

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE UNESCO HERITAGE MINING AREA OF ROȘIA MONTANĂ

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Abstract: *Roșia Montană mining area has sparked numerous controversies and generated a series of protests, ultimately leading to the rejection of a large-scale mining project carried out in a public-private partnership and the inclusion of this area in the UNESCO heritage. In this article, we do not intend to judge the interests of a political nature or some businesspersons. Still, an objective analysis of this field takes into account some key aspects related to the level of socio-economic development, natural mining, historical heritage and culture, historical pollution, and development potential (through tourism, resumption of mining activities, or other viable solutions). As a tool to quantify and conclude the presented aspects, we used a well-known method, namely the SWOT analysis.*

Keywords: *heritage, mining perimeter, legislation, cultural heritage, urban ensemble, industrial architecture, architectural monuments, acid drainage, degradation of buildings*

1. Introduction

Roșia Montană is currently receiving special attention on a national and international level, because of the inclusion (July 2021) of its unique cultural heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage. The period also marks a Great Change in the history of this community, developed over two millennia based on the extraction and processing of precious metals. The Great Change aims to give up mining in favour of developing an alternative strategy (and especially tourism) as the main source for the socio-economic well-being of Roșia Montană [1].

In the elaboration of this study, we started from a series of premises that outline the current socio-cultural, economic, legal, and environmental situation, before and after the inclusion of the mining cultural landscape of Roșia Montană in the UNESCO World Heritage, as well as the alternatives for sustainable capitalization of the existing resources today in Roșia Montană.

The investigated aspects refer both to the local problems that the majority of the commune's inhabitants face, to the general state of uncertainty in which the majority of the commune's inhabitants have been living for several years, as well as to how the problem of protecting the heritage of Roșia Montană is raised, by the village authorities. At the same time, this analysis of the diversity of the heritage as well as its vulnerabilities can be an alarm signal for those who will ensure the continuity of the preservation of heritage values or it can be the seed for new approaches.

2. Presentation of Roșia Montană UNESCO heritage

The UNESCO Heritage does not include the entire town of Roșia Montană, but a delimited area; it is mainly about the most important, extensive, and technically diverse underground mining complex of Roman antiquity, the old state exploitation together with the exploitation areas of the ore, residential areas, sacred areas, necropolises, and not of the entire Roșia Montană area.

At Roșia Montană we find a multitude of valuable elements that, together, form an exceptional site, a fabulous cultural landscape, such a rich network of important vestiges that date from prehistory to the modern and contemporary period and uniquely illustrate the evolution of mining.

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From a legal point of view, the most valuable historical information (about the history of Roșia Montană, of gold mining or the Roman law) are the triptychs, which are waxed tablets representing legal documents known since the 19th century; they record sales contracts, payments for certain services, interest-bearing loans, college documents, price lists and fees, cooperation agreements, as well as brief characterizations of settlements etc. [2].

The underground architecture contains the most representative example of underground Roman gold mining in the world and demonstrates the exchange of values through innovative techniques developed by Illyrian-Dalmatian mining immigrants. The multiple chambers that housed wooden drainage systems with escape wheels set in motion by human movement represent a technique probably brought from Hispania, while the excavated galleries, perfectly trapezoidal in section, the helical shafts, the sloping communication galleries with stairs carved into the rock and the vertical extraction areas superimposed on each other, with the ceiling carved in steps, are in a juxtaposition so specific to Roșia Montană that they very likely represent pioneering aspects in the technical history of mining [3].

The built heritage boasts an impressive inventory illustrating the diversity of classical and baroque architectural styles mixed with local tradition – a cosmopolitan settlement whose roots and decor come from the free mining of gold. The central square, where numerous public functions were concentrated - town hall, communal school and kindergarten, confessional schools, dispensary, pharmacy, clubs, cinema, insurance company headquarters, bank branches, shops, and craft workshops - grouped in an architectural-urban ensemble with a strong character of representation, the urban structure is gradually diluted towards the industrial peripheries, characterized by mining households composed of housing and processing installations or even mine mouths. The settlement developed along Roșia valley, in direct relation to the mining areas, at the base of the Orlea and Cetate massifs (Figure 1) or in the area of the natural amphitheatre defined by the Cârnic, Jig, and Letea massifs, where the central area of the village took shape [4, 5].

Traditional mining has generated, apart from the underground universe of the actual exploitation, the components of the historical industrial landscape of the site, from which the artificial lakes (the lakes), the coastal galleries of the Jig and Cârnic massifs, the tailings deposits (today partially vegetated) that dot the rocky slopes and coasts uncovered by vegetation; the settlement developed along the Roșia valley, with nuclei in direct relation to the exploitation areas, at the base of the Orlea and Cetate massifs or in the area of the natural amphitheater defined by the Cârnic, Jig, and Letea massifs, where the central area of the village took shape [6].



Fig. 1. Cetate quarry

Photo: Paul Grigorescu

Industrial heritage represents an important testimony of the technological and productive activities that underlie the socio-economic evolution of human society from its first pre-industrial manifestations to the present day.

3. The legal status and importance of monuments and protected areas in Roșia Montană

Originally (in Roman law), "patrimony" referred to a person's property. Today, the concept of heritage has a different meaning and legal status compared to its origins, which in turn gave rise to a new concept of cultural and natural heritage conserving and protecting the identity value of historical traditions, knowledge of our ancestors such as natural resources, etc. Responsibilities were thus established between the owner as responsible for management, maintenance, and restoration and local authorities responsible for approval, co-financing, and coordination, as well as central authorities responsible for approval, coordination, development of methodologies, co-financing of restoration projects and relations with other authority centres (ministries) [7].

The value of the patrimony of Roșia Montană is legally established, based on Law no. 422/2001 regarding the protection of historical monuments, by classifying the archaeological component as a historical monument, category "site" value group A - "of national and universal value". To this territorial type, monuments are added to historical archaeological and architectural monuments, ranked individually (an archaeological area and 42 houses and churches) or as a whole (the historic centre).

The status of historical monuments follows the prohibition of the destruction of the respective components (Law 422/2001, art. 10, paragraph 4, art. 11, and paragraph 2) and the obligation to protect them. The state guarantees and ensures the protection of historical monuments (art.7 paragraph.1) [8].

Based on Law no. 5/2000, regarding the approval of the National Territorial Development Plan, Section III - Protected Areas, the cultural heritage of Roșia Montană is declared to be of national interest and exceptional national value (art. 5, para. 1 and Appendix III), being included in the categories of "urban ensembles" (the historic centre), "industrial architecture" (the Roman galleries of gold mining operations) and "monuments of popular architecture" (houses, 18th and 19th centuries) [9].

The entire Roșia Montană commune is declared an "administrative-territorial unit with a very high concentration of built heritage with the cultural value of national interest". To the elements of built heritage are added the two rare geological formations (Figure 2), which are part of the "reserves" category and monuments of nature": Piatra Corbului and Piatra Despicață.



Fig.2. Piatra Corbului



Piatra Despicață

Photo: Paul Grigorescu

The sites from Roșia Montană have been on the List of historical monuments since 1992, also highlighted in the Annex to Law 5/2000, which refers to the protected areas section of the national land development plan. Moreover, as a rule of procedure, inclusion in the World Heritage List could never even be discussed if the site was not already protected by our national legislation. According to the provisions of the Mining Law (85/2003), Article 11, mining operations are prohibited in the perimeters that contain such values of the national cultural heritage [10, 11].

The general legal regime of technical and industrial heritage, as well as its protection, are provided for in Law No. 6/2008 regarding the legal regime of technical and industrial heritage. The goods belonging to the technical and industrial heritage are classified in the category of movable cultural heritage, respectively, as historical monuments and are inventoried by the legal provisions in force [12, 13].

4. What kind of heritage are we talking about at Roșia Montană? - past and present

If we look at our recent, post-December history, we sadly notice there were few or almost no moments when the state authorities valued or defended the cultural heritage of Roșia Montană. It is probably, on the one hand, explainable in an Eastern European country for which the destruction of heritage, centuries-old houses, and churches had become routine in the communist era.

When trying to remember what is the general perception regarding the fate of the valuable heritage of Roșia Montană, today, we discover the same pattern: a heritage on the verge of destruction or degradation as in the communist years, a total disinterest from the part of the state authorities in the heritage, even denial of its value and justification of the destruction through all kinds of arguments that never had anything to do with conservation or enhancement nor with caring for the local community; culminating, in recent years, with an unprecedented civil society awakening on the subject. Today, Romania must invest in the protection and valorisation of the cultural-historical heritage, regardless of whether a cultural objective is part of the UNESCO list or not.

The inclusion of Roșia Montană in the UNESCO World Heritage comes with several obligations for Romania, including allocating money for protection. Authorities must ensure that the integrity of the protected site is maintained. That means it has to make sure that the '10' selection criteria are kept. The main advantage is that, under the auspices of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the broad name of UNESCO, cultural and natural heritage is protected, and governments have an obstacle against the action of demolishing or modifying a building or interventions in natural areas. Also, in addition to the international recognition of this unique place, it would be a wide-open door to the development of the area based on heritage as a resource - be it cultural or environmental - in the current context, seen as a powerful economic engine [14].

Unfortunately, when it comes to heritage, it is not enough to "not touch" this site; on the contrary, Roșia Montană needs quick and consistent intervention. If the commitments made by Romania, before the World Heritage Committee are real, then we should see a mobilization from the state for the de facto saving of this heritage through direct and properly financed measures to restore the most important cultural-historical objectives in the area, concrete measure through the development of a new plan and the unlocking of town planning regulations, (obligatory by law), as well as the inclusion of clear legal provisions related to heritage, immediate greening measures the real encouragement measures aimed at the owners of historical monument buildings, immediate dedicated measures network of historic galleries – and the list, goes on. These measures are required by the very decision of the UNESCO Committee, before which the Romanian state committed itself to try in all ways and by all means to protect the cultural heritage from the entire perimeter included in the UNESCO World Heritage.

It would not be the first, nor the last, dishonoured statement by the Romanian state about the patrimony it takes care of. However, unlike other times, these commitments were made in front of the most important forum dedicated to the protection of heritage, to which Romania has responsibilities but also, to which it contributes annually. And, it's good to score as many times as we have the opportunity: we hope that the period has passed when state representatives allowed themselves to mock the heritage of Roșia Montană, classified and protected by law and by the commitments made at the international level.

5. Analysis of the current situation

The data used in this study were collected through the interview method (discussions with subjects) with representatives of local authorities and residents of the commune.

A suggestive aspect was the refusal of some of them to answer the questions. This refusal was more significant in certain areas (for example, in the area of the old centre of the village of Roșia Montană). It is understandable, therefore, that some hostile reactions were generated by the sight of a foreigner who wanted to ask questions. In several cases, before refusing, the approached locals asked: "You're from Gold, aren't you?!" Many subjects showed that "there were many others... with questions".

The problems that hinder the sustainable development of the Roșia Montană area are diverse, from economic, social, and environmental to legal ones. The local population, in its majority, finds it difficult to find alternative economic opportunities to mining, a fact fuelled by the prevailing mono-industrial mining tradition, the depopulation and aging of the community, the drastic drop in the standard of living and family income, the drop in morale due to the uncertainties created, as well as the non-existence of a General Urbanism Plan that also limits other activities in the area of the locality. In addition to these, other problems are identified as the lack of services, the disinterest of the state authorities, and not the least, the fact that the government does not consult the residents regarding major issues.

The UNESCO status is more of an obstacle for the moment. The main obstacle to sustainable development is the lack of a General Urban Plan (PUG) - the construction permits cannot be issued also, blocking access to non-reimbursable funds.

The representatives of the Roșia Montană town hall claim that the absence of the General Urban Plan after the cancellation (2016) of the previous one (which also included mining) is blocking the development of the commune. The building infrastructure has numerous deficiencies resulting from the lack of a rehabilitation and expansion program, especially in the area of the historic centre of the town, the most important from a heritage point of view.

This statute of Roșia Montană obstructs the local administration from carrying out rehabilitation works of some infrastructure elements in certain areas of the commune. It should be mentioned that the PUG (General Urban Plan) constitutes the set of urban planning rules applicable to a locality. The entrepreneurs in the area claim that it is precisely this international status of Roșia Montană, as well as the lack of urban plans, that causes them not to invest in tourism. The lack of (PUG) makes it more difficult to build new hostels or access government or European funding programs for both local administration and individuals.

Accustomed to repairing their buildings however they could, the local people claim that the restoration and modernization of any building included in the UNESCO Heritage require special approvals, those must be done under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture (directly or through the National Commission of Historical Monuments), the Ministry of Development, Works Public and Administration as well as the National Heritage Institute therefore and because of this aspect, was neglected the old centre of the commune [15].

The quality of the environment suffers as a result of the poor management of environmental aspects in the former mining operation (numerous problems related to intensive water pollution with mine drains, erosion of dumps and quarries, acidification and loading of soils with heavy metals, landscape degradation, etc. a.), as well as from the delay in starting the post-closure ecological reconstruction program. This program, financially supported by the World Bank, was started improperly and carried out superficially, given the uncertain (theoretical) situation maintained by the resumption of mining.

The numerous abandoned mines in the area of the UNESCO perimeter cause a general phenomenon of pollution of surface and underground waters with untreated mine waters. Through these mines, the underground water comes into direct contact with the ores, is loaded above the permitted limit, and flows into the surface waters or infests the water table without being collected and purified in specialized stations. Thus, the waters discharged from the old mines, as well as those discharged from the prospecting fields, cause great harm to the water supply of the surrounding residents [16].

Abrudel heavily pollutes the waters of the Arieș (Figure 3) through its waters loaded with mineral substances originating from the discharge of mine waters, tailings-laden waters from the old settling ponds, as well as highly acidic waters loaded with heavy metal ions brought by the Roșia stream.



Fig. 3. The confluence of the Abrudel River with the Arieș River (left) Roșia stream (right)

Photo: Paul Grigorescu

Another environmental factor with a general degree of degradation is the soil, the content of heavy metals in the mine waste storage areas, and the Preparation Plant caused pollution up to the limit of the alert threshold or even the intervention threshold.

Fortunately, today is not polluted air. Air pollution occurs only on days with strong winds, which can pick up and carry dust from the area of tailings dumps and quarries. Practically, it is found that the most affected environmental factors in the Roșia Montană area are water, soil, and aquatic ecosystems.

In the current situation, the threat is given by the Roșia Montană site itself. How can an area included in the UNESCO heritage pollute other areas in the vicinity? Moreover, then some sources of drinking water come from springs located in shallow aquifer layers.

Although Romania has created the necessary institutional/administrative and legislative structures to respond to the needs of integration into the World Heritage, Romania has serious deficiencies and slow progress in solving the problems of Roșia Montană, or better said, there are no practical concerns of an ecological nature.

Sharp degradation of the built environment

Due to the disappearance of the mining industry, implicitly the deterioration of the economic situation in Roșia Montană, especially, many houses are currently in a severe state of degradation, ranging from cracks and damage to the facades to houses in a state of collapse (see Figure 4). The fluctuations of economic activity in recent years have been strongly felt in the local economy.

The deterioration of heritage elements due to lack of maintenance and architectural abandonment is already an old trend in Roșia Montană, a trend that manifests itself regardless of the ownership regime. Recent demographic changes have led to the abandonment and consequent deterioration of many buildings with real heritage value. Maintenance work is carried out selectively in the historic area. However, much of the built stock consisting of valuable buildings continues to deteriorate at an accelerated rate due to a lack of maintenance funds. Most of the buildings require work to strengthen the structure, the walls, the change of the roof, and the wooden elements.



Fig. 4. Buildings in the historic centre of Roșia Montana

Photo: Paul Grigorescu

In the absence of urban planning regulations aimed at ensuring the protection of all the valuable components of the historical heritage, there is the danger of interventions that destroy or cancel their value. Their rehabilitation must be done only with the consultation and approval of heritage specialists in order not to irreparably damage these houses and to preserve their authentic character. Such cases can already be invoked, some right in the centre of the settlement, others scattered throughout the central area.

It is very important that these houses are lived in, that they have life. Their transformation into museum exhibits would transform the historical centre of Roșia Montana into a kind of "Ghost Town"

The destruction of cultural heritage comes not only from the usual causes of degradation but also from the evolution of social and economic life, which intensifies the threat through more severe phenomena of alteration and destruction. After 2007, no public entity invested a single penny, nor did it directly or indirectly finance cultural heritage conservation activities in Roșia Montană.

6. A new stage of development, "lights or shadows"

The engine of sustainable development is the local economy, that is, the set of economic activities determined by local opportunities and the experience of the community, which imposes the way of valorising local resources and creating added value. That is why I consider this component to be essential for the success of applying an alternative strategy for sustainable development in Roșia Montană.

Local authorities have a key role in strategic planning in the field of tourism. That is why the authorities need to be aware of the importance of a tourism development strategy and the benefits that this industry can bring the formation of a tourism development strategy for the area by:

- Recognition of tourism as an economic and social force;
- Making the community aware of the benefits of tourism;
- Guiding and influencing the development of sustainable tourism;
- Provide basic facilities and infrastructure to encourage the development of tourism;
- Ensuring the most appropriate conditions and facilities for receiving tourists;
- Ensuring that the development of tourism matches the characteristics and resources of the area.

Perhaps the most important step for the economic reconstruction of this area after the closure of the mining operation will be for the whole community to accept the fact that mining will no longer be able to provide them with the necessary economic resources and to start a process of individual, family and community reconversion for other activities viable and durable [17].

The transition from a traditional activity (2000 years) like mining in Roșia Montană to other types of activities that could ensure the sustainable development of the area will mean a joint effort of the 3 or 4 generations who now live in the local community. The activities belonging to the agricultural and forestry sector are poorly represented in Roșia Montană - they are carried out at the micro level to meet the needs of the family.

6.1 Alternative Resources-Analysis

At the moment, the most important resource of Roșia Montană is its unique heritage (cultural, natural, archaeological, and industrial), which makes us believe that in the future, this locality will survive, overcome the current obstacles, and that the alternatives for capitalizing the resources locally, will give the community the prosperity of yesteryear.

Tourism is the main alternative to the Roșia Montană site. For a tourism development strategy to be viable, several aspects related to tourists and their tendencies must be taken into account, as well as the impact that tourism can have on the local economy, the environment, and local culture. The use of cultural heritage as a catalyst for the development of a tourism industry will provide an alternative development for the local community through the following tourist premises [18].

Rural tourism must ensure the satisfaction of the basic conditions: accommodation and food facilities, guaranteeing the hygiene of accommodation and food facilities, offering local and diversified gastronomy, developing a friendly and welcoming attitude on the part of the hosts, etc.

Cultural tourism capitalizes on local crafts, gastronomy, art and music, architecture, historical sites, festivals and events, heritage resources, the nature of local activities, technology, religion, and education, contributing to community development for the locals firstly, and secondly for tourists. Such an example can be represented by mining tourist attractions, natural landscapes, heritage tourist circuits, etc.

The development of mining cultural tourism, being niche tourism, especially attracts day tourists, who come only for the respective attraction, which benefits especially restaurants or souvenir sellers, provided that they exist. It should also emphasize the role of the existing museum in Roșia Montană as a depository of artefacts (remains of buildings, work tools, machines, etc.) but also as a depository of social aspects, of institutional organization, attitudinal characteristics of the population and values such as be it language or religion [19].

Eco-tourism can become one of the main activities and a potential type of tourism, to take place here. Eco-tourism involves activities carried out in nature, without affecting the natural environment in any way, without polluting the areas crossed. Let us not forget, however, that in Roșia Montană the environment has been affected by human activity in quite large areas. One aspect to consider is the management of protected areas – access, waste management, behaviour, marking, ownership, etc.

Research activity - Roșia Montană lends itself very well to this type of tourism because it can primarily attract visitors who are passionate about geology and mineralogy, for which it can be offered as a tourist service, the so-called "geocaching" the search for a certain type of rock or mineral in the quarries in the area. Another type of scientific tourist would be enthusiasts of the history of technology and industry, finding here tools and installations for the exploitation and preparation of gold ore, mining galleries, people who worked with these machines and who can provide them with complete information, etc.

Organizing events is another form of tourism that is already practiced in Roșia Montană and represents a huge promotion channel, "Roșia Montană ALIVE". Roșia Montană ALIVE also organizes the Night of the Museums, respectively, an evening in which the Mining Museum is highlighted and other heritage buildings through concerts, plays, and guided tours.

The resources of the Roșiei Montană site - the cultural and natural heritage - can also attract other forms of tourism: business and congress, educational (e.g. the resumption of the International Symposium of Monumental Sculpture in Țarina. The first International Symposium of Monumental Sculpture in Roșia was organized in August-September 2006 and brought together renowned sculptors from all over the world; this event has a special cultural and promotional potential for Roșia Montană).

The rest of the tourists who visit Roșia Montană are "half-day" tourists. Whether it's individual tourists or organized groups, they usually don't spend more than a few hours in Roșia Montană. That's all it takes to visit the Roman Galleries within the museum and to walk through the old centre of Roșia. Eventually, they can extend their stay by visiting some of the churches or taking a hike to the surrounding hills.

Supporting the development of agriculture and forestry

- Supporting investments and stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit
- Partnerships based on agro-forestry sector networks
- Diversification of agro-forestry products
- Increasing the value of agricultural and forestry products through organic certification and designations of origin, etc.

Creating added economic value through mining

The economic and social reconstruction of Roșia Montana - on a sustainable basis cannot be achieved without the creation and increase of the added value of local products and services. Supplementing mining and its place in the local economy is a special challenge that exceeds the limits of the responsibilities of local actors.

Roșia Montană has the chance at this moment to rethink the way it capitalizes on the resources it has in such a way as to ensure both current generations and those to come to an economic system that can support the well-being and quality of life in the community [20].

- The processing of the material from the old settling ponds would lead to the greening of large areas occupied by these deposits;
- Important quantities of critical minerals for green technologies may be present in tailings deposits, and this would allow our country to strengthen its resilience and strategic autonomy, a goal that the European Union is also pursuing;
- Restoring the underground of Roșia Montană Restoring the underground of Roșia Montană besides salary would bring other benefits for the people of the area many, still need two or three years and can benefit from a pension if they work in the mining system etc.

It does not exist on the websites of the ministries or the list of available documents of the Chamber of Deputies regarding the Roșia Montană case I could not find a study on the tourism development potential of the area. The government's refusal to open such a door is regrettable, but the government's preoccupation with keeping it closed by any means is something completely reprehensible and inadmissible.

As long as concrete measures are delayed in appearing, the role of an active actor in encouraging this protection and development attempts based on heritage as a resource, I think, will largely fall back on civil society.

6.2 SWOT analysis - peak or free fall

STRONG POINTS	WEAK POINTS
-The undeniable value of the archaeological and cultural heritage of this region. -Economic reconstruction through alternatives such as tourism. -Easier access to funding for heritage conservation. -Transformation of Roman galleries closed to the public into open spaces. -Transmitting the history of Roșia Montană further through live speech or informative materials. - The attraction of mining tourism can lead to an increase in the pride of the Rosians vis-à-vis local history. -The industrial past of the settlement, since ancient times, attracts tourists interested in discovering how gold was mined -Locals can be the best guides because, almost without exception, they have all been involved in gold mining for generations. - the historical vestiges valuing, also related to the exploitation of gold, dating from the Dacian, Roman, and medieval eras and, up to the present day, can attract tourists. -Architectural monuments - mansion buildings are points of interest for tourists - The area promotion as a region of tourist attraction. - Local events (festivals). - The existence of a picturesque natural setting conducive to the development of tourism.	-Tourism is only a summer activity. -The tourism development strategy - which the authorities promised when Romania's file was submitted to UNESCO - did not materialize. -Roșia Montană cannot change the attitude of the community from inactive to proactive, drawing the road from "what is" to "what should be" and showing the locals the present reality, with its flaws and advantages. - The government is faced with a double responsibility: to ensure the promotion, of sustainable development and to ensure the preservation and protection of cultural heritage. - Lack of ecological reconstruction of the mining area; - The massive depopulation of the locality, - Lack of necessary funds to finance specific activities to protect the cultural heritage. - Lack of viable alternatives. - The poor technical condition of local roads; insufficient local funds for road construction and maintenance; financial dependence on the funds distributed from the County Council budget; non-existent public transport. - Lack of agritourism guesthouses; lack of coherent tourist products; lack of staff trained in tourism – managers, guides, hostel administrators; reduced promotion of existing tourism products. - Insufficient financial resources; small investments;

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- The preservation of the archaeological and cultural heritage, as well as the protection of the environment by eliminating the historical pollution originating from the old mining activities. - Ecological restoration of the soil through the elimination/utilization of historical tailings. - Total support of NGOs. - The inclusion of former miners in the activities of the museum, guides, or storytellers of the life and activity of the miners. - Development of mining tourism/mining archaeology. - Facilitating the creation of new jobs in various fields of activity - Encouraging the development of the entrepreneurial spirit. - Attractive standard of living for young people, both for locals and for those from neighboring areas who want to settle in the commune. - Establishment of a tourist information center with trained staff and information and presentation materials. - Assisting residents in initiating and carrying out tourist and agro-tourism activities; attracting funds for the development of tourist activities and the construction of guesthouses and agro-tourism farms; promoting the area as a tourist attraction region.	- Sharp degradation of the built fund. - Loss of cultural and traditional values. - The legal regime of Roșia Montana is incorrectly described. - Difficulties in securing a job for every miner. -The poor quality of the services offered. - The irreversible loss of some elements of cultural heritage through the accidental and involuntary destruction of some archaeological assets. - The residents' need for services is not realized, to a very large extent by the locals. - Lack of local initiative, mentality towards changes, and professional conversion. -The unavailable future in mining -Informing the population about the risks of household water spills in the wrong places, efficient use of water resources, and pollution prevention. - Lack of knowledge of environmental norms and applicable legislation; reduced ecological education. -Water pollution due to the lack of a wastewater separation system; an inefficient waste management system. -Reduction of labor force - major consequence of alternative development.

The following scenario emerges from the analysis of this SWOT method, the opportunities that the Heritage, has to develop a viable industry that contributes to the future stability of the community through the development of a diversified business environment, the preservation of cultural Heritage, and the ecological reconstruction of areas affected by mining. The elimination of threats plays an important role they must be included in successfully implemented actions and projects, but without the necessary resources and the cooperation of public and private actors, they will continue to remain the same. All these aspects must be outlined around the principles of sustainable development of the local community, solutions that generate economic well-being in the long term, and protecting at the same time - the natural, social, and cultural Heritage of the communities.

If the Tourism Development Strategy - which the authorities promised when Romania's file was submitted to UNESCO - will not materialize in a few years, and the government decides to mine there, all UNESCO can do is take note and delist the site. UNESCO cannot stop a state from exploiting natural resources, building bridges or stadiums or even blowing up its history and culture.

Roșia Montană is not limited only to supporting the restoration of buildings in the locality, but all social, economic, and environmental aspects must be highlighted and analysed in terms of the future of the entire community. I draw attention to the special importance of taking urgent and priority measures to preserve the identity of this community. Roșia Montană is a community in full erosion, risking, through pollution, depopulation, aging, and the destruction of the cultural Heritage, not to be able to support and benefit from alternative development programs and projects - possible and justifiable at this moment.

7. Conclusions

Based on what has been presented, it can be concluded that heritage values as a representative element of culture are also the product of history and social practices, constantly subject to evolution due to the rapid economic and social changes of recent years. In my opinion, the cultural heritage of Roșia Montană is threatened with damage or irreparable loss due not only to the passage of time and the progress of society but also to the pace of accelerated changes. Except for the resumption of mining, the only development alternative and the only source of capitalization for the local community, its preservation must be an immediate, concrete, and continuous concern.

In this context, Roșia Montană's cultural heritage should represent a priority at the national level, taking into account the representative-identity character of the heritage, the imperative need to protect it, from the perspective of recognizing the heritage as a value of national interest, unanimously recognized, as a non-renewable resource of sustainable development, generating progress and social cohesion.

All that can be said for sure after all these aspects reported in this study is that things are still not clear. Even if it is not my competence to say that the development of Roșia Montană through tourism is not viable or that the resumption of mining will destroy the area, I can point out certain principled and even legal inconsistencies that have made many look circumspectly at the proposed actions.

In conclusion, I emphasize an aspect essential for Roșia Montană, considering the decay of human consciousness, with all the legislative measures taken at the national or international level, although, about the cultural heritage, the measures taken are more effective, the goods from the world's natural heritage are far from to be properly protected.

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