

# Acknowledgements

This life is a whirlwind, full of paradoxes and ups and downs. Life is the subject of every book written since humankind invented writing. Nevertheless, one is bound by conventions when writing an academic book. A monograph must follow a chronological order; it must be neutral and not dogmatic, critical yet not didactic, descriptive but still not predictable. There is a little window of opportunity to be playful and this is the page of acknowledgements.

George Seferis, the first Greek poet awarded with a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1963 came up with a quote that might sound self-evident but is genuinely true at its core: “our words are the children of many people”. Indeed, we all owe our knowledge, our patterns, and our endeavors to numerous people, our significant others.

Four years of a quest to locate, read and translate all kinds of different sources revolving around the Greek Gastarbeiter resulted in my doctoral thesis, defended at the European University Institute in Florence in January 2022. Aside from the academic part, I also owe gratitude to the European University Institute for its financial support in the form of a subsidy towards the copyediting of this book.

In this journey, my supervisor professor Laura Downs taught me that in academia “il faut ramer, ramer”. However, despite the effort that this incessant rowing requires, you should still be able to enjoy the surrounding landscape and cherish the people that undertake the same feat as you. Apart from her feedback on my texts, she always offers me a confidence boost calling me a “shy networker” for my ability to connect people and inspire teamwork.

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This book is dedicated to the loving memory of my late grandfather, Christos Tsakiris, and its publication coincides with a decade since his journey to eternity. This book is among other things a tribute to my grandpa’s generation (born in the 1930s) and the pressures they faced as “children of the war” and heirs of political instability and deeply rooted social inequalities. Being a storyteller’s granddaughter, finally (*εν τέλει*) I had no choice than becoming a historian.

This book is also dedicated to my family. Apart from bringing me to life (which is a debatable benefit for humanity!), my family always had my back. They armed me with the confidence to be myself, the freedom to make my own choices, the pride, the support, and the care that someone needs to keep going. Thank you, mum, dad, and Vicky: you are my cup of gold!

