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Residential practices of middle classes in the field of parenthood

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation had started as a purely academic endeavour to understand the behaviour of urban middle-class parents but gradually became ever more inspired by personal experiences. This study of the spatial implications of transition to parenthood was enriched by the birth of my two daughters during the writing of this manuscript. Although this research has reached its conclusions through a range of scientific methods, the true implications of what it means to become a parent and how this affects one's social and spatial practices became ever clearer to me through my personal experiences. Yet, the way in which my life and that of Marie were turned up-side-down socially, spatially and temporally has helped me understanding the object of my study and therefore helped me reaching my conclusions.

However, also the support and contributions of others were indispensable for the completion of this project. In the first place, I could not even have started on this project if it weren't for Sako and Lia who believed in this research project and have been a great support and source of inspiration during the writing of the research proposal, the present research and the writing of this dissertation. I would like to thank them for their confidence, support and inspiration, as well as for their personal interest. I would also like to thank the Dutch Research Council (NWO) for funding this project and the Department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies and all administrative staff for facilitating my work at the University of Amsterdam. I would also like to thank Michiel Wagenaar and Wim Hamers for being the best teachers I have had.

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Writing a PhD-dissertation is oftentimes a struggle and sometimes a lonely affair. A PhD-trajectory is characterised by ups and downs and there is always a phase that one considers to quit. In these phases it is particularly important that there are colleagues around that motivate one to come to work, carry on with the research, or are just there for a chat, a coffee or an after-work beer. At our institute

a large number of colleagues have made my PhD-period a very pleasant one. In the first place my roommates: Marjolein, Marlies, Edith, Sabine, Wilma, and Annalies. I have very much appreciated our discussions about academic stuff and work at the department, our cups of coffee and tea, and our chats about anything and everything. You have made my time at the UvA much more pleasant. Secondly, all the fellow researchers with whom I have spent so much time during our daily lunches and -once weekly- beers: Sebastian, Caroline, Koen, Emma, Federico, Monika, Iris, Sabine, Josje, Rick, Andrew, Guowen, Jing, Els, Bas, Michela, Marjolein, Inge, Annika, Perry, Nadav, Aslan, Richard, Manuel, Marco, Floris and many others that I unfortunately forget right now.

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Mendel has been more of a friend than a colleague, really. Although we worked for the same employer, we were friends before the thesis and will be after its completion. As Mendel says in his acknowledgements our lives show many parallels: we studied political science together and both became young fathers of daughter(s). When Wouter and I visited him in London, we discussed the possibility of doing a PhD at the same institute. What started as a joke, has now been accomplished. I hope that our lives will run parallel for many years to come too.

Wouter. The quintessential friend-turned-colleague and colleague-turned-friend. We have spent a lot of time together the last four years, which has been very rewarding, entertaining, and pleasant. I appreciate your sense of humour, your encyclopaedic curiosity, your brightness and most of all your sincerity. I hope that we will be colleagues and friends for a long time.

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