

## Packed, unpacked, and adopted. Garden Cities (Birmingham, 14–15 May 20)

Birmingham, May 14–15, 2020

Deadline: Dec 20, 2019

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PACKED, UNPACKED, AND ADOPTED. GARDEN CITIES RECONSIDERED.

University of Birmingham

In 1901, in Bournville, Birmingham, there took place a conference of the Garden City Association. The event, benefiting from the status of Bournville as the model town of the chocolate manufacturer Cadbury's, contributed significantly to the circulation of ideas and practices of planning reform. The social reformer Ebenezer Howard encountered architect Raymond Unwin at the conference and together they set up the first garden city, Letchworth. To commemorate the upcoming anniversary of the event we are convening a symposium at the Department of Art History, Curating and Visual Studies, University of Birmingham.

It is generally accepted that British urban thinkers and designers such as Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Geddes and Raymond Unwin, to name but a few, were internationally influential in the dissemination of new planning ideas. The aim of the symposium is to illuminate transnational mechanisms through which reformist visions were transmitted, diffused and modified. In general, the goal is to reconsider the international garden city movement from new perspectives and new territories.

From a distance of more than 100 years we will examine the contribution of the garden city movement to wider ideas concerning urban community and social reform, with particular reference to contemporary debates about the roles of women in society. Additionally, garden cities are commonly associated with the urban development in the Western world (and, specifically, only some of its territories such as those in Western Europe and North America). But this symposium will focus, alongside the question of gender, also on underexplored regions of Europe and areas outside the West world.

Research questions include:

- What light does the specific case of the garden city movement cast on wider cultural and intellectual exchange, between Britain and other parts of the world?
- In what ways did the garden city movement shape ideas about urban planning and design in some underexplored regions? In what ways were its concepts and practices transformed when adapted to different social and cultural environments?
- Which social relations were emphasized in the garden cities that planners envisioned? Did the garden city movement reflect and incorporate the concerns of women to the new urban vision in

countries including the UK where, for example, it ran concurrently to campaigns for women's suffrage and other rights? Additionally, were designs for garden cities focused on children and their needs?

This call for papers encourages the exploration of ideas revolving around the analyses of the activities of individuals, networks, professional organizations, governments and local authorities involved in the development and dissemination of the garden city movement across world. We particularly invite proposals that examine garden cities from transnational and/or gender perspectives.

To apply to give a 20-minute presentation at the symposium, please send a proposal (max. 300 words + 150 words bio) to Dr. Vendula Hnídková: [v.hnidkova@bham.ac.uk](mailto:v.hnidkova@bham.ac.uk) by 20 December 2019.

The symposium will take place Thursday 14 to Friday 15 May 2020 at the University of Birmingham. The final selection of papers will be announced at the beginning of January 2020.

Reference:

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