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A LIBRARY AS A TEMPLE

by Wendy Magliozzi


Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

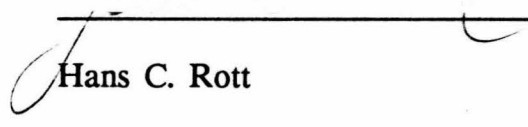
APPROVED:



Olvio Ferrari: Chairman



Salahuddin Choudhury



Hans C. Rott

Blacksburg, Va.
May 1990

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Committee Chairman: Olivio Ferrari

(ABSTRACT)

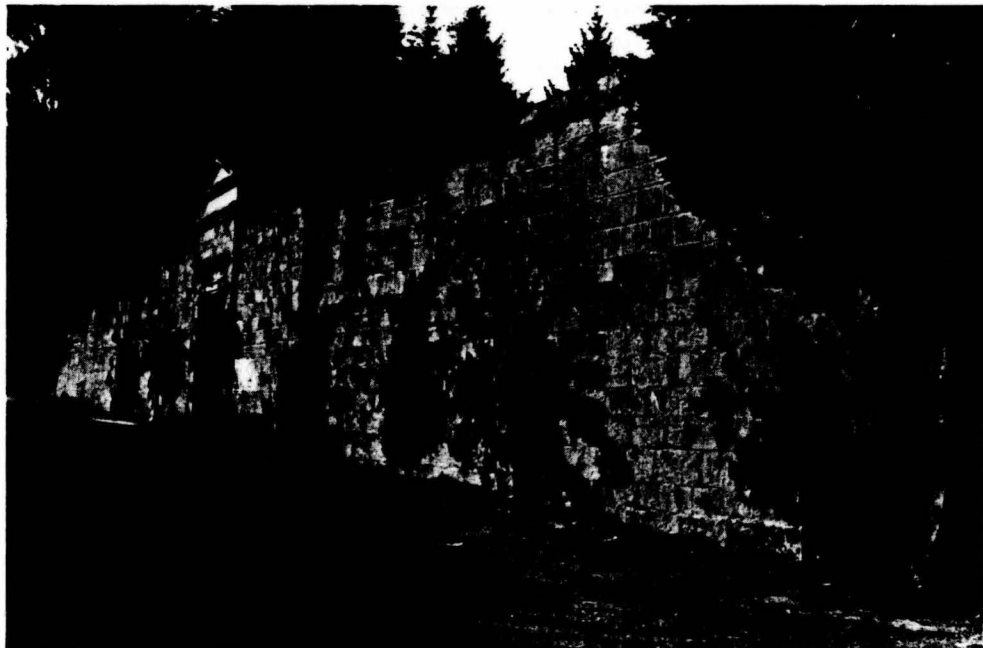
This thesis is the study of a library as a temple. It is a search for meaning in architecture through material, form and the idea of a sacred place.

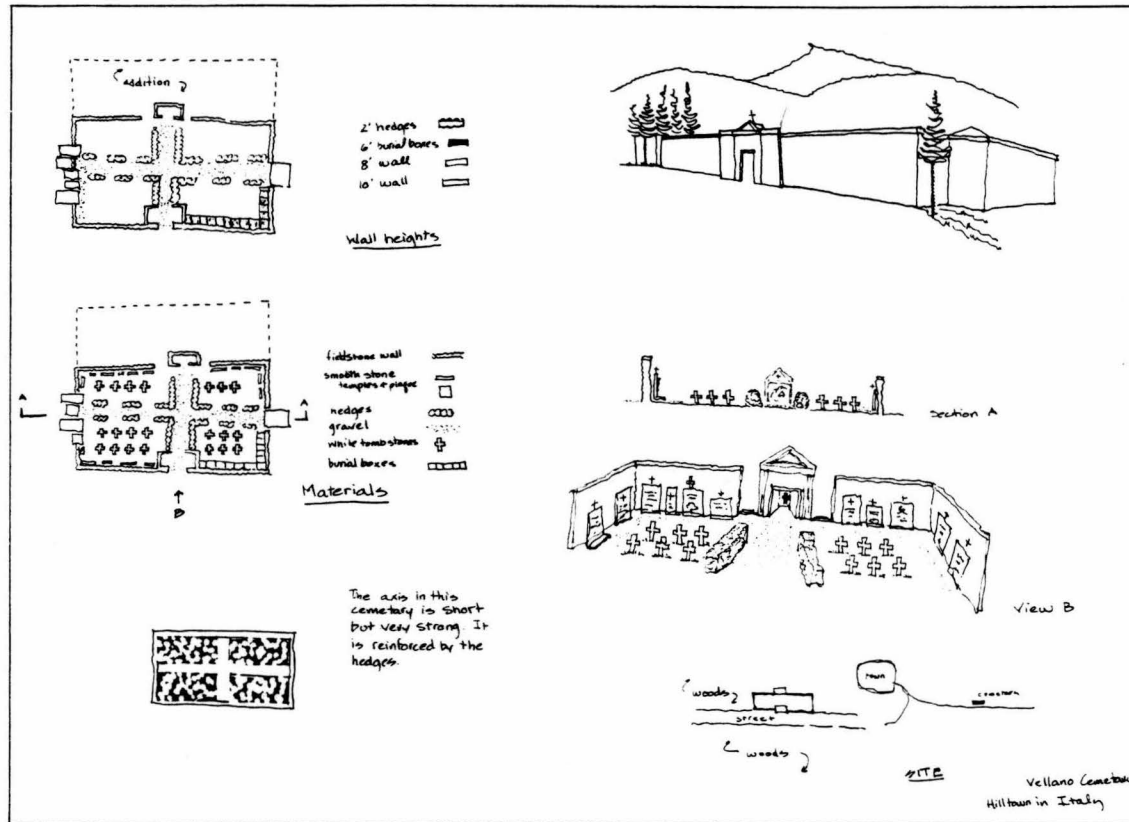


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"When mud huts or straw shelters, incapable of resisting the inclemency of the weather, sufficed for the living, tumuli were raised for the dead, and stone was used for sepulchres before it was used for houses. It is the strong-built houses of the dead that have withstood the ages, not the houses of the living; not the temporary lodgings but the permanent habitations." P.41 Unamuno, Tragic Sense of Life.





Statement

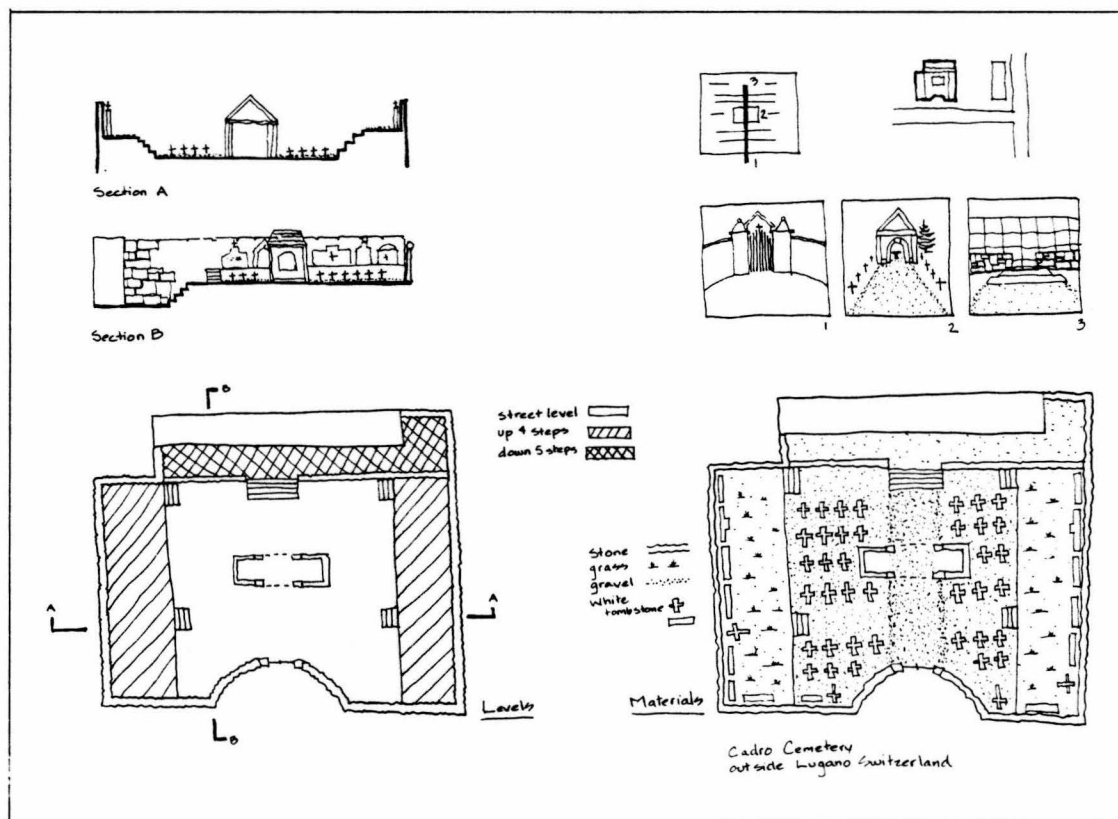
The inspiration for my thesis project follows understandings gained from an architectural pilgrimage to sites in Europe. It was in Europe that I began to understand the material relationship between some themes of architecture and the things of architecture.

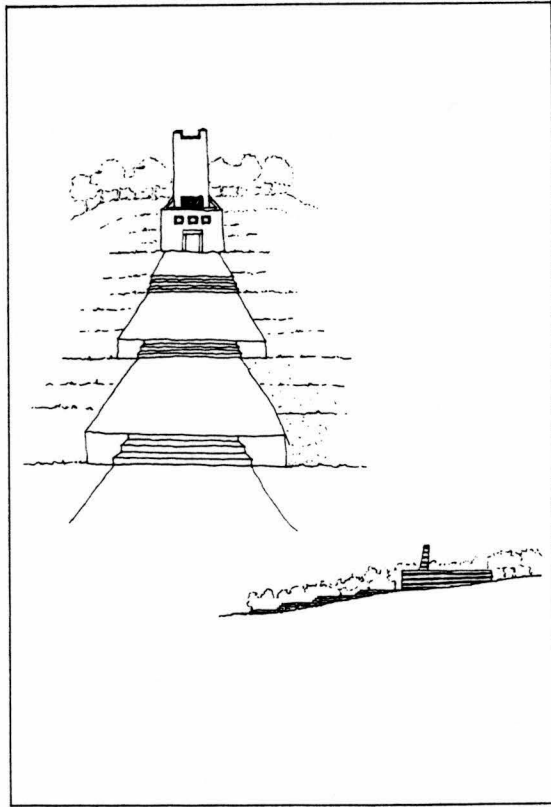
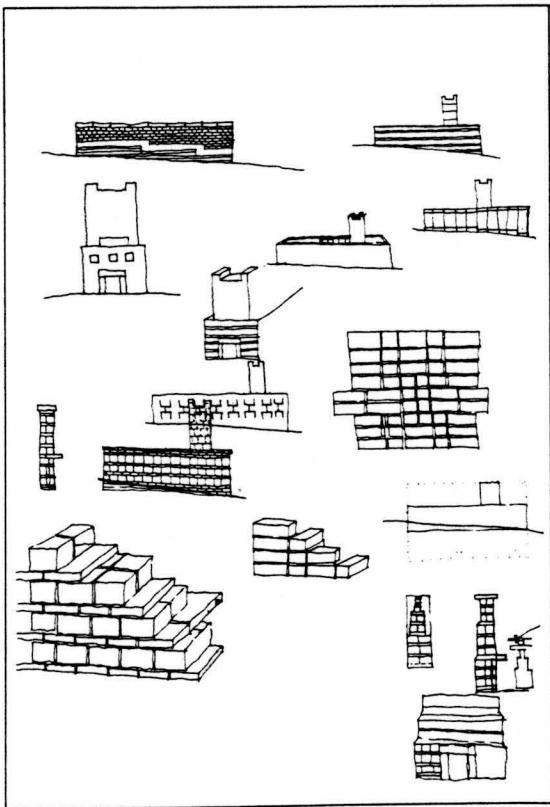
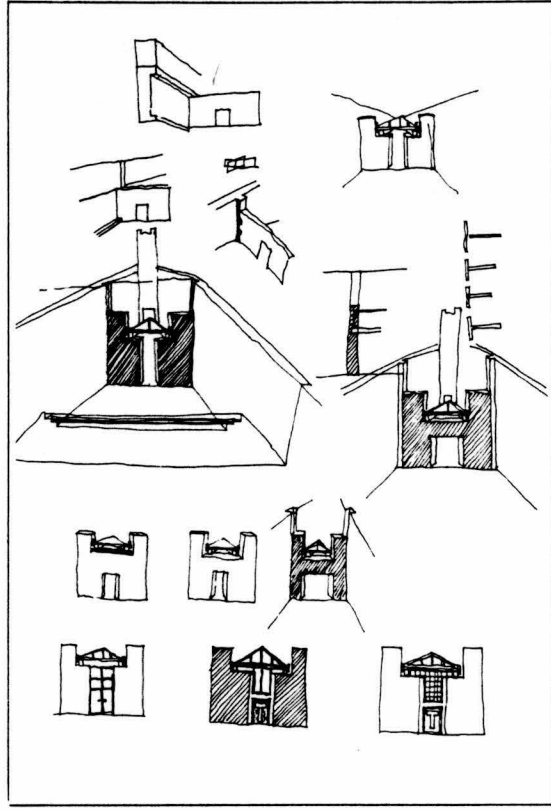
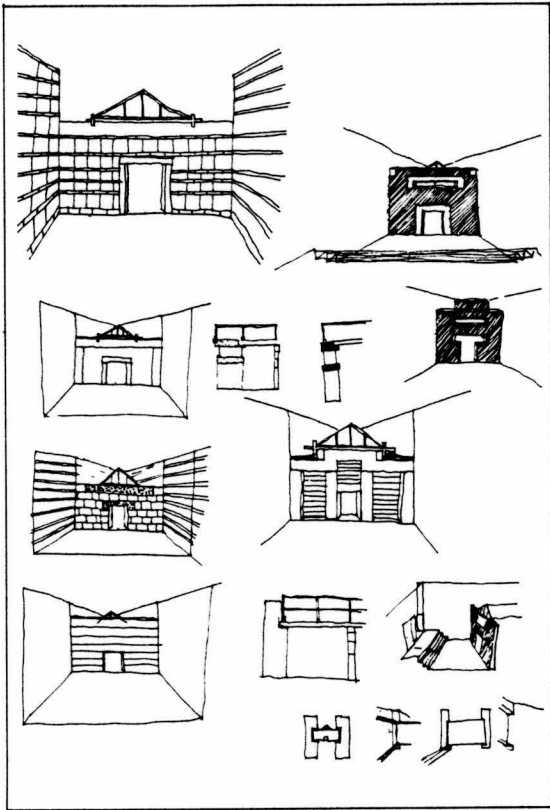
Architecture is distinguished by the architect's pursuit, in his work, of some idea, a theme that orders his making and doing.

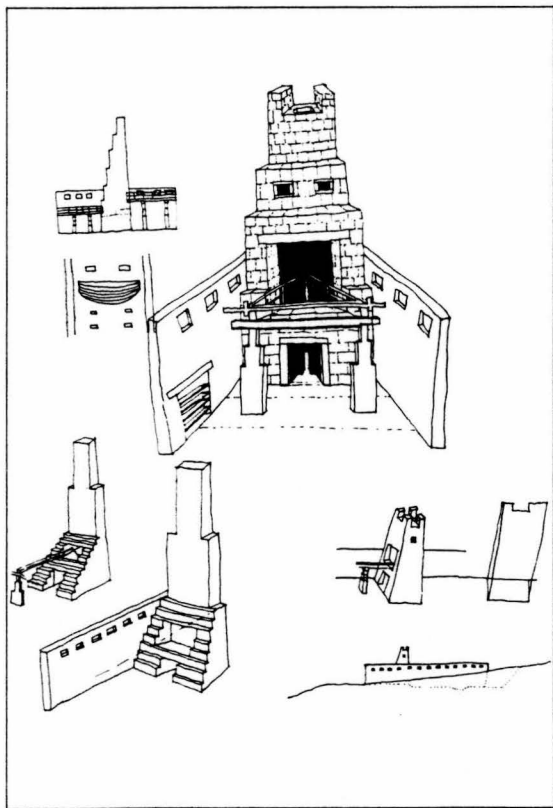
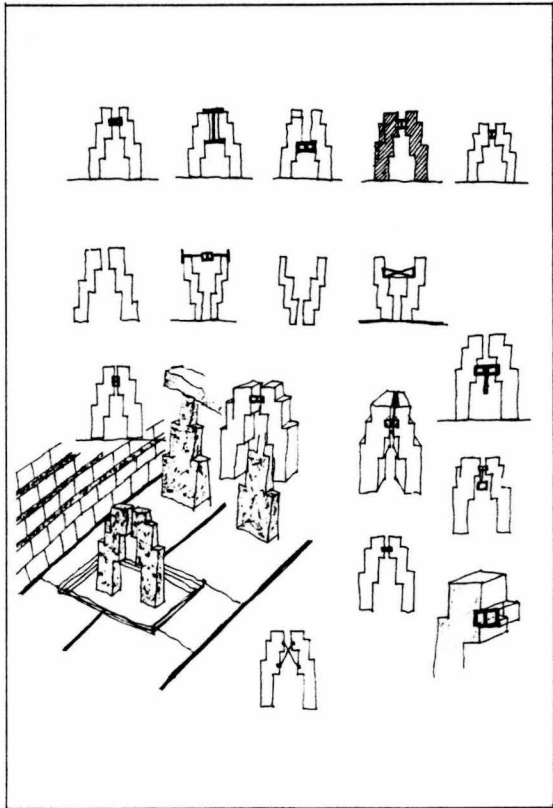
The cemeteries of Europe exemplify the theme of architectural processions. The portal at the entrance to the cemetery separates the special world of the cemetery from the ordinary world outside. It is this special architectural world of the cemetery, a world differentiated and designed, which my thesis emulates. The cemetery is distinguished by many differentiated parts: an iron gate, a stucco wall, an open window, a concrete bench, a hewn threshold, cut stone crosses, a red tile cap, and a pool of water.

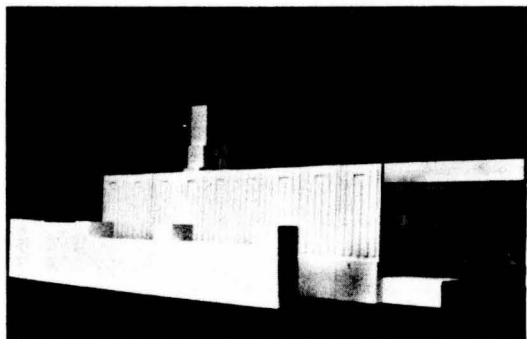
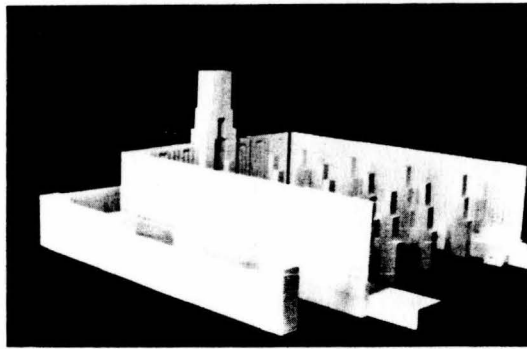
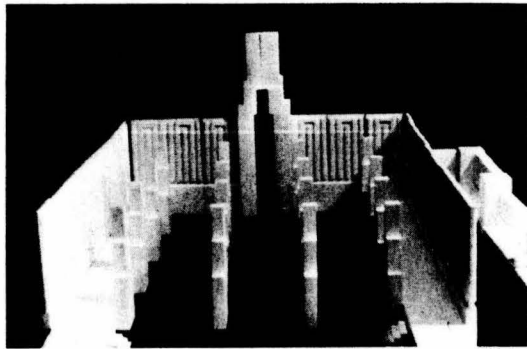
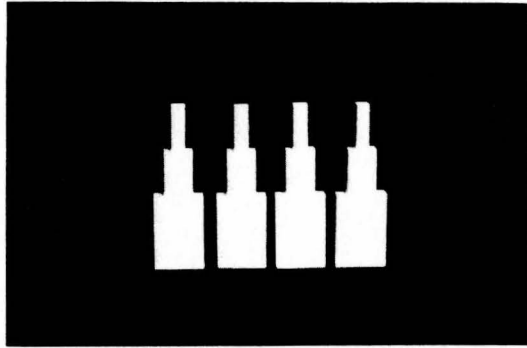
The idea of the cemetery is as a house, made to hold the individual pieces and the pilgrim who walks a path ascending from a beginning to the end of his journey. The journey is ordered to the rows of markers, the stepping of the path, the sound of gravel underfoot, the drop of water.

Procession is my architectural theme and the foundation of my thesis project. Procession, housed in a place of differentiated pieces: hewn columns, stone lintel, steps, steel truss, hollowed walls, and sunken pool, is the stuff of my thesis project.



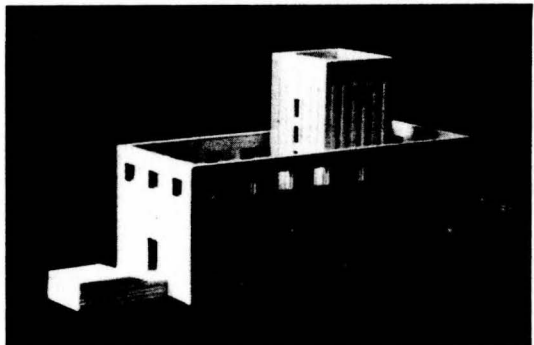
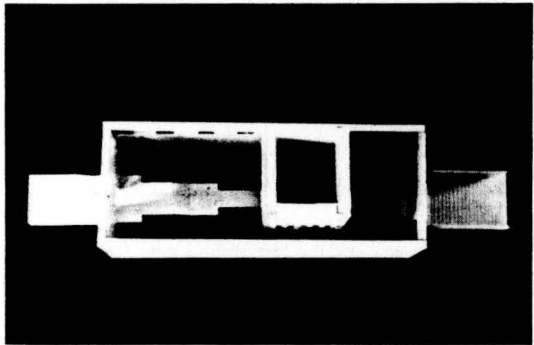
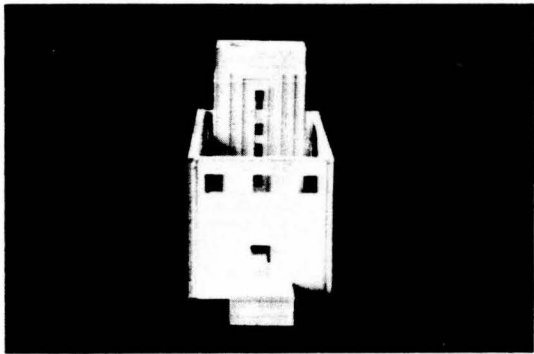


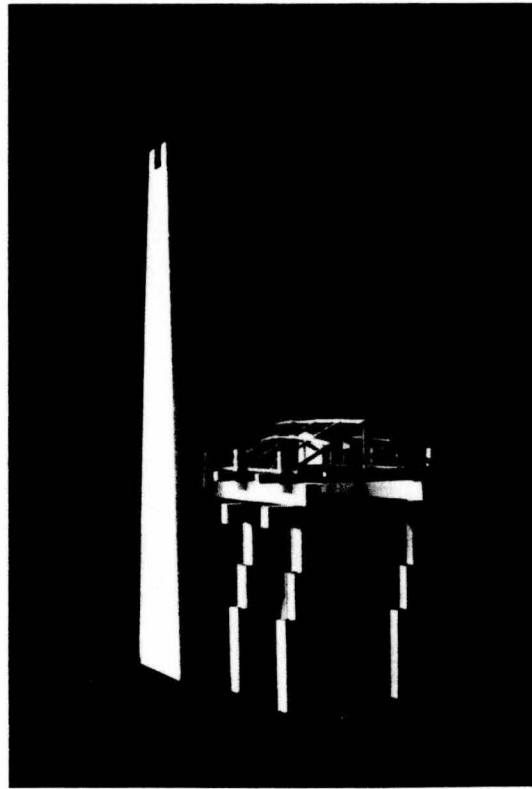
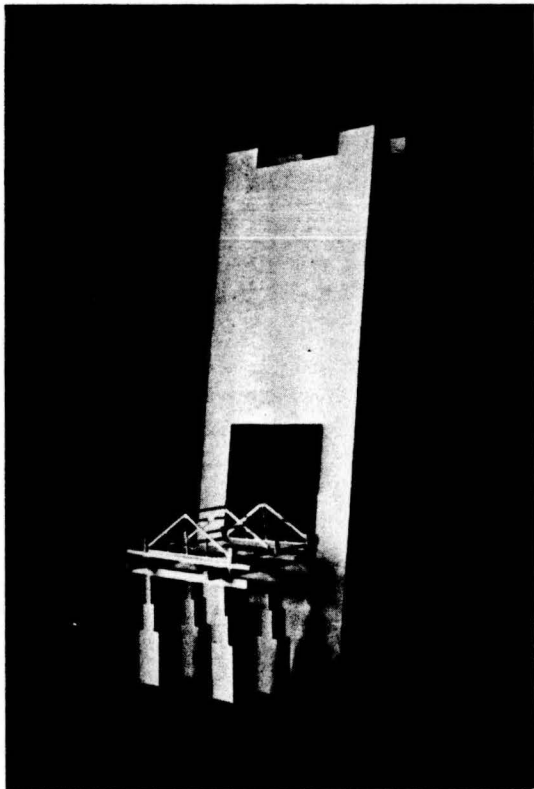
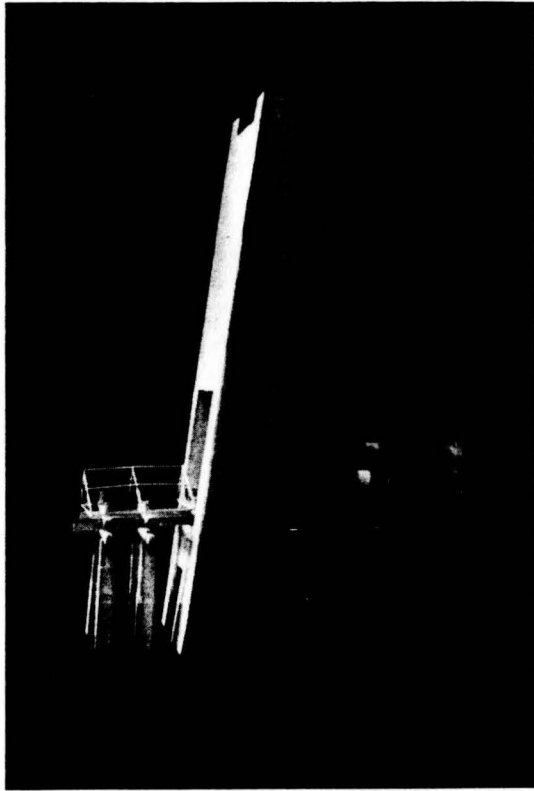


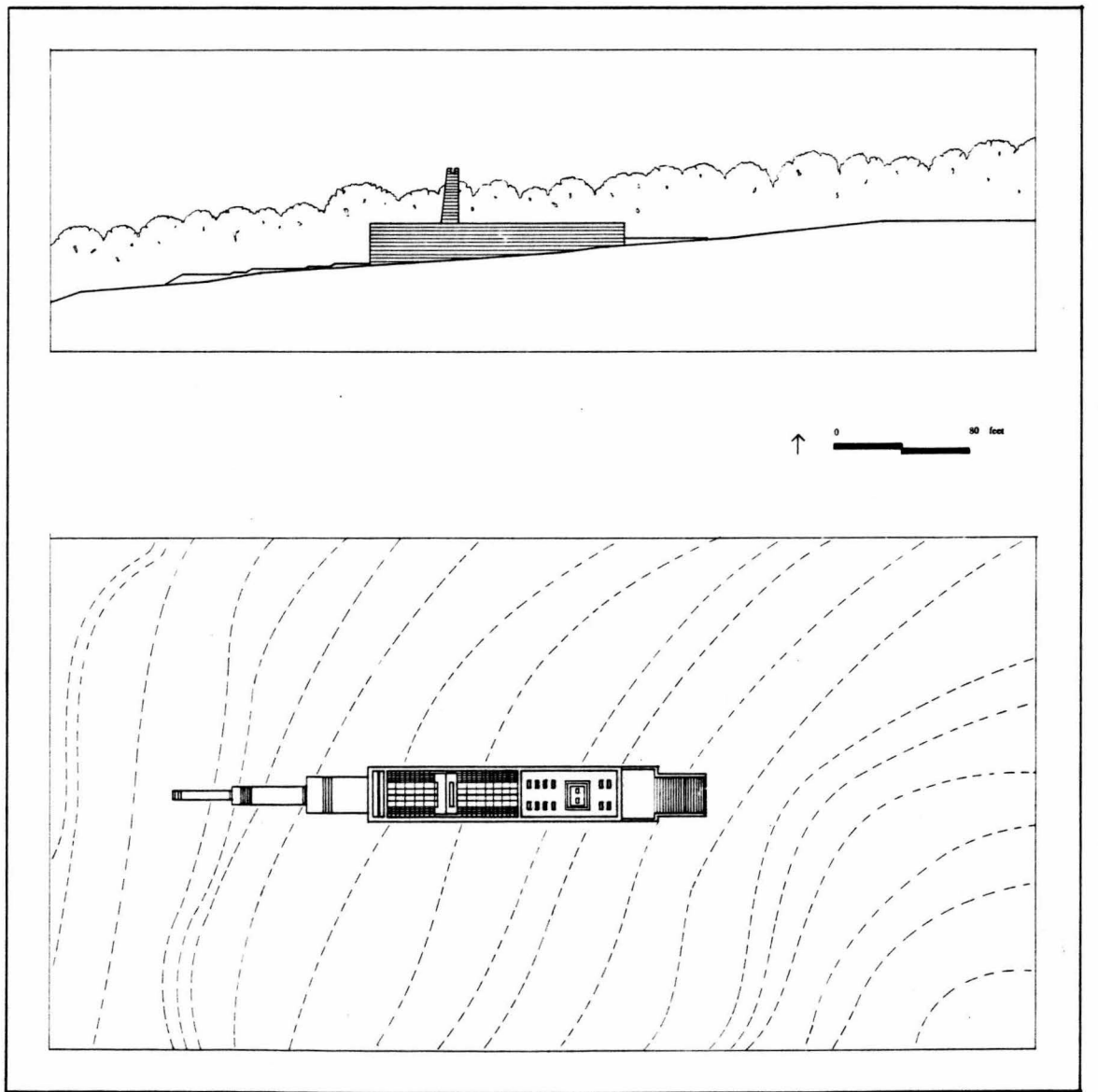


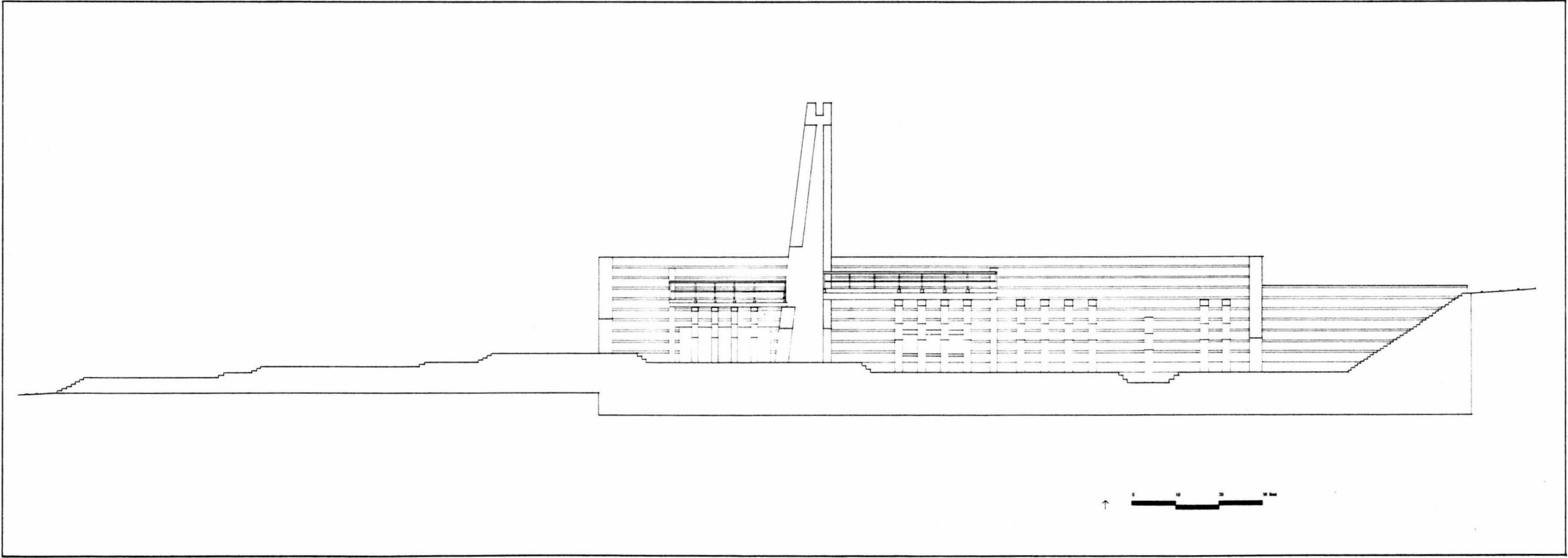
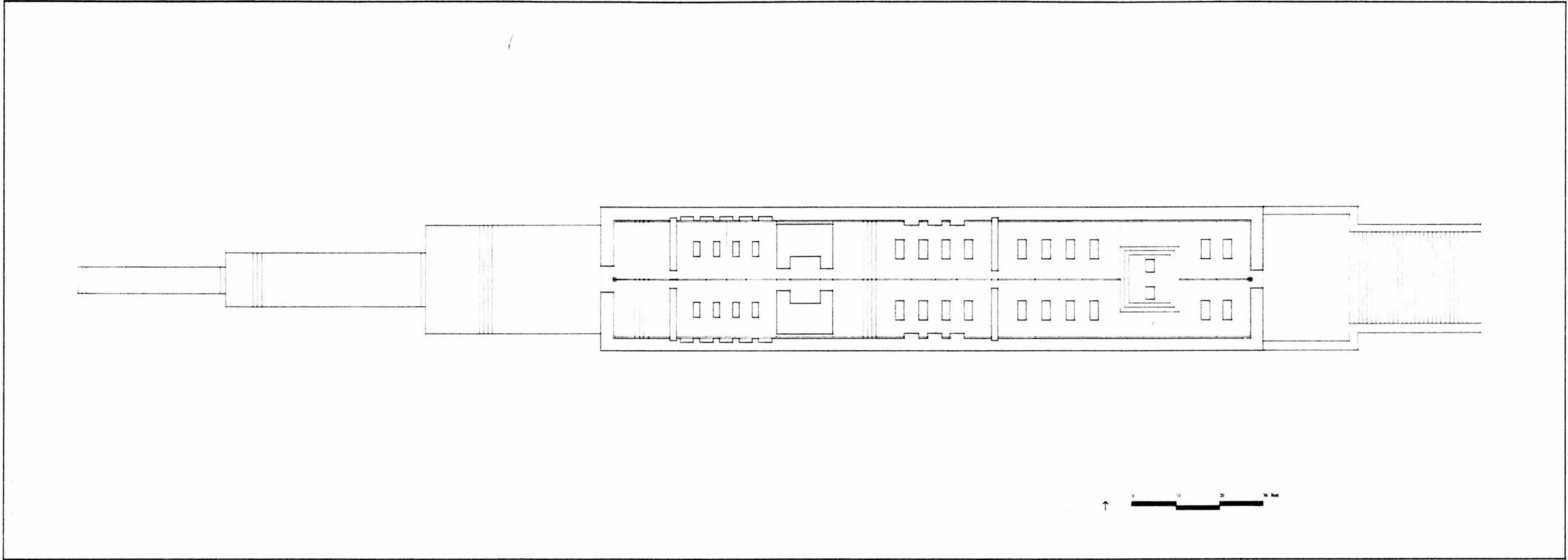
"One of the greatest achievement of Egyptian civilization was to sever stone from rock and to make of it a building material unsurpassed to this day. The choice of this unyielding material, which demanded great labor and high skill to give it the desired form, was directly based upon Egyptian religious convictions.

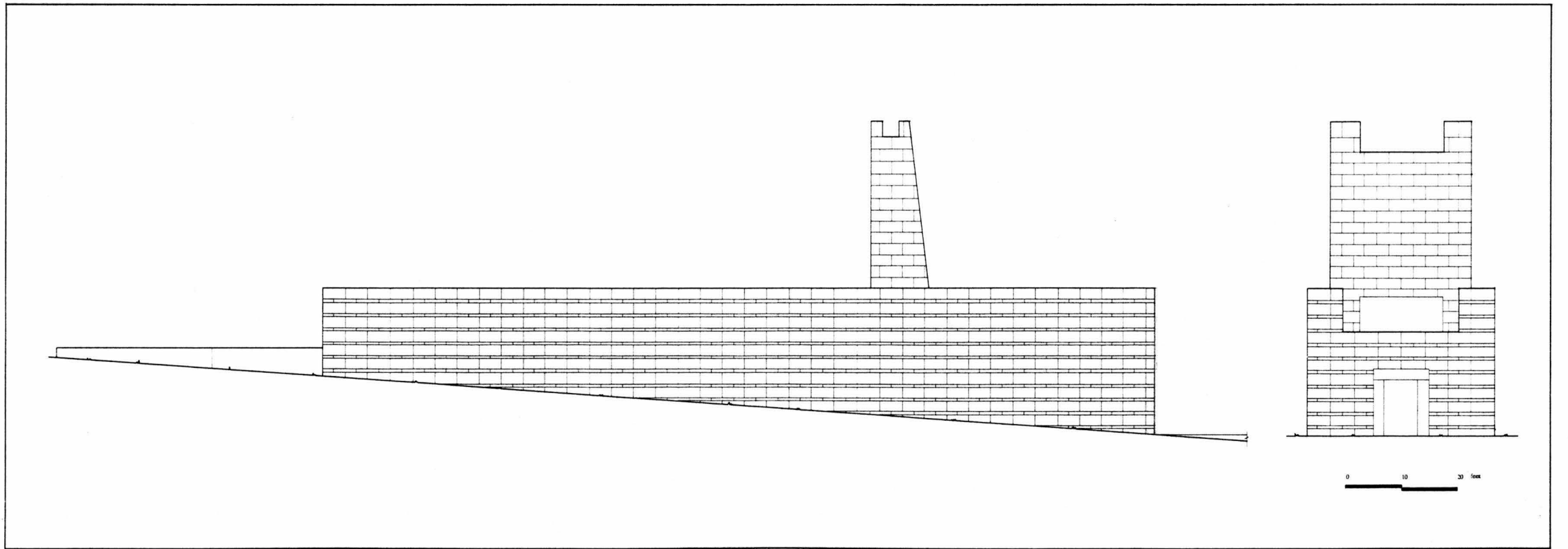
p.264, Giedion



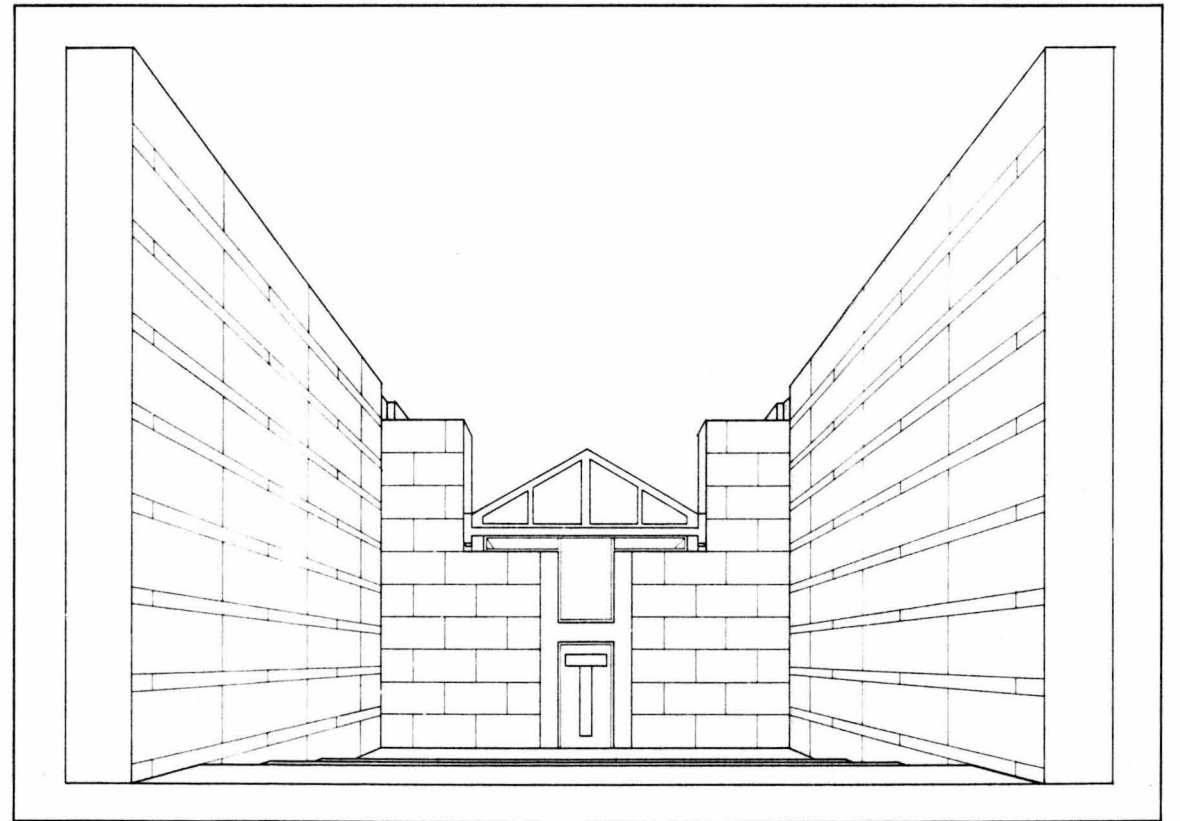


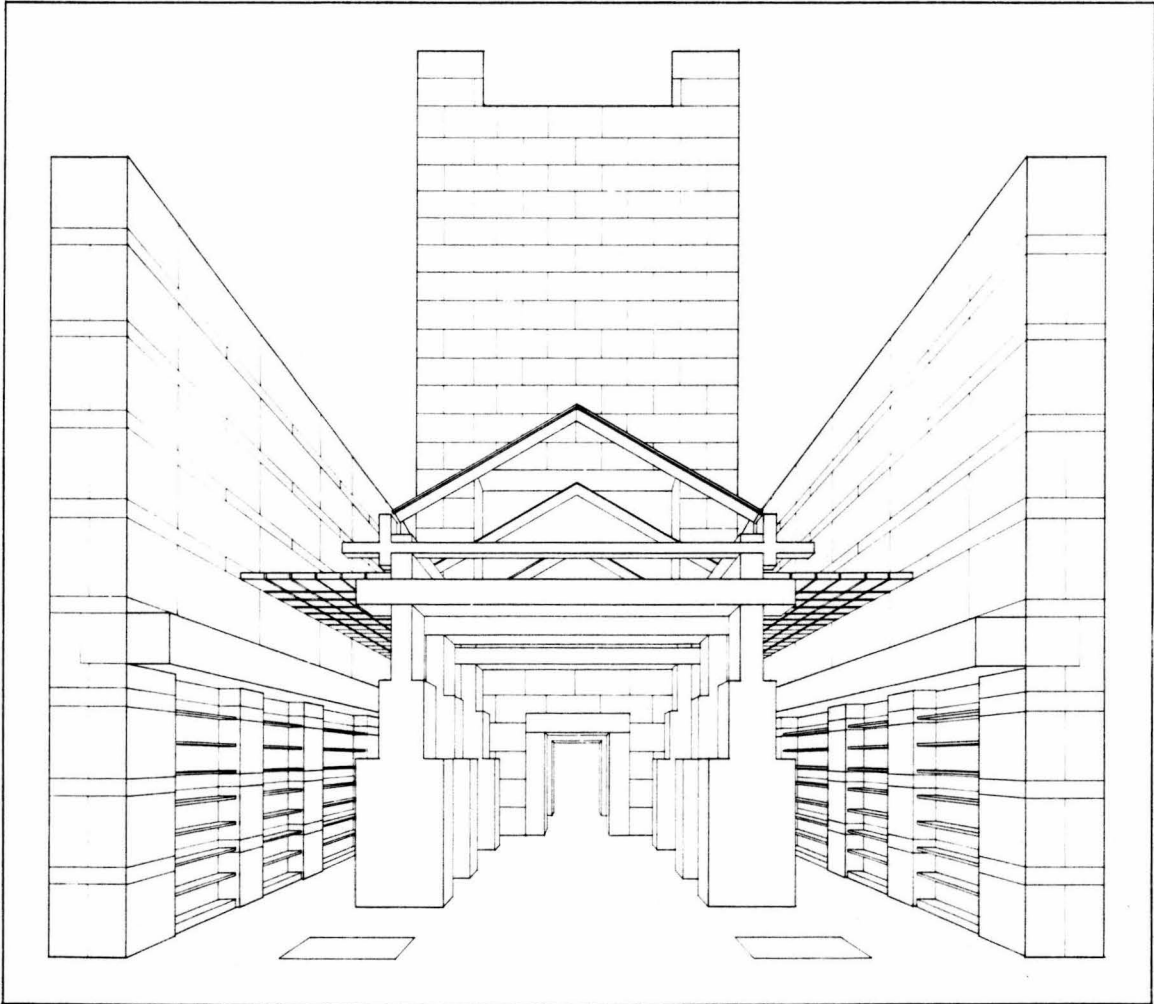


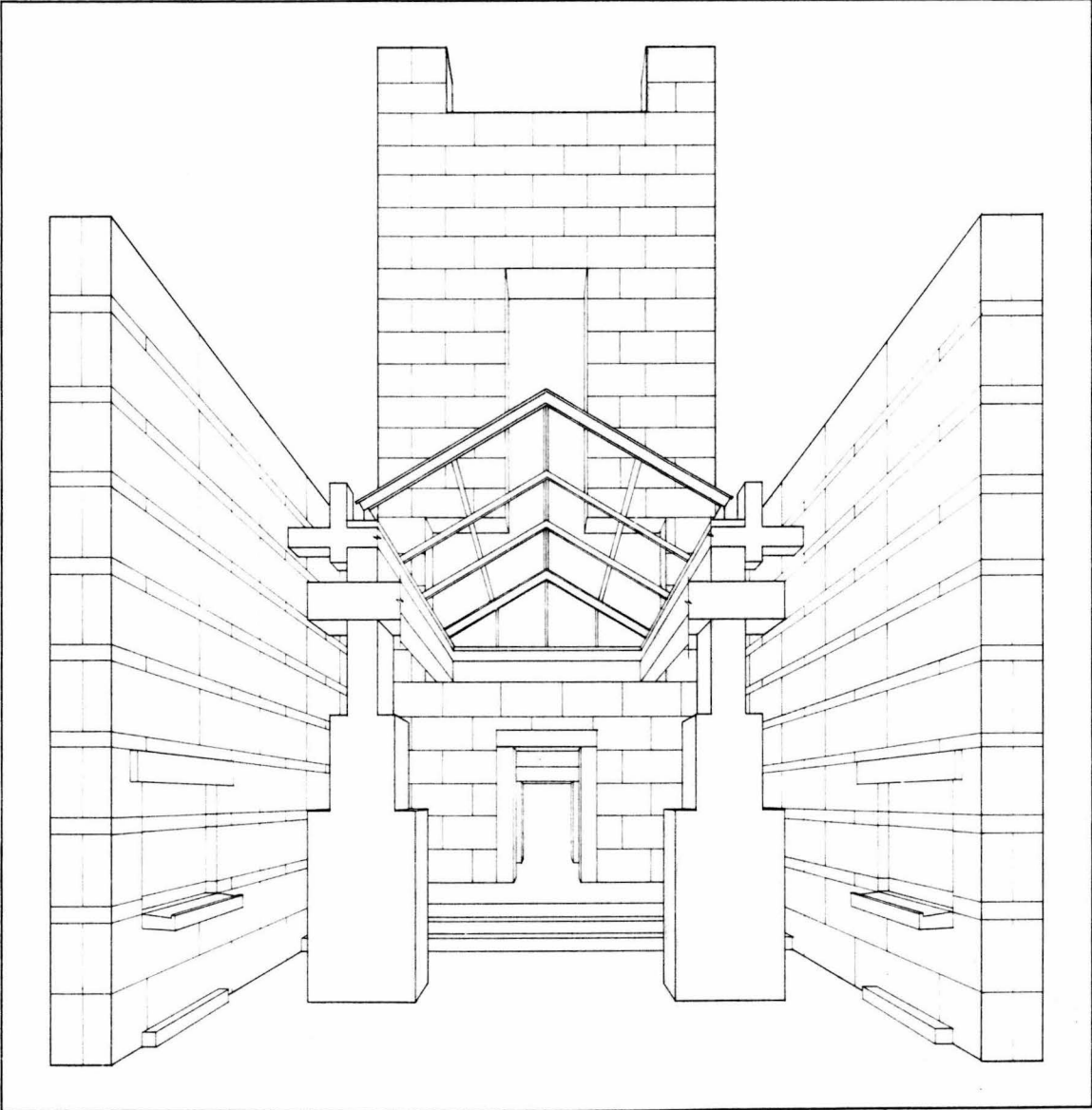


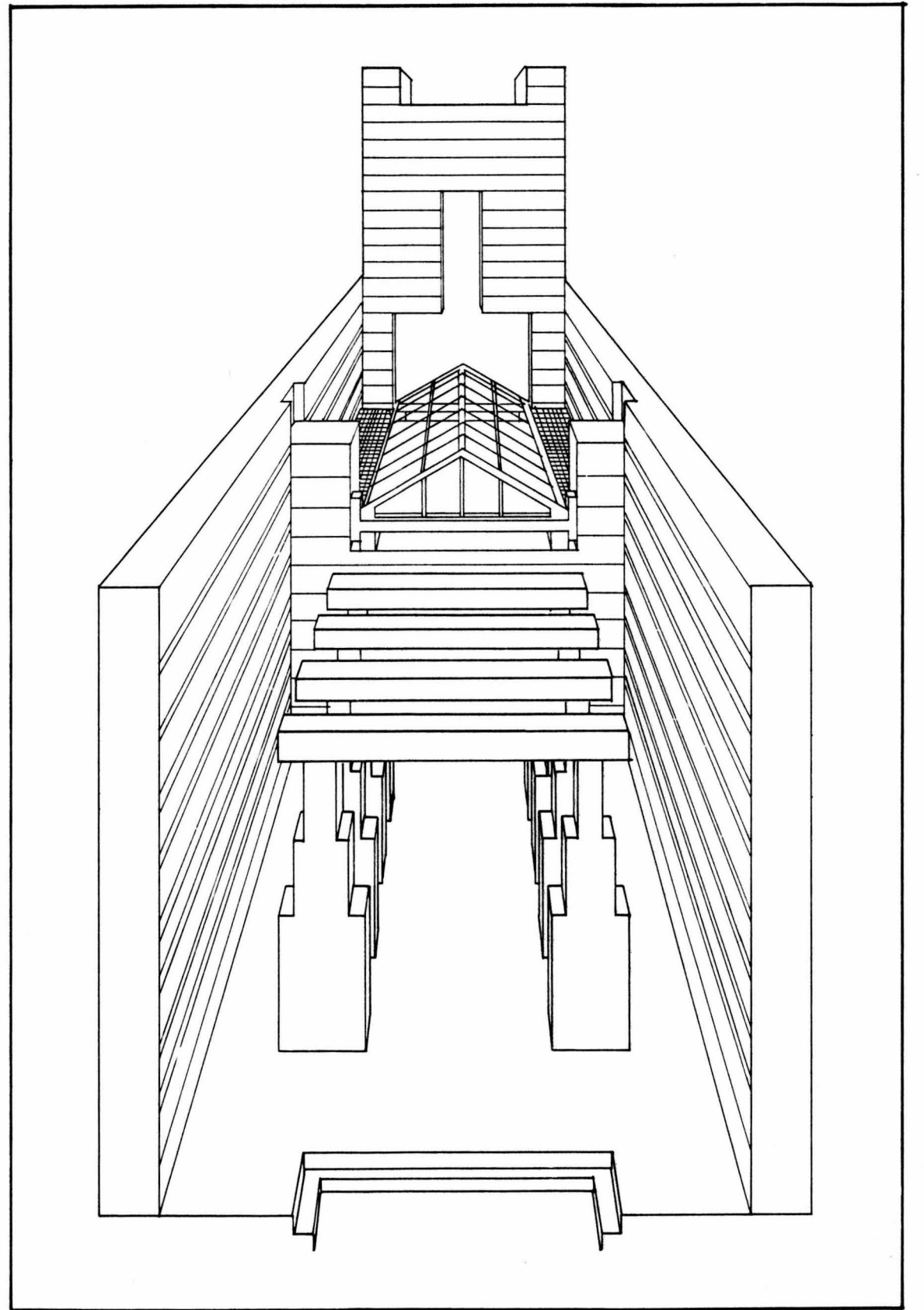


"The idea of work to be done is for me so closely bound up with the idea of the arranging of materials and of the pleasure that the actual doing of the work affords us that, should the impossible happen and my work suddenly be given to me in a perfectly completed form, I should be embarrassed and nonplussed by it, as by a hoax." p.52 Stravinsky, Poetics of Music.



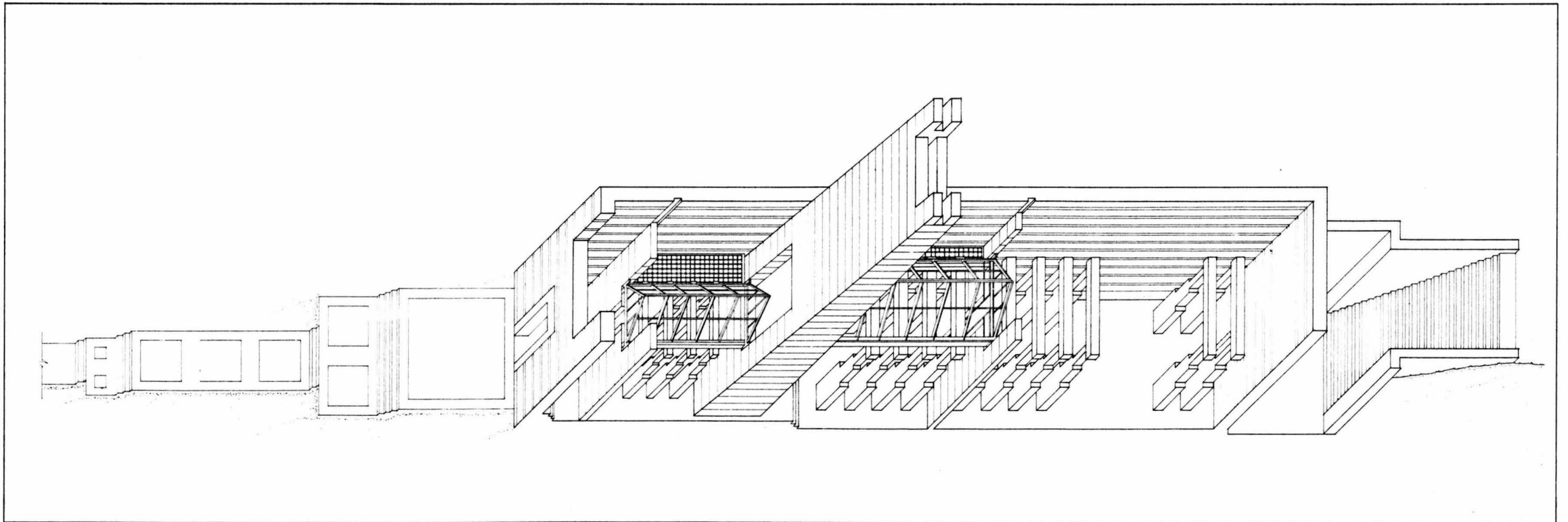






"The vertical is the line of movement. Movement downward, movement upward. Directed downward: a lead plummet, the force of gravity, sunbeams. Directed upward: a connecting link with the cosmos." p.438 Giedion

"The horizontal is the line of repose. It denotes the basis, the balance of scales in equilibrium. A horizontal position of rest was given to the Egyptian earth-god Geb, a vertical position to the air-god Shu, who separated him from the sky-goddess Nut. Vertical and horizontal belong together. One is the corollary of the other. They cannot be thought of independently." p.439 Giedion



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