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**MLA'S SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE STUDIES
AWARDED TO CHRISTY WAMPOLE FOR *DEGENERATIVE REALISM*; JUDITH G.
COFFIN AND ALYCE MAHON RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTIONS**

New York, NY – 6 December 2021 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its twenty-ninth annual Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies to Christy Wampole, associate professor of French at Princeton University, for her book *Degenerative Realism: Novel and Nation in Twenty-First-Century France*, published by Columbia University Press. Judith G. Coffin, professor of history at the University of Texas, Austin, has received an honorable mention for *Sex, Love, and Letters: Writing Simone de Beauvoir*, published by Cornell University Press. Alyce Mahon, professor of modern and contemporary art at the University of Cambridge, has received an honorable mention for *The Marquis de Sade and the Avant-Garde*, published by Princeton University Press. The prize is awarded annually for an outstanding scholarly work in its field—a literary or linguistic study, a critical edition of an important work, or a critical biography—written by a member of the association.

The Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies is one of eighteen awards that will be presented on 8 January 2022, during the association's annual convention, to be held in Washington, DC. The members of the selection committee were Frieda Ekotto (Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor), chair; Jonathan Keith Gosnell (Smith Coll.); and Ellen Welch (Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill). The committee's citation for Wampole's book reads:

Christy Wampole's ambitious, thought-provoking book identifies degenerative realism as a mode of fiction concerned with civilizational decay and especially with the idea that the boundary between the real and the false is eroding. Wampole offers engaging analyses of contemporary French novels, focusing on themes such as demographic collapse, crises of masculinity, and the effects of technology and new media on information culture and on formal features such as journalistic immediacy and the ambivalent use of satire. She connects this mode of realism to contemporary social and political issues while also showing how authors draw on and alter earlier modes of realism. Her readings illustrate how attending to literature can provide rich insight on complex social and cultural issues, often beyond what journalism or sociological research can uncover. *Degenerative Realism: Novel and Nation in Twenty-First-Century France* is well-researched and confidently—even fearlessly—written, with a strong argument and stylistic flair.

The committee's citation for Coffin's book reads:

Using an original archive of previously unknown correspondence, *Sex, Love, and Letters: Writing Simone de Beauvoir* offers a fascinating study of Beauvoir's relationship to her readers—a study that also contributes to a larger meditation on readership, especially in the context of intimate or life writing. Judith G. Coffin makes a compelling case that this

mode of reading serves as a key interface or practice in the creation of public intimacy or in the realization of the politics of private life. She sets Beauvoir's writing in the context of mainstream discourse about women's lives and sexuality and analyzes a range of reader responses while also addressing issues of material text and literary historical contexts. *Sex, Love, and Letters* manages to be rich, nuanced, textured, and rigorous and yet readable and accessible to a broad audience.

The committee's citation for Mahon's book reads:

The Marquis de Sade and the Avant-Garde, with its impressive scope and ambitious central idea in the concept of the "Sadean imagination," is a beautifully produced book that offers a compelling illustration of how Sade mattered to modernist and postmodernist artists and writers. Alyce Mahon's work demonstrates how Sade has helped artists and writers think about imaginative freedom in relation to censorship and offers readers an understanding of the degree to which depravity has marked the artistic and aesthetic borders that intellectuals inhabit.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 23,000 members in 100 countries work to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literature. Founded in 1883, the MLA provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy. The MLA sustains one of the finest publication programs in the humanities, producing a variety of publications for language and literature professionals and for the general public. The association publishes the *MLA International Bibliography*, the only comprehensive bibliography in language and literature, available online. The MLA Annual Convention features meetings on a wide variety of subjects. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

The Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies, awarded under the auspices of the MLA's Committee on Honors and Awards, was presented for the first time in 1992.

Other awards sponsored by the committee are the William Riley Parker Prize; the James Russell Lowell Prize; the MLA Prize for a First Book; the Howard R. Marraro Prize; the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars; the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Scholarly Edition and for Collaborative, Bibliographical, or Archival Scholarship; the Lois Roth Award; the William Sanders Scarborough Prize; the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies; the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies; the MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages; the Matei Calinescu Prize; the MLA Prize for an Edited Collection; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prizes for Comparative Literary Studies, for Italian Studies, for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, for a Translation of a Literary Work, and for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies. A complete list of current and previous winners can be found on the [MLA website](#).

The Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Endowment Fund was established and donated by Aldo Scaglione to the Modern Language Association in 1987. The fund honors the memory of Scaglione's late wife, Jeanne Daman Scaglione. A Roman Catholic, Jeanne Daman was headmistress of a Jewish kindergarten in Brussels, Belgium. When arrests and deportations of Jews began in 1942, she worked with Belgian and Jewish resistance units, helping to find hiding places for two thousand children throughout Belgium. She also helped rescue many Jewish men about to be deported as slave laborers by obtaining false papers for them. Jeanne Scaglione's life

and contributions to humanity are commemorated in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Aldo Scaglione, a member of the Modern Language Association from 1957 until his death in 2013, was Erich Maria Remarque Professor of Literature at New York University. A native of Turin, Italy, he received a doctorate in modern letters from the University of Turin. He taught at the University of Toulouse and at the University of Chicago. From 1952 to 1968 he taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and from 1968 to 1987 he was W. R. Kenan Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. In 1987 he came to New York University as professor of Italian and then chair of the Department of Italian. Scaglione was a Fulbright Fellow and a Guggenheim Fellow, held senior fellowships from the Newberry Library and the German Academic Exchange Service, and was a visiting professor at Yale University, the City University of New York, and the Humanities Research Institute of the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In 1975 he was named Cavaliere dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana. Scaglione was president of the American Boccaccio Association and was a member of the MLA Executive Council from 1981 to 1984. His published books include *Nature and Love in the Late Middle Ages* (1963), *Ars Grammatica* (1970), *The Classical Theory of Composition* (1972), *The Theory of German Word Order* (1981), *The Liberal Arts and the Jesuit College System* (1986), *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry, and Courtesy from Ottonian Germany to the Italian Renaissance* (1991), and *Essays on the Arts of Discourse: Linguistics, Rhetoric, Poetics* (1998).