



Background

The ECPR Political Theory Prize is being awarded for the first time in 2021. It highlights the critical role of political theory in political science by celebrating outstanding contributions in the field. The prize is awarded for the best first book in political theory, published in English and within two years preceding the award year.

The Political Theory Prize was conceived in collaboration with the ECPR Standing Groups on Kantian Political Thought, Political Theory and International Political Theory, along with the convenors of the ECPR General Conference Section on Methodology of Political Theory. It is co-sponsored by the Contemporary Political Theory journal and carries a prize fund of €500.

The members of the jury for this prize were:

Thomas Saalfeld (Chair)
Eva Erman
Emanuela Ceva
Macarena Marey
Peter Niesen
Terrell Carver

Winner: Chiara Cordelli

Chiara Cordelli's book *The Privatized State* was nominated for this prize. In her book she applies methods developed in philosophy and political theory to describe and analyze fundamental transformations of key characteristics of the state in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. In particular, she discusses the normative implications of the growing role of private (for-profit or non-profit) organizations in the process of governing.

The members of the jury agreed that she is taking up a very current problem of the modern state. Jury members were particularly impressed by the clarity and analytical subtlety by which she unfolds a theory of legitimacy in the privatized state. The book combines practical philosophy with elements of historiography and policy analysis to produce a highly original contribution to modern political theory. The jury was particularly impressed with the theory of administrative legitimacy she is proposing. In this context she persuasively develops principles of provisional and transitional justice for contexts where governance is already extensively privatized. She also proposes ways of rebuilding public instruments of government and administration, which are no longer based on a system of command and control but on an ethos of public service, citizens' trust and more direct democratic involvement in administrative processes.

On behalf of the jury, Thomas Saalfeld would like to offer heartfelt congratulations not only on the prize but above all for this outstanding contribution to contemporary political theory.



Honourable mention: Alasia Nuti

Alasia Nuti's book *The Injustice and the Reproduction of History: Structural Inequalities, Gender and Redress* was nominated for this prize. The jury agreed that she is making several important contributions to the field of Political Theory, developing a new and insightful account of injustice across time. The jury members decided to award her work honourable mention as an important and highly creative contribution to modern political theory tackling a number of issues of tremendous importance.

On behalf of the jury, Thomas Saalfeld would like to offer congratulations for this excellent contribution to contemporary political theory.