

BORDERING ON THE SUPERNATURAL: MERGING ANIMISM AND THE FRONTIER IN ARCHAEOLOGY

ABSTRACT

Animism, landscape and frontier have all been well studied in their various archaeological contexts. In spite of this isolated progress, however, there is little recognition of the overlap among these interest areas. I argue that new conceptions of boundary detailed in the field of frontier archaeology are useful in examining boundaries in animistic communities, and that conversely, advancements in the archaeology of animism can open new fields of analysis in frontier archaeology. The recognition and exploration of boundary and frontier in the archaeology of animism will add new perspectives to both fields and unite them in a comparative discussion on the nature of ethnic definition and interaction.

INTRODUCTION

Animistic beliefs are characterized by seamless and social relationships between humans and animals, cultural and natural entities (see Bird-Davis 1999). By examining art and explicit representation, archaeologists have explored these and other complex worldviews at length in their research (e.g., Clottes 1990; Holl 2004). However, archaeologists do not often encounter such direct evidence of worldview, as it can be all but invisible in the archaeological record. With this limitation in mind, it is important to pay close attention to alternative ontologies that may be hidden in methodological blind spots. Recent efforts to expose animism in the material record counter these difficulties through an overhaul of archaeological practice (Alberti and Bray 2009; Zedeño 2009). Yet, it is not necessary to abandon traditio-

nal archaeological practice in view of a holistic past. Instead, archaeologists can begin to explore the alternative worldviews of the past through the creative use of current archaeological theory. One means of reconsidering holistic ontologies is through the study of the categorizations and boundaries they create. Divisions in landscape are focal points for ethnic definition, and when visible in archaeological assemblages, they can provide insight into animistic belief.

Here, I argue that research on physical boundaries and borderlands can assist in the exploration of animistic landscapes in the past, if it is understood that interaction along boundaries can involve non-human entities. Physical remnants of borders among human or non-human groups offer unique perspective on the social interaction that created those borders. While archaeologists have utilized a

wide array of symbolic boundaries in their conception of border such as political (e.g., Trigger 1974), socio-economic (e.g., Smith and Berdan 1992), geographic (e.g., Cordy and Kaschko 1980), and technological and stylistic (e.g., Dietler and Herbich 1994; Kalentzidou 2000; Stark 1998), it seems that such interaction with non-human communities has remained relatively unaddressed. Conversely, studies on animistic landscapes have not made use of recent conceptions of boundary developed within frontier archaeology. Through a discussion of the archaeologies of the frontier, landscape and animism, and with particular reference to Bradley Parker's (2006) boundary schematic employed in *Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes*, I will attempt to bring notions of animism into the frontier and generate discussion across these now isolated areas.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF FRONTIER

Since the aim of this discussion is to unite the archaeologies of animism, landscape and frontier, it is appropriate to begin the discussion with their common element – boundary. When defined within an open, cultural system, boundaries are semi-permeable divisions in data, occurring along any number of variables (Justeson and Hampson 1985:16). The convolution of boundary makes finding fluid yet meaningful divisions within webs of overlapping relationships difficult. At once, archaeologists are challenged to recognize the complexity of social relationships in the past

and to establish important patterning within this sometimes-contradictory data. Appropriately, a new, open conception of border is emerging that is flexible enough to cover the range of overlapping relationships comprising archaeological boundary. Within it, the “animistic frontier” should be recognized as a key type.

The most widely studied aspect of border in North American archaeology is the “frontier.” This field of research does not frequently extend to wider issues of division and boundary, but instead focuses primarily on centre-periphery relationships within colonial expansion. However, there have been several notable attempts to join frontier and other border research into a coherent discussion on the wider issue of boundary itself. One important step towards this goal is Stanton Green and Stephen Perlman's 1985 edited volume *The Archaeology of Frontiers and Boundaries*. While much of the volume is devoted to macroscopic industrial studies, settlement processes, and systems-theory resource extraction models, the papers engage with an assortment of contexts and types of boundary. Throughout the case studies, social systems are characterized as fundamentally open, but crossed by a variety of economic, social and political boundaries, including colonial and non-colonial interaction. The range of papers included in this work attests to this variation, but most of this volume rests on economic foundations.

Kent Lightfoot and Antoinette Martinez's subsequent (1995) treatment

of boundary in archaeology takes the discussion of frontier from the relatively open and boundary oriented forum presented in Green and Perlman's volume (1985) and focuses it strictly on colonial frontier relationships. Lightfoot and Martinez' work foregrounds the periphery in centre-periphery schemes and emphasizes fluidity across home and hinterland areas. The authors put forward a model of "cross-cutting social networks" (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995:471) where boundaries are "socially charged places where innovative cultural constructs are created and transformed" (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995:472). Along similar lines as Mary Douglas (1966), Victor Turner (1967) and other anthropologists of ethnic creation and identity, Lightfoot and Martinez (1994:473) argue that the frontier is where culture is most visible and imbued with transformative power. Interactions in world-systems inspired peripheral zones (see Wallerstein 1977) cannot be characterized only as the edges of settlement, but as vital and defining centres of interaction. Certainly, Green and Perlman (1985) and subsequently Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) opened frontier research to encompass a wide range of social relationships that occur in peripheral areas. However, this recognition of individualized, agent-based, dynamic frontiers does not acknowledge two separate, yet important facets of boundary in archaeology. First, social interaction occurs among human and non-human communities. Second, a range of boundary exists in the archaeological record, from well to poorly defined.

It is necessary to introduce animistic communities into the complex mix of "scattered relationships" that comprise frontier according to Lightfoot and Martinez (1995). In their nuanced conception of the frontier, they do not afford landscape agency. For example, when dealing with "unoccupied lands," they ignore the possibility for cultural interaction of a different sort,

Of course, there was a time when growing populations could expand into unoccupied lands, a time when there truly were empty spaces and 'frontier' was mainly a spatial term designating a physical margin, fringe, or outer boundary. However, when colonists began encountering other people in a more consistent and insistent manner, one person's homeland may have become another's frontier (Lightfoot and Martinez 1994:473).

This quote acknowledges the multiple perspectives of centre and periphery that exist when dealing with "frontier." Yet, when one considers the possibility that these "unoccupied lands" may have had social agency, it becomes difficult to maintain the assumption that movement into a new land did not require interaction along a cultural frontier. Following Tim Ingold's (1993) sensory animation of landscape, which explores environment through memory, bodily interaction, and daily routine, how can we not acknowledge the possibility of animistic projection of frontier? Lightfoot and Martinez' (1995) notions of dynamic and ambiguous boundaries take steps towards a more incorporative frontier, but miss the possibility for imagined landscapes instead of "empty spaces".

Along with introducing animism into frontier, finding it in the archaeological record requires us to go beyond Lightfoot and Martinez' (1995) fluid frontiers and acknowledge the range of types within boundary processes – static to dynamic, social to geographic. The range of borders visible in the archaeological record will be necessarily skewed towards boundaries that are relatively fixed and coherent, and thus, research models need to acknowledge the wider range of relationships that occur in peripheral areas. Here, Bradley Parker's (2006) new conception of boundary is essential, as he offers a new, incorporative scheme for borderlands that adds static notions of boundary to the fluid, dynamic boundaries of Lightfoot and Martinez' (1995) article.

At its base, Parker's (2006) scheme is similar to that of Lightfoot and Martinez (1995). Yet, he moves beyond the context of colonialism and opens the discussion to all boundary research. Parker's synthesis of the variety of frontier and boundary studies comes as a response to social scientific calls for comparative boundary research (see Lamont and Molnar 2002). This follows Green and Perlman's (1985) efforts, but adds a more coherent and consistent method of categorizing boundaries. First, Parker (2006:83) separates borders from frontiers, with borders representing strict divisions and frontiers characterizing lax ones. Within this scale of permeability, Parker (2006:82) lists several major attributes of boundaries: geographic, political, demographic, cultural and economic. From climatic to religious boundaries, Parker acknowledges the

range of cases seen in Green and Perlman (1985) and elsewhere. His own work in Anatolia and an array of other archaeological studies of boundary (Parker 2006) provide a rich comparative base to explain the intertwined relationships among boundary attributes. In one case, resource extraction fuels demographic change, but in another linguistic boundary can prevent commodity exchange. Through all of his case studies boundary remains unstable, but it remains within his simply defined "boundary."

As well defined as boundary is among Parker's many examples, it still does not incorporate animism and imagined landscapes. Parker's interconnected and overlapping aspects of boundaries (**Figure 1**) do not address the question of empty landscapes drawn from Lightfoot and Martinez (1995). Geography is effectively barred agency. For instance, when detailing geographic boundaries, Parker (2006:83) merely accounts for the guiding nature of topographic features. Mountains may impede settlement while rivers enhance trade, but neither can be social entities. Animated landscape and non-human communities are boundary processes that drive the creation and maintenance of ethnicity and need inclusion in Parker's latest revision of the archaeology of boundary.

Parker (2006) has brought the discussions within Green and Perlman (1985) and Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) into a comprehensive and updated discussion. Essentially, he has incorporated Lightfoot and Martinez'

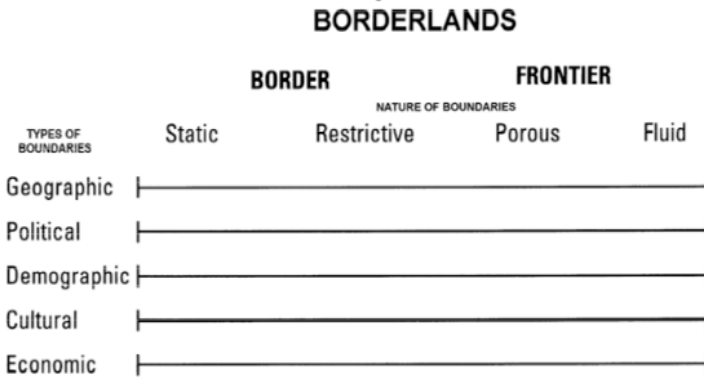


Figure 1 The Continuum of Boundary Dynamics. (Parker 2006:82)

ideas of a variable, complex, and defining periphery and also brought frontier back into the wider discussion on boundary, as seen in Green and Perlman’s volume. He states that “boundary processes — the finite, if complex, set of dialectal interactions that take place in contact zones — ... bridges our fields, regions, and sub disciplines and makes us all students of the frontier” (Parker 2006:78, emphasis in original). The archaeologies of frontier and liminal materiality offer a visible place of transformation between social spheres in both ethnographic and archaeological datasets, places where social divisions are given physical form. Through ethnographic analogy and contemporary material culture studies, archaeological boundary can contribute to wider social scientific discussions on identity.

One bridge between the archaeology and ethnography of boundaries lies within E. Breck Parkman’s (1994) ethnohistorical research on the ideologies of the Pomo bands of Northern California. This work is particularly

notable for its elaboration of animistic boundaries and its relatively smallscale. In the Pomo’s pre-contact history, the author found the presence of a distinct division in their worldviews of “wild” and “communal” lands, a division that did and still does reach across all aspects of life. This division between persons and animals can remind one of dualities of nature and culture, however the Pomo bring the “Outside People” into social engagement where a strict nature–culture divide would not. For example, Pomo origin stories such as *The Deer and the Bear* document a long and interwoven history between nature and culture, people and things. For Parkman, this story documents human migration out of the wilds and into communities and the forging of distinct and bounded social groups. In contrast with the wilds, the Pomo “in effect, became another world” (Parkman 1994:13). This separation can be understood as an interactive and cultural boundary, even if some of its participants are what many archaeologists would consider non-cultural.

Parker's (2006) and Lightfoot and Martinez' (1995) core and periphery frontier model is revealed in the pre-contact Pomo village's diametric and concentric structure. In a Levi-Straussian pattern, male-female, and sacred-profane worlds were divided in terms of core and periphery. Although matrilineal and matrilocal, the Pomo men's ritual structures were placed in the centre of the village, separated from peripheral women's domestic structures. Moreover, the outer limits of the village, out of view of gendered-separated structures, were the only places where alternative behaviour was regularly allowed.

In the centre of the village, ceremonial roundhouses were built as a microcosm of the larger world, with determined areas reserved for visiting bands. Social and geographic boundaries among neighbouring communities were recreated in the roundhouse (Parkman 1994). Accordingly, northern, western, and eastern neighbours all sat in their corresponding positions, yet the southern section was left unoccupied. This, Parkman argues (1994:19), may be due in part to the tense relationship the Pomo had with the ghosts who lived beyond the southern boundary of their territory. These ghosts had a tangible role in political negotiation and were considered participants in ritual activities within the roundhouse. The building's very construction required direct interaction with such "Outside people," and since the Pomo considered them to be a serious danger to humans (Parkman 1994:21), trips into their lands to gather resources

were not taken without first negotiating peace through prepared feasts and offerings.

Since this example is taken from ethnographic survey, it is important to consider these interactions as they would appear archaeologically. There are strong material correlates for these interactions and liminal boundary zones. In light of the Pomo's negotiated relationship with the "Outside peoples," ritual architecture and offerings may indicate boundary in Pomo archaeology. For example, the centre pole of the roundhouse represented the focus of the world. During particular ceremonies, "ghost impersonators" would attempt to enter and remove this anchor point. Yet, the pole was not normally host to violent interaction. Attacks and negotiation usually occurred within the liminal, frontier zone, which suggests that the division ran through all of Pomo social life. In spite of this, however, the periphery was an important and real meeting point between spirits and humans (Parkman 1994). This bounded negotiation was apparent in daily practice, as well as in more unique events. For instance, around one mile from the village (Parkman 1994:21), there were many trailside offerings of beads and sticks where hunters prayed before entering the territory of the Outside people. Moreover, Parkman (1994) also documented rock art and cave transformer points. These locations also represented visible boundary zones, portals between human and non-human worlds employed by shamans to effect materially evident power. Architectural features within

the community, trail offerings, and transformer points all represent archaeologically visible boundaries between human and non-human communities.

Parkman's work on the Pomo (1995) gives a clear example of ethnographically and archaeologically visible boundaries in animistic worldviews. At this point, however, there needs to be a means of comparison to link this animistic boundary to other forms of cultural encounter and traditionally defined frontier interaction. Parker's (2006) discussion of the variable influence of frontiers in geographic, political, economic and cultural dimensions fits well with the complexities of Parkman's discussion of gender, ritual, and power in Pomo society. The overlapping, multiscalar characteristics of frontiers that Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) speak about are also evident in the Pomo's engagement along their frontier. The political negotiations taking place in the village centre and the close management of resources in dangerous and occupied territory expose a division between human and non-human communities that is comparable to situations found in frontier studies. Most importantly, however, the archaeological visibility of these interactions in settlement patterns, hunting shrines and transformer sites supports the need for an archaeology of boundary and animism.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF LANDSCAPE

While frontier studies have not yet incorporated landscape agency, phe-

nomenological studies, such as Christopher Tilley's *Phenomenological Approaches to Landscape Archaeology* (1998), have discussed the idea in some detail. For Tilley, landscape is an ever-changing concept that defies individual definition. Imagined and experienced landscapes are constructed in innumerable ways and thus, they require flexible interpretive strategies. In his work, Tilley (1996; 1998) focuses on monumental architecture and demonstrates that prominent landscape features can act as orienting and "transition points" for their viewers. Following this view, he uses physical remnants of boundary to explore worldviews through landscape, in much the same manner as anthropologists and archaeologists can explore wider social divisions through physical boundary.

Employing notions of landscape brought forth by Tilley, Richard Bradley's (2000) *An Archaeology of Natural Places* details the importance of seemingly empty landscape through discussions of votives, rock art, and lithic production sites. Under the umbrella of landscape archaeology, Bradley uses boundary and boundedness in his attempt to expose worldviews through natural landscape. As with the archaeologies of frontier discussed previously, he remarks upon the difficulty of associating boundedness in artifactual groups and boundedness in cultural constructs such as gender, age and other divisions (Bradley 2000:147). Despite this, he also acknowledges the importance of physical boundary in his work on Salisbury Plain earthworks, where votives found in peri-

pheral areas contrast sharply with those in the settlements and point to an alternative spatial status that might even create a distinction between the individual and the community (Bradley 2000).

The difficulty of extrapolating world-view from archaeology is evident in Bradley's work, but of the options available, boundary markers prove successful. The attempt to "recover" (Bradley 2000:161) the cultural meaning of natural places through the material of liminality is a progressive process. An important first step has been taken through landscape archaeologies brought by Bradley and Tilley, as this pushed archaeology beyond the traditional categorizations of archaeological practice that isolate persons from their environments. However, their investigations utilize ideas of core and periphery in the same ways as researchers working on the frontier. Concepts of duality and boundedness can be applied to animistic concepts fruitfully when one realizes the limitations of the analogy. By comparing these core and periphery concepts in the animistic landscapes of Tilley and Bradley with conventional ideas of community interaction, we can arrive to a more vivid and complex picture of social interaction. When brought into Parker's (2006) continuum, these animistic engagements take their place among the interactive web of human and non-human relationships that make up the frontier.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANIMISM

The third major research area in this discussion is the archaeology of animism. Like research in landscape archaeology, recent coverage on animism in the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* (2008) and the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* (2009) centres upon the topic of methodological integration of alternative ontologies into archaeology. As suggested by Brown and Walker (2008), the cross-cultural prevalence of animistic religious belief documented by anthropologists in the ethnographic period should provide sufficient reason to explore its material correlates in the archaeological record. Adding to this view, I believe that by operating from a uniformitarianist, analogical perspective, we can use boundary to begin to approach these extremely clouded and complex topics.

In their introduction to the *Cambridge Journal of Archaeology's* special section on animism, or "relational ontologies," Alberti and Bray (2009:338) isolate several major difficulties to the study of animism in archaeology: "(1) [...] modern 'dualisms'; (2) the nature of relational ontologies; (3) the problematic of 'object agency'; (4) and the methodological implications of researching relational and other ontologies." Taking a cue from Tilley (2008) and the archaeology of landscape, dualities employed discursively and non-discursively by archaeologists must be recognized, if not in specifics, then as a source of bias that may overwhelm evidence of animism. As a corollary, relational ontologies must be recognized in addition to

substantivist, modernist ontologies, as they contrast with earlier notions of animism by focusing on the “the ability of people, places and things to communicate with each other rather than [...] focus on the super-natural world of spirits” (Sillar 2009:369).

The most pertinent difficulty is the danger of applying dualist thinking onto unreceptive data. This statement comes up particularly clearly in Bradley’s position on stretched associations (Bradley 2000:147) in his archaeology of natural places, but also in Green and Perlman (1985) and Parker’s (2006) discussions on arbitrary division. These difficulties are, however, navigable, and researchers such as Bradley (2000), Tilley (1996) and Parkman (1994) have successfully brought animistic landscape constructions into focus. Finding boundaries within an animated and holistic landscape may seem contradictory, but these contradictions are necessary for comprehension of animism (Holbraad 2009). As Holbraad has stated on the subject, we must “explore the enormous conceptual wealth of the Western intellectual tradition in order to find concepts that may, after all, be appropriate to the analysis of animism” (Holbraad 2009:435). Cultural boundary is one such means of exploration.

Even though boundary is an excellent starting point for research on animism in archaeology, the basic problem of recognizing it in the archaeological record remains. How can one differentiate conventional social boundaries from animate ones? Recent contributions to the

discussion on animism have manoeuvred around these problematic issues. For example, Maria Nieves Zedeño (2009) has developed several ethnologically derived criteria for the recognition of animism in the archaeological record. To do so, she has listed “inherently animate objects” such as red paint, crystals, fossils and copper; “objects that embody the soul of a living being, such as effigies and parts of animals;” and “objects that enhance communication, such as smoking pipes, smoking plants, roots of hallucinogenic plants and leaves of smudging or incense plants” (Zedeño 2009:412). In coordination with these material types, three association types are consistently defined as animistic: “spatial association between animate objects and any other object,” “spatial association between any kind of object and certain landforms, such as springs, caves, lakes, prominent rock formations and rock crevices, mountaintops and erratic boulders,” and “use in activities or contexts aimed at managing and transferring power” (Zedeño 2009:412). These categories are certainly broad, yet they can provide sufficient ethnographic analogy to recognize the possibility of animism in the past. Bradley (2000), Tilley (1996), and Parkman (1994) have all used one or another of these material traces as the foundation of their arguments for active landscapes, and researchers focusing more specifically on “animism” certainly do as well. These analogical associations are essential starting points in the search for animistic boundary in the archaeological record.

DIVIDING ANIMISM

The analogical reasoning put forward by Zedeño (2009) is apparent in all of the case studies presented in the corresponding special issues on animism in archaeology. Most work on animism in archaeology begins with such ethnoarchaeological research, because the materiality of animism is normally too complex to distill from the material record without some ethnographic analogy. Of these case studies, several exhibit particular reference to the archaeology of physical boundary. First, Bill Sillar's (2009) ethnoarchaeological study of central Andean animism seeks to complicate notions of supernatural with ideas of real, personified material agency. Sillar's (2009) study of the Highland Andean peoples suggests that the spirit world is not separated from the human world in terms of cultural ability. Rather, persons, animals and things can all possess *animo*, the "vitalizing animation" of life and the agent. In this perspective, Incan stone monuments at Huanacaure did not merely represent ancestors for the Highland Andeans, but rather embodied them. In descendent communities, offerings of food, drink and other goods can be transmitted to the animate receiver in several ways: surrogate, conflagration, scatter distribution and burial. These are relationships of reciprocity and active negotiation, what Sillar terms "social responsibility to other people, as well as the animate world" (2009:374). While he does not discuss boundary within these descriptions, there is a distinct and negotiated separation between the

ritual guardians and the persons they connect. Through this, though, all agents are connected through *animo*. It is very possible that the offering sites described there exist in a liminal zone, bridging two communities along a material boundary, much like the caves among the Pomo (Parkman 1994) or transformer sites studied by Bradley (2000).

In contrast, Linda Brown and Kitty Emery's (2008) treatment of animism in the Guatemalan highlands directly explores boundaries within animistic belief. Following a logic similar to Zedeño (2009), Brown and Emery search for the material remains of animistic interaction in the archaeological record. In particular, they demonstrate that hunting shrines document a division between humans and the forest, as it is where the ritual negotiation with non-human agents occurs. As with the Pomo, the Maya "draw a sharp conceptual distinction between the social spaces occupied by humans and those of the forest wilds" (Brown and Emery 2008:303). Throughout their discussion of this situation, Brown and Emery (2008) emphasize thresholds, boundaries, and the spatial anchoring of ritual practice. They show that beings – human or non-human – navigate through these liminal spaces and foreign lands, and negotiations take the form of rituals and offerings in hunting shrines.

More so than in any other example, Brown and Emery present the potential of studying animism in the long-term, using a variety of historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources.

ces to explore animistic boundary. Widespread depictions of functionally separated forest–human realms and corresponding human–animal deities among the Lowland Maya from the Post-Classic period onwards link their ethnographic work with a well documented history of animistic belief (Brown and Emery 2008:305-306). Through a comprehensive project including the mapping of topographic and shrine features, analysis of faunal remains and ethnographic interviews with active users of such features, they manage to untangle animistic boundary from other social relationships using ethnographic analogy (as per Binford 1967 and Hodder 1982).

As we have seen in all cases so far, animate beings and the spaces they occupy, or embody, are involved in a complex, dynamic and consequential communication with their partnered communities. In Brown and Emery’s (2008) work in the Guatemalan highlands, rock outcroppings, prey, hunting dogs, weapons and skeletal remains are all active agents enmeshed in a relational discourse with humans. Understanding boundaries between these groups allow researchers to see how such divisions are transgressed, as shown by Brown and Emery’s (2008) study on new perspectives on “wild” material use in community settings. Here foreign products traded within an animate landscape, where subfloor caches of these materials take on new meaning as transgressions of an animistic boundary. The danger associated with these foreign economic encounters is again apparent. In Parker’s

terms (2006), this is a relatively sharp and impermeable boundary, one hinged upon resource acquisition. Yet, the political nature is inseparable from economic concern. Retribution for improper political negotiation can be dangerous and even deadly for Mayan participants (Brown and Emery 2008:332).

All these examples of boundary in the archaeology of animism show spatial liminality strictly between persons and things, “*between* humans and non-human agents” as Brown and Emery state (2008:300, emphasis added). Now when one considers the integrative nature of animistic belief, the notion of boundary becomes tricky. As noted before, western dualisms can effect division where it may not exist, and it is important to characterize such boundaries dividing human and non-human communities as Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) and Parker (2006) would for colonial frontiers. In view of frontier research, it is essential to explore the contradictions among the many relationships that comprise frontier and contrast multiple lines of animistic and other boundary relationships.

THE ANIMISTIC FRONTIER

The most useful way to bridge the complicated nature of boundary with the existence of non-human interaction in the archaeological record is through Parker’s continuum of borderlands. Gender in Parkman (1994), gender and power in Bradley (2000), ancestral lineages in Sillar (2009), and resource extraction in Brown and Emery (2008) are all singular

explanations for boundary negotiation and liminality in the archaeological record. Yet, each of these foci cannot provide a complete picture. Just as with the negotiated and variable colonial landscapes put forward by Lightfoot and Martinez (1995), some of these may contain multiple, overlapping boundaries.

This is where Parker's "Continuum of Boundary Dynamics" (**Figure 1**) proves particularly useful. The merging of borderland discourse between archaeologies of animism, landscape and frontier studies can enrich all components through a characterization of boundary from static to fluid and from geographic to social. The possibility of comparing ontologies through boundaries is a complicated subject indeed; however, Parker's scheme can simplify comparative research. In frontier studies where material is considered as a possible source of agency in boundary dynamics, Parker's (2006) work can help refine the unique and multifaceted characteristics of boundary.

The use of Parker's continuum opens possibilities for research by associating animism with a range of interaction types. For example, ideas of constrained geography (Parker 2006:83) among the aforementioned case studies have not been adequately analyzed, although topographic associations are vital to boundaries in animism (Brown and Emery 2008:307; Zedeño 2009). The "lines of communication" Parker (2006:83) argues for river borders are strikingly similar to trade routes and associated hunting shrines in Brown and

Emery's work (2008:316). In economic terms, the resource procurement strategies shown in borderlands in Pomo territory and Lowland Guatemala fit into a very economic description of animistic boundary. In his explanation of similar frontier studies, Parker argues, "Assyrian administrators had to travel far into enemy territory to acquire logs suitable for construction projects taking place in the Assyrian heartland" (2006: 83). Compare this with similar economic transactions in Brown and Emery's Lowland Mayan example: "the animal guardian protects the creatures of the forest by making sure hunters do not abuse them or take more creatures than needed. Hunters know they must maintain good rapport and positive dealings with this powerful actor..." (2008:311). These depictions of economic and social transaction across boundary are markedly similar. Often, notions of violence and danger are associated with any foray across these conceptual boundaries, animistic or otherwise. This sense of danger and economic opportunity aligns with Lightfoot and Martinez' (1995) characterization of frontier as a source of economic power and fits well within Parker's continuum of boundary. When dealing with issues of landscape interaction, ideas of resource exploitation carry over from world-systems studies. Throughout Green and Perlman (1985), Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) and Parker (2006), peripheral resource management in occupied territory is a key theme, just as it is in the archaeology of animism.

Along with economic borders, politi-

cal borders are also visible in the case studies. Offerings of food from the people of the Andean Highlands oblige animal guardians “to care for the house, the fields and the animals” (Sillar 2009:373). In the Salisbury Plains, changing distributions of votive deposits signified a move of small, peripheral and socially subversive activities to large, core, and government-sanctioned arenas (Bradley 2000). As for the Pomo, “corporate power was found in the community, personal power came from the wilderness” (Parkman 1994:29). This concept of individualism in peripheral areas of cultural interaction can be compared to Lightfoot and Martinez’ (1995) characterization of frontier as a place of individual power. Adding yet another layer in Parker’s (2006) boundary schematic, gendered descriptions of male and female power divisions in the Pomo followed strictly along spatial liminal zones, cross-referencing female puberty and fertility rights with the “wilderness” (Parkman 1994). It should be noted that the complexity of all of these boundary relationships is comparable to that of traditionally defined community boundaries. In light of this, work that has been done on boundary in animism should be re-examined through a simplified and comparative scheme such as Parker’s (2006).

CONCLUSION

The variety and richness of boundary in animistic communities should encourage its inclusion in wider frontier research, and boundary should have a secure place in the archaeology

of animism. The motivations and associations of boundary activities between animistic and other boundaries will spur a reconsideration of landscape interaction in all of its related fields. By integrating the new methodological insights on animism that highlight points of transformation and liminality in landscape with newly simplified concepts of overlapping and dynamic boundaries of frontier research, we can better approach the complexity of worldviews present in the archaeological past. In the archaeology of animism, it is interesting that the exploration of bounded animistic groups have not been couched in terms of frontier research. When animistic, active landscapes are inserted into typical colonial and frontier engagements, we can better analyze conflict and cooperation among groups. Conversely, the insights gained from colonial interaction can provide nuance to our understanding of boundaries in animistic societies. At the very least, we should follow Parker (2006) and Lamont and Molnar’s (2002) calls for a synthetic conversation among those who study boundary processes. By merging discourses on boundaries between animism and frontier, we can broaden comparative research on the nature of ethnic identification through culture contact.

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