Preface

The contents of this book first appeared in a thematic issue in the journal *Language Policy*; we felt that the themes and arguments developed in that issue merited a more permanent representation in order to help fulfill our goal of building bridges between language policy, political theory, sociolinguistics and related areas. This book is aimed at an interdisciplinary readership and is particularly suitable for courses concerned with the politics of language, sociolinguistics, political theory, and language policy.

In working on the articles that comprise this volume, the editors and authors communicated over many months in face-to-face conversations and email exchanges, culminating in a panel presentation at the American Association for Applied Linguistics conference in Portland, Oregon, March 2014. Before, during, and after that panel, and notably during the peer-review process, we were forced to seriously (re)consider our views on our various positions on political theory, language, and language policy. Our discussions were lively, often intense, as one might expect of scholars who have spent years working within the comfortable confines of highly articulated disciplinary frameworks, with their often peculiar methods, goals of argumentation, and criteria for the establishment of validity. The structure of the academy and scholarly publishing works against the sort of successful collaborations we have forged as a collective over the past two years.

Although we cannot claim to have produced a ‘new paradigm’ or ‘unique synthesis’ between political theory and language policy, we believe we have outlined some of the key areas that can benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration that *could* lead to better theories and concepts where the advancement of democracy and justice are influenced by how societies—and their governments—think about and often act upon the status and roles of languages in social life. In essence, although this book contains separate papers, the contents reflect the movement of ideas and positions over time on the part of the contributors, resulting in a true collaboration
and progression to new, interdisciplinary spaces that did not exist before any of us began this project. This book represents the first steps in a process that we hope will lead to greater collaboration between scholars of politics and language whose interests and research come together in the subfield of language policy.

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Thomas Ricento
Yael Peled
Peter Ives
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