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Title

STORIES OF SEPARATION: REUNIFYING THE EMOTIONAL BORDER OF THE KOREAN 38TH PARALLEL

By

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STORIES OF SEPARATION: REUNIFYING THE EMOTIONAL BORDER OF THE

KOREAN 38TH PARALLEL

A Thesis
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ABSTRACT

When encountering conditions with unknown aspects, it is an impulse to occupy them with experiences and memories to alleviate the associated feelings and reach a form of understanding. This thesis explores how our understandings are influenced and establish a precedent for architectural interventions to assist in resolving the conditions of the unknown. Following World War II (WWII), the 38th parallel marked the beginning of the separation of the Koreas before it developed into the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Contrasting the stagnant characteristics of this physical division, the emotional division in Korea has continuously evolved and shifted throughout the years. Designed in mountains and along the invisible line of the 38th parallel, the architectural experiences draw out an understanding of the emotional border by imparting a lasting influence on people's perceptions and memories.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

To my mother and my father, I would not be who I am without your unwavering love and belief

in me throughout my life. I love you both so much.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DMZ..The Demilitarized Zone in reference to the border between North and South Korea.

WWII ....World War II

NDSU...North Dakota State University

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Statement

Lines and borders physically divide the world we live in and lead to the separation of cultures and populations. Edward S. Casey's expansion of the concept of the edge in his writings provides insight into how humanity perceives and interacts with the existence of the edge (Casey, 2007, 2017). The consideration and showcasing of the edge in mapping and architecture will become a leading factor in establishing the approach and foundations of this thesis.

Additionally, this thesis explores and relates several concepts to history and how it is archived, remembered, and contextualized in the world today. Nietzsche describes the modern view of history as "knowledge [that] floods in ever anew from inexhaustible springs, the alien and disconnected throngs about, memory opens all its gates and is still not opened wide enough" (Nietzsche, 1980, p. 23). By relating topics to Nietzsche's ideas of critical history, the stories and lessons of history are again tied to being "in the service of life" (Nietzsche, 1980, p. 21). By expanding and shifting the understanding of history through further precedents, the meaningfulness of stories to this thesis will be revealed and integrated into design solutions.

The thesis will emphasize the history of separation between North Korea and South Korea in searching for precedent studies. Established after World War II (WWII), the imaginary 38th parallel marked the line dividing Korea into the North and the South (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 5). This line, intended as a temporary border, evolved into what is known today as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) resulting from the Korean War (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 5). The splitting of people and the development of the emotional rift between them since the Korean War will be the specific problem this thesis examines.

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1.2. Objective

1.2.1. Aim

The research of this thesis will explore the history of how humanity has interacted with and perceived borders and how history and memory are influenced and engrained in architecture. Through a series of poetic and historic precedents, the research will tie concepts together creating a narrative that provides meaning and background for the design proposals and experiences. The research will provide frameworks that will be employed to poetically interpret aspects of storytelling and history into artefacts and architectural spaces.

1.2.2. Significance

Illustrating collected stories through artefacts and architecture will contribute to the archiving of these stories while simultaneously communicating them in a new form to be interpreted. It is hoped that through a series of encounters, people will discover a closer emotional connection and relation to those that exist on the other side of a physical border. Engaging people's imaginations through linguistic descriptions of design will elevate its intentions by allowing it to be personally transformative. This thesis hopes to achieve two things, that the existence of a shared history in the Koreas is continued and that this history is translated into a form that maintains meaning and establishes personal connections between people.

BACKGROUND

2.1. Context

Although this thesis focuses on the stories of Korean physical and emotional division, the base of the research still provides the foundation for other emotional borders to be explored. The emotional division in Korea contains an abundance of narratives that appeal to the proposed framework. The emotional border, that is the personal and cultural connections between people, is what this thesis analyses and how to reconnect this border through architecture. This occurs in conditions where the people cannot be physically reunited due to existing borders which places a high importance on the experience of proposed architecture to achieve the intent of this thesis. The proposed concepts have the potential to be applied to a vast variety of borders should emotional connections and desires exist between the people on both sides.

2.2. Literature Review

2.2.1. The Conceptual Edge and its Understandings

The edge as a condition and its representation in ideas about the edge of the world establish the foundations for this thesis. When faced with the condition of an unknown, an invocation of curiosity and anxiety arises within people to understand or fill in what is on the other side, and it is through storytelling and imagination that humanity has historically explored the unknown (Casey, 2007, p. 160). The edge is developed as a concept in Casey's writings, particularly in its journey-like wonder from one's perception of emptiness to fullness as well as the feeling of the unknown and the known and how we manage and interact with the feelings.

This entire content of Casey's writings illustrates conceptual thoughts about edges and folds from their history up through their connection with architecture. The concept of the edge of the world describes a dramatized and recognizable edge condition, which allows many further

depictions to be illustrated (Casey, 2007). The text portrays ideas such as how the existence of an edge can generate motion either away, towards, or around the edge and the enticing thought of being able to cross that edge to see it as a theoretical fold, knowing both sides of it (Casey, 2007). Another writing by Casey is "The Edge of the World" which expands upon these concepts and reinforces several pertinent aspects that Casey attributes to the edge across both of his writings explored in this thesis such as borders and boundaries and how the edge of the world was understood throughout history (Casey, 2017). The potential of the conceptual edge and the narrative device of the edge of the world are a primary reason for their inclusion in this thesis.

Figure 1. Reconstruction of Hecataeus' World Map
Note. (Bunbury, 1959)

The map shown in Figure 1 is attributed to Hecataeus and depicts the known extent of the world at the time of its creation, made through recording one's journey over hills and along shores. Before humanity crossed the seas, oceans were understood as the literal edge of the world, and because of the inability to cross them at the time, storytelling and imagination were used to fill in the extent and understanding of it (Casey, 2007). Stories of sailing off the edge of

the world, stories of an unending body of water, stories of sea monsters, and stories of no return lived on the horizon that was understood as the edge of the world as there was no physical connection and exploration of the other side (Casey, 2007). Humanity's desire to understand what is on the other side of the oceans eventually led to the crossing of them, and today we can understand the entire world from a vast amount of information types.
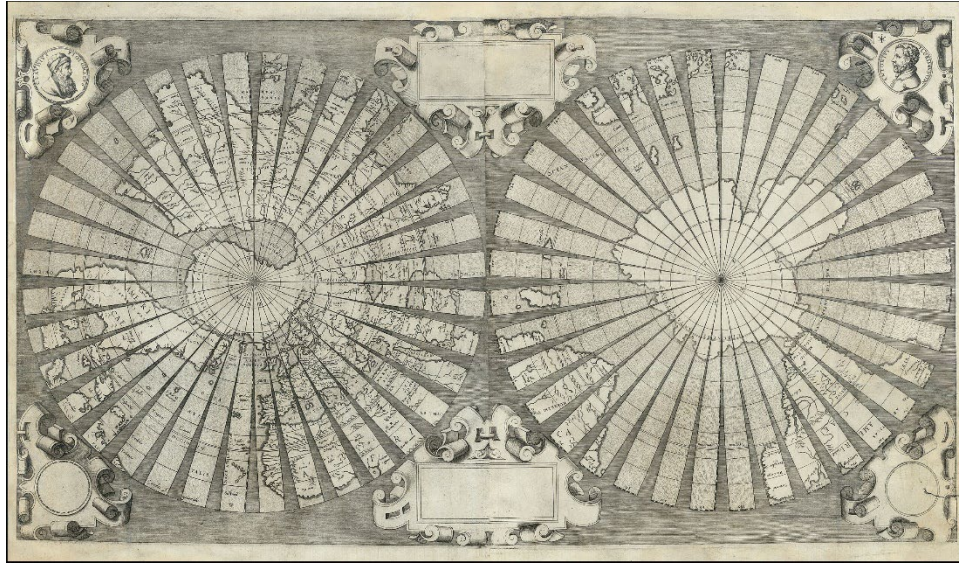
Figure 2. 16th Century World Map by Antonio Floriano
Note. (Floriano, 1555)

Once humanity crossed the seas, the definition of the edge of the world in relation to the oceans changed into what we understand today. We look out across the ocean and know what physically exists on the other side and thinking about what the edge of the world means today compared to the past shows how much things have shifted in the way we look and perceive things (Casey, 2007). The "16th Century World Map" drawn by Antonio Floriano is an example of the shift of understanding in its depiction of the known extent of the world at the time (Floriano, 1555). Further maps will be explored in this thesis and pay careful attention to how they were mapped and visually transformed to show meaning.
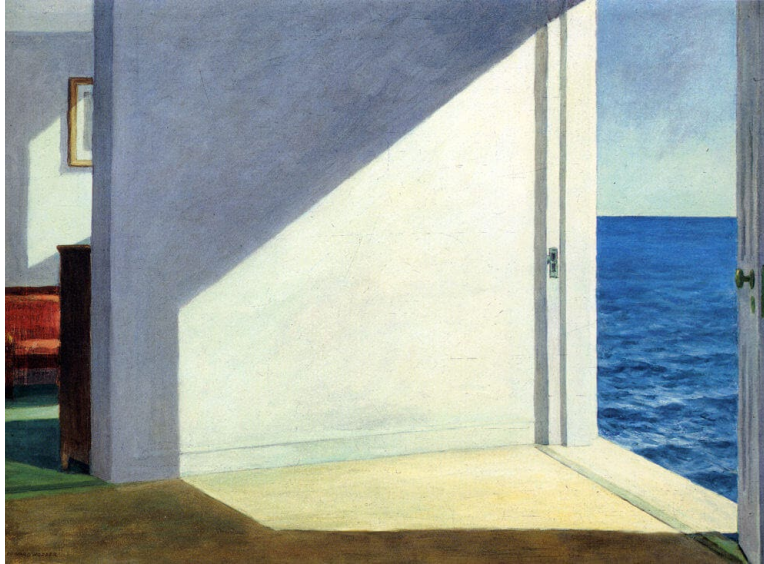
Figure 3. Rooms by the Sea by Edward Hopper
Note. (Hopper, 1951)

It is through an imagination of architecture and mapping that this concept of the unknown can be further understood and also reveal moments of my research and proposal. Depicted in "Rooms by the Sea," a painting created by Edward Hopper, is an Ocean seen through a doorway that appears to connect directly to the ocean (Hopper, 1951). Casey describes the painting through this excerpt:

> Strangely, we are looking at the very Atlantic Ocean so feared and sought by the earlier Greek, Carthaginian, and Phoenician explorers… We are seeing it now from *the other side*: not just the other side of an object or thing but the other side of the world – from another edge of the earth, one wholly unknown in earlier eras (Casey, 2007, pp. 172-173).

To paraphrase, the ocean depicted in the painting is the other side of the edge that was once understood as the edge of the world before humanity crossed the oceans (Casey, 2007). The shift between what is considered known and what is considered unknown will be exemplified through the maps and architecture proposed in this thesis.

2.2.2. The Application of History and Memory

The second primary drive of the thesis research focuses on how such a stagnant physical border can connected on a personal scale. Starting with Friedrich Nietzsche's writings that propose three ways to approach history in the monumental, the antiquarian, and the critical, with my thesis focusing on the latter. A monumental view of history, implied by the name, focuses on extraordinary events as deserving of life and remembrance as history (Nietzsche, 1980, pp. 17-18). The antiquarian view seeks to preserve and look back in affection on history to be taught to the present and future generations (Nietzsche, 1980, pp. 19-21). Critical history can be described as employing the tools of transformation and contextualization of historical lessons to life today, a way of better connecting to the emotions of being human (Nietzsche, 1980, pp. 21-22). It is essential to understand that the prominent approach to history in the world today is from a scientific perspective that ultimately stems from the Industrial Revolution and its intent to store history as evidence, documenting things with statistical accuracy and devoid of a connection to the heart of humanity (Nietzsche, 1980, pp. 23). Understanding the past and its stories as a tool to change how things are viewed today becomes a leading force in the programming of my architectural proposal.

These ideas and perspectives on historical applications provide the basic groundwork for the approach and relevance of this thesis. With a critical view of history, further exploration and dialogue can be made with the thesis topic resulting in a deeper narrative. Introduction to these historical perspectives is important to gain an understanding of the methodology employed throughout the project.

Figure 4. Janus Head Imagery
Note. Depiction of a Janus Head using concrete silhouettes

The relationship between history and the future is narratively tied to the representations

of the Janus Head, which is described in a book by Frederica Goffi as

> the two-headed Roman god of gates, beginnings and ending. Janus, who had the ability to
>
> look in two directions in both space and time. Janus's double vision was allegorically
>
> expressed in the idea of the threshold. Renaissance arched gates and portals often
>
> presented a Janus-like keystone; passing across a threshold was the metaphorical
>
> equivalent of passing from the past into the future through the present (Goffi, 2013, p.
>
> 175).

The meaning and form of the Janus Head embody the way a critical history is intended to be

emphasized in this project. Through looking back and archiving what is there to not forget, but

also looking forward at how these stories can shape our perceptions.

Bradford Vivian's book "Public Forgetting: The Rhetoric and Politics of Beginning Again" brings dialogue about this concept highlighting the significance of memory and forgetting in our society today. The book describes the existence of two rivers to assist with the illustration of these concepts. Mnemosyne and Lethe, two Greek rivers representing remembrance and forgetting further the dialogue on the nature of memory (Vivian, 2010). As the scales of remembrance and forgetting tilt and skew in different directions, public perceptions change to accommodate them creating a situation where documenting and comprehending these changes and their consequences become critical to the preservation and transformation of history (Vivian, 2010).

The book offers unique perspectives and relationships between the acts of memory and forgetting, with both being important elements of living. Current associations with memory are remembrance, life, and immortality while forgetting is linked with corrosion, death, and loss of connections (Vivian, 2010). Although these connections are commonly understood and believed, it can simultaneously be true that forgetting is necessary in certain circumstances to continue moving forward as a culture and society (Vivian, 2010). The author specifies that even with this, forgetting is inevitably a negative in some instances and this thesis generally views forgetting as a damaging force, but the proposed solution should not be the opposite of forgetting alone.

An additional example aligning with thoughts on forgetting and also establishing initial dialogue on the difference between monuments and memorials is found in Ozymandias. The monument for Ozymandias represents the effect time has on a monumental memory because it was built to immortalize the rule of a king but became a testament to their downfall (Vivian, 2010). Further explored by James. E. Young, the monument can be said to have housed the memory of the king outside of humanity and in its physical construction which eventually led to

its shift in memory because the existence of the memory was directly tied to the monument (Young, 1994). A contrast to this is the experience of memory through the Jewish Museum Berlin by Daniel Libeskind, its spaces memorialize memories rather than monumentalize.

"The Texture of Memory" by James E. Young advances the conversation on monuments and memorials by providing the reader with criteria or viewpoints for the evaluation of them. Monuments fixate on a specific memory of the past as an embodied fact, leaving no room for the reality of changing interpretations with the passage of time, eventuating in a damaged memory (Young, 1994). On the other hand, memorials bring experiences to the foreground, creating a scenario where the sharing of community around a memory can become that shared memory (Young, 1994). It is through design that this thesis hopes to further explore this concept.

James E. Young writes further about the architecture of memory in his book and conceptualizes how memory can be generated and affected through discussion on the differences between monuments and memorials. The author states that

> It is not enough to ask whether or not our memorials remember... or even how they remember it. We should also ask to what ends we have remembered… This is to recognize that the shape of memory cannot be divorced from the actions taken in its behalf, and that memory without consequences contains the seeds of its own destruction (Young, 1994, p. 15).

Applying the ideas of shared memory as something connected to society and culture will help this thesis to generate dialogue rather than simply proposing a monument or storage room for memories and stories.
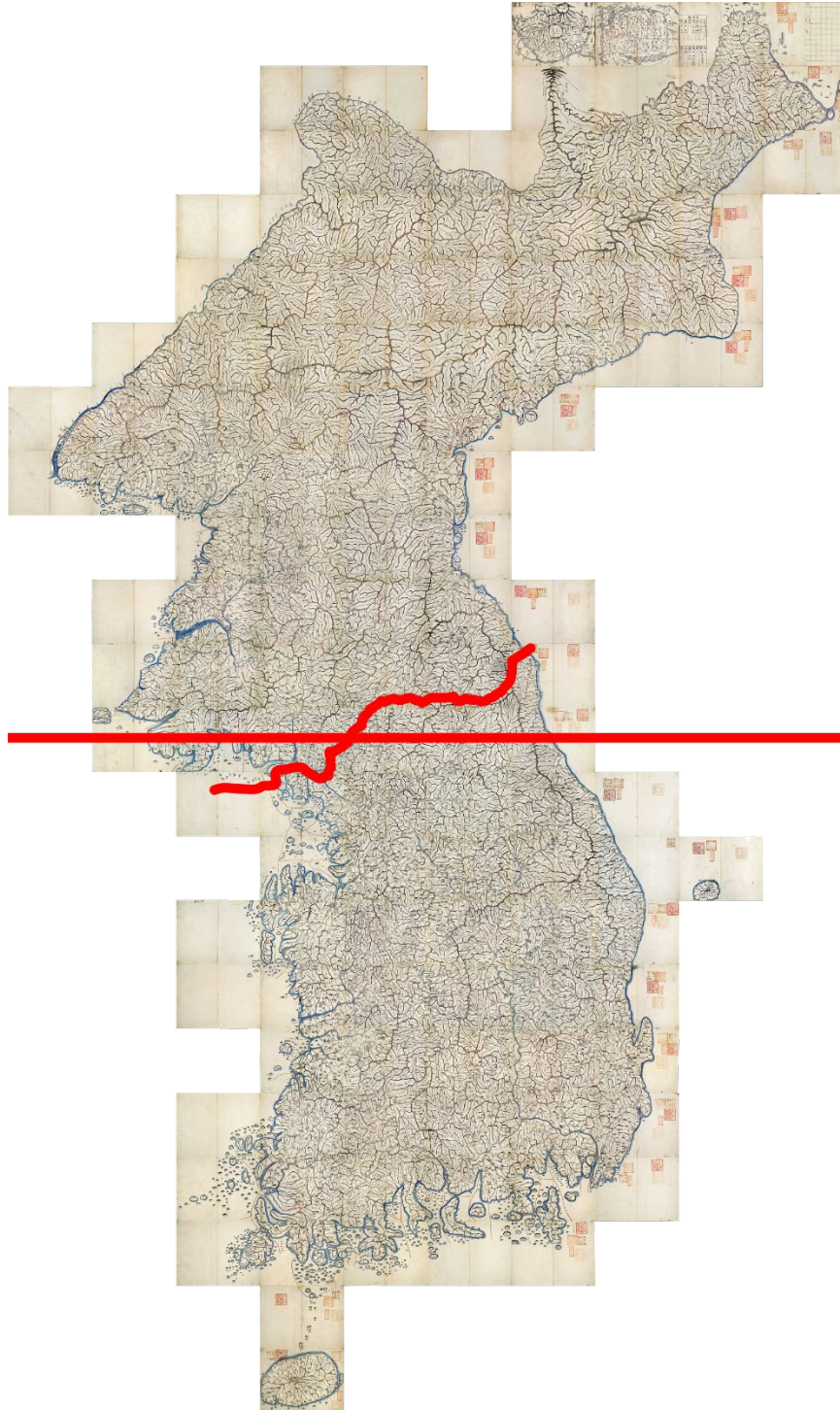
2.2.3. The History of a Split Korea

Figure 5. Daedongyeojido
Note. Base map: Daedongyeojido (J. Kim, 1861)

Furthering the research narratives requires the identification of specific histories and stories that will not only further provide connections between concepts but will allow them to transform and extend the research. The Daedongyeojido, a beautiful map depicting Korea was completed by Kim Jeong-ho in 1861 (*The Returned Daedongyeojido*, 2023). Created in the medium of woodblocks and covering a massive area of 6.7m by 3.8m when fully showcased, the map "is generally regarded as the greatest cartographic achievement in Korea before the modern period, and its detail and precision are favorably compared to modern maps" (*Detailed Map of Korea*, n.d.). The oneness of this map and the natural landscapes it depicts become a primary driver of this project's narratives because once borderlines are drawn on the map, the meanings it holds are also modified.

A brief showcasing of the tragic 38th parallel and its development into the DMZ is brought forward in the book "DMZ Crossing: Performing Emotional Citizenship Along the Korean Border" by Suk Young-Kim. Following the occupation of Korea by Japan in 1945 and the outcome of the Second World War, the once unified entity was split in two by this line (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 5). This line, which paid no regard to geography in its placement, cuts through natural mountains that cover a large portion of Korea and the valleys and crevices of the mountains that are connected by snaking roadways (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 5). The 38th parallel was intended as a temporary solution that sliced the country in half until reunification could be negotiated.

Instead of being reunified, this wound across Korea developed during the Korean War and is still bleeding today as the DMZ. The DMZ marks an agreement between the now-divided Koreas, a line snaking across the peninsula spanning 155 miles across and 2 miles wide, creating a volatile area of peace (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 6). Because of how divided this border has become

and how little humans interact with it, it is now one of the most ecologically diverse places in the world while also remaining one of the most dangerous (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 7). The development of this border physically, ecologically, and culturally sets the origin and stage for many stories.

People understand fragments of the unchanging arrangement in the DMZ and the continued growth of its rift as a prominent and recognizable story. However, this is far from the only story describing connections between the Koreas and their people. Storytelling, especially that of fiction, presents a concept or idea that draws people into its world and often leaves a lasting impact on one's memory and perceptions. Anca Matuiku writes that "literature is a more agile instrument than drawing when it comes to tackling these complex and delicate aspects of architectural design" (Matyiku, 2018, p. 114). It is easy to internalize details and statements about the separation of the Koreas, but data alone does not correspond with empathizing and connecting to the separation because these feelings cannot be activated by generalized and number-focused storytelling.

Reconnecting families across this border has become a political and arduous process. The rift between the Koreas develops as memories morph and fade, and ideas of reunification both emotionally and politically become less than a dream. Several books and stories arose in the research process of gathering stories, for this proposal, the story from a book by Kim Young-Suk will be further specified in later sections and other stories will be lightly referenced here to provide additional context. The first is from the book "Lost Souls" which contains several stories about the border between the Koreas and a section about the author who had relocated from the North to the South in 1946 before the DMZ was established (Hwang, 2009, p. 350). The book "Dust and Other Stories" was written by another author who moved from Seoul to Pyongyang in 1946 before the DMZ was established and several of their stories also incorporate the borders

(T'aejun, 2018, p. XIII). It is through reading and exploring a vast amount of fictional writings that this thesis will be able to bring curated pieces forward into design. Addressing the Korean emotional border through transforming stories is critical as the generation holding the memories of a once unified Korea are passing away.

2.3. Project Programming

Through the application of this context and research, the proposed programming will focus on an architectural experience and an exhibition hall. Through a planned procession, borders and how they orient the project architecture will be shown to visitors. The necessity of showcasing collected stories is the leading factor for the exhibition space and a proposed installment within it will connect people to these stories. The spaces required to support and expand an exhibition hall such as archives, offices, and documentation rooms are not proposed in this thesis because the research and understanding of these spaces was not explored in depth. When paired, the programs will familiarize visitors with the borders and the history associated with them before ushering them into a space that displays and connects them to emotional stories.

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

It is through poetic and metaphorical assemblies between related topics of the examined research that a framework for design was established. These relationships are emphasized through unique case studies that provide manifestations of the research ties. The case studies explore the architectural relevance of the research and add to the Korean stories that are transformed in this thesis. By representing and transforming the collected research and stories into the form and exhibition of an artefact, a valuable bridge between the research and architecture is generated. Hand sketching and physical architectural models were also created to expand the concepts of the research and artefact.

3.2. Project Locations and Sites

3.2.1. Large Scale Site

The architecture explores how the entirety of the Koreas can be established as a site. The primary design of the proposal will exist in South Korea, but several smaller designs will be proposed in North Korea while cautiously overlooking the realistic issues associated with doing so to emphasize the thesis narratives. Involving the entire region as the site creates essential meaning in the connection of the two Koreas whose split is shown in Figure 6. To narrow down the potential sites, the decision to engage with mountainous geography as a prerequisite for a site was made to separate the architecture from the dense urban environments that exist in the Koreas. Mountainous sites align with the project's objective of connection because the urban environments that differ between the Koreas are purposefully avoided in favor of natural landscapes that stretch across the border.
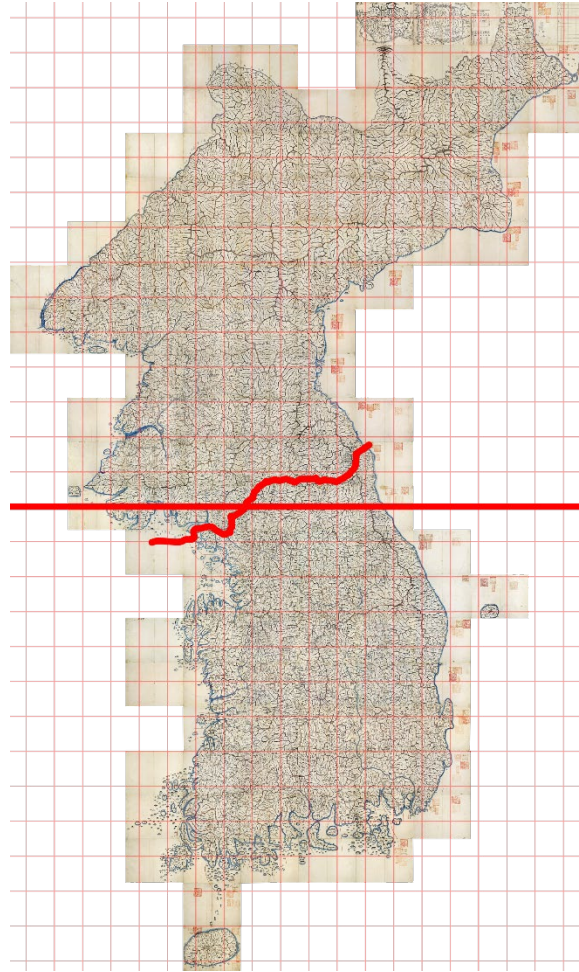
Figure 6. Borderlines Overlaid on Map
Note. Base map: Daedongyeojido (J. Kim, 1861)

3.2.2. Specific Sites

Figure 7. Mountain in South Korea Intersecting with the 38th Parallel
Note. Base map: Google Maps (*Google Maps*, 2024)

There are a total of 15 proposed sites scattered around the mountainous geography of the Koreas marked in Figure 23 with the intersection of lines becoming the central site and the 14 boxes placed along them marking the pavilions. The 14 sites are identical mountain pavilions that align and communicate with the central site through mapping. Because of the project scope, only one of the mountain pavilion sites was specifically selected to be detailed in its topography. The central site of the project's architecture is where lines drawn between the satellites overlap on a mountain north of Seoul in South Korea that intersects the 38th parallel. Although mountainous topography is nothing new to the Koreas, the unique aspect of the central site of the project is that it overlaps with the 38th parallel allowing the architecture to interact with and reveal the line.

3.3. Precedents and Case Studies

3.3.1. The Joseon Industrial Exhibition

This precedent showcases architecture and art's influence on memory through procession while simultaneously detailing another aspect of Korean history. The Joseon Industrial Exhibition is an event that took place in Korea in 1915, five years after the start of its occupation by Japan in 1910 (Jung, 2016, p. 142). The primary objective of the event was "to both commemorate and legitimize Japanese colonial rule in Korea, responding to international criticism of its occupation" (Jung, 2016, p. 142). It achieved this through the careful framing and planning of its architecture on a site of traditional Korean architecture, the Joseon Palaces (Jung, 2016, p. 143). The meaning of this is subject to interpretation, but when compared with further details produced for the event the intentions become much clearer.

The careful planning of the procession and experience of the event is visible in its architectural styles and artworks. The exhibition built modern Japanese architecture and

compared it to traditional Korean architecture to emphasize modernization (Y.-S. Park, 2021, p.

9) This intention is also evident in the design of the event poster described by Park Young-Sin:

> This visual contrast was echoed in the official poster of the 1915 exhibition, with the
>
> juxtaposition of two locations of the exhibition site in the background: the desolate and
>
> empty Kyŏngbok Palace surrounded by autumn leaves, and the crowded bright space of
>
> new exhibition pavilions decorated with flowers (Y.-S. Park, 2021, pp. 9-10).

Although this event was a controversial application of memorialistic architecture and art, the

ability of architecture and art to convey ideas is transformed and applied in the project design.

Figure 8. Joseon Industrial Exhibition Poster
Note. (Y.-S. Park, 2021 p. 10) (*Official Poster of Choson Industrial Exhibition in 1915, in 1916*,
1916)

3.3.2. Jewish Museum Berlin Shalekhet Installment

Figure 9. Shalekhet Installment at the Jewish Museum Berlin
Note. Photographed during a visit by the author in 2023

The Shalekhet Installment in the Jewish Museum Berlin by Daniel Libeskind provides

this thesis with a critical precedent on the impact architecture and poetic interactions have on

people. The installment represents of victims of war and is placed in

> The Memory Void, one of the symbolic spaces on the ground level of the Libeskind
>
> building [and] includes the installation Shalekhet (Fallen Leaves) by Menashe
>
> Kadishman. More than 10,000 faces with open mouths, cut from heavy round iron plates,
>
> cover the floor of the ground floor void (*Shalekhet – Fallen Leaves*, n.d.).

Architecturally, the feeling of existing at the bottom of the space is elevated by the lighting that

filters in from above, bouncing off the walls and reflecting off the metal faces. The color and

texture of the concrete allowed the installment itself to hold the emotional pull of the space.

This space is compelling and having the privilege to experience it during a study abroad

semester in 2023 has influenced the way this thesis approaches the expression of exhibition

spaces. As one enters into the space they will see that

disks are scattered over almost the whole surface of the gallery floor and the visitor is

asked to tread them. This difficult walking exercise provokes a profound feeling of

uneasiness since not only is it hard to keep one's balance, one is also unconsciously

reluctant to trample a work of art which, in addition, represents such painful feelings

(Schwartz, n.d.).

No visualization of this space other than oneself at that moment could ever hope to describe this

place accurately. It is this understanding and the linguistic representations that are employed to

provide a deeper connection to it that allows for memories to be transferred.

3.3.3. The Demilitarized Zone Movie

Children are often depicted with their sense of childlike wonder, innocence, and playful

expression. The Demilitarized Zone film, directed by Park Sang-ho, injects this understanding by

following two children on their journey across the DMZ. The physical location and inherent

dangers of filming within the DMZ were critical to the experience of the film (S.-Y. Kim, 2014,

pp. 47-54). The knowledge filming location adjacent to numerous landmines that have claimed

lives, and the destruction of real homes instill a feeling of dread and danger that could not be

conveyed in any other way. This film is directly referenced through its scenes and is also

evaluated through a chapter in "DMZ Crossing: Performing Emotional Citizenship Along the

Korean Border" by Suk Young-Kim.

Figure 10. Young Girl from "The Demilitarized Zone" Movie
Note. (S. Park, 1965)

Figure 11. Young Boy from "The Demilitarized Zone" Movie
Note. (S. Park, 1965)

The movie follows two young children on their voyage across the DMZ. We experience their conversations, their decision to become siblings, their journey to reunite with families (S. Park, 1965). The comparisons of a children's story that takes place in the DMZ produces contrasting imagery infused with meaning. A children's story overlapping the reality of the war and death that took place is a prime example of this contrast (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, pp. 47-54). Through intentionally placing these circumstances side by side the film is described by Young-Suk as a "semi-documentary", somewhere between a real story and a fiction (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 48). Throughout this film, the disturbing feeling of the border is there, its title, its filming location, and its danger is all evident, but it is through the interactions of the children and the environment that it becomes real.

A critical hinge in the film occurs once the children reach a line of woven cloth that stretches over the ground, a signifier that the whole world understands as a physical separator. Finally, through the visualization of a physical divide, the film reveals the division of the soil that belongs to the North and South, allowing for the separating of the Koreas into two sides and perceiving them as different in one's perception because of a piece of cloth (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, pp. 51-52). The siblings propose and start to play a game of separation along this border with the rules of no talking, no turning around, and no crossing the line (S. Park, 1965). A song echoes throughout the land as they play transcribed in DMZ Crossing:

Does a mountain keep you from coming here?

Does a river keep you from coming here?

The land in the north, the land in the south.

They all belong to our Fatherland.

But why can't we see you even in a dream?

We only regret the 38th parallel (S.-Y. Kim, 2014, p. 54).

Eventually, the children tear down the fabric border and reunite before continuing on their journey together. Contrasted to reality, the Koreas of the same land continue this game, following the illogical rules of the game.

Figure 12. Scene from "The Demilitarized Zone" Movie
Note. (S. Park, 1965)

3.4. The Artefact

3.4.1. Conceptualization and Process

In the process of design, an artefact was proposed to interweave aspects of the research and architecture more intensely. "Beyond serving as initial catalysts for design, *artefacts* created… either in process or exhibition, help steer the imagination towards a more comprehensive and intentional understanding of the hypothetical spaces of models and drawings" (Wischer, 2012, p. 139). The importance of materiality, orientations, and narratives, which are critical elements to the creation of artefacts, become the central foundations in the generation of the artefact shown in Figures 18 and 19. (Wischer, 2012, p. 142). This artefact parallels and overlaps with the architectural design of the project in the transformation of stories into a form, with this one physically existing in reality.
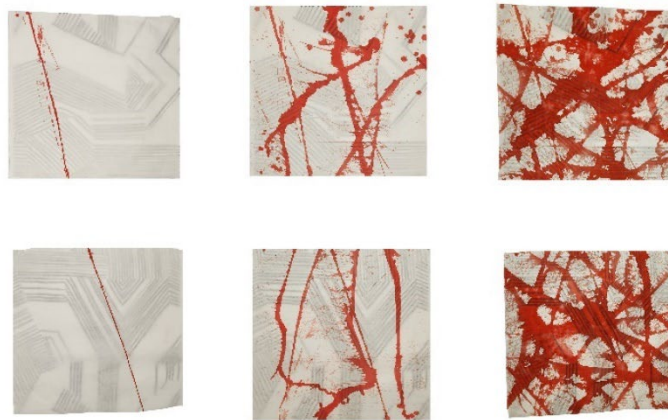

Figure 13. Hanji Paper Canvas

Hanji paper created from the bark of the mulberry tree native to the Koreas and their traditions holds many stories of Korean history. The central material used in the creation of hanji paper is *Dak*, a paper mulberry tree indigenous to the Koreas, this poetically connects the physical constitution directly to the Koreas (Song & Munn, 2004, p. 128). Through several "labor-intensive, highly-skilled methods", the beautiful paper becomes resilient and strengthened

allowing for its use in both art and architecture (Song & Munn, 2004, pp. 127-128). Red paint

saturated with water was used to imbue the idea of storytelling across the hanji paper shown in

Figure 13. By laying a thread dipped in paint across the canvas and pulling it off, the stark lines

became hazy and washed out, representing the disappearance of stories as memories of them

fade. The paper temporarily lost strength from the paint and water, pulling apart with ease,

vulnerable and fragile before regaining its original strength after drying. The lines were washed

out further by pouring water across the canvas before redrawing several of them as fragments

embedded in the hanji paper.

Figure 14. Concrete Silhouette Stencils

Stencils capture features of figures yet never complete their intended purpose alone. They

completely control the form of the silhouettes, yet once removed from the canvas the only traces

of the stencil remaining were the slight imperfections at the edges of the figures. The canvas was

not the only element transformed through using a stencil, the stencil itself holds residual material

as a necessary byproduct for the method of production chosen shown in Figure 14. Because of

the stencils, the figures are carefully measured to ensure that stories displayed through them can

enter into an equal dialogue with each other, ensuring that neither becomes the prominent or

dominant figure over the other.

As the centerpiece of the artefact, two concrete silhouettes are engaged in a game of separation, the same game that was played by the two children in "The Demilitarized Zone" by Park Sang-ho (S. Park, 1965). The critical transformative element of this representation is that the children in the film tired from the game and moved on to continue their journey together (S. Park, 1965). As we gaze upon the silent silhouettes of the artefact, it is understood that they have both diligently complied with the arbitrary rules of the game. This feeling is achieved through the characters now embodied in concrete as adults shown in Figure 15. The figures were placed on top of the lines drawn on the hanji paper, obscuring them from being fully seen yet they simultaneously act as the connecting anchor between them.

It is hoped that through their contrasting appearances, intentionally assigning biased representations to them becomes difficult. The silhouetted figures are always aligned and represented horizontally with each other, making it impossible to naturally decide one to represent the North and one to represent the South. Once realized, it becomes a desire to remove this ambiguity and unknown from perception, to select which one represents the North and which one represents the South in one's mind. This assumption does not meaningfully attach to any specific story in the artefact and would hinder its ability to depict stories. The intention of showcasing the figures equally in this way allows them to embody different narrative meanings fully dependent on their orientation with each other and the space around them.

3.4.2. Artefact Synthesis and Exhibition

Figure 15. Separation Alignment

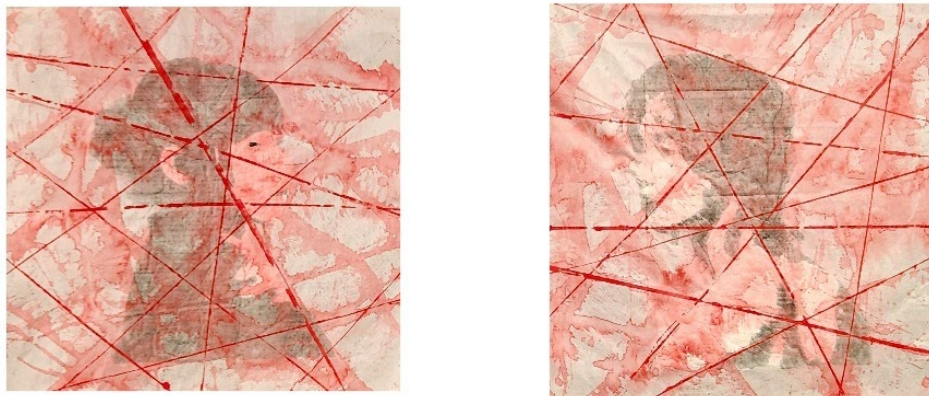
Figure 16. Janus Head Alignment

Figure 17. Connection Alignment

The artefact was displayed in the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Memorial Union Gallery during the Spring 2024 Semester. For its physical display, the two paintings were suspended from motors that endlessly rotated them in the same direction so that different alignments of them could be seen as shown in Figures 18 and 19. By using stepper motors to rotate the paintings, the motors subtle ticking sounds were aligned with the passing of seconds, effectively creating an unending timer as long as the artefact was activated. Suspended around the paintings as seen in Figures 18 and 19 were red lines that pointed in various directions and angles, these lines symbolized the existence of scattered stories around the Koreas. Through the rotating display, the lines of the artefact paintings would overlap and align with the suspended lines connecting them to each of the canvasses but remained dependent on the person experiencing the artefact to locate these connections.

Endlessly entwined in a synthetic choreography the figures rotated to embody stories that reach across the emotional border of the Koreas. As the siblings face away depicted in Figure 15, they exist and remember for that fleeting moment in time, the children they once were and the game they have been playing for generations. Twice in their rotation shown in Figure 16, the figures align suspended between the past and the future, becoming a representation of the Janus Head and its established meanings. As they face each other shown in Figure 17, they exist and remember for that fleeting moment in time, the joy and sorrow of reunification before returning to the state of separation that has become normalized. Through these alignments, the artefact paintings poetically embody different emotional meanings through the medium of an unchanging physical form in concrete.

Their genuine connection exists in the exchange and understanding of the stories that have always existed across the border but have never been brought to the necessary context to

ingrain them in memories. The figures looking at each other in Figure 17 is not the only

connection made at this point, the red lines between the canvasses also align because it is this

orientation of the artefact that perfectly embodies the purpose of the project's architectural

proposal.

Figure 18. Artefact Installment Image One
Note. Installed in the NDSU Memorial Union Gallery during the Spring 2024 Semester

Figure 19. Artefact Installment Image Two
Note. Installed in the NDSU Memorial Union Gallery during the Spring 2024 Semester

The concrete silhouettes reach out past the canvas, not only for the connections of meeting each other, but also aligning individually to the suspended red lines. These figures were powerful enough to embody stories and meaning on their own because no matter how many layers of narratives are appended to align with details of the artefact in writing, when it was physically placed in the NDSU Memorial Union Gallery, interpretations were up to the visitors to perceive. The core understanding was brought forth through the emotions felt in the innate connections between the paintings, allowing everybody to hopefully connect with this aspect of the artefact. The ever-changing roles of the artefact was revealed as it connected with and intertwined with the people and space around it. Visitors were hopefully provided with an understanding that these characters were not isolated to a specific story or border but understood that an unfathomable amount exist in the world, waiting to be explored and crossed.

3.5. Architectural Conceptualization

Figures 20-22 demonstrate a sample of the design process employed to reach the final proposal. Firstly, hand-sketching manifestations of concepts connecting to both the research and the artefact were made and iterated on using stacks of tracing paper to layer ideas and locate connections between them. Selecting key aspects of the research and artefact to complete further iterations on allowed important concepts to be further developed before their transformation into finalized architectural drawings. Physical model making shown in Figure 22 was also employed as an exploration past hand sketching to help visualize aspects of the architecture and its tectonics. Through developing research and concepts through a variety of methods such as the artefact, hand sketches, and architectural models, the final synthesis of them generated a stronger and more meaningful architectural proposal.
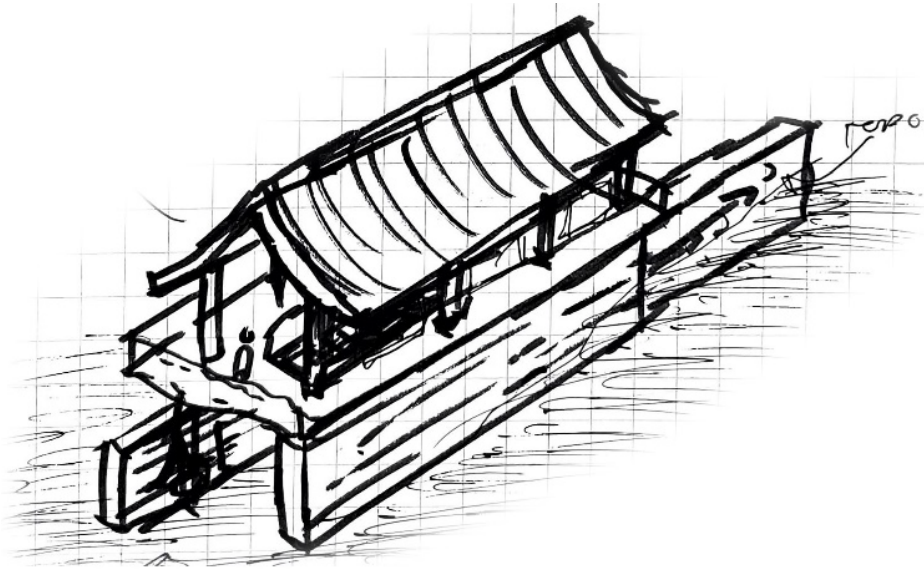

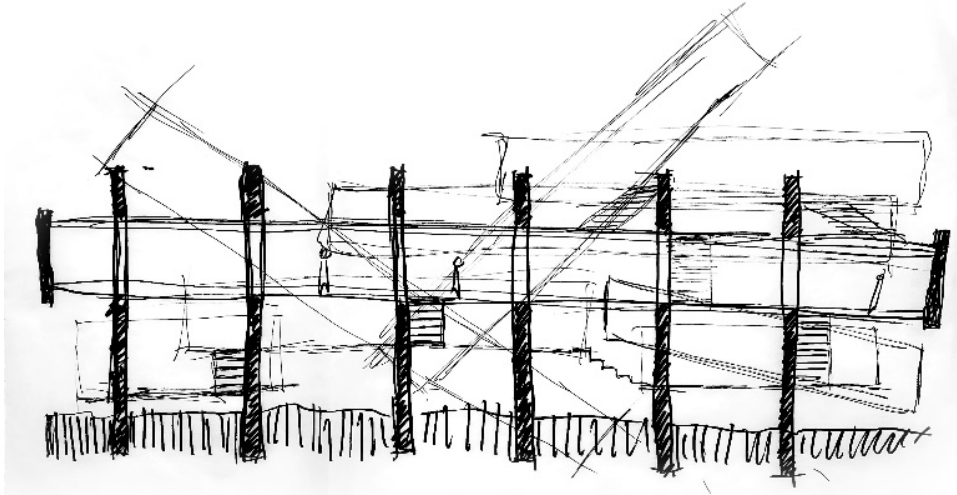Figure 20. Mountain Pavilion Concept Sketch

Figure 21. Central Site Concept Sketch

Figure 22. Exhibition Space Exploration Model

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Final Project Overview

The architecture of this thesis poetically encompasses the entirety of the Koreas through its design by developing a series of sites that correspond to a central site. Drawing lines across the Koreas and orienting 14 pavilions in different mountains along them allows the lines to be understood from the perspective of mapping. On the central site, a series of frames and voids attach and overlap the exhibition space creating a procession through the project. Additional pavilions are placed in close proximity on the project's central site, connecting to and allowing the drawn lines of the other pavilions to be understood in reality. Through experiencing the architecture, a deeper connection and understanding of the emotional border between the Koreas is communicated to its visitors.

4.2. Design Objective Response

4.2.1. Revealing Borderlines Through Architecture

The first primary framework for design dealt with the reveal of borders and history in an architectural experience. In many instances, design choices were translated from the artefact and connected to shared history, cultural elements, or metaphoric relations to ensure the building properly connected with the research of the thesis and the Koreas. This is represented in the design of the imposed but physically insignificant borders accentuated with pavilion design and the frames that mark the beginning of the architectural procession on the central site. The architecture also reveals the existence of the borders that influenced its design in a variety of experiences dependent on one's progression along the architecture.

4.2.2. Connecting People Through Architecture

       The second primary objective of this proposal directly addressed the emotional disconnect between people and how to maintain their relations without a physical reunification. This was achieved through the design of an exhibition space that is entered into after the procession and experience of the other architecture. In the exhibition space, stories that unite people together were displayed and an installation that connects people with the stories, allowing them to foster a personal perception and memory within themselves opposed to the stories being remembered apart from oneself. The proposed architectural narrative became fully realized through the combination and overlap of both of the design objectives.

4.3. Project Design

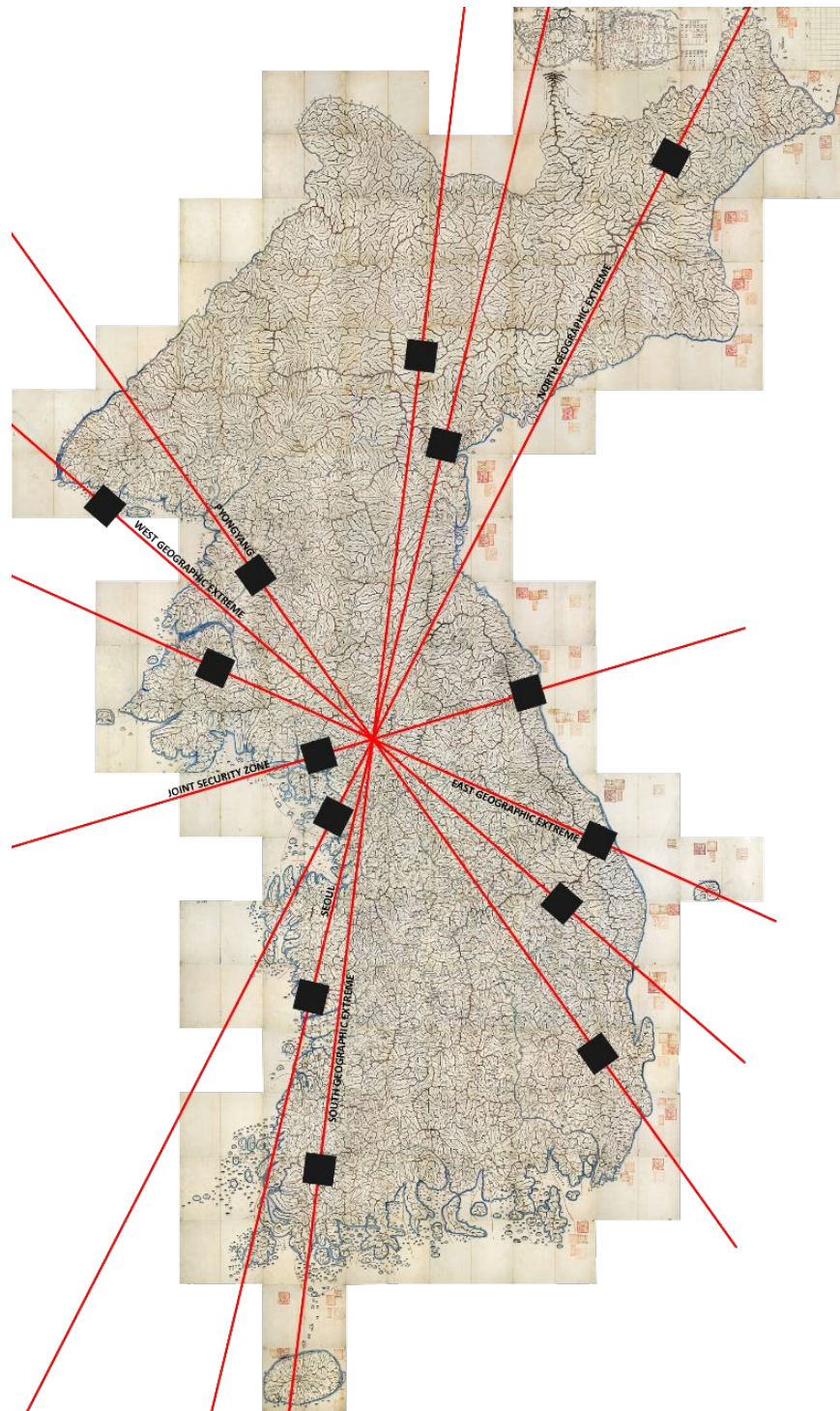### 4.3.1. Mountain Pavilions

Figure 23. Pavilion Sites Shown on Map
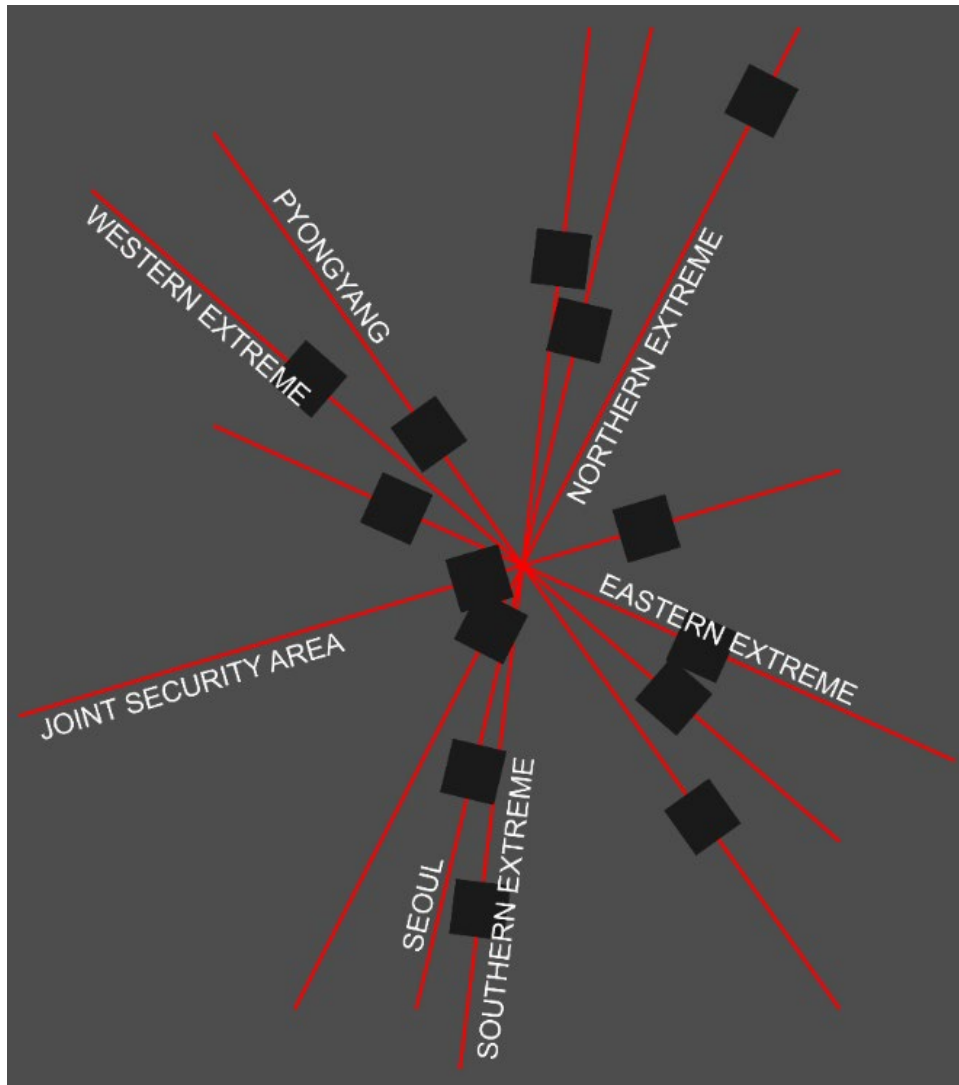*Note.* Base map: Daedongyeojido (J. Kim, 1861)

Figure 24. Isolated Pavilion Sites

    Pavilion proposals marked with black squares on Figures 23 and 24 engage imaginary lines established across the Koreas that intertwine on the main project site. Two lines intersect with the existing capital cities of Pyongyang and Seoul; the dominant settings of stories and people. One line intersects with the Joint Security Area, where the Koreas are connected across the DMZ. The final four lines reach out to the geographic extremes at the furthest cardinal directions of the Koreas in reference to mapping formally linking the entire peninsula to the project site.
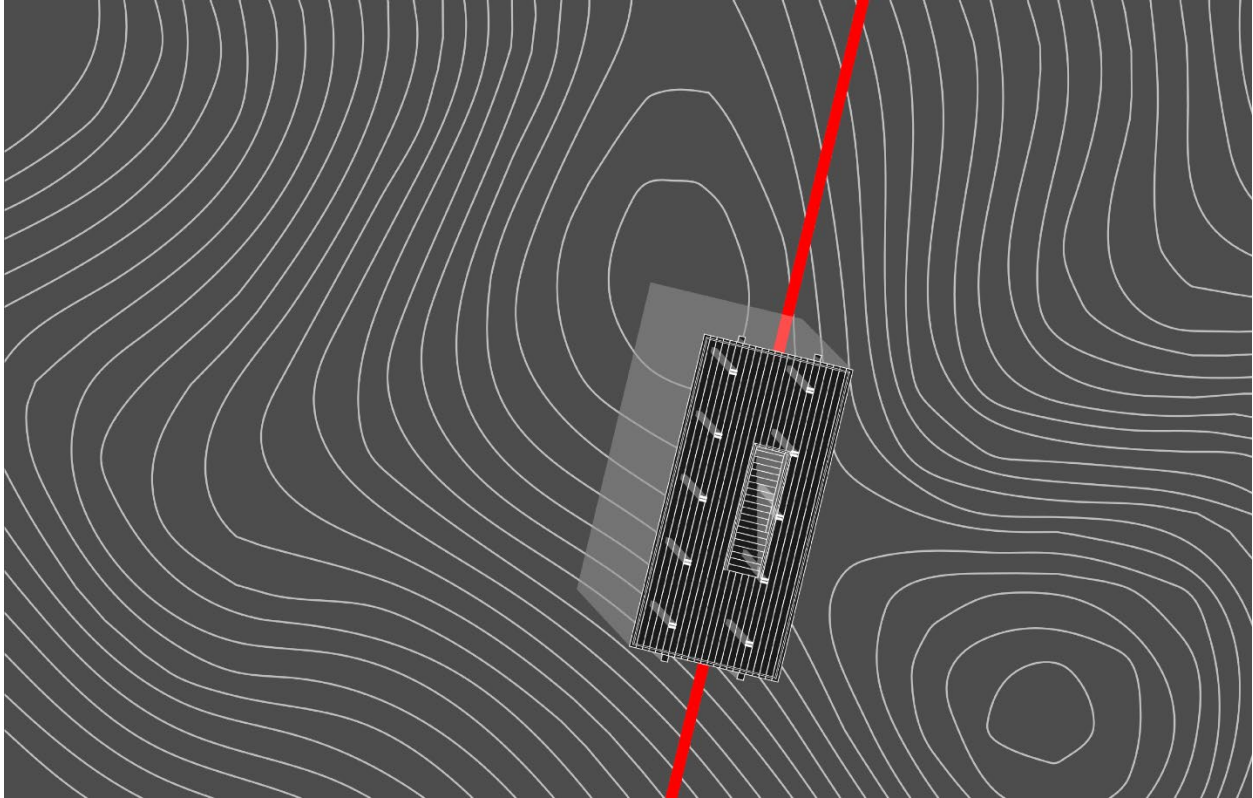
Figure 25. Pavilion Site and Topography

By exhibiting these lines on maps and designing pavilions on them, the project site metaphorically and architecturally encompasses the entirety of the Koreas. The lines created by this architecture are only visualized and understood from looking at a map overlaid with the connections purposefully making them arbitrary and meaningless borders that do not exist in reality. The reveal of this on the primary site was designed to provoke conversation on the meaning of drawn borders and the influence they have on us. Their placement in mountains drew inspiration from existing mountain pavilions in Korea and the shared connections and perceptions both Koreas have about mountains.
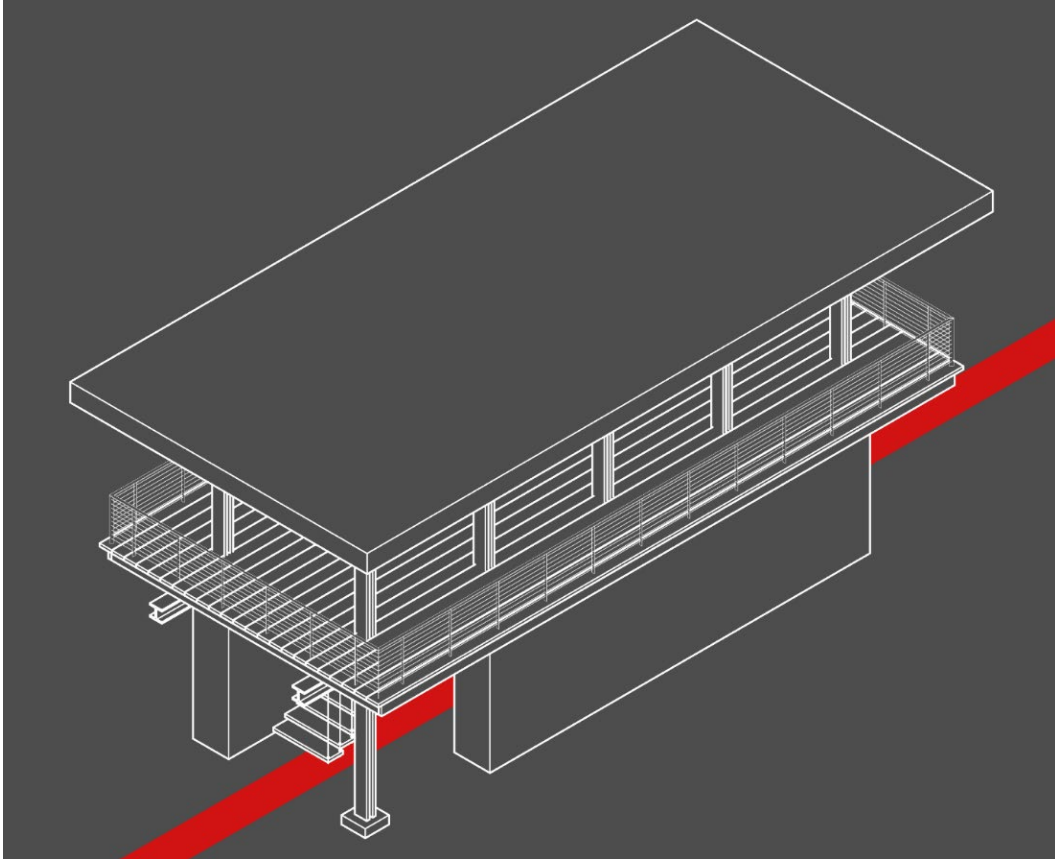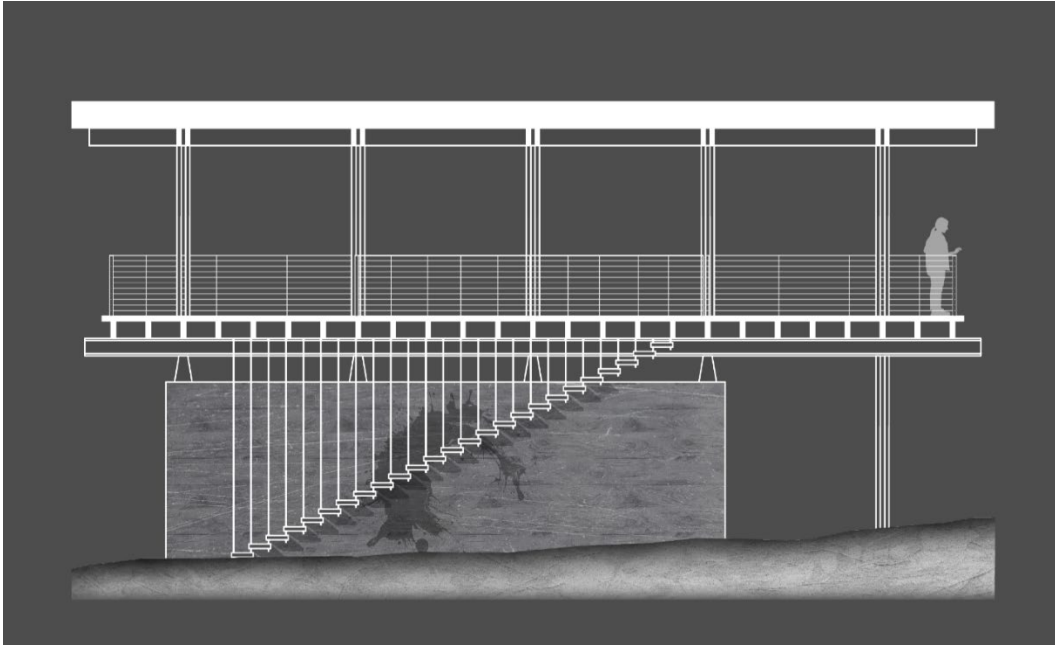
Figure 26. Pavilion Isometric

Figure 27. Pavilion Section

Architecturally the pavilions utilize linear tectonics and textures to emphasize the lines they sit on. Board-formed concrete walls anchor them to their specific sites and the material is also reflected in the main building. The wooden viewing platform of the pavilion sits atop the concrete, hovering above the earth. Being above the ground on the wood decking and looking around at the immediate surroundings places one's immediate physical location on the earth at the forefront of the experience, disconnecting them from existing anywhere but on the specific mountain the pavilion sits on.

4.3.2. Central Site

The architectural experience of the central site is revealed through the procession from the entry into the frames carving into the mountain and the overlap of the pavilion garden and underground exhibition space. The experience of the spaces is designed to establish internal dialogue with oneself on held perceptions by connecting to and transforming the 38th parallel and borderlines in different ways. The careful arrangement and overlap of the spaces draw inspiration from aspects of the artefact and the experience of physically seeing and eventually connecting with the stories of separation.
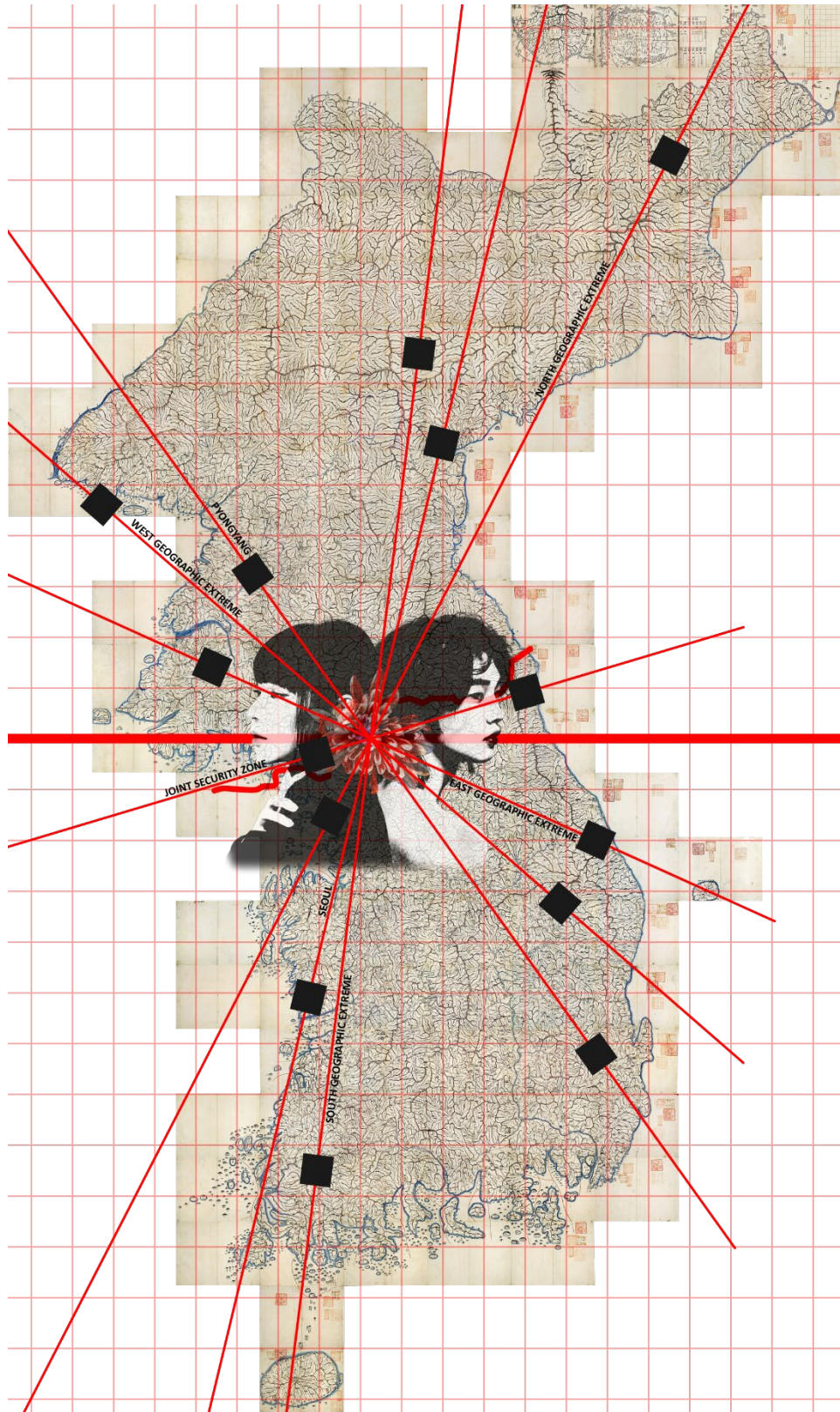
Figure 28. Central Site Vignette and Intersecting Lines
Note. Base map: Daedongyeojido (J. Kim, 1861)

Figure 29. Central Site and Topography
Note. Base map: Google Maps (*Google Maps*, 2024)

To reach the building a hiking trail that crosses over the 38th parallel without fully revealing it would be created, allowing for the line itself to be blurred as it would be difficult to pinpoint yourself in the world without an external orientation. Further development of this thesis would entail the detailing of this element and the addition of accessible cable cars, parking lots, and connections to public transport options along the roadways.
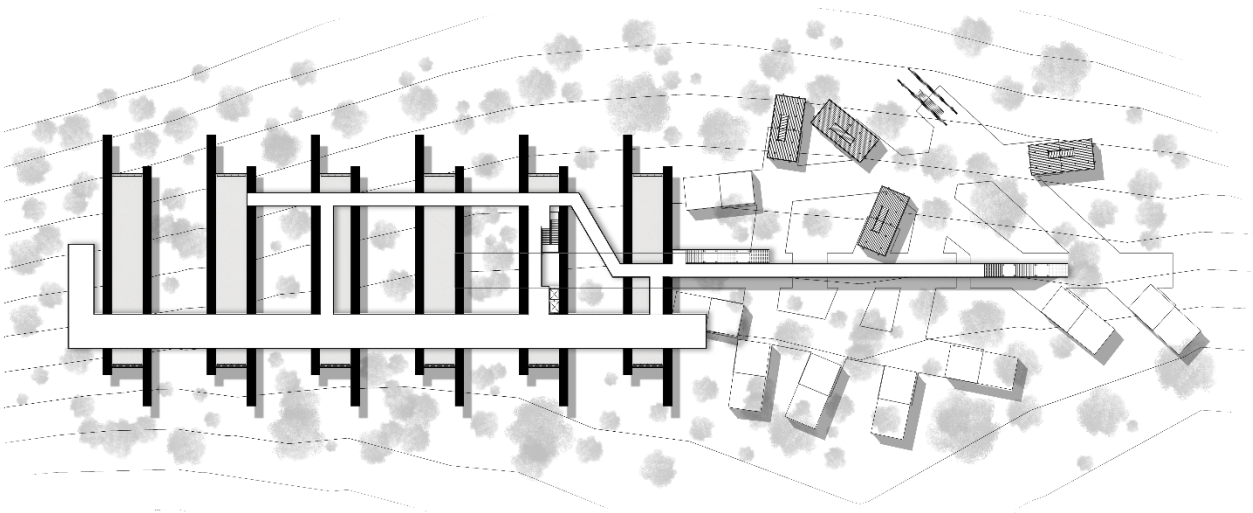

Figure 30. Full Site Plan

The first encounter you have upon reaching the building is moving through six voids

cleaved into the mountain and framed with concrete that reveal pieces of the building's

programming in one's procession through them. The subtle uniqueness of each void engages

with the sense of curiosity in constant reveals from empty space to the architectural connection

point down to the exhibition space and the bridge over the pavilion garden. Tying the

underground parts of the mountain to the intimate connections innately associated with them, but

not allowing for the most intimate part, the deepest reveal, to be interacted with plays with the

experience of emptiness and fullness. Each consecutive frame varies slightly from the one passed

through. The first is only occupied by the bridge extending through every frame placed at an

elevation above the ground. In the second, an opening appears across the divide, letting the

exterior light pierce uninterrupted through the concrete wall. The third reveals the bridge across

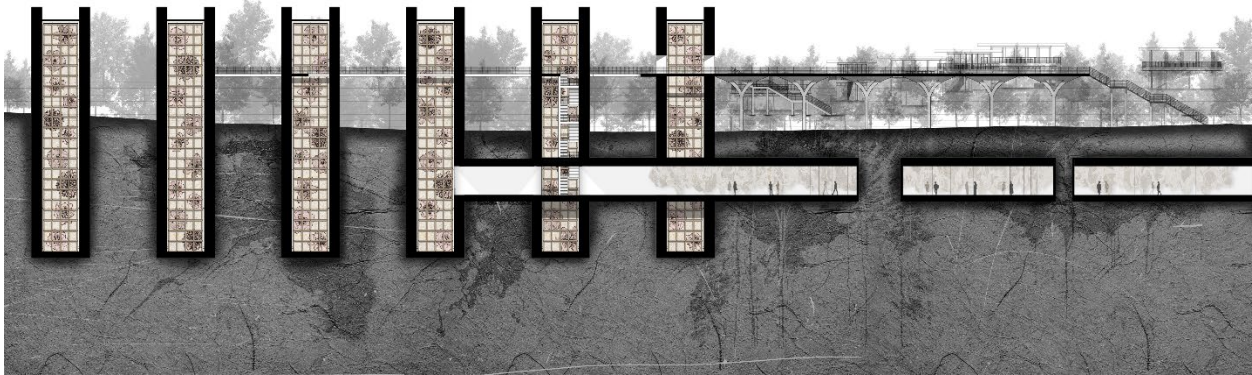the divide, allowing the rest of the procession to be chosen.

Figure 31. Full Site Section

The fourth frame reveals the corridor underground in the same way the second bridge

was revealed, through a singular opening in one of the frame walls. The fifth frame connects all

the spaces through a staircase and elevator. After the reveal of an architectural space below the

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earth, uncovered by the cleaved voids in the mountains, one can traverse down into the exhibition space of the architecture or continue above grade. The sixth frame marks the end of the primary bridge while the secondary one closes in and extends out past the frames into the pavilion garden.
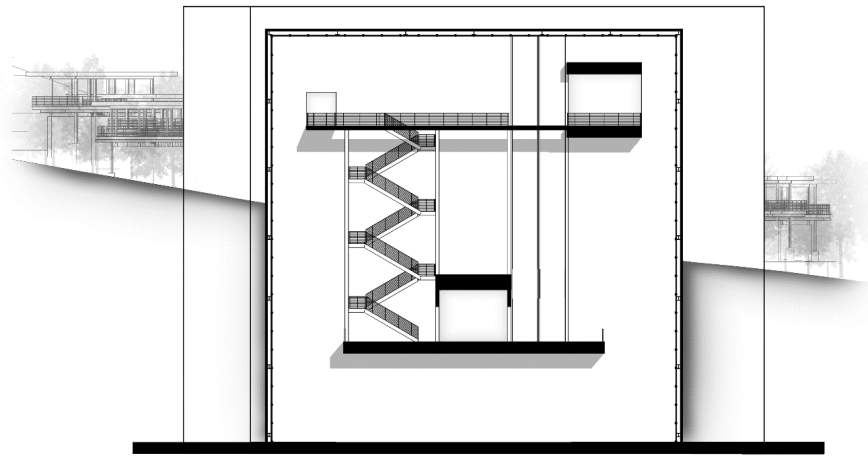

Figure 32. Fifth Frame Section

The design of each frame applies a glass shell and a framed hanji interior. The shell of glass protects the hanji paper while also allowing light to flow through and from the exterior remains visually light compared to the immense concrete walls. The framed hanji paper screens on the interior of the glass filter the light through and prevent views towards the outside making the space intimate. Mimicking the gridded and parceled view of the world we have while also providing the necessary structure to house hanji paper, the wood frames produce shadows along the concrete walls. The hanji paper leaves a small cove at each edge, not extending to the concrete to allow unfiltered and more direct light to be cast down against the board-formed concrete texture creating delicate shadows against the minute topography engrained in the concrete. Carefully selecting materials by how they interact with visual weight, their construction process, metaphorical meaning, and light create truly transformative experiences.
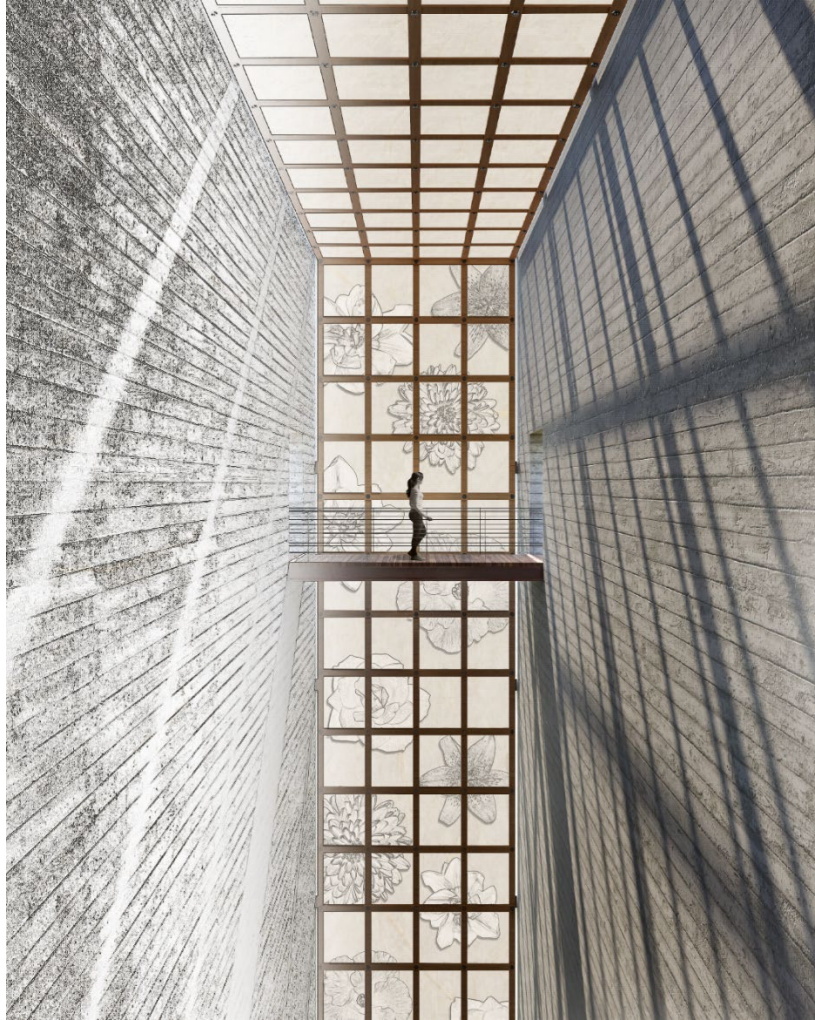
Figure 33. Frame Interior Vignette

Board-formed concrete suppresses views and forces perspectives as you pass through them and hanji paper screens fit between the concrete to create an intimate canvas of stories in each frame. Board-formed concrete as a material connects to my artefact because the intricate grains of the wood are captured and held in the concrete after the wooden stencil is removed. Seeing across and down each void creates a unique experience for each person dependent on the other inhabitants of the building at the time in the fleeting connections that can be made by seeing and hearing the actions of others. However, these interactions remain separated by the voids between the bridges.
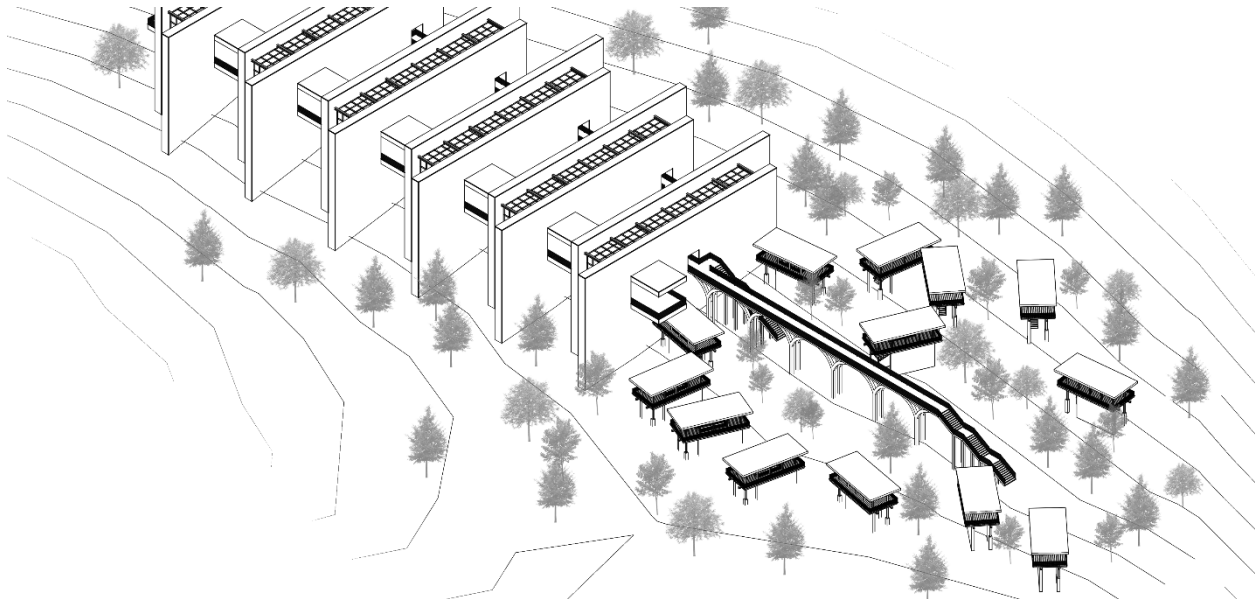
Figure 34. Pavilion Garden Isometric

These pavilions call out to the off-site ones to form a garden of lines understandable at a human scale. The experience of moving on a mountainous topography creates scenarios of discovery and shifting perspectives as one ascends and descends among the pavilions. The bridge stretching across connecting to the frames defines the 38th parallel as a line imposed above the garden, just as the line is imposed on a map. The linear architecture of the pavilions allows the invisible connections between them to be understood when standing in one and looking out toward the others. This garden is a critical piece of the proposal as it acts as the catalyst of the imposed lines generated by the off-site pavilions by bringing them into reality, these realized lines were then transformed into the exhibition space situated directly underneath these pavilions.
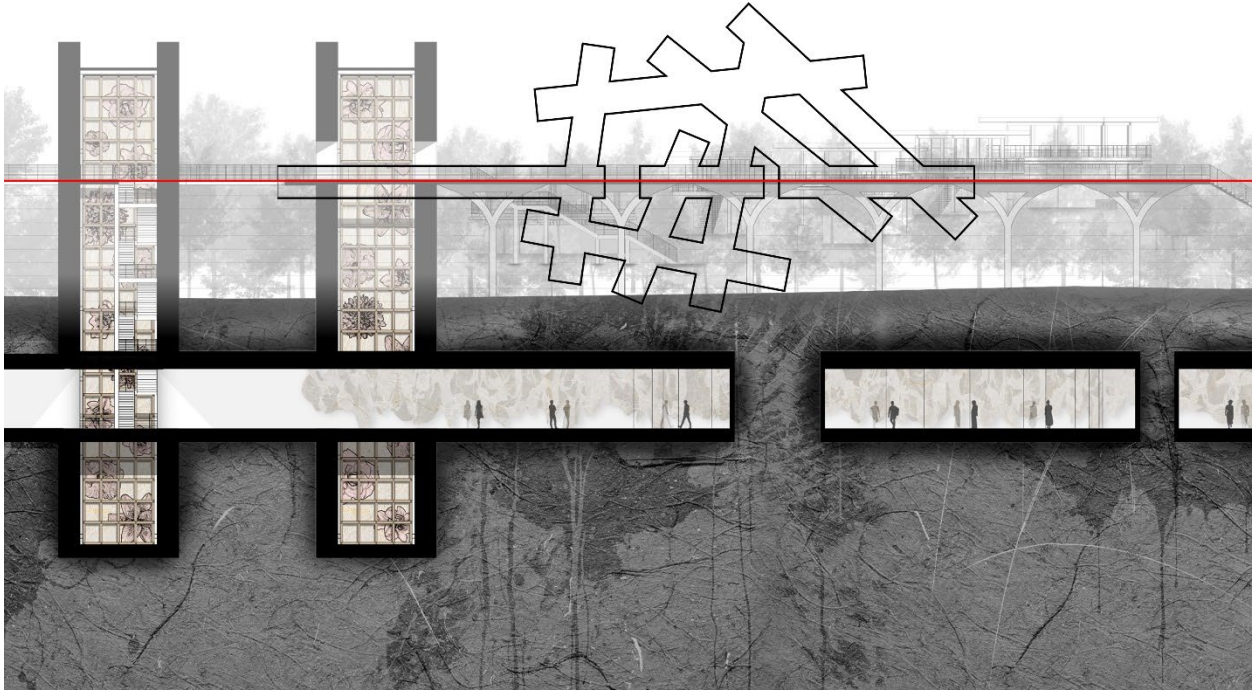
Figure 35. Exhibition Space Vignette

Choosing to descend underground through the access in the fifth frame, the architectural experience of the 38th parallel becomes tangible in the exhibition hall shown in Figure 35. Its layout along the intersections of the 38th parallel and the lines of the pavilions create a space where turning each corner reveals different angles, connections, and viewing depths that intrigue visitors to explore and understand the meaning of the layout. This space displays collected stories of families, connections, and relationships that were torn apart by the splitting of the Koreas, allowing for them to be understood and read in a space inextricably connected to their origins in the 38th parallel.

Across the building, the 38th parallel is established and interacted with but it is in the exhibition space that it truly manifests itself as an experience. This is achieved by clearly marking its path with an expressive installation of suspended hanji paper strips that simulate breathing and life through movement. People moving along the hallway are drawn to the suspended paper by projections of themselves reflecting across the moving paper. This

movement allows people to see through to the other side of the marked 38th parallel in the exhibition space. By projecting someone on the literal other side of the border, they can understand themselves as physically on one side but also as connected to the other that is represented by themselves. The living installation will reflect the still existing connections between the Korean people and will remain breathing as long as the hope of reunification exists. It is in this part of the building that the strongest connection to a unified Korea is felt by visitors because of the relationship between the exhibition of stories and the projections of self on the hanji paper.
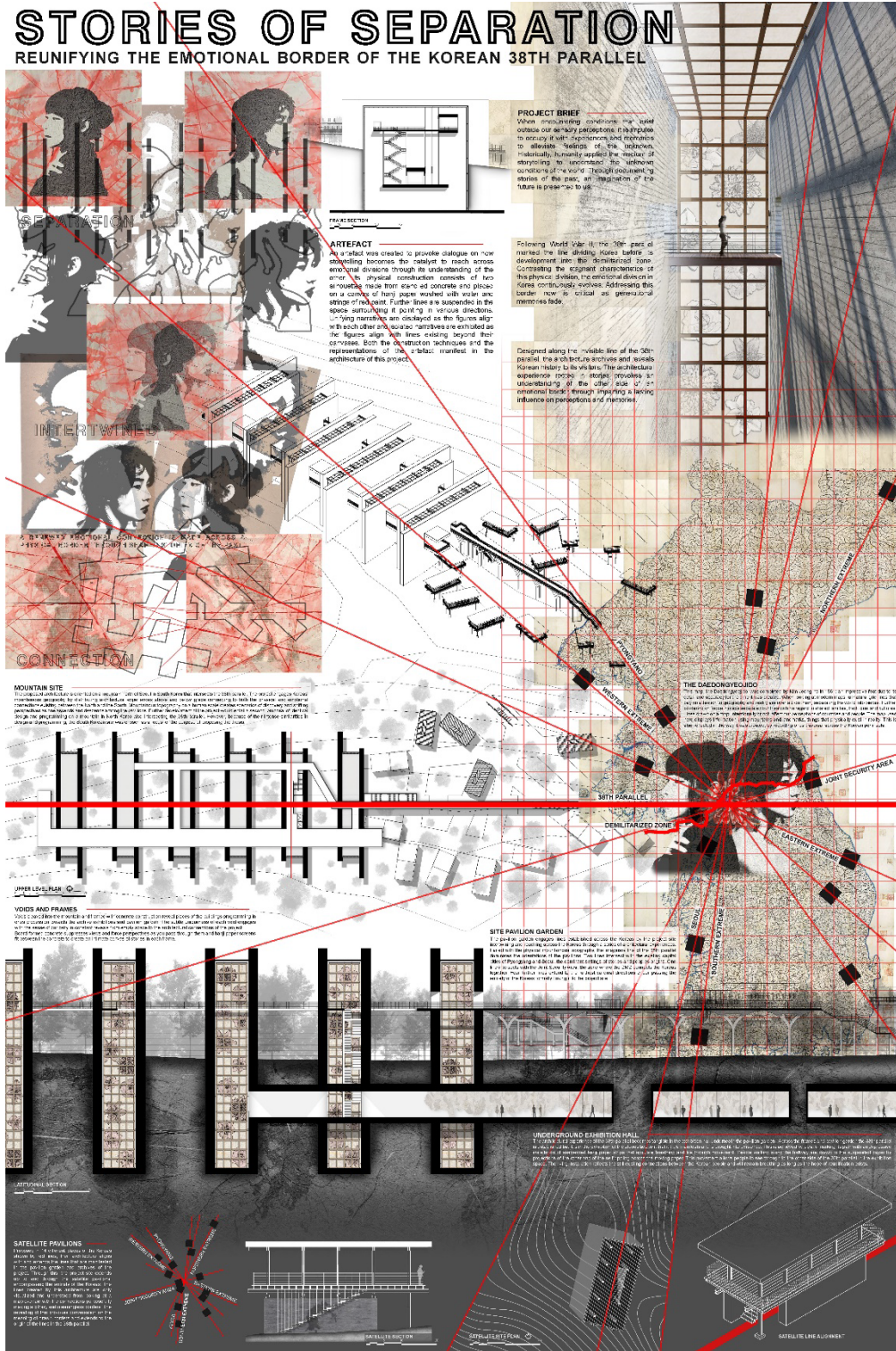
4.3.3. Project Display Design

Figure 36. Thesis Presentation Board
Note. This board was printed at 6' x 4', mounted, and displayed on the 5th floor of Renaissance Hall during the NDSU Spring 2024 Semester.

The use of lines and limited colors in the composition of the board provided narrative guides and ensured the highlighting of specific elements By overlaying the lines of the 38th parallel, the DMZ, and the mountain pavilion designs over the composition in a vibrant red with different weights, the focal hinge of the boards is established. Several of the lines were intentionally built upon and connected back to the center such as the 38th parallel aligning the site plan and the proposed mountain pavilion site aligning with the line it sits on. Employing limited colors with the most prominent being the vibrant red and the hanji paper makes them easier to follow throughout the board.

A unique aspect of the presentation board in Figure 36 is the overlapping and meshing of images together to convey related concepts and design decisions. Firstly the collage of artefact imagery and pieces of its construction overlap its meaning with several integral parts of the design. The interior rendering and its construction fade into the map placed below it by merging and aligning the paper colors together and the wooden framework with the red grid overlaid on the map. Lastly, the large section drawing at the bottom of the board fades into the mountain pavilion graphics to visually separate them in the composition. Several other adjacencies were also designed in the boards to convey connections and ideas of the architecture.

Figure 37. Artefact and Stencil Model
Note. Displayed on the 5th floor of Renaissance Hall during the NDSU Spring 2024 Semester.

Figure 38. Stencil Viewport to Paintings
Note. Displayed on the 5ᵗʰ floor of Renaissance Hall during the NDSU Spring 2024 Semester.

Finally, alongside the printed boards, a reinterpretation of the produced artefact was displayed to accentuate the architecture. Due to the parameters of the display area, installing the full experience of the artefact was not an option. Accounting for this, as shown in Figures 37 and 38, the paintings were placed on a table facing each other signifying the understanding and connections the artefact conveys and one of the stencils used in the production of both paintings was placed above them. The stencil covers and provides windows to see below to the artefact paintings which mirrors the layout of the building section shown in Figure 31 through orienting and looking down at snippets of the exhibition space from the spaces above ground and experiencing the intended emotional connections once underground.

4.3.4. Future Architecture Potential

Continued development of the architecture would entail a second proposal in North Korea which would enhance the connections of current project elements. This project of similar design, programming, and imagery would be placed on a mountain in North Korea that intersects

the 38th parallel to mirror and establish dialogue with the South Korean site. This was not realized in this proposal due to the similarities in design and programming and consideration of development time but holds critical significance to the future of this thesis.

Additional conceptualization and design of the building program would be considered for further architectural studies. Visualizations and designs for site approach and access would be realized and poetically merged with the architecture past the linguistic connections already described in the proposal. The exhibition space and the programming necessary to grow and maintain it hold the potential for complementary research to be explored and intertwined with this thesis. These conceptual investigations would highlight and emphasize the narrative aspects of the architecture while also significantly heightening the practicality of the proposal.

4.4. Conclusion

Addressing emotional borders between people through design narratives drove the research and architecture of this thesis. Through a study of philosophy and historic precedents, a framework for meaningfully connecting people through architecture was explored. With the selected border and site of the Koreas, gathering stories rooted in the 38th parallel and the DMZ revealed their emotional connections and provided a foundation for design. Artefacts and architecture were designed to engage and reveal the gathered stories becoming the catalyst for reconnecting people on the other side of the border. This thesis proposed architectural narratives and visualizations that engage the emotional connections of people across the volatile physical border of the DMZ by providing compelling catalysts to experience emotional reunification.

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