

WHITE ELEPHANT

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METHODS & ANALYSIS
MASTER THESIS

Methods & Analysis Graduation Studio is focused on the investigation of human actions in relation to the built environment in terms of **meaningfulness, appropriation and integration** in the context of the city of Bogotá. This investigation initiated by the tutors during site visit by a workshop spread into three days. During the workshop, we selected a domestic object to analyze and interact with our surroundings. As I selected "pillow" as my domestic object, it guided me towards searching for **privacy, intimacy and comfort in the public space**.

As I searched intimacy, comfort and especially privacy in public sphere, I ended up finding the **dark, inconspicuous and forgotten (abandoned) parts of the city which are occupied by the excluded individuals of the society. Although they are excluded from the public realm, they still inhabit the public space. They are constant invisible users of the public space who we tend to ignore.** This ironic situation interested me and I wanted to understand the relation between the exclusion & public sphere in the city of Bogotá.

According to Wim Cuyvers, these spaces are what public has. He mentions that public space is the **space of powerless**, it is the **space of transgression and the space of being uncontrolled**. Cuyvers believes that the squares and streets are not public spaces because the movement and acts of individuals are controlled by the sovereignty. Instead, he considers dead-ends, parking lots and shady corners of the city as public spaces where people can **act freely and out of reach of moral and societal rules**.

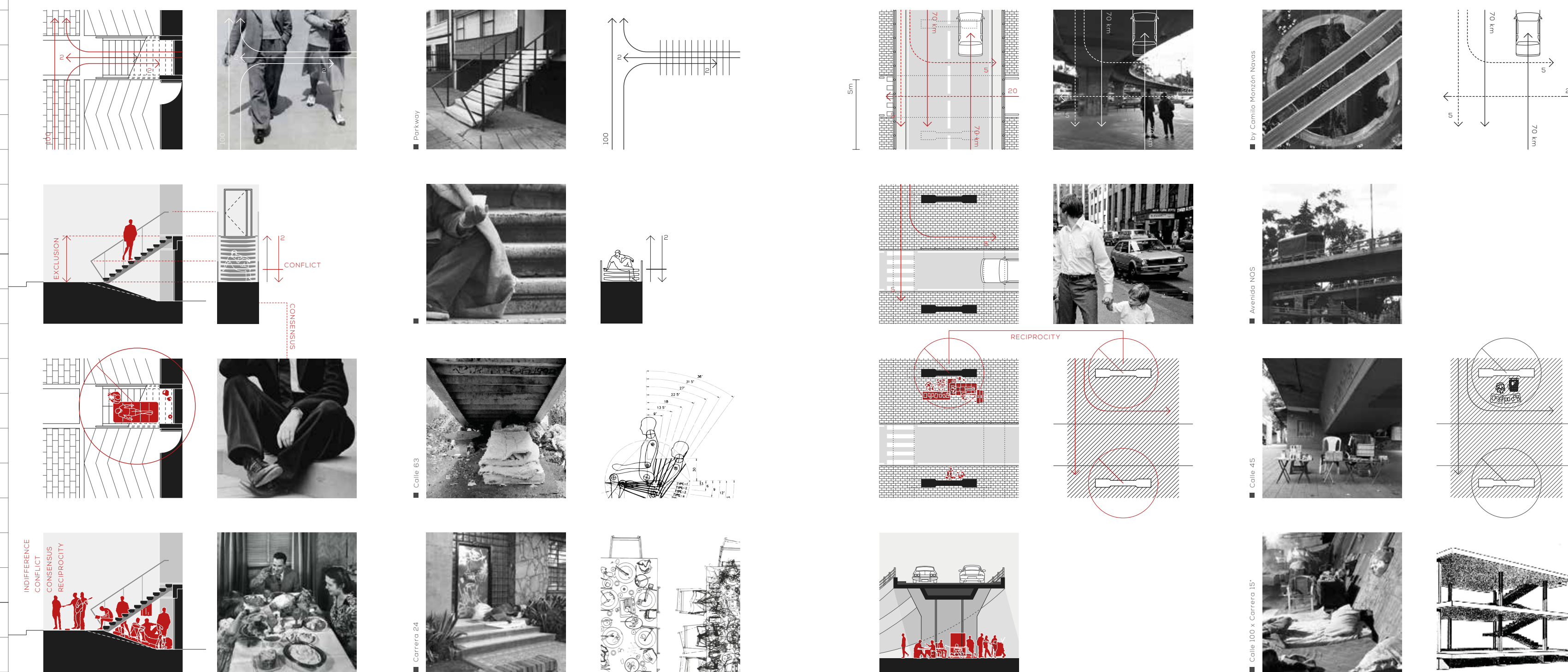
EXCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS
The acts of individuals are heavily bounded to societal norms and rules of public realm. However, acts of excluded are uncontrolled as they are not inside the public realm.

EXCLUDED OBJECTS
The city is filled with unused objects that are occupying the public space immensely, restraining the space from the public use especially in the ruins of Centro Gaitán in Teusaquillo.

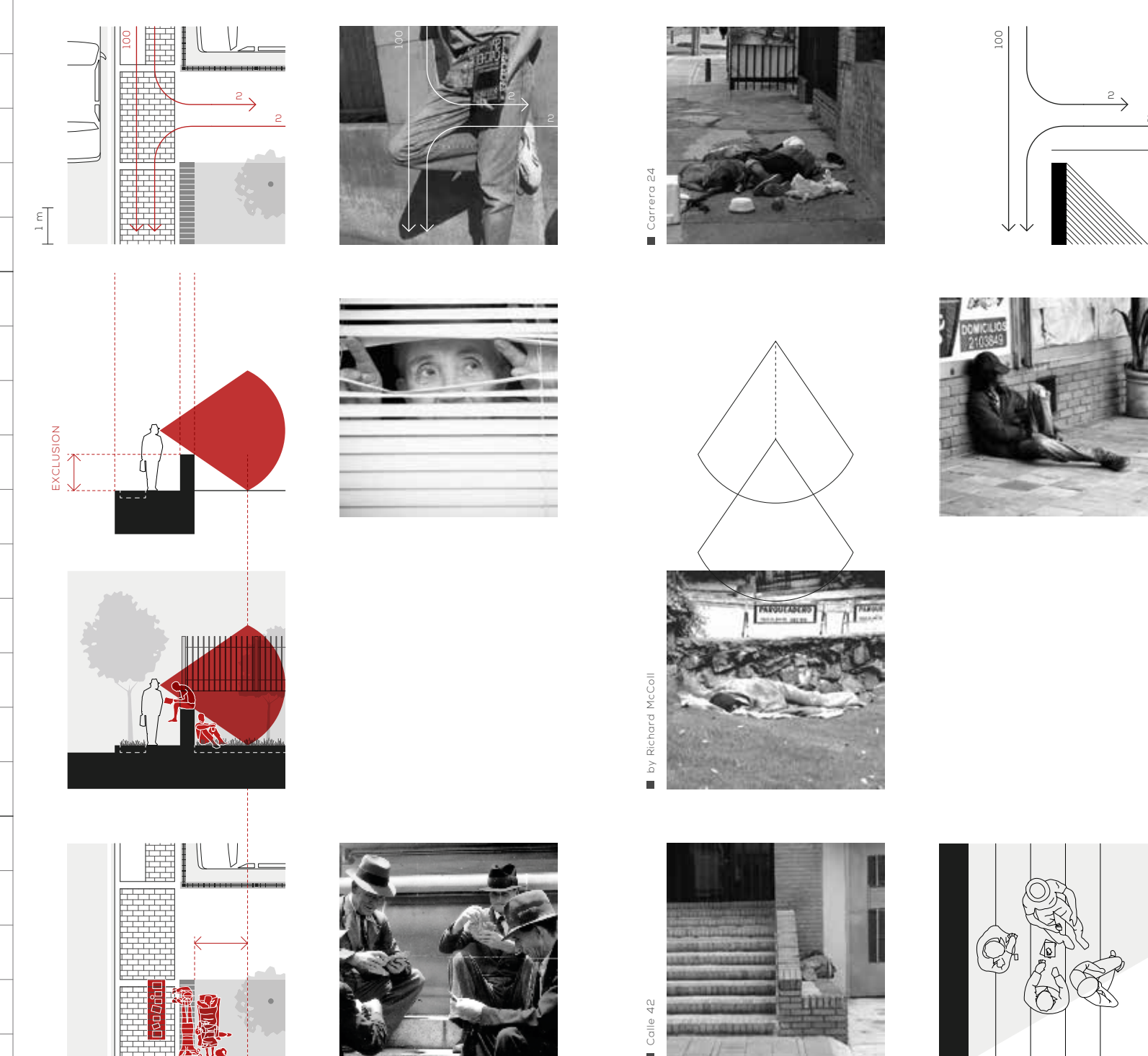
EXCLUDED SPACES
The public refer to these spaces as "elefante blanco" which are highly expensive government projects that are inaccessible to public and are hard to maintain even though they don't produce anything.

EXCLUDED INDIVIDUALS

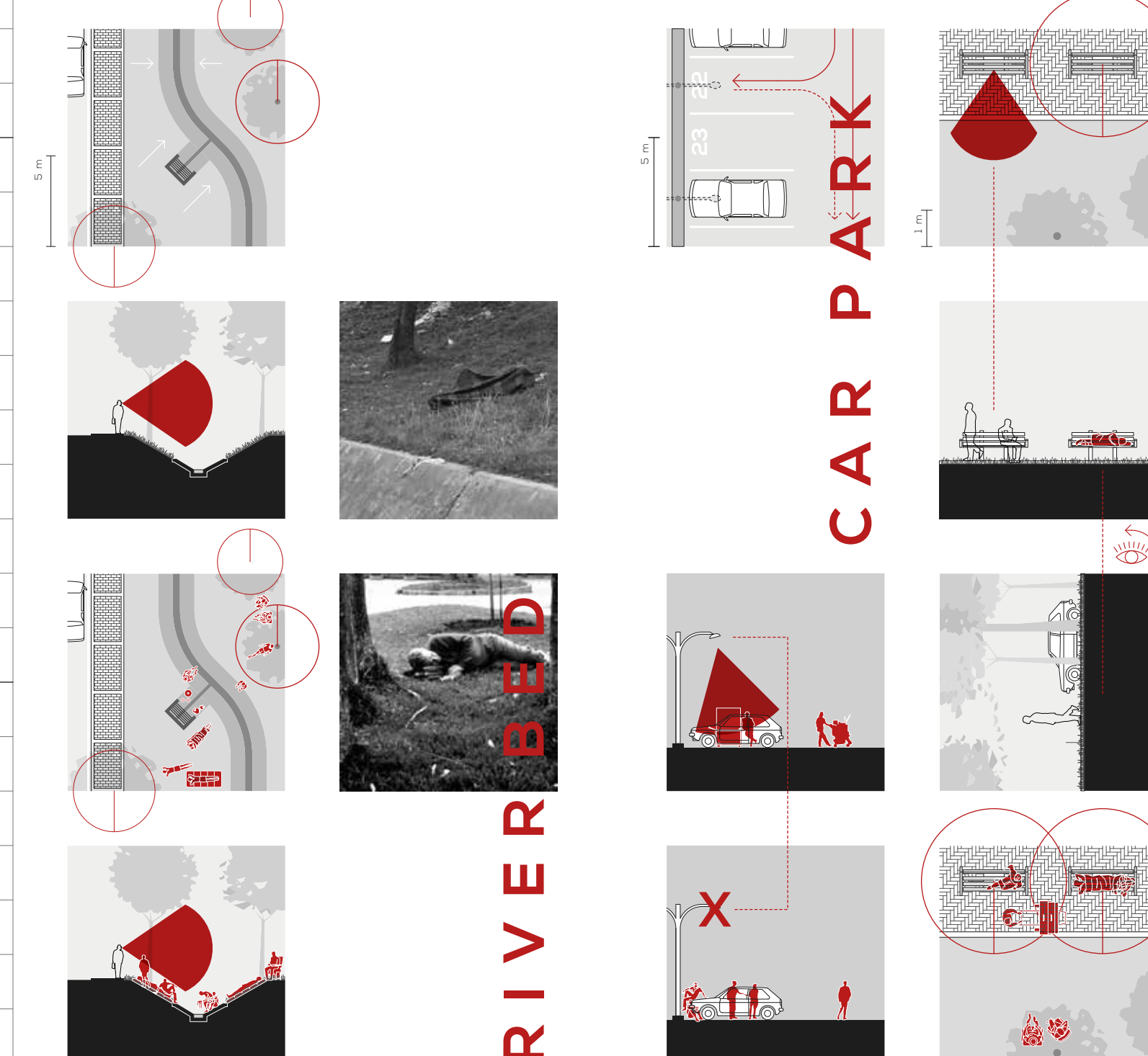
The acts of excluded individuals are analyzed by borrowing related terms from acknowledged studies and depicted by diagrams showing the relation with the public & built environment. The diagrams show 9 different situations of relation between public space and excluded individual, varying from small scale objects like steps & walls to city scale objects like underpass & park. The diagrams are accompanied by related photos from the site as well as references images that creates a dichotomy between the act of excluded individuals and ordinary life of a city dweller.



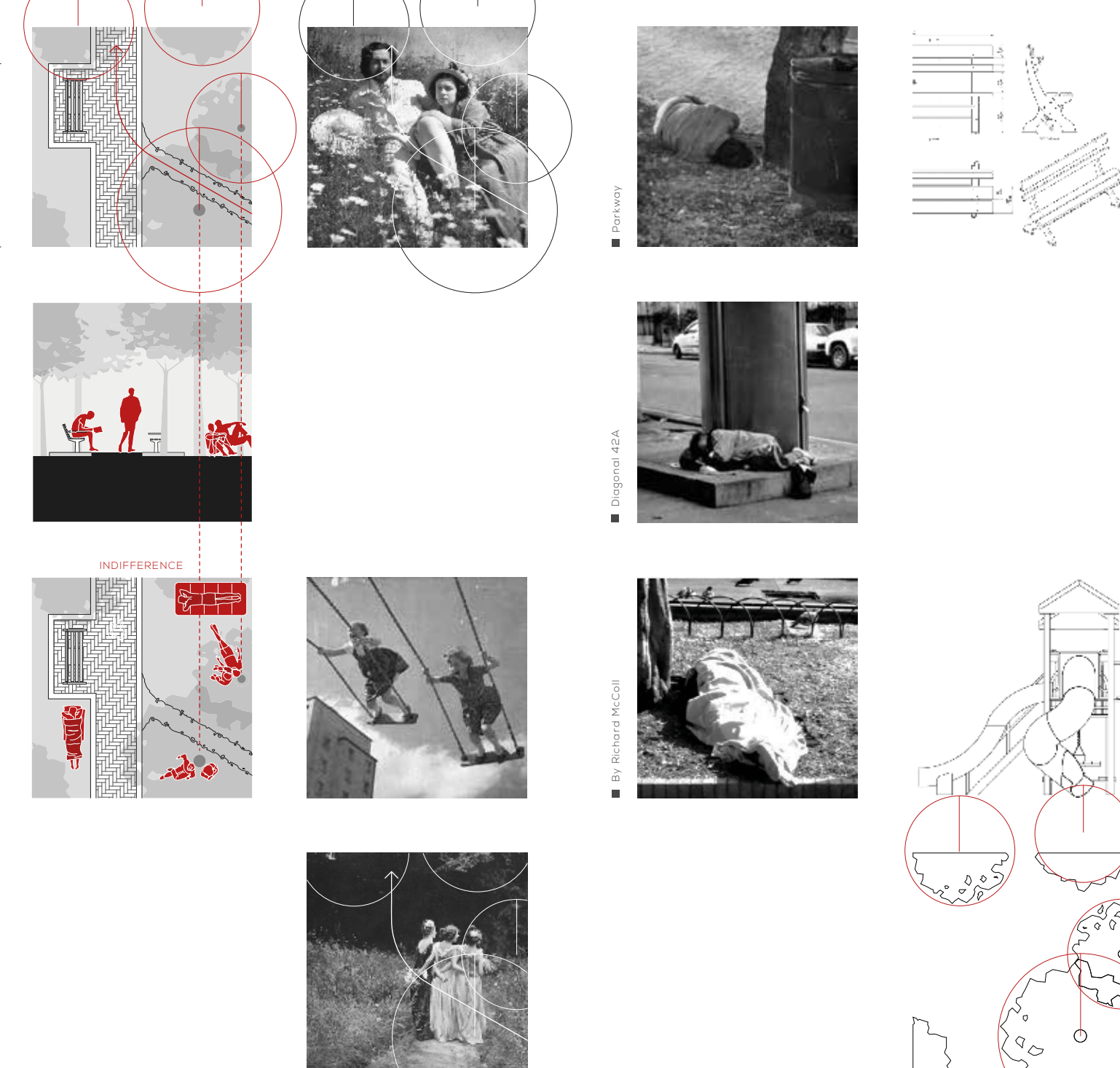
STEPS



WALL



UNDERPASS

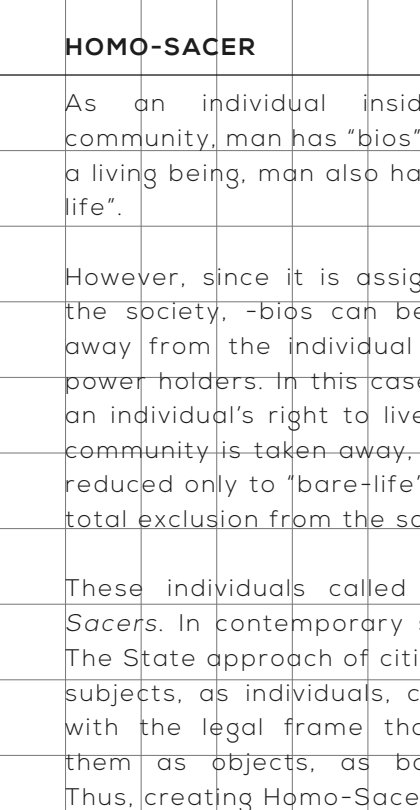
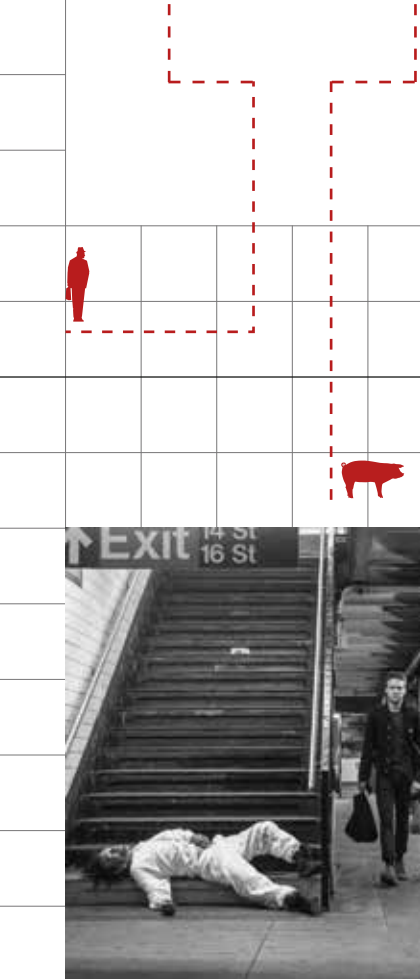
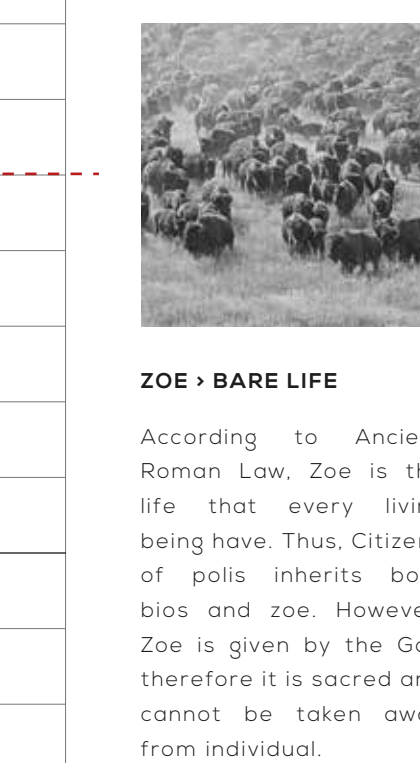
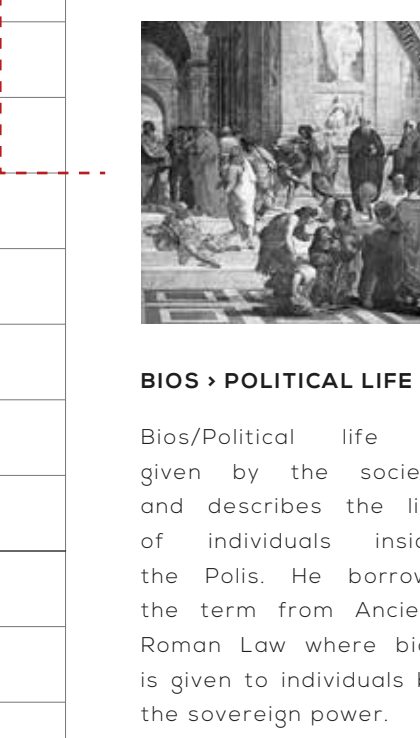
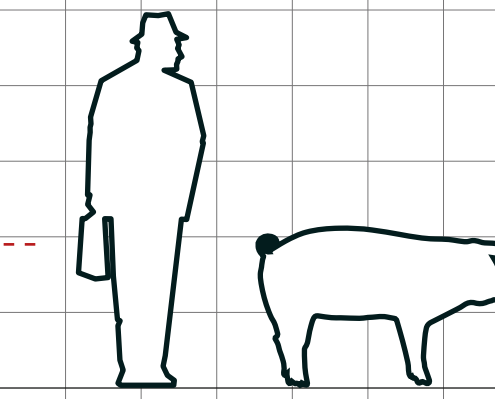


PARKWAY



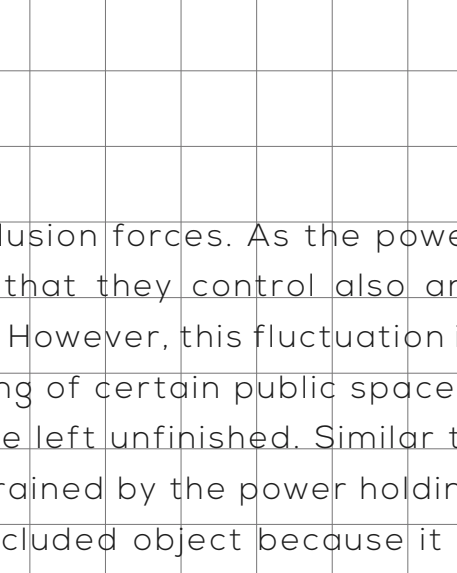
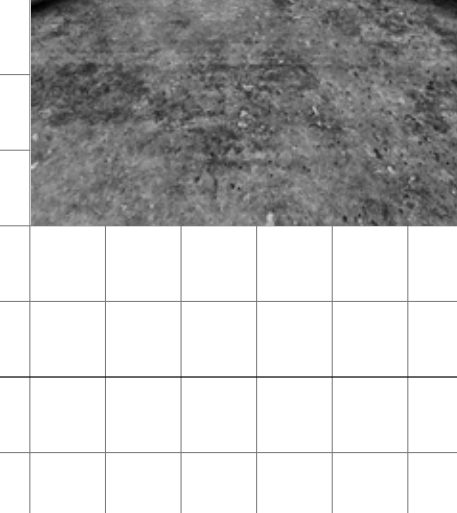
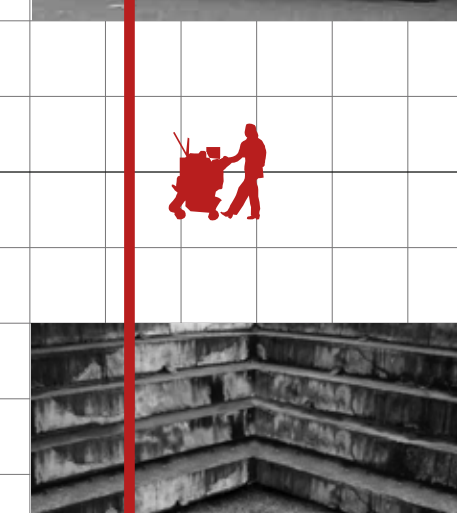
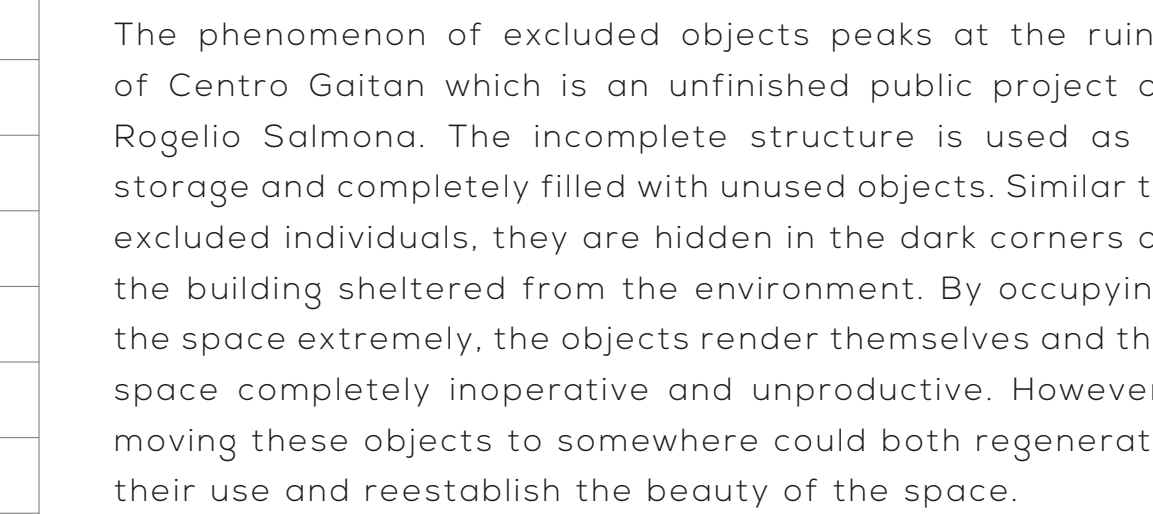
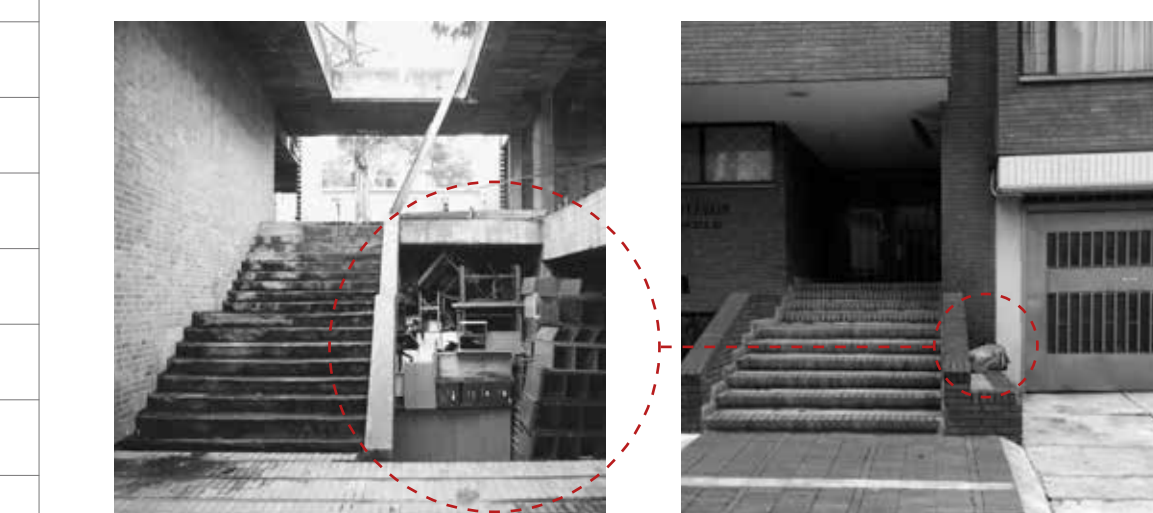
LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Agamben states that there are two different concepts for life according to Ancient Romans that separates public life from the life given by God.



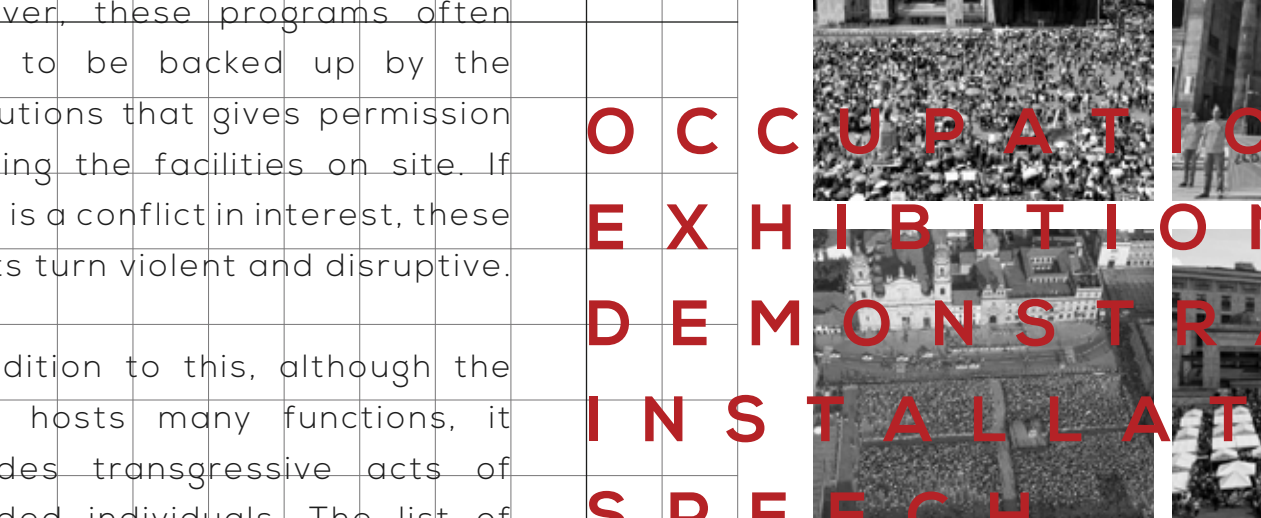
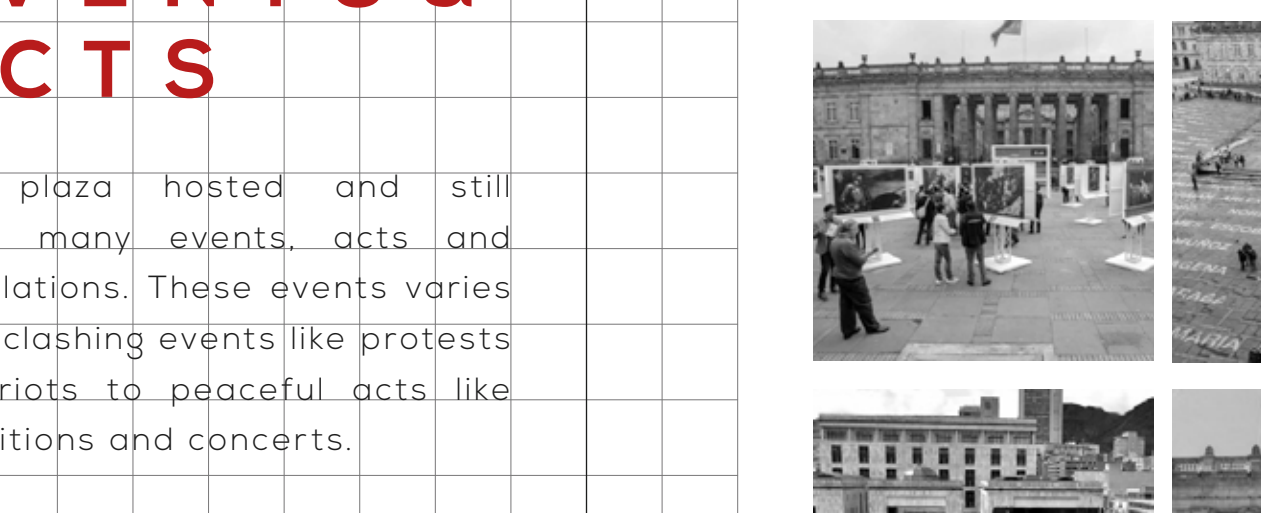
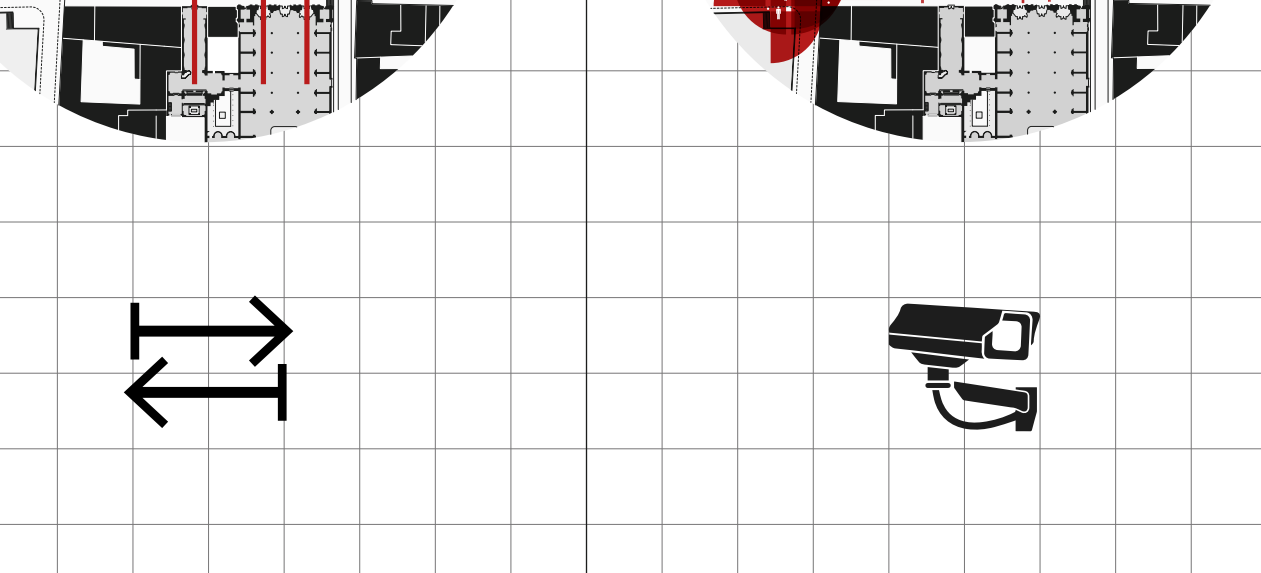
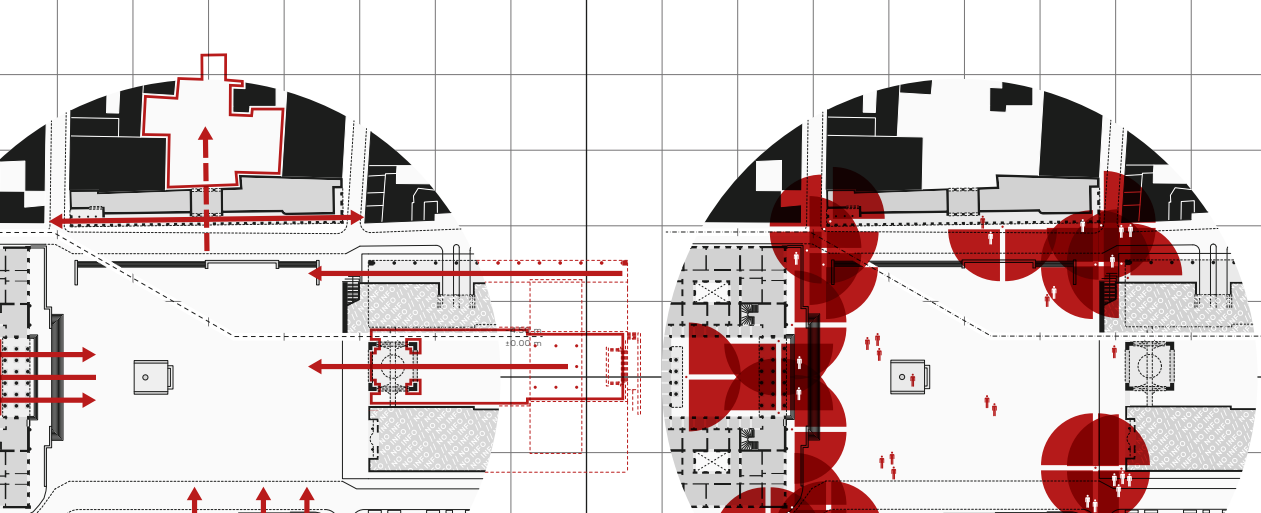
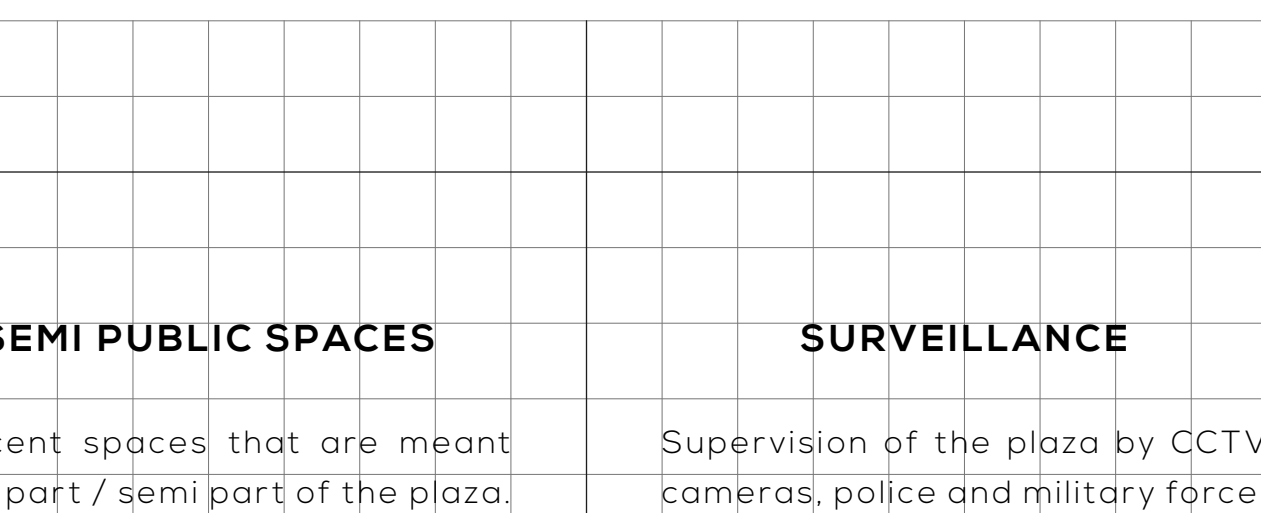
EXCLUDED OBJECTS

The phenomenon of "exclusion" also affects the realm of inanimate objects. Moreover, as we move on to more inclusive idea of what "object" is, (like Object Oriented Ontology) this situation becomes more relevant for urban fabric. City of Bogotá is filled with these objects that are excluded from edge and abandoned in the forgotten parts of public space. Thus, not only individuals but excluded objects are also inhabiting these spaces and the society and decision makers tend to approach these objects indifferently.



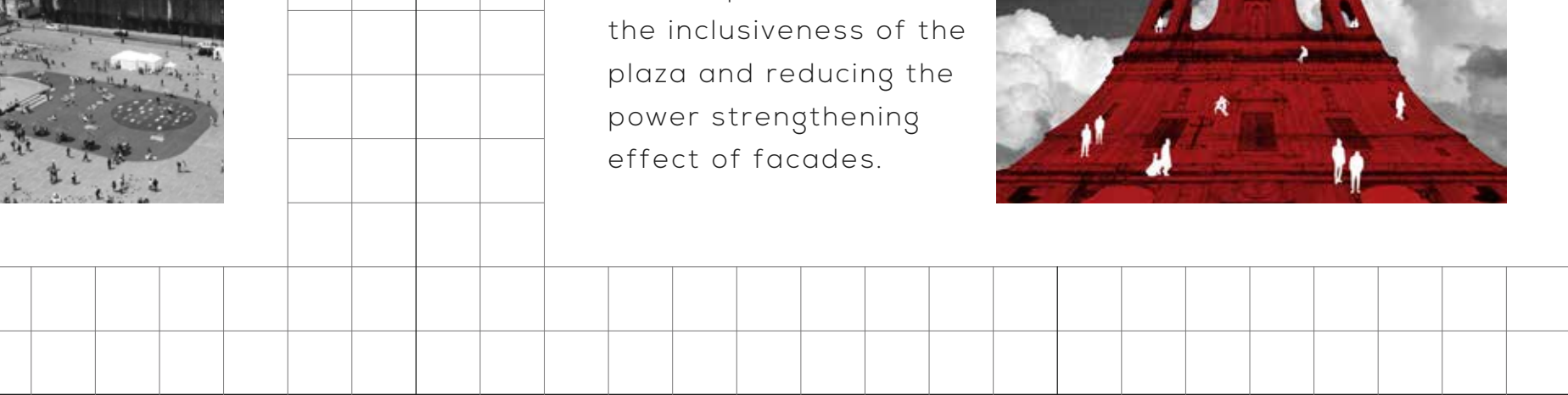
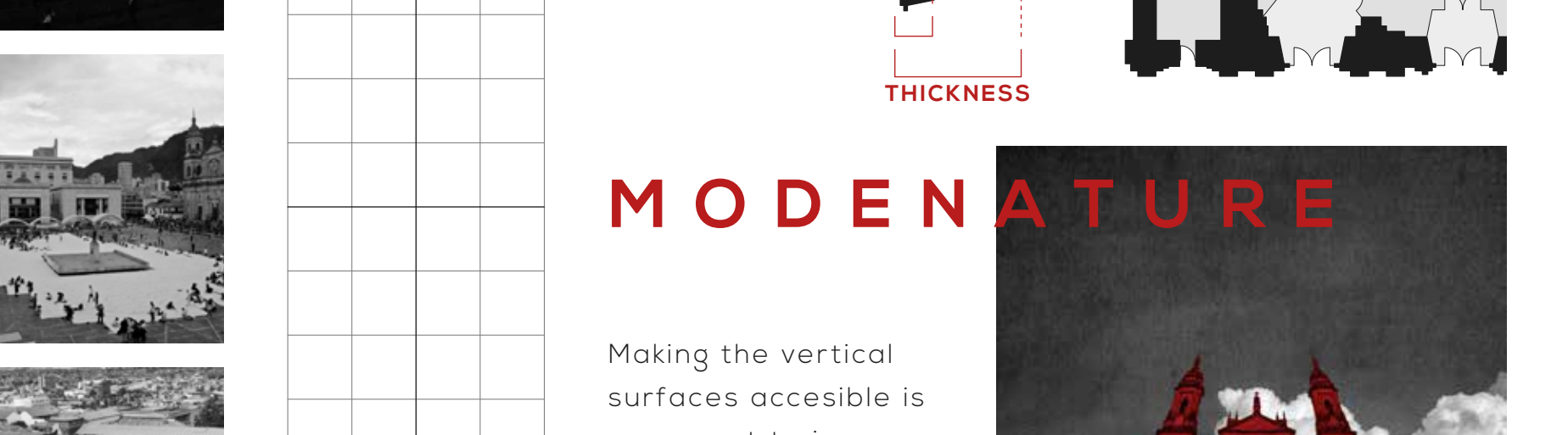
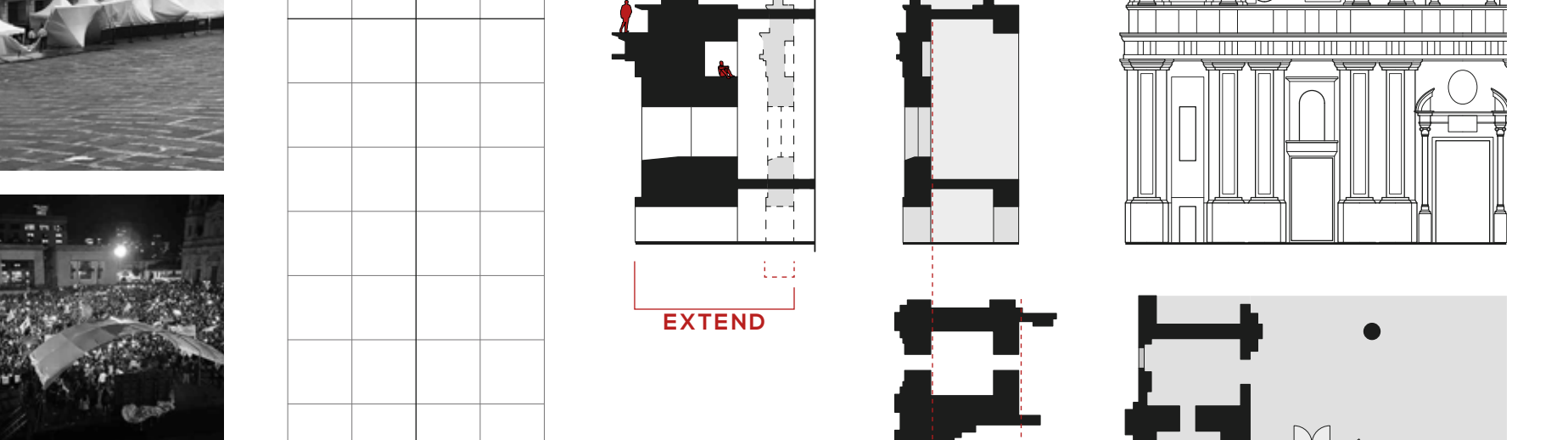
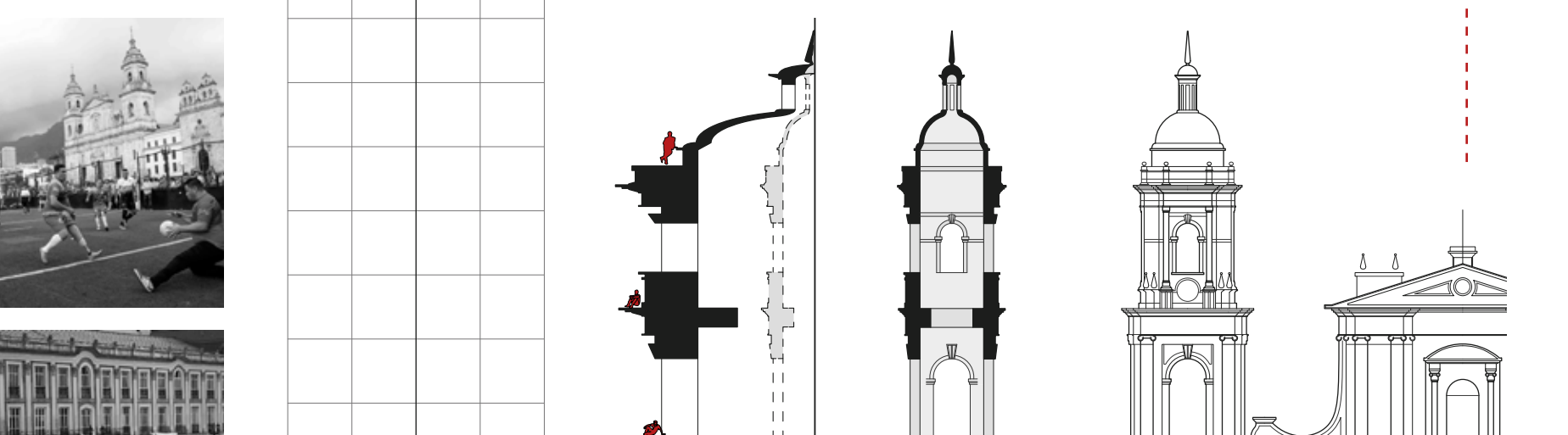
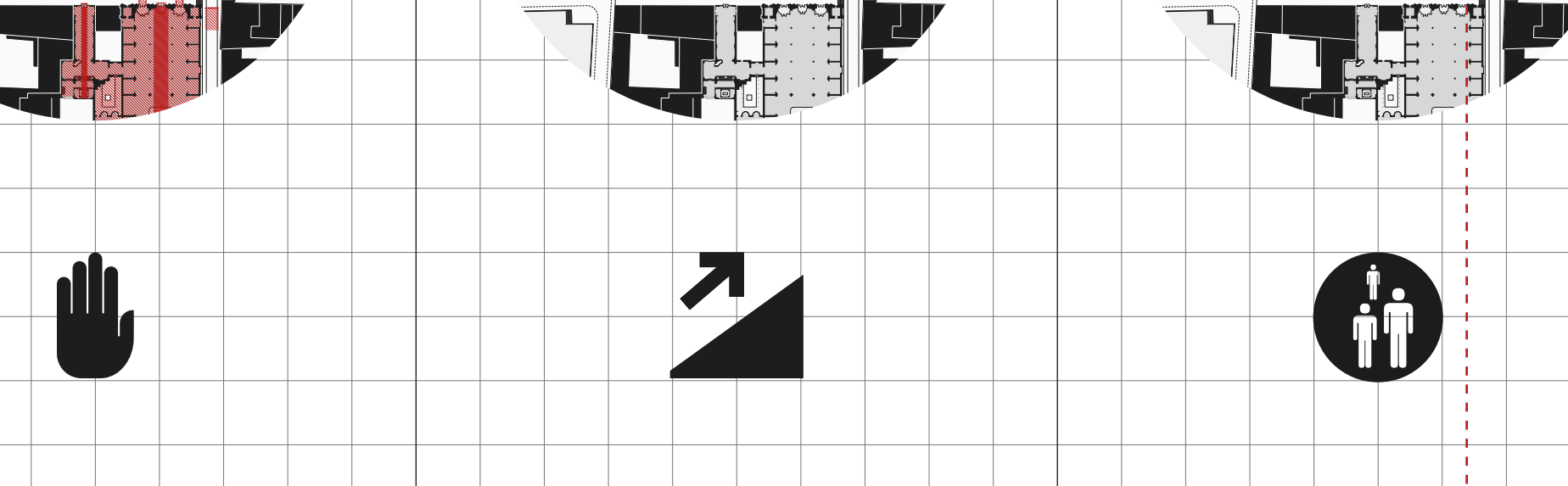
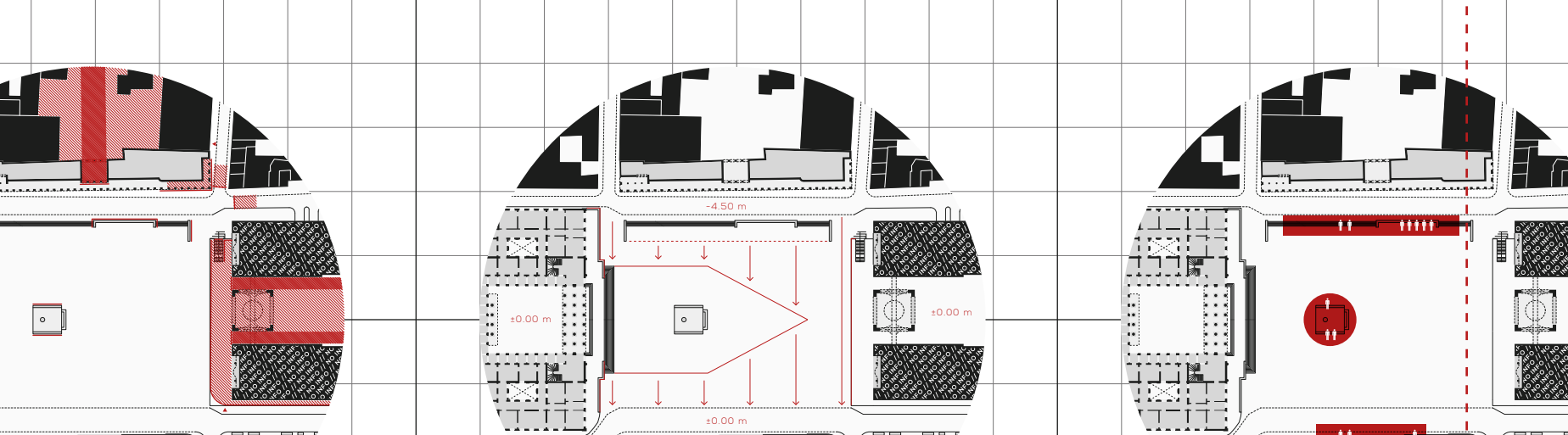
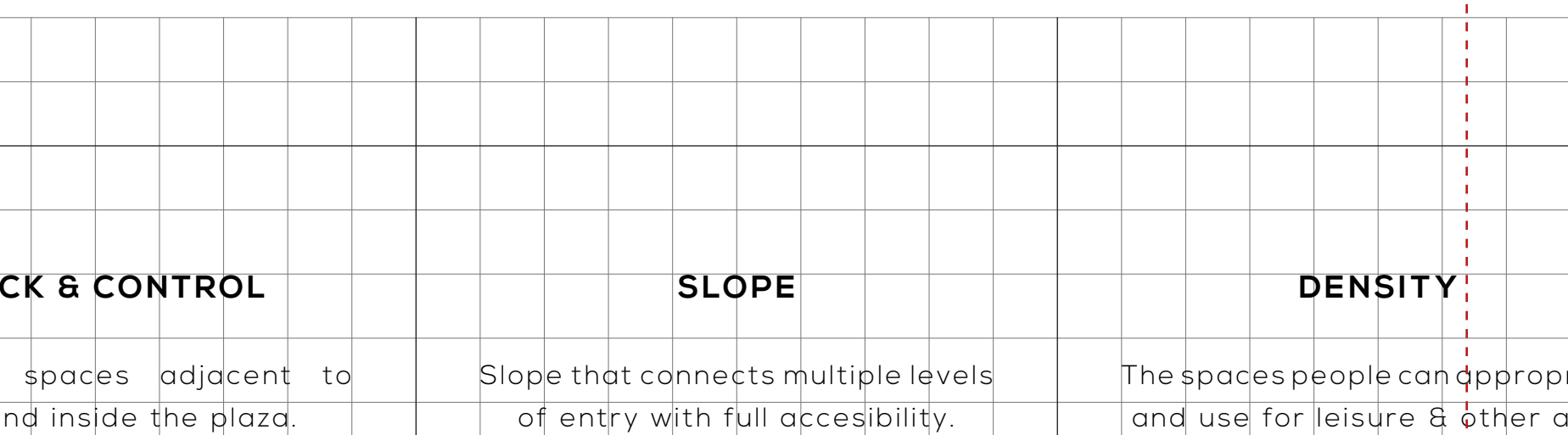
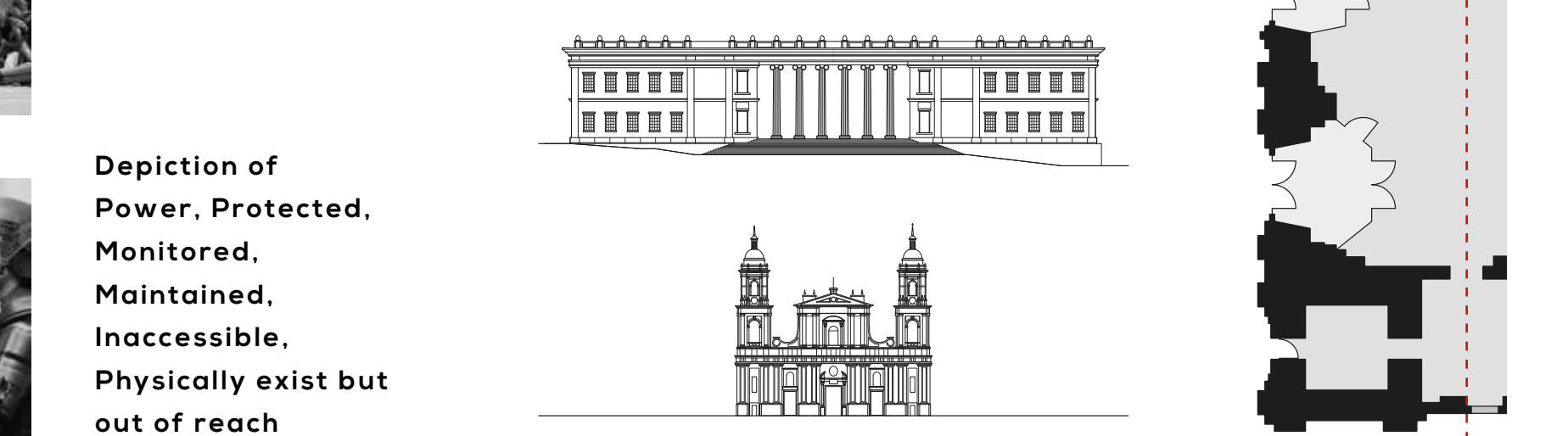
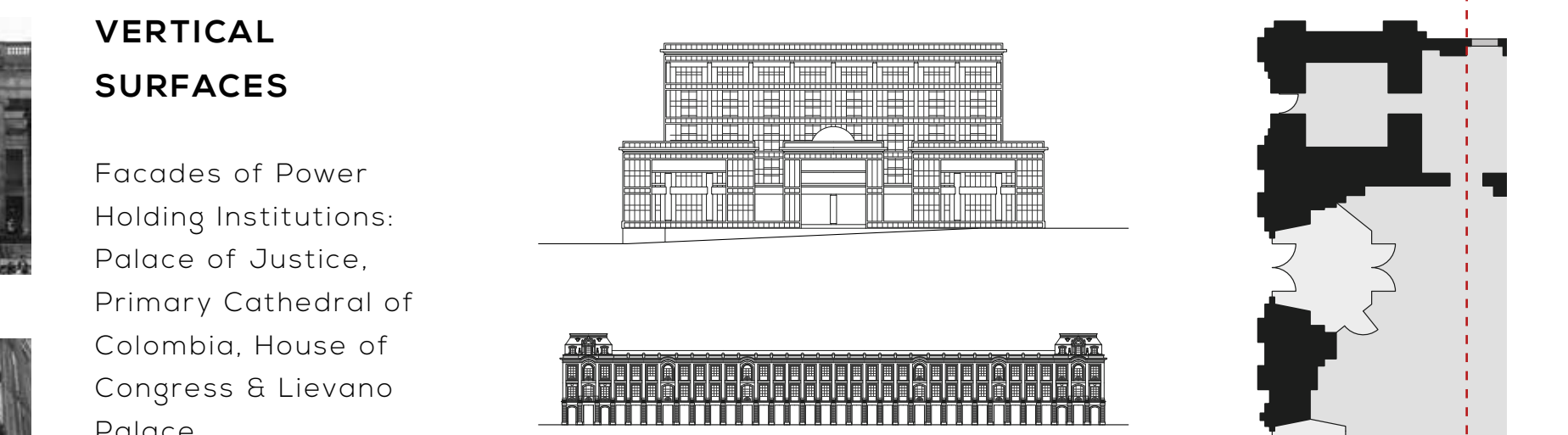
PLAZA DE BOLIVAR

As project deals with exclusion in public realm, it is crucial to understand the situation of the center of the public realm, then main square of the city of Bogotá, Plaza De Bolívar.



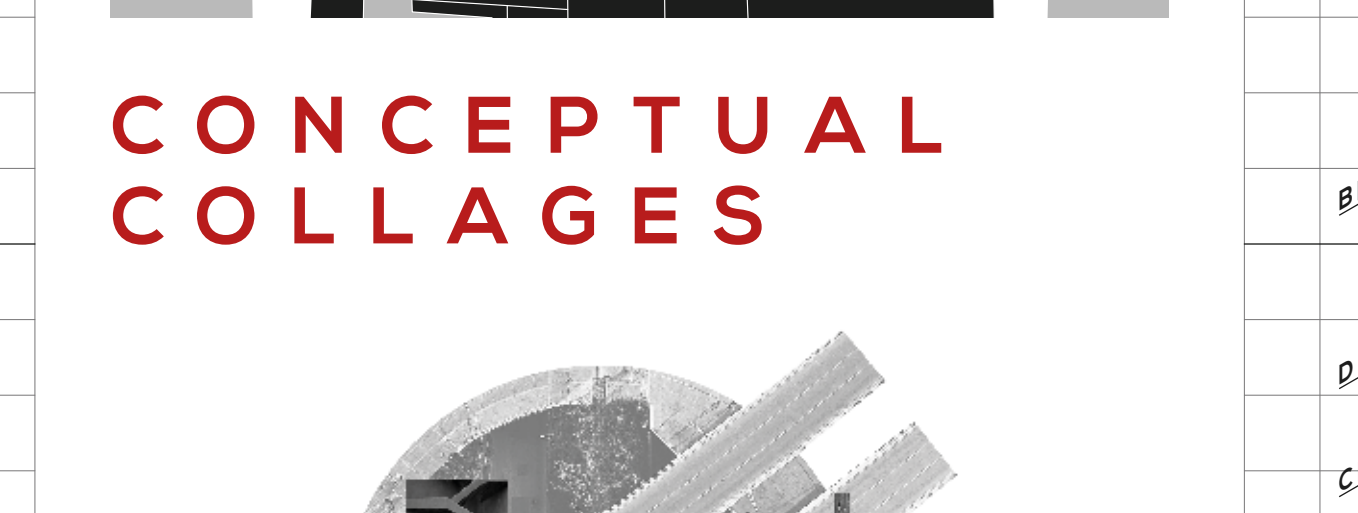
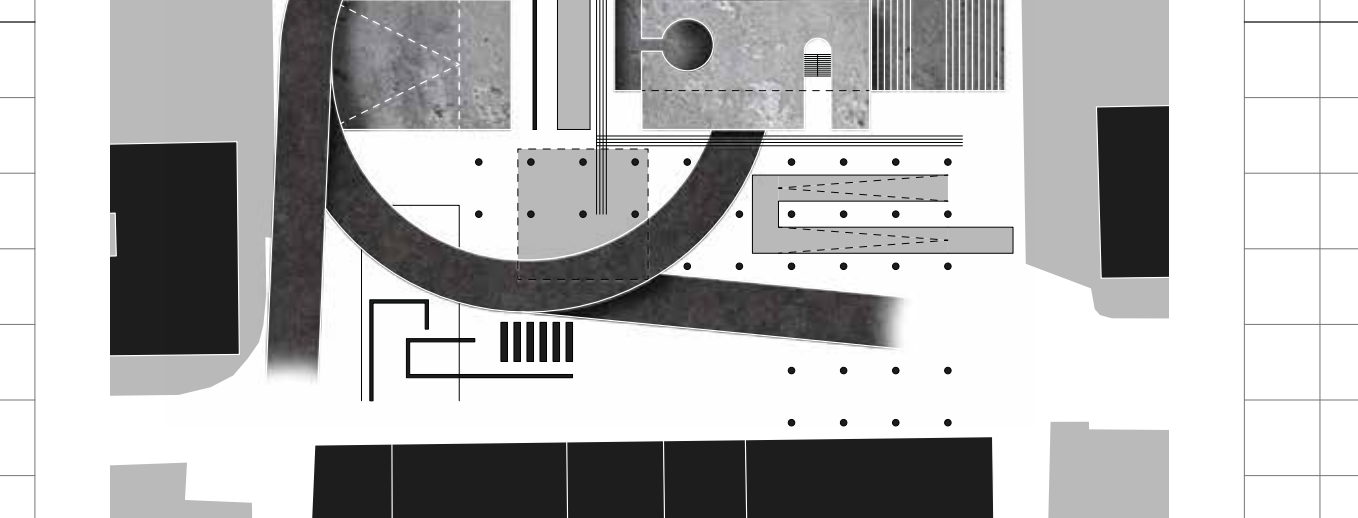
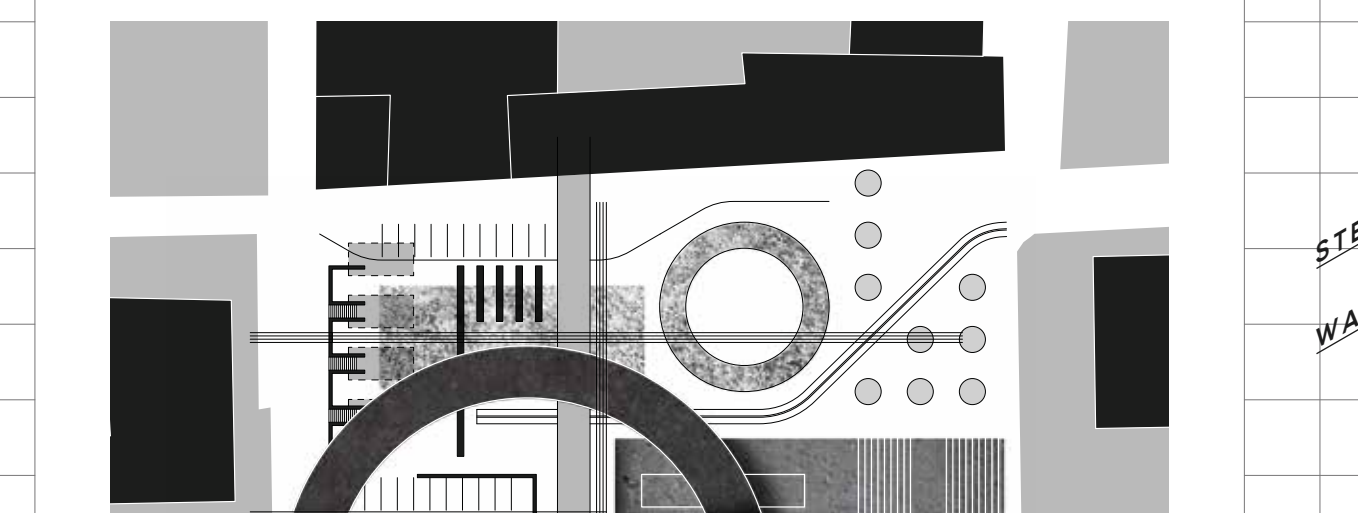
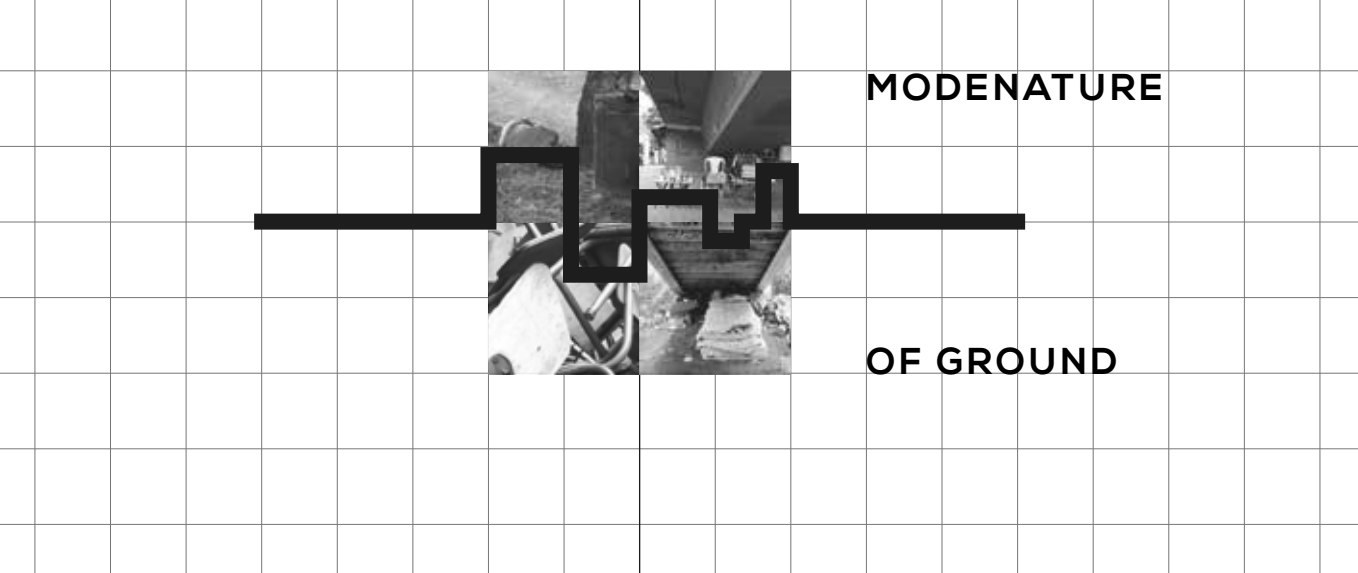
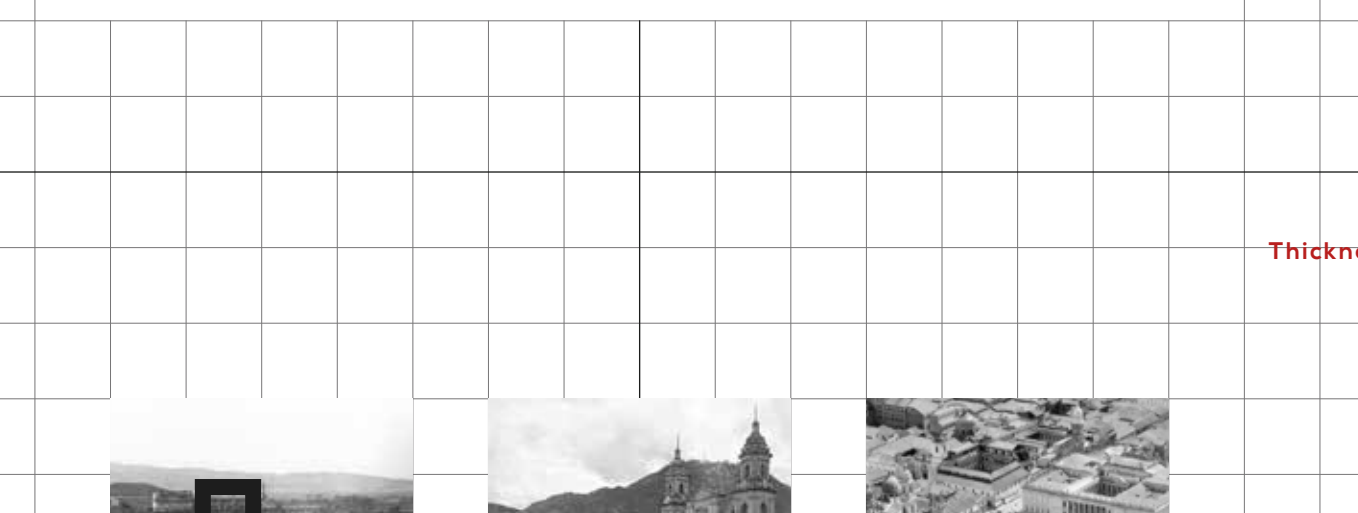
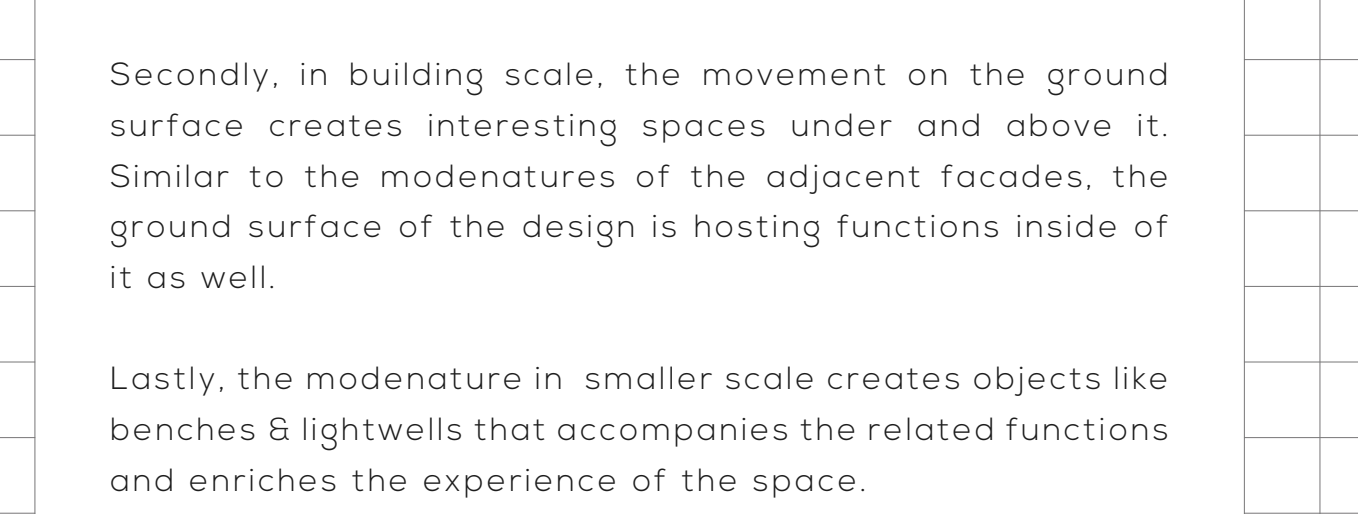
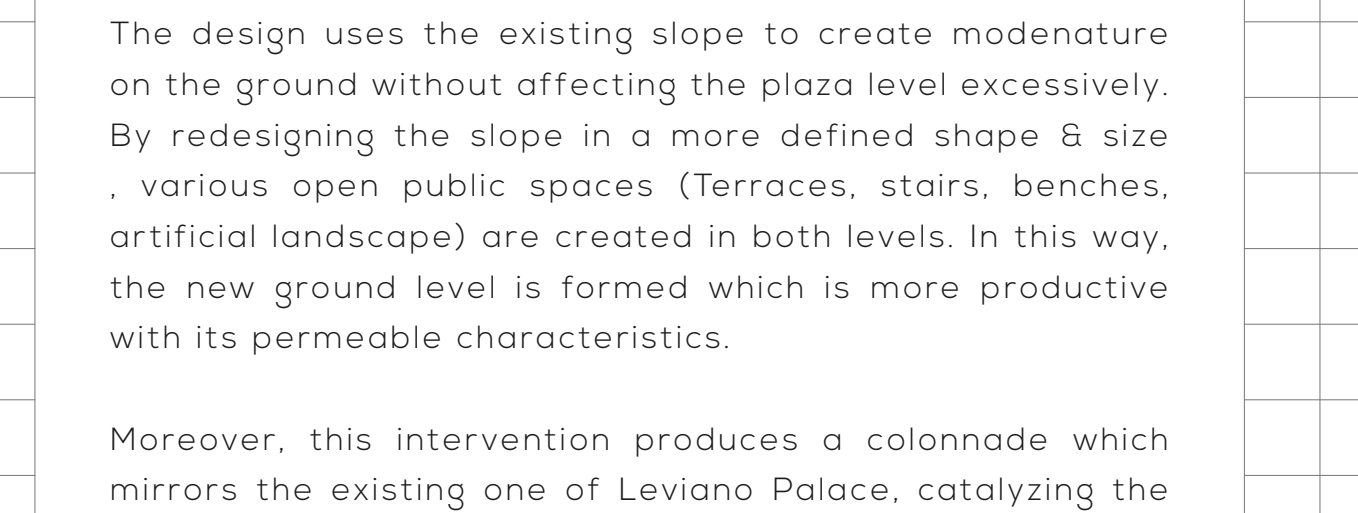
MODENATURE

Facades that are facing the plaza are historical facades of powerful institutions that governs the society. Thus, they often depict the power and wealth of the institution by intricate decorations & modernities. That's why, they are vertical surfaces that has a thickness that can host functions behind and inside the facade.



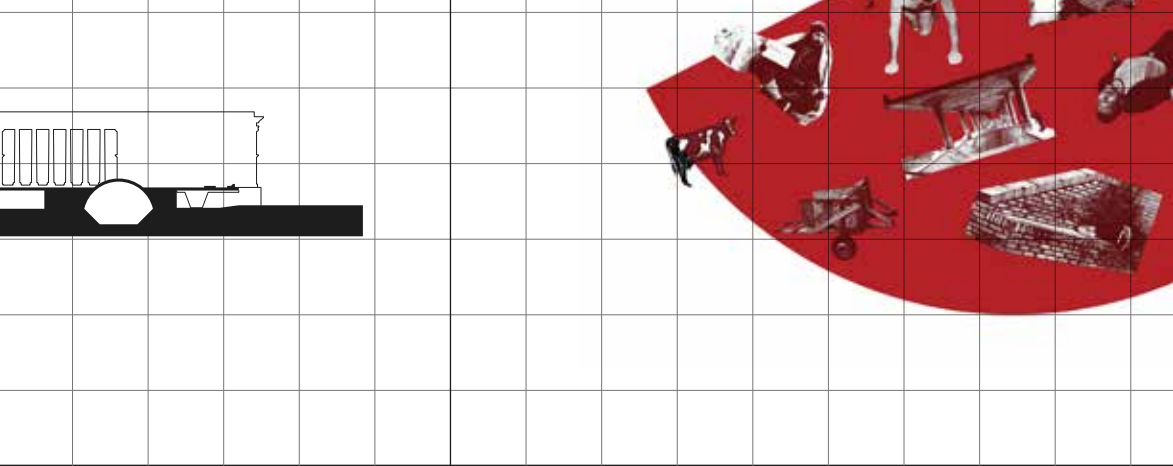
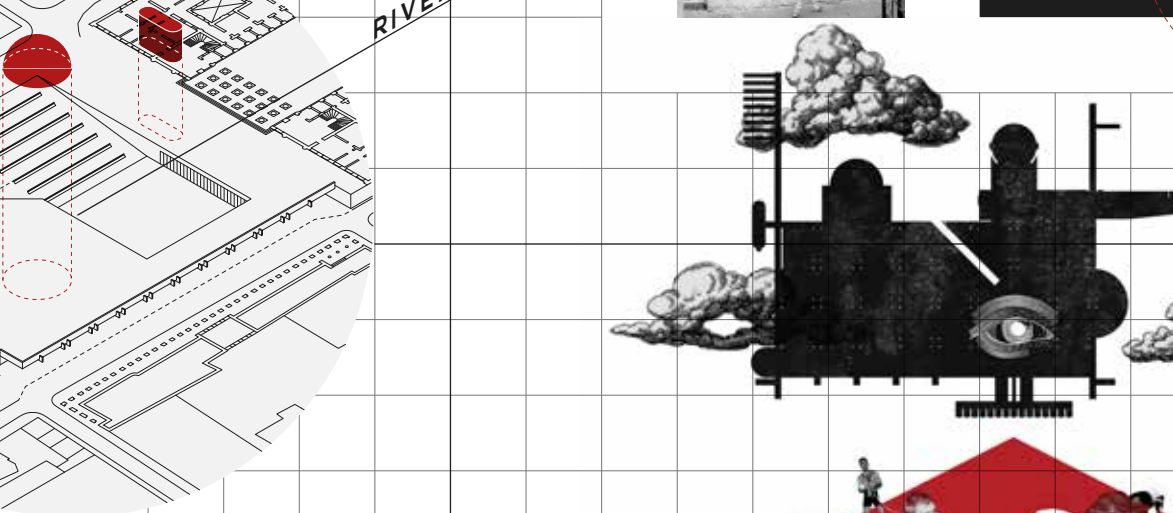
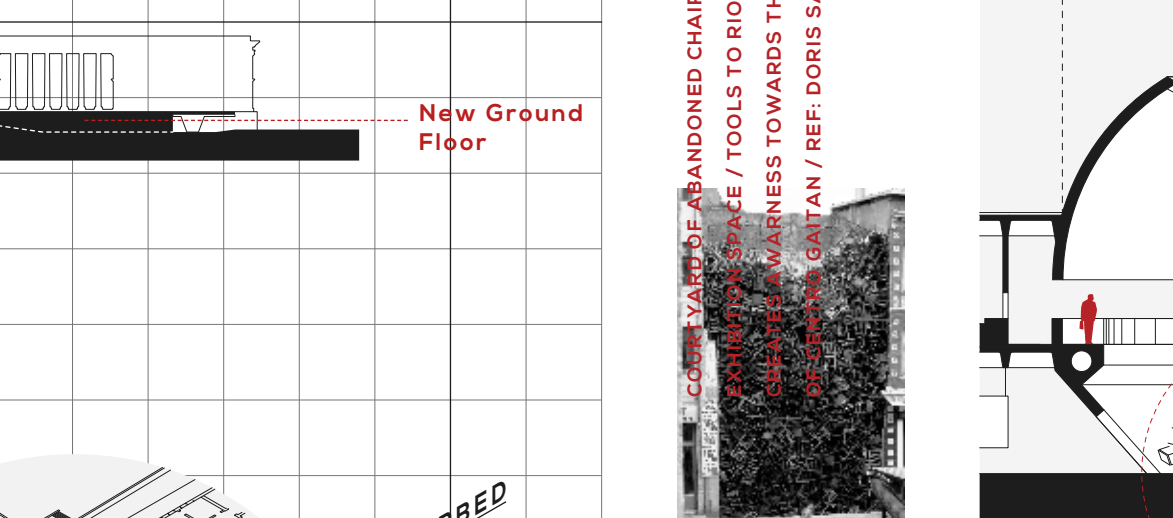
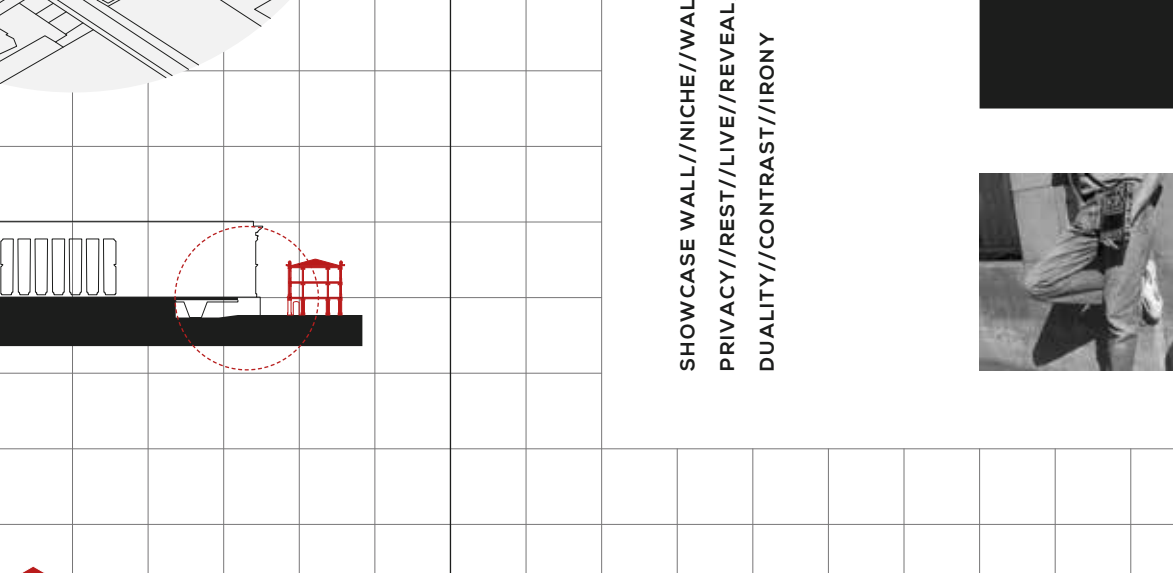
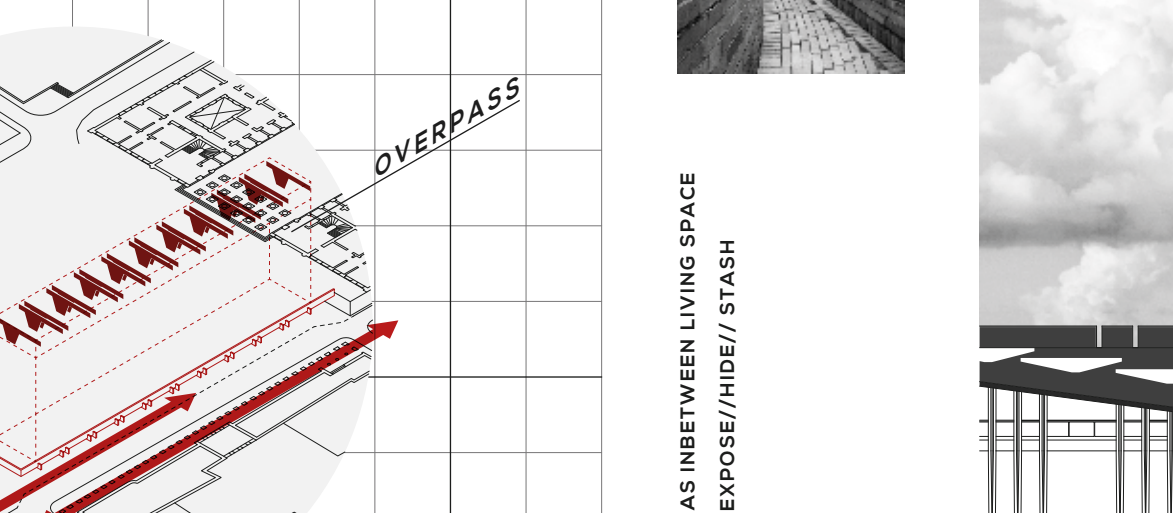
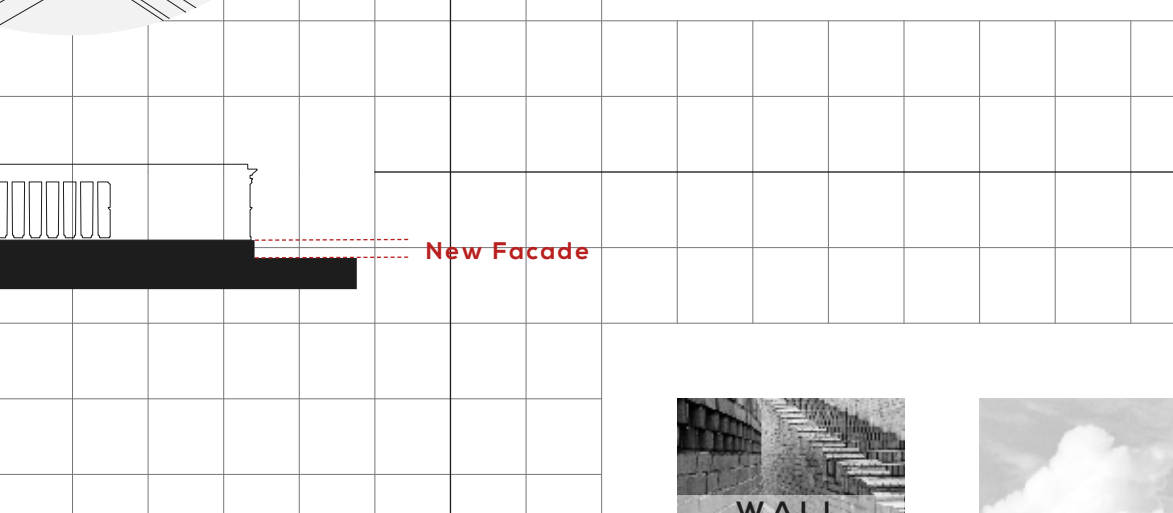
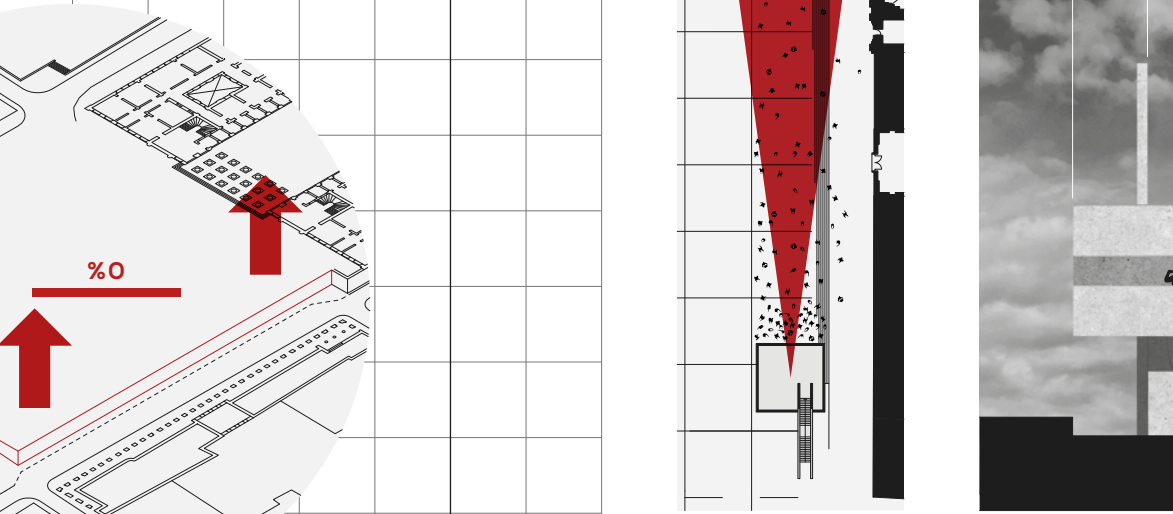
WHITE ELEPHANT

The project aims to bring excluded individuals, objects & spaces to the center of public realm, Plaza De Bolívar and allow them to exist freely, hidden from the surveillance of the power holding institutions.



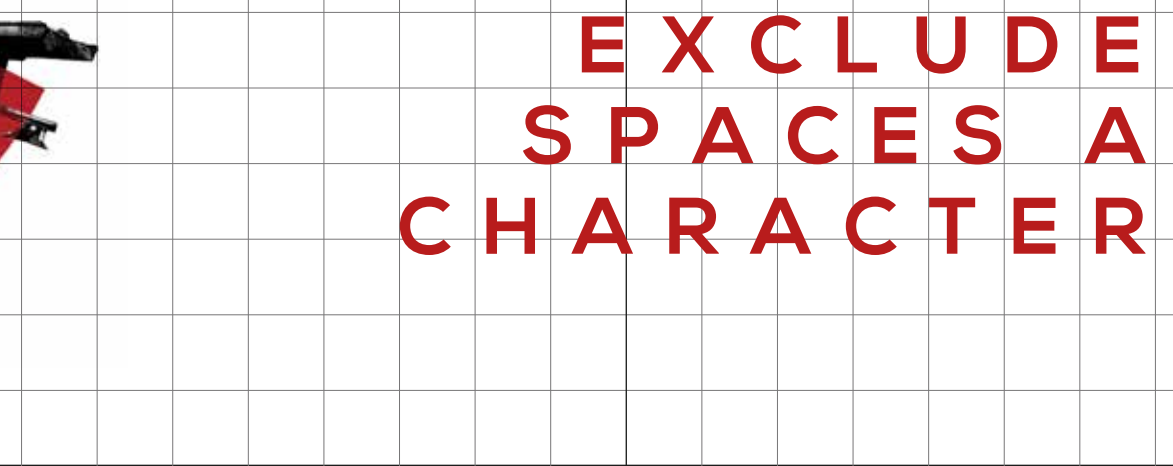
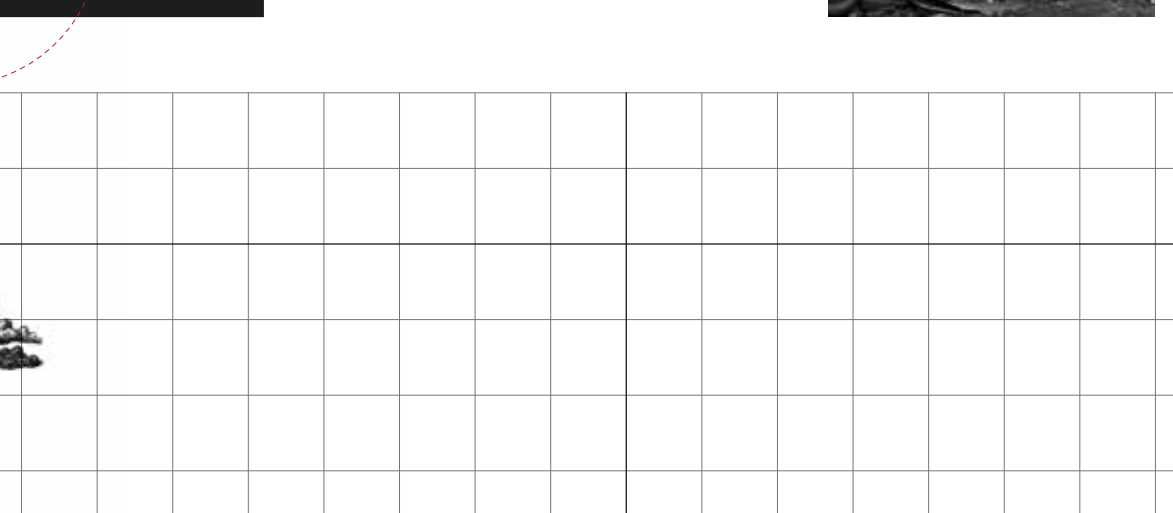
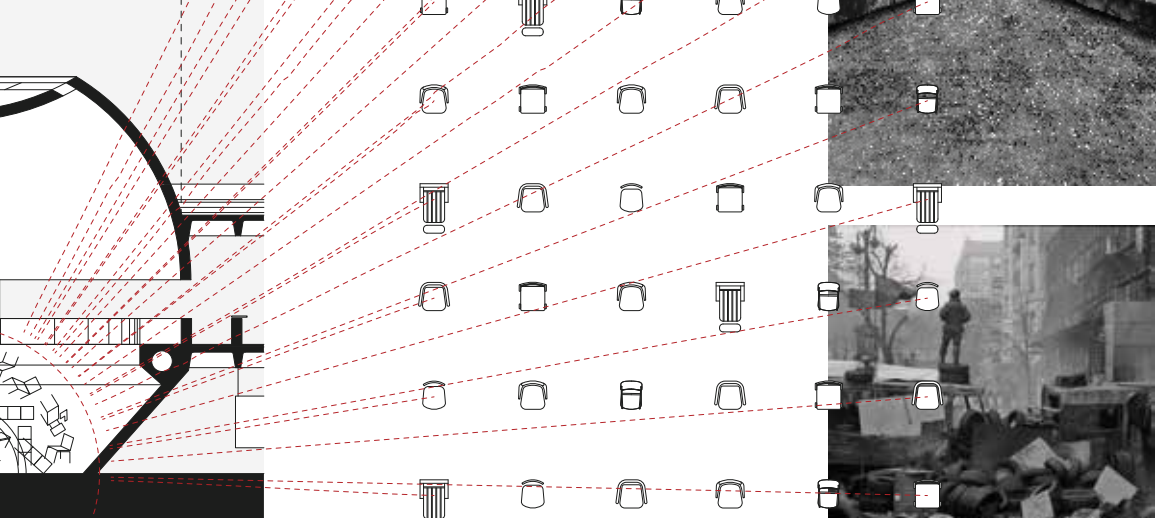
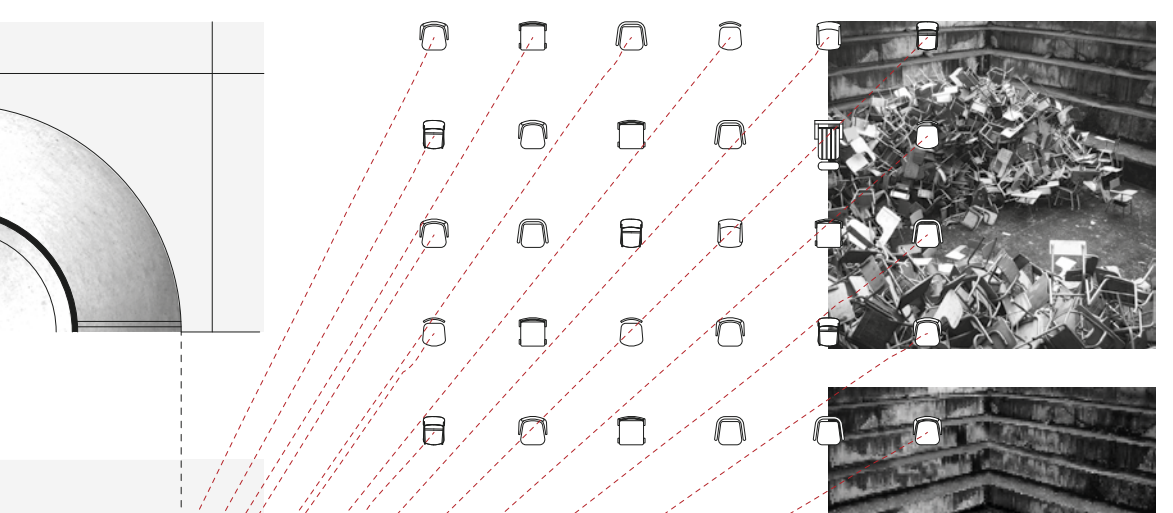
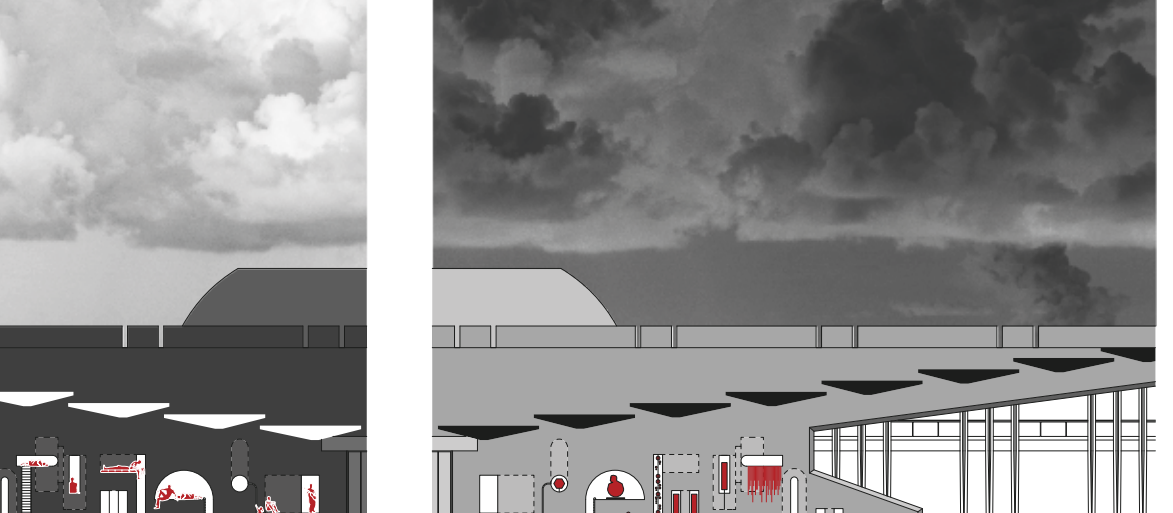
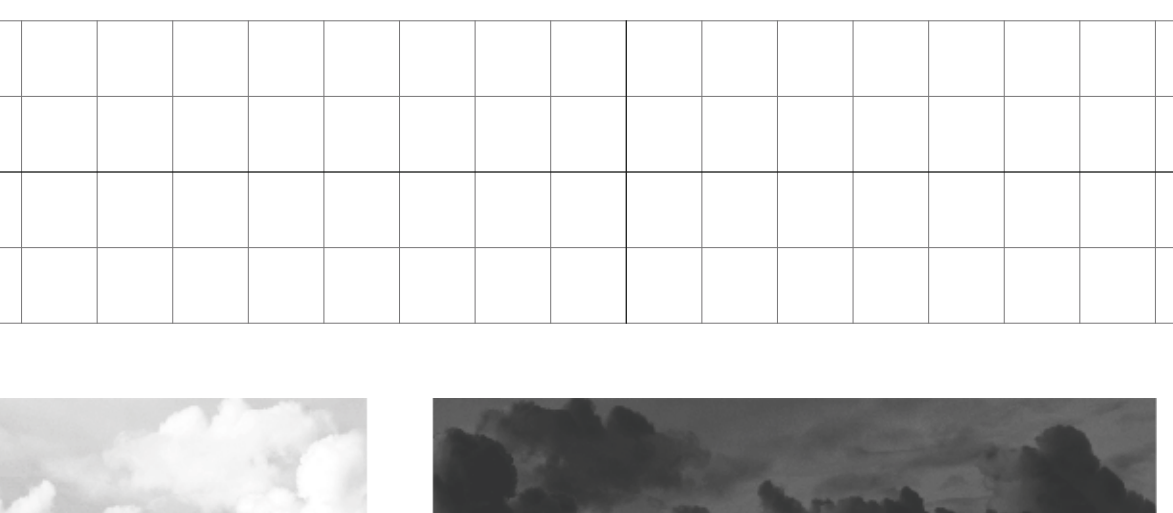
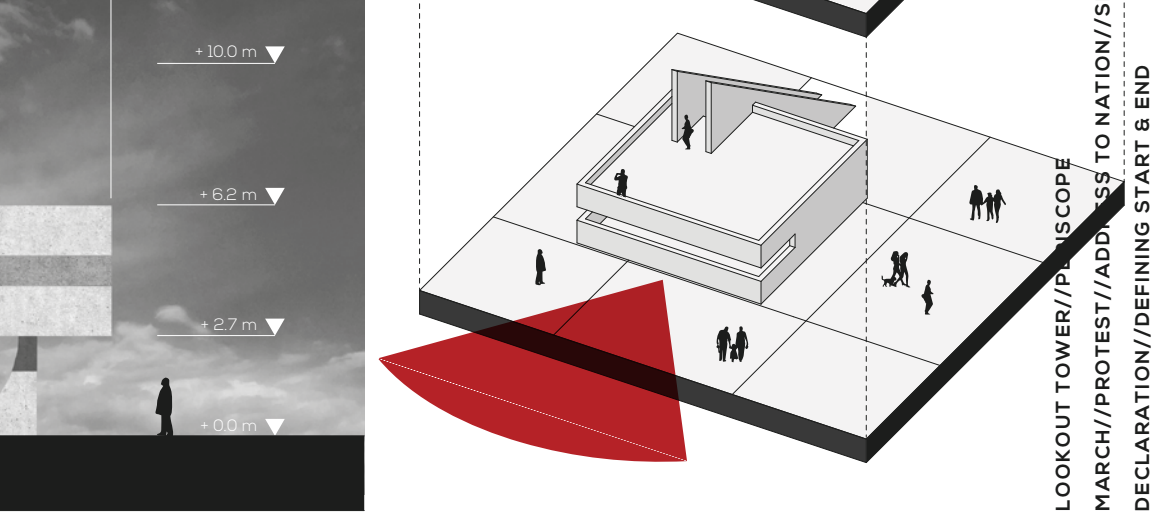
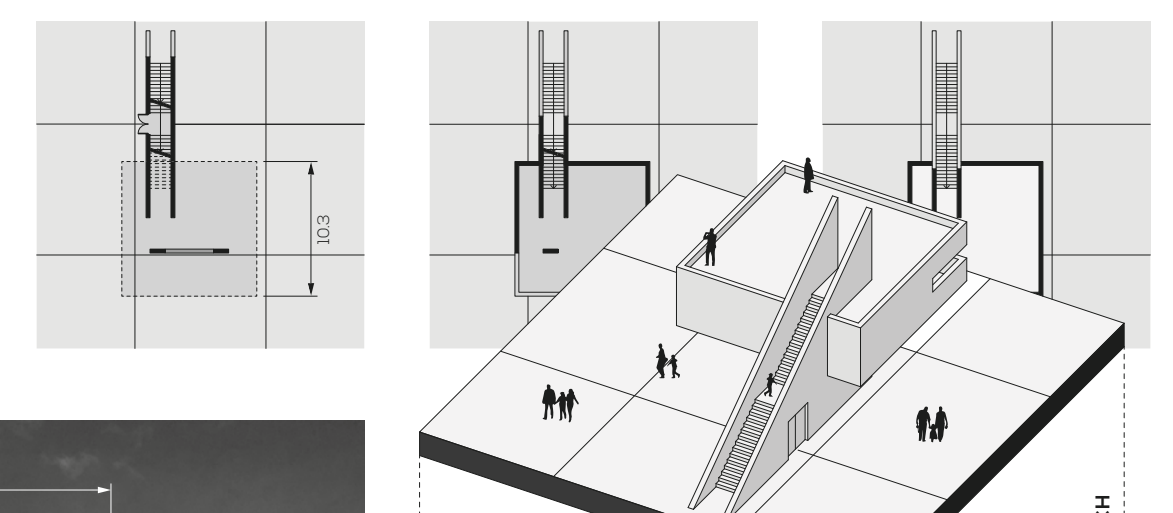
DISGUISE OF THE PROGRAM

To cope with the power of the decision makers and prejudice against the design, the program hides itself inbetween the "required" and "expected" functions, secretly existing behind the complexity of different functions and spaces that building hosts. The emergency exit becomes a lookout tower, the exhibition space, the showcase wall turns into a rehabilitative vertical living space and the installation becomes a tool for building a barricade.



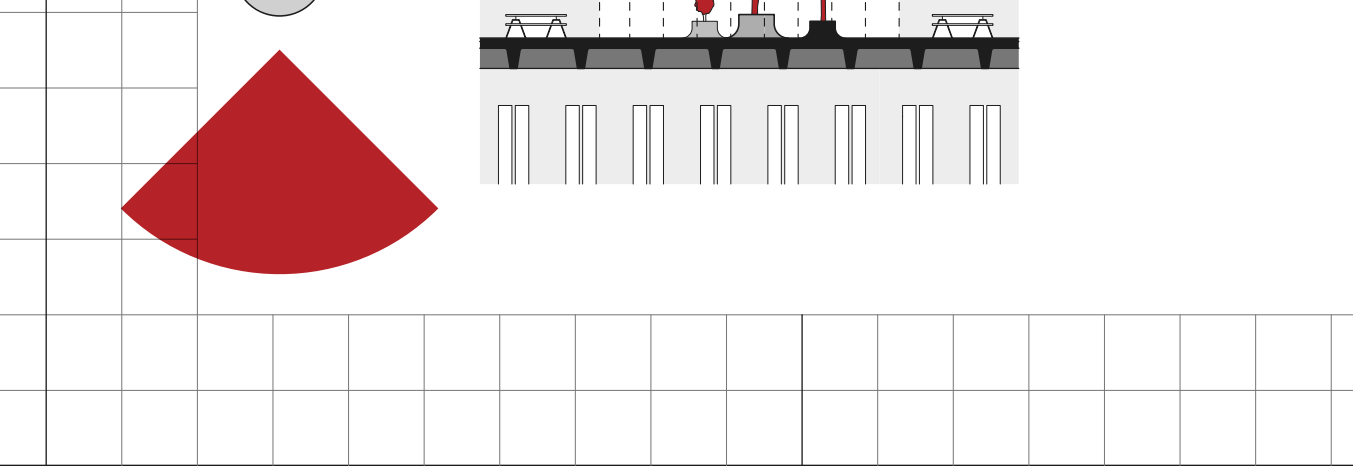
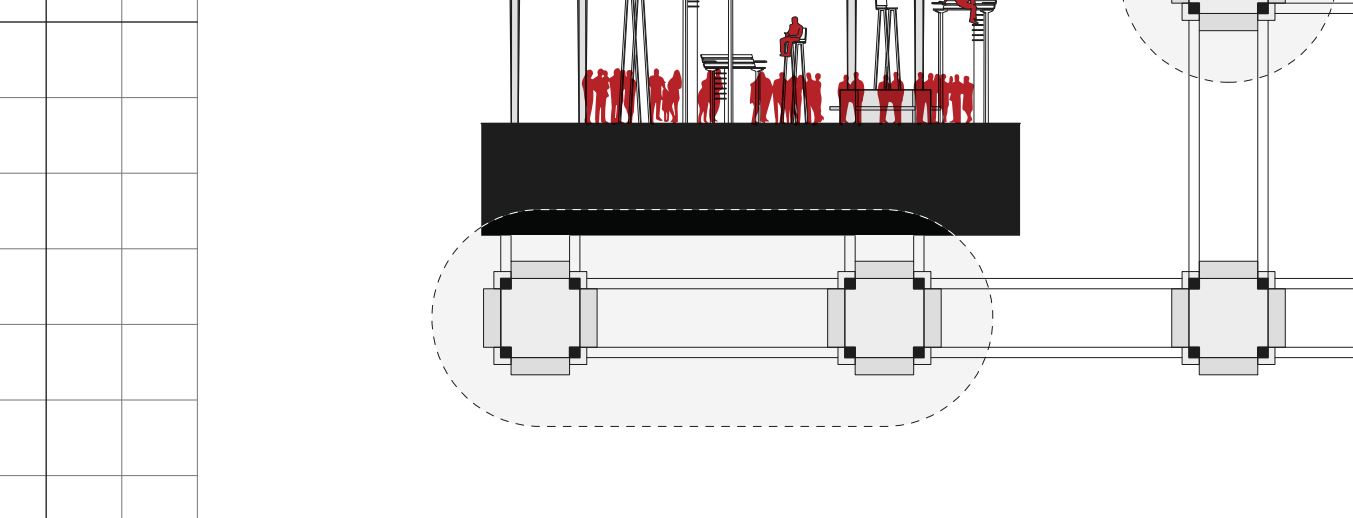
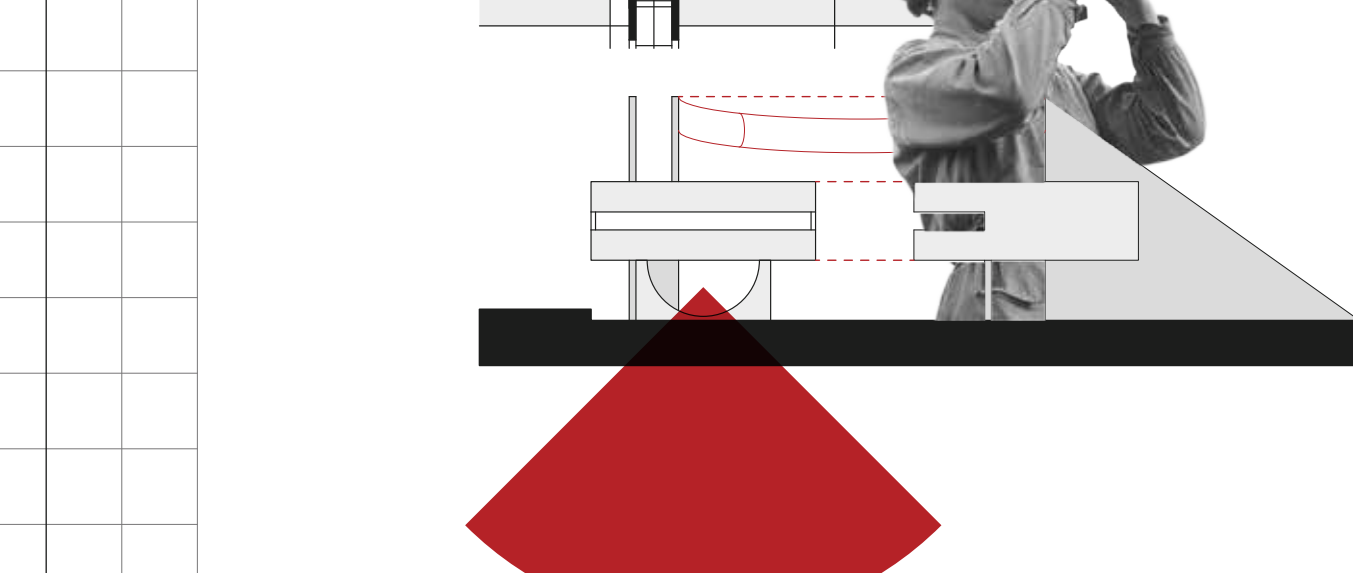
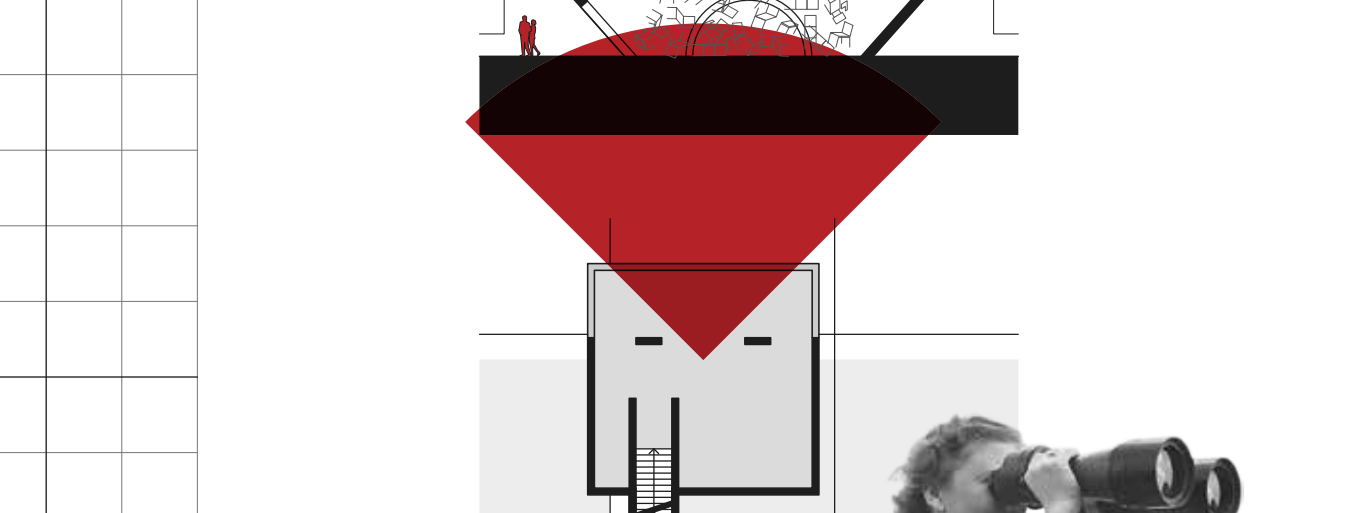
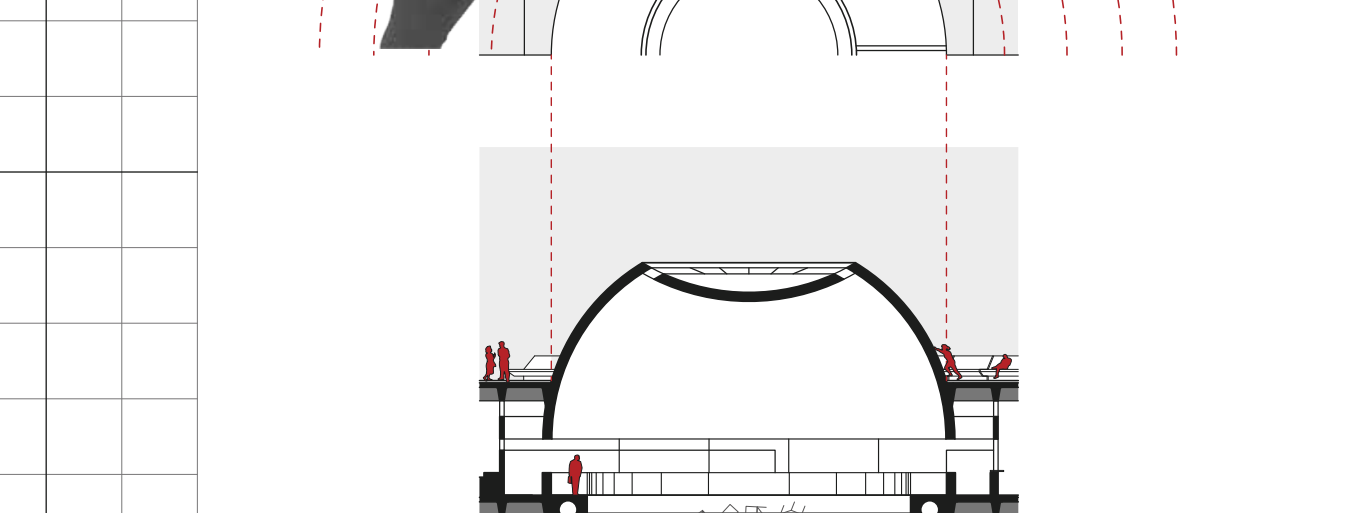
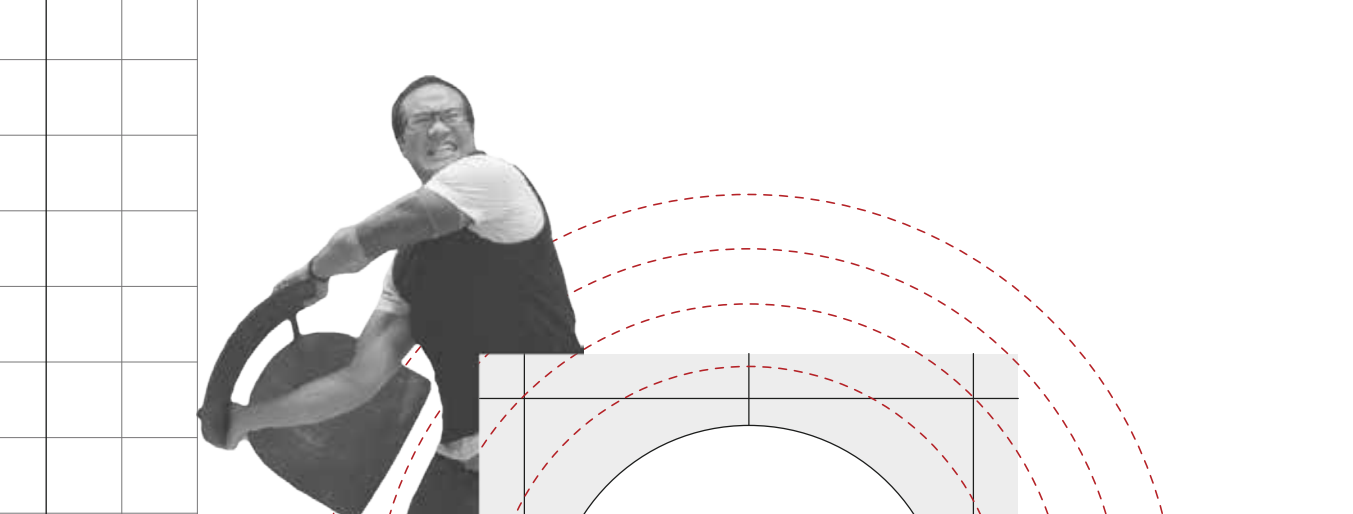
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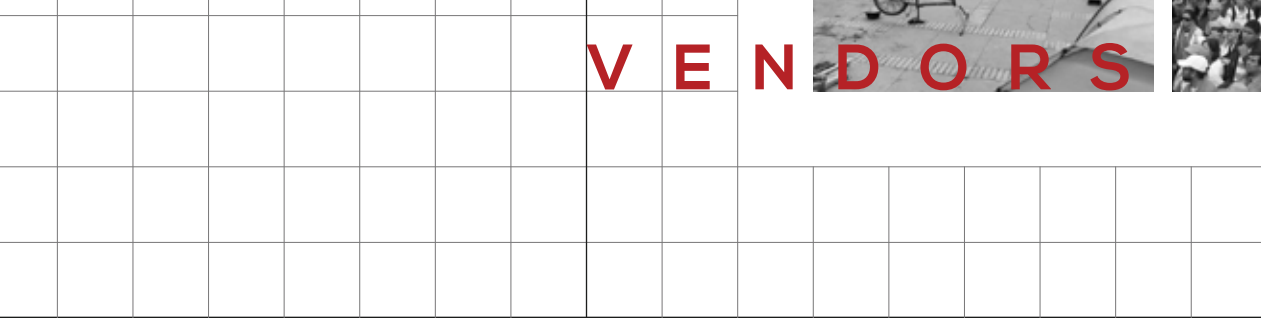
CONCEPTUAL COLLAGES

The design uses the existing slope to create modenature on the ground without affecting the plaza level excessively. By redesigning the slope in a more defined shape & size various open public spaces (Terraces, stairs, benches, artificial landscape) are created in both levels. In this way, the new ground level is formed which is more productive with its permeable characteristics.



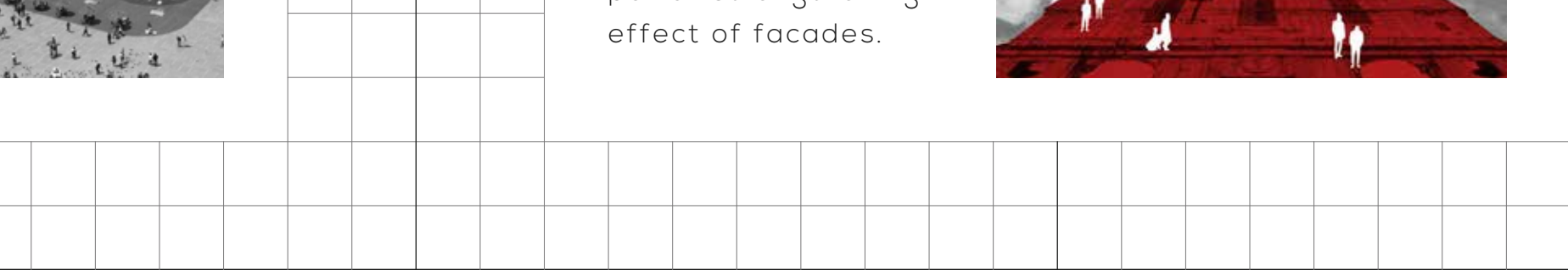
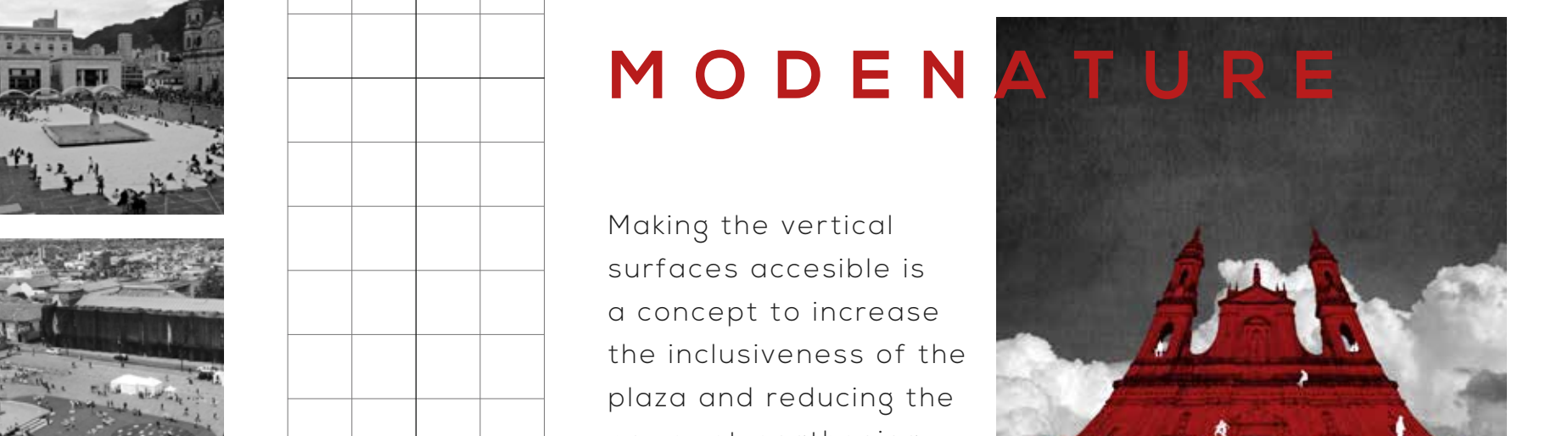
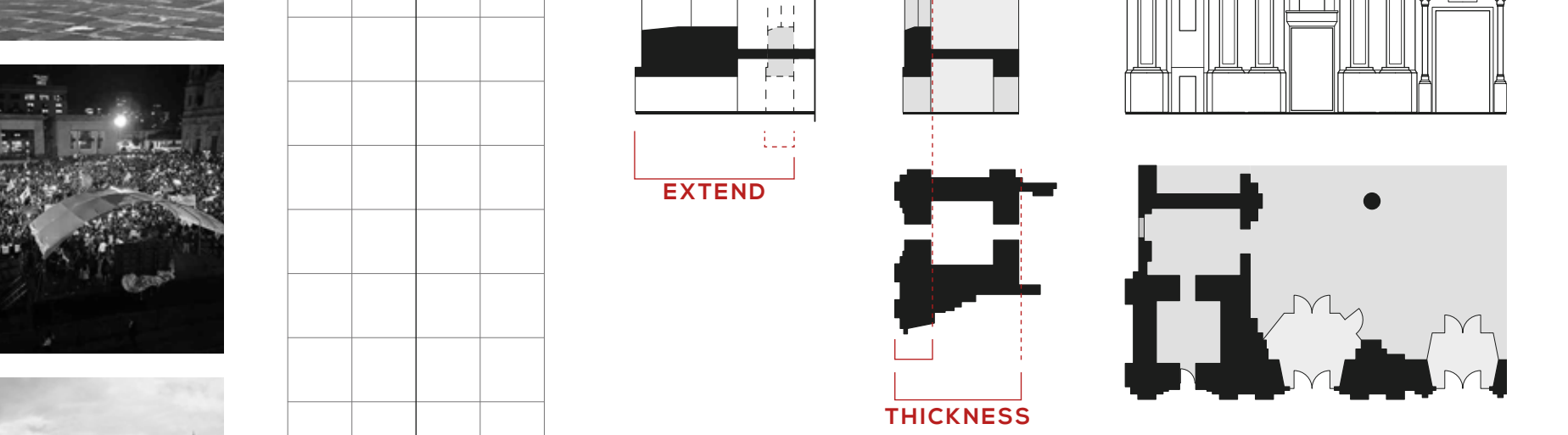
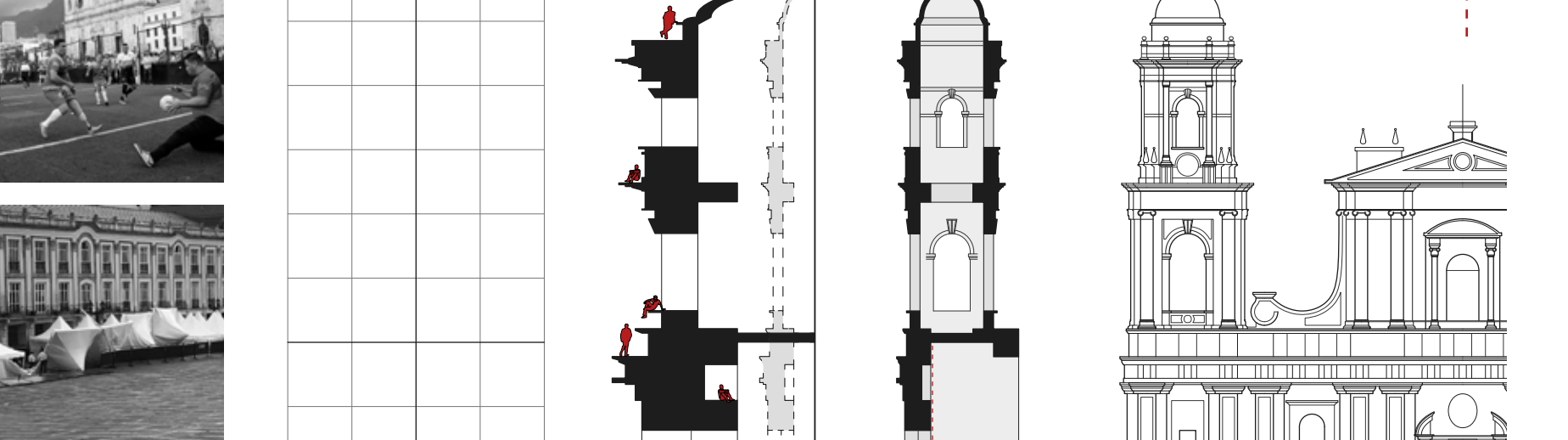
EXCLUDED SPACES

Public spaces are also influenced by the exclusion forces. As the power holders change and transform, the spaces that they control also are remodelled and reconstructed to their needs. However, this fluctuation in power relations often results in the repressing of certain public spaces. That's why those of the "White Elephants" are left unfinished. Similar to these, Plaza de Bolívar is controlled and restrained by the power holding institutions and can be considered as an excluded object because it is passively controlled, monitored and protected.



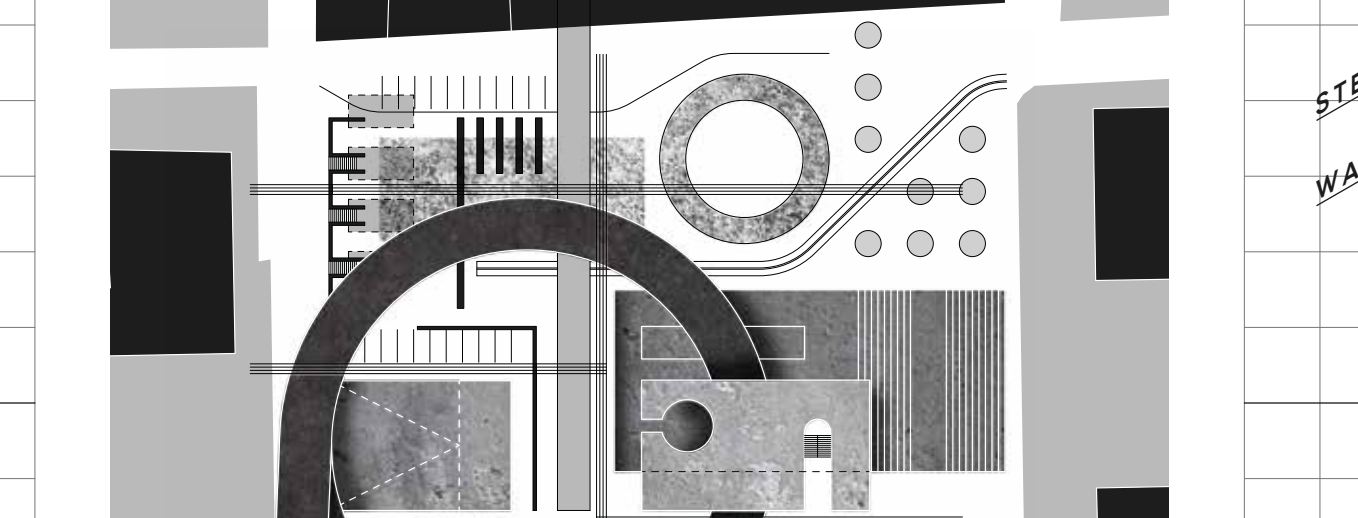
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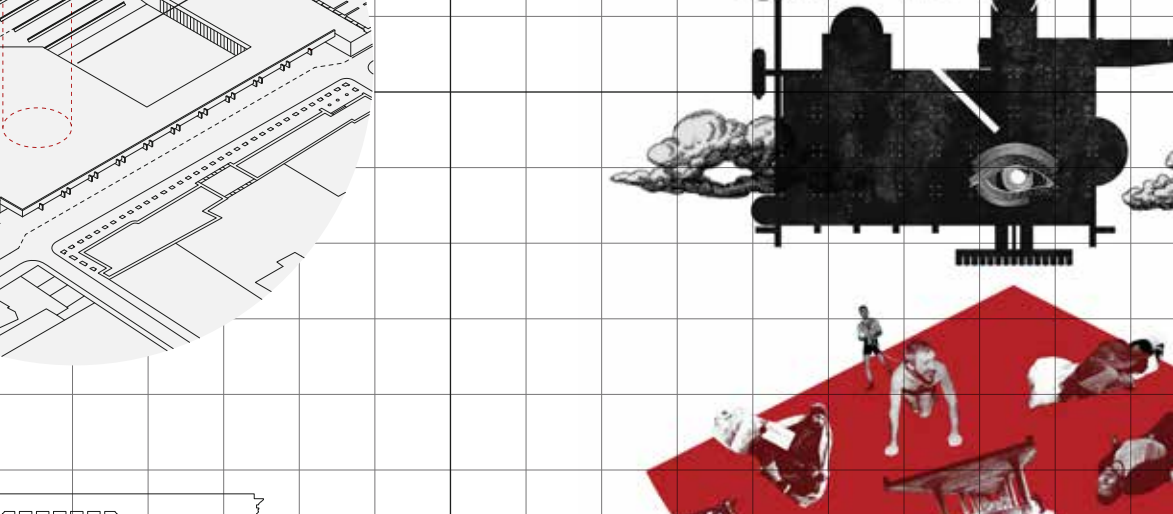
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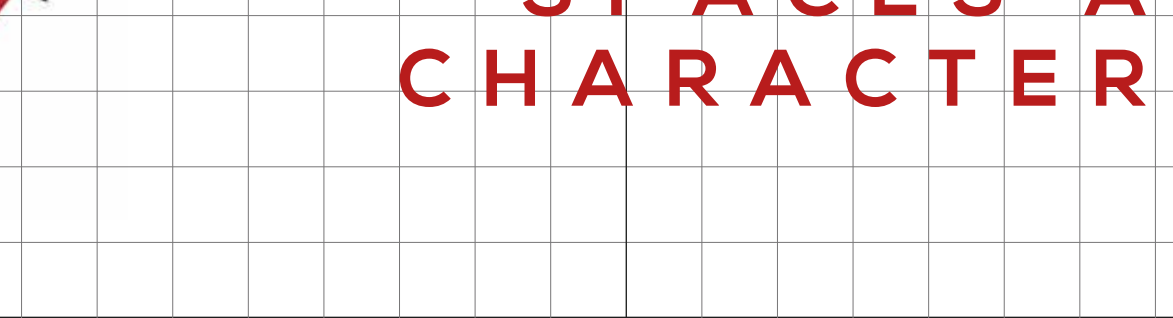
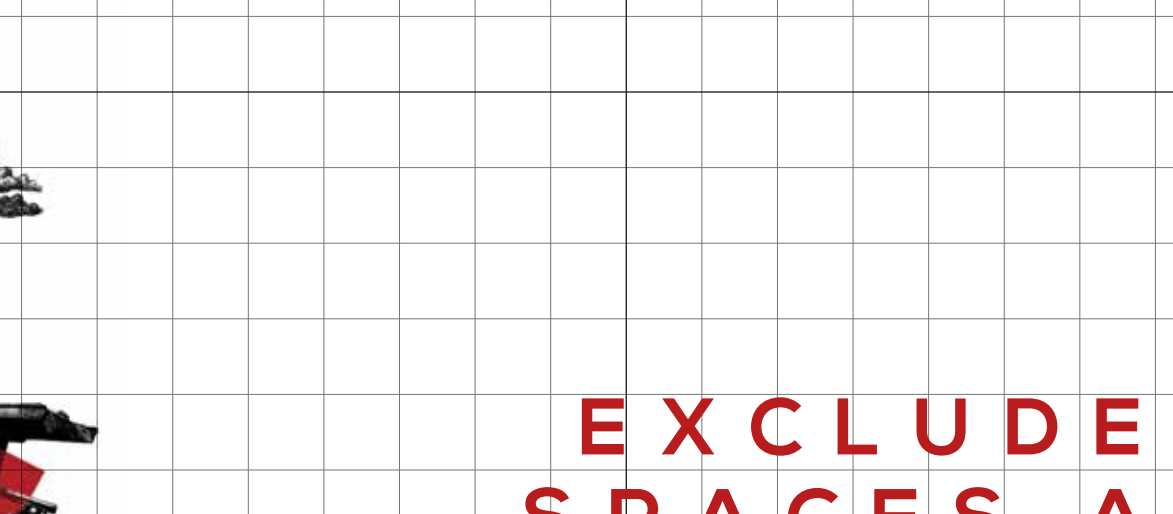
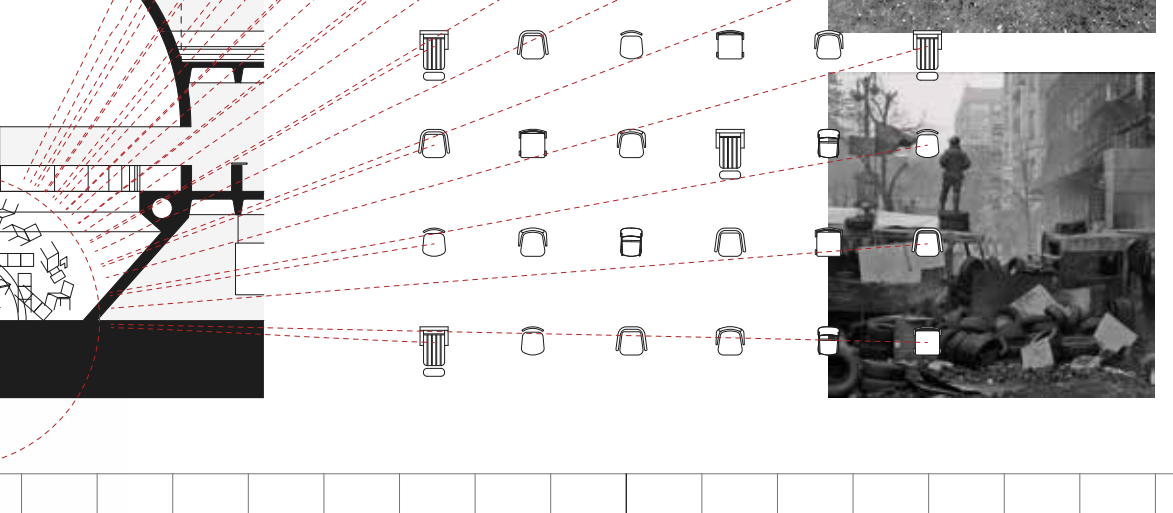
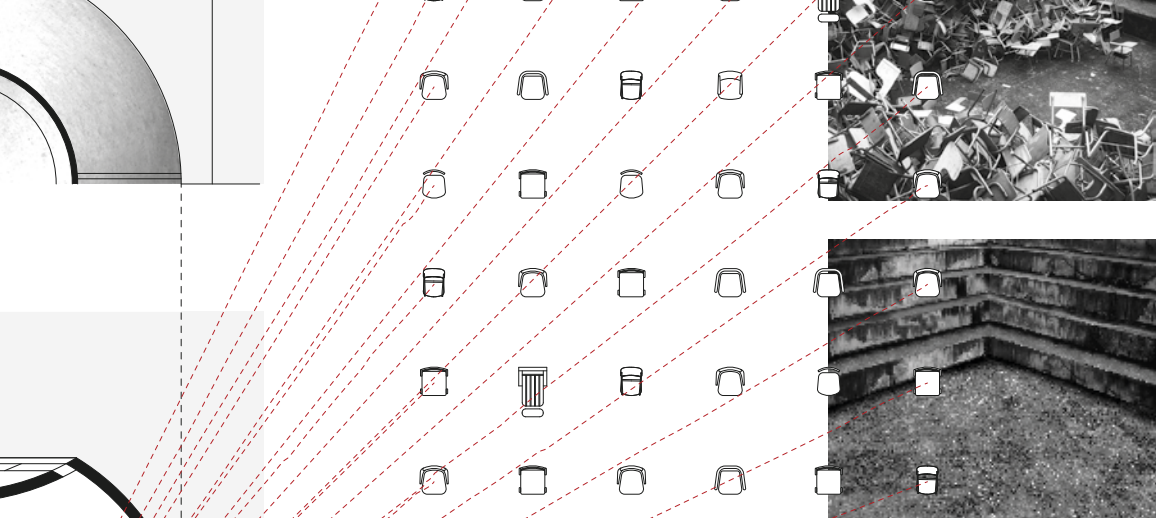
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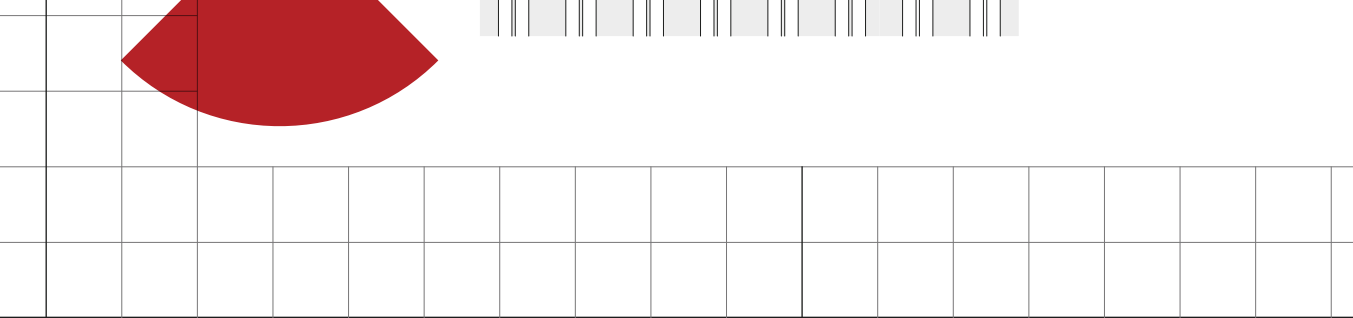
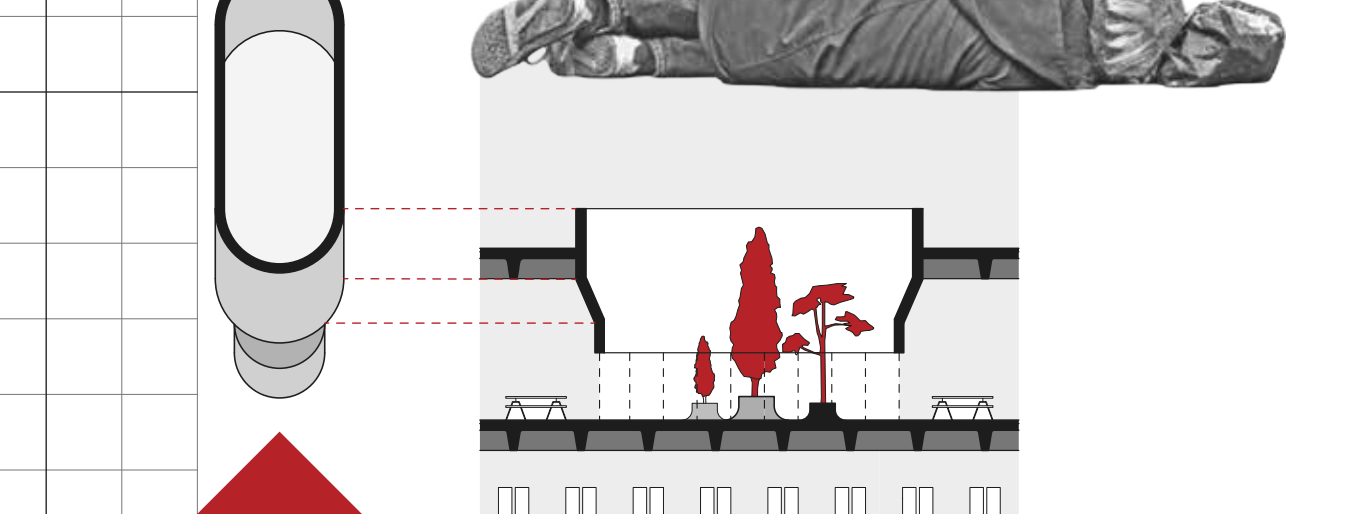
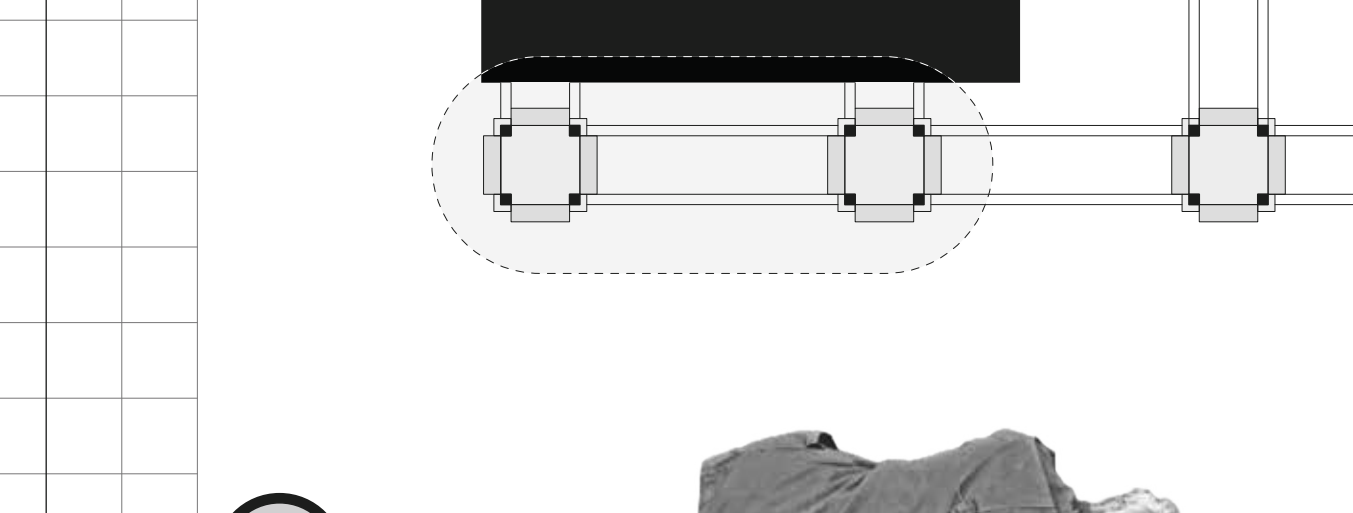
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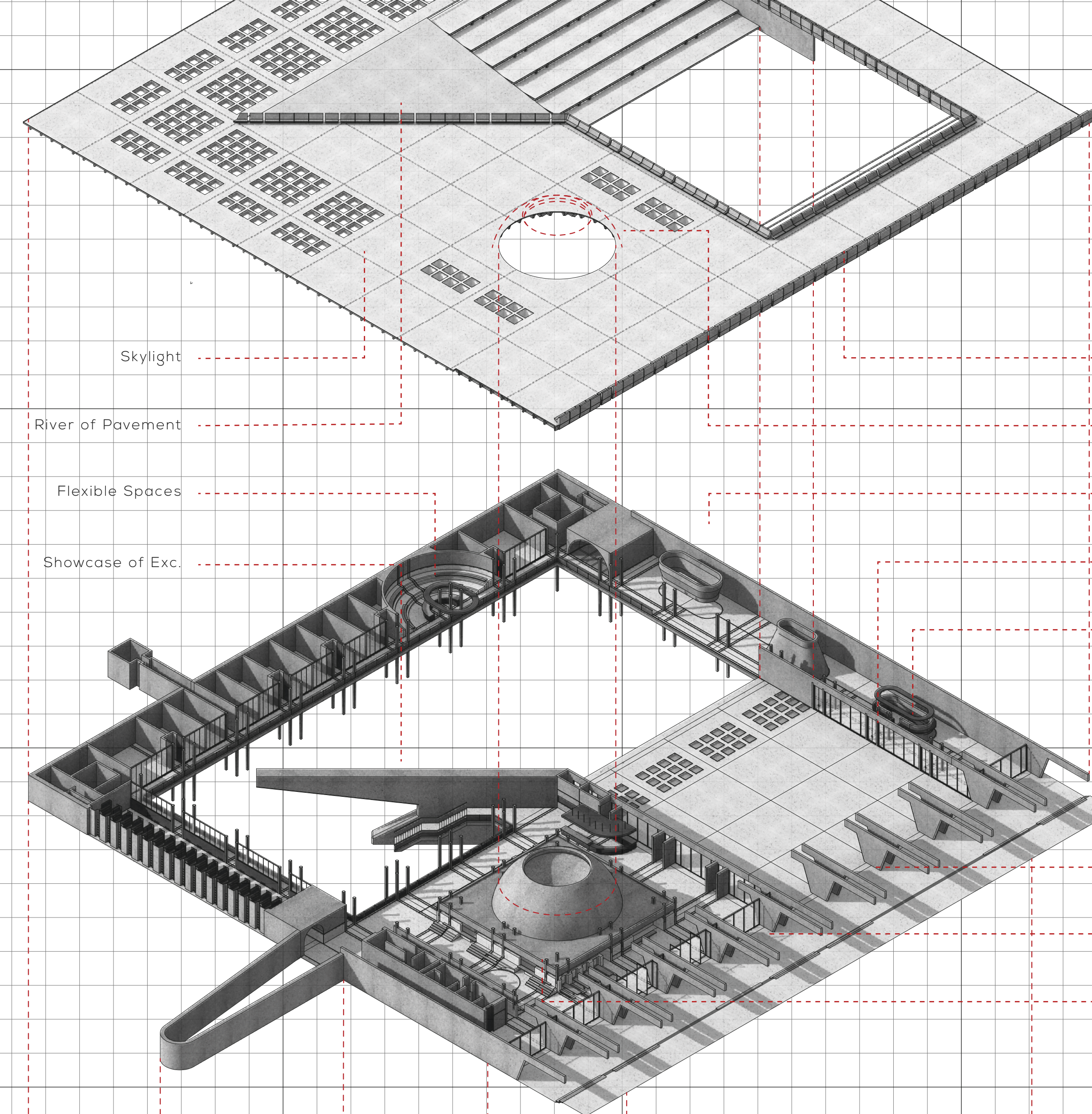
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EXPLODED DIAGRAM

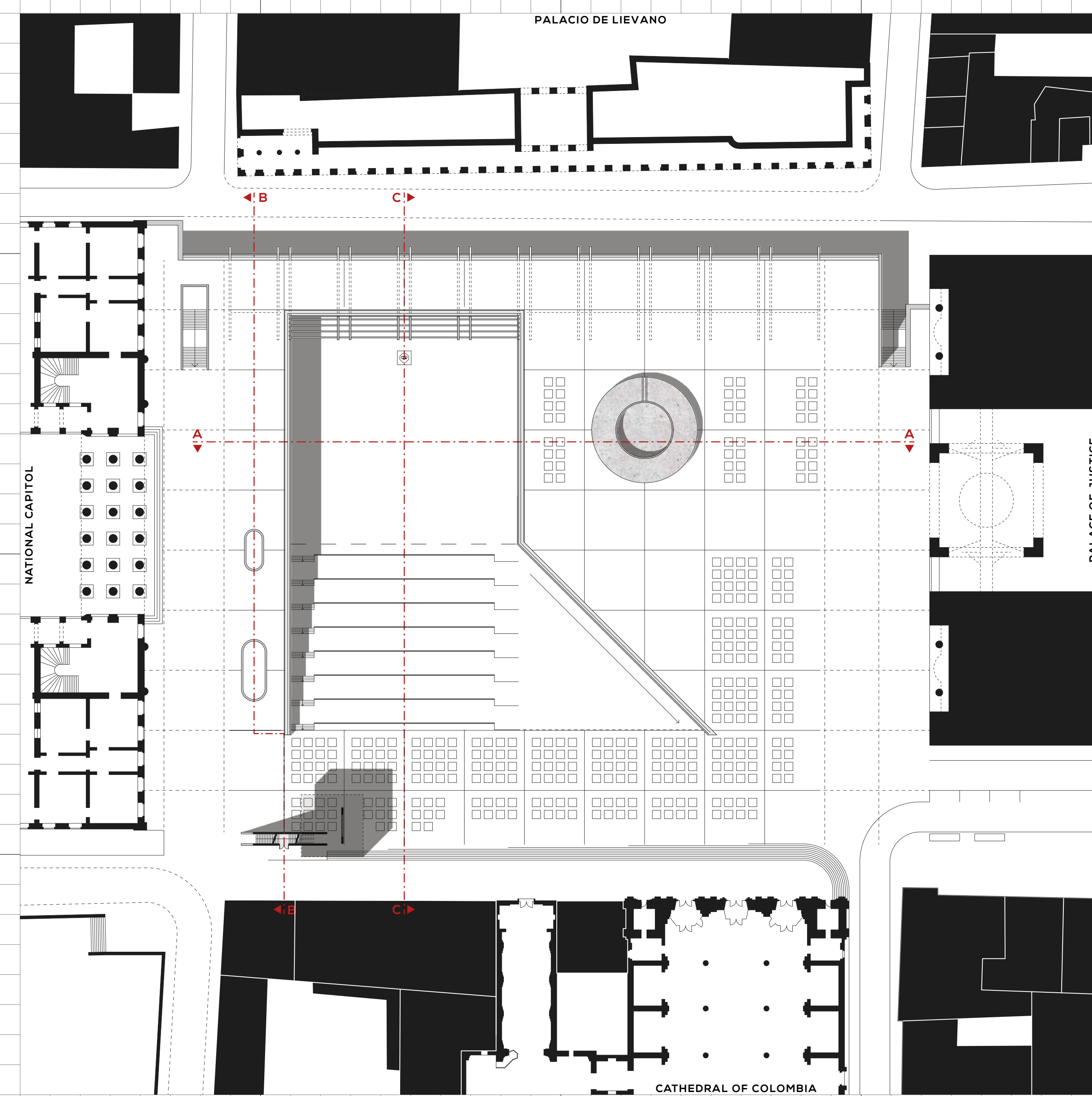
The design is formed by various types of open public functions, with accompanying facilities in 3 levels.



FLOOR PLANS

The design brings the excluded objects, spaces and functions from all around the city to the center of the public space, exhibiting it and allowing to exist without disturbing the plaza.

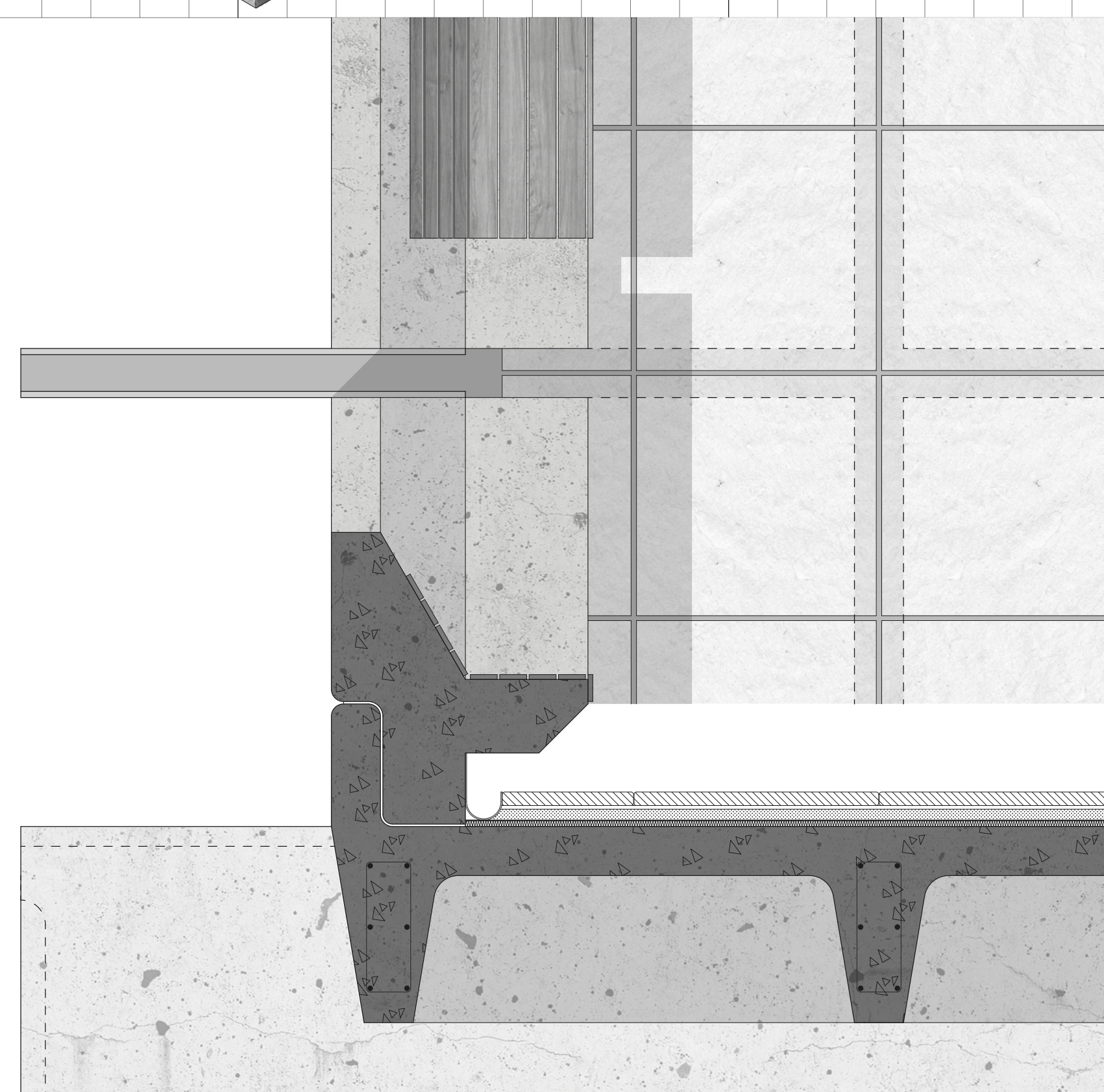
These excluded beings are hidden underneath the plaza, out of the sight of power holding institutions that govern and controls the society.



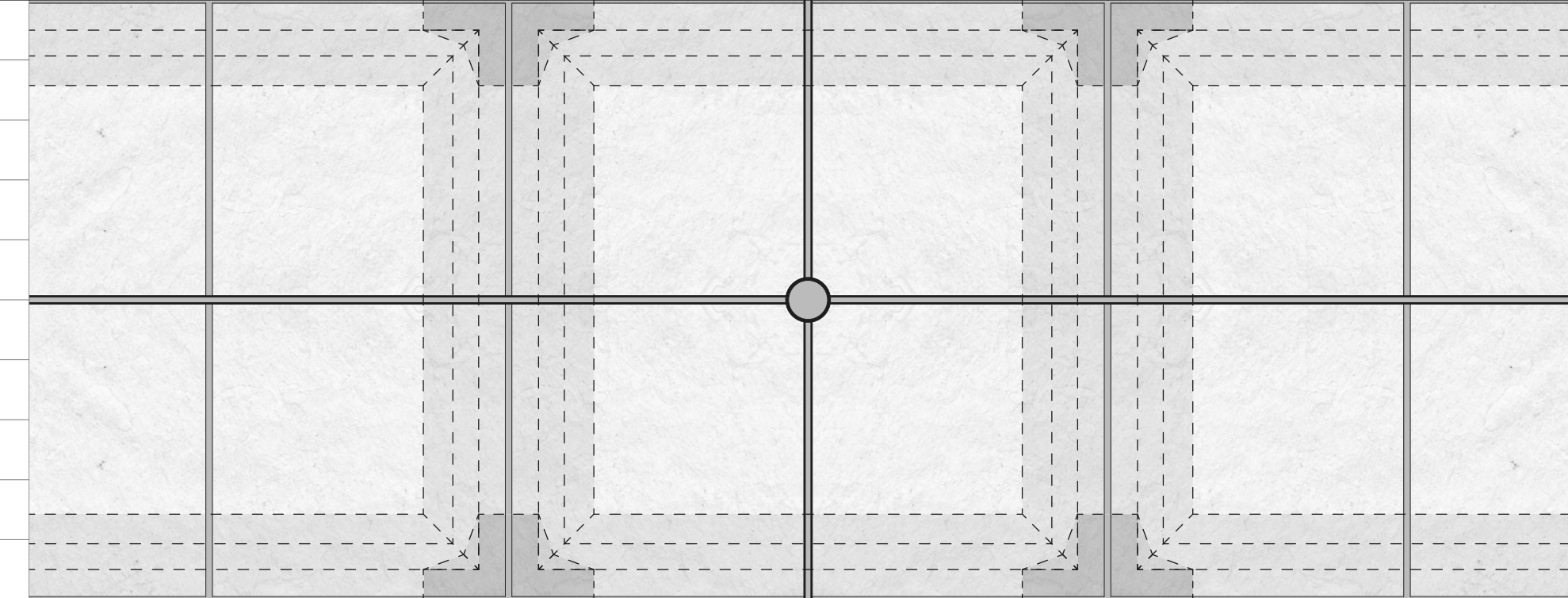
PLAZA LEVEL 1/500

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Construction details of various types of the 10 x 10 module with connection details and opening details.



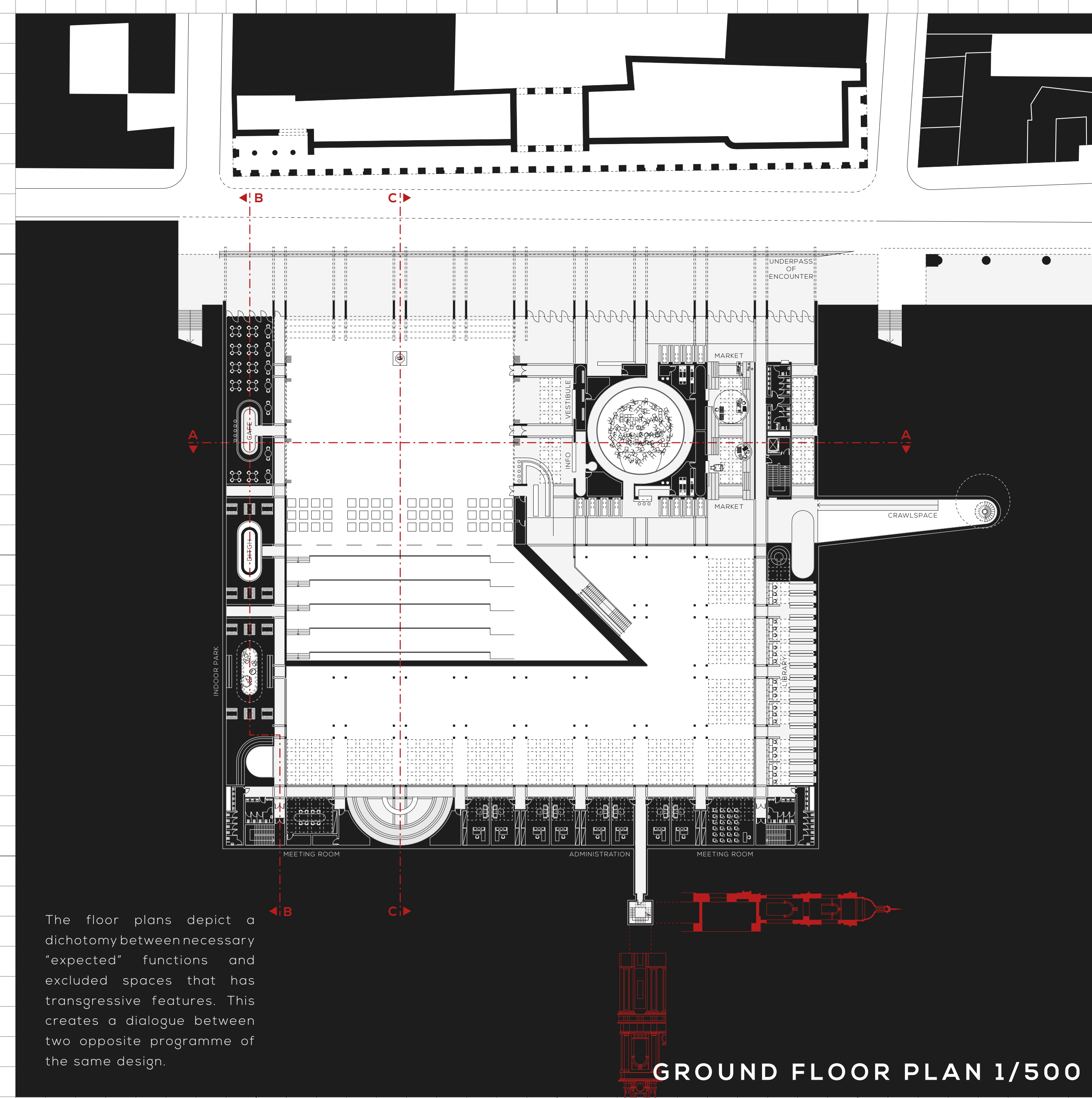
CONCRETE BENCH DETAIL



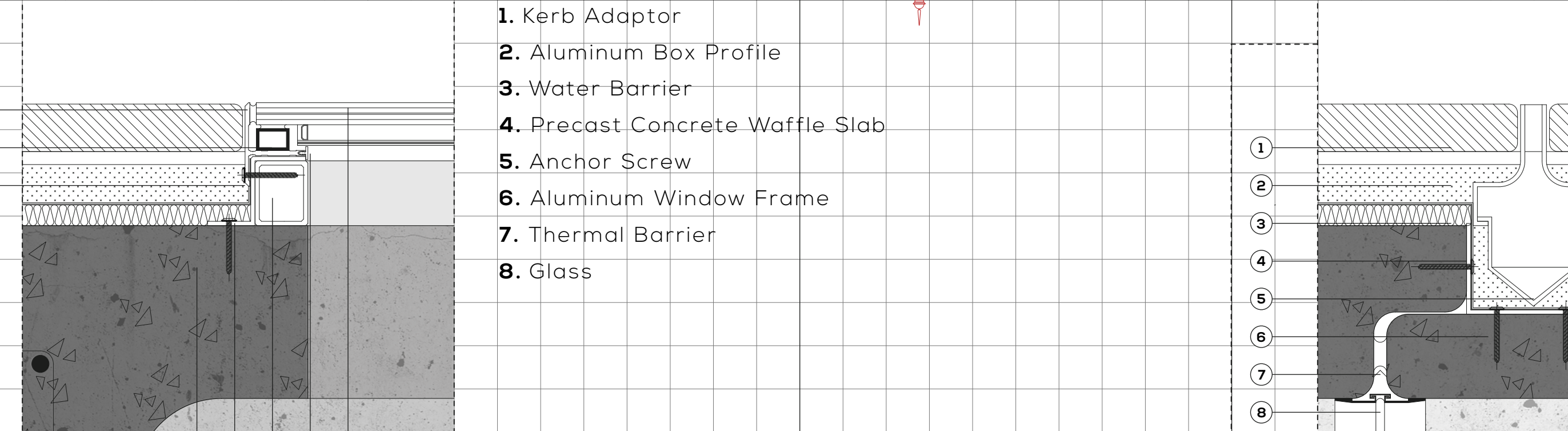
GUTTER DETAIL



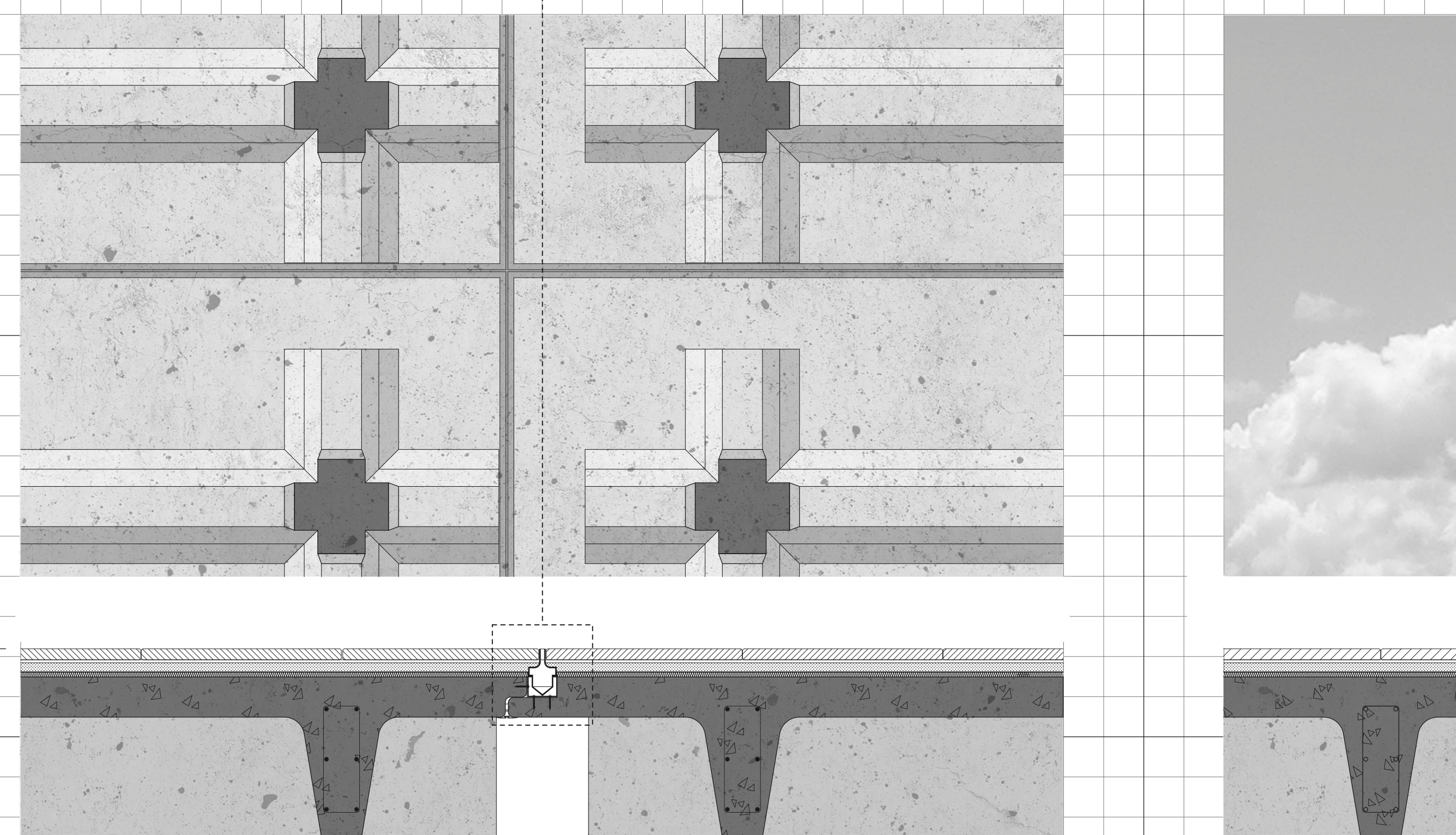
CEILING WINDOW DETAIL SECTION



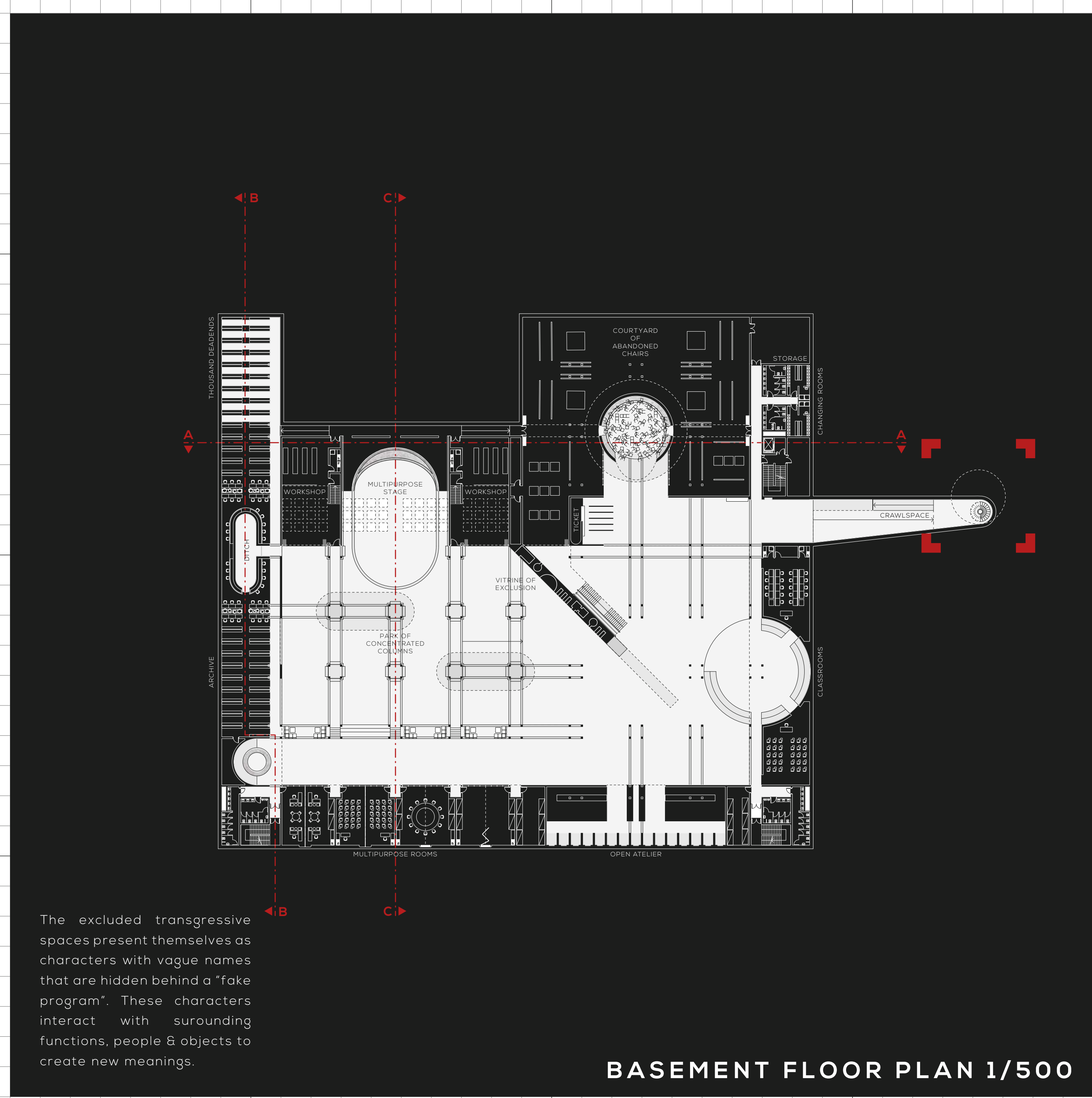
GROUND FLOOR PLAN 1/500



1. Kerb Adaptor
2. Aluminum Box Profile
3. Water Barrier
4. Precast Concrete Waffle Slab
5. Anchor Screw
6. Aluminum Window Frame
7. Thermal Barrier
8. Glass



EXPANSION JOI. GUTTER DETAIL

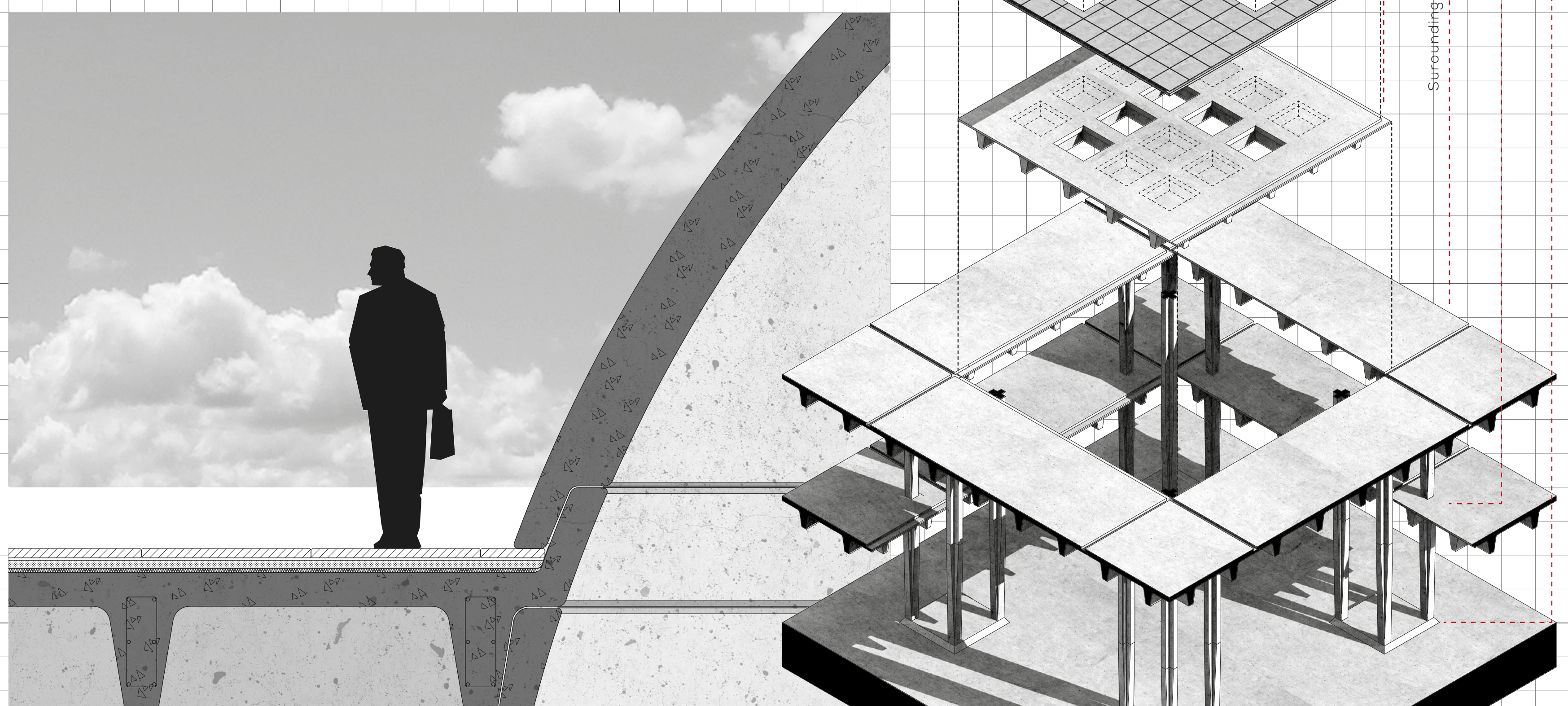


BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN 1/500

EXPLODED MODULE

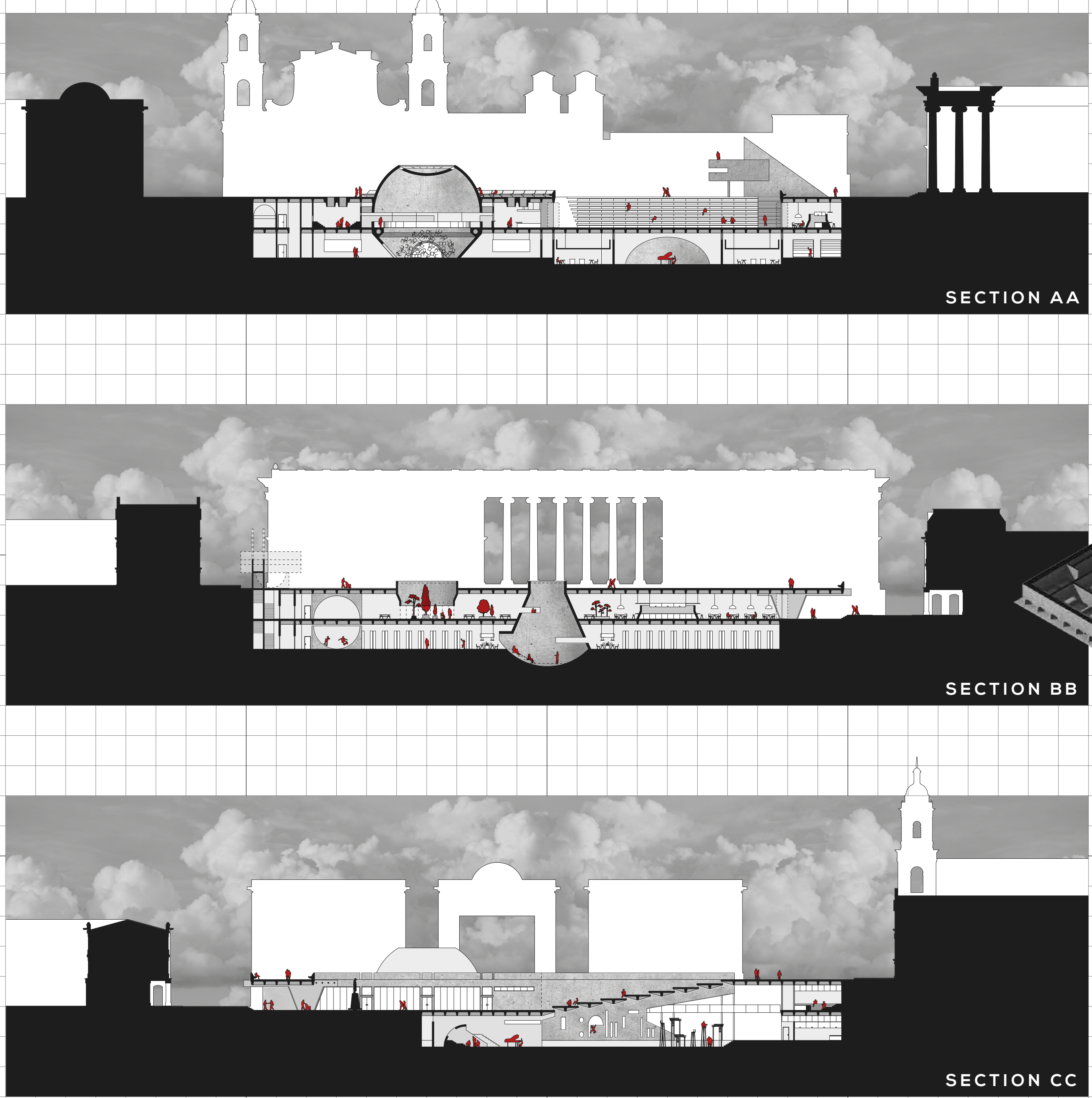
The design is formed by a 10 x 10 module, which is made out of smaller modules. This creates a continuum from the human scale to larger scales. By this way, the large scale of plaza design is related with users & objects that occupies the space.

1. 100x100cm Square Stone Tile
2. Sand Layer
3. Sound Insulation Layer
4. Aluminum L Profile
5. Gutter
6. Anchor Screw
7. Fire Barrier
8. Copper Cover Plate
9. Adhesive Mortar
10. Water Barrier
11. Sound Insulation
12. Precast Concrete Waffle Slab Edge



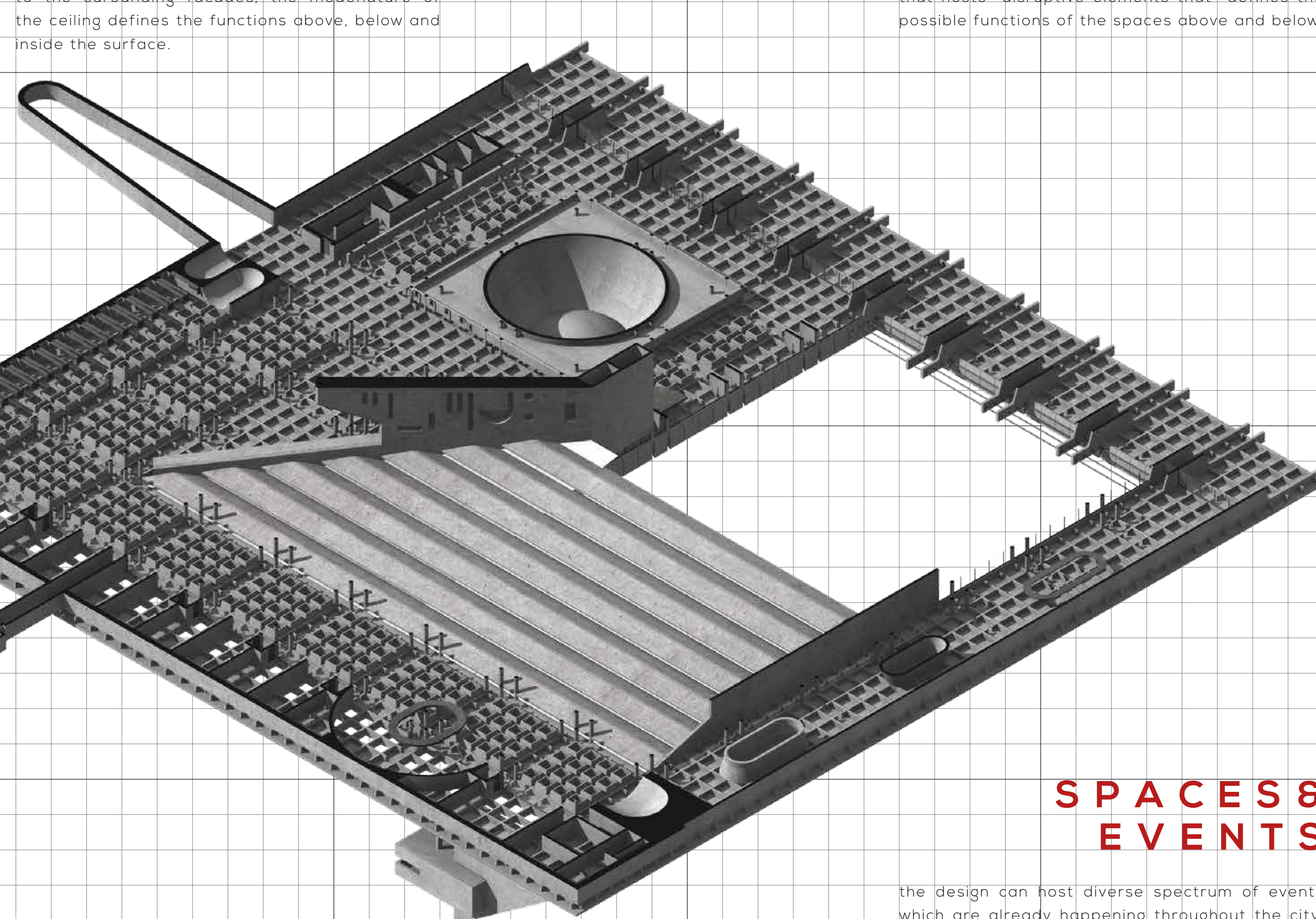
GRID

The rhythm of the grid is an interpretation of the patterns of adjacent historical buildings.



ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS

Facade is a surface that separates the private from the public, the indoor from the outdoor. In the case of the design, facade becomes the ceiling by separating the plaza from indoor functions similar to the surrounding facilities. The modularity of the ceiling defines the functions above, below and inside the surface.



CEILING LANDSCAPE

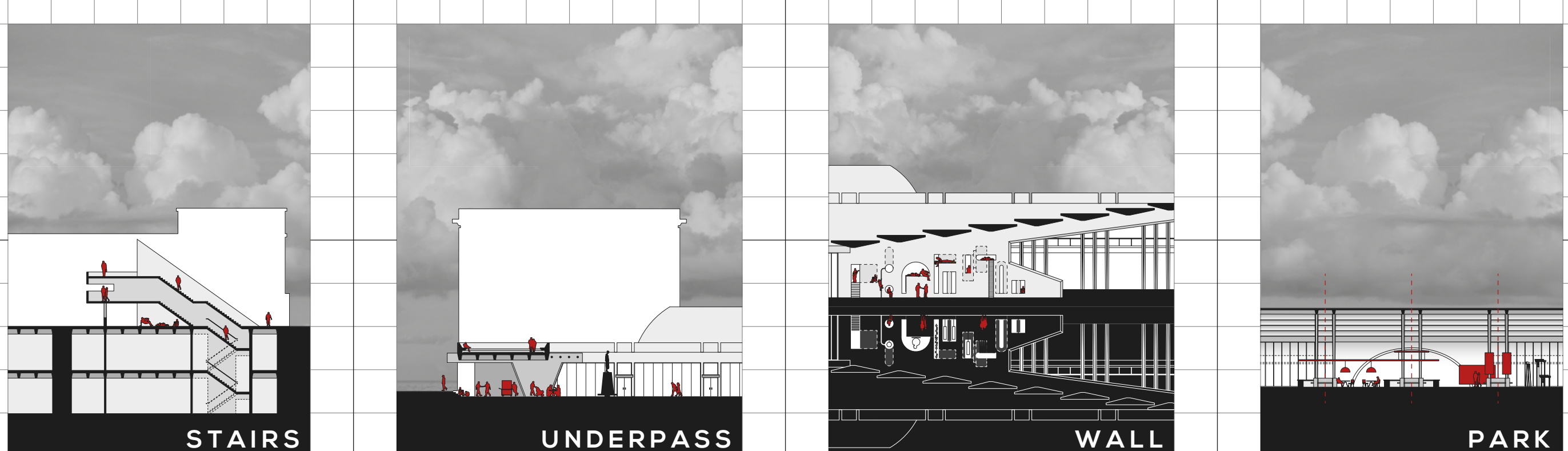
The repeating construction module creates a framework or a basis for the space defining modernities to attach themselves to the existing structure. The ceiling becomes a landscape that hosts disruptive elements that defines the possible functions of the spaces above and below inside the surface.

SPACES & EVENTS

The design can host diverse spectrum of events which are already happening throughout the city. These programs vary from already existing functions in the plaza to transgressive functions of excluded individuals from all around the city.



FACADE RELATION



STAIRS

UNDERPASS

WALL

PARK



NORTH WEST FACADE

