Borders, Bordering Practices and Mobility
in Early Modern Europe

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Borders, Bordering Practices and Mobility in Early Modern Europe

Edited by

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Introduction

The present volume of essays is an exploration of recent developments in the field of Frontier and Border Studies, but indirectly it was inspired by the 33rd Irish Conference of Historians. Ireland's premier historical conference is organised biennially by the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences and on this occasion was held at the University of Galway in May 2020 on the theme of 'Borders and boundaries: historical perspectives'. Unfortunately, the recent pandemic badly disrupted at a late stage traditional arrangements for convening the conference with a panel of invited speakers on the chosen theme. In the ensuing, well-nigh unprecedented circumstances, the best that could be done to maintain the conference was to issue a call for papers and to hold a virtual conference online.

In the event, the virtual conference attracted a strong panel of speakers, surpassing the organisers' expectations, but prospects then looked very problematic for publishing a traditional volume of conference proceedings, and in these circumstances alternative ways of marking the conference and theme were also canvassed. One outcome was the genesis of the present volume. Happily, the organisers of the initial Galway conference have since succeeded in arranging publication of most contributions as a collection of short papers from the virtual meeting. This success has not, however, prevented preparations from continuing for publication of the present volume which is rather different in composition, focus and theme.

The original four early modern panellists of the Irish Conference of Historians in virtual Galway took the opportunity to update and greatly extend their contributions for the present volume which encompasses a much broader geographical remit with case studies from Continental Europe and North America, and which focuses on the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. We are delighted that we could recruit a number of excellent international scholars as well as early career academics to contribute to the topic with their own research. A common factor of all the articles is the focus on geographical, physical borders and the investigation of the spatial dimensions of power relations between political and other actors in the early modern period. While sometimes analysing seemingly small, local cross-border incidences (for instance in Dániel Moerman's paper on Aldekerk), all the articles are engaged with questions of territoriality as their spatial marker. This responds to one par-

ticular facet of Border Studies, which (re-)addresses spatiality and territoriality as interrelated concepts.[1] For the early modern period, an investigation into the changing instruments and techniques of bordering and spatial demarcation are of particular interest. These include rituals and performances, cartography and surveying, the references to legal codes, practices, systems of land-use and inheritance patterns, or mere military power. These different tools and approaches demonstrate the variety of knowledge systems used in the early modern world to negotiate and to demarcate borders, sometimes competing, sometimes overlapping, sometimes aligning with each other.

A similarly exciting collection could have been put together with investigations of, for instance, early modern urban borders – city walls, the grid of parish boundaries and their rules and routines. The study of thresholds, doors and windows demarcating, but also blurring domestic and public urban spheres, and liminal spaces such as alleyways, canals or commons would have provided many insights into the approach to and understanding of boundaries in early modern urban neighbourhoods.[2]

It is owing to the consistency of the volume, that we have restricted our contributions to the wider territorial borders rather including other forms of borders and boundaries, be they spatial, social or cultural. Unintentionally, this has led to a focus on historical actors, who are largely male and predominantly from the elite or professional segment of early modern society. It remains the case that most of the professions engaged with border-making, such as cartographers and land surveyors, were staffed by men. There were notable exceptions, such as the Dutch widow Anna van Westerstee Beek, who continued the publishing business of her deceased husband, Barend Beek, in seventeenth- and

1 See, for instance, Mario Damen/Kim Overlaet (eds.), *Constructing and Representing Territory in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, Amsterdam, 2021.

2 For an overview of the many approaches to investigate borders, see Suzanne Conklin Akbari et al., AHR Conversation. Walls, Borders, and Boundaries in World History, in: *The American Historical Review* 122,5, December 2017, 1501--1553. For multi-disciplinary approaches, see: Ulla Connor, Border or bordering practice? Changing perspectives on borders and challenges of praxeological approaches, in: Christian Wille/Dominik Gerst/Hannes Krämer (eds.), *Borders in Perspective – UniGR-CBS Thematic Issue. Identities and Methodologies of Border Studies: Recent Empirical and Conceptual Approaches* 6, University of Luxembourg and University of Duisburg-Essen, 2021, 27–38; Basak Tanulku/Simone Pekelsma (eds.), *Physical and Symbolic Borders and Boundaries and How They Unfold in Space. An Inquiry on Making, Unmaking and Remaking Borders and Boundaries Across the World*, Routledge, 2024.

early eighteenth-century The Hague. Women often acted as colourists for early modern maps, thus giving a distinct interpretation to the lie of the land, but these roles are still largely under-researched.[3] Further investigations might indeed extend our understanding of female professionals in the early modern 'border making' business. Armies and their leaders, who enforced border regimes, as is shown in some of the case studies in this volume, were also staffed by men. However, we are aware that, while they do not feature in the present studies, female rulers had as much agency in defending, demarcating or negotiating the borders of their territories as their male counterparts.[4] It would be fascinating, for instance, to trace the politics of the seventeenth-century abbesses of the Imperial abbey of Thorn nestled in the contested part of the Duchy of Guelders, and their strategies to manoeuvre their interests around war and partition in the area during and after the Eighty Years' War.[5] Women are well-researched as active participants in urban court cases, but they also acted as litigants in cross-border legal disputes, as demonstrated in the Aldekerk-scenario, where we meet the female dissenters Tryn Smit and Anna Boeren.[6] Women faced particular challenges when crossing borders, but they were no less mobile than early modern men.[7]

The study of physical borders, bordering practices and cross-border mobility is a thriving field of research. The topic has been addressed in multi-disciplinary approaches ranging from (human) geography to anthropology and history. The recent trends in research, particularly related to early modern territorial borders will be introduced in the first chapter of the present volume

3 See Will van den Hoonaard, *Map Worlds: A History of Women in Cartography*, Waterloo, Ontario, 2013. See also Heleen Wyffels, Women and Work in Early Modern Printing Houses. Family Firms in Antwerp, Douai and Leuven (1500–1700), unpublished PhD Dissertation, Leuven University, 2021.

4 There are ample studies of early modern female rulers well beyond the all too familiar queens and consorts. See, for instance, Tryntje Helferich, *The Iron Princess, Amalia Elisabeth and the Thirty Years' War*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2013.

5 Such an analysis, which would also highlight the power of female religious rulers, is missing.

6 Manon van der Heijden/Marion Pluskota/Sanne Muurling (eds.), *Women's Criminality in Europe, 1600–1914*, Cambridge, 2020. Jeanette Kamp, *Crime, Gender and Social Control in early modern Frankfurt am Main*, Crime and City in History no. 3. Leiden, 2019.

7 Raingard Esser, Out of Sight and on the Margins? Migrating Women in Early Modern Europe, in: Fiona Reid/Katherine Holden (eds.), *Women on the Move: Refugees, Migration and Exile,* Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010, 9–24.

by Raingard Esser. She sketches the most promising areas of present and future investigation into this important and acutely relevant topic. The remainder of this present introduction, therefore, is devoted to a brief outline of the key themes identified in the other contributions assembled in this book. Although unable to directly engage with each other in a traditional conference setting, the authors have responded to the abstract inviting them to contribute to a collection, which particularly investigates borders, bordering practices and cross-border mobility with original contributions, which not infrequently communicated to each others' agenda. These conversations have added to the cohesion of the volume which is grouped around three central themes: firstly, the study of borders in the context of concepts of sovereignty, territoriality, and the law. Secondly, a praxeological approach to border management analysing the instruments and methods of bordering also in the context of changing spheres and practices of knowledge-production. Thirdly, the study of borders within the framework of migration and mobility studies. These themes are not clear-cut and, as we will see in the contributions to this volume, they sometimes overlap.

After the conceptual introduction by Raingard Esser the volume commences with three chapters which address the theme of territoriality, sovereignty and the law in the English crown's dominions in Tudor times. A key aspect of English practice in all three Tudor borderlands -- seemingly a peculiarity of English state formation -- was the attempt to reduce them to conformity with English institutions, law, and culture by sweeping strategies of anglicisation. Thus, the border marked the boundary between English institutions and culture in these territories and neighbouring lands; and where the border was relatively stable, the area enclosed might also be described as an 'English Pale'. As Neil Murphy shows in his chapter on the defence of the English Pale at Calais, anglicisation here took the form of promoting arable farming by tenant farmers who spoke English, followed English law and inheritance practices, and held their leases directly of the king so that agriculture underpinned territorial sovereignty and incorporated these lands more firmly within the English dominions. Arable farming aimed chiefly to feed the large garrison defending the Pale which ended at the limits of the ground worked by the English king's subjects. Similar considerations governed the defence of the English Pale in Ireland, as Steven Ellis argues in his chapter; but here the promotion of tillage by English subjects -- chiefly Irish labourers since 'sworn English' -- aimed also to strengthen the Pale's border defences by establishing a chain of fortified manors

along the line of earthworks marking the military frontier, the principal means of defence. Chris Maginn's chapter discusses a different kind of moving frontier and the reasons why this persisted in late Tudor Ireland. As the area of English rule was extended out from the English Pale, the border between English and Irish areas was where the two cultures and their respective systems of government and socio-economic organisation met. Anglicisation here chiefly meant imposing English structures of government and English officials on territories now deemed shire ground; but this strategy moved the frontier further away from the English Pale's established defences, enlarging the territory to be anglicised, but without establishing any new means of frontier defence. Finally, Mark Thompson's chapter on borders and identities in the mid-Atlantic borderlands also finds an echo in strategies of anglicisation as a means of establishing the colony's legitimacy. The chapter discusses the 'border crisis' of 1659 when English planters from Maryland threatened to invade the Dutch settlement of New Amstel. To protect foreigners engaged in commerce in Chesapeake Bay, Maryland's government made English subjects of dozens of Swedish and Dutch settlers, and these carried specific rights by English law. A clause in Maryland's charter also applied to lands that were 'neither cultivated nor planted, but only inhabited by barbarous Indians'[8]: English agriculture conferred title to land, overriding occupation by 'savages'.

The practice of litigants' appeals to legal courts at both sides of a border is investigated in Dániel Moerman's contribution. His case study of a small border community navigating the legal opportunities to make their case at the courts of Upper Guelders in the Spanish Netherlands and the neighbouring county of Moers demonstrates the agency of these borderers of humble origin and with no formal knowledge of the law. His study demonstrates an interesting case of 'forum shopping', a practice which, so far, has not been sufficiently investigated for rural border communities. Holger Th. Gräf's study of bordering practices in the princely abbey of Fulda from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century provides insights into the business of 'border drawing' which gradually replaced the traditional forms of 'finding boundaries in the land' [transl.RE] and the ensemble of territorial administrators, land-surveying practitioners and eyewitnesses

8 Charles T. Gehring (trans. and ed.), *Delaware Papers (Dutch Period): A Collection of Documents Pertaining to the Regulation of Affairs on the South River of New Netherland, 1648–1664*, Baltimore, 1981, 220.

involved in this process.[9] The last two papers, by Megan Williams and Ann Ruth investigate mobility regimes in the light of the emerging rise of the commonly accepted Roman Law practices in early modern Continental Europe. Megan Williams discusses the argumentation of one of the most prolific early modern legal scholars, Francisco de Vitoria, in support of diplomatic immunity and safe passage in a time of rising territorialisation in the early sixteenth century. While carefully analysing the legal rationale in de Vitoria's considerations, which are embedded in Roman Law and Canon Law, but which responded to the diplomatic and intellectual challenges of his own time, she advocates an understanding of Victoria's texts not as a founding father of modern International Law, as is often the case in historiography, but to understand the Dominican's argumentations within the Christian moral framework and the Canon Law, in which his thinking was deeply embedded. Ann Ruth investigates mobility regimes for a group in early modern society, and, more specifically, the Holy Roman Empire, who were explicitly not harnessed to a territorial allegiance. In a carefully analysed case study she investigates the argumentation put forward by Rabbi Josel von Rosheim to ensure freedom of movement as an essential requisite for the wellbeing of Jewish communities. The coverage of this supra-territorial community provides new insights into the management of movements in early modern times. The case study also tests the concept of legal pluralism by demonstrating Rabbi Josel's ability to navigate different legal arguments and frameworks to serve his community.

In sum, this volume includes essays exploring some of the most promising themes in early modern Border Studies today, along with an opening chapter outlining other potentially fruitful approaches to the topic. The hope is that the book's appearance will thus serve to open up further the field of Frontier and Border Studies.

9 Achim Landwehr, *Die Erschaffung Venedigs: Raum, Bevölkerung, Mythos 1570–1750*, Paderborn, 2007, 88.

Borders, Bordering Practices and Mobility in Early Modern Europe

Raingard Esser

Early Modern Borders, Bordering Practices and Mobility Regimes

Current Historiographical Approaches

'Borders are back', thus the poignant verdict of German sociologist Steffen Mau.[1] After a period of seemingly vanishing borders in the 1990s, the difficulties around the Brexit-protocol for Northern Ireland between the EU and the United Kingdom have brought the relevance of borders once again into sharp relief. In recent years, measures to contain the spread of COVID–19, and ever tighter migration policies have focused on the closing or, at best, selective opening of borders in Europe and elsewhere. The protracted debates about territorial borderlines on the island of Ireland or, alternatively, in the Irish Sea, seem to indicate that territoriality is again a defining feature of political sovereignty and, by extension, social and economic regimes. However, a closer investigation into the positions concerning the border regime in Northern Ireland demonstrates that 'territory plays tricks' with our concepts of sovereignty, as Lauren Benton has aptly phrased it in her research on law and geography in early modern Empires.[2] We are thus confronted with a mixed picture: in earlier as well as in recent conflicts, it is often less the territoriality itself which is contested, but the rights and regulations attached to a geographical and political entity. What seemed a particularly early modern understanding of European borders as a multifaceted and multilayered complex with sometimes overlapping, sometimes conflicting jurisdictions and extraterritorial rights involving different national, regional and local agents is, maybe, not so different to scenarios that we are witnessing today. More recent conflicts also focus on 'hard' territorial borders, as the war in Ukraine and also the discussions about a border between the US and Mexico demonstrate. At the same time, the role of borders for the management of mi-

1 Steffen Mau, *Sortiermaschinen. Die Neuerfindung der Grenze im 21. Jahrhundert*, Munich, 2021, Chapter 1.

2 Lauren Benton, *A search for sovereignty: law and geography in European empires, 1400–1900*, Cambridge, New York, 2010, 279.

gration and mobility of people has received an even greater urgency in European Union policies. However, as Steffen Mau, whose research focuses on borders as instruments of mobility control, reminds us, the vision of a 'borderless society' in which people could and did travel without restriction has only ever been an option for the wealthy elites, now as well as in early modern societies. Perhaps reflecting the perception of a seemingly 'borderless world' of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, and in response to a traditional historiography focusing on the nation states and its borders, scholars have emphasised the connections rather than the separations in early modern societies. While certainly members of the upper echelons of early modern society such as students and scholars, diplomats and merchants, or aristocratic families were not restricted by borders, this was not the experience of the majority of early modern men and women.[3] One could, therefore, argue that 'Borders were never far away'.

The perceived vagueness of early modern territorial integrity seemingly not harnessed to clear border lines has led to an assumption that borders should be interpreted as border zones whose political lines of separation remained porous and which served more as areas of contact and exchange rather than providing strict lines of inclusion and exclusion.[4] In contemporary Border Studies the concept of 'borderscapes' advocating epistemological and ontological approaches to a multi-layered understanding of borders has gained academic currency.[5] Some recent approaches to borders as an embodied and intersubjective process of perception, cognition and imagination in the physical world, however, carry the danger of devaluing the political role of borders as expressions of power and

3 Examples for early modern cross-border mobility of distinct societal groups include: Margaret C. Jacob, *Strangers nowhere in the world: the rise of cosmopolitanism in early modern Europe*, Philadelphia, 2006; Mark Netzloff, *Agents beyond the state: the writing of English travellers, soldiers, and diplomats in early modern Europe*, Oxford, 2020; Violet Soen/Alexander Soetaert/Johan Verberckmoes/Wim François (eds.), *Transregional reformations. Crossing borders in early modern Europe*, Göttingen, 2019.

4 The idea has been particularly developed in scholarly debates about the character of the American frontier in the 1990s. See, for instance, Richard White, *The middle ground. Indians, empires, and republics in the Great Lake Region, 1650–1815*, Cambridge, 1991. For a critique of this approach see, for instance, Herman Wellenreuther, 'Enclave' and 'exclave' on the North American Revolutionary Frontier: Schönbrunn and Welhik Thuppeck, in: Steven Ellis/Raingard Esser (eds.), *Frontiers and the Writing of History, 1500–1850*, Hannover, 2006, 245–274.

5 Chiara Brambilla, Exploring the Critical Potential of the Borderscapes Concept, in: *Geopolitics* 20, 2015, 14–34.

coercion.[6] Scholarship on early modern borders has cautioned against an overemphasis of an interpretation of borders and border areas as cultural constructions which borderers could and did simply utilise to their own advantage.[7] Moreover, scholars have wondered whether the focus on communality and reciprocity has not overshadowed the importance of categories such as the rule of law, and administrative and other institutional networks based on political power structures which were distinct on both sides of a border. Researchers now caution against a trend in historiography which has de-bordered early modern societies and has emphasised global connections rather than regional limitations. While the strategy of breaking with an anachronistic reliance on national borders as a yardstick of border research is certainly welcome, this scholarship underestimates the role of borders denoting differences that existed between early modern political units and their economic, confessional and social make-up. The many interactions and connections in the early modern world took place not in spite of borders, but by successfully managing the political, economic or confessional distinctions and differences demarcated by a border. Borders were known, carefully described and also visualised with new measuring instruments. They were the subject of elaborate legal texts and of an ever-increasing number of maps.

Early modern borders in Europe are also characterised by their diversity. Some borders in Europe were more or less fixed since the Middle Ages and remained so for subsequent centuries. The Anglo-Scottish border was clearly defined by the Treaty of York in 1237 and remained stable during the early modern period, albeit with warfare or the prevention of warfare as a defining feature of border management and border societies.[8] The no less bellicose realities in the early modern Low Countries and the Holy Roman Empire required a more nuanced management. Their borders emerged out of warfare, which

6 See, for instance, Basak Tanulku/Simone Pekelsma (eds.), *Physical and Symbolic Borders and Boundaries and How They Unfold in Space: An Inquiry on Making, Unmaking and Remaking Borders and Boundaries Across the World,* Routledge, 2024.

7 An early critique of this interpretation has been provided by Raingard Esser/Steven Ellis, Introduction, in: idem (eds.), *Frontier and Border Regions in Early Modern Europe*, Hannover, 2013, 7–18. See also Anna Groundwater, Renewing the Anglo-Scottish Frontier: Reassessing Early Modern Frontier Societies, ibid, 19–38.

8 Steven G. Ellis, *Tudor frontiers and noble power: the making of the British State*, Oxford, 1995; Steven G. Ellis, Region and Frontier in the English State: the English Far North, 1296–1603, in: idem/Raingard Esser/Jean-François Berdah/Miloš Režnik (eds.), *Frontiers, Regions and Identities in Europe*, Pisa, 2009, 77–100.

in the case of the Low Countries led to a distinctive division of the more or less united political unity of the Seventeen Provinces under Habsburg rule. This separation and the protracted military campaigns often involving third parties in the course of the Eighty Years' War requested careful and prolonged political negotiations both on the physical territorial borders, but perhaps even more in terms of the allocation of sovereignty and legal authority. Results were not always mutually shared and even the Westphalian peace treaties left some aspects and some areas of the new border regime inconclusive. Negotiations between the representatives of the two opposing parties often included facilitating a degree of continuity of social, economic and political practices across newly erected military frontlines and political reorganisations.[9]

More generally, partition as well as acquisition of hereditary lands was a traditional dynastic policy of aristocratic families in medieval and (albeit decreasingly) in early modern Europe.[10] Changing territorial borders along dynastic lines rather than through warfare, were the norm, not the exception.[11] On a local and regional level, partible inheritance was a widespread custom in landholding societies on the Continent, particularly in the Holy Roman Empire, as well as in some parts of the British Isles. Territories were, thus, subject to political and administrative changes and rearrangements, which were not necessarily the outcome of conflicts.

The management of early modern borders, be they the result of warfare or dynastic policies, had to be approached from several levels. Firstly, territorial authorities had to agree on lines of demarcation. Bram de Ridder has convincingly

9 Bram de Ridder has carefully outlined the steps taken between the warring parties of the Habsburg Netherlands and the Dutch Republic to manage territorial boundaries of the Twelve Years' Truce and the Peace of Westphalia. See Bram de Ridder, *Lawful Limits: Border Management and the Formation of the Habsburg-Dutch Boundary ca. 1590–1665*, unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2016. I am grateful to Bram de Ridder for providing me access to his important study.

10 See, for instance, Matthew Romaniello/Charles Lipp (eds.), *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe*, London, 2016. See also: Mario Müller/Karl-Heinz Spieß/Uwe Tresp (eds.), *Erbeinungen und Erbverbrüderungen in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit: generationsübergreifende Verträge und Strategien im europäischen Vergleich*, Berlin, 2014.

11 While much scholarship has been invested in the establishment of new, often composite monarchies, the dissolution and partition of early modern territories has received surprisingly little interest in historiography. For composite monarchies see, for instance, Robert von Friedeburg/John Morrill (eds.), *Monarchy Transformed: Princes and Their Elites in Early Modern Western Europe*, Cambridge, 2017.

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Raingard Esser is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Groningen. She is a specialist in early modern migration, border studies and cultures of memory in Western Europe. She is the author of *The Politics of Memory. The Writing of Partition in the Seventeenth-Century Low Countries* (2012), *Frontier and Border Regions in Early Modern Europe* (with Steven Ellis, 2013) and *Genderpatronen in vroegmoderne samenlevingen* (with Anita Boele 2021). She currently works on the international cross-border project "Grenzgänger" together with colleagues from the Universities of Groningen and Oldenburg.

Steven G. Ellis is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Galway and Chair of the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences. He is a Tudor specialist, with a particular interest in Ireland and the English far north. His present research focuses on frontier regions and societies in the Tudor state. The more recent of his many publications include *Ireland's English Pale, 1470–1550: the making of a Tudor region* (2021), *Defending English ground: war and peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460–1542* (2015), and with Christopher Maginn, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland* (2015).

Holger Th. Gräf is employed at the Hessian Institute for Regional History, a department in the Ministry of Sciences and Arts, was appointed as Honorary Professor at the University of Marburg in 2009. The more recent publications include *Die Neustadt Hanau. Ein Drehkreuz im europäischen Kunst- und Wissenstransfer* (with Victoria Asschenfeldt and Markus Laufs 2022); *Grün in der Stadt: vom Hortus conclusus zum Urban gardening* (with Andrea Pühringer 2023); *Der Künstler als Buchhalter. Serielle Aufzeichnungen zu Leben und Werk* (with Andreas Tacke and Michael Wenzel 2024); *Geschichtsschreibung in Hessen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart. Brüche – Kontinuitäten – Perspektiven* (with Andreas Hedwig and Alexander Jendorff 2024).

Christopher Maginn is Professor of History at Fordham University in New York. His research is concerned with Irish and British history, with particular focus on the Tudor period (1485–1603) and the relationship between England and Ireland. He is the author of several books, including *'Civilizing' Gaelic Leinster (2005), William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor* State (2012) and with Steven Ellis, *The Tudor Discovery of Ireland* (2015). He is presently finishing a book entitled: *The Tudors and the Conquest of Ireland*.

Dániel Moerman is a PhD-candidate at the Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam in the project Coping with Drought: An Environmental History of Drinking Water and Climate Adaptation in the Netherlands, 1550–1850. He specialises in sociocultural approaches to crisis and resilience on a regional and transregional level during the early modern period. Prior to this, he has worked on the life of cross-border nobleman Sweder Schele (1569–1639) and his accounts of the Dutch Revolt and Thirty Years War, which led to a joint-contribution with Raingard Esser in the volume Early Modern War Narratives and the Revolt in the Low Countries (2020). In 2022, he also received the Virtus Thesis Award for the History of the Nobility for his MA-thesis titled: *Nobles at the Frontier. Noble Politics and Diplomacy along the Border Regions of the Low Countries and the Holy Roman Empire During the Eighty and Thirty Years' Wars: A Transregional Approach*.

Neil Murphy is Professor of Late Medieval and Early Modern History at Northumbria University. He has published five books and written extensively on Henry VIII's wars, including *The Tudor Occupation of Boulogne: Conquest, Colonisation and Imperial Monarchy 1544–50* (CUP, 2019) and *Henry VIII, the Duke of Albany and the Anglo-Scottish War of 1522–24* (Boydell, 2023). His most recent book is *Plague, Towns and Monarchy in Early Modern France* (CUP, 2024).

Ann Ruth graduated with an MA in Classical, Medieval, and Early Modern Studies from the University of Groningen in 2023. She specialised in early modern legal history, border studies and Jewish history in the early modern Holy Roman Empire. This is her first publication. She currently is working as a publishing editor with Springer Nature in Dordrecht, the Netherlands, heading the mathematics education, educational technology, and medical education books program.

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Megan K. Williams is a tenured Assistant Professor in Early Modern History at the University of Groningen, where she specializes in sixteenth-century diplomatic history and the history of political communications. Her research has centred around the border-crossing mobility of both diplomats, in her *Dangerous Diplomacy and Dependable Kin* (2009) and elaborated in her *The Politics of Passage: Diplomatic Immunity in Transit and the Practice of Renaissance Diplomacy* (in press), and the paper they used to communicate. Paper's impact on early modern diplomatic practice was the subject of her Dutch National Research Organisation 2012–17 Veni early career research grant "Paper Princes", a monograph on which she is currently completing.

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