in Alberobello and the surrounding villages are, however, not circular buildings with conical stone roofs except for a recent church in Alberobello which has the roof of a trullo but incorporates it very consciously in the design as a genuflection to the vernacular.

If we move south to a town like Lecce with its flamboyant Baroque we frequently find churches as part of the continuous street façade but distinguished from the simple urban buildings on either side by a greater geometric order, a higher density of decoration and a marked increase in scale. The visual signals are unambiguous and acknowledged by everyone. The same thing happens in the Piazza Navona in Rome as in many other places in continental Europe.

What also distinguishes the churches from their neighbours is that they are built in a recognisable style, a visual vocabulary belonging to a particular period. There were visual choices and these were made consciously. The assumption that it is possible to dispense with style – a frequently voiced tenet of the architects of the modern movement – is a fanciful concept. As long as visual choices are possible and indeed necessary, a style emerges. Because architects of the early part of the 20th century disapproved and found meaningless the styles of the 19th century and particularly the battle between Classical and Gothic, does not logically lead to the abandonment of style even if this were possible. To believe that the determination of form can arise solely from purpose assumes a level of determinism which is never experienced in practice and which presupposes the total impossibility of making visual choices. What of course happened in Modernism was that a new style simply arose, or as Adorno phrased it 'the absolute rejection of style becomes style' (Adorno, 1979). It is akin to a position of total disbelief which is itself a powerfully held belief.

The rejection of style as a determinant is rooted in the view that every architectural problem needs an entirely in-

Right
**Beidha, Southern
Jordan ca.7000–6000 BC**;
semi-subterranean
dwellings and stores
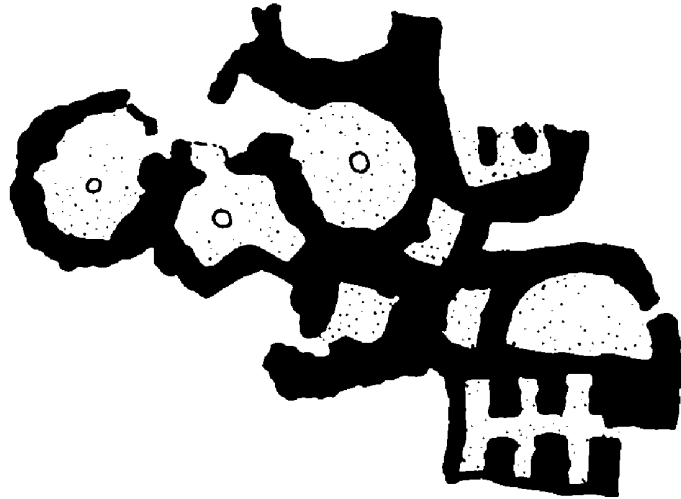
novative solution and, therefore, could not use any elements from an existing visual language, from a style, however much that style may be evolving. Style also works by both inclusion and exclusion, it implies the acceptance of some forms and the rejection of others. The choice of cladding material in the case of the Getty Center, which has already been discussed, shows how we can start by choosing to exclude a whole range of possibilities simply on the connotation that is inherent in those elements. It would be difficult to imagine that Richard Meier would choose to do a red brick building. This may be due to the inability of dark brick to produce light reflective surfaces – so characteristic of Meier's architecture – and, equally, to the connection between brick and a colonial architecture in America. Visual selection, sometimes based on non-visual beliefs, invariably plays its role. This is independent of the degree to which the design may be innovative; just as it is unlikely that Meier would use red brick so it is improbable that Zaha Hadid would use any brick for her curved flowing shapes, quite apart from any constructional difficulties which might arise.