World Heritage and Tourism Innovation

Proceedings of the 7th UNESCU UNITWIN Conference Portorož, 15–20 May 2022

Edited by

Tadeja Jere Jakulin
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Introduction

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Preserving and promoting our shared cultural and natural heritage has become a complex and pressing challenge in a rapidly changing world. The delicate balance between safeguarding the past and stimulating economic growth through tourism has spurred intense discussions, exchanges of ideas, and reflections. In response to these evolving dynamics, the UNESCO UNITWIN conference served as a crucible of thought, bringing together experts, scholars, and practitioners from around the globe to deliberate on the nexus of World Heritage and Tourism Innovation.

This book, titled "World Heritage and Tourism Innovation," is a compendium of 9 insightful papers that emerged from the conference, shedding light on the multifaceted and intricate issues at the intersection of heritage and tourism. The general conclusions drawn from the conference discussions offer a framework for exploring these complexities. The first conclusion underscores that sustainability is not an absolute term but rather a relative one, always leaving us with the pressing question of attainability. Moving from the noble ideology of sustainability to its practical implementation remains a formidable challenge. This issue raises questions about the feasibility of our aspirations and the real-world hurdles we must surmount. The interrelationship between heritage and tourism forms the focal point of the second conclusion. It delves into the transformative processes where heritage becomes a commodity for tourists and, conversely, where tourism begins to shape and influence the very essence of heritage. This mutual influence raises questions about whose heritage it truly is, often turning heritage sites into contested spaces and emphasising the dependency on tourism income. The third conclusion emphasises the management and planning issues surrounding World Heritage Sites and Properties. It calls for a vigilant approach to monitoring changes and safeguarding authenticity in the face of evolving tourist pressures and developmental needs. The fourth conclusion delves into community issues, probing the concept of 'community' itself and emphasising the need to measure host communities' Local Area Carrying Capacity (LAC). This section raises the critical concern of how to offset the damage to the quality of life in local communities due to tourism, seeking to strike a balance between progress and preservation. The global pandemic, COVID-19, forms the centre of attention in the fifth conclusion, underscoring the importance of resilience, preparedness, and risk perception in the tourism sector. This section explores a pandemic's global versus global handling and encourages us to draw lessons from past experiences. The sixth conclusion delves into the role of creativity and innovation in addressing the challenges of heritage and tourism. It poses a fundamental question – are creativity and innovation the real solutions, or have they become mere buzzwords? The section emphasises the need to raise awareness, particularly among stakeholders and the youth, fostering a sense of stability in the face of constant change. Lastly, the seventh conclusion dives into digitalisation and the complex dynamics of "smart destinations." It highlights the ambiguity surrounding technology gaps, issues of digital literacy, and the cost and availability of technology in heritage and tourism. This section advocates for a delicate balance between digital and physical services, encouraging the fusion of digital tools and "soft tourism" experiences.

As you embark on this journey through the papers in this volume, you will gain a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between world heritage and tourism innovation, exploring the challenges and opportunities of an ever-evolving world. These conclusions represent a compass guiding our efforts to navigate the dynamic landscape of heritage preservation and sustainable tourism in the 21st century.

Exploring the Sustainability in a Rural Area of the World Heritage City of Yazd During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Example of a Survived Eco-lodge's Innovations

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This paper aimed to assess a surviving eco-lodge with private ownership in Yazd Province, Iran, from a sustainability perspective. After unexpected circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the eco-lodge has adopted innovations that could apply to similar cases. For data collection, the eco-lodge owner contributed to researchers by providing necessary information regarding his activities. Moreover, a semi-structured interview with the owner was conducted. The studied eco-lodge is an old mansion on the outskirts of the Historic City of Yazd, the first inscribed city of Iran on UNESCO's World Heritage list. At first, this old mansion was adaptively reused for accommodation purposes to familiarise tourists with the local lifestyle in 2016. Traditional architecture techniques, materials, and minimum intervention on the layout have been implemented in the adaption process. This eco-lodge has prepared financial support for locals by hiring women and youth. On the other hand, it has introduced rural areas as a prominent destination. According to the findings, a set of innovations in line with sustainability principles, such as collaborating with local entrepreneurship, advertising the sale of local handicraft products on its social media, holding creative events for children, and cooperating with universities and NGOs, helped the eco-lodge to survive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: sustainability, eco-lodge, COVID-19, innovation, Historic City of Yazd, Iran

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Introduction

With the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world faced an unexpected and unprecedented global health, social and economic emergency. The travel and tourism industry was especially affected as one of the first sectors with travel restrictions in almost all countries worldwide (World Tourism Organization, 2020). However, eco-tourism had a small share of the global tourism sector, worth around USD 100 billion annually before the COVID-19 pandemic, but was experiencing fast growth (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme, 2017). Due to the fall of occupancy rates in 2020 and 2021 (World Tourism Organization, n.d.), eco-lodge facilities suffered financial losses like other parts of the tourist accommodation industry. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 crisis paved the way for innovation and had a positive impact through various unexploited opportunities (Choudhary, 2020). Innovation is the main engine for economic growth (Schumpeter, 1934). The international tourism industry also benefits from innovation, which helps to make it more competitive and advance its quality and reputation (Attia et al., 2019; Bardolet & Sheldon, 2008). Innovations, even on a small scale, can make a substantial difference in tourism development in developing countries (Batala et al., 2019). Aside from financial support, innovation is crucial to business survival (Cefis et al., 2020). Offering alternative tourism, such as eco-tourism, is one of the main contributions of Innovation (Carlisle et al., 2013). The eco-lodge is a nature-dependent tourist that adheres to the philosophy and principles of eco-tourism (Russell et al., 1995). According to Mehta et al. (2002), 'an eco-lodge is a 5 to 75-room low-impact, nature-based, financially sustainable accommodation facility that helps protect sensitive neighbouring areas; involves and helps benefit local communities; offers tourists an interpretative and participatory experience; provides a spiritual communion with nature and culture; and is planned, designed, constructed and operates in an environmentally and socially sensitive manner.' These features are consistent with sustainable tourism's environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects (Hagberg, 2011).

Since 2015, with the planning process for inscribing the historic city of Yazd to UNESCO's World Heritage List, the government has facilitated private-sector investment for establishing tourism businesses. After the inscription of the Historic City of Yazd in 2017, a wave of the establishment of tourist resorts, especially eco-lodges, began. About three years later, facing the restrictions caused by COVID-19, most tourism facilities were bankrupt due to the lack of efficient government support (Mehr News Agency, 2021). This study aims to introduce sustainable-oriented innovations applied by an eco-lodge in a World Heritage area in Iran and to evaluate their effects on its survival amid the pandemic. Although the introduced innovations in the study may not be novel and leading approaches in the tourism industry, reviewing them will provide empirical insight for eco-lodges, especially in less developed destinations, to survive a health crisis.

Literature Review

Sustainable Tourism

The concept of sustainability has been increasingly highlighted in international tourism literature since the mid-1980s (Butowski, 2012). 1995, tourism became decisively linked with sustainability at the World Conference on 'Sustainable Tourism: Towards a New Tourism Culture' in Lanzarote, Spain (Azcárate et al., 2019). Despite various definitions for sustainable tourism, United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization (2005) defined it as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities." According to this definition, sustainability principles in tourism refer to consisting of environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects through achieving a state of balance between them (Butowski, 2012). The environmental standpoint suggests using environmental resources efficiently, maintaining essential ecological processes, and preserving natural heritage and biodiversity. The economic perspective encompasses ensuring robust, long-term economic operations, delivering socio-economic benefits to all equally distributed stakeholders, including options for income generation and social services for host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation. The socio-cultural dimension involves respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserving their built and living cultural heritage and traditions, and contributing to intercultural understanding and tolerance (United Nations Environment Programme & World Tourism Organization, 2005).

Innovation in Tourism Businesses

Generally, innovation means '(the use of) a new idea or method' (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). However, innovation is a multi-dimensional concept, and various ways exist to define it (Korres, 2007). In the business context, Rogers (1998) described innovation as a series of significant changes in routine business activities that will result in improved performance for the firm. Schumpeter (1939) determined five different types of innovation: the formation of new products or services, new processes, raw materials, new markets, and new organisations. In the tourism industry, different innovative solutions can be applied, such as preparing new hotel services or adding new attractions at a destination; looking for new customer segments or improving tour guiding to enhance the efficiency and quality of the tourist experience; varying to new niche tour operators; reorienting existing destination brands to appeal to new markets; and facilitating business in a new way (Carlisle et al., 2013). Genç and Genç (2017) argue that implementing innovation impacts tourism by increasing the existing capacity of the tourism market, taking part in the survival of tourism, overcoming the possible adverse effects, and opening up saturated markets. Additionally, tourism innovation contributes to the local economy, promotes local enterprise development, and provides employment opportunities (Carlisle et al., 2013).

Much research addressing innovation's implications in the tourism industry is in pre-pandemic studies (e.g. Carvalho & Costa, 2011; Tolstad, 2014; Stanovcic et al., 2015; Genç & Genç, 2017; Attia et al., 2019). Little research has highlighted the role of innovation in tourism after the COVID-19 pandemic. Hernández et al. (2021) analysed the strategies and actions implemented by tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including souvenir shops, accommodation, restaurants, art galleries, etc., on the coastline of the Metropolitan Area of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, after the COVID-19 pandemic. According to them, the studied tourism SMEs followed four types of innovation in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, including digitalisation of processes, contact with customers in the virtual environment, product and service design in digital environments, and business model adaptation. Vuong and Tran (2021) explored the contribution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in bringing new and other values to the tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. They expressed that AI could drive new and safe customer experiences during the pandemic and beyond by pushing companies to redesign their products and services. Significantly, only two significant studies have been devoted to studying tourism innovations amid the COVID-19 era from the sustainability viewpoint. Buluk Eşitti (2022) learned how innovation could help the sustainability of post-COVID tourism. She believes that swinging to more sustainable forms based on broadened clean energy use, a fair and egalitarian approach, and the application of e-transformation and digitalisation will gain more traction regarding the sustainability of the tourism industry. Li et al. (2021) introduced technological innovation as a solution to a sustainable recovery of the tourism sector in response to the crisis of COVID-19. They argued that adopting technological advances, tools, and social media can produce beneficial results. The studies above further emphasised the role of new technologies, such as digital tools. However, this research introduces an empirical example of an eco-lodge as a sustainable pattern of tourism and its simple and applicable innovations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in a developing destination. It is crucial because access to digital technologies is challenging for many less developed destinations due to poor infrastructures, high costs, etc.

Case Study

The studied eco-lodge is located 34 km from the Historic City of Yazd (see Figure 2). The Historic City of Yazd is the first city in Iran to be inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in 2017.

The eco-lodge is originally an old adobe mansion with a unique architectural layout that dates back about 100 years. The eco-lodge has an area of 2000 m^2 and currently has nine rooms. Six people were employed with the launch of this eco-lodge in 2016 (Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, 2016).

In Figure 2, an aerial photo of the ecolodge was illustrated.

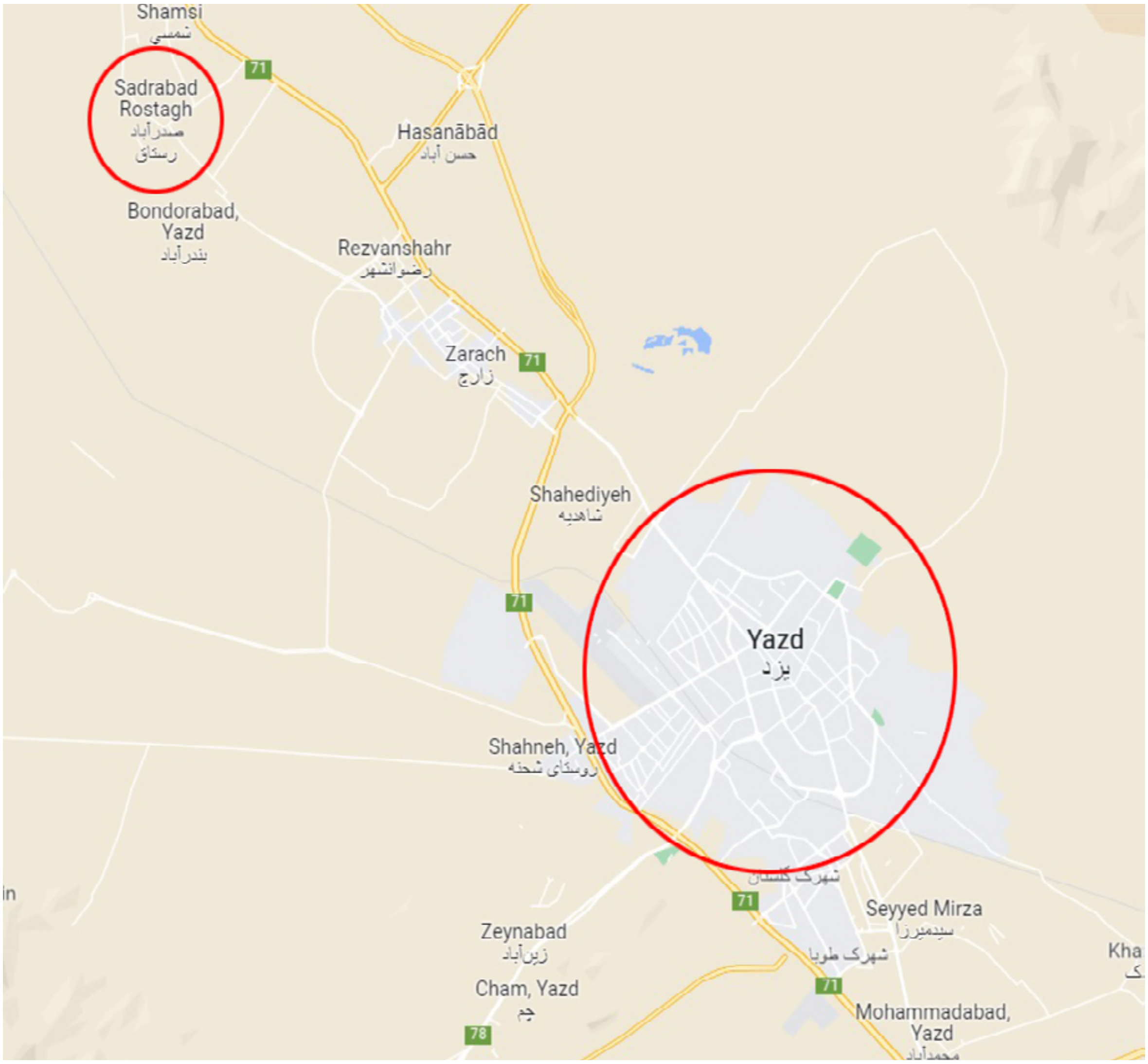


Figure 1 Location of the Ecolodge to the Yazd City

Method

The present study had two phases: (a) documentary research and (b) Semi-structured interview. In the first phase, documentary research was carried out so that the eco-lodge owner provided information, including photos and some descriptions of his activities, which he has been collecting on social media since the beginning days of the revitalisation operation. Then, researchers categorised them based on sustainability principles and in the periods before and during the pandemic. In the next phase, given the research problem and objectives, five questions were developed for the interview based on literature suggestions. The content of the questions consisted of:

1. Aims and motivations for setting up this eco-lodge.
2. The owner's attitude toward sustainability.
3. Purposes for engaging in various activities before the pandemic.

Figure 2 Aerial Photo of the Ecolodge

4. Reasons for shifting from tourist accommodation to implementing alternative activities after the outbreak.
5. Benefits of the innovations.

The interview was conducted with the owner of the eco-lodge in the Persian language. With the permission of the interview participant, the session was recorded. Then, it was transcribed verbatim and translated into English. The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis techniques. Thematic analysis is an appropriate method to better understand experiences, thoughts, or behaviours across a qualitative data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Following the procedure, we identified codes and themes, as Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested. In the analysis process, two of the authors participated in decreasing bias.

Documentary Research

According to the collected data, the categorization of the eco-lodge activities based on the sustainability principles, including environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects in the periods before and during the pandemic, is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Semi-structured Interview

Respondent Profile

The owner is a 34-year-old male, married, with a master's in conservation and restoration of historical buildings. He manages the eco-lodge but also teaches as an adjunct lecturer at universities.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Semi-Structured Interview

In analysing the interview materials, themes from the owner's responses were extracted.

Q1 *Why did you decide to rehabilitate this historic building as an eco-lodge?*

He responded: 'Well, this building is my ancestral mansion, which was being demolished. We rehabilitated it as an eco-lodge to ensure this house does not

Table 1 The Activities Before the Pandemic

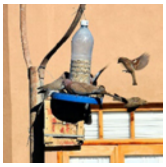
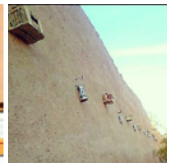
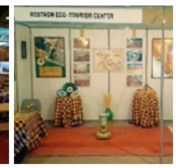
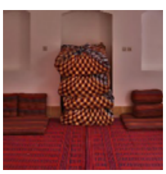
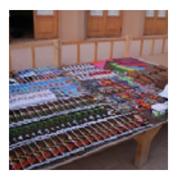
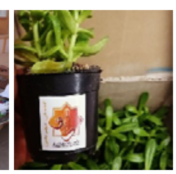
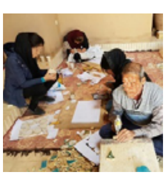
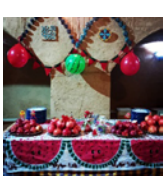
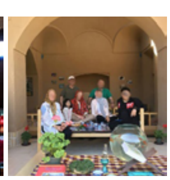
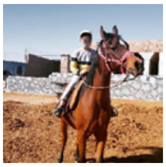
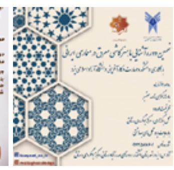
	Activities			
Environmental	 	Preparing nests and seeds for birds in winter;		Using indigenous fruits to cater to tourists.
Economic		Preparing financial support for locals through hiring women and youth;	 	Participating in the exhibition on sustainable development.
Socio-cultural	 	Using traditional architecture techniques and materials as well as implementing minimum intervention on the layout;		Operating free daily tours for the elderly and orphans;
	 	Using local handmade furniture and pottery;	 	Helping to the education of residents' children by selling products and allocating its profit to buy educational supplies
	 	Introducing local traditions, artists, and handmade on the eco-lodge's social media;		Holding the extracurricular courses for the residents' children.
	 	Holding educational courses to familiarize university students with traditional architectural techniques.		Holding a campaign to promote the conservation of local architectural heritage;
	 	Hosting traditional ceremonies and festivals;		Hosting environmentally friendly tours like the bicycle riding tours.

Table 2 The Activities During the Pandemic

	Activities			
Economic		Collaborating with a local equestrian club to entertain children during the workshops;		Selling handicraft products by advertising the local artists on the eco-lodge's social media.nt.
Socio-cultural	 	Holding creative events for children such as robotic and UAV workshops;	 	Cooperating with universities and NGOs to host entrepreneurship workshops.and orphans;

deteriorate. I also learned about the nomination of the historic city of Yazd as a World Heritage Site (WHS). On the one hand, it was located near Yazd; many travellers could attract it.

According to him, inheriting a deteriorated historic property in a WHS suburb has motivated him to establish the eco-lodge. Some scholars (e.g., Attia et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2022) have remarked that the WHS listing triggers the revitalisation of historic buildings for tourism purposes. After a site is inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, the number of tourists who visit it will increase (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2008).

Q2 *How did you try to follow sustainability in your eco-lodge?*

He responded: 'Considering my field was architecture, I paid attention to sustainability since the restoration, the minor work done in the building, such as materials and energy, had the most negligible negative impact on the environment. We had an ecological design if we wanted to add spaces. We also tried not to add anything to the building and adhered to its originality.

The eco-lodge is different from hotels, motels, and resorts. Eco-tourism is mainly in rural areas, although it is also seen in cities. Our guests usually have visited other cities in Iran, but what is important to them is the simplicity of eco-lodges, like the ambience and furniture. Familiarising themselves with the villagers' lifestyle was very attractive to them. We also have a wonderful garden for tourists, and we even took them to the farmland of fruits when the travellers came, and sometimes they helped us. And they would like to be in such an environment. We also hold some traditional ceremonies and festivals where they are welcomed by tourists, especially during the Nowruz holidays.

Our workshops about the students differed; they did not think such things could be done in Iran. The difference between our eco-lodge and other eco-lodges is that the topic of education and culture is being done, and it is delightful for people. If our services in the field of tourism are weak and incomplete, it would not be evident to tourists because the learning issue is so interesting for them, and when we put effort into them, it sits in their hearts much more.

We also tried to help the local community by providing job opportunities or charitable assistance. I believe that when we allow the villagers, they will help us.

Many traditional ceremonies and festivals were hosted in the eco-lodge, where tourists welcomed them, especially during the Nowruz holidays.

Regarding the environment, we made a series of nests for the birds because we are in a desert area, and the birds were very hot. Because of the strong winds in the spring, we made a series of bird nests, which was a tourist attraction for tourists, and it was difficult for the birds to find food because the weather was hot. We put wheat in the nests, and the birds stayed in the nests, and it was more attractive to tourists.' They always came to drink water at the pond's edge and nest in the trees. He has tried to follow sustainable tourism in terms of environmental, economic, and socio-cultural by respecting the environment, sharing economic benefits with locals, and providing a first-hand experience for the guests. These activities align with the sustainable tourism principles described by United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization (2005).

Q3 *What was your purpose in engaging in various activities along with tourist accommodation before the pandemic?*

He responded: 'Before the pandemic, we focused on cultural and educational tourism. His purpose in promoting cultural tourism was to raise public awareness regarding preserving monuments in the village or at least preventing them from being demolished. And for this, we held a campaign that started in a neighbouring village and spread to other villages. Because when a monument is ruined or dirty, tourists do not desire to visit. When tourists visit monuments, it causes the region to be introduced on social media.

Regarding educational tourism, we talked to architecture professors nationally and internationally, and some came to visit, even those who were not in architecture but were interested in monuments. Many students also came here to stay and practice architectural techniques. The monuments of the surrounding villages were surveyed by the students, which led to the registration of these monuments on the Iran National Heritage List. On the other hand, the students were unfamiliar with the practical topics of architecture and were practically unaware of traditional Iranian architecture. Practical classes and acquaintance with traditional architecture were held here, which attracted students. It was an excuse for them to come back again.

According to Georgakopoulou and Delitheou (2020), sustainable tourism development can be achieved by developing alternative forms of tourism. As Vărzaru et al. (2021) stated, sustainable tourism requires a long-term vision. He had a long-term idea for his business before the pandemic. Therefore, he has promoted alternative forms of tourism, including cultural and educational tourism and tourist accommodation. In this regard, he has strived to preserve local tangible and intangible heritage as potential tourism resources. On the other hand, by holding architectural workshops for the students, he tried to provide a unique experience and earn the guests' loyalty.

Q4 *Why did you change your approach from just tourist accommodation to alternative activities after the outbreak?*

He responded: 'When Corona came, there were a lot of restrictions and rules that had to be followed, and eco-lodge had to follow these rules. On the one hand, we could not use government aid because its amount was low, and the conditions for receiving it were difficult. Tourists who wanted to go and visit the monuments were rare, and the number of tourists decreased. Since public awareness had dropped, especially among children, the decision was made to hold courses in architecture (tiling, mirror working, and mosaics), electronics, and robotics. Students could attend classes with their families during the Corona. This new approach was welcomed by many institutions, especially music and painting institutions. Artists and students from different universities came and held art workshops.' this change in approach made us realise that educational tourism has good potential, which we were weak in this regard, and we learned and experienced a lot. Due to the lack of tourist bookings, he focused on the local community and pursued educational tourism as an alternative form of tourism to survive; this is consistent with the results of Soliku et al. (2021) that the promotion of domestic tourism can enhance the resilience of the eco-tourism sector and Wang et al. (2021) and Abbas et al. (2021) that alternative tourism such as special programs for children and adolescents can accelerate the post-COVID-19 tourism recovery.

Q5 *How do you evaluate the benefits of implementing activities such as holding creative events for children, advertising the sale of local handicraft products on social media, and so on?*

He responded: "Financially, if I want to check, it had the minimum for us to be able to pay the employees, water, electricity, and gas bills, and that eco-lodge should not be closed and depreciated due to the lack of people because when the furniture is not used, it has deteriorated. And termites and pests damage the building. The profitability of the eco-lodge itself was lower than before the Corona- not zero, but it was not very high. Parents used to come with their children initially because they were stressed. It made it difficult for us because there was a limit. We had to say for wearing the mask, and we had to accommodate any family in one room. And we did the disinfection steps before them so they would be relieved that everything was safe here. After the disinfection process, we preferred that if the weather was cold, we would work in the hall, the heating and air conditioning system was available, and the windows were open. And if it were sunny, we would work outdoors and in the yard. Recently, when people were less sensitive, the number of our groups, initially 6 or 7 people, had reached 30 by the end. The families safely sent their children, and they attended the courses much more willingly. Early in Corona, we made very little profit, but late in Corona and in the last few months, it was more and more because those who had seen the environment of the eco-lodge early had told their friends and relatives, and their number increased. The cost was unimportant to the families because they had a challenging time and wanted to attend the courses. People were already accustomed to the condition of Corona and accepted that it had become a part of their lives.

Selling online was not very profitable for us. We even had some difficulties because we were not familiar with it. But it made us visible in cyberspace and was a kind of advertisement for us. Because recently we had guests to stay in the eco-lodge who mentioned this themselves."

Långstedt et al. (2022) argue that countermeasures such as hygiene and social distancing are deemed a significant source of safety for most customers in the hospitality industry. His words indicate that he has tried to create a sense of security for participants by following health protocols. Consequently, their satisfaction has acted as a marketing tool in such a way that it encouraged them to retake the courses and caused them to introduce the eco-lodge to their friends and relatives. Furthermore, although online selling on social media did not provide direct financial benefits, it led to more familiarisation among people with the eco-lodge and its activities. In terms of monetary benefits, these activities resulted in minimum profitability in a short time. Still, it brought more benefits later and helped the eco-lodge continue operation without closure.

Conclusion

This research consists of two parts. In the first phase, the sustainable-oriented innovations of an eco-lodge located in UNESCO's World Heritage Site were explored. These innovations were introduced based on sustainable tourism's environmental, economic, and socio-cultural principles during the two periods before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the second phase, the authors conducted a semi-structured interview with the eco-lodge owner to deeply understand his experiences, thoughts, or behaviours in facing the pandemic. According to the findings, the owner's primary motivation to revitalise the eco-lodge was to count on an increase in the number of tourists due to the listing of Yazd on WHS. From the beginning, he has followed the principles of sustainable tourism by respecting the environment, sharing economic benefits with locals, and offering a first-hand experience for guests. Having a long-term vision based on the alternative forms of tourism –educational tourism– instead of relying solely on the income of tourist accommodation and focusing on the local community as his main customers helped him adapt his business to the difficult conditions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. In this regard, he supported his activities by following hygiene, social distancing, and advertising on social media. The findings indicated an eco-lodge in a developing destination could survive amid the COVID-19 pandemic without using financial support from the government and only by applying simple and applicable sustainable innovations. It is important because previous literature proposed applying new technologies as a mainstream solution. At the same time, most tourism businesses in less developed destinations have challenges accessing digital technologies due to poor infrastructures, high costs, etc. Although the public's concern about COVID-19 is declining and the tourism industry is returning to a normal situation, future research could further work on simple and applicable sustainable innovations applied by other types of tourism businesses or assess them in the context of different crises. The limitation of the research was that the authors only referred to the owner's statements and the information he provided. While it was more favourable, the authors could consider their observations and have the participants' feedback.

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Critics on Heritage Laws and Tourism Politics in Ethiopia: Multi-layered Delphi Approach

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This research has analysed the substantive essence of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) on mandated jurisdiction about heritage matters between federal and state governments. It has also scrutinised the FDRE Proclamation No. 209/2000 on its constitutional permissibility, and its validity against international declarations. A Multi-layered Delphi Method was used with interdisciplinary sub-panels. Accordingly, the constitution substantively and majorly puts heritage matters as state jurisdiction rather than federal power. However, it also has polyphony-monograph dilemma as it puts multi-layered sovereignty on heritages, makes hybridization of responsibility, and has constitutional silence on the schemata of exercises of its stipulations. In this regard, its essence of federalism has dialectical problems of being rhetorical and lacking transcendence. Politically, it suffers from imperialist syndrome on heritage ownership which is a legacy of Unitarianism that dominated the political scene of Ethiopia. On the other hand, the essence of proclamation No. 209/2000 is found to be against international declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination that put heritage sites as first and forever local places. Majority of the contents of this federal proclamation fall under jurisdictions of regional state powers which make it unconstitutionally. It also establishes a neo-imperialist structure. As an impact, and politically, this opens doors to (deliberate) delay of conservation of treasure, productivity of meanings that construct counter-history where the politicized 'portion of truth' is produced, and biasedly publicizing certain heritages as "national" prestige. It also opens doors to lootings, and smuggling. At last, it is found that this hyper-centralization again harms indigenous people on heritage economics and fair remunerations from tourism as it can storylin and mold public opinions on which tourist destination is ought to be popular.

Keywords: Heritage Laws, Tourism Politics, Ethiopian Tourism, Delphi Approach, Heritage Economics

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Introduction

The specific questions of interest of this research are the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (hereafter FDRE), and the FDRE proclamation decreed under Proclamation No 209/2000, which establishes the Federal Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (hereafter ARCCH).

The Proclamation is the highest Ethiopian heritage-related legal framework next to the Constitution, and it can govern heritage-related matters in Ethiopia. The Proclamation's entire essence, from its Preamble to its last section, is checked for its constitutionality, permissibility in answering the national question, and acceptability in light of international declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination.

The dialect of this research epistemologically inspired the works of Lenin (1914) and the idioms of Walleligne (1969) on the issue of the national question and class struggle. The second epistemic inspiration is Jones's (1984) propositions on policy development, which are the proponents of the pioneering groundwork of the current field of inquiry. So, we adopted Heritage and Tourism Politics dialects in this conceptual category.

Statement of the Problem

Merryman (1986) articulates two competing dimensions of the ownership ladder of cultural property: one as the common culture of all humanity, imparted in the 1954 Hague Convention, and the other as belonging to specific nations, imparted in the 1970 UNESCO Convention. However, there is a third way to it (Lixinski, 2019), where the host community is brought upfront from the back seat, and multi-layered sovereignty over heritages is shifted to the local Authority with community control over the heritages (Al-Ansi et al., 2021; Lixinski, 2019). As heritage is the contemporary use of the past (Wight & Lennon, 2007), there may be conflicting interests among owners (McCamley & Gilmore, 2017) and perhaps several politically motivated layers of owners with their claim of sovereignty (Lixinski, 2011) and are prone to be managed for a range of purposes defined by the needs and demands of the present societies (Wight & Lennon, 2007) which ultimately make it cumbersome obstacle to protect cultural heritages (Lixinski, 2011). Simone (2019) stated that the values of heritages are not measured by what they overtly say or how they are exposed to tourists now but by the meaning that explains how the past happened and has the power to influence generations on how they will memorise and analyse their history. They can act as sites of both memory (Al-Ansi et al., 2021) and counter-memory (Davis & Starn, 1989). They may reflect tyrannical histories of domination and demand for autonomy and sovereignty. Therefore, given the fact that heritage occupies a discursive political space with vast sphere of influence, so much is not in doubt that institutional racism characterised by wrongly structured heritage governance mechanisms may lead up to; identity cleansing, in any appropriate sense of the term, (Hall and Jenkins, 1995; Mill and Morrison, 1985): opening doors to deliberate delay of conservation of treasure, undermine or silence contestant's treasures (Walleligne, 1969); deconstruct, deny, or omit elements considered unfit for specific purpose); memories of all nations may not be equally and sufficiently presented to the deserved scope and scale of the reality as some may be under-presented and others over emphasised (Merryman, 1986; Walleligne, 1969; Wight & Lennon, 2007; Biehl et al., 2015) which means the productivity of meanings that construct counter-history where the politicised 'portion of truth' is produced; Smuggling of heritage treasures (Casana & Panahipour, 2014; Al-Ansi et al., 2021); Biasedly selecting heritage as national prestige (Walleligne, 1969; Wight & Lennon, 2007); Selectively researching and publicising heritages (Walleligne, 1969); and, Selectively proposing treasures to be world heritages (Wight & Lennon, 2007; Lixinski, 2011).

Another remote consequence of the politicisation of heritage governance is on the economics of heritage (Lixinski, 2019), which collided with the long-run interests of the economic remunerations in the tourism industry (Richter, 1983; Jordan et al., 2007). Heritage has four main significances (Lixinski, 2019): economic, social, political, and scientific. Out of these four, the social and scientific significance-related discussions are beyond the scope of this study. At the same time, heritage politics and means of translating the economics of heritage into benefits, such as the remuneration from tourism, are the subjects of interest in this study. However, the above theses have many academic limitations. First, all postulates remain partial regarding Dialectical mutual exclusiveness and epistemic indicator measurability. It means the propositions do not have an exhaustive set of robust indicators, and there are problems with the limited scope of knowledge in the area; this requires a knowledge extension type of discourse that fills the rift of exhaustiveness and the ideological vacuum. Second, they do not show how they are reflected by what applies in what context, especially in multi-national federations like Ethiopia, historically polarised states, developmental states, liberal economies, and different types of markets and levels of economies. Third, there are no such grounded empirical pieces of evidence elsewhere; to the researcher's knowledge, they are not vindicated and verified empirically, especially in Ethiopia; this again demands corroboration and substantiation type of research in Ethiopia. Five, there are no agreed and exhaustive pieces of literature in this regard, and no antitheses sufficiently provided. This paper sees these problems as an apparent scientific rift. A semi-exploratory type of discourse should warrant initial investigation to fill the need to establish a new theory adequately.

Probing along these lines of dialects at the phenomenal levels, apart from the above academic aspects of the necessities, and with regards to Ethiopian context leads that the issue requires clear articulation of the Constitution of the FDRE on account of its essence and substantive spirit on mandate jurisdiction about heritage governance and ownership matters between Federal and State Governments. Second, it requires evaluating the FDRE Proclamation No. 209/2000 on account of Constitutional permissibility. Third, there is a need to validate the FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 against international declarations on the right of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination; fourth, it requires analytical articulation on the potential adverse effects of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 in Ethiopian Tourism on account of its remuneration landscape and overall industrial vigorousness. These all together necessitated the applied aspect of the current research discourse. Hence, the discourse features at both the conceptual and the unprecedented levels, as indicated in the above two paragraphs.

Objectives of the Study

This research aims to analyse the permissibility of the federal legal frameworks established generally on Ethiopian heritages and articulate them because of the Ethiopian tourism remuneration landscape.

Specific Objectives

To analyse the substantive spirit and essence of the FDRE constitution on mandate jurisdiction about heritage matters between Federal and State Governments

To evaluate the Constitutional Permissibility of FDRE Proclamation No. 209/2000

To evaluate the validity of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 against international declarations on the right of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination

To articulate the potential adverse effects of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 in the Ethiopian Tourism remuneration landscape

Literature Review

Literature-Map on the Discourse of Enquiry

Literature mapping discourse of this study has revealed that there are many areas of research in Heritage and Tourism related politics: one aspect of literature is heritage laws, governance, and tourism (Wight & Lennon, 2007; Darian-Smith, 2013; Anker, 2014; Soderland & Lilley, 2015; McCamley & Gilmore, 2017; Berman, 2012; Carpenter & Riley, 2014; Klabbers & Piiparinen, 2013; Al-Ansi et al., 2021). The second significant stream is public policy and tourism politics (Kerr et al., 2001; Hall & Rusher, 2004; Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2010). Another stream of study is the heritage economics and political economy of tourism (Bramwell, 2011; Nelson, 2012; Nunkoo & Smith, 2013).

Literature Review on Heritage Laws, Governance and Politics

Merryman (1986) articulates two competing dimensions of the ownership ladder of cultural property: one as the common culture of all humanity embodied in the 1954 Hague Convention and the other as belonging to certain nations represented in the 1970 UNESCO Convention. However, there is a third way to it (Lixinski, 2019), where the host community is brought upfront or at least to the centre from the back seat (Lixinski, 2019; Al-Ansi et al., 2021) in the dichotomy of Merryman (1986) that excludes communities. Communities must be more centrally involved in cultural property governance and benefit-sharing. They shall shape that involvement by changing existing rules of multi-layered sovereignty over heritages to local independence, which presents novel possibilities for community control over heritages; this supports the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which provided a platform for Indigenous peoples to unsettle the autonomy of the nation-states in which they live and provided the institutional presence required to exert influence on national governments to respect their collective rights as peoples and their struggles to maintain their unique cultural identities, traditions, and institutions in the face of discrimination (Soderland & Lilley, 2015). From the philosophical and political categorical imperatives of national treasures, it is recognised as a priori, a knowledge that needs no proof, to be heritage only in their textual address by this UN proclamation. As heritage is the contemporary use of the past (Wight & Lennon, 2007), there may be conflicting interests among owners (McCamley & Gilmore, 2017) and perhaps several politically motivated layers of owners with their claim of sovereignty (Lixinski, 2011) and are prone to be managed for a range of purposes defined by the needs and demands of the present societies (Wight & Lennon, 2007) which ultimately make it cumbersome obstacle to protect cultural heritages (Lixinski, 2011). Heritages can shape how future generations remember and analyse their ancestors. They can act as sites of both memory (Al-Ansi et al., 2021) and counter-memory (Davis & Starn, 1989); they may reflect tyrannical histories of domination and misrecognition and hold great spaces for politics and political struggle as there is a split between the national culturalist demand for autonomy and sovereignty, and the negation of the certainty in the articulation of imperialist demands as a practice of domination. Simone (2019) has also stated that the powers of heritages are not measured by what they overtly say or how they are exposed to tourists now but by the fabricated meaning that explains how the past happened. Therefore, given the fact that heritage occupies a discursive political space with vast sphere of influence, so much is not in doubt that institutional racism characterised by wrongly structured heritage governance mechanisms may lead up to; identity cleansing, in any appropriate sense of the term, (Mill & Morrison, 1985; Hall & Jenkins, 1995): open doors to deliberate delay of conservation and neglecting the restoration of treasures; undermine or silence contestant's treasures (Walleligne, 1969); deconstruct, deny, or omit elements considered unfit for specific purpose. Memories of all nations may not be equally and sufficiently presented to the deserved scope and scale of the reality as some may be under-presented and others over emphasised (Merryman, 1986, Wallelign, 1969; Wight & Lennon, 2007; Biehl et al., 2015) which means the productivity of meanings that construct counter-history where the politicised 'portion of truth' is produced; Deconstructionist systematic suppression or deletion of heritage related evidence; Smuggling of heritage treasures (Casana & Panahipour, 2014; Al-Ansi et al., 2021); Biasedly selecting heritage as national prestige (Walleligne, 1969; Wight & Lennon, 2007); Selectively researching and publicising heritages (Walleligne, 1969); and, Selectively proposing treasures to be world heritages (Wight & Lennon, 2007; Lixinski, 2011). This over/under/misrepresentation of the past could serve as a tool of social, political and economic hegemony and a place for objectifying political aspirations.

Literature Review on Heritage Economics and Tourism Politics

Heritage has a value that transcends numbers and figures. The remote consequence of the politicisation of heritage governance is on the economics of heritage (Lixinski, 2019), which in turn unnecessarily collided with the long-run interests of the economic remunerations in the tourism industry (Richter, 1983; Jordan et al., 2007). The Tourism Business sub-sector can be an instrument and victim of this politics (Richter, 1985; Matthews & Richter, 1991; Hall, 1994; Dredge & Jenkins, 2003; Douglas, 2014; Hollinshead & Suleman, 2017). So, the above postulates indicate that the functioning of the Tourism sector is against the ontological Dialectical Materialism because it adheres to a pure materialist worldview about tourism instead of an integrated totality of the political domain.

Material and Methods

Research Methodology

The multi-layered Delphi method is the principal analysis methodology employed in this paper. In this method, panels of specialists who know related areas anonymously give an opinion on complex phenomena. If they do not reach a consensus, the process repeats the thesis and antithesis to work towards synthesis until a consensus plateau emerges. The process can stop after a predefined stop criterion, consensus achievement, or results stability. The technique could be used in areas where actual scientific dialectics does not appear, to capture multi-disciplinary or inter-sectoral perspectives on a topic that requires various areas of knowledge, to assess the desirability of a direction, or to capture the temperature of opinions on a controversial topic; This is because a knowledgeable participant pool generates survey instruments and ideas (Hasson et al., 2000).

Although there is considerable variation in how the method is applied, the Delphi method has its distinct characteristics: it uses expert panellists; It has a series of sequential 'rounds'; employs an 'idea generation and evaluation phase; and is interested either in the formation of consensus or exploration (measurement) of agreement.

Panel Size

Although 10 to 50 experts are considered adequate for content validation (Turoff, 2002), and Delphi surveys have had as few as seven and as many as 2000 panellists, this study's panel consists of 91 thematic academicians. The size of the panel was determined by the topic area and the time and resources available to the researcher.

The type of Delphi used is the Multi-layered Delphi Approach; this means there were sub-panels within the panel to capture the interdisciplinary dimension of the discourse. Based on this, seven sub-panels of appropriate specialisations that have 13 experts each were formed within the overall panels of the discourse to give a total of 91 experts at the beginning. The number of 13 experts does not affect the attrition rate throughout the rounds and retain at least seven experts (as prescribed in FGD) in each sub-panel in the last round of the Delphi. Accordingly, the selected appropriate specialised sub-panels were the sub-panel of tourism management, archaeology, heritage management, political science, ethnography, history, and the sub-panel of law. This professional diversity enabled us to see the issue from seven academic dimensions. Participants were confined to the various regional states of Ethiopia only, favouring the establishment of a conclusion that suits the nuances of the Ethiopian scenario and the potential adoption of the study's results predominantly to this very context.

Panel Inclusion Criteria

Accordingly, the following inclusion criteria were applied: Professional expertise in one of the above-stated fields. Consistent with the principle that panellists should have special qualifications (Hasson et al., 2000): More than ten years of work experience in Ethiopia; Proven track records in publication; Rank of assistant professor or above; More than 30 years of age; and individuals with a minority perspective. Accordingly, we sent e-mails to 131 experts who met this study's inclusion criteria through snowball sampling. One hundred three professionals showed interest, but an agreement finished with only 91 of them.

Research Paradigm, Positionality, and Place of the Researcher

The research acknowledges that the researcher's biography, i.e. personal and professional experiences, historical-political location, and pre-study beliefs, may directly or indirectly influence the design, execution, and interpretation of the research. The recognition is that the researcher is part of the social world he is researching, making it challenging to attain a completely 'objective' reality. However, this difficulty does not mean that, ontologically, there is no objective external reality independent of human thinking and out of personal value systems. Siding a positivistic world but reflexively acknowledging the influence of biography, the research has aspired to achieve 'empathetic neutrality, eliminate the relationship between the researcher & the researched, and strive towards dualism or knower and known independence and separability. Axiologically, they tried to find findings that were

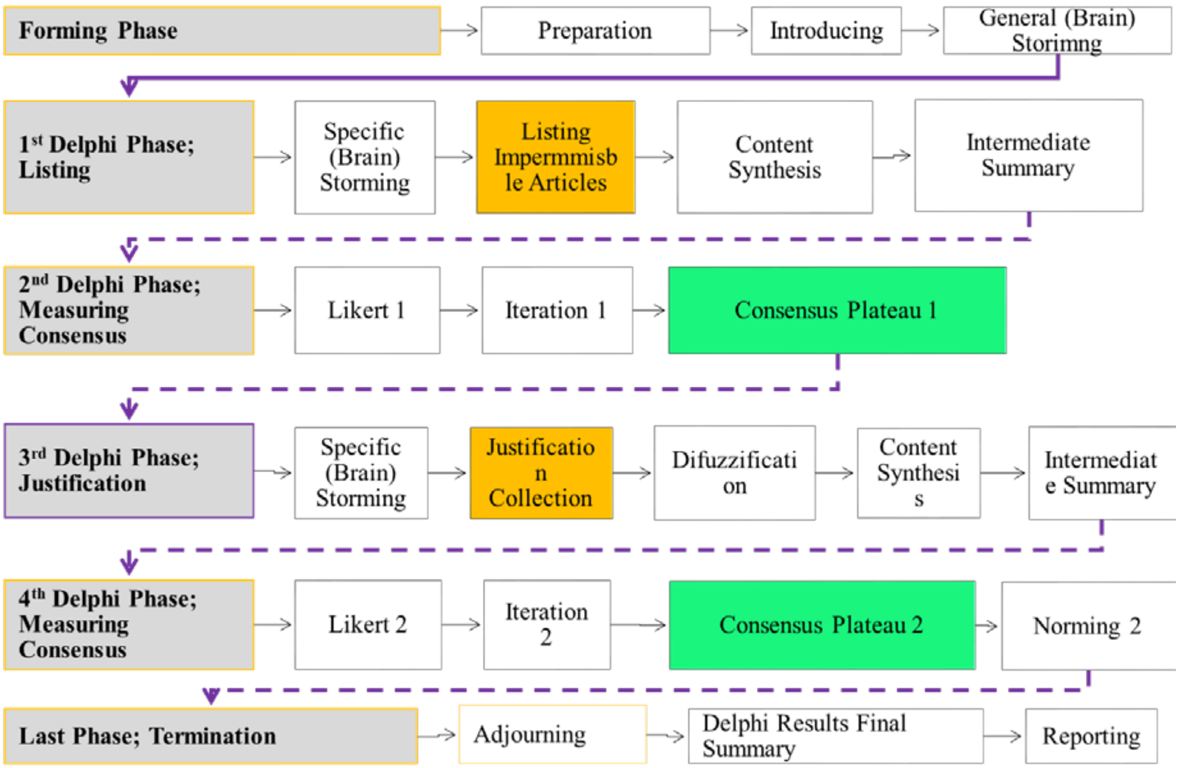

Figure 1 The Five-Phased Delphi Flow Chart

Source Adapted from Fish and Busby (2005)

not mediated by values and strived to avoid at least conscious bias while recognising that this aspiration is 'difficult' to attain with completely 'objective' reality. Though all the above efforts were put in place to attain an acceptable level of objectivity, by appreciating the influence of the value system, the researcher would like to reflect that by religion; he is a sceptic ethically; by political belief, he is Leninist, and, he has both academic and professional experience in the field if this biography would periphrastically influence the study process. Readers are, therefore, advised to vigilantly take this into account as it is pretty tricky (though attainable) to 'absolutely' control how, where, when, and in what way this biography might periphrastically influence the research process.

Role of the Facilitator

The role of the facilitator included but not limited to; designing overall Delphi methodology including selecting panel's fields and inclusion criteria, determining panel composition (size/expert breadth), determining Delphi period and number of rounds; sending invitation to participate in Delphi study and all nitty-gritty listed in the forming Phase of the Delphi; Defuzzification (where imprecise data are converted into something that has precision; reducing fuzzy sets of ideas into coherent ones; numbers and figures are transformed into linguistic expressions or terms; and, excessively jargon terms or proverbs, idiomatic expressions are converted into conventional expressions; filtering out "irrelevant (to the topic) or duplicated" content); providing an anonymised summary opinions; circulating outlier answers to be iteratively ventilated; measuring and reporting consensus levels and monitoring attrition rate in each round; and, declaring whether or not a particular round is closed, based on stop criteria, and, saying that consensus plateau is reached.

Reliability and Validity

Fish & Busby (2005) indicate that we can estimate the reliability between the first and second rounds by exploring the consensus rates of the respondents. In other words, if a reasonable level of consensus is on many items on the second questionnaire, it is likely reliable. The issue of validity is directly related to the selection of the panel of experts. Against the field's appropriation, reviewed expert selection criteria is an insurance of the validity. In addition, the experts have expertise in the study area. Accordingly, reliability and validity concerns have been addressed by strictly following Fish and Busby's (2005) recommendations:

The Five-Phased Delphi Flow Chart

Although the classic Delphi technique recommends at least four rounds, this study used a five-round Delphi, except for the forming Phase, as seen in the diagram below.

Pre-Delphi Phase: Forming

The forming Phase included preparation, introduction, and general (brain) storming. The practice included:

- Designing the overall Delphi methodology, including selecting relevant fields of panellists.
- Designing panel selection criteria.
- Determining panel composition (size/expert breadth).
- Choosing the Delphi period.

The following action was to decide the number of rounds and iterations. Delphi rounds were predetermined to be five according to the typology of information required from the experts and to be careful not to compromise panellists' response rates and enthusiasm. However, we did not have predetermined iterations; instead, we were supposed to undertake them until we reached a consensus plateau. So, the dependence was on how diffused the opinions were among panellists or how fast the panellists reached the plateau. The study timeframe was determined to be five and a half months, which is consistent with the recommendation of Fish and Busby (2005), which states that four months suffice for three rounds of Delphi. The continued tasks of this forming Phase were dispatching a general introduction of the problem statement, an invitation to participate in the Delphi study, developing consent acquisition forms, and completing ethical clearance from the responsible body. Forming a Delphi Panel with an anonymous respondent code throughout the inquiry was part of this task. The last part was general (brainstorming about ways forward.

First Delphi Phase; Identifying Salient Issues Phase

This Phase included brainstorming about the first task of identifying salient issues, identifying salient issues in each research objective, composing content, and producing a Delphi 1 summary. First-round questions with epistemic assumptions were circulated to 91 experts enquiring about identifying salient issues under each research objective. We subjected the responses to defuzzification and produced an intermediate summary of this round. We monitored the attrition rate, resulting in 82 panellists at the end of the first round of Delphi with a 90% response rate. We did not close the process of identifying salient issues under each objective at this Phase and did not reach the conclusion plateau. We structured the next rounds based on the responses to the previous stages.

Second Delphi Phase; Consensus Measuring Phase on Lists

In the second Delphi Phase, we sent a 5-Point Likert-based questionnaire back for validation to rate the identified salient issues under each specific objective; this aimed to investigate the level of consensus on the consolidated summary of lists of salient problems presented by the panel members in the first round of Delphi. We indirectly and methodologically cultivated divergence. We developed striking epistemic theses and called for antitheses through iterations until we reached the consensus plateau. The iteration process allowed participants to comment on the responses of others and revise their own opinions in real-time. Articles deemed outliers and not accepted by a majority but had subjectively substantive reasoning on why and how they disagreed or significantly disagreed again circulated for discussion. We reiterated this process to penalise outliers until we established a declarable consensus plateau. We measured the Consensus Level for all identified salient issues of specific objectives, ensuring agreement with a maximum 8% coefficient of variation. Delphi's method requires a penalised attrition coefficient of variation of up to 20% as the cut-off point to reach a satisfactory consensus plateau. So, issues that passed this cut-off point were consolidated and sent back to panellists, declaring that Consensus Plateau was born and the identification phase was closed. Abstention was monitored and was at 5%.

Third Delphi Phase: Justification

The third Delphi Phase was the Justification Phase. In the Delphi method, analysis and synthesis coincide with data collection and panellists, given the academic and professional Authority they should have on the topic of inquiry, which are partly analysers and synthesisers. The justification phase does play this role. So, this third Delphi started through specific (Brain) storming in justifying the lists of salient issues. The typical (Brain) storming followed by a collection of justifications for why the problems under each specific objective were salient. Panellists have received reasons, and responses converted into defuzzification. Finally, we produced an intermediate summary of this round and monitored the attrition rate, resulting in 67 panellists. We did not close this justifying process at this Phase or reach the conclusion plateau. We structured the next rounds based on the responses to the previous stages.

Fourth Delphi Phase: Consensus Measuring Phase on Justification

In this Phase, the intermediate summaries of justifications collected during the third Delphi for all specific objectives were sent back to each panel member and subjected to the consensus test; this was an inquiry to put their agreement or disagreement levels in a 5-Point Likert Scale with space allowing experts to comment on the ideas they significantly agree or disagree. Multiple iterations penalised outlier responses by ventilating them until the establishment of a consensus plateau. The consensus level was exposed against 20% as the cut-off point to reach a satisfactory consensus plateau, and the agreement was that there should be a maximum coefficient of variation of 12% in all specific objectives. So, we sent back justifications that passed this cut-off to panellists, declaring that the panellists reached the Consensus Plateau and closed this justifying Phase. The Attrition Rate stood at 4%, with a 96% response rate.

Last Phase: Termination

In the Termination Delphi Phase, we brought together the first consensus Plateau result document and the second consensus Plateau result document to be adjourned by the panel. We measured the response rate at this particular Phase, which was 100%, with 63 panel members remaining until the end of the Delphi process. The process occurred through a laissez-faire communication structure, allowing the experts to provide any late feedback about the consensus Plateaus reached earlier and to revise their opinions through subjectively good rounds of iterations. Finally, we endorsed the two Consensus Plateaus with a 5% coefficient of variation. The final summary report of the adjourned Delphi result was produced and returned to all the participants who had handed in the questionnaire from the first round.

Results and Discussions

Result and Discussion on Specific Objective 1

As mentioned elsewhere, the first specific objective of this research was to analyse the substantive spirit and essence of the FDRE constitution on mandate jurisdiction about heritage matters between the Federal and State. The panels of experts in the Delphi process have found that governments predominantly respond to the national question by giving powers to States in six critical articles. However, one article has elements of Unitarianism bias. The panels of experts of the Delphi concluded this by providing the following justifications: one, the fact that all sovereignty resides in the nations, nationalities, and peoples of Ethiopia (Article

8 (1) of the FDRE Constitution) indicates the fact that the federal government cannot be sovereign to state government in any matters, which of course heritage cannot be exceptional. Another article mentioned by the experts of Delphi panels is Article 39(2), which stipulates that every Nation, Nationality, and People in Ethiopia has the right to promote and develop its culture and preserve its history. This article explicitly uncovers the implicit essence of Article 8 (1) on matters of sovereignty is said by the panels of experts of the Delphi that this article is augmented by Article 39(3), which stipulates that States have the right to a full measure of self-government which includes the right to establish its institutions of government in the territory that inhabits, that shall consist of institutions that govern matters of heritage treasures. One exception in the Constitution about heritage is Article 51(3), which stipulates that the federal government shall establish and implement national standards and essential policy criteria for protecting and preserving cultural and historical legacies. These expressions, though they are post-structuralist ideas, are contrary to other articles mentioned above and are opposed to the national question, as they somehow put multi-layered sovereignty on heritages or at least are characterised by the hybridisation of responsibility; this makes the Constitution somehow suffer the polyphony-monograph dilemma. Besides this, there is constitutional silence or at least vague expressions that amount to silence, on the schemata of exercises of the above stipulations in the Constitution, which produced the epistemological and dialectical problems of being significantly rhetorical, lacking transcendence or going beyond its philosophical concept, into actualisation in answering the national questions. Though the panel did not deny that the structure of this article somehow suffers from Unitarianism bias, they saw it as an indication that the federal government has to establish just essential policy criteria. This comparison was made concerning the Constitution's general essence and substantive theme, as put in other articles listed above, and not as an indication of sovereignty over state matters of heritage. Generally, starting from Article 8 (1), Article 39(2), Article 39(3) and probing through Article 52(1) of the Constitution (its stipulation will be found elsewhere in this document), the general substantive spirit and essence of the Constitution of the FDRE has been seen by the panels of experts of the Delphi to be predominantly responding to the national question by giving powers to States in four critical articles. However, as stated in four critical articles, one article has elements of Unitarianism bias. However, one article has elements of Unitarianism bias.

Result and Discussion on Specific Objective 2

The second specific objective of this research was to critically evaluate the Constitutional Permissibility of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000. In this regard, the panels of experts have made striking epistemic theses and antitheses argued with iterations until they reached the censuses plateau. Accordingly, the following articles were listed to be impermissible;

Article 23 (2) on "Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Heritage" Article 23(2) of the FDRE Proclamation No 209/2000 states, "The Authority shall enjoy a right of preemption over the sale of cultural heritage". A right of "preemption" means, in law, the judicial principle asserting the supremacy of Federal over State legislation on the same subject. Hence, it means the Authority, a federal institution, has sovereignty over the sale of cultural heritage. The panel concluded that this article is not constitutionally permissible, saying the national Authority cannot get such supremacy over nations and nationalities on the sales of their treasured heritage. Here are the following justifications: The federal House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) does not have the power to proclaim legislation that declares a right of preemption (supremacy of the Federal Government) on the sales of heritages of these nations and nationalities. Article 8, Sub-Article 1 of the Constitution states that all sovereign power resides in Ethiopia's countries, ethnicities, and peoples. So, according to Article 8, Sub-Article 1 of the Constitution, the federal government cannot, in any case, be supreme to Nations and Nationalities. According to Article 55(1) of the federation's Constitution, the federal HPR cannot proclaim legislation in matters other than those expressly assigned by the Constitution to federal jurisdiction. Article 52(1) states that any power not explicitly given by the Constitution to federal jurisdiction is the power of the States. The Proclamation does not expressly grant federal control over the right of preemption regarding the sale of cultural heritage, as stated in this article. Therefore, the power to exercise this right belongs to the States.

Article 39(2) of the Constitution stipulates that every Nation, Nationality, and People in Ethiopia has the right to promote and develop its culture and history. So, the federal government cannot deny this right. Fourth, according to Article 39(3) of the Constitution, every nation, nationality, and people in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of self-government, including the right to establish its government institutions in the territory it inhabits. This argument supports that the federal government cannot, in any case, be supreme to Nations and Nationalities in all matters. As such, heritage matters cannot be exceptional. Another justification provided by the panel is that the article's overall substantive spirit and essence suffer from Unitarianism and Imperialism biases with the interest of political hegemony in the politics of heritage and centralising power at the federal level. The panel of Delphi provided the last justification, stating that the Proclamation of selling heritage is incorrect. The panel argues that this case involves heritage and political and economic problems. Firstly, it goes against international declarations that we will discuss in subsequent sections of this paper. Second, "Whose heritage is to be sold, by whom and to whom?" The panel supports its claim that the article can also be the loophole for the illegal trafficking of many states' historical property.

Article 19 (1) on Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritages: Article 19(1) says, "Any conservation and restoration work on Cultural Heritage must have prior approval of the federal Authority". This article was considered constitutionally impermissible by the panel because it is inconsistent with Article 39(2) of the Constitution, which stipulates that every Nation, Nationality, and People in Ethiopia has the right to promote and develop its culture and to preserve its history. The panel says that the power is expressly given to the country's nations, nationalities, and peoples and not to the federal government. Again, the panel has reached a consensus plateau that it has dangerous political implications: it opens doors to delay conservation and restoration; it is fertile for individuals that have a bias in giving attention to weathering of heritages; it gives a chance to erase nations' memories; and provides loopholes for historical cleansing by systematic suppression of evidence of a people that do not conform to the destroyer's politically motivated perception of what is appropriate. Disremembering the unconstitutionality of the Proclamation and just focusing on pure logic, the panel interrogated, "Can the federal Authority be fair enough to be concerned on the conservation, restoration and protection of the heritage of all nations and nationalities given the competing and counterproductive historical narrations of the country? Who is emotionally better connected to the treasures of the nations: the nations themselves or the federal government? The panel has finally reached a plateau conclusion that in a country where competing historical narratives are rampant, it is natural and experienced that a battle is raging between those who want to destroy and those who try to restore national treasures. This Proclamation, which gives loopholes to the former, can be conclusively regarded as lacking logical and legal rationalities.

Article 30 (1) on Permit Requirement of Exploration

Article 30 (1) says, "No person may conduct exploration, discovery, and study of cultural heritage without obtaining a prior written permission from the federal Authority."

The panel stated that the FDRE Constitution does not expressly grant federal power the right to explore, discover, and study cultural heritage. Any power not explicitly assigned by the Constitution to federal jurisdiction is the power of the States, Article 52(1). So, the panel concluded that it is the state government's power, not the federal government's. The Delphi discussants again emerged from the legal issue and concentrated on logical matters. According to the summarised result, given the historical competition and cultural polarisation in the country, the federal Authority has illogical empowerment to decide which heritage shall be a matter of exploration, studying, and discovery (striking the question of whose legacy will get the permission for exploration and study and whose' to be prohibited). Again, it exposes selectively discovering heritages that it believed would be helpful for historical hegemony and technically suppressed treasures of others in the federation from being studied.

Article 36 on Publicizing Discoveries of Heritages
Article 36 says the federal Authority shall be the first to publish any field discovery in National Media. The Delphi discussants understood that for the member states to conduct exploration of heritages, the Federal Authority should give blessing and again, the Authority should be convinced of the value of the discovery and first publicise it through its national media; this was inconsistent with Article 39(2) of the Constitution, stipulating that every Nation, Nationality, and People in Ethiopia has the right to promote and develop its culture; and preserve its history. Besides this, Article 29 (1 & 2) of the Constitution states that everyone has the right to seek, receive and publicise information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice. Therefore, for the panel, this sub-article of the Constitution concretises four essential points:

1. Everyone has the right to seek information.
2. Anyone can publish (citizens, nations and nationalities, states or the federal government).
3. Any media can promote the choice of the publisher.
4. Article 29(2 &1) of the Constitution prohibits any form of censorship.

However, opposite to these four concrete constitutional stipulations, the HPR has proclaimed an unconstitutional article (striking the question of whose heritage is desired to be publicised). Apart from raising legal issues, the panel of the Delphi has agreed that this article exposes selectively publicising heritages believed would be helpful for cultural hegemony and technically suppressing rival treasures. Besides, the panel said it is difficult to settle when the Authority faces differences on whether certain heritage discoveries must be publicised (as the treasured heritage for someone cannot be as such for another). All in all, article 36 of Proclamation No 209/2000 was found by panel members of Delphi to be both illegal and irrational.

Article 43(1) on Heritage Inspection
Article 43(1) says, "An inspector from the Authority may enter, at reasonable hours, any place where there is any heritage and conduct an inspection to ensure that the heritage is properly maintained and protected". The demerits of the article, as to the panel of experts, are that one, it doesn't have a constitutional base as according to reports, Article 39(2), 52(1) and 41(9) heritage conservation, restoration, protection and promotion are explicitly state powers, and not federal forces; two; it generally assumes that an expert from a national authority is above suspicion (lacking intent or capacity to injure local treasures in any form of damage); three, it doesn't require the permission of the owner states (nations and nationalities); four, it doesn't put any bureaucratic conditions that must be satisfied for an expert of a federal Authority to enter into any place of the states where there is any Heritage; five, its substantive spirit and essence suffer from Unitarianism and Imperialism biases by giving extreme trust on federal individuals; six, opposite to the radical faith in federal individuals, it doesn't have any level of trust or confidence in the States (nations and nationalities) on properly maintaining and protection of heritages. These all open doors for heritage smugglers from the federal Authority to loot and traffic treasures, their authentic environment, and sell them out. The panels of experts of the Delphi study, listing the above justifications, have concluded that article 43(1) of the Proclamation on heritage inspection is legally and logically impermissible.

In the Preamble ("WHEREAS") part of the Proclamation
The fifth "WHEREAS" or rationalisation part of Proclamation No 209/2000 states that protecting and preserving cultural heritage is the "responsibility of each citizen". The panel conceived that this rationalisation's substantive spirit and essence suffer from Unitarianism and Imperialism Biases. The justification provided is that it destroys the power of states on the matter

of their heritages through indirect diffusion of ownership to any citizen at any corner of the federation, diffusing collective power of ownership from nations and nationalities, thereby destroying their collective bargaining capacity and group rights. Besides, it is unconstitutional because the rights to protect and preserve cultural and historical legacies are the mandates and responsibilities of the Nation and Nationalities of the country, Article 39(2) of the Constitution.

Result and Discussion on Specific Objective 3

The third objective was to evaluate the validity of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 against international declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination. The panel found eight international declarations on matters related to heritage self-determination. Accordingly, eight international declarations have stipulated the rights of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination. These rights have been explicitly stated or interpreted from these declarations' general substantive spirit and essence. The following are articles of the Proclamation that contravene these declarations: Article 23 (2) declares that transfer of ownership of cultural heritage is possible and gives the federal Authority the right of preemption over the sale of cultural heritage. This is not consistent with the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (Articles 3& 6) that outlaw import, export or transfer of ownership of cultural property; two, Article 30 (1) which says "No person may conduct exploration, discovery and study of cultural heritage without obtaining a prior written permit from the federal Authority" is not consistent with the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which stipulates that indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination and to freely pursue their cultural development (article 1); three, Article 19(1) which says "Any conservation and restoration work on Cultural Heritage shall be carried out with the prior approval of the federal Authority" is not consistent with 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which declares the right of indigenous people for the conservation, the development and the diffusion of culture(Article 15). The same article is not consistent with the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, which stipulates that communities (UNESCO 2003: passim) are the principal actors in decisions about what is essential, endangered, and worth safeguarding in the area of ICH through "bottom-up" approach and, again, not consistent with the 2003 Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ODs) which gives the indigenous people the right to identify, define, and draw up inventories of ICH (Article 80). It is also essentially at odds with the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, which emphasises that the aim should be to give heritage a function in the life of the community (Article 5.1) and with the 2007 United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which stipulates that Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination; the right to cultural integrity; the right to self-government and autonomy; the right to heritage self-determination and to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (Article 3).

Result and Discussion on Specific Objective 4

The fourth specific objective of the research was to articulate the potential adverse effects of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 in the Ethiopian heritage economics and Tourism remuneration landscape. The panel found out, with a majority, that the law impacts storylining worldviews about the existence of heritage and tactically loads this one-sided worldview over the preferences of tourists that come to the federal country. Such laws can potentially constrain access to promoting the historical heritages of competitors within the country. It can be a storyline in which the destination should be famous, a script for the country's tourism product presentation, and affect promotion and mould public opinion on how much tourists should stay and where; this is because such legal-structural problems can get the institutional and industrial shape as institutions can act as fertile farms for certain political ideologies by giving or denying institutional and administrative support to certain political discourses or even reflecting what is known as institutional racism. Therefore, the structure of governance of heritages can actively or inactively sabotage the free flow of tourists. The tourism business sub-sector can be an instrument and victim of these politics. This way, this may defy the national prestige (identity and political) tourism could mean to nations and nationalities of the federation, and a substantial scale of quarrel may occur over how a specific heritage/attraction in the Ethiopian multi-national coalition should be valued (preserved, conserved, developed and promoted) for all to get justifiable economic and non-economic remuneration from tourism.

Conclusions and Recommendation

One conclusion reached by the Delphi study panel of experts is that the overall substantive spirit and essence of the Constitution of the FDRE indicates that the power to preserve, protect, investigate, and promote cultural heritages lies under the jurisdiction of the state government rather than the federal government.

The second conclusion is that the contents of FDRE Proclamation No 209/2000 fall under the jurisdiction of state powers. Therefore, the Proclamation is unconstitutional and impermissible, intended to establish a neo-imperialist structure at the federal level, and it is illegal, void, and null.

The third conclusion reached by the panel is about the validity of FDRE Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 against international declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination. The panel of experts of this Delphi study reached a plateau consensus that the Proclamation is not acceptable against international declarations on the right of indigenous peoples regarding heritage self-determination; this is because, one, almost all of the international declarations, place the communities, along with their "free, prior and informed consent", at the centre of its scheme for the Safeguarding of cultural heritage worldwide, opposing international or domestic heritage colonisation; and, two, almost all of these declarations stress that World Heritage sites are, first and forever, local places and no conservation without or against these communities is possible, and the community can legitimately wish to draw benefits from their heritage treasures according to their criteria and priorities; three, almost all of these declarations assume there are no heritages without the heir or heritage bearers as there are no folklores without the folks.

The fourth conclusion made by the Delphi study panel of experts concerns the harmful effects of Ethiopian heritage laws on tourism economics. The panel, by a majority, concluded that the law harms heritage economics and fair remunerations from tourism.

Recommendations

This study has critically examined how politics reflects in heritage governance in Ethiopia and, as a result, impacts the landscape of tourism remuneration in the country through heritage laws.

The fact that the research design inhabits some characters of exploratory nature, meaning such kinds of studies were not conducted in Ethiopia before and rarely have been done elsewhere in the world, at least to the knowledge of the researcher, it would not capture academic appropriateness to give fast and challenging prescription to the public before further extended (with a longer spanning time) and extensive (with a broader scope of the study) confirmatory research (to confirm or dismiss) is conducted on the issue using explanatory design with the rule of 'repeatable materiality'.

So, before the prescription is implemented, the scientific community is requested to augment this study through comprehensive, exhaustive, extensive, and extended works of inquiry. Specifically, the recommendation is that other countries corroborate current findings in their context; different types of research with scopes covering the intuitional and industrial environments of the tourism sector are requested, and academicians should contribute to adequately establishing or clarifying the theories by giving depth and scale in their epistemic form.

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Tourism Valorisation of Croatian Intangible Cultural Heritage on the UNESCO Lists: The Example of the Sinjska Alka

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Until fifteen years ago, intangible cultural heritage was considered a less recognised value requiring preservation for future generations. To ensure better protection and raise awareness of its importance, UNESCO created the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2008. Today, three lists of intangible cultural heritage under UNESCO patronage include 18 intangible cultural assets, placing Croatia 7th in the world and 3rd in Europe among countries with recognised intangible cultural assets. In addition to artistic value, intangible cultural heritage also has tourism value. The question remains about valuing intangible heritage in terms of tourism and integrating it into the tourism supply.

The research aims to analyse the conversion of Croatian intangible cultural heritage into tourism supply, using the example of the Sinjska Alka, a knights' tournament. It is a tradition that has continuously occurred every year since 1715. The event has been on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 2010. The Sinjska Alka is an example of good practice, with the opening of the Sinjska Alka Museum in 2015 and the transformation of the event from a one-day to a year-round tourist attraction. The research is based on an analysis of tourism statistics in the Town of Sinj, an analysis of registered visitor flow to the Sinjska Alka Museum as well as the Sinjska Alka event, an analysis of the presentation of the Sinjska Alka in tourist brochures, and interviews with key stakeholders from the local public.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, tourism valorisation of intangible heritage, the Sinjska Alka, Sinj, Croatia

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Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage was first recognised in the early 21st century as a value that needs protection and determines a locality's identity for future generations. Timothy (2011) includes in intangible cultural heritage the following categories of cultural assets: the arts (art traditions, handicraft skills, foodways and gastronomy), languages (unique languages, music), folkways (dress, farming methods, faith, behaviour, folklore, stories), music and performing arts (dance, music, opera), religion (beliefs, practises, ceremonies, gender roles), sport (play, rules, and methods), and festivals and pageants (ethnic festivals, food festivals, religious pageants). The late recognition of the value of intangible heritage has affected its inclusion in tourism (Melis & Chambers, 2021), and a stronger tourism valorisation of intangible heritage assets has been noticeable only in the last fifteen or so years (Petronela, 2016; Drpić & Rudan, 2019). As with tangible cultural heritage, the crucial role in better protecting intangible cultural heritage is raising awareness of its value, promoting it, and strengthening the tourism valorisation contributed by UNESCO. In 2008, the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage was established. Today, there are three lists of intangible cultural heritage under UNESCO: 1) the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity; 2) the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding; and 3) the Register of Good Safeguarding Practises (UNESCO, 2022).

Croatia has recognised the value of its intangible cultural heritage early on, as reflected in the many protected intangible cultural assets under the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media. The Intangible Cultural Property Register of the Republic of Croatia includes 209 secure intangible cultural assets classified into the following five categories: 1) oral tradition, expressions, and speeches; 2) performing arts; 3) customs, rituals, and ceremonies; 4) knowledge and skills; and 5) traditional crafts (Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, 2022b). Among these, 18 intangible cultural assets have been on the UNESCO World Intangible Cultural Heritage list, i.e., sixteen of them on the Representative List of Intangible Heritage of Humanity and one intangible asset on each of the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and on the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices for Intangible Assets, placing Croatia 7th in the world and 3rd in Europe in terms of the number of intangible cultural assets on the UNESCO lists (Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, 2022a; 2022b; UNESCO, 2022).

The question remains as to the manner of adequately valorising intangible cultural assets in terms of tourism and preserving them for future generations while, on the other hand, enriching tourism supply while not excessively commodifying intangible cultural heritage (Du Cross & McKercher, 2020). More commercialisation of any intangible cultural heritage as a tourist attraction can prevent it from losing its authenticity (Park, 2014), which can hurt the local and regional identity in a way that cannot be fixed. Intangible and tangible cultural assets included on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage lists are protected and saved from oblivion but are branded more than other intangible and tangible cultural assets and, therefore, exposed to excessive commodification when transformed into tourism products (Cole, 2007; Adie, 2014). This commodification has initiated intensive discussions in academic circles as to whether the inclusion of cultural assets on the UNESCO lists is a blessing or burden (Pyykkönen, 2012; Moy & Phongpanichanan, 2014; Caust & Vecco, 2017) and whether the UNESCO lists contribute to "producing heritage" (Hameršak & Pleše, 2013; Zebec, 2013).

Though there are many examples of good practises in integrating all forms of intangible cultural heritage included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, there are no generally accepted models of valorising it in terms of tourism. Therefore, the Sinjska Alka, a case study for this research, is an example of the tourism valorisation of Croatian intangible heritage included on the UNESCO world heritage lists.

Research Goals and Methods

This research aims to analyse the transformation of the Sinjska Alka, an intangible cultural asset, into a tourism product of the Town of Sinj. The Sinjska Alka, a knights' tournament, has been held continuously every year since 1715 and has been included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 2010. The Sinjska Alka was an example of good practice when the Sinjska Alka Museum was opened in 2015, transforming the Sinjska Alka from a one-day to a year-round tourist attraction and branding the new museum as an identity builder for Sinj as a tourist destination.

The research is based on analyses of tourism statistics for the Town of Sinj, registered visits to the Alka Museum and the Sinjska Alka event, presentations of the Sinjska Alka and the Alka Museum in tourist brochures published by the Sinj Tourist Board, and interviews with key stakeholders from the local public.

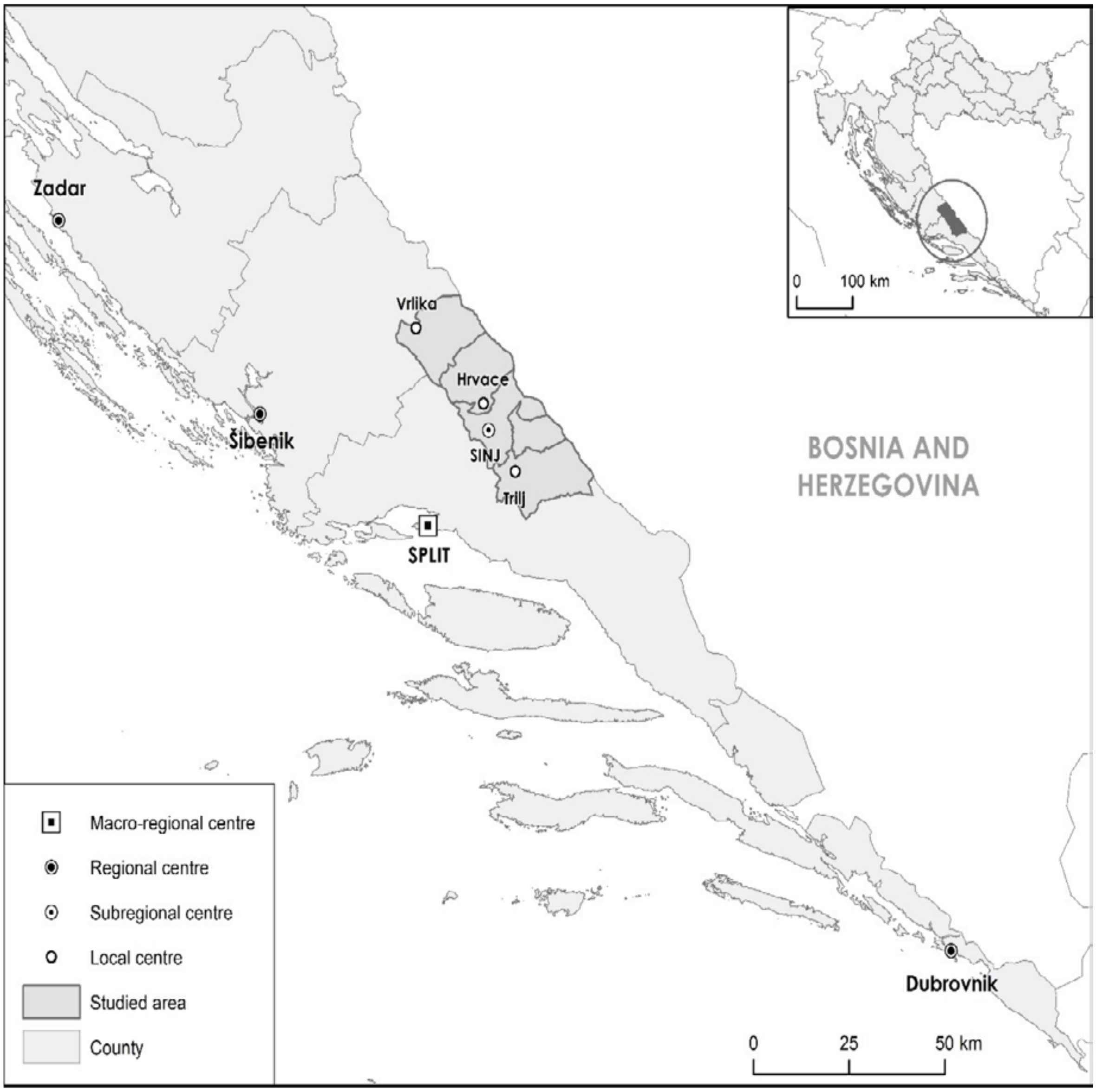


Figure 1 The Geographical Position of the Town of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina Region
Source Croatian Geodetic Administry (2016)

Tourism flow in the administrative area of the Town of Sinj over the last ten years was analysed by descriptive statistics methods using official data from the Croatian Tourist Board and sourced from the eVisitor system for the most recent six consecutive years (2016–2021), while data for the period 2012–2015 derives from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics. We used official data on the number of visitors to the Sinjska Alka Museum from its opening in 2015 to the end of 2021 to analyse the number of museum visits yearly and monthly.

The prevalence of the Sinjka Alka in the tourist brochures and tourist maps published by the Sinj Tourist Board and the Public Institution RERA S.D.

for Coordination and Development of Split-Dalmatia County was determined using the method of content analysis, in this case, a study of images (photographs). This method is based on the presumption that there is a link between the presence of mainly presented content in the analysed sources and the importance of the contributed content (Mejovšek, 2008; Zupanc, 2010). The analysis of images relies on decoding the meaning of the photographs and converting them into quantitative data to provide statistical analysis and interpretation. The decoding process included determining the number and importance of images related to the Sinjska Alka in the tourist brochures and the tourist map. We identified the importance of images related to the Sinjska Alka through the following indicators: the size of the image, its position in the brochure according to the page number, and the centrality of the image in the page design.

The key local stakeholders in the tourism valorisation of the Sinjska Alka and its transformation into a tourist product are the Sinj Tourist Board, the Sinjska Alka Museum, and the Alka Knights Society. In March 2022, their headpersons participated in a semi-structured interview.

The Sinjska Alka: A Good Practice Example

The town of Sinj (administrative region: 23,574 inhabitants; settlement of Sinj: 10,828 inhabitants in 2021; Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022) is in the Dalmatian hinterland in the most densely inhabited region of poorly inhabited Dalmatinska Zagora in the Cetinska Krajina region. The area covers the fertile Sinjsko Polje and some smaller karst poljes between the massifs of Dinara Mountain in the east (bordering Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Svilaja Mountain in the west, which extends northwest-southeast in the valley of the Cetina River. Sinj is 40 kilometres from Split, Croatia's second-largest city and Dalmatia's largest urban area. Some are 20 kilometres from the exit of Dugopolje on the Zagreb-Split-Dubrovnik motorway; some are 50 kilometres from Split Airport. Such transport accessibility drives general development, particularly tourism (Figure 1).

In the Middle Ages, Sinj affirmed itself as the leading settlement in the Cetinska Krajina region due to its favourable and advantageous transportation links, geographical position on the border of Dalmatia and Bosnia, and intersecting longitudinal and transversal transport links (Magaš, 2013). Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region were under Ottoman rule for 150 years during the 16th and 17th centuries. Though the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 (present-day Srijemski Karlovci) led to the merger of Sinjsko Polje with the Venetian Republic and the eastern part with the Ottoman Empire, the Ottomans attempted on several occasions to conquer the entire Cetinska Krajina region, leading to their defeat and banishment from the area in 1715, as affirmed by the Treaty of Passarowitz, a peace treaty signed at Požarevac in 1718. The organisation of Sinjska Alka first appeared in honour of the win over the Ottomans as a knight's tournament called the Sinjska Alka. The later periods saw Venetian, Austrian, Napolean, again Austrian, Yugoslavian rule, and finally, the independent Croatian Republic.

The preserved nature of the tranquil fertile valley in the Cetina River valley, surrounded by steep karst mountains, including the turbulent history of this region, has become the basis for developing various natural and manufactured tourist attractions in the tourism supply of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. Some of the natural attractions requiring mentioning are the geomorphological attractions such as the massifs and the natural surroundings of Dinara, the highest mountain in Croatia, and Kamešnica, which in 2021 became an integral part of the Dinara Nature Park. Among other critical natural attractions, the massif of the Svilaja Mountain and hydrographic features such as the Cetina River source and the upper part of this karst river, including the Peruća artificial lake, should be mentioned. It also includes attractions that stem from the appeal of the cultural landscape, such as the original stone houses in the rural settlements; in terms of the manufactured ones, the most significant importance in local tourism supply are the cultural and historic features, such as the Sinj Fortress, Kamičak Fortress in Sinj, Alkars' Courtyard in Sinj, Sinj Franciscan Grammar School, Prozor Fortress in Vrlika, Stone Bridge on Han, and the bridge on Panj. There are also sacral attractions such as the Shrine of the Miraculous Madonna of Sinj, the pre-Romanesque church of the Holy Saviour at the Cetina source, including traditional cultural life like Ojkanje Singing, Silent Circle Dance (nijemo kolo) of the Dalmatian hinterland, the carnival procession called Didi s Kamešnice, pottery, and local cuisine, followed by cultural institutions such as the Sinjska Alka Museum, Museum of the Cetinska Krajina region, the Archaeological Collection of the Franciscan Monastery, Sikirica Gallery, and also events like the Sinjska Alka and pilgrimage on the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady in Sinj.

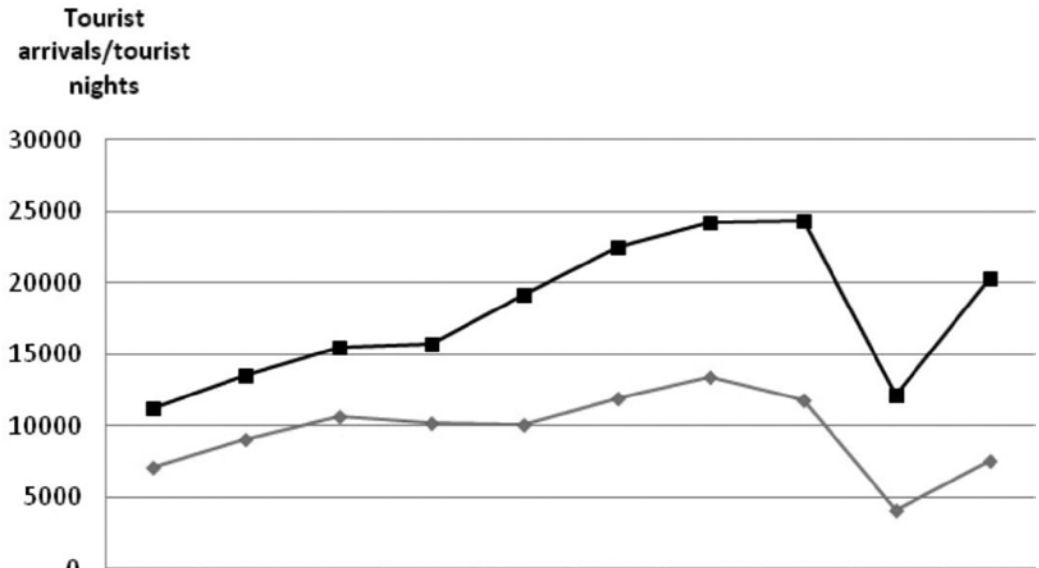
Though tourism in Dalmatinska Zagora is significantly less developed than on the Croatian coast and islands, in the Dalmatian hinterland, there has been an increasing orientation towards tourism as the crucial economic sector and its increasing importance, not only in the day trip excursion. However, one can expect the destination (longer-stay) segment of tourists. The most common forms of tourism in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region are events, religious and cultural tourism (especially heritage tourism), rural tourism, cyclotourism, mountaineering, ecotourism, and equestrian tourism. Affirming the Sinjska Alka on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 and the opening of the Sinjska Alka Museum in 2015, this event, including all complementary tourist attractions stemming from the Sinjska Alka, has become even more critical when visiting Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. Besides being the most prominent feature in the region's identity, the Sinjska Alka and alka traditions hold the Sinj identity as a tourist destination.

The Sinjska Alka is a unique also one of the last preserved traditional horse-riding knight tournaments in Europe, in which the horse-riding knight (alkar) rides at full gallop (at least 45 km/h) carrying a 3-metre-long spear and attempts to hit the alka, which is a small iron ring hung from a rope across the racetrack. The alka comprises two circles with a common centre hold. A hit in the middle is three points; in the upper section, it is two points; and in the two side sections, one point is an award. The winner is the horserider who gets the most points in three races. The Alka honours the win over the Ottomans in 1715. It probably began in 1718, when, after the signing of the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 (present-day Srijemski Karlovci), Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region were finally merged into the Venetian Republic (Belamarić, 2015). Since then, the Alka has happened every year on the first Sunday in August. Besides the main tournament, the Alka, on Friday and Saturday before that, the Bara and the Čoja are organised, and two preliminary races introduce the main event. The Alka intertwines historical local, Venetian, and Ottoman cultural elements in terms of the costumes, weapons, and precise military rules of the tournament, including the alkars' parade and other participants of the alkars' procession, in which each participant has their name, role code of behaviour, and clothing (Belamarić, 2015; 2019). The Alka is headed by the Tournament Master and organised by the Alka Knights Society. The Alka Knights Society (2022) is an association of citizens that holds the Sinjska Alka, carefully preserving all the tangible and intangible aspects that make the knights' tournament an intangible heritage. The headquarters of the Alka Knights Society and the actual Sinjska Alka Museum is in the Alkars' Courtyard in Sinj in one of the rarely preserved Venetian kvartirs (rectangular-shaped barracks to accommodate cavalry) in Dalmatia, built in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The locals from Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region, including all Croatians, are strongly associated with the Sinjska Alka, the symbol of the battle for freedom and peace, uniquely celebrating honour, integrity, heroism, and courage while emphasising the tradition of the time (Belamarić, 2015). The Alka expresses the traditional identity of the Cetinska Krajina region, historically formed along the border of Mediterranean and oriental influences, Christianity and Islam, presented in rich folk costume, the solemn parade of altars, and other participants in the altar procession, including the traditional dialect and music. The local identity exists since the alkars are only reputable and honourable men from Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region.

Tourism Flow and Accommodation Capacities in the Town of Sinj

Though tourism flow in the administrative area of the Town of Sinj, based on registered tourist arrivals and



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Tourist arrivals	7110	9035	10691	10266	10045	11959	13413	11872	4170	7538
Tourist nights	11258	13576	15460	15764	19206	22465	24187	24387	12179	20279

Figure 2 The Number of Tourist Arrivals and Tourist Nights in the Administrative Area of the Town of Sinj for the Period 2012–2021

Sources Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2013; 2014; 2015; 2016); Croatian Tourist Board (2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021)

nights, is small compared to closer coastal tourist destinations, there has been a noticeable trend of continual growth in the last decade (Figure 2).

The increasing trend is emphasising tourist nights more than tourist arrivals. From 2012 to 2019, there were more significant risk nights each year than the previous year. The exceptions were in 2020 and 2021, with the sudden fall in tourism flow due to the COVID-19 pandemic, not only in Sinj but also in Croatia and elsewhere in Europe. Nonetheless, a significant increase in tourism flow in 2021 compared to 2020 indicates that the tourism sector is recovering in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic after conducting the vaccination campaign and introducing COVID passes, thereby more clearly regulating tourist arrivals in Croatia than in 2020. The number of tourist arrivals shows a somewhat slowing growth, along with specific oscillations between the years, regarding the number of tourist nights in 2012–2019. Noticeably, the number of tourist nights significantly decreased in 2016 compared to 2015, coinciding with the opening of the Sinjska Alka Museum and the expansion of tourism supply stemming from cultural and rural tourism attractions with the Alka.

Based on the presented data, it is evident that the duration of the average tourist stay is becoming longer. In 2012, the average duration of a tourist stay in the Town of Sinj was 1.58 tourist nights. In 2016, it was 1.19, and in 2021, the average stay was 4.86 nights, indicating a more significant and diverse tourism supply in Sinj and the entire Cetinska Krajina region and motivating tourists to decide on more extended stays. The longer average stays in 2020 and 2021 are due to the increasing demand for individual tourist stays in less-visited destinations, enhancing the enjoyment of clean natural surroundings and preserving traditional cultural heritage without the need to make too many risky social contacts. This fact leads to new trends in tourism, which will reflect changes in terms of a quicker dispersive expansion of tourism demand

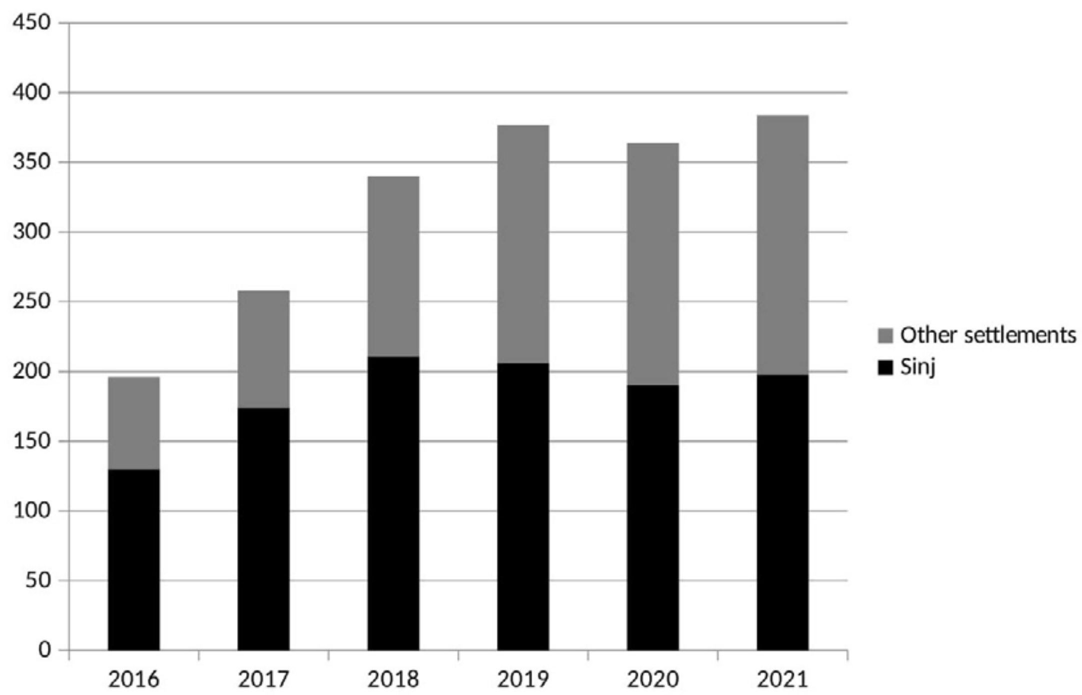


Figure 3 The Number of Beds in Sinj and Other Settlements Belonging to the Administrative Area of the Town of Sinj for the Period 2016–2021

Source Croatian Tourist Board (2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021)

from a very touristified Croatian coastline toward less saturated destinations in closer hinterland regions. As a developing destination, in these new circumstances, Dalmatinska Zagora has many opportunities to develop increasingly popular alternative forms of tourism, such as cultural tourism, events tourism, intangible heritage tourism, gastro tourism, ecotourism, cyclo tourism, rural tourism, for which one can expect a greater demand in the post-COVID period.

What supports the evidence of the current dispersion of tourism in the Town of Sinj as a tourist destination is a trend indicating a smaller percentage of tourist arrivals and nights in Sinj compared to surrounding settlements which belong administratively to the Town of Sinj. Hence, the share of tourist arrivals in Sinj in 2016 was 96.89% of all administrative areas of the Town of Sinj. This percentage fell to 91.81% and 84.05% for 2019 and 2021, respectively. In 2016, 86.72% of all tourist nights in the administrative area of the Town of Sinj were in the settlement of Sinj. This percentage fell to 74.13% and 64.43% for 2019 and 2021, respectively. It becomes evident that the rate of tourist nights in the surrounding areas of Sinj increased more quickly than the percentage of arrivals; this leads to the conclusion that tourists stay in the surrounding areas longer than in the town. The explanation is that the tourism supply for accommodation in holiday houses and private accommodations better suited for more extended stays in the surrounding areas is growing quicker than in Sinj.

The overall number of beds in tourist accommodation across the entire administrative region of the Town of Sinj almost doubled in six years (2016–2021), from 196 beds in 2016 to 384 beds in 2021 (Figure 3).

Though Sinj recorded the most significant number of beds in all analysed years, the growth was due to an increase in the number of beds in other settlements in the administrative area of the Town of Sinj. In contrast, the number of beds in Sinj recorded a minor increase. The percentage of overall beds from other settlements

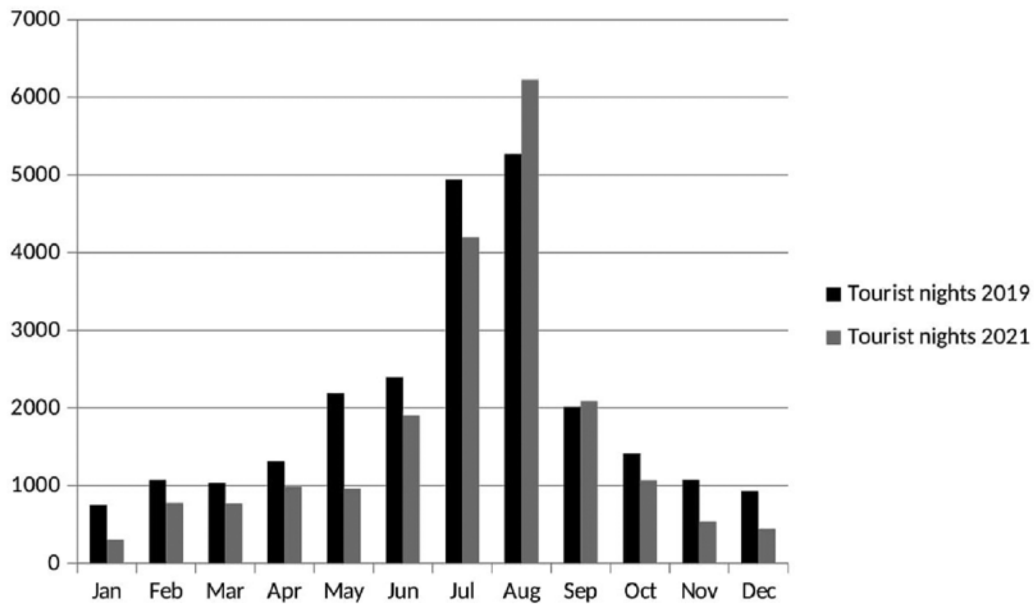


Figure 4 The Number of Tourist Nights in the Administrative Area of the Town of Sinj in 2019 and 2021 by Months
Source Croatian Tourist Board (2019; 2021)

increased from 33.67% in 2016 to 48.44% in 2021; this confirms the dispersion of tourism in the destination and the beginning of its maturing development phase. The structure of accommodation capacities is dominated by complementary accommodation capacities in private accommodation (apartments and rented rooms, holiday houses), offering 295 beds, mostly the four-star category, which accounts for 162 beds. In comparison, a single three-star hotel in Sinj has 89 beds available. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of beds in private capacities of a higher category (four and five stars), which indicates an increasing quality of the destination tourist product.

Most tourist arrivals in Sinj occur during summer, especially in July and August (Figure 4).

The peak season, in July and August, recorded 41.88% of all tourist nights in 2019 and 51.43% in 2021, indicating significant seasonality in tourism. This distribution of tourist nights by month is not surprising given that most foreign tourists visit Sinj in passing by while they stay on the Croatian coast, during annual holidays and the bathing season. Moreover, on the days when the Sinjska Alka happens every year, all accommodation capacities in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region are entirely booked. Domestic tourists exhibit a different concentration of tourist nights during summer. What is noticeable is that the share of tourist nights in the 2021 pandemic year during the two busiest summer months increased compared to the pre-pandemic year of 2019, which is due to the extended lockdown in Croatia and emissive European markets during the winter and spring of 2021, including restrictions on visiting Croatia which negatively affected tourism. The vaccination program and introduction of the European COVID-19 certificates led to more precise regulations of rules for visiting Croatia and behaviour during the pandemic. Coinciding with increased tourism demand after the winter and spring lockdowns, this increased the number of tourist nights, which in August 2021 even exceeded the previous record in August 2019.

The number of tourist nights by foreign tourists in the Town of Sinj exceeded the number of tourist nights achieved by Croatian tourists, hence the ratio of 60:40 in favour of tourist nights by foreign tourists

Table 1 Tourist Nights in the Administrative Area of the Town of Sinj for 2019 and 2021 According to Emissive Markets

2019		2021	
STATE	% OF TOTAL TOURISTNIGHTS	STATE	% OF TOTAL TOURIST NIGHTS
Croatia	38.62	Croatia	39.25
Germany	17.89	Germany	20.54
South Korea	6.95	Poland	7.85
France	3.37	France	4.83
Netherlands	3.15	Netherlands	2.74
Romania	2.95	Austria	2.04
Poland	2.90	Slovenia	1.69
UK	2.40	Romania	1.52
China	2.09	Belgium	1.49
Greece	1.99	Italy	1.40
Other	17.69	Other	16.65
TOTAL	100	TOTAL	100

Source Croatian Tourist Board (2019; 2021)

and before the COVID-19 pandemic (data for 2019) and during the pandemic (data for 2021) (Table 1).

Croatian tourism's most significant number of tourist nights comes from the most crucial emissive market, i.e., Germany. A considerable share of tourist nights for 2021 have tourists from Poland and France. A comparison of the profile of tourist nights based on emissive markets indicates that in the 2019 pre-pandemic year, the more prevalent non-European and more remote markets (South Korea, China, and the U.K.) were among the leading ten markets, more so than in the 2021 pandemic year. The large share of tourist nights by tourists from South Korea and China before the COVID-19 pandemic is due to slightly lower accommodation prices in Sinj compared to nearby coasts. Such accommodation for tourists from these far away countries is adequate when travelling on round-trip organised tours, which is the most common way of seeing Croatia. On the other hand, in the 2021 pandemic year, there was a larger share of tourist nights by tourists from nearby countries like Austria, Slovenia and Italy, suggesting a somewhat restricted range of tourist mobility during the pandemic.

Tourism Presentation and Valorisation of the Sinjska Alka

The method of content analysis, specifically images (photographs) in tourist brochures published by the Sinj Tourist Board and the Public Institution RERA S.D. for Coordination and Development of Split-Dalmatia County, was used for interpreting the meaning of the Sinjska Alka as a tourist attraction in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. The analysis covered six tourist brochures and one map promoting tourist attractions in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. They include The Town of Sinj: Tourist Guide (Sinj Tourist Board, 2021c); Miraculous Lady of Sinj (Sinj Tourist Board, 2021a); Three Museums, One Gallery, and the Town of Sinj (Sinj Tourist Board, 2021e); The Our Lady of Sinj Route: Tourist Guide (Sinj Tourist Board, 2021b); The Town of Sinj: Tourist Map (Sinj Tourist Board, 2021d); The Cetinska Krajina Region: Tourist Guide (Public Institution RERA SD for Coordination and Development of Split Dalmatia County, 2021a); and The Cultural Heritage of the Cetinska Krajina Region: An Overview (Public Institution RERA SD for Coordination and Development of Split Dalmatia County, 2021b).

The brochure titled The Town of Sinj: Tourist Guide offers tourists the most comprehensive presentation of town attractions; the alkar motif during the Alka is the only motif on the cover, and describes the Sinjska Alka in the brochure as the first tourist attraction, along with photographs of the alka and alkars' heritage on the inside rear cover, which undoubtedly confirms that the Alka is the greatest tourist attraction and the primary motive for the tourism branding of Sinj as a tourist destination. The same brochure describes and presents the Sinjska Alka Museum as a tourist attraction. Though the pamphlet Miraculous Lady of Sinj is thematically related to the Marian shrine that attracts many visitors, pilgrims, and tourists, the Sinjska Alka is also textually and pictorially presented on two pages. The brochure Three Museums, One Gallery, and the Town of Sinj describes the Sinjska Alka Museum and attached photographs as the third most important, probably because it is open after the first two museums: Archaeological Collection of the Franciscan Monastery in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina Museum. The tourist guidebook Our Lady of Sinj Route: Tourist Guide is thematically related to the pilgrimage which takes place each year in the period leading to the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. In the evening, from the 8th to the 15th of August, many pilgrims make the journey. The pages describing the Sinj shrine also mention the Sinjska Alka in the first paragraph.

In contrast, the Monument Three Generations (three men from different generations holding the alka together) and the Monument to the alkars are in the photographs. On The Town of Sinj: Tourist Map, a photo of the altar procession from the Sinjska Alka Museum is found on the back covers, and the altar tournament is on the inside page with short descriptions of tourist attractions and the described Alka taking the first position on the page. In The Cetinska Krajina Region: Tourist Guide, Sinj takes first place among other tourist attractions and localities. The Alka presents a synonym for the town of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region as its most important attraction. A photograph of the Monument to the alkars accompanies the text. The Sinjska Alka Museum is one of the Sinj museums worth visiting. It presents texts and photos from the brochure Cultural Heritage of the Cetinska Krajina Region. An Overview explains the Alka textually and pictorially using the Monument to the alkars and the Sinjska Alka Museum as the first two cultural heritage attractions in the Cetinska Krajina Region and the Monument Three Generations, presented in a photograph in the second part of the brochure. In addition, the Monument to the alkars is one of six photographs on the back covers.

An analysis of the images (photographs) in the tourist brochures of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region suggests that the Sinjska Alka and related tourist attractions (the Sinjska Alka Museum, alkars' heritage, monuments raised in honour of the alkars and the alka) is the most important among the tourist attractions of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region and is justified in assuming the tourist identity and brand in promoting this tourist destination on the tourist market.

The Sinjska Alka is one of the most famous traditional Croatian events each year at the beginning of August in Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region, attracting many tourists and one-day visitors. Though there is much interest in attending the Alka, due to seating capacity limits, the fact that the Alka Knights Society endeavours not overly to touristify this traditional event and thereby lose its authenticity, the Alka is nonetheless attended by more than 6,000 visitors each year, and all available seating is always full. According to internal data from the Alka Knights Society since 2018 on attendance at the Alka, the capacity of the temporary grandstand assembled each year for the Alka race is 5,170 seating places, and another approx. One thousand visitors follow the Alka event at the start and end locations of the racetrack (standing places only). Hence, in 2018 and 2019, the Alka was watched by 6,170 spectators. Between 2000 and 2018, the number of sites on the grandstand was slightly less and amounted to 4,160 seats (Alka-Knights-Society, 2022). The Alka was held during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 and 2020, and permitted capacities were significantly smaller due to epidemiological measures; in 2020, there were 1,740 spectators 2020 and 2,650 in 2021.

Given that the considerable public interest in watching the Sinjska Alka live cannot be satisfied, the tourism valorisation of the Alka, Sinj and Cetinska

Table 2 Number and Structure of Sold Tickets to the Sinjska Alka Museum for 2015–2021

Year	Ticket category					TOTAL
	Adults	Students, pensioners, children	Family (parents + children)	Preschoolers	Group (5 persons and more)	
2015	2,835	6,012	369	-	-	9,216
2016	4,280	13,044	730	1,649	-	19,703
2017	3,432	11,383	504	826	-	16,145
2018	3,092	10,443	446	941	-	14,922
2019	2,572	10,253	418	600	-	13,843
2020	541	755	219	38	-	1,553
2021	1,031	2,305	278	51	284	3,949
TOTAL	17,783	54,195	2,964	4,105	284	79,331

Source: Sinjska Alka Museum (2022)

Krajina region required the opening of the Sinjska Alka Museum in the Alkars' Courtyard. The first idea of opening a unique museum where Alkar uniforms, weapons, the Alka history, and all other related valuables would be stored and exhibited to the public appeared in the first half of the 20th century. However, the museum opened on 8 August 2015, on the 300th anniversary of the victory over the Ottomans; this was how the Sinjska Alka, an intangible cultural asset, materialised. The knights' tournament, held one day a year, became a tourist attraction open to visitors throughout the year and gained its full affirmation in local tourism. The Museum set is modern and interactively interpreted, attracting visitors of various ages, interests, and knowledge. Besides the exhibition, which includes alkar uniforms, equipment, and weapons, alkar statues including statutes and rules in digital form, including an additional exhibition area for temporary exhibitions, the museum also houses modernly furbished rooms for holding conferences, seminars and various workshops, which additionally enriches the local tourism of Sinj and providing opportunities for development and congress tourism. The museum has received multiple awards and recognition. Some of the more important are the Storytelling Award by the Forum of Slavic Cultures in 2016 (ŽIVA Award 2016), winner of the golden plaque of the international cultural tourism award Plautilla in 2017, nomination for the European Museum of the Year award in 2017 (EMYA 2017) and European Cultural Heritage Award / Europe Nostra Prize 2018 in Education, Training and Raising awareness (Sinjska Alka Museum, n.d.).

The most significant number of tickets sold to the Sinjska Alka Museum was in 2016, the first year in which the museum operated throughout the year. After that, the number of tickets in all categories fell until 2020. The most significant decrease in the number of visits was in 2020 compared to 2019 (a decrease of 88.78%). The reason was the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in fewer tourist arrivals and reduced mobility of people. Museum operations were rare during the lockdown, as with most other activities in closed spaces. Also, visitors largely avoided such venues due to a fear of becoming infected. The second pandemic year (2021) showed slightly better attendance at the museum; the attributes for this are the stipulation of more explicit epidemiological regulations for visits to institutions in closed spaces, as well as the arrival of vaccines, which gave visitors a greater sense of safety (Table 2).

Based on the profile of sold tickets and categories, it becomes clear that the type of tickets for pupils, pensioners and children is the most sold and attributed to 68.32% of all sold tickets in the analysed period, more popular than the category of tickets for adults, followed by preschool children, and then family and group tickets. The predominance of tickets for pupils,

Table 3 Number and Structure of Sold Tickets to the Sinjska Alka Museum in 2019 by Months

Year	Ticket category					TOTAL
	Adults	Students, pensioners, children	Family (parents + children)	Preschoolers	Group (5 persons and more)	
2015	2,835	6,012	369	-	-	9,216
2016	4,280	13,044	730	1,649	-	19,703
2017	3,432	11,383	504	826	-	16,145
2018	3,092	10,443	446	941	-	14,922
2019	2,572	10,253	418	600	-	13,843
2020	541	755	219	38	-	1,553
2021	1,031	2,305	278	51	284	3,949
TOTAL	17,783	54,195	2,964	4,105	284	79,331

Source Sinjska Alka Museum (2022)

pensioners and children is due to the more significant number of educational school and student excursions and those visiting the museum as extracurricular activities; this is a confirmation by internal data from the Sinjska Alka Museum on the number of tickets sold by the month in 2019 (the last year before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of epidemiological measures) (Table 3).

The most significant number of visits to the museum were recorded in July (total of 3,354 tickets sold) and May (2,831 tickets sold) due to the organisation of school and student excursions. A significantly smaller number of sold tickets were during the peak tourist season: 1,214 in August and 484 in July; this suggests that pupils and students mostly visit the museum in organised visits, whereas tourists are significantly small in numbers. Indeed, here lies the critical opportunity for tourism valorisation of the Sinjska Alka and the town of Sinj. Also, in the future, tourist visits to the Sinjska Alka Museum should be increased to make this intangible cultural asset more recognisable in terms of tourism and the town of Sinj better branded as the town of Alka.

Views of Key Local Stakeholders in the Tourism Valorisation of the Sinjska Alka and its Transformation into a Tourist Product

All three interview participants highlighted the importance of the Sinjska Alka in creating a tourist identity for Sinj as a tourist destination. They pointed out the importance of further intensifying the promotion of the Alka and the need to preserve its authenticity to avoid excessive commodification and touristification. Priority was also placed on its status as an intangible cultural asset on the UNESCO list in promoting it and the obligation to preserve its authenticity. The head of the Sinjska Alka Museum importantly mentioned that one must keep the authenticity of the Alka in line with the strict Statute of the Alka Knights Society, which takes care of its protection and continuity of tradition and that there is no fear of excessive touristification. Representatives of the Alka Knights Society pointed out that there are no plans to increase the capacity of the grandstand for Alka visitors.

In addition to preserving and exhibiting alkars' heritage, the head of the museum pointed out that one of the main reasons for its opening was also to transform the Alka into a permanent tourist attraction in Sinj. The head of the museum highlighted the importance of collaboration with tourist agencies, which is affirmed by the museum's partnership with about 40 tourist agencies, mainly from Croatia, to get the Sinjska Alka Museum to attract a more significant number of individual and organised tourists visits in the future, and also strengthen the tourist component. As suggested by the data on the number and categories of tickets sold, the museum is visited mainly by pupils and students regarding educational programs, not individual tourists. The head of the museum explains that the large share of pupils among visitors is due to the recommendation within the national school curriculum to visit the museum.

The director of the Sinj Tourist Board pointed out that Sinj is a leading destination in Dalmatinska Zagora. There has been an increase in accommodation capacities in the town and across the entire Cetinska Krajina region, especially in private accommodation. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a fall in the number of arrivals and the duration of tourist stays. The Sinj Tourist Board director also highlighted the thematic walking route (e.g., Our Lady of Sinj Trail), the bicycle route, and the equestrian route along the Dinara Mountain, along the Cetina River and the Kamešnica Mountain as essential segments of the tourism supply in Sinj and the surrounding region. She sees many opportunities to integrate natural attractions from the newly declared Dinara Nature Park into the tourism supply of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. The respondents highlighted the importance of the Sinj u sridu project, which was conducted by the Town of Sinj (Sinj.hr, 2019) as the beneficiary, together with project partners, among which are the Sinj Tourist Board and the Alka Knights Society, and which is partly financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Additional tourism valorisation of the Alka from the stated project requires constructing the new Sinjska Alka Interpretation Education Centre, which will "enable holding all-year interpretive-educational content relating to the Sinjska Alka that has already become an established and recognised Sinj brand." Though the new Sinjska Alka Interpretation Education Centre on the Sinj Hippodrome is still in the planning stages, all the stakeholders have pointed out its vital role in the future positioning of Alka as a year-long tourist attraction.

The respondents concluded that further tourism promotion of Alka requires its upgrade in several different ways and through various media, such as:

1. Tournaments,
2. The Sinjska Alka Museum
3. The Cetinska Krajina Museum
4. The new Sinjska Alka Interpretive-Educational Centre
5. More frequently organised alkars' parades in several cities in Croatia and abroad
6. Eventual alkars' tournaments outside of Sinj (even though in its 300-year-old tradition, the tournaments were only held outside of Sinj in Split in 1832, Belgrade in 1922, Zagreb in 1946 and Vukovar in 2017)
7. Events inspired by the Alka, such as Vučković's Children Alka and similar Alka's for children, the Women's Alka, the Flying Alka, the Moto Alka

Fortunately, Sinj has witnessed such synergy, reflected in the proper tourism valorisation of the Sinjska Alka as an intangible cultural heritage. An essential aspect of promoting the Sinjska Alka abroad is the project to network traditional equestrian games in Europe, such as the Trka na Prstenac (Barban, Croatia), Sartiglia (Oristano, Italy), Giostra di Zante (Zakynthos, Greece), Giostra Cavalleresca (Sulmona, Italy) and other games. All three respondents pointed out good cooperation and a close connection with these three critical institutions for tourism valorisation and promoting Sinjska Alka, who agree with the thesis that coherent action by important local stakeholders is vital to success in creating and branding new tourist products.

Discussion and Conclusion

Croatia is a positive example of a country that early acknowledged the importance of including its intangible cultural assets on the UNESCO lists, where its cultural assets become living guardians of the local identity and a statistical value transforms into commercial value, used to expand tourism supply in many destinations (Jelinčić, 2008; Smith, 2009; Opačić, 2019).

The Sinjska Alka, a knights' tournament, has become a beneficial case study. The town of Sinj and the surrounding (Cetinska Krajina) region are touristically branded thanks to this traditional equestrian knights' tournament, as listed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 and reflects as the successful example of tourism valorisation of intangible cultural heritage in Croatia. Namely, researching the presentation of Sinjska Alka in the tourist brochures and the tourist map has shown that Alka is the carrier of the town's and the entire region's identity and the tourism identity of Sinj as a tourist destination; this shows the parallelism between the frequency of the presence of the Alka in analysed tourist communication means (brochures) and its significance (Mejovšek, 2008; Zupanc, 2010). Strengthening the Alka brand in the town's and region's tourism identity has been facilitated by the modern and interactive Sinjska Alka Museum, which opened in 2015, helping Alka and the alkars' tradition become a daily materialised and institutionalised tourist attraction among the tourist attractions of Sinj and the Cetinska Krajina region. Nonetheless, what is evident is that profiling the museum as a tourist attraction will need more work in the future because analysing the number and profile of sold tickets has shown that pupils and students are the leading groups of visitors, not tourists. A statistical analysis of the data on tourism flow and accommodation capacities has determined that tourism development in Sinj and its surrounding region shows positive tendencies, though a less developed destination than those on the coast. This assessment indicates growing accommodation capacity and tourism flow, not only in the town of Sinj but also in its surrounding regions, which conforms to the tourism valorisation of various attractions, contributing to the dispersion of tourist attractions for this specific destination. One can expect positive trends in the further maturing of Sinj as a tourist destination when the newly declared Dinara Nature Park, in the immediate proximity of Sinj, fills its utilisation. The presumption is that the protected natural heritage will be an additional factor in creating coherent local tourism, which will be based on tourist products from the tourism heritage, natural and cultural, where one can find abundance in Sinj, the Cetinska Krajina region and the entire Dalmatinska Zagora.

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An Intangible Cultural Heritage Asset as a Driver for the Development of Tourism: Violin Making in Cremona, Italy

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In 2012, "Traditional Violin Craftsmanship in Cremona" was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In the city, the link between the urban context and artistic craftsmanship is seen most clearly in the Cultural District of Violin Making, characterised by the so-called "atelier effect". This high concentration of professionals in the field has led to the presence of several actors that play a role in the handing down and dissemination of this art: the "Antonio Stradivari" Cremona Consortium of Violin Makers, the Italian Violin Making Association, the Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari, the UNESCO office of the Cremona Municipality. The Safeguard Plan for traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona and its application in the UNESCO Creative Cities network are now in progress. This study intends both to understand how the violin-making supply chain moves between traditional and innovative aspects and to analyse how its dense cluster of institutions and professionals (about 150) could enhance musical tourism based on the desire of tourists to get in touch with the creativity of the artisanal manufacture of musical instruments. The aim is to highlight how to promote this niche of cultural tourism in this period of significant changes resulting from technology implementation. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand how this aspect integrates with the other specificities of the area (e.g., the monumental ones) to convey and strengthen its image. The research was carried out through qualitative and semi-structured interviews.

Keywords: Cremona, violin making, territorial identity, intangible heritage, cultural tourism, music tourism.

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Introduction

This research takes its cue from UNESCO's concept of intangible heritage, in line with the "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" (Blake & Lixinski, 2020; UNESCO, 2020; Olalere, 2019; Tudorache, 2016), approved in 2003 and then ratified in various countries; this had a long gestation before being disseminated in its current form (Aikawa, 2004). Between 2008 and 2021, this led to the inclusion in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of 629 elements in 139 countries (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-a). In the last twenty years, intense debate has arisen regarding the conception of intangible heritage and its implications (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004; Bouchenaki; 2007; Bindi, 2013; Paratore, 2013; Morbidelli, 2014;

Adell et al., 2015; Smith, 2015; Richards, 2018, pp. 6–7; Gualdani, 2019; Cioli, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020).

UNESCO's 2003 Convention considers five wide-ranging 'domains' of intangible cultural heritage (art. 2, com. 2):

1. Oral traditions and expressions, including language, are a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage.
2. Performing arts.
3. Social practices, rituals, and festive events.
4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.
5. Traditional craftsmanship.

The reflection that follows will concentrate on category no. 5. However, its scope will be limited to a particular kind of savoir-faire, that of making stringed instruments: traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona, Italy – the only example of this type of artisanal expertise in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). In 2012 it was included in the Representative List (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-c). Numerous actors were involved in the intensive preparation of the paperwork for its inscription, who then underwrote the application. Illuminating is the article by Fulvia Caruso (2014) – who participated in the laborious compilation of the forms – in which Cremona's candidacy is presented critically, and the procedure adopted by the stakeholders is described. In the end, the city's registration was decreed at the seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2012a), specifically with the pronouncement of DECISION 7.COM 11.18 (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2012b). The manufacture of stringed instruments in Cremona – with the production of the full range of those played using a bow: violins, violas, cellos and double basses – commenced around the sixteenth century and became consolidated from the 1700s onwards in the "botteghe" of master luthiers such as Amati, Stradivari, Guarneri, Bergonzi and Ruggeri, as well as by exponents of their families who made instruments for numerous monarchs, for noble families, and for the clergy (see the volumes published since 2015 by Edizioni Scrollavezza & Zanrè in the series "Treasures of Italian Violin Making", Parma and others; Antoldi, Capelli et al., 2017). In past centuries, as well as in Italy – in the Cremona area, of course, but also in Milan, in the Province of Brescia, in Mantua, in Venice, in Emilia Romagna, in South Tyrol, and around Naples – one could find luthiers all over Europe; this occurred in conjunction with the establishment and differentiation of musical products and the involvement of other population strata when performances spread from aristocratic salons to theatres (Tesini, 2016). Bowed-stringed instruments are still in prevalent use today. On a worldwide basis, one must count the numerous classical and modern symphony and chamber orchestras and the vast number of varied formations: octets, sextets, quintets, quartets, trios, duos (even solely strings), and soloists. These instruments are also used in Conservatories, universities, and schools for Musical Education, though with specific problems at various levels (for example, in Italy, see Comploi & Schrott, 2019). For extremely varied information and reflections on string instruments, see the publication A Tutto ARCO of ESTA-Italia (European String Teachers Association), Archi Magazine and Strad over different years. Thanks to the archives and catalogues of exhibitions held in Cremona, it is possible to discover all the individual instruments produced over time in the city; following their ownership changes is more difficult. We are not only talking about recent instruments; there are also splendidly fashioned antique instruments in circulation, some even referred to by their names (e.g., Hämmerle, Cremonese, Principe Doria or Bracco). Indeed, one of their characteristics is that they are incredibly long-lived and can be restored and adapted (Cacciatori, 2014; 2016; Rovetta et al., 2016). More or less ancient instruments are preserved in specialist museums like those in Milan, Bologna, and Venice or Academies (Zanrè, 2017), Conservatories and Philharmonic Societies (e.g. that of Verona) (Magnabosco, 2008). Usually, these collections result from donations. These instruments are often the focus of studies. An example in this regard is the research concerning the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Museo del Violino in Cremona: a comparison was made of 15 violins from the two mu-

Figure 1 Audizione alla Città: Violin Concert by Lena Yokoyama (Torrazzo, Cremona-Italy)
Source https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F13JrI3_AMs

seums dating from between 1564 and 1816 (including the famous 1715 "Cremonese" of Antonio Stradivari), of which 11 were crafted by luthiers in Cremona (Blümich et al., 2020).

Today, musical events are very widespread (Robiglio, 2009; Rizzo, 2011; Cerutti & Dioli, 2013; Cafiero et al., 2020; Rizzo, 2020) in towns and extra-urban settings, indoors or in the open air, in large or small municipalities, in plains, hills or mountains, and on the shores of lakes or by the seaside… in wide open areas or in enclosed spaces with locations in theatres, arenas, castles, country houses, gardens, parks, townhouses, auditoria, piazzas, by town walls, in churches, cloisters, abbeys, museums, by poolsides, in cellars, at agriturisms, on farms or anywhere that the spaces will allow. Music played on string instruments may be enjoyed in its own right or part of more complex events. Examples are in Italy, Sorsi d'autore in the Veneto, or EnoArmonie in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (with guided tours, tastings, performances, exhibitions, etc.). Emblematic was the initiative titled "Audizione alla Città", organised on 4 April 2020 by Pro Cremona with the collaboration of the Municipality of Cremona, the Museo Verticale, the Museo del Violino, the City Police force, the Chief of Police of Cremona, and Acid Studio s.r.l. On that occasion, the violinist Lena Yokoyama played for a quarter of an hour at the top of the Torrazzo, the highest bell tower in Europe, in the centre of Cremona. The streets and piazzas were filled with the sound of the - globally broadcast - string instrument, creating a particularly moving communal moment (also because of the deafening silence in the city, typical of the initial wave of the pandemic was taking place). That said, it is worth mentioning music's place in accompaniment to the other arts: music in film, music for the theatre, dance or a medium like television with its varied range of programmes.

So, faced with this proliferation of events, including festivals and – a series of individual – concerts, the question naturally arises: what possible relationship may exist between working musicians and the ICH of Cremona and whether this relationship is transmittable to the spectators/listeners or if they are aware of it themselves.

The manufacture of string instruments in Cremona has continued – with alternating fortunes – to the present day. After a notable crisis before the Second World War in which "companies in the sector were reduced to nil", from the 1960s and '70s, it picked up again and has now become decidedly established as a specialist district - a leader in its field anywhere in the world - and with a high concentration of producers (Antoldi, Macconi et al., 2017, pp. 330–335). One can attribute a place-making role to violin-making and its associated associations and institutions (Caruso, 2014). Qiu generally states: "From performing arts, festive events, rituals, traditional craftsmanship, oral traditions and knowledge of practices, ICH provides place-making tools to improve places' aesthetics and attract tourists. It contributes to an understanding and enrichment of local history, identity, and ecology" (Qiu et al., 2022, p. 15). The whole city identifies itself with the production of stringed instruments and music. The city is presented, in the context of the #inLombardiaComeMe campaign devised by the Region of Lombardy, as *Cremona è musica (Cremona is Music)*; this is not a claim linked solely to the city's tradition of violin making; Cremona is music everywhere, in the ateliers of the craftsmen, in the kitchens of the restaurants, in the streets, on "our" River Po.

Everything about Cremona is music; all you have to do is come and discover it in person. (Comune di Cremona, n.d) in this regard, watch the eight short videos of the promotional campaign on the website cited above).

The reasons discussed above bear witness to the fact that the proposal to UNESCO to insert violin-making savoir-faire in the list of intangible assets was able to satisfy the Convention's five criteria, as shown below:

Decides that, from the information provided in file 00719, the nomination satisfies the criteria for inscription on Representative List, as follows:

- R.1: Traditional craftsmanship for violin-making has been transmitted from generation to generation, both through apprenticeship and through formal education, playing an important role in the everyday life of people in Cremona and giving them a sense of identity.
- R.2: Given the high degree of skills and manual inventiveness of the internationally known traditional violin craftsmanship, its inscription on the Representative List could testify to human creativity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue and to the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage as a whole.
- R.3: Past and current efforts to safeguard the craftsmanship enjoy the participation and support of diverse stakeholders including the municipality and national government, local institutions as well as violin-makers' workshops and associations.
- R.4: Violin-makers and their associations, together with local institutions and representatives of the town of Cremona, participated in the nomination process and gave their free, prior and informed consent.
- R.5: The element is included in the national inventory of cultural heritage maintained by the Ministry of Cultural Properties and Activities; the Archive of Ethnography and Social History of Lombardy Region also included the element in its Register of Intangible Heritage of Lombardy Region" (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-b).

Methods and Object of the Research

The study was conducted by examining and carefully reading existing primary and secondary sources, both desktop and online. This methodology was then implemented using a qualitative investigation, with open interviews with privileged territorial actors: luthiers, teachers, representatives of city institutions, representatives of musical associations and organisations, etc. The common denominator of these interviews was the initial two-part question (identical for all stakeholders):

Does the Fact that it is Part of UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Help Actors to Highlight and Promote Cremona as a Place Where Stringed Instruments are Made?

The rationale behind this question draws inspiration partly from the article by Qiu, Zuo and Zhang, Intangible Cultural Heritage in Tourism: Research Review and Investigation of Future Agenda, in which the authors conduct a review of academic studies regarding the relationship between tourism and ICH, reflecting on how ICH influences the process of place-making: "the image and emotion perceived from ICH deserve more research, and place-making results within and without ICH elements should be clearer. For example, what is the role of ICH in place-making and place-making? How does ICH contribute to tourists' cognition and emotion in the place-making process? How do tangible and intangible heritages bring differences in place making?" (Gasparini, 2017; Qiu et al., 2022, p. 15).

Is the Tourist and Day Visitor Who Arrives in Cremona Aware that he or she is Visiting One of UNESCO's "Intangible" Sites?

This latter question, again asked to the district's actors and (in this phase, because of the current pandemic, it was not possible to reach tourists) not to the tourists themselves, is imprinted on the vision and perception that the tourist has of the intangible heritage represented by 'violin making in Cremona'. It draws its inspiration – though with a qualitative investigation – from studies regarding the impact of tourism on the inscription of heritage (tangible or intangible) of other resources inserted in the UNESCO list. These analyses investigate whether such inclusions in the list - in so far as they guarantee the (intrinsic) value of the heritage being visited – do or do not become a feature of attraction for the tourist (Huang et al., 2012; Ivanunik et al., 2021; Bak et al., 2019; Canale et al., 2019; De Simone et al., 2019; Mariani & Giuzzardi, 2020).

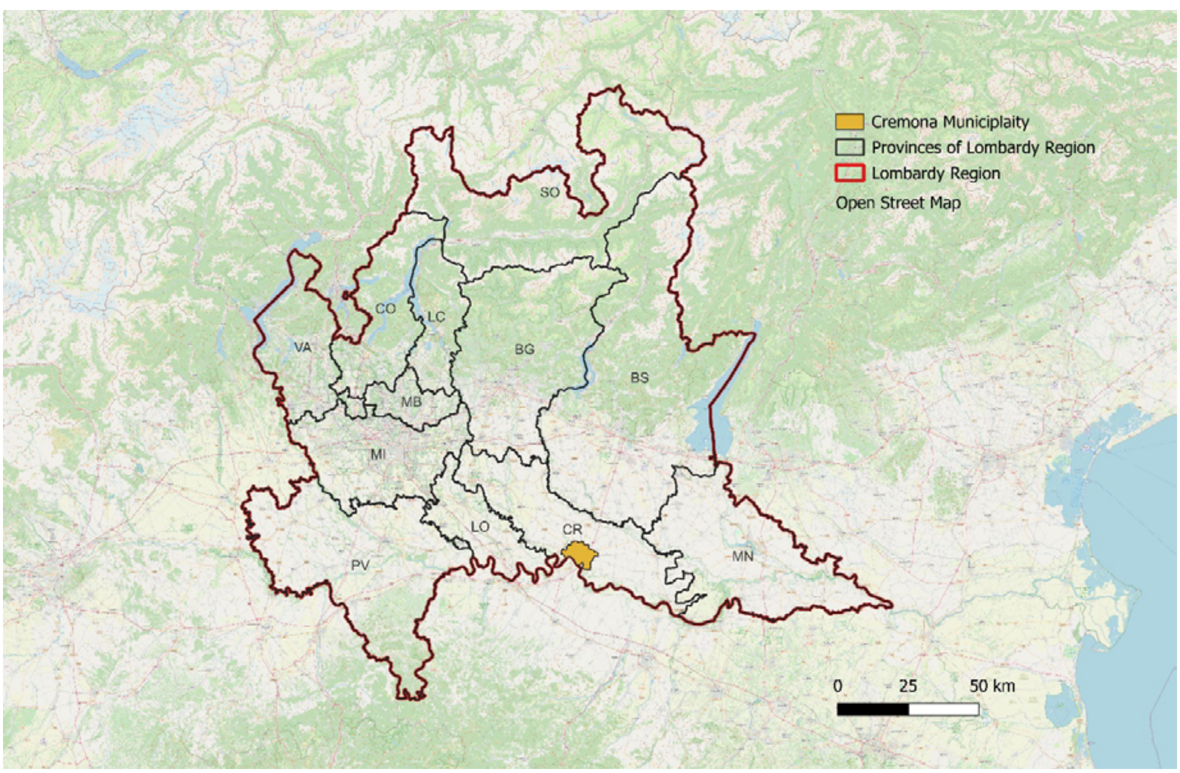

Figure 2 Location of the Province of Cremona

Source by the Author using *QGIS* 3.34.4 and OpenStreetMap carthography

The Context of the Research

Having decided on the methodology of the study, setting the two-party research question in a well-defined context was deemed appropriate; this revealed itself to be complex.

From a methodological point of view, it was necessary to:

a) define the area under examination – *Cremona, city of music* – along *with its tourist flow.*

b) Identify the fundamental aspects that have recently delineated (and are continuing to transform) tourist destinations linked to UNESCO sites and others.

c) Trace the identity of the contemporary tourist.

The Territorial Context: Tourist Flows in Cremona

The research began in the Province of Cremona before focusing on the urban context of the city of Cremona. Situated in the southern part of the Region of Lombardy, this province had, on 1 January 2021, a resident population of 352,242 and an area of 1,770,407 sq. km.

The province presents itself (again in 2021) with 316 structures offering accommodation (hotels and others) that can boast 4,178 beds, mostly in 3- or 4-star hotels and agritourims. In the five years 2015–2019, arrivals and overall stays increased, ending with 228,278 arrivals and 391,438 overnights. One can note a predominance of domestic tourism from the Lombardy Region and nearby Regions such as Emilia-Romagna, the Veneto and Piedmont, with an average stay of 1.7 days. The 2020–2021 has not been considered, given the drastic reduction in numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, whose only noteworthy outcome was increasing the average stay to 3 days. Changing territorial scale and entering the situation in the municipality of Cremona (the province's capital lies in the centre of the Po Valley), this contains in its territory (70,492 sq. km) 44% of the province's establishments offering accommodation. This percentage covers 35% of the beds (1,466) available in the province. Tourist flow in the municipality consisted of 81,012 arrivals and 156,133 overnights in 2019, characterised by the same snapshot of provenance indicated at the Provincial level (Province of Cremona-Statistics Department, 2021). The figures demonstrate that tourism is, for now, a limited phenomenon. Battilani (2019) also asserts that "the entire Province of Cremona has never been a tourist destination, despite the splendid cathedral and the attraction of the violin makers. The limited number of tourist presences proves this. The interest in tourism is very recent and has grown in parallel with the reappropriation of the ancient art of the luthiers"(pp. 120–121).

Covid and Post-globalisation

A multidisciplinary debate about the crisis of the paradigm (and of the dynamics) of globalisation is currently taking place (Flew, 2020; Islam, 2021; Roudometof, 2021; Shukla, 2021; Contractor, 2022). The research shown here refers, on the one hand, to a period in which SARS-Cov-2 (COVID-19) has been pandemic – perhaps now at the beginning of a post-pandemic phase? – and, on the other, in an era of post-globalisation. Academics and researchers are trying to understand what a new model of this phenomenon might be, as is nicely summarised by James and Steger: "'reglobalisation', that is, a profound rearrangement of globalisation's constituent formations that are moving conjecturally at different speeds and levels of intensity" (James & Steger, 2021, p. 807).

The Figure for the Tourist

In a similar scenario characterised by multiple changes in society and, simultaneously, by a certain degree of (generalised, worldwide) uncertainty about the future and hypothetical forecasts about what that future might be, how can one describe the figure of the tourist? And, more specifically, that of the cultural/musical one? To try to reply to a question of this significance, it is worth remembering that one of the significant challenges of this historical period (see b.) is digital transformation, which is still taking place. In this regard, one is reminded of the six pillars of the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the European Union (European Union, 2021) and the Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza #Nextgenerationitalia (Fadelli & Fava, 2021; Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a; D'Alessio, 2022; Meazza, 2022). The Italian Plan contains "a series of actions and interventions designed to overcome the economic and social impact of the pandemic and construct a new Italy … giving it the necessary instruments to face the environmental, technological and social challenges of our time and of the future" (Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021b). One of the six projected missions is that of "digitalisation, innovation, competitiveness and culture", which represents the second item of expenditure and includes "investments in tourism and culture" for a sum of over 8 billion Euro, (Missione M1C3 – Turismo e Cultura 4.0) (see Table 1.1 of the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a, p. 24). In Mission M1C3, the Italian government proposes courses of action aimed at "valorising historic and cultural sites" through interventions "accompanied by efforts to augment tourist/accommodation facilities and tourism services, to improve the standard of what is on offer and increase its overall attractiveness. These operations of producing added quality /renewal of what is available for tourists are in line with a philosophy of environmental sustainability and full exploitation of the potential of digital media, taking advantage of the new technologies to offer new services and improve access to tourist/cultural resources" (Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a, p. 89) (Mancini Palamoni, 2022, p. 4).

Within the context of this European and national picture, one finds the figure of a constantly evolving tourist. On the one hand, there is talk of the phenomenon of transformational tourism (Pung et al., 2020; Pung & Del Chiappa, 2020) as "a positive change in attitudes and values among those who participate in the tourist experience" (Christie & Mason in Pung et al., 2020, p. 2) and of the co-design of a cultural tourist experience (Cuomo et al., 2021). Conversely, the tourist figure emerges as a subject who is "contemporary, increasingly digitalised and omnivorous concerning the content and touchpoints to gain access to information and make his or her choices as a consumer" (Battaglia et al., 2021, p. 131). At the same time, the tourist is an actor increasingly seeking experiences providing territorial identity, authenticity, and proximity. This quest leads the tourist to interact – not only in a passive manner – with concepts that are proposed with ever greater insistence by those who produce tourism and cultural tourism in this age of Tourism 4.0 – and heading towards 5.0 (Carbone, 2020; Pencarelli, 2020; Stankov & Gretzel, 2020): smart tourism, e-tourism, Internet of Things (IoT), augmented reality, virtual reality, metaverse, phygital, travel designer, travel blogger, communities, Exponential Organization (EXO), Online Tour Operator/Online Travel Agencies (OTA), Destination Management Organization (DMO)…: a lexicon that bears witness to the concatenation of challenges and opportunities and – at the same time – potential problems and threats that the transformation of the tourist sector is bringing about.

The Violin Making District of Cremona: Creative and Cultural Craftsmanship

Though small in terms of the number of people it employs, this district is very complex: the value chain reveals elements of very different kinds that are closely integrated. Most of these elements are situated in the city's historic centre; they occupy urban buildings and create the aesthetic "landscape" of portions of the city. The luthiers – who, as a whole, constitute the actual nucleus of an 'industrial district' – have their artisanal workshops mainly close to one another, and they are, in turn, close to any satellite activities. They may sell their products directly or commercially (Macconi & Antoldi, 2020; Tuccia, n.d.). They often carry out their work "in the shop window", in full view of those passing outside. They operate practically in an experienced, manual fashion, with high quality and professionalism. Their biographies are fascinating: they have always attended the International School in Cremona or other educational establishments elsewhere and have then undergone specialist training in the city or abroad (e.g., in Lausanne in Switzerland, New York, UK…) in the workshops of eminent luthiers. One can read their stories on their business websites or – if they are members – on the website of the Consorzio "A. Stradivari" Liutai, where one can also admire some of the instruments they have produced. The life stories of the luthiers are very varied: some come from Conservatories and are real musicians (just as an example, see Gabbani Martin, n.d.) Some also have experience as teachers at the School of Violin Making and in the workshops. They participate in instrument

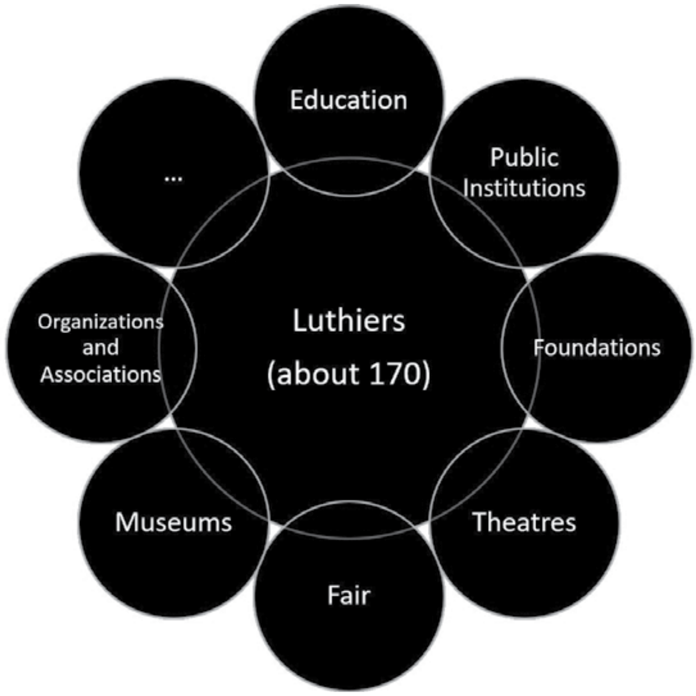

Figure 3 The Violin Making District of Cremona.

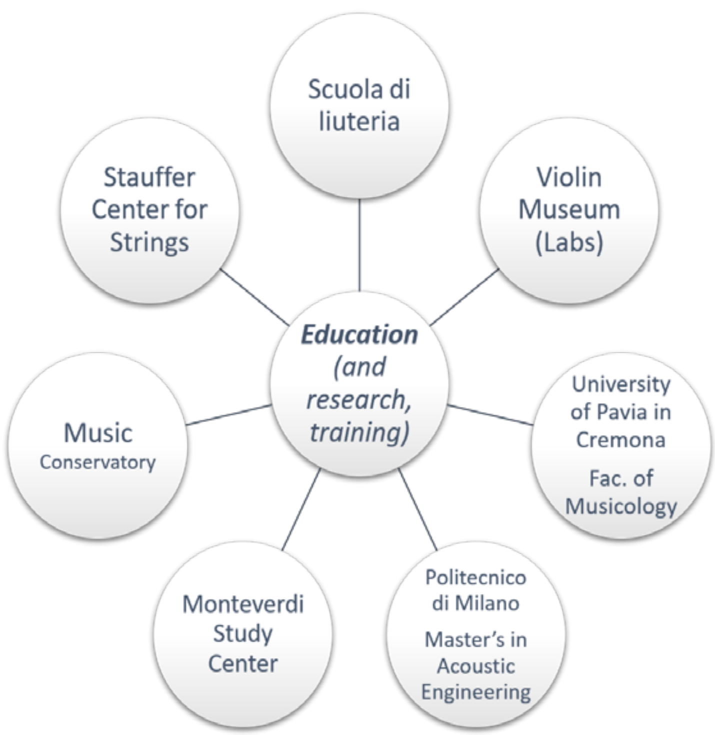

Figure 4 The Educational Actors in the Violin Making District of Cremona.

Table 1 Institutions and Other Bodies in the Violin-Making District of Cremona.

Group of actors	Actors
Education Training Research	• Scuola Internazionale di Liuteria and Liceo Musicale in the IIS (Istituto di Istruzione Superiore) A. Stradivari • Workshops (Museo del Violino) • Univ. of Pavia-Faculty of Musicology in Cremona • Univ. Politecnico Milano- Master's in Acoustic Engineering • Conservatorio Statale di Cremona/Istituto "Claudio Monteverdi" and Monteverdi Study Centre • Accademia W. Stauffer • Academia Cremonensis
Public Institutions	• Municipality of Cremona – UNESCO office; InfoPoint for Tourism • Region of Lombardy • Province of Cremona • Cremona Chamber of Commerce with Cr.Forma
Foundations	• Fondazione Stradivari • Fondazione Teatro Amilcare Ponchielli • Fondazione Cariplo • Fondazione Lucchi
Theatres	• Teatro Ponchielli • Teatro Monteverdi
Museums	• Museo del Violino • Museo Ala Ponzone
Diocese of Cremona	• Diocese of Cremona
Fair	• Ente Fiere Cremona spa
Organisations and associations	• Consorzio Liutai "A. Stradivari" • Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa (CNA) • Associazione Nazionale Liutai Artistici Italiani (ANLAI) • Associazione Culturale CrArT • Associazione Costanzo Porta
Others	• Private citizens with Town Houses • Service companies, tourist agencies (e.g., Target Turismo) • Hotels • Musician instrument shops • Other shops and services functional for the violin making district

festivals, exhibitions and national and international competitions, such as the ANLAI (Associazione Nazionale Liuteria Artistica Italiana) competition in which luthiers from Cremona compete against violin makers from the whole of Italy and around the world. The violin-making businesses are small, usually made up of one or two persons who sometimes have moved here due to their passion (Guercini & Caccarelli, 2020). The groups surrounding the nucleus of luthiers are made up of bodies in the tertiary and quaternary sectors and have been grouped here by category (Table 1). Together, they give rise to the type of district stated in the title of this section (Segre & Re, 2020). Once the training at The School of Violin Making and, subsequently, a superior level of learning at the university and an advanced course are completed, the subjects may remain in Cremona, but generally, they "disperse" elsewhere in Italy or the world.

As can be seen from Table 1 and in the descriptions on the websites of the respective institutions, training in violin making and music education can be carried out here at any level one wishes. Many initiatives originate in institutional establishments but involve the whole city in close collaboration. As regards the Istituto "C. Monteverdi"/Conservatory, there is the Monteverdi Festival, a top-quality event focusing on the music of the two Monteverdi brothers (Claudio, Cremona 1567 – Venezia, 1643 and Giulio, Cremona 1573 – Salò, 1630) and other outstanding coeval composers. The festival involves – apart from the Conservatory's Orchestra Monteverdi – well-established national and international orchestras, musicians, and students of the Conservatory itself, along with theatrical and artistic inserts. During the festival, workshops are held for instrumental and vocal groups. These events are also publicised on social media. Part of the Festival also takes place in the Giovanni Arvedi Auditorium of the Museo del Violino, where this year, Maestro Jordi Savall played instruments from the sixteenth century.

The Violin Museum works closely with all the entities in the district and, in some aspects, is functional for them (Lucarno, 2020). It also conducts international collaborations and relationships with the proprietors of the "Friends of Stradivari" instruments, which form part of the collection exhibited in a particular room in the Museum. The Museum offers a tour through ten rooms, where one can first learn (using multimedia techniques) about the process of constructing a violin and subsequently admire the exquisite instruments on show, played by top-class musicians on special occasions and at the short weekly concerts. In the fifth room – referred to as "The Treasure Chamber" – one can admire instruments by:

- Andrea Amati (circa 1505–1577) – the "Carlo IX" violin, circa1566
- Girolamo Amati (circa 548–1630) – the "Stauffer" viola, 1615
- Nicolò Amati (1596–1684) – the "Hämmerle" violin, circa1658
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the "Clisbee" violin, 1669
- Giuseppe Guarneri fiulius Andreæ (1666–1740) – the "Quarestani" violin, 1689
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the "Stauffer – ex Cristiani" cello, 1700
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the "Il Cremonese" violin, 1715
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the "Vesuvius" violin, 1727
- Giuseppe Guarneri "del Gesù" (1698–1744) – the "Stauffer" violin, 1734 (Museo del Violino, n.d.).

Mention the public institutions, the City Government's Culture Department takes initiatives regarding the art of violin making: first, it was one of the signatories of the proposal for the recognition of ICH status; in 2021, it constituted the UNESCO Office, and it is notably involved in all the main events. Last year, with the Teatro Ponchielli (which has an annual programme), the Museo del Violino, the Conservatory and the University's Department of Musicology, it launched the first edition of the Festa del Violino.

We close this brief description of the district with two bodies always present when businesses are being promoted and initiatives to be hosted: the Cremona Chamber of Commerce and the Cremona Fair (CremonaFiere s.p.a.). For the former and reflections regarding this paper's subject, please see Fulvia Caruso: La Camera di Commercio di Cremona e la liuteria classica Cremonese (2017). Regarding the latter, attention is due to the annual *Cremona musica International exhibitions and festivals*. Every type of top-quality musical instrument and event fills the spaces and the calendar of the fair during the festival.

Awareness of the Actors Regarding Cremona's Violin-making ICH

The first part of the question asked by the author regarded an understanding of the extent to which the actors involved in various ways in Cremona's Violin Making District are aware of the value of the ICH element that they create, produce, use, or communicate, and which they should highlight and promote to a highly varied public. Emblematic in this sense is the sign that most luthiers attach to the windows of their

Figure 5 Window of luthiers Gaspar Borchardt & Sibylle Fehr-Borchardt in Piazza Sant'Antonio Maria Zaccaria in Cremona, May 2022.

shops/ateliers: "UNESCO Traditional Violin Craftsmanship in Cremona".

The sign inspired the author to conduct exploratory interviews to comprehend whether the sign was only a "decorative" element affixed in the windows of their workshops or if it had, as it were, become "alive" over time. Dialogues were conducted with the main actors who work in Cremona and the environs in fields involved with the savoir-faire of violin making (see the section on methodology in this paper). From these open interviews, it emerged from all the interviewees that they recognised the need to implement actions themselves in favour of the awareness of the craftsmanship of violin making as a UNESCO intangible element. In the context under examination, the process of drafting a Plan to Safeguard the Savoir Faire of Violin Making, for which the subject of reference with the Ministry is the Municipality of Cremona, coordinated by its own UNESCO Office, is still in progress. In this regard, the author wishes to cite the importance of the public event on 10 May 2022, at which the work already accomplished was presented to the community by the local institutions (see Museo del Violino, 2021 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cucY72vidUQ).

Ten years after UNESCO recognition was granted, the actors involved in the general agreement, coordinated by the Municipality of Cremona, have done a great deal of preparatory work towards drafting the Plan: in particular, they have drawn up a questionnaire (as an instrument in which the craftsmen can have their say) which will be given to the luthiers and have agreed on a calendar of work sessions on the themes that are considered of cardinal importance for their activity, to begin the phase of so-called "capacity building". These sessions represent, in fact, the basis for the subsequent creation of measures that will be inserted in the planning for managing the violin-making heritage as a "heritage that is living and therefore – of necessity – ever-changing" and also "an expertise rooted in the local context, which has at the same time a global scope" (Ana Luiza Massot Thompson-Flores, director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, in Museo del Violino, 2021). From the voices of the luthiers, also confirmed by the questionnaire given to them voluntarily, it emerges that they sense the need to promote their professionalism/activity combined with that of UNESCO in an action that is synergic and shared with the various institutions of Cremona.

Awareness About the UNESCO ICH Element for Tourists and Day Visitors

The second question in this research regards the tourists and day visitors' awareness of the ICH element under investigation. Of interest – and before the study conducted by the author – is the survey carried out by Cremona's municipal Infopoint office in 2021 on a sample of 4,000 tourists, from which it emerges that "69% of the tourists interviewed declared that the principal motive for their visit to Cremona was "art, culture and related events", followed by "food and wine and related events" (28%)" (Province of Cremona-Office of Statistics, 2021, p. 40). Such a decision on the part of the tourist suggests that Cremona is a destination for cultural tourism tout court and, within this, for music-based tourism. The promotional choices made by the institutional subject, the Municipality of Cremona, bear witness to the result of this survey.

Taking her cue from this consideration, the author sought to comprehend the relationship between the tourist and the ICH of Cremona's violin, making savoir-faire. She, therefore, asked the question, "Is the tourist and day visitor who goes to Cremona aware that they are visiting one of UNESCO's immaterial elements?" in open interviews with some twenty stakeholders: officials of the UNESCO Office in the Municipality of Cremona and those responsible for the city's promotion/tourist information; university lecturers (musicologists and ethnomusicologists); violin makers (in particular the dozen or so out of 150 who are prepared to give guided tours of their workshops); directors of the Cremona Fair; tourist guides; specialist publishers in the musical/violin making field; and musicians/orchestra members. The question was asked to these territorial actors rather than tourists because of the characteristics of the historical period in which the study was conducted. A common denominator in all the interviews was the assertion that there is no awareness of the tourists regarding the 'UNESCO immaterial element of violin-making savoir-faire' when they visit the city of Cremona and its iconic locations (e.g., the Violin Museum, violin makers' workshops, Ponchielli Theatre, etc.). Three declarations appear to be symbolic and worthy of being quoted:

> "Tourists do not know about our UNESCO membership" (all the stakeholders interviewed);
>
> "The average tourist does not know the intangible heritage value of Cremona, and the luthiers' workshops are not perceived as tourist places" (tourist guide);
>
> "Cremona has always been perceived as the city of violin music; UNESCO came later, and it is not in the tourist's mind" (words of the luthier who carries out the most significant number of guided tours).

Conclusive Remarks

To understand the role and the attractive/competitive/complementary importance of a small city like Cremona, one must remember that the urban cultural tourism available in Italia is highly subdivided. Apart from the "classic", overly-frequented tourist destinations of Florence, Venice and Rome, even if one considers only Northern Italy (Turri, 2000) – apart from the metropolises of Milan and Turin – many small and medium-sized cities contain inestimable cultural heritages: the Italy of the "intermediary cities" of Giuseppe De Rita (2022). These are now all "open" for musical entertainment. From the numerous medium-sized towns, one passes to the minor centres (Touring Club Italiano, 1983) and then to the so-called Borghi, where one can enjoy a slower-paced, alternative form of tourism. Within 100–200 km from Cremona, we find Pavia, a Longobard city on the Via Francigena; Piacenza, with the imprint of the Farnese family; Mantua*, the city of the Gonzagas and the painter Mantegna; Bergamo with the walled Bergamo Alta and the birthplace of Donizetti; Brescia with the complex of Santa Giustina; Verona*, the city of Shakespeare, opera and music in general; and then to the south-east Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena*, Bologna* and Ferrara* (*unesco tangible World Heritage Sites).

For Cremona, being a unesco ich site is a plus factor, which should be communicated as much as possible (Gomez-Oliva et al., 2019); this calls, on the part of the recipient, for a specific sensibility and acculturation regarding the role of unesco, which seems more obvious as far as what is "tangible" is concerned. In contrast, the intangible still must make an impression. For every person today, referring to unesco should become a forma mentis, on whatever scale locations are being considered. In our case, one might pressure musicians (violinists, cellists, and bass players) to underline their trait union with the violin-making district of Cremona.

Returning once again to focus on the city of Cremona, the most appropriate instrument for adhering to its context in the form of an ongoing rapport with the luthiers of the present and of the past, composers of the past, musicians and singers is an "itinerary" or "route", a topic that is now mainstream. At this point, the question would become broader and more complex; i.e., it would be possible to include the route in Regional tourist policies - especially in connection with local governance (Regional Law no. 27 of 1st October 2015, *Regional policies regarding tourism and the attractiveness of the territory of Lombardy*) and communication aimed at tourists (Regione Lombardia, n.d.) - as well as those for Italy and Europe. Concentrating on what is already materially feasible, in this case attention should be drawn to internal urban itineraries on a local scale, organised by guides who have refined their knowledge of the places involved in connection with people who are alive or were in the past, their lives and their material and musical production (an example: Adami, 2020). There is also a predisposition to seek out these characteristics in a larger area (Scaratti, 2020). In the case under investigation, this necessarily includes frequenting the numerous musical events that are offered throughout the year.

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Smart City Branding: Kota Manado

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The SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) have seventeen development priorities for UN member countries. The eleventh goal is to build inclusive, safe, durable, and sustainable cities and settlements. Thus, Indonesia's smart city branding should align with the SDGs' sustainable city concept. Indonesia's 34 provinces are divided into 98 cities and 416 districts. The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Republic of Indonesia drives the country's intelligent city initiative. In 2017, Manado City became one of Indonesia's first 100 smart cities.

This article uses a qualitative approach with exploratory research by observation-visiting Manado, relating with the people, meeting and interviewing government officials and tourism experts, and then triangulating it with an internet news articles search. It can be inferred that the idea of smart city and city branding is considered a top-down policy from the central government. Policymakers and the Manadonese tourism community work in isolation, resulting in "diversity in harmony" remaining a slogan rather than being promoted as a solid brand.

The findings, diversity in harmony, truly serve as the DNA of Manado. However, intelligent city branding requires a collaborative effort from a visionary government, the tourism community, and the inhabitants.

Keywords: city branding, SDGs, smart city, Manado

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Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have seventeen areas that become references for countries that are members of the United Nations to carry out development. The eleventh goal of the SDGs is to build cities and settlements that are inclusive, safe, durable, and sustainable. This goal operationally has small targets to be achieved by 2030, including: (i) By 2030, ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for all and improve the quality of slum settlements; (ii) By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improve road safety, by increasing public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children -children, people with disabilities and the elderly; (iii) By 2030, promote inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable settlement planning and management in every country; (iv) Strengthen efforts to protect and preserve the world's cultural and natural heritage; (v) By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially reduce the direct economic losses associated with global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and the being in a vulnerable situation; (vi) By 2030, reduce the adverse environmental impacts per capita in cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management; (vii) By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, and green public spaces, especially for women and children, the elderly and persons with disabilities; (viii) Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning; (ix) By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusiveness, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and developing and implementing, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, and holistic disaster risk management at all levels; (x) Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and durable buildings using local materials (Sustainable Development Goals, n.d.). The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Republic of Indonesia is the motor for implementing smart cities in Indonesia. Thirty-four provinces in Indonesia are divided into 98 towns and 416 districts. Manado City is included in Indonesia's first 100 smart cities, starting in 2017. In North Sulawesi province, Tomohon City is included in the first 25 intelligent city batches, while Manado City is in the second smart city batch. This paper discusses Manado's smart city branding strategy since 2018 and the role of digital communication in branding the city of Manado to become an empowered and globally ready region. It aims to produce a branding campaign pattern for Manado City that can be used as a framework for evaluation and duplication in 500 other cities throughout Indonesia, specifically in the dimension of smart branding in smart cities, according to the smart city guidebook from Kominfo.

Literature Review

This research is structured with a framework of thinking starting from a brand management strategy. Traditionally, a brand is a set of mental associations that customers have which give value to a product or service (Keller, 1998). Kapferer (2012) defines brands as having financial value because brands create assets that stick in the hearts and minds of customers, distributors, and opinion leaders. The manifestations of these assets include brand awareness, belief in exclusivity, excellence, valuable benefits and emotional bonds. Objects that can be managed into a brand are not limited to products, services, people or individuals, and destinations to a country. While the brand referred to in this paper is a city, and this concept is then known as city branding. The title of this research is smart city branding: kota manado. It consists of two main concepts, namely smart city and city branding. The smart city concept is a city development that emphasises the importance of innovation to solve each city's problems by utilising ICT technology, sensors, technology, and data analytics as a supporting factor to facilitate problem-solving (enabling factor). A smart city is formulated in the guidebook for preparing an intelligent city master plan by the Director General of Informatics Applications (aptika) of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Republic of Indonesia). Smart City-based development provides a vast space for innovation to solve problems faced by local governments, communities, businesspeople, the world of education and various other stakeholders. So, the Smart City initiation that appears is a partial solution that closes the door for innovation and further development.

The concept of city branding itself is an extension of place branding. Place branding is marketing strategies to promote localities to improve their reputation and attract residents' attention, tourism, and investment (Paganoni, 2015). The management of a city's brand lies with the government and, of course, the city community. City brand management also requires collaboration between the public and private sectors. Meanwhile, Keith Dinnie, editor of City Branding: Theory & Case (2011), revealed three main concepts in managing city brands: brand architecture & brand attributes, network approach and sustainability. Meanwhile, brand communication also depends on a city's three target audiences, including

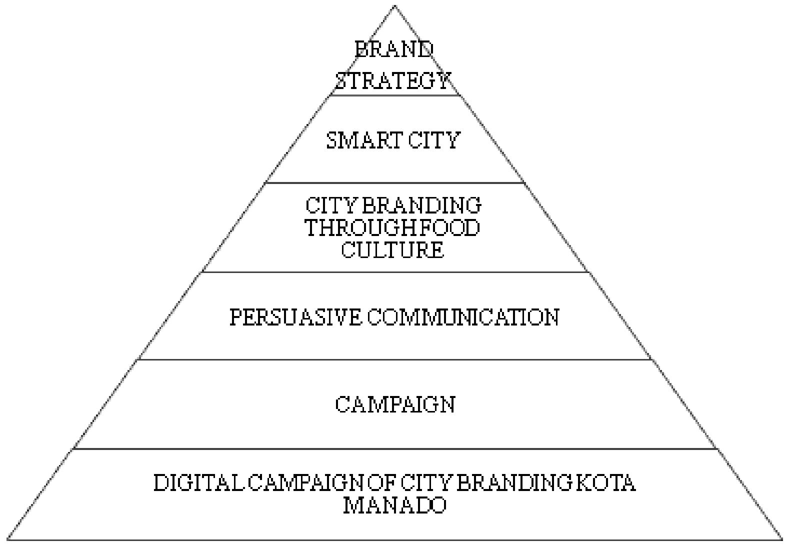

Figure 1 Road Map Research

city dwellers, tourists (both domestic and foreign) and internal stakeholders.

A city's branding strategy using food and beverages is a strategic step considering that apart from food being a basic need every day, food and cooking traditions are also the basis for the identity and culture of community groups. The food industry is an indicator of economic growth, and how food is consumed is part of the experience economy, which is very closely related to the tourism growth of a city or even a country. The branding strategy of an area related to food should be understood the same as the branding strategy of a book, film or drama, which is essentially a process of telling a story about who we are, where we come from and most importantly, what kind of person we will become (Dinnie, 2011). Each food brings the audience to certain symbols, icons and regional identities. Indonesia should be proud because we have a variety of typical culinary or iconic culinary. The term gastro branding emerged as an activity or process that puts forward names, terms, symbols, designs, or a combination of these by using marketing communication to identify everything related to food (Irwansyah, 2020).

From some of the definitions above, city branding is an effort to identify the local advantages of a city (in Indonesia, we have cities and districts), which are then promoted to specific target audiences. The local government initiates efforts to encourage this locality, but it also requires cooperation between the government and the private sector and empowering the people in the city. Sustainability involves the work of all parties, so the city branding research roadmap can be described as follows:

Nation Branding

The main elements of globalisation are apparent in the realm of national governance. Nation branding is an expression of global nationalism, i.e. the belief by federal governments that the nation's future consists of finding a "beneficial role" to play in a globally integrated economic system. Under the rubric of global nationalism, national identities are recognised more in terms of their suitability for capital appeal than their cohesive or collegial nature. Cohesiveness and a sense of belonging follow from the nation's fitness to the attractiveness of capital because state policies and corporate practices are mutually configured to support economic growth as an engine of citizen welfare. The conceptual apparatus of neoliberalism combines the utopian vision of property ownership with individual freedom, placing it as the "central value of civilisation." This teaching is embedded in enforcing three economic practices: liberalisation, privatisation and stabilisation. Furthermore, these technocratic actions are advocated as a solution to cultural and political problems, presented as the only necessary response to the inevitable forces of globalisation. This solution is called neoliberalism when globalisation is presented as an economic problem.

Businesses and corporations "not only" collaborate closely with state actors but even acquire a substantial role in writing laws, determining public policies, and setting regulatory frameworks. In this context, the state engages in a balancing act that must strengthen its authority by reducing tax and regulatory structures to enforce a free market that becomes a consensus. Adopting public-private partnerships is one vivid example of this balancing act.

The two main elements above, globalisation and neoliberalism, organise today's thinking about nations in different but familiar ways. The representation of countries through time has revealed the close relationship between commerce and culture, morals and markets, and national and global. If nation branding represents business transformation in articulating national identity, then this novelty explains what makes nation branding refer to commercialisation, corporatisation, or commodification (Aronczyk, 2013).

City Branding

Cities are part of the state, so the commercialisation of cities requires a strategy. Cities have always been something of a brand, though not necessarily well-managed. It is still rare for a city to be perceived as relevant to its services, production, attributes, reputation, visual associations and stories that significantly influence the decision to visit. Middleton (2011) claims that in a world where cities and regions compete aggressively for investment from the public and private sectors, it will consider professionally managing city branding. Brands in the context of city branding are lenses through which information is viewed and provide criteria that influence tourist decisions (Middleton, 2011).

Modern marketing began to spread to local governments in the 1970s. However, at that time, its transfer from the business sector to the public sector was unsuccessful, and urban marketing was difficult to understand conceptually and practically. Traditional marketing cannot provide the correct answer for the city as a product, how to determine the market for the city, and how to understand the target consumer for the city (Kavaratzis, 2004). A basis for discussing city branding, a refined perspective on place emerged as part of a critical discussion of urban entrepreneurship through a re-imaging analysis of localities, urban transformation and post-industrial development, operationally relegated to large-scale physical redevelopment, grand events and cultural regeneration (Anttiroiko, 2014).

Destination Branding

In 2004, Hankinson conducted research on destination branding, which resulted in the category of image attributes related to history, heritage, and culture that could shape the image of a tourism destination brand. Then, in 2005, Wisansing researched destination branding, examining various components of destination branding in Malaysia. The results of this study conclude that all products require a brand to attract customers. In this context, Malaysia has elements that contribute to the success of destination branding: a strong brand, firm commitment and positioning, marketing capabilities, and unique tourism products. In 2006, Peterson researched destination branding, resulting in several studies from laboratories, museums, works of art, and culture. This research study concludes that a good national brand construction will construct an excellent social image. A good social image will be created if state and destination brands are properly nurtured. The social image of the state brand is created by building good destinations such as museums, city parks, festivals, tourism events, hotels, good restaurants, public readiness for tourist arrivals, smooth transportation, and attractive souvenir products. In 2007, Rufaidah researched destination branding, concluding that a destination brand consists of visual elements, strategic issues, tactical issues, sound, logos, and so on, based on the nation's philosophy, all the country's advantages, wealth, and soul. In 2008, Lusi researched destination branding in Surabaya, Indonesia, which concluded several things: First, Sparkling

Surabaya is the result of branding made by the Surabaya Tourism Promotion Brand as a city representative. Second, Sparkling Surabaya has a global, modern, and brilliant meaning in every area throughout the day, representing the modern Surabaya community in a big city. Third, Sparkling Surabaya is a power relationship between the city government businesspeople and tourism task force officials in Surabaya to form a social image of Surabaya destinations (Burhan, 2017).

Digital Branding

Digital branding is a marketing communication activity that aims to share information about a brand with the public through digital media, such as the company's website and social media.

Yunus (2019) mentioned ten guidelines for improving brand image through digital branding: (i) Providing a road map for long-term planning, (ii) understanding the digital branding hierarchy and managing it appropriately over time, (iii) Identify well the identity of the customer and create a brand strategy, (iv) Realise brand equity and sales are two different things, (v) Brand belongs to the customer, not the creator of the brand, (vi) Brand strategy needs to consider the attributes of its CEO, (vii) Building an efficient brand can be realised through brand association, (viii) The categories of technology used in digital branding are created by customers and external parties, not by the company, (ix) The rapidly changing environment demands that marketers can quickly adapt to internal and external, (x) invest time to understand the technology. (Yunus, 2019)

The purpose of this research:

1. The research team wanted to identify Manado's local advantages within the brand architecture framework, which became the city's brand attributes.
2. What has been done within the city branding framework for Manado since it was declared a smart city in 2018?
3. Within the city branding framework, what has not and needs to be done by the city of Manado?
4. Any successful and sustainable brand communication strategies are carried out with specific target audiences.
5. As part of the recommendations, this study aims to provide strategies, especially digital campaigns, to implement the city branding concept consistently and sustainably. This campaign strategy can later become a tool for evaluating the success of city branding and can be duplicated in other cities in Indonesia.

Research Methods

Units of analysis can be individuals, groups, or organisations (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This research's unit of analysis is a city (organisation): Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi, which has been declared a smart city since 2018. In this case, the Manado city government is a source of information because the initiative to campaign for the first 100 cities to become smart cities in Indonesia is an initiative of the government as the policyholder.

The research is exploratory by nature, which is essential, and it aims to obtain information regarding matters related to the progress of the smart city of Manado after three years of being a smart city.

Data collection is carried out in 3 ways: interviews with three key informants. The criteria for key informants are individuals who hold positions in local governments, understand the concept, and are responsible for implementing smart cities and city branding. The second way is through a literature study on Manado city data obtained from various sources and case study literature on areas successfully implementing city branding inside and outside Indonesia. The third is internet research related to campaigns, writings or photos about the city of Manado since it became a smart city in 2018. We collected data from the internet based on the mainstream mass media, namely Tempo, Kompas, Detik, Liputan 6, and Metrotvnews, typed in 3 keywords, namely: kota Manado, smart city Manado and Manado diversity in harmony (based on the interview with tourism government official "Diversity in Harmony" is the central theme to visualise Manado as a smart city).

Based on the type of research, this study is a qualitative study with an exploratory nature that aims to find specific ideas, ideas, phenomena or symptoms. The process has no particular structure and occurs randomly. The data type is qualitative, with methods including case studies, bibliographic research, interviews and observations. In this type of research, the researcher participates in the events or conditions under investigation. Researchers often ask WHAT questions to dig for more profound information. For this reason, the results of qualitative research are the depth of the researcher's analysis. In general, the nature of the exploratory study is creative, flexible and open, and the data obtained are detailed, allowing for new theories or concepts to emerge if research results from conflict with the ideas and images used. We visited Manado in November 2021. Travelling within Indonesia is allowed with specific and strict health protocols. We experienced the city as both researchers and travellers. We interviewed key informants Erwin Simson Kountu, SH (Pembina IV/a, Kepala Dinas Kominfo) and Dra. Neivi Lenda Pelealu, M.Si (Pembina Utama Muda, IVc, Kepala Dinas Pariwisata). Additional interview is with Abdiel O Bajen – Kepala bidang pemasaran dinas pariwisata Kota Manado, while expert informant is a writer and lecturer of De La Salle University of Tourism located in Manado as well-Yelly A. Walansendow, SE, S.ST.Par, M.Si.

Discussion

As mentioned in Figure 3 above, city branding is part of the six pillars of the smart city in Indonesia (Direktorat Jendral Aplikasi Informatika Kementrian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2017). It is called smart branding. As the second pillar, smart branding consists of 3 elements: appearance, business, and tourism. In terms of appearance, Manado is already well-known for several things: BUNAKEN, which is the heaven of d1ivers and the house of plenty of sea creatures.

Bunaken is a well-known sea park in North Sulawesi. BOULEVARD is another iconic place near Laut Sulawesi, the city's iconic area of one-stop shopping malls and culinary and sports centres. Boulevard is a place where communities and tourists come for gathering, sporting, shopping and enjoy Manadonese delicious meals:

> God Bless Park, or Taman Berkat, strategically lies on Boulevard; it is the centre of activities for the people of Manado city; people use it for diversity, just like what Lenda said earlier, for religious harmony because hands are praying there, a sign or identical to togetherness in spiritual connection. However, it is also used as a location or a place for activities for young people for sports infrastructure; there is also sports infrastructure: skateboarding, basketball courts, climbing walls, everything there. [Kountu, 2021]

Thus, Bunaken and Boulevard are among the city's landmarks and must-visit when tourists travel. There were also numerous symbols, logos, and slogans/taglines when we searched the internet. Some of the photos and news articles were written or taken from iconic places in Manado, for example, the statue of Jesus Christ gives a blessing, the waterfront city at the Malalayang beach and the raising of our national flag, "merah-putih" at the base of Manado Bay. At the same time, the rest of the news articles about symbols or slogans were political news about the elected governor, newly-elected mayor and vice mayor of the city and the winning political party. It is unfortunate, though, that we did not meet with the mayor or vice mayor. Another element of smart branding in Manado, the city based on the Kominfo model, is business. We do not gather essential data on this dimension; however, we focus on data we received during interviews and field research. A tourism government official stated that few unique handicrafts or home industry products in Manado could have economic value. True, they sell lots of things, and I visited several souvenir shops (one is open 24 hours). Unfortunately, they are not iconic enough to be branded. Some of the products even were not initially made in Manado. Instead, they were imported from outside Manado:

> Then MSMES or superior products from Manado are more culinary, to be honest, if we talk about MSMES or craft products, especially more imported from Java and then written "Bunaken" which is a lot in shops in Manado. There are also local craftsmen, but they are less competitive in quality and work; I do not know, maybe because of the characteristics of

> Manado people who are not too meticulous in exploring small things.[Pelealu, 2021]

Home industry or small and medium enterprises are not endorsed or branded in this sense. Whereas we know that craft is something that tourists bring back to their homes and display in their hometowns, even handicraft is something that tourists tell other people when they share their experience about a particular destination. Therefore, the craft must be professionally managed in the tourism industry. On the field in the city of Manado, we found that coconut shells have the potential to be branded as the iconic craft of Manado, even Sulawesi Utara. Sulawesi Utara, the province, is known as *Bumi Nyiur Melambai* (the earth of coconut palm waving). We also received zero findings from an internet news search about Manado handicrafts. Different testimony was mentioned by an expert informant who was excited and passionate about the home industry and SMEs. She explained that the government -both local and central- were highly supporting the SMEs of Manado city, the products ranging from food, snacks and handicrafts:

> At the time of the pandemic, MSMEs were on the rise … when the pandemic occurred, the most affected were tourism service businesses, then the tourism ministry of Pak Sandiaga Uno worked with the provincial tourism office, the Manado city tourism office, and other cities in Indonesia, training or several times holding training for MSME participants, they boosted, training activities were continuous, I know precisely this because my friends are there … so both in the city, in the province, then there is more from the cooperative, trade office, it carries out like that. Even though this is an entrepreneur, MSMEs have been around for a long time, but they intensified during this pandemic; the simplest example is that we can look in the next room; some exhibitions are made in collaboration with retail entrepreneurs or owners of, for example, trading places, they hold continuous; they make exhibitions, then provide opportunities for the community to please, for instance, if I like cooking, we create and market it, now who wants, for example, making chips, then we can try it, coconut chips, we do not think about it; the trainers come, both from the city and the province, then they provide opportunities for the community to please, for example, if I like cooking, we make it. We market it, now who wants, for example, making chips, then we can try coconut chips, we do not think about it. Well, they bring in offline and online trainers to train and provide provisions for young entrepreneurs because yesterday, I was also allowed to be a resource person for one of the training from the tourism office. So they encourage the community so that they can make and create something that can be assisted. The simplest example is also in our service environment; during the pandemic, we immediately started three groups—the most minor, medium, and medium- to sell all kinds of activities from the community. Likewise, on campus, during a pandemic, everything is smoother to make this make that and me because I have made a book during a pandemic too; that is what I feel. I participated in the exhibition. I asked the Minister of Tourism to give a speech to members of the DPR, to the Regent and mayor of North Sulawesi, and many gave speeches for my book and appreciation quotes for my book. Manado is famous for roa, tuna, fried bananas, and many more. Well, there are also crafts and coconut husks made into flower pots. There are pandanus hats made when we go to hot tourist attractions and wear them; it is good, fantastic. Then there are bags made of plastic materials that are also recycled or maybe new items to train those who may be used to carrying boats because there are many guests, bringing tourists, because there are no tourists anymore, so at home, besides catching fish, the mothers can cook. The fathers can make bags or other crafts.[Walansendow, 2021]

Thus, the home industry was very enthusiastic, ranging from food products to crafts, there were exhibitions, and souvenir shops are quite a lot in Manado.

Nevertheless, iconic products such as coconut shells should be branded and promoted by the city, such as pearls from Lombok and Ambon, weaving textiles from Nusa Tenggara and noken bags from Papua, etc. The raw materials of coconut shells are galore. Still, our findings indicate that this business was not managed professionally to become Manado's iconic handicraft and create economic value for the people. Therefore, in finding localities in brand architecture and attributes, Manado is best and concentrates only on place/destination branding and culinary. At the same time, the craft was not given high priority; our internet search result confirms it. Tourism is the third element of smart branding from the smart city model of Manado the city. Our interviews and internet findings show that nature is Manado's prioritised destination. It has Bunaken and Boulevard in Jembatan Soekarno and Jendela, Indonesia. People can experience paragliding on Tetempangan Hill, and the newest one is called Gunung Tumpah. We were recommended to visit Gunung Tumpah as the local government is promoting it; however, when we requested local people to drive us to Gunung Tumpah, unfortunately, they had never heard of the place called Gunung Tumpah. In August 2018, there was a campaign about Tomohon City celebrated as the city of flowers, and it was such a big and happy festival- full of flowers. In July 2019, President Mr Joko Widodo enacted the Likupang district to become one of the super-priority destinations of Indonesia, along with Danau Toba, Borobudur, Mandalika and Labuan Bajo. To visit Likupang and Tomohon, one must arrive in Manado, the province's gateway to North Sulawesi. The expert informant also suggests that Manado possess diversity in its nature (it has mountain, sea, beach, and underwater):

> The first is, of course, the beach, the sea… starting from Malalayang to Tuminting, then towards Bunaken, not on the island, just on the outskirts; everything passes through the sea coast, not to mention in Bunaken on several islands of Bunaken, Siladen, Nain, it is also very rich in beauty, the beach and the sea are also under the sea, underwater… many fish and sea animals are unique in the waters in Manado City… then the second is, of course, the beauty of the mountains. There are places such as lakes, rivers, and waterfalls here completely… There are many unique fishes and sea animals in the waters of Manado City… Then the second is, of course, the beauty of the mountains, then places such as lakes, rivers, and waterfalls here are complete … in Manado, there is everything, eat it all. Manado has it all; that is why we went to Davao yesterday. I said that Davao is inferior to Manado… but why did we go outside when Manado itself has much potential that we can see… maybe Manado people themselves are bored. However, friends from other regions in Indonesia will be satisfied because Manado is quite small; we can only reach it in an hour without traffic jams. Well, you can get a lot from there… you can see the mountains, the sea, the beach, and all kinds of beauty in North Sulawesi province, especially in Manado.[Walansendow, 2021]

From her statement, she implies that Manado possesses diversity in its nature. Tourism in Manado is also rich in its culinary tradition. The diversity of food, rich in spices and even several kinds of iconic drinks, indeed describes Manado as a city with diversity in food and beverages. "Nasi Kuning, es brenebon, bubur manado" (Yellow rice, iced brenebon, Manado porridge) are some of the city's iconic foods and are being reviewed in the news stories. Not to mention, 'extreme food' has also become the headline. Bats, snakes, field mice and dogs are categorised as extreme food and are sold commonly in traditional markets or restaurants. Manado is one city in Indonesia that serves this type of food, called extreme food, and it is sold in extreme markets. Religious tourism was written once in the national newspaper (*Sightseeing in Manado turns into an excursion to Tomohon (Bukit Doa, Danau Linow, Bukit Tetetana*). However, we do not find a single article on the craft or handicrafts of Manado. Crafts can bring the slogan "diversity in harmony" into something tangible. Tourists can bring the crafts home besides photos and videos. Thus, the business element in smart branding of a city stays as homework for Manado City. The idea of Manado's smart city is internalised in smart tourism. Moreover, the campaign was well-documented, as was Manado Fiesta. Newspapers have written a lot about it since 2018, and the slogan "diversity in harmony" is well-documented both on mass media and social media. (Manado Fiesta Official, 2020). However, based on in-depth interviews with three government officials and one tourism expert, the author found that the idea of a smart city, smart tourism, innovative branding and diversity in harmony remains merely a slogan you can uphold and later take down according to change in leadership. The city government thinks of "diversity in harmony" as past events and merely an event well-documented in mass media. In online news media, we found the slogan "diversity in harmony" mentioned along with the launch of Manado Fiesta when Manado was set to be a smart city back in 2018. On the other hand, the author considers that diversity in harmony is not only a slogan. It serves as the DNA of Manado City. Based on observations, literature reviews, and internet news searches, Manado has diversity in several dimensions; the city has rich tourist destinations and a variety of authentic food and beverages. "Bubur Manado" is one famous porridge available in almost every canteen. Based on field observation, tolerance is high within the city. Manado respects the diversity of religions despite the majority of inhabitants being Christians. Politically speaking, diversity in harmony plays a vital role in putting Manado as a role model city in Indonesia as a country. Indonesia has a slogan, "unity in diversity". If Manado plays its role by correctly branding the city, it serves as the miniature model of Indonesia, the country. Lastly, our expert informant, who functions as a tourism academician, SME practitioner, and book writer who also lives in Manado, poses a strong opinion when asked about smart city branding in Manado city:

> As a lecturer, of course, I will also explain to my students to research this, because if we make the programme, I believe and believe it is expensive, so do not let the change of leadership, for example, then this good thing is not continued or not realised, it is a shame for us as academics who feel that this has been - they issued this must have gone through various meetings, They have spent much money, a lot of time and ideas, everything must have come out when discussing this programme, and we certainly hope that this will continue, because in the current era of digital, everywhere people are now, district cities have even followed the steps of the last Manado city, they took the initiative to become digital cities, for example, the city of Bitung. WelOtherties in Indonesia have used that, meaning they have followed this step or adopted it from the last Manado city. As I said earlier, let us monitor this good program to see whether it has ended or will continue, and I am sure that if the government is smart, they will use this because this will be something extraordinary for our city, not only in Manado but other cities in Indonesia. [Walansendow, 2021]

It implies that smart city branding has changed just as city leadership has. Where it puts the branding as merely a slogan, other cities even started to imitate Manado to become a digital city. Indeed, various tactics of city branding can be applied according to leadership. However, values, culture, and local wisdom are the same. Thus, it should be communicated consistently.

Our Internet News Search Concludes the Following

This internet search is based on news articles and photos released by mainstream media: Kompas, Tempo, Liputan6, BBC, detikcom, CNN, CNBC, and Antara News and Media Indonesia from 2018 to 2021 (roughly two years before the pandemic hit in 2020). In 2018, the city of Manado was declared a smart city. We did not receive any news about KRIYA (craft) at all; this confirms the statement from the Head of the Manado Tourism Office that no Manado city craft is superior. So, neither news nor the welfare of MSMEs in Manado is visible online. One business has emerged, namely Woloan's house (the location is not in Manado, and the item is not a souvenir that tourists can take home as a keepsake. It is a weakness, where the handicrafts of the community and improving the city's economy are also strategies to increase brand awareness of Manado City when there are souvenirs that tourists can take home and not consume. According to the head of the tourism office's interview, NATURAL TOURISM is still the City of Manado's flagship product and the locality that the city government prioritises.

However, culinary tourism, religious tourism, and crafts must improve because a city's branding includes all these elements. The Manado Association as the City of a Thousand Churches and SULUT as the province of Nyiur Melambai should appear in news reports from the national media. Likewise, news about Diversity in Harmony based on interviews is promoted to the audience as a tagline, although national news coverage is minimal/almost non-existent. News & photos about DISASTER also dominate the Manado keyword, and it is in the second top position after NATURAL TOURISM if we enter the keyword Manado. Emergency numbers for the public and tourists can be contacted when a disaster occurs/experiences and needs help, which must be communicated frequently concerning smart city branding. When searching for news regarding Manado in the last two years, it turned out that the internet also promoted other cities such as Tomohon, Tetempangan Hill, and Koha. Hence, digital campaign strategy plays an important and strategic role.

The arrival of President Jokowi and the First Lady, as well as other ranks of the central government, means that the central government is earnestly promoting super-priority destinations and SEZs in North Sulawesi, with the city of Manado as the entry point. News content is overwhelmingly dominated by natural or social disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty articles out of 100 collected pieces contain all the negative news about the MANADO keyword. For this reason, the role of the city government in providing access, facilities, and technology to help communities affected by disasters is vital. It includes frequent communication of emergency telephone numbers, which need to be known not only by the residents of the city of Manado itself but also mainly to be understood by tourists. Communication and Information Technology often disseminates the emergency telephone number for Manado on standby, namely 112. This is in line with the results of our interview with the head of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of Manado City, Mr Erwin Simson Kontu, SH. Most articles were in the smart city category, which focused on developing infrastructure and technology to support Manado's progress.

The second most common news topic is natural tourist destinations, which aligns with the results of our interview with the head of the Manado city tourism office, Dra. Neivi Lenda Pelealu, M.Sc. Indeed, she emphasises Manado's superior natural wealth. Another notable occurrence that can be observed from the findings of an internet news search is that no visible or insignificant news discusses the involvement of the private sector with or within the city of Manado regarding natural tourism, culinary, religion, or intelligent cities.

An online news article (liputan6.com) in 2017 wrote that the implementation of intelligent city Manado is exemplary. They have mainly depicted the Manado Cerdas Command Centre (C3) photo. The author was given a chance to visit the Manado command centre and found the technology, human resources, and seriousness of the Kominfo Manado Office were highly beneficial to the people of Manado. The technology and budget allocated were significant to serve the people. We are in the middle of the pandemic; society needs information and communication technology. Moreover, the Manado Cerdas Command Centre is there to help. By doing this, the government is working mainly on smart city pillar number 1: Smart governance.

Based on an internet news search, interviews and a visit to Manado City in November 2021, we found that "diversity in harmony" serves as the DNA of the city. The government officials cleverly captured it, and the slogan truly reflects the city of Manado. However, the smart city idea appeared to be a top-down policy. The branding communication is not consistent. As a result, our internet news search indicates that the hype was only during the Manado Fiesta campaign, which was back in 2018. After the Manado fiesta event, the branding of Manado becomes obscure. If the smart city concept is applied by local government, it does not solely resonate with tourism or technology; instead, it reveals the city's DNA and maintains its inhabitants' quality of life. The current local government does not see a smart city as a solution for Manado; instead, it is merely a slogan or a series of past events. Lastly, smart city pillar #1, smart governance, excelled in implementing *Cerdas* Command Center and Call Centre 112. However, pillar #2, innovative branding, still requires collaborative work: government, internal stakeholders, and inhabitants to attract tourists and investors. After all, there are three target audiences for smart city branding: inhabitants, tourists (from Indonesia and foreigners) and investors.

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Accessibility in Vernacular Settlements: A Holistic Experience and Sustainability Key

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Cultural heritage protection and inclusive human settlements constitute a sustainable development pillar. Vernacular settlements are architectural ensembles whose idioms limit accessibility adjustments, while location and geomorphology often contribute to settlements' exclusion. Accessibility in the context of Universal Design is a crucial factor for vernacular settlements' sustainability as tourism destinations and living places. Enhancing their accessibility, and thus their functionality, usability, and inclusivity, as well as providing learning opportunities, is expected to improve residents' lives and strengthen people's relationships with heritage and place. At the same time, it offers new options for attracting new groups of visitors and creating new tourism destinations while enhancing existing ones, enabling economic growth benefiting local communities, and thus contributing to heritage, settlements, and cities. The present research aims to contribute to this field by investigating new approaches to Greek vernacular settlement sites, including cities' historical centres, towards rediscovering the visitor experience, including persons with disabilities. The research is in the literature review and situ research stages. The paper presents the research objectives, the methodology and the first results of the literature review that form the interdisciplinary theoretical framework of the study. Finally, we discuss gaps and challenges related to the accessibility, sustainability, and holistic experience for all, including persons with disabilities, in vernacular settlements.

Keywords: accessibility; vernacular settlements; visitor's experience; inclusion; settlements and cities' sustainability

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Introduction

Pandemics and evolving socio-economic and environmental crises have greatly changed human settlements, recognisably impacting architectural heritage environments. The present research focuses, within the context of architectural heritage environments, on the Granada Convention, 1985 (Council of Europe, 1985) classification as "building groups". Mainly, it focuses on the vernacular settlements regarding the Greek ones. In Greek building legislation (New Building Code(L.4067/2012), 2012, article n.6), "vernacular settlement" encompasses settlements or parts of them, historic centres or parts of cities, and independent architectural complexes. These coherent architectural ensembles are complicated systems evolving in time and reflecting the socio-economic and environmental changes.

Vernacular settlements form a heterogeneous group with various characters, sizes, and urbanisation levels: historical centres, parts of metropolises, small urban centres, settlements and complexes. They are carriers of collective memory, cultural archives, and educational resources. Their historical value, coherence, authenticity, and continuity in time are generally recognised, attributing a unique identity to each one.

The intrinsic elements constituting vernacular settlements' idioms contribute to preserving their identity, but on the other hand, they often limit their accessibility and put their sustainability under discussion. Location and geomorphology are historically critical factors for settlements' accessibility and sustainability. They have often driven small mountainous and island colonies, which faced issues of distance, connection and accessibility, to isolation and economic decline. However, they have also been the fundamental drivers for retaining settlements' physiognomy. Cities' historic centres reflect the problems of contemporary urban settings and suffer the consequences of controversial heritage management and inappropriate interventions on monuments and sites, which alter or destroy their character. In cities where the historic setting keeps changing in form and function, the big challenge of heritage continuity and compatibility is to be met by urban heritage management (Bandarin & Van Oers, 2012), whose social dimension entails inclusivity and accessibility. As highlighted in the Charter on the built vernacular heritage by ICOMOS (1999), built vernacular heritage worldwide is deemed extremely vulnerable, facing serious problems of obsolescence and integration due to the contemporary culture homogenisation and global socio-economic transformation. A new approach structured in heritage protection associated with inclusivity is necessary.

Under the accessibility prism, the vernacular settlements' unique attributes comprising location, geomorphology, history, place memory and architecture in traditional or historic structures, forms, materials (colours, textures) and construction techniques are considered possible generators of barriers. The barriers to access in general and for persons with disabilities have multiple dimensions. Physical barriers, which are natural and structural, block the approach and transfer of persons with disabilities within spaces. Intellectual barriers inhibit the whole experience of the cultural commodity by people who face sensory, intellectual, or other impairments. In addition, there are attitudinal barriers (e.g. prejudices), organisational (e.g. lack of flexibility in organisations, practices, and procedures) or other circumstances such as social isolation (Oliver, 1990; 2013). Furthermore, particularly in vernacular settlements, distances, height differences, inclinations, standard features, traditional or urban fabric consisting of streets, open spaces and buildings, and some complicated-to-perceive architectural idioms can form different types and levels of barriers to accessibility.

Enhancing vernacular settlements' functionality, usability, and inclusivity by ensuring accessibility will contribute to settlements' and cities' sustainability both as living places and as tourism and education destinations. The basis that accessibility facilitates inhabitants' environment and everyday life can provide new tourism and learning opportunities and can be beneficial in terms of economic potential and contribution to local community development, which are strongly related to cultural heritage (Hampton, 2005). The present research's perspective falls under this context. It is important to mention that researchers have not significantly investigated the field of accessibility in architectural heritage environments at the Greek national level. The conducted studies primarily focus on monuments, archaeological sites, and museums. Thus, under the current survey of the extent of the relevant investigation at the European and international level, the present research has to confront the issue of the minimal associated conducted studies as a basis for further development. On the other hand, it faces the challenge of generating innovative research.

Theoretical Framework

Key Theoretical Topics for Accessibility in Vernacular Settlements for a Holistic Experience and Sustainability

Given the lack of a comprehensive framework for issues of accessibility for vernacular settlements in Greece as "building groups" (see Introduction), one major challenge of the current research is to form a theoretical framework that combines different aspects of issues related to persons with disabilities, accessibility in terms of sustainable development, and architectural heritage, as well as theoretical frameworks for built environment and learning and appropriate technologies. The following sections present the vital academic topics defined from the first stage of the present research and specifically from the literature review. These topics form an interdisciplinary, multilayered theoretical framework necessary to proceed to the following steps of the study.

Persons With Disabilities and Accessibility

Persons with disabilities constitute a heterogeneous population with different types of impairments, while the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) stresses the importance of "recognising further the diversity of persons with disabilities" (UN, 2006, Preamble, section i). Persons with disabilities face different types of socially constructed barriers. Accessibility is a core factor and condition for their equal participation in all aspects of life to fulfil fundamental human rights and freedoms (UN, 2006, Preamble, section v). Based on the "social model of disability", disability is conceived mainly as a socially created problem versus the "medical model", which views disability as a problem of the person. A person's functioning and disability are dynamic interactions between health conditions and contextual factors, including personal and environmental factors (Oliver, 1990; 2013; World Health Organization, 2001, chapters 3.2 and 5.2), which leads to the necessary environmental and organizational modifications as well as attitudes for the full participation of persons with disabilities in all areas of social life. In this context, the UN addresses architectural heritage because all individuals can access cultural commodities (UN, 1948, article 27.1). Persons with disabilities live, travel, and move together with their family, friends, etc., creating consistent groups in visiting destinations with appropriate access and services. (Fletcher, 2006; 2013; Lisney et al., 2013). In this line, CRPD (article 30, "Participation in cultural life, recreation,leisure and sport") stresses the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life "on an equal basis with others". Accessibility is the primary condition to ensure this right, and it refers to various aspects, activities, services, and places related to cultural life, including monuments and sites. In specific, the CRPD states that States Parties [...] recognise the right of persons with disabilities to have access to cultural life with the appropriate measures so that persons with disabilities "enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far aspossible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance" (UN, 2006, article 30, section c). Furthermore, many others face mobility restrictions for different reasons or in different periods (e.g., elderly, pregnant women, parents with children in strollers, and people with temporary injuries and chronic ailments). As a result, it is crucial to adopt theoretical frameworks and principles that address people's diverse needs. The present research aligns with the international social agenda and conventions for human rights and persons with disabilities rights (UN, 1948; 2006; Lawson & Beckett, 2021) and extends the investigation of persons with disabilities accessibility in vernacular settlements' environments.

Universal Design

The idea of an "average user" is no longer accepted in architecture, design and other scientific fields (Mace, 1988). In practice, as Mace (1998, p.5) states, "no "average" actually represents the majority because too many people have vastly differing requirements". To address these diverse requirements, Universal Design is a framework that integrates the understanding and managing of the diverse humanity's needs and concerns in the design of environments, products, programs and services to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible (Mace, 1988; Mace et al., 1996). In the case of persons with disabilities, Universal Design is the central concept and framework of the CRPD (UN, 2006). Thus, Universal Design does not refer to persons with disabilities but all people. The reasonable adjustments (UN, 2006, article 2) concern the already spatially configured environments concerning the necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments in every single case to ensure the exercise of all human rights and the fundamental freedom for persons with disabilities on an equal basis to others. In the present research context, the built environment will be approached via Universal Design, with supplementary specific references to accessibility regarding products and services (Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council, 2019), including digital technology. In this context, it is necessary to consider the various sub-groups of persons with disabilities' needs, facilitating life for all. It demands an advanced analysis of all possibilities and of the objective space limitations and then the lifting of barriers by determined actions and the guidance of users. The design incorporates assistive devices when there is a demand for them. Furthermore, "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed" (UN, 2006, article 2). Issues of protection and conservation of architectural heritage are vital factors in the present research.

Protection and Conservation of Architectural Heritage - Vernacular Architecture

The Amsterdam Declaration on the European Architectural Heritage (Council of Europe, 1975) outlines the need for architectural heritage conservation to become an integral part of urban and regional planning, involving local authorities and citizens and considering social factors. In this frame, architectural heritage includes exceptional-quality buildings, their surroundings, and all areas of towns or villages of historical or cultural interest. So, architectural heritage, entailing monuments, vernacular settlements, and historical centres, has evolved into a cultural commodity (Di Stefano, 1979) with cultural and economic value. On this basis, protecting and improving the architectural heritage environment increases its efficiency, with cultural and economic benefits for society. In the Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies (1982, point 16), UNESCO links culture with development, asserting that "making cultural factors an integral part of the strategies designed to achieve it" is essential to ensure balanced development." Also, its Report "Our Creative Diversity" (1995) stresses "the importance of heritage preservation policies as part of economic development". It claims that we have not yet sufficiently considered intangible cultural heritage; we are still not using the heritage in all its aspects as broadly and effectively as we might, nor managing it as sensitively as we should.

UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011, point 5) integrates and frames urban heritage conservation strategies within the larger sustainable development goals. It suggests a landscape approach for identifying, conserving, and managing historic areas within their broader urban contexts by considering the inter-relationships of their physical forms, their spatial organisation and connection, their natural features and settings, and their social, cultural and economic values (Weber & Yannas, 2014). Moreover, the vernacular architecture itself is considered a model for sustainable design (Weber & Yannas, 2014) and the lessons that it may teach constitute "indigenous" forms of knowledge (Vellinga, 2015). The Granada Convention's definition of architectural heritage as monuments, groups of buildings and sites (Council of Europe, 1985) renders possible the identification of properties to be protected. ICOMOS (1999) defines vernacular architecture in the Charter on the built vernacular heritage as a manner of building shared by the community within a context composed of its characteristics, which one can recognise as:

1. A manner of building shared by the community.
2. A recognisable local or regional character responsive to the environment.
3. Coherence of style, form and appearance, or traditionally established building types.

4. Traditional expertise in design and construction is transmitted informally.
5. An effective response to functional, social and environmental constraints.

Regarding the non-academic character of the most significant part of vernacular architecture, Amos Rapoport (1969, p.2) claims that this architecture is the "ideal" environment of a people expressed in buildings and settlements, with no designer, artist, or architect. In addition to collective memory, according to Aldo Rossi (1982, p.130), the city is the locus of collective memory associated with objects and places. Therefore, preserving collective memory and tradition is crucial to protecting and preserving elements that carry these values and constitute architectural heritage. Moreover, heritage protection and sustainable development are firmly linked, structuring another component of the present research's theoretical background.

Sustainable Development

Heritage protection associated with making cities and human settlements inclusive, which entails the participation and access of all, is considered a pillar for sustainable development. In the context of the United Nations Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals (UN, 2015), for the achievement of the goal of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Goal n.11), critical factors are the protection and safeguarding of the world's cultural and natural heritage (Goal n.11.4) as well as the provision of access to safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (Goal n.11.7). The empowerment of vulnerable people, by removing obstacles and constraints is emphasised (UN, 2015, point 23). Based on the two goals mentioned above, one can develop a new framework to ensure the sustainability of heritage and other cities and settlements. The three dimensions on which sustainable development lies are economic, social, and environmental (UN, 2015, point 2). Regarding the sustainability of cities' heritage environments, UNESCO's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011) supports social and economic processes to facilitate the sustainable development of historic districts. Accessibility is examined in the present research regarding the dimensions mentioned earlier and within the fields of tourism, learning and living places. Regarding learning and education, in the context of the provision of inclusive education, emphasis is laid on providing all people with access to life-long learning opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in society (UN 2015, point 25). Finally, participatory, integrated, sustainable human settlement planning and management (Goal n.11.3) is important and strengthens local communities.

Place Branding

In place branding, a popular tourism concept, stakeholders can implement a strategy in vernacular settlements and cities' heritage environments to give meaning to a place and manage perceptions about it. An integrated brand strategy could be developed based on a settlement's or city's core values, attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics (Middleton, 2011). The place is integral to the human experience (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). The relationship between place and space, as components of the environment, can be seen from the perspective of experience (Tuan, 2001). Particularly in tourism, the relationship between architecture, an image of a place and tourists' perceptions is powerful. This fact is crucial for the implications of architectural heritage management for tourism (Gholitabar et al., 2018). In terms of a strategy, the endeavour is to form a strong relationship between person and place concerning vernacular settlements regarding the feeling of attachment to the site and the identification leading to place satisfaction. The above expects to drive both locals and new visitors -tourists and students- to stay at or to select to visit a particular place of a vernacular settlement. Regarding the terms "place attachment" and "place satisfaction", Chen and Dwyer's (2017) survey suggests that, at residents' level, place satisfaction configures residents' intention to stay, while place attachment has a strong influence on residents' participation in tourism planning for a destination. Numerous surveys conducted in the place branding field (e.g., Giuliani & Feldman, 1993; Brocato, 2006; Gustafson, 2014) and regarding the topic of place attachment associated with the issues of environment, cultural context and mobility can contribute to the supplementation of the present research's theoretical framework. Furthermore, besides the built environment, to provide meaningful and accessible learning opportunities and construct an "architectural narrative", it is equally important to investigate and adopt theoretical frameworks that address the diversity of learners.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is based on the concept of Universal Design (Pisha & Coyne, 2001) and combines theories and evidence from different scientific fields (e.g., learning theories, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, etc.) (Riviou et al., 2015; CAST, 2018).

Similar to universal design, education and various learning settings and environments recognise people's diversity and the different ways they learn or prefer to learn, including cultural ones. UDL does not focus on persons with disabilities, although it includes them. It places importance on designing teaching and educational programs by considering learners' diversity and heterogeneity in advance. It has basic principles concerning the "why", "what", and "how" of learning, suggesting a set of guidelines for the engagement, representation of information and content, action and expression, respectively. In practice, that means adopting different methods, strategies, tools, etc., which enhance learners' access, participation and understanding, motivate them, and promote their engagement and various ways of expression (Riviou et al., 2015; CAST, 2018). We can implement UDL into different frameworks, settings and learning environments, including the cultural sector (e.g. schools, museums, etc.) (Rappolt-Schlichtmann & Daley, 2013; Riviou et al., 2015; Kanari & Souliotou, 2020). Thus, UDL should be a basic theoretical framework for accessible learning experiences in vernacular settlements alongside specifically designed provisions, means and tools.

Interpretation and Storytelling

As the research aims to form a strategy for developing a new "architectural narrative" to perceive the identity of the vernacular settlements, the frameworks of interpretation and storytelling are essential for the survey. With compelling storytelling, stakeholders deem that the place above branding can build a sense of belonging for residents and visitors. At the same time, the site narrative can contribute to both social and economic development. Regarding storytelling and culture, the narrative approach to dissemination, mainly for historical and cultural contexts, is considered a powerful means to enhance learning through emotional impact (Palombini, 2017). Based on this, we need an initial approach to the museum field that generates heritage experiences. We need to approach the interpretation of things and their typologies and cultural dimensions, as well as the polysemy of the museum objects (Nakou, 2001).

The Research

The research investigates accessibility as the means for the perception of heritage and as a strategy tool for sustainability. It lies on the notion that via ensuring accessibility, persons with disabilities can discover and perceive vernacular settlements' identity and can experience the cultural commodity of architectural heritage in situ. In this context, accessibility is explored not simply as a technical provision but as a means for all to perceive the ensemble's unique identity and have a holistic architectural heritage experience via a new narrative. Furthermore, combining issues of heritage protection, functionality, inclusivity and providing learning experiences for all contributes to settlements' and cities' sustainability, enhancing locals' lives and strengthening local communities and economies.

Aim and Objectives of the Research

The research aims to contribute to the sustainability of heritage, settlements, and cities by investigating new approaches to Greek vernacular settlement sites. We can achieve the above by forming a strategy and a set of principles for a new "architectural narrative" based on physically, intellectually, and digitally accessible routes within the context of place branding.

Implementing the abovementioned strategy associated with relevant in situ interventions aims to be highly beneficial in tourism, learning and living places. Regarding tourism, enhancing the access and perception of heritage is expected to offer the tourism market new prospects by attracting new groups of visitors and entrepreneurs, creating new tourism destinations for all and improving the existing ones in terms of the built environment and services. In the field of learning, the objective is the provision of new learning opportunities for all. These opportunities can increase the level of knowledge for residents, tourists, and students, which can largely contribute to heritage preservation via cultural awareness, maintaining heritage as an archive and educating the next generation. As for living places, accessibility facilitates and enhances the inhabitants' everyday environment and life, simultaneously offering prospects for local market development. The aim is to increase the incentives to stay and live in vernacular settlements rather than to move to big urban centres and live in historic centres of cities rather than in newer districts, which will have social, economic, and environmental benefits for local communities and places. Regarding in situ interventions, the research aims to present ways for addressing mobility and perception difficulties of different types and levels and for reducing or even eliminating barriers via design. Particularly, interventions resulting from the integral design combining traditional or historical elements with advanced design should provide the channels for having the architectural heritage experience. We must emphasise that the criterion of heritage protection always prevails. The in situ interventions and adjustments associated with providing means for digital access are under investigation. There are architectural synthesis and design issues regarding embodying elements (constructions, special equipment, standardised elements, assistive technology -applications, and digital models) into the existing heritage environment. The objective is the creative and effective integration of the idiom elements (location, geomorphology, history, place memory and architecture, in terms of distances, height differences, inclinations, traditional structures, forms, materials and construction techniques) and new appropriate elements for access and perception, into traditional or historical settings and the included buildings. Moreover, directions configured through the above investigation can form supplementary regulations to the Greek legislation for architectural heritage and accessibility.

The primary defined research objectives are to investigate the following:

- The ways and means, via mainly Universal design, for structuring the in situ experience of vernacular settlements for persons with disabilities.
- How the enabling of access and perception of architectural heritage by persons with disabilities can contribute to heritage sustainability as well as to vernacular settlements' and cities' sustainability.
- The processes and tools for accessibility measurement and evaluation.
- The codification of the vernacular settlement's architectural environment in terms of form, structure, and function.
- The integration and embodiment, via integral design, of accessibility elements (standards, constructions, technology) in traditional or historic environments; and
- The configuration of directions in structure and implementation of Greek legislation for accessibility and architectural heritage.

Method of the Research

To verify the hypothesis above and to realise the set goals, we used qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (Creswell, 2015). The research method involves:

- A settlement's classification by accessibility level.
- Developing a typology.
- Evaluating recognised interventions.
- Interviewing stakeholders and persons with disabilities.
- Conducting case studies and proposal tools.

Thus, the methodology will occur in different stages and with the use of various research instruments:

- Literature review comprised of three axes as follows: (1a) the thematic axe concerning the research's individual questions fields, in regards to the theoretical framework and with the emphasis led on strategies, good practices and connections and interactions between the investigated areas, (1b) the national accessibility and architectural heritage legislation and (1c) listing of the Greek vernacular settlements and of the realised case-by-case and authorised by councils relevant accessibility interventions;

- In situ research in Greek vernacular settlements as well as in Greek archaeological sites where numerous accessibility interventions have appeared.
- Development of accessibility measuring processes and tools and evaluation criteri.
- Conduction of questionnaires and interviews with stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, regarding the fields of tourism, learning and living place.
- Classification, by accessibility level, of the Greek vernacular settlements and the realised relevant interventions and development of typologies and evaluation.
- Organization and analysis of information.
- Configuration of general directions and tools for accessibility in vernacular settlements' environments and assessment of them with accessibility experts in various fields.
- Implementation of the above directions and conduction of case studies.
- Testing the applied directions with a focus group of users, including persons with disabilities.
- Extraction and evaluation of results; and
- Codification of accessibility provisions and generation of conclusions and proposals.

The Greek Context, Accessibility and Vernacular Settlements' Issues and Challenges

The literature review is the first stage of the present research. We have defined the theoretical frameworks (see Theoretical Framework section). This literature review clearly shows that the accessibility approach in vernacular settlements towards sustainability and a holistic experience for all is multidimensional, multilayered, and interdisciplinary. Furthermore, the literature review and the Greek context revealed some gaps, issues, and challenges.

We must stress that the fundamental concept of the accessibility chain is missing. A significant gap recorded via the literature review concerns addressing and managing Greek environments of high architectural value, such as the vernacular settlements. Generally, there are difficulties in implementing the existing Greek building legislation, attributed to the special features of these environments and the fact that Greek legislation has a quite general character and does not include regulations aiming exclusively at the environments mentioned earlier. The lack of special regulations to give directions for accessibility interventions and adjustments into such environments has led to case-by-case interventions (on buildings and in public spaces) authorised by councils, which constitute fragmentary constructions. With these case-by-case interventions, we recorded an intention to interpret accessibility legislation. The result is the generation of new accessibility "vocabularies" for in situ adjustments. However, the role of standards and standardisation is crucial, and a standard "vocabulary" practice is deemed the basis for training persons with different types of disabilities. To bridge this gap, the present research, through investigating the axes of protection of architectural heritage and ensuring accessibility, aspires to propose directions and tools for a holistic approach and the perception of the identity of vernacular settlements, supplementing the national legislation.

Firstly, there are regulations for the listed buildings, with a few references to accessibility issues. Secondly, there is a reasonably developed context for accessibility in public spaces generally and not specifically in heritage environments, which needs to be updated. Moreover, a critical point of the existing legislation is that it does not address vernacular settlements as complicated architectural ensembles but primarily as buildings and public spaces. However, the vernacular settlements are much more than a sum of buildings and open spaces. So, developing the context of regulation for a holistic approach to vernacular settlements is essential.

Another issue is that legislation and realised interventions tend to emphasise mobility impairment while overlooking other types of impairment, inevitably leading to these groups' exclusion. Available Greek population statistics (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2002) show that 18.2% of the population has various chronic health problems or types of disabilities leading to mobility limitations, which is a considerable percentage and brings to the surface the issue that inclusion and involvement of all should be a priority.

The literature review and first stage of in situ research in Greek vernacular settlements has revealed the heterogeneity of the settlements, which, in combination with the heterogeneity of the group of persons with disabilities, creates a multi-parametric research problem. Dealing with the limitations of the Greek settlements' place idioms (location, geomorphology, architecture, history, place memory) for addressing the various needs of persons with disabilities and within the context of accessibility legislation undoubtedly constitutes a big challenge. The relationship between heritage and technology regarding special equipment and digitalisation is a big issue. The first stage of the in situ research revealed analytical problems of transfer, approach, access, entrance, routes, horizontal and vertical circulation, crossing and stops, orientation, perception of landmarks, ways of escape, signage for all, function, services, urban equipment and mainly the accessibility chain. In the Greek context and regarding relevant issues about monuments, a methodology for accessibility and perceptibility improvement interventions has been built, applied and tested at the Byzantine monuments of Thessaloniki by a research group of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Naniopoulos & Tsalis, 2017). This methodology relies on existing accessibility evaluation methodologies, such as the Checklist for Buildings and Facilities of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) (1992). The city-level assistance tool also constitutes the Disability Inclusion Evaluation Tool (DIETool) (Rebernik, 2020). Hence, we must stress that in some cases, settlements, or parts of them cannot be subject to in situ improvement adjustments or can only be limited ones. In these cases, other means, such as digital accessibility, should be investigated as the primary means for accessing and perceiving architectural heritage. The issues mentioned above stress the importance of developing a strategy for an architectural narrative for the access and perception of vernacular settlements' identities; this is also deemed an educational challenge and a challenge regarding tourism boosting. Particularly in education, the association of the architectural and, precisely, the technical part with the academic part constitutes a challenging concept and research procedure.

The lack of facilities -and infrastructure in general- for conservation and sustainability is a characteristic of the Greek reality. Focusing on buildings as a fundamental element of vernacular settlements and historic centres of cities, it is a fact that numerous Greek-listed and traditional buildings are abandoned or even collapsing. The prospect of contributing to these buildings' sustainability by enhancing their accessibility and functionality within the heritage preservation context, particularly their reuse, is challenging.

Another major issue in the Greek context is the insufficiency of information regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities, particularly regarding architectural heritage. Difficulties also exist in getting official data from ministries, public organisations, and museum sites. We generalised the problem of the dissemination of relevant information. Accessibility chain and participation of all parts -built environment, services, products- is indispensable. The need for cooperation and participatory processes becomes even more significant in contemporary times when cities and settlements face threats to their sustainability due to crises like pandemics and wars. These crises pose risks to the sustainability of architectural heritage. Additionally, in the same context, there are difficulties in synergies and collaborations at scientific and various operators' levels, which hinder the participation of all stakeholders in processes regarding accessible heritage and tourism and other accessibility fields.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The promotion of accessibility, including the enhancement of functionality and perceptibility in architectural heritage environments, is expected to have a tremendous social and economic impact. Ensuring accessibility and perceptibility generally, particularly in vernacular settlements, is a heritage valorisation practice. It adds value to these heritage environments, benefiting mainly local communities and other revitalising vernacular settlements and cities. Therefore, it constitutes a sustainability driver regarding heritage, settlements, and towns, with great benefits for tourism, education and residence. Its contribution to sustainability reflects and strengthens the regional cultural identity, enhancing tourism destinations and visitors' experience, stimulating economic growth at the local level, offering opportunities for new learning experiences, and providing better living places for the local population, improving people's quality of life. Empowering the relationship between people, heritage and place and enhancing relevant interactions by improving places' functionality and inclusivity generates people's involvement as locals, visitors, and entrepreneurs. This involvement is the basis for the preservation of heritage and sustainability. It can be illustrated in inclusive and participatory design, in the participation of persons with disabilities and stakeholders in tourism and other processes regarding architectural heritage, and the activation of service carriers and relevant synergies at scientific and operator levels. Stakeholders can find a new context for innovative and creative anthropocentric solutions regarding vernacular settlements in tourism, education, and residence.

All the Greek vernacular settlements must offer a holistic experience. Developing a strategy for an architectural narrative associated with ergonomic and high-esthetic solutions can form the context for in situ interventions that ensure accessibility, quality, and safety for all. Within this frame, one will utilise and appropriately adjust according to the present research's concept, the existing accessibility and perception measuring, evaluation methodology and tools. The proposed accessibility strategy anticipates stimulating the cooperation of stakeholders to expand the accessibility improvement actions in other fields, such as archaeological sites and museums. The conducted case studies can also set a basis for discussion for other vernacular settlements and historic centres of cities. To this end, the codification of accessibility provisions and the generation of research conclusions and proposals are necessary. Based on the Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy's archive of vernacular settlements and listed buildings (2022), the literature review and first stage of in situ research in Greek vernacular settlements revealed the heterogeneity of the vernacular settlements, which, when combined with the previously unknown heterogeneity of the group of people with disabilities, formed a multi-parametric research problem. Capitalising and preserving architectural history while emphasising vernacular settlements and guaranteeing accessibility and perceptibility is a novel method that contributes to tourism, education, habitation, and sustainability.

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Education and Heritage: Teaching the Tourism Curriculum from a Community Sustainability Perspective in South Africa's Rural and Township Schools

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Tourism is one elective subject in South Africa's school curriculum. Through Tourism, learners learn about the activities, services and industries that deliver a travel experience to individuals or groups. The subject is also charged with studying the expectations and behaviour of tourists and tourism's economic, social, and environmental impact on South Africa, which relates to sustainable and responsible tourism. Teaching the Tourism as a subject appears to be a valuable and practical platform for schools, teachers, and other relevant stakeholders to contribute meaningfully and innovatively to sustainable development, policy framework, local community involvement and participation and in supporting and promoting local tourism as a platform to support social cohesion and economic development, as per the vision, mission, and objectives of the World Heritage Tourism. This paper aims to explore the schools' roles in forging a partnership and relationship with local communities in the generation and preservation of knowledge about local heritage sites located, near schools. It further explores the implementation of a tourism curriculum in this regard, emphasising on the interplay between education, heritage, and sustainable community development. The study is premised in the Community-Based Education, Cultural Heritage Education and Sustainable Development Theories. Through surveys, reviews of existing literature and analysis of case studies, this paper highlights the benefits and challenges of such educational initiatives and proposes strategies for effective curriculum delivery. The results suggest that teachers regard Tourism as a bridge that connects schools and communities and an approach to transform how heritage sites are perceived, particularly in rural and township communities.

Keywords: Tourism, heritage, community, sustainability, education, teachers

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Introduction

Education plays an important role in giving a voice and agency to students and transforming communities. Teachers are at the centre of this process, and they are believed to be the custodians of agency, which they are expected to pass on to their students. Agency is defined as the ability to operate autonomously in determining social constrains of social structure and temporal-relational contexts. Agency is a key element in influencing change (Pantić, 2015; 2017). This paper investigates how the Tourism subject teachers particularly in rural and township schools can teach the subjects to reinforce the view of creating relationships with local communities, with the aim of preserving heritage and creating a sustainable tourism future.

The Tourism subject has an important role in South Africa's education, in endowing schools with the ability to construct and preserve sustainable heritage sites as well as forging socially cohesive communities, through the curriculum. Tourism education is perceived as "*the way tourism destinations prepare the human resources to be able to work professionally in the development of the tourism sectors*," (Bellos et al., 2021, p. 1). This implies that tourism development depicts a better quality of life for the tourists and the local community at the destination. Similarly, in the South African context, education is perceived as a transformative tool, particularly after the collapse of apartheid. This system used education as a tool to suppress rural and township education in favour of urban education, which predominantly promoted white supremacy. Education was used as a device to oppress, control and divide the South African population along racial and cultural divides.

In this study I share similar sentiments with Rogerson and Rogerson (2020), where they argue that the literature review in their study suggests that there is limited informed historical research that explores the racialised dimensions of tourism landscapes, across the international academic discourse, hence why in this study I attempt to base my argument within the scope of the South African history in order to achieve what Saarinen et al. (2017, p. 311) referes to as "*the extended application of historical perspectives in order to inform contemporary debates and practices*". Eventhough there have been equity and equality measures put in place by the new government dispensation to address the inqualities of the past, the legacy of apartheid continues to be evident in various sectors of the economy and culture, including tourism spaces which are still associated with power imbalances (Witz, at el., 2004). The long-term effects of this system led to a failure to address democratic principles, which are based on access, participation, and equity, argues Msila (2007). Therefore, this paper argues that learners' active participation in their education is key in creating sustainable communities.

The system of apartheid in South Africa reinforced colonial land dispossession policies, resulting in Black communities losing vast tracts of ancestral lands. These lands were often reallocated to white ownership and have since been developed into tourism enterprises that benefit the descendants of apartheid-era beneficiaries. For instance, the Natives Land Act of 1913 and subsequent legislation confined Black South Africans to only 7–13% of the country's land, facilitating white ownership of the remaining areas . This historical colonial land dispossession has had lasting impacts, with many tourism ventures operating on land that was historically taken from Black communities. The concentration of tourism assets in the hands of a few, predominantly white individuals, underscores the enduring economic disparities rooted in apartheid-era policies; Maharaj, (2006) .

These historical puzzle pieces; colonialism and apartheid, significantly shape the readers' understanding of why the curriculum is at the core focus of this study, and why the study examines the Tourism curriculum's role in promoting socially cohesive and heritage-sustainable communities. In this context, the curriculum presents itself as a bridge and springboard to manage local tourism innovatively, but most significantly to address the past injustices for rural and township communities. However, with poor implementation of the curriculum due to various reasons, such as lack of knowledge and innovation and creativity from the side of the teachers, and or subject advisors, Tourism as a subject, has not yet reached the level at which it can elevate local communities, particularly rural areas and townships, to gaining World Heritage status. This view is based on the belief that knowledge should be based on a bottom-up approach and used to foster partnerships with communities; promoting the view that schools are not isolated institutions but have a transformative role to play for the wider society. This study draws from different contexts yet similar experiences of implementing the Tourism curriculum worldwide.

One notable situation is discussed by Tribe (1999; 2005a; 2005b; 2005c). Tribe notes that the curriculum was cushioned or supplemented by multi-disciplinary knowledge at the early developmental stages of tourism in the United Kingdom. Based on this approach, scholars believe that curriculum developers and planners have managed to incorporate multiple ideas, skills, and methodologies to inform the teaching of the subject. Tribe (2000a; 2000b; 2000c; 2002) argue that this brought a significant maturity of tourism as an academic subject, and emerging vocational subject, focusing on the economy and business. According to this literature, the approach to teaching Tourism, should be viewed as a tool to capacitate and empower students to think critically, and being able to study disciplines from a cross and inter-discipline perspective and being able to transcend the different parts that contribute to the totality of the subject or discipline. For this reason, this study argues for the practical inclusion of local heritage as extended knowledge in the formal curriculum by teachers and relevant stakeholders as one of the routes to achieve sustainability within the teaching of Tourism as a subject in South African schools. This is necessitated by the justifications highlighted in the subsequent sections of this article.

Justification and Background

Post-1994 South Africa's objective of the tourism subjects is to empower the students with practical skills and knowledge needed to pursue careers in the tourism sector, while instilling an understanding of the rights and responsibilities associated with tourism for both tourists and tourism practitioners. This study argues that incorporating tourism education from an indigenous heritage perspective can assist students recognise the significance of the heritage passed down by their ancestors and encourage them to engage in conservation efforts for the benefit of future generations. However, owing to the general lack of access to resources and challenges faced by teachers in terms of curriculum flexibility, in rural and township schools (Tapala et al., 2021), the tourism curriculum is not yet fully maximised as a platform to assist preserve indigenous knowledge that natives had been denied to, during colonial and apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, the subject also empowers citizens to develop sustainable livelihoods from their heritage. According to Mtapurı and Giampiccoli (2020), tourism with a community-based aspect and vision is essential in empowering poor communities, and in South Africa, rural communities are often marginalised and poverished, which makes this approach even more relevant.

Problem Statement

Even though the curriculum addresses the topic of heritage multiple times in the distinct phases of its implementation, there are still gaps that exist in the way in which the Tourism pedagogy is perceived. Often, it is regarded as a classroom-bound subject instead of a platform for connecting schools and communities and bringing about community transformation. Jamal et al. (2011) describe tourism as a social and cultural phenomenon. This perspective is aligned with the move that higher education institutions instituted after the Bologna Process should re-invest in the tourism curriculum from a pedagogy renewal view. It is in the interest of this investigation to view pedagogy as a platform that designates local heritage as a strength of communities, particularly after the demise of apartheid. The curriculum should not only be a means to accumulate grades but also a springboard to facilitate social values, such as peace, social cohesion, non-sexism, non-racialism, and democracy (Muller, 2020). The term sustainability is used without necessarily understanding what sustainable education is. Youness (2017) argues that sustainability means enhancing jobs and improving the economy. South Africa has a diverse population, which also means diverse economic sources. Still, the curriculum seemingly has not yet been exploited to the level at which it can be applied to tap into the different economic sources, such as local heritage, to provide local economies with sustainable living and heritage preservation.

Research Questions

1. How can schools implement the Tourism curriculum in a way that contributes to heritage preservation and sustainable tourism in rural areas and townships?

   RQ 1.1 Does valorising the tourism curriculum encourage stakeholder engagement in preserving local heritage in rural and township communities?

RQ 1.2 Does the tourism curriculum require further reforms to encourage schools to play a meaningful role in community development?

2. How can Tourism curriculum be put on the same level with other subjects?
3. What impact does tourism education have on students' understanding of community sustainability?

RQ 3.1 What knowledge and skills do students gain from the tourism curriculum regarding sustainable practices?

RQ 3.2 What are the long-term impacts on students' attitudes and behaviour towards sustainability in their communities?

Research Aims and Objectives.

a) Investigate the role of schools in forging partnerships and relationships with local communities to generate and preserve knowledge about local heritage sites.
b) Examine the benefits of teaching the tourism curriculum from a community sustainability perspective in South African's rural and township schools.
c) Investigate the long-term benefits for students regarding community sustainability.
d) Investigate the role of teacher capacitation in uplifting the status of Tourism subject.

Literature Review

This study contributes to the existing literature on the role of the Tourism curriculum in fostering and bolstering sustainable heritage in rural and township communities. However, it is imperative to review the literature that discusses the school curriculum development and reform stages in South Africa from 1995 to 2014 to present a rather comprehensive, coherent, and logical argument. The curriculum amendments were intended to direct education towards a quality education, especially after most of the population had been subjected to subjugation for about five decades. From 1995, after the democratic elections, national audits were conducted to assess the different curriculums, and the results revealed significant gaps for each audit. Subsequently, in 1997, a new curriculum policy was launched, curriculum 2005, which was outcome-based. In 2002, this curriculum was reconstructed and approved into the Revised National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and implemented in 2004. It was reviewed in 2009 regarding the quality of learning and teachers. As a result, the 2009 findings of the NCS were reviewed in 2011. Its subsequent amendment led to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), claims DoE (Department of Education 2009; National Education Policy Act 1996; 2009) and Pinnock (2011).

The Tourism Curriculum Concept

Based on the evolution of the school curriculum in South Africa, as documented by the CAPS Tourism Package published by the Umalusi, a Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, in collaboration with the Department of Tourism in South Africa, the Tourism curriculum appears to be aligned with Curriculum levels and associated curriculum documentation (Thijs & Van den Akker, 2009). This characteristic presents Tourism as a key subject in the country's various economic strategies. In 2009, the subject was therefore identified as a priority economic sector as well as one of the growth areas which are expected to contribute to the development of economic activities in rural areas by the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP2), according to the National Tourism Sector Strategy, (February 2011). Therefore, it is assumed that the tourism subject, as early as the school phase, is recommended as part of the improvements that can potentially influence the implementation of the curriculum both in and outside the classroom.

Heritage and Economy

According to Timothy and Boyd (2006) and Stoddart and Rogerson (2009), tourism is regarded and described as a strategy in rural areas to market less developed heritage asserts. One of the effective ways to achieve this, according to Snowball and Courteney (2010), is documenting them. Although most of the publicity is often done by tourism boards and municipalities, for example, on wine routes in the Western

Eastern Cape and in KwaZulu-Natal Midlands Meander and the Eastern Cape, heritage trails are named after local chiefs; on such occasions, schools can also get involved by researching the names and even the roles these individuals played in the political-liberation struggle for freedom or cultural roles, which is a way in which the subject of tourism can apply the knowledge gained from the history curriculum.

The preservation of heritage in South Africa is intrinsically linked to the political context of the country before 1994. According to Timothy and Boyd (2006), the history of certain races was excluded, which Kim et al. (2007) refer to as collective amnesia. The deliberate suppression of certain histories can be addressed through revitalising local heritage, which Snowball and Courteney (2010), described as a healing process and an attempt to correct the gaps in South Africa's history. While this requires a substantial amount of financial funding, schools can contribute from an academic point of view.

A study in Indonesia (Hampton, 2005) advocates for community participation, presenting tourism as a bottom-up, participatory, and benefit-oriented activity. While schools may not be involved in the financial planning and management of the heritage sites for tourism, their involvement could be a step forward in the practical education and training of learners about the Tourism industry. More significantly, if we single out the Midlands Meander, which is mainly rural, the local community, according to Snowball and Courteney (2010), was not benefiting from the tourism offshoots; it is only a recent development that emerging Black entrepreneurs are obtaining membership in the route association. Most factors responsible for the lack of rural Black participants in heritage and tourism development include limited information and lack of finance and experience. Schools, as centres of knowledge, can educate communities about the role that they can play in developing a sound tourism economy. One example would be to discuss a much simpler and user-friendly White Paper, a policy paper which stresses the advancement of tourism to develop even those areas that are lagging because the tendency, even for the government, is to focus only a few destinations already enjoying publicity, argues Viljoen and Tlabela (2006).

Theoretical Framework

This study is shaped by three theories, Community Based Education, Cultural Heritage Education and Sustainable Development theories. According to the community based education theory, residents' views on the benefits of tourism shape the attention that scholars have afforded the subject (Almeida-García, et al., 2016). Studies show that community members will support development innitiatives if they realise that community innitiatives are a platform for development (Lee, 2013), which leads to supporting such programmes. Bui (2011) and Bui et al. (2020), argue that community-based environmental education is a participatory, collaborative, action and information based process, hence the positive reaction of communities towards development programmes, such as community based tourism (Abdul Aziz, et al., 2023). This approach to education is empowering and preserves community heritage. Cultural heritage education asserts that culture has many layers, movable, immovable, tangible and intangible heritage, and is highly contested discipline (Jagielska-Burduk, et al., 2021). Cultural heritage and sustainability are aligned because, culture is an non-renewable resource, therefore its preservation is crucial, according to Jagielska-Burduk, et al. (2021). In light of this, education is an integral part of its preservation, through awareness and other forms of education. Thus far, UNESCO has been crucial in developing the existing legal framework in the area of culture, by adopting six conventions in the area of heritage. According to the Agenda 2030 for sustainable goals, SDG 4.7 ensures that by 2030, learners acquire knowledge and skills required to promote sustainable development, human rights, equality and the promotion of culture, peace, diversity and global citizenship. According to the Sustainable Development Theory, the curriculum has a role to promote and encourage tourism practices that merge economic growth with environmental stewardship and social equity. The Brundtland Commission presents this theory as a lens though which learners' learning parttens should be guided. They should learn about how tourism impact communities in the communities where they live and go to school (Brundtland & Khalid, 1987). This aligns educational outcomes with broader goals of sustainable community development.

Methodology

We present a constructivist qualitative study. Adopting a constructivist approach, according to Crotty (1998), allows the researcher to search for culturally and historically explained interpretations of the social life world. The construction of meaning and knowledge, according to constructivism, is a societal-driven process through interaction with reality (Schmuck, 1997). This paper aims to pool multiple teachers' knowledge about the topic at hand to contribute to the Tourism curriculum in the South African context. The sample consisted of a total of ten (10) teachers, nine (9) who are experienced, and one (1) who is a novice, in schools located both in rural and township South Africa. Due to the logistical dynamics, an internet survey was chosen as the most practical way of administering the research questionnaire to teachers. It was designed in Microsoft Word format and emailed to the respondents.

The purposeful sampling of the respondents was based on the idea that I am a teacher and have worked with some of the respondents as colleagues in different schools. In the process, they could suggest names other teachers I did not know, who could also be potential respondents. However, the results of this study cannot be generalised because of the size of the sample.

The choice behind the use of email as a tool and platform for conducting online research data collection is supported by the idea that as early as year 2002, emails were already used in Iceland in a study involving teachers and students (Lefever et al., 2007). Electronic data collection methods vary widely, including computer-administered, electronic mail, and web surveys (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). Since the early 2000s, the Internet has become the most convenient tool and platform for survey research, argues Van Selm and Jankowski (2006). Online surveys present themselves as both advantages and liabilities; for this paper, the positives surpass the challenges. It should be mentioned that internet-based surveys provide the researcher with economic relief based on the logistical factors posed by the distance and financial costs, according to Van Selm and Jankowski (2006). The ease is also provided by the accessibility by which potential respondents can be reached. In this study, using email was particularly attractive because the participant teachers work in different schools across a large South African region, meanwhile the researcher is based in outside South Africa. However, despite the benefits, challenges were still encountered. For example, communication with some teachers stretched much longer because of the poor internet networks, leading to receiving responses later than anticipated. Other teachers were concerned about their privacy and anonymity because, as Van Selm and Jankowski (2006) argue, email-based responses are prone to invasion of privacy, where the identity of respondents can be compromised due to the nature of the Reply Function of an email programme.

The study also references two case studies. Case studies in education can bring to the fore challenges faced by teachers in education (Broudy, 1990). In the context of this article, teachers are unable to some extent to implement the Tourism curriculum to effect community transformation, through the two case studies below, we can draw some conclusions that it is a possible feat.

Results

In rural and township schools, the tourism curriculum can serve as a vehicle for teaching students about local heritage, environmental stewardship, and sustainable business practices. By embedding sustainability principles within the tourism curriculum, educators can prepare students to become custodians of their heritage and proactive participants in local economic development, however teachers also should be prepared. This means that curriculum transformation and teacher training is crucial to the achievement of the roles that the subject is expected to fulfill.

Discussion

Lack of a Strong Will

Some teachers agree that tourism remains a vocational subject that is not taken as seriously as it should be, partly due to the country's symbolic nature of curriculum changes. In the wake of South Africa's democratic elections in 1994, the then minister of education launched national processes that aimed to transform the curriculum and purge its apartheid-subjugating matter. However, these changes did not legitimately usher in change; instead, they exposed the symbolic and superficial transition, argues Jansen (1999). The gaps in the curriculum implementation are visible generally across the curriculum, including the Tourism subject.

South Africa's Tourism curriculum seems advanced and detailed compared to countries that implement the IGCSE Curriculum, like Kenya, Lesotho, India and the UK, because its objectives include content that discusses culture and heritage, mapwork and marketing the country (Department of Education, 2014). However, it still does not occupy the same status as other subjects in the school curriculum. Teachers and school managers' perception of the Tourism subject, according to Nhlapo et. (2019), poses a challenge of rendering it an easy subject for those learners who are struggling in the STEM subject. This attitude is also popular among teachers in Lesotho. In 2011, when the subject was introduced in the country, learners did not hesitate to elect it as part of their high school curriculum package. Teachers who participated in a study conducted by Nhlapo et al. (2019), Lesotho also holds similar sentiments about the Tourism subject resembling a dumping site for learners struggling with other elective subjects.

According to Sean (2010), there is a general feeling that Tourism is a generic subject that utilises everyday knowledge. While this may be true to some degree, it still threatens to tarnish the image of the subject and water down its significance. Dube (2014) argues that these phenomena present a paradox because while the government designates the subject as an integral contribution to the economy, on the ground, it is perceived as a soft discipline, which may be interpreted to mean that it has no significant value, which this a direct opposite of the sentiments shared by this study. Based on the above claims in the South African context, it can be argued that the extent of commitment and support from key decision-makers to formulate policies to address particular social issues by utilising the curriculum seems to be an inevitable practical trajectory. This is reflected by the coastal part of Lebanon and Syria, which, according to Bellos et al. (2021) and Bou (2021), the tourism industry will thrive and be shielded from threats such as terrorism, conflict and political corruption, and become a smart and sustainably worthwhile investment if there is a visible political will to transform tourism, a process that is contingent on the power of education as a reform tool (Airey & Tribe, 2006). This perspective portrays and regards the youth as the custodians of heritage, which is achievable through a meaningful education system. Considering this view, this paper understands that Tourism education or Tourism curriculum can promote sustainability and economic development since sustainable tourism has become a popular trend worldwide, according to UNWTO (2020a; 2020b; 2020c; 2020d).

A Self-reliance, Community-based Curriculum

The self-reliance community-based concept in education is a philosophy linked to Tanzania's former statesman, Julius Nyerere, which he popularised across the African continent after recognising that the Western-based education system was not benefiting Africans, instead, it was turning Africans into dependent individuals. He further criticised it as being theoretical and lacking practical skills (Nyerere, 1967). He campaigned to adopt a community participation-based curriculum. In this light, one of the participants agreed that tourism as a vocational subject should be taught in a way that triggers an entire community's awareness of tourism attractions available in their communities. Nhlapo (2018) argues that communities are an asset which can assist schools and learners in reaching a state of self-reliance, which is an idea that is also supported by Kretzmann and McNight (1993; 1996) and Moeller and Bielfeldt (2011). According to Russell (2009), communities play a significant role in improving local education in Mexico, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Kenya. Community participation is a well-documented concept (Fan & Williams, 2010; Moeller & Bielfeldt, 2011; Barron, 2013; Fathi, 2014).

Nhlapo (2018) argues that community participation goes a long way where the community members have low levels of education because once community members see a value in the knowledge that they possess and begin collaborating with schools in the form of capacity building, they can significantly gain self-esteem (Myende, 2014). This therefore informs us that in addition to the heritage asserts that exist in communities, it can be the beginning of a long-standing relationship between communities and schools, if utilised meaningfully. For this section of the study, I am presenting the participants views on the contributions of the example of Mount iNhlangakazi.

This mountain lies in the valleys of Ndwedwe. It is a pilgrimage mountain of the Nazareth Baptist Church, founded by Isaiah Shembe, a Zulu prophet who holds a special place in the hearts of the members of this church. This church is one of the oldest and largest independent African churches, also known as an indigenous church, founded around 1910 (Van der Heyden, 2004). The church has Zulu traditions and culture at the centre of its doctrine, making the mountain a shrine and a heritage site. Apart from that, the Nazareth church is one of the many Zionist churches that sprung up to resist colonial religion, which rendered it an enemy of missionary work, leading to being labelled as a black nationalist organisation that was threatening public safety and their leaders' charlatans and rebels in disguise, argues Lea (1924) and Van Wing, (1958). Therefore, the historiography of the church describes a strong political, religious, and cultural heritage that exists mainly in rural areas. The historiography presents the mountain and the whole religion as heritage, and the community living in Ndwedwe and the schools located there are said to be the main initiators and beneficiaries of the heritage. This idea is aligned with the Community Cultural Wealth Theory that acknowledges that Indigenous knowledge from the community is worthy for educational purposes (Mahlomaholo, 2012; Graven & Schafer, 2013). Such an approach to teaching tourism is believed to be useful in assisting teachers who sometimes are not adequately trained or lack resources to gravitate towards learner-centred teaching, which renders the subject effectively vocational; Park, (2008).

Teacher Capacitation and Empowerment

The teaching of Tourism as school subject, but significantly as a vocational subject, is not executed in earnest, according to the view of some participants. Previously, the subject did not enjoy the same status as other subjects to qualify learners for university entrance. This is one of the reasons that contributed to the relegation of the subject to an inferior status compared to academic subjects.

Participants believe that the threat of the subject not being taught justly looms, if a subject is not held in high regard (Chili, 2013; Adukaite et al., 2016). Therefore, it is paramount that Tourism teachers and school management be capacitated on available ways of elevating the subject so that it becomes a tool to prosper the subject and uplift the status of local heritage. In Lebanon and Syria, a study conducted, provides perspectives on the role of educational institutions in encouraging local development through educational tourism; Bou (2021).

Tourism in South Africa is renowned for its role in the economy and its ability as a sustainable labour attraction (Adukaite et al., 2017). Considering this view, Tourism teachers and learners, as early as high school, should be aware of the subject's critical role (Adukaite et al., 2016). According to Adukaite et al. (2017), teachers can implement the curriculum flexibly in deciding which methodologies to adopt. However, such knowledge comes with extensive training and experience. Generally, Tourism teachers are not qualified to teach the subject argues Adukaite et al. (2017) and lack innovation, interest, and exposure. To address the challenge of student apathy regarding the subject, we must create relationships with the community to forge a participatory teaching and learning approach to heritage as one of the aspects of the tourism subject.

Case Studies

The Madikwe Game Reserve in the Northwest Province is an example of a successful integrating tourism education with community sustainability. This programme facilitates the participation of local schools in the wildlife conservation, eco-tourism, and economic development benefits of sustainable tourism. Through this programme, community participation in various tourism initiatives has increased. One of the key factors that renders this programme a success, is education. The Madikwe Reserve operates various educational programmes that aim to conscientise locals of the importance of conservation, empower locals with the knowledge and skills needed to engage in sustainable practices. Some of the significant benefits of this initiative is the income generated from tourism. The funds help fund local schools and educational projects, thereby contributing to long-term community development. There is an increasing demand for programs that produce socially conscious students armed with practical and contextual knowledge and ready to act accordingly (Arrobas, 2020). The tourism sector requires students who can interprete theoretical views into practical realities.

Another case, is that of Khayelitsha Tourism Education Project. Khayelitsha is one of the biggest Black townships situated in Cape Town, formed by the apartheid state (Mokoena, 2022). Upon its formation, it was characterised by overcrowding and poverty. Today, Khayelitsha is a predominantly characterised by informal housing and unemployment and lack of infrastructure (Phelanyane, 2021; Kongo, 2022). Despite these challenges, schools and other institutions remain radical in capacitating the youth. The Tourism Education Project focuses on empowering youth through tourism. The curriculum includes modules on local history, cultural tours, and sustainable business practices. The project has fostered a sense of pride in local heritage and equipped students with practical skills to enter the tourism industry (Lange, & Bricker, 2024), empowering the youth to contribute to the local economy.

Conclusion

The study explored how Tourism education is perceived through a community sustainability lens, particularly in terms of preserving and promoting local heritage via the tourism curriculum. The literature highlights that community engagement, collaboration, participation, and the recognition of community cultural wealth are essential elements of a successful curriculum. These aspects also contribute to expanding learner knowledge beyond the classroom. Recognising Tourism's vital role in driving economic growth and addressing historical inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa, this approach may offer a pathway to job creation through heritage-based initiatives, depending on weather communities are aware of the significance of heritage in this context. However, implementing this vision poses challenges. One key concern is the shortage of professionally trained teachers who understand the subject's depth and societal relevance. Such educators are crucial in influencing school leadership to actively involve communities in the educational process. The study suggests that adopting a community sustainability perspective in the Tourism curriculum, particularly in rural and township schools, can reframe the subject to emphasise heritage preservation, sustainable development, and community-based education. This approach promotes a more integrated, relevant, and engaging curriculum. It prepares learners to become proactive agents in their communities and supports long-term impact through strengthened school-teacher-learner-community relationships. Ultimately, the study advocates for a resilient educational model that fosters community empowerment and sustainable development through Tourism education.

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Layers of Tourism in Protected Ecosystems of Slovenia: Trends and Challenges

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The article is a personal view of a geographer about the ongoing relationship between tourism and nature. The focus is on Slovenia, a European country with diverse natural ecosystems. The criteria for the protection of the country's natural wealth are presented. Within the EU's "Nature 2000" framework, 37% of the country's surface is defined as exceptional, and 14% of the territory is classified by Slovenian law into five protection categories. The tourism industry builds its promotion through the nation's natural diversity of the Mediterranean, Alpine, Karst and Pannonian (Danubian) landscapes. Protected areas are under the constant pressure of visitors and economic restructuring. The challenge for tourism planners and regulators of natural resources is focused on tourist flows numerically, substantively, and promotionally. After the impoverishment of economic inflow during the SarsCov pandemic (2019 -) and the desire for a rapid rise of tourism, the fear exists that tourism industry participants, tourists, and providers of tourist amenities would bypass the recommended management of nature's treasures. Therefore, the reasons for the author's plea to place significant nature treasures (and culture), like the Triglav National Park (TNP), under international observance, favourably UNESCO, is documented.

Keywords: human geography; protection of nature; sustainable tourism, Triglav National Park, Slovenia

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Introduction

A Place is Designed to Provide a Living Experience Like an Experience Attached to the Site.

Geographers are, by rule, superficial when studying the Earth. We register the phenomenon, discover connections, and monitor the processes that shaped them. Geographers do not descend into the "guts" of the phenomenon. One of my mentors, professor Svetozar Ilešič (1907–1985), concluded that a geographer observes the planet from a satellite. He registers traces of nature and humans on Earth and files layers they have left behind. In times of peace and stability, we individuals change our planet through work, residing, caretaking, educating, mobility, socio-political activism and leisure activities (= tourism; recreation) (Maier et al., 1977; Zupančič, 2019; Drozg, 2020;). Tourism has lately put many layers on the planet. The elites, initially trendsetters, began … and the middle class of the Western to the Eastern society followed. The poorer strata of society were seldom incorporated (except pilgrimages). In Colorado, Professor *Nick Helburn* (1918–2011), another mentor of mine, a former student of the famous cultural geographer *Carl Ortwin Sauer* (1890–1975), and an admirer of the nature protectionist *John Muir* (1838–1914) took us, students, in early November of 1981 to the Rocky Moun-

Table 1 The Definition of Protected Areas by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and by the Nature Conservation Act of the Republic of Slovenia.

Protected Area	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (1994)	Nature Conservation Act (Zakon o ohranjanju narave, 2004)
National Park	A larger ecosystem and natural area with preserved indigenous ecological processes and specific types of ecosystems is the base for providing environmental and cultural conditions that conform to meet the spiritual, scientific, and educational needs and recreation (following the primary management objectives).	Larger area with several natural values and great biodiversity. National parks must be defined by at least two conservation areas so that the strengthened protection regime must be predominant in size and consider the international protection standards. The national park institution, the purpose of protection, the size of the protected area, the protection criteria and the operator shall be determined by law.
Regional/ Landscape Park	A long-standing interaction between man and nature has created a larger area of the specific ecological, biological, and cultural landscape. The nature-human interaction is the key to preserving the specific and authentic ecological characters in the related geographic areas.	A relatively larger area of the region's typical ecosystem and by size, outstanding primordial nature is intertwined with the works of humans and balanced by nature. It should be defined by at least two conservation areas so that the conservation area with a sharper regime is in size of smaller scale. Detailed rules of conduct are to be established.

Source: Dudley (2008), Berginc et al. (2006), and Sovinc and Gosar (2015)

tains National Park. We've observed the mountainous landscape from the Summer Camp at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Across from us, we've identified a dark green forested slope and two white stripes in the cleared area. We, students, thought it was a typical wood clearing, a work of foresters. After a short break, the teacher explained: "… no, no… there is a winter sports centre in the making (Breckenridge); due to the lack of precipitation ("the Rain Shadow"), the ski slopes must be artificially snowed in early autumn already". Almost a decade later, I completed my doctoral dissertation entitled "Holiday Homes as an Element of the Transformation of Slovenian Alpine Regions" (Gosar, 1989), which was, in a way, triggered by this experience. UNESCO and the documents of Rio+20 (Vernhes, 2013) claim that sustainable development should be an exclusive goal of the planet's societies; it would diminish poverty, create a society of social justice and preserve natural resources. The World Tourism Organization (e.g., in The Guidebook: Sustainable Tourism for Development) directs development policies towards environmentally, socially, and economically responsible planning and management (World Tourism Organization, 2013). According to UNWTO guidelines, sustainable tourism should focus on non-mass tourism. In addition to that, respecting visited nature and culture. Consequently, eco-tourism (responsible tourism) should be understood as non-mass travel in naturally sensitive, protected areas where the visitor would raise public awareness towards preserving the natural environment. The set of products would enable visitors to admire the complexity of natural and cultural environments (heritage, habits) and thereby contribute to the development of the local economy. Tourism would also be in tune with the residential population and allow tourists to understand the destination's social/cultural substance in its cohesion with nature. The rules of conduct, namely the protection regimes and the development direction, as well as recommendations for the types of protected areas which could be included in tourism products of a certain country, are defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (1994).

This paper focuses on the exponential societal use of the planet's natural wealth by tourists, the tourism

Table 2 Management Objectives of Protected Areas Outlined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and by the Slovenian Nature Conservation Act

Protected Area	Management objectives defined by the Union for the Conservation of Nature (International Union for the Conservation, 1994)	Management objectives defined by the Nature Conservation Act of the Republic of Slovenia (Zakon o ohranjanju narave, 2004)
National Park	*Primary objectives:* Protection of natural biodiversity, including organic structures and environmental processes of the area for promotion, education, and recreation. *Secondary objectives*: Management of the area of its natural state to ensure the sustainability of the representative examples, genetic resources, and natural processes. The site management must maintain the survival of viable and ecologically functional populations and communities of native species in such density, which is necessary to keep the integrity of the ecosystem in the long run. The management should contribute to biodiversity conservation, especially regional ecological processes. With the goal not to expand biological and ecological degradation, the management of the area should manage visits to the area for relaxing and recreational purposes. It should concentrate on the education of visitors. At the same time, the management of the protected site must consider the needs of the resident population and local communities so that their acts do not harm the primary goal of protection. In addition, the management of the protected site should, through adapted tourism products, contribute to developing the local economy.	*Primary objectives:* Natural parks should, in addition to the purpose of protection (Tab. 1), set up a vision towards sustainable development of the area, considering the specific regional development and the complex needs of the residential population, including measures to support physical and mental relaxation of humans. Protected areas should become future cells of sustainability. *Secondary objectives:* The purpose of designating protected areas by law (as in the Conservation Act of the RS) is to outline specific landscape areas with outstanding natural features and authentic human-nature interactions. Each protected area should be tackled separately and not within the designated category of the general protection guidelines.
Regional/ Landscape Park	*Primary objectives:* Protection and conservation of outstanding and authentic landscapes (mainland, sea) and their associated nature, including additional values of the site that have emerged due to man's interaction with nature. *Secondary objectives*: The purpose of protection is to maintain a balanced interaction of man and nature by conserving certain spatial areas and their corresponding traditional forms of governance, including sociological, cultural, and spiritual values. Management of named sites should also address the broader protection of nature (flora and fauna; agricultural and aquatic phenomenon) and the landscape's specific use. It should produce opportunities for relaxation, well-being and other activities within recreation and tourism. Management of the site should focus on the natural and cultural heritage to encourage the active community to participate.	(See above)

Source Dudley (2008), Berginc et al. (2006), and Sovinc and Gosar (2015)

industry and linked economies. Visits of tourists to diverse natural resources of Slovenia, particularly sites under protection, will be discussed and elaborated. Special attention will be given to the Triglav National Park (TNP). Due to Triglav's national, cultural and natural significance (2865 m) for the Slovenian nation, our intention is also to start a discussion by which the Eastern Julian Alps, with their highest peak Triglav, would be placed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. In a way, this mountainous range, from its natural and cultural point of view, is like the area of the neighbouring Dolomites, which were included in the List in 2009.

Spatial Background: Areas of Protection

Slovenia is one of the most diverse tourist destinations in Europe. On its relatively small size (20.273 km2), Mediterranean landscapes cover 9%, the European Alps 42%, karstic landscapes of the Dinaric Alps 28%, and the Pannonian (also called Danubian) landscapes cover 21% of the nation-state's territory. The detailed geographic perspective singles out Mediterranean flysch areas (5.2%), Mediterranean karst (3.3%); Alpine highlands (15.1%), pre-Alpine hills (23%), Alpine lowlands (4.0%); Dinaric plateaus (18.8%), Dinaric valleys (9.4%); Pannonian hills (14,8%) and Pannonian flatlands (6,4%). (Orožen Adamič & Perko, 1998). Within the "Natura 2000" program framework, the EU Life program singled out 365 areas, covering 37% of the country. In this context, protection is granted to 205 animals, 27 plants and 60 typical natural environments, which is 11% of all protected habitats in the European Union - EU (Ministrstvo za okolje in prostor, 2022). The largest protected nature area covers Triglav National Park - TNP (838 km2); the areas designated as UNESCO's natural heritage cover 773 km2 (World Tourism Organization, 2020). Six types of protection are legally defined in nature conservation areas. In addition to the Triglav National Park, 3 Regional Parks, 46 Landscape Parks, and 57 Nature Reserves (57) exist. A certain level of protection is granted to 1.164 Monuments of Nature (Zavod Republike Slovenije za varstvo narave, n.d.). The Slovenian Nature Conservation Act (Zakon o ohranjanju narave, 2004) has partially implemented conditions published by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (1994). The 49. article describes protected areas. In a special survey, we have checked criteria implemented on categories of protection by Slovenian law – in national, regional and landscape parks. The system of protection determines the category or type of protected area and should consider the internationally established IUCN categorisation of protected areas. The minimum protection and sub-sequential tourist use standards are not set for each category. The analysis of differences and the consistency between the international categories of protected areas, by IUCN standards, and categories of protected areas in the Slovenian system has been performed (Zakon o ohranjanju narave, 2004). A comparison of the management of objectives in categories of national parks and protected landscapes with similarly defined protected areas in Slovenia has been carried out. (Dudley, 2008; Berginc et al., 2006; Sovinc & Gosar, 2015).

According to international standards, in the central area of national parks, activities that would endanger "the biodiversity, together with the organic structure and environmental processes, may not be carried out" (Dudley, 2008). Article 68 of the Nature Conservation Act of the Republic of Slovenia (Zakon o ohranjanju narave, 2004) prohibits and limits activities that threaten biodiversity, organic structure, and environmental processes in the TNP's central area and at designated sites of regional/landscape parks. However, this arrangement is not a minimum standard in named and other protected areas. Therefore, activities should be banned or at least limited in central areas of each protected nature site if they threaten biodiversity, a basic objective of the international classification categories.

Methodology

Previous Study. The Slovenian Tourist Board (STO) has since produced several strategic plans and promotional campaigns. Along with the general promotional slogan "I feel Slovenia", the contemporary trendy slogan is to recognise the destination as "Green, Active, Healthy". From the dawn of the 21st century, the intention has been to base tourism growth entirely on principles of sustainable development. Students at the University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies - Turistica, have tried to find out how national directives are accepted by hotel management and among tourists. Senior management believed sustainable development should focus on actual, place/destination-related problems. They would favour sustainable development if promotional campaigns would change past trends and would deliver increased short- and mid-term financial results. Many have acted independently by saving electricity

Table 3 Protected Sites of Nature Recommended for Visit

UNESCO (Nature)	National Park (NP)	Regional Parks (RP)	Landscape Parks (KP)	Natural Reserves
Unesco Global Geopark Idrija (294 km^2)	TNP - Triglav National Park (839 km2)	Inner Carniola (incl. Cerknica Intermittend Lake (222 km^2)	Debeli Rtič (3 km^2)	Škocjanski zatok (1 km^2)
Škocjan Caves (31 km^2; incl. RP area)		Škocjan Cave (31 km^{2*})	Strunjan (4 km^2)	Lagunes of Ormož (1km^2)
Krokar Primeval Forest Reserve (1 km^2)		Kozjansko (206 km^2)	Sečovlje Salt Ponds LP (7 km^2)	
Snežnik Ždrocle Reserve (8 km^2)			Pivka Intermittend Lakes-17 (140 km^2)	
Ljubljana Marsh Pile-Dwellers (150 km^2)			Ljubljana Marshes (150 km^{2*})	
Unesco Global Geopark Karawanken (in Slovenija 409 km^2; Austria 568 km^2)			Tivoli, Rožnik & the Hill of Šiška (5 km^2)	
			Radensko polje (15 km^2)	
			Lahinja (3 km^2)	
			Kolpa (43 km^2)	
			Logarska dolina (24 km^2)	
			Goričko (462 km^2)	
6 (773 km2)	1 (839 km2)	3 (429 km^2) * incl. in UNESCO	11 (706 km^2) * incl. in UNESCO	2 (2 km^2)

Source Sovenska turistična organizacija (2020)

and water, changing cleaning practices and treating food-wastes. They disagree with enforced regional/national handling of the matter; they want to be consulted in advance because some measures may affect their profits in the long run. Tourists welcome the sustainable tourism concept only as long as measures taken are not venturing their wallets, changing embedded habits, interfering with their privacy and not affecting the quality of the existing tourist attractions at the destination. Three-quarters of visitors to tourist destinations consider environmentally conscious approaches as desirable. The general opinion of visitors regarding educational content is that they should be offered at tourist destinations where they should be applied to the residential population, particularly to tourist industry managers and workers (Jurinčič & Gosar, 2003).

Research Base

Along with directing general tourism development, the Slovenian Tourist Board (STO) publishes award-winning catalogues and promotional materials highlighting the Republic of Slovenia's natural and cultural assets. According to the STO brochure *Outdoor Slovenia: Movements in the Nature* (Slovenska turistična organizacija, 2020), 23 large-scale protected nature areas of Slovenia are in high interest by visitors. The Triglav National Park (TNP), six UNESCO World Heritage Sites and 11 landscape parks lead the way. STO suggests that the experience-loving tourists should have 1976 km2 (about 9.8% of the nation-state's territory) in mind. Dominant by size is the Triglav National Park in the Julian Alps (839 km2), followed by Unesco sites (773 km2) and designated Landscape parks (706 km2). Regional parks cover an area of 429 km2, and the largest of three, encompassing 222 km2, is the Inner Carniola Regional Park (Notranjski reiki park), with several above and underground attractions produced by the karst geology.

Selected contemporary trends regarding pandemic and post-pandemic behaviour of tourists in protected areas have been observed in contemporary literature and at several national institutions, such as the Slovenian Office of Statistics (SURS), the headquarters of the Triglav National Park - TNP (Triglavska Roža, Bled) and the Mountain Rescuing Service (GRS).

Tourism Layers in Protected Sites

Promotion and Directions. In 2020, the Slovenian Tourist Board, in the brochure "Slovenija na prostem. Moj način gibanja v naravi" (Open Air Slovenia. My Movements in Nature), highlighted four types of activities: hiking, cycling, experiences of the karst underground and golf. Other recommended leisure-oriented summer activities included horseback riding, parachuting, paragliding, hang-gliding, and ballooning, experiences on and along rivers, lakes and the sea, visits to the adrenaline parks and activities in health resorts (Slovenska turistična organizacija, 2020). Recommended summer tourist activities placed in protected areas of nature show the following characteristics:

1. Hiking and Mountaineering. Out of 12 hiking/mountaineering trails, as many as six crisscross Triglav National Park (TNP), five trails offer experiences in landscape and regional parks. Just one hiking trail avoids protected areas (region Zasavje). Protected sites of nature are crisscrossed by 92% of recommended hiking trails.
2. Bicycling. Of the nine recommended cycling routes, two cross the Triglav National Park, five lead cyclists through regional/landscape parks, and two avoid protected areas (the Mura River and the Kamnik-Savinja Alps circle tour). Thus, 78% of the recommended cycling routes cross protected natural sites.
3. Experience of the karst (and the underground world of Slovenia). 5 exceptional and recommended caves to visit three are in protected areas: in the Škocjan Caves Regional Park, in the Karawanken Geopark (both UNESCO sites) and in the Inner Carniola Regional Park (Notranjski reiki park). 60% of recommended visits to the underground world are to be performed in protected areas.
4. Other recommended sites to visit in summer include adventures in the air and on water as well as in "adrenalin parks". These are rarely located inside protected areas of nature and, therefore, are not subject to analyses. Nevertheless, their initial location is often on the edge or near nature-protected sites and could affect them indirectly. None of the recommended 15 golf courses are located within protected areas.

In the brochure named earlier, the Slovenian Tourist Board outlined destinations specially recognised by media or institutions related to tourism. In the frame of "hiking", two stand out: 1. the *Juliana Trai*l, circling the Triglav National Park in the alpine environment with outstanding vistas (330 km, 20 days, 1326 meters of maximum elevation above sea level); this trail was recommended by the British newspaper The Guardian and the USA's New York Times; 2. the *Peace Trail,* crisscrossing the Italian - Slovenian border and the Triglav National Park area in memory of the first World War tragedy at the Isonzo frontline in 1917 (120 km, seven days, hiking in part above 2000 m above sea level); this trail is marked with the sign "Slovenian Unique Experience". In the frame of "biking", the bicycle circle route *Slovenia (Mountain) Biking Tour* (1800 kilometres, 41 segments, 50.000 meters of elevation, 109 control points) stands out as it crosses several regional and landscape parks, as well as the Triglav National Park (Vršič Pass, 1611 meters). The "underground experience" is highlighted by three, named "Slovenian Unique Experience":

The Postojna Cave is 22 kilometres away from the Inner Carniola Region Park (Notranjski regijski Park - NRP).

The *Peca/Petzen* walking, biking and boating adventure in the Unesco Geopark Karawanken.

The *Caves of Škocjan* are a UNESCO Heritage Site, containing the world's largest underground canyon of the river Reka.

Table 4 Suggested Summer Outdoor Activities/Experiences by STO.

Hiking Trails	Biking Routes	Underground Experiences	Other Outdoor Atractivities	Golf
Slovenian Trail: 617 km (37 vistas); Pohorje via Alps to the Adriatic Sea*	Slovenian Biking Tour: 1800 km/41 segments*	Slovenian Unique Experience - Postojna Cave (22 km) Exploring: 4 km; Tourist Visits since 1818	40 take-off sites for hang-gliding & paragliding */**	Bovec: 3.012 m (9)
Via Alpina Red: 220 km; Karawanken via Julian Alps to the Adriatic Sea*	Pohorje Long Distance Trail: 75km**	Slovenian Unique Experience - Peca/ Karawanken: Walking, Biking, Boating: 5 km**	Zipline Parks: Učja, Kanin, Planica, Bled, Bohinj*, Golte, Črna na Koroškem; Maribor	Kranjska gora: 1.748 m (9)
Via Alpina Purple: 430km; Julian Alps to the Karawanken*	Trans Slovenia 1 Trail: 384 km / 7 segments*	Škocjanske jame: World Largest Underground River Canyon; Unesco Heritage **	20 adventurous parks: 5 in the Upper Soča Valley*; Stari vrh, Bohinj*, Bled, Postojna, Krvavec, Vače, Menina, Celje, Otočec, Osilnica, Betnava, Vurberk, Bukovniško jezero	Lipica: 6.225 m (9)
Alps-Adriatic Peace Trail: 145 km; criss-crossing Slovenian-Italian-Austrian border*	Trans Karawanken Trail: 132 km**	Vilenica: Oldest Cave Opened for Tourists (since 1660)	Outstanding Lakes: Bled (alpine lake w. island - icon of Slovenian Tourism); Bohinj (largest)*; Cerknica (intermittent)**; Šmartinsko (longest shore)	Bled: 6.536 m (18)
European Trail E7 (Naprudnik's Trail): 598 km; ** from Baltic to the Adriatic	Biking Trail along the Draga River: 145km**	Križna jama: Underground Lakes and Ponds (boat ride) **	Adriatic Coast: 21 beaches (on 47 km of coast)	Brdo: 887 m (9)
European Trail E 6 (Cigler's Trail): 260 km**; from Italian to Hungarian Spa's	Biking Trail Parenzana: 32 km (Trieste to Poreč) **		21 Spa's: Lendava, Moravske toplice, Radenci, Laško, Čatež, Dolenjske, Ptuj, Rogaška, Olimia, Zreče, Dobrna, Šmarješke, Portorož, Strunjan, Banovci, Mala Nedelja, Rimske toplice, Dobova, Topolšica, Snovik, Cerkno.	Ljubljana: 5.872 m (18) Lj.-Stanežiče: 1.299 m (9); Lj.Volčji potok: 5.015 m (18); Lj.Trnovo: 2.470 m (9)
Via Dinarica: 160 km**; experiencing the karst landscape	Around Kamnik-Savinja Alps: 130km			Grad Otočec: 6.189 m (18)
Alpe Adria Trail: 145 km* criss-crossing Slovenian-Italian-Austrian borders*	Via Bela Krajina: 115 km; **			Grad Mokrice: 5.785 m (18)
Mountain Trail of Koroška: 230 km **	Along Mura River: 56 km			Podčetrtek: 2.081 m (9)
Hiking Trail of Pomurje: 330 km**				Slovenjske Konjice: 2.448 m (9)
Hiking Trail of Zasavje: 199 km				Radenci: 1.669 m (9)
Juliana Trail: 330 km: experiencing the Julian Alps (suggested by New York Times and The Guardian) *				Moravske Toplice: 6.236 m (18)

Source Slovenska turistična organizacija (2020)

Among several other outdoor areas with karstic features, the intermittent *Cerknica Lake* in the Inner Carniola Regional Park's (NRP) core area is worth mentioning (see Table 4).

Layers of Tourism in Mountainous Environments. The most obvious layers of leisure, produced by constantly growing tourism in the Republic of Slovenia, are experienced along the Adriatic Sea and in

Table 5 Triglav National Park (TNP): Visits, Bed-nights, Mountain Rescues 2018 – 2021

	Mountaineering in TNP *	%	Bed-night stays in the TNP area Bohinj - (in 000)**	%	Bed-night stays in municipalities partly within TNP***	%	Interventions of Mountain Rescuing Teams in TNP ****	%
2018	172.711	100	661	100	3.945.332	100	322	100
2019	176.798	102	710	107	4.052.241	103	394	122
2020+	158.827	92	465	70	2.395.659	61	292	91
2021+	179.864	104	584	88	4.012.302	102	399	124

Sources - + pandemic years: SarsCov 19.

Notes * Statistics of the automatic cameras (April to August) in TNP at: Bohinjsko jezero, Krma, Lepena, Planina Blato, Tamar, Zadnjica. Source: Triglavska Roža, Bled: M. Odar, 2022. ** Source: Headquarters of the Triglav National Park (Triglavska Roža, Bled: M. Odar, 2022). *** Source: Statistical Office of Slovenia (2022). **** Source: Mountain Rescue Service (Gorska reševalna služba, 2022): municipalities with TNP area)

the Julian Alps. Early attempts to protect the alpine mountainous range go back to the beginning of the 20th century. In 1924, Albin Belar, a radio broadcaster (1864 - 1939), succeeded Triglav Lakes Valley, an area of 1.6 km2, and became declared "The Alpine Protection Site". 1981, the Bill of Triglav National Park (TNP) passed the Slovenian Parliament. In addition, the protection of 839 km2 of the mountainous area of the Eastern Julian Alps was finalised. Triglav - the Three Head Mountain has become the nation's symbol and is engraved in the Coat of Arms of the Republic of Slovenia. In 1895, the priest Jakob Aljaž placed a micro tower - a galvanised sheet of metal called Aljažev stolp (the Aljaž Hut) - on the top of the mountain. This structure evokes the memory of the national awakening and symbolically outlines opposition to the then-ruling (Austrian) elite. Nowadays, people's proverbial saying, "If you've not been on Triglav, you are not a Slovenian" ("Kdor ni bil na Triglavu ni Slovenc"). Proof of continuous visits and interest in the wealth of mountainous/alpine nature is found in recent statistics provided by the nation-state's statistical office, the Headquarters of the Triglav National Park and the register of the Mountain Rescuing Teams (Table 5).

Municipalities sharing the area of the Triglav National Park (TNP) reported that at the height of the pandemic, in 2021, tourists equalised overnight accommodations of the pre-pandemic years and even increased visits by 2% with the year 2018. At the beginning of the pandemic, tourist visits dropped by a third. According to results from cameras registering visitors hiking to the park's core, mountaineers decreased by just 11% (159.000). In 2021, as the vaccine against the virus became available, the visits to the Triglav National Park (TNP) 's core increased 2018 by 2%. Along with the growing number of visitors, rescuing teams' (Gorska reševalna služba, 2022) interventions increased by 24% (Table 5). On the edge of the park, visitors were intrigued by the many installations that satisfied the desires of post-industrial humans. Leisure/recreation supply installations - like zip lines, rafting, canyoning, downhill skiing and biking, flying in several styles and walking over trees… are mushrooming. Since they are an "open air" experience, they were heavily visited in the Covid-19 pandemic years (like in the municipalities of Bohinj, Bovec and Kranjska Gora). Major motives creating the contemporary layers of tourism in the TNP are related to a) the leisure-time motivated impacts, b) the nation-state's protection and intervention management and c) private and societal economic interests. Second home constructions are the most visible layers of tourism in the TNP. Starting in the 1960s, in socialist Yugoslavia, in times of de-privileged agriculture, the locals' pasture lands and farm huts started to switch ownership. Politically and economically privileged urban residents settled in. This trend continued and was, to a certain extent, stopped with the national park legislation. In a limited form, the construction of second homes

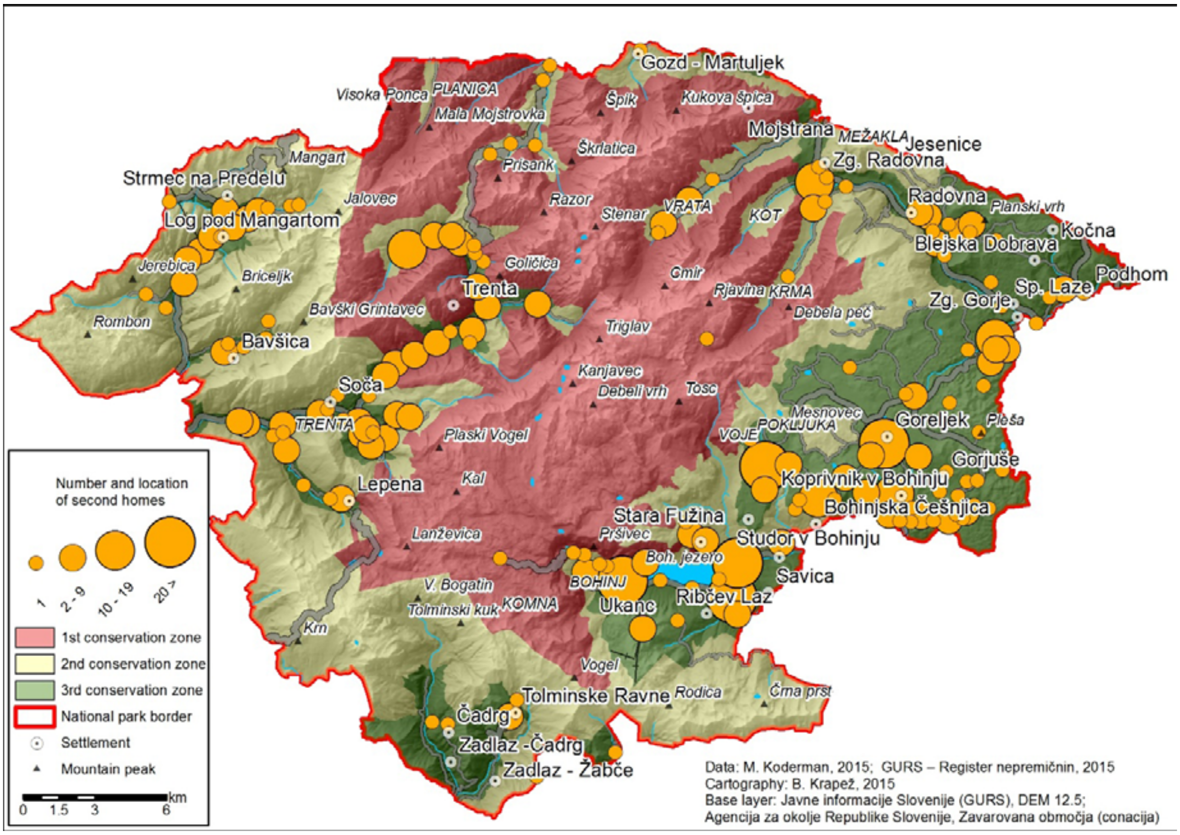

Figure 1 Second Homes in the Triglav National Park (TNP), Slovenia in 2015.
Source Miha Koderman (2017)

continued anyway. Most have been built without required permits. Municipalities have unwillingly legalised them; rare buildings were demolished. Named problems have often been lead stories in mass media, exposing the removal dilemmas (Gosar, 1989; Koderman & Salmič, 2013). In the village of Goreljek (7 full-time residents), 25 new second homes were built since 1981, and just one was legally demolished. Most of the year, the named village, with about 70 buildings, is a ghost town (despite several urban owners registering permanent residency there). According to the Revenue Office of Slovenia, 3.344 second homes are located on the territory of municipalities associated with TNP (see Figure 1). Between 400 and 600 are illegally constructed within the limits of the park. The management of the Triglav National Park reports about 30 cases of suspected new illegal objects every year. In September 2012, there were 129 such cases under consideration by the nation--states or municipality inspectorates (see Figure 1; Koderman, 2017).

Since the dawn of the 21st century, the national interest in was within the Triglav National Park has enforced by changing/improving the TNP Bill. The main aim was to increase nature protection and implement local initiatives. Some "national interests" also mirror the military infrastructure (high-mountain battlefield) and enlarged sports facilities. As the Slovenian biathlon team showed significant results in the international competition, the idea to develop a biathlon centre in the park's core area has received nationwide support. On the Plateau of Pokljuka, 1347 meters above sea level, construction began in 2008. The investment was worth close to 10 million Euros and was with 6.5 million Euros founded by the European

Regional Development Fund; the Ski Association of Slovenia provided missing funds. In 2012 the first international competition was attended by 18.000 spectators; the Biathlon World Championship in 2019 was visited by close to 50.000 sports fans. Despite efforts to minimise the impact of the centre on the fragile environment (waste-water treatment plant, minimal illumination on tracks, avoiding large-scale parking spaces, low-noise snow-making machines, the wild rooster population monitoring, etc.), low-key hotels have been upgraded, a stadium and a heliport were constructed. Violations of the Nature 2000 and EU habitat directives were registered. Namely, an above-ground water reservoir meant to support snowmaking exceeded the initially approved plan more than three times. The reservoir has a capacity of 5,478 cubic meters and is about three times larger than the proposed project (1,400 cubic meters). The EU Commission was put on alert because of the EU's co-financing of the project. A new project assessment took place in the years before the 2019 championship. In the according books, the water reservoir - a lake - is now registered as a "reservoir for pasture feeding cattle". According to media reports, as of March 2017, the European Commission has retracted the EU Proceedings 1308/10 and, in addition to that, removed its critics of the project (G. C., 2014; Kavčič, 2014; Gosar, 2017).

Findings

The attractiveness of the mountainous and alpine landscapes increased the interest of visitors, the economy, and the general society. The exploitation of the wealth of nature resulted in visitors' enjoyment. It enabled profit to the local and wider economy, but it often becomes, to a certain extent, a burden to the residential population. Several recent studies have outlined that the structure and attitude of tourists visiting mountains have changed, that in the pandemic years, destinations offering outdoor activities have gained popularity and that impacts of tourism on the host population have increasingly worked against interactive sustainability. Returning to the traditional values of the mountaineering culture would enforce sustainable tourism development in the mountains (Špindler et al., 2022). In 2021 the Mountain Rescue Service of Slovenia (Gorska reševalna služba, 2022) reported that nine interventions (out of 399) could have been triggered by "a person taking a photography of himself". Taking selfies at dangerous points, above cliffs etc., was the cause of 24 deaths in Europe in the last pandemic year. The deadliest accident happened in 2017 when globally, as many as 107 people died by taking selfies (Avery, 2021). Selfies increase interest in a particular locality. If they are forwarded via Facebook or other apps to "friends". Video or photos of unique attractions can lead to increased visits.

Consequently, due to the crowds that follow, this impulse is trending into the saturation of the destination. Colleagues from Arizona State University analysed Tik-Tok messages focused on the Hainan National Park (China). Park management has strongly opposed such acts, the unwanted promotion, as it already has resulted in devastating impacts on the protected nature and infrastructure. Namely, thousands of followers re-enacted the acts promoted by the original TikTok video and those degrading certain elements of the park (Wengel et al., 2022). Publicised video of a quarrel between critics of the government and the prime minister, which took place in the Triglav National Park in 2021, sparked similar complaints by the Slovenian Mountaineering Society (SPD), the park's management and the public (Slovenska tiskovna agencija, 2021). Addressing this issue, researchers from the University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Turistica, concluded in a recent study that national and local authorities should ensure positive impacts of tourism on the residential and wider population. In addition, tourism would enable sustainable development in destinations of tourists' extreme interest (Juvan et al., 2021).

In Renata Mavri's dissertation (2020), which I supervised, visits to the Triglav National Park are empirically documented, and the dissatisfaction of the residential population is epitomised. Residents believe that their mountainous homeland needs to be more saturated and protected. Interviews were performed with visitors of the park (TNP) and the local population. She concluded that contemporary visits to the park are still traditionally dominated by hiking and mountaineering (48%). However, the activity by vis-

Table 6 Interviewing Visitors to the Triglav National Park: Activity During TNP Visit

Activity Performed*	Residents of TNP Municipalities	%	Other Slovenian Citizens	%	Foreign Visitors	%	All	%
Mountaineering / Hiking	59	47	160	48	85	47	304	48
Mountain Biking / Biking	50	39	133	41	71	40	254	40
Other Recreation (motorised vehicles, ski touring, base jumping, etc.)	18	14	35	11	23	13	76	12
N = 634	127	100	328	100	179	100	634	100

Source Renata Mavri (2020)

itors whose mode of recreation is related to different types of bikes (40%) and recreation vehicles - four-wheel recreation vehicles, motorbikes, and motorised slides (12%) - has exploded (Table 6).

Layers produced by tens of thousands of hikers yearly can be traced on or near designated paths (also by trash); generally, they do not conflict with the residential population or park authority. Mountain bikers (increasingly using electric power) are also seldom becoming a burden to the local population and park management. The concern is particularly directed to the increasing number of leisure activities motorised recreation vehicles perform. Most visitors, foreign and domestic, are opting against events which would take place in the park (78% and 76%), whereas, to a certain extent, surprisingly, a substantial number of the local population would support such acts (39%).

In general, all agree that the number of visitors in the area where they hike, bike, or otherwise recreate must be limited: the local population opts for a maximum of 500 visitors per day (31%), Slovenian and international visitors would rather see that number between 50 and 200 (72% and 66%). All agree that the non-regulated system of visits is nowadays absolute. On the relationship between residents and visitors to the Triglav National Park, the authors of this study concluded: "Tourism development in protected sites of nature has reached the level of saturation and needs to be re-evaluated" (Mavri, 2020, p. 268). Suggestions on how to limit or otherwise restrain visitors from visiting popular sites in this nation's largest protected site of nature (and culture) are included in several previous studies financed and published by the TNP - such as The Analyses of the Cohabitation and Clash of interests in the TNP - A base for the management of the park (Mlekuž & Zupan, 2011) or in the Aspects of carrying capacities and recreation management: the case of Triglav Nations Park, Slovenia (Mrak et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Protected areas are established to protect the inherited natural and cultural biodiversity. At the same time, these areas provide essential goods and services for the residential population and could be admired by other humans visiting. Tourism has become essential to the areas in and around national parks, landscape parks and natural monuments. Management of tourist visits to protected sites is often inadequate. Standards of protection, set on the international level, have been implemented selectively – even worse, due to national promotion directives, protection of outstanding heritage becomes a minor priority. The national park (TNP) protection, with its strict regime at its core, has no adequate regimes set on lower intensity protection levels in Slovenia. The number of visitors to protected sites of nature (open spaces) is constantly growing, even in years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Visits also increased by the presented and elaborated booklet of the Slovenian Tourist Bureau, in the promotional brochure "Slovenija na prostem. Moj način gibanja v naravi" (Open Air Slovenia. My Movements in Nature). Negative impacts humans impose on nature in protected sites - like motorised traffic, mass events, noisy and other selected sports activities, etc. - distract from preserving the area's intangible natural values. The tourist industry and tourists as visitors to protected sites – national, regional and landscape parks - acknowledge that the international restriction standards, elaborated in this paper, supplement sustainable tourism development. Proper managing sustainable tourism in protected areas means eliminating previous and contemporary negative impacts by humans, like a) the construction of second homes, b) the construction of (new) municipal roads, c) introducing sophisticated agricultural methods, d) introducing non-native species of plants and animals; e) organising sport and other mass public events; f). other illegal activities related to sport and recreation. It is somehow contradictory that named activities are in part initiated by nature-loving tourists (individuals investing in the construction of second homes), by nation-state institutions (sport, agriculture and forest management agencies, military), by private enterprises (owners of restaurants, hotels, bed & breakfast services) or just by occasional nature-loving enthusiasts. (Cigale, 2010; Salmič & Koderman, 2013; Mavri, 2020). Following international directives, sustainable tourism should incline towards accepting main management goals which should be implemented in areas where protection (of nature/culture) and tourism supplement each other: 1) preserving natural values, species, habitats and the cultural landscape as a whole, 2) enabling visitation and enjoyment in parts of protected sites open to visitors, 3) contributing to the interests of other sectors of public policy and tourism economy, 4) supporting development of local communities in a way which is not in opposition to the primary management objectives related to the sites of protection. 5) managing protected areas by embracing the maintenance of the ecosystem and supporting natural processes, by which local communities would become the subject of the tourism products. In Slovenia, changes need to be done on several levels: in promotion (in areas of protection this article is addressing), in the education of visitors to protected sites of nature and local population (=hosts), and in several management processes (drastic changes to existing liberal standards being in place nowadays). The residential population living in or close to the Triglav National Park expressed several times that the named protected site of nature is "touristically" overused and overcrowded throughout the year. It is in the general public's interest that protected sites would not become crowded places and that the intrusion of personal or national interests would not overshadow the efforts of institutions of protection. Studies made in the last decade support the following conclusions:

- visits to the extremely popular sites of nature should become regulated/registered (user fees should be implemented and other meanings of limitations introduced), monitored, and, if extreme devastation is registered, closed for a certain period.
- to avoid individual, economic and institutionally motived intrusions into space of natural wealth, we initiate the proposal, often elaborated at responsible institutions and professional meetings dealing with sustainable tourism in protected areas, that the Slovenian Triglav National Park would become UNESCO Heritage Site (like the Dolomites in neighbouring Italy). This step would, along with managerial directives, enable UNESCO to send careful warning signals to operators if the site's management does not coincide with international standards and the original wealth of nature/culture. Past UNESCO warnings and directives regarding the overuse of the world's heritage sites, like in Venice, at Plitvice Lakes and in Dubrovnik, have been welcomed by the public and the residential population.

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Digital Innovation of Cultural Heritage: Reflection on Slovenian Story of Success

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The paper aims to look back at the 'digital innovation of cultural heritage' processes happening in Slovenia in 2020, 2021, and 2022 after a public call by the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. The article summarises the activities and results of a set of projects that present a novel approach to developing new tourist offers in Slovenia. In the article, the authors – all involved in the training for tourist destinations and the execution of some projects – look at both the results of the projects, their quality and relation to existing tourist offers, as well as at the processes at leading tourist destinations, know-how and skill-set to conduct such projects. In the final chapter, the authors envision the needed next steps to reach the mission to become the leading European country in digitally enriched tourism experiences.

Keywords: tourism 4.0, heritage+, digital innovation of cultural heritage, digitisation, digitalisation, cultural heritage

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Introduction

> 'Our competition is Netflix and Candy Crush, not other museums' (Sree Sreenivasan, former Chief Digital Officer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

On several occasions, investments in cultural heritage have shown both direct and indirect positive impacts. From a tourism development point of view, cultural heritage presents an opportunity and a potential source of new digitally enriched interpretation and (tourism) experiences. Each registered object of immovable cultural heritage conveys a value and learning that could be interpreted digitally – and thus presented to new audiences in new, engaging ways.

However, tourism management organisations are typically not engaged in creating new complex tourism products on cultural heritage and are even less engaged in incorporating new digital interpretation technologies. The tourism sectors (tourism providers, tourism destination management organisations) and cultural heritage (GLAM and regional offices of the Institute for Heritage Protection) have – despite having many touchpoints and common aims – very seldom cooperated in co-creative processes, which changed in 2019 with the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology's mission to become the leading European country in digitally enriched tourism experiences and thus combine tourism development with cultural heritage protection and interpretation. The goal was to develop new tourism products that take inspiration from cultural heritage, engage new audiences and stakeholders through digital and hybrid interpretation, and, like this, contribute to the interpretation, awareness-raising, and documentation of (immovable) cultural heritage.

The Ministry aimed to support leading tourism development organisations conducting complex development, documentation, and interpretation projects at the cultural heritage and tourism crossroads. Such projects were envisioned to directly result in tourism development and indirectly support creative and cultural industries, advance technology in cultural tourism and cultural heritage, and contribute to local 3D digitisation goals and cross-sectorial cooperation.

The proposed paper examines Slovenia's 'digital innovation of cultural heritage' processes. As part of the team that led training and workshops for leading tourist destinations at the beginning of the processes in 2019 and 2020 and implemented several projects as the main contractor, the authors have insights and experiences worth sharing with the broader public.

The article looks at the projects' results, quality, and relation to existing tourist offers, as well as the processes, know-how, and skill sets at leading tourist destinations to conduct such projects.

In the final chapter, we envision the actions/ programmes/ projects necessary to achieve the mission.

Heritage as a Developmental Field

Cultural heritage is widely understood as a powerful economic, educational, and social resource, a 'development asset' (Loulanski, 2006), a 'value-adding industry' (Cernea, 2001), and 'the most significant product of the 21st century' (Ogino, 2002). Heritage and culture, in general, are especially valued for their contributions to social innovation (Napolitano, 2018) – for their creative and innovative capacity, identity and capacity to generate attractiveness and as a catalyst for urban transformation, as discussed in several UNESCO publications (UNESCO, 2013; 2016; 2018); This is where local culture and cultural heritage are often seen as 'unpolished diamonds' that can be transformed into assets by 'polishing diamonds', a process of 'turning underused or unused resources, situations, facilities or features into socio-economic assets' (Schwedler, 2012), as the URBACT OP-ACT Thematic Network (Schlappa & Neil, 2013) suggests.

Investments in cultural heritage have already shown both direct and indirect positive impacts. In 2003, Nypan (2006) identified a ratio of 1:27 between direct job creation by heritage institutions and indirect job creation (creative and cultural industries, tourism, etc.). The exact ratio of direct to indirect job creation for the automotive industry is 1:6.3. Moreover, a study found that 1 million USD invested in the rehabilitation of cultural heritage generates 31.3 jobs, making the impact more significant than manufacturing (21.3) (Rypkema, 1998).

In addition, only 16% of the jobs created from investing in cultural heritage are located at the heritage sites (Greffe, 2002), which means that the positive impacts are felt mainly in the vicinity and for neighbouring communities. For example, Nypan (2006) attributes only 6–10% of all heritage tourism spending to the objects of cultural heritage. The largest share of spending happens in the broader community (accommodation, food, related cultural offers, and other local businesses …). Although the impact of culture is increasingly analysed by (cultural) economists (Doyle, 2010; Navrud & Ready, 2002; Srakar, 2010; Seaman, 2003) and conceptualised as a part of macroeconomics, cultural heritage within development lacks a real working formula that can be used in the practice of 'polishing diamonds'. Consequently, despite the broad agreement on the need to (socially) innovate at the intersection of heritage and economy, many of the challenges remain.

Recent Developments in the Heritage Sector

Heritage institutions, GLAMS (galleries, libraries, archives, museums) and others involved in research, preservation and promotion – public, private or non-governmental – have a long tradition: from the first private collections of rare and curious objects and artefacts (cabinets of curiosities) to the gradual opening to the public of collections starting in the late 18th century, to the development of a contemporary modern public and private institutions. In the 21st century, heritage institutions balance their debt to tradition and history with their commitment to contemporary communities (Anderson, 2005).

Since the 1970s, these institutions have experienced new challenges that demand changes in their functioning. They are operating in a highly competitive leisure market, trying to meet the expectations of increasingly discerning visitors (Komarac, 2014; Conway & Leighton, 2012). Although these changes do not only affect heritage institutions, this sector was also – and continues to be – less able to adapt and consequently most affected, due in part to their long tradition of object-oriented *modus operandi*. The shift from object-based (dealing with objects and collections) to people-based approaches (UNESCO, 2015; Chhabra, 2009) has become more and more accepted (Mencarelli & Pulh, 2012) as in people-based approaches, the intangible benefits for the visitor are favoured (Alcaraz et al., 2009) over more custodial approaches based on conservation and objects.

This shift has a significant effect on the organisation of work, programming, professional skills (e.g., 'hybrid profiles' (Burning Glass and General Assembly, 2015)), marketing (Kotler, 2005) and budgeting, which also changes the role and positioning of heritage institutions in their wider communities – locally, nationally, or internationally. Heritage institutions are expected to collect, preserve, and conduct research and drive economic growth. The 'eco-museum' presents heritage institutions as 'agent(s) for managing change that links education, culture, and power. It extends the mission of a museum to include responsibility for human dignity' (Fuller, 1992). Furthermore, the challenge of atomisation of customers, the so-called segment of one' (Rogers & Peppers, 1993; Peppers & Rogers, 1999), requires heritage institutions to customise activities based on individual requirements and expectations, resulting in the need to collect, analyse and operationalise data using advanced technology.

Heritage and/in Tourism

Cultural heritage and tourism seem to be natural companions – several of the main tourist attractions are also cultural heritage sites (nationally, in Slovenia - Bled, Postojna Cave, Piran, Ljubljana Castle … - and globally – Eiffel Tower, Louvre, Great Wall of China, Colosseum, Machu Pichu …), or otherwise places of significant cultural heritage values. Scraping heritage out of tourism would leave tourism of theme parks, casinos, spas and SSS (sea, sand, sun).

Despite this natural connection, a Eurobarometer survey reports that almost half of Europeans (48%) say they are not involved with cultural heritage in any way. Moreover, cultural heritage is not often seen as a source of new tourist products and the development of new tourist destinations. Contemporary trends in tourism (outdoor activities, focus on experiences, gastronomy and wellbeing, personalisation, business-leisure blur) are often driving tourist destination developers even further away from cultural heritage, which is primarily due to the image of cultural heritage as rather an inhibitor of development than a resource, and understanding of cultural heritage as static, rigid and non-attractive. However, from a tourism development point of view, cultural heritage presents an opportunity and a potential source of tested and pivoting stories, universal values, and emotions that can be translated into new products. As a starting point of sustainable tourism development, cultural heritage is characterised by deep roots in local culture and the life of local communities. It reflects local, regional, national, and cross-border identity and symbolic DNA - the 'authenticity' and 'uniqueness' a modern tourist seeks. Moreover, in Slovenia, cultural heritage is relatively evenly dispersed. Cultural heritage has been identified in all regions, both in rural and urban areas, the only exception being larger forested areas, such as Trnovo Forest and Kočevje Forest, that humans have not inhabited. Due to even dispersion, developing tourism around local cultural heritage can avoid the agglomeration effects of mass tourism, where tourism providers tend to cluster around existing tourism destinations, often leading to over-tourism, iconisation and over-commercialisation/ Disneyfication and at the same time harming the life of the local community (Juvan et al., 2021; Urbančič et al., 2020).

Digital Technologies for Tourism and Cultural Heritage

The tourism and heritage sector face new challenges due to the quick adoption of information technology tools and advanced technologies in the science industry (Industry 4.0.) and daily use. The true essence of this paradigm shift is not only to use technology to

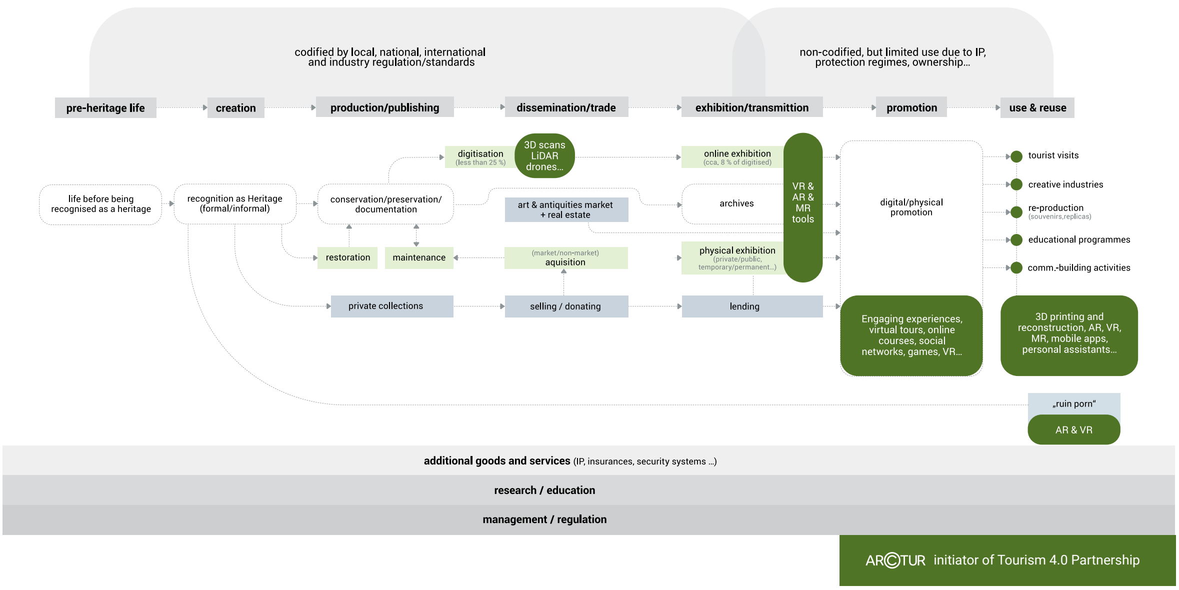

Figure 1 Potential for Technological Innovation in the Value Chain of Cultural Heritage (adapted from De Voldere et al., 2017).

unlock the innovation potential in the tourism sector but to affect every field around it by creating an ecosystem in which physical and digital space, infrastructure, people and technology behind it merge into one seamless experience of many personalised outputs (Peceny, 2019). The knowledge, expectations, and experiences of tourists, defined as Tourist 4.0, are utilised to build new services and products to raise the satisfaction of all stakeholders' experiences in the tourism ecosystem, which is done with the help of the key enabling technologies from Industry 4.0, such as the Internet of Things, Big Data, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. Within the value chain of cultural heritage (De Voldere et al., 2017), several fields of disruption that digital technologies are potentially creating can be identified:

in the process of research: using technologies for detailed inspection (e.g., LiDAR, laser scanning, photogrammetry) and analyses of digitised material (e.g., digital archives and digital copy collections, such as Europe-wide Europeana and 3D-Stock.eu for 3D models of cultural heritage),

- in the process of the exhibition: using presentation technologies (e.g., VR, AR, holograms, 3D models and prints…),
- in the process of promotion: presentation technologies often have more significant promotional potential due to the attractiveness of technologies and digital storytelling,
- in the processes of re-use (tourist attractions, creative industries, re-pro-ductions (e.g., souvenirs), educational programmes, community building activities…): using presentation and interaction technologies (e.g. 3D printing and reconstruction, AR, VR, MR, mobile apps, personal assistants…).

Thus, the use of intelligent technology applications presents an opportunity for the heritage sector and cultural tourism – not only concerning digitalisation for archiving, documentation, analysis, and presentation, but primarily for the development of new points of interest, heritage-inspired digital branding and marketing, and post-tourism creative narratives, as well as for management, monitoring, and citizen participation. Although heritage institutions have always been a source of data and information, digitisation (transforming cultural heritage in digital formats) and digitalisation (using new business processes for managing and presenting digitised heritage) enable new presentation experiences, such as virtual museums, virtual tours, augmented reality and virtual reality experiences, holograms, and interactive chatbots. They also present new collections management methods and, most importantly, open these processes to external collaborators. (Open) access to digital collections provides an opportunity for new outreach, research and innovation programmes that allow for play, alteration, and speculation without compromising the physical artefacts, enabling simultaneous, collaborative, co-creative and remote processes. (Digitised) cultural heritage could become a (digital) resource that allows for the experimentation, testing and pivoting that have become the mainstream approaches in (social) business development, art and design. Digitising and digitalising cultural heritage open opportunities for new co-creative and participative processes. It offers opportunities for developing new narratives within cultural heritage tourism, gives an impetus to creative and cultural industries, and can be a source of new city/region marketing and branding.

About the intersection of tourism and cultural heritage, new technologies can attract fresh audiences who have not shown any previous interest in cultural heritage, have overlooked it or considered it boring. Digital technologies present new methods for presenting content — for example, in a visually more attractive way — and offer better explanations or breakdowns of information that include the visitor. These solutions are also attractive for groups not considered drawn to cultural heritage. New interactive technologies and digital storytelling methods are not meant only for those interested in cultural heritage but can also widen the circle of potential visitors. Moreover, digital technologies enable communication and interactive experiences that classic presentation methods (texts, articles, information boards, photographs, videos…) do not allow. Through technology, learning about cultural heritage can become interactive, simultaneously making it more educational, memorable, individualised, and experiential. Cultural heritage can be introduced to people through (serious) play and practical experience.

Despite several advantages, tourism management organisations are typically not engaged in creating new complex tourism products on cultural heritage and are even less engaged in incorporating new digital interpretation technologies. The tourism sectors (tourism providers, tourism destination management organisations) and cultural heritage (GLAM and regional offices of the Institute for Heritage Protection) have – despite having many touchpoints and common aims – very seldom cooperated in co-creative processes. Moreover, digital interpretation technologies – such as Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, holographic projections, video mapping, and mobile and web apps – have not been joined at leading tourist destinations, primarily due to a lack of knowledge, skills, and dedicated funding.

The main obstacles can be identified in:

- Understanding of DMOs' role: DMOs in Slovenia have traditionally been engaged in promotional and advertisement activities (offline and online promotional presence, destination marketing and branding, promotional materials, organisation of traditional festivals, informing visitors …) and much less in development activities (co-creating and operating tourist products).
- Understanding of GLAM sector as non-tourist: Among DMO, we have noticed a common misunderstanding that museums, libraries, galleries, and archives are not (also) tourist providers. Consequently, GLAMs are often excluded from normal co-creation processes and promotional activities.
- Understanding cultural heritage as a barrier, not an opportunity: Cultural heritage is often seen as something to preserve, not to develop or build upon.
- Absence of technical standards and widely accepted agreement on what is technically sufficient digitisation project.

Technical Standards for 3D Digitisation

Pending the establishment of standard European guidelines for the unification of digitisation activities under Tourism 4.0, particularly its Heritage+ sub-programme, the Tourism 4.0 Partnership produced the Technical Guidelines T4.0: Digital Innovation of Cultural Heritage in 2019. These guidelines represent essential technical standards in the process of digitising cultural heritage. The guidelines offer a technical framework to all actors involved in digitisation processes - heritage institutions, local and national governments, public services, technology companies and other stakeholders. Guidelines are updated by the expert team of the Tourism 4.0 Partnership at least once a year, according to the technology development, accessibility of technological solutions, broader practice, and other criteria for the digital material. The document's purpose is not to give precise and comprehensive instructions for digitising the material but to define fundamental guidelines and minimum requirements necessary to ensure the use of materials for enriching the experience of cultural heritage.

Technical guidelines complement the Guidelines for capture, long-term preservation, and access to cultural heritage in digital form (Issue: 6202–1 / 2013-MIZKS / 17 Version 1.0) prepared by a Ministry of Culture working group in 2013 for the long-term preservation of cultural material in digital format (from now on referred to as e-material) within the agenda of the European Digital Si EU Ti. The guidelines' first edition covers the digitisation processes of audio materials, video materials, 3D models, image materials and 360° photos and videos. This document's most significant contribution is digitising three-dimensional objects and structures (in 3D models) and video materials. This area has changed and developed the most since the last update of the Guidelines for the capture, long-term preservation, and access to cultural heritage in digital form in 2013. Although clear standards are not yet in place, we can define vital technical guidelines based on industry practice. The T4.0 technical guidelines also set the bar higher for minimum standards for digitising image, video, and audio materials - mainly due to better and more easily accessible equipment. Technical guidelines are accessible here (in Slovenian and English): https://tourism4–0.org/heritage/toolkit/. Digital innovation of cultural heritage projects changed in 2019 when the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology set out to become the leading European country to systematically develop unique tourist experiences by applying digital innovation to cultural heritage. With that as a goal, the Ministry published a public call for leading tourist destinations (35) that also involved co-financing 'digital innovation of cultural heritage' activities. The 'Public Call for Building Competencies of Leading Tourist Destinations and Development of Tourist Offer at Leading Tourist Destinations in 2020 and 2021' was published in October 2019. Training in catering and tourism provided co-funding for digital innovation of cultural heritage. Each applicant was required to implement digital innovation of immovable cultural heritage in its area and develop tourist products and services that build upon digitised units of cultural heritage (e.g., virtual tours and virtual museums, 3D printing of souvenirs, augmented reality applications in tourism, mobile and stationary gamification, digitally enriched storytelling and digital animation, digital reconstructions of ruins or archaeological sites …).

In this case, this required applicants to 3D digitise at least three units of immovable cultural heritage from the Registry of Immovable Cultural Heritage, out of which at least one should be further developed into a tourist experience, following the Slovenia Unique Experiences guidelines (green, boutique, authentic, sustainable, local, experiential, personal …). The focus was on immovable cultural heritage, although exceptions for intangible and natural heritage were allowed after confirmation by the special commission comprised of representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, the Ministry of Culture, and the Slovenia Tourist Board. For the call, 5,480.00 EUR were allocated, and the projects were to be completed by June 2022 (the deadline was postponed from October 2021).

The call obliged applicants to work closely with regional offices of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, local, regional, or national museums, the national library and other national institutes and, upon completion, deliver all 3D digitised units to the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Culture and Slovenia Tourist Board. The Ministry aimed to support leading tourism development organisations conducting complex development, documentation and interpretation projects at the cultural heritage and tourism crossroads. Such projects were envisioned to have direct results in tourism development and indirectly support creative and cultural industries, advance technology in cultural tourism and cultural heritage, and contribute to 3D digitisation goals and cross-sectorial cooperation at local levels. To summarise, the goal was to develop new tourism products that take inspiration from the cultural heritage, engage new audiences and stakeholders through digital and hybrid interpretation, and thus contribute to the interpretation, awareness-raising, and documentation of (immovable) cultural heritage.

Defining Digitally Enhanced Experiences of Cultural Heritage

Digitally enhanced cultural heritage experiences could be described as 'engaging experiences, both digital and hybrid, that employ digital technologies to interpret cultural heritage values to pre-defined target (tourist) groups'. Like this, they:

- Imply an engaging and user-friendly conveyance of the values connected to natural and cultural heritage.
- Focus on what is truly unique, memorable, and engaging in the area.
- Make use of advanced technologies for greater interactivity, memorability, storytelling, and the global recognition of tourist experiences.
- Develop new business models and demonstrate positive effects on the local economy.
- Develop hybrid competencies of heritage and business approaches and skills (art & design thinking, business models, user experiences, digital marketing).
- Local business offers (accommodation facilities, food establishments…) should be meaningfully included and connected to other tourist products.

Therefore, digitally enhanced cultural heritage experiences adhere to some underlying interdisciplinary principles, covering four elements: preservation of cultural heritage, storytelling and interpretation, technology, and sustainability.

The project is based on scientific evidence and verifiable historical facts, which are unequivocally stated when they draw inspiration from myths and legends or contradict expert opinions. The project considers the chosen cultural heritage in the context of its historical period — in addition to the assets themselves and their traits, it presents the conditions in which they existed and draws attention to both the achievements and injustices of the past and the deviations from commonly accepted values of today. Thus, the project not only entertains but also raises awareness and educates users about cultural heritage — in each case, adapted to a given desired audience. Moreover, the project adheres to the recommendations for safeguarding cultural heritage, and the project's intervention may not negatively impact the asset in question or its natural or cultural surroundings. In the digital world, the project follows directives for long-term storage of cultural heritage materials in a digital format — regarding the quality, formats, and metadata.

The project communicates a clear and memorable message about storytelling and interpretation, with values relevant to the cultural heritage. The project includes well-rounded content focused on the cultural heritage in question. The cultural heritage assets are chosen prudently to avoid negative impact on the heritage, ensure safe visits, and disperse tourist flows onto new locations. To achieve this, planning and execution involve artists, creatives, and creative industries. It aims for a solution that derives from the needs and wishes of the visitors, considering both the existing and desired audience (general/professional, children/adults, shorter/longer visits.

The project is particularly attentive to the user experience in the technology field. It uses different methodologies to anticipate, evaluate and improve the interaction between the user and the solution. At the same time, it avoids excessive generalisation, loose assessments, and misleading facts about the cultural heritage asset. The project relies on quality digital

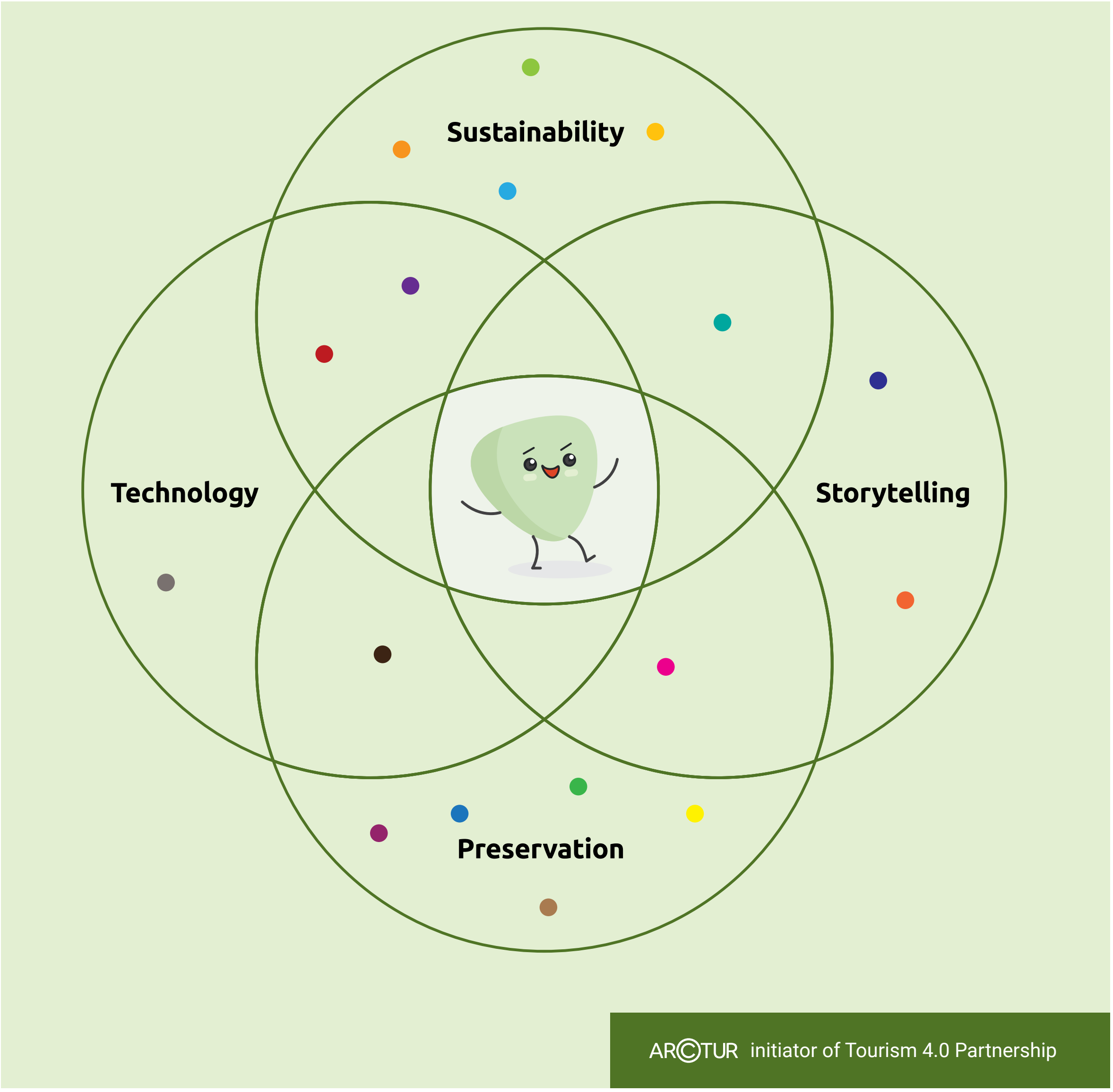

Figure 2 The Overlapping Nature of Technology, Storytelling, Preservation, and Sustainability in Digital Innovation of Cultural Heritage

materials. Digital scanning of cultural heritage assets complies with the standards and recommended minimum criteria, allowing further use in other (tourist and non-tourist) applications. Here, it considers not only the accessibility of physical spaces but also the accessibility of information and services.

For sustainable reasons, the project is based on a widely accepted consensus of the key stakeholders (local community, experts, tourist industry and other consenting parties…). It includes diverse social groups and achieves wider acceptance and higher creativity through a participatory process. Financially, it effectively uses available resources – producing the best result in the given timeframe.

Training Before the Start

Before the projects started, the Ministry and external contractor Arctur d.o.o. organised workshops and training to clarify and deepen tourist destinations' understanding of 'digital innovation of cultural heritage. '

Within three workshops, organised twice – in West and East Slovenia -, the whole process of digital innovation has been covered from the technological, content and organisational points of view:

First Workshop

- Tourism of the future: Discuss current trends and the main challenges in tourism (overtourism, need for personalisation, data management, unforeseen events) and consider technology as a potential solution. Heritage at the Challenge raises awareness of the heritage sector's challenges (e.g., banalisation, fictional digital 'meta' worlds) and proposes using digital technologies to find solutions. Digital technologies for cultural heritage: why digitally interpret and what societal benefits digitisation of cultural heritage has.
- Processes of digital innovation: Elements of a good project: Discussing elements of a good project and stressing the importance of a balanced and interdisciplinary approach – covering storytelling and interpretation, technology, sustainability, and protection of cultural heritage.
- Identification of heritage stories: This covers identifying a target group, the subject (cultural heritage), the main message, and the idea of an experience.
- 3D digitisation and digital interpretation: This covers preparing for and implementing 3D digitisation (using various technologies), familiarising yourself with different digital media, developing the user experience, and digitally interpreting the unit through selected media.
- Launch and promotion: promotional activities (online and offline) and re-use of digital content.
- Target groups and personas: define the target group, get familiar with national tourist personas, and develop your story-specific persona.
- Identifying and selecting units of cultural heritage: things to consider while selecting heritage units and stories while simultaneously identifying (physical, technological and ethical) obstacles and limitations.
- Digital experience: introduction to principles of heritage interpretation (ICOMOS) and user/customer journey.

Second Workshop

- Digitisation (3D digital capture): basic understanding of technologies for 3D digital capture (advantages, disadvantages, environmental factors, necessary preparation and technical requirements, standards) and comparison to other digital assets (e.g., 360-degree photos and videos).
- Digitalisation (VR, AR, holograms, video mapping, mobile and web apps …) technologies: basic understanding of digital media (advantages, disadvantages, environmental factors, technical requirements, possible applications).
- Interpretation plan and user journey: principles of heritage interpretation (ICOMOS), elements of successful digital experiences, developing tourism experiences.

Third Workshop

- The new COVID-19 reality: the importance of non-textual contents, datafication of culture, algorytmicity, phantomisation.
- Promotion: introduction to digital content marketing, bridging the divide between education, entertainment, and art. In addition to the two in-person and one online workshops, a toolkit, 'Digital Innovation of Cultural Heritage: Toolkit for Tourist Destinations', has been published.
- Reflection on Results and Processes

As part of the team that has led the training mentioned above and workshops for leading tourist destinations and implemented several projects as the main contractor, the authors have a comprehensive and holistic overview of the processes and results and wish to share experiences and reflections on the outcomes. Our team has been the main contractor or sub-contractor in 13 destinations and has participated in project design and implementation. We have entered the projects with several internal guidelines and convictions we aimed to follow:

- Projects must respect and contribute to cultural heritage interpretation, not abuse it for promotion. We must advocate collaboration with heritage institutions and support the client in this collaboration.
- We aim to create complex interdisciplinary projects that cross sectoral boundaries. We shall involve the creative sector.
- We use technology to convey the message, not for its own sake. Sometimes, a simple technology can be more efficient than an advanced solution.
- We aim to submit to technical standards for digital capture.
- The end goal is heritage tourism products, not solely tourism promotion or heritage documentation.

Overall, the results show great creativity, inventiveness, and variety. Like the results, the processes behind them also vary, depending on clients' technical knowledge, local stakeholders' interest and involvement, and the complexity of the idea.

The projects address a wide range of cultural heritage: from pre-Roman and Roman to medieval and modern, from housing to industrial, from large-scale to small-scale, and from multi-location to one-location … Although some initially feared that all the projects would focus on similar objects and stories (castles and knights), the diversity of topics is immense.

Example: The Castles of Posavje

For example, the Regional Development Agency Posavje project aimed to digitalise the cultural heritage of the Castles of Posavje and position Čatež & Posavje in the national and international space as a unique tourist destination. The castles subject to digitalisation are Rajhenburg Castle, Brežice Castle, the former Cistercian monastery Kostanjevica na Krki, Sevnica Castle, Mokrice Castle, and the castle ruins of Svibno and Kunšperk.

To increase the visibility of Posavje Castles and its offer and to link the destination brand with the castle-themed offer, it was decided to address visitors in person and at the destination. The selected location was Terme Čatež, with the most visitors and overnight stays within the destination. An interpretation room in Terme Čatež, called the Digital Room of e-Posavje Castles, was established at 20 m2, next to the main strolling path. The digital room has the latest technological equipment: holograms, VR glasses, LCD screens and smart tablets, and presents the castles attractively through 3D models, 3D reconstructions, 360° videos, videos with 3D models and an interactive web app. The Magnificient Seven: www.egradovi-posavja.si.

The Digital Room opened on 5 July 2021 and has attracted over 3,450 visitors in half a year. The local tourism office manages the room, training the staff on handling the technology and providing additional tourist information to the visitors. Entrance to the Digital Room is free of charge and mainly attracts families with young children, predominantly from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Italy, Austria, and the Netherlands.

The main challenges in the development process were posed by the weather (cold winter with regular snowing postponing 3D digital capture, late spring postponing 360-degree video filming), short time frame (8 months for the whole project from start to launch), and many stakeholders with decision-making powers. The development processes involved various stakeholders, both from the public (various museums, development agencies, municipalities) and private (Terme Čatež spa resort), and the implementation team (storytellers and copywriters, 3D digital capture experts, filmmakers, hardware developers, interior designers, 3D animators and artists, sound artists…) which required much coordination in a very condensed time frame.

See trailer (in Slovenian): https://youtu.be/KNC-Ohlmt3U

Example: The Šalek Valley

Another example worth mentioning is the project of the Šalek Valley Tourist Board. The central premise of this project was to present and interpret a heritage lost to an artificial lake and, in a site- and heritage-specific way, bring to the forefront the story of 'Slovenian Atlantis'.

The ongoing coal mining activities have defined the Šalek Valley. Besides the mining heritage, industrial buildings, mining culture and traditions, another element stands out – the artificial lakes formed due to coal excavation. In forming new lakes, several villagers had to relocate, and several villages were partially demolished, submerged and lost.

The 'Mysteries of Submerged Villages' tourist experience is a 4-hour exploration of this story, combining guided tours, culinary experiences, picturesque views and digital media. It takes participants on a journey where they help a descendant of the Velenje miners, who mined one of the thickest layers of coal in the world and turned fertile fields into lakes, find a precious item under the water's surface.

The experience description captures it: 'Where once were villages, now are lakes. What happened to the houses, schools, and churches? Why did they sink, and where did the villagers go? What secrets can be uncovered in the depths of the lake? Discover the bitter-sweet life stories of the villagers, miners, and Velenje people. For their bright future, they mined coal but sank their past.'

The experience begins with an authentic tour of The Coal Mining Museum of Slovenia in Velenje with heirs of mining, where the elevator lowers the visitors into 160-metre-deep tunnels. The mine visit is enhanced by a short movie showcasing the lakes' formation. A 3D animation projects a century of the valley's history in a few minutes, highlighting the stark contrast between the past and the present. Moreover, the 3D animation continues and showcases the planned future expansion of the lakes.

The visit to the mine is followed by a walk to Velenje Lake, where the visitors board a boat and ride toward the underwater village of Škale. Above the old Škale, visitors experience a virtual dive into the lost village – using VR glasses, one finds oneself in a virtual reality. The village was 3D reconstructed according to old photos, maps and memories of former inhabitants, and it visualises the village for the first time.

The experience ends with a culinary conclusion featuring selected local treats and a view over the lake. Here, guests can reflect on the bitter-sweet story of Šalek Valley.

Contrary to the examples of Posavje and Izola, this experience is available only upon appointment and payment. Due to its boutique nature, it is part of a marketing theme connecting the destination's past (mining) and present (recreation and activities at the lake). The experience can be understood as a 'showroom' of the destination's offer, combining several experiences that can be and some already are also commercialised individually. Thus, the experience is mainly suitable for business partners, small boutique organised groups and protocolar activities.

The main challenges in the development of this experience were posed by the several involved stakeholders (the mine – management, the mine–tourist mine, the museum, the tourist board, a former mine employee with several data, and a boat operator …), each responsible for only parts of the finally unified and coherent programme which exemplifies the interdisciplinary nature of such projects and especially the importance of coordinating the contractor's role in partnership with the client. (See 3D reconstruction: https://youtu.be/uo_4CdUafto)

Beyond Immediate Results

We have generally witnessed an increased understanding of the topics and skills among the DMO staff. Through the workshops and training and primarily through hands-on implementation, the staff has acquired skills in the use of technology (familiarity with technological solutions – e.g. distinguishing between interactive and non-interactive media; understanding the technical conditions for the use of technology – e.g. challenges with lightning and humidity; handling different hardware – e.g. setting up VR glasses; understanding the functioning of different media – e.g. 360-degree image vs holographic projection). Secondly, product development skills (user-centred development, user experience, marketing and storytelling, content management, team collaboration, stakeholder management …) have been upgraded, while many of the staff have been, for the first time, involved in developing and launching a partially technological solution. Similarly, digital interpretation skills have been significantly improved, especially in cultural heritage interpretation. To develop the skills mentioned earlier further, continuous use of these skills is crucial – new projects and processes where skills can be put into action and further upgraded pose an essential element in developing sectors' development capacities.

Another benefit beyond immediate deliverables has been established collaborations. Newly or significantly strengthened collaborations have formed between tourism destination managers, tourism providers and technology providers, tourism and heritage sectors, and tourism and creative industries (digital artists and designers, interior designers, and sound artists…). Moreover, many civil society stakeholders, such as local associations, have contributed content and ideas to the projects. In the future, such collaborations could be further intensified – primarily when enough time for collaboration is allocated in the timeline, enabling structured involvement and equal consideration of all inputs by various organisations.

One of the foremost collaborations is between the tourism and cultural heritage sectors. We believe this collaboration has planted a seed of mutual – yet sometimes still conflictual – understanding between the sectors. On the one hand, the potential of cultural heritage (its stories, universal values, emotions, and relationships) has been stressed and, to some degree, accepted by the DMOs. Intertwining heritage stories and values with tourism offered a creative springboard for novel experiences and narratives. On the other hand, the cultural heritage sector was given a clear and, in most cases, honest invitation to co-create and co-develop tourism narratives and offers. Although somehow necessary, GLAM organisations in many destinations have not taken part, nor were they honestly involved in destination development until these projects.

Strategically, projects and processes initiated by them are essential precursors for tourism destination management – they signal an upgrade from a promotional to a developmental focus in tourism destination development. As discussed at the third training and workshop, digital interpretation projects alter the position of DMOs from channel-oriented (managing channels) to content-oriented (creating content). This shift recognises a broader societal change toward the mass creation of engaging, authentic and personal content (e.g., influencers and micro-influencers…).

Awards and Prizes

At the 14th European Cultural Tourism Network conference in Athens under the central theme 'Regenerating European Tourism through Culture, Heritage and Creativity, ' the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology of Slovenia received the ECTN award for its digital innovation project in cultural heritage. The Ministry was also awarded second place in the Digitalisation in Sustainable Cultural Tourism towards Smart Destinations category.

The Award enhances the visibility of European cultural tourism destinations, creates a platform for sharing experience and knowledge, and promotes networking between destinations. Still, it confirms the ambitious path toward bridging the gap between tourism and cultural heritage through digital technologies.

Conclusion and Way(s) Forward

Although initially too ambitious and uncharted, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology's initiative to introduce 'digital innovation of cultural heritage' to the work of leading tourist destinations and their DMOs proved to be a bold and visionary step.

The initiative produced engaging experiences and attractive digital materials on Slovenian cultural heritage. It paved the path for further collaboration at the crossroads of tourism, cultural heritage and digital technologies. Digital innovation projects have often started with technology scepticism and the wish for 'regular ways of doing things'. However, through workshops and training, primarily through hands-on work at the local level and producing engaging and attractive results, scepticism has turned into enthusiasm. Learning about digital technologies and the rich resources of stories and narratives within the cultural heritage, DMO staff has come to perceive the vast area of (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) possibilities collaboration at the intersection offers.

However, the public call of 2019 has only set the first stones – now, other actions need to follow. A proactive stance is needed to prevent this initiative and achievements from withering away. We wish to point out some of the necessary activities, starting with further developing the skill-set and building capacities, which should be done through regular annual workshops and training – for tourism and cultural heritage workers, but also technology companies –, international exchanges of practices and knowledge, and transfer of Slovenian knowledge and experiences abroad. Skill-set needs to be developed both regarding the quality of the technology (respecting technical standards, adoption of new technology approaches, testing new software, pivoting and optimising production processes, regular upgrades of the hardware …) and the quality of interpretation (continuous research on target groups and their changing preferences, revising the interpretation based on the changing context, following the narration trends in popular media, adopting inclusion and diversity policies to reach out to vulnerable groups …).

As seen with the project following the 2019 public call, workshops and training can only complement and never supplement practical work on local projects. Thus, public co-financing of further activities is needed to develop the initiative further and achieve wider societal and economic benefits (supporting creative and cultural industries, demystifying development in cultural heritage, preservation of cultural heritage both physically and digitally, ensuring even development across the country, engaging new and vulnerable social groups …). We believe public co-financing should be targeted, having a clear mission and scope – to develop and upgrade digitally enhanced experiences of cultural heritage, from initial storytelling drafting through digitisation and digitalisation to final launch, promotion, and business operation.

Moreover, on the policy level, digital innovation in cultural heritage should permeate not only the cultural heritage and tourism sectors but also all levels of education, culture in general, research and development, humanities and social sciences, and informatics design and engineering. As the last three years have proved, genuinely successful projects are interdisciplinary and often domain-bending. Luckily, in Slovenia, innovation does not happen only in sterile laboratories and away from the ordinary people but across the country, inspired by the generations of men and women working hard to make their lives and their children's lives brighter and happier.

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