

SPEECH BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS DON PEDRO DE BORBON DOS SICILIAS, DUKE OF CALABRIA

27th October 2022

Your Majesty,

Secretary of State for Justice, Mr. Antonio Julián Rodríguez

President of the Board of Directors of Patrimonio Nacional, Ms. Ana de la Cueva

Director of the Royal Academy of History, Ms. Carmen Iglesias

Apostolic Nuncio in Spain, H.E.R.H. Msgr. D. Bernardito Cleopas

Authorities

Knights of the Spanish Orders

Dear friends,

I would like to begin my speech with some heartfelt words of gratitude to Her Majesty Queen Sofia, who today honors us with her presence at this award ceremony of the IV Edition of the Spanish Orders Award. Your Majesty, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for joining us.

Today, thanks to our Grand Master, H.M. King Don Felipe (q.D.g.), who supports and promotes this award to History, we are once again gathered here in this extraordinary World Heritage Site, the Royal Monastery of the San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

The Spanish Orders History Award was instituted by the Royal Council of the Spanish Orders in 2017 and created from the firmest commitment to the truth and to the history of Spain.

These four editions that already allow us to assess, with real satisfaction, that the initiative, started only five years ago, has been consolidated as an academic, historiographic and social reality of international reference.

This distinction was created with a precise objective in mind - which makes it so unique and necessary - but also, and especially, by the award winners, whose works are an exact response to its spirit and meaning of this award. This is also due to the the wisdom of the Jury. Our responsibility is to make known and ensure that the richness of the true history of Spain is known.

Indeed, the Spanish Orders Award is singular and unique in the international academic context, and it is considered the most important recognition of Spanish history and the highest level of recognition of historiographical work of outstanding excellence. It is our way of thanking the academic figures who have been assuming a commitment free of biased cultural or ideological prejudices.

In this fourth edition of the Spanish Orders Award, to the names of John Elliot, Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada and Enrique Krauze -prizewinners in previous editions- are now joined by Professor Carmen Iglesias Cano, Director of the Royal Academy of History and Full Academician of the Academic of Number of the Royal Spanish Academy.

We cannot fail to remember, with all appreciation and with all emotion, the person of John H. Elliot, who is no longer with us. Let these words serve as a heartfelt tribute to the work and figure of this great hispanist historian.

On the other hand, adapting ourselves to the times and to the formidable projection of our Hispanic Civilization, our award pay attention to the Iberian dimension of our historical and multinational identity. According to data provided by the Cervantes Institute in 2021, 512 million people already speak Spanish, while the Organization of Ibero-American States indicates that there are already 338 million Portuguese speakers.

It is a fact that the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking peoples of all continents already speak Spanish and Portuguese.

Portuguese-speaking peoples on all continents now comprise more than 850 million people worldwide.

We know that we have to approach this reality with a historiographic vision as well, approaching it essentially in the recognition of academic and intellectual merits.

In a few minutes we will listen to the Laudatio that exposes the high merits of our laureate, Professor Carmen Iglesias, Countess of Gisbert.

Dear Carmen, receive our feeling of deep admiration for your extraordinary contribution to rigorous research and knowledge of the history of Spain. Today, I extend to you the recognition of all of us for the extraordinary work you have been doing as director of the Royal Academy of History, an Institution that, since its foundation in the 18th century, has deepened the study of our past.

Your studies of modern European and Spanish history, as well as other topics in history and political philosophy from different periods are already a reference point for consultation. We would like to thank you all the years you have dedicated to the study and research in favor of the history of Spain.

I would like to recall the words of His Majesty King Felipe who, on the occasion of the first edition of this Award, pointed out that the Spanish Orders –Santiago, Calatrava, Alcántara and

Montesa– are a heritage of Spain and of its history that we must administer with rigor and generosity, knowing how to renew and update it permanently, at the service of our society and the best name of our country.

That is our mission and our commitment.

The Spanish Orders have His Majesty King Felipe as their point of reference and, united in our Council, we seek to revitalize and update them in order to be a useful instrument in our society. As President of the Royal Council of the Orders, it gives me great satisfaction to see how this Award fulfills one of its purposes: the dissemination of the Historical and Cultural Heritage of Spain.

More than 60 universities -national and international- have presented 58 candidatures for the Prize in these four editions. Their interest in the Prize consolidates it year after year as a History Prize of international reference.

From here we convey our gratitude to His Majesty the King (q.D.g.) for the example he gives us every day, as Head of State and as King in our Parliamentary Monarchy, working tirelessly for progress and harmony among Spaniards.

Our gratitude to all the members of the Jury of the Award. Thanks to your support and collaboration this challenge has been possible. We thank the President of Patrimonio Nacional and the Royal Spanish Mint for their generous participation in the development of the Award. To the Father Prior of the Monastery, Don Isidro de la Viuda Diez, for opening his house to us.

Last but not least, my deepest gratitude to all the Sponsors of this Spanish Orders Award:

- Doña. Micaela Valdés Ozores, Censor of the Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País, Correspondent of the Real Academia de la Historia.

- Mr. Carlos de Palacio y Oriol, President of the Talgo Foundation.

- Mr. Raimundo Pérez-Hernández y Torra, Director of the Ramón Areces Foundation.

- Mr. Manuel Pardo de Vera y Diaz, President of the Royal Association of Hidalgos of Spain.

Without you, this Award would not be possible.

I conclude these brief words by reiterating, on behalf of all of us present here, our gratitude to Her Majesty Queen Sofia. Your Majesty, thank you very much.

Finally, on behalf of all of us, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the winner, Ms. Carmen Iglesias.

Thank you very much.