

IN
PICTURES
AND
CONVERSATIONS

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FUTURE CITY

edifying and truthful stories

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

ANTHROPOLOGY
FOR KIDS

2010-2022

INTRODUCTION

This book is a conversation between the authors and the readers about cities. It asks how people's ideas about what cities are have changed throughout history and across different cultures.

The book consists of illustrated notes, medieval engravings, quotes and images from science fiction movies and architectural drawings. In this book, you'll find many different city designs, both imaginary and real. Some of these designs are symbolic, some will be realistic, three-dimensional drawings, and others like scribbles in the margins. There are cities drawn from above with a bird's eye view, as well as close-up, detailed images of the tiniest, individual parts that go into city planning.

Like the other books in the A4kids series, Future Cities is the result of a dialogue with two people: my (then) 4-year-old son, Benjamin, and my (future, now late) husband, anthropologist and activist David Graeber. It has been written over many years and has since been translated into several languages. In the current edition, several chapters have been added. But there are also now two versions of the book: one for reading and thinking, the other for drawing and dreaming. The latter can be freely downloaded at a4kids.org

I hope to continue to update the book, collecting new notes and as well as including comments sent to me by readers. Future Cities.

In 2008, the world's urban population surpassed its rural population for the first time, and since then, the rate of urbanization has only increased.

Millions of people are leaving rural areas for cities every month. However, this urbanization seems driven by two antisocial processes: climate devastation and capitalist dispossession are pushing the rural's poor into cities, adding their numbers to already impoverished and overcrowded spaces. At the same time, wealthier city-dwellers have started to buy properties in the countryside and migrate out of the cities, especially during the Coronavirus pandemic. This recent trend has been made possible by the increasing feasibility of remote work by the expansion of high-speed internet beyond urban centers.

SO WHAT WILL THE CITIES OF THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

While some imagine 'smart' cities governed by artificial intelligence, promising to provide residents with clean air, alternative energy sources and plenty of public spaces, most people in the future will be living in refugee camps, where asylumists

will be huddled in tents without access to basic amenities such as sewage, drinking water, internet, forget beautiful architecture or public space.

HOW DO WE FEEL ABOUT THESE CHANGES? ARE THEY NOT REVERSIBLE? AND, IF WE COULD INTERVENE, HOW?

I don't have answers to these questions. That's the point of this book. Let's think about it together! After all, a city is always a collective project.

At the end of the book, in «Further Reading,» you can learn more about real and fictional city projects and the people who worked on them.

They remind us that often the most daring fantasies or brutal nightmares can become our reality.



THE CITY THAT ALWAYS SLEEPS



Would you agree
to live in a city like
this? If not, why
not?



What would you
change?



Imagine that you
are a machine
generating dreams
for people. What
kind of dreams do
they have?

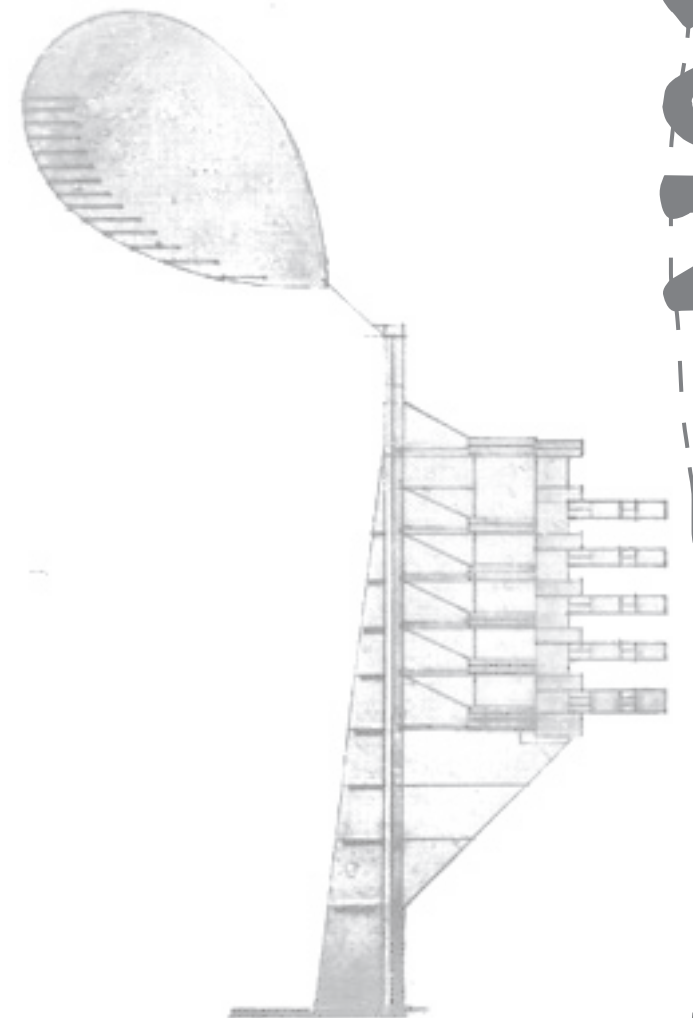
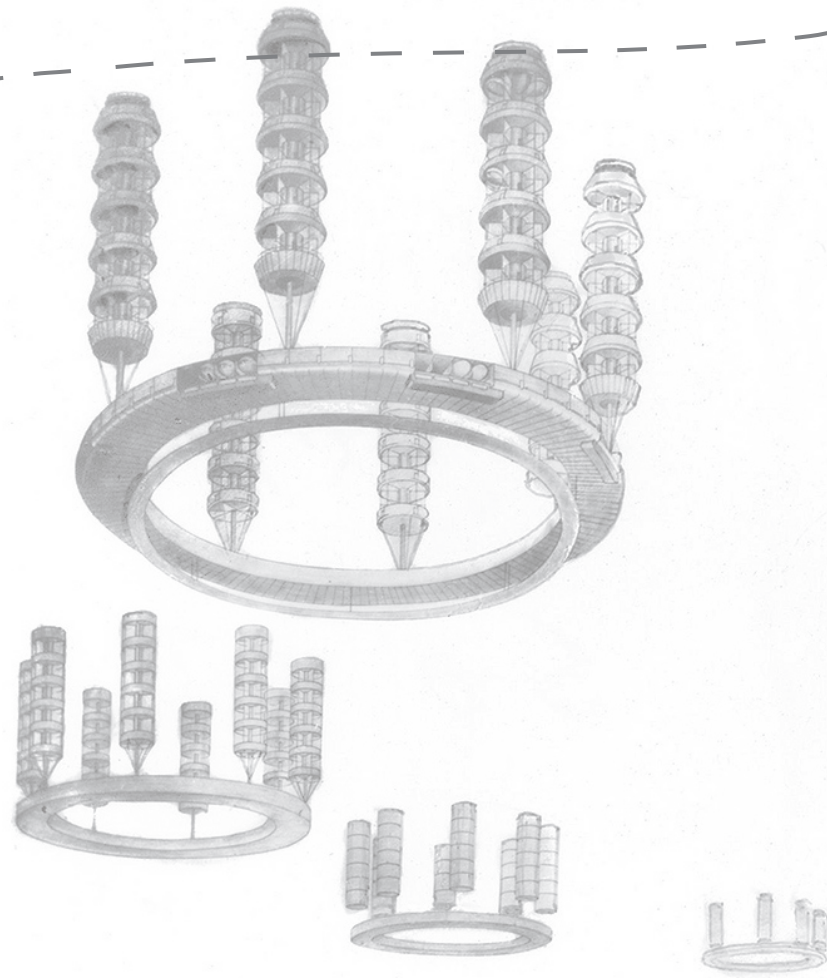


PEOPLE NO LONGER KNOW WHAT THE
REAL WORLD IS. THEY LIVE
IN A DREAM.

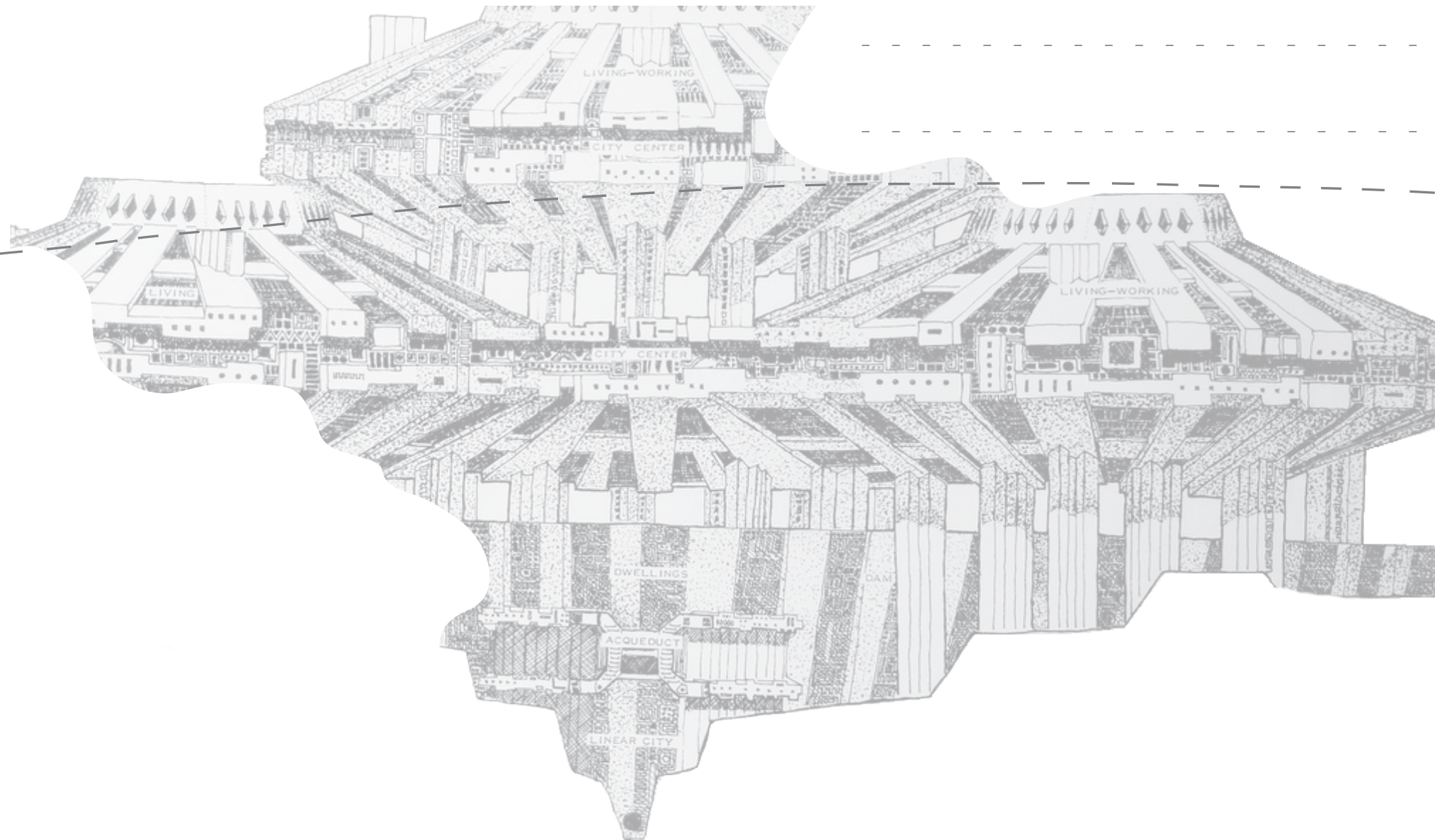
FLYING CITIES



Draw the details of your flying city: private jets, air taxis, housing complexes and libraries, science laboratories, and concert halls.



CITY IN THE CLOUDS



Write how
your flying city
is organized.

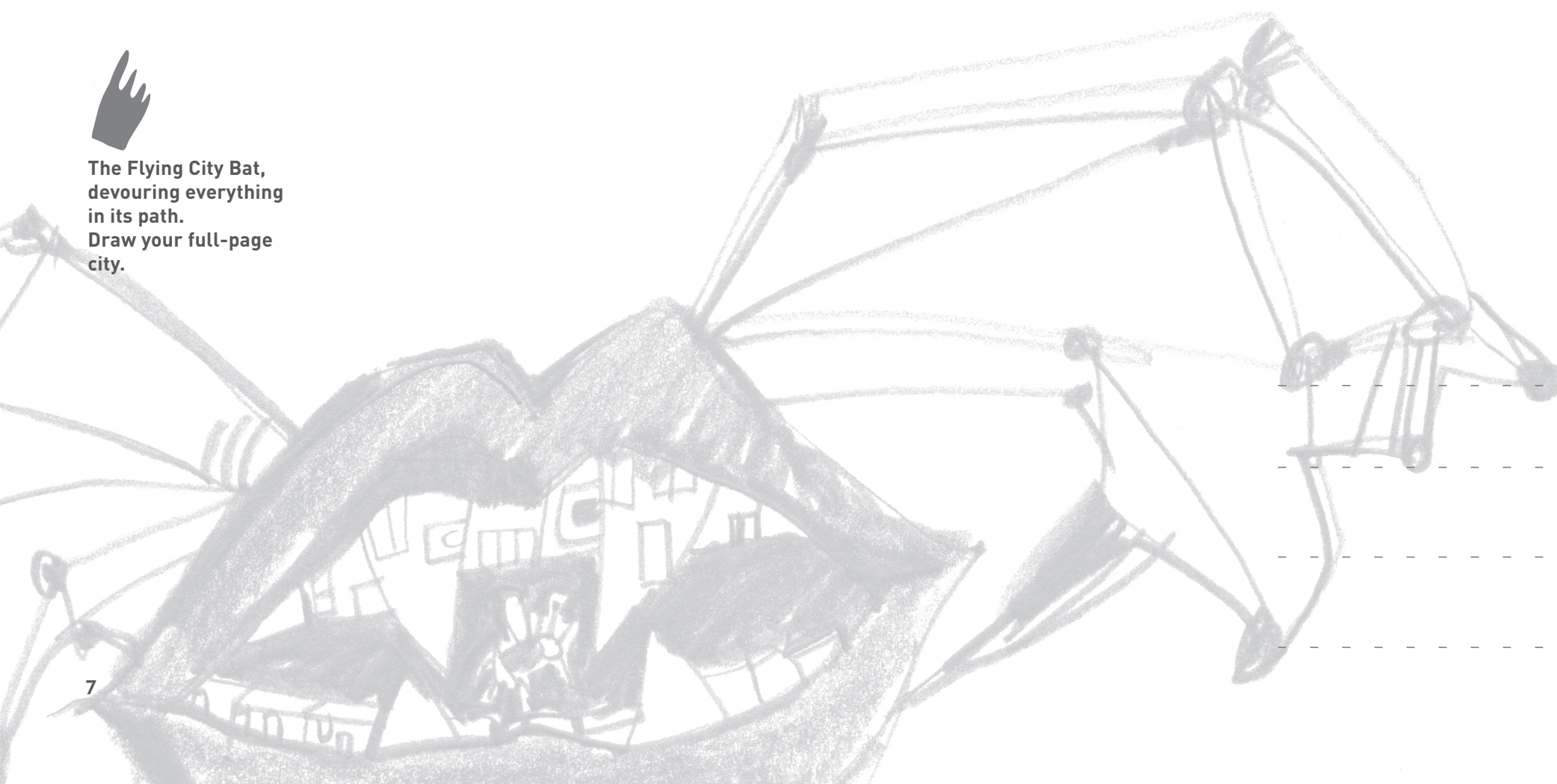


Draw a design
for a floating city built
as a military machine
that controls those
who are living
on the ground below.





The Flying City Bat,
devouring everything
in its path.
Draw your full-page
city.



Describe how it
works.



CITY

OF FIGHTERS, WHOSE
CITIZENS ARE CONSTANTLY
PREPARING FOR WAR

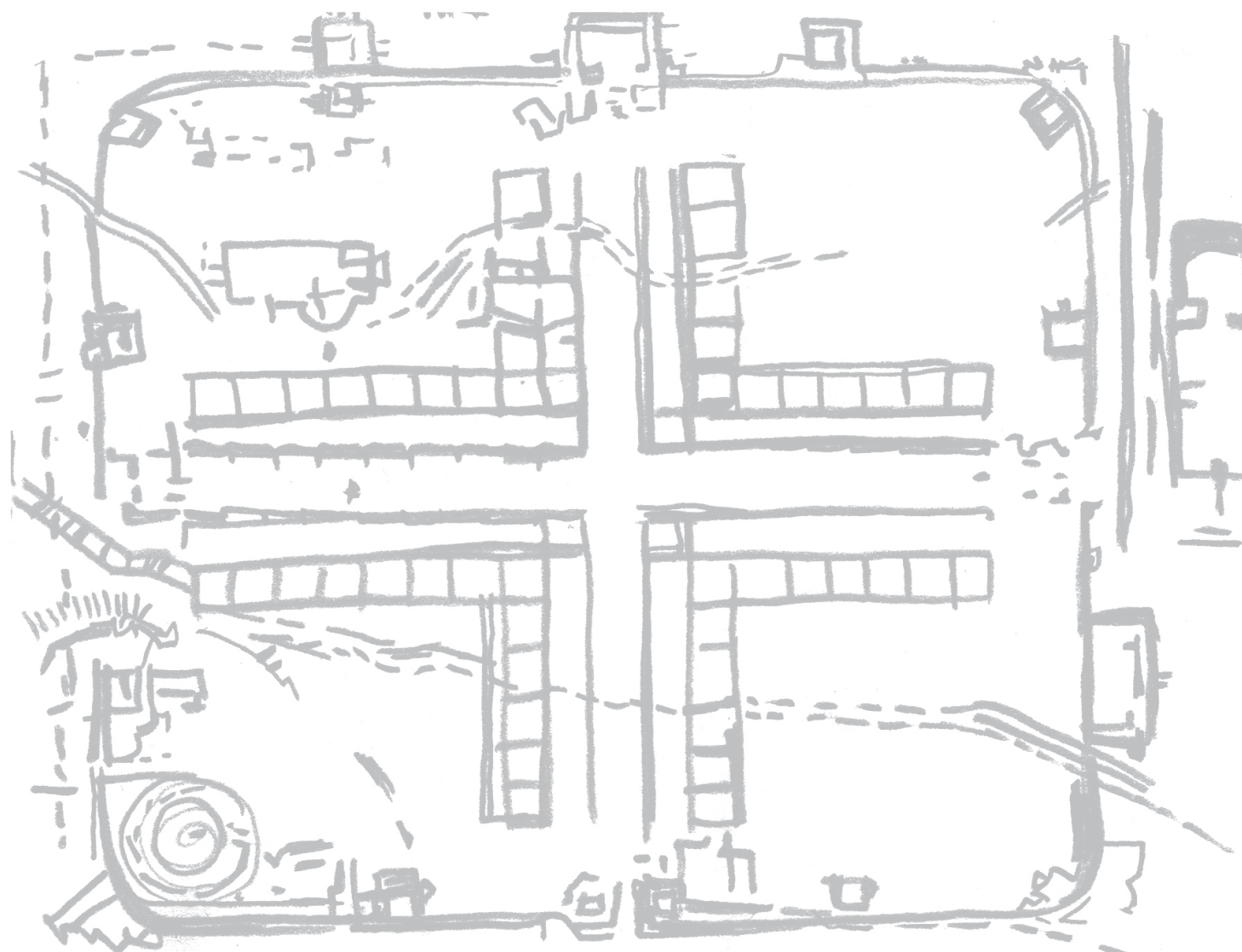
Draw a map
of a military town.



Come up with
completely different
types of fighters.
For example: chess
players, boxers,
military... who else?

THE FIGHTERS ALWAYS HAVE TO
KNOW WHERE THEIR LEADER IS –
THEY NEED ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.
THE STREETS LOOK LIKE THEY'VE BEEN
DRAWN

No 4



CITY OF
FREEDOM



Draw a map of a town
where everyone is
friends with each
other.



HOME OF ARTISTS, FLORISTS, CHILDREN,
PARENTS, AND JUST ABOUT ANYONE,
EXCEPT FOR THE MILITARY.

No5

gōn

PLAY CITY

WHERE WORK IS
PROHIBITED

IT IS ONLY ALLOWED
TO PLAY, MAKE
FRIENDS
AND LOOK AFTER
EACH OTHER.

It is only allowed
to play, make
friends and look
after each other.

THIS MAP SHOWS A CITY IN WHICH EVERYTHING IS UPSIDE DOWN. RIGHT AND LEFT ARE CONFUSED; TOP AND BOTTOM HAVE SWAPPED PLACES.



The perfect place for a playground — finish drawing it.





Describe robots and
scientific inventions
that do all the work in
the city of little girls
and boys.
Shall we start with
flying cars?

ZoN

CITY
OF LITTLE BOYS
AND GIRLS



Here's a space
for your plan.

IMAGINE A CITY WHERE
INHABITANTS HAVE
TO PAY NOT ONLY FOR
HOUSING AND MEDICINE, BUT
ALSO THE AIR THEY BREATHE.



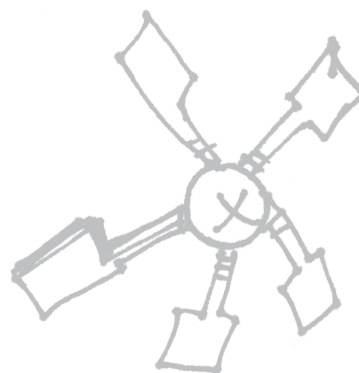
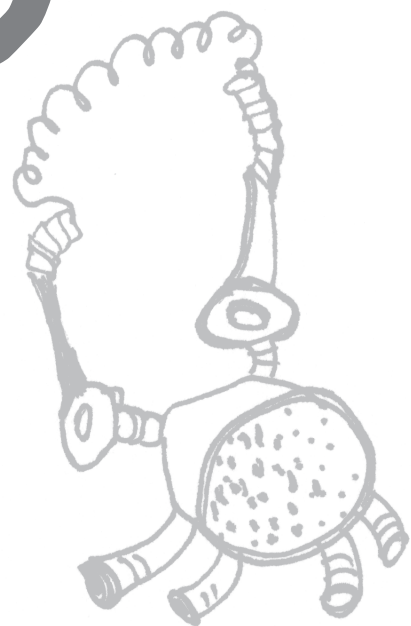
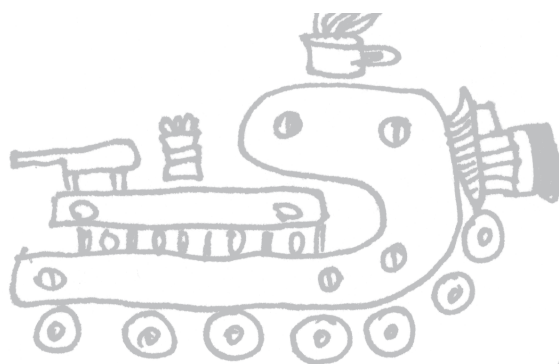
Draw a map of the
city where everything
is up for sale.
Where do the owners
live? How do the
buyers live?



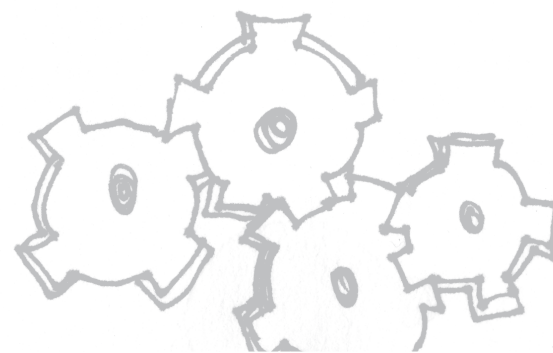
CITY OF
GREED
No8

No9

FAMILY CITY



The city-family, where everyone knows and loves each other. Fill it with pleasant and useful family things to do.

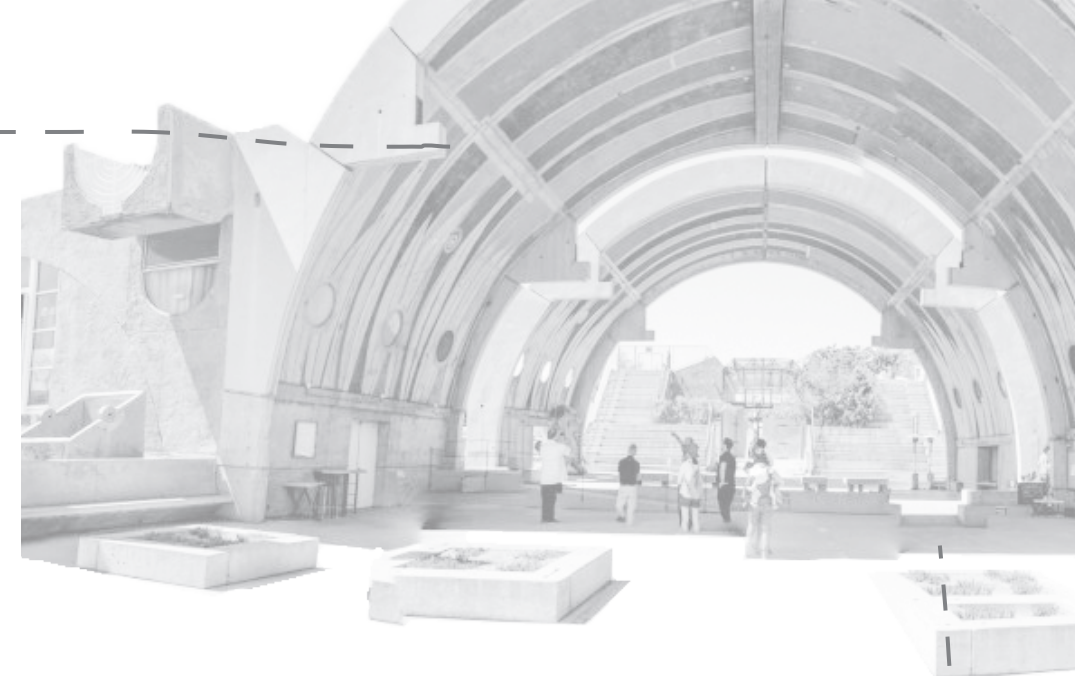


CITY IN THE DESERT

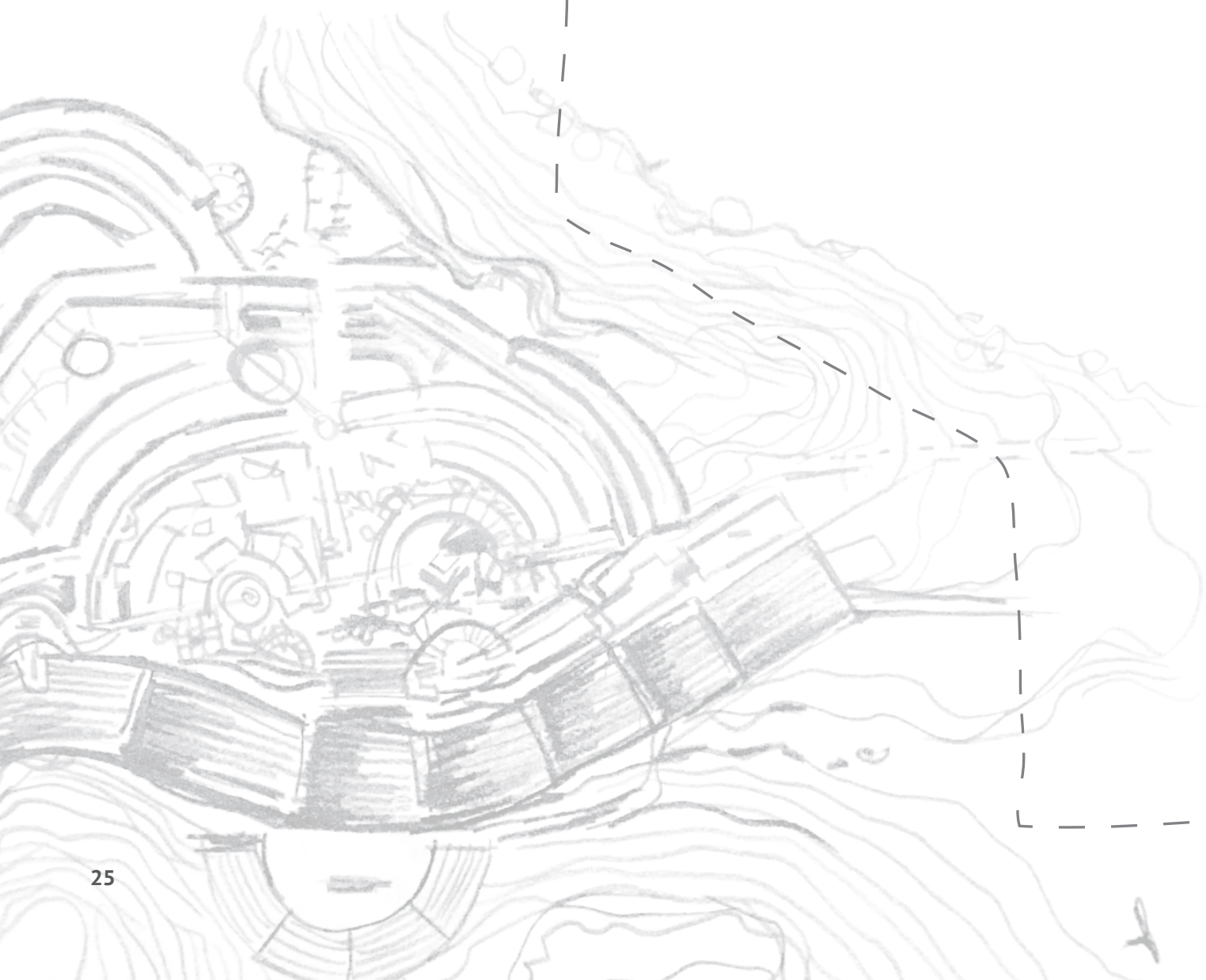


How would
your city in
the desert
look?

THE WHOLE CITY IS A
SPACE THAT PROTECTS
US FROM THE HEAT,
PRODUCES FOOD, AND
PROVIDES A PLACE FOR
CREATIVITY AND LEISURE.
DON'T FORGET TO ADD
PLACES TO BE TOGETHER
OR IN SOLITUDE.



DRAW A PLAN FOR A
CITY, WHERE IT'S GOOD
TO LIVE TOGETHER!



SANCTUARY CITY



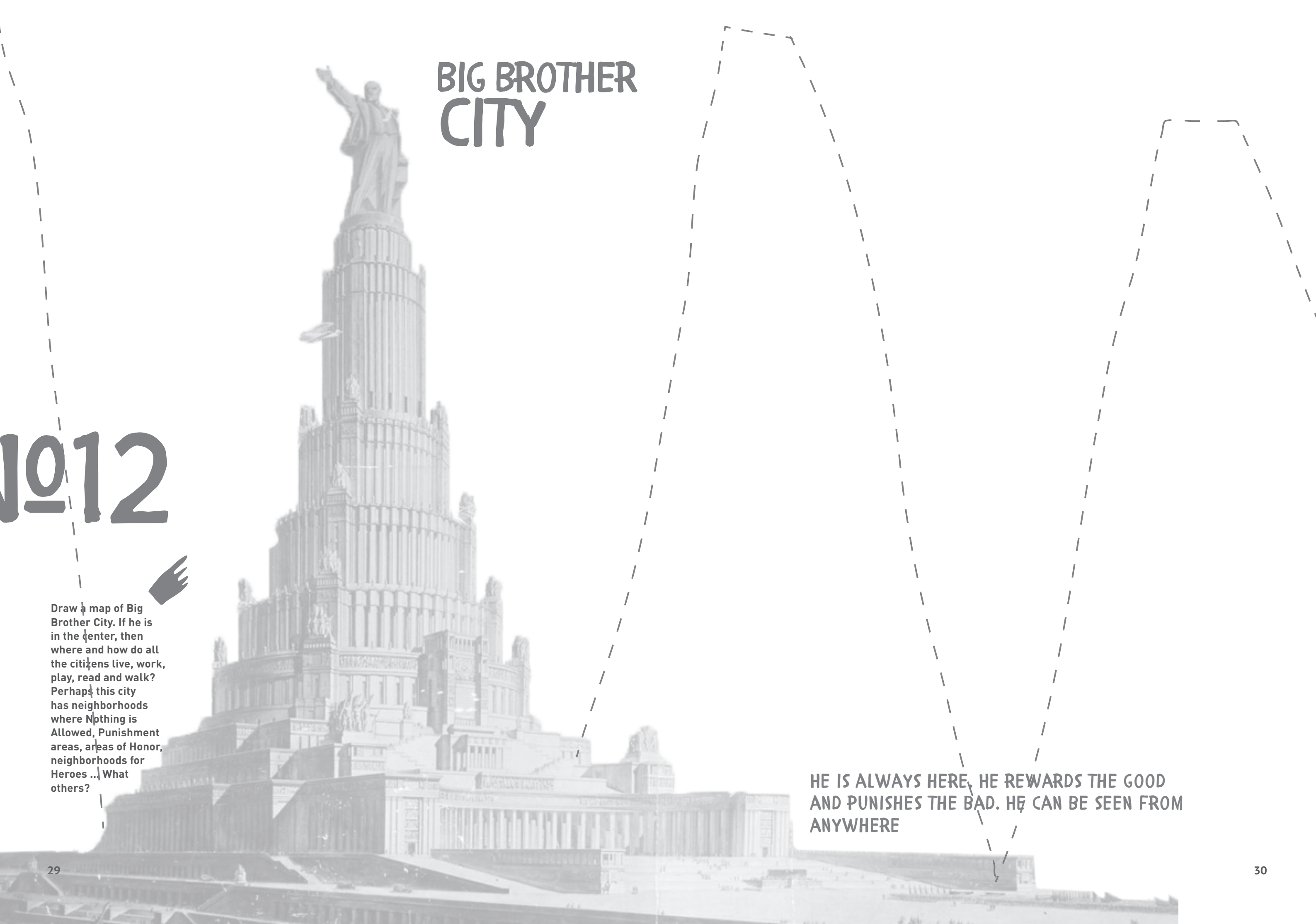
How people will live
in a giant city-house
that will fit all of
humanity.

Draw a city plan for
all mankind.



CLIMATE CHANGE
COULD TURN ALL
OF HUMANITY INTO
REFUGEES.





BIG BROTHER CITY

012

Draw a map of Big Brother City. If he is in the center, then where and how do all the citizens live, work, play, read and walk? Perhaps this city has neighborhoods where Nothing is Allowed, Punishment areas, areas of Honor, neighborhoods for Heroes ... What others?

HE IS ALWAYS HERE, HE REWARDS THE GOOD AND PUNISHES THE BAD. HE CAN BE SEEN FROM ANYWHERE

SURVEILLANCE CITY

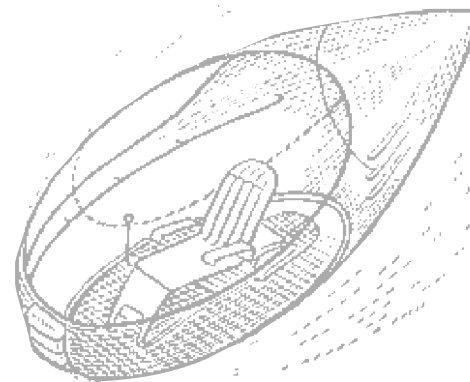
Nº13

Write rules for a city
where every person
is under constant
surveillance.

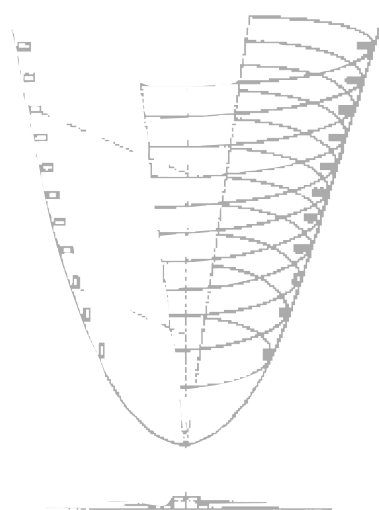


IN THIS CITY, NOBODY
IS EVER ALONE!

TRANSPARENT CITY



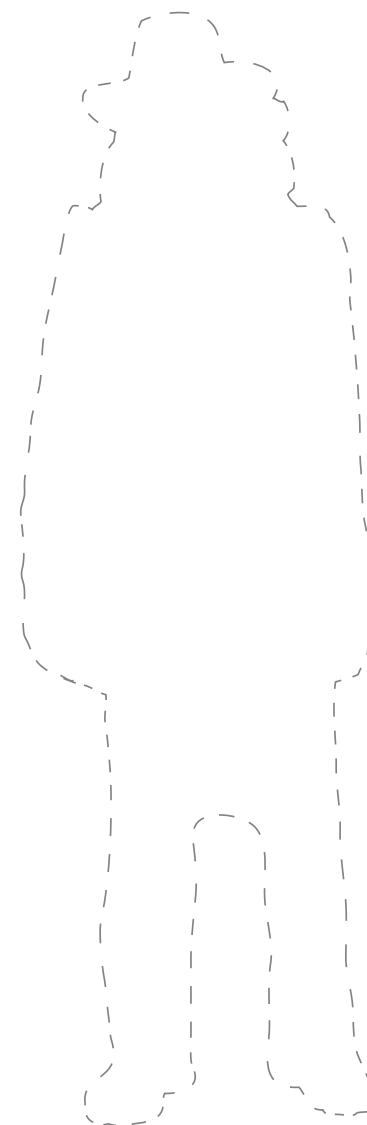
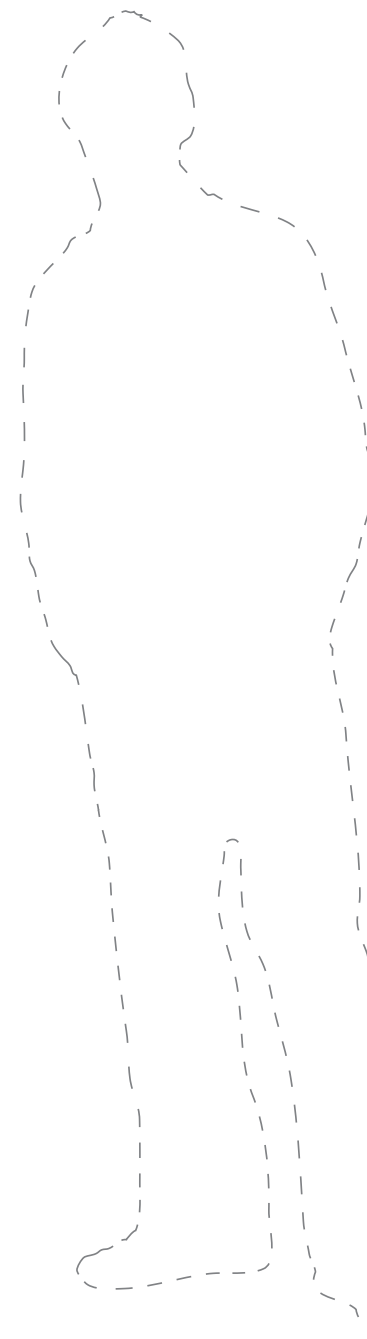
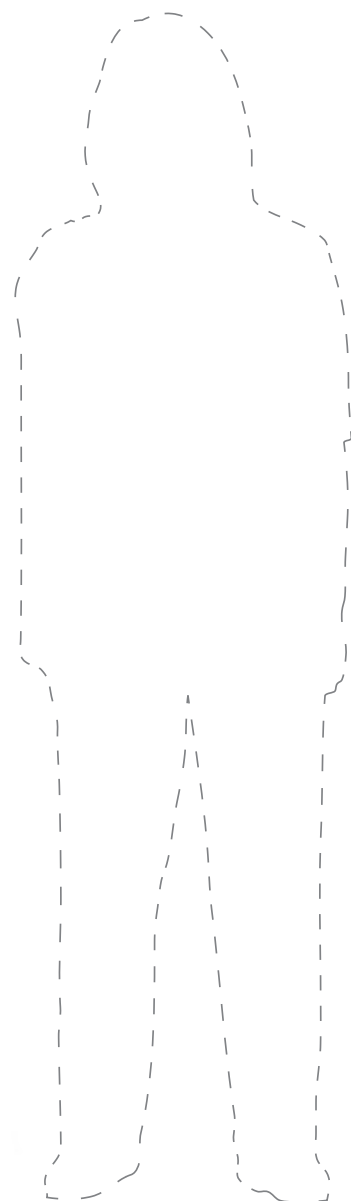
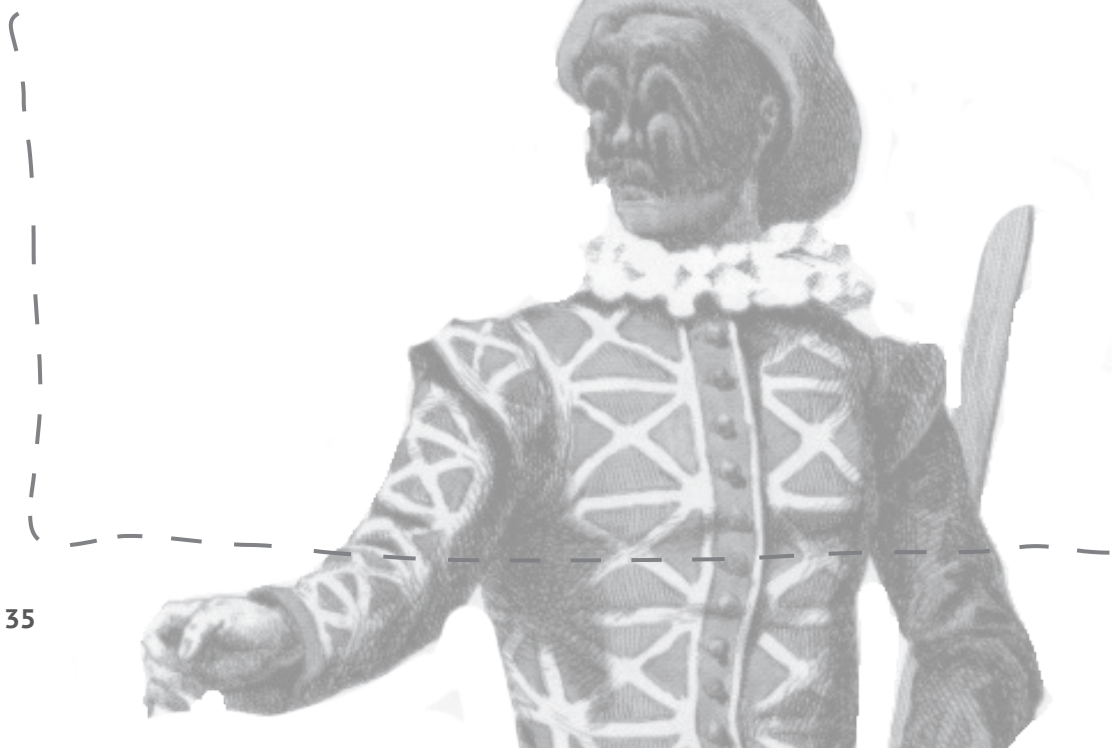
№14



Imagine that you live in a transparent city. How does it work? Where is your house? With a dotted line, mark on the map how the residents watch each other.

CITY OF MASKS

Imagine and draw the
masks that the people of
the carnival city wear.
Draw carnival costumes.
Let them be really
unexpected!.



Invent of these
people's outfits
to make them
look protected,
but playful and
cheerful.

Nº16



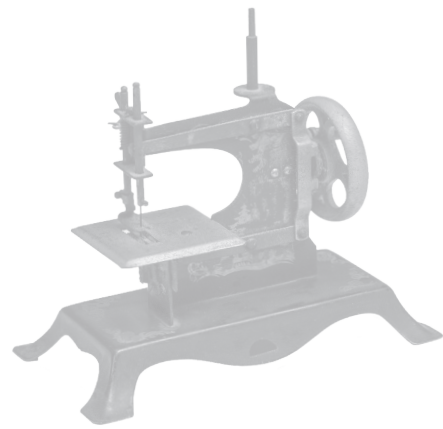
What rules would
there be in a city of
invisible people?
What is allowed? And
what is prohibited?



CITY OF INVISIBILITY



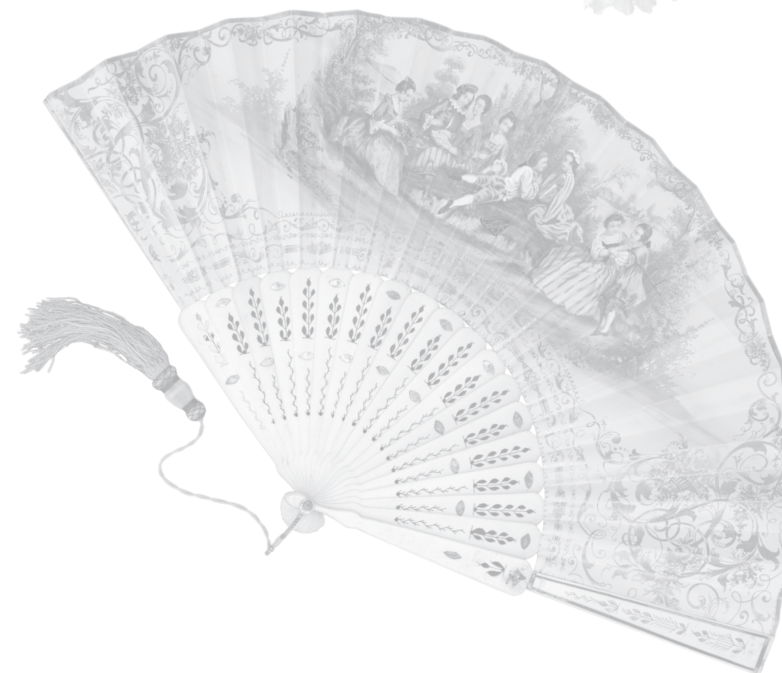
A CITY WHICH VALUES SOLITUDE



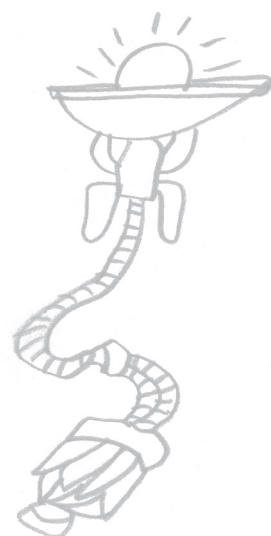
THE HOME OF A
WEALTHY LONDONER
AT THE TIME OF
QUEEN VICTORIA



When privacy is
a luxury, it calls
for luxurious
surroundings.



Fill up the whole page with
stuff that would make you
feel like you were in the
center of a giant empire,
caught in the middle of the
world, in perfect solitude
and confusion.
Please be extravagant



No17



IN THIS CITY, YOU ARE
ALONE!

№18



ONE MAN
CITY



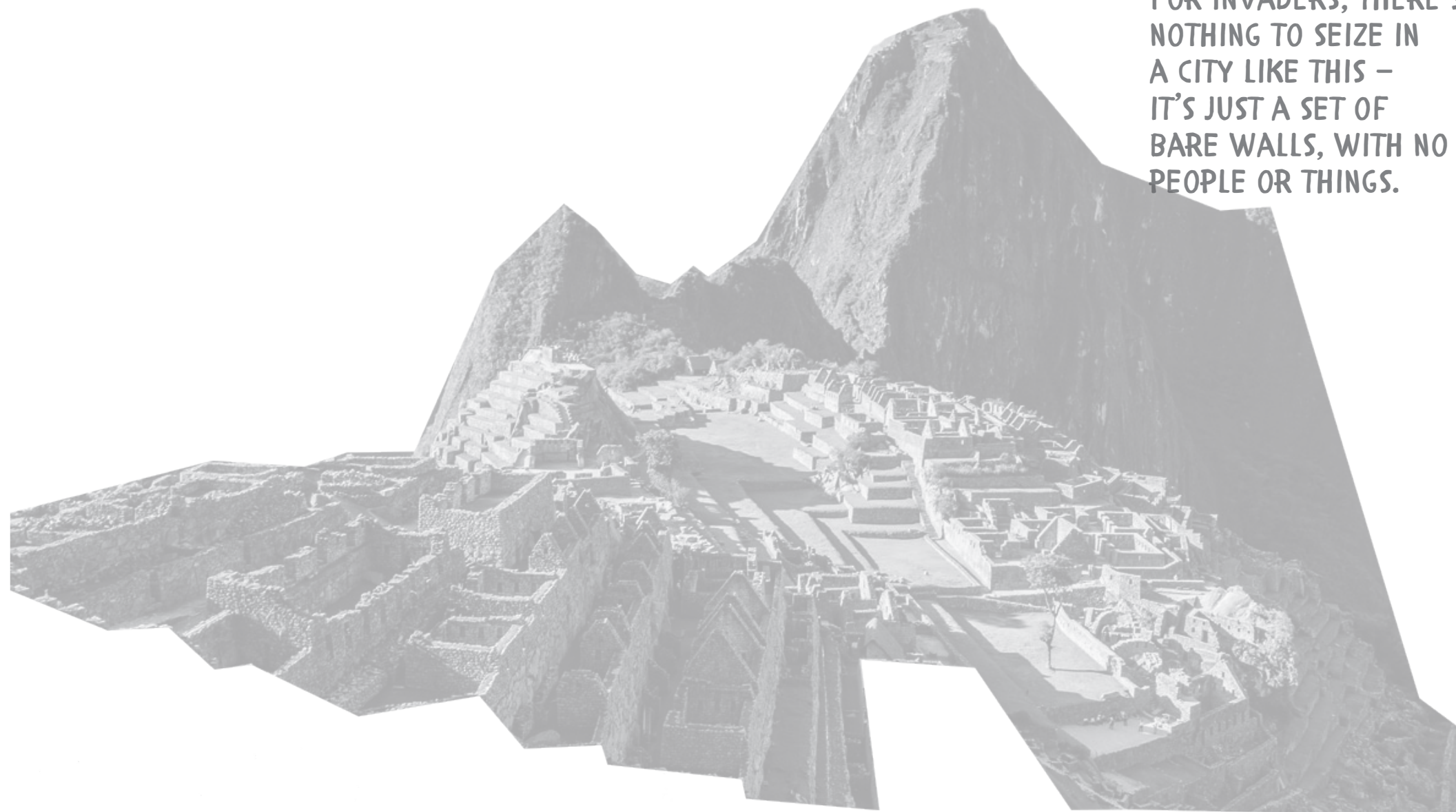
JUST ONE SINGLE RESIDENT
LIVES IN THIS CITY. THE
CITY FORESEES EVERY
CONCEIVABLE DESIRE OF THE
CITIZEN. THERE IS JUST ONE
THING LACKING – NEIGHBORS/
COMPANY/COHABITANTS.



Draw a city built
especially for you.

No19

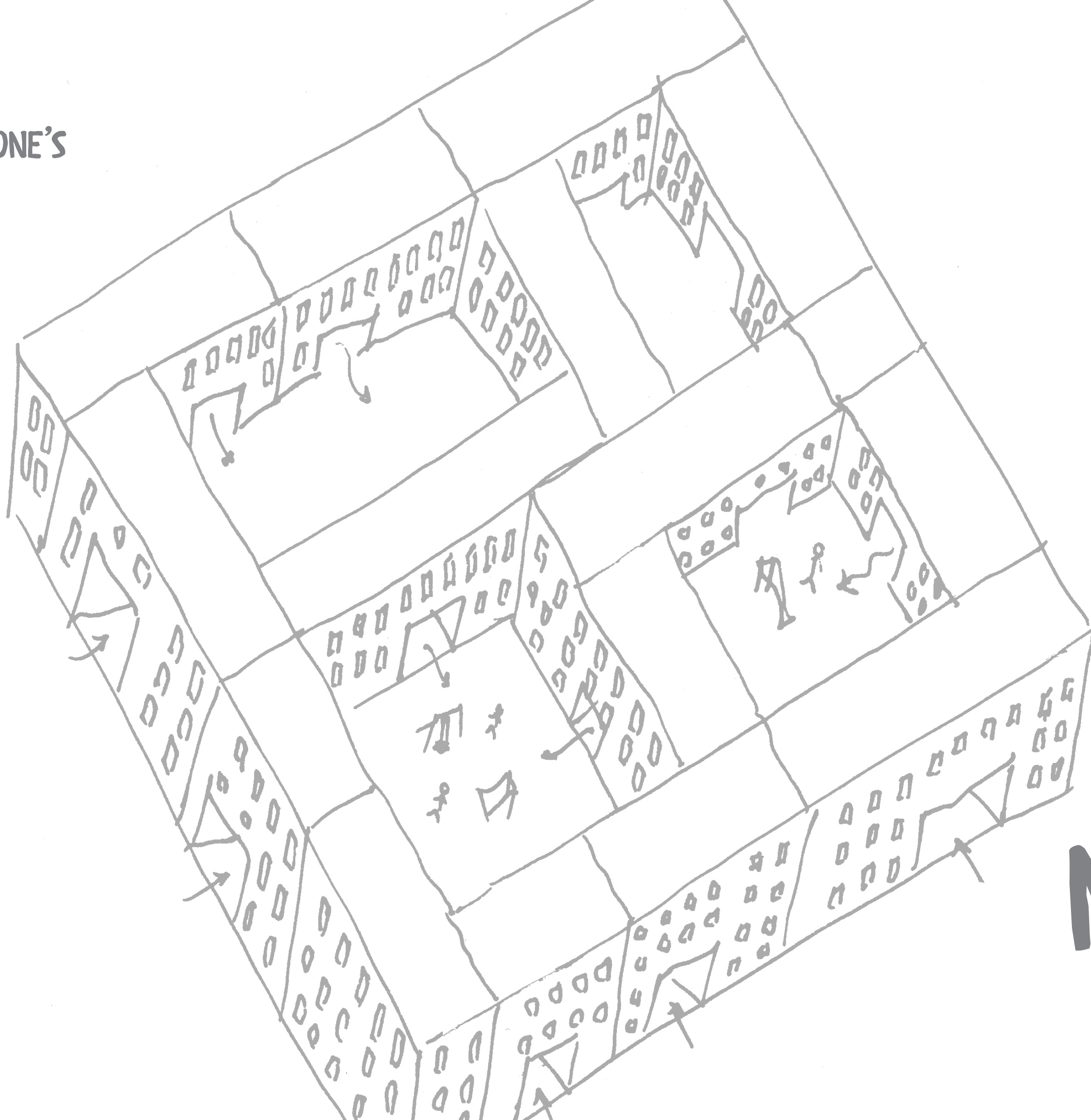
FOR INVADERS, THERE'S
NOTHING TO SEIZE IN
A CITY LIKE THIS –
IT'S JUST A SET OF
BARE WALLS, WITH NO
PEOPLE OR THINGS.



Draw a map of
the city, whose
inhabitants are able
to disappear at any
moment.

GHOST TOWN

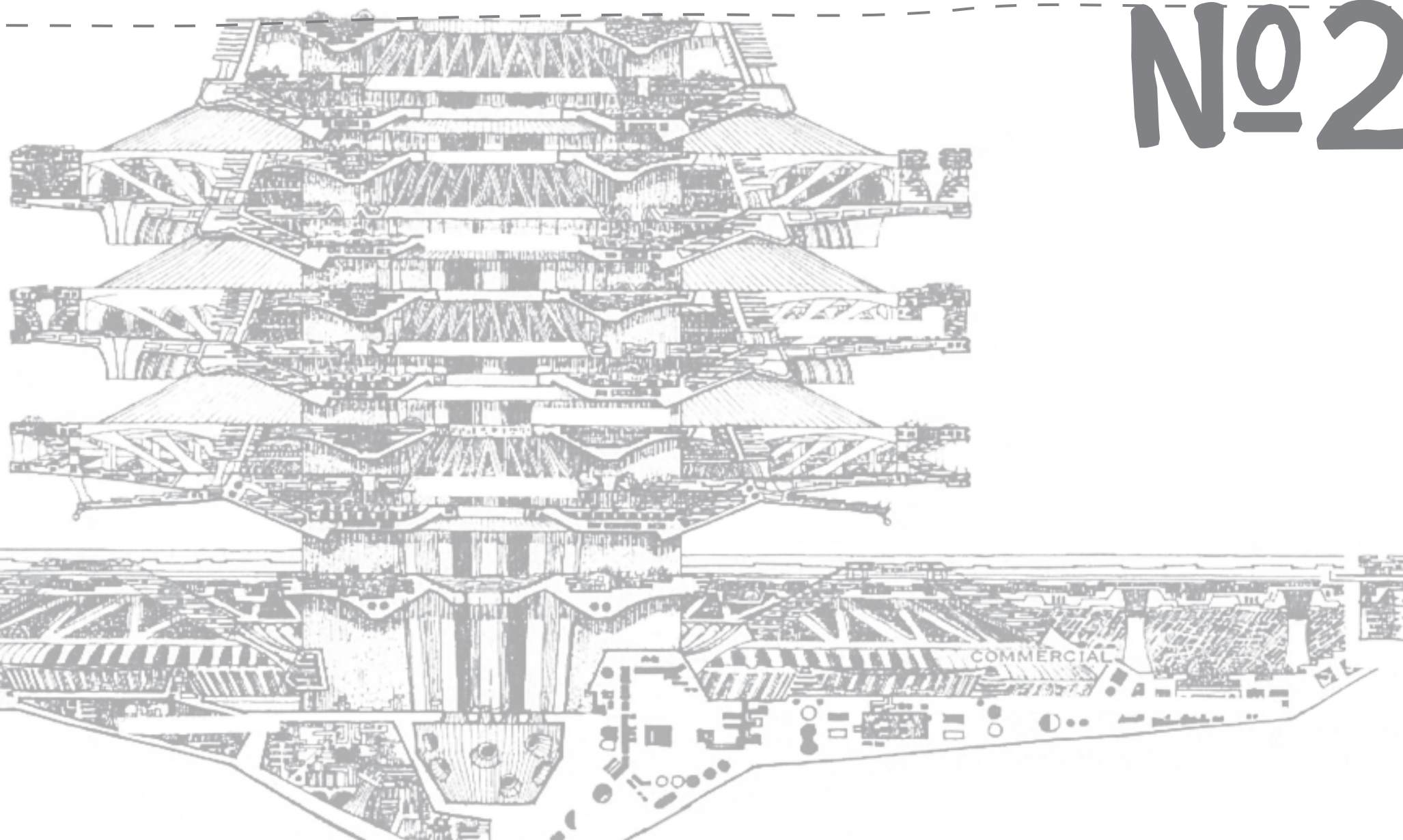
A CITY WHERE EVERYONE'S RUNNING



On top of the drawing, draw your own plan for a city of runners. What if they have springboards for jumping over roofs? What if they descend by parachute? What if they dig underground tunnels?

What rules would
there be in your
underground city?
Will it be governed
by a computer, a
director/president
or all the residents
collectively?

UNDERGROUND CITY



№21



A city that is
suspended on
balloons. It is
constantly swinging.



what would be the
plan?





CITY IN THE OCEAN

IF YOU LIVE IN THE
OCEAN, THEN YOU'RE
A HARD TARGET TO
ATTACK! YOU CAN
ALWAYS ESCAPE (SAIL
AWAY).

Draw a plan.
And some residents.
What will they look
like?
Amphibian people.



CITY OF PUNISHMENT



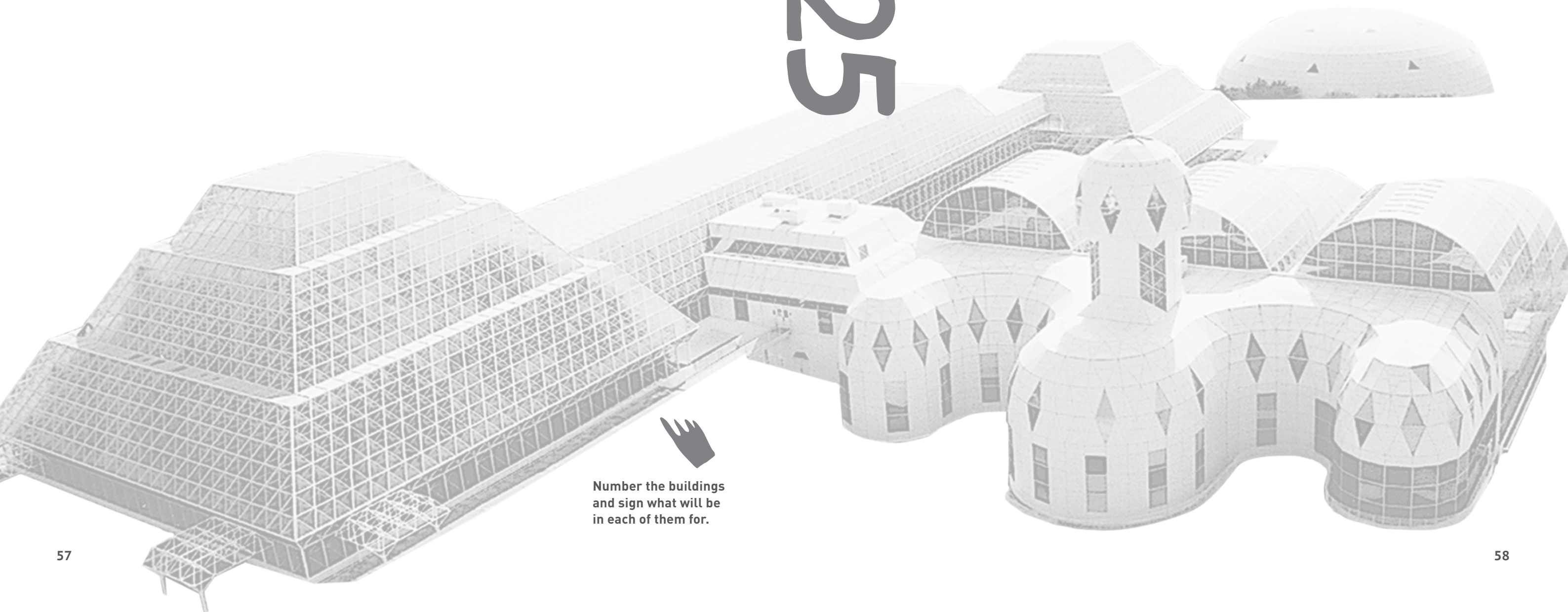
№23

A city of policemen and prisoners. What would you build in the center? How the whole city is set up? Write the main rule of the city.

NOAH'S ARK

No 25

SCIENTISTS ARE
CONSTANTLY INVENTING
A CITY THAT NO ONE
NEVER HAS TO LEAVE.



Number the buildings
and sign what will be
in each of them for.

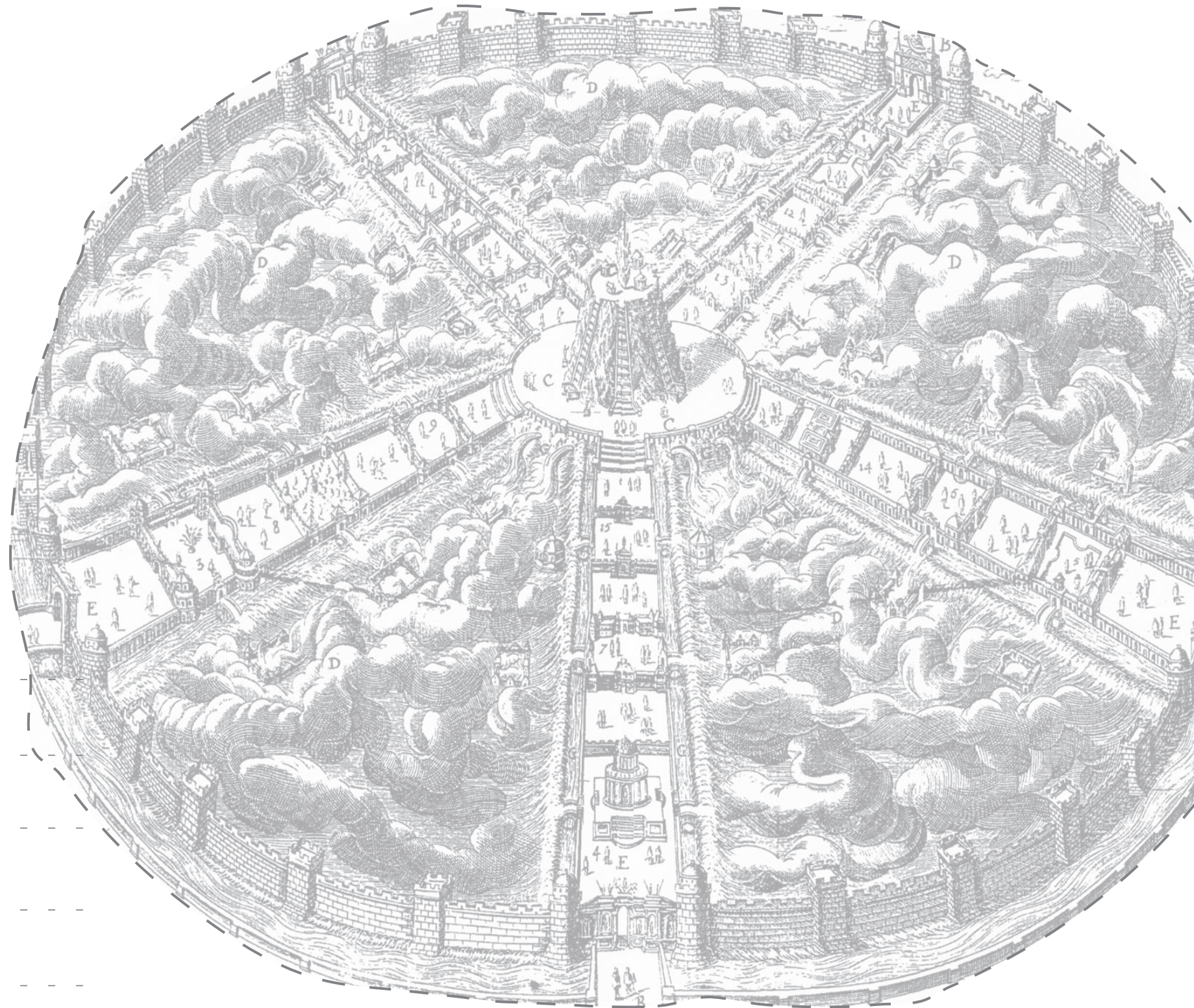
SUN CITY, WHERE EVERYONE'S EQUAL



Rules of the
Sun City.

MAGICIANS
AND
SCIENTISTS
RULE
THE CITY.

Draw a map of your
city of equal and
happy people.





Each book in the series «In Pictures and Dialogues,» is about characters from children's play: they are Kings and Queens, Pirates and Ghosts, Witches and Knights.

I began writing it with my late husband, anthropologist and activist David Graeber, who remained a child until his death.

This doodle book is about pirates, adventure, violence, magic, and freedom.

Now it's filled with your drawings and stories, so it' become our shared book and game.

Thank you, dear co-author!