

Adelaide: The Ideal City of the Philosophic Radicals, and the Great Experiment in the Art of Colonization

This paper examines connections between the utilitarian principles and ideals of the philosophic radicals and the manifestation of these in the founding of Adelaide and the British Province of South Australia.

As the most immediate and complete expression of the aims of the philosophic radicals, the founding of South Australia during the Reformed Parliament represents a remarkable synthesis of 19th century advances in economics, philosophy, science, and religion which provided an exemplar for 'Garden City' town planning, Benthamite democracy, and the formation of a modern Commonwealth.

In addition to extensive literature, including crucial contributions by John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, the participation of these reformers in the genesis of this new society echoes throughout the urban fabric of the City of Adelaide, in the naming of its streets and in its world-renowned green belt of Park Lands - the most sublime realisation of John Arthur Roebuck's campaign for a public trust of land around towns for health and recreation.

From a unique foundation as the first trial of Wakefield's Systematic Colonization with its guarantee of self-government obtained years in advance of the Durham Report, South Australia was set on a path of reform and innovation.

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