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## Before and After Collapse

### Reflections on the Regeneration of Social Complexity

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This book addresses an extraordinarily complicated sociohistorical phenomenon: the regeneration of cultural complexity in the aftermath of state collapse. The case studies presented here graphically demonstrate the highly variable nature of this process. One might be tempted to say that each case of societal regeneration is unpredictable, historically contingent, unique, and therefore analyzable only in its own terms. Most of the authors in this book do, in fact, present empirically rich instances of regeneration processes that pertain to highly specific historical, cultural, and environmental circumstances. Generally eschewing the comparative impulse, these authors emphasize the contingent and locally embedded quality of the social regeneration of complexity. One can readily understand this perspective given the exceptionally variable social and historical trajectories through which complex societies developed globally. Some contributors (most notably Bronson and Schwartz), however, explicitly grapple with more general theoretical frameworks that may enable intriguing comparisons across time, space, and cultural traditions.

As Glenn Schwartz perceptively notes in his introductory chapter, the regeneration of social complexity in the wake of the collapse of urbanized, state-level societies and empires has rarely been a topic of sustained scholarly analysis, despite its inherent value for comparative historical and social science research. This may be because the aftermath of empire is often imagined as a period of cultural degradation, a backsliding into “dark ages” shorn of the rich material trappings of imperial splendor. The initial decline of social complexity after state collapse apparently renders this period of transformation less compelling as an object of analysis for many historians, art historians, and archaeologists. The study of “high civilization” still remains the holy grail of historical scholarship. But this is at once a parochial and an elitist conception, one that fails to acknowledge that the regeneration of cultural

complexity, in whatever forms it takes, is a complex process of social change fascinating in its own right. Principled theoretical and empirical analyses of regeneration in the aftermath of collapse have enormous potential for informing us about the structural nature of complex society and the processes through which states and empires are formed and sustained in the first instance. The various chapters of this book represent richly varied attempts to explore this potential both through empirical analysis of individual case studies and through more general, comparative perspectives.

To understand the regeneration of social complexity after some form of state disintegration or collapse, one must recognize and account for the historical specificities of prior structures of rule, authority, and governmentality. By “governmentality” here I mean the socially and historically contingent crucible of coercion and consent that composes the underlying lineaments of state power. Regeneration of social complexity, if such occurred after collapse of a state formation, can follow any number of structural pathways, depending on the nature of various externalities present during the reconstitution of complex society. Such externalities might include the social, political, economic, and environmental processes by which state collapse was engendered in the first instance, or the nature of historical, political, and economic relationships with neighboring states. In short, the conditions of possibility for the social regeneration of complexly structured societies, as well as the specific character of that regeneration, are directly dependent upon the principles and structures of government prior to collapse.

Any convincing analysis of the regeneration of social complexity after state collapse must account for the “time-binding” material and social effects of prior governmental actions—the specific political ecology of the state prior to its disintegration. The analysis of political disruption must take account of the historical continuities between pre- and postcollapse social formations as much as the nature of the disjunctions produced in the aftermath of state disintegration. One can readily imagine, for instance, that it matters considerably for such an analysis whether the historical trajectory of state formation and governance entailed the forceful imposition of direct control over territories, resources, and populations by some form of dominant political, economic, and military power, or whether state structure and governance was sustained through indirect networks of political alliance, social exchange, and commodity circulation via trade and mutually accepted tributary or clientage relationships.

The former circumstance involves the imposition of hegemony and sovereignty over subjugated peoples by authorities that govern with the full panoply

of the instruments of daily administration, surveillance, persuasion, co-optation, and coercion. Here territorial annexation, imposition of externally derived laws and regulations, cultural absorption of subject populations, and often a powerful, colonial ideology of a "civilizing mission" are central to the dynamics of state formation and expansion. A necessary institutional correlate of the colonizing state is the forceful deployment of military and police power. The physical embodiment of this power often includes chains of strategically placed fortresses, garrisons, and fortified walls, but also new colonial towns imposed in the countryside, often with streets laid out in visually transparent grid or radial forms to enhance, in theory at least, the capacity for surveillance, tracking, and ultimately taxing of populations of the subject cities and their near hinterlands. The strategy of hegemony and sovereignty, in other words, reflects the logic and the logistics of empire.

The latter circumstance, in contrast, represents a case in which a state dominates populations without actually administering them directly—a form of governance that can be termed hegemony without sovereignty. In this instance, power and influence are exercised not by unilateral imposition of administrative regulations or centrally controlled bureaucracy but rather by the strategic application of force—tactical force, not generalized military oppression—and the demonstration effects of cultural superiority, awesome displays of material wealth, sumptuousness, conspicuous consumption, and superior military capability (Sahlins 2004).<sup>1</sup> The intrusive, material presence of the state in local communities is much reduced, often absent altogether, in favor of the co-optation of local institutions and facilities, while the displays of superiority (the demonstration effects) are frequently limited to capitals, where they may impress and overawe local elites. The mere potential for direct military intervention, territorial subjugation, and social incorporation is sufficient to ensure the political and economic subordination of these subject populations. The dominant state exercises hegemony without the need for or logistical difficulties of maintaining sovereignty. Here the shared perception of overwhelming power obviates the need for its systematic exercise. The social and economic costs of this principle of power are correspondingly lower than that of the colonizing state, which must bear the extraordinary burden of subduing and directly governing an often truculent and resistant population.

But why do I claim that it matters significantly to the analysis of the regeneration of complex society whether the political ecology of states prior to collapse varied along these lines—that is, along the continuum from what we can gloss schematically as direct-to-indirect rule? First, I would argue that these distinct modes of political control (and, as discussed below, the depth of their

temporal persistence) generate differing degrees of transformation in everyday practices, habitual social relations, and, ultimately, the historical consciousness of subject populations, and further that the intensity of this transformation of historical consciousness shapes the character and trajectory of social regeneration in the wake of state disintegration. From this perspective, ordinary peoples' prevailing attitudes, perceptions, and practices played out in the course of their everyday lives, not simply political and economic institutions, become analytically critical variables.

In the case of the colonizing state (hegemony with sovereignty), the ubiquity of instruments of social control—foreign governors wielding authority through military force; imposed systems of revenue collection, taxation, tariffs, and tribute; subordination of once-autonomous local authorities; expropriation of local land, water, and other natural resources; graphic displays of extreme violence against local resistance; erection of highly visible public monuments such as palaces, temples, shrines, government schools, offices, warehouses, forts, prisons, and the foundation of entirely new colonial cities commemorating and glorifying the power of the state—serve, over time, to alter and even suborn autochthonous social identities and senses of cultural independence. In a kind of society-wide "Stockholm syndrome," subject populations often move their perception of newly dominant authorities from fear and loathing to identification, collaboration, and emulation. They often become complicit in their own domination. In short, historical consciousness may be so thoroughly transformed that the dominated and the dominators come to broadly share the new ideology of social relations and governance. The political subjugation of local populations becomes naturalized. Foreign authorities and, even more important, foreign "ways of being" become embedded in the total social fabric, radically transforming if not erasing locally specific identities and social relationships. This is not to say, however, that resistance to the colonizing state necessarily disappears. Vigorous local opposition may continue, particularly in covert fashion. But accommodation to the state in its various degrees and intensities of political presence defines the terms of engagement of that resistance.

In the case of a state formation structured according to a political strategy of hegemony without sovereignty, the effects on historical consciousness of the subjugated populations may be rather less transformative, more fluid, and potentially evanescent. Daily social interactions follow familiar rhythms without the continual presence of foreign authorities. The material presence and sheer physical artifacts of the superordinate state rarely

dominate local cityscapes. Foreign-occupied military garrisons and foreign-conceived and -imposed colonial new towns are few and far between, or entirely absent. Social intercourse between state authorities and subject populations is highly constrained both spatially (to capitals or trading entrepôts, for instance) and often temporally as well, occurring only during a few prescribed moments (such as periods of tribute collection). Local patterns of work, worship, and leisure continue fundamentally unaltered. Foreign ways of being are less apparent, less palpable, consigned most often to occasional encounters in highly conventionalized, scripted social contexts. Multiple or unanticipated juxtapositions of the foreign and the local are rare and do not constitute the fundamental texture of social life.

Of course, this does not mean that in a complex state formation structured through the exercise of hegemony without sovereignty, social impacts on subject populations are negligible. As a major instance of such impact, all states extract surplus from subject populations whether in labor or in kind, or both. Taxation of labor, product, or species will often be considerably onerous, even though the institutional forms of extraction remain local. Surplus inevitably flows away from the local communities into the coffers of both the local authorities (as was likely the case prior to foreign domination) and that of the distant, foreign elites. Although social and, especially, economic impacts on subject populations are considerable, they are periodic, not chronic, and framed in terms of very specific social domains; they do not seep into daily social practice or necessarily transform people's understanding of themselves or their place in the world.

This distinction between state-deployed strategies of hegemony and sovereignty versus hegemony without sovereignty can be further explored by conceiving the difference in impact on subject populations in terms of another analytical distinction—that between orthodoxy and orthopraxy. This distinction will be particularly important later when I explore the various pathways, trajectories, and outcomes of the regeneration of complex societies after an event or process of state collapse. Orthodoxy and orthopraxy are subtly different forms of the relationship between belief and behavior.

By orthodoxy here I mean circumstances under which subject populations adopt and practice state ideology that serves to bind them closely to dominant patterns of behavior prescribed and sanctioned by state authorities. In the case studies of the preindustrial states examined in this book, orthodoxy is framed most often in terms of state religions and related cult practices. Such state religions inculcate concepts of the proper social relationships between rulers and the ruled, create a sense of shared meaning

between state authorities and their subjects, legitimize the actions of central authorities, and, in some sense, define the terms of social belonging and citizenship in society.

Often such religious practice is tied spatially and materially to visually salient state temples, shrines, and pilgrimage centers. These state-authorized and -constructed spaces become touchstones for public gatherings and therefore for the expression of popular culture and publicly shared attitudes. Significantly, one finds that such temples (within major cities at least) are contiguous with other state-constructed spaces and structures, such as central plazas, palaces, elite residences, and perhaps most important of all, state-regulated marketplaces. This physical contiguity of state-identified places and the institutions they materialize shapes the daily spatial practice of state subjects. They become critical nodes in the social networks that people inhabit on a daily basis. Because access to and social relationships within these spaces are shaped by the needs and priorities of the state, these physical spaces are important vehicles for inculcating socioreligious orthodoxy.

State religions can also change the definition and experience of time and therefore the collective daily activities organized in temporal cycles that are critical to social reproduction. Frequently, state religions introduce new calendars, calendrical systems, and related forms of time reckoning that serve to inscribe new senses of temporal value. In the preindustrial world, such calendars are normally linked to specific rhythms of production, particularly in agricultural practice. By temporally coordinating agriculture and labor through new systems of time reckoning, the state achieves a measure of control over the social forces of production. Surplus production, in particular, is extracted through the spatial and temporal frames of reference of the dominant state authorities. That is, state religion and state business merge or interpenetrate as a bundle of related, daily practices and activities. Religion and economics become part of a socially and conceptually seamless set of practices.

Subjects come to live and experience their social worlds in terms of the spatial and temporal frames of reference constructed and authorized by the state. By significantly altering or introducing new spatial and temporal frames of reference, the state in essence achieves a measure of discipline over its subjects' social, political, and economic behavior, challenging and often changing local practices. Over a period of time, perhaps a generation or two, this habituated social action engraves a kind of mental template of what is defined as acceptable actions and proper thought. In Orwellian terms, the state achieves, particularly in its leading subjects, a measure of

“mind control” through its involvement in the production and consumption of spatial, temporal, and material value. State orthodoxy defines what, where, when, how, and why certain social actions are valued, as well as who may have access to the material and social benefits generated by the state. Just as importantly, a state-imposed doxology defines who can be excluded from these benefits. That is, state authorities define and implement the system of incentives and punishments that motivate or inhibit culturally prescribed and culturally proscribed behaviors among its subjects.

Orthodoxy, in other words, is intimately associated with the process of the transformation of historical consciousness. Habitual social, economic, religious, and ideological practice is intimately bound to belief. Believers become citizens; citizens become believers. Subjects aspire to the values promoted by state authorities, often through religious practice. New communities of worship and social belonging are among the most effective vehicles for the transformation of historical consciousness that, in political terms, can be glossed as the transformation of subjects into citizens. In the world of orthodoxy, behavior and belief become isomorphic: subjects of the state do what they believe, and they believe what they do. Subjects become stakeholders and, in the process, willing agents of the state’s social, economic, political, and cultural agendas and its status quo. In the calculus of cost versus value, orthodox citizens benefit from conforming their behavior to the dominant beliefs and practices of the state.

I suggest that the adoption of orthodoxy is more likely to occur in the context of a state structured through a strategy of hegemony and sovereignty—a context in which daily behaviors are suffused within, defined, controlled, or heavily influenced by state instruments of social control. The very social and physical ubiquity of the state, its institutions, material practices, strategies of governance, beliefs, and value systems, condition the manner in which individuals experience their world. The relevant social memories, religious practices, and institutions become those of the dominant state and its elite authorities, not those of the incorporated subjects. Local identity is not necessarily entirely subsumed in or erased by the foreign value system, but it is certainly transformed and, in complex ways, hybridized by interaction with the dominant value system. Of course, hybridization may flow in either direction or both simultaneously—from dominant elites to local subjects, and from local subjects to dominant elites—but the relevant point is that value shifts inevitably occur, and the resulting system can become the taken-for-granted institutional, social, and behavioral framework for society. In short, orthodoxy becomes naturalized, the normative state of affairs.

By orthopraxy, I mean social forms of practice that come close to dominant patterns of behavior without adopting the underlying meaning or worldview inscribed in such practices. Subjects behave (publicly at least) in a fashion consistent with the expectations of state authorities. They may do so to avoid punishment or, perhaps just as likely, to extract social, political, or economic benefits from the dominant state and its institutions. The behavior of local subjects is strategically mimetic and does not constitute thoroughgoing assimilation or conversion, as is the case with orthodox beliefs. Local elites expand their own influence and authority by establishing mutualistic or symbiotic social relationships with state authorities without adopting the underlying value system of the dominant state. Emulation and deference are effective tools for creating and sustaining these important social networks.

Orthopraxy, however, is not a dilute or incomplete form of orthodoxy in which state doxology and values are misunderstood or inadequately inculcated in subjects. Rather, orthopraxy generates a unique synthesis of foreign (dominant) and local (subordinate) beliefs; expresses its own value system that may partially incorporate, transform, or even reject foreign elements; and, importantly, constitutes its own political strategy. In contrast to the power of orthodox beliefs, when thoroughly assimilated by subject populations, to effect a transformation of historical consciousness, orthopraxic behaviors do not readily result in such substantive changes in local beliefs and practices, core value systems, or metaphysical understandings of space, time, and history. Local beliefs, values, and social memories are not subsumed or erased in the dominant system. Rather, they retain their integrity and local meaning, even if they are partially transformed by foreign concepts and institutional practices as they interpenetrate them. Local elites and their subjects pattern their behavior on the model of the dominant social actors, but they do not become like those actors except as they consciously choose to do so. In effect, unlike orthodoxy, orthopraxy produces strategic subjects, not committed citizens.

Parallel to my thoughts on the proposed close relationship of orthodoxy to states organized according to principles of hegemony and sovereignty, I would argue that orthopraxy is more likely to occur under conditions of dominance structured by a strategy of hegemony without sovereignty. The rationale for this hypothesis is straightforward, and I will not belabor the point. Simply framed, the relative material, social, and political absence of a state that elects to exercise hegemony through indirect instruments of power inhibits the consolidation and convergence of belief, value, and behavior that induces committed forms of orthodoxy. The relationship of state to

subject under a regime of hegemony without sovereignty is framed most often as a periodic, extractive proposition, rather than as a fully realized incorporation of local subjects into the political sphere. State authorities skim the economic surplus of subjects through episodic tribute and taxation, but they rarely engage in the social control of daily life. Political relations focus on interactions between state and local elites; that is, the bulk of the subject population constitute economic subjects, not political subjects. As a result, substantive value shifts and the hybridization of beliefs and social practices among all but a few local elites rarely occur. Absent a "civilizing mission," the mass conversion experience characteristic of orthodoxy never takes root. Habituated social practices remain deeply embedded in local ways of belief and being. Orthopraxy does not entail the rejection or transformation of local identities, values, institutions, and social practices, but rather constitutes a strategic positioning of these local cultural expressions in terms of the value system of the state. Instead of a transformation of historical consciousness among subjects as occurs with orthodoxy, we see multiple local accommodations to the political and economic realities of a dominant power. Such accommodations, however, do not entail acceptance of the implicit social and moral order on which that dominant power is based. In short, orthopraxy is a form of situational, pragmatic social practice formed in the crucible of unequal power relations.

How, then, do we apply these various theoretical concepts of hegemony, sovereignty, orthodoxy, and orthopraxy to the analysis of the regeneration of complex society in the aftermath of state collapse? First, I would argue that what is regenerated after collapse may be dependent on the extent to which the historical consciousness (and therefore the daily social, political, ideological, and cultural practices of subject populations) has been transformed. An initial hypothesis might propose that the regeneration of complex society after state collapse is more likely to occur in contexts in which the predecessor state held both hegemony and sovereignty over subject populations for a considerable period of time (several generations) and therefore succeeded in significantly transforming the historical consciousness of these populations. In such a historical context, the ubiquitous physical and social presence of the state serves, over time, to ingrain social habits, political structures, patterns of production and consumption, and, not least, familiarity with and acceptance of hierarchical institutions and specific forms of class relations. The status quo ante becomes the natural, familiar model for regenerating and reproducing state formations. Here the intriguing concept of "template regeneration" proposed by Bennet Bronson (chapter 9) is particularly apropos.

By "template regeneration," Bronson means that the regeneration of complex society follows a culturally well-understood and historically ingrained model of social and political organization, such that states and empires reappear periodically after periods of disintegration with essentially the same structure. According to Bronson, such regenerated states are "faithful copies of their predecessors" that adhere to replicated social practices, "government organization, institutions, language, cultural manifestations, and style." Bronson attributes the virtual isomorphic character of such regenerated states to the power of literacy and to bureaucratic structures obsessed with detailed record keeping. He believes that such practices of reading, writing, and record keeping permitted the reemergent state to copy the institutions and cultural styles of their predecessors with high fidelity and essentially re-create the past. Not surprisingly, Bronson points to the ancient Chinese empire(s) as his principal exemplar of template regeneration, given the high cultural value placed by the Chinese on literacy, bureaucracy, mensuration/standardization, and hierarchical institutions.

This assumes, of course, that the Chinese (or other template regenerating states) held a norm or ideal of history as the "unadorned reporting of things that had happened, free of distortion, addition or omission, as though it were possible to record human actions in words as faithfully as a musical performance might be recorded by an infallible phonograph" (Nelson 1973:40) and further that the means of transmitting historical tradition across generations was principally via the written word. Both of these assumptions can be questioned—if not, perhaps, in the Chinese case, most certainly in other cultural and historical contexts (such as the Andes, Mesoamerica, sub-Saharan Africa) where plastic and textile art, storytelling, folk tales, music, dance, and other forms of performative acts serve as a principal vehicle for the transmission of historical knowledge.

In other words, I would extend Bronson's notions of how and why template regeneration occurs by noting that this was not simply a matter of technography, that is, occurring merely through the quality and fidelity of written records. Rather, cases of template regeneration may equally be a product of perduring ideologies, worldviews, and daily social practices, however these were transmitted across generations (orally, the written word, plastic arts, performative scripts). Miriam Stark's (chapter 10) discussion of the sequential, recursive emergence of structurally isomorphic state formations in Southeast Asia is a particularly interesting instance of template regeneration that does not depend exclusively on literacy and the transmission of detailed historical records. Although the pre-Angkor and Angkor period Khmer states employed scripts written in Sanskrit and Old

Khmer, these texts (particularly those written in Sanskrit) generally concern details of dynastic succession, dedications recounting the establishment of religious foundations, and imprecations to various Indic deities. Michael Vickery's (1998) tour de force of historical scholarship demonstrated that the Old Khmer texts do provide a richer description of local sociological, political, and economic structures than had been previously appreciated. Still, these inscriptions do not constitute the kind of highly detailed historical archive that Bronson suggests was essential for template regeneration. As Stark proposes, the "Khmer template" derived from long-term continuities in local-level political structures ("local" here meaning down to the sociological scale of villages and their surrounding hinterlands) and in traditional modes of production, principally wet-rice agriculture and fishing.

A very similar argument can be seen in Gordon McEwan's (chapter 6) treatment of the emergence of the Inca empire. He effectively argues that the Inca were consciously drawing on historical models of ecological adaptations, administrative structures, political organizations, and, most importantly, ideological concepts of political legitimacy prevalent in the predecessor empires of Tiwanaku and Wari. Here, though, one might suggest along with McEwan that the structural template regenerated by the Inca was not completely isomorphic with the past; it was not a "faithful copy" of its predecessors, in Bronson's terms. Rather, the "Inca template" combined elements of structural continuity, particularly at the level of local political administration (as in the case of the Khmer), with political innovations that built upon but nevertheless transformed the Wari and Tiwanaku templates.

These cases bear some similarity to Bronson's "stimulus regeneration" (the mobilization of social memory, real or imagined, to legitimate structures of hierarchy) but still retain elements of the process of template regeneration. So perhaps we might seek to extend Bronson's typology by proposing a conceptual hybrid of some sort between stimulus and template regeneration to account for these cases. In these sociohistorical contexts, the transmission of a structural template for state formations across generations was not the product of didactic readings of preserved historical archives by mandarins but rather resulted from daily sociocultural practice and long-term persistence in ideology and worldview. In short, the mode and technology of structural template transmission is not really the principal issue here. More importantly, template regeneration can be conceptualized as another term for a process of social regeneration stemming from shared historical consciousness of proper social, moral, and governmental order: the practice of orthodoxy rather than orthopraxy.

As is made clear by several chapters in this volume, that which is regener-

ated after collapse is not always a duplicate or "structural template" of the prior state. Often the very ruptures of collapse generate new institutions, new social practices, and (most interesting from my perspective) new forms of historical consciousness. The fascinating case studies described by Ellen Morris for the First Intermediate Period in Egypt (chapter 4), by Diane and Arlen Chase for the Classic-Terminal Classic-Postclassic Maya transitions (chapter 11), and by Christina Conlee for the post-Wari setting in the Nasca region of Peru (chapter 7) emphasize that social inversions, new forms of class relations, emergent wealth, and shared power regimes complicate presumptive models of divine kings, centralized bureaucratic administration, and the bifurcated class relations of nobles versus commoners. In these historically and culturally distinctive situations, state collapse appears to generate not a rejuvenated template of prior governmentality but in some sense a polar opposite.

In each of these cases, we see the emergence of pluralizing ideologies, new regimes of collective, decentralized authority, enhanced social mobility, and even a socially sanctioned aversion to prior authoritarian regimes. So, rather than the regeneration of similar institutions of power, governance, and sociocultural practices, we may in postcollapse scenarios see the emergence of new forms of socially complex institutions—new class relations, new patterns of production, new forms of the circulation of wealth, and a pluralizing of ideology (even if these innovative forms are imagined by their creators to represent a legitimate continuity from the past). In these instances, some institutions, class relations, and patterns of production may be retained from the precollapse polity. Often, however, these social-structural forms will reflect the historical circumstances of the collapse process (which in most instances was likely to have been socially traumatic to a significant part of the society's population), and the process of collapse and reconstitution will result in new forms of complexity.

Often such new forms of social complexity derive from a foreign source and from external models of organizing social and economic relationships. As Schwartz (chapter 1) perceptively remarks, any analysis of the regeneration of social complexity must pay keen attention to the "teleconnections" of societies across extensive geographic space. In this vein, the contributions of Stark (chapter 10) and Marilyn Masson, Timothy Hare, and Carlos Peraza Lope (chapter 12) demonstrate that "internationalism" in the form of sea-borne, long-distance trade and mercantile activities drove significant social change and heavily influenced (in the case of the Khmer states) or even broke (in the case of the Postclassic Maya) preexisting structural templates of social complexity. In these cases, connectedness and interdependency rather than autonomy and autarky provide the social conditions for the regeneration of complexity. Emerging

from this complex interplay of societies and economies is the development of a political landscape of multiple self-organized, competing polities rather than a monolithic imperial presence.

Of course, as Kenny Sims (chapter 8) trenchantly observes, in some cases the regeneration of centralized authority fails to occur after the collapse of empire. Local political formations retain a postcollapse preference for noncomplex, independent, and stubbornly autonomous structures. In these instances, as Sims suggests, local populations were probably little invested in imperial institutions and value systems that, from the local perspective, were perceived as alien and economically burdensome impositions. In other words, when regeneration of social complexity does not occur, the previous state or empire probably governed by a strategy of hegemony without sovereignty and effected no significant transformation of the historical consciousness of its subject populations. The state in these instances produced not citizens but strategic subjects who did not ideologically hew to state orthodoxy. Rather, they adopted a strategy of orthopraxy to negotiate daily life under the dominion of empire, adopting the external appearances of dominant values and practices without fundamentally changing their underlying local value systems and worldviews. When the empire collapsed, their strategic mimesis of state institutions, values, and social practices disappeared with it.

Empires generate significant social, cultural, and economic opportunities for some subjects while simultaneously imposing great burdens on others, creating significant tension through the attempted transformation (successful or not) of local social structures. Imperial regimes and other similarly centralized state hierarchies often seek to radically restructure modes of production and consumption among newly subject populations to accelerate economic revenues. Often these schemes take the form of highly specialized, labor-intensive systems of production that are high risk–high return propositions. Overinvestment in capital- and labor-intensive modes of production, such as massive irrigation systems tied to variable hydrological regimes, frequently results in high short-term economic gains but social and ecological disaster in the long run.

In some instances, such high risk–high return systems can persist for several generations, as in the case of the Tiwanaku state in the Andean high plateau (Kolata 1996; Kolata [ed.] 2003). In the specific case of Tiwanaku, centuries of considerable demographic expansion and increasing social complexity were underwritten by the productive capacity of a highly specialized agricultural system. However, the complex and technically specialized character of Tiwanaku's production system rendered it vulnerable to an extreme environmental impact. The ability of the Tiwanaku state to adapt to deteriorating climatic

conditions that ensued in the mid twelfth century and persisted for nearly three hundred years was compromised by its overreliance on a single, highly specialized production system. After Tiwanaku's mid-twelfth-century collapse, social complexity as indexed by urban formations and multilayered political hierarchies did not reemerge in the Tiwanaku heartland for nearly three centuries. As Garrett Hardin (1993:101) observed, "Technology is a blessing, to be sure, but every blessing has its price. The price of increased complexity is increased vulnerability."

Similarly, John Nichols and Jill Weber (chapter 3) and Lisa Cooper (chapter 2) imply that the conditions for the regeneration of social complexity are frequently tied to the relative flexibility of indigenous production systems and their ability to respond to changing social and ecological circumstances. Such strategies may include diversifying subsistence portfolios or decoupling urban settlements from overarching political formations to promote, in Nichols and Weber's felicitous phrase, "integrated strategies of resilience." The ecological and social tensions of empire rarely permit or foster strategies of economic resilience and in fact are more often associated with the imposition of structural rigidities, as was the case with Tiwanaku. Such structural rigidities render the regeneration of social complexity under changed ecological and social circumstances extremely problematic.

As is abundantly clear from the contributions to this volume, the social regeneration of complexity after state collapse can follow multiple historical pathways, each with its own contour of specificity. But these pathways are not infinite in variety; many share significant structural features and sociohistorical commonalities. What we need now, of course, is more nuanced comparative archaeological and historical research that will give us the empirical warrants to categorize and understand differentiated forms of state collapse and social regeneration. Useful discussion of the regeneration of social complexity requires us to negotiate the analytically fraught passage between the Scylla of historical contingency (the history of event) and the Charybdis of comparative societal structure (the history of structure). The contributors to this volume challenge us all to explore more deeply how structure and event under circumstances of state collapse and regeneration interrelate in complicated ways.

#### Note

1. I thank Marshall Sahlins for bringing the concept of hegemony without sovereignty to my attention. See Sahlins 2004 for an extended discussion of this concept in the context of ancient Greece.