

## Paul Preston, member of the European Academy of Yuste receives an honorary doctorate from the University of Extremadura



The University of Extremadura has granted an honorary doctorate to British historian Paul Preston. The proposal for him to receive the award came from the Department of History of the Faculty of Arts that venue for the academic ceremony.

Enrique Moradiellos, the doctor's sponsor and a professor at the university, described him as a "master of historians, my guide" and highlighted the scientific contribution he has made to contemporary history. "He is the finest British Hispanist around today", he concluded.

After accepting the award Preston said a few words, recalling that his relationship with Spain began in the late 1960s and that "my first trip was to Extremadura". During his speech he pointed out that he was appointed as a member of the European Academy of Yuste, occupying the Marcel Proust chair. "For me, Extremadura represents the Civil War and the suffering of the Spanish people. Extremadura has a pre-eminent place in my relationship with Spain", he said. The historian ended by stating that "during my life I have drawn closer to Cáceres and the University of Extremadura. I am very much aware of the honour you have bestowed on me and of forming a small part of this university".

The ceremony was presided over by the Rector, Segundo Píriz Durán, and the President of the Government of Extremadura Guillermo Fernández Vara.

The Rector stressed several aspects of Preston's academic career. The historian was educated and served at institutions such as the Universities of Oxford and London, he founded and directed the Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies, the most famous and renowned centre for Hispanic studies in the world, and he appears regularly as a lecturer at universities like Harvard, Boston and Yale in the United States and Paris, Leuven, Siena and Turin in Europe.

"Professor Paul Preston is the greatest living exponent of the noble tradition of Hispanism. He has provided guidelines to enable us to understand our contemporary history within the context of universal history, without mystifications or demonizations but also without gratifying exaggerations or favourable and angelic distortions", declared Píriz.



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