

TRANSITIONS: A Sanatorium on the Seaside

by Belén Hermida Rodríguez
Bachelor of Arts
Wellesley College
1986

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
June 1988

Signature of author.....

Belén Hermida Rodríguez
Department of Architecture
May 6, 1988

Certified by.....

Imre Halasz
Professor of Architecture
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by.....

William Hubbard
Chairman
Departmental Committee for Graduate Students

© Belén Hermida Rodríguez 1988

The author hereby grants to M.I.T. permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly copies of this document in whole or in part.

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY

JUN 3 1988

LIBRARIES

TRANSITIONS: A Sanatorium on the Seaside

by Belén Hermida Rodríguez

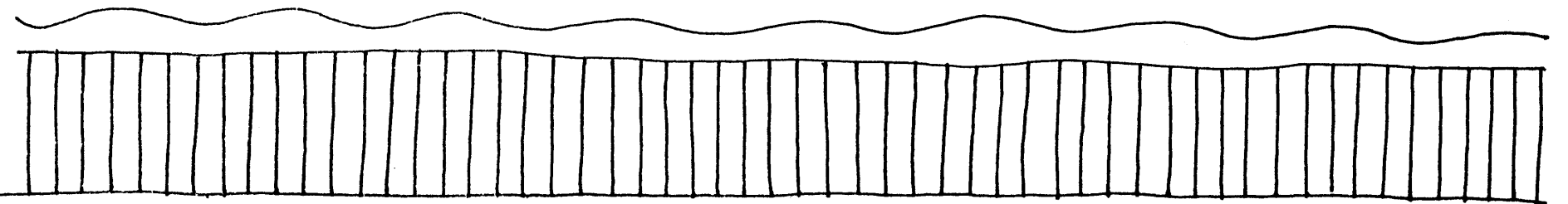
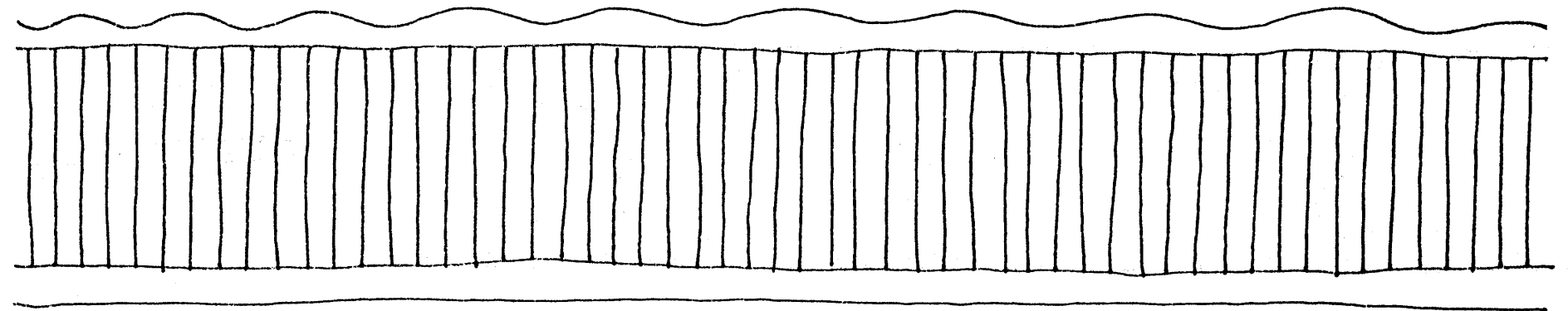
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE ON MAY 6, 1988, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

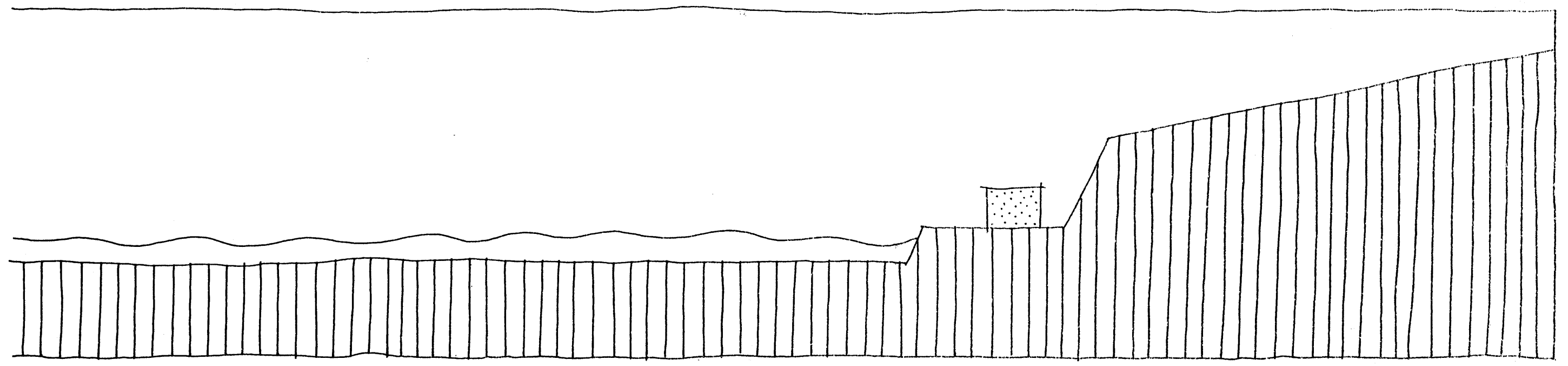
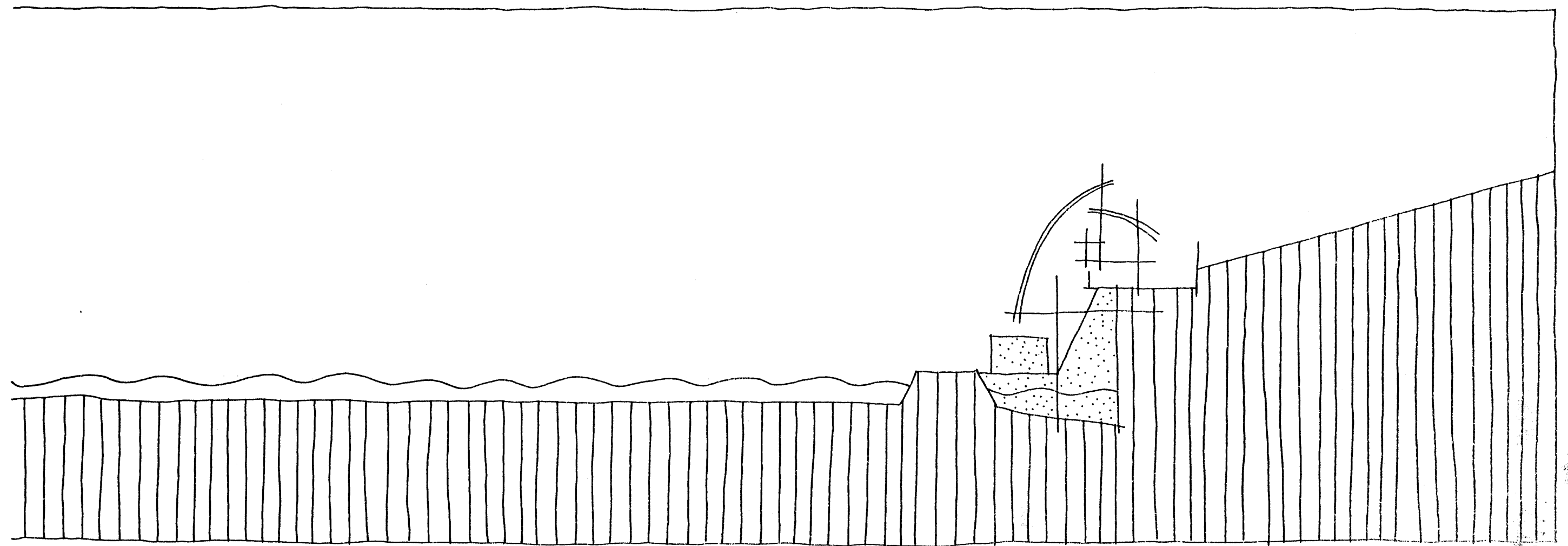
ABSTRACT

This thesis is about transitions: from sea to hill, from harbour to town, from illness to wellness, from life to death; it is about the passage of time. I chose a dramatic site, in the village where I have spent the past twenty-four summers, a place where the horizontality of the water and the verticality of the cliffs create immediate tension. The project combines a strong attraction to this particular site with a growing interest in the process of convalescence, that nebulous limit between illness and wellness, between madness and mental health. These two interests have become pivotal in the conceptual and formal development of this thesis.

In formal terms, the project consists of a staircase which establishes the physical connection between harbour and town. This wound in the wall generates a building, in this case a sanatorium, and a series of tidal pools.

Thesis Supervisor: Imre Halasz
Title: Professor of Architecture



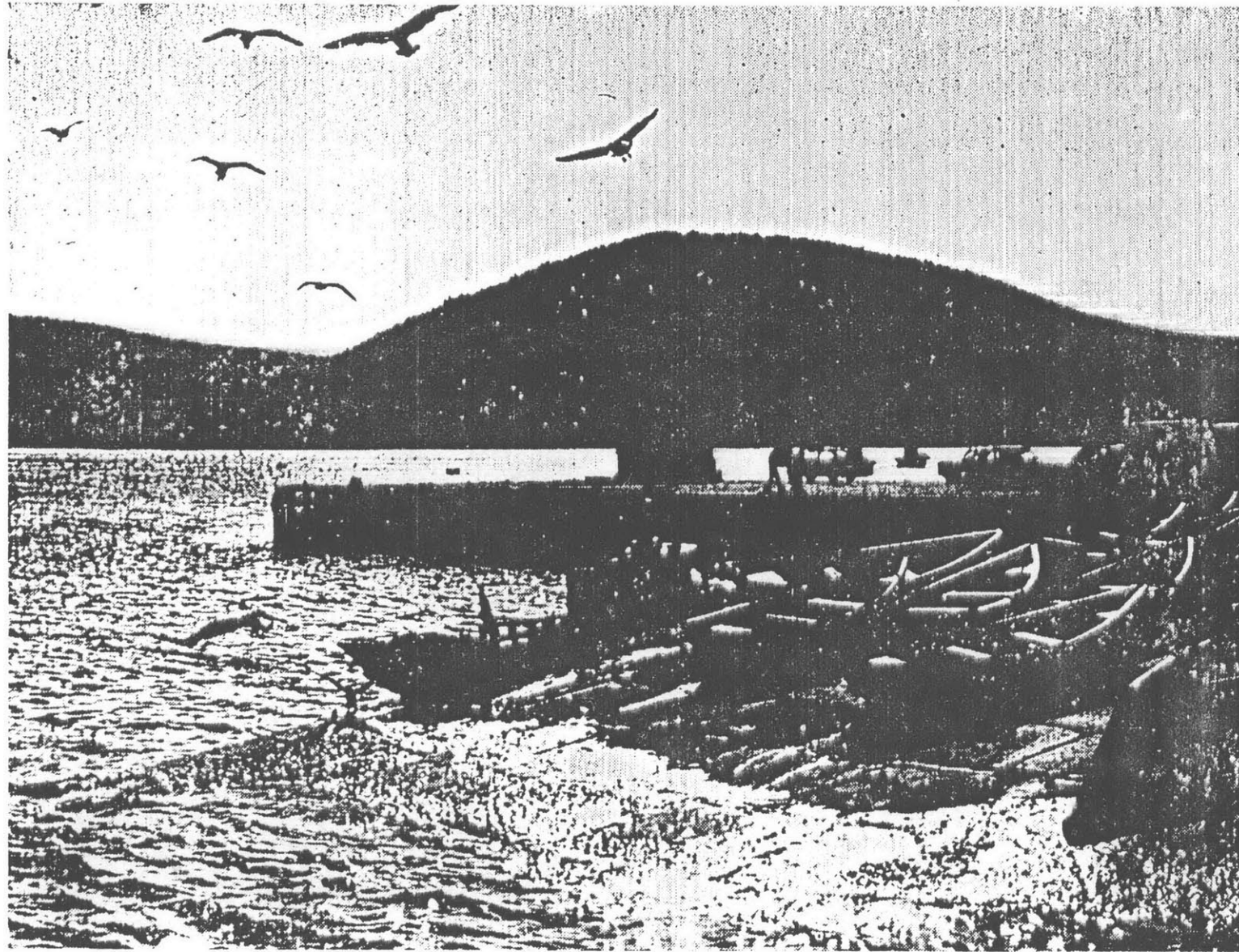


Hieronimus Bosch
Ship of Fools



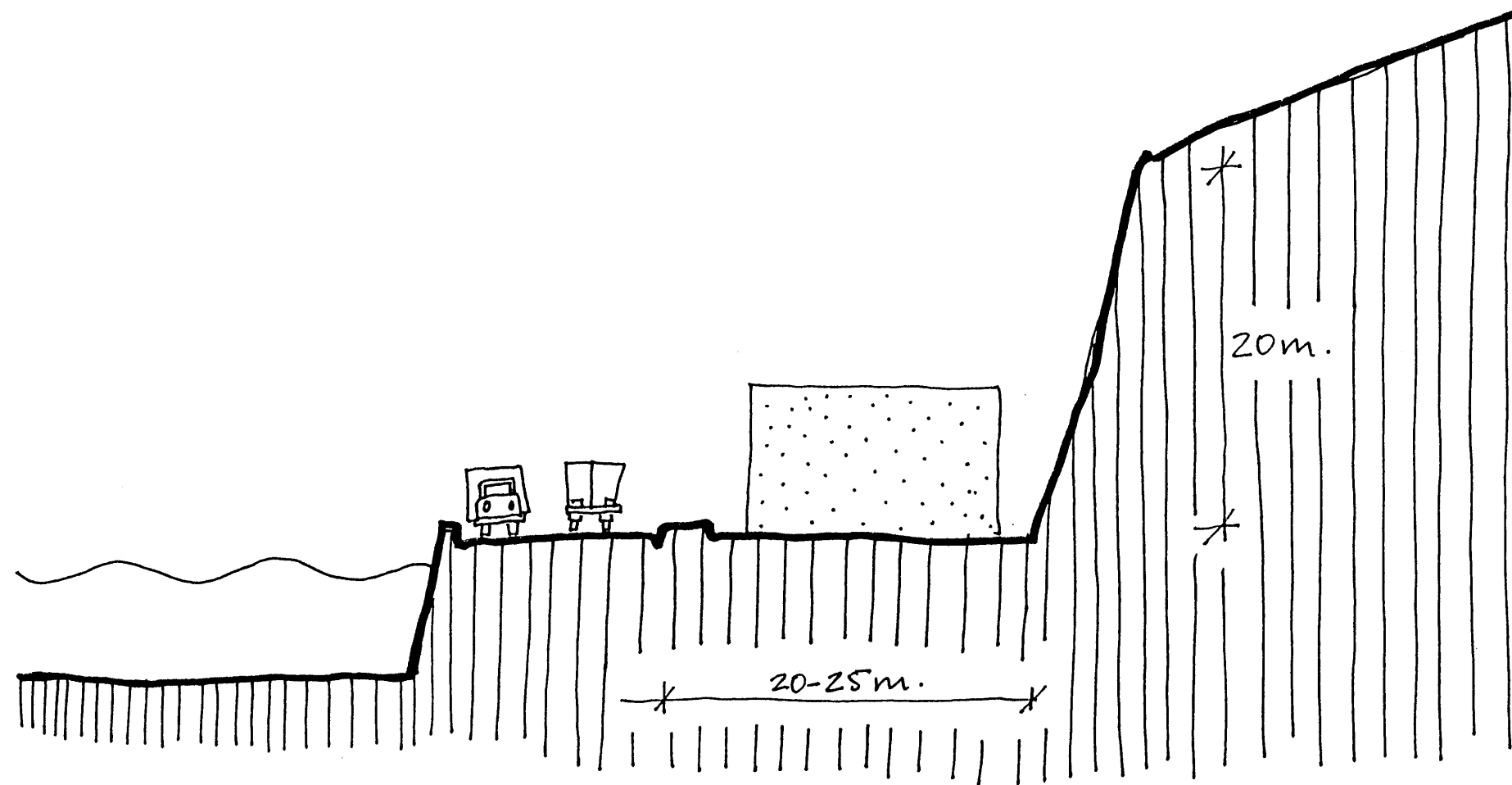
To the painter of modern life,
of course.

TABLE OF CONTENTS



p. 2	ABSTRACT
p. 7	TABLE OF CONTENTS
p. 8	TOPOGRAPHIC TRANSITION: Introduction
p. 10	CUDILLERO
p. 14	EL PEINE DEL VIENTO: The Combs of Wind
p. 36	TRANSITION OF THE BODY: Convalescence
p. 38	HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS
p. 42	THE ILLUSTRATION OF A DESIGN PROCESS: Introduction
p. 46	ELEMENTS OF THE SITE: Natural and Artificial
p. 62	ANALYSIS: Sketches from Journals
p. 112	SYNTHESIS
p. 120	CONCLUSION: The Proverbial Primer
p. 122	BIBLIOGRAPHY
p. 126	SOME FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS . . .

TOPOGRAPHIC TRANSITION: Introduction



Back in September, I found myself, once and for all, in search of a pretext. I still didn't quite know how to find the appropriate parameters to design, how to reduce variability, how to approach any of the multiple alternatives without being suspiciously arbitrary. *When does a project stop being authentic to become idiosyncratic? How could it be highly personal without being capricious?*

These questions bothered me intensely. At the time, my mind was behaving like a sponge, absorbing information in a passive way; I was collecting words, without transforming them. Needless to say, I was in a pretty chaotic state of mind, very confused, buried under an avalanche of words, words so overused they meant nothing to me anymore.

I had, indeed, an overdose of information. And it seemed that in order to evolve, I had to go back in time, in search of the proverbial primer.

I chose a site located inside the *ría* of Cedeira, a small village bathed by the Atlantic Ocean--a bit of asphalt, a lot of vegetation, no revered architectural statements, and of a manageable size, so that any decision I might make would have an impact on both the building and the town level. There are two grade levels to this site: one is a long and narrow platform at harbour level, the other a slope at the town level, facing southwest. Situated between them are a natural stone wall (20 m. high) and the road to the harbour, forming the limit between hill and sea.

The initial purpose was to connect physically these two grade levels, to facilitate the pedestrian movement from the sea to the hill, from the harbour to the town and, perhaps, to suggest an alternative direction in the growth of the town, towards the harbour. This public walkway would appear at the tension point between horizontal and vertical, between water and stone.

After choosing the site, I began looking for a programmatic reinforcement to what thus far was merely regarded as a staircase. I read the zoning regulations for the area and, after considering the few options, I settled for a center for convalescence. The program for this sanatorium would include three areas to be developed: the nursing area (50-100 beds), the clinical area and the recreational area, plus living quarters for 10-12 nuns, a small chapel, a library, a parking lot and a plum orchard. It would closely follow the requirements for a sanatorium of this size stipulated by the local branch of The Ministry of Health of Spain.

The intention was to explore the parallel between this topographic transition and the transition of the body, two journeys from the horizontal to the vertical. In fact, throughout the semester, these two transitions have evolved in a reciprocal manner; they have informed each other, sometimes overlapping, sometimes tightly intertwined.

Like the convalescent, I had to reconsider my perceptions. Intuitively, I was not striving for invention, but for discovery. *The main concern was how to build in a certain context, natural or artificial, in harmony with our life and time, without rejecting the past for the sake of novelty.* It was not a chance to test my volcanic imagination, nor a dilemma between *traditional* and *contemporary* approaches--it was not a matter of replication, of rearranging and distorting existing elements, but rather transformation. Precedents in dealing with climate, site and materials had to be carefully considered and, eventually, manipulated.

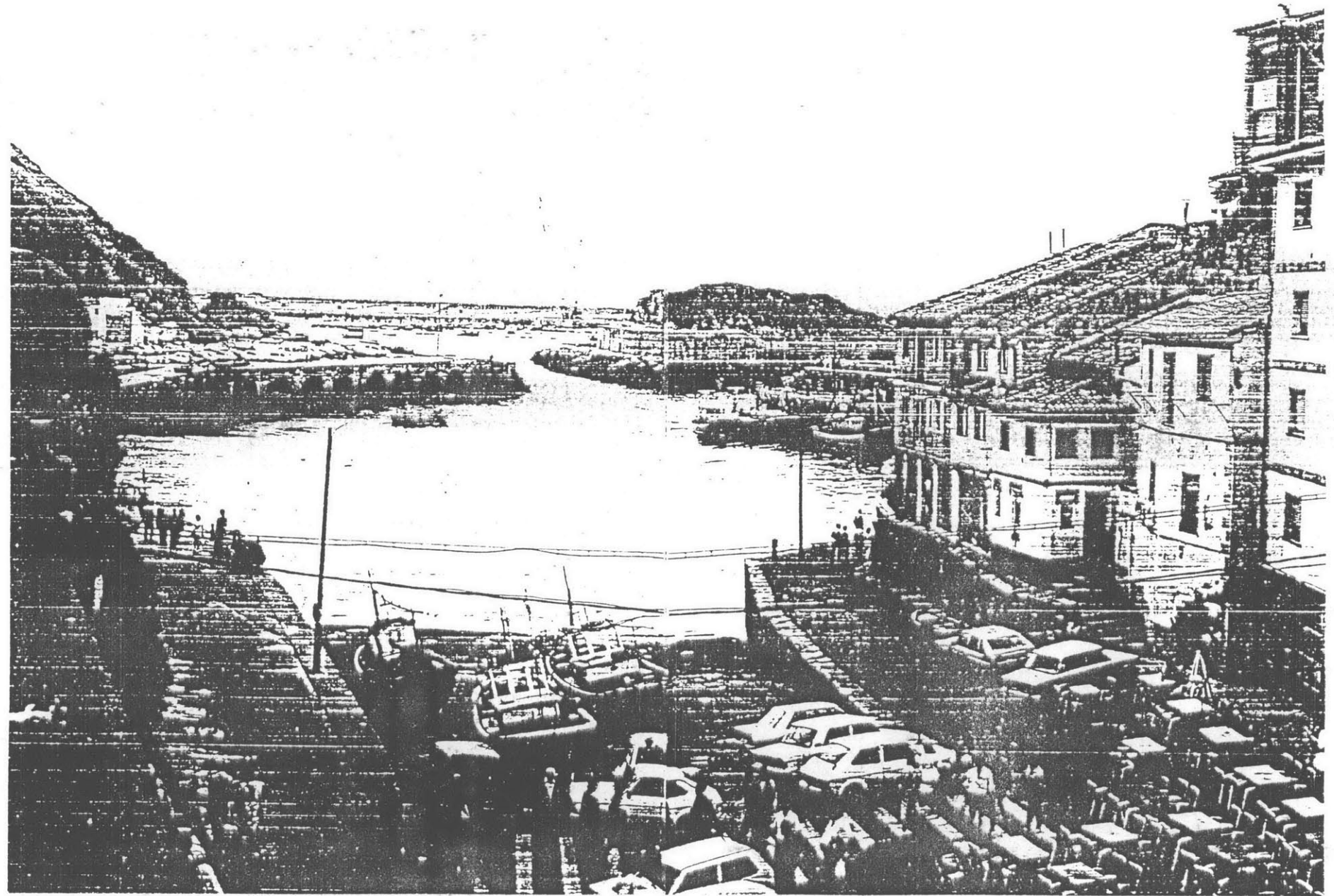
So I began by observing the context.

CUDILLERO

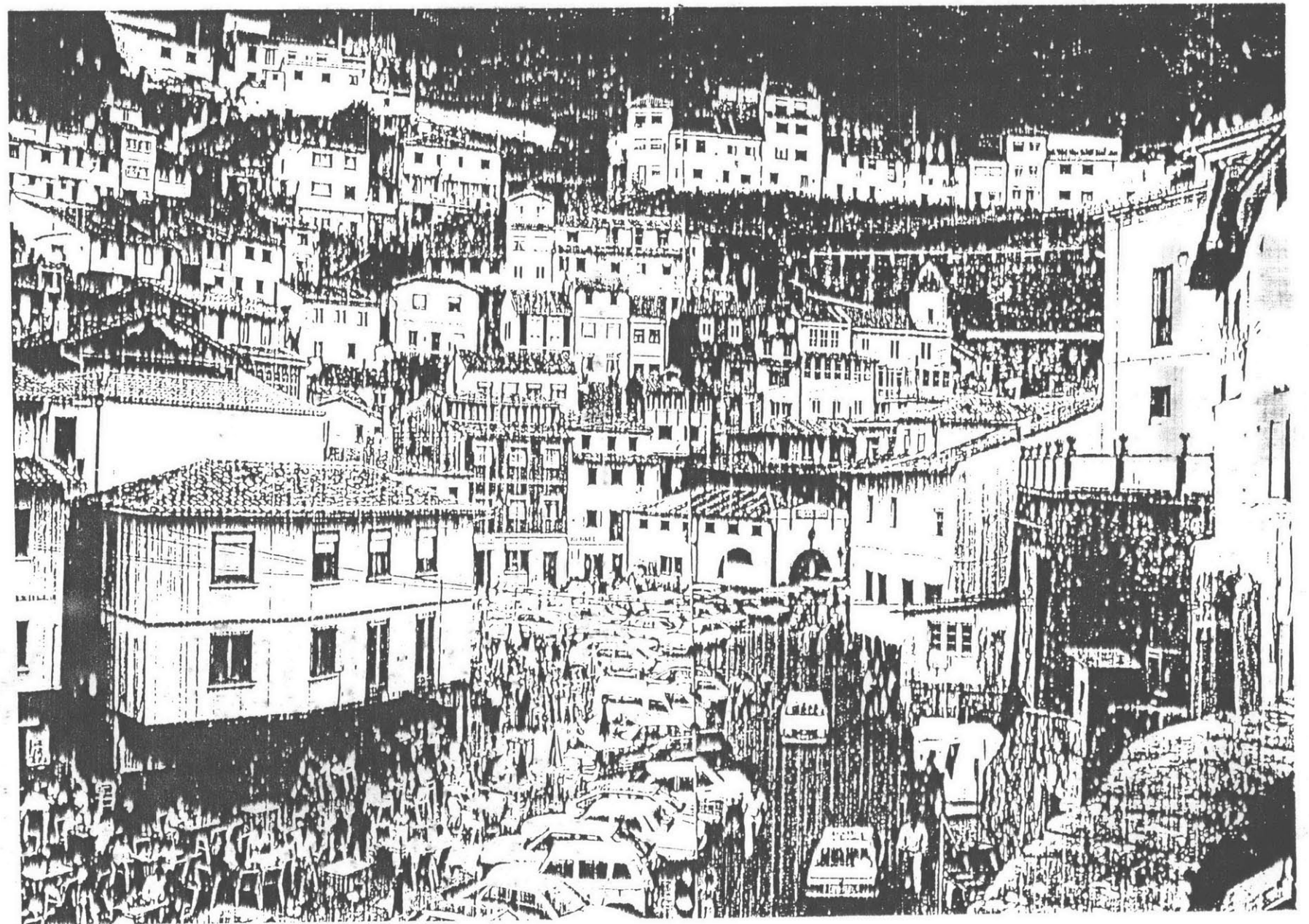
Cudillero is a small village located in Asturias, in the north coast of Spain. I visited it the summer of 1987.

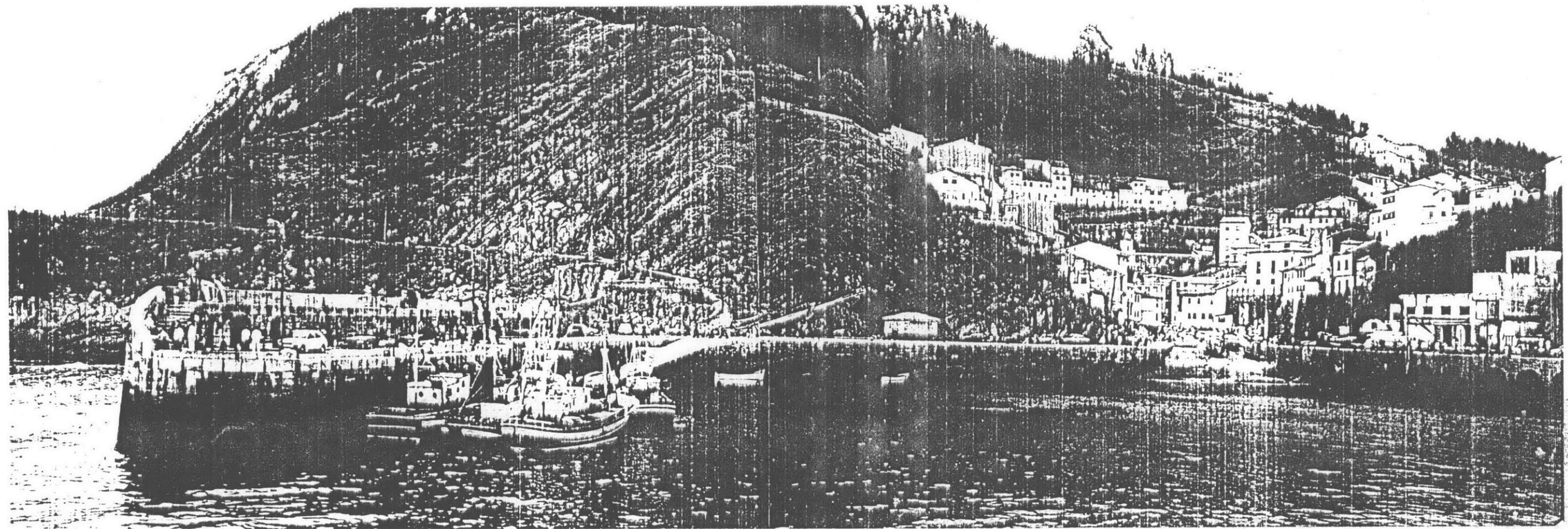
A tiny settlement, Cudillero is a splendid and beautiful example of non-planned urbanism. Fishing, the main activity, has simply determined the shape of the village. The *Plaza del Puerto*, the main square, collects both the swirling arrival road, built on the bed of an old river, and the ramp from the sea, built to bring fish and boats ashore. The ground level on the north side has a covered walkway that protects against the rain and allows fishermen to store and repair equipment. The south façade is built over the cliffs and retaining walls, with steep access stairs. Although small in plan, the square opens generously in section. The fish market is located in this square, while the houses have been built around it, moving up the steep hills, forming an amphitheatre open to the square, its stage, but, ultimately, to the sea.

This symbiosis between sea and town, between its form and its function, is what struck me most about Cudillero.



left: view towards the sea.
right: view towards the *Plaza del Puerto*.



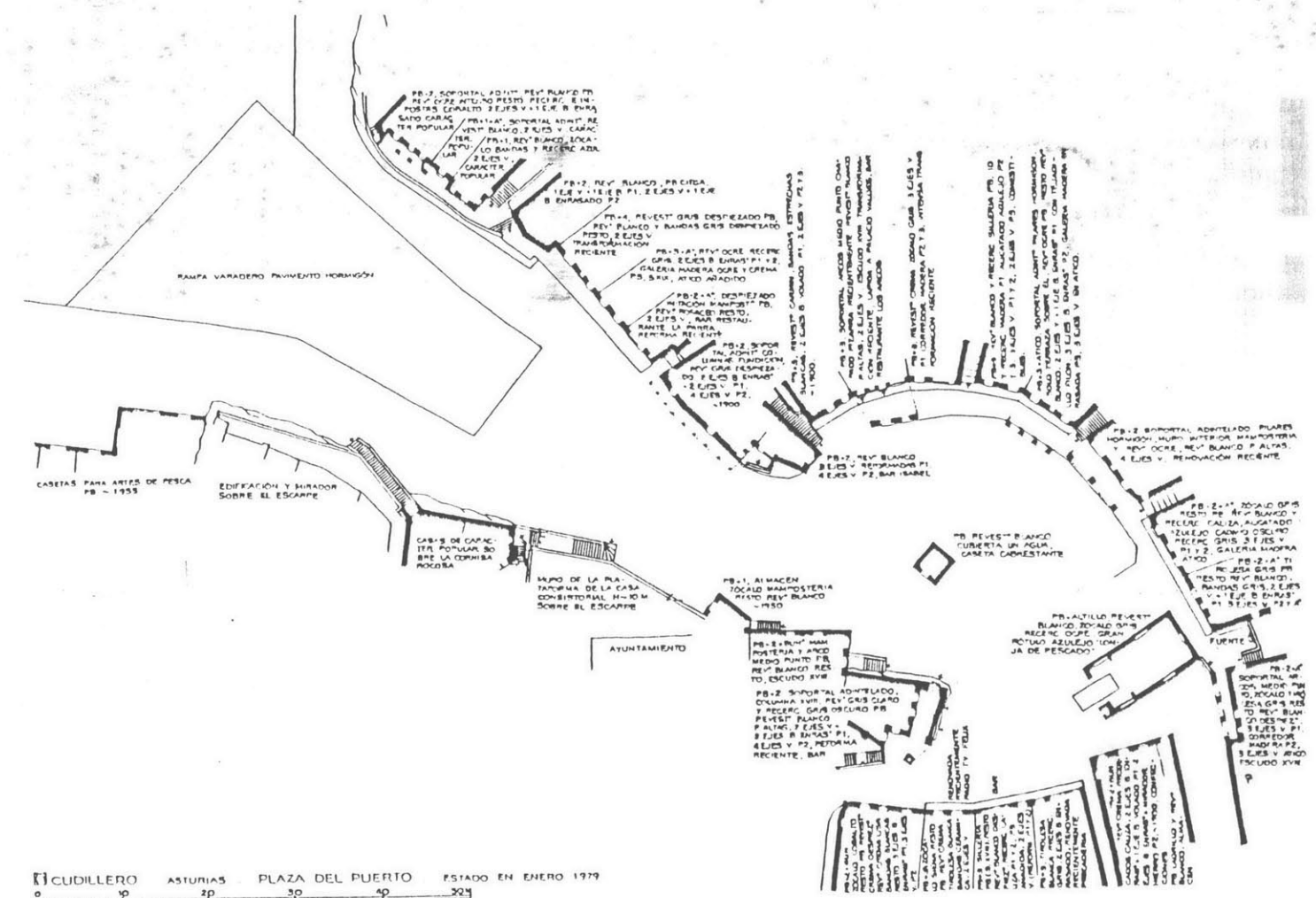


above: view of Cudillero from the new harbour.

right: Site plan. Aerial view. *Plaza del Puerto*, plan.
Drawings by J.L. García Fernández.

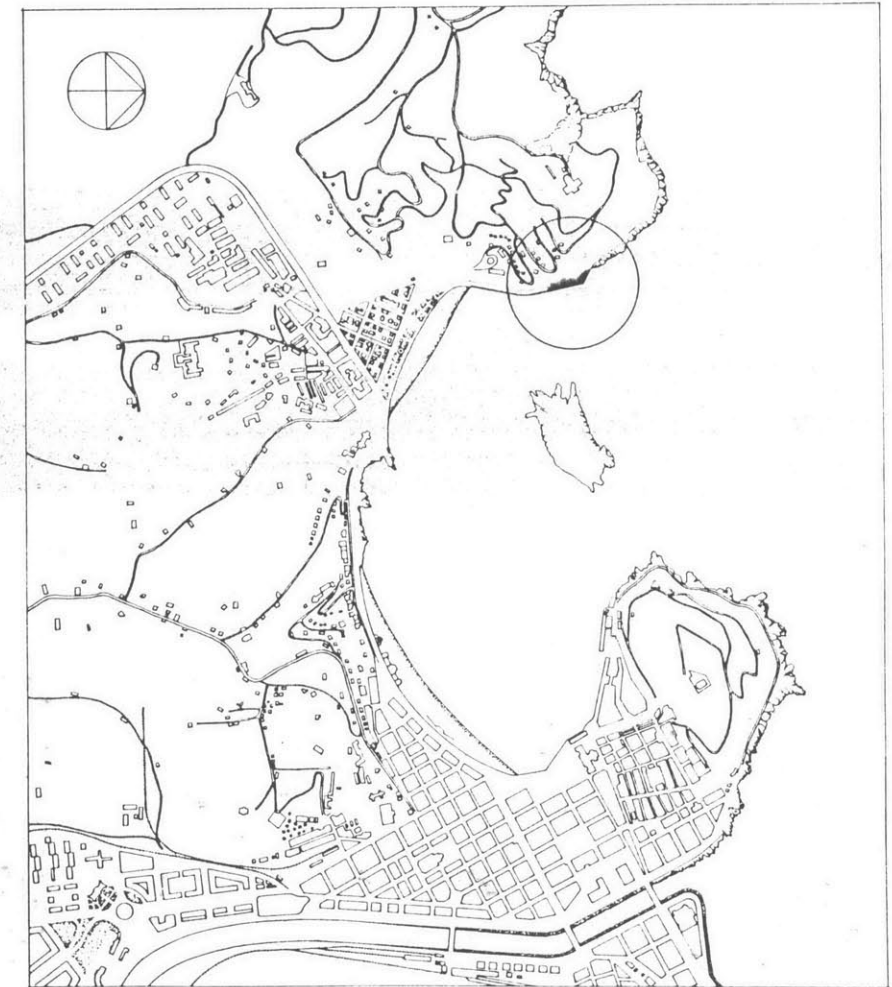
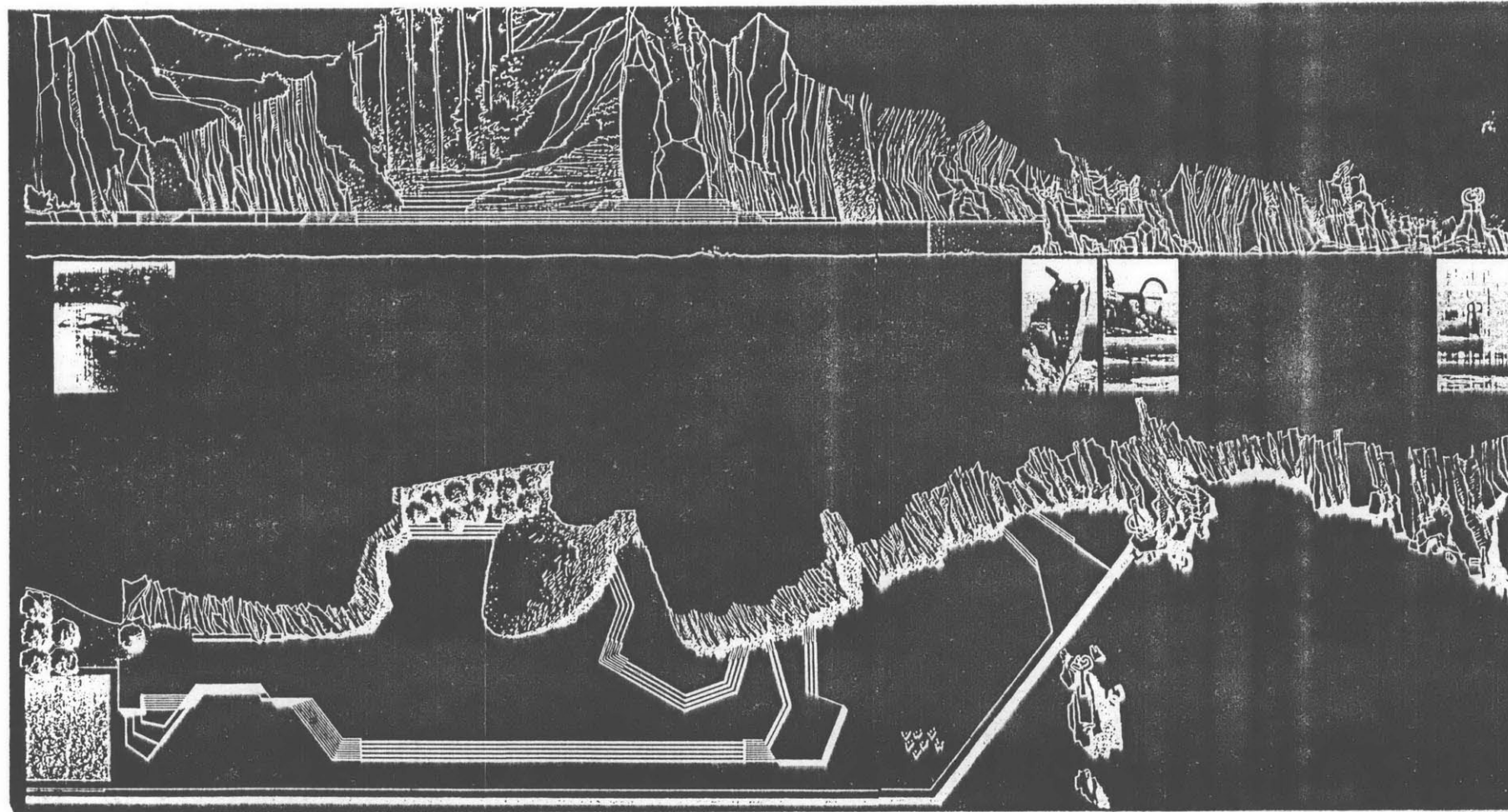


□ CUDILLERO ASTURIAS PLANO 1970
 1 RAMPA. 2 PLAZA DEL PUERTO. 3 PLAZA DE LA IGLESIA. 4 AYUNTAMIENTO.



□ CUDILLERO ASTURIAS PLAZA DEL PUERTO ESTADO EN ENERO 1979

EL PEINE DEL VIENTO: The Combs of Wind

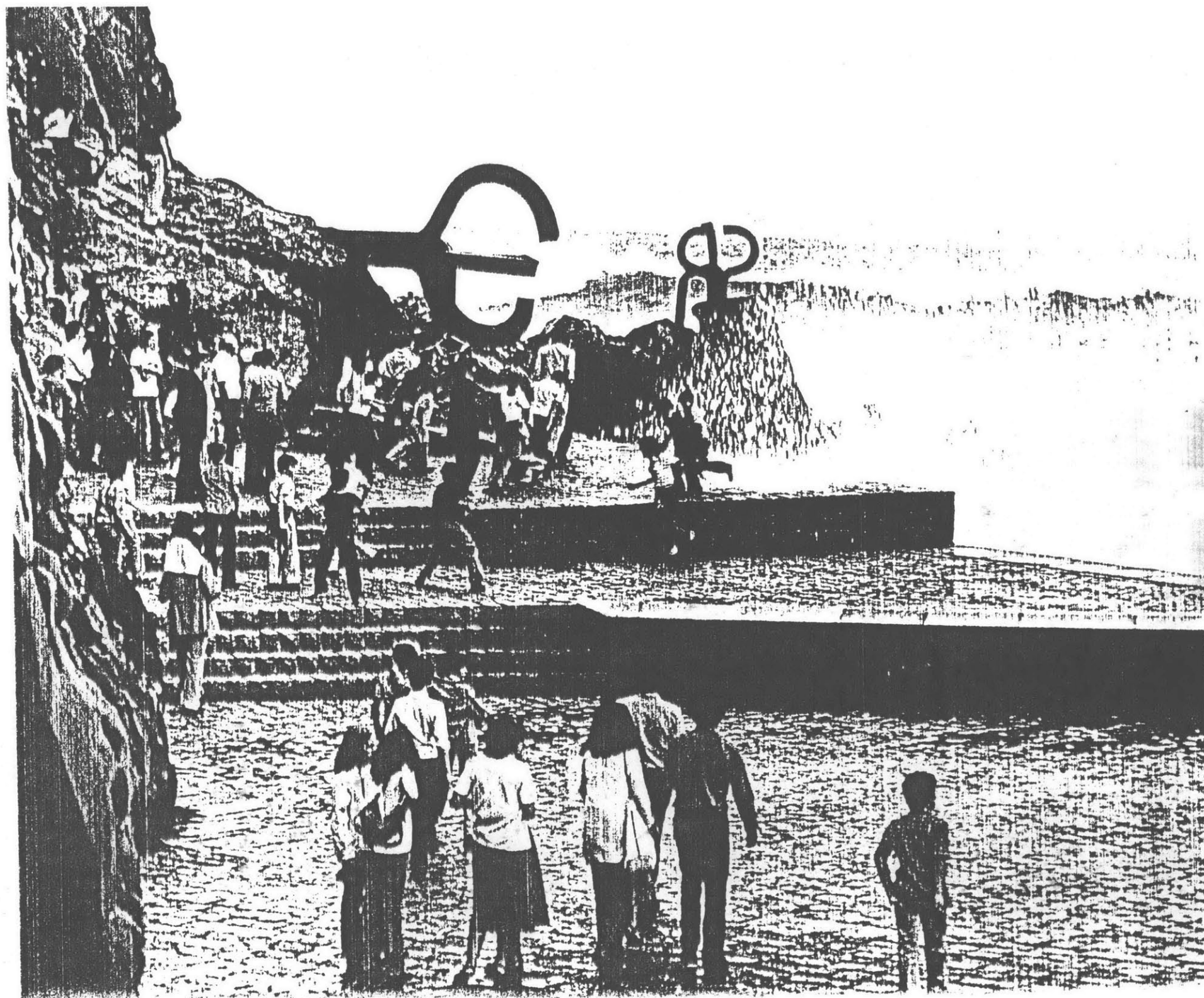


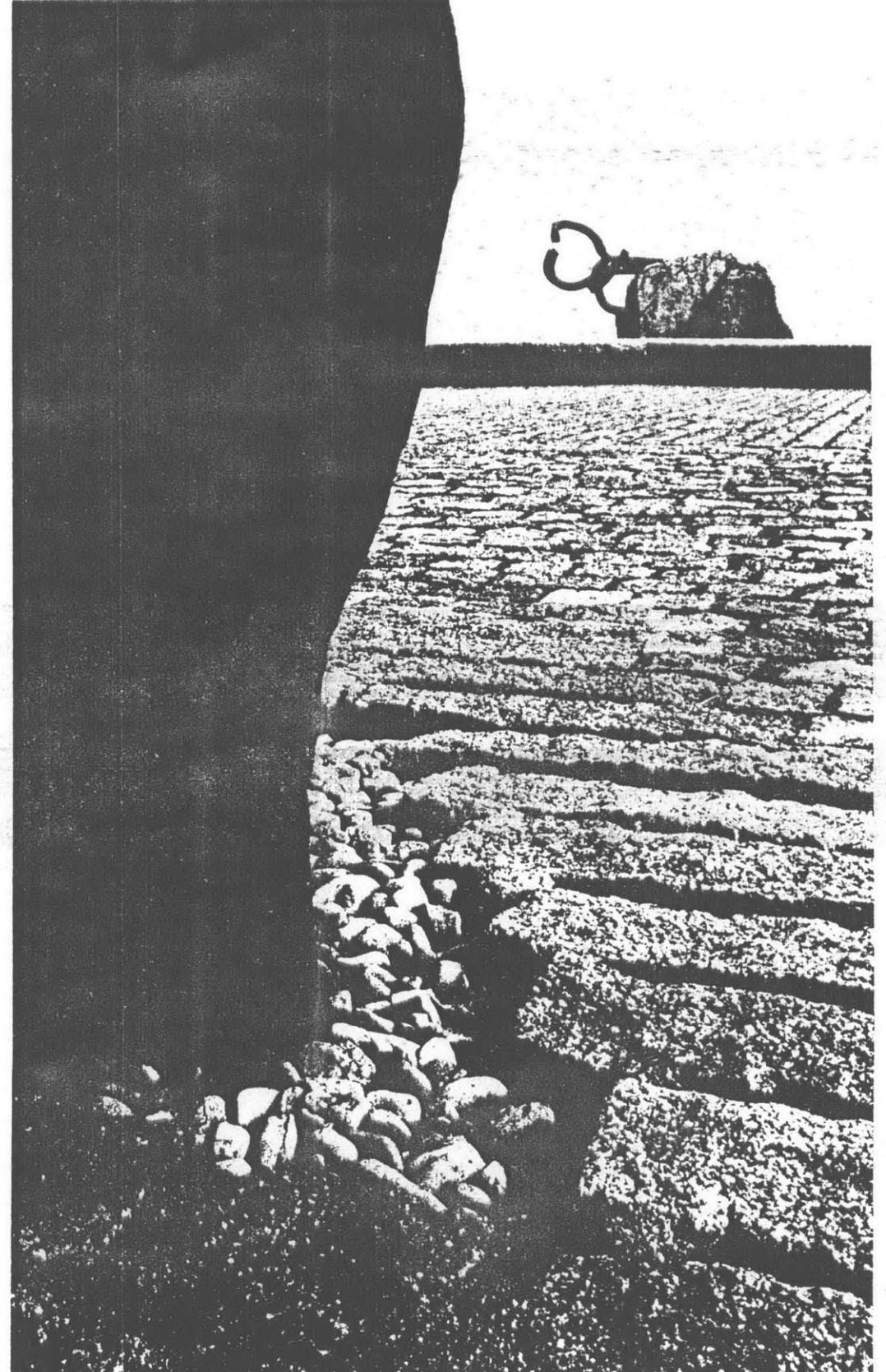
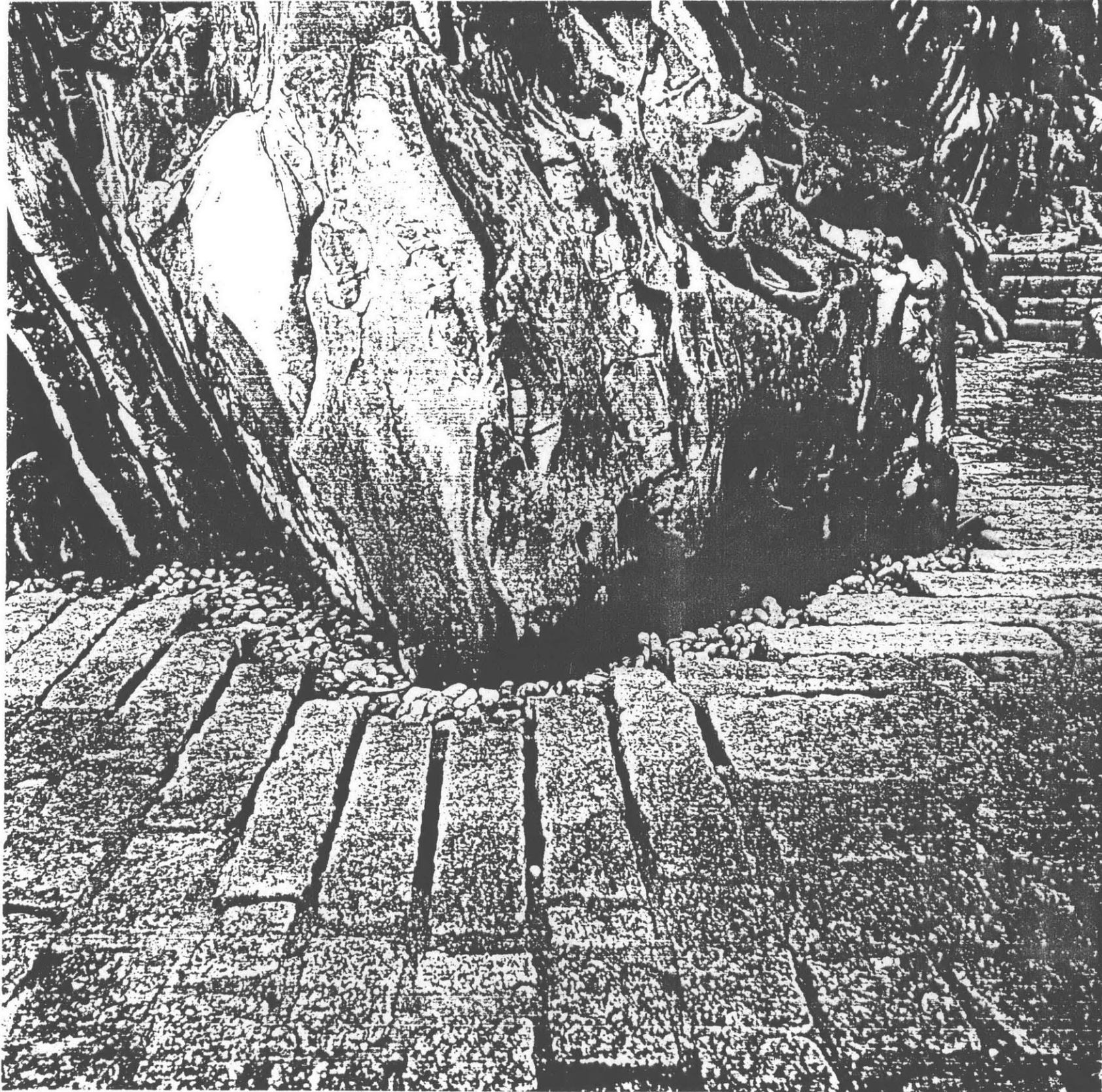
San Sebastián: *Plaza del Tennis*, plan, elevation, site plan.

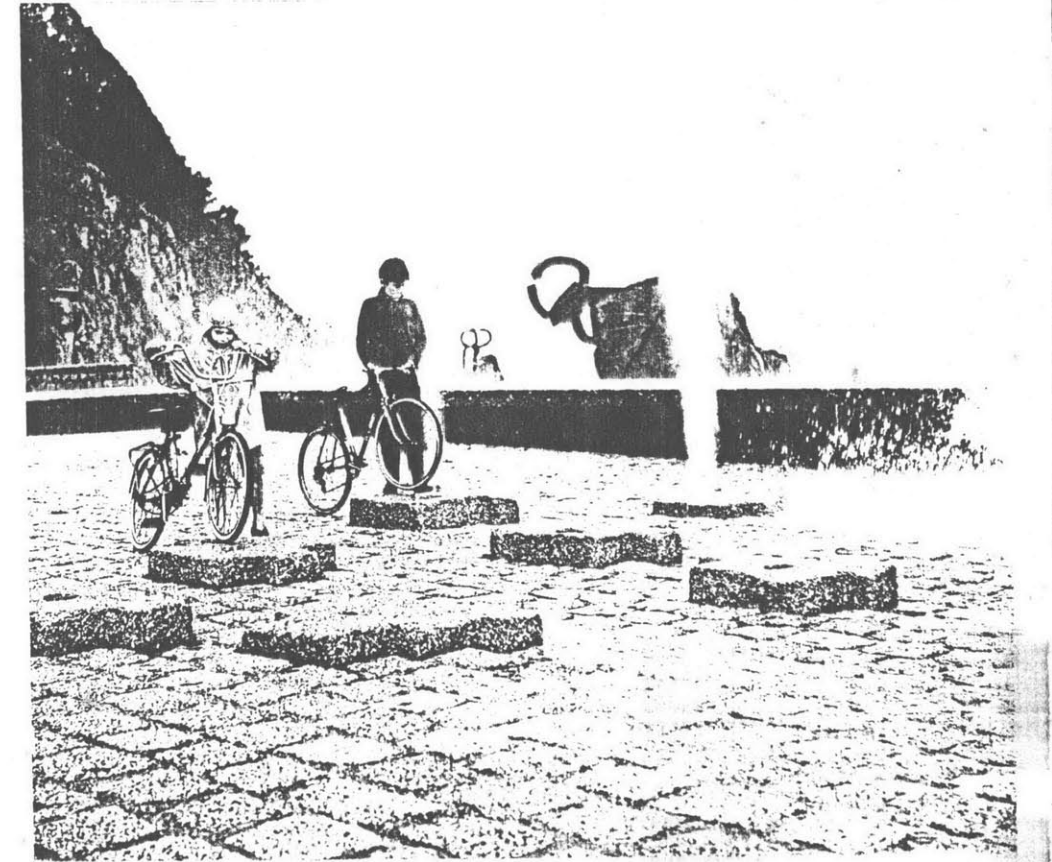
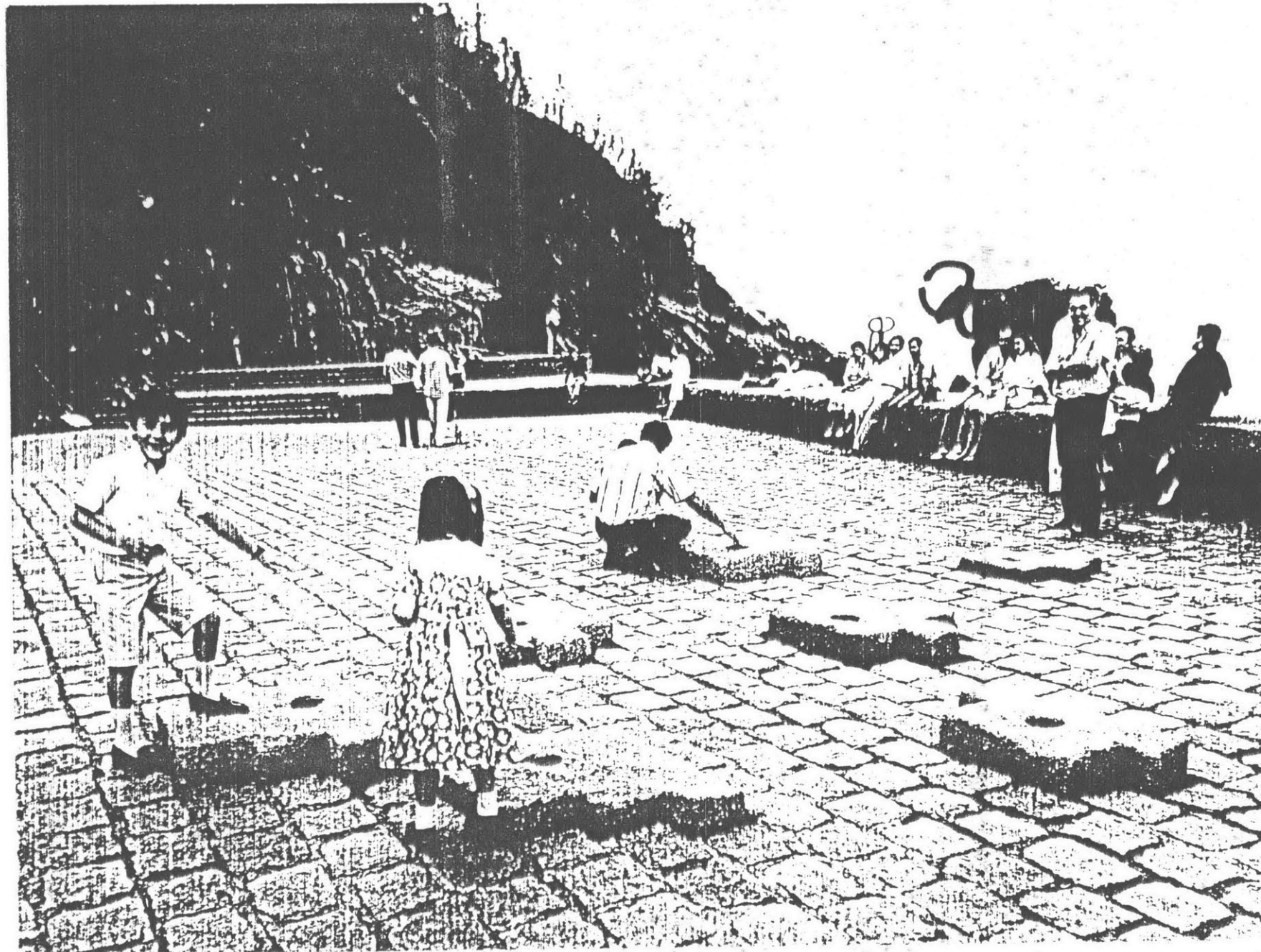
I visited San Sebastián, the capital of one of the Basque provinces and a former royal summer resort, many years ago.

San Sebastián has developed at the foot of a mountain and along the *Playa de la Concha*, a spectacular bay facing the Atlantic Ocean. There is a promenade along the beach which finishes with the *Plaza del Tenis*, an ocean vantage point dramatically located between air, rocks and water. The *Plaza del Tenis*, designed by Basque architect Luis Peña Ganchequi, consists of a series of platforms and stairs, meant as both the culmination of the promenade and as the backdrop for the *Peines del Viento*, the Combs of the Wind, designed by Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida. The three Combs sit on the rocks, between air and water, carrying on an enigmatic conversation. They are like open hands, sometimes challenging, sometimes surrendering themselves to the erratic and voluble wind to which they are dedicated. The austerity of the materials, pink granite for the plaza and rusted steel for the sculptures, accentuates the qualities of the sea at this point, palpitating like a dormant volcano, and captures the nature of the Basque people, sober and incredibly tough.

This site as a synthesis of the sea and its people is what struck me most about this place.



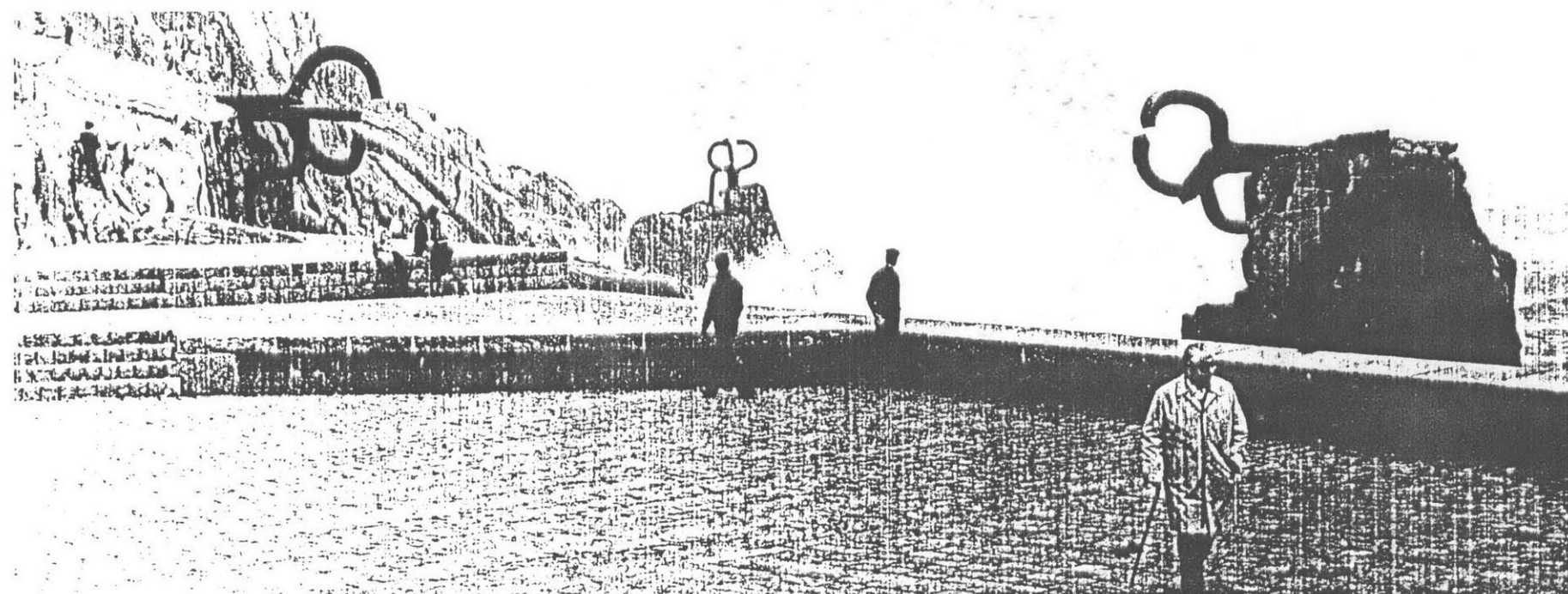


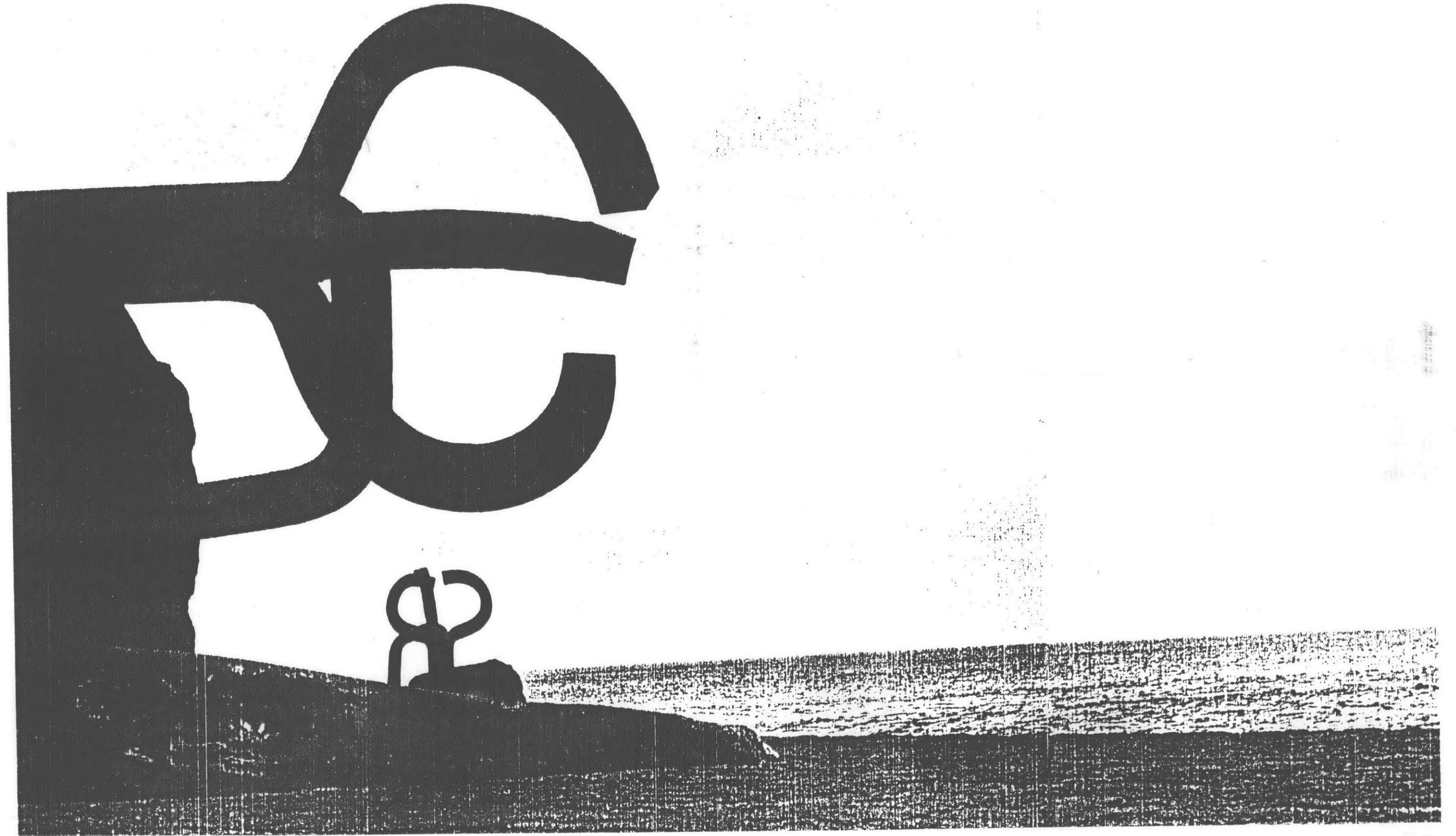


The water flows into the former sump over which the *Plaza del Tenis* is built, and emerges as watersprouts through special apertures in the pavement.

*This place is the origin of all . . .
.It is the true author of these
works. I discovered it and then
paid an homage to it . . . That place
captured my imagination before I
knew I was going to do something
in it . . .much before I became a
sculptor . . .much before I finished
my High School . . . I could be
fourteen then wondering where the
waves would come from . . .*

Eduardo Chillida







Low tide in Combarro, Pontevedra.

BUILDING IN GALICIA: Longa noite de pedra



Called *Finisterre* (the End of the World) by the Romans, the actual region of Galicia occupies the northwest corner of Spain, being the most occidental part of continental Europe.

The four Galician provinces (La Coruña, Lugo, Orense and Pontevedra) sit on the oldest massif of the Iberian peninsula. Geologically, the western part of this massif is mostly composed of granite and gneiss, the eastern of slate and quartzite. Both granite and gneiss deteriorate under the action of water. Because of the humid climate, the mountains have been slowly transformed into undulating shapes: a succession of valleys and gentle hills which, along with the persistent rain and the green vegetation, characterize the Galician landscape.

The north coast of Spain, of which Galicia occupies the western part, constitutes a rather jagged edge, due to the abrasive action of the Atlantic Ocean and the proximity to the sea of a

parallel chain of mountains, the *Cordillera Cantábrica*. A natural stone wall of variable height stretches for about 600 kilometers along the coast, alternating with sandy beaches, forming a dynamic limit between land and sea. Peculiar to the Galician coast, though, is the phenomenon of the *rías gallegas*, commonly considered a small version of the Norwegian fjords, where the tongues of land and water reciprocate. In the *rías*, the sea recedes quite a bit at low tide, unveiling large planes of white sand, resulting in about a four to six meter drop in the water level between high and low tides.




Due to the proximity of the sea, the climate is temperate but rainy, sometimes windy and always humid. These conditions create a dense green layer covering the slopes. The rich vegetation includes pine groves, oak and chesnut forests, orchards and vineyards. There are also a few imported palmtrees, and thousands of

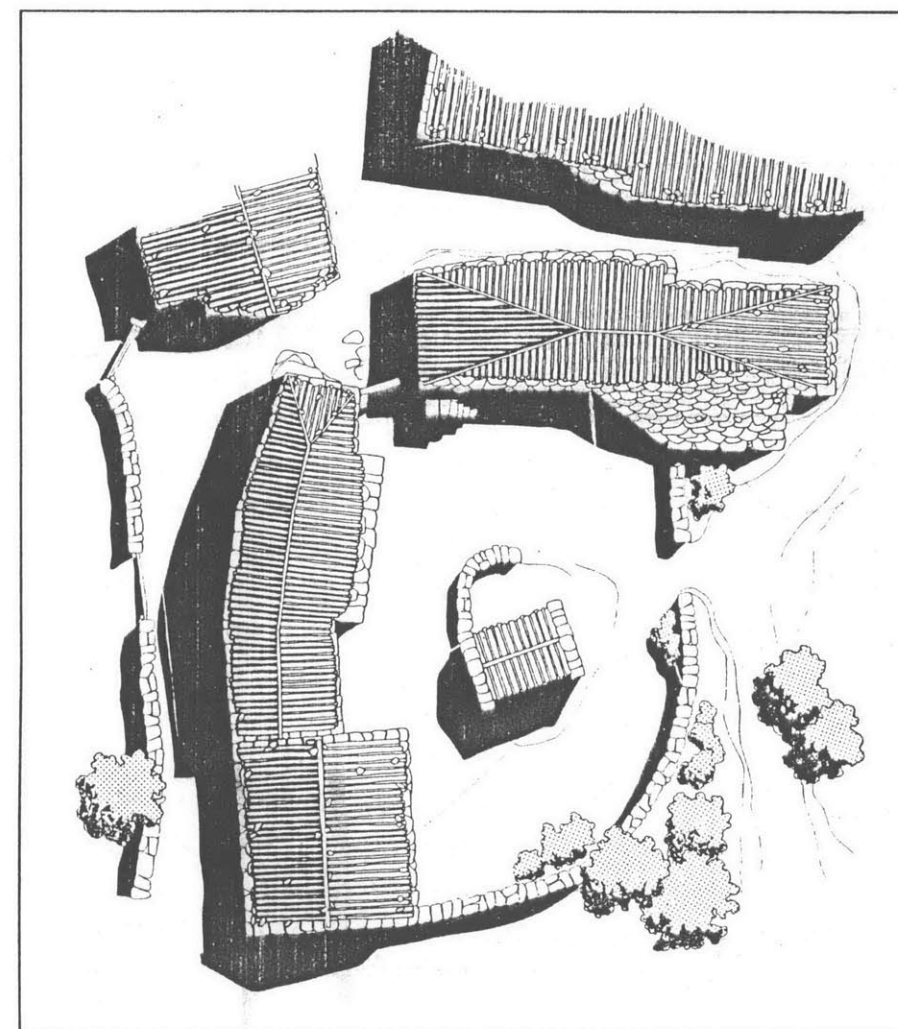
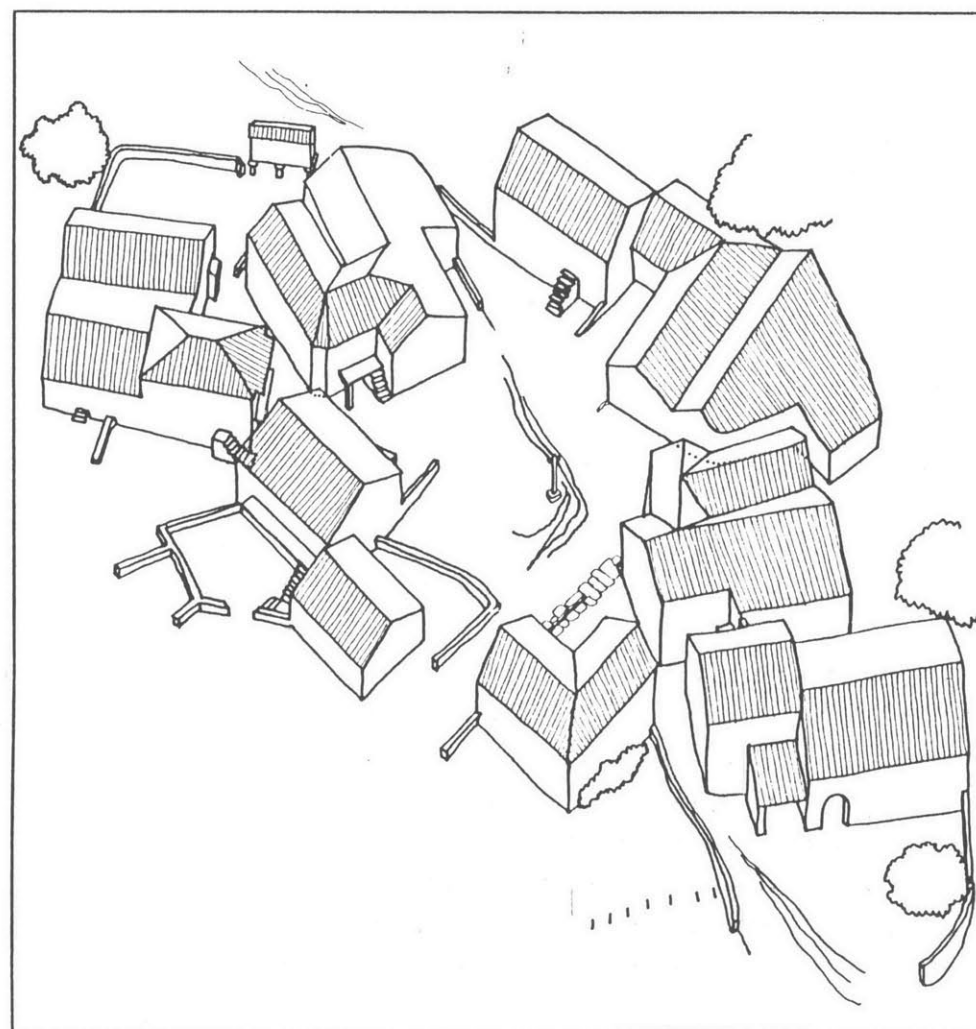
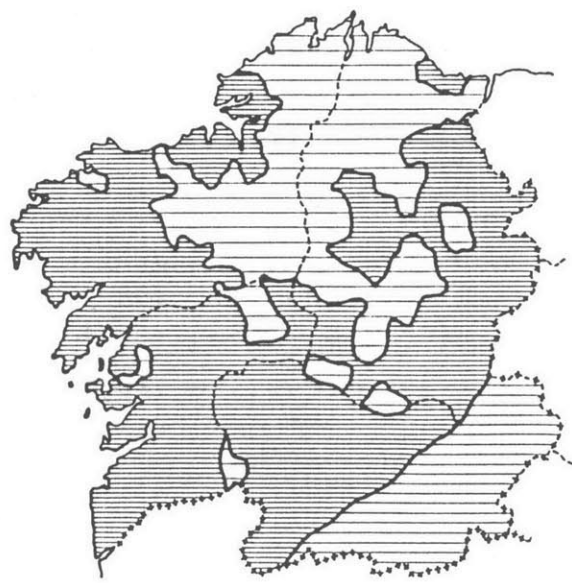
bluish eucalyptus trees, not at all autochthonous, but rapidly invading and eroding the Galician landscape. These areas of trees intertwine with heather, twins and ferns, as well as with pastures and agricultural areas.

The density of the population is rather high, compared to other areas of Spain: it is dispersed in villages and tiny settlements, *aldeas*, scattered along the slopes. The racial origin of Galicians is Celtic. For the obvious geographic reasons, it is a land of sailors and fishermen. They have a reputation for being very attached to their land. In fact, even when they have been forced to migrate, they long to return. They are dreamy and nostalgic people, maintaining a healthy balance between what is perceived through the senses and what inhabits their reveries.

"Longa noite de pedra" (Long night of stone), title of a poem by Celso Emilio Ferreiro.

ALDEAS. DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION

-  Small *aldeas*
-  Large *aldeas*, relatively distant from each other.
-  Intense dispersion of population, along with the *aldeas*.



A complete and exhaustive study of Galician architecture was beyond the scope of this thesis. Still, I would like to mention briefly a few things about local technologies and materials, accompanied by a graphic description of the most significant architectural elements.

Granite is the material most frequently used in vernacular architecture. Galicians have carried on a tradition of stone carving for centuries, not only for the construction of cathedrals, monasteries and *pazos* (17-18th century villas), but in popular architecture as well, for their houses. Wood is used in interior partitions and floors, in verandas, glazed-in balconies, window frames, shutters and doors.

The need for protection against wind and rain has dictated, in a spartan manner, the volumes, the size of openings and the roof shapes. In the exterior, the building is a volume of stone, usually oriented towards the South. The openings in the stone walls are usually

small, larger in the coastal areas. Windows are placed in plumb with the exterior line of the wall, to prevent water leakage; when it rains, the water washes past the windows. The shutters are placed in the interior of the window panels. The roofs usually have a low pitch, with minimal overhang, the ridge parallel to the main facade. The wooden rafters are supporting irregular slate slabs or terra-cotta tiles.

To protect against rain, two elements have been developed: the covered walkway and the *galería*, a glazed-in balcony.

The covered walkway appears at ground level. It is always made of stone and, when made up of arches, rather low. Although for public use, it belongs to the adjacent houses; their owners use it for storage.

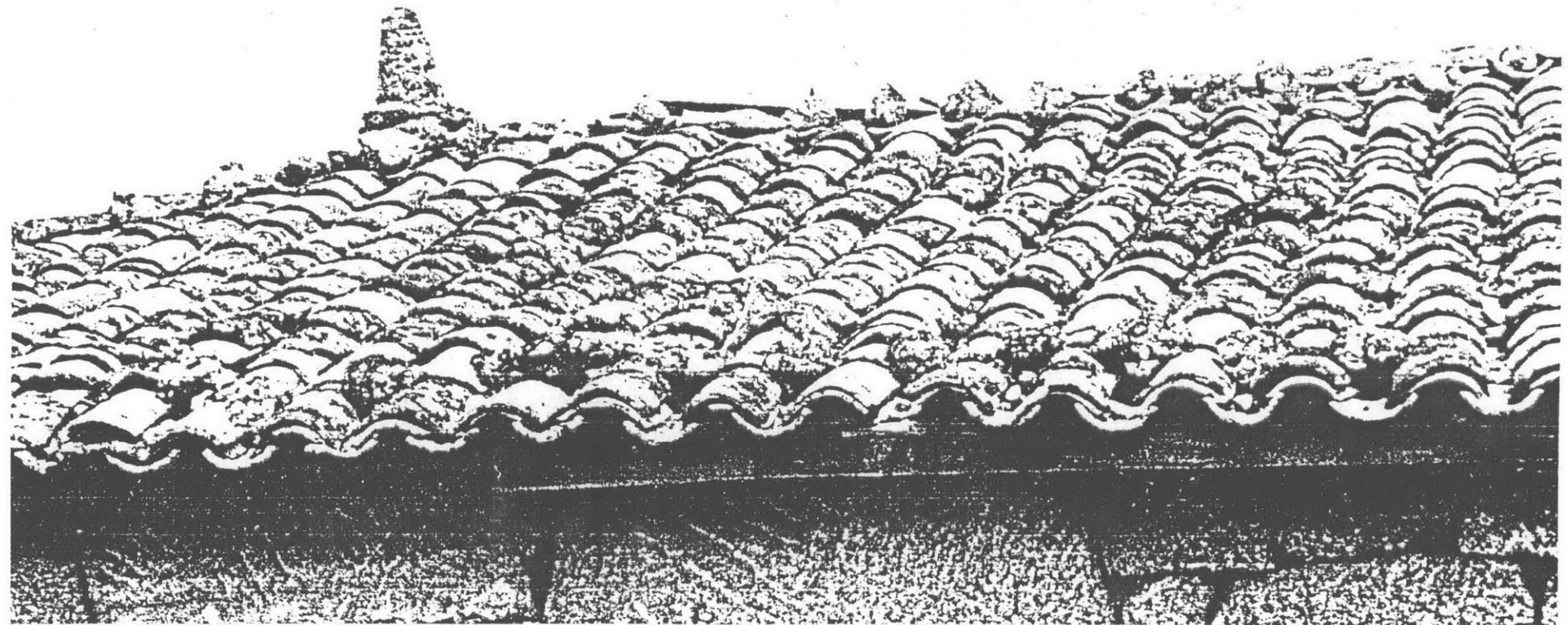
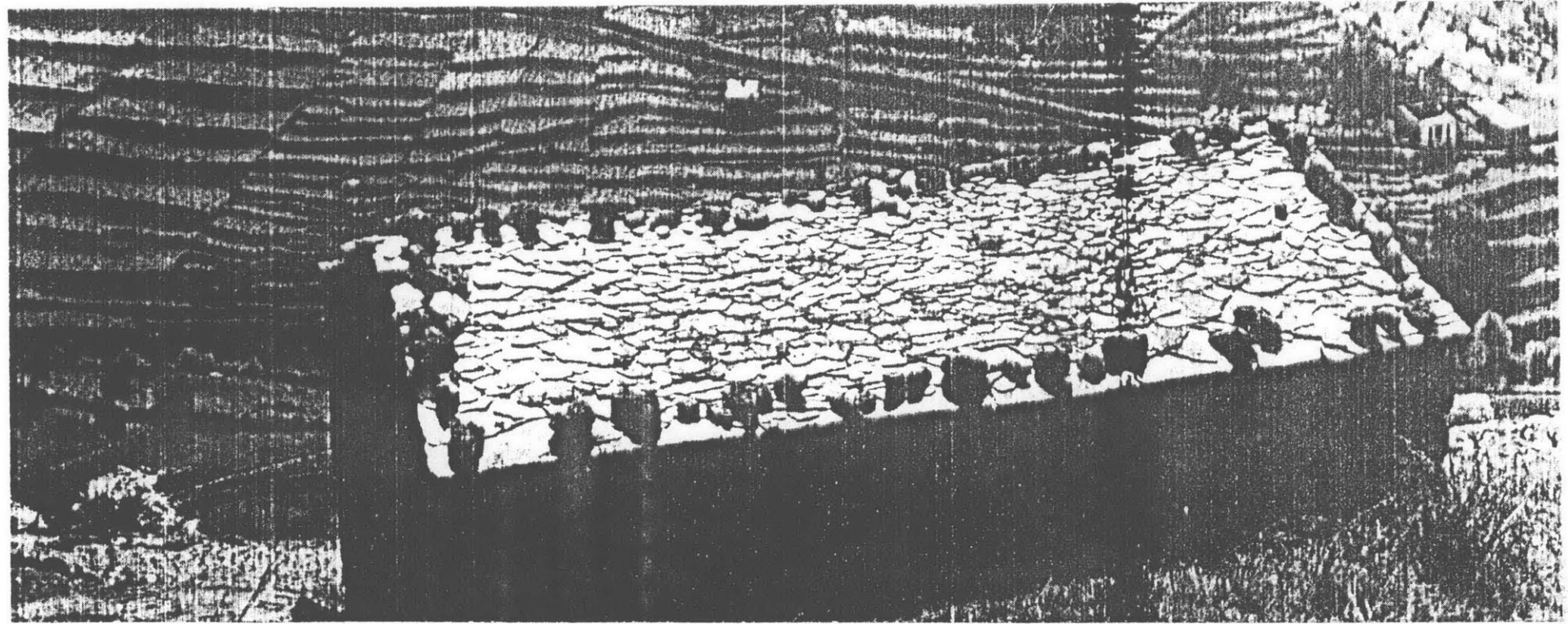
The *galería* appears in the upper floors alternating with balconies as facade elements. They are built in wood and usually painted white.

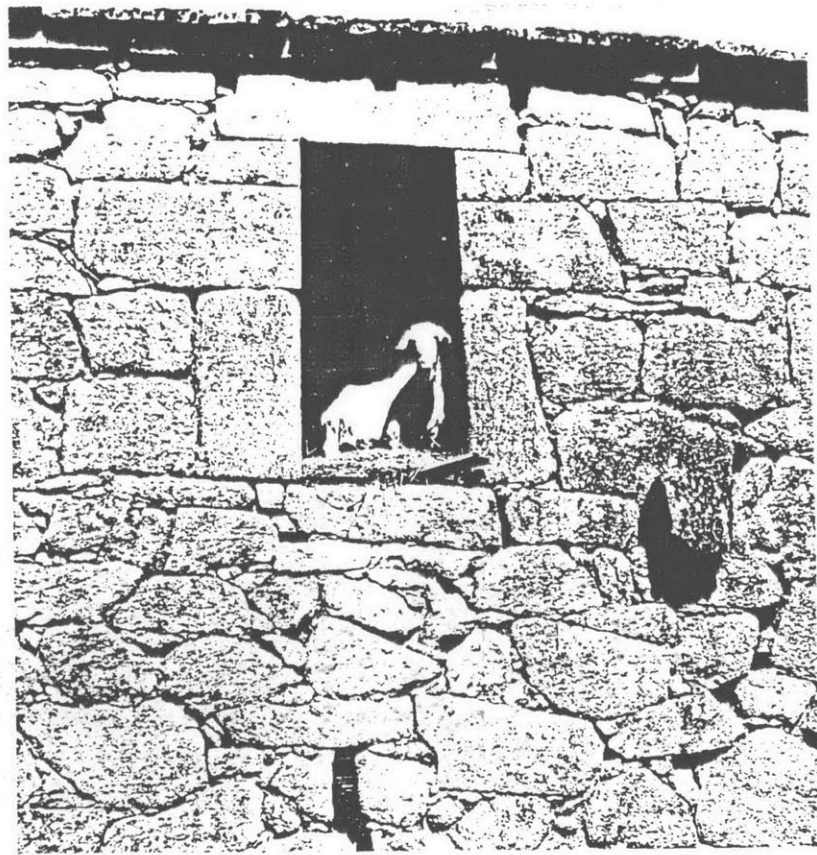
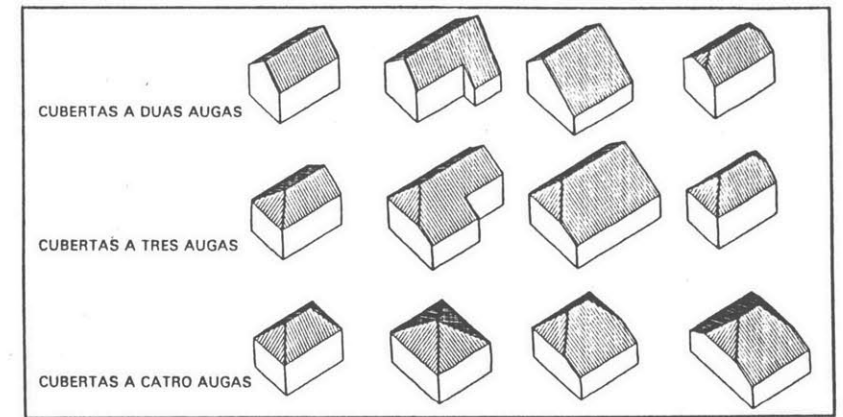
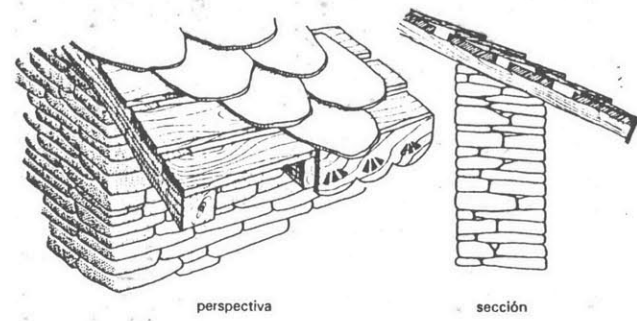
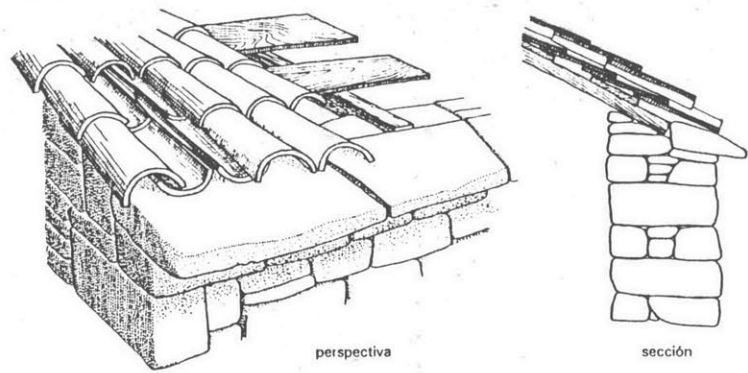
Galicians use them for heating, as *solaria*. They move outside the wall and live in the *galerías* during the day, withdrawing within the stone walls during the night.

Granite appears as well in the *hórreos*--small granaries propped up by pilars to protect grains from rodents and humidity, and in *street furniture*: fences, fountains, *cruceiros* (crosses), vineposts, benches . . . Even roads and houses are paved in stone.

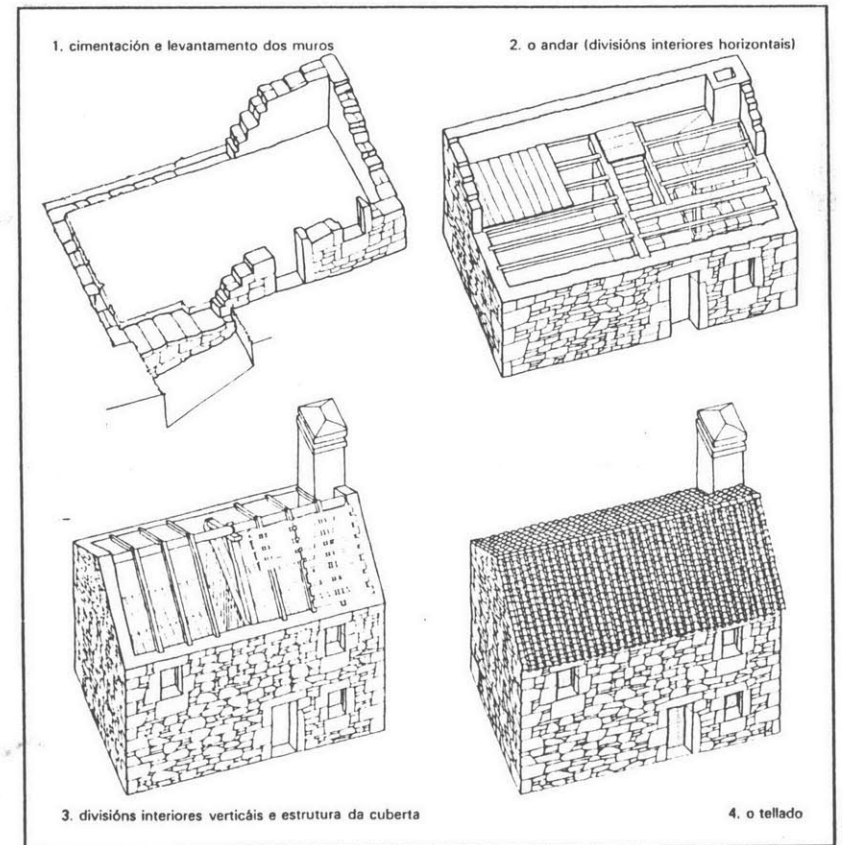
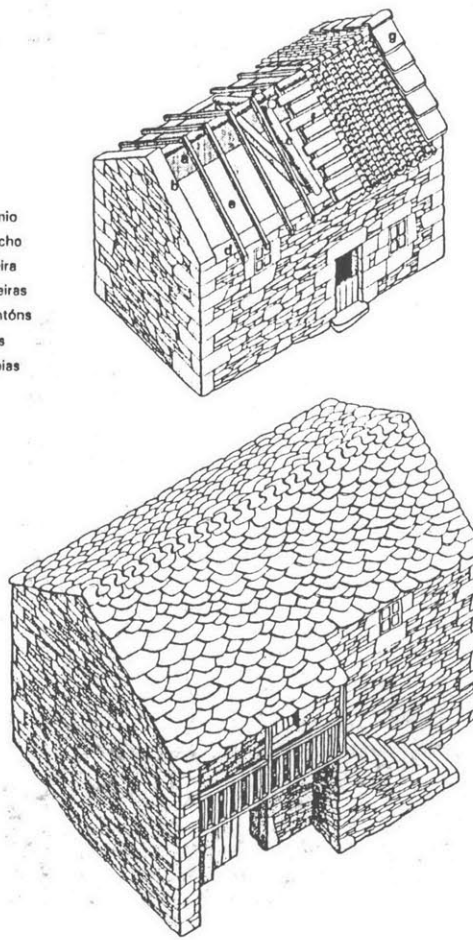
Reinforced concrete frames and curtain walls are substituting the traditional massive, loadbearing stone walls. In general, this new architecture mimics the old architecture: it is a replica of an architecture of volumes, hardly an expression or a praise of an architecture of skeletons.

SOME ROOFS

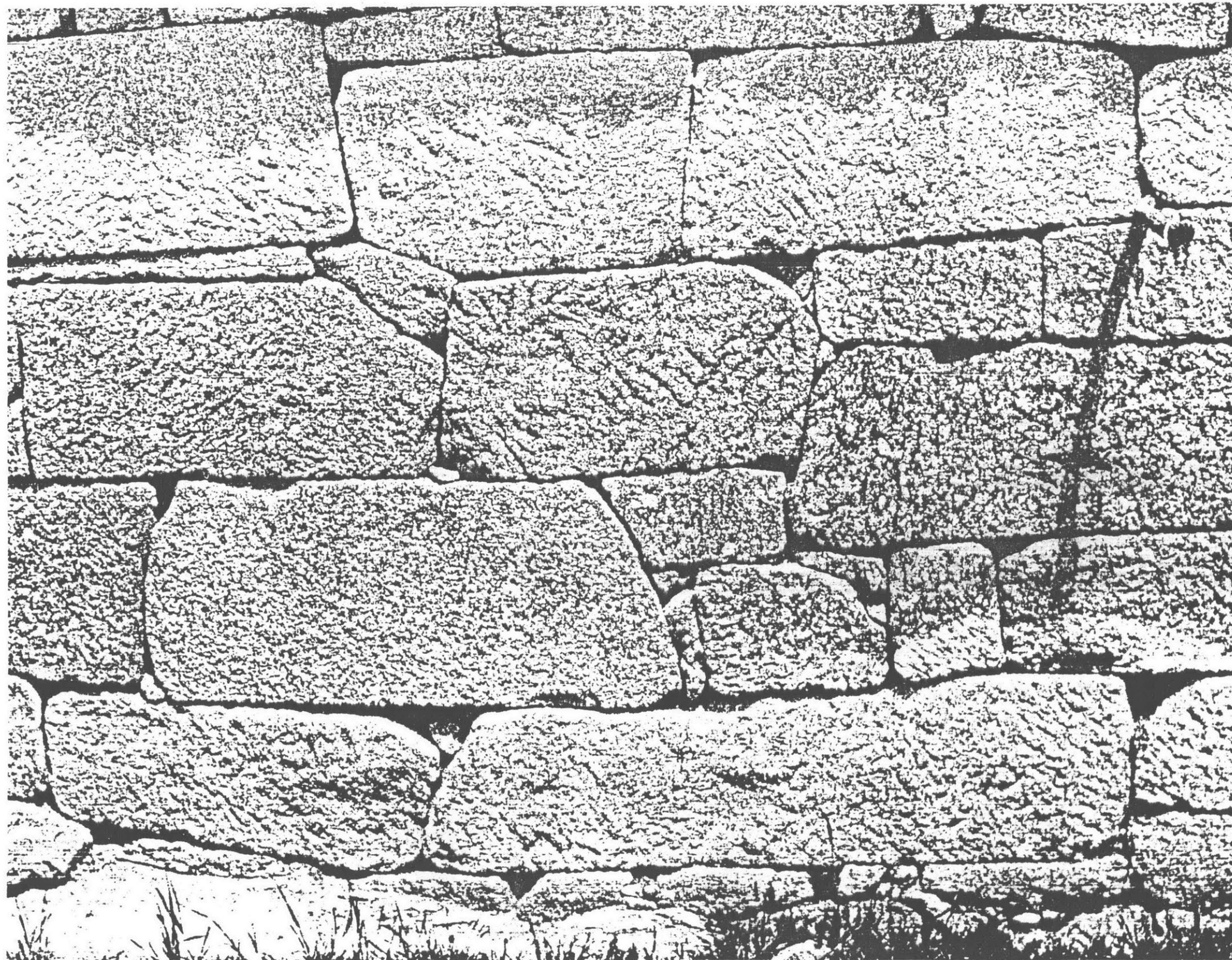


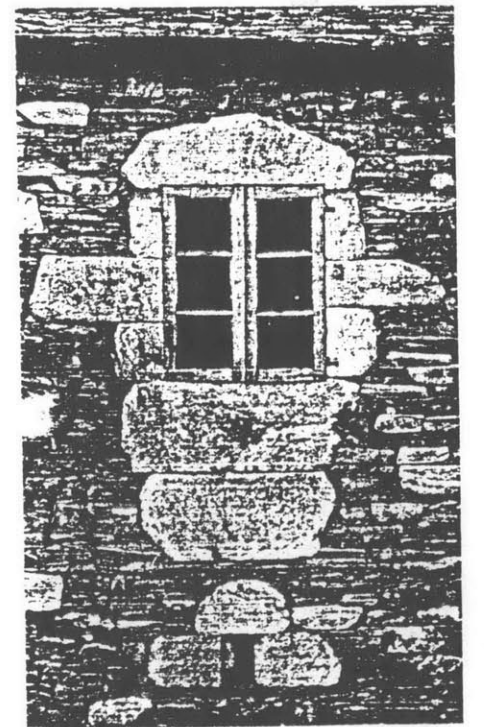
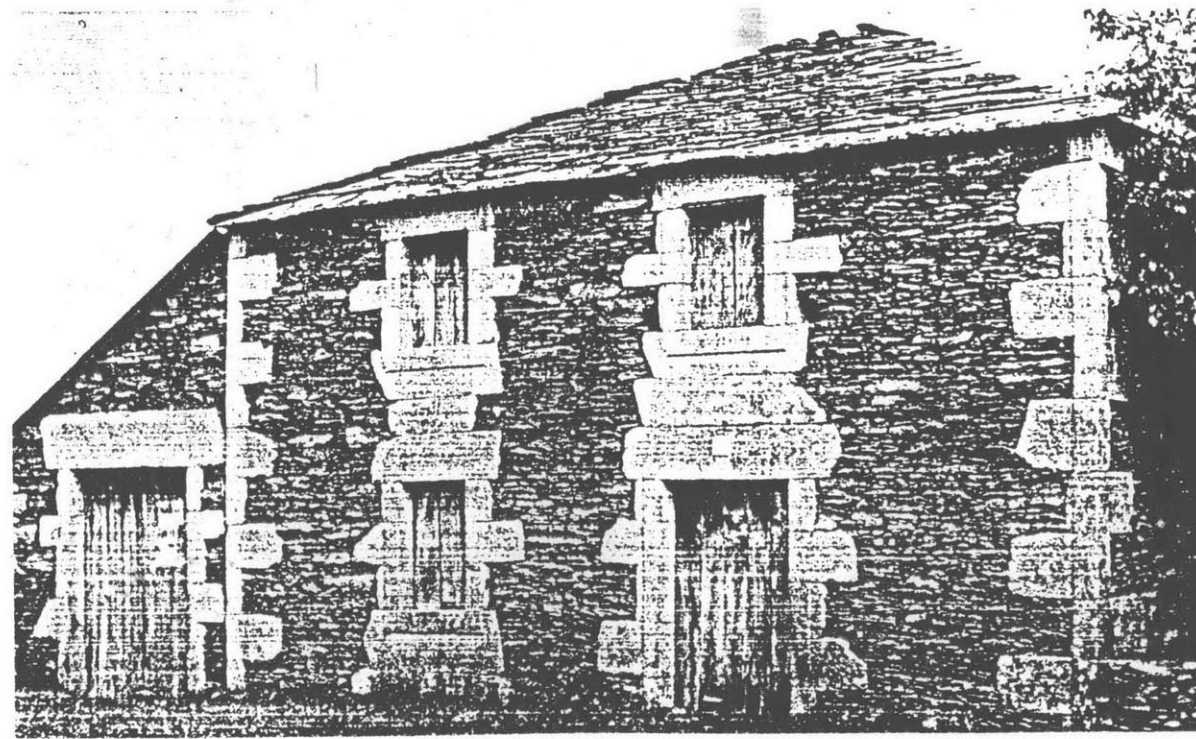
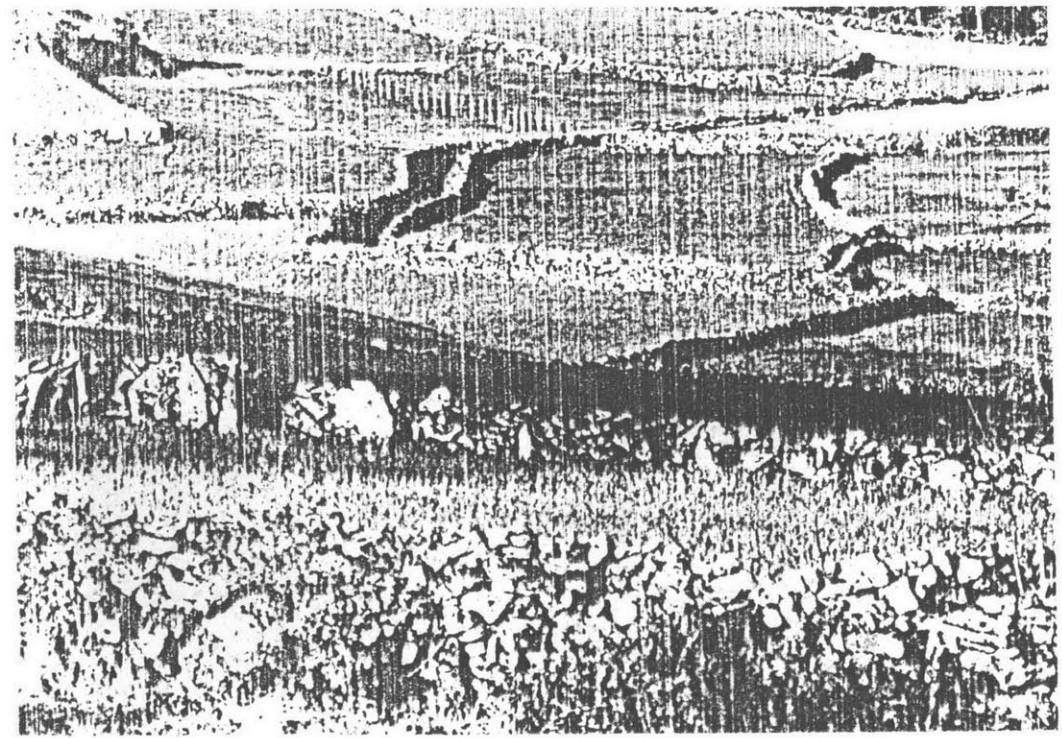
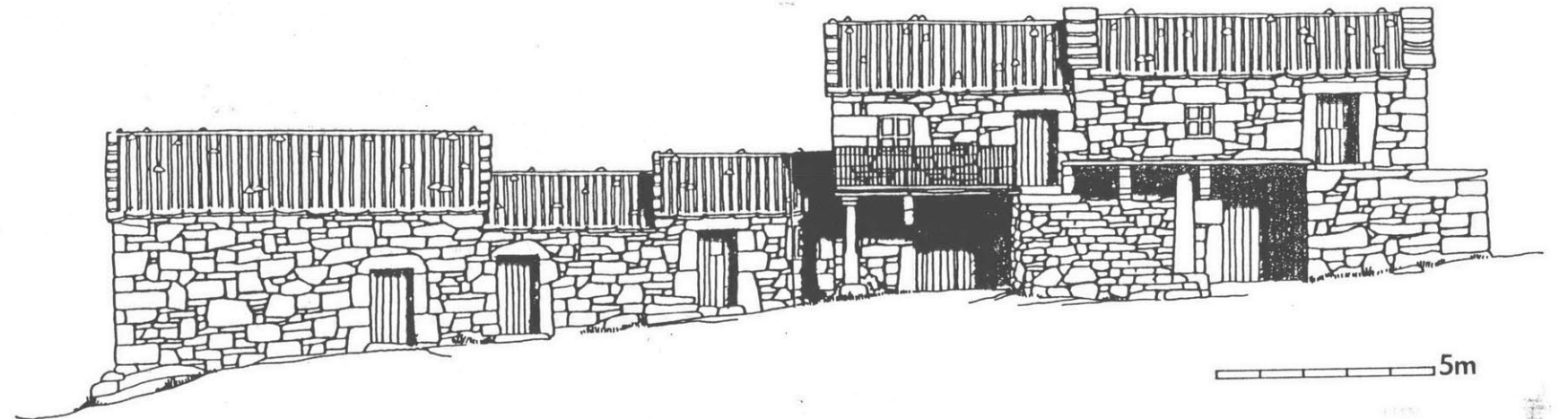


- a) cumio
- b) pincho
- c) tixeira
- d) soleiras
- e) pontóns
- f) latas
- g) cepias

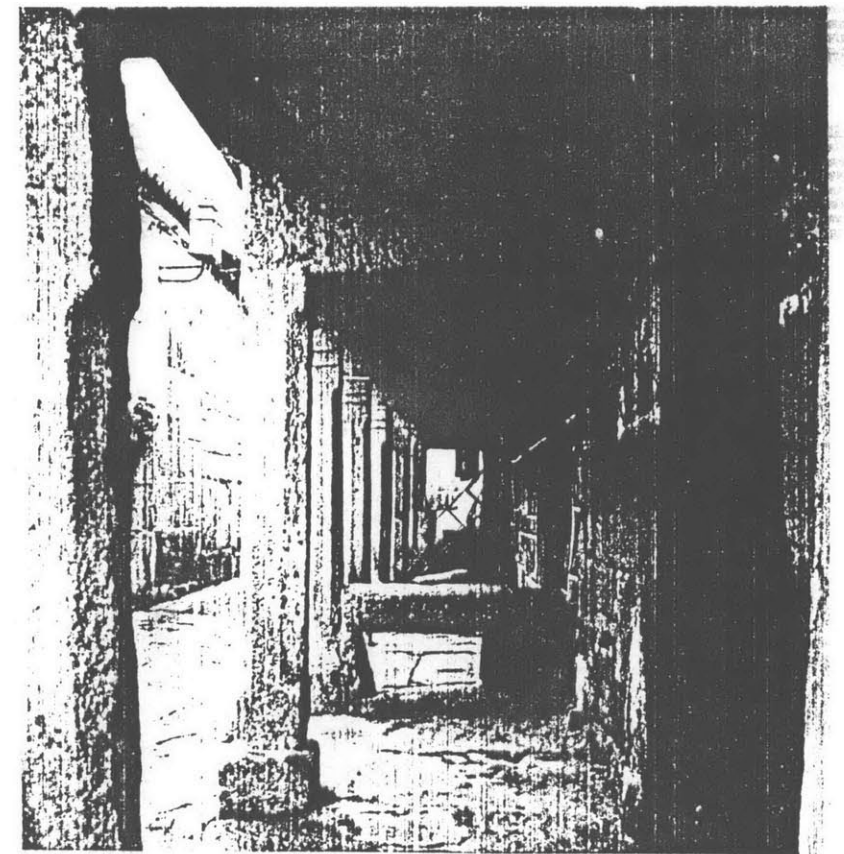
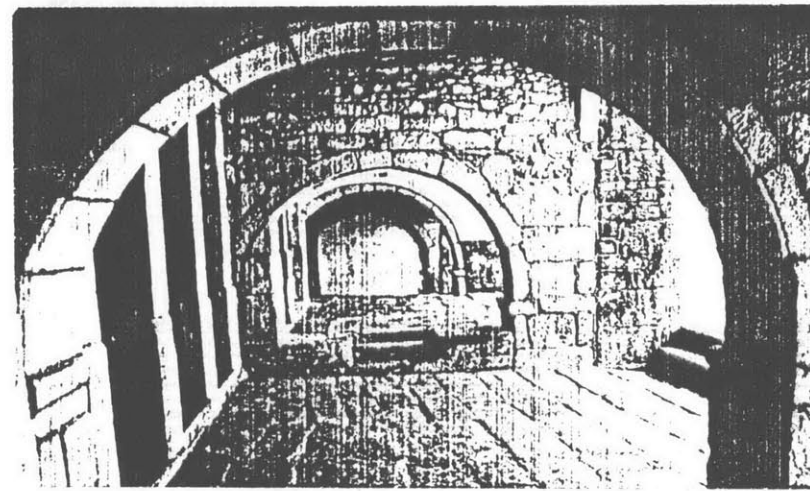
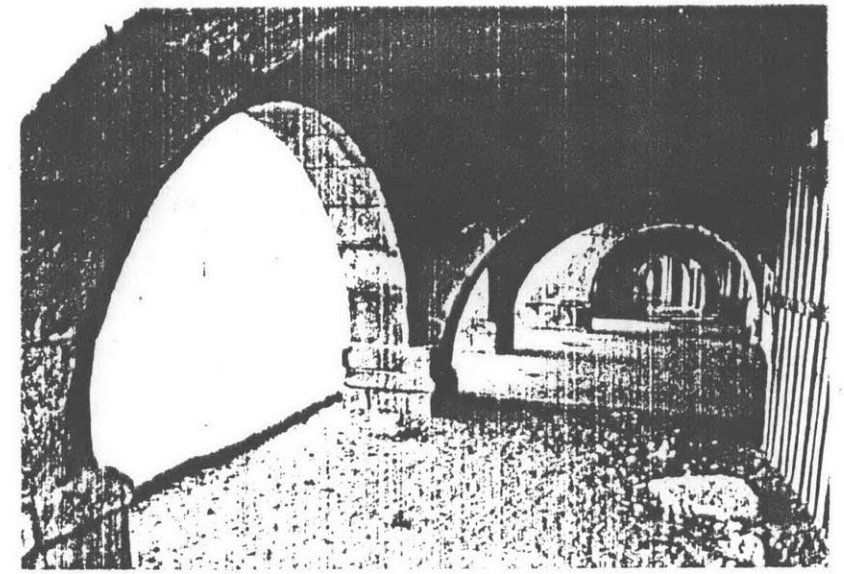
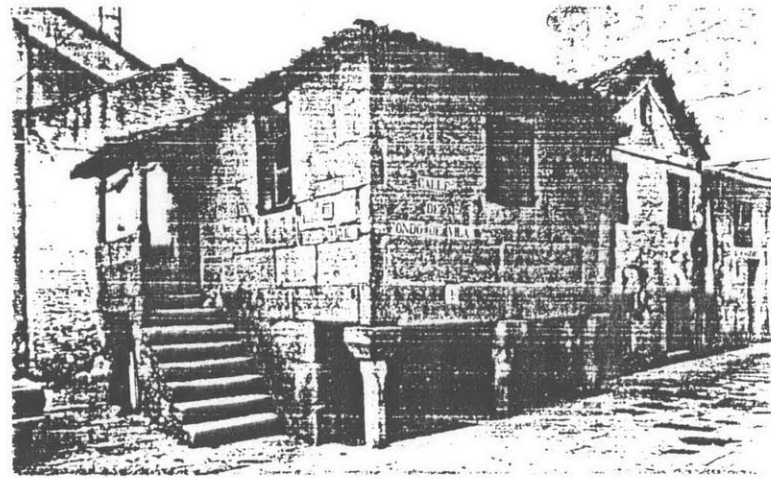


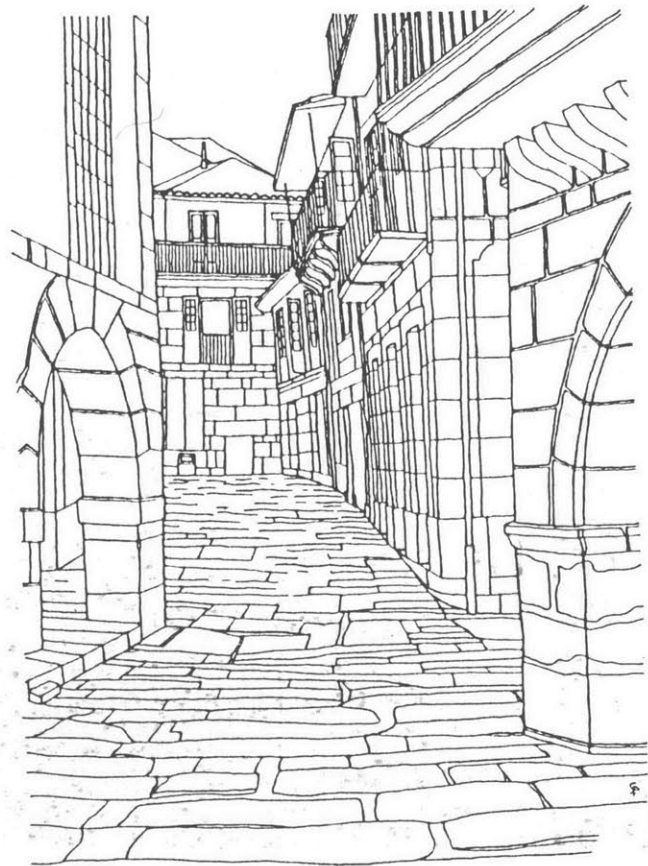
SOME WALLS



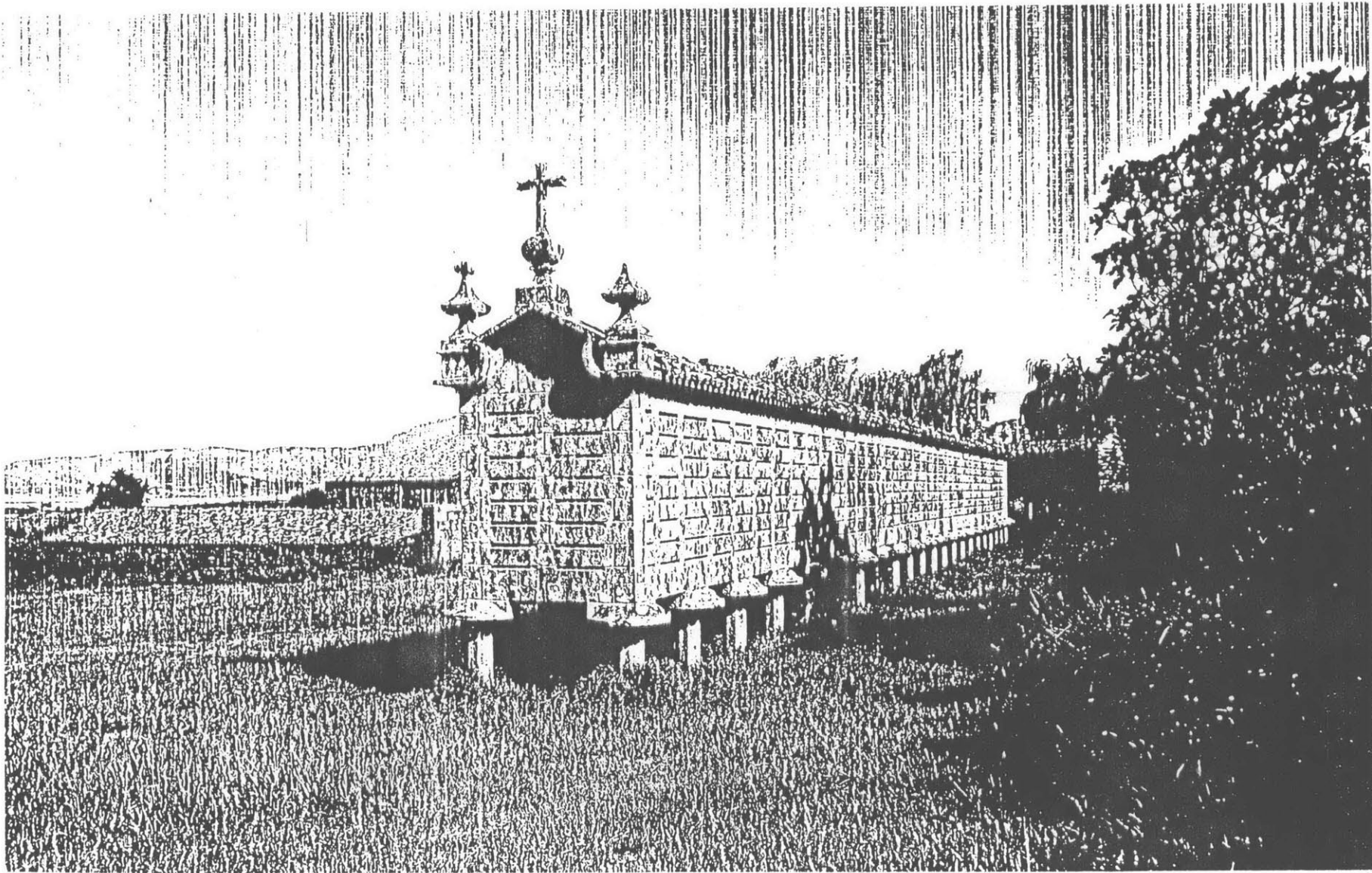


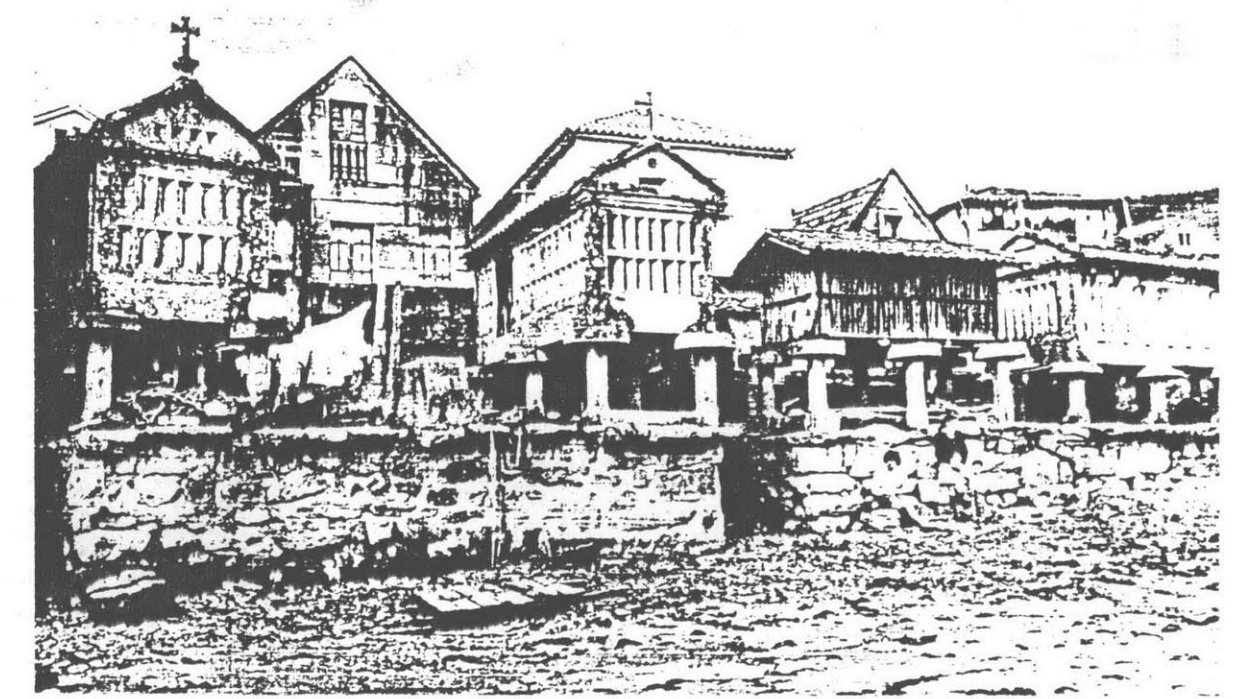
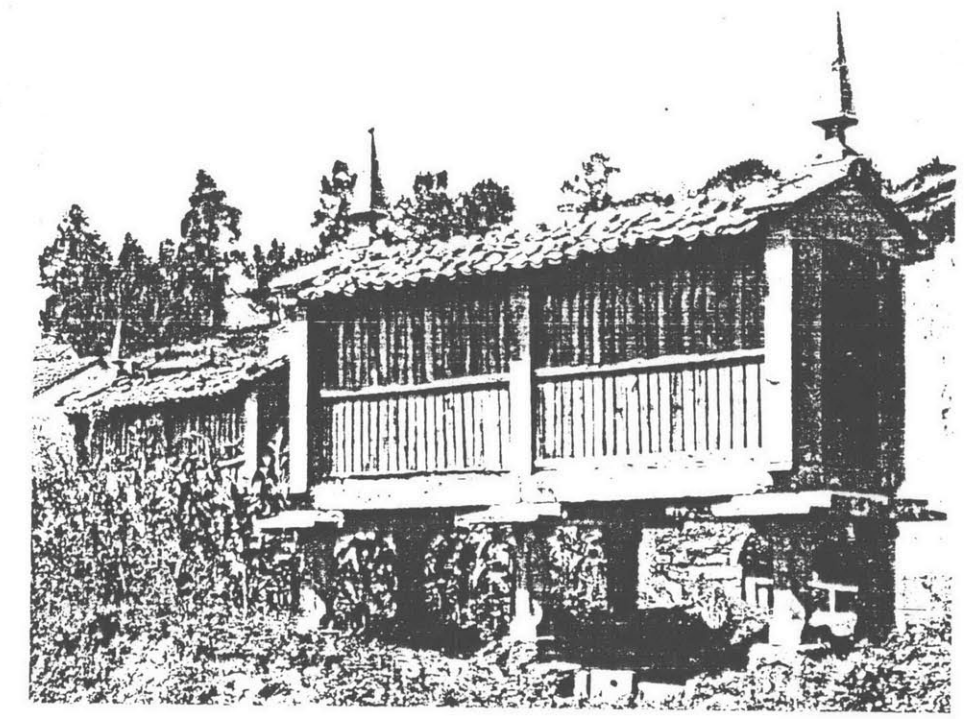
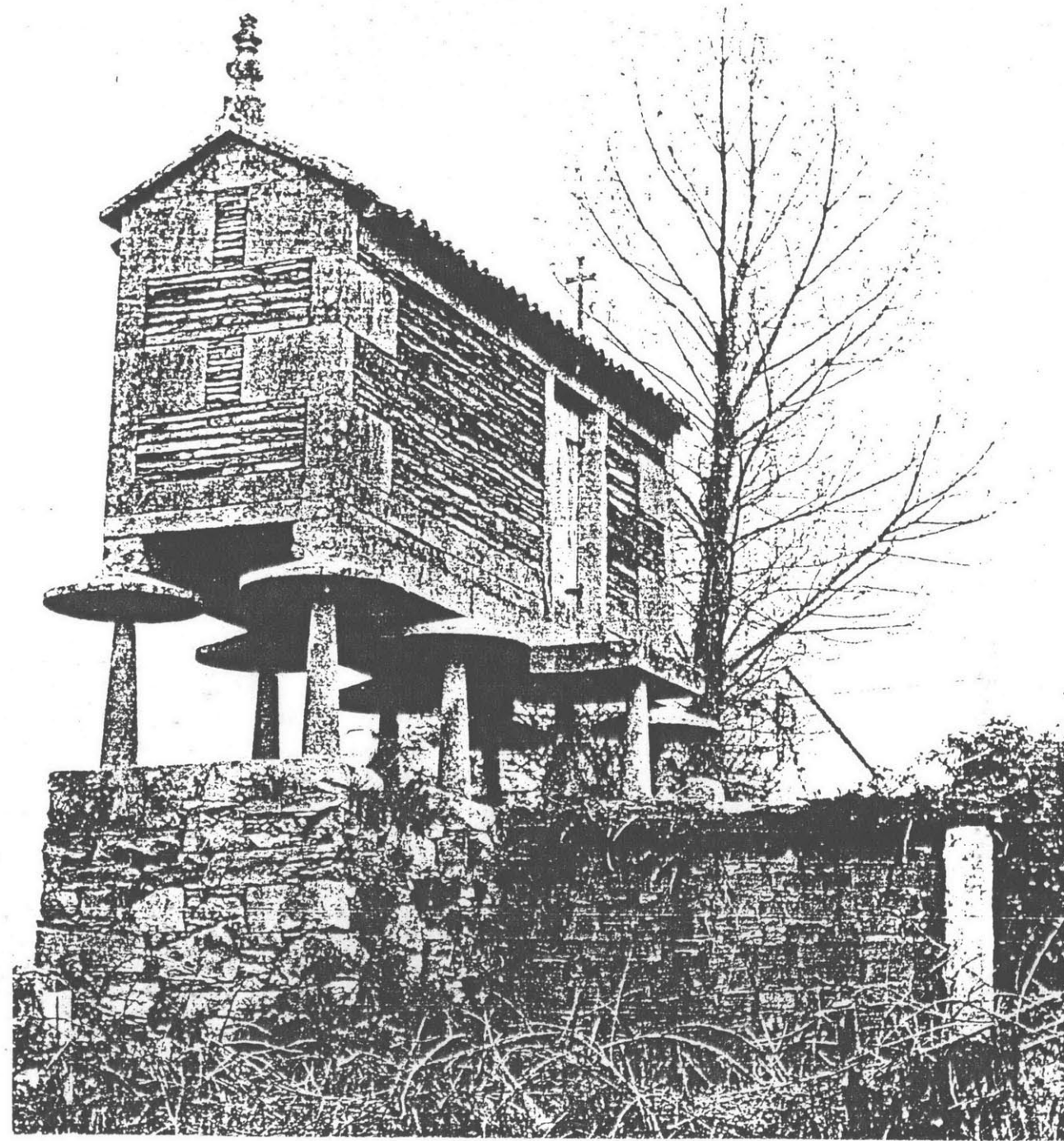
SOME PORTICOES

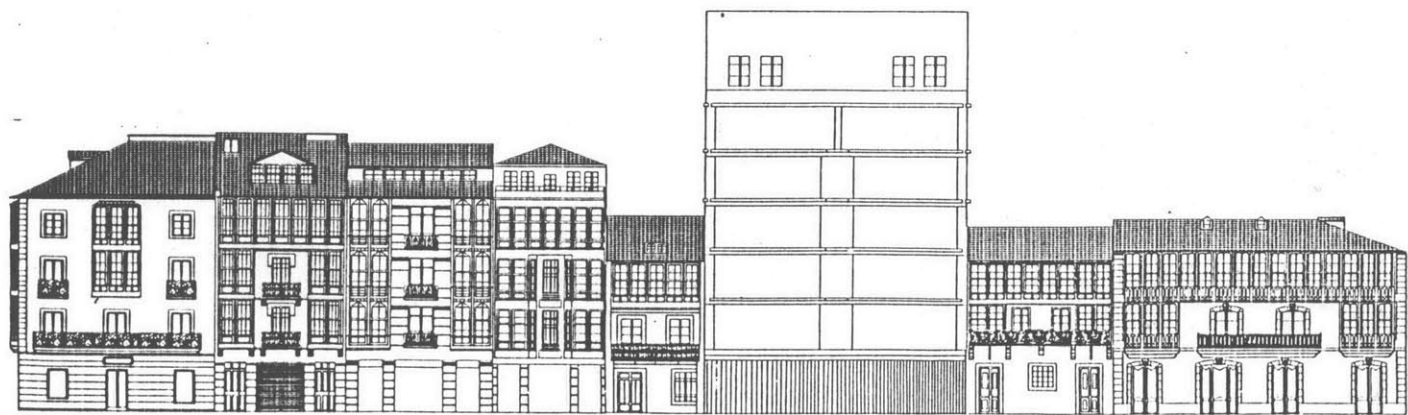
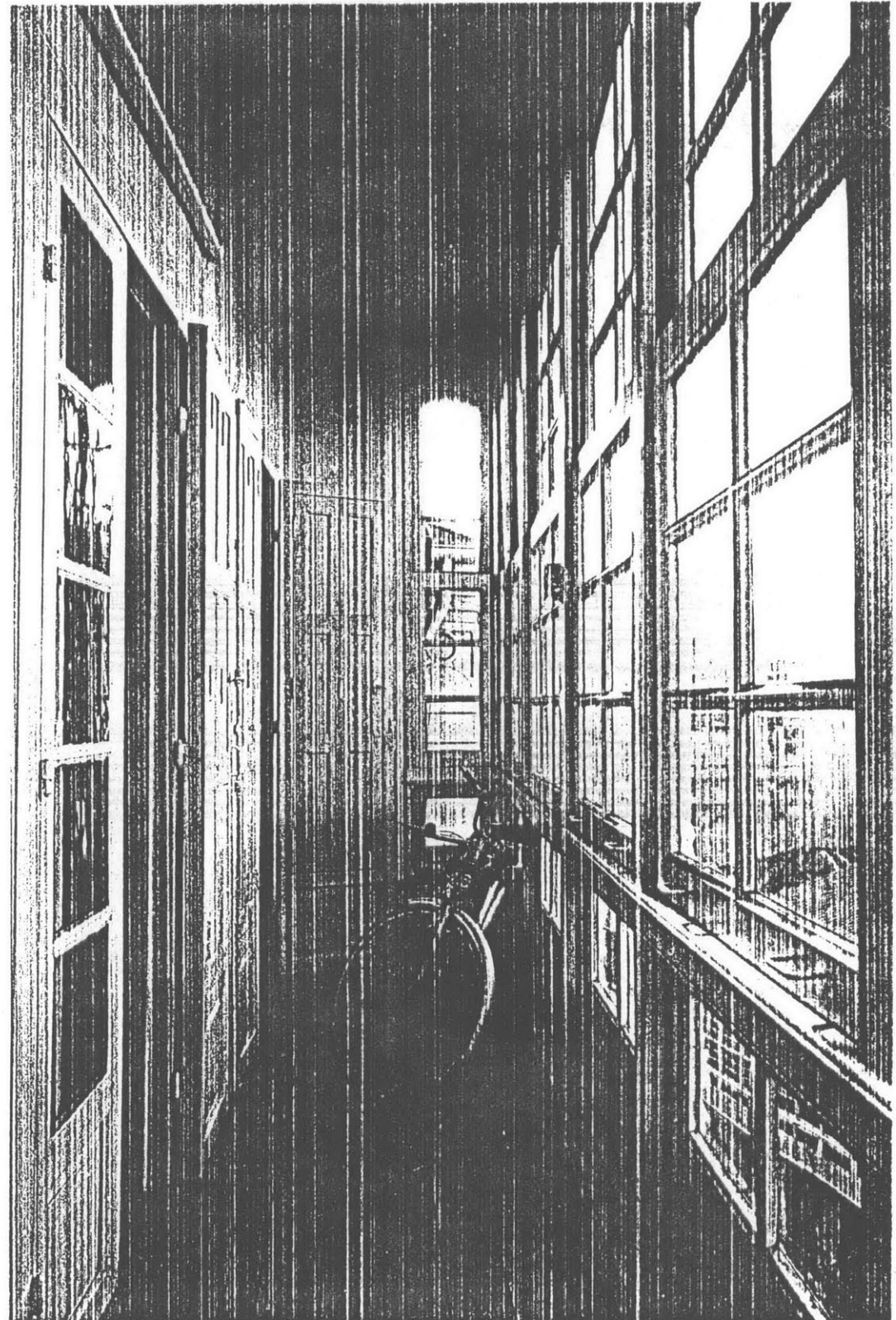




SOME HORREOS

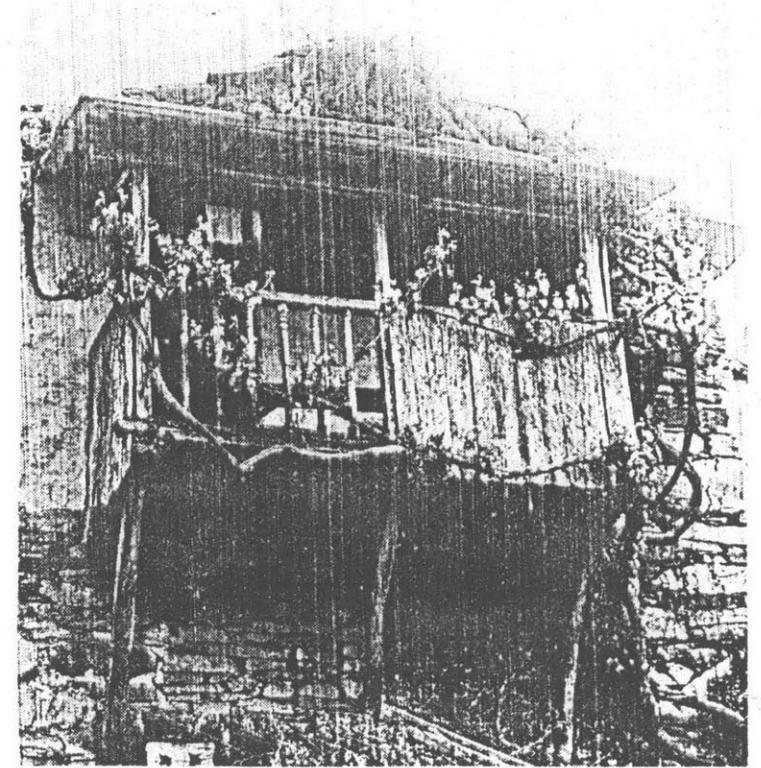
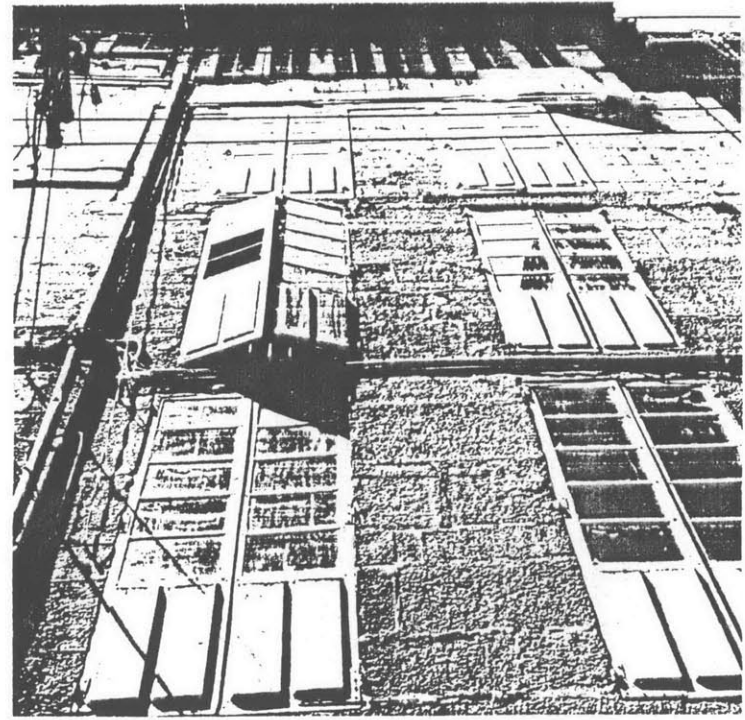
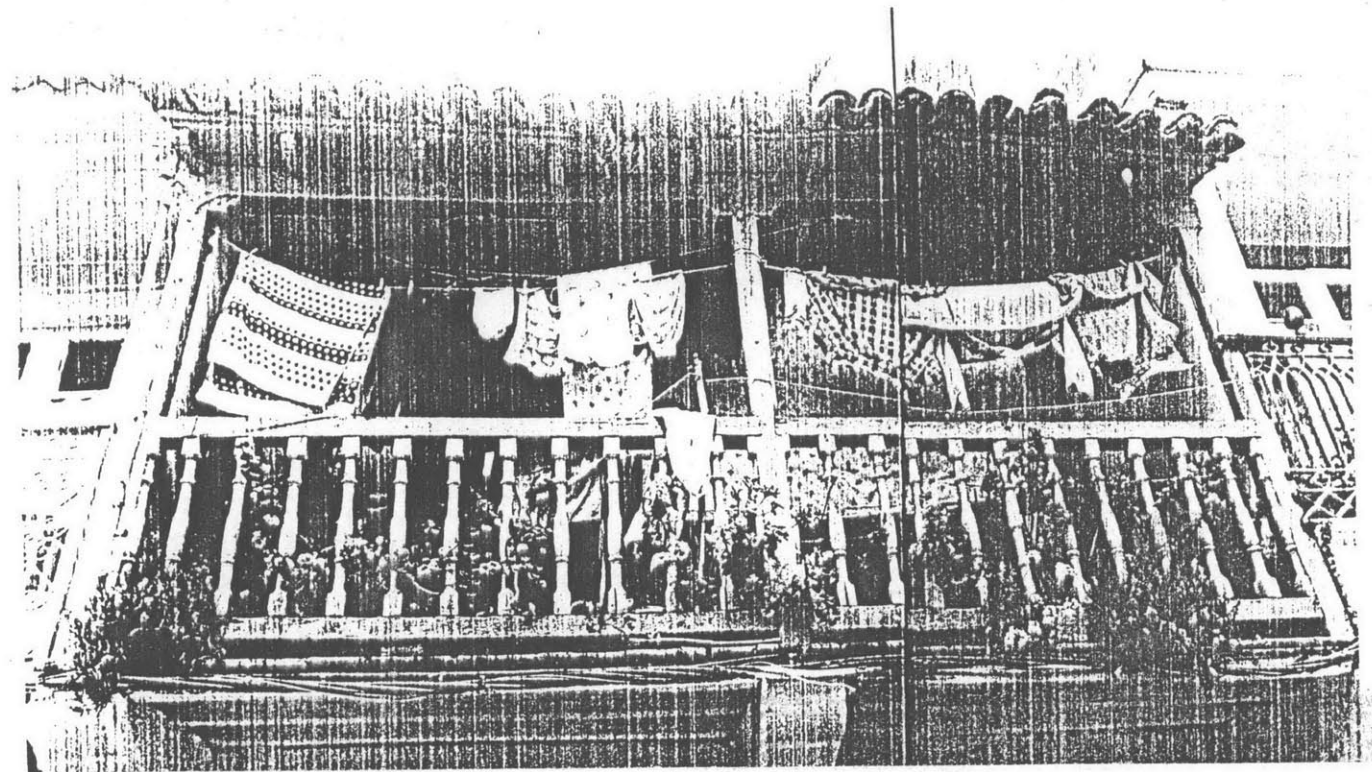


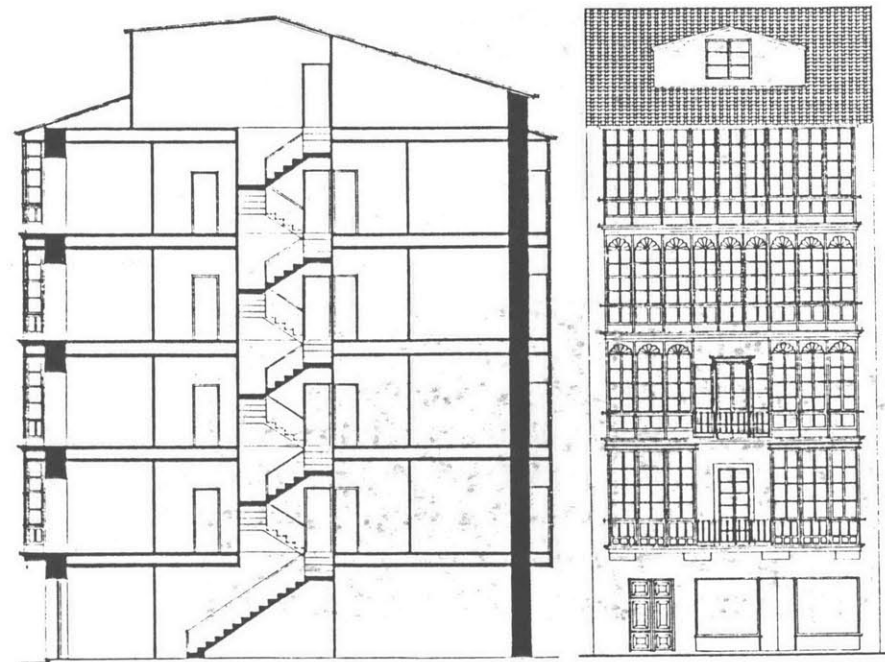




SOME OPENINGS: WINDOWS, BALCONIES,
GALERIAS







TRANSITION OF THE BODY: Convalescence

I have become very interested in the process of convalescence, in that nebulous limit between illness and wellness, between madness and mental health. I imagine illness and the process of healing as being out of synchronicity, as stepping out of the rhythm of active life into a rhythm with its own period. Usually conceived as time for repose and contemplation, convalescence is, in fact, a rather humbling experience, a time in which the patient, extremely vulnerable, becomes exquisitely sensitive to the physical environment. In a way, the convalescent steps back to infancy: perceptions become more acute and, thus, they need to be reconsidered. First, the usual position of the body switches from vertical to horizontal and, second, the patient is isolated from the distractions of everyday life.

In this thesis, convalescence is not interpreted as a kind of exile or confinement but, rather, as a unique chance to revise one's own perceptions, perhaps gradually numbed by a routinary or difficult existence. It is primarily a time to recover health and strength, but also a time for awareness and exploration.

Conceived for chronic, rather than for acute conditions--such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, alcoholism, AIDS, drug addiction, cancer, neurosis, psychosis, this sanatorium lies in the public axis that connects the harbour and the town.

In this kind of environment, the passage of time could become an obsession. After all, the focus is the moment of discharge; anxious patients search for even the most insignificant sign of progress in their treatment. Surprisingly, sometimes an effort is made to emphasize that search, to time events along the way, and to assign to them a symbolic value. Dino Buzzati's short story "Sette piani" illustrates such a paradox. The protagonist enters a sanatorium and is admitted to the seventh floor, for mild cases. He soon learns the implicit levels of hierarchy: the lower the floor, the sicker the patient. Unfortunately, through all kinds of excuses from his doctors, he is forced to move down, sometimes skipping floors. More restrictions are imposed on him and his privileges vanish. He is convinced of his health and suspects that there has been a terrible misunderstanding. But his morale gradually drops in face of the symbolic value of his descent. He finally succumbs to the oppressive surroundings.

The old labyrinthian hospital in Siena literally follows the same rationale. Built on a slope, the mild cases also occupy the top floors. This time, one even finds the morgue on the lowest floor which, by the way, is located below grade with respect to the town and to the main entrance to the hospital. *Just imagine what it might be like to be a dying patient there, conscious of this morbid pattern.*

Also in architectural terms, the idea has been considered by John Hejduk in his project for the Milano Triennale. He has proposed a

hospital for Venice, twelve towers for twelve patients. Each patient is isolated within a tower, descending if getting worse, ascending if getting better. When the patient is cured, a helicopter will pick him up from the top of his tower. Otherwise, he is buried under it.

This way of thinking about hospitals is not at all exclusive to Italians, although that might have been inferred from the selection of these examples--it's just a coincidence; similar hierarchical organizations are found everywhere. What is rather obvious in these particular examples is the direct relationship between the passage of time and the degrees of illness, which seems to me, of all things, an awfully literal and insensitive emphasis, especially since this one-to-one relationship is merely established for the sake of efficiency, relegating the emotional needs of the convalescent to a blurry background. Dwelling so much on degrees of illness might be encouraging for some patients moving from illness to wellness, but clearly lethal for those moving from life to death.

In fact, the passage of time is autonomous; its inexorable quality can be easily observed in natural phenomena--it does not need to be intensified through artificial schedules and timetables, stressful for the sensitive psyche of the patient. Since the convalescent is extremely susceptible to environmental changes, emphasis will be shifted to the sensuous, to whatever can be perceived through the senses: sights, sounds, textures, smells and flavours. One way of doing that would be to accentuate natural changes,

both periodic and random. Thus, periodic cycles such as seasons, light and tides, as well as random changes such as climate (wind, rain, clouds) will be crucial determinants in the design.

The internal circulation of the sanatorium will take into consideration the ambulatory nature of its occupants: patients, caretakers and, sometimes, visitors. They could be divided into two groups: one belongs to the earth, it's definitely terrestrial; the other belongs to the spirit, it's almost celestial. The first group consists of the true inhabitants of this project, these anachronistic beings, the convalescents. Their free time seems monotonous, endless. Hours are usually spent lying down, or maybe pacing, wandering around the sanatorium, always looking for clues to their recovery. But instead of such hints, they might find a corner to hear the rain, an opening to smell the wet eucalyptus trees, or a window to frame the moonlight, distracting them momentarily. The second group consists of the twelve nuns that run the sanatorium. They seem to defy gravity, almost levitating as they move around to nurse the patients. They are clearly anachronistic as well, but in a rather sublime way.

In my design, I will think of architecture as an artificial element, a frame for patterns, echoes, transparencies and reflections. Materials and services will be thought of as separate layers, as an overlapping of systems. The final product should then be a synthesis of natural and artificial rhythms.

HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS

Age and arthritis have deprived Patrick of any but the wheelchair approach to exploration . . .

Memoirs... Patrick White

We have yet to write the history of that other form of madness, by which men, in an act of sovereign reason, confine their neighbors, and communicate and recognize each other through the merciless language of non-madness...

Madness... Michel Foucault

When I felt better and was able to quit my bed, my mind, still weak, remained incapable of any lengthy reflection; it was through the agency of my body that the first joys came to me. I perceived once again the almost sacred beauty of bread, the modest ray of sun that warmed my face, and the exhilaration that life caused me. A day finally came when I was able to lean out of an open window. The street I lived on in a suburb of Vienna was somber and gray, but there are moments when one tree rising above a wall is enough to remind us that whole forests exist.

Alexis... Marguerite Yourcenar

Then all was quiet. The moon shed its liquid light through the iron bars, and on the floor lay a shadow which looked like a net. It was terrifying.

Ward 6 Anton Chekhov

Theodora, lying in her bed, could sense the roses. There was a reflection on the wall that was a rose-red sun coming out of the earth. . . she could hear a golden murmur of roses . . . Because nothing ever happened at Meröe, you could watch the passage of time, devote a whole morning to the falling of a rose.

The Aunt's... Patrick White

Nowhere in the world, probably, was life as monotonous as it was in this hospital annexe. In the morning the patients, with the exception of the paralytic and the obese peasant, would go out into the passage and have a wash in a large wash-tub and dry themselves on the skirts of their dressing-gowns; after that they drank tea out of tin mugs brought from the main building by Nikita. Each was allowed one mugful. At noon, they had sour cabbage soup and porridge, and for supper in the evening they had the porridge left over from dinner. Between meals they lay on their beds, slept, looked out of the windows, and paced the room from one corner to another. And so every day. . .

Fresh faces were rarely seen in Ward 6. The doctor had long stopped admitting any new mental patients, and there are not many people in this world who go to visit lunatic asylums.

Ward 6 Anton Chekhov

So I am restored to the living. In the beginning I can scarcely keep my balance in this world of light. If I sit, I float horizontally like the moored boats I see through my window. The window is barred, but the bars do not prevent the interchange of sensation between myself, trees, the boats floating in the radiant backwater. If I try to wrest myself from the horizontal and attempt the vertical position normal to waking human beings, I am threatened with toppling unless I reach out and support myself on the nearest piece of furniture. . . But I MUST remain in the vertical position. Reason's posture is vertical . . .

Memoirs... Patrick White

When she learned that I was sick, she sent me flowers. Flowers do not mind if you live in squalid surroundings... At that period, she had a passion for mauve lilacs; thanks to her, my convalescence was redolent... Possibly, without the lilacs from Princess Catherine, I should never have had the courage to get well.

Alexis... Marguerite Yourcenar

Pretese però, incurante dei motteggi delle infermiere, che sulla porta della sua nuova stanza fosse attaccato un cartello con su scritto "Giuseppe Corte, del terzo piano, di passaggio".

Sette piani Dino Buzzati

The rolling of the sea, the most regular, the most natural movement in the world, and the one most in accord with cosmic order... was considered by the eighteenth century as a powerful regulator of organic mobility. In it, the very rhythm of nature spoke.

Madness... Michel Foucault

I once knew a madman who thought the end of the world had come. He was a painter- and engraver. I had a great fondness of him. I used to go and see him, in the asylum. I'd take him by the hand and drag him to the window. Look! There! All that raising corn! And there! Look! The sails of the herring fleet! All that loveliness! But all he saw was ashes.

End-Game Samuel Beckett

Hilda could no longer contain herself. 'I'm sure every one of the young women caring for the patients in this hospital is as dedicated as any nun. And with nuns you run into mysticism. I wouldn't want a mystic counting my pills.'

Memoirs... Patrick White

The fancies associated with tuberculosis and insanity have many parallels. With both illness, there is confinement. Sufferers are sent to a "sanatorium" (the most common word for a clinic for tuberculars and the most common euphemism for an insane asylum). Once put away, the patient enters a duplicate world with special rules. Like TB, insanity is a kind of exile. The metaphor of the psychic voyage is an extension of the romantic idea that was associated with tuberculosis. To be cured, the patient had to be taken out of his or her daily routine. It is not an accident that the most common metaphor for an extreme psychological experience viewed positively--whether produced by drugs or by becoming psychotic--is a trip.

Illness... Susan Sontag

I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a hand-saw.

Hamlet William Shakespeare

The distinction between outer and inner usually refers to the distinction between behavior and experience; but sometimes it refers to some experiences that are supposed to be "inner" in contrast to others that are "outer." More accurately this is a distinction between different modalities of experience, namely, perception (as outer) in contrast to imagination, etc. (as inner). But perception, imagination, fantasy, reverie, dreams, memory, are simply different *modalities of experience*, none more "inner" or "outer" than any other.

The Politics... R.D. Laing

In the second half of the eighteenth century, madness was no longer recognized in what brings man closer to an immemorial fall or an indefinitely present animality; it was, on the contrary, situated in those distances man takes in regard to himself, to his world, to all that is offered by the immediacy of nature; madness became possible because of everything which in man's life and development, is a break with the immediate.

Madness... Michel Foucault

TB was understood, like insanity, to be a kind of oneness: a failure of will or an overintensity. However much the disease was dreaded, TB always had pathos. Like the mental patient today, the tubercular was considered to be someone quintessentially vulnerable, and full of destructive whims... Their prescription was the same as the enlightened one for mental patients today: cheerful surroundings, isolation from stress and family, healthy diet, exercise, rest.

Illness... Susan Sontag

In this delusive attachment to himself, man generates his madness like a mirage. The symbol of madness will henceforth be that mirror which, without reflecting anything real, will secretly offer the man who observes himself in it the dream of his own presumption. Madness deals not so much with truth and the world, as with man and whatever truth about himself he is able to perceive.

Madness... Michel Foucault

The Hôpital Général was not a medical establishment ...it had nothing to do with any medical concept. It was an instance of order, of the monarchical and bourgeois order organized in France (in the seventeenth century)... it assigned the same homeland to the poor, the unemployed, to prisoners, and to the insane... an enormous house of confinement... It organizes into a complex unity a new sensibility to poverty and to the duties of assistance, new forms of reaction to the economic problems of unemployment and idleness, a new ethic of work, and also the dream of a city where moral obligation was joined to civil law, within the authoritarian forms of constraint.

Madness... Michel Foucault

'Yes, I am ill. But surely there are scores of madmen, hundreds, walking about unmolested, simply because in your ignorance you're incapable of distinguishing them from healthy people!... Where's the logic?'

'I'm afraid morality and logic have nothing to do with it. It's all a matter of chance... There's neither morality nor logic in the fact that I am a doctor and you are a mental patient. It's just mere chance.'

Ward 6 Anton Chekhov

When your life is most real, to me you are mad.

Olive Schreiner

As late as 1815... the Hospital of Bethlehem (St. Mary of Bethlehem, London, "Bedlam") exhibited lunatics for a penny, every Sunday. Now the annual revenue from these exhibitions amounted to almost four hundred pounds; which suggests the astonishingly high number of 96,000 visits a year. In France, the excursion to Bicêtre and the display of the insane remained until the Revolution one of the Sunday distractions of the Left Bank bourgeoisie... Certain attendants were well known for their ability to make the mad perform dances and acrobatics, with a few flicks of the whip... Here is madness elevated to spectacle above the silence of the asylums, and becoming a public scandal for the general delight.

Madness... Michel Foucault

Renaissance men developed a delightful, yet horrible way of dealing with their mad denizens: they were put on a ship and entrusted to mariners because folly, water, and sea, as everyone then "knew," had an affinity for each other. Thus, "Ships of Fools" crisscrossed the seas and the canals of Europe with their comic and pathetic cargo of souls. Some of them found pleasure and even a cure in the changing surroundings, in the isolation of being cast off, while others withdrew even further, became worse, or died alone and away from their families. The cities and villages which had thus rid themselves of their crazed and crazy, could now take pleasure in watching the exciting sideshow when a ship full of foreign lunatics would dock at their harbors.

Madness and Civilization

Psychiatry, with its modern classification of ailments, methods of diagnosis, and treatment—compared with what it used to be it was a gigantic achievement. No longer was cold water poured over the heads of lunatics, nor were they any longer put into straight jackets; they were treated like human beings, and even theatrical performances and dances organized for them, so the newspapers reported. Dr. Ragin knew that according to modern ideas and tastes such an abomination as Ward 6 was only possible in a small town ... in any other place the public and the press would have torn that little Bastille to shreds.

Ward 6 Anton Chekhov

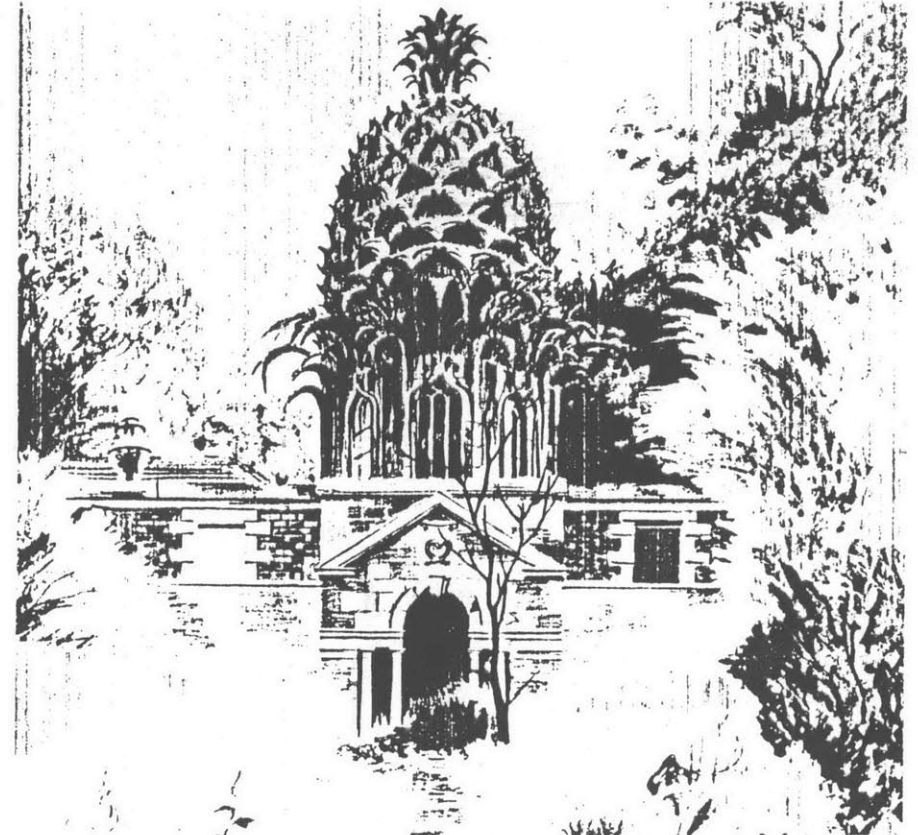
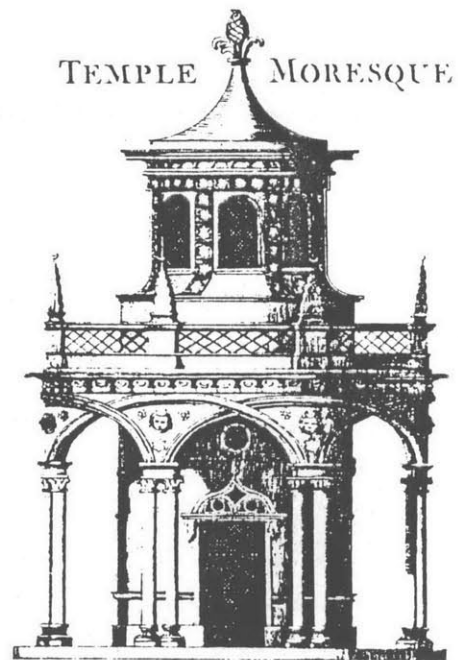
No doubt, madness had something to do with the strange paths of knowledge... If madness is the truth of knowledge, it is because knowledge is absurd, and instead of addressing itself to the great book of experience, loses its way in the dust of books and in idle debate; learning becomes madness through the very excess of false learning.

Madness... Michel Foucault

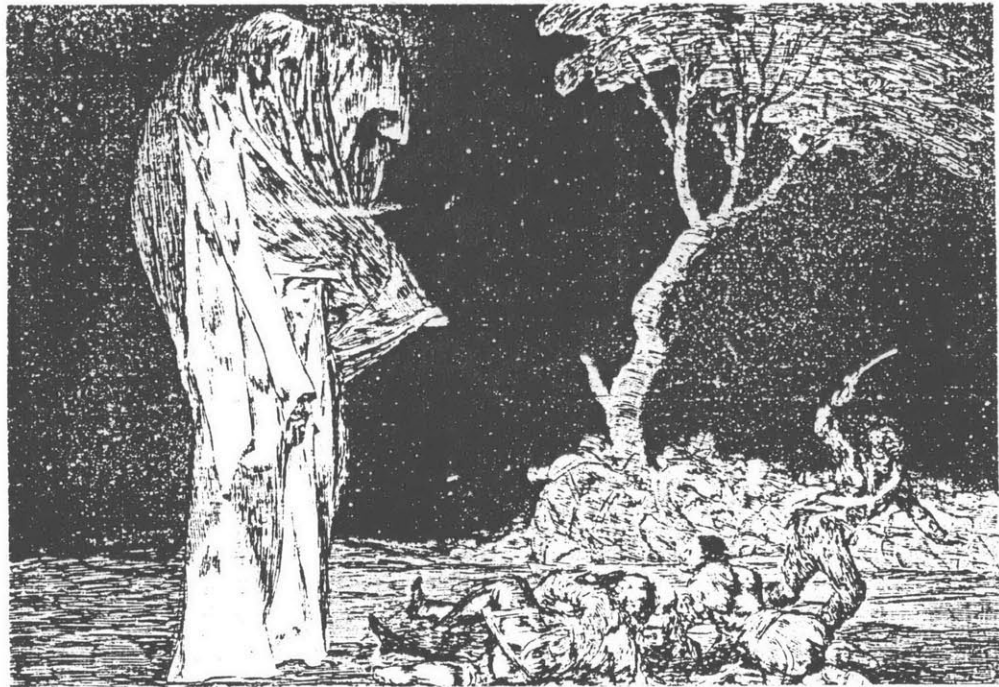
'Only chairs and tables,' she said, 'are sane.'

The Aunt's... Patrick White

SOME FOLLIES

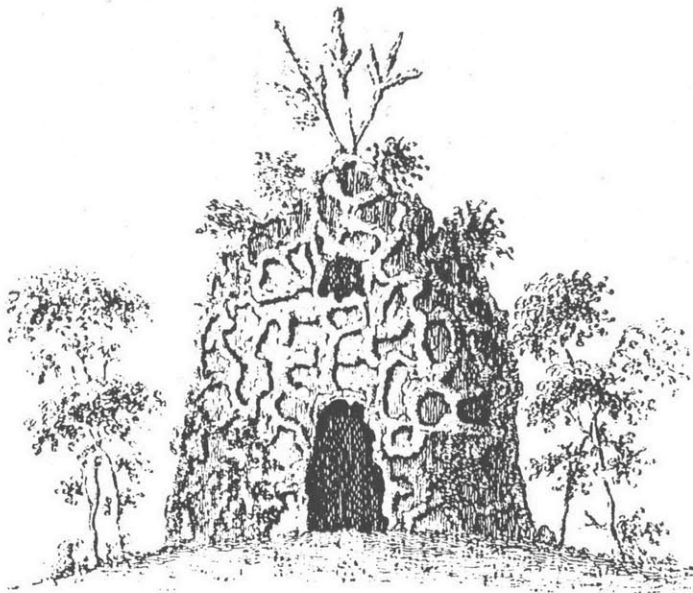


Above: Francisco Goya, *El aquelarre*.
Casa del Sordo, 1820-1823.
Below: some Follies from English
gardens.



Goya: Disparate del miedo (The Folly of Fear)

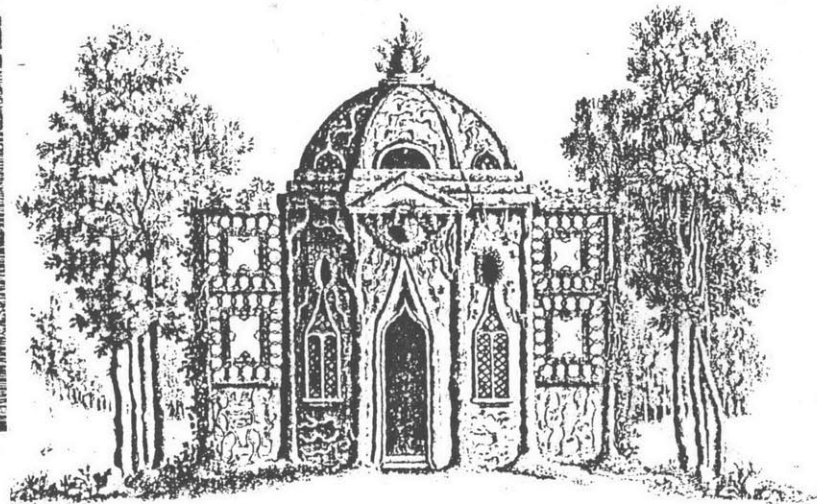
Follies from English gardens



Goya: Disparate femenino (Feminine Foolishness)



Goya: Disparate de carnaval (Foolishness at the Carnival)



Goya: Disparate ridculo (Strange Folly)

THE ILLUSTRATION OF A DESIGN PROCESS: Introduction

In formal terms, the project consists of a public walkway which establishes the physical connection between harbour and town. This wound in the wall generates a building, in this case a sanatorium, and a series of tidal pools.

In conceptual terms, though, I am much more interested in understanding the development of a project than in a finished design. Consequently, the following pages are a description of a design process rather than the illustration of a product.

In this particular instance, I took the stand of an observer, since the project seemed to evolve on its own: it kept asking to be essential, sensuous, serene, humble--a benign building form; a discreet backdrop; the beginning of a story, rather than its end.

How was I to clarify these words, to translate these lofty wishes into tangible forms? An exploration of the limit, of transitions, seemed to be a reasonable starting point.

If by method one suggests some sort of predetermined, linear, coherent outline to be followed and modified, then it would be accurate to say that no such element is present in this thesis. I never intended to design a tidal pool, nor a sanatorium; these elements were simply generated in the process. I would rather call it the story of a staircase.

The aim of this project has been to create a backdrop, enhancing what was already existing on the site, that is, the artificial and the natural elements, while providing for an access between harbour and town--I guess I was striving for a certain *environmental docility*. The existing artificial and natural elements were thought of as layers of stillness and movement. The place was to be perceived and experienced through movement and changes--a dynamic, rather than static, perception. This emphasis consisted of an intensification of certain *facts* (gravity, light, granite and, of course, water) and, sometimes, a challenge to them.

The idea of *DISPLACEMENT* became pivotal in the development of this thesis. I was interested in what happened when two or more elements came together and how they affected each other. These transitions, these limits fascinated me. Rather than emphasizing some sort of merger of elements, I would emphasize their overlap. In the process, the existing elements would be decomposed in layers.

The resulting new elements were the public walkway, the sanatorium and the tidal pools.

THE SANATORIUM. Conceived as a place where the convalescent needs both to feel protected from and to belong to the outside world, the sanatorium became an exploration of traditional and contemporary architecture in the area. It had no further pretensions: it simply wanted to make a transition, rather than to emphasize a caesura between volumes and skeletons. And, of course, it wished to share the colours of sea mist at dawn, those beautiful bluish greys: the greys of rainy days, the greys of granite and slate, and those of concrete, steel, aluminum and lead as well.

The placement of the major volumes is determined by the topographic lines of the hill; their size, by the fishermen's housing. These volumes are oriented east/west.

Two structural systems are used: granite walls and steel frames. These two systems result from the displacement of structure and enclosure since a one-to-one relationship between them is now obsolete. The granite walls either act as retaining walls on the hill, or as the foundation for the *friction wall*, the service wall in the wards. These walls are rarely part of the enclosure. The steel frame moves over the friction walls. At the ground level, this move allows for a covered walkway on one side of the wall and for covered parking on the other side, at a different level.

The enclosure system consists of concrete blocks, glassblock, and an aluminum frame. This aluminum frame moves to the interior of the buildings, creating the partitions. Panels for this frame are opaque, translucent and transparent, depending on degrees of privacy.

The friction wall contains a series of cores for services (ventilation, electricity, drainage, telephone lines, bathrooms...). It also organizes private and public areas with respect to the movement of the sun. Circulation and public areas usually face east, the sunrise, while the more private areas face west, the sunset.

The recreational ward is located parallel to the public walkway, across from the fishermen's housing. It contains the library, the restaurant and the occupational and the physical therapy areas.

The clinical ward is the one located closest to the town. It contains the administrative quarters, laboratories, the pharmacy, the x-ray suite, the doctors' offices and the visitors' areas. It is conceivable that outpatients will come for consultation.

The nursing ward is the one farthest from the public walkway, and the highest one on the hill, to allow for the best views. There are two types of rooms: those facing west, shared by two or four ambulatory patients, and those facing east, for one or two invalid patients. The nuns' quarters are located at the end of the corridor, the one end closest to the chapel. These corridors are meant for circulation, small social areas and the nurses' stations.

The chapel is, in a way, the non-thematic element. It responds to the heaviness of the fishermen's club which sits on the platform by *levitating*--an ascension, a volume displaced vertically. Of all the parts of the program, the chapel seemed the most appropriate to act as a transition between water and air, between sea and sky. It is a vertical volume; in fact, one moves down a few steps to reach the main level.

The roof of the chapel was conceived as a horizontal displacement of the granite wall. This displacement allows the north light to enter the chapel through the coloured glassblock top windows, washing along the wall and coming through the floor, which is made of translucent glassblock. The wall behind the altar and the cross is made of glassblock as well. This wall filters the sea, creating an impression of colour and movement. Views to the outside are limited to the sides, in a direction parallel to the granite wall.

The chapel is supported by two steel columns framed together. The bottom of this structure marks the beginning of the public walkway, the long way up. I thought of this structure as a vertical staircase, in order to juxtapose the shortest and the longest ways to move from the platform to the hill. These two stairs affect each other.

The plum orchard runs across the complex, following the 20 meter topographic line, reinforcing the turn of the granite wall at this point and creating a noise buffer for the nursing ward. A road leading directly to the main church in the village lies on this topographic line. The line also coincides with a visual axis towards the lighthouse, located across the bay.

A swimming pool is located near the entrance to the sanatorium. This volume of water acts as a virtual limit between the outside world and the sanatorium, while also providing a recreational area for those patients who cannot possibly go to the tidal pools. There is a covered porch between the chapel and the recreational ward for patients to rest and to enjoy the sea, the sun and the sea breeze.

THE PUBLIC WALKWAY. It is conceived as the transition between the horizontal and the vertical, between the sea and the wall. It is generated by the displacement of the access from the visual axis--similar to the journey towards a Folly in an English garden: the view and the path rarely coincide.

This public walkway moves both diagonally and parallel to the wall. It developed from three initial needs: the access to the sanatorium, the access to the town and a vantage point at the end of the fishermen's housing.

Originally, this public walkway was thought of as a virtual boundary for the sanatorium and a connection to the vantage point at the top of the wall. Then it became a cascade, when I was interested in incorporating the movement and the patterns of water into the design. The steps were thought of as ripples of water. The beginning of this pedestrian access would occur at the intersection of the sea waves, the *stairs* to the chapel and the public walkway. The frequency of the steps changes every time there is a change in the direction of movement going up the hill.

This public walkway finally became a wound in the wall, a quarry--it provides the granite necessary for the construction of the whole complex. One side of this wound is left rough, while the other is finely polished, as if it were a mirror. Between the rough side and the steps there is a drainage strip, which collects the water filtering through the wall--as if the rock were sweating. A row of hydrangeas grows on this strip, the whole length of the walkway. On the other side, a stair leading to the vantage point on the top appears.

The walkway does not end when it lands on the platform. Actually, this walkway continues to the sea, providing an access to the tidal pools as well as an access to the beach at low tide.

THE TIDAL POOLS. They are generated by the direction of the sea waves and by two opposite attitudes in dealing with water: *contain* versus *retain* water.

There is a large pool on axis with the public walkway which contains water at low tide. The patients of the sanatorium will hear the low tide through the screaming of children playing in the tidal pool. At high tide, the water moves to touch the wall, the original limit between sea and hill before the infill platform and the road to the harbour were built. During the very high tides in September, the sea moves into a series of platforms located behind the existing trees, creating a series of shallow pools, and increasing the length of the actual contact between the sea and the wall.

The two levels of movement, one for pedestrians, the other for vehicles, echo each other as opposites. One becomes a vertical slit, a wound in the wall, while the other becomes a horizontal plane, a bridge over the water, allowing the sea to come close to the wall. On both, the inflection points, the points where the directions of movement intersect, become vantage points, places to watch where the waves are coming from. They are also echoed by the third vantage point at the level of the fishermen's housing.

Seppè così la strana caratteristica di quell'ospedale. I malati erano distribuiti piano per piano a seconda della gravità. Il settimo, cioè l'ultimo, era per le forme leggerissime. Il sesto era destinato ai malati non gravi ma neppure da trascurare. Al quinto si curavano già affezioni serie e così di seguito, di piano in piano. Al secondo erano i malati gravissimi. Al primo quelli per cui era inutile sperare.

Duesto singolare sistema, oltre a sveltire grandemente il servizio, impediva che un malato leggero potesse venir turbato dalla vicinanza di un collega in agonia, e garantiva in ogni piano un'atmosfera omogenea. . .

Ne derivava che gli ammalati erano così divisi in sette progressive caste.

Sette piani Dino Buzzati

Il faut, d'autrepart, aménager l'espace intérieur de l'hôpital de façon qu'il devienne médicalement efficace: non plus lieu d'assistance, mais lieu d'opération thérapeutique. L'hôpital doit fonctionner comme une "machine à guérir".

Les machines à guérir Michel Foucault

We are all born mad. Some remain so.

Waiting for Godot Samuel Beckett

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot

When society decides to protect itself against criminals, mentally sick people, and people it considers generally inconvenient, it is invincible. There's only one thing you can do: reconcile yourself to the idea that your stay here is necessary.'

'It isn't necessary to anyone.'

'Once prisons and lunatic asylums exist, there must be someone to be there. If it's not you, it's me; if it's not me, then it's someone else....

Ward 6 Anton Chekhov

From the alienated starting point of our pseudosanity, everything is equivocal. Our sanity is not "true" sanity. Their madness is not "true" madness. The madness of our patients is an artifact of the destruction wreaked on them by us and by them on themselves. Let no one suppose that we meet "true" madness any more than that we are truly sane. The madness that we encounter in "patients" is a gross travesty, a mockery, a grotesque caricature of what the natural healing of that estranged integration we call sanity might be.

The Politics... R.D. Laing

The Romantics invented invalidism as a pretext for leisure, and for dismissing bourgeois obligations in order to live only for one's art. It was a way of retiring from the world without having to take responsibility for the decision--the story of *The Magic Mountain*.

Illness... Susan Sontag

The order of disease is simply a 'carbon copy' of the world of life; the same structures govern each, the same form of division, the same ordering. The rationality of life is identical with the rationality of that which threatens it.

The Birth of the Clinic Michel Foucault

Because the death rattle of time is far more acute, and painful, and prolonged, when its impermanence is disguised as permanence. Here there were no clocks. There was a time of light and darkness. A time of crumbling hills. A time of leaf, still, trembling, fallen.

The Aunt's... Patrick White

Sometimes a blade of light, between carpet and a door, slit the darkness. . . Theodora passed an open doorway that blinded by its audacity, or rather an unconscious insolence of solid light.

The Aunt's... Patrick White

But Theodora did not reject the world. It flowed, violet, and black, and momentarily oyster-bellied through the evening landscape, fingering the faces of the houses. Soon the sea would merge with the houses, and the almost empty asphalt promenade, and the dissolving lavender hills behind the town. So that there was no break in the continuity of being . . . She could breathe the soft light. She could touch the morning.

The Aunt's... Patrick White

'Always remember, Theodora, there's nothing like stairs. They comand such a vista. They lend importance. Everyone passes sooner or later. And sometimes one notices disgraceful things one wasn't meant to see.'

The Aunt's... Patrick White

I sit and wait. It is not so very different from the outside world because life in whatever surroundings or circumstances is a series of variations on the theme of waiting.

Memoirs... Patrick White

I do not intend to romanticize any disease, to make illness glamorous--only to make a necessary step, convalescence, as fulfilling as possible.

A sensuous experience: ways of intoxicating yourself?

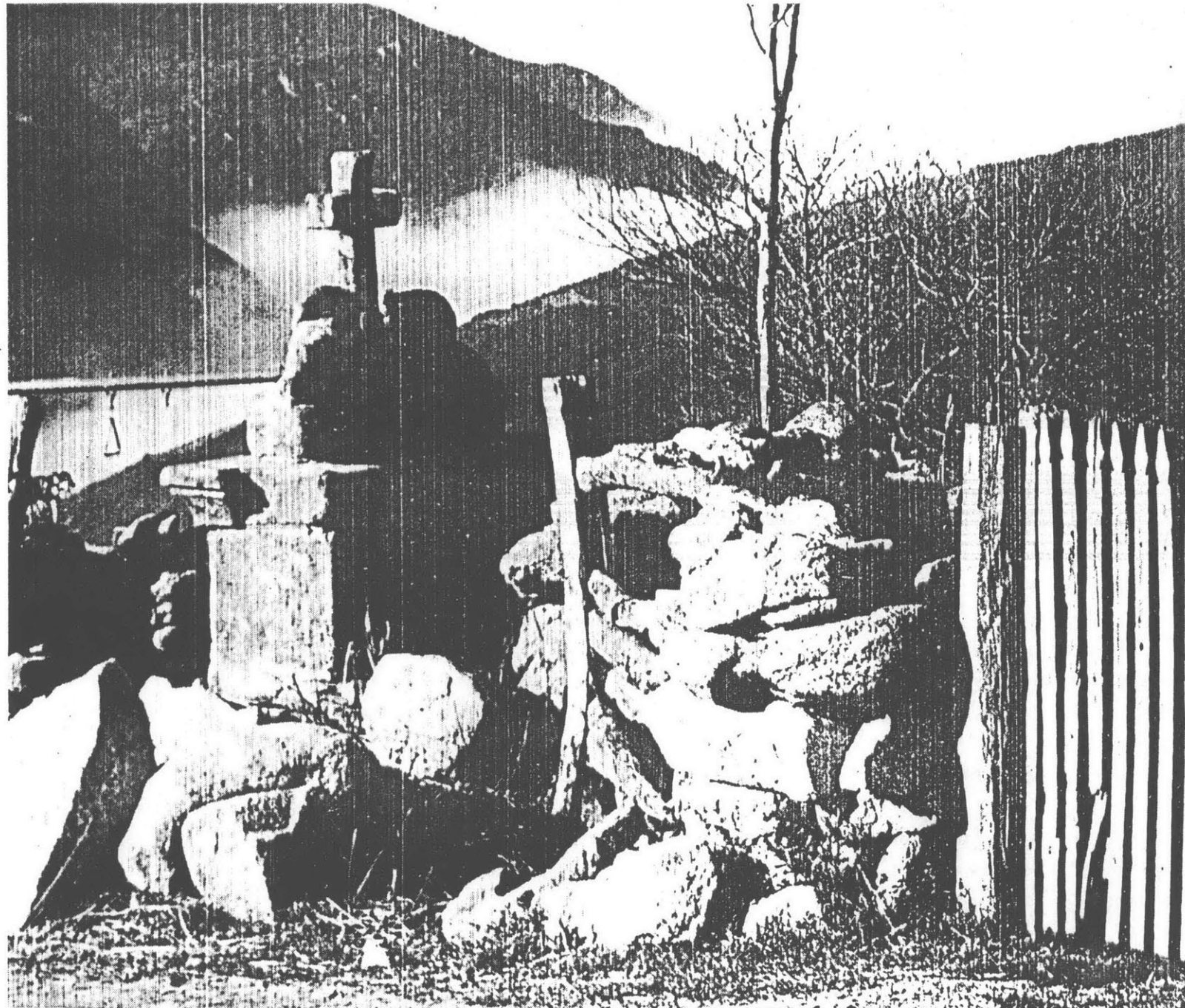
An acute sensibility: the refinement of perceptions versus "artificial paradises".

Natural versus artificial.

But an excessive abundance will make you feel saturated, satiated, sated, surfeited. Better, a healthy balance, only the essential.

So there I was, in this white and blue asylum, cleaning up some blood with turpentine, and you came to help them too and kept rollerskating up and down the empty ward. A sanatorium . . . free association?

ELEMENTS OF THE SITE: Natural and Artificial

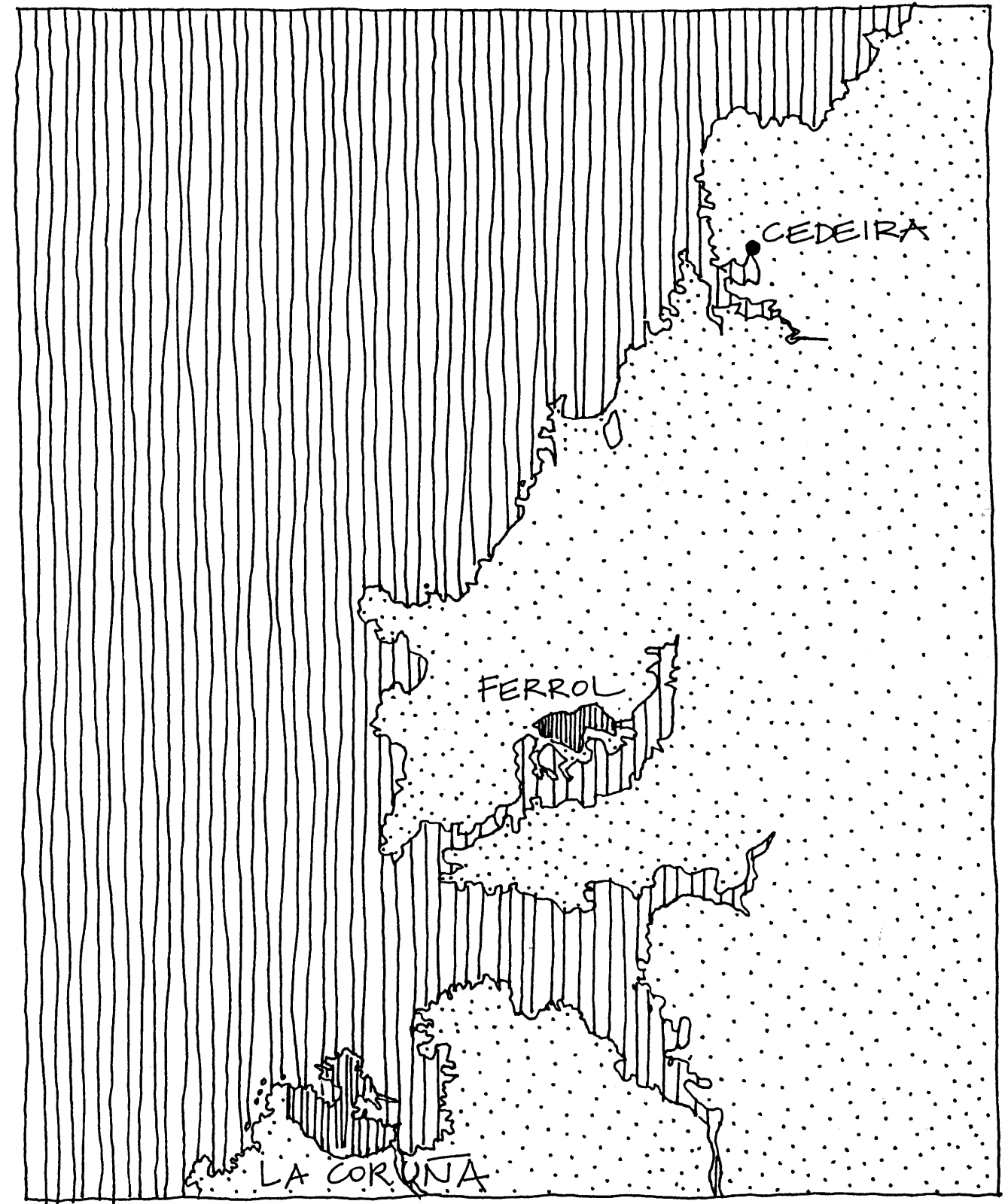
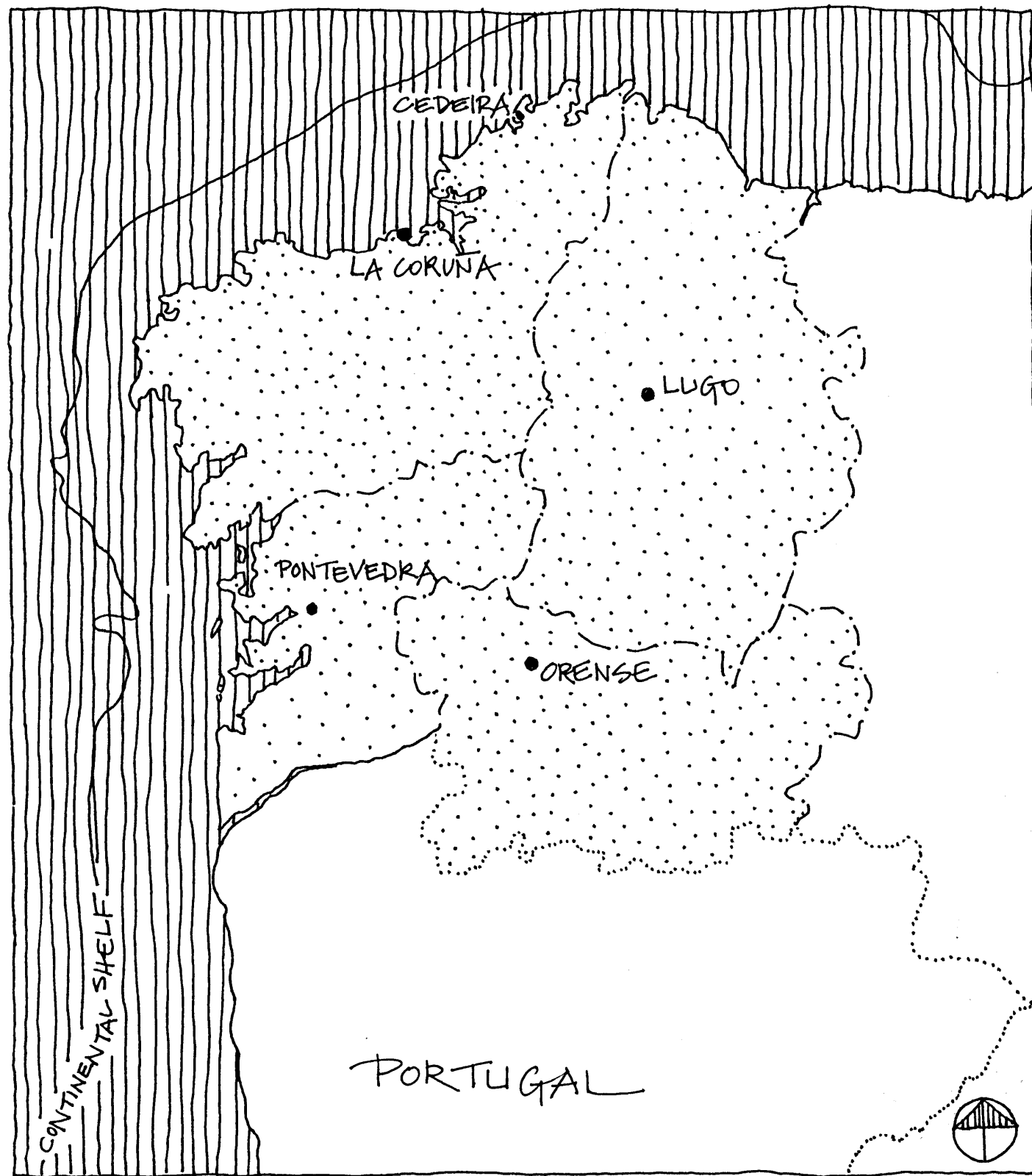


NATURAL ELEMENTS:

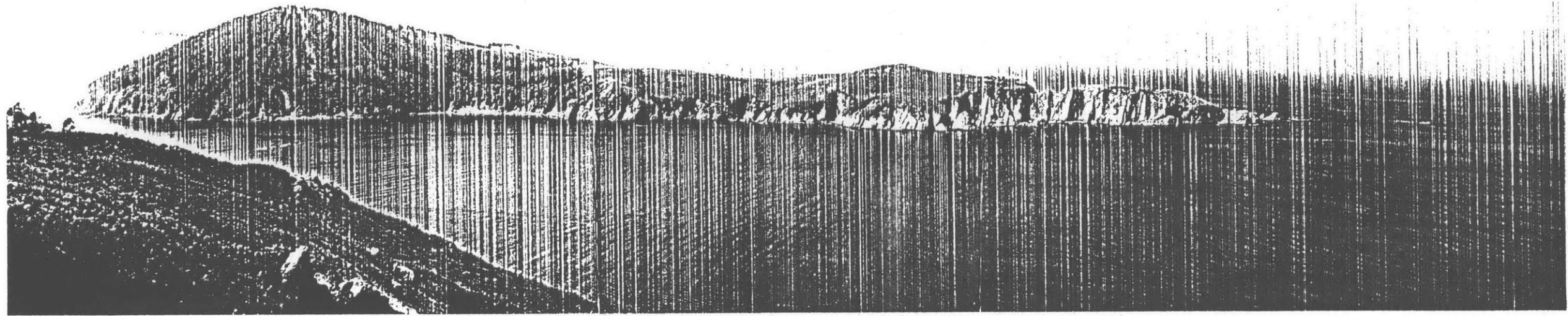
- the hill--the topographic lines
- the wall
- the sea--the direction of the waves
- the existing row of trees in the platform

ARTIFICIAL ELEMENTS:

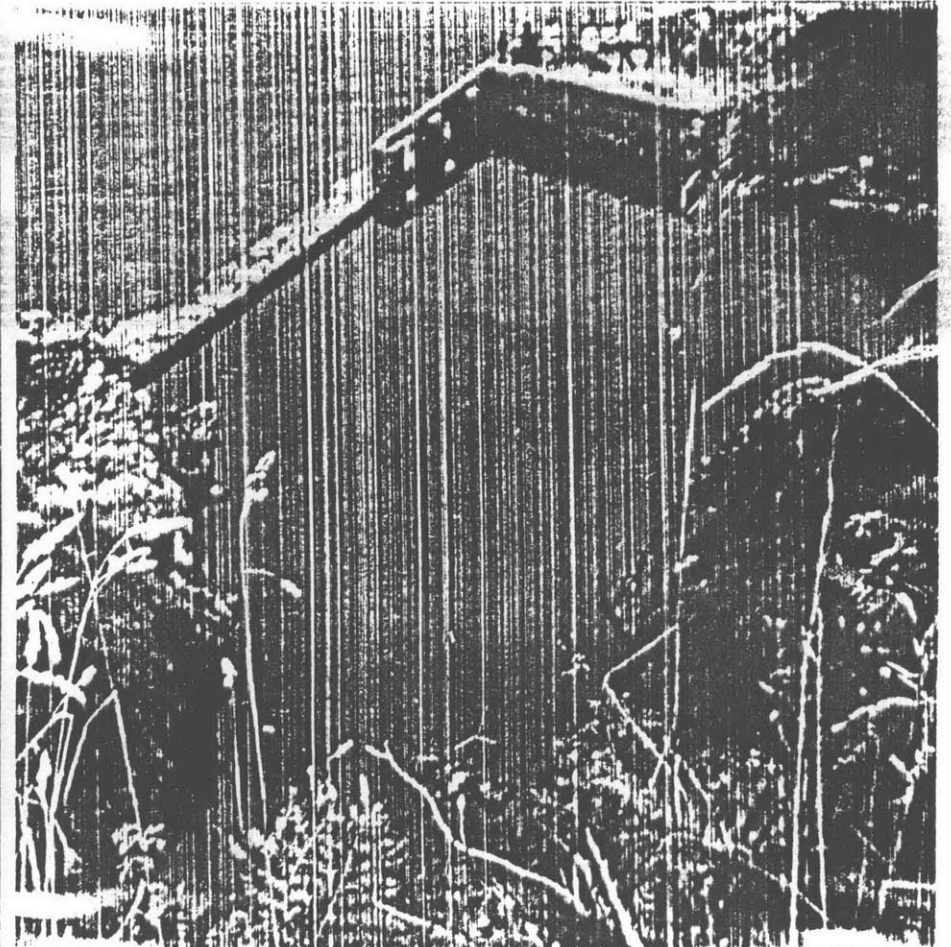
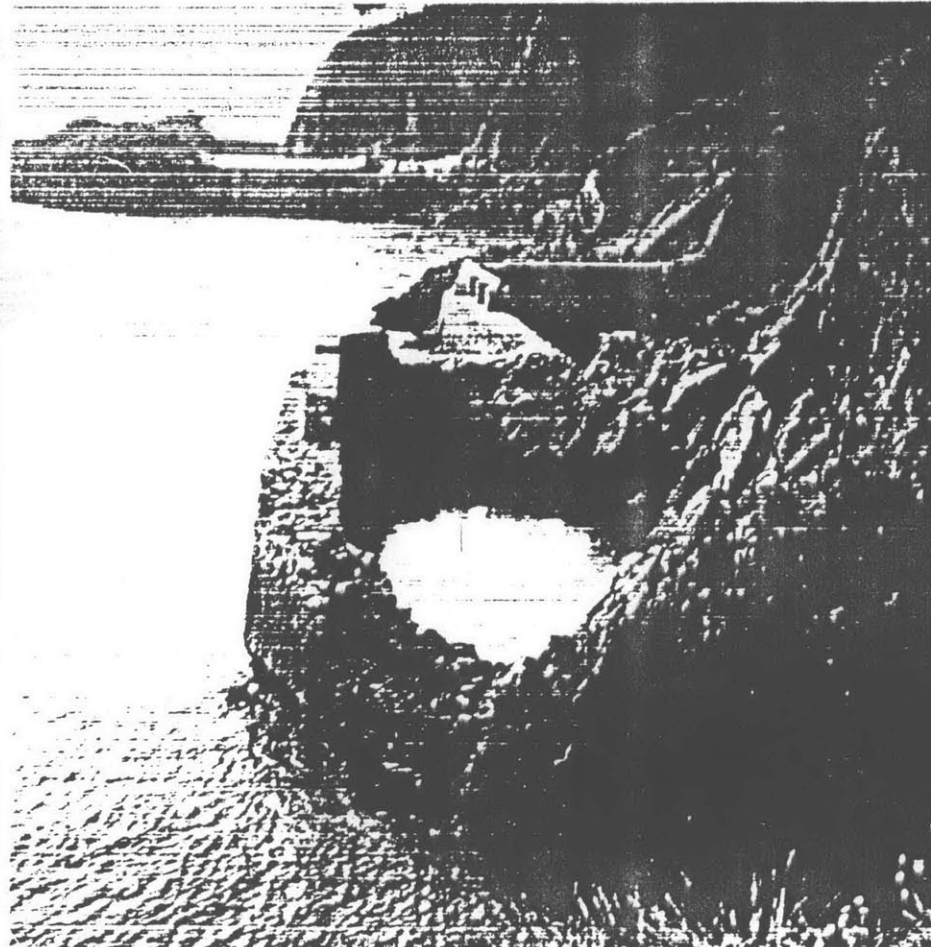
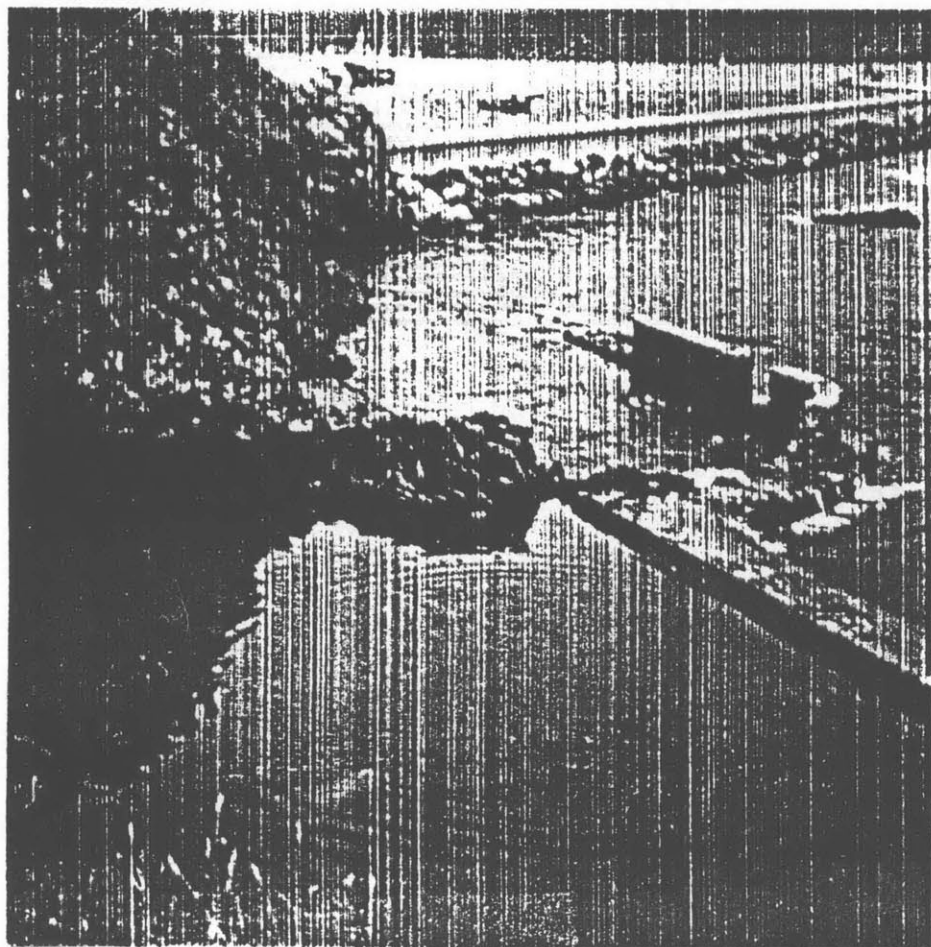
- the platform and the road to the harbour
- the visual axis and the road to the town
- the fishermen's housing
- the fishermen's club

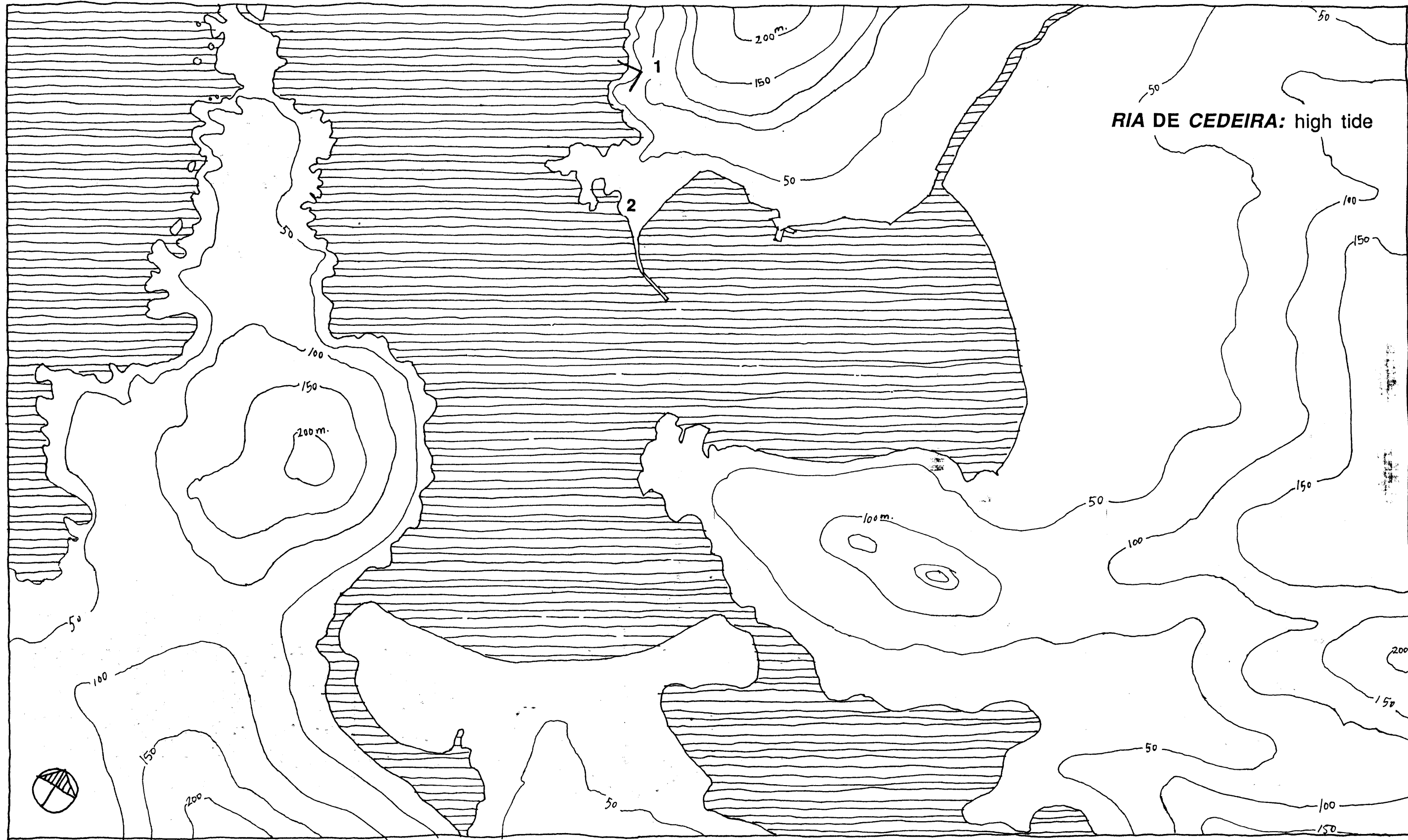


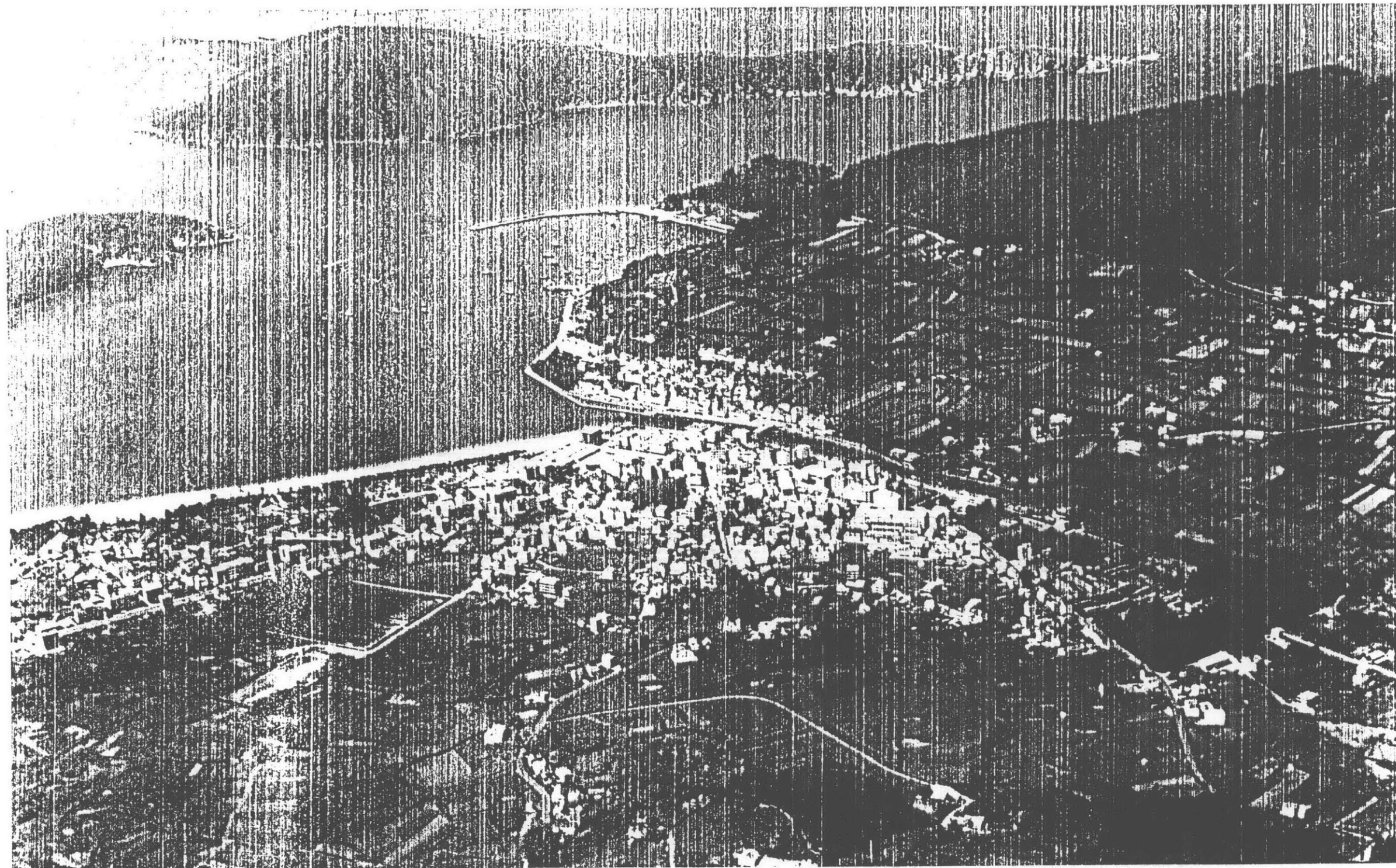
1



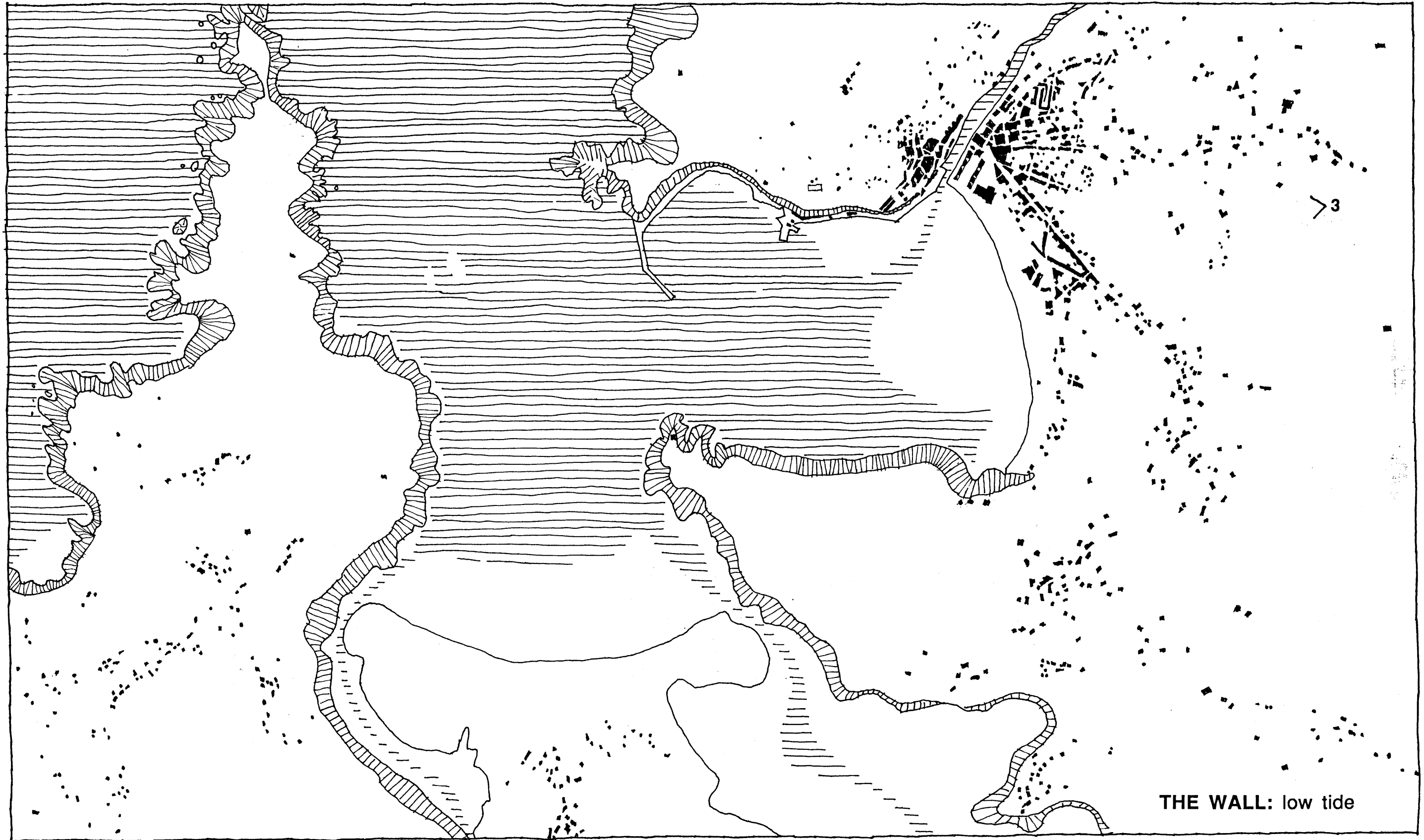
2 TIDAL POOLS: former shellfish nurseries--the roofs collapsed several years ago.



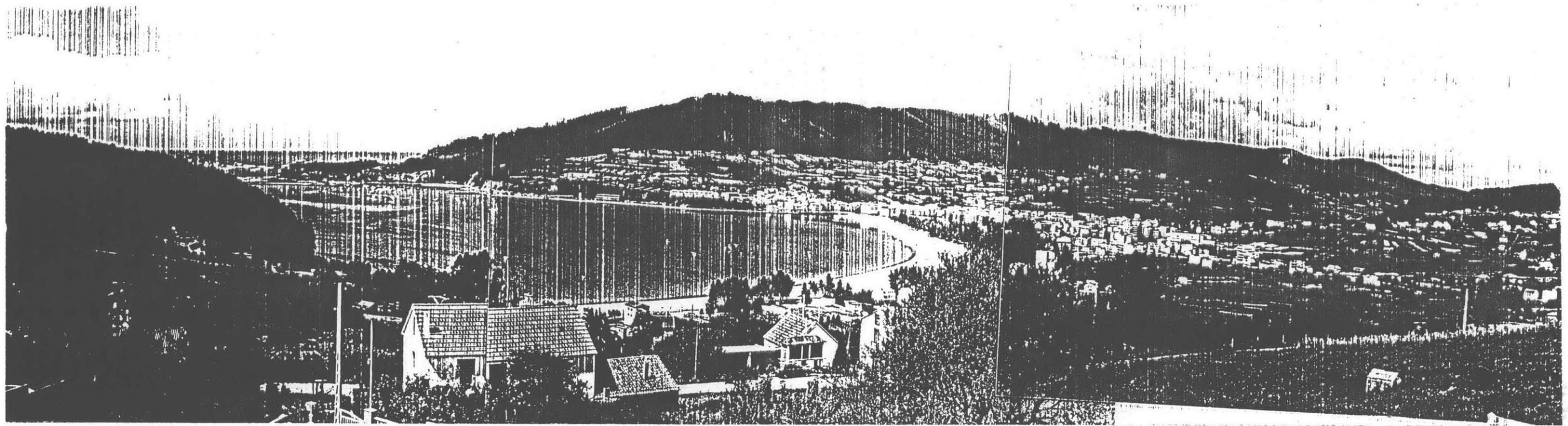




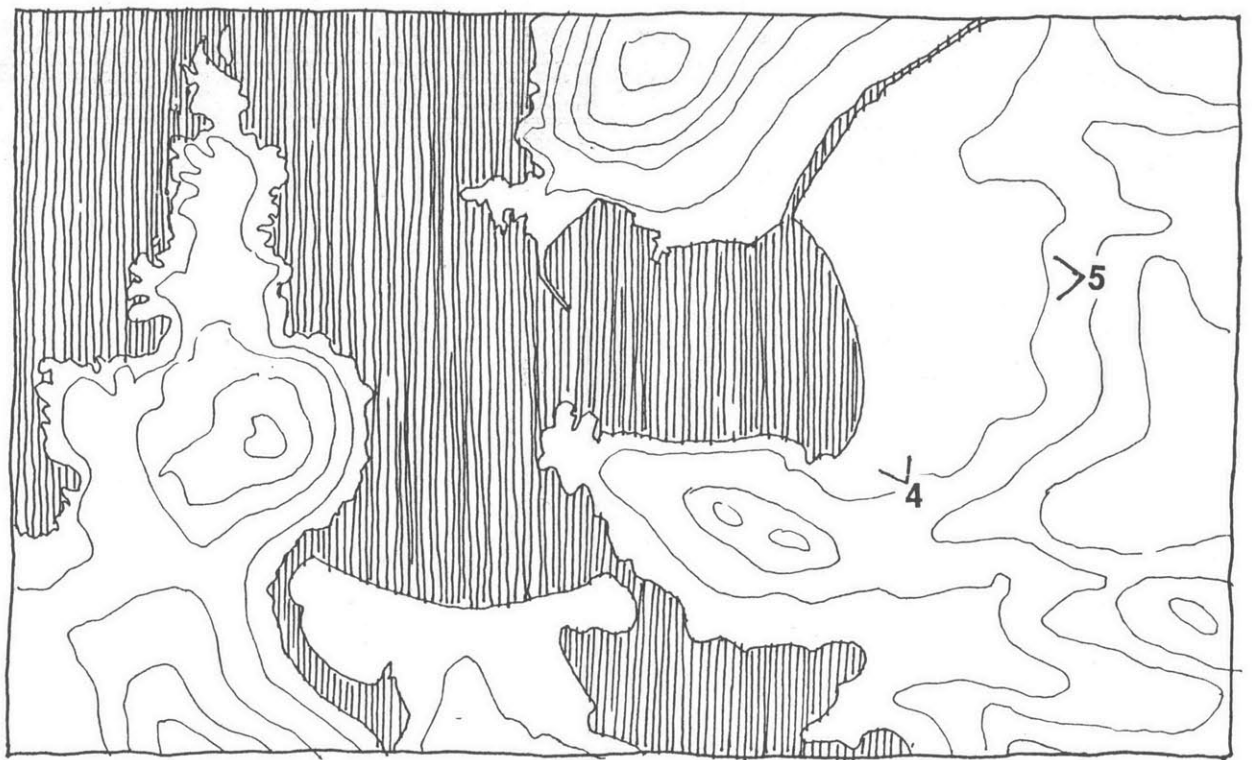
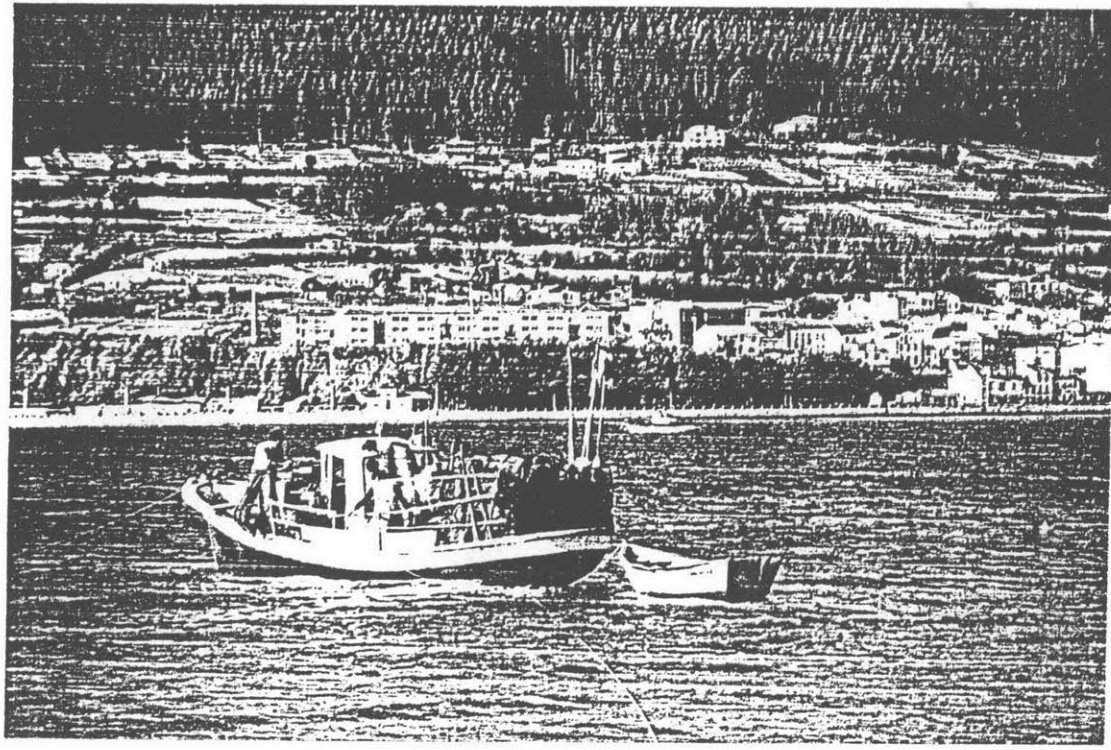
3 Aerial view of Cedeira



THE WALL: low tide



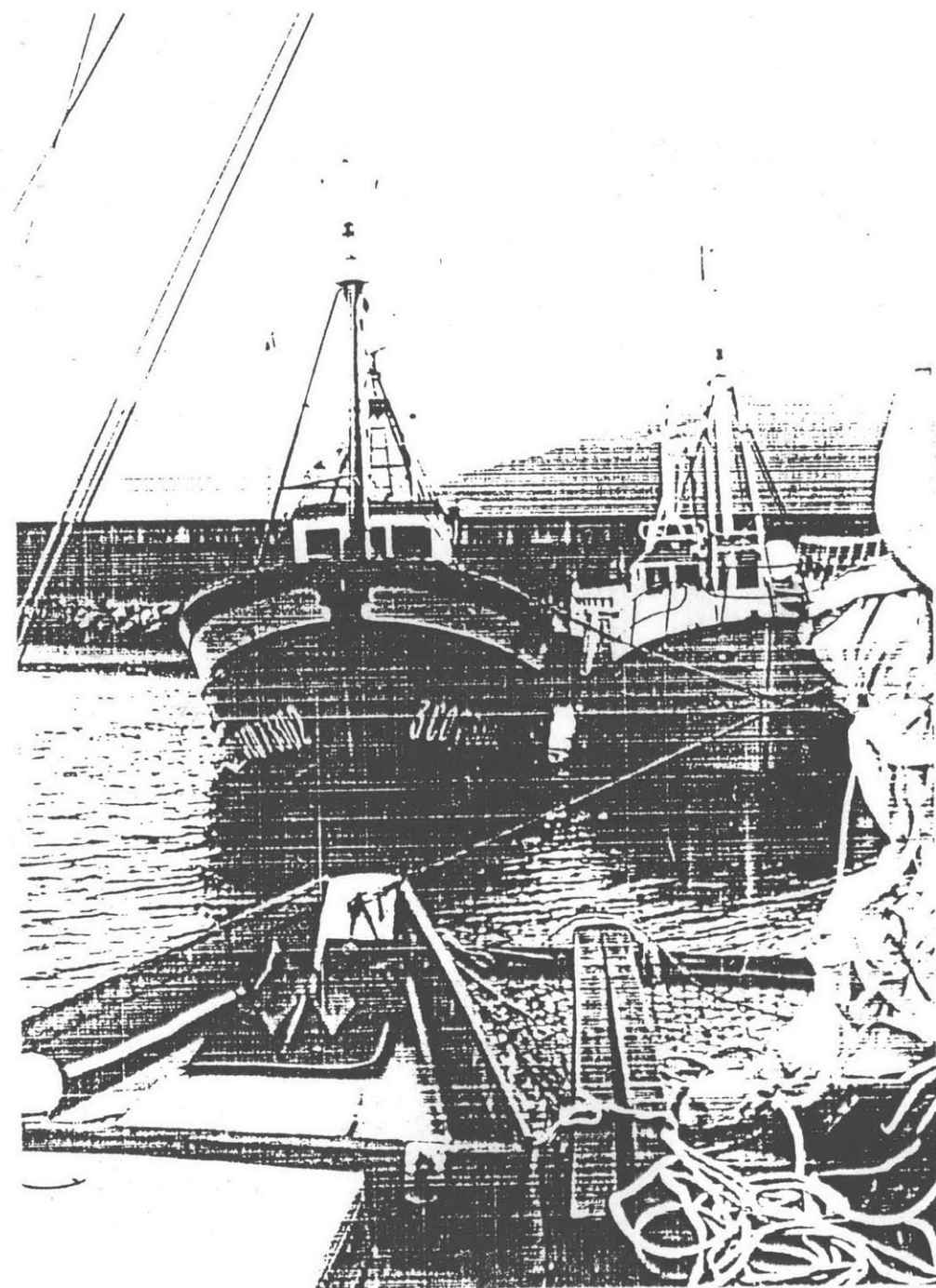
4

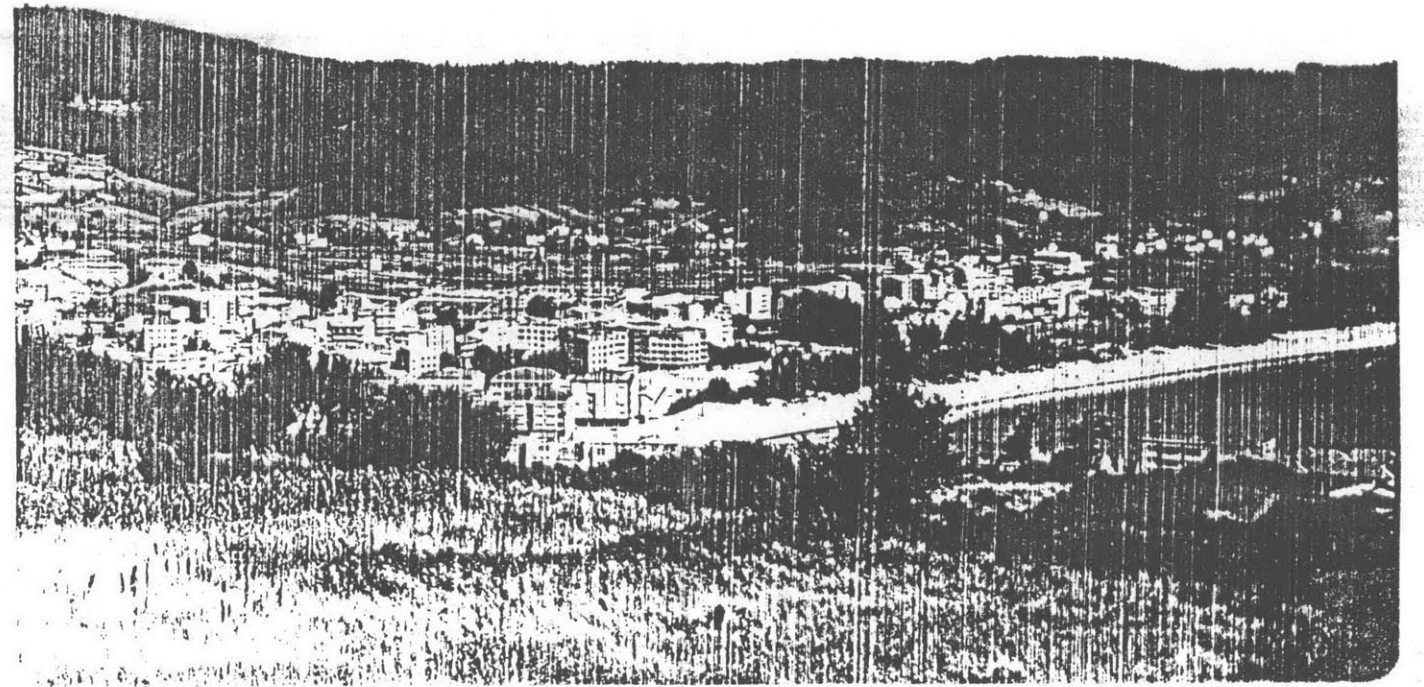
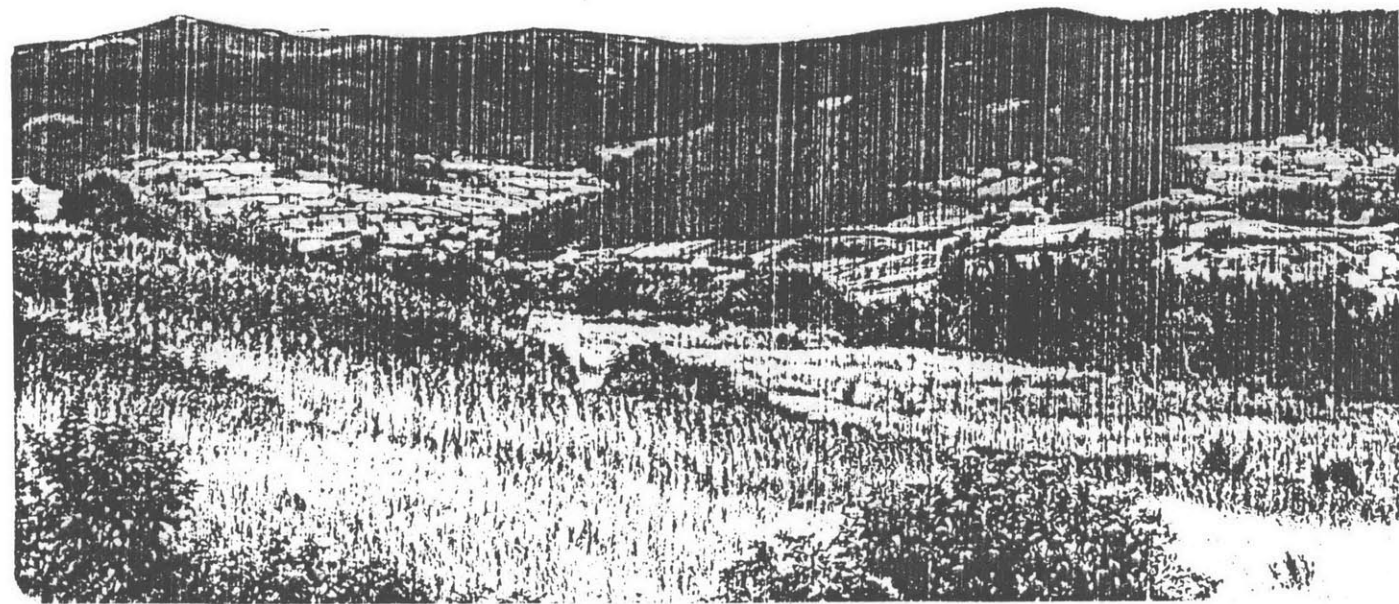




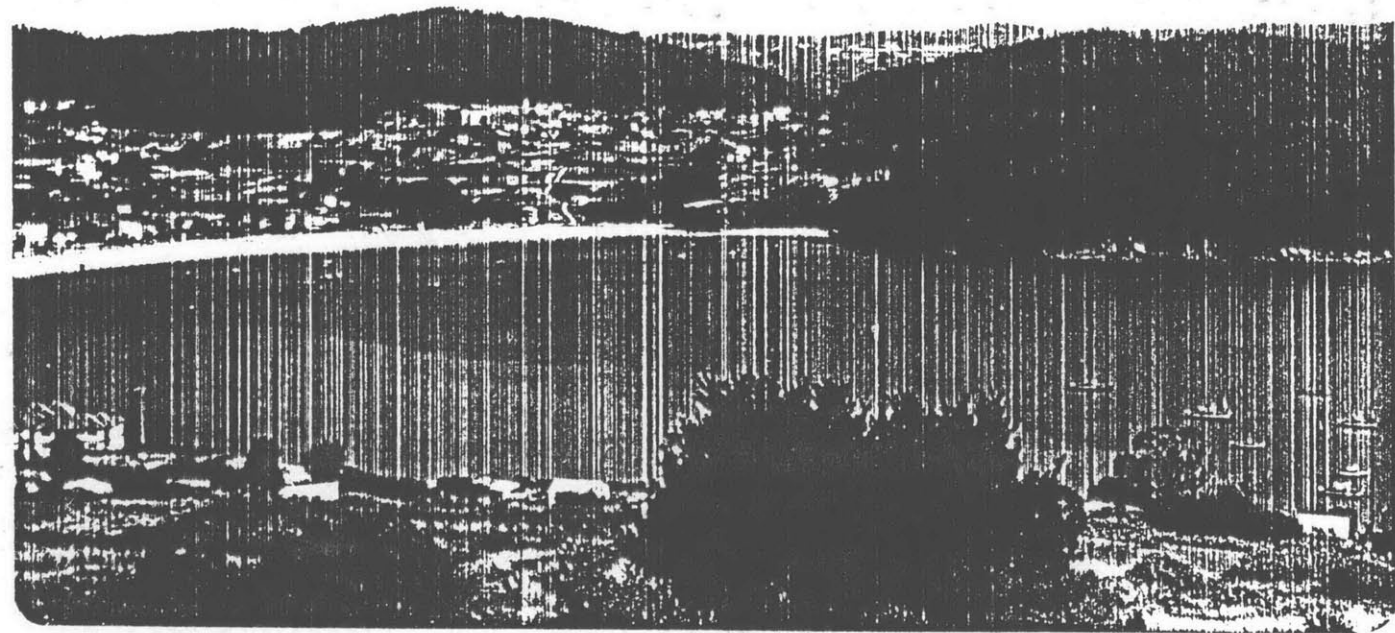
5

CEDEIRA: Panoramic views

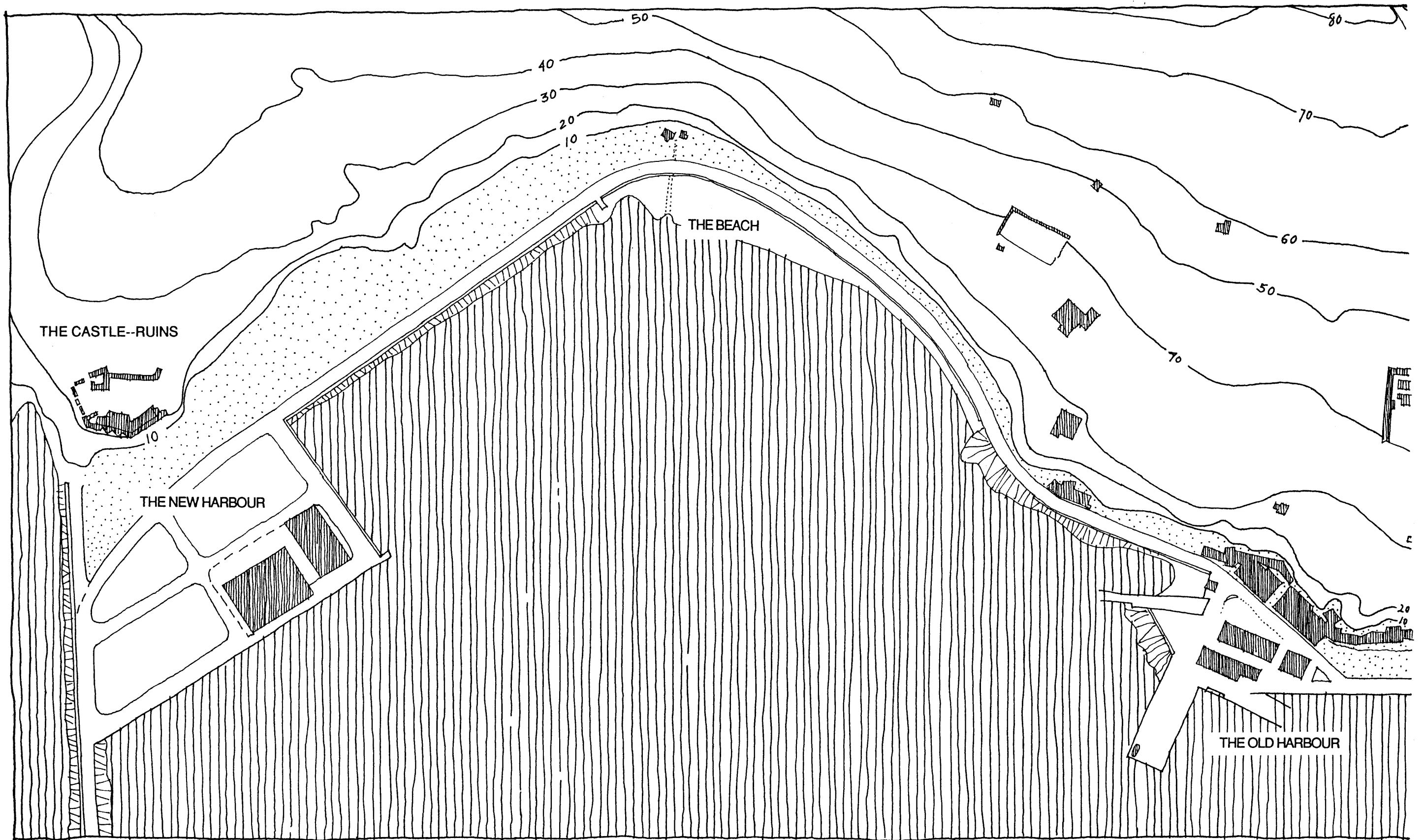


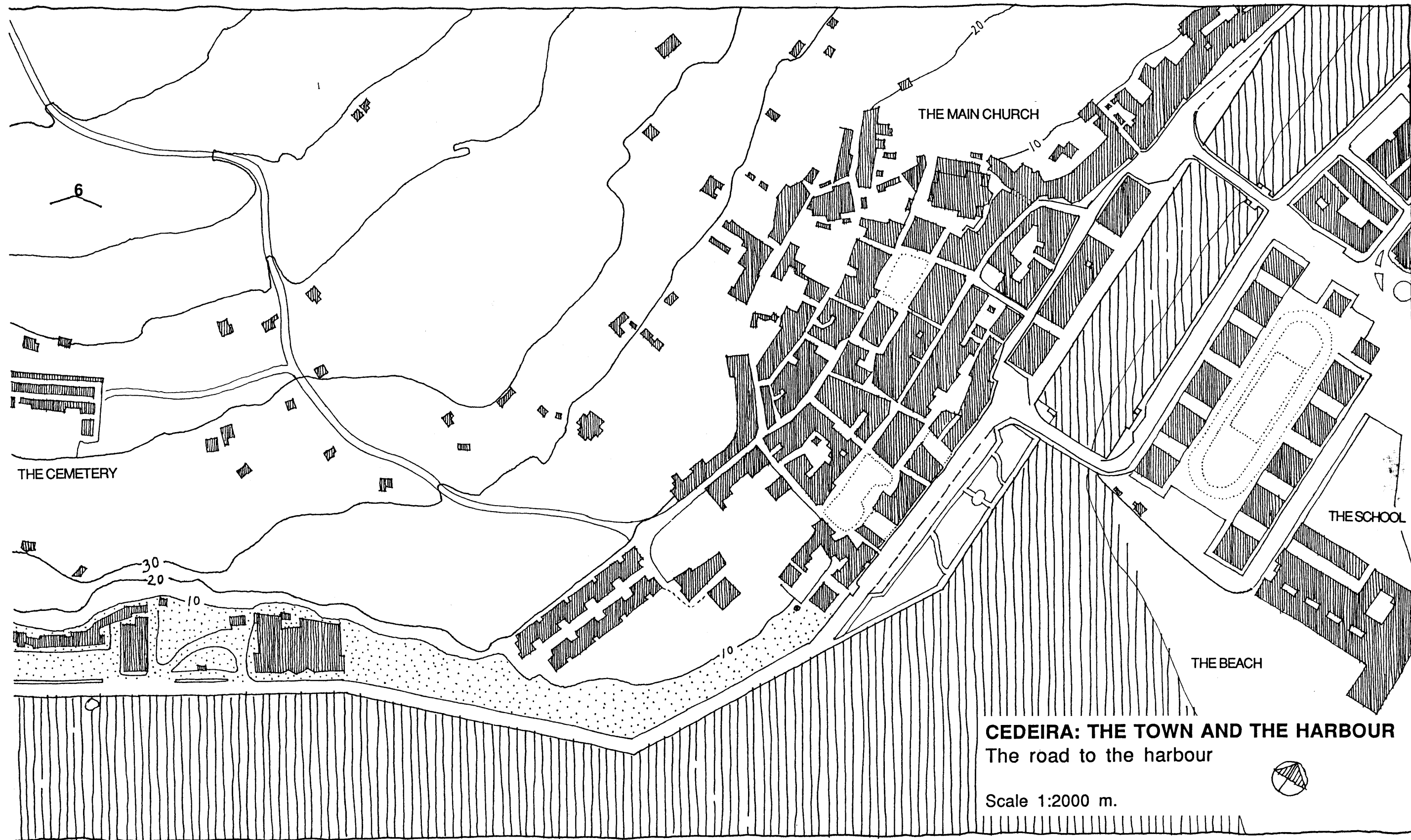


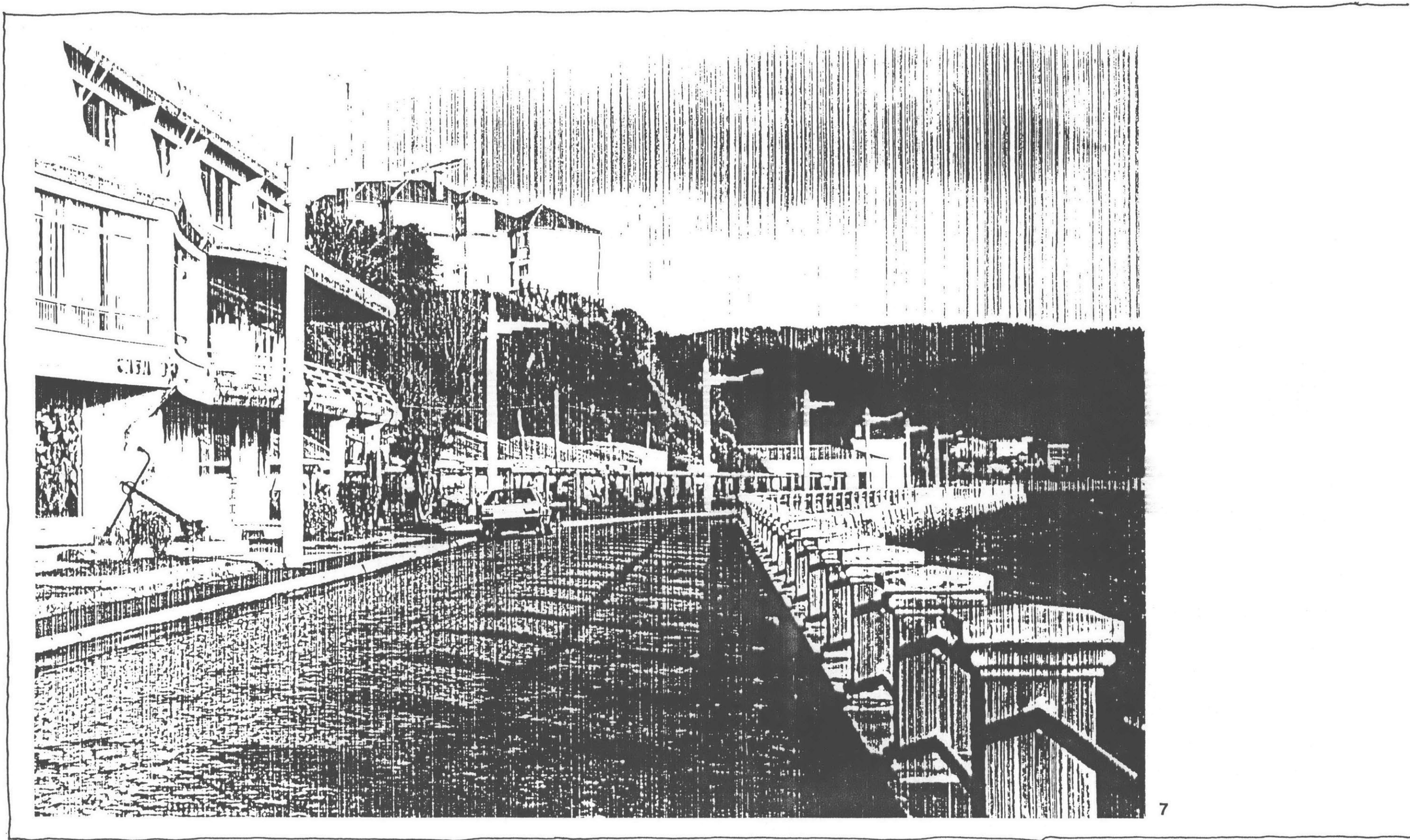
6 Panoramic view of the bay from the site

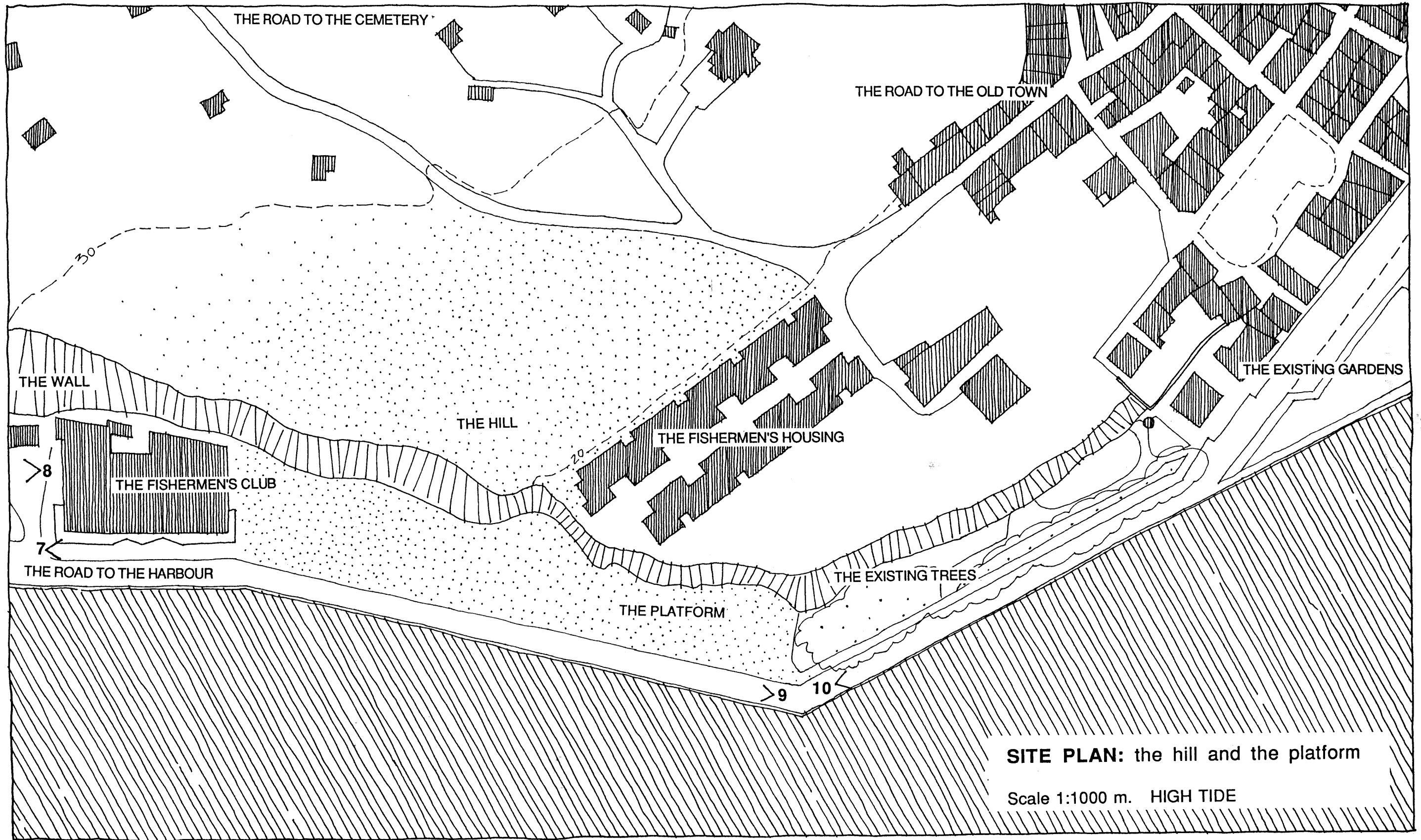


THE LIGHTHOUSE



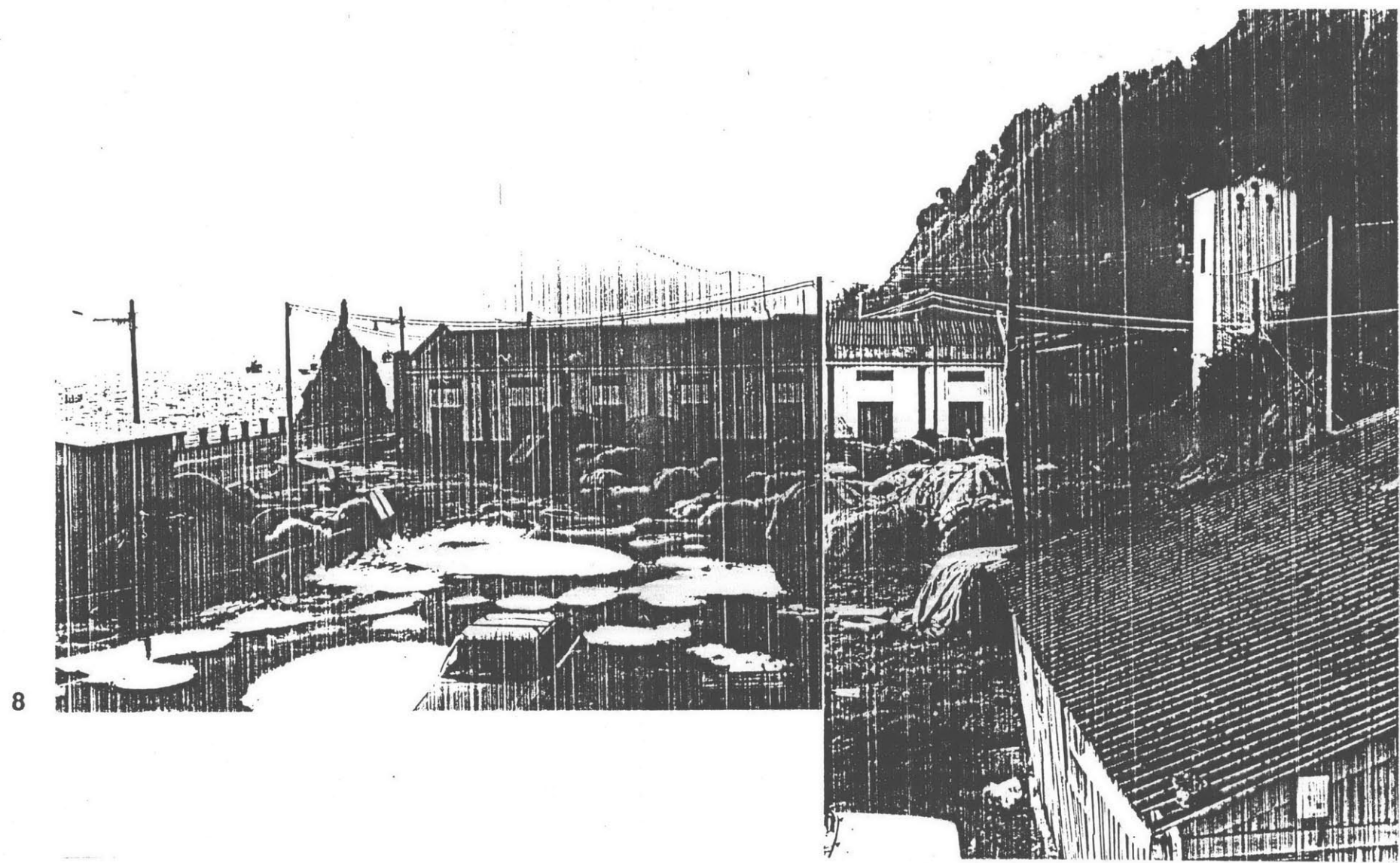




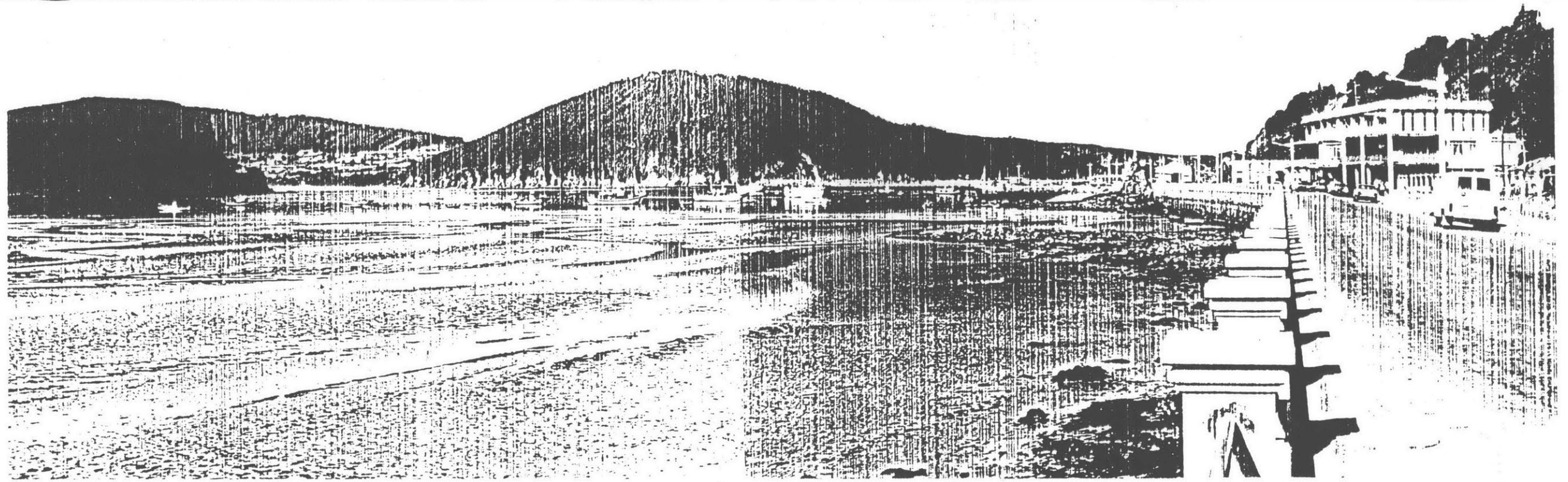


SITE PLAN: the hill and the platform

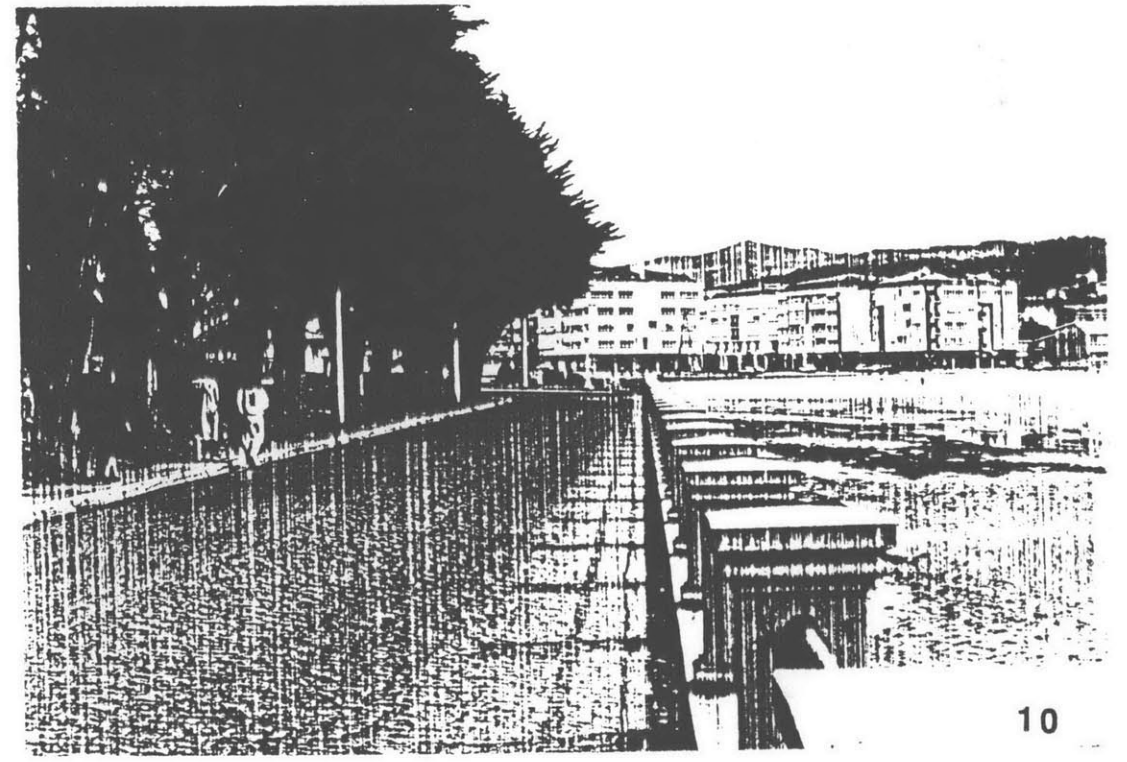
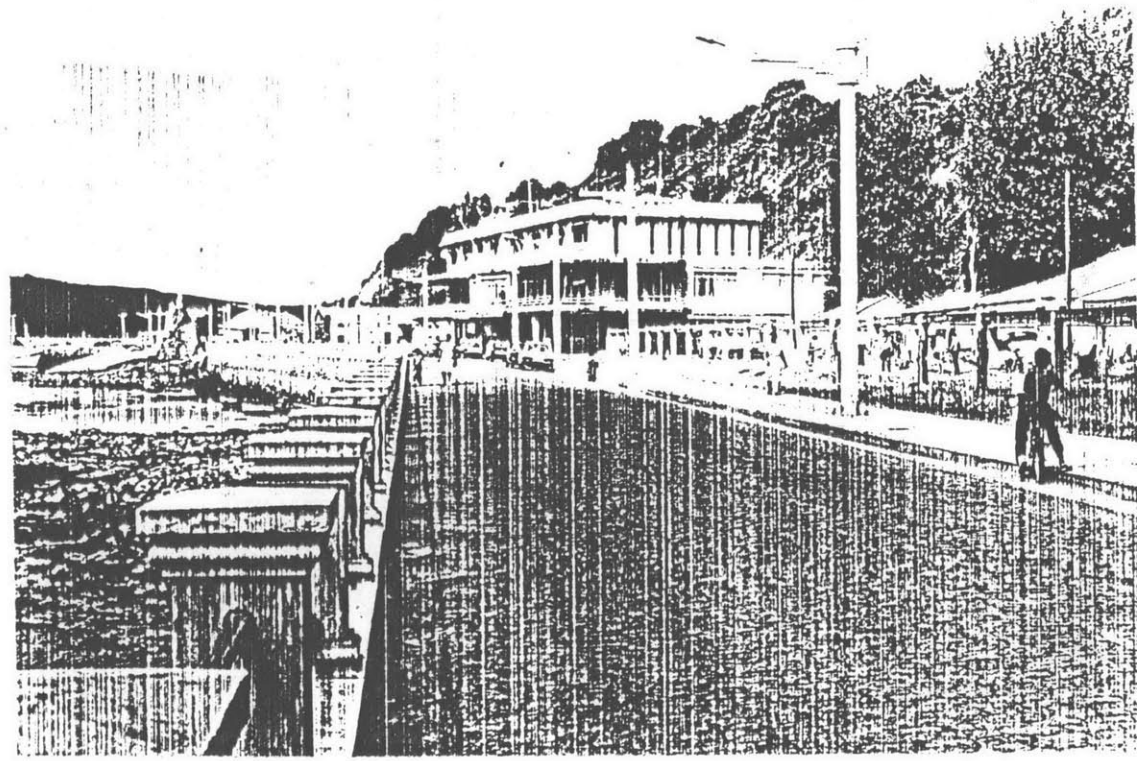
Scale 1:1000 m. HIGH TIDE



8



9 View from the site at low tide



10

ANALYSIS: Sketches from journals

The following pages contain sketches and excerpts photocopied from the journals that I kept throughout the semester. They are arranged in a chronological, rather than thematic, order. The reasons are twofold: first, a chronological account seems more coherent with the actual development of the project; second, it does not make sense to isolate these elements when the main premise is to explore how they affect each other.

In a way, this section could be considered the pith of this thesis.

SITE DIAGRAMS

Scale 1:2000 m.

PROGRAM FOR A SANATORIUM (50-100 beds)

NURSING WARD

Rooms: 1 or 2 patients (24)
 2 or 4 patients (76)

Living quarters for 10-12 nuns

Common areas

Nurses' stations

Laundry and support areas

CLINICAL WARD

X-ray suite

Pharmacy

Laboratory

Visitors and outpatient areas

Doctors' offices

Administrative offices

Admitting/lobby/visitors

Staff/conference/lounge/lockers

Maintenance/mechanical plant

RECREATIONAL WARD

Library

Physical therapy

Occupational therapy

Activity spaces (quiet to noisy)

Support: kitchen, laundry, storage

Restaurant

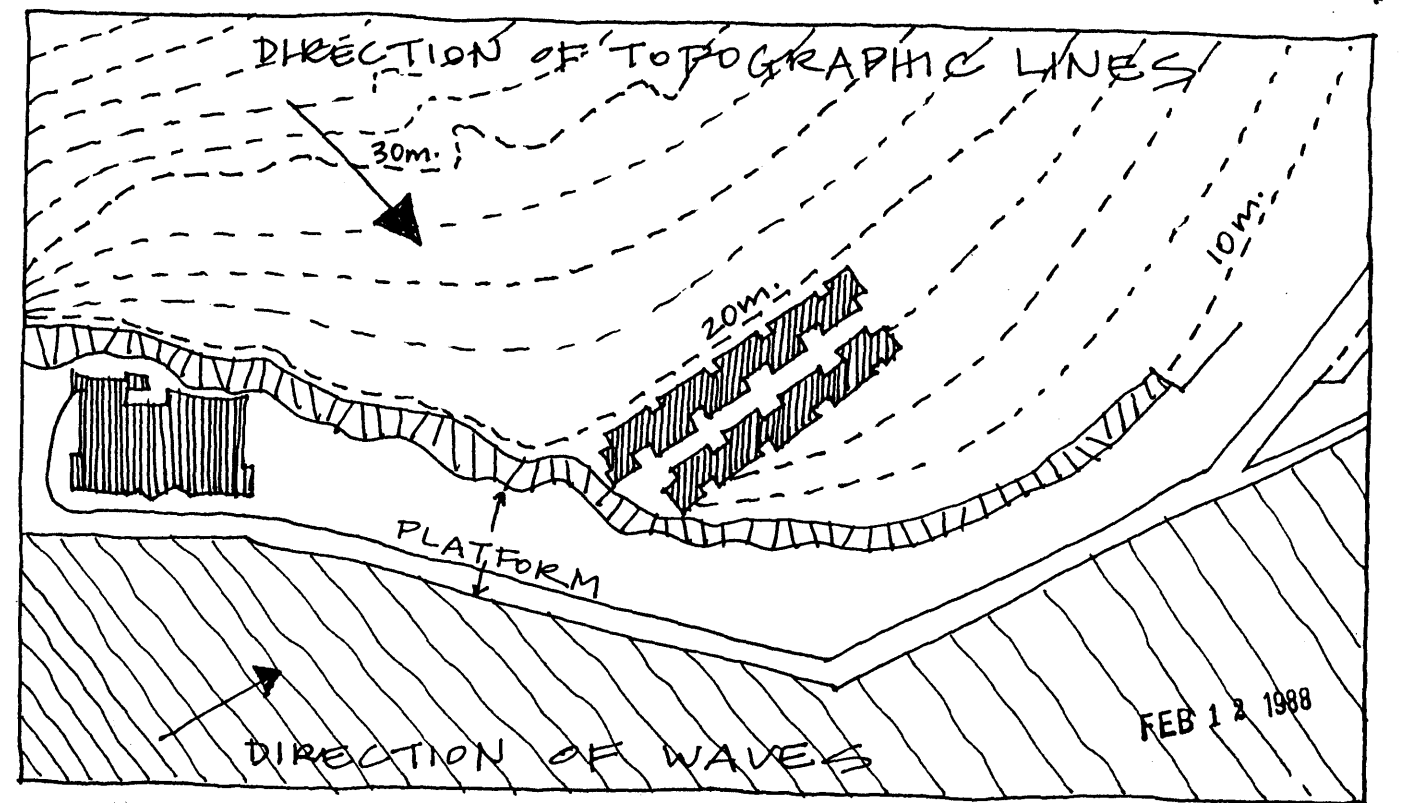
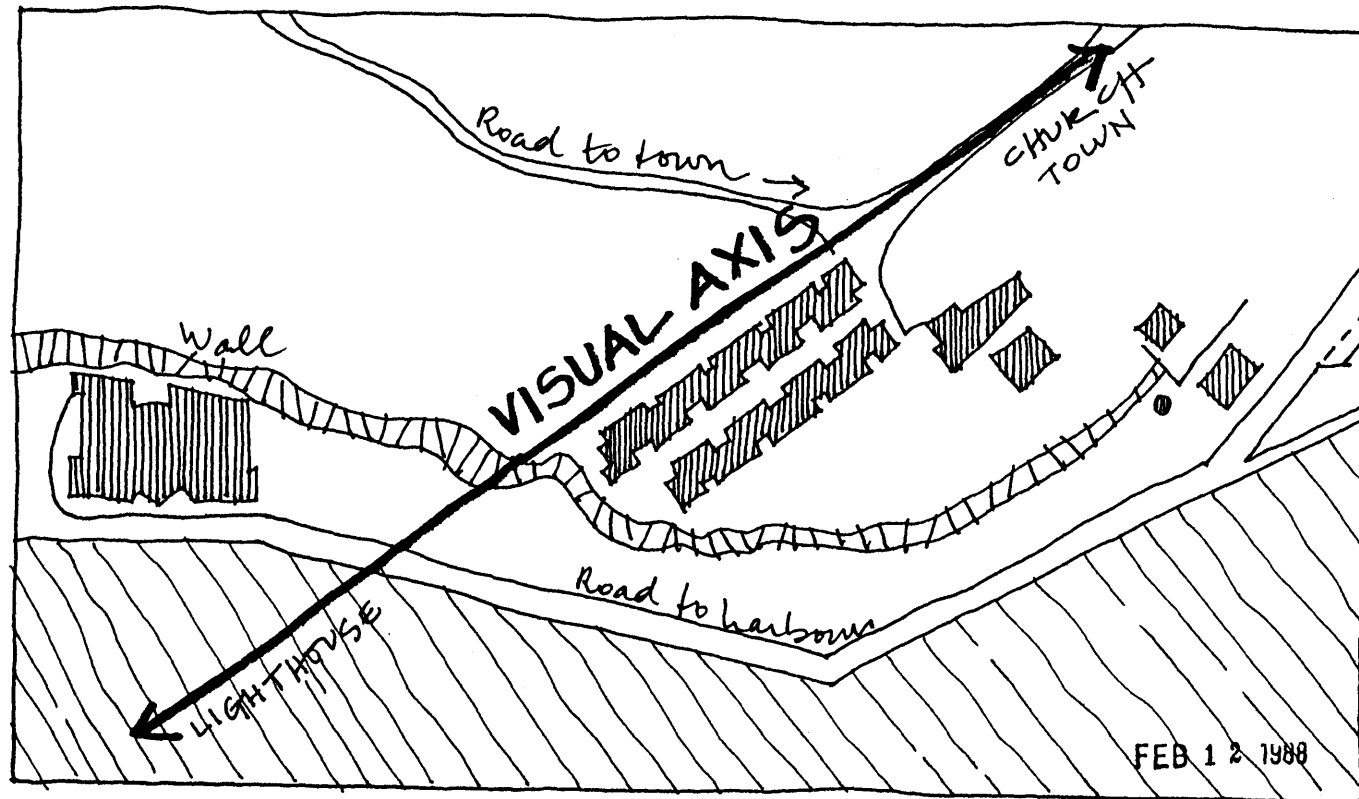
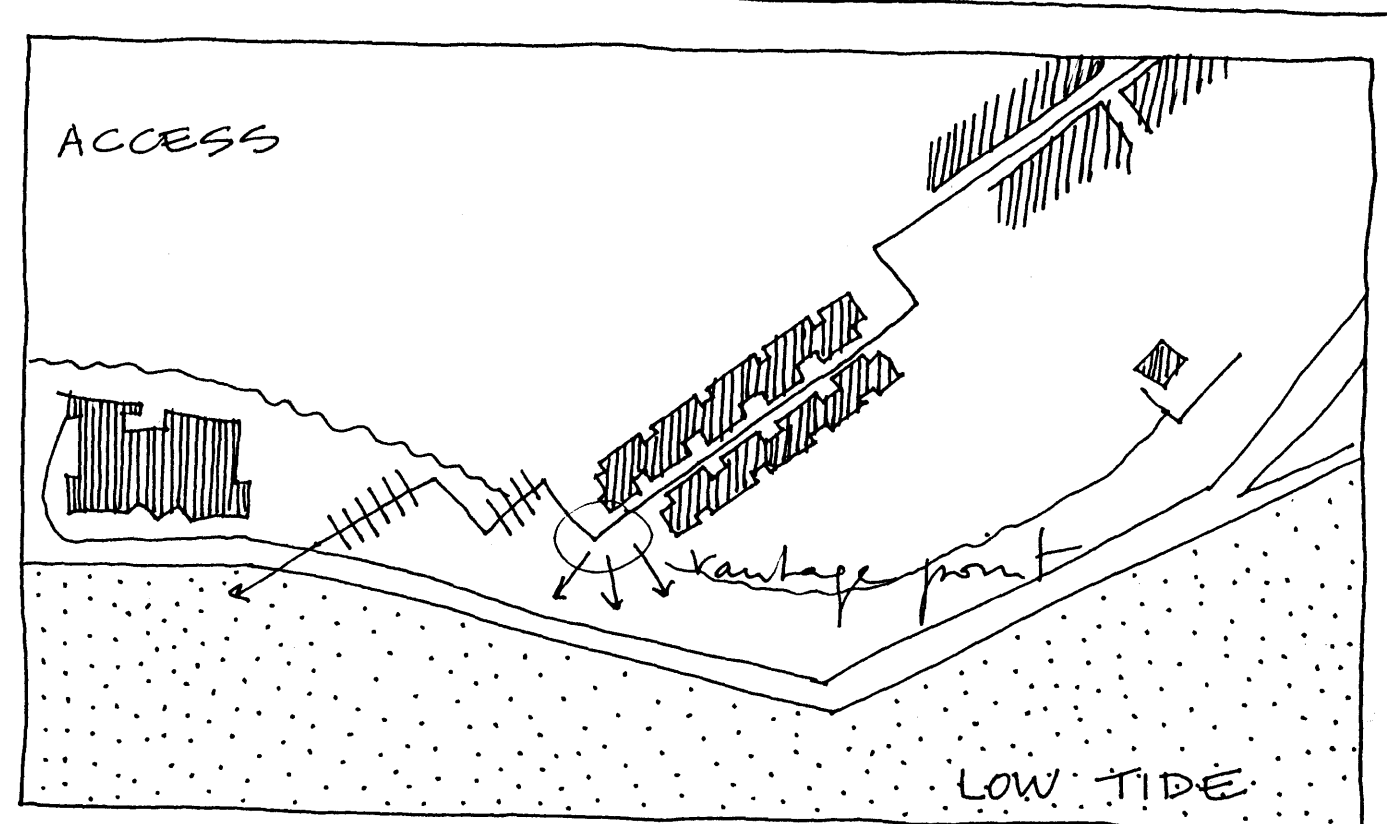
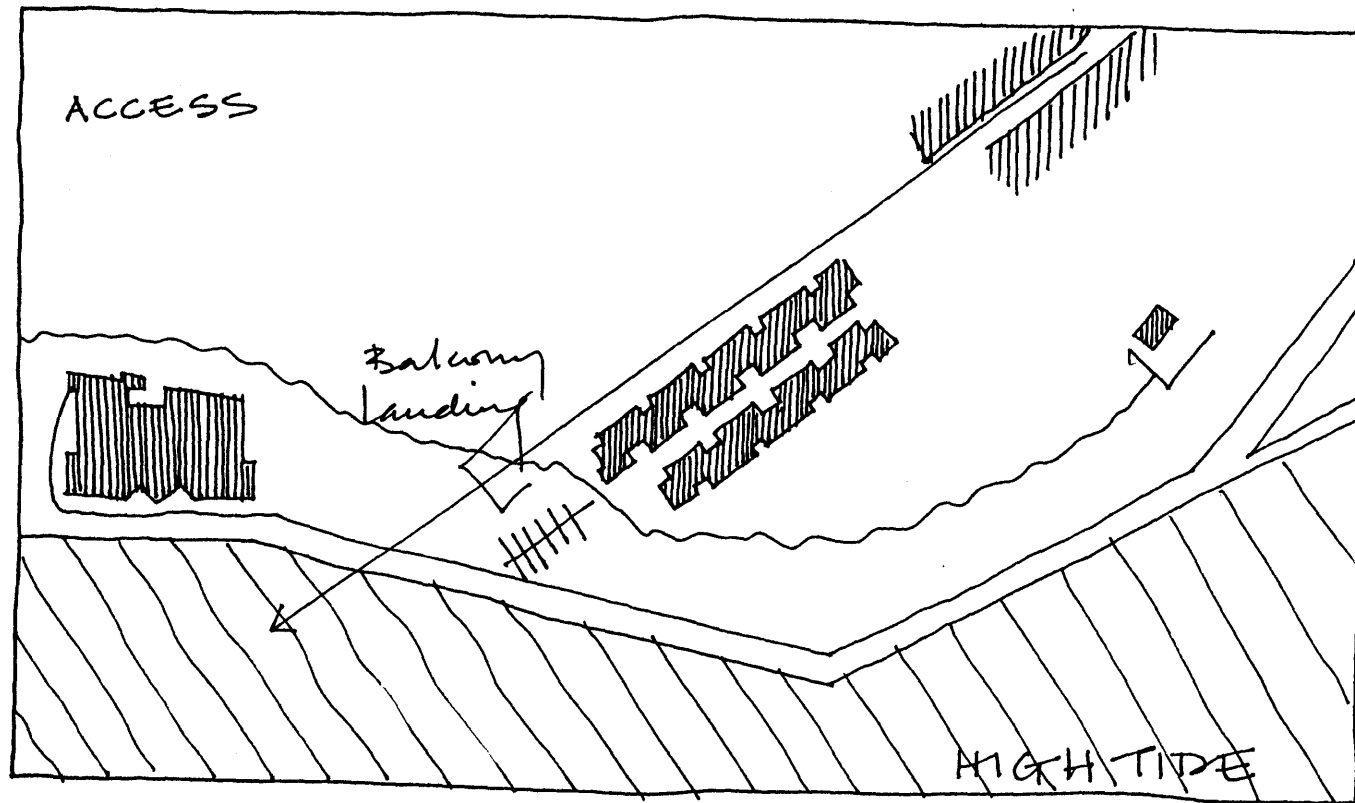
CHAPEL

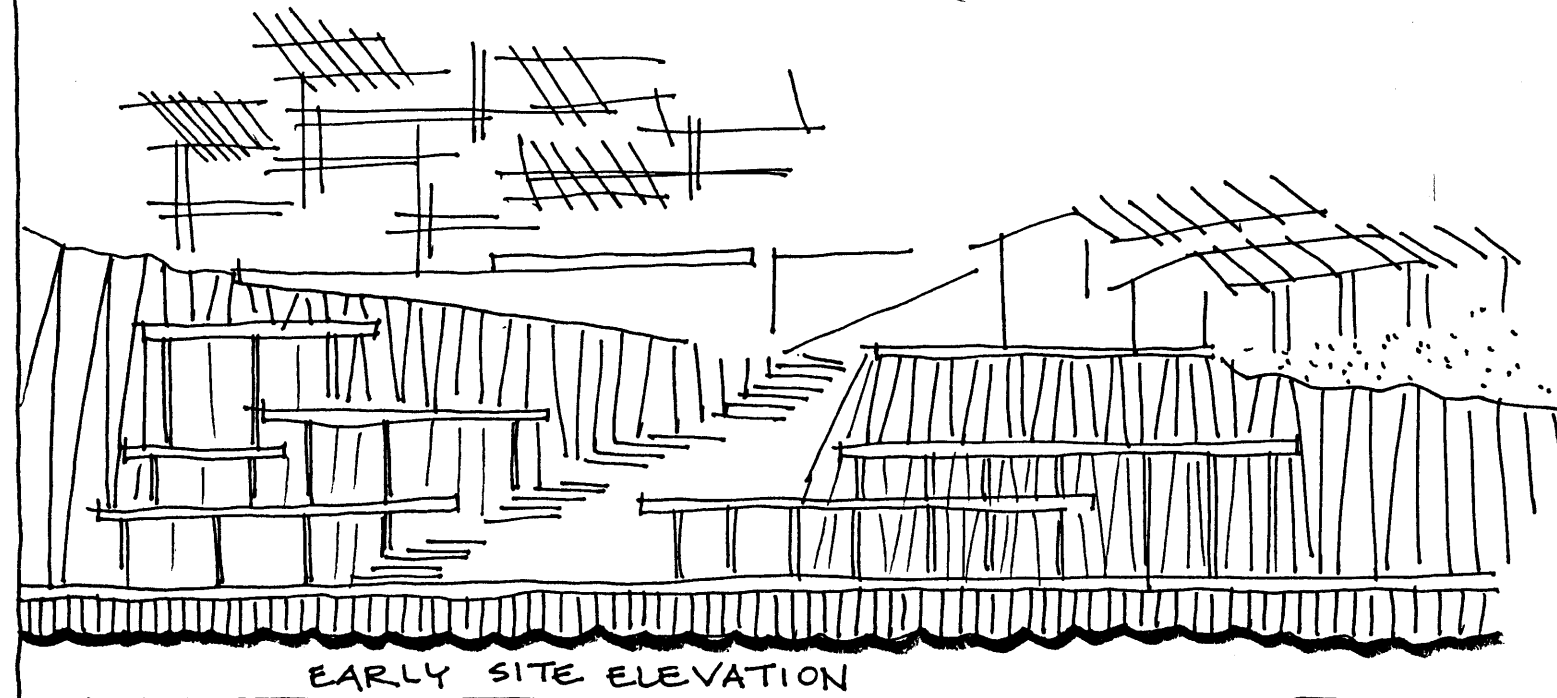
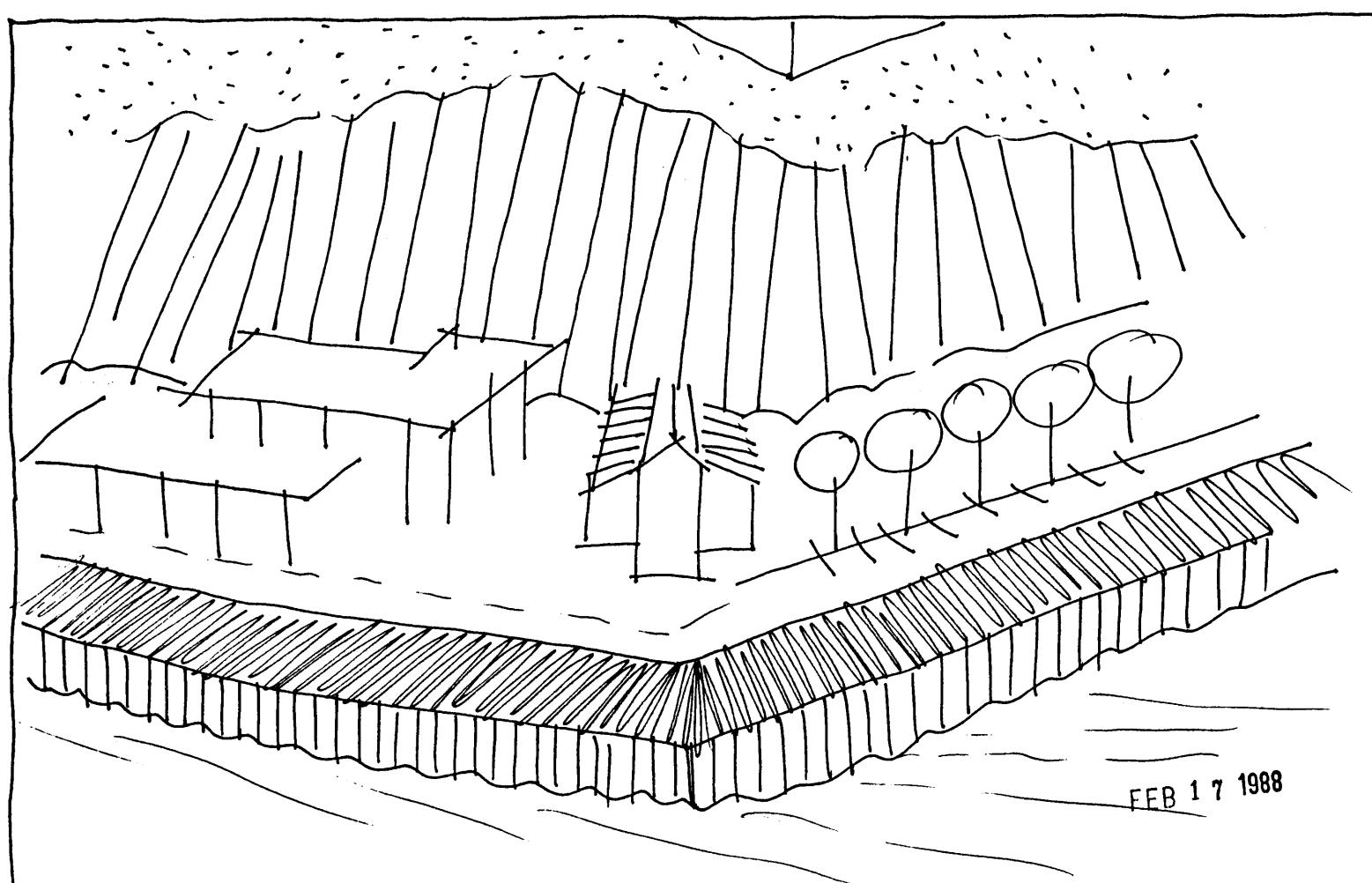
Sacristy

PLUM ORCHARD--botanical garden

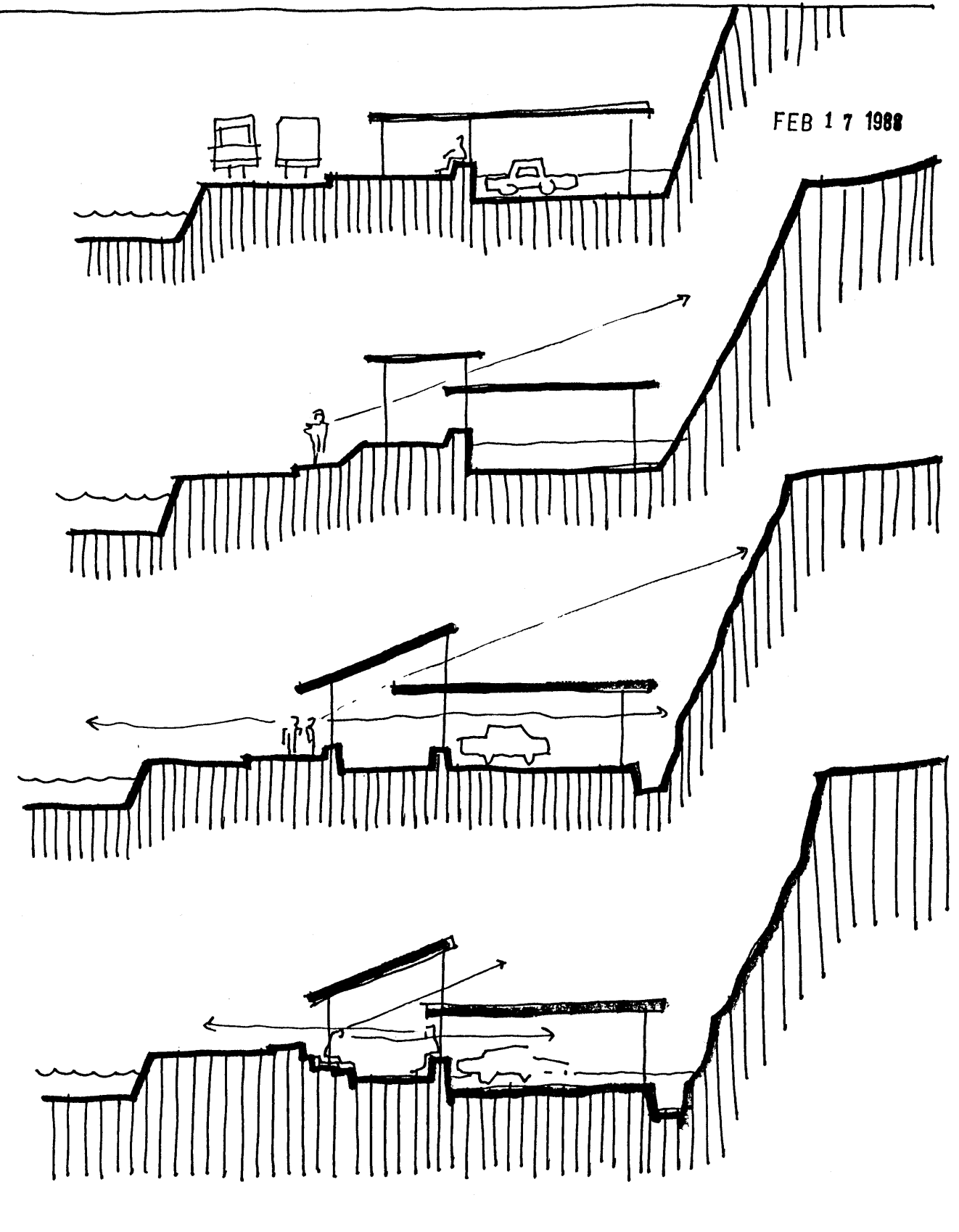
PARKING

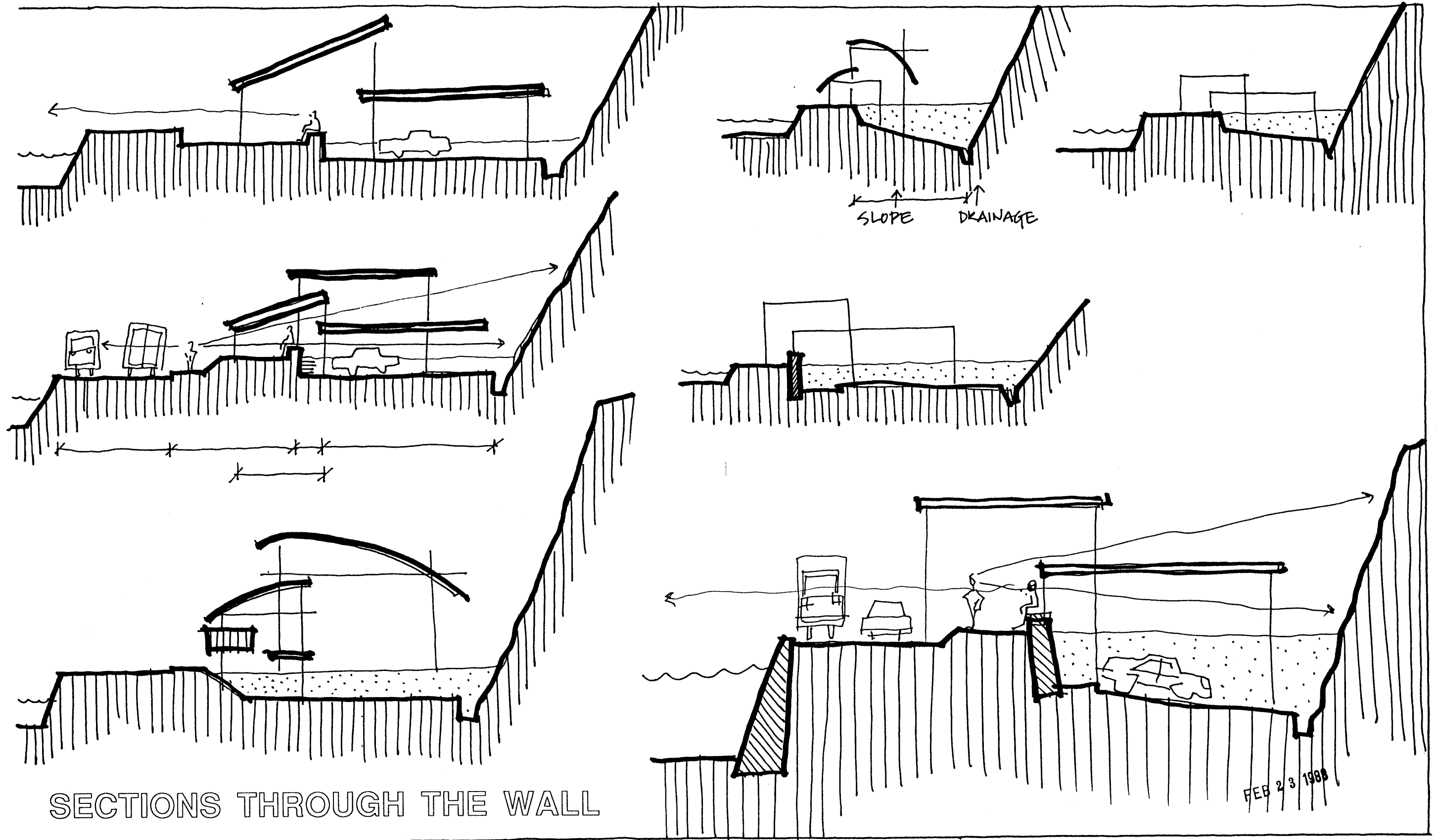
SWIMMING POOL--solarium



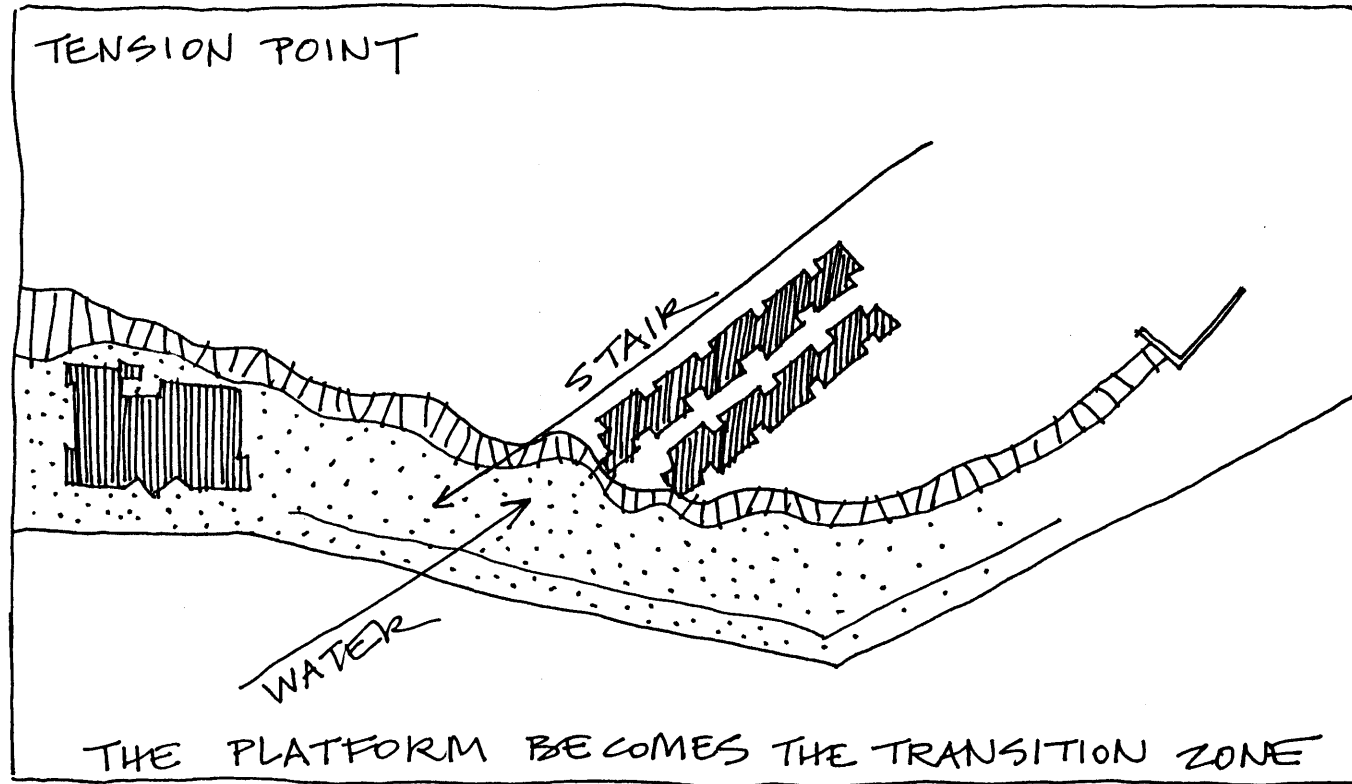
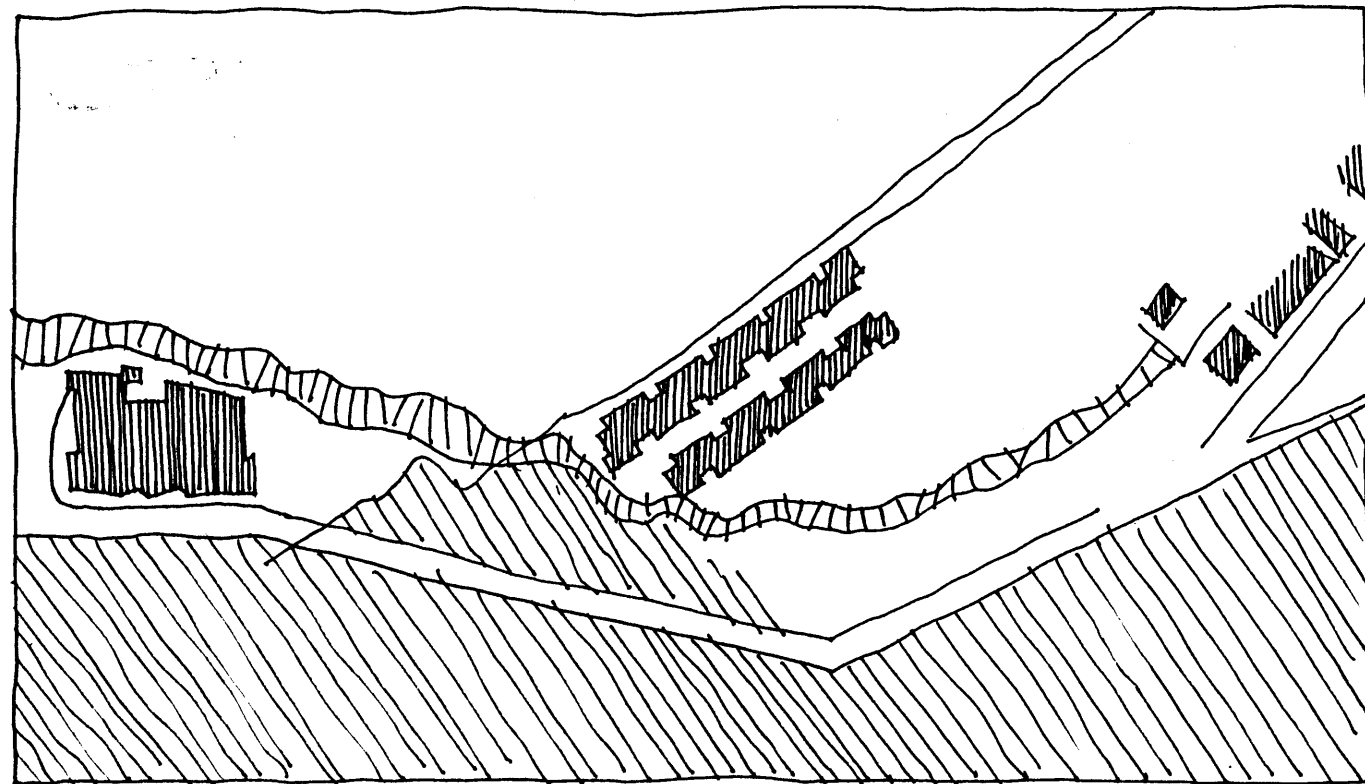


EARLY SITE ELEVATION





SECTIONS THROUGH THE WALL

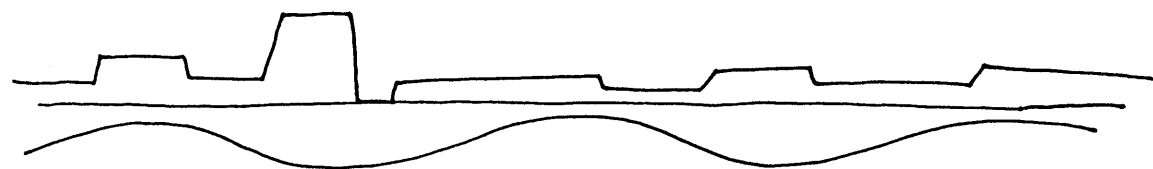


the water literally moves into the platform - of course, changing with the tides - the stairs become a BRIDGE.

THE WATER TOUCHES AGAIN THE WALL, THE ORIGINAL LIMIT BETWEEN SEA AND HILL.

WATER - Horizontals
GRANITE - Verticals

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY IN PLATFORM:
LIKE THE UNDULATING, CEASELESS
MOVEMENT OF THE WAVES

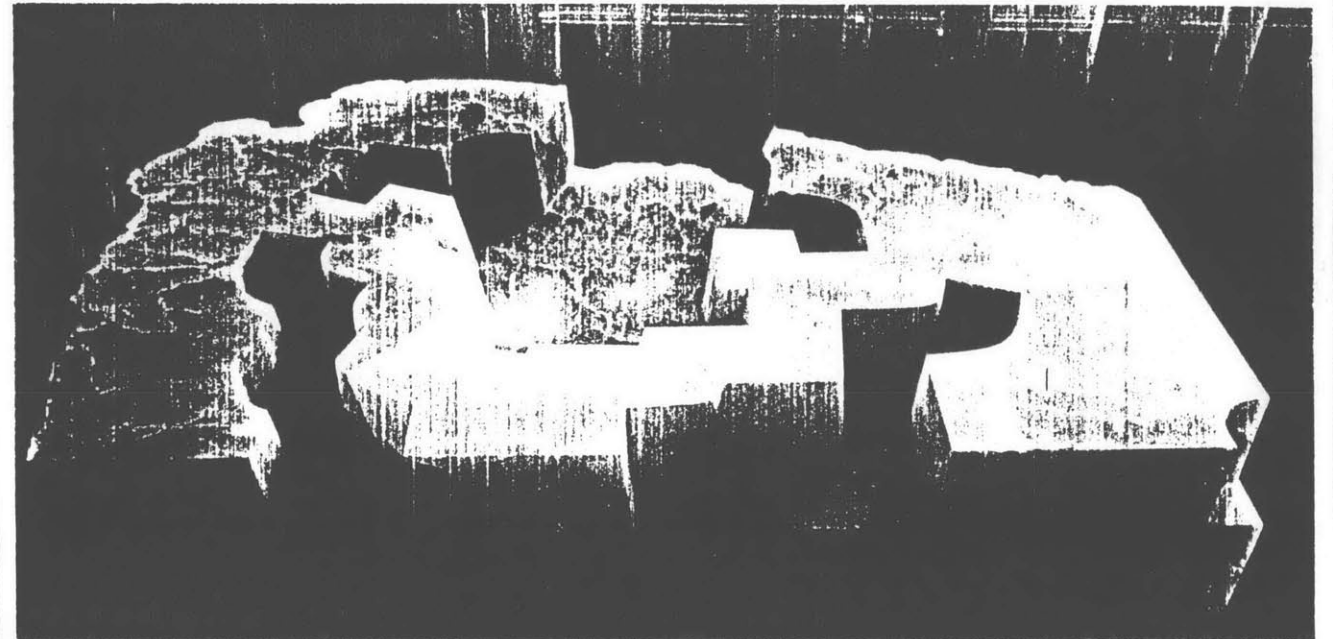


PLAN
SECTION
ELEVATION

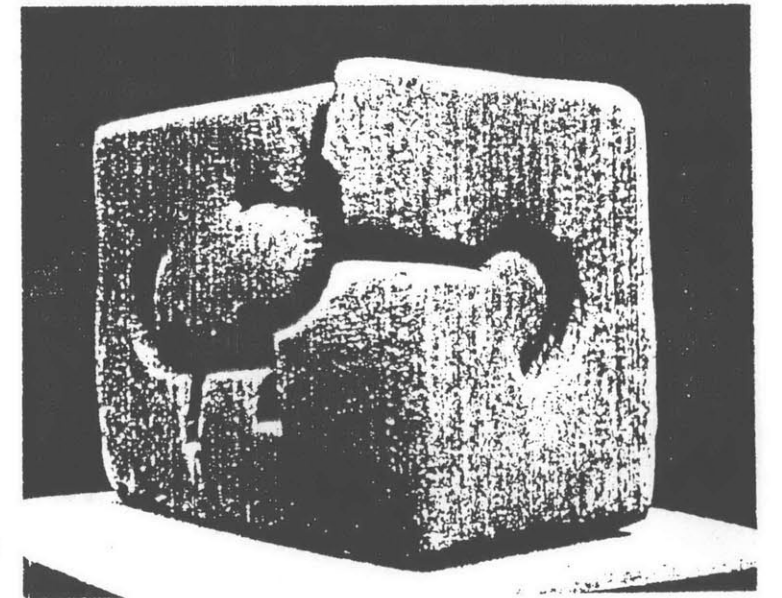
MAR 01 1988

EDUARDO CHILLIDA

1. CAPTURE/PENETRATE SPACE vs. OCCUPY IT.
2. "THERE IS NO NEED TO MAKE WHAT ONE ALREADY KNOWS!" HE WOULD ONLY BE COPYING HIMSELF, CONFUSING TODAY'S WORK WITH YESTERDAY'S THOUGHT.
3. THE "EMANATION" OF FORM; "I GRADUALLY ABSORB IT AND AS IT WERE INHALE IT."
4. CHANGE vs. PERMANENCE.
5. THE CONCEPT OF LIMIT: WHICH IS BOTH AN END AND A BEGINNING IT IS IN THE REALM OF RUMOR.
6. LIGHT. TRANSCENCY OF ALABASTER.
7. WATER, "THE QUEEN OF THE HORIZONTAL".
8. LIGHT, THE VERTICAL.
9. LIGHTNESS vs. WEIGHT.
10. MOBILE - A STATE OF FLUX: "INESTABILITY, NOT STABILITY, IS THE ONLY CONSTANT ELEMENT."
11. PHYSICAL REALITY AND THE SENSUAL AND THE EMOTIONAL.
12. LEVITATION vs. GRAVITATION.
13. FULL vs. EMPTY.



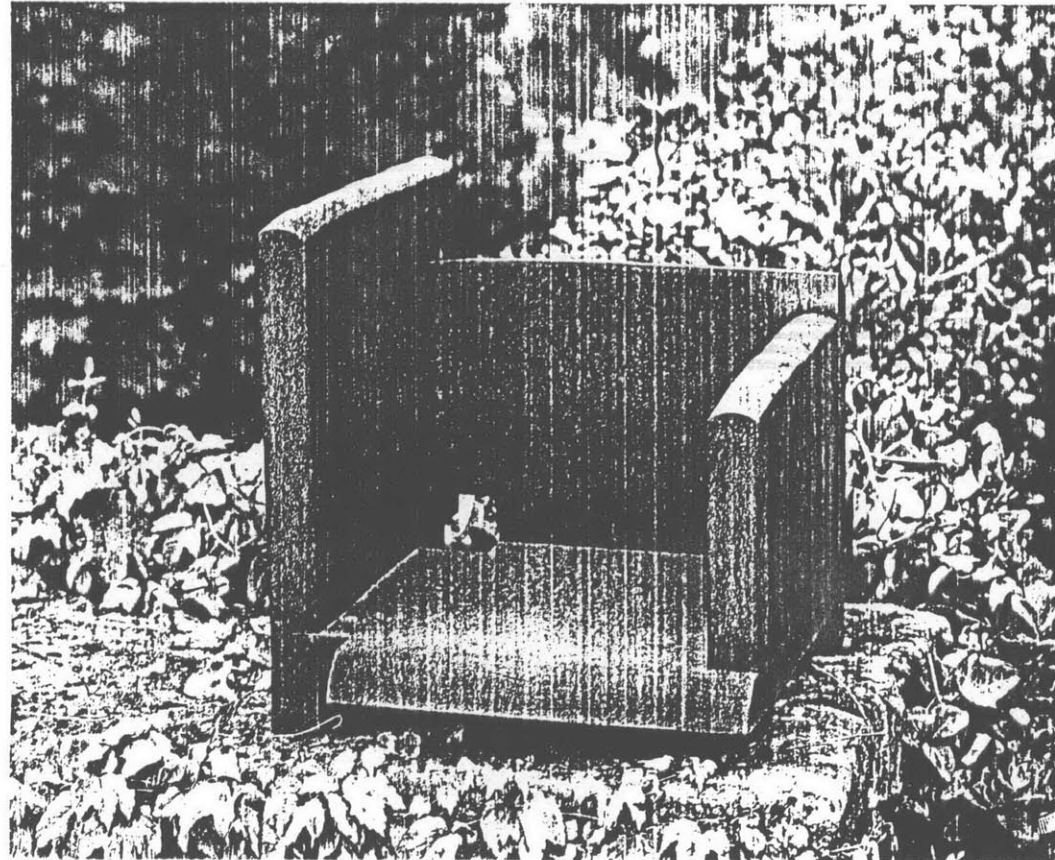
Homage to the Sea II. 1979. Alabaster.
12 x 27½ x 31½ in. (0.30,5 x 0.70 x
0.80 m.). Collection Antoni Tapies



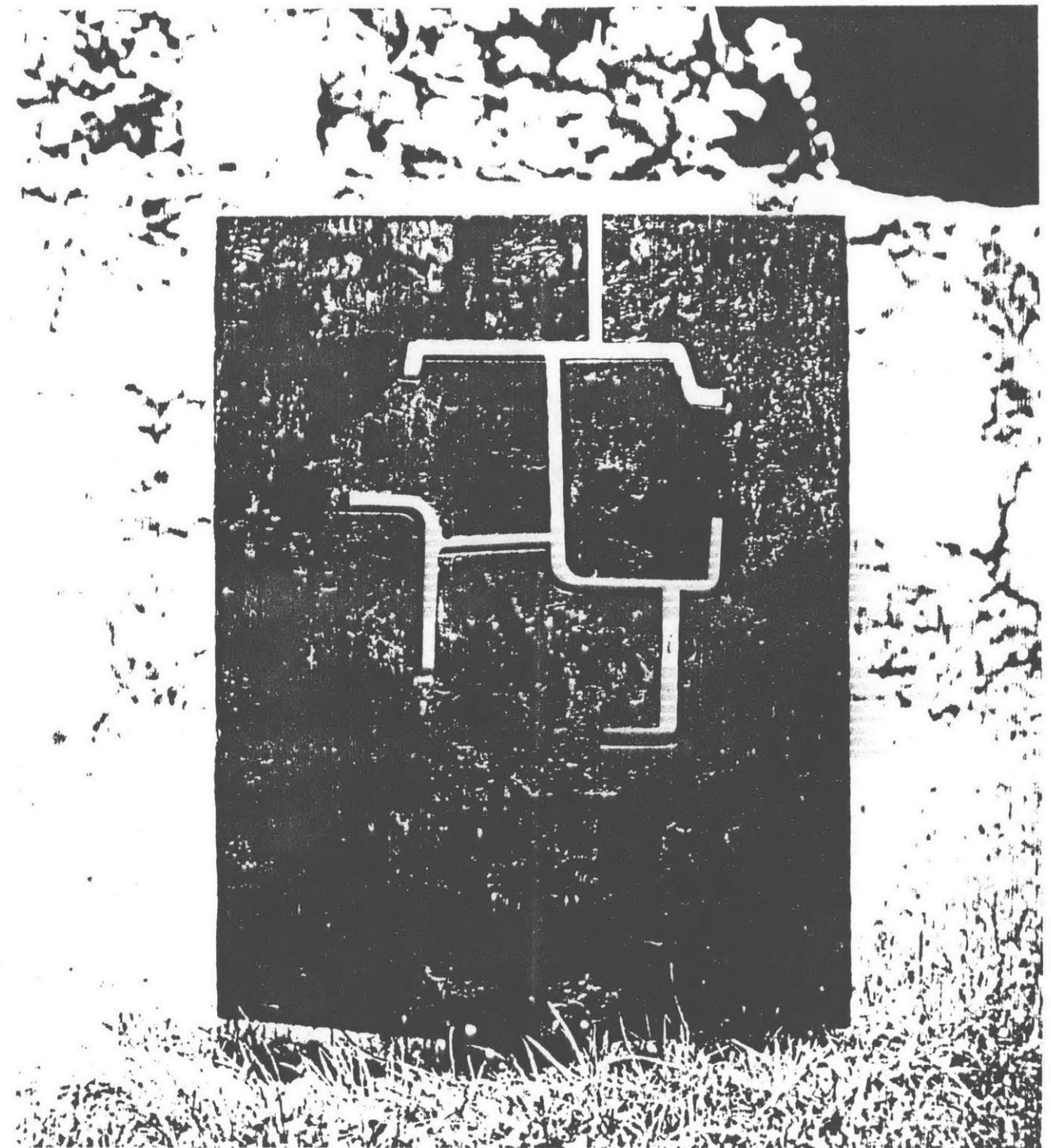
Lurra XXXV (Earth XXXV). 1979. Fired
clay. 10 x 12 x 7½ in. (0.25,5 x 0.30,5 x
0.18,5 m.). Private collection, London

(CHILLIDA)

14. JUXTAPOSITION OF THE HORIZONTAL AND THE VERTICAL.
15. "THE LIMIT IS THE MYSTERIOUS ASPECT OF SPACE AND COMES TO GRIPS WITH THE INEFFABLE."



Topos III. 1985. Steel, 16½ × 17½ × 15¾ in. (0.42,5 × 0.44 × 0.40 m.).
Collection the artist.



Stele for José Antonio de Aguirre. 1978. Steel, 36 × 27 × 7½ in. (0.91,5 × 0.68,5 × 0.19 m.). Collection
Galerie Maeght Lelong, Paris

CONCRETE:

fluid, ductile.
like petrified water.
levitating planes.

GRANITE:

retaining walls.
belongs to the earth.

ALUMINUM/GLASS:

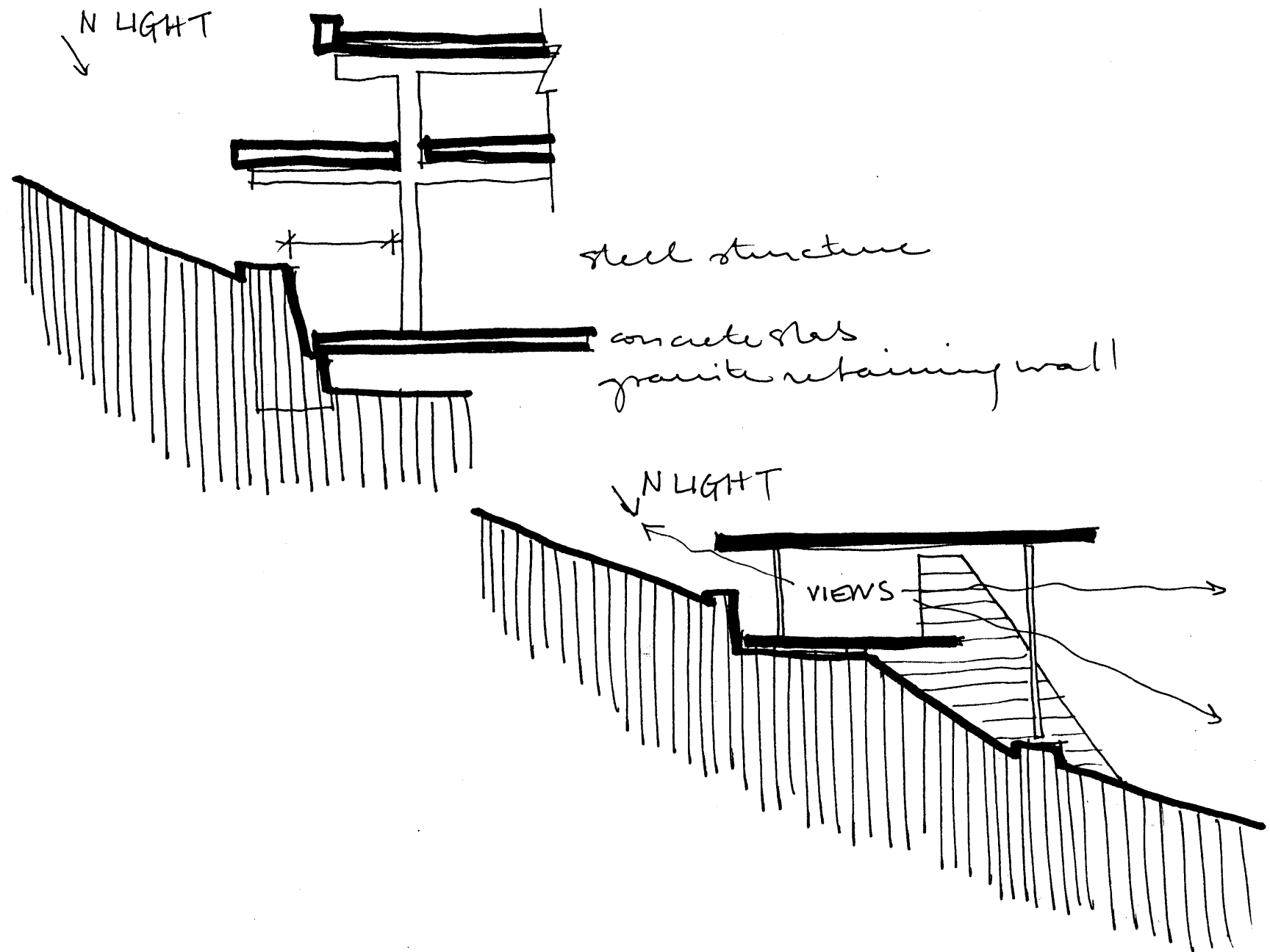
enclosure.
belongs to the sky.

EXPLORE THE LIMITS (TRANSITIONS):

- EARTH TO SKY
- SEA TO HILL
- WATER TO GRANITE
- INSIDE TO OUTSIDE
- HORIZONTAL TO VERTICAL

define context, building systems: elements/rules

CHEKHOV: Smells (indoord/outdoors)
Weather
Colours



GRAVITY is the ruler of the design,
but sometimes her dictatorship is challenged.

March 5, 1988

If water becomes the plane, the reference line for whatever happens horizontally, the granite becomes the reference line for whatever happens vertically.

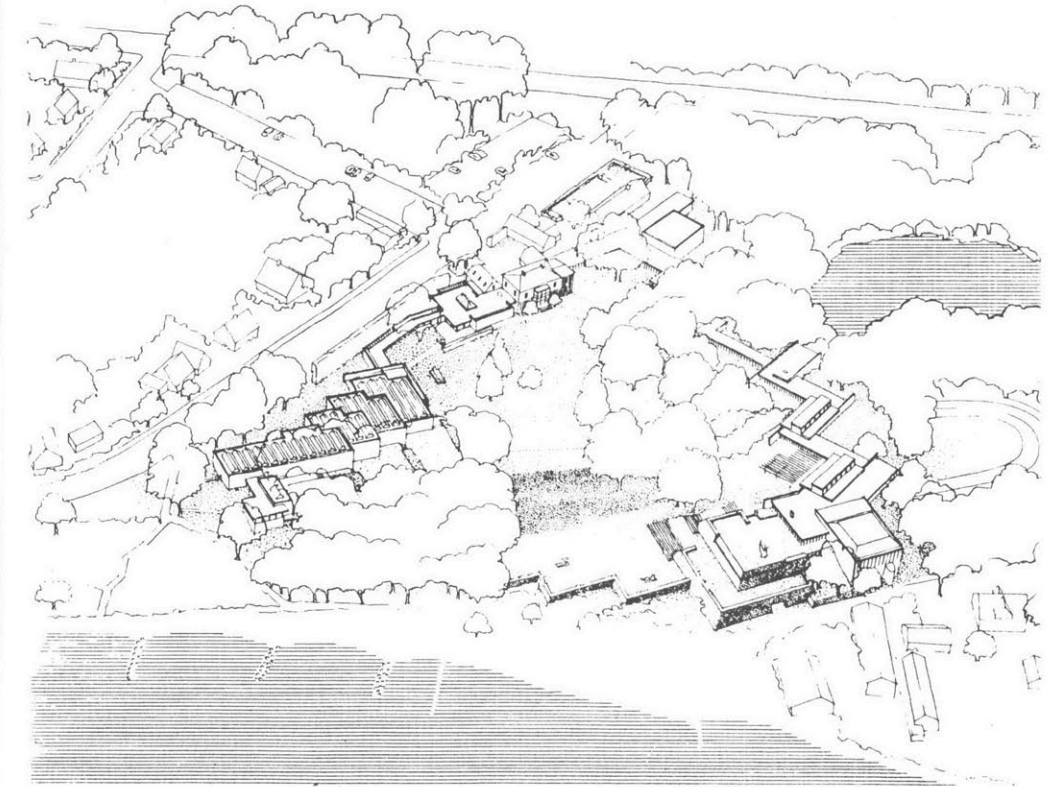
The transition from earth to sky is a very important one. It is a vertical transition between inside and outside.

. . . Things are not necessarily read as volumes, as solid shapes, but as an overlapping of layers.

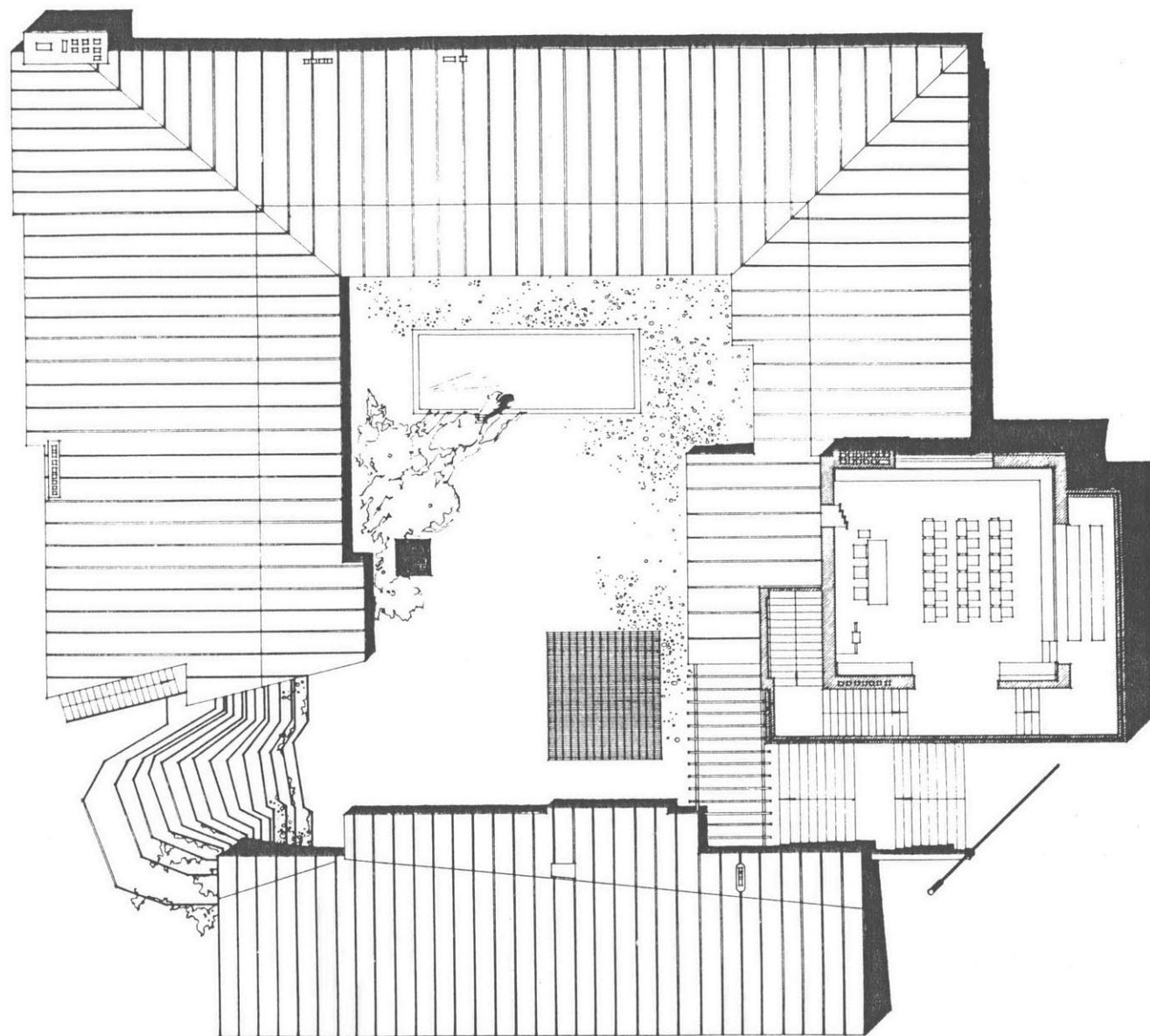
CIRCULATION in the complex: It will be the driving layer. Patients need to spend many hours vegetating . . . I was thinking of the **Louisiana museum** in Denmark, which combines views with a long circulation. Spaces sometimes are part of the corridors, sometimes off the main circulation. Even then one can see different layers: the paintings on the walls, the people that move around, the sculptures and, seen through all of them, the landscape, the sea.

Even outside, there are things happening; there are boats on the water, and cars on the roads. Emphasis, therefore, will be put on such variety: contrasting layers of stillness with layers of movement, showing a wide range from **STILL** to **ANIMATED**.

There is the internal circulation of the building as well, and the external staircase connecting both grade levels. How do they affect each other? Do they ever touch, are they parallel or develop separately? Do they influence each other?



ALVARO AALTO
SÄYNTÄSALO 1950-52



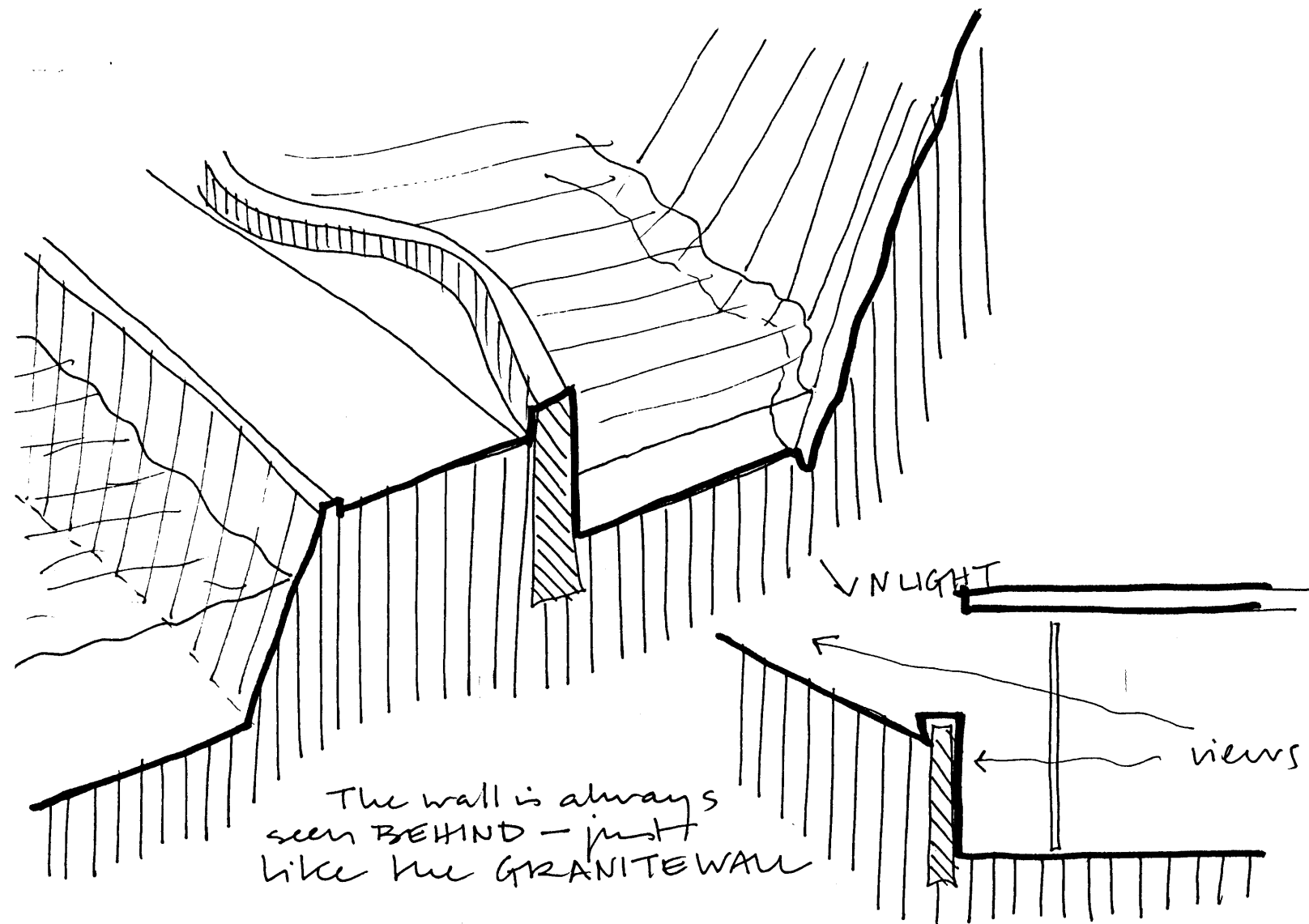
katto ja istuntosalin pohjakaava
roof plan with council chamber

- LIGHT.** Daylight to nightlight.
Both vary in intensity.
- Daylight** General, atmospheric light
Direct sunlight
Northlight
Translucent light
Reflected light . . . and so on
- Nightlight** Fluorescent light
Incandescent light
Moonlight
Spot/general light

Imagine this place at night, under the liquid light of the moon, as if it were underwater. That would be quite a contrast. During the day, one sees the water, one is above water, one might even pretend to be a fish and get in a pool, or in the sea, one might even be rained on. But at night, everything is permeated by liquid light, as if the world were momentarily flooded. In the morning, the cycle starts again: the sun might shine and clouds might create some intermittent light.

. . . just reflected light; after all, moonlight is reflected sunlight . . .

SYSTEMS SYSTEMS SYSTEMS SYSTEMS



The wall is always seen BEHIND - just like the GRANITE WALL

1.. GRANITE WALLS. *Belong to the earth. Meant as retaining walls can rise to different heights. Horizontal folds/movement.*

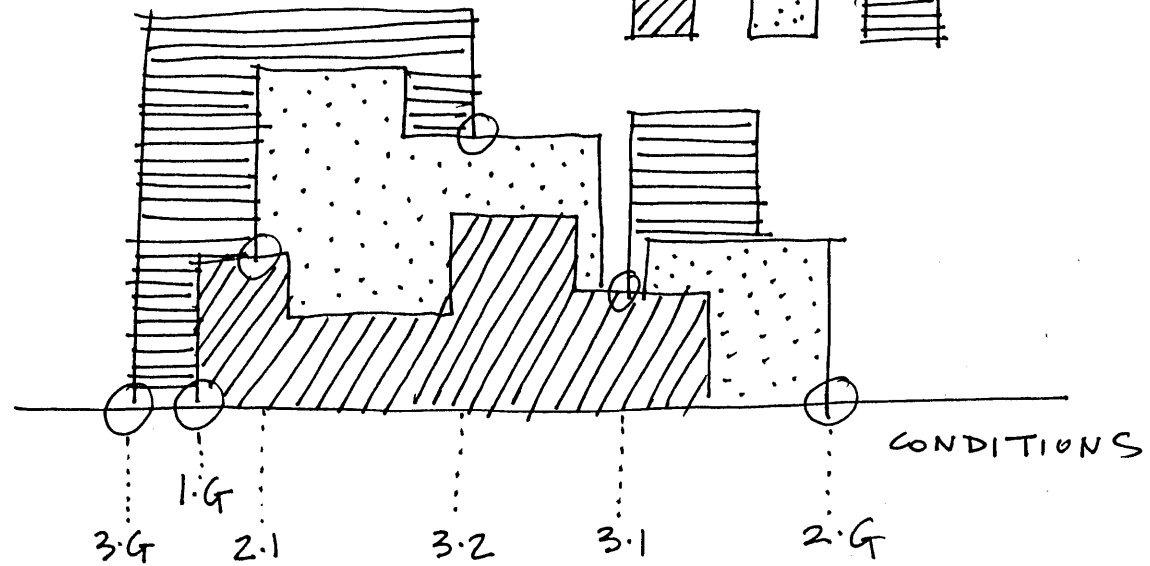
2. STEEL FRAME and CONCRETE FLOORS. *Only vertical folds.*

3. GLAZING SYSTEM/ENCLOSURE. *Glassblock and glass. Supporting aluminum frame. It moves up to the roof. Moves inside/outside. Pannels range from opaque, translucent, transparent. Used for interior partitions.*

SYSTEMS SYSTEMS SYSTEMS SYSTEMS

MAR 11 1988

systems: G, 1, 2, 3



Situations 1-1, 2-2, 3-3 are indeed possible but not as interesting.

*But G (ground) could change in two ways:

1. HEIGHT

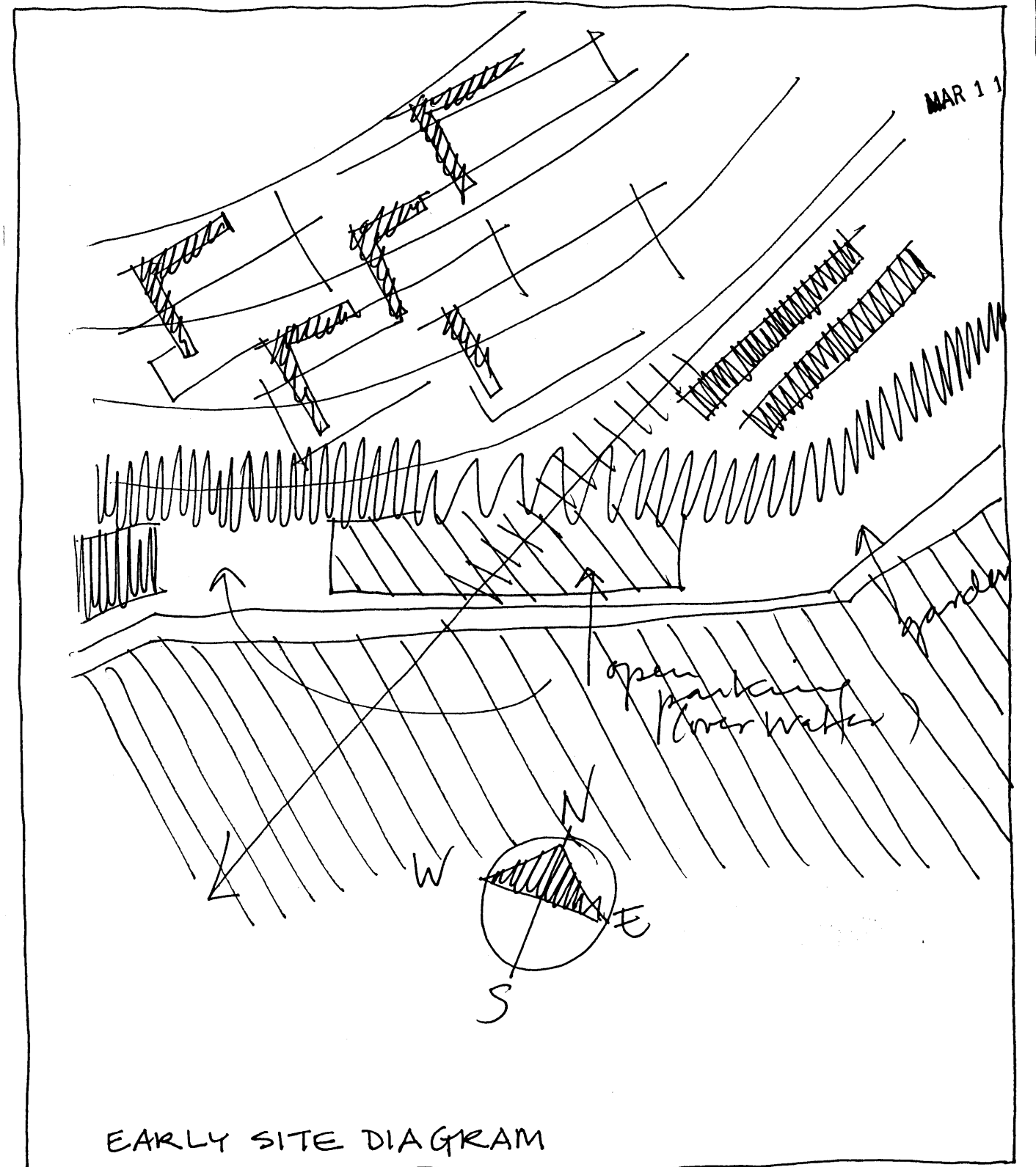
2. MATERIALS,

giving clues for the type of foundations to use.

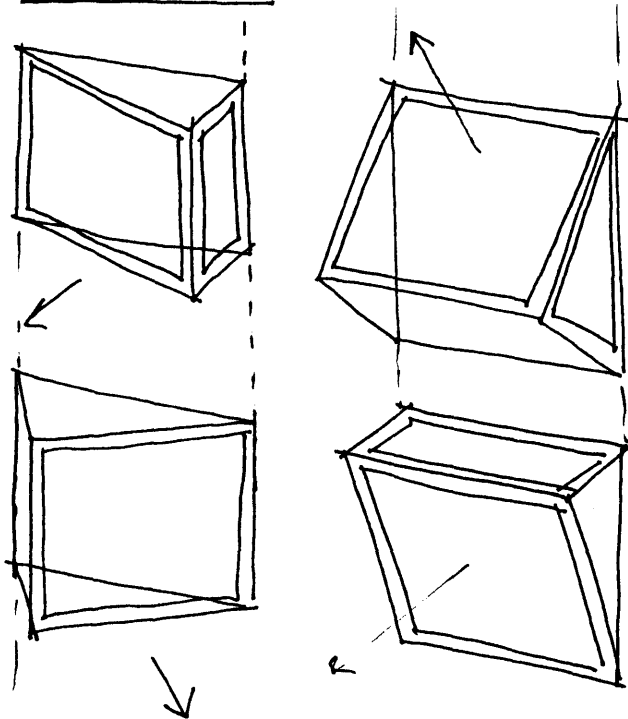
Idealizing the site a bit, there are several material

conditions:

- 1. granite
- 2. granite + soil
- 3. sand infill in platform
- 4. sand infill + water
- 5. water (floating foundations)



WINDOWS



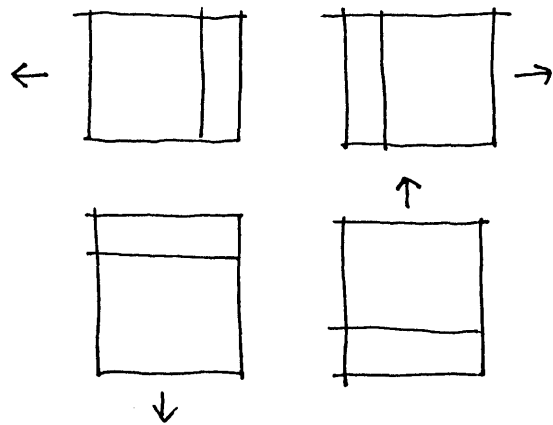
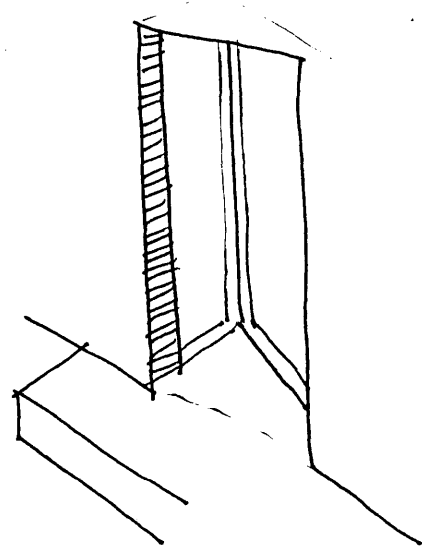
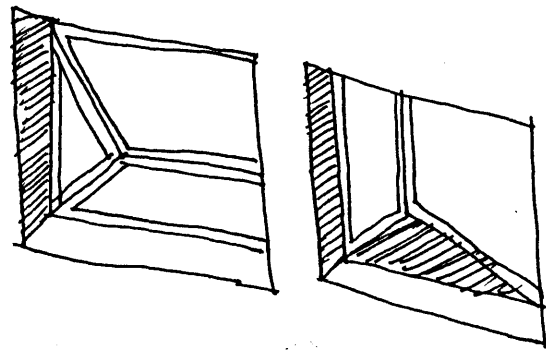
(Aalto's villa Mairea)

By rotating the same window, different views are emphasized.

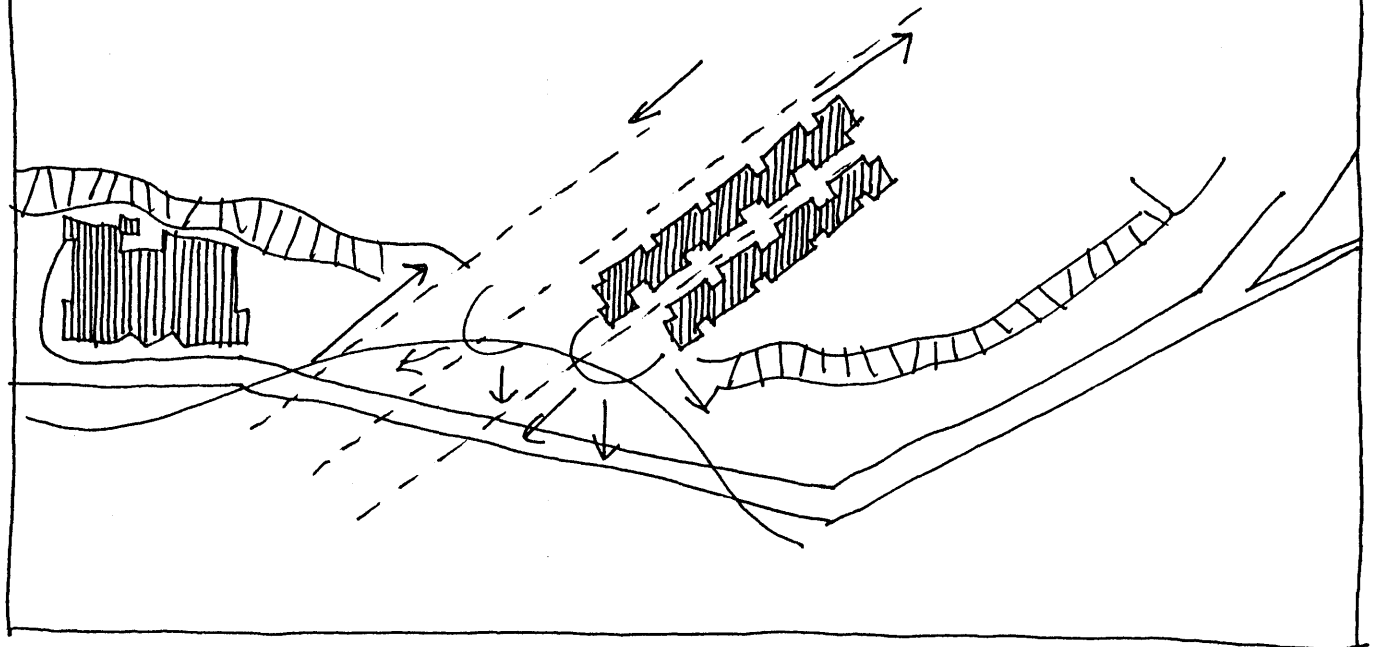
Panel's range:

- transparent
- translucent
- opaque

WINDOWS



MOVEMENT: PARALLEL] TO THE WALL
DIAGONAL]



AXIS: SPLIT IN THREE

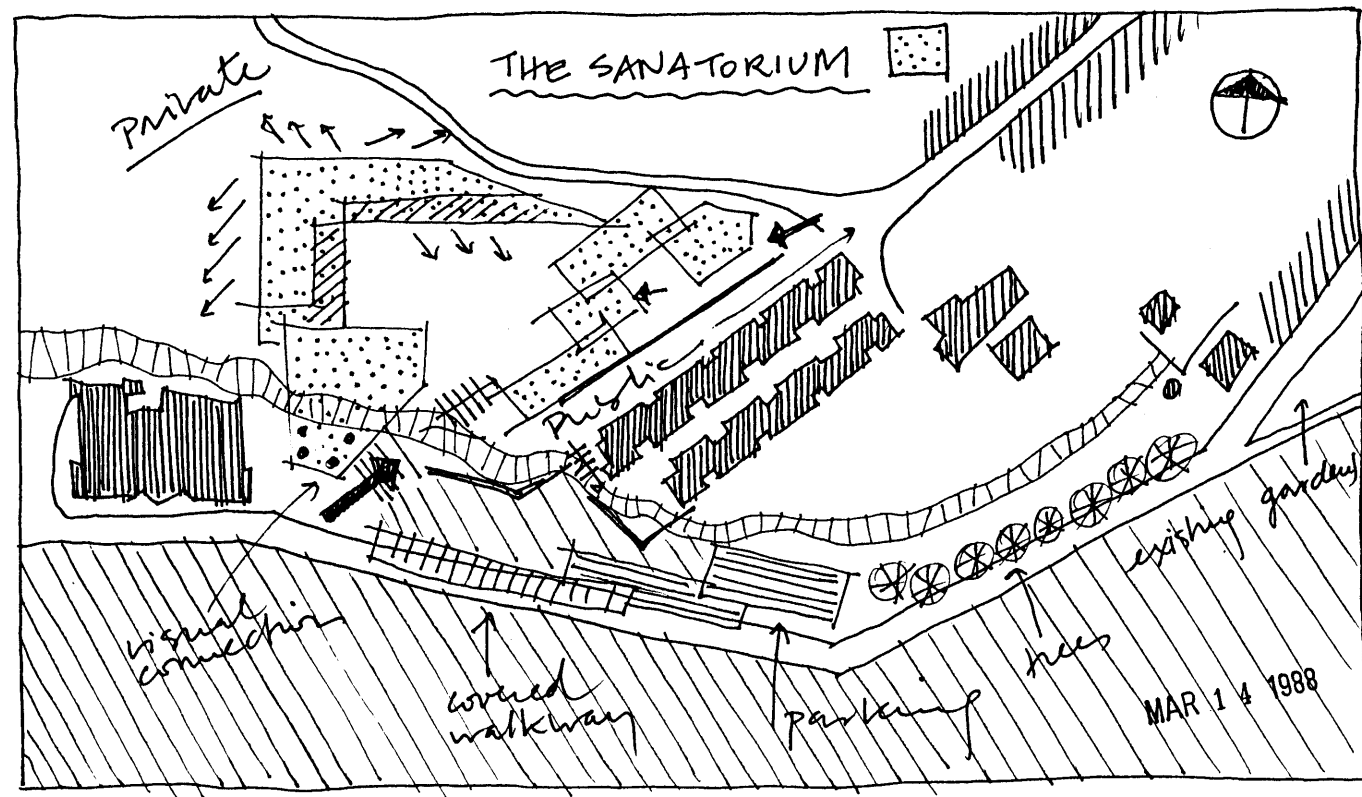
1. entrance to sanatorium
2. public walkway
3. vantage point for housing complex

INTERVENTION: THREE HEIGHTS

1. bottom of the wall (platform)
2. middle of the wall (ramp)
3. top of the wall (vantage point)

MOVEMENT: TWO WAYS

1. parallel to the wall
2. diagonal to the wall



A CIRCULAR ARRANGEMENT: one could walk around and around for hours (look at Aalto's Saynatsalo).

The JOURNEY starts as a diagonal, as if entering the sanatorium's courtyard. Then one moves along the wall. Another turn, and a long ramp takes you into town (the slope allows for an actual road for cars). On the right, there is a vantage point, on the top of the wall, making an end for the Fishermen's Housing... or a beginning (... a place to wonder where the waves are coming from...)

PATIENTS:

1. need for protection
2. need to belong

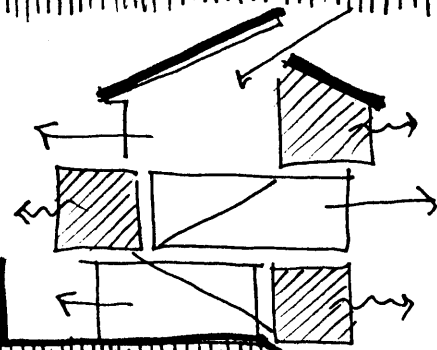
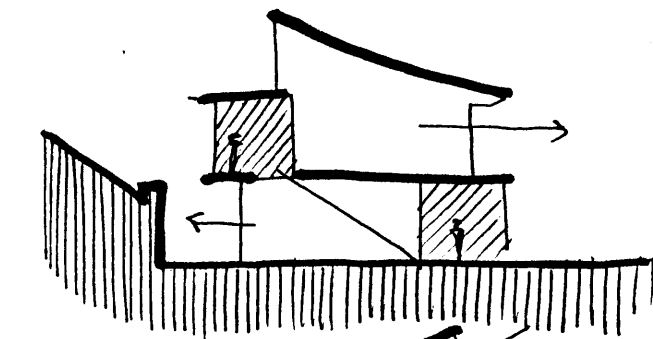
As of now, there are two entrances to the sanatorium, one for pedestrians (from the town, a main handicapped access); one for drivers (parking is down in the platform). Maybe all access should be from the same side, rather than splitting pedestrians and drivers, handicapped and non-handicapped.

THE BUILDING NEVER TOUCHES THE PLATFORM, BUT MOVES OVER IT. ONE VOLUME LEVITATES, RESPONDING TO THE HEAVINESS OF THE FISHERMEN'S CLUB.

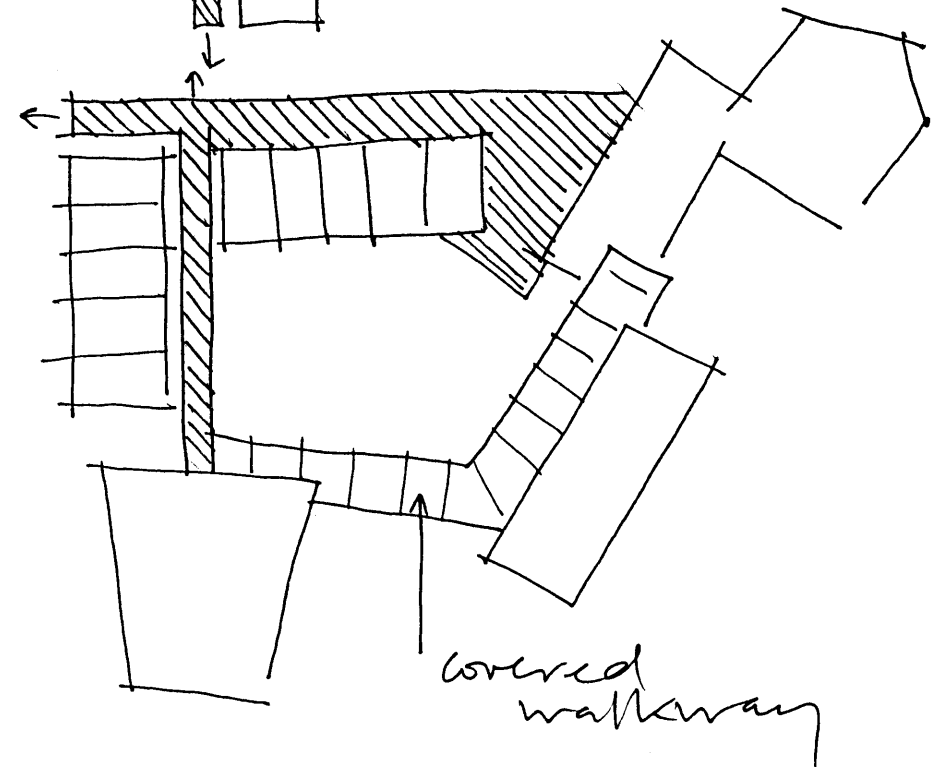
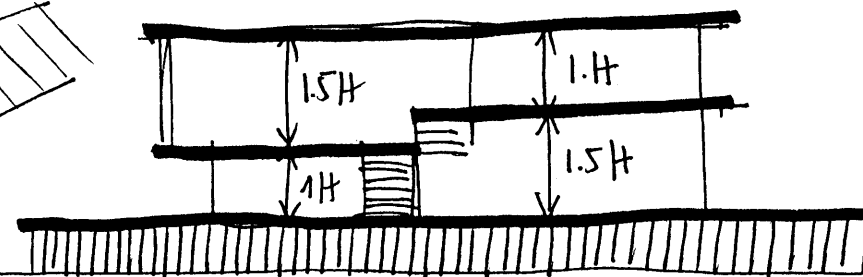
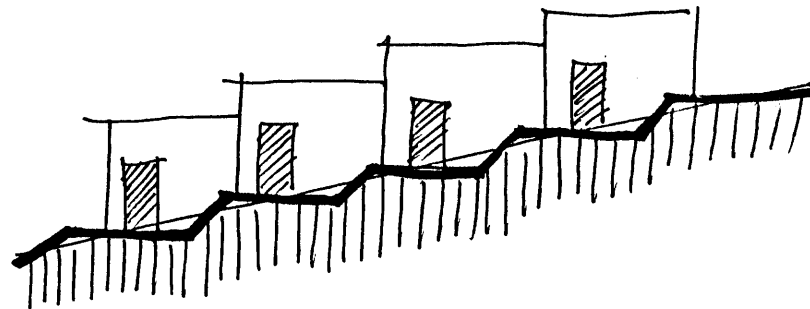
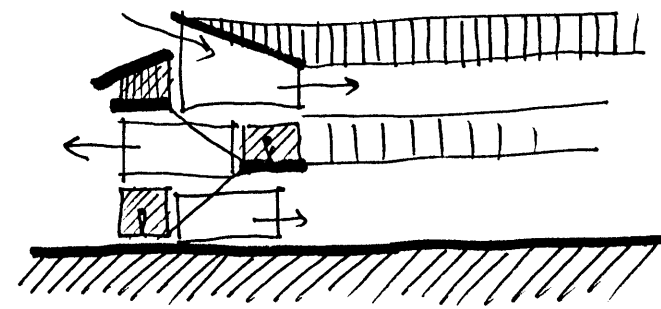
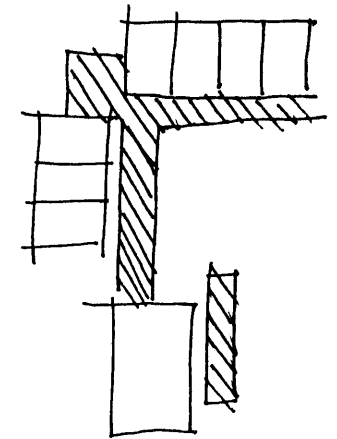
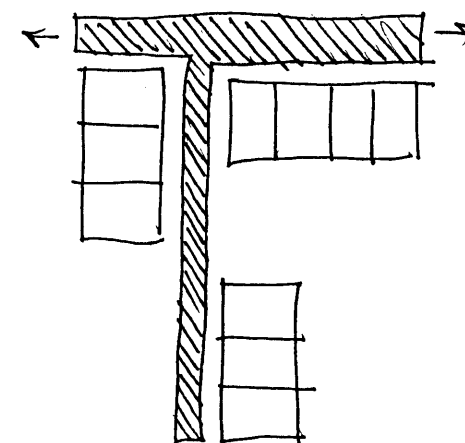
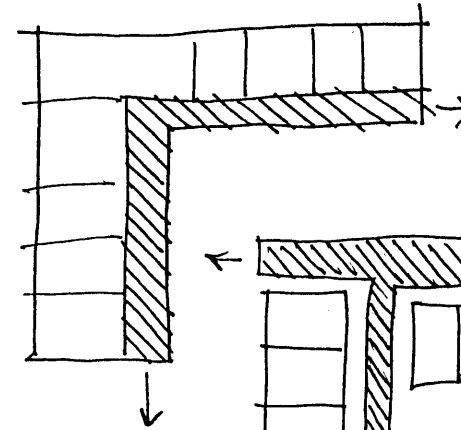
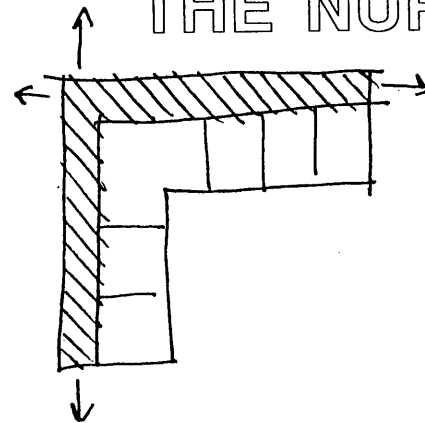
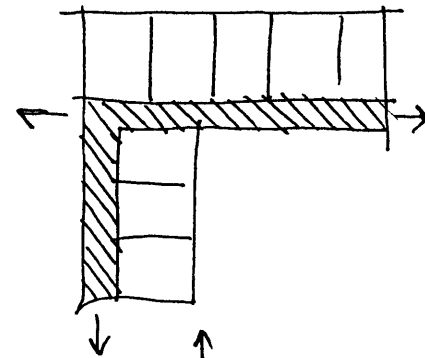
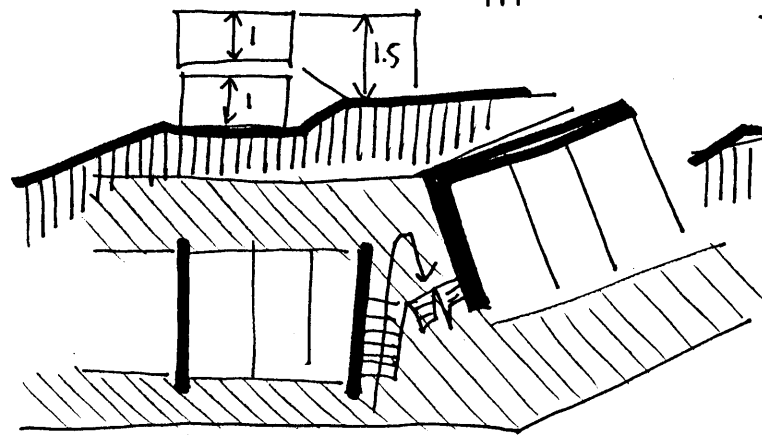
The ramp forms one of the boundaries for the sanatorium.

CIRCULATION

THE NURSING WARD



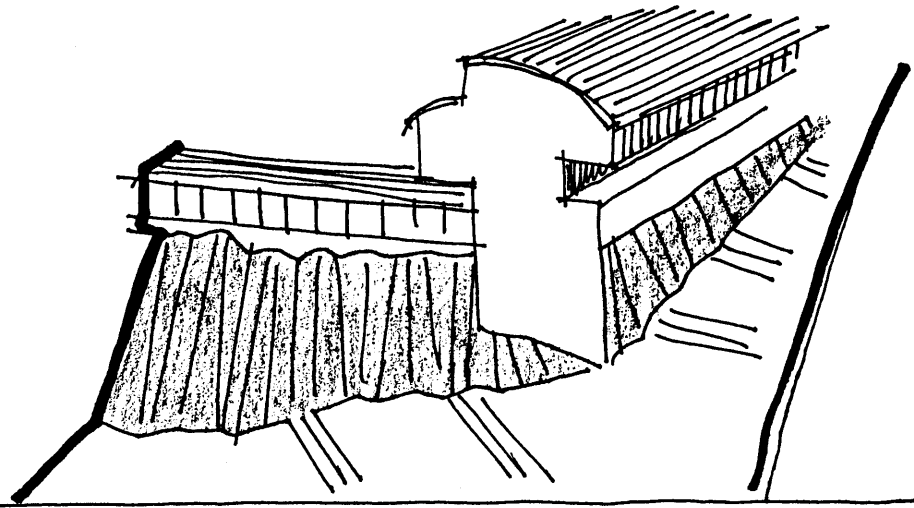
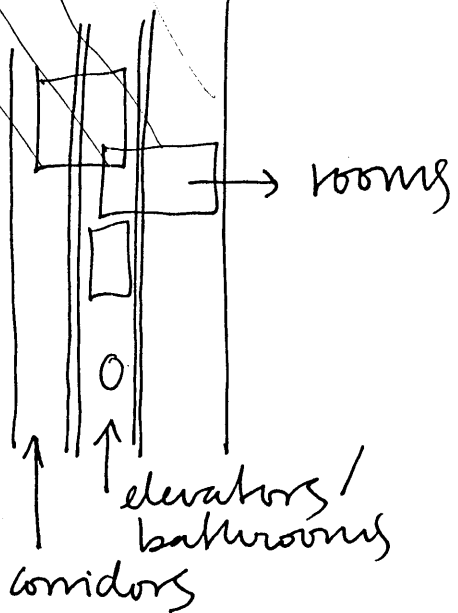
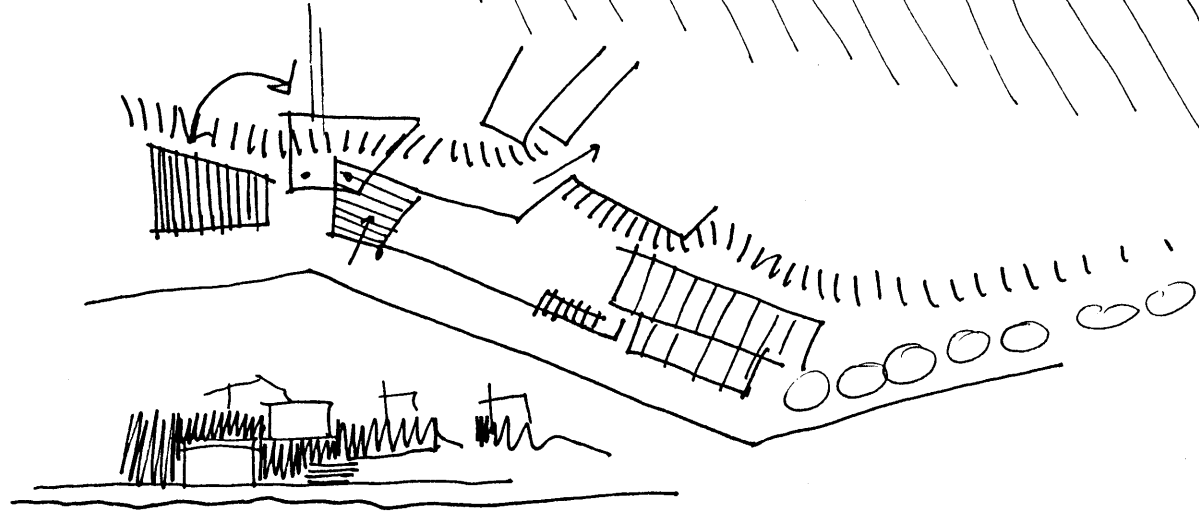
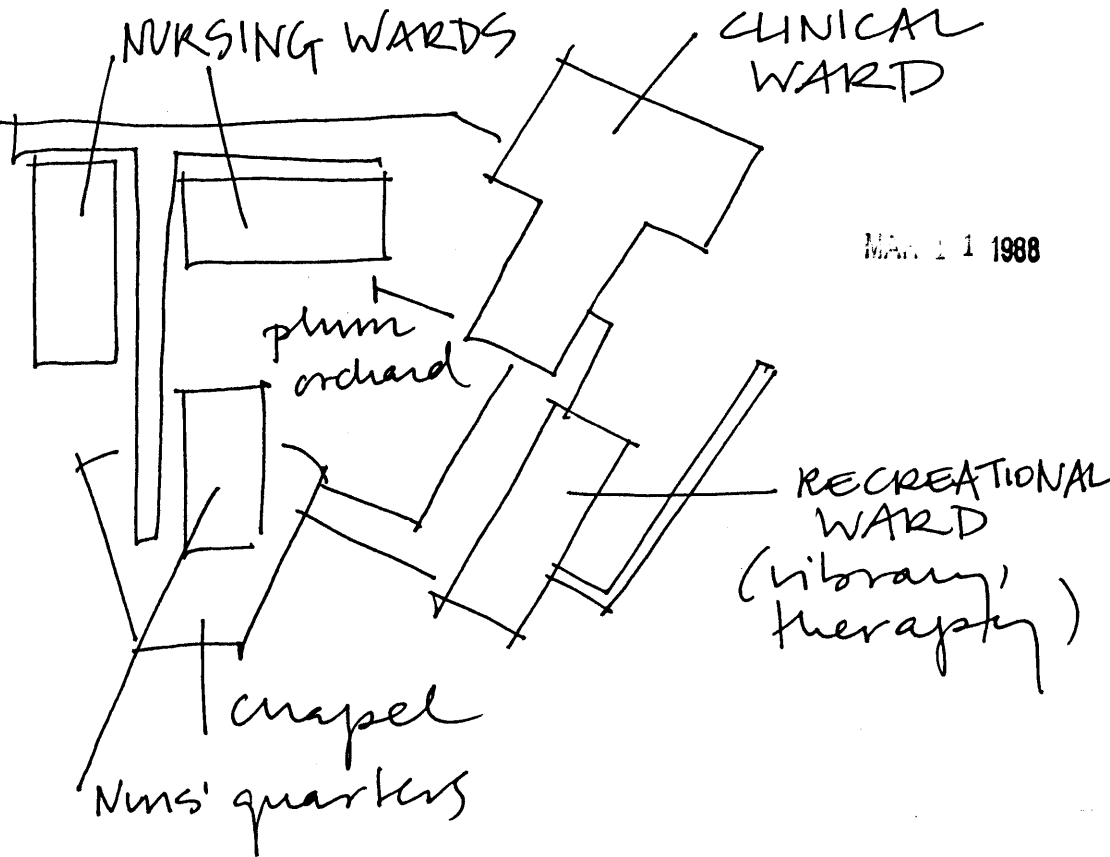
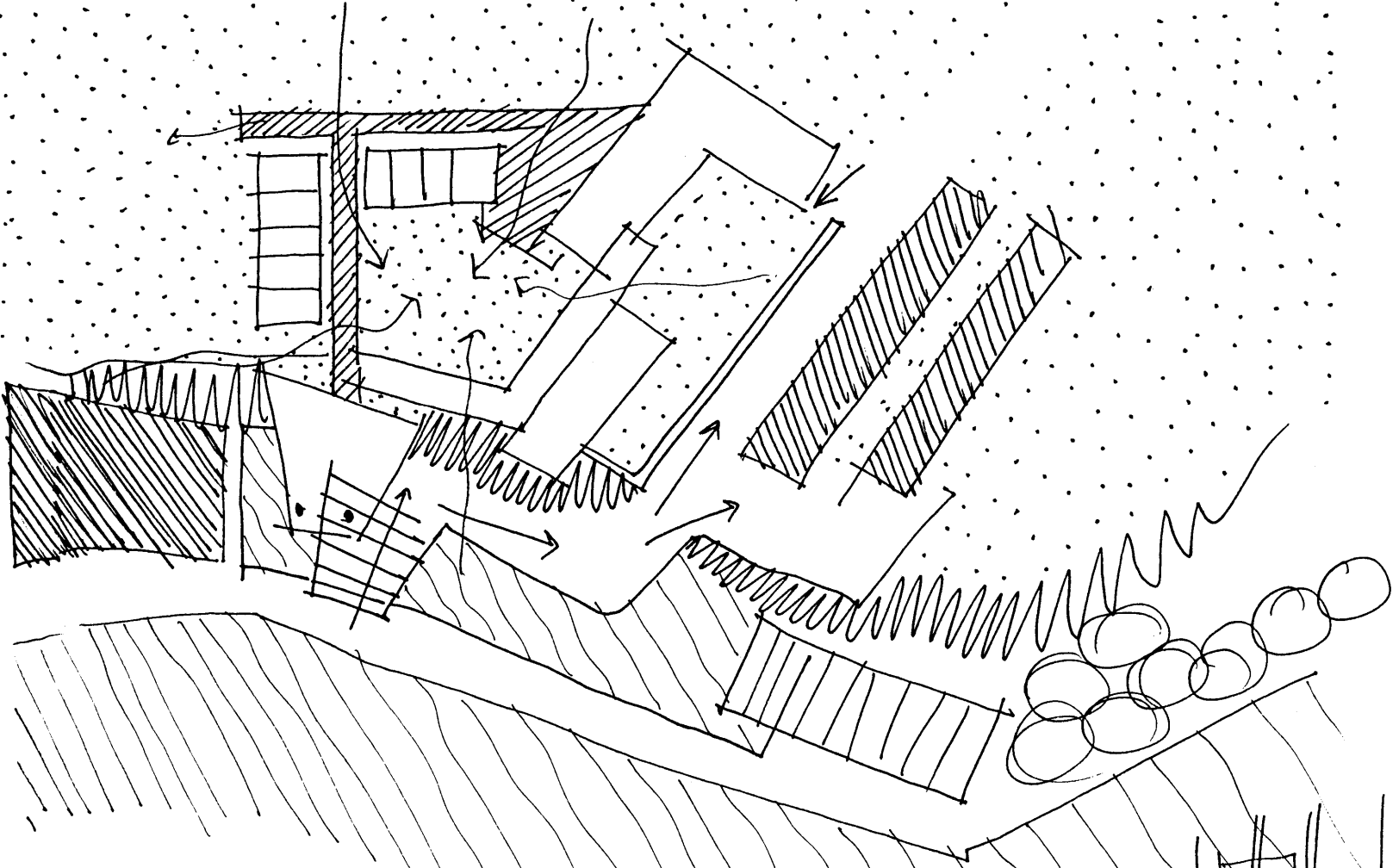
CORRIDORS
ALTERNATE FROM ONE
SIDE TO ANOTHER



covered
walkway

THE PROGRAM

MAR 11 1988



CONTAIN VERSUS RETAIN WATER.
 PATTERNS OF WATER (ripples)
 CONCAVE versus CONVEX

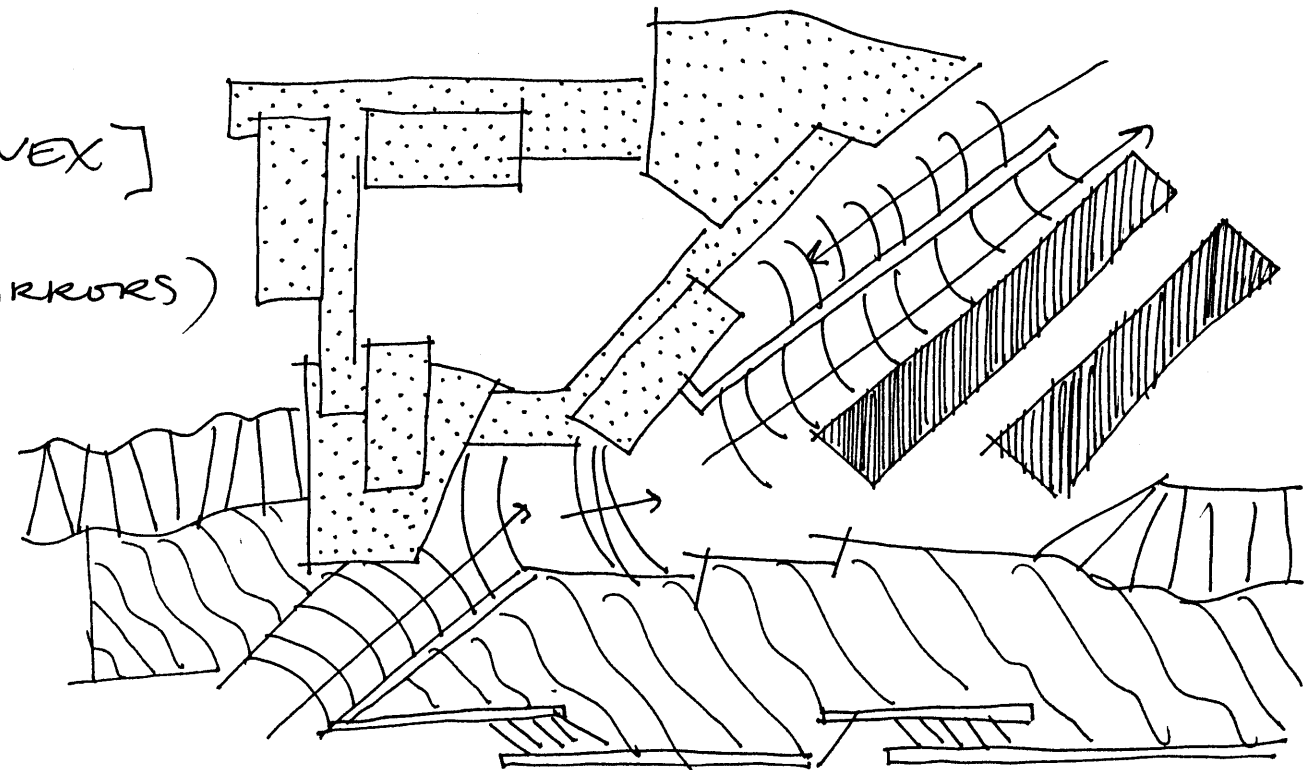
Patterns of WATER (ripples)

RAMP (((((

STAIRS))))

[CONCAVE vs. CONVEX]

- REFLECTIONS (MIRRORS)
- PATTERNS
- ECHOES
- RESONANCES



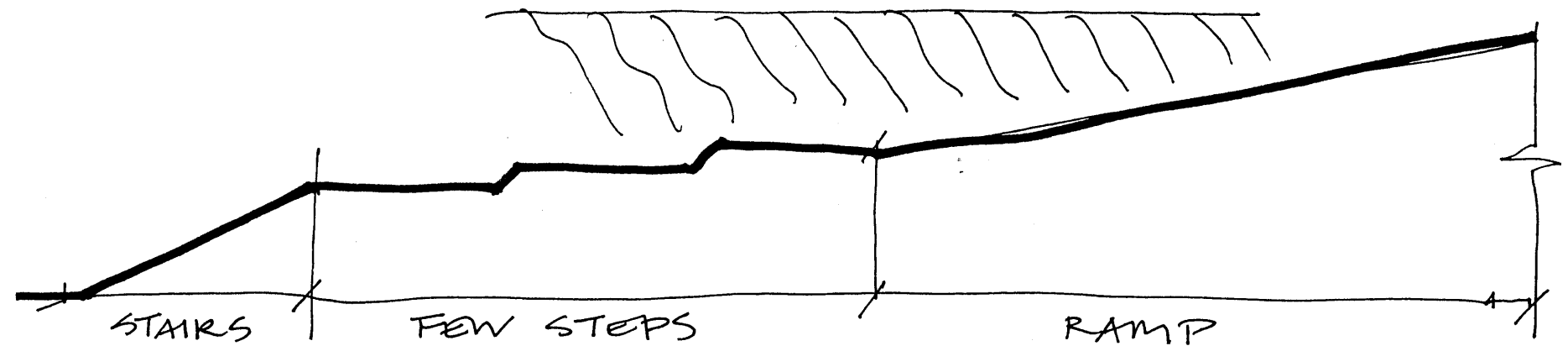
A STAIR LIKE A CASCADE, THE ORGANIZING ELEMENT.

Other elements will make the stairs very narrow, like a tunnel, or very wide, for long views.

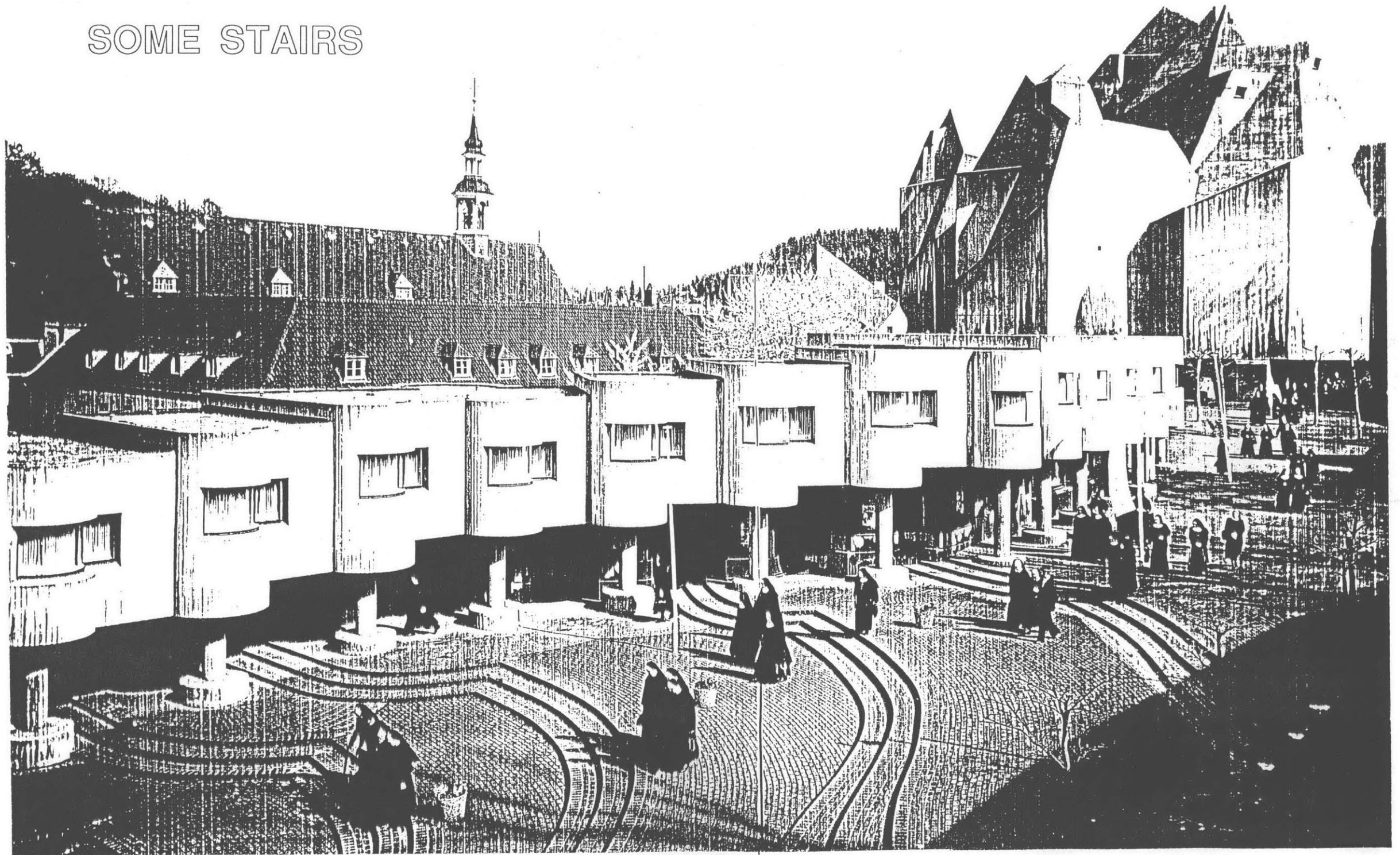
JOURNEY from sea to hill: the stairs rest on the SAND of the platform and carve their way into the GRANITE.

LANDINGS: another RHYTHM.

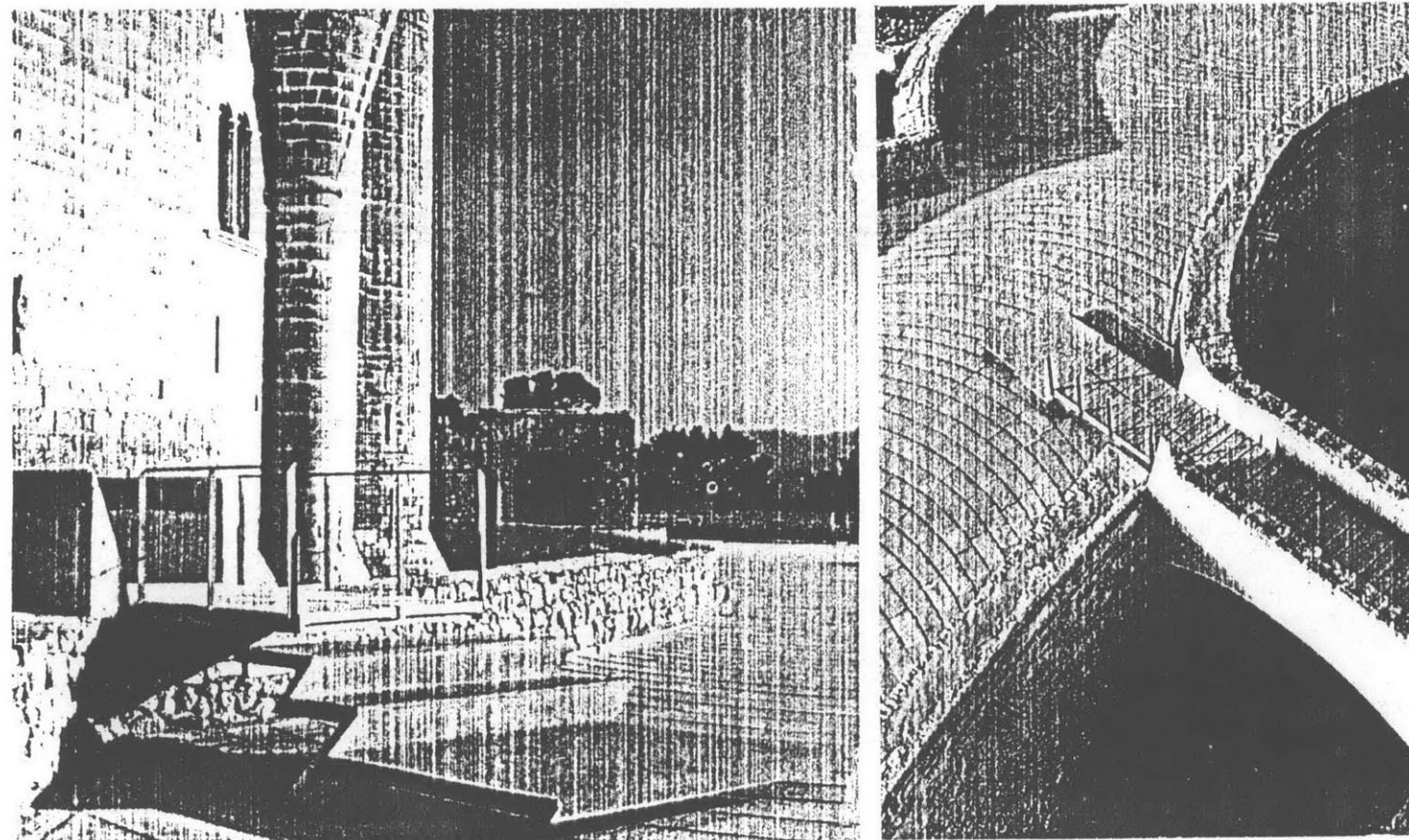
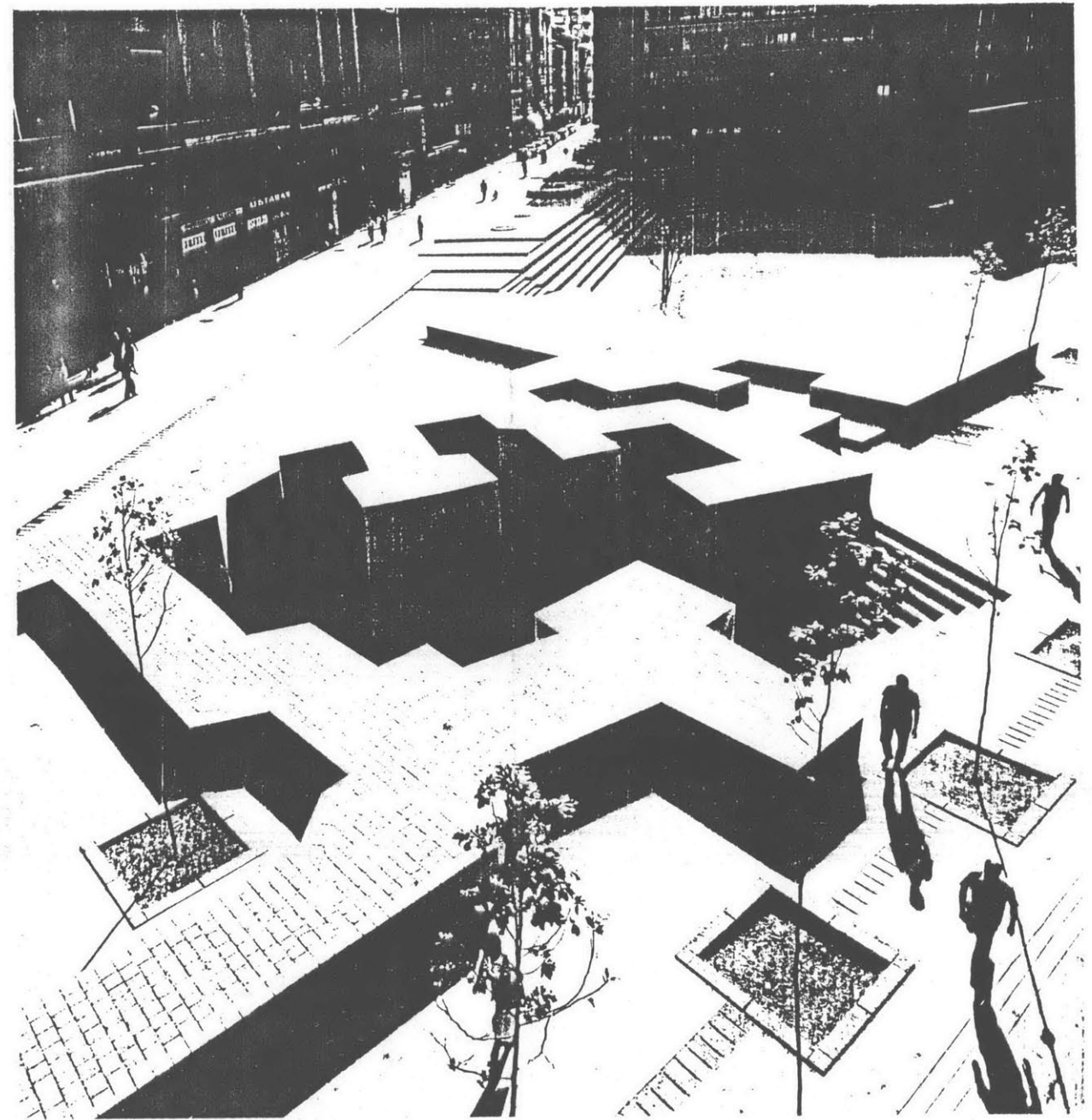
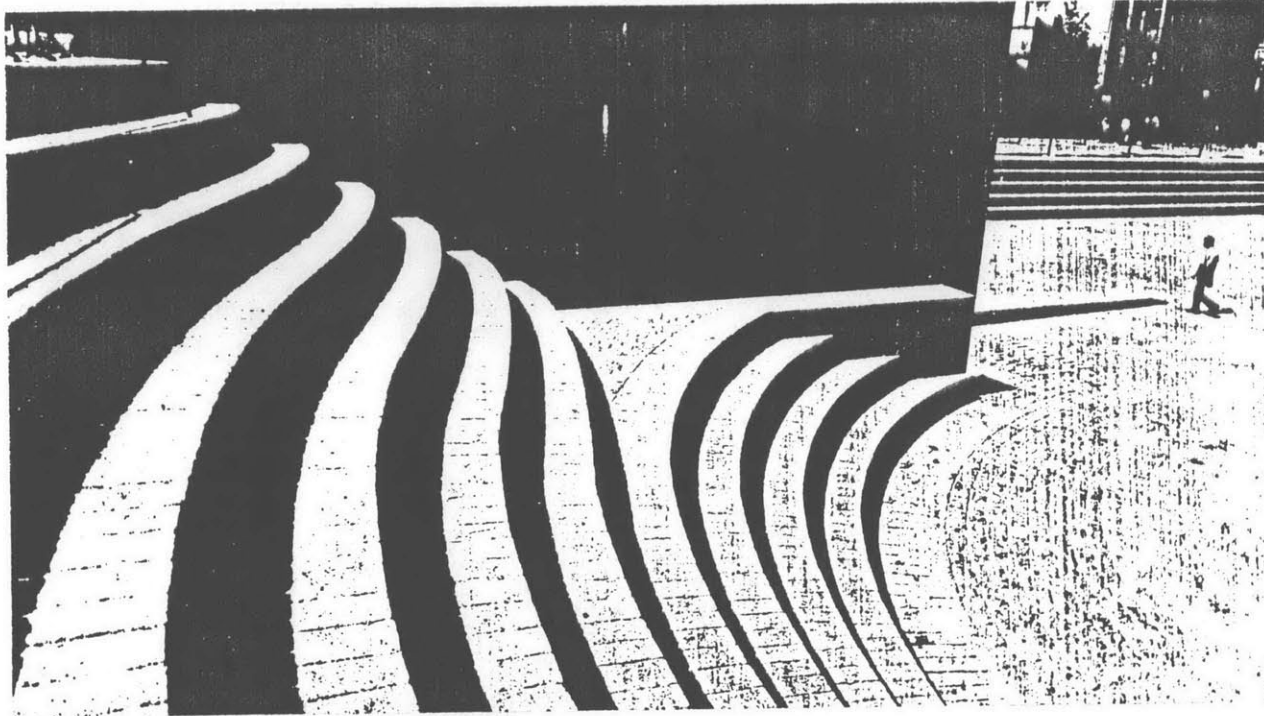
FOLLIES: AXIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY COINCIDE WITH THE VIEWS.



SOME STAIRS



WALLFAHRTSKIRCHE, Neviges. 1962-1964. Arch. Gottfried Böhm.

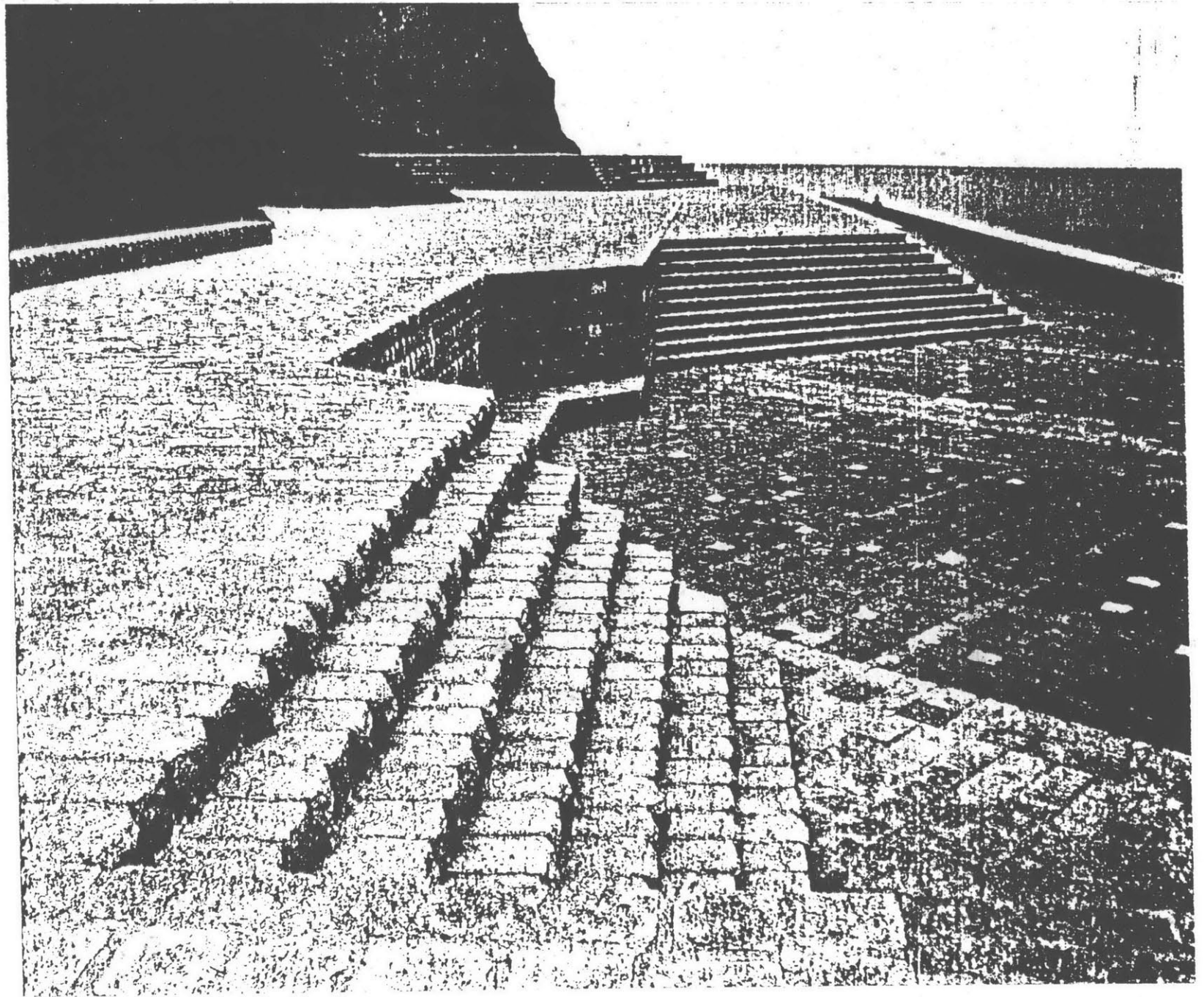


above and top left: PLAZA DE LOS FUEROS, Vitoria, Spain. 1980.

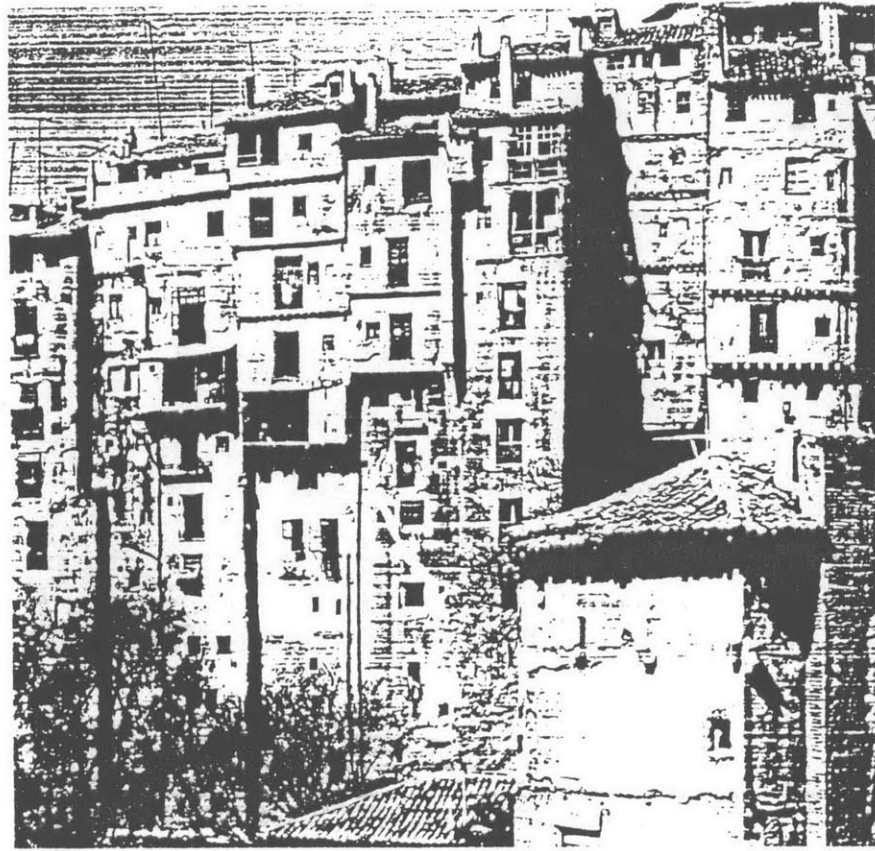
Collaboration E. Chillida and L. Peña Ganchegui.

left: RESTORATION OF BELLVER CASTLE, Palma de Mallorca, Spain. 1983-1985.

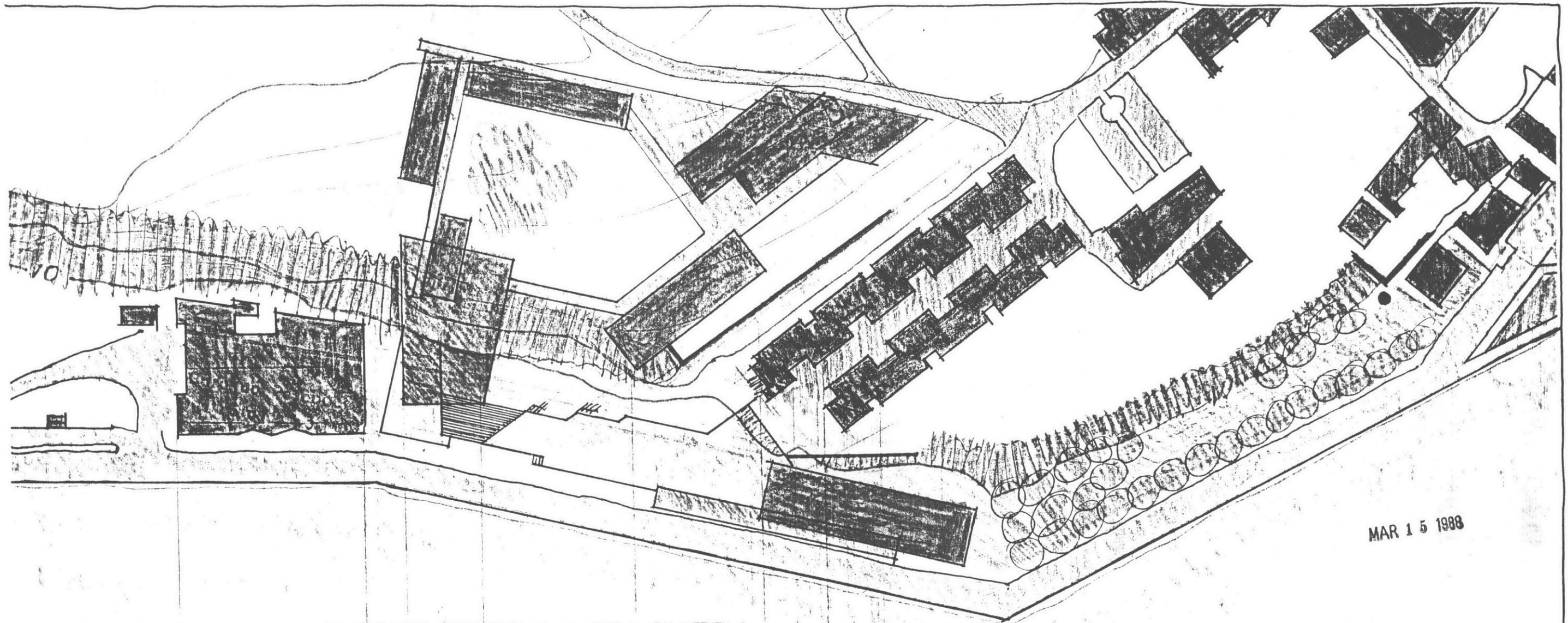
Architects A. Martínez Lapeña and Elías Torres.



above: PLAZA DEL TENIS, San Sebastián, Spain. 1979. Arch. L. Peña Ganchegui.
left: THE STEPS OF MONTMARTRE, Paris.

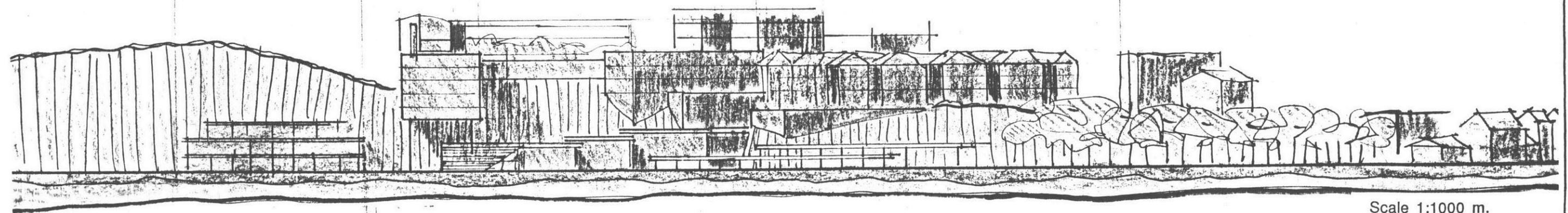


CASAS COLGANTES (Hanging houses), Cuenca, Spain.

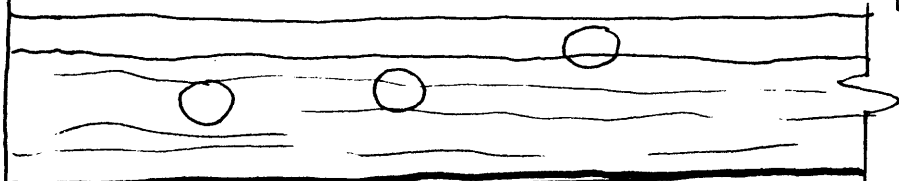
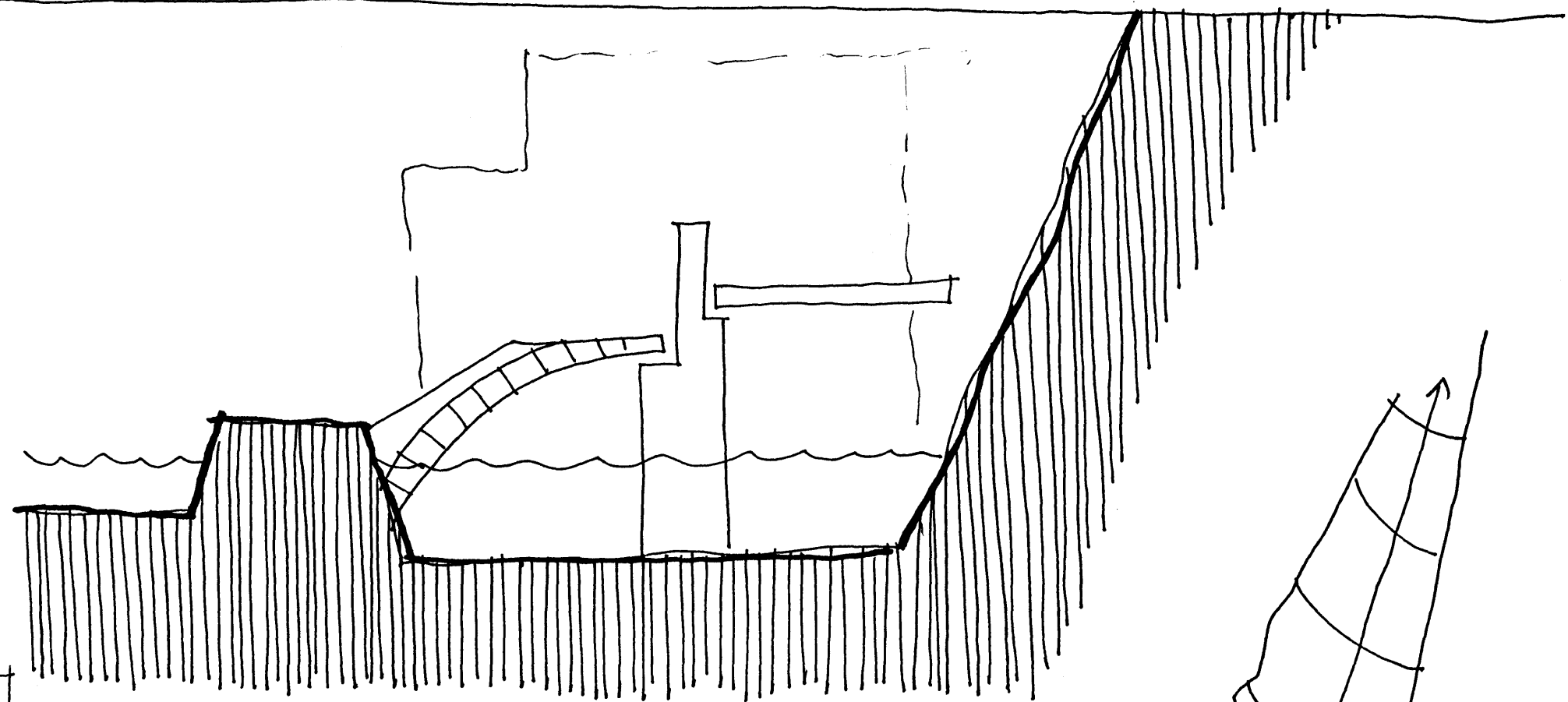
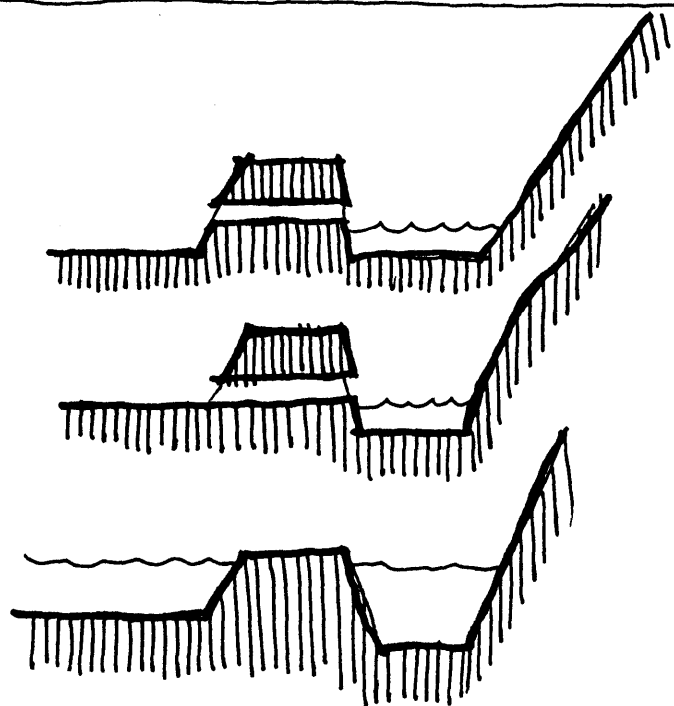


MAR 15 1988

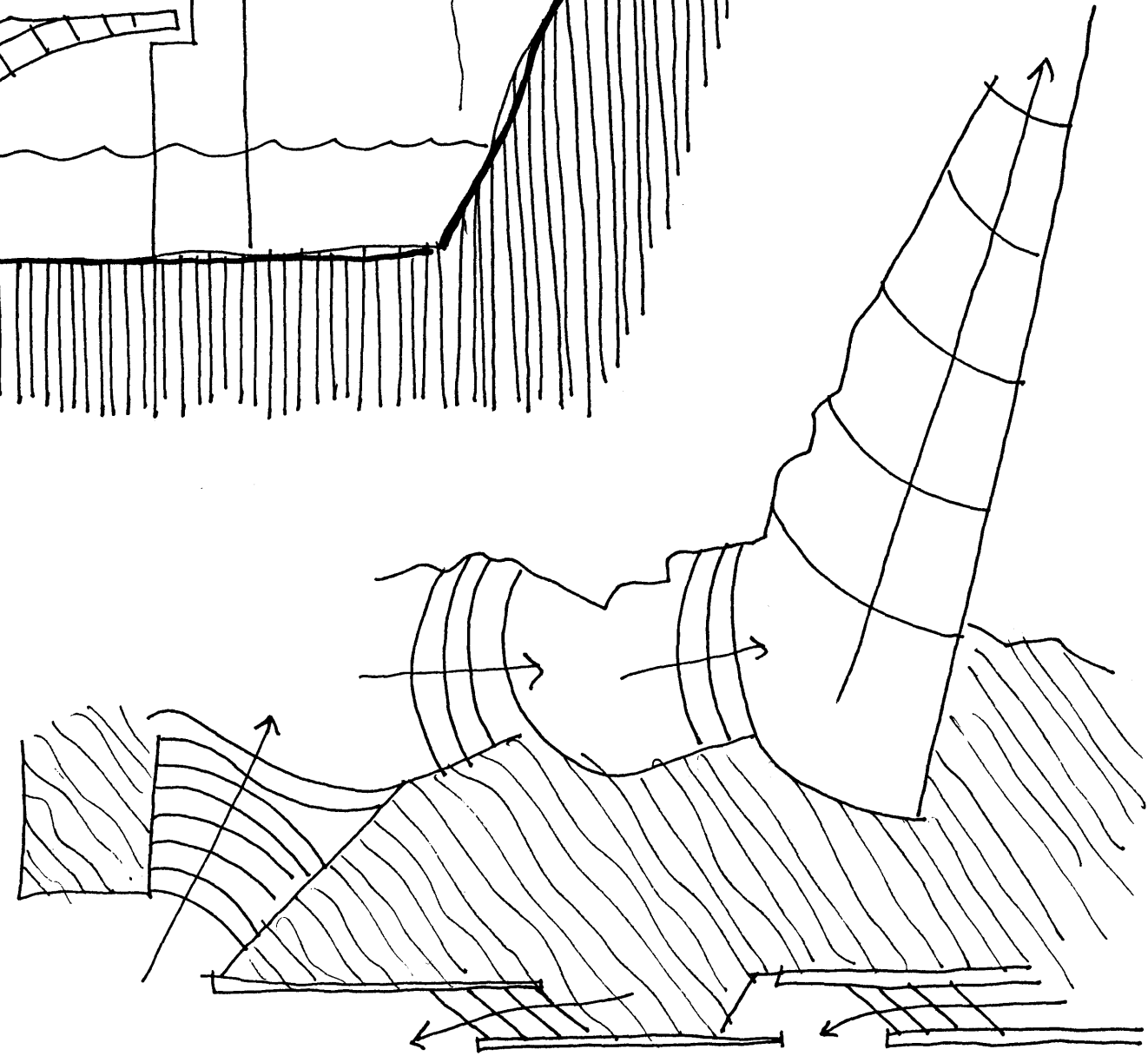
SITE DIAGRAM AND ELEVATION



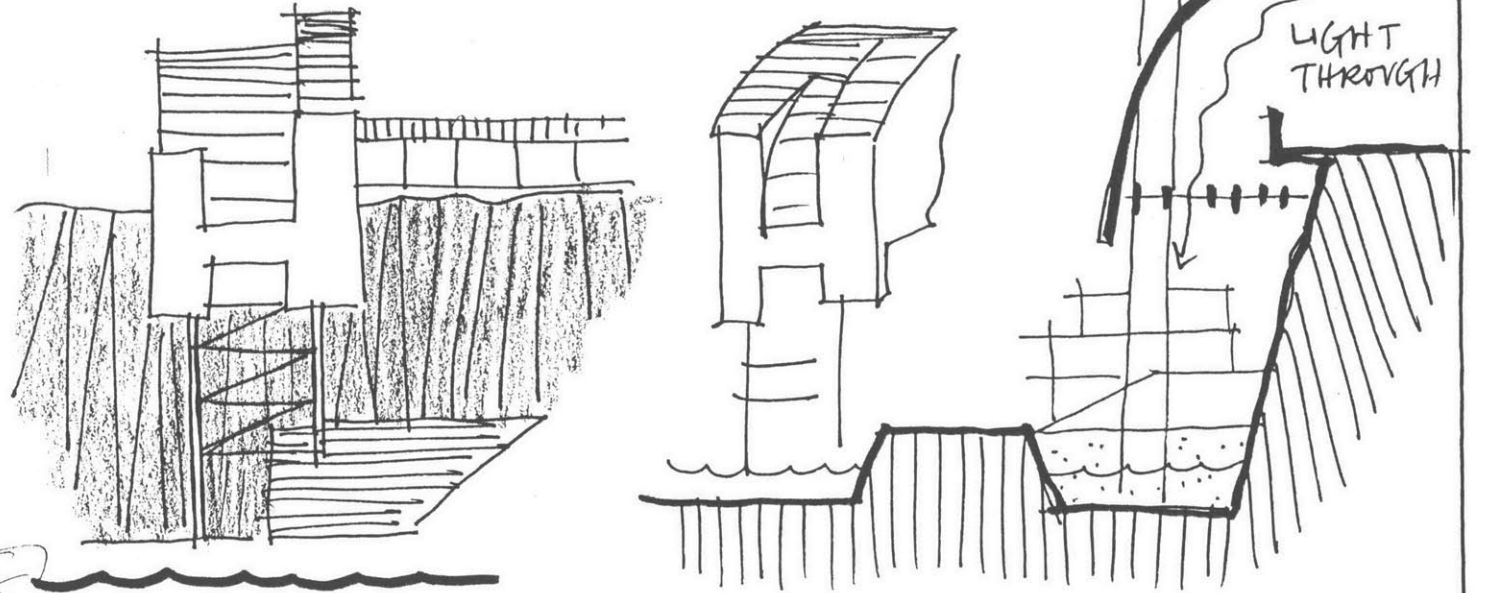
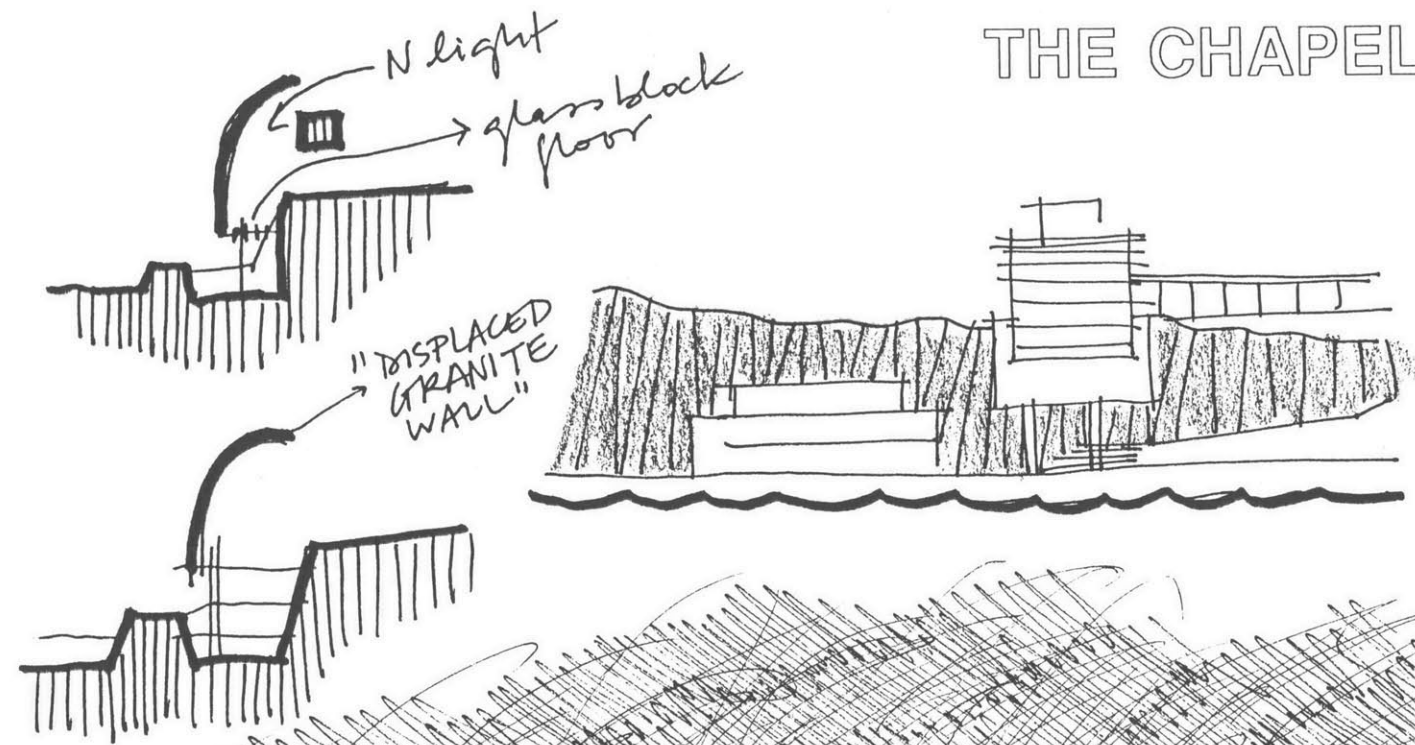
Scale 1:1000 m.



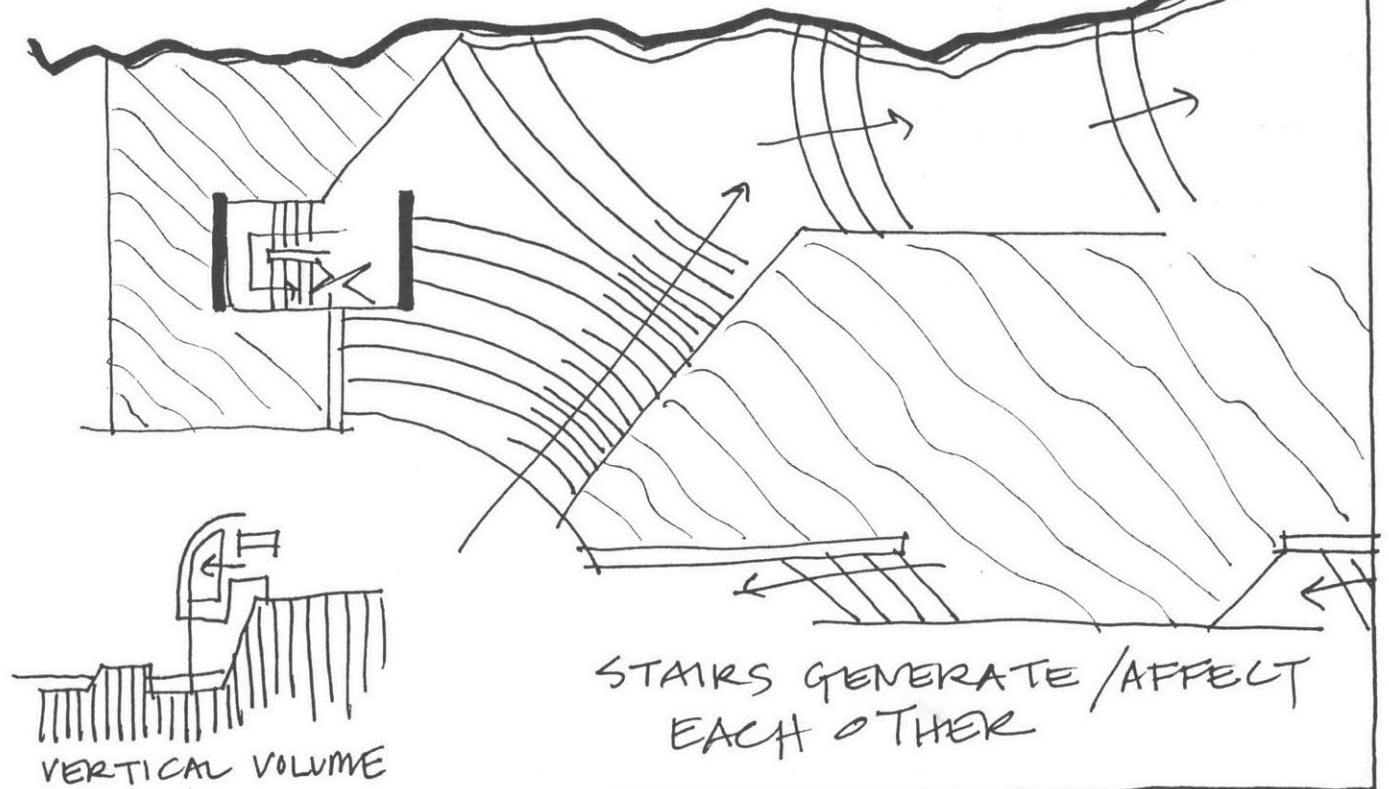
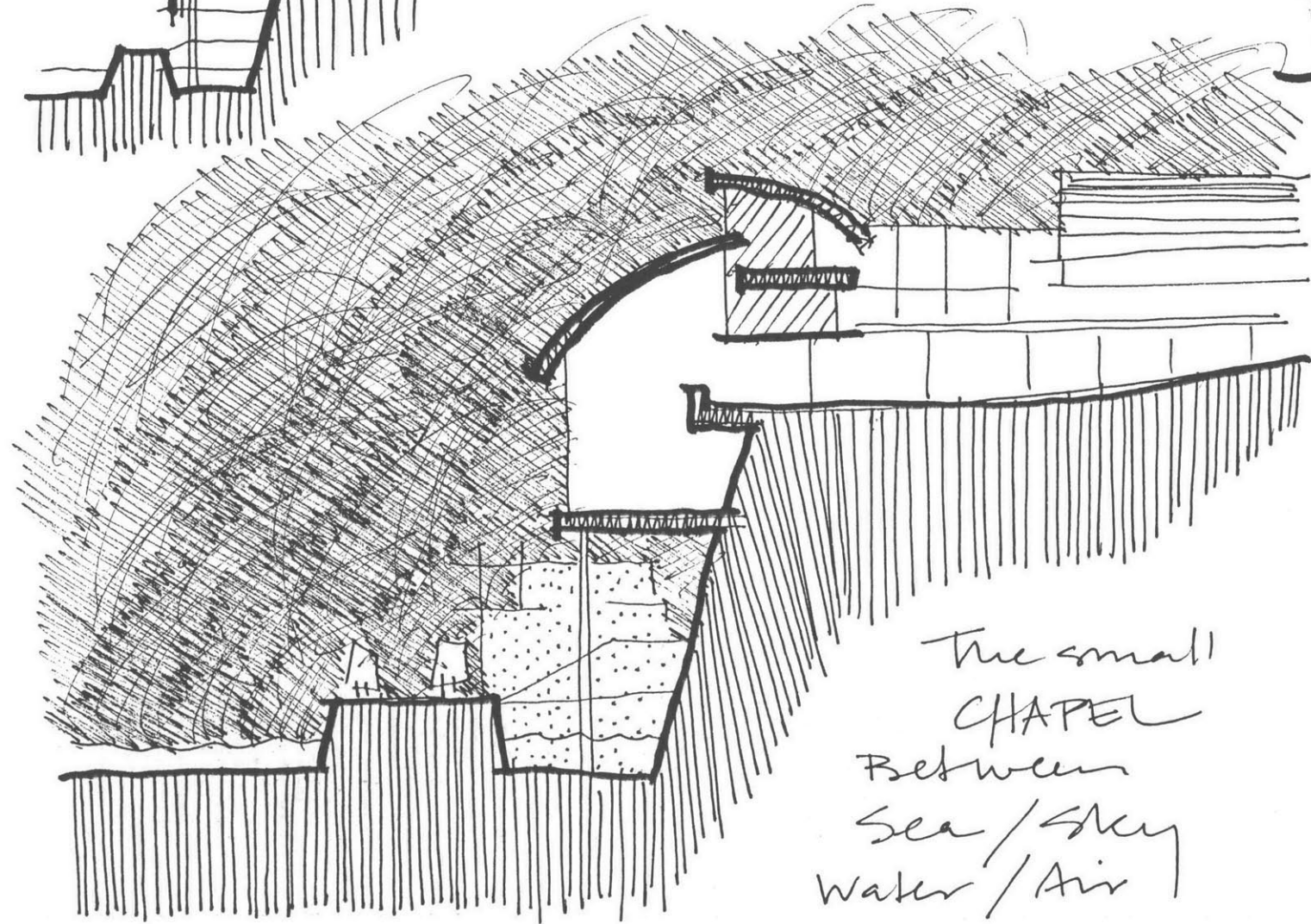
WATER ENTERS THE POOL THROUGH
 TUBES/WINDOWS/OPENINGS.
 DRAINAGE OF THE POOLS HAS
 A DIFFERENT PERIOD THAN THE
 TIDES.
 ONE POOL ALWAYS HAS WATER IN IT.

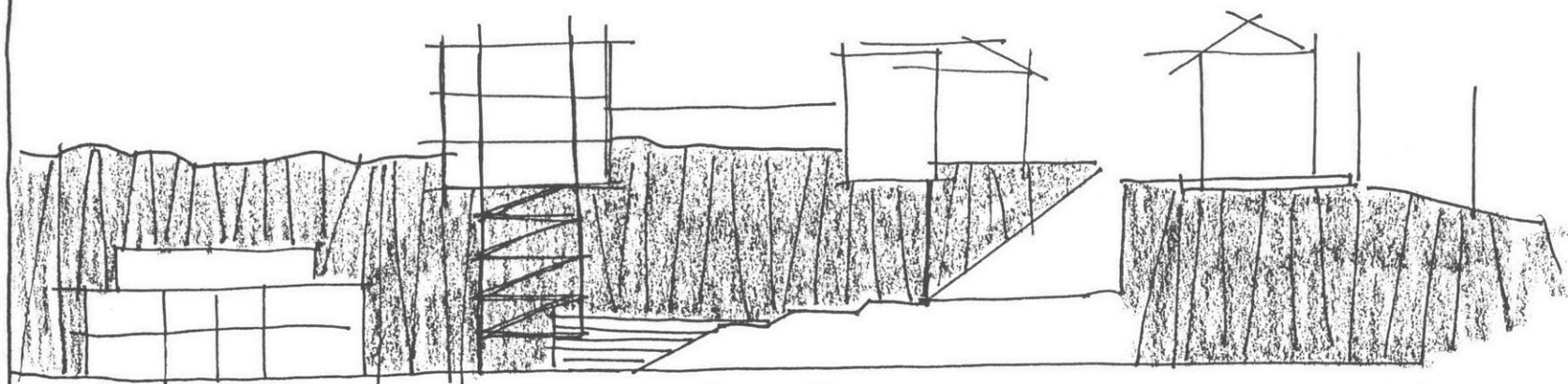


THE CHAPEL

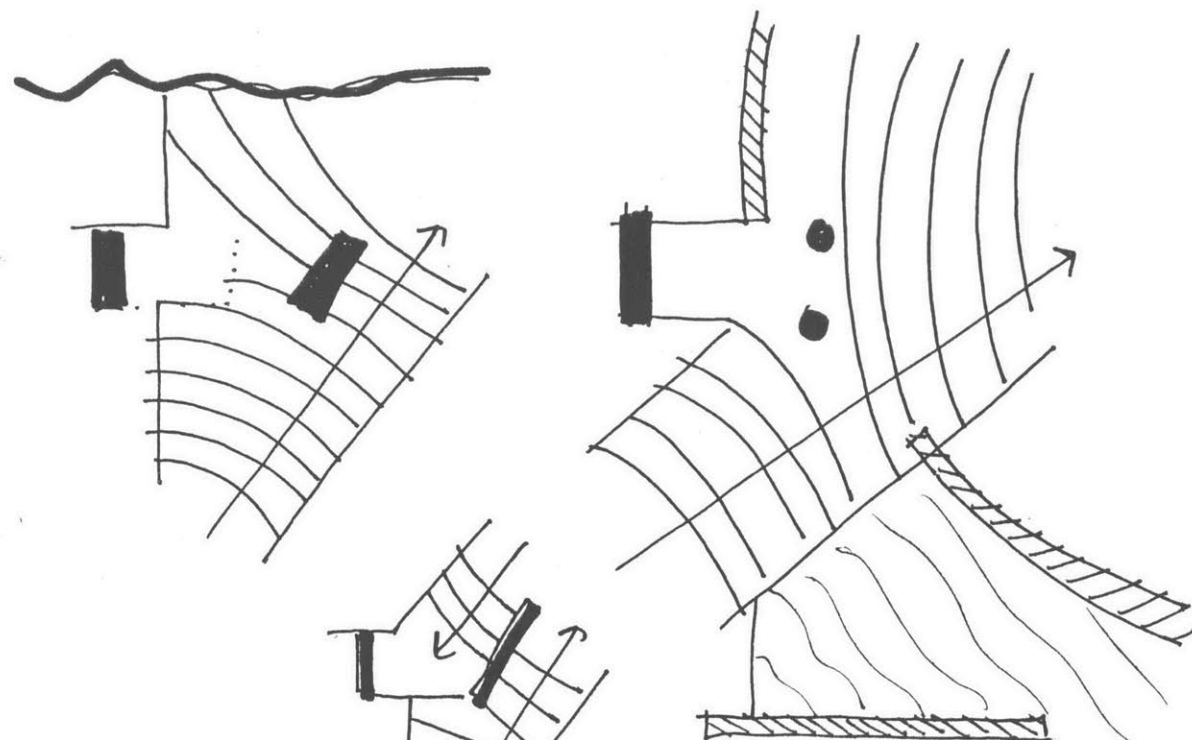


THE STAIRS

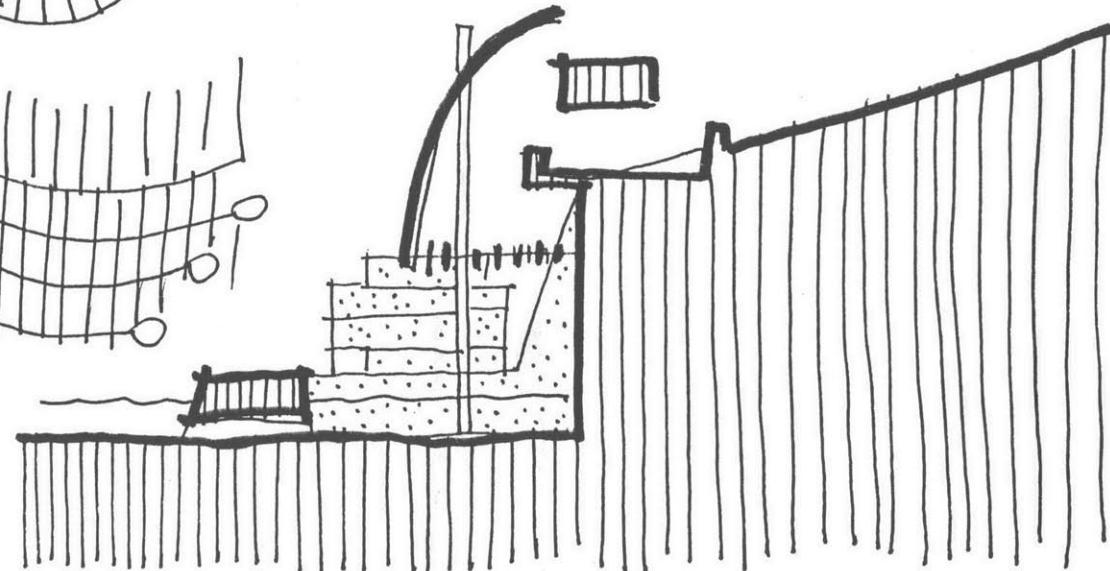
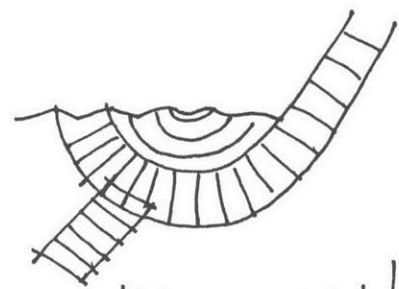
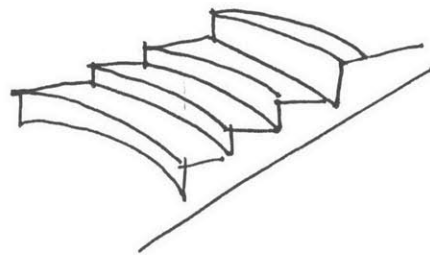
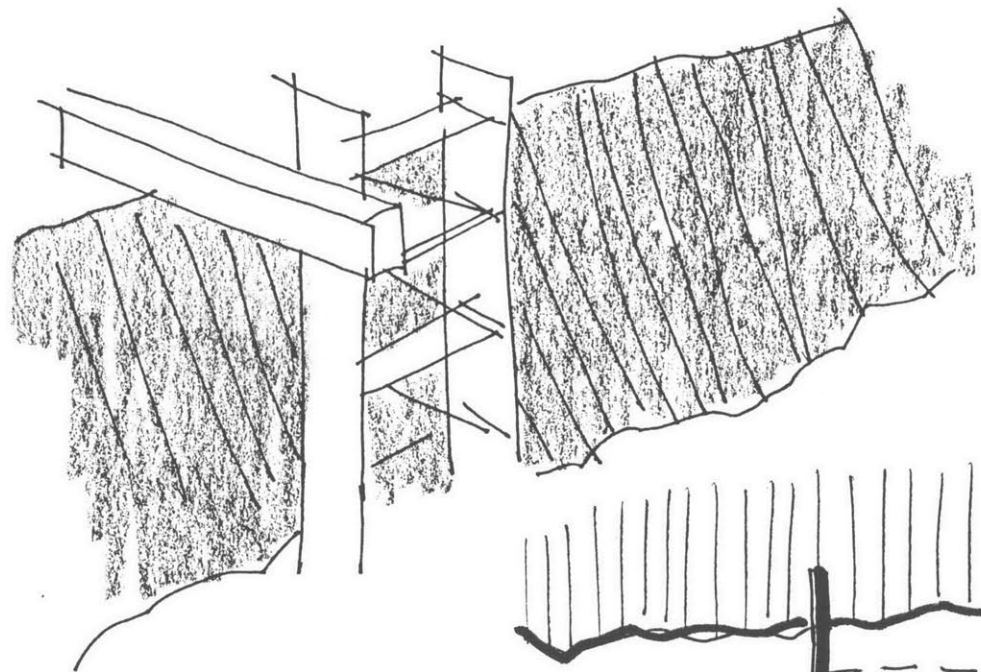




ELEVATION



MORE STAIRS

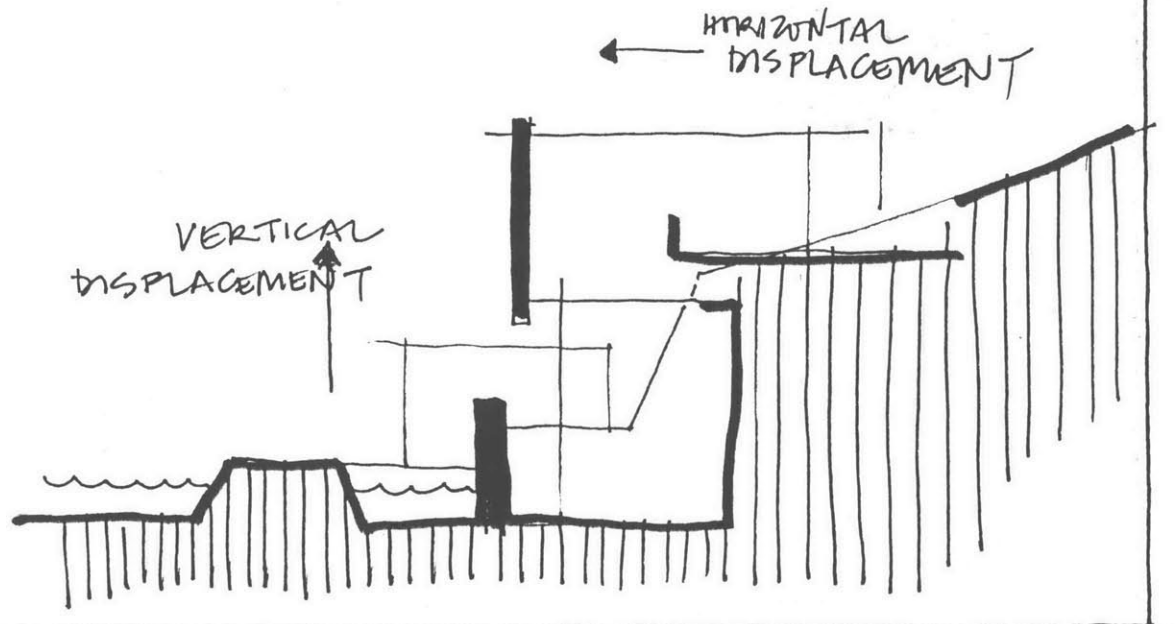
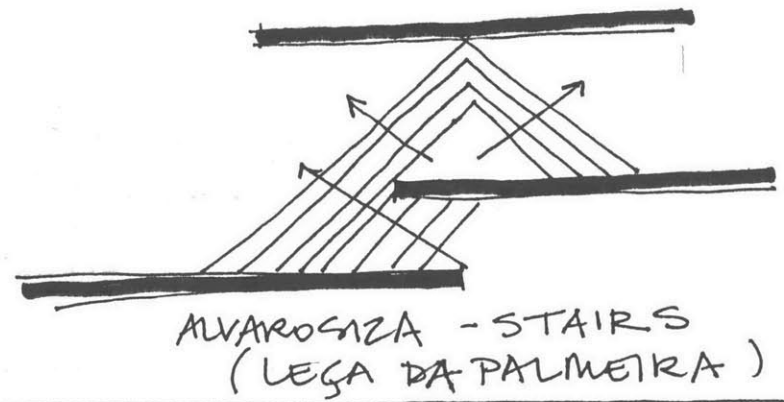
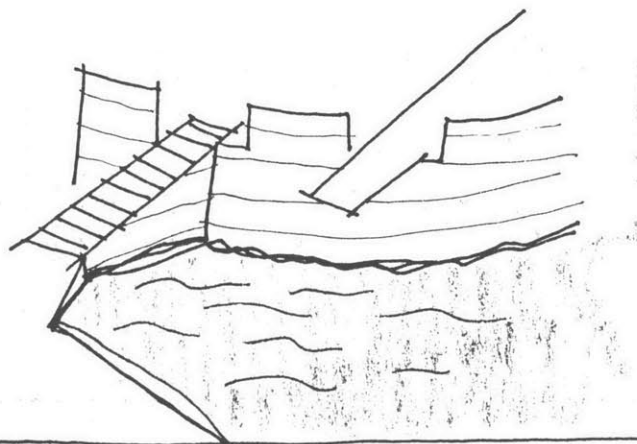
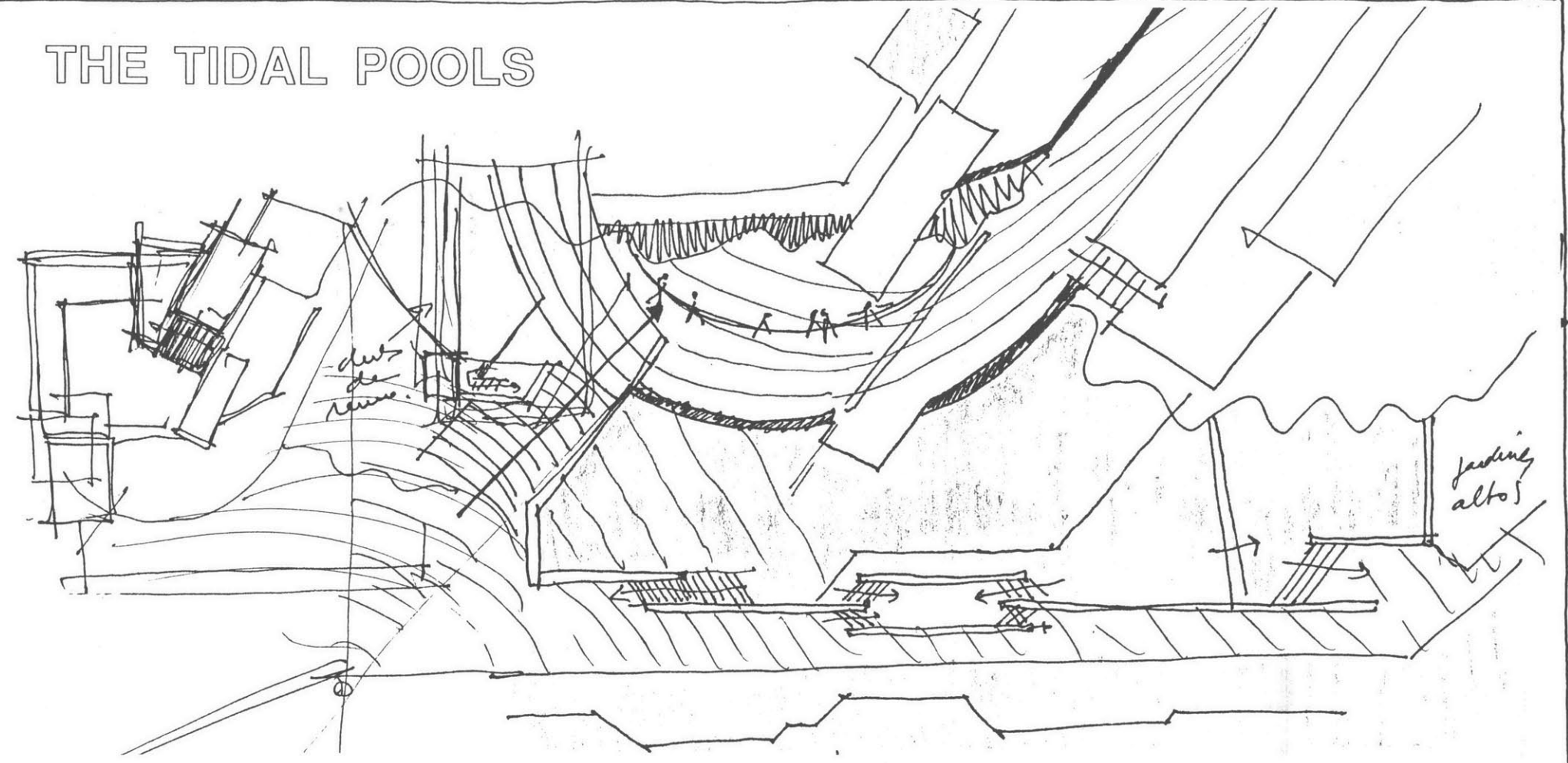
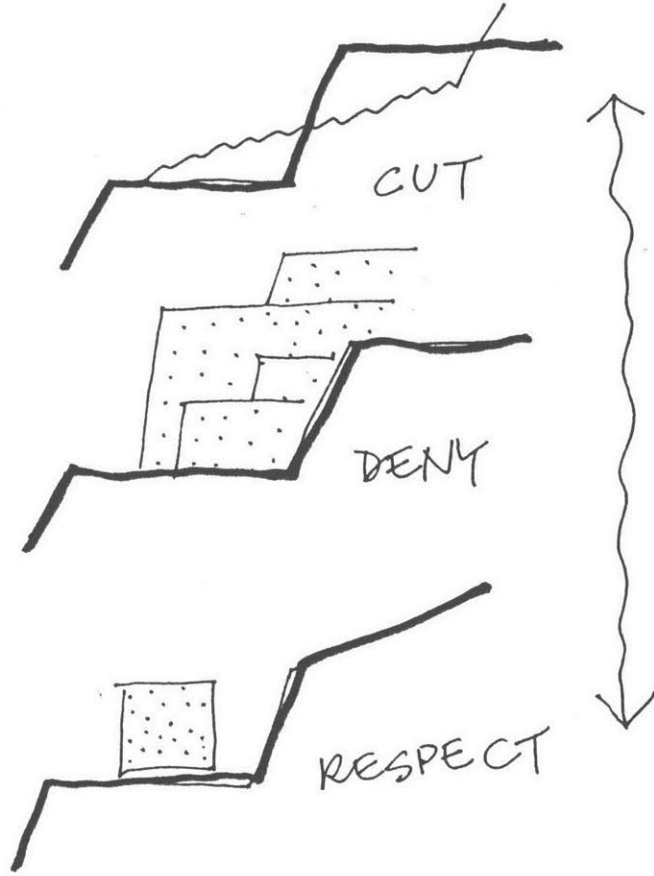


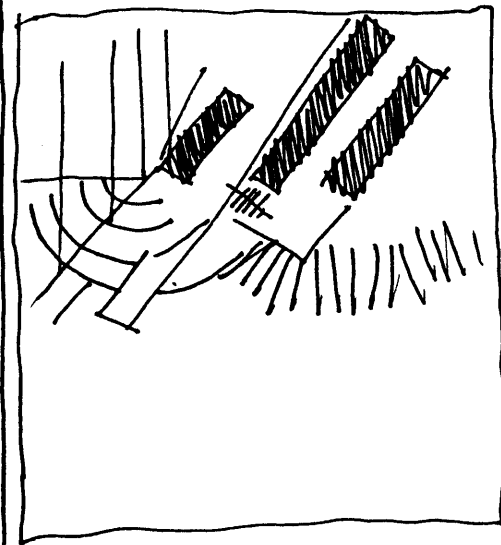
SECTION THROUGH THE WALL

THE CHAPEL

PLAN

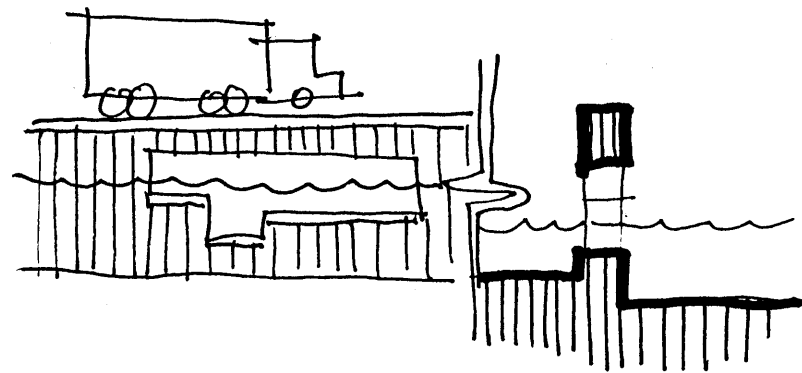
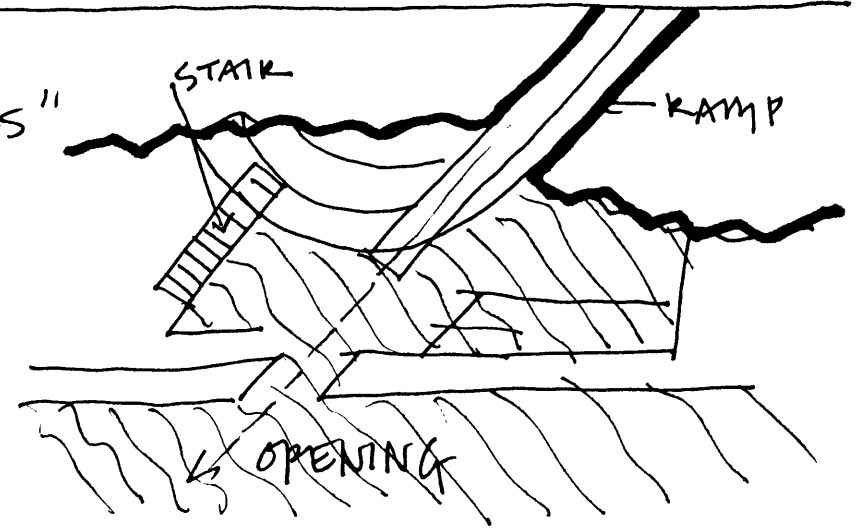
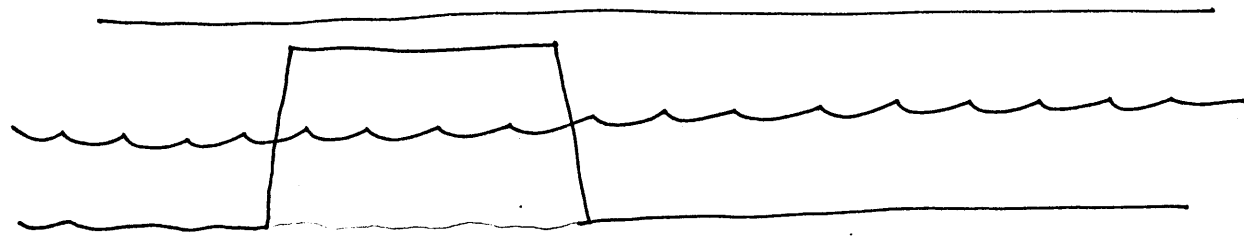
THE TIDAL POOLS



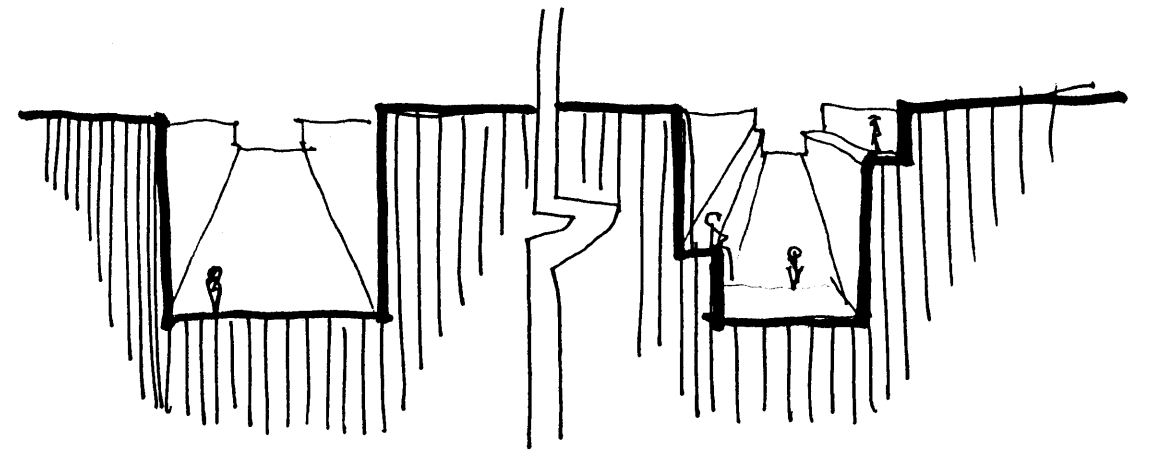
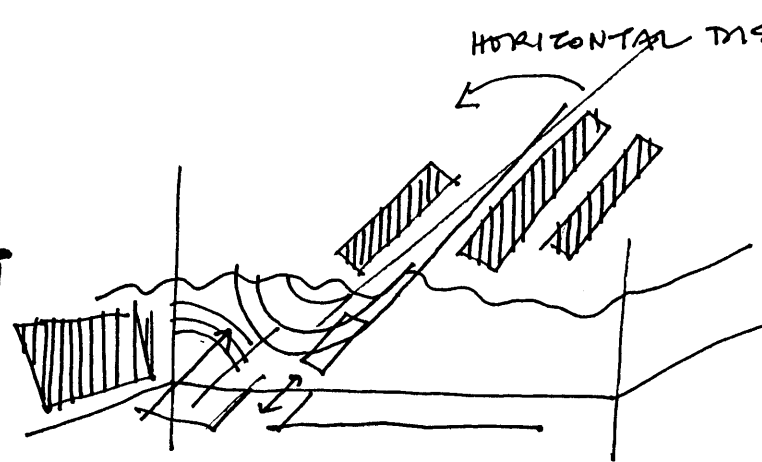
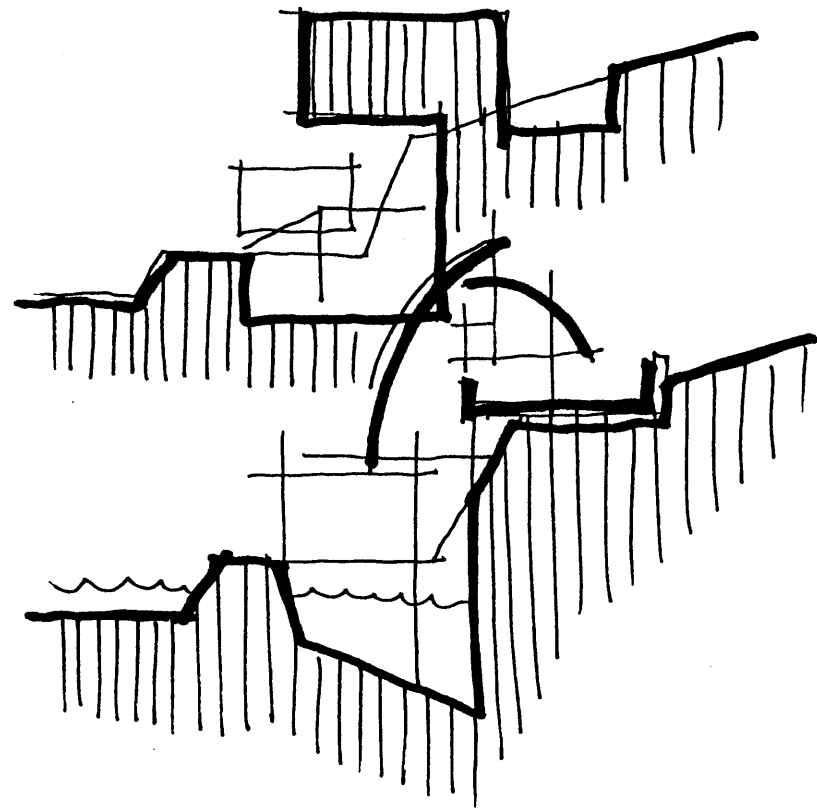


DRAWINGS -
 1. CONVENTION
 2. INVENTION

TURN THE ROAD INTO A BRIDGE
 BIGGER OPENING, RATHER THAN "TUBES"

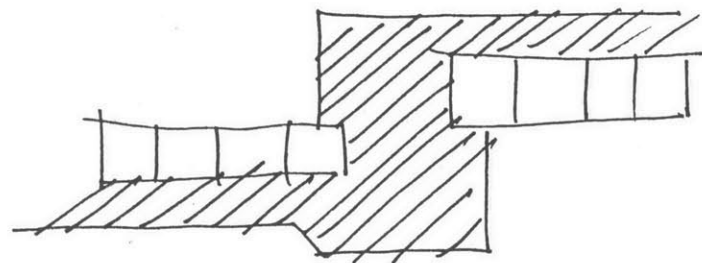
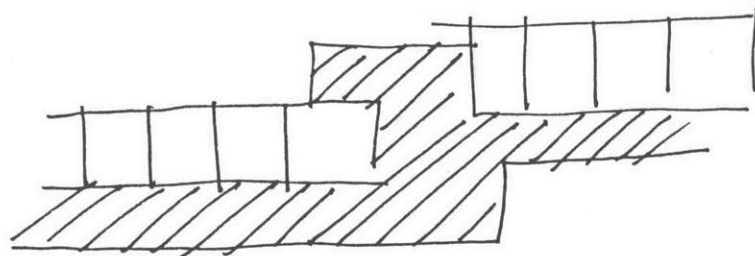
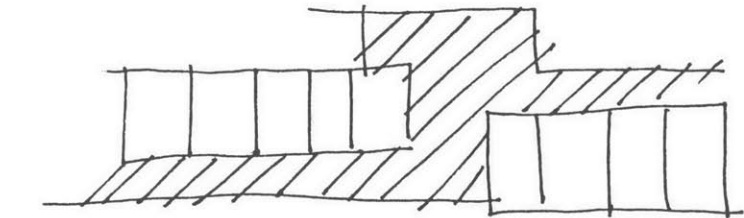


"LOOSE CONNECTIONS"... BYPASSING
 BRIDGE...S / PLATFORM...S (Repetitions)

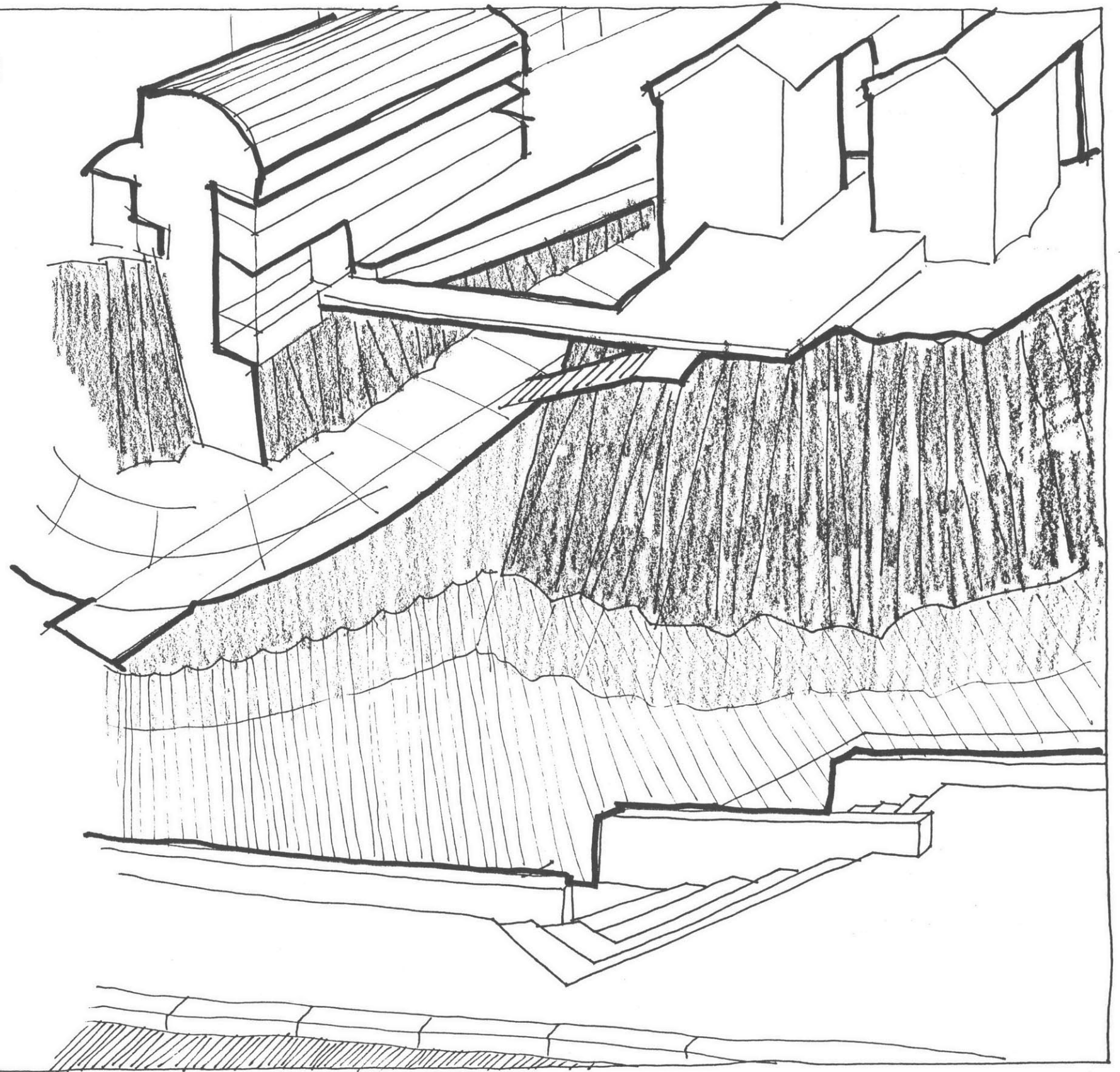


RAMP - A TUNNEL

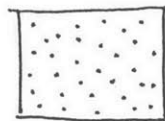
THE STAIRS - BETWEEN THE SANATORIUM
AND THE SEA.
A WOUND IN THE WALL.



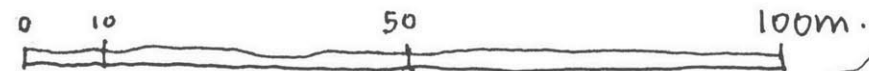
NURSING WARDS - CORRIDORS FACE
BACK (1/3) FRONT (2/3)







THE SANATORIUM



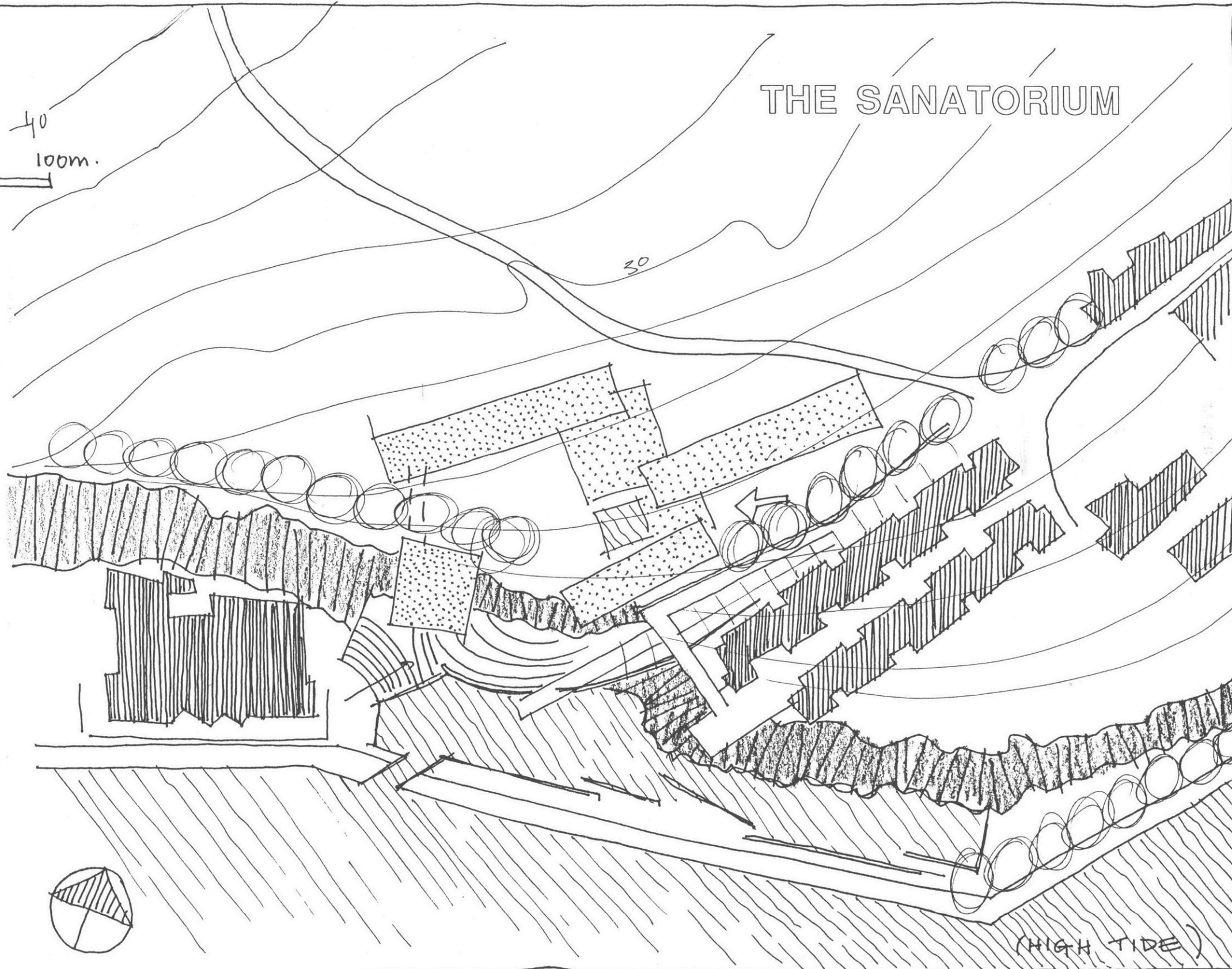
4 VOLUMES:

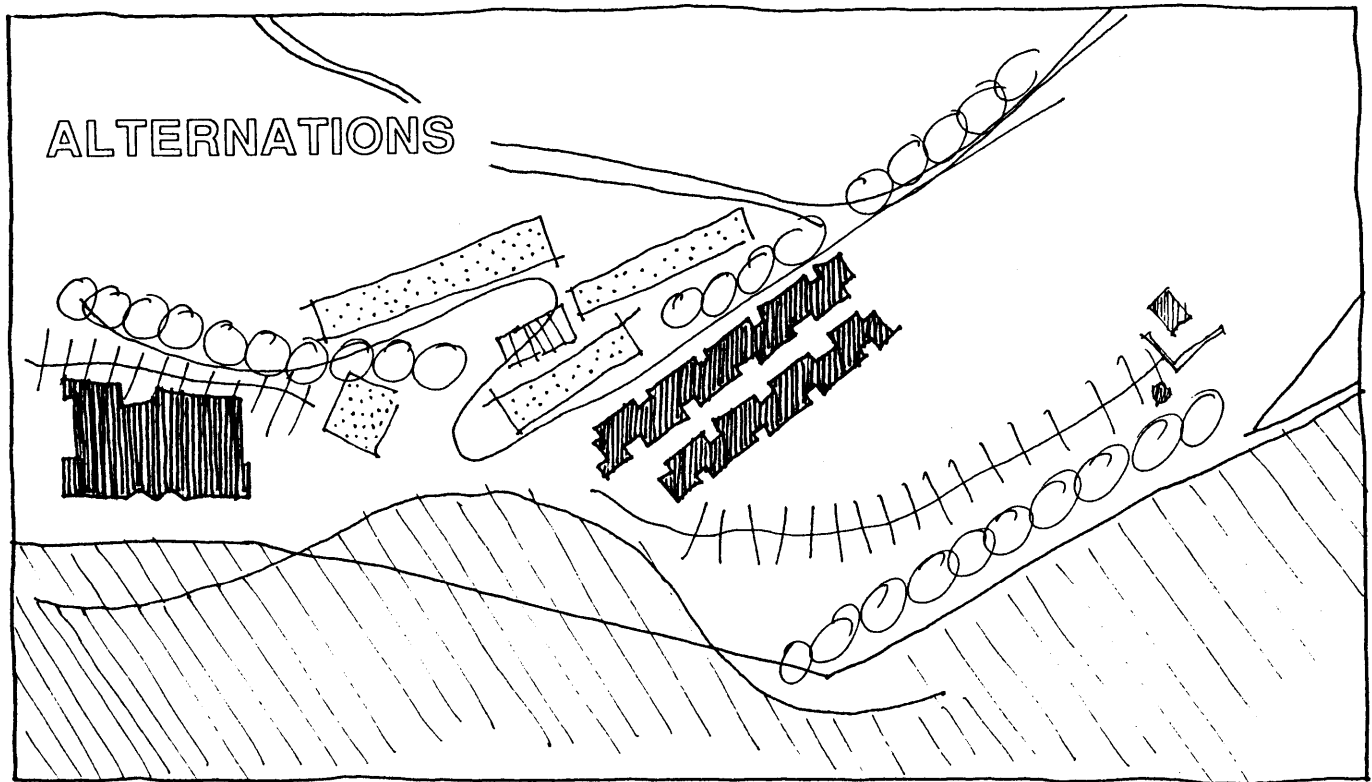
- NURSING WARD
- CLINICAL WARD
- RECREATIONAL WARD
- CHAPEL

(DISPLACED ACCORDING TO TOPOGRAPHIC LINES)

LINES/ROWS OF TREES AT BOTH LEVELS, INTENSIFYING THE WALL.

NEED FOR A LARGE INTERVENTION (BECAUSE OF THE SIZE OF THE WALL)





ALTERNATIONS - IN PLAN AND SECTION

1. with respect to the ROAD TO HARBOUR
(water in front / behind)
2. with respect to the WALL
(courtyard of sanatorium vs. ramp / tunnel / wound)
3. in elevation: FISHERMEN'S PUB CHAPEL
4. TREES - existing row in platform + new row acting through the sanatorium and continuing into the town. NOISE BUFFER.

MOVEMENT:

FROM HORIZONTAL → VERTICAL

(STAIRS)

PRIVATE

SEA

PUBLIC

WALL

FROM VERTICAL ← HORIZONTAL

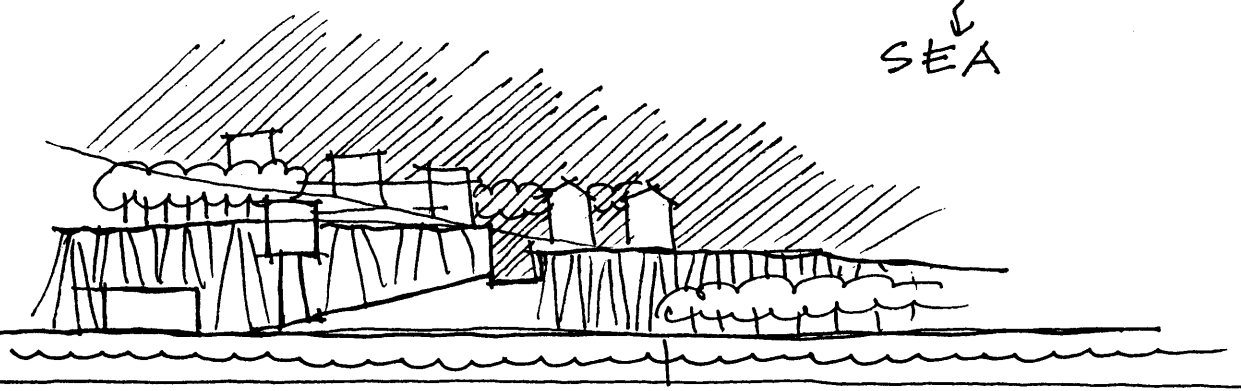
(SANATORIUM)

PUBLIC

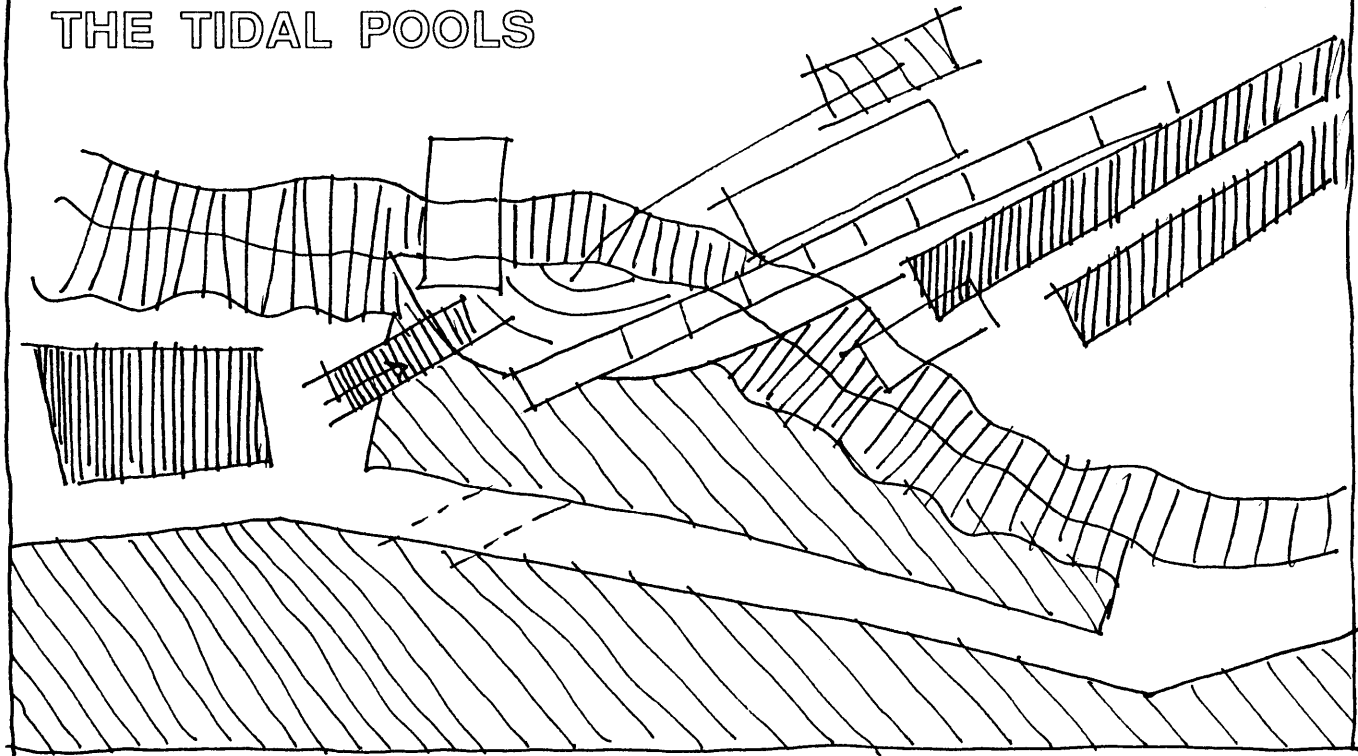
RECREATIONAL
CLINICAL

PRIVATE

NURSING



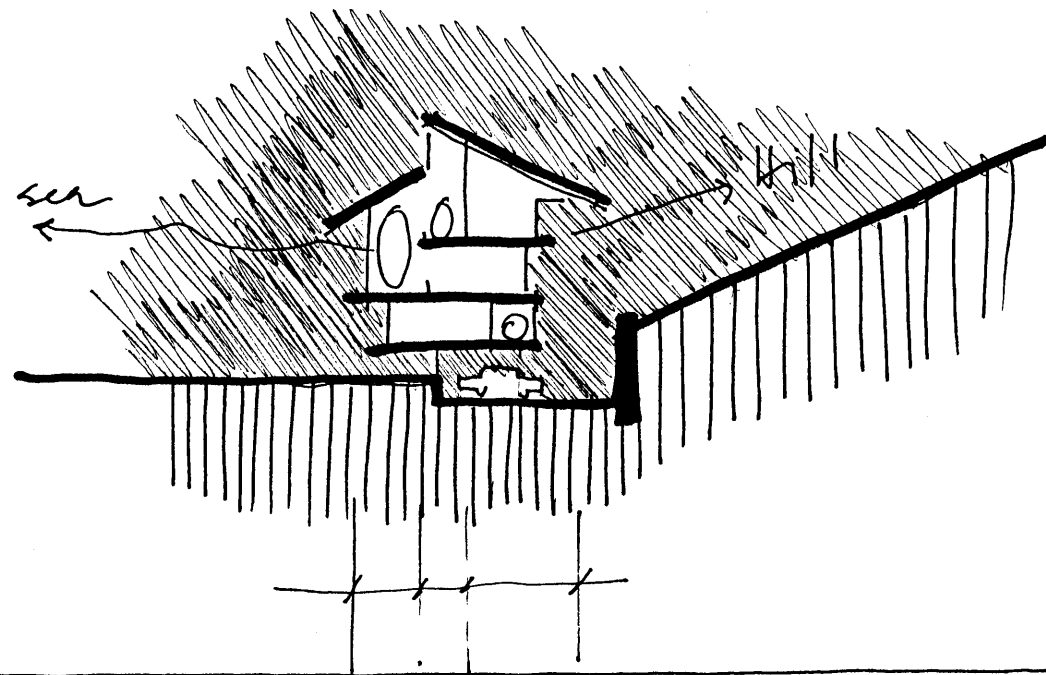
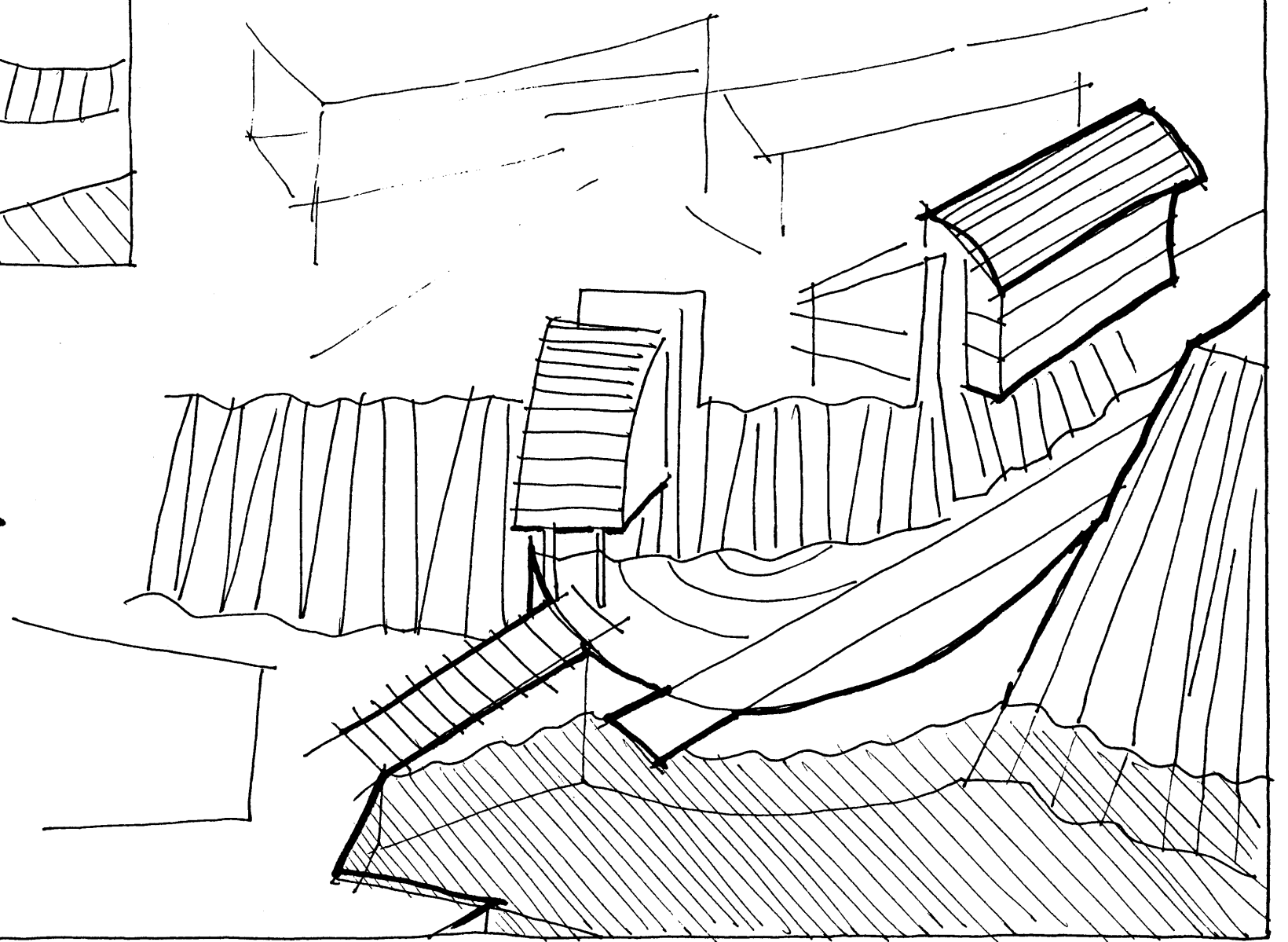
THE TIDAL POOLS



TIDAL POOLS

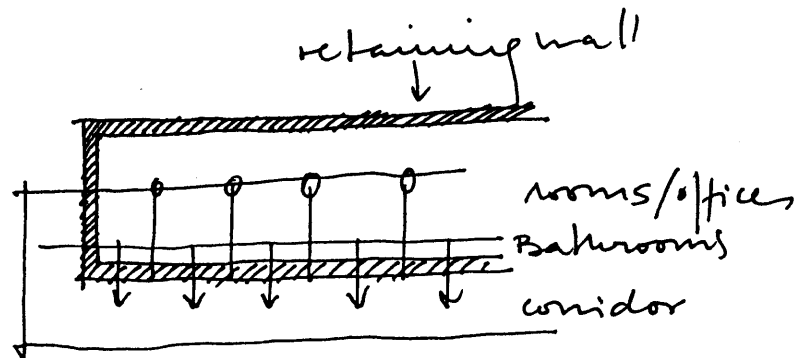
SWIMMING POOL IN SANATORIUM

(DISPLACED UP - USED AS BOUNDARY,
LIMIT BETWEEN TOWN AND SANATORIUM
IN ENTRANCE)

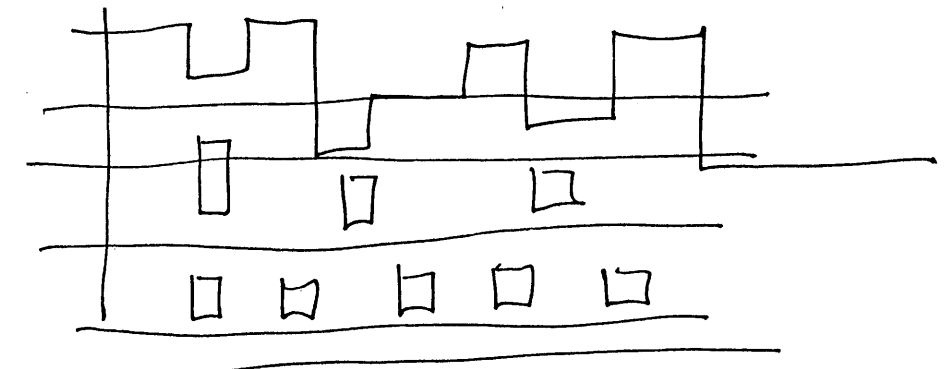
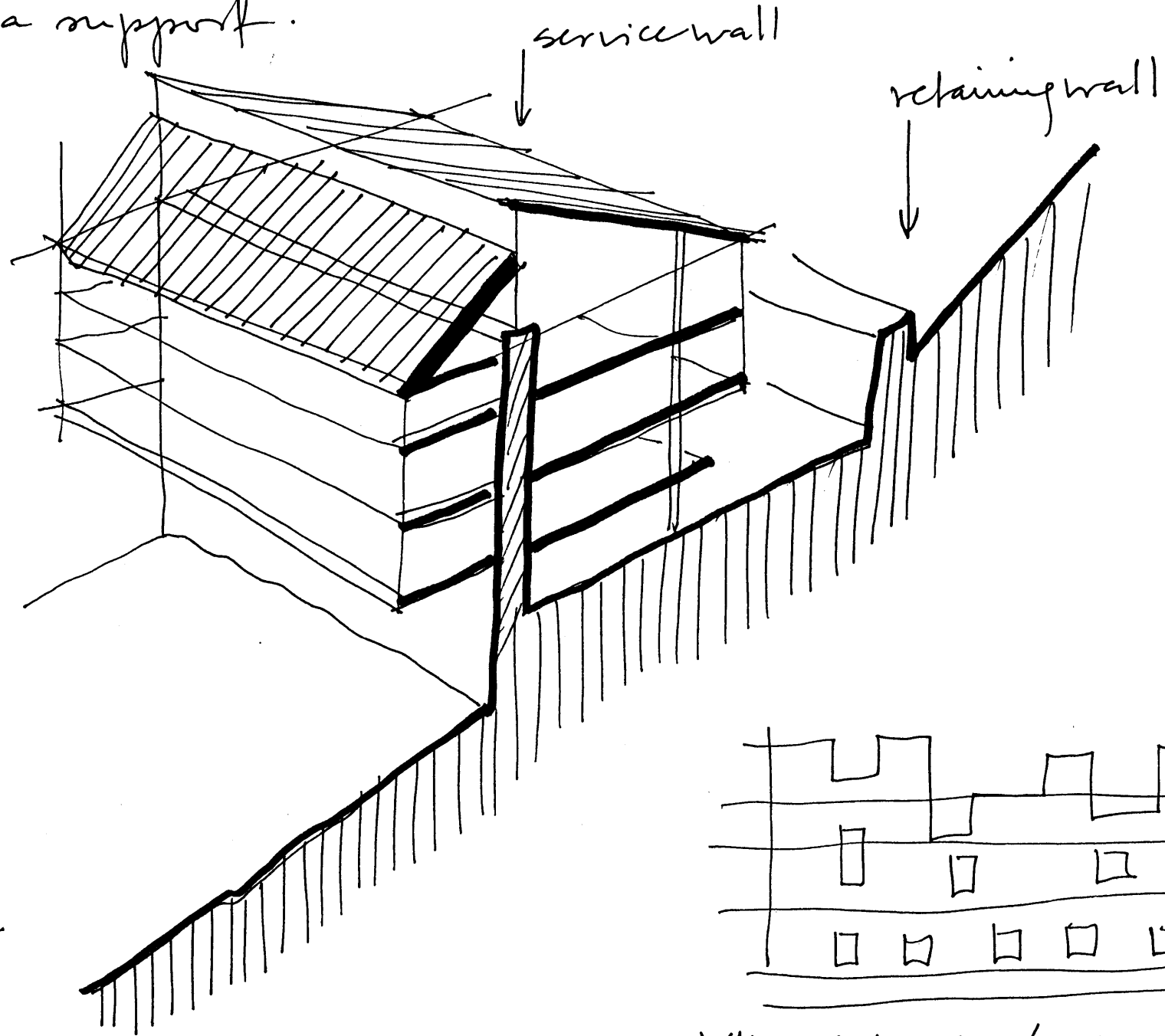
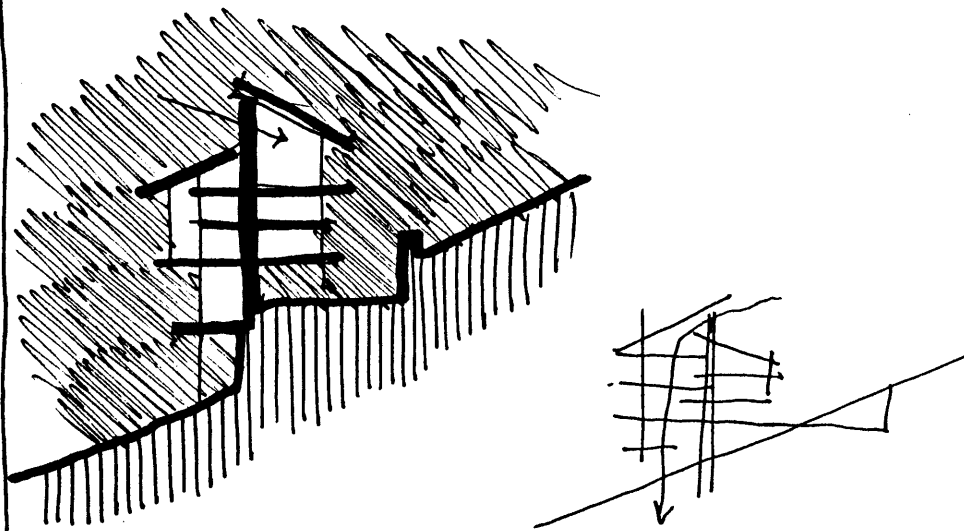
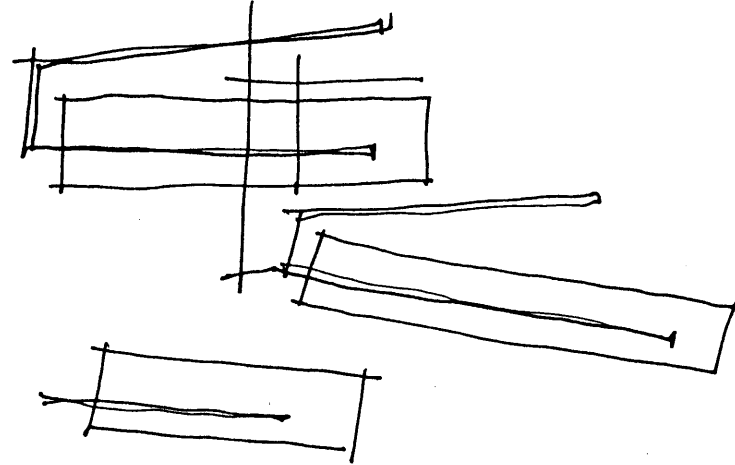


DISPLACEMENT

THE WALL IS NEVER
A BUILDING EDGE -
A retaining wall or
a support.

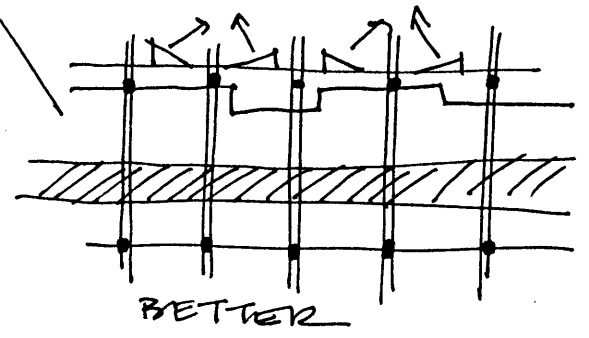
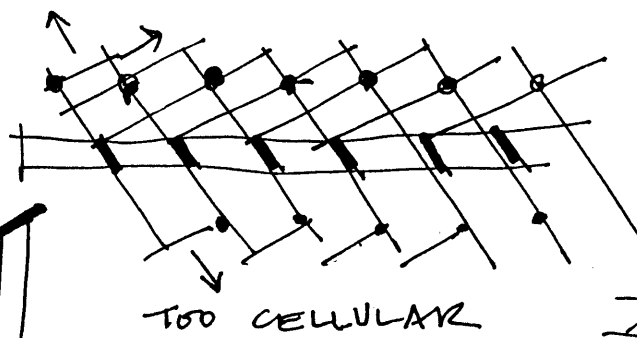
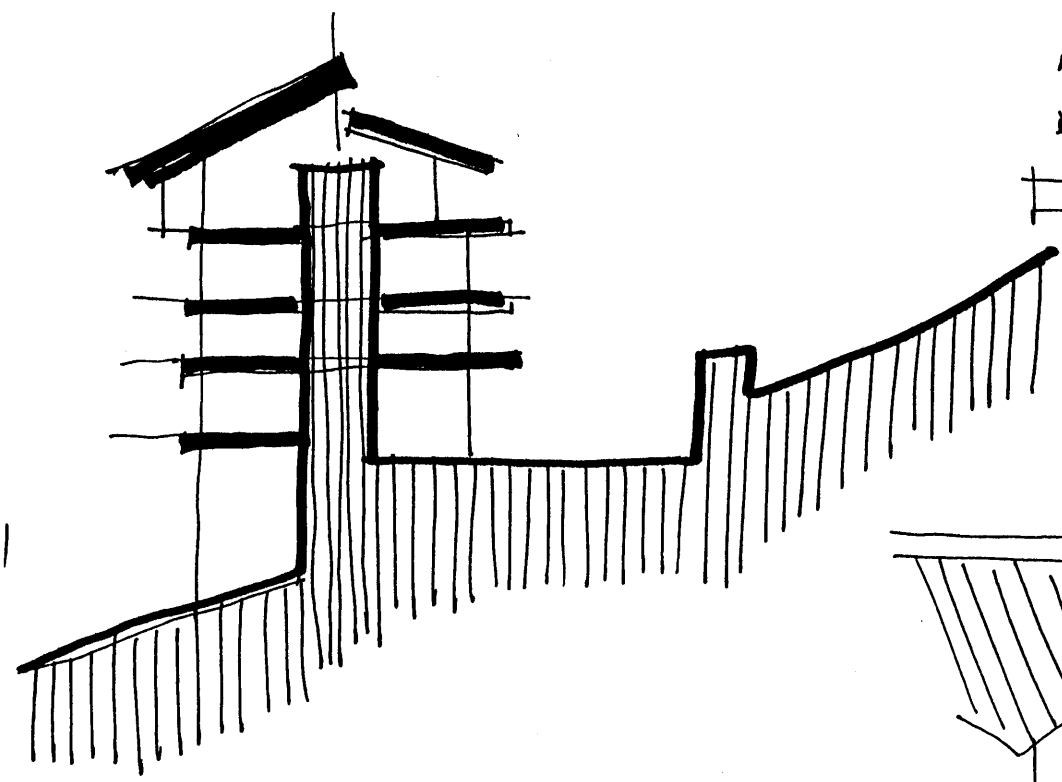
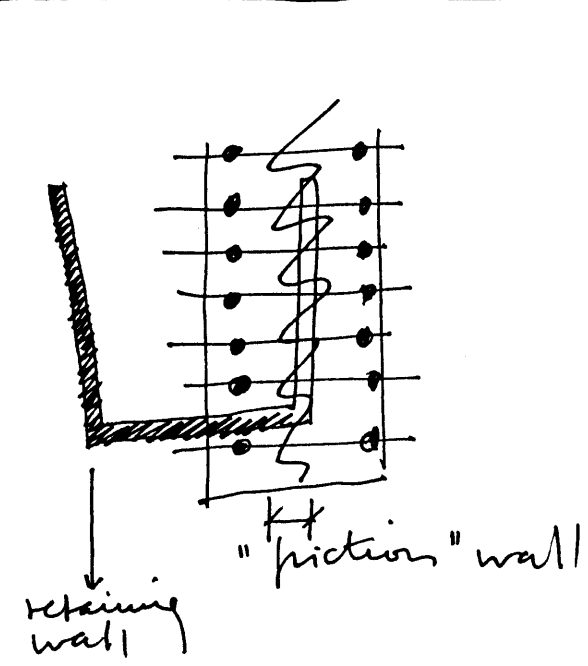


Displacement

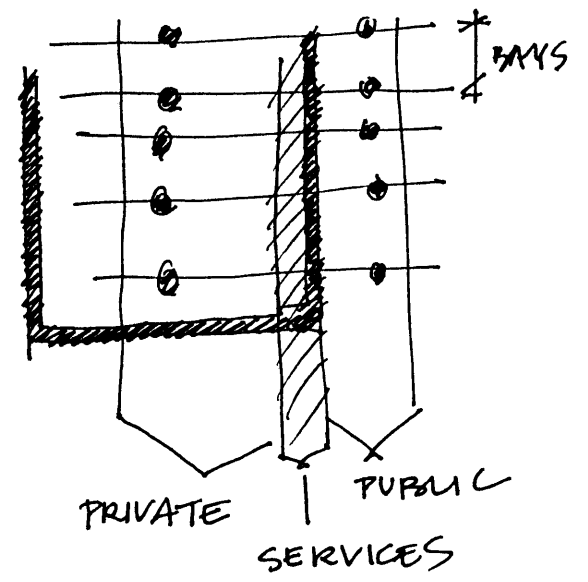


WALL IS A CORE / SERVICE WALL

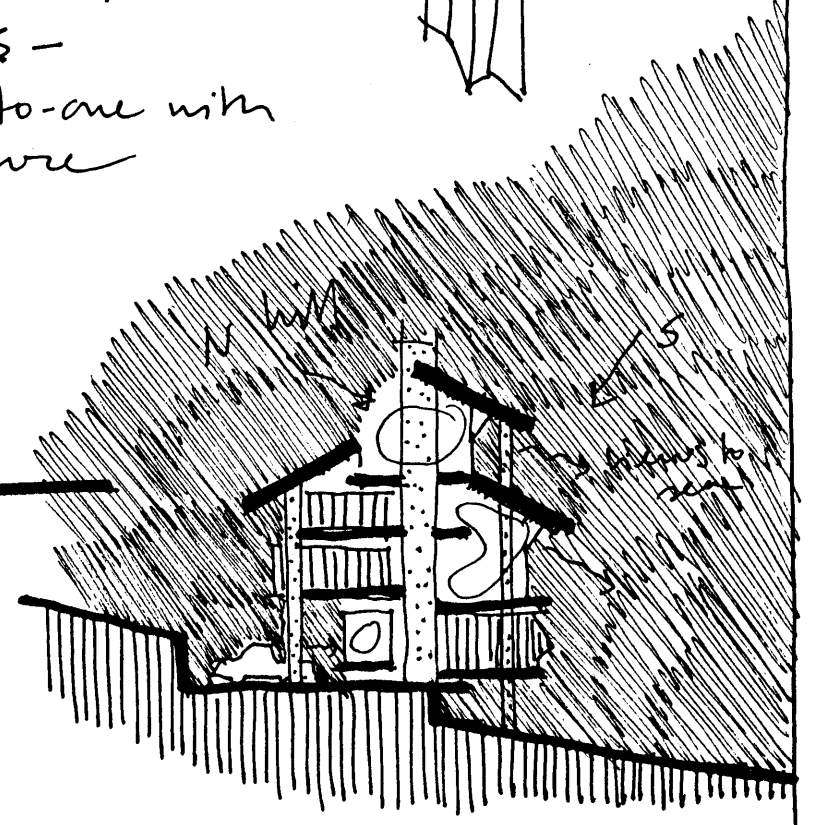
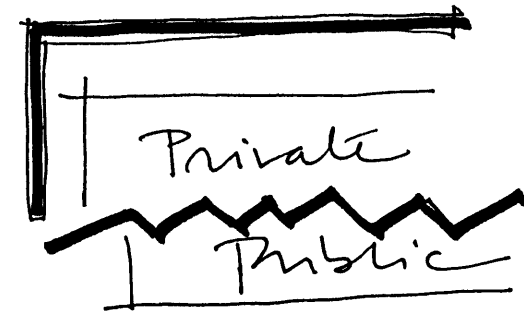
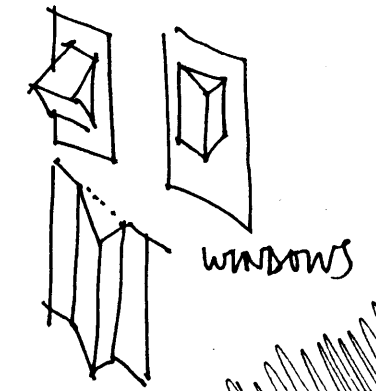
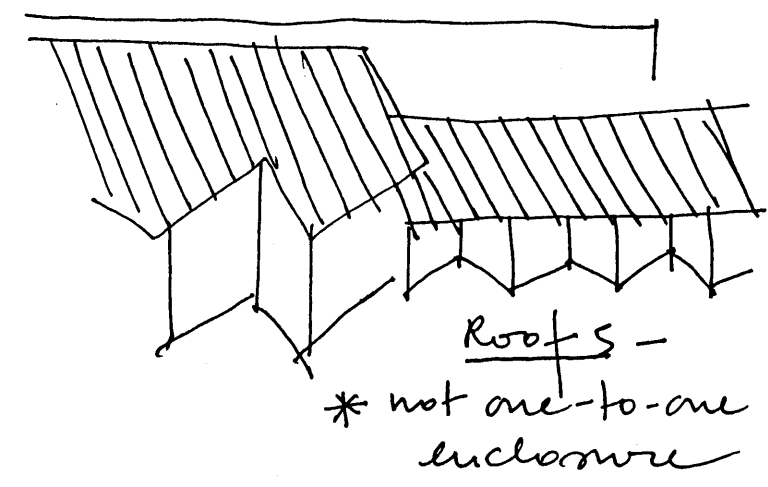
DISPLACEMENT



NURSING WARD

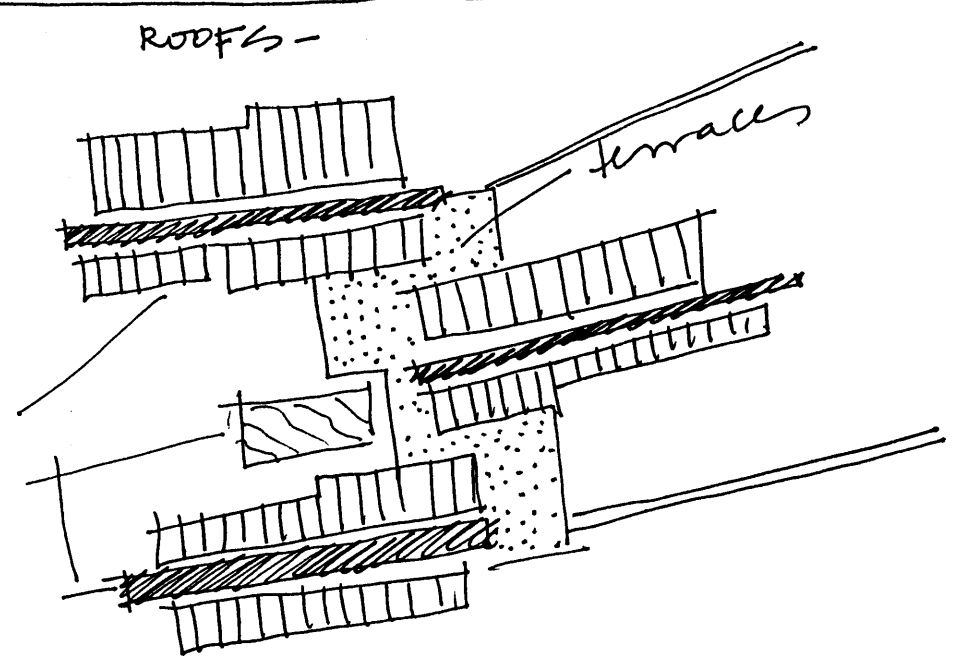
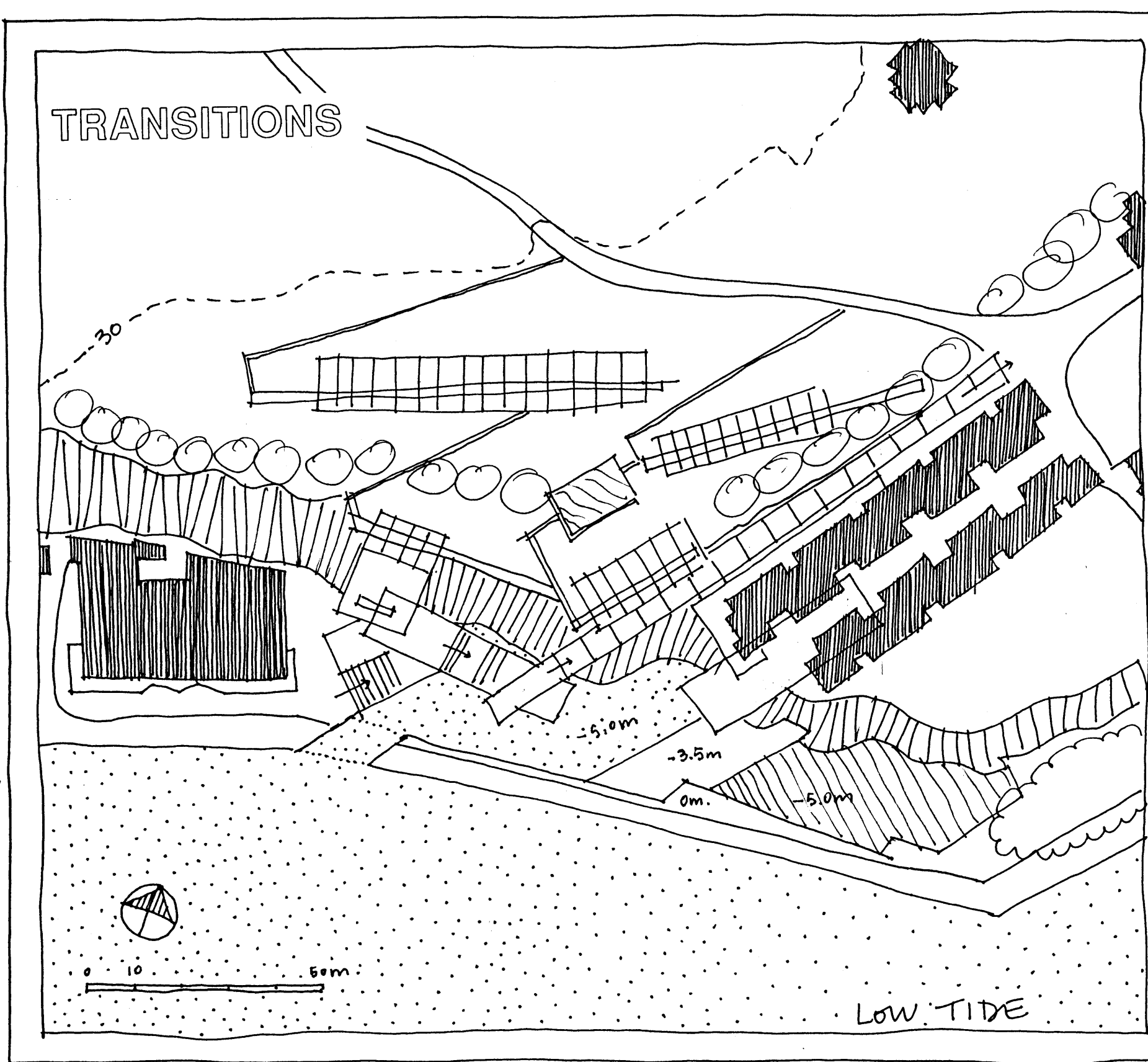


- "FRICTION WALL"
- DRAINAGE
 - WATER
 - ELECTRICITY
 - VENTILATION
 - ELEVATORS
 - BATH ROOMS
 - LIGHTWELLS
 - NOISE BUFFER



DISPLACEMENT
GENERATES
MOVEMENT

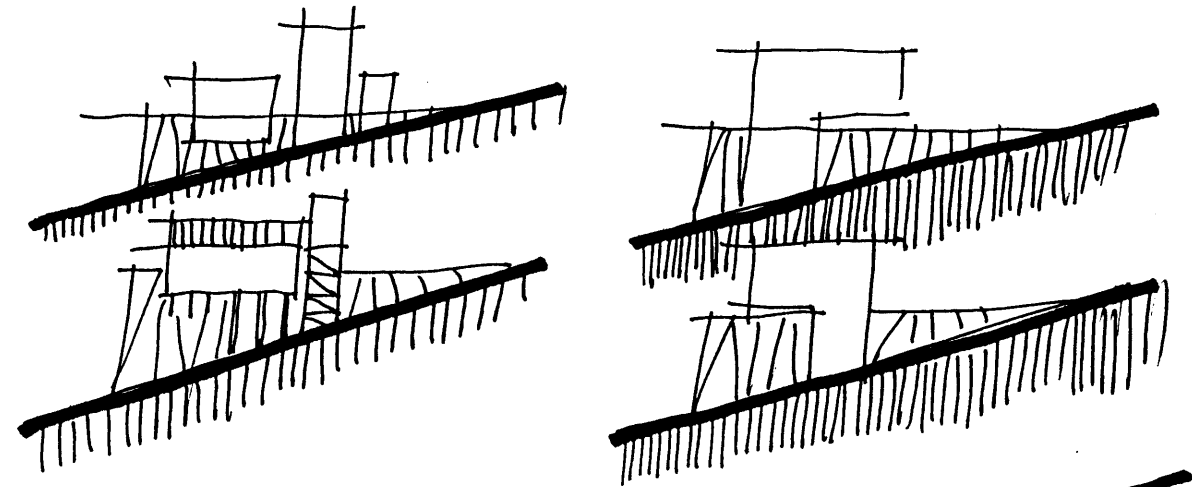
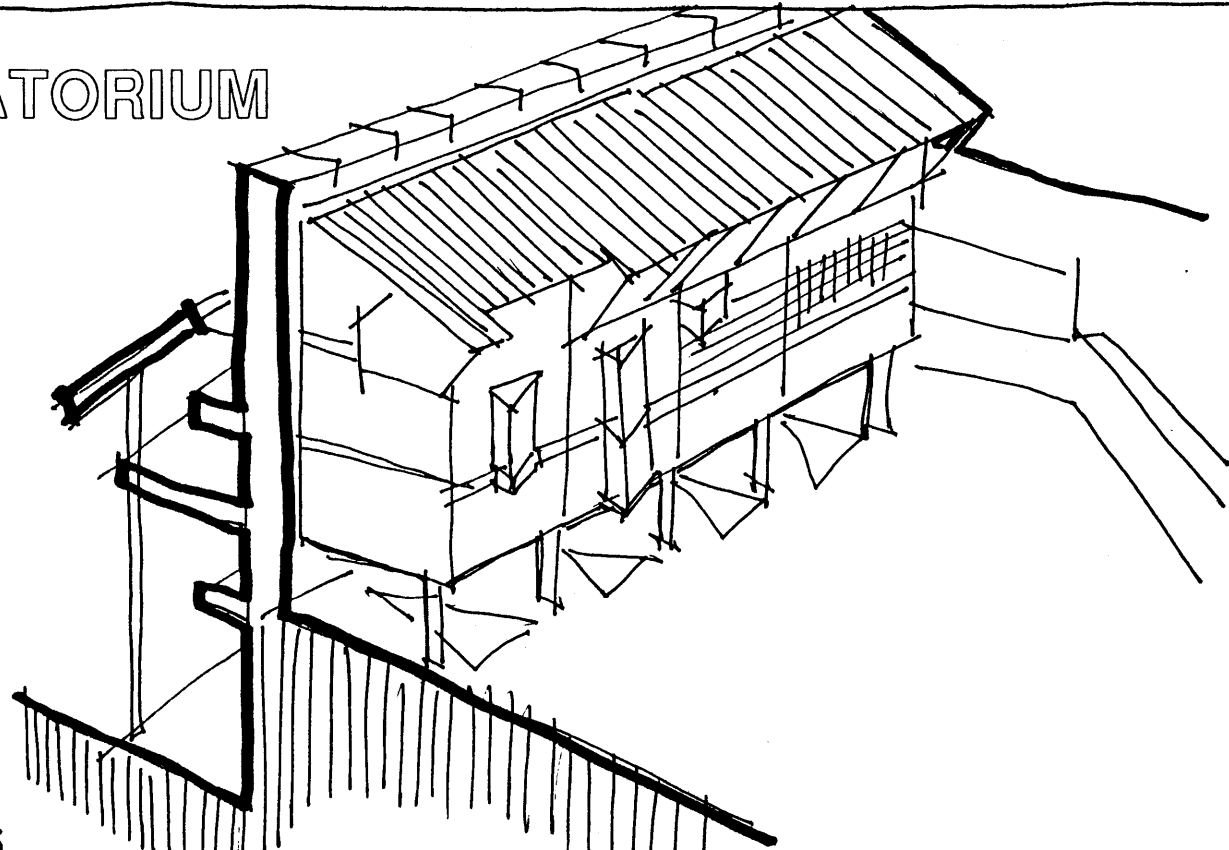
HORIZONTAL (water)
VERTICAL (wall)



TRANSITIONS:

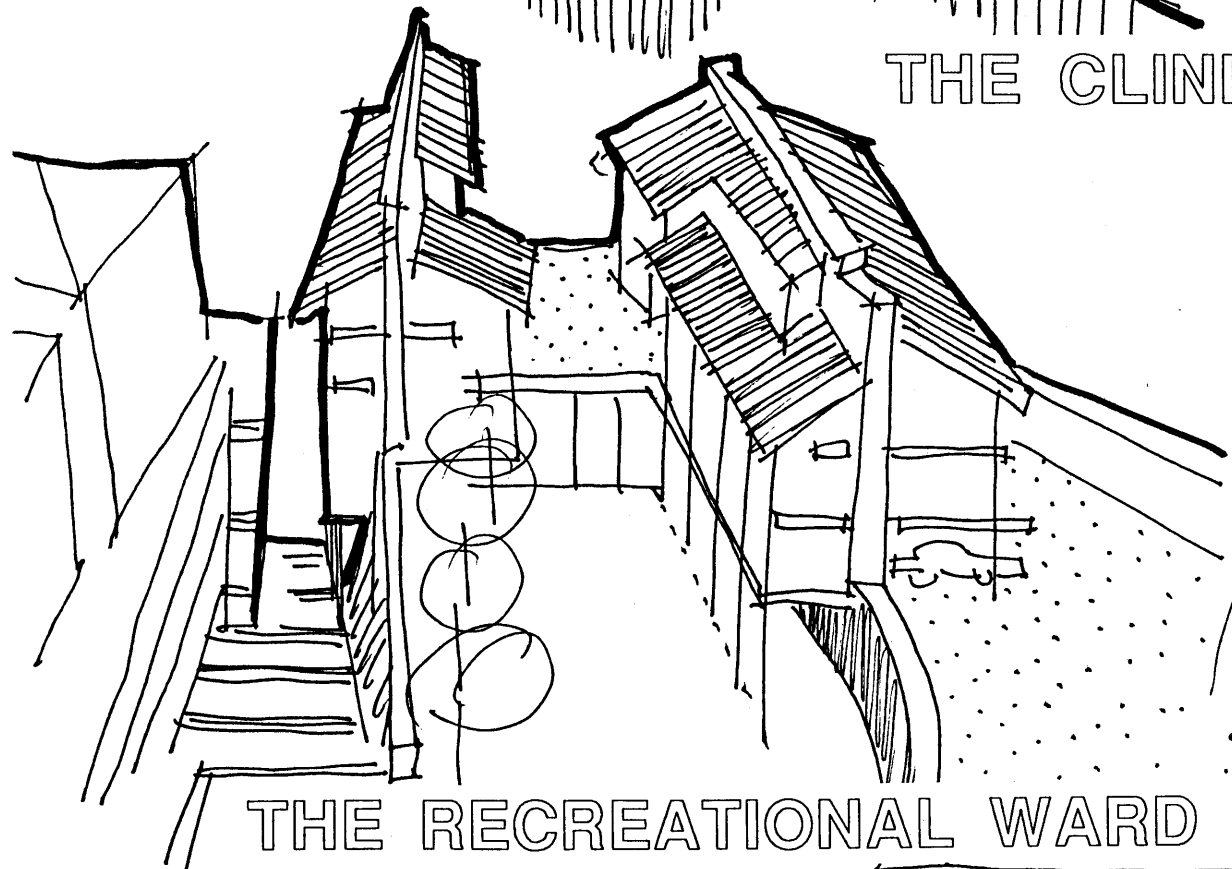
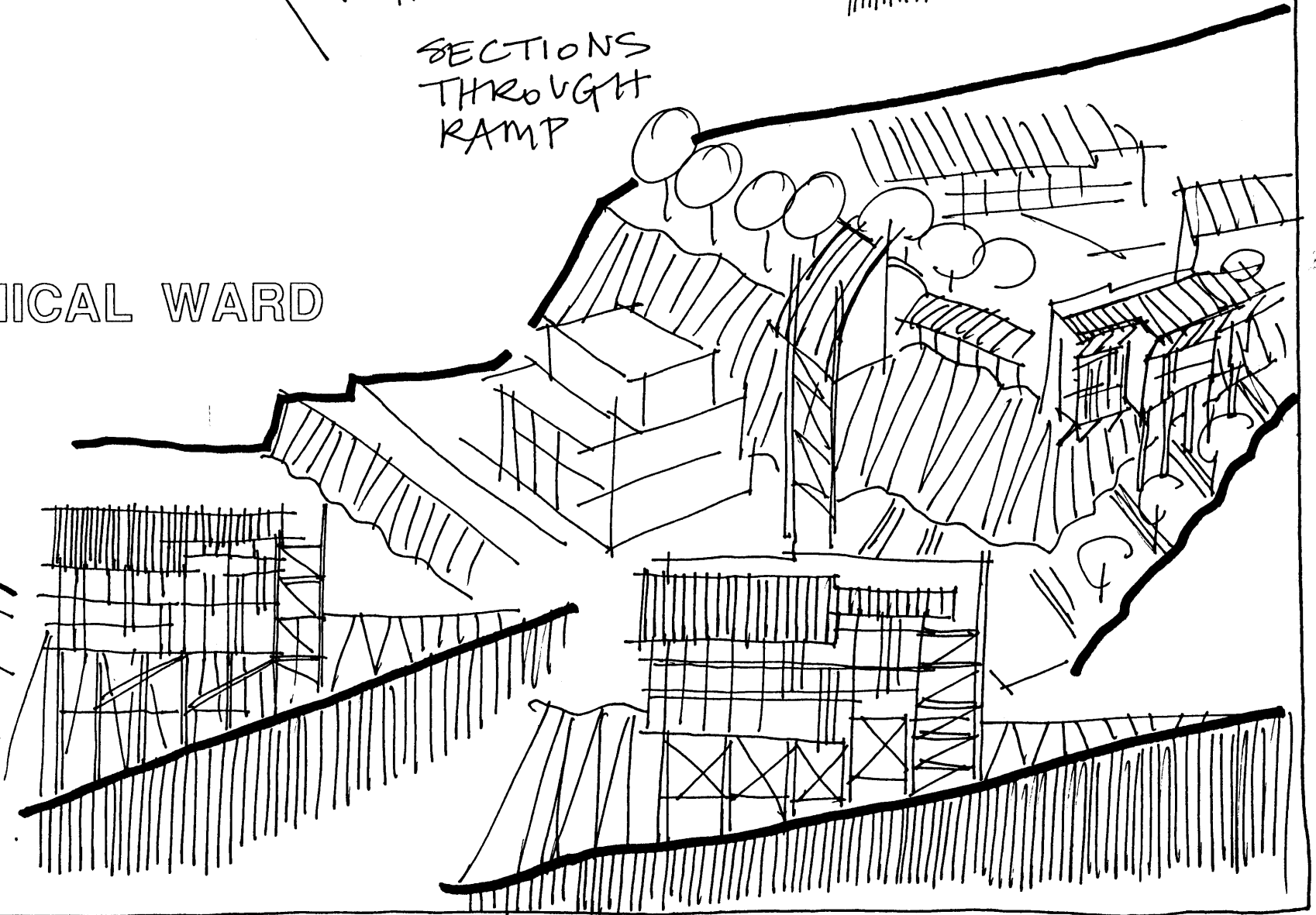
- [DISPLACEMENT
- [DECOMPOSITION
- SERIES OF DICHOTOMIES:
- 1. HORIZONTAL / VERTICAL
- 1. VOLUMES / SKELETONS
- 1. CONTAIN / RETAIN
- 1. SEEING / BEING SEEN
- 1. NATURAL / ARTIFICIAL
- 1. STILLNESS / MOVEMENT
- 1. PUBLIC / PRIVATE
- 1. PERPENDICULAR / PARALLEL
-

THE SANATORIUM

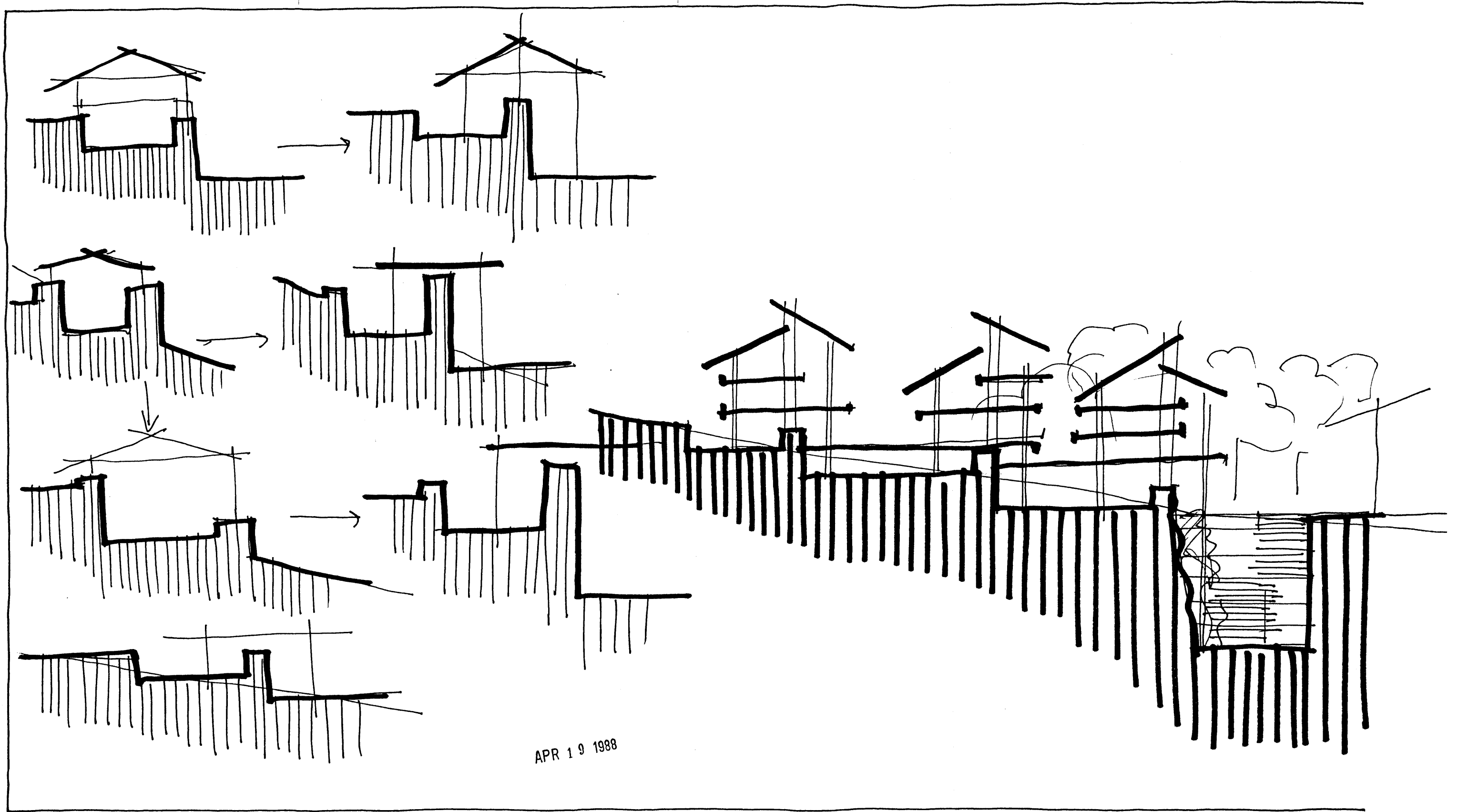


SECTIONS
THROUGH
RAMP

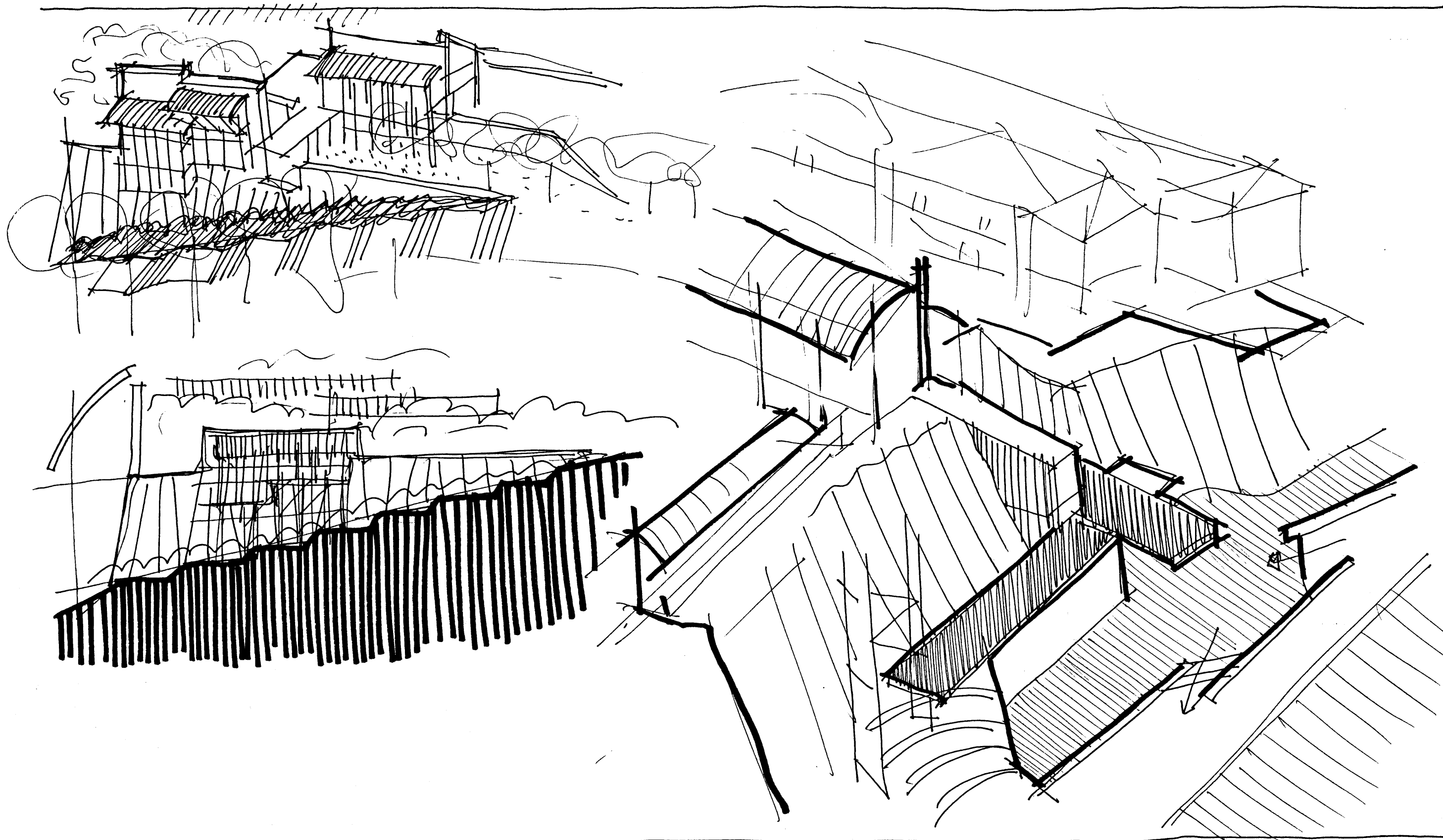
THE CLINICAL WARD

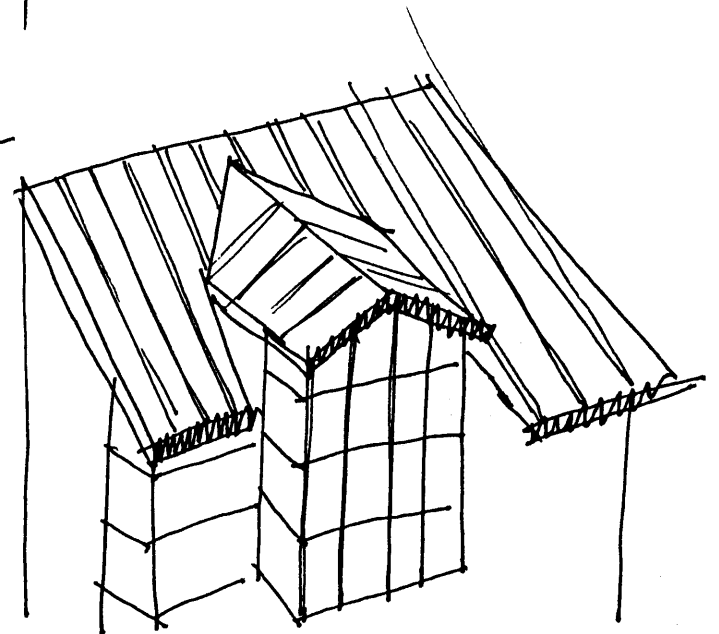
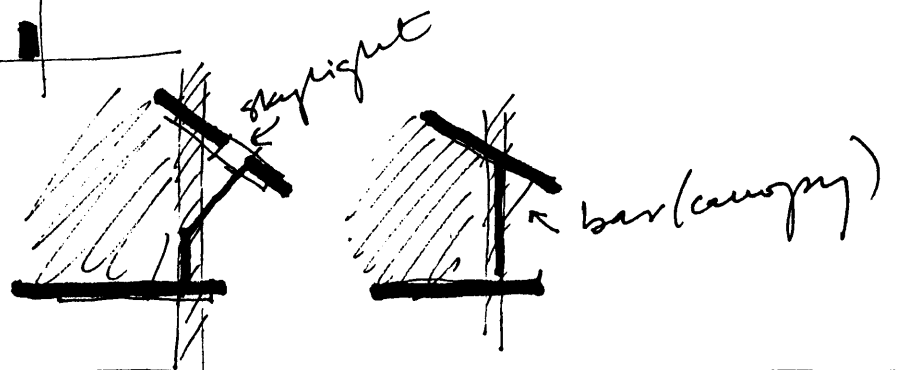
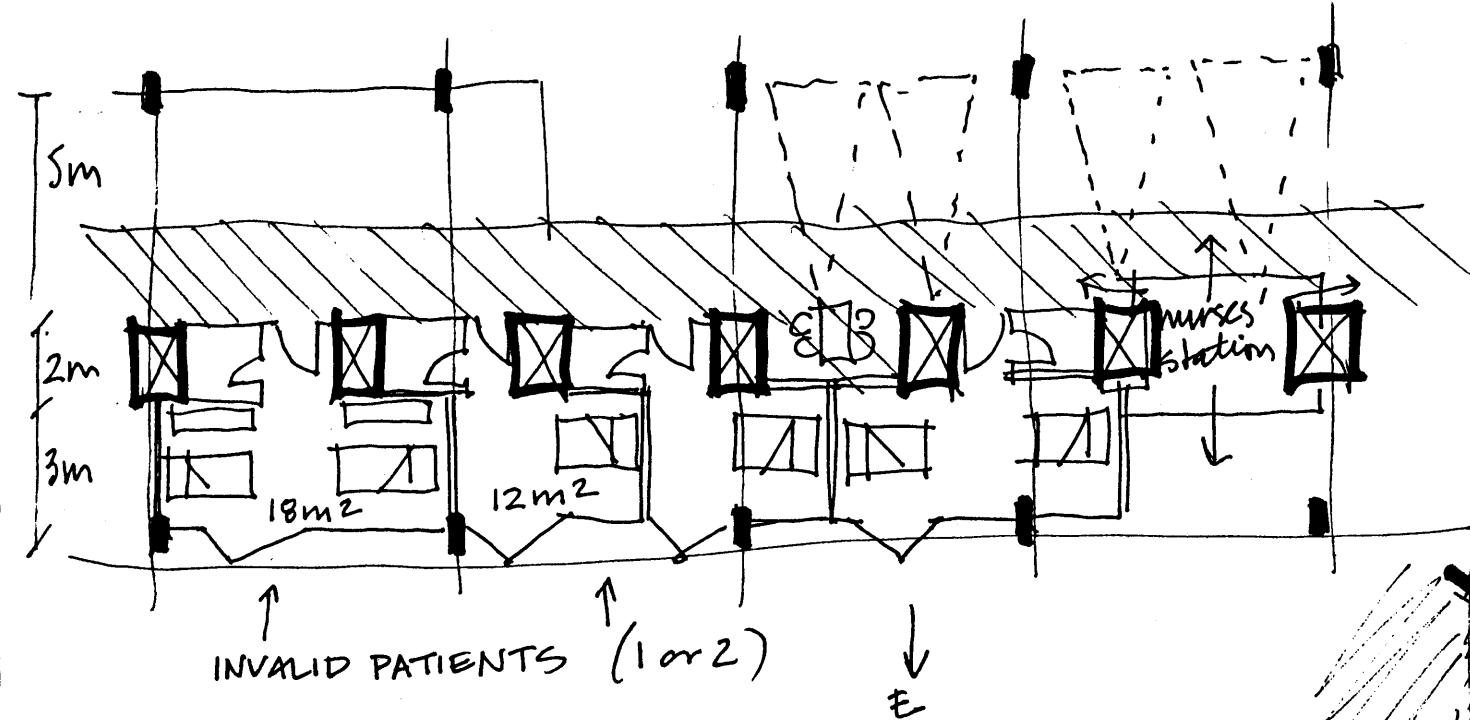
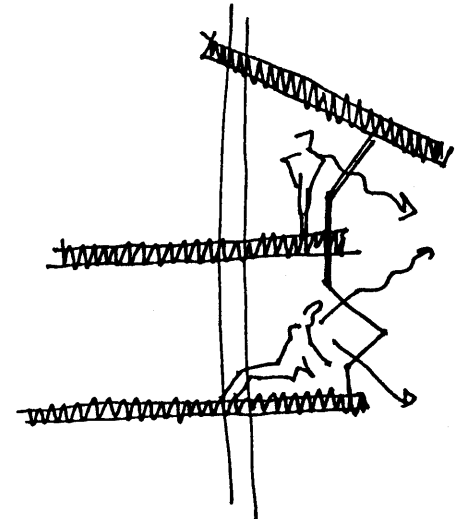
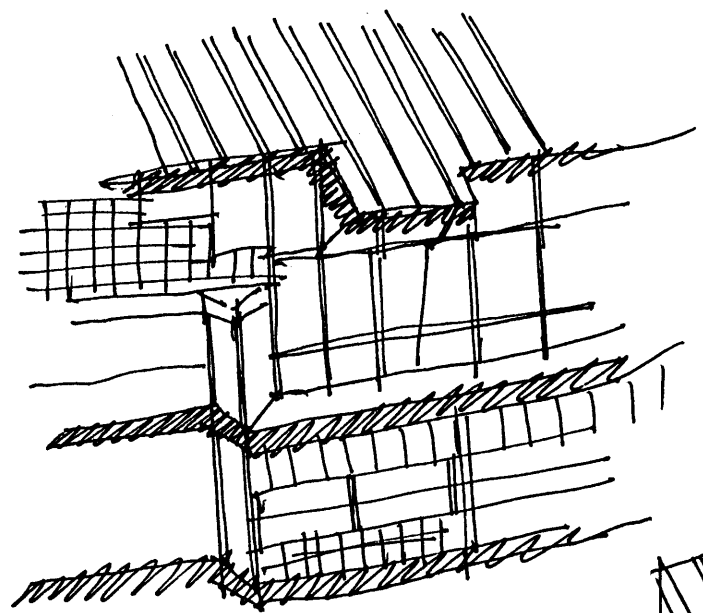
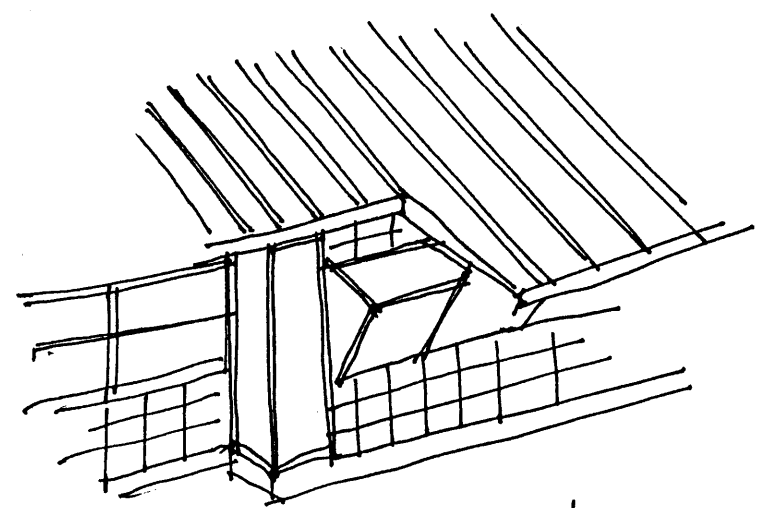
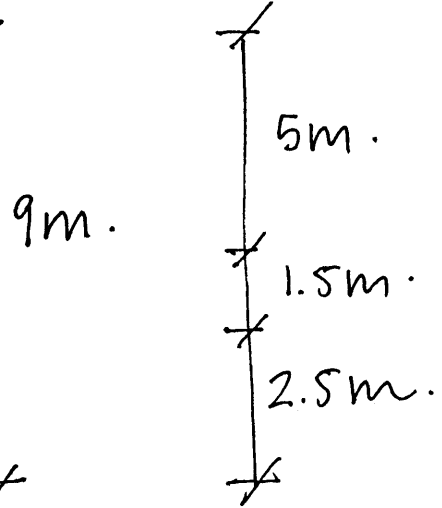
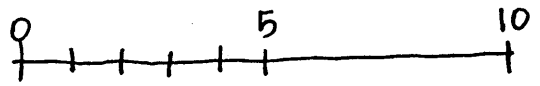
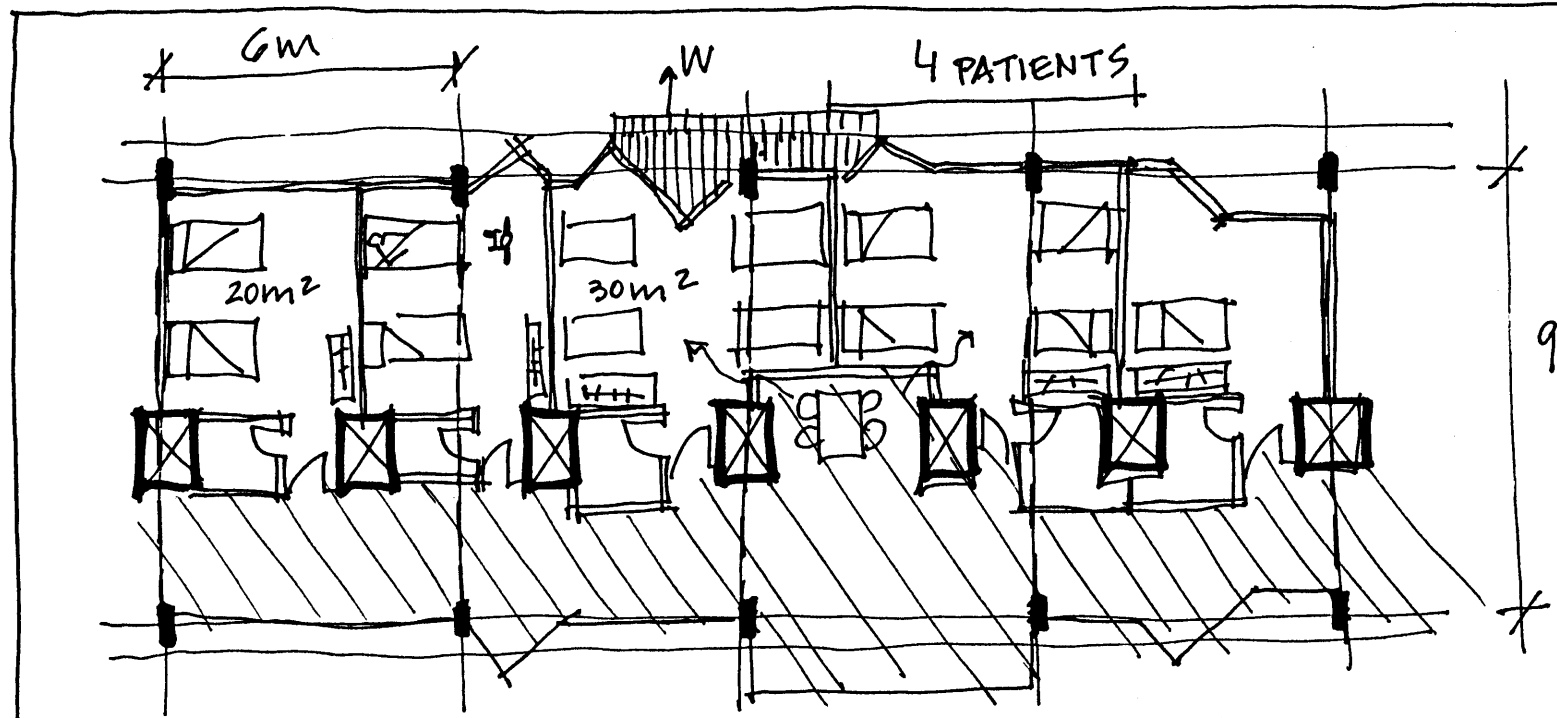


THE RECREATIONAL WARD



APR 19 1988

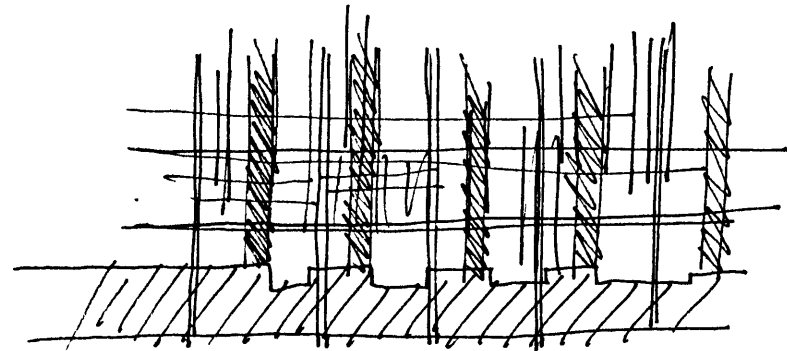




INTERNAL ADAPTABILITY - CAPACITY

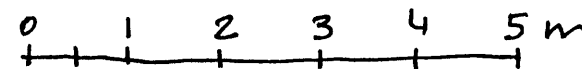
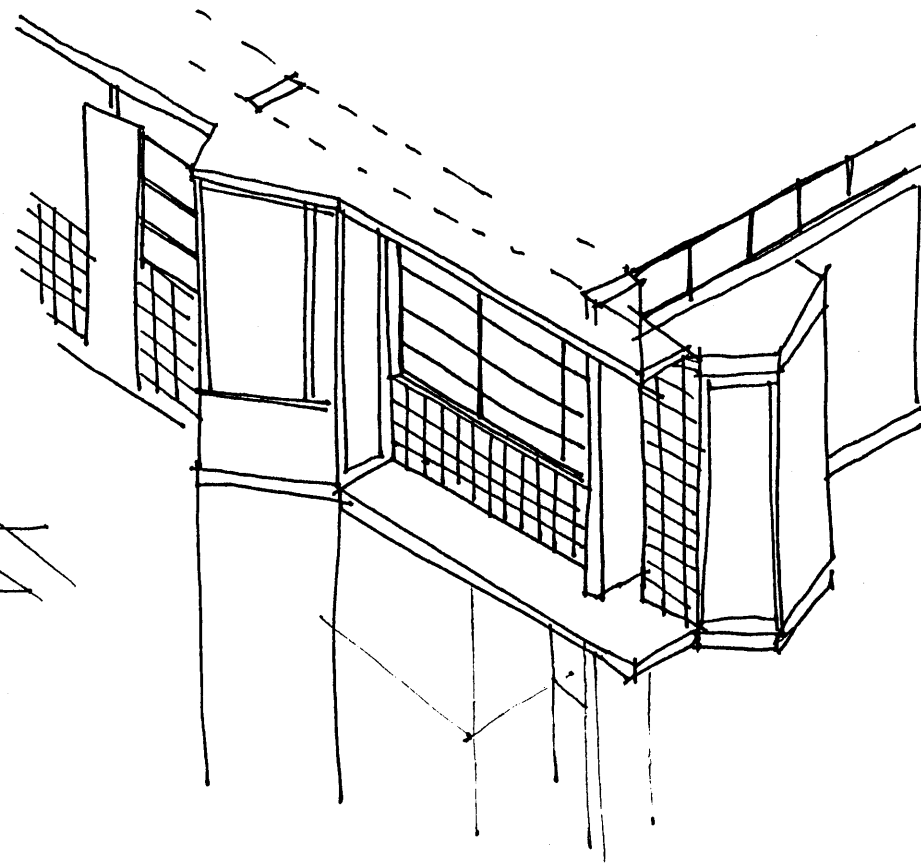
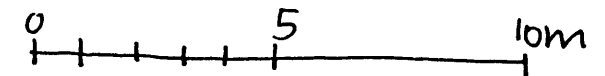
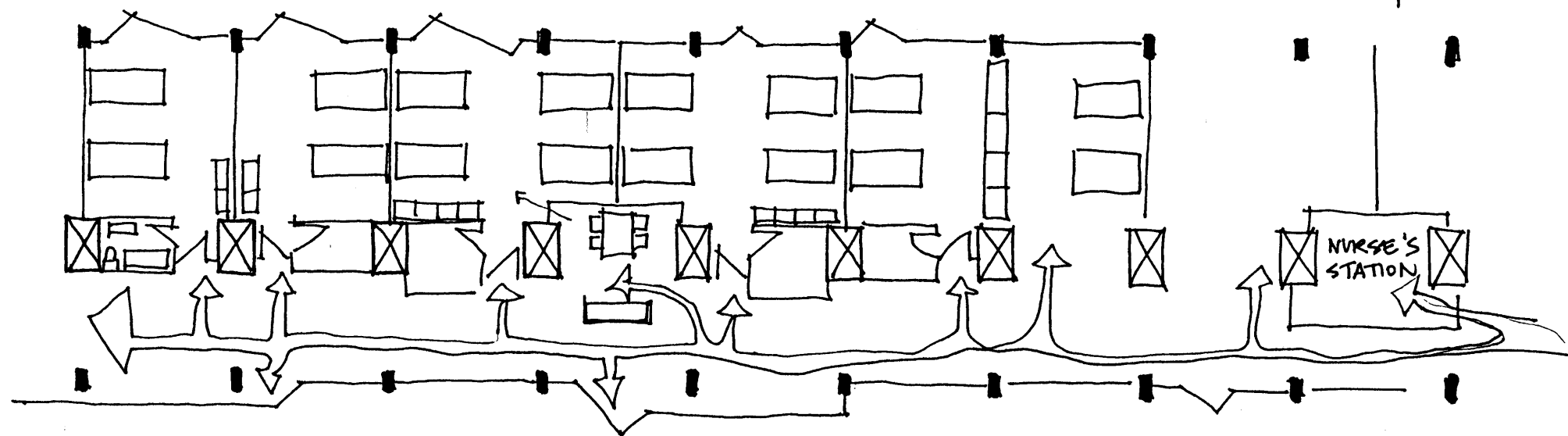
THE NURSING WARD

EARLY CAPACITY STUDY

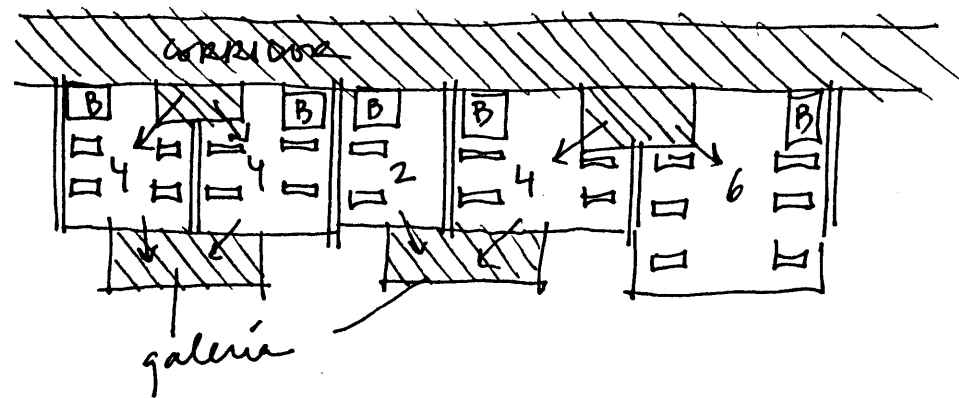


ELEVATION - S
LAYERING

- WALL
- LORES
- STEEL FRAME
- ENCLOSURE

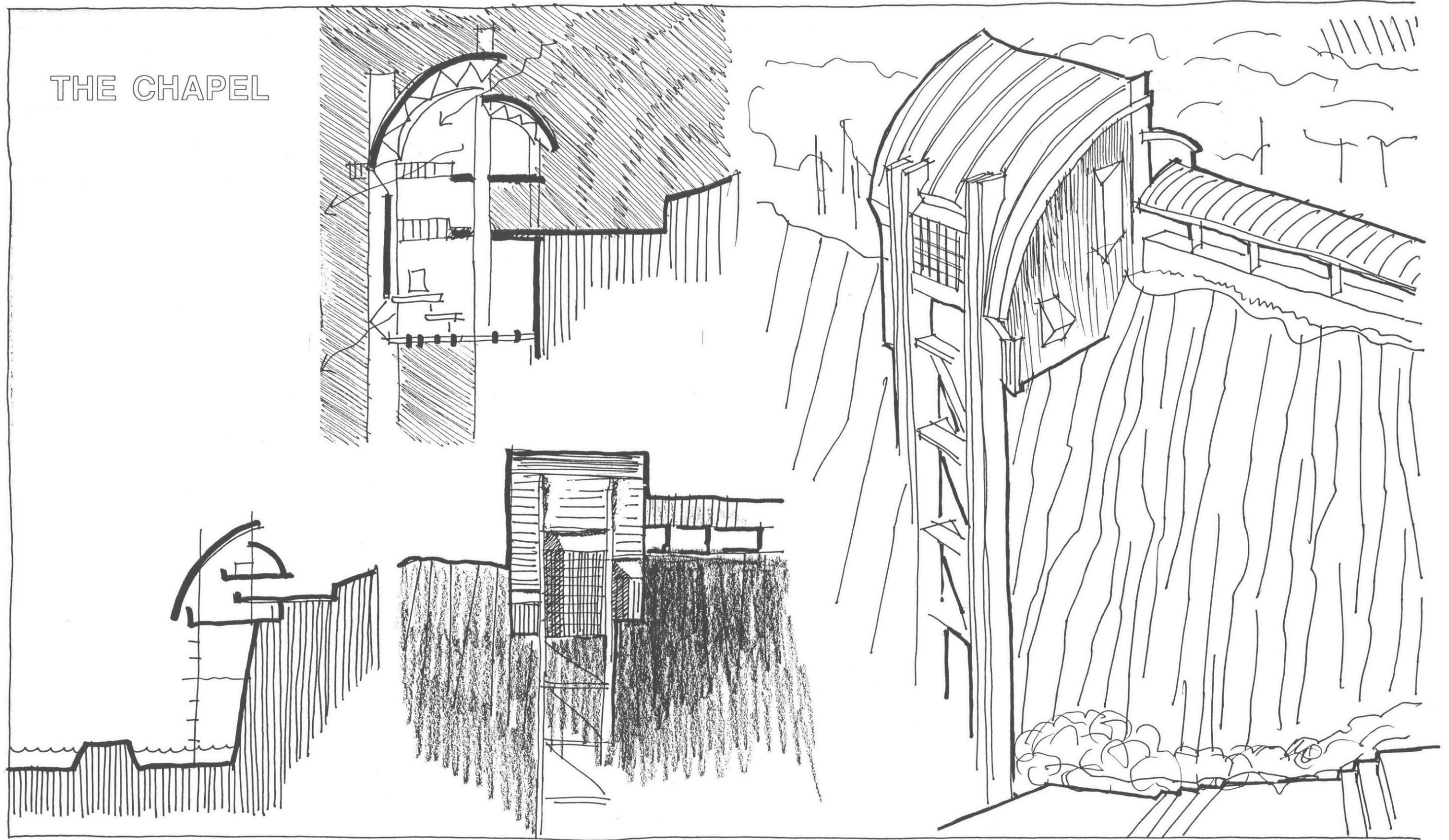


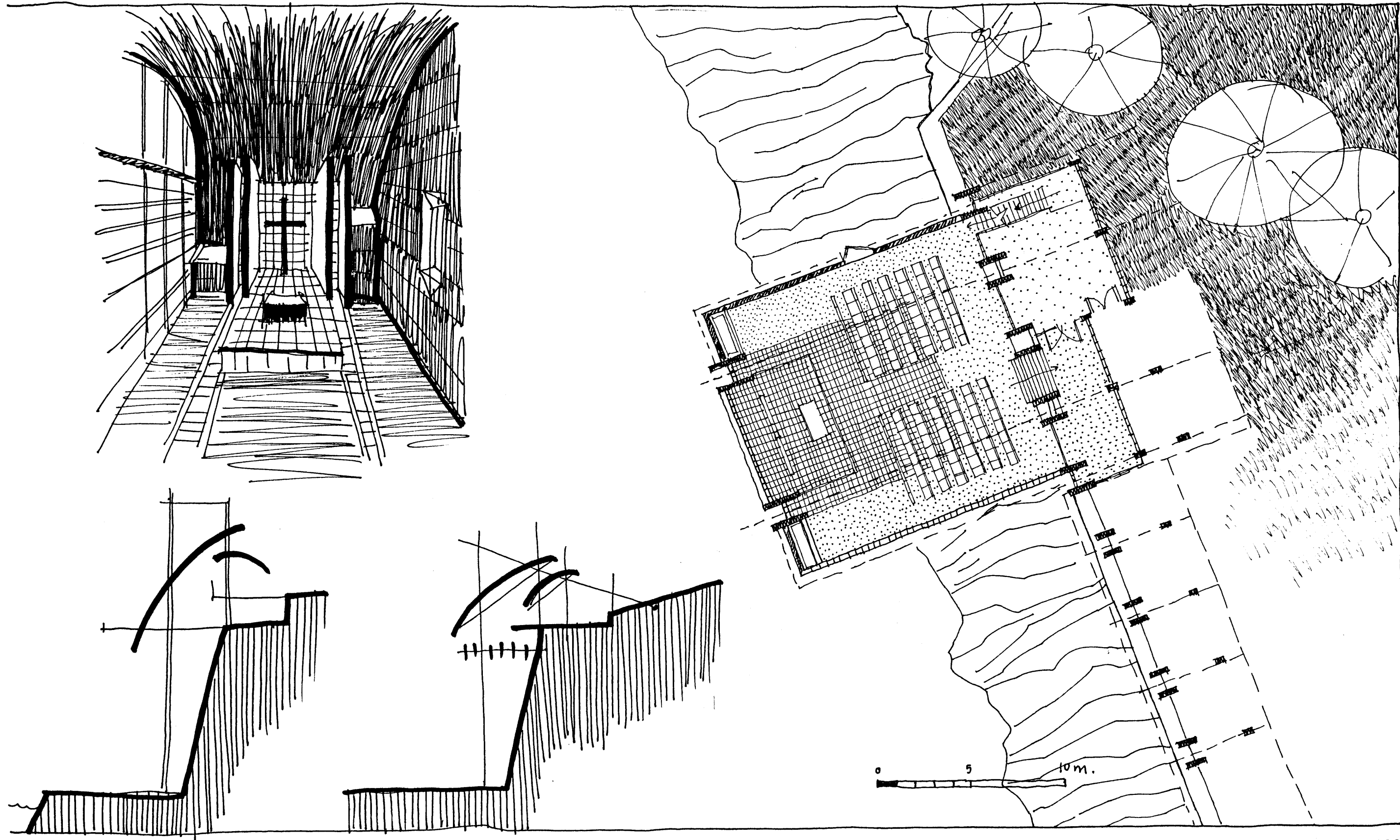
NURSING WARD - SHARED SPACES

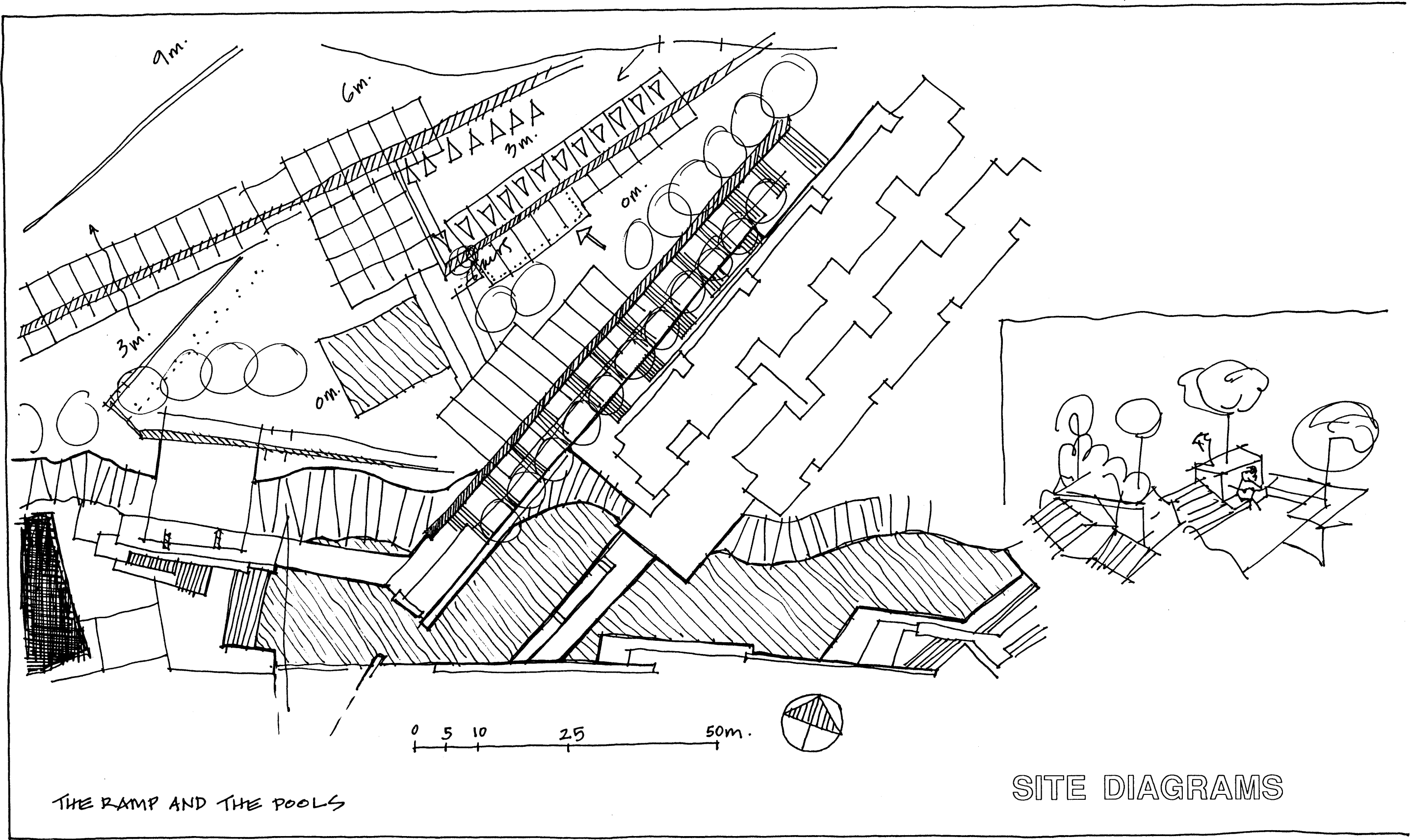


THE NURSING WARD

THE CHAPEL

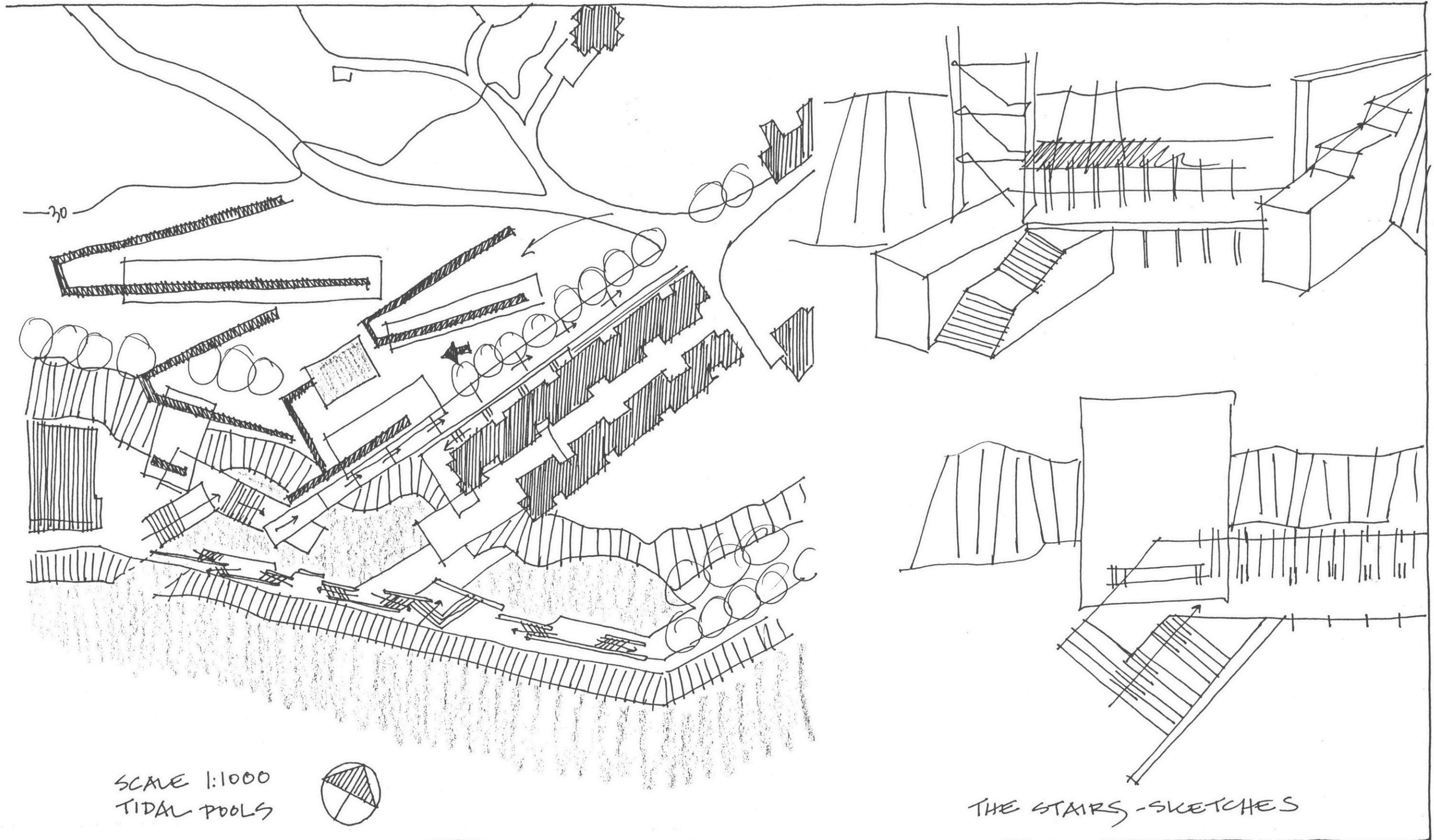






THE RAMP AND THE POOLS

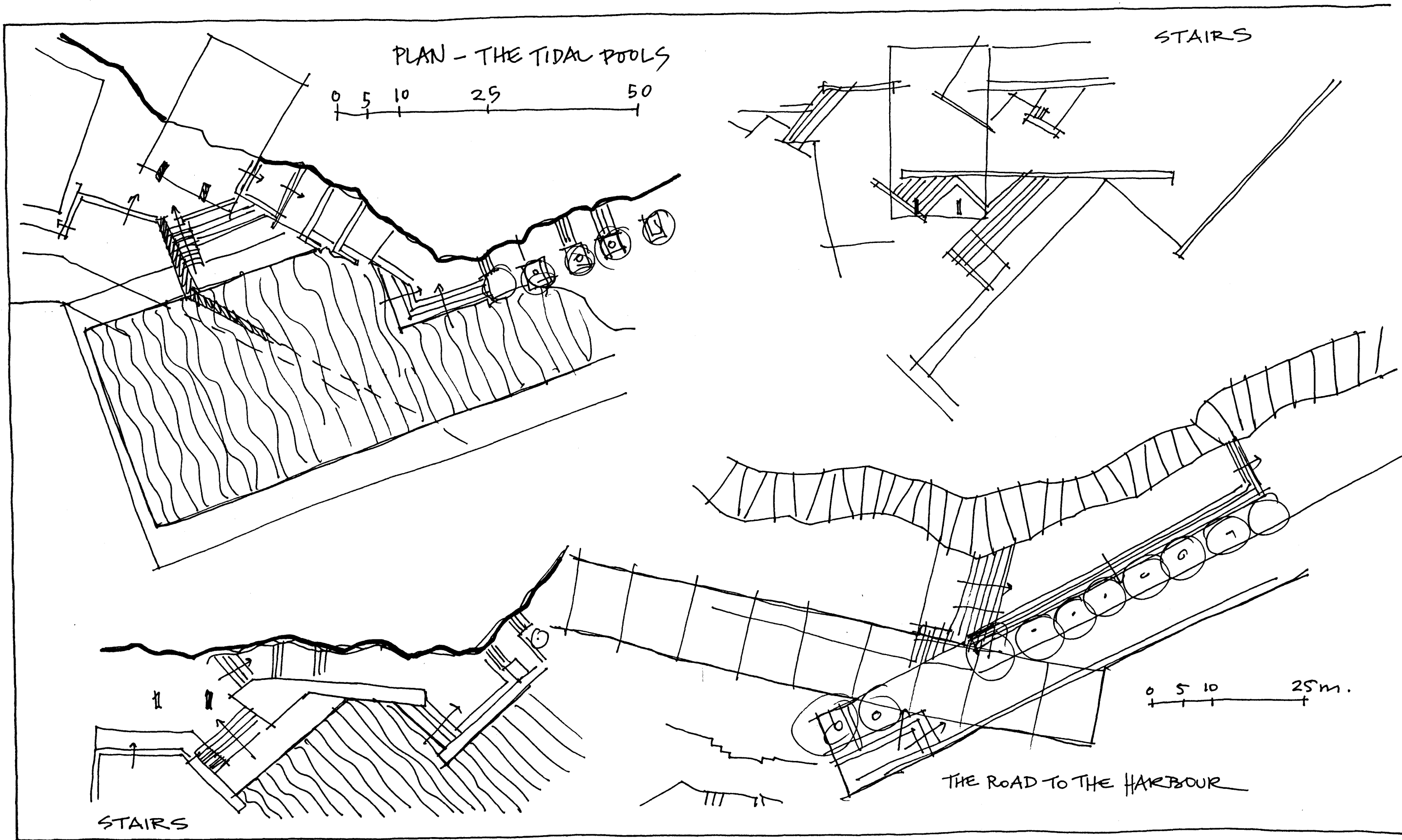
SITE DIAGRAMS



SCALE 1:1000
TIDAL POOLS

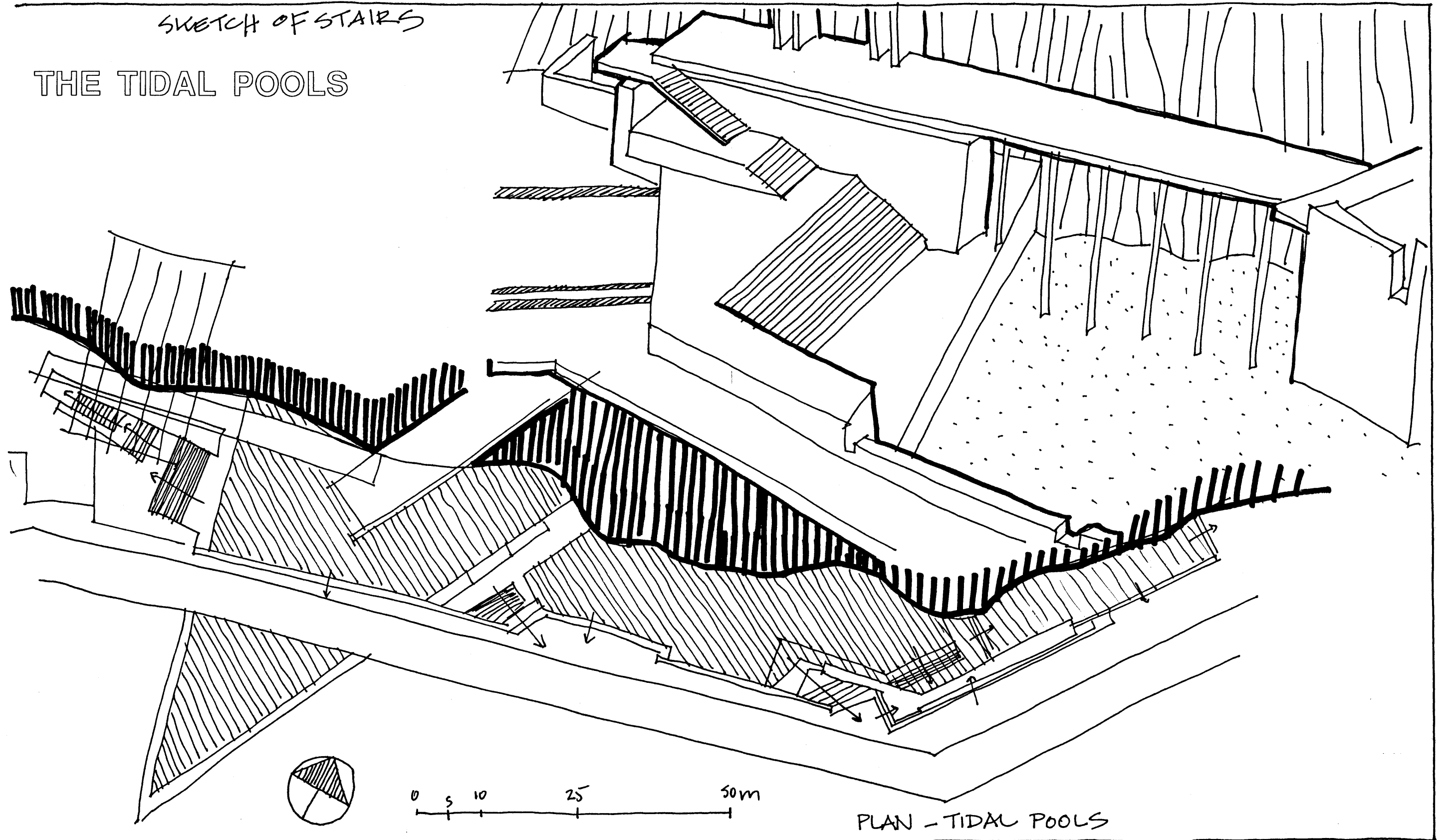


THE STAIRS - SKETCHES



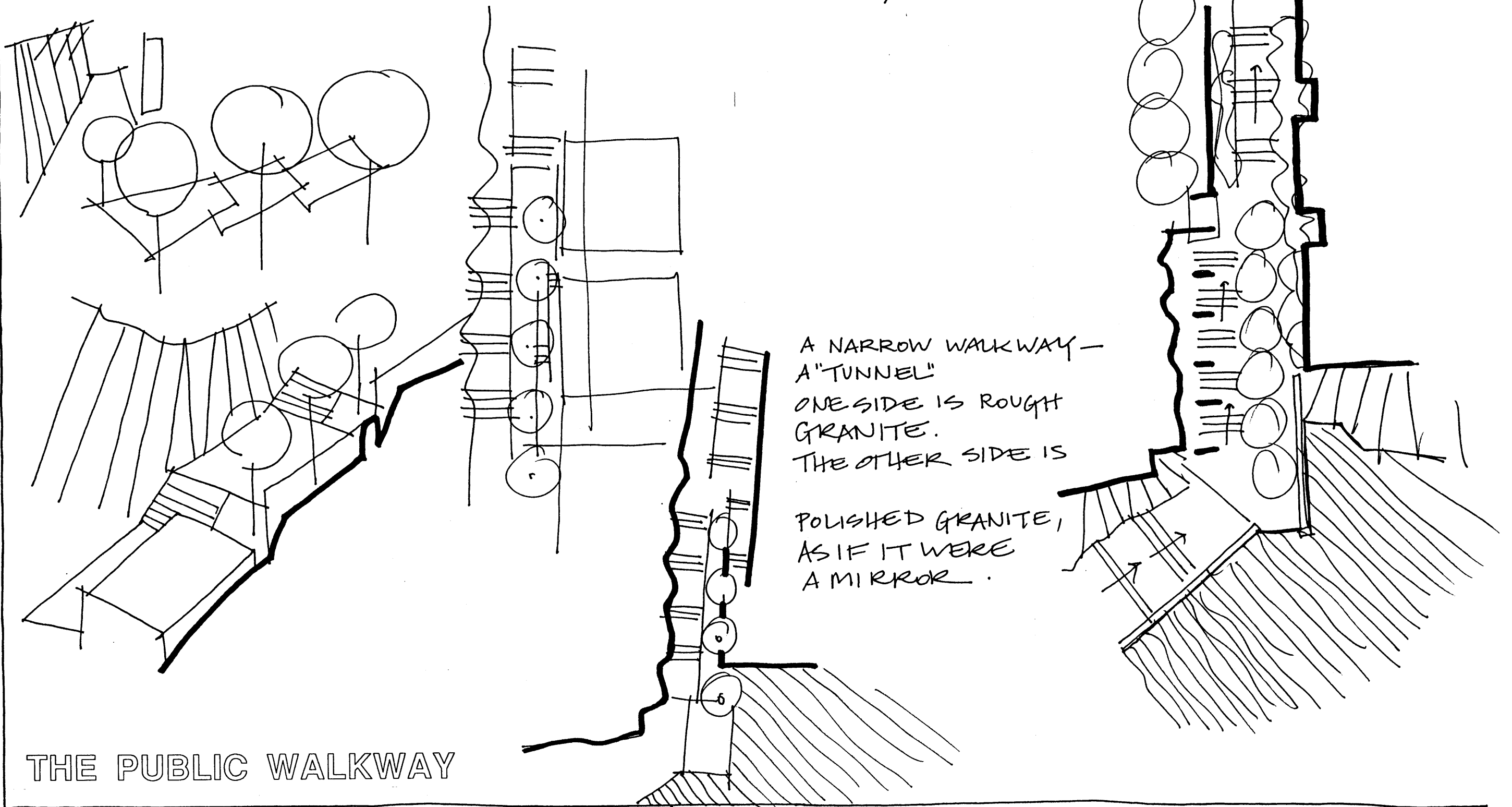
SKETCH OF STAIRS

THE TIDAL POOLS



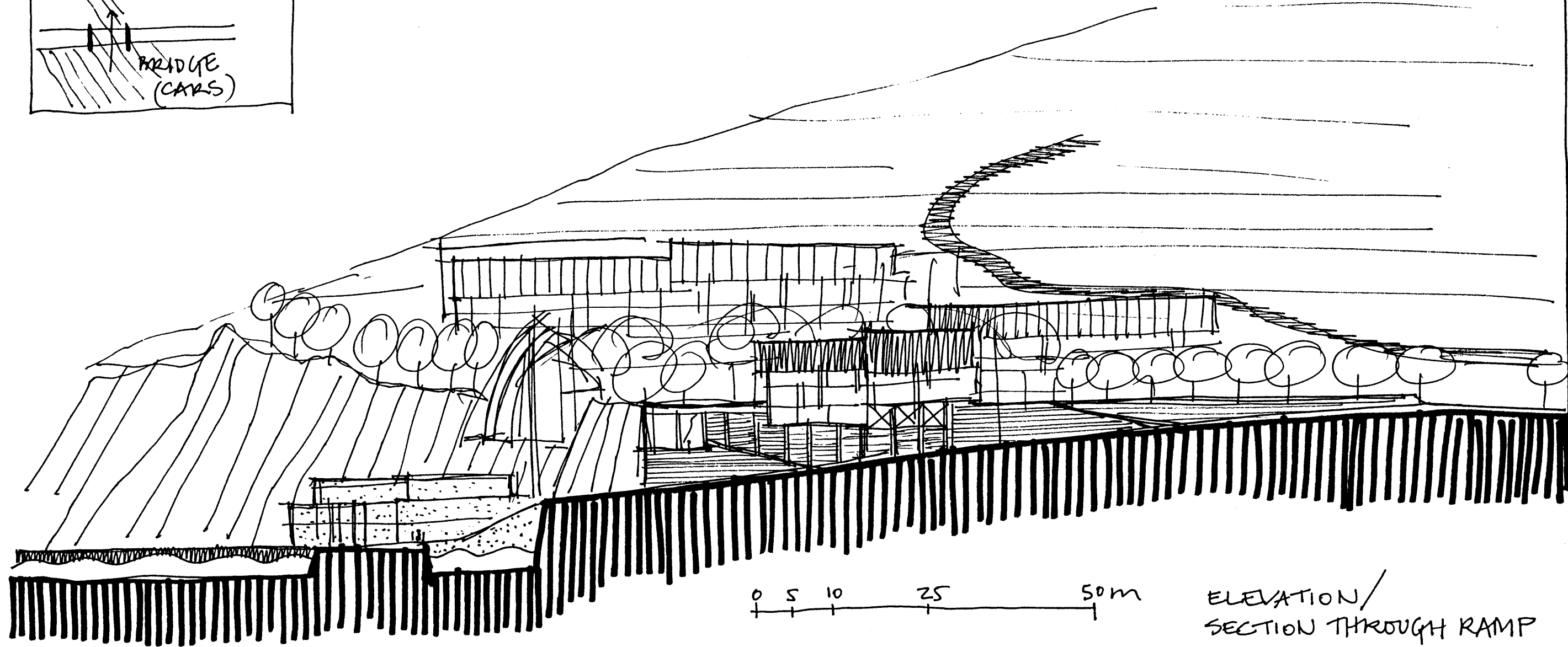
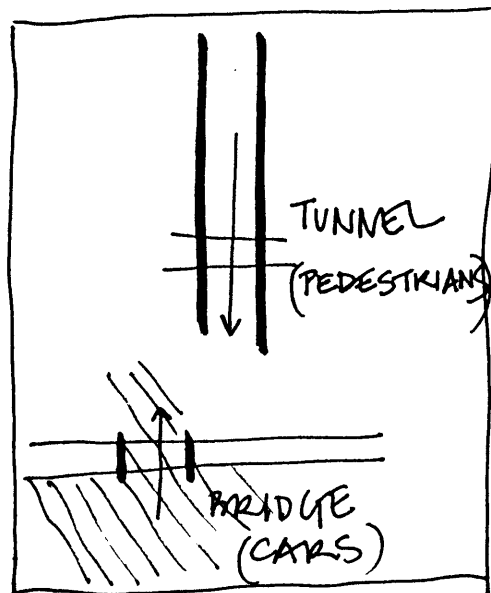
PLAN - TIDAL POOLS

THE RAMP / STAIRS



A NARROW WALKWAY -
A "TUNNEL"
ONE SIDE IS ROUGH
GRANITE.
THE OTHER SIDE IS
POLISHED GRANITE,
AS IF IT WERE
A MIRROR.

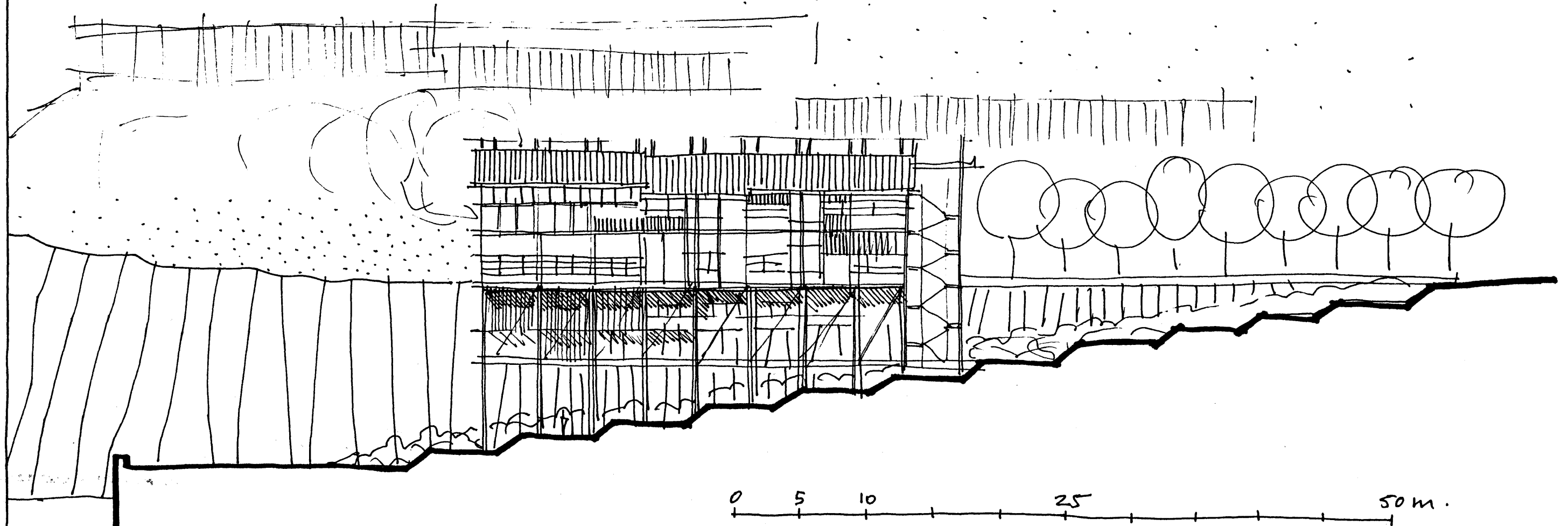
THE PUBLIC WALKWAY



0 5 10 25 50m

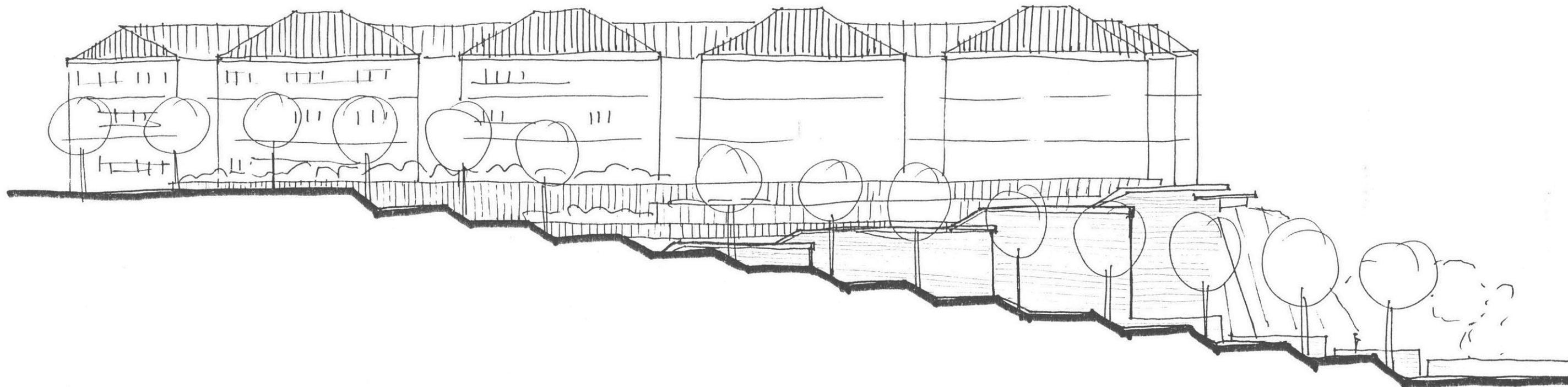
ELEVATION/
SECTION THROUGH RAMP

THE RECREATIONAL WARD



THE STAIRCASE - LONGITUDINAL SECTION LOOKING WEST.

THE RECREATIONAL WARD

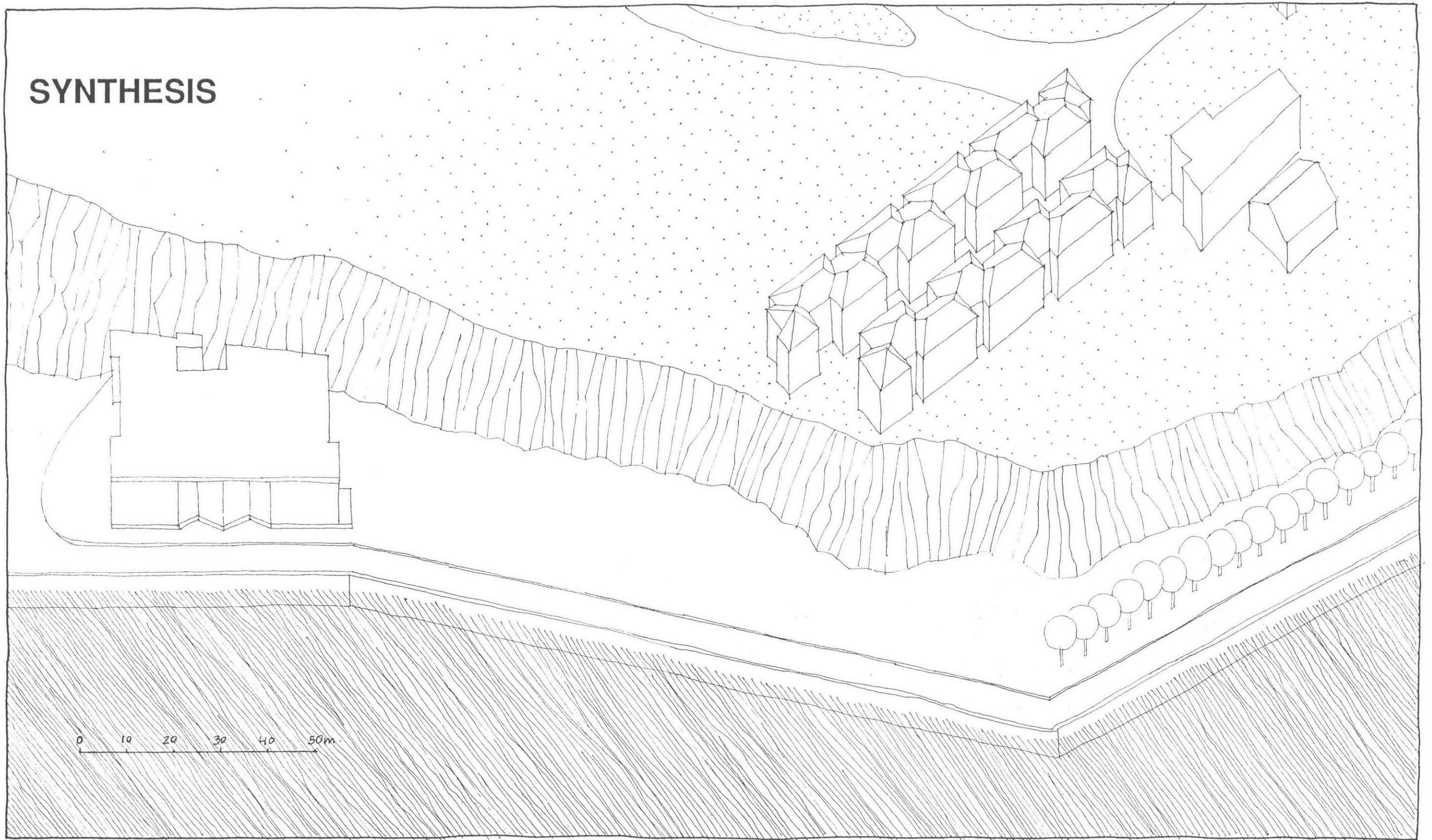


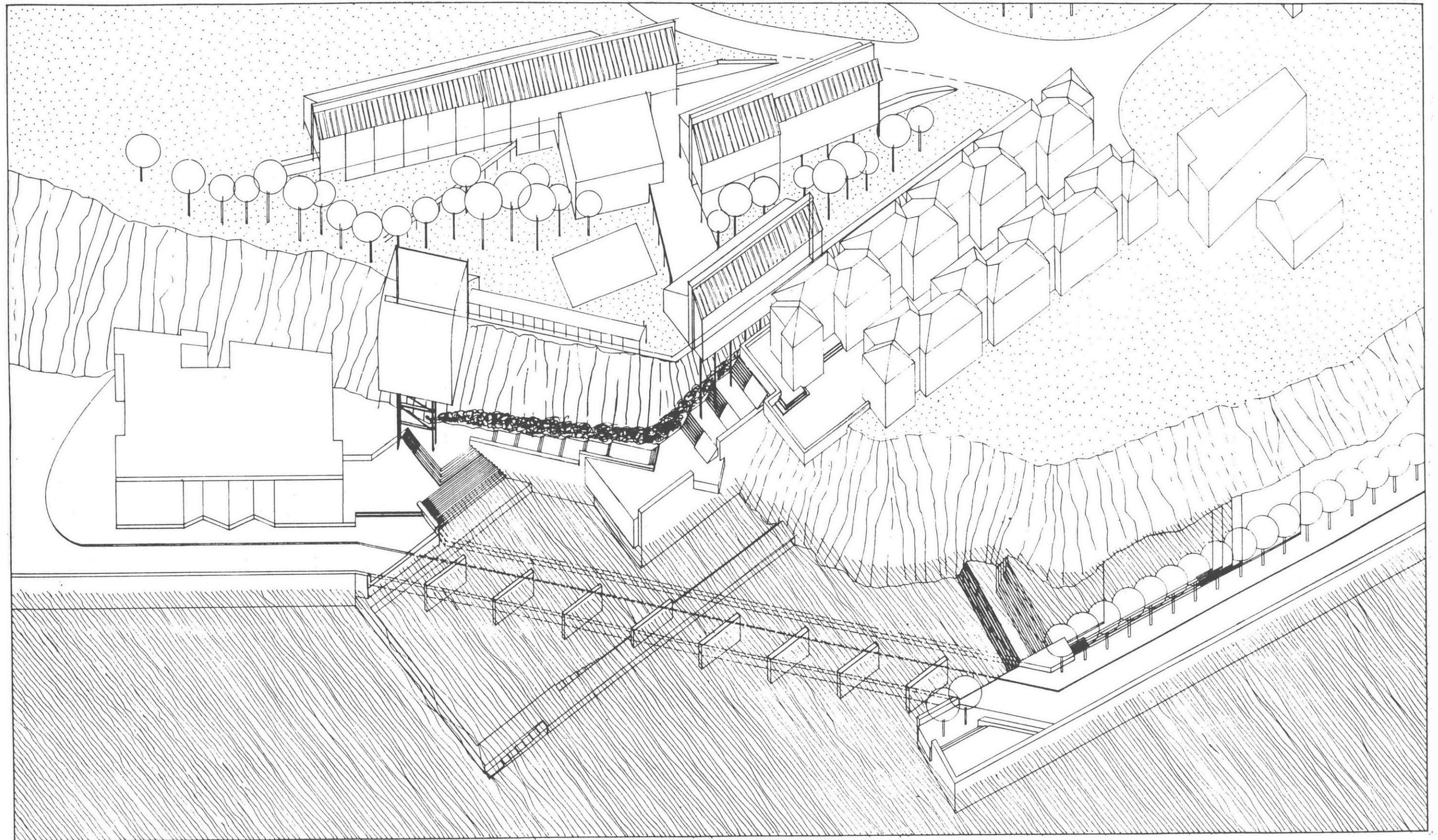
0 5 10 25 50m.

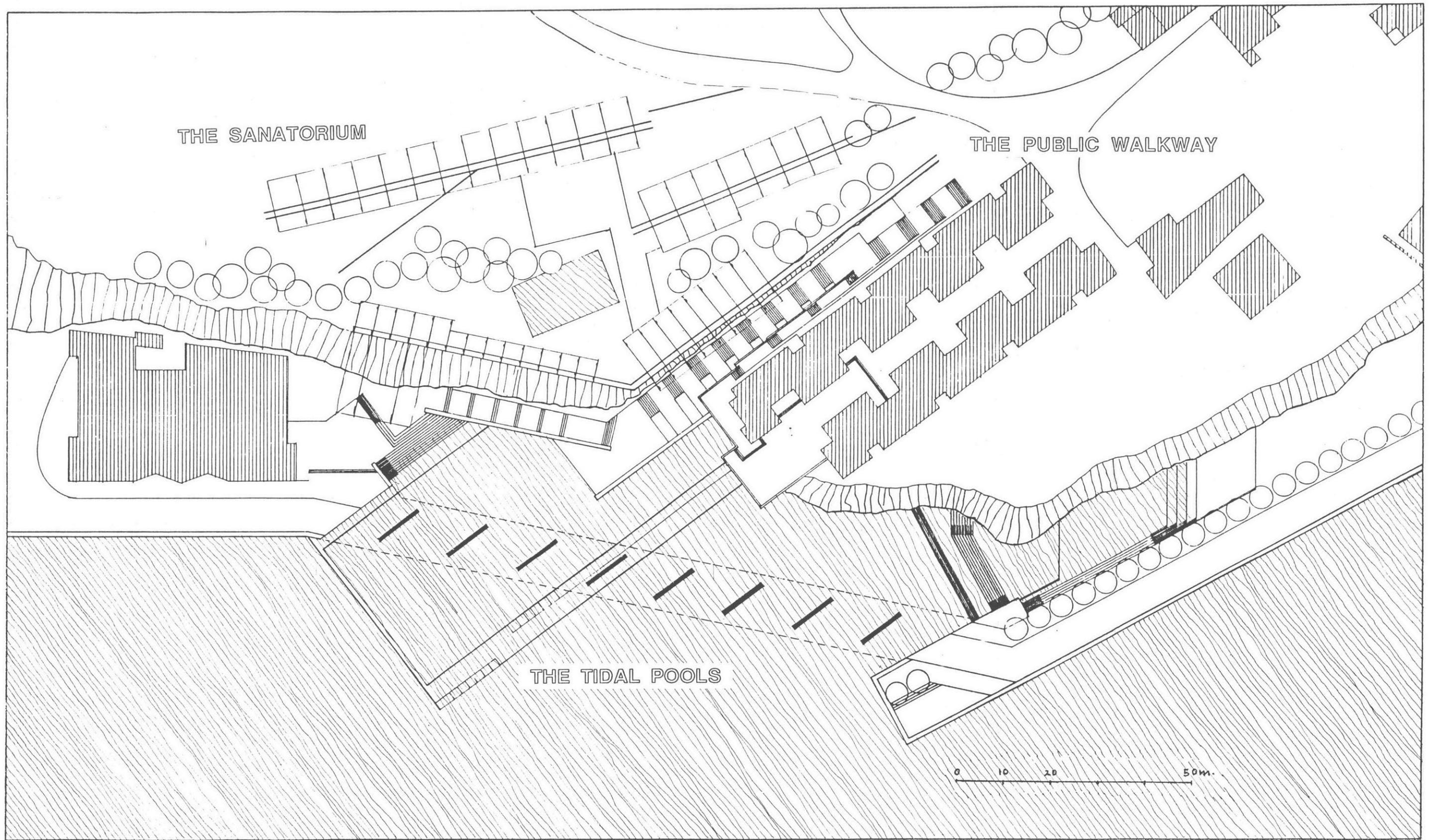
THE STAIRCASE - LONGITUDINAL SECTION LOOKING EAST

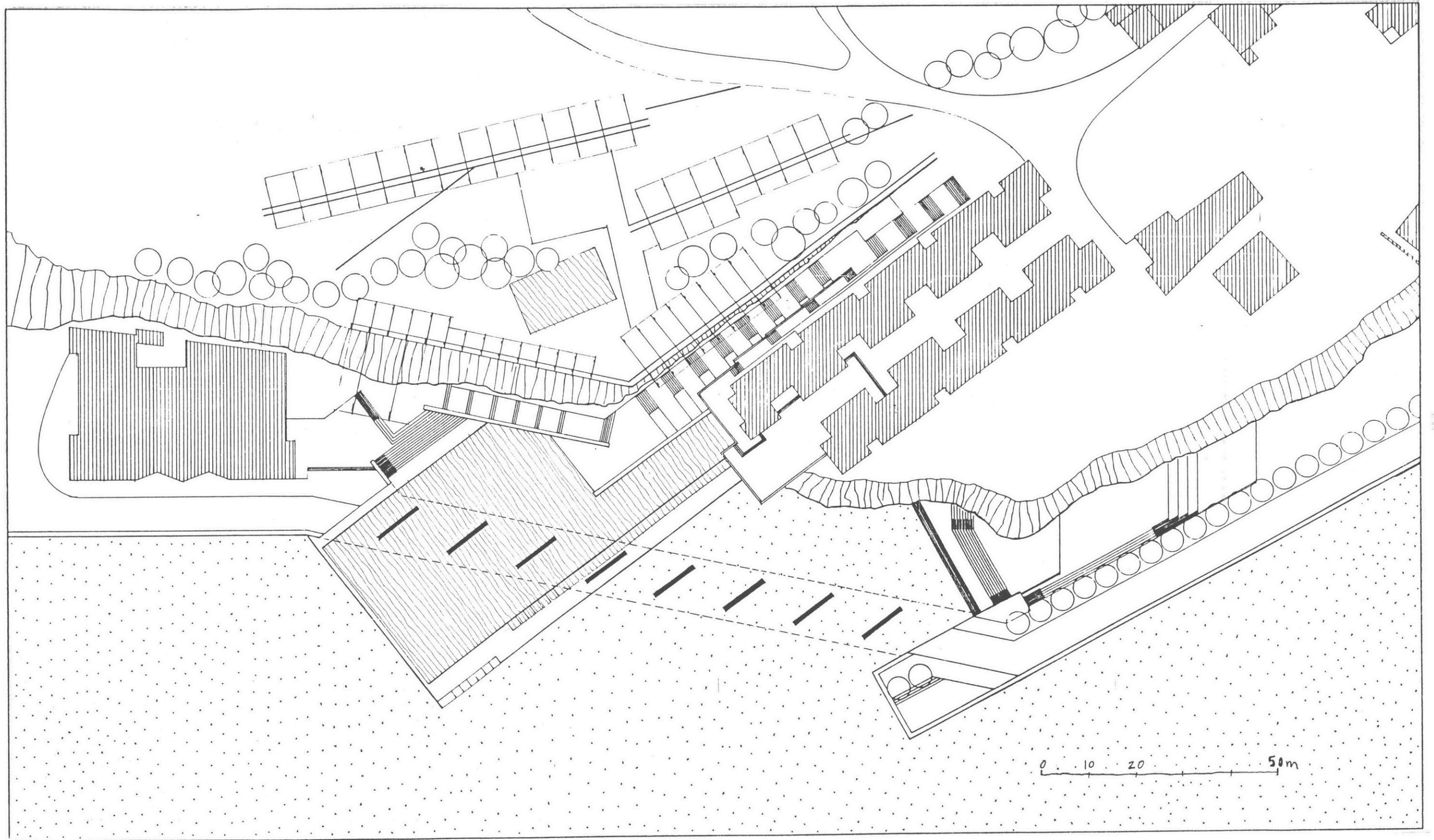
THE FISHERMEN'S HOUSING

SYNTHESIS









THE SANATORIUM

THE NURSING WARD

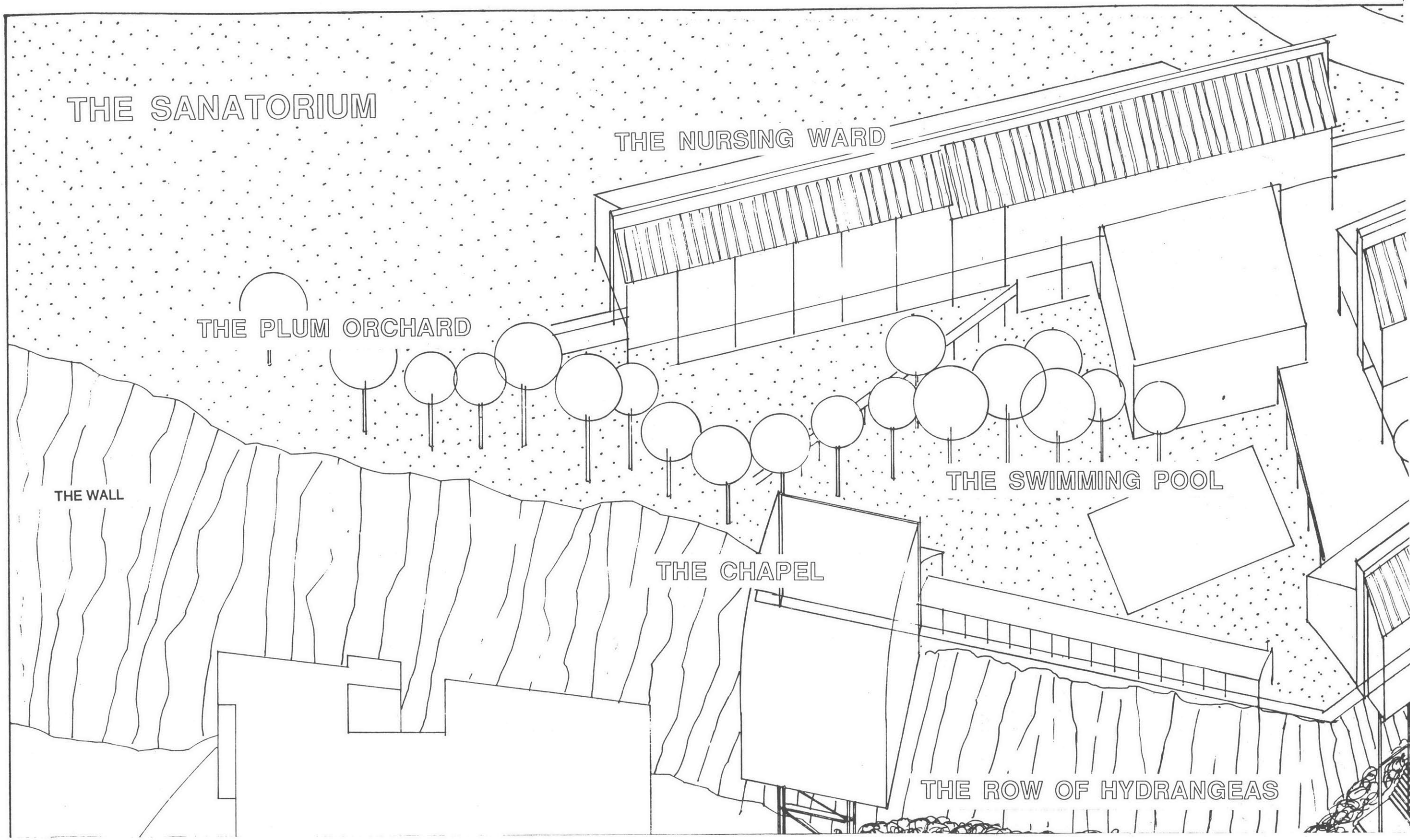
THE PLUM ORCHARD

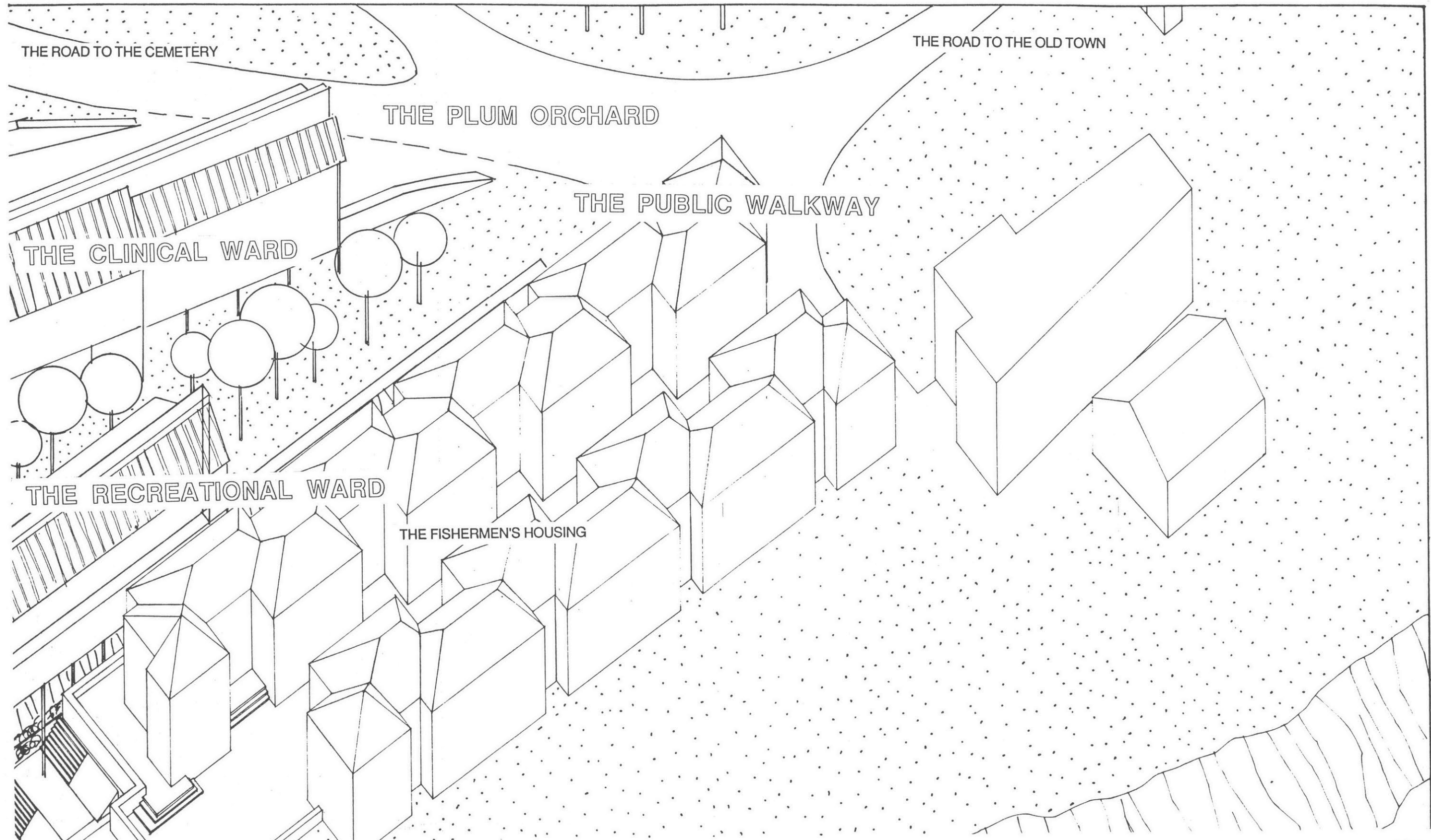
THE SWIMMING POOL

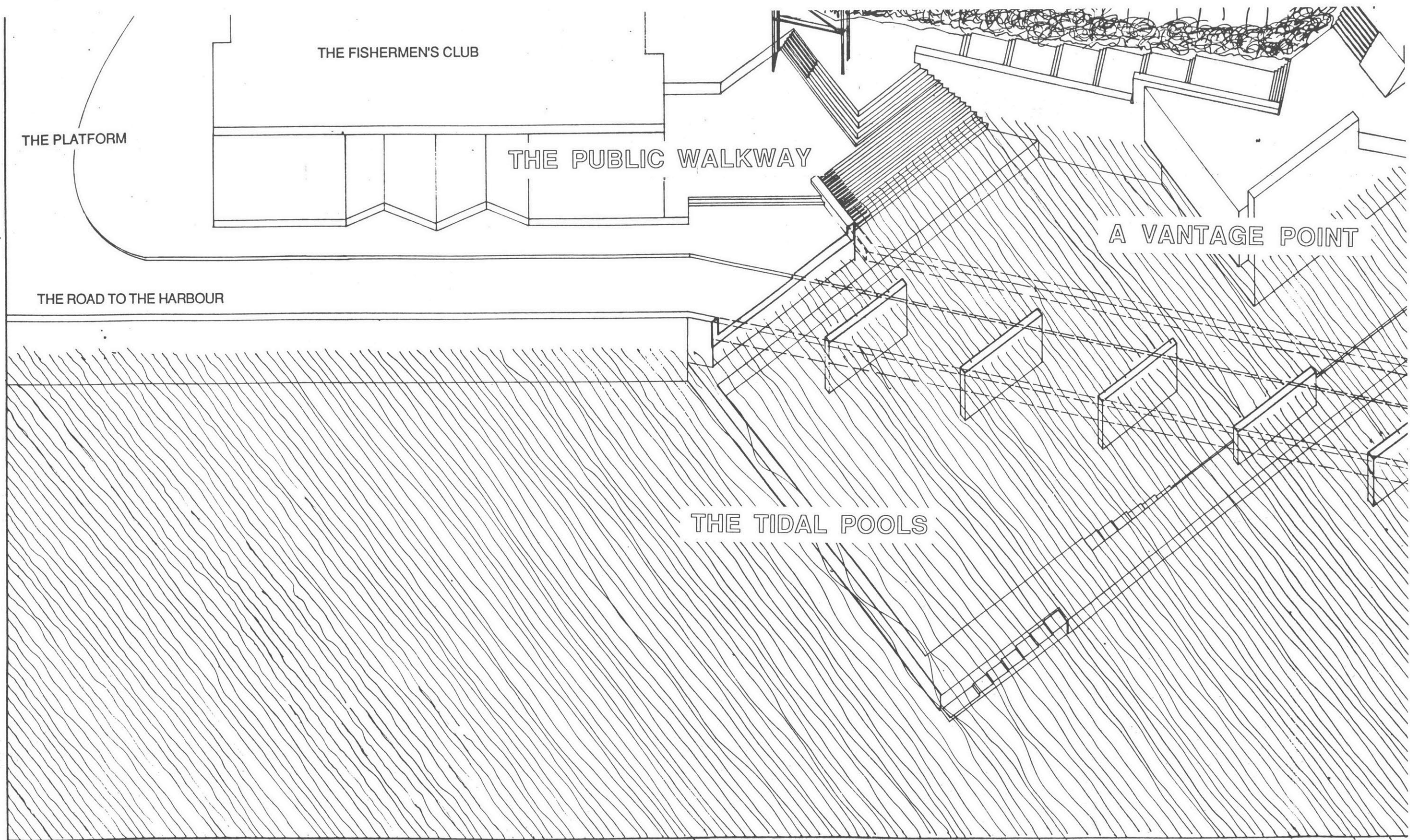
THE WALL

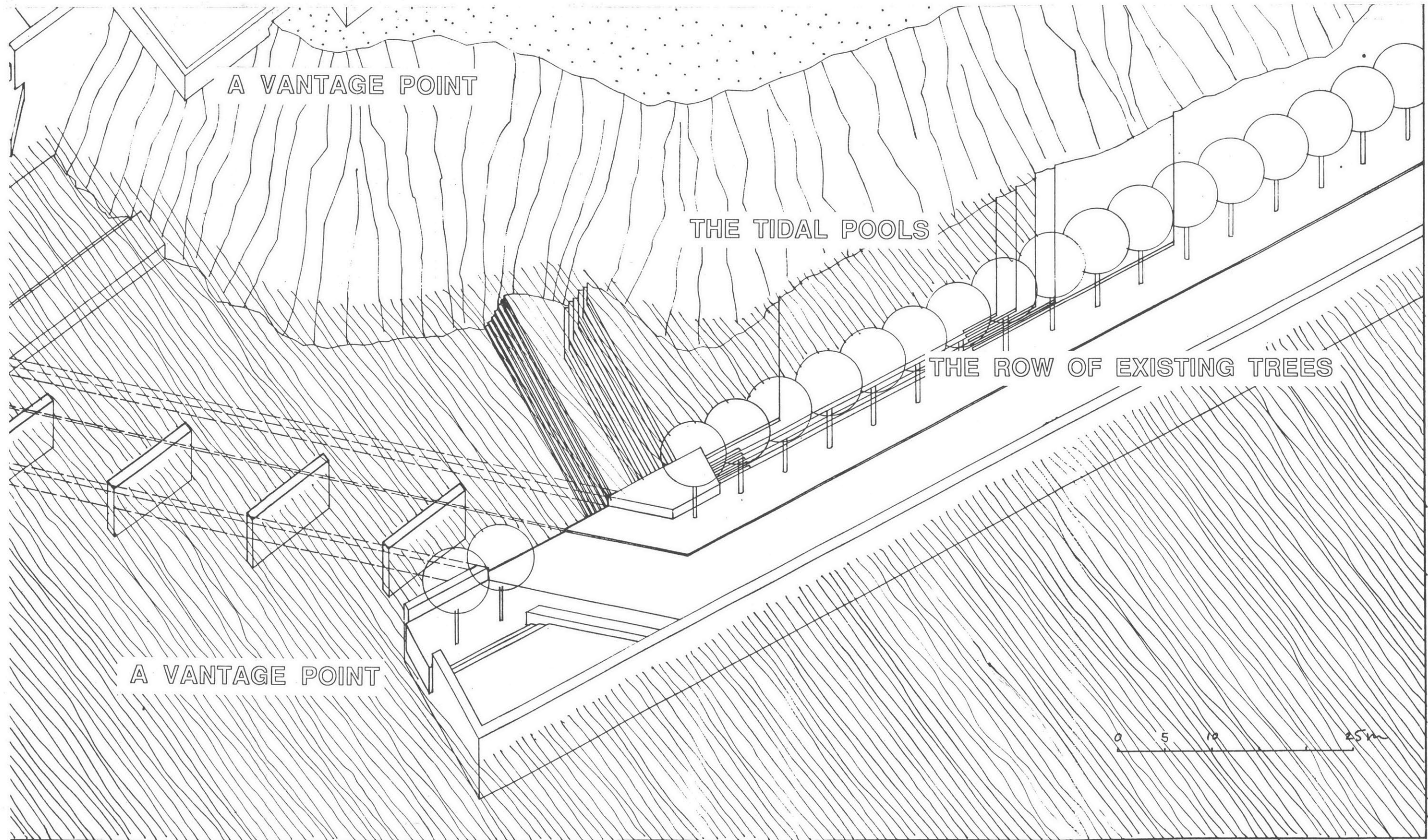
THE CHAPEL

THE ROW OF HYDRANGEAS









CONCLUSION: The Proverbial Primer

What informs the actual design?

Ideas are transformed, and expressed through materials, tools, techniques. The function seems to be an incentive to create, to build on a certain site. Writing and reading are considered complementary means of exploration but, by themselves, cannot generate form, nor can they be considered "architecture". The design, although relying on something conceptual, is autonomous and needs to be evaluated as an entity in and of itself.

Any building, regardless of its function, should always provide for a variety of spaces and experiences, adding something new to the physical environment. In this particular case, the building happens to be a sanatorium. But the same spatial organization could be appropriate, with minor alterations, for other functions: public housing, a Weight Watchers' camp, a kindergarten, a monastery, a yuppie spa, a prison, a nursing home or an office building.

SOME REFERENCES

The sculptures of Eduardo Chillida

The paintings and writings of Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and other Expressionists.

The works of David Hockney and Pablo Picasso

The architecture of Alvar Aalto, Mario Botta, Ted Cullinan, Herman Hertzberger, Carlo Scarpa, Alvaro Siza, Elías Torres, Aldo Van Eyck . . .

The teachings of Nan Freeman, John Habraken and John Whiteman.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



BOOKS

BACHELARD, Gaston.

On Poetic Imagination and Reverie.

Dallas: Spring Publications, Inc., 1987.

The Poetics of Space. Boston: Beacon Press, 1964.

The Right to Dream. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1971.

BAUDELAIRE, Charles.

"The Painter of Modern Life", **Selected Writings on Art and Artists.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

BAZAL, Jesus, POMBO, Alberto and PAGOLA, Fernando.

El Peine del Viento. Serie Arquitecturas. Pamplona: Q Editions, 1986.

BRU, Eduard and MATEO, Jose Luis.

Arquitectura española contemporánea. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, S.A., 1984.

BUZZATI, Dino.

"Sette piani", **La boutique del mistero.** Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1968.

CANTER, David, and CANTER, Sandra, eds.

Designing for Therapeutic Environments. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979.

CARVER Jr., Norman F.

Iberian Villages: Portugal and Spain. Michigan: Document Press, Ltd., 1981.

CHEKHOV, Anton.

"Ward 6", **Lady with Lapdog and Other Stories.** London: Penguin Books, 1987.

COLEGIO DE ARQUITECTOS DE GALICIA.

El Barrio de la Magdalena del Ferrol. Santiago de Compostela: COAG, 1980.

Galicia: A destrucción e a integración do patrimonio arquitectónico. III Xornadas de arquitectura galega. Santiago de Compostela: COAG, 1981.

CONSELLERIA DE SANIDADE E CONSUMO--DIRECCION XERAL DE ASISTENCIA SANITARIA.

Guía para o deseño e funcionamento dos centros de saúde. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 1985.

Mapa de recursos sanitarios de la comunidad autónoma de Galicia. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 1985.

CULLINAN, Edward.

Edward Cullinan Architects. London: RIBA Publications Limited, 1984.

DE TOLNAY, Charles.

Hieronimus Bosch. Baden Baden: Holle Verlag, 1973.

FEDUCHI, Luis.

Itinerarios de arquitectura popular española. vol. 2: **La orla cantábrica-la Espana del hórreo.** Barcelona: Hermann Blume, 1974.

FLORES, Carlos.

Arquitectura popular española. vol. 2. Madrid: Aguilar, 1973.

FREEMAN, Hugh, ed.

Mental Health and the Environment. New York: Churchill Livingstone, 1984.

FOUCAULT, Michel.

The Birth of the Clinic. New York: Panther Books, 1973.

Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason. New York: Vintage Books, 1965.

GARCIA FERNANDEZ, Jose Luis and IGLESIAS ROUCO, Lena Saladina.

La plaza en la ciudad: Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, Pais Vasco, Navarra. Madrid: Hermann Blume, 1986.

GOFFMAN, Erving.

Asylums. New York: Anchor Books, 1961.

HABRAKEN, N.J.

Transformations of the Site. Cambridge: Awater Press, 1983.

KÜBLER-ROSS, Elizabeth, M.D.

On Death and Dying. New York: Collier Books, 1970.

JAMES, W. Paul, and Tatton-Brown, William.

Hospitals: Design and Development. London: The Architectural Press, 1986.

LAING, R.D.

The Divided Self. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970.

The Politics of Experience. New York: Pantheon Books, 1967.

LANCHNER, Carolyn, ed.

Paul Klee. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1987.

LEVITIKOW, Dankwart

Ten Years of European Hospital Architecture. Ingelheim an Rhein: C.H. Boehringer Sohn, 1967.

de LLANO CABADO, Pedro.

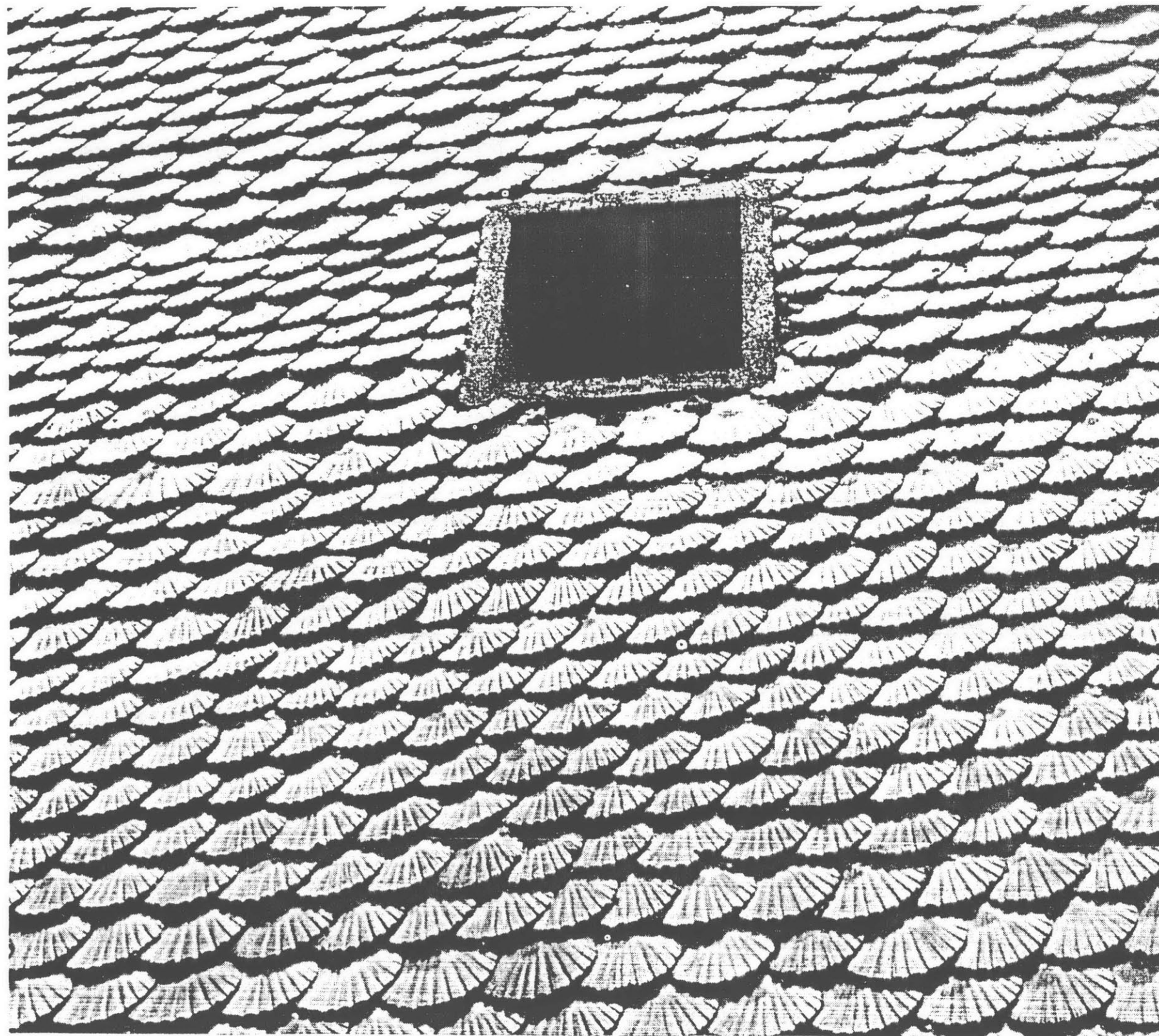
Arquitectura popular en Galicia. 2 vol. Santiago de Compostela: COAG, 1983.

LUCHINGER, Arnulf, ed.

Herman Hertzberger: Buildings and Projects 1959-1986. Den Haag: Arch-Edition, 1987.

MANN, Thomas.

The Magic Mountain. New York: Vintage Books, 1969.



MARCIANÒ, Ada Francesca.

Carlo Scarpa. Bologna: Zanichelli Editore, 1984.

MARDAGA, Pierre.

Les machines à guérir (aux origines de l'hôpital moderne). Bruxelles: Architecture + Archives/Pierre Mardaga editeur, 1979.

MARTINEZ SARANDESES, Fernando.

Arquitectura vernácula en Pontevedra. Santiago de Compostela: COAG, 1982.

NICOLIN, Pierluigi.

Alvaro Siza: Professione Poetica. Quaderni di Lotus. New York: Electa/Rizzoli, 1986.

ROETHEL, Hans K.

Kandinsky. New York: Hudson Hills Press, Inc., 1979.

ROSLANSKY, William Fenn.

Building on Steep Slopes: An Exploration and Presentation of Building Strategies. M.I.T., M.Arch. Thesis, 1986.

ROUILLARD, Dominique.

Building the Slope: Hillside Houses 1920-1960. Santa Monica: Art and Architecture Press, 1987.

SELZ, Peter.

Chillida. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1986.

SIMMEL, Georg.

"The Metropolis and Mental Life", **The Sociology of Georg Simmel.** Glencoe: The Free Press, 1950.

SONTAG, Susan.

Illness as Metaphor. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.

SPIVACK, Mayer.

Institutional Settings: An Environmental Design Approach. New York: Human Sciences Press, Inc., 1984.

STADTISCHEN GALERIE.

Der Blaue Reiter im Lenbachhaus Munchen. Munchen: Prestel-Verlag, 1982.

THOMPSON, John D. and GOLDIN, Grace.

The Hospital: A Social and Architectural History. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975.

ROTH, Julius A.

Timetables. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1963.

YOURCENAR, Marguerite.

Alexis o el tratado del inútil combate. Madrid: Ediciones Alfaguara, S.A., 1985.

WHITE, Patrick

The Aunt's Story. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.

Memoirs of Many in One by Alex Xenophon Demirjian Gray. New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1986.

ZALEWSKI, Waclaw.

Building on Slopes: An Approach. M.I.T., 1970.

MAGAZINES

ABITARE: "Spagna". Luglio-agosto 1986, n. 246.

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW: "Spain: the Poetics of Modernism". May 1986, no. 1071.

ARCHITECTURE D'AUJOURD'HUI: "Espagne 86". Juin 1986, n. 245.

MOPU, Julio-Agosto 1986 n. 334.

"Galicia: larga noche de piedra", Guía de la arquitectura popular en España, 2nd. ed. Madrid: MOPU, Dec. 1986.

TZONIS, Alexander and LEFAIVRE, Liane.

"El regionalismo crítico y la arquitectura española actual", A&V, monografías de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, (1985) 3. Madrid, 1986.

SOME FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS...



(Application to the M.Arch. program, dated January 1986). . .Why persevere in architecture? Well, let me say that this choice was not an arbitrary one at all, nor a matter of obstinacy. It was at first intuitive and now has become intertwined with my interest in the multiple verbal and non-verbal systems that we have invented to enhance communication among us, especially languages and art.

(...) At the moment, architecture seems to be more intriguing. I honestly don't know why. I don't always know why things are the way they are. For me, architecture has become another language to be explored and developed, in order to understand and to express my own instincts and thoughts. It is such a fascinating discipline encompassing many fields in which my ever fighting intellect and intuition find the perfect battlefield. One can give concrete form to dreams, transforming the abstract into the tangible, using mind and hands to create, to render the intangible world of the mind, or the soul, accessible through form.

Architecture evolves directly from a fundamental human need: the need for dwelling. Inherently three-dimensional, it is both empirical and theoretical. It has a dual function, in an Aristotelian sense, to delight the senses and to instruct. I like to think of it as a statement of desire, rather than of mere survival. I believe the good architect to be a catalyst, the one that, drawing from the three architectural domains--aesthetics, function and construction, invents new modalities of organizing the space of everyday life so that we can be in harmony with our life and time. Although gravitating towards the essential, there are no absolute answers in architecture, only approaches, vehicles to reveal and interpret human experience. After all, it is a subjective process: it's a constant search for pretexts to intervene in a reality, to change an existing situation in order to complete it your own way.

Left: Wassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation 19*, 1911.

Modern mind has become more and more calculating. The calculative exactness of the practical life which the money economy has brought about corresponds to the ideal of natural science: to transform the world into an arithmetic problem, to fix every part of the world by mathematical formulas. . . The conditions of metropolitan life are at once cause and effect of this trait. The relationships and affairs of the typical metropolitan usually are so varied and complex that without the strictest punctuality in promises and services the whole structure would break down into an inextricable chaos. . . clocks and watches. . . punctual integration. . . time schedule . . . minute precision. . . unambiguousness. . . Punctuality, calculability, exactness are forced upon life by the complexity and extension of metropolitan existence and are not only most intimately connected with its money economy and intellectualistic character. These traits must also color the contents of life and favor the exclusion of these irrational, instinctive, sovereign traits and impulses which aim at determining the mode of life from within, instead of receiving the general and precisely schematized form of life from without.

The Metropolis and Mental Life Georg Simmel

'Your sense of permanence is perverted, as it is in most people. You are too inclined to consider the shapes of flesh that loom up at us out of mirrors, and because they do not continue to fit like gloves, we take fright and assume that permanence is a property of pyramids and suffering. But true permanence is a state of multiplication and division. As you should know, Theodora Goodman. Faces inherit features. Thought and experience are bequeathed.'

The Aunt's Story Patrick White

You live like this, sheltered, in a delicate world, and you believe you are living. Then you read a book (*Lady Chatterley*, for instance), or you take a trip, or you talk to Richard, and you discover that you are not living, that you are hibernating. The symptoms of hibernating are easily detectable: first, restlessness. The second symptom (when hibernating becomes dangerous and might degenerate into death): absence of pleasure. That is all. It appears like an innocuous illness. Monotony, boredom, death. Millions live like this (or die like this) without knowing it. They work in offices. They drive a car. They picnic with their families. They raise children. And then some shock treatment takes place, a person, a book, a song, and it awakens them and saves them from death.

Some never awaken. They are like the people who go to sleep in the snow and never awaken. But I am not in danger because my home, my garden, my beautiful life do not lull me. I am aware of being in a beautiful prison, from which I can only escape by writing.

Diaries Anaïs Nin

...this liberation derives from a proliferation of meaning, from a self-multiplication of significance, weaving relationships so numerous, so intertwined, so rich, that they can no longer be deciphered except in the esoterism of knowledge. Things themselves become so burdened with attributes, signs, allusions that they finally lose their own form... between the knowledge which animates it and the form into which it is transposed, a gap widens. It is free for the dream... Thus the image is burdened with supplementary meanings, and forced to express them. And dreams, madness, the unreasonable can also slip into this excess of meaning... the long path of reflection becomes in the image the alembic of a subtle learning, an instrument which distills quintessences.

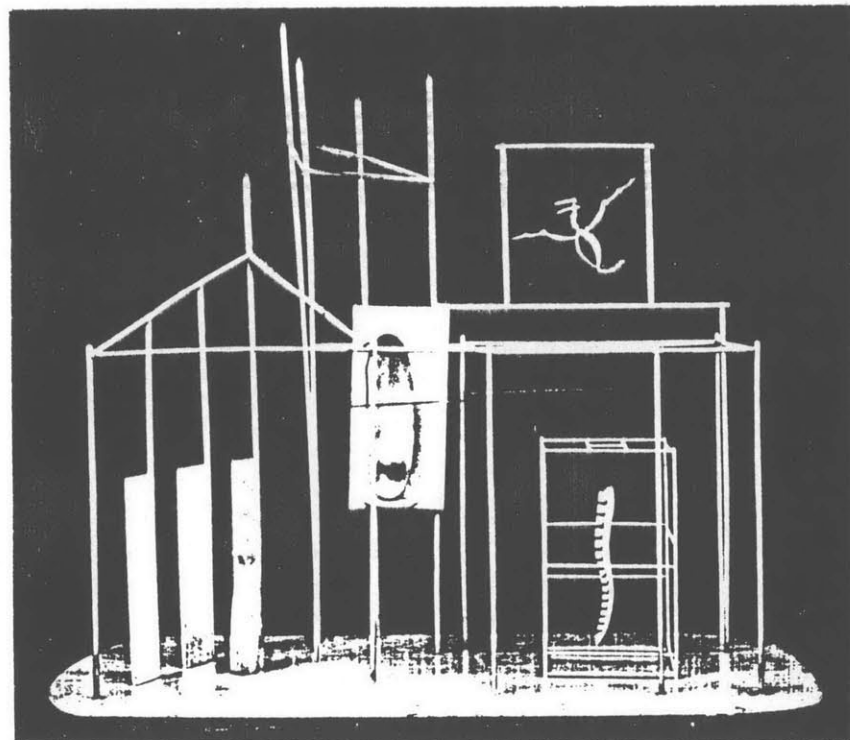
Madness and Civilization Michel Foucault

I knew very well that my acts were voluntary, but then I only willed them at the moment when I was actually achieving them. One would have said that instinct, in order to take hold of me, waited until my conscience had faded away or closed her eyes.

Alexis... Marguerite Yourcenar

Deviser of the voice and of its hearer and of himself. Deviser of himself for company. Leave it at that. He speaks of himself as of another. He says speaking of himself, He speaks of himself as of another. Himself he devises too for company. Leave it at that. Confusion too is company up to a point. Better hope deferred than none. Up to a point. Till the heart starts to sicken. Company too up to a point. Better a sick heart than none. Till it starts to break. So speaking of himself he concludes for the time being, For the time being leave it at that.

Company, Samuel Beckett



Alberto Giacometti: The Palace at 4 A.M. 1932-33.

29 March 1988
Cambridge

Dear -----:

...You see, I was hibernating then. For some reason, I didn't know how to wake up. Neither condition, *falling asleep*, nor *waking up*, started drastically. I sort of slipped gradually into one and now, finally, out of the other. Now I know I can use my brain, rather than facing the painful confirmation that I, indeed, had some sort of intelligence but that it was useless, since I had no idea how to set it in motion. It really tortured me for a long time. I no longer have such existential conflicts--at least for these three months of 1988.

(...) 1988 is full of surprises. I don't know, for once, what will come out of my thesis. One always wants to control the creative process, to the point of predicting the product. Well, it's good fun not to know, after all. I have put my mind on hold for a while; I guess you can call it *surrendering*. When you do, you suddenly start seeing things differently. I don't really know what has triggered so much energy and euphoria; it's just happening. It was very hard to force myself to do things, always, so I never did. Friends and acquaintances would tell me I was getting away with murder. *Laziness* would be the usual argument thrown back at me. I have never been able to develop a disciplined working method, only to identify the symptoms announcing the different phases. It just comes when it comes; one can only accelerate the process a bit, but never make a schedule out of it.

Anyway, I don't mean to make a big deal out of my idiosyncrasies. I lost track of my thoughts a while ago when I was all set to tell you something. Let me jump backwards for a second. It's about surrendering. Now it seems I am discovering things, and not generating them, nor grinding them out. The project has its own vitality and I cannot violate that. . . It has acquired an organic quality of its own and evolves autonomously. I just happen to be there to unveil it. The bottom line hasn't changed, though. It would be silly to pretend this detachment is real. I know it isn't.

Emphasis has been shifted to less trivial matters, I hope. The whole thing is about communicating one's own abstractions, right? In order to do that, I had to make them tangible for others. Doing, then, becomes indispensable. Being verbal (which I am becoming much more than I ever wished) wasn't it. I was in a vicious cycle: I would rather do things than talk about them, but the opposite was happening. Being too verbal is, quite often, a curse for a designer. Too much energy consumed by words, enlarging the proverbial dichotomy between plastic and literary. And of course, there is always the danger of objects not matching up with words. . . writing as a method of communication. I'd like to emphasize its visual qualities too. The fact is that, at first, one *looks*. Then one recreates sounds. Looking is crucial, how signs are arranged on the page (of course this computer is doing its own independent job on my efforts, carelessly shifting my words around to fit the margins). Handwritten or typed? One arranges symbols--the same way one arranges sounds and silences for the reader, who looks at it, reads it, recites it. It sounds very premeditated, but it isn't. For the time being, I'm giving some of this up for the sake of clarity and brevity.

I am still wondering if a serious explanation of my MArch thesis would be appropriate or if I should just be discreet, show a few drawings and leave my wandering thoughts for a novel. I have compiled this incredibly long waiting list for admission to this sanatorium--everybody wants to go there. It's a fantastic sanatorium, not just any sanatorium. You too would love to be sick to be able to come with us. It tells a lot about stress, does it? Architects and friends. I could certainly invent a story about Belén's sanatorium. I have been a faithful patient there all along--how else could one design it? But that story barely insinuated certain moves. I found more answers in the concrete site conditions. Pretending to be highly objective and systematic, I chose to emphasize the elements of the site (you know, gravity, light, water, granite). Indifference, for once, was totally out of the question. I never ignored those facts but, sometimes, I had fun challenging them.

The word thesis has become a fixture in my vocabulary these days! Today, someone came up to me to tell me about her undergraduate thesis. It's your sort of thing. Apparently, there is an island off Manhattan, in this current year of 1988, where all unclaimed NY corpses are sent, arriving inside big bottle-green trucks. There are piles of coffins, a pile for children, a pile for men and so on. Every twenty-seven years bulldozers flatten the island up, enlarging its size. She wanted to put a monastery for intellectuals there--the stench was supposed to bring them back to our realm, the realm of the simple mortals. I can't wait to see what she described.

(...)As a matter of fact, yes, I have read several novels by Patrick White. I like his mordant style--it makes me want to write HOW TRUE in the margins. A bit sordid, sometimes. But of course, a shock every now and then always helps to keep you in balance--it's even therapeutic. I often identify myself, even for a second, with the characters of the plays I see and the books I read. Very chameleonic. So I became Theodora Goodman for about a week; Alex Gray for a couple of days. It's called the human condition when it seems to reveal one's own quirky nature. Next book and onto the next personality! I suppose I do the same when I design. I found a quotation from Olive Schreiner while reading about The Aunt's Story (I was in my Theodora Goodman phase),

And so, it comes to pass in time, that the earth ceases for us to be a weltering chaos . . . Nothing is despicable--all is meaningful; nothing is small--all is part of a whole, whose beginning and end we know not.

It is not a matter of dissecting, of analyzing things in order to control a whole . . . Control is not that important--in fact, to me that need to control is a barometer of true neurosis, as if there were only two possibilities in life,i.e., dominating and being dominated. There are many more shades of grey. . .

(...) You know I detest labels. Someone puts a sticker on your forehead and you might as well be classified in some dull archive--like my thesis will be shelved in Rotch library. Your name and some adjective. At the moment, I'm still trying to become an architect, that's true. While I was trying to be a painter, architecture was distracting. Now that I am trying to be an architect, I'm dying to paint again--mirrors, reflected layers. Always on the other side; never where I think I should be. Then, when I finally arrive to the desired place, I find myself a new obsession. It's the illusion that keeps us going. A healthy ambivalence--a permanent oscillation, like the *perpetuum mobile* of the Renaissance.

Method, method, what do you want from me? Don't you know that I have eaten of the fruit of the unconscious?

Jules Laforgue



WORKING METHOD

1. Period of **ABSOLUTE INACTIVITY**
the Hibernating Brain
2. Period of **PASSIVE ABSORPTION**
the Sponge Brain
3. Period of **CERTAIN CURIOSITY**
the Docile Brain
4. Period of **FRANTIC RESTLESSNESS**
*the Hyperactive Brain or
the Randomly Stimulated Brain*
5. Period of **ACTUALLY MAKING SOMETHING**
the Useful Brain

And then, it starts all over again . . .

Always convincing myself that someone might be interested in what I do--just like you do. PRETEXTS to enable you to intervene inside a reality, to change an existing situation in order to complete it your own way. (That's my definition of architecture, by the way). Any reality. Not only in design. In anything one does. Otherwise, one stops doing, leaving the field open for atrophy to take over. The optimal set-up for the sponge-brain mode. I have described the symptoms *ad nauseam*.

Enough prattling for today. And happy Spring to you too.



Francisco Goya: *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* (The Dream of Reason Creates Monsters).

Till finally you hear how words are coming to an end. With every inane word a little nearer to the last. And how the fable too. The fable of one with you in the dark. The fable of one fabling of one with you in the dark. And how better in the end labour lost and silence. And you as you always were.

Alone.

Company, Samuel Beckett

None of my plans mature the moment they are conceived. They have to be proved acceptable, pass through a noviciate so to speak.

Memoirs... Patrick White

But circumstances are like that. They are shy and indefatigable; they come and go before our doorway, always the same, and it is up to us whether we stretch our hand to stop these passerby.

Alexis... Marguerite Yourcenar

Henceforward we walk into myriad fragments, like an insect with a hundred feet, a centipede with soft-stirring feet that drinks in the atmosphere; we walk with sensitive filaments that drink avidly of past and future, and all things melt into music and sorrow; we walk against a united world, asserting our dividedness. All things, as we walk, splitting with us into a myriad iridescent fragments. The great fragmentation of maturity.

Henry Miller

'You cannot reconcile joy and sorrow,' Holstius said. 'Or flesh and marble, or illusion and reality, or life and death. For this reason, Theodora Goodman, you must accept. And you have already found that one constantly deludes the other into taking fresh shapes, so that there is sometimes little to choose between the reality of illusion and the illusion of reality. . .'

The Aunt's... Patrick White