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Archaeology and border studies: living with liminality through the *Longue Durée*

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Contemporary border studies scholarship is primarily concerned with the analysis of how we build, perceive and interact with liminal environments across the globe today; how spatial and temporal power relations are played out in spaces where different groups encounter each other.¹ But what forms of evidence do scholars from, for example, economics, geography, politics, anthropology and psychology use to study these landscapes? Are similar forms of evidence available in the archaeological record? To what extent are these methodological and theoretical frameworks useful and relevant to archaeologists? What is the value of the conversations generated by an interdisciplinary approach? How can we make our disciplinary voice heard in the interdisciplinary melee?

By embracing time-depth border studies, scholars are able to look further back into human social history to examine the context from which our contemporary world has emerged over the *Longue Durée*.² Archaeological approaches to the analysis of past liminal spaces promise to make a major contribution to our understanding of one of today's key debates: how we create and transform our responses to living alongside each other.³ By engaging with border studies, archaeologists can draw on a wealth of theoretical frameworks from across the social sciences to inform our analysis of liminal spaces through time.⁴ Though an examination of the early medieval Anglo-Welsh border this study explores the possibilities and practicalities of such an interdisciplinary approach.

There seems no rationale as to why archaeology cannot find a place in mainstream border studies, and every reason why it should. Landscape evidence left behind by previous generations within border environments, at every level of society and across the globe, can illuminate our past, our present and our aspirations for our future.

¹ E.g. Ghosh 2011; Megoran 2012.

² E.g. Aung 2014; Champion 2018.

³ E.g. Bonacchi et al. 2018; Hingley 2018; Hingley et al. 2018.

⁴ E.g. Ghosh 2011; González-Ruibal 2014; Megoran 2012.

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