In my idiosyncratic reading of *Labyrinths*, written by Jorge Luis Borges – one of my favourite writers – writing is a form of perilous travelling, of exploring, getting lost and finding oneself again. Writing this book represents indeed a very long labyrinthine journey, replete with treacherous routes, detours, dead ends and moments when the destination figured unattainable.

In mid-2020, five years after the original idea behind this book was just that – a vague, exciting notion – the manuscript was finally being completed in the midst of a pandemic, with working from home measures in place and travel having been relegated to the fuzzy realm of utopia. Several months of working almost alone can create a false sense of self-sufficiency, but, as is the case in most intellectual work, this book has been the culmination of intellectual and human exchanges. *Turkish Politics and ‘The People’* would not have been possible without the numerous interlocutors and friends who have made an input to the intellectual content of this book.

Catharina Raudvere has been a most supportive colleague, friend and interlocutor, and without her keen interest and encouragement I have no doubt that I would still be lost in the dead ends of this route. Paul Levin and Bahar Baser Özturk provided extensive and invaluable feedback on the contents of this book as did the two anonymous Edinburgh University Press reviewers. Emma Rees, the Press’s commissioning editor, and Alp Özerdem and Erdi Öztürk, the series editors, offered advice and placed their confidence in this volume. I am grateful to them for their support and enthusiasm.
Various interlocutors were at times unaware that our conversations would eventually find their way into this particular book. Nicolas Demertzis has been a good friend, interlocutor and invaluable mentor for as long as I can remember. Our casual and more formal conversations on nationalism, populism, the political, psychoanalysis and, as this manuscript was being prepared, emotion in politics have informed ideas that underpin the argument of this book. My ideas on populism and nationalism, especially the distinction between ‘the popular’ and ‘the populist’ have been taking shape over decades and thus my intellectual debt extends way back. A number of exchanges with the late Stuart Hall on hegemony and authoritarian populism, and with the late Ernesto Laclau on populism and the concept of hegemony, have helped me sketch the contours of my current argument on populism and the popular, and, although elements of some of these ideas found their way into earlier work, my discussion of populism in this book benefits from these conversations. My intellectual debt encompasses earlier conversations with Glenn Bowman on constitutive violence, post-Marxism and post-foundationalism; and John Breuilly’s work on nationalism and his reminders of the importance of historical perspective in any theoretical endeavour. The late Rosemary Bechler gave me the invaluable opportunity to test my ideas in public in the aftermath of the 2016 failed coup in Turkey, and later on, as we embarked on the adventure of the rethinkingPopulism project from the pages of openDemocracy was a considerate and constructive interlocutor. Conversations and exchanges with Dibyesh Anand, Albena Azmanova, Seyla Benhabib, Paula Biglieri, Luciana Cadahia, Rodrigo Echecopar, Paolo Gerbaudo, Jeremy Gilbert, Catarina Kinnvall, Grigoris Markou, Chantal Mouffe, James Schneider, Guy Standing and Cihan Tuğal provided much needed food for thought with regard to formulating the contours of my understanding of populism. My reading of Turkish politics and society has benefited from exchanges with Ayhan Aktar, Isa Blumi, Pinar Dinç, Zeynep Direk, Ayhan Kaya, Mehmet Kıırık, Özge Özdüzen, İnan Ruma, Ömer Tekdemir, Ömer Türk (who also very generously pointed me out to some hard-to-locate literature), Maria Varaki and Jenny White. I am also grateful to Miray Keskin, who has provided invaluable research assistance in Turkey.

Oscar Hemer, Hans Åke Persson and Thomas Tufte gave me the opportunity to test my thoughts on Turkish politics in the course of a MICS/
Örecomm Centre for Communication and Social Change workshop held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul back in May 2015, and David Shankland and Natalie Martin invited me to a roundtable at the Royal Anthropological Institute in April 2018, discussing recent political developments in Turkey with parliamentarians and policy-makers. The Human Rights Summer School of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, where I taught over several years, has always provided a space for intellectual experimentation, and the Institute itself has been a home to me, while its staff and visitors have extended warm collegiality and a stimulating intellectual environment on several occasions. İlhami Alkan Olsson of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (Turkey office) has offered me the opportunity to combine aspects of my research with a programme on Democratic Dialogue in Turkey, which I coordinated together with Zeynep Direk and Mehmet Kırık. The Istanbul Roundtables that we organised within the framework of this programme have been the most gratifying and fascinating interdisciplinary experiences, and I am grateful to İlhami and my co-organisers as well as the participants for exploring with us the notion of trust from a theoretical perspective and its empirical application in the Turkish context. I also wish to thank the Centre for Advanced Middle Eastern Studies, Lund University, which, prior to my move to the Middle East Centre, London School of Economics, was home to me, and was where most of the research for this book was conducted. Finally, I could not have wished for more supportive colleagues than my co-workers at the LSE Middle East Centre, and for a more intellectually stimulating research environment than the Centre itself as I concluded this manuscript.

My parents have been intimately involved in this endeavour from the very start; there are no words that can even begin to describe my gratitude and love for their having been there for me, their unconditional support, encouragement and confidence in me. My late father sadly passed away prematurely, yet part of the aspiration and perseverance embodied in this book is due to the fact that he has always remained with me. My brother, Alexandros, who was in his mid-teens when I left Greece to study and, later, work in the UK has always made the distance separating us seem short and inconsequential. I am grateful to him for braving the distance, and being there in so many ways. I have been immensely privileged to have shared this journey with my
lovely children, Iason and Roxana, who are now young adults. They have been, and are, a source of joy, pride and strength and have brought to this long process immensely invaluable moments of respite, affection and love.

Finally, Nazanin, you have been a veritable *yoldaş*, braving adversity with me, making the journey bearable and helping me see the destination.