From World to World. An Armamentarium for the study of poetic discourse in translation
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When I started working, in September 1990, on the project of which this book is the final result, I lived in an altogether different world. A world in which there still existed, in the Netherlands, a separate, flourishing academic institute for the teaching and study of translation: the ‘Instituut voor Vertaalwetenschap’ of the University of Amsterdam. In the very year in which this book is published the institute will disappear from the map. Why this should have happened will remain one of the unsolved mysteries of the twentieth century. I believe the landscape of the world of translation and translation studies in The Netherlands would never have looked the same without the many fine translators and scholars that were educated there. I very much hope that people will consider this book as one the fruits of that rich but untimely cut tree.

Yet, as any student of translation well knows, loss and gain never appear without each other. As a counteraction to the abolishment of the Institute Filter, tijdschrift voor vertalen en vertaalwetenschap was founded, as well as the ‘Platform for Translation and Translation Studies’. I am grateful for having been able to play a part in these developments.

Of all the people whom I met, and talked and worked with throughout my academic career so far, three stand out for their involvement with this book: Kitty Zwart, Peter Verdonk and Ton Naaij-kens, all of whom have been involved from the very beginning.

Although sadly Kitty had to retire untimely, she played an important role in the early years, allowing ample room for experiment and providing inspiration and confidence. It is to the memory of those early ‘utopian’ (in the Holmesian sense) postgraduate years and to Kitty that I want to dedicate this book.

I was very happy when it turned out that Peter, because of his appointment as Professor in Stylistics at the University of Amsterdam, and Ton, because of his appointment to the chair of ‘Theory and Practice of Literary Translation’ at the University of Nijmegen, could act as joint supervisors for this dissertation.
Preface

I want to thank Peter for everything he taught me about the study of poetry and stylistics and about being a teacher, and even though he is a relative outsider in the field of Translation Studies, his meticulous comments and astute questions always proved to be relevant.

Through most of the period it took me to produce this book, Ton played the triple role of supervisor, colleague and friend. Our cooperation, at first in Amsterdam and later on in Utrecht, both in Filter and the Platform, has been intense and gratifying, and still is. I want to thank Ton particularly for all the professional and writing opportunities he provided. Both this book and my professional life would have turned out different without his influence. I owe him greatly.

Great portions of this book have been conceived and/or written in the ‘blue room’ at the beautiful estate ‘In Pragno’ in Belgium. A warm word of thanks goes to Marcel, who watched the manuscript grow in all those years of ‘working vacations’, for bearing with my writers’ restiveness, for letting me monopolize his laptop computer, for cooking all those delicious meals, but most of all for the pleasant company.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my parents, Dries Koster and Rie Koster-de Jong, for their unfailing belief and generosity.

The final words of this thanksgiving parade are directed to my son Remco, whose blissful ignorance of matters academic ever proves to be refreshing, and to whom I can now say, at last, ‘Yes, I finished writing that book.’