Acknowledgements

Following my migration from Germany to the UK in 2007, this book mirrors my intellectual journey from doctrinal to interdisciplinary approaches to the EU and its law. The journey was more meandering than originally anticipated: while the book should have been in print shortly after the coming into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, it only materialised during a renewed global economic crisis, arguably triggered by risky banking practices and a volatile housing market in the US. Its impact on the EU demonstrated impressively how solidarity between economically strong and weak Member States might be the only way for the Union to survive. Thus, the theme of economic and social integration gained unexpected currency. Developing answers to the question of what and how EU constitutional law can contribute became ever more difficult though.

While writing this book, I profited from numerous academic cooperative projects in which to reflect my ideas. These included the Blurring Boundaries Project (convened by Ruth Nielsen, Ulla Neergaard and Lynn Roseberry, Copenhagen), where I was able to discuss my first ideas for the European Social Model (2007) and the initial paper on the Social Ideal of the Court of Justice (2009), which grew into the methodology applied in analysing the EU’s judicial constitution in Chapter 4. On the initiative of Dora Kostakopoulou, I was able to present my ideas on socially embedded constitutionalism to the Fifth Pan-European Conference on EU Politics in Porto (2010), and on the invitation of Ulrike Liebert I was able to present further developments on the Social Ideal to a RECON workshop in Bremen (2011). Commenting on the Antwerp expert seminar on ‘Social Inclusion and Social Protection’ (2011), on the invitation of Herwig Verschuren, Bea Cantillon and Paula Ploscar, I was able to reevaluate my analysis of the Treaty of Lisbon’s values and objectives; and seminars of the FORMULA project (invited by Stein Evju, Oslo) and the REMARKLAB project (invited by Niklas Bruun, Helsinki, and Jonas Malmberg, Uppsala) inspired me to consider practical consequences. Last but not least, the book owes much to the multilateral research group ‘EU Economic and Social Constitutionalism after the Treaty of Lisbon’, which I convened at the University of Leeds, with the cooperation of Ulrike Liebert and Sandra Kroeger (Bremen), Hildegard Schneider, Sergio Carrera and Anja Wiesbrok (Maastricht), Peter Vincent-Jones, Caroline Mullen, Stephanie Fehr and Andrea Gideon (Leeds).
Andrea Gideon also provided valuable research and editorial assistance from 2010 on and particularly at the final stage of the manuscript. Without her help, good humour and perseverance all these grand ideas might not have materialised in a book. Also, Ben Booth and John Paul McDonald at Edward Elgar publishers were very supportive and never lost their patience over my numerous delays.

Finally, personal encouragement from many people helped me persevere in finishing this. I have met incredibly nice colleagues, not only at the Centre of European Law and Legal Studies, but at different schools at Leeds University and beyond, whose warmth, laughter and friendship created more than only a new academic home. First and foremost, I am truly and forever indebted to Ulrike Magdalena, who never ceased believing in my ideas and helped me through more than a few dark hours over this intellectual adventure, read parts and gave valuable feedback and generally makes my life worth living.

This book also commemorates Brian Bercusson and Ulrich Zachert, who both encouraged me to work comparatively and to risk academic migration. Their tireless work for imprinting EU law with more social justice is a continuing source of inspiration.

Dagmar Schiek
Leeds, 2 October 2011