

AR-504

From garden city to garden metropolis

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Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture	MA1, MA3	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	3
Session	Winter
Semester	Fall
Exam	During the semester
Workload	90h
Weeks	12
Hours	2 weekly
Courses	2 weekly
Number of positions	

Summary

The course will look at the potential transformation of the residential urban growth of the last century, what we call the Garden Metropolis, through the re-consideration of the Garden City model.

Content

Since the beginning of urbanisation, cities have been places where people live together : for the opportunities and safety they provide, for economic reasons, to fulfill a need for social bonds, and all the other reasons that make us come together as people. Living together in a particular environment requires a collective organisation that always manifests itself physically, and our urban structures are the reflections of our values and the challenges we face as a society.

This course will deal with a specific type of organization that we call the « Garden Metropolis ». Neither the centre nor the periphery, the term refers to residential urban growth that has mainly occurred in the twentieth century as a direct extension of major urban centres. Because it arises from a liberal world order and market economy, we struggle to make sense of it, often considering it as a kind of uncontrollable chaos that is the "price to pay" for everyone to satisfy our individual desires : an environment shaped by boundaries and distance instead of the desire to live together.

This kind of urbanisation exists all over the world around every major city centre. We have produced it in sometimes dizzying quantities, and now we have to deal with it, transforming it and adapting it continuously. To achieve this, and to give it collective meaning, we have to look at it in detail and understand the specific processes that lie behind it.

In this class, we will operate a change of perspective. Going a century back in time we will look at the old-fashioned model of the Garden City as it was first conceptualized by Ebenezer Howard in 1898 in his book « Garden Cities of To-morrow » (originally « To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform »). As one of the most successful urban models in time, laying out a strategy for a new kind of city, our aim is to understand the ideas that lay behind this model and how they could serve us in thinking of the transformation of the Garden Metropolis. Our hypothesis is that, as opposed as they may seem - the small scale Garden city versus the seemingly endless sprawl of the Garden Metropolis - they are actually linked and the understanding of one can help us in envisioning the transformation of the other as a social and collective project.

The course will be articulated in two parts :

1. The first classes will present an understanding of the model of the Garden City : where it emerged from in time and space, where it went during the 20th century (from urban to suburban) and the different concepts that were at its core.
2. The second part will be an open exploration through different case studies on how different ideas from the Garden City model can serve our thinking on the transformation of the Garden Metropolis today. From the heated climate of Phoenix to the cool forests of Sweden, from Los Angeles garden apartments to cooperatives in Basel, we will consider different themes such as structure, scale, garden and new collective spaces.

The course will also provide a critical look at the notion of models in urban planning and an understanding in how ideas travel in time and space.

Learning Outcomes

- Analyze the urban and social model of the Garden City
- Explain the evolution of the Garden City model
- Formulate a critical opinion on the Garden City model
- Express the link between a series of specific actions and large scale visions
- Formulate positions regarding the potential transformation of the Garden Metropolis

Assessment methods

70% personal production during the semester of a quadriptych drawing based on a selected Garden City case study
30% oral presentation of the quadriptych drawing

Resources

Bibliography

To be provided at the beginning of the semester

Ressources en bibliothèque

- [Garden Cities of To-morrow / Howard \(1902\)](#)
- [Garden Cities of To-morrow / Howard \(1965\)](#)
- [Les cités-jardins de demain / Howard](#)
- [Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century / Fishman](#)
- [L'utopie urbaine au XXe siècle / Fishman](#)
- [The City in history / Mumford](#)
- [La Cité à travers l'histoire / Mumford](#)

Moodle Link

- <https://go.epfl.ch/AR-504>