



— Mei Han Liang 1 81 4 1 5 0 5

architecture of mist

A Sacred Scents Cultural Preservation through
A Traditional Incense Hub in the Sasong Village, China



Fig 0.1
Cover Page
Hand Sketch
MIST
(Author, 2024)

Fig 0.2
Opposite
Travel Sketch
Potala Palace
(Author, 2023)

I, **Mei Han Liang - 1841505** am a student registered for the course Master of Architecture (Professional) in the year 2024. I hereby declare the following:

I am aware that plagiarism [the use of someone else's work without permission and/or without acknowledging the original sources] is wrong. I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have stated explicitly otherwise. I have followed the required conventions in referencing thoughts, ideas, and visual materials of others. For this purpose, I have referred to the Graduate School of Engineering and the Built Environment style guide. I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my own work.



Mei Han Liang
27 February 2025

ARCHITECTURE OF MIST



Fig 0.3
Opposite
Digital Illustration
Imagination
(Author, 2024)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book serves as both an artifact and a reflective journal documenting my journey through the “Architecture of MIST,” my Master of Architecture thesis completed at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2024, under the esteemed mentorship of Professor Hilton Judin.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have guided and supported me throughout this endeavor and the development of this thesis. My sincere appreciation goes to the faculty of Wits Architecture for their steadfast support and guidance. I am particularly indebted to my supervisor, Professor Hilton Judin, whose wisdom, critical insights, and encouragement fostered an environment conducive to exploration. His mentorship has not only shaped this thesis but has also significantly influenced my evolution as an architect. His faith in my work has been pivotal in bringing this project to fruition.

To my family, friends, and loved ones, who have stood by me through the myriad emotions of this process—your unwavering love, encouragement, and belief in me have been my constant source of strength. In times of uncertainty and vulnerability, your support empowered me to persevere. You have been my refuge during moments of despair, grounding me and reminding me of the joy inherent in this journey. Thank you for your steadfast presence, even when challenges appeared insurmountable.

To my peers and colleagues who have shared in this academic pursuit—your collaboration, insights, and camaraderie have greatly enriched my experience. Together, we have navigated the complexities of architecture and confronted numerous challenges, for which I am profoundly grateful. The knowledge and friendships we have cultivated are invaluable.

To Tibet, China, my homeland and wellspring of inspiration—the essence from which this thesis was born. The memories embedded in the land, the heritage preserved by countless ancestors, and the richness of its history provided the foundation for this work. Layer by layer, brick by brick, this thesis is a testament to endurance, creativity, and the relentless pursuit of visions that materialize when all is said and done.

Every aspect of an Architect’s work is a diligent fusion of imagination and precision, forging connections that exemplify resilience and the crafting of spaces that serve and inspire. Zaha Hadid remarked, “There are 360 degrees, so why stick to one?” The challenge of exploring multiple perspectives and possibilities is formidable, and it would not have been achievable without all of you. To those I may not have mentioned by name, I apologize for the oversight, please know that your contributions are deeply valued.

To everyone who has been part of this journey—your love, care, and presence have been indispensable, and I extend my deepest thanks to you. Lastly, to myself, I express gratitude for not leaving any path unexplored, for embracing new imaginations and possibilities, and for having the courage to challenge the status quo. This journey has been one of self-discovery and growth, pushing the boundaries of my understanding and capabilities as an architect. Each late night, every moment of doubt, and all the triumphs have collectively shaped not only this thesis but also my identity within the field of architecture. The experiences I’ve gathered will serve as a compass, guiding my future endeavors in architecture and beyond.

Mei Han Liang
Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, August 2024

Fig 0.4
Opposite
Hand Sketch
Chinese Calligraphy : QI
(Author, 2024)



AIR

qì kōng qì
氣 | 空气

/ɛ:/ [noun]

1. the invisible gaseous substance surrounding the earth, a mixture mainly of oxygen and nitrogen.

Fig 0.5
Opposite
Edited Photography
Tibet Landscape:
Mount Namjagbarwa
(Author, 2023)

GLOSSARY

mist /mist/

1. [uncountable, countable] **a cloud of very small drops of water in the air just above the ground, that make it difficult to see** (Oxford, 2024)

The intentional use of blurred boundaries, transparency, and fluidity to create ethereal atmospheres that evoke an ambiguous spatial perception. It emphasizes the dynamic interaction between solid and void, serving as a design approach that shapes space through flexible and expansive configurations, often challenging traditional spatial definitions.

Tibet /ti'bet/

1. **Tibet Autonomous Region, an administrative division of China, north of the Himalayas** (Dictionary, 2024)

Plateau of Tibet, a vast plateau in southern central Asia bounded by the Tarim and Qaidam basin deserts to the north and the Himalayan, Karakoram, and Pamir mountain ranges to the south and west: highest plateau in the world, averaging about 15,000 feet (4,570 meters). 850,000 square miles (2,200,000 square kilometers). (Dictionary, 2024)

Tibetan /ti'bet.ən/

1. **belonging or relating to Tibet, its people, or its language** (Cambridge, 2024)





ABSTRACT

At the roof of the world, Tibet reaches toward the sky with a short arm, envisioned as a vessel that draws a profound connection between the sacred and the earthly realms. The air here is thin and pure, yet vast and boundless; every breeze carries the whispers of ancient mountains, the soft caress of green meadows, and the silence of endless skies. The mountains offer the cool touch of snow, while the land rises with the sun's first light, softening into a misty veil as twilight descends. The air is alive—clear, crisp, and fragrant—laden with the weight of centuries. If one could imagine every connection to the heavens, every communion with the sacred, and every atmosphere rich with the memory of the land, it would feel as if they were incensed themselves: infinite and eternal, with the soul brushed by the weightless touch of eternity in the boundless layers of air.

An Architecture of Mist for Intervention—this thesis investigates a site in South-east Tibet, the Sasong Village, known as “the village of Sacred Scents and Fog.” Perched on the plateau, the village is steeped in cultural and heritage traditions and is renowned for its high-altitude landscapes and spectacular peach blossoms. While its beauty and cultural significance are celebrated, the region's ancient incense craftsmanship—deeply rooted in practical rituals—has become endangered, threatening its survival for future generations.

This thesis aims to revitalize and reintroduce this endangered craft into the core of Tibetan culture, restoring local knowledge of Tibet and the attention of the broader world. By considering the needs of the local Tibetans, the unique ecologies, and the ancient craftsmanship of incense-making, this project uses architecture as a subtle, invisible framework. The design leverages transitional spaces to create innovative methodologies, redefining spatial paradigms that honor both tradition and modernity.

This architectural approach seeks to explore the “in-betweens”—the interstitial spaces between nature and human intervention, between the past and the present, between the monumental and the intimate, and between the imagina-

tive and the perceivable. With a deep concern for heritage sites rich in cultural and geological history, protective measures are considered with utmost care. Tibet, an autonomous region long safeguarded by its remote, high-altitude isolation, has nurtured its people with deep rituals and meaningful practices. Yet, today, Tibet faces significant challenges, including environmental degradation, cultural erosion, economic disparities, and infrastructural gaps, alongside the delicate balance between tourism development and cultural preservation.

This thesis proposes an Architecture of Mist—a Traditional Incense Hub designed to catalyse architectural intervention, addressing these pressing issues while ensuring that Tibet's cultural heritage is preserved. The objective is to maintain the ethereal beauty of the landscape while fostering sustainable development for the future. By creating human-scale structures that bridge the surrounding natural environment with thoughtfully implemented programs, the project fosters interactions that celebrate and preserve the rich Tibetan incense-making tradition for generations to come. This architectural vision aspires to be both a tribute to the past and a promise for the future, ensuring that the cultural essence of Tibet continues to thrive amidst the mist.

Contents

I. Mystique



0 | Introduction

Navigation



1 | Air

Preface: Decision Making

1:1 Physical Orientation

Context: Location

Natural Ecology of Linzhi

Geology of Sasong

Cultural Heritage of Sasong

Preface: Memories of Aechitecture

1:2 Conceptual Orientation

Space Organism

Sequentiality

Borderless

Architecture of Mist

Preface: Theory

1:3 Theoretical Orientation

Context Narratives: Spectrum

Air, Atmosphere, and Architecture

Mirroring Air as an Element

Air as an architectural Symbolism

"Air" id "Mist" is "Sublime"

II. Interplay



2 | Incense

Preface: Interlectural Cultural Heritage

2:1 Programmatic Orientation

Burn: Incense with Air

Context: Stories of Incense

Incense: Making Processes

2:2 Connection Orientation

Moment into Memories

Air in Making and Burning

III. Sublimation



3 | Analysis

Preface: Site Visit

3:1 Analysis Orientation

Context: Condition Analysis

Context: Material Analysis

Context: Space Analysis



4 | Design Development

Preface: Concept

4:1 Development Orientation

Design Inspiration

Form Study and Development

Form Iterations

Programmatic Development

IV. Tectonics



5 | Final Design

Preface: Drawing Introduction

5:1 Presentation Orientation

Project on Site

Project Influenced Movements

Design Implementation

Model Footage



6 | Appendices

6:1 Documentation Orientation

Project Viability

Ethic Clearance

References

Fig 0.7
On Page
Edited Ink Drawing
1: Buddha and Stupa
2: Chatra
3: Makara-tail Scrolls
4: Kalachakra
5: Tibet Chakra Wheel
6: Tibet Golden Wheel
7: Pattern Colour
(Author, 2024)

Fig 0.8
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Online Source
Left: Zhangzhung Nyan Gyud
1400-1499
Right: Body Mandala
1900-1959
(Watt, 2015)



0

Introduction

Navigation of Project

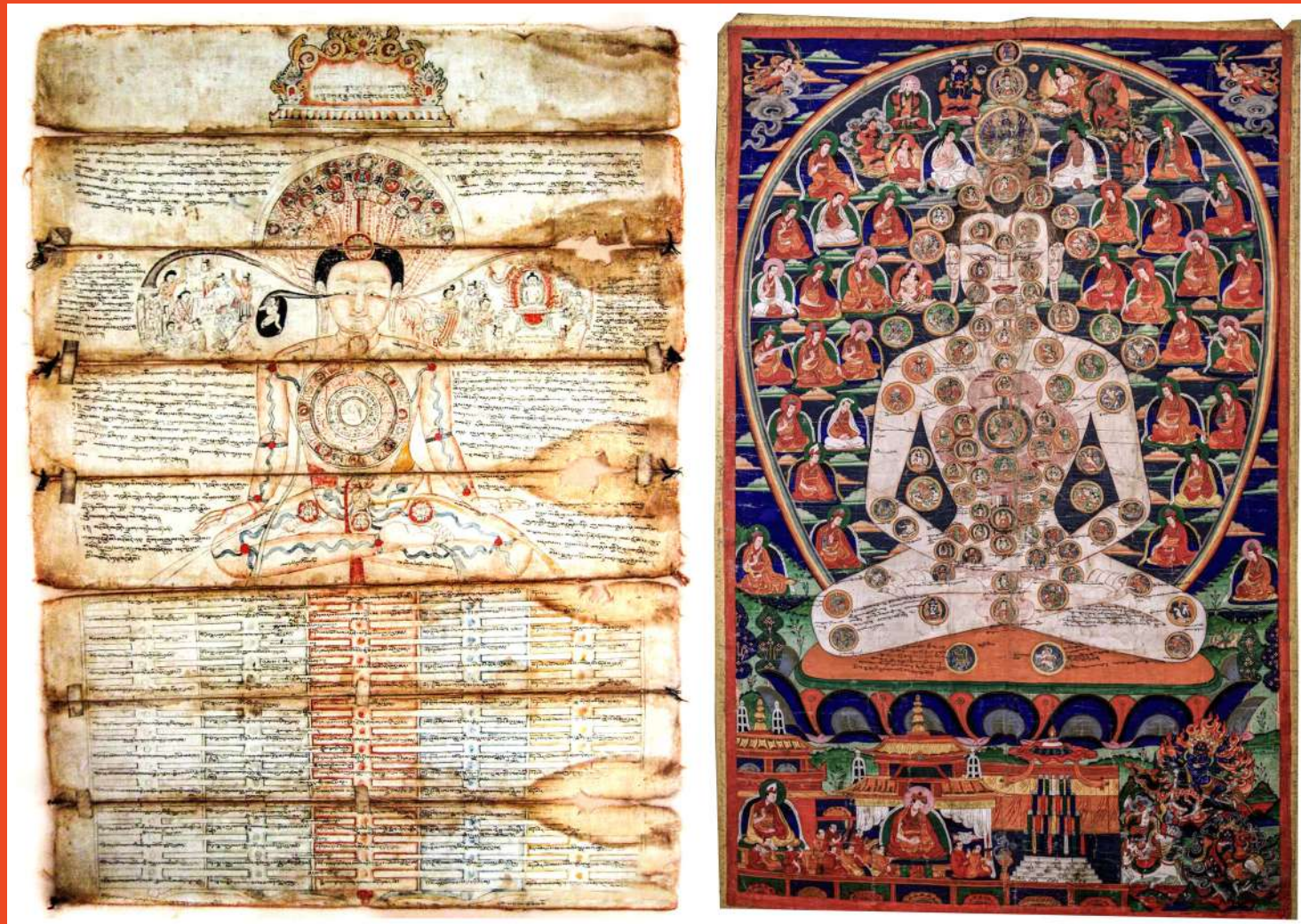
From Lama Zopa Rinpoche:

"Building a stupa is a way to benefit sentient beings without using words. They are very powerful objects for purifying negative states of the mind. To have such a holy object existing in a country makes that country very rich and very lucky. Wherever a stupa is built, it will become a powerful place for healing and a cause of whatever success visitors are seeking. By coming and seeing such holy objects, each person can have the potential to transform their mind. These benefits apply to all sentient beings that come to the stupa, even dogs that are taken for a walk around it."

"The Stupa represents Buddha's holy mind, Dharmakaya, and each part of the Stupa shows the path to Enlightenment. Building a Stupa is a very powerful way to purify negative karma and obscurations, and to accumulate extensive merit. In this way you can have realizations of the path to Enlightenment and be able to do perfect work to liberate suffering beings, who equal the sky, leading them to the peerless happiness of Enlightenment, which is the ultimate goal of our life."

"The benefits you receive from building a stupa equal the number of atoms of the stupa, and these benefits exist as long as the stupa exists. Sentient beings accumulate extensive merit by making offerings to holy objects, and from this merit happiness comes"

Zopa Rinpoche
September 1994



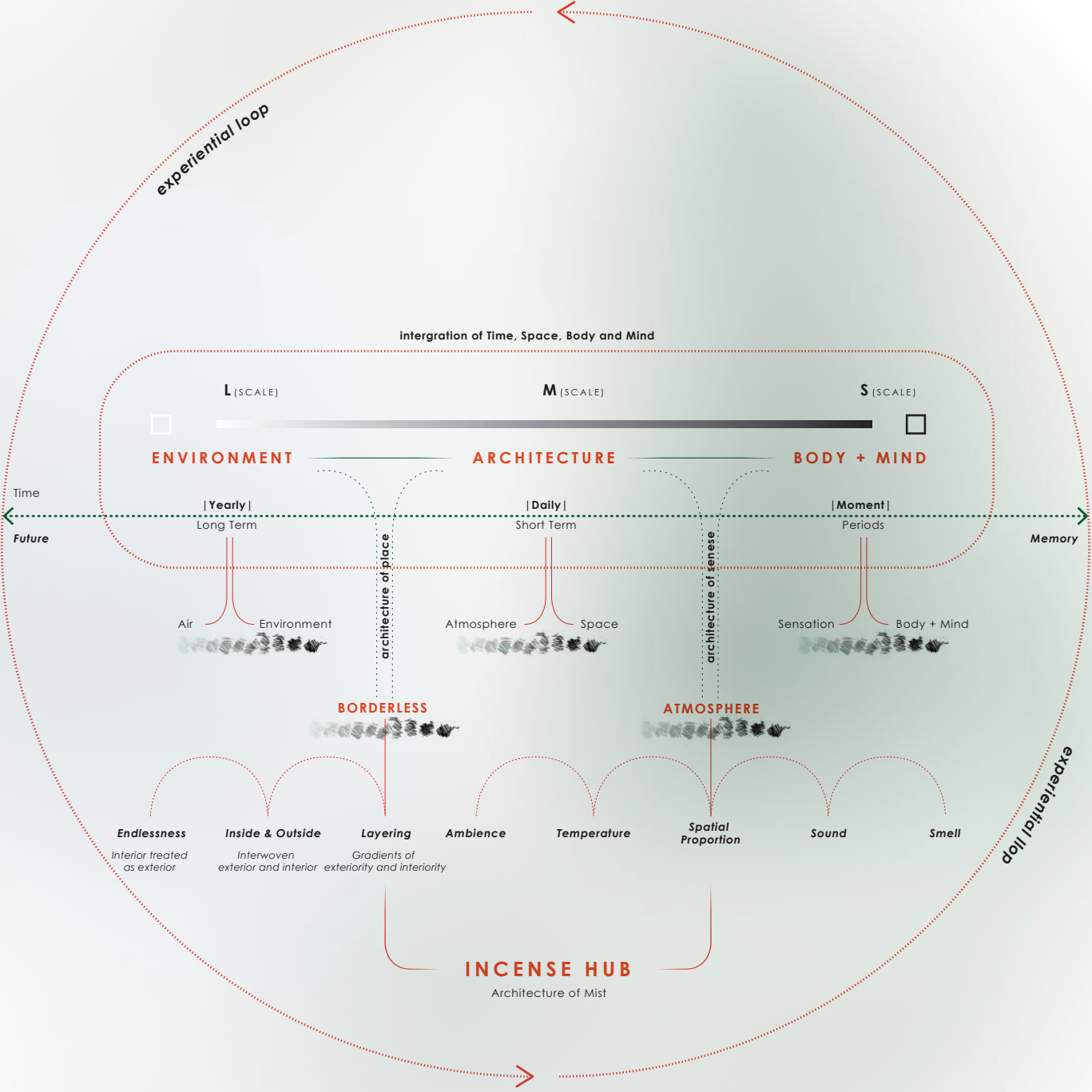


Fig 0.9
Opposite
Diagram Illustration
0-255:
Project Navigation
through The Greyscale
(Author, 2024)

Project Navigation

—A Sacred Scents Cultural Preservation through A Triditional Incense Hub in the Sasong Village, China—



Tibetan Incense, as it integrates into its natural and cultural context, stands at the intersection of therapeutic benefits and spiritual rituals. Showcasing its therapeutic qualities, Tibetan Incense is crafted from natural ingredients, aimed at enhancing human well-being. Spiritually, its ritualistic burning is believed to cleanse impurities, elevating it beyond a simple product to a sacred practice. Also known as "sang," Tibetan Incense

has long been essential to Tibetan culture and everyday life. However, in recognising its significance, there seems to be a gap in the conversation surrounding its dual role in cultural production. On one side, its production follows traditional cultural practices, while on the other, there are instances where economic factors come into play. Yet, there is no single space or dialogue that acknowledges and bridges this duality.

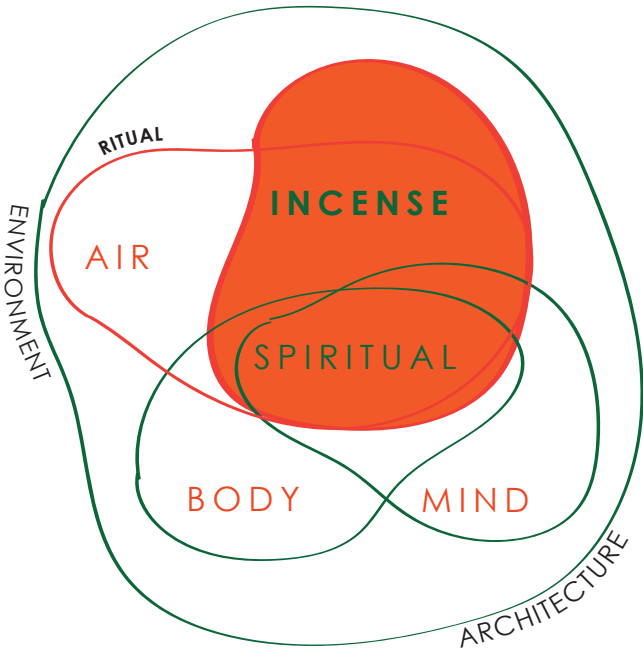
This ancient cultural heritage is now at risk, fading under the combined pressures of cultural erosion and environmental degradation. This research seeks to contribute to the revitalisation of incense production through the lens of Tibet's Intangible Cultural Heritage Practice—a practice that traces back to the earliest history of Tibet and its people. The aim is to rekindle the memories of body, mind, and soul, intertwined with Tibet through architectural design. This

study explores the physical and spiritual dimensions, unveiling them through theoretical analysis, where air is considered an essential element, a thread that connects all, framing the past and present. It draws from themes of primitivism, phenomenology, vernacular theory, and the psychology of air while exploring its spiritual significance for Tibetans and humanity at large.

The design project endeavors to bridge the gap between the environment, body, and mind, using architecture to address ecological sensitivity alongside spiritual displacement. The process incorporates an in-depth analysis of the site, people, places, and nature. The project advocates for the revival of Tibet's intangible cultural heritage, underscoring its historical importance. This is envisioned as a long-term endeavor, paving the way for the resurgence of other intan-

gible cultural practices, and bringing ancestral knowledge into dialogue with contemporary technologies.

The project illustrates the importance of time, place, and memory, creating values through architectural practice. A navigation diagram unveils the interconnected themes and thought systems that informed the project, revealing how its various aspects coalesce. Every line of the diagram traces meaningful connections, guiding the viewer through layers of complexity toward a coherent vision. The journey through the greyscale uncovers deep links, revealing a clear and unified conclusion at the project's end.





1

Chapter 1:1

Air

Physical Orientation *of Project*

Preface: Decision Making:

"I embark on my journey into Tibet, and with each moment I experience, every path I walk, and every word I exchange, my bond with this land of purity deepens. As I open my diary, I revisit the emotions I have captured in words, tracing each entry back to the evidence of my growing connection. Every section begins with a recollection of the journey, guiding me like an arrow, pointing toward the decisions and ties that have shaped my attachment to this sacred place."

Mei Han Liang
2024-02-22

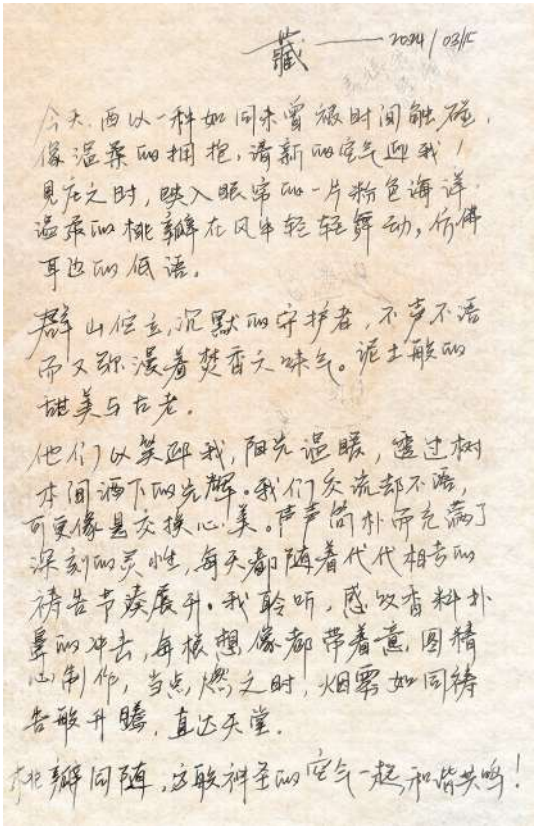
Fig 1.2
Below
Scan Document
Diary 01: Mandarin
(Author, 2023)

Fig 1.3
On Page
Edited Water Colour
Land: Sasong Village
(Author, 2023)

Context: Location

—Diary 01: 15 March 2023—
Arrival in the Land of Blossoms—

Today, Tibet welcomed me with an air of timelessness—so crisp, vast, and clear, as though untouched by history. My steps led me into Suosong Village, though the locals, called it Sasong. Upon arrival, I was greeted by a cascade of peach blossoms, catching the gentle fall of pink petals, carried by the wind like whispers. Towering mountains stood as silent guardians, while the air was thick with the sweet and earthy scent of incense, ancient and pure. The warmth of the locals matched the sunlight filtering through the trees. Without words, we exchanged gestures—simple yet profound—rooted in a spiritual understanding, as if generations of prayers had shaped their days. My welcome was marked by the lighting of incense, a sacred gesture, its smoke rising like prayers to the heavens. Even the peach blossoms seemed to sway in harmony, dancing in sync with the sacred air.



15 March 2023



15 March 2023

Fig 1.4
Below
Sourced Photograph
Tibet Flags
(Blackstationwang, 2024)

Fig 1.5
Below
Sourced Photograph
Tibetan Plateau,
(Unknown, 2023)



Fig 1.6
Below
Edited Photograph
Sasong Village, Linzhi
(Author, 2023)



Fig 1.7
Below
Online Source
Sasong Village Site View
(Google Earth, 2024)



Fig 1.8
Below
Edited Photograph
Tibetan Style Window
(Author, 2023)

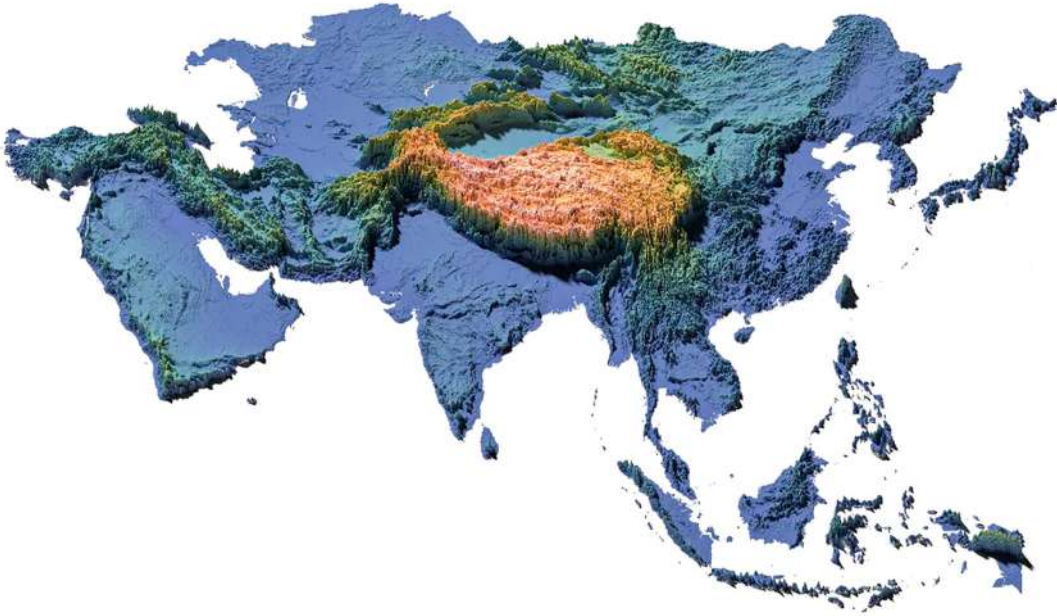


Fig 1.9
Below
Online Source
World Map
(Reddit, 2023)



Fig 1.10
Below
Online Source
Top View of Sasong Village
(Sisifield, 2019)



Fig 1.11
Below
Photograph
Sasong Village , Bottom View
(Author, 2023)



Fig 1.12
Below
Edited Photograph
Local Stone Walls, Sasong Village
(Author, 2023)



Fig 1.13
Below
Edited Photograph
Blossom Field
(Author, 2023)



Fig 1.14
Below
Edited Photograph
Tibetan Style Red Mud Wall
(Author, 2023)



Fig 1.15
Previous Page(Bottom Left)
Diagram Illustration
Macro Context
(Author, 2024)

Fig 1.16
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Online Source
Topographic Map of Asia
(Ranking, 2024)

Fig 1.17
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Diagram Illustration
Micro Context
(Author, 2024)

Context: Location

—Sasong Village, Linzhi, Tibet, China—

Tibet, often referred to as “The Roof of the World,” is shaped by its soaring altitude, which has a profound influence on both its environment and its people. Nestled within this majestic landscape is the breathtaking city of Linzhi (Nyingchi), distinguished from the rest of Tibet by its temperate climate. This region is celebrated for its towering mountains, lush valleys, and rich natural ecosystems, each season bringing a unique beauty. In winter, Mount Namjagbarwa stands tall; in autumn, the Yarlung Tsangpo River flows through golden hues; in spring, peach blossoms paint the landscape; and in summer, vibrant green plants carpet the land. This ancient and lively region has served as a sanctuary for spiritual practices and a cradle of tradition for centuries.

Sasong Village holds a unique position within Linzhi, set apart from the noise and bustle, quietly isolated in its remote location. This seclusion has allowed the village to preserve its cultural integrity, safeguarding traditional craftsmanship from the influences of mass production. Despite its isolation, Linzhi has long held strategic importance due to its location along the ancient “routes of wealth,” where Tibet was once a vital passageway of the ancient ‘Tea and Horse Caravan Road’ (also known as the ‘Silk Road of Southwest China’), a trade route from the 6th century to the 20th century that started in Southern China, passed through Tibet, Burma, and Nepal, and ended in India. ((Liang Xu, 2022)) These exchanges have deeply influenced Tibetan practices, with the villagers of Sasong continuing to incorporate elements of ancient wisdom from both Chinese and Indian traditions.

The village benefits greatly from its geographical isolation, where the high altitude acts as a natural barrier, protecting both the people and their environment. This positioning has shielded the village from external influences, allowing traditions and rituals to flourish in their purity. Homes in Sasong Village are built to align with the rhythms of nature, designed to withstand the forces of the natural world while remaining in harmony with the landscape. These structures not only embrace the environment but are, in return, embraced by it.

Sasong is home to the largest peach blossoms in the region, where the annual bloom serves as more than a symbol of beauty—it represents the cyclical nature of life and renewal, a deeply meaningful event for the local villagers. The towering mountains and low-lying lands of the village carry both physical and spiritual significance, often shroud-

ed in mist, which creates a thin veil between the earthly and the divine. This mist, along with the smoke of burning incense, carries the weight of centuries-old traditions and devotion. Life in Sasong is not hurried but instead reflects the contemplative nature of the land itself. Here, villagers seek simplicity in mind, body, and spirit, striving to continue a legacy that prioritizes connection with nature over material progress or technological innovation. Their lives are intimately tied to the earth, mountains, rivers, and skies—a place where modernity has remained untouched, leaving space for the origins of life to be felt and honoured.

Fig 1.18
Below
Photograph
Tibet Tea Baking
(Author, 2023)

Fig 1.19
Below
Edited Water Colour
Tibet Tea Cup
(Author, 2023)

—Diary 02: 18 March 2023
Tea and Timelessness —

Morning here differs from anywhere I've known—peaceful yet full of life, a freshness born of blossoming earth. I left the warmth of my bed to join the elders for tea under the vast sky, where peach blossoms formed a canopy above us. Steam rose from our cups, and so did the conversation, revealing the deep connection the people have to this land. Every stone, breath, and stream is woven into the fabric of life, a continuity that stretches across generations. Soft words carried the weight of centuries, as the elders spoke of the land as though it were family, rising like old friends conversing with the clouds. There was no rush, no intrusion of technology—just calm, slow moments where stories unfolded, and shared over tea. Like the peach blossoms, the people here are rooted in this soil, generation after generation, grounded by their connection to the earth.



17 March 2023



17 March 2023

Natural Ecology of Linzhi

——Sasong Village, Linzhi, Tibet, China——

Linzhi, home to Sasong Village, is often referred to as the “Switzerland of Tibet” due to its rich and diverse ecosystem, slightly lower altitude, and more temperate climate compared to the rest of Tibet. This favourable environment supports a wide variety of species, many of which are unique to Tibet. These plants not only enhance the natural beauty of the Tibet Autonomous Region but are also deeply intertwined with the cultural and spiritual lives of the local villagers. Iconic flora, such as the peach blossoms of Sasong Village and the vibrant rhododendrons, colour the landscape each spring, serving as symbols of the land’s identity and uniqueness.

Many plant species in Linzhi hold significant cultural and spiritual meaning. Ancestors have long-drawn connections to the earth through the roots of these plants. Sacred trees, such as the Tibetan Cypress and Juniper, play important roles in religious rituals and are often used in the construction of temples and

the making of incense. In addition to their architectural significance, these plants are integral to smaller-scale practices, such as incense production. Wild herbs like Cordyceps and Rhodiola are highly valued for their medicinal properties, playing a vital role in traditional Tibetan healing practices. These processes not only support the livelihood of locals but also forge unseen links between the people and the land.

The inhabitants of Linzhi and Sasong Village maintain a profound connection to the natural world, living in harmony with the earth that sustains them. They view the land as sacred, and everything it provides is cherished with deep gratitude. The flora of the region offers not only sustenance and materials but also holds a central place in their cultural beliefs and daily rituals. The preservation of their natural surroundings is deeply connected to the preservation of Tibetan culture and heritage. This reverence for the environment ensures

that efforts to protect the natural beauty of the region are intertwined with Tibetan cultural identity.

The writings of “Duan Ge” by Sangjiejiacuo document the rich variety of plant species native to Tibet, with particular emphasis on medicinal herbs that have been integral to Tibetan life. These detailed records highlight the importance of nature to the Tibetan people and their way of life, underscoring the essential role that the natural world plays in sustaining both their physical and spiritual well-being.

Fig 1.20
Following Page (Full Page)
Scans of Printed Photograph
<Duan Ge>
Tibetan Handwritten
Herbal Dictionary
(Sangjiejiacuo, undated)

Fig 1.21
Following Page
Edited Hand Drawings
Saffron
Sandalwood
(Author, 2024)

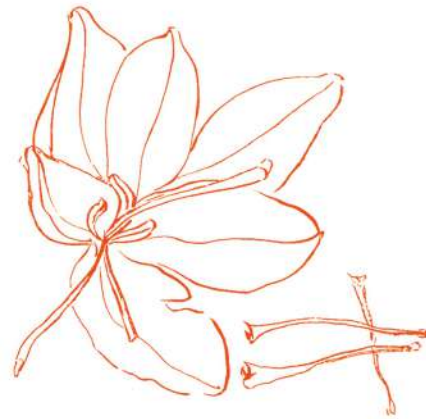




— 檀香 —

—Sandalwood—

Sandalwood, with its warm, woody scent, is a key ingredient in Tibetan incense for its grounding and purifying qualities. It is used to calm the mind, purify the atmosphere, and create a peaceful, sacred space for spiritual practices.



— 藏红花 —
—Saffron—

Saffron, known for its vibrant colour and rich aroma, is often used in Tibetan incense for its calming and uplifting properties. It is believed to promote mental clarity, reduce stress, and enhance spiritual focus during meditation.

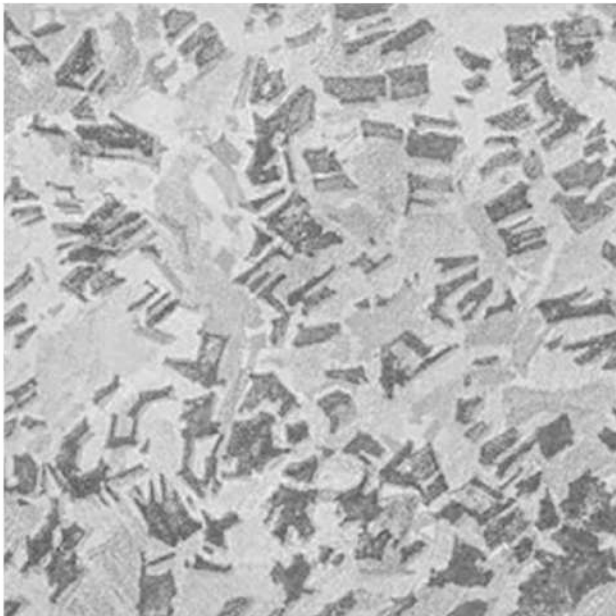


Geology of Sasong Village

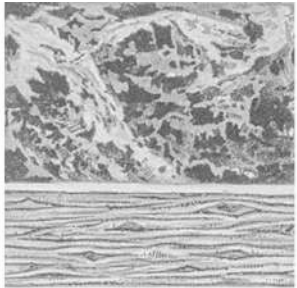
—Sasong Village, Linzhi, Tibet, China—

Linzhi, situated on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau, features a landscape shaped by tectonic activity, resulting in rugged peaks and verdant lowlands. Sasong Village, nestled near a deep valley, is a testament to this dramatic terrain. The geological context of the village reveals layered soil beds formed by the shifting course of the river over time. As the river cuts deeper into the valley, new riverbanks emerge, while the old riverbeds form solid, stacked layers of earth. This fertile valley, nurtured by the Yarlung Tsangpo River, provides rich soil that sustains diverse vegetation.

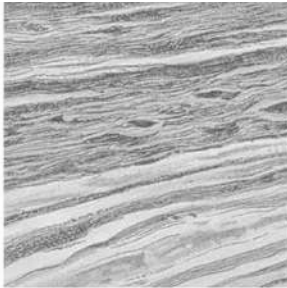
Surrounding Sasong, the towering Mount Namjagbarwa rises steeply, creating a striking contrast between the high peaks and the lush green lowlands and forested slopes below. The significant elevation differences between the mountains and valleys give rise to a layer of mist, often cloaking the landscape in a veil of mystery. This varied terrain, encompassing both alpine and subtropical environments, supports a rich and unique blend of ecosystems, making Linzhi a region of extraordinary natural diversity.



Medium waterhold soil for planting



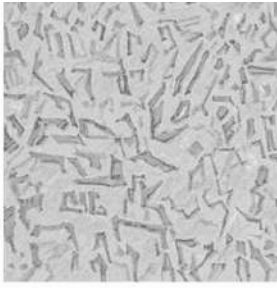
Old and new soil beds



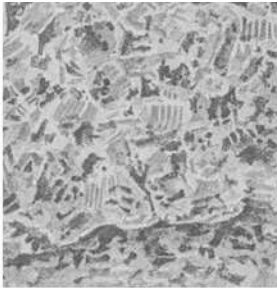
Soil land Wash



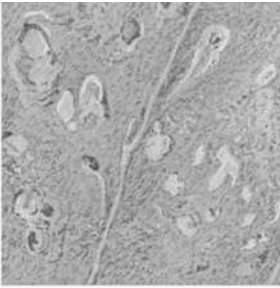
Mixed soil



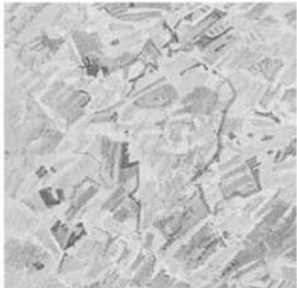
Dry Soil



Medium soil with sandrock



Soft soil with water streams



Light soil beds



Even beds



Extreme water lands



Rocky Land



Smooth soil wash



Uneven hard rock

Fig 1.22
Below
Online Source
Minerals Antique, 1907
(Unknown, 2003)

Fig 1.23
Next Page(Top)
Diagram Illustration
Geological Conditions of Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 1.24
Next Page(Middle)
Edited Hand Sketch
Mountain Streams
(Author, 2024)

Fig 1.25
Next Page(Bottom)
Photograph
Charette Exercise on Land Condition Explorations
(Author, 2024)

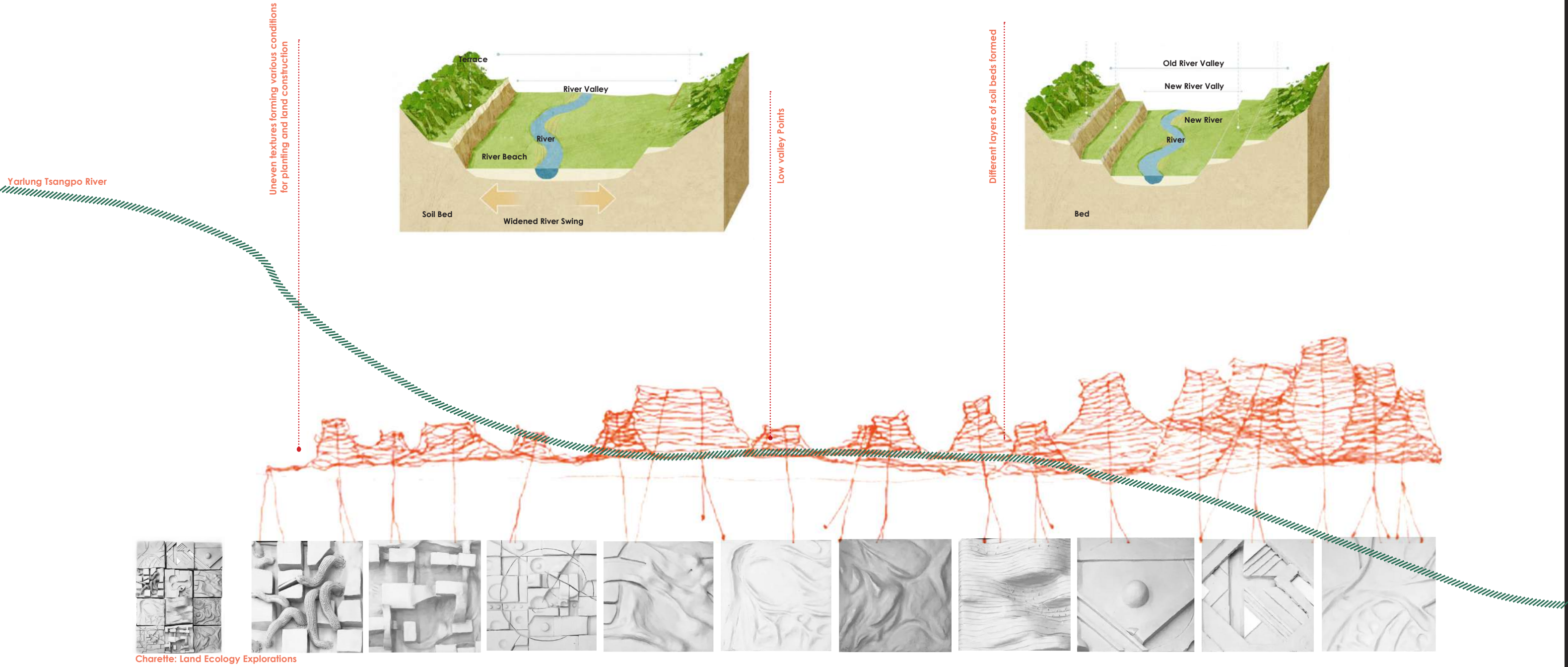


Fig 1.26
Below
Edited Water Colour
Traditional Incense Burner
(Author, 2023)

—Diary 03: 22 March 2023
The Sacred Dance of Incense —



Today, I followed a path perfumed with incense, a reminder of the spiritual threads that bind this land. I was invited to witness the making of incense, a sacred process passed down through the ages. Each ingredient was carefully selected, ground, and mixed by hand, a ritual that felt like a dance—every movement deliberate, serene, and imbued with meaning. They told me that incense is not merely something they burn; it is a bridge between the earthly and the divine. Its smoke carries prayers, hopes, and gratitude to the heavens, healing and connecting what is broken. I watched the smoke spiral upward, dissolving into the sky like the petals drifting away in the wind, leaving behind their beauty. The air seemed alive with spirit and tradition, something ancient yet beyond words, only felt in the senses.

Fig 1.27
Opposite
Online Sourced
Traditional Incense Practice
(Unknown, 2023)

Cultural Heritage in Sasong

—Cultural Heritage: Incense Burning—

Sasong Village in Linzhi, steeped in rich cultural heritage, offers a vivid reflection of unique Tibetan customs and the region's deep spiritual practices. This village, somewhat isolated compared to its neighbours, has long relied on its self-sufficiency, preserving cultural traditions that have been passed down through generations. As one walks through the village, the presence of traditional Tibetan architecture and Tibetan Buddhism is unmistakable, visible in the structures and spiritual symbols scattered throughout.

Curiously, despite the strong spiritual presence, there is no dedicated space for incense burning or incense prayer rooms within the village. Instead, incense rituals are integrated into everyday life, with burning often taking place in the corners of rooms, houses, or open spaces. This practice appears fluid and mobile, where villagers simply use a match and a handful of incense to engage in spontaneous acts of prayer and purification.

Incense craftsmanship remains one of the most notable traditions in Sasong Village. This ancient art relies on locally sourced herbs and plants, transforming elements of the natural environment into sacred offerings. As incense burns, it releases a delicate string of smoke that purifies the surroundings and carries prayers to the heavens. Importantly, this craft has been passed down through generations and remains an essential skill to preserve, as it embodies the village's sacred connection to its environment and cultural heritage.



Fig 1.28
Below
Photograph
Sasong Village
(Author, 2023)

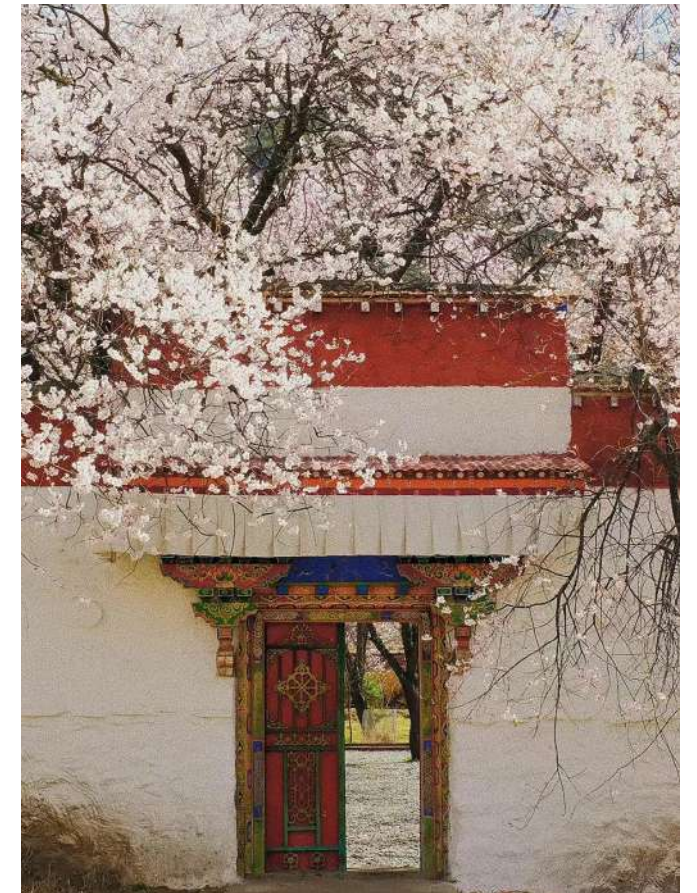
Fig 1.29
Below
Photograph
Entrance to the Village
Home Stay
(Author, 2023)

—Diary 04: 26 March 2023
Echoes of the Earth —

In these last few days, I wandered into the fields, where the peach blossoms had begun to fade, stretching out in delicate hues of pink. Yet, I felt no sadness, for I knew they would bloom again, year after year. The mountains in the distance stood timeless, unchanged. As I immersed myself in nature, I heard soft footsteps approaching, accompanied by prayers directed towards the mountains. Hands pressed together in silent reverence, the people's connection to the land was palpable, uninterrupted by the distractions of modernity. Their steps left a faint trace of incense, a lingering symbol of their love and loyalty to this sacred place. They harbor no desire to abandon this land for the noise of the modern world. Instead, they place their faith in the earth, believing in its return and continuity. There is a quiet strength in their resolve, a trust that this land will remain theirs—a legacy handed down in silence, like the rising smoke of incense, like prayers carried by the wind.



20 March 2023



22 March 2023

Fig 1.30
Below (Left)
Online Source
A Path in Sasong Village
(Unknown, 2023)

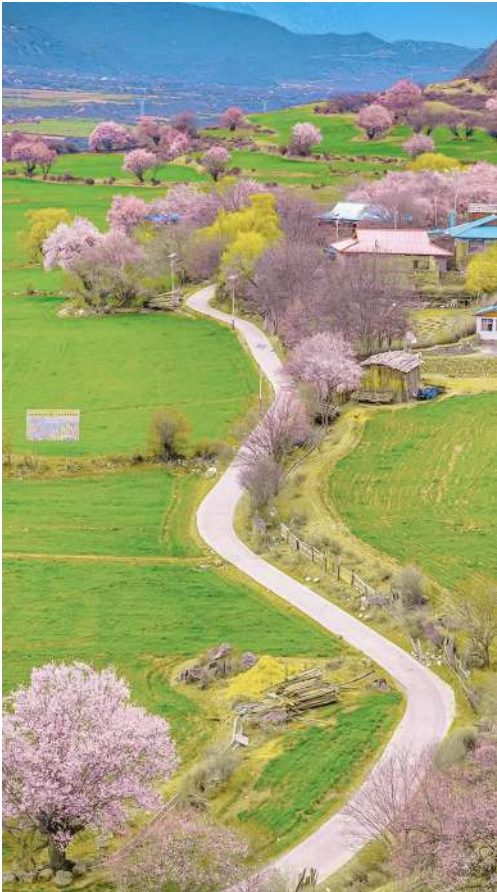


Fig 1.31
Below (Middle)
Online Source
Front View of Sasong Village
(Unknown, 2022)



Fig 132
Below
Edited Water Colour
A house on the edge of Sasong Village
(Author, 2023)

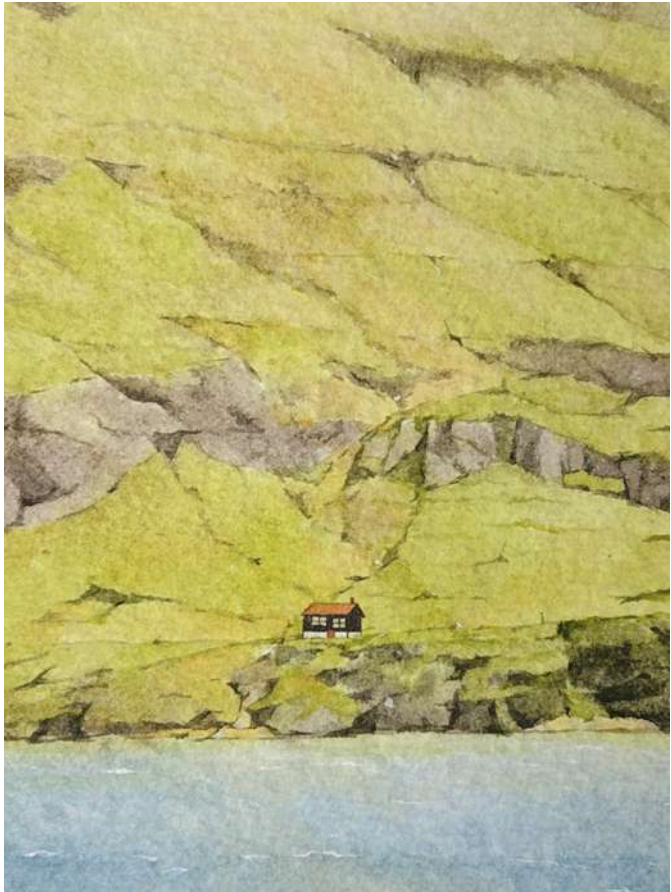
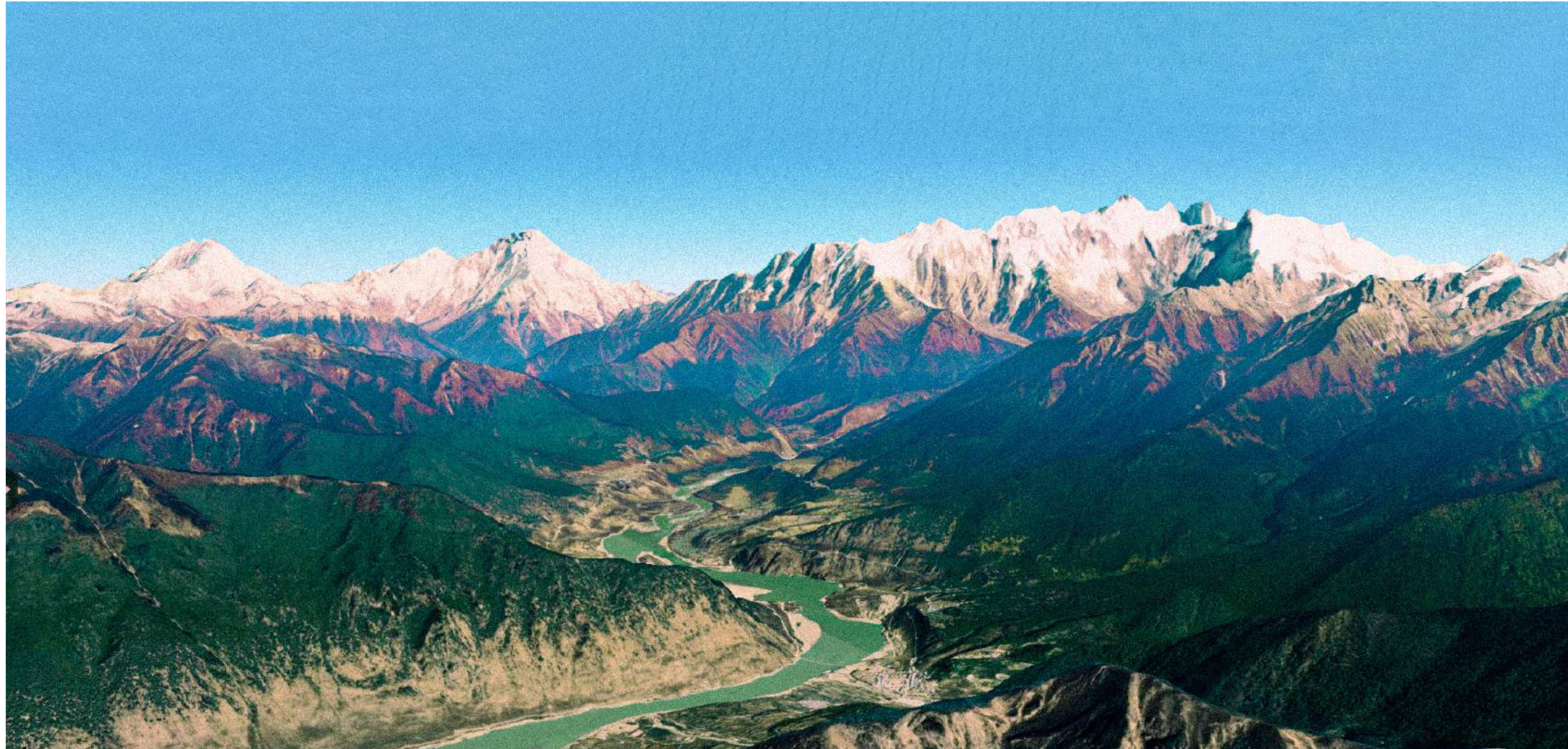


Fig 1.33
Below
Online Source
Google Earth:
Sasong Village
(Google Earth, 2024)



—Diary 05: 28 March 2023
Rhythm of Life —

As my time here draws to a close, I feel the spirit of this place settling deep within me as I prepare to return home. Staring out the window of the train, I watch the last petals of the peach blossoms fall, carried by the soft wind. The pink hues fade, veiling the land in soft memory. I have never witnessed a life so intertwined with nature, where the land itself seems to breathe with the people. Every moment here felt surreal—the smiles, the praying hands, the deep eyes filled with stories. Their lives, untouched by the hustle of technology, pulse to a different rhythm—one of patience, purity, faith, simplicity, and endurance. Each day is a meditation, a silent dialogue with the earth. I witnessed it, the petals witnessed it, the mountains witnessed it—all the prayers and the heartbeat of this land. Like the smoke from burning incense, disappearing into the air and our breaths, the incense rises as an offering to the land, passed down through generations. I leave this place, carrying with me the echoes of their stories, their devotion, and the silent strength of a people whose fate is intertwined with the land they cherish.

Fig 1.34
Below
Edited Water Colour
Open
(Author, 2023)





1

Chapter 1:2

Air

Conceptual Orientation of Project

Preface: Decision Making:

"I embark on my journey into Tibet, and with each moment I experience, every path I walk, and every word I exchange, my bond with this land of purity deepens. As I open my diary, I revisit the emotions I have captured in words, tracing each entry back to the evidence of my growing connection. Every section begins with a recollection of the journey, guiding me like an arrow, pointing toward the decisions and ties that have shaped my attachment to this sacred place."

Mei Han Liang
2024-02-22

Fig 1.35
Below
Edited Hand Sketch
Space:
The Greyscale
(Author, 2024)

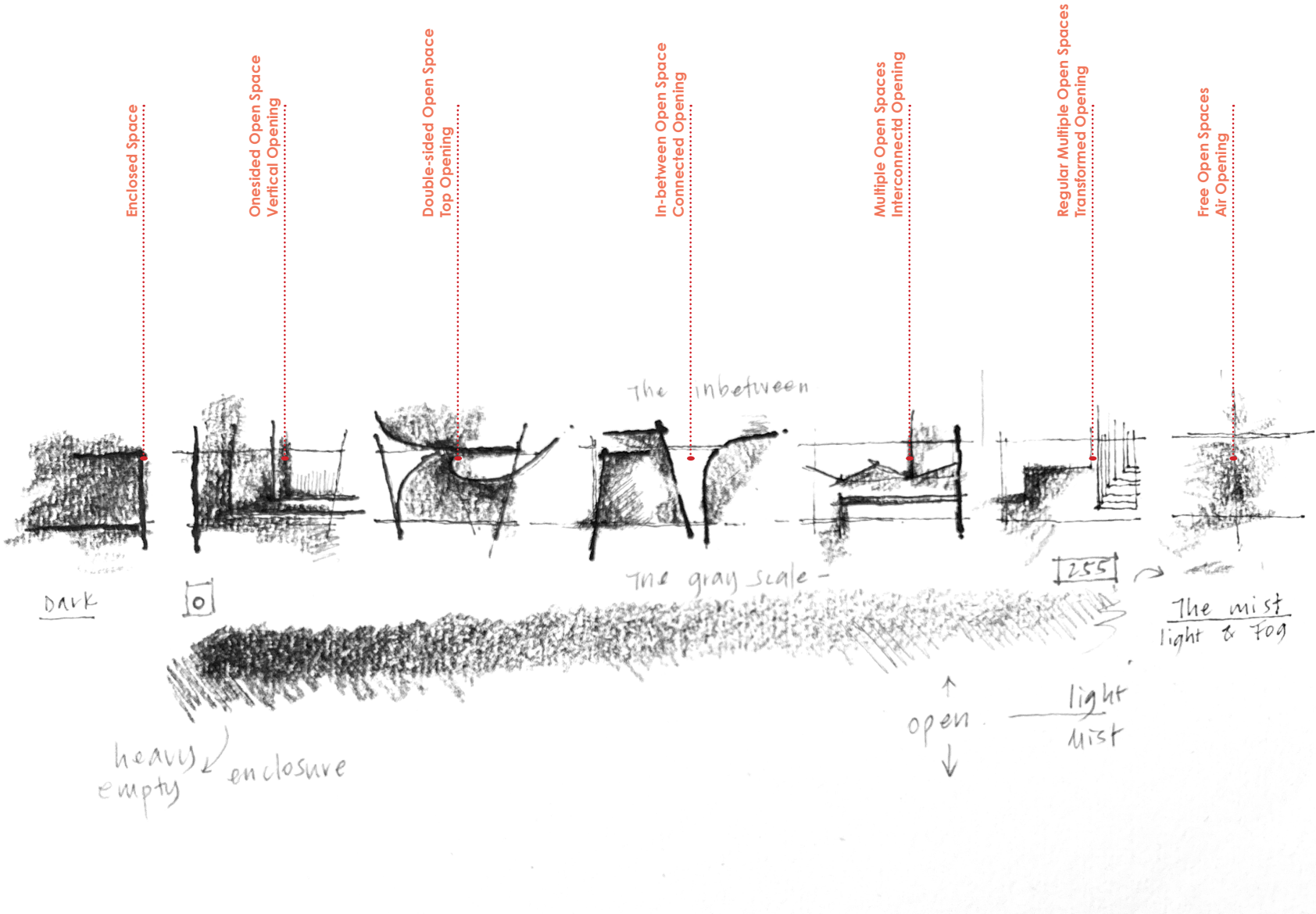
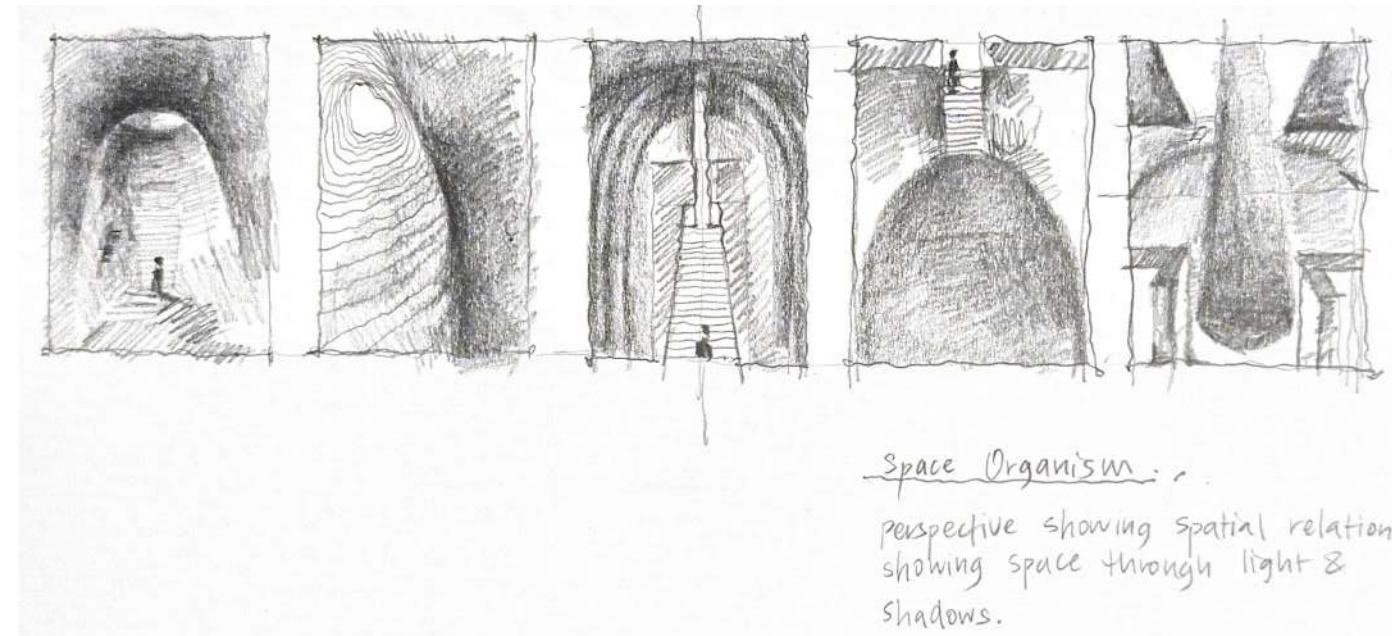


Fig 1.36
Below
Online Source
Space:
Bing Ding Wood Kiln
Factory Renovation, China
(Archdaily, 2022)



Fig 1.37
Below
Edited Hand Sketch
Space:
Light and Space Relationship
(Author, 2024)



Space Organism

—Spatial & Structural Order—

The inner logic of the part-to-whole relationship in architecture's structure, spatial composition, and organisational aspects works cohesively to create an interplay of atmospheric light and shadow, enhancing both the space performance and the structural performance. This synergy establishes a sense of grounding while simultaneously setting possibilities for movement and flow within the built environment.

Light and air—light with air—are inseparable architectural elements that collectively shape spatial perception, movement, and atmosphere. Whether natural or artificial, light introduces dynamism, and its interaction with air generates ephemeral moments and immersive experiences within a space—revealing textures, guiding circulation, and shifting with time. Air, as an invisible yet palpable medium, carries light,

diffusing it softly or allowing it to pierce through in dramatic contrasts, thereby emphasising spatial depth and transitions. The interplay between light and air influences perceptions of openness, enclosure, and fluidity as light filters through the air to define voids, cast shadows, and articulate the rhythmic structure of an architectural form.

Architectural design strategies and methodologies significantly shape how light and air perform within a structure, fostering comfort, movement, and a continuous dialogue between built and unbuilt spaces. The presence of light and the air movement imbue empty spaces with meaning, making them integral to the spatial experience rather than mere voids. Architecture becomes a living entity—responsive to its surrounding environmental conditions and human interactions. Here, light and air, both physical and perceptual, extend beyond their functional roles to enhance visual and thermal comfort while creating transient, atmospheric qualities that elevate the sensory and experiential dimensions of space.

Fig 1.38
Opposite
Edited Online Sources
(Left: Structure and Space Relationship)
Bing Ding Wood Kiln
Factory Renovation, China
(Author, 2024)

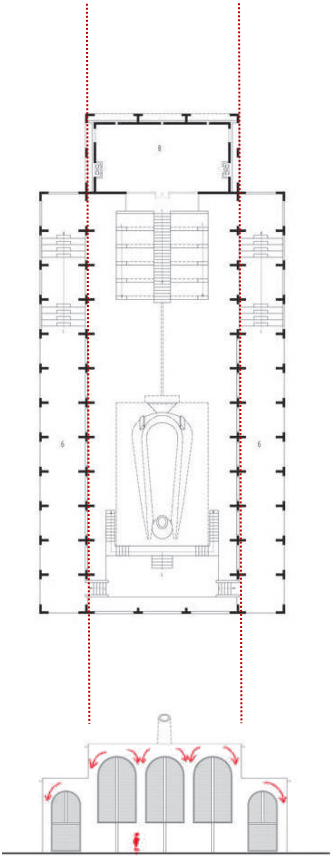
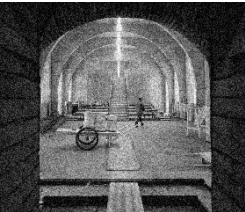
Fig 1.39
Opposite
Edited Online Sources
(right: Structure and Space Relationship)
King's College Chapel, Cambridge
(Author, 2024)

Sequentiality

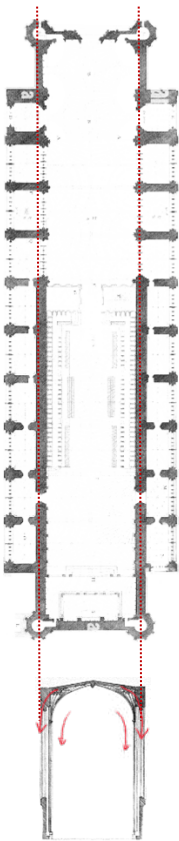
—Structure for Designing
Spatial Experience —

The relationship between structure and space extends beyond mere physical support, enabling the creation of expansive spans and large openings through the integration of form, geometry, and material systems. By synthesising structural logic with architectural intent, designers achieve both functional efficiency and expressive spatial qualities. The structure serves as an organising framework that shapes spatial experience, influencing how occupants interact with and perceive their surroundings. The interplay of form and engineering allows for a balance between openness and enclosure, where material choices and construction techniques contribute to structural integrity while enhancing the architectural language of a space.

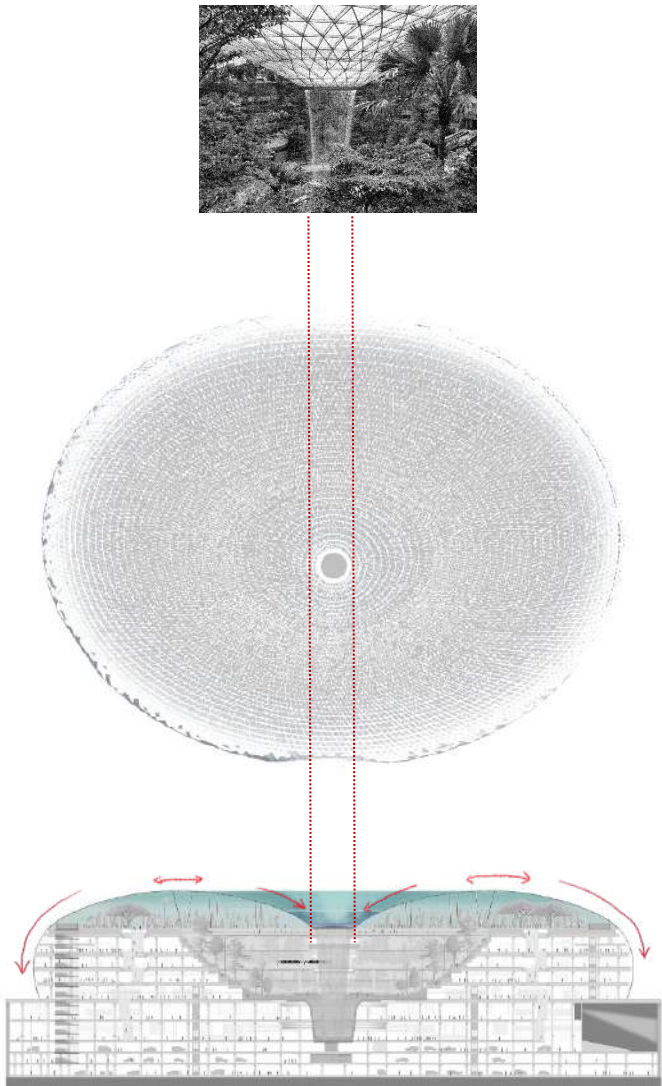
The structure with air achieves a harmonious balance of scale, proportion, and spatial fluidity. The profound impact of structural integration on spatial experience demonstrates how form, geometry, and construction methods converge to create immersive and functionally sophisticated architectural environments.



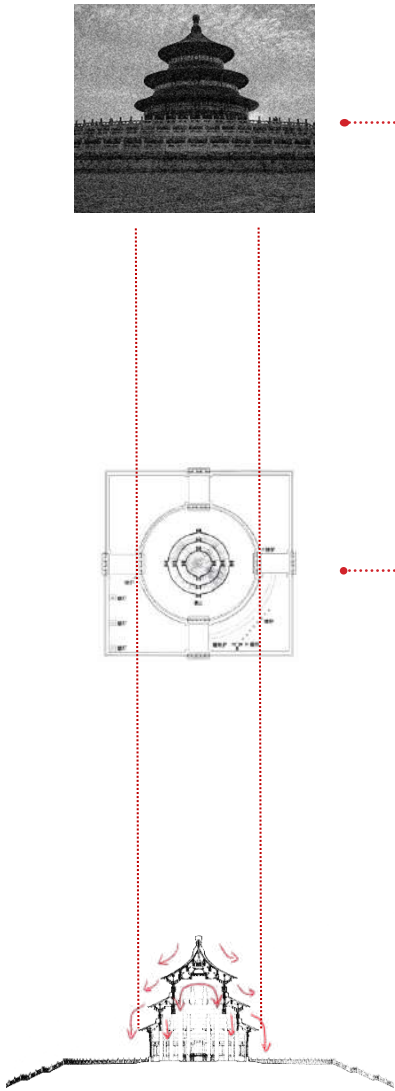
Bing Ding Wood Kiln Factory Renovation, China



King's College Chapel, Cambridge



Jewel Changi Airport, Singapore



Temple of Heaven, China

Architecture

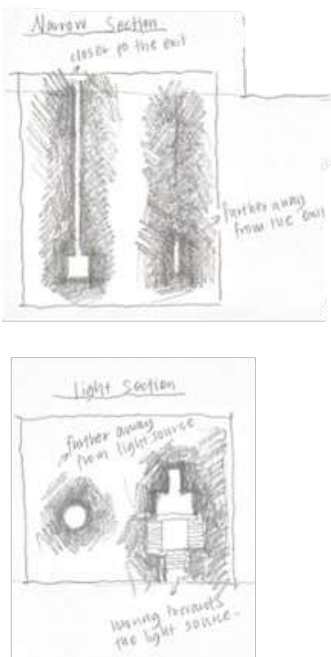
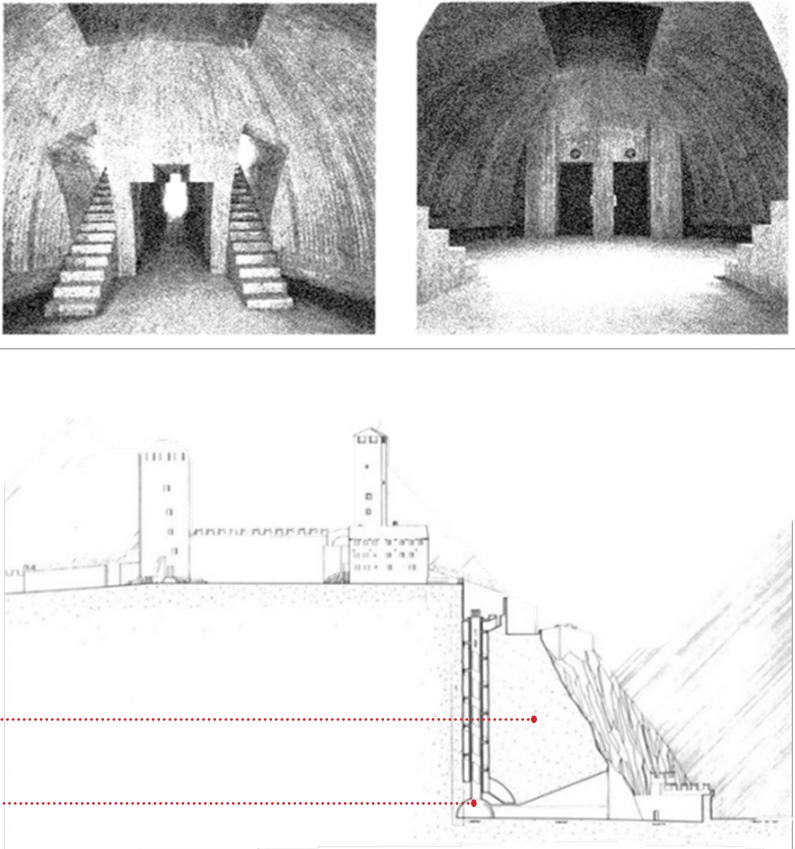
Internal Structure

Fig 1.40
Opposite
Edited Online Source
(Left: Structure and Space
Relationship)
Jewel Changi Airport Singapore
(Archdaily, 2022)

Fig 1.41
Opposite
Edited Online Source
(Right: Structure and Space
Relationship)
Temple of Heaven, China
(Archdaily, 2022)

Fig 1.42
Opposite
Edited Online Sources
(Left: Gradient of Space)
Castelgrande Castle Renovation,
Switzerland
(Author, 2024)

Fig 1.43
Opposite
Edited Hand Sketches
(Left: Gradient of Space)
Relationship between height and depth
(Author, 2024)



Borderless

—Gradient of Space—

Through variations in height, temperature, and the surrounding landscape, architecture can shape atmospheric conditions, creating contrasting spatial effects that define the gradient between the natural and the man-made, the near and the distant, and the historical and the contemporary. These transitions are not merely physical but also perceptual, influencing how a space is experienced and understood with its context. The integration of built form with its environment can heighten these contrasts, forging a dialogue between the existing and the newly introduced, between permanence and transformation.

The Castelgrande Castle Renovation in Switzerland serves as a compelling example of this delicate balance between extremes. Situated atop a rocky hill in Bellinzona, the project integrates historical fortifications with contempo-

rary interventions, preserving the site's heritage while introducing a refined architectural language. The renovation, led by architect Aurelio Galfetti, carefully navigates the interplay between solid, imposing medieval stone walls and sleek, modern additions. By employing materials such as concrete and glass, the intervention establishes a visual and tactile contrast, reinforcing the historical depth of the castle while asserting a contemporary presence. Furthermore, the site's elevation enhances the atmospheric experience, offering panoramic views that shift with light and weather conditions, reinforcing the relationship between the built form and its natural surroundings. The project exemplifies how architecture can mediate between the past and the present, crafting an evolving spatial dialogue that respects historical integrity while embracing modernity.

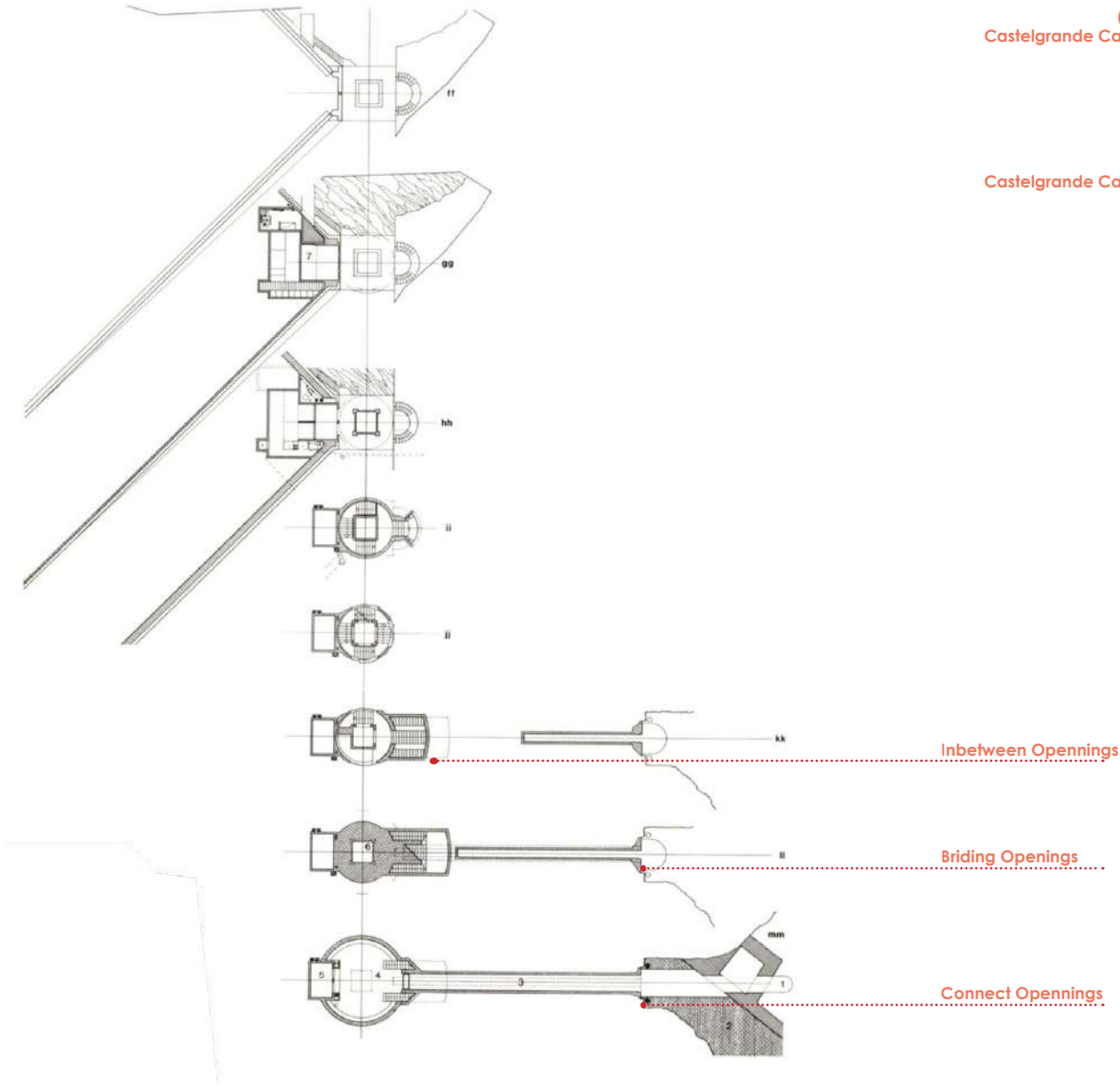
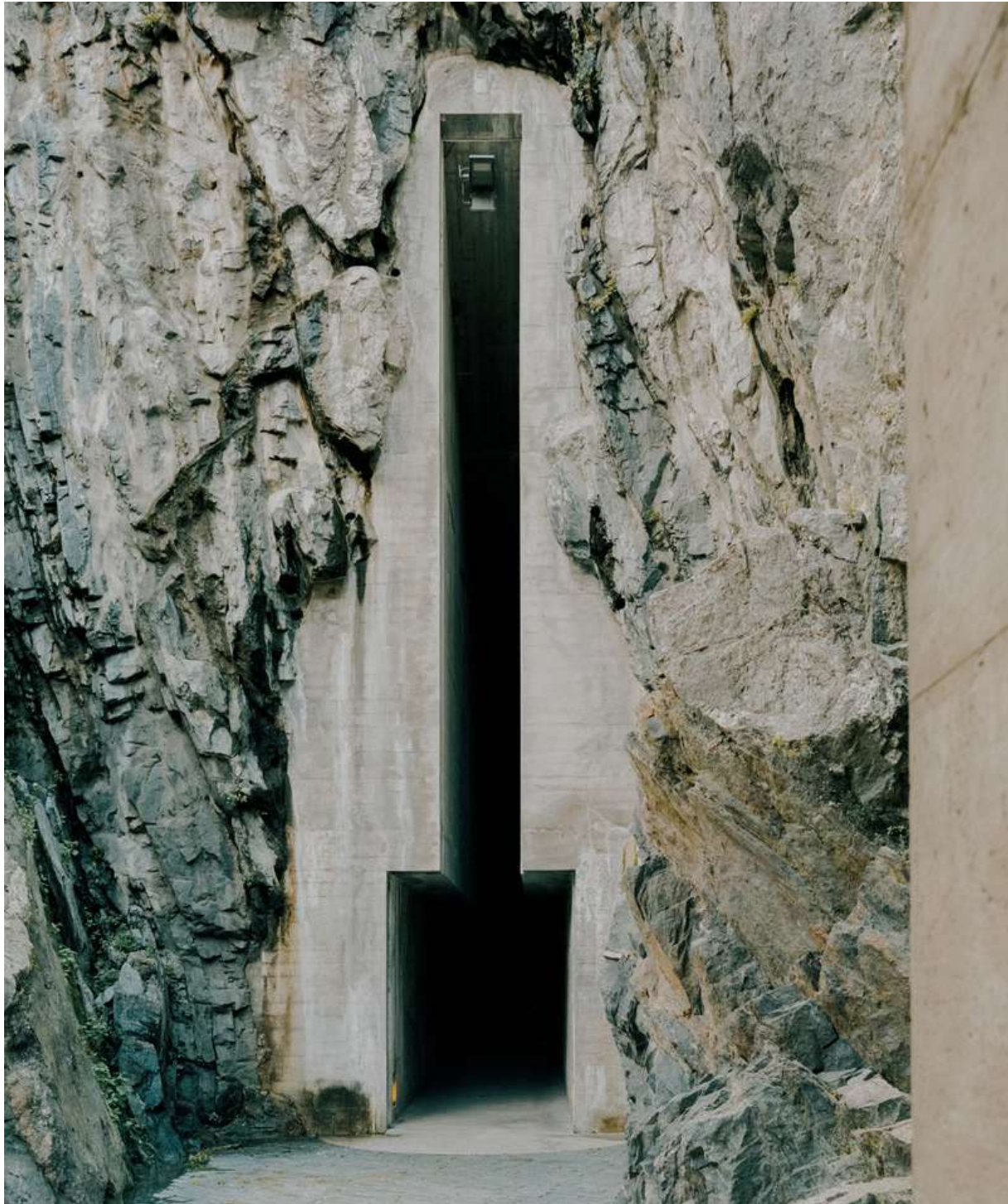


Fig 1.44
Opposite
Online Source
(Left: Proportion)
Castelgrande Castle Renovation,
Switzerland
(Archdaily, 2022)

Fig 1.45
Opposite
Online Source
(Right: Plans)
Castelgrande Castle Renovation,
Switzerland
(Archdaily, 2022)

Fig 1.46
Opposite
Edited Online Sources
(Top: Fog Sculpture)
Tate Modern, London, Fujiko Nakaya
(Author, 2024)

Fig 1.47
Opposite
Edited Online Source
(Bottom: Celebration of Machinery)
Blur Building, DS +R
(Author, 2024)

ARCHITECTURE OF MIST



Architecture of Mist

—Mist, Architecture, Body, Mind—

Thinking of mist, fog, air, and smoke is thinking of a new material territory in creating space. Through the varying densities of these elements, space can be defined by its openness and enclosure, shaping transitions between thresholds and heightening the sensory experience. Mist, in particular, can dissolve rigid spatial boundaries, blurring the distinction between solid and void, interior and exterior. Through the air, the relationships between public and private, open and closed, small and large, static and dynamic can be explored within the Body of Architecture, transforming spatial perception into an evolving, atmospheric experience.

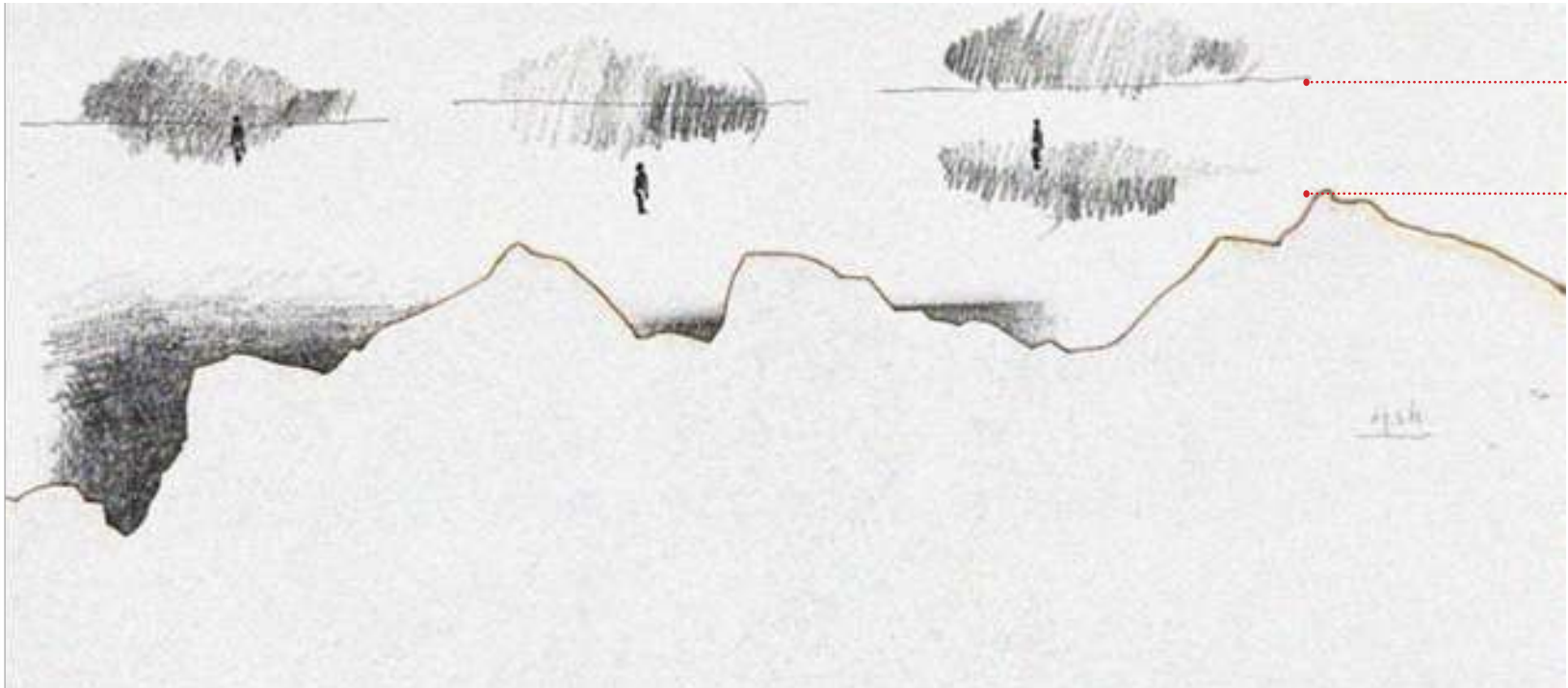


MYSTIQUE

Fig 1.48
Bellow
Edited Hand Sketch
(Bottom: Mist)
Defind Space through Mist
(Author, 2024)

——*Shifting Perceptions: The Body Within, Surrounded, and Beyond the Mist—A Spatial Dialogue of Concealment, Transition, and Revelation.* ——

When immersed in mist, one's perception of space becomes fluid, as familiar forms dissolve into an ambiguous, shifting environment. The body experiences a heightened awareness of movement and proximity, as sight is partially obscured, and architecture is perceived through temperature, humidity, and sound rather than clear visual definition. Being surrounded by mist creates a dynamic interplay between concealment and revelation, where density fluctuates and space is perceived through layers rather than fixed boundaries. Finally, upon exiting the mist and observing it from the outside, a new perspective emerges—the once-enclosing atmosphere is now a veil that shrouds and unveils, allowing the architecture within to appear and disappear in a continuous dialogue between presence and absence. Through these shifting conditions, mist acts as both material and medium, linking the body, mind, and built environment in an ephemeral and ever-changing spatial experience.



Density of Mist

Burnt Mist (Shape)

Fig 1.49
Bellow
Online Source
Open and Close
(Pinterest, 2020)



1

CHAPTER 1:3

Air

Theoretical Orientation of Project

Spectrum

"The timeless task of architecture is to create embodied and lived existential metaphors that concretise and structure our being in the world. Architecture reflects, materialises and eternalises ideas and images of ideal life. Buildings and towns enable us to structure, understand and remember the shapeless flow of reality and, ultimately, to recognise and remember who we are. Architecture enables us to perceive and understand the dialectics of permanence and change, to settle ourselves in the world, and to place ourselves in the continuum of culture and time."

—Juhani Pallasma

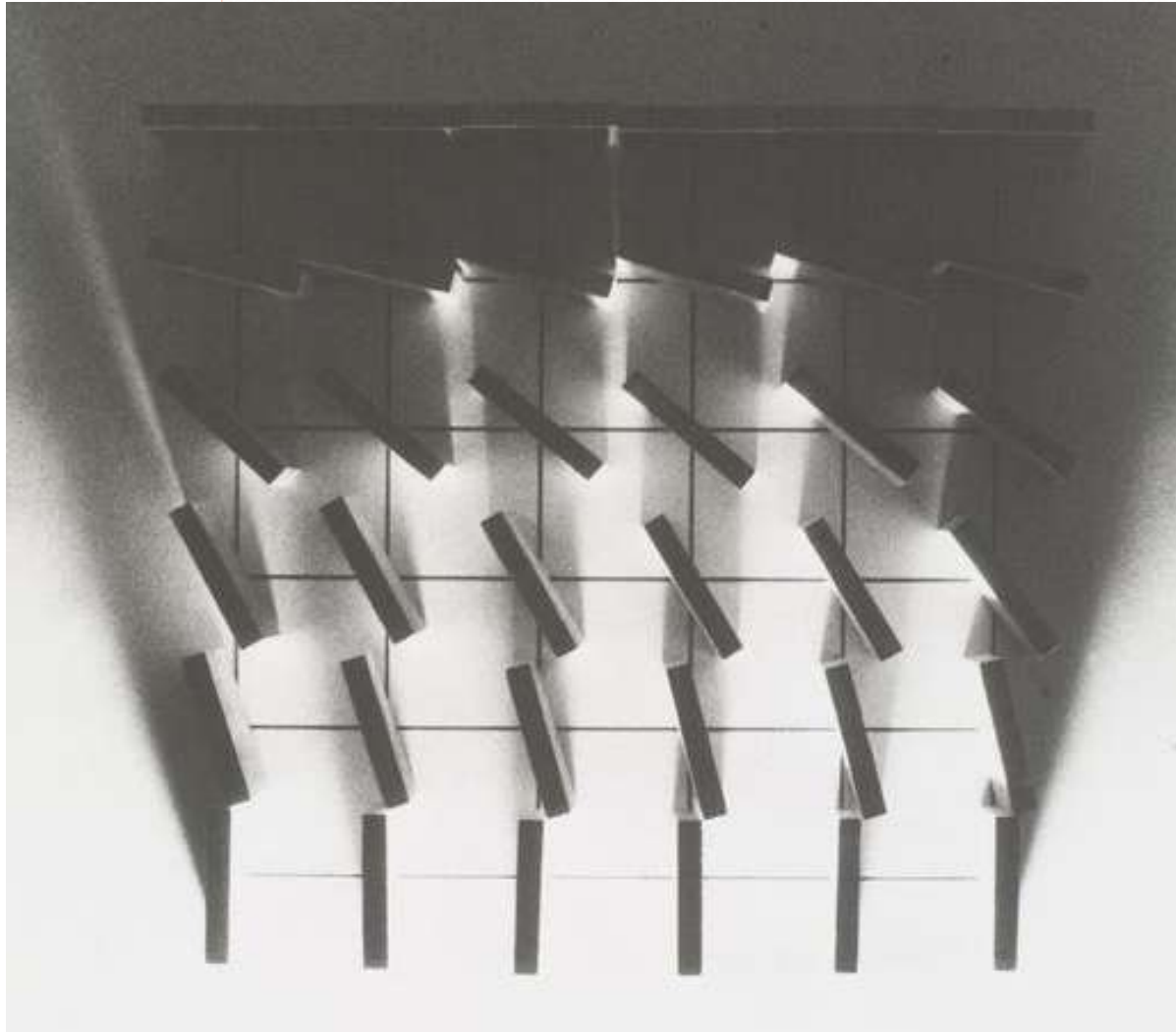


Fig 1.50
Bellow
Online Source
Disorder:
Experience and Space
(Wigglesworth, 2024)

—The Task of Architecture—

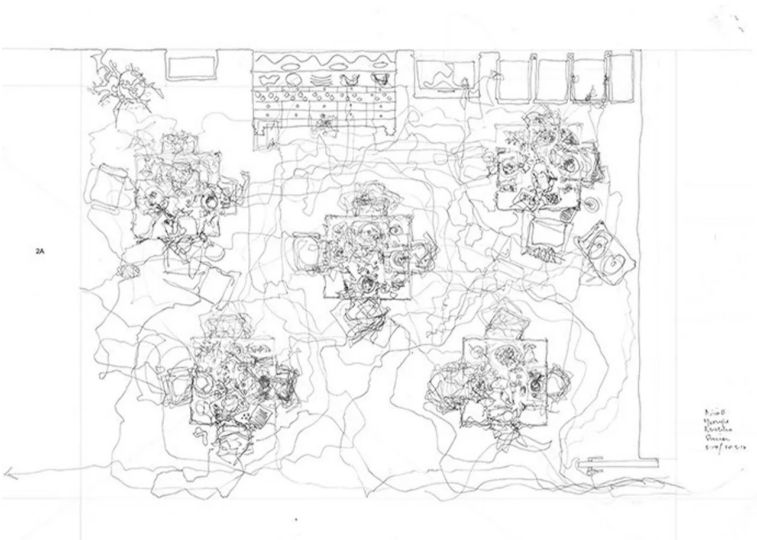
Architecture significantly impacts society's evolution by navigating the dynamic spectrum between logic and sensation. As architects, we often find ourselves balancing these opposing forces, stepping back to reengage with rational thought continually. This interplay between logic and emotion enables us to create spaces that heighten human awareness of their physical existence. In response to rapid societal changes, I propose a broader architectural spectrum encompassing macro, meso, and micro scales. This gradient requires a shift from object-based to relationship-based thinking, questioning the necessity and nature of our disciplinary core. By exploring air and its related elements as drivers of architectural design, we can advance radical thinking while maintaining a connection between the physical and spiritual realms.

The rapid change in society grounds my belief in setting a broader spectrum – Scale. This new dimension and metric of contemporary architecture span from the macro scale to mesoscale to micro-scale, all viewed through a dynamic relationship. Setting this gradient scale necessitates a balance between the environment, architecture, body, and mind, prompting architects to shift from object-based to relationship-based thinking. In this realm, I question the necessity of maintaining a disciplinary core, and if so, what should it be and why? Can design and architecture be the primary mechanisms of stimulating imagination rather than merely producing built objects? By investigating the element - air and its relevant elements as an architectural driver, how can a design framework be derived to advance radical thinking while maintaining the connection between the physical and the spiritual?

—The Architecture of Experience:
Designing Experience—

The profound interrelationship between space, human perception, and emotion suggests a design approach that crafts and reflects actual physical experiences. This approach prioritizes the lived experience over mere aesthetic or functional considerations, resonating with individuals on sensory, cognitive, and emotional levels. In the culmination of design creation, the "environment" shaped by architects' hands should be perceived as a space—an intentional emptiness. Le Corbusier once said, "The purpose of construction is to hold things together; the purpose of architecture is to move us." Thus, architecture's scope should extend beyond functionality, delving into the value of relationships through the lens of physical experience. The value derived from such experiences should enrich the imagination, spatial and experiential memory, and vocabulary, enabling the formation of a new system of application.

Delving into architecture as a designer involves examining my own senses at moments of creation. This process layers through deep, unconscious memories, crafting an experiential space akin to the abstract "soul" of a physical form.





MYSTIQUE

Air, Atmosphere, and Architecture

—Theory Introduction—

Air holds numerous connotations in spirituality, occultism, serenity, comfort, and a medium by scientists. On the body scale, it evokes a sense of presence through stimulation of the senses. Spectrums are reflected in the opposing extremes, inducing feelings of pleasure or, conversely, pain. The physical presence of air is extremely necessary, inversely, its visual visibility nihilists such existence. This duality places air between two extremes.

In the spectrum of architecture, air is a multifaceted concept, that manifests in various forms and interpretations. Regrettably, the Modernist Tradition has limited us to a narrow definition of air within architectural spaces. As long as humans existed, air was viewed to be an inevitable element of life, framed by the traditional physical and perceptual boundaries. In *The Radiant City* (Corbusier, 1933), Le Corbusier frames an ideal city with inserted "exact air", formulating an accurate ratio of gases, temperature, and humidity. Towards the late

20th Century, the discipline of traditions experienced a radical change. The realization became vivid in *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres* by Gernot (Böhme, 2016). He contended that the atmosphere serves as a substance that evokes emotions, stimulates the senses, and imparts meaning. At a blurred moment, air evolved into a significant phenomenon, not the formula "exact air" with any essentialist position, but having a transitory presence functioning strictly on conditions, made every fantasy an atmospheric projection possible.

Fig 1.51
Previous Page
Online Source
Four elements and
signs of the zodiac
(France, Le Mans, 15th Century)

—Mirroring Air as an Element—

Understanding Air as an Element in the Philosophy Theory

As time elapses, contemplations regarding the diverse perspectives of intangible elements provoke inquiries into the role of air within the interface of the physical world and human perception. Within the context of architecture, this dynamic relationship between physicality and perception underscores the significance of air as a pivotal element. The picturesque physical and perception, delineating the boundary between the visible and invisible realms, fails to instigate a relational approach from within. Visible: the architecture, invisible: air as atmosphere, their independence of one another does not formulate the relationship-thinking. Instead, air as an element is the foundational substrate (Kingsley, Summer 2020), endowed with qualities that define perceivable entities that enable the emergence of thought by exploring conditions and underlying causes. In this perspective, the conditions and causes governing phenomena such as “combination,” “contact,” “action-passion,” and natural changes like “coming-to-be,” “passing-away,”

and “alteration,” become the catalysts for generating relational thinking. (Zeyl, 2023)

The phenomenon of relational thinking interrogates the interdependence between elements and their tangible qualities. Identifying perceivable bodies with their originative sources imparts tangibility, touch, and sensation, bridging the physical and perceptual realms. Air serves as the connective element, enabling transformations by existing within conditions that facilitate change. By presenting its inherent contradictions, air establishes the foundational basis that activates and immerses itself within the catalysts for transformation. In the eye of architecture, Aristotle's assertion that the embodiments of qualities cannot be identical to the physical object or its name in kind (Aristotle, No Date) is pertinent. Here, air refers not to the material substance felt on a windy day but to the atmospheric quality that connects architecture to the body and mind.

The intention of relationship-based thinking draws on Aristotle's treatise “On Generation and Corruption,” which examines the fundamental nature of matter and change, emphasizing the multiplicity of catalysts rather than a singular cause (Aristotle, No Date). This dialogue among the distinct qualities of each element creates a cyclical interaction between the four elements posited by Empedocles: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water (Kingsley, 2020), establishing their order within the cosmos. While this theoretical framework did not set a specific direction, the absence of air renders the journey impossible. Air is the only imperceptible element of “action-passion” that “coming-to-be” is the driver of the atmosphere within. It “contacts” architectural surfaces, “combines” the boundaries of the physical and perceptual, and “passing-away” the energy to stimulate sensations, enabling the “alteration” of architectural elements and the embodiment.

Air as an Architectural Symbolism

—Understanding Air to be a material of Architecture—

The presence of air fosters a duality between poetry and symbolism in architecture. Its role is introspective and metaphorical, bridging the tangible and intangible. Gaudi's words, "The straight line belongs to men, the curved one to God," highlight the flexibility and adaptability of intangible elements around tangible ones, emphasizing their capacity to conform to the divine.



Fig 1.52
Above
Online Source
Renaissance Villa Aeolia in
Veneto, Italy
(Unknown, 2022)

—Historical Context: Pneumatic Architecture—

In the pre-industrial era, architecture often embraced a pneumatic quality, perceiving air as an animated spirit. Structures like the Renaissance Villa Aeolia in Veneto, Italy, illustrate how air and atmosphere were integrally linked, creating spaces that promoted a sense of "spirited" well-being. Architectural historian Barbara Kenda notes, "The spiritual significance of air in architecture underscores its role in creating a positive presence and well-being within spaces" (Kenda, 2006). The Greek term 'pneuma,' meaning "blow," "breath," or "wind," captures this dual material and immaterial quality, seamlessly integrating with the architectural atmosphere.

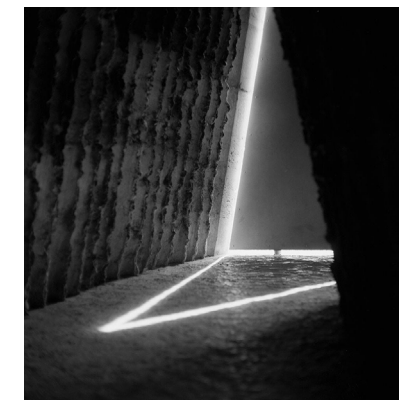
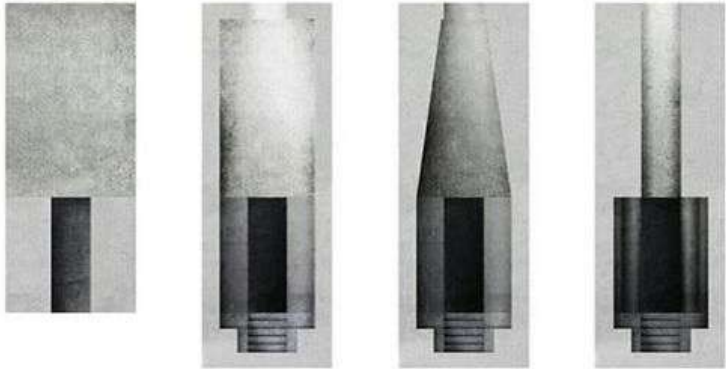


Fig 1.53
Above
Online Source
Atmosphere:
Peter Zumthor
(Pretti, 2018)

—Integrating Air into Modern Design—

In contemporary discourse, the concept of air should be reimagined within the design process. Integrating air into the design can create vital, inspiring living spaces that restore the essentials of life, imbuing them with meaning and spirit. Peter Zumthor aptly states, "Atmosphere is my material" (Zumthor, 2006), emphasizing the significance of sensory experiences in architecture. Zumthor's notion of atmosphere encompasses a material of sensation, gatherness, connectivity, distribution, healing, and nature, all directed toward living essentials. This material allows for sensory experiences while evoking profound meanings (Böhme, 2016).

—The Role of Air in Contemporary Architecture—



Air possesses the unique ability to organize and integrate organisms, particularly humans, within architectural contexts. It connects the environment with its inhabitants, fostering engagement. On a planetary scale, air sustains life, enabling organisms to thrive. We congregate on land, developing complex living systems with air as a fundamental context.

In a more focused perspective, air defines architectural spaces, movements, and activities. It can manifest as thin or thick, creating diverse atmospheric conditions that shape our experiences. In this sense, air becomes space, an atmospheric entity influencing our sense of place. As Gaston Bachelard eloquently says, "The house shelters day-dreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace" (Bachelard, 1958).



—Air as an Architectural Material—

Viewing air as an architectural material may seem implausible in the physical realm, yet it thrives in metaphorical realms, allowing architecture to become a living and breathing entity. The beauty of air in its multiple forms facilitates reconciliation by linking elementary components in and around architecture. Juhani Pallasmaa echoes this sentiment: "Architecture is the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world, and this mediation takes place through the senses" (Pallasmaa, 2005). Air fills every gap in architecture, holding tight and serving as the disciplinary core that guides decisions and recognizes the world and its people. Air opens a new avenue for creating spaces from the architectural perspective, the vital link between the tangible and intangible, physical and metaphysical, inside and outside, open and closed. Gernot Böhme's words resonate: "The task of architecture is to make visible how the world touches us" (Böhme, 2016), and air, out of the traditional architectural material sets the new tone within the discipline.

Fig 1.54
Above
Online Source
Air Path
(Pinterest, Undated)

Fig 1.55
Above
Online Source
The Meteors
(Philippe Rahm architectes, 2017)

“Air” is “Mist” is “Sublime”

— The Immeasurable and
the Measurable —



“Viewing air as an architectural material may seem implausible in the physical realm, yet it thrives in metaphorical realms, allowing architecture to become a living and breathing entity. The beauty of air in its multiple forms facilitates reconciliation by linking elementary components in and around architecture. Juhani Pallasmaa echoes this sentiment: “Architecture is the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world, and this mediation takes place through the senses” (Pallasmaa, 2005). Air fills every gap in architecture, holding tight and serving as the disciplinary core that guides decisions and recognizes the world and its people. Air opens a new avenue for creating spaces from the architectural perspective, the vital link between the tangible and intangible, physical and metaphysical, inside and outside, open and closed. Gernot Böhme’s words resonate: “The task of architecture is to make visible how the world touches us” (Böhme, 2016), and air, out of the traditional architectural material sets the new tone within the discipline.”

Louis Kahn



“Architecture is the learned game, correct and magnificent, of forms assembled in the light.”

Le Corbusier

—The Whisper of Air—

Air is the breath of life, an invisible, silent force that animates architectural materials. It flows through spaces, glides over surfaces, and weaves a tapestry of changes that resonate with the natural and built environments. Its interaction with fundamental architectural elements reveals its intrinsic qualities, enhancing its beauty and imbuing it with vitality. Gently touching every facade, like a soft breeze through metal lattices, creates a dynamic interplay of light, shadow, and sound. This intangible element sculpts the environment, infusing static forms with life.

Air, in its openness, mirrors the spaces envisioned by Le Corbusier, who championed the concept of buildings that “breathe.” His design philosophy emphasizes air through openness, treating it as a tangible component of his architecture. Le Corbusier’s use of pilotis (columns) lifts the building off the ground, allowing air to flow beneath and creating a sense of transparency. This approach subtly suggests the solidity of air, incorporating it as an essential

building material. By integrating air into the structural and spatial qualities of his architecture, Le Corbusier’s designs extend seamlessly into the surrounding environment, enhancing both the aesthetic and functional aspects of the space.

Fig 1.56
Above
Online Source
Light in Ronchamp
(Unknown, 2017)

"Time is the moving image of eternity."

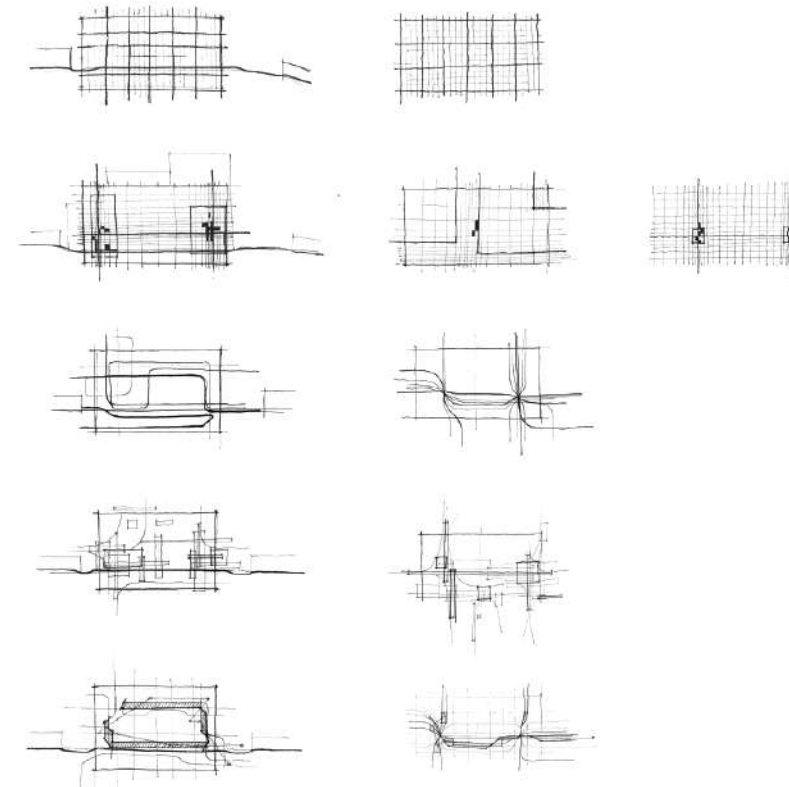
Plato

— The Patina of Time —

Air functions on two levels: as physical particles in space and as the aura that defines a place. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin argues that the aura of a work is uniquely tied to its "presence in time and place." Similarly, Peter Zumthor suggests that timeless visual qualities are embedded in design. Both discourses highlight how the perception of air is deeply connected to specific historical contexts and the experiential states of visitors. Air acts as a "continuous propagation" of time, space, and user, enabling architecture to transcend time-sensitive atmospheric estrangement.

The most significant property of air is its ability to regenerate unique atmospheres through real-time interactions between inhabitants and their environments. With the advent of new technologies and materials, the perception of air has evolved from a predominantly optical contemplation to a metaphorical, immersive, and sensory experience.

Air, laden with moisture, salt, and particles, serves as an agent of sensory engagement, bestowing a patina of time upon materials and places. The transformations air induces, guided by seasonal temperatures and the growth of lichens and mosses, tell stories of endurance, resilience, and imperfect beauty. It does not merely mark the passage of time but enriches the surroundings with moments of memories and the scent of change.



MYSTIQUE

Fig 1.57
Below
Hand Sketches
Sound to Movement Diagram
(Author, 2023)

"Architecture begins where engineering ends."

Walter Gropius

— The Symphony of Sound —

Air acts as the conductor of an architectural symphony. Through breezes, it transforms materials into instruments of sound, creating auditory experiences that enrich spatial perception. The movement of air through wooden columns and the gentle hum of wind vibrating against a glass façade emphasize these auditory elements, enhancing the sensory experience. It invigorates the sensory organs, touching the skin and stimulating the ears, awakening the nerves with the rhythms of nature.

Louis Kahn viewed architecture as an orchestration of materials, structures, and spaces, where closures and openings are uniquely positioned to amplify ambient sounds. This perspective turns architecture into a rhythmic presence on the earth, evoking sensations akin to how air interacts with architectural forms. As Kahn famously stated, "The sun never knew how great it was until it hit the side of a building," highlighting the profound relationship between natural elements and architectural design.

"Light creates ambiance and feel of a place, as well as the expression of a structure."

Le Corbusier

— The Dance of Light and Shadow —

Peter Zumthor describes air and atmosphere in architecture as an intensity of mood evoked by the immediate physical characteristics of a space. Throughout his career, he has strived to create "moving atmospheres," which he defines as the culmination of sounds, colours, materials, textures, and forms. These atmospheric intensities can reflect natural elements, such as temperature, causing and creating tension between the formed and unformed, the internal and external, intimacy and movement, and the created and the given. This interplay leads to the "composure and seduction" of a space, which is central to how Zumthor achieves a "moving atmosphere."

Air, in concert with light, becomes an architectural material, guiding the intangible through the apertures of a building and casting intricate patterns that dance upon surfaces. The interaction of air and light transforms the mundane into the magical, creating spaces that shift and change with time, revealing new dimensions and textures.

This dynamic interplay turns architecture into a living, breathing entity, constantly evolving and engaging the senses. The power of light and shadow creates strong foundations, echoing Pallasmaa's assertion: "Deep shadows and darkness are essential because they dim the sharpness of vision, make depth and distance ambiguous, and invite unconscious peripheral vision and tactile fantasy."

"Architecture should speak of its time and place but yearn for timelessness."

Frank Gehry

— The Breath of Freshness —

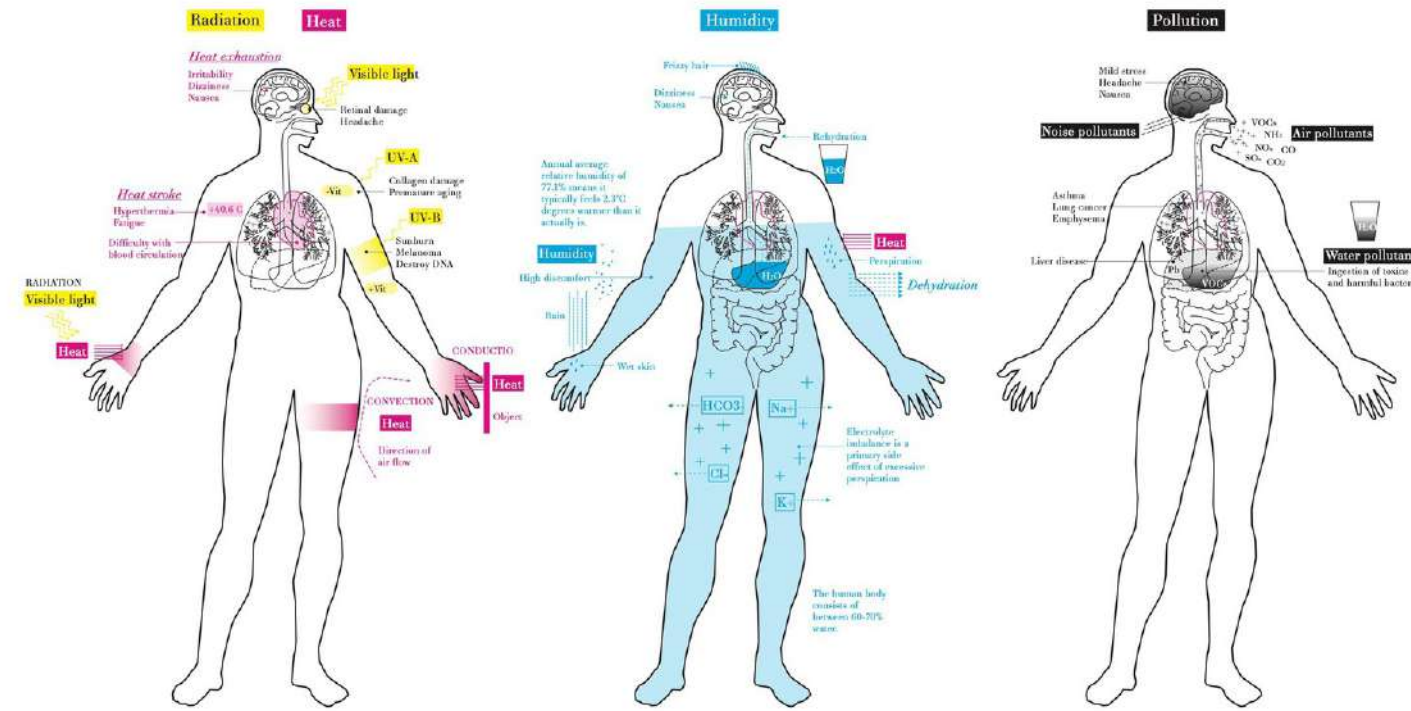
Defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, "atmosphere" is the air you breathe in a place, encompassing the gaseous particles that fill a space. In architecture, atmosphere is understood in layers—primarily what is chemically defined and often perceived as a byproduct of design. However, it functions more deeply as a vital design tool and even as an architectural material. Air in the architectural atmosphere is not merely something architecture is built around but is an integral part of the architectural creation itself.

In the 2002 World Expo, Diller + Scofidio's Blur Building showcased atmospheric intensities through an undulating, fluctuating density of fog, blurring the boundaries between structure and environment. The fog in the Blur Building materialized the flow of data, drawing direct connections to the weather conditions surrounding it. The performative atmosphere created a sense of freshness, transforming unconditional components

from passive observers into active participants in the architectural formulation.

Walter Benjamin, a critical theorist and philosopher, often engaged with the concept of "aura" rather than "atmosphere." He described the path through distinct atmospheres as a unique visionary transformation, shifting from an optical state to a haptic vision—allowing close-range experiences of constructed atmospheric architectures. This perspective aligns closely with contemporary paradigms, enabling real-time feedback from experiencers to the per-

Fig 1.58
Below
Online Resource
Temprature Study:
The Human Body
(ArchDaily, 2020)



MYSTIQUE

“Architecture is a way of thinking about the world very differently than we do in the everyday sense.”

Thom Mayne

— The Embrace of Warmth and Coolness —

Understanding air as an atmospheric intensity in architecture is essential for assessing and controlling humidity, odor, and temperature. In the San Paolo Church by Funks Studio in Italy, elemental sacred immanence is explored through architectural elements, with light beams and suspended volumes creating a profound spatial experience. The design advocates for a re-narrativization of architectural innovation to accommodate modern spirituality. Here, air plays a crucial role in ventilation, merging design functionality with emotional necessity, and contributing to the atmospheric resonance within the architectural complexity. The space allows for natural ventilation, creating a transitional zone between the interior and exterior, and fostering an elemental synergy. While fulfilling its functional role, the juxtaposition of open and closed spaces introduces light and residence from within, enhancing emotional and physical illumination. The interplay between warmth and coolness, the exploration

of natural and man-made elements, and the dynamic transitions between inside and outside produce sensory reflections that promote well-being and create an attuned state of harmony.

Mist — Sensations—Design Strategies

- 1. Air as an Atmospheric Medium:** Integrating air to regulate humidity, temperature, and odour while enhancing spatial perception.
- 2. Light as a Defining Spatial Element:** Using light beams and suspended volumes to shape depth, atmosphere, and spiritual experience.
- 3. Synergy of Function and Emotion:** Merging natural ventilation with emotional resonance to create a balanced and immersive environment.
- 4. Transitional Spaces and Fluid Boundaries:** Blurring the distinction between interior and exterior through dynamic spatial thresholds.
- 5. Material and Sensory Contrast:** Juxtaposing natural and man-made elements to evoke sensory engagement and balance.
- 6. Reinterpreting Sacred Space:** Adapting architectural innovation to redefine contemporary spiritual experiences.



2

Chapter 2:1

Incense

Programmatic Orientation *of Project*

The Scent of Time

In a quiet Tibetan village nestled between misty hills, I rest near an old incense-making workshop. A villager, an elderly man with hands stained from years of handling herbs, watches as the traveller picks up a piece of freshly made incense and inhales deeply.

Me:

This scent... it feels ancient. Almost like it's carrying whispers from the past.

Villager: (chuckles)

You are not wrong. This incense carries more than just fragrance—it carries history, culture, and even prayers.

Me:

I know Tibetan incense is famous, but I never thought of it as more than just... well, incense. What makes it so special?

Villager:

Ah, young one, this is no ordinary incense. It is a bridge—between generations, between lands. It carries the wisdom of Indian Ayurveda, the depth of Chinese herbal medicine, and the spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism. Did you know? The art of making this incense came from India over a thousand years ago, when great masters brought Buddhist teachings here. But over time, we blended it with our herbs, our air and prayers.

Me:

So it's a mix of cultures... an intercultural heritage?

Villager:

Right. A heritage that is both Tibetan and beyond. The recipe and the meaning behind it evolved with every hand that shaped it. Even now, some of our incense goes back to monasteries in Nepal, China, and India... some even to faraway lands where people burn it for peace, not knowing the hands that made it.

Me:

That's incredible. But... is this tradition still strong today?

Villager: (sighs, gazing at the distant hills)

Not as strong as before. You see, the world moves fast now. People want convenience, not tradition. Factories make incense too—cheaper, faster. But the soul is missing. Fewer young ones learn the craft, and the herbs... even the mountains are changing.

Me:

That sounds... heartbreaking.

Villager:

It is. But some still carry the flame. Some travellers, some monks, some who feel the weight of time in these scents. If you take this with you, if you remember this moment, then perhaps—just perhaps—the story will not end here.

I held the incense closer, realizing that within its delicate form lies a journey spanning centuries, cultures, and now, one more heart that carries its story forward.

—2023-03-28

Burn

— *The importance of understanding
Incense as an Object and as a
Relationship* —

In the highlands where prayers ascend like incense, Tibet's tangible heritage unfolds, immense. Intricately woven with spiritual essence, Incense whispers tales of timeless presence. In the ethereal tendrils of Tibetan incense, we glimpse a heritage profound and intense. Across the ages, its essence still reverberates, A fragrant testament to faith that never abates.

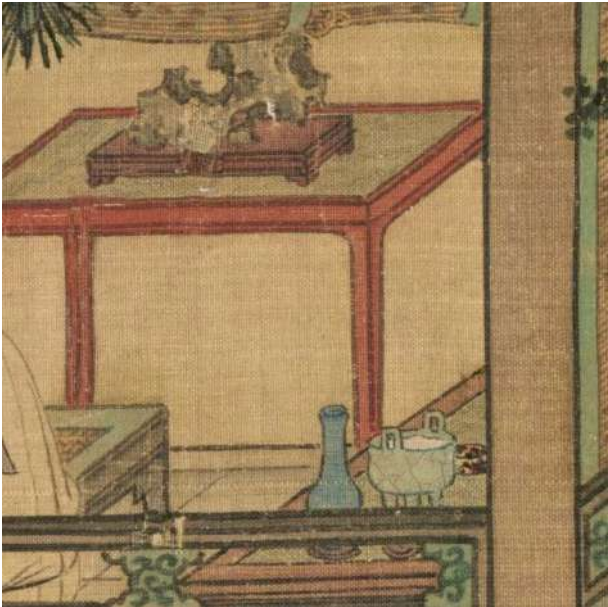


Fig 2.4
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Placement of Incense Burners
and Vessels
(Unknown, 2023)

Fig 2.5
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Delicate fragrance adorning
ancient women's rituals
(Unknown, 2019)

Stories of Incense

— Still Object —



Incense, a slender vessel of time, rests quietly, cradling the essence of earth and spirit. In its stillness, it holds the promise of transformation, where the solid becomes smoke and the air whispers of ancient prayers.

— Elegance —



a lady's delicate companion, woven into the fabric of her daily rituals. Like a soft whisper of elegance, it adorned her chambers with fragrance, guiding her moments of reflection and grace, as the gentle curl of smoke mirrored her quiet refinement.

Fig 2.6
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Incense as a means of focus
and spiritual concentration in
scholarly writing
(Unknown, 2016)



Fig 2.7
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Incense as an accompaniment
to dining rituals
(Unknown, 2022)



ARCHITECTURE OF MIST

Fig 2.8
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Incense as an essential element
for mindfulness in daily activities
(Unknown, 2020)



— Tea —

Incense accompanied the quiet flow of conversation, its fragrant tendrils mingling with the rising steam from delicate cups. The smoke, like a meditative breath, infused the air with calm, deepening the serenity of each sip, as tea and incense intertwined to create a moment of reflection and harmony.

Fig 2.9
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Incense as a companion to the
appreciation of musical compo-
sitions - Male Gathers
(Unknown, 2018)



Fig 2.10
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
Incense as a companion to the
appreciation of musical compo-
sitions - Female Gathers
(Unknown, 2017)



— Entertainment —

Incense danced softly in the back-
ground, its subtle fragrance weaving
through laughter and conversation.
As melodies filled the air and friends
shared stories, the gentle wisps of
smoke added a layer of elegance and
tranquility, enhancing the atmosphere
with a sense of calm amidst the joy.

Fig 2.11
Below
Ancient Chinese Painting
(Incense Stories)
The gentle essence that stills
the mind
(Unknown, 2017)



— Silence —

Incense became a quiet muse, its delicate smoke spiraling upward like thoughts taking shape. Its soothing scent filled the room, grounding the mind and sharpening concentration, allowing words to flow effortlessly as the essence of tranquility infused every stroke of the brush.

Incense Making and Tools

— The Ancient Skill of Incense Making —

The incense-making process is a deeply spiritual and methodical craft, blending ancient traditions with careful precision. Pure hand craftsmanship holds profound value in the industrialized, factory-driven world of today. In an era dominated by mass production, the artistry and skill of handcraftsmanship represent a dedication to tradition, individuality, and quality that machines cannot replicate. Each handcrafted item carries the personal touch of the artisan, imbuing it with uniqueness, cultural significance, and a sense of connection to history.

This sacred art not only connects the physical with the divine but also symbolizes the continuity of culture and reverence for nature, as each step honors the balance between the earth's gifts

Fig 2.12
Below
Photograph
Triditional Tibetan
Incense Making Process
(Studio O, 2023)

Grounder
Mortar and Pestle
Sieve

Natural ingredients such as herbs, resins, and woods are meticulously ground into fine powders.

Mixing Bowls
Rolling Boards and Sticks
Molds

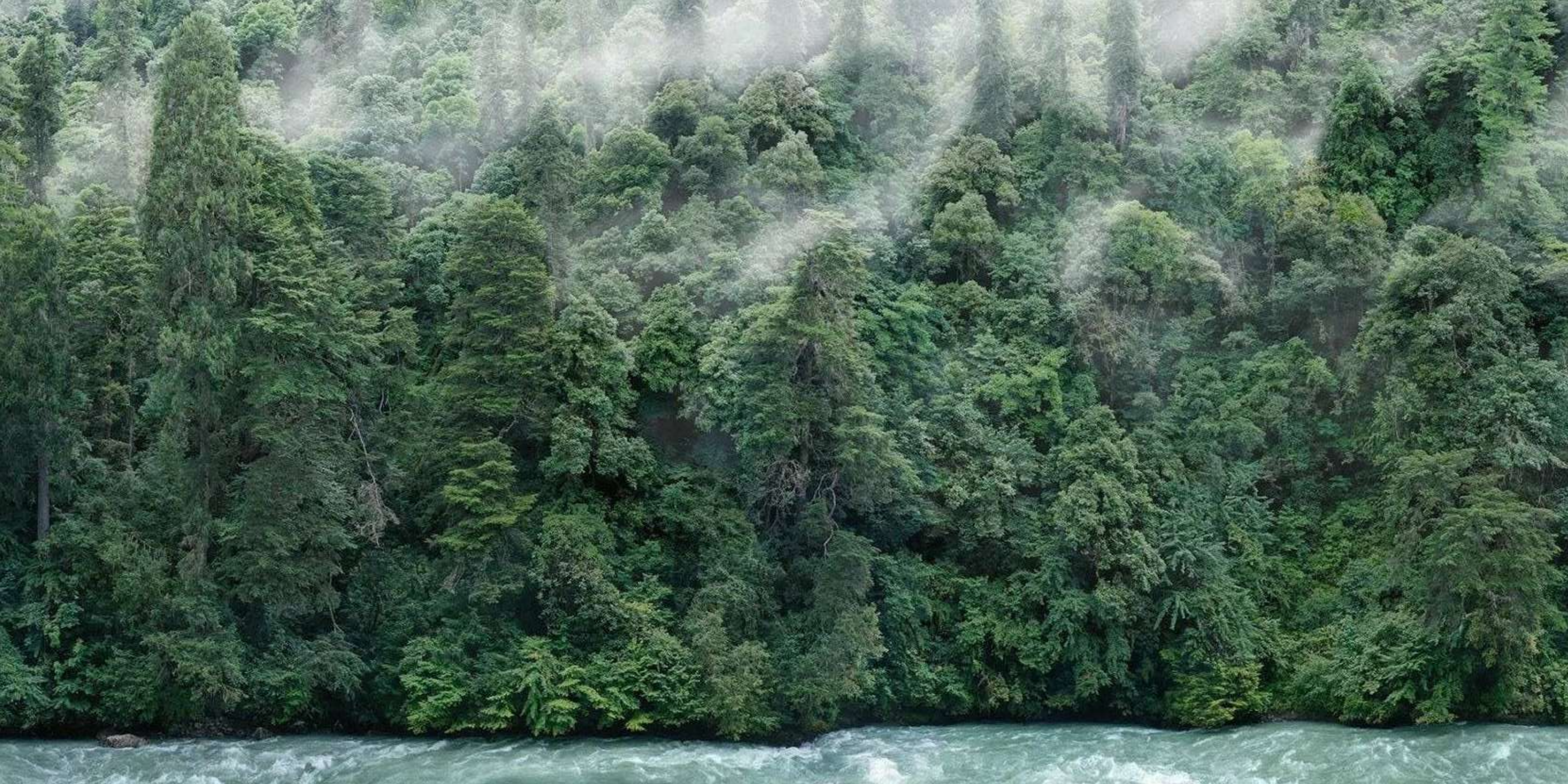
These elements are then combined with water to form a malleable paste, which is carefully shaped, rolled, or molded into sticks, cones, or coils.

Drying Racks

Once dried under the sun or in a sheltered space, the incense is ready, its essence preserved within, waiting to release its fragrant offerings.









ARCHITECTURE OF MIST

Air in Tibet

— My Personal Experience of Air in Tibet —

Stands Tibet's expansive, elevated plains, the thin, ethereal air sustains a unique and resilient life, each breath a delicate whisper, light and rare. The clouds part swiftly, revealing a radiant sky as the sun pierces through with beams like fine needles, narrating the ancestral tales carried by the pure, free wind. Ancient Denisovan genes, a secret inheritance, enable survival in this thin atmosphere. The clouds, not burdened with weight, conceal a hidden strength, thriving in the rarefied air, day and night. Tibetan air, vital and true, permeates every aspect of life, weaving through each touch and action. From the highest peaks to the valley floors, this essence is cherished deeply, its significance growing ever more profound.

How Tibetans survive life on the 'roof of the world' (Riley, 2017-02-27)

The profound mystery of Tibet's high altitudes, coupled with low oxygen levels, evokes a sense of awe. The survival of its inhabitants hinges on remarkable genetic adaptations that allow the precious, thin air to permeate every cell in their bodies. The harsh living conditions of the high plateaus have led to the evolution of wider blood vessels, facilitating efficient oxygen transport. This adaptation underscores the inherent ability of life to evolve around essential needs. The EPAS1 gene, present in 78% of Tibetans but only 1% of Han Chinese, epitomizes the genetic traits that enable thriving in one of the world's most extreme environments. The journey from the brink of genetic minimalism to enduring harsh conditions is encapsulated in a single breath. The essence of life, so rare and vital, is manifested in every inhalation, symbolizing treatment, relief, and human resilience. Could this fundamental element inspire architectural innovation, mirroring the seamless integration of life and environment?

Moment into Memories

— Architecture as a Spiritual Salvation —

Architecture is the tangible manifestation of human ingenuity, where minds and souls are etched into the fabric of reality, and the body of imagination takes flight on the wings of interlocking structures. It is the poetry of space, the artful dance of form and function, a silent symphony of structure that softly yet powerfully resonates with the soul of many. Strains of smoke weave through, smoothing the essence of every soul they touch, as it did thousands of years ago, uniquely experienced by each individual.

Architecture is a layer cake, conceived and experienced in strata, possessing the power to forge and sustain bonds. It is the guardian of our daily lives, cradling us in its embrace, from the intimate to the grand, the private to the public. Every wall connects, every beam supports, and every curve is designed with intention, crafting and echoing the heartbeat of human existence. It shapes interactions, guides movements, and defines the spaces where daily life unfolds to its physical extent.

Metaphorically, architecture reflects our aspirations and values, an unspoken testament to our quest for harmony and beauty. It stands as a symbol of human resilience and creativity, a betacon of hope transcending the constraints of time and space. The atmosphere here is a “continuous propagation” of time, space, and its inhabitants. Within these spaces, arches and pillars endure like the verses of an epic poem, and facades and rooftops play rhymes and rhythms, laden with layers of meaning that narrate our collective story.

To extend the physical and metaphorical essence of architecture, by promoting the sense of air as a spiritual element, architectural spaces can be understood as what Paul Emmons and Marco Frascari describe as a “Meaningful Plenum.” This denotes an emotive aura achieved through the balanced intermingling of conversed spaces. Architecture serves as a tool of connection, bridging the inside with the outside, the above and below, the tangible and intangible, the past and the

future. Just as it grounds us in history, it propels us toward the future, encouraging change, innovation, and progress. It uses existing layers to form new ones, creating a living archive that constantly evolves. Architecture is the physical embodiment of culture, a bridge that connects extremes, breathing life into the surroundings, and transforming the mundane into the extraordinary.

Architecture is the soul of its creation, a guardian of memories, witnessing and housing them, rekindling the spirit of humanity etched into the skyline. It serves as the canvas upon which the narratives of existence are painted, embedding our shared heritage and aspirations for the future. Like a layer cake, meticulously crafted or naturally evolved, it holds layers of possibilities, with immense memories embodied within.

“I believe that buildings only be accepted by their surroundings if they have the ability to appeal to our emotions and minds in various ways, Since our feelings and understanding are rooted in the past, Our sensuous connections with a building must respect the process of remembering”

Zumthor, 1988







Air in Making and Burning

— Patterns in Incense Paper Art: A Sensory and Emotional Journey —

Incense paper art, with its delicate, curling forms and ephemeral transformations, creates patterns that engage both the senses and emotions. As the paper burns, it forms intricate, organic motifs—spirals, waves, fractals, and lace-like residues—each shaped by the movement of air and the intensity of the flame. These evolving patterns contribute to a deeply immersive experience, evoking sensations of transience, continuity, and transformation.

A Poetic Dialogue Between Form and Feeling

Incense paper art is more than a visual expression—it is a multisensory experience that evokes memory, movement, and mindfulness. The patterns formed, whether fragile and lace-like or bold and fluid, engage deeply with human emotions, drawing forth sensations of impermanence, natural harmony, and quiet introspection. Through its transient beauty, it transforms the simple act of burning into an artistic and emotional meditation, bridging the material and the ethereal.



3

Chapter 3:1



Analysis

Analysis Orientation of Project

परिचय

Fig 3.1
Opposite
Ink Drawing
Tibetan Spinner
(Author, 2024)

Fig 3.2
Following Page
Online Source
Bird's Eyevew of Sasong Village
(Google Earth, 2024)

Preface:
Decision Making:

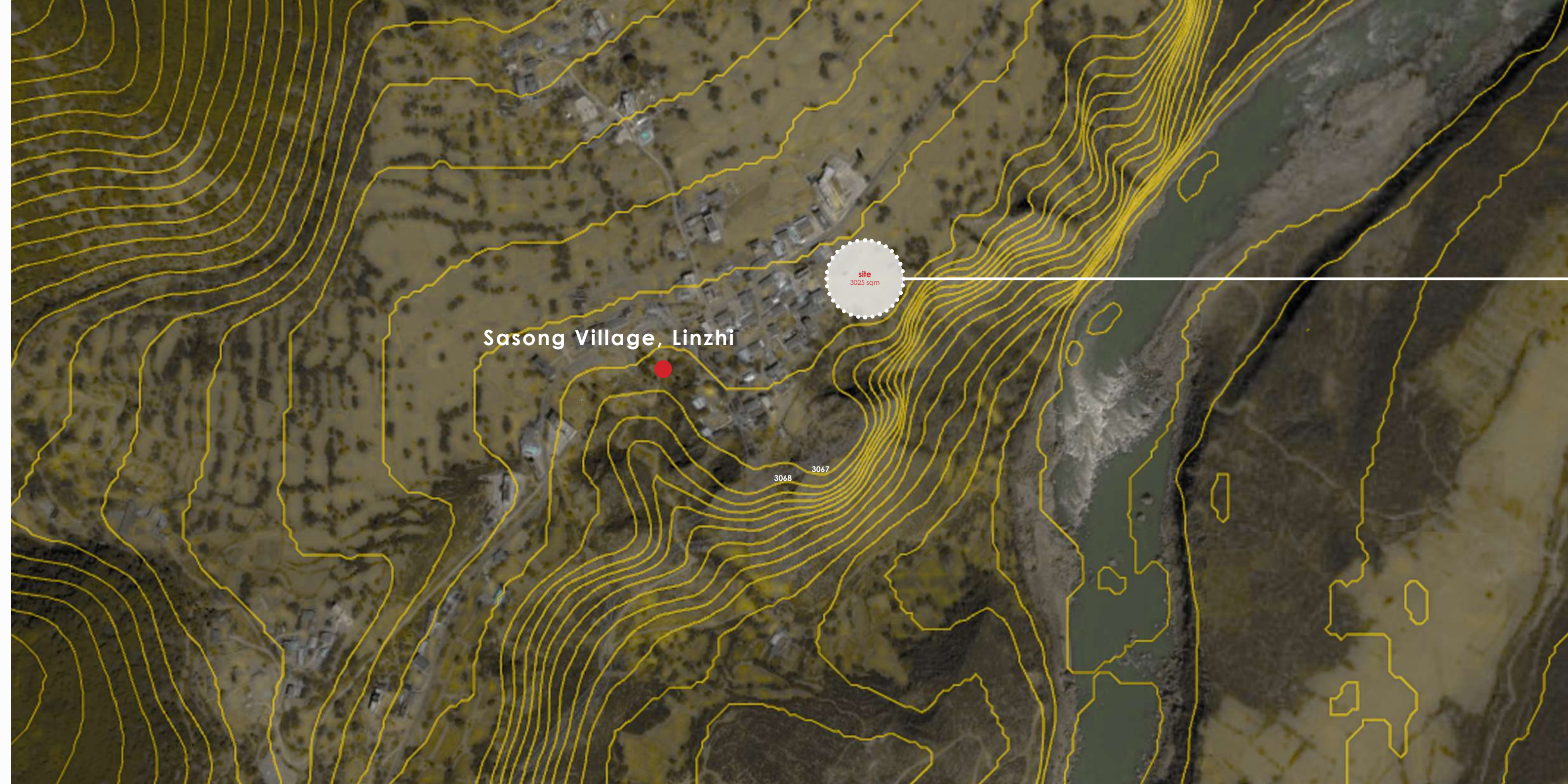
I am imagined device for traditional incense making.

In 2017, Suosong Village had 4 registered poor households and 2 households with five guarantees. In addition to traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, and understory resource collection, tourism is an important source of income for farmers and herdsman in Suosong Village. There are 30 family hotels in the village with nearly 1,000 beds. But lacking a cultural device to pass on the ancient skill of traditional incense making. The aim is to create a connecting gear where it turns on the vintage cultural skill and vitalise local economy.

Mei Han Liang
2024-02-22



SUBLIMATION



Sasong Village, Linzhi

site
3025 sqm

3068

3067

Fig 3.3
Opposite
Photograph
Over View of Sasong Village
(Unknown, 2022)

Fig 3.4
Below
Photograph
Views of Sasong Village
6-10(Unknown, 2022)
1-5 (Author, 2023)

Sasong Village

— Views in asong Village —



Houses in the Village



Views in and around in the Village

SASONG VILLAGE IN THE FOG/MIST

A site in Southeast Tibet,
the Sasong Village, known as
“**the village of Sacred Scents and Fog.**”
Perched on the plateau, the village is
steeped in cultural and heritage traditions
and is renowned for its high-altitude
landscapes and spectacular peach
blossoms.



Fig 3.9
On Page
Edited Mapping
General Scenes
of Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 3.10
Following Page
Edited Mapping
General Conditions
of Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

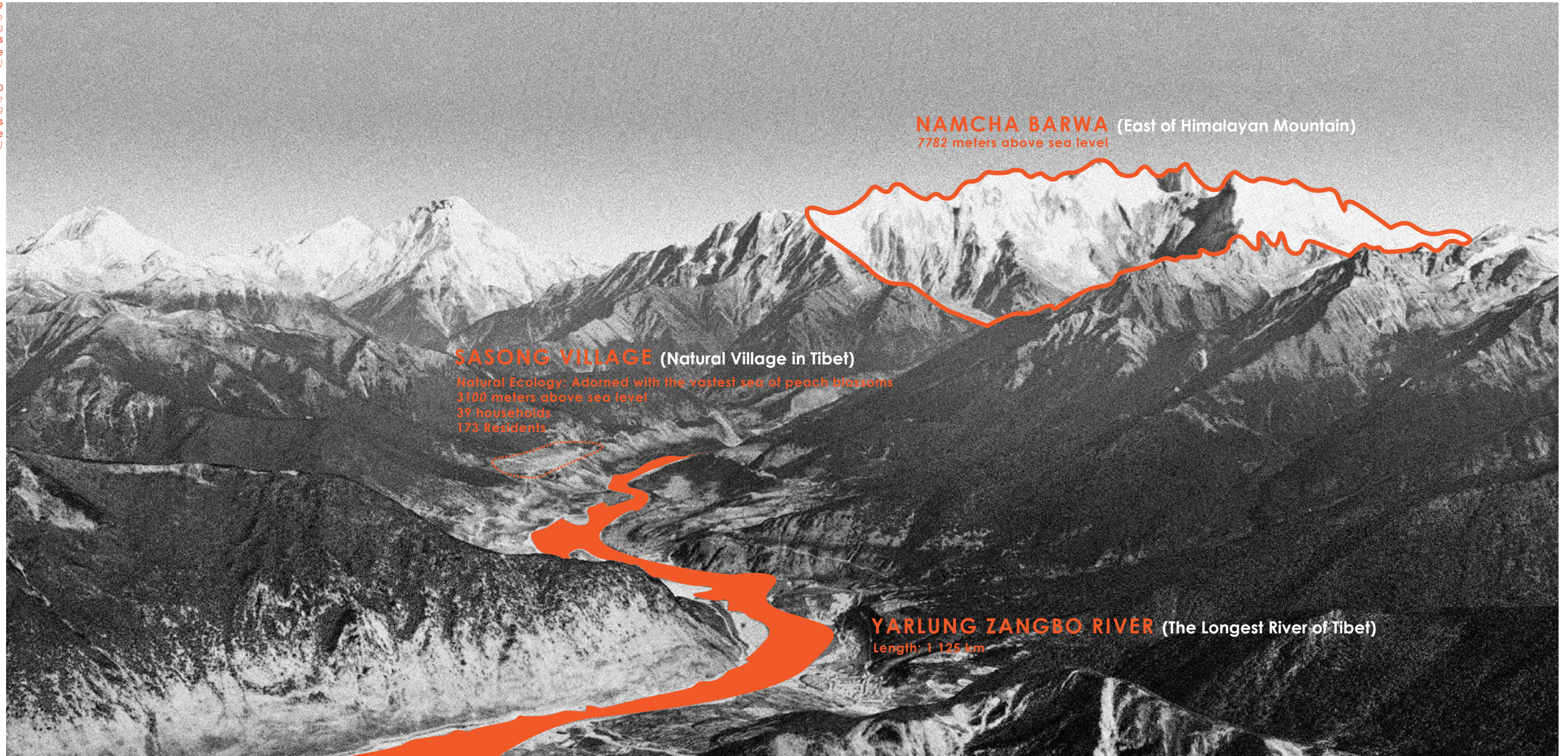




Fig 3.11
On Page
Following Page
Edited Mapping with
Edited Photograph
**Views of
Sasong Village**
(Author, 2023)

2023-03-13
03:05 pm

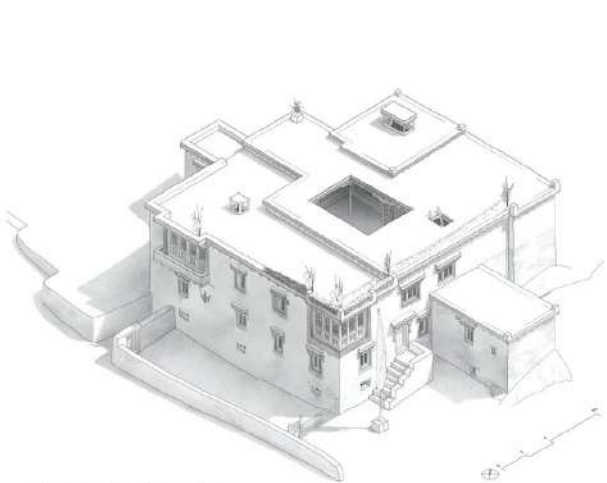


ARCHITECTURE OF MIST

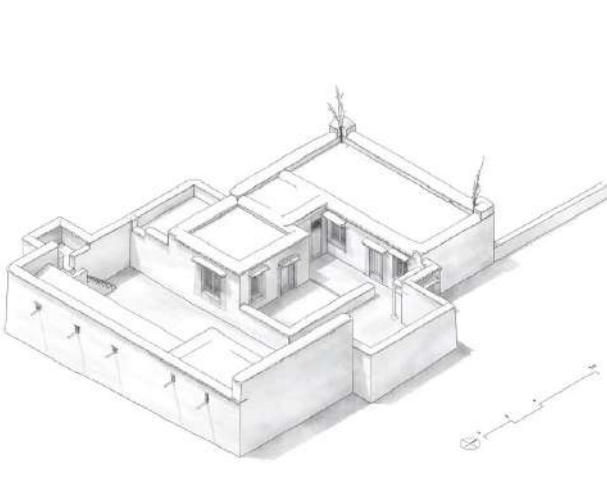
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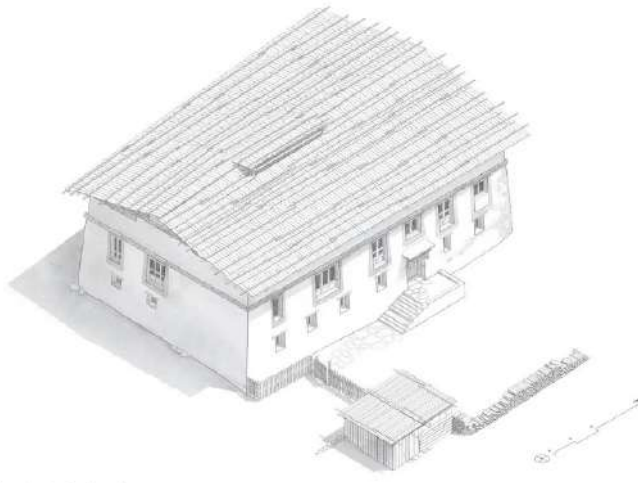




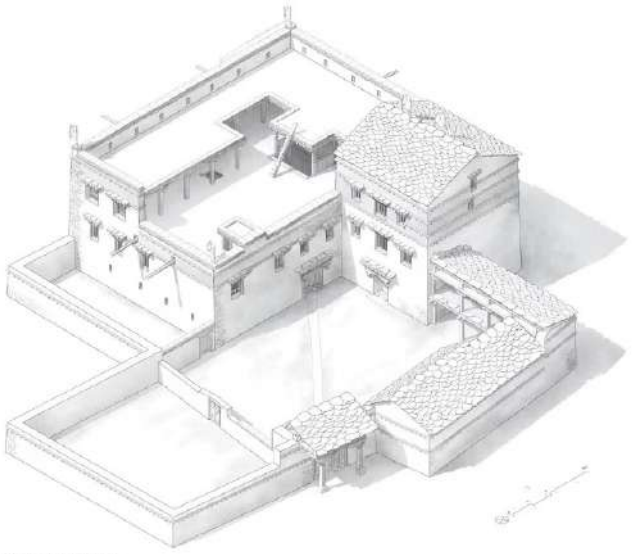
Farkethang Goezma, isometric view from south-east.



Isometric view of the house from the south-east.



Isometric view from the east.



Isometric view from the south-east.

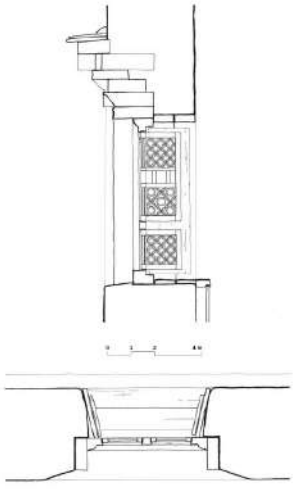
Fig 3.12
Opposite Page
Scanned Drawing
Types and Views of Houses in
Sasong Village
(Author, 2022)

Fig 3.13
On Page
Scanned Drawing
Facde and Structure of Houses in
Sasong Village
(Author, 2022)

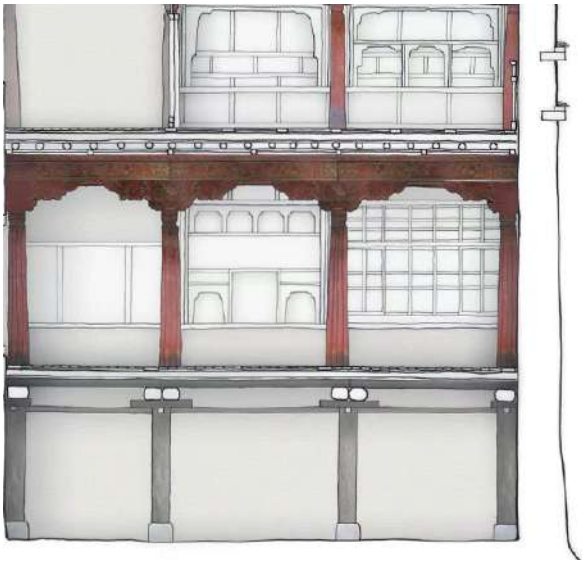


Houses in Tibet

— Houses in Sasong Village —



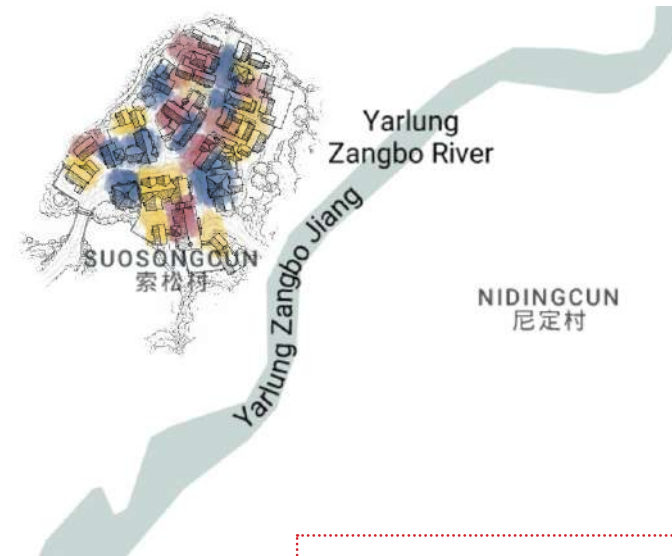
Exterior view, vertical and horizontal section of a typical window (color rendering by Nadja Barschewski).



Tibetan houses vary based on region and environment. In high-altitude areas, homes are often built with thick stone or mud walls to insulate against the cold. In lower regions like Lhasa, homes are usually two or three stories, with flat roofs, and often feature a courtyard. Wooden beams, stone, and earthen materials are commonly used, reflecting the natural resources available. Houses are designed to withstand the harsh climate while incorporating spiritual elements, such as prayer flags and shrines, blending practicality with deep cultural significance.

Colour Study

| Colour Study in Tibet and Parts of Sasong Village



Pattern Study

| Pattern Study in China and Parts of Sasong Village



Material Study

| Pattern Study in China and Parts of Sasong Village

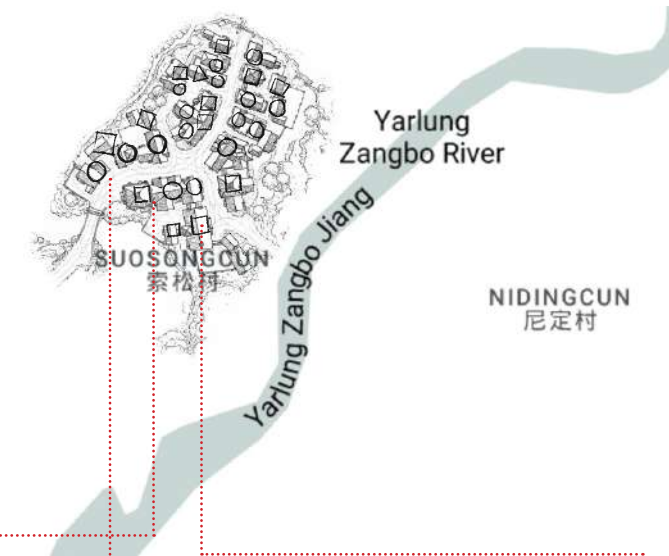
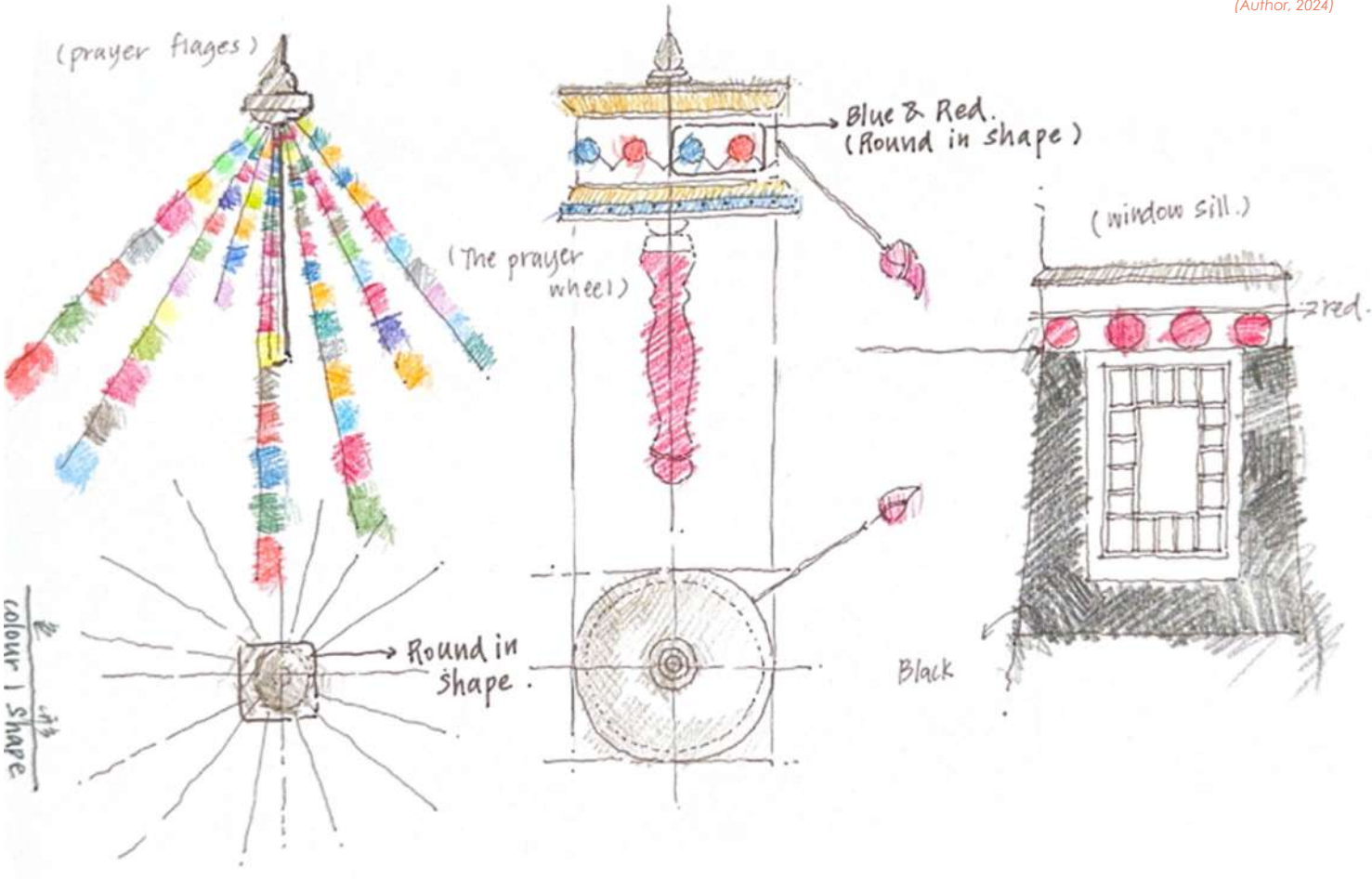
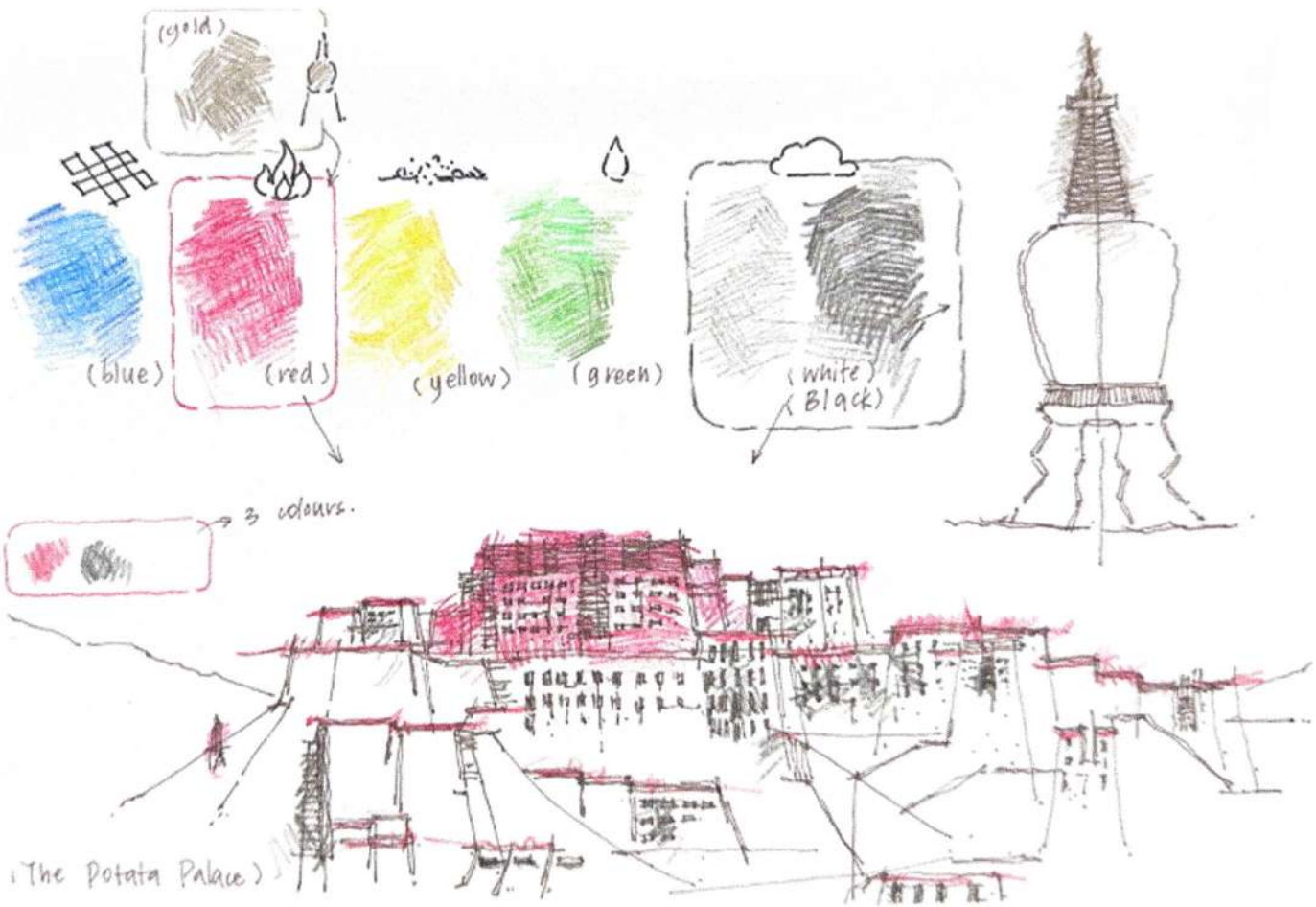


Fig 3.14
Opposite Page - Top
Sketch Mapping
Elements of Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 3.15
Opposite Page - Bottom
Online Source
Architectural Design Elements
of Sasong Village
(RedBook, 2023)

Fig 3.16
On Page
Scanned Drawing
Colour Study of
Tibetan Elements and
Architecture
(Author, 2024)

— Connecting Tibetan Symbolism to
Form Building Concepts —





4



Design Development

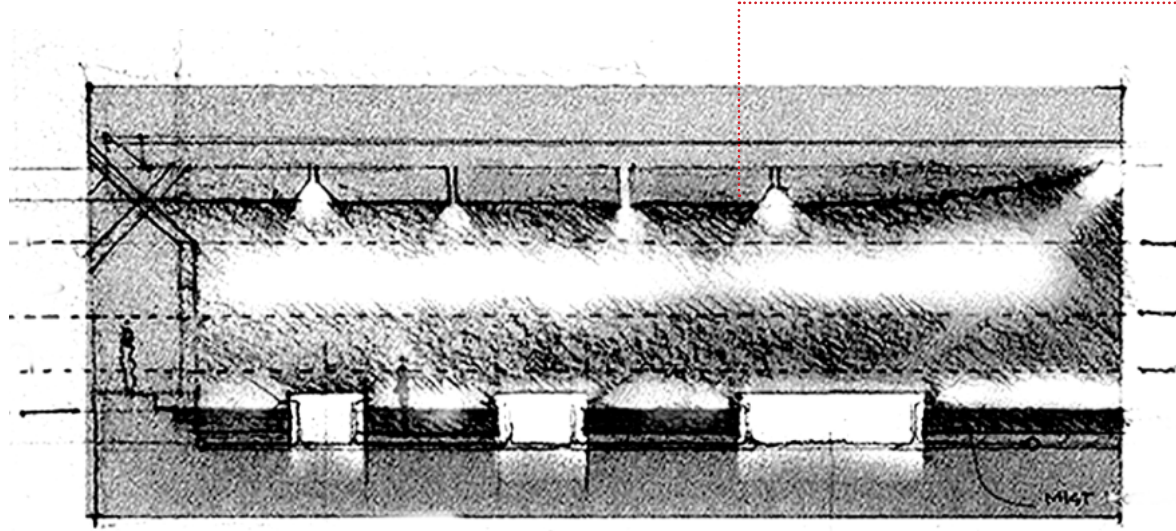
Chapter 4:1

Development Orientation *of Project*

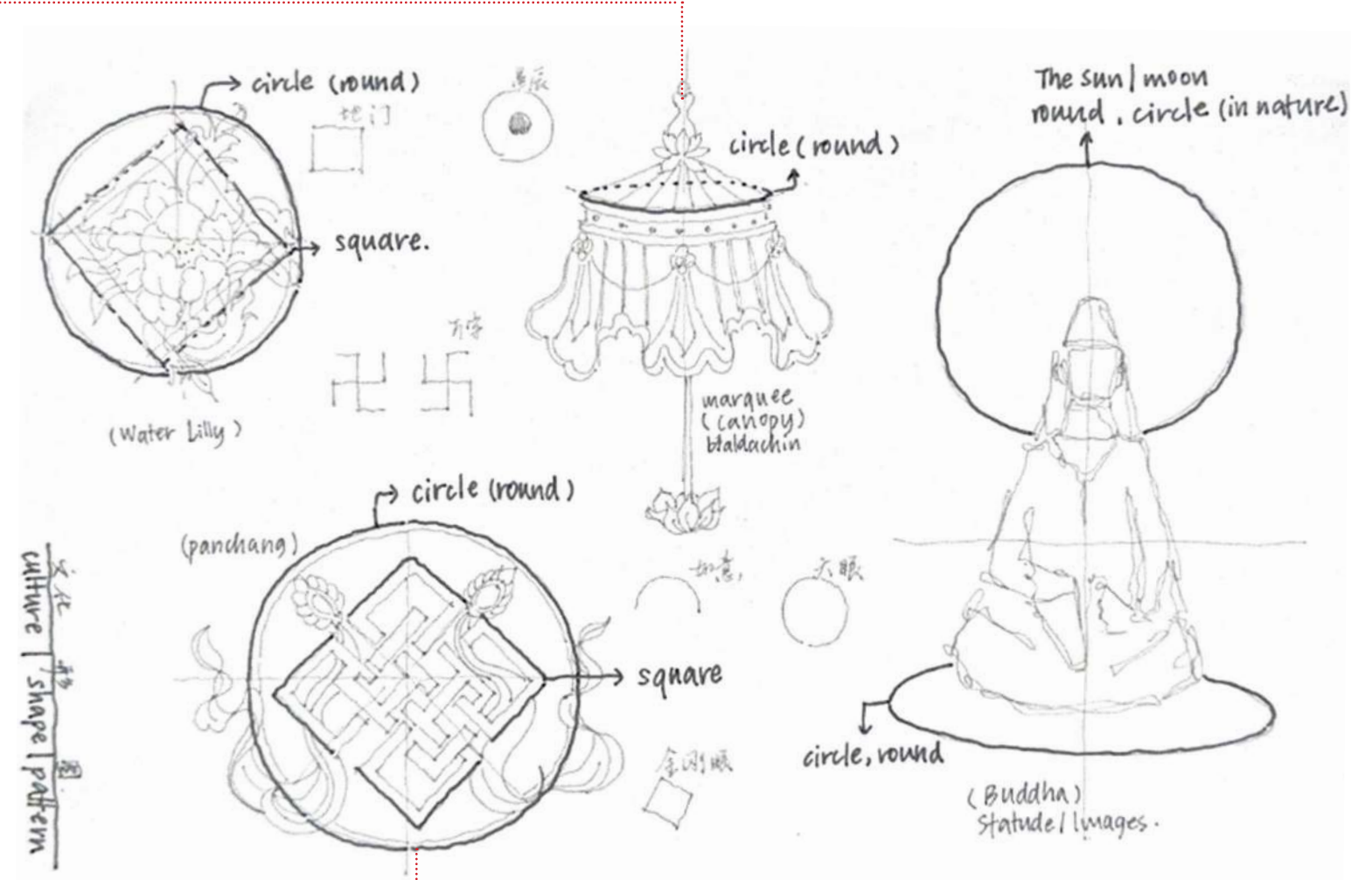


Defining Form

—— Connecting Tibetan Symbolism to Form Building Concepts ——



Tibetan shapes—whether in art, architecture, or sacred symbols—draw inspiration from a mix of Buddhist cosmology, indigenous Bon traditions, and the surrounding Himalayan landscape. Mandalas and stupas reflect sacred geometry from Indian and Nepali influences, while curved rooflines and fortress-like structures come from adapting to Tibet's harsh climate and high altitudes. Natural forms, like flowing clouds, lotus petals, and mountain silhouettes, also shape Tibetan aesthetics, blending spirituality with nature's rhythm.



SUBLIMATION

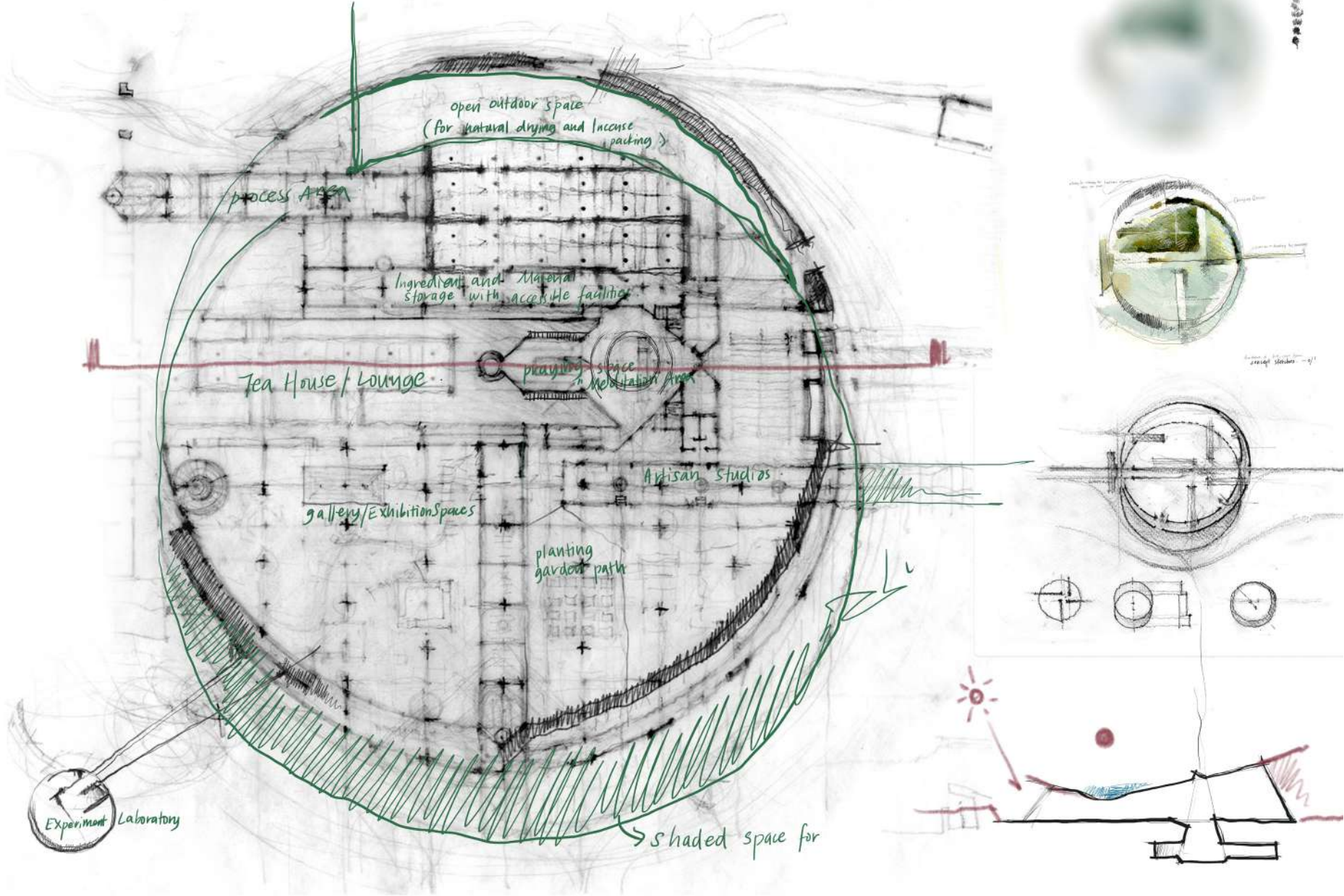
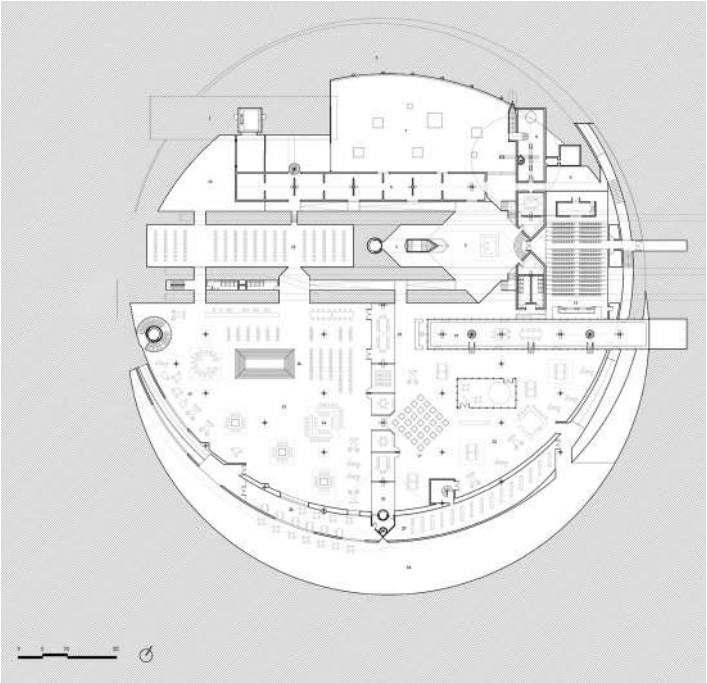


Fig 4.3
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Scanned Drawing
Conceptual Design of
The Triditional Incense Hub
(Author, 2024)

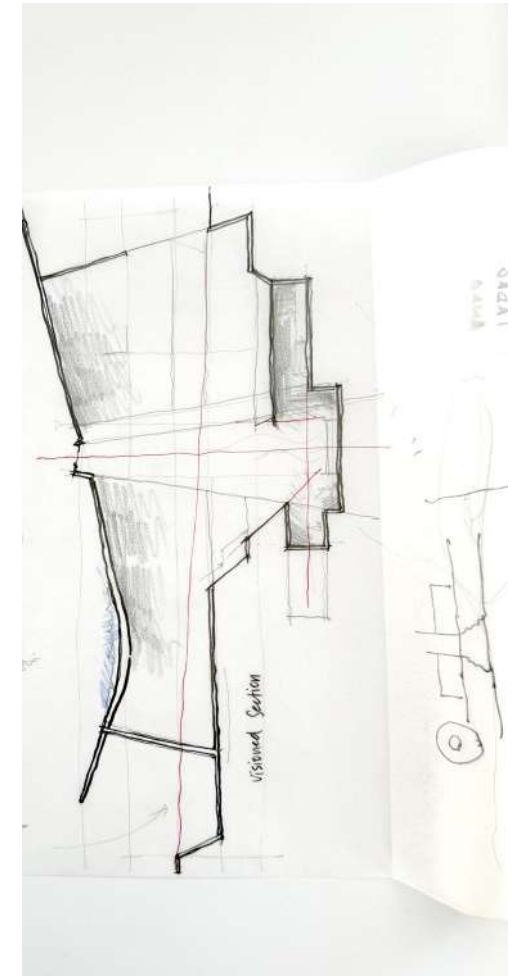
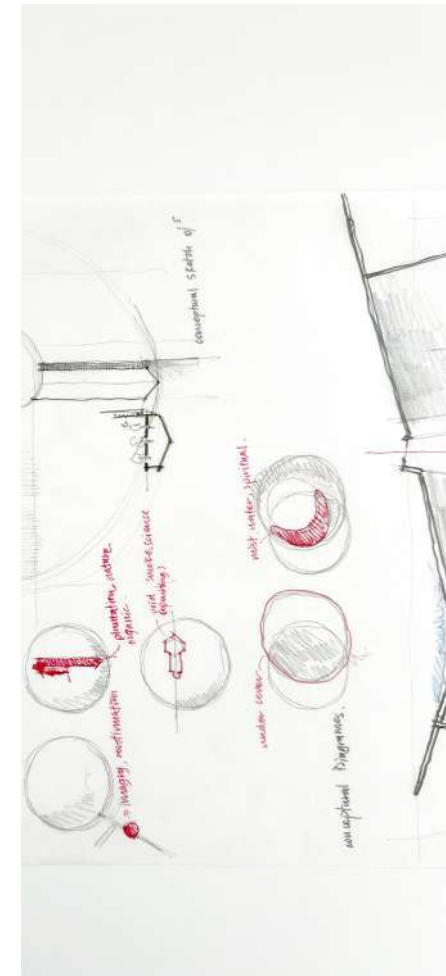
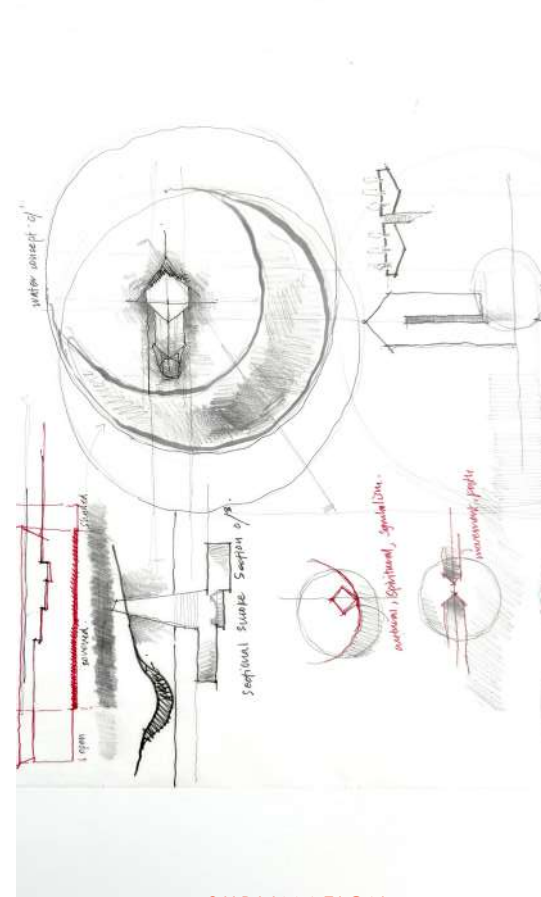
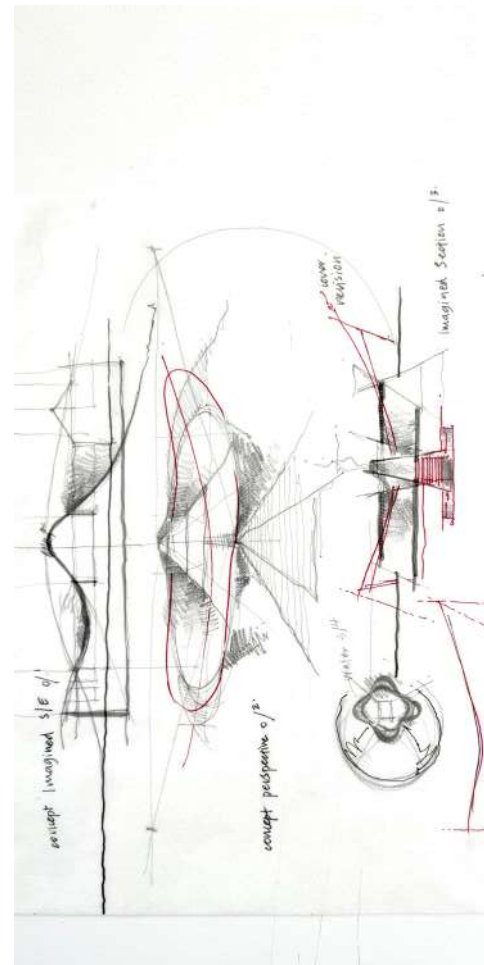
Fig 4.4
On Page - Right
CAD Drawing
Conceptual
Spatial Testment of
The Triditional Incense Hub
(Author, 2024)



Having multiple grid and surface
 symmetrically represent natural
 elements that stand alone and
 together created a multiple
 space to get the desired, interesting
 and functional spaces within.

concept development of "

Sketch Studies — Mei Han Liang



— Section Development —

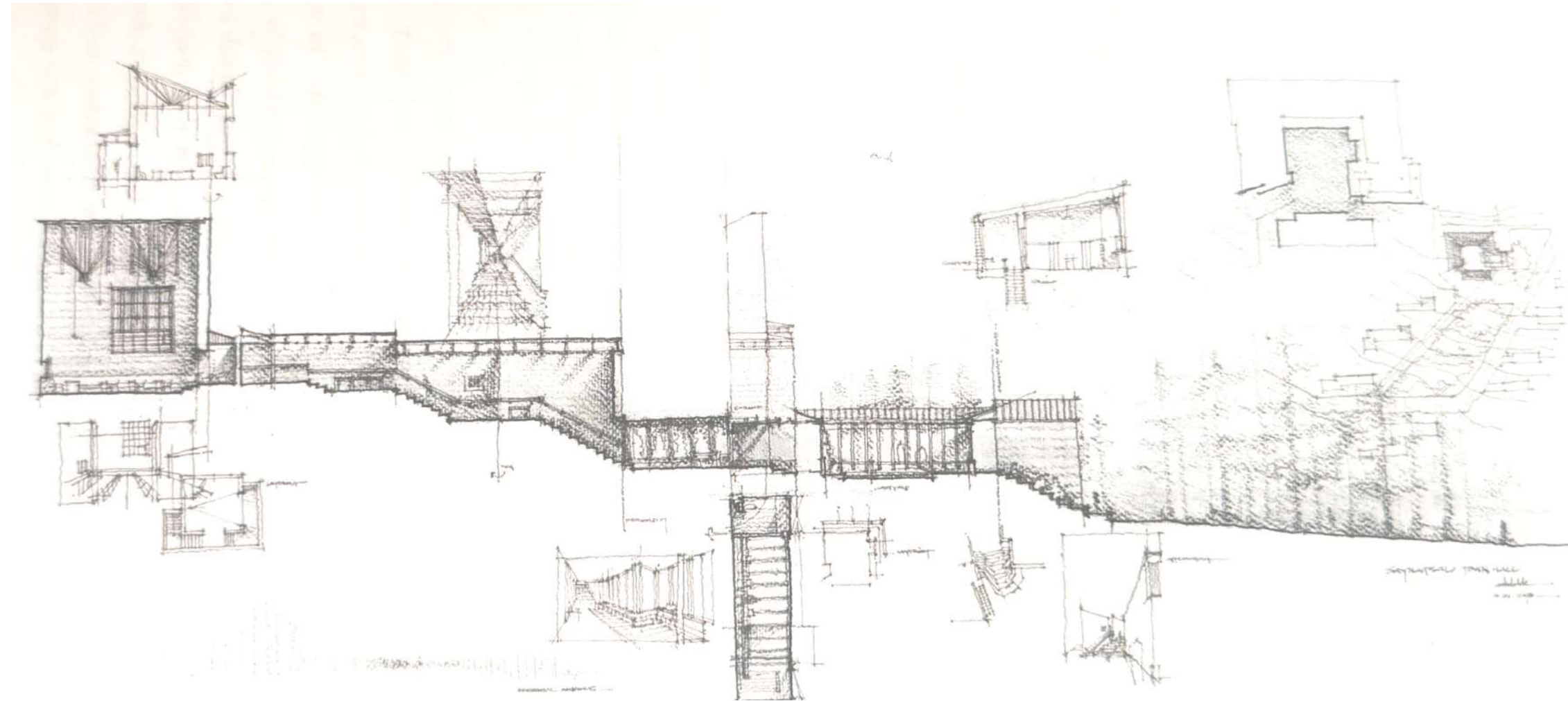
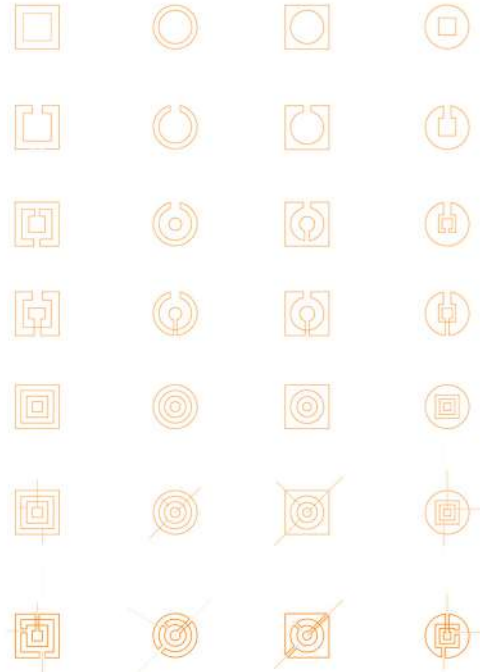
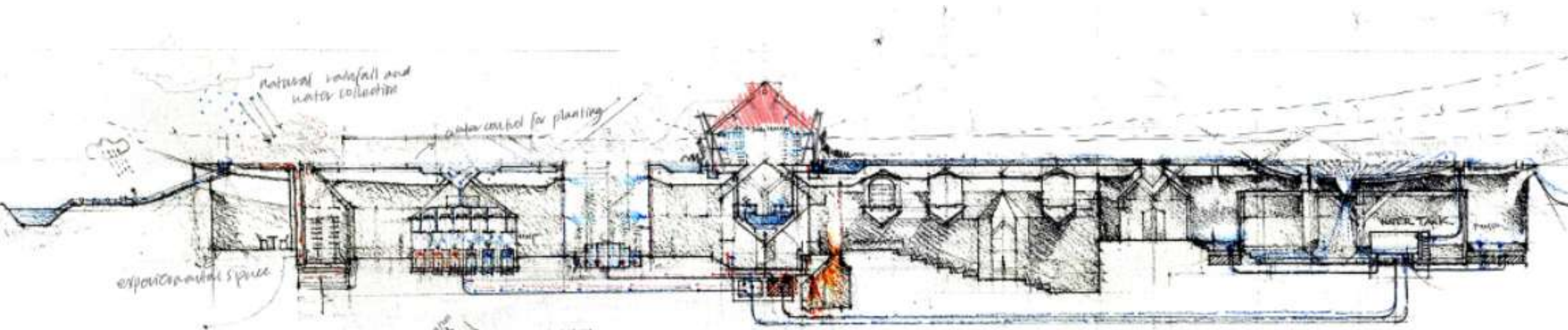
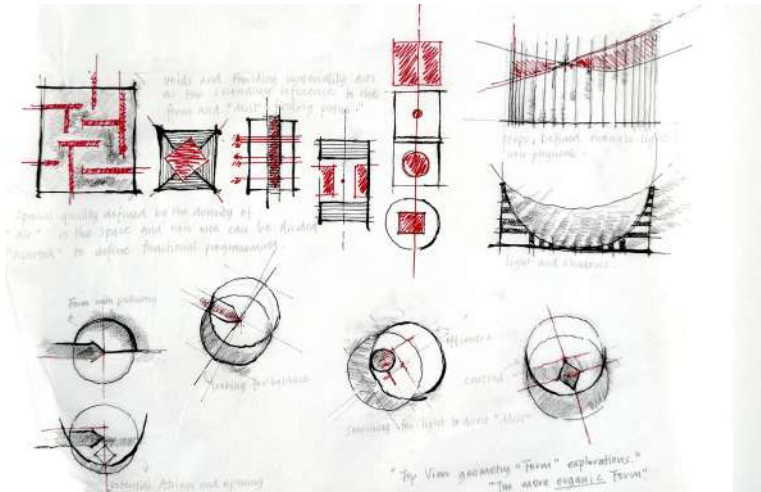


Fig 4.6
Opposite Page
Scanned Drawings
Section Elevation
Conceptual Development
(Author, 2024)

Fig 4.7
On Page
Scanned Drawings
Section Elevation
Conceptual Development
(Author, 2024)





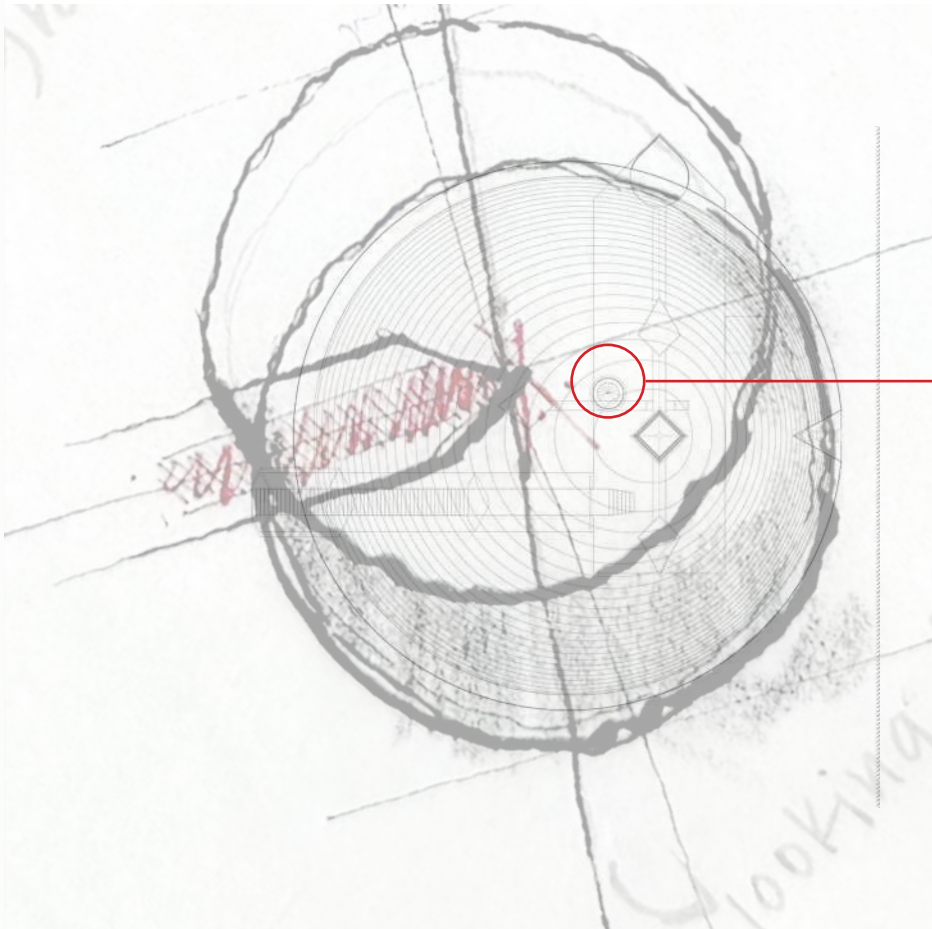
Column Studies

Tibetan columns are traditionally made from massive timber, often sourced from Himalayan pine, cypress, or fir. Due to Tibet's harsh climate and high-altitude conditions, these woods are chosen for their durability and resistance to cracking. In regions with scarce trees, stone or rammed earth columns may also be used, especially in fortresses and older structures.

In Tibetan architecture, stone works in harmony with wooden columns by providing a stable and durable foundation, crucial for the region's extreme climate and seismic activity. Many Tibetan wooden columns rest on stone pedestals to prevent direct contact with the ground, protecting the wood from moisture, rot, and pests.

Fig 4.8
On Page - Left
Scanned Drawings
Section Elevation
Conceptual Development
(Author, 2024)

Fig 4.9
On Page - Bottom
Online Source
Column Stand Types
(RedBook, 2023)





5

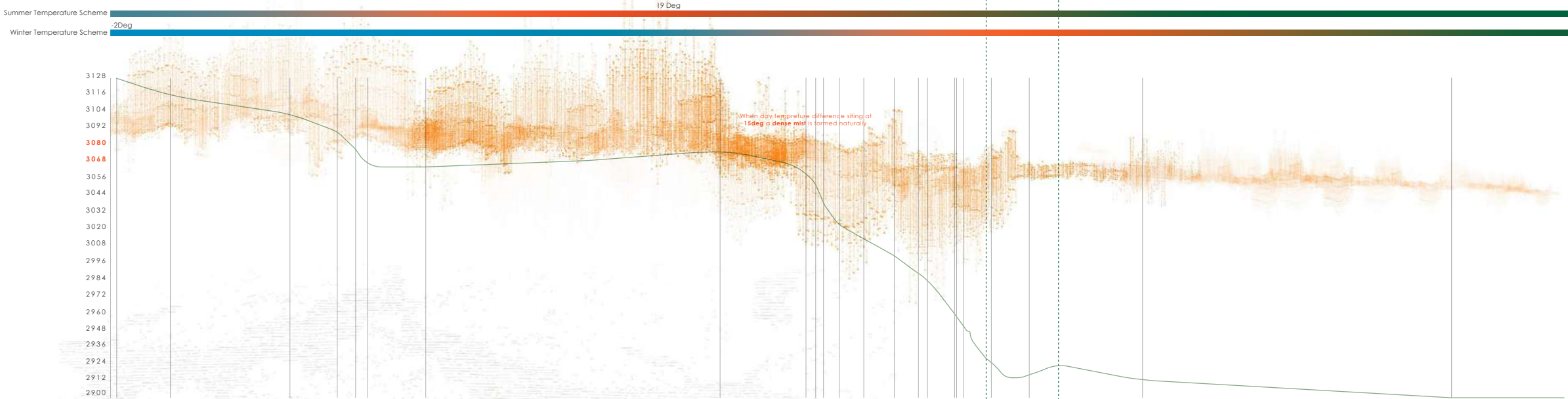


Final Design

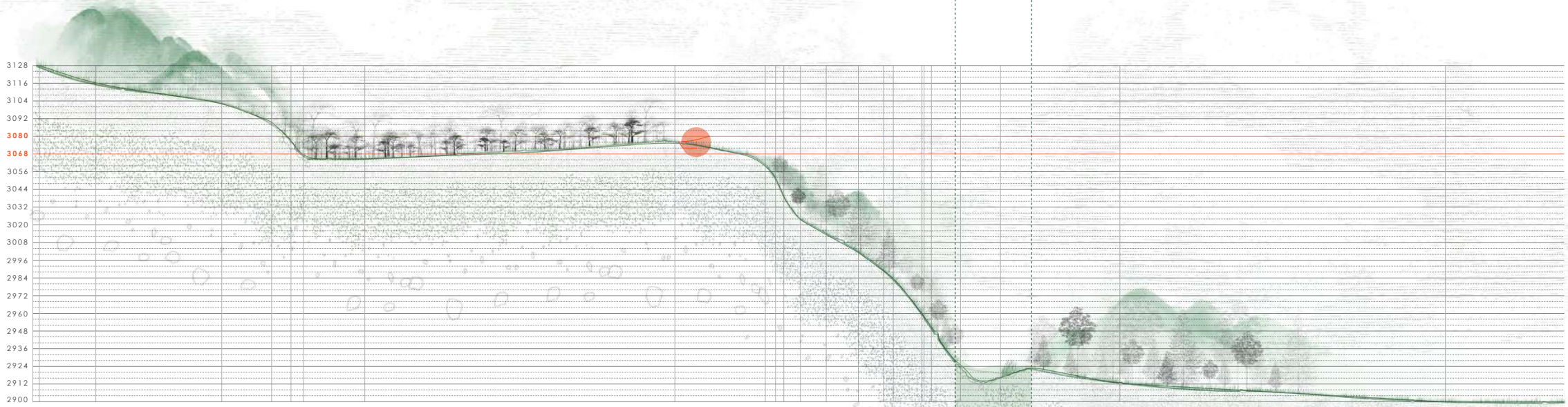
Chapter 5:1

Presentation Orientation *of Project*





mist DENSITY DURING THE YEAR
Scale 1:2000



SITE SECTION A-A
Scale 1:2000

Fig 5.1
Opposite Page - Top
Illustrator Mapping
Mist Density of Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.2
Opposite Page - Bottom
Illustrator Design Drawing
Long Section of Selected Site in Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.3
Below - Left
Illustrator Design Drawing
Short Section of Selected Site in Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.4
Below - Right
Digital Illustration
Building on Site Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)

Locate The Triditional Incense Hub

— Still and Rising —

Nestled in the heart of Sasong Village, a Traditional Incense Hub sits in quiet contemplation, as if planted in the earth like a sacred stick of incense, its roots deep in the soil of tradition. When occupied, it awakens, exhaling fragrant smoke that curls and dances with the morning mist, blurring the line between the seen and the unseen. The air hums with the rhythm of hands grinding herbs, and rolling paste, shaping time into slender forms meant to burn and dissolve into prayer.

But when silence falls, the Hub becomes a watchful guardian. Its wooden beams, darkened by centuries of incense and

devotion, gaze over the mountains, standing steadfast like an ancient protector. The scent of past burnings lingers in its walls, whispering forgotten stories to the wind. In stillness, it listens—to the flowing river, the rustling of prayer flags, the distant voices of villagers.

Like the incense it crafts, the Incense Hub exists between presence and absence, between the moment of burning and the echo of its fragrance long after the flame has gone. It does not merely make incense; it embodies it—a sanctuary of slow-burning wisdom, where time dissolves into sacred smoke, rising endlessly into the sky.

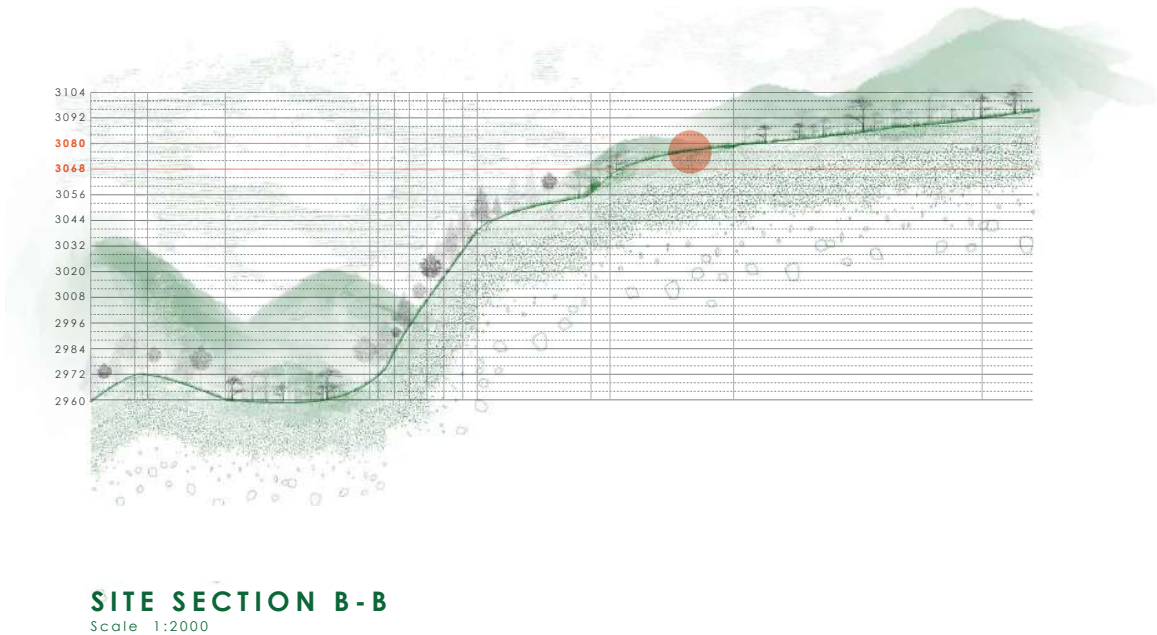
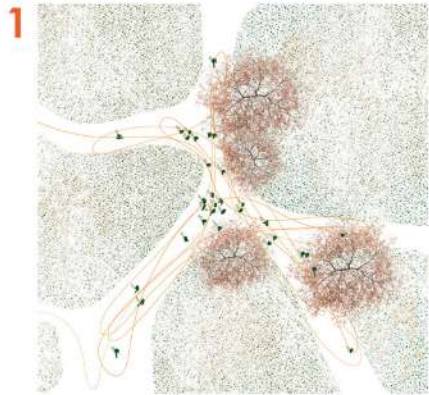
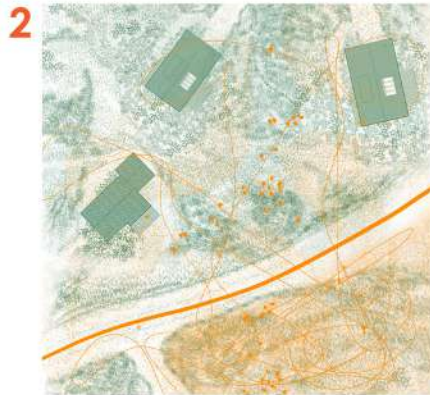


Fig 5.6
Below
Mix Media Digital Art
Zoomed in conditions of
Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)



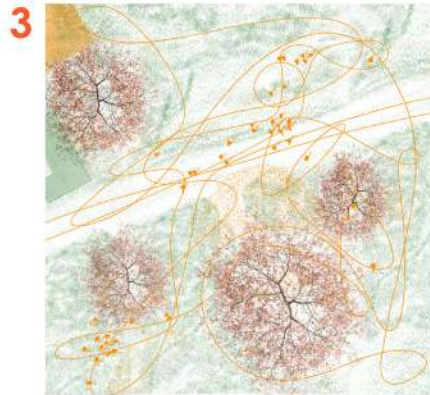
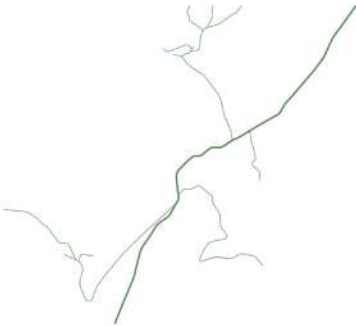
Site Sensitivity
Environmental Integration

Promotes eco-friendly practices that respect the natural landscape and traditional agricultural methods.



Site Connectivity
Education and Awareness

Establishes platforms to teach and celebrate the village's heritage, fostering pride and cultural continuity.

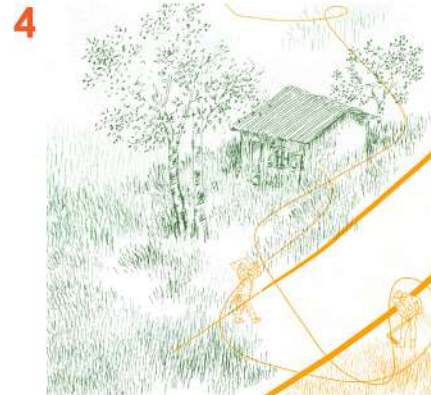


Site Access
Proximity

Ensuring heritage sites, workshops, or events are conveniently located for nearby residents.



TECTONICS



Site Generation
Economic Empowerment

Generates income through heritage tourism, local incense crafts, and local agri-tourism, boosting local livelihoods.



Site Mobile Condition
Community Engagement

Involves local residents in planning and implementation to ensure cultural authenticity and sustainability while maintaining the long existed life local style.



- 1: Central Altium
- 2: Roof Top Platform
- 3: Roof Top Circulation Pathway
- 4: Roof Light for Raw Material Natural Drying Sanctuary
- 5: Ground Access to Roof
- 6: Ground Access to Basement Hall
- 7: Roof Plate



- 1: Dry Herbal Storage Room
- 2: Raw Powder Blending Chamber
- 3: Artificial Incense Making Pavilion
- 4: Curing and Drying Sanctuary
- 5: Sorting and Packaging Atelier
- 6: Incense Cultivation Suite
- 7: Main Entrance
- 8: Praying Stations
- 9: East Ailes
- 10: Enlightenment and Washing Altium
- 11: Open Hydroponic Heating Station
- 12: Open Administration and Kitchenet
- 13: Meditation and Contemplation Retreat
- 14: Bathroom
- 15: Mori Vireet Walking Aile
- 16: AltiumVoid



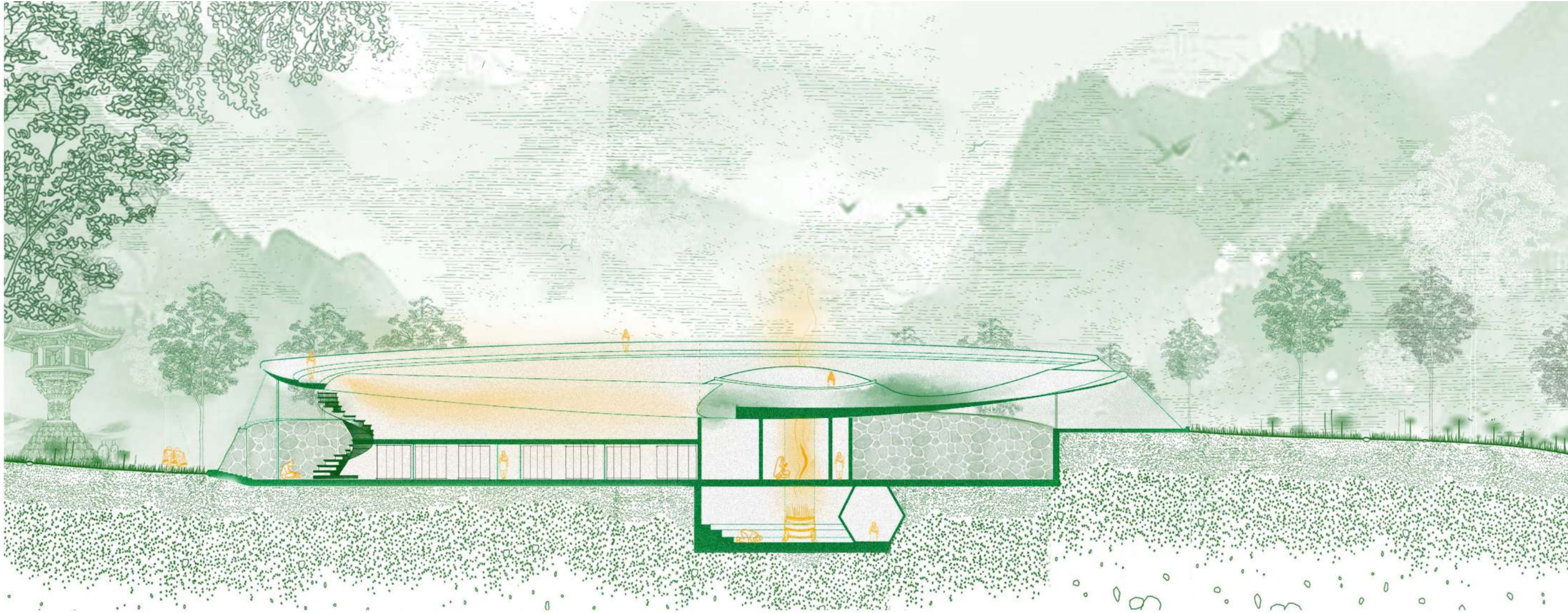


UNDERGROUND FLOOR PLAN
Scale Bar

A horizontal scale bar with three segments. Above the bar, the numbers 1, 2, and 5 are placed at the start, middle, and end of the segments respectively. Below the bar, the numbers 1, 3, and 8 are placed at the same positions. The bar is black with white lines separating the segments.

This architectural floor plan illustrates the interior of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Prague. The plan shows the nave, choir, and apse, with various numbered points of interest. The nave is the central area, and the choir is the area at the end of the church. The apse is the semi-circular end of the church. The plan includes a detailed view of the choir and apse, showing the layout of the choir stalls and the apse mosaic. The plan also shows the location of the altar, the pulpit, and the baptismal font. The plan is oriented with the entrance at the top.

Fig 5.9
Below
Design Drawing
Section of The
Traditional Incense Hub
(Author, 2024)



Section 01
Scale Bar
1 2 5
1 3 8

TECTONICS

Fig 5.10
Below - Left
Mix Media Art
**Perspective of The
Traditional Incense Hub
Sasong Village**
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.11
Below - Right
CAD Drawing
**Internal Wall Detail
of Building**
(Author, 2024)

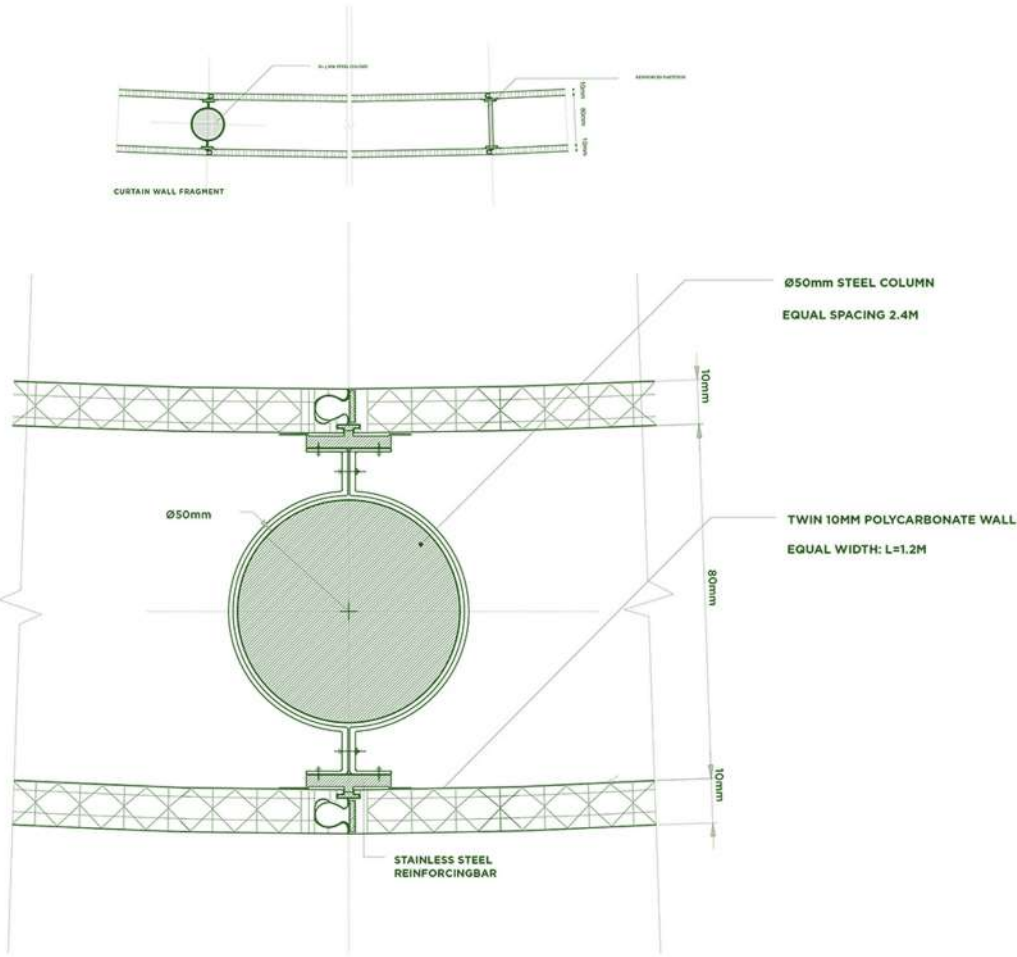
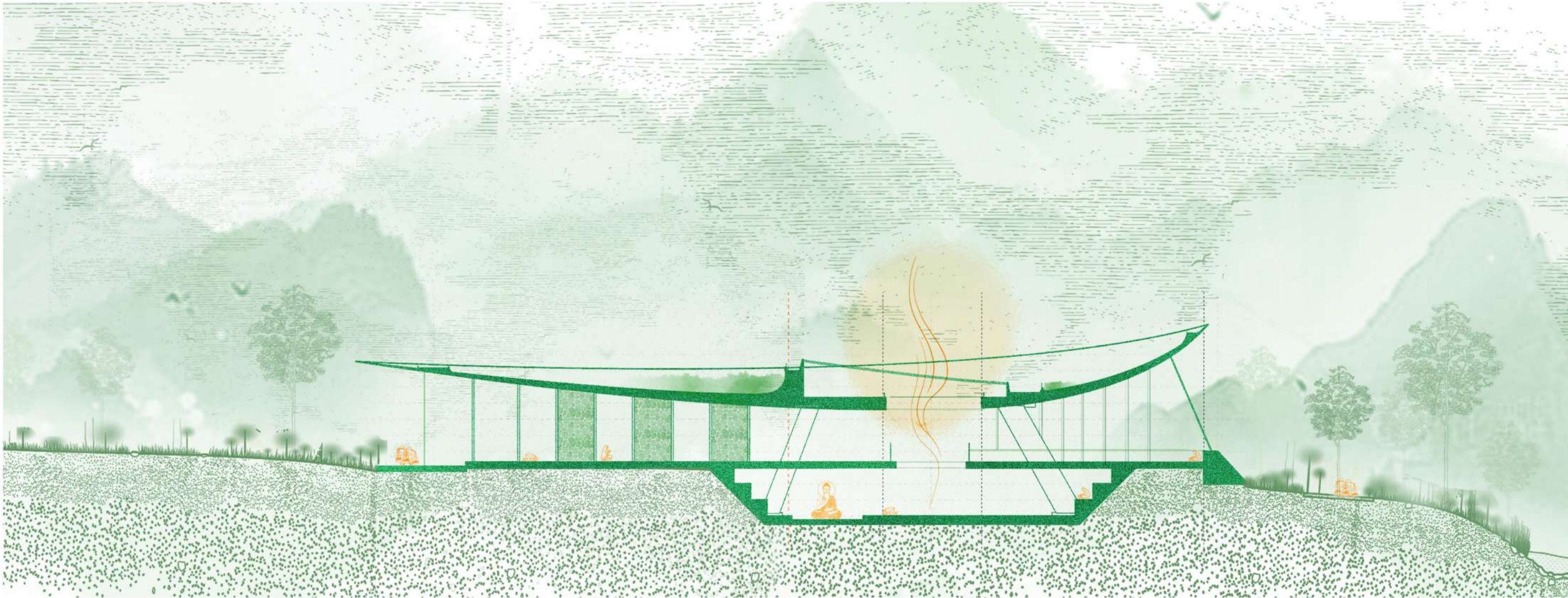


Fig 5.12
Below
Design Drawing
Section of The
Traditional Incense Hub
Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)



Section 02
Scale Bar
1 2 5
1 3 8

Fig 5.13
Below - Left
Mix Media Digital Art
**Perspective of The
Traditional Incense Hub
Sasong Village**
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.14
Below - Right
Digital Illustration
**Internal Perspective of
The Praying Station**
(Author, 2024)

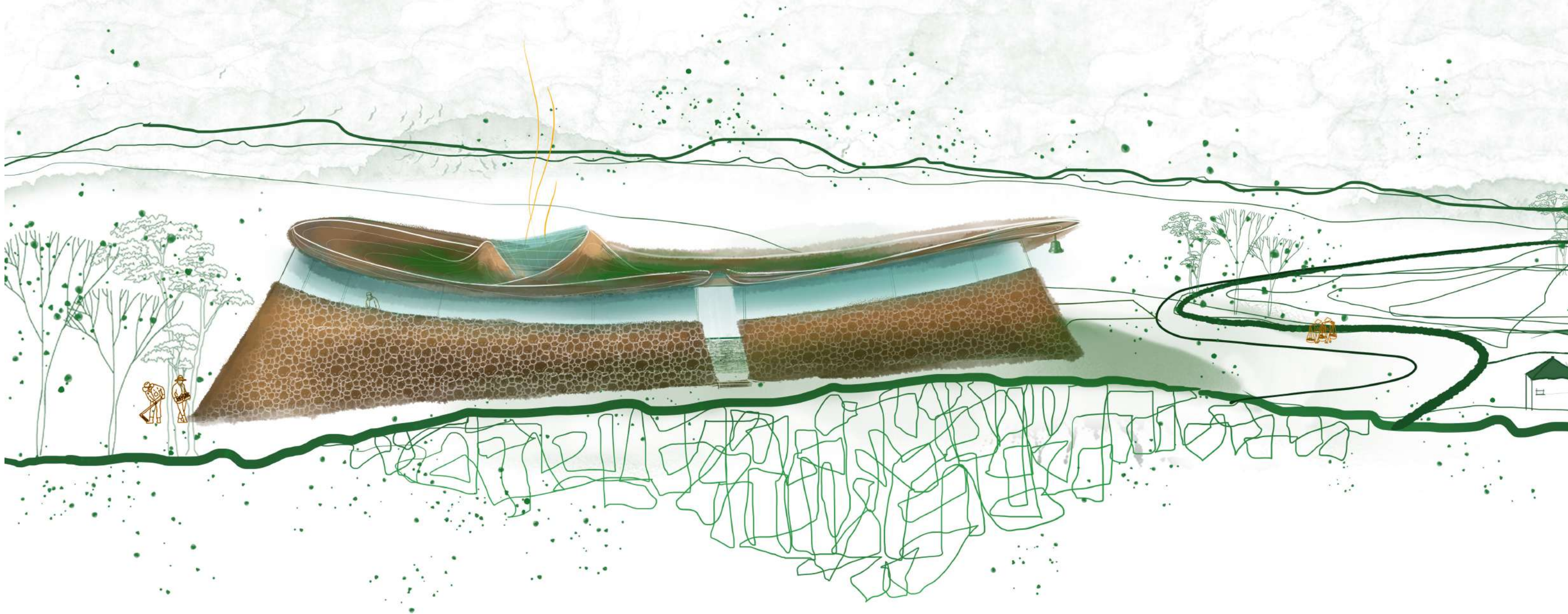


Still

— Daily —

This incense hub remains sacred yet functional for daily villagers by seamlessly blending spiritual reverence with practical accessibility. The space is designed to accommodate both quiet rituals and communal activities, allowing villagers to engage in incense offerings, meditation, and reflection while also using the space as a meeting point infused with cultural tradition. The architecture harmonizes the spiritual and physical environment through natural elements—air, light, and scent—creating a sensory bridge between the earthly and the divine. Open courtyards invite natural light and wind, symbolizing purification and renewal, while the controlled movement of incense smoke reinforces an ethereal presence, subtly reminding villagers of the sacred atmosphere even in their everyday routines. This interplay of structure, air, and ritual ensures the space remains a living, breathing sanctuary that nurtures both spiritual devotion and communal life.

Fig 5.15
On Page
Design Drawing
Elevation Perspective of
The Traditional Incense Hub
Sasong Village
(Author, 2024)



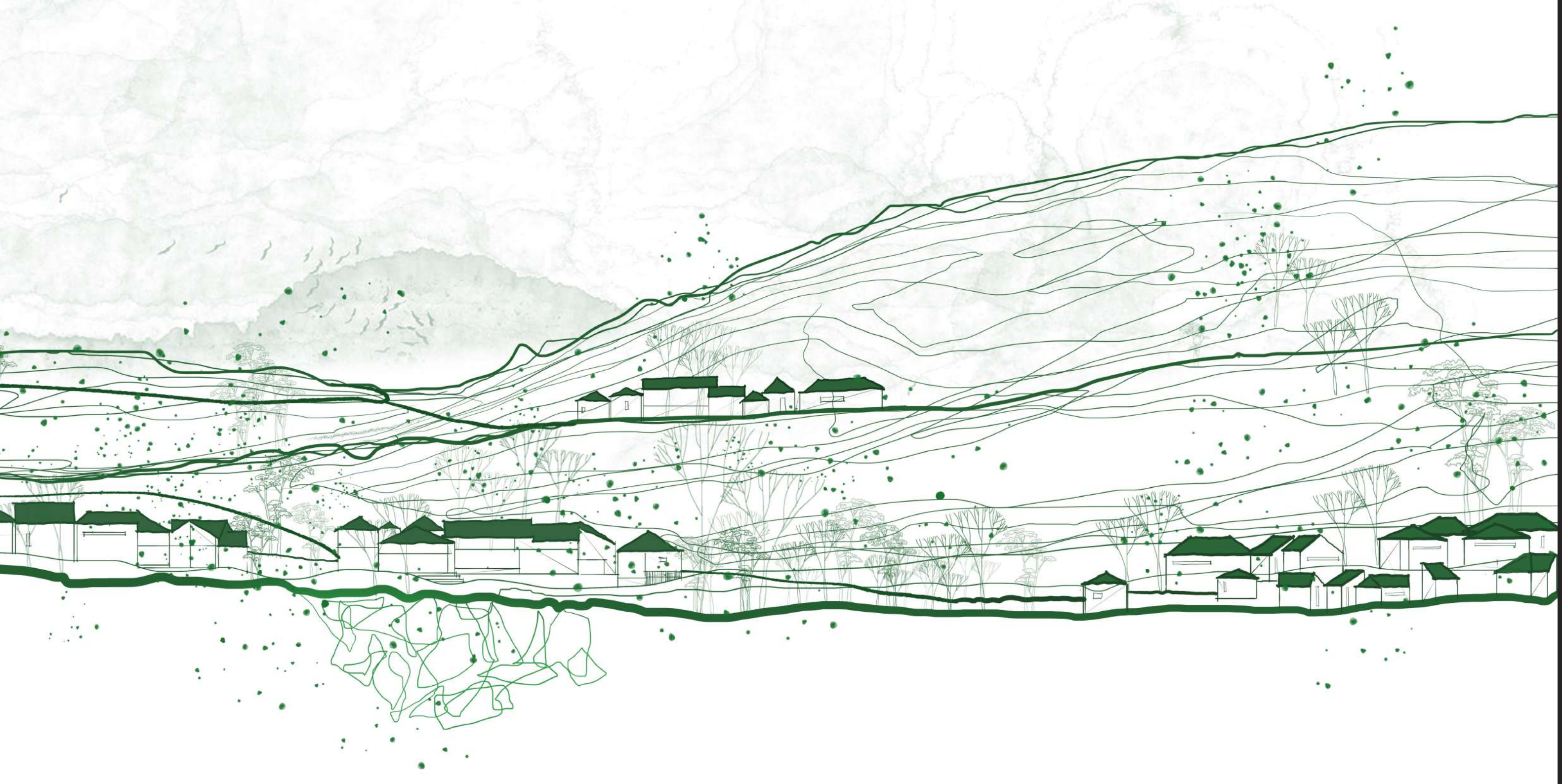
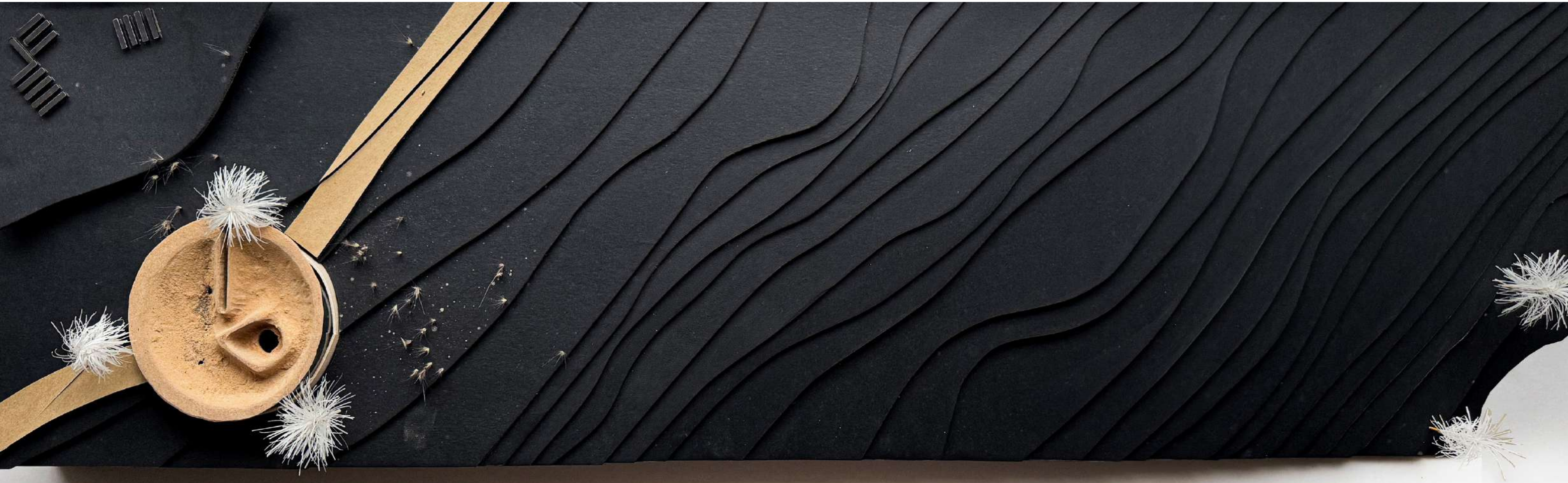




Fig 5.16
On Page
Photograph
Images of The Project Model
(Author, 2024)

Fig 5.17
Following Page
Photograph
Overlook of The Project Model
(Author, 2024)







6

CHAPTER 6:1

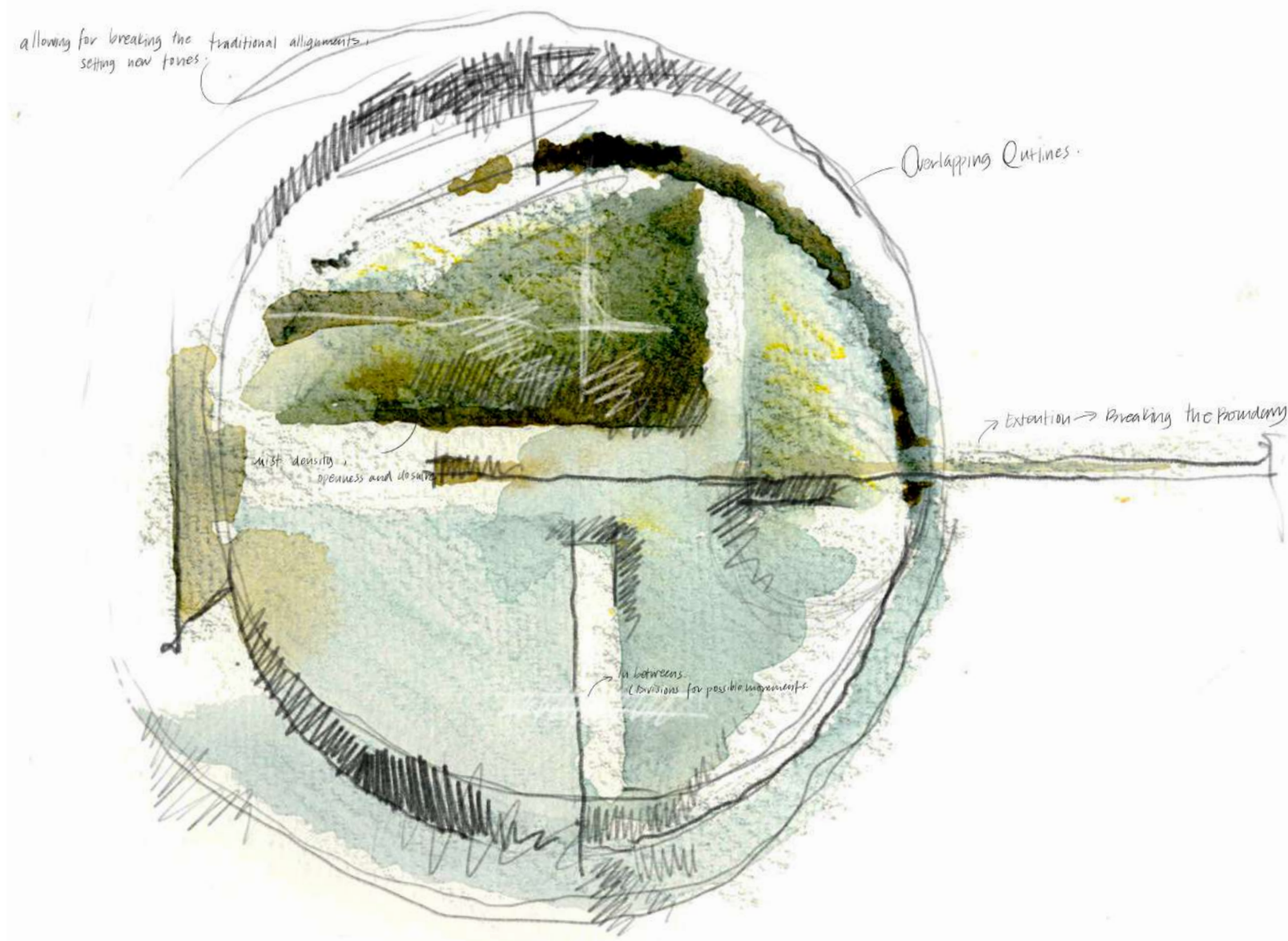
| Appendices

Project Viability

The Viability Report for The Cultural Incense Hub as a requirement for the MArch (Prof) Degree within the Simulated Office Practice Course, aims to evaluate the feasibility and practicality of to the proposed architectural intervention outlined in this research project. The report will assess the project's alignment with a comprehensive analysis on the feasibility criteria and the project's architectural elements. The above should set a guideline for meeting all intended project goals while adhering to budgetary requirements and timeline constraints. Given the physical location of the proposed project, primary data and information will primarily be sourced from within China and relevant online websites. A sufficient amount of data is expected to be included to conduct a comprehensive analysis of statutory requirements, ensuring viability in both China (The Project's Physical Location) and South Africa (For Formal Assessment and Examination purposes).

—Part Details that is not reflect in the early "concept and viability" stage should be revised for further developments in later stages.—

Fig 6.1
Opposite
Edited Hand Drawing
Concept Sketch:
Incense Hub
(Author, 2024)



Design Brief

The proposed project is to develop a publicly accessible cultural facility in Sasong Village that supports traditional incense making and production. This facility should be adaptable to various incense-related religious practices and not solely serve as a heritage symbol. The interest of the project is to initiate and protect the traditional skill of incense making, and the multiplicity of the historical incense narrative within the democratic society.

To enhance the inheritance of traditional ancestral craftsmanship and culture, the proposed project acts as a catalyst and embodiment of this heritage. The Traditional Incense Hub draws from a profound and dynamic cultural legacy. This initiative aims to explore a rich layer of cultural heritage preservation, which fluctuates with evolving cultural identities and conservation efforts. The architecture is designed to reflect and enhance the environmental and atmospheric qualities while honouring the intangible rituals associated with incense culture. In the context of Sasong Village, the design will evoke the tranquillity, solitude, and boundlessness of nature, which have historically defined many sacred spaces within the community.

—Defining The Project Client—

The project's objective is to initiate and protect the China Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of ancient incense-making craftsmanship, integrating historical traditions into contemporary society. This initiative seeks to engage multidisciplinary entities from both governmental bodies and local communities, prioritizing and ensuring the preservation and transmission of this rich heritage to current and future generations. The framework provided by the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2011) and the Regulations on the Protection of Traditional Arts and Crafts (2020) supports this initiative.

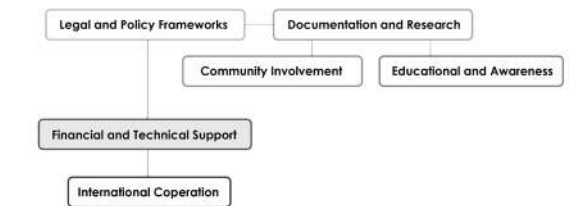


Fig 6.2
Above
Diagram Analysis
Key Strategies and Measures
for the Protection of China's ICH
(Author, 2024)

The initiative will be carried out by government departments in collaboration with the cultural stakeholders listed below, through partnerships and joint ventures.

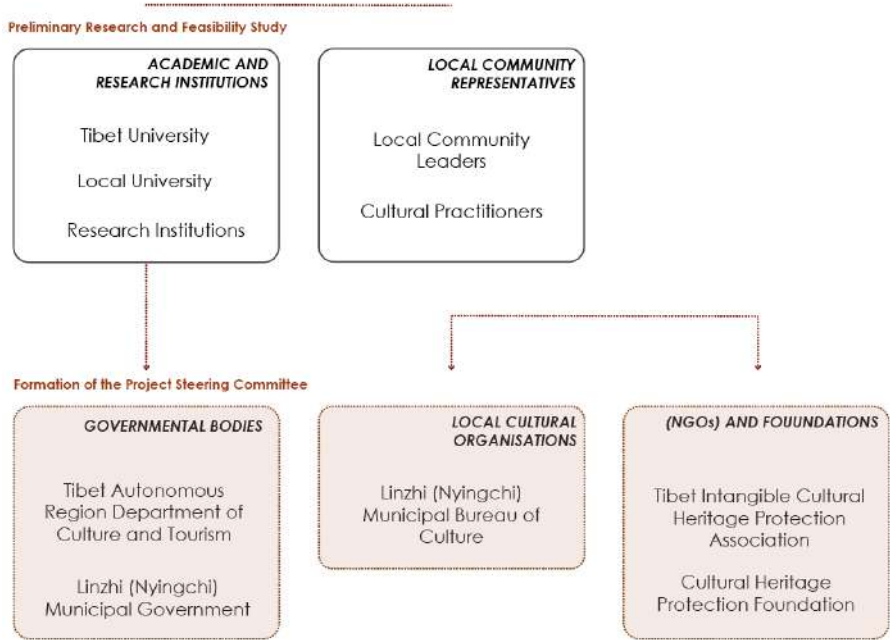


Fig 6.3
Opposite
Diagram Analysis
Project Inception
Naviga
(Author, 2024)

The Government Bodies

Tibet Autonomous Region Department of Culture and Tourism

The department is responsible for managing and protecting China's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) projects within the autonomous region.

The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2011) and the Regulations on the Protection of Traditional Arts and Crafts (2020) establish support for traditional artisans and provide a legal framework for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

Linzhi (Nyingchi) Municipal Government

The Linzhi Municipal Government ensures that the China Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Project aligns with municipal development plans and local cultural preservation goals.

Local Cultural Organisations

Linzhi (Nyingchi) Municipal Bureau of Culture

The organization is responsible for managing and protecting China Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) projects within Linzhi (Nyingchi). It also provides expertise and resources to ensure the project meets the specific needs of the local community.

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) and Foundations

Tibet Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Association

The organization provides specialized support for research, protection, knowledge dissemination, advocacy, and promotion of China Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) projects within the autonomous region.

Cultural Heritage Protection Foundation

The foundation is responsible for the establishment and management of special funds, ensuring financial transparency and accountability to support the protection of China Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) projects.

Academic and Research Institutions

Local Universities and Research Institutions

Academic support includes offering research and expertise in cultural studies, as well as contributing to the educational component of the project.

Local Community Representative

Local Community Leaders and Cultural Practitioners

Community members and cultural practitioners offer invaluable insights to ensure that the project respects and authentically represents local cultural practices. The project also aims to foster community engagement and support, further enhancing its impact.

—Fund Organisation and Management Framework—

ARCHITECTURE OF MIST

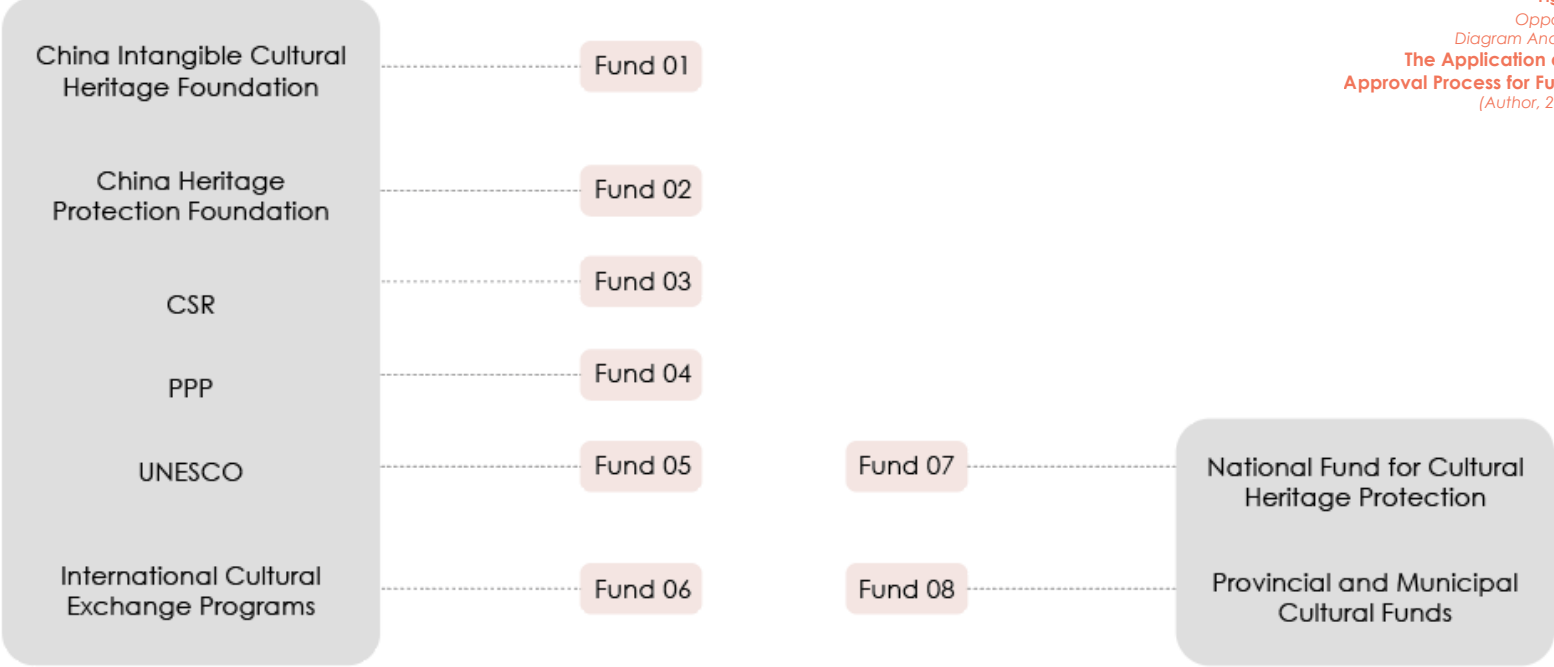
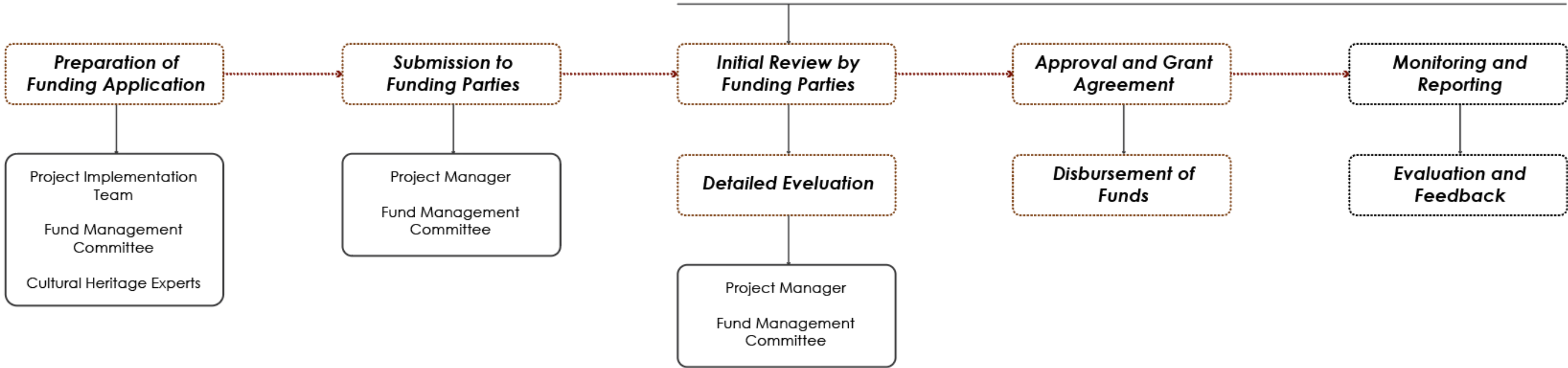


Fig 6.4
Opposite
Diagram Analysis
The Application and
Approval Process for Funds
(Author, 2024)



—Fund Organisation and Management Framework—

The initiative is largely dependent on a balanced of governmental and non-governmental fundings which both supports the protection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH).

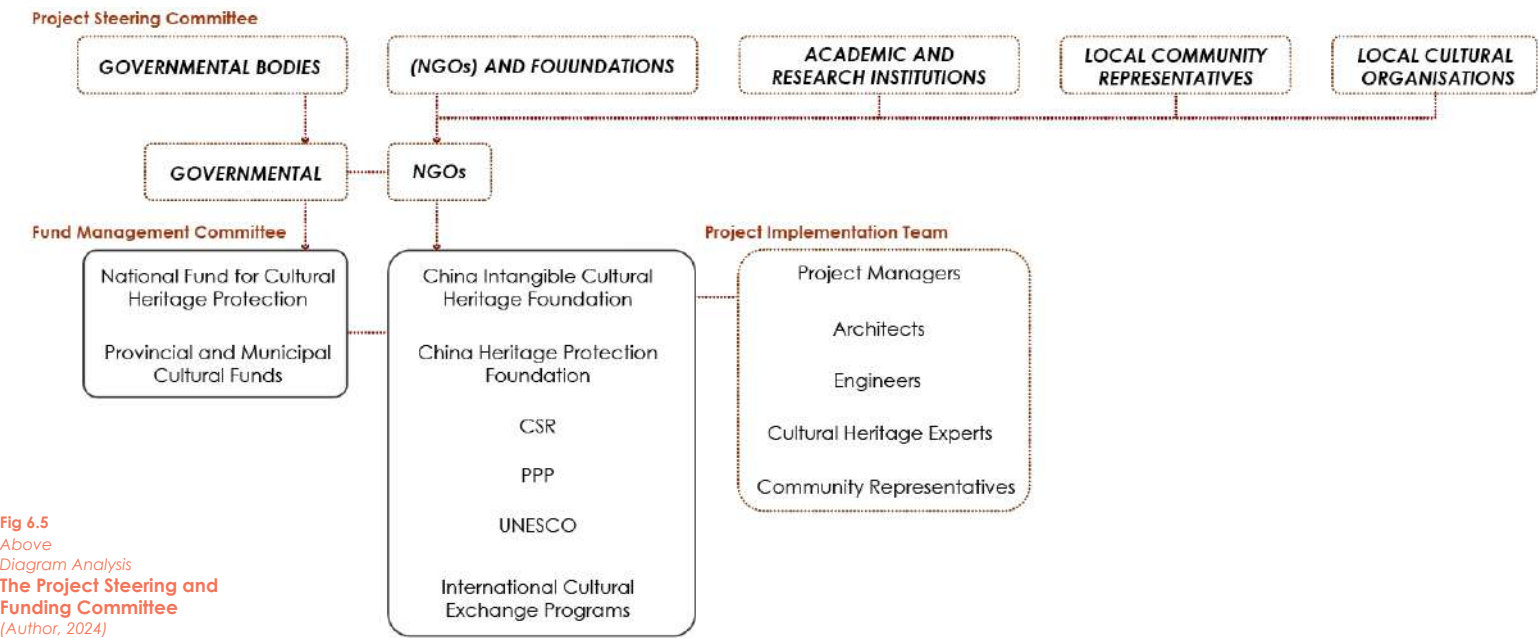


Fig 6.5
Above
Diagram Analysis
The Project Steering and Funding Committee
(Author, 2024)

Governmental Funds

National Fund for Cultural Heritage Protection

Provincial and Municipal Cultural Funds

Government funds are managed by governmental authorities to support national-level Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) protection initiatives. In this context, Tibetan incense making crafts are designated as a China ICH project.

Non-Governmental (NGOs) Funds

China Intangible Cultural Heritage Foundation

Cultural Heritage Protection Foundation

The foundations aim to collect grants and donations from individuals, corporations, and international organizations to provide financial support for ICH projects. These funds will be used for initiatives related to research, documentation, and preservation of ICH, including the construction of protection facilities. As part of this initiative, a Cultural Incense Making Hub is planned to be constructed.

International Organisation and Grands

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

International Cultural Exchange Programs

UNESCO funds support the goals of cultural heritage preservation by providing grants and funding at an international level. These resources promote cultural heritage at a national level and facilitate international cultural exchange and heritage protection.

Corporate Sponsorship and Partnerships

Corporate Social Responsibility Funds (CSR)

Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

Corporate sponsorships and partnerships gather joint funding from businesses, corporations, the private sector, and governments. These funds demonstrate social responsibility initiatives while sharing the financial responsibilities and benefits of constructing and operating the ICH initiative facility—the Cultural Incense Making Hub.

——*Defining
The Professional Team*——

The initiative is managed and executed in different stages, with various professional teams undertaking specific responsibilities. The primary focus throughout the project lifecycle will be on the architecture and construction teams, providing an overview and key professional involvement.

Legal Team

*Legal Advisors
Contract Managers*

The legal team is responsible for providing counsel on contracts, permits, laws, and contractual obligations, as well as ensuring compliance with local regulations. They will monitor and manage all legal aspects to ensure that terms and conditions are met.

Planning Team

Urban Planners

Urban planners develop comprehensive plans that comply with statutory town planning information and infrastructure requirements to support the project. They ensure that the project aligns with broader development goals and meets the needs of the current community.

Environmental Planners

Environmental planners assess and mitigate the project's impact on the environment. They ensure compliance with environmental regulations and implement sustainable practices to achieve long-term environmental goals.

Design Team

Architects

Architects lead the design process, creating plans that meet the fundamental, aesthetic, and cultural requirements. They ensure that the architectural drawings respect and reflect these aspects throughout the building's design.

*Mechanical, Electric, and Plumbing
(MEP) Engineers*

MEP (Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing) engineers are responsible for coordinating with onsite construction teams and architects to efficiently implement mechanical, electrical, and plumbing designs and plans. This coordination is crucial, especially in integrating with the existing infrastructure on-site.

Structural Engineers

Structural engineers are responsible for approving designs and analysing all structural components of the building to ensure its stability, safety, and constructability.

Interior Designers

Interior designers are responsible for creating functional, aesthetically pleasing, and culturally appropriate interior spaces. Their work sets the tone for the Cultural Incense Hub, ensuring it aligns with the project's objectives as an Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) initiative.

Subcontractors

General Contractors

The general subcontractors are responsible for overseeing all project deliveries, including the construction process and the management of subcontractors and their respective responsibilities.

Specialised Subcontractors

The specialised subcontractors are categorised into various groups, each carrying distinct responsibilities. They work collaboratively towards achieving the project's successful delivery.

Landscape Architects

Landscape architects are responsible for the contextual design of outdoor spaces, ensuring they are functional, environmentally sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing in harmony with the current location.

Additional Support Teams

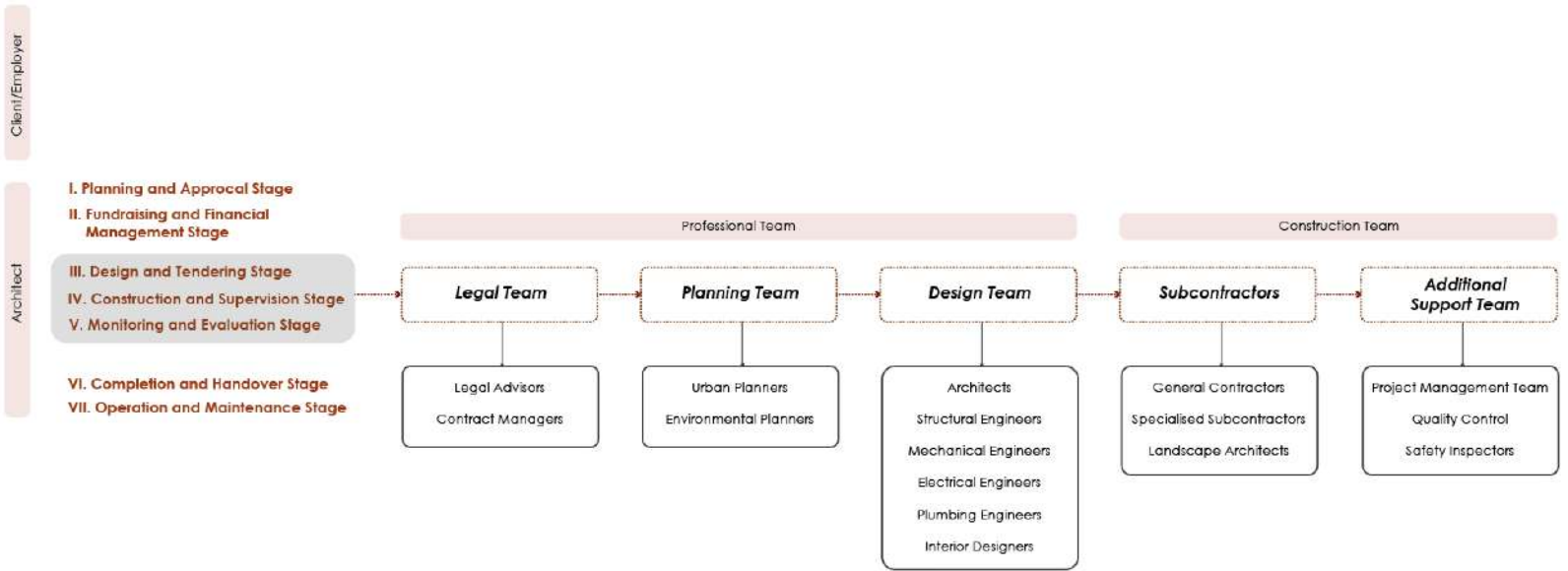
Project Management Team

The project management team oversees the initiative from inception to completion, coordinating between all teams, monitoring progress, and ensuring that all processes, issues, and tasks stay on schedule without major delays.

Quality Control and Safety Inspectors

Inspectors in this stage conduct regular inspections and audits, implementing safety protocols and procedures, and reporting on compliance with quality and safety standards. Their involvement ensures that construction activities are successful and meet all regulatory requirements and safety standards.

Fig 6.6
Below
Diagram Analysis
The Professional Teams
Organogram
(Author, 2024)



——*Defining The Tangible
Characteristic of the Project*——

The project is the embodiment of multiple factors in which it should be examined and assessed:

Topographical Means

Sasong Village is situated in a region characterized by a dramatic and varied landscape. The easternmost Himalayas showcase a diverse range of topographical features, from high mountains to deep valleys with river gorges. Located in a lowland area, Sasong Village benefits from a milder climate due to its lower elevation, supporting a rich diversity of biophilic life. Integrating the architecture with the natural terrain demands meticulous attention to detail to create a seamless connection between the built environment and the earth.

Topographical Considerations:
Elevation Mapping, Remote and Rugged Terrain

Geological Means

Sasong Village boasts an abundance of natural resources, including glacier-fed rivers, forests, and mineral deposits, all set against a stunning landscape. The diverse biodiversity, featuring unique flora and fauna, presents significant opportunities for biophilic research and contributes to the production of raw materials for incense making. The region's distinctive microclimates create fertile valleys that support a wide variety of plant species, enhancing its potential for large-scale botanical cultivation.

Geological Considerations:
Soil and Vegetation Analysis, Hydrological Studies,

Environmental Means

Linzhi boasts one of the richest plant biodiversities in China, significantly contributing to ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods and traditional practices. The focal point of the region lies in the complex interplay between the environment, human activities, and sustainable development. The high-altitude climate, characterized by distinct precipitation patterns and significant diurnal temperature variations, creates a misty atmosphere. Seasonal monsoons influence various ecosystems, necessitating the development of conservation strategies to protect and enhance these ecosystems while simultaneously improving the quality of human habitats.

Environmental Considerations:
Climate Extremes, Community Involvement, Biodiversity

Heritage Means

The ancient settlements in the region offer valuable insights into early civilizations and their robust religious, spiritual, and cultural practices. These sites provide a comprehensive understanding of the area's rich religious heritage, cultural traditions, and artistic expressions. The traditional craftsmanship of incense making, historically used for prayer and purification—often with medicinal effects—is a significant part of this heritage. These fundamental elements should be intricately woven into the architectural design, preserving and reflecting their historical importance.

Cultural Heritage Considerations:
Cultural Preservation, Ethnographic Studies, Linguistic Studies

——Project Site and Choice——

The cultural heritage of incense making has long been a traditional practice dating back to ancient times, where Tibetan incense is valued not only as a product for prayer but also for its medicinal properties. Sasong Village, located in Linzhi City in Tibet, China, has been selected for its rich biodiversity, offering significant potential as a primary source of raw materials for incense production. The village, renowned as one of the most visited in the area, the largest area with peach blossoms blooming annually, attracts a large number of tourists, making it an ideal location for disseminating the traditional cultural heritage of incense making.

The key characteristics and relevant information of the selected site are as follows:

Key Statutory Town Planning Components	Key Statutory Town Planning Information
Location	Sasong Village, Linzhi, Tibet, China
Geographical Division	Southwest China
Site Owner	City of Linzhi
Administrative Level	Urban and rural classification - Village
Zoning Designation	Semi-Public Open Space within the village
Administrative Region	Tibet Autonomous Region
Site Area	Tibet Autonomous Region
Population Density (Within the Village)	39 Households, approximately 173 people
Postal Code	860119

Fig 6.7
Below
Table Analysis
Site Information
(Author, 2024)



Fig 6.8
Below
Edited Hand Drawing
Site Plan
(Author, 2024)

—Project Programming—

Programming (In terms of activities and spaces): To ensure that the process of incense production can be fully experienced and appreciated by both locals and visitors, the building will need to include the necessary program activities (as suggested below) within its spaces. This will also enhance the exploration and appreciation of the cultural heritage associated with the production of incense.

General Programme				
Cultural Incense Hub (350 Users): Programme	Occupants	Size(sqm)	Units	Total (sqm)
Visitor Reception and Reception Desk	n/a	-	1	-
Administration Offices	16	12	4	48
Sanitary Facilities	8	40	2	80
Retail Shop	20	180	1	180
Outdoor Courtyard and Garden	-	-	2	-
Storage and Utility Spaces	4	140	3	420
Accessible Facilities	12	120	3	360
Meeting Room	10	100	3	300
Conference Facilities	60	320	1	320
Tea House / Lounge	12	200	1	200
Artisan Studio	12	60	3	180
Healing and Wellness Centre	30	250	1	250
Meditation Room	36	400	1	400
Workshop and Demonstration Area	20	80	3	240
Gallery / Exhibition Space	40	180	3	540
Library /Resource Centre	40	400	1	400
Experiment Laboratory	12	140	4	560
Incense Production Area	8	50	4	200
Total				4,678

Fig 6.9
Opposite
Table Analysis
Programming
(Author, 2024)

Project Cost

The project is estimated in U.S. dollars, as it is not based in South Africa, with all applicable international standards adhered to throughout the process.

Appendix A: Construction Cost (First Phase)								
Cultural Incense Hub (350 Users): Programme	Occupants	Size(sqm)	Units	Total (sqm)	Cost (\$/sqm)	Net Total (\$)	VAT (14%)	Gross Total (\$)
Visitor Reception and Reception Desk	n/a	-	1	-	-	-		
Administration Offices	16	12	4	48	495	23760		
Sanitary Facilities	8	40	2	80	458	36640		
Retail Shop	20	180	1	180	485	87300		
Outdoor Courtyard and Garden	-	-	2	-	-	-		
Storage and Utility Spaces	4	140	3	420	858	360360		
Accessible Facilities	12	120	3	360	245	88200		
Meeting Room	10	100	3	300	245	73500		
Conference Facilities	60	320	1	320	1598	511360		
Tea House / Lounge	12	200	1	200	245	49000		
Artisan Studio	12	60	3	180	245	44100		
Healing and Wellness Centre	30	250	1	250	850	212500		
Meditation Room	36	400	1	400	850	340000		
Workshop and Demonstration Area	20	80	3	240	245	58800		
Gallery / Exhibition Space	40	180	3	540	850	459000		
Library /Resource Centre	40	400	1	400	850	340000		
Experiment Laboratory	12	140	4	560	245	137800		
Incense Production Area	8	50	4	200	245	49000		
Total				4,678		2,871,320	401,984.8	3,273,304.8

Fig 6.10
Opposite
Table Analysis
Project Cost:
Appendix A
(Author, 2024)

Appendix B: Professional Fees		
Consultant	Percentage (%)	Amount (\$)
Architect	8	261,864.38
Principal Agent (Developer)	4	130,932.19
Quantity Surveyor	8	261,864.38
Environmental Assessment Practitioner (Fixed Amount)	n/a	220,000
Town Planner (Fixed Amount)	n/a	180,000
Engineers	19	621927.91
Heritage Practitioner (Fixed Amount)	n/a	200,000
Net Total		1,876,588.86
VAT	14	2,139,311.3

Appendix C: Total Development Cost	
Total Development Cost	Cost (\$)
Land (\$250/sqm)	1,169,500
Construction	3,273,304.8
Professional Fees	2,139,311.3
Total (Inc. VAT)	6,582,116.1

Appendix D: Operational Costs			
Expenses / m	Quantity	Amount (\$ / m)	Quantity /m (\$)
Onsite Workers (Manager)	4	2,600	10,400
Onsite Workers (Administrative)	2	1,200	2,400
Onsite Workers (Recreational Director)	1	1,000	1,000
Onsite Workers (Local Food Provider)	8	1,000	8,000
Total Operational Cost /month			21,800
Total Cost /annum			261,600

Fig 6.11
Opposite
Table Analysis
Project Cost:
Appendix B
(Author, 2024)

Fig 6.12
Opposite
Table Analysis
Project Cost:
Appendix C
(Author, 2024)

Fig 6.13
Opposite
Table Analysis
Project Cost:
Appendix D
(Author, 2024)

—Proposed Project Timeline—

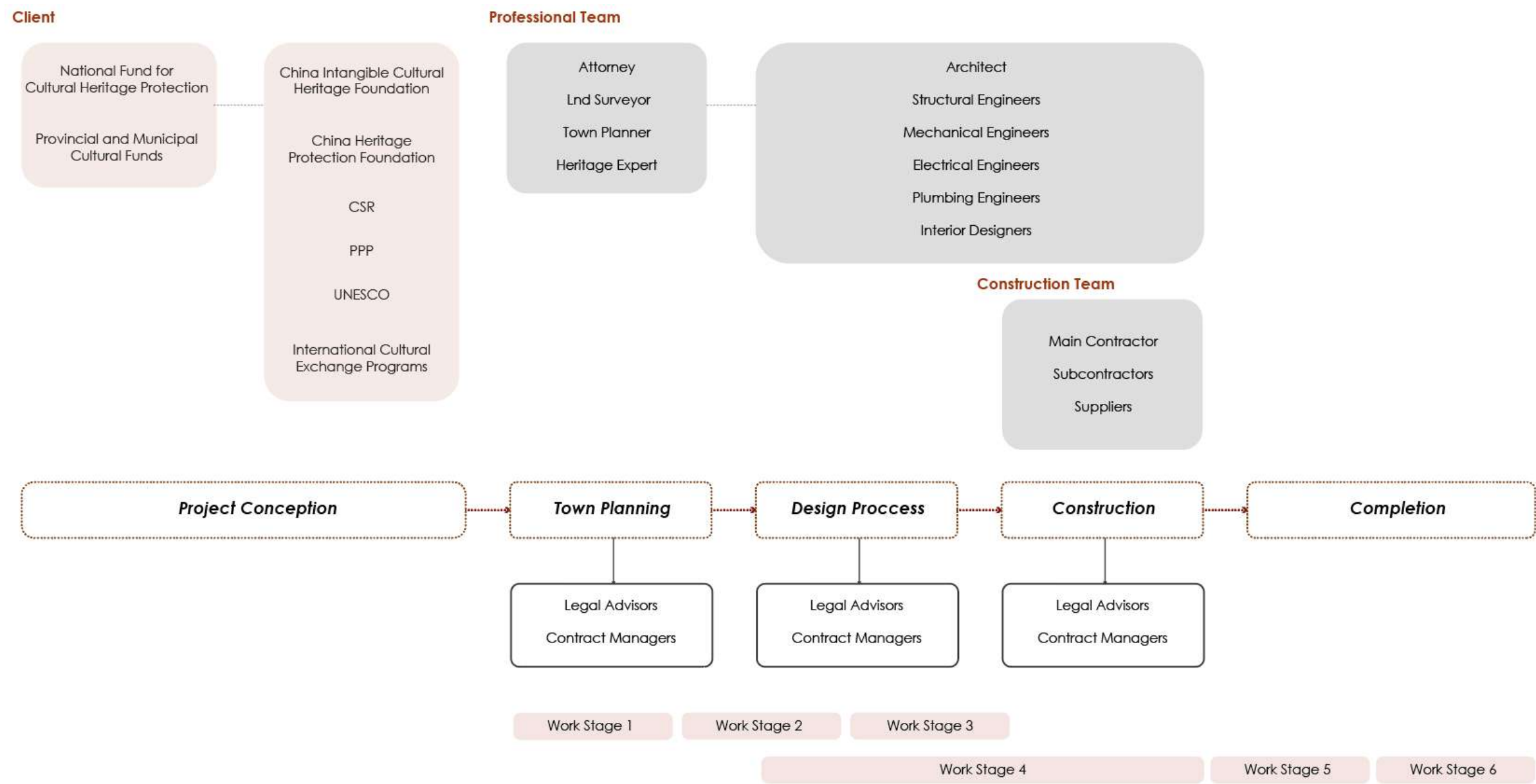


Fig 6.14
Opposite
Diagram Analysis
Proposed
Project Timeline
(Author, 2024)



6

CHAPTER 6:2

|

Appendices

References

List of Figure Sources

—Introduction and Chapter 0—

Fig 0.1	Cover Page, Hand Sketch MIST (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.2	Opposite, Hand Sketch Potala Palace (Author, 2023)
Fig 0.3	Opposite, Digital Illustration Imagination (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.4	Opposite, Hand Sketch Chinese Calligraphy: QI (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.5	Opposite, Edited Photography Tibet Landscape: Mount Namjagbarwa (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.6	Opposite, Edited Ink Drawing Incense Burner (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.7	On Page, Edited Ink Drawing 1: Buddha and Stupa, 2: Chatra, 3: Makara-tail Scrolls, 4: Kalachakra, 5: Tibet Chakra Wheel, 6: Tibet Golden Wheel, 7: Pattern Colour (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.8	Watt, J., 2015. Himalayan Art Resources. [Online]Available at: https://www.himalayanart.org/items/36250 [Accessed 07 09 2024].
Fig 0.9	Opposite, Diagram Illustration 0-255: Project Navigation through The Greyscale (Author, 2024)
Fig 0.10	Below, Diagram Illustration Link: Connection between Main Themes (Author, 2024)

—Chapter 1—

Fig 1.1	Chapter Cover Page, Digital Illustration Tibetan Number: One (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.2	Below, Scanned Document Tibetan Number: One (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.3	On Page, Edited Water Colour Landscape: Sasong Village (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.4	blackstationwang, 2024. Diary in Lhasa, Tibet. [Art] (Instagram).
Fig 1.5	Below, Sourced Photograph Tibetan Plateau (Unknown, 2023)
Fig 1.6	Below, Edited Photograph Sasong Village, Linzhi (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.7	Below, Online Source Sasong Village Site View (Google Earth, 2024)
Fig 1.8	Below, Edited Photograph Tibetan Style Window (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.9	Below, Online Source World Map (Reddit, 2023)
Fig 1.10	Sisifiled, 2019. x.com. [Online] Available at: https://x.com/sisifield/status/1113823761743011840 [Accessed 29 08 2024].
Fig 1.11	Below, Photograph Sasong Village, Bottom View (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.12	Below, Edited Photograph Local Stone Walls, Sasong Village (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.13	Below, Photograph Blossom Field (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.14	Below, Photograph Tibetan Style Red Mud Wall (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.15	Previous Page, Diagram Illustration Macro Context (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.16	Previous Page, Diagram Illustration Micro Context (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.17	Ranking, T. W., 2024. [Online] Available at: https://x.com/worldranking_/status/1821220955580199061 [Accessed 30 08 2024].
Fig 1.18	Below, Edited Photograph Tibet Tea Baking (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.19	Below, Edited Water Colour Tibet Teacup (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.20	Following Page, Scans of Printed Photograph <Duan Ge> Tibetan Handwritten Herbal Dictionary (Sang-

Fig 1.21	jiejiaquo, Undated)
Fig 1.22	Following Page, Edited Hand Drawings Saffron, Sandalwood (Author, 2024) Below, Online Source, Minerals Antique, 1907(Unknown, 2003)
Fig 1.23	Next Page (Top), Disgram Illustration, Geological Conditions of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.24	Next Page(Middle), Edited Hand Sketch, Mountain Streams (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.25	Next Page(Buttom), Photograph, Charette Exercise on Land Condition Explorations (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.26	Below, Edited Water Colour, Traditional Incense Burner (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.27	Opposite, Online Sourced, Traditional Incense Practice (Unknown, 2023)
Fig 1.28	Below, Photograph, Sasong Village (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.29	Below, Photograph, Entrance to the Village Home Stay (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.30	Below (Left), Online Source, A Path in Sasong Village (Unknown, 2023)
Fig 1.31	Below (Middle), Online Source, Front View of Sasong Village (Unknown, 2022)
Fig 1.32	Below, Edited Water Colour, A house on the edge of Sasong Village (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.33	Below, Online Source, Google Earth: Sasong Village (Google Earth, 2024)
Fig 1.34	Below, Edited Water Colour, Open (Author, 2023)
Fig 1.35	Below, Edited Hand Sketch, Space: The Greyscale (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.36	Below, Online Source, Space: Bing Ding Wood Kiln Factory Renovation, China (Archdaily, 2022)
Fig 1.37	Below, Edited Hand Sketch, Space: Light and Space Relationship (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.38	Opposite, Edited Online Sources (Left: Structure and Space Relationship) Bing Ding Wood Kiln Factory Renovation, China (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.39	Opposite, Edited Online Sources, (right: Structure and Space Relationship) King's College Chapel, Cambridge (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.40	Opposite, Edited Online Source, (Left: Structure and Space Relationship) Jewel Changi Airport Singapore (Archdaily, 2022)
Fig 1.41	Opposite, Edited Online Source (Right: Structure and Space Relationship) Temple of Heaven, China (Archdaily, 2022)
Fig 1.42	Opposite, Edited Online Sources, (Left: Gradient of Space) Castelgrande Castle Renovation, Switzerland (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.43	Opposite, Edited Hand Sketches (Left: Gradient of Space) Relationship between height and depth (Author, 2024)
Fig 1.44	Opposite, Online Source (Left: Proportion) Castelgrande Castle Renovation, Switzerland (Archdaily, 2022)
Fig 1.45	Opposite, Online Source (Right: Plans) Castelgrande Castle Renovation, Switzerland (Archdaily, 2022)
Fig 1.46	Opposite, Edited Online Sources (Top: Fog Sculpture) Tate Modern, London, Fujiko Nakaya (Author, 2024)

- Fig 1.47

Opposite, Edited Online Source (Bottom: Celebration of Machinery) Blur Building, DS +R (Author, 2024)
- Fig 1.48

Bellow, Edited Hand Sketch, (Bottom: Mist) Defind Space through Mist (Author, 2024)
- Fig 1.49

Bellow, Online Source, Open and Close (Author, 2024)
- Fig 1.50

Bellow, Online Source, Disorder: Experience and Space (Wigglesworth, 2024)
- Fig 1.51

Previous Page, Online Source, Four elements and signs of the zodiac (France, Le Mans, 15th Century)
- Fig 1.52

Above, Online Source, Renaissance Villa Aeolia in Veneto, Italy (Unknown, 2022)
- Fig 1.53

Above, Online Source, Atmosphere: Peter Zumthor (Pretti, 2018)
- Fig 1.54

Above, Online Source, Air Path (Pinterest, Undated)
- Fig 1.55

Above, Online Source, The Meteors (Philippe Rahm architectes, 2017)
- Fig 1.56

Above, Online Source, Light in Ronchamp (Unknown, 2017)
- Fig 1.57

Below, Hand Sketches, Sound to Movement Diagram (Author, 2023)
- Fig 1.58

Below, Online Resource, Temprature Study: The Human Body (ArchDaily, 2020)

Chapter 2

- Fig 2.3

Opposite, Edited Ink Drawing, Lion Incense Burner (Author, 2023)
- Fig 2.4

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting (Incense Stories) Placement of Incense Burners and Vessels (Unknown, 2023)
- Fig 2.5

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting, (Incense Stories) Delicate fragrance adorning ancient women's rituals (Unknown, 2019)
- Fig 2.6

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting (Incense Stories) Incense as a means of focus and spiritual concentra- tion in scholarly writing (Unknown, 2016)
- Fig 2.7

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting (Incense Stories) Incense as an accompaniment to dining rituals (Un- known, 2022)
- Fig 2.8

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting, (Incense Stories) Incense as an essential element for mindfulness in daily activities (Unknown, 2020)
- Fig 2.9

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting, (Incense Stories) Incense as a companion to the appreciation of musi- cal compositions - Male Gathers (Unknown, 2018)
- Fig 2.10

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting, (Incense Stories) Incense as a companion to the appreciation of musi- cal compositions - Female Gathers (Unknown, 2017)
- Fig 2.11

Below, Ancient Chinese Painting, (Incense Stories) The gentle essence that stills the mind (Unknown, 2017)
- Fig 2.12

Below, Photograph, Triditional Tibetan Incense Making Process (Studio O, 2023)
On Page, Photograph, Greens in Tibet (Author, 2023)
- Fig 2.13

Opposite, Edited Water Colour, Field of Tibet (Author, 2023)
- Fig 2.14

Below, Photograph, Incense Paper Art (Author, 2023)
- Fig 2.15

Opposite, Photograph, Charette: Incense Paper Art (Author, 2024)

Chapter 3

- Fig 3.1

Opposite, Ink Drawing, Tibetan Spinner (Author, 2024)
- Fig 3.2

Following Page, Online Source, Bird's Eyeview of Sasong Village (Google Earth, 2024)
- Fig 3.3

Opposite, Photograph, Over View of Sasong Village (Unknown, 2022)
- Fig 3.4

Below, Photograph, Views of Sasong Village, 6-10(Unknown, 2022), 1-5 (Author, 2023)
- Fig 3.5

Opposite - Top, Online Source, General Tempreture on a Winter Day in Tibet (Unknown, 2023)
- Fig 3.6

Opposite - Bottom, Online Source, General Tempreture Across Tibet (Unknown, 2023)
- Fig 3.7

On Page, Online Source, Sun Angle Study in Tibet (Unknown, 2022)
- Fig 3.8

Following Page, Editted Online Resource, Overview of Sasong Village (Redbook, 2022)
- Fig 3.9

On Page, Editted Mapping, General Scenes of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 3.10

Following Page, Editted Mapping, General Conditions of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 3.11

On Page, Following Page, Editted Mapping with Edited Photograph, Views of Sasong Village (Author, 2023)
- Fig 3.12

Opposite Page, Scaned Drawing, Types and Views of Houses in Sasong Village (Author, 2022)
- Fig 3.13

On Page, Scaned Drawing, Facde and Structure of Houses in Sasong Village (Author, 2022)
- Fig 3.14

Opposite Page - Top, Sketch Mapping, Elements of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 3.15

Opposite Page - Bottom, Online Source, Architectural Design Elements of Sasong Village (RedBook, 2023)
- Fig 3.16

On Page, Scaned Drawing, Colour Study of Tibetan Elements and Architecture (Author, 2024)

Chapter 4

- Fig 4.1

Bellow - Left, Scaned Drawing, Concept Sketch of Light Exploration in Various Shape Openings (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.2

Bottom - Right, Scaned Drawing, Shape Study of Tibetan Elements (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.3

On Page - Left, Scaned Drawing, Conceptual Design of The Triditional Incense Hub (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.4

On Page - Right, CAD Drawing, Conceptual Spatial Testment of The Triditional Incense Hub (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.5

On Page, Scaned Drawings, Conceptual Development (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.6

Opposite Page, Scaned Drawings, Section Elevation Conceptual Development (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.7

On Page, Scaned Drawings, Section Elevation Conceptual Development (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.8

On Page - Left, Scaned Drawings, Section Elevation Conceptual Development (Author, 2024)
- Fig 4.9

On Page - Bottom, Online Source, Collum Stand Types (RedBook, 2023)

Chapter 5

- Fig 5.1

Opposite Page - Top, Illustrator Mapping, Mist Density of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.2

Opposite Page - Bottom, Illustrator Design Drawing, Long Section of Selected Site in Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.3

Below - Left, Illustrator Design Drawing, Short Section of Selected Site in Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.4

Below - Right, Digital Illustration, Building on Site Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.5

On Page, Illustrator Mapping, Detailed Mapping of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.6

Below, Mix Media Digital Art,Zoomed in conditions of Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.7

Opposite, Design Drawings, Plans of The Tradditional Incense Hub Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
- Fig 5.8

Below, Detail Design Drawing, Zoomed in Plan, Illustrating Internal Movement Sasong Village (Author, 2024)

Fig 5.9	Below, Design Drawing, Section of The Traditional Incense Hub (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.10	Below - Left, Mix Media Art, Perspective of The Traditional Incense Hub Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.11	Below - Right, CAD Drawing, Internal Wall Detail of Building (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.12	Below, Design Drawing, Section of The Traditional Incense Hub Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.13	Below - Left, Mix Media Digital Art, Perspective of The Traditional Incense Hub Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.14	Below - Right, Digital Illustration, Internal Perspective of The Praying Station (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.15	On Page, Design Drawing, Elevatioon Perspective of The Traditional Incense Hub Sasong Village (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.16	On Page, Photograph, Images of The Project Model (Author, 2024)
Fig 5.17	Following Page, Photograph, Overlook of The Project Model (Author, 2024)

——Chapter 6——

Fig 6.1	Opposite, Edited Hand Drawing, Concept Sketch: Incense Hub (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.2	Above, Diagram Analysis, Key Strategies and Measures for the Protection of China's ICH (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.3	Opposite, Diagram Analysis, Project Inception Naviga (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.4	Opposite, Diagram Analysis, The Application and Approval Process for Funds (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.5	Above, Diagram Analysis, The Project Steering and Funding Committee (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.6	Below, Diagram Analysis, The Professional Teams Organogram (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.7	Below, Table Analysis, Site Information Site Plan (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.8	Below, Edited Online Source, Site Plan (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.9	Opposite, Table Analysis, Programming (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.10	Opposite, Table Analysis, Project Cost: Appendix A (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.11	Opposite, Table Analysis, Project Cost: Appendix B (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.12	Opposite, Table Analysis, Project Cost: Appendix C (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.13	Opposite, Table Analysis, Project Cost: Appendix D (Author, 2024)
Fig 6.14	Opposite, Diagram Analysis, Proposed Project Timeline (Author, 2024)

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31 July 2024

Liang Mei Han
1841505

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

Architecture of Mist: A Sacred Scents Cultural Preservation through A
Triditional Incense Hub in the Sasong Village, Tibet.

This letter serves to confirm that the Ethics application for the above titled study has been approved. The researcher has been granted clearance to proceed with the research study or project.

Protocol/clearance number is: SOAP019/03/2024W

Yours sincerely

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255 | architecture of mist