

Twelve Cautionary Tales for Christmas

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PREMONITIONS OF THE MYSTICAL REBIRTH OF URBANISM

SUPERSTUDIO evoke twelve visions of ideal cities, the supreme achievement of twenty thousand years of civilization, blood, sweat and tears; the final haven of Man in possession of Truth, free from contradiction, equivocation and indecision; totally and for ever replete with his own PERFECTION.

First city

2,000-ton city

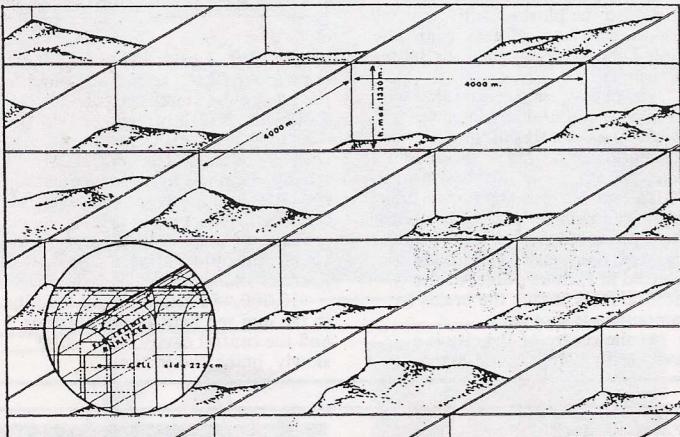
Even and perfect, the city lies amid green lawns, sunny hills and wooded mountains; slim, tall sheets of continuous buildings intersect in a rigorous, square mesh, one league apart. The buildings, or rather the single, uninterrupted building consists of cubic cells 5 cubits each way; these cells are placed one on top of another in a single vertical stack, reaching a height of a third of a league above sea-level, so that the relative height of the building varies in relation to the level of the ground on which it rises. Each cell has two external walls. Cell walls are of opaque material, porous to air, rigid, but light. The wall facing north (or if this is an external wall, the wall facing west) is capable of emitting 3D images, sounds and smells. Against the opposite wall is a seat capable of moulding perfectly to the human body, even of enclosing it completely. Incorporated in this seat is an apparatus for satisfying all physiological needs.

When not in use, this membrane and all apparatus withdraw and the wall reforms. The floor is a simulator, and can evoke all sensations of living things. The ceiling is a brain-impulse-receiver.

In each cell is an individual whose brain impulses are continually transmitted to an electronic analyser set at the top of the building, beneath a continuous semi-cylindrical vault. The analyser selects, compares and interprets the desires of each individual, programming the life of the entire city moment by moment. All citizens are in a state of perfect equality.

Death no longer exists. Sometimes someone indulges in absurd thoughts of rebellion against the perfect and eternal life granted to him. At first the analyser ignores the crime; but if it is repeated, the man who has shown himself unworthy is rejected. The ceiling panel descends with a force of two thousand tons until it reaches the floor.

At this point, in this marvellous economy, another life is initiated.



The panel returns to its original height, and all the individuals living in cells within a distance of a quarter of a league from the empty cell donate an ovum or a group of spermatozoa, which are transported

in channels created for this purpose in a mad race to the now-empty seat. Here, an ovum is fertilized and the seat is transformed into a uterus, protecting the new son of the city for nine months, until his happy dawn.

Second city

Temporal cochlea-city

The city is an endless screw, 4.5 Km. in diameter, completing one revolution a year. Its lower extremity, facing the centre of the earth, consists of an excavating apparatus (a kind of turbine, with blades) that, in revolving, crushes rock, forcing all matter towards the centre of the cylinder and through a duct up to the ground. Above the turbine is the propulsion apparatus, an atomic power centre set to last 10,000 years and the automatic plant and electronic computers that control the city.

The upper extremity grows gradually, remaining constantly at the level of the ground outside. Growth is realized through the continuous construction of new sections of city by means of an automatic building-site placed like a bridge between the centre and the perimeter. On this site, rock detritus from the excavations at the bottom is used as building material.

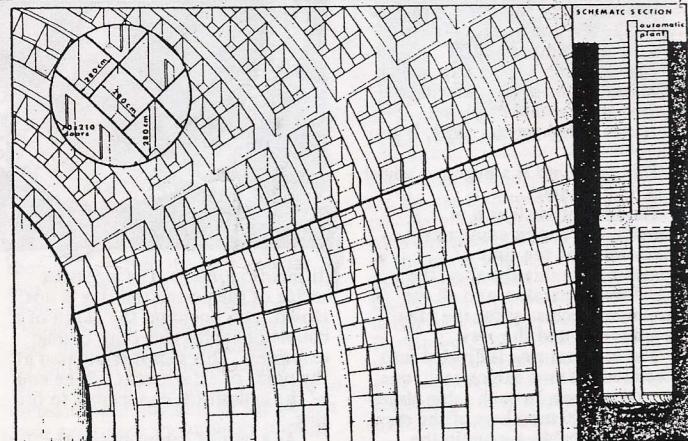
The city is composed of living-cells arranged in a double row of concentric circles. Between the two contiguous circles of cells runs a roadway. Each cell has a single opening, a door giving on to the circular roadway; the other three walls backing onto other cells are totally opaque and soundproof.

The floor of the cells is soft, all apparatus required for the satisfaction of individual living needs are hidden in the ceiling and are tele-controlled. The entire city is climatized at a constant 25°C. with 60% humidity. Each cell is constantly lit to an intensity of 150 lux; the roads are illuminated to an intensity of 500 lux; this light contains all the wavelengths of the visible spectrum; that of the roads also contains small quantities of ultra-violet light.

The cells have no system for closing or screening.

Inhabitants live one to a cell, and possess no clothes or other objects because the city provides for their every need. They are absolutely free to act and organize their lives, both as individuals and as a community; to be alone; to gather in groups; to create laws or regulations; the only restriction is that they cannot go outside the city because the upper ends of the circular roads are closed by the automatic building-site.

Each cell contains an "automatic obstetrician" which, applied to the abdomen of the future mother, extracts the foetus painlessly. The baby is transported by pipeline to a cell in the newly-built section, where it is fed and looked after automatically. Only in this phase is the door of the cell sealed by a steel panel. For four years the child remains in his cell, during which time he learns the ethics and working of



his city. Thereafter the metal door slides away and disappears forever into the wall.

Materials used for building the city remain unaltered for a century, without maintenance; then they begin to degenerate; this is also true of the equipment and machinery. Naturally, load-bearing structures and the general equipment of the city are an exception.

The inhabitants spend a lot of time in the roads near their cells; often, in groups or alone, they climb the spiral roads until they reach the children's zone and beyond, into the

last four deserted and silent spirals where the newborn babies live. Often, placing their hands and ears against the warm, vibrating metal walls of the building-site, they try to penetrate the mystery of the outside world. But it is rare for someone to go down the road beyond the zone of extreme old age, into the spirals of decay and putrefaction of things and men, and yet further into the uncertain light and the heat, into the spirals scattered with detritus, dust, bones, until they reach the dark, suffocating and vibrant zones spiralling towards indefinite depths.

Third city

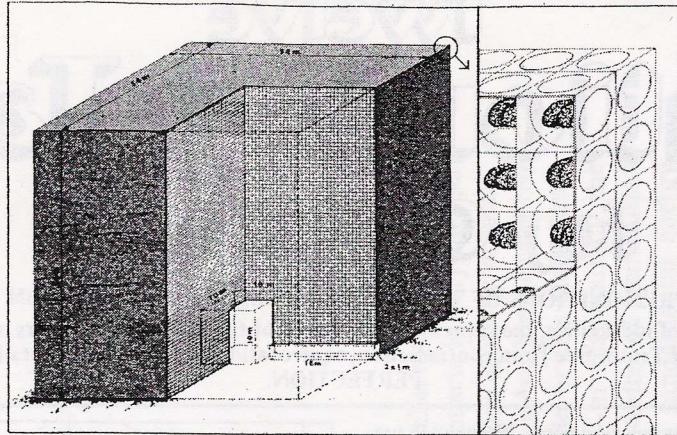
New York of brains

In the most charred, devastated and molten area of that grey space that once was New York, and, more precisely, where Central Park once was, at about 81st St., there stands the city.

When the others realized that the explosion had irrevocably contaminated all the inhabitants of New York, and that their bodies were rotting without recourse, it was decided to build the city. It is a cube, with a length, width and height of 180 ft., covered in quartz tiles measuring 10 x 10 in., in each of which there is a lens 9 in. in diameter. This covering condenses light onto the photosensitive layer behind, which transforms it into the energy necessary for the functioning of the city.

The cube is uniformly filled with 10 in. cubic containers, made of a special transparent polymer with indefinite stability. The inside of every cube is a spherical cavity filled with a liquid which supports a brain. In the thickness of the cell walls are the pipes through which the liquid is renewed. Systems of electrodes inserted in various points of the cerebral mass enable the brains to communicate directly.

At the centre of the city is a cavity with a length, width and



height 33 ft. 3 in. Its floor is at the same ground level as that on which the great cube stands. A corridor 3 ft. 4 in. wide, 6 ft. 8 in. high and 58 ft. 4 in. long connects the central cavity with the outside. The central cavity is mostly occupied by the regenerating and filter apparatus for the brain liquids; the filter process is particularly accurate, eliminating all toxins, thus preventing the process of necrosis and ageing.

10,000,456 brains live in the city: in the dim red light of the corridor and the central cavity, they pulse slowly, immersed in their

interminable meditations, or concentrated in mute, indefinite intercourse. Completely cut off from external perception, they can sublimate their thoughts for as long as the life of the sun, free to reach the supreme goals of wisdom and madness, perhaps to reach absolute knowledge.

They will survive humanity, they will see its march towards destruction, but they will be unable to do anything to accelerate it, or to delay it.

And then, finally, they will be alone.

Fourth city

Spaceship city

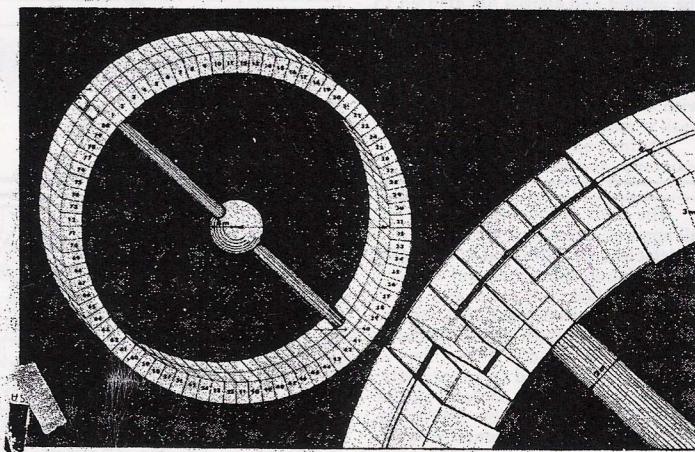
If a city can be considered a place where a group of men are born, live and die; if a city is a mother who looks after her children, furnishes them with all they require and decides how they shall be happy; if a city is all this, independent of its physical and demographical dimensions, then a spaceship, which for centuries has been following a precise route towards a planet thousands of light-years away, is also a city.

This spaceship is a huge red wheel 50 m. in diameter.

The central nucleus 8 m. diameter, contains a computer, programmed at the time of departure, to guide the ship; the propulsion apparatus, and all the equipment necessary for the life of the spaceship and the crew.

The external ring is divided into 80 sections of two cabins each, one above the other. In each cabin sleeps one of the 156 members of the crew, in the upper cabin a man in the lower a woman. The system of cabins rotates slowly completing one revolution every 80 years.

Members of the crew sleep from birth to death, enclosed in their cabins and enveloped in the cables and pipelines which regulate their existence. Their brains are connected by electrodes to a "dream generator" which contains tape recordings of two complementary lives, as they move, each pair of cabins runs through the tape which projects its evolving dream into the brains of the inhabitants; all passengers therefore live through the same dream at a



different moment. The eightieth sector of the perimetral ring is not closed: two openings the depth of a couple of cabins give onto cosmic emptiness. This sector is situated at the point of attachment of one end of the cylindrical connectors to the ring.

As a pair of cabins passes the 79th sector, and the outer wall begins to coincide with the opening, air escapes through the fissure and annuls the pressure in the cabin. But before dying of asphyxia, the passenger dies of total haemorrhage. No longer subject to external pressure, all blood vessels break, blood breaks through the entire skin and almost immediately freezes. The air gap continues to widen, and at the same time the cables and pipelines which had kept the body alive, detach themselves, and it floats slowly into outer space.

At the same moment, on the opposite side of the ring, at sector

no. 40 where the other extreme of the diameter conduit is attached, the dream stimulates the sexual activity of a couple; two ovules are fertilized by two spermatozoa under controls that permit no possibility of error. Inside the two empty cabins, two "mechanical uteruses" expand to receive the two fertilized ovules, the masculine one above, the feminine one beneath. Nine months later the uteruses withdraw, freeing the foetuses that in developing have already incorporated the terminals of the vital cables and conduits.

Thus, generation after generation, the spaceship proceeds towards its goal, with its load of sleepers with happy dreams, until it reaches the New Land where the awakened ones will find a new Babylon and a new Jerusalem, a new Athens and a new Rome, a new Moscow and a new New York — and also a new Berlin, a new Saigon and a new Cape Town.

And they will be happy.

Fifth city

City of the hemispheres

The city is a dazzling sheet of crystal amidst woods and green hills. On nearing it, one realizes that it is made up of the covers of 10,044,900 crystalline sarcophagi, 185 cm. long, 61 cm. wide and 61 cm. deep. The walls separating the sarcophagi are transparent; the bottom however is shiny white. Inside each sarcophagus lies an immobile individual, eyes closed, breathing conditioned air and fed by a bloodstream — in fact, the blood system is connected to a purifying and regenerative apparatus which, through toxin elimination and doses of hormones, prevents ageing.

A series of electrodes applied to the cranium control an external sensory apparatus, of hemispherical form, diameter 30.5 cm.; this hemisphere of silver metal is capable of moving and remaining immobile in the air and on the ground thanks to a propulsion system which emits no gas and no noise, and has an unlimited life. One might think that the hundreds of thousands of hemispheres that continually crowd the air and are suspended over the city or its surroundings are moved by telekinesis.

The flat surface of the hemisphere

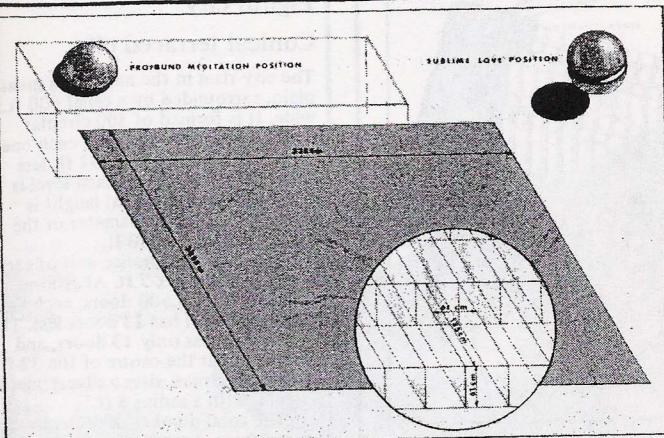
Sixth city

Barpum Jnr.'s Magnificent and Fabulous City

The city lies beneath an enormous red and blue striped circus tent.

The tent, suspended by the traction between the aerostats and the thousands of cables anchoring its perimeter to the earth, has a diameter of 2 miles, 205 yards; at its centre stands an enormous cylinder with a diameter 1 mile and a height 100 yards, made of sheet metal nailed and painted silver; in this cylinder lies enclosed a city built on a scale five times smaller than reality; this is a city with about 2 million inhabitants; it has all the characteristics of a modern city, but also contains reproductions of all the major monuments of the world, from the Empire State Building to the Eiffel Tower, from the Colosseum (reconstructed in its original form) to Sunset Boulevard.

Here's how to visit this fabulous city: after arriving and parking buy a ticket — 50 cents for every minute of your visit to the city. Then pay a deposit for any eventual damage you might cause. This deposit is fixed at \$1 for every minute of your visit, but may not, in any case be less than \$900 (if you haven't got it, you can get a loan at the bank next to the ticket office by simply handing over your driving licence and the papers of your car; this loan will cost you 5% of the total). At this point, you receive the "key to the city"; this is an electronic punchcard which contains all information on you and your visit; you are then channelled along with other visitors towards the computer, and after arriving at a "choice point", you insert your "key" in a slot; then you see the red light in front of you change to green,



contains its sensory organs; sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch. The sensations which these perceive are transmitted directly to the brain of the individual commanding the hemisphere.

At times one can see hemispheres placed on the sarcophagus of the owners, exactly over the head, this is the position known as "profound meditation". At other times, especially on sunny days, many hemispheres can be seen united in

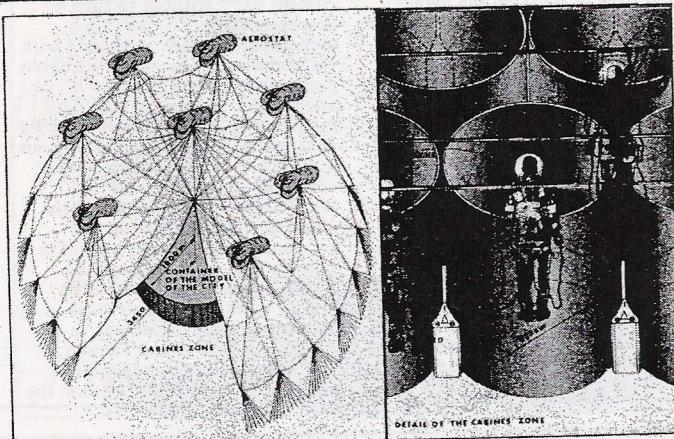
and can explain to the "brain" who you would like to be. If you want a famous person, living or dead, you just mention the name. We hope your "Hero" is on the list of 100,000 famous people available; otherwise, you must make another choice (on the screen in front of you will see the photograph of the person chosen if available; the word "absent" if it isn't on the list; and the word "engaged" if it is in use at the time. *Our organization isn't a masked ball, so don't ask for historical characters; the list only includes persons still living in 1915.* For a visit as a famous person, the charge is \$1 a minute. If on the other hand you are unassuming and prefer an ordinary person, just tell the "brain" what kind of person and his picture will immediately appear on the screen. Having made your choice, wait for the sound of the bell and withdraw your "key" which now bears embossed the true person you have chosen. Then proceed to the cubicle zone and find one that is free; insert your "key" in the board you find there. Within 90 secs., the rails above you will bring a space-suit type of garment which will remain hanging, attached to the rails by cables running from the joints and the helmet. When you are ready, push the green button at chest height on the space-suit. The floor you are standing on will disappear through a diaphragm system and you will find yourself on a circular plate with a diameter 2 yds. 1 ft. 5 in. This plate is covered with a layer of small steel balls which allow you any movement of the legs, even the splits if you know how. While you are observing these marvels, a plexiglass cylinder rises from round the edges of the plate, stopping when it reaches a height equal to the diameter of the plate. At this point it is better to close your eyes for a few seconds to avoid dizziness. When you open

couples; this is the position of "sublime love"; these spiritual unions naturally do not have the power to create life, but this is unnecessary in a place where death does not exist.



them, you are in the city. Remember that from now on every movement of your body is transmitted by the suit (which is an extremely modern teletypewriter) to the robot-doll you have chosen, and which is able to act within the city according to your impulses. The sensations of vision, smell, hearing and touch and taste perceived by its electronic detectors will be faithfully transmitted directly to your nervous centres.

Remember you can do whatever you want, but any damage to the city or its inhabitants will be debited to your account; also remember that your "character" has a small quantity of practical knowledge that can be of use to you during your "journey". He knows which is his car, his house, his wife or girl-friend, he can find his way in the city streets, etc... In the right-hand pocket of your jacket, or in your handbag if you are a woman, you have a loaded pistol (if you have chosen to be a detective or a killer, you know very well that your pistol is under your left armpit). You can use it as you please, but remember that every assassination will cost you repair charges, which are sometimes very heavy (a word in your ear: if you don't want to spend too much, aim low; a great bull's-eye between the eyes or in the forehead is satisfying, but ruins all the sensory detector mechanisms and this can cost you about \$1000. A good hole in the stomach, with a bit of luck, will cost you only \$300). Watch out: during your journey, naturally, you can be attacked, run over, the victim of attempted rape (even if you are dressed as a bright young man); you have the pistol for defence, but don't forget that killing for self-defence doesn't exempt you from refunding damages, so if you can't afford it, be resigned to getting killed or "serviced" (in any case, you won't feel any pain, this is the only type of sensation we don't provide for in our



normal characters. There are, however, 50,000 special characters with sensitivity to pain for those who like "special effects"). Remember though that from the time you are mortally wounded, you lose control of the movements of your person. The automatic death simulators take over, differently programmed according to the type of wound received. This is naturally intended to increase the enjoyment of the person your personage was unlucky enough to displease. At this point, your journey isn't over, you won't get back control of your movements, but you can watch a great run to the hospital in the ambulance with its siren wailing; then all the medical and legal formalities taking place around you just like in real life, and then at last you will be shut into a luxurious 1st-class coffin with padding and stereo-music. The moment the coffin lid closes your journey comes to an end, irrespective of the time paid for: the coffin does not in fact go on to a quiet green cemetery, but directly to the Character Restoration Lab.

This explanation of cases of

violent death is lengthy because these are the cause of most of the complaints and unpleasant arguments with our clients. These are the rules of the game, and anyone who decides to buy a ticket automatically accepts them. Naturally, we wish you much better luck during your journey. Remember, you can do anything you want, nothing is forbidden. Have you ever wanted to make love to Brigitte Bardot? To strip Sophia Loren naked? To have Omar Sharif all to yourself? You can finally do it – all of these and many other famous people are wandering around the city. Seek them out, rush them in the middle of the road, no-one will recognize you, don't worry about the police, they're thinking about having some fun just like you are, and if anyone wants to be a moralist, remember, you've got your pistol with you. That's all. Don't waste any time, friend, rush over to Barnum Jr.'s city, buy a ticket and enter the freest and most amusing city in the world. You'll live fantastic experiences and you'll be able to fulfil your every wish.

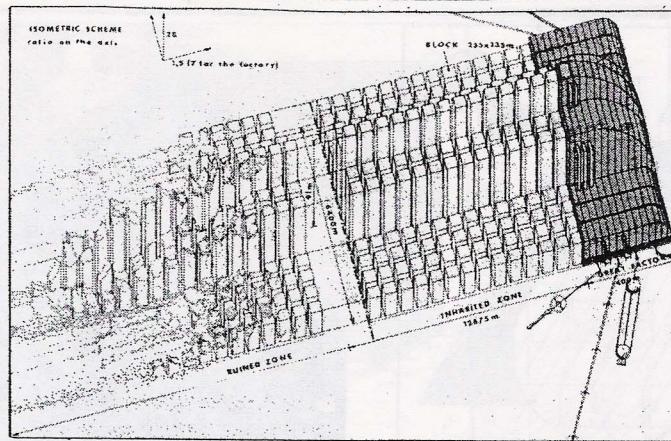
Seventh city

Continuous production conveyor belt city

The city moves, unrolling like a majestic serpent, over new lands, taking its 8 million inhabitants on a ride through valleys and hills, from the mountains to the seashore, generation after generation.

The head of the city is the Grand Factory, four miles wide, like the city it continuously produces 100 yds high, the Grand Factory exploits the land and the underground materials of the territory it crosses, and from these marvellously extracts all that it requires for the construction of the city. The Grand Factory devours shreds of useless nature and unformed minerals at its front end and emits sections of completely formed city, ready for use, from its back end. The Grand Factory moves forward at a speed of 1 ft. 2½ in. per hour. The plan of the city is based on a chequerboard of roads perpendicular and parallel to the Grand Factory; the roads separate square blocks, 261 x 261 yards, and are 29 yards wide. The perpendicular roads are numbered progressively, starting from the central axis of the city adding the letter L or R to the number according to whether it is on the left or the right of the axis; the parallel roads however are called by the name of the month and year of their construction. The Grand Factory produces a series of blocks (including the segments of perpendicular roads between them) in 27 days and the parallel road next to them in 3 days;

The greatest aspiration of every citizen is to move more and more often into a new house because the houses produced are continually modernized and equipped with the yet more perfect commodities that the Administrative Council invents for the joy of the citizens. The Great Families move monthly into the houses just built, following the rhythm of the Grand Factory. The other citizens do their best and



only those with little willpower and the laziest wait for four years before moving house. Luckily, it is not possible to live in the same house for more than four years after its construction; after this period, objects, accessories and the structure of the houses themselves decay, become unusable and soon after collapse. Only society's rejects, mad or insane individuals, still dare to wander amongst the ruins, the detritus and rubble that the city leaves behind it.

It is in order to prevent the citizens being reduced to such a desperate state that from their earliest age they are inculcated with the concept that everyone's greatest desire must always be a new house, and it is for this reason that the newspapers, TV and all other media continually advertise the marvellous novelties of the new houses, the technical innovations, the never-before-seen comforts. What could be more fascinating and reassuring than the spectacle of the families that daily drive up the perpendicular roads in the little yellow buses put at their disposal by the Administrative Council, in the direction of the Grand Factory, towards their new houses? What could be more stimulating than the

continual rivalry between all citizens in trying to live on parallel streets with the most recent dates? What day could be happier than when you move into your new house, and your Director gives you a day off on special grounds and congratulates you? What hour could be happier than when you enter your new home and discover all your new things, your new equipment, your new clothes and everything else that the Grand Factory has prepared for you? Admire the city from above, with its great black head, plumed with the smoke of thousands of factory chimneys, with its tidy body eight miles long, with at its centre the grandiose crest of skyscrapers, flanked by great blocks of popular housing estates, and stretches of villas with gardens at the edges; with its interminable wake of rubble indicating the ground covered.

Look at the perfect city that produces more goods for export than any other city. Look at the rows of lorries arriving empty and going away loaded with goods to contribute to the greater prosperity of our great country and the better fortunes of our well-loved shareholders.

Excerpt from
"Happy Birthday, Grand Factory –
our town is 200 years old"

Eighth city

Conical terraced city

The city rises in the midst of a great plain, surrounded by a canal 600 ft. wide. It is formed of 500 circular levels one above the other, each one of which has a diameter 32 ft. less than the one beneath. Each level is 8 ft. high, thus the total height is 4000 ft., while the diameter of the lowest level is 16,000 ft.

In the circumference wall of each level are doors 2 x 7 ft. At ground level there are 6,500 doors; each successive level has 13 doors less. The 500th level has only 13 doors, and above this, at the centre of the 32 ft. diameter terrace, rises a silvery metal cupola, with a radius 8 ft.

The total number of doors in the circumference walls of the city is 1,628,250. Each one gives on to a room formed by the external wall, a concentric interior wall and two radial walls; the distance between the two concentric walls is 16 ft. The maximum distance between the two radial walls and the height of the room is 7½ ft. In the radial walls, there are doors measuring 2 x 7 ft. which connect each room with the two next to it. The entire city is built of a white, vitreous, imperishable ceramic.

The levels are in no way connected; no architectural structure furnishes a hold for climbing; the terraces forming the steps between levels have no parapet.

In each room, in the centre of the wall facing the outside door, there are two circular openings, the lowest, 2 ft. diameter, is a kind of window opening on to the dark and silent interior of the cone, which is a single cavity without horizontal or vertical divisions. The second opening, placed above the first, has a 12 in diameter and is the end of a duct. Here newborn babies must be placed as soon as they are born. A few seconds after the baby is introduced into the opening it closes. When it re-opens, after some hours, the baby has a "co-ordinator" inserted in its brain.

The "co-ordinator" transmits orders through brain impulses to one or more inhabitants (never more than five at the same time) living on the level beneath the one on which its owner lives; it is not possible to transmit impulses to the inhabitants of levels yet further down, nor to the inhabitants of one's own level, nor

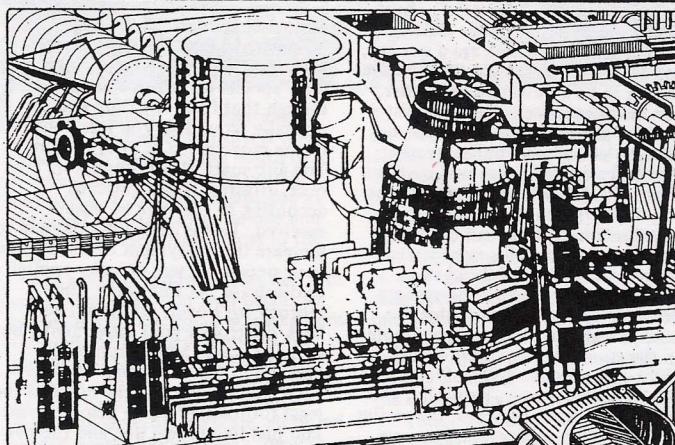
Ninth city

The "Ville-machine habitee"

The city is a machine, such a large machine that not even its inhabitants know its size; its pipelines, its rows of gear-mechanisms, conveyor belts, connecting-rods, stretch away out of sight, whichever way one looks, in the dim half-light, grey and foggy, which fills the cavern it occupies, and whose walls have never been seen.

The inhabitants live in the machine, endlessly dragged along by conveyor belts, by chutes and pneumatic tubes from the time of birth to the time of death. The machine takes care of everything; along the innumerable routes which intersect, unite and divide according to the incomprehensible

programming of the machine. The inhabitants find food and fear, sleep and joy, sex and hope, death and anger, sometimes also rebellion; but they know very well that if they get off the obligatory routes established by the machine, they will inevitably be crushed by its machinery.



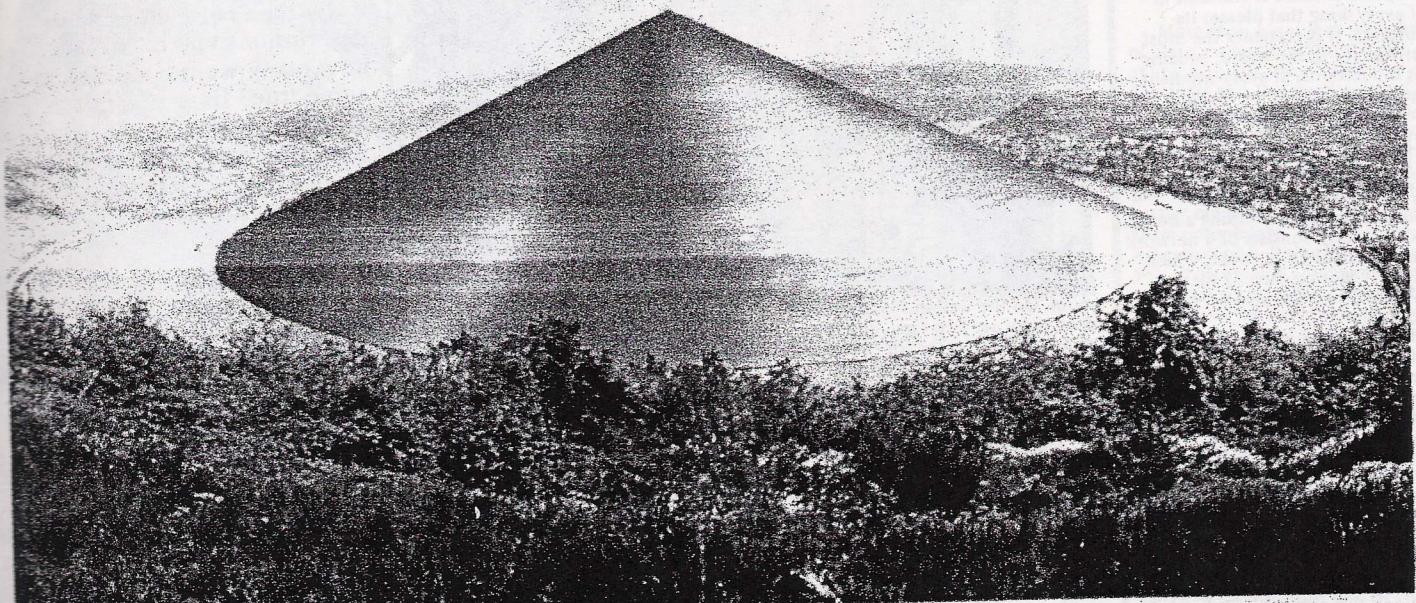
The machine is self-sufficient, it takes from the outside world only some rays of sunlight, air and water rich with the mineral salts of the earth. It looks after its inhabitants by elaborating and synthesizing the substances originally placed in it; it recreates, that is, within itself, life cycles from plant cultures and animal breeding. The perfection of the mechanism is such that the additional quantities of energy and matter brought in by the light, air and water become surplus. Any residue, anything that dies, is transformed. The machine produces fertilizers

Tenth city

City of order

This city has, apparently, nothing strange about it; it has streets, squares, gardens, new houses and old; it is in fact a city like any other. The only thing is that it has been governed by the same mayor for forty-five years. The reason for his long stay in office is simple: he had an exceptionally good idea. Instead of trying to suit the city to its inhabitants, like everyone else, he thought of suiting the inhabitants to their city.

Now, 45 years later, things are starting to go really well; the citizens that jump the lights, damage city property, complain about the unpunctuality of the buses or the



still less to those living above. Theoretically, with an effort, it is possible to refuse to obey the orders coming from the inhabitants of the floor above, but the sense of guilt deriving from this rebellion is so great and provokes such intense mental suffering that only a few can bear it for long. Through this system – that is, ordering the things they need from those living beneath – the inhabitants obtain everything they require. Each desire passes from "co-ordinator" to "co-ordinator", until it reaches the lowest levels, and almost always until it reaches ground level, where the inhabitants farm the land, work and manufacture objects to satisfy the demands of the inhabitants of the upper levels.

Twice a day, at fixed times, all the inhabitants of the city, putting their heads into the openings giving on to the central space, receive, through their "co-ordinator", a programme of dreams emitted by the man living in the cupola at the top.

No-one knows how the man living in the cupola lives, but everybody

imagines him to be happy because he never orders anything, never needs anything. It is said that the cupola has a mechanism which can grant his every wish immediately, and that the beautiful dreams he transmits are merely excerpts from his real life.

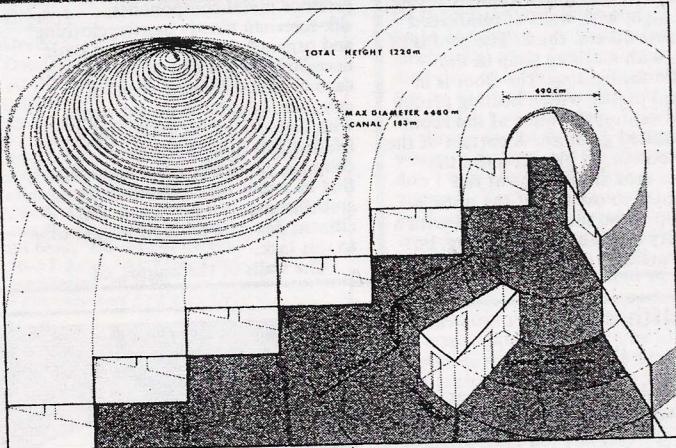
The highest aspiration of every inhabitant of the city is to climb to the higher levels and diminish the load of orders received through the "co-ordinator". All free time is dedicated to thinking up and executing plans to this end. Naturally, the inhabitants of the upper levels endeavour to foil these efforts by every means, and the bodies piled up here and there testify to the ferocity of their fights. Actually, it is the piles of bodies that provide the most useful means of climbing (naturally individuals with families, who want to take them along, are at a disadvantage).

The inhabitants of the highest levels, who have very few orders, and especially those on the very highest, who have none at all, continually endeavour to get into the cupola,

lack of water at the times it is most needed, etc. . . . are ever fewer. Actually, as soon as a citizen commits some infraction, or complains about something to the public authorities, he is not punished or reassured that his complaints will be taken into account – instead, he is sent to the town hall where he will be a guest for a week, and convinced.

When this citizen returns home he is much changed: precise, loyal to the regulations, calm, always smiling, he does his duty conscientiously. In 45 years, nearly all the citizens have visited the town hall and so now they are nearly all model citizens.

Every so often, there is a serious accident. one may see then that the model citizens have a complex miniaturized mechanism in their heads and lots of little expanded



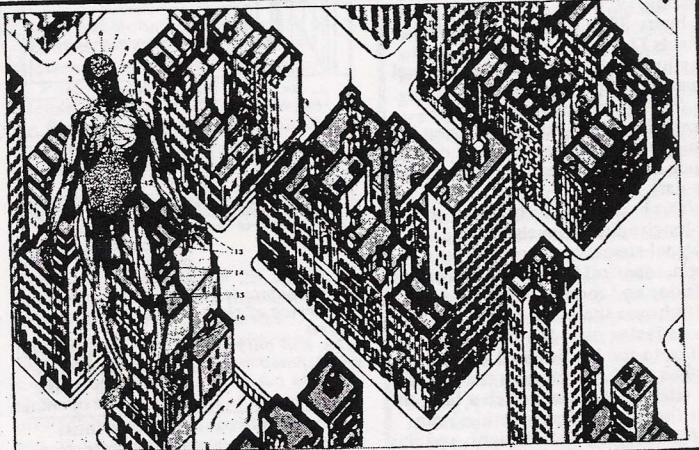
polystyrol balls instead of their insides, under the bands of muscles in their chest and abdomen.

No-one knows much about this because everyone who has seen such an accident is kindly accompanied to the town hall to recover from the shock.

The town councillors, who were old, have all died during these 45 years; the mayor has immortalized them in splended plastic statues, life-size and in natural colours, which show them sitting round the Council table in characteristic poses.

The mayor is very pleased with the way things are going: he is now beginning to have great ambitions for his city; he is sure everyone will agree. Unfortunately, yesterday he had a fall, burst open and lost all his little balls. They're putting them back.

the others about it. The most mysterious question is what happens to the previous inhabitants of the cupola, that is, those de-throned. On the terrace surrounding the cupola, a body has never been found.

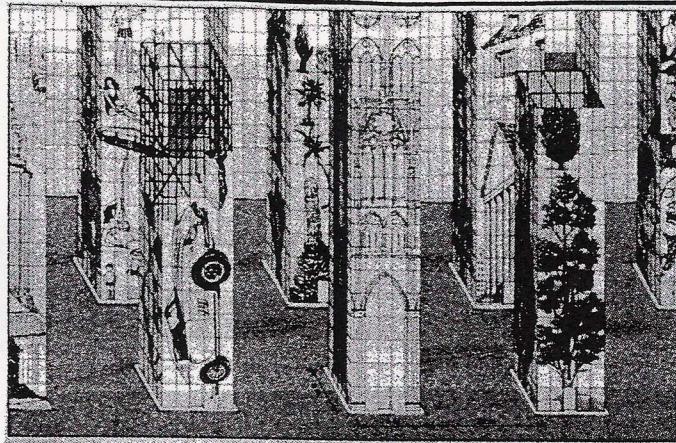


City of the splendid houses

The city has no connexion with the countryside because it contains in itself everything that pleases its inhabitants. It is certainly the most beautiful city in the world, because all its inhabitants, at every moment of their existence, move towards the single goal of possessing the most beautiful house.

The city gives all its citizens the same starting point; that is, it grants every family nucleus the same amount of space for building a house. In fact, the city consists of a network of parallel roads 10 m. wide, which form 6 m² blocks; each of these 36 m² blocks is occupied by a single family house.

The limitation of the space available for each house has the purpose of obliging citizens to dedicate all their efforts to the aesthetic enrichment of the outside of their homes, avoiding any temptations of comfort and softness, which would inevitably lead to the weakening of the yearning that should incessantly move the citizens to build ever more beautiful houses, in continuous rivalry with neighbours and friends. Every house in the city consists of one single room, 5 x 5 m., 3 m. high, with walls of reinforced concrete 50 cm. thick. The roof is of glass, with a ceiling lamp in the middle for lighting. The floor is in padded plastic with a heating plaque in the centre; the walls of the room are painted greenish. A curtain of the same colour, in plastic, hides the service area at the right of the entrance; to the left of the door, a green-painted metal cupboard with a security lock contains clothing, but there are no other objects in the



room. On the wall in front of the door there are two taps, one for water, and the other for the nutritive plasma based on chlorella and integrated with vitamins and mineral salts, which constitutes the citizens' only food.

Above the taps, on the electric light switch and on the regulating knob of the heating plaque, there are meters connected to the central electronic computer of the city which takes care of the citizens' remuneration. All citizens in fact work in the city's factories, which produce metal components, silk-screened plastic panels, clothing and ornaments and articles of basic necessity. At the end of the month, each citizen receives a sheaf of coupons, calculated on his wages, with deductions for water, light, heating and food; with these coupons, he can buy the materials that he needs for continuing the embellishment of his house. All citizens dedicate all their leisure time to this task.

The walls of the houses, of

reinforced concrete, are the bases for metal frames bearing silk-screened panels depicting any subject in bright colours; the choice of the subject to be represented on his house is left to the taste of the individual; the most popular is famous historical buildings, but there is no lack of trees, animals, paintings and sculpture, etc.

There is no limit to the height of these towers, except for the high cost of the building materials; the families with most prestige live in towers up to 200 m. high, and on which various subjects are depicted. Towers taller than 90 m. can no longer be supported by the iron framework alone, and contain transparent plastic balloon filled with helium which helps to hold up the construction.

All coupons not spent on building materials are used for the purchase of clothing and personal ornament. In the streets, the inhabitants, who at home spend their time naked, are clothed in many-coloured garments, gay and cut in all styles.

Twelfth city

City of the book

The book that all citizens wear hanging on a chain round their necks is the spirit of the city. Lefthand pages list the moral norms, righthand pages, codes of behaviour on which the citizen bases his life.

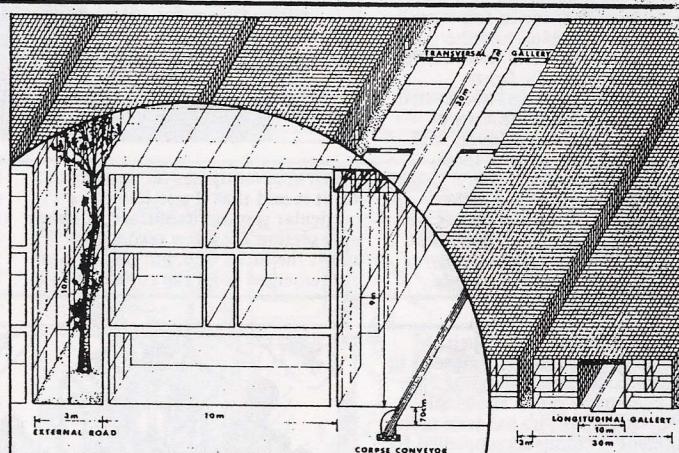
The city consists of a series of parallel buildings 10 m. high, 30 m. wide, and 10 km. long, with a distance of 3 m. between them. Inside each building is a tunnel 10 m. wide, 9 m. high, and the length of the building.

Every 30 m., smaller transverse tunnels (3 x 3 m.) join the longitudinal tunnels and the external streets between the buildings.

The longitudinal tunnels are completely dark, but each citizen is equipped with infra-red visual devices which enable him to see perfectly in the dark.

The built-up areas between the longitudinal tunnels and the external streets are occupied by single, identical houses with a central corridor and rooms to right and left; every house therefore has half its rooms facing onto the streets and half onto the longitudinal tunnels.

The Book which rules the life of the citizens is made in such a fashion that the left-hand page (ethics) can be read only by outside light, and the



right-hand page (behaviour) only in the dark, with infra-red light.

Extracts from the Book

- p.2, *The law is the same for all!*
- p.3, *The law is proportioned to the power of the individual*
- p.6, *The state is at the service of the citizen*
- p.28, *Kill only in self-defence*
- p.7, *The citizen is at the service of the state*
- p.29*, *Kill in lawful attack and dispose of the body in the appropriate openings.*

In any situation, a citizen must observe the corresponding regulations

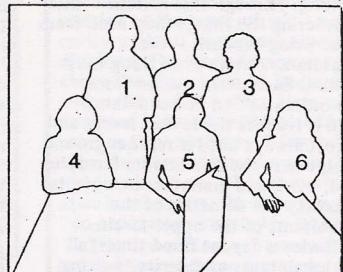
to be found in the Book.

The ethics of the Book are those of Christianity plus legislative and constitutional principles; the regulations governing behaviour are the result of behavioural tendencies in Western cultures freed from those moralistic overtones that had before prevented their free development.

All citizens are free to live in the light, or in the dark, or to move between them; practically all life is carried on in the tunnels and the house-rooms overlooking these. On the ground floor are shops and offices,

The moment has come in which to reveal the significance of these descriptions: this is a test

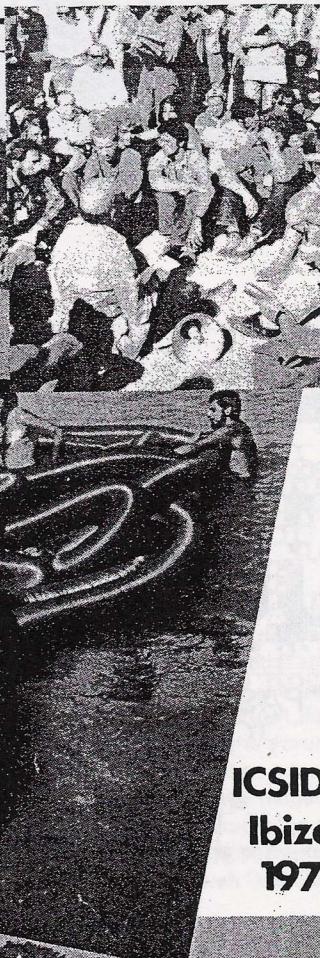
Of the twelve cities whose descriptions you have read, how many would you like to come true? Have you felt that they might be of advantage to humanity? Work out your answer carefully. Results on p. 785



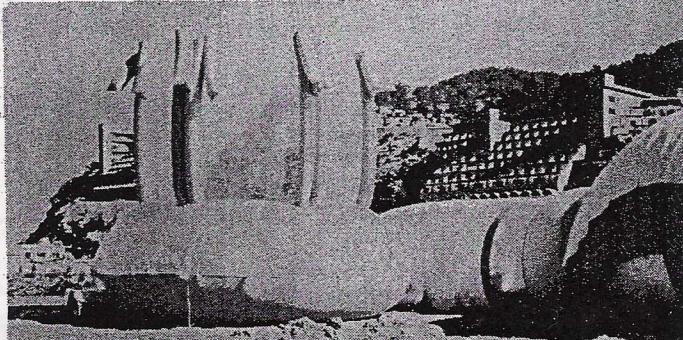
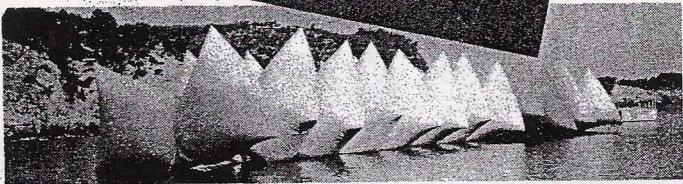
Superstudio
Piazza di Belvedere 1, Firenze
50124.

- 1 Alessandro Magris: born 1941, graduated in architecture in 1970, when he joined Superstudio.
- 2 Alessandro Poli: born 1941, graduated in architecture in 1970, when he joined Superstudio.
- 3 Piero Frassinelli: born 1939, awarded diploma in 1958, a degree in architecture in 1968, joined Superstudio in 1968.
- 4 Cristiano Toraldo di Francia: born 1941, graduated in architecture in 1966; co-founder of Superstudio.
- 5 Roberto Magris: born 1935, awarded diploma in 1955, joined Superstudio in 1967.
- 6 Adolfo Natalini: born 1941, graduated in architecture 1966, when with Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, he founded Superstudio. Teaches in the Faculty of Architecture, in Florence.

*Note to p. 29: The sidewalks of the longitudinal tunnels are raised 70 cm. above the roadway and under them lie the conduits for the elimination of bodies. These are transported to the incinerators by conveyor belts.



**ICSID,
Ibiza
1971**



• ADI/FAD, the Spanish branch of ICSID (International Congress of Societies of Industrial Design), was the organiser of what turned out to be the most frustrating of congresses. The location of the 2 new hotels which housed it (see AD 9/71 p.582), in relation to each other and to the beach and Instant City, could be blamed; or the lack of seating space for the dozen or so pre-arranged discussion groups; or the lack of a focal centre; or . . . or . . .

ADI/FAD had prided themselves that this was to be a congress organised by the participants themselves. Well, it failed.

True, that two swimming pools and the sea were on hand to cool anger. But that did not satisfy those who had come all the way from, say,

Australia, spending a fortune in reasonable expectation of professional exchange. (Some were even heard to say that ICSID should refund their fares).

The confrontation between the inhabitants of Instant City and the congresistas produced the only lively interchange during the 3 days. Prof. Misha Black brilliantly spoke up for industrial design but, as Dublin student Toal Ó Muiré describes on p.762, his argument was probably lost on the City people.

Artistic beach activities were in evidence throughout: fun and games in the water with green industrial hosing; and a 'sculpture' hydrogen-filled 'cushions', the result of 48 hours of round-the-clock activity, concluded barely in time for most of the departing guests to glimpse,

Results of 153
the twelve cities test, p.737.

If you approved:

More than nine: You are a head of state, or hope to become one, or at any rate you are suited to be one. The logic and the mechanism of the system are perfected within you, are part of you, are you. You are but an empty shell, a dark, humid cavity into which the system has penetrated like tendrils of pumpkin plants into earthy crevices, until it has filled them completely. You are a horrid evocation of hell, horror surrounds you. You are not a human being.

From six to nine: You are an element of the system, a cog functioning perfectly within its mechanism; lubricated by the logic of the culture, and thus free from friction, you turn smoothly, perfectly synchronized with your creator; hallucinating and sadistic you generate terror. You are not a human being either, but a "golem".

From three to six: You are a slave, a succubus. You have killed your doubts in order not to be killed by them, and you have died with them anyway. You don't think, you don't want, you only execute orders. Of the whole you, there remain but limbs and organs, nothing more than mechanical parts functioning in one direction only: from the assembly line to the junk yard. You are nothing, a poor, creaking "robot".

From one to three: You are a worm. You have got the idea and you don't want to admit it even to yourself. You have amputated your legs, arms and teeth because you're scared even to run away. And now you're hidden away in a dark corner with your snout in the mud so as not to see or hear. But the disgusting thing about you is that you'd like to be less frightened so as to be like everyone else. You're a human being, but perhaps that's worse than if you weren't; haven't you noticed?

You didn't want any of the cities to come true: So, you feel self-satisfied, but you shouldn't; because you haven't caught on: you haven't understood that the descriptions represent cities now. Is it possible that you didn't realize that it is enough to carry forward the logic of the system until it becomes rigorous logic, to concretize many more hallucinating fantasies than those described here? Hold on, the way is broad, the "technologically advanced" countries are running rapidly along it (ever nearer their goal) and the "developing countries" are following close. You are an idiot.

Only if you understood the game from the beginning, can you hope to be saved. From the horror of us and our surroundings, "revelation" could spring. Ascend, then, up to the Old Man of the Mountain and be of his children. Observe time through the white hairs of his beard, and when you have been reborn, descend with a pill of hashish beneath your tongue, and a knife under your shirt, to exterminate the spirits, monsters and demons that infest the Earth, and finally, purified with water and incense, you can prepare the foundations for the new City of the White Walls.

Courses

UK

London

- Building Research Station Garston, Watford WD2 7JR, tel. Garston (Herts.) 74040, ext. 7226 7-8 Dec., 'Wind loading on buildings', fee £14.

- CASE (Centre for Advanced Studies in Environment) The Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3ES, tel. 01-636 0974

- 5-6 Jan., 'Performance of the building contract', fee £20
19-20 and 26-27 Jan., 'Recent developments in environmental controls', fee £20
16-17 Feb., 'Local circulation, traffic and servicing', fee £20

- Polytechnic of Central London, Department of Building, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1, Tel: 01-486 5811 Ext. 347 1971/72, Modular Building Industry Courses

- Polytechnic of the South Bank Dept. of Architecture, Hackford Road, London SW9, Tel: 735 7190 Commencing 7 Jan., course of 12 lectures, 'Design for T.V.' — Fridays at 6.30 pm. Hackford Road annexe. Fee £3.50.

Bristol

- University of Bristol Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 30/32 Tyndall's Park Road, Bristol BS8 1HR

- 13 Dec., 'Changes in practice'
21-23 Jan., 1972, 'Shopping centres'
25-27 Feb., 'Environmental control'
24-26 March, 'Defects, failures and maintenance in buildings'.
28-30 April, 'Architectural practice and the Common Market'.
29 May, 'House conversion'.
16-17 June, 'Architectural secretaries' course'.
Fees between £12 and £3.

York

- Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, The King's Manor, York YO1 2EP, Tel: York 24919 28 Dec. 1971 — 8 Jan. 1972, fee £39.00.

- 'Teaching Methods'
October 1972, one year full time diploma course in 'Conservation Studies'.

- Applications to Dr. Derek Linstrum at above address.

Lecture

The annual lecture of the Society of Architectural Historians of GB will be given by John Brandon-Jones on 'C. F. A. Voysey: Pugin's last disciple', on January 17, at 6pm, at the Royal Society of Arts, Adelphi, London WC2. The lecture is open to the public.

Died

Robin Boyd, on October 25, aged 52, the Australian architect best known abroad, famous equally for his writings as for his neat buildings, Edgar Wind, aged 71, Professor Emeritus of the History of Art at Oxford University, one of the most brilliant lecturers and writers of the age.