

REDESIGNING THE DECONSTRUCTED

Chapels of St. John

by

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RECONSTRUCTING THE DECONSTRUCTED

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DEDICATION/EPIGRAPH

Thank you to my parents, Sofia and George Nino, who stood by me these five wonderful years. You have been my biggest inspirations throughout my entire life, and I would not be here without your immense love and support. Mom, you are the biggest reason I pursued architecture and I could not be more grateful for the late-night help and guidance as I wrapped up projects.

Thank you to my Abuelo Paco. Although he will not be able to see me graduate, he has always been a strong inspiration and another big reason as to why I pursued architecture.

And finally, thank you to my extended family, high school friends, and all the new friends I have made during this college experience. You have all helped me and pushed me in different ways throughout my thesis and college.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Rafael Longoria for all of his support and advise throughout the process of this thesis. Your insight, precedents, and open-mindedness on the thesis were invaluable to the growth of this project.

I would also like to thank Drexel Turner, whose insight during the juries and other important times throughout the year helped me deepen my understanding of the architectural theory behind my project.

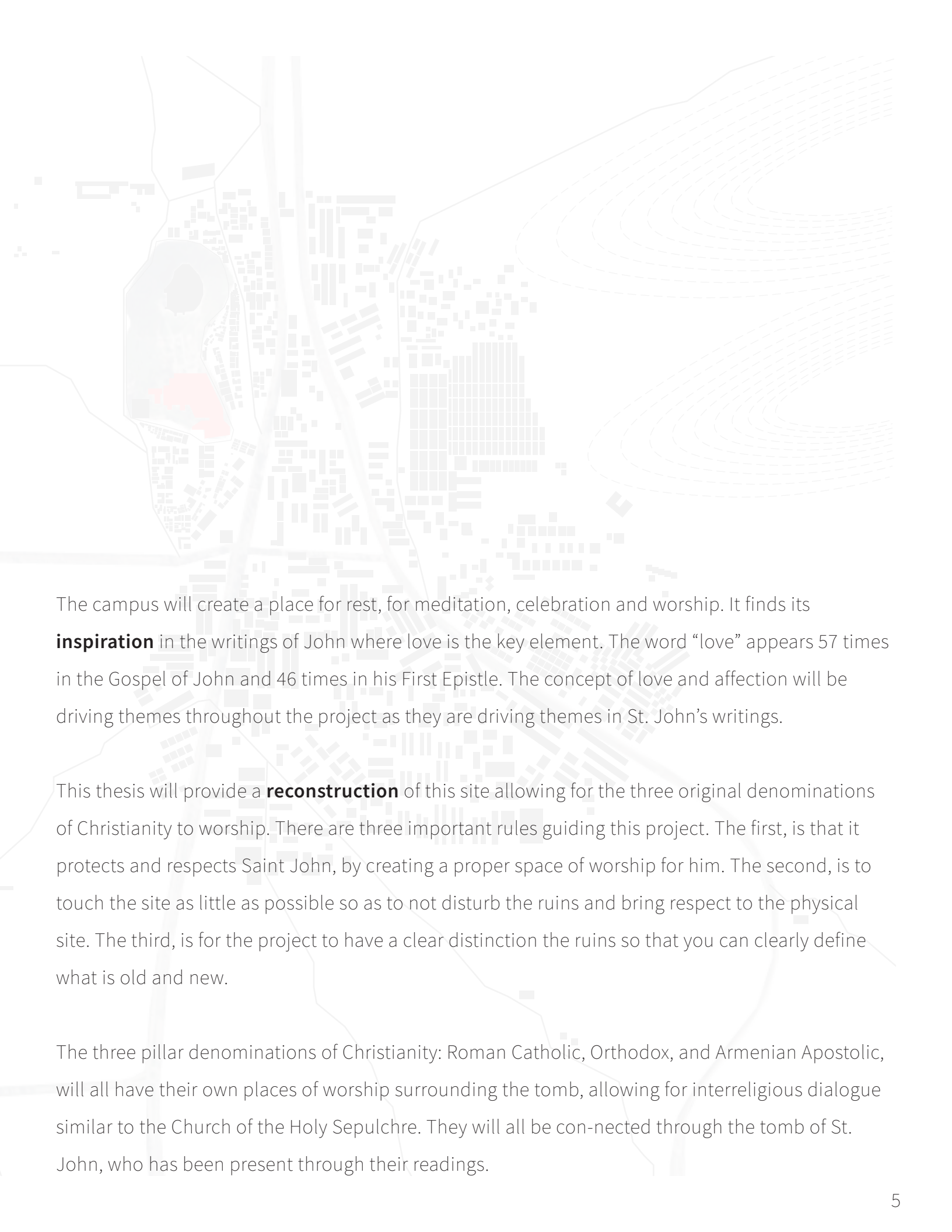
Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Ted Estess, who I reached out to many times for his insight on my writings. He helped my mother during her undergraduate thesis, and it has been my honor to work through some of the theories behind my project.

01 ABSTRACT



This thesis project will focus on completing an unfinished puzzle that will tie together memory, culture and a future vision. John the Beloved traveled throughout the Mediterranean and eventually settled in Ephesus where he spent the rest of his days, later passing away and being buried in Ayasuluk Hill. Over his tomb today sheep roam. He is the only apostle who does not have a proper tomb over his body or a place for people to celebrate and worship, to read his writings while going through the ritual of the mass that he helped design. This project seeks to rectify this by creating a series of chapels that will allow for the three original denominations of Christianity to worship.

Around the 4th century, a few hundred years after St. John died in Ephesus, a church was built atop his tomb. The Basilica, whose ruins are still visible today, was built by Emperor Justinian in the 6th century. In the 13th century, Tamerlane's Mongol army leveled the site, leaving the Basilica in ruins. The ruins sit at the base of Ayasuluk hill as part of the renowned ruins of Ephesus.



The campus will create a place for rest, for meditation, celebration and worship. It finds its **inspiration** in the writings of John where love is the key element. The word “love” appears 57 times in the Gospel of John and 46 times in his First Epistle. The concept of love and affection will be driving themes throughout the project as they are driving themes in St. John’s writings.

This thesis will provide a **reconstruction** of this site allowing for the three original denominations of Christianity to worship. There are three important rules guiding this project. The first, is that it protects and respects Saint John, by creating a proper space of worship for him. The second, is to touch the site as little as possible so as to not disturb the ruins and bring respect to the physical site. The third, is for the project to have a clear distinction the ruins so that you can clearly define what is old and new.

The three pillar denominations of Christianity: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Armenian Apostolic, will all have their own places of worship surrounding the tomb, allowing for interreligious dialogue similar to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They will all be connected through the tomb of St. John, who has been present through their readings.

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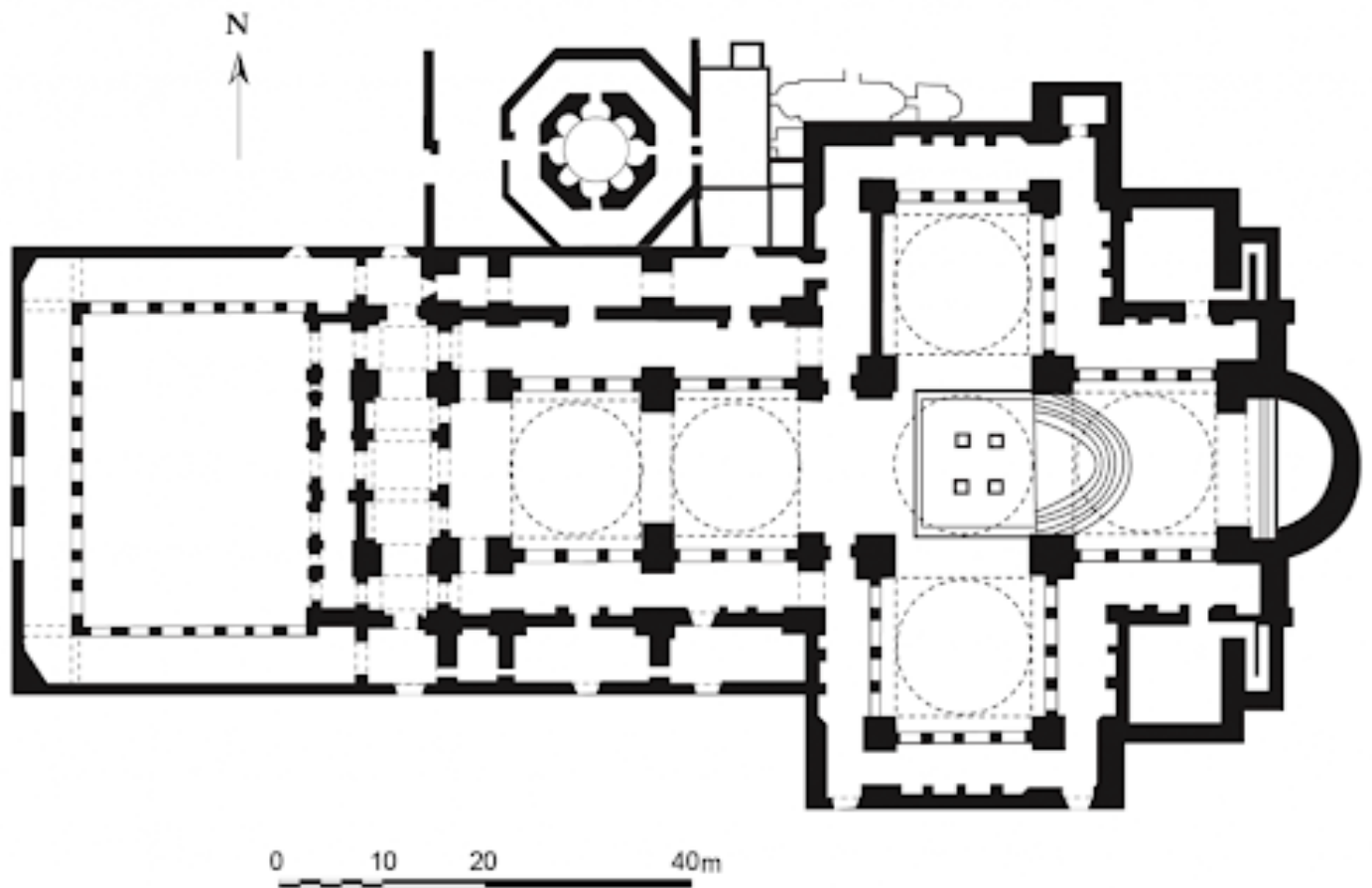
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02 THESIS STATEMENT

"I could tell you how many steps make up the streets rising like stairways, and the degree of the arcades' curves, and what kind of zinc scales cover the roofs; but I already know this would be the same as telling you nothing. The city does not consist of this, but of relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past..."

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 10

These relationships are visible in Ephesus, where St. John and the Virgin Mary spent their last days as they continued their travels throughout Eurasia. Ephesus is covered in a beautiful tapestry of historical ruins. There are remnants of the Roman empire, the Byzantine empire, and early Christian churches scattered throughout the site. The church of St. John was destroyed during Arab raids and scattered throughout Turkey, creating a poetic connection to many mosques and temples built in the 15th Century. The goal of my thesis is to construct a campus that honors St. John. The relationship between the nearby town of Selçuk and ruins of Ephesus runs throughout history as the city was born due to its location and the events that came from it. The thesis will emphasize the connection by creating an important dialogue that shows the importance of honoring the past in the present.



03 APOSTOLIC INFO

This project was brought upon by the idea that of the twelve founders of Christianity, only one is still without a proper resting place. The majority of the Twelve Apostles are interred in churches that honor their memory. These are located mostly in Italy, while the rest reside in Germany, Greece, and India. St. John is the exception to the rule, as his tomb currently sits in the open air in Ephesus, Turkey among the ruins of his once great church. This project will work on the last

piece of the puzzle that is missing by creating a proper resting place for the Beloved Apostle.

I decided to choose three of the twelve Apostles who were most pertinent to the project at hand, whether it were due to location, landscape, relationship with the country, or the program of the church.





ST. JAMES, GREATER



ST. PETER



ST. ANDREW



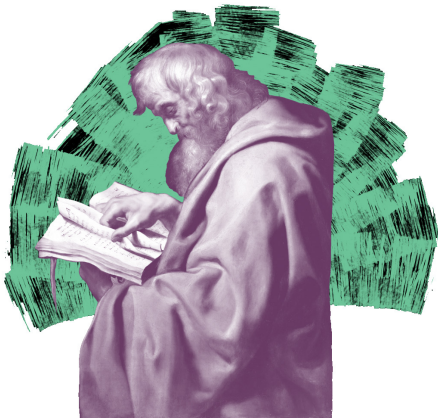
ST. PHILLIP



ST. JAMES, LESSER



ST. JUDE



ST. SIMON



ST. MATTHIAS



ST. BARTHOLOMEW



ST. MATTHEW



ST. THOMAS



ST. JOHN

03 APOSTOLIC INFO

ST. JAMES

Buried: Compostela, Spain

Born: Galilee, Palestine

Died: 44 A.D.

Feast Day: July 25

Church: Santiago De Compostela



-James is the older brother of St. John. They are both nicknamed the "Sons of Thunder," because of their fiery zeal when spreading the word.

-His church is the destination for many pilgrims who travel throughout all of Europe on a pilgrimage called the "Camino De Santiago."
(Nelson)

-He, along with Peter, Andrew, and his brother John were the first four disciples called on by Jesus. as a member of the inner circle, he witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Transfiguration, and Jesus' agony in the garden of Gethsemane.





03 APOSTOLIC INFO

ST. THOMAS

Buried: Chennai, India

Born: Galilee, Palestine

Died: 72 B.C.

Feast Day: December 21

Church: Santhome Cathedral Basilica



-Infamously known as “Doubting Thomas” for not believing that Jesus had Risen.

- St. Thomas also serves as a foil for Christians today--those who have not seen and yet have believed.

-St. Thomas was pierced through the heart with a lance in India.

(Nelson)





03 APOSTOLIC INFO

ST. MATTHIAS

Buried: Tier, Germany

Born: Galilee, Palestine

Died: 80 c.e.

Feast Day: Februaru 24

Church: St. Matthias Abbey



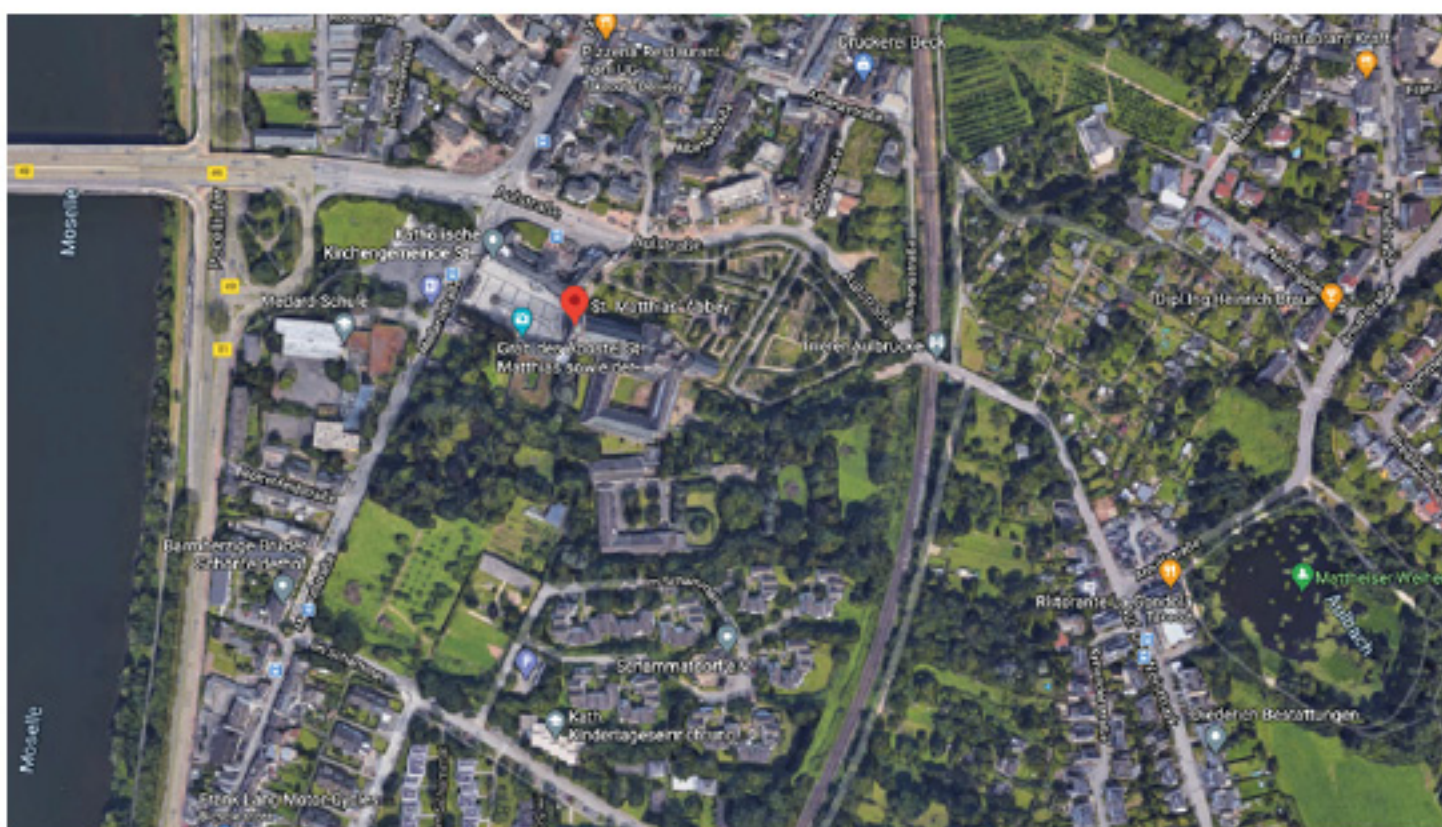
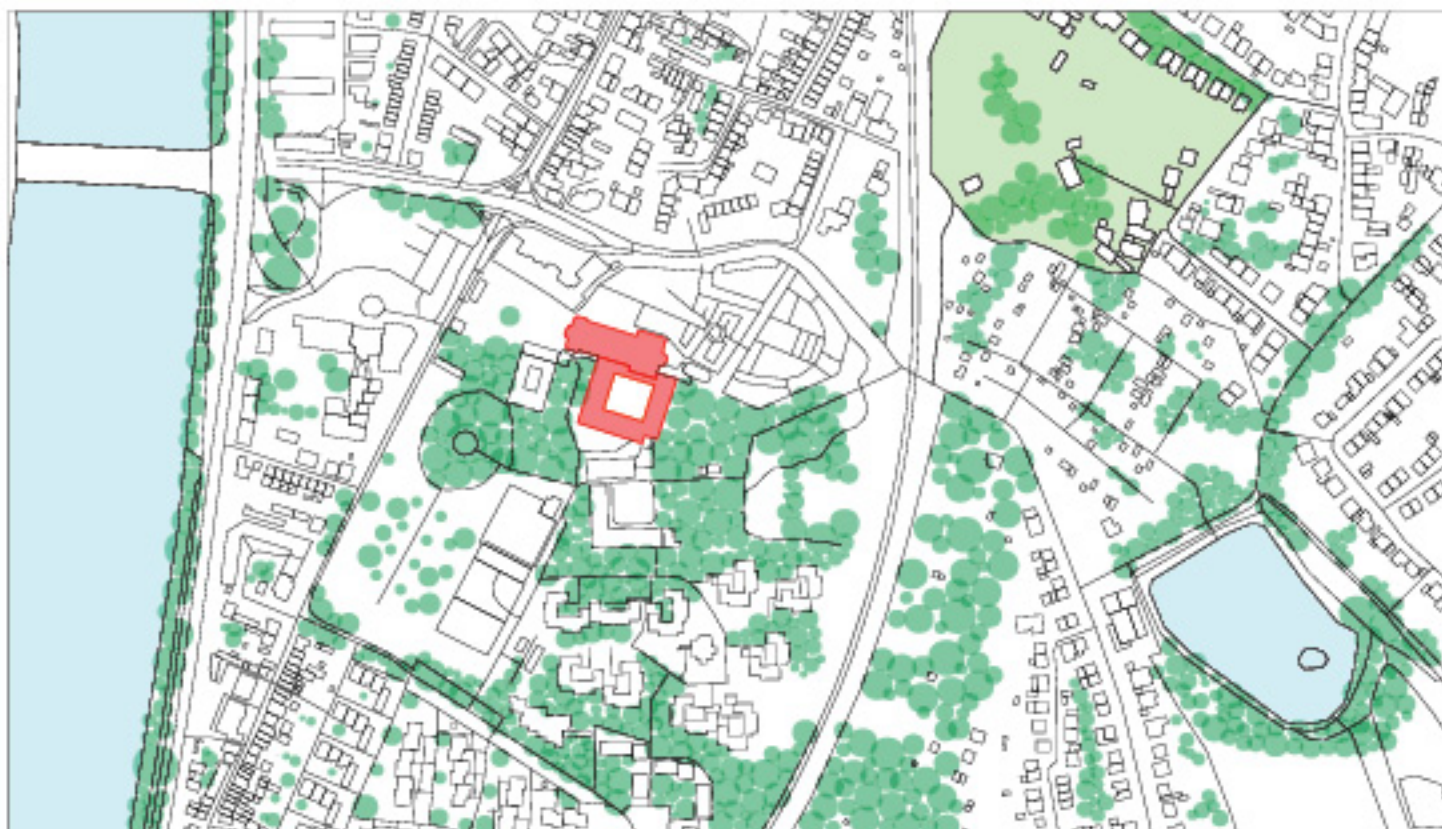
- The only Apostle who was not selected by Jesus. He was picked to replace Judas Iscariot.

- Peter assumed that it was their duty to replace Judas, due to this there is some debate on whether it was God's Will for Matthias to be one of the 12 apostles.

- He was stoned in Jerusalem and then beheaded.

(Nelson)





03 APOSTOLIC INFO

ST. JOHN

Buried: Ephesus/Selcuk, Turkey

Born: Judea, Palestine

Died: 98 c.e.

Feast Day: June 24

Church: No Official Church



- Known as the "Beloved Apostle." Was ordered by Jesus to take care of the Virgin Mary before He died on the cross.

- One of the 4 writers of the Gospels

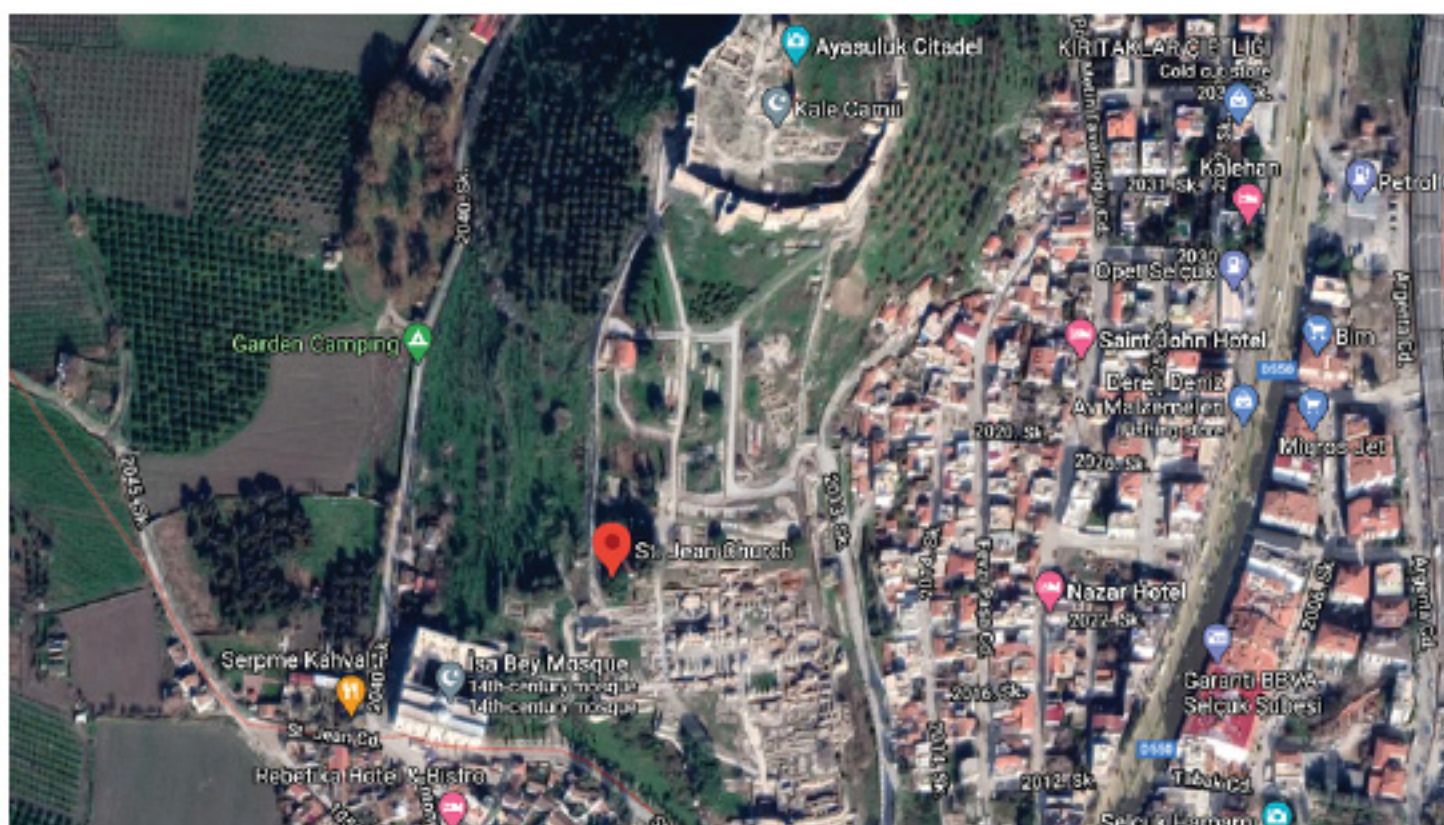
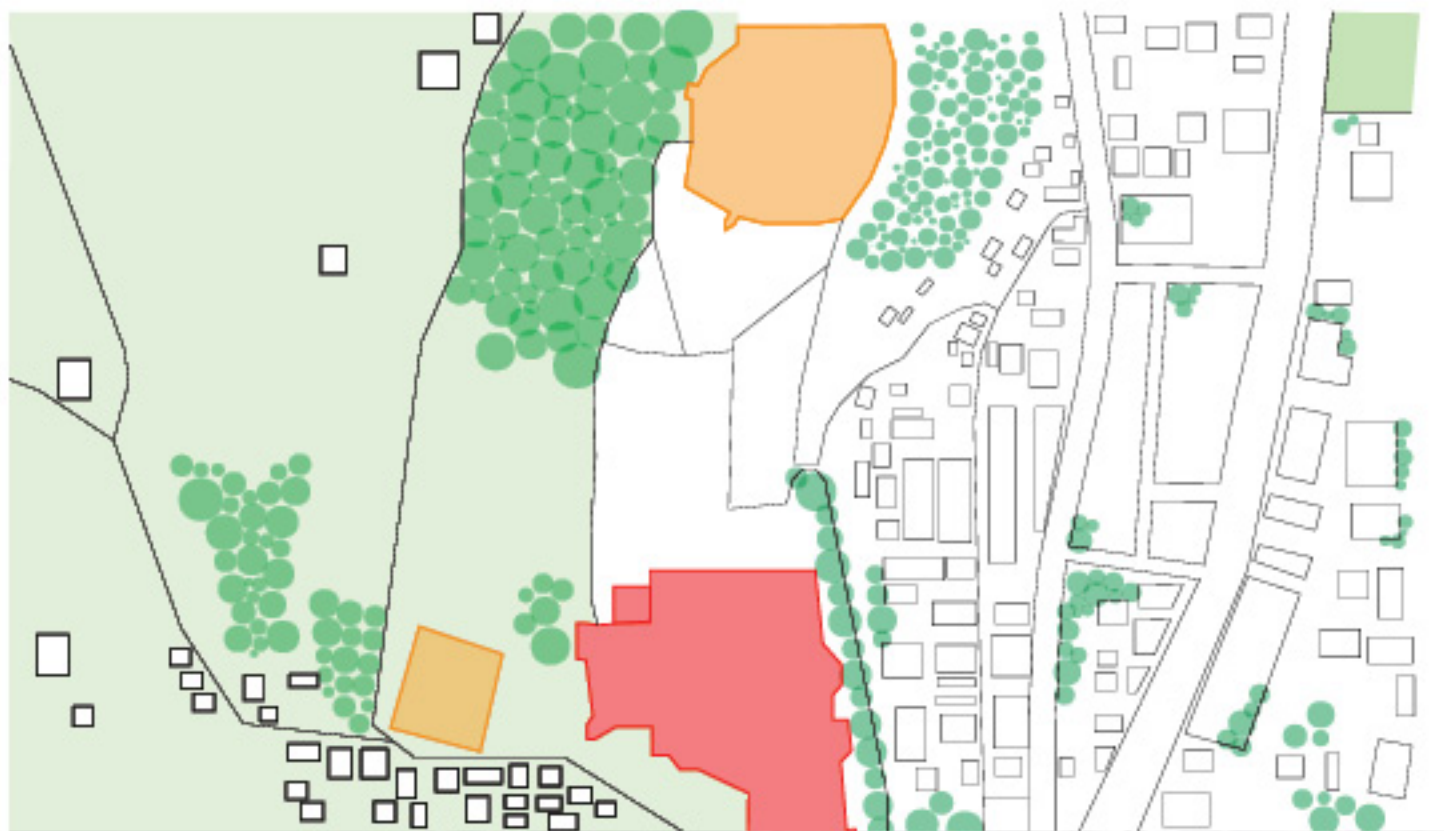
- First person to arrive in Jesus tomb and see that His body was not there.

- His Basilica was built in Ephesus and destroyed by Muslims and the materials were turned into a mosque in 1402.

- Although there were some assassination attempts on his life, St. John was the only Apostle to die of old age.

(Nelson)





04 HISTORY: *Imperial*

Ephesus was founded in the 10th century B.C. as a part of the Greek trading colonies built throughout the Mediterranean coastline. Throughout the centuries the name “Ephesus” has remained the same, even though the territory has exchanged many hands and cultures throughout time.

Throughout the centuries, Ephesus has been attacked and occupied by different nations and empires. Due to this, it has been under the rule of many different leaders with completely different religious and cultural views. One of the most notable leaders being Alexander the Great, who ruled over the region after conquering over the Persian Empire in 334 B.C..

A couple hundred years later, the city fell into Roman hands when Augustus became Emperor in 27 B.C., making the city the regional capital of that part of his empire. Upon realizing that Ephesus had the potential to become one of the greatest centers of commerce in his empire, Augustus poured many resources into the city. It was thought to be as large as 1,000 acres, with a population of roughly 250,000 people.

The city was destroyed years later by the goths in 262 A.D. after a series of raids throughout the 3rd century. The city was later deserted in the 15th century A.D. largely due to a large amount of silt build-up in the harbor that prevented ships from reaching the



Temple of Artemis

port, effectively depriving the city of its most important resource, trade.

John Turtle Wood is credited with finding the great city. It is because of his discovery of the Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the world, that Ephesus was found only a short distance away. This is why Ephesus is famous for the Temple of Artemis.

Ancient Ephesus: The History and Legacy of One of Antiquity's Greatest Cities

Norwich, John Julius. *A Short History of Byzantium*. Penguin, 2013.



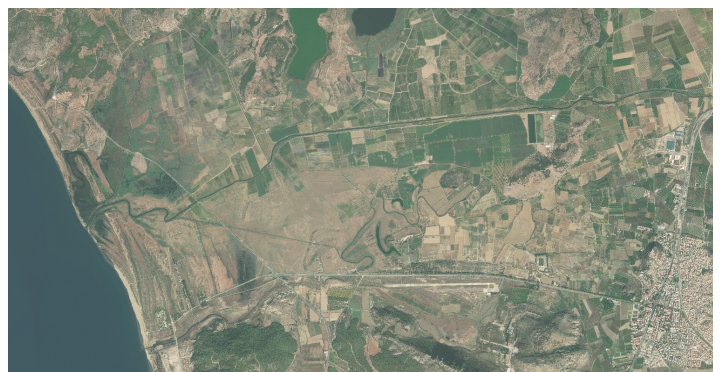
500 B.C. Ionian Ephesus



100 B.C. Roman Ephesus



600 A.D. Byzantium Ephesus



2020 A.D. Current Ephesus

04 HISTORY: *Religious*

Over the course of this history, Ephesus evolved from a small Greek colonial settlement, to one of the most important and influential cities of its time, becoming a major trading center in ancient times. This was all thanks to the large-scale road network and large-scale harbor on the river, Cayster, that led into the Aegean Sea.

Although it was not as densely populated or large as Rome, it was still a beautiful mixture of different cultures that left a touch of their architecture within the city. A lot of this had to do with religion, which has always been an important factor in Ephesus' history throughout the centuries. For a long period of time, the city had been a center of worship for the Greek goddess Artemis, known by the Romans as Diana.

The Roman Goddess Diana appears throughout the Bible several times and is associated with hunting, nature, and fertility. Though her temple in Ephesus was more commonly known by her Greek name, Artemis. The grand temple was built by the Ephesians and completed around the 4th century B.C., and one of the seven wonders of the world.

The temple was burned down by a man named Herostratus a few centuries later. The temple of Artemis was used for worship, as well as attracting visitors and the devout from all across the known ancient world. It also held regular ceremonies, public games, and was a focal point for many religious festivals held each year in the city.

(Sacred Destinations)



Depiction of Temple of Artemis

Before the birth of Jesus Christ at the beginning of the 1st Century A.D. the religion in Ephesus was predominantly, and sometimes exclusively, Greek and Roman deities. However, by the 1st Century A.D., the city became a beacon of Christian worship and teachings with the followers of Jesus Christ coming, praising Him as the Savior of humankind.

One of the first Christian figures to come to Ephesus was St. Paul, one of the twelve Apostles, who arrived around 60 A.D. to preach. He remained there for three years before continuing his journey as a missionary for Christ. He is said to have established one of the first physical Christian churches, outside of Rome, and created the first church in Ephesus during the mid-1st century.

Soon after, St. John the beloved was thought to have written the First Epistle of John, which focused primarily on Love and Communion with God. St. John completed many of his writings while in Ephesus, including the Book of Revelations, which stated that the church built in Ephesus was one of the seven most important churches in the world, representing that the church had abandoned its true love of God, this is thought to be one of the reasons that love was such a large focus throughout his Gospel (John 2:1). He came to Ephesus as a part of his evangelical journey and remained there along with Jesus' Mother, The Virgin Mary, until their passing. He is not said to have been buried beneath the now ruined Basilica of St. John in Selcuk, Turkey.
(A Week in the Life of Ephesus)



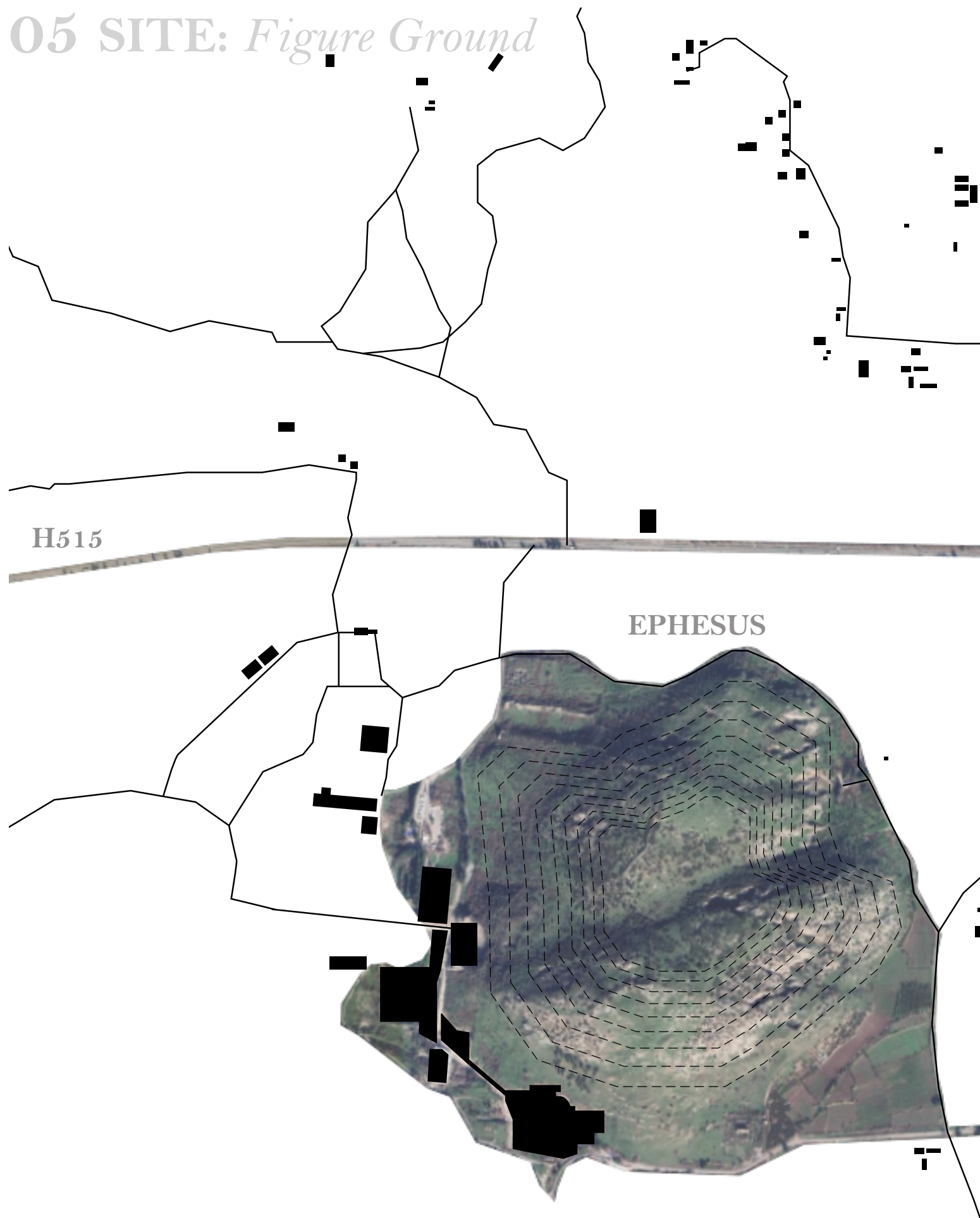
Ruins of St. John's Basilica

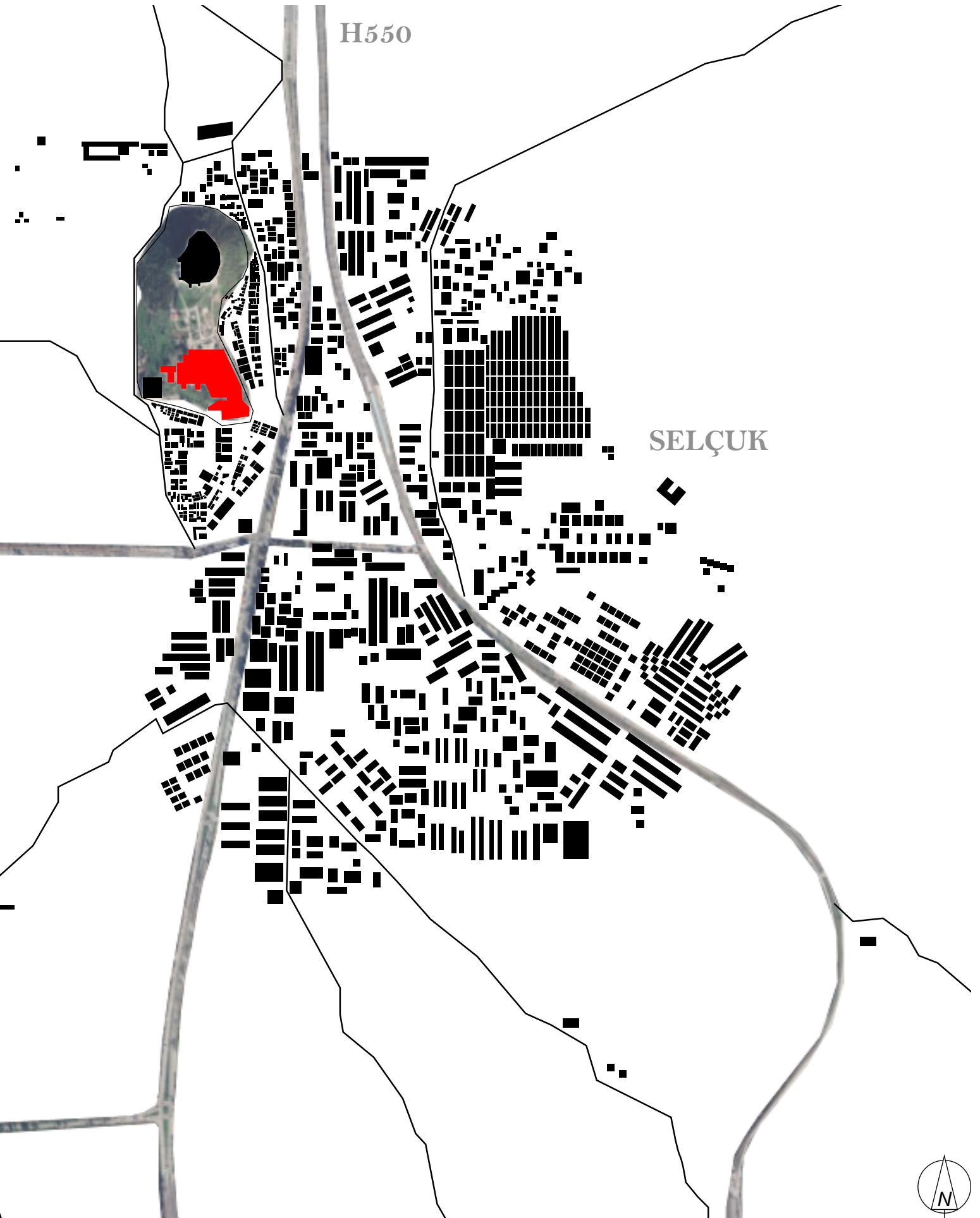
05 SITE





05 SITE: *Figure Ground*





05 SITE: *Ephesus Ruins*



1. THE STADIUM



2. THE GRAND THEATRE



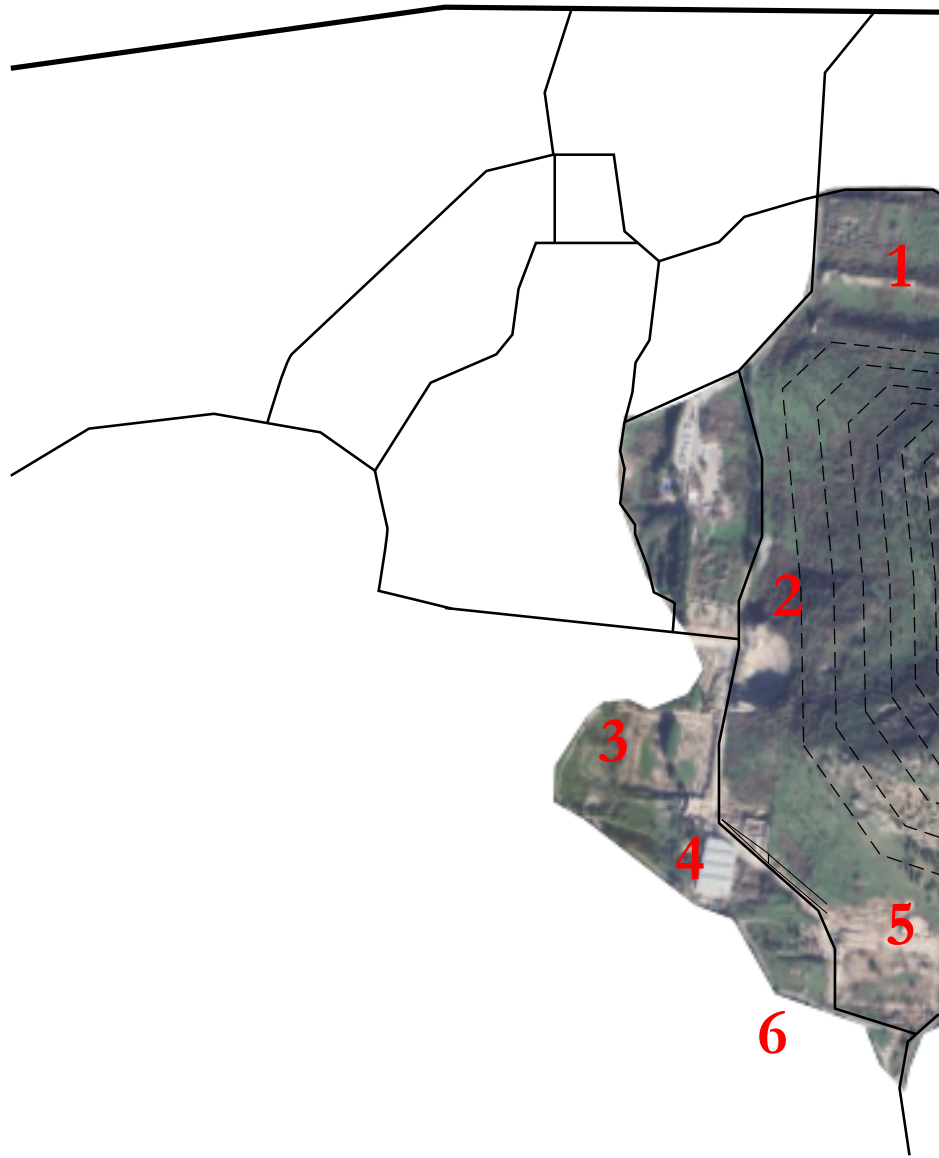
3. THE AGORA



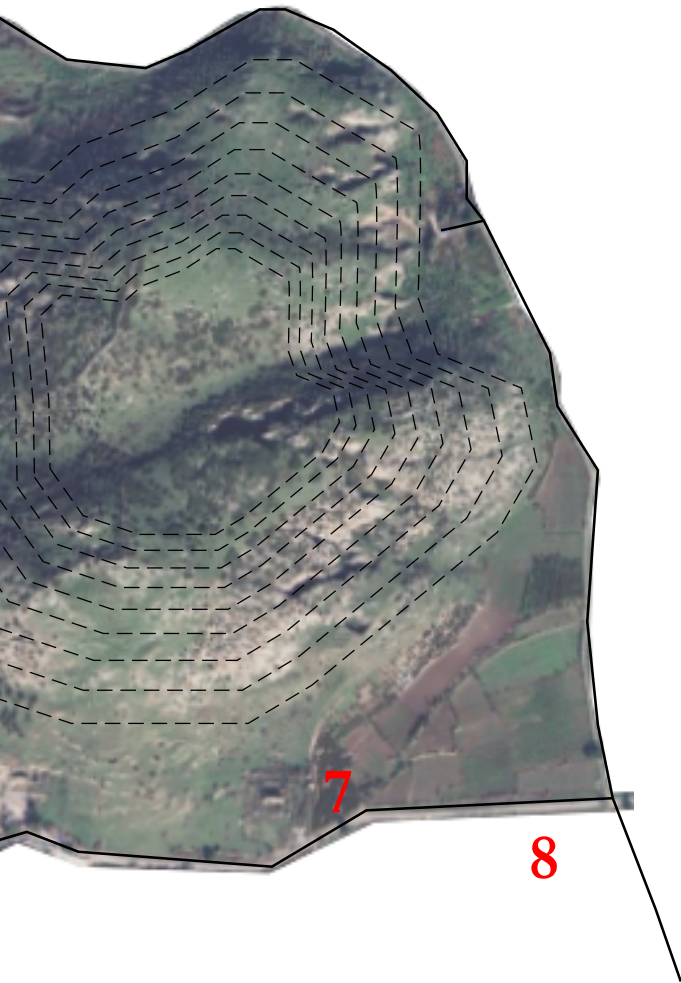
4. MAZEUS & MITHRIADATES
GATES



5. TEMPLE



9



9. TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS



8. THE WATER PALACE



5. TEMPLE OF HADRIAN

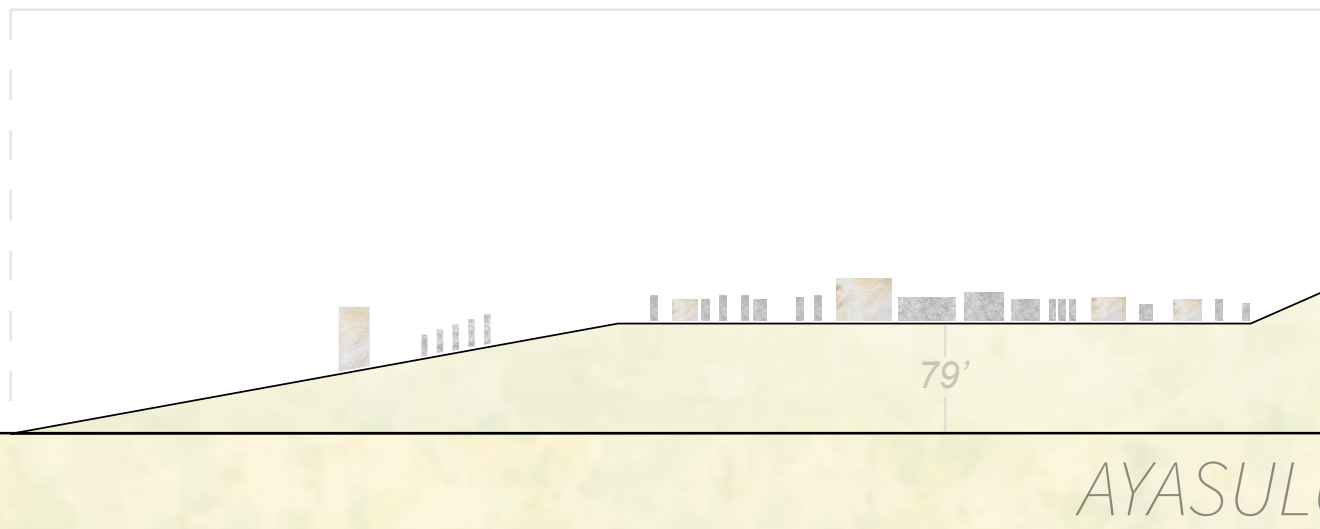


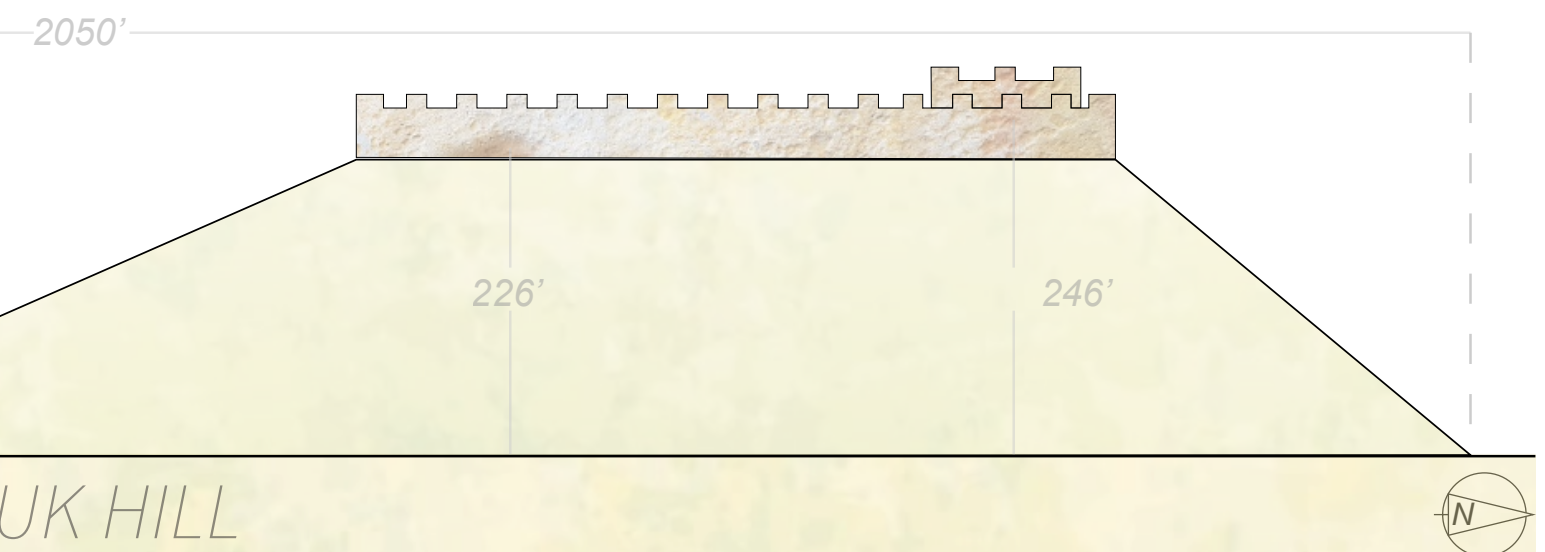
6. LIBRARY OF CELSUS



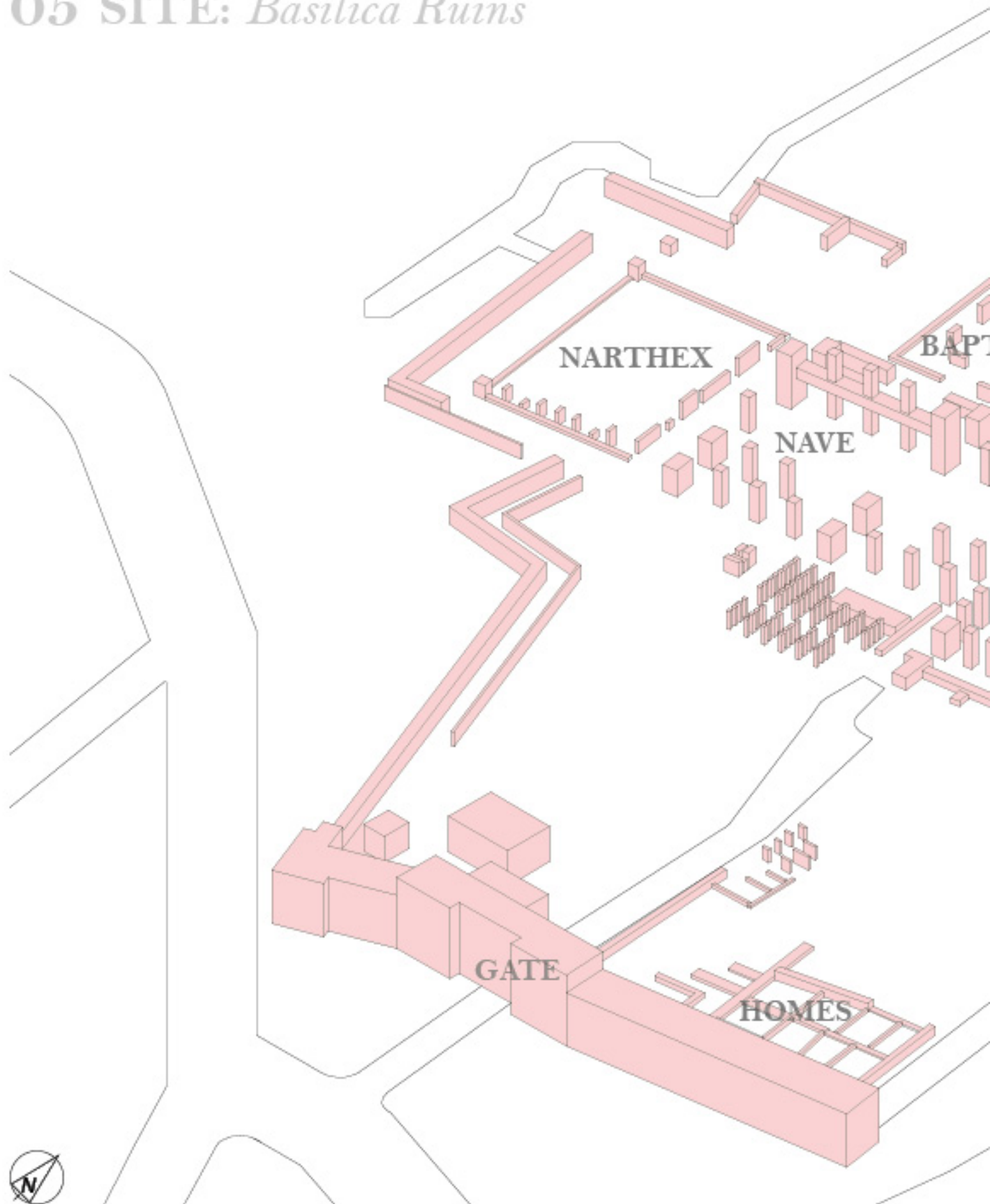
7. GATES OF HERCULES

05 SITE: *Ayasuluk Hill*





05 SITE: *Basilica Ruins*



ISTRY

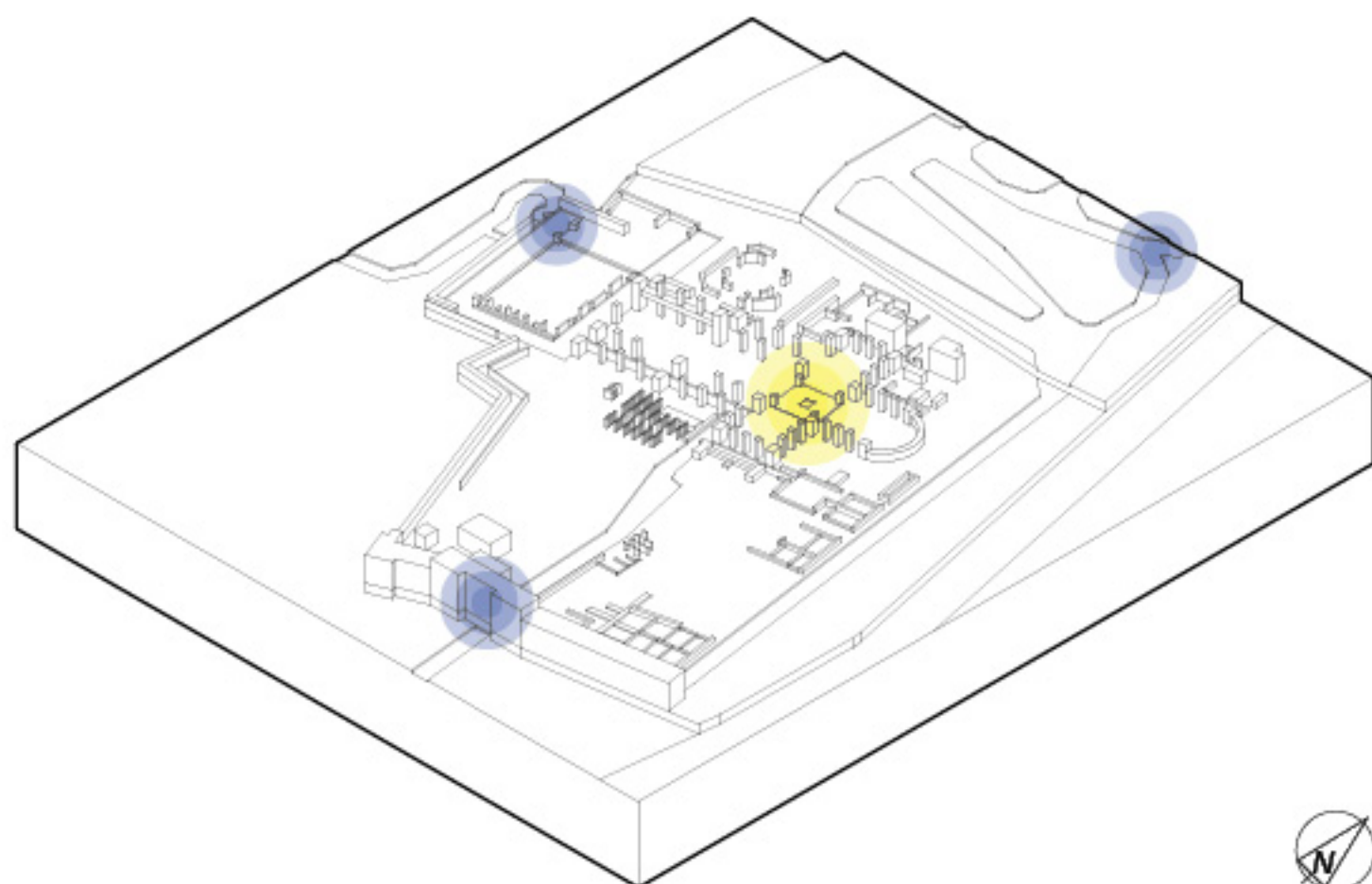
LIBRARY

TOMB

APSE

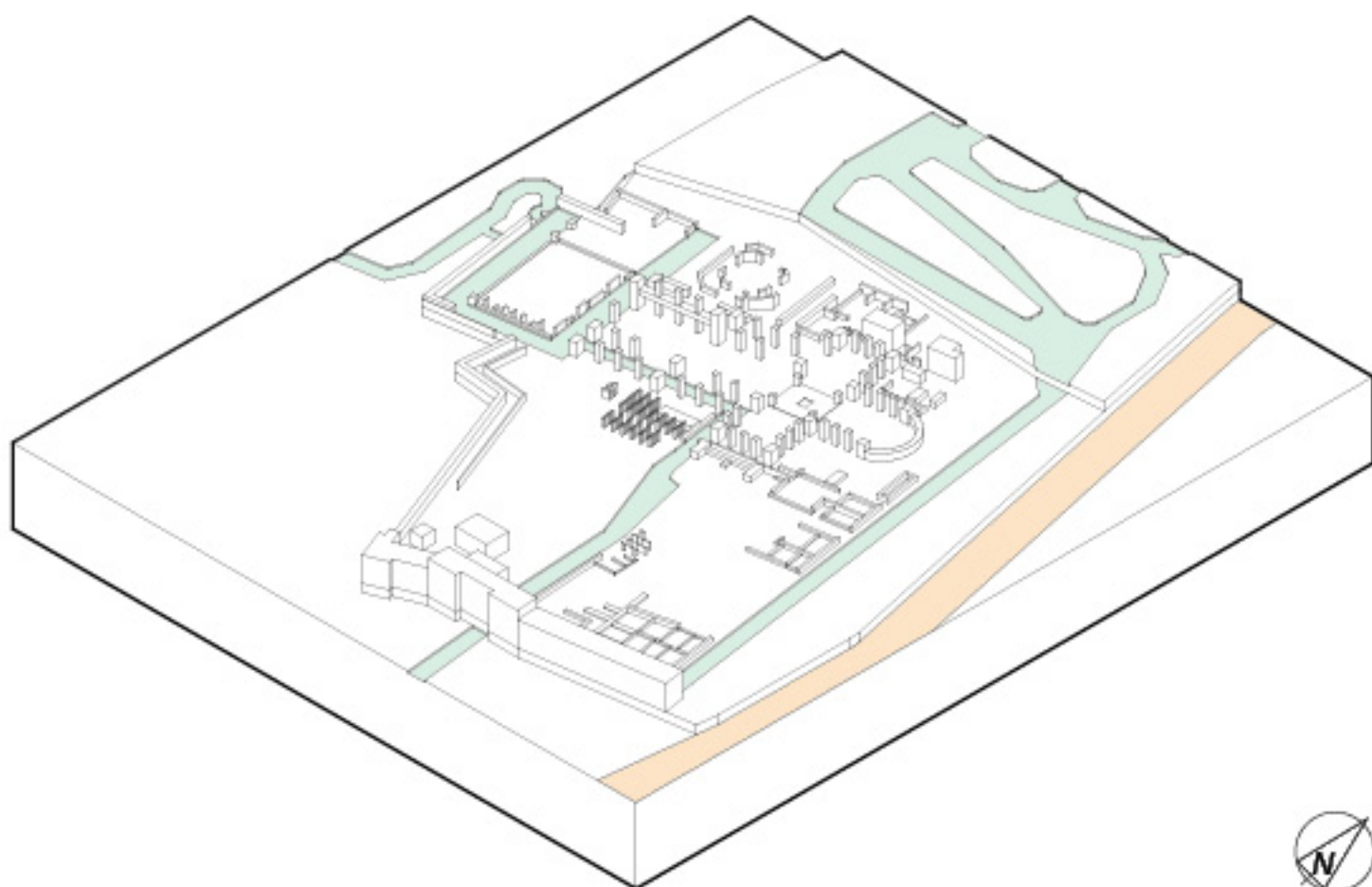
RECTORY



05 SITE: *Diagrams*



-  *Entry Space*
-  *Sacred Space*

This diagram shows both entry points and sacred spaces. The entry spaces are all approached from different parking points surrounding the site. Both the western and southern spaces are accessed from security gates that are set into the ruins. The southern space also has available restrooms for visitors to the site. As for the sacred space shown in yellow, that highlights the most important section to focus the design on, the tomb of St. John.



-  *Pedestrian Circulation*
-  *Vehicular Circulation*

This diagram shows the two main forms of circulation throughout the site. Green represents the paved cobblestone paths that stretch from the parking in the north, the parking in the south, and the mosque in the west. Orange represents the vehicular circulation that allows cars to park on either side of Ayasuluk hill.

06 PRECEDENTS: *Cultural Projects*

ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

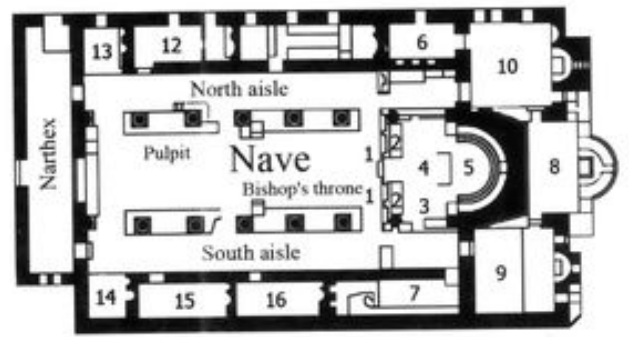
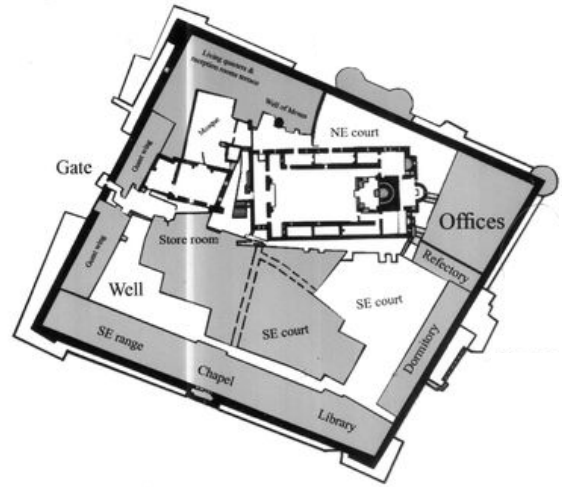
South Sinai Governorate, Egypt

Stephanos of Aila

Saint Catherine's Monastery is one the oldest and most famous working Christian Monasteries in the world. built by order of the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian I. There is a library in the monastery which preserves the second largest collection of early codices and manuscripts in the world only second to the Vatican Library. The Muslim Bedouin Arabs who live near the monastery have always acted as its guards and have in turn been supported by it.

This precedent is interesting because it is a perfectly kept "ruin" that functions the way it did when it was built in 530 A.D. This project is the embodiment of what an original monastery design would have looked like and will be a crucial precedent for my design moving forward as it houses many similar programmatic elements to my project.

(Dobbs)



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

Jerusalem, Israel

Nikolaos Ch. Komnenos

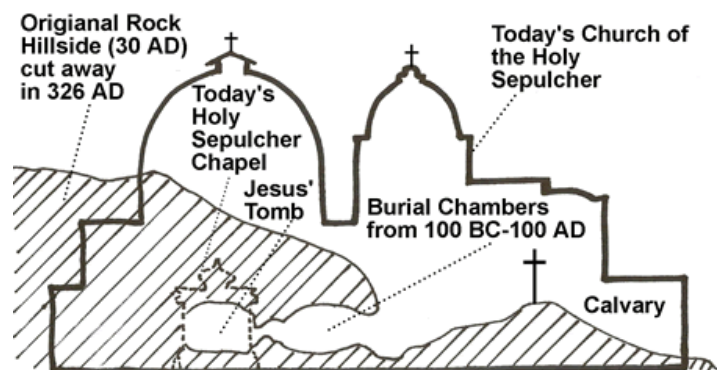
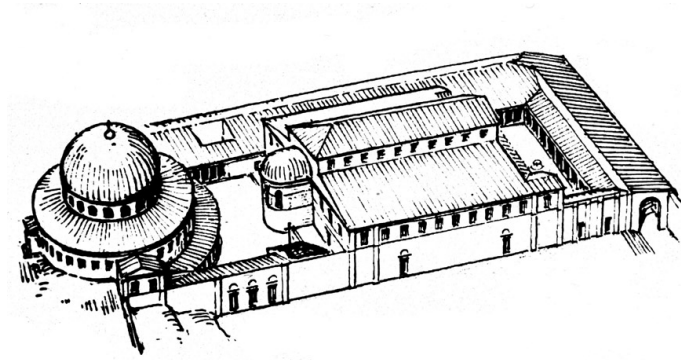
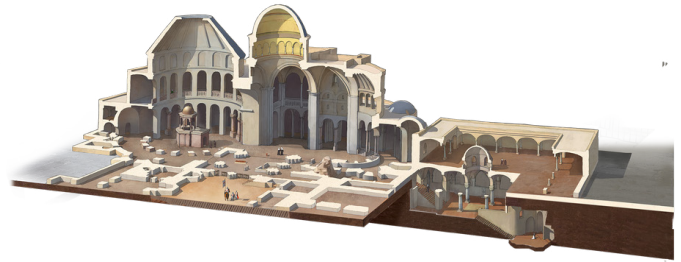
5,000 m²

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is built atop the site where Jesus is believed to have been crucified, known as Golgotha or Calvary. According to St. John's gospel (19:41-2), Jesus' tomb was close to the place of his Crucifixion so the church was planned to enclose both the spaces of his death and resurrection.

When the Muslim's reconquered the city in 1187 parts of the church were blocked up. However, pilgrims were still allowed admittance to the site, showing that there was a certain understanding between the cultures.

The church itself allows for Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Armenian Apostolic Churches to serve mass within the tomb of Jesus. This is a key factor that makes this project so interesting as it allows for many religious ideologies to come together under one roof and celebrate together.

(Jerusalem Archaeological Sites)



06 PRECEDENTS: *Ruin Strategy*

CHURCH OF VILANOVA DE LA BARCA

Vilanova De La Barca, Spain

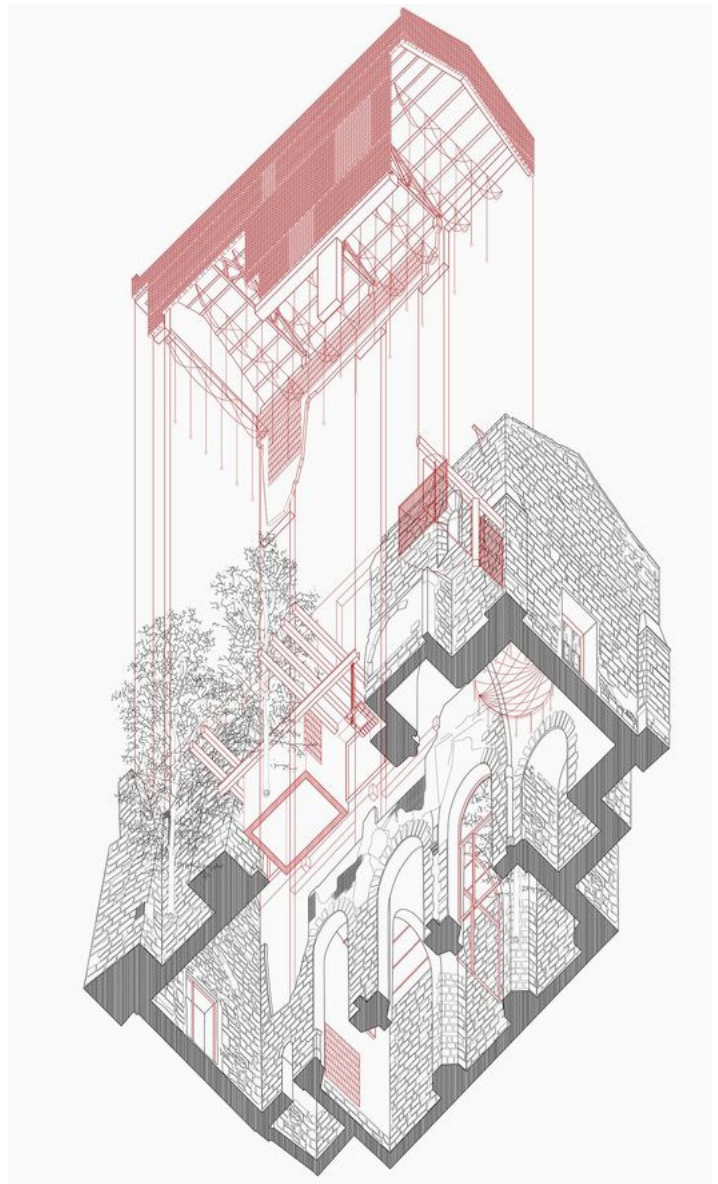
AleoOlea Architecture & Landscape

200 m²

As I began exploring how to respond to the ruins on my site in Ephesus I wanted to find examples of how other churches and sacred spaces have been rebuilt from their ruined state.

The old church of Vilanova De La Barca is a 13th Century Gothic building that was bombed in 1936 during the Spanish Civil War. Since, then the church stood in ruin with only the apse and some fragments of the nave and western façade. The project's goal was to restore the church to its original appearance and repurpose it into a multipurpose hall. What stands out to me about this project is how it responds to the ruins and builds on them rather than around them.

(Rojas,)



THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROMAN ART

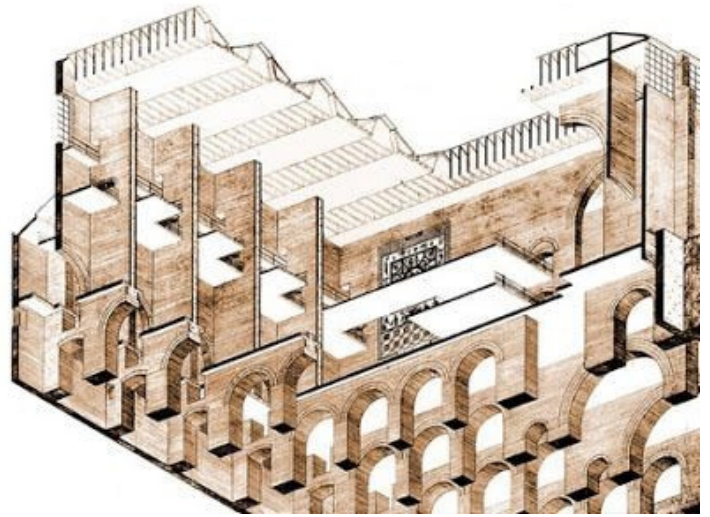
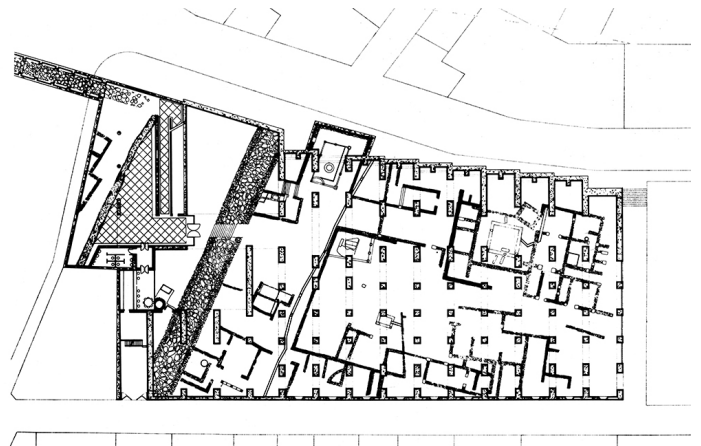
Merida, Spain

Rafael Moneo

200 m²

Founded under Emperor Augustus in 24 B.C., Merida became one of the most important cities in the Roman Empire. Today the presence of the Theatre and the Arena are an impressive token to the past. The roman museum is partially built over a portion of the buried Roman town. What struck me about this project was how it reacted to the ruins buried underneath. Unlike the smaller scale ruins, I am working with, Rafael Moneo had to work around the ruins of an entire buried city.

I believe that his style of dealing with the ruins is a bit extreme as he chose to keep them under the building rather than showing them off in the great hall.
(Langdon)



06 PRECEDENTS: *Ruin Strategy*

TRENTON BATH HOUSE

Ewing Township, NJ

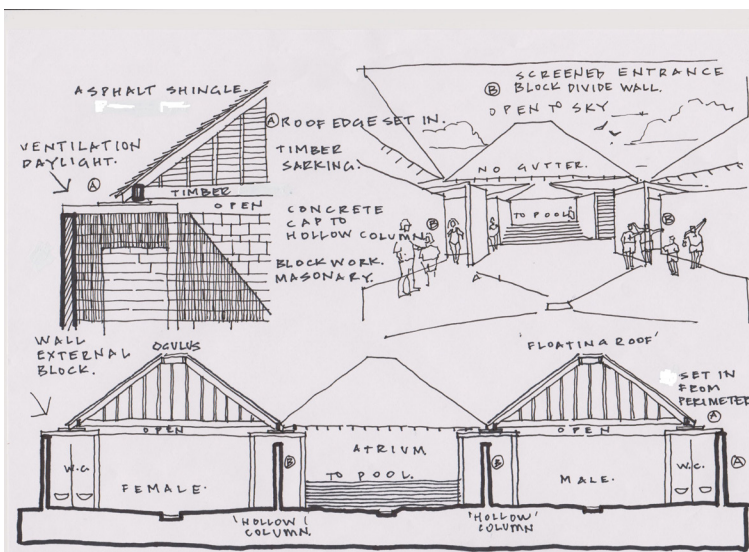
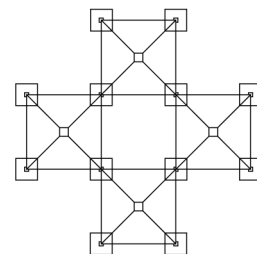
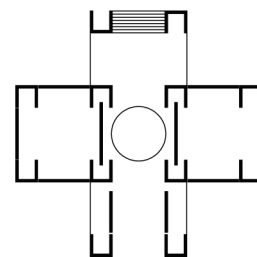
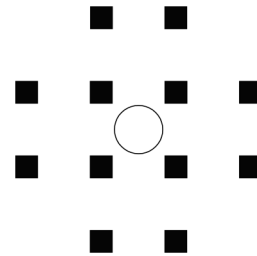
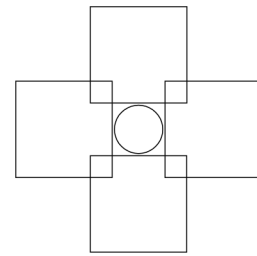
Louis Kahn

9 Acres

Often called Kahn's Trenton Bath House, the buildings, which opened in 1955, are located in Ewing Township, four miles from downtown Trenton. They provided an entrance and changing areas to patrons of the outdoor pool. Kahn envisaged an entire campus for the Jewish Community Center, which was moving from city to the suburbs.

The cross-shaped Bath House displays the key tools with which Kahn transformed modern architecture: the use of geometric shapes, the reliance on basic building materials, the focus on maximizing natural light, and a new way of relating the secondary spaces dedicated to services such as toilets and utilities to the primary spaces of a building.

The use of a pavilion as a nexus for accessing the different bath houses brought inspiration for the pavilion I would later design to access the individual chapels



THE CRYSTAL CATHEDRAL

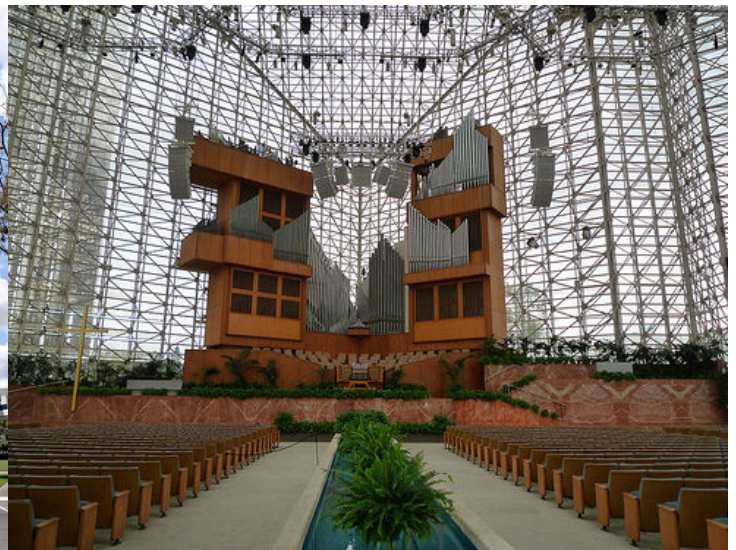
Garden Grove, California

Phillip Johnson

78,000 ft²

Located in the city of Garden Grove south of Los Angeles, the Crystal Cathedral has a four-pointed star shape with an exact east-west alignment. The detached bell-tower stands to the south, next to the original Garden Grove Community Drive-In Church (which now functions as an arboretum).

The church is made of a mirrored glass that reflects the surrounding context. Creating a sense of transparency within while making the exterior seem infinite.



07 PROGRAM

Ruin Worship Space	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35,000 ft ²
Chapels	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30,400 ft ²
<i>Armenian Apostolic</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,500 ft ²
Temporary Church Storage -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100 ft ² (2)
Altar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,000 ft ²
<i>Orthodox</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8000 ft ²
Altar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	520 ft ²
<i>Roman Catholic</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,500 ft ²
Temporary Church Storage -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100 ft ² (2)
Altar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,000 ft ²
Pavilion	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,700 ft ²
Rectory	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	615 ft ²

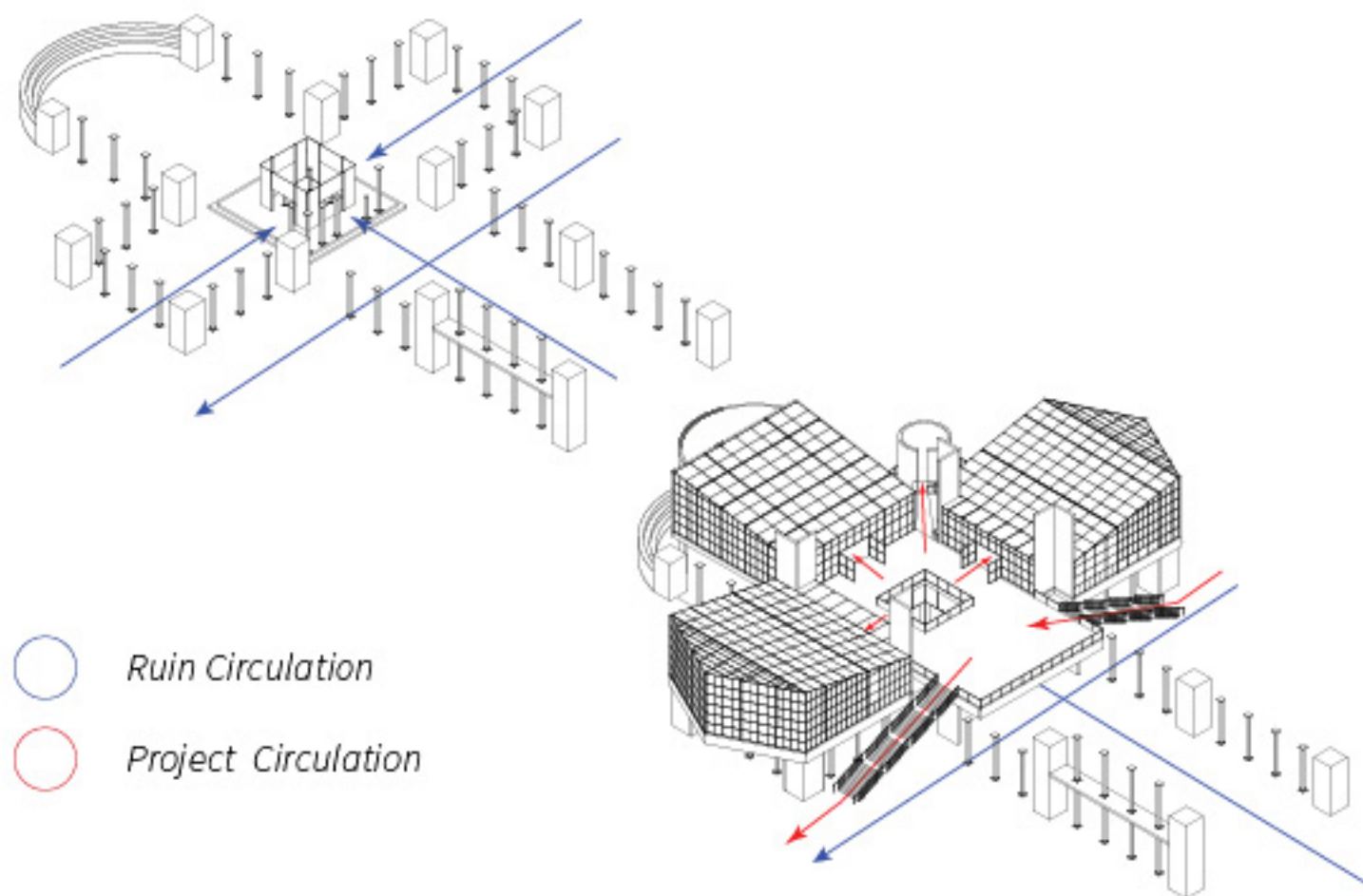
08 DESIGN STATEMENT

To restate the three rules guiding this project. The first and most important, protect and respect Saint John's tomb by creating a proper space of worship for people to gather and a proper resting place for him. The second, touch the site as little as possible to respect the physical site. The third, create a clear distinction between the ruins and the project.

With these things in mind, I took the approach of elevating the church above the ruins with minimal contact points to the site creating a "hanging" effect. The church is clad in mirrored glass so that it will be transparent from the interior view and allow the ruins to be seen. Glass will reflect the ruins from the outside and project the ruins onto the facades of the chapels.

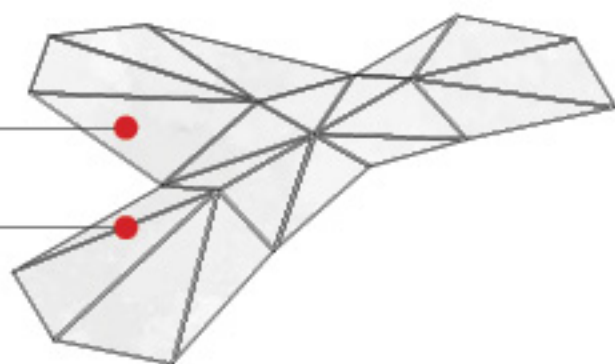
The chapels themselves are all connected by the pavilion in the center, which acts as a nexus that filters worshippers into their respective churches, while also acting as an egalitarian destination for non-religious visitors to enjoy elevated views of the site. It allows viewing of the tomb from the second floor and becomes the orientation element for all the chapels whose altars face the tomb.

The existing ruin level will act as it has throughout the past centuries, both as an area for larger religious gatherings, and for visitors who want to enjoy the ruins themselves.

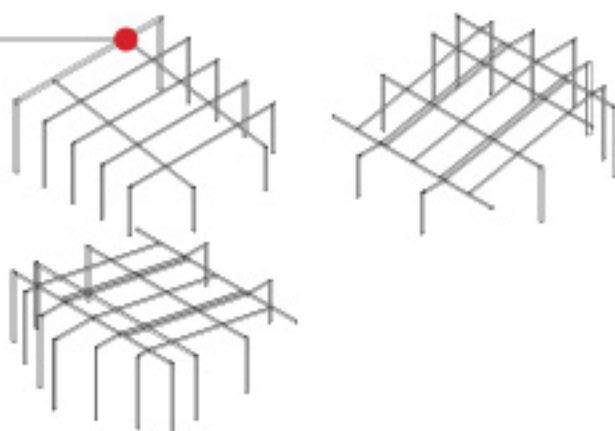


Fabritec ETFE Fabric

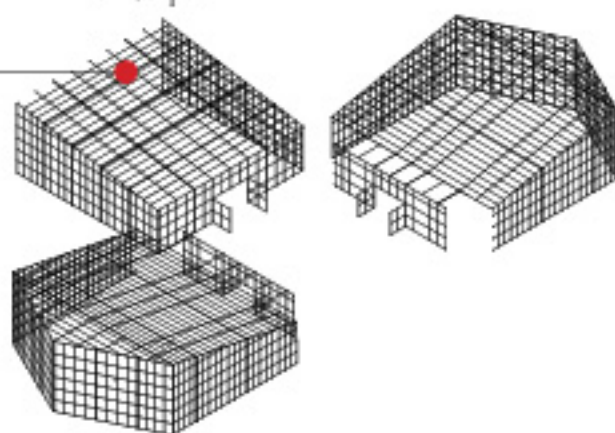
Steel Pipe



18"x3" Steel Structure



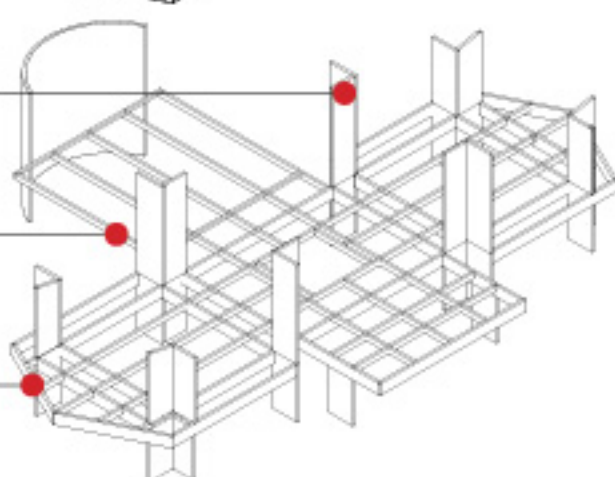
Steel Mullion



2' Thick Concrete Walls

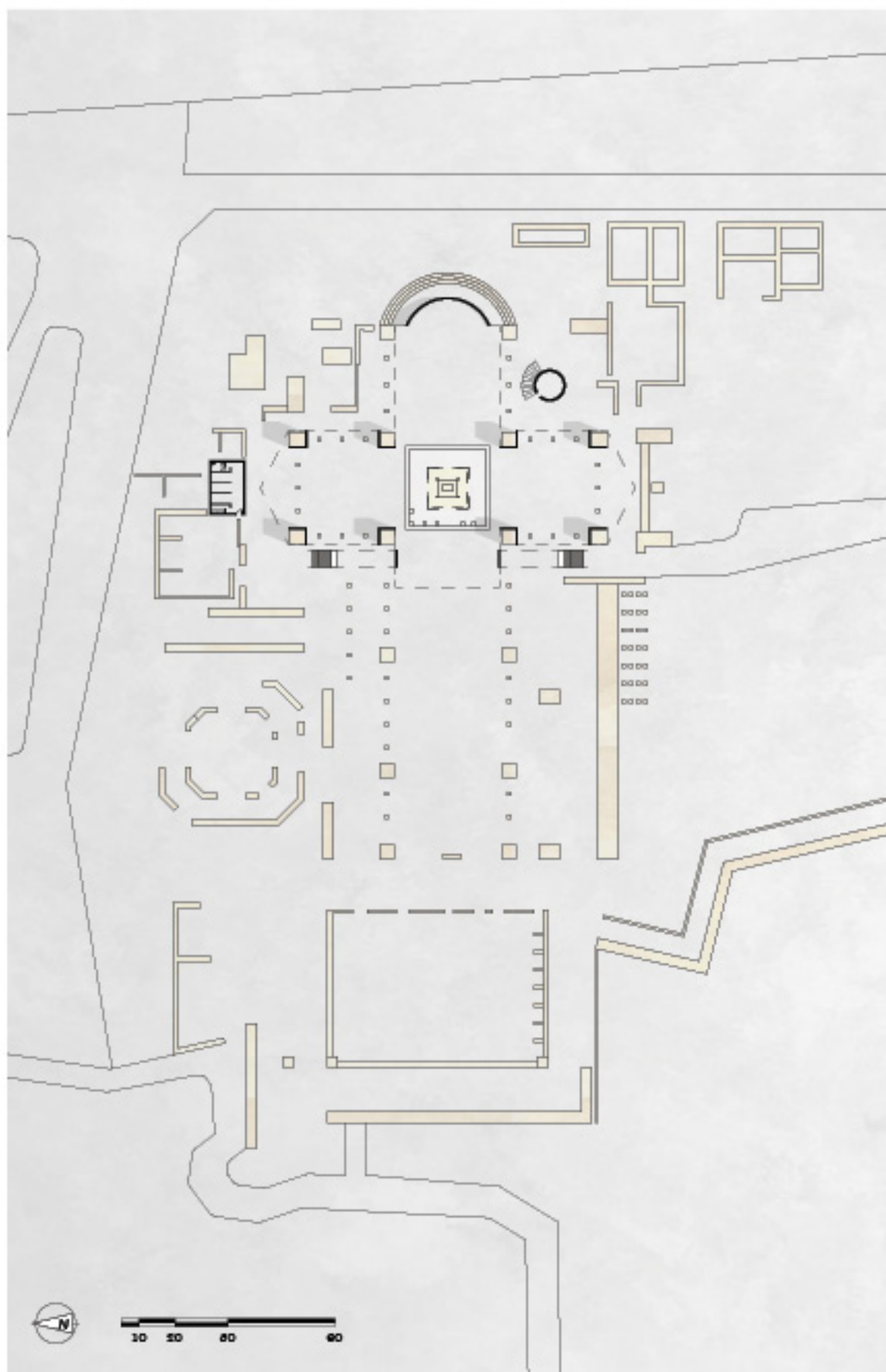
24" Deep Concrete Support Beams

48" Deep Concrete Beams



09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

FLOOR 1

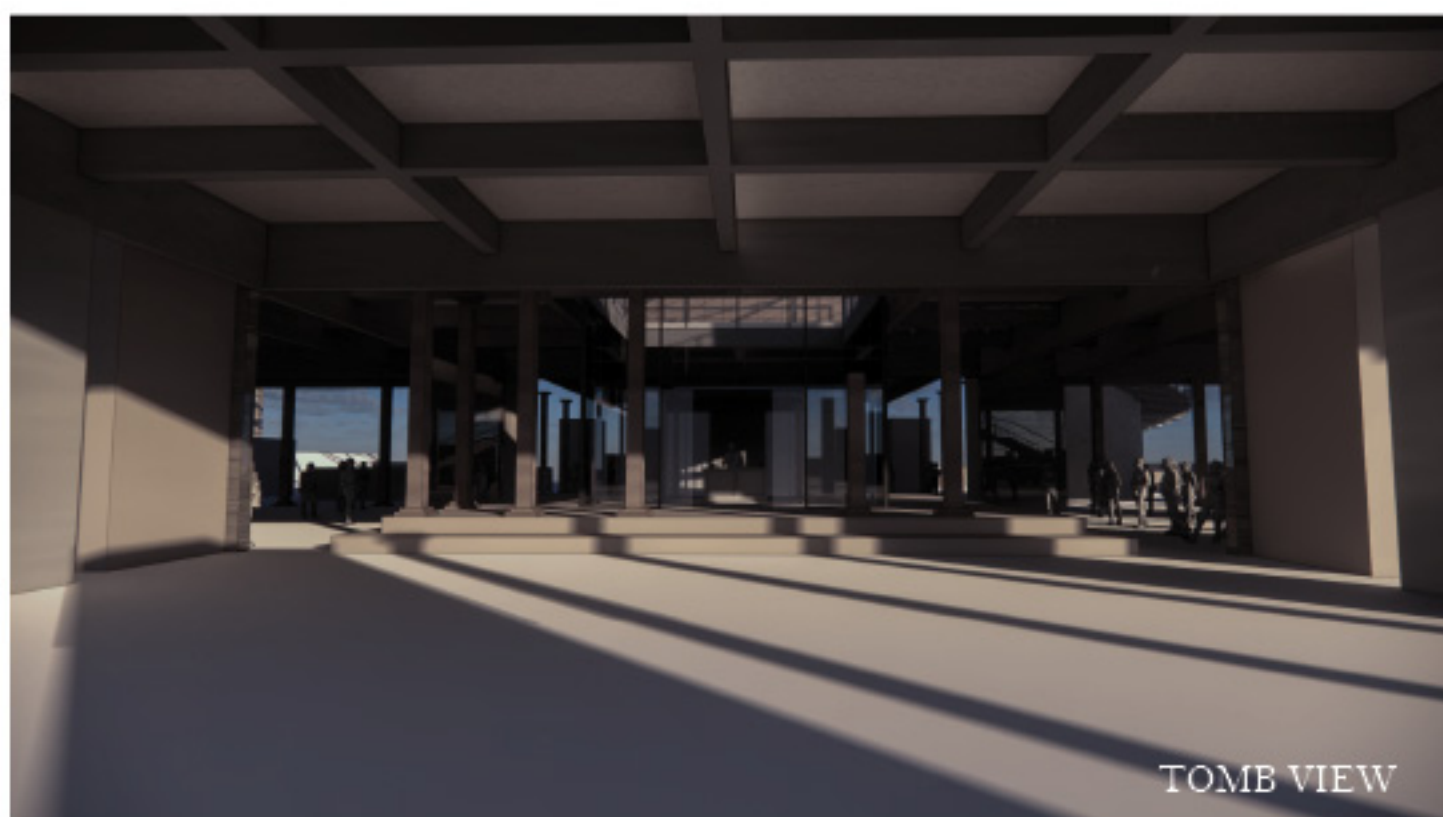


On the Ground floor, the goal of the project was once again to touch the site as little as possible. Taking inspiration from the Trenton Bath House, I created 8 L-Shaped structural columns that were offset from the existing ruin walls. I then offset the curvature of the ruined apse and extended a wall upwards to create another load bearing wall that would help support one of the chapels.

When I included circulation in the overall design I added two support walls to help support the staircases on either side of the entry pavilion and created a structural glass core for an elevator that would be surrounded by a spiral staircase acting as both an accessibility point and secondary form of egress. I also repurposed the existing library space on

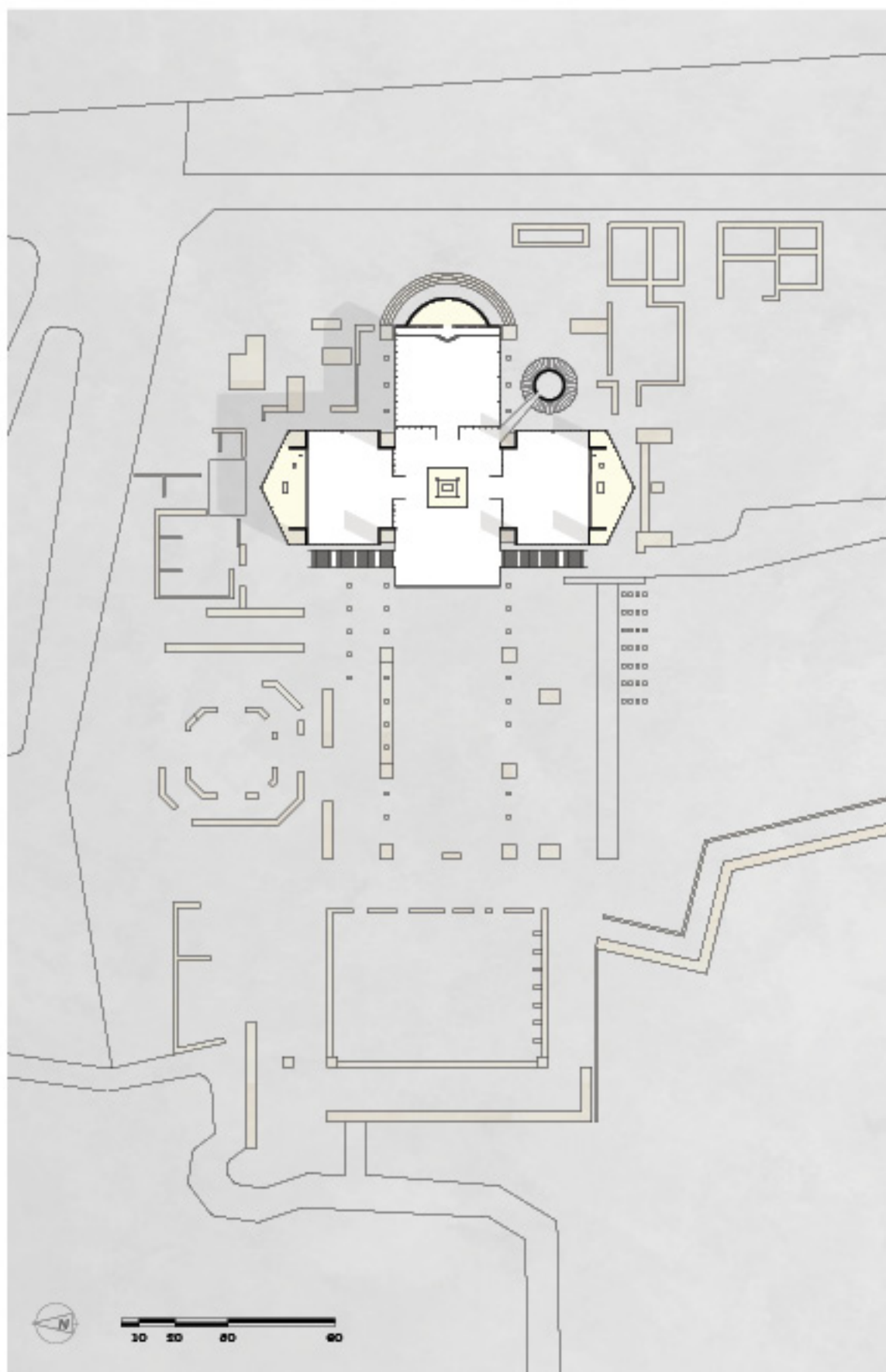
the northern part of the site from a storage for old frescos to a sacristy for priests complete with a restroom and a washing station for the sacred objects. My goal was to keep that as far away from the main groups of ruins so as to reduce excavation for water pipes.

Finally, and most importantly, I surrounded the tomb in a thin glass box with sliding doors so as to close off the tomb during off-hours and protect and respect Saint John. The space will continue to double as an altar for those who wish to worship mass over the tomb as they have been doing for years. This floor will also double as an extended covered area for larger masses with more guests such as Easter mass or Christmas mass.



09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

FLOOR 2



The stairs lead to a pavilion that extends westward to allow for different views throughout the ruin site. Although this project is predominantly religious I wanted to keep in mind an egalitarian approach for all spaces surrounding the chapels and for those who wish to just view the ruins or the tomb from above they can smoothly continue onward down the opposite staircase.

The pavilion acts as a nexus that connects the three chapels to Saint John, with all three altars pointing towards the Saint so as to honor him through the rituals of the mass he helped create. The three chapels are as mentioned previously: Apostolic Armenian, facing north; Orthodox, facing East; and Roman Catholic, facing South.

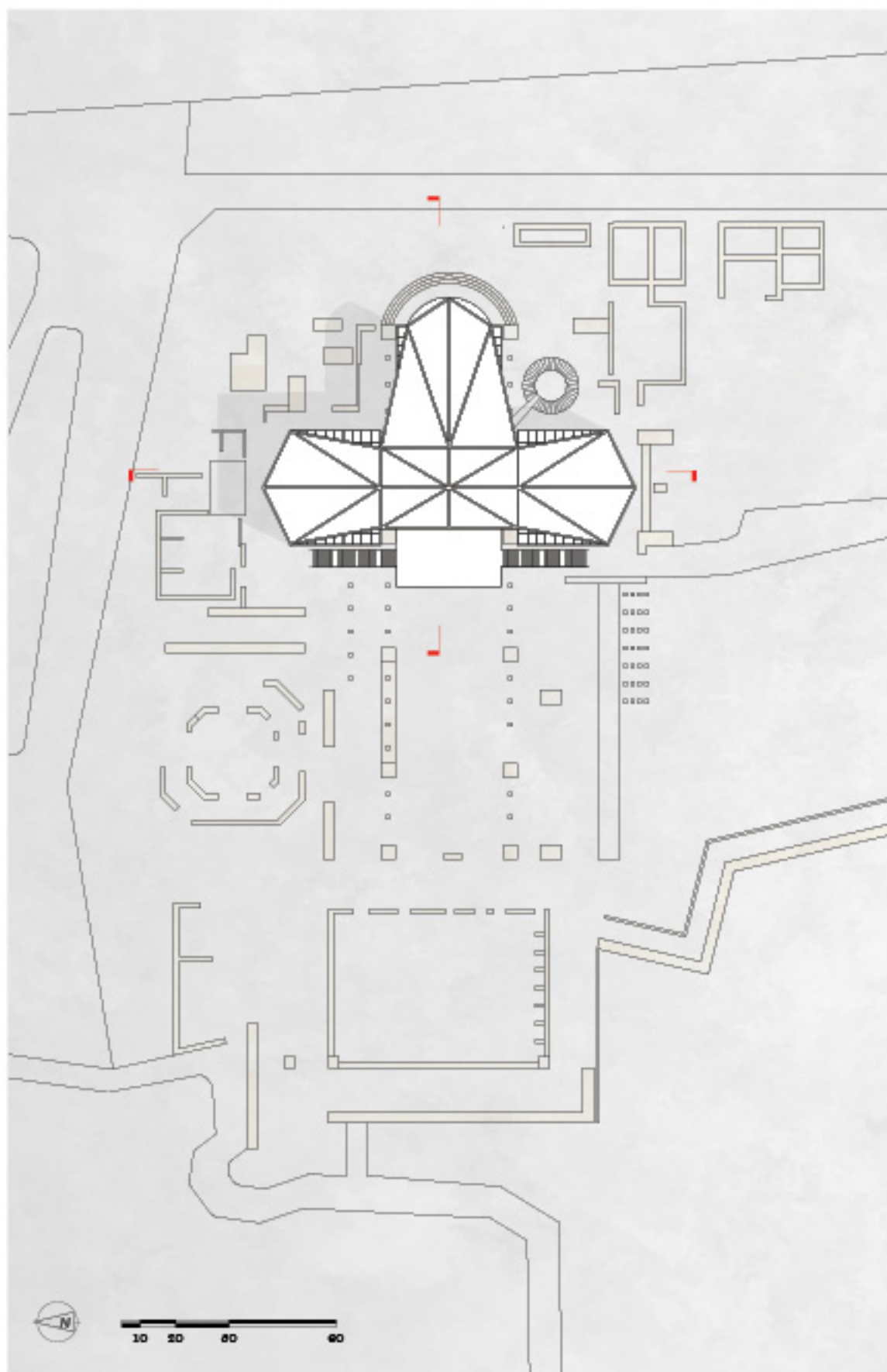
The L-Shaped columns extend on the Northern and Southern extremities and create both structural support for the roof systems and create temporary storage space for the Armenian Apostolic and Roman Catholic churches. The offset apse wall extends upwards and creates a closed off space for the Orthodox priest to conduct to the rituals of the mass that happen behind the iconostasis, as is tradition in this denomination.

The facades are all made of thin mirrored glass that reflects the site from the outside, decorating the walls with the ruins, while from the inside there is a transparency as those inside look out towards the ruins as they worship.



09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

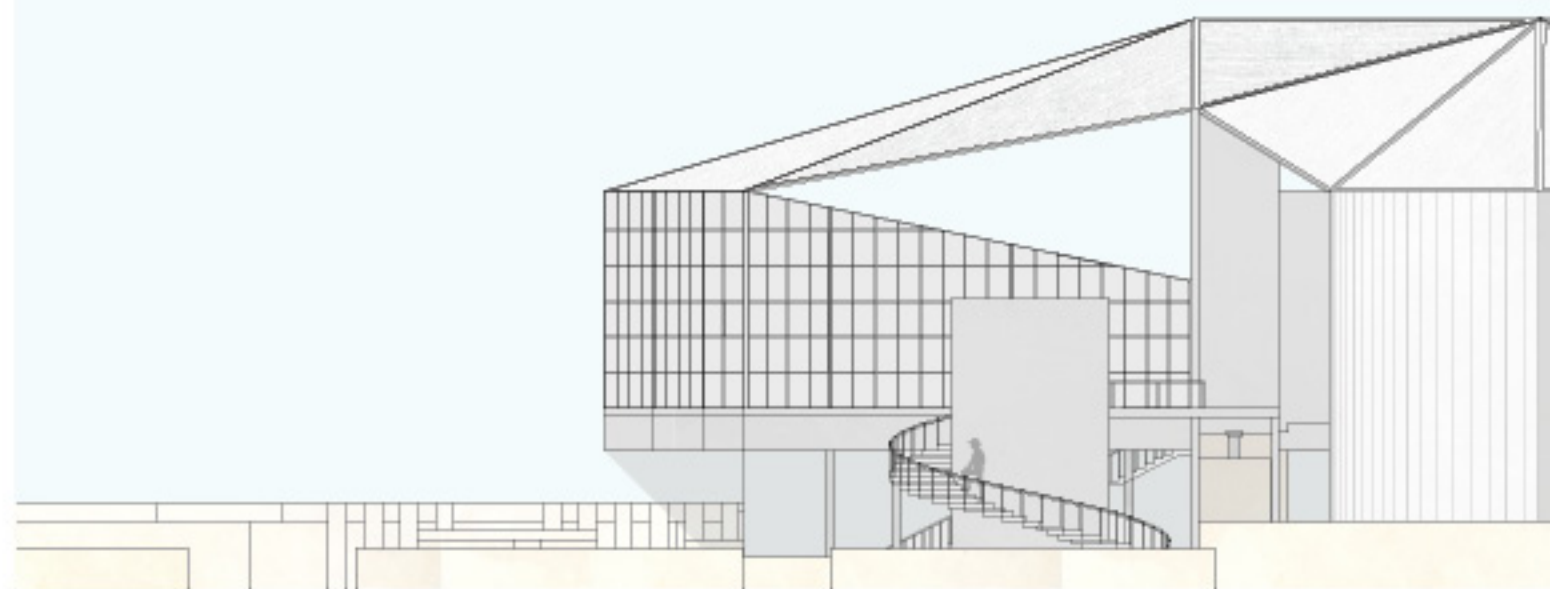
ROOF PLAN



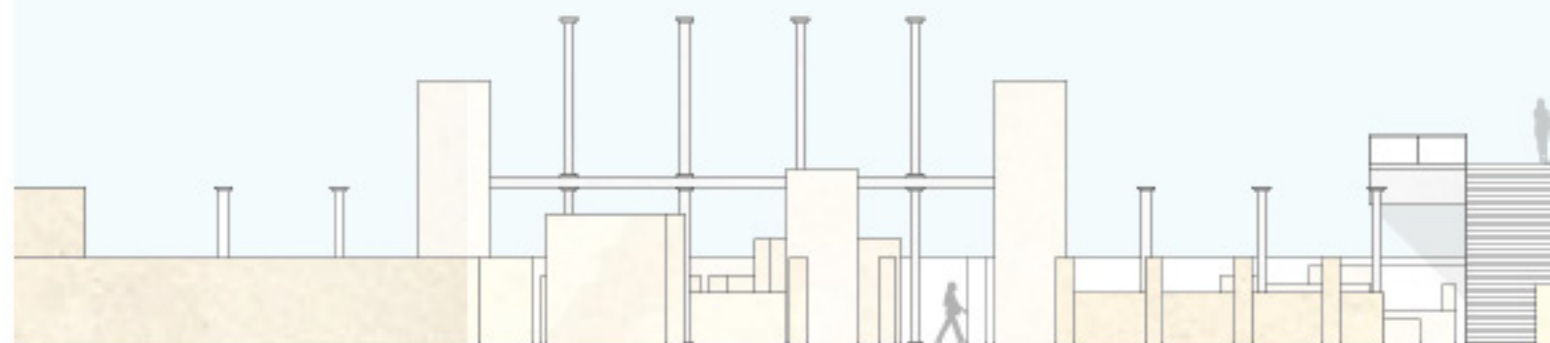
To reduce solar radiation on the chapels and stop them from turning into greenhouses, I placed a roof canopy that floats above the chapels and pavilion to create shade. The skin is made of ETFE fabric, an inflatable fabric material that becomes opaquer the more inflated it gets. It also has a built in LED system which will act as the lighting for the project during the vigil hours creating a soft glow that will illuminate the project and surrounding ruins.



09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

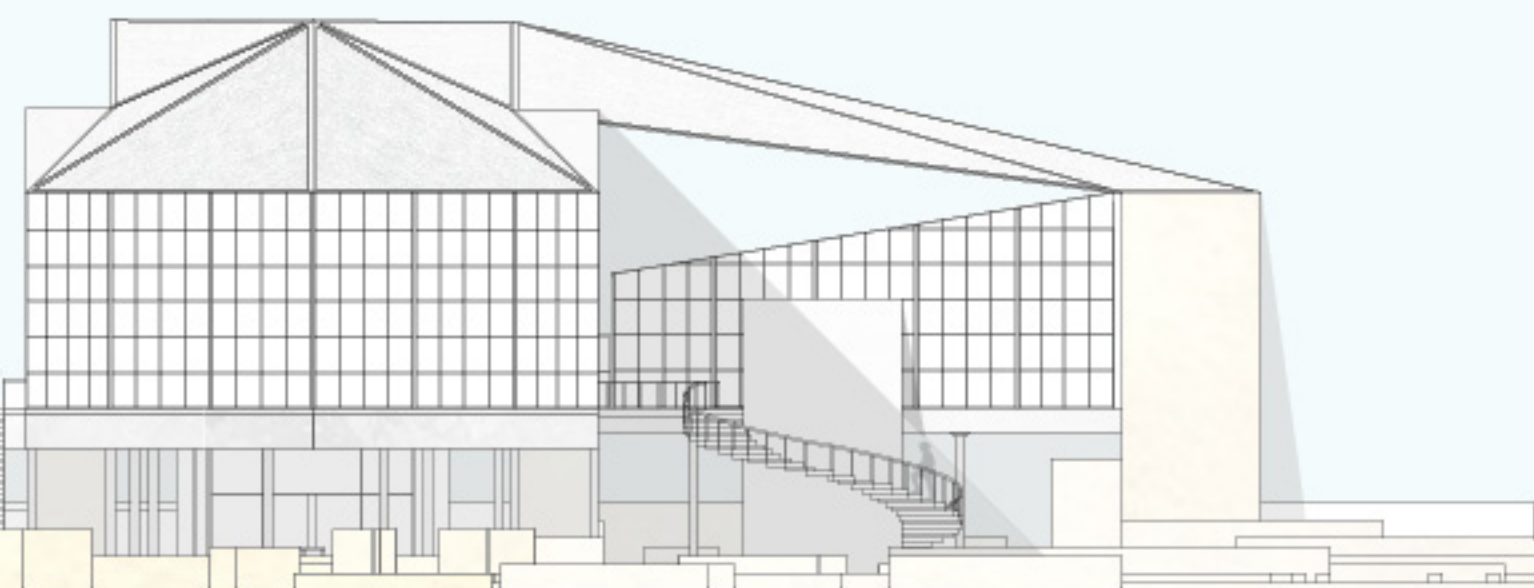
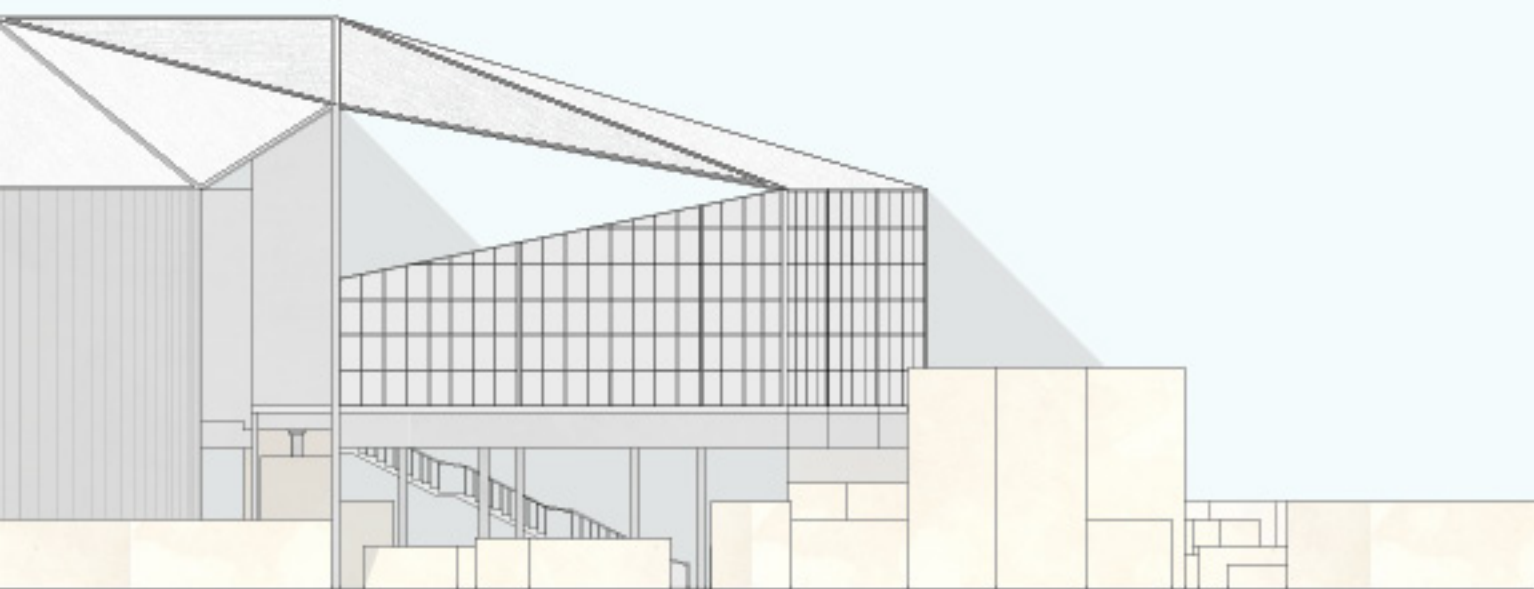


ELEVATION E

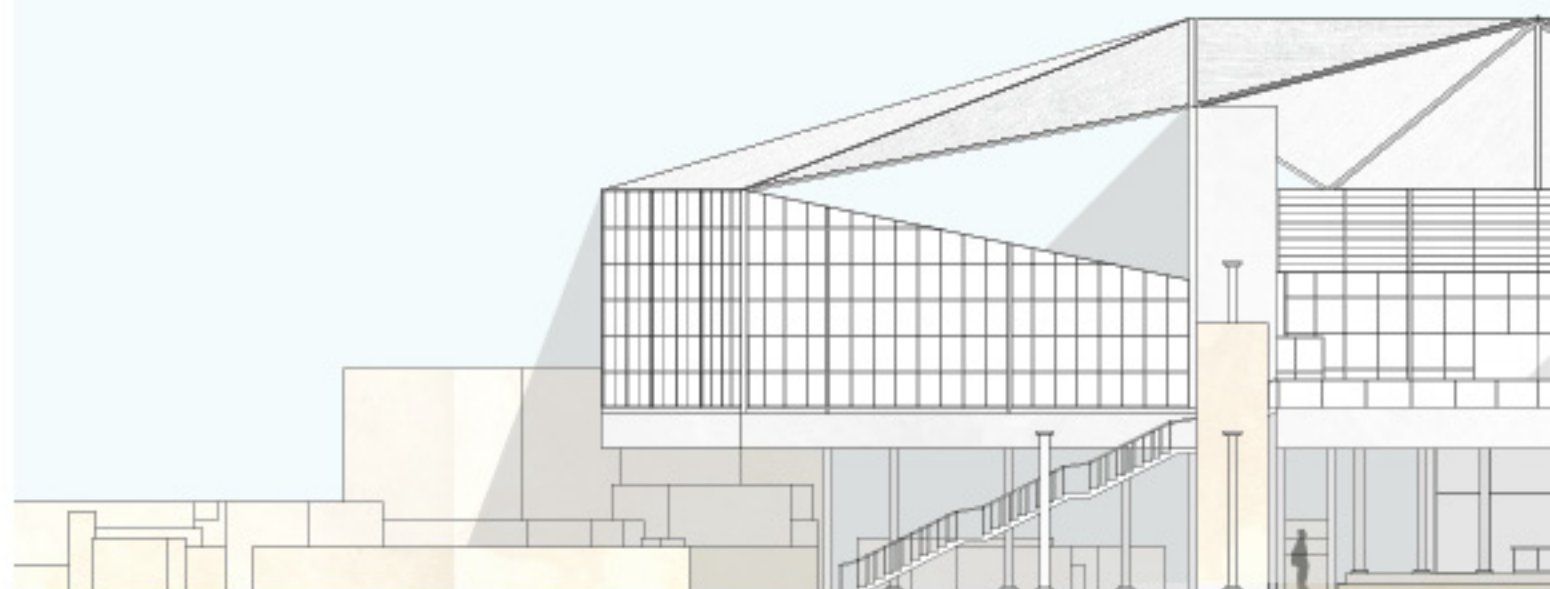


ELEVATION N

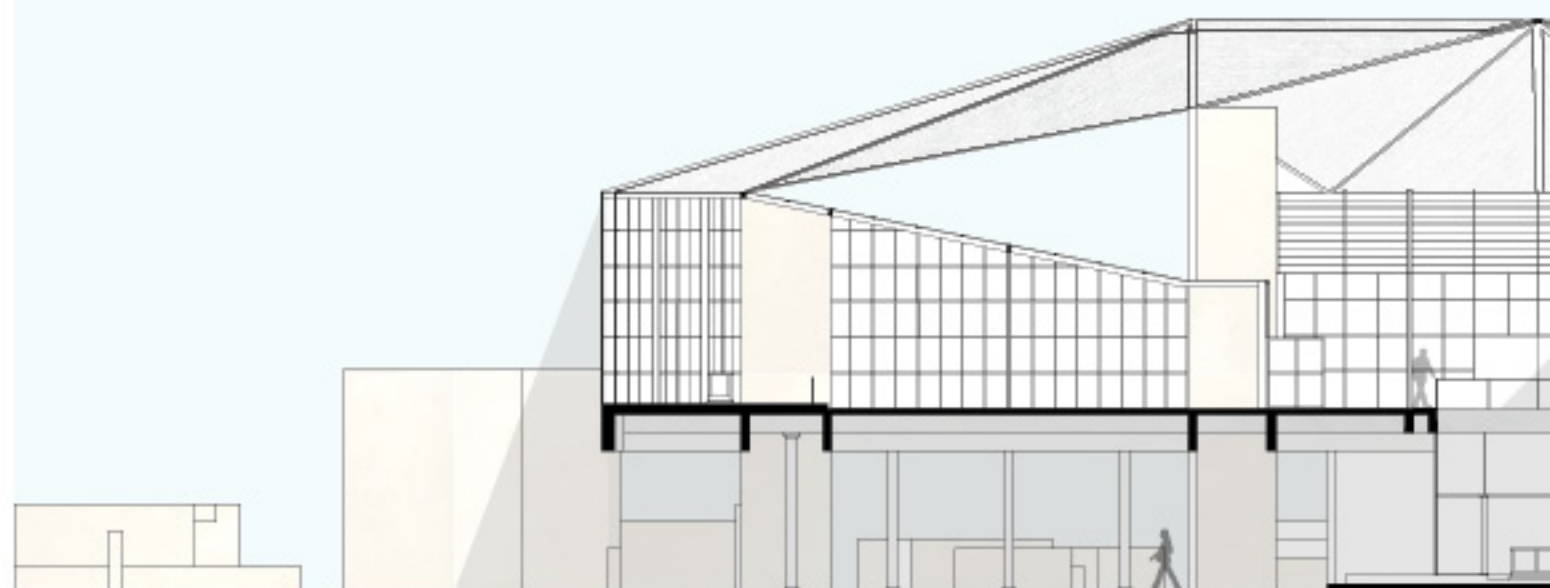




09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

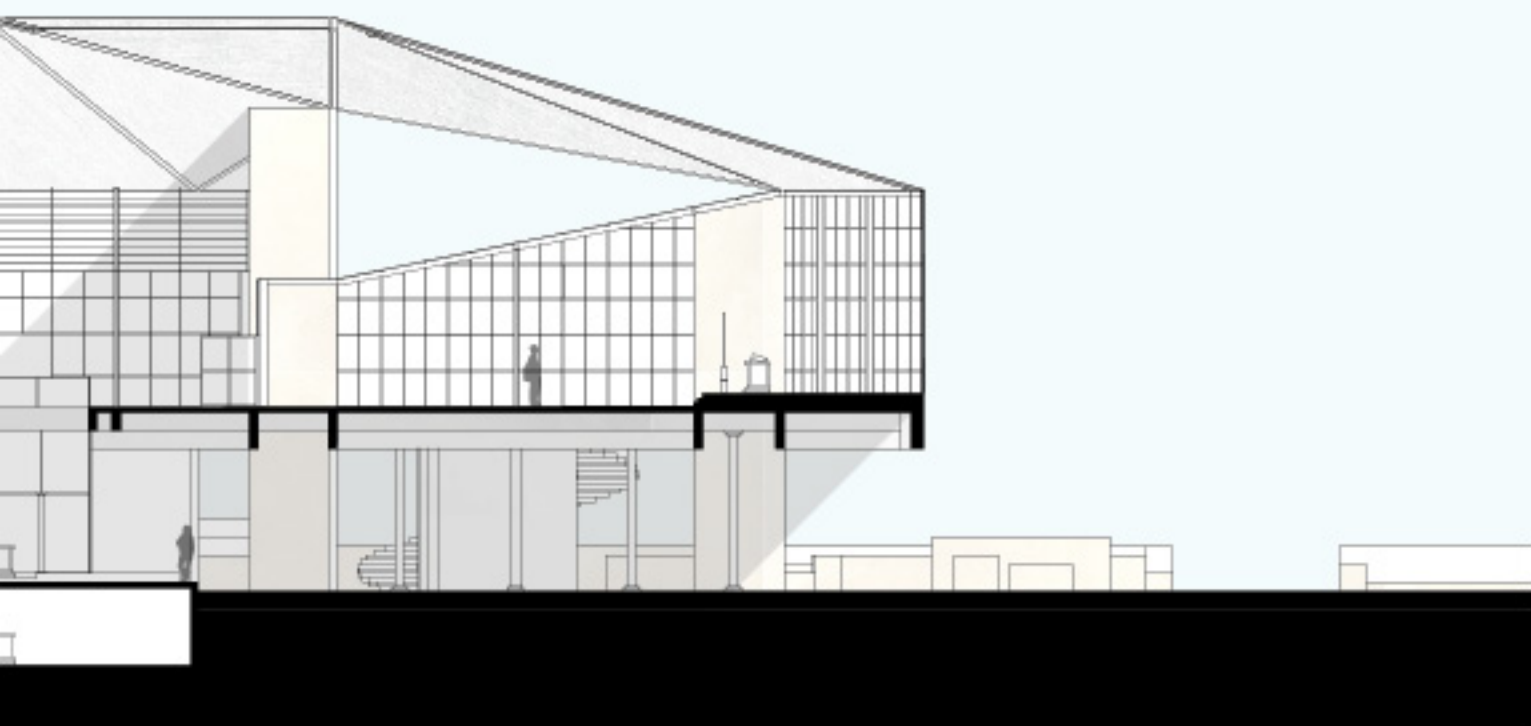
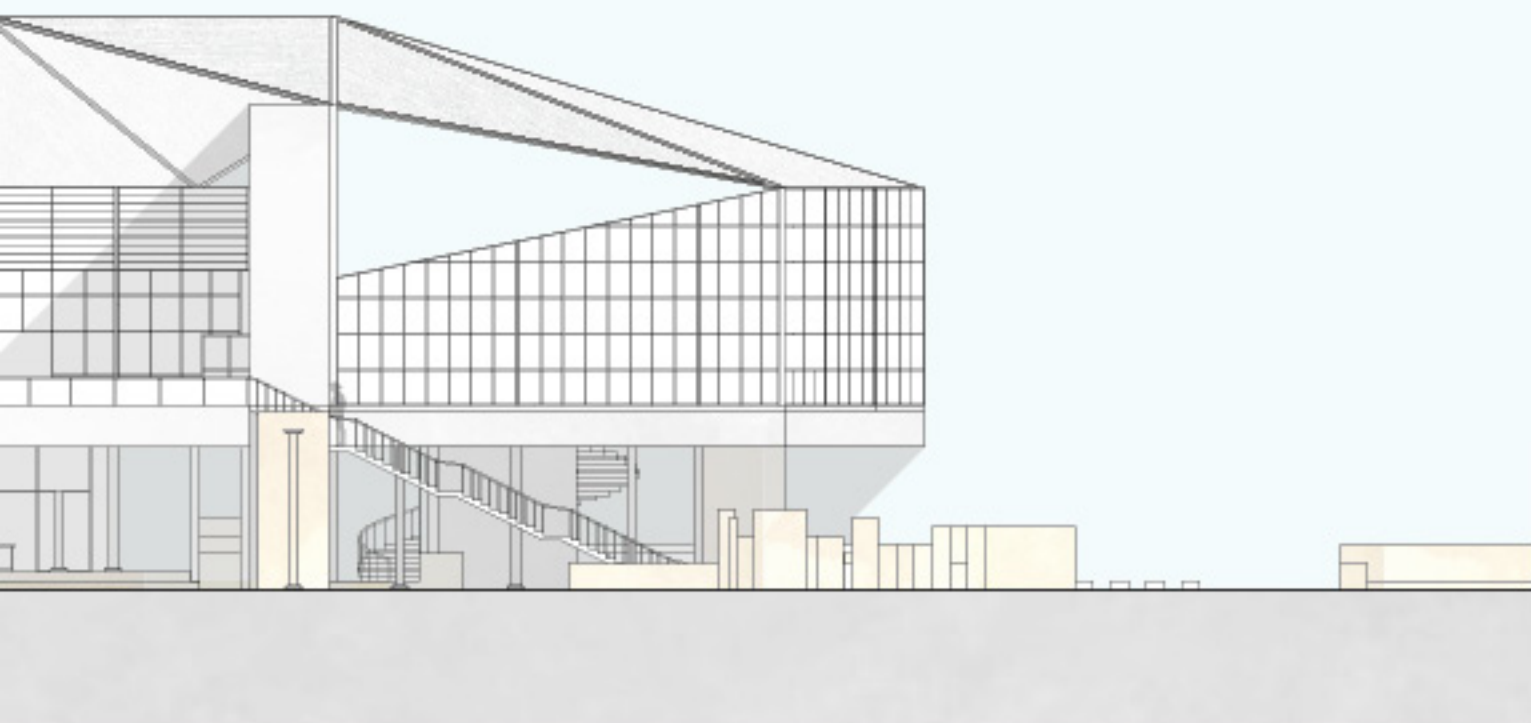


ELEVATION W



SECTION W

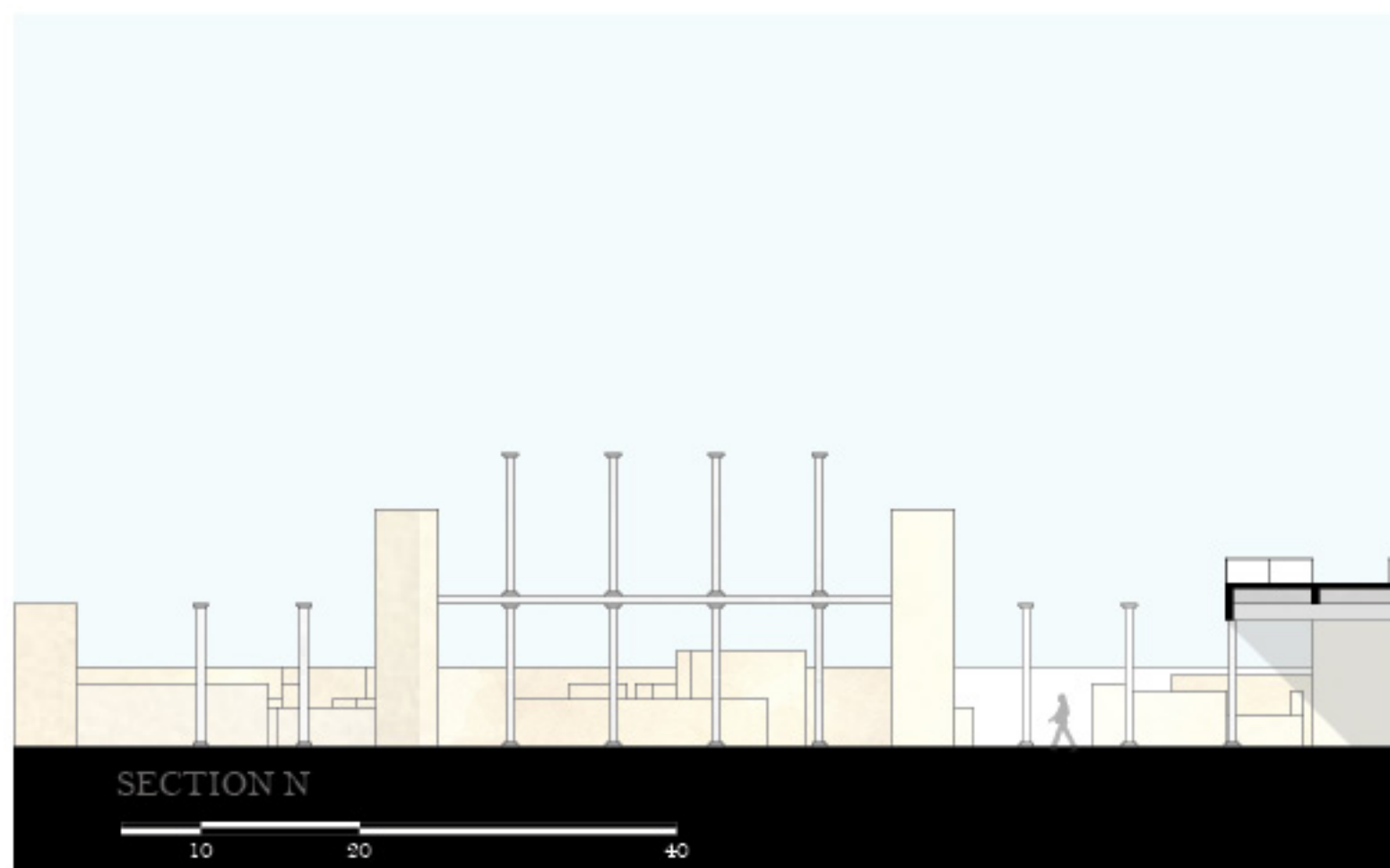


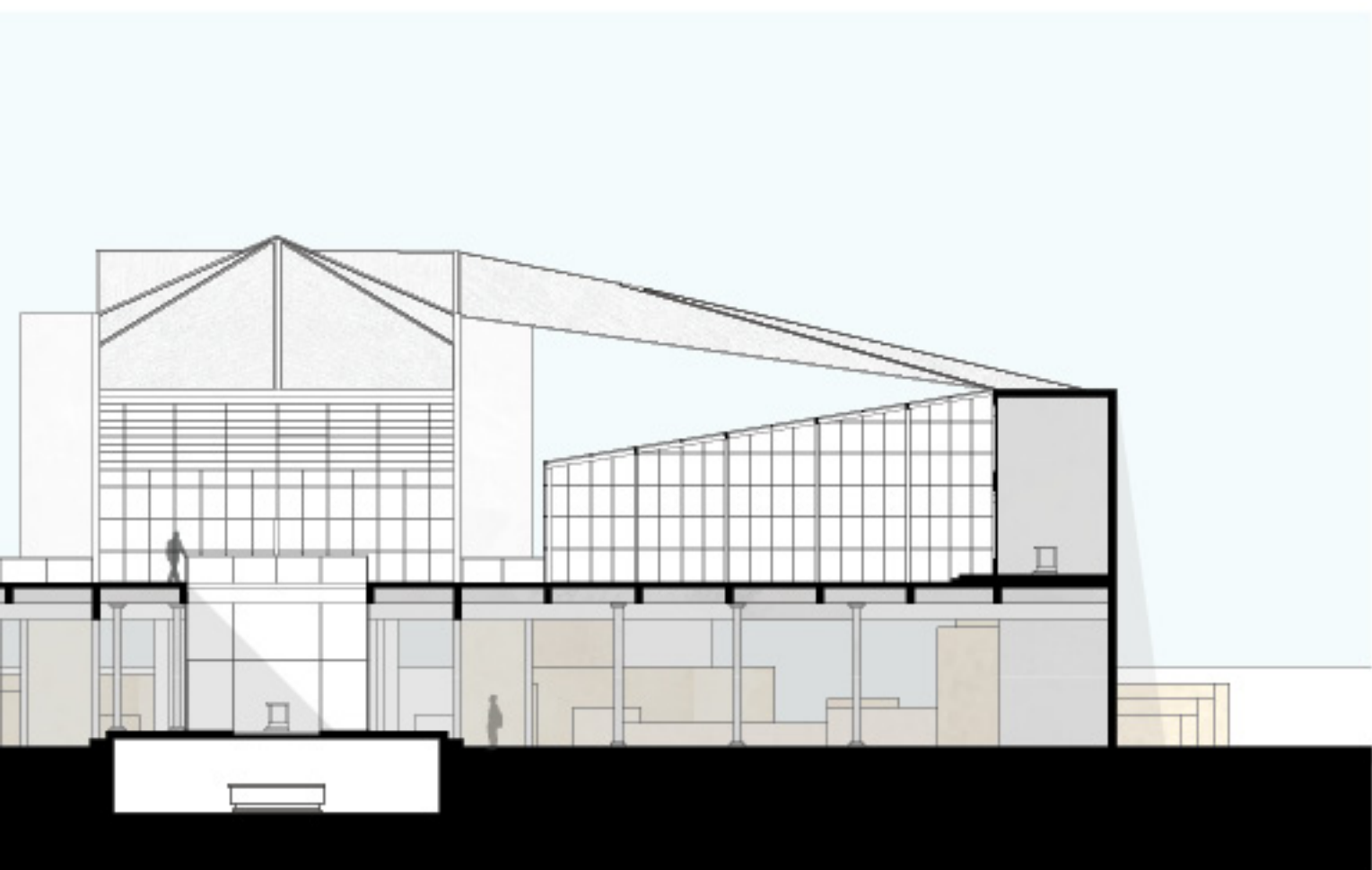
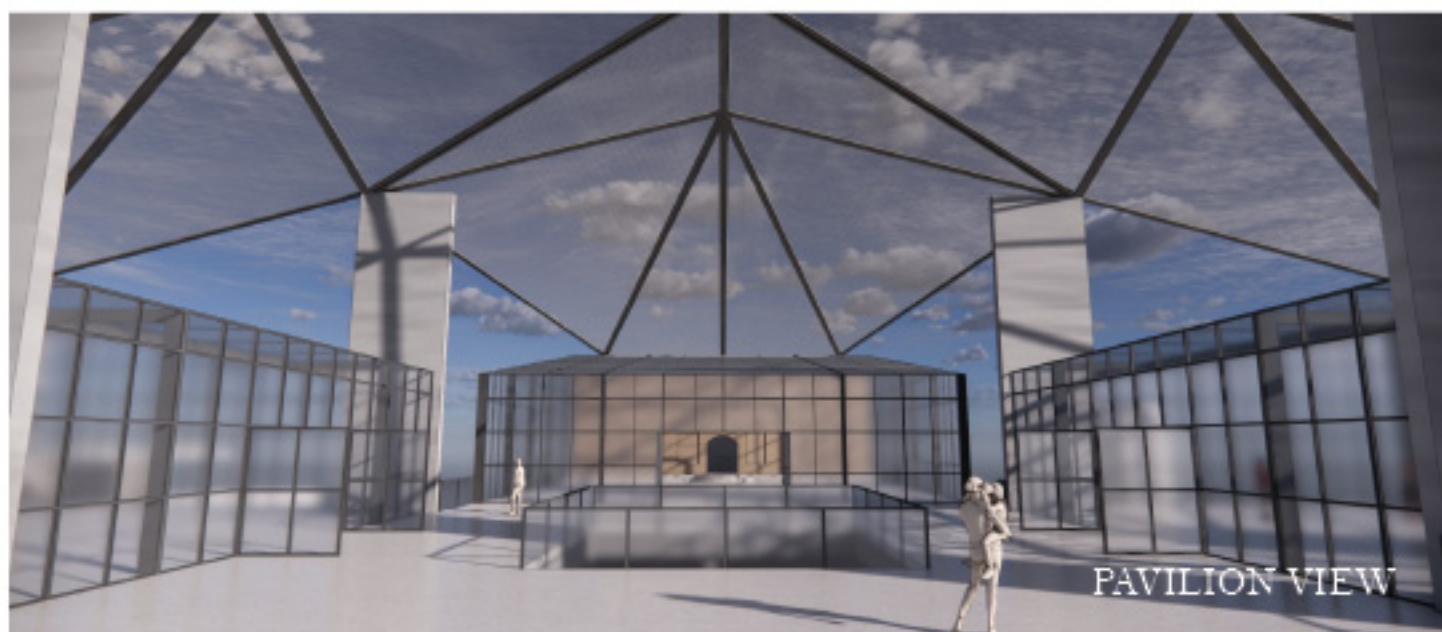


09 DRAWINGS AND DESIGN

FINAL THOUGHT

This project is provocative. As such, it does not shy away from the reality that it is sitting on an ancient site and rather than making something small and impermanent it chooses to embrace the controversy. The roof system and glass are a stark contrast from the existing site, and the connection between the pavilion and the tomb is meant to create a dialogue between modernity and antiquity. The chapels of Saint John embrace that all of Christianity is not under one roof, but begins to create an open line of communication, with clear boundaries, to peel back the veil and show that we all come from the same place.





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