BLUR

ARCHITECTURE PORTFOLIO

2024

KULAM MOHAMED SALEEM AHAMED ABRAR
ak5071@columbia.edu

AHAMED ABRAR

OBSERVE   ABSORB   ALIGN   IDEATE   REFINE   REALISE

SITE AERIAL VIEW

POLICY PARK
LEONARD STREET, NEW YORK CITY

PROJECT TIME : SUMMER 2023
TYPOLOGY : ACADEMIC - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT
SITE AREA : 0.6 ACRE (2400 Sq.m)
MENTOR : Prof. DAN WOOD - FAIA

INVISIBLE

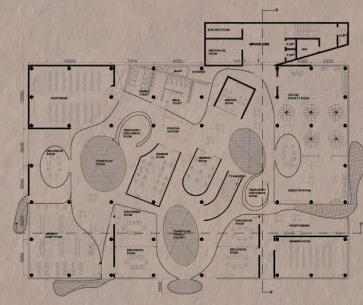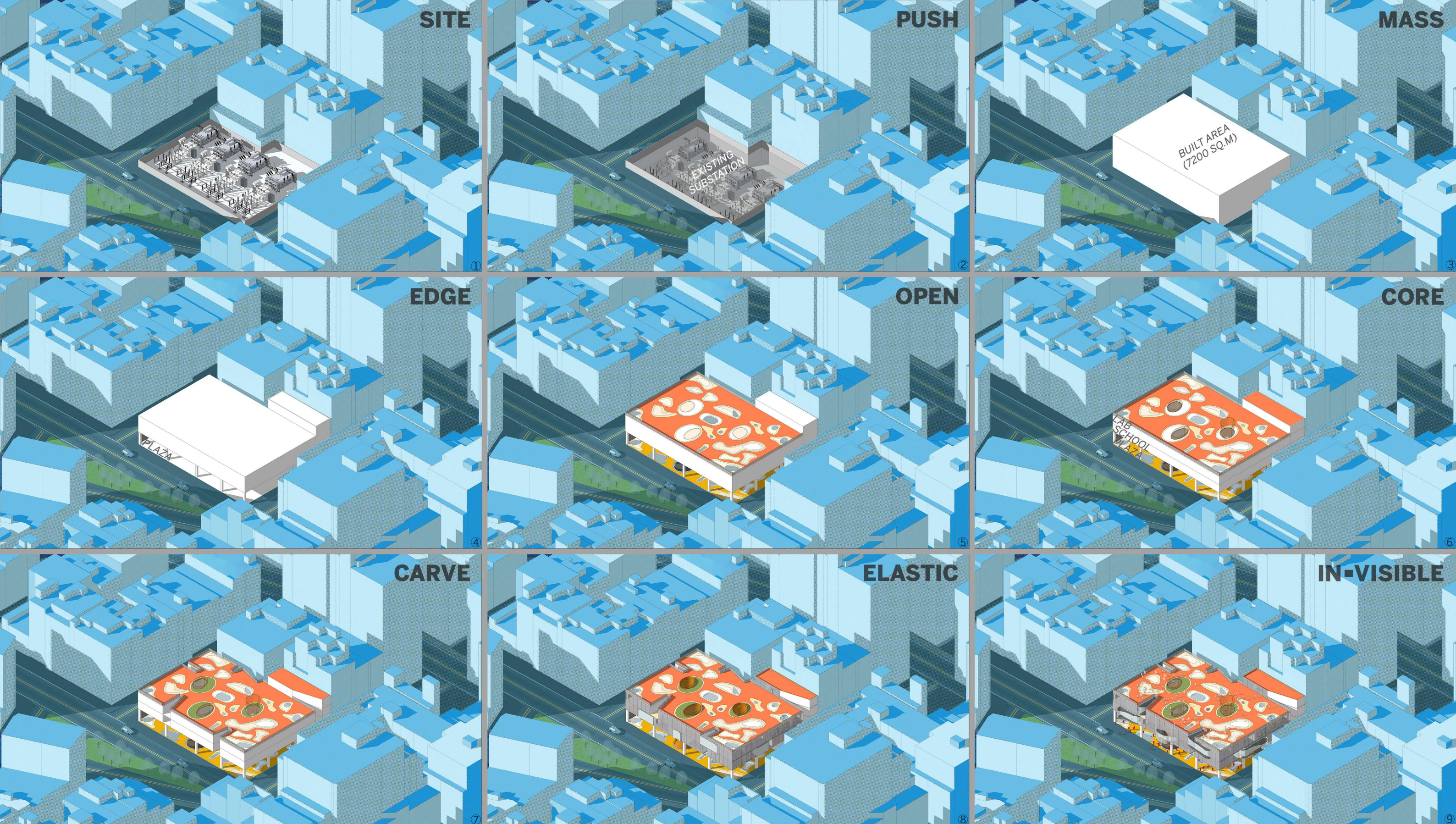WHAT IS INVISIBILITY? IS IT THE THIN AIR? IS IT THE ONE WHICH IS NOT VISIBLE NOW OR THE ONE WHICH IS NEVER VISIBLE. CITIES ACROSS THE WORLD ARE SPENDING HUGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY IN CREATING THESE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE LIKE ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS , BUT THEY ARE LEAST PUBLIC AND VERY BLUNT IN THE WAY IT INTERACTS WITH ITS NEIGHBORHOOD. THIS POLICY PARK PROJECT IS CONCIEVED AS AN NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITY WITH A SPIRIT OF REINVENTION AND EXPERIMENTATION. THE USERS ARE GIVEN AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERACT AND SEE THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF PRIVATE SPACES WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY SECLUDED FROM PUBLIC EYES THROUGH THE USE OF TRAMPOLINE. ALSO THE BUILDING IS LIVING APPARATUS AND ELASTICITY OF THE MATERIAL AND WIND IS EXPLORED .THE BUILDING EXPANDS AND COMPRESSES BASED UPON THE ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS ENERGY AND HEAT DEMAND. IN THIS PROJECT THERE IS CONSTANT PLAY AND CHANGE FROM VISIBLE TO INVISIBLE..

SERVICE CORE

LOBBY

DISCUSSION ROOM

TRAMPOLINE

PLAZA

CROSS SECTION
North   Scale N.T.S

2

COMPRESSED

SPECIAL LAB
FEMALE TOILET
MALE TOILET
SERVICE CORE
LOBBY
ANALYTICAL LAB
STUDENT LAB
OFFICE ROOM
DIRECTOR ROOM
STORAGE
PLAZA
PANTRY

ELECTRIC ROOM
MECHANICAL ROOM
SERVICE CORE
PIPE
AHU
PIPE
LIFT
SHAFT
STORAGE
FEMALE TOILET
MALE TOILET
MEETING ROOM
OFFICE/ FACULTY ROOM
AUDITORIUM
DISCUSSION ROOM
TEMPORARY DISCUSSION ROOM
PRINTING STATION
SEMINAR ROOM
SEMINAR ROOM
To student lab
DISCUSSION ROOM
TEMPORARY DISCUSSION ROOM
DIRECTOR ROOM
PANTRY/DINING
LIBRARY/ QUIET ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
TRAMPOLINE Option 5
DISCUSSION ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
SEMINAR ROOM

15585   7915   9000   14130   6350   6350
12000
6840
6840
6965
6840

EXPANDED

EXPANDED

SPECIAL LAB
DISCUSSION ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
FEMALE TOILET
MALE TOILET
SERVICE CORE
ANALYTICAL LAB
DISCUSSION ROOM
COMMON SPACE
STUDENT LAB
OFFICE ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
DIRECTOR ROOM
STORAGE
PLAZA
PANTRY

ELECTRIC ROOM
MECHANICAL ROOM
SERVICE CORE
PIPE
AHU
PIPE
LIFT
SHAFT
STORAGE
FEMALE TOILET
MALE TOILET
MEETING ROOM
OFFICE/ FACULTY ROOM
AUDITORIUM
DISCUSSION ROOM
TEMPORARY DISCUSSION ROOM
PRINTING STATION
TRAMPOLINE Option 5
SEMINAR ROOM
SEMINAR ROOM
To student lab
TEMPORARY DISCUSSION ROOM
DIRECTOR ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
LIBRARY/ QUIET ROOM
TRAMPOLINE COMBO/ GALLERY
DISCUSSION ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
PANTRY/DINING
DISCUSSION ROOM
DISCUSSION ROOM
SEMINAR ROOM

15585   7915   9000   14130   6350   6350
12000
6840
6840
6840
2500

3

SITE

PUSH

MASS

EXISTING SUBSTATION

BUILT AREA (7200 SQ.M)

EDGE

OPEN

CORE

PLAZA

LAB SCHOOL PLAZA

CARVE

ELASTIC

IN-VISIBLE

SEQUENCE DIAGRAM

ELASTIC CORES

THE POLICY PARK IS INSPIRED AND CONCIEVED FROM THE ELASTIC NATURE OF THE WIND WHICH IS CONSTANTLY AND SILENTLY CHANGING IT'S FORM AND NATURE. TO ACHIEVE THIS CONDITION THE BUILT FORM IS ORGANIZED AROUND THREE ELASTIC CORES WHICH IS REACTIVE TO THE HEAT PRODUCED FROM THE SUBSTATION BELOW. THE ELASTIC CORES ALSO FUNCTIONS AS AN TRAMPOLINE PARK IN WHICH THE USER CAN INTERACT WITH A PRIVATE ACCESS CONTROLLED BUILDING IN A UNIQUE WAY WHICH BLURS THE BOUNDARIES OF VISIBILITY AND INVISIBILITY. THE ELASTIC CORES FORMS A NETWORK OF OTHER ELASTIC MEMBRANES SPREAD ACROSS THE BUILDING WHICH CAN BE INFLATED AND DEFLATED AS PER THE PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS. THIS BUILDING TRIES TO REALIGN THE DEFINITION OF STATIC AND VARIABLE PROGRAMMATIC ORGANIZATION OF A BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND OFFERS THE ELASTICITY REQUIRED FOR THE CONSTANT CHANGE THE WORLD IS UNDERGOING.

TERRACE GARDEN

LAB

LIBRARY

PLAZA

SUB STATION

TRAMPOLINE

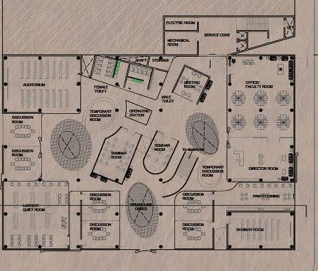MEETING ROOM

STUDENT LAB
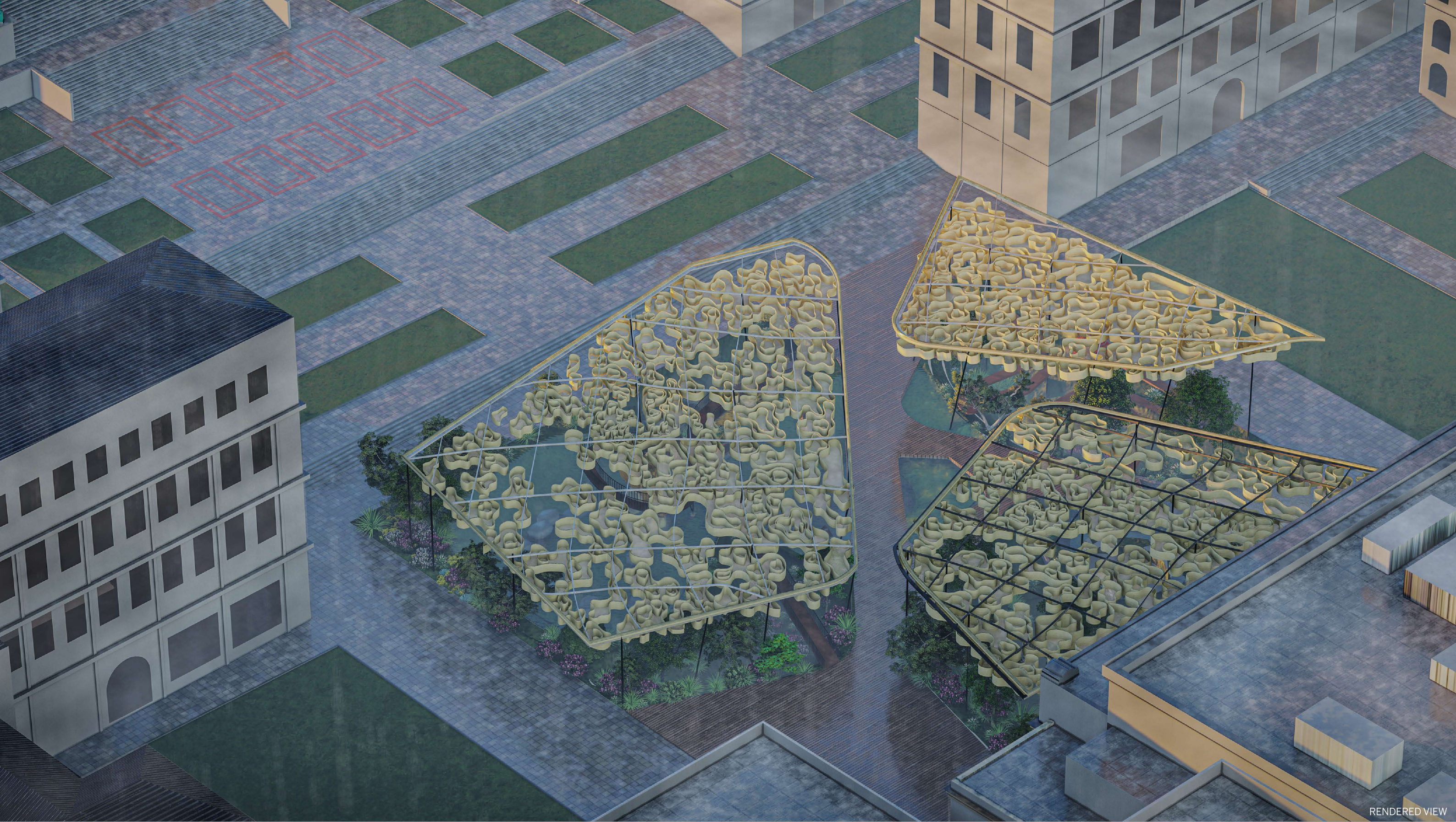
MEETING ROOM

STORAGE

STORAGE

PANTRY

DIRECTOR ROOM

OFFICE ROOM

CROSS SECTION

North   Scale N.T.S

RENDERED VIEW

CLIMATIC WETLAND
MORNINGSIDE, NEW YORK

PROJECT TIME : FALL 2023
TYPOLOGY : ACADEMIC - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT
BUILT AREA : 1.97 ACRE (8000 Sq.m)
MENTOR : Prof. PHILLIPHE RAHM & Prof. MARIAMI

ROOF
Made of Natural based
Bio-polymer materials composing of
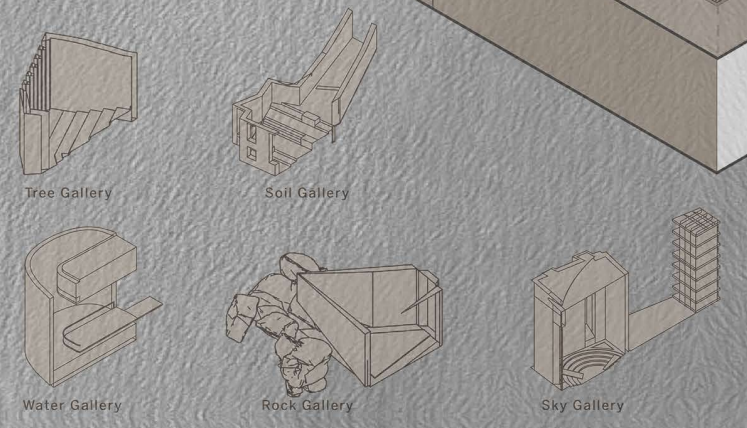animal and plant derived materials

PLANTING
Composed of Native
plants of New York City

TRAIL PATHS
Made of Wooden deck

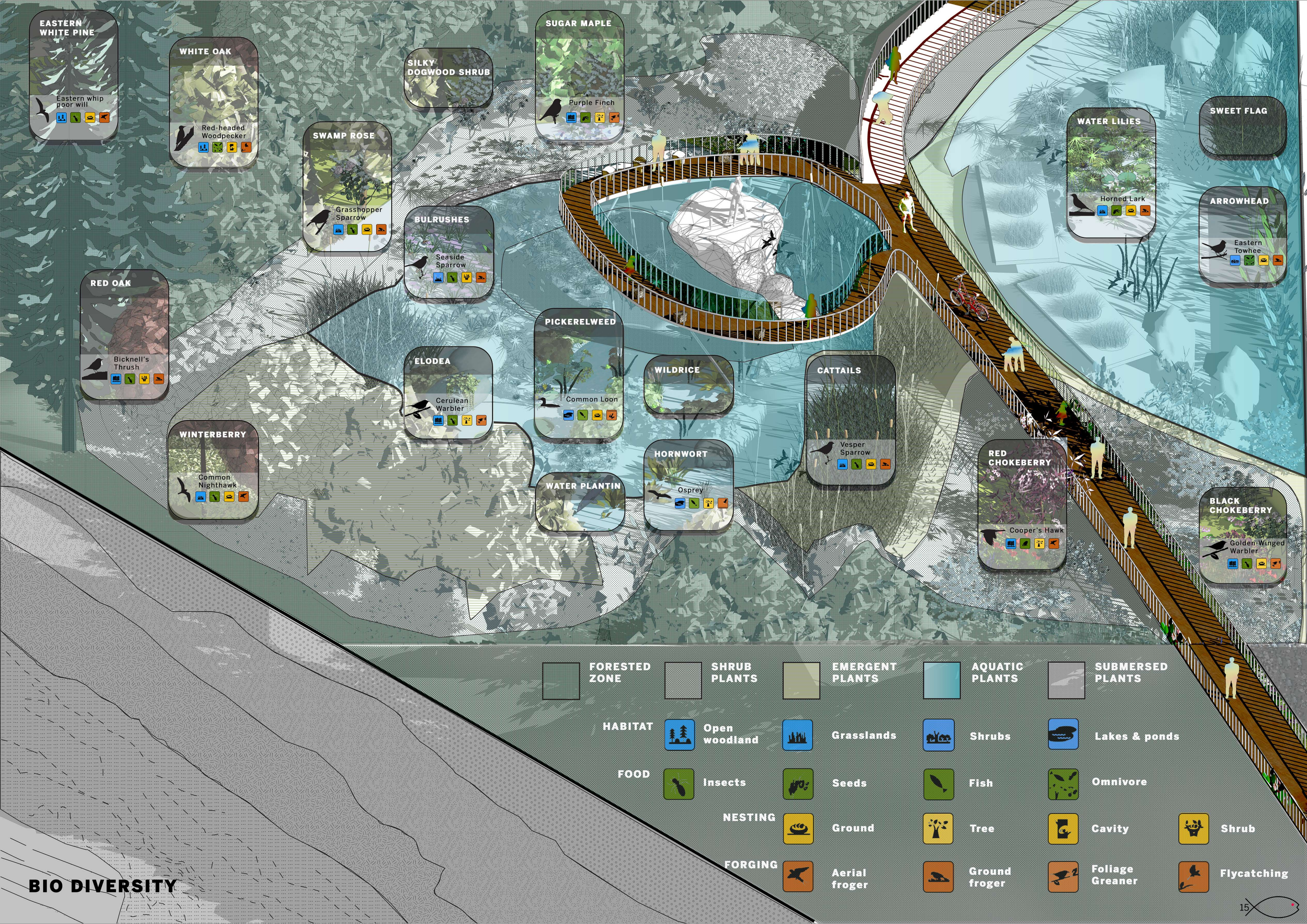**WATER LAYER**
Upto 6 ft depth

SOIL LAYER
Upto 6 ft terrain

COOL HOUSE
Reconnect with Nature

Tree Gallery   Soil Gallery

Water Gallery   Rock Gallery   Sky Gallery

EXPLODED AXO
North   Scale N.T.S

DISSOLVE

AN EDEN OF GARDEN IN COLUMBIA CAMPUS? IS IT THE THIN
AIR? IS IT THE ONE WHICH IS NOT VISIBLE NOW OR THE ONE
WHICH IS NEVER VISIBLE.CITIES ACROSS THE WORLD ARE
SPENDING HUGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY IN CREATING THESE
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE LIKE ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS ,
BUT THEY ARE LEAST PUBLIC AND VERY BLUNT IN THE WAY
IT INTERACTS WITH ITS NEIGHBORHOOD. THIS POLICY PARK
PROJECT IS CONCIEVED AS AN NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITY
WITH A SPIRIT OF REINVENTION AND EXPERIMENTATION. THE
USERS ARE GIVEN AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERACT
AND SEE THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF PRIVATE SPACES WHICH
WAS PREVIOUSLY SECLUDED FROM PUBLIC EYES THROUGH
THE USE OF TRAMPOLINE. ALSO THE BUILDING IS LIVING
APPARATUS AND ELASTICITY OF THE MATERIAL AND WIND
IS EXPLORED .THE BUILDING EXPANDS AND COMPRESSES
BASED UPON THE ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS ENERGY AND
HEAT DEMAND. IN THIS PROJECT THERE IS CONSTANT PLAY
AND CHANGE FROM VISIBLE TO INVISIBLE..

EASTERN WHITE PINE
Eastern whip poor will

WHITE OAK
Red-headed Woodpecker

SILKY DOGWOOD SHRUB

SUGAR MAPLE
Purple Finch

WATER LILIES
Horned Lark

SWEET FLAG

SWAMP ROSE
Grasshopper Sparrow

ARROWHEAD
Eastern Towhee

BULRUSHES
Seaside Sparrow

RED OAK
Bicknell's Thrush

PICKERELWEED

ELODEA
Cerulean Warbler

WILDRICE
Common Loon

CATTAILS
Vesper Sparrow

WINTERBERRY
Common Nighthawk

HORNWORT

WATER PLANTIN
Osprey

RED CHOKEBERRY
Cooper's Hawk

BLACK CHOKEBERRY
Golden Winged Warbler

FORESTED ZONE	SHRUB PLANTS	EMERGENT PLANTS	AQUATIC PLANTS	SUBMERSED PLANTS

HABITAT
Open woodland | Grasslands | Shrubs | Lakes & ponds

FOOD
Insects | Seeds | Fish | Omnivore

NESTING
Ground | Tree | Cavity | Shrub

FORGING
Aerial froger | Ground froger | Foliage Greaner | Flycatching

BIO DIVERSITY

15
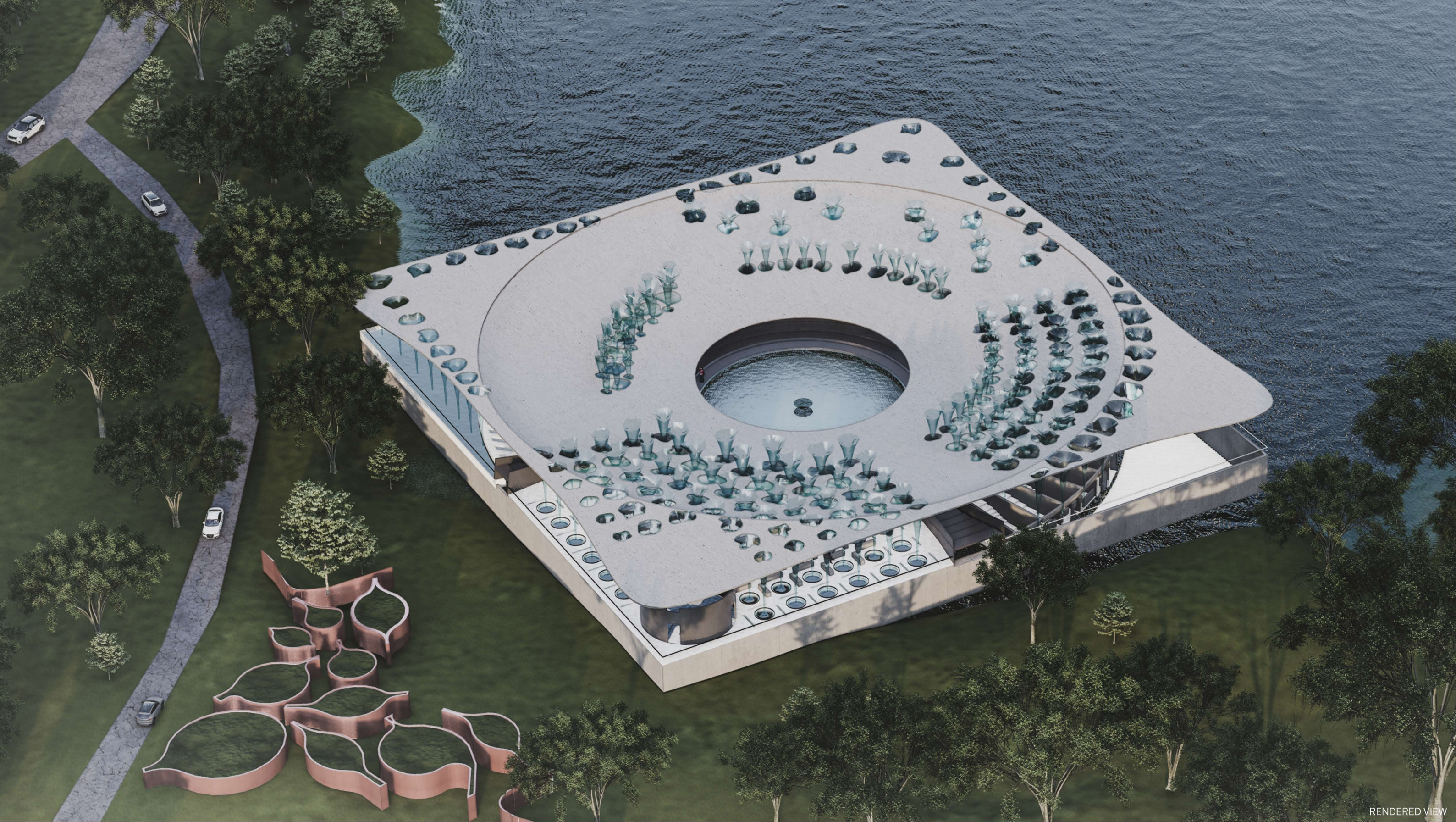
RENDERED VIEW

INTER-FAITH COMPLEX
GODHAVI, GUJARAT

PROJECT TIME : SPRING 2024
TYPOLOGY : ACADEMIC - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT
BUILT AREA : 0.88 ACRE (3600 Sq.m)
MENTOR : Prof. SANDRO MARPILLERO & Prof. SONAL BERI

RITUALISTIC PATH

THOUGH WATER, A PRIMORDIAL ELEMENT EXISTING ETERNALLY IN A DYNAMIC DANCE BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY, TRANSCENDS HUMAN OWNERSHIP, ITS EARTHLY PRESENCE SPARKS COMPLEX QUESTIONS OF CONTROL AND ALLOCATION. THIS "TRANSITION FROM INFINITY TO FINITY," MARKED BY VARIOUS EXTRACTION METHODS, IGNITES TENSIONS AS INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES VIE FOR THIS RESOURCE. LIKE ARCHITECTURE SHAPED BY NATURAL FORCES WITH SURROUNDING PROCESS, PRACTICES AND MEANINGS , WATER EMBODIES LIFE'S FLOW, FOREVER OSCILLATING BETWEEN BOUNDLESS POTENTIAL AND LIMITED REALITY.

WATER FOLLIES

ANANT-U
UNIVERSITY

WATER FOLLIES

USE OF MOVEMENT / SPATIAL KINAESTHETIC ORDER TO
ACHEIVE THE CLIMAX OR INTEGRATION WITH WATER.
SHOULD THE VISITOR PASS THROUGH ALL THE RITUAL?

STEPPED ROOFSCAPE WITH FLOWS OF WATER THE ROOF ALMOST
TOUCHES THE WATER-LAND TO ACHEIVE AN MYSTICAL OR
EVER-CHANGING BORROWED LIGHT FROM WATER - SUN INTERACTION

INTERVENTION AT SITES OF TRANSIT -
RITUAL AS AN INTERLINK BETWEEN
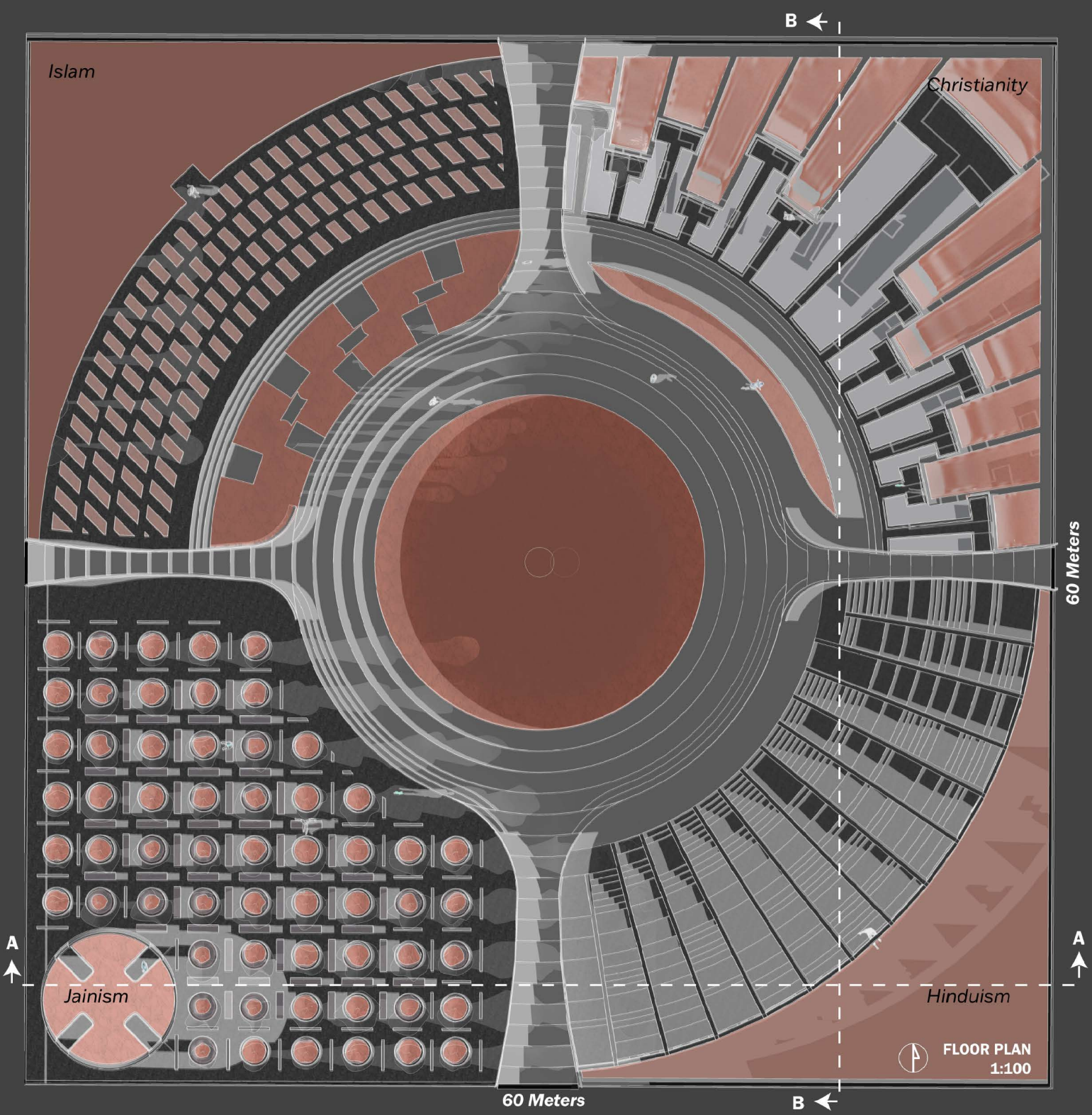VILLAGES/TOWNS TO PROTECT THE FLOW

MANIPUR

WATER FOLLIES

SITE

CREATION OF QANATS/AQUIFERS. THE CENTRE
ACTS AS AN STORE OF WATER. ALSO CREATION
OF UNDERGROUND GATHERING SPACE

USING THE COLUMNS / ROOFS AS AN APPARATUS OF WATER COLLECTION
AND PURIFICATION AROUND WHICH PEOPLE GATHER . ALSO TECHNIQUES
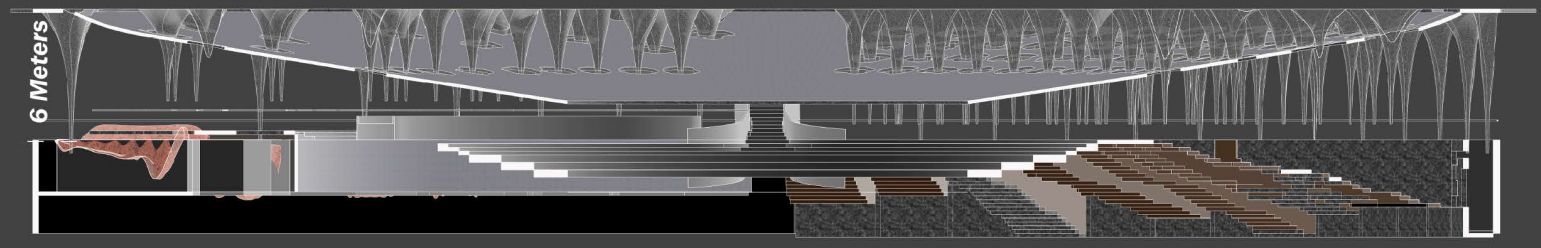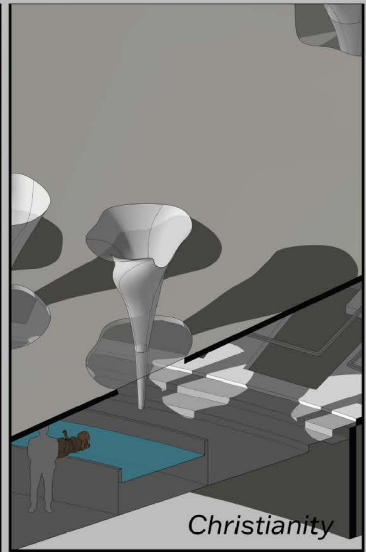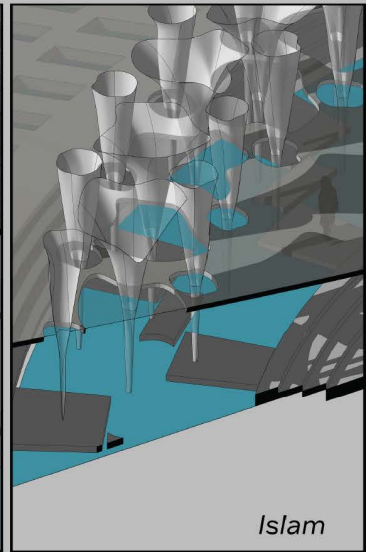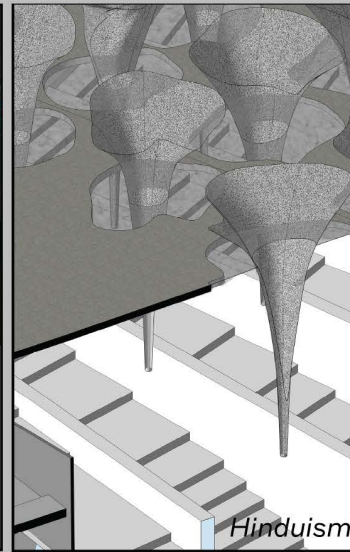LIKE SOLAR STILL TO CREATE WATER IN SUMMER / DROUGHT

Islam

Christianity

60 Meters

A

A

Jainism

Hinduism

FLOOR PLAN
1:100

60 Meters

B

6 Meters

SECTION - AA

6 Meters

SECTION - BB

FAITH

WATER, A NOMAD OF THE COSMOS, PREDATES OUR PETTY CLAIMS. IT DANCES BETWEEN SKY AND EARTH, AN ETERNAL DANCE ETCHED IN THE MEMORY OF GLACIERS. YET, WHEN IT TOUCHES THE GROUND, A STRANGE TRANSFORMATION OCCURS. THIS ESSENCE OF INFINITY BECOME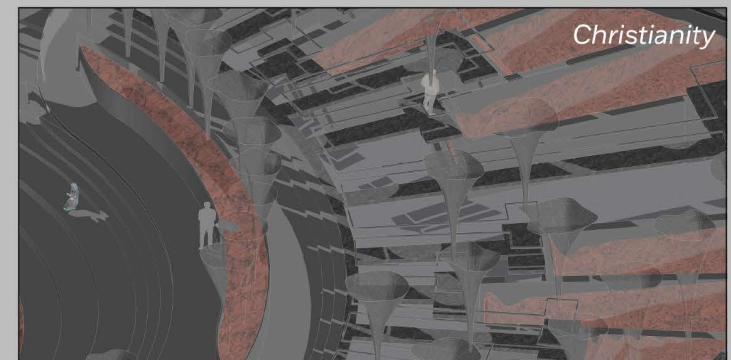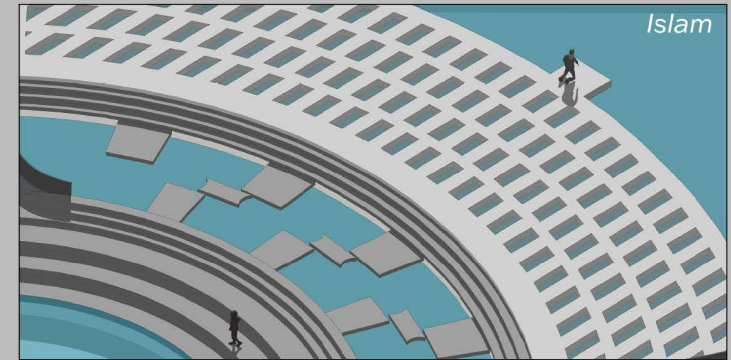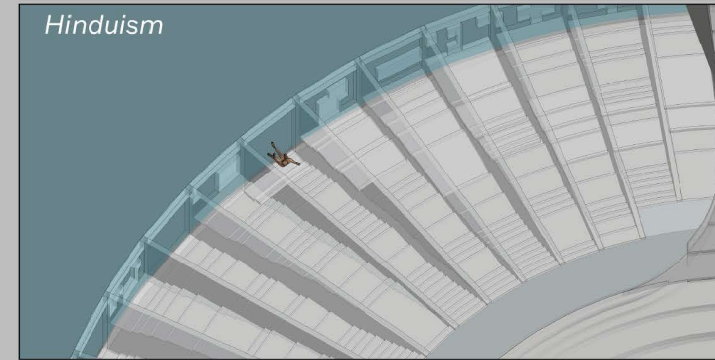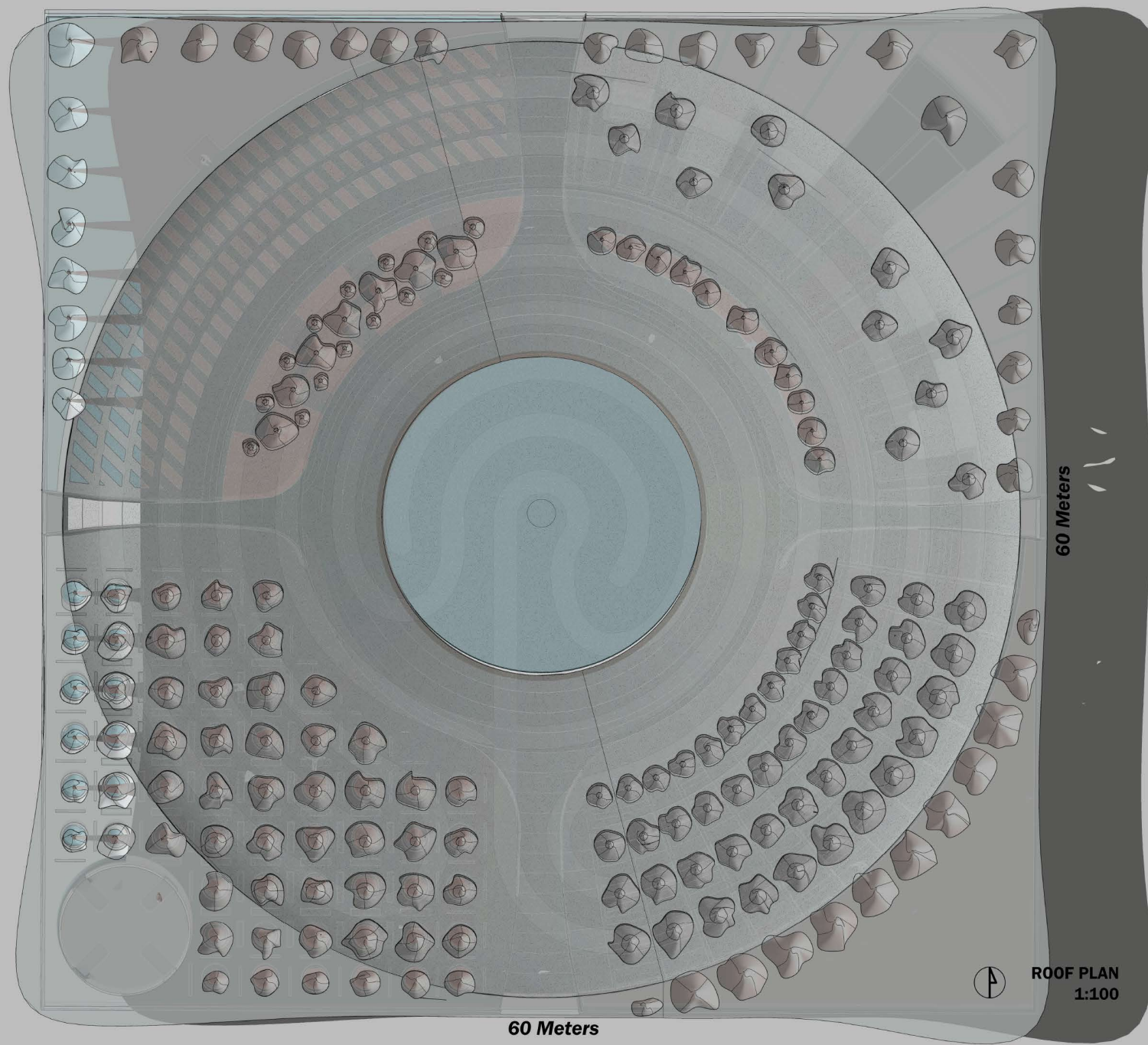S A FINITE PRIZE, SPARKING CONFLICT IN THE HEARTS OF HUMANS. THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE BECOMES A BATTLEGROUND, A "TRANSITION FROM INFINITY TO FINITY" MARKED BY THE HUNGRY SNARL OF EXTRACTION MACHINES. HERE IN GODHAVI, AMIDST THE SWIRLING CURRENTS OF FAITH, WE STAND. WE SEE THE RIGID GEOMETRIES OF RELIGION CLASH WITH THE UNTAMED FLOW OF RAIN. CAN WE BRIDGE THIS DIVIDE? CAN WATER, THE COMMON THREAD WOVEN THROUGH EVERY LIVING TAPESTRY, BECOME THE WELLSPRING OF A NEW KIND OF FAITH? A FAITH THAT TRANSCENDS OWNERSHIP, THAT CELEBRATES THE DANCE RATHER THAN COVETS THE CUP? LET US BUILD A CATHEDRAL OF UNDERSTANDING, NOT WITH RIGID LINES, BUT WITH THE EVER-SHIFTING FORMS OF CLOUDS. LET THE ARCHITECTURE ECHO THE SYMPHONY OF RAINDROPS, A LANGUAGE UNDERSTOOD BY ALL FAITHS. FOR IN THIS SHARED REVERENCE FOR THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR UNIVERSE, PERHAPS WE CAN DISCOVER A COMMON RELIGION, A COMMUNION BORN NOT OF DOGMA, BUT OF WATER.

ROOF PLAN
1:100

60 Meters

60 Meters

Hinduism

Islam

Jainism

Christianity

Jainism

Hinduism

Islam

Christianity
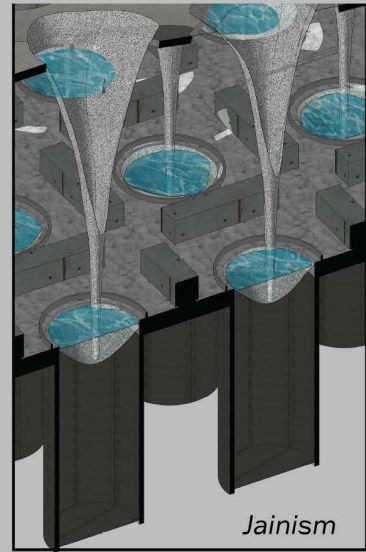
WHO OWNS WATER ?

THOUGH WATER, A PRIMORDIAL ELEMENT EXISTING ETERNALLY IN A DYNAMIC DANCE BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY, TRANSCENDS HUMAN OWNERSHIP, ITS EARTHLY PRESENCE SPARKS COMPLEX QUESTIONS OF CONTROL AND ALLOCATION. THIS "TRANSITION FROM INFINITY TO FINITY," MARKED BY VARIOUS EXTRACTION METHODS, IGNITES TENSIONS AS INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES VIE FOR THIS RESOURCE. LIKE ARCHITECTURE SHAPED BY NATURAL FORCES WITH SURROUNDING PROCESS, PRACTICES AND MEANINGS , WATER EMBODIES LIFE'S FLOW, FOREVER OSCILLATING BETWEEN BOUNDLESS POTENTIAL AND LIMITED REALITY.

3D-PRINTED MODEL

CYCLICAL ?

LYBRINTH ?

THOUGH WATER, A PRIMORDIAL ELEMENT
EXISTING ETERNALLY IN A DYNAMIC
DANCE
BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY,
TRANSCENDS
HUMAN OWNERSHIP. ITS EARTHLY
PRESENCE
SPARKS COMPLEX QUESTIONS OF
CONTROL
AND ALLOCATION. THIS TRANSITION
FROM INFINITE TO FINITE
MARKED BY VARIOUS
TIME-PROJECT CONTEST. THROUGH
INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE
THE FORM THIS DISCUSSION.
ARCHITECTURE
ADDRESS WATER
PRACTICE
REMAINS LINKED TO CORE
OF INHABITING ELEMENTS OF
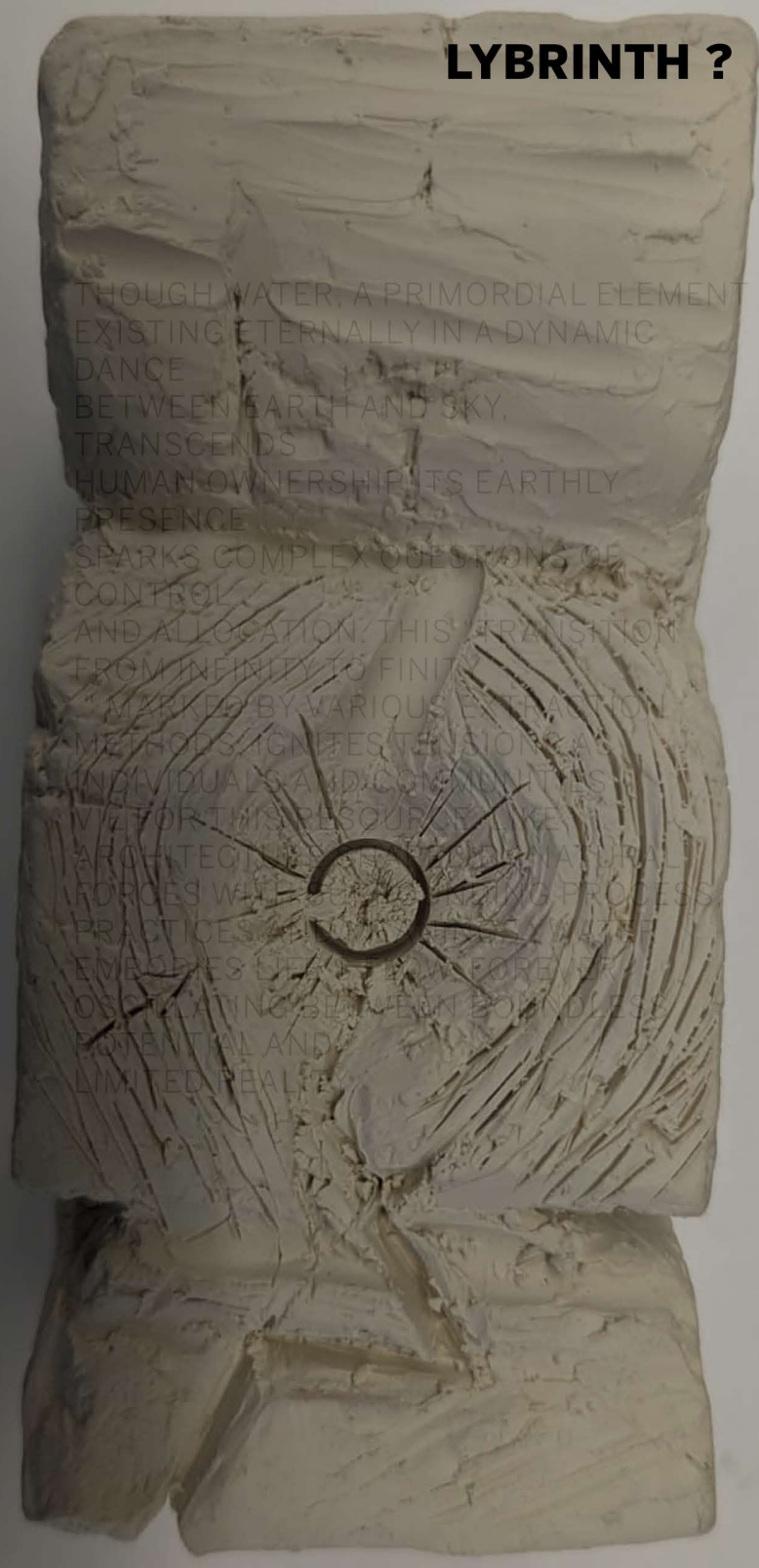DREAMS AND
CLIMATE REALITY.

CLAY CONCEPT MODEL

10

CONNECT THROUGH WATER

THOUGH WATER, A PRIMORDIAL ELEMENT EXISTING ETERNALLY IN A DYNAMIC DANCE BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY, TRANSCENDS HUMAN OWNERSHIP, ITS EARTHLY PRESENCE SPARKS COMPLEX QUESTIONS OF CONTROL AND ALLOCATION. THIS "TRANSITION FROM INFINITY TO FINITY," MARKED BY VARIOUS EXTRACTION METHODS IGNITES TENSIONS AS INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES VIE FOR THIS RESOURCE. LIKE ARCHITECTURE SHAPED BY NATURAL FORCES WITH SURROUNDING PROCESS, PRACTICES AND MEANINGS, WATER EMBODIES LIFE'S FLOW, FOREVER OSCILLATING BETWEEN BOUNDLESS POTENTIAL AND LIMITED REALITY.
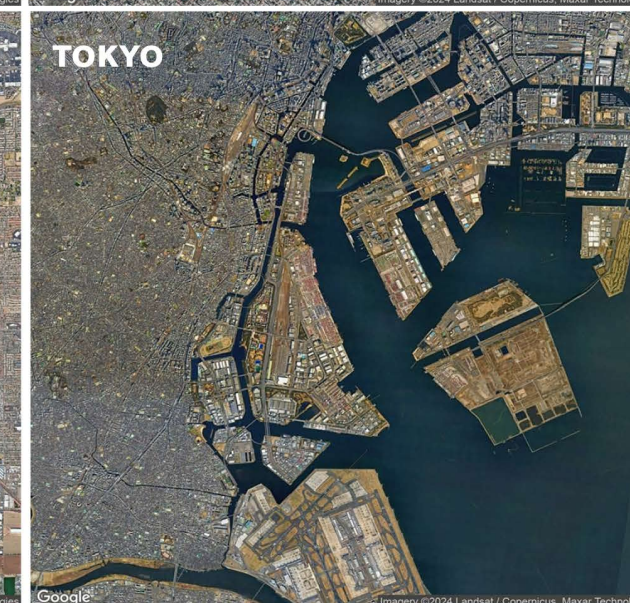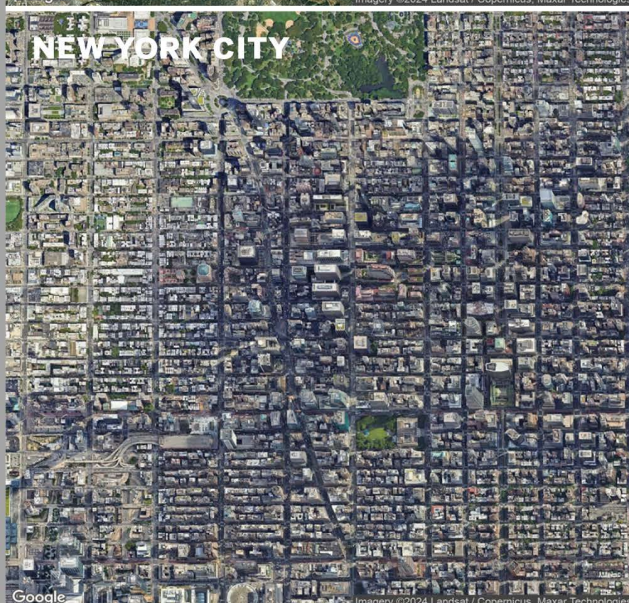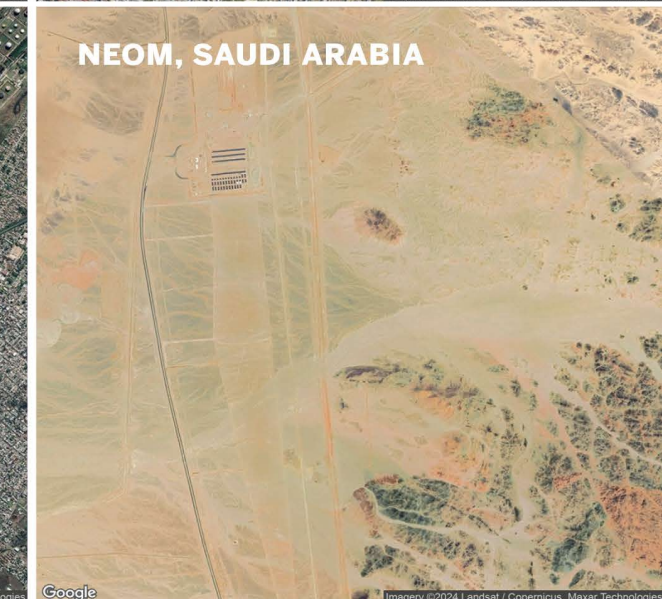
3D VISUALIZATION

12

COPHNEGEN, DENMARK

NEW DELHI

AARHUS, DENMARK

EL SALVADOR

FRANCE

HARBORTOWN, TEXAS

IXTAPALUCA, MEXICO

JOHANNESBURG

LA PLATTA, ARGENTINA

NEOM, SAUDI ARABIA

NEW YORK CITY

PALM ISLANDS , DUBAI

SUN CITY, ARIZONA

TOKYO

TORONTO
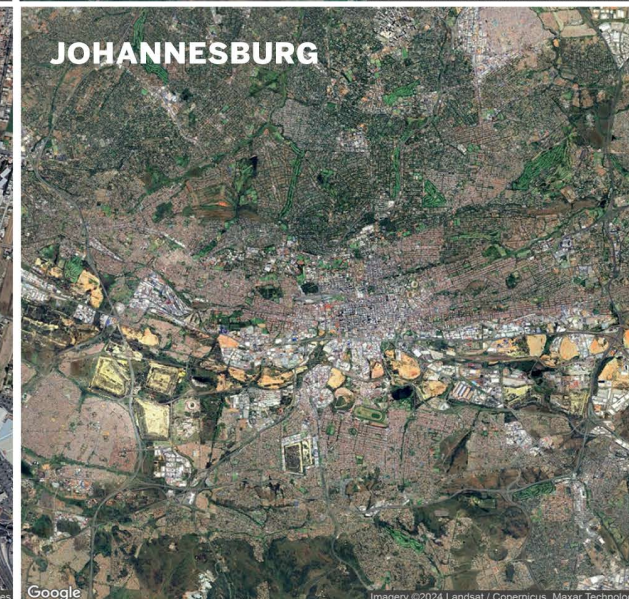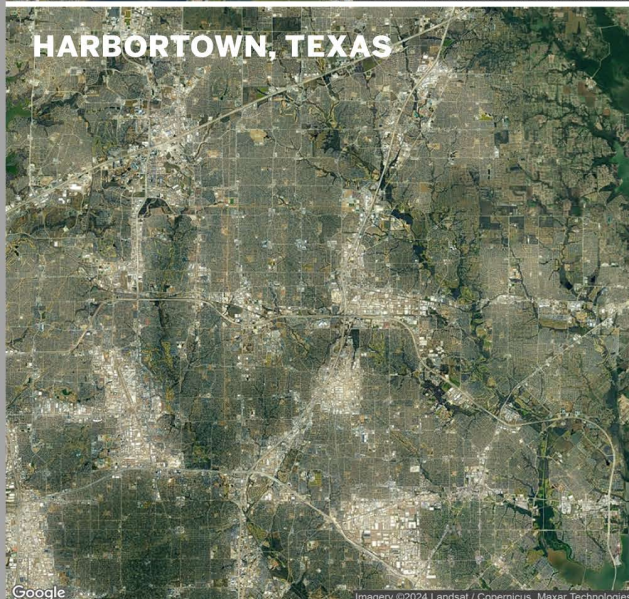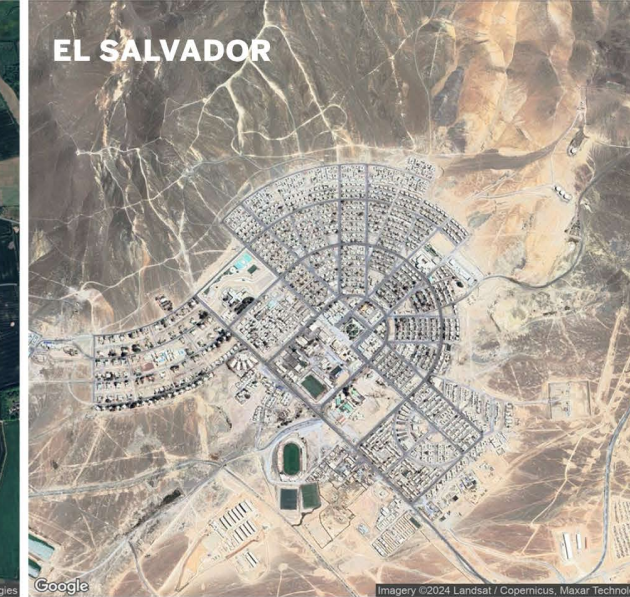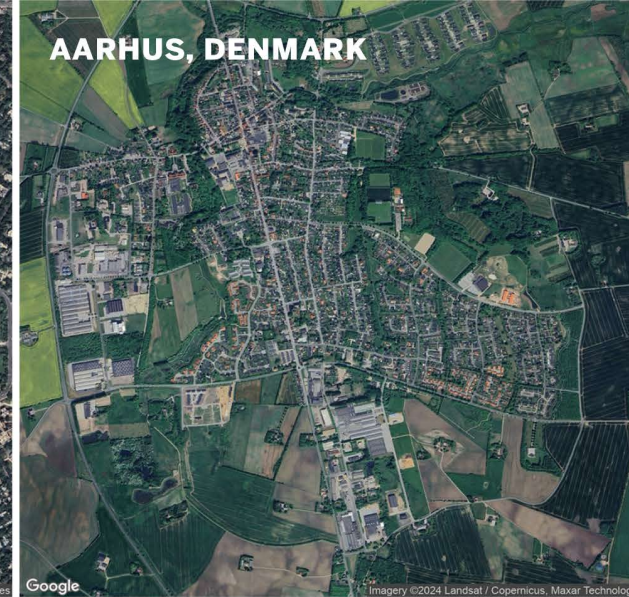
SHAPE OF CITIES

PROJECTIONS
WORLDWIDE

PROJECT TIME : SPRING 2024
TYPOLOGY : ACADEMIC - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT
COURSE : METHODS IN SPATIAL RESEARCH
MENTOR : Prof. ADAM VOSBURG

14

SOURCE : Landsat 8 Satellite Image
Publisher : USGS

DATE: 12/09/2013

BUILT MASS

WATER

EPSG:7785 - WGS 84/
UTM Zone 44N
SCALE 1:400000

DATE: 13/06/2022
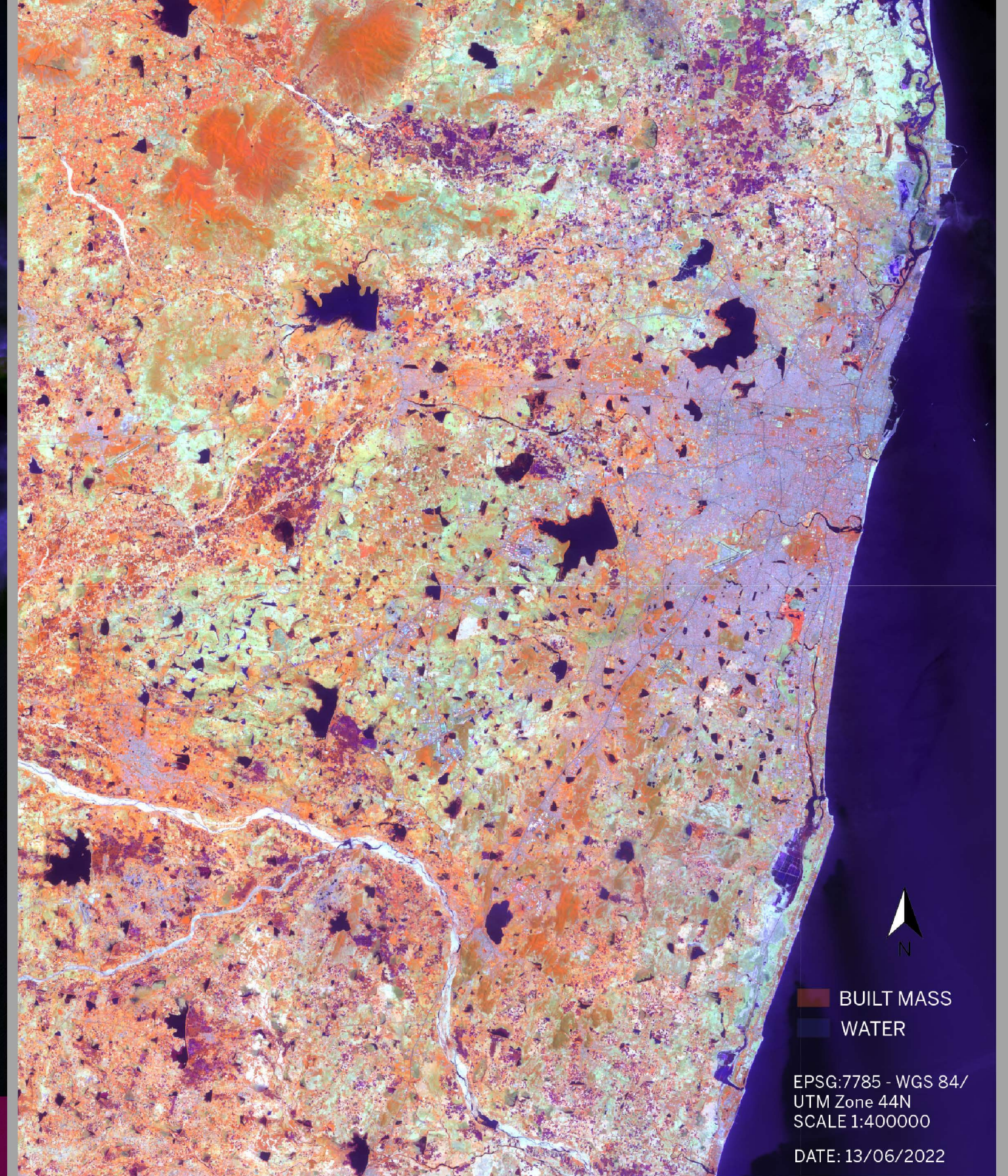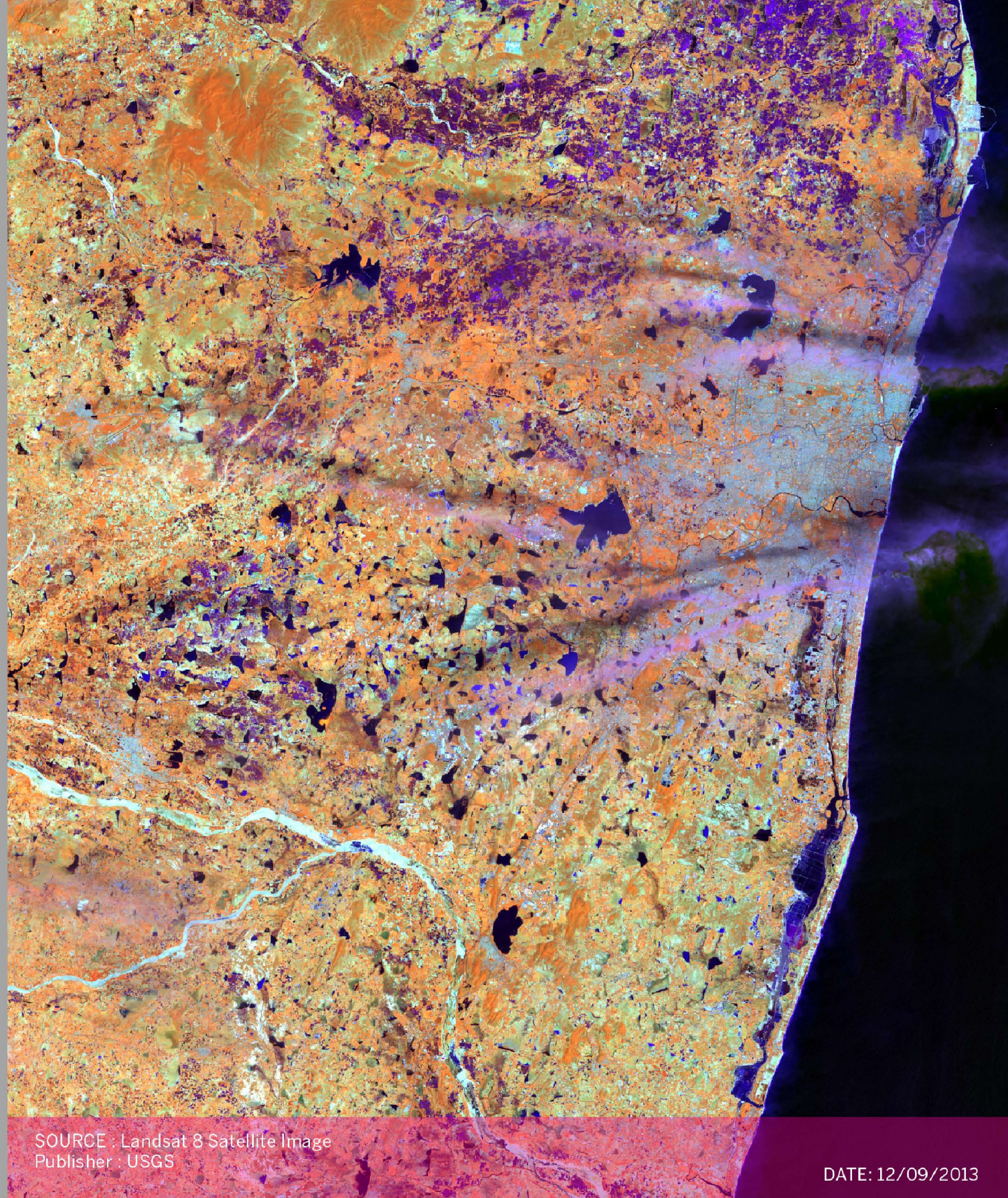
WHERE IS THE WATER ?

THIS MAP USES FALSE COLOR COMPOSITE TECHNIQUE TO
SHOW THE ALARMING SITUATION OF LOOSE OF LARGE
LAKES AND WATERBODIES IN THE CITY OF MADRAS OR
CHENNAI DUE TO THE RAPID URBANIZATION OF THE CITY

WHERE IS THE LAKE ?

This map shows the Alarming situation of Loose of large lakes and Waterbodies in the city of Madras or Chennai due to the rapid urbanization of the city

WATER BODIES

- LOST WATER
- CURRENT WATER

EPSG:7785 - WGS 84/ Tamil Nadu
SCALE 1:100000

0   1   2 km

N
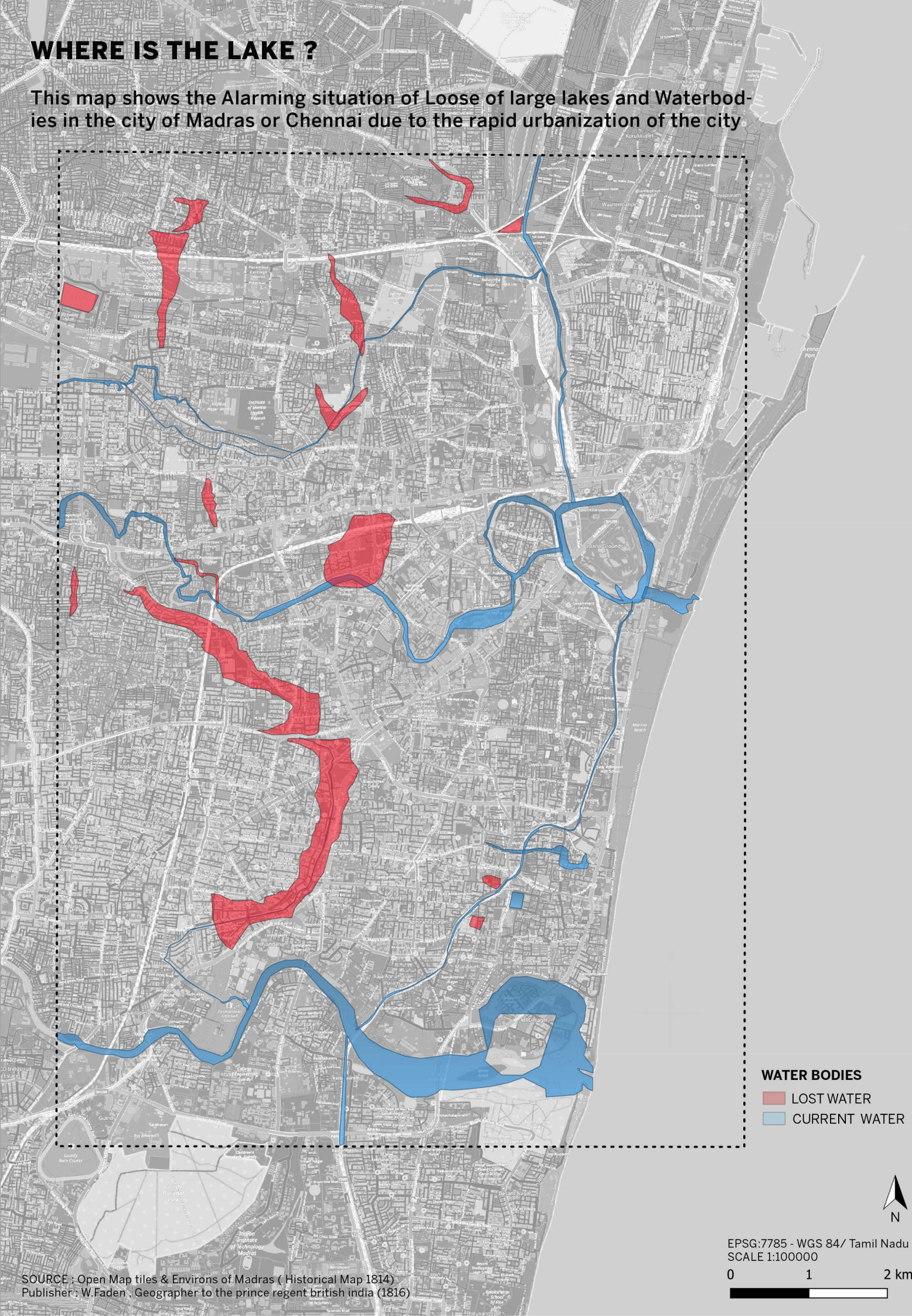
THE STATE OF EDUCATION

This map shows the Dispropotinate link between the Rate of Unemployment and The presence of Higher Education institution in the State of Tamilnadu In India which is Considered to be one of the most developed staes in India. It is to be Noted that the Unemployment is Predominant along the West Border of the state.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- HIGH
- MEDIUM
- LOW

HIGHER EDUCATION

- LOW
- MEDIUM
- HIGH

N

0   25   50 km

EPSG:32644 - WGS 84/ UTM ZONE 44N
SCALE 1:1200000
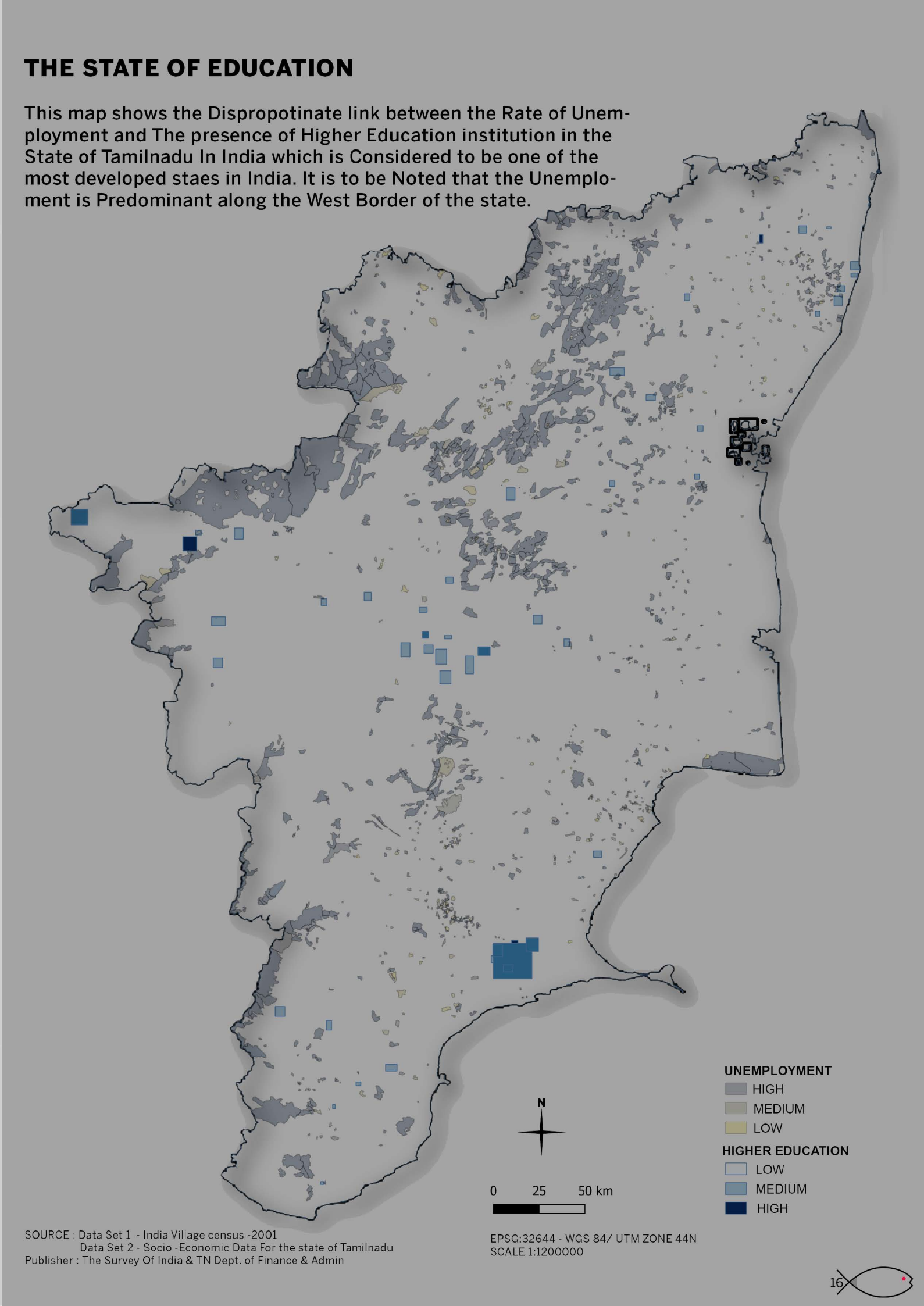
| C.F.Moller | Santiago Calatrava | Chagall Angel | Charles Barry | Abalos and Herreros | Aires mateus | Alajendro arevana | Alberti | **Gian Lorenzo** |

A master sculptor and architect, Bernini blurred the lines between the two disciplines, shaping spaces with dramatic curves and theatrical lighting, as seen in St. Peter's Square and the Scala Regia the Vatican. He integrated sculpture and architecture into unified artistic experiences.

| Charles correa | Claude Parent | Da vinci | David Adjyae | Aldo rossi | Alvar Alto | Alvar Alto | Alvaro Siza | Herbert Bayer |

| Diller scofidio | Donato Bramante | Eileen Gray | Erno Goldfinger | Alvaro Siza | Alvaro Siza | AMP Architects | Andrew Geller | Liam Young |

| Louis Boullee | First Office Architects | F.L. Wright | Norman Foster | Ant Farm | Archigram | Archizoom Associati | Arthur Erickson | Louis Khan |

| Frank Furnus | Frank O Gehry | F.L. Wright | Gae Aulenti | B.V.Doshi | Bernard Tschumi | Bjarke Ingels | Brodsky Utkin | Marco Zanuso |

https://ahamed-abrar.github.io/Abrar/FINAL/index.html

CODING
WORLDWIDE WEB

PROJECT TIME : FALL 2023
TYPOLOGY   : ACADEMIC - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT
COURSE   : METHODS IN SPATIAL RESEARCH
MENTOR   : Prof. CELESTE LAYNE

BINARIES OF ARCHITECTURE

PROJECT TIME : FALL 2023
TYPOLOGY   : HISTORY ELECTIVE
COURSE   : ARAB CITY IN FILM
MENTOR   : Prof.YASSER ELSETHAWY

Figure 4. Map indicating actual locations and shoot locations

The filming of the movie did not take place in Tehran, the location of the revolution, due to strained relations between the U.S. and Iran. Sites across America and Istanbul, Turkey were utilized to recreate architectural instances from the actual events. Some examples include scenes of the US embassy building in Tehran recreated in Sepulveda VA Medical Centre in Seattle, the Canadian Ambassador's house filmed in San Bernardino Valley hous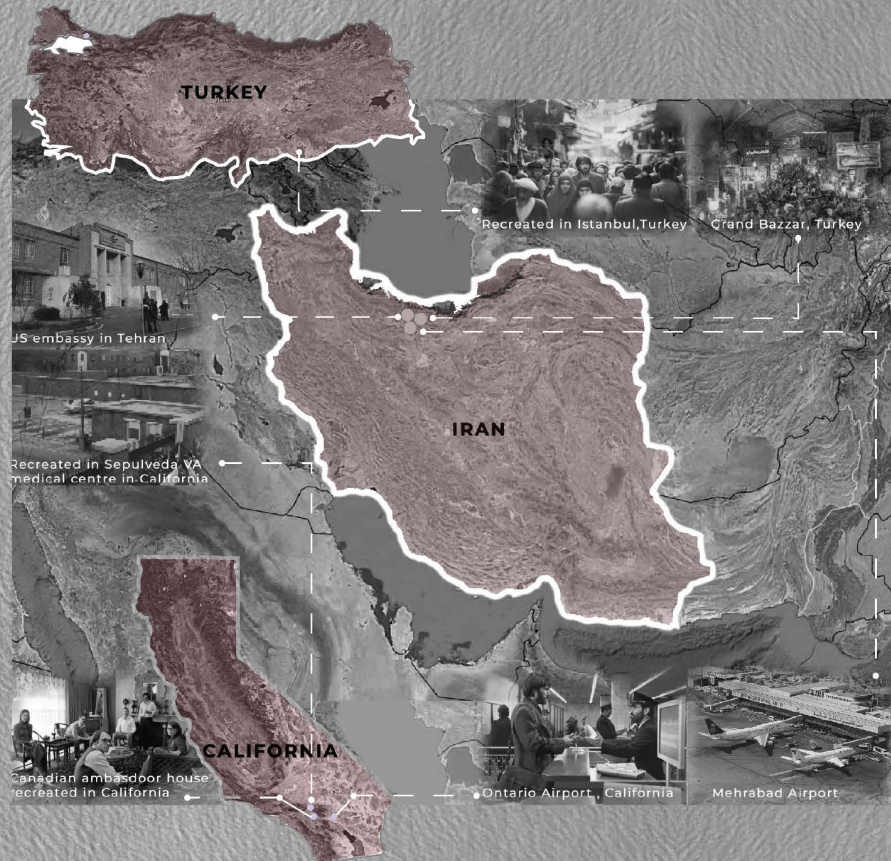e in California, or the Tehran Grand Bazaar events shot instead in the bazaars of Istanbul. The different locations are used symbolically and attempt to depict the actual physical, political, and social contexts that existed.

A deeper analysis of the architecture of Iran through the movie reveals the binaries that exist as we see the city through the lens of the prominent stakeholders, which in this case are the Iranians and the Americans.

Reflecting upon James Donald's analogy - city as a 'text' where meanings are ascribed to the physical environment, making it a 'representation', an 'imagined environment' when construed from the particular vantage point of each observer - closely describes the method of analysis adopted to understand Iranian Architecture through Argo. Thus, we identify instances and study how different people interpret a structure and the city in myriad ways depending on their circumstances or specific narratives. Ultimately, this method unpacks how the architecture of Iran, as seen through Argo, unravels complex layers inherent in it beyond its intended function and physical manifestation. Listed below are some of these thematic binaries that emerged as we simultaneously view the architecture and narrative from the American and Iranian points of view for a specific spot depicted in the film:

Deception in Architecture

The entire film being shot outside of Iran with spatial accuracy brings about themes of deception in the film. The simplicity with which such creative direction can be done is a nod to the notorious precedents in the way an Islamic city is viewed through an American military lens. The film can be abstracted as exploring this theme , particularly in how architecture reinforces power dynamics. It is interesting to note that Modern buildings often mimic traditional elements, like stone walls, which turn out to be mere cladding. This serves as a semiotic tool of control, masking the true nature of the underlying infrastructure. This tactic mirrors the strategies employed by military forces when planning the recapturing or destruction of cities, as exemplified by the US military exercise in Dugway Proving grounds, Utah. Here, meticulously constructed replicas of Arab tenements, down to the smell of sewage and calls to prayer, create a training ground for urban warfare. Such elaborate simulations blur the lines between real and imagined cities, allowing them to exist anywhere in the world, catering to the insatiable hunger of war machines.

Militarization and Digitization of Urbanism

If we study Stephen Graham' s "Cities under Siege", he talks about the "militarization of urbanism" as an attempt by Western governments to rapidly expand their economies through the technophilia of precision security technology. These proprietary systems, often controlled by corporations like Raytheon Technologies, operate with minimal data regulation. "Argo" subtly hints at this through its portrayal of border practices and airport scenes, highlighting how these spaces function as "planetary devices" of global information control.The movie shows a historical fact, as claimed by Iran, the protestors finding proof of surveillance legitimizing the revolution from their point of view. Excessive and unauthorized surveillance in this case led to the downfall of the US. However, in this increasingly digital world, where Silicon Valley corporations hold immense power over urban infrastructure and data flows, citizens must remain vigilant and critical of these developments, lest they become unwitting participants in a new wave of neo-colonialism.

"Argo" serves as a cautionary tale, offering a glimpse into the intricate relationship between film, urban spaces, and power dynamics. The film raises critical questions about Western influence, cultural appropriation, and the dangers of unchecked militarization in urban environments. Unfortunately for Iran a direct subversion of the oppression did not mean a glorious victory.   The increased surveillance by the police and military in the streets of Iran in the name of security and protection has indeed greatly curtailed and affected the daily city life of the people of Tehran . The curtailment of rights became evident when Khomeini came to power. One direct implication is the lack of women in urban spaces, which can be seen as religious militarization of the city. The paramilitary forces act as moral policing devices rather than a tool of protection. All these elements indicate the increasing militarisation of the urban landscape, generally in the Islamic world.

AN AFTERTASTE OF TRADITION

PROJECT TIME : SPRING 2023
TYPOLOGY : HISTORY ELECTIVE
COURSE : SPIRITS & MATTER
MENTOR : ALIREZA KARBUSION

An Aftertaste of Tradition:

Instrumentalized heritage & Societal Fracture in Kayalpattinam

Abstract

This paper examines the intriguing case of Kayalpattinam, a 13th-century South Indian hamlet renowned for its distinctive Islamic architecture and cultural identity reminiscent of Middle eastern lifestyle & urbanism. Kayalpattinam's trajectory presents a compelling puzzle: how did a once-successful model of tradition, bolstered by strategic connections to Dubai's ruling class, morph into a source of contemporary societal tensions?

Following a period of economic prosperity facilitated by patronage from Dubai and Middle eastern elites, Kayalpattinam witnessed a concerted effort by local actors to instrumentalize the town's historical Islamic character. This strategic emphasis, aimed at securing continued access and acceptance from their benefactors, coincided with the institutionalization of a rigid traditional model. The rise of religious organizations and the entrenchment of strict patriarchal norms, however, produced unintended consequences. This reified traditionalism, coupled with misguided modernization efforts, has exacerbated internal divisions within the community and fueled troubling social trends like increased crime and drug use and climate change due to lack of ecology.

Through a critical analysis of architectural and urban transformations, this paper delves into the following key questions:

How do traditional building practices in Kayalpattinam reflect evolving power dynamics ? From modest vernacular structures to ostentatious displays of wealth, how has architecture been employed to assert dominance and solidify social hierarchies?

In what ways do spaces like women's colleges and community halls and the practice of providing a new home during a daughter's marriage function as instruments of patriarchal control through their spatial design and associated norms?

Left : Image of the previously existing Muhaiyadeen mosque
Right : Image of Present existing Muhaiyaddeen Mosque
(Source: Image from Author)

Governmental Intervention and the Manufactured Town

Adding fuel to the fire of confusion and dissent is the bureaucratic strangulation exerted by the government. The anomalous status of Kayalpattinam, lacking even a basic police presence, underscores the town's marginalization within the larger administrative framework. The government's paranoia regarding this autonomy The rise of left-wing ideologies has fueled anxieties that actively view Kayalpattinam's unique social structure as a potential threat to the bureaucratic machine's desired homogeneity. This perspective is laid bare in the flawed Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Common Development Plan (CDP) for Kayalpattinam held in September 2007 [16]. The systematic exclusion of Muslim voices from the planning process, with only one representative out of 30 attendees, exemplifies a disdainful attitude towards the concerns of the community.

The proposed development strategy focuses on transforming Kayalpattinam into a tourist spectacle. This vision translates to systematically erasing the town's idiosyncratic character, prioritizing globalized kitsch and soulless modernization over preserving its cultural heritage. The inauthenticity of this approach is writ large in the failed attempt to introduce a "Merlion" statue – a blatant import from Singapore – as a

EYES OF
THE CITY

PROJECT TIME : SUMMER 2023
TYPOLOGY : HISTORY ELECTIVE
COURSE : TRANSCALARITY
MENTOR : BERIL SARISAKAL

EYES OF THE CITY

Imagine a future where there are various numerous drones flying along with migratory birds in the sky. Imagine a future where you are walking shoulder to shoulder with a humanoid robot in a busy street. This is not a distinct future but rather a near future of the post Anthropocene where the machines and technology are the dominant occupants of the city. Maybe this is a contemporary reality which we humans are not willing to accept. What will be our relationship with these machines?

Machines have always been an architecture of dream that has been used to refabricate the material world [1] (Shepheard 2003, Pg.no:4). Liam Young, a architect in his 2019 film " Seoul city machine" conceives an Artificial intelligent city machine which is disembodied and nomadic, under which watchful eyes the citizens move around it and with it. At the outset,it looks like young disguised the gaze/vision of the city machines as that of a lover [2] (Young et al., 2019) and as a companion which follows humans wherever they go. But actually raises more deep ethical concerns on human - machine vision & interactions. It is crucial to understand that the machines do not see or understand the world like we humans do [3] (young 2019, Pg:no: 10). However our construct of their world is through our imagery. [4] (young 2019, Pg:no: 117)

There are significant biases these so-called Artificial intelligent systems machines have in their vision. For example Researcher Morgan Klaus Scheuermann in his study [5] (Scheuerman 2019, Pg.no:1) Shows that AI Grounded Facial recognition software have a gender problem. As numerous facial analysis services (For e.g. Amazon rekognition, Clarifai, IBM, Watson, etc.) performed constantly worse on ambisexual individualities, and were widely unfit to classify non-double genders. Former exploration by Scheuerman shows that they tend to be most accurate when assessing the gender of white men, but miscall women of color as much as one-third of the time. This shows an essential impulse on race and "notion of what defines a person being coded into these machines" [6] (young 2019, Pg:no:114). These systems which are extensively being used to do putatively easy tasks like logging into a smartphone can be used as a tool for sorting and bias rather than junction. They can actively intervene in everyday life.

Further, there are concerns regarding the public operating system of a city like servers,data centers,etc operating in a human exclusion zones and being managed by private corporations which is not accountable to the citizens of the city [7] (young 2019, Pg:no:8-10) .It is essential here to note that people who wield the control or direct in how the AI technology is developed are primarily the venture capitalists (predominantly white male) who live in silicon valley [8] (Walsh 2022, Pg.no:20).This triggers the concern that AI can be used as a new tool of colonialism.

In conclusion ,AI is a defining technology that is rapidly influencing the way humans function and operate. There is a pressing need to democratize it and give the common public access to the regulation and management of AI technology [9] (Walsh 2023). I think it is a pressing issue of our time to understand the benefits of AI technology and address its risk factors while fastly developing an inclusive AI policy , like in the case of South Korea's "National strategy for Artificial Intelligence" [10] ("Harnessing Trustworthy AI in Korea to Reshape the Digital Future in a Post-COVID era" 2022). As Russian premier Vladimir Putin put it, "whoever becomes a leader in the sphere of AI will become ruler of the world". [11] (Vincent and Zhang 2017)

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CLIMATE CONTROLLED

Climate "controlled"

Who set the standards of temperature of this room ?

"Is there a scientific way to design buildings? A long ambition of modernism was encapsulated by Olgyays , an architect duo from hungary through the production of The thermohelidon device. The thermohelidon produced real world simulation of various environmental conditions like sun, wind and temperature of any given location. The Thermohelidon was based on the post war ideas that an optimized interior would contribute to the construction of an optimized life, one in which its human occupants would both physically and emotionally flourish .Through these experiments the Olgyays mitigated the thermal comfort of humans as primary concern of a design and later produced the book " Design with Climate: Bioclimatic Approach to Architectural Regionalism" which codified datasets for thermal comforts in four climate zones of US.

"Over the last six-decades, standards for the conditioning of indoor air have been based on the body of the young Caucasian adult in a thermally regulated environment" known as the comfort chamber; this idea was steeped in geopolitics (ling Lokko 2022) [1]. The Thermoheliodon device, not an exception, was also functioning within this sphere. as it did not regard for the main actors at play who had set these standards,which were the air conditioning manufacturers. Air conditioning pioneer Willis Carrier developed psychrometric charts in the early 1900s, Comfort charts that correlated thermal conditions to human physiology were developed in the 1920s by ASHVE[1] , the predecessor to ASHRAE [2] (Moffitt 2023, 131) [2]. These study models for human comfort used bodies of young white male and female adults as a datafield in relation to changing properties of air . Within the comfort chamber, the human subject's influence on their own comfort was relegated to their choice of a fixed clothing level and a sedentary metabolic rate of 1 met, i.e. a sitting position (chang 2016, 1181)[3]. Isolated from its broader environmental and social context, the human body was seen as a reactionary machine outputting physiological responses . A systematic imbalance of this kind would lead to the determination of temperature bias

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[1] ASHVE - the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers)
[2] ASHRAE- American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

that corresponds with the usual metabolic heat produced by white people versus People of color. It is also relevant here to notice that in 1958 Macfarlane observed that people of different zones of the same region have different thermal preferences (Macfarlane, n.d., 7) [4]. This Thermal discomfort/bias was understood not only as affecting work performance, it had the capacity to change one's personality. (Gordon 1950, 178) [5]

Further, This idea of codifying design standards and using two dimensional charts to represent climate led to other forms of colonialism in which a foreign architect sitting in somewhere else was designing a building infused with colonial flavors without knowing the local conditions like the site,people,material,culture,etc.This was mirrored by conflicts in the stylistic intention of Olgyay work –to develop regional modifications to a style, the International Style."Despite the fine-grained nature of Olgyay's analytic methods, his architectural proposals rely on repetitive use of orthogonal forms" (Lissa 2020, 9) [6] and features which was much global than local.

Victor & Aladar Olgyay were working at a time before global warming and all associated social & ecological consequences were part of public discourse. Their working methods and intentions, however, inform conceptions of environmental design today In competing ways.

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