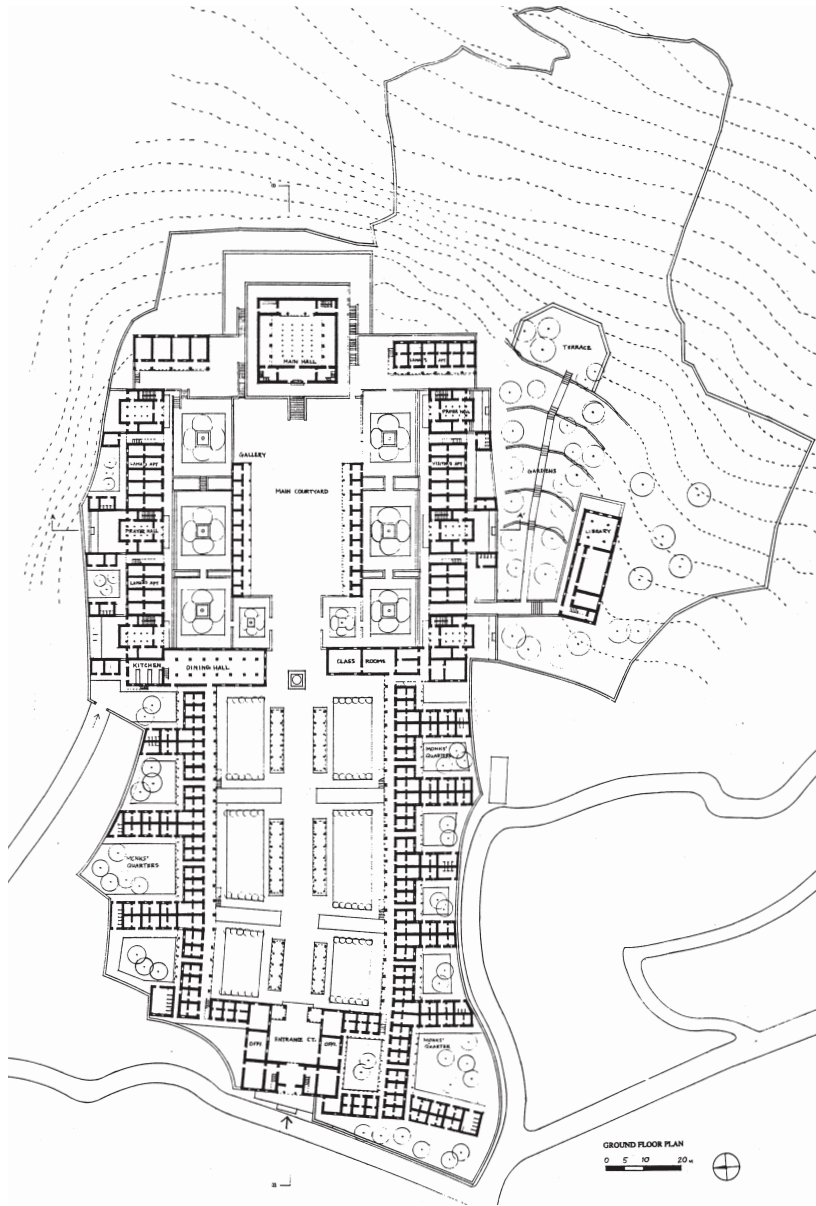


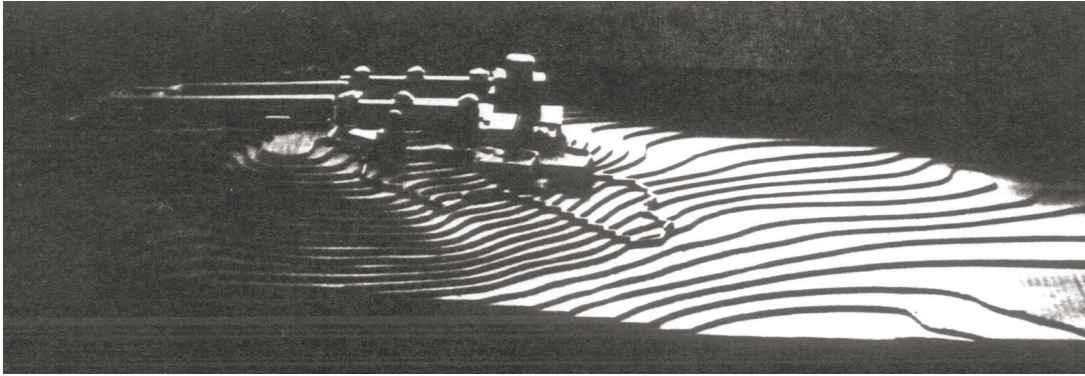


14 / CONCLUSION
GEOMETRIC FEATURES WHICH FOLLOW FROM THE USE
OF LIVING PROCESS IN THE MAKING OF LARGE BUILDINGS



Plan for Nyingma Monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal, Christopher Alexander with Ismet Khambatta, 1988

Perhaps the most vital thing about a large public building, and its form, is that it honors and respects the land, grows out of the land in a natural way. The drawings illustrate what I mean with a plan of the Nyingma monastery for a



Model for the Nyingma Monastery, showing its volume and relation to the hill, Nepal, 1988

community of 300 monks, designed for Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche, to be built one day — we still hope — in Kathmandu.

A successful large building will always show the subtle syncopation of regularity of structure combined with subtle, and gentle accommodation to the land and its contours — in the monastery, visible in the plan and in the profile of the model as the building juts out from the hill, almost grows out of it. And at the same time, the larger masses of the building will be offset by a continuous range of scales and levels, going all the way down to the most intimate details of construction, genuinely completing and strengthening the large structure of the whole. In the monastery, the high red wall, built to contain the compound, with blue “eyes” staring and providing detail — this is an example of what I mean.

These qualities, the combination of larger and small, often in a stunning range of scales, will always come about somehow, in combination with love for the land, when a large building emerges from a living process. Within that structure, the entities which exist go down to the tiniest details. The invariant, so described, seems like something from Kubla Khan — huge, yet intimate, studded with gold stars, shimmering with detail.



Sketch for the wall of Nyingma Monastery, Nepal, 1988