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INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE, URBAN MEMORY AND ADAPTIVE REUSE: THE CASE OF BATMAN, TÜRKIYE

PATRIMÔNIO INDUSTRIAL, MEMÓRIA URBANA E REUTILIZAÇÃO ADAPTATIVA: O CASO DE BATMAN, TURQUIA

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Abstract
Batman, once a small village in south-eastern Türkiye, was urbanised following the discovery of oil in the 1940s. The structures associated with the oil industry and related sectors that have survived are integral parts of the city's historical identity and collective memory. This study documents Batman's industrial heritage, assesses its potential for adaptive reuse from the perspectives of urban and spatial memory and develops concrete proposals. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining archival reviews, field observations (2024-2025), architectural potential analysis and oral history interviews with former industrial workers and local press representatives. Twelve industrial heritage sites related to oil production, railway

Resumo
Batman, outrora uma pequena vila no sudeste da Turquia, passou por um processo de urbanização após a descoberta de petróleo na década de 1940. As estruturas associadas à indústria petrolífera e aos setores relacionados que sobreviveram são parte integrante da identidade histórica e da memória coletiva da cidade. Este estudo documenta o patrimônio industrial de Batman, avalia seu potencial para reutilização adaptativa sob as perspectivas da memória urbana e espacial e desenvolve propostas concretas. A pesquisa emprega uma abordagem de métodos mistos, combinando análises de arquivos, observações de campo (2024-2025), análise do potencial arquitetônico e entrevistas de história oral com ex-

transport and early Republican public buildings were identified, documented and classified according to conversion feasibility criteria. The vast majority of these structures are publicly owned and possess potential for reintegration into the city as museums, recreational areas and event venues. As one of the first comprehensive investigations into industrial heritage in South-Eastern Anatolia, this study fills a significant gap in the national literature and provides a practical reference for relevant institutions in Batman. Based on the findings, a conceptual model explaining the relationship between preservation, adaptive reuse and tourism is developed, and two industrial heritage routes are proposed to strengthen urban memory and enhance the visibility of heritage sites.

Keywords: Industrial Heritage. Urban Memory. Adaptive Reuse. Industrial Heritage Tourism. Türkiye.

trabalhadores industriais e representantes da imprensa local. Doze locais de patrimônio industrial relacionados à produção de petróleo, transporte ferroviário e edifícios públicos do início da República foram identificados, documentados e classificados de acordo com critérios de viabilidade de conversão. A grande maioria dessas estruturas é de propriedade pública e possui potencial para reintegração na cidade como museus, áreas de lazer e locais para eventos. Como uma das primeiras investigações abrangentes sobre o patrimônio industrial no sudeste da Anatólia, este estudo preenche uma lacuna significativa na literatura nacional e fornece uma referência prática para instituições relevantes em Batman. Com base nas conclusões, foi desenvolvido um modelo conceitual que explica a relação entre preservação, reutilização adaptativa e turismo, e foram propostas duas rotas do patrimônio industrial para fortalecer a memória urbana e aumentar a visibilidade dos locais de patrimônio.

Palavras-chave: *Patrimônio Industrial. Memória Urbana. Reutilização Adaptativa. Turismo do Patrimônio Industrial. Turquia.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Industrialisation was not merely an economic and technical development; it was an historical turning points that fundamentally transformed the settlement patterns, social behaviours and cultural identities of societies. This process, which has shaped the world since the eighteenth century, has left behind not only factories and machines but also a vast physical heritage documenting production technique, labour history and the trajectory of urban development. As emphasised by the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) in the Nizhny Tagil Charter (2003), industrial heritage is a holistic cultural value encompassing buildings, machinery, mines, transport and energy infrastructure of technological, social and scientific value, as well as housing and educational facilities related to industry (TICCIH, 2003).

With the changes in urbanisation strategies during the final quarter of the twentieth century, many industrial structures and areas remaining within city centres began to be

relocated to the outskirts; the older structures left in the centre, meanwhile, lost their function and faced the threat of dereliction. Initially regarded as derelict zones and areas of urban decay, these spaces are now being reassessed through the lenses of 'urban memory' and 'sustainable conservation'. The ‘authorised heritage discourse’ proposed by Smith (2006) argues that these structures are not merely passive remnants of the past, but active assets that shape the city's future identity.

Industrial heritage buildings can be transformed into attractive urban focal points that bridge the past and the future by reintegrating them into the city with new functions such as museums, cultural centres, recreational public spaces, hotels or gastronomic venues. This approach, referred to as 'adaptive reuse', serves as a functional solution for reintegrating derelict decaying structures into the city, while simultaneously fulfilling the role of preserving the city's spatial memory and collective identity (Bullen and Love, 2011; Bottero et al., 2019). Industrial heritage buildings converted into public recreational spaces lay the groundwork for the re-creation of urban memory between the past and the present; thus, a dynamic relationship is established between physical conservation and social memory (Crinson, 2005).

In Türkiye's modernisation, industrialisation has been the most strategic tool for national development since the proclamation of the Republic. During that period, the first industrial initiatives in various cities were mostly supported by the state with state capital and then subsequently expanded and continued. Although significant studies have been conducted on early-period industrial structures in centres such as Istanbul and Ankara (Köksal, 2012), the industrial heritage of the South-Eastern Anatolian region has yet to be sufficiently explored at an academic level. In this context, Batman presents a unique model in Türkiye's industrial history. Iluh, a small village in the 1940s, was transformed into a modern industrial city known as the 'capital of oil' following the discovery of oil on Mount Raman in 1948 and the commencement of regular production. This transformation did not merely bring a refinery to the city; it also provided an experience of urban modernity through transport infrastructure, as well as cinemas, modern residential areas and social facilities.

Today, industrial heritage buildings and sites form the ‘collective memory’ of cities. However, rapid urbanisation and shortcomings in conservation policies carry the risk of this heritage being erased from the urban memory. This study seeks to address this

issue specifically in the context of Batman and examines three key research questions. (1) Which industrial heritage buildings and sites exist in Batman and what are their current condition? (2) How can the potential for adaptive reuse of these assets be assessed? (3) How can industrial heritage buildings be reintegrated into the city and woven into its urban identity? Within the framework of these questions, the study is designed to document the cultural, historical and architectural potential of industrial heritage structures in Batman; to evaluate them from the perspectives of adaptive reuse, urban memory and spatial memory; and to develop concrete proposals for their repurposing. As the first comprehensive study of its kind conducted in the South-Eastern Anatolian region and the first to address a petroleum-based urbanisation model from an industrial heritage perspective, the research aims to make a unique contribution to national and international literature. The article consists of the following sections: the theoretical and conceptual framework; methodology; international and Turkish case studies; findings; and discussion and conclusions.

2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Industrial heritage

Since the second half of the twentieth century, awareness of cultural heritage conservation has expanded to include industrial heritage as a recognised sub-category, gaining an international dimension and acceptance (Saner, 2012; Otgaar, Van den Berg & Feng, 2016). Industrial heritage consists of remnants of industrial culture possessing historical, technological, social, architectural or scientific value. These include buildings and machinery, workshops, factories, mines, processing facilities, warehouses, energy infrastructure, transport networks and related social facilities such as housing and education (TICCIH-Nizhny Tagil, 2003). The Nizhny Tagil Charter (2003) recognised industrial heritage not merely as technical structures but as 'cultural documents' representing social memory and living identity while the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes, in aiming to integrate protected areas into urban plans, viewed them as contributors to economic, social and physical development (Parlapan et al., 2023). This suggests that industrial archaeology requires an

interdisciplinary perspective engaging culture, architecture, urban planning, sociology and tourism.

2.2 Urban memory

Crinson (2005), establishing the relationship between industrial heritage and memory, focused on the symbolic representations of urban space and how urban memory is reproduced through contemporary art practices. He laid the theoretical foundation for the idea that industrial heritage sites are not merely objects to be preserved, but rather memory spaces that must be continuously reinterpreted and resignified. This growing interest in the city's industrial past within the context of cultural heritage has led to these structures being perceived either merely as objects of consumption or within the framework of popular culture's nostalgia for the past (Büyükarslan & Güney, 2013). In fact, Rosa (2024), analysing the transformation process of 'chimney-monuments' as industrial heritage in Barcelona, emphasizes that in the absence of a coherent heritage discourse, the meanings of these objects become open to negotiation and the link between the past and the present grows increasingly ambiguous. One of the theoretical approaches that has gained prominence in recent years in addressing industrial heritage within the context of spatial memory is 'place theory'. This approach essentially argues that in the renewal of industrial heritage, it is necessary to consider not only the physical form but also the historical, cultural and emotional dimensions that the space carries. The imprint of a building's form on the city, the lived experiences embedded in the city's history and in its relationship with the individual, constitute a part of collective memory (Büyükarslan & Güney, 2013). Zhong et al. (2024) while analysing renewal strategies for industrial heritage from the perspective of place theory, found that industrial heritage promotes organic urban revitalization by preserving the *genius loc*—the spirit of place —and strengthens local identity and a sense of belonging. Grazuleviciute-Vileniske and Gektauskas (2024), drawing on an approach they term the 'archaeology of hidden values', revealed the multilayered meanings of these spaces, meanings that are not immediately visible but are shaped around concepts such as the identity of place, its spirit, symbolic potential and temporal depth.

2.3 Adaptive reuse

The most current approach in the preservation of industrial structures is adaptive reuse theory which advocates for the reintegration of buildings into the urban fabric with new functions—such as museums, arts centres, event venues and tourism facilities—without compromising their original character. Adaptive reuse is defined as the act of finding a new use for a building and is generally described as the process of developing structurally sound older buildings for economically viable new purposes (Austin, 1988). The expected outcome of the adaptive reuse approach is not merely the physical preservation of the building but also the establishment of a balance between safeguarding its heritage significance and symbolic values on the one hand, and accommodating new alternative uses on the other (Bottero et al., 2019). Bullen and Love (2011) note that industrial structures, typically characterized by large volumes, flexible layouts and highly durable structural systems, make them ideal 'raw material' for conversion projects. However, in the refunctionalization of such structures, it is equally important that the building is capable of accommodating the intended function, that its original plan and spatial qualities are not subjected to substantial alteration and that the philosophical essence of the space is articulated (Mesutoğlu, 1995).

Smith (2006), through his theory of the 'uses of heritage', further argues that industrial remnants constitute symbolic capital that carries the authority of the past into the present. This theoretical framework legitimizes not only the preservation of these structures but also their transformation into urban public focal points. It is widely acknowledged that such transformations ensure 'spatial continuity', thereby preventing the erosion of urban identity. Nevertheless, efforts to preserve and revitalize such structures sometimes encounter significant challenges, including financial barriers to reuse, restrictive zoning regulations and building codes, as well as contamination and structural deficiencies (Cantell, 2005). In this context, tourism may be regarded as a facilitating factor in overcoming such obstacles.

In conservation practices centred on the refunctionalization of industrial heritage, tourism has emerged as a significant perspective alongside the provision of these spaces for public use and enjoyment as integral components of urban memory and its reproduction. A distinct practice has evolved whereby industrial heritage sites

simultaneously enhance tourist appeal as part of the city's cultural heritage and collective memory, and are integrated into the tourism supply through conversions into hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues and recreational spaces. This not only diversifies the range of functional options available within adaptive reuse strategies but also supports the broader process of restoration and refunctionalization. According to Ashworth's (2009) theory of branding through heritage', elements that are unique to a city hold the potential to reposition it as a destination where the experience of industrial history can be authentically encountered.

2.4 Industrial heritage and tourism

Industrial heritage tourism, as part of cultural heritage tourism (Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Richards, 2018), involves interpreting production processes, structures and cultural landscapes within tourism contexts, contributing to heritage sustainability and regional development through the adaptive reuse of disused sites (Otgaar et al., 2010; Xie, 2015). It is viewed as a tool for post-industrial regeneration that can represent local identity and collective memory (Hospers, 2002). Recent studies show tourism offers opportunities for cultural conservation, regional development and sustainable tourism (Xie, 2006; 2015; Harfst et al., 2025). Transformation into tourism products enhances destination diversity and offers unique experiences where industrial heritage routes and thematic networks enhance tourist appeal (Farrell & Pozvek, 2025). Ashworth's (2009) 'branding through heritage' suggests city-specific elements can reposition cities as destinations where industrial history is experienced, something characterized by Xie (2015) as 'experience-oriented tourism' exploring production heritage. Edwards and Llurdés (1996) emphasise that integration into tourism transforms regions from 'polluted/abandoned industrial areas' into 'cultural attraction centres'. It is not surprising, therefore, that the study of industrial heritage tourism requires an interdisciplinary approach that analyses relationships between heritage conservation, urban regeneration, local identity and tourism development.

2.5 Related studies: literature

International research has extensively examined the adaptive reuse of industrial heritage focusing on three main areas: barriers to reuse, solution strategies and socio-economic impact assessment (Han & Zhang, 2022) with case-based studies offering critical contributions. Oevermann et al. (2016) highlighted the limitations of community participation in Berlin's Oberschöneweide; Adin and Sirel (2024) compared Vienna's Gasometer with Istanbul's Hasanpaşa Gasworks, emphasising the need to preserve 'spatial memory' and 'spirit of place'; De Gregorio et al. (2020), studying Valencia's Fabrica de Hielo, warned that context-disregarding interventions may lead to negative long-term consequences; and Samadzadehyazdi et al. (2020) found that authenticity is highly valued in Iran's adaptive reuse projects, with museum functions being most popular.

In Türkiye, academic interest in industrial heritage has grown since the 1990s (Köksal & Ahunbay, 2006; Tanyeli & İkiz, 2009). However, most studies concentrate on major cities such as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara and Eskişehir (Büyükarslan & Güney, 2013; Parlapan et al., 2023) while the South-Eastern Anatolian region remains largely unexplored. Batman, with its unique oil-based urbanisation experience since the 1940s, represents a distinctive model that has never been systematically examined from an industrial heritage perspective. This research aims to fill that gap by applying the concepts of 'spirit of place' (Zhong et al., 2024) and 'archaeology of hidden values' (Grazuleviciute-Vileniske & Gektauskas, 2025) to Batman's industrial heritage.

3 METHOD

This study, which aims to document the tangible remains of industrial heritage within the borders of Batman Province (oil wells, transport structures and factories) using scientific methods, was conducted using mixed research methods and an interdisciplinary approach. The choice of a mixed-methods approach stems from the nature of the research because studies of industrial heritage require not only the documentation of physical structures but also revealing the social, historical and spatial meanings they embody. For this reason, quantitative data (structural condition surveys and geographical mapping) and

qualitative data (oral history and archival analysis) have been used in tandem to complement one another. Indeed, the recent literature compiled by Han and Zhang (2022) demonstrates that a single discipline or method is insufficient in this field and that holistic approaches are essential. The research encompasses the stages of discovering, documenting and cataloguing industrial heritage, as well as identifying its potential for adaptive reuse in relation to the city's development. In this process, industrial structures, facilities and sites from the past were first recorded through field research, archival searches and oral history interviews. All information, documents and audiovisual sources obtained were spatially processed using simple geographical and cultural mapping methods in relation to existing urban attractions.

Once the industrial heritage assets had been inventoried, their potential for adaptive reuse was assessed. The buildings were classified into three categories—'feasible', 'conditionally feasible' and 'not feasible'—based on criteria such as ownership status, structural integrity, location and accessibility, cultural and historical value, and the practical feasibility of conversion. Reuse proposals appropriate to these categories were developed within the context of cultural public spaces, recreation and urban regeneration opportunities. The findings were discussed in a comparative manner with best practice examples from Türkiye and the wider world. The original value of the research stems from the fact that this is one of the first studies of its kind specifically in South-Eastern Anatolia. Given the limited coverage of industrial heritage outside major Turkish cities, this research—as one of the first studies of its kind in Southeast Anatolia—makes an original contribution to the field. It is anticipated that the study will make a significant contribution not only to the literature but also to relevant institutions and organisations in Batman concerned with industrial heritage, particularly regarding the assessment of cultural heritage and its integration into the city. Establishing the relationship between industrial heritage structures and sites and the city's cultural, tourist and recreational fabric will highlight one of Batman's distinctive competitive advantages in tourism, while also contributing to the development of awareness regarding industrial heritage—a key component of cultural heritage and a critical element of urban memory. The data for this study were compiled from three main sources:

- **Archival and Literature Review:** Historical documents obtained from the archives of the TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation) and TCDD, along with

local newspaper clippings, were analysed to establish a chronology of Batman's industrialisation.

- **Field Observation and Architectural Documentation:** During field research conducted between 2024 and 2025, the industrial buildings in Batman were assessed within the framework of an 'Architectural Potential Analysis'. This analysis was conducted based on four key criteria: the structural integrity and physical condition of the building; the level of preservation of its original architectural character; its locational and accessibility features; and its relationship with the surrounding built environment and urban context. The assessments were supported by on-site observation and photographic documentation; the structural and functional transformation potential of each building was noted separately.
- **Oral History and Interviews:** In order to understand the place of these structures within collective memory, a total of seven in-depth interviews were conducted, including with three former employees of TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation), two senior civil servants currently working at Batman Railway Station and two representatives of local newspapers. Industrial workers were selected from among individuals who had actively served in the petroleum and railway sectors and had firsthand experience of these structures, while newspaper representatives were chosen from among members of the local press who had followed the industrialization history of Batman at an archival level. This method, grounded in the unstructured interview technique, was preferred with the aim of revealing not only the physical but also the sensory and historical significance of the structures (Ritchie, 2015). The interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently analysed through thematic content analysis.

3.1 Limitations of the study

The study has several significant limitations. First and foremost, as some industrial heritage structures are in active operation (TÜPRAŞ) or under private ownership (Evin Cinema, Petrol Ofisi Facilities), access to these sites was restricted; consequently, assessments of these structures had to be limited to external observations and secondary sources. Secondly, as the oral history interviews were based on a

qualitative and purposeful sampling, they do not claim statistical generalisation; rather, data obtained serve an interpretative function aimed at understanding the place of these structures in the collective memory. Finally, the fact that systematic archival documents relating to Batman's industrial development history are partially scattered or inaccessible has led to gaps in certain points of the historical chronology. These limitations align with the exploratory and documentary nature of the study and aim to provide a starting point for future research.

4 CASE STUDIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND TÜRKIYE

Successful examples of the adaptive reuse of industrial heritage exist both internationally and in Türkiye. The Zollverein Coal Mine Complex (Germany) is considered the 'gold standard' in transforming a whole industrial site into a museum, art gallery and recreational area. For Batman, this demonstrates the need to assess multiple heritage assets (Station, Water Tower and TPAO) as an integrated complex. New York's High Line, a disused elevated railway turned into a public park, offers both a physical design and a funding model based on civil society partnership; for example, the inactive railway section of the Zilek Bridge could be similarly transformed into a recreational walking and cycling path. London's Tate Modern (former Bankside Power Station) and Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum illustrate how cultural investments can turn industrial structures into drivers of urban regeneration.

In Türkiye, notable projects include the Istanbul Museum Gazhane (a publicly owned gasworks converted into a cultural centre by the municipality) which provides a model for local government-led transformation. The Çubuklu Silos (Istanbul), turned into a digital art museum and public space, offer a direct typological and programmatic reference for Batman's TMO Silos. The Bomonti Brewery (Istanbul) shows how a privately owned structure can be redeveloped through private investment—a possible model for the Evin Cinema. The conversion of the Eskişehir's TMO silos into a hotel demonstrates a successful public–private partnership while the İzmir Gasworks and İzmit SEKA Paper Factory exemplify municipality-led transformations focused on culture, arts and recreation. These examples provide guiding strategies—public initiative, private partnership and mixed use—for Batman's industrial heritage reuse.

5 FINDINGS

The field research identified twelve industrial heritage assets in Batman related to oil production, railway transport and early Republican public buildings. As Zhong et al. (2024) emphasise with reference to place theory, these structures are not merely physical remnants but landmarks that define the city's identity and spatially embody collective memory. As summarised in Table 1, the assets were assessed according to ownership, structural integrity and reuse potential: seven publicly owned assets have short-term conversion potential, while privately owned ones are conditional on owner approval or currently unfeasible due to active use.

5.1 Oil-focused industrial heritage

No. 8 Oil Well (Emektar-8): This well, where regular production and the first discovery commenced in 1948, is a milestone in Türkiye's and the wider region's petroleum industry. As the site of Türkiye's first systematic oil production, it is one of the most significant sites in the industrial history of Batman. Located within the boundaries of Yakıtlı Village on a hilltop on Raman Mountain, the well operates under the auspices of TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation) under the designation ‘Emektar 8’. The site is enclosed and secured. The original derrick structure is assessed as being in a high state of preservation and in Smith's (2006) terms, it represents the most tangible object of collective memory relating to Batman's petroleum history. Its position along a route running parallel to the Hasankeyf Road could facilitate the redirection of tourist traffic towards the site. Due to its commanding views of the Tigris Valley, the well could be repurposed as a 'Viewing Terrace and Memorial Site' through minimal landscape alterations and the addition of a lightweight café and observation unit. This would transform the structure from a passively observed object into an actively experienced public space.

Meymuniye Pass First Refinery: This site is one of the most important in Batman's industrial archaeology. A number of significant firsts were realised here, including the first oil wells, the first refinery and the first camp settlement. The remnants of the concrete floor, metal components and stone foundations of the former residential

quarters of this currently idle facility carry strong spatial memory potential, aligning closely with the concept of the 'archaeology of hidden values' proposed by Grazuleviciute-Vileniske and Gektauskas (2024). The site would be ideal for use as an 'Open-Air Museum of the First Oil Pioneers' (Petrol Park). It could be converted into a compact visitor attraction with signage and interpretive information panels, and a symbolic memorial structure or holographic installation could further reinforce the narrative embedded in this space. However, the fact that the site is located on privately owned land is the most significant structural barrier to its transformation. Resolving this ownership issue will require the coordinated intervention of public institutions.

TPAO Campus and Machinery Yard: Situated at the heart of the city, the TPAO campus is an integrated complex comprising an administrative building, workshops, a machinery park, residential quarters and social amenities. The open-air machinery park, located immediately next to the area earmarked for the 'Petroleum Museum', contains drilling and refinery equipment dating back seventy to eighty years. This area could be incorporated into the planned ‘Petroleum Museum’ and converted into an 'Open-Air Machinery Museum', complete with interpretive information panels and shade structures. When considered alongside the other heritage sites along the same axis, the campus could become a focal point on an urban memory route connecting Batman's key sites of industrial significance.

TÜPRAŞ Refinery: Following the privatisation of the refinery section of the TPAO campus, the area was transferred to TÜPRAŞ. The refinery structures, storage facilities and equipment located within the site are of considerable heritage significance. However, as the TÜPRAŞ Refinery is currently an active industrial site under private ownership, converting and adapting certain spaces and structures within its boundaries has been deemed to present substantial practical difficulties.

Petrol Ofisi Storage Facilities: Situated on the outskirts of the city, this complex was formerly used as a fuel storage site by Petrol Ofisi, a petroleum distribution company. It is now completely unused. Although the facilities are owned by a Batman-based private fuel company, the structures and the site are no longer in active use. Adaptive reuse of the site has been deemed largely unfeasible, primarily due to its ownership status and location within established residential zones.

5.2 Transport-based industrial heritage

Batman Train Station: Batman Railway Station and its surrounding structures represent the city's physical connection to the modern world. The station itself is one of the oldest buildings in Batman and is a key part of the city's modernisation process. The site is located at the heart of the city, positioned between the TPAO campus and the historic quarter surrounding the former bazaar, known as ‘Old Batman’. Although the water tower is currently idle and no longer in use, it has been restored and remains in good condition, making it a viable candidate for enhancement within its urban context.

Batman Railway Station, Water Tower and Garden: The tower should be considered in conjunction with its garden. Together, they could be used as an open-air event space and, more specifically, as an open-air cinema. With its reinforced concrete structure and distinctive form, the water tower is one of the city's most recognisable landmarks and within a holistic heritage framework it can be viewed as a ‘junction between transportation and social life’ alongside Batman Railway Station. With the addition of staircases and a lighting system to facilitate vertical movement, the currently idle yet well-preserved structure could be repurposed as an 'open-air cinema and themed children's activity space', or alternatively as a ‘science and experiential workshop’. In conjunction with the station's continued active use, this site could become the city's most dynamic cultural transfer node.

Zilek State Railway Bridge: This monumental concrete bridge is located on the provincial boundary between Batman and Diyarbakır and spans the Tigris River. It possesses considerable aesthetic and architectural merit. Situated on the Batman–Diyarbakır railway line, it is accessible via a four kilometre stretch of asphalt road branching off the main Batman–Diyarbakır highway towards Sinan or Zilek village. The bridge's concrete elements remain structurally sound, retaining the characteristic form of an arched railway bridge designed by German engineers in the 1940s. Like the High Line in New York City, it would be feasible to convert the passive sections of the bridge into a recreational walking and cycling path. The bridge, beneath which the Tigris River flows, also provides an attractive setting for leisure activities such as fishing and photography. A comprehensive landscape design oriented towards multi-purpose use could elevate the bridge to a significant point of attraction on the city's regional heritage map.

Avuski State Railways Bridge: The Avuski Bridge is located on the banks of the Garzan Stream, next to the Kurtalan railway line and the main asphalt road, all of which remain in active use. Due to its easy access and natural setting, the site lends itself well to recreational activities such as photography, enjoying the scenery, outdoor activities and picnics. With modest landscape interventions to its surroundings and given its proximity to the İki Köprü district, the bridge could be transformed into an attractive recreational stop-off point for locals.

5.3 Other industrial heritage

Old Lime Factory: The site is located on the Hasankeyf Road, approximately 500 metres from the main highway and is readily accessible by vehicles. The structures have been left to deteriorate and are currently in a state of disrepair. Its position along the Hasankeyf corridor integrates the site into the broader Petrol Yolu (Oil Road) heritage route. In addition to the visually distinctive lime kiln, the site contains two reinforced concrete buildings whose function is yet to be determined. Once property transfer or investor authorisation have been completed, the complex could be converted for a variety of uses, such as accommodation facilities, a café, a horse-riding farm or an outdoor activity venue.

Turkish Grain Board (TMO) Silos: Conveniently situated within the city at a well-connected point along the Hasankeyf Road, the silos offer interior spaces characterised by high ceilings and generous volumes, affording considerable acoustic and spatial flexibility. The complex could be repurposed as an indoor event venue capable of hosting a diverse range of activities, including mobile stage performances, trade fairs, thematic exhibitions, concerts and conferences. Operating under the ‘Batman Ambar’ brand identity, the site could acquire a distinctive cultural character and its enclosed nature would make it particularly well-suited to indoor programming during the winter months and in inclement weather conditions.

Evin Cinema: This building, the only surviving historic cinema structure in the city, is located in the city centre along the same axis as the TPAO campus and Batman Railway Station. It is currently used as a packaging warehouse by a private company. Although its status as private property makes it difficult to change its function, its

visibility could be enhanced, and it could be reintegrated into the city's memory through façade restoration and the application of an ‘urban memory label’. This approach aligns with Smith's (2006) framework of the ‘social legitimacy of heritage’.

Table 1

Potential Analysis of Batman's Industrial Heritage Buildings

Industrial Structure/Site Name	Characteristic/Location	Current Status	Ownership Status	Potential for Adaptive Reuse
No. 8 Oil Well (Emektar-8)	The well from which the first regular oil flow originated, Raman Mountain-Hasankeyf	Active	Public	Possible/Can be used in its current state. Viewing Terrace and Memorial Area
Zilek State Railways Bridge	Railway bridge/Batman-Diyarbakır border	Inactive	Public	Possible/Multi-purpose recreational activity area, café, etc., sporting activities (fishing, walking, cycling), festival area (a project similar to the High Line in New York could be implemented)
Avuski State Railways Bridge	Railway bridge/Batman-Siirt border	Active	Public	Possible/Recreational area, picnic, etc.
TPAO (Machinery Yard)	Oil refinery and processing plant/Batman Centre	Active	Public	Possible/Integrated with the Oil Museum: Open-air Machine Museum in the machinery park area
Grain Board (TMO) Silos	Storage of agricultural and other products/Batman Centre	Semi-Active	Public	Possible/Indoor Exhibition Hal, Cultural Events Area
Batman Railway Station	First industrial building/Batman Centre	Active	Public	Possible/Railway Museum
Batman Railway Station Water Tower and Gardens	First industrial building/Batman Centre	Passive	Public	Possible/Open-air Event Area, Open-air Cinema, Themed children's activities inside and around the tower
Meymuniye Strait—First Refinery	First refinery/Hasankeyf Road	Passive	Private	Conditional Possible/Permission from landowner; Open-air Refinery Park (First Oil Workers' Museum)
Old Lime Factory	Lime factory/Hasankeyf Road	Passive	Private	Conditional (Subject to the owner's approval)
Petrol Ofisi Storage Facilities	Petrol storage facility/Batman Centre	Inactive	Private	Conditional (subject to the owner's approval)
Tüpraş Refinery	Petroleum processing facility/Batman city centre	Active	Private	Not possible (Subject to owner's approval)

Evin Cinema	The only surviving cinema building/Batman Centre	Inactive	Private	Not possible (Packager)

As can be seen from Table 1, there are a total of 12 notable industrial heritage assets in Batman and seven of these assets have the potential, with rapid planning, to contribute to the city's cultural, recreational and tourist infrastructure within the scope of industrial heritage. The remaining assets either have the potential to be evaluated in the long term under certain conditions or are structures where evaluation is not really feasible due to being privately owned and thus dependent on the owner's permission. In line with the study's objective, and taking these assets into account, proposing a model—both specifically for Batman and within a broader, holistic context—is important in terms of the ability of cities to create a long-term urban memory, facilitate adaptive reuse and link this to the preservation of industrial heritage and urban regeneration processes.

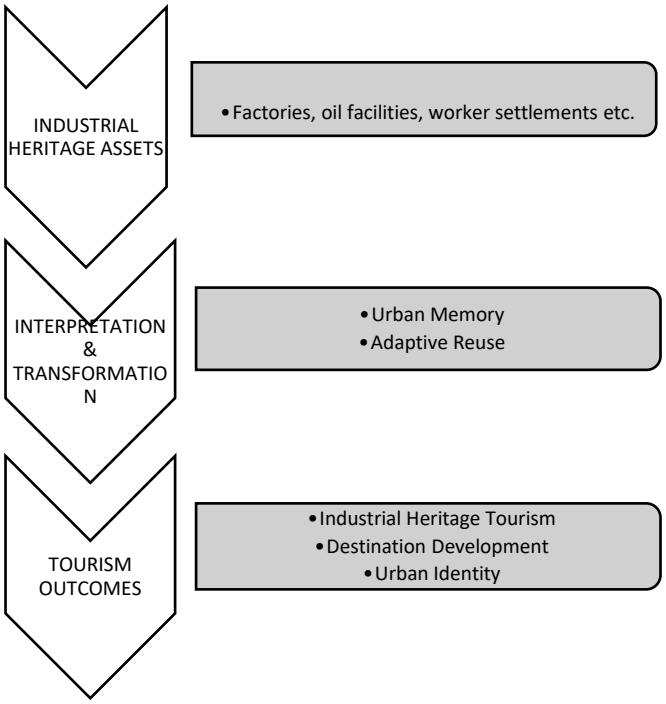
5.4 A proposed conceptual model for the re-purposing of industrial heritage

The evaluation of industrial heritage within a tourism context represents a multidimensional field where various processes—such as the preservation of cultural heritage, urban identity, tourism development and spatial transformation—converge. The literature indicates that three key elements are decisive in revealing the tourism potential of industrial heritage: heritage resources, regeneration processes and the tourism experience (Otgaar et al., 2016; Xie, 2015). This study also proposes a conceptual framework based on the relationship between these three components to explain the tourism potential of industrial heritage. The first component of the model is industrial heritage resources. Industrial heritage encompasses physical and cultural elements associated with industrial activities, such as factories, energy facilities, production infrastructure, workers' settlements and industrial landscapes. These elements are not merely remnants of production processes but also serve as significant spatial reference points representing the historical development and collective memory of cities. According to Halbwachs (1992/2020), who is known for his work on collective memory (urban memory), social memory is largely shaped through spatial references. In this context, industrial structures can be regarded as important memory spaces that reflect the

past experiences of city dwellers and their perceptions of local identity. The second component of the model is adaptive reuse. With deindustrialisation many industrial structures have lost their production functions and have become derelict spaces. However, the preservation of these structures and their repurposing for new functions both ensures the sustainability of cultural heritage and contributes to urban regeneration processes. The reuse of industrial heritage for new functions, such as museums, cultural centres, tourism areas or thematic routes, enables these spaces to be integrated into the tourism system. The third component of the model is the tourism experience and destination development. The transformation of industrial heritage sites into tourism products offers visitors the opportunity to experience historical production processes, technological developments and industrial culture. This process also contributes to the development of new forms of tourism by increasing the diversity of tourism within destinations. In particular, thematic heritage routes and industrial heritage networks are regarded as important tools that bring together different industrial sites to offer visitors a holistic tourism experience.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model for Industrial Heritage Tourism



In this context, the proposed conceptual model aims to explain the transformation of industrial heritage resources into a tourism experience through their conservation and adaptive reuse and the resulting relationship between destination development and the strengthening of urban memory. The model also highlights that industrial heritage should be regarded not only as a physical cultural heritage asset but also as a strategic resource in terms of tourism development and the formation of urban identity.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that the vast majority of industrial heritage buildings and sites in Batman are publicly owned. This finding aligns with a principle frequently emphasised in the literature: public ownership is one of the most fundamental structural conditions facilitating adaptive reuse processes (Bullen and Love, 2011). Given that virtually all successful regeneration examples in Istanbul and Izmir involve publicly owned buildings, Batman is clearly in a favourable position in this regard. Indeed, the No. 8 Oil Well, Zilek State Railways Bridge, Avuski Bridge, Batman Railway Station, TPAO Machinery Yard and TMO Silos fall into this category and the transformation processes can be implemented through coordination between the relevant institutions (Municipality, Governor's Office, TPAO, TCDD). On the other hand, as emphasised by De Gregorio et al. (2020) in the Valencia case study, public ownership alone is not sufficient; interventions that disregard the context may lead to negative social and economic consequences in the long term. Therefore, in the specific case of Batman, spatial context, social memory and functional compatibility must be considered alongside the ownership condition for each structure.

Among the best practice examples cited in the study, the significance of London's Tate Modern for Batman lies in the principle of 'preserving industrial aesthetics' as the building has been adapted to its new function without compromising its raw material texture, high ceilings and spacious volume. In the conversion of the TMO Silos and TPAO workshop buildings in Batman, this approach—adding new functions without erasing the original architectural character—could be adopted as a fundamental design principle. The Istanbul Museum Gazhane holds two critical messages specifically for Batman: firstly, it demonstrates that a publicly owned building can be transformed in a

relatively short time through the pioneering role of local government; and secondly, it provides a close point of comparison, both in terms of programme and management model, for the planned Petroleum Museum at the Batman TPAO Campus. The Istanbul Çubuklu Silos represent the most direct and contemporary model for the TMO Silos in Batman in terms of ownership structure (public), structural typology (tall cylindrical building) and conversion programme (exhibition + events + gastronomy). The vertical form of the silos has been tested here for its exhibition, acoustic and climatic advantages and, in the Batman example, these findings are applicable. The Izmir Gasworks example constitutes one of the Turkish models closest to Batman in terms of scale and programme for municipality-led conversions, providing a direct reference for the TPAO Campus's institutional coordination and operational model. The example provided by the İzmit SEKA for Batman demonstrates that the entire industrial site remaining within the urban fabric can be transformed into a public recreational open space. Evaluating the vacant areas around the TPAO Campus according to this principle could both address the city's shortage of green spaces and bring heritage and everyday urban life together.

The integration of Batman's industrial heritage into the city has the potential to transform not only the city's physical fabric but also its image. When assessed within the framework of Ashworth's (2009) theory of 'branding through heritage', adding the dimension of 'industrial heritage and cultural city' to Batman's established identity as an 'industrial city' could reposition the city at a regional scale. From this perspective, Batman's geographical proximity to Hasankeyf, an internationally recognised ancient cultural heritage site, offers a strategic advantage in that industrial heritage sites could serve as ‘intermediate destinations’ for visitors to Hasankeyf, thereby significantly expanding the city's tourism capacity. Drawing inspiration from the industrial heritage route model developed by Parlapan et al. (2023) for Izmir, this study proposes two main routes:

- **Batman Central Route:** Railway Station – TPAO Machine Park – Water Tower – Evin Cinema – TMO Silos – Petrol Ofisi Facilities
- **Raman-Meymuniye Oil Route:** Zilek Bridge – Avuski Bridge – Well No. 8 – Meymuniye First Refinery – Lime Factory

Routes: Batman Central Route and Raman-Meymuniye Oil Route maps to be inserted here.

The effectiveness of the proposed routes depends directly on an accessibility infrastructure. In this regard, the integration of the Batman Industrial Heritage Map into digital platforms (city website and Mesopotamia app) will enhance the visitor experience and increase the visibility of heritage sites. At the institutional level, coordination between TPAO, TCDD, the Municipality and the Governor's Office will be decisive in overcoming structural obstacles such as ownership, security and financing. The city's collective memory, inextricably linked to its oil industry, forms the basis for the social legitimacy for these transformations and the preservation and adaptive reuse of industrial heritage also entail the transmission of this memory to future generations. As the first comprehensive study on industrial heritage in the South-Eastern Anatolian region, this work fills a geographical gap in the national literature. Furthermore, by examining an oil-based urbanisation experience from the perspective of industrial heritage, it makes a unique contribution to the international literature. The case of Batman, as a model distinct from the dominant literature focusing on coal, textile or heavy industry heritage, opens new ground for discussing the industrial heritage and transformation potential of energy cities in developing countries.

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ANNEX

Figure 1

Meymuniye Oil Route

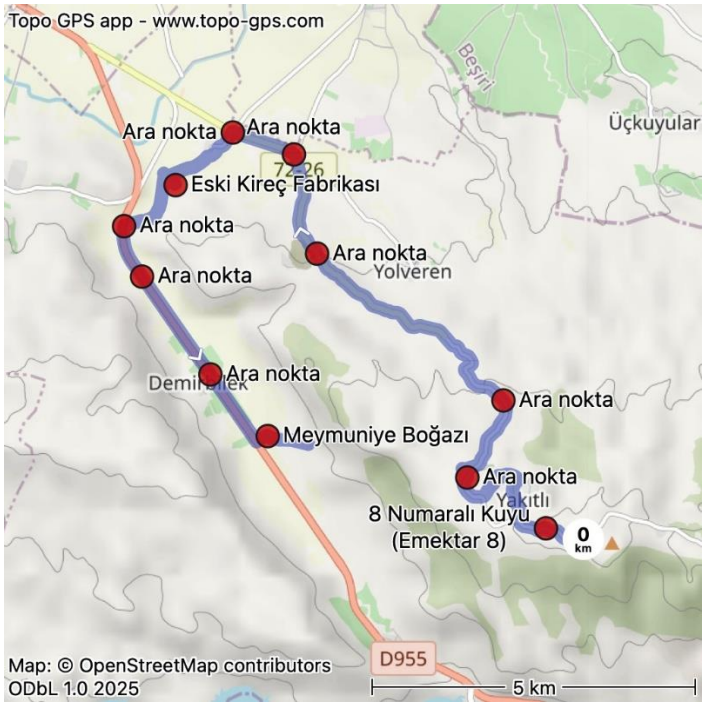
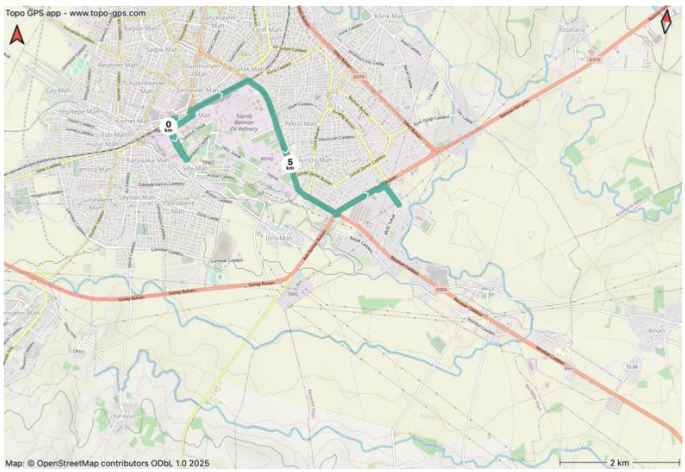


Figure 2

Batman Central Route and Raman



Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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