



Beyond Collapse: Archaeological Perspectives on Resilience, Revitalization, and Transformation in Complex Societies (Visiting Scholar Conference Volumes: ... Investigations Occasional Paper No. 42)

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The Maya. The Romans. The great dynasties of ancient China. It is generally believed that these once mighty empires eventually crumbled and disappeared. A recent trend in archaeology, however, focusing on what happened during and after the decline of once powerful societies has found social resilience and transformation instead of collapse. In *Beyond Collapse: Archaeological Perspectives on Resilience, Revitalization, and Transformation in Complex Societies*, editor Ronald K. Faulseit gathers scholars with diverse theoretical perspectives to present innovative approaches to understanding the decline and reorganization of complex societies.

Essays in the book are arranged into five sections. The first section addresses previous research on the subject of collapse and reorganization as well as recent and historic theoretical trends. In the second section, contributors look at collapse and resilience through the concepts of collective action, eventful archaeology, and resilience theory. The third section introduces critical analyses of the effectiveness of resilience theory as a heuristic tool for modeling the phenomena of collapse and resilience. In the fourth section, contributors examine long-term adaptive strategies employed by prehistoric societies to cope with stresses. Essays in the fifth section make connections to contemporary research on post-decline societies in a variety of time periods and geographic locations.

Contributors consider collapse and reorganization not as unrelated phenomena but as integral components in the evolution of complex societies. Using archaeological data to interpret how ancient civilizations responded to various stresses—including environmental change, warfare, and the fragmentation of political institutions—contributors discuss not only what leads societies to collapse but also why some societies are resilient and others are not, as well as how societies reorganize after collapse. The implications of the fate of these societies for modern nations cannot be underestimated. Putting in context issues we face today, such as climate change, lack of social diversity, and the failure of modern states, *Beyond Collapse* is an essential volume for readers interested in human-environment interaction and in the collapse—and subsequent reorganization—of human societies.

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