



Architectural Imaginaries: From Nomadism to the Volunteer Prisoners of Architecture

Imaginarios arquitectónicos:
del nomadismo a los prisioneros
voluntarios de la arquitectura

*Imaginários arquitetônicos: do nomadismo aos
prisoneiros voluntários da arquitetura*

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Abstract

The present study deals with changes in the architectural imaginary between the late 1950s and early 1970s, especially with regard to the promises of unrestricted mobility (architecture and technology in favor of a society that would know no frontiers) and the subsequent representations, in which architecture not only continues to perpetuate exclusion and regimes of segregation, but also assigns a desirable status to this process.

Keywords: history of architecture, 1960s, utopia, Superstudio, Koolhaas, Sottsass, Constant, Archigram

Resumen

El presente estudio trata sobre los cambios en el imaginario arquitectónico entre finales de la década de 1950 e inicios de la de 1970, especialmente al respecto de las promesas de movilidad ilimitada (arquitectura y tecnología a favor de una sociedad que no conocería fronteras) y las representaciones subsecuentes en las que la arquitectura no sólo continúa perpetuando los regímenes de exclusión y segregación, sino que asigna a este proceso un estatus deseable.

Palabras clave: historia de la arquitectura, Europa, década de 1960, utopía, Superstudio, Koolhaas, Sottsass, Constant, Archigram

Resumo

O presente estudo trata das mudanças do imaginário arquitetônico entre o final dos anos 1950 e início dos anos 1970, sobretudo com relação às promessas de mobilidade irrestrita (a arquitetura e a tecnologia a favor de uma sociedade que não conheceria fronteiras) e as representações subseqüentes, nas quais a arquitetura não só segue perpetuando regimes de exclusão e segregação, como atribuem a este processo um status desejável.

Palavras-chave: história da arquitetura, Europa, Década de 60, Utopia, Superstudio, Koolhaas, Sottsass, Constant, Archigram

Let us take some of the experimental and discursive projects in the field of architecture and urbanism of the late 1950s and 1960s as a starting point: *Ville Spatiale* (1958) by Yona Friedman, *New Babylon* (1959) by Constant Nieuwenhuys and Archigram's *Walking City* (1964). The context here was the unmeasured optimism of post-industrial society that seemed to demand new designs for the new global citizen, who is able to move freely around the world. At the end of the 1960s, however, progress and the conviction of the transformative potential of architecture started to be seen as producers of dystopian visions. Such is the case with *The Twelve Ideal Cities* (1971) by Superstudio and Rem Koolhaas' *Exodus* (1972).

This text explores the transformation of the imaginary that first conceived nomadic societies and ended up prefiguring societies voluntarily cloistered by architecture: nomadism was transformed into a limitation reinforced by architecture. We will examine three different perspectives:

Megastructures as a support for a society detached from the ground, in response to the new possibilities created by the welfare state.

Overcoming the need for three-dimensional supports, such as megastructures, would result in a society in which one could live anywhere, indiscriminately. The nomadic imagery of the previous moment is reworked here in an ironic sense.

The oppressive, conditioning aspects of architecture emerge; the very definitions of positive and negative, desirable and undesirable become scrambled.

Betting on Nomadism

In 1953, the activist and poet Gilles Ivain (the pseudonym of Ivan Chtcheglov, 1933-1998), a member of the Lettrist International, wrote the astonishing "Formulary for a New Urbanism," which would be republished in the first issue of the journal of the Situationist International, *Internationale Situationniste*¹ (1958). Ivain conceived of an experimental city whose main activity would be continuous drift:² "Architectural complexes will be modifiable. Their appearance will change totally or partially in accordance with the will of their inhabitants." Ivain evoked the ideas of Chinese and Japanese gardens and the labyrinth, images compatible with a "mobile civilization."³

Ivain conceived of districts that correspond "to the whole spectrum of diverse feelings that one encounters by chance in everyday life."⁴ Instead of the canonized functions of the Athens Charter (1933) – dwelling, recreation, work and transportation – we have a sort of parody of modern zoning, in benefit of leisure: the Happy Quarter is formed mainly of residences, the Historical Quarter contains museums and schools, the Useful Quarter concentrates hospitals and tool shops. Other neighborhoods are

the Death Quarter (for people to "live in peace") and the Sinister Quarter, which concentrates representations of the "evil forces of life,"⁵ but is devoid of lethal risks.

The Dutch Situationist artist Constant Nieuwenhuys (1920-2005) reworked some of the central points of Ivain's experimental city, such as continuous drift and the idea of a mobile civilization, to formulate his *New Babylon*. Constant's revolutionary subject finds his references in Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, in the gypsy way of life (which neither recognizes borders nor accumulates objects and properties) and in the increasing free time of citizens from developed countries during that period, which led to the idea that work would soon be dispensable. Overcoming work frees man from sedentariness and he can finally devote himself to pure creation. The abolition of deprivation, labor and private property would lead man back to the nomadic condition of the Neolithic.

Suspended above the ground, *New Babylon* interferes with the pre-existing only through its pillars and its own shadow, reserving the ground for the circulation of vehicles. Inside *New Babylon*, an intricately changing labyrinth would be incessantly built and rebuilt by its residents.

In addition to *New Babylon*, Yona Friedman's *Ville Spatiale* may be considered a precursor of megastructures.⁶ Friedman founded the GEAM (Groupe d'Etude d'Architecture Mobile) in 1957, partly because of his disagreement with the CIAM of Dubrovnik (1956) on points he considered too vague regarding 'mobility,' 'growth and change' and 'development.'⁷

According to the GEAM manifesto, "Programme for a Mobile Architecture" (1960), all institutions, framed by norms constituted over the centuries, should be periodically renewed: marriage every five years and property rights every ten years. The obstacle to the realization of the "general theory of mobility" was, however, the very rigidity of the built environment, which could not be adapted to life as it has been lived.

The GEAM proposed the reform of property rights in order to allow residents to occupy the air space themselves; variable and changeable constructions, largely employing prefabrication, would adapt the city and urban planning to traffic developments; and "residential and work places, as well as areas for physical and spiritual culture, must be intermingled throughout sections of the city."⁸

Although Constant agreed with Friedman's criticism of the modern city, he felt that *Ville Spatiale* was not a response to the problem: it was still a functional resolution. For Constant, "the future city should not be accentuating dwelling (which is nothing but the opposition between inside and outside) nor displacement (search for needs), but a new use for social space (ecology)."⁹ Friedman, for his part, argued that his proposal aimed at making

mobility possible for those who wished it, but that *New Babylon*, on the other hand, required mobility for all.¹⁰ *New Babylon* presupposed the Marxist and Situationist revolution and the advent of new ways of life: “*Homo Ludens* himself will seek to transform, to recreate, those surroundings, that world, according to his new needs.”¹¹ Friedman’s proposition, in turn, was aimed at existing cities.

The Archigram group announced the transition from the idea of nomadism to the ironic critique of nomadism. Constant’s *New Babylon* was published in 1964 in *Archigram* 5, the same year as Archigram’s *Walking City*. This project, literally a walking megastructure, passes over land and sea, reflecting an uprooted welfare society, that would soon know no boundaries or limits.

It should be noted that nomadism is not intrinsically a revolutionary or positive attitude. In *The Urban Revolution* (1970), Henri Lefebvre warns that the very development of capitalism demands the mobility of citizens across the globe. From the point of view of capital, “it is inadmissible that ‘sources of labor’ remain unexplored because they are rooted in the ground.”¹² Lefebvre accuses Friedman’s proposals of being aligned with this demand by proposing undifferentiated units or boxes which, in combination, would make up an “ephemeral grouping” capable of settling wherever its megastructure may be. From the social perspective, Lefebvre questions whether residential nomadism would not mean “an extreme, utopian way of individualism, in its own way.”¹³

The Ironic Critique of Nomadism

By the middle of the 1960s, the social commitment of architecture, as determined by the Modern Movement – to revolutionize society and to shape the built environment for the coming of the New Man – began to show symptoms of collapse, and architecture perceived itself as contributing to the consolidation of the new demands of capital, rather than challenging them. This profound reflection on the role of architecture primarily occurred on a discursive and narrative level, and several architectural designsturned to materiality and feasibility to reassess the discipline’s course.

The Italian critic Germano Celant (1940) coined the term “radical architecture” in his essay “Senza Titolo” (1970) as a way of understanding a series of neo-avant garde groups that sprouted up in Italy in the mid-1960s. Just after the first public appearances of Superstudio¹⁴ and Archizoom in 1966, there emerged 9999 (1967), UFO (1967), Ziggurat, all composed of students from the Florence School of Architecture. Gruppo Strum (Turin), Gianni Pettena (1940), Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007) and Ugo La Pietra (1938) are other names connected to this movement. Such groups would not be committed to meeting client demands, but to “function as a destructive philosophical-behavioral action in relation to current architecture.” The most diverse media – photographs, photomontages, illustrations, writings, films and the projecting *corpus* of the architect himself – are also considered

to be architecture. Radical architecture frees itself from doing to consider “architecture in a pure state”: conceptual architecture.¹⁵

Although Superstudio members were inspired by Archigram magazine, Superstudio considered Archigram to be uncritical, a continuation of the excessive optimism of the Italian futurists. Archigram’s stance was “full of confidence in the ‘magnificent and progressive’ destiny of neo-technological civilization,” as derived from historical avant-garde movements. With its “concepts of growth, change, metamorphosis, indetermination, anti-zoning, consumption” and software, Archigram ended up reinforcing the myth of technology being able to solve everything, which would correspond to the mythology of reason that explains and organizes everything.¹⁶

These issues were addressed in two idyllic designs by Superstudio and Ettore Sottsass, in which nomadism is approached in an ironic way: it is as if these scenarios were no longer utopias but mirages.

Vita (Life) or *Supersurface: An Alternative Model of Life on Earth* was presented by Superstudio at the MoMA (New York) show *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape: Achievements and Problems of Italian Design* (1972). Superstudio’s environment for this show consisted of a half-darkened space with a cube on a platform above a plastic laminate floor overlaid with a plaid design representing the infrastructure network of energy and communication systems. The mirrored walls of the cube infinitely extended this plaid pattern, constituting a continuous grid from which there emerged a series of life support terminals – air, heat, water, food and communication – including a display featuring *Life*.

The architect’s role was defined as necessarily cosmetic: “Architecture presents no alternative proposal, since it uses those instruments which are accurately predisposed to avoid any deviation.”¹⁷ This led Superstudio to investigate the relationship between architecture and its fundamental acts through a reductive process in all dimensions of life, in a search for the “redefinition of primordial acts.” Superstudio envisioned an urban way of life developing anywhere, anytime, using networks that progressively connect different parts of the world. If megastructures once seemed to be the indispensable support for the modernization of life, the evolution of non-physical means allows us to see the Earth itself as this ideal support. In *Life*, we have no spatial configuration, only alternative models of behavior.

New forms of agglomeration – especially temporary ones, such as crowds on beaches and hippie gatherings (Woodstock) – put the very definitions of the city and the urban into question. This absence of three-dimensional structures would enable a “tendency toward spontaneous gathering and dispersion.” *Life* addresses the transition from “hardware to software.”¹⁸ Environmental programming ceases to occur by physical means and instead occurs on the supersurface: energy and information networks, as well as miniaturized technologies, control the environment.

Wherever there are power and information transmission grids, it is possible to install the universal plug, from which one can attach the most



Ettore Sottsass, *The Planet as Festival: Design of a Roof to Discuss Under*, project. Perspective, 1972-73

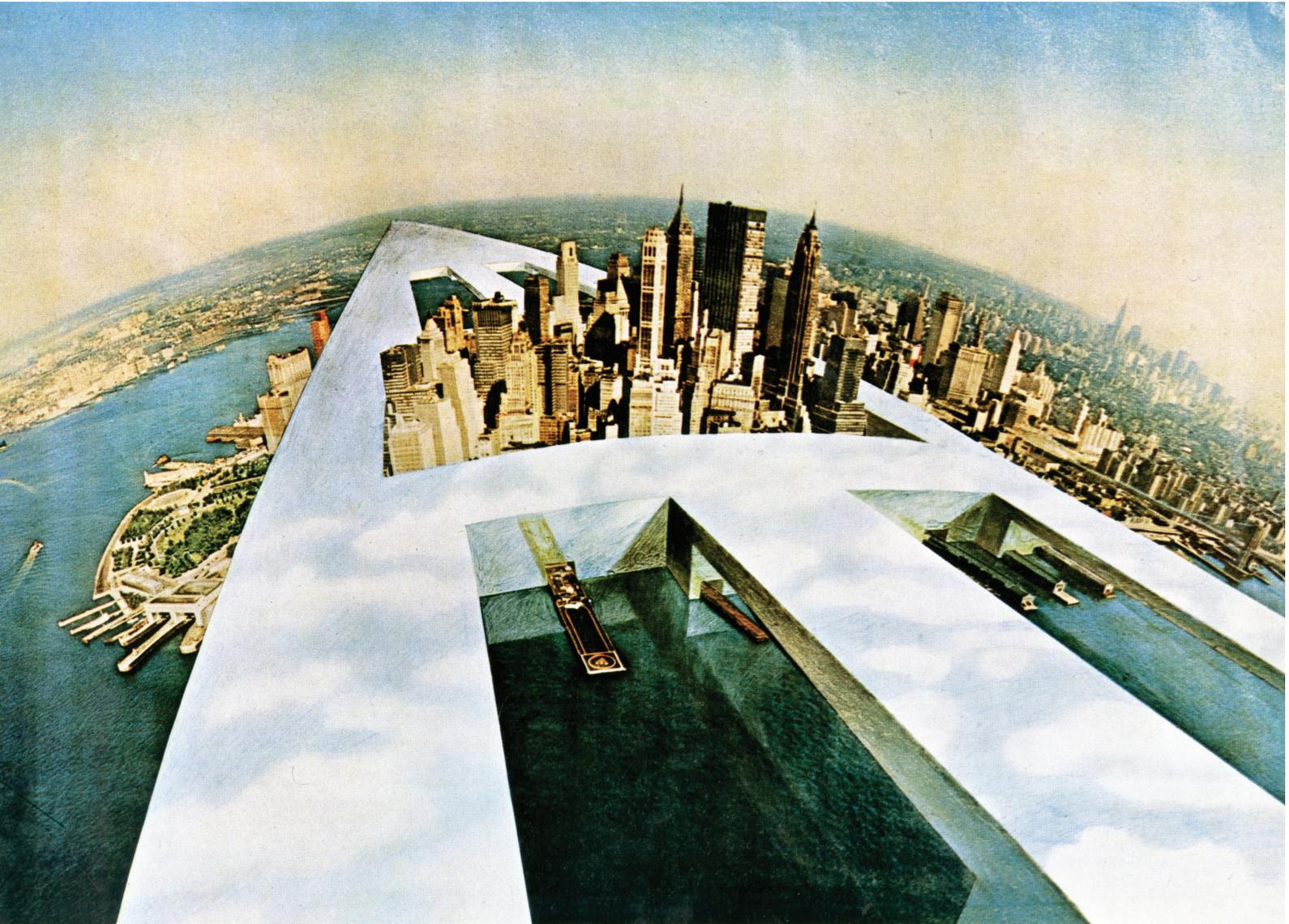
varied tools. The targeted use of technology would supply the primordial needs of human beings, who would be freed from work. As habitable zones are extended to practically any part of the globe and once all the barriers that restrain the free flow of individuals (such as the accumulation of goods) have been overcome, the behavior of humans, thus modified, approaches that of migratory birds. With nomadism, one returns to a state of romanticized nature, in which nature is absolutely benevolent.

Those same points are approached in Sottsass' alternative society *The Planet as Festival*¹⁹ (1972). Sottsass predicts a situation in which one would neither know what it means to work – the power structures have been completely abolished – nor to produce, but one continues to understand the meaning of consumption. All become artists and craftsmen. Consumer products arrive at distribution points through an underground network, making them available even in the most remote places. Once we have solved the problems of production – through total automation – of the distribution of goods – through universal consumption – and of communication – thanks to the “super-possibilities of communication” – the result is the disappearance of cities.

Sottsass designed equipment and models for distributors of goods: mass distributors of waltz, tango, rock and cha-cha-cha music; distributors of pens, paintbrushes, pencils and paper pads for watercolors; distributors of milk, candy, chocolate and soft drinks; distributors of incense, LSD, marijuana, opium and laughing gas.

Sottsass also conceived a destroyed Walking City in the midst of ruined skyscrapers swallowed by sand (*The Planet as Festival: Design of a Roof to Discuss Under*, project, Perspective 1972-73) as a kind of symbolic burial of the megastructure era.

Both *Life* and *The Planet as Festival* epitomize three great points that we could treat as the quintessence of the Marxist utopia: the destruction of the object – understood as the elimination of the commodity fetish and the status embedded in objects – the elimination of the city – which crystallized relationships of exploitation and domination – and the end of all alienated labor. The elimination of these three nodal points in which the capitalist order operates and reinforces itself would also be discussed in 1971 in the magazine *IN: Argomenti and immagini di design*, which featured contributions from Superstudio, Sottsass and many others.



Superstudio, *Continuous Monument*. Photomontage over Pan-Am, 1969. Courtesy of Archivio Superstudio

Life and *The Planet as Festival* also reveal an irony even with regard to the three goals shown above. After incorporating the critiques of utopian thought as totalizing and totalitarian, one dare not propose the best model for the future: it could only be one among many. The future is seen as merely a speculation and no longer as promise, much less a promise of bliss.

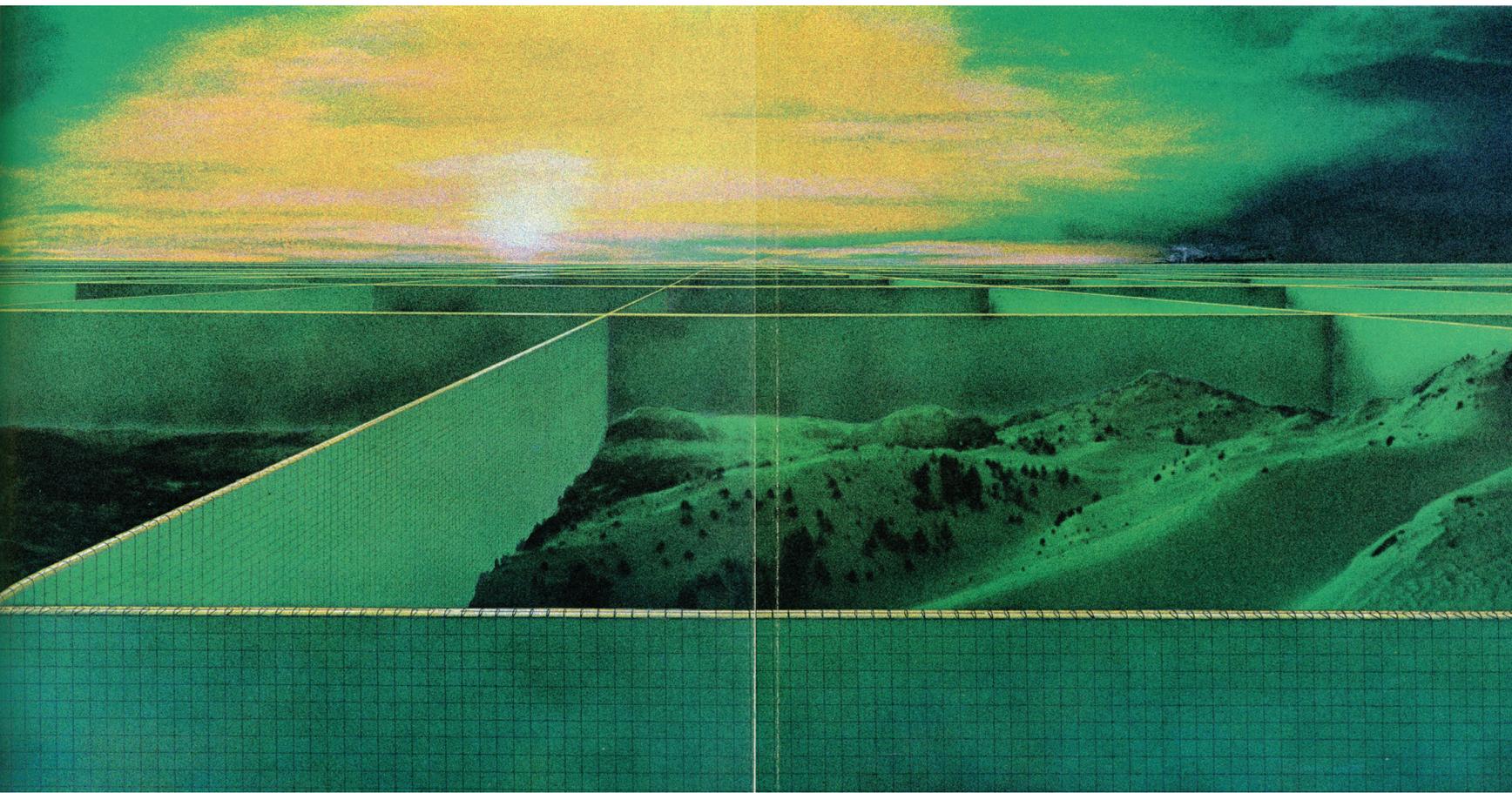
The Power of Architecture

In a general way, Superstudio assumes the utopian repertory to question if this thought should not give up its feasibility in order to preserve its critical power. It results in techniques such as negative utopia by extrapolating *ad absurdum* the processes unfolding in the present, producing images that confront us with the nefarious side of progress, of functionalism and of the search for perfection.

In the case of *Continuous Monument* (1969), a certain ambiguity prevails: the cold beauty of its images does not allow us to identify if we are confronted with criticism or praise of modernist movements. The *Continuous*

Monument would be the logical and definitive heir to all monuments, a representation of a "world rendered uniform by technology, culture and all the other inevitable forms of imperialism."²⁰ Faced with the "progressive impoverishment" and overcrowding of the Earth, the *Continuous Monument* stands as a "single architectural construction with which to occupy the optimal living zones, leaving the others free."²¹

There was a disagreement among Superstudio members concerning what was happening inside the *Continuous Monument*. In a sequence of the storyboard, the external surfaces of the *Continuous Monument* are portrayed as smooth and shiny, and although its interior is unknown, it is available for any use. It was mainly Frassinelli who produced the few images where one can glimpse the interior of the *Continuous Monument* and developed *Le dodici Città Ideali* (The Twelve Ideal Cities, 1971) in order to show how life in the *Continuous Monument* would be necessarily dystopian. *The Twelve Ideal Cities* therefore put an end to the ambivalence of the *Continuous Monument*.



Superstudio, *The First City, the 2000-ton City*, 1971. Courtesy of Archivio Superstudio

The Twelve Ideal Cities turn the notion of ideal form inside out by revealing their inherent conditioning. They consist of a series of small texts followed by images, always presenting the cities from the point of view of the established order. Subversive thoughts are already violently repressed in the first city, *2000-ton City*. The orthogonal mesh, indifferent to the topography, leaves no doubt that it is the necessarily oppressive but unportrayed life in the *Continuous Monument*.

The *2000-ton City* consists of a continuous web of perpendicularly-crossed vertical blades, with the whole city built at the same altitude. These blades are composed of a single row of stacked cells with no entrance or exit. Each cell is intended for an individual, whose brain impulses are constantly transmitted and monitored. An electronic analyzer “selects, compares, and interprets the desire of each individual, programming the life of the entire city moment by moment.” Any subversive thinking is tolerated only once. At the first recurrence, “the ceiling panel descends with a force of two thousand tons until it reaches the floor.”²² Since death has been overcome, this is the only condition in which the city begins a new life. Maintaining order becomes an end in itself, since there would be no reason to eliminate someone who is a prisoner of his own cell.

In August 1970, Rem Koolhaas went to Florence to meet and talk about Superstudio’s work. It was because of Koolhaas that Superstudio received an invitation to speak at a conference at the Architectural Association (where Koolhaas was studying at the time) in March 1971 and then at the Summer

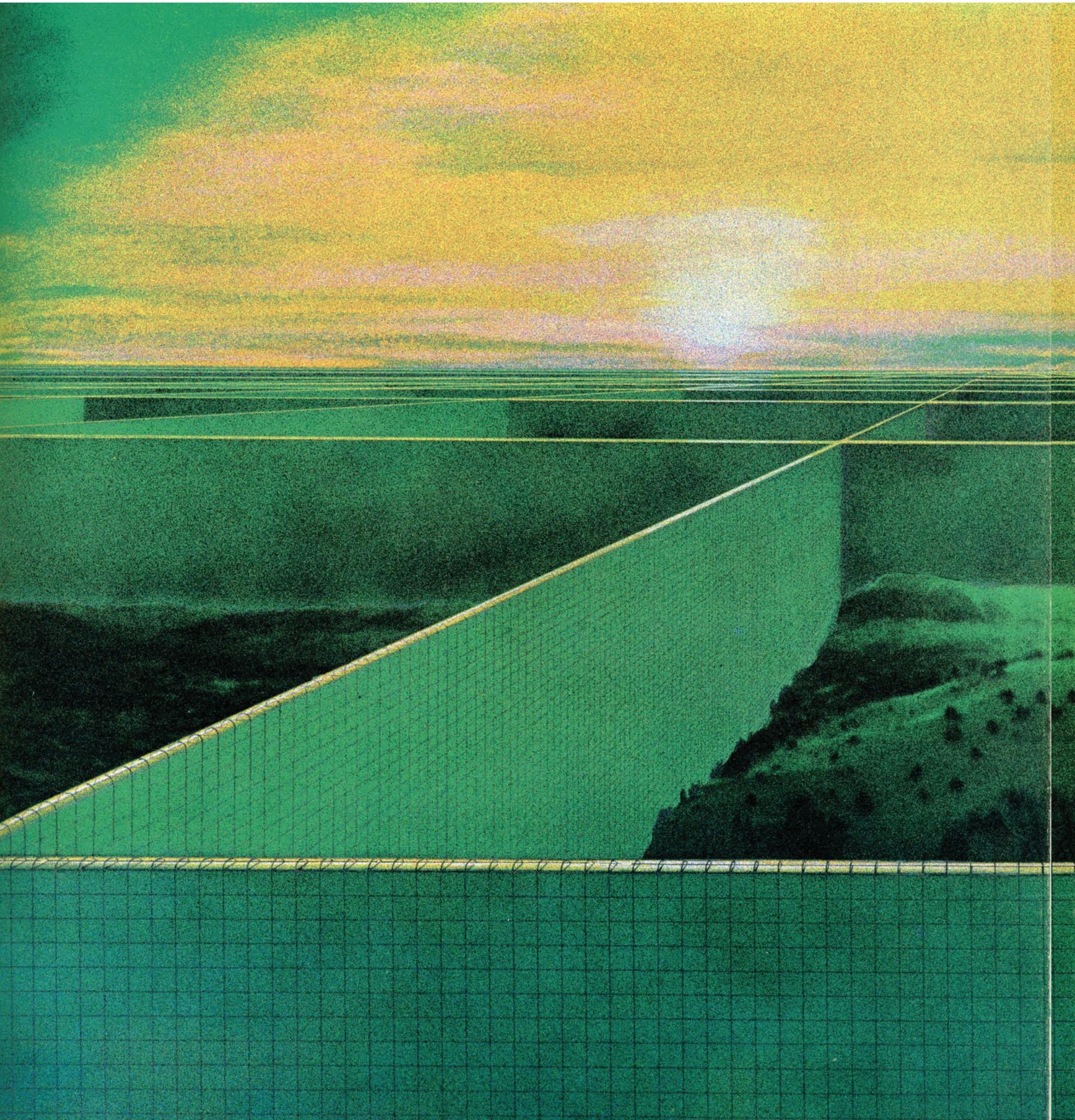
Session, between July and August. Other invitations were made in subsequent years.

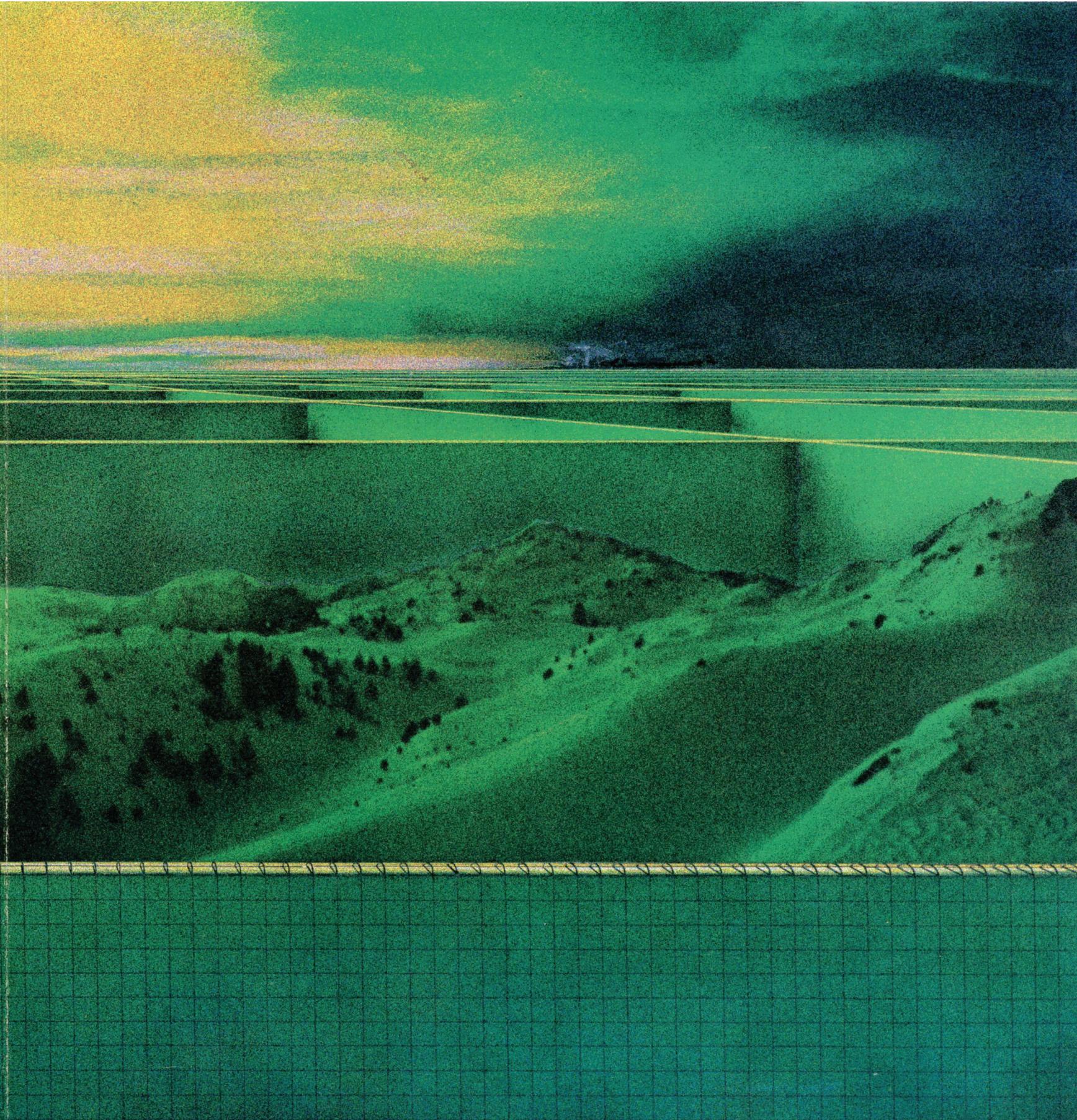
In turn, *Exodus, The Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture* (1972) was featured on the cover of *Casabella* 378 (June 1973) largely because Superstudio members put Koolhaas in contact with this magazine.²³

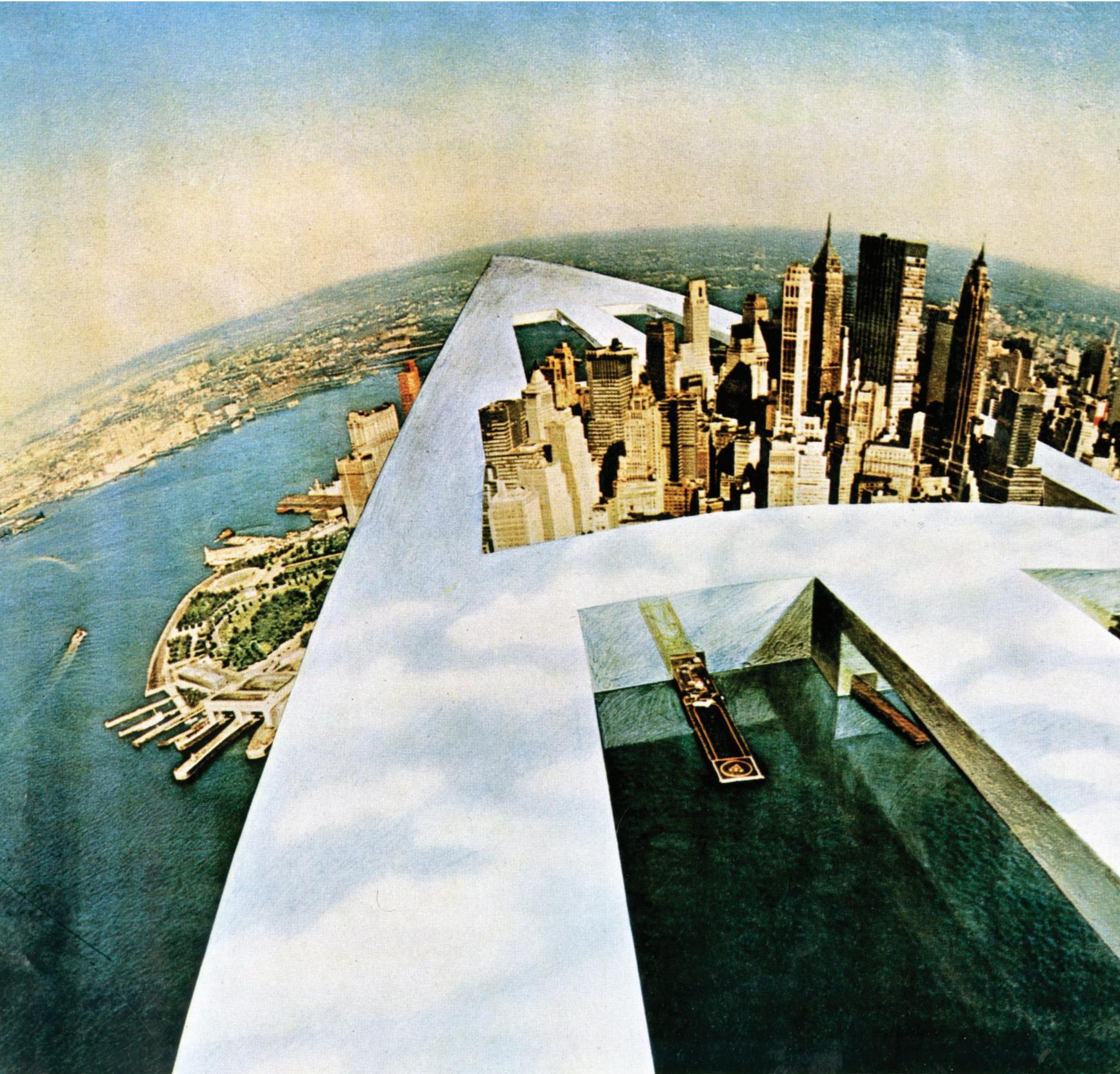
Exodus – the final student work of Rem Koolhaas, later developed with Madelon Vreindorp, Elia Zenghelis and Zoe Zenghelis – takes over and perfects the ambiguity of the *Continuous Monument*, forming an epigraph on the construction of the Berlin Wall. Since architecture in Berlin was used to contain the incessant exodus from the “bad” part to the “good” part of this city, the hypothesis is to conceive a “mirror-image of this terrifying architecture,” but now transposed to “positive intentions.”²⁴

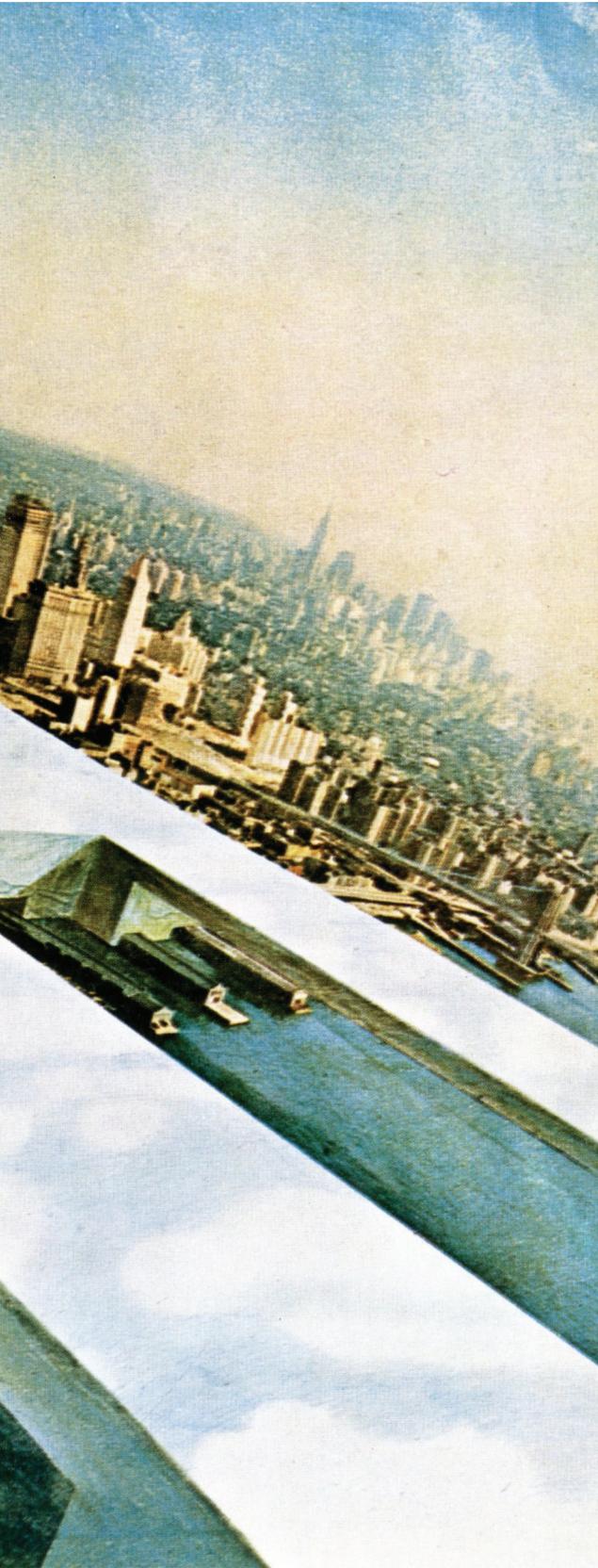
As the city becomes repulsive, *Exodus* becomes attractive by opposition: architecture designed for control becomes a refuge from London. Hence, architecture need not to be authoritarian: it is the “hedonistic science of designing facilities that completely accommodate individual desires,” and those who choose to live there are prisoners, but voluntary prisoners.

As Koolhaas observed in his essay “The Berlin Wall as Architecture” (1971, published in 1993), the wall encircled West Berlin, defining a desirable territory embedded in the heart of Soviet territory. But instead of one part of the city being the pole of attraction over another, the Strip, an “architectural oasis” in central London is born, protected in order to preserve its positive attributes. The first candidates for residency begin to arrive in









Un tempo la città era divisa in due parti. Naturalmente, una parte divenne la metà "buona" e l'altra la metà "cattiva". Gli abitanti della metà cattiva cominciarono a migrare nella parte "buona", dando luogo alla fine ad un vero e proprio esodo urbano. Fallite tutte le misure adottate per far cessare l'esodo indesiderato, le autorità della parte "cattiva" concepirono un uso disperato e selvaggio dell'Architettura: edificarono un muro attorno alla parte "buona" della città rendendola completamente inaccessibile. Il muro era un capolavoro. All'inizio c'era solo del patetico filo spinato posto frettolosamente sulla linea immaginaria di confine; il suo significato simbolico e psicologico era prevalente rispetto alla sua consistenza fisica. Tuttavia l'attrazione della parte "buona", intravista ora da rispettabile distanza oltre la barriera, divenne ancora più forte e irresistibile. Quelli rimasti rinchiusi nella tetra metà "cattiva" erano ossessionati da impossibili piani di fuga. E come già in precedenza era avvenuto nella storia dell'uomo, l'Architettura fu strumento e origine di disperazione.

Potremmo immaginare questa forza intensa e devastatrice usata per scopi positivi.

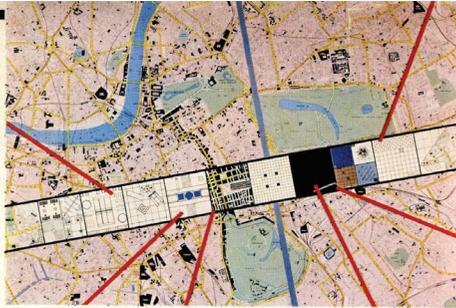
Divisione, separazione, isolamento, squilibri, aggressività ed anche paranoia: l'aspetto negativo di queste parole potrebbe essere rovesciato per descrivere gli ingredienti e le strategie di una guerra architettonica alle condizioni sgradevoli (le stesse che ci circondano oggi), una guerra per una Architettura rivolta non a timidi miglioramenti, ma tesa a stradicare il male per proporre al suo posto alternative desiderabili. Gli abitanti di questa Architettura — quelli abbastanza forti per amara — sarebbero in un certo senso i suoi prigionieri volontari. Possiamo soltanto invidiarli.

Questo studio si propone di muovere una guerra architettonica a Londra. Il centro di Londra è attraversato da una fascia ad alto potenziale di attrazione dal punto di vista metropolitano. Per sottolineare e mantenere questa differenza sostanziale, si costruirà un muro che racchiuda questa zona di perfezioni architettoniche e sociali.

Presto, i primi ospiti faranno la coda per essere ammessi. Il loro numero diventerà un fiume inarrestabile. Siamo testimoni dell'Esodo di Londra. Entrati in questa striscia di terreno, la preoccupazione quasi ossessiva dei suoi abitanti sarà la sua espansione, miglioramento e difesa. La struttura fisica della vecchia città non sarà in grado di resistere alla intensità ininterrotta di questa lotta senza precedenti. Londra, così come la conosciamo oggi, sarà un ammasso di rovine. Nove piazze (o aree quadrate) sono disegnate con diversi gradi di approfondimento.

La striscia centrale contiene solo attività di grande importanza e rilevanza sociale e comunitaria. All'interno della striscia centrale, la pianta e l'assonometria mostrano, nei quadrati da ovest a est:

1. La condizione di punta. Il luogo di massima frizione con la vecchia Londra. In questa zona è visibile il progresso dell'Architettura.
2. La lottizzazione. Lotti individuali per controbilanciare l'enfasi delle attrezzature collettive.
3. La piazza delle cerimonie, con pavimentazione di marmo.



4. L'area di ricevimento: qui i futuri abitanti sono introdotti ai misteri della cittadinanza.
5. Una scala scende a quell'area di Londra che è stata preservata (Nash).
6. I bagni. Costituiscono l'Istituto per la creazione e la realizzazione delle fantasie.
7. Il parco dell'aria, del fuoco, dell'acqua e della terra.
8. La piazza della cultura (British Museum).
9. L'Università.
10. Il complesso della ricerca scientifica.

Rem Koolhaas EXODUS Elia Zenghelis O I PRIGIONIERI VOLONTARI DELL'ARCHITETTURA OR THE VOLUNTARY PRISONERS OF ARCHITECTURE

L'area centrale/1

Il tetto della zona di ricevimento, raggiungibile dall'interno, costituisce l'alta piattaforma dalla quale si possono ammirare in tutto il loro splendore le manifestazioni che si svolgono nella fascia. Da qui si può anche assistere all'esilarante decadenza della vecchia Londra. Una scala gigantesca scende in quella parte di Londra che viene preservata (soprattutto le opere di Nash, nostro predecessore concettuale, destinate ad alloggio temporaneo per i nuovi arrivati). Sull'altro lato del tetto, ad ovest, c'è la piazza delle cerimonie, che è completamente vuota, tranne che per un canale e l'antenna della stazione radiotelevisiva, che proteggerà gli abitanti dalle scorie mentali del Resto del Mondo.

The central area/1

The roof of the reception area, accessible from the inside, is the high altitude platform from which physical manifestations of the strip are visible in all their splendour. Also, the exhilarating decay of the old London, can be witnessed from this roof. From here a gigantic escalator descends into that part of London which is to be preserved within the confines of the strip (mainly the achievements of Nash, conceptual predecessor). On the other (West) side of the roof is the ceremonial square. It is completely empty, except from the intrusion of a canal and the mast of the jamming station, which will protect the inhabitants from exposure to the mental exhaust of the Rest of the World.



The wall was a masterpiece. Originally, not more than some pathetic strings of barbed wire, abruptly dropped on the imaginary line of the border; its psychological and symbolic effects were infinitely more powerful than its physical appearance. Those trapped, left behind in the gloomy "bad" half, became obsessed with vain plans for escape. And as often before in the history of mankind, Architecture had been instrumental in bringing this despair about.

This would be a force as definitive, intense and devastating, but applied to positive intentions. Division, separation, isolation, inequality, aggression and even paranoia — the negative meaning of these concepts can be inverted totally to describe the ingredient themes and strategies of an Architectural warfare on undesirable conditions (i.e. the conditions around us).

This would be an Architecture not committed to timid improvements, but to the eradication of evils and their replacement by intensely desirable alternatives.

The inhabitants of this Architecture — those strong enough to love it — would, in a certain sense, be its voluntary prisoners. We can only envy them.

This study wages the Architectural war on London.

Through the centre of London runs a strip of intense metropolitan desirability.

To dramatize and protect the total difference, a wall will be built to enclose this zone of Architectural and Social perfections.

Soon, the first inmates will beg for admission. Their number will swell rapidly into an unstoppable flow. We witness the Exodus of London. Once inside, the metabolism of the strip, its expansion, perfection and defence will, at first, be the almost obsessive concern of the urban Settlers.

The existing physical structure of the city will not be able to stand the continuing intensity of this unprecedented competition.

London, as we know it, will be a pack of ruins.

Nine squares are designed in various degrees of detail.

The central strip is only the most intense part of the much larger complex of the Architectural enclave. Within the central strip the map and axonometric show, from West to East, (each contained in their own square):

1. The Tip Condition. The point of maximum friction with the old London. Here the Architectural progress of the zone visibly takes place.
2. The Allotments. Individual plots of land to balance the emphasis on the Collective facilities.
3. The ceremonial square, paved in marble.
4. The reception area: here future inhabitants are introduced to the mysteries of citizenship of the strip.
5. An escalator descends into the area of London which is preserved (Nash) as a reminder of the past.
6. The Baths. Institute for the creation and implementation of fantasies.
7. The Park of Air, Fire, Water and Earth.
8. The square of Culture. (British Museum).
9. The University.
10. The complex of scientific research.

This part still contains a preserved area of the old city. The Ceremonial Square is where refugees are submitted to physical and mental exercises. In the Square of the Arts, baths have the function of "recycling public and private fantasies, of testing and possibly introducing new forms of behavior." Similar to some of *The Twelve Ideal Cities*, the parallel walls of this part are composed of cells of various sizes, from which people go out into public spaces. The last part, The Allotments, is a suburb where each voluntary prisoner has their own house, nothing happens and time has ceased to pass.

Exodus makes it clear that what is expected from architecture is fulfilled by the Berlin Wall: "Were not division, enclosure (i.e., imprisonment), and exclusion — which defined the wall's performance and explained its efficiency — the essential stratagems of any architecture?"²⁵

Final Words

In a short period of time — from the designs of the late 1950s to *Exodus* (1972) — we see a dispute over what was intended to be positive or negative. In some of these cases, it does not even make sense to determine which is the predominant sign. *Exodus* is particularly exemplary because its design effectively plays with - and/or +. Not only the very idea of utopia but the promise of a life freed from barriers is cornered. It becomes more difficult to neglect the nefarious consequences of architecture if we take it in its broadest sense.

We witness the multiplication of pieces of a city voluntarily cloistered in closed condominiums, which are sold as promises of well-being and security. The "Formulary for a New Urbanism" (1953) once imagined by Ivin did not come, but in its place, *New Urbanism* (1993) produced isolated and exclusive paradises such as Celebration and Seaside. Likewise, anti-immigration walls have multiplied and barriers accompany the very promise of the mobility offered by airports, as witnessed in the United States and Europe. In short, the greater the possibilities of mobility, the more sophisticated are the controls implemented. Where there is deprivation, there is a wall, even if it is subtle or invisible. And architecture needs to discuss these other forms of walls, not forgetting the more concrete ones.

Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, "Exodus, or the Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture," *Casabella* 378 (June, 1973), 42

an ever-increasing flow. This new and desirable part is continually expanded, concomitantly leading to the collapse an already-ruined London. The image of the megastructure reappears here: from the survival of architecture to the collapse of the city.

The linear megastructure coated with a mirrored square that traverses London is a direct reference to the *Continuous Monument*. From

the narrative point of view, *Exodus* resembles *The Twelve Ideal Cities*: each of its parts, arranged in a sequence in which the voluntary prisoners have to pass through, corresponds to the description of a city. Refugees undergo indoctrination procedures as they cross the Wall at the Reception. The second part, the Central Area, has a plateau from which one can see the splendor of the track and the ruins of London at the same time.

Endnotes

- The Lettrist International (LI) was an “extremist tendency” of the Lettrists, a movement founded by Isidore Isou. Disagreements between Guy Debord – at the time one of the Lettrists – and Isou resulted in the founding of the LI in 1952 by Debord. The Situationist International (SI), in turn, was officially formed in 1957 by a merger of members of the LI, the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus (MIBI) and the Psychogeographic Association of London. Some of the main figures of the SI were Debord, the Danish artist Asger Jorn, the Belgian writer Raoul Vaneigem and the Dutch artist Constant Nieuwenhuys.
- A drift (*dérive*) is “a mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances,” Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology* [1981] (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2005), 51-52.
- Gilles Ivain, “Formulary for a New Urbanism”, in Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology*, 1-8.
- Ken Knabb, *Situationist International...*, 1-8.
- Ken Knabb, *Situationist International...*, 1-8.
- According to the Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki, “The megastructure is a large frame in which all the functions of a city are housed. It has been made possible by present day technology. In a sense, it is a man-made feature of the landscape. It is like the great hill on which Italian towns were built,” Fumihiko Maki, *Investigations in Collective Form* (Saint Louis: Washington University, 1964), 8.
- Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology* (New York: Rizzoli, 2007), 273.
- “1960 GEAM: Program for a Mobile Architecture,” Ulrich Conrads, *Programs and manifestoes on 20th-century architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971), 167-168.
- Letter from Constant to Friedman, April 21, 1961. Mark Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon: The Hyper-Architecture of Desire* (Rotterdam: Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, 010 Publishers, 1998), 40.
- Mark Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon*, 41.
- Constant, *New Babylon*, (The Hague: Haags Gemeentemuseum, 1974), 62. Republished in Jean Clarence Lambert, *Constant: New Babylon: Art et Utopie* (Paris: Cercle d'Art, 1997): 64-82.
- Henri Lefebvre, *A Revolução Urbana* (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 2008), 88.
- Henri Lefebvre, *A Revolução Urbana*, 90.
- A group of Florentine architects founded by Adolfo Natalini and Cristiano Toraldo di Francia in 1966, later joined by Roberto Magris, Piero Frassinelli, Alessandro Magris and Alessandro Poli.
- Germano Celant, “Senza Titolo” (1970), *In. Argomenti e Immagini di design* 2-3 (March – June 1971): 76-81.
- Adolfo Natalini and Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, “Dall'industria al tecnomorfismo,” *Necropoli* 6-7 (November-December 1969, January-February 1970): 13-26. In Andreas Angelidakis, Vittorio Pizzigoni and Valter Scelsi, *Super Superstudio* (Milan: Silvana, 2015), 89.
- Superstudio, “Life,” in Martin van Schaik and Otakar Mácel, *Exit Utopia: Architectural Provocations, 1956-76* (Delft: IHAUU-TU; Munich: Prestel, 2005), 192-200.
- Superstudio, “Life,” 192-200.
- Ettore Sottsass, “Il Pianeta come Festival,” *In. Argomenti e Immagini di design* 5 (May-June 1972), 26.
- Superstudio, “The Continuous Monument,” in Martin van Schaik and Otakar Mácel, *Exit Utopia*, 126.
- Superstudio, “The Continuous Monument / Storyboard for a film,” *Casabella* 358 (1971): 21.
- Superstudio, “Twelve Ideal Cities,” in Peter Lang and William Menking, *Superstudio: Life Without Objects* (Milan: Skira, 2003), 150.
- Gabriele Mastrigli, *La Vita Segreta del Monumento Continuo: Conversazioni con Gabriele Mastrigli* (Macerata: Quidlibet, 2015), 61.
- Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, “Exodus or the Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture,” *Casabella* 378 (June 1973): 42-45.
- Rem Koolhaas, “The Berlin Wall as Architecture,” 1971 document, entitled Field Trip, part of a summer study for his final degree in the Architectural Association. Published in Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1995).

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- Gabriele Mastrigli, September 16, 2015, Rome
 Peter Lang, September 25, 2015, Rome
 Gian Piero Frassinelli, October 14, 2015, Florence
 Adolfo Natalini, October 16, 2015, Florence
 Ugo La Pietra, October 26, 2015, Milan
 Dario Bartolini, October 27, 2015, Florence

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