

The World-Pole
A Journey into the Imagination of a Discoverer

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of a tower known only from the ancient works of a discoverer. The discoverer, who holds witness to the wondrous composition of the monument, documents the tower through illustrative and literary terms as a record of the findings for the reader.

Acknowledgements

My greatest gratitude to my family, soon-to-be family, and friends for your continuing encouragement through long nights and difficult times.

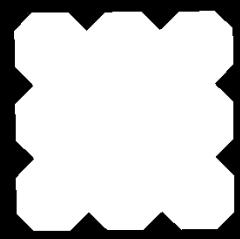
To my Committee, Scott, Steve and Bill, for your understanding and guidance throughout this journey.

To Mandy, my beloved fiancée, for which none of this would be possible without you.

To Sheep-City and the BillionORE's Club.

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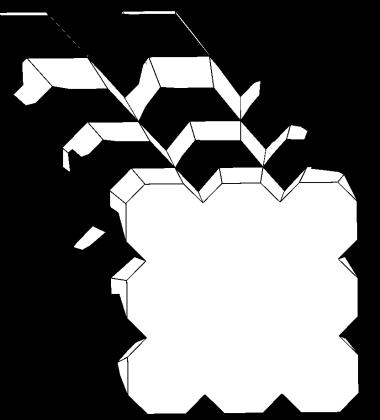
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Foreword: by the Author

Throughout history on Earth, many ancient monuments have astonished the beholders but have survived only in legend. The legends are told by travelers who can only describe their encounter as a ‘Wonder.’ A wonder is deemed a marvel as it cannot be fully explained based on to the unsettled history, construction methods and at times the sheer size of the monument. Today the focus on ‘Wonders’ narrows into a compacted list commonly labeled as “The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.” These monuments (other than the Great Pyramid) are not apart of our physical world today but survive only through means of their record that help to form an image in the imagination of the reader.

This thesis book revolves around the monument of an ancient tower that serves as great intrigue to its imaginary world. The ancient tower is explored through an intermediary, the discoverer, to migrate from the imagination of the author to this book. This book combines illustrative plates in conjunction with literary descriptions from the perspective of the discoverer’s recount. The discoverer’s narration serves as the only surviving record of the ancient tower.



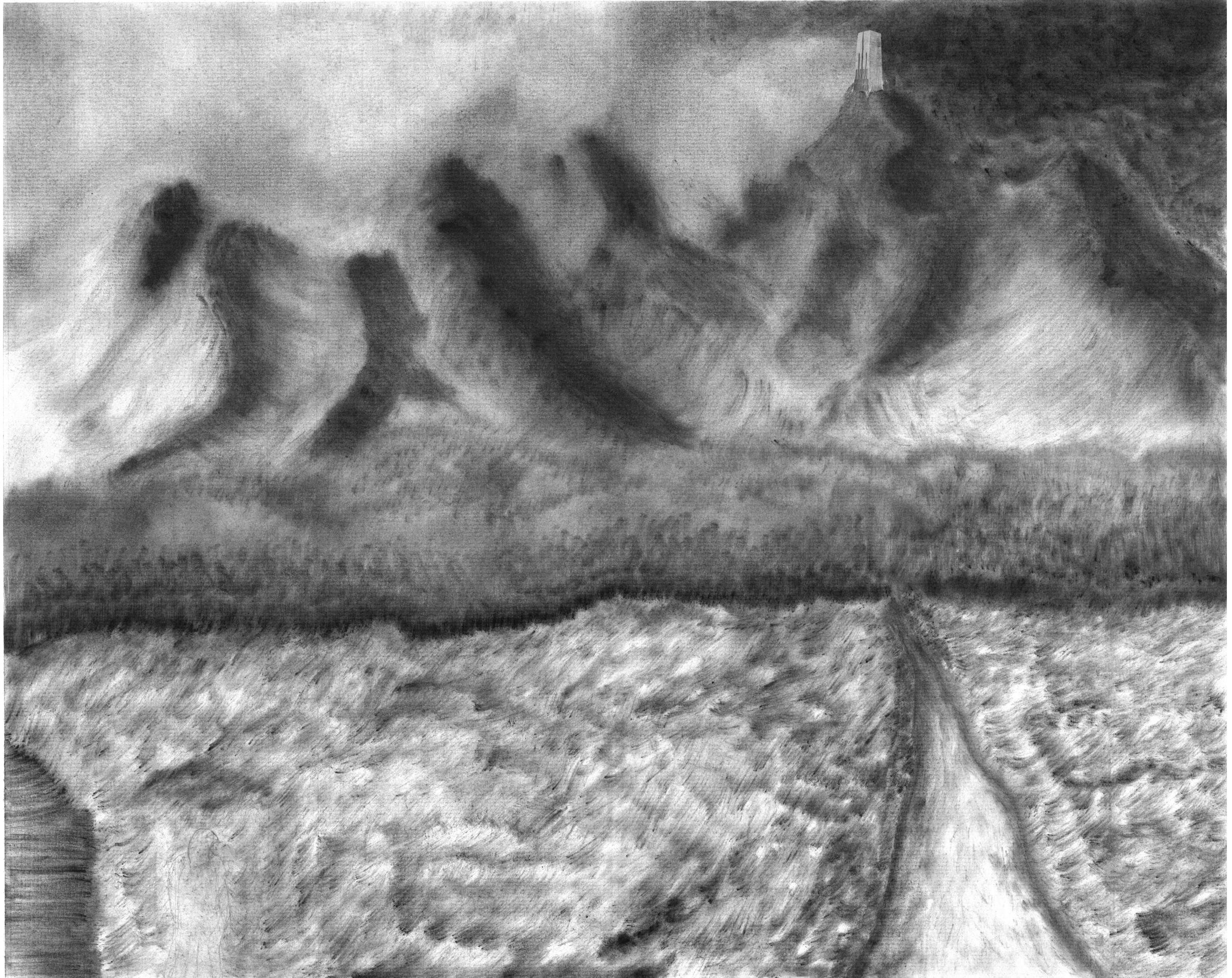
Perception Record: by the Discoverer





The Mountain

The distant mountain range was far from the hut but the tower was simple to distinguish amidst the background of the turbulent sky. The prominent structure was perched atop the tallest mountain peak, as if it were an extension of the world itself, pointed up towards the heavens. The dark ominous clouds had to fight the tower to continue their own journey.



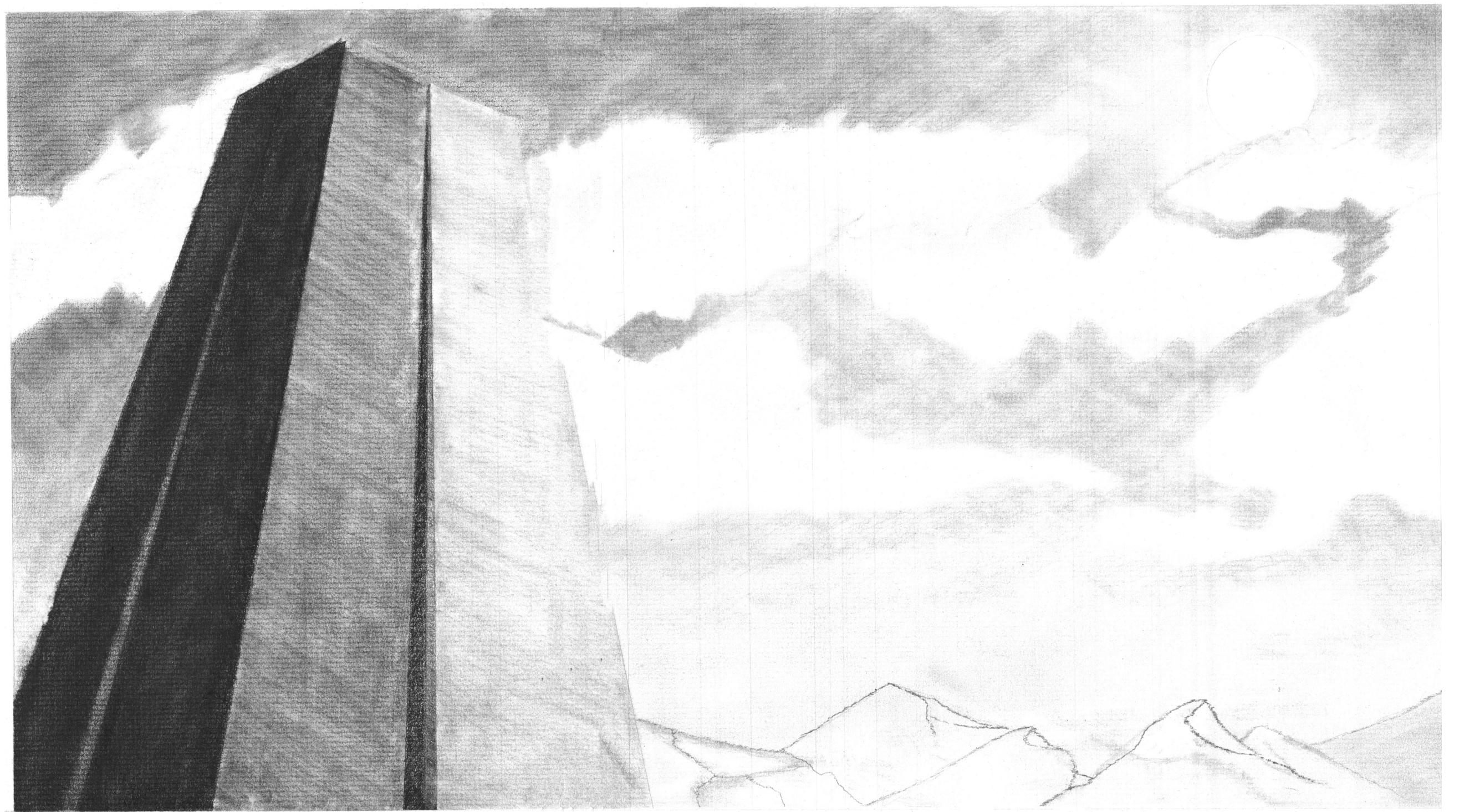
Two Axes

The tower, whose axes designated the four cardinal directions, was a symbol of prestige and power of the ancient civilization which constructed it. The site of the tower served as a "datum point" for the ancient builders, an easily identifiable and fixed spot visible to their entire world.



Unlimited

A battle of light and dark, good and evil raged along the skin of the tower. The rays from the sun meticulously crept around the edges, slowly exposing one portion of the tower while simultaneously concealing another.



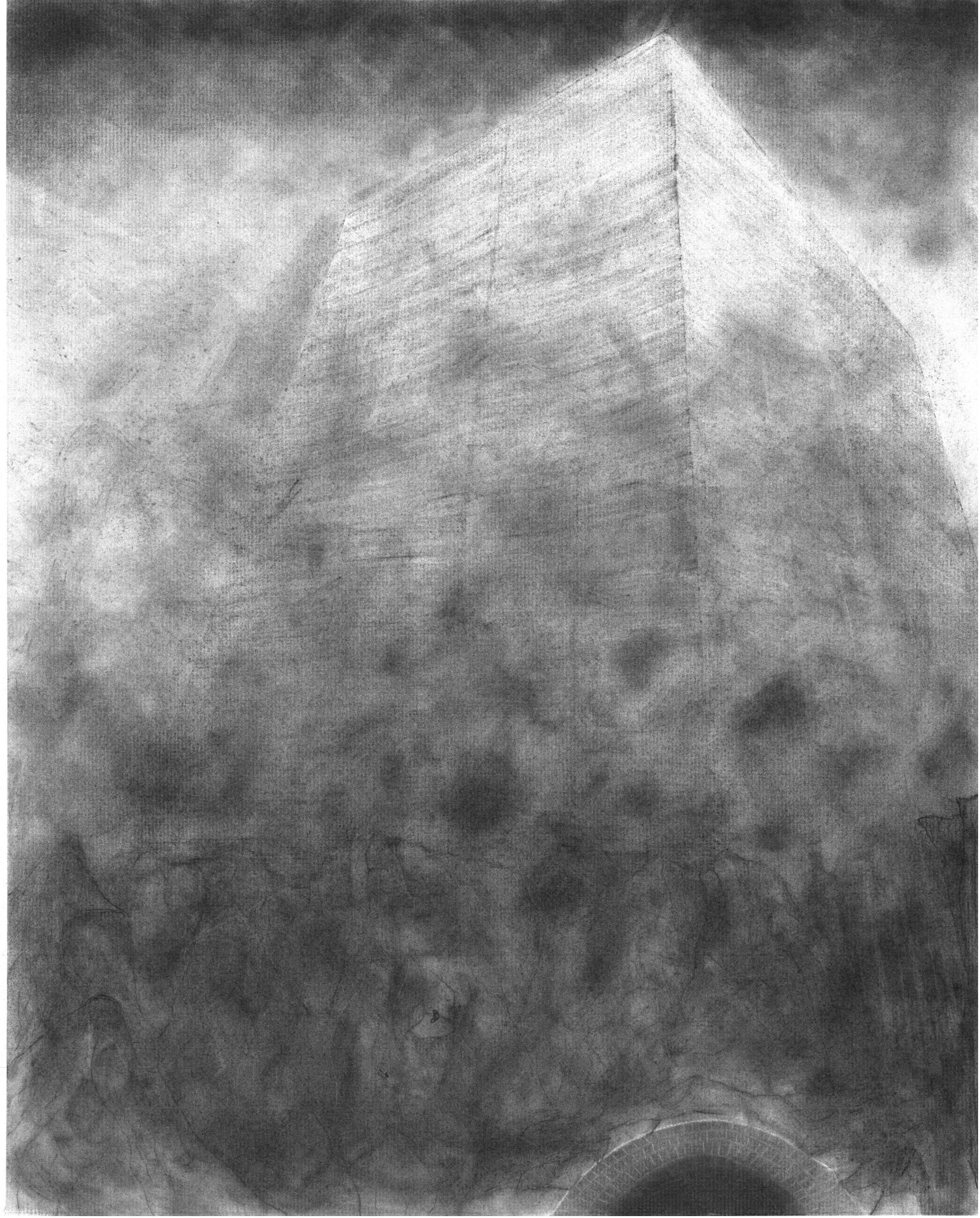
Greatness

After several more days of travel up the mountain range, the tower finally offered itself for a closer inspection. At the base of the tower, the pylons gently grasped down onto the mountain side like fingers of a hand. There was no single bottom layer of the tower. The termination of the artificial was the beginning of the natural.



Threshold

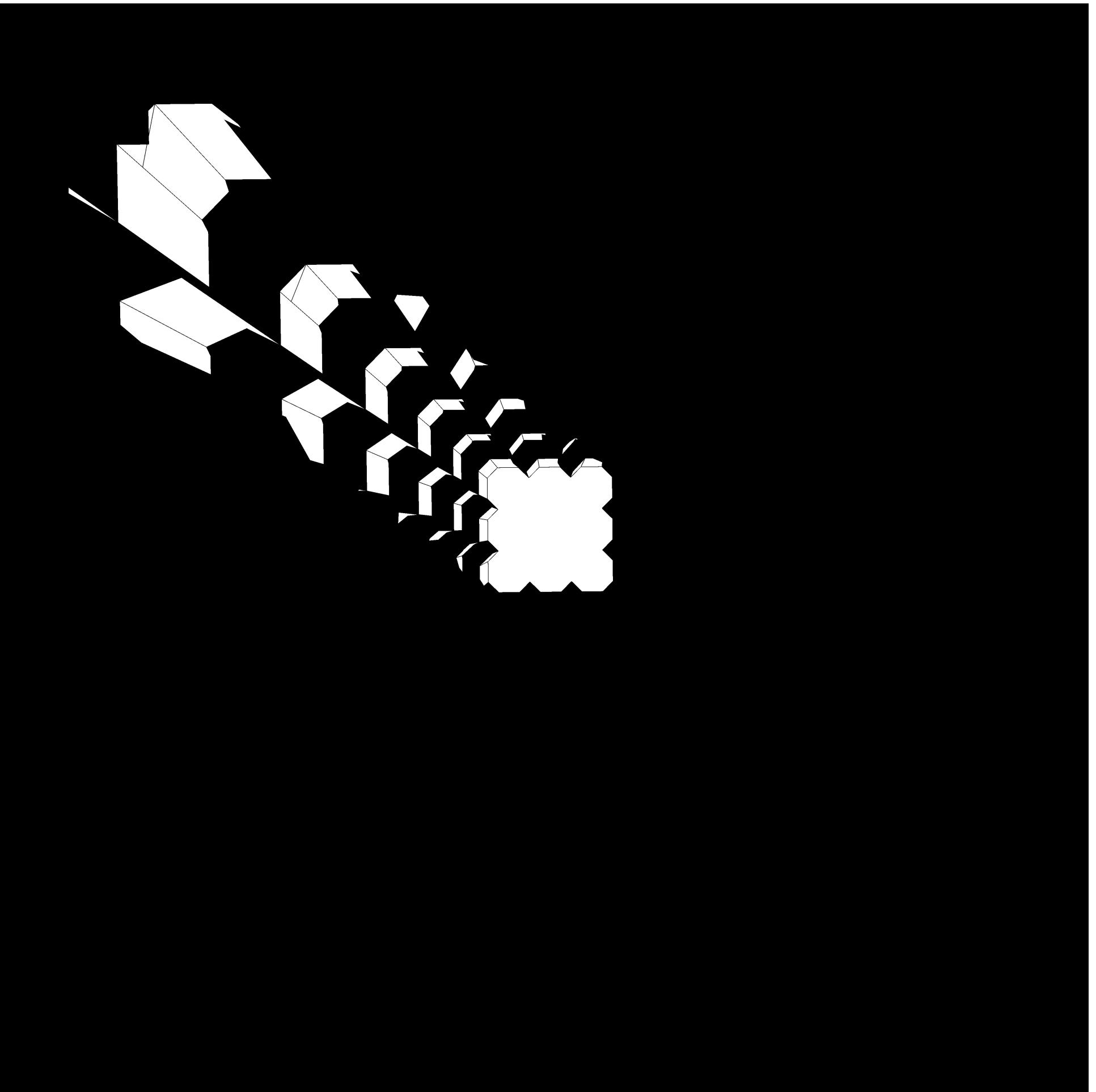
The only recognizable entrance for the tower was through an underground tunnel leading into the mountain side. The tunnel entrance, shrouded with a light haze from the morning dew, could easily be overlooked as it was nestled in the rocky cliffside of the mountain.



White Ash

During the frigid night, cold white ash dropped lightly from the heavens. Each instance of ash had a unique path and fashion as it floated down around the tower, like ghosts of the deceased visiting this world.





Purpose Record: by the Discoverer

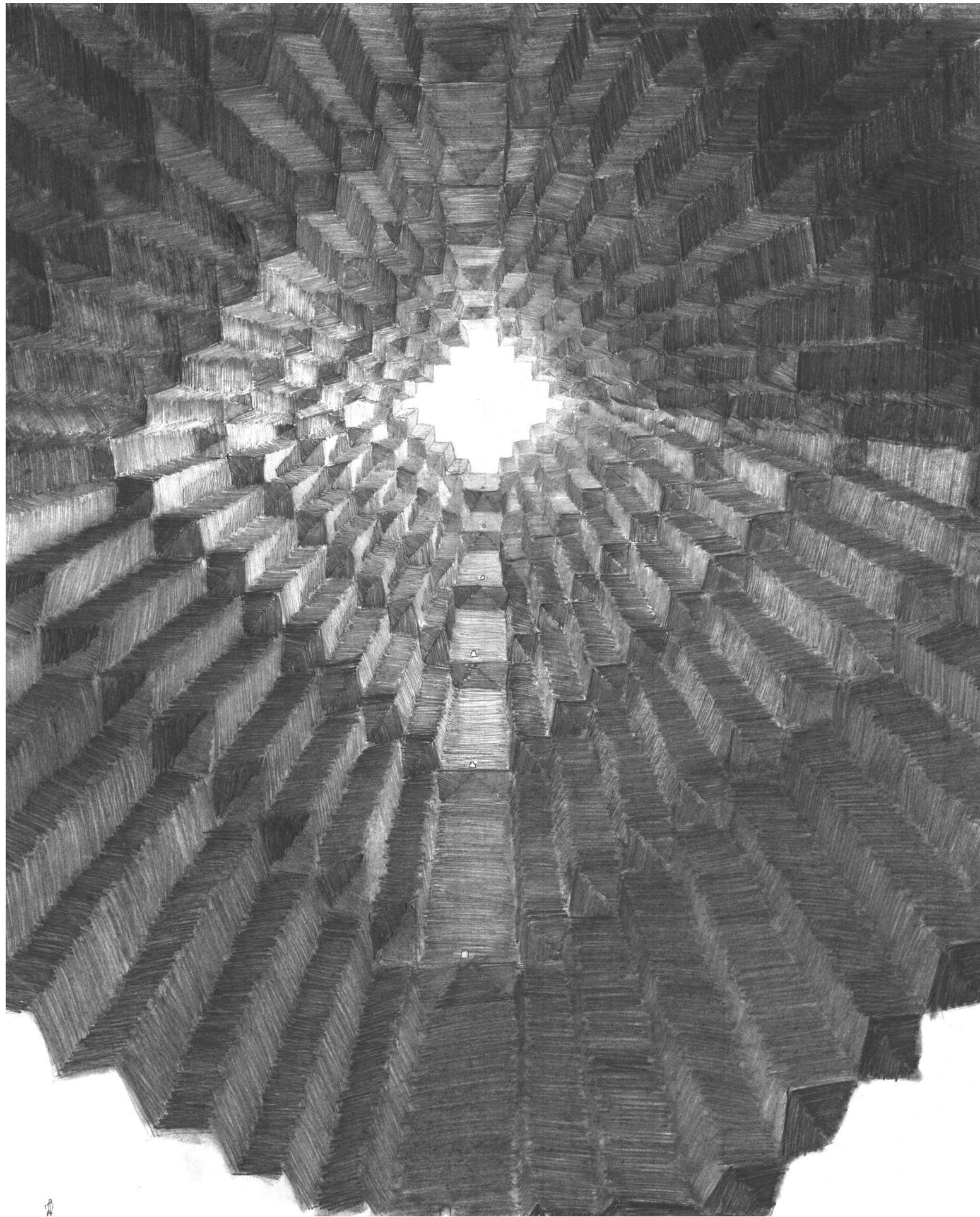
Celebration

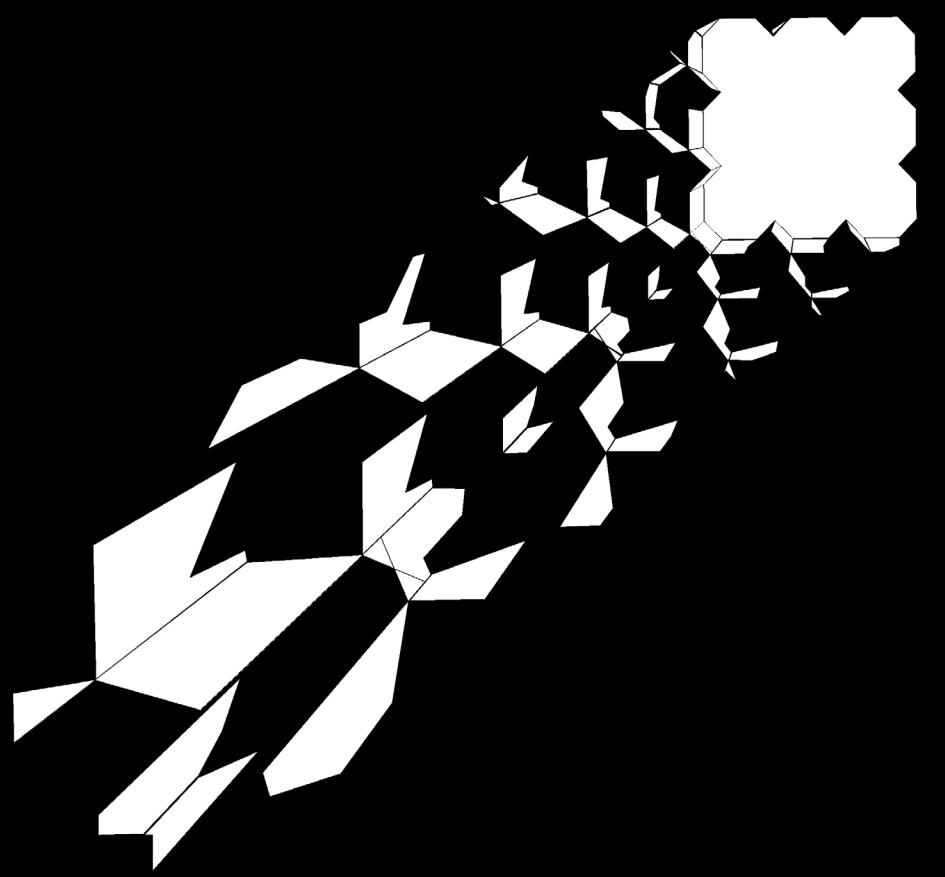
While inside the tower, as the white ash fell, the view above revealed streaks of light left over from a celebration in the overworld. The tower walls shielded the interior sanctuary from the chaos of the outside world.



Prayer

The four sides of the tower's exterior faces presented the world with the gift of direction. The interior of the tower guided the visitor in one direction only, up past the sky for a direct connection to the Gods.

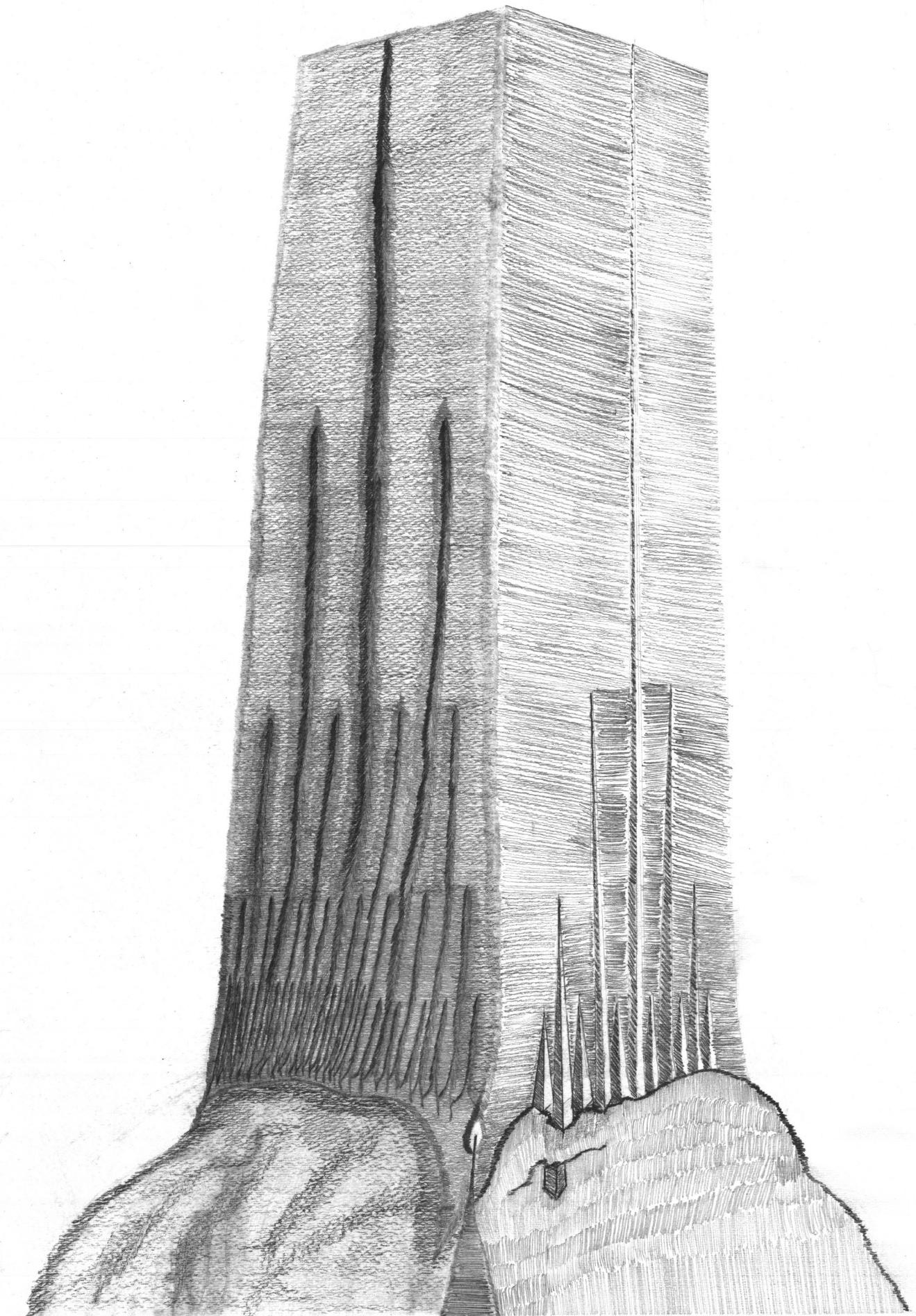




Corporeal Record: by the Discoverer

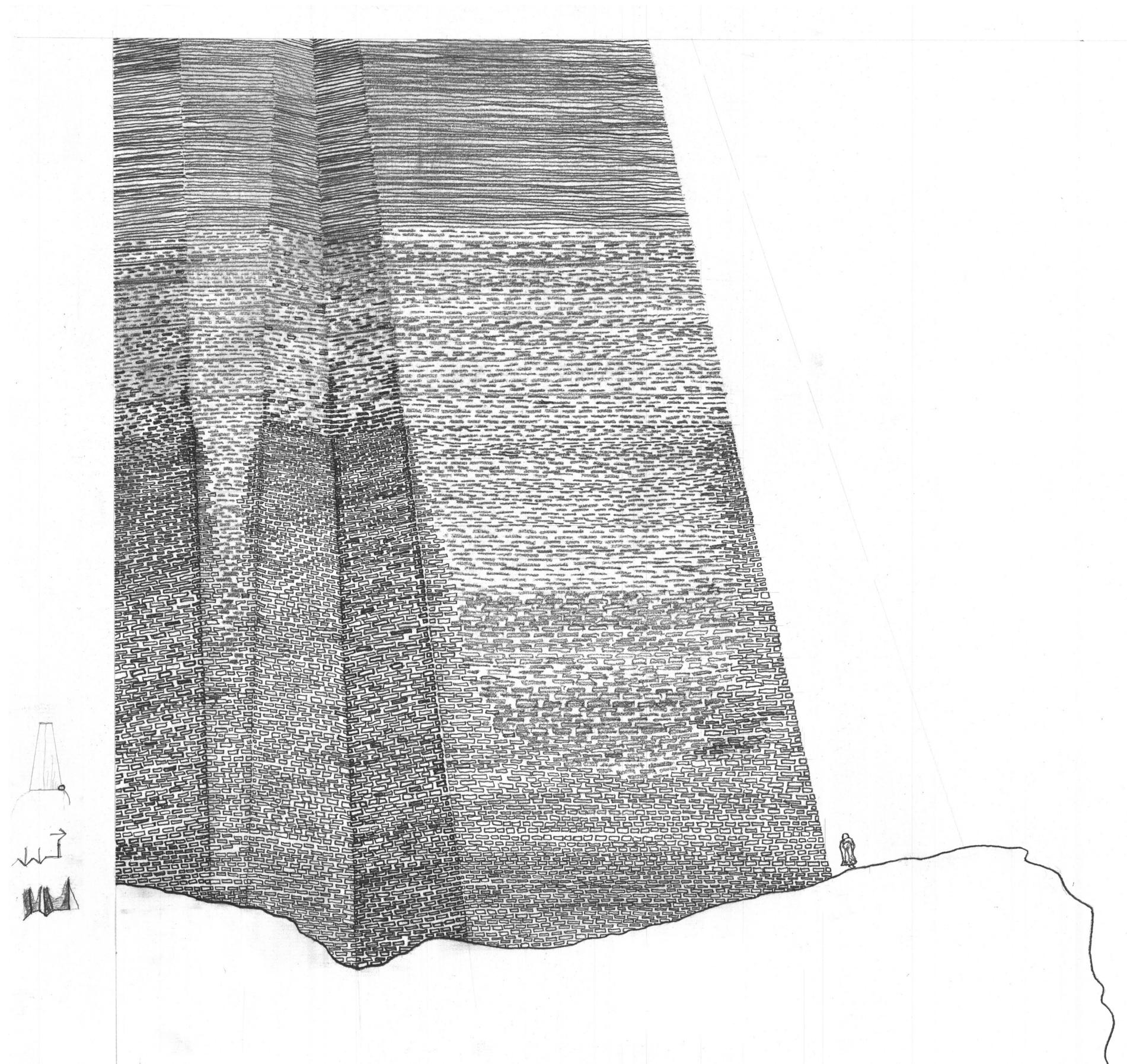
31 Pylons

The base of the tower required additional support due to the steep cliffs that lined the walls. The tower was stabilized by 31 pylons on each side. Each pylon braced itself onto the mountain below and leaned into the tower to provide inward force. The pylons climbed up the superstructure at different elevations for support; only the central pylons reached the top of the tower.



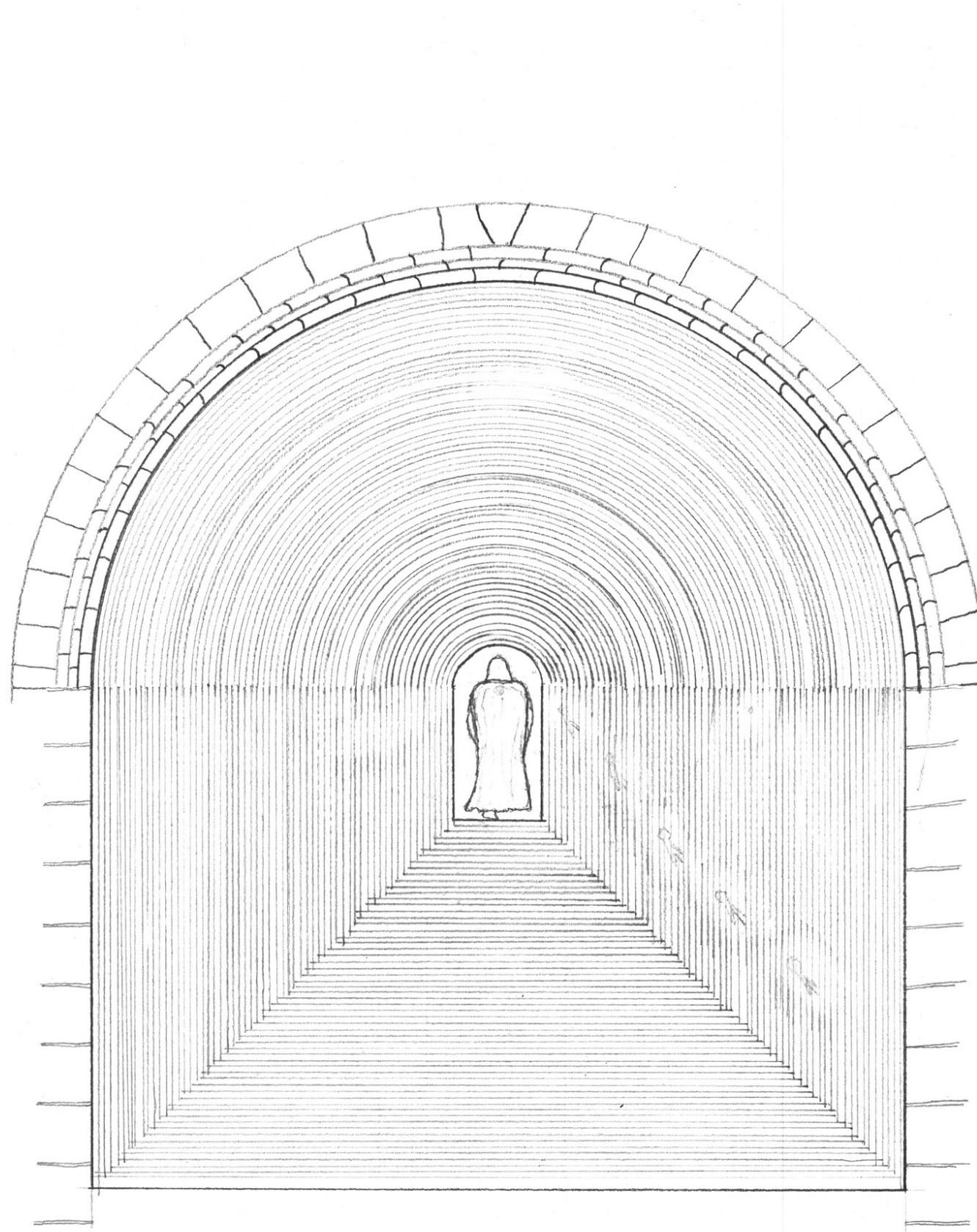
500 Stones

The height of one man equaled roughly four stone. The exterior stone ranged between six to eight palms high. The stone surface was chiseled down to create a smooth face allowing for deflection of the elements. Each layer of stone was perfectly stacked upon the previous without the disruption of a joint in between. Against the the entirety of the tower, individual stone families subtly revealed themselves from one another.



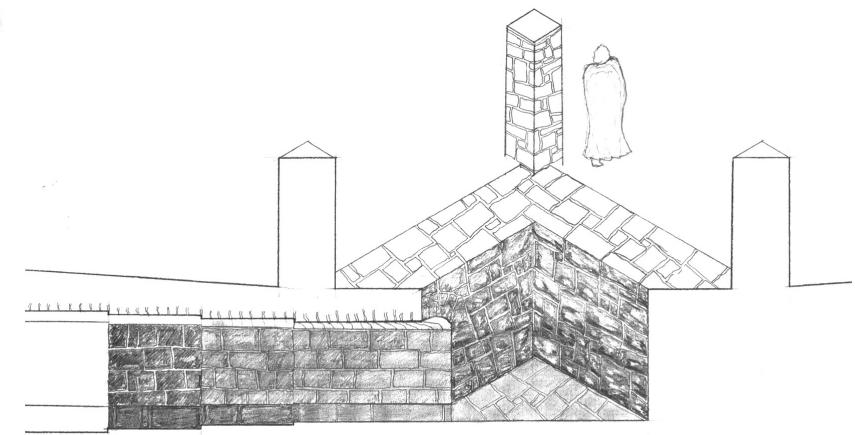
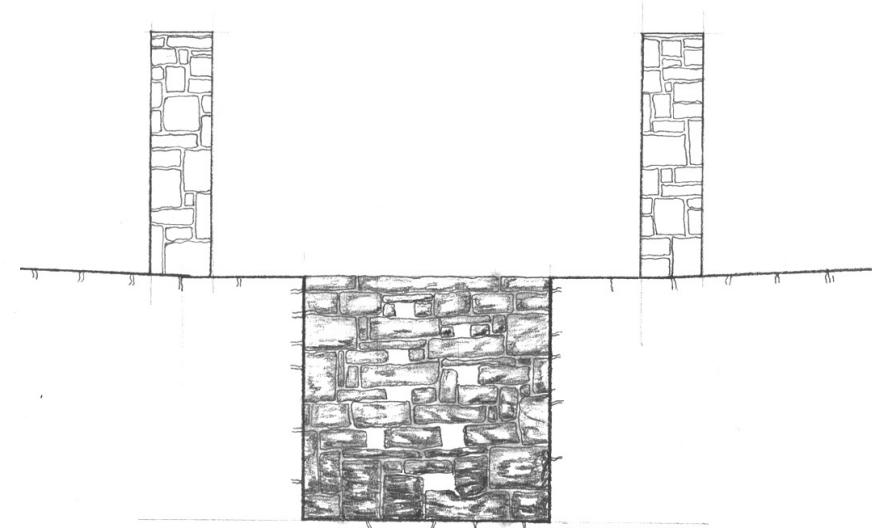
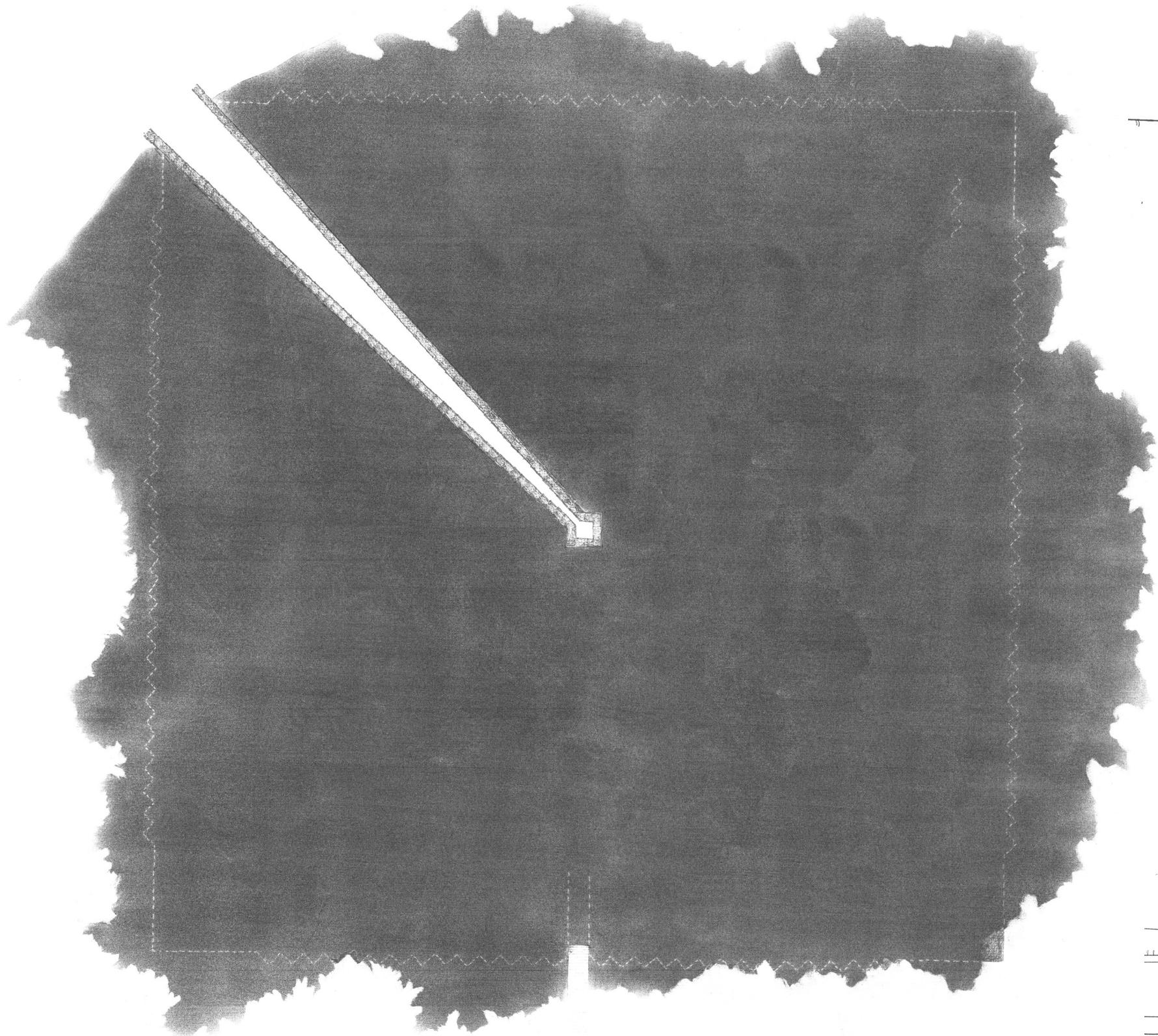
60 Constrictions

The entrance of the underground tunnel was immensely wide and to fill the width of the cavity would have taken several men standing shoulder to shoulder. The underground tunnel grew more and more narrow with each passing section. Each section took five paces to travel, ending with a raised step. By the final section, the tunnel was only wide enough for one man to squeeze into the underground central chamber of the temple.



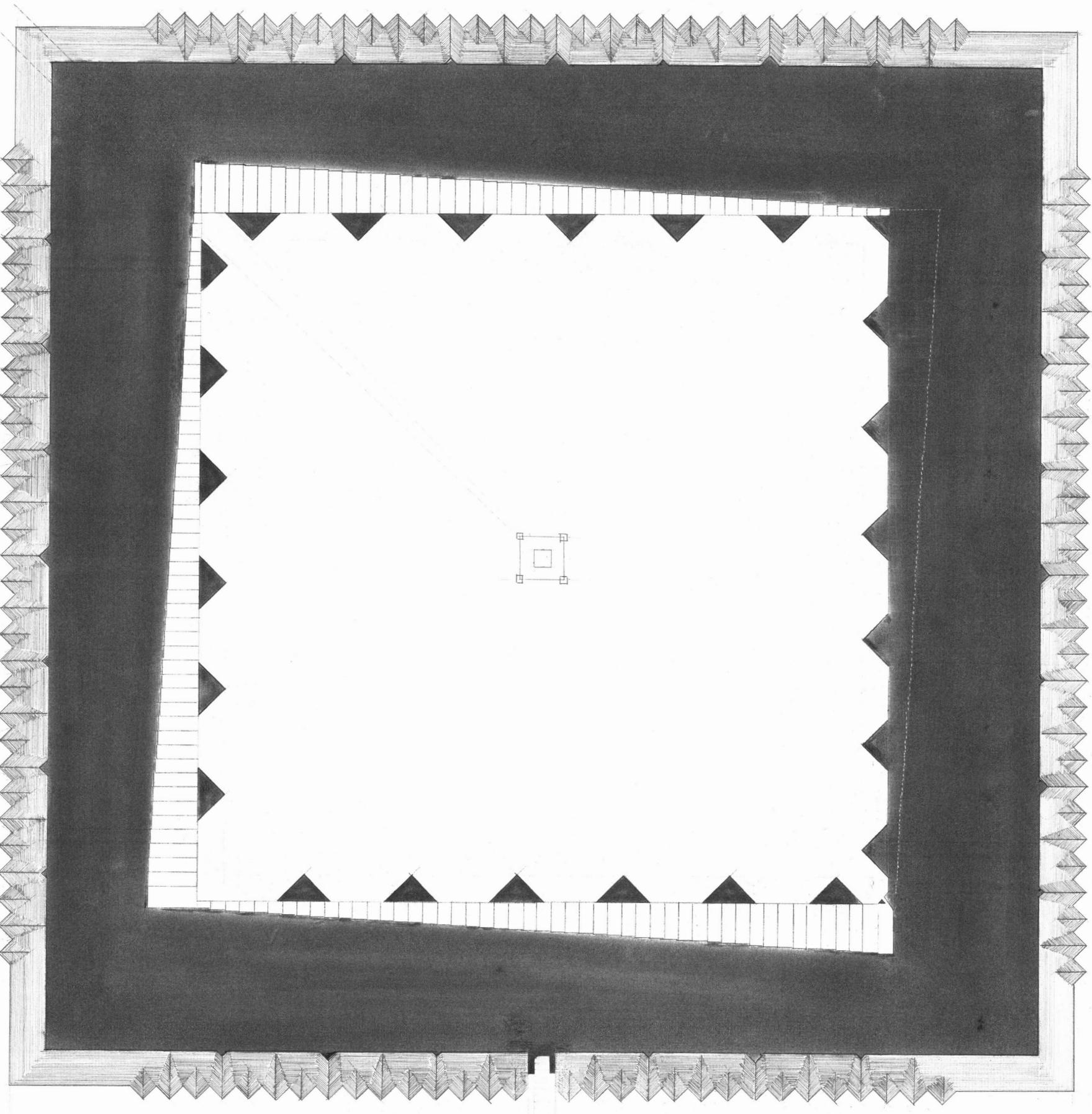
Eight Footholds

With each succeeding step through the tunnel the outside world is left further behind to enter into the artificial world. The tunnel ended at a sunken chamber illuminated by the light filtered down from the oculus of the tower above. One wall of the chamber opened itself up to create footholds for the final ascent into the temple.



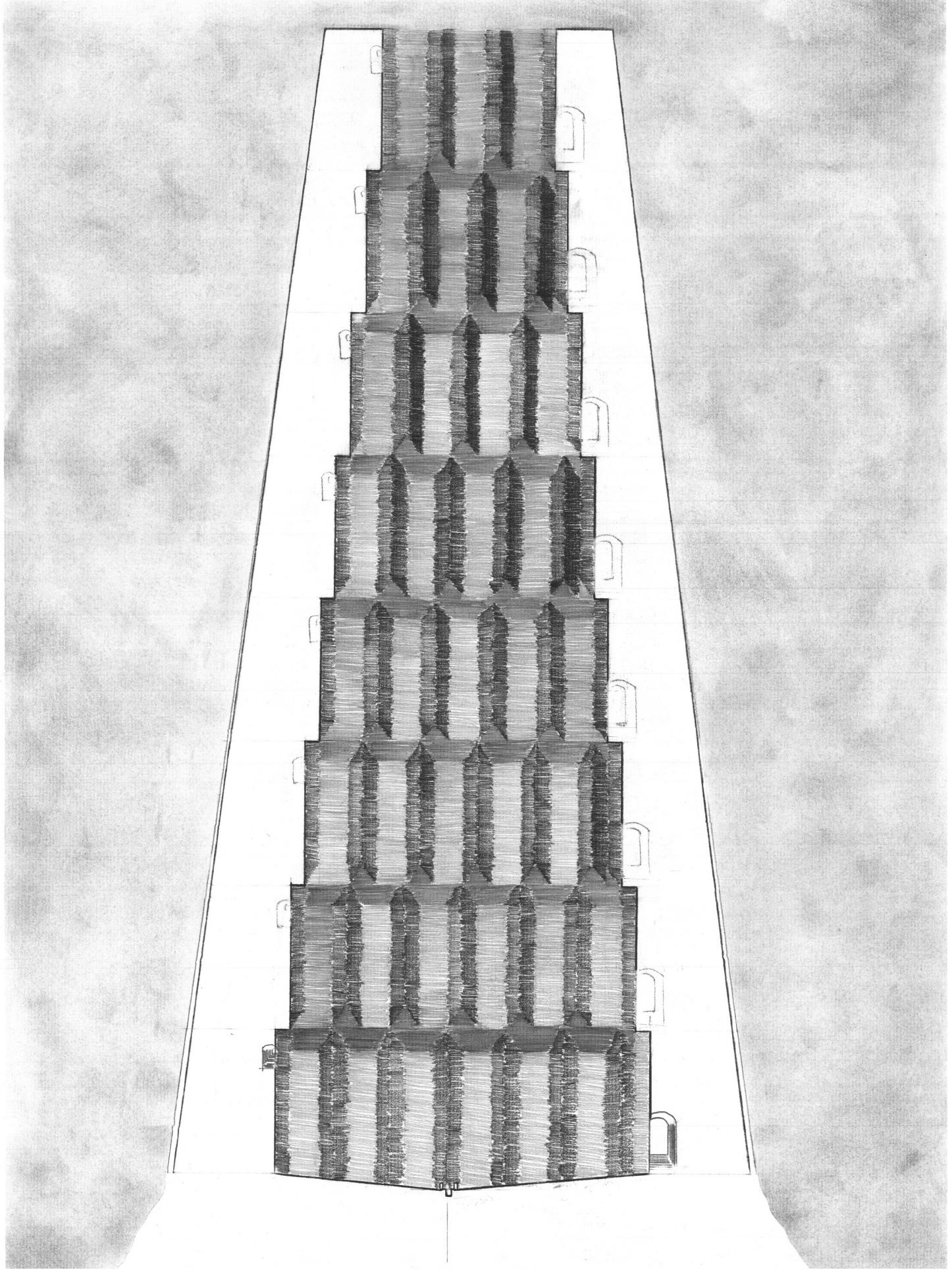
104 Paces Square

The square, central core was lined by six stone piers on each wall that supported the structure above. Travel to the top of the tower was provided by an ascending passageway, entered at the intersection of two walls. The ascending passageway, partially hidden from view behind the piers, spiraled around the central shaft.



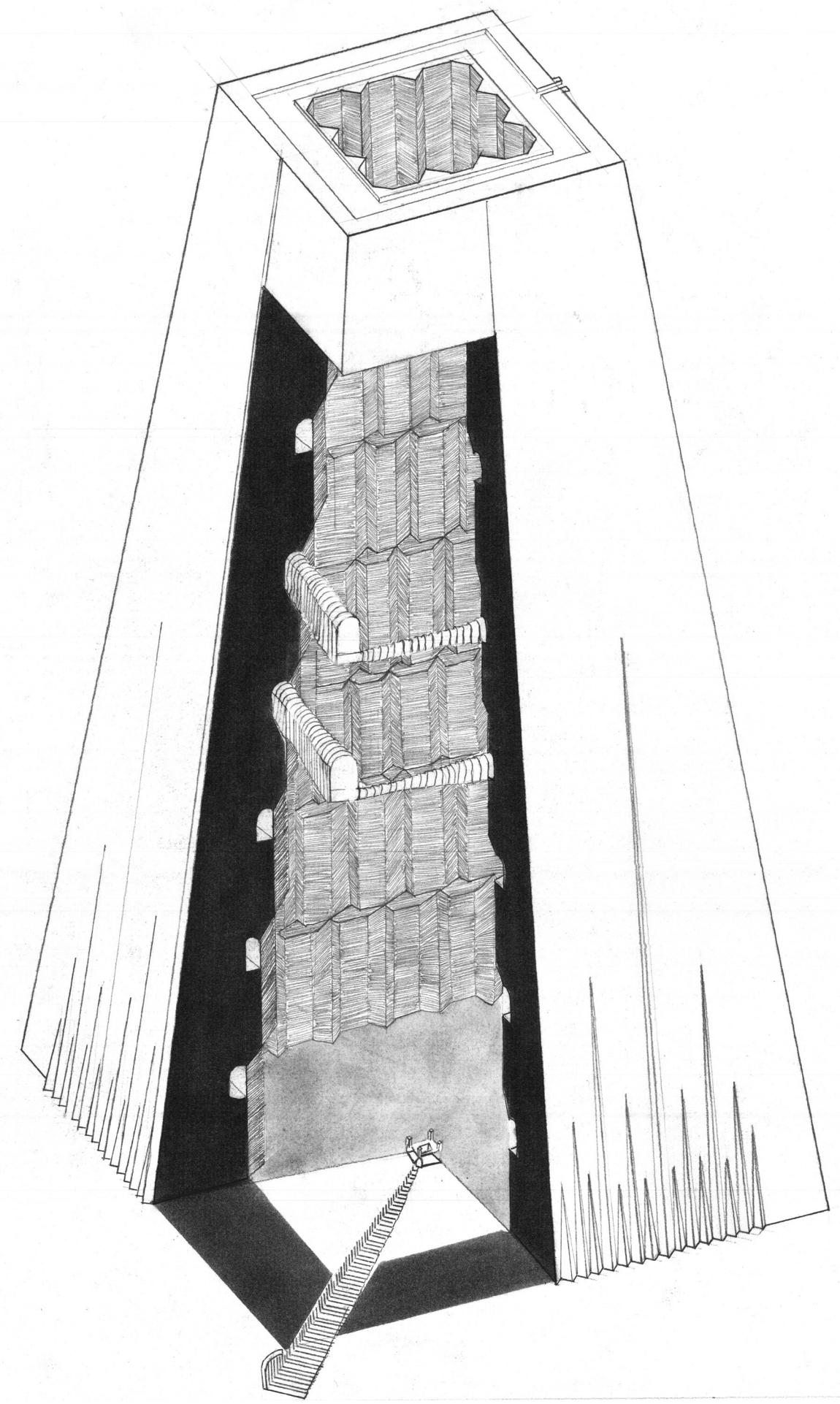
Seven Platforms of Air

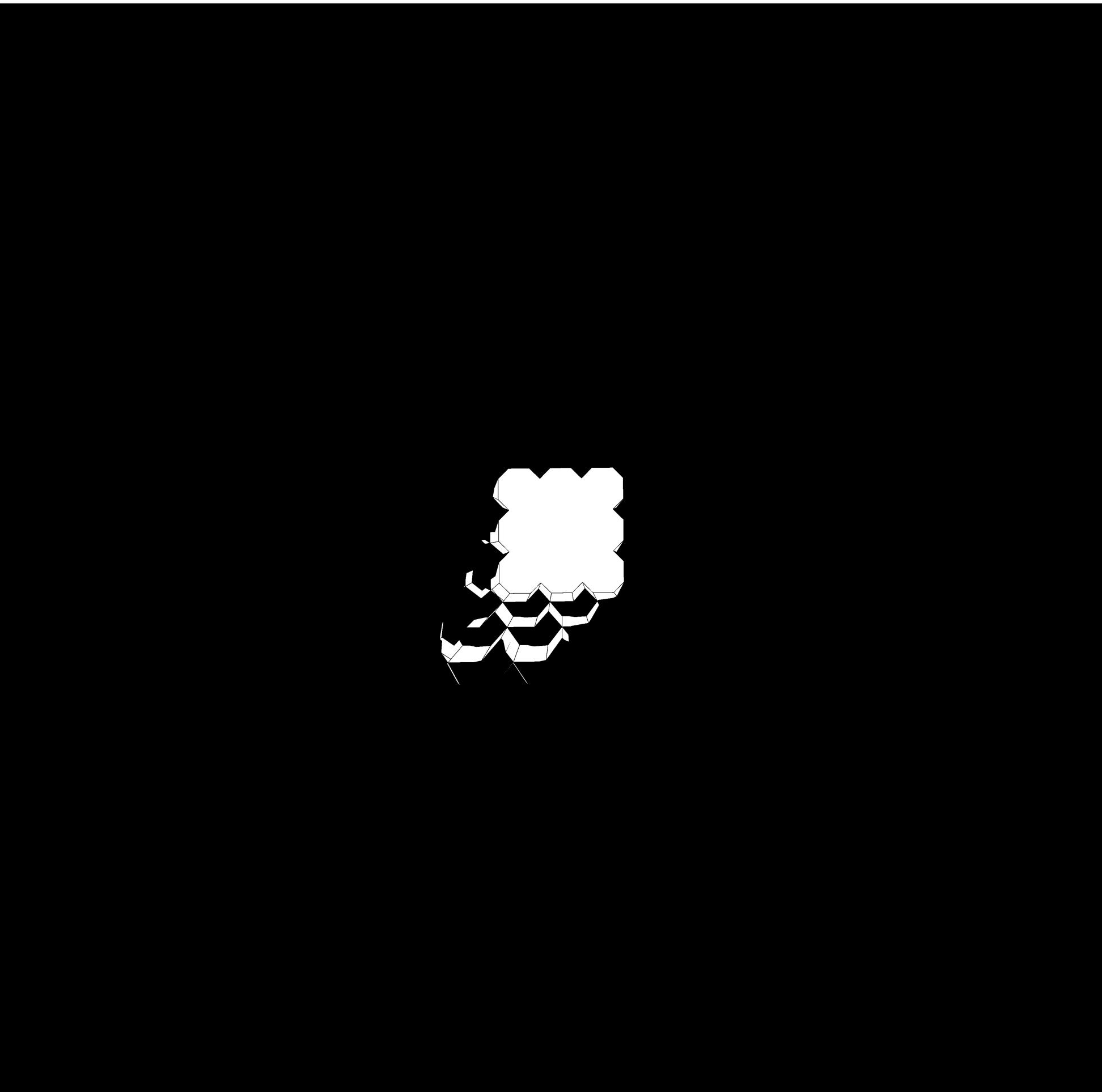
The tower's hollow interior molded the air in the form of a ziggurat. The interior void created a mesmerizing view of hundreds of stone layers. The totality of the stone wall enabled each stone to dance between individuality and solid whole.



4,881 Steps Closer

The ascent to the top of the tower was a tremendous effort many would attempt not for recreation, but for a cause. The spiraled ascent opened to the top of the tower where the air was almost too thin to breathe and where the birds did not fly. At the furthest distance, the world compressed itself down to a single line.



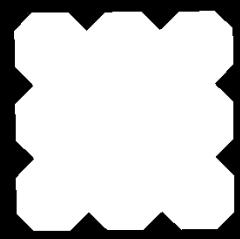


Corporeal Record: by the Discoverer

Claude Nicolas Ledoux, Etienne-Louis Boullée, Douglas Darden and John Hejduk each created projects not specific to the world and time they lived in. The works they created, which were void of structural detail and cannot be deciphered from the image alone, are a testament to how structure and program are not always the main interest of the designer. To these men, the concept of architecture included an embedded background with influences from a story not explained in drawing alone.

*There are no rules of architecture for a castle in the clouds.
G. K. Chesterton*

The journey in this book was the conclusion of a year long discovery into many aspects important to my understanding of architecture. These aspects included, but were not limited to, the sublime, the “world-pole” or “axis mundi,” and “The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.” each of which aided to the design of the tower and the description by the discoverer. In the end, I realize that the imagination is the greatest tool gifted to the designer.



Appendix

Appendix A

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