Framing Turkey: Identities, public opinion and Turkey’s potential accession into the EU

Azrout, R.

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I ‘grew up’ at the political science department of the University of Amsterdam, where I followed courses from several very inspiring lecturers. Among them was Marijke Mossink, who was the first to plant the idea of a PhD in my head. After spending two years teaching courses at the political science department, I finally decided to try to obtain a PhD-position. Armed with often moral, but sometimes also more substantive support from my colleagues I found a position at ASCoR. Although I did not continue my career at the political science department, I do want to thank Tjitske Akkerman, Jos de Beus, Wouter van der Brug, Philip van Praag, Benno Netelenbos, Boris Slijper and Robert van der Veen for their support.

Coming to the new world of ASCoR, I found a warm welcome in the VICI-project of Claes de Vreese. They say you can get very lonely as a PhD-student, with many hours alone behind your computer, but not within this project. The first one and a half year consisted of intense collaborative data collection effort. This meant I was not sitting alone behind my computer but that I could learn the ins and outs of such a large scale research project by looking at and working with the more experienced members of the project. And also, the loneliness was far away because of the social activities that followed long days of hard work.

Within the project, Claes de Vreese, Joost van Spanje and Rens Vliegenthart were the supervisors of my PhD-project. Being a supervision team with varying expertise, you gave me a wide range of comments and ideas to think about. And although I would thank you for your support at the times that it was necessary, I mainly thank you for the significant reactions on my manuscripts. Your critiques substantially improved my work and if you were satisfied with the result, there was not much left for reviewers to comment on.

The other members in the project were perhaps not my supervisors, but they did comment on my ideas, memos and manuscripts. But apart from that, Hajo Boomgaarden, Pieterjan Desmet, Matthijs Elenbaas and Andreas Schuck played an important part in my socialization as an academic, for which I thank you.

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Finally, there are some people from outside I would like to mention. Alex: We have been friends for a long time and as we chose for a similar path in life we could always talk about the interesting and sometime incomprehensible world of academics. Tristão: Although you chose a different path in life, you were always there to ask how the project was progressing. And all other DGO-ers: Thank you for being there whenever I needed it.

Mama and papa: Although you disagreed on many things, you both encouraged and supported me. Without the long discussions about politics, society, history, philosophy, religion, and all other subjects that are important and interesting at both your dinner tables, I wouldn’t be where I am today. Papa: I regret you are not here to witness the result.

Mounaim: I may get my PhD, but you are still my big brother. Thank you for always being there for me, whether I need someone to design my book cover, or a babysitter for the children.

Tetje: Impressive how you put up with me. First I work all night, then I bother you in the morning with long talks about my paper to get things straight in my head, and finally I am sleepy the next evening when you wanted some company. But I’ll make it up to you with a nice home-cooked dinner. Thank you for being here with me en thank you for giving me what is really most important in life.

And finally to Noa, Zara and Jona: You show me every day what is really important in life!