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Acknowledgement

So there we are; it is finished. At long last the answer to the questions surrounding the status of this PhD project has changed: "Yes it is done. Want to know more? Buy the book!" And now, as I find myself thinking of all the people that I could, should, want and indeed must thank for making this project possible I'm tempted to start with myself. Yet, apart from the fact that my name is already on the cover there are in fact (on balance) more reasons to start with an apology rather than with a self congratulatory note.

Having harassed unsuspecting people (friends, family, colleagues, and even complete strangers) for years with stories on this project, bored them to death with exposés on morality and markets, exasperated their sympathies and pushed the levels of their politeness to their natural limits with my endless descriptions of the challenges of writing a dissertation, I see and feel the need for an apology: I apologize and I promise I will never do it again.

The first time I discussed the notion of writing a dissertation was with Professor Veit Bader under whose supervision I wrote my master thesis for philosophy. It was on the topic of globalization and ethics with a special focus on international labor standards. Having completed the thesis he suggested I could use it as the first chapter if I were to start work on a dissertation. In the end the suggestion came a bit too early but it never lost its appeal. The seeds were planted and from time to time I found myself entertaining the suggestion of actually writing a dissertation in my spare time. And it was at this stage that my uncle Anthony (who thus deserves a special mention in helping me getting my ideas for the project in place) invited me to attend a conference on Morality and Business organized by the St Thomas University and the Universidad de Deusto in Bilbao. That was the moment when I really started to think about the possibilities of writing on the place of human dignity (and later decency) in relation to markets.

Having obtained some idea on what to write about I now had to find someone willing to take me on as a PhD candidate. This turned out to be surprisingly easy. A chance meeting with Harro Maas resulted in an appointment during which I was able to present my ideas and state my ambition in starting work on a dissertation. At the end of our talk he introduced me to this new American professor, Prof. John Davis. We had an almost instant connection. Our first

encounter was such that I can still quote bits of it, verbatim, to this day. And with this I have arrived at the two people who were so important in realizing this project.

There are multiple reasons why this project would have faltered without the assistance, encouragement and care of John B. Davis. There is of course the practical one, with him being the promotor and all, but far more important are those related to our personal interaction and the energy and stimulus I derived from that. Whether it is taking me along to the best live blues bars in Milwaukee or having in-depth discussions on politics, economics or culture, it was always interesting, stimulating and always great fun. Many thanks for your wit, wisdom, friendship, confidence and continuous support.

My gratitude for my co-promotor Harro Maas extends well beyond his role of matchmaker. He is an intellectual powerhouse and someone who has actually read all the books you can find in his office. I have learned a great deal from him and his guidance at the crucial final stages of this project was invaluable.

In the course of this project I was privileged enough to spend some time at the Graduate School of Business of Stanford University as a visiting scholar. I owe Prof. Robert Flanagan my deepest gratitude for making this possible but also for the discussions we had during my time there. His knowledge on labor standards and globalization were a tremendous help in framing my ideas.

Over the last couple of years I have been able to present and discuss my work at various conferences and symposia, including: the International Political Science Association at the Rothermere American Institute of the University of Oxford (2004), INEM at the University of Amsterdam (2004), the 2nd Pan Hellenic Conference on International Political Economy (2005), which included a wonderful 'private' session with Professor Paul Collier, The conference on Social Justice and Human Rights in the Era of Globalisation of the Globus Institute in Leuven (2006), the Good Company conference at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas (2006), die Salzburger Anstöße: Perspectives on work of the Salzburg Ethik Initiative at the University of Salzburg (2007), the Pathways of Human Dignity conference by the European Science Foundation in Vadstena (Sweden, 2007), the CERES Summer School of the CIDIN at the Radboud University in Nijmegen (2009), and the First annual Utrecht-

Nijmegen workshop in History and Methodology of Economics (2011) at Utrecht University. I'm grateful for the organizers and the other participants of these conferences and meetings for offering me the opportunities to present and discuss my project. For someone who was working outside the traditional walls of the university these encounters with scholars as well as their questions, suggestions and remarks have helped this project in more ways than one can imagine. For all the good parts in this dissertation I owe them, the lesser parts are of course most definitely mine and mine alone.

As an external promovendus I was in the position that my working life and my writing activities were to some extent separate spheres. Yet, I have been fortunate enough to have worked at places where my extracurricular activities were received with interest and support. Working at SEO Economic Research was a true lesson in applied economic research and how economic theory is translated to the real world. (By way of STATA of course, but that goes without saying) As a member of the labor market and education team and under the patronage of Marko van Leeuwen I was offered a surrounding wherein I could develop the necessary research skills that came in handy while working on the dissertation. I owe him and the other members of the team (Hana Budil-Nadvorníková, Djoerd de Graaf, Peter Berkhout, Ernest Berkhout and last—but definitely not least, Jaap-Anne Korteweg) my gratitude. The same goes for Prof. Barbara Baarsma, Prof. Coen Teulings, Joost Poort and all the others I had the pleasure to work with at SEO for their interest, support, fun, and in some cases, dare I say it, friendship!

My switch to the world of strategy consulting at Spring Associates opened up a whole new set of experiences and skills that go well beyond the martial arts of PowerPoint. It also introduced me to new and different ways of looking at the world and exposed me to the nuts and bolts of the business side of markets. In addition, the absolute luxury of working with really smart people who also have a sense of humor is nothing short of a true blessing. My sincerest gratitude to Ebel Kemeling, Matthijs Baan and Theye Veen for giving me the space needed to finalize the dissertation. It is hard to imagine that the support I received for this project would have been attainable at any other organization.

Although I was not part of the day-to-day workings of the faculty, the History and Methodology Group offered a basis from which I could develop my work. The advice and support from its members, which—apart from my promotores—included: Marcel Boumans, Tiago Mata, Geert Reuten, Edith Kuiper, Floris Heukelom, Peter Rodenburg, Ricardo Crespo and Dirk Damsma—were very welcome and for which I'm also very thankful. Alas it was not meant to be that Mark Blaug, former chair of the group, could fulfill his role as a member of my promotion committee, a task he had awarded himself during my first presentation for the group. I'm very grateful for his advice and lessons which I have tried to incorporate to the best of my ability. I would also like to thank Prof. Eric Fischer for his moral and practical support for this project.

Next I wish to express my thanks and gratitude for my paranimfen Jeroen Verberg and Jan-Hein Christoffels. They both helped me get through the difficult bits while we were studying economics and I'm very proud (but also relieved) that they are willing to continue to offer this assistance during the final phase of this project. Likewise, I wish to thank Frank Bijen for reading the manuscript and helping me in my preparation for my defense.

Writing a dissertation during the evenings, in the weekends and during the holidays means less time to spend with friends and family. To the distinguished members of het LDg '93 (toch al weer bijna twintig jaar Saai, Volgzaam en Niet Leuk) and all my friends I want to express the hope they will forgive me my absence in the past and will welcome my presence in the future. It is very sad to realize that in some cases this is no longer possible as they are no longer with us. Chris Devries, my former boss at Citibank, who showed me the truth of his motto—"You have to be nice to people"—and who could make the best Bloody Mary in town. Nico Mensing van Charante, my paranimf *in absentia*. His insight in the human condition, his support and humor are sorely missed. Although they are gone their impact on me will never fade.

When it comes to maintaining sanity in a project like this, it is more often than not family that helps in providing some good (common) sense. Whenever I was running out my two wonderful sisters Karlijn and Saskia as well as my sister-in-law Alexa and brother-in-law Ewout helped me out; at times this was much needed and very much appreciated.

It is my good fortune that my father and mother in law, Prof. dr. Michiel and Sonia Eijkman-Baronesse van Heemstra, are not only amazing people but also have considerable experience with PhD projects. Their advice on how to handle a project like this (in combination with work and family life) was always spot on and very helpful. The same can be said for the pointers regarding substance and style. Their support in every way imaginable was at times truly invaluable. Likewise to my aunt Emmy Russell, who followed the entire process meticulously while offering helpful comments along the way, I owe my thanks.

There are not that many people— at least that I know of—who can justifiably be called a continuous source of inspiration. Even more exceptional it is to find someone who is additionally smart, loving, caring, challenging, and full of humor. So I have to conclude that I'm extremely fortunate to not only know such a person but that she is also my mother, Monica Biermans. Although my father Alfons Biermans has not lived to see the start, let alone the completion of this project, his advice and counsel were always present and I like to think that the result is the better for it. I thank them both, from the bottom of my heart.

Theresa, Julius and Oscar, my three "priceless objects of sentiment", you three were the great stabilizers. Always ready to offer fun and games as a temporary escape from the writing process. Lastly I'm exceedingly grateful for the continuous love, support and patience (a lot of patience) of my own darling wife Quirine Eijkman (PhD) without whom I can honestly say it wouldn't have been possible.

And now I would like to sign off with a small message to you, dear reader, by sharing this important insight with you: "I have suffered for my art. Now it's your turn!"

Maarten Biermans

Amsterdam, May 2012