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To my surprise, the moment has arrived. I am writing the acknowledgments of my thesis and I think back on the period of my life that I now call “Amsterdam.” Now, in the sunny, warm and chaotic Rome, all the study, work and life that I had in Amsterdam seem so far away that it is surprising that it all happened. But it did happen, for real.

I would like to thank many, many people and let them know that they have been so important to me. This is the occasion to do so.

The first person to mention is Rosella Gennari, without whom I would have never heard of an opening position at the ILLC department of the UvA and I would not be writing these words now. That position was under the supervision of Maarten de Rijke, somebody I only had a vague memory of because of one class I attended when I was an undergraduate exchange student in Amsterdam. I went to that class only out of curiosity, who would have thought he was going to play such an important role in the years to come. Maarten has been a great example and a continuous surprise to me, because of his quick mind and kind manners, music taste and approach to life. With Maarten I learned an uncountable number of things, all of which will stay with me forever. Together with Maarten, Joost Kircz has followed the entire development of this work. Inspiring conversations, vision, human touch: I had the unique chance to enjoy all of these from him. Guglielmo Tamburrini was my supervisor when I started my PhD in Pisa, then he kindly agreed to continue to follow my work when I moved to Amsterdam and when he moved to Naples.

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