



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Essays on Economic Growth and Imperfect Markets

Tang, P.J.G.

Publication date
2001

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Tang, P. J. G. (2001). *Essays on Economic Growth and Imperfect Markets*. [Thesis, externally prepared, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. Thela Thesis.

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From writing a PhD-thesis I expected to learn about economics. Indeed, I have ploughed through many articles, read a few essentials books, had long discussions and scribbled countless pages of formulas, that most of the times ended up on the pile of old newspapers. The difficulty was to formulate and to understand the economic problems at hand but also to communicate these problems and their implications to others. A careful reader is still able to see the signs of this difficulty. I have not always bothered to conceal them. Why should I? Today I would write a different thesis. And a better one, I prefer to think. The crucial point is that I have learned a great deal, and this thesis shows that. What I had not anticipated, was that writing a thesis would involve -- directly or indirectly -- that many people. I think fondly of them, but I do not want produce a long list of names. Instead, I mention only a few.

In Tilburg I started my PhD-thesis. Even though the period in Tilburg was rather short, I left with many good memories about that period. In Amsterdam I was fortunate to work within a highly talented and enjoyable group. Whereas in Tilburg one could overhear a conversation about the third derivative of the utility function, in Amsterdam the culture was more mundane, in more than one respect. One of the main exponents of this culture was no doubt Rick van der Ploeg. He combined the sometimes puritanical world of academic research with the practical world of policy making, to the benefit of both worlds. Probably he influenced me more than I would like to admit. Even now, when someone pitches a research idea, I think: 'But what is the punch-line?' It turned out that also Casper van Ewijk combined worlds. The closer my contact with Casper van Ewijk grew, the more I discovered and appreciated his ingenuity in solving research problems and bringing research and policy making closer. Void of the usual cynicism and full of enthusiasm, he has been driving force behind my research efforts. Clearly, I have much regard for Rick and Casper, both professionally and personally. The only critique I might have at these two is that they are too darn nice: any of their attempts to set a deadline has always and ever lacked credibility.

Frank Kalshoven and Mirjam van Praag also made the period in Amsterdam fun and special. I am very glad that I still see them -- and their families -- (ir)regularly. To my great benefit, Ben Heijdra and Sweder van Wijnbergen were always willing share their knowledge and experience, and added in this way to my education as an economist.

After three years I was offered a job at the CPB Netherlands Bureau of Economic Policy Analysis. I accepted it with the idea that it would not keep me from finishing my thesis quickly, and with the concern that the CPB might be a bureaucratic, somewhat petrified institute. On both counts I was dead wrong. I was rather poor at combining activities. Besides, the CPB earned my respect, not in the least because my colleagues somehow mix independent thinking with a cooperative outlook. At and outside the CPB I have always felt a special kinship with Richard Nahuis and later also with Bas Jacobs. A shared interest in economics is just one reason for that.

I would also like to acknowledge my co-authors. Chapter two is based on work with Rick van der Ploeg, and chapter four has been adapted from an article with Klaus Wälde. With Casper van Ewijk I worked on chapter five, and chapter seven was the product of co-operation -- almost entirely by email -- with Adrian Wood.

Finally, I would like to thank Victoria for accepting that I was frequently absent-minded.