CROSS-CULTURAL LANDSCAPES:
INTEGRATING ISLAM INTO THE RURAL CANADIAN VERNACULAR

by

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ABSTRACT

Canada is a country of immigrants. Over generations our iconic landscape has offered a focal point for integration and been an important symbol of our identity. Yet as new cultures integrate their identity often fluctuates between old culture and new homeland. For Islamic immigrants, at a time when the world is rampant with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment, assimilation has largely meant the transplanting of home culture and community in an almost exclusively urban setting. Muslims, like other immigrant groups, are part of a multicultural narrative which lacks a connection to Canada's identity and its symbolic landscape–our wilderness. This thesis illustrates the representation of an Islamic-Canadian identity tied to our country's landscape through the design of a mosque and cross-cultural community centre to answer the question of what it means to be both Muslim *and* Canadian.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> Canada is a country blessed by nature — abundant lakes and rivers, vast forests and prairie fields, majestic mountains, and deep ocean waters. But, nature means different things to different people. For some, nature is the local green space in their community. For others, nature is the trail that meanders along the stream in the countryside. Provincial, territorial, and national parks are also critical parts of the nature continuum. People can derive powerful benefits from any kind of contact with the natural world, in whatever form it presents itself
>
> — *Connecting Canadians With Nature,* Canada Parks Council[1]

ISLAM, THE WILDERNESS, AND THE CANADIAN IDENTITY

The symbolism of the wilderness in Canada is intrinsically tied to our identity as a country. Our relationship with nature is rooted in our vast and varied landscape and informed through the country's history of pioneering and settlement. The modern manifestation of this ideal is the recreational enjoyment of our many national, provincial, and territorial wilderness parks. According to the Canadian Parks Council, our need for engagement with the landscape is essential for people of all ages, fostering play in children and contributing to the overall health, economy, and community inclusiveness of the nation. The wilderness also contributes heavily to our sense of national pride.

Yet Canada also remains a country at an impasse in search of a collective identity. Much of this is tied to our representation as a diverse, multi-ethnic nation lacking a single, pervasive culture. The question of identity in Canada is highly contested, many scholars arguing it simply does not exist. Cultural symbols of identity like the wilderness park remain an icon of a homogenous narrative of colonialization, which often does more to marginalize or exclude the immigrants who now comprise the nation. The result is a country of assimilation without integration: For Islamic-Canadians, this means a transplanting of culture and community, and a struggle for identity.

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1   Canada Parks Council, *Connecting Canadians with Nature*, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 2014), 3.

*Landscape REGIONS
of Canada by physical
geography*

Arctic

Great Lakes

Atlantic

Canadian Shield

Prairie

Cordillera

Figure 1. The six geographic landscape regions of Canada

THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY

Muslim identity in Canada has largely stagnated into the transplanting of a cultural and foreign aesthetic yet to develop a critical connection to place. Islamic-Canadians need representation of their emerging identity derived from *place* and embracing of cultural exchange within the larger multiethnic community.

THESIS STATEMENT

Islamic-Canadians need an architecture representative of their emerging identity: A place of worship and cultural sharing simoultaneously inspired by cultural memory *and* tied to the highly symbolic landscape of their new homeland.

Figure 2. The symbols of Canadian identity.
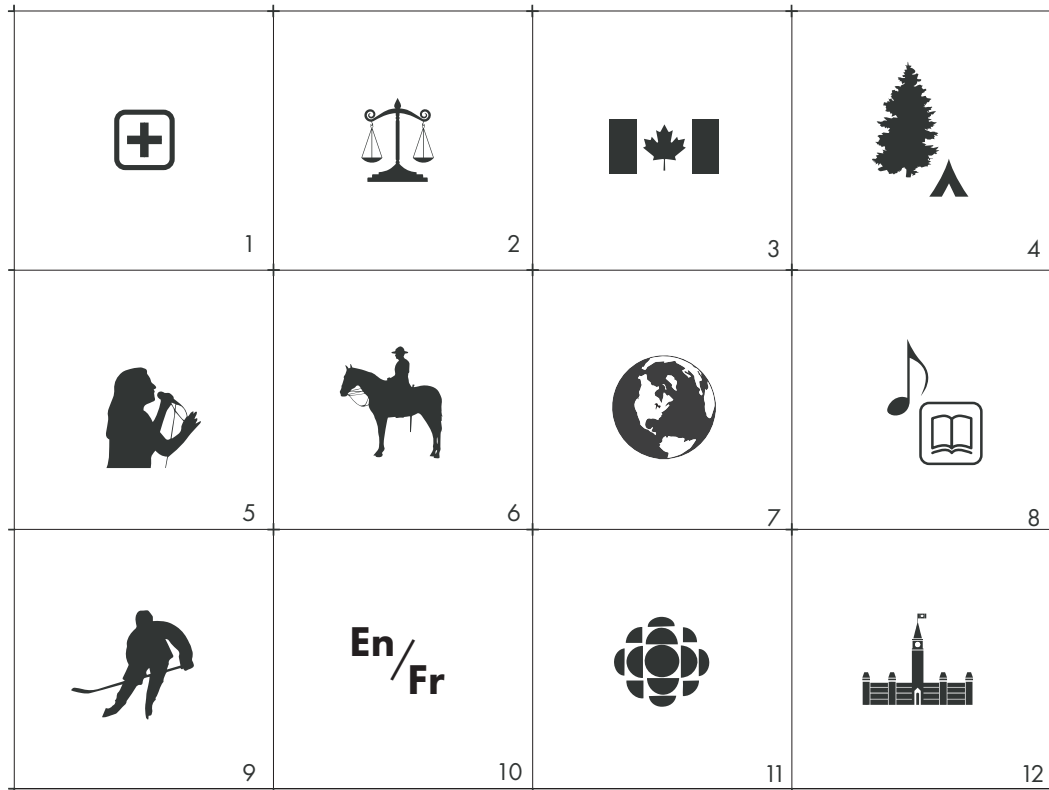
1 - *Health care system*
2 - *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
3 - *Canadian Flag*
4 - *National Parks*
5 - *National Anthem*
6 - *RCMP*
7 - *Multicultarilsm*
8 - *Canadian literature and music*
9 - *Hockey*
10 - *Bilingualism*
11 - *CBC*
12 - *National capital Ottawa*

Figure 3. Wish image depicting Muslim praying in nature.
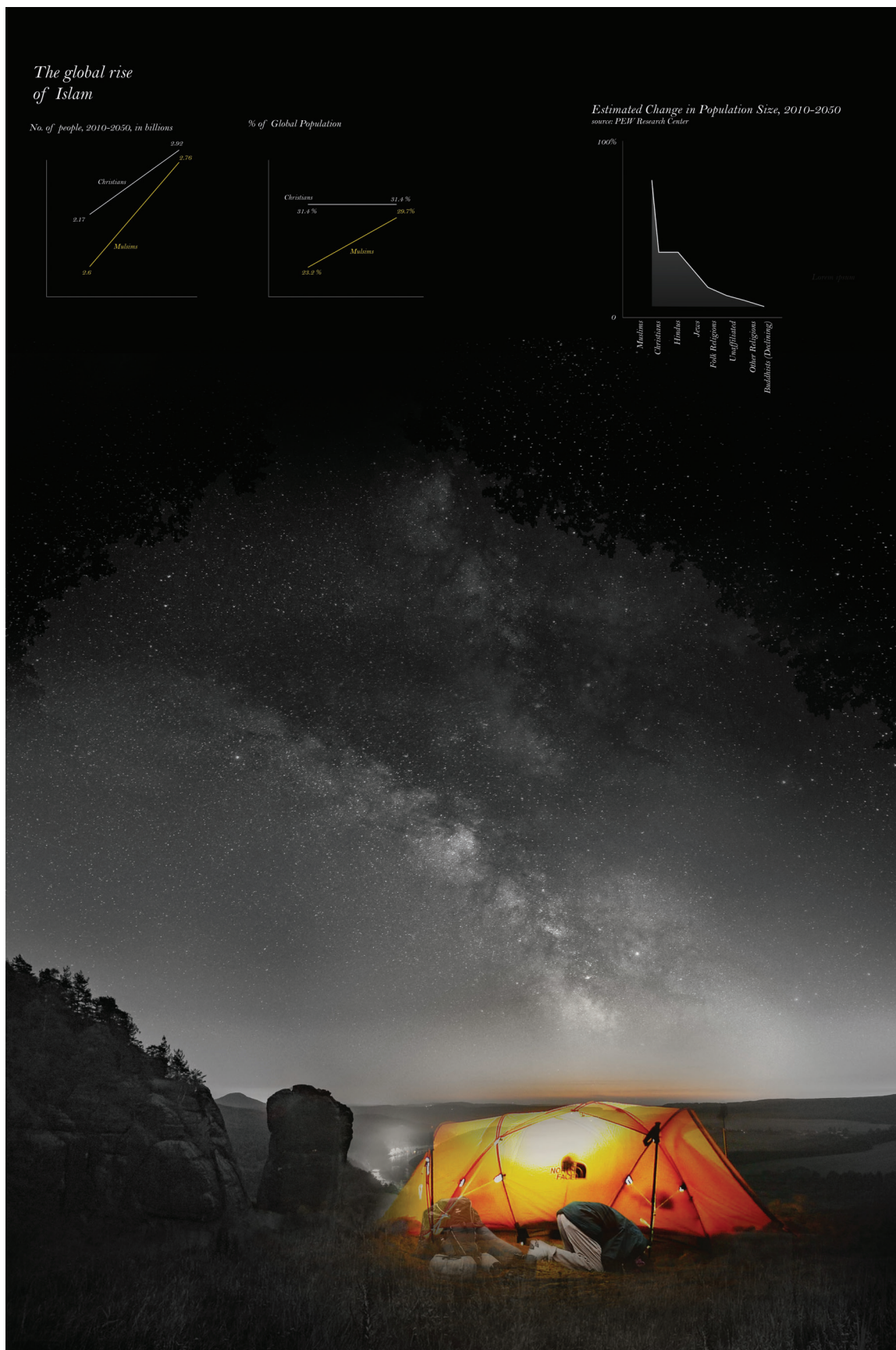
CHAPTER 2: DEFINING IDENTITY

The reason why any tension between traditional Muslims and liberal Canadians is lukewarm is because the two exist side by side with the unspoken rule of never spilling into each other

—'An Incompetent Muslim' *by Safia Fazlul (from 'The Relevance of Islamic Identity in Canada,' 2018)*

THE POLITICS OF OUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The challenging duality of an Islamic-Canadian identity illustrates a clear failure of Multiculturalism's ability to bridge the gap between a unified, homogenized national identity and the cultural mosaic of its celebrated and highly segregated parts. The diaspora of Muslims within Canada is not recent, but as author Jasmin Zine writes, it is a "diaspora as a site of struggle, contestation, and change."[2] There exists a clear tension within Islamic-Canadians attempting to reconcile their religious culture and national identity. For one Islamic-Canadian author, the experience of community tension within their predominantly Islamic neighborhood "felt like a test of loyalty: are you going to remain a Muslim or are you going to go join those sinning 'Canadians'?"[3]

| *Shahada* | *Salah* | *Sawm* | *Zakah* | *Hajj* |
| *Faith* | *Prayer* | *Fasting* | *Alms* | *Pilgrimage* |

Figure 4. Diagram depicting The Pillars of Islam —the five fundamental underpinnings of the Islamic faith

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2   Jasmin Zine, ed., *Islam in the Hinterlands: Exploring Muslim Cultural Politics in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 1.

3   Nurjehan Aziz, ed., *The Relevance of Islamic Identity in Canada: Culture, Politics, and Self* (Toronto, Ontario: Mawenzi House Publishers Ltd, 2015), 5.

In order to overcome this division, Muslims in Canada need places of cross-cultural integration to support community engagement. The secularization of modern society can make it difficult for many Canadians to draw comparisons between Islam and other faiths. Muslims see religion as an important part of their identity because Islam is a cultural religion inseparably woven into daily life.
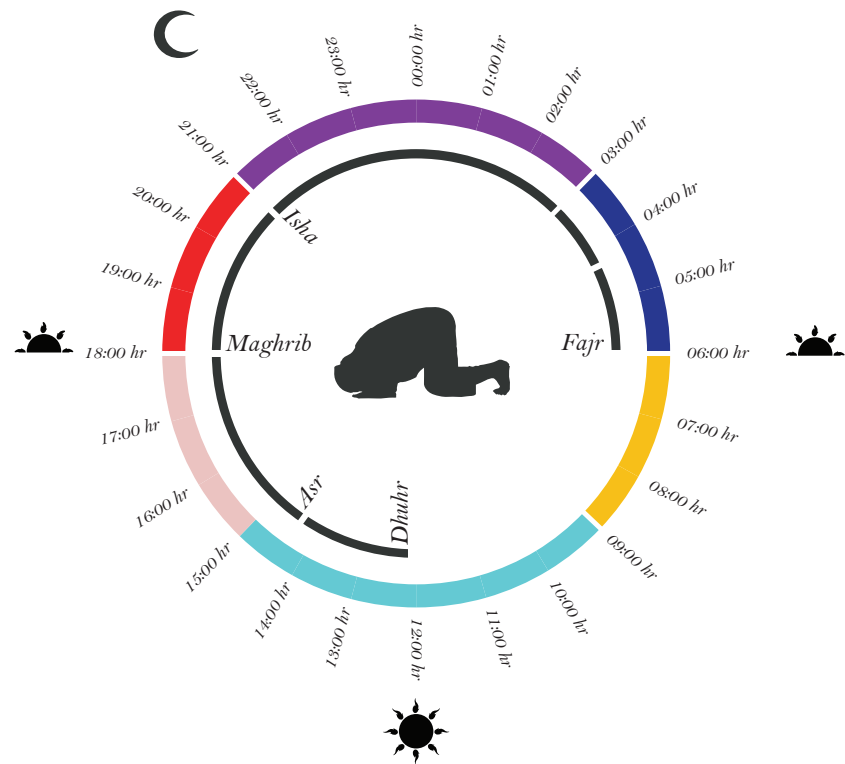
Figure 5. The five salah or prayer times in Islam, beginning at dawn with Fajr, then Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Ishu (clockwise)

Islam is a faith built upon ritual. Muslims pray five times a day as an act of ritual prostration before God. For many Muslims, the mosque is the epicentre of daily and social life, and it carries a vast significane within the community. Despite the strong communal and social aspect of the mosque, Islamic prayer or Salah does not require one to be present at a mosque: "The rite of prayer is itself sufficient, whether undertaken at home or in the open. Prayer in a group, however, is considered more virtuous." [4]

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4   Rudolf Stegers and Dorothea Baumann, *Sacred Buildings: A Design Manual* (Basel ; Boston: Birkhäuser, 2010), 46.

The orientation towards Mecca is the chief spatial qualifier of Islamic worship. Muslims pray facing the Kaa'ba, the pre-Islamic relic holding a sacred black stone in its southeast corner, drawing religious significance from the pre-Islamic era of stone cults and tribes in Arabia.[5]
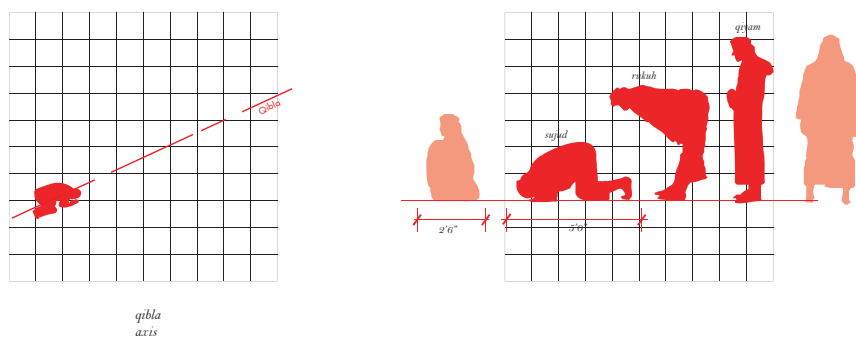
Figures 6. The Qibla and Salah positions

Viewing himself as a Prophet of the one true God, the same God worshipped by Christians and Jews, Muhammad fled the hostility of Mecca in 622 when he arrived in Yathrib, now known as the city of the Prophet, Medina. The Jews, unconvinced of Muhammad's revelations, refused to accept him as a Prophet leading him to trace the purity of faith from Abraham, through Ishmael, to the ancestry of the Arab peoples. Consequently, the directions muslims face during prayer changed from Jerusalem to Mecca, ultimately leading to the conquest of the city. Today, almost a quarter of the world's population is Muslim.

Identifying ways to integrate Islamic religious culture into a hybrid identity is difficult. As sociologist Ian Angus identifies in his seminal work *A Border Within*, "multiculturalism ghettoizes immigrants and forcibly keeps them out of the mainstream of Canadian society."[6]Angus argues that, in Canada, identity historically emerged as the populist rhetoric of our national identity. [7] In providing a method to re-align the symbolic markers of our heritage I believe a direct of examination of what each symbol means to the ethnicities within Canada is an ideal point of intervention. This means taking the symbolic icon of our wilderness (in a highly symbolic locale) and finding ways for diaspora groups

5   Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam: An Introduction* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 7.

6   Ian H. Angus, *A Border within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality, and Wilderness* (Montreal ; Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 4.

7   Ibid., 20.

Figures 7 and 8. In 2018 Nike became the first internationally recognized clothing company to launch a hijab marketed towards sports and recreation. The lighweight polyester and elastane fabric has a breathable mesh and perforated vents. Source: Nike.com

like Muslims to establish a high personal connection. This is clearly something Muslims in Canada are searching for.

The *Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016* conducted by the Environics Institute draws some important conclusions: Overwhelmingly, Muslims wish to adopt Canadian customs [8]. Second only to feelings of discrimination and treatment within the broader community, Muslims see cultural interaction as the second most important issue facing their community.[9] Despite Canada being a highly secular country, most Muslims find their religious identity and practices strengthened here – challenging the hypothesis that Canada has a secularizing effect. There has been an increase in the number of Canadian Muslims attending prayers at their local mosque. The study continues to highlight the praise most Islamic-Canadians feel with regards to their new homeland. The primary point of contention is related to the perceived lack of understanding from the general Canadian population " whose impressions are formed largely through simplistic stereotypes emphasizing negative characteristics (violent extremism, honour killings)."[10] Despite this the takeaways are clear: Muslims want to understand and be understood; they want to integrate into Canadian society and develop an identity of cultural reciprocity.

Figure 9. A scene from the final season of Zarqa Nawaz's television sitcom 'Little Mosque on the Prairie'. The show depicts the daily life of Muslims in the fictional small town of Mercy, Saskatchewan highlighting the challanges and importance of cross-cultural engagement. Source: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

8   The Environics Institute for Survey Research, *Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016* (Toronto, Final Report April 2016), 27.

9   Ibid., 22.

10   Ibid.

Geographic distri-
bution of immigrants within
Census Metropolitan Areas, illus-
trating 78.8% of total residing
within these 8 cities, source: Statistics Canada
2016

13.1%
Vancouver

4.1%
Edmonton

5.4%
Calgary

2.4%
Winnipeg

12.4%
Montreal

3.4%
Ottawa-Gatineau

2.1%
Hamilton

35.9%
Toronto

Immigrants in Canada by Source Country, 2016 source: Statistics Canada

Refugee's Admitted to Canada, 2014 source: Statistics Canada

Canada's
Population
Distribution by the
Standard Statistical Classifica-
tion of All Large Urban
Centers (LUC) versus All
Rural and Small Town Areas
(RST) by Province and
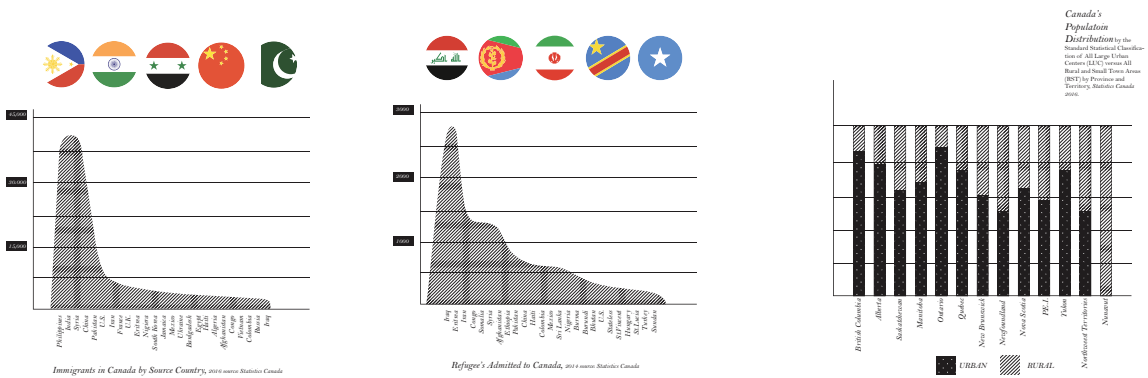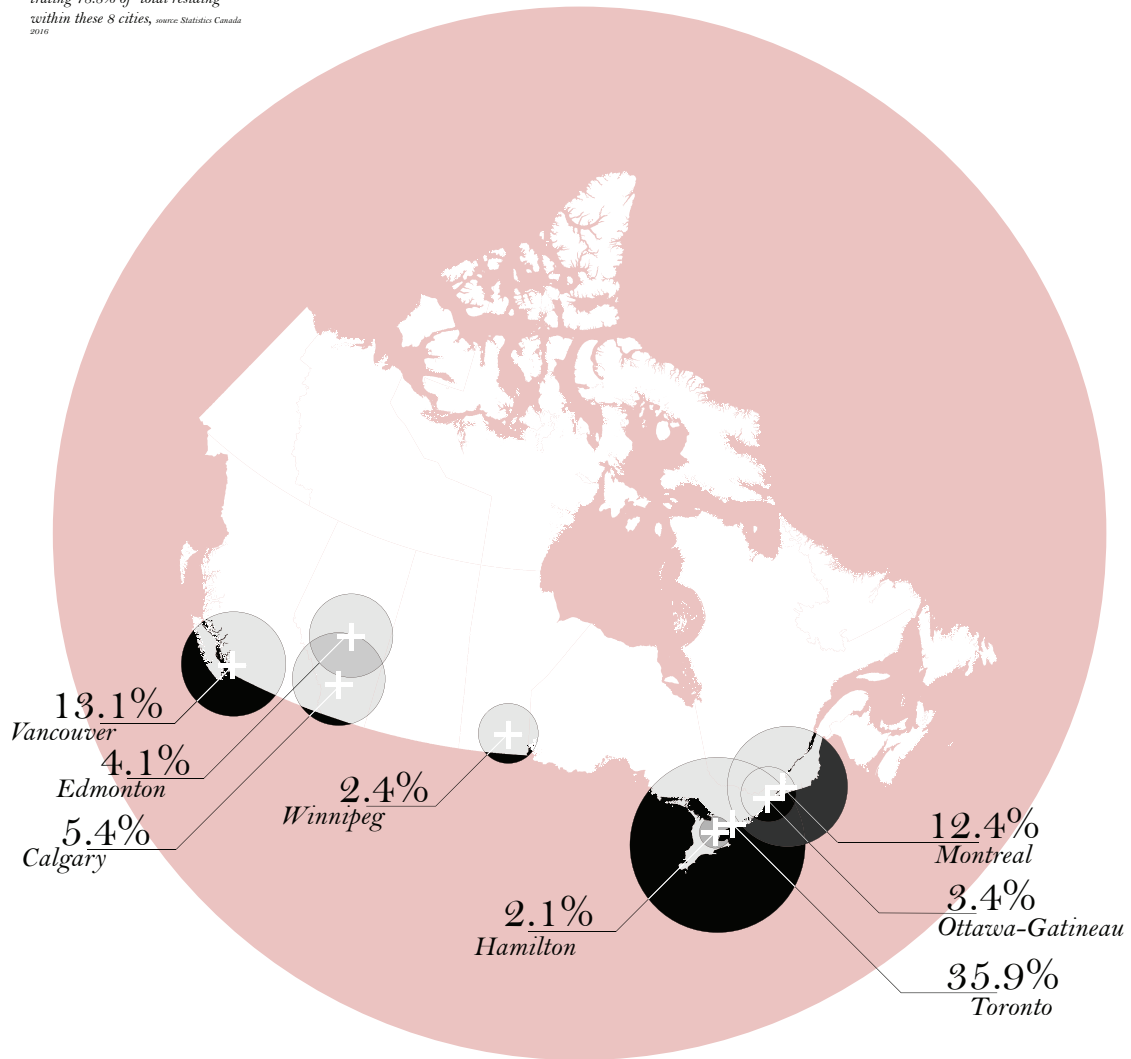Territory. Statistics Canada
2016.

■ URBAN ▨ RURAL

Figure 10. Map of Canada indicating the percentage of total immigrants to each of the top eight municiple destinations. Note To-
ronto holds almost thirty-six percent of all immigrants in Canada. Souce: Statistics Canada 2016

SYMBOLIC LANDSCAPE, RE-ENVISIONED

In his dissertation entitled *Symptoms of Canada*, sociologist Kieran Keohan argues that multiculturalism fails to address the unified identity of a nation without the synthesis of any poetic unity. Keohan describes Multiculturalism as distanced from ideals of equality and diversity:

> [Multiculturalism] tries to solve Hegel's problem of canceling the opposition while preserving the difference, but it cannot do this, because Multiculturalism is currently articulated and legitimated within the terms of a selflimiting pluralistic language. The values of "diversity" and "equality" upon which the organic solidarity of Official Multiculturalism is predicated, which it reinscribes in policy and reproduces empirically, presumes that the ethnocultural identities which constitute the mosaic are discrete elements with preconstituted and apparent interests which can and should be maintained and adjusted/equalized by state intervention... Because of this the evolution of Multiculturalism can only proceed spatially: identifying and adding new categories to an ever-widening mosaic, while failing to facilitate a synthetic "poetry of the nation.[11]

So how can the built environment and its relationship to the landscape attempt to formulate a solution for aiding Islamic-Canadians integrate? In order to address the needs of and failings of a modern and multicultural society, the symbols of Canada's identity, like the wilderness, must be readapted to engage with the various communities and cultures that they claim to represent:

*Longstanding
Symbol of Canadian
Identity*

*Aligned experience
for Islamic-Canadians*
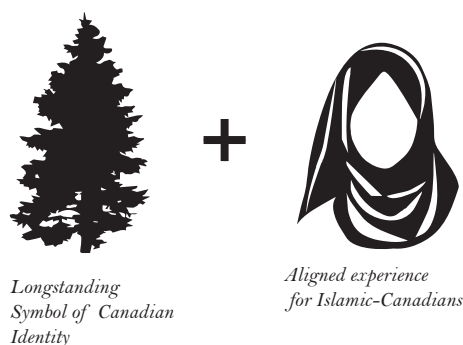
Figure 11. Re-envisioning identity

Our wilderness landscape is the key to evolving our national discourse to provide an identity inclusive of immigrants. For Islamic-Canadians this means a re-imaging of landscape interaction and worship framed within this narrative.

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11 Kieran Keohane, "Symptoms of Canada" (National Library of Canada / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, 1994), 2.

COLONIAL TYPOLOGIES

CULTURE RELIGION LANDSCAPE

COLONY CHURCH FARMSTEAD

INDIGENOUS HARMONY

CULTURE LANDSCAPE
RELIGION

1800

1700

COLONIAL SETTLEMENT

FIRST NATIONS

ECOLOGY

INDUSTRY AND EXPANSION

1900

2000

RECREATION

SEGREGATION OF FORCES

LANDSCAPE

RELIGION CULTURE

INDUSTRY

PRESENT

CULTURE LANDSCAPE

RELIGION

*Navigating
the
Canadian
Landscape*

*A systematic mapping of the histori-
cal, ecological and technical forces
which have dominated human inter-
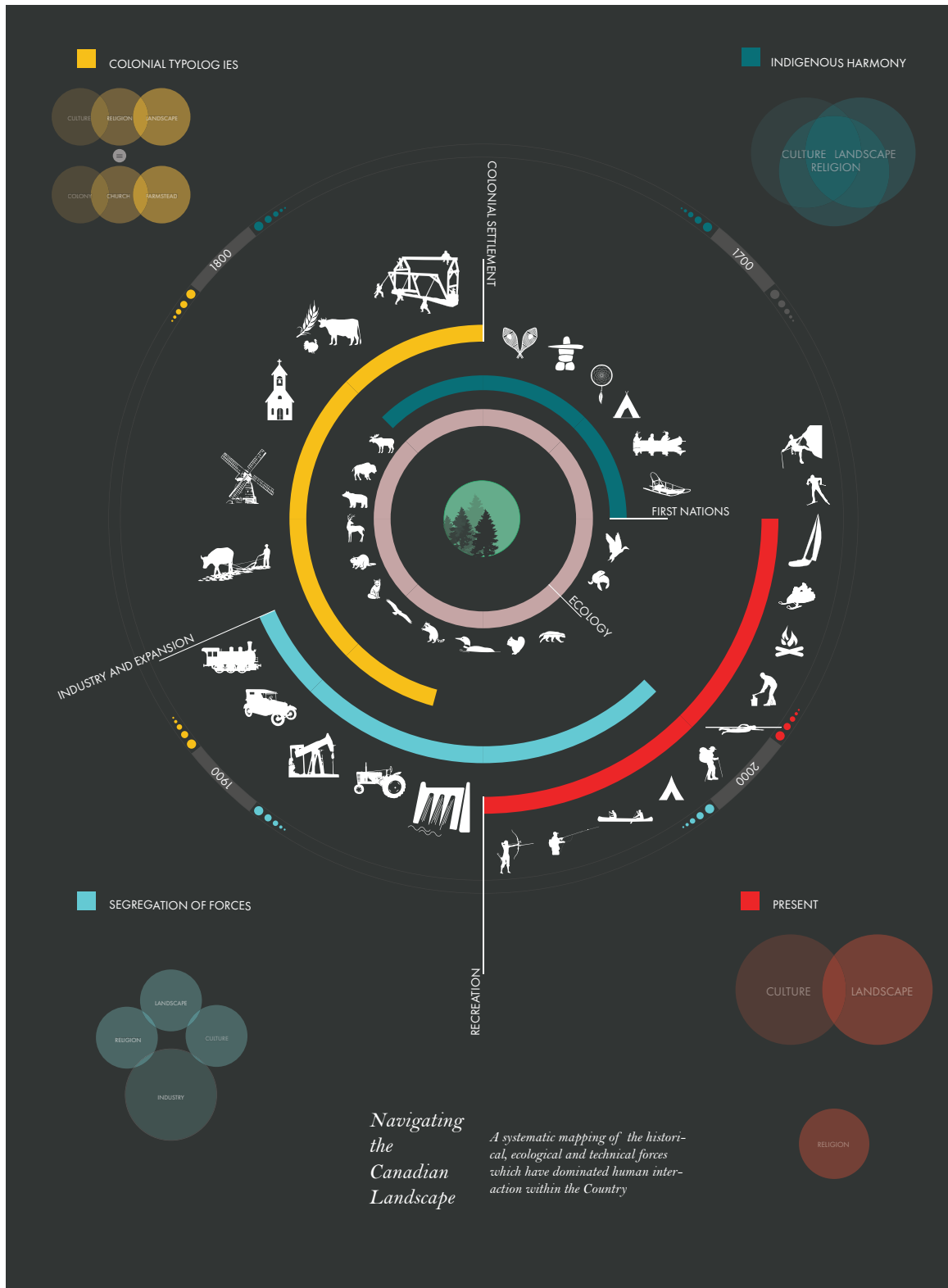action within the Country*

Figure 12. A systems diagram illustrating the various narratives and dominant forces influencing the Canadian andscape throughout the history of the country.

AN ISLAMIC-CANADIAN

Islamic roots within Canada are older and more geographically dispersed than one might imagine. The Al-Rashid Mosque in Edmonton, Alberta was intended to be the first mosque in North America. In addition, the construction of the mosque was patroned by a group of Muslim women led by Hilwie Hamdon, who, in 1930, acquired the land through a meeting with Edmonton mayor John Fry and with funding from donations from Muslims and Non-Muslims throughout the prairies.[12]

Figure 13. An early image of the Al-Rashid Mosque in Edmonton, Albert. Completed in 1938 the cultural hybridization of form illustrates a shallow gable, typical of period churches, adored with two minarets. Source: alrashidmosque.ca

The earliest Arab immigrants, mainly Christian but a few Muslims, arrived in the mid-19th century, mostly comprised of young men from Syria fleeing conscription into the Ottoman army[13]. Some headed westward to live on the frontier as peddlers and pioneers, giving way to the iconography of Arab peddlers in the West, marketing wares from their pack or horse-drawn wagon[14]. While a small number of Muslims settled in Canada and the United States, the Great War brought immigration policy aimed at excluding Asians, especially Turkish migrants. As a result, the population of Islamic immigrants to the North America stagnates largely between World War I and II. Subsequent increase in Muslim population correlates with Canada's post-war multicultural policy, leaving Muslims representing the largest non-Christian relgious group in Canada

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12   Al Rashid Mosque, *The History of the Al Rashiq Mosque,* accessed 24 November 2018, https://alrashidmosque.ca/history/

11   Zine, *Islam in the Hinterlands*, 4.

14   Ibid.

at the end of the 20th century. [15] Islam remains the fastest growing religion in Canada and the world. It is estimated that, by 2050, the number of Islamic worshippers will equal the number of Christians within Canada; the narrative of this growth is changing our landscape.

With many Islamic-Canadians seeking professional work opportunities outside of cities, places like Iqaluit, Nunavut are seeing a drastic rise in their Muslim population.

Figure 14. Iqualiuit Majid. Source: John Van Dusen, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

The recently completed mosque of Iqaluit, funded by the Zubaidah Tallab Foundation and Islamic association of Nunavut, is not the Winnipeg-based foundation's first arctic project. [16] Headlines were earlier made across the globe when the organization funded the Inuvik mosque, which was prefabricated in Winnipeg and transported to site via barge and tractor-trailer. The story of the mosque's journey is documented in the 2015 documentary film Arctic mosque.

Meanwhile, in Fort McMurray, Alberta, the largest mosque complex in North America is currently under construction. The vast 50-million dollar complex sweeps across 10-acres and over 150,000 sq ft. The complex includes an Olympic sized swimming pool, K-12 school and recreation centre. The economic boom of the oil industry in Fort McMurray provided appeal for working professionals and tradespeople regardless of religious affinity. [17]

15   Ibid., 6.

16   CBC News, *New Iqaluit mosque opens doors*, accessed 8 January 2019, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/new-iqaluit-mosque-opens-doors-1.3447397

17   The Globe and Mail, *Fort McMurray's Muslim community plans an ambitious, multicultural mosque,* accessed 18 January 2019, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/alberta/fort-mcmurrays-muslim-community-planning-an-ambitious-multicultural-mosque/article23119088/
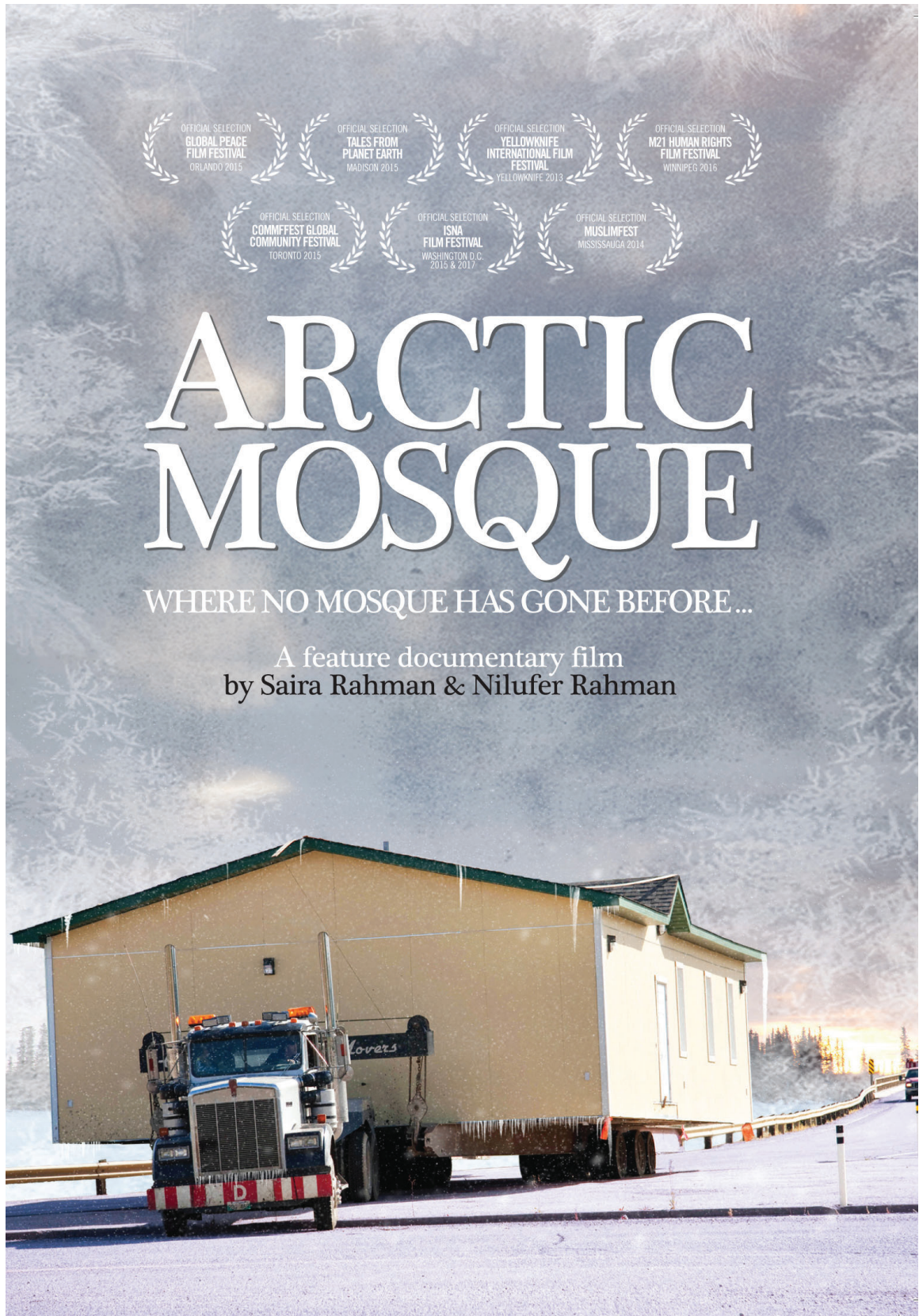
Figure 15. DVD cover for the 2015 feature length documentary 'Arctic Mosque'. Source: Winnipeg Film Group

Figure 16. Rendering of the proposed Fort McMurray Mosque and Islamic Centre. Courtesy studio Senbel, architecture + design).

While many ambitions of this thesis are shared with the Fort McMurray Mosque, early renders illustrate a design which represents little beyond a banal, shopping mall-like superstructure and expansive parking lot. Being sympathetic to the harsh climatic requirements of the region does not require that a design segregate itself from a material sensitivty .

Instead, by exploring a design sensitive to place, the mosque can embody a Canadian-ness which will allow it to succeed in harmonizing (as opposed to contrasting) the typology in a new setting. It is this emphasis on place which will allow the architecture to develop critical roots in its new homeland .

CHAPTER 3: PLACE

> It is place, permanent position in both the social, and topographical sense, that
> gives us our identity
>
> —J.B. Jackson[18]

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

Relationship to place is integral to identity and the human condition. In *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, author Norberg-Schulz offers a phenomenological definition of *place*, distilling from the topographical and material literalness an understanding that the feelings and atmosphere of a place evoke a connection beyond scientific analysis.[19] Place cultivates the collective identity. Architecturally, the idea of place as an impetus to design is a useful tool in developing an identity by informing the design into an aesthetic tied to the landscape. While the theoretical underpinnings of modern architecture as a universal style feed the earlier discussed aspects of alienation, a place based architecture can heal and support the diaspora of Islamic-Canadians through the offering of a hybrid space for worship and integration.

GEOGRAPHIC FRAMEWORK: IDENTITY IN ONTARIO'S LANDSCAPE

Canada is a country of immigrants. One out of five Canadians is foreign-born and visible minorities comprise one-fifth of a population containing more than 250 different ethnicities.[20] Cultural diversity is an important symbol of our national identity; however, immigrant settlement within Canada is clearly urban. The city of Toronto astonishingly houses more than one third of all immigrants within Canada; nearly as large as the next five census metropolitan areas (Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton and Ottawa) combined.[21]

Despite such a strong attachment to our landscape, Canada remains an urban country. The vast majority of our population resides within close proximity to our southern border. This exclusively urban identity segregates and offers little

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18   J.B. Jackson, Discovering the Vernacular Landscape (Yale University Press, 1986), 4.

19   Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1984).

20   Statistics Canada. 2017. *Immigration and ethnocultural diversity: Key results from the 2016 Census*. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 11-001-X. Ottawa.

21   Statistics Canada. 2017. *Municipalities in Canada with the largest and fastest-growing populations between 2011 and 2016*. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-200-X201600. Ottawa.
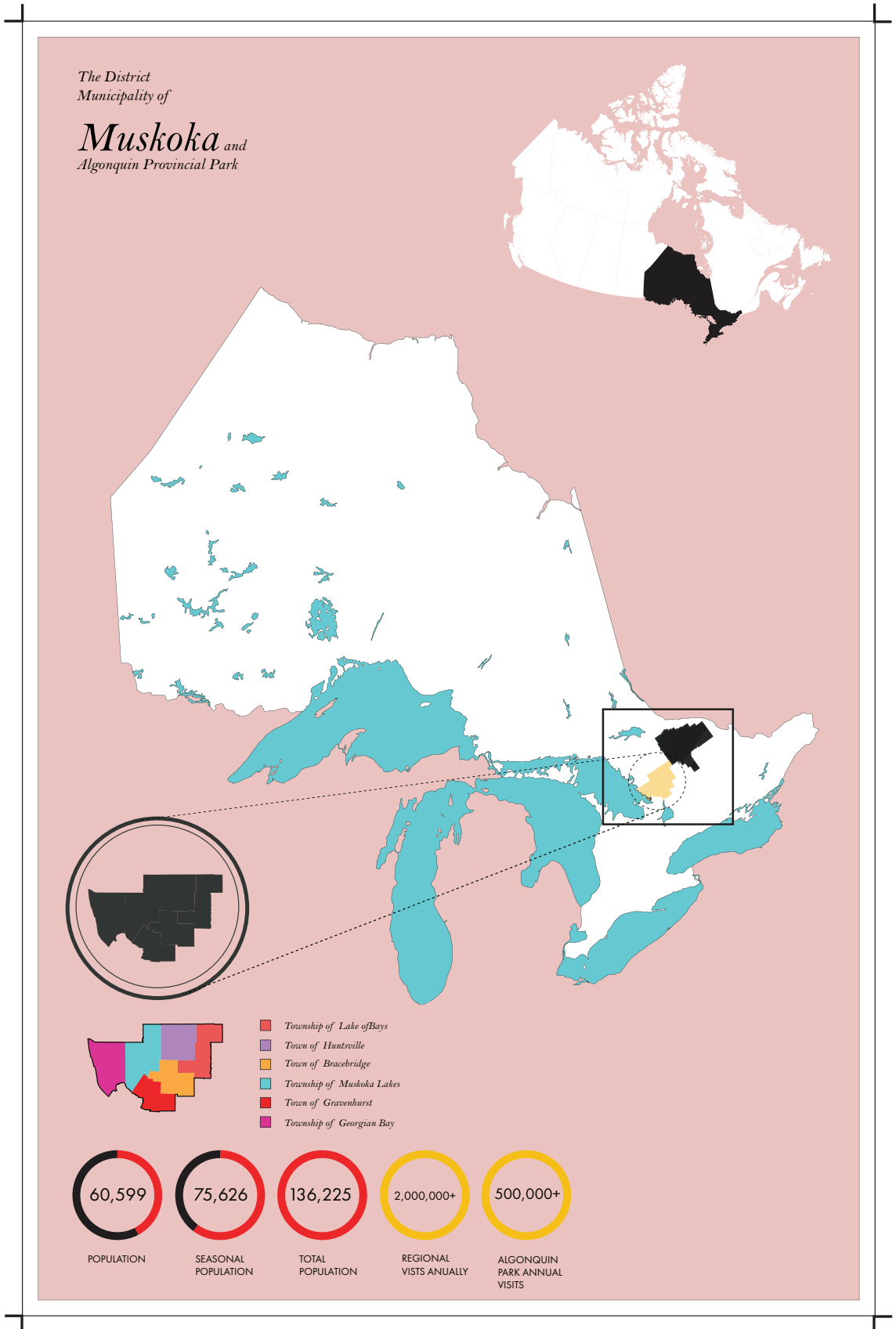
*The District
Municipality of*

Muskoka *and*
Algonquin Provincial Park

Township of Lake of Bays
Town of Huntsville
Town of Bracebridge
Township of Muskoka Lakes
Town of Gravenhurst
Township of Georgian Bay

60,599
POPULATION

75,626
SEASONAL
POPULATION

136,225
TOTAL
POPULATION

2,000,000+
REGIONAL
VISTS ANUALLY

500,000+
ALGONQUIN
PARK ANNUAL
VISITS

Figure 17. A Map of the Province of Ontario highlting the location of Muskoka and Algonquin Park . Also detailed are population graphics and a breakdown of the six municipalities within the District Municipality of Muskoka.

exposure for Islamic-Canadians to engage and explore our landscape. As the second and third generation children of immigrants grow, they lack the social mechanisms and wealth to leave cities and enjoy landscape interaction. They need places specifically designed to foster this learning and enjoyment in the symbolic landscape long monopolized by generations of Anglo-Canadians.

MUSKOKA: A DESTINATION OF SOLITUDE

The District Municipality of Muskoka has long been a destination for Ontarians and is highly symbolic of the Canadian wilderness. Known for its scenic beauty, wilderness parks, and ease of access to Ontario's metropolises, Muskoka is a frequent getaway for recreational engagement with the wild and home to a large number of seasonal dwellings.

Muskoka is comprised of six municipalities: three towns and three area townships. The majority of permanent residents have economic ties to three larger towns of Huntsville, Bracebridge, and Gravenhurst. It is bordered by Algonquin Park on the East and Georgian Bay on the west; containing more than 1,600 lakes and a vast array of wildlife, trees and varied rock types of the Canadian Shield. Highway 11 connects Muskoka to Barrie to the south (and subsequently Toronto and the Greenbelt) and leads north towards North Bay and into central Ontario and the TransCanada highway.

Historically, Muskoka was home to the Ojibwe First Nations and is still home to four First Nations reserves. During early settlement, many Objibwe tribes in the region were displaced to what is now Orillia, Port Carling and Parry Sound.

European settlement of Muskoka's landscape began with Ontario's Free Grant and Homesteads Act of 1868, which offered roughly 200 acres of free land to settlers who met criteria and established farms in the region. The tough soil of the Canadian Shield proved a challenge for farmers.
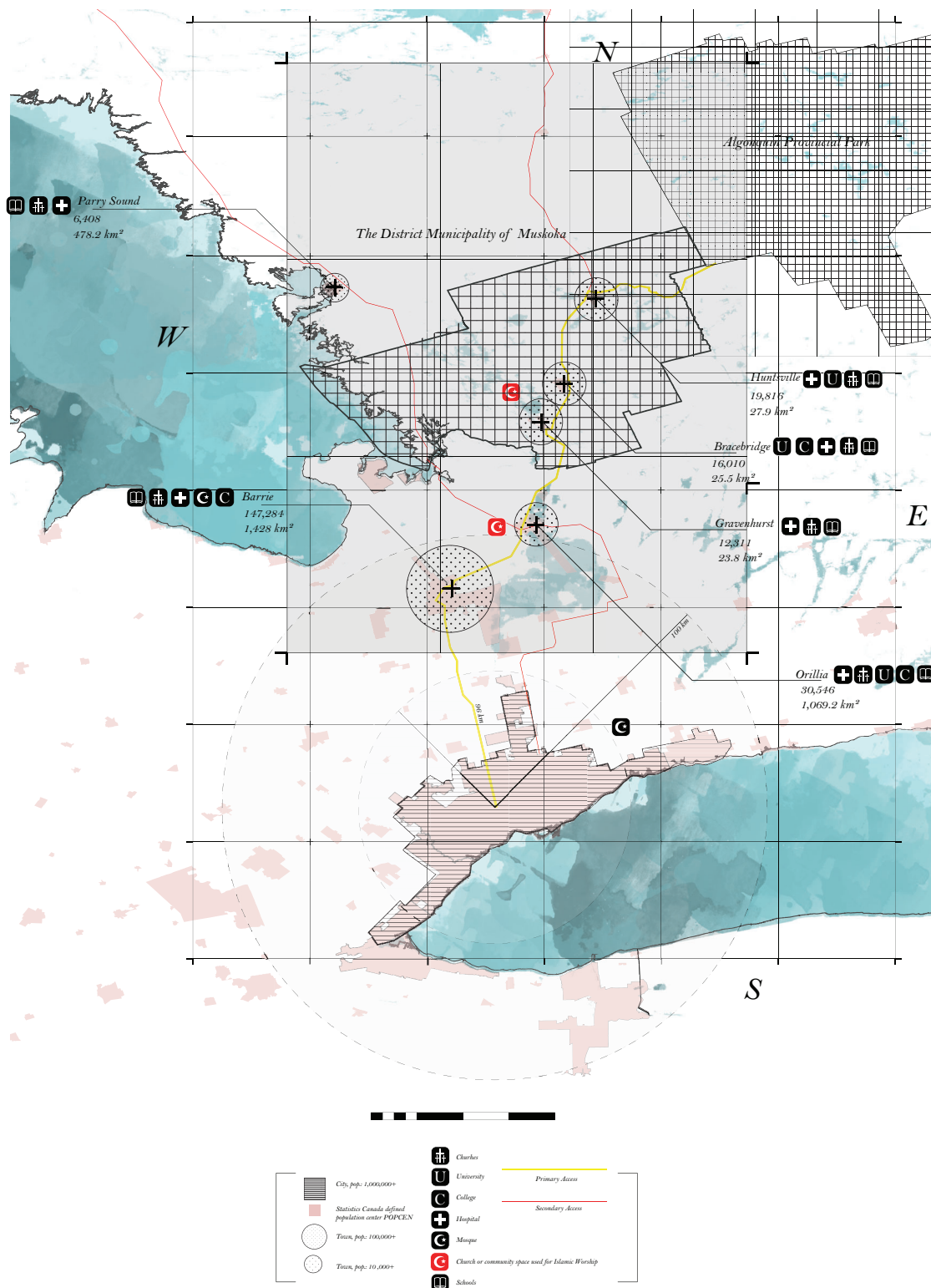
N

Algonquin Provincial Park

The District Municipality of Muskoka

W

Parry Sound
6,408
478.2 km²

Huntsville
19,816
27.9 km²

Bracebridge
16,010
25.5 km²

Barrie
147,284
1,428 km²

Gravenhurst
12,311
23.8 km²

E

Orillia
30,546
1,069.2 km²

100 km

90 km

S

Churches
University
College
Hospital
Mosque
Church or community space used for Islamic Worship
Schools

Primary Access
Secondary Access

City, pop.: 1,000,000+
Statistics Canada defined population center POPCEN
Town, pop.: 100,000+
Town, pop.: 10,000+

Figure 18. A map of South-Central Ontario highlighting Toronto, Canada's largest city, and the infrastructure supporting the procession from the city to Muskoka and Algonquin Park (also highlighted).

Figure 19. Fine Weather, Georgian Bay. 1913, oil on canvas by J.E.H. MacDonald. MacDonald was a member of Canada's Group of Seven, whose landscape work from the Interwar period is a huge part fo the regional iconography. Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia

Muskoka's picturesque environment is unique because of its ease of access to major cities and trade. Just 140km from Toronto'sPearson International Airport or 100km from Jack Garland Airport in North Bay it is the ideal site to provide a hybrid of landscape interaction and social infrastructure.

The region is home to 59, 980 residents within an area of 3,816 km²; however, when one factors seasonal residents into the equation, the population more than doubles to 135,606.[22] According to projections, this number is expected to climb by 2031, with a population growth of nearly 40 per cent; the greatest number of new residents residing in the larger townships.

Muskoka's economy is tourist driven and supplemented by a strong service industry. Construction, social services and international manufacturing bolster the region. According to the township of Muskoka Lakes, the construction industry is the primary employer,[23] while recent growth in the service sector has made this the largest economic contributor elsewhere in the region.

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22   Township of Muskoka Lakes, *Economic Profile,* 2010: 6

23   Township of Muskoka Lakes, *Economic Development Strategy*, 2015: 5

The District
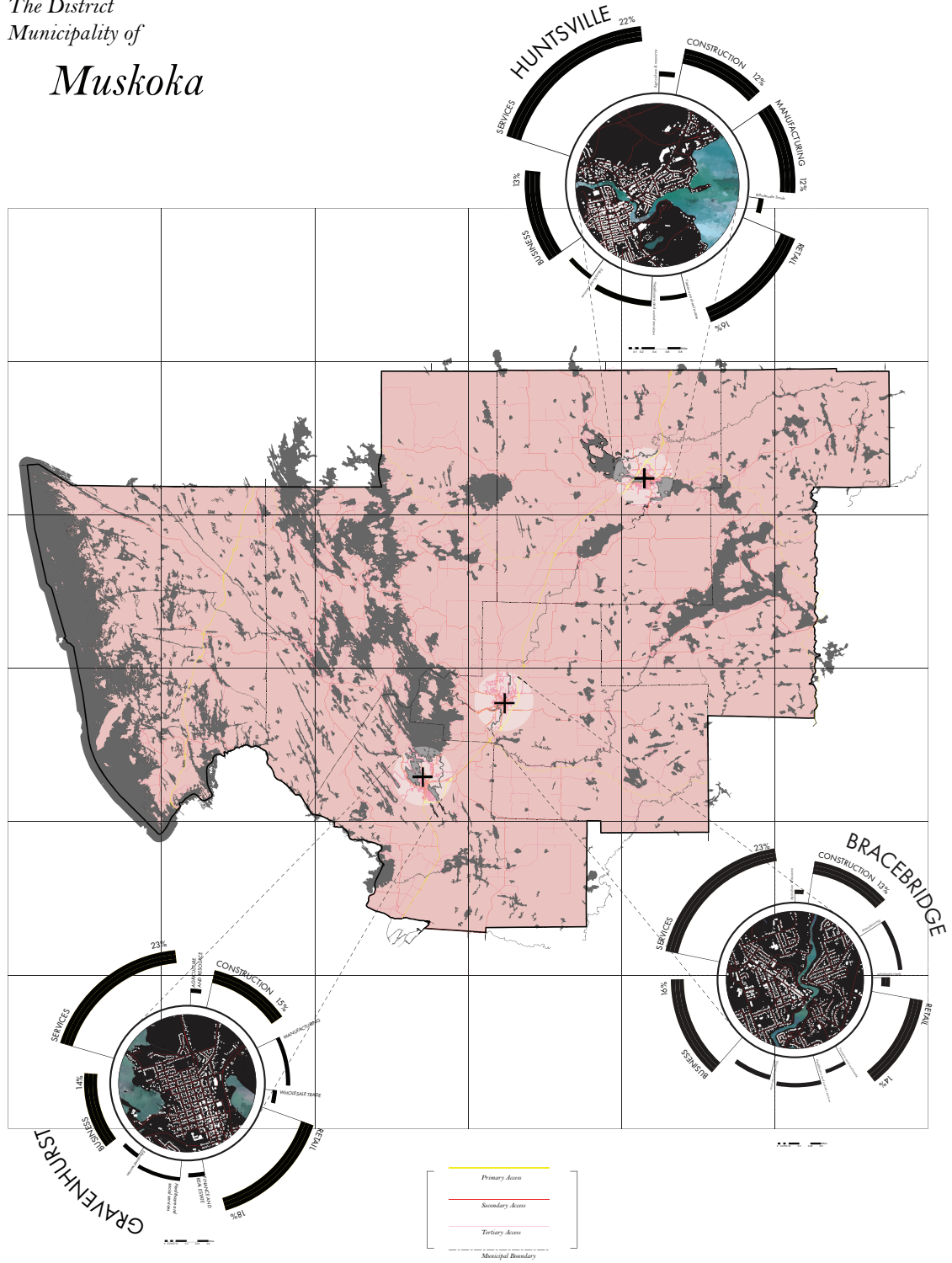*Municipality of*

Muskoka

Figure 20. Map of the District Municipality of Muskoka with the three towns of Gravenhurst, Bracebridge and Hunstville highlighted along with the major economic industries of each region.

Figure 21. Loggers in the Algonquin Muskoka region. Late 19th century photograph. Source: McCord Museum Collection.

From 1981 to 2001, Muskoka saw a 50 per cent increase in its experienced labour force, with growth in wholesale, retail, construction and services leading the way – largely driven by the tourist economy.[24] Calculating the exact economic drivers of the tourism industry is difficult, as they needs of tourists fuel related sectors in retail, accommodation, arts, entertainment, transportation and recreational services:

> Tourism is an industry that our system of industrial accounts does not identify separately. The needs of tourists are typically seen to be met in part by accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment and recreation services, retailers and transportation. Muskoka's higher than 100 indices in accommodations and food services; arts, entertainment and recreation; and retail sales all suggest that tourism is an important driver of Muskoka's economic base.[25]

The projected growth of the region indicates that the significance of tourism and jobs within the service sector will not slow down anytime soon.

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24 The District Municipality of Muskoka, *Muskoka Region Economic Strategy Phase 1*, 2010: 1

25 Ibid.

Figure 22. Ditchburn Boats were named after the Ditchburn brothers, immigrants from the United Kingdom who settled in Muskoka and manufactured boats in their Gravenhurst factory from 1871 until the 1938. Today, the boats are highly sought after and collected worldwide. Source: ditch-burnboats.ca

SELECTING THE SITE: HUNTSVILLE

The eastern border of Muskoka takes visitors through the largest municipality, Huntsville, which acts as a gateway into Algonquin Provincial Park. The park is highly popular with Ontarians and draws over half a million visitors annually in addition to the over two million visitors to Muskoka. There exists within the town a strong community infrastructure within the downtown core, which is bordered on the east and west by lakes. The town provides the ideal site for a mosque and Islamic community center, serving as a destination for Muslims from Toronto, North Bay and the Greenbelt to experience worship in more remote locale.

CHAPTER 4: A CANADIAN MOSQUE

The whole Earth is a Mosque

—Saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad

The acquisition of places of worship has always played a crucial role in the principle of religious freedom in Europe and America. Likewise many religious groups, once settled in a new environment, have always established a place of worship; over the last few decades these places have become symbolically laden arenas with respect to design. We must keep in mind that in an unfamiliar environment nothing is more meaningful than a familiar image, because it gives expressive meaning to one's belief and gives identity to a group that for a large part represents a Diaspora community.
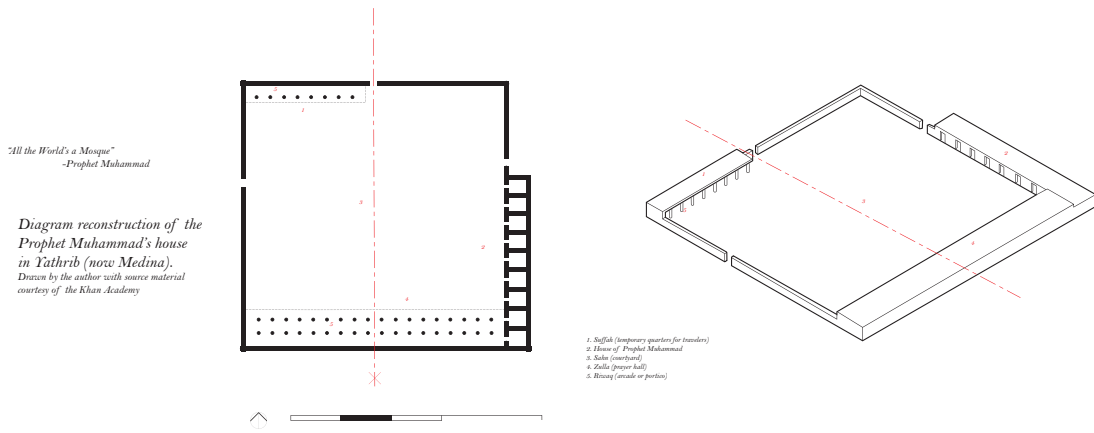
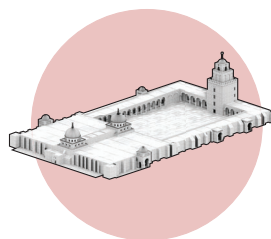—Design of Mosques and Islamic Cultural Centers[26]

THE MOSQUE TYPOLOGY

The word mosque or *masjid* translates to mean 'a place of prostration'. The mosque typology offers a rich architectural history informed by centuries of historical influences. Despite associations of ornate arabesque patterning, towering minarets and vast domes, many of the architectural elements of mosque construction are not prescribed or required by either the Qur'an or hadith, the two fundamental texts of the Islamic faith. Instead, the aesthetic qualifiers draw upon a rich history of cultural borrowing from various religions and vast extents of the Islamic Empire at multiple historical junctions. It is critical for the designer to understand that, unlike churches, synagogues, or temples, the act of worship within Islam is foremost an act of ablution and prostration, not tied to any formal spatial or design requirement. The ontological axis pointing towards Mecca is the only qualifier for the ritual worshipper. Still many mosques, especially in the West, rely on transplanting an aesthetic laden with historical significance from other eras or foreign climates. The familiar icons provide an association for Muslims to feel a sense of comfort and familiarity, yet architects seldom exhibit any acknowledgment of the new site, region or nation.

To design a 21st century mosque in Canada, the formative years of Islamic history provide two very crucial lessons drawn from the life of the Prophet Muhammad

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26   Akel Kahera, Latif Abdulmalik, and Craig Anz, Design Criteria for Mosques and Islamic Centers: Art, Architecture and Worship (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2009), vii.

"All the World's a Mosque"
-Prophet Muhammad

Diagram reconstruction of the
Prophet Muhammad's house
in Yathrib (now Medina).
Drawn by the author with source material
courtesy of the Khan Academy

1. Suffah (temporary quarters for travelers)
2. House of Prophet Muhammad
3. Sahn (courtyard)
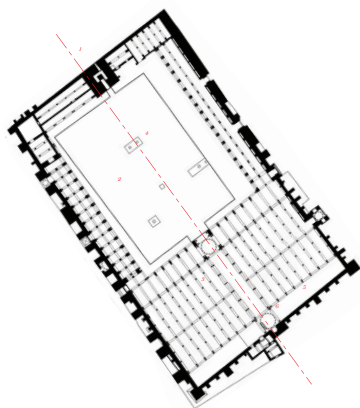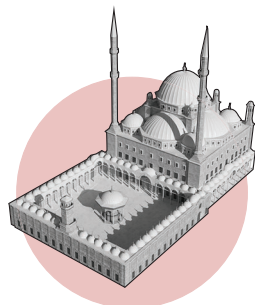4. Zulla (prayer hall)
5. Riwaq (arcade or portico)

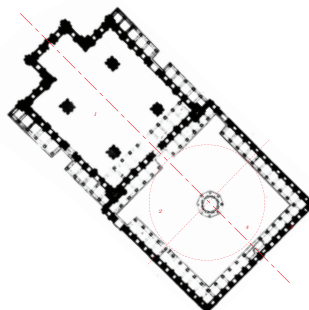i. Arab Hypostyle Mosque
Great Mosque of Kairouan
Kairouan, Tunisia
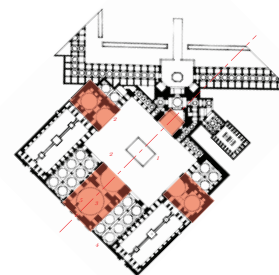
ii. Four-Iwan Mosque
Shah Mosque,
Isfahan, Iran
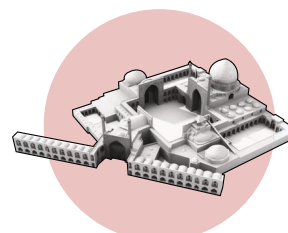
iii. Centrally-planed Mosque
Mosque of Muhammad Ali Pasha
Cairo, Egypt

1. Minaret
2. Sahn (courtyard)
3. Zulla (prayer hall)
4. Sadirvan
5. Qibla Wall
6. Mihrab

1. Sahn (courtyard)
2. Zulla (prayer hall)
3. Qibla Wall
4. Mihrab

1. Sahn (courtyard)
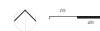2. Iwan
3. Zulla (prayer hall)
4. Qibla Wall
5. Mihrab

Figure 23. Above: diagrammatic reconstruction of the Prophet Muhammad's house, the first Mosque, in Yathrib. Below: Three standard Mosque typologies.

Qibla Wall

Mihrab Nice

Ablution

Minbar

Riwaq

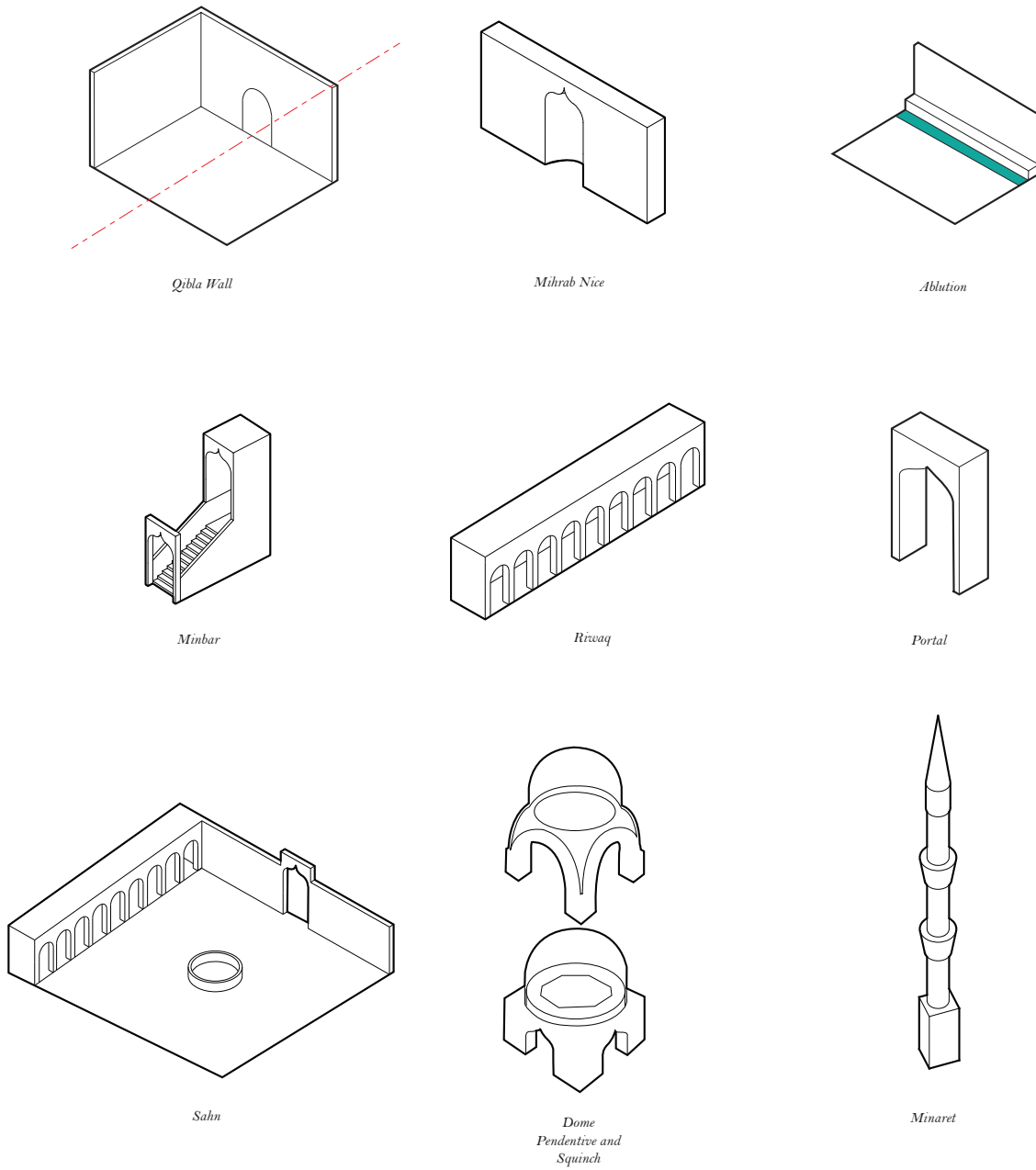Portal

Sahn

Dome
Pendentive and
Squinch

Minaret

Figure 24. Elements of Mosque Typology. Identifying the core elements in the spatial design and aesthetic of a Mosque

himself. The very first is the house of the Prophet Muhammad in Yathrib (now Medina) which is also the first mosque in existence. The house was a simple adobe structure unadorned with minarets or ornate arabesque patterning. The house served to accomodate visiting worshippers with rooms for dwelling, and provided an enclosed court with a shaded colonnade for worship. The simplicity of the structure served its function in a typology responding the environmental conditions of its place.

This structure differs greatly from the iconic images of mosques we think of today. In reality, the symbolism of the mosque is tied to the rapid expansion of the early Islamic Empire. In its conquest the amalgamation of various regional styles influenced the historic mosques:

> The major differences in the exterior design of later mosques thus had nothing to do with religion in any direct sense; the buildings were simply based on the regional architecture of the converted cultures. At first, mosques were precise copies of other local houses of worship; then, recognizable regional styles associated with characteristic formal types emerged, such as the Moorish mosque with a tent-like roof in Morocco, the Ottoman mosque with a central dome in Turkey, and the Mughal mosque with three onion domes in the Hindustani region. When Islam started spreading to the modern West, early immigrants erected nostalgic replicas of the mosques familiar to them from their homelands, because their foreign cultural environment made them homesick. Once they started to put down roots in Western society, they abandoned revival styles for a more eclectic, Disneyesque style, a hybrid of all sorts of mosques from different Islamic countries of origin, combined with Western styles and materials from their new countries[27]

The mosque design surpasses both the aesthetic qualifiers of the religious and historical context and the functional derivation of parts. Instead, the authors illuminate a third overarching complexity: the existence of "a ghostly resdue of emotional and cultural feeling attached to the image and while the author's.[28] For architects, this provides a new way of thinking that focuses on distilling the object of cultural memory from within the typology, and can in turn inform how to adapt each element to serve its historical context, function and the emotional attachment to the symbol simultaneously.

The second noteworthy moment of the Prophet's life is the pilgrimage he took

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27 Akel Kahera, Latif Abdulmalik, and Craig Anz, *Design Criteria for Mosques and Islamic Centers: Art, Architecture and Worship* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2009), 11.
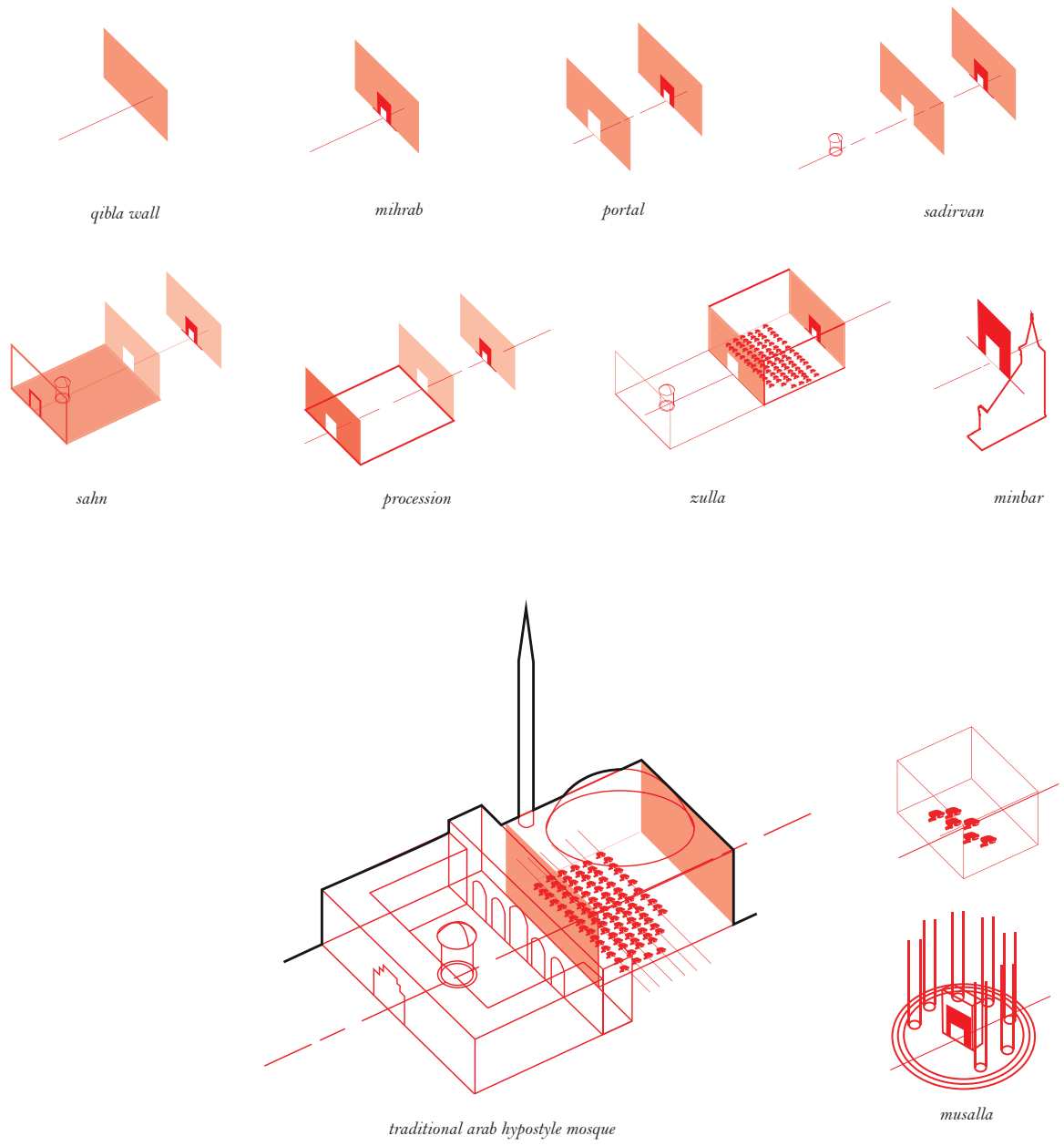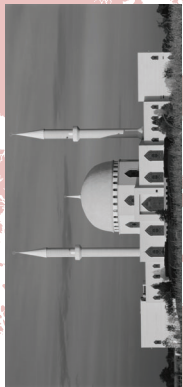
28 Ibid.

qibla wall

mihrab

portal

sadirvan

sahn

procession

zulla

minbar

traditional arab hypostyle mosque

musalla

Figure 25. Processional recreation of a hypostyle Mosque

qibla wall

mihrab

portal

sadirvan

sahn

procession

zulla

minbar

traditional arab hypostyle mosque

musalla

Figure 25. Processional recreation of a hypostyle Mosque

Landscape *typologies and the siting of Mosques and places of Islamic Worship around the world.*

Uzongol Mosque
Trabzon, Turkey

The city of Trabzon is lies at the base of a

forest

valley intersecting Turkey's Black Sea Coast. The city has an extensive history as an active Greek colony and its location on the Silk Road, establishing it as a melting pot of cultures and trade. The inland lake, Uzungol, as the Uzongol Mosque rises to great travelers and provide an iconic division in the landscape.

Marree Mosque
Marree, Australia
image source: State Library of South Australia

An example of early

vernacular

Architecture, this Mosque was built for Afghan worshippers who were relocated to Australia, through Pakistan and other Middle Eastern countries, as a result of British colonialism and expansion. Afghan cameleers were an important part of Australia's settlement, aiding explorers in navigating the arid landscape. Their proud heritage is tied to camel racing and a legacy of policemen riding camels -forming iconic imagery of the early 20th century in this region.

Hassan II Mosque
Cassablanca, Morocco

Morocco's beautiful Hassan II Mosque is an iconic building and well-known tourist attraction straddling the

coastal

landscape of the city of Cassablanca. Designed by French Architect Michel Pensou, the building has the tallest minaret in the world standing at 210 meters.

Islamic Center of Greater Toledo
Perrysburg, Ohio, USA

The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo in Perrysburg, Ohio, USA straddles the boundary between the city and its expanding farmland. Surrounded by a

rural

cornfield, the approach is framed as the minarets and central dome rising out of a landscape
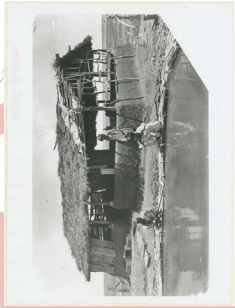

Dar Al Islam Mosque
Abiquiu, New Mexico, USA

Set in the hot-dry climate of the New Mexico

desert

this Mosque was constructed after a community-led initiative of the Dar Al Islam Non-Profit Education group and designed by Egyptian Architect Hassan Fathy. The tie to the American desert reflected its similarities to the Arabian peninsula and a strong existing vernacular of adobe construction.
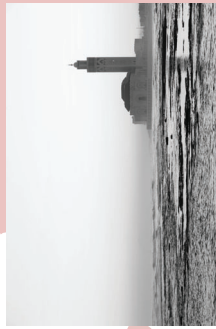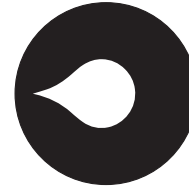
Figure 26. Various landscapes for siting Mosques.

when secluding himself in the cave of Hira on Jabal Al-Nour. It was during this period of seclusion that the archangel Gabriel appeared to him and recited what would become the earliest Qur'anic verses. The isolation within nature provides an important point of connection not only to nature, but of the highly personal ritual of Islamic prayer. The Haaj, a pilgrimage to the Kaa'ba in the holyland of Mecca, is one of the Pillars of Islam and an undertaking all Muslims must do once in their lifetime. This connection to nature and solitude is critical in designing a mosque and precedents offer import lessons to understand this.

SITING -CASE STUDY: ISFAHAN

The garden city of Isfahan was once the capital of the Persian Empire during the 16th and 17th centuries. Under the ruling Safavid dynasty, the city flourished. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Isfahan is centrally located within Iran and is home to many relics of Islamic architecture. Of particular note is the Shah Mosque, located adjacent to the plaza. The qibla axis clearly violates the city's grid, yet this seems of little importance relative to the scale and ornate nature of the building. Simply put: the importance of the qibla superceeds the rigidity of the urban fabric.
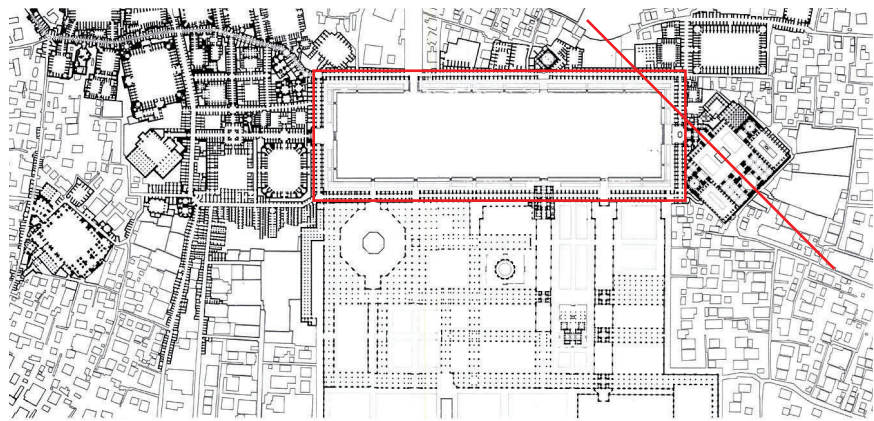

Figure 27. A map of downtown Isfahan and the location of the the Shah Mosque and adjacent plaza S.ource: Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture*, Publications of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies ; No. 9 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 98.

In examining the original layout of city, the urban condition develops as a response to sourcing channels of water from the Zayandeh river. The canals run perpendicular to the river's east-west orientation and subsequently used to supply the *charbagh* or gardens.

The charbagh is the Persian Islamic quadripartite garden layout seen frequently

in the Middle East. The garden illustrates the important relationship between nature and Islam. In Islam, the gift of nature and all things in the universe are blessings of Allah. The sacredness of these spaces and the quest for establishing an element of nature within a harsh desert climate indicate the importance of places of solitude and highten the spiritual significance of nature.
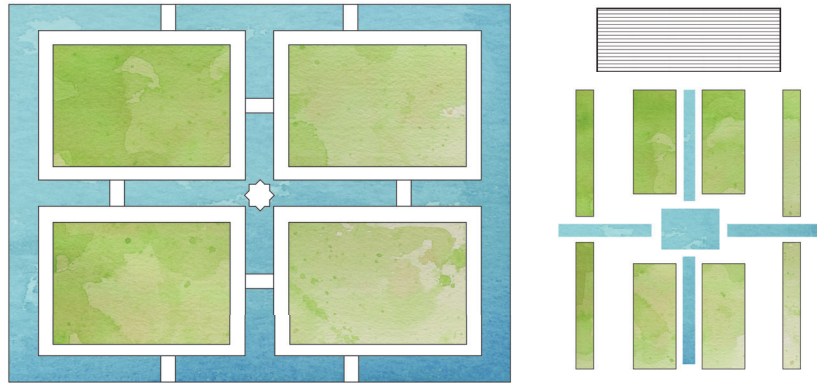

Figure 28. Schematic drawings of Persian garden layouts

The quadripartite scheme of the gardens alludes to the language used to describe paradise within the Qu'ran. Understanding the importance of the garden within early Islamic mosques is critical to understanding this physically manifested paradise, and how the natural environment can be successfully integrated into the mosque design scheme.

مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَآ أَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن مَّآءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَٰلِدٌ فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَسُقُوا۟ مَآءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَآءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

Figure 29. Qu'ran Surah 47:15, translated as: *Is the description of Paradise, which the righteous are promised, wherein are rivers of water unaltered, rivers of milk the taste of which never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of purified honey, in which they will have from all [kinds of] fruits and forgiveness from their Lord, like [that of] those who abide eternally in the Fire and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines?* Source: quran.com.
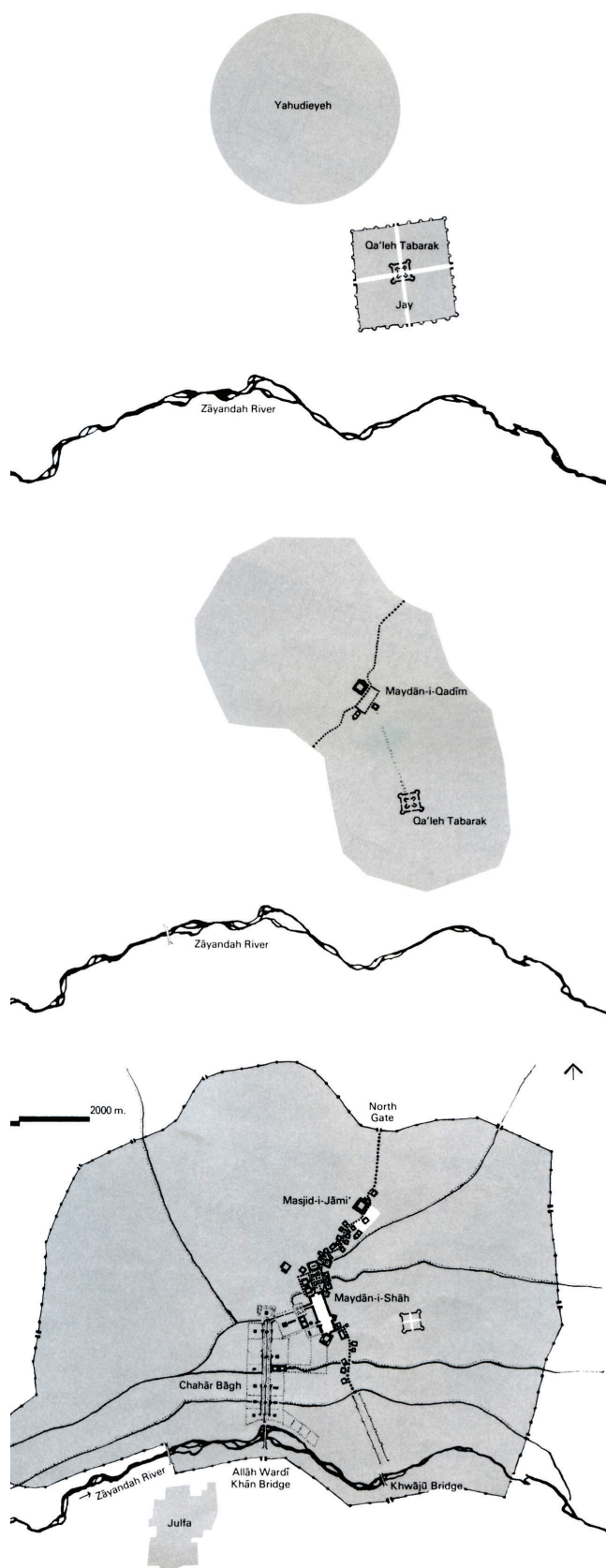
Figure 30. The growth of Isfahan from the pre-Islamic era. Source: Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture*, Publications of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies ; No. 9 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 97.
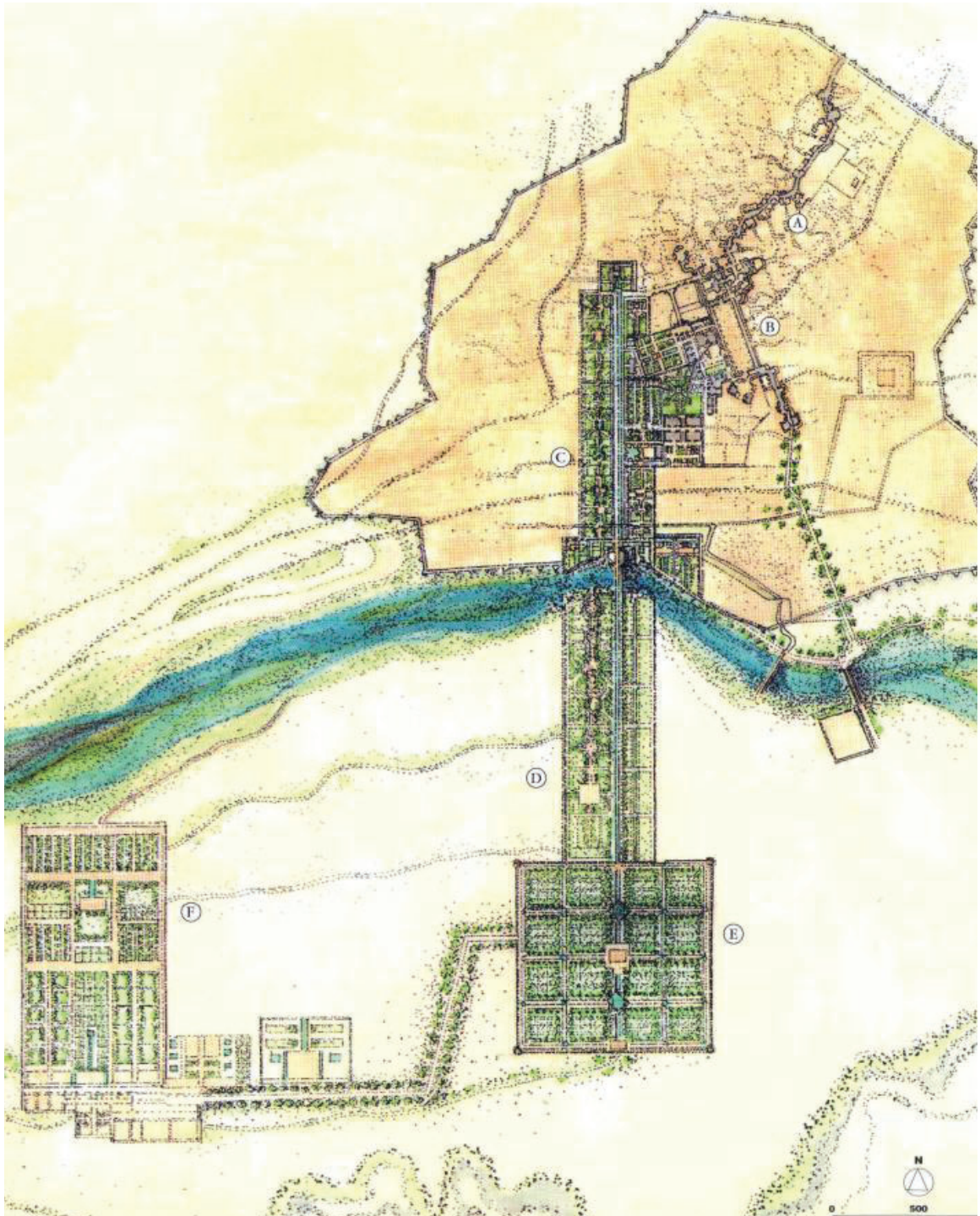
Figure 31. An image of the Safavid city of Isfahan indicating the gardens and charbagh. Source: Moghtader, M. R. and Khansari, Mehdi , *The Persian Garden: Echoes of Paradise*; Mage Publishers, 1998, p. 90

CHAPTER 5: DESIGN

> The architectural design of contemporary mosques is an amalgam of forms, one that merges the past with the present, the traditional with the technological. It is an important resource for the study of social and religious expression and of how a culture defines itself through the act of building.
>
> -Kishwar Rizvi, *The Transnational Mosque*[29]

DESIGN OVERVIEW

The outcome of this thesis is the design of a Canadian mosque—a symbol of identity for Islamic-Canadians and an architecture aimed at integrating one of the many marginalized groups comprising the multicultural fabric of the country.

Putting into principle the discussed importance of place and highly symbolic history of the region of Muskoka, the outlined design criteria will serve as a synthesis of these goals through the examination of the program, site and implementation of the overall design strategy.

DESIGN CRITERIA

The design criteria for this project emphaszes the importance of language and materiality to hybridize a foreign aesthetic into a new region—done in a manner sensitive to place. It must:

-Utilise a vernacular of wood post-and-beam or mass timber construction ,completmenting muskoka's heavily wooded landscape and rich history with lumber and decorative wood boat building.

-Evoke a sense of the familiar to Islamic-Canadians by depicting the relics of cultural memory tied to mosque design, as well as the fundamental while abandoning transplanted elements and material use which historically tied to other regions and eras.

-Be implemented at a scale sufficient to complement the programmatic

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29 Kishwar Rizvi, *The Transnational Mosque: Architecture and Historical Memory in the Contemporary Middle East* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

adjascencies of Huntsville's existing community infrastructure without program redundancy.

-Simultaneously serve and bridge the cultural gap between Islamic and Non-Islamic users and families (appeal as a destination to both the "Smiths" and the "Al-Hassans").

-Be sensitive to the architectural language of the area (boat houses. wood-frame construction, all-season durability).

-Be designed in harmony with the landscape .

PROGRAM

Viusalizing the design as a synthesis of two cultures, the initial program highlights the four pillars of the layout: community, cultural, recreational and worship. Almost all of these elements are included in the design, while program adjacencies from local community centres and existing park spaces near the site remove the need for large interior and exterior recreation spaces. In keeping with design ethos of a cross-cultural space, these pillars should not function as independently progammed spaces, but rather be designed as part of a cohesive scheme, in which program is encouraged to be shared and interchanged throughout.
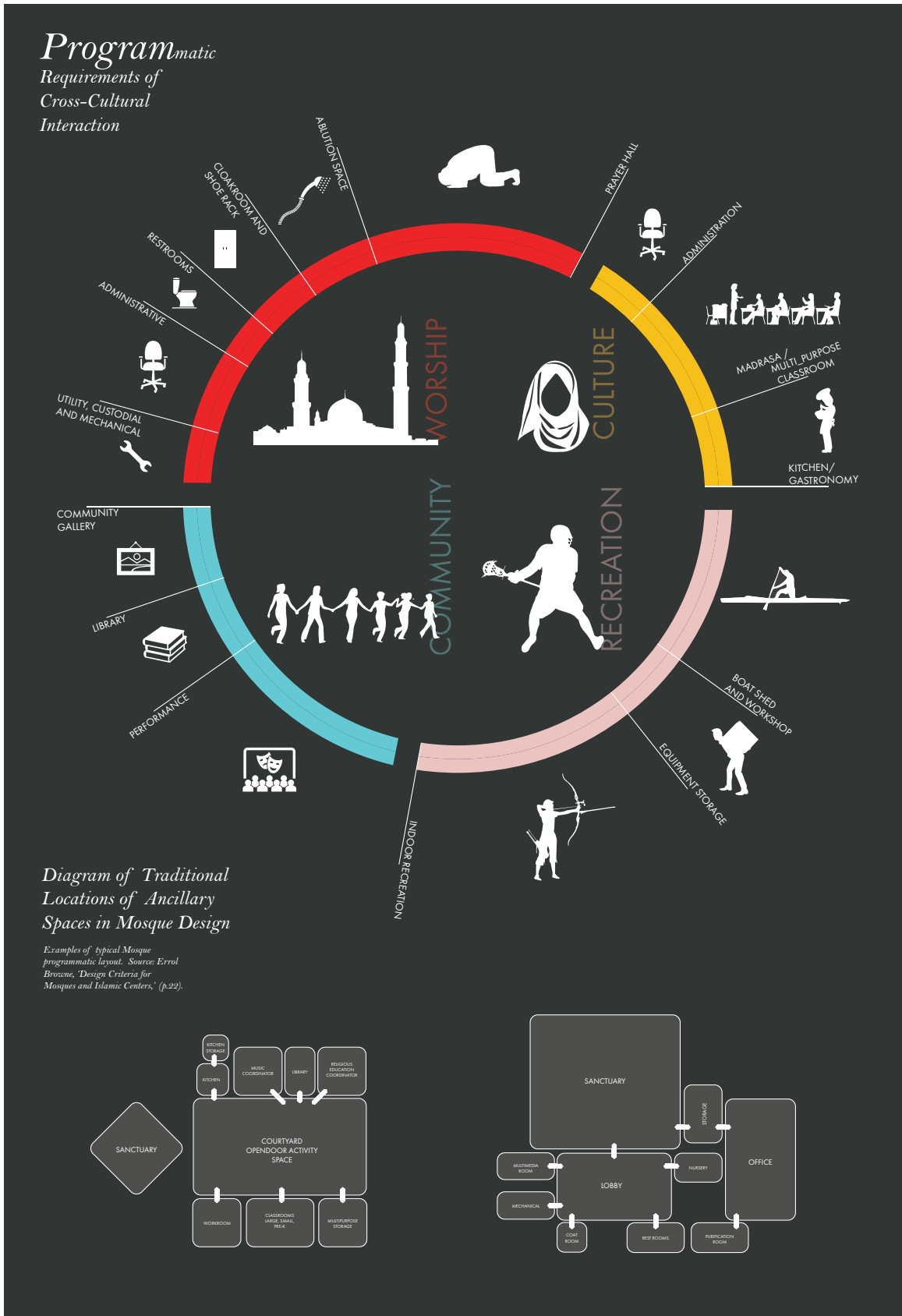
*Program*matic
Requirements of
Cross-Cultural
Interaction

ABLUTION SPACE

CLOAKROOM AND SHOE RACK

RESTROOMS

ADMINISTRATIVE

UTILITY, CUSTODIAL AND MECHANICAL

COMMUNITY GALLERY

LIBRARY

PERFORMANCE

INDOOR RECREATION

PRAYER HALL

ADMINISTRATION

MADRASA / MULTI-PURPOSE CLASSROOM

KITCHEN/ GASTRONOMY

BOAT SHED AND WORKSHOP

EQUIPMENT STORAGE

WORSHIP

CULTURE

COMMUNITY

RECREATION

Diagram of Traditional
Locations of Ancillary
Spaces in Mosque Design

Examples of typical Mosque
programmatic layout. Source: Errol
Browne, 'Design Criteria for
Mosques and Islamic Centers,' (p.22).

KITCHEN STORAGE

KITCHEN

MUSIC COORDINATOR

LIBRARY

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

SANCTUARY

COURTYARD OPENDOOR ACTIVITY SPACE

WORKROOM

CLASSROOMS (LARGE, SMALL, PRE-K)

MULTIPURPOSE STORAGE

SANCTUARY

STORAGE

MULTIMEDIA ROOM

NURSERY

OFFICE

LOBBY

MECHANICAL

COAT ROOM

REST ROOMS

PURIFICATION ROOM

Figure 32. Program diagram highlighting the focus of the design spaces

SITE

Huntsville serves as ideal location for the mosque and community centre. It is the largest town in the region and can act as a staging ground for further day or extended-period trips into Algonquin Park or one of the many other Provincial Parks in the region, while being easily accessed via highway to Toronto, Barrie and North Bay.

Existing community spaces highlight opportunities to eliminate program redundancy and complement the intervention without overburdening the design. The site map illustrates the historic downtown as well as Huntsville High School and the Canadian Summit Centre. The Summit Centre functions as the region's largest community centre, built for the 2010 G8 Summit which took place in the area. The structure houses two arenas, an aquatics facility, fitness centre, culinary instruction space, breakout rooms and coffee shop. Complementing this program offers an excellent opportunity to bridge the mosque and the community by supplementing the program and siting the design near to both the Summit Centre and downtown Huntsville.

Lion's Lookout is the town of Huntsville's main tourist attraction, offering a sweeping view of Muskoka looking east over Fairy Lake. The lookout is part of a vast greenspace and small trail located adjacent to the town's historic downtown. It features an elevation change of early 200 feet, straddling the western bank of the lake.

Figure 33. An aerial photograph of the site at Lion's Lookoutwith Camp Kitchen Road and the western bank of Fairy Lake visible in the bottom. Source: Google Maps Location Image Database

COMMUNITY LIVING HUNTSVILLE
COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Employment Services
Supported Independent Living
Facilitation and Planning
Group Living
Resource Teacher
Respite (Adults and Children)
Family Support

LION'S LOOKOUT FIELD

*Community park adjacent to Lion's
Lookout and tucked between the two
highest elevation peaks on the site. The
field is underutilized and contains no
infrastructure. Every summer the
Muskoka Sound Music Festival is held
here*

SITE

WATERLOO SUMMIT CENTRE
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

HUNTSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
TRILLIUM LAKELANDS DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Source: Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2013
Student population: 943;
Grades: 9–12
OSSLT
*Based on responses to Student Questionnaire
Male 47%
Female 53%
Applied 32%
Academic 66%
Locally developed 3%
Other 0%
Special Education needs 24%
English language learners 0%
Speaks primarily a language other than English at home* 4%

CANADA SUMMIT CENTRE
COMMUNITY PROGRAM

*Recreation facility built for the 2010
G8 Summit held in Huntsville. The
facility contains an aquatics facility,
fitness centre, health and wellness hub,
two arenas, breakout space and a coffee
shop*

Education
Community
Church

Figure 34. Map of the site and downtown Huntsville, Ontario

Figure 35. Satellite photograph of Lion's Lookout Park and the eastern bank of Fairy Lake. Source: Google Earth Pro

Figure 36. The eisting lookout pavilion atop Lion's Lookout with an overview of Fairy Lake. Source: Google Maps Location Image Database

There is multi-level access to the site: Camp Kitchen Road follows the narrows of the waterway opening to Fairy Lake and terminates at a small park along the shore. Lookout Road ascends towards the top of the hill, and terminates in a loop configuration with limited parking and the notable lookout pavilion.

Figure 37. The existing lookout pavilion atop Lion's Lookout with an overview of Fairy Lake. Source: Google Maps Location Image Database
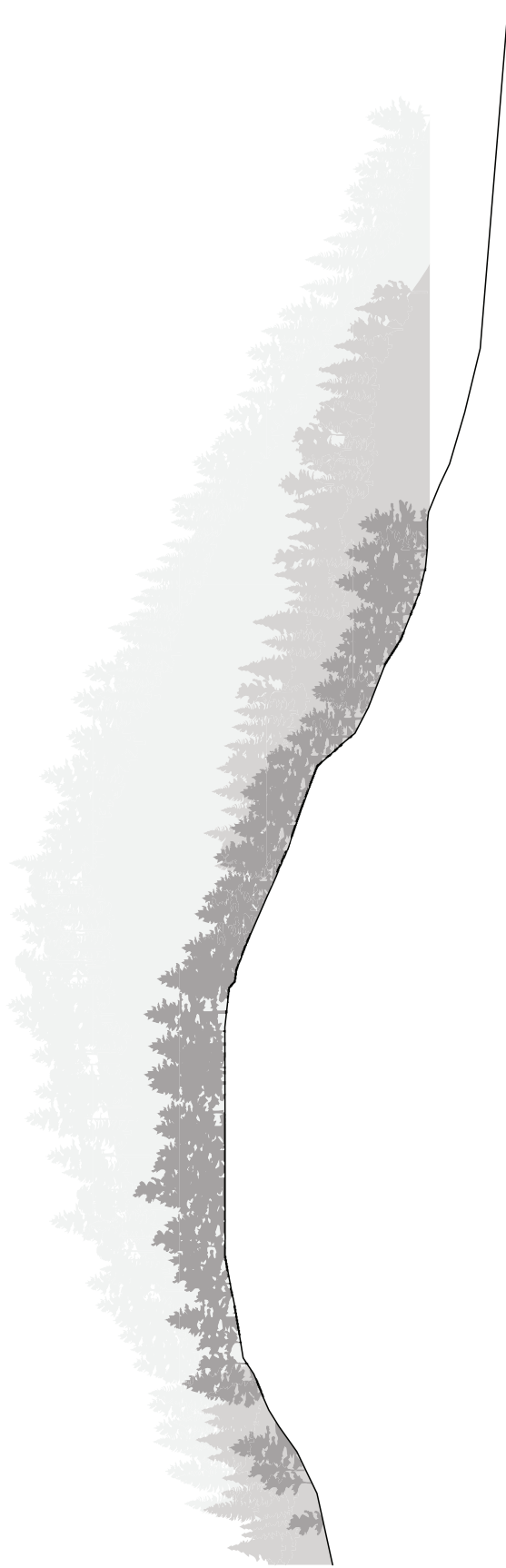
Figure 38. Site section from top of Lion's Lookout to Fair Lake

SCHEME AND DESIGN STRATEGY

The design scheme utilizes the multi-level approaches and existing road infrastructure at Lion's Lookout, and takes advantage of the nearly 200 foot drop from the location of the existing lookout pavilion down to the bank of Fairy Lake.

Instead of addressing the community, worship, and lookout activities in separate pavilions, the scheme is conceived as a procession down the hill with each building designed as a part of sequenced journey.

The procession draws upon the highly ritualized act of worship within Islam recognizing that ritual does not simply begin when one enters the mosque, but is a part of a larger, longer spiritual undertaking. Much like the Hajj and the processional emphasis on the journey to Cottage Country for Torontonians, this theme is underscored at all scales across this project and has significance to both Islamic and Non-Islamic user groups. The scheme is a translation of the spatial and processional layout of a traditional Arab hypostyle mosque, with each portal or gateway highlighted along the route as it descends the hill.

Each building is designed as a part of this path and is articulated in a manner serving the procession and the moments along it. The charbagh or Islamic garden is no longer a formal, walled garden within the Sahn, but is found in the hillside itself. The trees become the columns or *riwaq*. The lake is the natural source for ablution or purification.

IV.
Engage

N

III.
Dwelling

W

caravanserai /ˌkarəˈvansərʌɪ/,ˌkarəˈvansəri/

Origin

Late 16th century: from Persian kārwānsarāy, from kārwān 'caravan' + sarāy 'palace'.

II.
Pit stop

E

I.
Packing for the journey

S
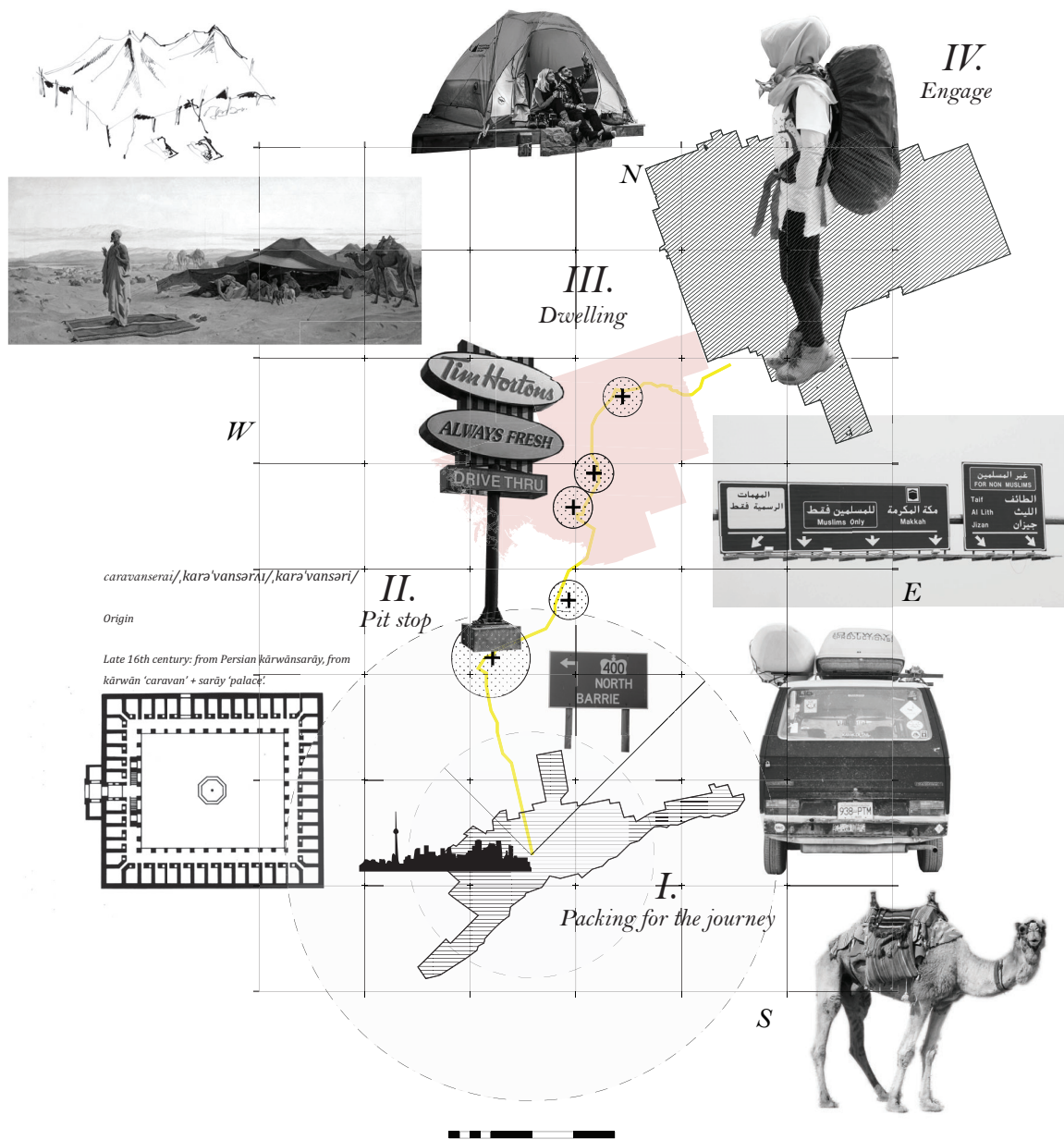
Mapping the Procession
to the Wild

Figure 39. Processional collage drawing similarities between the journey from Toronto to Muskoka and pilgrimage in the Near East
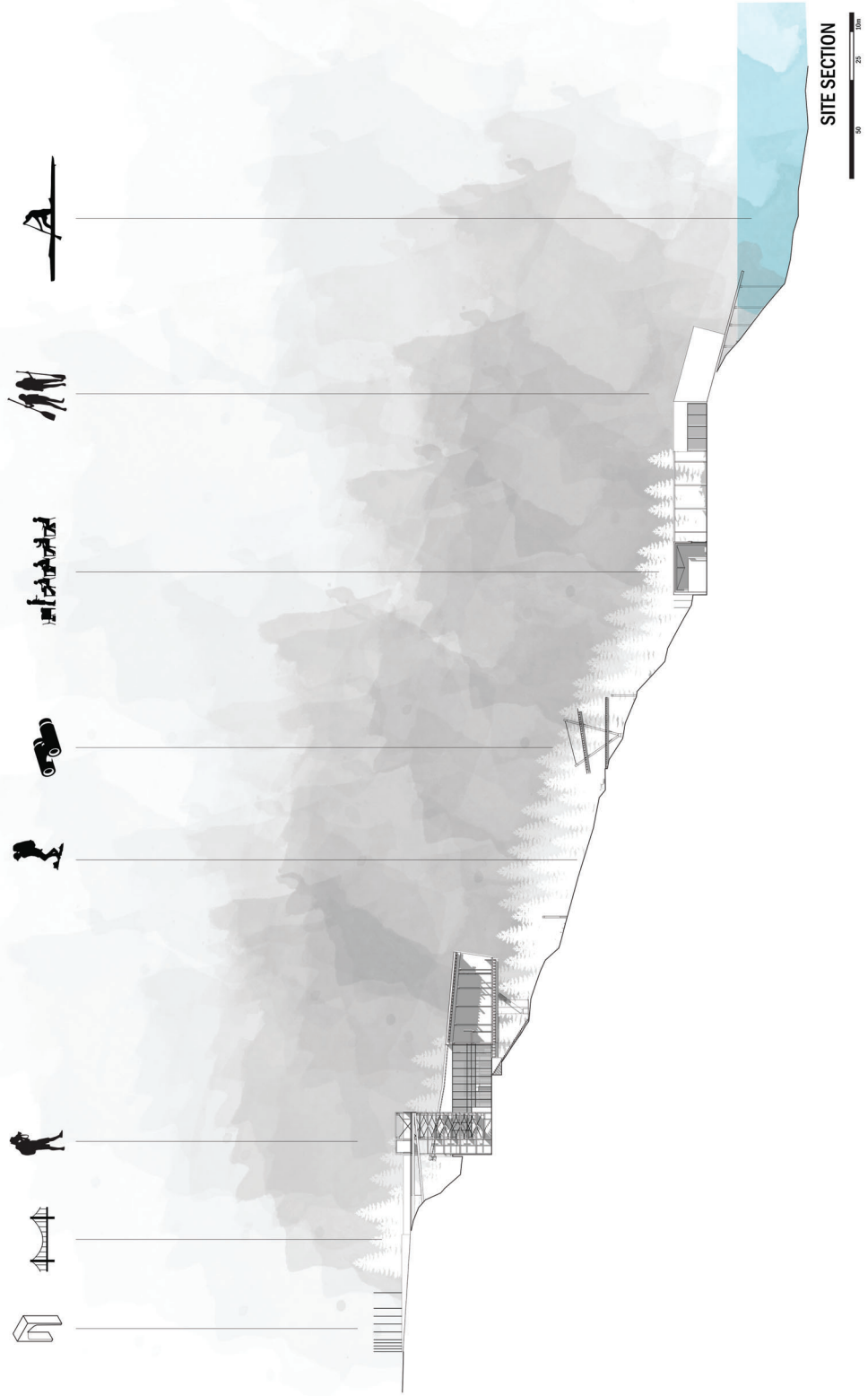
SITE SECTION

Figure 40. Site section down the hill

Figure 41. Site map

DESIGN: COMMUNITY

The community building sits nestled into the side of the hill and can be accessed from either above or below. In relation to the scheme, it represents the *sahn*, the traditional courtyard space of the mosque where more secular activities such as bartering, socialising and trade occur. The design follows a courtyard typology, with two wings containing an open gallery space and breakout tiered seating on either end, while the main space offers a 62-foot wide grand room with sweeping view of the site and tree canopies below. Perched above the court is a lookout: a singular, ramped plane projecting from the site of the old lookout pavilion and terminating at the pedestrian and elevator tower which lead down into the community building. From this court, one can enter the building from either side. If one continues forward, one can descend a grand stair, which projects beneath the cantilevered structure, leading to the start of the downhill path. A mezzanine level for additional seating and gathering wraps the wings with continuous internal circulation and the service spaces for admin, kitchen, storage and bathrooms are all contained underneath. The articulation of the roof mimics the slope of the hill and highlights the building's perched design. The entire inner courtyard is glazed, along with the east facade. Glazing from the courtyard wraps around the hillface and lets light in from above on the north and south, ensuring optimal daylighting throughout the project while emphasizing the framing of the view.
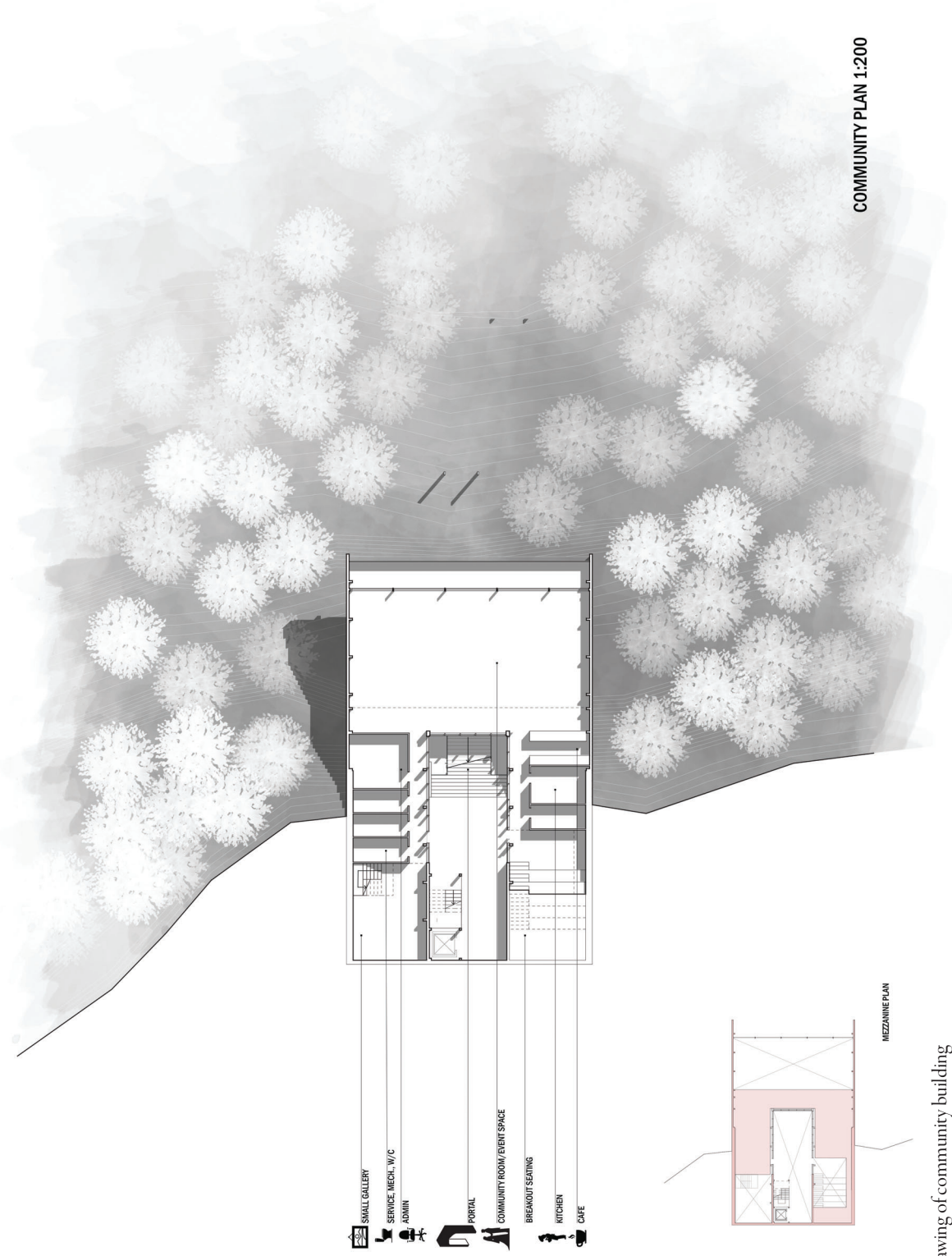
49

COMMUNITY PLAN 1:200

MEZZANINE PLAN

SMALL GALLERY
SERVICE, MECH., W/C
ADMIN
PORTAL
COMMUNITY ROOM/EVENT SPACE
BREAKOUT SEATING
KITCHEN
CAFE
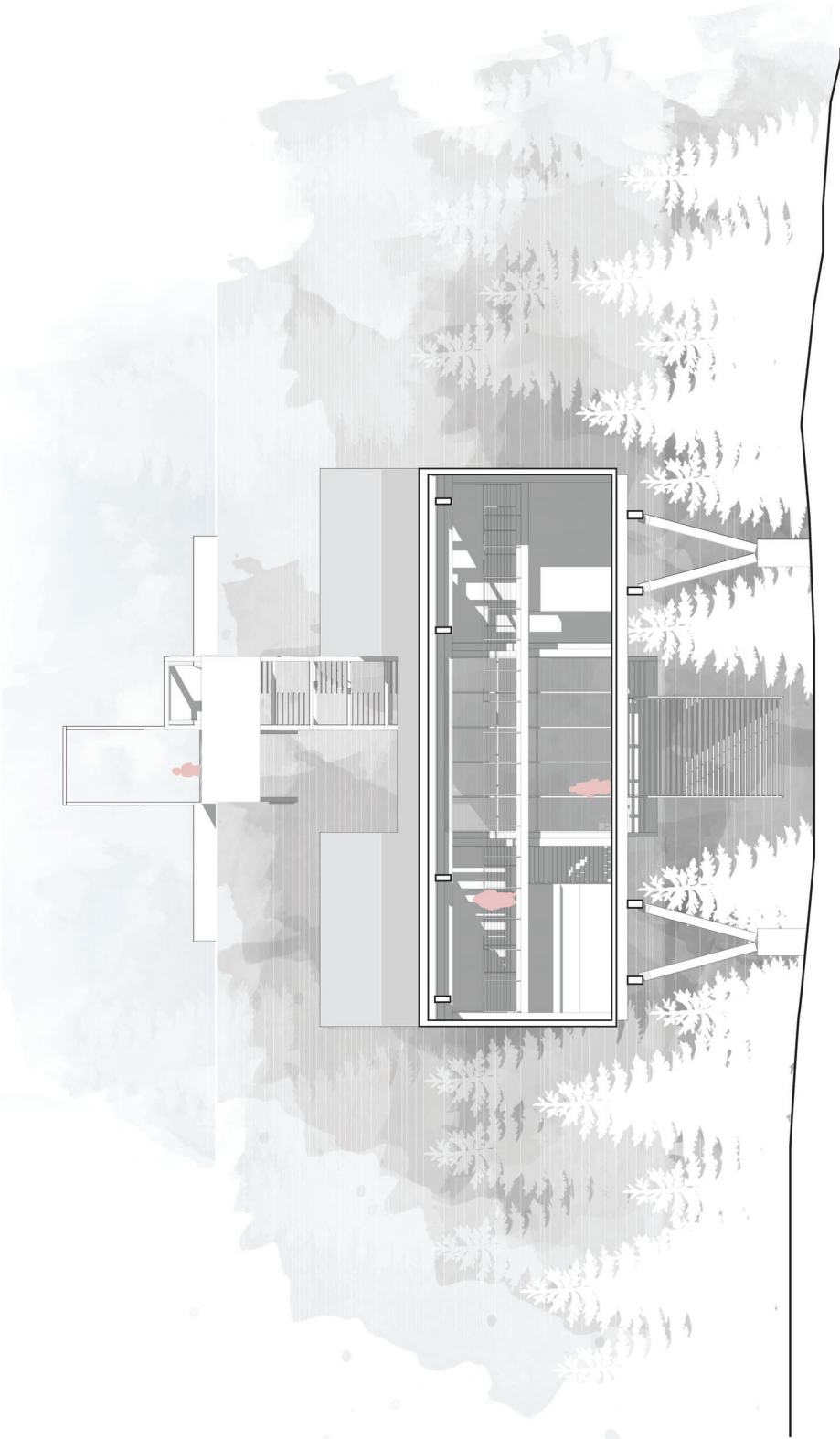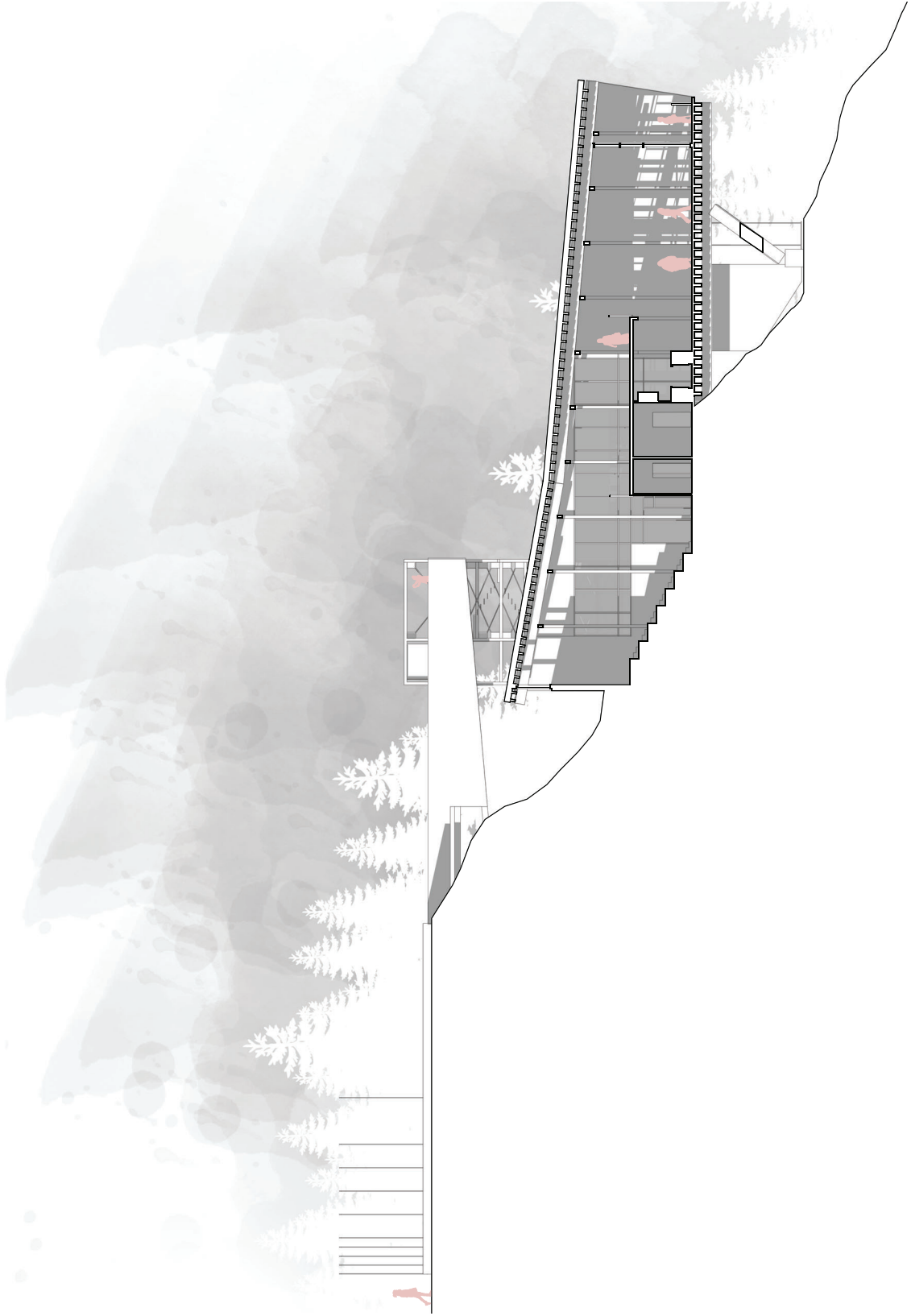
Figure 42. Plan drawing of community building

Figure 43. Cross section through community building

COMMUNITY SECTION A
SCALE 1:100

Figure 44. Long section down community building

DESIGN: MOSQUE

At the other end of the path, where the hill meets the lake, a second courtyard frames the mosque complex. This cluster of buildings is designed to be seen and approached from multiple viewing angles, whether one arrives from the road or the processional path above. An arrival portal frames the end of the path, near a parking and entry area where an open-air colonnade of structural bays encourages all passersby to process through. From this colonnade, one can also see across the court and beyond, ensuring that the view and lakeside path is uninterrupted and celebrated. One continuous L-shaped roof connects the building housing the *madrasa*, Imam's office, services, storage, mechanical and administration to the boathouse. This building is a symbolic take on the iconic Muskokan typology of boat storage, used as an ablution space in the warm summer months. The mosque building is designed in section, where light is funneled into a side lightwell with an inset roof, giving the appearance of a ceiling while still allowing natural light to filter in. Low meditative windows frame the calm lake waters without providing distracting views. The *mihrab* and *minbar* are joined, made of wood and set against a glazed and heavily slatted *qibla* wall, allowing silhouettes of nature and light to pass through while being dense enough to obscure distraction from boaters. Once again, direct access to the lower court through the lakeside road gives option to reach the Mosque for those wishing to forego the full procession –for daily prayers or Friday service.
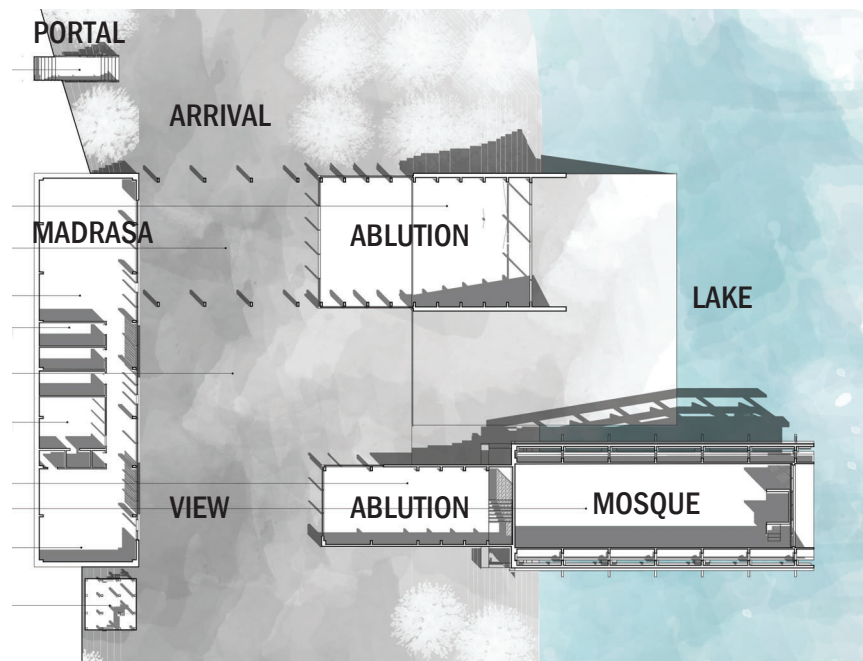

Figure 45. Diagrammatic site map of mosque.

MOSQUE PLAN 1:200

PORTAL

BOATHOUSE
RIWAQ
MADRASA
SERVICE, MECH., W/C
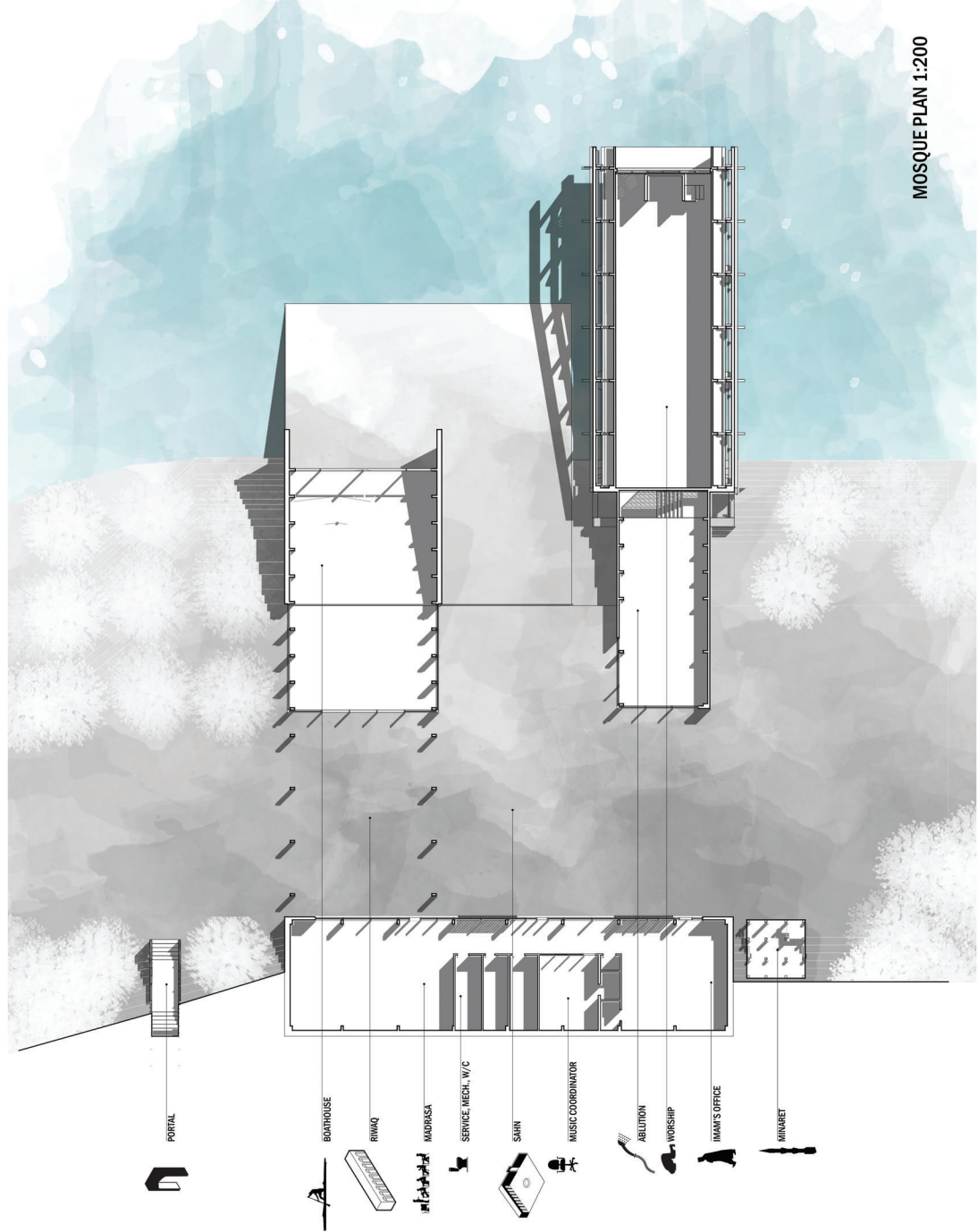SAHN
MUSIC COORDINATOR
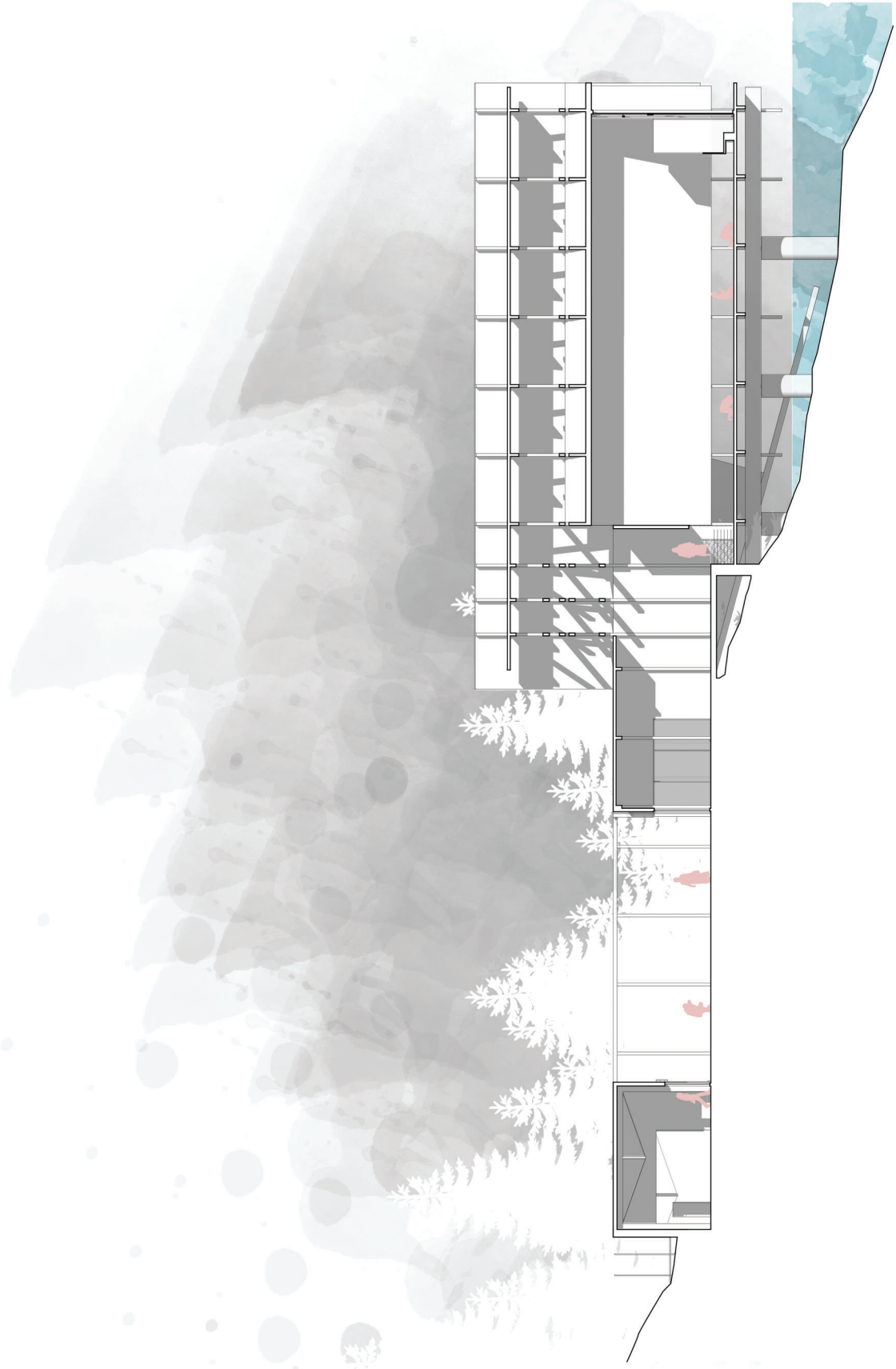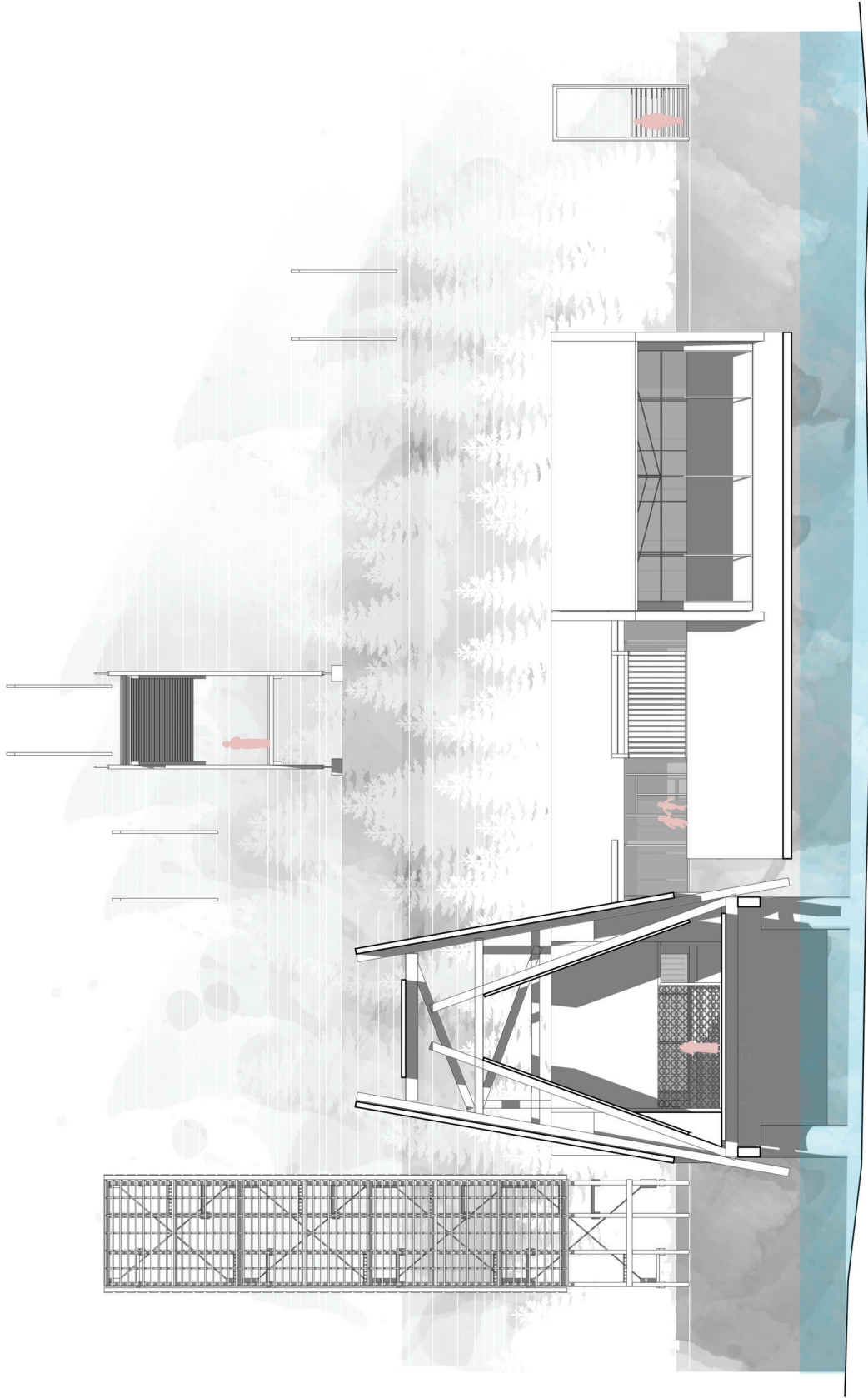ABLUTION
WORSHIP
IMAM'S OFFICE
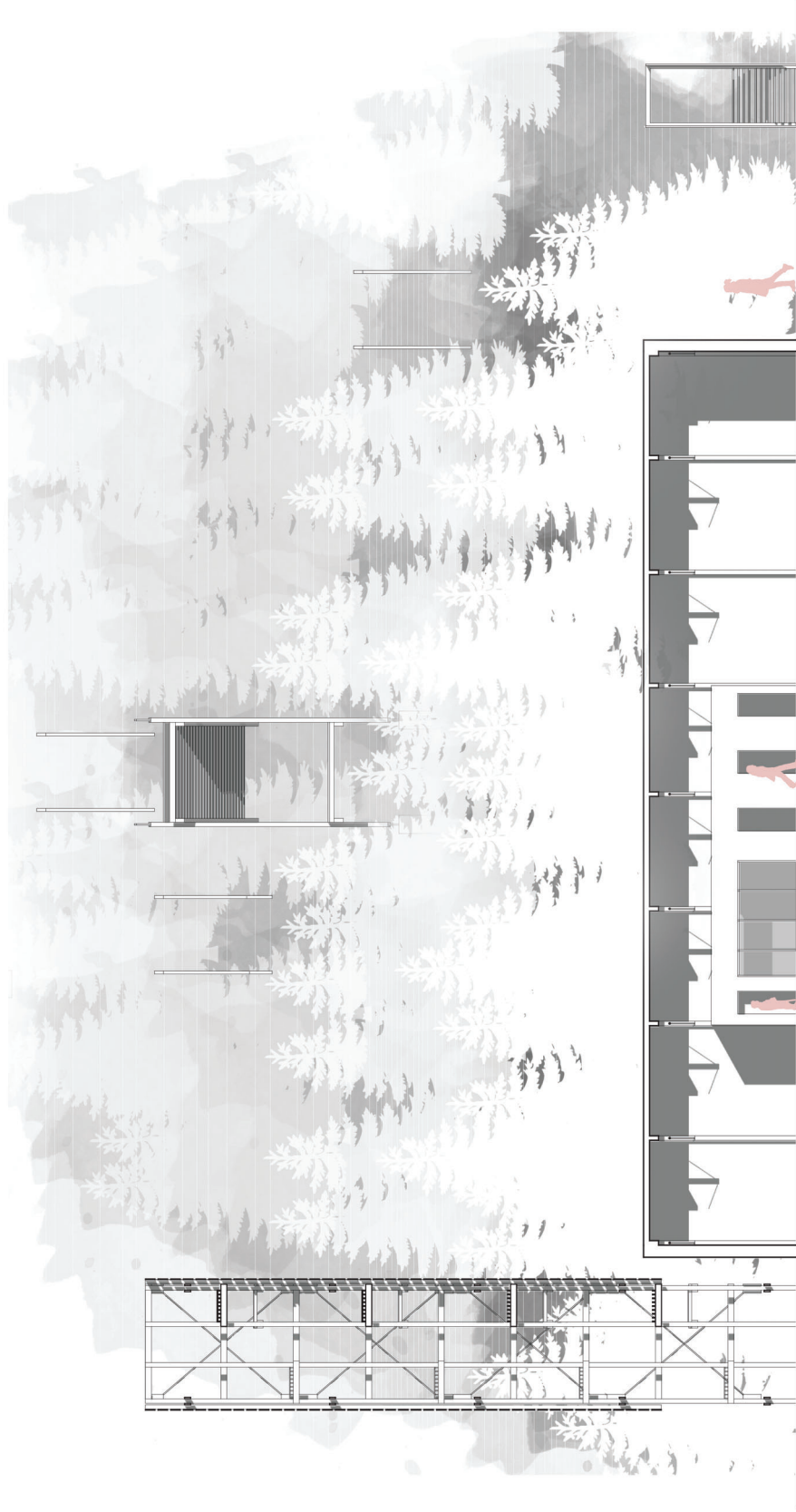MINARET

Figure 46. Plan of mosque building

MOSQUE SECTION B
SCALE 1:100

Figure 47. Long section through mosque building

MOSQUE SECTION D
SCALE 1:100

Figure 48. Cross section through mosque worship space

Figure 49. Cross section through mosque offices and madrasa

APPROACH FROM THE WATER

The *minaret* is located at the lower court to tie this symbolic marker at the place of greatest resonance. Traditionally, minarets have evolved beyond their function of a call to worship, becoming an important iconic representation of the mosque itself.

In Muskoka, the significance of boating means that the view from the lake is an important, if not the most important, facade. Casting the minaret from this view against a backdrop of trees enables this marker to retain its majesty in a manner signifying its relationship to its new home. The sound reveberation from the lake is an opportunity to naturally amplify the call throughout the region.

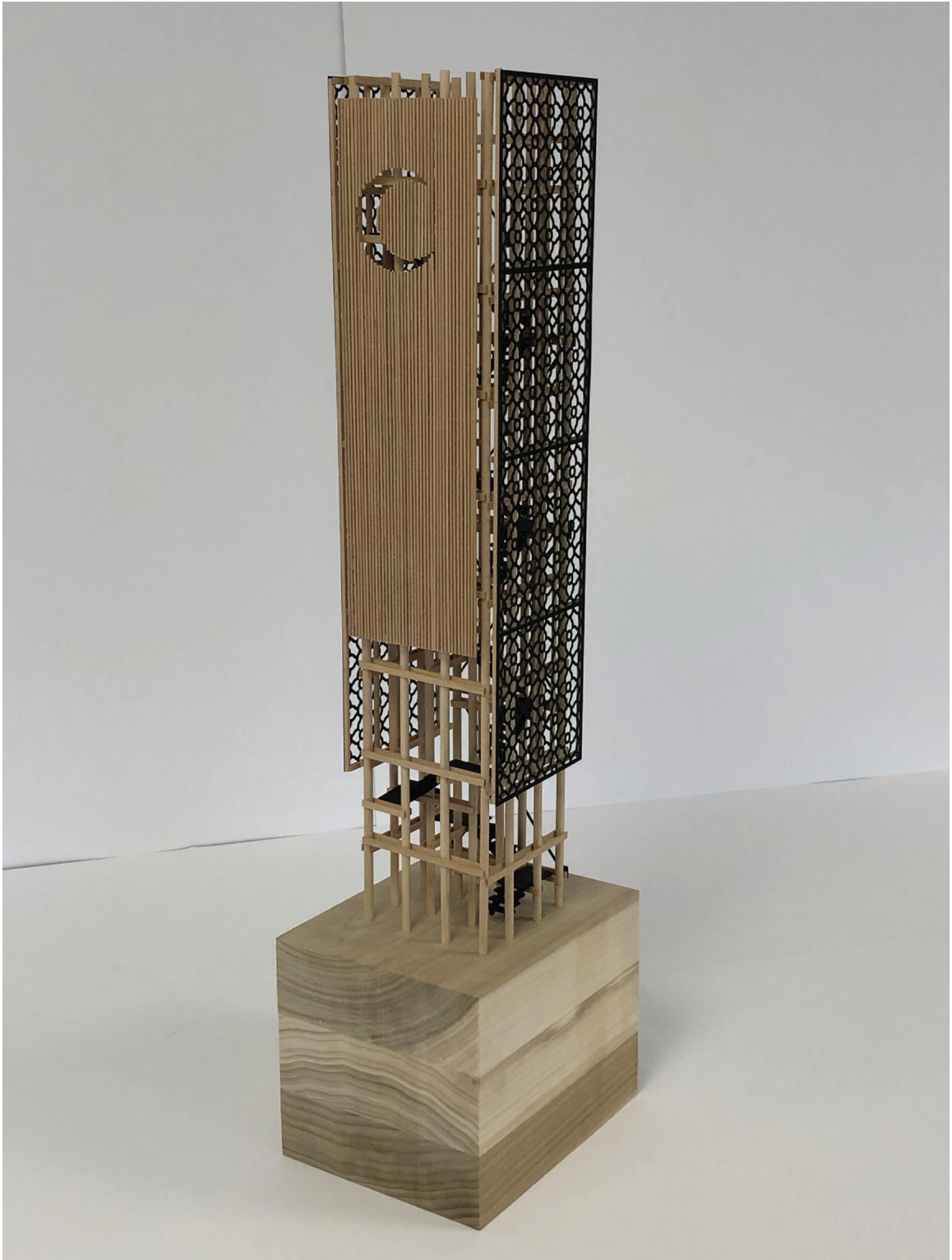Figure 50. Rendering of the scheme viewed from Fairy Lake
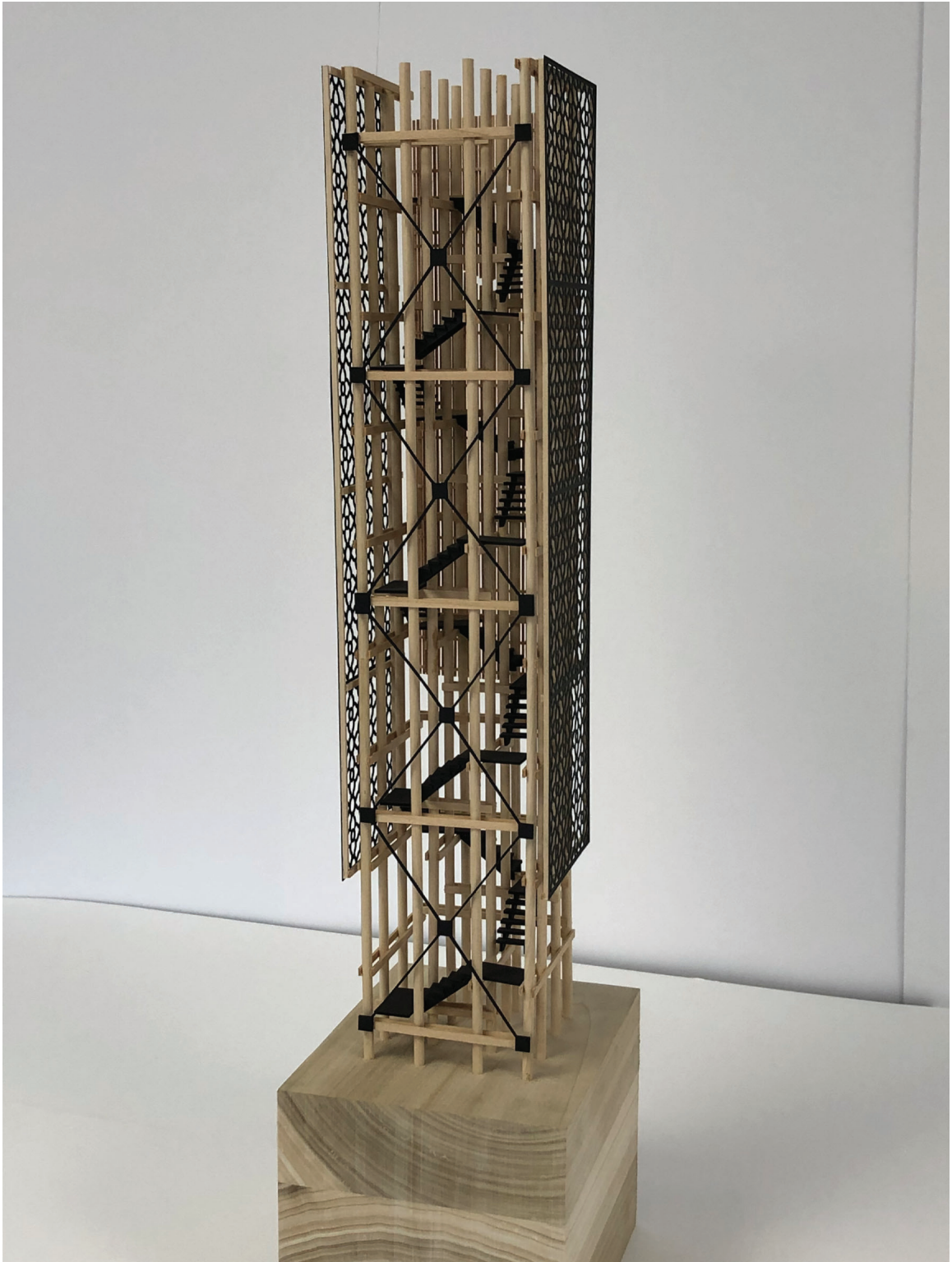
Figure 51. Model of minaret at 1:50 scale

Figure 52. Model of minaret at 1:50 scale

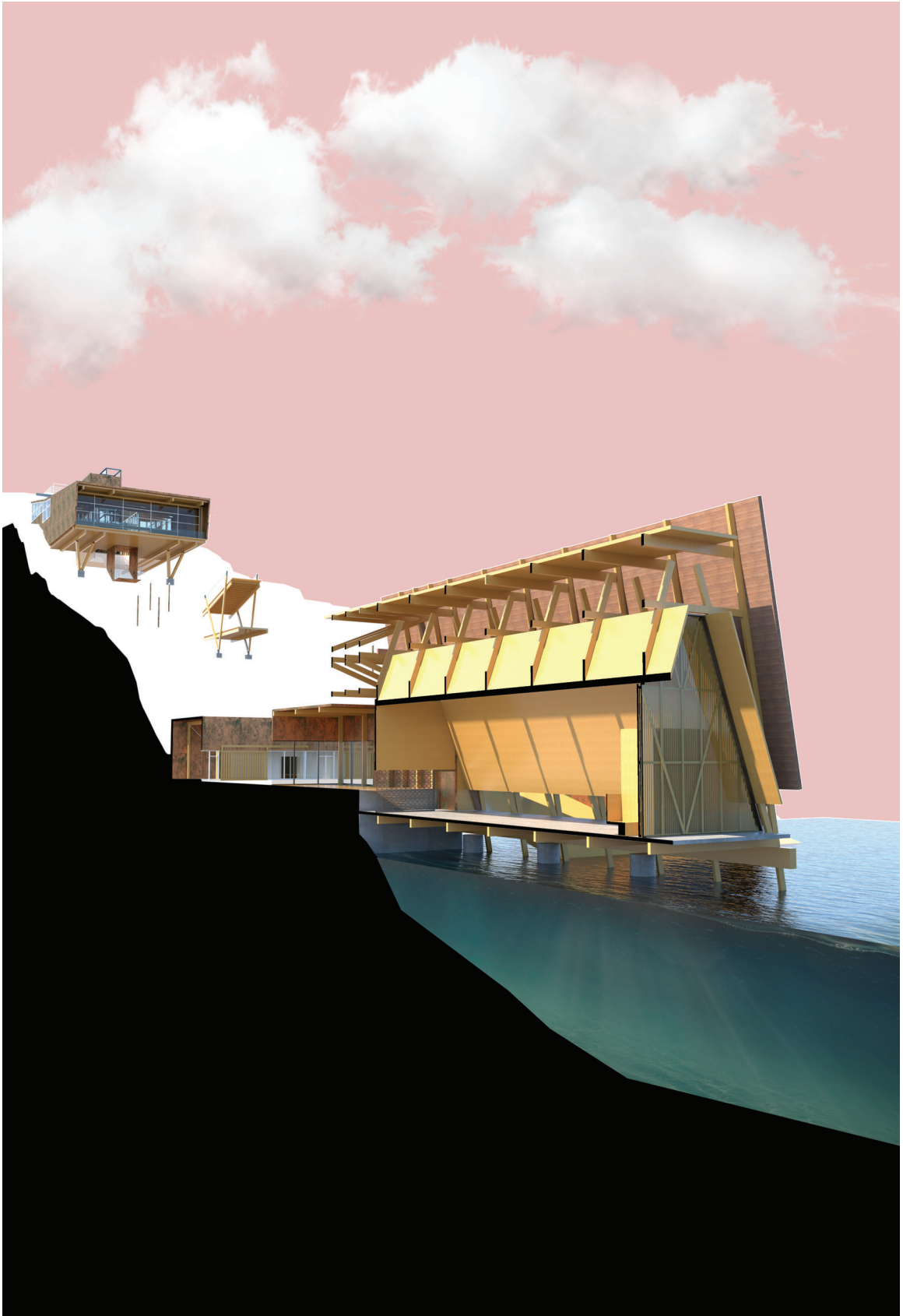Figure 53. Close up of minaret detail

Figure 54. Section perspective of worship and ablution space

Figure 55. Rendering of overlook and view from the top of Lion's Lookout. Photo-edting by Ryan Swirsky

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The thesis design illustrates how architecture can be used as a vanguard for positive social change. The placing of a mosque and community centre in Huntsville, Ontario offers Muslims in the town, surrounding area and Toronto the ability to share in a procession to the wilderness which has long been a central experience for Canadians.

The design acts as a destination beacon and staging ground for the Muskoka region, allowing Islamic-Canadians a place to worship sited within the landscape, facilitating recreational enjoyment of the region at large.

Beyond these aims, this intervention attempts to symbollically bridge the growing separation between Islamic and non-Islamic Canadians through shared moments and an architecture which celebrates our alikeness and offers a voice to new generations of youth attempting to answer the question of what it means to be Muslim *and* Canadian. It is only one example of how a more sensitive apporach to design can help integrate outsiders by re-envisioning their architecture within our aesthetic framework.
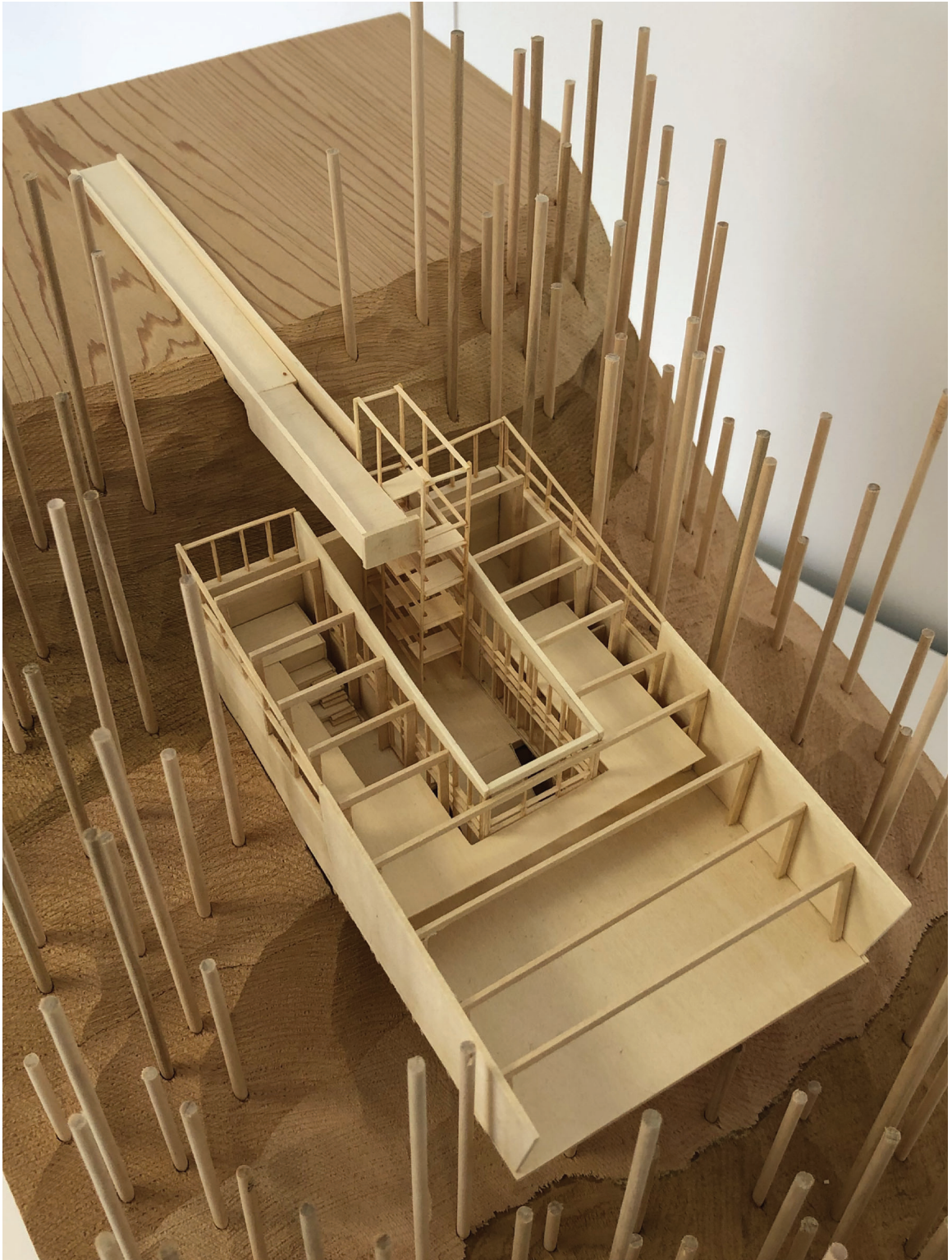
At its core, this is a thesis about identity and about understanding that community is a collective term: the Muslim community is, quite simply, your community.

Figure 56. Model of project in basswood and cedar
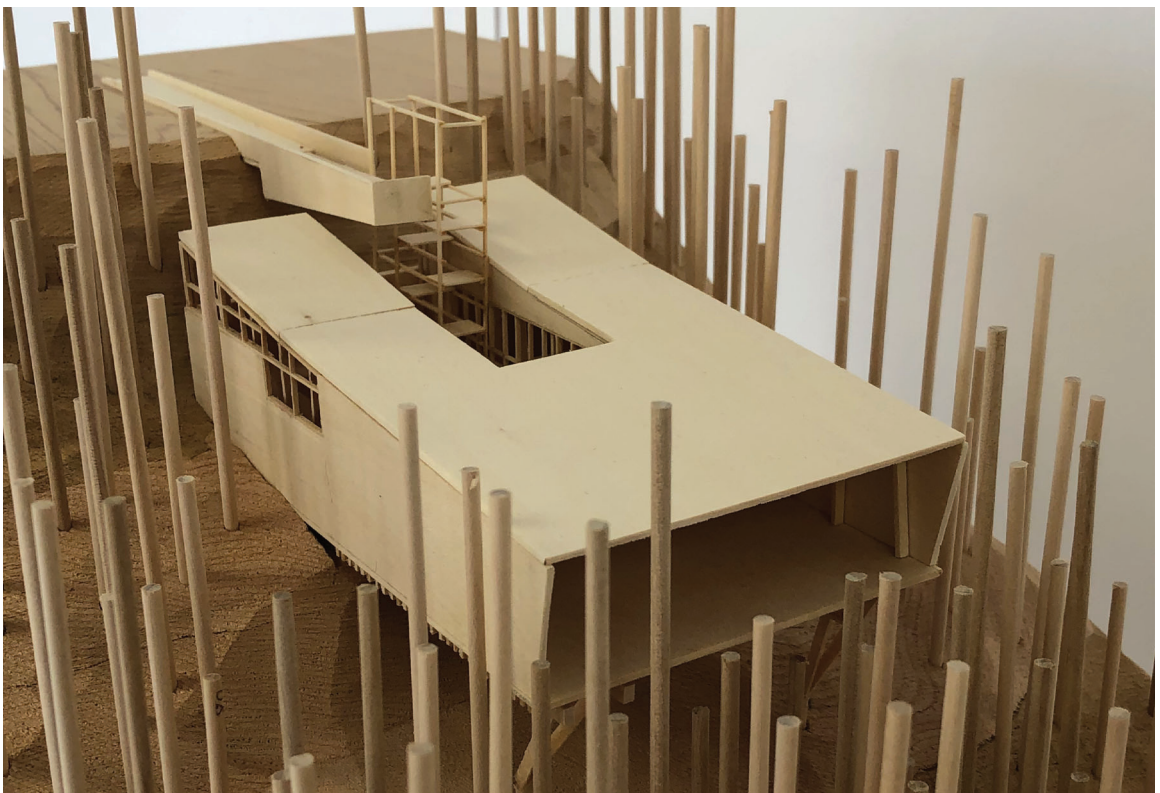
Figures 57 and 58.Model showing community building in trees

Figures 59. Physical model closeup of community building in trees

Figures 60 and 61. Model closeup of mosque building

Figure 62. Model of boathouse building structure

Figure 63. Model closeup of mosque building.

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