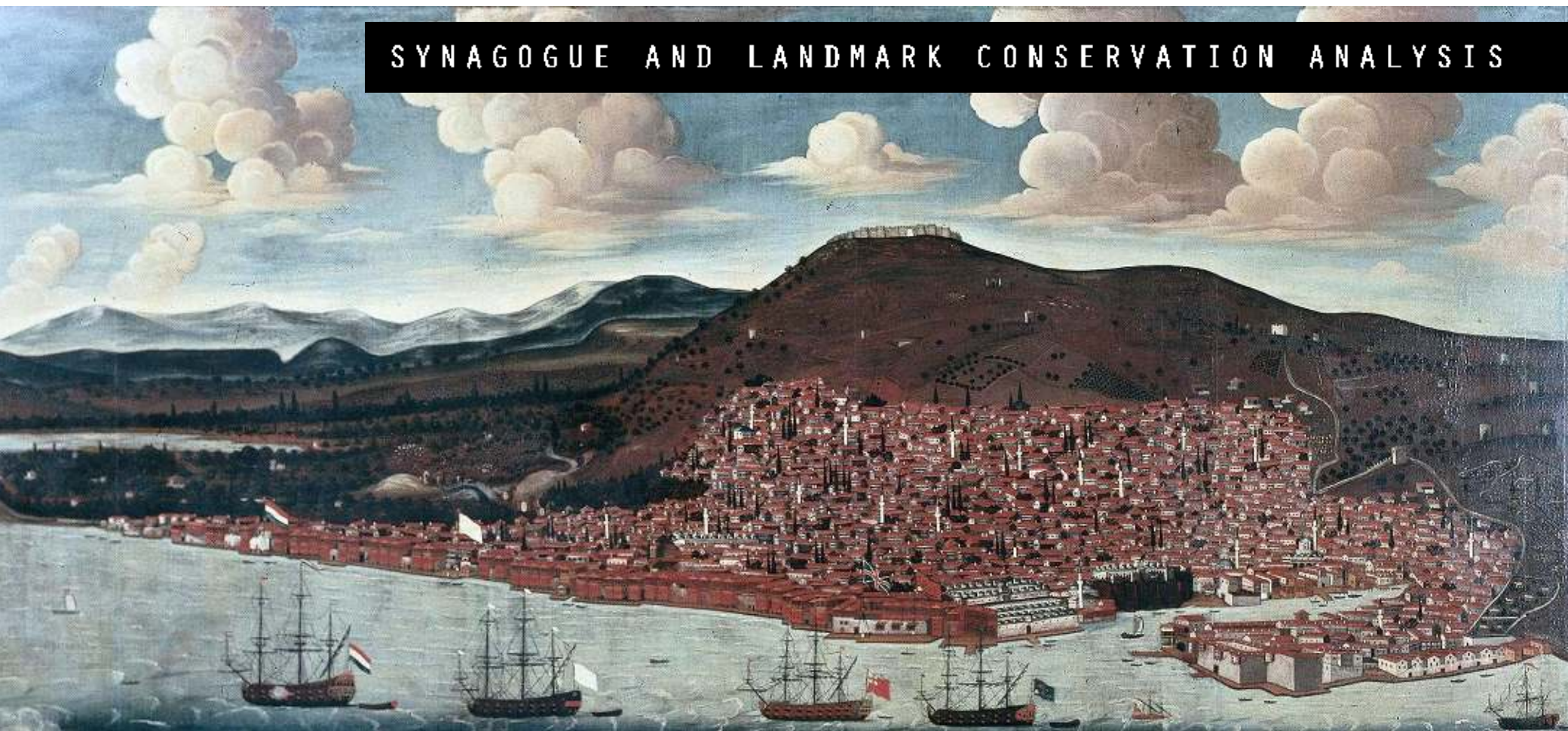


# THE JEWISH QUARTER OF IZMIR

SYNAGOGUE AND LANDMARK CONSERVATION ANALYSIS



THE JEWISH COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION OF IZMIR

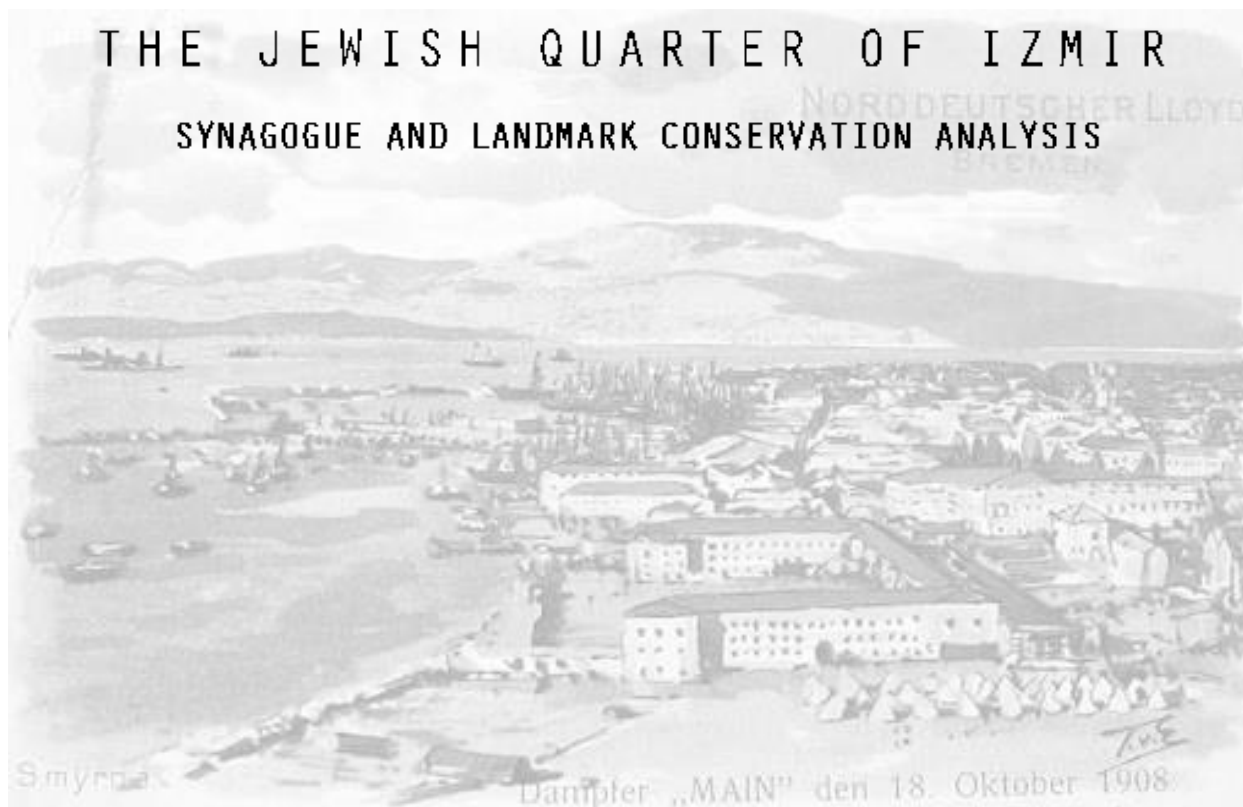
MORDECHAI KIRIATY FOUNDATION  
קרן מרדכי קרייתי



Mimar Naor · מימור נאור  
Architecture & Conservation

# THE JEWISH QUARTER OF IZMIR

## SYNAGOGUE AND LANDMARK CONSERVATION ANALYSIS



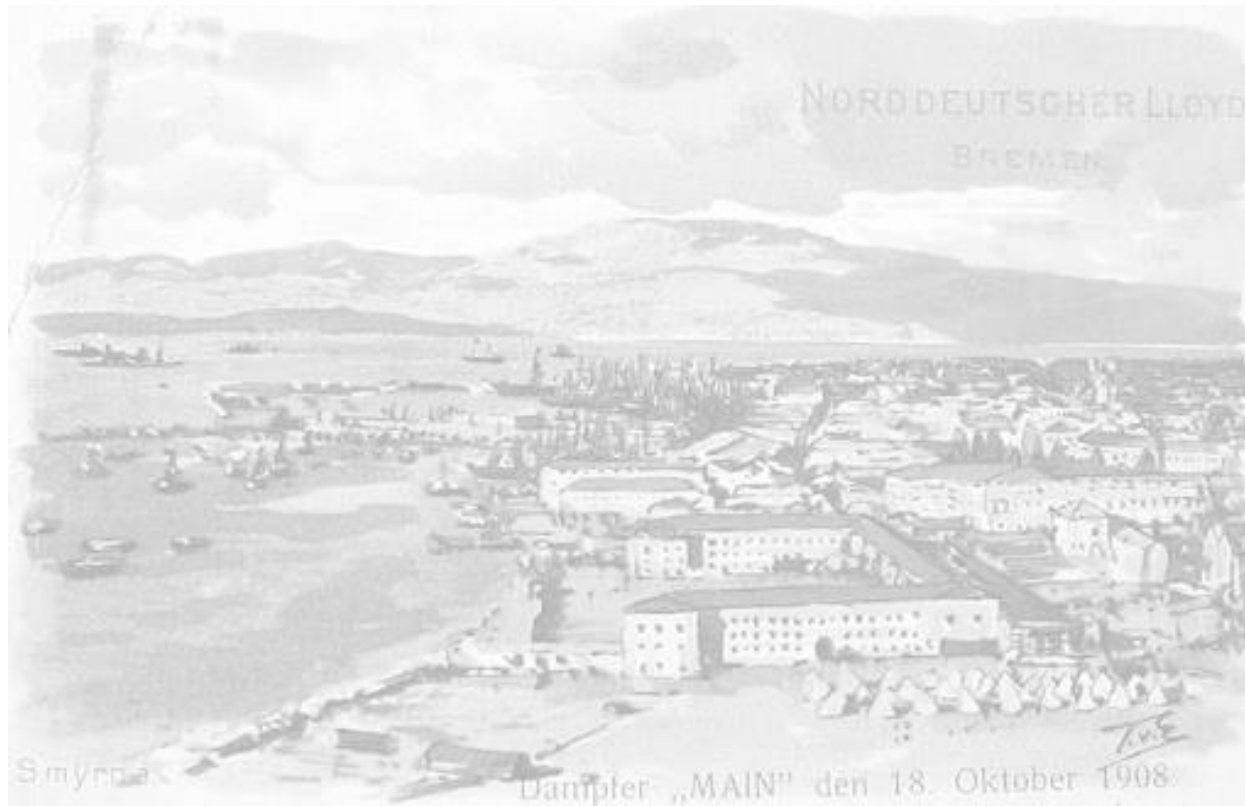
RESEARCH PREPARED FOR:

The Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation



MORDECHAI KIRIATY FOUNDATION  
קרן מרדכי קרייתי





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# PREFACE

When I first visited Izmir few years ago, I was introduced to the oldest synagogues of the city, built by the descendants of Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal. I was amazed by the synagogue's beauty & unique architecture, by the uniqueness of this historically important compound of synagogues. It was clear to me that something needs to be done regarding the deteriorating condition of some of these amazing Synagogues.

I have seen many synagogues around the globe, but nowhere such an outstanding compound of ancient Synagogues as exist in Izmir. I have realized that Izmir is the only place in the world that is home to complex of adjacent ancient synagogues constructed in a unique Sephardic architectural style dating from the 16th century. These historically important monuments touched my heart as they tell the stories of a Jewish community who brought to Izmir the Spanish Jewish cultural heritage, as well as the story of the city of Izmir that from early stage was a multicultural city, where Muslims lived side by side, in harmony with Christians and Jews. I felt it is time to tell the story of the expulsion from Spain, to show how a specific Jewish community renewed its life and flourished in Izmir. This due to the openness nature of the Ottomans, and the freedom of worship granted to the Jews by the rulers of the Ottoman Empire.

I realized the urgent need to preserve and conserve these historical treasures, to realize the potential of these historical monuments to become a major tourist attraction of the city.

Therefore I have decided to initiate a special project with the support of the Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation, our family foundation that supports cultural projects.

The Izmir's Synagogues Restoration Project Vision is:

1. to restore and conserve the ancient, synagogues, and save them from complete ruin;
2. establish in the Synagogues site a Visitor Center that will tell the story of the Izmir Jewish community and its rich Sephardic Jewish heritage which the refugees from Spain and Portugal brought with them to Izmir.

Realizing this vision, I first approached Mr. Jack Kaya, the former president of the Izmir Jewish Community, and the Mayor of the city with the idea of initiating, Izmir Synagogues Conservation Project that will turn them in to a Jewish heritage Visitor Center. After having their approval, I have asked the Kiriaty Foundation board members to support this endeavor as an international project, that will manifest all this worldwide.

I have established an academic consultants' team for the "Izmir synagogues project" that was formed by various professionals from a variety of disciplines such as: History, Judaica, Art, Architecture and Conservation, with the idea to establish a Jewish heritage Visitor Center in the synagogues site.

## PREFACE

This seemed as the only possible way to save these synagogues and their heritage, thrivingly active. An executive, operating team was formed, as well by the Kiriatiy Foundation, and is working to position and promote this project and gain international support by creating relations with governments, potential private donors as well as philanthropic entities for the preservation of Jewish Heritage worldwide.

Later on, I have established another team of experts who laid the principles for the conceptual program of the museum to be displayed in the synagogue site. The principles of the program are based on the historical major trauma happened to the Jewish people caused by the Spanish expulsion, and later the flourishing of the Izmir Jewish community following the deportation. This, thanks to the tolerance and freedom of worship granted by the Ottoman Empire, The coexistence and cocreation of communities from different cultures in Izmir in previous centuries. All this as a legacy of tolerance for future generations.

In order to preserve the site of the nine synagogues, an important architectural historical survey work was done by Architectural Conservation office of Arc. Naor Mimar, which is presented in this booklet .

I would like to thank the team of architects: Naor Mimar, Renana Zohar and Leslie Laufer for their efforts, their impressive documentation work, and their historical architectural research.

It provides a professional basis for the conservation work of the entire site of nine ancient synagogues.

Many thanks also to the President of the Jewish Community, Mr. Sami Azar, for his cooperation and assistance in advancing this important project.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the local and international organizations working with us that have supported this project: Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe, Tarkem, ( Historical Kemeralti Construction Investment Trade Inc) ,IZKA ( Izmir development agency) The U.S. Ambassadors Fund, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Government, AEJM (the Association of European Jewish Museums Europe ), AEPJ (The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage), The Foundation for Jewish Heritage, Izmir and Konak municipalities, The Turkish ministry of Culture and Tourism, Izmir Chamber of Commerce, and the European commission.

My hope is, that our efforts and those of all the organizations that support this special project, will bear fruits, all ancient synagogues will be restored and preserved within the framework of the new Visitor Center of Jewish Heritage in the Izmir synagogues site.

Sincerely  
Ms. Judith Kiriatiy Matalon  
Head of Mordechai Kiriatiy Foundation

# FORWARD

In 2002 I came to Izmir as part of a surveyal delegation documenting the Jewish community on behalf of Ecomos Israel. For three weeks we documented the community's history, heritage, synagogues, cemeteries and other related landmarks. I felt my experience to be a realization of my deep personal connection and roots to the deportees of the Spanish Expulsion as well as a professional challenge as a fledgling conservation architect. My encounter with the unique local architecture and my connection to the members of the community as fellows to my own Ladino tradition left a strong emotional and cultural imprint on me.

Since then, the preservation of Izmir's Jewish heritage has been for me an ongoing personal journey. I find myself searching and delving into every piece of information, book and map that can shed light on the history of the community its synagogues and monuments.

I have been privileged to be a part of Judith Kiriaty Matalon's vision for a project to rehabilitate the synagogues and have enjoyed close ties and a fruitful cooperation with the Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation and the Jewish community of Izmir for which I am immensely grateful. I am delighted to present this study commissioned by the Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation that includes research on the historical Jewish Quarter. This work binds the documentation of historical sources and analysis of maps alongside the survey of the main synagogue complex and peripheral

peripheral buildings as well as conservational analysis and preliminary preservation recommendations for the rehabilitation and revitalization of the complex.

My thanks to a number of dear individuals who have accompanied my work over the years and have enabled this international collaboration with a shared purpose. Firstly, to the Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation headed by Ms. Judith Kiriaty Matalon for her great vision and initiative, Mr. Uri Bar-Ner, for his representation and coordination on behalf of the foundation, to Ms. Sigal Ben-Zoor the projects conservation consultant, to Mr. Nissim Ben-Joya the foundation's representative in Izmir and coordinator with the Jewish community for his remarkable work, to the head of the community, Mr. Sami Ezer, a dear friend and our beloved host, and all those who helped us in Izmir, Architect Roni Russo for his planning efforts and design perspective. Finally, I would like to thank Architect Renana Zohar and Architect Leslie Laufer Freiman for their eye-opening research.

I sincerely hope that our efforts will bear fruit and that we will see with our own eyes the restoration of this cultural treasure.

Sincerely,  
Architect Naor Mimar , 2021

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## Chapter 3 : Survey of Peripheral Buildings and Connecting Path

## Historical Landmarks– Evolvement of the Jewish Quarter through the centuries

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

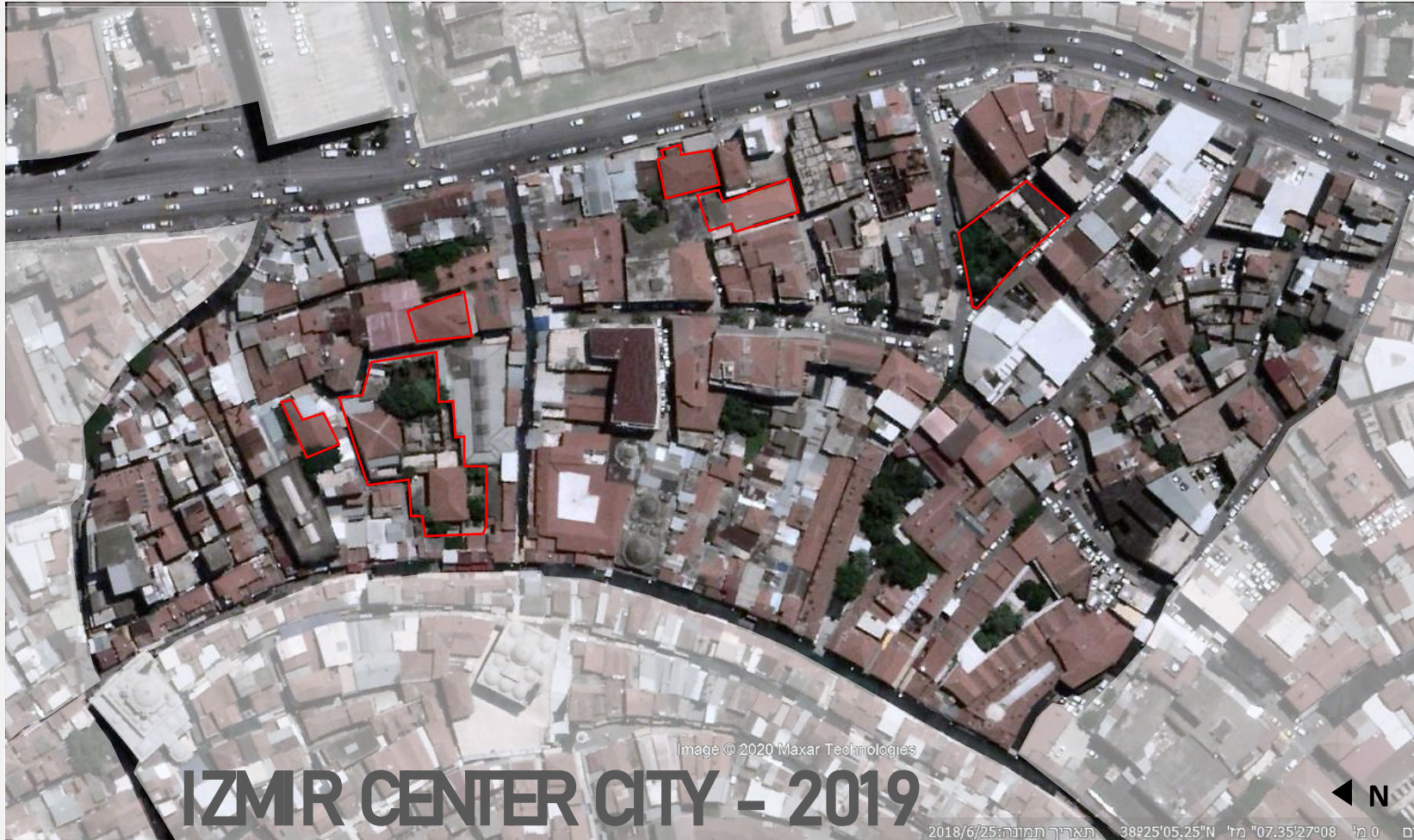
The story of the Jewish community in Izmir embraces many historical layers and landmarks that together make up a unique and captivating puzzle. One of the most intriguing historical elements that exemplifies this richness is the unique aggregation of six synagogues at the heart of the historical Jewish Quarter. Bordering the old port area the complex boasts original ritual textile artifacts and engraved memorials and headstones.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Old Jewish Quarter was at its peak, with approximately 34 synagogues, various dwellings and public structures including an orphanage house, Jewish hospital, Jewish hospice as well as two Jewish cemeteries. The number and variety of facilities demonstrates the involvement of the community, not only in the religious framework but also in the day-to-day needs and concerns. Over the course of the past few decades as many as 21 synagogues and most of the public faculties and dwellings attributed to the Jewish community have been damaged or destroyed due to numerous natural disasters coupled with the demographic changes in the community over time. The remaining structures slowly fell into disuse and suffered the damages from severe neglect. Today, the 13 surviving synagogues offer a testament to the rich historical community that once thrived in Izmir. Documentation work of these structures was conducted by the Mordechai Kiriaty Foundation alongside the Jewish community of Izmir and in cooperation with the administration of Izmir Municipality.

- ❖ The following study opens with an introduction describing the historical development of Izmir's Jewish community. We trace the growth of the Jewish Quarter in an historical context spanning from the 16th to the 21th centuries. Following this introduction is an overview of outstanding milestones and an comprehensive timeline of the Jewish community's development alongside Izmir's growth as a city. Next is an overview of the boundaries comprising the encompassing compound, including the main complex to be designed in the master plan. We then review a list of the ten buildings included in the complex as well as the peripheral synagogues and their courtyards and the public streets bordering the structures.
- ❖ Conservation examination and planning instruction is then given regarding the main complex and the peripheral buildings including consideration of and the relationships between them as well as to the public streets bordering the buildings.
- ❖ Lastly we lay out a route connecting the historical landmarks that demonstrate the evolvement of the Jewish Quarter over the centuries and doing so help to lead it into the coming centuries.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## CURRENT MAP OF JEWISH QUARTER



IZMIR CENTER CITY - 2019

# HISTORICAL TIMELINE

## *Overview of Outstanding Milestones*

### *The Jewish Community of Izmir*

*Izmir (historically Smyrna) is the principal seaport of Western Anatolia on the coast of the Aegean Sea and provincial capital of the Turkish Vilayet (province) of Aidin, the third largest city in the Republic of Turkey.*

*Haim F. Ghiuzeli*



# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

7<sup>th</sup> century BC

Smyrna was built on the Hippodamian system and is the earliest example in a western city.



124 AD

Emperor Hadrian visited Smyrna on his journeys across the Empire



1097

The Turks seized Smyrna and used the city as a base for his naval operations.



1424

Ottoman conquest the city and its present-day dependencies became an Ottoman sanjak (sub-province) with its capital in Aegean Islands.



## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

123 AD

There is evidence of a Jewish community in ancient Smyrna (Izmir) in Hellenistic and Roman times.

Speculative claims to a Jewish presence in Smyrna during this period.

1424

It appears that in the year of the Ottoman conquest of Smyrna there was no Jewish community in the town.

1492/7

Expulsion from Spain & Portugal  
Thousands of Jews settled throughout the Ottoman empire following the Sultans invitation. Throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century there was a flow of immigration from Ashkenazi communities of Jews with Spanish and Portuguese descent after settling in Europe.

### Demographic Mobility

An significant contributing factor to Jewish migration was the absence of travel restrictions by Ottoman authorities.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

### 16<sup>th</sup>-early 17th centuries

Izmir's remarkable growth began in the late 16th century when cotton and other products of the region brought French, English, Dutch and Venetian traders. With the privileged trading conditions accorded to foreigners in 1620 İzmir began to be one of the foremost trade centers of the Empire.

Foreign consulates moved from Chios to the city (1619 for the French Consulate, 1621 for the British), serving as trade centers for their nations. This also considerably enhanced İzmir's position within the Ottoman realm since the city served as a port of dispatch and supply for the troops.



### Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

### 1528

We find sources mentioning five neighborhoods in the city, with about 300 taxpayers (between 1500 and 2000 people). Jews are not mentioned in this quorum at all.

### 1565

**Reestablishment of Jewish Community in Izmir**  
The first evidence of Jewish presence comes in the form of a tombstone dating to 1565. Rabbinical sources show that Initial migration to Izmir was from the nearby towns of Tire and Manisa.

**Development of the port and trade**  
The reestablishment of the community came against the backdrop of significant economic growth of the city and founding of the Levant trading companies. Jewish merchants were drawn to the city from surrounding towns.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

1688  
Great  
Earthquake

Izmir was hit by an earthquake that caused great destruction in the city and thousands in the city perished. The earthquake, the plague that followed and the economic crisis that developed in the city weighed heavily on the city. Although the city was rebuilt at the initiative of the European powers, the number of residents in general and Jews in particular is very small.



Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

1605

Foundation of organized Jewish Community  
The community numbered in the thousands and was organized surrounding numerous synagogues or "Kahalim" that had their own leadership' institutions and maintained contact with other Jewish communities. (As many as 10 Jewish and European quarters)

Izmir grew into a religious center led by well known and well versed scholars including Rabbi Yosef Ishkapa, Rabbi Isaac de Alba (Shabbatai Zvi's teacher), Rabbi Haim Palacci.

As a result of the earthquake two synagogues were destroyed.

Among the thousands who perished were about 400 Jews, including one of the city's most important rabbis, Rabbi Aharon Haim.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

### Late 17th century

The population in the city was estimated at around ninety thousand, the Turks forming the majority (about 60,000); there were also 15,000 Greeks, 8,000 Armenians and 6,000 to 7,000 Jews, as well as a considerable section made up of French, English, Dutch and Italian merchants.

### 17<sup>th</sup>- 18th centuries:

Izmir grew from a minor town with a few markets and a small port into an international port city.

Trade agreements between the Ottoman Empire and European countries initiated in the early 16th century promoted and developed the international trade.



## Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

### 17th century

Continued Immigration from surrounding towns and villages

Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, The flow of immigration increased from Tire and Manisa. The first Rabbi of the community was likely Rabbi Isaac HaLevi Dayan from Istanbul.

### Jewish Immigration from Thessaloniki

After suffering many crisis such as fires , earthquakes and economic collapse, much of Thessaloniki's Jewish community moved to Izmir.

Jewish immigration from Portugal  
Portuguese conversos ("anusim") settled in Izmir in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, formed their own "Kahal" called Portugal- Neve Shalom which later split into 2 communities. Most of these immigrants came through Livorno and Amsterdam and kept close ties with western trading companies.

Jewish Immigration from outside Empire- During the second half of the 17h century many Jews with their Rabbis emigrated from the Balkans, Safed, Istanbul, Ankara, Italy and Holland.

### Printing Center

Izmir became one of the most prominent Hebrew printing centers in the Empire.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## 17th century

The differences between the Jews were manifested mainly in the religious space, in synagogue life and in customs and traditions. Overall there was integration between different groups and communities in daily life, markets, guilds and in places of entertainment (mainly in cafes).



Typical traditional dressing for the Jewish woman in Costantinople (Istanbul) 16<sup>th</sup> century

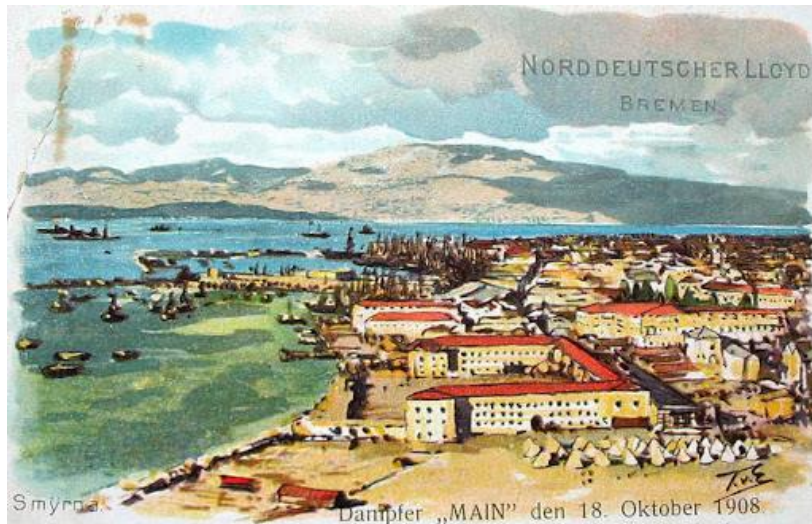


A family in Izmir hosts a refugee from Poland during the Chmelnitzki riots of 1648.  
Diorama at Beit Hatfutsot core exhibition

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries:

Izmir grew from a minor town with a few markets and a small port into an international port city. Trade agreements between the Ottoman Empire and European countries initiated in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century promoted and developed the international trade.



Advertising postcards from the German branch of the Lloyd company

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

### Izmir of the 17th century

#### From minor town to international port city

The character as well as the physical image of the city were largely determined by the economic activity that took place there. Changes in trade routes and growing European interest in Eastern markets in the first quarter of the 17th century made the poor town the main port of Anatolia for exporting goods and a vibrant international commercial center of a cosmopolitan nature.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

Following the development of the port and the city, many immigrants from Europe also flocked to Izmir. Beginning in the late 16th century, hundreds of European merchants as well as many Jews (most of Portuguese descent) arrived in the city.

This massive and diverse migration, which continued during the 17th and 18th centuries led not only to the prosperity of the city but to the creation of a fascinating human mosaic of a mixed city. The city took on a vibrant cosmopolitan character.

The city was inhabited by Turkish Muslims who made up the majority of the population, Greek Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Protestants from Europe, Jews who were mostly of Iberian descent but also included Romanian (Byzantine) Jews and their descendants and a few Karaites.



Roman Floor Mosaics from Terrace Houses of the Ancient City of Ephesus, Izmir, Turkey



Typical traditional dressing for the Jewish woman in Constantinople (Istanbul) 17<sup>th</sup> century

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## Thessaloniki Immigration

When a large group of immigrants comes she may adhere to her old customs as opposed to individual immigrants who have to take on the laws of the place and its customs.

There is existing evidence of the arrival of the Jews of Thessaloniki bit by bit in Izmir and not in large groups and therefore it is likely that they did not establish separate *kehalim*.



FIG. 128. —Israelitas españoles, vendedores de naranjas y semillas en Salónica.

The Jews of Thessaloniki occupied places throughout the social ladder: from wealthy entrepreneurs to street fruit vendors



Jewish family in Thessaloniki 1917

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE



### Ottoman period

1688

Earthquake that demolished a large part of the port and main quarters. Paralyzed the city for at least 20 years economically.

1626

Shabbetai Zvi and Messianic movement  
Shabbetai Zvi a kabbalist of Romaniote origin who was active throughout the Ottoman Empire, claimed to be the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. He was the founder of the Sabbatean movement.  
Shabbetai Zvi's influence outlived him by centuries/

1621-1774

Synagogues  
Portugal 1630s-  
Neve Shalom  
Hevra  
Sinyora- 1660  
Algazi- 1724  
Bikur Holim- 1720s  
Kadosh

The inner harbor was filled the Jewish district grew and extended to the south and the east.

1634

4 recorded  
synagogues in Izmir

1661

7 recorded  
synagogues in Izmir

1688

Earthquake  
400 Jews were  
killed and  
development of the  
Jewish quarter  
was at a standstill  
and many left  
Izmir.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

Filling in of the inner harbor.

1757

Izmir plague

1772

Izmir Fire

End of 18<sup>th</sup> century- 19<sup>th</sup> century

Economic crisis in Ottoman Empire



Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

1772

Izmir Fire  
Many buildings were destroyed in the raze.

End of 18<sup>th</sup> century

Destabilization of the communal structure

\* The fire forced many Jews to resettle in other quarters in the city, ending the framework of belonging to a "Kahal" on the basis of ones origins and traditions.

New inter-communal connections had to develop.

\*\*1840s- change in the leadership structure. Election of leaders based on class rather than religious knowledge and skill.

\*\*\* Submission of appeals to Turkish authorities that was encouraged by the "Francos".

\*\*\*\*Sizable debts and increased taxes and a split in economic classes and internal feuds.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES



Jewish Neighborhoods (Müller, 1843, Maeso & Lesvinge, 2013)

## 1772- Izmir Fire

Many buildings were destroyed in the raze.

The *kehalim* stopped within the synagogues for at least 30 years.

20 years after the fire 3 of the *kehalim* (Shalom, Bikur Holim and Etz Hayim) rented courtyards

In 1801 (30 years later) permission obtained from the Turkish government to rebuild the synagogues.

Jews began to settle in new quarters and this made it difficult to belong to the synagogues by place of origin as it was in the late 15th and 16th centuries.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## 1800s

### Aftermath of Great Fire 1772

The great fire that broke out in the city contributed to the undermining of the community framework.



1. the *kehalim* stopped within the synagogues for at least 30 years. Only in 1801 was permission obtained from the Turkish government to rebuild the synagogues. Following this, problems arose concerning the repayment of the debts of the *kehalim* more forcefully.



2. The financial problems that arose due to the fire weighed heavily on the entire community



3. The Jews began to settle in new quarters and this made it difficult to belong to the synagogues by place of origin as it was in the late 15th and 16th centuries.



4. Worship was practiced in private homes and rentals. 20 years after the fire 3 of the *kehalim* (Shalom, Bikur Holim and Etz Hayim) rented courtyards and after another decade or so, some synagogues were rebuilt.

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## 1800s

Changes in the structure of the community: The dependence between the individual and the original *kehal* in which he prayed weakened and new social organizations began to form.

It is no wonder that in an era of great change, tensions within the rabbinate in the city increased and this continued even at the beginning of the 19th century. The involvement of European consuls and other Christian organizations intensified.



Typical traditional dressing for the Jewish population in Constantinople (Istanbul) 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century



Community members of Izmir with Chief Rabbi Abraham Palaggi (1809-1899), Izmir, Turkey, 1896.

Beit Hatfutsot, the Visual Documentation Center.  
Courtesy of Hasson family in Izmir/Alexandria/Marseille

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

End of 18<sup>th</sup> century- 19<sup>th</sup> century

Economic crisis in Ottoman Empire

1841

Great fire



Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

Early 19<sup>th</sup> century

An explosive social crisis.

- Fire damage in 1772
- the accumulation of debts
- new ideas including commercial management of the city and strengthening the status of guilds.

Crisis leads to:

Organizational segregation of the poor and middle class.

A change in community leadership and taxation arrangements.

The monopoly of the rich over the leadership of the community and the determination of its order that lasted almost 200 years was broken. From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the voice of its middle and lower classes becomes more noticeable.

1841

Great Fire  
Most of the Jewish Quarter was burned and thousands left homeless

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

1856

Publication of the reform order that included the official abolition of sponsorship conditions including the payment of a taxes.

1863

Smyrna-Cassaba Railway was established to the north-west from İzmir and contributed greatly to the development of the northern shores as urban areas. These new developments, typical of the industrial age and the way the city attracted merchants and middlemen gradually changed the demographic structure of the city.



Ottoman period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

1862

Publication of an order disqualifying Jews with foreign citizenship from holding managerial positions in the community. The Franks separated from the Spanish community in Istanbul and possibly in Izmir as well.

1865

Alliance Israelite Universelle  
The opening of Alliance Israelite Universelle educational institutions in an effort to boost economic development.

1872

A blood libel in Izmir and Edirne

# CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

## IZMIR GENERAL TIMELINE

1908-1923

Committee of union and progress  
The committee retains power  
until proclamation of the republic  
in 1923.

1922

The abolition of the Ottoman  
Sultanate (Turkish: Saltanatın  
kaldırılması) by the Grand National  
Assembly of Turkey on 1 November  
1922 ended the Ottoman Empire,  
which had lasted since 1299

1914-1918

World War I

1919-1923

Turkish War of Independence



Ottoman period

Modern period

## JEWISH COMMUNITY TIMELINE

1893

Cholera Outbreak and  
Jewish community relocation  
Around 1900 serious steps were  
taken to relocate the Jewish  
community to the Eastern part of  
the city.

1923

Aftermath of First world war  
The natural balance of the Jewish  
community was disrupted. Much of  
the Jewish community gradually  
moved to France, South America,  
England and Italy. Jewish  
communities from western Anatolian  
cities filled the void created by the  
departure of Izmir's Jews and formed  
the new Jewish community in the city.

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

### 17th century

The differences between the Jews were manifested mainly in the religious space, in synagogue life and in customs and traditions.

Overall there was integration between different groups and communities in daily life, markets, guilds and in places of entertainment (mainly in cafes).

From the beginning of the founding of the Jewish community in Izmir, it was essentially heterogeneous and was built by immigrants from many different places.

In the 17th century, several conflicts broke out between the various groups of immigrants who organized in separate *kehalim* on the basis of different customs and conflicting interests.

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF OUTSTANDING MILESTONES

Towards the end of the 17th century the tension eased and the community began to form an independent local tradition.

The conflicts that erupted in the community from the second half of the 18th century that increased during the 19th century were based on differences in economic and class identities and not on origin, custom or lifestyle.

# HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## *World Monuments Fund*

*“Hidden behind walls and gardens, along the alleyways of the colorful historic bazaar, the Central Izmir Synagogues are an unparalleled testament to the city’s rich Jewish heritage.”*

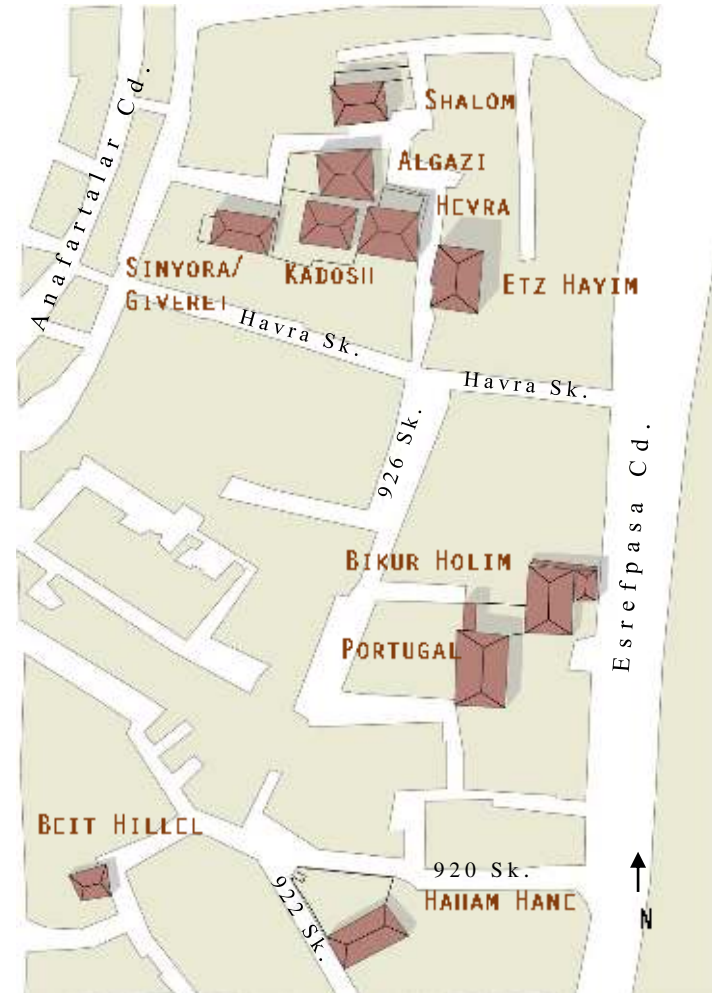
*2004 World Monuments Watch*



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## The “Kahalim” in Izmir in the 17th century

- By the beginning of the 17th century there was already an organized communal life.
- Every “Kahal” had its own Rabbi “Marbitz Torah” and different religious traditions.
- It seems that most “kahalim” were made up of Jews from mix of origins and that the names of the “kahalim” themselves does not necessarily testify to a homogenous origin.
- Exact dates of establishment remain unknown.
- The variety of the synagogues reflects the complexity of communal life in the city and each displays unique evidence of the social class and country of origin.



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

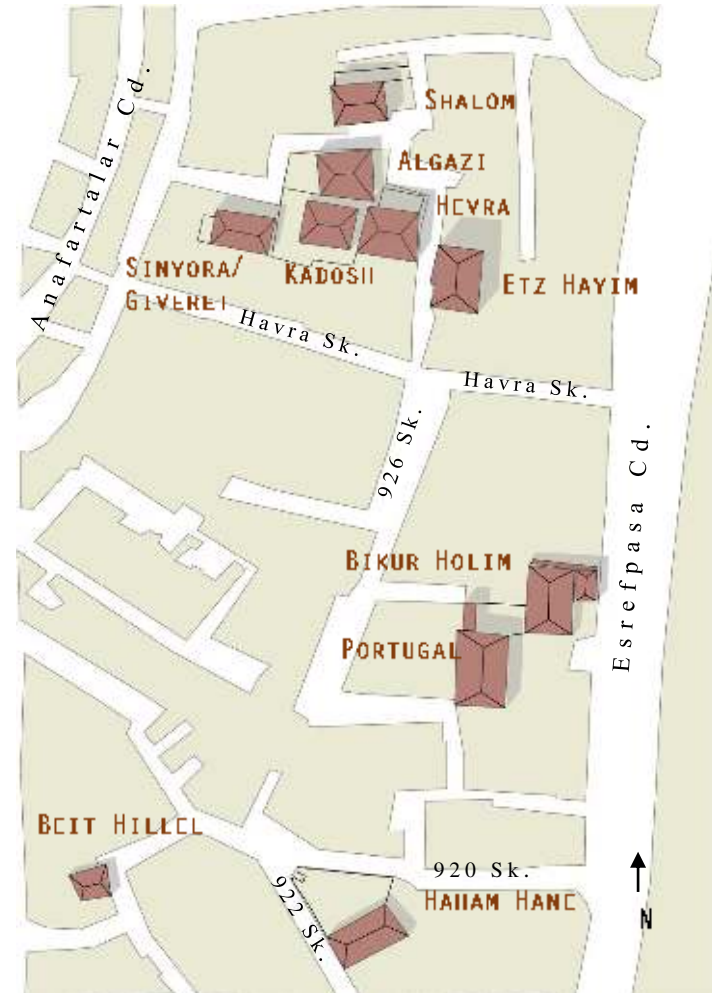
## The “Kahalim” in Izmir in the 17th century

\* Note: It is not clear whether the continuity of the community was maintained throughout the 17th-18th centuries or new ones were built on the ruins of the older following the many fires, epidemics and earthquakes that ravaged Izmir.

\*\* There are synagogues which we know existed but are not standing today. And 4 others that we have concrete evidence existed but cannot determine where they stood.

Influencing factors of division:

- 1) Migration from different origins
- 2) Internal social and religious issues
- 3) External factors- natural disasters



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## 1. Etz Hayim

### Approximate date:

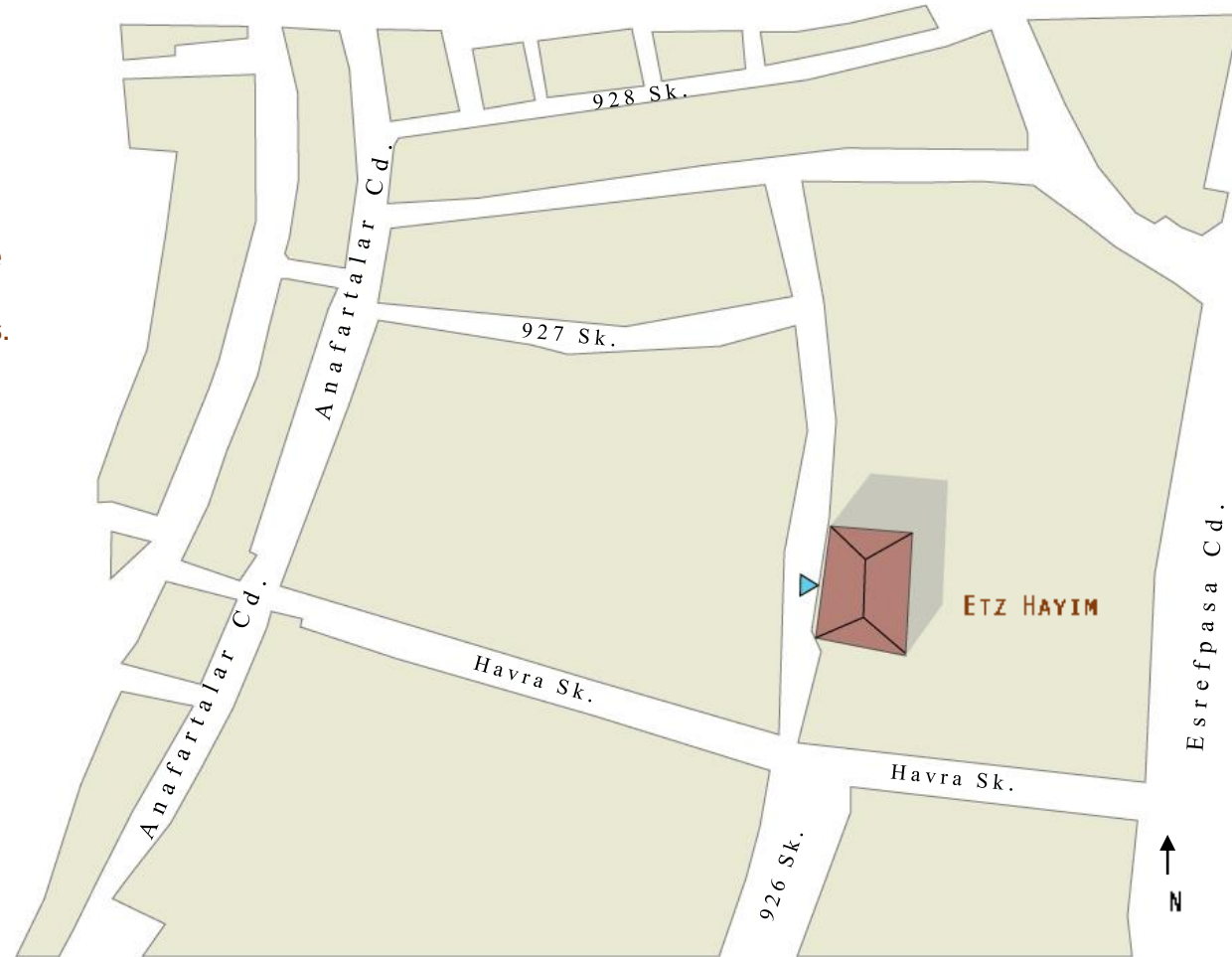
The name of the synagogue indicates its ancient history dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century. Additionally, the name can be identified as a typical name among the Romaniote -Byzantine period synagogues. Researchers believe it to be one of the first 6 *kahalim* established in Izmir. This synagogue is seemingly the earliest among the synagogues in the complex.

### Tradition\origin:

\*according to local tradition, the synagogue was used for prayer by Muslims who arrived in Izmir in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries where they found an absence of mosques.)

### Construction facts:

- The synagogue was burnt during the great fire of Izmir in 1841
- Renovated in 1851 with the contributions of Daniel Sidi



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

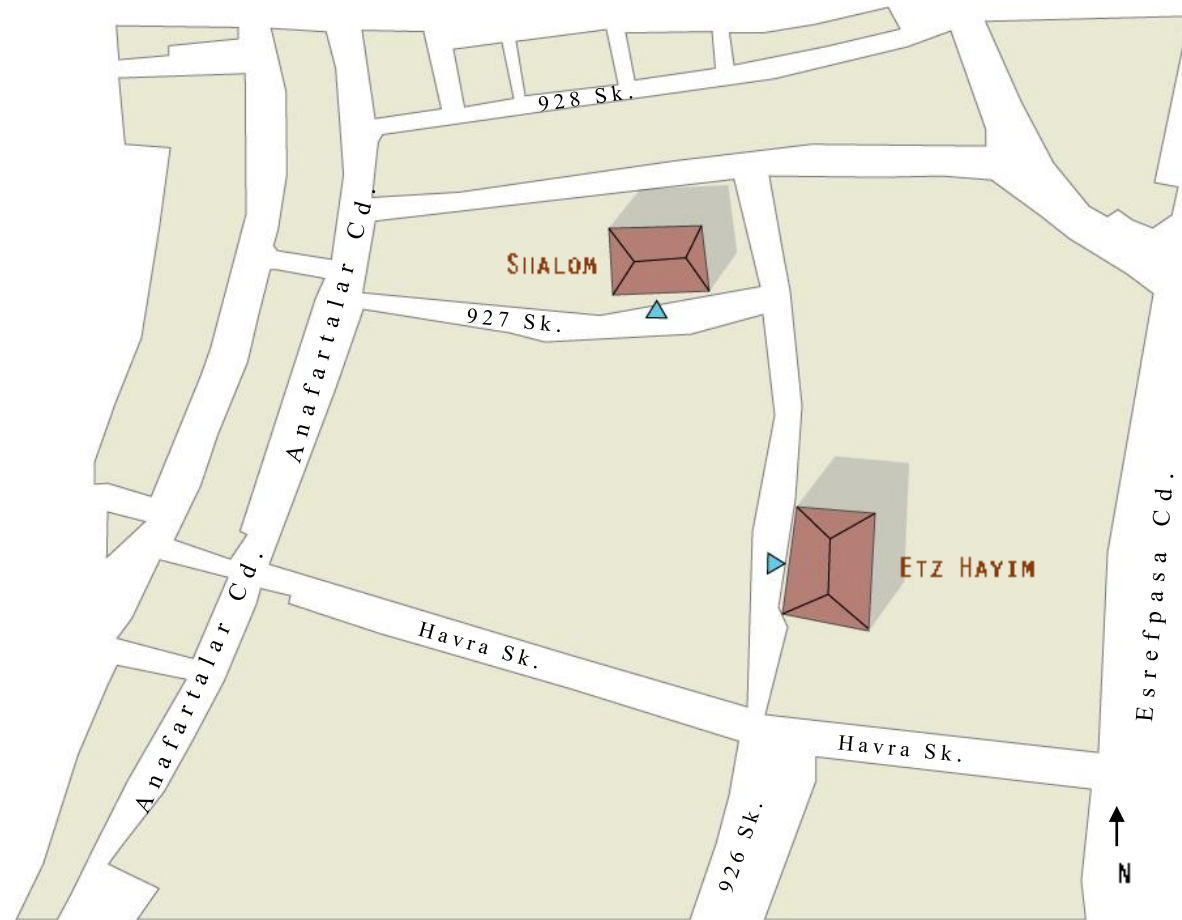
## 2. Shalom

Approximate date: 17<sup>th</sup> century- one of the first 6 *kahalim* established in Izmir. According to spoken tradition the synagogue is also named 'Neve Shalom' synagogue.

Tradition\origin: Portuguese conversos

- Among the chief Rabbis of the synagogue were the famous scholars Rabbi Yosef Eskapa and Rabbi Aharon Lepapa.

the synagogue was renovated at least two times in the 19<sup>th</sup> century- in 1800 and 1841 after a fire miraculously stopped at its entrance.



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

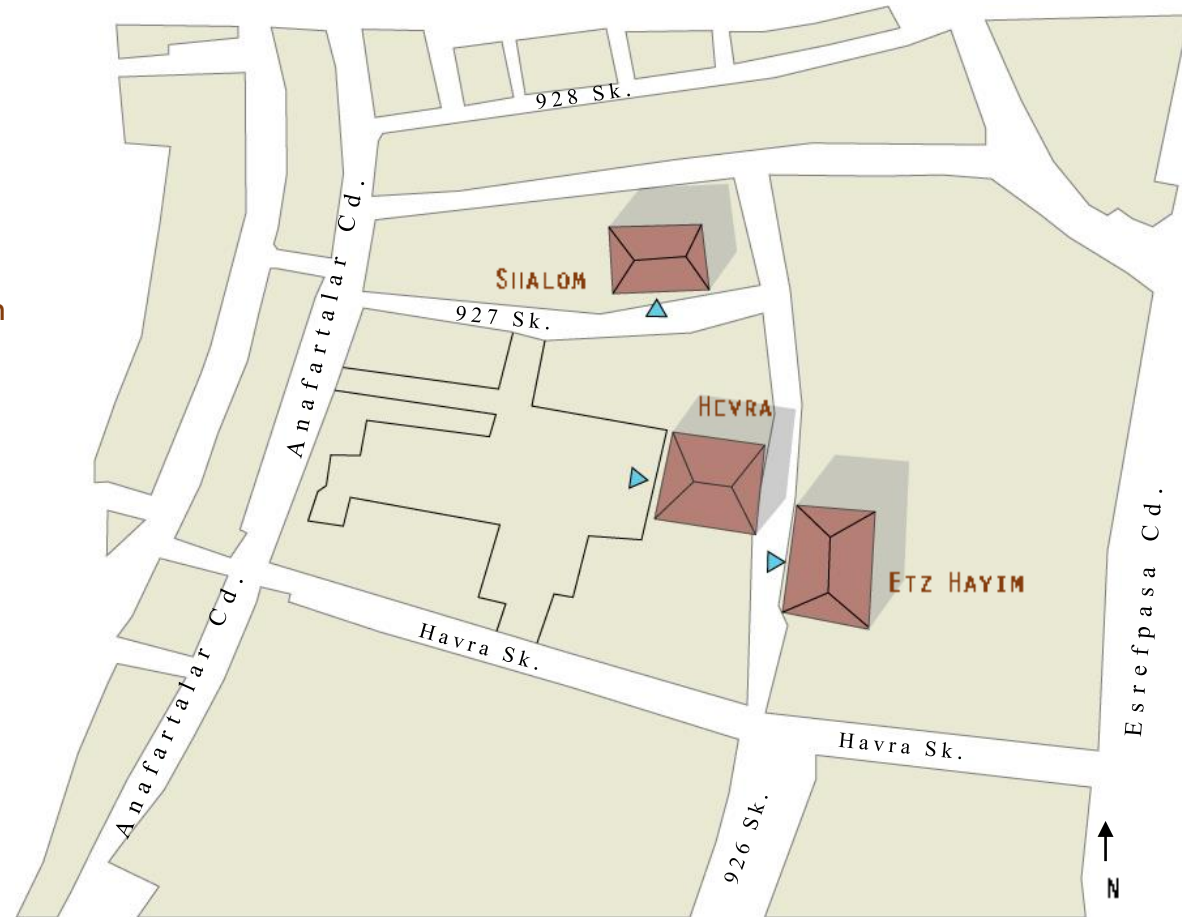
## 3. Hevra

### Approximate date:

- This building existed by the 17th century.
- The name of the structure echoes the name of the street outside the main entrance, Hevra St.
- Traditionally, the word Hevra in the Turkish language means 'synagogue'.
- According to spoken tradition the synagogues is also named 'Talmud Torah'.

### Construction facts:

- The synagogue was renovated in 1838
- Was greatly damaged in the Fire of 1841
- renovated in 1870
- In 2000-2002 a restoration plan was created and approved by the city administration and the Department of Preservation. But have yet to be realized.



## 4. Sinyora \ Giveret

Approximate date: 1660

Tradition: The name of the synagogue 'Giveret' in the Hebrew language means a fair lady. This name was seemingly given in memory of 'Sinyora' Donna Gracia- the well known philanthropist in the Jewish community who was active throughout Europe.

Construction facts:

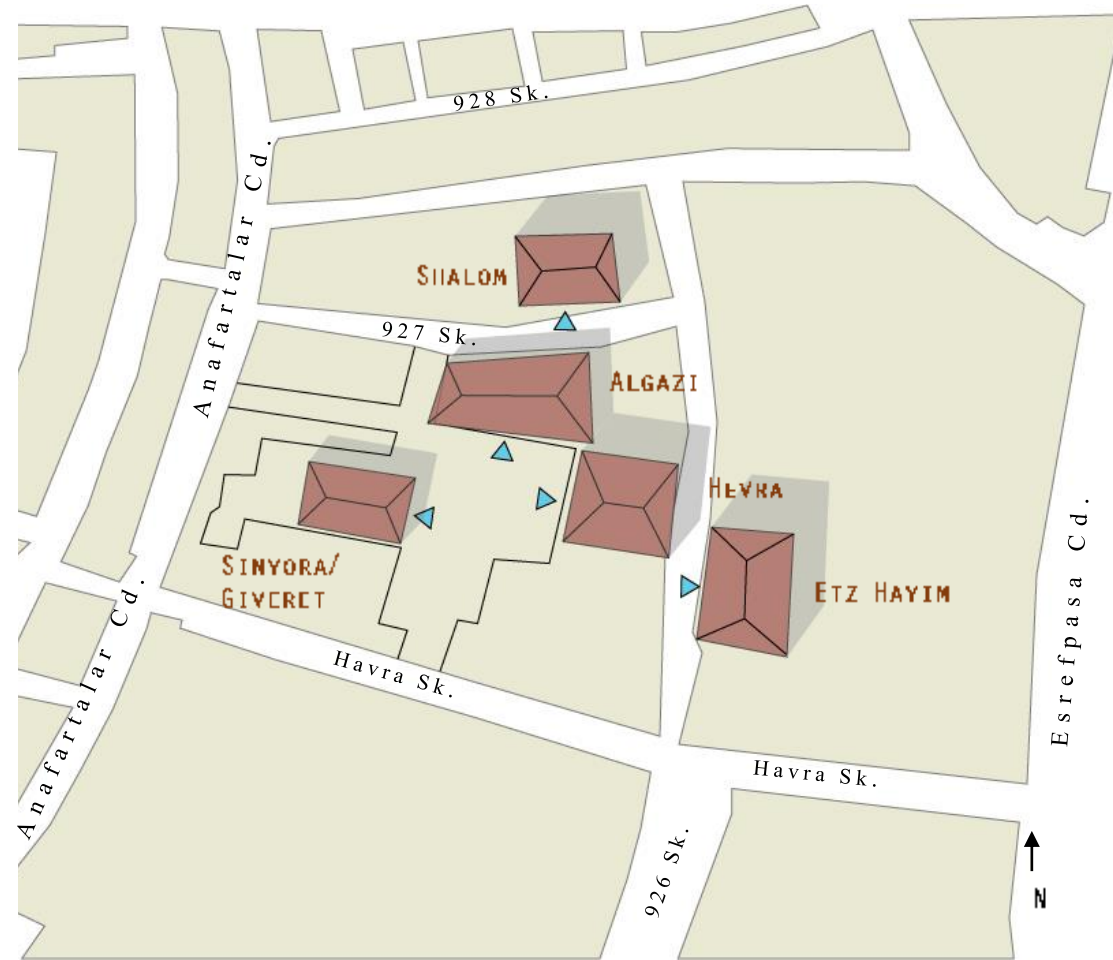
- The synagogue suffered great damage in the Great Fire of 1841.
- Renovated according to following Italian influence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a linear seating arrangement. financial support of Yerushalmi family.



## 5. Algazi

Approximate date: 1724

- Local tradition tells of the well-known cantor Algazi who lent the synagogue his name. Algazi was known to have emphasized the local Hebrew dialect (which includes to this day many influences from the Turkish language) in his singing technique.
- Some sources speculate that this synagogue was frequented by Shabbetai Zvi in 1666.
- Tradition speaks of a smaller building in the basement of this synagogue with adjacent historic pavement.



## 6. Kadosh \ Los Forestros

Approximate date: 17<sup>th</sup> century

Tradition: The name of the synagogue 'Forestros' refers to the Spanish word 'foreigners' indicating that it served new immigrants who came to Izmir and joined the local Jewish community.

Construction facts:

- The structure is considered to be the most recent synagogue constructed among the different synagogues in the complex. As a result of that, the synagogue doesn't maintain any direct connection to the surrounding streets but rather, creates a continuants structure sequence within the complex.
- The synagogue was greatly damaged in a fire in the mid 20th century.
- During the late 20th century the structure continued to disintegrate up to the point where most of the original attributes were lost leaving only the exterior walls intact.



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## 7. Portugal

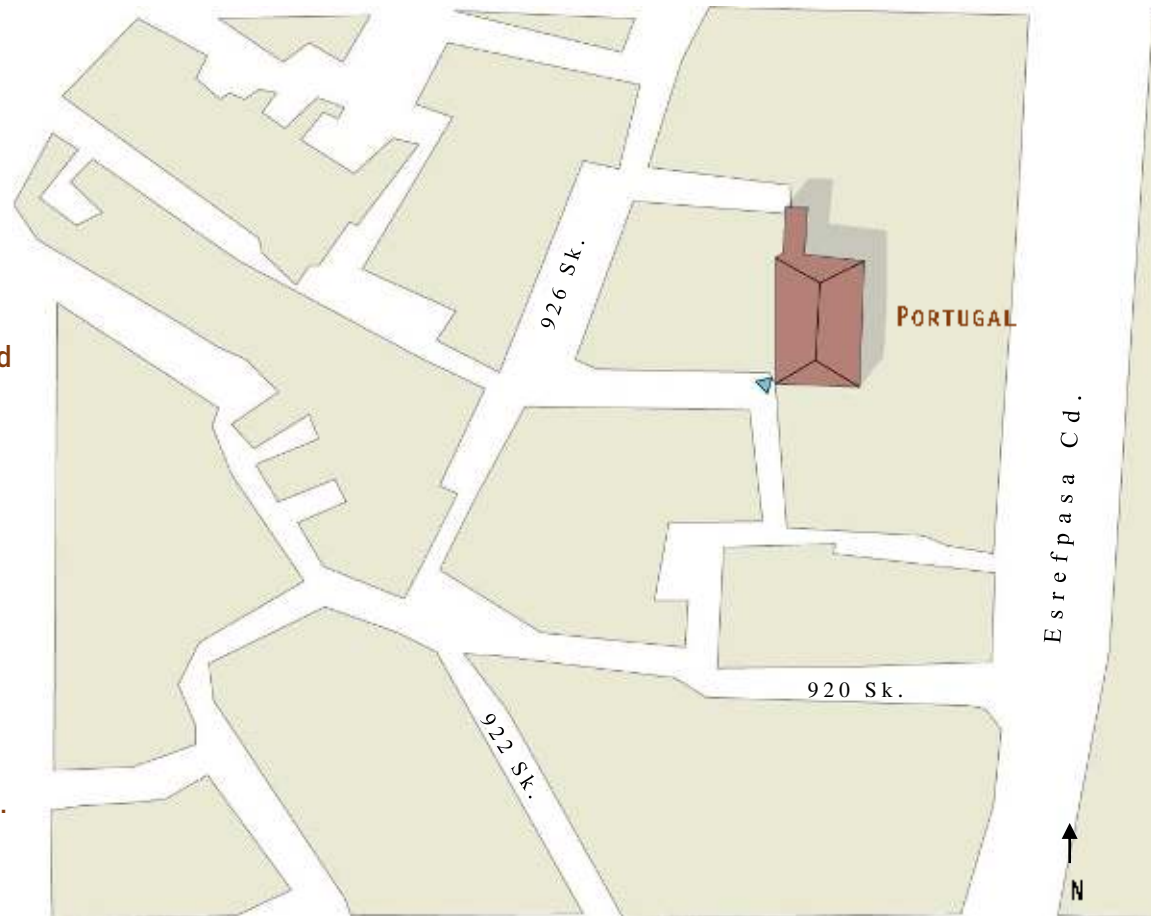
Approximate date: 1630s

Tradition\origin: Portuguese

- One of the first 6 *kahalim* established in Izmir and likely existed during Rabbi Escapa's time.
- As its name indicates', the *kahal* was seemingly built around a community of conversos who were expelled from Portugal during the Spanish inquisition period.
- Sources claim that this synagogue was at the center of events associated with Shabbetai Zvi in 1665-6.
- The local tradition describes this synagogue as a revolutionary place where Zvi was declared a living prophet and where he initiated the most significant reforms to the Jewish religion and tradition until banished by the head of the religious community of Izmir.

Construction facts: the synagogue was demolished and renovated several times as a result of natural disasters.

- Completely burned down in the fire of 1772
- renovated in 1801
- Burned and badly damaged in fire 1976
- Recently renovated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century



## 8. Bikur Holim

Approximate date: 1720s

Founder: Philanthropist Salomon de Chaves donated the building for use as a synagogue. (Chaves may have immigrated from Amsterdam, family of Portuguese decent). The name of the synagogue in the Hebrew language translates as visiting the ill, indicating the function of this structure as a hospital during the cholera plague outbreak. Additionally, in the basement of the structure there was a small jail cell which was designated following the legal autonomy given to the local Jewish authority to condemn miscreants and offenders.

Construction facts:

- In the eighteenth century, a part of it served as a clinic/hospital during the plague epidemic.
- Damaged in the great fire of 1772.  
Renovated by Manuel de Chaves in 1800.
- Most recent renovation 2018



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## 9. Beit Hillel

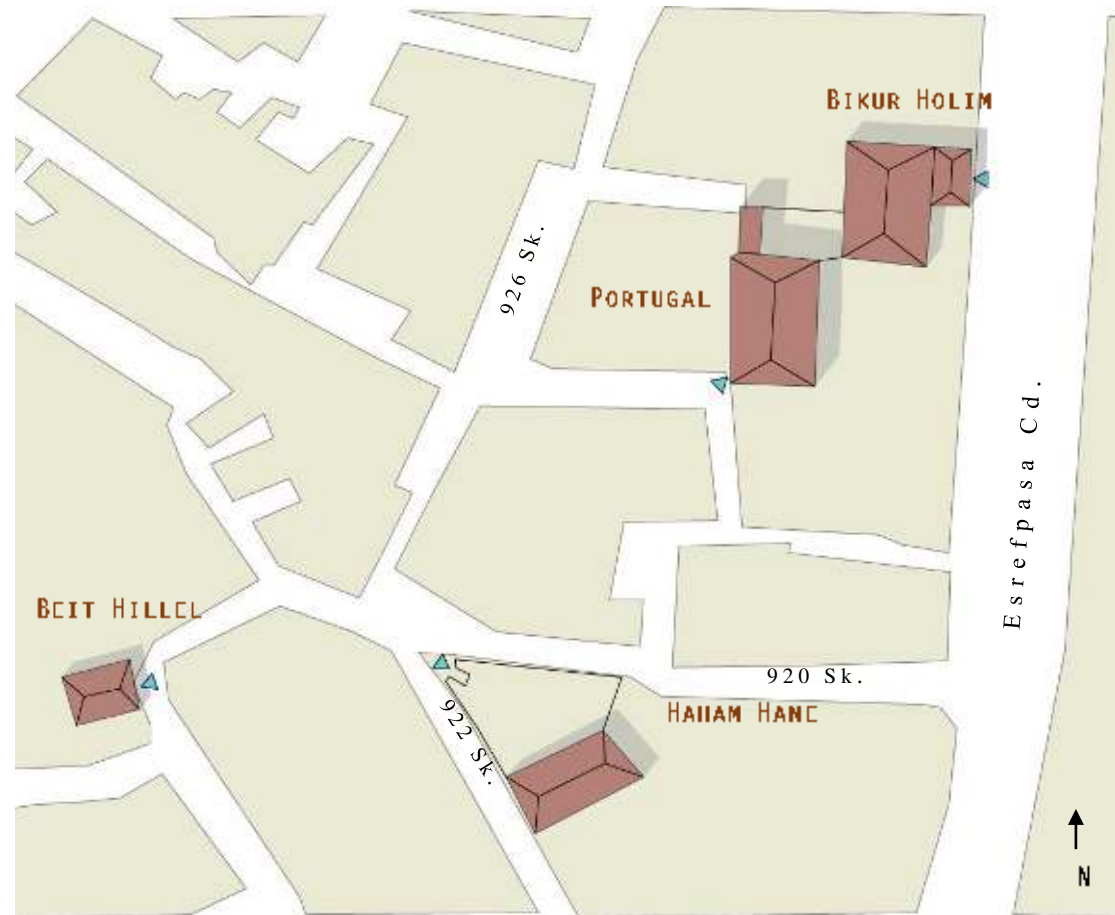
Approximate date: 1840s

Tradition\origin: Palacci family  
Rabbi Haim and his son Rabbi Avraham Palacci's synagogue.

According to spoken tradition Rabbi Palacci was well known in Izmir for his wisdom among the Jewish as well as Muslim communities. As the Rabbi aged, his mobility became limited and the small residence was converted into a synagogue.




Construction facts: the building has been used as a synagogue as well as *beit midrash*.

- Burned in the fire of 1841
- renovated by Eliezer Hillel Menuah from Bucharest
- Has not been in use since the 1960s.
- Damaged in fire of 2006- roof collapsed
- Fully renovated in 2015 by the city of Izmir and today serves as a small museum in the memory of Rabbi Palacci.



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

## ANALYSIS OF CURRENT ENTRANCE

-  Current entrances
-  Open courtyard
-  Urban block



# CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SYNAGOGUES

-  Existing structure
-  Non functional/ demolished structure
-  Ex community hospital
-  Ex Jewish dwelling
-  Ex Jewish school
-  Ex Jewish hospice for leprosy
-  Ex Jewish soup kitchen center

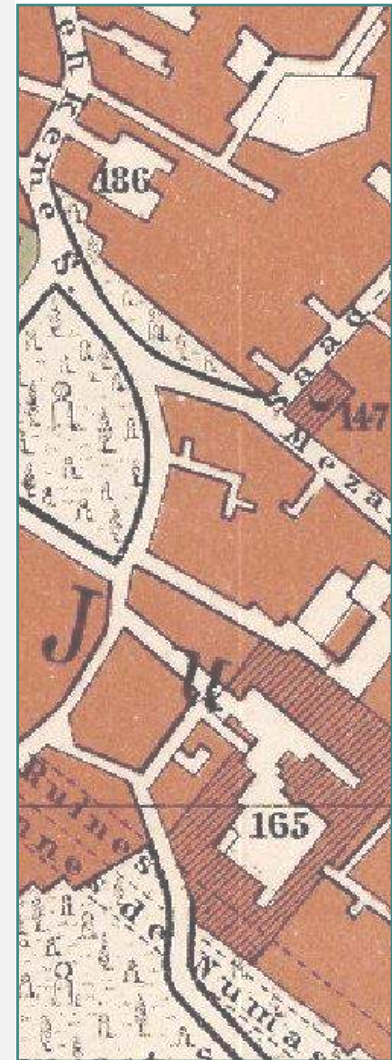


# MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

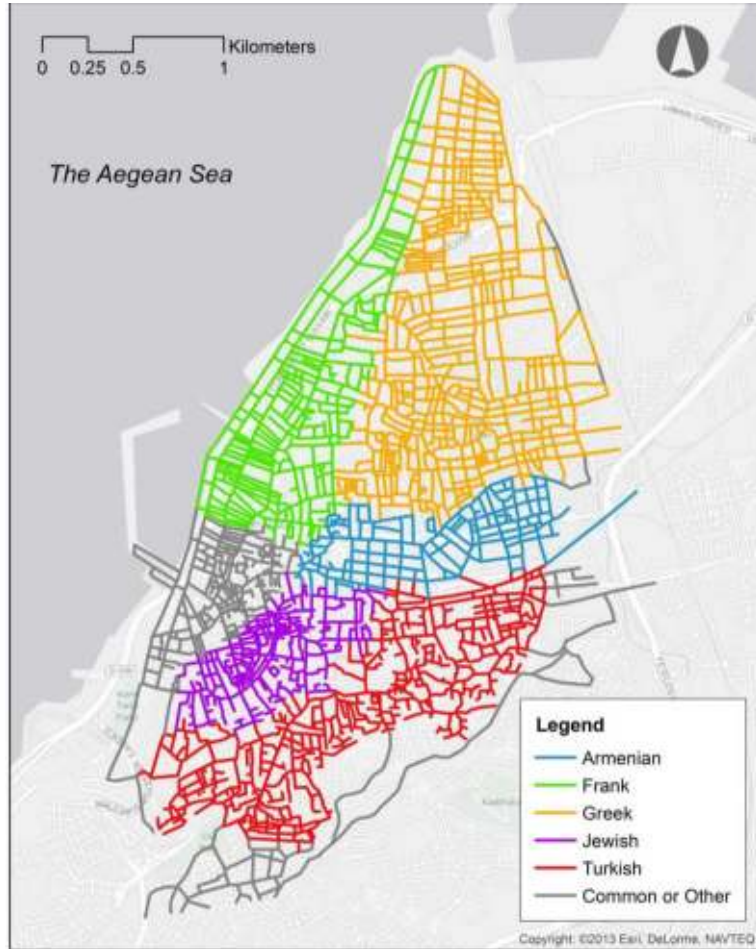
*Historical Map Analysis and Site Examination*

## *The Izmir Project*

“Izmir is home to a complex of adjacent ancient Synagogues constructed in a unique Sephardic architectural style, dating from the 16th century.”



# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS



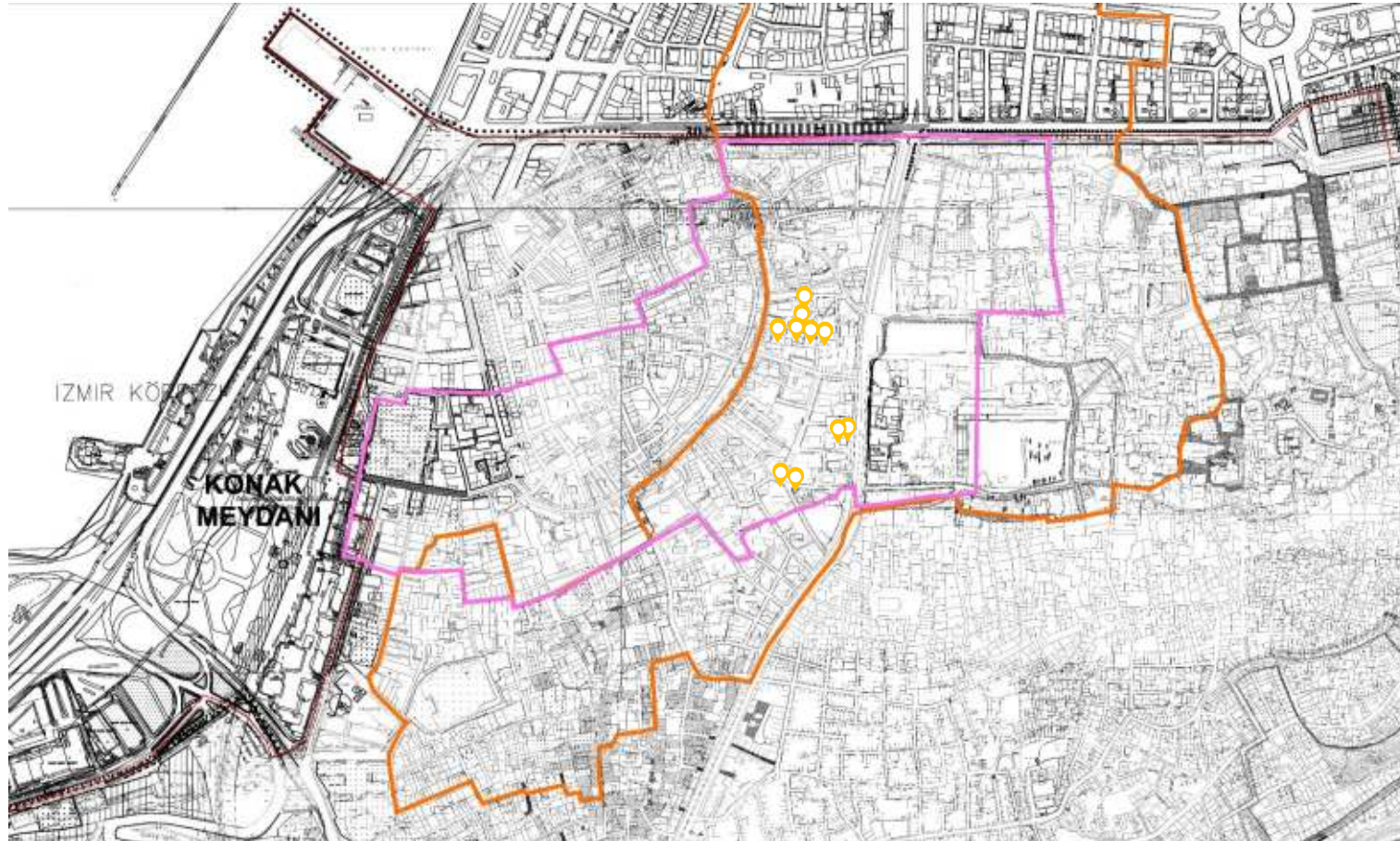
## The Jewish Quarter and its sub division

The original location of the Jewish quarter according to historical maps is located on the verge of the ancient port coastline silhouette (highlighted in magenta in the map).

Inside the quarter borders there are 6 sub district:

- The **Hahambasi** sub district – turned to the Guzelyurt in advanced periods .
- The **Sonsino** sub district - turned to the Orvisa / Sakarya in advance periods.
- The **Caves** sub district – turned to the Isareism in advance periods.
- The **Bene Israil** sub district- turned to the Istiklal in advance periods.
- The **Efrati** sub district – turned to the Gunes in advance periods.
- The **Hursidiye & Yenimahalle** - 20<sup>th</sup> century sub quarters scattered outside the original quarter boundaries.

# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS



-  Jewish Quarter boundaries according to K. Mert Cubukcu – 1796-1856
-  Jewish Quarter boundaries according to Siran Boran – pre 1887
-  Existing Jewish structures

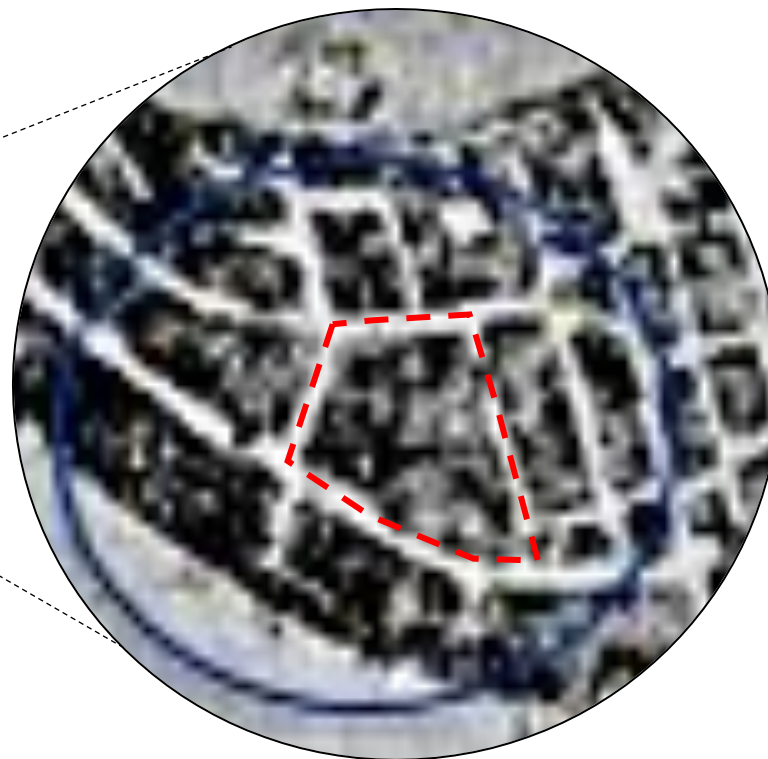
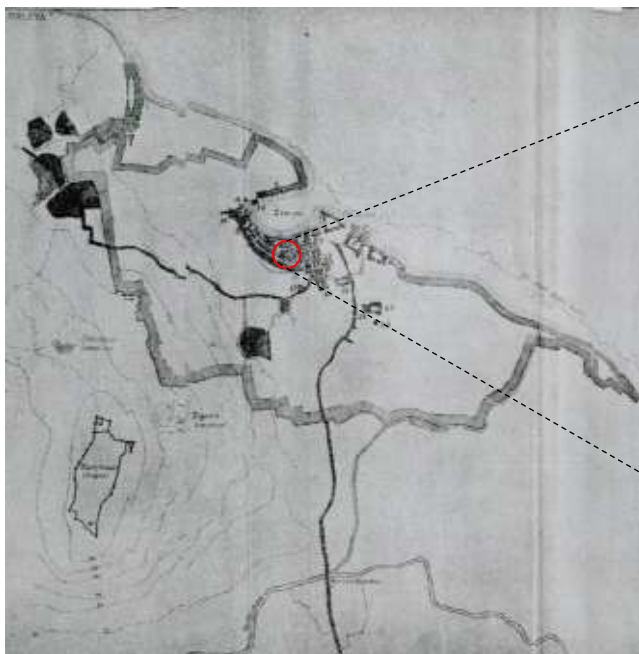
# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## List of cartography

No.	Map title	Year
1	Map of Symrin	18 <sup>th</sup> century
2	Mappa della Citta di Smyrne	1856
3	Plan de Smyrne	1876

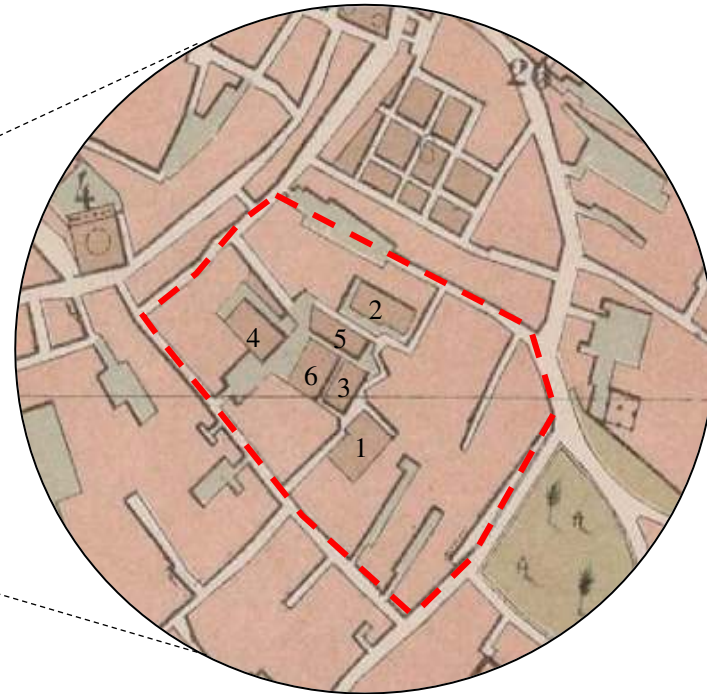
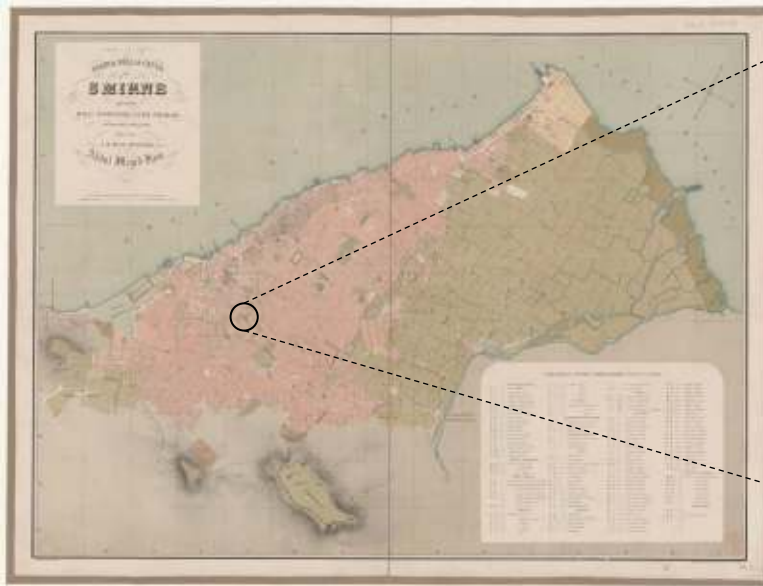
# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 1. ASIRDA IZMIR 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY



# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 2. MAPPA DELLA CITTA DEL SMYRNE 1856



**1**-Etz Hayim  
synagogue

**2**-Shalom  
synagogue

**3**-Hevra  
synagogue

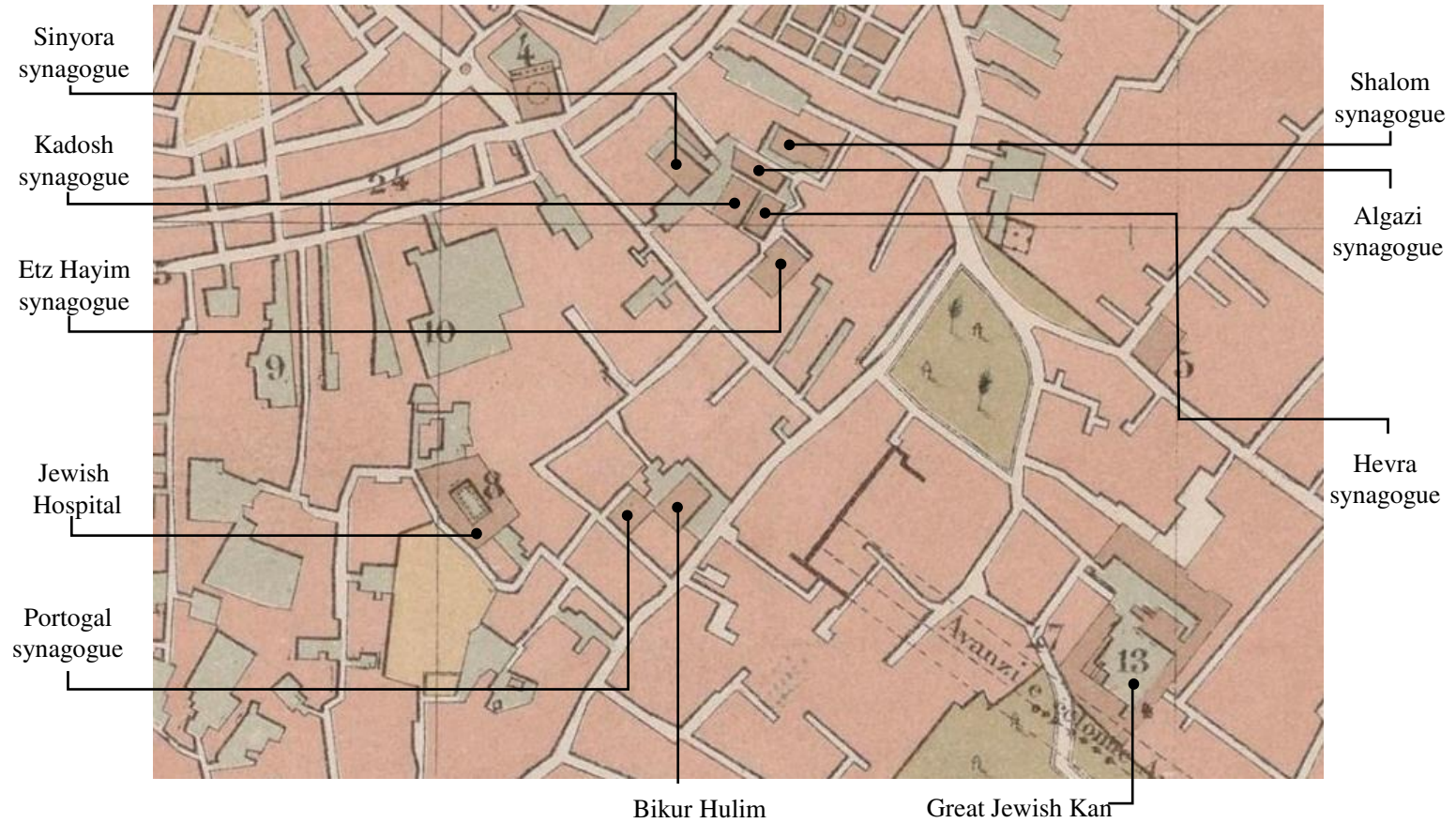
**4**-Sinyora  
synagogue

**5**-Algazi  
synagogue

**6**-Kadosh  
synagogue

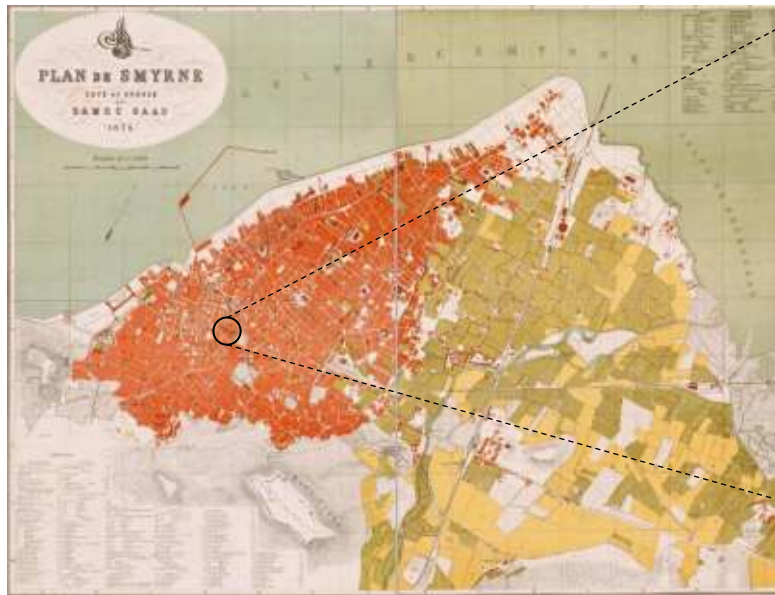
# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 2. MAPPA DELLA CITTA DEL SMYRNE 1856 - JEWISH QUARTER



# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 3. PLAN DE SMYRNE 1876



**d**-Etz Hayim  
synagogue

**b1**-Hevra  
synagogue

**b2**-Algazi  
synagogue

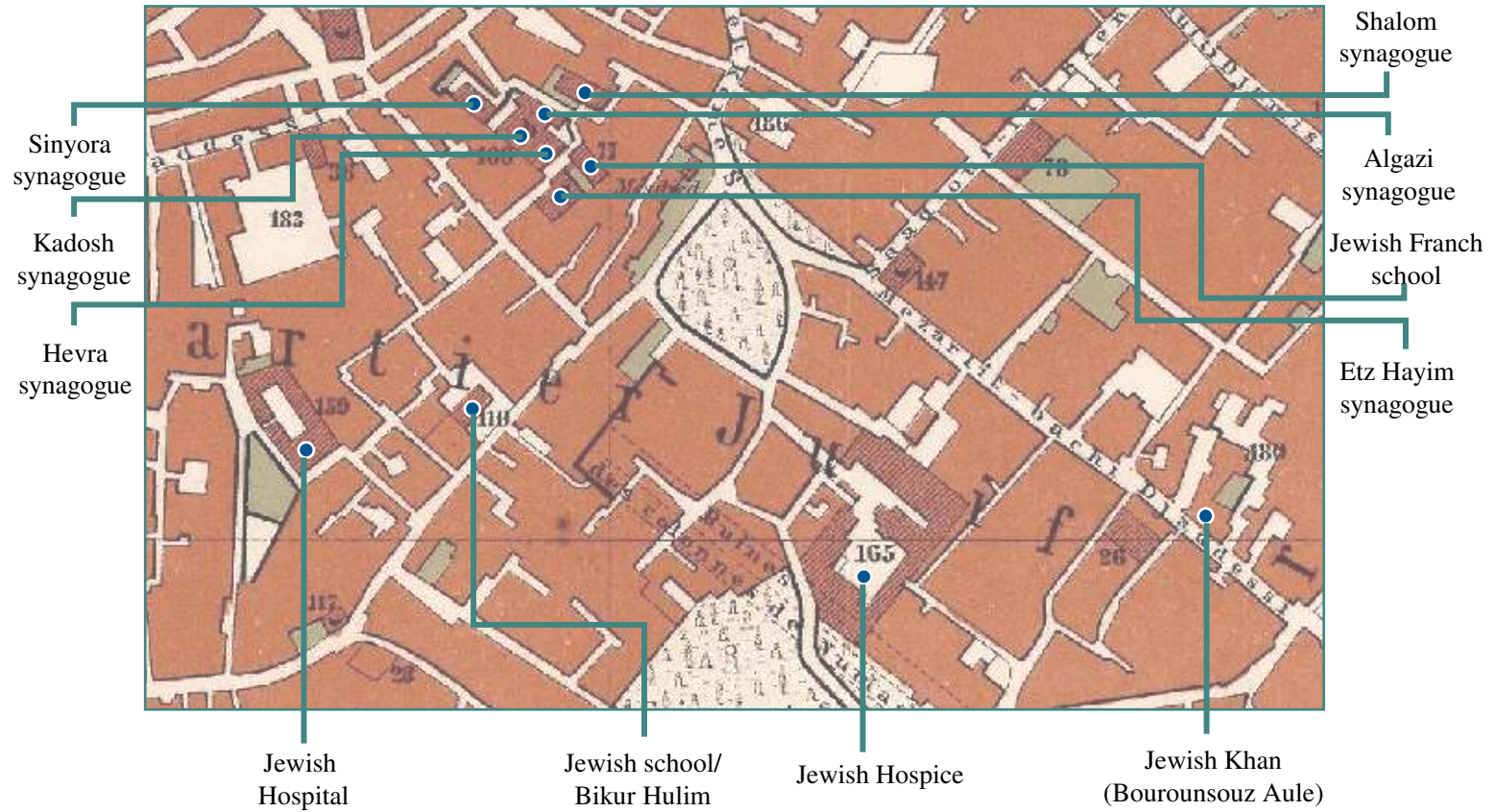
**c**-Shalom  
synagogue

**a**-Sinyora  
synagogue

**b3**-Kadosh  
synagogue

# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 3. PLAN DE SMYRNE 1876 - JEWISH QUARTER



# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 4. MAP DE IZMIR- BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY- JEWISH QUARTER



1-Etz Hayim  
synagogue

2-Shalom  
synagogue

3-Hevra  
synagogue

4-Sinyora  
synagogue

5-Algazi  
synagogue

6-Kadosh  
synagogue

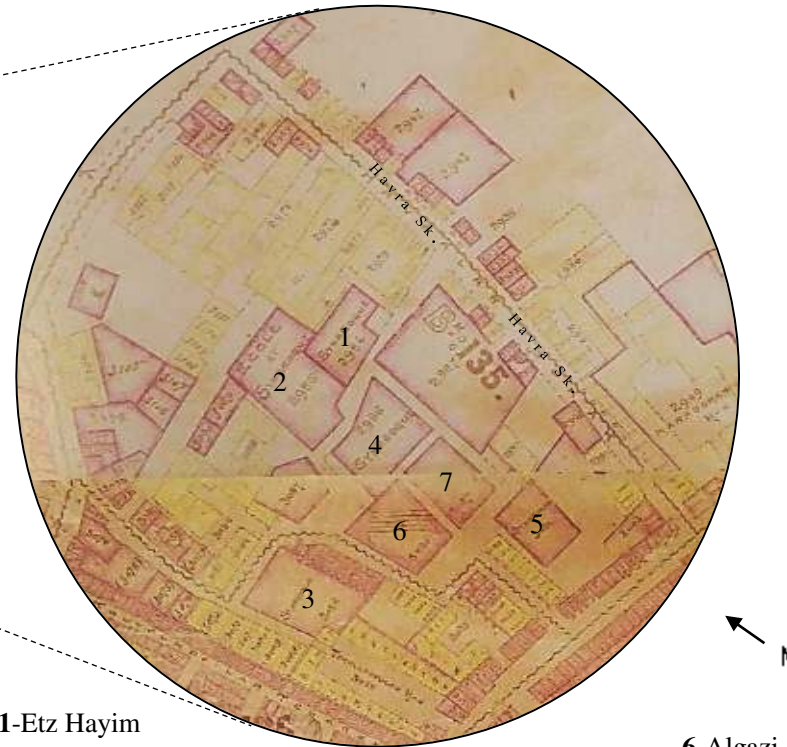
# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 4. MAP DE IZMIR- BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY- JEWISH QUARTER



# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

## 4. PLAN DE SMYRNE 1923 – SECTEURS EXISTANTS - JEWISH QUARTER



1-Etz Hayim  
synagogue

2-school of  
the Synagogue

3-Shalom  
synagogue

4-Hevra  
synagogue

5-Sinyora  
synagogue

6-Algazi  
synagogue

7-Kadosh  
synagogue

