CONTENTS

Contributors vii
Figures viii
Tables ix
Acknowledgements x

Chapter 1 Introducing the Conference: There Are No Innocent Terms 1
Norman Yoffee
Mapping the chapters 3
The challenges of fragility 6

Chapter 2 Fragility of Vulnerable Social Institutions in Andean States 9
Tom D. Dillehay & Steven A. Wernke
Vulnerability and the fragile state 12
Mediated political orders: succession and partition 13
The mediated state 19
Conclusions 20

Chapter 3 Why Early Cities Failed: Fragility and Resilience in Bronze Age China 25
Li Min
The first quarter of the second millennium BC: collapse of the great Longshan centres 25
The second quarter of the second millennium BC: the emergence and decline of Erlitou 28
The third quarter of the second millennium BC: the rise and decline of Zhengzhou 33
The fourth quarter of the second millennium BC: the rise and decline of Anyang 35
The first quarter of the first millennium BC: addressing fragility and resilience in the Zhou political order 38
Conclusion 42

Chapter 4 Fragile Authority in Monumental Time: Political Experimentation in the Classic Maya Lowlands 47
Patricia A. McAnany
Political experimentation 47
Large ‘anomalous’ aggregations 48
Preclassic Maya lowlands: E-Groups and patron deity shrines 50
Authority and hereditary rulership hybridized: southern lowland Maya experiment 52
Northern ambivalence to monumental time 54
Fragility in its many guises or how political experiments end 56
Final considerations and conclusions 57

Chapter 5 Ancient Egyptian Exceptionalism: Fragility, Flexibility and the Art of Not Collapsing 61
Ellen Morris
Dangers skirted, bullets dodged 61
Politicide, state effects and near death experiences 64
Resiliency 75
An autopsy report on Egypt’s first failed state 76
The case for re-considering the role of a climate hostile to the state 79

Chapter 6 Fragile Cahokian and Chacoan Orders and Infrastructures 89
Timothy R. Pauketat
Cahokian social and material history (AD 950 to 1250) 89
Chacoan social and material history (AD 800s to 1130) 96
Discussion 102
Chapter 7  Diversity, variability, adaptation and ‘fragility’ in the Indus Civilization 109
Cameron A. Petrie
Fragile and/or robust? (Re-)Introducing the Indus Civilization 109
Indus settlements: from village to city (and back?) 110
Diversity, variability and adaptation in the Indus context 116
Mediation of politics and power within Indus settlements: hierarchy, heterarchy and collective action 119
Mediation of politics and power between Indus settlements: the Indus state debate 121
‘Crises, what crisis?’; the 4.2 kya event and the Indus 122
Urban ‘stability and fragility’ and rural ‘resilience’ 125

Chapter 8  Fragile States in Sub-Saharan Africa 135
Peter Robertshaw
Three African states 137
State formation 141
Fragile African states 148
Conclusion 154

Chapter 9  Universal Rule and Precarious Empire: Power and Fragility in the Angkorian State 161
Miriam T. Stark
Universal rule and the Angkorian state 162
Context: place, structure and scale 164
The structure of sovereignty: Angkorian landscapes 167
The structure of sovereignty: Angkorian power and patronage 168
Collapse, resilience and patronage 173
Fragility, resilience and regeneration 173

Chapter 10  Negotiating Fragility in Ancient Mesopotamia: Arenas of Contestation and Institutions of Resistance 183
Norman Yoffee & Andrea Seri
A history of academic resistance to views of the totalitarian nature of political and economic power in Mesopotamia 184
Fragility in literature 186
Historical examples of fragility and resistance 187
Contestation, resistance and fragilities in early Mesopotamian states 193
Coda 194