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# Mountain Tourism in Romania During the Communist Period

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## Résumé

Mountain tourism in communist Romania represents a significant example of how communist regimes reshaped natural spaces for ideological, social, and economic purposes. The mountains, once associated with individual freedom and civic initiative, were transformed into controlled environments where recreation was permitted only insofar as it served state objectives. In an authoritarian regime, mountain tourism became a tool for collective discipline, strengthening loyalty to the party, and promoting official values such as health, work capacity, and patriotism.

The analysis combines a critical reading of the scholarly literature with a systematic examination of the press of the time, using newspaper collections available on the Arcanum platform for 1965–1989. This approach reveals the institutional and ideological context of mountain tourism, offering direct access to official discourses, public representations of recreation, and the mechanisms of control promoted by the state.

The results show a coherent policy of investment and institutional reorganization, materialized in an extensive network of trade-union hotels, mountain huts, sports bases, and marked trails. The facilities, subsidized accommodation, union-issued tickets, inexpensive meals, and organized transport, reflected the redistributive logic of the communist economy and helped secure public loyalty. Tourism was also regulated through strict surveillance: identity-based accommodation, mandatory reporting to the Militia, route restrictions, and monitoring of foreign tourists. In Transylvania, although tourism potential was exceptional, infrastructure remained uneven, and many administrative-territorial units (ATU) with high resources exhibited major deficiencies.

The findings indicate that communist mountain tourism functioned as a form of administered freedom, in which access was permitted but autonomy limited. This tension between reward and control remains insufficiently explored in the literature. The study also highlights the emergence of alternative post-communist forms of mountain tourism, such as agritourism and rural guesthouses, reflecting a reconfigured relationship between the individual, nature, and the state.

**Mots-Clés:** communist mountain tourism, state control, infrastructure development, administered freedom

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