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Introduction to Life at the Margins of the State

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The papers in this volume examine societies in areas considered politically marginal. Margins, a broad term to say the least, refers here to places that are in some manner peripheral to the state, including frontiers, borderlands, borders, and other loci of relational difference in scale or kind to hegemonic sociopolitical institutions. In this sense the political margins are best understood as a constructed spatio-social locale intrinsically defined by both geographic and social elements congruently. The term is primarily heuristic, being imposed by researchers on the groups or regions that they study, but the imposition is nevertheless derived from careful archaeological research. As spaces around or between political or cultural spheres, these politically marginal areas can be defined as the liminal geographies within which political, demographic, cultural, and economic circumstances or processes may interact to produce various types of overlapping, and interacting, boundaries (Parker 2002, 2006). The political margins are thus the landscapes where interactions between otherwise discrete cultural entities are played out. They are, we argue, the crucibles of historical change.

The current volume is not simply a study of borderlands. What makes this collection unique is that it sets out to explore not just the nature of interactions in the political margins, but the political, social, and economic trajectories of the societies that grew up there. This collection focuses on what might be termed "shadow polities" (cf. Barfield 2001). Shadow

https://doi.org/10.5876/9781646422951.c001

polities—polities that were defined by their relationship, or lack thereof, with larger, more complex, and invariably more powerful states and empires—offer unique perspectives on how borderland societies adapted to the unique human and natural environments of these liminal spaces. Instead of viewing such societies as derivative, the authors of this volume see them as adaptive groups that employed diverse strategies to maintain varying degrees of autonomy from their larger and more politically dominant neighbors. The studies in this volume show that such polities are not simply the byproducts of complexity emanating from a political core. As Smith and Fauvelle note in their chapter, "One of the great contributions of this volume is that it takes many established assumptions about the study of social complexity and turns them on their head," (140). Although shadow polities are often conditioned by neighboring complexity, the effects of that complexity are filtered through the human and natural landscapes of the borderlands within which such polities flourished. In fact, several of these case studies demonstrate that these marginal groups' lack of "complexity" enabled resistance and resilience in different ways. This volume demonstrates that close studies of groups in the margins demonstrate that traditional assumptions and models are well positioned to be reconsidered.

The study of zones of culture contact has been an important part of many academic fields, including anthropology, history, geography, political science, and archaeology, although each has had its own discourse on the topic with limited interdisciplinary conversation (Parker 2006, 78). Borderlands remain contested throughout the modern world today, from the physical boundaries of modern nation-states, such as the dispute over the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan. To the individual experiences of people in these zones today, such as the current debate around the United States' treatment of migrants on the US/Mexico border. Studies of the individual histories and cultural phenomena of these zones can provide counter-narratives to hegemonic power structures. As Robinson, Wienhold, and Whitby (2012, 289) note in their chapter on networks in California archaeology, "borderlands will continually need to be revisited and, ultimately, crossed in all directions."

The case studies in this volume range from populations living directly adjacent to more complex polities (e.g., MacEachern; Smith and Fauvelle) to those connected to polities but their peripheralness extends to a great physical distance as well (e.g., Carter). Border, frontier, and borderland scenarios can all be distinguished from the other. We draw on the definitions employed by Rodseth and Parker (2005, 9–12) in the introduction to their edited volume, *Untaming the Frontier in Anthropology, Archaeology, and History* to introduce

these differences briefly, although not all the contributors in the volume adapt these definitions. A border is often defined as a "legally recognized line, fixed in a particular space, meant to mark off one political or administrative unit from another," (10). A frontier, on the other hand, is a region rather than a defined line. A frontier is a zone of transition between two complex polities, or as is the case in several of the case studies in this volume, may be a less densely populated zone where inhabitants are perceived as less skilled than neighboring polities (examples given by Rodseth and Parker include technology and weaponry)—but also along the lines of political, social, economic, and ideological organization (Mann 1986; McNeill 1992; Wolf 1982). Rodseth and Parker (2005, 12) define borderlands as representative of the political dimensions of a frontier scenario that was of "special interest to national or imperial powers seeking to establish borders within an otherwise fluid zone of interaction." (See Anderson 1996; Donnan and Wilson 1994, 1999; Klein 1996; Mullin 2011; Parker 2002, 2006; Parker and Rodseth 2005; Rösler and Wendl 1999; Vaughn-Williams 2009 for more extensive discussion of these terms and their uses)

The characteristic shared by these three different scenarios is that they are all "areas in between"—a liminal status shared by populations living on the margins. However, in the definitions above, an important characteristic that is not included in these definitions is the consideration of the role that physical geography may play in defining borders, frontiers, and borderlands. Politically marginal zones on the peripheries of or completely outside of traditionally dominant political spheres may be defined geographically, socially, or more likely, by both physical geography and sociocultural factors. This is why this volume prioritizes the use of landscape in these case studies. While individual contributors adopt the use of landscape in their chapters in different ways, several case studies highlight the role the physical landscape in local histories and subsistence practices (see chapters by Knabb, Walker, and Garcea). Others draw on the cultural landscape (e.g., Novotny and MacEachern), and some case studies draw on both perspectives (e.g., Carter and Boswell).

In previous decades, the field of archaeology has prioritized understanding the perspectives of populations living on the peripheries of ancient states and empires. These studies challenged early simplistic core-periphery models. Early interests in frontiers, borderlands, etc., were tied to understanding imperial expansion and many early models assumed that in political peripheries "power, economic influence, and ideological forms of hegemony have been seen as one-way flows from more complex states to less developed

polities" (Stein 2002, 903). Yet, research has demonstrated that encounters and interactions between marginal groups and complex polities were not unidirectional, rather, there were transformative, impacting peoples in borderlands and complex polities (e.g., Cusick 1998; Lightfoot and Martinez 1995; Nail 2016; Rodseth and Parker 2005; Stein 2002, 2005). As researchers have continued to study inter- and intraregional dynamics of populations in marginal zones, they have examined issues such as social and cultural boundaries, ethnicity, identity, local agency, political economies, and networks (Barth 1969; Conkey and Hastorf 1990; Cusick 1998; Donnan and Wilson 1999; Harry and Herr 2018; Stein 2002, 2005). Researchers have adapted border theory from the humanities and applied it to archaeology (Mullin 2011; for recent focus on frontiers from a bioarchaeological perspective, see Tica and Martin 2019). Archaeologists have also continually been interested in peripheral groups' responses to outside forces and documenting resistance (Acabado 2018; Clastres 1989; González-Ruibal 2014; Miller et al. 1995; Scott 1985, 1990; van Dommelen and Terrenato 2007). Researchers prioritizing study of peripheral populations and the field's adaptation of postcolonial and critical theory have encouraged approaching these studies from a local perspective, prioritizing agency-centered models that employ elements of processual and post-processual theory, this can also be referred to as a "bottom-up" approach (Boswell 2016; Glatz and Casana 2016; Rodseth and Parker 2005; van Dommelen 2006).

While we agree that a bottom-up approach is essential to understand dynamics in the margins, consideration of outside groups, including the states and empire to which these populations are marginal, is also essential. As was noted at the beginning of the introduction, these case studies can be considered "shadow polities"—polities defined by their relationship, or lack of relationship with more complex and powerful states and empires. The case studies in this volume compose a variety of approaches to understanding local responses and reactions to nonlocal and state actors. They also consist of a variety of different types of social complexity. However, there is not one resolution to be taken away from these case studies. As one anonymous reviewer of this manuscript noted, these case studies highlight "that there is not a simple tension between state and nonstate actors, or more generally between hierarchical and nonhierarchical forces, but that all actions need to be viewed within a dense entanglement of concerns over the allocation of power within society." Indeed, power dynamics and relationships between groups are a complex set of processes that play out in time and space and play an important part in culture histories that imbue landscapes with meaning.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

The adoption of a landscape perspective in this volume is meant to place the reader squarely within the setting of the marginalized group and prioritize the dynamics and perspectives of these lesser known and lesser studied communities. The identification of natural and cultural landscapes is a useful tool to describe marginal zones. In this way the term marginal works to both describe the inhabitants of a space and the space in which those people live. Natural and cultural landscapes are an important part of understanding these societies because of the limitations these environments may impose. In archaeology, over the last thirty years, the term landscape has commonly been used to describe the post-processual approach for a phenomenological understanding of place (e.g., Smith 2003; Tilley 1994, 2010; Ucko and Layton 2003; Ashmore and Knapp 1999). The landscape concept builds on earlier descriptions of human interactions with space to include other aspects of the environment. Plainly, landscape studies seek to understand how people altered and used the physical environment to derive conclusions about social behavior in those spaces. Furthermore, there has been minimal dialogue about the relationship between landscape and communities' use of landscape within borderland and frontier regions. This volume highlights that in many cases the conditions of the natural environment played significant roles in the region being identified as politically marginal. Volume contributors use landscape to understand the relationship between people and the environment, the cultural construction of group identity, ideology, social organization, social memory, and resistance (Bender 1999; Johnson 2012; Smith 2003; Tilley 2010). The physical environment, resources, and cultural landscape of the case studies herein are important determinants that shaped local histories, relationships, and responses to outside groups. Examples of studies of groups on the political margins that have considered landscape in understanding these histories include Glatz and Casana (2016), Glatz and Matthews (2005), and Scott (2009).

OVERVIEW OF THE VOLUME

The idea for this project emerged many years ago when Boswell and Knabb were in the early stages of dissertation writing at UC San Diego. Although their projects focused on different areas and time periods, both highlighted the agency of ancient communities living in the political margins of complex polities. Archaeological fieldwork supported the idea that landscapes—natural and built—played a significant role in these communities' local experiences, identity, and resilience.

Interested in expanding this dialogue to explore issues surrounding the experiences of living at the political margins on a global and multiple temporal scale from the archaeological record, they did what any eager graduate students would do: organize a session on the topic. The session "Life at the Margins of the State: Comparative Landscapes from the Old and New Worlds" was held in Austin, Texas, in 2014 at the Society for American Archaeology Meetings. The session brought together scholars who presented case studies from historic and prehistoric periods in Africa, Central America, Eastern Europe, Iceland, the Levant, North America, and South America. Discussants Bradley Parker and James Snead provided useful insights to the case studies. This volume is composed of many of the revised papers originally presented in the session.

The volume includes case studies from Africa (2), Iceland (1), the Levant (1), Central America (2), North America (1), and South America (2). While not all major continents are represented in this volume, the global diversity of case studies and time periods they cover, five thousand years of history, encompasses nearly the entire duration of the presence of complex societies in human history. The two case studies from Africa represent both the earliest and one of the most recent studies, Nubia in the fifth to fourth millennia BC (Garcea) and the second millennium AD in the Lake Chad basin of Central Africa (MacEachern). While each author uses "marginal" and "landscape" differently, the chapters in this volume highlight that the agency and resilience of groups living in the political margins are significant to understanding the cultural past. As social scientists have continually demonstrated over the last thirty years, peripheries, borderlands, and frontiers were not the homes of static populations; rather, these were zones of innovation. The volume is not organized geographically or thematically, instead each successive chapter takes the reader to a different part of the world and time period. This organization is intended to emphasize how each case study presents a unique scenario.

Bradley Parker initially drafted much of this introduction as a concluding discussion chapter for the volume, in which he introduced the term "borderlandscape." We note that his definition of "borderlandscape" is a productive means of considering the phenomena that these chapters report on, and although it is not a term utilized by other volume contributors, the term nonetheless encompasses all of the case studies in this volume. Upon review, it was suggested that Parker's summary of the chapters would be useful for the introduction, and we have adapted the introduction as so. The following sections of the introduction include Parker's original discussion of the chapters first in the order that they appear in the volume and then turns to a number

of recurrent themes shared by the case studies. His discussion of the term "borderlandscape" forms a short epilogue at the end of the volume. Thank you to Bradley Parker's wife, Janet M. Theiss, for working with us to incorporate his discussion into the introduction.

Chapters in This Volume

This collection opens with a chapter by Kyle Knabb under the intriguing title heading of "Avoiding 'State-ness.'" Knabb's contribution focuses on what is today the southern section of the modern state of Jordan. In antiquity, this region was part of what many scholars have referred to as a "land bridge" between Africa and the Middle East. And indeed, the southern Levant was geographically wedged between two of the world's great centers of civilization, Egypt and Mesopotamia. On a subregional scale, however, Knabb's study area—the Wadi al-Feidh (which is located approximately 90 km south of the Dead Sea), is not simply straddling a north-south corridor, but also lies on an east-west transition between the lowlands leading to the Red Sea and the Jordanian Plateau and was therefore adjacent to the polities of the more hospitable central mountain range and coastal plains of the southern Levant. In geographic terms, the study area is composed of a varied topography concealing a variety of ecological niches in what has traditionally been considered a remote and marginal landscape (Palmer et al. 2007).

As an ecological and geopolitical borderland, southern Jordan saw numerous intrusions by neighboring polities, and thus the traditional histories of the region have painted this area as a periphery whose inhabitants were conditioned by political complexity of neighboring states and empires (e.g., Bartlett 1989; Millard 1992). However, utilizing data from an intensive survey of a small part of the Wadi al-Feidh, Knabb suggests that traditional views of the marginality, and in some cases subordination, of the inhabitants of this region are tainted by an overemphasis on center-periphery vistas (e.g., Bartlett 1989, 1992). Knabb's research confirms that the inhabitants of this region employed diverse subsistence strategies that took advantage of various ecological niches, and in doing so, promoted mobility. Unlike agricultural communities that are essentially tied to specific pieces of land and ecological zones, the inhabitants of the Wadi al-Feidh utilized their mobility to "avoid state-ness." Knabb argues that this area may conform to what Scott (2009) has described as a "refuge." The marginal environment of the Wadi al-Feidh offered the opportunity for refuge that allowed Indigenous inhabitants varying degrees of autonomy from intrusive polities. The geographic marginality and remoteness of this

region and the creative adaptation to both internal and external pressures and constraints blended to create unique trajectories for local participants (VanValkenburgh and Osborne 2012, 2).

Turning to Alicia Boswell's chapter, between about AD 900 and 1400 large portions of the North Coast of Peru were dominated by the Chimú Empire. The Chimú Empire, centered at the enormous site of Chan Chan on the outskirts of modern-day Trujillo (Moseley and Day 1982), subjugated much of the dry costal desert and several of the river deltas that crossed that desert between the Pacific Ocean and the foothills of the Andes Mountains in northern Peru (Moore and Mackey 2008). Boswell focuses on the borderlands between this extremely complex coastal polity and the various groups that thrived in the Andean sierra. In the foothills of the Andes, the physical geography of borderlands is very interesting. Viewed from the coast, the valleys created by the numerous rivers that emerge from the Andean highlands form ardent funnel-shaped wedges into the otherwise stark landscape of the western slopes of the Andes. Considered in terms of borderland geography then, these valleys are narrow frontier zones that literally pierce the Andean sierra, thus acting as "frontier bridges" between various coastal polities and the more diffuse highland communities of the western Andes.

The study area, known as the Sinsicap Valley, lies in the upper reaches of one of the main tributaries of the Moche River—the delta of which forms the heartland of the Chimú Empire. This particular river valley wedge thus penetrates the borderlands east of the Chimú Empire, creating a unique zone of direct interaction between the empire and its periphery. The landscape of this valley was clearly instrumental in shaping the culture history of the indigenous polity that grew up there. Boswell suggests that the Sinsicap Valley acted as a middle ground (White 1991) where Chimú imperial authorities and local leaders pursued a policy of accommodation (Adelman and Aron 1999; Aron 2005) in which Chimú authorities aided local inhabitants in the construction of roads and the expansion of at least one key site. In exchange, this borderland community monitored road traffic, supplied key luxury products, and presumably participated in the ideological system emanating from the Chimú capital at Chan Chan (Keatinge and Conrad 1983). Boswell argues that groups inhabiting this zone selectively appropriated some aspects of Chimú culture while at the same time curating and promoting local histories and traditions to assert a purely "Collambay" identity. By embedding group identity in the local landscape, Collambay residents simultaneously appeased and resisted the Chimú.

In chapter 4, we turn our attention to Medieval Iceland. In this chapter, Tara Carter explores how imperial contact and colonialism influence social

change in frontier societies. By applying social network theory (Buchanan 2002), Carter attempts to map out local and regional economic networks both within Iceland and in the North Atlantic (Carter 2015). In doing so, this chapter pushes the boundaries of studies of colonialism by suggesting that local communities were "active negotiators" in the colonial encounter and that in some cases such communities were able to use colonial situations to their own advantage. Thus, like Knabb's analysis in chapter 2, Carter suggests that being "marginal" can provide opportunities for frontier inhabitants to shape their own historical trajectories. In spite of its extremely isolated location in the heart of the North Atlantic, the Icelandic borderlands were well connected to the European world through the maritime networks established by the Vikings. Concentrating on settlement pattern data from Iceland's Skagafjörður region, Carter argues that local inhabitants practiced a mixed economic strategy that incorporated household sustainability with surplus production that linked even remote farmsteads to the North Atlantic system. It was, therefore, the synergy between local constraints and global pressures that ultimately created a polity poised for state-level organization.

In chapter 5, John Walker explores the concept of geographic refuge and "escape agriculture" (Scott 1997, 2009) in Llanos de Mojos of eastern Bolivia. This remote tropical landscape is characterized not just by a complicated network of rivers, but by impressive pre-Columbian causeways, canals, mounds and, most importantly, vast systems of raised fields (Erickson 1995; Whitney et al. 2014). The pre-Columbian population of this area (known as the Mojeños) constructed these raised fields to work in harmony with the seasonal flooding of the Bolivian lowlands. Given the scale of the earthen works discussed in this paper, two seemingly essential ingredients are conspicuously absent. First, this area does not seem to be defined by any particular core or other center of political power. The Mojeños did not share a boundary with any Andean states, and although they could have been neighbors of other Amazonian groups, direct pressure from any such group or groups is unlikely to have been a driving force in the construction of the agricultural systems analyzed in this chapter. And second, there is little or no evidence for state sponsorship in the construction of these vast earthen works. Instead, the agricultural systems of the Bolivian Amazon were likely built by non–state actors over the course of nearly three thousand years. Utilizing "escape crops" that require little regular care and can be harvested as needed, the Mojeños created a landscape that did not require resident farmers and was therefore difficult for any state-level organization, whether indigenous or exogenous, to monitor. Walker concludes that raised field agriculture in the upper Amazon was not a result of interaction between

local inhabitants and neighboring polities. The Mojeños were the product of a unique history that was not defined by external stimuli. The constructed border landscape of the Bolivian Amazon was thus a local adaptation that allowed an Indigenous culture to flourish in the absence of the state.

The region around the Gulf of Fonseca was described by early colonial explorers as a "land without benefit." Lying in the southern extreme of the modern state of El Salvador, this region is today, and was apparently also in the colonial era, a backwater ignored by political authorities and scholars alike. In chapter 6, Esteban Gómez questions the "myth of emptiness" (Blaut 1993) of this region by examining how local inhabitants utilized the concept of place to appropriate space at the physical and ideological margins of colonial rule. Interestingly, this chapter tells two stories. The first is one of oppression. Colonial demands for land and labor in eastern El Salvador not only displaced Indigenous communities but tied them to nontraditional modes of production like cattle ranching and indigo production as local inhabitants attempted to satisfy tribute demands imposed by colonial authorities. The establishment of the hacienda system also drastically altered the physical environment destroying what had been productive landscapes in favor of premodern industrial agriculture. And then there is, of course, the devastating effect of disease.

The second story told here is one of passive resistance (Scott 1985). In spite of the destruction wrought by colonialism in eastern El Salvador, Indigenous communities living on the margins of the state creatively adapted to the challenges of the colonial administration. In some cases, Indigenous actors utilized the legal system to resist within the confines of colonial rule. The colonial legal system, which was largely developed to promote colonial claims on land and labor, also became an important avenue used by Indigenous actors to combat the local administration. Other forms of resistance come in the continued use of Indigenous material culture. Additionally, Indigenous actors recognized the importance of place in local histories and thus utilized colonial churches, which were often built over the remains of precolonial historic or scared spaces. In this chapter, Gómez effectively demonstrates the "cloudy nature" of life at the margins of the state, showing that, in some cases, Indigenous subjects succumbed to colonial principles, but in other cases, Indigenous actors created spaces within and between colonial demands and ideals to recreate Indigenous identities.

In chapter 7, Erin Smith and Mikael Fauvelle compare two Indigenous groups from what is today California: the Chumash peoples of the Santa Barbara Channel and the Yuman-speaking peoples of southern California and the Lower Colorado River. Geographically speaking, both of these

groups dwelt on the western edge of north-south and east-west trade routes that connected the complex states of Mesoamerica with those of the Pueblo groups of the American Southwest. The Chumash were a hierarchically organized society in which elites accumulated wealth and prestige by controlling the production and exchange of prestige goods (Gamble 2008). In contrast, Yuman-speaking peoples organized authority around experience in warfare and spirituality that transcended village and lineage boundaries (Forbes 1965). By examining two attributes, warfare and trade, that are normally associated with social complexity, Smith and Fauvelle question the traditional view that there is a direct correlation between hierarchical authority and organizational capacity. They argue that, despite the emphasis placed on the complexity of the Chumash peoples in the scholarly literature, the organizational capacity of Yuman-speaking groups equaled and may even have exceeded that of the Chumash. Although the Chumash developed a complex and differentiated economy, they depended upon the Yuman-speaking groups to facilitate trade across the desert interiors of California. Thus, their position as intermediaries and their reputation as warriors allowed for the development of complexity in what was basically a heterarchical system (Crumley 1995).

In chapter 8, Claire Novotny takes us to the site of Kaq'ru' Ha', which lies in the foothills of the Maya Mountains in what is today southern Belize, and what would have been at the edge of the Maya world. In the Classic Maya period, this site was at the margins of the competing state-level polities that dominated the neighboring lowlands of the Guatemalan Petén. Novotny suggests that the residents of this borderland community played an active role in negotiating their social and spiritual identities as "discerning agents of their own strategies." The residents of Kaq'ru' Ha' established the social and ideological position of their borderland community by selectively adopting material culture, burial patterns, and building practices from far away Maya centers. In doing so, the residents of Kaq'ru' Ha' created a built environment that embedded them within, and made them active participants in, an animate landscape imbued with social and cosmological meaning.

In chapter 9, Scott MacEachern shifts our focus to Africa's central Sahel, where he examines the borderlands of the Wandala state. Situated in the region around Lake Chad in what is today a political boundary between Chad, Nigeria, and Cameroon, the Wandala were one of a group of state-level societies that profited from long-distance exchange networks linking sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa and the Mediterranean. This paper focuses on the period between about AD 1500 and 1900 when small emergent states like the Wandala competed with larger, more centralized Saharan polities

for the wealth and prestige associated with what MacEachern calls "stateliness." However, due to its location in the fertile lowlands south of Lake Chad, Wandala elites did not have access to the mineral resources that underwrote some of their competitors. Instead, the Wandala relied on the slave trade, and thus on raiding their less complex agropastoralist neighbors, to acquire the accoutrements of the state (MacEachern 2001). Since much of the interaction in the central Sahel revolved around the slave trade, the traditional view of this region is one in which small but centralized Islamic states like the Wandala tapped the human and natural resources of the borderlands in what Western scholars saw as a classic center-periphery dichotomy (cf. Lange 1984). To break out of this mold, MacEachern utilizes the work of scholars like Stein (2002), Jennings (2006), and most importantly Kopytoff (1987) to illuminate a much more nuanced understanding of both the development and implementation of Wandala statehood and adaptive strategies employed by societies it attempted to dominate. Following the idea that the frontiers between African societies are the crucibles of social and political innovation (Kopytoff 1987, 7), MacEachern shows that the development of the Wandala state is intimately tied to the non-Muslim "peripheral" communities in its borderlands. To begin with, the tension between these groups stimulated identity creation (cf. Hodder 1982). This situation also meant that the boundaries between these groups and the Wandala overlapped so significantly that the "marginal," "peripheral" non-Muslim societies in and around the Mandara Mountains "did not exist against the Wandala state as much as beside it, within it and around it." The Wandala thus existed within a landscape that both severed and bound various groups in a symbiosis that became a key ingredient in the performance of "stateliness."

The final chapter in this volume, by Elena Garcea, focuses on the relationship between Egypt and Nubia in the Predynastic period. In the fifth and fourth millennia BC, two subsistence systems were developing in and around the Nile River in what is today Egypt and northern Sudan. The first was based on sedentary agriculture on the river's flood plain and the second based on pastoralism on the river's fringes and in the desserts and grasslands outside the Nile valley. These two very different geographies created social and political pathways that led to two very different although complementary kinds of states. While sedentary agriculture eventually led to the formation of social complexity in the north-south corridor along the Nile River, transhumant nomadism spread Nubian groups west into the Sahara and southeast to the eastern fringes of the African Sahel (Blench 1999; Fattovich 1993). The peoples practicing these very different lifeways were, even in this very early period,

in intimate contact. Nubians became such important intermediaries in the long-distance exchange of luxury goods from sub-Saharan Africa that Nubian traditions blended with Egyptian elements to form hybrid (or better "entangled"?) material culture in some areas (Gatto 2002). Garcea argues not only that the two social systems spawned by these very different lifeways advanced in tandem, but, similar to MacEachern's argument in chapter 9, the symbiosis between them was an essential ingredient to the development of complexity in both. Nubia was therefore, not a passive periphery dependent upon events and processes in more centralized neighbor, but an active participant and indispensable partner in a regional system that enabled complexity to develop along different but complementary pathways in Egypt and in Nubia.

Themes of Marginality

The chapters in this volume address a number of themes that are fundamental to the anthropological study of political marginality, including social complexity, resistance, and secondary state formation. Carter (chapter 4), Smith and Fauvelle (chapter 7), and Garcea (chapter 10) join with a number of scholars who have commented on the inadequacy of the neoevolutionary model of state formation that envisions complexity on a step-scale, with each level the logical precursor to the next. Although many scholars have long been uncomfortable with this paradigm, few have addressed the topic head-on. A notable exception to this is the work of Yoffee, who, in *Myths of the Archaic State* (2005), argues that the neoevolutionary paradigm is untenable. An alternative to the neoevolutionary paradigm was offered many years ago by Mitchell Rothman. Rothman (1994) argued that we can envision complexity as the outcome of the level of centralization of societies on the one hand and the amount of integration between constituent groups that make up that society on the other. So, for example, a society that is highly centralized but shows little integration between productive units might fall on one part of the chart while one that is highly integrated but shows only limited signs of centralization would fall on another part of the chart. These two very different types of societies would likely have been simply classified as "chiefdoms" in the neoevolutionary paradigm, yet they are clearly different in terms of the way their complexity is organized.

There are three particularly interesting things about this model, and about the papers in this volume that address complexity, that are pertinent to the present discussion. The first is that each attempt breaks down this concept into potentially measurable categories. This is very important because doing so links the theory behind a big idea to empirical data that can be recovered in

the archaeological record. The second is that, instead of grouping societies into one or another category, this type of modeling allows researchers to highlight the *uniqueness* of the polities we attempt to study. Although "lumping" societies based on similar characteristics has certainly been a profitable exercise, this volume calls for "splitting" societies to highlight their distinctiveness. It is, after all, distinctiveness that enables us to add texture and depth to the histories we hope to illuminate (e.g., Boswell, chapter 3; Carter, chapter 4; Novotny, chapter 8; MacEachern, chapter 9; Garcea, chapter 10). And finally, perhaps the most pertinent point of this discussion for the current volume is that abandoning an evolutionary model allows us not only to visualize complexity, but also to visualize, contextualize, and value its absence. A number of the chapters in this volume, including Knabb (chapter 3), Walker (chapter 5), and, to some extent, MacEachern (chapter 9), highlight the advantages of *not being* complex.

This brings us to the second theme that is central to this collection: resistance. Knabb (chapter 2), Walker (chapter 5), and Smith and Fauvelle (chapter 7) explicitly utilize the work of James Scott (especially 1989 and 2009) in their discussion of resistance. Scott taught us that there are many kinds of resistance; some overt and active, and others covert and passive. Active resistance, like rebellions and assassinations, for example, are much more likely to leave remains in the archaeological or historical records. Covert or passive resistance, which can take many forms including, for example, espionage, noncompliance, or, as we see in this volume, avoidance (e.g., Knabb [chapter 2] and Walker [chapter 5]), are much more difficult to detect. The studies presented here highlight an interesting aspect of the concept of resistance. They highlight what we might term "resistance strategies" or "resistance patterns." What we mean by this term is that virtually all of the groups showcased in this volume employed systemic approaches to resistance. In chapter 6, for example, Gómez interprets the use and reuse of space and the curation of traditional lifeways as patterns of covert resistance, while in chapter 3, Boswell suggests that *chaupiyunga* identity coalesced as a means of resisting the Chimú, and in chapter 8, Novotny suggests that the residents of the site of Kaq'ru' Ha' utilized Maya ideology to embed themselves in place. In the aggregate, the chapters collected here suggest that when resistance is viewed as a strategy or pattern, rather than simply an event or anomaly, the archeological and/or historical residues of such strategies are likely to be much easier to detect.

With this in mind, it is interesting to note the intersection here with the above discussion of complexity. A number of papers in this volume suggest that the lack of complexity used in tandem with landscape may act as a path

of resistance. In chapter 2, Knabb, for example, argues that the isolated geography of southern Jordan may have acted as a refuge for those fleeing, or at least avoiding, the confines of state societies. An analogous situation may be visible in the Mojave desert trade systems described by Smith and Fauvelle in chapter 7, and perhaps also in the Bolivian Amazon as described by and Walker in chapter 5. In these cases, complexity was, perhaps intentionally, kept to a minimum. The studies in this volume clearly show that the lack of complexity can be a form of resistance.

This is particularly interesting when we consider the papers in this volume against the backdrop of another neoevolutionary paradigm: secondary state formation (Price 1978). The model of secondary state formation suggests that the consolidation of states or empires can stimulate increased sociopolitical complexity in borderlands often leading to secondary state formation. Like the neoevolutionary paradigm of complexity discussed above, the model of secondary state formation implies a particular unidirectional path for peripheries—when states or empires expand and consolidate, their peripheries become more complex as borderland societies are forced to centralize sociopolitical power because they are drawn into cycles of peer-polity competition (Renfrew and Cherry 1996, 1986). However, the papers in this volume highlight situations in which the opposite may be true. In several cases, we might say that fragmentation and simplicity, not consolidation and complexity, is a possibility, and may be an even more common reaction to the expansion or consolidation of states and empires.

This collection of global case studies spanning the history of complex societies highlights the unique dynamics of populations living within the margins of complex societies. One of the goals of this volume was to feature the sociopolitical and cultural nuances, negotiation, and resistance among marginal groups throughout the world and the duration of existence of complex societies. Individual chapters and the volume as a whole demonstrate that as researchers engage in close, localized studies of the dynamics in the margins, new understandings of local histories emerge, as well as new insights about the boundaries and territories of states occur too. We hope that this volume will encourage others to continue to turn to investigations of the margins.

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