

Acknowledgements

This book about the core of studies of civilisations in history and sociology has been written from the edges of two continents: the eastern edge of Australia and the western edge of North America. Both edges are along terrestrial borders of the Pacific Ocean. I feel myself influenced by the ecologies of these places with their ocean prospects and coastal horizons. Those ecologies, those horizons help with thinking about civilisations, societies, inter-connections and flows. More than places, however, it is people – several people – who have contributed to the thinking that sits behind the main arguments made in the chapters that follow. Some have provided direct support as interlocutors around major theoretical, political and historical questions; others have read drafts and provided feedback; and yet others have contributed indirectly in different conversations over several years or by providing me with their work.

Amongst them I acknowledge Craig Browne, Dietrich Jung, Alice Mills, José Mauricio Domingues, Janice Newton, Johann Arnason, Said Arjomand, Jane Mummary, Wolfgang Knöbl, Charles Crothers, David Waldron, Jamie Doughney, Adam Yaghi, Teruhito Sako and Karl Smith. I am especially grateful to John Rundell and Strobe Driver for their valuable feedback on various chapters. Long discussions with John have been irreplaceable experiences of intellectual friendship. I give particular thanks to Suzi Adams for many years of valuable conversations and for her intellectual and general friendship. In addition to Suzi, I would like to acknowledge shared discussions with my other colleagues from our journal *Social Imaginaries*: Paul Blokker, Natalie Doyle and John Krummel. I want to extend my thanks to all the editorial and production staff at Manchester University Press. Thanks to Robin Cohen is called for, given his patient encouragement at the outset of this project (including when he was on holiday!). My thanks for a second time (and the second monograph) go to Cathie Pilbeam for her copy-editing expertise and to Fiona Bryant and Gavin Myers for their wonderful and timely administrative help.

In addition to people, the project has received generous support from Federation University Australia, where I teach and research. I would like to thank, in particular, John McDonald for his enthusiastic support. A significant portion

of the research for the book took place as part of the Visiting Fellowship at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. I am especially grateful to the Centre's Director, Paul Bramadat, for his warm and collegial support during my fellowship.

I would also like to thank my partner Bronwyn Jennings for her unwavering patience and support and to our daughters Sari and Mietta for putting up with a ridiculously busy father.

An earlier version of the final section of Chapter 3 appeared as: 'Grounds for Engagement: Dissonances and Overlaps at the Intersection of Contemporary Civilizations Analysis and Postcolonial Sociology', *Current Sociology*, 63, 4 (2015), 566–85.

