

Preface

The cliché goes that Ph.D. students are locked up in the university's attics for at least four years to conduct their research. I was amongst the fortunate ones who had the opportunity to experience the academic attics in the inspiringly different surroundings of Rotterdam, Frankfurt, Tokyo and Utrecht for years. Therefore, I experienced the dissertation period as partly personal development, as living in oriental Tokyo impacted my life in various ways.

This research was set up as a modern variant of PhD research: the Habiforum foundation co-financed research in cooperation with universities and in this particular case a planning consultancy firm where I had already done an internship in 1999. This cooperation of Habiforum, Utrecht University and Ecorys in Rotterdam provided the start for my research in September 2001, focussing on economic incentives for land use on the regional level.

First and foremost I am grateful to Prof.dr. A.M.J. Kreukels, professor at the Urban and regional Research centre Utrecht (URU), Utrecht University, and Prof.dr. W.K. Korthals Altes, professor at research institute OTB of Delft University of Technology, and formerly working as a senior consultant at Ecorys. Both Ton Kreukels and Willem Korthals Altes gave me a considerable amount of freedom to conduct an international comparative study, and provide the confidence I needed for writing this book. In particular I appreciate Willem's practical solutions and thorough knowledge of planning. This was, in my eyes, a very good match with Ton's long experience, critical attitude, detailed hand-written comments, and foremost inspiration, or what in Germany is called 'Doktorvati'. The team of supervisors was completed by two experienced managers, who continued to be interested in the findings as the research took more time than managers normally have: thank you Dick Regenboog (partner of Ecorys) and Dick Hendricks (retail consultant).

As research moved on, so did I, eastbound. For the Frankfurt case study I am thankful to Dr. Ch. Rohrbach-Langhagen, who offered me a working place at the Department of Geosciences and Geography (KSR), Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main, and commented on the case study report in detail. In particular his contacts and detailed knowledge of economic geography in the Rhein-Main city-region were very useful. For the Frankfurt Rhein-Main case I also very much appreciated the supervision of Prof.dr. sc.techn. Bernd Scholl, director of the Institute of Urban and Regional Planning of University Karlsruhe (TH) later followed by Prof.dr. Bodo Freund, professor at the Institute of Geography, Humboldt University Berlin.

I was lucky to be awarded a research student scholarship by the Japanese Ministry of Education and the Japanese embassy in Den Haag. So I moved to Tokyo in April 2004. I will not forget the five months East-Asian style intensive language course, with seven hours of class a day and three hours of self-study of Japanese language and culture. This introduction was indispensable for the interviews and data research in Japanese. The Hitotsubashi University in Kunitachi, Tokyo, offered both the language course and research facilities. At Hitotsubashi Graduate School of Economic Geography I was grateful that Prof.dr. Fujio Mizuoka accepted

me as one of his Ph.D. students. Students of Hitotsubashi helped me with translation of interviews and data analysis. I am in particular happy about the support I got from graduate students Nagahito Haginiwa, Hiroshi Kaneko, Ken Kimura and Suno Naniwa. For meeting the actors in Japan, contacts and networks are indispensable. Therefore I am indebted to Mr. Atsushi Suzuki, director at the Information and Research Department of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport in Tokyo. His help and contacts opened doors that otherwise would have remained closed, and he provided important background information for understanding complicated dynamics in Japanese institutions. Two Dutchmen also provided infinite Tokyo inspiration and key contacts, Koen Klinkers and Paul Chorus.

Halfway through the two-year scholarship in Japan, I regularly returned to the Netherlands for interviews and literature research on the Schiphol and Randstad case studies, so I could avoid the Tokyo crowds but had to miss the delicious okonomiyaki and sashimi. Utrecht University provided the research facilities and I enjoyed the help of the Faculty of Geosciences. I would like to thank all colleagues and former colleagues at the Urban and regional Research centre Utrecht (URU), the GIS section, Geomedia for editing and Nethur for the research courses.

Conducting research is probably half the work of finishing a book. For publishing the book, I would like to thank the sponsors, who are mentioned on the cover. Before editing, the chapters, that cover a variety of research fields, were discussed with experts in their fields of study. I was very happy to have positive feedback from Prof.dr. Ron Boschma, Prof.dr. Frans van Waarden and Dr. Bart Wissink at Utrecht University, and Dr. Luca Bertolini, Dr. Enrico Gualini and Prof.dr. Willem Salet at the University of Amsterdam, Dr. Guillaume Burghouwt (SEO), and Mr. Willem Trommels, former director of SADC. For reading and English correction, I know I put a heavy burden on friends' shoulders. Thank you so much for the hours of editing: David van Bezooijen, Devan Reiff, Kevin Lee, Marieke Riethof, Menno van der Woude, Nicole de Bree, Nikos Karadimitriou, and Stephanie Manning. Jorrit Hoekstra, Stefan Fritz and Rien Rabbers helped a lot with making maps for this book.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my 'planning friends' for their useful comments, including Daniela Wullers, Gordon de Munck, Koen Vervoort, Stan Majoor and William Smit. Daniela even arranged a stay at her parents' house in Maintal. Paul and Jutta Wullers provided news, while noisy airplanes over-fly their town east of Frankfurt, and might find themselves in note 6.23. Consultant Koen kept being surprised that his deadline was the end of the day while my deadline was somewhere five years later. The planning-virus goes even as far as I am indebted to co-captain Casper Hootsen of our planning soccer team, who managed the team well when I was on my way to Tokyo or Frankfurt again. Luckily enough, planning was never an issue during the 'third half'.

I want to thank my parents Paul and H el ene van Wijk, supporters from the very beginning in focussing on research and learning. I dedicate this book to them. They always come visiting, or bring me with their handyman van. There was only one person, Naoko Kuge, who matched her career to this bumpy road of moving from Amsterdam to Frankfurt and later Tokyo. Luckily enough I managed to convince this Kansai Hanshin Tiger to live with me in rival Tokyo, which she didn't regret. I hope as a fianc ee she is also looking for the joint road ahead with a better understanding of oriental and western institutions, whether in Amsterdam or Tokyo.

Michel van Wijk
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