

The ESSSAT Research Prize 2018 has been awarded to Dr. Sarah Lane Ritchie for her PhD thesis “With God in Mind: Divine Action and the Naturalisation of Consciousness”, submitted 2017 at the University of Edinburgh. Sarah Lane Ritchie is the first person ever to win both the ESSSAT Student Prize (in 2016) and the ESSSAT Research Prize (now). She is currently Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Theology & Science at St. Mary’s College, School of Divinity, University of St. Andrews. Her thesis offers a fine analysis of the recent debate about divine intervention in the world, to show the main limits or problems that afflict the standard attempts to describe such action. She proposes a distinct theological model, ‘theistic naturalism’, to reframe the question at stake, opening alternative ways to understand God’s action, respecting scientific worldviews and recognising fresh theological insights. The jury appreciated especially her excellent exercise in interdisciplinary dialogue that renders justice to a theology paying attention to scientific developments. Thus, the jury chose this book as winner of the ESSSAT Research Prize. The Prize consists of 2000 euro, as well as coverage of travel to and participation in the next European Conference on Science and Theology, to be held in Lyon, France, April 17-22, 2018, where the winners of the prizes will be presented.

As another first timer, there also has been an Honourable Mention in the ESSSAT Research Prize Category. ESSSAT is honouring the contribution of Jaeho Jang on “The Doctrine of Theodicy in a Scientific Age: Examining the Evolutionary Theology of John Haught and the Daoist Philosophy of Zhuangzi”. The aim of Jang’s study is to develop Christian theodicies to inform both the West and the East in an age of science. He proposes steps for comparative work between religion and science and between Christianity and Daoism, which he calls description, comparison, generalisation, differentiation and supplementation. Based on this methodology, Jaeho generalises the ideas of Haught and Zhuangzi on evil into different theodicies and supplements the evolutionary theodicy of Haught with the Daoist ideas of Zhuangzi. The work convinced the Jury that Western evolutionary theodicies would benefit much from engagement with Asian Christian contexts, which is a very relevant thought in a globalized religious world. Jang completed his PhD at the University of Edinburgh in 2017 and is now a chaplain and lecturer at Myongji University, Seoul, South Korea.

The ESSSAT Student Prize 2018 has been awarded to Joanna Leidenhag, student at the University of Edinburgh, for her essay “The Revival of Panpsychism and its Relevance for the Science-Religion Dialogue”. Joanna Leidenhag is both a PhD candidate in Systematic Theology at Edinburgh and a candidate for ordination at the Scottish Episcopal Institute. In her essay, Leidenhag beautifully demonstrates the relevance of panpsychism for the doctrine of creation, focussing on the science and religion context. Leidenhag views panpsychism as a metaphysical hypothesis, and as such compatible with the principles and provisional conclusions of the sciences critical to this matter, namely evolutionary biology and quantum physics. Her well formulated argument is only that panpsychism is compatible and can be seen to find some limited, but significant, areas of resonance or traction with the natural sciences. The jury unanimously nominated Leidenhag’s most elegant and insightful paper as the winner. The ESSSAT Student Prize 2018 consists of 1000 euro and free travel to and participation in the ESSSAT Conference in France later this year.

It is remarkable that all three winners pursued their studies within the Science and Religion program at the university of Edinburgh. There were also of course fine contributions from other institutions as well. Location is a criterion for the ESSSAT prizes only in as far as the contributions must be based on research done in Europe. Besides, the competition has been especially fierce this year and the quality of the submissions very high, a number of them having already received offers of publication.

ESSSAT, is the European Society for the Study of Science And Theology, organizes a conference every other year. The 2018 prizes will be presented at the Seventeenth European Conference on Science and Theology, which will be held in Lyon, France, April 17th – 22th, 2018. The theme of the 2018 conference is *Nature and Beyond: Transcendence and Immanence in Science and Religion*.

Participants and contributors are scientists, theologians, scholars of religion, philosophers, historians and other scholars from different religious and non-religious persuasions, from almost all European countries as well as from other continents.

Additional Information:

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