

Rudolph (see Figure 6.6) and a series of explorations by Buckminster Fuller but also earlier proposals in the 1920s and 1930s by Modernists especially expressionists such as Sant'Elia. The 1969 City/State plan for Battery Park City (see Figure 8.33) is very much in this mould. As Rayner Banham suggested almost 30 years ago megastructures are design ideas of the past (Banham, 1976). Their attraction, however, persists. Some early twenty-first century buildings in China are close to the megastructure idea in concept. They strive to be vertical precincts.

Major references

- Banham, Reyner (1976). *Megastructure: Urban Structures of the Recent Past*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Mansfield, Howard (1990). *Cosmopolis: Yesterday's Cities of the Future*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Center for Policy Research.

A NOTE

Arcosanti, Arizona, USA: a prototype for a city in a building: a 'vision' going bad? (1969 – the anticipated completion date is 2030)

Arcosanti, near Scottsdale, Arizona is the brainchild of one person, Paolo Soleri. It is one of the smallest of the generic city-in-a-building schemes that he proposed. It represents the effort to bring to reality one of his many explorations on paper of a design for an energy and resource efficient city. These studies attempted to find an alternative to the consumption of the vast swaths of land taken up by urban sprawl and the resultant energy-consuming long commutes to and from work. (These commutes are considerably longer now than when Soleri was initiating his ideas.) Soleri's solution was to condense cities into single three-dimensional forms. The purpose was to eliminate the space taken up by cars in the typical American suburb. The city of the future, Soleri believed, should be much denser yet possess the social and activity mixture of the traditional city.

Arcosanti (see Figure 6.7) is being built to demonstrate Soleri's ideas. It has been designed to house from 1500 to 5000 people at a density of 215 to 400 people per acre (about 530 to 1000 people per hectare). It is located north of Phoenix on the edge of a valley surrounded by arid land vegetation. Today, the 'city' consists of half-completed buildings: apartments, businesses, production units, education facilities and also agricultural fields. In contrast to Arcosanti, which is modest in size, many of Soleri's proposals are double the height of the Empire State Building in New York and designed to house 500,000 people. They are all based on the concept of *arcology* (architecture + ecology).

Three principles form the basis of Soleri's arcology. He has described them in somewhat esoteric language. The first is *complexity*. Soleri believed that daily activities should