MOLECHASER

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James Harrison /
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□ So this is a clandestine talk or transmission, and we're not sure who it's going to and we're not even quite sure where we are, but my name is Richard Baxstrom, of that, I am sure. I'm an anthropologist based at the University of Edinburgh, and we're broadcasting to you from the basement of a very old building, looking around at all the duct work and all of the wires and it really is clandestine. It's almost underground. In fact, I think we literally are underground. It reminds me of going underground. I don't feel quite myself. So, I'll get around to a lengthier introduction to myself here in a moment, but I'm joined here by three colleagues and friends who have also gone underground with me to talk today about borders. We'll come around to that as well, but before we get into what we have to say about borders, as a way of getting started, I think I'll go around and just ask everyone to introduce themselves and then I'll come back to myself.

o Hello, my name is Killian O' Dochartaigh. I'm a lecturer in architecture and urbanism at Edinburgh University.

* Hi, I am Hephzibah Israel and I teach translation and language use in the School of Literatures, Languages, and Cultures at the University of Edinburgh.

/ My name is James Harrison. I'm professor of environmental law at the law school. I've been at the university for 15 years and in a brand-new space this morning. It's quite exciting.

□ Oh, wow. Yeah, that's amazing. Considering space and borders are a great concern here at the University of Edinburgh. We won't go into that because that will just be a complaint, but as I said, my name is Richard Baxstrom and I am an anthropologist here at the University of Edinburgh. Now, I have to say that my work in the past has often concerned borders and thresholds, urban life, houses that move. In fact, something I've written is called, *Houses in Motion*, but I have to also confess that perhaps I'm not a very good anthropologist. The reason for that in certain respects is because the borders that go along with disciplinary work have always been something that I've struggled with. So, there's quite a lot of things that I would bring into this that are anthropological, but not necessarily speaking for the discipline. I guess this is an apology from the very beginning in the sense that an anthropologist might be quite offended that I've transgressed a border.

So, if there are anthropologists out there, good. Hopefully there's something there to get you started, riled up, and perhaps even offended. Now, I'm going to say a few just general things, because I thought rather than write out a text and read it to you, that doesn't seem to be quite what I thought about in the spirit of a clandestine sort of transmission like what we're doing here today. I think I just wanted to talk about borders and what came to my mind, what flows through perhaps some of the work that I've done in the past and perhaps try to get us started. Because when you talk about borders, you can talk about many different things. I think the most obvious one of course, is a geopolitical kind of border. The walls, the fences. You think of Donald Trump and all of what he's gone on about in the United States.

I mean, you think about the English Channel and people trying to get in, trying to transgress or cross a border that they're perhaps denied or not supposed to cross, at least according to the law. You can think of a lot of different things, but ultimately I think borders, when I've thought of them, when I've confronted them, I've confronted them first as figures in thought because you have to actually think a border before you can materially make one. It's from this point of view or from this starting point where often I've found myself engaging with something like a border, or a threshold, or in a more positive way, something like adjacency, which I think is something that borders can also imply.

So really the borders, I suspect we can talk about this in so many different ways, and that we will talk about it in so many different ways, but for me, it's ultimately the history of a certain kind of idea, an idea that's made material in those walls, in those whatever it is that encloses a particular space or a particular idea or a discipline. Whatever it is that's being bordered, a history of an idea that's made material. It's not a natural formation for me. I'm sure perhaps I'll get a little pushback on that, but for me, it just doesn't seem a mountain, a river, a stream. That's one thing. The fact that it's taken as a border is something else. That's the idea. So, we're not talking about natural formations. We're talking about things that are made and they're made by us, and there's one thing that I think is really interesting about borders, among many things that we could talk about, but I'll just briefly talk about a couple of things. I've always, in taking it up as an idea, the next step is sort of how that is made material. The relation between the borders or a border and the police is something that's come to the fore time and again, not only in my own work, but just in thinking about the concept or the idea of borders, of how they're real. Because borders have to be established, as I've offered. They have to be maintained. They have to be guarded. They have to be made real. They don't just present themselves to us.

Now, that in and of itself is not particularly revolutionary. I think people that are much smarter than myself have come up with this idea and talked extensively or written extensively about it, but it is interesting to me where this policing happens, because we think of the border police as police that patrol the edges, that patrol the thresholds, but that's not what I found. That's not where I find the border police. I find them at the center. I find them actually patrolling squarely in the middle of that which is bounded. First and foremost, before we get to the threshold, it has to be made real at the center. So, border police are actually at the heart of whatever it is we might be talking about materially, be it a country, a discipline or anything like that.

Quite often, although we do have a visible police force, we have a lot of brutality around borders. We have a lot of what we would see on the news or what might appear in our various forms of work or research, but I'm quite fascinated by the invisible police force or that policeman in our head because we do seem to be the ones that, after a time, discursively or otherwise, maintain the borders. The border police at the center would seem to be at the center of our very minds, the policeman inside our head. That's the phrase that comes back to me time and again. Now, there are a number of things that someone like an anthropologist has looked at.

Actually, among other things, I've looked at urban spaces and environments, and one thing that has come to the fore in my own discipline of anthropology is looking at enclosed spaces, not just countries, but things like gated communities and so on.

Now, the bad anthropologist in me, I can't actually remember, I can remember some of who wrote about this, but what I really remember are people who are not anthropologists. I'll just read a quote that kind of sums up at least where I'm coming from, but it's from J. G. Ballard, and it's from a BBC interview he gave about 25 years ago talking about gated communities. I'll just very briefly read this because I think it sums it up at least some of what I'm trying to say here. So, this is Ballard speaking on the BBC Radio 3 in 1998.

I quote, 'If you think of what society invests in the training of its leading professionals, it's doctors, architects, lawyers, and so on, for them then to opt out and move into a gated community where they exist behind huge arrays of electronic padlocks and have no interaction with the rest of society in their social hours is a deplorable state of affairs. I think the way in which the gated community is springing up all over the world now is an ominous sign. 'It's a sign that something is deeply wrong with the societies that have evolved at the end of the 20th century. People aren't moving into gated communities simply to avoid muggers and housebreakers. They're moving into gated communities to get away from other people, even people like themselves, and that's the curious thing, because inside most gated communities, there's very little social life. People are happy to enter their executive houses and stay there'.

Now that's an ambiguous quote, and that's ambiguous for an anthropologist, but I've found in my own work that quite often it's not just that the police in the visible and obvious instituted sense are enforcing borders, boundaries, and divisions, but quite often communities or people I'm working with, themselves, actually invest quite a lot in the borders in which we're talking about and interrogating. So, a gated community is really an ambiguous space. It's not ambiguous in terms of its borders, in terms of its gates, its walls, its security, but the sociality, and just what precisely a border might mean in a space like that, I think, bears some discussion and thought.

So that's one thing, and the last thing I'll say, there's another sort of set of texts or ideas about borders that came up when I was thinking about, gee, what am I going to say? How am I going to introduce this? What am I really interested in when I'm talking about borders and associated concepts, words and phenomenon? It came to me that if we're talking about contested borders, border police and the policemen in our head, that we ourselves are a kind of contested border. I also remember back to a time before I was an anthropologist or before I was really anything except a child, and the Pentecostal preachers that used to come, and they used to talk about the border between man and the world, between man and animal.

This really came up to me, and actually, a 1920s publication called... What is it called? Jocko-Homo Heavenbound came up for me.

I can show people pictures later, which doesn't actually help the rest of you, but I have pictures for those of us who are kind of entombed down here in wherever we are, but this was basically a text that was addressing one of the three great insults to man, if we [take] Freud's word [for it]. This is a quote from Freud. Copernicus, that was the first one, but Darwin was the second. Of course, Freud was the third, but we won't talk about Copernicus or Freud. Maybe we will, but I won't talk about them at the moment, but the second one was that insult, that border between man and the world, between man and animals or human beings. Let's be a little bit more contemporary in our language. That in and of itself is a contested border and this amazing discourse and policing around this from a religious point of view is something that also just really came to my mind.

So, it seems to me that we ourselves sitting here broadcasting out to someone somewhere, we ourselves are contested borders. We ourselves might actually be transgressing in the context of our discussion and our transmission here today, borders that we've brought with us that we can't necessarily escape from, that we invest in, and that we perhaps don't even know about until we voice them or someone voices them for us. By way of introduction, this is a little bit... Again, the bad anthropologist comes out because that's a bit of a ramble, but that is where I began with borders and this interesting experience that we're having here today. So, I'll pass over, actually, to them.

O Great. Thank you, Richard. Unlike Richard, I kind of require a text frame my thoughts, but it's just to say, I think you're the best type of anthropologist there is...

□ No, come on now. No.

O So anyway, my name's Killian and as I said, I teach at the School of Architecture at the university here. So my connection to borders is rather personal and so I'm going to give an account of the sort of histories of borders that I've encountered and how my work has developed around them. So as I say, my connection to borders runs deep. I was born into the border city of Derry in Northern Ireland in 1976. It was four years after the massacre on the 30th of January when British soldiers shot 26 unarmed civilians during a protest march in the Bogside. It was a violation that my parents witnessed, and I have my father's testimony here on the table, and I was thinking of reading that out. We'll see if we can kind of share it. They are available all on online anyway. So my interest in borders, it is sort of an architectural interest, and that is sort of where the discipline of architecture has sort of been implicated in the project of border making. It's a practice of constructing hard ages, a practice that atomizes public or the collective space, a discipline and service to power that somehow constrains the correspondence between people placed in the environment and it ultimately ferments division. So my hometown of Derry or Londonderry is a fortified wall city. It was built on top of a hill located between a river and a peat bog at the edge of Britain and Ireland, the EU. Urban Derry came into existence in 1619 as a result of the city's walls, a government inspired project to incorporate or colonize western two thirds of the province of Ireland into the British realm.

This separated people from the culture of the landscape and their language. This separation was concretized in 1921 with the new hard border, positioned less than a kilometer from Derry. In 1933, as I prepared to leave Derry for University of Belfast, customed posts in Ireland were abolished and the EU single market came into force. In 1998, I was working in an architect's office in the staunchly loyalist part of Belfast as a Good Friday agreement was signed. An agreement we in Derry saw as signaling the dissolving of borders across Northern Ireland. In 2006, the last British watch tower was dismantled, effectively ending the border as a visible entity. It was actually a year later that I found myself in New Orleans, and that was two years after Hurricane Katrina. I was working on reconstruction projects - reconstruction we widely understood as the kind of physical repair and provision of new housing. It however took to working with the ex-Black Panther, called Malik Rahim, in the Lower Ninth Ward to understand that reconstruction was not simply a physical project or rebuilding, but about social relationships and the renewal of self-determination. Within a city riven by racial, economic, and environmental borders. In 2009, I returned to the UK following the collapse of the financial market, in the emergence of new economic borders that limited for many, both upwards, social and international mobility. I moved to East Africa to work on the reconstruction of Rwanda following the 1994 genocide. I lived there for four years, working as an architect and teaching at the New School of Architecture.

During this time, however, what I observed about the reconstruction of Rwanda, that is the physical reconstruction of the city, it's rural villages, and the natural environment was in fact a violent neoliberal project imposed by the ruling ethnic class. That was a rebuilding of architectural and urban enclosures that followed the borders of former feudal colonial regimes. As I and others have hypothesized, Rwanda is simultaneously under construction, yet at war with itself. So, I am therefore interested in architecture as a border, but enthusiastically researching for alternatives to borders at different scales and how they're contested, dissolved, traversed, and overcome as a way to sort of ease their violent affect and create space to imagine alternatives. I have found such moments of this kind of alternative border, or counter bordering, with indigenous communities in Rwanda and Liberia, whose very existences have been violently shaped by the borders of, be it a map or the pressure from the nation state to live in a sedentary lifestyle and to inhabit modern housing. So the forest communities in Rwanda, who are known as the Batwa for example, instinctively resist the borders of the government by physically stripping out the timber windows and doors of their new governmental home for the making of a communal fire.

So I'm interested in this and I've been using the architectural tools of drawing and model making as a way for these communities to amplify these moments of resistance and where these tools can be used to scale up their egalitarian visions that traverse the borders and that reconnect them to the forest landscape and the indigenous groups that they have an affiliation with in neighboring Uganda and the DRC across the border. So I'm sort of juggling with this question or a quest for an architecture that exists that is not bound by the border, but promotes fluid mobilizations across scales, across borders?

Taking into account 2016, when a large section of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union arousing divisions in my hometown once more, I will continue to think about and work against borders. I'm looking forward to having a discussion with the rest of the group.

✱ Thank you, Killian. So, as I introduced myself, I'm Hephzibah Israel and I am mostly interested in researching and teaching translation and language use. That means I am interested in all types of texts in translation as they travel across borders of various kinds. I'll come to this in a few minutes. But first, I'm interested in literary, sacred, visual, oral, or moving texts where I study the process of translation as having the power to change certain elements of a text. Anything could change in any part of it (*i.e.* the text). This could either be the meaning of a text, or its structure or form, its sound or shape, so that each act of translation births a new text for a new present and for a new audience. Amongst these, I am most interested in three specific areas of translation, in studying the translation of sacred texts and objects in sacred contexts and for sacred or religious communities. I'm also interested in the construction of histories through translation and finally understanding translation in post-colonial contexts, in a post-colonial world, especially in the way translation may have shaped ideas of race, nationalities, and identities in the past, but also for the present and future. I was very much interested in how Richard and Killian were talking about architecture, physical forms, policing and borders that are tangible in a very real way, but also how they're related to the intangible. I'm really interested in language functioning as a border, which may seem rather discursive and intangible. This may sound like an odd claim because language is usually thought of as fundamental to communication, to crossing boundaries between us, between me and you, between thought and speech and between our desired fantasies and our experience of reality, but if you gave it more thought, you will also see that languages occupy borderlands—they occupy border spaces—between the border of one entity that ends and the border of the next, that signals the start of a new entity. Languages attempt to locate us and in their bordering role, they might confine us within spaces that we may not wish to occupy. Languages create borders between geographical spaces. I come from India, from South Asia and it is a place where the words 'India' or 'Pakistan' or 'Bangladesh' are words on a map or on signposts that mark the same piece of land as either home or the land of the enemy. So for me, it is important to keep in mind that languages carry with them figurative, border-making functions to create borders of the mind, conceptual borders, borders between genders, between religions and races, rendering languages all the more potent in this bordering function. In fact, language in my experience, and perhaps in yours too, often is the border. It is the trench bordering territories, separating war from peace, of fragile space filled with clayey layers that clinging to our feet and cleave our tongues as they attempt to give utterance to thought. Language can also determine whether you are in or out, whether you belong or are an alien, a national or migrant. Killian, you were talking about this through your own experience, and I could just see the echoes of that between the kinds of experiences you were referring to and what I was thinking about language while preparing for this conversation. So in my opinion, strings of words act like lines or borders.

Let's take 'migrants go home', or 'refugees are welcome here'—these strings or words can mean very different things depending on which side of the statement and which side of the border you find yourself standing on. Yet, what redeems language is that it need not always work like sharp, barbed wire. Often languages work implicitly like the retractable tensa-barriers we negotiate ubiquitously in luminal spaces, but perhaps encounter most at 'hard' national borders such as immigration control at airports. Smooth, bendy, stretchy and thin, yet this inanimate object is capable of regulating the behavior of the most sentient of creatures, filling empty spaces into visible patterns, ending a race or determining a winner, governing the direction of movement while stopping some from stepping across the border. ere, I mean a physical border. Languages often work in similarly ambiguous ways, sometimes almost invisible, and at others springing into action; at times freezing one message over another, hurting, stopping even disallowing the act of crossing over, but it can also facilitate conversation, create orderly meaning from sounds, fill long silences. This shared plasticity speaks of porous borders that can direct vectors of human travel through space, through time, and through consciousness, but indeed, there's another echo that I found in what you were saying, Richard, about the borders between the human and the non-human. Language is often a marker of that which is human from the non-human and functions to separate one from the other, or perhaps human from inhuman. Remember Caliban? What renders him 'brute', neither fully human nor monster? His babbling invisibilizes him, making him vanish from human company. It *translates* him into a savage, but language also 'magics' him back into existence when he crosses that border, forged and strengthened by language, crossing that border we call language, he is re-translated from brutish animal to 'human' capable of speech, speaking to us through powerful poetry to be reckoned with. Almost human, almost are equal.

> While we have Miranda accuse Caliban-
> 'Abhorred slave,
> Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
> Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
> One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
> A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
> With words that made them known. But thy vild race
> (Though thou didst learn) had that in't which good natures
> Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
> Deservedly confin'd into this rock,
> Who hadst deserv'd more than a prison.
>
> Caliban protests-
> You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse. The red-plague rid you
> For learning me your language!
>
> [*The Tempest* Act 1, Scene 2: 351-366]

It is at that moment when he acquires language that Caliban also becomes a dangerous enemy in *The Tempest,* needing to be policed and confined to his cave. This confrontation between the magician Prospero, his daughter Miranda and Caliban has often been seen to represent a history of fraught relationships between the European imperialistic vision and non-European colonized populations. Isn't it language that created further borders with binaries such as civilized versus uncivilized, white and black, human versus barbarian, active or passive? Which side of the border do you find yourself located in, created by the string of divisive terms over the past three centuries at least—the Orient, the East, the Third world, Underdeveloped Nations, Developing world, Emerging Economies, the Global South? If language is a simulator of realities, should we, should I accept this reality entrenched through the language I use as I travel from one part of the world that is across the border? Having lived here in Edinburgh, in the world that is considered 'First', how do I negotiate the multiple borders that I transverse both mentally through my language and through my being as I travel back and forth across these two worlds? I'll stop here and I'll say something more on translation later, but this is my take on language as borders.

But indeed there's another echo that I found in what you were saying, Richard, about the borders between the human and the non-human. And language is often a marker of that which is human from the non-human and functions to separate one from the other, or perhaps human from inhuman. Remember Caliban? What renders him a brute, neither fully human nor monster. His babbling invisibilizes him, making him vanish from human company. It translates him into a savage, but language also magics him back into existence when he crosses that border, forged and strengthened by language. Crossing that border we call language, he's retranslated from brutish animal to human capable of speech, speaking to us through powerful poetry to be reckoned with. Almost human, almost are equal.

And we have Miranda accusing Caliban, 'abhorred slave, which any print of goodness will not take, being capable of all ill! I pitied thee, took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour thing or other. When thou didst not, savage, know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like a thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes with words that made them known. But thy vile race, though thou didst learn, had that in it which good natures could not abide to be with. Therefore was thou deservedly confined into this rock, who hadst deserved more than a prison.' But Caliban protests, 'you taught me language and my profit on it is I know how to curse the red plague rid you, for learning me your language.'

It is that moment when he acquires language that Caliban also becomes a dangerous enemy in The Tempest needing to be policed and confined to his cave. This confrontation between the magician Prospero, his daughter Miranda and Caliban has often been seen to represent a history of fraught relationships between European imperialistic vision and non-European colonized populations. Isn't it language that created further borders with binaries such as civilized versus uncivilized, white and black, human versus barbarian, active or passive?

Which side of the border do you find yourself located in, created by the string of divisive terms over the past three centuries, at least? The orient, the east, third world, underdeveloped nations, developing world, emerging economies, the global south. If language is a simulator of realities, should we, should I accept this reality entrenched through the language I use as I travel from that part of the world that is across the border. Having lived here in Edinburgh, in the world that is considered first, how do I negotiate the multiple borders that I transverse both mentally through my language and through my being as I travel back and forth across these two worlds? I'll stop here and I'll say something more on translation later, but this is just my take on language as borders.

/ Okay. As a lawyer, I approach borders somewhat differently, I think. Although there is also some resonance with what some of my co-conspirators have been talking about. Many of the borders that have been mentioned so far are actually legal borders, particularly those geopolitical borders between nation states but also within states such as the border between Scotland and England, the border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. I think when we use law to create a border, we give it an authority that can be enforced and we think about policing it, as Richard was talking about earlier. I think also we need to remember that just because something is given the force of law doesn't necessarily remove the contestation or the disputes that might exist. It gives, it prioritizes sets of interests inherently the law, but other interests continue to exist. And I think the example given by Killian earlier about Rwanda and on the ground, people can continue their daily lives and sometimes just ignore that legal border. The social reality can be a complete mismatch with actually the formal legal position and I find that very interesting.

But in my work as an environmental lawyer, borders play a somewhat different role. In the first sense, borders can constrain the law. So draw particularly around a nation state. When we think about the powers of a state to act, those powers are generally constrained within the territorial borders of that state. And within that state, states have the right to exploit the resources but also responsibilities. And so the law puts a huge weight on borders in terms of defining the scope of powers and the scope of authority to act.

But from an environmental perspective, what's particularly interesting in this area of law is that the environmental challenges themselves are not constrained by borders. And so environmental lawyers are constantly trying to reach beyond the boundaries of the state to deal with the pressing issues of the day, be it climate change, plastic pollution of the oceans, none of which respect human created borders, the legal borders. And this comes back again to the first points Richard made that borders are constructed, the law is constructed as a human construct, yet nature and the environment operates on a completely different level. So the challenge for the environmental lawyer is how do we get states and other authorities to be able to address these environmental challenges given their powers are constrained by borders, but the problems themselves are often trans boundary in nature and sometimes, like climate change, probably the most pressing issue of our day, global in nature.

And that is a key paradox for the law when it comes to borders. The mismatch between constrained authority and completely unlimited problems that require every single person in the world actually to respond. Not just every state, but every single individual. So in a way, what environmental lawyers are trying to achieve is to use the law to break down borders at the end of the day, which is almost the opposite of where I started, that the law creates borders. But modern environmental law needs to break down borders and ensure that everybody acts. And really law is also language. And so what that means is finding a common language that the global community can support and rally behind and act together in common course. They're my opening thoughts on borders.

□ Well, I suppose we've come to a beautiful problem with such rich introductions, which is where to go from here. I'll take a stab at it because we do have, in the richness of what we've all been able to talk about, there are a couple of claims which perhaps we could start with.

And I think, Hephzibah, your claim is perhaps where I think we should start, which is that language is the border – that's very specific, right? You didn't say it might be the border, could be the border, it's a border, you said it's the border. Now you also claimed that perhaps, the perhaps came in when it's like – well maybe this seems quite immaterial – but James, what you're talking about is very material, the law and language. I think architecture and it's relation to language. I mean there's a number of places we could go. It doesn't strike me as immaterial at all, but perhaps the most difficult place.

So maybe we just start in the most difficult space that we can in our underground bunker space and explore this a little bit more. And then we can start to talk about things, other things, material things, architecture, which actually I have quite a lot to say about as well, but maybe we can start with that. But rather than asking Hephzibah to expand, I'll ask all of us to say a little bit about what we think about that claim or what we would do with that. Language *is* the border. That's very clear.

O Yeah, well, I mean coming from a city whose name in itself is contested. Derry, Londonderry, Daire, or the Maiden City. And I would say, whether it's the border, it's certainly a border. And what I'm thinking of is as you approach Derry, the road signs to Derry, which are within Northern Ireland, Londonderry, people certainly cancel out. They've struck off the London, it's just Derry. And similarly, there's even stories told about people arriving into Belfast and trying to get a bus at one point to Derry and they will be ask 'could I have a ticket to Derry?' And the busman would go, 'there's no such place.' So language is important. It's extremely contested. I mean even our names, my name was Anglicized, the Anglicized version, and I recently reverted back to the it's Irish origins. But what I was actually thinking about or was going to ask you, have you read Brian Friel's book Translations? Brian Friel is from Derry (turns out he is not and is from Omagh nearby) and the book is Translations. And I mean it deals with, I suppose the connection between the language and the culture of the landscape and the meaning of the landscape.

It's no coincidence that for me he came from Derry. And I suppose the use of language and its alternative meanings — to English —have been able to operate beyond normative understandings of boundaries. This has been really useful for me in Rwanda too – the multiple names of a mountain from the different sides that it's looked at and the kind of different meanings. From one point it's regarded as a place where there is fire because of it's volcanic of geology and to another, it's referred to as being made of clay. And I find that really kind of fascinating. So I would say it is a border, but I find that there's real kind of potential for liberation within the language too.

□ Well liberation in what sense? I mean is it a redrawing of borders?

○ Yeah, yeah. Or a redrawing or a possibility for some coexistence.

□ Yeah. Because that's something, I mean, which I think I struggle with because in an idealist sense, a world without borders, that sounds great from a particular point of, political point of view, which I'm quite sympathetic to and familiar with. It's like, yes, worlds without borders. Brexit, I hated that because it's walling us up yet again. But there's something, and James, I think you have also touched on this, a kind of an ambiguous and perhaps unacknowledged or difficult to acknowledge need or requirement, even if we're constantly redrawing borders for them, right? I mean, can we take the position that we should just rid ourselves of borders starting with linguistic borders? Because without the borders in language, what do we have? I mean we have the kind of inarticulate cry that Rousseau talked about as the purest form of sort of human voicing, of human voice, but actually doesn't communicate anything.

It doesn't actually do – or it does something, but I'm not really sure that it does what we would want it to do. So, there is that struggle. It's not just ridding ourselves of borders that comes to mind, but what kind? How are they policed? Because I've argued, my claim was that they must be, and where do we go from there? How do we know? But maybe that seems like a very legal question in first, in a first sense, because the law is a series of speech acts as well that create, that draw or redraw these borders.

/ Absolutely. And lawyers spend a lot of their time quibbling over language, where to put a comma, and I guess you've got different stages of that process. You've got the negotiation stage of trying to find acceptable language that everybody can coalesce around. And you know, see these negotiating texts produced at the UN headquarters in New York with pages and pages of words. Some of them bracketed. And literally days are spent discussing whether or not a single sentence is acceptable or not.

So, lawyers and diplomats spend a lot of time focusing on words and language to delineate what is right, what is wrong, what is acceptable, what is not. Those are sorts of borders.

But even after that text is agreed, it continues to have a life. There will continue to be disputes 10, 20, 30 years after a treaty or a text is negotiated about what it actually means. And actually that meaning can change over time. The underpinning values may have changed that allow a legal text to be interpreted in what a lawyer would call an evolutionary manner. And that can ensure those underpinning social currents are not displaced by the law, they continue exist and they can seep back in in interesting ways, I think.

□ Right. Yeah, I think that's really interesting. So, we come back to translation. I don't know, maybe I'll make a counterclaim or suggest something, which is from what you were saying, perhaps it seems that translation requires a border. You have to have something to cross. You have to start from someplace and think about what is the bridge that allows me to cross this border or even transgress it. I don't know if that's fair to say or if that's consistent. But that kind of image starts to then, for me, circle back to some of whether we're talking about legal issues and diplomacy or whether we're talking about the kinds of exclusions and the kind of violence that can happen around borders. I mean, is that what you mean? Is that a fair statement to make?

✱ Yes and no.

□ Yes and no. Okay. Yes.

✱ And so, yes. I was being provocative when I decided to change my statement from language functions *like* a border to language *is* a border. And I'm very pleased that you picked up on that because actually it makes us think about translation in a very different way in that we need the creation of difference in the first place between languages in order to be able to say something can be taken over from one language to another. Because if it was all same across both sides of the border, and if it were all open, that is, with no borders at all, then what can you take across or transfer? The word translation itself comes from Latin '*transfere*', which means to carry across or to take over. And so, in a sense, translation presupposes the existence of linguistic borders. And in some cases, translation has even been used to construct linguistic borders where they didn't exist. Here I would like to give you an example of this from South Asia. In the 19th century, there was this 'language', a fluid language spoken through much of North India with multiple names that people used to refer to it. Importantly most people could understand when someone else was speaking or writing in that language. So it was a language that was understood, written in, and spoken by millions of people. But in the 19th century with a lot of other political divisions linked mainly to religion and territory in South Asia, there was a need to separate elements of that language into two separate languages, and give the same language, two separate names. And so at different points in the 19th century, the same language is called Hindustani or Hindi and Urdu. And by the end of the 19th century we begin to see translations across the same language, except that the title page claims that it is a translation from Hindustani into Urdu or Hindustani into Hindi. But what does this mean?

Because translation here is basically carrying material across from language A into language A, but this language A is just being referred to as language B for certain reasons because a community of speakers want to claim that they are distinct from another group of people. This is just one example. There are so many other examples where people have felt the need to claim that they speak a different language in order to construct an identity separate from a larger group and therefore bring in translation as a way to create, to visualize a border that perhaps existed in other forms or aspects of life. But Killian you asked whether I knew Brian Friel's *Translations*? Absolutely, it's a fantastic play! I love it. I teach it in fact and regularly discuss with my students. And another aspect that really interests me is the whole colonial angle in the play that he brings out beautifully through language use and translation. If you haven't read it, both of you must...

□ Well tell us all about it. Tell us, I mean, just summarize it just a little bit, just why is because both of you have mentioned this even coming from very different points of view. So, I'm just really curious because I don't...I've heard of it, but I don't know it, I have to admit.

○ Probably a very bad summary of it is it's the period in Irish history where in the north, the British come to remap parts of Ireland and change the place names. And the story is set around a small fictitious village in the northwest, in Donegal, not too far from Derry. And it takes place within a hedge school - a type of school that is the result of penal law where the learning of the Irish language was forbidden. So it was staged in something like this bunker. So this takes place within a hedge school where the Native Irish are learning the Irish language and arithmetic, philosophy. And then comes in the British cartographers and engineers and they're coming with their maps saying, this place is Bun Cranncha (meaning 'foot of the river Crana' and will anglicize it to Buncrana. And what happens is there's one of the young men who spent some time in Dublin sort of aspires to become British, and the British officer begins to kind of fall in love with the Irish language. It's like, why are we changing these place names? But it's all sort of focuses on the use of the map as the erosion of place and meaning taking place. And so Brian was from Derry and it was written I think in 1973, and it premiered in the Guild Hall, which was the town hall in Derry and so it's absolutely wonderful. But I mean it deals language, place meaning and other meanings of landscape. And this goes back to the point of an idealist idea of being liberated from borders, I understand that that is utopian and unbelievable. But I suppose the importance of the language, or the loss of the language in Ireland, it carries possibilities. And so Derry being also Daire, being the oak grove, people are quick to mobilize that in the language. I don't speak the Irish language, it wasn't on the British curriculum, but if I'd been born four or five miles down the road, I could have learned it from the age of five. So I suppose the kind of use of language there a romanticization of it. But anyway, wonderful. You should read it.

✱ Yeah, definitely. Yes. But also that the different characters are speaking English or Irish and whether they understand each other or not.

And of course there is the language of love that the British soldier and the Irish woman managed to speak to each other, even though they can't understand a word of what they're saying to each other. So how do they cross that border? These are questions that the play wants us to think about and also cartography, the whole legalizing of land, of people and territory as belonging to specific regimes. This idea of possession gets a stamp of authority through the act of writing down these place names on a British map. So the play is bringing together so many themes that we are already talking about in terms of law and power, I suppose. Who has the power to cross, to transcend that boundary, and who has the right to translate either themselves, or a language, or someone else? These are all really important questions when it comes to thinking about translation as well.

/ Sure.

O Yeah, and even, I think in the book, it touches upon the different interpretations of, let's say, space and land as quantity. And so where it might be an acre, and I think they talk about it, the needs of particular crops, and so it implies the, not just about the sort of violence of these borders coming into place, but the arbitrariness. So whether it's legal, it's still somewhat arbitrary and it's contested by a river or a hill, so there's a lot held within that.

□ Well, it sounds really pertinent to what we're talking about, and it does bring in one thing which extends a little bit from language, which we hadn't actually talked about somewhat surprisingly it's kind of come in, which are maps and the way in which... we have a language that requires borders, that functions, that is the border in a certain sense, but then we also have a writing and a graphing, as it were, which brings us back to law and so on. The idea of how a map becomes real when how you make the map synonymous with the territory, which is one of those things that one should never confuse. That's another Ballard quote. I don't know, I'm full of Ballard today, but in the *Empire of the Sun*, I think there's a phrase where he talks about this, but that's a really interesting one.

And, certainly, in my own experience as an anthropologist, I worked a lot in Southeast Asia, in Malaysia, and on the border of Thailand and so on, and this is actually a really big deal because... And it wasn't a straightforward story of the British or colonial powers actually able to draw maps that nobody recognized in the territory and then enforce them over time, although that's a big part of the story, but, say, the Kingdom of Siam actually turned it on its head and was able to instrumentalize the language of borders and territorialization and maps for its own devices, much to the dismay of what became parts of Malay kingdoms in the South and so on. There's a really interesting story about how a border... So, we've talked about how a border is uttered in a certain sense, but how they're also written, so not only written as a translatable language, but translating and making real, something like a map, which is in fact not real at all except as a graph at first, but then it becomes an instrument in a way. I'm kind of surprised, actually, that we didn't talk about... None of us really did.

I kind of gestured towards it, and I had Thailand/Siam 19th century notion in mind when I was talking about where do the border police actually work, because that's how it worked in that kingdom. They had to not simply resist, say, British incursions or kingdoms to the south that may or may not want to belong, or be within, or outside of the border, because these borders were very porous. Quite often, kingdoms in the south of what's now Thailand or the north of what's now Malaysia, they had dual alliances. They didn't consider themselves to be bordered. They would pay allegiance to a number of different places and keep it quite fluid in intentional ways, but they had to work from the center out to actually turn it on its head, that turning on the head that I talked about.

So, it wasn't simply the British imposing this, it was actually Thai elites instrumentalizing a kind of cartographic science for their own purposes and making it very real – mostly legally, although also they did it religiously. They had all sorts of ways in which it was connected to the phases of the moon and eclipses, and so they enlisted religious authorities to actually also make this translation, as it were. But I don't know. It's just an observation. It's just curious that you would think the first thing we would talk about is maps because, maps, that's what they show us, borders and terrain. And actually, none of us talked about it directly, almost like we were kind of avoiding it. I don't know, it's just, it's funny. It's funny.

/ But often maps are, they're what the particular cartographer sees. They don't portray everything. Maps are themselves a selection of features, and choices are made. We often think about maps as being objective because it just displays the landscape, but maps are just as subjective as language in a sense. And you see that in a lot of the international legal disputes about borders where maps become evidence, and you see both sides going back through the archives and getting these maps from sometimes centuries ago to illustrate, 'Well, this bit of territory's clearly fallen within our borders,' and the other side comes back with its own maps and it shows different things.

□ So how would that be adjudicated? Is it basically, then it becomes looking at the process of map making because the maps are supposedly objective and you've got two of them showing two different things? So how is that translated into a decision or a possible adjudication of, 'This is the border and this is not?'

/ So those maps have become part of the bigger bundle of evidence that would also rely on other sources' testimony, either historical testimony of where a state was collecting taxes, sending its soldiers, those sorts of archival materials. And you'd have to take it all together and see which state was able to make the greater claim. Often, it's not a matter of all or nothing. Both states have evidence that some control, and it's a matter of determining which one of those can trump the other. And it could go to a court of tribunal and it would be objectively decided by a set of judges.

But, in a sense, they're just weighing and balancing a series of claims of control, who had the greater control over the longest period of time.

And what it often comes down to is some piece of evidence that one state has come up with that actually shows they recognize the other state's claim at one point in time. And anything like that is then used against them. And so a single map from state A showing that state B actually had control of that territory at one particular point in time could be a real problem for that state wanting to maintain its claims.

Far more problematic when you get into the oceans, which is a lot of the work I do, is on maritime jurisdiction and claims. And obviously there are no features that you can claim, and it becomes a lot more contested and are far more of a question of equity actually, than actual control. And so we've seen rules emerge about how you draw maritime boundaries, but they're far more difficult to police. You can't actually draw them. You can't have border posts. And so they are even more of a human construct than land boundaries in a way.

□ Right. Yeah, no, that's interesting. And then a lot of what you're saying, it comes back, Killian, to what you said, some of what you were talking about in your opening statement and in terms of violently being shaped by borders and some of the work in Rwanda. I was interested to hear more about that in relation to borders, because you're talking about architecture as well, and we can move to architecture.

○ Yeah. I suppose when I know I speak about architecture with my academic hat on, I practiced for many years, and it was, back then it was buildings, but now I see it as infrastructure of borders. My experiences in Rwanda have been following the genocide in and they brought this new vision in for, the Country - Vision 2020 - which was all encompassing.

And one of the first things they did was to produce a cadastral map of the country to be able to understand what the land value was and who could be taxed, and that required aerial flight. They commissioned a Swedish company to fly the whole country up and down and photograph it in high res so they could produce maps and particularly environmental maps. These environmental maps drew a picture of the country along the divisions between human settlement and landscape. And this speaks to this duality between the human space and nature. And so that was just right across the country. And I suppose that it's purely problematic considering that there might be people that cultivate food to live, but it becomes even more, I suppose, unsettled when the further north you go to the border between Uganda and the DRC, where these three borders meet, they meet the transboundary area of the Virunga forest. And that's why I would imagine, and as someone dealing in environmental law, these transboundary areas really must be really problematic. How are they managed? So anyways, so the Virunga forest is the habitat in endangered gorilla. Historically the landscape has been extremely fertile because of the volcanic soil, and it's intensively settled by agriculture, and it's even more urban in terms of its population than the city of Kigali, although we can't see it, but people are scattered everywhere. But that, up in the northwest border in Goma, is where they're up to at least up to a million refugees still in camps.

So it's just that whole area is... this goes back to the establishment of the 1910 border as a result of the Anglo-German agreement where the three empires of Belgium, England, and Germany fought for these territories. And they argued through sketches of mountains who seen it first and as a way to triangulate the landscape. And it's so arbitrary and yet it's so policed between Rwanda and Uganda, and, having grown up in Northern Ireland and understanding a checkpoint. It is very strict. It's very intimidating. But for the Rwandese, the farmers, and the Twa who are forcefully resettled, they just knew the ways across. So anyway, so I suppose as an architect, I'm interested where, I suppose the scale of the building is the, I don't know, the sort of embodiment of that, but at the much smaller scale and so how the architecture now in Rwanda is all about the enclosure. And it's sort of, in part, derived from the German enclosure, but it's what it's doing and the tensions with land that are rising from it.

/ It's very interesting what you say though about it being a highly policed border, a lot of resources put into maintaining these lines, but the locals know the way across. They can circumvent it. I think there is this tension between the authority of a formal border, and there are always ingenious ways to circumvent it, and it happens closer to home, the channel crossings of migrant refugees. The more resources are put in almost the problem gets worse and worse. And there's this constant fight between trying to maintain it and then blocking one route, and then suddenly another way of circumventing comes around. And it's this ingenuity of those seeking to get around the border and get across the border to undermine authority, which very interesting.

□ Yeah, for sure. I think just, in a formal sense, just the more policed a border is, the more it precisely invites this, right? There's almost a linguistic principle, which is that you can never actually repeat something. If we talk about a concept of difference, going back to what you said, you can never repeat it completely so it just, in its usage itself, regardless of intention, you've actually moved it ever so slightly. And it seems like borders actually move in this manner sometimes quite quickly, and quite explicitly. This is what we're talking about, whether it's channel crossings or the forest.

But again, just when we start to unpack this in a very material way, there's nothing abstract in certain respects about this at all, how borders are constantly moving. There's a motion that belies what we are, in an explicit way, taught what they are, which is that a border is this, and it's always been this, and it can enclose and it can exclude or include. It can protect you. It can do all of these things. But actually, by definition, it seems to be from language outward into very material ways, borders never come to rest, which is why I thought coming back to the specificity of architecture, because houses and enclosures and structures are supposed to do the same thing, and I wonder if there's a principle of movement in what you're talking about, Killian, in terms of upsetting some of what we take for granted in terms of borders being stationary, et cetera. Is there motion in your architecture?

O Yeah. I suppose that's part of the quest. Hunter-gatherer communities like the Twa, they're nomadic. They're not used to being sedentary. They would build a house that is temporary, abandon it, and move on. And I believe that the nomadic communities have been picking up houses, moving them with them for a long time. But it's very difficult to achieve movement within the architectural discipline as we're taught about the inertness of materiality. So some of the work that I tend to do uses drawing as a map, but to make them move. And so it's not necessarily showing the movement of a material, but the movement of people in, amongst, and through the material fixed boundaries. So that's some of the work of, let's say, the discipline of drawing that is brought to some of my work.

/ Can I ask, to bring it back to climate change that I mentioned earlier? And one of the things climate change does is it physically changes borders. Sea levels are rising, maritime boundaries are changing, physical structures on land through flooding, et cetera, are changing increasingly as a result of climate change. And I just wonder whether that factors into your architectural work that you have to think forward if you want a structure to stay. To fulfill its function, are you having to think forward about what future changes to the landscape and borders might happen in order to build that into your work and future proof?

O Sure. For those architects, as I say, I don't necessarily operate in the traditional sense of an architect anymore. But if I might use the example of after Hurricane Katrina, and there was a number of projects, and I think one of them was by Brad Pitt. It was the homes in the lower ninth ward right opposite the levy, and that's where I'd lived for about four or five months. And they fixed the level at about two meters, the estimated next 100-year flood would come. But there was no sort of provision built within that to deal with any sort of change, or this littoral condition of where the water, or soil, or... It was just a fixed thing.

But there was an interesting proposal by Morphosis — which I think an American practice — and it was ridiculous idea to flood the city and giving over parts of the land that were flooded, to primarily owned by low income, white, and African American neighborhoods. So there was no real thought about that. But they had this radical proposal to have these houses that become unmoored. But other than that, architects are expected to consider it, but I suppose we're having to look far outside the discipline and other people, have some sense of understanding what's to come, through the climate modeling.

□ There's something kind of disturbing about that though.

O Absolutely.

□ Right. There's something disturbing, and coming back to just the status of what borders do, again, I'm thinking back to a community that I worked with in Malaysia. It was basically an urban community. Formally, they were squatters, so they weren't recognized on maps.

They were in a particular neighborhood that everybody knew the character and borders, and this is the place, and families had occupied it for 70 or 80 years. But it was being cleared, and so actually... Anthropologists are normally behind, so we come in after something has happened, and just, somehow, I won't call it serendipity because it was terrible, but I was there when they cleared the community. And one of the things about it was the fact that the borders, the limits, the thresholds that had structured their mode of living were being forcibly broken down quite quickly.

So, the experience of, and without warning, there was a general sense something was going to happen. But you would get up in the morning and a bulldozer would just be going through the middle of this settlement, always the middle, never round the borders. It's always just right to the heart. Of course, that's political and that's quite disturbing. It produces a lot of resistance, but it didn't produce all the effects that I thought [it would]. It wasn't particularly organized, and what I found were people became very confused because borders that they had understood to be solid were crumbling and dissolving literally in a day, in a few hours. And this was just a deeply disorienting thing for them. And it was a little hard to get a grasp on it – we come back to language because that broke down too.

People couldn't describe their lives or what they were doing. That's why the politics never went anywhere, actually. It just dissolved. And without these borders, without these sorts of thresholds, without this language, it completely disabled the action that might have resisted it or reconstituted the community, or the number of outcomes that we might think from a distance like, 'Well, why didn't this happen,' or, 'We should probably do this,' or, 'This would ameliorate the situation.' And it actually just dissolved a form of living is what it did, without borders. And it, again, started in perception and it started in language. And the perception part of that was that there was the disturbing, and this was finally articulated, but it sounded so ridiculous that people were very reluctant to say this, but they said, 'It's like the landscape in our urban landscape is moving.' And so it wasn't nice. It was actually quite disturbing.

And that was the only language they could find for that. And it was a kind of vertigo, a life without needed borders, which put me in a quandary because I was like, 'Well, again, this idealism of the borders and the state and the law, and they come and they impose on, there's almost a naturalism,' I hate to say it, but it's true, 'the way we should live.' And, actually, I didn't find that. I found a psychological and even sensory need for a stability. So the houses started moving too much is what it was, and that's really all they could tell me was that it seems like the houses are moving. The houses are moving, and it just completely broke people down. So, they needed those...

It just completely broke people down. They needed those borders, first of all, just as a language to talk about it. It broke their lives. And not because they were homeless, but because they were actually unmoored from the very sense of where they were in the terrain as it were. Yeah.

/ So in the climate change debate, there's talk about, what do we do about rising sea levels, the way that it's encroaching on borders, particularly in the Pacific? And lawyers take on this as well, can we fix borders that normally maritime boundaries as some way connected to the land? You measure them, usually, some kind of distance from the land is how you draw your maritime boundaries. If it overlaps with another state's claims, then you come to some equitable solution. But with climate change, land is ever receding and there's a debate about, is it fair for these small island states in the Pacific to lose this both land territory, but also maritime territory, by definition? Would it be more equitable to fix those boundaries as they are today, so they continue to claim the rights and resources that they have? So there is a move in law to actually fix boundaries and completely rewrite the rules in response to climate change and the effects on boundaries.

But what that doesn't take into account is the land ever shrinking and potentially the stage where actually the land disappears completely under the ocean. And what do you do then? Does that state continue to exist as a legal and physical entity? Does it continue to claim maritime territory, even though there's no land at all? And for the people, for the population, are they still citizens of that state, even though they might be living in another state? And their borders literally could potentially completely dissolve in the next 50 years? And I think there are a real existential questions that are deeply connected with borders that climate change poses, I think, in which is a more extreme version even than the situation you've just described, Richard.

□ No, absolutely. These were worlds that could be reformed. And what you're talking about is a liquidation, at least if we're talking about it in a bounded sense. So, using those borders to say, 'this is who I am,' or 'this is where I live.' That's liquidation. There's really nothing else. Yeah.

✱ Yeah. And that is a fascinating example of how borders function or dissolve. And I was thinking also, from what you were saying earlier, Richard, should we be also thinking about other metaphors for borders that are more, I hate to use the word 'positive', but we associate borders a lot with negative emotions of control and power? So often, all the metaphors that we usually associate with borders tend to highlight the negative aspects of borders. But how can we think about it the other way around? What metaphors come to mind that can show us some of the power of having that boundary, that border, that this can give to an individual or to a community? How is it enabling?

□ Do you have one for us?

✱ So I have a really interesting example of the metaphor of walls as borders. When we say 'going across a wall or going through a wall,' these are metaphors that can show the border or the wall as a physical border that must be broken down. But at the same time, thinking of architecture as well, the walls of a building or a home are actually protecting you and shielding you from what's outside.

So there is that sense of belonging that might come from having that border. Although controversial because of the many ways in which it excludes people, maybe there are points at which it is enabling to have that wall or that border or that line that shows even legally that that land did belong to someone. Because otherwise, they're left with nothing, no home, no identity, no nation, no resources to live on. And then they'll just be classified as refugees or migrants, maybe, in the more modern sense of the word.

□ Okay. Yeah, no, that's really interesting. And also, if I'm putting you on the spot, then just tell me, but when you said in your introduction that you're very interested in sacred language, I actually thought that might be the direction you would go with your new metaphor is the sacredness, a sacred language, which is bordering but ambiguous in that regard. Because it talks about something that's supposedly unbordered and yet, you belong or you don't belong, and so on. Kind of like my Pentecostals, right? The great insult was that human beings became as profane as anything else. There's no sacred language for us. Our possession of language is no longer sacred. It just sort of leeched all of that out through evolution, facts. Darwin – terrible guy!So, I'm curious, I don't know, maybe you don't have a metaphor there, or maybe it doesn't touch in the sacred in a way, but somehow, the sacred comes to mind as well. And again, I feel very ambiguous articulating that, because we don't approach it that way. We tend not to. We're academics. Whatever our spirituality may be outside of that, we tend to look at the sacred or the spiritual as a kind of object or a sort of thing. And that's part of what we're interested in. But yeah, that seems like an obvious one, that people might, whether it's 'true' or not, and I did air quotes with my fingers, for those of you who can't see me, but perhaps there's another way we need to rethink enlightening people. Because the sacred seems to actually perform this function. That's classic Durkheim. But we don't have to go that route to say that the border that the sacred provides is not necessarily a one of mystification. Right?

✱ Yeah, but it's definitely a construct, isn't it? Because in a sense every religious community or tradition tries to present or claim a particular language as sacred. And so, that becomes a construct, in terms of translation, for instance. So a really good example is when certain faiths claim that their sacred texts cannot be translated. There are two ways of saying that you shouldn't translate. One is, the sacred text can be translated, but it shouldn't be translated for certain reasons. Because you are messing with the text, the meaning, its structure. But then, the other claim is that it cannot be translated because divine language is so different from human language, or this particular language in which the text is written in is sacred, and therefore it cannot be translated. So the sacrality of the text seems to depend on the claim that this language is completely different from any other human language that we're functioning in.

And so, interestingly, we have religions that translate their texts, and we have religions that don't translate texts. We also have traditions within religions that claim more translation than not.

So even within Christianity, for instance, you can see how the desire to translate has produced schisms within the church. So the Catholic versus Protestant rivalry, for instance, goes back to the history of the Bible being translated by Luther and several other individuals who thought it was really important to break that border between what was considered divine and sacred message and what considered a lowly human language. And then, at the other end of the spectrum, you have Pentecostals, that you were mentioning, and glossolalia, what does it mean to speak in other tongues? It's a crossing over of borders, of linguistic borders, in a completely different way, to questions of translating a text. And so, you have that range within the religious context as well.

□ Yeah, no, that's quite interesting. And just even, again, coming back to that, I hesitate to call it a need, but the way in which borders sort of function to structure our belonging or not. Something like the Bible, it's just so annoying. So, I grew up in a Lutheran church in the United States, and they've kind of modernized all their biblical texts. And I'm sorry, but it's really hard to belong to a Bible that sounds like it's being articulated by Midwestern real estate agents. That's really just not, I'm sorry, but that's a border that shouldn't have been crossed. Give me the old translation where when you're speaking it, it sounds alien. So that way of grasping or becoming adjacent to radical difference. That's an interesting element of the borders as well that I think we've been talking about. Because sometimes, if you're on the inside, that actually breaks it down too.

And I would say those American Bibles, it just doesn't do it. I guess it does for some though, because they want to feel like they could go and have a beer with God. And I feel like God should just kill you or not. And the fact that God didn't kill you today is probably okay. But I guess, yes. Oh, my grandparents are so disappointed in this, I'm sure! But I suspect I was like a closet Catholic in a Lutheran church or something, just waiting for a little more blood. But the language does make a difference, and it just annoys the crap out of me. It really does. It makes me a disbeliever, unbeliever, because it sounds like a Midwestern real estate agent. And you cannot believe them.

✱ Well, there are many examples of translations, whether these are by serious theologians and translation committees that work together, writing down what they agree and disagree on theologically, and produce a translation, and then, the community goes, 'no way. We are not going to read that. It's too modern. It's too familiar.' So actually, the unfamiliarity that a linguistic register produces becomes really important in 'authorizing' the sanctity of the text, rather than the other way around. So it can work both ways. On the one hand, there is this idea that you translate into modern English or French or whatever, in order to clarify and to disseminate meaning. 'We want every individual to understand exactly what God said.' But on the other hand, bringing it into modern language, crossing that boundary, reduces that that's the weight of authority that seems to lie in these older registers. So there are so many claims about the King James Version of the English Bible, for instance, across the world globally, including in India.

In the 19th century, there were translations into several Indian languages in the 19th century, mainly based on the English King James version, rather than on Latin or Hebrew or Greek. And they came to be known as these King James translations, where, in the 20th century, there are communities who claimed that, 'Well, Jesus spoke in that language, didn't he?' What does it mean to have that kind of response to translation? Again, it is a kind of invisible border. It's very ambiguous, and yet, listening to the sounds of that language produce certain effects, effective in that it increases the sacred or the kind of mundane quality of the text that people are coming across. Yeah.

/ And what's interesting is your outrage about the new version, the version you prefer was once a new version as well. And there was probably outrage about it. And there's always this contestation about...

□ Yeah, there certainly was. I think the King James Bible was really very, it was controversial even before it was published. Just the mere fact of its translation was itself controversial and so on. Yeah, no, you're absolutely right. But somehow, in my experience, it's the valid one, because maybe Jesus didn't talk that way, but we should when we're in church. But I suppose it comes back to maybe the last big domain that occurred to me when I was thinking about what to talk about today and had no way of, until now actually, of working it into an introduction or even in my own work, but just how borders create a certain kind of desire. Because that's what you've talked about. And so, the obvious one, which I think we've discussed quite at length, is the desire to actually have some control over making them or being free of imposed borders, but also, even those that are imposed or misunderstood or we don't have a lot of control over.

But that whatever's on the other side seems to generate a kind of desire as well as the fear, the mixture of that. And I guess that's one thing we haven't talked as much about. Maybe we have, but we've talked about a lot of things. But that was the one thing that I couldn't actually even weave into the introduction. I'm not quite sure why, lack of imagination, I guess, but how borders, they create a desire. So that border between the past, just in my own example, or the crossing over, immigrating, I don't know how many of us are immigrants, but there's the weird kind of desire in crossing borders, like, 'ah, it'll be better.' I came for NHS, but that was a mistake. But the desire, which again, requires them. I don't know if anyone has anything to say about desire. I know I've gone... Now, I've gone from Darwin to Freud, I'm sorry.

✱ Well, it just reminded me of Billy Goats Gruff, the sheep wanting to cross over the bridge. The grass is always greener on the other side? The NHS will always be better...

□ Well, I was coming from America. I didn't realize America would come here. But yeah.

✱ So I suppose that's where ambiguity comes in.

You have a certain desire for something beyond the border. You go there and then you discover 'maybe what I left behind wasn't that bad.' Or it makes you think differently about both places. But until you've crossed the border, you don't know. You haven't experienced that other, that lies outside. So your sense of self and how you inhabit your space changes as a result of crossing borders.

□ Sure.

✱ And that is linked with desire, with...

□ And once it's not met, then you look for another border. It's like weird existential tourism, which is that you make it to the place and then, it's like 'Ah!'

✱ It's never enough. Yes. Yeah.

□ It looks exactly the same.

✱ Yeah. I suppose.

□ Even if it doesn't, right? Human beings are weird. Definitely. We hate the things that constitute us in a way, including borders. We're ultimately talking about borders in an oscillating fashion between borders that are imposed, that impinge upon us and need to be broken down, and the borders that constitute us themselves. Not just that we constituted a border, but that the border constituted us. And it's interesting that so much of what we've talked about is this kind of an oscillation back and forth between living in that and working to undercut that, almost like undercutting ourselves. So yeah, it's a hard idea to get a handle on, but I don't know if others wished to... So, desire! Did that kind of kill it?

○ Not at all. Not at all.

□ Not at all. Maybe. Maybe we're just tired. We're waiting for our savory treats promised out there. Whoever's listening, we were promised savory treats. Yeah, yeah. Well, if there's no objection, if we've reached the wall, if we've hit our own border, the border of our brains in this basement, yeah... James, were you going to say something? Oh no. Okay, then, perhaps, we'll just close the door and wish whoever is out there listening a good day. That sounds very Canadian. I don't know. Does anyone else wish to sign off? Say something or shall we just fade to silence?