



**From Gibraltar through Levant and from Maghreb  
through the Southern Latin European Countries  
or about culture and management  
in the Mediterranean Sea Region**

*De la Gibraltar până spre Levant și din Maghreb  
până spre latinitatea europeană sau despre cultură  
și management în insulele din Marea Mediterană*

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**Abstract**

*Bordering the southern coast of Europe, the eastern part of the Middle East and northern Africa, representing the most appropriate environment for the development of cultural, social and economic of the maritime regions, influencing decisively the culture and the entire life of the inhabitants in a lot of bordering countries, ensuring the achievement of a natural maritime transportation way between eastern Levantine character and western pragmatism of our ancient continent, or between Maghreb, and the Latin world, especially in southern Europe, the Mediterranean Sea has an another treasure, yet poorly known and only partially recovered, with a history of over six thousands of years, with people proud of their history, culture, customs and traditions with unique cities, impressive by the mixture of cultures and races, its islands.*

**Keywords:** *Mediterranean Sea region, history, culture, islands, tourism, management*

**Rezumat**

*Scăldând țărmul de sud al Europei, estul Orientului Apropiat și nordul Africii, reprezentând cel mai adecvat mediu pentru dezvoltarea unor activități culturale, sociale și economice specifice regiunilor maritime, influențând în mod decisiv cultura și viața locuitorilor din țările care o mărginesc, asigurând realizarea unui firesc transport maritim între estul levantin și vestul pragmatic al continentului nostru, ori între Maghreb și lumea latină, mai ales, din sudul Europei, Marea Mediterană dispune și de o altă comoară, încă insuficient cunoscută și doar parțial valorificată, cu o istorie de peste șase mii de ani, cu oameni mândri de istoria, cultura, obiceiurile și tradițiile lor, cu orașe unice, impresionante prin amestecul de culturi și seminții, insulele sale.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *Marea Mediterană, istorie, cultură, insule, turism, management*

**JEL Classification:** Z10, Z19, O52

**B**alearic Islands (that belong to Spain), Corsica (France), Sardinia and Sicily (Italy), Malta, Crete (Greece) and Cyprus are the most important and the most representative of the Mediterranean Sea islands. Dozens of other small islands, ruled by fishermen, or those who will not be seen while show off their wealthy life, hundreds of islands, often uninhabited, and thousands rocks of birds visited only meets in its roads a curious traveler while she or he is passing through the Aegean, Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Sea, or by near coasts.

Independent states or regions belonging to different European countries, the Mediterranean Sea islands have many common cultural characteristics, from their far away history, and it very similar, but especially obvious geographical advantages that transform them into isolated areas, suitable housing in resting places or for informational purposes, or for requirements in trade for navigators, in areas despite the obvious geographical difficulties, allowed, with difficulty, cultivating the land for vines, citrus trees and olive trees, and for goats and other livestock farms required. Mediterranean Sea islanders were not allowed ever dominated for long, nor any of conquering nature and adapted to temporarily and often difficult conditions, and climate extremes (extreme temperatures in summer, low rainfall, water resources scarce and difficult accessible, large areas without enough water, rugged terrain, heavy floods).

Through the Mediterranean Sea islands passed during the last two thousand years of history all around the world warring tribes bordering "Mare Nostrum". Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Byzantines, Normans, Greeks, Romans, conquered, possessed, inhabited and used these islands, but they also have enriched the culture of those islands. And so those lands bounded only by water represented a crucible in which were mixed by enriching each other, the cultures of peoples in search of land, glory, riches, or of the unknown and of a new faith.

The island of Crete, tourist destination par excellence, he not only welcomes travelers with specific services such economic activity, a quality often vitiated by a too strong impact of Balkanism neighborhood, arrived from the continent, but also beautiful cities-harbours, created or developed by enthusiasts Venetians, who were looking more and more space for Mediterranean trade that have developed since the Middle Ages in Europe. Today the tourist port of Chania with its great cultural spaces created by transforming large fishermen's sheds, or the old town, nowadays a nice shopping area, but also churches, museums and the old city of Rethymno, Agios Nikolaos, a peaceful city, with markets, beaches and its large pedestrian areas, or the island's capital, Iraklio, with its harbour, and especially the Archaeological Museum housing the treasures of Knossos, situated just a short distance, or Lassithi plateau, with its poor villages and thousands of wind mills, or the archaeological sites of Phaistos and Knossos, or mountains, difficult to travel, in the central part of the island, or Samaria Gorges, all these can

be visited, well known, appreciated and even loved by an interested traveller who intend to find, on the island of Crete, culture, traditions and history.



**Tourist port of Chania**



**A street in the old city of Rethymno**

The island of Sicily is something very different than the mainland Italy. It is in fact a space that captures by its uniqueness, is a nation that seeks its own identity for centuries between the European culture, the North – African one and the Arabic culture, is a region strongly influenced by peoples who have dominated it and also enriched it with historical and cultural vestiges that have survived of a very diverse times. In Sicily, everything is different, everything is mixed, everything is always changing. The traveller can find, in fact, several small parts of Sicily, each of one with its own personality, in contrast with the other.

Catania, with its churches, cathedrals, its Roman ruins, with its famous fish market, with "Opera dei pupi", so large or giant puppets, its popular districts; Ragusa, the modern town and especially Ragusa Ibla with its amazing location and with its narrow streets, with its markets and its impressive churches; Modica, another impressive town with its late baroque treasures, that we can find throughout the entire Val di Noto Region, Piazza Armerina, with the impressive Roman Villa del Casale and its rooms, halls, gardens and incredible mosaics; Caltagirone with his famous Scala Santa Maria del Monte, a scale that is decorated with tiles painted by local artists; Syracuse, with its historic Ortigia Island, the Neapolis Archaeological Park but also with a very rich museum of archeology; Taormina, with its ancient Greek theater, with its pedestrian streets, with the beaches, with its gardens, with gorgeous view of the Etna volcano, in fact ubiquitous in the every day live and in the natural representations of the people of Sicily; Noto, a new-built city in the faultless same Sicilian Baroque Style. This way the conscious traveler wanders in search of other cultural splendours of Sicily, before leaving for the famous Valle dei Templi from Agrigento, which fascinates not only by its temples but also by its collections of the Museum of Archeology. And do not go further without a short visit in Kolymetra ancient garden which its over 2500 years to preserve the Greek originated citrus trees, almond trees and all sorts of other plants and flowers used for food or for different religious purposes.

And when the traveller is leaving, she or he is headed for the island's capital, Palermo. Here are living together for hundreds of years, different cultures, languages and different religions in a strange mixture, but accepted. The benefits of this mixture are those that matter for the Sicilian people.



**Ragusa Ibla**



**Ortigia, Syracuse**

The traveller tries to use in a good manner the time she or he had in order to visit Catacombs dei Cappuccini, with its thousands of mummies; Mondello, a beautiful resorts and sought a resting place with its beaches for the local people especially; Monreale, near the city of Palermo, with its cathedral adorned with huge Christian style mosaics, but also the impressive courtyard of the monastery; Pallazzo dei Normanni, headquarters of the Kings of Sicily, with its magnificent Capilla Pallatina, adorned also with a lot of Christian style mosaics, and with the royal apartments; La Cuba and La Zisa, mysterious palaces in Arab-Norman style, the latest cultural one an important cultural center; the Punic necropolis; the regional museum of archeology; the historic gates of the city; La Kalsa, another Arab palace, even the crowded local markets and the commercial endless streets, under a torrid sun and under a natural sicilian noise, desired and sought by the Sicilians themselves.

Malta (in fact the Maltese Islands) is like no other European country and like no other Mediterranean island. With a strange mixture of Arabic and Italian vocabulary, in equal measures, but also with some words coming from the English and the French vocabulary, the Maltese language is incomprehensible and difficult to understand for the traveler accustomed with our classic our normal world. And the country about the same. A country that operates on two islands, slightly higher than Bucharest, a country of small towns surrounded by huge walls of protection, a country with megalithic temples built from now six thousand years ago, a country with fisherman's prouds villages, a country with small and poor museums, but with impressive catacombs, with historical busses, with bad roads, with little industry and a constant concern for tourism development unexpensive and for every ones budget. First, the traveller is visiting La Valletta, the country's capital, then, Vittoriosa, with the Inquisitors's Palace and the Maritime Museum, then Senglea

and Cospicua, other small historical cities, then Mdina and Rabat, in fact a single location, but with two significant historical areas. Here are the impressive Roman catacombs, or underground tombs, historical Roman villas, museums and impressive churches, but also the local people who live naturally under the everyday's tourists' siege. And then, the traveler is going to visit the island of Gozo, with the Victoria's Citadel, and for the megalithic temples of Ggantija. And she or he has some time to come back, on the main island to visit some other temples, especially Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, in the city of Paola. Completely underground and perfectly preserved, inscribed in the UNESCO list, this one is really magnificent.



**Vittoriosa, Malta**



**The megalithic temples of Ggantija**

And then, after trying to understand what she or he saw in the islands of Crete, Sicily or Malta, our traveler makes their other own plans to visit other islands in the Mediterranean Sea Region.