



Acknowledgments

A number of people have contributed to the making of this book. As one of my two doctoral advisors, David Graeber, said at some point, we should probably thank all the people we have ever met because our ideas always come from our interlocutions with others. To my mind, he unwittingly recalled George Seferis, a sound poet whose verse ‘our words are the offspring of many a people’ resonates with me. As much as it would make sense to do exactly that and thank pretty much everyone I have ever met, and particularly all the Sicilians I know, in a dadaist gesture, space constraints might be an issue. So I would need to keep it to the pragmatics of this specific research and its academic making.

Of course, I need to express my gratitude to all those Sicilians who shared so much of their lives with me in the context of my ethnographic fieldwork and in the time since. I hope the narratives in this book do justice to their lives. The irony of anonymisation here, especially in such an issue – anti-mafia – where safety is the ethnographer’s top priority, makes it all the more uncomfortable that I cannot mention names. So it goes.

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The book is dedicated to cooperativists and cooperationists – all those people in Sicily and beyond, who believe in and engage with the principles of cooperation. Labour is to be shared. The fruit of some intellectual labour on co-ops is this book. Hope you like it.