

## Spanish Orders History Award

### Speech by Ms. Carmen Iglesias, winner of the IV Edition of the Award

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MAJESTY, ROYAL HIGHNESS, DUKE OF SORIA, PRESIDENT of the ROYAL COUNCIL OF ORDERS DON PEDRO DE BORBÓN, MEMBERS of the JURY, KNIGHTS OF THE ORDERS, AUTHORITIES, LADIES and GENTLEMEN, dear FRIENDS ALL:

Madam,

Thank you very much for your presence this morning at El Escorial. It is a joy and an honor for all of us and particularly for me. As I go to write these lines, I have found that, in the most important moments or events of a professional nature, inseparable from the personal in my life, Your Majesty has always been near me: in my admission to the Royal Academy of History in 1991 -with all your august family; in my admission to the Royal Spanish Academy in 2002 - with Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and the Infantas-; in my admission to the Royal Spanish Academy in 2002 -with the Prince, the Princess and the Infantas-; and in my admission to the Royal Spanish Academy in 2002 -with the Prince, the Princess and the Infantas-. the Prince and the Infantas-; recently in the presentation of the Electronic Biographical Dictionary of the Royal Academy of History in the United States, in New York and Miami, supporting Your Majesty the Academy and its team with all enthusiasm and affection, since we have the privilege of having you as Honorary Academician since 1996 -already 25 years, as we remember with all affection last year in our web page-. And now, today, here, in this very important History Award granted by the Foundation of Spanish Orders. Thank you very much Majesty.

And thank you all very much for your generosity and company on this important day in my life. I wanted to recall in my thanks, and also in homage to H.M. Queen Sofia, the words that Cervantes puts in the mouth of Don Quixote (already heard by Your Majesty at that event in 1991), which express the emotion and the feeling of gratitude in a masterful way and vindicate a gratitude to the people who favor us and that should never be forgotten. And even more so in these turbulent times. These words have always been close to me.

Our Hidalgo says before farmers and maidens dressed as shepherdesses in a memorable lunch in the midst of his adventures the following:

"Among the greatest sins that men commit, although some say it is pride, I say it is ungratefulness, sticking to what is usually said that hell is full of the ungrateful. This sin, as far as it has been possible for me, I have tried to flee from the moment I have had the use of reason; and if I cannot repay the good works that are done to me with other works, I put in their place the desire to do them, and when these are not enough, I publish them; because he who says and publishes the good works that he receives, also rewards them with others if he could; because, for the most part, those who receive are inferior to those who give, and thus, it is God above all, because he is the giver of all, and the gifts of man cannot correspond to

those of God with equality, because of infinite distances, and this narrowness and shortness, in a certain way, is made up for by THANKSGIVING." (II.58)

Thus I wish to say and publish my profound gratitude with the incomparable words of Cervantes, my recognition for such a great honor and my joy and contentment with it. Thanks to the Council and Foundation of Spanish Orders and its President Don Pedro de Borbón, and thanks to the Jury, to each of its members and to all of them, for their generosity in awarding me this important international prize; thanks always to the Spanish University Foundation for its kindness in deciding to make my curricular presentation for the prize; thanks to my dear Feliciano Barrios, friend and great companion in the work and responsibilities we have carried out for so many years, always with all loyalty and deep affection. And again thanks to the Spanish Orders of Santiago, Calatrava, Alcántara and Montesa, of such a long and deep history for Spain and for Western civilization, and thanks for putting the importance and value of History in the first place and uniting the rigor of historiographic research with, at least in part, as it appears in its regulations on the award, with "Hispanic history and its projection in the world". I am going to refer to this as my main theme.

Linked since my university studies and my teaching and research career to the chairs of the Department of History of a then thriving Faculty of Political and Economic Sciences in the sixties and seventies, with D. Luis Díez del Corral, D. José Antonio Maravall Casesnoves and D. Luis García Valdeavellano, from the beginning I found important historiographical lines that these masters promoted in the history of the Spanish language. Luis García Valdeavellano, from the beginning I came across important historiographical lines that these teachers promoted in a novel way, where comparative world history, the history of facts and conceptualization and of the ideas and social movements they expressed, the history of institutions and their protagonists, and, in short, the history of Spain and America appeared from different angles as a major part of world history.

Later, as a professor of History of Ideas and of Political and Social Forms, the comparative history of the different civilizing areas of the world and especially of Europe, the study and research of objectified frameworks of meaning that can open up to the historical knowledge of our past (without which our present and possible futures vanish), both in teaching and in historiographic research -and even more so in recent times- the great construction of what we call the Hispanic Monarchy, as it was known for three long centuries, has been a central theme in several of my works since the 1990s. Something I learned from my teachers, especially from D. Luis Díez del Corral: that the history of the world could not be understood without the history of Spain and America, of the Hispanic Monarchy.

My membership in the Royal Academy of History has been decisive for greater specialization in these subjects, and I have had the privilege of continuing to learn constantly from my illustrious colleagues, whom I thank for their trust and their presence here in this exciting setting. And I am also very grateful for the presence of academicians of the Real Academia Española (of the Spanish Language, popularly); all colleagues and friends of many years meeting weekly and always trying to enrich us with knowledge.

Almost all of us -both historians and readers of history- have at some point come across the fact that the history of that era has been falsified and full of prejudices, which has fed distortions, falsehoods or exaggerations without counting, always highlighting the negative (which indeed existed, as in all encounters of different peoples and civilizations in the history of the world) and omitting the positive (which also existed, and very much so). Every Empire in

history has had its "black legends" (to use the cliché) and has had to fight better or worse with it, but in our case of the Hispanic sphere, we find something unusual and that is that the Hispanics themselves are the ones who create or promote the bad reputation -the most without knowledge and those who know for various interests, which is not the time now to deal with-. Three centuries of existence are buried under the easy generalizing affirmations of a barbarism that is condemned without appeal. Ignorance of a complex common history, which has been lacking, in general, in education on both sides of the Atlantic, the political struggle between countries and the human tendency to achieve supremacy of power and destroy the reputation of the "enemy" at any cost (propaganda has always existed), all this is aggravated when significant sectors among the Spanish and Hispanic Americans themselves believe in these falsified generalities and assume them with a certain resignation and an authentic inferiority complex.

A possible explanation of this persistent legend and its different historical stages, "starred" so to speak by the interests or conflicts of other European powers against Spain and its world hegemony at the beginning of the Modern Age, is complex. This is not the time to do so here, but it is worth noting that our entry into the contemporary world in the 19th century took place in the midst of the terrible French invasion of 1808, with the longest Napoleonic war in Europe, and with allies who often behaved as enemies in their desire for destruction, and prolonged the fight in the Peninsula as long as they could; with the great trauma of the end of the Empire (not imperialist) and, to top it all, with Ferdinand VII who was surrendered to the French.

But it was precisely there, in the 19th century, that European and North American colonialism and imperialism as we know it began, the wars and the colossal plundering (one only has to visit the museums of England, France, Belgium, Germany... to see in them the treasures of Egypt, Greece, Asia, Africa, India... Nothing to see...). The only museum in the Americas was built in the 20th century and is not the product of theft or plunder.

However, some things are changing, even in the midst of the iconoclasm revived in this 21st century and the fanaticism of forgetting five centuries, including the 20th century itself, to go back to the "political correctness" of the "original" peoples and to declare without further ado the action of Spain in America as "genocide". Spanish and American historians and writers are publishing, without great fanfare but with balanced objectivity, the "truth of the facts". Only the Hispanic Monarchy protected the Indian peoples, -after the first moment of discovery and conquest of bloody struggle, in some places more than in others of the New World- and only the Hispanic world can be proud of a mestizaje that was pointed out, among others, by Carlos Fuentes, or John Elliott, or León-Portilla: Not only biological, but a cultural, creative, reciprocal and enriching process on both sides that, in turn," continued León Portilla, "were bearers of mestizo heritages". The Hispanic frontiers have always been "frontiers of inclusion", as Elliott said, as opposed to the "frontiers of exclusion" of the Anglo-Saxons. Tradition nourishes creation and creation nourishes tradition. The Spaniards brought to America their culture, their religion, their language, their social organization, the values of Western civilization, everything they were and had. In addition to a body of legislation, the laws of the Indies and other successive laws, which allowed all the indigenous people, as equal subjects of the King of Spain on both sides of the Atlantic, to appeal to the courts and to be protected by the power of the Hispanic Monarchy. (We must not forget that, in this world, there can be no human rights of any kind if there is no state power willing to protect them, as the great philosopher and thinker Hanna Arendt pointed out in the 20th century.) The Indies, then, were never

colonies. The Hispanic Monarchy was polycentric around the world; Mexico was the most important center of the Monarchy (with the ships of the Carrera de Indias and the Manila Galleon converging on its coasts and crossing a good part of its territory), but there were several centers on both sides of the Atlantic. What was happening in Mexico or Lima, or in Seville or Madrid, or even Manila, was known and shared in all parts of the Monarchy.

Still in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Alexander Von Humboldt, on his famous tour of America, with special permission from Charles IV to be attended by the Hispanic America. Although he was not exactly pro-Spanish, his writings objectively show his admiration and amazement for what he sees: the still excellent administration (he marvels at the speed of the mail, e.g., a letter deposited in Rio de la Plata arrives in New Spain, in Mexico, in less than twelve days, at that time). a letter deposited in Rio de la Plata reaches New Spain, Mexico, in less than twelve days, at that time; in the treatment of the Indians he does not hide the possible abuses, but he points out the importance of the Laws of the Indies or the protection of the Crown, or the rigorous supervision of intendants or inspectors even to the viceroys and high officials. Or, as D. Luis Diez del Corral tells us in a great book, Humboldt amusingly relates his encounter, further up the Orinoco, with a small tribe of Zambos (children of black and Indian), under the protection of the King of Spain and the solemn and at the same time "familiar" reception with which he is entertained. The chief of the place asks him about his "cousin" the king, he considers himself a "white gentleman", even though he is black, and introduces him to his wife and daughter, named Doña Isabela and Doña Manuela, "as naked as he is", according to Humboldt, or rather surely semi-naked. Without ever having left the banks of the Apure River, the cacique followed with lively interest "the news from Madrid" and all things there. Our traveler Humboldt also enjoys the musical talent of the Salivas Indians, whom the Jesuit missionaries had turned into virtuosos of the violin, the cello and the flute. And, of course, he has no choice but to recognize the beauty and importance of the cities through which he passes, of their cathedrals and buildings, of the Universities in Latin America two centuries earlier than in the Anglo-Saxon North (let us remember that Mexico, Lima, Santo Domingo, had Universities since the XVI century and others continued to be founded during the XVII and XVIII centuries) and our traveler cannot hide a certain disappointment when he arrives in a Philadelphia that has nothing to do with the urban Latin American ones.

There are many testimonies of this universality and belonging at the same time to a vast integrating cultural organization. I cannot resist mentioning the first time that in Hispanic America Don Quixote and Sancho Panza appeared in a colorful celebration, with a solemn procession in a region of Peru -Pausa is its name, understanding of Parinocochas (current department of Ayacucho)-, closing the great procession of Spaniards and Indian tribes perfectly adorned, to celebrate the news of the appointment of a new Viceroy of Peru (Don Juan de Mendoza y Luna, Marquis of Montesclaros). Other Cervantes' characters were also on parade. Our historian and academic Carmen Sanz, discovered it to us in a precious lecture. And what is more striking is that this celebration was held in 1607, that is, only two years after the edition of the First Part of Don Quixote in Spain in 1605. Remember that today we know that the first ships that arrived with the first edition of Don Quixote had left for America on May 5, 1605 and arrived at Puertavelo on August 19 of the same year, with about 200 copies in their holds.

In short, universality and rapid communication was a fact that changed the world. The great mobility of all those travelers crossing the oceans is still surprising. With its costs and its successes. And it was fundamentally the work of the Hispanic world.

When I referred earlier to the fact that some things seem to be beginning to change in the distorted vision of the Hispanic Monarchy, I wanted to refer briefly to a historiography developed by Spanish and American historians and writers, some new generations at this moment in the fullness of their historical production, who are publishing research, essays, various writings, in which they claim, as I said before, the truth of the facts (with a small letter). Historians and writers of younger and maturing generations on both sides of the Atlantic are taking the floor. That truth of the facts that Hanna Arendt described, in several of her brilliant writings on "truth and lies in politics", as factual truth. The facts have happened and cannot be changed, the first premise; a second is that, in order to understand reality and explain them, they must be accompanied by an interpretation that is as objectified as possible, because our world is a world of meanings and, without them, it loses all meaning, as the cognitive sciences of our time have shown: without meaning we cannot live. Therefore, "we must rescue these facts from the chaos of mere events...and then we must order them in a narrative that demands a perspective." And this is not an argument against the existence of objective (but not absolute) questions, nor does it serve to justify erasing the dividing lines between fact, opinion and interpretation. This is the third premise. In history, it is up to the historian to maintain these dividing lines with his rigorous investigation of the facts, of their context, always complex, under the professional ethical imperative of the search for truth. And in no way can the facts be manipulated to one's own liking. Nor can they, as one of my teachers used to say, with a hint of irony, judging as if the historian were in the court of the Valley of Jehoshaphat deciding who are the good guys and who are the bad guys. Each generation asks questions from its present, can create a new perspective that allows it to order new questions and searches, find new sources and data, thus enriching the meaning and context of the fact, its factual truth.

In History there are no absolute gains; a Hispanist said, referring to Philip II and the centuries of the Hispanic Monarchy, that "successes are never definitive". Nor are failures, we would have to add. Arendt humorously recalls the famous anecdote attributed to Clemenceau, the great French politician who organized the victory of the Allies over Germany, when a German interlocutor asked him what historians would say fifty years later about who had been responsible for the First World War of 1914-1918, "such a problematic and controversial matter," according to the man from Weimar. Clemenceau replied: "I don't know what they will say, but I am sure they will not say that Belgium invaded Germany".

It is worth remembering that when someone tells us that there is no such thing as history or objective facts, we should be suspicious: they want to impose their particular "history" on us. We are also affected by Arendt's concern when she considers that the manipulation of history with falsehoods, lies or omissions of facts, carries within itself a violence that sooner or later can explode. In this rewriting of history, even in contemporary history, before witnesses who lived through it, and in this manipulated rewriting of the past, facts are replaced by opinions,

and then, said the great philosopher, there is no choice but to run away, as they had to do in Nazi Germany.

A last reflection on the falsehoods and lies that produce realities, also false and dangerous, by fomenting hatred, resentment, virtual war in any case.

In this political-moral-populist-victimist mix produced in our times that demolishes statues and creates new myths (which, let us remember, is nothing new in the history of mankind), the idea of "recognition of guilt" resurfaces from time to time, especially in certain policies, although five hundred years have passed.

Generally, this recognition of guilt and forgiveness is demanded from States, persons or peoples who have nothing to do with the events of their ancestors, except for a history -with its lights and shadows, like all of them- that is common and necessary to understand their own life and existence in the present. I think it is important to make a note on this question of facts, guilt and forgiveness. The lucidity of Hanna Arendt again and of Agnes Heller, partly a disciple of hers, give us basic clues in their precious texts, in different historical moments, on these delicate questions that affect us all.

To begin with, in one of Arendt's most significant and profound texts on the question of Responsibility and Judgment, it is necessary to analyze that extreme and easy fallacy of the affirmation of "we are all guilty". If everyone is guilty, then no one is guilty. Apart from the fact that one cannot measure whether the negative was greater than the positive or vice versa, nor can anyone be an omnipotent judge of things that happened centuries ago in different historical contexts, one can forgive one's enemies, as Agnes Heller pointed out, but one cannot forgive on behalf of others. And Arendt clarifies the differentiation between guilt and responsibility (and in this there are also degrees) and both are always individual. They do not exist collectively, in an abstract form. Guilt - Arendt continues - has a name and surname and is fundamentally individual. Guilt is strictly personal and refers to an ACT, not to intentions. There is a responsibility for things one does NOT do, but there is no such thing as feeling guilty for things that have happened without one's active participation in them. The seemingly "noble and tantalizing" statement that "we are all guilty" is "a statement of solidarity with wrongdoers". As I said before, where everyone is guilty, no one is guilty. Feeling "guilty" for what others (parents, ancestors, etc.) did, Arendt adds, is only metaphorical and can lead to a "false sentimentality" where everything is blurred. Forgiveness, like guilt and responsibility, only exists between individuals, concrete persons and not an abstract collective (State, nation, people, etc.). The sentences and the judgment itself, even when it is a group guilty in unison (Nuremberg, public or private group swindles, etc.), are one by one and individual, the judgment is always to each of the persons and not to the group as such.

The decisive common denominator is that "they always refer to the person and to what the person has done".

Falsehoods, lies and deceit -which are different things, although they belong to the same family- and the invention and distortion of news or events that did not happen have always existed, as another master, Julio Caro Baroja, lucidly reminded us in his magnificent essays. Ghosts exist in all ages and tend to repetitive compulsion; they are stereotypes to be used to explain complex facts badly. They foster misguided essentialist ideas that we are doomed to the worst and that it has always been so. They create sometimes impossible utopias to which

they attach a dangerous and daring impulse of "redemption" or "salvation" to others (something that especially concerned Agnes Heller in her essays); they replace concrete people with an abstraction and citizens with the tribe. Lynching, whether physical or intellectual or reputational, is always done in groups and leads to fundamentalisms that hide the individual - people - to raise myths and resentments without counting.

But mercy, compassion, forgiveness, recognition of our own mistakes and the courtesy of apology, or words of gratitude in their case, are always individual and bases of coexistence that should never be lost. Individual and community should form an unstable balance by definition, but not opposed to each other.

Knowing where we come from, knowing and accepting our history in all its complexity and richness, with its shadows and lights, strengthens our individual and collective existence. This is where we are. At the beginning of this month of October, we have had an important Congress with four Academies of History of America (Mexico, Peru, Argentina and Puerto Rico), in meetings in Trujillo (at the Pizarro Foundation) and in Madrid (at the Academy of History and at the Casa de America), to prepare a meeting of all the Ibero-American Academies of History in the coming year, and we have had the joy of noting a first consensus of our common history in the most essential part of the historiographic community gathered. In the face of so much self-interested falsehood in the denial of the reality of what was the Hispanic Monarchy, the interventions of the Academies focused not only on the modern period, but also on the relationship between the Spanish Monarchy and the Ibero-American Monarchy.

The Spanish and Hispano-Americans were divided in historiographic and experiential sectors, and in everything that united us on one side and the other.

To listen to a Mexican historian, a Peruvian, an Argentinean and a Puerto Rican, presidents or vice presidents of their respective Academies of History, explain in public, at the Casa de América, how the indigenous peoples were protected by the Crown; that there were wars (some more bloody than others) and blood in the Conquest, but that before reaching the middle of the 16th century, measures and laws began to be taken that annulled the encomiendas of some conquistadors and affirmed the equality of the King's subjects, including all the Indian population without distinction, and dictating successive laws so that even African Americans, fled and not fled from other territories, had certain rights in the Hispanic space. The story told by Humboldt that we mentioned before is an example of this, on the banks or near the Orinoco. Listening to them also that there were never genocides and that indeed miscegenation is the great achievement of our cultures, was truly exciting.

Allow me to refer in this matter to the character that best fits in this vision of the pride of mestizaje that Carlos Fuentes or Elliott or López Portilla said: it is about the great figure of the Inca Garcilaso. The Inca Garcilaso in his First part of the Royal Commentaries that deal with the origin of the Yncas, Kings that were of Peru (...) and of all that was that Empire and its Republic, before the Spaniards passed into it (Lisbon, 1609) writes: "there is but one world, and although we call Old World and New World, it is because the former has been discovered anew for us, and not because they are two, but all one". He himself, son of a Spaniard and an

Indian mother, in his translation of the Love Dialogues of Leo Hebrew (1589) says of himself in one of the dedications: "of both nations I have garments".

I am done now. To America the Spaniards brought, as has been said, what they were and what they had, the living Western culture. They brought with them the Greek, Roman and Christian roots that shaped Europe, the mixed heritage of various peoples, including Goths and Arabs in the Peninsula. The Spain that had come from an eight-century confrontation. The country -in the words of Díez del Corral- capable of such feats of discovery, conquest and war, and also of civilization and miscegenation, was not and had not been a "military society" (unlike, for example, 17th century Sweden and later Prussia or Russia); "it was," Don Luis pointed out, "a country with a warlike vocation, but not militaristic, capable of mobilizing people from the most varied nationalities of Europe to carry out its warlike feats". Hence, among the Spanish kings, portraits of military power abound more (Velázquez is the model in which our historian delved) and that is why in all campaigns, both in Europe and in America, people and important figures of different origins gather and are recruited under the banners of the king of Spain.

The universality, the equality of all on both sides of the Atlantic as subjects of the monarch, is a special seal of the Hispanic Monarchy, which had nothing to do - although nothing can be idyllic, but differentiating - with the misrepresentations and falsehoods even believed by Spaniards. Spain is the main protagonist of the first globalization of the world. This is the title of the excellent documentary by José Luis López Linares, which many of you know: Spain: the first globalization. A before and after that changed history.

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, President of the Council of Spanish Orders, Authorities, friends all, thank you very much for your generosity and your company in this unforgettable and moving morning for me. Thank you always,

Carmen Iglesias

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