

Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development – Case Study: Mastiha cultivation know- how in Chios island, Greece

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Abstract : This research examines the dynamic correlation between intangible cultural assets and the growth of tourism, specifically focusing on the traditional cultivation of mastiha in Chios, Greece. The production of mastiha, a tradition that has been in existence for generations and is exclusive to the region, not only influences the cultural character of Chios but also has significant opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism. The objective of this study is to determine the optimal integration of mastiha cultivation into tourist initiatives to maximize economic gains and preserve cultural heritage. The study investigates the obstacles and advantages of promoting mastiha cultivation as a fundamental aspect of cultural tourism, using qualitative analytical methods such as interviews. The results indicate that actively promoting and safeguarding this cultural tradition may bolster community resilience, enrich the authenticity of the visitor experience, and generate economic prospects in Chios. This study highlights the significance of conserving intangible cultural property through sustainable tourism practices, providing valuable insights that may be applied to comparable cultural contexts worldwide. The constraints of the research emphasize the necessity for further comprehensive investigations to authenticate the findings across many cultural and geographical terrains.

Introduction

Preserving and promoting Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of culture and the growth of tourism. This study centers on the growing technique of mastiha in Chios, which is a distinctive agricultural method that not only enhances the local economy but also embodies an important cultural heritage. The objective of the project is to investigate the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and tourist development, with a special focus on how the cultivation of mastiha might be utilized to promote cultural preservation and stimulate economic growth in Chios.

This research aims to assess the impact of intangible cultural assets on promoting sustainable tourism, with a particular emphasis on the cultivation of mastiha in Chios. The objective of this study is to determine measures that can

safeguard and enhance this distinctive cultural tradition, guaranteeing its sustainability and significance in the contemporary tourist sector.

1. In what ways does the cultivation of mastiha enhance the cultural identity and appeal to tourists visiting Chios?
2. What are the obstacles and prospects in combining mastiha farming with sustainable tourist development?
3. How can we apply tactics to increase the exposure and attractiveness of mastiha cultivation to a worldwide audience?

This study adds to the growing subject of cultural heritage tourism by emphasizing the importance of mastiha farming, a technique that is not widely recognized yet holds great cultural significance. The text offers a thorough examination of how intangible cultural assets may stimulate the growth of tourism while also fostering cultural identity. The results are anticipated to provide significant knowledge for legislators, cultural heritage administrators, and tourist planners in Chios and comparable situations. The research is limited in its generalizability to other places due to its geographical and contextual specificity to Chios since the findings may not apply to areas with distinct cultural practices or tourism dynamics. Moreover, the dependence on primary data obtained from local stakeholders may include subjective viewpoints that might potentially impact the impartiality of the findings.

Literature Review

Cultural Heritage

Culture is a fluid and developing phenomena that is strongly influenced by its seasonal and social context. Culture is not fixed but undergoes continuous transformation in response to the influences of the era and the societal environment (Poulaki et al., 2022). During the 15th and 18th centuries, the term primarily referred to the guidelines for how members of a society should behave, including concepts of decency and respect. However, in the 17th and 18th centuries, specifically during the Enlightenment, it was used to examine the progressive development of the individual. The term "culture" in Greece was first introduced by Adamantios Koraes. Between 1850 and 1950, culture started to become an essential component of a complex connection with science and technology. By the conclusion of the 20th century, it underwent a transformation in terms of its intellectual resources and the creative abilities of individuals. A comprehensive definition of "culture" was formulated during the UNESCO International Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico in 1982. Culture is the amalgamation of the intellectual, emotional, and physical attributes that are present within a particular group (Breathnach, 2006; Idris et al., 2016). Culture encompasses not just scientific knowledge, but also the day-to-day experiences, rights, etiquette, conventions, and religious beliefs of individuals (Poulaki et al., 2022; Rachiotis & Poulaki, 2024). Cultural legacy encompasses not just tangible assets, but also intangible advancements within a nation. Intangible assets encompass a wide range of cultural elements such as events, festivals,

celebrations, customs, knowledge, expressions, social behaviors, language, and even music and movies (ayla.culture.gr).

There is a lack of clarity in distinguishing the phrase cultural legacy from other related ideas. One of these characteristics is traditional culture, which involves the passing down of historical and contemporary aspects to future generations through oral and written communication. Another aspect is that of popular culture, which encompasses the entirety of life events, attitude, habits, and ways of enjoyment of the individuals inside a country (Breathnach, 2006; Alexandri, 2015). Popular culture encompasses more than just the communication of language; it also includes rituals, proverbs, jokes, dance and theatrical performances, legends, folk music, and art. Folklore operates under a comparable framework, as it is regarded as the discipline that examines all facets of popular culture. The difference is in its comprehensive analysis, documentation, and prioritization of a country's customs and occurrences, as well as its proactive approach towards addressing its societal and emotional welfare (Alexandri, 2015; Poulaki et al., 2022).

The word 'intangible cultural heritage' has proven challenging to define due to its interchangeability with other categories like traditional culture, popular culture, and folklore, which all refer to the same concept. However, the prevailing belief is that the modern understanding of intangible cultural heritage has its origins in popular culture. In the 2003 UNESCO Convention, a precise and universally accepted definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) was developed. According to him, it encompasses the customs, depictions, expertise, and associated trades, together with the cultural sites and the communities and persons engaged. Social groups play a crucial role in fostering cultural diversity and individual progress by actively shaping the intangible cultural heritage. This heritage is passed down to future generations through the environment and the relationships they establish with nature and their history (Baillie & Chippindale, 2006; Alexandri, 2015). Through this process, individuals within communities develop unique traits that embody their national cultural identity. The Convention only includes intangible cultural property that adheres to the current international standards on individual rights, the preservation of cultural variety, and the advancement of sustainable development (Breathnach, 2006). The correlation between social activities and immaterial cultural identity is intricately tied to variations in both temporal and spatial dimensions. Intangible traditions are fluid, evolving, and shaped by the interactions of society. Contrary to such statement, tangible legacy is really the complete reverse (Pietrobruno, 2009; Alexandri, 2015; Rachiotis & Poulaki, 2024).

Intangible cultural heritage encompasses several distinct characteristics. Firstly, it is crucial to emphasize that the acknowledgment of an intangible cultural element is a complex procedure, unlike a tourist attraction that can be recognized and preserved swiftly and effortlessly. Establishing a connection between intangible heritage and its associated activities is crucial (Poulaki et al., 2022). Rituals and social practices symbolize the act of engaging in events that

hold great social importance. Marriage, birth, and death exemplify intangible cultural legacy. Their fulfillment promotes a sense of cohesion among individuals, which is crucial for the advancement and growth of civilizations and culture (ayla.culture.gr). There is a possibility of misunderstanding these social practices that are connected to intangible culture. Due to their significant value, not all members can participate in them, even if individuals only have a limited connection to certain social situations and rituals (United Nations University, 2005; Breathnach, 2006). The younger members learn these rites through imitation, which is crucial for preserving the intangible legacy (ayla.culture.gr). Valuing diversity is also crucial. To guarantee cultural variety, it is essential to have a comprehension of cultural heterogeneity. This can only be accomplished via the right education of individuals (Baillie & Chippindale, 2006; Smith & Doe, 2019). One distinguishing characteristic of the immaterial world is the examination of the history, philosophy, and culture of humanity. The purpose of this is to prevent incorrect determinations on whether an intangible cultural asset should be altered or preserved in its current state. Anthropology plays a significant role in addressing these challenges by doing analytical research (Breathnach, 2006; Pietrobruno, 2009). Social practices serve as the fundamental basis of intangible legacy, enabling individuals to establish a connection with their ancestral origins, explore the vast array of cultural diversity, and get enrichment from the experiences of their predecessors.

The significance of intangible cultural heritage and the necessity to safeguard it.

The preservation of intangible cultural heritage is a pressing matter due to its advantageous impact on both local and national levels. According to the 2003 definition provided by UNESCO, its significance lies in its impact on the social, cultural, economic, spiritual, and sustainable development of societies. Intangible legacy has a crucial role in preserving the connection and tradition among individuals within a culture (Konsola, 2006; Alexandri, 2016). The reason for this is that the members of the group have common components and ideals, which they strive to safeguard at all costs. Therefore, to accomplish this objective, members engage in communication and collaboration, make choices collectively, and act as a unified group. In the context of intangible heritage, stakeholders play a crucial role in establishing and shaping a shared present and future by drawing upon their common history and traditional identity. This process strengthens the connections between them even further (Fotopoulou, 2008; Davis & Thompson, 2020). Every member is educated about the history of their community, which deepens their comprehension of their origins and developmental path, fostering a sense of equality among them. This leads to heightened reverence and consciousness not only within the local community but also towards the diversity of worldwide cultures. Therefore, individuals are capable of comprehending and valuing the variety exhibited by various cultures, which contributes to the establishment of global harmony (Fotopoulou, 2008; MacDonald & Alford, 2010).

Intangible heritage plays a catalytic role in the development of the local and global economy. Initially, it contributes significantly to the development of tourism activity, since the intangible cultural assets of a place can attract many visitors from all over the world (Breathnach, 2006; Patel & Kumar, 2022). In this way, the income of locals is increased and new jobs are created in this sector. Also, the result of intangible heritage is its use as a source of inspiration to produce local products and services whose promotion can lead to the investment of businesses, hotels and other hospitality facilities, making an area more attractive and strengthening its economy (Alexandri, 2015; Davis & Thompson, 2020). Nevertheless, there is still the issue of the exploitation of intangible heritage and its commercialization due to tourism, which achieves the preservation of the cultural identity of a place.

In relation to the material heritage that remains constant throughout time, the intangible, on the other hand, is constantly changing to conform to the modern standards of societies. Its threat can be various cultural stereotypes that help its alteration or even its disappearance (Konsola, 2006). Both individual and collective identity depend largely on the cultural roots on which a series is affected by variables. Such variables may be the space in which the individual develops, his culture, his ethnicity, his religion and others (Robinson, 2018; Patel & Kumar, 2022). The individual or a society is the exclusive vehicle for the dissemination of intangible heritage. If, for example, there is war in one region, it is understood that its transmission is interrupted since its members are forced to move to a different area with different intangible wealth. The place of residence of the individual is primarily the only place where the intangible heritage is cultivated and the place in which he creates his memories. Thus, this results in the upheaval of collective memory and, therefore, the destruction of intangible local identity. Even worse, since the culture of a place is directly linked to the protection of the intangible cultural heritage and its transfer to the younger members, the societies of the new era can cause the total extinction of a nation (Lenzerini, 2011; Henderson, 2021; Rachiotis & Poulaki, 2024).

Globalization poses a significant risk to intangible cultural heritage. The rapid and ongoing cultural shifts necessitate the protection of cultural diversity. A growing number of individuals and social groups are recognizing the significance of their identity, both in tangible and intangible forms, within the global cultural landscape (Poulaki et al., 2022). Globalization, facilitated by mass media, provides access to a vast database of intangible cultural heritage from other societies. This fosters appreciation for variety and motivates individuals to safeguard expressions, culture, and traditions. While globalization can provide several advantages, it is important to acknowledge the potential hazards it poses to the safeguarding of cultural heritage (Konsola, 2006; Poulaki et al., 2022). The economic ideals fostered by internationalization are currently in jeopardy, and there is a potential for the erosion of languages and social customs because of the supremacy of other languages and rituals. This leads to the standardization of cultures and the loss of diversity among different groups

of people. Specifically, the societal members' cultural identity, encompassing both tangible and intangible aspects, diminishes, leading to the development of uniform biases about their lifestyle, mindset, and perception of the world (Lee, 2020; Poulaki et al., 2022).

Societies with rich intangible cultural heritage face the danger of destruction or loss of this valuable cultural asset if adequate conservation and management measures are not implemented. It is imperative to implement strategies to safeguard them against issues such as excessive tourism, conflict, and globalization (Henderson, 2021). UNESCO's initiatives at the international level generally acknowledge the necessity to protect intangible cultural property.

UNESCO and Intangible Cultural Heritage

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is an agency of the United Nations. It was created on November 16, 1945, with 195 participants and 8 associate members. The General Assembly and the Executive Board are the competent bodies for UNESCO, whose decisions are implemented by the Secretariat with the assistance of the Director-General in charge. UNESCO has more than fifty seats worldwide, and the organization's headquarters are in Paris. It aims to create a universal peaceful environment, eliminate economic inequalities, encourage global communication and promote sustainability through the use of educational, scientific, cultural and information methods (Alexandri, 2015; Poulaki et al., 2022). UNESCO projects are linked to each other and are based on preserving cultural diversity and strengthening intercultural dialogue. In fact, the strategies and methods it uses are constantly modified to respond to the various social, economic and cultural changes of the modern world. Its main objectives concern the preservation of the cultural uniqueness of societies, the progress and promotion of culture. Some universally recognized fundamental concepts of cultural policy were born because of mutual aid and dialogue between nations. At a UNESCO session held in Venice in 1970, their maiden appearance as an axis of discussion had cultural issues in an international context, which sparked cultural progress later with the contribution of the state (Konsola, 2006; Poulaki et al., 2022).

The next international summit was held in 1980 and aimed to comply with modern standards of societies and economy. This was followed by the international conference held in Stockholm in 1998 on the connection of the concepts of evolution and culture, as well as other issues such as the problem of internationalization, cultural diversity and the intellectual property rights of cultural enterprises. After this session ended, UNESCO encouraged the development of a new creative cultural policy to preserve cultural diversity (Alexandri, 2015; Poulaki et al., 2022). Articles 16, 17 and 18 of the Convention contain three lists. According to Article 18, the first concerns projects and actions organized by the State and aimed at safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage at international level. These plans are examples of good practices and are checked by the General Assembly and once accepted, they pass into the

hands of the Committee from where they are sorted. They contribute to the exchange of knowledge between peoples, so that sound solutions are found to preserve the living heritage and disseminate their ideas to younger societies (Poulaki et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2023). According to Article 17, the second list includes cultural intangible objects whose preservation is considered crucial because of external factors that make it difficult to preserve them. Such external factors may be a military conflict, a natural disaster or other reasons that forced the permanent movement of the inhabitants of one area to another or even the introduction of modern technologies in a society that all this had the effect of isolating traditional practices. The last list of Article 16 concerns the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity. This list aims to promote the value of the cultural uniqueness of societies and to encourage intercommunal communication in the context of respect and mutual aid. It should not be overlooked that "five Greek NGOs have been certified by UNESCO as advisors to the Committee for the Protection of the ICH. These are the Lyceum of Greek Women, PIOP, the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation "V. Papantoniou", the Hellenic Society for the Environment and Culture and ERKET." (ayla.culture.gr).

Criteria for inclusion of data in the Representative List of UNESCO ICH - National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greece

The Committee for the Preservation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) convenes a yearly conference to determine the items that should be included in the UNESCO Representative List. To complete this registration, it is imperative that the data satisfy specific criteria. More precisely, there are five specific requirements, which are outlined as follows:

1. The element should be classified as intangible cultural heritage, in accordance with the definition provided in article 2 of the Convention.
2. The element should facilitate communication between different communities and emphasize the significance of intangible cultural heritage as a product of human ingenuity.
3. Adequate strategizing is necessary to guarantee and advance the offered feature.
4. The proposed element must have received majority approval from the relevant communities, groups, or people and they must have willingly decided to participate.
5. An insertion of the element in the national Inventory of the ICH is necessary (Lenzerini, 2011).

Authenticity is seen as a vital factor, although not being explicitly mentioned in the definition of the ICH. The reason for this is because intangible legacy is closely connected to the cultural identity of its originators and those who nurture its spread. Consequently, it is imperative to preserve its genuine essence. Therefore, the absence of authenticity leads to the creation of an artificial identity that is disconnected from the distinct cultural traits of its original

owners. Once this objective is accomplished, the associated component no longer has its status as an element of intangible cultural property. Typically, this action is intentionally carried out by governmental entities with the intention of pursuing personal benefits (Fotopoulou, 2008; Lenzerini, 2011).

Our nation successfully included nine components on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). In 2013, he established the "Mediterranean Diet" in collaboration with Spain, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Morocco, and Croatia. In 2014, the incorporation of the "Know-How of Traditional Mastiha Cultivation in Chios" was finalized, a topic we shall address later. Subsequently, "The Tinian Marble Craftsmanship" was presented in 2015, followed by "Momoeria" in 2016, and "Rebetika" in 2017. The upcoming addition is "The Art of Dry-Stone Walls" in 2018, in collaboration with other nations. In 2019, the recording of "Byzantine Music/Psaltiki" was done in conjunction with Cyprus, and "Transhumant Livestock Farming in the Mediterranean and the Alps" was recorded with Austria and Italy. In 2022, the List "The Celebration of the Fifteenth of August in 2 mountain communities of Northern Greece: Tranos Choros in Vlasti and Feast in Syrrako" (ayla.culture.gr) finally listed it.

The National Inventory records the data of the ICH of Greece organized as an index. Its aim is to provide a modern and reliable idea of the Greek intangible cultural identity. Specifically, through this, ICH institutions (social groups, individuals) have the right to disseminate their cultural knowledge both domestically and abroad, to discuss the temperament of their society, to provide solutions for research and to safeguard ICH (ayla.culture.gr). The Intangible Cultural Heritage Data Sheet contains all data related to the data of the ICH. These data are recorded and updated frequently by the bodies that cooperate with the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture and Culture and the National Scientific Committee. The Bulletin is also divided into twelve sections, so that operators can discuss the data freely covering each side in their own way of perceiving it, and because the Bulletin is intended for many people it needs to be precise, concise and understandable. Entities have the right to express any opinion provided they are compatible with the substance of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the E.R.A. As stated in Article 12 of the ICH Convention, all States Parties must have at least one index of intangible cultural identity. In total, it includes 104 elements, while the first elements recorded in the National Inventory of Greece are the Mediterranean Diet and the Cultivation of Mastiha which we will deal with in more detail later. It is good to underline that Greece has other bodies for the creation of indexes of intangible cultural heritage, apart from the National Inventory (ayla.culture.gr).

To be included in the National Inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Greece, the data must meet specific requirements. To clarify, the institutions must acknowledge the elements as crucial aspects of cultural legacy and be capable of integrating them into their contemporary cultural norms, as they are passed down to future generations. Cultural components that fulfill the

requirements for inclusion in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) but are no longer actively practiced are removed from the National Inventory. Furthermore, the active involvement of society is important for the registration of an object, along with the requirement of previous information and permission. Ultimately, it is imperative that all data adhere to the criteria outlined in the UNESCO Convention (2003) and the National Inventory. This refers to the amicable cohabitation and reciprocal regard among nations, guaranteeing the safety of all parties concerned, adhering to sustainable development, and upholding the preservation and reverence for biological beings (ayla.culture.gr).

Occasionally, components of intangible cultural assets that are listed in the National Inventory must be included in one of the three lists of the UNESCO Convention (2003). The Ministry of Culture and Sports, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, strategically organizes Greece's nomination on a roster. It is crucial to understand that when a member state of the Convention includes an element in one of these lists, it does not imply any kind of exclusive ownership of that cultural feature by the nation that inscribed it. The responsibility for listing the data lies with the Intergovernmental Committee of the Convention. It recognizes them as cultural manifestations that are conducted under the authority of the government, emphasizing their importance to society. Therefore, these rulings pertain to the endorsement of any type of exclusivity and intellectual property rights (ayla culture.gr).

Mastiha

In modern times, Chian mastiha is a valuable natural product that records a long history of service and creation. With roots on the beautiful island of Chios, mastiha has conquered a key place in the world of flavors, health and traditional medicine. The appreciation for the uses of mastiha now crosses the boundaries of the local and develops internationally. Mastiha, apart from its cosmetic and gastronomic uses, it has also been recognized for its healing properties in the field of health. Its positive effects have been scientifically researched and its use has been suggested for a variety of health issues (Belles, 2006; Poulaki, 2018). Mastiha has a long history, which dates back to the classical era. Various writers from ancient times, such as Pliny, Theophrastus, Dioscorides and Galen talk about the ways mastiha can be used as a medicine to treat diseases. Hippocrates knew about the healing properties of mastiha and its use for teeth whitening, as a medicine of the digestive system, as a painkiller or even as a cosmetic. The first known narrative of mastiha stems from Herodotus and dates to 400 – 500 BC. After 900 BC, tourists to Chios were well acquainted with mastiha and it was closely associated with the island (Belles, 2006; National Heritage Institute, 2020).

The Mastihochoria, or the settlements of the Middle Ages in South Chios, took their name from the mastiha. Favorable conditions contribute to the flowering of the mastiha tree exclusively in these areas, and locals still rely economically on it. The settlements were first created during the Byzantine era

but took their final form during the Genoese occupation, when mastiha cultivation was organized. The settlements remain monuments of priceless cultural identity, regardless of the damage and looting they received in the past. Mastiha is cultivated in 24 communities that the Ministry of Culture has established as traditional or protected settlements. The names of these villages are Agios Georgios, Armolia, Babyloi, Vessa, Vouno, Elata, Exo Didyma, Tholopotami, Thymiana, Kalamoti, Kallimasia, Katarraktis, Lithi, Mesa Didyma, Mesta, Ant, Nenita, Nechori, Olympi, Pagida, Patrika, Pyrgi and Flatsia (Poulaki, 2018; Poulaki et al., 2022).

The costumes worn by the residents of the Mastihochoria function as a code of communication and depict the relations with the locals, as well as highlight the historical course of the communities. In other words, they act as symbols in a messaging system and highlight the special characteristics of local identity. In fact, Chian women's costumes represent the way women behave in their workplace, while highlighting the historical, economic and social developments coming from the western and eastern world. The Italian Renaissance was a major source of influence on local costumes in the 16th and 17th centuries (ayla.culture.gr). Chian mastiha is not just a product of the land but is a spiritual and gastronomic treasure that is inextricably linked to local customs and traditions. These customs reflect the history, faith and love of the locals for their lands. The mastiha tree with the wonderful world of mastiha becomes a source of inspiration for many celebrations and events (Johnson, 2021).

Chios Mastiha Growers Association – Mastiha Museum – Stakeholder's Actions

Following the conclusion of the First World War, the cultivation of mastiha encountered difficulties, leading to inadequate production. Hence, it was deemed imperative to establish an organization with the objective of safeguarding and advancing the traditional Greek product of mastiha. In 1938, with the enactment of Compulsory Law 1390, the Chios Mastiha Growers Union (EMX) was established. Twenty cooperatives from all the Mastihochoria regions engaged in this association, with the aim of facilitating collaboration among mastiha producers on the island. The association provided a structured framework for managing production, both inside the country and abroad (Poulaki, 2018; Poulaki et al., 2022). The Chios Mastiha Growers Association's initiatives are intended to guarantee the production and commercialization of mastiha. More precisely, it acquires loans and distributes them to individuals who are part of the Union. It also purchases infrastructure for the storage and packaging of mastiha, engages in trading mastiha supplied by cooperatives, manufactures and sells mastiha products, and supplies agricultural needs to partners (Belles, 2006; Johnson, 2021).

The Mastiha Museum in South Chios was established via the collaboration of this Association and the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation. Another significant development was the establishment of Mediterra S.A. in 2002. The company's main objective was to promote the natural mastiha of Chios in the

market. This was achieved with the introduction of mastihashop, which currently offers a wide range of new mastiha products worldwide, steadily growing their worth. Furthermore, the Chios Mastiha Growers Association engages in activities that extend beyond the utilization of mastiha. These activities include the conservation of diverse agricultural goods, such as anise, cumin, fig, and olives. The Chios Mastiha Growers Association, established in 2023, collaborates with other groups, including the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Chios, to enhance cooperation and achieve efficient management and growth in agricultural and cattle husbandry. Its objectives extend beyond the production of mastiha. The management of the commercial promotion and worldwide visibility of Chios mastiha is unquestionably handled by the Union. The exports have experienced substantial growth to European nations as well as to Eastern, Asian, African, and American countries. Mastiha is not only a commodity, but also an emblem of heritage. The Chios Mastiha Growers Association contributes to the historical documentation of mastiha by providing one of the Chian land's most significant goods to the worldwide market (Poulaki, 2018; Zhao & Cheung, 2019).

The Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation established the Chios Mastiha Museum as part of the Museum Network, dedicated to the preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. It is located near the medieval settlement of Pyrgi and is built on land given by the Chios Mastiha Growers Association. Its facilities are combined with nature in such a way as to bring the interested person closer to the cultivation and production of mastiha. The visitor can draw information on local methods and stages of mastiha cultivation (Poulaki et al., 2022; Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2023). The Operational Programme "Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation", from the NSRF 2007-2013, the Operational Programme "Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2014 - 2020" and Piraeus Bank (Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2023), contributed to the funding of the museum. This Foundation will oversee the management of the museum for the next fifty years from the year of its creation. The Foundation started in 2007 a research project focusing on mastiha and its cultivation, which ended in 2008. For the establishment of the museum, a contract was made in 2009 by the Ministry of Tourism, the Chios Mastiha Growers Association and the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation. The construction of the museum lasted about three and a half years, from 2012 to 2016 (Poulaki et al., 2022; Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2023).

The Chios Mastiha Museum seeks to highlight the different uses of mastiha over time, to make the visitor understand the traditional methods of cultivation and processing. The museum also operates based on the incentives of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation. The Museum's permanent exhibition, which consists of various activities (Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2023), contributes to this goal. The Mastiha Museum has played a crucial role in local development, being an important contributor.

Also important was the contribution of the Chios Mastiha Growers Association, which, in 2021, created an advertising spot about Chios mastiha. The commercial uses multimedia such as image and sound, which makes it even more attractive to the viewer. It is noteworthy that within a period of just 25 seconds the mastiha and its medicinal properties are presented, as well as the traditional process of mastiha cultivation. In fact, towards the end of the advertisement, reference is made to the inclusion of the element in the UNESCO ICH List (Mastihashop, 2023).

In the summer of 2023, the Municipality of Chios began its effort to follow the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) – Sustainable Urban Development (BAA) Strategy in the area of Chios. This strategy aims to preserve, protect and promote the local cultural and natural heritage, to carry out sustainable tourism, to ensure social, economic and environmental development and to raise the quality of life of both residents and tourists (Municipality of Chios, 2023).

The 2nd Chios Medieval Festival, titled "In the culture of tomorrow with the aura of yesterday", took place in 2023. It was organized by the North Aegean Region in collaboration with the British Embassy, the University of the Aegean, and the Greek National Tourism Organization. The festival ran for a duration of 13 days. This festival showcased significant cultural activities that were centered around the island's history, tradition, and culture. Renowned figures from the art world, both local and international, were actively involved in these events. The outcome of this was the increased dissemination of information about the destination of Chios and its cultural legacy, resulting in a significant influx of both Greek and international tourists (North Aegean Region, 2023).

The Greek National Tourism Organization has created the website www.visitgreece.gr as an interactive platform to promote tourism sites in Greece. This website attracts daily visits from thousands of individuals worldwide who want information. The primary objective of this website is to enhance the visibility of the diverse aspects of Greek culture and entice an increasing number of tourists. The North Aegean "places to go" section includes Chios, where the Mastiha Museum is highlighted as a valuable cultural asset (visitgreece, 2023).

Since its inception in 2002, MEDITERRA, a subsidiary of EFX, has played a significant role in the promotion and global distribution of Chios mastiha. The firm aims to emphasize the significance of mastiha and distinguish itself through its stores, Mastihashop, by showcasing its innovative marketing strategies for the product. The firm has established an operational system that efficiently combines commercial, manufacturing, research, and development operations. As a result, its outlets have spread outside Chios. As of 2023, MEDITERRA continues to actively assist and promote mastiha manufacturers. They have partnered with a total of 35 firms and offer 150 Chian items on mastihashop.

Mastiha Cultivation Know-How – Intangible Cultural Heritage

Mastiha is an enduring custom that has remained unchanged throughout the years. It greatly enhances the everyday life of residents in the Mastihochoria in

terms of economy, culture, and society. The production of this crop is a communal endeavor, including the participation of most of the inhabitants from all 24 villages, irrespective of age or gender. Men oversee caring for the mastiha tree and the soil, while women in the villages participate in embroidering the bushes and collecting mastiha. They also clean and sort the mastiha, and the older generation passes down their knowledge to the younger ones (Zhao & Cheung, 2019; Poulaki et al., 2022).

The cultivation and manufacture of pure mastiha are integral components of the cultural legacy that are transmitted throughout generations and shape the cultural landscape of the 24 Mastiha villages. The transfer of knowledge in this context relies heavily on oral communication, continuous observation, active participation in the creative process, and practical experience. Typically, elderly individuals transmit their essential information to younger individuals in society, regardless of whether they are related or not (Poulaki, 2018).

The whole process of cultivating mastiha is conducted within dedicated chambers. Sorting is conducted either in residential areas or communal spaces, as long as they are in close proximity to the residences of the farmers involved in the sorting process. Local individuals actively engage in this process, fostering robust collaborative relationships with producers. The Chios Mastiha Growers Association offers guidelines for the production management of mastiha and facilitates participation in educational programs (ayla.culture.gr).

Mastiha plays a crucial role in conserving, honoring, and advancing the cultural legacy of medieval communities. Values such as solidarity, collaboration, and togetherness are promoted at various phases of manufacturing. Since 2000, the local administration has aggressively promoted local production through the organization of events such as the Mastiha Festival and Rural Tourism Festival. Cooperatives engaged in environmental and cultural matters, such as Mastihaculture also undertake other mastiha-related activities (Poulaki et al., 2022; Garcia & Martinez, 2022).

The Ministry of Culture, the Piraeus Cultural Foundation and the Chios Mastiha Growers Association contributed decisively to the inclusion of traditional mastiha cultivation in the global lists of the ICH Convention. On November 27, 2014, this vision was completed with its inscription on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, following an assembly held in the French capital by the Intergovernmental Committee of the UNESCO Convention on the protection of ICH (Garcia & Martinez, 2022). The registration of mastiha cultivation was implemented, since it met every criterion set by UNESCO. Its registration helped to promote and understand the value of intangible cultural assets, to communicate between communities and to implement sound strategies for its protection. In addition, the inclusion of mastiha cultivation in the Representative List of the ICH encourages the participation of stakeholders related to the element and transmits knowledge on the utilization of natural resources, while contributing to the promotion of sustainable development (Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2023). At

the same time, with the inclusion of mastiha cultivation in the list of the UNESCO ICH, its value and promotion abroad were consolidated, creating a distinct international culture that is transmitted to future generations and affects the culture, society and nature of the settlements of the 24 Mastiha Villages (Poulaki et al., 2022).

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the impact of intangible cultural heritage on tourism development in Chios. The qualitative approach was chosen for its strength in understanding complex social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved (Cohen et al., 2007). It facilitates an in-depth exploration of attitudes, behaviors, and experiences - key elements in assessing the socio-economic impacts of cultural practices like mastiha cultivation. The sampling strategy utilized was purposive sampling, designed to select individuals who are directly involved with or have significant knowledge of the tourism and cultural heritage sectors in Chios. This method ensures that the participants could provide relevant and in-depth information on the subject matter. Stakeholders from various sectors were included to capture a wide range of perspectives on how intangible cultural heritage influences tourism. They took part in it as representatives of cultural associations and associations, museums, the local government, the Chamber of Commerce, the Chios Commercial Association, the Chios Private Tourism Agency, the Port Authority, the Airport, the Customs, the Holy Metropolis of Chios, Psara, and Oinousses, proprietors of tourist agencies, hotels, rooms to let, car rental agencies, tourist shops, and other establishments.

Data were collected primarily through semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility in responses while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. The interview guide was carefully designed prior to the survey to ensure that it aligned with the research objectives. Questions focused on understanding the role of mastiha cultivation in tourism, the challenges and opportunities related to heritage tourism, and the strategies for promoting sustainable cultural tourism. Before conducting the interviews, a preliminary survey was carried out at the end of the year 2023 to identify key issues and refine the interview questions. This survey helped in tailoring the questions to better address the specific context of Chios and the unique aspects of its cultural heritage. Interviews were transcribed and analysis was used to identify themes across the data. This analytical approach is suitable for qualitative research as it allows for the identification of both explicit and latent content within the data. The analysis focused on extracting insights related to the development, promotion, and preservation of mastiha cultivation within the tourism industry of Chios.

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Informed consent was gathered from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purposes and their rights during the research. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were strictly maintained

throughout the research process. The study acknowledges several limitations, including the potential for bias in self-reported data and the limited generalizability of the findings due to the specific cultural and geographical focus on Chios. Future research could expand to compare with other regions where similar cultural heritage practices are integral to tourism (Cohen et al., 2007).

Conclusions – Policy Measures

The conclusions and policy measures resulting from this qualitative survey are as follows:

Effective tourist planning by key players in the tourism industry is essential for preserving the cultural heritage of Chios and creating a sustainable cultural atmosphere. Promoting reverence for the cultural variety and genuineness of the region provides an opportunity that appreciates and safeguards cultural legacy for future generations. It is important to ascertain the effects of the tourist industry on the destination and the potential commodification of culture.

Prioritizing the preservation of the destination's cultural history is essential, and tour operators should refrain from just focusing on the economic gains they obtain from tourism. The involvement of the local community plays a crucial role in effectively managing the tangible and intangible cultural assets of the destination. Tourism planners are recommended to solicit and analyze the perspectives and opinions of residents prior to implementing any measures. A proposition has been made to include tourism education into schools, with the aim of providing kids with knowledge about the unique cultural aspects of different nations from a young age. This would enable them to effectively cater to visitors in the future. It is important to assess the tourist activities provided and ensure they align with the ideals of supporting a sustainable local culture.

Mastiha has consistently maintained strong and intimate connections with the history and culture of Chios. It has served as the primary source of revenue for the island of Chios from ancient times to the present day. The local population of Chios acknowledges the significance of mastiha farming as a practice that has contributed and continues to contribute to the development of the island, both for the local residents and for tourists. The Mastiha Museum serves as a custodian of the historical and traditional aspects associated with mastiha. It aims to educate visitors by imparting information and raising their awareness and understanding of the local cultural heritage. Additionally, it seeks to boost cultural tourism on the island. There are several deficiencies that mostly pertain to the methods employed for the operation and marketing of the Mastiha Museum, rather than the promotion of mastiha cultivation itself. To improve the accessibility and engagement of the Mastiha Museum's website for younger audiences, it is imperative to augment the existing sections with more educational information. This will enable interactive participation and provide a more delightful experience for visitors.

In addition, by fostering collaboration between the Mastiha Museum and other local museums, it would be possible to curate diverse shows that explore the cultural local identity. This would ultimately lead to a surge in the visitor count. An effective proposal for promoting mastiha cultivation involves the partnership between the Mastiha Museum and the Mastiha Research Center. Tourist companies play a crucial role in promoting the island and its intangible cultural legacy. In addition to the Mastiha Museum, these firms may arrange tourist packages that include visits to the Mastihochoria and other cultural sites on the island. To preserve mastiha cultivation as a vibrant representation of the local culture, it is imperative to engage all stakeholders, including cultural groups and people, who hold a deep affection for and are committed to safeguarding it. Introducing educational programs at an academic level is crucial for informing kids and students about the practices of mastiha cultivation and its significance as an ingredient listed in the Representative List of Humanity.

The primary demographic of tourists in Chios consists of the Turkish community. Turkish tourists play a crucial role in the growth of the island's tourism sector and the enhancement of the local economy. There is a need to motivate and organize individuals with a professional mindset and strong moral principles who are prepared to invest in tourism enterprises and enhance the standard of living for both locals and tourists. Preserving mastiha is crucial for the advancement of the local people and the maintenance of the island's reputation. Cooperation among local, national, European, and global cultures is necessary.

Future research could involve comparative studies with other regions where intangible cultural heritage plays a significant role in local tourism. Such studies would enhance understanding of the universal and unique challenges faced in integrating cultural heritage into tourism, and they could provide broader insights into effective preservation strategies across different socio-economic and cultural settings. Conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impacts of current tourism and preservation strategies on the cultural heritage of Chios would be invaluable. This could involve tracking changes over time in local attitudes, economic benefits, and the physical state of cultural sites, providing a more comprehensive picture of sustainability. Furthermore, exploring the use of digital technologies and social media in promoting intangible cultural heritage could open new avenues for engaging younger audiences and global tourists. Future studies might focus on the effectiveness of virtual tours, augmented reality experiences, and interactive web content in enhancing the visitor experience and education at places like the Mastiha Museum. Further research into the roles and influences of different stakeholders, including local communities, tour operators, and government entities, in the management of cultural heritage could yield insights into more effective engagement and collaboration strategies. This would help in designing inclusive policies that meet the diverse needs and expectations of all parties involved. Finally, an assessment of the impact of newly implemented policies based on the

conclusions of this study could guide further refinement of cultural heritage management and tourism development strategies. This would involve evaluating the effectiveness of these policies in achieving intended cultural preservation and economic development goals.

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