

## **Abstract**

### **GARDEN CITY URBANISM ? : BARRY PARKER AND OPORTO Dr Mervyn Miller, Presenter**

Portugal's second city, Oporto grew on the rugged terrain above the River Douro. A central boulevard from the Praca Don Pedro [Praca Liberdade] to the Praca Trindade was proposed in 1889 by Carlos de Pezerat. In 1914-15, the Camara Municipal, under Councillor Elisio de Melo, updated of Pezerat's proposals, and brought in English architect, Barry Parker.

Parker, with his partner, Raymond Unwin, was renowned internationally for Letchworth Garden City (1903) and Hampstead Garden Suburb (1907). Unwin was, during the First World War, seconded to the Ministry of Munitions emergency housing programme. Parker arrived in Oporto in August 1915, and stayed eleven weeks. He reworked the plan as a wedge-shaped boulevard, with the new Camara Municipal sited centrally at the head, linking to the off-axis Praca da Trindade beyond. His design concept included colonnaded shops and offices linking the street frontages, in classical vernacular style.

On 29 November 1915, a modified version of Parker's plan was approved, and endorsed in February 1916. On his return to England, Parker elaborated his proposals, exhibited, with acclaim, at the Royal Academy. The scheme was implemented during the 1920s (without Parker's further involvement) as the Avenida dos Aliados, headed by an elaborate Franco-Flemish style Camara Municipal.

Parker's Oporto experience represented an early export of planning expertise, and preceded his two years in Brazil, 1917-19. By drawing on original sources and contemporary publications I shall address the compatibility between a Garden City advocate and early 20<sup>th</sup> century European urbanism.

### **Keywords**

Oporto; Camara Municipal; Barry Parker; Urbanism