

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AGUSTÍN GORDILLO*

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I REALLY did not expect to be given the floor, but I cannot miss the opportunity to join all of you in the remembrance of our dear friend Luis Ortega Álvarez. Further, I would like to also join you in the homage to Massimo Severo Giannini, to whom I sent a book in 1969 and who replied with a warm, yet very critical, letter. I later visited him both at his office and his house and will always remember him as one of the great masters of Administrative Law, together with Jean Rivero, whose kind memory binds many of us, as Professor Flogaitis has warmly recounted. I would be remiss in not mentioning Professor H.W.R. Wade, who had received me at Caius College in Cambridge, yet there are so many great masters in the history of this European Group of Public Law, that it would be almost impossible to render justice to them all.

Please allow me to go back to the starting point of this wonderful story which is my relationship with the European Group of Public Law. It was in the beginning of the 1980's when I met Professor Flogaitis, today Director of the European Public Law Organization, at a conference in Louvain-La-Neuve. This acquaintance evolved into an exchange of ideas on European Administrative Science and later to a close friendship.

Jean Rivero, whom I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, became - after my first acquaintance with Professor Flogaitis - the link that motivated the continuation of our relationship based on our

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mutual interest in Public Law. This is where the origins of my bonds with the European Group of Public Law are found, which were strengthened even more by my participation in the workings of the Group and culminated to my membership of the EGPL and of the EPLO Board of Directors, the EPLO Honorary Board of the Academy of European Public Law and the EPLO Board of Trustees of the European Law and Governance School.

I value this participation and membership since it gave me the opportunity to enrich my knowledge of European Administrative Law, a field I was always very interested in. In fact, all those who know my itinerary up to here know that I always focused on the study of Administrative Law, having taught law from 1958 to the present in Argentina and throughout Latin America and Europe and having published more than 20 legal works and textbooks, numerous contributions to Latin American and European Law journals and having served since 1982 as the Founding President of the Administrative Law Foundation in Argentina. I also served Administrative Law from the position of a Judge in several international tribunals (Administrative Tribunal of the Organization of American States; of the International Monetary Fund; of the International Labor Organization; of the United Nations and others).

My interest in Law has exceeded the boundaries of Latin America and found its best expression in my involvement in the activities of the European Public Law Organization.

I am proud to be one of its members and I am glad that today I am having the opportunity to thank you for this through this short speech.

Dear friends,

I would like to thank all of you who have enriched my mind throughout the many years that I have been able to attend these meetings, but I most specially thank these three friends that have joined in generously pouring so much warmth into my heart today: Director Spyridon Flogaitis, Professor José Esteve Pardo and Professor Isaac Damsky.

A British Diplomat once told his audience, on a similar occasion, that he had prepared three different speeches from which to choose the one to deliver, according to the circumstances. I have done the same, and just as he showed us, now I have also decided to deliver all three of them:

Thank you, thank you very much, thank you very much indeed.