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### Symbolic markers and institutional innovation in transforming urban spaces

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**Publication date**  
2012

[Link to publication](#)

#### **Citation for published version (APA):**

Dembski, S. (2012). *Symbolic markers and institutional innovation in transforming urban spaces*.

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## Acknowledgements

A PhD project is a long pathway of learning to understand the subject and what one is actually going to do. When thoughts look good on paper that does not automatically mean that they are already fully internalised and understood. In order to get the time to digest what I was doing alternative strategies were needed to stay longer than the scheduled four years at the UvA. Teaching was a good activity to get a feeling of relevance, spending time in a purposeful manner with more or less immediate results. Parental leave was another—more drastic—measure. There are no doubts that it was a good step, but I have my doubts as to whether it paid off in terms of time. Just when these measures appeared to be insufficient, Ed Taverne came along, searching for an assistant editor for a book publication in the framework of the NWO programme *Urbanization & Urban Culture*. In the meantime, more teaching activities were acquired to chew on the PhD thesis. And despite all these efforts, time pressures made the last steps go quicker all of a sudden: a new NWO project in sight, with a submitted and approved PhD Thesis as a *conditio sine qua non*, and yet another baby. Here we are!

My first words of thank are to my promotor Willem Salet and my copromotor Pieter Terhorst. Willem is a *Doktorvater* in the real sense. He guided me through my theoretical and empirical endeavour, never lost for answers. He has been cheerful, but sometimes also strict and very direct with his points of critique. It took me a while to fully grasp his view on planning (theory), but now that I (believe myself to) understand I admire it the more. Fortunately, this source of inspiration is not yet drying out as we continue to work together in a NWO research project. I also very much appreciated that his interest went much further than my academic output. Pieter, who was one of the first persons I met when I arrived in Amsterdam as an exchange student, volunteered as a copromotor in his function as a senior researcher in the Synergien project. I am grateful to him for carefully reading through my text, for listening (and talking through...). He is too modest when he just considers himself a sparring partner for developing my argument, because he is so generous with advice.

A particular dedication goes to Ed Taverne, who opened my interest for urban history and helped me to reflect on the broader field of urban studies. Working as an editor for a book on 1,000 years of Dutch urban history was

a pleasure. His enthusiasm is contagious, his broad knowledge stretching far beyond architectural history, is admirable, his consumption of books impossible to keep up with for a young father. He made me aware that planning is not everything (but still not nothing). It was a pleasure to work with him and to profit from his insights. I hope that our collaboration continues after the publication of the book. I am grateful to the other editors, Len de Klerk and Bart Ramakers, and Lenny Vos from NWO for our fruitful collaboration.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all those who shared their valuable insights that are indispensable for case study research. Without their help, this study would have been impossible. This also includes the anonymous referees of the articles as well as the journal editors, who helped to improve my argument. Special thanks go to Ton Kreukels for his comments on the Rotterdam case. The research also profited from the many tutors at the AESOP PhD Workshop in Manchester 2008. Before my time at the University of Amsterdam, it was Michael Wegener and Klaus Kunzmann at the University of Dortmund (now Technical University), who fuelled my interest in academia.

The academic environment of AMIDSt and later AISSR is very much appreciated, but it is the personal contact with colleagues that makes academic life not just a productive enterprise, but enjoyable. It starts with the secretaries and management (Puikang Chan, Joos Droogleever Fortuijn, Marian Hamann, Marianne van Heelsbergen, Barbara Lawa, Geert van der Meer, and Guida Morais e Castro Ermida) who helped me wherever and whenever they could. The programme group Planning, Institutions and Transforming Spaces, the Synergis research project, the *Rooilijn* editorial board, and latest the so-called Dream Team, were just a few of the regular clubs I was and still am lucky to be a part of and which shaped my academic development. In the bachelor and master of the planning programme I enjoyed the challenges posed by students and discussing their work with them and with colleagues, in particular Henk de Feijter.

For more than five years, the core of my daily academic life took place in room G 1.02, before we recently moved to the new building across the canal. Thanks to the 'coffee company' consisting of various room mates for supplying me with the essential fuel of science: coffee. With them, coffee became a code, only understood by those who delved into the cryptic keyboard of the high-tech coffee machine. The strategic location of the room at the beginning of the corridor made it an excellent location for others to pop in and discuss football matches and other important stuff. It turns out that some professor (Robert Kloosterman and Willem Salet) do indeed qualify as foot-

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ball professors, elaborating on their philosophies (which prove useless the very next day...). It was a quiet, social room or quite a social room.

There is a long list of colleagues, also beyond the planning group, which would become too long to mention them all. I just want to mention in alphabetic order: Manuel Aalbers, Wilma Bakker, Luca Bertolini, Els Beukers, Anita Blessing (thanks also for some English editing of chapter two), Willem Boterman, Marco te Brömmelstroet, Gouwen Dai, Michaël Deinema, Emma Folmer, Wouter van Gent, Mendel Giezen, Perry Hoetjes, Bas Hissink Muller, Leonie Janssen-Jansen, Melika Levelt, Stan Majoor, Virginie Mamadouh, Karin Pfeffer, Richard Ronald, Federico Savini, Dick Schuiling, Bart Sletjtes, Floris van Slijpe, Thomas Straatemeier, Andrew Switzer, Wendy Tan, Caroline Uittenbroek, Rick Vermeulen, and Jochem de Vries. Some of you became more than colleagues. It was a pleasure to work with you and fortunately I will be able to continue working with most of you for another two years. In particular, this applies to my paranymphs. With Nadav Haran, I had the pleasure to be paranymph at his PhD ceremony, and ever since our families have done a lot together. Koen Raats shared the office with me for the last couple of years and we had fruitful discussions on planning and—fortunately—many other things.

My last and deepest words of thank are to my family and friends: Florian and Markus for posting the match reports and other nonessential news about Wuppertaler SV; my brother Thomas and his future wife Julia; my grandma *Oma* Lilo (How do you call what you are doing ... and do you earn something?); my family in law for accepting me in their midst and particularly Gareth for brushing up the English in chapter five and Brian for his help in chapter three and, more importantly, for still being amongst us; my parents for the compass they provided for my life and all the love and support they still provide; and of course Rosie, who came over from England to Amsterdam, leaving her job as a veterinary doctor to live with me, give birth to our daughter, marry me and just before the submission of the thesis, giving birth to our son. Amelie has contributed very little to its completion, and George even less, but all of you gave every day the best reason to be there: as a father—so I won't blame you for the content. I enjoy every second being with you!

Amsterdam, July 2012