

## **The Lure of Capitalism:**

### **Foreign Tourists and the Shadow Economy in Socialist Romania of the 1960s-1980s**

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In 1964, a British newsreel promoting socialist Romania as a tourist destination described the country as a blend of tradition and modernity that despite its location beyond the Iron Curtain displays a capitalist mentality.<sup>1</sup> Romanian tourist propaganda sent a similar message when advertising Romania in capitalist countries.<sup>2</sup> In 1976, “Vacances en Roumanie,” a Romanian tourist magazine published abroad, lavishly invited Western tourists to spend their holidays on the Romanian “Riviera” of the Black Sea. “Roulette, jazz, beauty contests, night shows, music, projections, and cocktails” were all part of the vacation package that was supposed to render Western tourists productive for the rest of the year.<sup>3</sup> Yet, despite this tourist promotion, when it came to encouraging market economy practices at the level of everyday life, the Romanian socialist government was less enthusiastic. This article examines particularly the tension between the goal of the socialist state to attract Western tourists with their coveted hard currencies and the regime’s fear of capitalist “contamination” at the everyday level. More than anything else international tourism exposed the socialist society to the Western eyes, but also the capitalist consumption patterns to the Romanian public.

The first part of this chapter will explore the politics of the Romanian socialist state regarding international tourism, the second part will look at the economic interaction between foreign tourists and Romanian citizens asking to what extent these contacts eluded the state, and the last part will examine the ways in which consumer culture in socialist Romania was reshaped by the contacts between tourist workers and Western tourists. It argues that the direct contacts between Romanians, especially tourist workers, and Western tourists triggered significant changes

in the formers' taste and garb and stimulated their entrepreneurial mentality. Most of these changes occurred on the Black Sea Coast where Western tourists predominated and in the Transylvanian towns of Sibiu and Brasov, home to a sizeable German community.

This chapter adds to the growing literature on the porousness of the Iron Curtain and the role of international tourism in connection to it.<sup>4</sup> The 'cultural turn' in Cold War studies has shifted the discussion from 'the culture of the Cold War' to 'Cold War cultures' in Rana Mitter's and Patrick Major's terms;<sup>5</sup> that is, from diplomatic and political relations between two 'divergent' blocs to the meanings associated with these relations and their impact at the everyday level. International tourism has only started to be tackled in this conversation. Recent studies by Anne Gorsuch, Diane Koenker, Igor Tchoukarine, and Sune Bechmann Pedersen opened the discussion about the role of tourism as a promoter of mobility during the Cold War either within the socialist bloc or between the socialist East and the capitalist West.<sup>6</sup> This study comes to supplement current literature on tourism by focusing on the effects of international tourism at the level of everyday life during the Cold War, an aspect that current works on tourism have overlooked. At the end of the day Cold War was a lived experience for citizens in both socialist east and capitalist west while international tourism facilitated a direct contact between these citizens. The question that begs an answer is to what extent these contacts consolidated or, by contrast, dismantled the official rhetoric about the 'other camp' of the communist regime in socialist Romania, or vice-versa in the case of the capitalist countries the tourists were coming from. And how did international tourism help ordinary citizens in both socialist Romania and capitalist West to capitalize on the political and economic divisions between eastern and western Europe if at all?

### **The politics of international tourism and its limitations**

In the early 1960s, the socialist state of Romania became increasingly interested in

welcoming foreign tourists, especially those from the capitalist countries.<sup>7</sup> The construction of new modern beach resorts by the Black Sea from the late 1950s and onwards helped attract Western and Northern clients. The number of foreign tourists increased from 100,000 in 1960 to about six million in the mid-1970s. In the early 1980s, the number of foreign tourists peaked at seven million per year. Although only 35–40 percent of all tourists came from Western capitalist countries (or ‘developed countries’ in the language of then Romanian official rhetoric), the revenues that they brought to the Romanian economy were higher than those brought by tourists from socialist countries.<sup>8</sup>

Tourist collaboration among the socialist countries had begun already in the 1950s. A summit in Varna in 1955 staked out some general principles and in 1957, the national tourist authorities of the COMECON member states held their first conference in Carlsbad in Czechoslovakia to discuss the matter in greater detail.<sup>9</sup> At first the discussions focused mostly on international tourism within the socialist bloc, but from the 1960s onward, the socialist countries also sought to develop international tourism across the East–West divide.<sup>10</sup>

The forth meeting of tourist organizations from the socialist countries marked a change in the Eastern bloc’s tourist policy. The summit took place in 1961 in Moscow and included participants not only from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but also from Mongolia, North Korea, and North Vietnam. The second point on the agenda mentioned the “importance of developing international tourism between socialist and capitalist countries as a means of popularizing the accomplishments of socialist regimes and of counterattacking the unfriendly imperialist propaganda towards socialist countries.”<sup>11</sup> The next point on the agenda stated that tourist relationships between socialist and capitalist countries should start from the idea that socialist states “could be less expensive and more attractive tourist destinations.”<sup>12</sup> The meeting also emphasized that socialist countries should find ways to promote themselves on the capitalist

countries' tourist market.<sup>13</sup> During this meeting, Romania signed tourist agreements for 1962 with Intourist (USSR), Orbis (Poland), Čedok (Czechoslovakia), Ibusz and Expres (Hungary). However, in the early 1960s, Romania was not the strongest voice with regard to tourist relationships with capitalist countries. For example, for the meeting in Moscow Romania's representatives presented a report about "recreational tourism" and the prospects for its development within the socialist bloc as this was Romania's main priority.<sup>14</sup> Its border crossing policies closely reflected this stance since in 1964 only tourists from socialist countries could travel without a passport to socialist Romania, while in Bulgaria visitors with pre-paid vouchers were already able to receive on-the-spot visas and there was no need to declare the amount of currencies they held at the arrival or departure.<sup>15</sup>

But change was under way. Already in 1964, the Council of Ministers decided to send a number of Romanian tourist specialists to France in order to receive training in hotel and restaurant management and to get acquainted with the French cuisine. In 1966, a report of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation asked the National Office for Tourism-Carpathians (ONT-Carpați), the state agency in charge with tourism, to attract tourists from West Germany and Scandinavian countries, as these looked like the most promising markets. Additionally, it asked ONT-Carpați to pay more attention to individual tourism as opposed to organized tourism, also from the same financial reasons.<sup>16</sup> In 1967, to boost international tourism with Western countries, socialist Romania had already abolished the visa regulations that required a potential tourist from a capitalist country to visit the Romanian embassy. Visas became a simple formality as they were automatically granted at the border.<sup>17</sup> Alongside liberalization of travel an institutional consolidation took place. Also, in 1967, the ONT-Carpați, previously under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, became a stand-alone institution

assimilated with a ministry under the supervision of the Council of Ministers.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to sending tourist workers to be trained in Western countries, welcoming Western tourists, and creating an institutional framework, a new definition of tourism started to crystalize at the end of the 1960s. Besides the recuperative aspect of tourism, this activity started to encompass an economic dimension as well. Tourism ceased to simply be an activity which improved Romanian workers' physical condition, and henceforth became a set of services designed to meet the needs of potential consumers. Oskar Snak, a high official in the Ministry of Tourism and a scholar of tourism, explained, "From an economic and social point of view, the development of tourism refers to the population's growing demands for a better access to tourist services and consumer goods, which in the end stimulates both production and consumption." Furthermore, Snak emphasizes that the growing number of "foreign visitors is beneficial for the development of certain tourist areas and of the Romanian economy in general."<sup>19</sup>

Yet, international tourism seemed to only partially meet the economic expectations of the Romanian government. Despite the liberalization of travel and the market oriented development of tourism, in 1982, the total income from international tourism in Romania was just 1.4% of GDP, below the world average income of 3.4 % of GDP.<sup>20</sup> In fact, in 1975, Romania raised only 132 million dollars from international tourism, while in 1980, tourism revenues climbed to 324 million dollars only to plummet to 176 million dollars in 1988.<sup>21</sup> Corneliu Mănescu, a member of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and president of the United Nations General Assembly between 1967-1968, explained the limited success of international tourism in socialist Romania as follows: "We cannot compare ourselves with the Dalmatian Coast, we have abolished the visas but this thing did not bring too many tourists. We have to make propaganda, to build tourist circuits, to understand that tourism does not mean only the hotel (accommodation) or places such as Eforie and Mangalia, but we can develop tourism in

other places too.”<sup>22</sup> The lack of flexibility in the design of international tourism was apparently the most important challenge for the socialist officials. One possible explanation for this inflexibility was the structure of the planned economy that did not leave much room for adjustments throughout the year, but this alone cannot explain the relatively low performance of international tourism in Romania.



*Figure 1: Postcard showing new hotels in Mamaia in 1961 (personal archive).*

### **Consuming socialism through international tourism**

The Romanian communist regime was critical of conspicuous consumption among its own citizens.<sup>23</sup> However, the regime displayed a different attitude when it came to foreign tourists. In their case, it aimed at encouraging consumption during vacations in Romania, for instance through the opening in 1964 of COMTURIST shops, which specialized in selling merchandise to foreign tourists. In 1969, the revenue generated by the tourist shops amounted to 2.6 million dollars, but the figure did not impress the regime.<sup>24</sup> Compared to the income generated by other countries in the socialist bloc, Romania was lagging behind. Bulgaria reportedly earned 4.5 million dollars and Czechoslovakia no less than 45 million dollars.<sup>25</sup> The Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party therefore complained that the ONT Carpați (Oficiul Național de Turism Carpați), the Romanian Tourist Office, had failed to achieve its goal, and it looked for ways to improve the revenue from foreign tourism.<sup>26</sup>

The proposed solutions ranged from “making available a large array of merchandise from both internal and external production such as cosmetics, food, cars, apartments, construction materials, and medicines” to selling those goods at reasonable prices (if possible, at lower prices than in the tourists’ home countries).<sup>27</sup> The main problem seemed to be the difficulty in adjusting to the consumers’ demands, which the proposals for improvement did not address in a serious manner.<sup>28</sup>

Although the number of tourists increased steadily until the early 1980s, it was still below the planned numbers and not enough to fill the tourist facilities built to accommodate them.<sup>29</sup> In 1966, communist officials were dissatisfied because the occupancy rate at the seaside was only at 60–70 percent during the peak season.<sup>30</sup> According to ONT Carpați officials the problem owed to

the lack of adequate services and tourist personnel. This is why they asked for an investment of three billion lei for the 1966–1971 period and an increase in the number of tourist workers. The demand was met with skepticism by some members of the government, including the president of the Council of Ministers, Ioan Gheorghe Maurer, yet ultimately it was granted.<sup>31</sup> What is more, in 1966, the Council of Ministers and the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party approved the new plan for the “systematization” of the Romanian seaside, which called for the building of a new resort for foreign (Western) tourists in the southern part of the coast.

Though the Romanian socialist state aimed at getting more Western tourists, it was also preoccupied with policing the interactions between Western tourists and Romanians as it saw the former as a possible source of “anti-socialist” contamination. What worried the communist government were the informal economic practices that flourished between foreign tourists and Romanians. Socialist Romania mostly focused on industrial development and allocated more than fifty percent of its investments to the industrial sector at the expense of agriculture and services. Little attention was paid to domestic consumption and the availability of consumer goods remained low with the exception of a short period of time in the late 1960s.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, goods made in capitalist countries were out of reach for ordinary citizens. But the mass-arrival of Western tourists and their access to the coveted tourist shops provided an alternative outlet to consumer goods for Romanian citizens. Yet, the state did not encourage these lucrative interactions as they compromised the image of the socialist regime and showed its inability to cater for its citizens in this matter.

Consequently, the Securitate, the infamous secret police, would periodically instruct tourist workers, who were more likely to establish connections with tourists from capitalist countries, to avoid receive gifts and engage in economic activities with foreign tourists.<sup>33</sup> To ‘justify’ its actions, the secret police would make use of a patriotic rhetoric as it warned citizens that such economic



exchanges were a cover for espionage. A Securitate's "Note on the counterrevolutionary preparations of tourist workers from Sibiu County" from 1974 requested tourist workers to report to their superiors any foreign tourists' suspicious behavior within 24 hours, or even act themselves if they believed that those individuals could endanger national security.<sup>34</sup> The note warned tourist workers that on various occasions, foreign tourists took advantage of tourist employees' weaknesses and offered them presents.

The deeds Securitate's note referred to stretched from relatively small illegalities to complicated networks of foreign or Romanian currency smuggling. A common practice especially for smaller hotels was to check-in tourists illegally or to encourage prostitution. A Securitate report gives detailed examples about such activities: "We consider damnable the deed of T.I. and V.V., receptionists at Saliște Inn, who illegally checked-in numerous individuals, including foreign tourists. They erratically registered them, after which they misappropriated the payment, and falsified the hotel records."<sup>35</sup> In another situation, which also took place at Saliște Inn, T.I. "the director of the inn, instead of helping the militia, allowed the prostitutes to escape through the back door."<sup>36</sup>

The presence of foreign tourists gave tourist workers access to various material resources. For instance, it helped them acquire the coveted foreign currency. Foreign currency was a state monopoly and owning only a few dollars or Deutsche Marks could land a Romanian citizen in prison.<sup>37</sup> Yet smuggling of hard currency was a daily occurrence. One such case is the example of a watchman at Lebăda (Swan) Cottage in Tulcea County in the Danube Delta who "gave foreign visitors rides with the cottage boat for which he charged them in Deutsche Marks, or invited tourists to have dinner at his house where he cooked fish dishes, thus gaining their trust."<sup>38</sup> Through his daily contact with foreign tourists, this otherwise rather anonymous blue-collar worker in the Danube Delta gained access to hard currency, which he could later use to buy goods from the tourist

shops.<sup>39</sup>

Similar currency restrictions applied to foreign citizens when it came to Romanian lei. Foreign tourists were allowed to bring any quantity of hard currency into the country, but they were not allowed to take Romanian lei out of the country.<sup>40</sup> A 1967 tourist guidebook published in English advised tourists to exchange their remaining Romanian money at “a bank, bureau de exchange, or the nearest National Tourist Office”<sup>41</sup> before leaving Romania. Yet this was not economically advantageous for foreign tourists as the official rate disproportionally favored the state.<sup>42</sup> When arriving in Romania, tourists could exchange money at the “exchange bureau of the National Bank of Romania, in big hotels, at airports, ports, and railway stations, as well as at all National Tourist Office agencies and branch offices in Bucharest and throughout Romania.”<sup>43</sup> In the same locations, tourists also had the option to exchange travelers’ checks. To prove to the custom office that they changed all their lei when leaving the country, foreign tourists were instructed to save all their receipts.<sup>44</sup>

In spite of these measures, the smuggling of both Romanian and foreign currencies became a routine activity during the 1960s and the 1980s. A 1965 secret police report noted that, “The cases that we have discovered prove that such illegal transactions [foreign currency smuggling] involve both foreign and Romanian currency.”<sup>45</sup> Not surprisingly, Western tourists were active participants in the smuggling of Romanian currency, an activity that turned into a profitable business. The same 1965 Securitate note emphasized that: “Some foreign citizens purchased and took out of the country Romanian currency with the purpose of selling it abroad at a better price or exchanging it for other currencies. The currency exchange took place not only through some exchange offices from abroad, but also between private citizens. These individuals intend to visit our country and need Romanian lei.”<sup>46</sup> Austrians and West Germans who had emigrated from Romania were the main figures in such transactions. This was the case with Ernst F. from Austria,

who coordinated illegal currency exchanges with his brother Richard F., a Romanian citizen living in Sibiu (Hermannstadt). In one case, Ernst F. carried 200,000 lei (the equivalent of 12,000 US dollars) across the Romanian and Hungarian borders.<sup>47</sup> The case was discovered when a spiteful neighbor informed on him. When finally caught by the Romanian authorities, F. told them that he “only exchanged 80,000 lei and brought the rest of the money back to invest it in jewelry, as the currency exchange business was not that profitable.”<sup>48</sup>

This was hardly an isolated case. Between 1963 and 1965, another Austrian visitor, Iosif H., sold various Western commodities, such as razors, markers, and table covers, to obtain important revenues in Romanian currency. He then used the Romanian money to buy goods from a Viennese store that accepted Romanian lei or sold it to prospective tourists to Romania.<sup>49</sup> His ultimate goal was to exchange the Romanian money for dollars. The Viennese shop that accepted payments in lei officially sold Romanian folk artifacts, but in the background, it actually operated an efficient network of currency exchange. Clearly, the socialist state was not the only beneficiary of Romania’s opening to foreign tourists. In addition, some citizens of capitalist countries started to sell Romanian currency in the West. As a city in between the socialist and capitalist blocs, Vienna became a very important location in this network. At the end of the 1960s, a representative of a foreign travel firm in Romania noted that “...passing through Vienna I saw that there are large quantities of Romanian money that sell for 20–22 lei per one US dollar.”<sup>50</sup> This story suggests a well-established network that dealt with smuggling of Romanian lei as well as the Romanian socialist state’s inability to bring this phenomenon to a halt. Moreover, it shows how ordinary citizens in Romania and some citizens of capitalist countries capitalized on the east-west divisions during the Cold War and the Romanian state more restrictive policies regarding currencies exchanges. This happened particularly against the backdrop of international tourism which melted the Iron Curtain, but only partially to the Romanian state advantage.

## **Fighting the Cold War on the Black Sea Riviera: Informal Relations between Tourist Workers and Western Tourists**

A complex set of relationships was established between foreign tourists on the one hand and Romanians, be they tourist workers, domestic tourists, or relatives of foreign tourists living in Romania (most of them ethnic German). These networks enabled Romanian citizens to circumvent state authority and either develop private enterprises in a state socialist economy or simply gain access to consumer goods that were not available in ordinary stores.<sup>51</sup> At the same time, these informal relations developed into transnational networks that went beyond the socialist camp.

The interactions between foreign tourists and Romanians ultimately fostered a different view on lifestyle and consumption among ordinary citizens in socialist Romania. Tourist workers who had a daily contact with foreign tourists were among those Romanian citizens to be most affected by these changes in mentalities and lifestyles. Doina, one of my interviewees, who worked as a *maître d'hôtel* in Neptun, one of the holiday resorts built on the Romanian Black Sea seaside in the 1970s, after having started as a waitress, recalled that, “When I came here, I thought I am in another country.”<sup>52</sup> Her story is similar to that of many tourist workers who took advantage of the development of tourism in socialist Romania in the 1970s, and enthusiastically poured into the newly built holiday resorts.<sup>53</sup> Despite the low wages tourist workers were lured to the seaside by the possibility to informally trade with foreign tourists and to live in a more cosmopolitan milieu.

The memories of tourist workers are an excellent source to document the ways in which their consumption habits changed after taking a job in tourism on the Black Sea coast. While Doina (aged 55 at the time of the interview) began to work in the early 1970s during a period of a relative political and economic liberalization, two of my interviewees, (one man aged 44 and a woman aged 42) started to work in mid-1980s at the peak of consumer goods scarcity in socialist Romania.<sup>54</sup>

Doina, maître d'hotel in Neptun, a resort where tourists from capitalist countries predominated, deems her job in tourism as an opportunity compared to how her life would have turned if she had stayed in her hometown in Moldavia (a region in eastern Romania) and worked in a factory.<sup>55</sup> For her just seeing how female foreign tourists dressed and behaved taught her about fashion and modern lifestyle. Yet, the economic restrictions made it difficult for Romanian citizens to buy these goods from ordinary shops. The “tourist shop,” which sold goods in hard currencies and was conveniently located in every major hotel on the seaside, was one place from where tourist workers could buy Western manufactured goods. Yet, as tourist workers did not legally own foreign money, they could not just go and buy the wanted goods so they had to ask their foreign friends to do it for them. Doina recalls of having befriended a foreign tourist from West Germany who agreed to buy a fleece from her, which she describes as being, “A little bit more different than what other people wore.”<sup>56</sup> Through this shopping by proxy, Doina managed to acquire the goods she was yearning for.

Ion T., waiter at “Doina” Hotel in Neptun, remembers how at the end of each sojourn tourists would collect money, buy things from the shop, and offer presents to every tourist employee from the maid to the receptionist. It was also quite usual to receive tips mostly in foreign currency, which Ion T. would also use to “buy” things from the hotel’s shop. The shop plays a central role in my interviewee’s recollections, as similar to Doina’s case, this was the place from which he could access goods that were not available in ordinary shops. Although Ion T. had a very elementary knowledge of German, he was still able to set up contacts with foreign tourists with whom he actually stayed in contact after 1990, when they could come and visit him at home.<sup>57</sup>

Alexandra N. started working in tourism when she was 14 years old. She began as a kitchen-assistant and reached the peak of her career as a receptionist. She met foreign tourists on a daily basis when she worked at Caraiman, a three-star hotel in Neptun. Foreign tourists, particularly

those in their 60s or 70s liked the way she behaved with them, and they were always curious to know about her age, family, etc. Foreign tourists were quite aware of the consumer goods' scarcity in the 1980s and they used these circumstances to get acquaintances among tourist workers and consequently better services. Alexandra N. remembers getting tips in foreign currencies that tourists "left on the table under the napkin." She used her first money to buy a tracksuit (a "training"), and after she saved for a couple of months she purchased a Grundig dual cassette deck from the tourist shop with the help of foreign tourists. In most cases, the tourist workers' shopping experience was mediated by the foreign tourists and required social skills. The presence of Western tourists helped them get the goods they wanted, and to go around the Romanian state that sought to control the public and private lives of its citizens. At the same time, the state through its agents (especially the party officials and militia) to some degree tolerated this informal system because it supplied the goods, which the official retail system could not provide.

## **Conclusions**

As Caroline Humphrey argued in her study about personal property in socialist Mongolia, material possession matters and it holds both identity and ritualistic significance in one's life.<sup>58</sup> Regardless of how insignificant the gifts or goods that tourist workers received from foreign tourists were, they were extremely meaningful in the context of the consumer goods' shortage in socialist Romania of the 1970s–1980s. For tourist workers, these goods opened a window on to a world that was not physically accessible to them, as they could not easily travel to the West. In most cases, the possession of trivial Western items had a symbolic meaning, proving their grip of that "world."

The accomplishments of international tourism in Romania were limited when compared with other socialist countries such as Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia, but it definitely put Romania on the map of world tourism. As more foreign tourists poured into the country, it became

increasingly difficult for the socialist state and the Securitate to control the interactions between foreigners and Romanians, especially those who worked in the tourist sector. Tourist employees obtained privileged access to consumer goods and developed a cosmopolitan consumption pattern at odds with the official ideology of rational socialist consumption.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the boundaries between official and unofficial economy became blurred in the case of the economic interactions between foreign tourists and tourist workers. By using their position within the socialist economy, tourist workers became a privileged group, and even displayed a capitalist mentality in their relationships with Western tourists. This ambiguous situation was best explained by anthropologist Alexei Yurchak who showed that the state itself through its agents (in this case tourist workers) overlooked socialist ideology.<sup>60</sup> In the long run, the informal economic relationships between foreign tourists and Romanian citizens compromised the legitimacy of the socialist regime, as they not only showed the state's inability to fulfill the citizens' consumerist needs, but they also honed a market mentality among tourist worker and their peers. Not surprisingly, it was the tourist workers who became the first entrepreneurs in the post-1989 period.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rumania 1964, <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/rumania>. Accessed 15 March 2017.

<sup>2</sup> The reportage might have been sponsored by the Romanian government.

<sup>3</sup> “Casinos et night clubs” in *Vacances en Roumanie* (1976, 49) p.6.

<sup>4</sup> On the Iron Curtain and revisiting the Cold War see: Simo Mikkonen, Pia Koivunen, *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (London: Berghahn Books, 2015), Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith, Joel Segal, *Divided Dreamworlds: The Cultural Cold War in Western and Eastern Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), Annette Vowinckel, Marcus Payk, and Thomas Linderberger, *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012, 2014), Sari Autio-Sarasmo, Katalin Miklóssi, *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge, 2011), Gordon Johnston, “Revisiting the Cultural Cold War” in *Social History*, vol. 35, no.3, August 2010, pp. 290-307, Rana Mitter and Patrick Major, *Across the Blocs: Exploring Comparative Cold War Cultural and Social History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Mitter, Major, *Across the Blocs: Exploring Comparative Cold War Cultural and Social History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> On travels in socialist societies and the Cold War see Anne Gorsuch, *All This is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad* (Oxford University Press, 2011), Anne Gorsuch and Diane Koenker, *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), Igor Tchoukarine, “Yugoslavia’s Open-Door Policy and Global Tourism in the 1950s-1960s” in *East European Politics and Societies; and Cultures*, vol. 29, issue 1, 2015, pp.168-188. See also the special edition edited by Mark Keck-Szajbel and Dariusz Stola, “Crossing the Borders of Friendship: Mobility Across Communist Borders” in *East European Politics and Societies; and Cultures*, vol. 29, issue 1, 2015), Adelina Stefan, *Vacationing in the Cold War: Foreign Tourists to Socialist Romania and Franco’s Spain, 1960s-1970s* (PhD Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2016), Adelina Stefan, “Postcards Transfer across the Iron Curtain: Foreign Tourists and Transcultural Exchanges in Socialist Romania during the 1960s and 1980s” in the *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity (HCM)*, special issue on “Photo Transfer in Cold War Europe,” vol. 5, no.1 (2017): 169-195, Adelina Stefan, “Between Limits, Lures, and Excitement: Holidays Abroad in Socialist Romania during the 1960s-1980s” in Kathy Burrell and Kathrin Horschelmann (eds) *Socialist and Post-Socialist Mobilities* (London, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 87-105, Sune Bechmann, “Eastbound Tourism in the Cold War: The History of the Swedish Communist Travel Agency Folkтурист,” *Journal of Tourism History* 10, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2018.1469679>.

<sup>7</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party, Economic Unit, file no. 165/1981, f. 21, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>8</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party Collection, Economic Unit, file no. 244/1981, f.10, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>9</sup> Martin A. Garay, *Le tourisme dans les démocraties populaires européennes* (Paris: La

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documentation française, 1969), 35; Sune Bechmann Pedersen, “A Passport to Peace? Modern Tourism and Internationalist Idealism,” *European Review* (manuscript under review).

<sup>10</sup> On the different approaches to international tourism within the socialist bloc see Derek R. Hall, “Tourism Development in Contemporary Eastern and Central Europe: Challenges for the Industry and Key Issues for Researchers” *Human Geographies- Journal of Studies and Research in Human Geography*, 5.2, (2011): 5-12.

<sup>11</sup> National Archives of Romania, Council of Ministers Collection, file number 29/1961, f. 6, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, f.7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 10.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 39. The Czechoslovak delegation was in charge with the report on tourism with capitalist countries.

<sup>15</sup> “European Travel on the Increase” in *World Travel (Tourisme Mondiale)*, no. 63 (April 1964): 3, 15.

<sup>16</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party Collection, Chancellery Section, file no. 150/1966., f. 2, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>17</sup> *Colectia de legi si decrete* (Bucharest, 1967), HCM 800/ 1967, p. 281.

<sup>18</sup> Oana Adelina Stefan, *Vacationing in the Cold War: Foreign Tourists to Socialist Romania and Franco's Spain, 1960s-1980s* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2016, unpublished PhD dissertation).

<sup>19</sup> Oskar Snak, *Economia si organizarea turismului* (Bucharest: Sport Tourism Publishing, 1976), pp. 28-29.

<sup>20</sup> Careba Crișan, Gheorghe Ionel, *Tehnica Operatiunilor de Turism International* (Bucharest: Sport-Tourism Publisher, 1984), 14.

<sup>21</sup> Derek R. Hall, “Evolutionary pattern of tourism development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union” in Derek R.Hall (ed.), *Tourism and Economic Development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (London: Belhaven Press, 1991), 377.

<sup>22</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee Collection, Chancellery Unit, file no. 47/1967, f. 24, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>23</sup> Pavel Campeanu, *Coadă pentru hrană, un mod de viață* (Bucharest: Editura Litera, 1994), 185.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 4.

<sup>25</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee Collection, Chancellery Unit, file no. 92/1969, f. 3, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, f.6.

<sup>28</sup> In 1965, an Austrian tourist complained that he wanted to buy a leather jacket from the shop, but he could not find one available, although the advertising to Romania highlighted such goods. See National Archives of Romania, Council of Ministers Collection, file no. 154/1965, f. 14, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>29</sup> Romanian Statistical Yearbook (Bucharest, National Institute of Statistics, 1990), 569.

<sup>30</sup> National Archives of Romania, Central Committee Collection, Chancellery Unit, file no. 96/1966 f. 43, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>31</sup> National Archives of Romania, Council of Ministers, file no. 227/1965, f. 32, Bucharest,

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Romania. Maurer was skeptical that international tourism will pay off and thought that the plan that the NTO Carpathians presented was shallow.

<sup>32</sup> Vladimir Pasti quoted in Murgescu, *România și Europa. Acumularea decalajelor economice (1500-2010)* (Iași: Polirom, 2010), 341.

<sup>33</sup> In 1977, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party issued a decision regarding the type of presents employees in state owned enterprises could receive from foreigners. For instance, they were allowed to accept chocolate, but not cigarettes, alcohol, coffee, or electronics. See National Archives of Romania, Collection CRCP-DOCALS, File no. 83/1977, ff. 241-242.

<sup>34</sup> Archives of the Council for the Securitate Archives (ACNSAS), Sibiu Documentary Fund, file no. 8663, vol.21, f. 15, Bucharest, Romania.

262. Also, three decrees were issued between 1970 and 1980 that regulated the relationship between Romanians and foreigners.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 264.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 265

<sup>37</sup> This was common to other socialist states as well. The more liberal Hungary also prohibited foreign currency possession. See the movie *Secret House Search* (Titkos házkutatás) about a secret search into a private house by the AVH (secret police) in order to find hidden objects, such as US dollars or western goods, while the owners were at a spa. (OSA archive, Budapest, Hungary). See Art. 37, Decree no. 210/1960 published in Official Bulletin in no. 56/1972. According to this law, the failure to declare available foreign currencies could put one in prison from six months to five years.

<sup>38</sup> ACNSAS, Tulcea Documentary Fund, file no. 19661, vol.4, f. 55, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>39</sup> Decree 210 from 1960 forbade the possession of hard currencies and those caught could have been sentenced to jail term that spanned between six months to five years.

<sup>40</sup> Peter Latham, *Romania: A Complete Guide* (London: Garnstone Publishing, 1967) 65.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 65.

<sup>42</sup> Richard, American tourist, university professor, personal interview, interviewed April 2016. He remembers that he was approached by a Romanian at the door of a ONT-Carpathians office and offered the possibility to buy lei at a more advantageous price than the official rate. A similar transaction took place when he left Romania.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 65.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66.

<sup>45</sup> ACNSAS, Braşov Documentary Fond, File no. 1877, vol.11, f. 46, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 46.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 47.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 47.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 48.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 50. This was a better price for tourists as in Romania one US dollar could be exchanged for amounts ranging between 14 to 18 lei.

<sup>51</sup> *Blat* in sociologist Alena V. Ledeneva's terms. See Alena Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favors: Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

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<sup>52</sup> Doina T., 55 years old, graduated high school, personal interview, March 2013. First hotels opened in Neptun in 1972. For this article, I interviewed three tourist workers, one male and two women.

<sup>53</sup> Whereas in 1966 there were approximately 11,000 tourist workers, in 1975 the number of tourist workers increased to about 40,000. This was a low number if compared with Yugoslavia which had 200,000 people employed in tourism (both permanent and temporary) but significantly high in comparison with countries such as Spain and Italy whose tourist employees only numbered around 20,000 people. See *Economic Review of World Tourism*, (Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1976), p.33.

<sup>54</sup> I treat these interviews as “dialogic discourse,” in Alessandro Portelli’s words, namely as a narrative that emerges in the realm of the dialogue between the interviewee and the interviewer.<sup>54</sup> I am interested not how accurately they reproduce the chronology of events, but how they express certain details, what they forget, and ultimately how they build the discourse about their own past. See, Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1997).

<sup>55</sup> Doina T., 55 years old, graduated high school, personal interview, March 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Alexandra, N, 42 years old, graduate high school, personal interview, Doina, T. 55 years old, graduated high school, personal interview March 2013.

<sup>57</sup> Ion T., 44 years old, graduate high school, personal interview, February 2013.

<sup>58</sup> Caroline Humphrey, “Rituals of death as a context for understanding personal property in socialist Mongolia” in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 8, no.1 (March 2002): 65-87.

<sup>59</sup> Rationing was a pervasive reality during the communist period in Romania. It was officially ended in the early 1960s, but bread continued to be rationalized in some towns until the late 1960s. Rationing was reintroduced in 1979 for gasoline and then in the 1980s for most basic goods.

<sup>60</sup> Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>61</sup> Among the tourist workers, except one female interviewer, all my other interviewers ran a private business at the time of the interview.