THE NEED OF MANAGEMENT FOR BANAT’S TOURISM

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Abstract: Old province of the Habsburg Empire, divided into three parts which are located on the territories of Serbia, Hungary and Romania, Romanian Banat presents an inestimable touristic potential because of the history, landscape, people, traditions, gastronomy or registered premieres over time. For Banat’s tourism to be brought to a certain level, it should mainly involve planning, organizing, coordinating, meaning more precise management.

Using direct observation and statistical analysis as research methods the study presents Romanian Banat tourism in terms of organization and coordination, as well as assets that can be valued through it.

Key words: management, tourism, Banat

INTRODUCTION

At international level, the present touristic phenomenon knows an important increase being influenced by major factors like: globalization, mobility due to the transportation infrastructure development, increase of the wellbeing and spare time, desire for recreation, for knowledge and information. (Strategic propositions for the development of cultural tourism in Banat, Intercultural Institute of Timisoara, CULTOURS 2009).

Tourism is considered a real engine of the economy because it represents an important source for the wellbeing of the population from the areas which are less developed from economical point of view. Tourism is the “force” which involves the human, natural, cultural potential which is considered the treasure of an area, but this is possible only by involving the main actors which have a role in producing, promoting and developing it.

Often in front of the borders of our country, visiting different touristic objectives, charmed by the beauty of the places but mainly by everything that means practicing tourism at maximum levels, we are asking questions like: why this is not possible in our country? What is missing? What is not working? Taking into consideration that our country has an impressive cultural and natural patrimony but which is not valuated accordingly. It is said that nature was generous with everybody but the people make the difference, they give value to the places or not, we can go further with the statement and say that education, mentality and culture have an important role in everything which means the development of a country, region or community, and to all these we can add also their capacity to organize and coordinate touristic activities, probably these are the qualities which are missing, the managerial skills. The same thing can be mentioned for Banat, the history, the places and the people have something special but unfortunately this region is not present on the Romanian tourism scene. The purpose of the study is to analyze Banat through its touristic potential and to make several propositions for its development.
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Using different documentation sources and as research methods the analysis of statistical data and direct observation, the study wants to presents Romanian Banat tourism in terms of organization and coordination, as well as assets that can be valued through it.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Banat represents the historical region located at the South – Eastern extremity of the Mitteleuropa territorial entity. Territory with very old inherited structures but continuously restored through the succession of influences and dominations from its history, Banat has the shape of a square with the following natural limits: Mures river in the North, Tisa river in the West, Danube river at the South and at the East there is a path through the Western part of the Meridional Carpathians and the Southern part of the Occidental Carpathians. The surface of Banat, 28526 km$^2$ is divided between three countries. The largest part, almost two thirds belong to Romania (18966 km$^2$), almost one third belongs to Serbia (9276 km$^2$) and a small part belongs to Hungary (284 km$^2$). In Romania Banat includes: Timiş county, entirely, Caraş – Severin county, except Băuţar, Bucova, Corişoru and Preveciori town which together form Bautar commune, Arad county, only the Southern part of Mures river, Mehedinti county, only Baia Nouă, Dubova, Eibenthal, Ieşeniţa, Orşova and Svinţa and Hunedoara county - Sâlciva and Pojoga towns.

Located at the South-Eastern part of the Pannonia Basin, Banat is consists mainly in a low and smooth plain area, with large swamp areas (Timiş, Bega, Aranca) but also with Aeolian accumulations (sand hills from Deliblata). The region has also low and medium mountains reaching over 2000 m at the Eastern part (Tarcu Peak, 2190m). Short hills (200 – 300m) border these mountains, interrupted by intrusions of plain “gulfs” which
are extended along the main rivers and inside the mountain area, facilitating the circulation. Banat is located at the border of three main ethno-cultural complexes and which come across on its territory: the Oriental Latin complex (Romanians), Southern Slav complex (Serbs) and the Finno-Ugrian complex (Hungarians). The colonization undertaken by the Habsburg House during the 18th century added the fourth ethno-cultural complex, the Germanic one, which played many years the decisive role in the organization of the space and the socio-economic development of the region. According to the localization of these ethno-cultural complexes, the historical Banat (1918) was split between the three neighbor countries: Romania, Yugoslavia (Serbia) and Hungary. Banat is located in an intensively politically polarized European region, at less than 700 km from 15 European capitals and has the advantage of a permanent flow of ideas and values, of people and goods, feeding a rich and diversified local patrimony. (Strategic propositions for the development of cultural tourism in Banat, Intercultural Institute of Timisoara, CULTOURS 2009)

With a population with almost 1.25 million of inhabitants and a low population density (38 inhabitants/km² in the mountain Banat and 78 inhabitants/km² in Timis county) Banat presents an advanced level of urbanization (61%), over the national average, but a life expectancy at birth of 71 years, below the national average due to the morbidity incidence caused by the traditional nutrition rich in fats. In these conditions, the natural dynamics of the population is regressive (-2 to -5‰ per year), intensifying the advanced demographic ageing, higher in Caras-Severin county and lower in Timis county. Instead the migration balance is still slightly positive (+2‰), mainly in Timis county. The population activity rate (61%) and the occupation rate (56%) are below the national average, but the manpower is well qualified, this is the result of a good infrastructure and of good educational and professional training services.

From touristic point of view, Banat has an inestimable natural patrimony (various relief forms – plain, hill, mountain, thermal and mineral waters – Calacea, Herculane, Buzias, Jimbolia, Sinmihaiu roman, etc) and cultural patrimony (museums, art galleries, memorial houses, monuments, archeological sites, places of worship, gastronomy, traditions and habits, cultural events), being one of the most various regions of Romania. The tourism is focused mainly around the urban communities (Timisoara, Caransebes, Resita, Buzias, Anina, Oravita, Jimbolia, Herculane, etc), and the types of tourism practiced are: business tourism, cultural tourism, leisure and recreation tourism and health tourism. Also the rural and itinerant tourism is practiced to a large extent (ex. Poiana Ruscăi Mountains, Gărâna, Nera’s quays, Caraș quays, Crivaia, Rudâria quays reservation, Muntele Mic, Trei Ape etc.), and also the hunting tourism (ex. Pischia, Mașloc, Bogda). Regarding the origin of the tourists, most of them are from Banat, due mainly to the lack of promotion but also to the poorly developed tourism infrastructure from certain areas of the region. Concerning the management which is practiced in Banat’s tourism, we notice a poor representation of the centers/offices/information points for tourism, in the region there is only one such point in Timisoara. We consider that for Banat’s tourism there is a strong need of management, and the presence of more touristic information points could solve some problems of Banat’s tourism, starting with the identification of its “hotspots”, ending with the promotion and link between the touristic operators (accommodation units, restaurants, transportation, leisure units, cultural institutions etc).

CONCLUSIONS

1. The touristic potential of Banat is given both by the natural elements and the cultural
patrimony (museums, art galleries, memorial houses, monuments, archeological sites, worship places, gastronomy, traditions and habits, cultural events).

2. The main types of tourism practiced in Banat are: rural tourism, health tourism, cultural tourism, business tourism and leisure and recreation tourism.

3. The development of tourism in Banat has to be a permanent concern of all interested actors from the political and administrative environment, economic, cultural environment, civil society and population.

4. The development of tourism in Banat means mainly:
   - The existence of some functional touristic information centers/point/offices with specialized personnel able to provide the information needed by the tourists (accommodation, possibilities for leisure activities, etc);
   - The promotion of Banat region in general and per specific areas with touristic interest;
   - The inventory and reconditioning of the touristic objectives;
   - The inventory, reconditioning and link between all touristic infrastructure elements (accommodation units, food units, transportation, leisure units, cultural institutions);
   - The valuation of the existing cultural patrimony;
   - The modernization of the health units for a better health tourism practice (Calacea, Herculane, Buzias resorts);
   - The encouragement for practicing religious tourism (realization of a circuit in order to visit the wooden churches from Faget – Margina area),
   - The support for practicing scientific and itinerant tourism by realizing partnerships with educational units (Astronomic observatory from Timisoara, ornithological reservation from Satchineș Swamps, the National Park from Nera’s quays).

5. In order to bring Banat’s tourism to a certain level planning, organization, coordination should be mainly involved and this means a better management.

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