

PROFESSOR NICHOLAS ROUND

Nicholas Grenville Round is a graduate of Pembroke College, University of Oxford, where he later obtained a DPhil. From 1962 to 1972 he taught Spanish, first as Lecturer, and then as Reader, at Queen's University, Belfast, before being appointed as the Stevenson Professor of Hispanic Studies at the University of Glasgow, a post which he held for 22 years. In 1994 he came to Sheffield as Hughes Professor of Hispanic Studies and, in 1996, he set up the Pérez Galdós Editions Project.

Nicholas Round is widely recognized as one of international Hispanism's foremost researchers. His originality, exceptional range and insight are attested in his publications. In more than a hundred critical editions, translations, essays and articles his intellect ranges productively from the Mediaeval period, through the Nineteenth Century to contemporary translation and interpreting. His work on Galdós - including his fine translations of *Torquemada en la hoguera* (*Torquemada in the Fire* (Glasgow, 1985) and the play *Realidad*, broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 1975 - has been influential in bringing Spain's finest realist novelist to an English-speaking audience.

Nicholas Round's services to international Hispanism have been recognized with the award of a number of honours, including the *Cruz Oficial de la Orden de Isabel la Católica* for his contribution to the promotion of co-operation between Spain and the wider international community (1989); President of the *Asociación Internacional de Galdosistas* (International Association of Galdós Scholars (1999-2001)); and the Society of Authors Portuguese Translation Prize (1992). In 1996 he was made a Fellow of the British Academy and, in March 2003, was awarded the title of Emeritus Professor of the University of Sheffield.

During his period as Director of the Pérez Galdós Editions Project, his enthusiasm, intellectual generosity and energy were an inspiration to his colleagues and students alike. Largely thanks to his efforts, Sheffield is now an internationally recognised centre for innovative Galdosian studies. It is with enormous pleasure that we welcome him back here.

LECTURE SYNOPSIS:

“WHAT IS THE STARS?”

GALDÓS AND THE MEASURES OF MANKIND

Characters in realist fiction are human types: they show how specific inherited personality traits develop in a given material and social environment. But we also respond to them as types of humanity, revealing the things – present at least potentially in all of us – that make us, like them, human. Francisco Torquemada, the money-man of Galdós’s 19th-century Madrid, is memorable in both these ways. This lecture explores how Galdós presents Torquemada as a very specific and localized example of an age-old topic (itself perpetually changing from one cultural moment to another): humanity in its relation to the stars in their courses. It is an instance of the novelist’s form of truth-telling about a particular social and cultural world. It also illustrates how the writer’s imagination functions as a unique form of knowledge, enabling us to understand the kind of creatures that we are, in that world and in this.