

Reconstitution of the memory: Renovation of the Alsancak Cigarette Factory

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Abstract

In parallel to the evolution of the extents of conservation discipline, the place has been the prior subject regarding its historical, architectural, symbolic, and social values. Heritage places that create bonds between past and future and links between societies and their environments forefronts as a reaction to change and forget. Due to the bonds that are created by experiences, feelings, and witnesses, heritage places turn into memory places. However, regarding the changes in their urban and social environments, the meaning of these places transforms and reforms as the objectives of remembering and forgetting, power and disgrace, glory and loss. In this context, this study focuses on the creation and transformation of a memory place: the Alsancak Cigarette Factory, an urban reminder of the industrialization process and the socio-economic progress of the city. The factory, which was established in 1884 as a part of the industrial zone of Izmir, holds an important place in the collective memory in terms of tobacco production besides being a place of belonging for the employees and their families. After its closure in 2004, the factory remained idle and physically damaged, and its urban impact was weakened. In 2018, it was renovated as a cultural hotspot. With this study that defines the transformation process of the factory, the transformed meaning of the memory place, the impact of the intervention in this process and its new role in the urban identity is discussed.

Keywords

Collective memory, Heritage places, Industrial heritage, Memory place, Tekel Factory.

1. Introduction

In a world of rapid transformation, the living cycle, shaped by the pace of life, brings admirable innovations in science and technology while also posing risks due to the changes in our life routines and spatial expectations. The transforming life that reshapes expectations, aesthetic pleasures, and attitudes toward experiencing the physical environment has been an interdisciplinary discussion in the context of culture-space relations. These changes affect not only the collective but also the personal identities, and cause the weakening and even annihilation of the links between individuals and their environments. In order to overcome the risk of annihilation of identity, heritage places and their resilience comes to the forefront.

Heritage places are the traces of the past, a reaction to change and forget. Besides, they symbolized as the objects of power. As Silberman (2016, p. 33) states, government-protected heritage places become civic rituals while these cultural assets are renovated as commemorative places as symbols of a communal identity. Within the attempts of officializing heritage places, they become the representatives of a chosen past while becoming instruments to push one's history to the front or push it to the back to be forgotten. In other words, heritage places become crucial to create bonds to the past and to reproduce it as the roots of the future of societies. At this point, the phenomenon of memory stands out.

Connerton (2014) defines memory as a reconstruction of history, while Halbwachs (2017) points out its timelessness and interprets it as a reconstruction of the past and the future. Besides, the ability to constitute images, experiences, and rituals specific to each society helps to stabilize and convey that society's self-image (Assman, 1995). Thus, memories always need the present, a current image, or a place to reproduce the past (Sarilo, 2012) and the anticipated future.

The interrelation between the concepts of memory and place covers sensible links between place and society and also refers to the relation between

memory and experience. Considering the fact that each person's ideas and perceptions on a particular subject may vary; the cultural norms, expectations and pleasures, values and dislikes, and meaning differ from the other in any place. Brook (2000) states that the meaning of place is formed by the subjective perceptions of individuals shaped by cultural norms such as myths, beliefs, stories, and historical narratives, besides attitudes such as authentic, local, useful, and characteristic. In a similar vein, Cresswell (2014) defines the place as a location that shapes our minds with its loaded meanings. The unique experience of a person or a society related to a place and the meaning of it transforms into a memory that reminds the significant feelings, emotions, acts, and cultural past.

The perception of the place and the creation of memory are not only related to experience but also to the cultural background of the individual and the social, economic, and physical dynamics in which she or he lives. Pointing out the dynamic structure of the concept, Casey (1987) claims that memory is a way of redefining the past through each and every experience, and therefore each recall process creates a new memory.

Regarding the impact of the cultural environment, the process of remembering and forgetting is another key concern in the interrelationship of place and memory. According to Kamhi (2013), memory is a personal archive based on the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unaware of their transformation and constant reconstructions. In this regard, place can be used as a tool to lead society by recalling memories and experiences or creating new ones to forget the existing ones. Places that cover the artificial reminders or activities of current ideologies are strengthened by the images of these memories. In cases of a change of ideology, memory is recreated by organizing the place to be a venue for new experiences, producing new memories, and making society forget the previous experiences.

In this context, this study focuses on the transformation of a memory place, an industrial heritage place (Alsancak

Cigarette Factory) in Izmir which renovated as a cultural centre. Through the analyses on the transformation of this memory place, the article will seek answers to the following questions:

- What are the impacts of the reuse implementation on the urban role and the architectural character?
- Does the implementation strengthen the place identity and its role in the collective memory?
- Does the implementation improve the perceptibility and the meaning of the heritage place?

Depending on the aim and questions of the inquiry, the first step of the study is focused on the historical process of the place. Through the analyses on the urban role and the reorganized spatial order of the place, sustainability of the character and continuity of the meaning are to be examined. After then, the public consciousness and the perceptivity of the heritage components are examined. Depending on the findings of the inquiries and the interviews with the former and today's users, tools of remembering and the forgotten values are defined, while the transformed meaning of the place is questioned.

2. Methodology

The article investigates the transformation of the urban role, the character, the meaning, and the perceptibility of the memory place through a qualitative research method. To achieve this, the physical features such as the urban environment, the pattern of the campus of the Alsancak Cigarette Factory, and the architectural character of the buildings are analyzed. Besides, depending on the literature, the historical process of the heritage place is defined.

In parallel with the physical and historical features of the memory place, the social impact and the awareness related to the former meaning are questioned. To evaluate the intrinsic value of the factory as a memory place, a structured questionnaire was conducted. The questionnaire started with the inquiries to elicit demographic information from the participants to question the relation between the level of awareness and the age, gender, and affiliation. Following these, the aware-

ness of the participants to the history of the factory, its former and current functions, and spatial opportunities were questioned. Through the conducted questionnaires and the in-depth reviews, personal memories associated with the site, subjective attributes such as values, likes, and dislikes, the characteristic details they could recall from the factory's original state, and the impact of the restoration on participants' perceptions and recollections were decoded. Besides, through the identification of the participants, the characteristic details of the renovated place that echoed remnants from the original form were questioned. Concluding the questionnaire, participants were invited to express their ideological stance on the preservation of the factory's historical identity. Referring to the obtained data of the inquiries and the interviews, the transformed meaning, the tools of remembering, measures of the user satisfaction, and the perceiving continuity of the memory place are discussed.

Finally, the effect of the renovation implementation on the perceptibility of the authentic essence of the memory place is defined. Referring to the possible reverse impacts of the renovation implementations, a pivotal inquiry seeks to discern the deliberate act of 'forceful forgetting' by neglecting or marginalizing the traces of the collective memory or "an improved remembering" by highlighting the compounds of the memory and the unique features of the heritage. By identifying and comprehending the factors contributing to the cultural sustainability of the memory place, this research aims to proactively address the risks inherent in preservation endeavors and provide a foundation for formulating preventative measures within the discipline.

3. Constitution and transformation of the place

In parallel with the significant impacts on the trade, economy, and industrialization processes of the Ottoman Empire, the trade network had also been a significant factor in the transformation of the city of Izmir. The developments in maritime trade of the 19th century transformed Izmir

into a port city, while the coastal zone (Cordon) and the social structure were reconstructed. Moreover, the advancement of industry led to a shift in trade towards industrial products, contributed to the development of the city through import-export activities, and played a crucial role in the urbanization of the city.

The construction of railways that began in 1864 caused the fade of the traditional commercial zone and altered the urban layout. In parallel with the heightening impact of the Aydın railway and its central station in Punta, the construction of docks that occurred between 1867 and 1875 was a significant development not only for the trade capacity but also for the reformation of its surroundings (Köksal, 2018). Due to the need for industrial energy, the first gas company in Izmir was established in 1860. In 1892, a Belgian company installed a turbine alternator and a Kesstner boiler in the Daragaç area to meet the city's electricity demand. The commercial, industrial, and spatial development of the late 19th century led to the reorganization of the surroundings of Punta and the construction of the industrial zone of the city (Çetinkaya, 2015, pp.57-60). In this period, various structures such as the electricity factory, gas factory, ark industry, and cigar factory were established.

Besides the changes in the trade networks all over the Mediterranean, the agricultural product range of West Anatolia and the transportation opportunities were among the key factors in the transformed identity of the city of Izmir. The expansion of the railway network, which enabled a strong connection between the city and its surrounding provinces, led to an increase in the external trade of agricultural products. The key products of the region were grape, fig, and oak, while tobacco production was becoming one of the fundamental export products of the Ottoman period and kept its importance in the early republican period (Demir, 2019, pp.427-439).

Tobacco made its entry into Anatolia in the 1600s alongside foreign sailors and traders, and its economic impact kept on rising till the 19th cen-

tury (Çelik, 2016). With the increase in tobacco processing and cigarette production, Izmir became one of Turkey's significant industrial centers in the second half of the 19th century. The expansion of the railway network penetrating the city from Alsancak and Basmane Stations supported exports and made a significant contribution to Izmir's economy (Parlapan et al., 2023). Therefore, tobacco industry played a crucial role in Izmir's urban memory and the development process of that memory.

Regarding the administrative and financial impasse of the Ottoman Empire, the control of the tobacco trade as well as all the other financial tools of the Empire was granted to the Reji Administration, a consortium of the Ottoman Government and the representatives of Western countries. With an agreement signed on January 10, 1883, the government transferred the management of the tobacco and salt monopoly, along with all tax and sales revenues derived from tobacco, to the Reji Administration for a period of 30 years. Accordingly, the first two factories were established in Istanbul and Izmir in 1884, while two others were established in Adana (1885) and Samsun (1887).

Unfortunately, the granted authority led to exploitation of peasants and tobacco workers in the Reji capital, the taxes of the merchants were increased, and the gap encouraged tobacco smuggling (Öztürk, 2023). Though the Reji Administration established its own gendarmerie to prevent smuggling, violent conflicts erupted between producers and this organization, which resulted in fatal incidents and left significant marks on the tobacco history of the region (Yurtoğlu, 2021). On the other hand, the Reji administration developed the sales of Turkish tobaccos in western markets such as Germany, the Netherlands, and Denmark (Figure 1). In the first quarter of the 20th century, the increase in the importance of the Anatolian tobacco led to its worldwide recognition under the name Oriental Tobacco or Turkish Tobacco, and the global recognition of Izmir as a universal cultural benchmark (Peksüslü et al., 2012, pp.83-89).



Figure 1. Advertisement for Regie cigarettes (left, Orhun, 2024) and the cigarette box of the Selam Cigarette. (right, Powerhouse Collection)

3.1. Directorate Of Reji

Due to the formation of the industrial zone of the city, the Izmir Cigarette Factory was established on the southern edge of Punta Station in 1884 (Öztürk & Keskin, 2013, pp.94-97). Regarding its location, which is also quite close to the port and other industrial structures of the city, and the spatial quality of the campus, the cigarette factory played an important role in the social and economic development of Punta (Şimşek, 2006).

Despite its negative effects on the socio-economic structure of the empire, the privilege granted to the Reji administration continued until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Regarding the basic policies covering political, economic, and cultural independence that were implemented, the tobacco regime was nationalized in 1925. Due to the aim to manage agriculture, industry, and foreign trade from within the country and to allow the working classes to make choices against all ideological illusions, the Tobacco Monopoly was purchased from the Reji Administration, and all rights and obligations were transferred to the state (Nalçacı, 2023).

3.2. Reorganisation of the place and creation of the memory:

Alsancak Tekel Cigarette Factory

Despite the very strong worldwide impact of the industrial revolution, it had a weak impact on the Ottoman Empire. However, regarding its technological, social, cultural, and economic dimensions,

industrialization was taken as one of the prior goals in the Republican Period. The industrial structures were seen as a tool for the newly established state to get rid of economic dependency, and industrial facilities were built in many parts of Anatolia. Cigarette factories are among the important parts of this policy.

In the early years of the Turkish Republic, tobacco was not only one of the main export products but also one of the pioneers of industrialization, independence, and development policies of the country. However, with the 1929 economic crisis, there was a significant decline in agricultural production. In order to find ways to protect the traditional export products and to support producers, tobacco congresses were held in 1932 and 1934 (Yurtoğlu, 2021). Established in 1935, the General Directorate of Tekel was formed as a state institution to operate, manage, and prevent smuggling of state monopolies. This provided assurance regarding tobacco usage, production, and sales among the public, contributing to the development of the Tekel Industry. Moreover, through this institution, laborers, workers, and civil servants attained significant positions within the sector and nationwide (Köksal, 2018).

For the workers and civil servants who worked at Tekel for many years, the institution was not just a source of livelihood but also a significant memory space. They spent much of their time on the campus of the factory and had a say in their work areas. Moreover,



Figure 2. Above: Female tobacco workers of Tekel in the foreign press (Doğruel & Doğruel, 2000); Below: Cigarette boxes of Tekel (Gökçe Auction, Dec.2024; Gökçe Auction, Jan.2024; Bitmezat, Dec.2024)

regarding the social policies of the republic, employing women was a prior aim (Figure 2). In 1928, two-thirds of the total workforce consisted of women (Öztürk & Keskin, 2013, pp. 94-97). Thus, in addition to the importance of Tekel Factory within the economic structure of the republic, it was also a memory space that needed to preserve and transmit the feelings of trust, ownership, and uniqueness experienced by the citizens.

As Tekel factories are reorganized across the country, Alsancak Cigarette Factory has also restructured as a part of Tekel and took a leading role in Izmir's urban history and also in the development of storage functions around the port area (Karadağ & İncedere, 2020). Alsancak Tekel Cigarette Factory was a complex with an extremely important urban location on the main axis that directs the modernization process of Izmir. It was located adjacent to the historical Punta Train Station (Alsancak Train Station), which opened Izmir to the world economy and culture. Within the modernization and industrialization process of the Republic, the factory campus was

enlarged with the depots, technical units, and social spaces such as a dining hall and a nursery (Figure 3). The existence of the campus fabric, which is located between the highway and the railway, was highlighted with the main entrance gate and its significant sign. The Tekel sign that faces one of the main arteries of Alsancak has been an urban reminder not only for the staff of the factory and their families, but also for the citizens. Regarding the preservation strategies of the 1970s and the urban role of the campus, the factory complex was registered as a cultural asset in 1979, and the preservation status was defined by the Preservation Board decision taken in 1985.

By the late 1990s, within the economic policies of the government, the privatization process of the governmental facilities was begun, and the production capacity of the factories was decreased. In 2003, it was stated that permission should be obtained from the board for any physical intervention, functional change, or zoning application on the campus. With this decision, the campus was protected for its function within Tekel (Köksal,



Figure 3. Izmir Tekel Tobacco and Cigarette Factory / Entrance Courtyard. Above: Before and after 1929 (Köksal, 2018, p.69). Below: 1960-1980 (Erol Şaşmaz archive, 2014)

2018). Though the production capacity and the urban role of the factory were weakened, the production activities continued until 2004 (Gökşen et al., 2021). Following the cessation of its activities, Tekel was abandoned, and the complex fell into ruin. This situation diminished its impact on the collective memory of the city, rendering it occasionally recognizable only by its signage. The privatization process, which ended in 2008, left Tekel empty and unusable. Despite the obsolescence and disuse process of the factory, its legal preservation status played a significant role in the preservation of the complex until today (Gökşen et al., 2021).

In 2004, the alcohol department of Tekel's factories across the country was transferred to the consortium. With these privatization efforts, two factories in Şanlıurfa and Kırıkkale were closed after the tender, while eight more factories were closed in Ankara, Çanakkale, Diyarbakır, İstanbul, İzmir, Ürgüp, Yozgat and Acıpayam (Kencsoy, 2023). After the activities were stopped, the Alsancak Tekel Factory was abandoned, and the complex fell

into disrepair. This decline has reduced its impact on the collective memory of the city, sometimes making it recognizable only by signs. Tekel's nationwide cigarette division was sold to British American Tobacco in 2008. Following the sale, cigarette factories in İstanbul, Adana, Bitlis, Malatya and Tokat were closed, and only the Balıca Factory remained operational (Kencsoy, 2023).

3.3. Transforming the factory into a cultural place

In 2005, the Alsancak Tekel factory complex was allocated free of charge to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for use in cultural services. This decision marked the initial phase of the concept of repurposing the area as a cultural facility. In 2007, the protection status of the complex was recorded as a Group 2 Cultural Asset, and it was deemed appropriate to change the zoning plan without objections to the functional transformation (Köksal, 2018). The privatization process, which concluded in 2008, rendered Tekel's warehouses unusable, leaving them empty and abandoned. Despite the

factory's liquidation and subsequent disuse, the legal protection status has played a crucial role in preserving the complex to the present day (Gökşen et al., 2021).

During this period, issues such as the new function of the factory, method of renovation, and user group were under discussion. Alongside the central administration who owned the property, local authorities, associations of architects and urban planners, and academia were involved in these discussions. In line with this, a project proposing the conservation of the factory into an educational campus was presented to the committee in 2008. Köksal, who prepared an academic/scientific preliminary report in 2008, stated that the factory contains original details and materials, and it is still in a better state of preservation (Köksal, 2018). However, despite numerous meetings with relevant institutions, the project proposing the renewal of the factory complex as an educational campus could not be implemented due to the failure to obtain the approval of the regional Heritage Preservation Board.

In 2014, due to the decision of the Heritage Preservation Board, the 1/1000 scale zoning plan was changed, and the preservation approach related to the factory was reformulated as simple and comprehensive maintenance and repair. Regarding this, some interventions, such as the removal of the unqualified additions and the repair of the roofs of the two buildings facing the city, began. Unfortunately, the intervention stopped unfinished, leaving the buildings exposed to adverse nat-

ural conditions and causing significant damage (Köksal, 2018). The process of abandonment and the unsuccessful preservation attempt not only caused physical damage but also led to a decrease in the awareness of the factory as a memory place while causing the significance and value of the complex in the city and collective memory to diminish.

In 2018, another project was prepared for the renovation of the factory. The restoration project prepared by E-S Construction and Lift Architecture proposed to refunction the factory as a cultural center: Izmir Culture and Arts Factory. Far from the life of a production facility, the campus has turned into a cultural hotspot with its exhibition halls, libraries, workshop spaces, and a recreation area with the food and beverage venues (Figure 4).

Within the intervention, the main production building was renovated as an ethnography museum, while the warehouses were renovated into an art museum and a restaurant, workers dining halls were converted into conference halls, and work areas were converted into temporary exhibition spaces (Figures 5-7). However, these transformations caused some spatial fictions and also the annihilation of original traces. As the traces of the production activities, such as machines and other objects, were removed and no visual or audial information elements were used, the link of remembering has not been achieved. Despite the original meaning of these spaces as the integrated parts of the whole production activity, they now turned into more idle spaces that can be used and



Figure 4. Functional layout, Left: Before 2008, Right: 2025

perceived in fragments, and partially used spaces. The renovation of the factory also changed the original layout of the space and completely changed the life of the site. As the factory campus hosts new activities and experiences, spatial memory of the site is about to be transformed and reshaped.

Despite the new function of the factory, a collection that recalls the former life of the site is presented in a limited part of the exhibition (Figure 8). Within the halls of the Etnography Museum, some equipment, samples of the products, and photographs are exhibited. Unfortunately, considering the content of the collection and the spatial impact of it within the exhibition, this collection is far from providing information about the life and production process of its period.

4. Transformation of the meaning and the traces of memory

The transformation of the factory has not only affected the utilization and spatial values of the site but also the meaning and the traces of the memory. In order to decode the transformed meaning of the factory, questionnaires and indept reviews with 66 people from different ages have been made. Five of the participants were at the age of 18 and below, while 36 were between 18 and 35, and 25

were at the age of 35 and above. The findings of the inquiry pointed out the intricate interconnections between age, historical awareness, and evolving perceptions of the factory. As expected, a linear relationship has been observed between familiarity, emotional commitment, and age. It is obvious that participants over the roughly age of 35 have emotional bonds with the place and its former function, while the young ones (18–25) who were born after the dereliction of the factory are more likely to be acquainted with the current urban role as a cultural center. The interplay between participant age, historical progress, and the dual phases of the factory—abandonment and subsequent restoration—underscores the complexity of memory and perception. Older ones provide a valuable link to its historical past, while younger ones prioritize the spaces of the revitalized cultural center.

The survey data reveals a noteworthy balance in participants' exposure to the former state of the factory. Expectedly, while those acknowledging firsthand encounters have a better understanding of the factory's evolution over the years, the ones who experienced the former state recognize the building as a cultural center. The duality of perception of the community underscores the evolving nature



Figure 5. Main entrance and the iconic plague: Above: Main Entrance of site, Left: 2014 (Erol Şaşmaz archive), Right: 2025; Below: The current location of the original plague

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Figure 6. Then and Now: The Production Building / Ethnography Museum. Up & Middle-left: Lift-Es Construction archive in Köksal, 2018; Below-left: Doğruel & Doğruel, 2000, fig.23

of the cultural space in the absence of direct historical engagement. Besides, responses to the questions related to the original function of the factory reveal a lack of awareness. The majority of responses (43/66) show that the citizens recognize the site as “Tekel” or “Tobacco Factory,” while only a small group (2/66) is aware of the original identity of the site and recognizes the building that faces the city as “regie administration building” (Figure 9). Furthermore, a small minority (3/66) responded to the question as “oil production” or “governmental ironworks,” which was categorized as misinformation, and 18 of them declared that they have no idea. These responses point out a notable gap in the awareness of the citizens related to the history of the site and highlight the need for elucidating historical information surrounding the factory. As the responses varied to this inquiry, roughly a quarter of the

participants indicated their absence of information. With this, there were also small minority responses that were unfortunately. Responses taken as incorrect information covering views on the factory’s original use have included different usages such as “oil production” or “governmental ironworks.” The prevalence of such responses underscores the existence of misconceptions and the lack of historical information.

The inquiry also aimed to define the citizens’ memories related to the site and its urban role (Figure 10a). A substantial majority (45/66) of the responses reported a lack of personal memories connected to the factory, while some (13/66) put forward limited interactions with the factory, such as walking by its boundaries or perceiving the building through its urban facades, and some (8/66) present memories directly connected to the spaces of the factory. The quoted memories



Figure 7. Then and Now: Up: Offices & Production Building, 2018(Lift-Es Const. archive) / Atelier&Museum, 2025; Below: Warehouse, 2018(Lift-Es Const. archive) / Restaurant, 2024



Figure 8. The Old Tekel Memory Room and the collection.

vary from personal experiences with the spaces of the factory to parental connections, such as visiting the family member working there during the active years of the facility. The memories associated with the active years

of the faculty highlight the meaning of the site as belonging, collaboration, and safety. On the other hand, many of the responses (5/13) that were taken as “limited interactions” were connected to the abandoned years of the

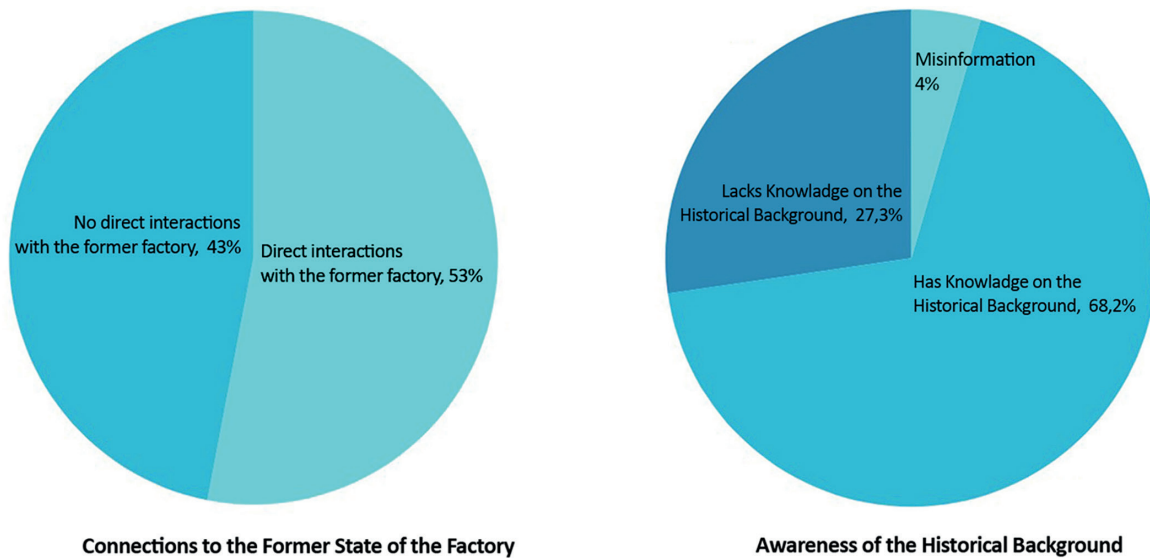


Figure 9. Public awareness regarding the history of the site.

factory and marked the place as unfair, dangerous, and unsecured. These nuanced experiences shed light on the multifaceted nature of the factory's impact on the citizens and the effect of the urban role in the creation of memory. Furthermore, the memories from the abandoned period introduce a temporal dimension, revealing not only positive feelings but also the challenges and negative perceptions associated with specific periods in the factory's history.

Another aim was to decode the awareness related to the architectural value of the site. A significant portion of the responses (34/66) revealed a notable absence of awareness regarding the architecture and the characteristic details of the factory. Conversely, a much smaller portion of responses (15/66) provided clear descriptions and details regarding characteristic features of the campus. Noteworthy among these were the expansive size of the factory and the stone garden walls crowned with steel fencing, while the most distinctive and recognized aspect of the factory is remarked as the steel signboard located at the main gate bearing the corporate identity of Tekel. On the other hand, a minor portion of responses (17/66) recalled the abandoned years of the factory and highlighted its deserted state surrounded by the intense urban environment. Although these responses pointed out the state of being neglected and emphasized the impact of time on the factory, the common recollection regard-

ing the steel signboard was stated. This unravels that, regardless of the level of awareness and remembering, the "Tekel" signboard is the most prominent feature of the factory in the collective memory of the citizens' (Figure 10b).

The findings of the inquiry also put forward the user's remarks related to the renovation implementation, the new use, and the reminders of the memory place (Figure 10c). Through the responses, it became evident that a significant majority had indeed visited the factory after the renovation implementation. A noteworthy group consisting of students and researchers highlighted their periodic visits for their academic studies, as the new cultural center provided an ideal environment to study and research. Despite the user's satisfaction related to the study places, a majority (28/66) express their difficulty in naming the specific feature of the current state of the place. This remark underscores the fact that the renovation had transformed the space into an educational hub and weakened the perception of the factory as an industrial heritage site. The rest of the responses (32/66) provided feedback appreciating the modern additions to the site, including the museum, library, and cafes, among the admiration for the landscaping. However, even the answerers of these responses revealed a lack of understanding regarding the industrial past and the original identity of the site. It is evident that the new functions and amenities have effec-

tively overshadowed the recognition of the limited unique features of the industrial heritage site, even less some expressed their dissatisfaction and worries regarding the annihilation of the industrial character of the place. It is also remarkable that all the remarks regarding the weakening industrial character of the place corelated with the removal of the iconic “Tekel” signboard, which further underscores the value of the signboard as the characteristic feature of the factory and the significant reminder of the memory place.

Despite the responses underscoring the lack of reminders of the historic industrial character of the place, a smaller but significant portion of responses (18/66) asserted that the volumetric forms of the buildings indicate resemblances to the original place. However, these assessments overlook the demolition of worker houses that occurred prior to the restoration efforts and show the lack of historical knowledge related to the spatial features of the site. Besides, the inability to discern the historical traces within the current structures of the factory underscores the disconnection between the current and the original state of the place.

Lastly, the responses regarding the remembrance and the perception of the original state of the factory displayed a notable divergence among the participants. A roughly quarter of the responses (16/66) expressed their pleasure about the implementation and underlined their preference for focusing on the contemporary and functional aspects of the site rather than its historical features. However, almost the rest of the participants (47/66) prioritized the preservation and remembrance of the original state of the factory, emphasizing its unique values and historical significance. Besides, a small group (3/66) reported that the current state of the factory already sustains sufficient similarity to the original state, negating the need for additional measures and preservation efforts. To sum it up, the varied responses emphasize the complexity of the opinions of the community regarding the remembrance and preservation of the original factory (Figure 10d). The differing perspectives contribute to the broader discourse on

the balance between historical preservation and adaptive reuse, reflecting the diverse attitudes towards the significance of industrial heritage in the context of evolving societal priorities.

5. Conclusion

Historical structures are important not only for their architectural and historical value but also as reminders of past lives and experiences. Historical industrial buildings, in addition to their role in reminding us of the advancements in knowledge, technology, and production systems, also draw attention with Tekel their reflections on socio-economic development. In this context, the Alsancak Tekel factory, as a reminder of the industrial and socio-economic development of Izmir, has been one of the memory places of the city.

Within the transformation process of the Alsancak Tekel Cigarette Factory and its urban environment, the physical environment of the factory and the experiences they offer have produced spatial memories regarding the industrialization and modernization process of the city of Izmir. Regarding the questionnaires and the in-depth reviews that were conducted with 66 persons, the traces of the heritage place in the urban memory of the citizens and the retention of the place memory have been disclosed.

The findings of the inquiries point out that the renovation implementation that transformed the abandoned site into a cultural center strengthened the environmental impact of the factory and recreated its urban identity. It is certainly understood that due to the abandonment of the factory, the heritage place has been forgotten or even not known by the citizens. However, the renovation and re-functioning have transformed the site into an urban core and created awareness.

In the framework of the continuity of architectural value of the factory and the preservation-utilization balance, the renovation of “Alsancak Cigarette Factory” stands as a commendable achievement. The endurance of the integrity of this historical place and the strengthened environmental impact and utilization values are the causes for

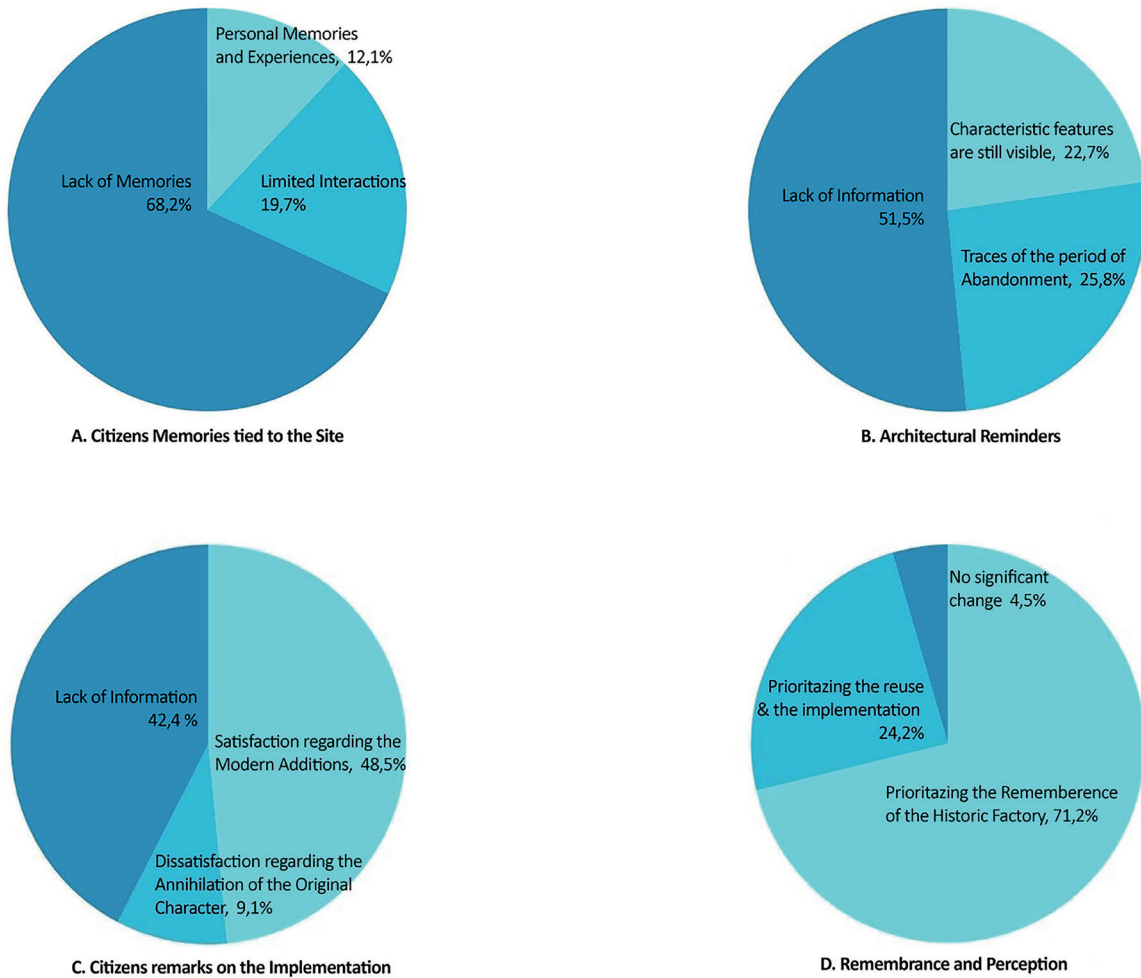


Figure 10. Citizens' memories related to the site (10a) & architectural reminders (10b), Citizens' remarks on the implementation (10c) & the remembrance of the character (10d)

gratitude. The adaptability of the factory to serve contemporary needs reinforces its relevance as a living heritage place, ensuring its continued contribution to the cultural and educational life of İzmir.

On the contrary, the socio-cultural dynamics of the present day cast an undeniable shadow over Alsancak Tekel Cigarette Factory as a memory place with traces in the collective memory. As generational shifts unfold, the intrinsic connection to the bygone era gradually fades and the memories once embedded within the factory become increasingly elusive. The spaces that once bore witness to these memories now exist in an altered state, lost and indiscernible within the contemporary framework. Besides, due to the annihilation of the reminders that weakened the links between the collective memory and the place, the memory space has been damaged, lost its original quality,

and transformed. As a result, despite the strengthened environmental value of the site, the meaning of the factory as a memory place of the cities' past and the reminder of the historical industrial production of it has been forgotten.

The participant statements underlined that the youth, as the major group of current users who have been untouched by the historical nuances of the old factory, lack the shared experiences that defined its original state. Unfortunately, the renovation implementation seems to have overlooked the imperative to preserve the intangible aspects of the factory. Although some significant reminders, such as the iconic plague and the equipments, have been preserved and presented to the visitors, the location and presentation of these assets are not sufficient to understand the historical value of the place or to perceive them as the prima-

ry components of the heritage. It may be assertive to evaluate the renovation approach as a deliberate act of forceful forgetting, but it is possible to take it as a lack of intentional remembering.

Today, there seems a risk to perceive the site as a cultural area produced by the renovation of a historical complex rather than a memorial space that recalls a specific period of the city, the industrialization efforts, and the socio-economic structure of its time. Urgent and deliberate actions are imperative to rectify this trajectory, ensuring that the factory's legacy endures not merely as a restored structure but as a living testament to the shared history and cultural heritage of İzmir. The challenge lies not only in preserving the physical remnants but also in actively cultivating a collective consciousness that cherishes and perpetuates the memories intrinsic to the factory's original state.

Addressing the issues surrounding the fading memories of the Alsancak Tekel Cigarette Factory and revitalizing its historical identity is still to be achieved with relatively straightforward approaches. It is crucial to enhance the perceptibility of the industrial character and the corporate identity of the factory. The first step can be to relocate the iconic "Tekel" signboard to its original location rather than its current place, where it is so hard to be noticed and to enlarge the exhibition of the original facilities so far as possible. This singular act has the potential to serve as a powerful reminder and acknowledgement of the factory's rich history. Placing the signboard at the main gate would not only preserve the memories of those who have experienced the old factory but also serve as an educational beacon for the new generation, imparting knowledge about the site's historical significance.

It is also important to expand the collection of the original features of the industrial process. Besides, the original function of the buildings and the life they covered shall be informed by highlighting the original features, such as architectural elements, equipments, and materials, while informing about the transformation process through informative techniques like information

panels, photographs, testimonies, and documentaries.

By taking these decisive steps, the implementation can transcend its current limitations and actively contribute to the continuity of the factory's legacy. It represents an opportunity to bridge the gap between the historical and current states, fostering a deeper connection between past and present for both long-time residents who cherish the factory's history and newcomers who may be unaware of its industrial heritage value.

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