Modelling human visual attention: from pixels to proto-objects
Yanulevskaya, V.

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Once upon a time, Nicu Sebe came to a small Finnish town next to the Russian border as an invited speaker of the International Summer School in Novel Computing. His lectures were so exciting, funny and gripping, that half a year later I started my PhD at the University of Amsterdam where Nicu worked at that time.

In Amsterdam I have met many interesting people who have changed my life. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Jan-Mark Geusebroek, who introduced me to the world of research. Thank you for your enormous patience in teaching me how to write scientific papers, for believing in me, for being positive even in the darkest periods of my PhD life, and for giving me the opportunity to make my own mistakes. I have learned a lot about science and life during our collaboration. Another important person in my PhD journey is undoubtedly Arnold Smeulders, who is my promotor. Our short but very fruitful collaboration helped to structure how I do science. Moreover, Arnold’s great ability to give a wise advice when you are ready to hear it, helped me in the quest of becoming a better scientist and person. If I have any regrets about my PhD it is that I did not pass by Arnold’s office more often.

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like aikido and skating, for making together homework and Halloween outfits, for hot sauna evenings and many many conversations which shaped my personality.

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Этой диссертации никогда не случилось - не будь в моей жизни Леры. Благодаря ей я переехала в Санкт-Петербург. Лера же убедила меня продолжать образование в Финляндии, а потом и в Голландии. Она создавала мне все условия для подготовки к экзаменам и разделяла заботы и радости моей студенческой жизни. А все мои студенческие истории, так или иначе, связаны с Леной. Лена стала моим самым близким другом и ориентиром. Уже 9 лет мы живем в разных странах, но, как и прежде, она а курсе всех моих дел и планов. Игорь знает меня практически так же хорошо, как и Лена. Его пример заставляет меня двигаться вперед, и жить не как получится, а, как мечтается. Лучших друзей невозможно себе представить.

В Санкт-Петербурге, мои опасения по поводу жизни в общежитии быстро развеялись, как только я познакомилась со Славой, Антоном, Мишей, Сергеем, Женей, Лешей и Настей, Мариной и Ирои, Лебедевым и Мастером, Лаосом и Тополем. С ними я научилась мыслить независимо, быть открытой новому и не бояться перемен. Особенная благодарность Славе за поддержку, походы в театр и помощь в адаптации в Финляндии.

Семья - мое главное место силы. Я двигаюсь вперед только потому, что ощущаю ваше доверие, любовь и веру в мои способности. Я бесконечно признательна папе за его заботу, готовность прийти на помощь, понимание и мудрость. К тому же он готовит самый вкусный в мире шашлык. С самого рождения меня оберегает моя сестра Алёна,
она несколько раз спасала мою жизнь и постоянно делает её веселее и интереснее. В мире нет детей прекрасней, чем Таня и Миша. Ира и Лера, Витя, Инна, Аня, Галя, Софа и Жора, спасибо Вам за то, что вы есть в моей жизни. Отдельное спасибо Ире за редактирование этого текста. Таня Куланина, хоть официально и не входит в семью, но давно уже стала её важной частью.

Эта диссертация посвящается моей маме и бабушкам.