Is left/right still the ‘super glue’? The role of left/right ideology and issues in electoral politics in Western and East Central Europe

Walczak, A.

Citation for published version (APA):
Walczak, A. (2012). Is left/right still the ‘super glue’? The role of left/right ideology and issues in electoral politics in Western and East Central Europe.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation completes a long journey which I started exactly ten years ago. Back in 2002, when Poland was still outside of the European Union, I left my home country in order to study ‘in the West’. Being from one of the first generations in post-communist countries that had the opportunity to study anywhere in Europe, I was very eager to learn and to experience European integration. This dissertation crowns this studious period, full of beautiful moments and tough challenges, which accompany the life of an expat. Here, I would like to thank numerous people who have given me support and inspiration on this long journey.

W pierwszym rzędzie chciałabym serdecznie podziękować rodzicom. Ten doktorat jest nie tylko wynikiem mojej, ale przede wszystkim Waszej ciężkiej pracy. Ukończenie najlepszego liceum w Radomiu, studiów w Niemczech i Polsce oraz doktoratu w Holandii nie byłoby możliwe dzięki Waszemu wsparciu oraz ogromu pracy, którą wkłóciliście, aby umożliwić mi dobre wykształcenie. Dziękuję Wam za to, że zawsze mogłam na Was liczyć w trudnych chwilach. Mam wspaniałych rodziców, Kocham Was bardzo. Mam nadzieję, że będziemy kiedyś ze mnie dumni.


Thirdly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Nathalie Sonck and Serge Wielemans for their friendship and support. Nathalie, I greatly value our discussions about PhD, life and career and our common dinner-movie outings. I hope that many more nice moments lie ahead of us. I am deeply thankful to you and Serge for the support you have given me during my stay in Amsterdam, I could always count on you and I assure you that I will pay this credit of friendship in the future. Moreover, I would sincerely like to thank Julia Hermann for her friendship and support. Julia, your optimism and perseverance have greatly inspired me in the last phase of my PhD and the difficult period of job search. I have very much enjoyed our discussions about PhD, academic and non-academic career and the (im-)possibility of work-life balance. You and Nathalie are both very strong women that I greatly admire and have learned a lot from.

Fourthly, I would like to thank my (official and unofficial) supervisors. In the first place, I would like to thank Wouter van der Brug for his guidance and excellent cooperation during my PhD track. Wouter, I am very grateful to you that you helped me bring this project to a successful completion in such a short time with your valuable advice and extensive comments. I would also like to thank you for your support and understanding during the last stage of my PhD programme when I did not only need to finish the project and revise papers for publication, but also needed to find a job. Those three years have been very valuable for me as under your supervision I have learned rigorous academic work, which I value a lot. Furthermore, I would like to express my thanks to Mark Franklin, who has been my mentor during my stay at the European University Institute in Florence. Mark has a great capacity to inspire his students to think unconventionally and rigorously, which he combines with great interpersonal skills. I am grateful for the possibility to learn from him and enjoy his support during my stay at EUI and beyond. Moreover, I would like to thank Catherine de Vries for her thought-provoking comments on my work and a healthy dose of scepticism with regard to the ptvs. Our exchanges have taught me a lot about ideological wars among methodologists and have inspired
me to find my own way. Further, I would like to thank Geoffrey Evans, my mentor during my stay at the
Nuffield College, University of Oxford. I greatly appreciate his comments on the earlier versions of my work
and his willingness to help in times of supervision crisis. Last but not least, I would like to thank Dave
Armstrong from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for very useful tips on how to graph in R.

Next, I would like to thank the whole ELECDEM team for the challenging three years that we have
shared. A special thanks goes to Susan Banducci for putting together the ELECDEM network, and to Fiona
Raffael, who has successfully and gracefully solved all problems resulting from the complicated structure of
an FP7 grant. I would like to thank my fellow Early Stage Researchers for the great time shared at
conferences, summer schools, methods workshops and secondments. In particular, I would like to thank
Kathrin Thomas and Markéta Bilská for having a good time while sharing rooms at conferences, and Zoltan
Fazekas, Federico Vegetti and Ben Stanley for fruitful and inspiring exchanges on methodological and
theoretical problems. It was a pleasure to work with you all.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my colleagues from the University of Amsterdam, the Vrije
Universiteit, the European University Institute and the University of Oxford for providing a great working
atmosphere. In particular I would like to thank my roommates, Paul van Hooft, Sarah Hardus, Julia
Poskakukhina for sharing with me the ups and downs of a PhD project. I greatly appreciate your good word
in difficult times and your understanding for my small peculiarities, such as eating in the office in spite of all
the mice terrorising us. Further, I would like to thank Matthijs Rooduijn for helping me around with academic
questions and solving cross-cultural puzzles, and Lutz Hoffer for being the brave gentlemen who had the guts
to remove a couple-of-days-old dead mouse from my office. I am also deeply grateful to Trajche Panov for
his great support during my stay at EUI. Further thanks go to Elmar Jansen for his advice on
STATA/WORD/R-related problems. I would also like to thank Michelle Allport, with whom I did not only
share a room in the first year of the PhD programme, but also with whom I shared frustrations about a PhD
life, next to interesting discussions about politics, the life in Europe and Dutch peculiarities. In addition, I
would like to thank Tom van der Meer, Annemarie Walter, Basje Bender, Madeleine Moret, Benno
Netelenbos, Gijs Schumacher, Bouchra Arbaoui, Laura Sudulich, Daphne van der Pas, Marc van de Wardt
and all other members of the CPPC club who have commented on my work and provided a very friendly
working atmosphere. Also many thanks to Elias Dinas, Carolien van Ham and Nina Liljequist for fruitful
exchanges on the canteen terrace of the EUI or at High Table at the University of Oxford. It was a pleasure to
meet you all.