

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I started studying law in September 1998, I was working as a court interpreter and legal translator. It seemed a good idea to expand my legal knowledge for the benefit of my translating work. Little did I suspect that precisely 9 years later I would be sitting here writing the acknowledgements for my PhD thesis. My translating and interpreting work did indeed benefit from my 'expanding' legal knowledge, as did my studies from my work in practice. However, the longer I studied, the more I realised that I wanted to be more than a linguistic intermediary between people in a legal setting. I wanted to be more involved with the law itself. So when I saw an advertisement for a PhD position in comparative family law at the University of Utrecht towards the end of my studies in 2002, I did not hesitate and applied.

The subject of the research 'children and their parents' has proven to be every bit as interesting as I thought it would be. But besides the content of the work, the working environment is probably the most important reason why I have enjoyed the past five years. The Molengraaff Institute is a very inspiring working environment, and the Private International and Comparative Law group in particular. I want to thank my direct colleagues (Bente, Christina, Ellen, Merel, Nora, Richard and Vesna) for the various ways in which they have contributed to the completion of this book. I want to thank Wendy Schrama and Ian Curry-Sumner in particular, for their invaluable suggestions and comments and inspirational discussions on the topic of my research. Furthermore, I want to thank Ian Curry-Sumner for reading my writing with the eyes of a common lawyer.

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