



Cornell University

Marcos López de Prado, PhD
Professor of Practice
Operations Research & Information Engineering
School of Engineering
2 W Loop Road, New York, NY 10044
ML863@cornell.edu
www.QuantResearch.org

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH AT INVESTITURE CEREMONY

Professor Marcos López de Prado

Knight Officer of the Royal Order of Civil Merit

Abu Dhabi, UAE – November 21, 2024

Excellencies, Esteemed Professors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As-salamu alaykum. Muchas gracias por su presencia y por acompañarme en un día tan especial. It is an honor to stand before you tonight. Allow me to take you back in time, to the summer of 1793, in southern France. Brigadier General Andrés López de Prado participated in the Siege of Toulon, in support of French Royalists who rebelled against the excesses of the Revolution. During that campaign, Andrés faced a then unknown artillery officer from Corsica. Perhaps you have heard his name: Napoleon Bonaparte. Toulon marked Napoleon's first victory, and the beginning of his rise to become Emperor of the French. As you may have guessed, Andrés López de Prado did not ascend to become Emperor of Spain... which is a real shame, because then I could have made you all knights for your patience through this speech. Instead, upon his return to Madrid, Andrés was appointed General Director of the prestigious "College of Nobles," and was thus entrusted with the education of Spain's future leadership. After a life dedicated to both military and academic service, on May 1, 1803, the King appointed Andrés López de Prado a Knight of the Royal Order of Charles III.

That was 221 years ago. In the generations since, members of my family have continued to uphold those values of service, some even making the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. Looking forward, my wife Sandra and I have worked to instill the same principles in our three children. Our hope is that tonight's award, like the award of 221 years ago, inspires them to live by the noble ideals of this Order: "To the benefit of civil society." Let's give my wife and kids a round of applause.

Tonight's ceremony is particularly momentous. Our esteemed Ambassador is presenting not one but two awards. To understand how rare this is, consider the following: the last time a Spanish Ambassador to the UAE presented this Order was in 2019, to a fellow Ambassador. That we celebrate two recipients tonight reflects the exceptional relationship between Spain and the UAE—a relationship shaped in no small part by the tireless efforts of Ambassador Íñigo de Palacio. Please join me in acknowledging his dedication and his instrumental role in fostering collaboration between ADIA Lab and Spain.

We are also privileged to be joined by some of the world's most esteemed scientists: Prof. Steven Chu, Nobel Laureate in Physics (1997) and former U.S. Secretary of Energy (2009-2013); Prof. Dan Shechtman, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry (2011); Prof. Shafi Goldwasser, recipient of the Turing Award (2012) and the Gödel Prize (1993, 2001); Prof. Guido Imbens, Nobel Laureate in Economics (2021); Prof. Miguel Hernán, Rousseeuw Prize for Statistics (2022); Prof. Horst

Simon, Gordon Bell Prize (1998, 2009); and other esteemed members of ADIA Lab's advisory board: Prof. Alexander Lipton, Quant of the Year (2000), and Dr. Edward Jung, former CTO at Microsoft. We are deeply grateful for your contributions. Your presence here tonight in Abu Dhabi elevates this ceremony.

In the same spirit, we warmly welcome esteemed institutional representatives: H.E. Carme Artigas, Co-Chair of the United Nations AI Advisory Body and Spain's former Secretary of State for Digital Transformation; H.E. Sultan Al Mansoori, former Minister of Economy of the UAE; H.E. Félix Barrio Juárez, Managing Director of Spain's National Cybersecurity Institute; H.E. Juan Corchado, President of the University of Salamanca, the oldest University in Spain, founded in the year 1218; H.E. Prof. Enrique Herrera Viedma, Vice-President for Research of the University of Granada, founded in the year 1531; H.E. Antoine Delcourt, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to the UAE; and H.E. Robert Lauer, Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the UAE. Your commitment to collaboration and excellence is an inspiration to us all.

As both a Cornell University professor and a fund manager, I have worked for the past 25 years to advance the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in finance, making investing more evidence-based, systematic, and reliable. I hope this accolade draws further attention to the financial applications of AI and supercomputing, which benefit society by enabling better decision-making and public policy design. I am grateful to ADIA for the opportunity to apply my scientific work towards achieving its long-term investment objectives. ADIA Lab is ADIA's gift to the scientific world, and I would like to thank ADIA's leadership for their steadfast support, with heartfelt gratitude towards Majed AlRomaithi. Majed, thank you for your vision and leadership, which has made all this possible.

Finalmente, deseo expresar mi profundo agradecimiento al Gran Maestro de la Orden, Su Majestad el Rey Felipe VI, y al Gobierno de España por la concesión de este alto honor. I am sure that this decoration would have made Andrés López de Prado proud, 221 years after his. I am particularly grateful to His Majesty the King, to whom I wish a long life and a very successful reign over a prosperous Spain.

Shukran. Gracias. Thank you.