Mapping the market: a portfolio approach for informed deliberation of urban development strategies
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Neighbourhoods going up or down is a good conversation topic and – similar to traffic or football – we’re all experts. So to be able to do research on this is like turning a hobby into a job. I started this project in 2003 and I soon found out that Amsterdam is a good place to do this research in many ways. Most of all, it is because of the people I have been able to work with.

First and foremost, I want to thank my promotores Luca Bertolini and Frank le Clercq, for giving me the opportunity to start this research and supporting me along the way. Sadly, Frank passed away in 2006. We had to continue without his support, his inspiring new ideas and without the pleasure of discussing and developing these ideas. The city as a portfolio was one of these.

Luca however has done everything and more to compensate for this, for which I cannot thank him enough. It’s hard to imagine a more inspiring, energetic and ever-supportive mentor. No matter how good, bad, or so-so things were going, I was sure to be provided with a fresh view of things and a good mood. For me, Luca becoming my promotor was only natural; most of all it has been a pure bliss and a great joy.

I was very fortunate to develop the portfolio approach together with the people at DRO. The extent to which the approach has practical value is for a large part the result of their critical support and because of them eating the pudding. I thank Caroline Combé for all the energy she put in the shared development of the approach, the organisation of the workshops, and getting the message across. I am also thankful for working with Klaas-Bindert de Haan, Tony Dashorst, Koos van Zanen and Erik Klusman.

To apply the portfolio approach in Rotterdam as well was a great opportunity and great fun. I appreciated working here with Kicki Söderhjelm, Iris Dudok, Caroline Bosscher, Stef Molenaar and Wim van der Zanden. Eight workshops in total were organised in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in which over a hundred people have participated: too many to mention individually, but I am in debt to all workshop participants. Their input in the discussions as well as their response afterwards was vital to the research.

Many colleagues at the university have contributed to this research in different ways. A crucial part of it was working together with Thomas Straatemeier and Marco te Brömmelstroet. It took some time to properly understand the kind of research we were doing. We found out by joining forces and things became much easier and more fun after that.

There are many other colleagues/roommates/friends/band members who have made life at the university really academic and less academic when necessary. On top of this list are Manuel and Rogier, whom I enjoy disagreeing with about everything, music being on top of that list. I was also lucky to share a merry room: with Anna, Hebe, Robert, Ellen, Mendel, Jacob and Barbara. Other people I enjoyed working with are Nadav, Amanda, Tineke, Michaël, Fenne, Marjolijn, Melika, Els, Karin, Marco, Wouter, Bart, Marlies, Kai, Edith, Joram, Inge, Koen, Francesca,
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For about two years – in the words of one of the colleagues above – I turned the job of writing a thesis back into a hobby, and started working for AWV, now Stadgenoot. I thank my colleagues there for their interest and support, with a special mention of Rogier Noyon, Frank Roozekrans and Willy de Looper.

Finally, I am happy that I can present the book it was all about to the wonderful people at home who gave me their unconditional support: my friends, my close family, my parents and, above all, Mirjam.