

## **Acceptance talk**

Dear Mr Rector,  
Dear Members of the Senate of Ankara University,  
Dear Members of the Faculty of Science,  
Dear Honorary promoter,  
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I would like to express my sincere feelings of extreme gratitude for this highly esteemed honorary degree, which I receive today by decision of the Senate of Ankara University. In particular, It touched me to read and hear the kind motivation of this great honor.

Since the start of my scientific career, I am fascinated by the beauty of the harmony that may be achieved between the real world on the one hand and the mathematical models describing this reality on the other hand. In case a statistical, mathematical, actuarial or financial model has to be developed to describe reality, almost complete insight is needed in the real world events one is trying to capture in the model. No model being perfect, each investigation starts at a higher level, e.g. energy in physics, or cost of operation in insurance. In order to calibrate the model with reality an optimization procedure is used, e.g. minimizing the energy in physics to find the classical path, or minimizing the total cost of an operation to derive an optimal risk capital. It is amazing to realize that quantum-physics and financial markets can be described by very much related concepts.

When I learned to know the names of the previous honorary doctorates I realized that it is a great honor for me to enter in this group of very famous personalities. Although a honorary degree is an individual award, it is clear for me that individual scientific achievements are never really individual. Indeed, they are embedded in the joint work of a scientific team.

Throughout my career, I have always been very lucky to meet the right persons at the right moments and on the right places.

Without claiming to be complete, allow me to say a few words about it. In the beginning of the seventies, together with Prof. Piessens and Prof. Wuytack, we decided to create the Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics. Later we decided to organize related ICCAM congresses, which started in Leuven.

In the beginning of the eighties IME was created. Together with the professors. R. Kaas, H. Gerber, E. Shiu and the members of the editorial board including Prof. J. Dhaene we are still running IME, together with the related IME congresses, which started in Amsterdam.

I am very grateful to my co-authors of some international actuarial books that are published (and translated in several languages), in particular Prof. Kaas, Prof. Dhaene and Prof. Denuit. I greatly acknowledge the scientific cooperation resulting in these international publications.

I am only a member of the actuarial-financial research group of the University of Leuven, co-directed by Prof. J. Dhaene, and of the one of the University of Amsterdam, directed by Prof. Kaas. I am proud to be part of it. I have benefited a lot from belonging to both groups. I find myself very fortunate to have encountered the colleagues just in time.

Of course, I am also very indebted towards my 26 former PhD students. They became professors or practicing actuaries all over the world. I also would like to thank my current doctoral students.

I have been fortunate to be able to work in different application fields, mathematical physics, actuarial science and statistics. I am very grateful for the support of the insurance industry especially the sponsoring of the Fortis Chair in Financial and Actuarial Risk Management and of the Actuarial Contact Program which has stimulated our research in the direction of the real insurance world.

Apart from these professional reasons, there are also some personal considerations why I am especially happy to receive this honorary title in Ankara. First of all, my first scientific trip abroad was to Turkey, where I met Prof. Marc Kac. Further, Ankara University was established in the year I was born, or the other way around. And last but not least, during the flight to Antalya on our way to the meeting of statisticians organized by my honorary promoter last year, my daughter told me that she was expecting my first grand-child.

Only 3 years separate me from the status of professor-emeritus. Up to yesterday I felt a little bit uncomfortable when thinking of leaving my active research life in times where the real world and the evolutions of it never has been that exciting, with the globalization effects and the consequences for insurance and banking.

But I must admit that by my nomination as honorary doctor by the Senate of Ankara University, I found peace and I realized that thanks to all of you, I achieved more than what I ever could imagine. I feel very much obliged towards Ankara University. I am convinced that the ties between Ankara University and the Leuven-Amsterdam Universities will be strengthened.

To conclude I would personally want to thank my honorary promoter Prof. Omer L. Gebizlioglu.

Dear Omer, I will recall a statement of our colleague and friend Hans Gerber, honorary doctor of KULeuven, who claims that in a honorary celebration the scientific quality of the honorary promoter is more important than the one from the honorary doctor. Thank you very much!

Professor Marc J. Goovaerts  
Dr., Dr.h.c.