

THE MEDITERRANEAN TOURISTIC PHENOMEN

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Abstract: *At the beginning of the XXI century has started to record a series of tendencies in the plan of Spanish touristic sector, translated through the reduction of tourism participating in PIB including of the contribution of international tourism. This changes from the plan of the demand and offer from the last decade is coinciding with a scenario where the touristic offer is seeing marked more and more by the accelerated process of urbanizing from the Mediterranean area, Balearics and Canaries. The natural and cultural environment quality is essentially the main attraction of these areas. The itineraries are wishing to offer an exclusive alternating to the locals of valorification of the touristic potential of the regions and to offer new touristic products.*

Key words: *tourism, mediterranean basin, touristic tradition*

The principal world wide touristic basin – the Mediterranean sea is characterised through a „own identity”, beyond the particular identity of the states that are composed, is separating like a region of the ancient civilization and modern civilization of twinning.

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The statistics are showing that this area is annually visited by about 1/3 international touristic circulation. If it will be counted that a sample of the travelers are having designation the heliotherapy treatment and the activities associated with this which can be appreciated the fact that the Mediterranean littoral is, far away from the first place in the seasonal destinations.

The Mediterranean, known in Roman period as the *Nostrum Sea*, is suffusing the littoral of 3 continents: Europe, Africa and Asia. The states that are located on shore are benefitting the unusual beauty, the wealth of the lands, but especially of the sunny climate known in the whole world. The water of the sea is medium deep, but with accentuated salinity. She is including a lot of islands like: Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Malta, The Greek islands from the Aegean Sea etc. Her arms are: The Tyrrhenian Sea in the West of Italy, The Adriatic Sea between Italy and Balkan Peninsula, The Ionian Sea in the West of Greece and The Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey. Marseille (France), Barcelona (Spain), Genoa (Italy) and Haifa (Israel) are holding the status of principal ports. From this point of view the Mediterranean Sea plays a strategic role by being the gate between numerous states.

By political point of view, can be distinguished three locations on the shore: the states that are pertaining to Europe, states which are pertaining to Africa and those of the Middle East. The best individualized is the tourism from the old continent. In defiance to the declaration of the State secretary for Commerce and Tourism of Spain, conform to: „The Mediterranean states are offering similar products and that's why is logical that they should cooperate”, they can't pass unnoticed the distinction of political, economical and social order. Of course, the cooperation between states is necessary in an age of globalization, but the European shores are passing beyond as number of emplacements, age, degree of endowment, the other areas. Starting from the fact that zones of France and Italy, are known by a few decades and until the ample problematic of the management in the coast line, can be affirmed easily the importance of the European states over the African or Asiatic.

The most solicited areas for the littoral tourism are the French Riviera, Italian Riviera, and then the Spanish coast which are attracting a lot of tourists. The touristic tradition of the European countries from the Mediterranean basin, borned at the middle of the XVIII century, when British aristocracy and then the continental, were travelling in winter to the south of the continent. For the Mediterranean Europe, the touristic fashion was demanding that the voyages must have place in the cold season, the

tourists escaping from the country of origin in seeking of a warm climate, and not in a special way for the sun, from that the fashion asked to protect. The mutations from the valoric sistem of turism determined by the fashion, medical opinion, and development of sportiv activity in free air they brought the revelation of sunny destinations particularly appreciated specially for their offer of tipe „3S”- Sun, Sea, Sand.

The ample centers or turistic poles of the mediterranean basin are getting between 10 and 15 million tourists anually, wich are going to in particularly to Azur Coast, Lidi Coast (from Adriatic Sea), Brava Coast (spanish Catalania) si Coast del Sol (Malaga). Alongside this cost regions from mediterranean basin are also included the islands of Cipru (Turkey-Greece), Corfu, Crete and Cycladele (Greece). The tender of the mediterranean country is containing alongside the coast area and also the turistic area of continental tipe. This is having a pronounced cultural character and recreativ beeing located in urban centers wich are recepting between 5-10 million tourists anually. Citys like Rome (including Vatican), Venice, Florence, Granda, Corboda, Athen are ownenig their development to the turistic, cultural and paracultural offer of the mediterranean civilization. Beside their littoral offer of the „big city” is valued in the hole time of the year, the sesional oscilations beeing unsemmificant or laying out of step confronted with other areas of littoral.

The turist industry of mediterranean basin is trully developed, is having a character integrated trough the hotelier chain in full expansion and is valued into a very diversified sortiments, destined at the same to the mass turism as also to the elitist one. The Egypt is attracting trough the Valley of Nil where over five million tourists anually are discovering the antic artifacts of the antic world. The traditional turist offer is also including and the citys of Cairo, Port Said, Alexandria, wich are attracting the masiv amount of tourists. The nord African littoral and also Maroc, Tanger, Al-Hoceima, Sidi Reruch and at Tunisyen – Hammamet, Monastir and Djerba is representing the turistic locations in full development, with an offer of international quality diversified. The principal international turistic basin is located in Europe and is containing the next regions:

- 1 The Occidental Europe:
 - The Mediterranean area
 - The area of North Atlantic facade
- 2 The alpine arch from the central Europe
- 3 The central Europe and Eastside

The demand for the transport service and turistic in European Union was evaluated at 2. 149 mld USD and predicted of reaching the level of 3.529 in the course of a decade. The contribution of T&T (Travel and Tourism) in the total PIB of UE had situated at aproximative 3,9% in 2006. In UE the industry of T&T is generating 8,6 mil. Work places (4,2% frot the total of the work places existent at the UE level).

The exports of T&T representing aproximatively 13% from the total exports of UE from 2006. The investitions of capital in T&T had the value aproximatively 241 mld USD in 2006, 88,6% from the volume of the international region.

The mediterranean area, wich is mobilizing 1/3 from the word wide tourist is aproximatively 1/2 from the offer of the regional turistic, is representing the biggest tourist concentration in the world.

The specilization in mediterranean offer is following the natural characteristics of this area (climate, littoral, flora etc.) of the ones activity is, answering in present to the principal motivation from summer time of the european tourists, specifically to those from the North continent.

The main international tourist destinations among european countries riverside resident of the Mediterranean Sea are:

- 1 Spain – with cahsing of 38,495 mil Euro;
- 2 France – with cashing of 33,981 mil Euro;
- 3 Italy-with cashing of 28,453 mil Euro.

Near France and Italy, Spain is a famous state for the turistic industry. Getting an anual number of tourist's average of 50 million, Spain is finding on the second place in world after France (according to the apreciations ONT). Spain is confrunting to the overcrowd, especialy in the warm season. With all of this the littoral tourism is contributing to the income of this industry.

With an exist to the Mediterranean Sea of 1670 km, Spain is having numerous famous resorts, wich apeared and are evolving in the same time with traditional locations, like, for example, Valencia.

Although the massive arrangements of the littoral area were accomplished hardly over 1950, from the point of view of the quality resources and the services labour conscriptioned, we cannot speak about significant difference between resorts from here and those from France for example.

The first area and the most important is The Costa del Sol, with an impressive length, around 300 km, between the Gibraltar rock and Cabo de Gata. She is giving more beauty to Andalusia, famous through her history and cultural traditions.

The quality of water and air, nebulosity extremely low and the endowment are attracting numerous tourists. Some results are attracting attention: Torremolinos, Nerja (the Mediterranean pearl), Acipino, Marbella, La Linea (the oldest Iberic beach). Is being added the beaches with sand very thin and white from the Plaza de Getares, Algeciras, El Rincancillo, Malaga, the capital of the province with the same name, is an old place, dating from the 12th century I.E.n. The colony of Carthage, then of Rome and not at the last time Moor, she is still keeping the marks of the old civilization (including those of a Moor fortress). Encouraged by the subtropical vegetation rich in palm tree, Malaga, is today a modern city, renamed aside the tourism and for wine production, sugar or textile.

Forwarding from the frontier, to the south, is lying Costa Brava, with its unique landscape, formed by a multitude of gulfs with sand where the water is penetrating calm, is the second area of Coast line littoral of Spain, as beauty and tourist attraction. The little villages had transformed gradually in resorts very agglomerated, like Lloret de Mar with more than 100 hotels, San Feliu de Guixols, Palamos, Tossa de mar or Blanes. It must remind and the presence of the Barcelona, as a main touristic center of Spain, in which will be rediscovered a series of monuments and cultural elements like the Sagrada Familia cathedral, the biggest in the world in modern style, with an interesting history, yet undetermined (opera of the famous architect Antonio Gaudi), between Costa del Sol and Costa de Brava, reference points for the touristic wave of summer. It is also finding other four „costs”: Costa Dorada- with the resorts Mataro, Garrof, Bara, Tarragona. Costa del Azahar with the city of flowers Valencia (having the biggest botanic garden from the world) and resorts like Denia and Alicra, Costa Blanca, with the capital at Benidorm, one of the most known littoral resorts of Spain, with a beach with golden sand of 5 km, and with Calpe (spectacular through her rocks), Torrevieja and Costa de Los Pinos, an area with less improvements.

At 200 km of Spanish coast is finding a group of five islands which forms the Los Balears. The climatic regime extremely favorable (10-25 Celsius degrees), the air purity thanks to the emplacement in the wide sea, is making from this area the most pleasant destination for the beach of Europe. The karstic phenomenon are all around and the human had put his fingerprint through ports with big beauty and spaces for relaxing. The most known, most arrangements and also the most looked are the island of Mallorca, with the main touristic center Palma de Mallorca, with beautiful beaches and Roman architectures and the Ibiza island with the eponymous resort of favorite destination of German tourist in special.

Ibiza is knowing a development with unknown precedent and the last few years in what concerning the tourism. Without having demands of a destination extremely expensive, she is gathering lots of visitors. A characteristic of this island is the fact that wherever you are (especially when travel by car) you are never far away from the beaches and from the isolated gulfs. Ibiza is reuniting over 30 beaches arranged especially around the cities.

One of them is Talamanca, situated in eponymous gulf, very close to the city Ibiza. With all of this she is remaining a quite resort with sandy beaches beautiful which is giving popularity. Her proportions are 900 m length and 25 m wide. The waters are penetrating the gulf line, being ideal for swimming (including for children). Another possibilities of recreation are the bicycle walking or courses at the windsurf school. All the hotels have a view on the old side of Ibiza city which can be seen spectacularly in the night, when is illuminated.

At the beginning of the XXI century has started to record a series of tendencies in the plan of Spanish touristic sector, translated through the reduction of tourism participating in PIB including of the contribution of international tourism. This fact is coinciding with the relative loss of competitiveness at international plan of a whole new line of products and tourist destination. This, although had registered an increase of international touristic arrival, the average income didn't increase, but they have maintained at a level comparative with the one of the 1999. The foreign tourists are spending more and

more time in Spain, they are auto-organizing quickly, respectively, through the internet, contacting directly the offerer of touristic services and transport service at low cost, spending more time in own residences, or of the friends or in rented residences, what it means a evident break up of the model of touristic classic Spanish of the type of beach and sun.

This changes from the plan of the demand and offer from the last decade is coinciding with a scenario where the touristic offer is seeing marked more and more by the accelerated process of urbanizing from the Mediterranean area, Balears and Canaries.

The loss of the portion of market on the external plan from Spain in front of the other Mediterranean countries specialized in offer of sun and beach products. After 40 years of continuing growth of the touristic performance from the region, the first sign of regress have manifested through the deterioration of particularly touristic areas and a slowing down of the rhythm of increasing of the demanding for the touristic products with added value increased, compared with another destinations of the Mediterranean competitors for the same line of touristic products, especially from the closer Orient.

The reduction of the profitability of the companies who are activating in a succession of sub sectors and the reduction of the contribution socio economics of the tourism.

The gradual loss of the advantage through price, is a competitive element.

Between the years '70, '80 and '90 the prices acted in a decisive way in the meaning of multiplication of the international tourist arrival, diversion from a low level of the life cost, salaried costs and supplying in tourism reduce, sustained by the advantages offered in some moments of the prices devaluation. At the middle of the '90 the touristic cashing of Spain advanced favourable and under the influence of the reduction of competition in the area, respectively the reduction of attractiveness of the Oriental Mediterranean as following from the instabilization geo politicals from the area.

In exchange, in the last years, the economical growth registered by the Spanish economic and the approaching of life cost at the level registered in other European states, have made the price for goods and service at the Spanish, market for approaching for that ones from the source country of the tourists, losing in this way the competitiveness of the price, comparative with the offer of the oriental states from the Mediterranean area for the same segment of the demand.

The factor of influence - elements of demand:

- the influence of the macroeconomic scenario with excess of financial liquidity and reduced levels of the rate of the interest at credits in all Europe, with consequence over the capacity of acquisition for families and companies;
- The expectation of increased the profitability, in the touristic immobiliar domain associated with the good results in Spanish tourism obtained until the year 2000;
- The powerful increase and constant of the vacation resident prices in the coast line area, including under the pressure of short terms exercise by publicity in the immobiliar domain, the disturbance of stock market in the year 2004 and the low rentability of other financial active with a fixed rent;
- The accentuation of the preference to leave in areas with a pleasant climate and more closely to the sea manifested in increasing of Spanish population and European after the pension;
- The explosion and the diversification of the aerean route at low cost that at their turn had two effects:
 - accentuation tendency of buying/sale of residential home in the coast line area where is existing the most numbered and better directly connections towards the air line with low cost;
 - shorter visit and a level of expenses more reduced of the tourist which are appealing at the low cost company transportation.

Elements of the offer:

- the intensification of immobiliar company investments in vacation house as result of strategies and diversification of the offer line;
- the deficit budget of local authorities, as a result of intensification of investments in some local services of infrastructure (security service and guard, sanitary service and of the local network transportation);

- the strategies of territorial planification -a good part of the urbanistic plan for the touristic areas they have în view the increasement of urbanistic level without foreseeing, yet, the limits and without including a strategy of long terms, what is representing a treath of the sustenabil character of Mediterranean area form socio-economical and ambiental point of view.

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