

THE MOUNTAIN RANGE OF CARTAGENA-LA UNION (MURCIA): AN EXAMPLE OF TOURIST ACTIVITY THROUGH THE MINING HERITAGE

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1. INTRODUCTION

From the second half of the twentieth century, there was a major crisis in the Spanish mining, lack of productivity in the face of competition from other emerging areas worldwide led to the gradual closure of most of the Spanish coalfields (GARCIA et al., 2013). Indeed these landscapes lost their extractive function passing progressive unprecedented environmental degradation.

After decades of uncertainty, not knowing quite what to do with these spaces, began the interest in enhancement as a material heritage of cultural and tourist attractions, municipalities, county councils own autonomous communities begin cataloging tasks and plans protection of these areas, although in many cases the degradation had they reached levels that were too complicated a comprehensive recovery due to the economic magnitude involving these actions, however through European programs LEADER II and LEADER + and PRODER I and II were initiated these tasks that still today remain in full development. In fact this new industrial tourism is an element that aims to promote and develop areas with significant potential in the absence of the enhancement of existing resources (PRAT I FORGA, 2014) as well as a very important new alternative that allows to know new spaces with a unique and differentiated aesthetic (LLURDÉS I COIT, 1994) and the technical development and progress of industrial production started in the late eighteenth century, but extended to the present (HUDSON., 1983)

In the Region of Murcia are two areas classified as "Property of Cultural Interest" industrial type is mineral Pier Stove in Águilas (Decree 316/2009, of 25 September). This peculiar metal structure was built by the British East Railway Company (GRRS) commissioned by The Stove Company Limited to provide maritime outlet for iron ore Las Menas and other mining concessions in the Sierra de Los Filabres. This landing was opened in 1903. It has a length of 168 meters and a height above sea level of almost 13 meters. There are three routes for the movement of trucks and maneuvers, and landfills on both sides of the pier. There was a railway from the mines to the landing which lasted until the decade of the 60s of XX century. The other is the mining landscape of La Unión-Cartagena object of our work, but also want to highlight the space Arsenal of Cartagena, a place that has not yet found the formula, despite having a rich cultural legacy (CARCELÉN GONZÁLEZ, 2013) and is currently in a legal limbo for not having been declared of cultural interest by the Ministry of Culture, who will have the responsibility of their protection; under Law 16/85 and for being a not transferred to the Region of Murcia, linked to the Ministries of Defence and Industry installation.

Decree 93/2009, of 30 April, the Governing Council of the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia, declared of cultural interest, with the category of historical site Sierra Minera de Cartagena and the Union (Murcia). This declaration has been a turning point and operation for the gradual recovery of this unique area of the Region of Murcia.

2. RESULTS OF SWOT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The SWOT analysis (Weaknesses, Threats, Strengths, Opportunities) is a tool that will give us an assessment of the status of this area of Cartagena-La Union both internally and externally. We will consider those threats or opportunities that come from outside as well as the weaknesses and strengths that are appearing. The combination of strengths with the potential opportunities arise, which indicate the most promising lines of action for the overall improvement of this space. While the combination of weaknesses and threats, we warn of the risks and challenges in the short and medium term. In this sense the political and social groups authorities indicate the actions to improve tourism. We indicate below summarizes the highlights of the analysis performed.

2.1. WEAKNESSES

He perceives that the process of recovery and enhancement of the mining heritage is essentially slow recovery of buildings and industrial machinery.

- Ha been little public awareness of the cultural, tourist and environmental values representing the recovery of this space.

- The Abandonment and progressive deterioration of property conservation rehabilitation complicated because it is very costly investments.

- The Visual impact of facilities with such a weathered look creates a decadent aesthetic territory which affects the lack of investment by the private sector.

- The Recovery project Portman Bay is still very slow, in fact after thirty years is planned for 2015 the beginning of this regeneration.

- It's necessary to harmonize tourism beaches there, for example Calblanque, with the enhancement and dissemination of the natural, architectural, archaeological, and industrial heritage.

- The Promotion as a tourist destination is still small compared to other offerings in the area: nautical tourism, skin diving, "Cartagena, Port of Cultures", etc.

- The Hotel offer in the area is completely focused on tourism sun and beach, also golf and water sports.

- Insufficient Research, conservation and musealization architectural, ethnographic and industrial heritage

- Lack of professionalism in personnel based on restoring from mining and Hospitality training offered in the Shire and local cuisine.

- The Tourism potential of the municipality of La Union is still in its infancy.

- She should it improve signage of places, from the nearby highways this tourist destination is indicated forcefully.

2.2. THREATS

- The Current economic crisis due to the housing bubble and lack of funding has resulted in the stoppage of projects needed

- The Absence of a supra-organizational structure can prevent the execution of some actions to not reconcile the presence of municipalities, owners and investors must reach a coordinated effort between the municipalities of Cartagena and La Union.

- The Tourism in the area as sun and beach tourism obscures the potential that industrial-mining tourism.

- The Heritage continues to disappear and increasingly deteriorated, which means an irreparable loss of existing potential, the mines "La Cierva" and "Lo Veremos Viejo" in the vicinity of the town of La Union have suffered a serious attack with the disappearance of extraction machines both mines, besides the destruction of all non-metallic elements of machinery and pit work. The iron machines, predictably stolen, weighing several tons each, and

were equipped with a large shaft, pulleys, steering wheels and gear wheels about three meters in diameter and steel tapes and other items. They were installed on a large pit inside the engine room, next to the respective masts. The machines have had to be scrapped and cut into multiple fragments to remove them from the buildings where they were, having been shattered walls of the trenches, and large pine beams of Canada on which they settled. The dismantling of the machines had to be time consuming as well as vehicles and tools, being inexplicable that you were able to perpetrate such spoliation near the village without having been detected (Association ADEPA. 12/12/2013)

-The Region of Murcia presents cultural destinations that continue to grow, the nearest is Cartagena, Murcia but also be kept in close proximity, we also highlight Lorca, Caravaca or wine routes of the Altiplano.

-Risk That the development of the "sun and beach" resulting in a residential tourism if a strong development control on new developments, such as resort golf courses, Polaris World is performed, etc.

2.3. STRENGTHS

- Well Declaration of cultural interest by the Governing Council of the Autonomous Community of Murcia (Decree No. 93/2009, of 30 April)

Recent -Initiatives for establishing the Tourist Consortium which reflects the interest of the private sector in tourism management

- There is a constant stream of initiatives that are improving this space and putting in value.
- Fluid communication between the Local Government and Regional
- Work of the Sierra Minera Foundation in research and enhancement of heritage.
- Accessibility of La Union and Portman (proximity to the Hyatt)
- Availability of mineral elements of great interest to its value: rail, Roman road, passages and tunnels, port, etc.
- Beaches low level of urbanization and mass, essentially due to access control, for example Calblanque.
- Variety and wealth of natural resources (well preserved), archaeological (paleolithic, Phoenician, Roman), ethnographic-mining (crafts, cuisine), architectural (Pinion House, House Uncle Wolf, Liceo de Trabajadores ...), archaeological miner
- The Festival del Cante de las Minas is a cultural element to follow touted for its uniqueness and international appeal.
- Good conservation of the architectural heritage, ready to be visited: Mining Museum, Charity Hospital
- Supply of bars and taverns, heritage mining splendor

2.4. OPPORTUNITIES

- The implementation of the European Landscape Convention (2000) in Spain from 2008 is a great initiative in obtaining grants and funds for the implementation of the mining landscapes, plans include: PRODER, LIFE ...

-The Statement of cultural interest as a Historic site of the Sierra Minera of La Unión-Cartagena (2009) is a major milestone for the assessment of this space.

-The Traditional sun and beach tourism, nautical La Manga and the culture from Cartagena acquire a great potential to increase the number of travelers.

-The Proximity Golf Resort Hyatt can ensure the influx of visitors to the enhancement of mineral resources

-The Regeneration of this area has chosen to employ the technique of phytoremediation plants compatible with contaminant metals content in soil (CASTANEDA Lopez, 2013)

In the current situation is difficult, but respondents assert the need to further enhance the activity of mining park, encourage agreements between all stakeholders (restaurants, hotels, shops, AA.VV., municipalities and entities supra), the In order to promote greater synergies. It also affects improve signage and establishing activities and actions of visibility and awareness of issues related to the activity of tour and museum. In addition, the data obtained have a rough and real vision, beyond statistics, the current situation of the sector. Exceptions participation of respondents was full. We hope that the results obtained above, they can serve as a reference current analysis and future projection.

3. CONCLUDING

The mining mountains of La Unión-Cartagena is located in an area of great economic importance. The conditions for enhancement and regeneration of Portman Bay, improved accessibility, large investments to recover the industrial heritage pose difficult performances in modern times since the cut in subsidies and budget items slows this process. Until few dates, there was a great expulsion of the indigenous population, in fact the municipality of La Union has lost more than a third of its population in the last century, mainly due to the cessation of activity in the mines.

Before it noted a number of proposals that could encourage a growing dynamic in the development of this space:

1. Involve actively and joint public and private institutions in the project enhancement and rehabilitation of heritage. So far most of the investments have been made by public institutions across Europe, STATE, regional and municipal funds. Obviously private foundations unless there is private capital contribution unless there behind a benefit in the short to medium term, for example in real estate transactions that are currently impractical.

2. Design a wide range of cultural visits and workshops that are perfectly diffused and known tour operators, so a permanent connection with an offering developed in La Manga del Mar Menor is necessary.

3. It is essential to a much more coordinated between the municipalities of La Unión-Cartagena to generate synergies of joint work activities, although there is a growing collaboration a higher level of development is still needed and pooling tourist services.

4. The hotels and restaurants in La Union needs to be increased, within the mining park is nonexistent.

5. The feeling of large vacant spaces as social wastelands is very present, yet renovations have been scarce in relation to the set of all surface mining park, it brings feelings of abandonment.

6. The looting and destruction of property continue to occur systematically, much of the machinery is intended directly as industrial waste to be recycled as scrap, essentially the old motors and metal structures that have an important ethnographic value.

7. It is urgent regeneration of Portman Bay as a strategic place for tourism, tourism is now nonexistent. This area has great potential for this function and is located within the mining park actually own part of it because it was one of the places of departure of the product through its port.

8. The signage and access to the mining park should be increased through billboards, signage and other advertising tools with the aim must be to facilitate the visitor easy access and the promotion and dissemination of the tourism product, it is essential that via highway access to Manga and other adjoining roads as Cartagena-Murcia-Madrid motorway; Alicante-Cartagena-Vera can provide attractive advertising of which is a visit to the Sierra miner Cartagena-La Union.

9. The presence in social networks for cultural, educational and tourism Mining Park is still insufficient, the existing web pages must be constantly updated and improved.

10. We need to encourage greater awareness among the public about the important assets it owns the mining park, all initiatives that can give greater dissemination are essential, both institutional and cultural associations, neighborhood or individual initiatives.