
ABSTRACT

The history of thought states that ideas are those entities which shape the perspective of reality of a given human society, and every single action of man is conditioned by this view. On the other hand, most studies regarding urban planning and urban structure are focused on the description of cities, and of the most important design's elements of those ones. These focus on the different typologies of cities and the role of form and design.

However, architecture, city planning and infrastructure design represent those fields of human action where is possible to find all kind of categories: artistic, technological, sociological, historical, and so on. Moreover, historically speaking, all these studies have not put attention to the dimension of the origins and of the primary sources –birth, reproduction and change- of these structures and forms of cities. Urban structure and buildings are also the outcome of a human original will, as the political structures are. Certainly, this will -or desire-, which is transformed into socio-political action, gives form to the whole material and moral structures of a given society. However, every will which is transformed into socio-political action is a product of the hegemonic ideology of the society which, in turn, is based on the shared cultural knowledge.

This thesis intends to show how systems of ideas in general, and more specifically ideologies and their associated categories, attitudes and values, which are understood to be a 'cosmovision system', all determine directly and clearly not only social structures but also the definition of the space where human beings are settled. This work tries to expose in a simple and understandable manner how the systems of ideas, and more specifically ideologies, attitudes and values, all of them as being a system of 'cosmovision', determine and define clearly and directly not only its social structures but also the definition of the space where these human populations are settled. Ideology, knowledge and attitudes operate in the driving of communication, of language and other social practices which, in turn, make these societies to transform the surrounding space in one way different from another. Architecture forms, urban design and general infrastructures are also forms of social expression and of communications, which bring inside these ideological perspectives of the same society.

Taking two classical ideologies – medieval communitarism and liberalism-, this work tries to prove the fact that these two ideologies shape the living space of those communities or social groups they belong to. The contrast between them will be exposed by analysing the urban planning and the most relevant features of the medieval Christian city, in one hand, and those of the liberal garden city, on the other. The term 'Christian Medieval Communitarism' regards to the collective mentality of the peoples of Europe during the Middle Ages. This ideological mentality is associated to the life's forms during the medieval epoch which, in turn, are constituted by vital attitudes such as the fear to the use of brutal force, the feeling of chaos, conflict and permanent war, or the transcendent feeling of religion, the Holy fact and the omnipotence of God. According to this, the forms of medieval urban structures are closed and are based on the necessity of protection from outside and of values that neglect the common and vulgar real life. On the other hand, liberalism as an ideology developed a new concept of man, which considered the latter to be more free and possessing more rights, and able to determine and justify their own responsibilities. Through the new concept of citizen it is possible to see the necessity of promoting the principle of autonomy and the justification that man can work for searching his happiness. And all this can be reached with the help of this new tool which is the reason and the techno-scientific imperative. Liberal cities are open and are supposed to be creating for serving the human being. The objective of this work is, then, to state that the difference between the forms of a given city in comparison to another is due to the type of man that forms it, a kind of man that has his specific ideas which are shared with other member of the society he belongs to.