Acknowledgments

When I took up my appointment at the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research at The Australian National University in 2003,¹ I thought I had died and gone to heaven. In times of great pressure on universities to adopt managerialist assumptions and organisation, not just to funding, but also to academic work, the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research was a haven of intellectual excitement and reflective space. I thank Professor Howard Morphy and Dr Mandy Thomas for making my time there possible, and my colleagues and postdoctoral students for challenging and enriching my intellectual imagination. In particular, Dr Monique Skidmore stretched my thinking by being much more academically modern than I, and suggesting the possibility that my original more modest proposal could usefully encompass the sweep of my previous research. This book is the result.

In the process, I also received invaluable support from the Centre’s Executive Director, Anne-Maree O’Brien, and her administrative colleagues, especially Alan Wyburn and Suzanne Groves. Glenn Schultz and Anna Foxcroft provided timely and always helpful technical support.

My thanks go also to the many people with whom I have shared my research journey over the past 30 years. My former husband, Brendan Doran, was the reason that I found myself in Bangkok and Madrid; his support was strong and unstinting, even in the face of some disapproval from his diplomatic superiors. Without that support, I would have found it much more difficult to turn his overseas postings into research projects of my own. The late Professor Anthony Forge accepted my unorthodox proposals to undertake, first a Master’s degree and then a PhD, while on overseas postings, and assisted me in negotiating the necessary approvals from The Australian National University. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies—now the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies—provided me with the opportunity to carry out the first Roebourne research. I have engaged in an ongoing dialogue with Diane Smith since we were undergraduates together at the University of Queensland; I value greatly her extensive knowledge and experience, anthropological and practical, and always deep insight. And of course there are the people in the book, who allowed me into their lives and enriched mine in the process.

My friends at the Human Rights Council of Australia never allowed me to shelter from the demands of human rights advocacy even when I wanted to. Patrick Earle and others did much of the difficult work that resulted finally

¹ The Centre for Cross-Cultural Research has now been subsumed into the Research School of Humanities and the Arts and no longer exists as a separate centre.
in the inquest into the deaths of Nurjan Husseini and Fatimeh Husseini, who drowned while seeking the better life that they thought would be offered in Australia. Julian Burnside, Catherine Crawford and Lisa Roche provided legal representation pro bono for the families of the two women. Leith Maddock, of the Fremantle asylum-seeker support group, gave generously of her time and heart to those family members and to other asylum-seekers in Perth. Angela and Fred Chaney offered me a haven, friendship and support during the demanding days of the inquest, and since.

A number of people have read and commented on the draft manuscript for this book—in particular, Professor Howard Morphy and Dr Monique Skidmore. Michael Robinson and Yindjibarndi leader Michael Woodley provided initial responses to the draft of the Pilbara chapters. Anne McMillan read each chapter as I anxiously produced it, and gave me the encouragement and courage to continue. I could not have sustained my focus without her. Kitty Eggerking provided early editorial assistance, as well as new insights through her own doctoral research. Dr Adam Chapman kindly read the Thai chapters in order to update my rusty Thai orthography. Carolyn Nagy gave an overview of the whole book by reading the complete manuscript in final draft form. Dr Debjani Ganguly took precious time from her own writing to give me advice when the time came for revision. Karen Leeman kindly gave me permission to use the photo of her daughter, Amanda, on the front cover. Karen took it, as she said, ‘with love’, on Strathburn Station in Cape York in 1998. Clive Hilliker produced the maps. The Australian National University provided a welcome publication subsidy. Jan Borrie undertook the intensive task of copyediting and completed it expeditiously and comprehensively. My thanks go to all of them.

A book is never completed outside the context of family and friends. This one has been accompanied by the joy of my grandchildren, Fin, Tilly, Charlotte, and Miles. I hope that their life journeys will be as serendipitous, enthralling, loved and loving, as mine has proved to be.