

Media Monitoring of the World Heritage Sites in Romania

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Abstract

Both the general public and the specialists (archaeologists, historians, etc.) that are concerned with the cultural heritage, are most often informed about their state or about the latest archaeological discoveries in the written or TV press. The present study focuses on articles published in the press and television during 2017 and 2018 (January - November) on the issue of the cultural and archaeological heritage of Romania included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. For a better follow-up to this study, we will provide you with a table below with each UNESCO heritage objective, along with the LMI code, UNESCO registration code, year of listing and geographic location. Also, the study will contain a brief presentation of the report drawn from the media for each monument.

Keywords: UNESCO, Romania, Mass-media, Heritage, Protection, Preservation, Promotion.

Introduction

Media analysis is a basic information mode and can be the basis for future case studies. In general, the public, regardless of age, gender, religion has the main sources of information in newspapers (on-line or paper-based), television or radio. We were interested in the way in which the main means of mass information were manifested during the period January 2017 - November 2018 on the subject of UNESCO's heritage from Romania. The data include the articles that appeared in the written press within the timeframe in question and are based on the conclusions presented below. In this article, we will present the first results of the media monitoring process on the coverage of UNESCO's cultural and archaeological heritage in Romania.

Also, we noticed that on the official sites of UNESCO Organization (en.unesco.org, whc.unesco.org) this kind of reports have not been posted, namely how the image of monuments enlisted in the World Heritage is reflected in the international press or in national press of every country that has such monuments in their custody.

In social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) the problem of World Heritage is intensely debated in restricted groups of archaeologists, specialists in heritage preservation, historians etc., while in other circumstances like com-

ments, conversations, posts or likes it happens very rarely when the civil society is involved in this kind of subjects.

List of the World Heritage Sites from Romania

NAME	LMI Code	UNESCO Code	Year of admission	Geographical localisation
CHURCHES FROM MOLDOVA		598 bis	1993, 2010	
„Tăierea capului Sf. Ioan Botezătorul” Church	SV-II-m-A-05487.01			Arbore Village, Suceava County
„Adormirea Maicii Domnului and Sf. Gheorghe” Church	SV-II-m-A-05570.01			Mănăstirea Humorului Village, Suceava County
„Buna Vestire” Church of Moldovița Monastery	SV-II-m-A-05673.01			Vatra Moldoviței Parish, Suceava County
„Înălțarea Sfintei Cruci” Church	SV-II-m-A-05581.01			Pătrăuți Village, Suceava County
„Sf. Gheorghe” Church of „Sf. Ioan cel Nou” Monastery	SV-II-m-A-05469.01			City of Suceava, Suceava County
„Sf. Gheorghe” Church of Voroneț Monastery	SV-II-m-A-05675.01			Voroneț Village, City of Gura Humorului, Suceava County
„Învierea Domnului” Church of Sucevița Monastery	SV-II-m-A-05651.01			Sucevița Village, Suceava County
„Sf. Nicolae” Church of Probota Monastery	SV-II-m-A-05592.01			Probota Village, City of Dolhasca, Suceava County
HUREZI MONASTERY	VL-II-a-A-09884	597	1993	Romanii de Jos Village, City of Horezu, Vâlcea County
Villages with fortified churches from Transilvania		596,596 bis	1993, 1999	
Rural site of Călnic	AB-II-s-A-00197			Călnic Village, Alba County
Rural site of Prejmer	BV-II-s-A-11744			Prejmer Village, Brașov County
Rural site of Viscri	BV-II-s-A-11841			Viscri Village, Brașov County



Rural site of Dârjiu	HR-II-s-A-12812			Dârjiu Village, Harghita County
Rural site of Saschiz	MS-II-s-A-15781			Saschiz Village, Mureș County
Rural site of Biertan	SB-II-s-A-12327			Biertan Village, Sibiu County
Rural site of Valea Viilor	SB-II-s-A-12581			Valea Viilor Village, Sibiu County
DACIAN FORTRESSES FROM ORĂȘTIEI MOUNTAINS		906	1999	
Sarmizegetusa Regia – Grădiștea de Munte Dacian Fortress	HD-I-s-A-03190			com. Orăștioara de Sus, Hunedoara County
Dacian Fortress of Costești Cetățuia	HD-I-s-A-03178			Costești Village, com. Orăștioara de Sus, Hunedoara County
Dacian Fortress of Costești-Blidaru	HD-I-s-A-03181			Costești Village, com. Orăștioara de Sus, Hunedoara County
Dacian Fortress of Luncani-Piatra Roșie	HD-I-s-A-03200			Luncani Village, com. Boșorod, Hunedoara County
Dacian Fortress of Bănița	HD-I-s-A-03153			Bănița Village, Hunedoara County
Dacian Fortress of Căpâlna	AB-I-s-A-00020			Căpâlna Village, com. Săsciori, Alba County
HISTORICAL CENTRE OF SIGHIȘOARA	MS-II-s-A-15806	902	1999	City of Sighișoara, Mureș County
WOODEN CHURCHES FROM MARAMUREȘ		904	1999	
„Intrarea în Biserica a Maicii Domnului” Church	MM-II-m-A-04517			com. Bârsana, Maramureș County
„Sf. Nicolae” Church	MM-II-m-A-04530			com. Budești, Maramureș County
„Sf. Parascheva” Church	MM-II-m-A-04566			com. Desești, Maramureș County
„Nașterea Maicii Domnului” Church	MM-II-m-A-04587			com. Ieud, Maramureș County

„Sf. Arhanghel” Church	MM-II- m-A-04604			Plopiş Village, com. Şişeşti, Maramureş County
„Sf. Paraschiva” Church	MM-II- m-A-04605			Poienile Izei Village, Maramureş County
„Sf. Arhangheli” Church	MM-II- m-A-04617			Rogoz Village, oraş Târgu Lăpuş, Maramureş County
„Sf. Arhangheli” Church	MM-II- m-A-04769.01			Şurdeşti Village, com. Şişeşti, Maramureş County
THE DANUBE DELTA		588	1991	Tulcea County
PRIMARY AND OLD BEECH FORESTS IN THE CARPATHIAN AND OTHER REGIONS OF EUROPE			2017	
Izvoarele Nerei				Caraş – Severin County
Cheile Nerei - Beuşniţa				Caraş – Severin County
Domogled – Valea Cernei				Caraş – Severin County
The Massif of Cozia				Vâlcea County
Lotrişor				Vâlcea County
The Secular Forest Slătioara				Suceava County
Groşii Țibleşului				Maramureş County
Strâmbu Băiuţ				Maramureş County
Seculat Şinca Forest				Braşov County

Thus, for the year 2017, a total of 106 articles were registered, out of which: 57 in the local press and 39 in the national press. The articles were distributed, both in the local press and in the national press, according to each UNESCO monument. For the year 2018, there were 84 articles: 49 articles in the local press and 35 articles in the national press. The search was focused on the UNESCO keyword, and we used the constructions: “painted churches”, “churches in Moldova”, “wooden churches”, “Dacian fortresses” and “virgin forests”. For a better search, the name of each monument or the name of the village in which it is located are used. Also, with regard to the selection of articles, we focused on the following topics of debate: promotion, funding/rehabilitation, political disputes/conflict situations, theft/illegal/poaching, discovery/research, destruction, crunch/negligence.



Regarding the local press, the monitoring was carried out periodically (every three months), and for each district with the monuments registered in the world list, two or three newspapers were traced as following: Suceava County – *Monitorul de Suceava*, *Obiectiv* and *Suceava News*; Vâlcea County – *Ziarul de Vâlcea*, *Gazeta Vâlceană* and *Infoplus.ro*; Alba County – *Alba 24.ro*, *Ziarul Unirea* and *Ziarul Apulum*; Braşov County – *Bună Ziua Braşov*, *NewsBv.ro*, *Braşovul Tău*; Harghita County – *Ziarul Harghita* and *Informația Harghitei*; Mureş County – *Zi de Zi*, *Ziarul de Mureş*, *Cuvântul Liber*; Sibiu County – *Turnul Sfatului*, *Tribuna*; Hunedoara County – *Servus Hunedoara*, *Mesagerul Hunedoarean*, *Ziarul Hunedoareanului*; Maramureş County – *Ziar MM.ro*, *Gazeta de Maramureş*, *Graiul Maramureşului*; Tulcea County – *Obiectiv de Tulcea*, *Ziarul de Tulcea*; Caraş Severin County – *Express de Banat*, *Argument* and *Reper 24h*.

We will open the press report with local press publications on monuments from UNESCO World Heritage List. From our preliminary analyses, we have noticed that in all Counties, with exception of Hunedoara, they show almost total disinterest towards the UNESCO heritage from Romania.

We will start with the press from Suceava County. There were 14 articles in three daily newspapers in the course of the following two years: six articles aimed to promote painted churches in Moldova through events and school activities dedicated to or organized within them. Two articles present the plans of the local and district authorities to grant funds to the *Moldovița* Monastery, to *Progota* Monastery, to the Monastery of *Sf. Ioan cel Nou' Suceava*, to *Pătrăuți* Monastery to carry out repair and consolidation works for the modernization of the parishes. An article was classified into the 'Theft' category, and it was about a recidivist who had broken the box of mercy at *Sucevița* Monastery. There were five articles in the 'Political disputes' category describing the conflicts between the former director of the Stulpicani forest derelict - now deputy and former president of the Suceava County Council on the subject of the *Codrii Seculari Slătioara Natural Reservation*.

Three articles have been registered for Vâlcea County. One of them briefly describes the fact that the walls at the Hurezi Monastery had been affected due to water infiltrations, the plaster and the structure of the brick walls being partially destroyed even at the adjacent land. Another article presents the city of Horezu as the homeland of owls and the UNESCO monument and the third was about the ISU Vâlcea exercises that took place at the Hurezi Monastery. For the year 2018, there was no record, no mention of the Monastery except the occasion of church and Easter celebrations.

In the media from Alba district, we recorded a single article from 2017, which is dedicated to describing the Călnic Fortress and promoting it, present in the local daily 'Alba24.ro'. In 2018, local newspapers paid increased attention to the Roşia Montană problem, neglecting the other UNESCO sites in the district.

In the course of the analysis of the local media in the districts of Brasov, Sibiu and Tulcea, we noticed that UNESCO monuments have been completely disregarded - we have not found any articles on this subject.

Regarding the UNESCO World Heritage from Harghita District, two articles were discussed in 2017 that debate the issue of rehabilitation of the road that leads to the rural site of Dârjiu. No articles have been registered for the year 2018.

We have found only five articles regarding Mureş District. Two of them discussed the possibility of restoration of the fortified church in Saschiz through European funds. Three articles were dedicated to the Sighişoara's problems: one article is about the discovery of a middle-sized supply pits after a pedestrian alley in the Central Park, another one is about the debate on a new PUZ (Area Town Planning), and the last article, dating 2018, through which Mircea Diaconu, the MEP, makes a public call for saving the Medieval Fortress.

The Hunedoara area has a total of 43 articles in 2017 and 31 for 2018. The greatest attention was paid to the Dacian fortress from Sarmizegetusa Regia - Grădiştea (56 items). Twelve out of those articles relate to the issue of court trials in the case of the mould discovered in the fortress's site. The Hunedoara Court had settled the complaint formulated by a young woman from Arad who asked for reward for participating in the discovery of the ancient matrix of Sarmizegetusa Regia, a bronze artefact considered extremely precious, and she asked for a new expertise for it. Eleven articles discuss the destruction of the walls of the Dacian fortress caused by the collapse of trees and taking steps to cut them to prevent other incidents, the authorities' inability to resolve this issue, accusations by ecological associations that cutting of secular trees will affect or have already affected the integrity of the archaeological site, and the assurances from the site administrator and archaeologists that this has not happened. Eight articles present the new funding strategies for conservation and rescue work, two items highlight the Hunedoara District Council's plans to scan the fort of the city using state-of-the-art technologies to ease the work of researchers in future archaeological excavation campaigns, three articles outline the framework of a series of discoveries brought by archaeologists' research-



es undertaken in the sacred area (the Ninth Terrace), of a *stone-paved pathway and some limestone elements belonging to an edifice*. Also, many artefacts have been found, such as fragments of ceramic pots, some painted with geometric or zoomorphic motifs, iron and glass pieces. All these archaeological discoveries could be admired by visitors at the open day at Sarmizegetusa Regia, organized on 9 September (Bumbac 2017a). An article discusses the request of the Hunedoara Court of Accounts to the Hunedoara district Council to carry out *valuations and records in the accounting by the Public Administration of Historic Monuments Administration of Fixed Assets and other unrated valuables like buildings and lands that make up the historical site of Sarmizegetusa Direction - Grădiştea de Munte, owned or managed by District Council* (Bumbac 2017b). An article presents the year 2017's report by CJ Hunedoara with the number of visitors and the funds obtained from the sale of tickets from Sarmizegetusa Regia and Ulpia Traiana. One article highlights the latest home searches conducted by the Alba and Hunedoara police following suspicions of "archaeological poaching" and theft of property from the Dacian fortress site. Five articles from 2018 highlighted the resignation and protests of Sarmizegetusa's site administrator, Vladimir Brilinsky, directed against the Hunedoara District Council, but these resulted in the following: after seven days of protests he resumed his activity from the fortress. Also, in 2018, we found out that the National Heritage Institute had carried out a comprehensive study that would underpin the future conservation, restoration and rehabilitation works of the archaeological site Sarmizegetusa Regia, which the Hunedoara District Council intends to carry out in the following years and on which the architects from INP conducted the DALI related studies. Three articles report that severe weather events and landslides in the Sarmizegetusa Regia area have revealed a variety of comments and opinions that have inflamed public opinion in the media and social networking sites alongside well-documented opinions. In the 'Theft' category, we have two other articles: the Hunedoara Court sentenced Adrian Stoicoi to four years in prison. He is a citizen from the Orăştie Mountains area, accused of the illegal discovery and trafficking of ancient treasures from Sarmizegetusa Regia. The Prosecutor's Office attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice sued Zeno Pop, a German citizen accused of money laundering in a sequel, in an anti-trafficking case file.

We continue to present the situation of press releases of other UNESCO-listed cities. Out of a total of five articles dedicated to the Dacian fortress from Costeşti, two describe the discovery of a bronze vessel and the investigation of the people involved in the qualified theft and abuse of service (two were accused of vandalizing the fortress), the search for the culprits, and the latter

brings to the surface the question “who will be chosen for the administration of the Dacian fortresses?”, and the debate on the problem of taking over the management of the Dacian fortresses by the Hunedoara district Council.

For the Dacian fort from Lunca, six articles were extracted from the local media in Hunedoara. Four out of them feature the recovery of ancient silver and bronze coins by the district police officers who acted under the coordination of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Romanian Police in the Czech Republic. These had been extracted from the site of the Lunca fortress. Two other articles come with the news on the Hunedoara District Council taking over all the Dacian fortresses in the district. The Dacian Fortress of Costești-Blidaru has been in the shadow of Sarmizegetusa Regia in the last years, after the road to the Dacian capital was renovated. There are only four articles on The Dacian Fortress in Bănița: three that present the issue of obtaining funds for the restoration and valorisation of the fortress, the evaluation phase of other roads that lead to the cities and the need to be restored, the greening actions that had taken place in their premises, and where one has remained the most neglected historical monument among all the Dacian fortresses of UNESCO heritage in our opinion.

In the three newspapers studied in Maramureș District, five articles have been recorded. Three showed the history of the UNESCO-listed wood churches and the rehabilitation works they have undergone over time, but also the degree of degradation and the fact that they are exposed to the risk of fire due to non-modernized electrical installations. Two articles are dedicated to Codrii Seculari’s site in Strâmbu-Băiuț, which in May 2018 received the first official visit since its designation as a UNESCO monument and will be subjected to an ample conservation process in the near future.

In Caraș Severin County two items were debated for the year 2018 regarding the introducing of the forests of the district into the world heritage list and later, the elaboration of the Catalogue of the Virgin Forests, which must be protected. The press has found out that this catalogue lacks an area of nearly 1500 hectares of potentially virgin forests, out of a total of 1727 hectares on the Higege Valley, in the Teregova Forest District, these being authorities-owned.

In the following we will refer to the national press. The daily newspapers were: *Adevărul* (31), *News.ro* (12), National Agency of Press *Agerpres* (9), *Gândul* (3), *Mediafax* (4), *Știrile ProTV* (7), *Știrile TVR* (1) and *România Liberă* (7). In the national press, the same topics were reported and debated as in the local press, which is why we will present briefly the appearances. For Sarmizegetu-



sa Regia Site, we have identified 27 articles that raise the issues of destruction, theft and trial, new investment for research, site rehabilitation and conservation, site protector protests, etc. The rest of the Dacian fortresses (Bănița, Piatra Roșie, Costești) sum up a total of nine articles about the promotion, the disputes regarding the taking over of their administration by the Hunedoara District Council and the thefts that took place within the sites and the state of their presence, both authorities and tourists concentrating, in large part, on Sarmizegetusa. Six articles debated future rehabilitation actions and their funding for Saschiz (2017), people from Saschiz, were fined by authorities for changes not in keeping with the status of heritage sites, and the fact that the Saschiz fortress is undergoing renovation. Local authorities took steps in this direction and managed to get about 8.5 million lei from the European Union to restore the fortress. An article is dedicated to promoting the rural site of Biertan, one article presents the Viscri Village and its stories, and one item announces the collapse of the Siemioara medieval fortress wall on a 4.6 m section in the 11th Section area. The wooden churches in Maramureș draw attention to the destructions by a storm with two articles, in one of them they being presented as *Churches UNESCO Monument from Maramureș, at the mercy of times: attacked by dampness, with non-insulated electrical installations and strange buildings around* (Sabău 2018), and the 'Adevărul' newspaper has an article about them with the purpose of promoting their history. Three other articles present the entire UNESCO heritage from Romania, one article discusses the elaboration of the new UNESCO strategies, one item presents the list of the following investments of the Ministry of Culture and one of them is for the promotion of all monuments included in the list.

The Danube Delta has seven articles on the problem of poaching and on the police work to confiscate hundreds of kilograms of fish resulting from this activity, namely of extinct species, such as *zander*), legislative changes that have taken place, anthropogenic activities that lead to the destruction of certain areas of the delta and two articles were for promotion purposes.

Ten articles are subject to the entry of virgin beech forests into the UNESCO heritage list and a conflict between environmental associations (Agent Green and EuroNatur) and ROMSILVA on the cutting of trees inside the forests of Caraș-Severin. Environmental organizations have published an investigation showing that several secular forests in the Nerei-Beușnița National Park were destroyed almost entirely following the approval of the intensive use of the wood.

Conclusions

No reports could have been traced in Hungarian newspapers in Harghita District. Also, in the counties of Sibiu, Braşov and Tulcea there were no articles on the UNESCO local heritage, but this does not prove the total lack of objectives that require the attention of authorities, specialists and the media.

As we can see, the area of Hunedoara represented the greatest interest for the Romanian press, in the other districts, where UNESCO heritage is located, the local and the national press presenting either very short news or no interest to the public. Many of the newspapers analysed are mostly interested in promoting other types of subjects than cultural heritage, such as gossip, politics, etc.

The national press is only interested in controversial issues such as the theft of stolen robberies to those who have sold the Dacian bracelets on the black market.

As it has been noticed, most of the local press do not show much interest either in UNESCO heritage issues or in cultural and archaeological heritage in general. Also, most of them present subjects related to the subject matter in a politicized, subjective manner, some denouncing in an accusatory, slanderous manner abuses that do not exist, and others glorify the authorities, praising their initiatives or writing a large number of articles on the same subject to cover the negative items in other daily newspapers.

The lack of interest in the subject was also noticeable in the year 2018. From January until the end of November, we could identify fewer items than the previous year on the UNESCO World Heritage from Romania. As a result, we could notice that Rosia Montana, the political problems and the protests took a large part of the editorial space both in the local press and in the national press, and the news from the local press is repeated in the national press. This fluctuation is partly due to the fact that the journalists from local newspapers are correspondents in the territory of national newspapers, and the same content was published on both sides of the paper.

All this analysis of the Romanian press has led us to conclude that there is not only a low interest in the media, social media, television or radio, but also in the political discourse of the authorities in custody of these monuments, in the indifference manifested by the political class in the alarm signals drawn by the specialists in the field, which are often just echoes that just get whispered to the ears of those concerned.

This article is only a small part of our work, and for more information on various topics, we recommend visiting the site www.archaeoheritage.ro



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Monitorizarea de către mass-media a siturilor patrimoniului mondial din România

Rezumat

Atât publicul larg, cât și specialiștii (arheologi, istorici ș.a.) patrimoniului cultural sunt informați cel mai adesea despre starea acestuia sau despre ultimele descoperiri arheologice din presa scrisă sau TV. Prezentul studiu se concentrează pe articole privind problema patrimoniului cultural și arheologic al României inclus pe Lista Patrimoniului Mondial UNESCO, difuzate de către presă și televiziune în perioada 2017 și 2018 (ianuarie-noiembrie). Pentru o mai bună expunere a acestui studiu, schițăm un tabel cu fiecare obiectiv al patrimoniului UNESCO, împreună cu codul LMI, codul de înregistrare UNESCO, anul listării și situarea geografică. De asemenea, studiul conține o scurtă prezentare a raportului extras din mass-media pentru fiecare monument.

Cuvinte-cheie: UNESCO, România, mass-media, patrimoniu, protecție, conservare, promovare.

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