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MAGAZINE

Oliviero Stock, pioneer of artificial intelligence, awarded the Aquila di San Venceslao

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The Autonomous Province of Trento awarded the highest honor in Trentino, the Eagle of St. Wenceslaus, to Professor Oliviero Stock, pioneer of Artificial Intelligence

[PRESS RELEASE]

Having come to Trentino in 1988, when the then ITC-Irst, directed by Luigi Stringa, was starting to steer its research efforts towards Artificial Intelligence – a pioneering choice considering the relevance that Computer science would take on in the following decade – Stock “has allowed Trentino to become an international research node, first casting Irst and then FBK in an international landscape of excellence”, reads the honor statement. With his work, stressed Province Councillor for University and Research Sara Ferrari during the ceremony held this morning in the Province Government Hall, Stock “has led Trentino to compete with the giants of Europe and of the world, and he did so by pursuing a long-term scientific vision over the profit of the moment or the fashions that unfortunately exist also in research. He thus allowed IRST and scientific research in Trentino to take a step forward and stay a step forward. He did so with his conviction that cutting edge research in artificial intelligence can change people’s lives, believing in an artificial Intelligence for all, for ‘good’, for the spread of well-being, and in the service of the individual, i.e. able to communicate and interact with users “. With his research, in particular in the field of human-machine communication (as well as man-man mediated by the machine), Stock aimed to an artificial intelligence “that would allow machines to understand people rather than forcing people to understand machines “, and he did it during the so-called “artificial intelligence winter”, when everyone, following more popular themes, parted from it. While at the lead of Irst, he brought the best researchers in the field to Trentino, while at the same time making Trentino’s research appreciated abroad, at institutions such as Stanford, SRI, Harvard, Berkeley, Haifa, DFKI. His commitment has been critical in helping to make Trentino an open, attractive and avant-garde area.

The long scientific career of Stock was recalled this morning by the director of the DFKI-German Institute of Artificial Intelligence, also a scientific advisor to Angela Merkel, Wolfgang Wahlster. It was followed by the testimony of Luigia Carlucci Aiello, founder and first president of the Italian

Institute for Artificial Intelligence, who was also a teacher of Stock's at the University of Pisa, in 1975. The floor then went to Francesco Profumo, president of FBK, former minister of University and Research and president of CNR, who pointed out how, with this recognition, the Trentino administration shows, in an age when immediacy trends, that it treasures the memory of the steps taken to date and intends to build on them the foundations for the future. After that, the awarding of the Eagle by Sara Ferrari, followed by greetings by Stock. "Only if one is able to look beyond short-term goals one can produce important results", he said, in thanking for the honor conferred on him and in addressing a thought of gratitude, in particular to Luigi Stringa, to the former president of the autonomous Province Lorenzo Dellai and his close collaborator Fernando Guarino, to the current provincial council, for the support it continues to guarantee to research, to the three presidents of the ITC succeeded during his lead of the Institute, Fabio Ferrari, Nadio Delai and Gianni Bonvicini. "I consider this recognition – emphasized Stock – as a tribute to artificial intelligence, to IRST, to the people who have worked with me and to those who have continued with great authoritativeness on the path of research in Trentino".

Short bio

Oliviero Stock, born in Trieste, obtains a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from the University of Florence, and then a aster's degree in Computer Science from the University of Pisa, with a thesis on the analysis of natural language. From 1981 to 1987 he was appointed as coordinator, in Rome, of the National Strategic Project on Artificial Intelligence of the National Research Council-CNR.

Since 1988 he has worked at ITC-Irst in Povo, today FBK-Fondazione Bruno Kessler, a research organization of the Autonomous Province of Trento. Here, he is first in charge of the Cognitive and Communication Technologies Research Division and then, from 1997 to 2001, Director of the Institute.

President of the AI ??* IA, Italian Association for Artificial Intelligence, in 1992-93 and 94-95, president in 1996 of the ACL-Computational Linguistics Association, member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the DFKI and of numerous editorial committees of the most important journals in this scientific field, author of over 250 scientific publications, lecturer at numerous Italian (La Sapienza in Rome, Pavia, Pisa, Siena, Sissa Trieste, Trento) and international (Wilem Mathesius Courses, Charles University, Prague) universities, he has started a profitable scientific collaboration with Israeli universities, in particular by coordinating a project – stemmed from a collaboration between the University of Haifa and FBK-Irst – on smart technologies for the enhancement of cultural heritage. Current Director of the PerTe Project.

Among the founders in 2010 of the Trento node of the EIT-European Institute of Technology, which has made Trento a hub for central and southern Europe in the field of digital technologies.

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