

iz(trace)

The practice, in its own words · v1.0, locked

Before we ask how to preserve a place, we ask how to know it.

Bir yeri nasıl koruyacağımızı sormadan önce, onu nasıl bildiğimizi sorarız.

1 What iz is

iz is a relational research and spatial practice. Heritage is its first laboratory—a field entered through long-term relation, not a subject observed from a distance.

It studies how people, places, and memories stay connected, and what happens to those bonds when the structures that once held them are damaged, absent, or no longer enough.

2 The central proposition

A place is not, first of all, a collection of things. It is a field of relationships. Traces are how that field can be read.

| *iz begins with the trace, but reveals the relationship.*

Bir yer, önce şeylerin toplamı değil; bir ilişkiler alanıdır. Bu alan, bıraktığı izler üzerinden okunabilir.

3 The three cores

Method — The trace is the unit of observation; the relation is the unit of meaning.

Question — Can we look otherwise? (Başka türlü bakabilir miyiz?)

Ethic — Attention to the substrate: the living continuity people carry before, during, and often unseen by official recognition.

4 What iz studies

iz studies how people, places, memories, material forms, and institutions sustain—and sometimes displace—one another across time.

Its field is not relation in the abstract, but these particular bonds as they become perceptible through traces.

5 How iz works — two modes

Reading relations. iz traces the relations already present in a place—mapping, documenting, and reading the field through the traces available.

Creating conditions. iz builds spatial conditions in which relations can be felt, voiced, remembered, or allowed to emerge.

The first is observational; the second, present-tense. The same inquiry at the scale of a damaged city, or of a single person in a room.

6 On visibility

Visibility can make protection possible—but not everything must become fully visible to count. Some life survives by staying partly opaque.

We document without assuming we can possess.

We make perceptible without demanding full exposure.

We map relations knowing no map holds the whole life of a place.

7 Institutions and unofficial life

Official recognition does not create continuity from nothing; it enters forms of continuity people are already carrying.

iz is non-prescriptive about outcomes, but not neutral about attention. It does not decide what a place should keep. It is built to bring unofficial and lived relations into the picture—without claiming to represent them completely, and without romanticizing them. Not against institutions—ahead of them, where continuity is already being carried.

8 What iz makes

Maps and diagnostic instruments, field studies, archives, publications, workshops—and emerging forms of exhibition and spatial encounter. The

Four-Quadrant Framework is one instrument among these, not the practice itself.

9 Who iz works with

People and institutions facing rupture, transition, disappearance, or questions of belonging—a recovering municipality, a museum rethinking what it holds, a community archive, a commissioned encounter.

10 Who speaks · authority

iz carries the method without concealing the person who formed it. Çiçek remains present in the work—in its field sensitivity, voice, and encounters.

iz earns authority through method: long-term fieldwork, documented evidence, conceptual rigor, and instruments tested under real conditions. Its authority comes from a convergence of lived connection, training, research, field observation, and sensitivity.

11 Manifesto

What if a place is not what survives—but what is still being carried?

iz is the Turkish word for trace: the mark a life leaves behind.

Heritage is not only what remains. It is what we keep practicing—the memory, the care, the daily gestures that hold a place together long after the record closes.

iz begins with these traces and follows them to the relations they reveal: between people, place, memory, and time. We work where official systems cannot fully register what a place is carrying, and make it perceptible—without reducing lived experience to an object of display.

A trace is easy to miss. Learning to read it changes what a place is allowed to keep.

v1.0 — locked. The voice & identity guide, site brief, and practice map live as separate documents drawn from this source. The Turkish still owes itself a dedicated, native-level round—a co-original language of iz, not a translation.