



Press Release

Polish writer receives 2016 Lucas Prize

Adam Zagajewski honored for his work in reconciling East and West; Junior Lucas Prize goes to theologian Daniela Blum

Dr. Karl Guido Rijkhoek
Director

Antje Karbe
Press Officer

Phone +49 7071 29-76788
+49 7071 29-76789

Fax +49 7071 29-5566
karl.rijkhoeck[at]uni-tuebingen.de
antje.karbe[at]uni-tuebingen.de

www.uni-tuebingen.de/aktuell

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The Polish writer and essayist Adam Zagajewski received the University of Tübingen's Dr Leopold Lucas Prize on Tuesday. The Faculty of Protestant Theology paid tribute to his literary work, as well as to his political and social activities as a critic of dictatorship and totalitarianism, and his promotion of unity and freedom in Europe.

The €500,000 Prize honors outstanding achievements in the fields of theology, intellectual history, historical research, and philosophy - and those who have improved relations between people and nations by spreading a mindset of tolerance.

Adam Zagajewski was born in 1945 in Lwów, studied Psychology and Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University of Krakow, where he subsequently worked. He was a member of the Workers' Defense Committee; his works were banned in Poland in 1976. He lived in West Berlin on a DAAD artists' program from 1979 to 1981. From 1982 he lived as an exile in Paris and taught at the University of Houston in Texas, then at the University of Chicago. In 2002, Zagajewski returned to Krakow.

His works have been translated into a number of languages, including English and German. He has received widespread international recognition, most recently the Jean Améry Prize for European essay writing. "His works combine philosophical and theological aspects - shaped by moral fortitude, meditatively assessing reality, clearly unfolded," said the Dean of Protestant Theology, Professor Jürgen Kampmann, at the award ceremony. He added that Zagajewski struck both humorous and skeptical notes in a sensitive and winning manner. "Against the backdrop of his own life, he has written works which build bridges of understanding between Eastern and Western Europe, and beyond to the United States. He confronted dictatorship and censorship both politically and socially." His best known works include *Mysticism for Beginners* (1997); *Eternal Enemies: Poems* (2008); and *Unseen Hand: Poems* (2011).

At the suggestion of the Faculty of Catholic Theology, this year's Lucas Prize for Junior Researchers went to theologian Dr Daniela Blum for her outstanding 2014 doctoral thesis, "Modus convivendi. Konfessionelle Koexistenz, Konflikte und Kooperation in der Reichsstadt Speyer in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts" (Confessional coexistence, conflicts and cooperation in Speyer in the second half of the 16th century). The Lucas Prize for Junior Researchers comes with €20,000 in prize money. It has been awarded every year since 1986 to an outstanding doctoral thesis from the fields of Protestant Theology, Catholic Theology, Philosophy, or History.



Daniela Blum studied Catholic Theology, Politics, and Psychology in Tübingen. She was a member of the research training group "Religious Knowledge" from 2011-14 and is now a researcher at the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

Photo: Blum

The Leopold Lucas Prize honors the memory of the Jewish rabbi and scholar Dr. Leopold Lucas, murdered at Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1943. The Prize was endowed by his son, Franz D. Lucas, in 1972.

Contact:

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Kampmann
University of Tübingen
Protestant Theology
Phone +49 7071 29-72538
ev.theologie@uni-tuebingen.de