Acknowledgements

This book spans the ‘Emerging Subjects’ research project (ERC-2013-CoG, 615785, Emerging Subjects) based at UCL and NUM, from 2014 to 2019. I am very grateful to these institutions for hosting us and to the ERC for their generous funding, through which we were able to build a research community that has become an extended family over the past five years. This project began at a time when I was experiencing my own crisis of sorts as my personal life took an unexpected turn and I was forced to re-imagine the future in light of the present, just as my interlocutors were doing but on a different scale. Working on this topic with the people mentioned below has been a wonderful gift and hugely transformational in many different ways.

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our wonderful group at UCL – Lauren Bonilla, Joseph Bristley, Bumochir Dulam, Baasanjav Dune, Liz Fox, Rebekah Plueckhahn, Hermione Spriggs and Hedwig Waters. Together, we developed and discussed many of the ideas presented here, in reading groups, on shared fieldwork with Chiara Goia, at writing retreats and Lunar New Year parties and through our exhibitions, workshops and public talks. At NUM, I thank Sarantsentseg Dugersuren, Officer of the International Relations Department, and Boldgiv Bazarseren, Taylor Family Chaired Professor of Ecology at the Department of Biology of the School of Arts and Sciences, for facilitating our partnership, and offer my sincere thanks to our brilliant paired researchers – Tsetsegjargal Tseden, Byambabaatar Ichinkhorloo, Bayartsetseg Terbish, Munkh-Erdene Gantulga, Tuya Shagdar and Narantuya Chuluunbat – with whom we collaborated in fieldwork and research and from whom we learnt enormously. Thank you also to our fantastic research assistants, transcribers and translators – Erdenezaya Batbayar, Batdelger Doljinsuren, Batdavaa Bachaa, Setsen Altan-Ochir, Nomindari Shagdarsuren, Navchaa Tumurbaatar and Khishigsuren Yadamdsuren – who skilfully assisted with recorded interviews, at conferences and workshops, in navigating formal meetings and in our writing. Our two exhibitions, conceived and developed by the immensely creative Hermione Spriggs, brought me into contact with some extraordinary
Mongolian artists and scholars, among whom I personally thank Tuguldur Yondonjamts, Nomin Bold, Baatarzorig Batjargal, Dolgor Ser Od and Marc Schmitz, Yuri Pattison, Deborah Tchoudjinoff, Uranchimeg Tsultem and Unurmaa Janchiv. I thank Nomin Bold for granting permission to reproduce her images in this book. Having a Mongolian female artist depict five Mongolian women as the custodians of the five elements of Mongolia is a fortuitous gift. I also thank our visiting (and later permanent) scholars – Marissa Smith, Sanchir Jargalsaikhan and Badruun Gardi – and our generous advisory board members – Haltar Batsuuri, Dashdemberel Ganbold, Jargalsaikhan Dambadarjaa, Badruun Gardi, Shurkhuu Dorj, Delgermaa Tsend and Manduul Nyamandeleg – for sharing their expansive knowledge and unique perspectives, as well as our Mongolian language teacher, Uranchimeg Ujeed, and affiliated member, Dalaibuyan Byambajav. Administrative assistance at UCL was generously given by Paul Carter-Bowman, Suzanne Pertou and Pascale Searle. Collaborating in research with this group of people has been a unique gift, both personally and intellectually.

In Mongolia I thank my friends for warmly welcoming me back into their lives and for all their support and critical engagement, including Lkhamsuren guai, Mandukhai egch, Bataa akh, Tserendondog hai, Dagmidmaa egch, Buyant egch, Burmaa egch, Duyaa egch, Delgermaa egch, Boloroo and their families. It is with great sadness that I record that Elbegdorjiin Eldev-Ochir, my Mongolian father, passed away during this work. I am forever grateful to him for gracefully gifting me a position as his daughter and thereby placing me in a wonderful extended family.

I am grateful too for ongoing intellectual engagement from Caroline Humphrey, David Sneath, Manduhai Buyandelgeryn, Morten Pedersen, Andrei Marin, Christopher Atwood, Daniel Murphey, Gisa Weszkalnys, Laura Bear, Madeleine Reeves, Kimberly Chong, Haidy Geismar and all the scholars at the ‘Rethinking Usufruct’ workshop at UCL and the ‘Mongolian-Made Capitalism’ conference at NUM. They have provided intellectual critique at crucial stages, and our two publications from these events (with Central Asian Survey and Current Anthropology) opened up theoretical avenues explored in this book. At UCL, I thank our head of department, Susanne Kuechler, and the Social Anthropology subsection for facilitating my research project, and the undergraduate and master’s students of the ‘Anthropology of Capitalisms’ course (2018 and 2019) for their review of several ideas presented here. An early draft of Chapter 1 was presented at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Copenhagen, whose members I thank for their comments and suggestions, particularly Henrik Erdman Vigh. Versions of Chapters 1, 2 and 5 were presented at the Laboratoire d’Anthropologie des Mondes
Contemporains, Université Libre de Bruxelles, where I thank, among others, Olivia Angé. Hedwig Waters read Chapter 5, Bumochir Dulam read Chapter 4, Liz Fox read Chapter 3, and Rebekah Plueckhahn and Sanchir Jargalsaikhan kindly commented on the Introduction. Nomindari Shagdarsuren and Sanchir Jargalsaikhan, two exemplary scholars, did a careful job checking the Mongolian transcription. I thank them all for their insights and suggestions. The two initial reviewers and the final reviewer offered extremely thoughtful and sage advice at a time when I needed a fresh perspective. I thank them for their intellectually generous reviews. The production of this book has been blessed with several sharp eyes and editors. I thank Denise Cowle for her initial proofreading and Anthony Nanson for his thorough and astute copy-editing, as well as Jaimee Biggins, Managing Editor at UCL Press, and Robert Davies for his proofreading. Chris Penfold, Commissioning Editor at UCL Press, has seen the whole project through from its early inception. I thank him for his patience and foresight.

In London the Village Women’s Co-working Group at the South Kilburn Granville Centre provided a unique space for me to write during the final stretch of this book. I am deeply grateful to My Kieri, Tom Sessink and Helena Reeves for looking after my children during research and writing. Freya and Otto came to Mongolia with me and made our research together so much fun. My has been with us during the writing of this book and has become a good friend. My immense love and heartfelt thanks to Brett Dee for gifting his steadfast support, important critique and golden stretches of time to think and write during weekends and afternoons, as well as for his photographic collaboration on *Five Heads*.

I dedicate this book to my maternal grandmother, Ebba Ekman Mannerfelt, who passed away at the age of 101 years while I was in the final stages of writing and who followed my life in Mongolia with great interest. Your absence is a gap that motivates us anew.