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Although archaeology experienced a major reorientation with the rise of New Archaeology and the incorporation of neoevolutionist theory beginning in the 1960s and early 1970s (e.g., Binford 1962; Flannery 1972, 1973; Sanders and Price 1968; Watson et al. 1971), it was only somewhat later that a mature, theoretically and epistemologically complex, processual archaeology began to take shape. This mature processual archaeology, also called “alternative pathways to complexity,” moved beyond neoevolutionism’s obsession with explaining centralization, power, and exploitation based on environmental conditions, to recognize that other factors including agency, negotiation, and cooperation are important factors shaping complex societies. The development of “alternative pathways to complexity” can be attributed to a number of key scholars, but we think Richard Blanton merits special recognition for both his contribution and leadership. His work is especially important because he looked to economics, sociology, political science, and geography in order to broaden his thinking on complexity. Inspired by research in these disciplines, he worked to develop a holistic approach that applied his wide theoretical and methodological purview to understanding the role of households, urbanism, regions, markets, world-systems, and political economics in cultural evolution. In the process, he has developed an impressive, robust, and flexible toolkit for understanding the evolution of social complexity that has inspired scholars working

Introduction

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in diverse world areas, including Mesoamerica and the Old World, as well as scholars engaged in cross-cultural comparative research, to look at social complexity in new ways.

Therefore, in order to highlight the contribution that he has made to anthropological and archaeological thinking on the evolution of complexity, we gathered a group of distinguished scholars and asked them to prepare a series of chapters that apply Rich's ideas to the study of architecture, economics, and power in Mesoamerica, the Old World, and cross-cultural analysis. Here, we document how Rich became interested in archaeology, as well as the individuals, publications, and field research that coalesced to shape his research and theoretical paradigm.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Rich's interest in archaeology is rooted in his family history and experiences growing up in Colorado. Rich's paternal grandfather was a miner who had moved the family there to work in the gold mines. During the Great Depression, Ed, Rich's father, and Helen Maxine, his mother, graduated from high school and got married. Ed and Maxine were too poor to attend college, and the only work Ed could find was in a gold mine even though it was dangerous work, as evidenced by the fact that his father had been trapped for several days in a mine collapse. In spite of the challenging work he did in the mines and his own father's traumatic experience, Ed developed a life-long interest in Colorado mines and mining. As a boy, Rich and Ed, as well as other family members, would hike up into abandoned mining towns in the Rockies west of Denver (figure 0.1). While Ed explored historical mines, Rich explored the "ghost towns." As he sifted through what people had left behind in their houses, Rich developed a fascination for understanding how people lived from the study of material remains. Rich's interest in archaeology received another boost from a trip to Mexico when he was 15 years old. Ed and Maxine loved to travel, taking the four children on long adventures. One of these, a lengthy driving trip through Mexico, exposed Rich to Central Mexican archaeological sites, such as Cuicuilco and Teotihuacan. In his own words, Rich discovered on those trips that he liked, "old stuff that is trashed out."

After graduating from Denver's Abraham Lincoln High School in 1962, Rich accepted a gymnastic scholarship from the University of Michigan with the intention of studying anthropology. At the University of Michigan, Leslie White, Elman Service, Marshall Sahlins, Roy Rappaport, and Eric Wolf encouraged him to think about anthropology holistically, to look at large-scale



FIGURE 0.1. *Richard Blanton (on the left) at age 18 on a climbing expedition in the Rockies with a friend.*

processes, and to immerse himself in theory. James B. Griffin encouraged him to think in new ways and to go beyond the faculty. In the Museum of Anthropology's graduate program he was exposed to probability statistics in the quantitative methods course taught by Bob Whallon. Jeffrey Parsons (his major professor) introduced him to a new survey methodology that was beginning to provide important new insights on regional systems and socio-cultural processes in prehispanic Central Mexico. Henry Wright, who was becoming interested in regional systems in the Near East as well, suggested that he look into cultural geography, spatial analysis, and regional market systems as potentially useful material for understanding the regional systems he was studying in archaeology.

After finishing his doctorate in 1970 under the guidance of Jeff Parsons, Rich moved first to Rice University and then to Hunter College at the City University of New York. In New York, he joined a distinguished group of scholars who converged there in the early 1970s, including, among others, fellow Michigan graduates John Speth and Greg Johnson; a Penn State student,

Chris Hamlin; as well as Melvin and Carol Ember, Susan Lees, Daniel Bates, Robert Sussman, Jane Schneider, and Eric Wolf. Chris Hamlin, a computer expert, showed Rich how to use computers and introduced him to statistical analysis software. Melvin and Carol Ember introduced him to systematic cross-cultural analysis and the potential it held for addressing questions related to scale and complexity. From Hunter College, Rich moved to Purdue in 1976, where he benefited from participating in a joint Sociology-Anthropology department, which included a number of scholars with strong backgrounds in statistical analysis as well as resources for software and statistical support. He also had the opportunity to interact with Tenzing Takla, who introduced him to classical social theory, especially that of Max Weber.

Rich also became involved in the Society of Economic Anthropology in the early 1980s and eventually served on the board and as its president. At the society's meetings, he interacted with a number of stimulating scholars, including Sutti Ortiz, Frank Cancian, Robert McC. Netting, Frances Berdan, Stuart Plattner, Carol Smith, and Harold Schneider, among others. These scholars stimulated and contributed to his thinking and research regarding markets and commercialization in ancient states and civilizations.

At each turn in his career, Rich has shown a singular capacity not only to learn from both his professors and his colleagues but to bring together disparate research and thinking from across the social sciences to provide a deeper and more holistic understanding of premodern complex societies within a scientific epistemology that is rigorous, empirical, and oriented toward testing and falsification. An approach he often encouraged his students and colleagues to adopt, including the editors of this volume.

This approach has also contributed to his ever-dynamic theoretical and research paradigm and increasingly complex empirical projects. Rich initially worked on Jeff Parson's Texcoco settlement pattern project (Parsons 1971) and then directed a regional survey of the Ixtapalapa peninsula (Blanton 1972), both in the Basin of Mexico. From these projects, he was invited by Kent Flannery to bring the regional survey methodology developed in the Basin of Mexico to the Valley of Oaxaca. He first directed an intensive survey and mapping project at Monte Albán (Blanton 1978) and then a regional survey of the southern arm of the Valley of Oaxaca (Blanton et al. 1982). Incorporating former students and colleagues as codirectors, Rich encouraged the expansion of the Valley of Oaxaca Settlement Pattern Project to the entire Valley of Oaxaca (Kowalewski et al. 1989). From Oaxaca, Rich turned his research attention to systematic cross-cultural research on the built environment (households) and, most recently, rational choice and

collective action theory (Blanton 1994; Blanton and Fargher 2008; Blanton and Taylor 1995). He also returned to the field to carry out a regional survey in Turkey and an intensive site survey at Tlaxcallan (Blanton 2000; Fargher, Blanton, et al. 2011).

Through this research and more synthetic works, Rich continued to refine and expand his—and in the process, scholarly—understanding of social complexity. Specifically, his academic production has brought to bear ideas concerning markets and commercialization, world-systems, political economic and egalitarian behavior (especially cooperation), households, demography and settlement patterns, urbanism, scale issues, boundedness, social integration, architectural analysis, public goods, bureaucratization, and rational decision-making on theories concerning the evolution of social complexity and states (e.g., Blanton 1975, 1976, 1978, 1983a, 1983b, 1985, 1989, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998a; Blanton and Fargher 2008; Blanton and Feinman 1984; Blanton et al. 1982, 1993, 1996, 2005; Fargher and Blanton 2007; Fargher et al. 2010; Fargher, Heredia Espinoza, and Blanton 2011; Feinman et al. 1984, 1985; Kowalewski et al. 1983, 1989). All of this using a comparative and systematic methodology geared toward robust (statistical-based) testing and falsification. The impact of Rich's scholarly endeavors on archaeology and other social sciences, especially scholars interested in ancient or premodern states, is amply evidenced by the more than 4,200 citations that his publications have received at the time of this writing.

THE CONTENTS OF THIS VOLUME

Thus, to honor his contribution to and leadership in the study of the evolution of social complexity and ancient states, we invited a group of highly distinguished scholars to prepare a series of theoretically and empirically robust chapters. These chapters focus on at least one of the research themes that have interested Rich (e.g., architecture, economics, power, and cross-cultural analysis) and employ methodologies involving variously regional studies, testing, falsification, and/or comparison. We asked these scholars to address issues in novel ways and to experiment with new explanations. We think that “pushing the envelope” in terms of explanation is the best way to honor Rich's contribution because he has been a constant innovator across his career.

Given the diversity of areas and themes in this volume, organizing the chapters thematically proved overly complex. Thus, in order to avoid a confusing array of sections and subsections, we opted for a simple ordering based on world areas. The first section is dedicated to Mesoamerica, the second section

to the Old World (Europe, Africa, and South Asia), and the final section to cross-cultural comparison. Given Rich's primary focus on Mesoamerica, the number of chapters dealing with Mesoamerica is slightly more than the Old World; yet the Old World contribution is substantial and illustrates the broad appeal and extensive impact of his scholarship.

MESOAMERICA

The first two chapters in this section are dedicated to Oaxaca. In chapter 1, Stephen Kowalewski argues that markets significantly impacted Mesoamerica before the conquest and identifies six implications of a market-dominated economy. He then looks for material evidence of market economies in the prehispanic Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca. He concludes that markets affected the spatial distribution of cities, regional specialization, economic integration, wealth stratification, consumption, and economic cycles. In chapter 2, Arthur Joyce and Sarah Barber compare Monte Albán and Río Viejo during the later Formative (350 BC–AD 250). They argue that during the later Formative political architects at both sites initially built complex political structures around corporate and collective strategies. But by the end of the Terminal Formative, these structures came under attack by exclusionary strategies resulting in major reorganization at the outset of the Classic period. Río Viejo collapsed, while the political elite at Monte Albán built a hierarchical structure that persisted for another 400 years. They conclude that the differences in the ability of the ruling elite to transform local corporate structures into regionwide integrative institutions resulted in the different pathways followed by each polity.

The second pair of chapters is dedicated to West Mexico. In chapter 3, Christopher Beekman works to link corporate and exclusionary strategies with regional data in the southern Tequila valleys. He uses Pierre Bourdieu's concept of fields to tie specific strategies to particular physical spaces. Within this framework, Beekman concludes that individualizing rituals, marked by elaborate shaft tombs, declined as more and more communities in Jalisco adopted circular architecture and corporate rituals after AD 200. In chapter 4, Verence Heredia Espinoza addresses the role of corporate political strategies in the northern Tequila valleys during the Postclassic. This region was under threat from the Tarascans and the Caxcanes, yet it maintained its independence by building small collective polities that could be mobilized for defense but that could not be dominated by a single individual or lineage. Conversely, the more exclusionary polities located in neighboring regions were easily conquered and incorporated by the Tarascans.

The remaining chapters in this section focus on Veracruz, the Basin of Mexico, and the Maya area. In chapter 5, Barbara Stark uses data on “Standard Plan” (SP) architectural arrangements from the Classic-period Gulf Lowlands to develop a more nuanced application of the corporate-network continuum. She concludes that the SP provided a physical arena where a tug-of-war between divergent corporate/collective and network strategies played out. Hence, a middle-ground political strategy where corporate groups were important but not dominant best explains the Classic period in south-central Veracruz. In chapter 6, Frances Berdan looks at the ways that a single commodity complex, feathered ornaments, transformed an array of secondary production activities that fed into the manufacture of these ornaments. In chapter 7, Lisa LeCount examines the development of markets in the Mopan River valley, Belize. She concludes that while marketplaces were present throughout the Maya Lowlands during the Late and Terminal Classic, commercialization was more limited. The political elite manipulated the flow of highly elaborate ceramics and obsidian by controlling the markets in which they could be sold and by price fixing. As a result, rural households were more poorly supplied with these goods despite being well supply with plain ware ceramics.

OLD WORLD

In the second part of the book we grouped chapters on Europe (Sweden), sub-Saharan Africa (Nyoro), the Near East (Mari), and South Asia (Indus Valley and Sri Lanka). In chapter 8, T. L. Thurston argues that both collective ideologies and political strategies have deep roots in the Swedish state. Focusing on the emergence of the first state in Sweden, Thurston analyzes the conflict between the Svear crown and the strongly collective organization of Småland pastoralists, who occupied a region that housed natural resources (e.g., iron ore) coveted by the Crown. As the Crown moved in, the Smålanders faced increasingly unfair and brutal tax oppression. At first, they responded by moving into higher and more remote valleys to escape voracious tax-farmers and thugs employed by the Crown. Then, when they had exhausted their exit options, they violently pushed back against the Crown and successfully maintained the ambitions of absolutist rulers in check over many centuries. Thus, Thurston argues, the Smålanders were instrumental in laying the foundation for modern democracy in Sweden. In chapter 9, Peter Robertshaw examines the history of the Nyoro state from the perspective of collective action theory and corporate-power strategies. He argues that the Nyoro state originally

developed with a more corporate political economy and shifted toward a high degree of “despotism” in the nineteenth century. Yet, the Nyoro state expressed a “tension” between the people and the ruler and, thus, between more collective and more exclusionary strategies throughout its history. In chapter 10, Rita Wright compares the ways in which objective bases of power and corporate cognitive codes limited individual power in Mari, in the Near East, and the Indus civilization, in South Asia. She concludes in both cases that corporate cognitive codes, built around the collective ideologies of pastoralists in the case of Mari and craft-producer and merchant communities in the case of the Indus, were important for limiting the power of individual rulers. In chapter 11, Deborah Winslow examines changes in Sinhalese houses in the village of Walangama, Sri Lanka, from the perspective of canonical and indexical communication. She notes that although economic changes over the last 30 years have brought much more wealth to the community, wealth display on household façades has remained muted, a pattern consistent with the maintenance of a strong collective ethic in the village.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON

In chapter 12, Peter Peregrine and Carol Ember evaluate the degree to which the corporate-network continuum is related to socialization for mistrust, unpredictable natural disasters, and external warfare. Their cross-cultural analysis finds support for the hypothesis that network strategies are associated with unpredictable natural disasters as well as more frequent external warfare, but they did not find support for the hypothesis that xenophobia is more strongly associated with network than corporate strategies. In chapter 13, Gary Feinman and Linda Nicholas argue that archaeological thought on the origins of hierarchical societies should focus on patterns of diversity as opposed to uniform types, and on historical sequences instead of individual stages. In chapter 14, Tim Earle explores how resource mobilization, especially productive “bottlenecks,” are related to diverse political-economic strategies (e.g., the corporate-network continuum). He concludes that property rights over productive bottlenecks are key aspects of political economy. The degree to which the state or ruling elite monopolizes bottlenecks affects the degree to which resources may be mobilized for exclusionary political economies. In the final chapter, Lane Fargher examines the relationship between corporate political strategies and collective action. Building on Blanton’s work on corporate strategies and statistical assays, he determines that corporate strategies are strongly correlated with several aspects of collectivity (e.g., internal revenues,

public goods, and control of principal agency). Accordingly, he concludes that corporate strategies are an important tool that can be deployed in building collective states, especially for controlling rulers or a powerful nobility.

CONCLUSION

Each one of the chapters included in this volume investigates the myriad pathways to complexity followed by human societies across the globe and throughout history in new and provocative ways. Following Rich's leadership, they show that multiscale analysis, recognition of human agency, and a robust and diverse theoretical toolkit are necessary for understanding cultural evolution and complexity. Especially important is the accumulation of knowledge in this volume that demonstrates that cooperation and market development are as much a part of the development of complex societies and states as coercion and exploitation, regardless of geographical area. The chapters in this volume collectively show, in accordance with Rich's theoretical arguments, that collective action and competitive market systems played a decisive role in the cultural evolution of social complexity and civilization, regardless of world area.

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