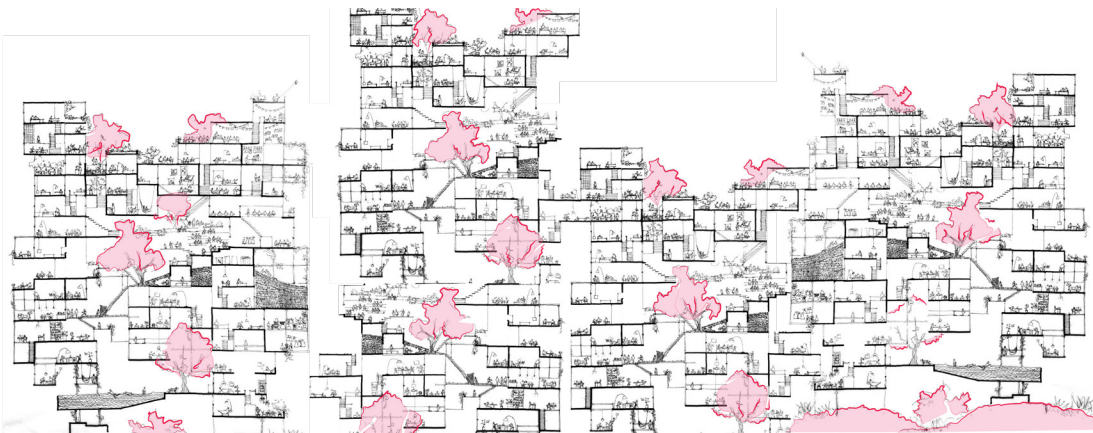


BEIT BYOUT

To Build A Home

Mai Rohana



Mai Rohana

BEIT BYOUT

Final Project

Technology Studio

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Research Seminar

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Architecture and Town Planning Program

Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, Technion

2025

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Introduction

This project emerges from a critical comparison between my personal experience of Home and the lived reality of contemporary residential buildings and neighborhoods shaped by prevailing urban development practices in Israel. Growing up in a carefully designed, personalized private house in a village, I experienced a physical environment deeply attuned to my needs at every stage of life. It offered adaptable spaces that evolved with my circumstances while providing stability when needed, fundamentally shaping my understanding of what a home should be. In stark contrast, contemporary urban development in Israel faces a significant challenge: the residential landscape is increasingly characterized by homogeneity, repetition, and uniformity. Driven by rapid population growth, neighborhoods are dominated by clusters of identical apartment buildings, often isolated and lacking urban vitality or personal character. As a result, these spaces, stripped of cultural, traditional, and adaptive qualities, fail to foster a genuine sense of “home,” serving instead as impersonal “houses” for their inhabitants.

The fundamental difference between these experiences

lies in their design approaches. My childhood home was thoughtfully crafted to meet its inhabitants' specific needs, creating a functional and meaningful space, while contemporary urban housing—designed for mass production—prioritizes efficiency and profit over individuality. This results in uniform buildings with identical apartments and repetitive layouts that fail to resonate with residents. The transformation from a mere structure to a meaningful home depends on the architect's approach. When spaces are tailored to inhabitants' needs—addressing both psychological and physical well-being—they become experiences rather than just shelters.

In Israel today, the housing landscape is dominated by multi-story apartment buildings rather than private homes. According to national housing data, the vast majority of new units constructed over the last two decades belong to dense residential blocks, while standalone houses have become increasingly rare and financially inaccessible to most families¹. This shift is fueled by neoliberal market forces that prioritize fast

1 Arik Mirovsky, "Housing Starts in Israel Boom," Globes Publisher Itonut (1983) Ltd., 2022., September 21, 2022, <https://en.globes.co.il/en/article-housing-starts-in-israel-boom-1001425181#:~:text=In%20the%20twelve%20months%20to,figure%20was%2053%2C000%2D57%2C000%20annually.>

and inexpensive construction, maximizing housing supply and profitability. Developers and planning authorities emphasize quantity over quality, producing repetitive units with limited adaptability. The outcome is a housing stock shaped more by economic efficiency and standardized prototypes than by cultural values, individuality, or long-term livability — resulting in large numbers of residences that feel soulless rather than truly “homelike.”

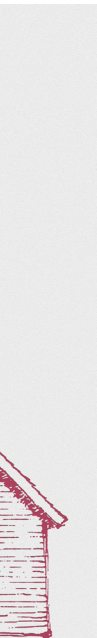
While acknowledging the differences in scale and context between, this project seeks to adapt values and design principles from the private village house to urban housing. This approach is driven by the reality that, due to rapid population growth, private standalone homes have become a luxury accessible only to a few, making multi-story housing not just inevitable but essential. However, the current planning methods for such buildings often result in impersonal, homogenized spaces. Human-oriented design fosters connection, comfort, and belonging – turning houses into homes. This project applies such principles from tailored private spaces to create more livable, meaningful housing.

The project aims to do so by attempting to answer this research question: **How can human-oriented principles**

derived from traditional Arab architecture be integrated into contemporary residential design to transform generic, repetitive urban housing into potential homes?

This project will reexamine and analyze this architectural tradition to extract its core values and methods, particularly those that reflect a human-oriented design approach. By abstracting, reinterpreting, and adapting these principles to contemporary circumstances and needs, the aim is to create residential spaces that prioritize the well-being and individuality of their inhabitants, even within the constraints of modern urban living.





1. House vs. Home

1.1 Defining Home: Beyond a Physical Structure

The distinction between a house and a home lies in the lived experience of its inhabitants. Shelley Mallett, in *Understanding Home: A Critical Review of Literature* (2004)¹, challenges the assumption that a house is inherently a home. Mallett identifies home as both a physical space defined by architecture and materiality, and a social and cultural unit tied to family and tradition. A home transcends mere physicality, embodying emotional, social, and cultural dimensions that architecture and design have the power to shape. Thus, the true value of architecture lies not in constructing generic structures, but in crafting spaces that resonate with the emotional, social, and cultural needs of their inhabitants, transforming houses into meaningful homes.

Rooted in Islamic principles (Al-Shari'a)², which emphasize family,

1 Shelly Mallet, "Understanding Home: A Critical Review of the Literature,"
 The Sociological Review 52, no. 1 (2004): 62–89.

2 Ahmad El Shamsy, "Sharia'a Law," ©2025 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.,
 n.d.

privacy at both the individual and household levels, and adaptability to accommodate growth, traditional Arab architecture inherently reflects a human-oriented approach.

One of the most significant voices on this matter is Martin Heidegger, particularly in *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* (1951)³, where he critiques the modern tendency to reduce buildings to mere functional objects, instead advocating for a philosophical understanding of architecture as integral to human existence. Heidegger posits that dwelling is not simply inhabiting a physical space but a fundamental aspect of being human, rooted in a harmonious relationship with the world.

Central to his argument is the concept of the Fourfold, which frames dwelling as an interplay between four essential elements: Earth, the material foundation that sustains life; Sky, the celestial realm that provides light, weather, and seasons; Divinities, the spiritual or transcendent dimension that imbues life with meaning; and Mortals, human beings who are uniquely conscious of life and death. True dwelling, he argues, requires integrating and respecting these elements, rather than dominating or isolating them.

In a design context, this can be exemplified by using local materials (Earth), orienting structures to optimize natural light and ventilation (Sky), creating spaces that allow for personal expression and spiritual connection (Divinities), and ensuring the design is fundamentally responsive to human needs and experiences (Mortals). By embracing these principles, architecture can transcend mere functionality and foster a deeper sense of belonging and harmony within the built environment.

3 Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (Harper & Row, 1971).

Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*⁴ complements Heidegger's perspective by exploring the emotional and imaginative dimensions of domestic spaces. For Bachelard, a home is more than a structure; it is enriched by memories and psychological meaning. Through topoanalysis—the study of the psychological significance of spaces—he highlights the home as a repository of personal history and imagination. Dwelling, then, becomes a deeply personal and poetic experience where spaces reflect the self.

In conclusion, the distinction between a house and a home lies in the interplay between physical structure and psychological meaning. While a house is defined by its architectural form and functionality, a home emerges through the lived experiences and emotional connections that transform a space into a sanctuary of belonging. This research underscores the importance of designing spaces that lay a framework enabling this transformation—allowing houses to become homes.

1.2 House to Home – Design Necessities

In parallel to the philosophical perspectives of Heidegger and Bachelard, Bryce Stoneham and Desmond Smith's essay *The House and the Home: The Balance of Architecture and Psychology Within the Residential Home* addresses the subject from a practical design standpoint. They assert that while a house is a physical structure, a home emerges from the psychological and emotional connections fostered through architectural design and lived experience.

To facilitate this transformation, they propose several design principles:

4 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Bibliothèque de Philosophie Contemporaine (Beacon Press, 1994).

1. Balance between stimulation and security – A home should engage its inhabitants without overwhelming them.
2. Connection to nature – Natural light, greenery, and views of the outdoors enhance well-being and harmony.
3. Human scale and proportion – Spaces aligned with human dimensions create comfort and smooth transitions.
4. Privacy and personalization – The ability to modify spaces strengthens belonging and ownership.
5. Centrality – A core space where other functions converge provides stability and predictability.



Together, these principles emphasize the interplay between architectural form and psychological experience. They demonstrate that the transformation of a house into a home depends on design choices that nurture the human need for stability, identity, and adaptability.

By drawing attention to such necessities, Stoneham and Smith reinforce the argument that the home is not merely a shelter but a setting that must actively support well-being. Their framework resonates with the traditional Arab domestic typologies examined later in this project, where adaptability, centrality, and privacy gradients similarly ensure that spaces are attuned to human needs.

2. Contemporary Urban Housing in Israel

2.1 Urban Development Trends and Challenges

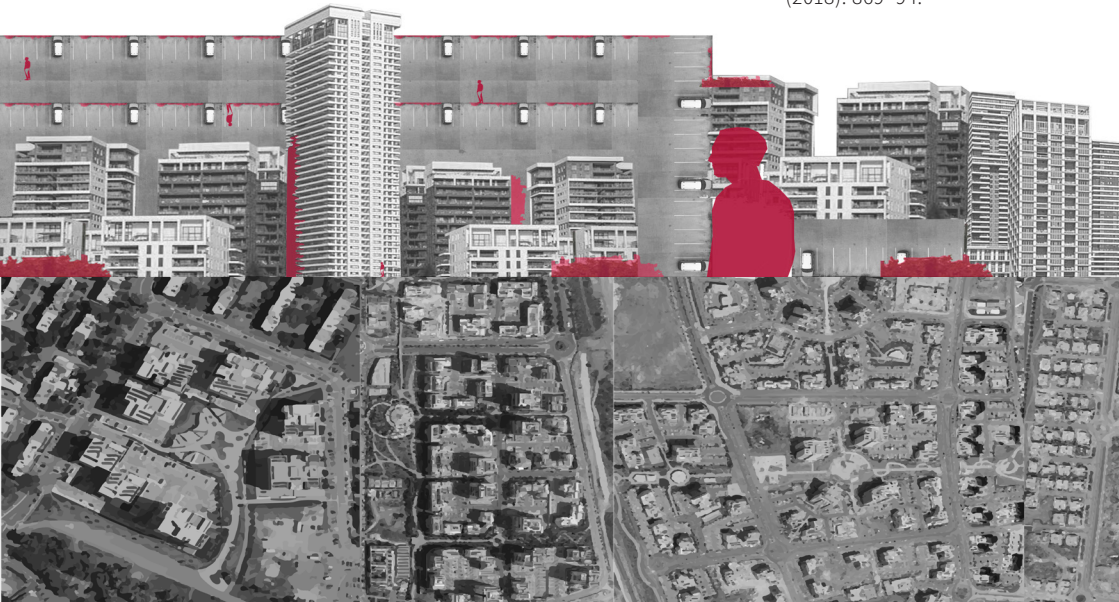
The urban development scene in Israel has been heavily criticized by local scholars for its uniformity and repetition, particularly in residential areas. As Rachelle Alterman argues in *Planning in the Face of Crisis* (2002)⁵, Israel's response to rapid population growth has relied on privatization and market-driven development. This neoliberal approach has resulted in the mass production of generic, repetitive residential buildings, prioritizing speed and profit over creativity and personalization. The outcome is housing that may satisfy quantitative targets but fails to meet residents' diverse social and emotional needs.

5 Rachelle Alterman, *Planning in the Face of Crisis: Land Use, Housing, and Mass Immigration in Israel*, 1st Edition (Routledge, 2002), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203994047>.

Similarly, Tali Hatuka and Roni Bar, in *The City-Region and the Challenge of Its Representation* (2018)⁶, analyze over 70 new neighborhoods in the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area built since the 1990s. They demonstrate how these neighborhoods follow a standardized prototype of multi-story apartment buildings, uniform layouts, and vehicular connectivity. The result is a suburbanized and homogenized aesthetic that erases local cultural context and fails to reflect the unique identity of each city.

Recent housing data illustrates this reality: the overwhelming majority of new residential units in Israel are located in high-rise or

6 Tali Hatuka and Roni Bar, “The City-Region and the Challenge of Its Representation: The Hierarchical Network of Newly Built Neighborhoods in the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area,” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 50, no. 4 (2018): 869–94.



multi-story apartment buildings, while the proportion of standalone private homes continues to decline each year. This imbalance is not only a reflection of land scarcity but also of economic policies that emphasize efficiency and quantity. Developers and state authorities focus on maximizing the number of units per project, often through high-density construction, while overlooking long-term quality of life, cultural specificity, and ecological adaptation. As a result, housing is increasingly framed as a commodity rather than a lived environment, producing “houses” that rarely succeed in becoming “homes.”

2.2 Neot Peres Neighborhood, Haifa

The Neot Peres neighborhood in Haifa, whose first phase was built in 2014 and second in 2018, exemplifies the repetitive, uniform design that characterizes much of contemporary Israeli housing. Defined by clusters of multi-story apartment buildings with standardized layouts, its design prioritizes functionality and marketability over creativity, leading to a generic aesthetic disconnected from Haifa’s diverse cultural identity.

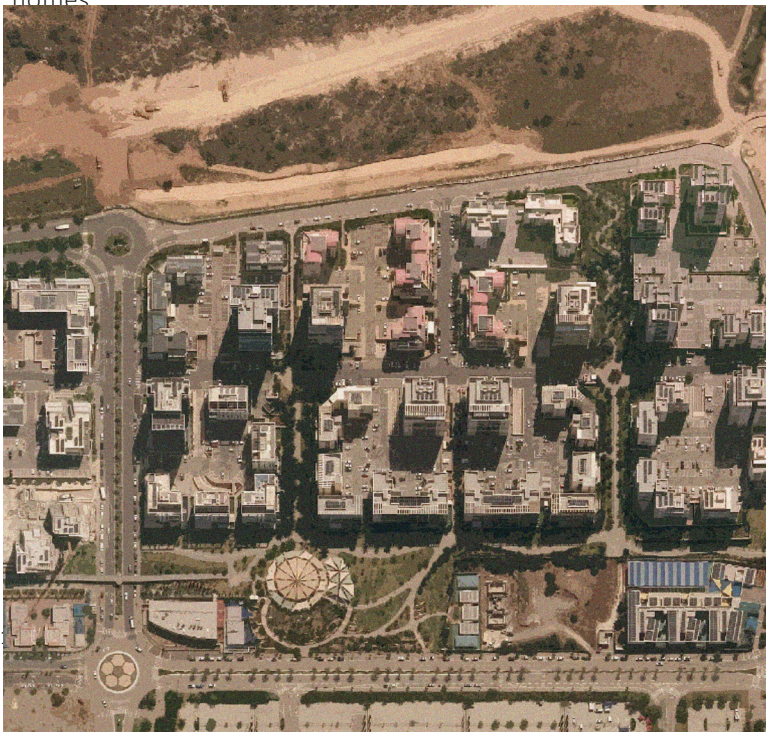
The neighborhood’s atmosphere reflects the larger trend of market-driven development: efficiency and speed dictate design decisions, while considerations of social cohesion, adaptability, or cultural resonance are marginalized. Despite being promoted



as an aspirational lifestyle environment, the neighborhood lacks the communal and flexible qualities necessary for fostering a true sense of home.

My sibling's personal experience as a resident between 2018 and 2021 highlights these shortcomings. Drawn initially by the neighborhood's branding of "luxury living," they soon encountered the structural limitations of the apartment: poor spatial allocation, isolation from the rest of the city despite geographic proximity, and a dominating view of parking lots instead of meaningful public spaces. Equally striking was the lack of social cohesion among neighbors, attributed to the absence of shared communal areas in both the building and the surrounding complex.

This case reinforces the critique of Israel's current urban housing model: by prioritizing quantity, efficiency, and profit, developments such as Neot Peres generate residential environments that may serve as adequate "houses" but fall short of becoming meaningful "homes."



3. Traditional Arab Architecture As A Human-Oriented Design Model

3.1 Core Principles Of Traditional Arab Housing

Traditional Arab architecture offers a profound model of human-oriented design, developed through centuries of adapting to cultural values, climatic demands, and social needs. Unlike contemporary mass-produced housing, these dwellings embody a holistic integration of physical form and human experience.

Drawing on foundational works—El-Shorbagy’s structural analysis of domestic spaces¹, Fathy’s studies of vernacular environmental systems², and Fuchs’s typologies of Palestinian dwellings³ —four key systems emerge: cultural-spatial organization, environmental intelligence, adaptive flexibility, and symbolic thresholds. Each element responded to human needs while reflecting values of family, privacy, and adaptability.

1 Abdel-moniem El-Shorbagy, “Traditional Islamic-Arab House: Vocabulary And Syntax,” *International Journal of Civil & Environmental Engineering* 10, no. 4 (n.d.): 15–20.

2 Hassan Fathy, in *Natural Energy and Vernacular Architecture: Principles and Examples with Reference to Hot Arid Climates* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

3 Ron Fuchs, “The Palestinian Arab house reconsidered part 2: Domestic architecture in the 19th century,” *Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, Jerusalem*, no. 90 (1998): 53–86.

Key elements include Courtyard (Ḥaūsh) (see figure 1), Elevated Platform (Mastaba) (see figure 2), Bent Entrance (Majaz) (see figure 3), and Mashrabiya Screens. Each of these balanced environmental sustainability, cultural norms, and human well-being.

Ron Fuchs identifies three typologies central to Palestinian domestic architecture: **The Liwan House** - Liwan is a central space in the house, typically used as a reception area. It is enclosed on three sides and open on the fourth, allowing a view of the inner courtyard or garden while providing shade and protection. The Liwan was used for dining and hosting, with low sofas and carpets arranged along its walls. Its importance lies in its centrality and being a connector to different parts of the house since its most basic shape (see figure 4), **The Riwaq House** - The Riwaq house is based on an arcade located in front of a row of rooms. The Riwaq is a covered porch supported by columns, serving as a connecting corridor between rooms and a shaded area for daily activities. This style was particularly common in traditional Arab construction, with the Riwaq acting as a transitional space between the exterior and interior of the house, providing protection from the sun and rain (see figure 5), and **The Courtyard House** - Where the central room became the main space in the house, surrounded by additional rooms. The central space served as a meeting and hosting area and was sometimes open to the facade with large windows and it often featured a Mastaba area – an elevated area which serves a different purpose and certain users (see figure 6). Each typology embodies spatial hierarchies and degrees of privacy while offering adaptability across generations. They show how houses could simultaneously provide stability (through central organizing spaces) and fluidity (through multifunctional zones).

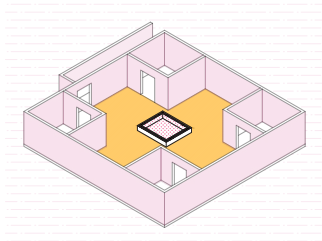


Figure 1: Haush

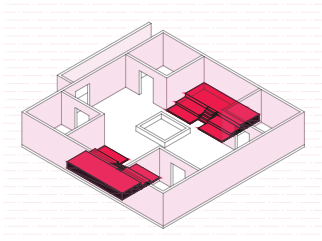


Figure 2: Mastaba

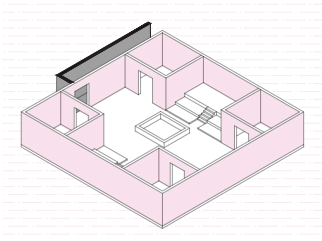


Figure 3: Majaz

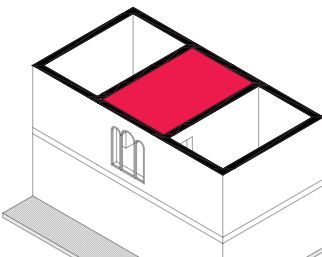
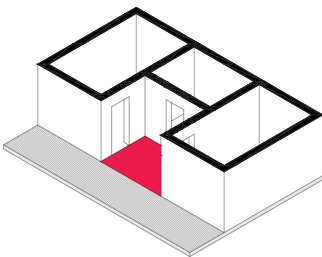
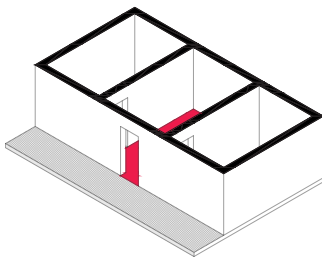


Figure 4: Liwan House Variations - Basic, 3 Rooms, 2nd Floor respectively

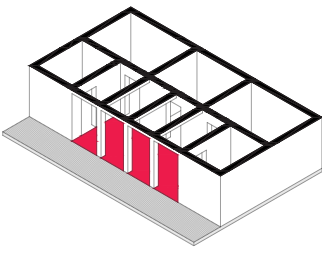
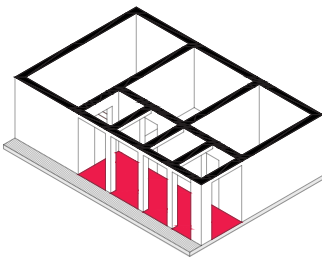
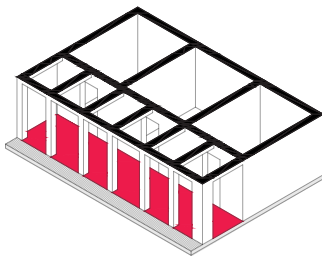


Figure 5: Riwaq House Variations

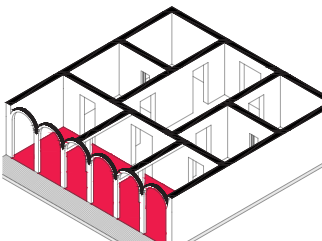
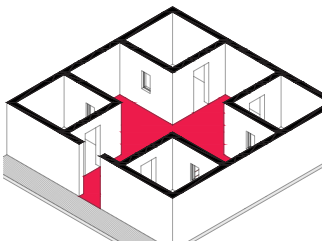
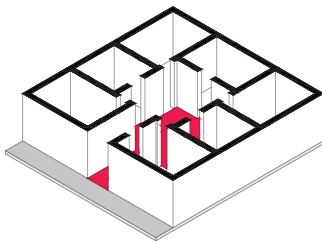


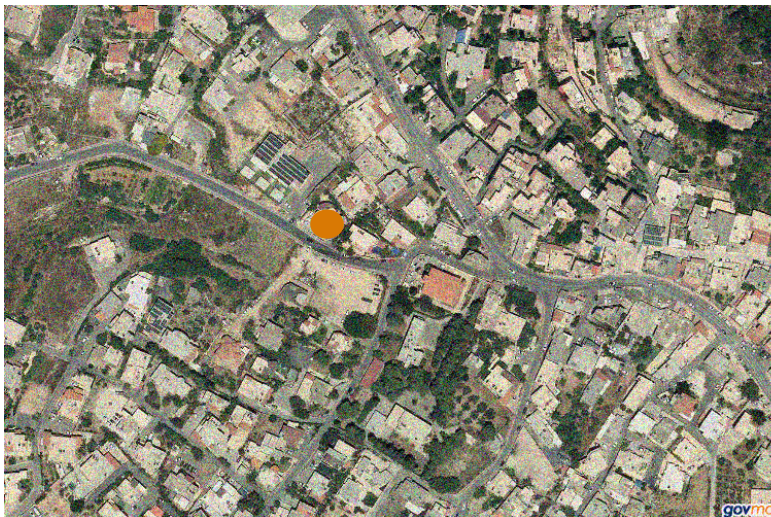
Figure 6: Courtyard House Variations

3.2 Case Studies Of Traditional Arab Homes

3.2.a. Our Home

My childhood home formed part of a three-story building containing three units. The ground floor functioned as a shared threshold between public and private realms (see figure 7). It accommodated storage, a small workshop, and service areas, but most importantly, it operated as a liminal space where neighbors and family intersected before dispersing into their more private domains - basically functioning as a Majaz (see figures 8-9).

The first floor opened into the Liwan, the heart of the home (see figure 10). This space gathered the household and directed movement toward the kitchen, living room, and a Mastaba-like space but instead of an elevated platform it is defined by a dropped and colored ceiling (see figure 11-12). The Mastaba itself served as a semi-private space for the residents despite its location,



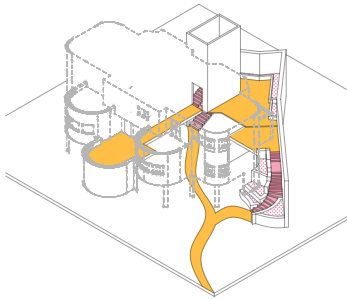


Figure 7: Majaz



Figure 8: Majaz

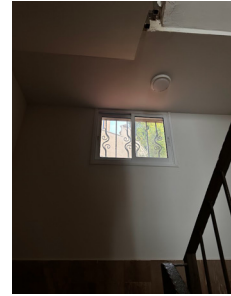


Figure 9

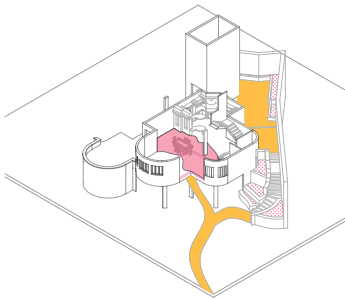


Figure 10: Liwan

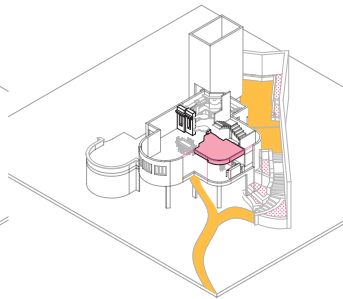


Figure 11: Mastaba

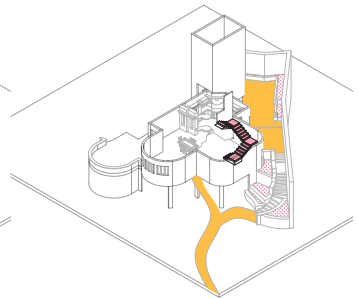


Figure 12: Semi-Majaz - stairs

slightly less formal yet still closely tied to the rhythms of everyday life. From the Liwan, a stair led upward, embedding vertical circulation into the daily pulse of the household (see figure 12).

A second entryway—via a side stair and a private courtyard shaded with vines and fruit trees—created another layer of transition (see figures 13-14). This courtyard offered both microclimatic relief during Haifa's hot summers and a visual buffer from the street, reinforcing privacy while still opening to light and air. It was a space of pause and gathering, where the boundary between outside and inside blurred.

On the second floor, another Liwan—rotated 90 degrees from the one below—organized the level differently (see figure 15). Around it, private bedrooms and smaller intimate spaces unfolded, providing greater seclusion while still maintaining connection through the central spine. The repetition and rotation of the Liwan across floors allowed flexibility: family life could expand or contract as needed, with rooms redefined for children, guests, or work.

The overall design, both vertically and horizontally, cultivated a fluid hierarchy of privacy. Spaces were minimally divided yet carefully layered, enabling adaptability across generations and diverse modes of inhabitation. The house was not static; it grew and transformed with its occupants, always balancing openness, privacy, and togetherness.

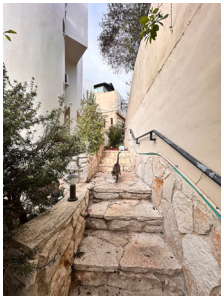


Figure 13

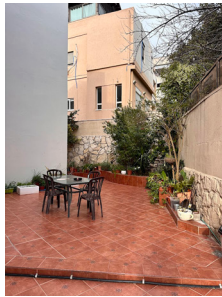


Figure 14: courtyard

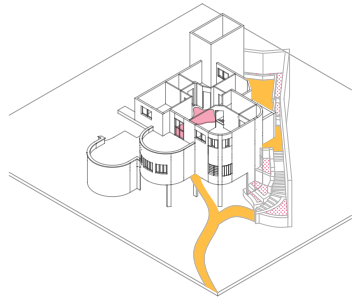


Figure 15: 2nd Liwan



3.2.b. Home in Wadi al-Jimal (Renovation 2021)

The second case is a traditional Arab house renovated under conservation guidelines. Originally built between 1931–1954, it was converted into three apartments while preserving much of its original distribution. The Liwan remained central, with surrounding spaces adjusted only slightly to meet contemporary needs. The tenants report strong satisfaction, noting how the preservation of centrality, spatial adaptability, and thresholds between private and communal spaces sustains a deep sense of home.

These case studies confirm that what enables houses to become homes are not luxury finishes or abstract branding, but rather: central gathering spaces, layered privacy, adaptable layouts, and spatial transitions that support both individuality and community. In contrast, developments like Neot Peres lack precisely these qualities — highlighting the relevance of traditional design

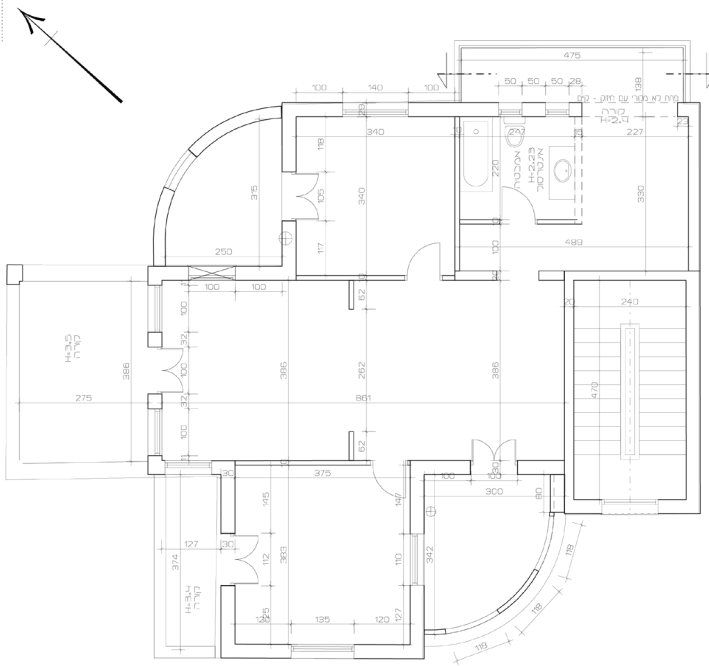


Figure 16: original apartment plan - documentation file

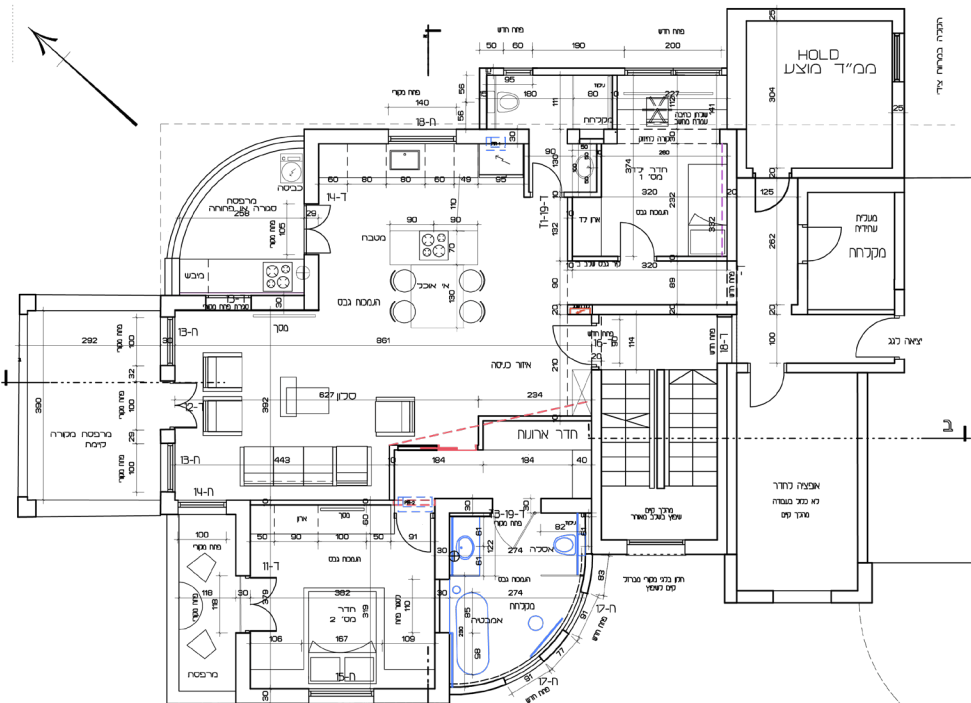
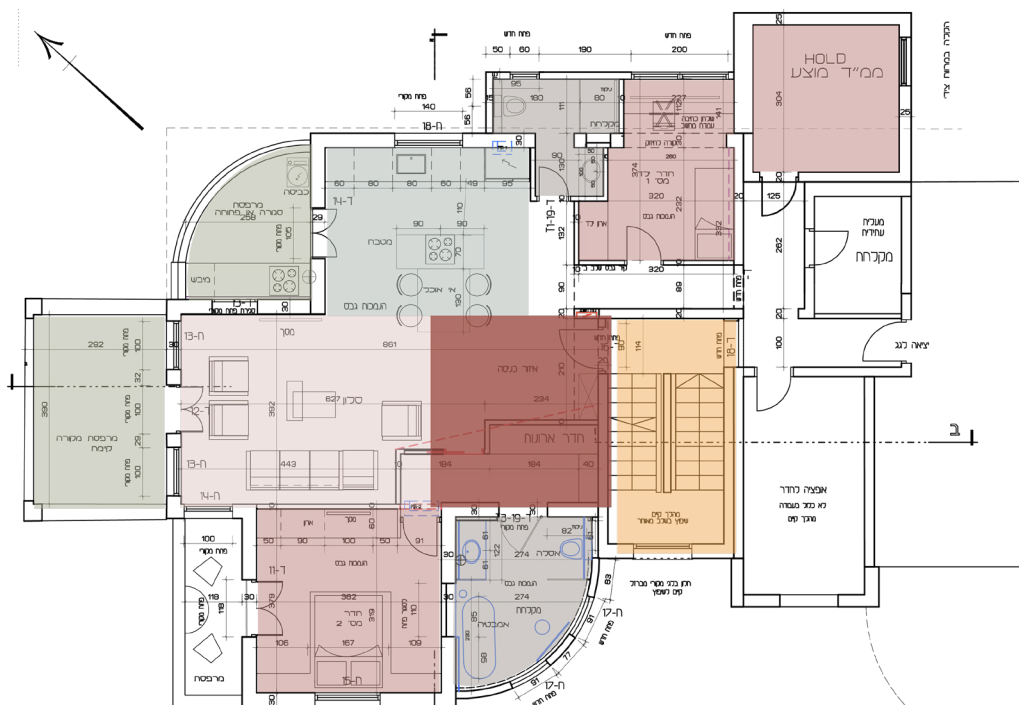
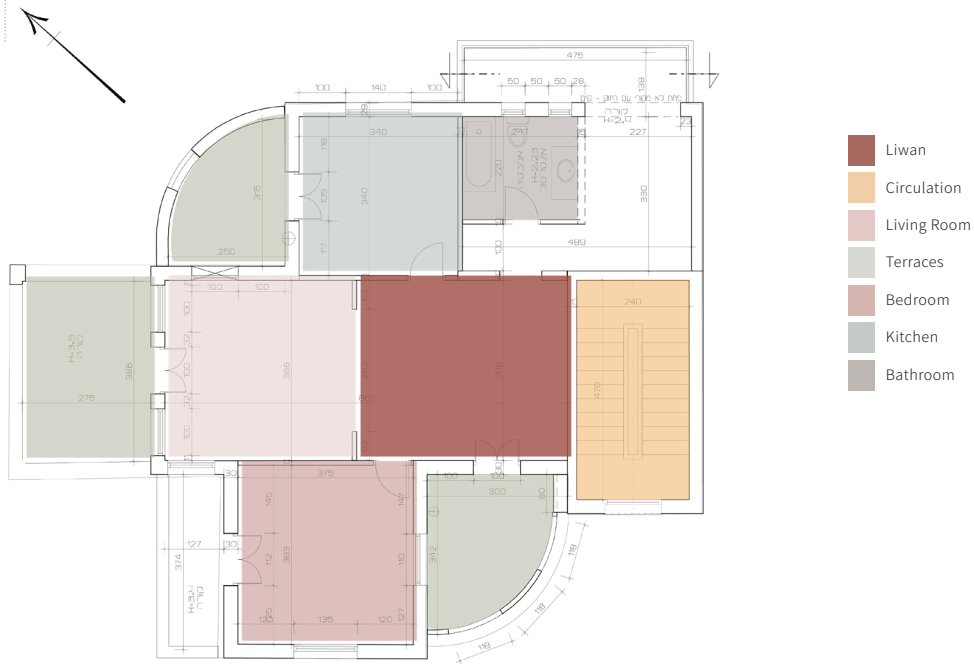


Figure 17: new apartment plan - documentation file



principles to today's housing crisis (see figure 16-19).

4. Suggested Human-Oriented Design Principles

Drawing from the preceding discussions, this project proposes a framework of five principles for human-oriented housing:

- 1. Harmony with Nature**
- 2. Human Scale**
- 3. Layered Privacy**
- 4. Centrality**
- 5. Adaptability**

Together, these principles ensure that residential design can support the transformation of houses into homes by addressing cultural, social, and ecological dimensions alongside physical needs.

4.2 Principles Application in Modern Multi-Story Housing

The design intervention for a multi-story complex applies these principles (see figures 20-21):

- Massing subdivision into smaller clusters.
- Creation of a central courtyard (Liwan) for daylight, ventilation, and communal gathering.
- A Riwaq buffer around the courtyard to mediate between private and public.

- Ground-floor public functions (cafés, shops, playgrounds) opening to the courtyard.
- Orientation of apartments for solar gain and cross-ventilation.

For single-wind-direction apartments, three design options were developed. Each centers on a Liwan space, surrounded by flexible family areas and an upper level for private zones. These proposals show that even standardized apartment blocks can integrate

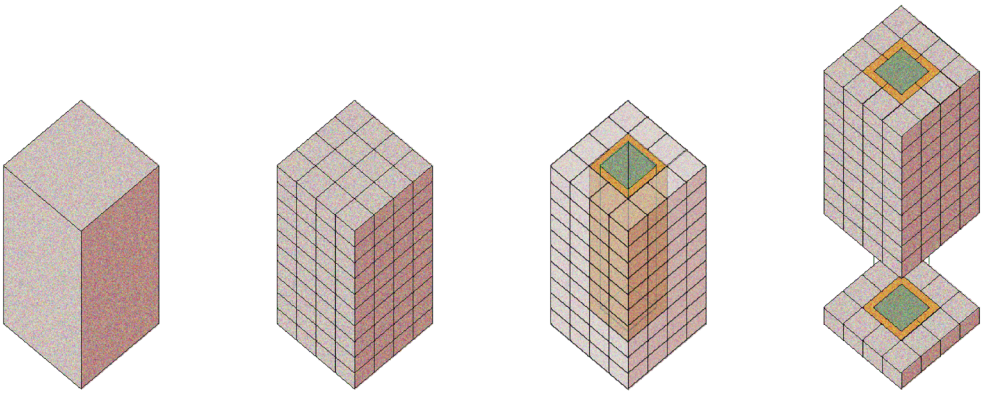


Figure 20: subdivision, courtyard, and Riwaq

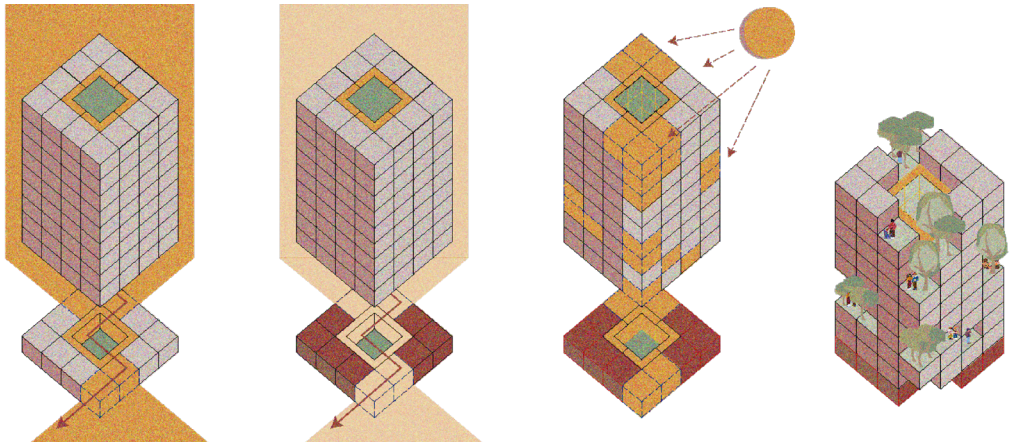


Figure 21: public functions at ground floor and orientation

principles of adaptability, centrality, and privacy gradients, generating homes rather than anonymous units.

The intervention process consisted of taking the standard measurements and areas of the different parts and functions of the home and assembling them according to the different design principles concluded in addition to a main Liwan area which ties the entire apartment together. The three apartments were designed

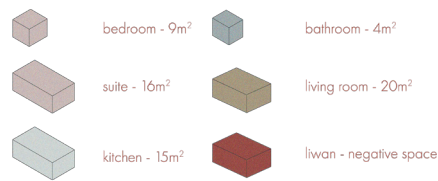


Figure 22: First apartment

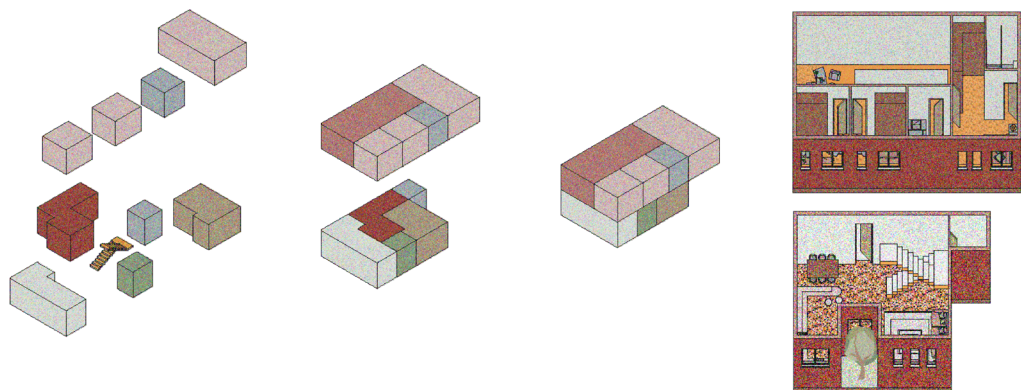


Figure 23: second apartment

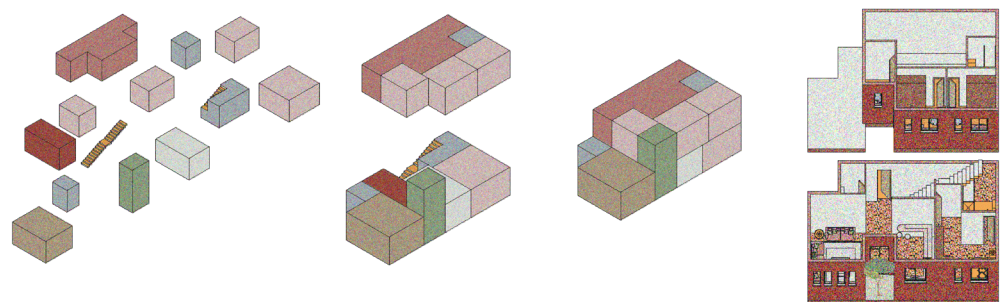


Figure 24: Third apartment

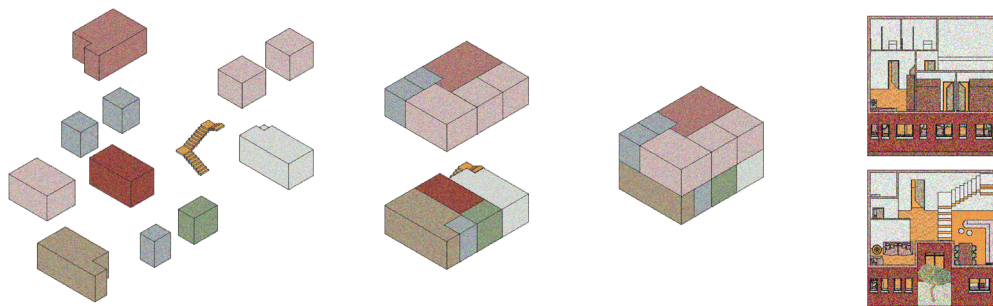


Figure 25: all apartments



to fit one next to the other as if they are placed one next to the other in a building (see figures 22-25).

The distinction between a house and a home has been the guiding thread of this project. Contemporary Israeli residential development, dominated by standardized apartment blocks and driven by neoliberal market forces, too often produces mere “houses”: repetitive units designed for efficiency, speed, and profit, yet stripped of cultural resonance and human adaptability.

In contrast, traditional Arab domestic architecture demonstrates how design rooted in human-oriented principles can transform structures into homes. Through central spaces, privacy gradients, adaptable layouts, and meaningful thresholds, these dwellings nurtured individuality and community alike. Their lessons remain highly relevant, offering not nostalgia but a set of adaptable design strategies that address universal human needs within specific cultural contexts.

The framework proposed in this project—harmony with nature, human scale, layered privacy, centrality, and adaptability—demonstrates how such principles can be reintegrated into multi-story housing today. By applying them, architects can resist the flattening logic of market-driven repetition and instead design environments that foster belonging, flexibility, and dignity.

Ultimately, the task of housing is not merely to provide units, but to cultivate conditions for dwelling. Architecture must therefore reassert its human-oriented vocation, ensuring that even within dense, urban contexts, people are able to transform houses into homes.

5. Intervention – Beit Byout

Application in Context – Wadi Salib

To translate the theoretical framework into practice and test its potential across scales, the project takes shape as a residential complex located in the Wadi Salib neighborhood of Haifa. This site was carefully selected for its layered conditions, which both constrain and inform the possibilities of multistory housing. The chosen plot lies at a crossroads: bordered to the north by the ruins of traditional Arab houses, to the south by a recently constructed apartment complex emblematic of the criticized repetitive model,

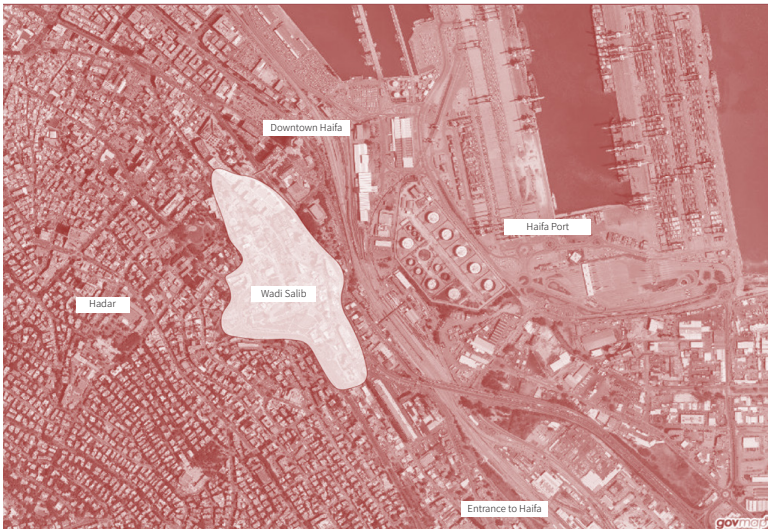


Figure 26: Wadi Salib in context

to the east by Downtown Haifa and the industrial zone, and to the west by the Hadar neighborhood (see figure 26).

The contrast between these edges is telling. The traditional houses once built here negotiated with the steep and fractured topography, embedding themselves into the slope and cultivating a dialogue between architecture and land. In stark opposition, the newer development erases the terrain, erecting support walls to flatten the ground for high-rise blocks that sever residents from any experiential connection to their environment. The result is a



Figure 27: Site topography

Figures 28-30: Traditional Arab houses in the site

condition of alienation—precisely the rupture this research seeks to address (see figures 27-30).

A crucial element of Wadi Salib's fabric is its system of staircases, running east-west and linking Downtown Haifa to Hadar. These stairways, carved into the narrow passages between houses, remain active even after the destruction of much of the built fabric that once framed them. They embody a form of connective tissue, simultaneously infrastructural and cultural, anchoring the neighborhood's memory in everyday use(see figure 31).

Thus, Wadi Salib embodies the very tensions at the heart of this research: traditional Arab architectural adaptation versus modern erasure, human-oriented pathways versus indifferent urban schemes, and the persistence of lived patterns within the constraints of imposed development. It is precisely this convergence of tradition, restriction, and opportunity that makes the site an appropriate



Figure 31: Wadi Salib stairs

ground for rethinking what multistory housing might mean when reframed through the lens of home, identity, and belonging.

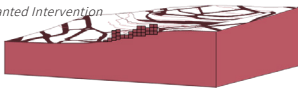
Building upon the theoretical framework and the site analysis outlined earlier, the design process engages directly with Wadi Salib's steep topography and layered conditions. Rather than imposing a singular block that erases the slope, the complex is conceived as a series of apartments arranged in a terraced formation, lightly embedded within the terrain. This approach recalls the strategies of the traditional houses that once animated the site, creating order within apparent dispersion while requiring minimal alteration of the land's contours (see figure 32).

The site itself is strategically positioned between two existing green spaces—Park Ha'Irīya to the east and Park Ha'Rovah to the west. The neighborhood's historic staircases already link these parks, cutting across the slope and offering passages between Downtown and Hadar. The project therefore seizes the opportunity not only to

Topography



Wanted Intervention



Unwanted Intervention

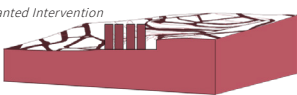


Figure 32: Intervention approach



Figure 33: Intervention approach - park connection

provide housing but also to reinforce the public realm, establishing a defined open space that clarifies and strengthens this east–west connection (see figure 33).

Framework Application – Unit Scale - Beit

The first step in the design was to place the previously developed schematic units—carefully dimensioned with attention to orientation, airflow, and access—along the topographic lines of the slope. Organized into three terraced rows, the apartments are accessed through shared pathways that stitch the complex together. However, this arrangement revealed a challenge: because each unit

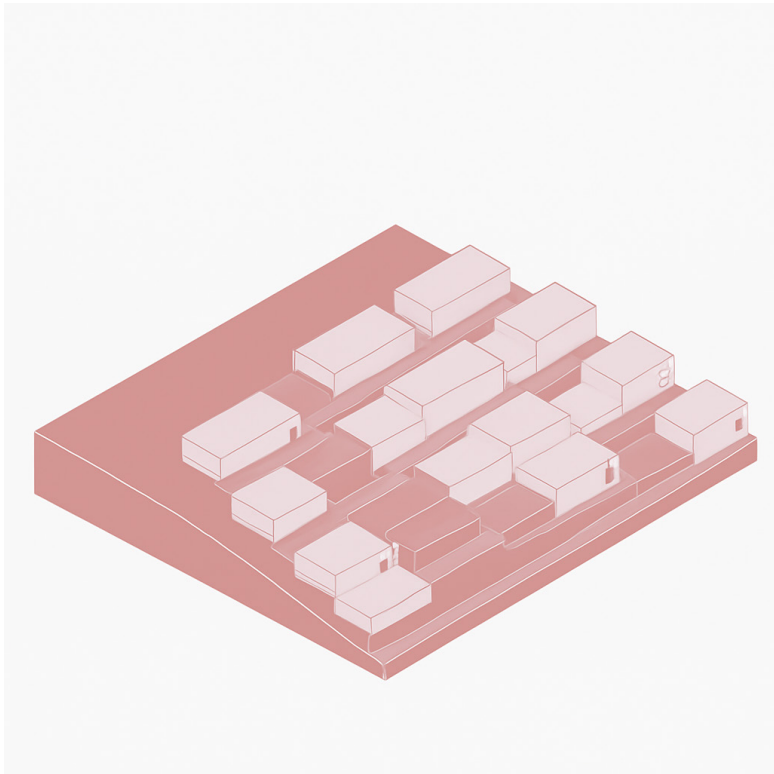


Figure 34: Intervention approach - schematic scattering of the apartments

is composed of two floors, the ground level of one row inevitably had its views obstructed by the upper floor of the row directly in front (see figure 34).

To resolve this condition, three additional unit types were developed, derived from the earlier prototypes but inverted in section. In these “upside-down” units, the public floor—liwan, kitchen, and living areas—occupies the upper level, where it can capture the expansive views across the valley (see figure 35). The private floor, containing the bedrooms, is placed below, allowing for both seclusion and a direct connection to the ground. By partially embedding these units in the terrain, entrances gain greater privacy, and the bedrooms of one unit remain elevated above the eye level of those approaching



Figure 35: The Units

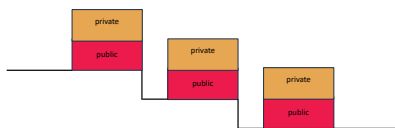


Figure 36: Before - Initial placement

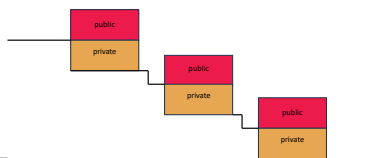


Figure 37: After - Inversion and intervention

the units in front. In this way, the relationship between public and private space is carefully negotiated, ensuring that each household benefits simultaneously from outlook and intimacy (see figure 36-37).

Framework Application –Building Scale - Byout

At the highest point of the site, where a wide cul-de-sac currently serves primarily for parking and service access, the project proposes the insertion of a high-rise building designed according to the framework established earlier. This structure extends the logic of the schematic block developed in the research, while adapting it to the conditions of scale, density, and public presence demanded by the site.

The building is composed of four unit types: the three single-orientation prototypes previously refined into finalized dwelling units, and an additional single-level, dual-orientation apartment positioned at the ends of the block. Together, they form a varied yet coherent whole, organized around an extracted vertical core. This core is not merely a technical service shaft but a spatial and experiential element.

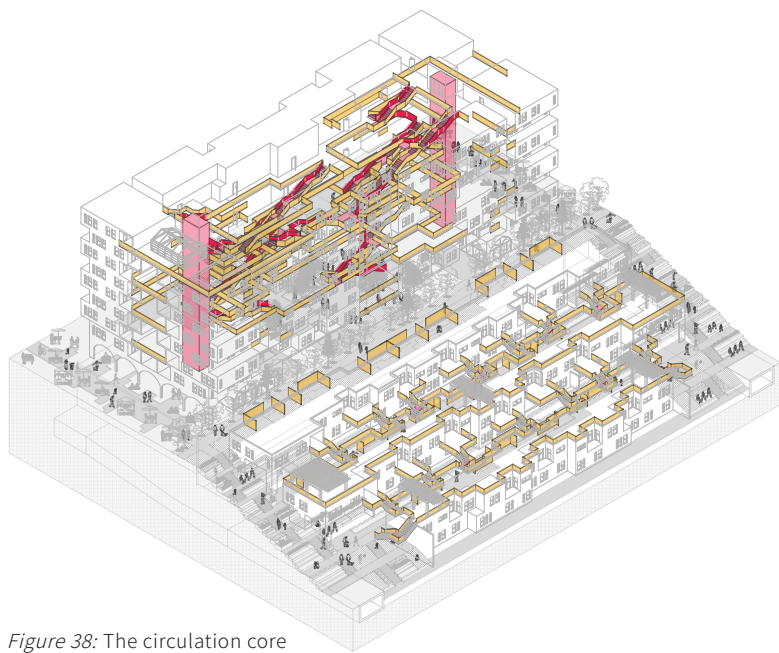


Figure 38: The circulation core



Figure 39: Topography Section Scale 1:100



By strategically removing units at certain levels, voids are created that introduce daylight and natural ventilation into the interior while also producing semi-public terraces distributed throughout the height of the building. Circulation threads through this core, connecting the apartments and generating moments of encounter on every floor. As the arrangement of units shifts from level to level, the building achieves a dynamic façade and a sequence of diverse communal spaces (see figures 38-40).

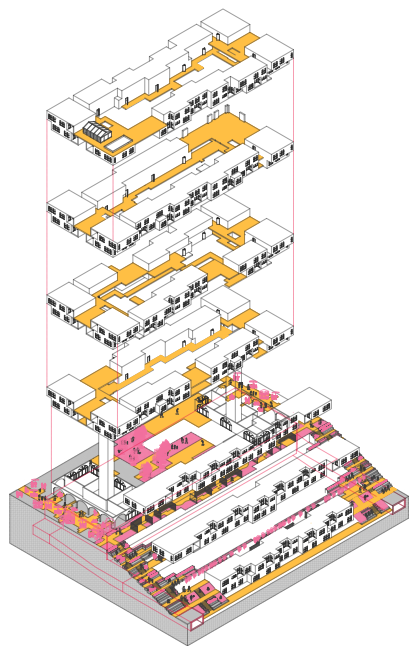


Figure 40: Variety of spaces and floors

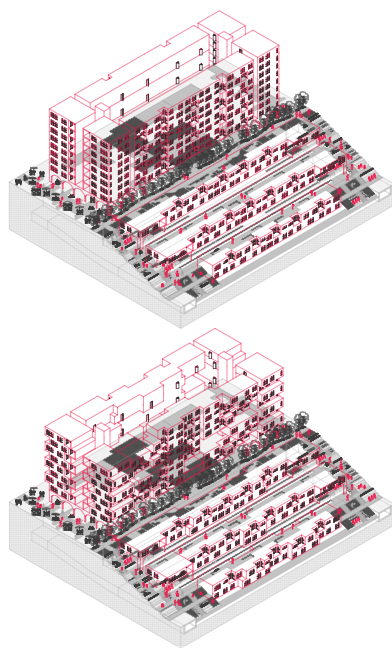


Figure 41: Transformation from block to dynamic

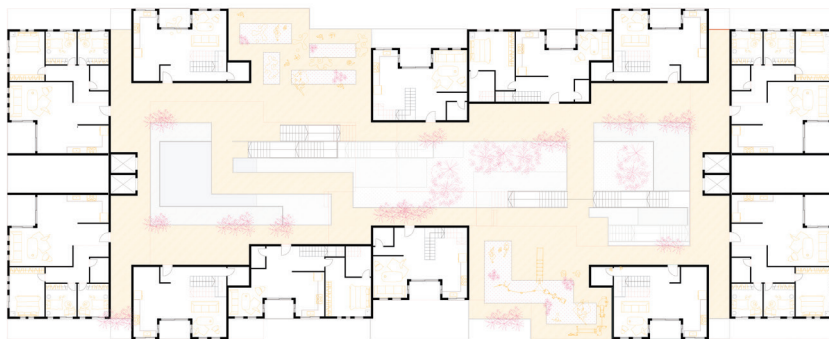


Figure 42: Third floor Plan Scale 1:100



Figure 43: Sixth floor Plan Scale 1:100

The ground floor is the most significant public threshold. Here, the high-rise becomes not only the gateway to the residential complex but also an active civic connector. Spanning between Park Ha'Irîya and Park Ha'Rovah, the ground level serves residents and visitors alike as a place of gathering, encounter, and movement. It accommodates entrance lobbies at both ends of the building, commercial and social programs such as cafés, restaurants, and a public market, as well as direct access to the first row of terraced apartments that step down the slope.

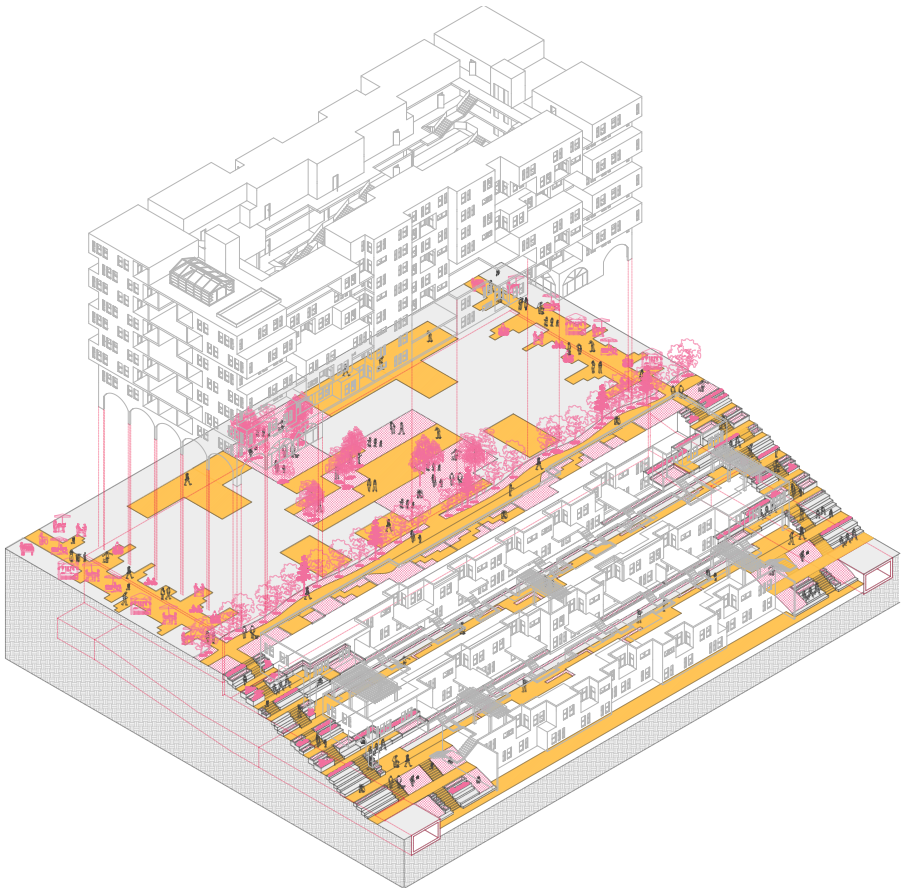


Figure 44: Ground floor

From this level, two new staircases descend through the complex, linking the high-rise to the terraced rows below. Designed to echo the rhythm and spirit of Wadi Salib's historic stairways, they emphasize continuity with the neighborhood's timeless pedestrian routes while complementing their role as connective urban infrastructure.

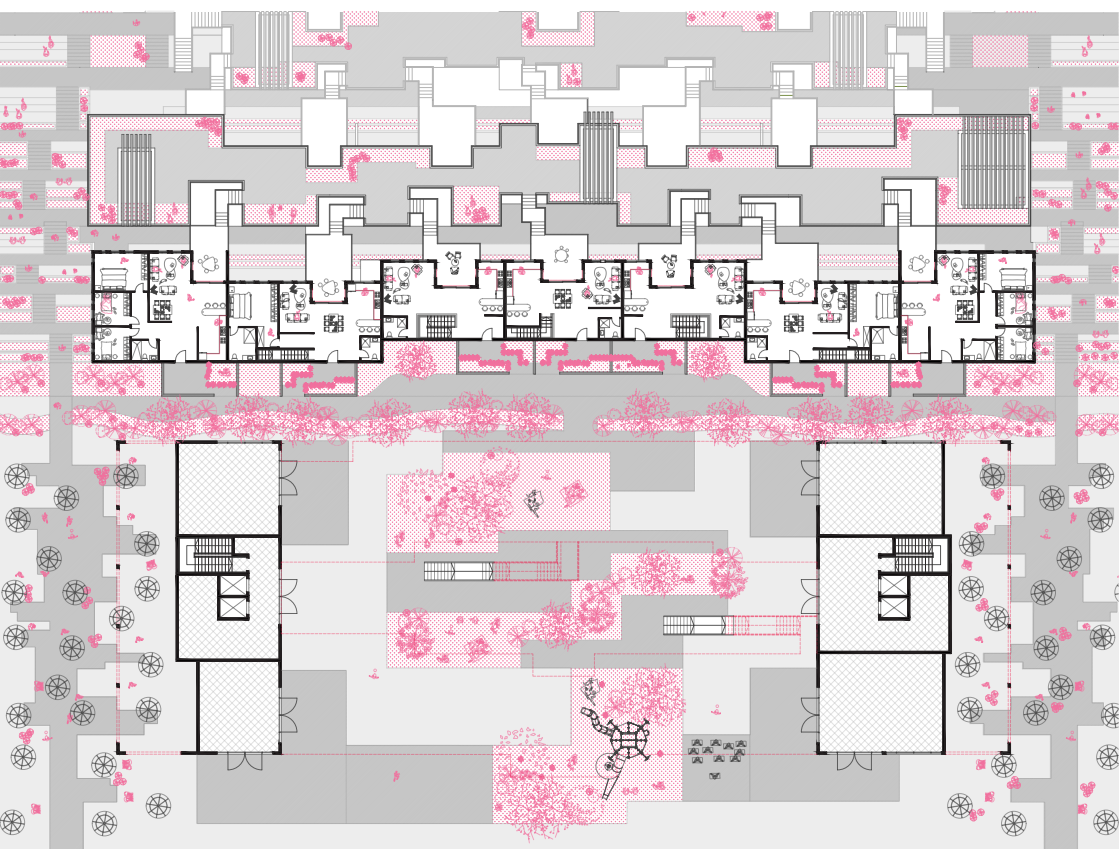


Figure 45: Ground floor Plan Scale 1:100

To negotiate between public vibrancy and residential privacy, a carefully designed buffer is introduced at the transition points. Rows of trees, climbing vegetation, and Mashrabiyas filter the view toward the entrances, functioning as a contemporary Majaz—a transitional threshold that veils the domestic realm without severing its connection to the street. This strategy is repeated along the terraced rows of apartments, ensuring that while the complex opens itself to the neighborhood and reinforces public life, it simultaneously safeguards the intimacy of home.

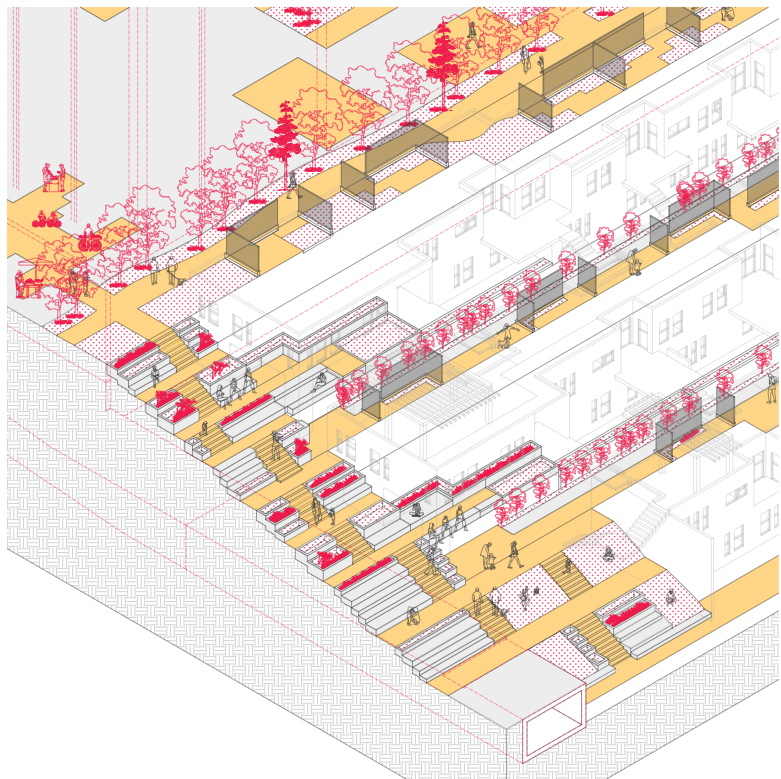


Figure 46: Pathways and entrances



In sum, the project demonstrates how the theoretical framework can be translated into practice across multiple scales—from the intimate interior of the unit to the collective life of the complex, and outward to the urban realm. At the unit level, the inversion of layouts, the calibration of public and private floors, and the attention to orientation and ventilation reintroduce adaptability, privacy, and a meaningful relationship with both view and ground. At the scale of the complex, the terraced arrangement of apartments along the contours of the slope minimizes intervention in the terrain while generating layered thresholds between households, shared pathways, and public open space. At the urban scale, the insertion of the high-rise at the cul-de-sac, the reactivation of historic stair connections, and the integration of civic programs on the ground floor anchor the project within the neighborhood and transform it into a connector between parks, streets, and communities. Together, these strategies enact the principles of the framework: negotiating between tradition and modernity, balancing individuality and collectivity, embedding human-oriented design in the fabric of the city, and cultivating the conditions through which a house may once again become a home.

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BEIT BYOUT

To Build A Home

This project explores how architecture can transform mass-produced “houses” into meaningful “homes.” Drawing from traditional Arab domestic spaces, phenomenological theories of dwelling, and contemporary critique of repetitive housing, it develops a framework that balances privacy and community, tradition and modernity, individuality and collectivity.

Wadi Salib in Haifa serves as the testing ground for this framework. Once shaped by terraced houses and historic stairways, the neighborhood is reimagined through a residential complex that engages its steep topography and cultural memory. Units are adapted to the slope, public and private spaces are rebalanced, and new connections stitch together home, street, and city.

The project demonstrates that housing can be more than shelter: it can cultivate belonging, identity, and connection across scales—from the intimate life of the unit, to the shared fabric of the complex, and to the wider urban realm.

