

International Workshop

Model Cities: the Construction of Urban Exemplarity

20 May 2011 ❖ Geography Institute ❖ University of Neuchâtel

City governments, planners and policy-makers are increasingly modeling their urban policies on successful 'best practices' borrowed from elsewhere. Some cities have thus become 'model cities', to such an extent that their name resonates with urban policy-makers all over the world. Expressions such as 'Vancouverism', or the 'Barcelona model', have become global references of exemplarity among urban practitioners and researchers. Yet, while there is a growing body of literature on the circulation and reproduction of urban models in diverse locations, we still have a limited understanding of the ways in which model cities acquire paradigmatic status. The workshop will try to deepen our grasp of this phenomenon by examining the historical and political processes behind the construction of urban exemplarity, and by analysing the 'careers' and trajectories of model cities.

Guest speakers

Shane Ewen, Leeds Metropolitan University: From the Megalopolis to the City of Bits: Approaches Towards the History of the Model City

Jennifer Robinson, University College London and MOVE Network-UNINE: The Topological Spaces of Policy Learning: how Urban Policy Ideas Circulate

Kevin Ward, Manchester University: Relational Comparisons: the Assembling of Cleveland's Waterfront Plan

Andy Thornley, London School of Economics: Olympic Model Meets Real Cities

Emeline Bailly, Université Paris-Est: Cross-cultural Urbanism

The workshop is organised by Prof. Ola Söderström, Prof. Francisco Klauser and Dr. Laurence Crot, Geography Institute, University of Neuchâtel.

A detailed programme will be posted on the Geography Institute's website starting 1st May 2011 (http://www2.unine.ch/inst_geographie). Attendance of the workshop is free and open to all but requires pre-registration. For registration and practical information (travel, accommodation, meals) please contact Noémie Béguelin at Secretariat.Geographie@unine.ch

Deadline for registration: 20 April 2011