

Herra Rehtori, provosti, dekaani, new doctors and friends of science and technology, ladies and gentlemen.

I'm honoured to give the speech of Doctor Jubilaris.

I want to share my personal path here in Otaniemi where I have studied and worked for almost fifty years.

I lived my first fifteen years in the neighbourhood of the main building of the Helsinki University of Technology downtown Helsinki. During that time the idea, that I want to be an electrical engineering student at this university, matured.

When I took the entrance examination, the main building of the university had moved here in Otaniemi. In one of the examination days I came early enough in order to explore the campus area.

It was a warm and sunny day in June. I found a green area suitable for relaxation. Unfortunately the area was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. However, very carefully I managed to get myself unhurt to the other side.

I looked for a proper place where I went to lay down and started enjoying the sunshine. All of a sudden I heard the sound of a galloping horse approaching me. I realized immediately that I have to get out as soon as possible. This time I had no time to be careful. I got my pants caught in the barbed wire and they ripped in the back. My pants were no longer presentable. I had a very important examination ahead which would seal my future.

I went to a corner of a parking place turning my back on the forest - for obvious reasons. I knew that my friend was coming to the same examination by his own car (rättisitikka in Finnish). After he arrived he arranged me a long overcoat to cover the damages, and I could participate in the examination.

This episode was my first experience concerning the theme "Beyond borders".

After graduation I chose radio engineering and mathematics as my subjects for the doctoral studies. It later turned out to be an excellent combination.

At that time, computers were emerging rapidly. I got an assistantship in a new circuit simulation course which combined my interests in the microwave circuits and mathematics. During that course I started writing simple circuit simulation software. My idea was to give students a demonstration tool in order to show how the electrical circuits will be designed in the future.

The reception of the software was enthusiastic and later it defined my future here in Otaniemi. I started to gather a research team to develop the software professionally also for industrial use.

At that time, in the late eighties and early nineties Nokia was developing its success mobile phone. Our software caught Nokia's attention and we started to cooperate. Many talented students joined our team to enhance their studies.

I modified the famous Latin phrase: “Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse.” To navigate is necessary, to live is not necessary. The new phrase was: “Simulare necesse est, vivere non est necesse.”

The collaboration with Nokia led to the establishment of a new start-up company in the end of nineties, and later after three mergers, the software found its home in the portfolio of an internationally well-known company having offices in seventy countries. The best part of the story is that even today the office responsible for the design of the software created originally here in Otaniemi is still situated in Finland and run by the former members of our circuit simulation team.

That is to me a true “Beyond borders” experience.

At this point I want to modify the original Latin phrase “Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse” once again to a shorter form: “Vivere necesse est.” To live is necessary. Everything else comes along with it.

Let me propose a toast to our Alma Mater!

