

**HANNAH FREED-THALL NAMED WINNER OF MLA'S SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR
FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE STUDIES FOR *SPOILED DISTINCTIONS:
AESTHETICS AND THE ORDINARY IN FRENCH MODERNISM***

New York, NY – 6 December 2016 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its twenty-fourth annual Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies to Hannah Freed-Thall, of Brown University, for her book *Spoiled Distinctions: Aesthetics and the Ordinary in French Modernism*, published by Oxford 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 seventeen awards that will be presented on 7 January 2017, during the association's annual convention, to be held in Philadelphia. The members of the selection committee were Daniel Brewer (Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities); Robert S. Schwartzwald (Univ. of Montreal), chair; and Joëlle F. Vitiello (Macalester Coll.). The committee's citation for Freed-Thall's book reads:

In her elegant and fresh study of the unexceptional as disorienting in modern literature, Hannah Freed-Thall presents new perspectives on Marcel Proust, Francis Ponge, Nathalie Sarraute, and Yasmine Réza. *Spoiled Distinctions: Aesthetics and the Ordinary in French Modernism* examines the importance of the banal and ordinary, the imperfect and dissonant in the artistic representation of modernity. Daring and subtle, it offers a close reading of famous passages, revealing the strategies of the authors in their aestheticization of the mundane, decaying, vulgar, and awkward objects and situations. The book is astute, brilliantly written, scholarly and humorous at the same time, and very smart in its study of the writers' strategies to translate the uncanny. Freed-Thall's audacious approach allows a wide readership access to texts that often appear intimidating and makes them relevant to a contemporary public.

Hannah Freed-Thall is an assistant professor of comparative literature at Brown University. She holds a PhD in comparative literature from the University of California, Berkeley, and has been a Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in the Princeton Society of Fellows and a Joukowsky Postdoctoral Fellow in the Brown Pembroke Seminar, *Aesthetics and the Question of Beauty*. A specialist of comparative modernisms and modern French literature and theory, her current projects include a study of the rhetoric of revulsion in nineteenth- and twentieth-century French literature and film and a study of modernist ecological thought. She received the 2012 Malcolm Bowie Prize from the Society for French Studies for her article "Prestige of a Momentary Diamond: Economies of Distinction in Proust," which appeared in *New Literary History*.

The Modern Language Association of America and its 25,000 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; this year's convention in Philadelphia is expected to draw 8,000 attendees. 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. Recent recipients have been Lawrence D. Kritzman, Adelaide M. Russo, Willa Z. Silverman, Maurice Samuels, John Culbert, Larry F. Norman, Christopher Braider, Valérie Loichot, and Irving Goh.

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 a Bibliography, Archive, or Digital Project; 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 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.

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 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).