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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 assisstant 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 Synergin 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.

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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-

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 Sleutjes, 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.

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Amsterdam, July 2012