

# Density in Historic Urban Forms

Fadi Zaher

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## Density in Historic Urban Forms

Final Project

Technological Studio

Instructors | Architect Eitan Kimmel, Architect David Robbins

Research Seminar

Instructors | Dr./Architect Liat Eisen

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## **Abstract:**

This research embarks on an exploration of the intricate interplay between urban development, civil society dynamics, and public spaces within the historically significant city of Nazareth. The focal point of this study revolves around the revitalization of Nazareth's industrial area through an innovative integration of a multi-layered public sky system. This proposal is motivated by the imperative to address pressing challenges including constrained open spaces, mounting congestion, and the evolving needs of a burgeoning civil society. The overarching aim is to infuse renewed vitality into Nazareth's urban landscape, thereby fostering an environment where public spaces seamlessly intertwine with the progressive advancement of civil society initiatives.

## **1. Introduction:**

Nazareth, an epitome of cultural and religious heritage, finds itself at the juncture of tradition and modernity, and this research endeavors to navigate the confluence of these facets. In response to the contemporary urban predicaments that Nazareth faces, this study embarks on an exploration of a novel urban intervention - the integration of a multi-layered public sky system within the industrial area. Rooted in the recognition of Nazareth's religious significance and the burgeoning influence of civil society organizations, this proposal seeks to address multifaceted challenges and pave the way for a symbiotic coexistence between urban development and communal progress.

### **Background and Significance:**

Nazareth's historical import as the third holiest city in Christianity reverberates through its urban development. The presence of diverse Christian religious currents has imprinted the cityscape with sacred sanctuaries and communal spaces (Shiler, 1982). This intersection of spiritual devotion and urban architecture accentuates the nuanced link between religious heritage and spatial evolution.

Concurrently, the surge in civil society bodies within Nazareth signifies an emerging sociopolitical consciousness that seeks to drive social change (Ja-

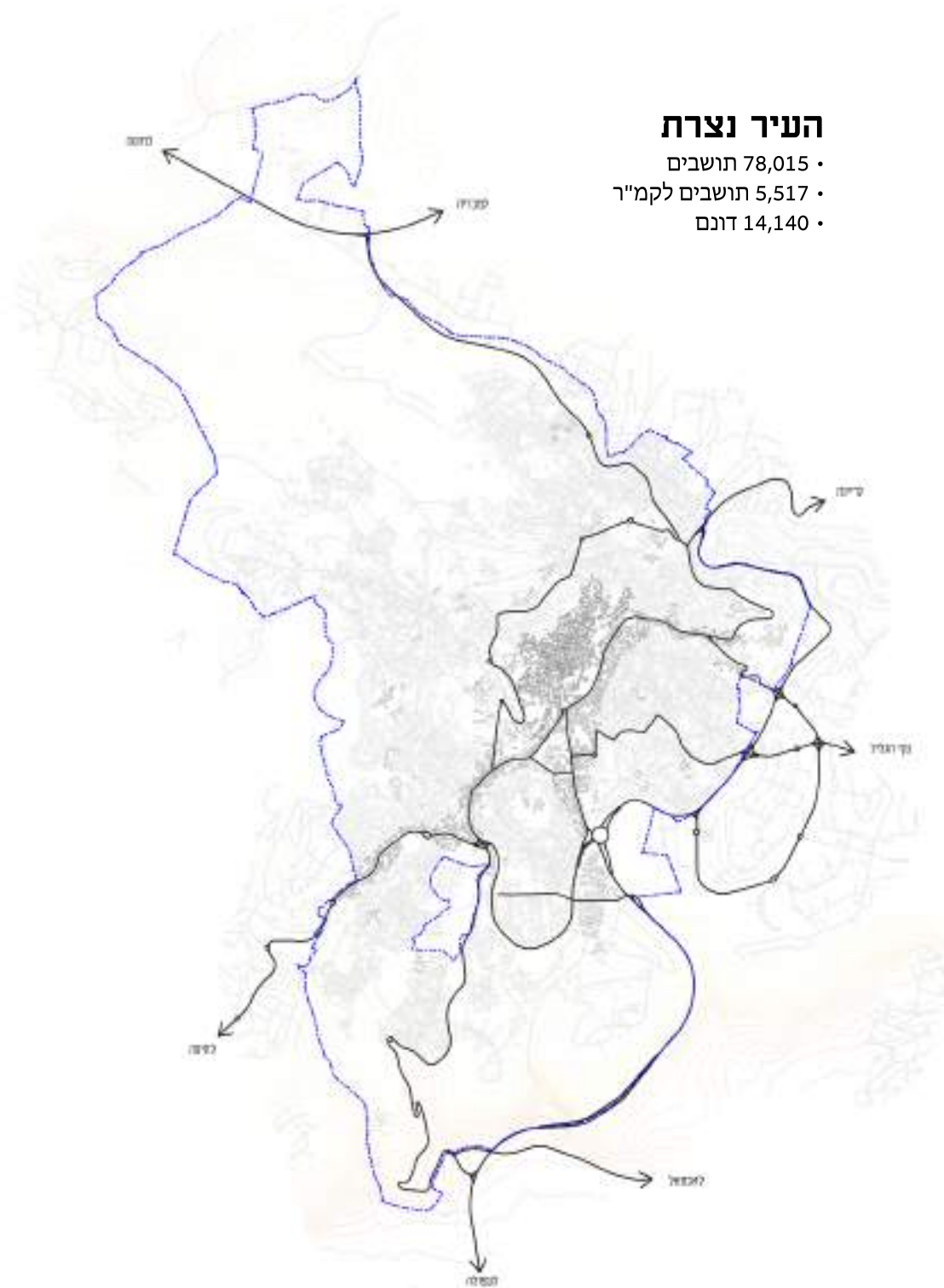
mal, 2017). As these secular entities proliferate, the demand for dynamic and accessible public spaces amplifies. These spaces not only serve as physical platforms but also as crucibles for engendering dialogue, fostering collective action, and galvanizing societal transformation.

### Research Questions:

The core inquiry of this research is encapsulated within the following pivotal question: **“How can the integration of a multi-layered public sky system within Nazareth’s industrial area catalyze urban development and cater to the evolving needs of its burgeoning civil society?”** This question underscores the dual thrust of the study - first, examining the potential of revitalizing underutilized spaces within the industrial precinct, and second, discerning how such an intervention can synergistically amplify the impact of civil society initiatives.

## העיר נצרת

- 78,015 תושבים
- 5,517 תושבים לקמ"ר
- 14,140 דונם



## 2. Theoretical Research:

### 2.1 Religious Significance and Urban Growth:

Nazareth's status as the third holiest city in Christianity has profoundly influenced its urban evolution. The influx of Christian religious currents, drawn by its religious significance, has significantly impacted the city's development. The message to Mary, signaling the birth of Jesus, has left an indelible mark on the city's cultural and spiritual fabric. These religious currents, as described by Shiler (1982), fostered the creation of both private compounds and public spaces, shaping Nazareth's architectural landscape. The coexistence of these spaces, serving as spiritual centers and communal hubs, exemplifies the intricate connection between urban development and religious heritage.

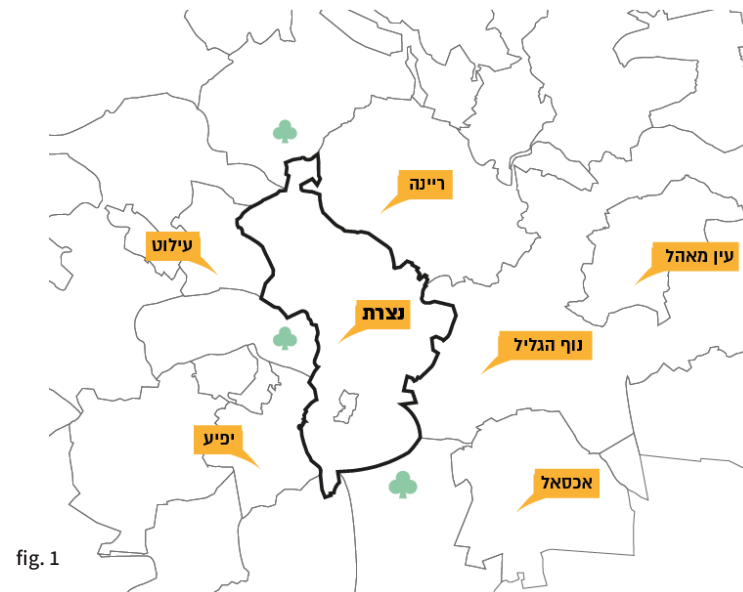
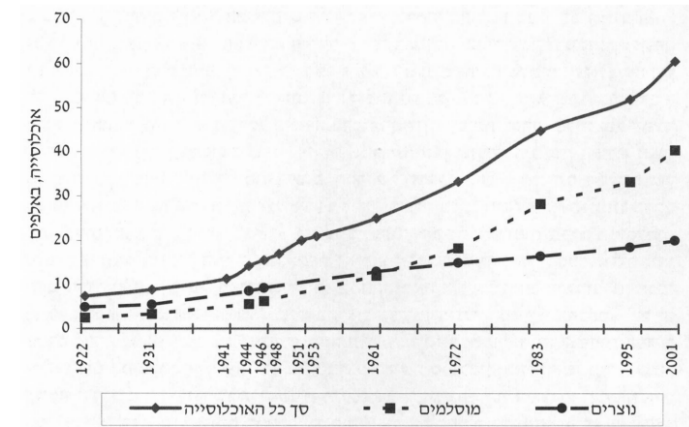


fig. 1

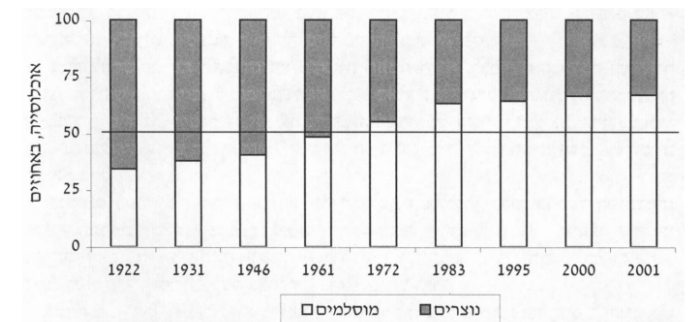
## Density in the City of Annunciation

The severe lack of open spaces for various uses is the main reason behind many social problems; The plight of public areas, housing, transportation and more. Where the most noticeable result is the migration of the young people, out of the city because of its lack of responsiveness to their day to day needs.



מקור הנתונים: הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה (פרסומים שונים) ועיבוד מיוחד: Government of Palestine (various publications)

תרשים 1: אוכלוסיית נצרת לפי דת בשנים נבחרות (באלפים)



מקור הנתונים: הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה (פרסומים שונים) ועיבוד מיוחד: Government of Palestine (various publications)

## Dense cities in Israel

30 היישובים המאוכלסים בארץ		
תושבים לקמ"ר	מספר תושבים	עיר
6,802	849,800	ירושלים
8,232	426,100	תל אביב
4,292	277,100	חיפה
4,099	240,700	ראשון לציון
6,314	225,400	פתח תקווה
4,720	218,000	אשדוד
6,920	202,400	נחניה
1,711	201,100	באר שבע
9,882	187,300	חולון
24,214	178,300	בני ברק
9,190	150,900	רמת גן
5,574	128,900	רחובות
15,651	128,500	בת ים
2,754	126,800	אשקלון
2,810	98,100	בית שמש
6,500	94,200	כפר סבא
4,177	90,700	הרצליה
1,799	87,000	מודיעין מכבים רעות
1,712	86,800	חדרה
5,258	74,600	נצרת
6,029	72,300	רמלה
5,966	72,200	לוד
4,751	70,200	רעננה
12,953	63,200	מודיעין עילית
3,078	60,400	רהט
17,589	56,800	נבעתים
3,324	54,300	קריית אתא
2,810	54,100	הוד השחון
4,851	53,900	נררית
1,979	51,400	אום אל פאחם

## Request to expand Nazareth's jurisdiction

The municipal area of the city currently covers about 14 thousand dunams, with about 75 thousand residents. You can see the city in the list of the most densely populated cities when it is ranked number 8, Nazareth is the most densely populated city outside of the central district.

As a result of the current situation in the absence of open areas, a report was made in collaboration with Prof. Yousef Jabareen, his findings show that the areas needed for development beyond the current outline plan, is about 12 thousand dunams, almost the area of the city today.

Based on the results of the amount of land requested for the city, Prof. Jabareen proposed expanding the city's borders in the three directions where Nazareth borders agricultural areas. (Jabareen, Jobran, Zalberman, Zoevi, 2013).

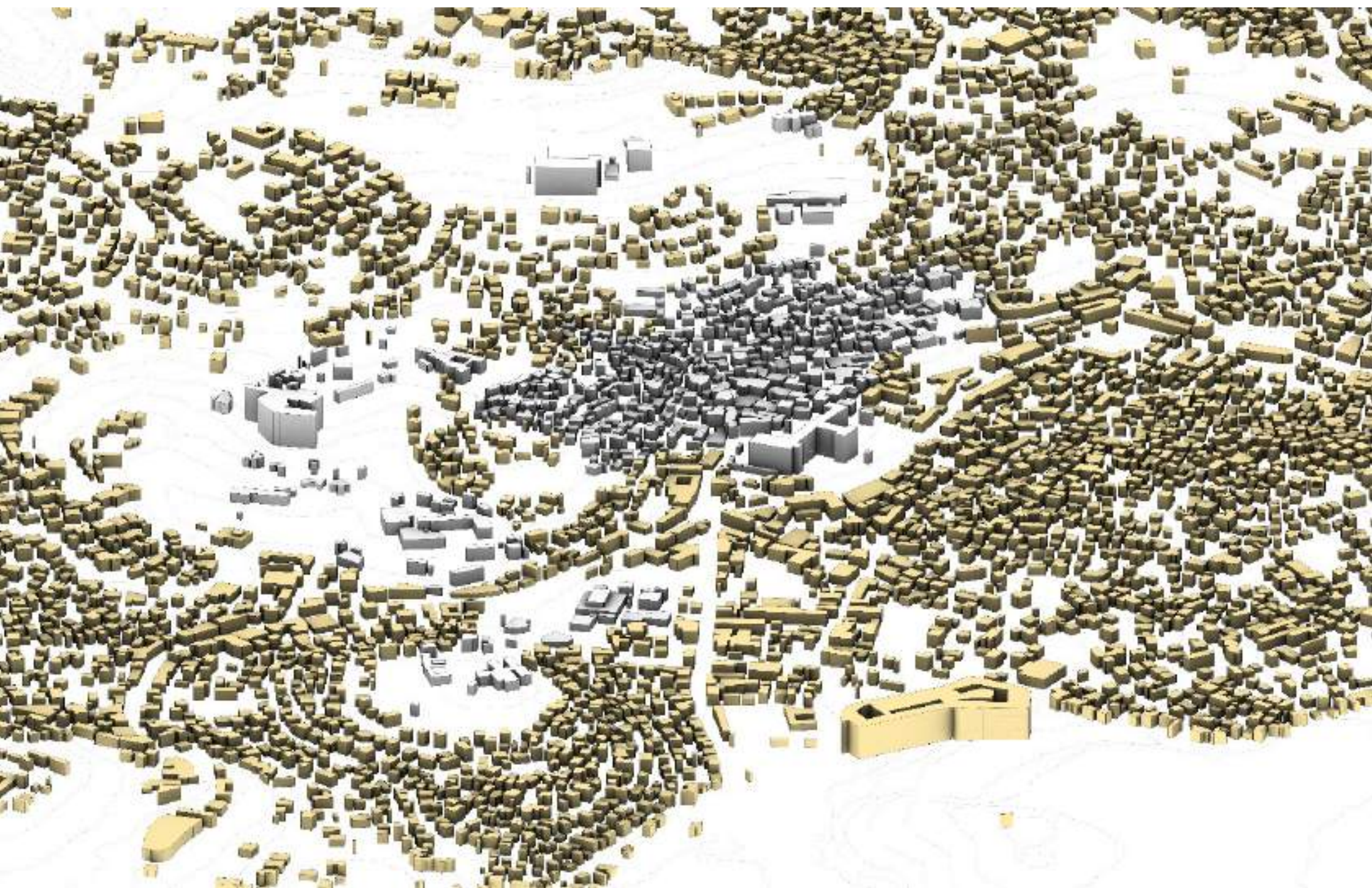




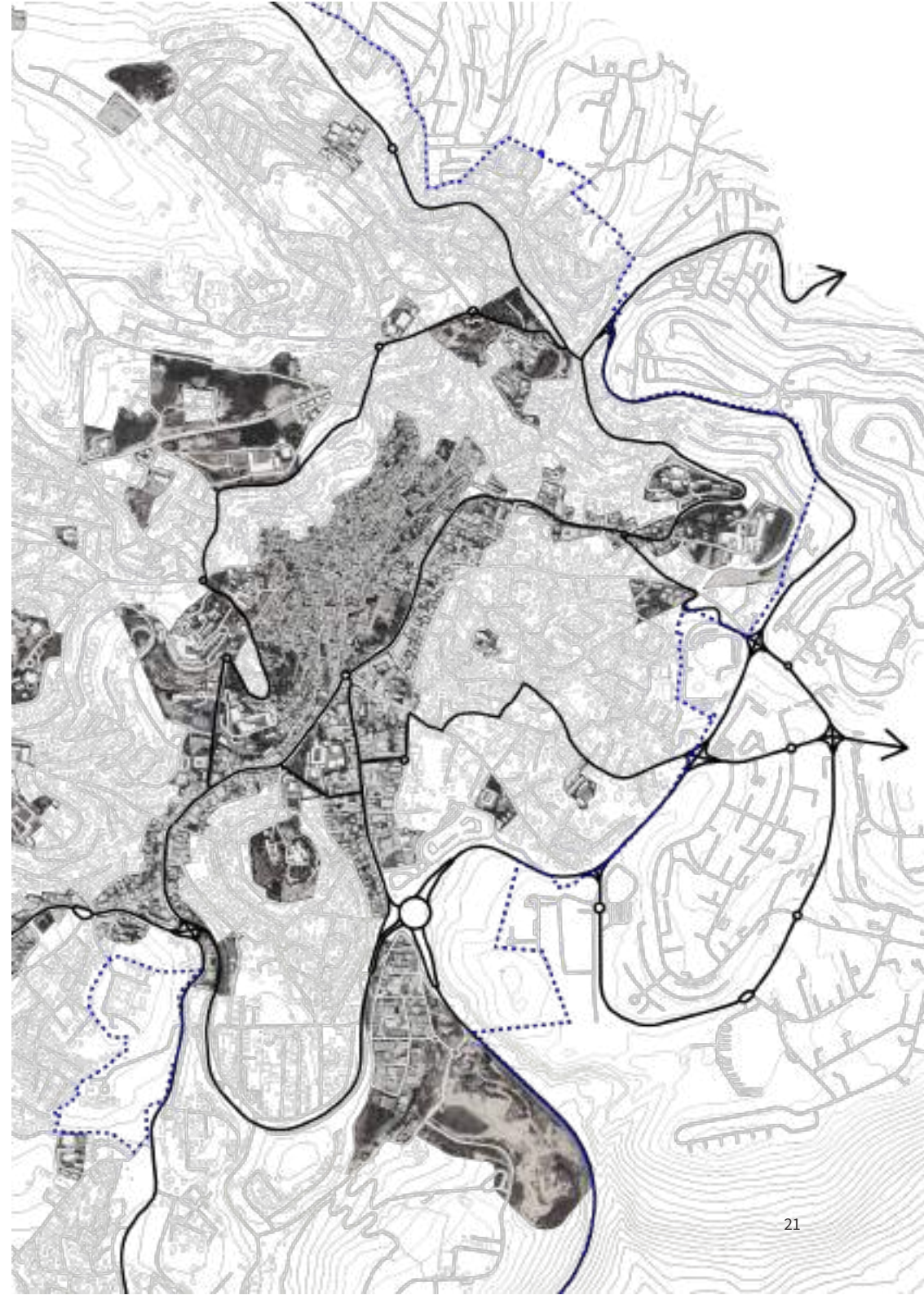














## 2.2 Civil Society Development and Public Spaces:

The surge of civil society organizations in Nazareth parallels a broader regional trend, where individuals actively seek to drive social change. Prof. Amal Jamal's work underscores the significance of these secular bodies in societal transformations (Jamal, 2017). As these organizations proliferate, the importance of accommodating their activities within accessible and dynamic public spaces becomes evident. These spaces are not only physical settings but also societal catalysts, fostering a new socio-political consciousness through active participation and communal initiatives.

### Civil society – Nazareth

Many of the young people in Arab society are attracted to creating social change in an activist way by creating bodies and associations that operate from the field to achieve a common goal, these bodies are identified as more secular bodies. Prof. Amal Jamal tries to describe these bodies in his book as: Arab civil society and attributes great importance to them in the social changes taking place in society today (Jamal, 2017).

**A general theoretical reference to the concept - civil society:** Civil society is a broad social phenomenon that contains definitions and sub-concepts that relate to diverse social and political issues, the basic principle that characterizes this phenomenon is the growth of associations initiated by citizens to achieve a common goal as a way of informal activist organization, hence civil society is considered a phenomenon that is essentially political. Because it strives to remove certain areas of public life from the

direct control of the state and market forces in order to establish and create an alternative space that reflects the citizens' desires directly and under the control of the public (Clayton, Oakley, Taylor, 2000).

Liberals, libertarians, conservative elitists, Marxists and neo-Marxists agree that the existence of a civil space between the state and the individual is an important social and political phenomenon, reflecting changes in the understanding of the collective existence of human beings in common political frameworks. Such a space is necessary to provide services that the state chooses not to provide, to enable public policy discussions and to promote civil discourse and awareness that have practical implications for the decision makers in the country. Such a space is also necessary to provide protection against the arbitrariness of the government. Many see this space as an expression of the citizens' desire to take responsibility for certain aspects of their lives and leave them outside the influence of the state. (Jamal, 2017: 33)

According to Habermas, the development of civil society depends on the level of modernity of the society, and there is a direct connection between the two, the more modern the society, the more developed the civil society will be. Before I address the issue of Arab civil society in Israel. I will take a broader look at the development of civil societies in the Arab world as a view of the process that Arab civil society in Israel is going through these days, due to being an integral part of the Arab nation and having a very similar social and identity structure. (Jamal, 2017)



מבט מרחוב הגליל



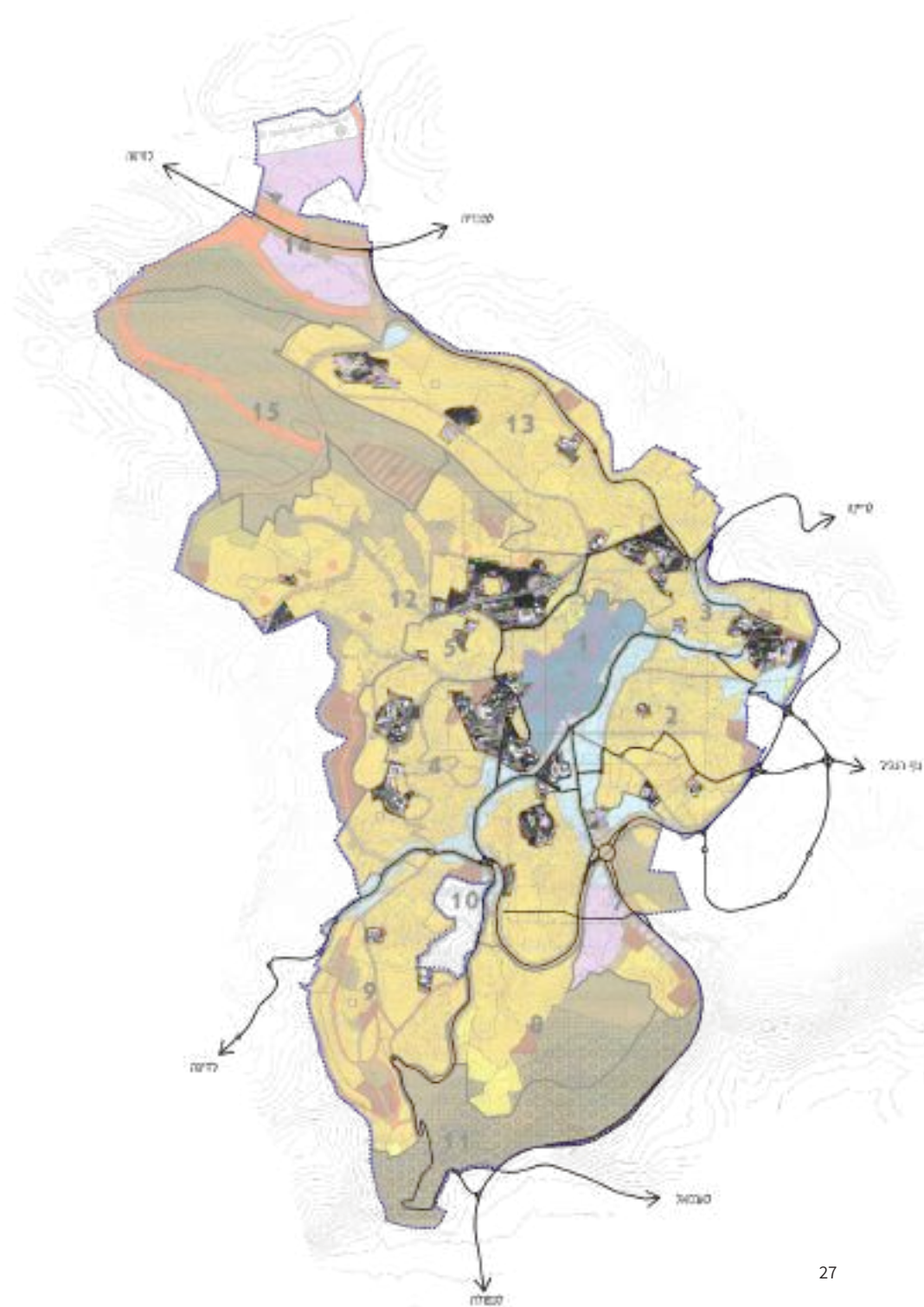
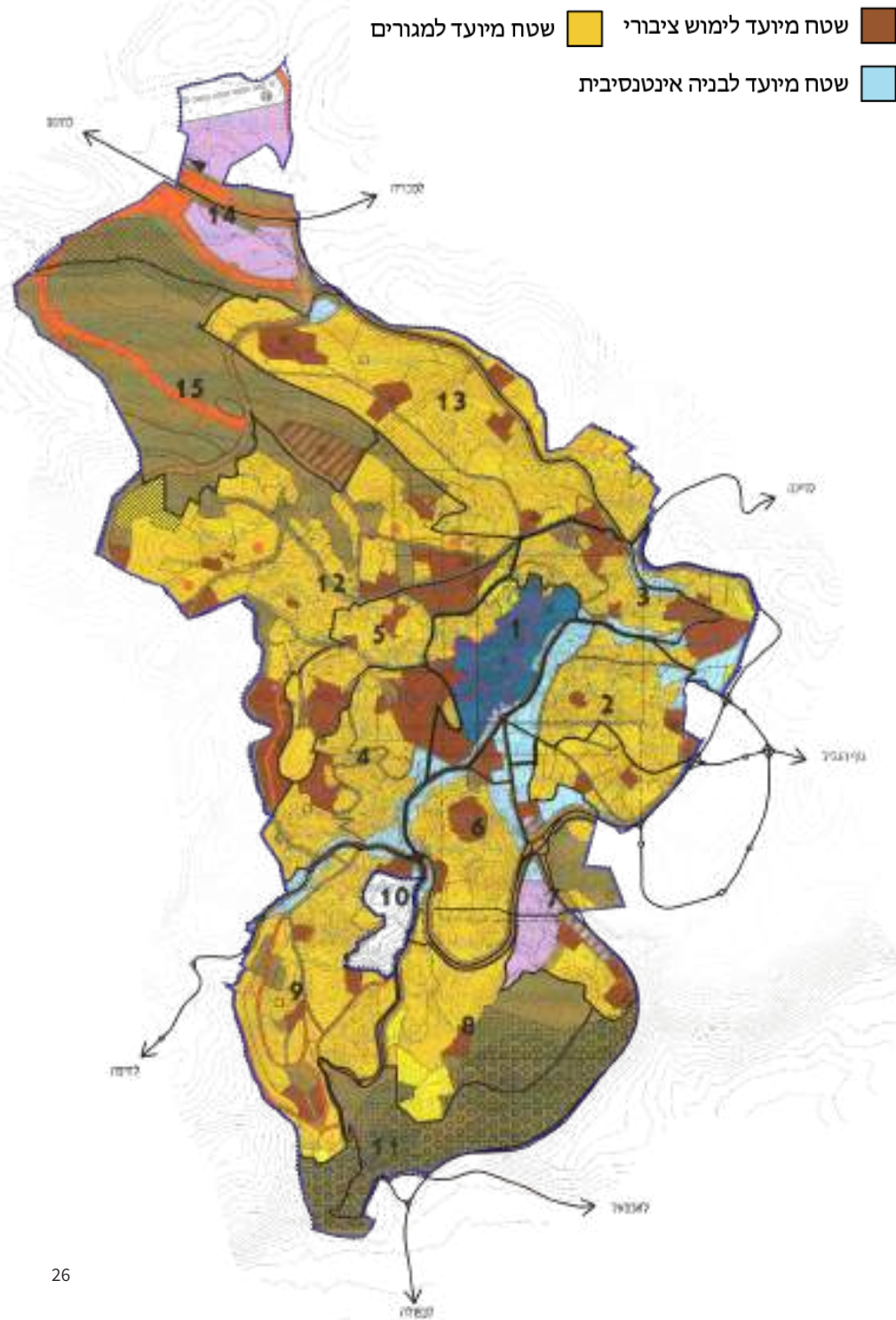
מבט מרחוב פאולוס השישי



מבט מרחוב תאופיק זיאד

- ציבורי
- משרדים
- מסחר
- שטח ציבורי פתוח קיים









**The development of civil society in the Arab city depends mainly on:**

1.The social structure 2.Religious beliefs (Jamal, 2017)

### **1.The social structure**

Since Arab society began to be exposed to Western culture due to the occupation of large areas of the Arab world by the colonial forces at the beginning of the twentieth century, the modernization process that had already begun at the end of the years of the Ottoman Empire began to strengthen even more with the arrival of Great Britain and France in the region, through the formation of an intellectual bourgeois layer mainly in the large cities that began to adopt A more western way of life, these fundamental social changes were mainly as a result of the fundamental changes that took place in the economic structure, which went from being based on agriculture, to an economy that also contains commerce and industry as a result of the technological means and scientific progress that those colonial forces brought with them to the region (Rosenfeld, 1998). Hisham Sharabi describes the transition of the Arab identity within the big cities to modernity as a distorted and partial transition, which gave rise to a hybrid identity trapped between tradition and modernity, between religion and secularism, between capitalism and socialism, between production and consumption, this hybrid identity which is characterized by what he called neo-patriarchy, which combined Western values based on liberalism, and the values that lie deep within the Arab social structure built on a patriarchal clan order. (Sharabi, 1992)

It is possible to understand the extent of the influence of the social structure on the civil society and the civil space, by looking at the translation of the term “civil society” into the Arabic

language - “almoghatma al madani” - where the word “madani” is derived from the word “madina” which in Arabic means “city” where connections develop more anonymous than in the village, and this contributes to raising the level of individualism within society, which may increase the process of breaking away from the social order built on a clan and tribal basis, thus allowing more for the existence of an active public space that transcends clan obligation. (Jamal, 2017)

### **2.Religious beliefs**

Civil society, which is made up of public bodies, is considered more secular than religious, and this poses a challenge to Arab society, which to this day is considered religious in essence. The cooperation between the secular civil bodies and the religious communities built on the basis of the community of coaches is not yet considered successful and effective. When each community has its own private common space (Jamal, 2017).

## **The modern identity of Arab society in Israel**

Because the development of civil society depends on the level of modernity and urbanism of the society, I will refer to the development of the urban identity of the Arab society in Israel, which is similar to the process of the development of the modern and hybrid Arab identity in the cities scattered throughout the Arab world as a result of the modernization process. The other factor that is not found among the societies in the Arab countries is that the Arab society in Israel is considered a minority within a country, and this had the most dominant effect on the rise of socio-political consciousness among the Arab population and thus the significant jump in the number of public bodies and the development of a new civil society in the last twenty years. There is no single



clear reason for the increase in the number of civil associations, but there are several internal and external factors that influence the formation of these bodies, in the internal context it is possible to notice the increase in the number of academics and thus the professional skills and social initiatives with the aim of strengthening society as a whole and creating social capital against the state's institutional discrimination that excluded the population Arabic over the years. With reference to the external factors: there are many factors that influence the number of these bodies and their degree of effectiveness, but the most significant factor in the creation and strengthening of the status of the Hillel associations is the cooperation with global bodies that allow the civil bodies operating in the Arab society in Israel to use external resources from other countries and thus work together in cooperation to promote universal-civil values (Menuhin, 2010; Jamal, 2017)

Despite the development of the modern bourgeois Arab urban identity and with it the development of the public and civil bodies in the Arab society in Israel, the public space in the cities is in severe shortage, the need to provide public urban spaces that support the civil bodies is necessary (Svid 2005).



سوق الناصرة



سوق القدس



سوق يافا



سوق غزة





### 2.3 Public Sphere and Urban Planning:

Habermas's concept of the public sphere finds resonance in Nazareth's context, where inclusive public spaces are essential for nurturing rational discourse and collective decision-making (Calhoun, 1996). The reciprocal relationship between public spaces and the public sphere reinforces the argument for harmonizing urban planning with the principles of inclusivity and accessibility. As a fundamental driver of societal dialogue and engagement, public spaces are integral to shaping the depth and breadth of public discourse, thereby enriching the fabric of civil society.



האזנה עץ חג המולד בעיר נצרת



בית התרבות והאמנות



קניון ביג פאשן נצרת

### The Public Sphere

Based on the term public sphere, it is possible to understand the importance of the existence of public space as a necessary condition for the development of civil society in the Arab cities. (Calhoun, 1996)

Many researchers have dealt with different and diverse definitions and wordings for the meaning of the term “public space”, the multitude of dealings with the term indicates its degree of dynamism and the fact that it contains many sub-themes. I will use this general definition as a comprehensive framework:

A public space is therefore an area or place (not necessarily physical) that is accessible and public in our social life where a rational and egalitarian discussion takes place (Khamaisy, 2016)

“The public sphere” is a term coined by the German researcher Jürgen Habermas, through which he tried to define the meaning of public space as a physical space where people meet and where discussions take place in order to achieve common agreements and goals, a space of socio-political importance to society and the individual alike. The public space is the link between the space of public autonomy, defined as the space of the state, with the private space of the people. So the public space is supposed to link the ruling class and the citizens, allow discussions to generate ideas and agreements and be critical of the state. This means that the public sphere is essentially political. (Calhoun, 1996)

Conditions for the existence of a public space according to Habermas (Khamaisy, 2016)

-Free access to all citizens while ignoring differences in gen-

der, religion, nationality, ethnicity, etc.

-Free and voluntary participation.

-Participation outside the institutional duties.

-Independence from the regime.

-Freedom of discussion, expression of opinion and criticism in the affairs of the state.

-Communication between citizens.

## **The development of public space in Arab society in Israel:**

At the beginning of the 20th century, most of the Palestinian Arab society in Israel was a traditional agrarian society, and the village economy was based on the cultivation of the land and agricultural work, and the public space was limited and included: the religious building and the courtyard around it, the spring (water source), the cemetery, Albiadar, which were divided on the basis of affiliation clan and were found around and near the built-up area. During the harvest season they were used for agriculture, and during the rest of the year they functioned as a place for meetings and games (Khamaisy, 2016).

In the last years of the Ottoman Empire rule, the Arab inhabitants began to undergo a transformation from a traditional rural society, which consumes public space but does not produce it, to a semi-urban society in which an economically middle class begins to develop due to the introduction of innovative types of industry (Rosenfeld, 1998), but to the society There is no urban tradition that is developed enough to allow it to create public space in settlements, which limits the development of the settlements' identity and the physical environment. There are quite a few reasons for the non-development of public space, but one of the main ones

that can be pointed to is the geopolitical struggle over the land between the Arab citizens and the State of Israel which It strengthened the symbolic and national value of the land in the collective consciousness of society and contributed to the lack of growth of the public space due to the lack of trust in the state institutions to provide the public needs of the Arab citizens (Khamaisy, 2016).

The transition from an agrarian to an urban society is manifested in the process of reducing employment in agriculture, which currently stands at about 4% of the Arab workforce. Today, most Arab households are engaged in non-agricultural occupations, and most of them behave according to more urban patterns of behavior, which are expressed in a growing demand for public space and open areas, one of the main criteria that differentiates between a rural and an urban form of settlement (Khamaisy, 2016).

## **A civil society in the city of Nazareth**

Nazareth was a small village at the beginning of the 20th century, but the process of development of the public space is a little different from the other Arab villages, as a result of its global religious importance which contributed to the growth of urbanism due to the interest and competition between the powers for having as much influence as possible in the region. therefore, the new educational system grew an intellectual layer, which had a significant part in the development of the coffee houses, and the libraries as public spaces in the city that did not exist in the villages and settlements in the region, these spaces testify to the growth of the urban dimension in those years. when Nazareth became an important crossroads and a city that serves the entire region (Yazbak, Sharif, 2012).

Today, Nazareth is considered the capital of the Arab minority in the State of Israel, a city that has ethno-national symbolism for the Arab public in Israel (Shiler, 1982).

Civil society in the city has been thriving in recent years, and the number of entities that fall under the definition of “civil society” is gaining momentum and stands at 307 entities (according to the website: <https://www.guidestar.org.il/home>) At the same time, the city is suffering from a severe shortage of public spaces, and unimaginable overcrowding (Jabarin, Jobran, Zalberman, Zoevi, 2013).

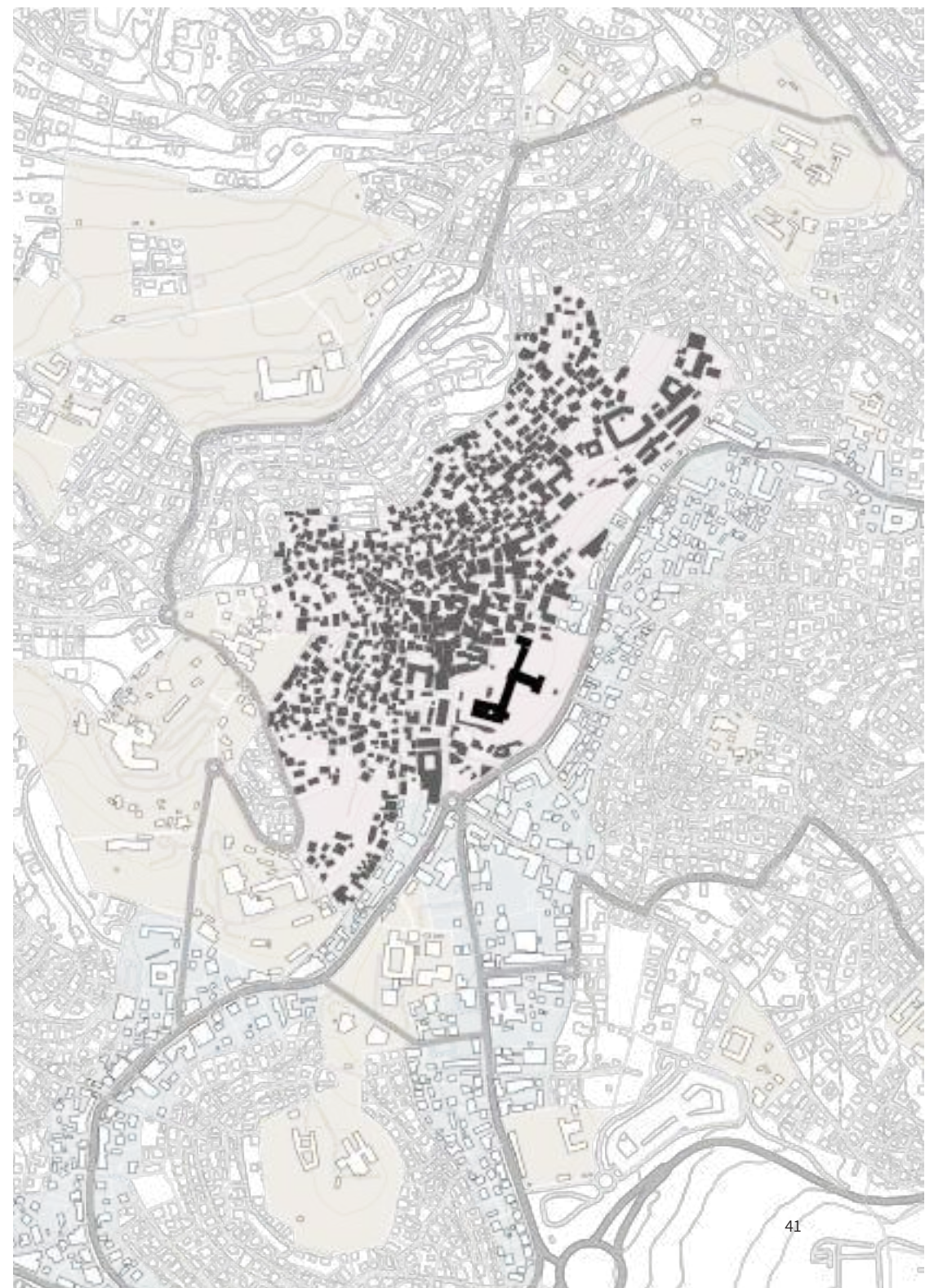
Further to Prof. Jabareen’s report showing a shortage of about 500 dunams in the open public areas in the city of Nazareth, it turns out that 60% of the areas defined as open public areas today according to the city’s current outline plan are in fact areas owned by private association.

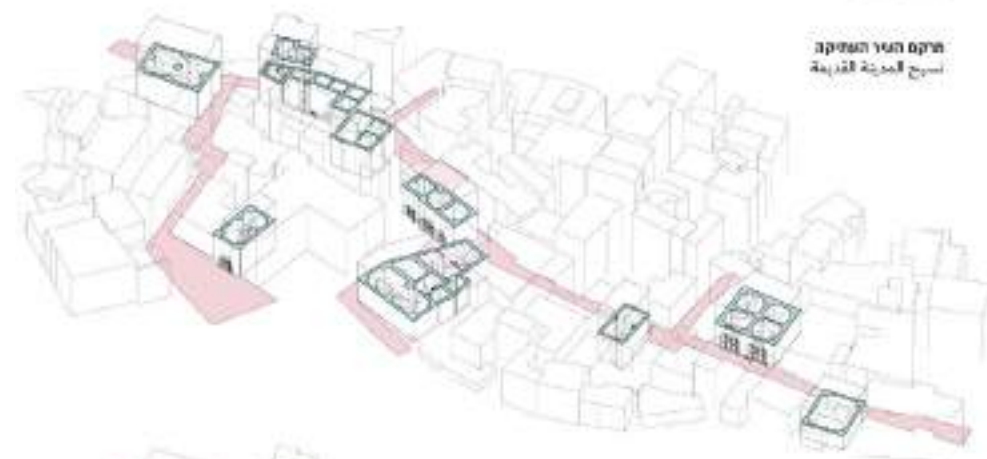
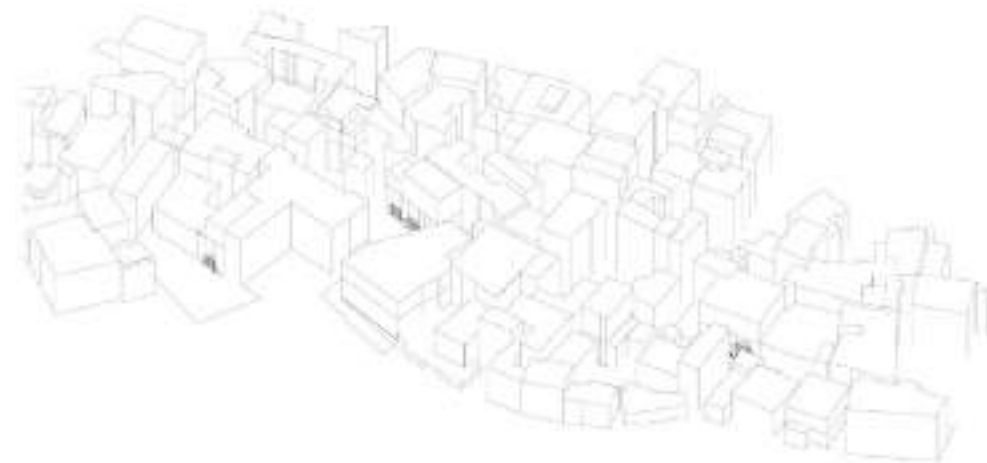
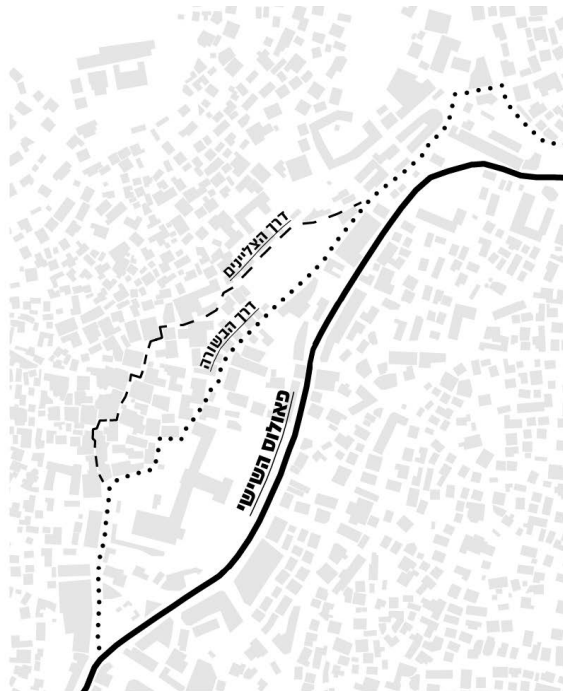


### A masculine urban space?

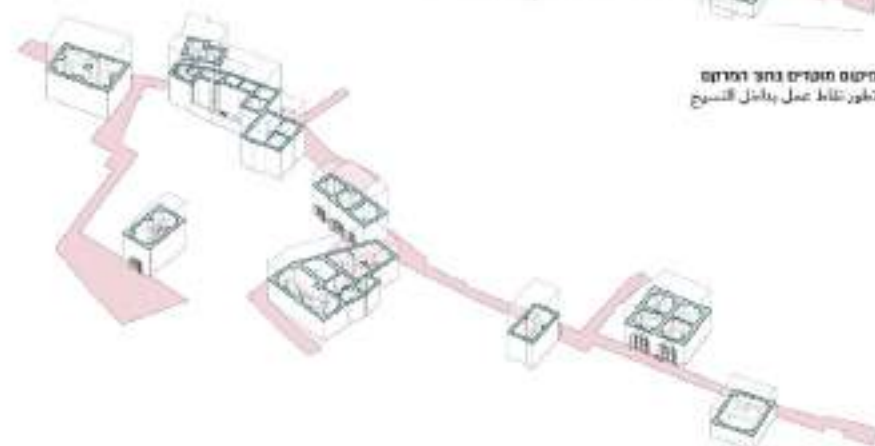
As a case study, I decided to check this phenomenon in the city of Nazareth, which is considered the “largest Arab city” in Israel. The focus was on the city center, an area that was considered an active area throughout all periods. The Arab city was built on the foundations of patriarchal systems embodied in its architecture. Nazareth is an Arab city that has undergone structural changes throughout history in the architectural space, including its private buildings and public space. The city center is characterized by being lively with archaeological and historical places, and it is crossed by the only main street, Paulus VI, in addition to Tawfiq Ziad Street, which connects the center to the garage area of the city. Like most Arab cities and villages, Nazareth developed from the core of the old city and expanded outward. This development happened mainly during the British Mandate period, in which the city prospered economically, which caused general changes in the way of life in the city. And because of this, the city went through processes of urbanization and significant expansion.

After examining the phenomenon, it becomes clear that there is a male employment space in the city that spreads along Paulus VI Street of private shops and employment that developed on the sides of the street over many years, and another work space that began to develop and reverberate a few years ago in the Old City and is of a feminine nature. Between a business in the alleys of the old market or a business in the heart of the new city there is a very big difference and character. This situation did not arise from absurd reasons, rather it arose from and depends on the developments and changes that the city has undergone over the years.

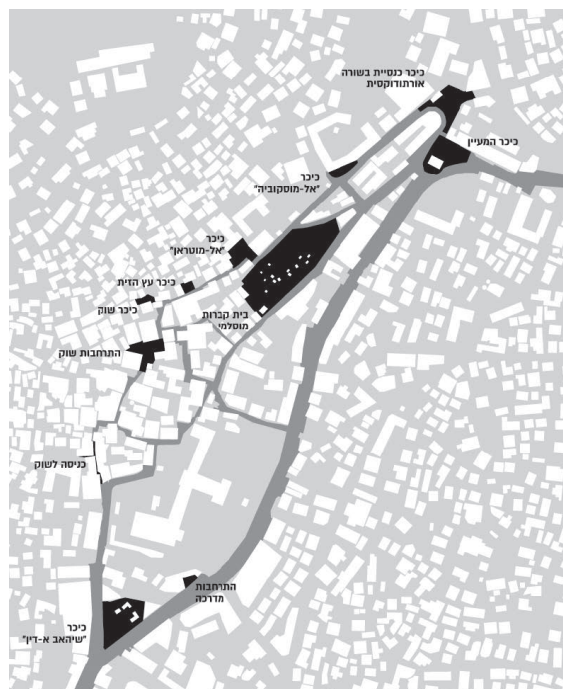




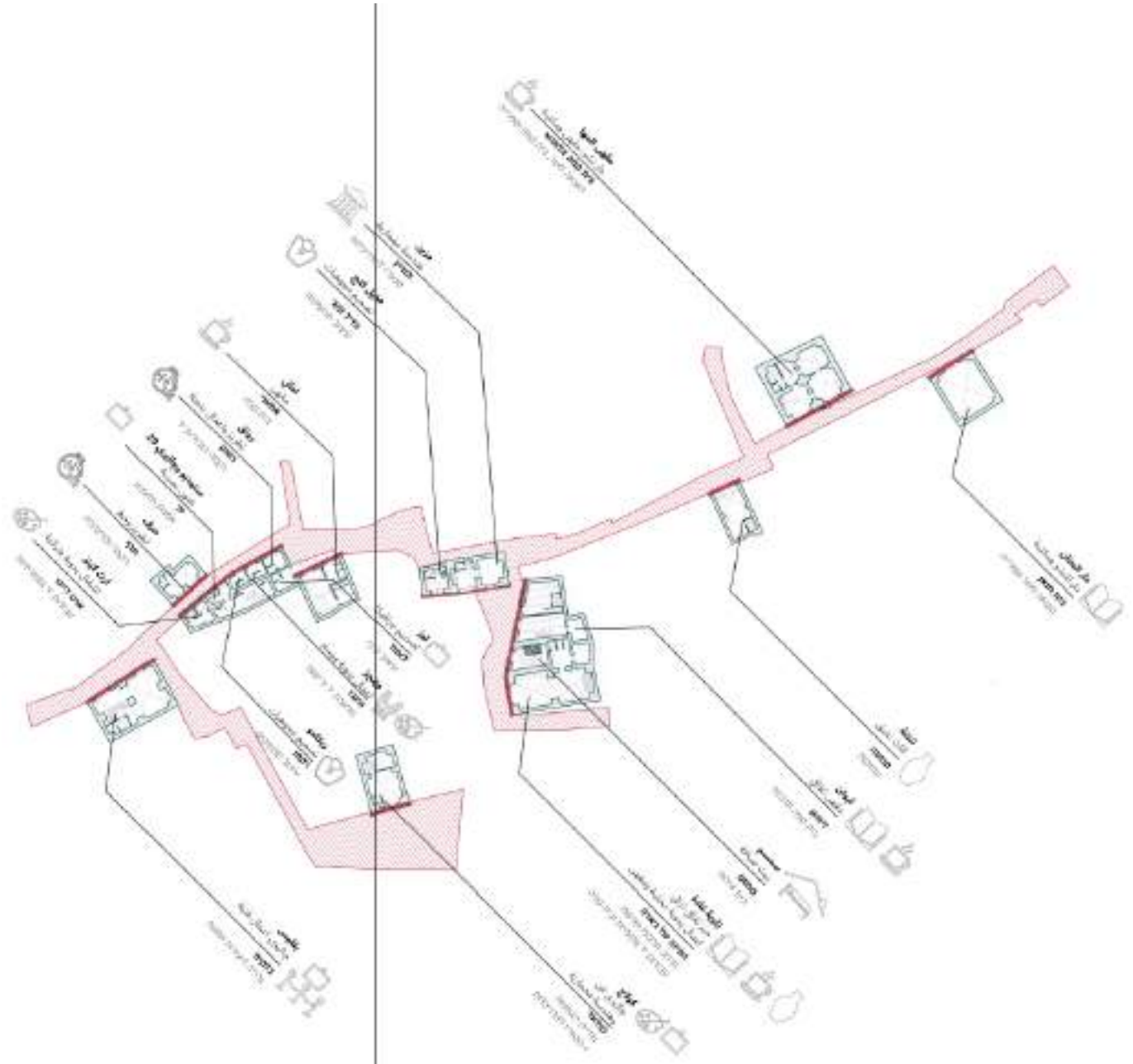
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תוכנית המרחב



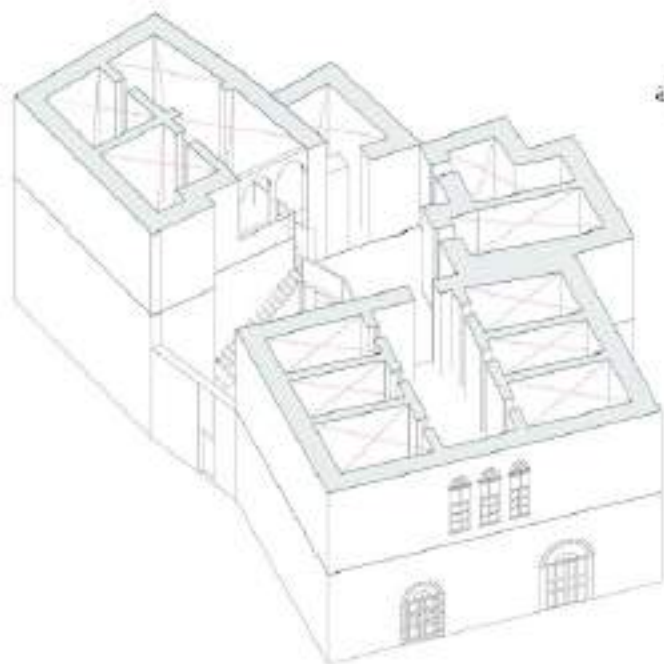
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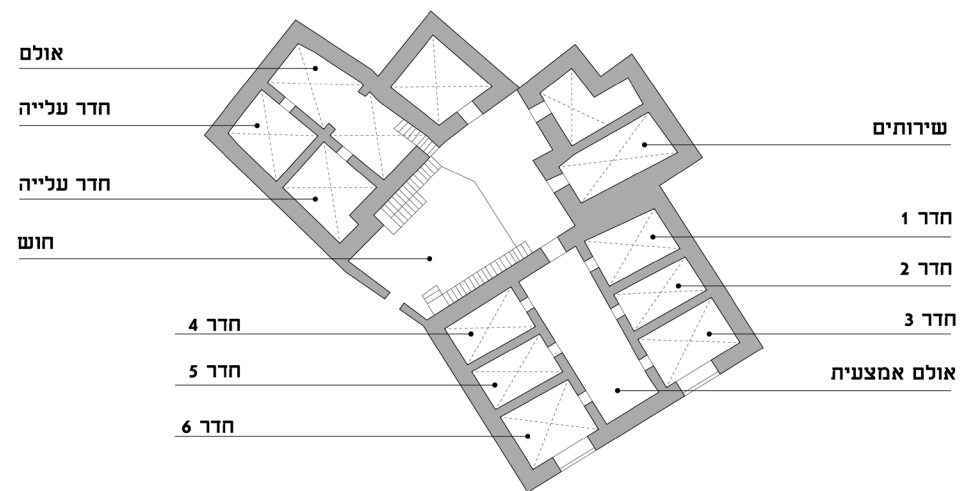
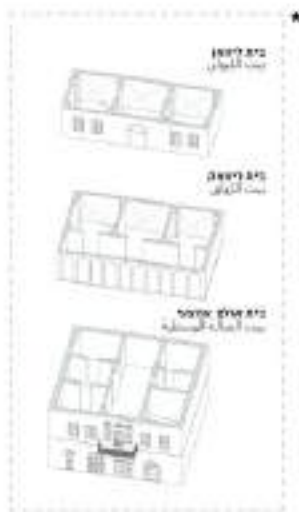




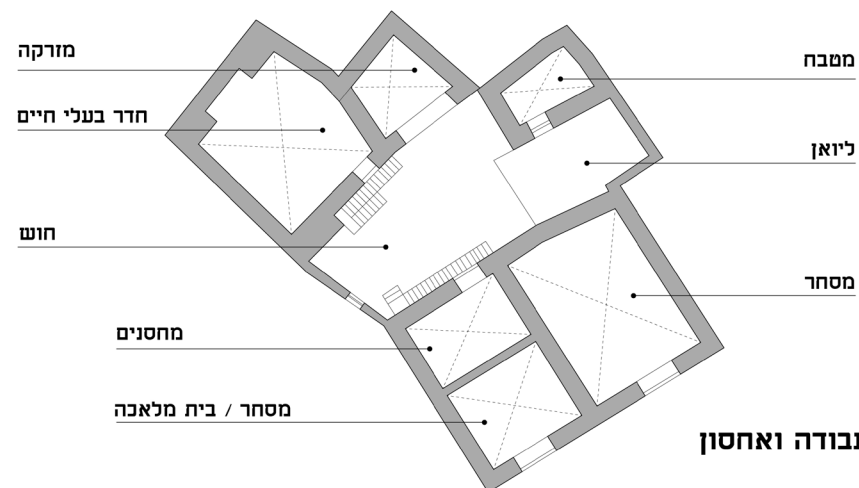




בית העיר  
בית المدينة  
1850  
1930

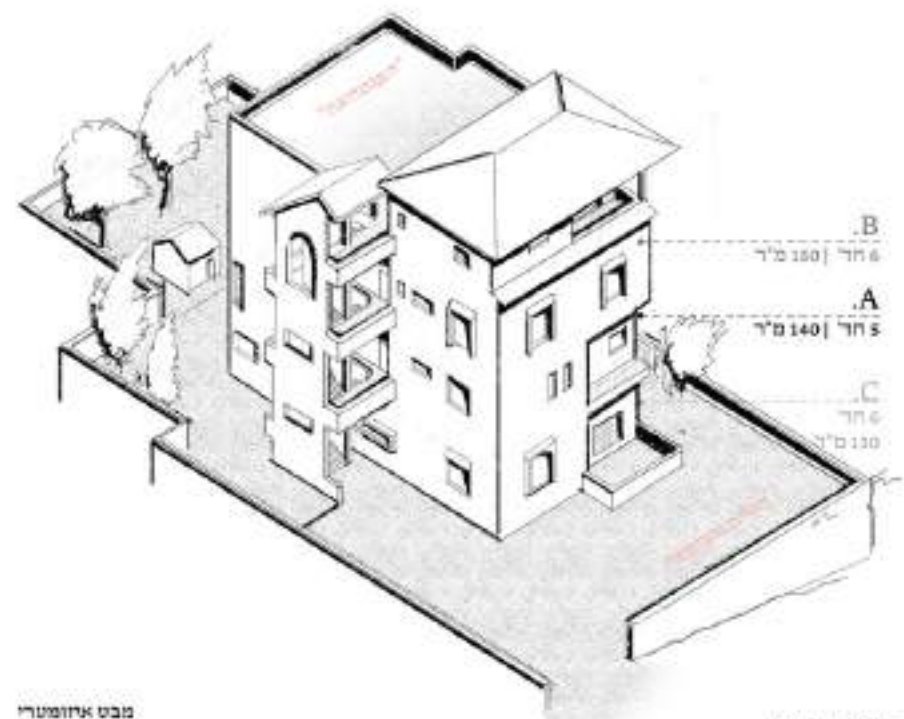
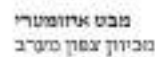


קומה 2 - מגורים

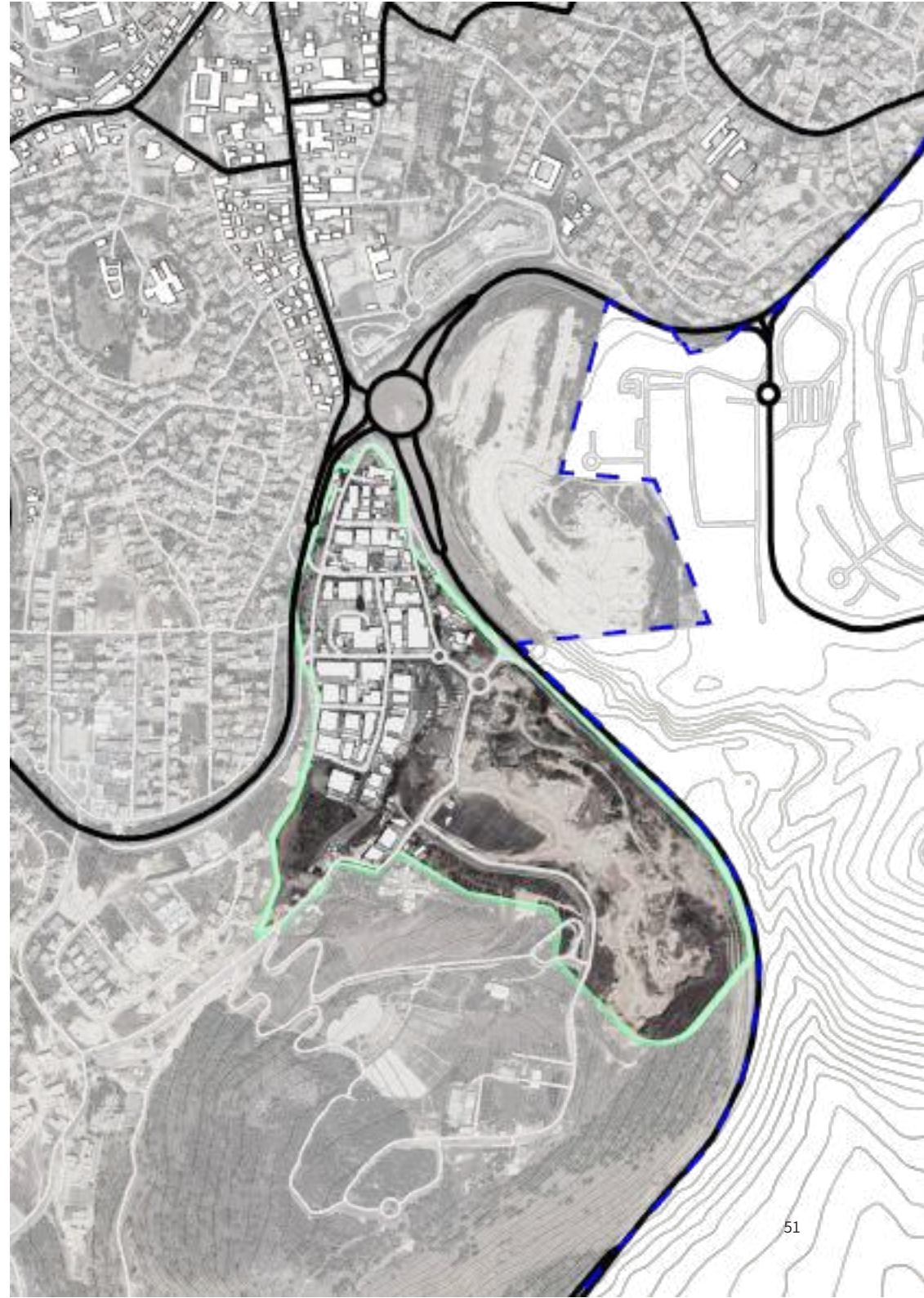


קומה 1 - עבודה ואחסון

בעלות וביתו









### 3. Methodology:

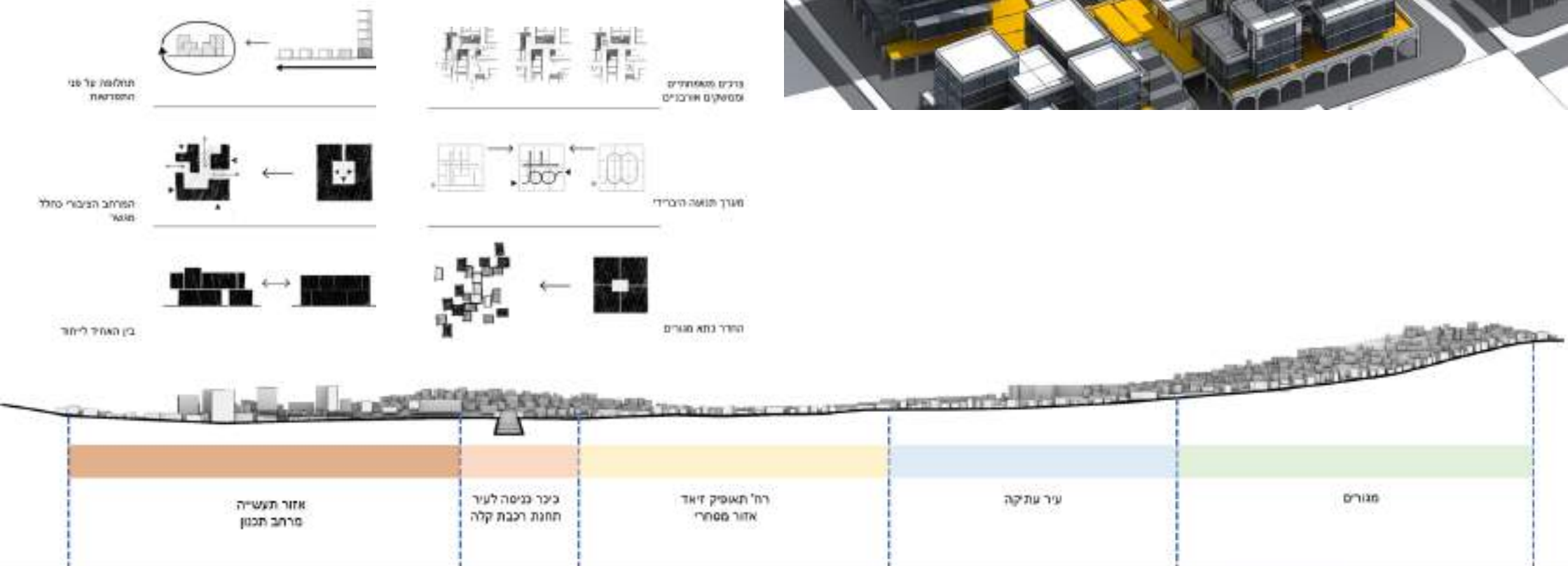
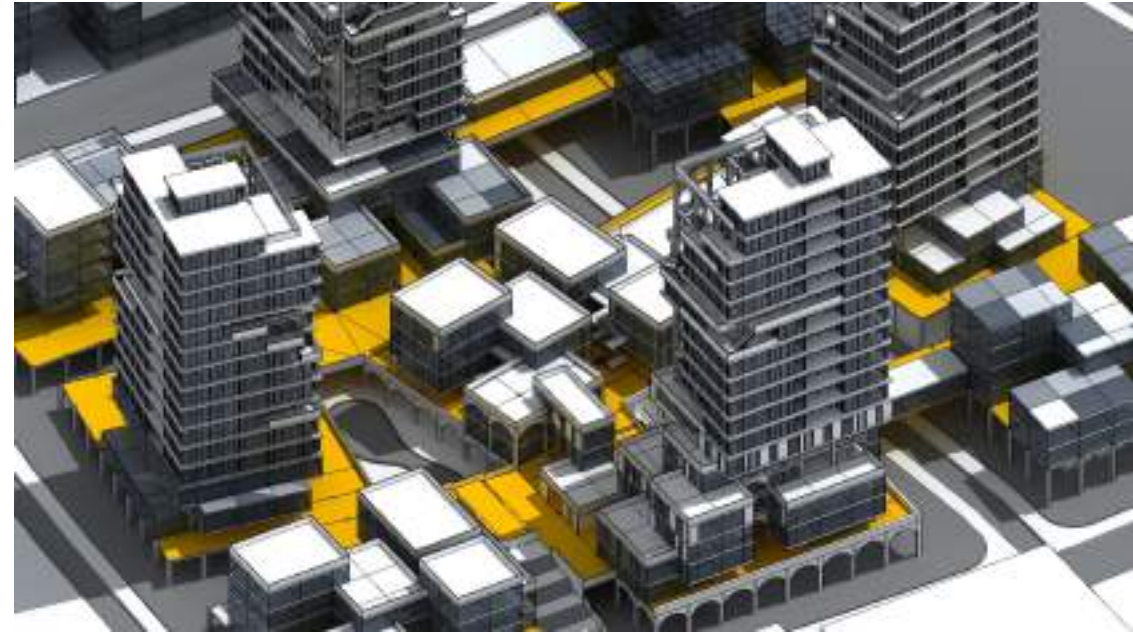
#### 3.1 Industrial Area and Connectivity:

Central to this research is the comprehensive analysis of Nazareth's industrial area, strategically located at the city's southern entrance. Adjacent to the industrial area lies Tawfiq Ziad Street, a bustling thoroughfare that serves as the main artery leading to the heart of the city and the old city. This street pulsates with life, lined with an array of restaurants, retail stores, and government buildings. Notably, it boasts one of the region's premier shopping malls, a hub of commercial activity. This strategic location aligns with the proposed train connection to Haifa, enhancing Nazareth's accessibility and economic potential. By harnessing this spatial synergy, the industrial area's redevelopment holds the promise of rejuvenating public spaces while nurturing civil society initiatives.



### 3.2 Proposal for Public Sky System Integration:

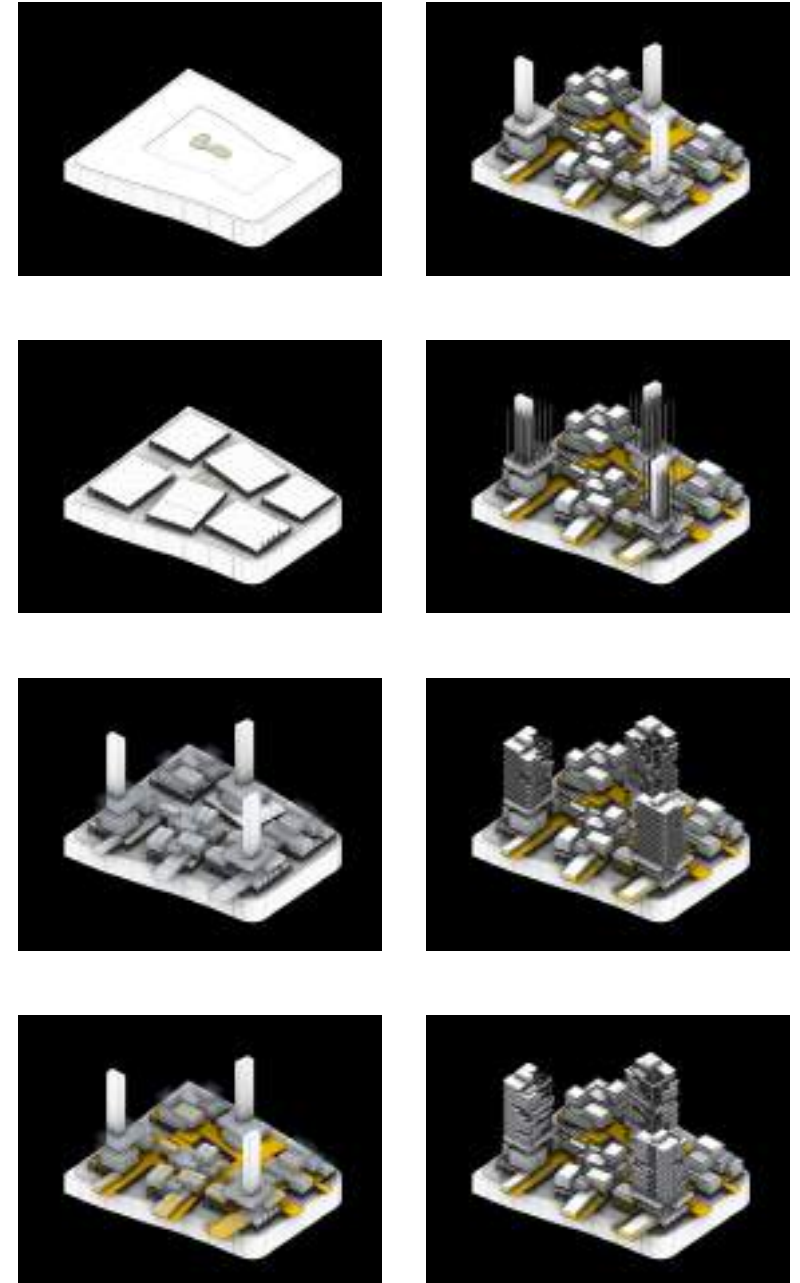
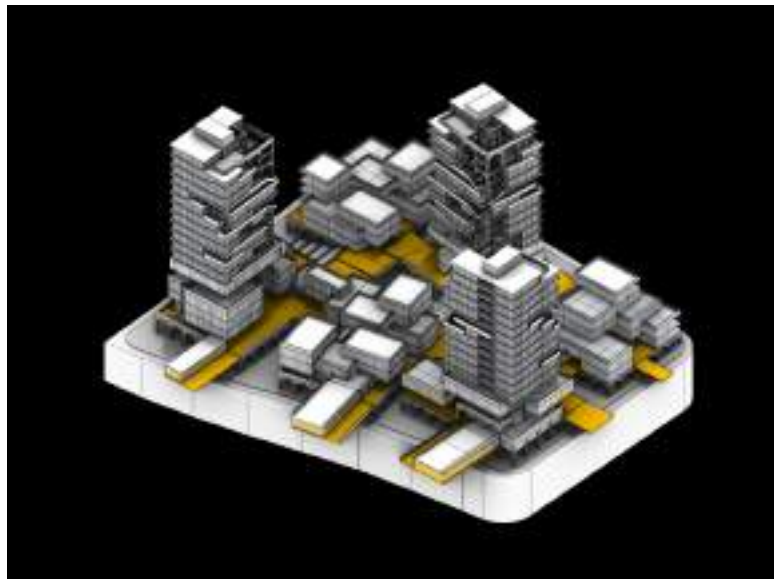
Central to this proposal is the integration of a multi-layered public sky system above the existing industrial buildings. Drawing inspiration from Nazareth's historic old city, characterized by its charming narrow passages and vibrant communal spaces (Yazbak, Sharif, 2012), this intervention envisions a seamless amalgamation of tradition and innovation. By emulating the essence of the old city's urban fabric, the proposed public sky system enriches Nazareth's landscape, providing a captivating backdrop for civil society engagement and community interaction.



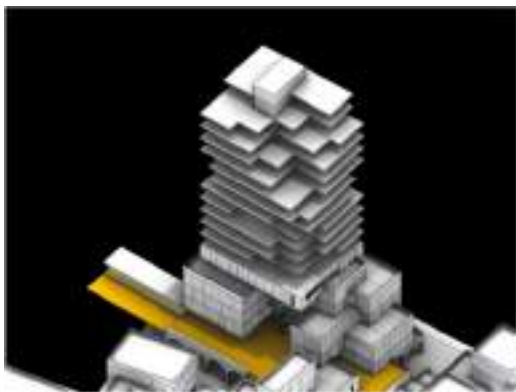


### 3.3 Mixed-Use Urban Fabric:

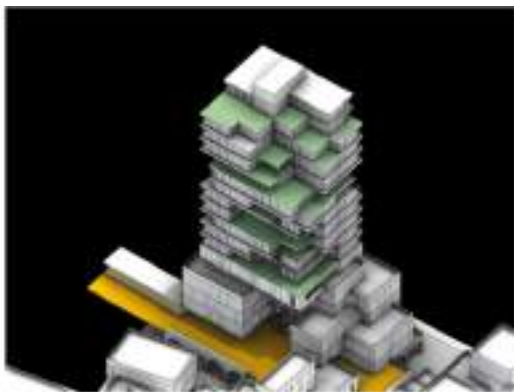
The envisaged transformation envisions a comprehensive mixed-use urban fabric that meets the diverse needs of Nazareth's residents and professionals. This approach integrates three to five-story residential buildings alongside towering office high-rises, echoing the insightful findings of Prof. Yousef Jabareen (Jabareen, Jobran, Zalberman, Zoevi, 2013). By optimizing land utilization and accommodating multiple functions, this approach addresses both the practical requirements of urban living and the burgeoning demands of a thriving civil society.



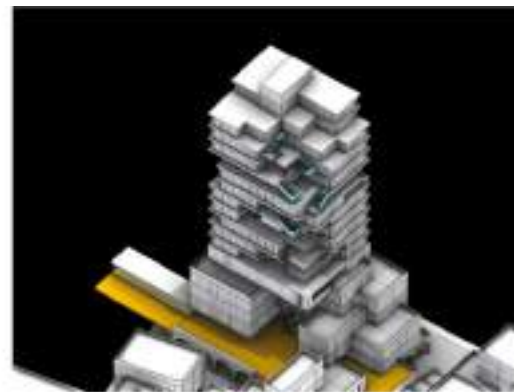




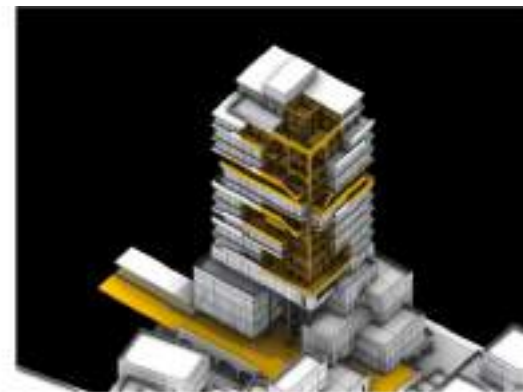
פתיחת רצפות



שטח ציבורי



חיבור בין המפלסים



השלמת חזית חיצונית



Central to this visionary transformation is the integration of a multi-layered public sky system above the existing industrial structures. Drawing inspiration from Nazareth's historic old city, renowned for its charming narrow passages and vibrant communal spaces (Yazbak, Sharif, 2012), this innovative intervention reimagines the urban landscape while honoring its rich heritage. The envisioned public sky system seamlessly marries tradition with modernity, fostering a dynamic environment for civil society engagement, public interaction, and urban cohesion.

Conceived as an elevated hub of civic interaction, the Nazareth sky system encompasses a blend of private city offices and a dual-level public commons. This shared space is envisaged as a multifunctional arena, promoting socialization, civic discourse, and collaborative engagement. The heart of this communal space resides within strategically positioned staircases that fluidly connect the ground level to the sky system. These staircases offer more than just vertical traversal. They serve as beacons of accessibility, serving the needs of both street-level pedestrians and those traversing the elevated pathways. This intentional design fosters an organic merging of foot traffic, dissolving physical and social barriers between disparate realms.

In this vision, accessibility is not merely an afterthought but a pivotal tenet, mirroring the ethos of our approach adapted to Nazareth's distinctive culture and architectural essence. By infusing democratic access into the city's infrastructure, the proposed sky system epitomizes a community-centered ethos. It resonates with the local heritage, effectively breathing life into public spaces, and bolstering connections that transcend the mundane.

In summary, this proposal for a multi-layered public sky system underscores an innovative convergence of historical reverence, contemporary urbanity, and progressive civil society aspirations. Rooted in the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and cultural alignment, the envisioned sky system holds the potential to redefine public spaces in Nazareth, fostering a resilient urban fabric that echoes the city's rich legacy while charting an empowered trajectory toward a more connected future.

#### **4. Conclusion:**

The proposed multi-layered public sky system offers a transformative avenue to address Nazareth's complex urban challenges. By synergizing the potential of the industrial area, the historical charm of the old city, and the diverse functions of the proposed urban fabric, this intervention holds the promise of revitalizing public spaces, invigorating civil society, and cultivating a sustainable urban environment. The holistic integration of public spaces and civil society development establishes a harmonious equilibrium, forging a vibrant and inclusive Nazareth that seamlessly bridges its rich heritage with the aspirations of the future.







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