Turkish politics was dramatically reshaped in the early 2000s following the decline of the Islamist National View and the electoral breakthrough of the new Justice and Development Party (JDP), headed by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Alongside its Islamist credentials, Erdoğan’s JDP consistently and convincingly presented itself as the ‘populist’ defender of the downtrodden sectors of Turkish society. However, with Erdoğan’s rise as the popularly elected president in 2014, Turkey’s already fragile democratic system was pushed in a more authoritarian direction.

Shifting the focus away from structural factors, this book analyses the political appeal and organization of the JDP that granted the party such unprecedented electoral resilience. With critical but accessible theoretical discussions, Toygar Sinan Baykan locates the JDP within the wider literature of populism, Islamist party politics, party organizations and authoritarianism. More than fifty in-depth interviews also help to relate the intimate story of Turkey’s socio-cultural divides and the JDP’s intra-party organizational dynamics, thereby offering a fresh account of Turkish politics.

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The Justice and Development Party in Turkey

*Populism, Personalism, Organization*

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If this work contributes even slightly to our understanding and knowledge of the relationship between electoral success, party organizations and Islamist party normalization, there is no doubt that my good fortune played a huge role in this. Now it is a huge pleasure for me to thank those people who, together, created these privileged circumstances for me. I have always been very lucky to come from one of those millions of families in Turkey – from all walks of life and with different social, ethnic and religious backgrounds – who have a firm belief in the collective and individual benefits of a proper education. My father and mother always stood behind me and supported me by any means at their disposal against the psychological and financial hardships of postgraduate studies. My gratitude to them is unending. I was also very lucky to be taught by very hard-working and inspiring teachers and educators from the time my formal education started. I consider myself extremely privileged to have attended these public schools and universities in Turkey. My postgraduate studies in UK, and my PhD research at the University of Sussex, have been supported by a scholarship from the Ministry of Education of Turkey. I have done my best to properly use this resource provided by the taxpayers of a country that is not very rich.

My good fortune regarding teachers and mentors was still with me when I began my PhD at the University of Sussex. As my PhD process continued I understood much better how privileged I was to have Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak as my supervisors. Without their guidance and suggestions I would probably have ended up with a text suffocated by extraneous empirical details and theoretical discussions. Alongside their invaluable contribution to my understanding of some of the essential conceptual and theoretical tools, and to the research in general, I learned many things from their intellectual and professional integrity. These are surely lessons with life-long consequences. When I started my PhD research, there was another lucky coincidence. Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser was at the University of Sussex and, for a year, we conducted unusually crowded supervision meetings with him which were extremely
Acknowledgements

intellectually stimulating. He made a very significant contribution to the formation of this research project in its initial stages.

I was also fortunate to receive comments and criticism from other people and friends in the department. It was very kind of Marko Stojic to take the time to comment on one of the chapters. I also had the chance to speak to Monika Bil on the various central arguments in the text and benefited immensely from her suggestions. Nikoleta Kiapidou, Stella Georgiadou, Gregor Zons, Roxana Mihaila, Daniel Keith, Rebecca Partos and Pedro Echeverria were among the people who made the politics department an extremely supportive and friendly environment. It was a privilege to have them around and have the opportunity to hear them speak on various dimensions of my research project as well as on other practicalities of the PhD process. At a very early stage of my research two anonymous reviewers read my research outline and recommended some very useful changes. Two other anonymous reviewers read a working paper I published in the second year of my PhD studies, and their comments later helped me to define the most appropriate approach to one of the central concepts of my work: populism. In fact, I received even more help and support from the department than I have already listed. In two presentations to the department and in other individual contacts, I received some extremely helpful comments and thought-provoking questions from the academics and other PhD students in the department.

I also attended some important events during my PhD research. I presented various parts of my research at the ECPR PhD Summer School on Political Parties in Lüneburg, the BRISMES Annual Conference in London, the ECPR Annual Conference in Montreal, the Inaugural Symposium on Turkey of the Centre for Southeast European Studies and the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey in Graz, and the Düsseldorf Graduate Conference. At these events I received some very important questions and comments from the participants.

In Graz I had a chance to meet in person Elise Massicard, whose studies on Turkey were one of those few that deeply shaped my approach to the case of the JDP organization. She was extremely generous in agreeing to read the first full draft of my dissertation and gave me some crucial feedback in a Skype meeting. Meanwhile, I also had a failed attempt to publish one of the chapters of my research. Despite this failure, I received extremely important feedback from two anonymous reviewers, which led me to write a (hopefully) much more robust theoretical background to the central chapter on the JDP’s organization. It was very kind of Tanel Demirel, too, to agree to read and comment on a couple of key chapters of the first draft of this work. I benefited
Acknowledgements

significantly from his comments and recommendations. Since my undergraduate studies began, Fethi Açikel has always been very kind to take the time to have long discussions with a group of his students and to encourage them to pursue careers in social sciences. I was lucky to have been one of those students. He was very encouraging during my postgraduate studies, too, and on a couple of occasions I had a chance to discuss various aspects of my PhD research with him.

Excepting only the role of my supervisors’, Pierre Ostiguy’s contribution to my research was second to none. He was very generous in spending long amounts of time replying to my many questions on his approach to populism via email. He read many parts of my dissertation and, on many occasions, took time to meet with me in person in Brighton and Santiago. Thanks to a Santander Mobility Grant, I was able to visit Pierre Ostiguy in Chile, and he and Umut Aydin helped to organize a seminar presentation for me at Catholic University there. I received some very crucial, thoughtful questions and comments there from the academic staff and PhD students, which helped me to think through various problematic aspects of my research.

There is no doubt that without the contribution of my participants this work would not have found a voice of its own. The overwhelming majority of my interviewees were very kind to me, and they taught me crucial lessons on party politics in Turkey. I would never have been able to acquire this insight through second-hand resources and without their generosity. Participants of my research from various hierarchical levels and localities of the JDP organization were in fact taking part in an unprecedented political experience which, I think, will have long-term political consequences for a much wider Muslim majority geography: the rise of an electorally successful post-Islamist party (or an electorally successful and politically resilient Islamist party normalization). I hope I properly grasped the important discursive/stylistic and organizational reasons for this process, which unfolded itself to me in the narratives of the actors of this historic transformation. My copy-editor Jenny Prince-Chrisley made a substantial contribution to this work by mediating my uneasy relationship with English language. I would like to thank my wife for her compassion and solidarity which made the whole process a much smoother and less lonely one.

After I submitted my dissertation at the beginning of July 2016, I continued to receive new comments, critiques and recommendations from many other established academics that I admire. At the 2016 APSA annual meeting in Philadelphia, I was lucky enough to present my paper as part of a panel on populism and get some encouraging feedback from Pierre Ostiguy and Francisco Panizza. The examiners of my dissertation,
Paul Webb and George Christou, provided me with some very important feedback in my viva in November 2016. In a second attempt, I got much closer to publishing a central chapter of my work. This time, too, I received highly detailed and helpful comments and suggestions from three reviewers as well as from the editors of the journal *South European Society and Politics*. Yaprak Gürsoy, very generously, read the entire text and provided me with extremely useful feedback. Murat Somer also read key chapters of my dissertation and recommended some key changes for the book in a very long meeting. It was very kind of him. I am indebted to all.

When this book started its life as PhD dissertation, the subject matter and the related problematics that occupied the minds of researchers and scholars in the social sciences were remarkably different. The JDP was still considered the ‘democratic model’ for the Middle East, and the Arab Spring could still be viewed in a positive light; there was hope for a more democratic, much more tolerant and prosperous region. Since 2012, Turkey and the wider region surrounding it have undergone profound, and mostly negative changes. There is no doubt that these changes have deeply shaped the manner and perspective in which I examined the JDP, as well as the final conclusions I have reached regarding the party. But I hope the desire to keep pace with these changes helped me to achieve a more up-to-date, theoretically and empirically richer account of the phenomenon of Erdoğan’s JDP.

Two anonymous reviewers of this typescript provided me with invaluable comments and criticisms. They helped me to properly define the relevant gaps within it and achieve a better study of the JDP in Turkey, taking into account the country’s authoritarian turn as well as the important political and social developments underlying this transformation. My repeated contact with Pierre Ostiguy, Yaprak Gürsoy and Murat Somer through recent academic activities and collaborative work that continued after I submitted the typescript to the Cambridge University Press for the peer review process made substantial contributions to its current form. I also attended some extremely stimulating academic events, including the PSA annual meeting in Glasgow, the ECPR annual meeting in Oslo and a symposium titled ‘I am a people’ in Eugene, Oregon, USA. In these events, I had a chance to hear very relevant comments and questions from extremely curious and interested audiences as well as prominent scholars of politics and populism. The editorial help I got from Maria Marsh and Abigail Walkington at Cambridge University Press was always timely and encouraging. Of course, errors and gaps in the text are entirely mine.
In memory of my sister Diyar Baykan