

The chapters of the volume were born from the meeting of three, partially overlapping researches in Hungary and Romania, representing two different theoretical discourses, that took place in the 2013–2019 period. This proved to be a very fruitful encounter and contributed to a cultural theoretical and medium historical archaeology of recurrent topics and figures of the Hungarian and Romanian cinema.

The encounter, the existence on the border and in-between are the common denominator of the topics, production modes of these films, as well as of their research methods and the theoretical discourses of their interpretation. The chapters of the volume aim to contribute to the interpretation of generational phenomena, coined by the critique as the Romanian New Cinema and the the New Hungarian Cinema, both starting off at the beginning of the years 2000. The two new cinematic trends present significant differences in terms of memory work, their relationship to European and own cinematic traditions, as well as the thematisation of coping strategies under the conditions of present crises. The analyses of the volume aim to illuminate these differences and their historical, political and cultural background.

The title itself marks a multiple border situation: a geographical and cultural border between Hungarian and Romanian, East and West, the ambivalence of the relationship to local and global cinematic traditions, the borders of generational identity quest, the obstacles of an only apparently easy mobility, the border territory of ideological and conceptual (self)definitions, the prolonged crisis of the transition period and the autopsy of the societal maturation processes. The 12 chapters of the four sections dwell in these topics. The first section concentrates on the films of cultural self-definition, mobility and border crossing, with special attention to the topics of return and intercultural encounter. This is followed by the chapter exploring the differences of memory work, including analyses of melodramas representing the dynamics of the crisis of patriarchy, as well as the discussion of the allegorical figuration characteristic of the self-representation of the “losers of history”. The unprocessed past and sense of loss lead to melancholia and nostalgia, in focus of the third section. The topic of musical nostalgia already connects to the last section, the chapters of which analyse the exaggerated visuality of contemporary Hungarian films, displacing the bodily expression of feelings and sensations to other levels of signification.