ecpr general conference 2007, pisa ecpr prizes

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The following ECPR prizes were awarded on the Friday during the General Conference in Pisa:

ECPR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO EUROPEAN POLITICAL SCIENCE

AWARDED TO: PROFESSOR PHILIPPE SCHMITTER

Brief profile of the award winner

Philippe Schmitter (1936) studied at the Graduate Institute for International Studies of the University of Geneva and subsequently took his doctorate at the University of California at Berkeley. In 1967, he was appointed as assistant professor by the Department of Political Science of the University of Chicago, where he later became full professor. Between 1986 and 1996 he taught at the European University Institute (EUI) (1982–1986), then moved to Stanford (1986–1996). He taught again at the EUI until 2004 and was thereafter nominated Professorial Fellow of the Department of Political and Social Sciences of that Institute. Professor Schmitter has published numerous books and articles on comparative politics, on regional integration in Western Europe and Latin America, on the transition from authoritarian rule in Southern Europe and Latin America, and on the intermediation of class, sectoral and professional interests.

Motivation of the jury

In his brilliant academic career, Philippe Schmitter has given a fundamental contribution to the advancement of political science and its consolidation as an academic discipline. His scientific work is characterised by an outstanding intellectual breath and has spanned across several sectors of the discipline: from comparative politics to European studies, from political theory to political economy. In each of these fields, Professor Schmitter has left a recognisable and important mark, not only by addressing in original ways some 'classical' questions in the study of politics but also by posing new, challenging questions and outlining innovative research agendas. On themes such as neo-corporatism, democratic transitions, regional integration processes (including European integration) the work of Philippe Schmitter has offered pioneering theoretical contributions and has opened new paths for empirical research, inspiring and orienting the work of other political scientists around the world. A truly cosmopolitan scholar, Professor Schmitter has been strikingly active and successful not only on the front

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of scientific production but also in the spheres of teaching, research promotion and organisation, professional service, public and policy debates. His impressive achievements are widely acknowledged and highly appreciated and have contributed to setting new standards of excellence for political science in Europe and beyond.

MATTEI DOGAN FOUNDATION PRIZE IN EUROPEAN POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

AWARDED TO: PROFESSOR GIOVANNI SARTORI

Brief profile of the award winner

Born in Florence in 1924, Giovanni Sartori graduated in Political and Social Sciences at the University of Florence in 1946 where, after qualifying for teaching History of Modern Philosophy and Doctrine of the State, he became lecturer of Modern Philosophy (1950–1956) and Political Science (1956–1963), and professor of Sociology (1963–1966).

After becoming full professor of Political Science and teaching at Florence University from 1966 to 1976 he taught also at the European University Institute (1974–1976) and later became professor of Political Science at Stanford University (1976–1979). Professor Sartori is currently Albert Schweitzer Professor Emeritus in the Humanities at Columbia University, New York (since 1994), and Professor Emeritus at the University of Florence (since 1992). After having given a vital contribution to the development of the Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia, Professor Sartori was the founder and long time director of the Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica (1971–2003). He has received numerous honours, awards and prizes, among which the Gold Medal for cultural and educational merits from the President of the Italian Republic, the Outstanding Book Award of the American Political Science Association (APSA) for Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis (1998), the Principe de Asturias Prize in the Social Sciences (2005), the ECPR Lifetime Achievement Award (2005), the APSA – Methodology Section – Lifetime Achievement Award (2006).

Motivation of the jury

In his outstanding career, Giovanni Sartori has given a lasting contribution to the advancement of political sociology and its consolidation as an academic discipline in Italy and Europe with an undeniable worldwide impact. His scientific work is characterised by an unsurpassed intellectual breath and has spanned from democratic theory, constitutional engineering, parliaments and representative institutions, elections and electoral behaviour, to parties and party systems. In particular, Professor Sartori has elaborated the most widely used classification system for party systems. In what can be rightfully considered the richest and most imaginative comparative study of political parties in the literature, he suggested that party systems should be classified according to the number of relevant parties and to the degree of ideological polarisation. His conceptualisation and operationalisation of Left-Right ideological distance are among the foundations of most contemporary political sociology research. In his many significant methodological articles on the use of the comparative method in the social sciences, Professor Sartori set the standards for closely reasoned, tightly structured argumentation in political theory. His work's conceptual clarity, methodological rigour, analytical brilliance, and relentless interest in theory building have made Giovanni Sartori one of the most prominent political sociologists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

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2007 JEAN BLONDEL PHD PRIZE

AWARDED TO: TANJA E. AALBERTS FOR HER DISSERTATION POLITICS OF SOVEREIGNTY

Brief profile of the award winner
Since August 2006, Tanja E. Aalberts has been Assistant Professor at Leiden University, Department of Political Science. She obtained an M.A. in 1999 in Public Administration and Management (Besturskunde) at Twente University, Enschede, and in 2000 an M.Sc. Econ. in International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. In June 2006, she defended her dissertation Politics of Sovereignty.

Motivation of the jury
The jury of the prize considered this an outstanding dissertation. It is very well written and the argument is clearly presented. The author demonstrates academic maturity and mastery of the relevant literature. The thesis makes a well-sustained case for its key finding, that is that 'Sovereignty is not merely an organising principle [...] as the English School maintains, but by connoting in addition international personality and legal status it ultimately identifies agency in terms of eligibility to play the sovereignty game' (p. 170). The author succeeds in demonstrating how interaction and intersubjectivity contribute to establish sovereignty as a norm in international relations that is neither exclusively agentic nor exclusively structural. The thesis addresses a much debated subject and succeeds in offering a genuine contribution to the literature based on thorough and careful reviews of the relevant literature in the field and a reconstruction and reassessment of the handling of 'sovereignty' in IR theory.

the duncan black award winner 2007

The Standing Group on Analytical Politics and Public Choice, which is active within ECPR, has created the Duncan Black Award. This award honors a graduate student who has presented the best paper at the ECPR Conference pursuing research in analytical politics that combines systematic theoretical thinking and rigorous empirical testing. The award carries a prize of 200 Euros.

For the 2007 General Conference in Pisa a committee of the standing group has selected *Nikoleta Yordanova*, Ph.D. student at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, as the 2007 Award Winner. In her paper 'Rationale behind committee assignments in the European Parliament: Distributive, informational and partisan perspectives' she analyses the factors that shape committee assignments. She finds that special interests drive the assignments to committees with high externalities, while expertise is important for assignments to committees on highly specialised issues. The award committee very much appreciated the theoretical reasoning in the paper, which was supplemented with an empirical test using new data on interest group affiliations of MEPs.

The next Duncan Black Award will be presented at the 2009 ECPR General Conference. See the website of the group for further information: http://www.publicadministration.leidenuniv.nl/index.php3?m=1&c=254

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