



Spatial Representation of Turkish Oya Lacework and the Influence of Folkloric Narratives on Brand Image

Oya Sanatının Mekânda Temsili ve Folklorik Anlatının
Marka İmajına Etkisi

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Abstract

The adaptive reuse of historic buildings is a multilayered process that extends beyond physical conservation to include the contemporary reinterpretation of cultural and folkloric values. This study examines the transformation of the Sivrioğulları Mansion, a traditional Turkish house, into the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, focusing on the spatial representation of *oya* and visual identity design. A qualitative research approach was adopted, using a document-based case study,

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architectural observation, visual analysis, content analysis, and descriptive analysis. The museum's physical transformation, the folkloric meanings of *oya*, and the ways in which these narratives are translated into visual identity were evaluated. *Oya* was examined in relation to women's labor, nonverbal communication, emotional expression, and intergenerational cultural transmission. The study emphasizes that motif meanings are not fixed but vary according to regional and social contexts. Accordingly, *oya* is considered not merely as a displayed handicraft, but as a form of living cultural heritage sustained through production knowledge, social memory, and transmission practices. The museum is likewise interpreted as a representational space that makes folkloric narratives visible and reconnects them with contemporary society. The findings suggest that architectural memory and folkloric memory can be integrated within a unified visual identity system. The İmren Erşen Oya Museum provides a significant example of the public visibility of women-centered traditional production and the contemporary representation of intangible cultural heritage. The study offers an interdisciplinary contribution linking architectural heritage, folkloric memory, and visual communication. Its conclusions are limited to the symbolic, formal, and cultural representational capacity of the visual identity, as visitor perception was not empirically measured. Digital platforms are therefore regarded as complementary tools supporting visibility, accessibility, and documentation.

Keywords: *oya art, folklore, intangible cultural heritage, adaptive reuse, visual identity design*

Öz

Tarihî yapıların yeniden işlevlendirilmesi, fiziksel korumanın ötesinde kültürel ve folklorik değerlerin çağdaş bağlamda yeniden yorumlanmasını içeren çok katmanlı bir süreçtir. Bu çalışma, geleneksel bir Türk evi olan Sivrioğulları Konağı'nın İmren Erşen Oya Müzesi'ne dönüşümünü, oya sanatının mekânsal temsili ve görsel kimlik tasarımı ekseninde incelemektedir. Nitel araştırma yaklaşımı benimsenmiş; doküman-temelli vaka çalışması, mimari gözlem, görsel analiz, içerik analizi ve betimsel analiz yöntemlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Müzenin fiziksel dönüşümü, oya sanatının folklorik anlamları ve bu anlatıların görsel kimliğe nasıl aktarıldığı değerlendirilmiştir. Oya; kadın emeği, sözsüz iletişim, duygusal ifade ve kuşaklar arası kültürel aktarım bağlamında ele alınmış; motiflerin anlamlarının sabit olmadığı, bölgesel ve toplumsal bağlama göre değişebildiği vurgulanmıştır. Bu yönüyle oya, yalnızca sergilenen bir el sanatı ürünü değil, üretim bilgisi, toplumsal bellek ve aktarım pratikleriyle süreklilik kazanan yaşayan bir kültürel miras unsuru olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Müze mekânı ise bu mirası yalnızca koruyan değil, folklorik anlatıları görünür kılan ve çağdaş toplumla yeniden ilişkilendiren bir temsil alanı olarak ele alınmıştır. Bulgular, tarihî yapının mimari belleği ile oya sanatının folklorik belleğinin aynı görsel kimlik sistemi içinde birlikte temsil edilebildiğine işaret etmektedir. İmren Erşen Oya Müzesi, kadın merkezli geleneksel üretim biçimlerinin kamusal alanda görünürlük kazanması ve somut olmayan kültürel mirasın çağdaş müzecilik araçlarıyla temsil edilmesi açısından önemli bir örnek sunmaktadır. Ayrıca çalışma, mimari miras, folklorik bellek ve görsel iletişim arasındaki ilişkinin bütüncül biçimde ele alınabileceğini göstermesi bakımından disiplinlerarası bir katkı sunmaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, görsel kimliğin sembolik, biçimsel ve kültürel temsil kapasitesiyle sınırlıdır; ziyaretçi algısı ölçülmemiştir. Dijital platformlar ve sanal müze uygulamaları ise yaşayan

mirasın yerine geçen araçlar değil, görünürlüğü, erişilebilirliği ve belgeleme olanaklarını destekleyen tamamlayıcı ortamlar olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *oya sanatı, folklor, somut olmayan kültürel miras, yeniden işlevlendirme, görsel kimlik tasarımı*

Introduction

Cultural heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible values shaped through human creativity, knowledge, and experience within social life. In addition to archaeological and historical remains, it includes intangible elements such as language, customs and traditions, dance, music, handicrafts, and celebrations that reflect a community's identity, culture, and history (McKercher et al., 2005: 542; Snowball and Courtney, 2010: 563–564; Rodzi et al., 2013: 413). Cultural heritage therefore establishes a link between past and present and enables societies to sustain and transmit their cultural identities across generations. In the case of intangible cultural heritage, however, sustainability depends not only on documenting or exhibiting cultural products, but also on maintaining the knowledge, skills, narratives, and practices through which they are produced. Folkloric productions should consequently be understood not as static remnants of the past, but as forms of “living heritage” that are continuously transmitted and reinterpreted by communities (UNESCO, 2023).

Folkloric arts constitute an important component of this living heritage. Handicrafts, folk music, traditional clothing, oral narratives, games, and rituals embody the aesthetic, functional, and symbolic values of collective memory (Arioğlu and Aydoğdu Atasoy, 2015: 112–113). Their meanings are shaped not only by formal characteristics, but also by their makers, contexts of use, modes of transmission, social environments, and culturally attributed meanings. Folkloric products may therefore be regarded as multilayered forms of expression situated at the intersection of individual experience and collective cultural memory.

Within this framework, the art of *oya* represents a distinctive form of women-centered folkloric expression in Anatolia. Through intricate production techniques, motifs, and color choices, *oya* has functioned not merely as decoration but also as a medium through which women have expressed emotions, social roles, interpersonal relations, and everyday experiences (Gümüş and Uray, 2018: 362). Nevertheless, the meanings of *oya* motifs should not be regarded as fixed or universal codes; rather, they may vary according to region, purpose of use, social environment, and cultural context (Akpınarlı and Karabacak, 2017: 1885–1890; Evecen et al., 2017: 324). Representing *oya* within a museum context is therefore significant not only for preserving aesthetic objects, but also for making women's labor, local knowledge, social memory, and intergenerational cultural transmission visible (Atalay Onur, 2020: 244–259).

Museums devoted to traditional handicrafts play an important role in safeguarding and communicating such forms of intangible cultural heritage (Ergin, 2025: 121–122; UNESCO National Commission of Turkey, 2022). Contemporary museological approaches no longer define museums solely as institutions for collecting and displaying objects; they are also understood as spaces in which cultural meanings are interpreted, social memory

is reproduced, and heritage is brought into dialogue with new generations (Ergin, 2025: 121–122). Similarly, the adaptive reuse of historic buildings contributes not only to physical conservation but also to their continued participation in contemporary social and cultural life (Yung and Chan, 2012: 354; Smith, 2006: 199).

Locating museums of folkloric handicrafts within historic buildings creates a particularly meaningful relationship between tangible and intangible heritage. Architectural memory and the cultural memory embodied in displayed traditions can thus be represented within the same spatial framework. In such settings, architecture, exhibition design, and visual communication operate together as interconnected means through which folkloric narratives are recontextualized in contemporary forms.

This study examines this relationship through the transformation of the historic Sivrioğulları Mansion in the Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir into the İmren Erşen Oya Museum. Its primary aim is to investigate how *oya*, as a form of intangible cultural heritage and folkloric narrative, is represented through the interrelationship between adaptive reuse, exhibition design, and visual identity. The study further considers how tangible architectural heritage and intangible folkloric heritage are brought together within the same cultural setting and translated into contemporary visual communication. Rather than reconstructing the individual life histories of *oya* makers or their performance practices through ethnographic fieldwork, the research focuses on how documented folkloric heritage is spatialized, exhibited, and visually reinterpreted within the museum context. Accordingly, the study is defined as a document-based qualitative case study, while ethnographic investigation of source persons, performance contexts, and practice-based forms of intergenerational transmission is identified as a direction for future research.

Materials and methods

This study was conducted within a qualitative research framework. Its primary aim is to examine the transformation of the Sivrioğulları Mansion, an example of traditional Turkish domestic architecture, into the İmren Erşen Oya Museum following its restoration in 2022, and to analyze how the folkloric and cultural representations associated with *oya* have been incorporated into the museum's visual identity and communication design. Accordingly, the research was designed as a document-based qualitative case study rather than an ethnographic field study. The focus is not on reconstructing the individual life histories of *oya* makers or directly documenting performance practices, but on examining how documented folkloric heritage is spatialized, exhibited, and reinterpreted through contemporary visual communication within the museum context. Documentation, architectural observation, descriptive analysis, visual analysis, and case study techniques were used in combination.

The research data were drawn primarily from open-access sources, institutional promotional materials, accessible examples from the museum's *oya* collection, physical and digital museum archives, visual communication materials such as logos, posters, and brochures, and published plans and visual documentation related to the restoration of the building. Publicly available

documents issued by the Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, together with news bulletins, promotional materials, and digital publications concerning the museum, were also examined. In addition, published folkloric and institutional sources addressing the cultural context of *oya*, women's labor, intergenerational transmission, and living heritage were included in the data corpus. All sources were systematically reviewed and organized into thematic categories through qualitative content analysis.

During the analysis stage, descriptive analysis and qualitative content analysis were employed in combination. The physical transformation of the museum building was evaluated through architectural plans, pre- and post-restoration photographs, and spatial arrangements. The *oya* examples were examined in terms of representational characteristics, aesthetic structure, symbolic meaning, regional diversity, and cultural context. Motif meanings were not treated as fixed or universal codes, but as culturally situated signs that may vary according to geographical region, mode of use, social context, and conditions of production and transmission. The relationship between *oya* and the museum's visual identity was also analyzed. Symbolic and formal analysis of the museum logo focused on how references derived from traditional folk art were translated into contemporary graphic language, with particular attention to women's labor, nonverbal communication, collective memory, and cultural transmission.

A methodological limitation of the study is the absence of data collected directly from human participants. No in-depth interviews were conducted with İmren Erşen, *oya* makers, museum staff, or source persons, and the contemporary performance context of *oya* was not examined through participant observation. This limits the extent to which individual production histories, source-person information, collection contexts, and living practices of transmission can be analyzed in detail. These dimensions, however, fall outside the principal scope of the present study, which focuses on spatial and visual representation. Future ethnographic research involving interviews, oral-history methods, and participant observation could provide a more detailed understanding of the formation of the collection, master-apprentice relationships, intergenerational transmission, and the contemporary status of *oya* as living heritage.

The study relied exclusively on open-access documents, archival materials, and visual data, and no personal or interview data were collected from human participants. Therefore, no research procedure requiring ethics committee approval was undertaken within the scope of this study.

1. Spatial representation of folklore: Examining historic buildings within the museum function

The preservation of cultural heritage is not limited to maintaining the physical existence of buildings; it also encompasses the transmission of folk culture, traditions, and collective memory to future generations (Smith, 2006: 11; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 161). In this context, the adaptive reuse of historic buildings as museums offers an important framework through which tangible and intangible cultural values can be preserved and represented together. Museums render the material and immaterial elements of folk culture visible, transform

them into narratives, and recontextualize them within physical space (Walsh, 1992: 30). The exhibition of folkloric productions such as handicrafts, traditional garments, motifs, and decorative techniques also strengthens the relationship between folk memory and the public sphere (Bauman, 1992: 29–32). The museum should therefore be understood not merely as a setting in which folkloric objects are preserved, but as a cultural interface through which the modes of production, contexts of use, social meanings, and collective narratives associated with these objects are reinterpreted. The spatialization of folklore consequently requires more than presenting an object as an aesthetic artifact detached from its original context; it also involves making visible the cultural memory and social world with which that object is associated (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 161).

Adaptive reuse is one of the most widely applied strategies in contemporary heritage conservation. By assigning new functions to historic buildings, this approach can extend their physical life while contributing to the continuity of their historical, social, and economic contexts (Hasol, 2019: 279). As a principal method of architectural conservation, adaptive reuse enables historic buildings to respond to contemporary needs while preserving their original character and continuing to generate cultural and economic value (Cantacuzino, 1986: 72–73; Jokilehto, 1986: 124; Mısırlısoy and Günçe, 2016: 148–149). When such buildings accommodate folkloric heritage, however, reuse cannot be evaluated solely in terms of architectural authenticity. The relationship between the new function and the traditional knowledge, modes of production, social practices, and cultural narratives represented within the building must also be considered. Adaptive reuse can therefore be understood as a multilayered process situated at the intersection of physical conservation and cultural continuity.

Museums constitute one of the most prominent functions assigned to adaptively reused historic buildings. While museum use enables visitors to perceive the original architectural characteristics of the building, it can also contribute to cultural awareness and the reinforcement of social memory (Kaymakçı, 2022: 650). Museums may further support the preservation and promotion of local culture while generating economic and touristic benefits (Orhan and Yıldız, 2021: 44). As Cevher (2024: 111) emphasizes, museums are not merely institutions responsible for physical preservation; they also connect cultural values with contemporary society. This role is particularly significant in relation to intangible cultural heritage. Safeguarding a handicraft in a museum involves not only preserving completed objects, but also representing the production knowledge, symbolic narratives, local identity, social relations, and forms of intergenerational transmission associated with them. In this way, the museum becomes a cultural environment in which folkloric memory can be interpreted and rearticulated within contemporary society.

International examples of historic buildings reused as museums include the Louvre Museum, Tate Modern, Musée d'Orsay, and the Royal Ontario Museum. These institutions contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage and architectural fabric while enabling cultural narratives and collective memory to engage with contemporary users through reconfigured spatial arrangements (Çetin, 2021: 252; Balçık et al., 2022: 51–53). In Türkiye, comparable processes are carried out under the supervision of the Regional Conservation Boards for Cultural and Natural Assets, and numerous historic buildings have been adapted for museum use (Dülger,

2014: 111). In such cases, adaptive reuse establishes a relationship between the spatial traces of the building's former function and the requirements of the new museum program, including exhibition design, circulation, and visitor experience. In museums devoted to folkloric content, an additional layer is introduced through the cultural practices and social memory represented by the collection. The museum experience thus becomes a multilayered form of representation in which the building, the collection, and the cultural narrative can be interpreted together.

This relationship is also evident in Eskişehir, where examples include the conversion of the Sivrioğulları Mansion into the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, the Kurşunlu Complex into the Meerschaum Museum, and a traditional mansion in Odunpazarı into the Museum of Contemporary Glass Art (Çuhadar, 2024: 155–156). These structures have not only been physically preserved, but have also been transformed into cultural spaces in which handicrafts, folk arts, and other cultural values are brought into dialogue with contemporary society. In the context of Eskişehir and Odunpazarı, the adaptive reuse of historic buildings as museums creates a relationship between local architectural memory and the cultural forms represented within these institutions. In the case of the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, this relationship takes on a particularly distinctive character, as a traditional residential building becomes a public representational space for a folkloric form of production rooted largely in women's labor. Bahar and Kurak Açıcı (2021: 69) note that such practices can contribute to the transmission of folkloric heritage to new generations while also offering advantages in terms of tourism and economic development. In this respect, adaptive reuse can integrate physical conservation with cultural, social, and economic sustainability, allowing historic buildings to remain active components of contemporary life (Dotel, 2024: 147–148).

Overall, the adaptive reuse of historic buildings as museums offers a multilayered framework for cultural representation. Such buildings not only preserve their architectural characteristics, but also provide settings in which folkloric and social values can be made visible. Nevertheless, the sustainability of intangible cultural heritage cannot be ensured solely by incorporating cultural products into museum collections. Maintaining the living character of folkloric heritage also requires attention to production knowledge, associated narratives, contexts of use, and processes of intergenerational transmission. Historic buildings adapted for museum use should therefore be understood not merely as architectural assets or containers for cultural objects, but as dynamic representational spaces in which tangible architectural heritage can enter into dialogue with living folkloric memory and contribute to cultural continuity between past and present.

2. Spatialization of folkloric memory through the art of *oya*

Folkloric arts are cultural productions that reflect a community's historical memory, social values, and aesthetic sensibilities. Handicrafts, traditional clothing, motifs, and ornamental forms are not merely visual elements; they are narrative practices intertwined with ways of life, social roles, and systems of belief (Dorson, 1972: 6–7). In this context, museums function as cultural stages in which folkloric narratives gain visibility and intergenerational transmission

is supported (Smith, 2006: 4). The living character of intangible cultural heritage requires traditional forms of production to be considered not only through the objects they generate, but also through the knowledge, skills, practices, and modes of transmission that make their production possible. UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage likewise approaches traditional craftsmanship not solely in terms of finished products, but in relation to the knowledge and skills required for their production and their transmission across generations (UNESCO, 2023).

As one of the distinctive examples of such cultural production, *oya* has long served as an important traditional means through which women in Anatolia express emotions, social positions, and their relationship with the surrounding social environment. Produced with tools such as needles, crochet hooks, hairpins, and shuttles, *oya* extends beyond aesthetic production and functions as a medium through which social messages may be conveyed nonverbally (Onuk, 1981: 3; Atalay Onur, 2020: 246–247). Women have been reported to express joy, grief, hope, and resentment through motifs and colors (Gümüş and Uray, 2018: 356–357). For example, the hyacinth motif has been associated with love and chastity, while the pepper motif has been linked, in certain contexts, with sorrow or marital discord (Figure 1; Aydın, 2015: 769; Yeşilyurt, 2008: 65). These symbolic associations, however, should not be interpreted as fixed, universal meanings that operate identically in every region. Folkloric meaning may vary according to the locality in which a motif is produced, its mode of use, the maker, the life-cycle event with which it is associated, and the social relationships surrounding its use. The folkloric interpretation of an *oya* piece should therefore be based, wherever possible, not only on the name of the motif but also on contextual information such as the source person, place of production or collection, date, and context of use. This perspective also underlines the importance of preserving contextual information alongside the aesthetic characteristics of objects in museum collections.



Figure 1. Pepper oya motif (Evecen et al., 2017: 326)

Oya is regarded as a folkloric cultural form because of characteristics such as collective transmission, anonymity over time, and functionality. In Anatolia, the fact that girls traditionally learn *oya*-making from an early age within the family and close social

environment provides an example of how traditional knowledge and skills are transmitted through everyday life. In this respect, *oya* constitutes a form of expression in which individual stories intersect with collective cultural narratives and through which women's memory is carried forward (Yıldız, 2024: 241–242). As Atalay Onur (2020: 246–247) emphasizes, the continuity of *oya*-making depends not only on the preservation of finished products, but also on the transmission of production knowledge and design culture across generations. The intangible cultural heritage value of *oya* should therefore be understood within a broader framework that includes processes of learning, teaching, practice, and reproduction rather than being confined to the museum display of completed objects. UNESCO's approach to transmission likewise recognizes the transfer of knowledge and skills from communities and tradition bearers to younger generations as a fundamental element in maintaining the continuity of living heritage (UNESCO, 2023).

Understanding *oya* as a form of communication among women also opens an important field of discussion from the perspective of feminist folkloristics. Feminist folkloristic approaches consider handicrafts, narratives, and everyday practices produced by women not merely as aesthetic forms, but as carriers of gender relations, women's experiences, and culturally situated modes of expression (Hollis, Pershing and Young, 1993). In this context, Radner's (1993) concept of "coding" in women's folk culture is particularly useful for explaining how thoughts and emotions that may be socially constrained from direct expression can be communicated symbolically or indirectly. Within certain social contexts, the motifs and colors of *oya* may likewise be read as cultural codes through which women articulate emotions, relationships, or social positions indirectly. This does not mean, however, that all *oya* production should be interpreted as an explicit form of "resistance." Rather, *oya* can be understood as a flexible and context-dependent folkloric expressive repertoire through which women generate different meanings in response to their social circumstances.

Regional differences in *oya* motifs, colors, and production techniques reveal the cultural diversity of the tradition. In the Aegean Region, vivid colors and more pronounced motifs such as *efe oyası*, *bülbül tükürüğü*, and *papatya* are frequently encountered, while examples from Central Anatolia tend to employ simpler forms and darker tones (Akpınarlı and Karabacak, 2017: 1885–1890; Evecen et al., 2017: 324). In Eastern Anatolia, motifs associated with religious or protective meanings may be observed; in the Black Sea Region, colorful and nature-inspired forms are more prominent; while in Southeastern Anatolia, *oya* used in traditional head adornments may signify women's social status (Özder, 1999: 9). This regional diversity demonstrates that *oya* should not be understood as a single, homogeneous "Anatolian language," but as a multilayered tradition shaped by local cultures, ways of life, and social relationships. For this reason, information concerning the geographical origin and social context of museum objects is of fundamental importance when interpreting the folkloric meanings of their motifs.

This issue is particularly relevant to the İmren Erşen Oya Museum. The museum's collection, which comprises thousands of examples gathered from different regions of Anatolia, brings the regional diversity of *oya* together under one roof. However, the availability of

folkloric inventory information for each object—such as source person, place of collection, date of production, and history of use—would allow the collection to be understood not merely as a formal archive of *oya*, but also as documentation of living social contexts. Within the scope of this study, such detailed information was not systematically accessible in publicly available sources for every object in the collection. Consequently, the meanings of individual museum pieces were not generalized in the absence of source-person-based ethnographic data. This limitation is acknowledged as one of the methodological constraints of the collection-based folkloric analysis undertaken here.

From a historical perspective, *oya* also has a noteworthy place in broader discussions of textile and lace traditions. Some scholars have suggested that comparable lace-making techniques in Europe spread from Anatolia. Taciser Onuk traces the origins of *oya* to approximately 2000 BC and argues that needle *oya* spread from Anatolia to Greece and Italy in the twelfth century. She further notes that needle *oya* experienced one of its most developed periods in the eighteenth century before declining under increasing Western influence. Despite these changes, it has continued to function as an important medium of cultural transmission among women (Onuk, 1981: VII).

Today, *oya* continues to retain cultural representational power in both private and public spheres. Collections displayed in folklore museums contribute not only to the physical preservation of the craft, but also to the transmission of women's memory, local identities, and forms of nonverbal communication into social memory (Köklü, 2002: 218; Atay, 1987: 38). Such museums remind us that traditional productions are not “dead objects” belonging exclusively to the past, but living cultural signs that can be reinterpreted within contemporary contexts (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 156). Nevertheless, the musealization of folkloric heritage and the safeguarding of living heritage are not identical processes. Although preserving museum collections is important, the continuity of *oya* as living heritage depends on the transmission of production knowledge, the continuation of practice, and the participation of those who carry the tradition. UNESCO similarly identifies the active involvement of communities, groups, and individuals who create and transmit intangible cultural heritage as a fundamental principle of safeguarding (UNESCO, 2023).



Figure 2. Exhibition of *oya* art (Eskişehir Imren Erşen Oya Museum, 2022)

The art of *oya* is a quiet yet powerful folkloric form of expression in which individual craftsmanship is interwoven with collective culture and social memory. The process of musealization may preserve the physical products of this tradition while also making women's labor and folkloric narratives visible. From this perspective, *oya* is not merely an aesthetic production, but a form of living cultural memory that carries women's nonverbal expressions, local knowledge, and cultural experiences into the future. The sustainability of living heritage, however, should not be reduced to museum display or digital visibility alone. Workshops, practice-based educational activities, intergenerational learning environments, and the involvement of tradition bearers are essential to sustaining the knowledge required for *oya* production. Digital platforms should therefore be regarded not as substitutes for practice-based transmission, but as complementary tools that can enhance visibility, accessibility, and documentation.

From this perspective, the representation of *oya* through museums, educational settings, and digital environments enables folkloric memory to be reproduced in both physical and symbolic spaces. Yet the principal condition for cultural continuity remains the intergenerational transmission of the knowledge and skills embedded in the tradition. When *oya* is understood as a form of living heritage situated at the intersection of women's labor, social relationships, local identities, and nonverbal modes of expression, the museum itself ceases to function solely as a protective institution and instead becomes a cultural environment in which this multilayered memory is made visible and continuously reinterpreted.

3. The case of the Imren Erşen Oya Museum: restoration, spatial design, and the representation of folkloric heritage

The Imren Erşen Oya Museum was established in the Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir through the restoration of a historical building, with the aim of preserving, exhibiting, and transmitting Anatolia's rich *oya* tradition to future generations. This section examines the building's location within the urban fabric, the restoration process, floor plans, spatial organization, and the contribution of these factors to the formation of a cultural brand identity.

The museum is housed in the Sivrioğulları Mansion, located on Tiryaki Hasan Pasha Street in the Orta neighborhood of the Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir (Figure 3). It is registered as a second-degree protected cultural asset under the ownership of the Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality (Eskişehir Council for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, n.d.). Although its exact date of construction is unknown, the building is considered an authentic example of traditional Turkish civil architecture. Constructed as a two-story building above a basement, it features a timber frame structure filled with adobe and is notable for the use of original materials. The building has facades facing both Tiryaki Hasan Pasha and Mücellit Streets, with two separate entrance doors.



Figure 3. The urban location of the Imren Erşen Oya Museum (Eskişehir Council for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, n.d.).

On the Tiryaki Hasan Pasha Street façade, iron-barred windows are located above the double-winged main entrance; particularly, the oriel windows on the first floor and the latticed bay windows on the upper floor reflect the aesthetic of traditional architecture (Figure 4). On the Mücellit Street façade, a later-added entrance and projecting rooms are located on the ground floor. The building has a hipped roof covered with traditional Turkish tiles (Figure 5).



Figure 4. Front façade prior to restoration (Eskişehir Council for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, n.d.).



Figure 5. Rear façade prior to restoration (Eskişehir Council for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, n.d.).

In terms of interior layout, the entrance floor covers approximately 145 m² and includes a central hall (*sofa*), service areas, a pantry, and a kitchen. The first floor is 138 m² and the second floor is 149 m². Each floor is designed around a central *sofa*, following traditional residential planning principles. The 11 m² pavilion room at the top was designed as a traditional viewing space. Similar to examples of Ottoman domestic architecture found in places like Safranbolu and Kula, the building had undergone physical deterioration over time, including flooring deformation on the ground level and cracks in the upper floors. Due to these issues, a restoration process involving structural reinforcement, roof repair, and façade reorganization was initiated.

The adaptive reuse of the building aimed not only at physical preservation but also at generating public benefit. As a result of this transformation, the building was reopened in 2022 as the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, becoming the first thematic museum in Turkey specifically dedicated to the art of *oya* (Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, 2021). This functional transformation not only preserved the building's historical and cultural identity while adding a new layer of meaning, but also enabled the art of *oya* to gain a place in visual memory and museological representation.

3.1. The adaptive reuse process

The İmren Erşen Oya Museum was opened to visitors on June 3, 2022, in the Odunpazarı district of Eskişehir. According to the Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, the museum is presented as a pioneering thematic institution dedicated specifically to the art of *oya* in Turkey and internationally (Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, 2021) (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Imren Erşen Oya Museum after restoration (Eskişehir Council for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, n.d.).

The museum exhibits approximately 8,500 pieces of *oya* collected from various regions of Anatolia by Imren Erşen, including needle lace, bead lace, and other ethnographic artifacts (Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, 2021). On the ground floor of the building, there is a ticket office, cloakroom, restrooms, a conservation-restoration room, a resting area, and access to the courtyard. In the garden, a centuries-old oak tree and a historical well contribute to the building’s authentic character. Additionally, there is a souvenir shop that facilitates visitor access to traditional products (Figure 7a).

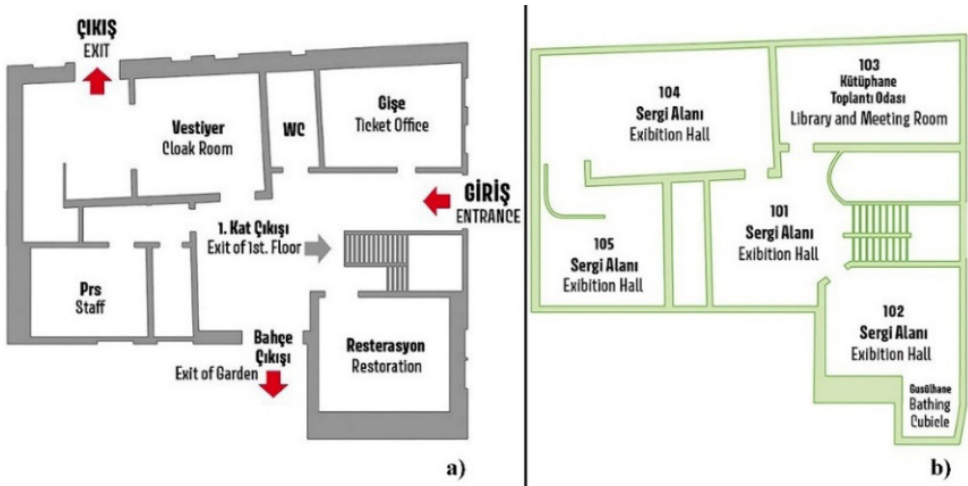


Figure 7. Imren Erşen Oya Museum a) Ground floor plan, b) First floor plan (Eskişehir Imren Erşen Oya Museum, 2022).

On the first floor, there is a seating-area exhibition room, a room organized according to the traditional *gusulhane* layout (ritual cleansing area), a gallery consisting of two interconnected exhibition spaces, and a library for researchers (Figure 7b). The second floor is entirely dedicated to exhibition purposes, where thematic arrangements are designed to foster a deeper connection between visitors and the works on display. The top floor functions as a traditional viewing terrace offering a panoramic view of the surroundings (Figure 8c, Figure 8d).

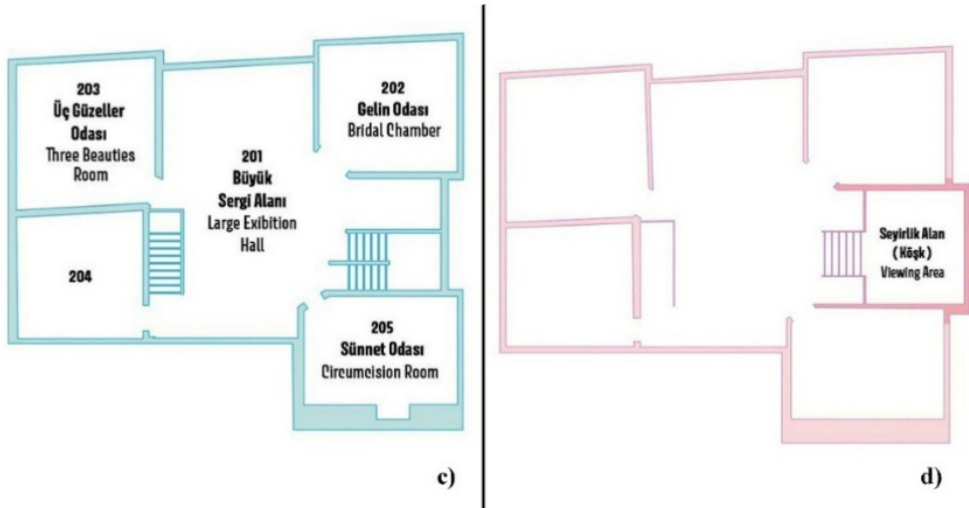


Figure 8. Imren Erşen Oya Museum c) Second floor plan, d) Top floor plan (Eskişehir Imren Erşen Oya Museum, 2022).

In line with accessibility principles, digital kiosks are placed on the ground floor to ensure that visitors with limited mobility can also experience the museum. Through the “360-Degree Virtual Tour” feature, the building can also be explored digitally (Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, 2021).

All of these arrangements have successfully established a holistic relationship between the architectural-spatial design and the cultural content. While preserving the historical fabric of the structure, a contemporary exhibition language has been achieved through modern museological practices. Thus, the traditional art of *oya* has been successfully translated into space, both aesthetically and socio-culturally. During the restoration process, not only physical improvements but also a visual identity design was developed to transform the building into an *oya*-themed museum. Thematic exhibition halls feature wall graphics adorned with *oya* motifs, and informational panels include narratives collected from local dialects, creating a narrative texture. Through this approach, the museum has become not only a visual exhibition venue but also a public stage for folkloric expression.

The museum's function is not limited to the preservation and display of the collection. Publicly documented workshops, cultural activities, and events focusing on the meaning, continuity, and transmission of *oya* indicate that the museum also operates as a cultural space in which living heritage is brought into public circulation. In particular, events such as the "Living Heritage Talk: Oya" and previously organized workshop activities demonstrate that the institution provides opportunities for the transmission of knowledge beyond static exhibition practices. These activities enable *oya* to be approached not only as a cultural object preserved in museum displays, but also as a living heritage practice connected with learning, sharing, and intergenerational transmission (Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality, 2026).

4. Branding and cultural representation approaches in adaptively reused folkloric spaces

The adaptive reuse of historic buildings is not merely a process of physical restoration; it is a multilayered transformation through which the semantic relationships between space, memory, and society are redefined. This transformation reshapes both the emotional texture of a building and its place within collective consciousness. As Bachelard emphasizes in *The Poetics of Space*, space constitutes an existential realm that acquires meaning through lived experience and imagination.

Drawing on Riegl's concept of "age value," Plevoets and Van Cleempoel (2019: 43) note that cracks, faded surfaces, and other traces of aging can evoke emotional responses even without detailed historical knowledge. For Riegl, "age value" refers to the aesthetic significance that emerges from the natural process of a building's deterioration over time. From a phenomenological perspective, space is likewise experienced not only visually but also bodily and temporally.

Within this framework, adaptively reused buildings may be understood as carriers of cultural and folkloric memory, becoming cultural texts through which social rituals, modes of production, and collective narratives can be read. Branding should therefore be considered not only in relation to contemporary design and marketing objectives, but also in terms of the folkloric and semiotic meanings embedded in both the building and the cultural heritage represented within it (Özgen and Sarı, 2021: 129–130). Particularly in museums devoted to traditional handicrafts, brand identity may be understood not simply as a graphic system that enhances institutional recognition, but as a representational medium that translates components of intangible heritage—such as production techniques, motifs, local memory, women's labor, and cultural transmission—into a contemporary visual language.

Visual communication functions as a bridge through which cultural and symbolic values are conveyed to contemporary audiences. While logos, color schemes, typography, and other components of visual identity contribute to the formation of brand image, the incorporation of traditional motifs and cultural references into the design process enables cultural continuity to become visible (Wang, 2024: 19). In institutions with folkloric content, therefore, brand identity gains significance not through the merely decorative reuse of a motif

from the past, but through the translation of its cultural context, production practice, and meaning within collective memory into a contemporary system of representation.

Within the scope of this study, the comparative examples were selected not merely because they represent successful applications of logo or branding design, but because they meet several criteria: (i) representing traditional handicrafts or textile culture; (ii) making intangible cultural heritage visible through space, exhibition, or visual communication; (iii) reinterpreting local production memory through contemporary modes of representation; and (iv) where possible, incorporating folkloric dimensions such as women's labor and intergenerational transmission. This selection was intended to establish a comparative framework that corresponds more directly to the folkloric and thematic character of the İmren Erşen Oya Museum.

4.1. Translating architectural memory into visual identity

Examples of the translation of architectural memory into visual identity in adaptively reused buildings demonstrate how formal elements associated with a building's past can be reinterpreted through contemporary graphic design. In the case of the Ambler Boiler House, the industrial history of the building is incorporated into its visual identity through imagery of the chimney and smoke, while the addition of a green leaf introduces an emphasis on sustainability (Kürşad and Pehlivan, 2017: 298). The resulting design establishes a visual connection between the building's industrial past and its contemporary function (Figure 9).



Figure 9. The Ambler Boiler House building and logo (Ambler Main Street, n.d.).

Similarly, in the visual identity developed for the city of Kaposvár, architectural elements and public spaces were transformed into a coherent graphic system (Figure 10). Through the integration of buildings surrounding Kossuth Square, circular paving patterns, and the letter “K,” spatial memory was incorporated as an integral component of the city's visual identity (Kiss, 2019).

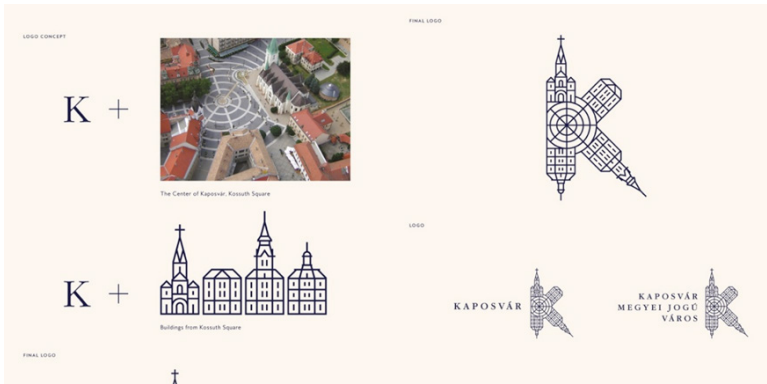


Figure 10. The city logo of Kaposvár designed by Miklós Kiss (Kiss, 2019).

In the case of Royaucourt Abbey, the brand symbol was derived from an original window niche of the building. The architectural form was geometrically simplified and transformed into a contemporary visual identity element (Graphéine, 2014). The shared approach across these examples lies in the translation of the physical memory of historic architecture into graphic language (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Logo design of Royaucourt Abbey (Graphéine, 2014).

However, these examples are not directly comparable to the İmren Erşen Oya Museum in terms of folkloric content. They are therefore considered in this study primarily as reference cases illustrating the transformation of architectural memory into brand identity. The main basis for comparison in relation to folklore and traditional handicrafts is instead provided by the textile- and craft-oriented examples discussed in the following section.

4.2. Translating folkloric motifs into contemporary visual language

The logo designed for the Turkish Music Preservation Society offers an example of how cultural memory can be rendered symbolically through visual communication (Figure

12). In this design, traditional motifs are combined with a contemporary graphic language: the treble clef is integrated with tulip and İznik tile motifs, thereby transforming cultural references associated with Anatolian folk music into contemporary visual signs (99designs, 2019). As Gümüşer (2012: 225) notes, the use of traditional Turkish motifs in contemporary design provides design objects with not only aesthetic value but also historical and cultural significance.



Figure 12. Logo of the Turkish Music Preservation Society featuring folkloric motifs (99designs, 2019).

However, the incorporation of a folkloric motif into contemporary design does not, in itself, guarantee cultural continuity. When a traditional motif is detached entirely from its original contexts of production and use and reduced to a merely decorative surface element, its cultural meaning may be diminished. For this reason, the design of a folkloric visual identity should take into account not only the formal characteristics of a motif, but also its origins, context of use, social meanings, and relationship with the community that produces and transmits it. This approach is particularly important when translating cultural forms such as *oya* into brand identity, since their meanings may vary according to regional and social contexts.

4.3. Spatial representation of handicraft and textile memory

A closer parallel to the İmren Erşen Oya Museum in terms of representing folkloric narratives through both branding and space is *La Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode* in Calais, France. Established through the adaptive reuse of a nineteenth-century industrial building, the institution preserves Calais's history of mechanical lace production and houses an extensive archive of lace produced on historic Leavers looms (*La Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode*, n.d.).

In 2020, Polish artist NeSpoon created a mural for the museum façade based on an original lace pattern dating from 1894 and preserved in the institution’s archive (Figure 13). By transferring a traditional lace pattern onto a large-scale public surface, the intervention moved lace beyond the confines of the collection and transformed it into a visible layer of urban memory (Neuendorf, 2020).



Figure 13. Mural applied by the artist Nespoon on the façade of La Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode, based on a lace pattern. (Neuendorf, 2020).

In this example, the traditional pattern functions as more than a decorative surface treatment; it becomes a graphic narrative through which the memory of the building, the city, and its production history is made visible once again. In this sense, the façade operates as a “folkloric interface,” establishing a cultural connection between past and present. Like *oya*, lace combines aesthetic and narrative functions.

For the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, the significance of this example lies in the transformation of a textile-based cultural production from an archival object into an element of architectural expression and public visual language. In the Calais case, the lace pattern mediates the representation of urban and industrial memory, whereas at the İmren Erşen Oya Museum, *oya* motifs are used to convey traditional women’s labor, everyday life, and folkloric narrative within the visual identity. In both cases, therefore, the craft motif moves beyond the status of an exhibited object and becomes an integral component of the institution’s spatial and visual identity.

International examples that foreground the living-heritage dimension of handicrafts further broaden this comparison. In the textile tradition of Taquile, recognized by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage, weaving is not merely a product to be preserved or exhibited; it continues as an everyday practice maintained by both women and men and serves as a means of transmitting social identity and oral tradition. The transfer of traditional textile

knowledge to younger generations through dedicated learning environments demonstrates that the sustainability of handicrafts depends less on the preservation of objects alone than on the continuity of production knowledge (UNESCO, 2008).

Similarly, the traditional weaving and embroidery techniques of the Li people in China constitute a cultural knowledge system transmitted across generations, particularly through women. Textile patterns function not only as aesthetic compositions but also as forms of visual memory that record the community's history, beliefs, taboos, customs, and oral traditions. In this respect, they present a folkloric structure comparable to the meanings associated with *oya* motifs in relation to women's memory and nonverbal communication (UNESCO, 2024).

The role of women as principal bearers of traditional textile and handicraft knowledge forms another important dimension of the comparison. UNESCO initiatives involving women artisans indicate that embroidery and textile production are not merely economic or aesthetic activities, but also important means of sustaining family memory, community identity, and intergenerational transmission. For example, traditional Tally embroidery in Upper Egypt, as well as embroidery practices in Siwa and Sinai, are transmitted from mothers to daughters, while documentation of these traditions and the training of younger women are recognized as important components of safeguarding strategies (UNESCO, n.d.).

Taken together, these examples point to three interrelated levels in the safeguarding of folkloric handicrafts: the preservation of the object, the spatial and visual representation of its cultural meaning, and the transmission of production knowledge through living practices. Within this framework, the İmren Erşen Oya Museum can be understood as a distinctive case in which these three levels intersect: a traditional residential building houses an *oya* collection, *oya* motifs are incorporated into the institution's visual identity, and the visibility of living heritage is supported through workshops and cultural activities.

4.4. From folkloric narrative to brand identity

Within this context, brand image can be understood as a visual communication tool that makes visible the folkloric layers of both the building and the cultural heritage represented within it. Through logos, typography, color schemes, motifs, and architectural references, visual identity not only contributes to institutional recognition but also translates the historical and symbolic dimensions of the building into a contemporary narrative.

In a museum devoted to folkloric content, the effectiveness of brand identity depends not merely on the formal reproduction of a traditional motif, but on the extent to which the relationships among the community it represents, the associated production practices, the spatial context, and cultural memory are reflected in the design language. Brand identity should therefore be regarded not simply as a means of visualizing cultural heritage for promotional purposes, but as a representational process through which cultural meaning is recontextualized.

The comparative examples reveal two principal design approaches in relation to the İmren Erşen Oya Museum. In cases such as the Ambler Boiler House, Kaposvár, and

Royaucourt Abbey, physical and architectural memory constitutes the formal source of the graphic identity. By contrast, in the Calais lace museum and in living textile traditions, modes of cultural production, motifs, social memory, and practices of transmission become the primary sources of representation. The İmren Erşen Oya Museum occupies the intersection of these two approaches by bringing together the architectural character of the Sivrioğulları Mansion with the motifs, women's labor, and folkloric narratives associated with *oya* within a unified visual identity.

This continuity allows not only for the preservation of the past but also for the contemporary rearticulation of folklore. The building thus moves beyond its physical presence to become a folkloric element of representation within social memory, while branding emerges as one of the means through which public narratives are culturally reconstructed.

5. From folkloric narrative to brand image: The case of the İmren Erşen Oya Museum

Cultural heritage is one of the principal components through which a society's collective memory is formed. This heritage is expressed not only through material remains such as stone, soil, and architectural structures, but also through folkloric forms of production transmitted across generations in everyday life. Within this context, *oya* may be regarded as a form of nonverbal folk narrative through which Anatolian women have expressed emotions, identities, and social relationships by means of symbolic forms. As a folkloric practice, *oya* is a multilayered handicraft that combines technical skill with cultural expression and extends from local traditions to broader cultural contexts. As discussed in the preceding sections, the meanings embedded in these narratives should not be treated as fixed or universal codes; rather, they should be understood in relation to the social, regional, and cultural contexts in which they are produced. The translation of *oya* into visual identity therefore requires more than the formal reuse of motifs; it also entails the representation of folkloric layers such as women's labor, cultural memory, and intergenerational transmission.

The İmren Erşen Oya Museum is one of the thematic museums in Türkiye specifically devoted to increasing the visibility of *oya*. The museum not only preserves and displays examples of *oya*, but also creates opportunities for the folkloric memory associated with the tradition to engage with contemporary audiences through exhibition design, spatial representation, cultural activities, and visual communication. The brand identity developed for the museum was conceived to represent this multilayered cultural structure at both aesthetic and conceptual levels (Figure 14). The logo examined in this study was designed by the author as a practice-based design outcome that brings together the architectural characteristics of the historic building and folkloric references associated with *oya* within a contemporary visual communication system. Accordingly, the following discussion is based on the formal, symbolic, and cultural analysis of the design rather than on an empirical assessment of user perception.



Figure 14. Imren Erşen Oya Museum brand identity logo design, spot and colored versions (Designed by the author).

During the logo design process, the museum building was reinterpreted through an abstract illustration referencing traditional Anatolian domestic architecture. The façade composition, symmetrical arrangement of windows, and projecting upper floor evoke characteristic formal features of vernacular residential architecture. Within this approach, the historic building is considered not merely as the physical shell of the museum, but as one of the principal visual references representing the tangible cultural heritage dimension of the institutional identity.

The fine linear motifs surrounding the architectural form recall the formal characteristics of *oya*. These motifs symbolically refer to both the technical refinement of *oya* and the folkloric narratives associated with the production practices of Anatolian women. The logo therefore seeks to bring together, within a single visual composition, the historic building as a representation of tangible heritage and the *oya* tradition as a representation of intangible heritage. This combination makes visible, at the level of brand identity, the relationship between “architectural memory” and “folkloric memory” discussed in the preceding section.

The circular frame employed in the design recalls the floral and circumferential arrangements frequently encountered in *oya* examples and is also associated with notions of continuity, cyclicity, and the persistence of life. In this context, the circular form is interpreted not simply as a compositional device, but as a symbolic design decision associated with the intergenerational transmission of *oya* and the continuity of traditional production knowledge. These forms are intended to evoke women’s labor and collective memory.

From the perspective of feminist folkloristics, however, the relationship between *oya* motifs and women’s experiences should not be reduced to a decorative narrative. Feminist folkloristic approaches, which demonstrate how meanings may be conveyed indirectly and symbolically through women’s everyday cultural productions, make it possible to interpret *oya*, in certain contexts, as a field in which women’s experiences are culturally encoded (Hollis, Pershing and Young, 1993; Radner, 1993). Accordingly, the use of *oya* motifs in the logo is understood not merely as the graphic reproduction of a traditional ornament, but as a representational choice intended to make women’s labor and women-centered folkloric memory visible within the institutional identity.

The use of black and gold tones constitutes a deliberate aesthetic decision associated with elegance, the refinement of craftsmanship, and the value attributed to cultural heritage. Through the combined use of color, form, and motif, the visual identity is intended to evoke both the architectural character of the historic building and the intricate production qualities of *oya*. The reinterpretation of traditional motifs within contemporary design enables cultural references to be conveyed through current forms of visual communication (Gümüşer, 2012: 225).

Within this framework, the logo may be understood not simply as an institutional emblem, but as a representational structure through which folkloric narrative is translated into a contemporary visual language across both digital and printed media. Developed from cultural elements associated with the *oya* tradition, this visual narrative demonstrates that folklore is not necessarily confined to a static past, but can be reinterpreted through contemporary design practices. Such reinterpretation, however, should not imply detaching the traditional motif from its original context and reducing it to a decorative device. Rather, folkloric visual identity design requires consideration of the production practices, social memory, women's labor, and processes of cultural transmission represented by the motif.

In this respect, the brand identity of the İmren Erşen Oya Museum provides an example of how the relationship between handicrafts and folk culture can be rearticulated through contemporary graphic language. Its design approach is based on the convergence of three interrelated cultural layers: (i) tangible architectural heritage represented by the Sivrioğulları Mansion, (ii) intangible folkloric heritage represented by *oya* motifs and the tradition of production, and (iii) living heritage represented through women's labor, social memory, and intergenerational transmission. Bringing these three layers together within the visual identity allows the museum to be interpreted not merely as a collecting institution, but as a cultural site situated at the intersection of architectural and folkloric memory.

The brand identity developed for the İmren Erşen Oya Museum can therefore be understood as both a cultural and symbolic carrier. By bringing together the motifs and narrative world of *oya* with architectural references drawn from the historic building, the design seeks to offer contemporary audiences a multilayered form of cultural representation. This approach may be associated with a museological and visual communication perspective that seeks not only to preserve cultural heritage, but also to make it visible, accessible, and open to contemporary reinterpretation. Nevertheless, because the present study does not measure visitors' perceptions of the brand identity or the effect of the logo on institutional image, the conclusions presented here are limited to the folkloric, symbolic, and formal representational capacity of the design rather than constituting a claim of perceptual "success."

Conclusion

The adaptive reuse of historic buildings is a multilayered process of transformation that extends beyond physical restoration and requires these structures to be redefined within their socio-cultural contexts. This process involves not only the preservation of architectural

authenticity, but also the meaningful and sustainable continuation of the relationships that historic buildings establish with folk culture. Spaces associated with traditional modes of production, handicrafts, and collective memory are therefore not merely physically preserved through reuse strategies; they also gain renewed opportunities to engage with contemporary society. From this perspective, adaptive reuse can be understood as a conservation approach that brings tangible architectural heritage and intangible cultural heritage together within a shared representational environment and enables cultural memory to be reproduced in new contexts.

This study examined the transformation of the Sivrioğulları Mansion, one of the traditional Turkish houses in Eskişehir, into the İmren Erşen Oya Museum and evaluated the role of brand identity and visual communication strategies within this process. Alongside the architectural restoration and spatial reorganization of the building, particular attention was given to the visual and cultural meanings of *oya* represented in the museum. In this study, *oya* was approached not merely as a decorative or aesthetic handicraft, but as a living form of cultural expression that embodies women's labor, social relations, intergenerational cultural transmission, and nonverbal folkloric narratives. In this sense, *oya* constitutes a multilayered field of folkloric communication through which women may express emotions, identities, and social experiences by means of motifs and symbolic signs. At the same time, the study demonstrates that the meanings of motifs should not be understood as fixed or universal codes, but as context-dependent signs that may vary according to locality, mode of use, social environment, and cultural setting.

The brand identity developed for the İmren Erşen Oya Museum seeks to translate these cultural layers into a contemporary visual language. Through the image of the historic building, linear arrangements recalling *oya* motifs, and a circular composition, the museum logo aims to represent tangible architectural heritage and intangible folkloric heritage within a single visual system. In this study, the circular form is interpreted as a symbolic design choice associated with the continuity of *oya* production, intergenerational transmission, and the persistence of women's labor. The combination of traditional motifs with contemporary graphic elements allows cultural heritage to be reinterpreted through current modes of representation. However, since the study does not include an empirical assessment of visitors' perceptions of the logo or brand identity, it does not make any direct claim regarding the success of the design or its causal effect on brand image. The findings are therefore limited to the folkloric, symbolic, and formal representational capacity of the visual identity.

The findings also underline the importance of incorporating folkloric and artistic values into the branding processes of historic buildings. In such settings, visual identity can function not merely as a promotional device, but as a communicative layer through which cultural narratives are represented in contemporary forms. The comparative analysis revealed two distinct but complementary approaches: the translation of architectural memory into graphic identity and the spatial and visual representation of folkloric memory associated with handicrafts. In examples such as the Ambler Boiler House, Kaposvár, and Royaumont Abbey, architectural and spatial memory constitutes the principal formal source of design. By

contrast, in *La Cité de la Dentelle et de la Mode* and in examples of living textile traditions, modes of production, motifs, social memory, and cultural transmission become the primary sources of representation. The İmren Erşen Oya Museum occupies the intersection of these two approaches by bringing together historic domestic architecture and the memory of a women-centered traditional handicraft within the same brand identity.

The case of the İmren Erşen Oya Museum also provides an important example of how traditional handicrafts and women's labor can be reinterpreted within contemporary museology in the context of intangible cultural heritage. Understanding the museum not only as an institution displaying a collection of approximately 8,500 objects, but also as a cultural space that supports the social circulation of *oya* through workshops, cultural events, and living-heritage-oriented activities, allows conservation to move beyond an object-centered museum model. This perspective demonstrates that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage requires attention not only to the cultural product itself, but also to production knowledge, practice, and processes of intergenerational transmission.

In this context, the sustainability of *oya* should not be based solely on digital platforms or visual representation. Workshops, practice-based learning environments, the participation of *oya* practitioners and tradition bearers, and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge are fundamental to the continuity of living heritage. Virtual museums, digital exhibitions, archival systems, and augmented-reality applications should therefore be regarded not as substitutes for these practices of transmission, but as complementary communication environments that support the visibility, accessibility, and documentation of cultural heritage.

The document-based qualitative case study design constitutes the principal methodological limitation of this research. The absence of ethnographic interviews with İmren Erşen, *oya* practitioners, museum staff, and source persons limited the extent to which the source person, place of collection, date of production, history of use, and contemporary performance context of each object in the collection could be examined in detail. Accordingly, the study evaluates the living-heritage dimension of *oya* through documented cultural representations, museum organization, and visual communication elements rather than through direct field data. Future research could extend the present study through ethnographic methods such as oral history, in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation of the production practices of *oya* makers. Such approaches would contribute to a more detailed understanding of source-person information, master-apprentice relationships, local networks of transmission, and women's contemporary folkloric experiences.

In conclusion, the İmren Erşen Oya Museum presents a distinctive case in which tangible architectural heritage, intangible folkloric heritage, and living cultural transmission converge within the same spatial and visual system of representation. The relationship between the architectural memory of the Sivrioğulları Mansion, the cultural memory of *oya* grounded in women's labor, and contemporary visual identity design demonstrates that folklore is not merely a value belonging to the past that must be preserved, but a dynamic cultural field that can be continually reinterpreted through changing modes of representation. In this respect,

the study contributes an interdisciplinary perspective to the relationship between the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, the spatialization of folkloric heritage, and its translation into visual identity.

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