



A Transformation Story in Southern Turkey on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage: The Tokacli (Hatay) Olive Oil Museum

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how the olive oil factory in Altınözü, Hatay, which has kept its original features but lost its functionality, was conserved and transformed into a museum. It explores the history of olive oil production in the region as well as the link between this history and the region it took place in. This study focuses on the refunctoning, refurbishment, and redesign of the factory as a museum. Within this scope, all the stages that comprise this process were examined, for the building itself was intended for exhibition after restoration, just like the entire process of olive oil production. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of restitution and restoration in the transformation process which aimed to put the olive oil mill, which is a cultural property, into use again. Apart from designing the museum as a mill which functioned in the past and transferring knowledge only in this direction, the purpose was to offer a holistic approach and emphasize the obvious effect of the olive and olive oil on the culture. The museum is situated in the only Arabic-Orthodox Christian district in Turkey, where the locals have tried for many years to maintain the olive tasting tradition known as 'zinnane'. This study examines the sustainable development and transformation processes those cultural properties go through by focusing on the redesign of the oil factory in Hatay-Altınözü as a museum and the effect of this transformation on the region as a tourist destination.

Keywords: olive museum, cultural heritage, industrial heritage, Hatay

INTRODUCTION

This article aimed to ensure that traditional olive oil production mills, which have witnessed the development of archeological and industrial heritage in Turkey, are properly protected and used without causing any harm to their cultural value. More specifically, the objective of this study is to present a different approach to the Tokacli olive museum in Altınözü, Hatay, and to the protection of the cultural heritage concerned. The main idea underlying this different approach is to tell the audience the story of a local identity in the place where it was born through a poetic ritual.

Nowadays, museums are being constructed in the Mediterranean region, particularly in Croatia, Greece, the Aegean Islands, and the coastal towns in western Anatolia in Turkey in order to trace the history of olive oil culture. The overall objective of these museums is to demonstrate the oil processing techniques of the past to today's audiences under appropriate conditions. A common feature of these museums is that their main themes are fed by ethnographic objects related to the olive business and olive oil extraction technologies.(Gür, 2017) These two main themes aside, it has been observed that these museums are deficient in showing the economic and religious effects of the olive and olive oil on the living culture. Therefore, this study aimed to help sustain the deeply rooted living cultures that have been formed around the olive in the region.

Turkey is one of the places where olive farming began, and the Hatay- Altınözü province in the south of Turkey has hosted several olive oil production facilities for centuries. This study aimed to explore the historical development of these buildings, which have an important place in cultural heritage, document their current status, determine the possible interventions aimed for their protection, and make suggestions about their refunctoning



and use. One of the objectives of this study is to sustain and protect the cultural richness of the region. Thus, the aim was to exhibit the cultural heritage to visitors and particularly to younger generations while offering a new cultural and economic entity to the society.

DISCUSSION

Olives and the Province of Hatay-Altınözü

The olive tree is amongst the oldest known cultivated trees in the world.(Liphschitz et al., 1991) In the past, it was a symbol of friendship and peace among nations. As early as the 7th century BC, winners of the Olympic games were awarded a wreath of olive branches.(Kapellakis et al., 2008)

In antiquity, the olive permeated every area of life in the Mediterranean world. It was used not only in cooking and alimentation but also in medical and religious rituals; it also had an important place in personal hygiene, preparation of scents, and lighting.(Tyree & Stefanoudaki, 2015) Particularly in Homer's works, there is frequent emphasis on the sacredness of olive oil and the wisdom it brings as well as its use in the purification of the human soul and the cleansing of the human body.(Clodoveo et al., 2014)

Archeological finds have shown that the olive was first introduced to the culture and farmed in the eastern coastal regions of the Mediterranean, namely southern Anatolia, Syria, Israel, and Lebanon.(Hadjisavvas, 1992) It is known that olive oil production was an important activity in the ancient city of Antiocheia, which was one of the most significant culture and trade centers of the eastern Mediterranean since the Hellenistic period, and olive oil was exported from Antiocheia to the Aegean Basin, the eastern Mediterranean, and Egypt.(van Wijngaarden, 2002) The ancient city of Antiocheia is now in Hatay, one of the southernmost cities in Turkey. Throughout the centuries, olive farming and oil olive extraction have been important activities in the region and were developed incessantly.

In today's Hatay, olive farming and olive oil production are mostly concentrated in the plateaus of Altınözü, a town in the north of the province and on the hills and slopes surrounding Asi Valley and Asi Delta. Altınözü has the highest number of olive oil trees in the province, and in this olive-rich region there are olive oil production facilities which have been operating for centuries or stopped operating at some point in the past.

Forty-three olive mills have been found in the many archeological excavations that have been conducted in Hatay. It has been discovered that Altınözü hosts the highest number of olive mill remains. Thus, it can be concluded that Altınözü was the richest part of Hatay in terms of olive farming in antiquity, just as it is now. The settlements where the mills were found date back to the Late Roman and Byzantium periods, which points to a long history.(Pamir, 2008)

Altınözü Tokaçlı: The History of Olive Mills

One of the oldest olive oil production facilities in Hatay is in the district of Tokaçlı in Altınözü. Tokaçlı is 26 km from Hatay and 2 km from the centre of Altınözü. The mill is right at the centre of Tokaçlı, which is surrounded by olive gardens (Figure 1).

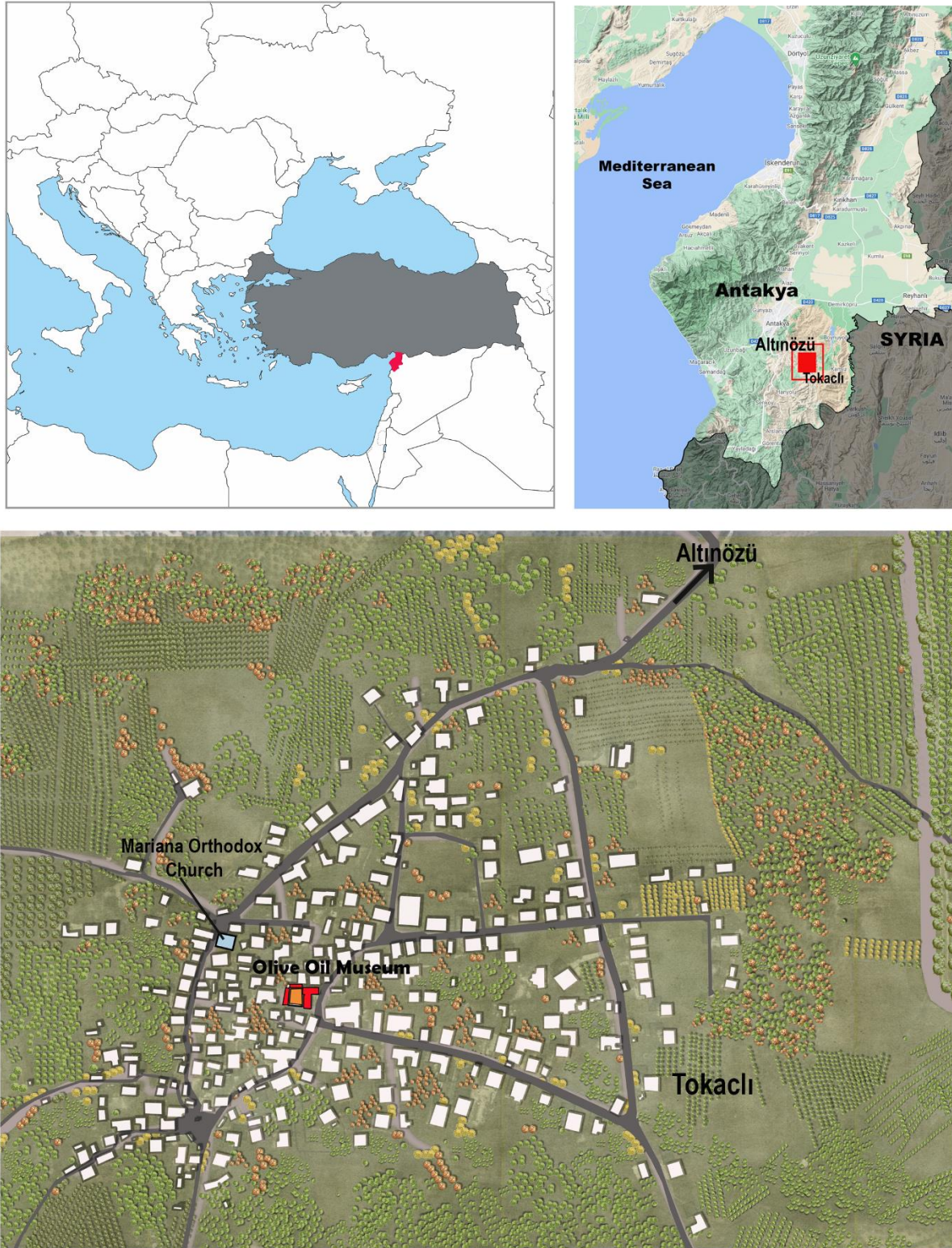


Figure 1. The location of the Hatay Altınözü olive mill

Although there is limited information regarding the original construction of the mill, it is understood that it changed over time and expanded with the addition of new units when needed. It is probable that the mill has a long history considering its stone mill, olive press, pools, and channels. In fact, at the archeological diggings in Yunushan, which is 6 km from this location, the unearthed olive mills date back to the Late Roman and Early Byzantium



periods. It should be noted that the stone mill in these olive mills is similar to the one in Tokacli.

Situated in a geography where Eastern and Western cultures meet, Hatay is a multicultural city where people from diverse religions and faiths live. The city has protected its multiculturalism throughout history, and now there are several religious communities and ethnic groups in the city. (Doğruel & Leman, 2009) Tokacli, the subject of this study, embodies such a diverse profile.

Tokacli is the only Arabic-Orthodox Christian district in Turkey. Mariana Orthodox Church, which is registered as cultural heritage by the Ministry of Culture, is very close to the olive oil museum. Although its exact date of construction remains unknown, the church is estimated to have been built in the second half of the 12th century. (Emir & Yüksel, 2016) It is apparent that the main walls of the olive mill, which date to its second development phase, are similar to the walls of the church; therefore, it is thought that the mill was actively used in the same period as the church. In fact, churches used to have their own mills from the early Byzantium period to the Ottoman period; these mills were used as a sort of business. (Hadjisavvas, 1992) Likewise, the olive mill situated in a wide square in Tokacli was operated by the priests of the church for many years. The church notebooks in Anatolia are important archival documents that contain significant historical information. In the Ottoman period, the church notebooks used to cover the records of imperial orders about the repair and expansion of the religious and public buildings that belonged to non-Muslim communities such as churches, synagogues, cemeteries, and schools and the operation of the businesses inside them. (Satis, 2012) This olive mill is mentioned in the church notebook of Tokacli Orthodox Church. The oldest record about the mill is following the 1872 Antakya earthquake in which mention is made of the parts of the building that were demolished in the earthquake. The same record also contains information regarding the quantity of olives stored in the mill.

As observations carried out in the mill and an evaluation of the current traces show, except for the replacement of manpower by steam power in 1954 and the addition of some offices and a decantation unit, the original core of the mill building was not subjected to substantial changes.

The olive mill, which shows the socio-economic status of Altınözü in the past, expanded over the years with the addition of olive storage yards, half-open units, a solid fuel production facility, and other storage yards and service units. Having grown from a small mill to a factory, it employed a great number of workers when it was active, and thus left a permanent mark on the memory of Altınözü and the locals. However, the olive mill gradually lost its importance as a result of urbanization, migration, and the construction of more modern olive oil factories. It was eventually abandoned in 1975 and left to lie idle.

The Valuation of the Tokacli Olive Mill as Cultural Heritage





Cultural heritage is a symbol and proof of the existence, identity, and continuity of humankind, societies, and cultural groups that form societies. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage covers historical, documental, aesthetic, artistic, symbolic, social, economic, religious, spiritual, and even political values.




Cultural heritage can be protected in all its forms and historical periods depending on the extent of the value that is attributed to it. Any judgement on the authenticity of a cultural heritage product is based on the appreciation of its value, its interpretation in relation to its initial design and added qualities, its contextualization in history, and an understanding of its historical meaning; such a judgment is also related to the form and material of the product as well. (Truscott, 2014) The protection of cultural heritage in all its forms and historical periods is directly related to the reliable and correct understanding of information

sources. The authenticity of cultural heritage is related to the understanding of all aspects of these sources of information.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) emphasizes the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage sites as they evaluate the criteria that cultural heritage sites must meet from the historical, artistic, scientific, ethnological, and anthropological perspectives. At the Nara conference, ICOMOS decided that the definition of authenticity must cover elements like the function of the heritage, its location and setting, its traditional management systems, and even intangible aspects like its spirit and feeling (ICOMOS, 1994). (ICOMOS, 1994) Once the updated Nara document was accepted by UNESCO, the criteria about the protection value were included in UNESCO's application guide in 2005. (UNESCO, 2005)

Table 1, which aims to determine the conservation values of the Tokacli olive production facility, offers a valuation of the mill based on the criteria defined by UNESCO.

CONSERVATION VALUES			
Authenticity	Location	In the region where olive farming started in the world	
	Date of design	Structure having historical layers that reflect Roman, Byzantium, Ottoman and early industrial periods	
	Material and craftsmanship	Rubble coursed stonemasonry representing the features of the period	
Integrity	Integrity with structural and architectural elements	The layout plan having a many-body tract and functional yard	
	Continuity with the environment and landscape	The harmony of olive trees and the natural setting	
Historical value	Link with an event, a person and/or an institution	The Orthodox Christian Community playing a role in all the periods the mill went through	
	Oldness of the urban, rural and industrial heritage element	The mill where the first steam power was used for olive oil production in the region	
Documental value	Living culture of the society	Olive being a part of human life for 2000 years in this region	
	Information about the technology used in the construction of the building	Construction technique, space setup, authentic roof construction and existing authentic woodwork	
Aesthetic and	Aesthetic appeal reflecting the period	Traditional regional architecture reflecting the change in times	

	Structural aesthetics and craftsmanship	Rubble coursed walls, doors with pointed arch crowns, woodworking in the hipped roof	
Rarity – uniqueness-value	The only structure in its own kind that has survived to date	The only mill in the region that has been conserved and still has traces from the period it was constructed	
Use Value	The structure is conserved while it is in use	Because it now serves as a museum, its conservation will be a sustainable effort	
	The value added to the structure because of its new use	More awareness about the building after the restoration	

Instead of designing olive oil museums only as mills left over from the past and transferring knowledge only in this way, it would be more useful to have a holistic approach that emphasizes the effect of the olive and olive oil on the culture. Such an approach would also add to the functionality of olive oil museums. Having managed to protect its diverse religious and spiritual values for long years in a country where the majority of the population is Muslim, Altınözü-Tokaçlı also preserved its authentic traditions nourished by a life that relies on olives. For example, the ceremony called 'zinnane' has been held for many years to pay tribute to the olive. In the ceremony, a piece of thin village bread is wetted with the first olive oil produced right after the olive harvest. The ceremony starts in the small hours of the morning, and the oldest member of the household recites prayers (Psalm 142) from the Bible and gives thanks to God. Nothing but olive oil and bread is eaten at breakfast. This type of breakfast is still prepared at certain times of the year by Orthodox households in Tokaçlı. This tradition, which can be evaluated as an intangible cultural heritage, should be protected and maintained for the region itself.

The valuations demonstrate that Altınözü Tokaçlı olive mill, which has cultural, archeological, architectural, and industrial value, must be protected. With all its cultural importance, this place must be conserved for the sake of the present and future generations, considering the principle of intergenerational equity. If this already valuable structure is attributed new functions without any harm to its architectural style and form, it will be even more valuable.

Museum Design Process

The olive mill in Altınözü-Tokaçlı has borne witness to the evolution of olive oil extraction methods throughout the centuries in Hatay; therefore, it is a cultural heritage that must be conserved even though it has lost its functionality. Conservation of cultural heritage and its transference to future generations is a prerequisite for forming a society. In today's world, museums are the only institutions that help societies protect their cultural identity and pass it on to the next generations. Museums and cultural sites are concrete witnesses to the togetherness of societies and show their continuity.(Benedetti, 2012)



The museum world has evolved a great deal over the years, both in terms of its functions and through its materiality and the main elements upon which its work is built. The One deals with the preservation, protection and research of heritage, and the other reveals and conveys its important values and character, as well as the underlying universal theme. Museum processes the objects that make up the collection.

The 'New Museology' approach started to gain popularity in the 1980s. It argued that instead of being a place of static exhibitions, museums should become more interactive. (Mairesse et al., 2009) In this context, in addition to major museums that are visited by large numbers of people, local and small-scale museums which contribute to the transference of knowledge across local societies have started to spread. In local museums, instead, the scientific languages of museology, and the narrative ones of museography, can fruitfully work together. (Benedetti, 2012) One deals with the preservation, protection and research of heritage, and the other reveals and conveys its important values and character, as well as the underlying universal theme.

In addition, local museums serve as a physical space of civilian representation, a place where the bonds that form the society can be fostered, and the elderly and youth of a given locality can take pride in their traditions and cultures together. In this sense, they provide an important empowerment opportunity for the locals. Such a collective harmony is vital to enable local identities and small communities to survive at a time when cultural differences seem to be threatened and eventually eliminated by the tendency of globalization. In this context, every single museum is an opportunity to present the story of a local tradition through contemporary tools and languages. Therefore, museums need to seize this opportunity to prove their sustainability, aliveness, and competitive power. Because of the competition and diversification in museology, museums have been engaged in an effort to diversify their functions and differentiate themselves. (Tobelem, 1997) As museums make increased efforts in this direction, the number of museums working in different categories is increasing, too. One of these categories is gastronomy.

Because of the increasing interest in gastronomy tourism, gastronomy museums have become very important to teach domestic and international tourists about the values related to a certain cuisine. Offering information on the history, production, preparation, and presentation of food as well as the tools and utensils used in these processes, gastronomy museums are important indicators of the development of gastronomy. (Hjalage & Hjalage, 2012)

Tokaçlı has a cultural value due to its folkloric features enriched by its ethnic and religious diversity. The locals' cultural link with olives and olive oil has directly affected their dietary habits. It is necessary to protect such tangible and intangible cultural values, transfer them to future generations, and ensure their sustainability. It is considered that a museum is an important tool in the conservation and presentation of the gastronomy culture of the region.

The Tokaçlı olive museum, which was designed as a local museum in line with the new museology approach, reveals the evolution of olive oil production over time and the effects of local living habits on this evolution. To evaluate this old olive mill, which has an authentic architecture, as a museum, there was a need to prepare relieve, restitution, and restoration projects.

Relievo, Restitution, and Restoration

It is essential to refunction historical structures that cannot maintain their original functions in the contemporary world so that they can be protected. Refunctioning projects aim to conserve the values of historical buildings as tangible and intangible cultural heritage and to transfer their authentic architectural integrity on to the new generations. (Jokilehto, 2006)



This study covers the preparation and application of the relieve project, which documents the beginnings of the structure, the restitution project, which shows its evolution over time, and the restoration project which explains the technical interventions to be made in line with the suggested function.

While the structure was being designed so that it could be reused and its cultural heritage values could be protected, the following points were taken into consideration: the exhibition of architectural values, the integrity of the structural system, the quality of the new additions, and the requirements of the new function. The holistic conservation approach put forward in this study supports the idea of protecting and sustaining authentic interactions as much as possible. Based on this idea and within the framework of the restoration of historical structures, an effort was made to transfer knowledge about the already lost intangible cultural heritage elements to visitors via different tools and technological opportunities.

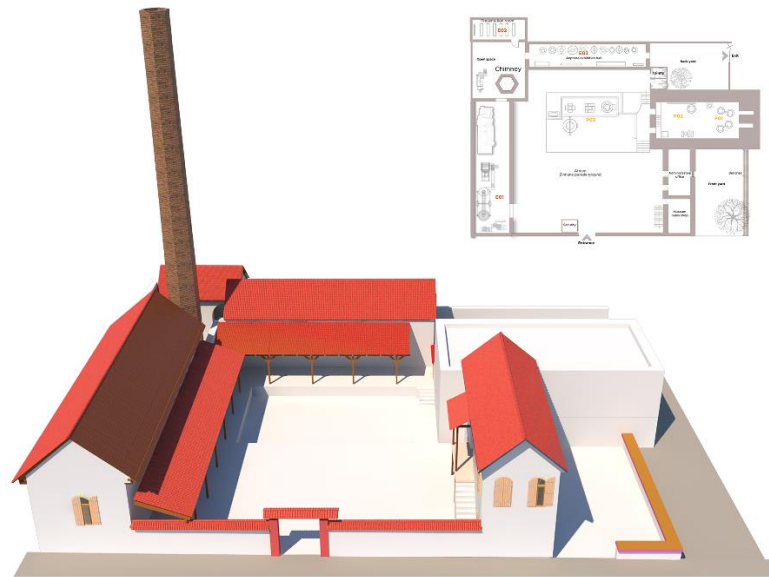
The olive oil factory was subjected to an architectural analysis and the building survey was done. Also, restitution proposals, period analyses, and a restoration project and reports were all prepared. While restoration and refunctioning suggestions were being developed, the utmost attention was paid to the conservation of archeological, cultural, and industrial heritage. There was also an effort to make sure that the public were made aware of the value of the structure as well as the value of olives and olive oil. Another point was to raise awareness on the side of both producers and consumers and thus contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

For this purpose, the old maps and photographs of the factory and the parcel of land where the factory was built were examined, and it was observed that the present parcel was mainly the same as the original one, and in time the building was harmoniously integrated into the environment. As with the layout plan of traditional Antakya houses, there is a trapezoidal yard facing north. (Downey, 2015)

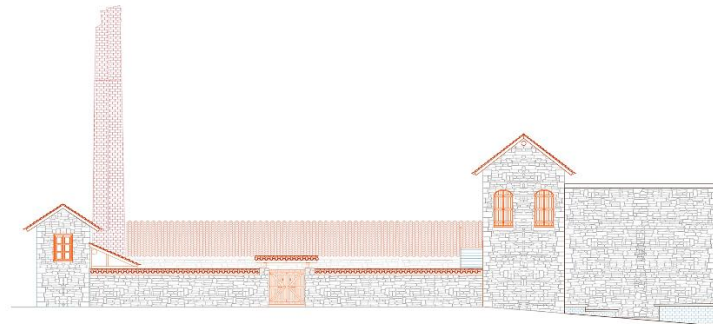
The restoration of the olive mill and its refunctioning as a museum is a conservation effort that helps not only to protect its architectural and physical features but also to reveal its value as intangible cultural heritage. This project aimed to protect intangible values such as the function and the use of the structure as well as the value it has had for that period and the present. It also aimed to protect the physical and spatial features of the structure. In the building that has been converted into a museum, some spatial arrangements were made in line with the carrier system and the perception of the authentic space has, thus, been maintained. That the building has been turned into a museum has made it easier to protect the structure with its tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

While the structure was being transformed into a museum, an effort was made to protect its authentic version and revive it. In order to determine the authentic version of the structure and understand its evolution, interviews were held with people who used the facility, and old maps, photographs, and written documents were studied. It was observed that the roofs that were of poor quality were added recently, and a two-storied ferroconcrete structure that was built on the yard and the upper floor brought about some structural problems. These recent additions also caused fractures and damp in the southern façade.

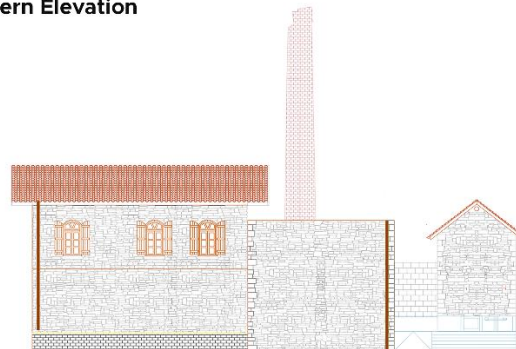
The restoration project aimed to remove all these recent additions and to restore the structure to its original plan and yard (Figure 2). Because the newly added wooden roof went rotten, it was dismantled, and a free-standing wooden roof was built on compressed earth. The necessary insulation materials were used while the roof was being built. During the restoration of the roof, the existing template was used, and the roof was covered with Marseille tile. The stone spans were covered with wood, and soffits were, thus, made. In addition, it was deemed appropriate to make zinc downspouts and rainwater pipes.



3D and Plan



Western Elevation



South Elevation

Figure 2. Olive mill restoration project

It was deemed appropriate to dismantle the woodwork that was recently added to the window embrasures and instead mount solid wood, for there would be a need to use them during refunctioning. In addition, the newly added jerry-built woodwork on the doors in the western and northern façades of the building were dismantled, and double solid wooden doors were made.

Olive Museum Units Layout

Part C1, which is the core of the building, is also the oldest structure in the olive mill. Other units such as olive oil storage and decantation pools were added to this building over time.

The general layout plan consists of (Figure 3):

- Antiquity exhibition areas
- Roman period
- Early Byzantium period
- Late Byzantium/Early Ottoman period
- Early industrial period: Steam and diesel machines
- Period of electricity: Traditional stone print water systems
- Administrative building
- Presentation, display and tasting area
- Sales department

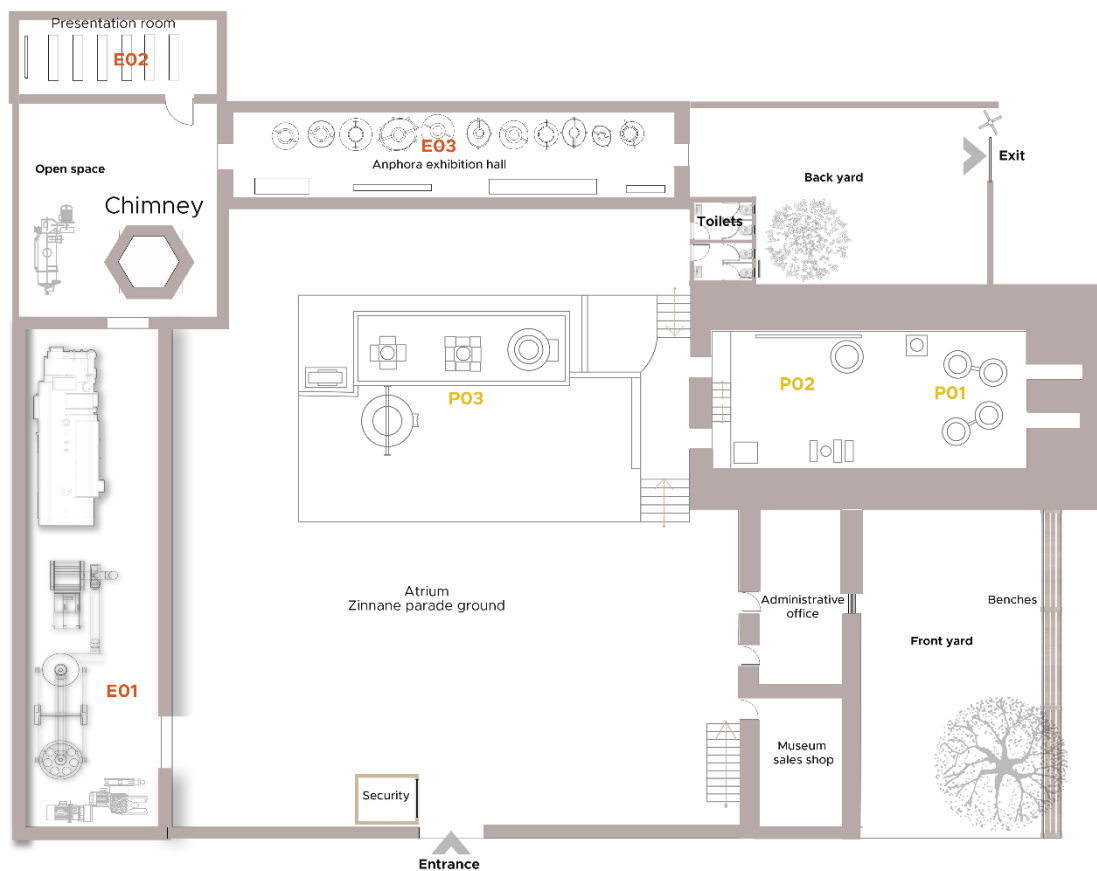


Figure 3. Museum layout plan

The museum plan stayed with the evolution of olive oil extraction throughout time. The antiquity exhibition area and the core of the building, which are known to be the oldest parts of the structure dating back to the late Roman period (P-01), are at the centre. The decantation pools are also located here (P-02). The antiquity period and the industrial period are connected to each other through a semi-open yard. The works from the industrial period are placed in chronological order starting with the yard and continuing towards the closed areas in the east end of the building. The restoration work on this building, where the industrial products are exhibited (E-01), is ongoing. This building opens onto a small yard, where there is a historical chimney, which has been demolished almost completely. This chimney, which is very important for the silhouette of the olive mill, is to be rebuilt with bricks respecting its authentic version. The building in the northwest wing

(E-02) is going to be used as a projection hall. The E-03 building is going to be used as the extension of the museum once its roof is renovated. This space is designated as an area where equipment and utensils related to olive oil will be exhibited. This place will also cover objects that have a memorial value for the public. In addition to these, some big objects will be exhibited here on wooden stalls. The two-storied building in the west of the entrance is designed as a café on the ground floor and the administrative building on the first floor. The museum atrium is used as an open meeting area. The same area is used also for zinnane ceremonies, during which visitors can taste olive oil while watching a visual activity (Figure 4).



Figure 4. The museum zinnane ceremony

Visitors to the museum can access information on olive oil extraction techniques, the history of the region, and the history of olives and olive culture by means of the 1.20 m x 1.50 m light panels. In the inner yard, there are information boards that contain written and visual information about the history and culture of Tokacli. Here there are also transparent showcases which contain small objects on the same theme (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Museum information panels and showcases



The purpose of these installations is to increase the visitors' knowledge about olive oil and enable them to have different experiences. Visitors are informed about the technologies used in olive oil extraction throughout history and the different uses of olive oil through different works remaining from the period and animation.

The space has been arranged in chronological order, and each unit is dedicated to a certain time period with its tools and materials. In this way, visitors are informed about the tangible and intangible elements of each time period. To explain what kind of life people lived in the different time periods in which the olive mill was in use, the production tools used in the past are exhibited. Moreover, visitors can view a documentary on the history of the olive mill through the digital screens. In this way, not only is the structure conserved as a tangible cultural heritage site but also its importance as an intangible cultural heritage element and its place in the collective memory of the town are highlighted, with this information being transferred to future generations.

Conclusion

In Altınözü, the olive has not only played a role in shaping the natural landscape but also affected all aspects of human life and helped to form a shared culture despite differences in the local languages and religions. Tokacli olive mill, the oldest extant structure in Altınözü that reflects the important features of the olive culture of the region and the architectural values of its time, can be evaluated not only as an archeological and cultural heritage site but also as an industrial heritage site. In fact, even if they lost their function of production, industrial buildings and sites are accepted as witnesses that reflect the socioeconomic, architectural, and technological features of the periods in which they were constructed. As noted at the beginning of the study having no difference from other historical monuments under protection, they are also considered as heritage buildings to be preserved as clearly defined in the charter of The International Committee for the Conversation of Industrial Heritage.(TICCIH, 2003) This building complex has great potential in terms of its architectural and historical value and the area it covers. Thus, it needs to be conserved through refunctioning. Tokacli olive mill, which was transformed into a museum by the Altınözü municipality because of its architectural and cultural values, has enlivened the social, cultural, and economic life of the town.

The museum exhibition covers the evolution of olive oil from 2 500 years ago to the early industrial period. The historical objects give information about the lifestyle of the time beyond the emergence of olive oil. The museum building will, thus, significantly contribute to the urban identity helping to transfer the olive culture, which is still an important means of existence in the region, to future generations.

Gastronomy tourism connects culture and tourism, contributing to the protection and development of the local culture. In gastronomy tourism, gastronomy museums are important because they encourage tourists to establish contact with the culture of a region and bond with its history, traditions, and cultural heritage. In this context, the Tokacli olive museum has become a place where the cultural richness of the region is also exhibited from a gastronomical perspective. Within the building, it is possible to access information on the values related to the region's cuisine and learn about the history, preparation, and presentation of the food as well as the tools and utensils used throughout these processes. Therefore, the museum will help to keep a log of the local dietary habits from the past to today, to protect such cultural values, to transfer them to future generations and to contribute to their sustainability. The museum will not only boost the sustainability of the cuisine culture of the region but also promote tourism in the region by increasing its attractiveness as a tourist destination.

If the increasing tourism potential in Antakya and Altınözü paves the way for a type of tourism that contributes to the olive oil culture in the region, and if such a touristic activity continues in the winter, this will be an important initiative for the development of culture



tourism in other villages. In this respect, the Tokaçlı museum will be a motivating example for other abandoned olive oil factories in the region.

In conclusion, it is necessary to include this olive oil museum in the tour programmes and in tourist destinations. In this regard, Altınözü has the potential to be a successful choice for the sustainability of agriculture and tourism.

Disclosure Statement

The author report there are no competing interests to declare.

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