

Preface

The ecology of ideas of which this book is a part started to emerge in my head a long time ago. As time passed new ideas were added, some of which flourished, while others were unable to secure a spot in the evolving landscape. The particular combination of insights that forms the main argument of this book started taking shape after 27 November 2004. On that day our twin sons Daniel and Nestor were born. For quite some time after that I spent a lot of time holding one of them asleep in my arms. The only thing I could do in parallel was reading. So I read a lot of papers and books on which I draw here.

Although they have a life of their own, ideas cannot develop and flourish without people talking to other people. Over the years, Leo Baas, Céline Louche and Nigel Roome have been major influences by listening patiently and critically reflecting on my ideas. In the past few years I have found another fertile ground in the Governance & Networks group at Erasmus University where Geert Teisman and Lasse Gerrits have nurtured the emergence of a complexity-based view on governance. I was accepted into this group and found it an inspiring environment from which important parts of the argument originate. I also thank Lasse for his extra-patient support in the last phase of writing this book.

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I want to express my gratitude to all the researchers who have studied in detail the way in which the ecological impact of firms, sectors of industry, and production and consumption systems is shaped. They made it possible for me to provide a wider empirical insight than would have been possible

had I relied only on my own research. Of course the work of these persons is referenced according to the accepted scientific rules, but I feel they deserve a special mention.

And finally, Angela, thanks a lot for standing by me in writing this book and doing the many things that made it possible for me to finish this big project.

