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Political Geography

Volume 20, Issue 8, November 2001, Pages 1053-1074

“Facing the future”: tourism and identity-building in post-socialist Romania

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298\(01\)00044-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298(01)00044-0)

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Abstract

Tourism is an important component of the process of identity-building, representing one way in which a country can seek to project a particular self-image to the wider international community. As such, tourism has considerable ideological significance for the formerly socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe that are seeking to project and affirm distinctly post-socialist identities as part of the process of re-integration into the political and economic structures of Western Europe. This paper focuses on tourism and identity-building in post-socialist Romania. In particular, it focuses on one building “the so-called “House of the People” which is intimately linked with Romania’s totalitarian past and which is fast becoming Bucharest’s biggest tourist sight. The presentation of the building to tourists seeks to “reconfigure” its past so that it accords better with Romania’s post-socialist identity, and particularly its aspirations to (re)establish itself as a country of “mainstream”



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Keywords

Tourism; Identity-building; Post-socialism; Romania

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