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Inverted Thresholds: From the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory to Its Successor Urban Interior in Türkiye

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Abstract

Research on urban interiors has concentrated on shopping malls, transport buildings, and public institutions, leaving industrial settlements, which integrate production and everyday life within a single boundary, largely outside this discussion. This study examines the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory campus, established in Türkiye during the early Republican period, as an urban interior and compares its threshold regime with that of its successor urban interior on the same site. The threshold is operationalized as an analytical framework disaggregated into five dimensions: permeability, control regime, temporality, transformation, and exclusion. Local newspaper archives (1934–1951) were examined through qualitative content analysis, while reader comments published on a local digital platform (2002–2023) were examined through discourse analysis; the corresponding news items provided contextual material, and cartographic material enabled component-level matching across the two periods. The findings show that the settlement established a graded order of openness within a closed boundary, and that this order was reconfigured after the site was divided into two distinct ownership regimes (private capital and local government), with the most open components becoming enclosed and the most restricted ones freely accessible. Threshold regimes thus appear to be restructured by ownership arrangements rather than determined by architectural configuration alone. Openness did not disappear; it relocated, detaching from the components that carried collective urban experience.

Keywords: threshold; urban interior; interiority; industrial settlement; urban transformation; company town

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1. Introduction

A reader comment posted on a local digital news platform in Malatya captures the transformation the city has undergone over the past two decades. The commenter recalls attending celebrations held in the social facilities of the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory, including an engagement ceremony held there, and notes that entering the bar or restaurant of the hotel now standing on the same site would be beyond reach. The comment is telling because it registers two distinct regimes of access operating at the same geographical point.

This contrast is not isolated. The settlement's Olympic swimming pool (the first in the city, where Turkish swimming champions were trained and municipal celebrations were held) is today a hotel. Conversely, the guesthouse (a space accessible only by invitation, where state officials of the period were received) is today an arts street through which

anyone may pass freely. The most open component of the settlement has closed, and its most restricted component has opened.

This study analyzes that transformation through the concept of the threshold. To speak of interior space is at once to invoke exterior space; yet what constitutes this distinction has itself received comparatively little attention. The threshold, however, is more than a dividing boundary. As Simmel's distinction between the bridge and the door suggests, separating and connecting are two aspects of the same act [1]. Grosz, in turn, removes in-betweenness from the status of a fixed position between stable terms; the in-between is the condition that allows one term to cease being the "other" of the other and to enter its own becoming [2]. From this perspective, the threshold does not simply regulate passage; it transforms the one who passes.

Interior architecture theory has developed a parallel orientation over the past two decades. Interiority has been detached from the notion of enclosure defined by a building envelope and redefined as a relational effect produced by boundary, atmosphere and practices of use [3], and as an ongoing process of interiorization rather than a given container [4]. This redefinition has released the interior from the architectural scale and opened the way for the discussion of the urban interior [5,6]. That literature, however, has left industrial settlements almost entirely outside its scope.

Yet industrial settlements are exceptionally well suited to the question of the threshold. They integrate production and everyday life within a single boundary and thereby constitute an interior at the urban scale. Drawing on Stavrides's critique of enclosed urban enclaves and points of control [7], these settlements may be described as outwardly closed formations defined by demarcated boundaries and controlled entrances, which acquire their urban character through porosity and thresholds. The permeable relations governing which facilities open to whom and when transform the settlement from a mere production site into an urban institution. At the same time, such settlements are apparatuses of paternalistic regulation [8]; access to facilities spatializes institutional belonging, while housing typology spatializes status hierarchy. The dual character of the threshold, at once connecting and excluding, is considerably more legible in these settlements than in other building types.

The industrial settlements established by the state in Türkiye during the early Republican period are prominent examples of this type. Twenty-three factory settlements were founded under the First Five-Year Industrial Plan (1934) with the aim of developing the less industrialized regions of Anatolia [9]. The textile factories established by Sümerbank were equipped with staff and workers' housing, schools, nurseries, hospitals, cinemas, ballrooms, guesthouses and sports facilities. Sümerbank may therefore be understood as a project in which industrial, social and ideological objectives were intertwined [10]. The settlements have also been characterized as "factories of happiness" that supported the identity of the new Republic by blending production with social life [11].

The earliest Sümerbank settlements, designed as small factory towns, are reported to have been established directly by Soviet teams [12]. At the Malatya plant, Sümerbank's fourth textile factory, the site was instead determined by a committee formed from within the institution under the leadership of the director of the Ereğli Factory [13,14]. In this respect, the settlement represents not a direct transfer of the model but a locally adapted application of it within the institution.

The literature on these settlements is extensive; however, studies have proceeded largely along the axes of industrialization policy [15,16], architectural characteristics [17,18], and industrial heritage, conservation and adaptive reuse [19]. That the settlements constituted integrated living environments, and that their social facilities were open to city

residents, has been documented [20]; what has not been analyzed conceptually is the spatial mechanism through which this openness was established and regulated. Addressing this conceptual gap is the first aim of the study.

The second feature that distinguishes the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory is the fate of the settlement. Following the privatization of Sümerbank, most of its settlements were partially preserved or adaptively reused [21]. The Malatya settlement, by contrast, was removed in its entirety. Construction began in 1937, and production started in 1939. The factory remained decisive in the everyday life of the city for approximately seventy years; it was included in the privatization program in 1987, two tender attempts in 1998 and 2000 were unsuccessful, and the site was sold to an investor group in 2004 [21]. Part of the land, however, was expropriated and transferred to the municipality. The liquidation of the settlement therefore proceeded along two distinct ownership trajectories: private capital and local government.

This dual trajectory is what makes the case theoretically productive, since the transformation cannot be explained as a one-directional movement from public to private. Demolition did not eliminate the character of the site as an urban interior; rather, as the land was divided between two ownership regimes, the threshold regime was reconfigured at the level of individual components. The components of the industrial settlement that were most open to the city are today enclosed interiors regulated by purchasing power and institutional function, whereas its most restricted components have become freely accessible areas of the city. Openness did not disappear but relocated, and this relocation detached openness from the spaces that carried collective urban experience.

Accordingly, the study addresses three research questions:

1. Through which spatial arrangements and which regime of permeability was the industrial settlement constituted as an urban interior, and how were its components graded in terms of openness to the city?
2. Through which ownership trajectories was the threshold regime that emerged on the same site after demolition shaped, and how do the two regimes differ at the level of individual components?
3. What persists at the symbolic level once the built form of a threshold has been removed, and which contemporary distinctions does it operate?

The study offers three contributions. First, it operationalizes the threshold not as a descriptive metaphor but as an analytical framework disaggregated into five dimensions—permeability, control regime, temporality, transformation, and exclusion—and tests this framework in a component-level comparison of two spatial regimes. Second, by showing that the threshold regime is restructured by ownership arrangements rather than determined by architectural configuration alone, it proposes reading urban transformation as a relocation between two interior regimes instead of through the public–private dichotomy. Third, by demonstrating how thresholding persists in a partial and symbolic form once its built form has been removed, it extends interior theory toward the condition of absence.

The construction of the article is presented in Figure 1. As illustrated in the figure, Section 2 develops the analytical framework by discussing the concepts of interiority and the threshold. Section 3 presents the case, the data sources, and the analytical procedure. Section 4 sets out the findings across the five dimensions of the threshold. Section 5 discusses these findings in relation to the theoretical framework, and Section 6 concludes.

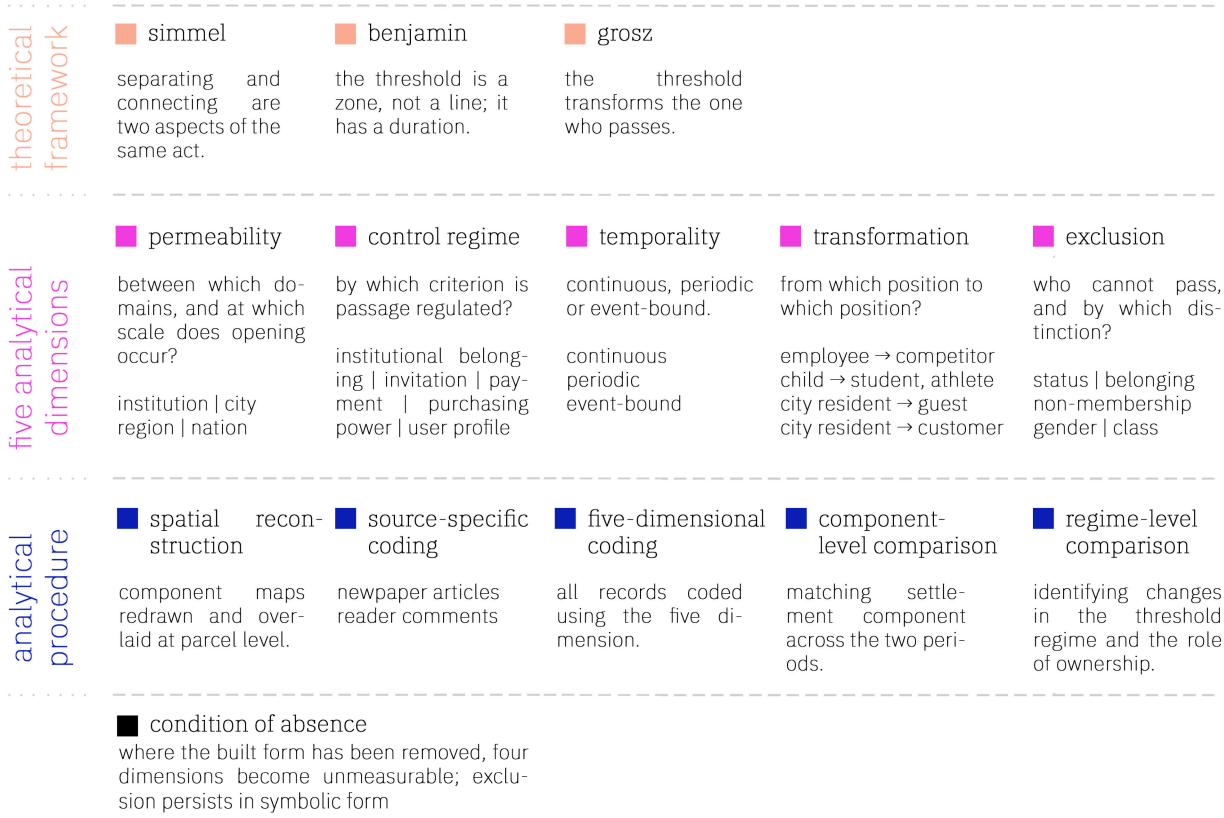


Figure 1. Theoretical framework and analytical procedure of the study. Developed by the first author.

2. Theoretical Framework

This section develops the analytical framework of the study through two concepts: interiority and the threshold. Section 2.1 addresses the redefinition of the interior from a volume defined by enclosure into a relational condition. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 discuss the separation of the threshold from the boundary and its transposition to the urban scale. Section 2.4 presents the five analytical dimensions derived from this discussion, and Section 2.5 addresses how the framework applies once the built form of a threshold has been removed.

2.1. The Interior Without Enclosure

In the literature of architecture, the interior was long treated as the residual volume defined by the envelope of a building. This definition ties the interior to the architectural scale and reduces its existence to the existence of the building. The interior theory of the past two decades, by contrast, has problematized this dependence and redefined interiority not as the outcome of enclosure but as a relationally produced condition [3].

This redefinition has three consequences for the present study. First, interiority is not a volume but an effect: a state of being inside produced jointly by boundary, atmosphere, scale and practices of use. Second, the interior is a historically produced category, which emerged at a particular moment of modernity through the doubling of the spatial and the imaginary [22]. Third, interiority is not a state but an act; the interior is not a given container but a continually rearranged process of interiorization [4].

This third proposition opens two doors. On the one hand, it makes it possible to read urban formations that exceed the scale of the architectural building as interiors; the literature on the urban interior, developed around the interiorization of public space, is built on this ground [5,6]. On the other hand, if interiority is a process rather than a container, it

follows that an interior whose built form has been removed may still constitute an object of research, and the case of this study is situated precisely in this condition.

The literature on the urban interior has concentrated largely on shopping malls, transport buildings, campuses and public institutions. This concentration also entails a shared characteristic of the spaces studied; the formations in question are consumption- and circulation-oriented, comparatively permeable and contemporary urban forms. Industrial settlements, which integrate production and everyday life within a single boundary, have remained almost entirely outside this framework. This study aims not to fill that gap by means of a single case but to test the concept of the urban interior by transposing it to a type of space in which enclosure and selectivity are determining.

2.2. Threshold and Boundary

If interiority is produced relationally, the instrument of that production is the threshold. To turn the threshold into an analytical tool, however, it must first be separated from the boundary.

In his distinction between the bridge and the door, Simmel defines the human being as the connecting and separating creature; separating and connecting are two aspects of the same act. Whereas the bridge unites what has been separated, the door does so asymmetrically; because the door can be opened, its closedness becomes a form of isolation, and passage acquires a directional meaning [1]. A first principle follows: what makes an element a threshold is not one of the functions of separating or connecting, but its performing both at once. An element that only separates is a boundary; an element that only connects is a passage.

Benjamin carries this distinction into the temporal dimension. He emphasizes the difference between "Schwelle" (threshold) and "Grenze" (boundary); the boundary is a line, whereas the threshold is a zone, one that expands, that has a duration, and that takes time to cross. The threshold is bound up with rites of passage, and for Benjamin it is precisely this ritual intensity that has eroded in modern experience [23]. A second principle follows: the threshold has a duration; passage is not instantaneous but extended in time.

This duration has been elaborated in the anthropology of rites of passage. Van Gennep's scheme of separation, threshold and incorporation, and Turner's concepts of liminality and communitas, show that the time spent at the threshold is not merely an interval of transfer but produces a social condition of its own [24,25]. Turner's concept of communitas is additionally operative for the present study; events at the settlement such as festivals, openings, balls and competitions can be read as collective states in which everyday hierarchies were temporarily suspended.

Grosz, in turn, removes in-betweenness from the status of a relation between two fixed terms. For her, the in-between is what allows one of the terms to cease being the "other" of the other and to enter its own becoming; in-betweenness is not a position but a condition of becoming [2] (p. 94). A third principle follows: the threshold does not simply regulate passage; it transforms the one who passes. The same person, in crossing a threshold, may be positioned as an employee, a spectator, a student, a competitor, or a guest. The threshold is a device that redistributes the positions of subjects.

2.3. The Threshold at the Urban Scale: Porosity, Selectivity, Ownership

When the concept of the threshold is transposed to the urban scale, it turns from a singular architectural element into a regime. The concept of porosity, developed by Benjamin and Lacis in their writing on Naples, describes situations in which the urban fabric renders the distinction between inside and outside discontinuous and open to negotiation [26] (pp. 165–171).

Stavrides politicizes this line of thought; threshold spaces are areas in which closed identities are opened to encounter and sharing, and in which belonging is continually renegotiated. The city is composed not of enclosed residential islands but of thresholds that regulate passage, and the regime of these thresholds determines the extent to which the city can be held in common [7].

This perspective is decisive for reading an industrial settlement defined by a perimeter boundary. At first sight the settlement is a closed enclave; yet its urban meaning derives not from its enclosure but from its selective porosity. Which component opens to whom, under which conditions and at which times, is what turns the settlement from a facility into an urban institution. What requires analysis, therefore, is not the existence of the boundary but the regime of permeability that governs it.

The second face of this regime is exclusion. Crawford's study of American company towns shows that settlement models integrating production and everyday life are at the same time apparatuses of paternalistic regulation [8]. In such settlements, housing typology spatializes status hierarchy while access to facilities spatializes institutional belonging. The threshold is therefore not a neutral element of passage but a technology of distinction that defines who may cross. To read the settlement solely through opening and sharing is to render this constitutive selectivity invisible.

Physical accessibility does not in itself produce publicness. A distinction between four terms is necessary here: permeability refers to the capacity of a boundary to be crossed; access to the actual possibility of crossing for a given group; openness to the formal absence of restriction; and publicness to the condition in which a space is usable by a heterogeneous public. These do not coincide. A space may be formally open yet remain inaccessible in practice, whether through cost, through the hours at which it can be used, or through the reading of whom it has been arranged for. The analysis that follows treats this non-coincidence as a finding rather than as an anomaly: the question is not whether a component was open, but for whom, on what terms, and at what cost.

This study proposes to add a further dimension to that literature. The threshold regime cannot be reduced to an architectural arrangement, since the criterion that governs passage is restructured by the ownership regime rather than determined by the built form. Ownership does not operate alone: function, governance, security arrangements, user profiles and management practices all participate in producing the regime. What ownership does is to restructure the conditions under which these factors operate. In a settlement where institutional belonging regulates passage, the threshold is the spatial expression of the employment relation; in a commercial interior where access is regulated by purchasing power, it is the spatial expression of the ownership relation. When different ownership regimes operate on the same site, the threshold regime differentiates accordingly. At this point, the debates in the urban transformation literature concerning the transfer of ownership and the commodification of public space [21] become combinable with the concept of the threshold.

2.4. Analytical Framework: Five Dimensions of the Threshold

The discussion above defines the threshold not as a building type or an element but as a relational operation. For the threshold to be analyzed empirically, this definition requires that it be disaggregated into its dimensions. Table 1 sets out the five dimensions, derived from the principles developed in Sections 2.2 and 2.3, which constitute the analytical framework of the study.

Table 1. Analytical dimensions of the threshold and their theoretical grounds.

Dimension	Question	Theoretical Ground
Permeability	Between which two domains does the component establish both a division and a connection, and at which scale does opening occur?	Simmel; Benjamin & Lacis
Control regime	By which criterion is passage regulated: institutional belonging, invitation, payment, purchasing power, user profile?	Stavrides; Crawford
Temporality	Is access continuous, periodic or event-bound, and at what temporal scale is it experienced?	Benjamin; van Gennep; Turner; Attiwill
Transformation	From which position to which position does the one who passes move?	Grosz; Turner
Exclusion	Who cannot pass, and which distinction is being enforced: status, non-membership, gender, class, belonging	Stavrides; Crawford

These five dimensions make it possible to move beyond a functional classification of components. A swimming pool is functionally a recreational facility; as a threshold, it is a device that opens the permeability between the institution and the city on particular days and through particular events, that transforms the position of the one who passes from employee into competitor, and that simultaneously produces a set of those left outside. This reading makes visible what a functional classification alone would miss.

The second function of the framework is comparison. The five dimensions make it possible to analyze spatial orders belonging to different periods by the same criteria. The present study applies the framework to two orders established some seven decades apart on the same site and compares the two regimes at the level of individual components.

The dimensions were derived from theory but tested against the data. During the coding process, the framework was revised once, and all included records were subsequently recoded using the revised definitions. The framework is therefore abductive rather than strictly deductive: its five dimensions were theoretically derived but refined through engagement with the material.

2.5. The Condition of Absence: Symbolic Persistence of Thresholding

The final component of the framework concerns how thresholds whose built form has been removed are to be treated. As noted in Section 2.1, if interiority is not a container but a process [4], the existence of the interior cannot be reduced to the existence of the building. Demolition, in this case, does not end the interior but changes the terms on which it persists.

From this, the study derives a proposition: when its built form is removed, the threshold does not persist as such, but its separating function continues in a partial and symbolic form. The gate, the pool or the hall of a demolished settlement can no longer be crossed; yet these spaces are reconstituted in local narrative and begin to operate a different distinction, between those who know the past and those who do not, between those counted as belonging to a period of the city and those who are not.

This symbolic persistence can be analyzed through the literature on the production of lost spaces in memory. Boym's distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia makes it possible to identify the function that a narrative of loss performs; restorative nostalgia seeks to reconstitute what has been lost, whereas reflective nostalgia acknowledges the irreversibility of loss [27].

This proposition leads to a methodological expectation. Where a threshold has no built form, four of the five dimensions in Table 1—permeability, control regime, temporality and transformation—should become analytically inapplicable, since there remains no threshold to be crossed, no access to be regulated and no position to be transformed. Only the dimension of exclusion should continue to operate, in its symbolic form. Section 4.5 tests this expectation empirically.

3. Materials and Methods

This study adopts a theory-informed qualitative research design based on a single case. The campus of the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory was selected as the case, and two periods were examined comparatively: the period during which the industrial settlement was established and operated, and the period that followed its demolition on the same site. These periods were selected because they correspond to the two moments at which the settlement was visible in local discourse.

Three types of material were used: local newspaper archives from the founding period, digital news items and reader comments from the period of demolition and redevelopment, and cartographic and visual archival material relating to both periods. The methodological framework comprises four stages: (i) processing the spatial material and overlaying the component maps of the two periods; (ii) screening the records for relevance; (iii) source-specific coding: qualitative content analysis for the period press and discourse analysis for the post-demolition texts; and (iv) recoding the resulting categories across the five threshold dimensions developed in Section 2 and comparing them between the two periods. The study area is presented in Section 3.1, the research method and data sources in Section 3.2, and the analytical procedure in Section 3.3.

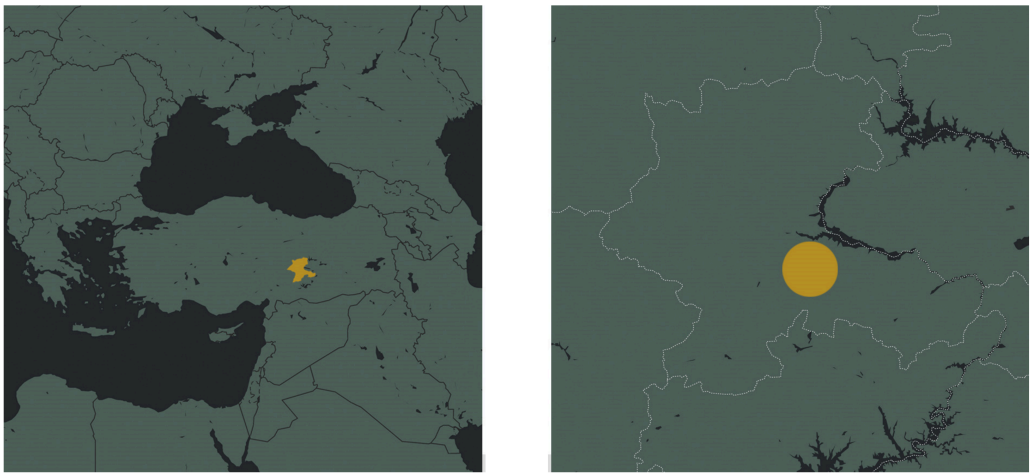
3.1. Study Area

Figure 2 shows the location of Malatya in eastern Türkiye, where the campus of the Textile and Yarn Factory examined in this research was established. Malatya acquired provincial status through the administrative reorganization of the early Republican years in 1924 and became one of the centers in which the statist industrialization policies of the period were implemented. The presence of the railway provided the infrastructure required for the supply of raw materials and the distribution of manufactured goods, making the city suitable for industrial investment. As the reports of the period indicate, proximity to the railway was among the determining criteria in the selection of the factory site [14]. The decision to establish the factory was taken under the First Five-Year Industrial Plan and announced publicly in 1935, and the factory began production in 1939 [21,28].

Alongside its production buildings, the settlement brought together workers' and staff housing, a cinema, a social club, a swimming pool, a football pitch, tennis courts, a primary school, a nursery and a hospital, and was distinctly separated from the surrounding urban fabric. The site was not a single continuous area; İnönü Avenue divided the settlement in two, with the production buildings and the social and cultural facilities to the north of the avenue and the staff and workers' housing areas to the south [15]. The avenue thus formed an internal boundary within the settlement while allowing the everyday circulation of the city to pass through it.

The Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory was deliberately selected for this research. In Flyvbjerg's terms, it constitutes an extreme case [29]. Of the forty-seven Sümerbank production facilities, fifteen were transferred to public institutions for non-profit uses, and eight were sold to private investors who demolished the complexes and built for-profit facilities in their place [21]. Whereas most early Republican textile factory

settlements have been partially preserved or adaptively reused (the Kayseri complex, for instance, now serves as a university campus [19]), the Malatya settlement was removed in its entirety. Extreme cases are more productive for theoretical inference than typical ones because they contain the phenomenon in a more concentrated form [29]. The complete disappearance of the settlement is therefore decisive for the question posed by this study. How spatial thresholds are constituted, and what becomes of them once their physical counterparts have been removed, can be disentangled only where the object has vanished entirely.



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 2. Location of the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory settlement: (**a**) Malatya within Türkiye; (**b**) the city center within the province of Malatya. Drawn by the first author based on Google Maps (2025) data.

3.2. Research Method and Data Sources

The sources available for the two periods examined differ in character, and this difference requires a methodological distinction. The data concerning the founding period consist of the press of the period, which recorded how the thresholds were established and operated, and are examined through qualitative content analysis. The data concerning the period of demolition and redevelopment consist of texts in which a space that no longer exists is reproduced within discourse and are subjected to discourse analysis. The two methods rest on different epistemological assumptions; the former aims to classify systematically what a text states, whereas the latter seeks to reveal how meaning is constructed within a text, and from which positions it is articulated [30]. In this study, the two methods are used not as substitutes for one another but in correspondence with the difference in the nature of the data. Cartographic and visual material, in turn, provides common ground for both periods; the component maps of the settlement and of the successor development make it possible to compare the findings of the two periods on the same parcels. Table 2 sets out the corpus, the method applied to each source group and what each documents.

The principal source for the founding period of the settlement is the newspaper Fırat. Established on 8 October 1932 and closed on 27 September 1952, it was for twenty years the only local press organ in Malatya [31]. For most of this period it appeared twice a week, and for shorter intervals daily and weekly. That the newspaper was published concurrently with the planning, construction, opening and first decade of operation of the settlement makes it the primary source for this study. However, the fact that it was published during the single-party period and that its coverage of industrial investment was consistent with the developmentalist discourse of the time required that it be treated not as a neutral record

but as a text that publicly constituted the settlement. This does not weaken the data; it is itself a finding that shows how the thresholds were legitimated.

Table 2. Research corpus.

Period	Source Group	Source	Method	What It Documents
Period 1: establishment and early operation of the industrial settlement	Local press	Fırat (1934–1951) National Library; Beyazıt State Library	Qualitative content analysis	Establishment, opening of facilities, events, user groups
		(Yeni) Malatya Postası (1952–1957) Demokrat Malatya (1951–1959)	Screening	No substantive content relating to the settlement was found
Period 2: demolition and redevelopment	Digital news items	malatyahaber.com (2002–2023)	Document analysis	Context of demolition and redevelopment
	Reader comments	malatyahaber.com (2002–2023)	Discourse analysis	Post-demolition representation, memory discourse
Both periods	Cartographic and visual archive	SALT aerial photographs, period photographs	Document analysis, redrawing, parcel matching	Layout, boundaries, entrance points, component locations

All issues of the newspaper from 1934 to 1950 were examined through the digital library of the National Library of Türkiye [32], and the issues from the first half of 1951 were consulted physically in the archive of the Beyazıt State Library. The issues from 1932 to 1934, those from the second half of 1951, and the whole of 1952 could not be accessed. The newspapers published after the closure of Fırat—Malatya Postası (from 1952) and Demokrat Malatya (from 1951)—were also screened, but no substantive content relating to the settlement was found. This absence is significant in defining the scope of the study; while the settlement was repeatedly covered during its establishment and opening, it ceased to constitute a regular news subject during its later operation and returned to local discourse only with the process of demolition.

The spatial material consists of the layout information obtained from Arıtan [15] (p. 178), aerial imagery dated 2001 and 2025 accessed through Google Earth, and two period photographs held in the SALT Research archive. How this material was processed is described in Section 3.3.

The data concerning the period following the demolition of the industrial settlement were compiled from news items and reader comments published on malatyahaber.com, a publicly accessible news platform. The site was founded on 15 April 2002 and is the first and longest-running digital news platform in the city [33]. The principal reason for selecting this platform is that the date on which it began publication coincides with the beginning of the demolition and redevelopment process at the settlement; all stages of the process are therefore recorded on it. News items relating to the settlement and the reader comments posted beneath them were compiled together.

The screening covered the period from 2002 to 2023. The upper limit was set deliberately, since the spatial transformation processes in the city changed in character following the earthquakes of 6 February 2023.

3.3. Analytical Procedure

The spatial material forms the basis of the analytical procedure. Aerial photographs, layout information, period photographs and press images were compared, and the component maps of the settlement and of the post-demolition development were redrawn by the author. On each drawing, the outer boundary of the site, the entrance points, the distinction between production and social facility areas, and the housing typologies were marked. The two drawings were prepared at the same scale and framing, making it possible to match the components at parcel level and to locate the findings obtained from the textual analyses on the same site.

For the founding period, approximately 2260 issues of Fırat published between 1934 and 1951 were screened; the items relating to the settlement identified in this screening form the basis of the analysis in Section 4. For the post-demolition period, all news items published on malatyahaber.com between 2002 and 2023 concerning the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory were reviewed, and the reader comments posted in response to these items were collected, yielding a corpus of 119 comments. Before coding, these comments were screened for relevance. Comments relating to the settlement, its components, the demolition process, the successor development, or the removal of the settlement's name from urban space were included, while comments unrelated to these topics were excluded. Following this screening, 66 comments were included, and 53 were excluded. Of the 66 comments included, 31 addressed the demolition and renaming of the settlement school and were analyzed separately in Section 4.5; within the five-dimensional framework, these records were coded primarily through symbolic exclusion (DIŞ-5), while stance, nostalgia, and frame were used as additional discourse-specific categories. The remaining comments were analyzed in relation to the other threshold dimensions according to their substantive content.

The records were then coded according to the nature of their source. For the founding period, each newspaper item in Fırat was treated as a separate analytical unit and examined through qualitative content analysis. Each record was subjected to open coding, in which the component of the settlement to which it related, the type and date of the event, the participating group, and whether the event was internal to the settlement or city-wide were recorded. The categories emerging from this coding are functional: production, sport, education, health, cultural events, housing and everyday life.

For the post-demolition period, each reader comment was treated as a separate analytical unit and examined through discourse analysis. The corresponding news items were used to establish the context of the comments and to identify the events and spatial transformations to which readers were responding. The comments were examined in terms of the frames of meaning within which the settlement was constructed, who articulated these frames, and to which contemporary demand they were attached. Nostalgia was treated not as a finding but as an object of analysis; the distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia [27] was used as the differentiating framework in this coding.

The categories obtained from the source-specific coding were recoded in a second stage across the five dimensions of the threshold. This second coding translates categories derived from different sources into a common framework; the language of the period press and that of the post-demolition comments become comparable only after this translation. For each component or record, the following questions were answered: between which two domains does the component establish both a division and a connection, and at which scale does opening occur (permeability); by which criterion is passage regulated (control regime); is access continuous, periodic, or event-bound, and at what temporal scale is it experienced (temporality); from which position to which position does the person passing

move (transformation); who cannot pass, and which distinction is operated (exclusion). This coding converts functional categories into threshold categories and renders the components legible not merely as service units but as spatial devices that both enable and regulate passage. The full codebook is provided in Appendix A.

A single record illustrates the procedure. A news item reporting the opening of the swimming pool in 1948 was first coded at source level for its component (pool), event type (opening ceremony), participating group (city residents and regional competitors), and scale (regional). At the second stage, these categories were translated into threshold dimensions: opening at regional scale (permeability), event-bound access (temporality), and the transformation of the employee's child into a competitor (transformation). The result was then located on the pool parcel of the component map, where it could be compared with the access regime of the same parcel in the successor period.

The coded categories were compared between the two periods in the final stage. The comparison was carried out at two levels: at component level, by matching the access regime of each parcel across the two periods; and at regime level, by comparing the distribution of the five dimensions across the two periods. Discrepancies between sources (for instance, a component presented in the period press as operating at city scale but recalled in present-day accounts as belonging to a narrow group) were recorded separately and evaluated as findings.

The coding was carried out by the first author and subsequently reviewed by both authors. The review covered all coded records rather than a sample; where the two authors read a record differently, the disagreement was resolved by returning to the source and, where necessary, by refining the definition of the code in question. Coding notes recording uncertain decisions and their grounds were kept throughout and constitute an audit trail retained by the authors. Two further measures were adopted to enhance transparency and auditability: the codebook is provided in Appendix A, and, following one revision of the framework during the coding process, all records were recoded using the revised definitions.

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used in two ways during the process: as preliminary coding support in the relevance screening of the comment corpus and in part of the coding, and in the language editing of the English version of the text. AI suggestions preceded rather than followed human coding, and each suggestion was reviewed individually by the authors and either verified or corrected before being entered into the dataset. AI was not used for research design, the development of the analytical framework, theoretical interpretation, or the formulation of the conclusions.

It should be noted that the analysis rests on an asymmetrical source structure across the two periods. Claims concerning the founding period are based primarily on the press of the period, on cartographic material and on the secondary literature; testimonies are used in this part only in a supporting capacity. The analysis of the post-demolition period, by contrast, relies largely on the comment corpus. The two corpora do not merely differ in volume; they produce different kinds of knowledge. The press of the period records the settlement as it was being constituted, whereas the comments reconstruct it retrospectively, after its disappearance. The comparison should therefore not be understood as a direct comparison of equivalent forms of lived experience across the two periods. Rather, the study compares threshold regimes reconstructed through historically different source structures and brought into correspondence through the spatial components of the site and the five analytical dimensions.

A clear limitation arising from this is that the data on exclusion for the founding period are limited. The scarcity of records concerning internal hierarchy and non-membership does not indicate that exclusion was limited during that period, but rather that the testi-

monies relating to it are retrospective and memory-based; witnesses rarely articulate the distinctions of their own period. This gap has been addressed through the secondary literature on housing typology [15]. A second limitation is the absence of complete architectural documentation of the settlement; the redrawn maps are an approximate reconstruction. A third is that the comment corpus derives from a self-selecting group of users. Finally, the findings are produced from a single case and make no claim to statistical generalization; generalization is at the theoretical level.

The comments were compiled from content published on a publicly accessible news platform. Usernames and profile information were not recorded, and comments were conveyed indirectly rather than quoted verbatim. The first author has a personal connection to the case; the author was born and raised in Malatya. While this position facilitated access to local archives and to the local idiom, it also carries the risk of sharing in the post-demolition narrative of loss. To counter this risk, records defending the transformation were coded separately and evaluated as negative cases in the analysis, and the dimension of exclusion in the settlement period was addressed in a separate subsection.

4. Findings

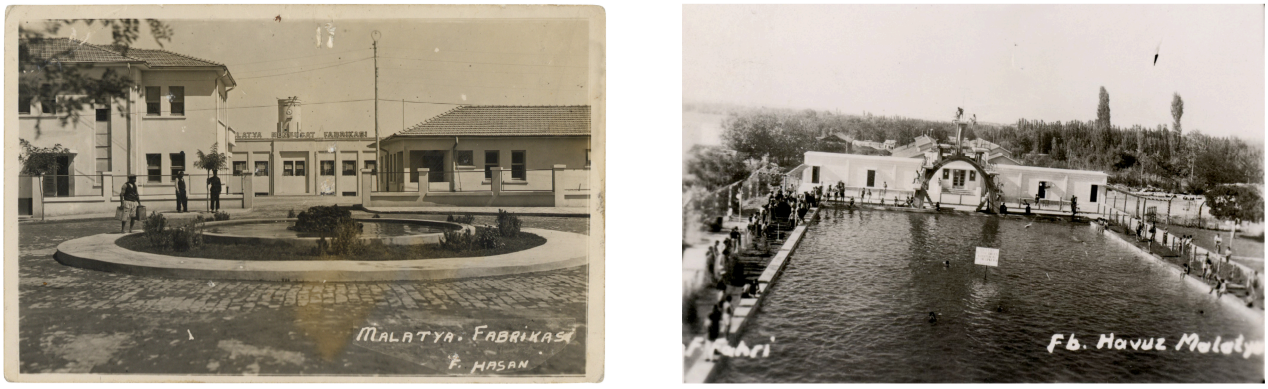
The findings are organized across the five dimensions of the threshold rather than period by period, so that the two periods can be compared by the same criteria. Throughout the text, the period during which the settlement was established and operated is referred to as the "settlement period", and the order that emerged on the same site after demolition as the "successor period".

4.1. Spatial Configuration

The settlement is located 2 km west of the city center, on the axis between the railway station and the city. The location was not selected by chance. The site was determined following surveys carried out by a delegation that traveled to the city in 1936 under the leadership of the director of the Ereğli Factory, and which included the director of the Nazilli Factory, ministry engineers, and various specialists [13]. The delegation concerned itself not only with the identification of the site but also with cotton production, the supply of labor and the electricity infrastructure [14]. The determining criteria were listed as proximity to the railway, the inexpensive delivery of raw materials, the equally convenient dispatch of manufactured goods, and ease of access to the plant for workers [14]. This last criterion indicates that the location was a decision about access as much as a decision about production.

The effect of the site selection on the city began before the settlement was built. In 1935 it was decided that the city's power station would be moved from Pınarbaşı to Gündüzbey, and the local press of the period justified this decision directly by reference to the energy requirements of the textile factory that was to be established [34]. The city reorganized its own infrastructure for a facility that did not yet exist; the urban effect of the settlement may therefore be said to have begun before its boundary was drawn.

The site is separated from its surroundings by a demarcated boundary, and its entrance is kept under control. Photographs from the period show that the boundary was formed of wire mesh panels stretched between cut-stone piers, and that a paved forecourt with a pool and planting was arranged in front of the main entrance opening, as shown in Figure 3. The boundary thus remains visually permeable while physical passage is kept under control; the entrance is constituted not as a line but as a zone shaped on the side of the city [23].



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 3. Views of the settlement: (**a**) Entrance to the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory, the boundary formed of wire mesh panels stretched between cut-stone piers, with a paved forecourt in front of the main entrance opening, n.d. Source: SALT Research, Photograph and Postcard Archive [35]; (**b**) The swimming pool, n.d. Source: SALT Research, Ali Saim Ülgen Archive [36].

Figure 4 shows that the site has a distinct internal zoning: the production units lie to the north, the social and cultural facilities to their south, and the housing areas on the opposite side of the axis, in the section facing the city [15]. The housing area is itself divided in two, with staff housing in one section and workers' housing in a separate section toward the station. The guesthouse stands at the western end, in an independent position separated from both the production and the housing zones. This zoning is visible in the record of the period itself; a journalist visiting the settlement writes that the staff and workers' houses rose "like monuments" [37].



Figure 4. Component map of the settlement, showing the outer boundary, the entrance points, the distinction between production and social facility areas, and the housing typologies. Drawn by the first author on the basis of layout information in [15] and aerial imagery from Google Earth (2025).

The settlement is also autonomous in infrastructural terms. The plant began operating with electricity supplied from its own energy source at a time when the city did not yet have sufficient grid capacity [34] and distributed the electricity it generated to the housing units. Enclosure here is therefore not only physical but infrastructural and functional; the

settlement is a complete environment containing its own energy, its own health service, its own education and its own cultural facilities.

This completeness is also recorded in the language of the period. In an interview with the factory director in 1938, it is stated that the settlement contains a cinema, a hospital and a library, that a person arriving at the plant will find themselves in "an entirely different milieu", and that they will work, sleep and be entertained there [37]. The same interview reports that a school is to be opened at the settlement and that the children admitted to it will be trained as weavers "from the seed". The journalist visiting the settlement summarizes his impression with the phrase "we are touring a country". The historical record therefore suggests that several characteristics later associated with the urban interior were already embedded in the founding conception of the settlement, rather than being solely a retrospective analytical interpretation.

This completeness, however, is not homogeneous. The components of the settlement form a distinct gradient in terms of their degree of openness to the city, as set out in Table 3.

Table 3. Components of the settlement ranked by degree of permeability (1939–1950).

Component	Access Regime	Scale	Permeability
Swimming pool	Event-bound; competitions, celebrations, open use	City + region	Highest
Football pitch and sports areas	Open to the public on match and competition days	City + nation	High
Cinema and hall	During screenings and performances	City	High
Primary school and nursery	Open to city residents, separately announced for the nursery	City	Medium-high
Hospital	Institutional; regional in crisis conditions	Institution + region	Medium
Production units	Employees	Institution	Low
Housing area	Institutional allocation; divided by status	Within the institution	Very low
Guesthouse	By invitation	Protocol	Lowest

Following the privatization of Sümerbank, part of the settlement was sold to a group of investors while another part was expropriated. To understand the order of the successor space, it is necessary to see that the land was divided along these two distinct ownership trajectories.

The first trajectory operated through local government. The stadium, which had for many years housed the settlement's sports club, was demolished, and a municipal service building was constructed on the site [38]. The workers' and staff housing, vacated when production ceased, was also demolished, and the land was designated for a city park [39]. The title to this area was transferred to the municipality, which put the construction of the park out to tender [40]. A further parcel of 28,925 m^2, allocated by the Privatization Administration, was developed as a congress and culture center financed in equal shares by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Provincial Special Administration and the municipality [41,42], and brought into service in 2011 [43]. The park, known locally as Sümerpark, was renamed by a decision of the municipal council [44]; the renaming was not fully absorbed into everyday use, and for a period two different names appeared on signs at different entrances to the same park [45].

The primary school of the settlement continued to exist on the same parcel. Following the 2020 Sivrice earthquake, it was demolished on grounds of structural damage and rebuilt

with private financing; the new building was given the name of the donor's mother, a name that had not been on the agenda when the project was first announced [46].

The second trajectory was formed through private capital. Under a decision of the Privatization Board dated 8 January 2004, the factory was sold with all its equipment to a partnership of local firms for 6.4 million US dollars, and the transfer was completed in February 2004 [47,48]. Although the sale was made on the condition that the land would be used as an industrial facility, production was not continued and the production buildings, then some seventy years old, were demolished in their entirety and the site leveled [49]. Along this trajectory, a shopping mall was constructed and opened in November 2009 [50], followed by a hotel [51], residential blocks and an office building.

Figure 5 shows that the resulting composition cannot be defined solely as a commercial investment area. Alongside the shopping mall, hotel, residences and offices, the site contains a municipal service building, a congress and culture center, an arts street, a rebuilt primary school and a city park in two parts. City residents refer to this second group as a clear gain; in records defending the transformation, the park and the arts street are counted directly in these terms.



Figure 5. Component map of the successor development, prepared at the same scale and framing as Figure 4. Drawn by the first author on the basis of aerial imagery from Google Earth (2025).

These components are treated here as a single successor urban interior rather than as a cluster of adjacent interiors, and three continuities with the settlement period support this reading. First, they occupy the parcels of a single former enclosure and preserve its parcellation: when Figures 4 and 5 are overlaid, the successor uses correspond very largely, component for component, with those of the settlement, as set out in Table 4. The transformation took place not on a tabula rasa but by retaining the traces of the existing division of the land. Second, the site remains collectively distinct from the surrounding fabric; in terms of scale, height and circulation logic it differs markedly from the four-story residential fabric around it, and residents articulate both this distinction and the possibility that the transformation will extend toward their own housing. Third, the site continues to be organized through a series of demarcated boundaries and controlled entrances. What has changed is not the existence of the interior but where these boundaries are drawn and by which criterion they operate, and as the following subsections show, that criterion now differs from parcel to parcel.

Table 4. Component-level matches between the settlement and successor periods.

Settlement Period	Successor Period	Trajectory
Swimming pool	Hotel	Private capital
Football pitch	Malatya Municipal Service Building	Local government
Staff and workers' housing	Culture center and city park	Local government
Guesthouse	Art street	Local government
Primary school	Primary school (rebuilt)	Public + donation
Production units	Shopping mall, residences, offices	Private capital

4.2. Permeability and Temporality

The settlement was not continuously open to use by city residents; opening to the city was bound to particular rhythms and events. The settlement acquired its urban function through these openings.

The component in which opening occurred most extensively is the swimming pool. Built to Olympic dimensions, it was the first swimming pool in the city [52] and was opened on 29 June 1948 with the participation of the factory director, at a crowded ceremony with a display by twenty-five swimmers [52]. The report of the opening emphasizes the importance of the pool for "the people of the region, who long for a large body of water" [52]. The expression used by the source of the period is notable; the addressee of the pool is neither the factory employee nor the city resident alone, but the people of the region. The pool served as a training ground that produced Turkish swimming champions during the 1960s and 1970s, and the area around it was actively used as a venue for municipal gatherings, weddings, circumcision ceremonies, dinners, and concerts [53]. The breadth of access is emphasized in testimonies as well; it is stated that there was no child of a staff member or worker who had not jumped from the diving boards of the pool.

The football pitch and the sports areas come second. A report dated 1945 states that the stadium was open to members of the public wishing to watch matches between city clubs [54]. In 1948, inter-school volleyball matches were held at the settlement [55], which indicates that many events at city scale took place within it. The participation of athletes from Mersin, Adana, Istanbul and Diyarbakır in the athletics competitions of 1940 [56] documents that the opening reached the national scale.

The cinema, the hall and the education and health units form a third group. The screening of a film about the city at the factory cinema [57], the charity ball held in the hall [58] and the theater performances [59,60] show that these units operated at city scale. The primary school of the settlement was opened in 1946 [61] at a crowded ceremony, and it was separately announced that the nursery, opened in 1947 [62], was open to use by city residents. The hospital, in turn, took on a regional function following the 1939 Erzincan earthquake by treating 50 casualties brought from the region [63].

The opening of the threshold, however, did not occur only through city residents entering the settlement; it also occurred through the resources of the settlement spilling beyond its boundary. It is reported that hot water discharged from the factory was carried by pipes to a nearby point on certain days of the week and used by women from the surrounding neighborhoods. The supply of electricity generated by the settlement to part of the city falls into the same category [18]. The threshold here is not a line but a zone through which resources flow in both directions.

A different temporality can be identified in the testimonies. In the comments, the settlement is described as the space not of a single visit but of a period of life. Users who

were born and raised in the housing, who attended the school of the settlement, who learned to swim in its pool, or whose fathers retired from it, convey the settlement as an environment that was lived within.

In the successor period, permeability has not disappeared entirely but has withdrawn to a particular part of the site. Opening at city scale was coded six times in the records, and all of these records concern open or undeveloped areas; specifically, the city park and an unpaved sports ground. This code does not appear in any record relating to the shopping mall, the hotel, or the residential components.

The records concerning the unpaved ground document in detail how the basis of permeability has changed. It is reported that sport is played there regularly on certain days of the week with different age groups, that users come from different districts of the city, and that the area is used jointly by young people, students and pensioners. One record also explains how this use arrived there; activities previously held on the sports ground of another industrial facility moved to this ground after that facility closed.

The basis of this permeability, however, differs qualitatively from that of the settlement period. In the settlement period, access was provided through the institution's own arrangement; in the successor period it rests on discretionary permission. One record states this explicitly; the school administration opened the ground to those using it. Permeability has been transformed from an institutional arrangement into a temporary license.

The consequence of this contingency appears in the same records; all records coded for opening at city scale are also coded for the narrowing of access, since the reason these records came into being is the debate over the allocation of the ground to another use.

A differentiation is also observable in terms of temporality. Whereas in the settlement period opening was bound to particular events and ceremonial moments—match days, screening times, competitions, opening ceremonies—no such rhythm was recorded in the successor period for the areas accessed at city scale. Use is continuous, but this continuity derives not from an arrangement but from the fact that the area has not yet been built upon.

4.3. Control Regime and Transformation

In the settlement period, the everyday and continuous use of the facilities depended on standing in a relationship with the institution; on being an employee or a relative of an employee. The allocation of housing rested directly on this criterion; living in the housing was an extension of employment, and the right to housing ended when the employment relationship ended. Similarly, the hospital, the nursery and the school served the population of the settlement in the first instance, and their opening to city residents constituted an exception that had to be separately announced [62]. In the testimonies, the relationship established with the settlement is likewise narrated through this criterion; users position themselves as people whose father worked there, who lived in the housing, or who retired from it.

Events and invitations form the second mechanism, regulating the passage into the settlement of those without institutional belonging. City residents entered the settlement on the occasion of a match day, a screening, a performance, a ball, or a competition [54,58–60]. The strictest form of this mechanism operates at the guesthouse; access depends directly on invitation and is confined to the protocol level.

What these two mechanisms have in common is that payment does not appear as a criterion of control. No arrangement concerning the cost of access to the facilities is found in the sources; access is determined not by purchasing power but through a relationship with the institution or participation in an event. The spatial counterpart of the control regime can be read in the boundary itself; the wire mesh panels and the single main entrance opening establish an order that does not prevent passage altogether but directs it through particular

points and under particular conditions. Separation and connection operate together in the same element.

In the successor period the criterion regulating access has changed. According to the coded records, the most frequently appearing reason for restriction is purchasing power; what determines passage is no longer a relationship with an institution but the capacity to purchase the service the space offers. The clearest expression is found in a record comparing the same area across the two periods. The commenter recounts attending celebrations held in the social facilities of the settlement, including an engagement ceremony held there, and then, by stating that the hotel and restaurants now rising on the same area would be beyond reach, renders their presence meaningless from their own point of view. Access that was possible through participation in a collective event has given way to passage through a threshold of consumption.

The second mechanism is the definition of security and user profile. This mechanism is articulated in the records not as an explicit prohibition but as a reading of whom the space has been arranged for. This is the situation described in the literature on pseudo-public space; access is formally open to everyone, but is regulated indirectly through price levels, security arrangements and the aesthetic register of the space [64].

The third and unexpected form of control is the complaint about the absence of control, and this complaint has arisen twice on the same parcel, twenty years apart. The justification for the demolition of the housing in 2002 was that the vacated units had been occupied by unauthorized users and that residents of the surrounding neighborhoods had complained to this effect [65]. This parcel, whose access was regulated by institutional allocation during the settlement period, was left without oversight when production ceased and the housing was vacated and was experienced as unsafe. The same parcel is today a city park, and the comments report that the area is left unattended in the evening hours, that its equipment has been damaged, and that residents of the district avoid passing through the park in the dark. Twenty years apart, on the same ground, the same complaint recurs.

This recurrence shows that the liberalization of access does not in itself produce publicness, in the sense distinguished in Section 2.3. When the institutional framework is withdrawn, the openness that remains may be experienced by city residents not as a gain but as insecurity. The finding supports, with longitudinal evidence, the theoretical claim that the threshold carries not only a limiting but also a constitutive function [7].

The threshold does not simply regulate passage; it also changes the position of the one who passes [2]. In the settlement period this transformation appears in three patterns.

The first is the passage from child to trained labor. The educational buildings of the settlement are the thresholds through which the institution produced its own workforce. In the interview with the factory director in 1938 this aim is stated explicitly; children who had completed primary school and could read would be admitted to the school to be opened at the settlement, and weavers would be trained there “from the seed” [37]. With the school entering service in 1946 and the nursery in 1947, this sequence was completed. The educational buildings are thus not merely a service but an instrument of institutional reproduction; a person entering the settlement as a child leaves it as a student and then as a qualified employee.

The second is the passage from employee to competitor/athlete. The sports club of the settlement, first under the name Mekik Spor and later Sümer Spor, was active in cycling, athletics, volleyball, football, boxing, wrestling and tennis [53]. The club’s competitions were held on the settlement’s ground, and wrestling victories were reported in the local press [66]. Many swimmers in the city are stated to have been trained in the Olympic pool [53]. The factory employee, or the child of an employee, acquired through the facilities

of the settlement an identity as an athlete, a competitor and in some cases a representative at national scale.

The third is the passage from non-literate to literate; literacy courses were organized for employees after their shifts, and vocational training was also provided [67].

These three patterns show that the settlement was designed as an environment that did not merely employ its workers but formed them within itself. The direction of transformation is singular and institutional; passage carries the person toward the position the institution requires. This also coincides with the aim of the industrialization policy of the period to transform an agrarian society by incorporating it into industry [67]. A non-institutional form of transformation was also recorded: the fact that women employees began to move about the city in their work clothing illustrates how a position acquired within the settlement was carried beyond its boundary.

In the successor period the function of transformation has not disappeared but has changed direction. Whereas in the settlement period the person accessing the facilities was an employee, a relative of an employee or an invited guest, in the successor period the city resident enters the space as a customer. Transformation here is attached not to institutional reproduction but to a relationship of consumption; the person passing approaches not the position the institution requires but the user profile the space anticipates.

The only place where the form of transformation belonging to the settlement period persists is the undeveloped part of the site. The records concerning the unpaved sports ground report that young people and students play sport there regularly; the threshold sequence through which a child becomes an athlete continues here, resting not on an institutional arrangement but on a discretionary permission.

4.4. Exclusion

Alongside the permeability produced by the public facilities of the settlement, there are also areas defined as closed to the outside. In this respect the housing area emerges as the most strictly regulated zone. In this area, which was directly accessible to factory employees, the presence of city residents not belonging to the institution was not envisaged. The area is moreover differentiated internally according to the status of employees; housing typology is divided into staff, married workers and single workers [15,67]. Testimonies confirm this distinction in the residents' own idiom; it is recounted in detail that the single-story staff housing stood in one section and the workers' housing in a separate section toward the station. The housing area is therefore a zone that is both closed to those outside the institution and hierarchically divided according to the status of employees.

These houses, located on İnönü Avenue and consisting generally of single-story semi-detached units [15], also transformed the appearance of the city; a report dated 1 July 1938 states that the avenue, which had previously contained large gaps, acquired with these buildings "a more modern urban appearance" [68]. The housing area thus redefined the frontage of the city even while remaining closed to it.

Access to the guesthouse depended on invitation. Testimonies report that state officials of the period were received there, welcomed at the poolside and accommodated in the guesthouse. This component was reserved for the representational function of the settlement at protocol level and was closed to city residents and to the majority of employees. The production units were likewise closed to city residents, and their use was confined to employees.

Exclusion operates not only through spatial access but also through social roles. The settlement established a framework that both transformed and reorganized the gender regime of the period. The nursery opened in 1947 is a direct indication of women's participation in the workforce; as Doğan notes in the case of the Nazilli settlement, women's

entry into industrial employment depended on the provision of childcare for pre-school children, and the nursery established within the factory complex made this possible [18]. In the provincial conditions of the period, the opening of a nursery should be regarded as an innovation in itself. As Himam and Pasin note, within Sümerbank culture women and men employees wore the same uniform and shared the same public spaces, which affected the everyday practices of society and brought visual and social profiles closer together [69]. That women employees began to move about the city in their work clothing shows that this change spilled beyond the boundary of the settlement. The visibility thus opened, however, remained within institutionally defined limits; the presence of women in public space was legitimated through the status of employee and through the uniform of the institution.

The threshold regime of the successor period likewise closes to the extent that it opens. In the coded records, exclusion is both the most frequently coded dimension and the one whose character changed most markedly between the two periods. In the great majority of records relating to the successor development, exclusion is articulated not as an explicit prohibition but as a cost that cannot be met (13 records). City residents state not that they are prevented from entering the space but that entering it no longer has any meaning for them. This distinction matters: access is formally open but is in practice positioned beyond an income threshold.

This positioning is established in the records through a recurring formulation; it is stated that the new buildings are directed toward a particular income group and were not built for them. What is notable about this formulation is that it derives not from any physical obstacle but from a reading of whom the space has been arranged for. City residents know that they cannot cross the threshold before attempting to do so.

The second form of exclusion is the narrowing of access over time. In the debate over the allocation of the unpaved sports ground to another use, users state that the last area in the city center they could use with free access will also be taken from them; one record anticipates that this narrowing will advance toward their own housing. Exclusion here is not a state but a process; each new phase of development reduces the freely accessible area a little further.

The parcels opened in the successor period also produce their own exclusions. The records concerning the city park, opened to free access, report that the area cannot be used in the evening hours. That access is formally free does not mean that it is usable in practice; the withdrawal of oversight, for certain groups of users, makes access more difficult rather than easier.

In both periods, exclusion is not a malfunction of the threshold regime but its constitutive element; what differs is the distinction that is operated. In the settlement period, the person who could not pass was the one outside the institution; in the successor period it is the one below a certain level of expenditure. This comparison confirms the distinction drawn in Section 2.3: openness and publicness do not coincide. Access that was closed but regulated in the settlement period has been replaced, on certain parcels of the successor period, by access that is open but unregulated, and in both cases certain groups of users have remained outside.

4.5. Thresholding at the Symbolic Level: The Debate over the Name

The preceding subsections compared the five dimensions of the threshold across the two periods. This subsection addresses what remains once the built form of a threshold has been removed. In the records concerning this condition, four of the five dimensions were not coded, as anticipated in Section 2.5; the analysis therefore centers on symbolic exclusion and on the stances, frames and forms of nostalgia through which it is articulated.

The place where this symbolic persistence is concentrated is the primary school of the settlement. As Table 4 shows, the school is the only component whose function persists across the two periods; it continues to exist on the same parcel, with the same function, as a rebuilt structure. It is at the same time the only component whose name was changed. The demolition of the building in 2020 and the opening of its replacement under a different name initiated a marked debate in the city.

The convergence of these two features on the same parcel explains why the debate has been conducted here with this intensity. In the other components, the loss is physical and irreversible; the restitution of the pool or the sports ground is not something that can be demanded. At the school, by contrast, spatial continuity was preserved, and the loss occurred only at the symbolic level; for this reason it appears recoverable. One record establishes the subject of the debate explicitly: the issue is not the demolition of the school but the fact that its replacement was given a name other than one carrying historical value. When the built forms through which the original threshold regime operated have been removed, the separating function concentrates on the only bond that remains standing: the name.

The distribution of stance and frame across the 31 coded records is set out in Table 5. It reveals three features of the debate. First, the two sides use largely non-overlapping languages. Those who articulate loss invoke the language of memory, generational transmission and participation in decision-making; those who defend the transformation invoke the language of philanthropy, development and safety. The debate is therefore less a disagreement over a shared criterion than a divergence between different criteria of evaluation.

Table 5. Stance and legitimating frame in the debate over the symbolic threshold (n = 31).

Stance	*n*	Frames Invoked
Loss/criticism	15	Urban memory (6), generational transmission (5), historical legitimacy (2), participation in decision-making (2), urban identity and public investment (1)
Defense of the transformation	12	Philanthropy (4), development and safety (4), rejection of historical legitimacy (2), earthquake/safety (1), political identity (1)
Conflicted	4	Reconciliation (4)

Frames are not mutually exclusive; therefore, frame frequencies may exceed the number of records.

The second and more decisive finding is that historical legitimacy is the only shared concern, but that it is interpreted in opposite directions. One side maintains that the settlement and its name carry historical value for the city and that their removal weakens the city's memory. The other side reverses this claim, arguing that the name has no historical connection with the city, that the city's history belongs to a different lineage, and that the change is therefore not a loss but a correction. Symbolic exclusion operates in both directions here: the removal of the name is read by one side as a denial of belonging, while its preservation is read by the other as the imposition of an illegitimate connection.

Alongside this, the language most frequently used by the side defending the transformation is philanthropy. These records emphasize that the new building was realized through a private donation and argue that objections concerning the name will deter the donor. Only one record, while thanking the donor, also problematizes the withdrawal of the public sector from school construction.

Third, the conflicted stances all settle into a single frame. All four records propose reconciliation, accepting the quality of the new building while proposing that the name be preserved or combined with the new one. This is not indecision but a definite position: what is defended is the name rather than the building.

Since the nostalgic character of post-demolition discourse is to be expected, nostalgia has been treated not as a finding but as an object of analysis. The coding shows that the majority of records articulating loss produce restorative nostalgia (13 records): the restitution of the name is requested, the question of by whom and in consultation with whom the decision was taken is raised, and correction is demanded. It is notable that this demand remains confined to the symbolic level; no record proposes the reconstruction of the settlement.

Reflective nostalgia appears in only three records, and its distribution presents an unexpected pattern. One of these records comes from a position defending the transformation: the writer states a longing for the former condition of the neighborhoods in which they were born and raised, and then argues that nostalgia should be abandoned, since the city's population cannot return to the scale that this longing implies. The record does not deny the loss; it accepts its irreversibility and refuses to convert it into a demand.

5. Discussion

Before turning to the three research questions, this section positions the case within the literature on early Republican industrial settlements and on company settlements. Within the first of these, the Malatya case occupies a distinctive position. While most of these settlements have been partially preserved or adaptively reused [19,21], the Malatya example was almost entirely removed. This near-complete physical removal has made it possible to trace the transformation of the threshold regime at parcel level; continuity and rupture, which are intertwined in the preserved examples, become separable here.

The differences among these outcomes are not reducible to the architectural qualities of the settlements. At Kayseri, the complex was listed in the Docomomo register of modern architectural heritage before its transfer, and its conversion into a university campus followed a political decision rather than a market calculation [21]. At Nazilli, part of the complex was transferred to public use while other components were lost, so that the settlement was divided rather than preserved as a whole [18,67]. Malatya differs from both in that no component was retained under public protection, and the division of the land followed the sale rather than preceding it. What a settlement becomes after liquidation therefore appears to depend less on what was built than on who acquired it and under which regulatory conditions, an observation developed further in Section 5.2.

Within the second, Crawford's account of company settlements as apparatuses of paternalistic regulation [8] holds here as well: at Malatya, the division of housing by rank and the reservation of facilities for employees gave that regulation a spatial form. The case, however, adds a dimension to that literature. Studies of company settlements deal predominantly with the period in which the settlement was in operation; the question of what becomes of the threshold regime after liquidation remains open. This study shows that liquidation, rather than returning the settlement to the urban fabric, produced a new urban interior with a different threshold regime. The following subsections address the three research questions.

5.1. The Graded Order of the Settlement

In answer to the first research question, the settlement's components formed a distinct gradient of openness within a closed boundary, as set out in Table 3: the functions most open to the city occupied the most permeable components, while the most institutionally restricted functions occupied the most enclosed ones. Opening was not continuous but bound to events and rhythms, and passage was regulated by institutional belonging and by invitation rather than by payment. The same arrangement defined who could not pass: the

housing area was closed to those outside the institution and internally divided by status, while the guesthouse was restricted to the protocol level.

In the terms set out in Section 2.3, the settlement's urban character derived not from its enclosure but from its selective porosity. Its threshold regime was the spatial expression of the employment relation: the criterion that opened or closed a component was one's relation to the institution, not one's capacity to pay. It is against this baseline that the successor regime is compared in Section 5.2.

5.2. Reconfiguration of the Threshold Regime and the Role of Ownership

With regard to the second research question, the two tables given in Section 4.1 reveal not a single direction of change but a relocation: Table 3 ranks the components of the settlement by their degree of openness to the city, while Table 4 shows the present-day counterparts of the same components.

The two components at the top of the gradient have today become enclosed interiors under different control regimes: the football pitch is institutionalized as a municipal service building, while the swimming pool—which trained national swimming champions, where city residents held their weddings and celebrations, and which the press of the period considered important for "the people of the region"—is regulated by purchasing power as a hotel. At the bottom of the gradient, the housing area and the guesthouse are today freely accessible; the guesthouse, access to which once depended on invitation and where state officials were received, is now an arts street subject to no control whatsoever.

The reconfiguration is better understood through the ownership trajectories of the parcels. The trajectory column of Table 4 shows that the transformation took place under two separate ownership regimes: the expropriated parcels were opened or institutionalized, while the parcels transferred to private capital were commercially closed. What differentiated the successor threshold regime was not demolition alone, but the division of the land between the two trajectories.

The theoretical claim of the study follows from this. What the two trajectories make visible is that the criterion governing passage closely corresponds to the ownership regime rather than to the built form alone. On the parcels that remained in public hands, passage continued to be regulated institutionally or ceased to be regulated at all; on those transferred to private capital, it came to be regulated by the capacity to purchase. The comparison suggests that changes in ownership arrangements played a significant role in restructuring the criteria governing access. This places the case within the debates on the transfer of ownership and the commodification of public space [21], as anticipated in Section 2.3.

This reading also shows that conceiving urban transformation as a one-directional movement from public to private is inadequate for the present case. At the scale of the site, the amount of land available for public use has not simply disappeared; the land today contains a city park, an arts street, a culture center and a municipal service building. What changed was not the existence of openness but its location and its regulatory basis. Inversion is the sharpest expression of this at the level of individual components, but the broader finding is a reconfiguration of the threshold regime rather than a simple reversal. The relocation of openness, however, did not produce a corresponding relocation of publicness, in the sense distinguished in Section 2.3.

Two dimensions point independently to where the earlier regime survives. In the dimension of permeability, the code for opening at city scale appears only on undeveloped parcels, as shown in Section 4.2; in the dimension of transformation, the only place where the form of transformation belonging to the settlement period persists is again one of these parcels, the unpaved sports ground, as shown in Section 4.3. The residue of the earlier

regime survives on the still undeveloped periphery of the site, and even there it rests not on an institutional arrangement but on a discretionary permission.

5.3. The Parceling of Memory

Turning to the third research question, the records concerning the name show what remains once the built form has been removed: of the five dimensions, only exclusion was coded, and it operated in both directions, as the expectation set out in Section 2.5 anticipated. The distinction it now draws is no longer between those inside and outside the institution but between those who claim the settlement's past for the city and those who reject that claim. This symbolic distinction also has a spatial dimension: the relocation at parcel level finds its counterpart at the level of discourse. The comment corpus concentrates narratives of loss on three spaces: the pool, the sports areas and the school. The first two are among the components ranked highest in Table 3, and they have today become enclosed; the school is the one component whose function persists, and the loss attached to it concerns its name. The parcels opened to free access today—the park and the arts street—by contrast do not appear in narratives of loss; in the corpus these spaces are referred to as gains, principally in records defending the transformation.

This does not mean that the opened parcels are without memory. Strong narratives concerning the housing area exist; one record states that its author was born and raised in the workers' housing and lived there until 1973, and that nothing has been left behind apart from the mosque and the school. This kind of memory, however, is different. Narratives concerning the housing area are about dwelling and neighborliness; narratives concerning the pool and the sports ground are about encountering the city. The first is the memory of a settled community, the second that of a collective urban experience.

The comparison therefore suggests that in the successor period free access has settled on parcels whose surviving memories are primarily residential or localized, while the parcels that carried collective urban experiences have closed. Openness has persisted, but it has become detached from collective memory.

This divergence also accounts for part of the disagreement documented in Section 4.5. Those defending the transformation speak from the gained parcels of the site, while those articulating loss speak from the closed ones. The two sides are speaking about the same land but mean different parcels; each is voicing an observation that is accurate with respect to its own parcel. This shows why the debate has been unable to arrive at a shared criterion.

The pattern of nostalgia documented in Section 4.5 supports this reading. That physical loss is accepted while symbolic continuity is demanded shows that thresholding can be disaggregated across material and symbolic levels. More importantly, the corpus is not univocal: more than one third of the records defend the transformation, and the narrative of loss does not represent the city as a whole. Nostalgia operates less as a feeling about a lost space than as a means of establishing a present position: restorative nostalgia produces the demand for the restitution of the name, while the rejection of nostalgia produces the legitimation of the transformation. In both cases, what is at issue is not the past but who today holds the authority to define this city.

6. Conclusions

This study has examined the campus of the Malatya Textile and Yarn Factory as an urban interior. It has compared the threshold regime of the industrial settlement with that of the successor development established on the same site after demolition, across the five dimensions of the threshold: permeability, control regime, temporality, transformation and exclusion.

The settlement established a graded order of openness within a closed boundary, in which passage was regulated by institutional belonging and by invitation rather than by

payment. Demolition did not end the site's existence as an urban interior. When the land was divided between two ownership regimes (private capital and local government), the threshold regime was reconfigured component by component, and openness relocated rather than disappearing. Once the built form had been removed, the separating function continued only in its symbolic form, in a debate over which past may be counted as the city's own.

The study makes three contributions. First, the threshold has been treated not as a descriptive metaphor but as an analytical framework of five dimensions, and the comparison showed that these dimensions can vary independently: enclosure persisted while the criterion of control changed, and permeability relocated rather than disappearing. Second, the relationship between the threshold regime and the arrangement of ownership has been established, allowing urban transformation to be read as a relocation between two interior regimes rather than through the public–private dichotomy; this reading avoids both a celebratory assessment of the early Republican settlement and a merely dismissive assessment of its successor. Third, interior theory has been extended toward the condition of absence: the proposition that the separating function of a threshold continues in a partial and symbolic form once its built form has been removed was supported by the records concerning the name, and demolition thus becomes analyzable not as the end of the interior but as a change in the terms on which it persists.

The case of Malatya indicates that debates on urban transformation should take the location of public space as a criterion alongside its quantity. The site today contains a city park, an arts street, a culture center, a municipal service building and a rebuilt school; public use persists, and on some of these parcels access is free. That access, however, has withdrawn from the parcels that carried collective urban experience and has settled on parcels whose surviving memories are more localized and residential.

The findings should be read within the bounds of the design. Being drawn from one settlement, they support theoretical rather than statistical generalization. The two periods also rest on sources of unequal kind: the founding period is documented mainly through the press of the period and the secondary literature, whereas the successor period is reconstructed largely from reader comments. Exclusion in the founding period is the dimension most affected by this imbalance, since witnesses seldom record the distinctions of their own time. The maps, finally, are reconstructions rather than measured drawings, no complete architectural documentation of the settlement having survived.

These limitations point to four directions for further research. First, the everyday operational life of the settlement falls only partially within the scope of the available sources; a study drawing on institutional records and oral history could reconstruct the full operational period. Second, the direct voices of workers, and of women workers in particular, are only marginally represented in the present corpus; an oral-history-based study could considerably deepen the dimension of exclusion. Third, the proposed five-dimensional framework may be tested by applying it to settlements that have been preserved or adaptively reused; such a comparison would show how the transformation of the threshold regime varies with the form of liquidation. Fourth, another industrial settlement in the same city underwent a comparable process of closure and redevelopment; a comparative study of the two sites would allow the framework to be tested where the macro-political context is held constant.

The effect of urban transformation on public space should be assessed not only in terms of the quantity of open space but also in terms of where openness persists and by which criterion.

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Data Availability Statement: The newspaper sources analyzed in this study are publicly accessible through the digital library of the National Library of Türkiye and the archive of the Beyazıt State Library. The news items and reader comments are publicly available on the news platform cited in the reference list. The codebook developed for the analysis is provided in Appendix A. The coded corpus is not shared publicly, since the comments were anonymized and are reported indirectly in accordance with the ethical protocol described in Section 3; it is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Appendix A

Codebook

Coding was carried out in Turkish; the codes are given here with their original labels and English definitions. The framework was revised once during the coding process, after which all records were recoded using the revised definitions.

Relevance screening. Each record was first assigned to one of three categories. Only İ1 and İ2 records were coded; İ3 records were excluded, but their number was recorded.

Table A1. Relevance screening categories.

Code	Category	Inclusion Criterion
İ1	The settlement and its components	Records concerning the factory, housing, pool, cinema, stadium, school, nursery, hospital, sports club, production, privatization, demolition, or the successor buildings
İ2	Symbolic threshold	Records concerning the use, removal or replacement of the name of the settlement in urban space
İ3	Outside the scope	Records whose subject is unrelated to the settlement

Where a record addressed both the settlement and an unrelated subject, the part concerning the settlement was coded and the record classified as İ1.

Each record was first assigned to one of the two periods examined. Records concerning the establishment and operation of the industrial settlement were coded R1, and those concerning the period following its demolition were coded R2. Records that compare the two periods within a single account were coded R1-R2 and received a value in each dimension for both periods.

Table A2. Threshold dimensions and codes.

Dimension	Code	Definition
Permeability (GEÇ)	GEÇ-1	Opening at city scale: a city resident enters the settlement
	GEÇ-2	Opening at regional or national scale
	GEÇ-3	Use within the settlement: employees and families only
	GEÇ-4	Narrowing or closure of access
	GEÇ-0	No information
Control regime (DEN)	DEN-1	Institutional belonging
	DEN-2	Event or invitation
	DEN-3	Low cost or free access
	DEN-4	Purchasing power
	DEN-5	Security and user-profile control
	DEN-0	Unspecified
Temporality (ZAM)	ZAM-1	Continuous or everyday access
	ZAM-2	Periodic rhythm: shift, screening, weekend
	ZAM-3	Event-bound; competition, ball, wedding, opening ceremony
	ZAM-4	Generational scale; childhood, a period of life
	ZAM-0	Unspecified
Transformation (DÖN)	DÖN-1	From employee to spectator or competitor
	DÖN-2	From city resident to guest or user
	DÖN-3	From child to student, trainee or athlete
	DÖN-4	From city resident to customer
	DÖN-0	No change in position
Exclusion (DIŞ)	DIŞ-1	Status hierarchy within the institution
	DIŞ-2	Non-membership of the institution
	DIŞ-3	Gender or age
	DIŞ-4	Class or economic exclusion
	DIŞ-5	Symbolic exclusion: name, belonging, legitimacy
	DIŞ-0	Unspecified

The settlement providing a service to the city does not by itself constitute GEÇ-1; the record must indicate that a city resident physically entered the settlement.

Table A3. Stance, nostalgia and frame codes, applied to the records analyzed in Section 4.5.

Field	Codes
Stance	DUR-K loss or criticism, DUR-S defense of the transformation, DUR-N descriptive, DUR-Ç conflicted
Nostalgia	NOS-O restorative, NOS-D reflective, NOS-Y none
Frame	historical legitimacy, rejection of historical legitimacy, generational transmission, urban memory, philanthropy, development, earthquake and safety, political identity, reconciliation, participation in decision making

Records coded DUR-S were treated as negative cases and reported separately, in order to counter the risk that the analysis would reproduce the narrative of loss.

Coding protocol. Each record was read in full before being coded; coding was not carried out on the basis of keywords. A record could receive more than one code within a dimension. Uncertain decisions were marked and the reason entered in a notes field; these notes constitute the audit trail.

After the first twenty records had been coded, the framework was reviewed and revised, and the records coded up to that point were recoded. The revision concerned the definition of the Regime field and the rule that R1-R2 records take a value in each dimension for both periods.

Comment records were assigned identifiers during coding. These are retained in the audit trail and are not reproduced in the text, since the corpus is not published.

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