

Introduction

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How do borders and knowledge relate? How do changes of borders relate to changes in knowledge and its boundaries and vice versa? Are epistemic boundaries more resilient than the territorial and social ones, or is the case the reverse? These questions are regularly addressed with regard to specific research questions and with the tools available within the academic disciplines. The particular contribution of this volume lies in its focus on borders and knowledge in the context of an encounter between approaches from different disciplines. At the same time it presents a large number of pieces of original research.

The topic: borders and knowledge

In an era of globalization, people, knowledge, information, items and money (real or virtual) cross at an ever-increasing speed and intensity borders and boundaries. The latter seem to lose their impact and importance. However, never have borders, the perception and use of them, their background and effects attracted such intense scholarly interest. *Border* and *boundary studies* thrive in all social and human sciences, conceived both in terms of bordering and bounding of nations and ethnicities, of inclusion and exclusion, and in terms of transgression and becoming transnational, travelling, translating, migrating, diasporic. *Border poetics* has developed into a large field of research and reflection. The border as such, as well as its transgression, becomes a forceful metaphor in the study of art and literature, as well as in the conceptualization of works of art and the perception of them. The very bounding and dividing of literary and artistic genres is put under scrutiny, while the division of academic knowledge by disciplinary boundaries is shattered in terms of *interdisciplinarity* or *transdisciplinarity*.

Knowledge, however defined or perceived – what the individual considers he/she knows, what circulates as knowledge within a group, or is diffused by different types of media, or formalized and presented as results of scholarly research – all these forms of knowledge are in different ways part of both establishing and dismantling borders and boundaries. Geographers, historians, linguists provide foundation and legitimacy when the play of power is about drawing borders on the ground or defining a "state language" or a "minority language". Sociologists and psychologists, literary and political scholars, like journalists or anyone among us, conceive of the objects of knowledge (the

country, the working class, health, domestic politics, the language, the migrants, "us", "them") as bounded and structured. Sometimes the items and conceptualizations of knowledge (the maps, the texts, the inventories, the categories, the common topoi) come first and the social or territorial borders and boundaries follow; sometimes there are changes in the borders and boundaries and the process of knowledge construction lags behind, among the public and among scholars. To approach and grasp – in particular times and places, and under particular circumstances – the movements back and forth between stable or changing borders and boundaries of different kinds, and changing boundaries of knowledge, understood in its widest meaning, is the topic of this volume. The setting of the different contributions is mostly, but not exclusively, the Eastern Mediterranean region, Turkey and the Middle East. Several of the individual articles are original research presented here for the first time; others look from a new angle at research published elsewhere, often in other languages than English. The collective contribution of the volume comes from its focus on the linkages between borders and knowledge and the boundaries within them, as well as in the encounter between approaches from different disciplines merging into a common field of investigation and questioning.

At the origin of the volume lies a series of encounters around these common research concerns and a desire to cross the border and learn from other disciplines and contexts. Contacts between researchers in several disciplines within the humanities and social sciences at various Swedish universities and Turkish colleagues from a number of universities, led to the planning and organization of a conference held in 2008 at Kadir Has University in Istanbul.

The workshop: Changing boundaries of knowledge – changes in the boundaries of knowledge

A group of research fellows of the collegium of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, from different disciplines and universities, gathered in 2007 around a common interest in border and boundary studies. The editors of this volume, Inga Brandell, Marie Carlson and Önver A. Çetrez, together with Assoc. Professor Helena Bodin and Professor Annika Rabo, both from Stockholm University, subsequently contacted Turkish colleagues, first of all Assoc. Professor Levent Soysal at Kadir Has University in Istanbul – then chair of the Department of Radio, Television and Cinema – with a proposition to organize a common multidisciplinary workshop. Assoc. Professor Asli Kotaman, a media researcher and at the time assistant at the Faculty of Communications at Kadir Has University, was a central figure in the organization of the workshop, which took place on May 27–29, 2008 at Kadir Has University. The workshop, with both public and closed sessions, constituted a cooperation between Kadir Has University, Istanbul, and four Swedish universities (University of Gothenburg, Stockholm University, Södertörn University, and Uppsala University), and was financed by the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT).

The overall theme was *Changes in the boundaries of knowledge – The changing boundaries of knowledge*. Researchers and PhD students at universities and

university colleges in France, Italy, Norway, Great Britain, Sweden and Turkey – most with research connections with Turkey – were invited to give presentations of their work and to scrutinize the tensions and various aspects of the double and related topic of the workshop. Questions to be discussed were listed in the invitation as: How do boundaries of knowledge change when political, geographical, social and cultural boundaries change? How do changes in the boundaries of knowledge affect other kinds of boundaries?

Professor Deniz Bayrakdar, then the Vice Rector and Dean of the Faculty of Communications at Kadir Has, opened the workshop and welcomed the participants to the University, beautifully situated on the shore of the Golden Horn. Thereafter Assoc. Professor Levent Soysal outlined the field of the conference in his introduction. The title of his paper was "Border(s) of Europe: at the Beginning and End of the 20th Century", and Soysal took as his point of departure the seminal work of Margaret Macmillan on the Paris peace conference in 1919, thereby situating the participants and the context of the conference in the Turkish-European *longue durée*.

The theme of the first day was *Changes in the boundaries of knowledge – actors and strategies*. Professor Fuat Keyman at the Department of International Relations, Koç University, acted as the keynote speaker. With the explicit purpose to "enlarge our thinking space", his paper, "Rethinking Turkey: Globalization and Knowledge", described the approach to Turkey over time, both within different theoretical paradigms and in international politics.

The theme of the second day – *On the boundaries of knowledge – changes in academic positions and practices* – was introduced by Inga Brandell with her paper "On Boundaries of Language, Knowledge and Nation" (with a different title in this volume). On the last day, the theme was *The changing boundaries of knowledge – structures and effects*. Johan Schimanski, Professor at the Department of Comparative Literature, UiT The Arctic University of Norway gave the keynote speech under the title "Reading Borders" (in this volume).

Other participants, not included in this volume, gave contributions from different perspectives. Lars Kleberg, professor of Slavic languages, then at the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEEs), Södertörn University, presented the exchange of letters in the early 1920s published between two famous Russian intellectuals who had totally opposing views on the relations Russia had and should have with the West ("Culture as Blessing or Burden: On the 'Correspondence between two Corners' by Vyacheslav Ivanov and Mikhail Gershenzon"). Imprisoned in the same room, Ivanov and Gershenzon argued their cases, crossing with their letters the border between them in the room, and claiming respectively the dismantling of the border to the "West" or, on the contrary, its necessary reinforcement. Mahmut Mutman, Assoc. Professor of Sociology, Department of Communications and Design, Bilkent University, used the lacanian concept of the "whispering game" in his broad approach to Turkish language and literature, exemplified within a precise analysis of sections of *Araba Sevdası* by the Ottoman author Rezaizade Mahmud Ekrem ("A Novelistic Affair: Boundaries of Knowledge, Boundaries of Modernity"). Alan Hajo, a PhD-student at the Institute for Oriental and African Languages, University of Gothenburg, discussed the relation between thought and language, and accordingly the potential boundaries for reason/ing, through a presentation

of the influential contemporary Moroccan philosopher Mohammed Abed al-Jabri (“Reason, Faith and Democracy in Contemporary Arab-Islamic Thought: A study of the Philosophy of Mohammed Abed al-Jabri”).

Dr Claire Mauss-Copeaux, a historian from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Lyon with a series of publications on the Algerian war of independence, gave a presentation on the colonial confrontation and how violence creates a memory, sometimes hidden for decades. In her presentation, “Stories and History and Human Pain. Anthropology and History in the cases of Algeria and Cyprus”, she used, *inter alia*, photographs taken by French soldiers during the Algerian war of independence, visualizing the inherent violence and the objectified power relations. Finally, Levent Köker, Professor of Law, Ankara University, brought a specific and decisive form of knowledge to the fore in his presentation on “Legality and Legitimacy: The Peculiarities of Positivism in Turkish Jurisprudence”. Going through some recent cases and controversies in Turkish politics and judiciary, Köker was able to document the “scientific” understanding predominant among Turkish judges and develop an argument about its necessary transformation as a condition for the democratization of the state.

Professor Dr Saliha Paker from the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies, Boğaziçi University had sent in an abstract about “‘Ottoman Interculture’ as a Theoretical Construct for an Understanding of Shifts in the Epistemological Boundaries of the Empire and the Turkish Nation-state”. She was, however, unable to attend. As her research was central to the overall problematics of this anthology, it was later decided to conduct an interview with Professor Paker. The interview is included in this volume.

The workshop discussions turned out to be intense and constructive; opportunities for further collaborations and exchanges materialized. After further communication with several of the workshop participants, some of the organizers considered the possibility of publishing and set up an editorial committee. All the participants were invited to develop full articles. Most of them agreed and this volume is the result. Once the articles had been submitted, their reading by the editorial committee led to reworked second versions, which were subsequently sent for an anonymous peer reviewing by experts in the respective fields of research, whose comments and queries were integrated. The articles then underwent English proofreading by Margaret Cornell, implying new adjustments and clarifications. Funding for the printing and publishing came from the Section for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation at the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul.

The volume

Based on how each text relates to the main topics of this book, knowledge and borders, the articles have been divided into three sections. The first section – *From Knowledge to Borders* – contains articles addressing different forms of knowledge and its production, and their effects in establishing borders and boundaries. The second section – *From Borders to Knowledge* – has the reverse perspective and the contributors analyze how established borders produce and

reproduce knowledge in different contexts. In the third section – *Borders and Knowledge Back and Forth* – the authors, within their specific empirical fields, follow both movements: the borders’ influence on the construction of knowledge and the way the concepts and organization of knowledge reinforce existing borders or create new ones among people, in culture or on the ground. The interested reader will find that empirically several of the texts separated in this way are treating similar material or issues: translation, for example, is the main topic or is touched upon in the contributions by Bodin, Brandell, Rooke and Tahir Gürçaglar and in the interview with Paker; travellers come to the fore in the articles by Fuccaro, Bodin and Rooke; migrants and/or diasporic communities are touched upon or at the heart of the contributions by Schimanski, Nil Doğan, Carlson and Çetrez.

Two articles, authored respectively by Etienne Copeaux (“The Research Topic as a Guideline”) and by Jostein Børtnes (“Bakhtin’s Conceptual Contributions to Changes in the Boundaries of Knowledge”) are characterized by a meta-perspective and function in this volume as bridges between the different sections.

A thorough presentation of the history, thematics and aesthetics of the “Kurdish novel”, e.g. novels in Kurdish language, was presented at the workshop by Dr Hashem Ahmadzadeh (then University of Exeter). This important contribution, based on the author’s doctoral thesis (Uppsala University 2003), has an evident relation to the topic of the volume. In the present version the relation is mainly implicit, which is the reason for this contribution standing by itself in an appendix, following the preceding three sections of the volume.

From knowledge to borders

The first part of this volume consists of four contributions. The first two deal with the way a particular process of producing knowledge creates an order within which borders and boundaries are drawn and anticipated. Nelida Fuccaro, a historian at SOAS, London University, provides the reader with a thorough analysis of the context and content of an imperial production of knowledge through *The Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia* – a nine-volume geographical and historical compilation published at the eve of World War I, and anticipating and steering what later became British state building in this region. Åsa Lundgren, a political scientist at Uppsala University, whose article comes next, has as her topic a contemporary process of knowledge production. She analyzes the very logic of the influential World Values Survey and its chosen indicators, studied here in particular in relation to the survey’s results for “Muslim” societies and “Western” societies and the drawing of borders resulting from this seemingly neutral form of knowledge production.

The source material for the third article, by Helena Bodin, a literary scholar from Stockholm University, is constituted by the many Swedish travelogues recounting shorter or longer visits to the Orthodox monastery republic, Mount Athos, and published in the 1950s and ‘60s. Distinctions, based on the authors’ different access to language and knowledge regarding Byzantium and Orthodox faith and rituals, produce a view of exclusive *semiospheres*, each with its own

centre and periphery, all co-existing during the same epoch and laying radically different foundations for the understanding and mediation of Mount Athos.

These three contributions all present new research, and in the cases of Fuccaro and Bodin analyze new sources. In contrast, Etienne Copeaux, the French historian and geographer, whose many works on Turkey and Cyprus are widespread, returns to books already published, questioning his own eclectic and boundary-transgressing use of method and theory. His claim that the research topic itself is the guideline for the researcher, and hence imposes disciplinary boundary transgressions, is controversial and opens up a debate, relevant for the preceding articles and developed further in some of the contributions in the next section.

From borders to knowledge

This section contains six articles, and is introduced by Johan Schimanski, a literary scholar from UiT The Arctic University of Norway. Schimanski reaches out for manifold and diverse materials – ancient maps, contemporary cinema, literary fictions from different times and in different languages – when establishing the *double vector* that he situates in the spatiality of the lived experience both of crossing a border and of reading a text. The crossing of borders in the production of knowledge, as well as a reflection on how boundaries are constructed and preserved, is the common focus of this section. Marie Carlson, a sociologist from the University of Gothenburg, approaches it in the next article through a reflection on the possibilities and restraints of (re)presentation and the construction/production of knowledge in relation to research on migrants/migration within the context of the Swedish welfare state. The material she draws on is an overview of recent research together with a revisit to her own earlier interviews with Turkish immigrant women taking Swedish language courses, which constituted a part of her doctoral thesis, published under the telling title “Swedish for Immigrants – a Bridge or a Frontier?” (2002). Within an intersectional discussion concerning ethnicity/migration, gender and class, her contribution takes place in a field that relates, for instance, to cultural, migration, ethnicity and gender studies.

The next three articles are all, though in different ways, studies of individuals and groups, their crossing of borders, and their knowledge of them as well as the reshaping of their individual and collective knowledge. Tetz Rooke, an Arabist at the University of Gothenburg, brings to the fore the prolific and yet rather unknown Swedish journalist, writer, photographer and translator Karin Johnsson. During the 1930s Johnsson published a number of travelogues from Palestine, in which she included translations of Arab poetry and related her encounters with Palestinian personalities of the time. Johnsson’s texts, read against the background of the Swedish literary approach to the Middle East of the time, provide evidence of ambiguity and tension and also changes over time. Rooke, who at the workshop presented another paper on the concept of world literature and the place given in it to Arabic literature, initially intended this piece for publication in conference proceedings from the University of Damascus, however made impossible by the turn of events in Syria.

Setenay Nil Doğan, a political scientist from Yıldız Technical University, does not, like Rooke, approach an individual facing the contradictions of exposing his/her knowledge to the experience of crossing borders. In her article, it is a diasporic community, the Circassians in Turkey, who, facing a totally new situation with the break-up of the Soviet Union and the preceding and concomitant globalization, redefine their own identity and transform the knowledge of their history and diasporic experience. The boundaries of their knowledge are challenged, problematized and changed. Önver A. Çetrez, a psychologist of religion at Uppsala University, also approaches what could be considered a diasporic community, the Assyrians who at one time migrated from the Middle East to Sweden. In his article, based on recent research together with a revisit to earlier interviews, the topic is not the community, but the encounter of the individual young person with what Çetrez calls the “identity boundaries” in their surrounding context. He demonstrates the criss-crossing boundaries that run through individual psychological development as young Assyrians grow up in Sweden. Like Marie Carlson in her article, he challenges the research and the researcher in the field of migration. In particular, Çetrez argues that established and current psychological models of identity formation are limited and have to be superseded to pay attention to a multicultural complexity.

Jostein Børtnes’ short article “Bakhtin’s Conceptual Contributions to Changes in the Boundaries of Knowledge” presents two central concepts as well as Bakhtin’s revolutionary thoughts about the omnipresence, decisiveness and creativity of “boundary encounters”. Heteroglossia, heterochrony, and the necessary location of those who put the questions outside of the object to be understood, or – closer to Bakhtin’s formulation – outside of the other culture, are all perspectives present to varying extents in the preceding articles in this section. They have a bearing, however, also on the third and closing section of this volume on borders and the changing boundaries of knowledge. Børtnes’s article therefore constitutes not only a possible perspective on what precedes it but also a bridge to the final part.

Borders and knowledge back and forth

Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar, a scholar in the field of translation studies at Boğaziçi University, is the author of the first article in the closing section. She puts a twofold question to the discourses surrounding the politically and culturally important translation activities in the first decades of Republican Turkey. The question concerns, first, how translation studies and history may make visible and problematize certain boundaries taken for granted in the literary field, and second, how translation may play a role in the creation of new literary, cultural and political boundaries. In a detailed analysis of the Turkish translation field in the 1930s and ‘40s she is able to demonstrate that, far from the common perception of the literary field as marked by binary oppositions, there is a much greater hidden complexity behind the production, dissemination, and consumption of literature. The boundaries in the literary field are more diffuse than is often suggested and the seeming boundaries have often been used to further political and aesthetic agendas.

Tahir Gürçağlar discloses the double or parallel movement of dismantling borders and creating them through literary translation and the structuring of the translation field. This double movement, back and forth, is at the centre of the three articles here. Inga Brandell, a political scientist at Södertörn University and the University of Oslo, in the following article looks for both the empirical and the theoretical borders and boundaries intrinsic in the very production of knowledge. Using recent research in the humanities and social science research connected with the geographical area known as the Middle East, she addresses the subject of the bounding of knowledge and the transgression of the boundaries from different perspectives. A case study of one influential social science reception of the Ibn Khaldun's concept of 'asabiyya concludes the chapter.

The final contribution to this last part of the volume devoted to the movement back and forth between knowledge and (its) borders consists of an interview with Saliha Paker. Paker, who is a founder of translation studies in Turkey and world-wide, has written extensively on pre-Republican Ottoman translation. In the interview theoretical concepts, such as "Ottoman interculture" and "cultural repertoires" are discussed. With the conceptual and theoretical debate in the field of translation studies as a background, the Ottoman culture and episteme, in relation with the Persian and Arab-Islamic, is revisited since its origins.

The appendix

Hashem Ahmadzadeh, a scholar of Kurdish literature, aims in his article to identify the main changes that have occurred in the Kurdish novel since its rise during the 1930s until contemporary times. Against the background of a discussion of Jameson's and Goldman's theories of the modern novel and Moses' later introduction of the concept of "global hybridization" in world literature, Ahmadzadeh compares the style and theme of the early Kurdish novels with more recent ones. He argues that, with the penetration of modernity, there are radical changes resulting from internal Kurdish cultural and socio-political transformations. They are also a result of the inclusion in global culture, not least as transmitted by the large Kurdish diaspora and the authors who are part of it.

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