Acknowledgements

During almost three years in the Isala Klinieken (De Weezenlanden Hospital) in Zwolle I have gathered a great human and professional experience. I like doing clinical research and one of the reasons why I arrived in Zwolle was because of the great possibilities to do that in the field of primary angioplasty. By its great experience and organisation, Zwolle has given a relevant contribution to treatment of ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI). In South Italy the majority of patients still receive thrombolysis or no reperfusion therapy for STEMI, with, of course, disappointingly dramatic consequences in terms of mortality.

I would like to thank the Maatschap Cardiologie Zwolle for giving me a great opportunity to do clinical research and to fulfill my dream to be an interventional cardiologist. With their continuous supports, by creating a fantastic research atmosphere and high-quality clinical activities, they have made me a better cardiologist and person.

First of all Dr. H. Suryapranata. Dear Harry, I have no words to express all my gratitude to you. For me you and Zwolle are and will be the most important pillars of my life. During this time I got married, and you accepted to be my best man. It was very important to me. A way to express all my gratitude to you and to consolidate my incommensurable friendship with you and Zwolle. During this three years, we have spent days and nights together writing and discussing all these articles. I have learnt a lot from you. Your way to face the difficulties of life and in the cath-lab. Your way to interact with people. And most important, your way to interact with reviewers. One of the most important part of research, beyond the project organisation, the results and the initial paper, is the revision. Without this last step, your paper will never be published and
only few people will know your results. Thank you very much for all, and I know I can always count on you, as much as you can count on me.

Prof. F. Piscione. Dear Federico, I would like to express all my gratitude to you, for being both my friend and teacher. I have spent three years with you in Naples and I started doing my angiograms. I have learnt from you how to write good papers, and to do good revisions. This was my best springboard here in Zwolle.

Prof. F. Zijlstra. Dear Felix, I would like to express all my deepest appreciation and gratitude to you for your indispensable role in preparing this thesis. Your brilliant and invaluable ideas have encouraged me to finalize this thesis. During these years in Zwolle, I have tried to pick up the best from all of my colleagues. I love your coolness. In particular, when you perform procedures. You helped me a lot in the cath-lab, as well. I will never forget.

Dr. A. van’t Hof. Dear Arnoud, together with Harry and Felix, you are an important “chapter” of my “Zwolsche” experience. I am very grateful to you for coming with your wife to Sorrento for my wedding. We have set up together a great, unique ECG database. I hope we will get a lot from it.

Dr. J.C.A. Hoornije. Dear Jan, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to complete my cardiology training in Zwolle, under your supervision.

Dr. A.T.M. Gosselink, Dr. J-H. E. Dambrink. Dear Marcel, and Jan-Henk, thank you very much for helping me in the cath and echo-lab. I have learnt a lot from all of you during these years. I have appreciated a lot your corrections and advises concerning all my papers.

Dr W.P. Beukema, Dr. A.R. Ramdat Misier, Dr A. Elvan. Dear Willem, Anand and “Don” Arif, I would like to thank you for your great kindness to
me, for letting me perform some ICD and pacemakers implantation. Thank you very much.

Dr. Rene’ van der Schaaf and Dr. Karen Thomas. Dear Rene’ and Karen, thank you very much for the kindness you have always shown to me. I enjoyed a lot the time spent with you and your families. It has been very important. I wish you a brilliant career.

Dr A. Breeman. Dear Arno, even though you joined the group in the last part of my experience, thank you very much for your kindness to me, and your help in the echo-lab.

Some special words to my special “paranymfen” Dr. JP Ottervanger and Dr. MJ de Boer. Dear Jan Paul, dear Menko-Jan. Thank you very much for your careful revision of my thesis and for accepting to closely support me during the defense of my dissertation. I was so impressed and pleased to see the enthusiasm and the pleasure of both of you in being my “paranymf”. Words are not sufficient to express all my gratitude.

Prof. M. Chiariello. Dear Professor, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for giving me the chance to start my experience in Zwolle. Without your approval I would have never come here. I hope to have contributed with this thesis to keep high the name of your brilliant school of Cardiology.

Prof. J.J. Piek, Prof. D.J Van Veldhuisen, Dr. D. Antonucci. Dear Prof. Piek, Prof. Van Veldhuisen, and Dr. Antonucci, I would like to thank you for accepting to revise my thesis. Thank you very much for all your advises and suggestions.

Dr. E.M. Antman. Dear dr. Antman, I would like to express all my gratitude to you for your nice, sharp and timely suggestion on the analysis of time-to-treatment and mortality. I hope that it will contribute to further improve the treatment of acute myocardial infarction. Thank you very much.
Dr G.W. Stone, Prof. F-J. Neumann, Prof. J.E. Tcheng, Prof. F. van de Werf, Prof. E. Topol. Dear Colleagues, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for your agreement to cooperate on the meta-analysis on abciximab. It is a work of extreme clinical relevance. I hope that our findings will improve the management of patients with acute myocardial infarction.

Thank you very much to all assistanten. I wish a great future to all of you. The sacrifices and the time you are spending in Zwolle, will turn out to be a great investment in your life. Be sure. Wherever you go in the world, Zwolle will be the best recommendation letter.

I would like to thank the cath-lab staff, Y"Henk"y, Dirk, “the best friend of the best dutch speaking italian interventional cardiologist” well known as Joop, “Gilberto”, Michel, Arjan, “Gom”, Tim, Gea, Edwin, Edwin…… I have spent most of my three years with you in the cath-lab. Most of you were for me my “Zwolsche” family. It was a very great emotion to see Gea, “Gilberto” and Michel at my wedding on behalf of the cath-lab. Thank you very much. I will always keep all of you in my heart, wherever I go.

Thank you very much to Cor and all the echo-lab staff.

Thank you to DIAGRAM staff: mostly Edwin, Diny, Joep, Linda and Evelien. Your contribution is in all my papers and my thesis.

Vera Derks. Dear Vera, thank you very much. I am indebted to you for your secretarial expertise for many of my papers and my thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and my wife, and I will do that in Italian, otherwise they will never understand any word.

Cari genitori, ovviamente la parte dedicata a voi dovrebbe essere posta all’inizio di questo libro. Senza di voi questa tesi non ci sarebbe. Potrei continuare a scrivere centinaia di pagine, ma non potrei mai esprimere...
tutta la mia gratitudine per i sacrifici che avete fatto per me e con me nel corso di tutti i miei anni di studi.
Cara Giusy, per me sono stati anni difficili perché tu non sei stata qui con come. Questo non è stato possibile, perché dopo tanti sacrifici sei riuscita a superare l’esame di ammissione alla scuola di specializzazione in greco. Era il tuo sogno. Anche per te, indubbiamente, sono stati tempi difficili, soprattutto adesso che aspettiamo un bambino. E nonostante i sacrifici che questo comportasse per te, mi hai sempre incoraggiato a seguire la mia strada. Ti amo tanto.