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MLA'S SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDIES AWARDED TO KARLA MALLETTE FOR *LIVES OF THE GREAT LANGUAGES*; NATHAN BROWN AND ANJULI FATIMA RAZA KOLB RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTIONS

New York, NY – 7 December 2022 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its thirtieth annual Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literary Studies to Karla Mallette, professor of Italian and Mediterranean studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, for her book *Lives of the Great Languages: Arabic and Latin in the Medieval Mediterranean*, published by the University of Chicago Press. Nathan Brown, professor of English at Concordia University, is receiving an honorable mention for *Rationalist Empiricism: A Theory of Speculative Critique*, published by Fordham University Press. Anjuli Fatima Raza Kolb is receiving an honorable mention for *Epidemic Empire: Colonialism, Contagion, and Terror, 1817–2020*, published by the University of Chicago Press. Raza Kolb is currently an associate professor of English at the University of Toronto. Beginning in January 2023, she will be an associate professor of English at Dartmouth College. The prize is awarded annually for an outstanding scholarly work that is written by a member of the association and that involves at least two literatures.

The prize is one of nineteen awards that will be presented on 6 January 2023, during the association's annual convention, to be held in San Francisco. The members of the selection committee were Wail S. Hassan (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana); Natania Meeker (Univ. of Southern California), chair; and Melissa E. Sanchez (Univ. of Pennsylvania). The committee's citation for Mallette's book reads:

At once lyrical, engaged, and profoundly learned, Karla Mallette's *Lives of the Great Languages: Arabic and Latin in the Medieval Mediterranean* is a thrilling example of the power, appeal, and breathtaking scope of comparatist literary scholarship at its best. In an account distinguished by both poetic force and scholarly ambition, Mallette limns the trajectories of two megalanguages of literary history: Arabic and Latin. These cosmopolitan languages, Mallette shows, function as agents of connectivity and spurs to desire; they detach themselves from time and place even as they create new geographies. Formally and conceptually inventive and infused with vibrancy, this book is a gorgeous testament to the worlding power of language.

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

With dazzling range and depth, Nathan Brown's *Rationalist Empiricism: A Theory of Speculative Critique* puts speculation in dynamic engagement with critique. Brown's book offers a timely challenge to the post-Kantian opposition between rationalism and empiricism in order to reactivate the critical dimension of speculative thought. Brown interweaves fascinating close readings of Plato, Althusser, Meillassoux, Hegel, and Marx with analyses of the redefinition of the kilogram, the political sequence Occupy Oakland,

and Nicolas Baier's experimental photography to explore how reason and experience interrupt, interrogate, and recast one another. This is a brilliant and searching intervention in literary theory that imagines new ways of thinking about the relations between history and philosophy, theory and practice.

The committee's citation for Raza Kolb's book reads:

This expansive, beautifully written book deftly traces a history of viewing terrorism as an epidemic that spans centuries and continents. Anjali Fatima Raza Kolb explores a vast archive of texts and artifacts from India, Algeria, Europe, and North America to propose a grippingly innovative analysis of the disease poetics of empire. Elaborating a method of reading epidemiologically that cuts across diverse histories with erudition and ease, *Epidemic Empire: Colonialism, Contagion, and Terror, 1817–2020* reveals the entanglement of medical and political imaginaries in the figure of the Muslim insurgent. Raza Kolb writes a history of the present that is prescient and surprising—and in the process compellingly demonstrates how the metaphors of an imperial past continue to shape contemporary experience of pandemics both literal and figural.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 20,000 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 Comparative Literary 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, Languages, and Cultures; the Matei Calinescu Prize; the MLA Prize for an Edited Collection; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prizes for French and Francophone 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, for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature, for African Studies, for East Asian Studies, for Middle Eastern Studies, and for South Asian Studies; 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).