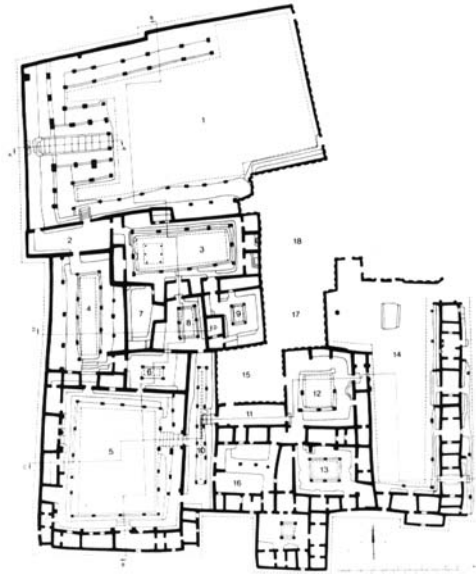
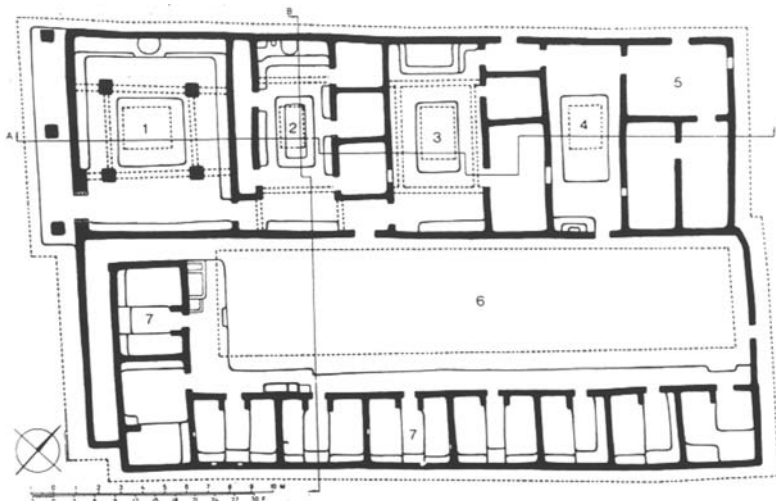


Yoruba
 Atin Akure


7.23a



7.23b

of blob of development March advises his readers to dismiss from their minds.

The arrangement of accommodation along the perimeter of a single plot has a long and well-documented history. This form of plot development can be seen in, for example, the courtyard house of the classical world, and it is also a typical house form in some parts of Africa (Moughtin, 1985; Denyer, 1978) (Figure 7.23). This may prove to be a useful concept for the arrangement of accommodation on a well-defined site and an appropriate form for the street block (Martin, 1974). The magnification of the concept for use on a regional, national and supra-national scale is to remove all meaning from the original idea; a linear city stretching from Birmingham through London across the Channel to Europe and along the Rhine belongs to the world of fantasy, if not to 'the stuff of nightmare'. Such suggestions do little justice to an elegant concept devised by Soria y Mata for the suburbs of Madrid. A linear form of limited extent for public transport corridors may prove to have a great potential in achieving local sustainable development.

Figure 7.23 African courtyard house. (a) Yoruba (b) Igbo (Dmochowski in Moughtin, 1988)

Chief Uzana Edigi's house

Key

- 1 Ogbe
- 2 Ikun-na-Aruerna
- 3 Ikun-na-Nogiukpo
- 4 Ikun-na-Aruiye
- 5 Enogie
- 6 Harem courtyard
- 7 Women's apartment – Ogua – Oderie

THE GRID PLAN

The grid plan has been used in a number of ways to structure the city: it has also been used with all three normative city models. The grid, for example, was used at Teotihuacan in Mexico to give form to a city as a religious symbol (see Figure 6.7). It has also had wide use as a tool for land subdivision in colonial cities and new towns, where it was used to express the technical demands of a machine aesthetic. In contrast, Frank Lloyd Wright in his project for Broadacres proposed a grid of high-capacity roads extending over the regional landscape with each family occupying one acre of land on which to build an extensible do-it-yourself family home (Lloyd Wright, 1958). Lloyd Wright, in extolling the virtue of the nomad, the pioneer and wide open spaces, while denigrating the old form of the city and ‘pig piling’ in high-rise buildings, was expressing his ideals of ‘back to nature’ and the organic city (Figure 7.24). The grid-iron is a versatile method of city structuring which can be used to give form to quite different values.

The grid plan can take five main forms:

- (1) The grid as a hierarchy of boxes, each nesting within one another.
- (2) The grid as a strict orthogonal geometrical figure, often called a ‘grid-iron plan’, or checker-board pattern.
- (3) The directional grid.
- (4) The triangular grid.
- (5) The grid as an informal lacework of paths.

When associated with cosmic symbolism, the grid is divided and sub-divided into boxes within boxes. The hierarchy of finer grids of nesting boxes found in South-east Asian cities express in physical terms an equally

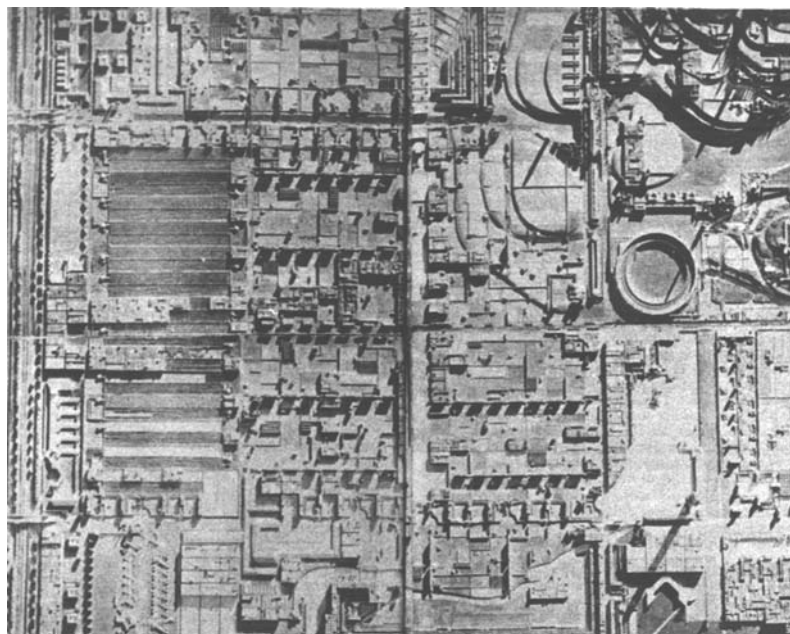


Figure 7.24 Broadacres (Lloyd Wright, 1958). © ARS, NY and DACS, London 1997

hierarchical system of religious and civil power, each level of authority having its own appropriate location, colour and building materials. The enclosures, gateways and symmetrical approaches to each box were imbued with a magical protection which was reinforced by the ceremonies used both to found the city and to sustain its socio-political structures. The geometry and geomancy, the foundation for the structure of the grid used in many ancient cities, has little relevance for the sustainable city of the twenty-first century, except as an artefact of great historical and archaeological value. The search for a symbol of sustainable city form lies in other directions.

The grid becomes a ‘grid-iron pattern’ when it is composed of standard square insulae similar to the standard structure used by the Romans for colonial settlements. In theory, the grid-iron plan permits the