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### Urban peripheries: The political dynamics of planning projects

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**Publication date**  
2014

[Link to publication](#)

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

Savini, F. (2014). *Urban peripheries: The political dynamics of planning projects*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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With this dissertation I had the possibility to combine some of my personal fascinations: traveling and discovering new places, the exploration of cities beyond known touristic locations and my profound interest in politics. This dissertation also expresses three of my personal beliefs. First, that the beauty of cities can only be appreciated by comparing them, as an open confrontation that valorizes their particularities and specificities. Secondly, that each city, small or large, has something extremely interesting and unique to tell to any observer. Thirdly, that the main way to grasp these differences is to interact with the people working and living in those places and, ultimately, to live in these cities. In my work, I tried to combine the fascination of discovery the unknown with the need to design more rigorous analysis of social events. The thesis has traveled across different countries. It has been immersed in the context of research as I tried to embed myself in the cities I was living and in the institution I was visiting.

During the last 4 years, I relied on a large network of colleagues, friends and interviewees. Already at the time of my Master at the University of Amsterdam, I settled the first bricks of this research, investigating urban development policies in Paris and Amsterdam. My first exchange in Paris as student has increased my fascination for the French capital and Parisian politics, a city of incredible densities of ideas, people and activities. Christian Lefèvre made my staying at the Institut Français d'Urbanisme fantastic and today he is still guiding me through the study of metropolitan governance in France. Paul Lecroart at the Institut d'Aménagement et Urbanisme of the Ile de France introduced me to the world of regional and metropolitan planning. I thank him for having promptly suggested the right interviewees during all these years. In the same period in Paris, I had the pleasure to be directly involved in an atelier coordinated by Brigitte Guigou, that introduced me to practical issues of urban policy making. I particularly thank Mai Diep,

Cécilia Petitprez and Francesca Artioli; they have been and still are great friends and colleagues with which I could exchange ideas on planning and architecture in France, The Netherlands and Italy.

I spent the first year of research at the AMIDSt in learning, understanding and making sense of the unique Dutch planning system. During the first months, I had the opportunity to look at concrete urban projects in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Almere, Maastricht and Delft. To find information and interviewees, I had the kind help of some colleagues at the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environmental affairs, today at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. I thank Henk Ovink and Bart Vink for their direct support to the research, Hannalara Palsdottir and Elien Wierenga for their initial mentorship. I also thank Marijn van der Wagt, Henriette Bersee and Yvonne van der Laan, for their interest in the second part of the work. With them I organized interesting study trips in Paris and Milan. In these initial years, some colleagues have been incredibly helpful to answer my wonderings about the Dutch context of urban planning. Among others, I would like to particularly thank Dick Schuiling, Leonie Janssen-Jansen, Pieter Terhorst and Wim Ostendorf.

I spent my second year of research at the Department of Architecture and Planning, at the Polytechnic of Milan. My staying has been incredibly stimulating and fascinating, and I had the possibility to discover the context of planning and policy making of my home country. Alessandro Balducci has been a major reference for me in selecting the right project, in collecting the right information and in meeting the right interviewees. He has strongly supported me in all my choices. His colleagues at DiAP made me comfortable at the institute and have been very kind to share important information with me. I thank Matteo Bolocan Goldstein, Luga Gaeta, Luigi Mazza, Davide Ponzini and Valeria Fedeli for our talks about Milan urban policies and metropolitan governance. I also had the opportunity to receive important feedbacks on my work from Costanzo Ranci and Gabriele Pasqui. During the same period, I directly participated to the Master course in Urban Policy Design. This has

allowed me to learn more about the practice of urban development in Milan periphery. I here had the pleasure to work with Gabriele Rabaiotti, Antonella Bruzzese, Francesca Santaniello, Paolo Cottino e Gianluca Nardone and learn from their deep knowledge of the city of Milan.

The DiAP has been a special place thanks to my friends and colleagues Maddalena Falletti and Felix Adisson. Guido Codecasa has been an excellent officemate as well as a dedicated scholar to share ideas on public administration and planning. I also thank Giulia Fini and Valeria Inguaggiato for their help with projects and seminars, and Fabio Manfredini for its great technical skills with geodata. Alessandro Spoldi has helped me with the map of chapter 1, besides being a great keyboard player in my band. A particular thank to Demetrio Morabito, deputy mayor of Sesto San Giovanni, for his direct cooperation in my research on the ex-Falck development project.

Back in Amsterdam I went deep into the Amsterdam planning practice. I learned a lot from numerous experienced colleagues and a large number of interviewees. I thank all the colleagues at the Urban Planning theme group for their remarks, comments, talks and reflections on different pieces of my work. The 'dream team' has been and still is a close intellectual family to make my papers more resistant to criticisms. I thank the PhD colleagues, and friends, that have started their work with me: Koen Raats, Gouwen Dai, Sebastian Dembski, Bas Hissink Muller, Rick Vermeulen, Anita Blessing and Caroline Uittenbroek. Today we are a larger and promising group. The research group coordinated by Luca Bertolini has been of great help in reflecting on the connection between spatial planning and transport planning. I am particularly thankful to Els Beukers for her capacity to coordinate teaching activities, Wendy Tan for her incredible design skills and Marco te Brommelstroet for his engagement and activism in our research group. A particular thank to Willem Boterman for teaching me the Dutch language and at the same time for updating me about Dutch politics, Amsterdam gentrification trends. At the department, I learned a lot from San

Verschuuren about the building of Amsterdam metropolitan governance. I am thankful to Jochem de Vries for his comments on the methodological aspects of my work. A special thanks to Manuel Aalbers for our long conversations about urban studies in many countries and for the wonderful music concerts.

The Institute has become a wonderful place to work thank to all the several PhDs colleagues from other disciplines, and all the visiting scholars that spent some months in Amsterdam.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help of Willem Salet and Stan Majoor. They have been able to keeping me on track while providing the intellectual freedom to my thoughts. They also did a great job to keep me under pressure when needed. Their supervision at distance was excellent during my fieldwork. They also stimulated me to participate to several side activities, making my PhD research more enjoyable. At the department, I received a crucial support of the whole secretariat. I thank Puikang Chan for its precise financial management; Barbara Lawa for making difficult bureaucratic issues clearer to me; Marianne van Heelsbergen for her great energy in coordinating logistics; Guida Morais e Castro Ermida for having promptly helped to find an accommodation; Marian Haman for her help with teaching. All of them have provided the infrastructure needed for the research.

Thanking all friends that made, and are making, my stay in Amsterdam great would not be possible here. Yet, I must give a particular thank to few important persons that have substantially, perhaps involuntarily, helped me in shaping my ideas on Amsterdam urban environment. Giulia has been a great friend since when I arrived in Holland and made this country a second home for me, together with Jenni and many other Italians. Magda has kindly helped me in the last part of my work and made me enjoying long dinners at home. A particular thank to Mattia Fadda for his interest on my work, on Italian and international politics since we were bachelor students. A particular thank to Yuri Kazepov, in Urbino, that kindly advised me on the different steps into the academic world.

My father Enrico, my mother Concetta and my brother Gabriel gave the trust needed to continue to work far from my hometown. They have been close to me even at distance and they have supported me with love in any choice I made. Finally, I thank Lucia for being close to me in the difficult first steps of my work and life in Amsterdam, and Miriam for sharing the conclusive moments of this path.