



Contact: Paula M. Krebs
646 576-5102, awards@mla.org

MLA'S ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR A TRANSLATION OF A LITERARY WORK AWARDED TO DAISY ROCKWELL FOR KRISHNA SOBTI'S *A GUJARAT HERE, A GUJARAT THERE*; ERIC M. B. BECKER, DAVID CONNOLLY, AND JOSHUA BARLEY RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTIONS

New York, NY – 14 December 2020 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it will award its sixteenth Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work to Daisy Rockwell, of North Bennington, Vermont, for her translation of *A Gujarat Here, a Gujarat There*, by Krishna Sobti, published by Penguin Random House. Eric M. B. Becker, of Jackson Heights, New York, will receive an honorable mention for his translation of Mia Couto's *Rain and Other Stories*, published by Biblioasis. David Connolly, of Athens, Greece, and Joshua Barley, of Melbourn, England, will receive an honorable mention for their translation of Michális Ganás's *A Greek Ballad*, published by Yale University Press.

The Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work is one of eighteen prizes that will be presented on 9 January 2021, during the association's annual convention, to be held online. The prize is awarded annually for a translation into English of a book-length literary work. From 1999 until 2016, the prize was offered biennially, alternating years with the Lois Roth Award for a translation of a literary work. The two prizes are now both offered annually. The members of this year's selection committee were Esther Allen (Graduate Center and Baruch Coll., City Univ. of New York), chair; Jeffrey Angles (Western Michigan Univ.); Thomas Oliver Beebee (Penn State Univ., University Park); Efrain Kristal (Univ. of California, Los Angeles); and Luiza Moreira (Binghamton Univ., State Univ. of New York).

The committee's citation for Rockwell's translation reads:

In scintillatingly rich and poetic language, the semiautobiographical novel *A Gujarat Here, a Gujarat There* portrays the human dimensions of the partition of India in 1947 and the complex questions about belonging that it provoked as entire provinces, populations, and kingdoms were rearranged and incorporated into new political structures. In this translation, Daisy Rockwell has reflected the complex linguistic layering of the original, especially the influence of Gujarati and Punjabi on the Hindi of the author, Krishna Sobti, which reveals much about the characters' shifting identities. Skillfully navigating the novel's complex shifts in tense, perspective, and persona, Rockwell's nuanced translation presents us with a much-needed modernist masterpiece about one woman living through a defining, fractious moment in world history and forging a new identity.

The committee's citation for Becker's translation reads:

Rain and Other Stories was first published in 1994, shortly after the 1992 peace agreement that put an end to the lengthy civil war that followed the lengthy war for

independence of Mozambique. Mia Couto's characters have endured the devastation of decades of war: blind men, children who lost their families, widows, displaced old men. They still find their way to solidarity and a quiet hope. The stories are often sad but sometimes very funny. The range of tones in the collection, together with Couto's verbal inventiveness, poses a considerable challenge to the translator, but Eric M. B. Becker makes it look effortless, writing with low-key eloquence and matching creativity with creativity.

The committee's citation for Connolly and Barley's translation reads:

Despite the singularity of its title, *A Greek Ballad* contains well over a hundred poems selected from nearly four decades of Michális Ganás's work. David Connolly and Joshua Barley, in addition to translating Ganás's "short, terse, strangely mechanized, technically accomplished" poems, also had to make critical judgments for inclusion according not only to the poems' relative quality but also to their ability to give a sense of the whole of particular collections, from the 1978 volume *Upstanding Supper* to the 2012 collection *Wormwood*. Connolly and Barley have met these challenges, as well as the one of suggesting the technical accomplishment of these poems, by paying close attention to the often complex metric and rhyme schemes and conveying their shape in English.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 24,000 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 a Translation of a Literary Work was presented for the first time in 1993.

The prize is awarded under the auspices of the MLA's Committee on Honors and Awards. 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. Mildenberger 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 French and Francophone Studies, for Italian Studies, for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, 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](http://www.mla.org).

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).