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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Save the best for last... I freely admit that during the past few years while I was working on my dissertation I took a few moments here and there to stop and think about what I would like to write in this particular section. Still, I refrained myself from putting anything in writing so as, on one hand, not to attract any bad luck, and, on the other hand, to have this 'carrot' dangling in front of me while I struggled with the last steps that needed to be made.

No one said that writing a PhD would be easy, to the contrary, I remember well that during my interview I was specifically warned that most PhD candidates take way longer to finish their dissertation than they intended and that *everyone* goes through phases of doubt, of not being able to look at the manuscript anymore, of discouragement. I am sure that if not for the constant support that I was given by my two supervisors, Marco and Gerard, I would have had many more of these moments. With them just a few offices away, always ready to answer any of my questions or inquiries, I had a very much-needed back up during these past years. I would like to thank them for always being there and for helping me in any way that I let them do so, which admittedly might have not been often enough at times.

I wish to thank the members of the doctorate committee for their willingness to evaluate my work. I especially value all additional comments and suggestions that I had received along the way, which have greatly contributed to the improvement of the manuscript.

When I left Poland and arrived in the Netherlands to start working on my PhD, I had thrown myself into deep waters. Luckily, the water turned out to be mostly warm and clear (quite contrary to the weather in Amsterdam). Still, I have managed to navigate it as smoothly as I did only thanks to many friendly hands that were there to give me a necessary support whenever I started to lose my footing. Many of my fellow PhD colleagues had helped me more than just by listening to me whenever I needed some input on my PhD in progress. And so, I would like to heartily thank: Izabela, Rolef, Matthias, Bas, Chantal, Odavia, Selma, Rafal, Jaap, Sacha, Dewi, Valentina, Lyn, Bram, Guido, Jaap, Jacob, Maaïke, Tim and Josse. My dear office roommate Jaap deserves special mention, since he served as my patient sounding board many times. Thanks, Jaapie! I must mention the huge support I received from Karla, Astrid, Marianne, Janneke, Yvonne, Lidwien, Marije and Tiny who all managed to make my daily life at the faculty a lot easier. Finally, I would like to thank all other members of the Centre for the Study of European Contract Law, who listened to my presentations and provided valuable comments.

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I have decided to dedicate this book to my parents. They have encouraged me to always follow my dreams and ambitions, regardless of what it cost them. Mom, Dad, I know it is difficult to not have me around on a daily basis. I am grateful that you have contained your worries in order not to discourage me from moving abroad to follow my career path and that you have been there and still are always just a phone call, Skype conversation or a short flight away. The certainty of your love and support gives me much needed security and strength to pursue whatever goals I set for myself. I love you. I would also like to mention my brother, Jan, who by chance moved to Amsterdam just a year later than I did which allowed me almost no time to miss my family. You are my best friend and I value the fact that I can always count on you to bring me back down to reality when I start worrying, e.g. about the workload getting to heavy. Finally, I would like to thank Dennis, for all these times when you pointed out that maybe I should stop emailing you now and go back to writing my PhD. See, I told you I would not have finished it without you. Might have still been emailing you at this moment instead... Writing to you here is way better, though.

Joasia Luzak
Amsterdam, 1 September 2011