

## Ideas Have Consequences

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**Abstract:** “The Bat’a Company implemented the ideas for an industrial garden city that had been formulated in theory,” is a quote from Ladislava Hornakova’s book, referencing Bat’a’s ideal industrial cities of the future in Zlin. In our view, the progressivist theoretical models of these cities, developed within the urban planning department of the Bat’a Company’s Construction Office from 1930 to 1937, have little in common with the principles of the culturalist urban planning model proposed by Sir Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the garden city concept. This confusing label, viewed through the lens of urban planning, leads us to further exploration in order to avoid possible misclassification of these plans in accordance with the appropriate urban planning model as suggested by Françoise Choay. Choay categorizes European urban planning into two opposing models: culturalism and progressivism. Although these models share certain elements, Choay suggests nuancing as a way to distinguish between them, indicating a range of variations.

Regarding the classification of the urbanization type and the urban planning model for the Ideal Industrial City of the Future by R. H. Podzemny, from the Bat’a Company’s Urban Planning Department in Zlin, we propose the following preliminary hypotheses: The plan offers an entirely new satellite city to serve the function of urban decentralization; it belongs to the progressivist model of modernist urban planning (functionalism); and it fundamentally opposes the core principles of Howard’s culturalist garden city model. When it comes to the “garden city” label, as preliminary research shows, the only connection between these opposing urban planning models lies in the high value placed on greenery in spatial planning. At the same time, the approach to urban greenery design differs significantly: public parks and private gardens stand in contrast to the non-functional greenery of the functionalist city. Another significant difference is in the type of urbanization: Howard’s “social city” versus the singular satellite city.

**Keywords:** garden cities, type of urbanization, theoretical urban planning model

## Introduction

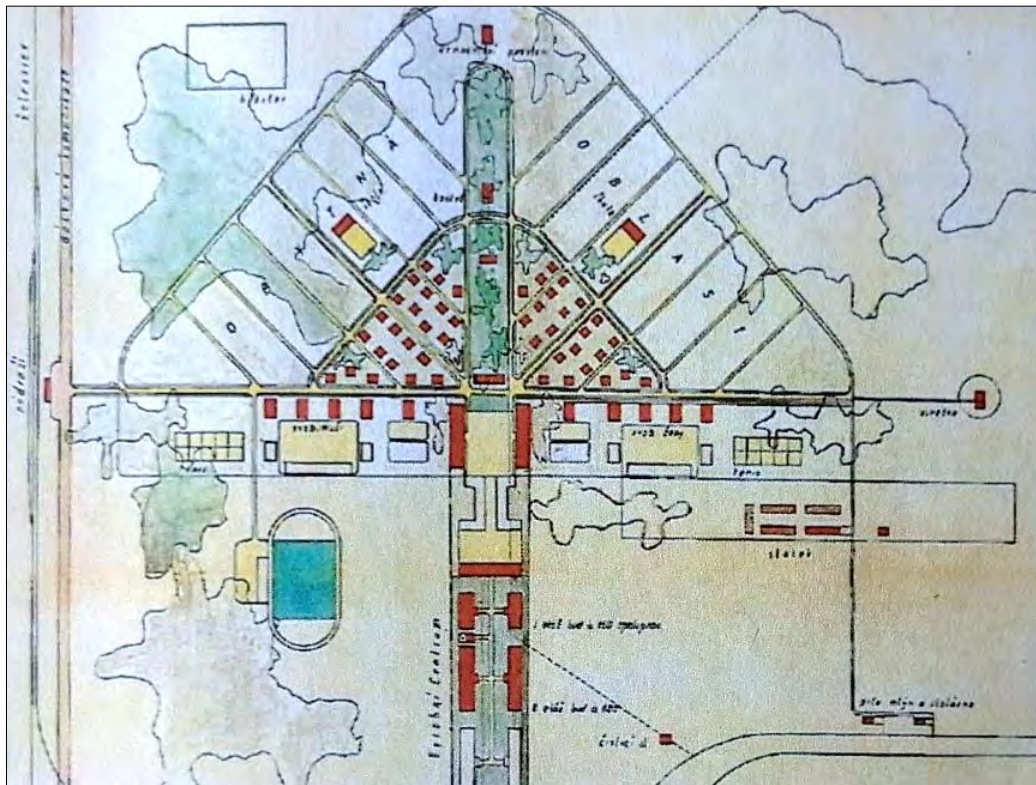
“The Bat’a Company implemented the ideas for an industrial garden city that had been formulated in theory,” is a quote from Ladislava Hornakova’s book, referencing Bat’a’s ideal industrial cities of the future in Zlin. In our view, the progressivist theoretical models of these cities, developed within the urban planning department of the Bat’a Company’s Construction Office from 1930 to 1937, have little in common with the principles of the culturalist urban planning model proposed by Sir Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the garden city concept. This confusing label, viewed through the lens of urban planning, leads us to further exploration in order to avoid possible misclassification of these plans in accordance with the appropriate urban planning model as suggested by Françoise Choay. Choay categorizes European urban planning into two opposing models: culturalism and progressivism. Although these models share certain elements, Choay suggests nuancing as a way to distinguish between them, indicating a range of variations. The city of the culturalist model, according to the author, sharply contrasts with the city of the progressivist model in its urban atmosphere. In political terms, the idea of community and collective spirit is realized through democratic patterns. Economically, it reflects anti-industrialism, where production is viewed not in terms of product or revenue but in relation to the harmonious development of the individual. At the core of the progressivist model lies the concept of the industrial era as a radical shift, where urban planners’ focus shifts from economic and social structures to technical and aesthetic ones.

## Type of urbanization and urban planning models

Regarding the classification of the urbanization type and the urban planning model for the Ideal Industrial City of the Future by R. H. Podzemny, from the Bat’a Company’s Urban Planning Department in Zlin, (Fig. 1) we propose the following preliminary hypotheses: The plan offers an entirely new satellite city to serve the function of urban decentralization; it belongs to the progressivist model of modernist urban planning (functionalism); and it fundamentally opposes the core principles of Howard’s culturalist garden city model.

The plan of the industrial city of the future as envisaged by the Bata company proposes urban decentralization/deconcentration through the construction of a new satellite city. This plan aligns with the progressivist type of urbanization, which opposes the “repair” of existing metropolises and the construction of suburbs - settlements near the city. By building a satellite city, it was anticipated that pressure on the conurbation would be reduced, offering a more pleasant living environment than in the densely populated urban area.

However, the plan primarily served the company's interests in decentralizing its own production facilities, rather than strictly aiming for urban decentralization. The criteria for site selection included an acceptable land acquisition cost, favourable transportation links, and access to energy sources and workforce. In terms of the urban planning model, a formal analysis according to the C.N.S. [4] indicates that the relationship between built and open spaces in the city follows a “geometric” model, with elements of the physical structure organized along a compositional axis running north-south. The industrial centre located in the southern part of the city serves as the starting point of this axis, along which public buildings (community centre, hotel, hospital) are arranged within a belt of representative greenery as one moves northward. Freestanding family homes and residential buildings for single occupants are situated within the residential area to the east and west of the axis. The family homes, scattered with low density across green public areas, lie along residential streets positioned at an angle to the compositional axis, joining the regional road near the passenger railway station. Recreational areas (sports fields, stadium) are located on the city's outskirts, surrounded by greenery.



**Figure 1.** Ideal Industrial City of the Future, R.H. Podzemny  
(The Bata Phenomenon Zlin Architecture 1910 – 1960. ed. Hornakova L. regional Gallery of Fine Arts Zlin 2009.)

The axially of the urban structure, the separation of the residential area from the industrial centre, and the recreational zones in contact with the surrounding natural environment are important components of the urban identity of the ideal industrial city of the future. The following characteristics confirm the proposed plan's alignment with the progressivist urbanism model: space is divided according to an analysis of human functions (living, work, culture, leisure); the entire city area is public (owned by the industrialist) and holds buildings arranged as “architecture within greenery”; non-functional greenery replaces private gardens and public parks; and the plan remains open without demographic constraints. Possible inspiration and foundation for this model is Tony Garnier’s Cité Industrielle (1901–1904) (Fig. 2 a,b), which was conceived on the principle of functional and rational land use and had a significant influence on the development of functional urbanism. [6]

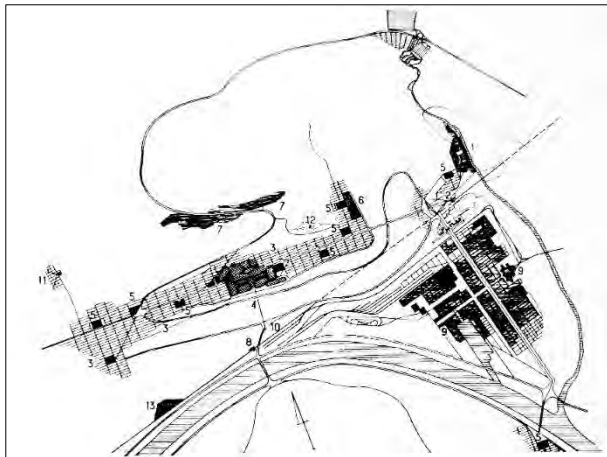


Figure 2a. Cité industrielle T. Garnier

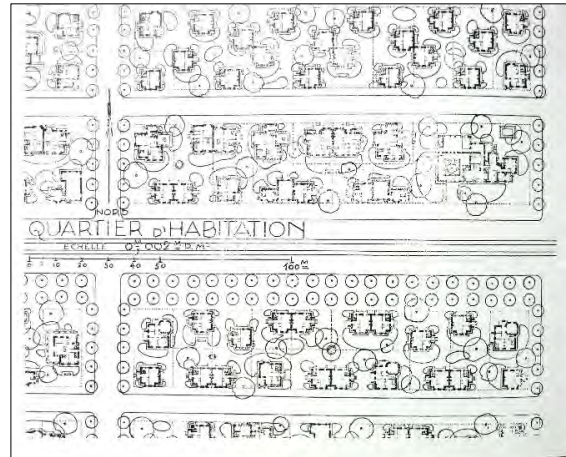


Figure 2b. Cité industrielle : plan de quartier d'habitation T. Garnier

The Garden City concept by Ebenezer Howard (1850–1928) was first published in 1898 in his book “To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform.” The second edition in 1902 and the third in 1946 were published under the revised title “Garden Cities of To-morrow.” According to Mumford [7], Howard was aware that the overcrowding of 19th-century industrial metropolises could not be resolved by expanding the city’s residential area, but rather through complete decentralization, rejecting the suburb as a temporary and transitional solution. The construction of autonomous satellite cities, instead of continual urban expansion that gradually consumes suburban areas, was intended to prevent all the risks of metropolitan congestion.

The Garden City was designed as a satellite intended to house 32,000 residents, and instead of expanding, it would multiply. To prevent the Garden City from becoming merely a singular satellite dependent on the overcrowded metropolis for higher-level functions, the author proposed clustering several garden cities around a central city of 50,000 residents. Together, they would form a new spatial, political, and cultural organization called a “social city,” with a population of about 250,000 (Fig. 3).

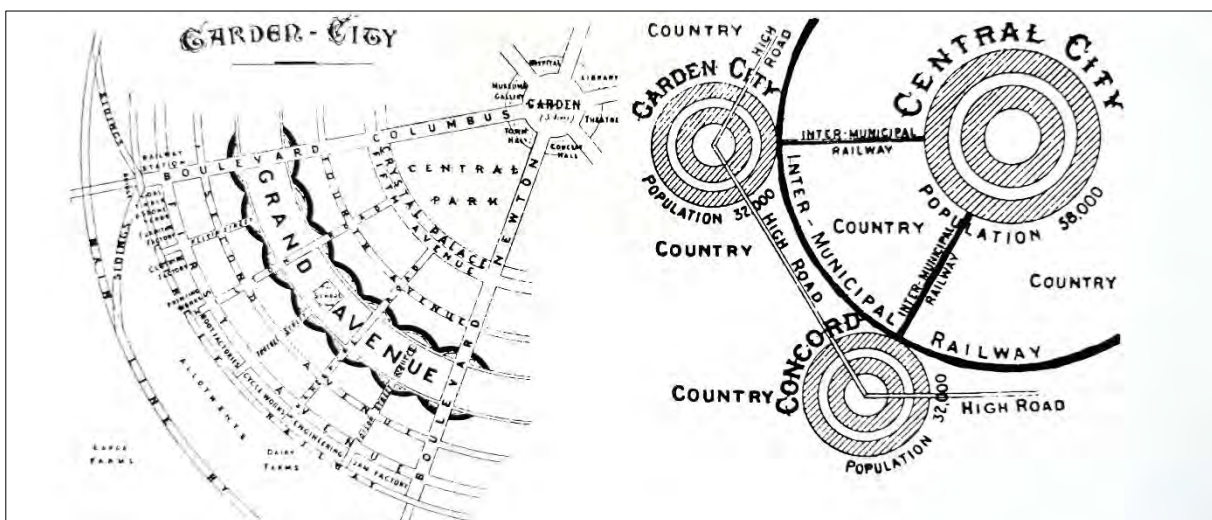
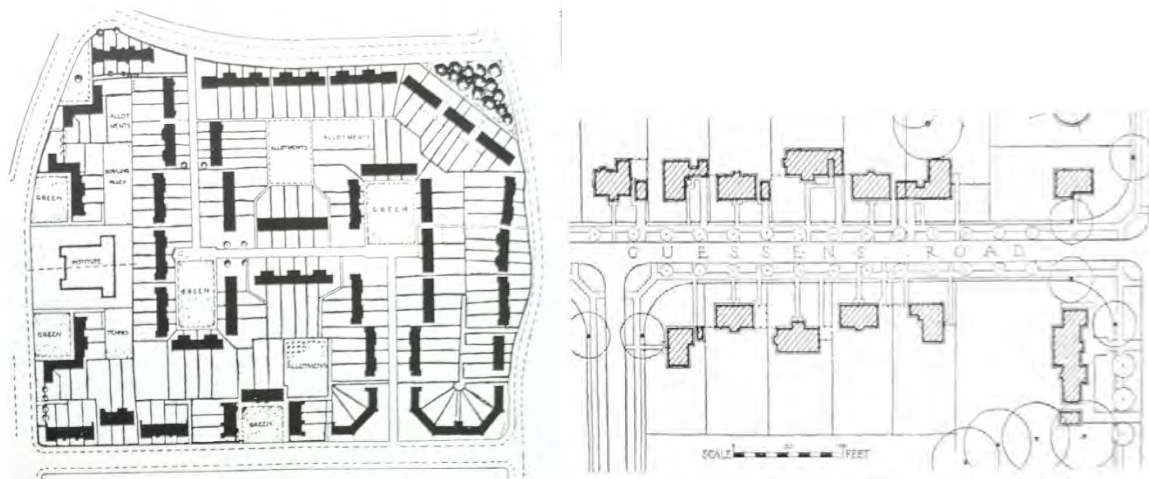


Figure 3. The Garden City, E. Howard

According to Zevi [8], the urban model of the Garden City is based on three fundamental requirements: sufficient employment functions to ensure population employment, a spacious agricultural belt held in common ownership to prevent settlement expansion, and demographic protection fixed at 32,000 residents. Howard did not propose a new city plan but rather a new program for balanced organization, being careful not to confuse the real objective with a specific urban structure [7], thus avoiding attachment to any particular image of a city or specific planning model. Howard warned that city growth should be controlled by a representative public authority and that the best results are achieved when this authority has the strength to acquire and retain land, plan the city, and provide all necessary services. The land held in social ownership is leased, while in the residential area, there is a belt of exceptionally built houses, each set on its own spacious plot. [2] The practical implementation of this

concept can be seen in the first two cities near London, Letchworth (1903) and Welwyn (1919) (Fig. 4). In this way, the Garden City, through skilled design, reintroduces within the framework of English culture the cult of nature, reducing it to a garden and gardening, transferring the vitality of groups into neighbourhood unity, meeting the needs of capitalist urbanization while simultaneously providing a technical framework for urban growth and the society's agreement on the necessary reproduction of bourgeois cultural models [9]. Given its emphasis on shared values and interpersonal relationships, Howard's Garden City belongs to the culturalist model of urbanism.



**Figure 4.** Letchworth Garden City, R. Unwin, B. Parker / Welwyn Garden City, E. Howard

### Conclusion

An analysis of the type of urbanization and urban planning model of new cities in the first half of the 20th century reveals two antagonistic urban models, according to the classification proposed by F. Choay: the progressivist model of the ideal industrial city of the future by R. H. Podzemny versus the culturalist model of the Garden City by E. Howard. The distinction between these models can be described by highlighting the following contrasting characteristics: a singular industrial satellite versus a group of satellites forming a "social city"; urban land in private ownership of industrialists versus land in the social ownership of a representative public authority; "architecture within greenery" in the functionalist city versus urban structures of the traditional city; an open city plan without demographic protection versus demographic protection set at 32 000 residents.

When it comes to the "garden city" label, as preliminary research shows, the only connection between these opposing urban planning models lies in the high value placed on greenery in spatial planning. At the same time, the approach to urban greenery design differs significantly: public parks and private gardens stand in contrast to the non-functional greenery of the functionalist city. All of this indicates the need to also add a distinguishing classification to the designation as a "Garden City" for new cities of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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