Preface

Life is full of interactions; and so are legal orders, in a world of multiple legal regimes and realities – both horizontally (in the form of nearly 200 national legal systems) and vertically (with sub-, supra- and international legal orders), let alone self-regulatory schemes that lie beyond the realm of public authority. I have always been fascinated by the variety of ways in which legal orders interact with each other; by their dynamics and tensions; by their constant quest to define how to relate to what is ‘external’ from a particular viewpoint. Immersion in the interplay between them requires the observer to apply at least two points of view at all times, and to dismiss a static, single point of reference. The rules governing international migration are no less ever-evolving and are in a constant state of transformation. I thus found it thrilling to analyse the grand tectonics of the EU and international legal orders through the microcosm of the fluid body of migration law. Have I already mentioned my fondness for continuously evolving legal structures, multi-layered legal pluralities and the complexities and legal intricacies that they entail?

Interactions are also pivotal when one engages in the otherwise fairly solitary activity of writing a legal monograph – especially when the final year of drafting occurred amid a global health crisis, which drastically reduced real-life interactions. Although the production of the final work was a singular task, the entire endeavour was not a singular project. The quality of this intellectual exercise was considerably improved by a great support network, both professionally and personally.

My work in the Migration-Expulsion Working Party of the Council of the European Union as a government-delegated legal adviser, years before embarking on this project, initially inspired me to conduct research in this domain. After the inception of the concept of this project, a postdoctoral research scholarship awarded by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was instrumental in helping me to ‘walk the talk’. Over the past six years of work, I have found inspiration, critique, fascination and challenge in my interactions with a great deal of brilliant scholars and practitioners, colleagues and friends – I am indebted to them for their input. All of these exchanges, talks, lectures, workshops and conferences enriched and polished my work, sharpened my arguments and deepened my understanding. I have also grown and matured academically during this exciting, and at times painful, journey.

Without mentioning names, for fear of inadvertently missing any, I benefited greatly from a visiting fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg in the summer of 2016 – its inspiring intellectual environment boosted my research, thanks to the amazing people and outstanding research infrastructure that I experienced there. I am equally grateful that the Centre of European Law and Governance and the Centre of International Law at the University of Amsterdam co-hosted me in early 2019 to present a previous, working version of the manuscript and gain feedback from distinguished scholars after rich discussions. I would also like to express my thanks to the anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful comments on my book proposal.

Deep thanks are also due to the team at Edward Elgar Publishing – in particular Ben Booth, Amber Watts, Barbara Pretty and Sabrina Lynott-May – for their excellent support and high-octane professionalism. It was memorable to work with the copy editor, Carolyn Boyle, whose feeling for the English language and sensibility to the issues dealt with in this book were enthralling.

Last, but not least, I am eternally grateful for the love, patience and moral support of my family through this incredible voyage – notably my wife and soulmate Rita, to whom this book is dedicated.

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Tamás Molnár
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