

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the Dutch PhD tradition, it is customary to present a list of propositions along with the actual dissertation. One of the propositions of my own thesis was: “Gaining time by hurrying is a waste of time.” I did not mean that hurrying often has a contrary effect, as in the proverb ‘more haste, less speed’, but that hurrying *in itself* is a waste of time, because one cannot hurry and live at the same time. Hurrying entails a narrowing of the mind, but unlike concentration, it involves losing awareness of what one is actually doing. Although awareness is a *sine qua non* for science, even present day scientists are sometimes the victims of a lack of time, and feel forced to produce their results within strict deadlines. This is a pity for both science and the scientist. I am very grateful for the opportunity that I have had to write this book without such time pressure. Whether this has resulted in a good book, I leave to the judgement of the reader. But it certainly has made this book part of my life.

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