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Models of Economic Geography
Dynamics, Estimation and Policy Evaluation

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Dynamics, Estimation and Policy Evaluation

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Prof. dr. J. Oosterhaven

Acknowledgements

Work on this thesis started in 1996, when I was appointed to the department of economics at Groningen University. The project has continued much longer than any of the original participants must have thought, but I think it has now come to a satisfying conclusion.

After using eight years to write this relatively small book, I think I owe the public some explanation about how the time on this project was spent. I left Groningen late 2000 after completing the research that was to become chapter 6 of this thesis. The manuscript still had a number of loose ends, which I intended to tie up quickly.

As these things go, however, I was soon torn between two interesting projects: while my new job took off, theoretical complications that I had not foreseen turned up in several chapters of this book. Lacking the time to fix things once and for all, I soon became the owner of an interesting collection of missed deadlines. Fortunately, time was partly on my side. I came across a new paper by Redding and Venables in the summer of 2002 in which I found the missing idea for chapter 5. Dutch speakers will appreciate the fact that this paper saved my thesis. If I add that my experience in Rotterdam allowed me to improve the general-equilibrium models in this book I hope that the long time to completion is accounted for.

As with any drawn-out project, a large number of people have been instrumental to its completion. By naming a few of them here, I run the risk of neglecting others. For this I apologize beforehand.

I thank Steven Brakman for suggesting the project and subsequently allowing it to take a number of surprising turns. Our many discussions on the subject have been interesting and taught me a thing or two about keeping an eye on the subject while cutting the right corners. I further thank Catrinus Jepma for supervising the project and tirelessly reading manuscript after manuscript, suggesting many valuable improvements along the way. Both my promotors have shown an extraordinary amount of confidence in my abilities, and I hope that I have not let them down. Simon Kuipers contributed much to the smooth start of this project and involved me in many department activities, for which I am grateful. His valuable suggestions have especially improved chapters 2 and 3.

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