

## **Borderland Experience – How People Negotiate Media Representation of National Borders and of Identities**

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This paper employs itself with the constructionist paradigm to examine the concept of borderland in Romania. Borderland is an indeterminate cultural space, wherever two or more cultures edge each other. Borders, be the physical, nonphysical or emotional, are socially constructed through ideological mediated representations, which stabilize meanings into the sense/purpose of one country/nation/minority. We present the case of people living at the territorial borders of Romania, of their negotiation of media texts, and stresses the connectedness, but also the warfare of the social-historically situated readers and of media text as ideological constructions when examining the processes of interpretation and thus of identities formation and belligerent opinions/theories/arguments. Our contribution, dealing with “border crossing” as the continual process of production meaning, suggests engaging with the new “genres”, such as audience ethnography (focusing on multiple selves of informants – “auto-histories”, on media ideological texts in the context, etc). The border project tries to face an individual’s own architecture when people are confronted with media texts conveying messages with undermining meanings of disclosure on purpose of hate, exaggerated patriotic feelings, disrespect and mislead believes on pseudo-theoretical instructions. Therefore the audience ethnography can find out where “real” borders are – how one reads ideological media texts in his/her own space, encompassed by other texts, and how he/she thus constructs the social reality and builds his/her identity. The project is a way of audience ethnography, which discovers the multiple subjectivities in a borderland and examines the complex process of identities formation when people as individuals negotiate ideological media texts on fallacies, under-presentation, and manipulation. Although the position of the important minorities has marginally improved in Romania, the presentations of media are still very traditionally orientated. Unfortunately, the conclusions of our interpretation have shown only nominal changes during the period after 1989.