MLA Prize for Independent Scholars Awarded to Tom Duggett for
Gothic Romanticism: Architecture, Politics, and Literary Form

New York, NY – 5 December 2011 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its twenty-eighth annual Prize for Independent Scholars to Tom Duggett of Suzhou, China, for his book *Gothic Romanticism: Architecture, Politics, and Literary Form*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. The prize awards distinguished published research in the fields of modern languages and literatures, including English, and recognizes achievements and contributions of independent scholars.

The MLA Prize for Independent Scholars is one of eighteen awards that will be presented on 7 January 2012, during the association’s annual convention, to be held in Seattle. The members of the selection committee, appointed by the association’s Committee on Honors and Awards, were Crystal Bartolovich (Syracuse Univ.); Daylanne English (Macalester Coll.); Barbara Harlow (Univ. of Texas, Austin); Anthony Purdy (Univ. of Western Ontario); and Alan Rosen (Jerusalem, Israel), chair. The citation for Duggett’s book reads:

Tom Duggett’s *Gothic Romanticism* is a compellingly ambitious study of the pursuit of a purer and better gothic in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century England. Focusing on Wordsworth and the Lake Poets’ attempt to refine a coarser, more sensational gothic as set forth in the novels of Radcliffe and Scott and in antiquarian curiosities, Duggett weaves sustained analysis of their poetry with thoughtful commentary on medieval architectural imagery and history, the turn to conservative politics, and educational reform. This multileveled investigation demonstrates in engaging prose the centrality of a cultivated rhetoric of a gothic aesthetic in this period while provocatively suggesting its relevance to a post-9/11 era where architecture “has assumed an importance that seemed without precedent.” *Gothic Romanticism* goes far in detailing such a poetic, cultural, and historical precedent.

Tom Duggett currently serves as a lecturer in English literature at Xi’an Jiaotong–Liverpool University in Suzhou, China. He received his PhD from the University of Saint Andrews. He has previously taught English as a foreign language in Shanghai, China, and English literature at the University of Bristol. His articles have appeared in journals such as the *Wordsworth Circle*, *Romanticism*, and the *Review of English Studies*. His research interests are focused on British Romantic literature and in particular visual technology and Romantic literature and ideas of the exotic, gothicism, and orientalism.

The Modern Language Association of America and its 30,000 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 Seattle is expected to draw 8,000 attendees. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

The MLA Prize for Independent Scholars, awarded under the auspices of the MLA’s Committee on Honors and Awards, was first presented in 1983. The winners have been Zdzislaw Najder, Gloria C. Erlich, Edward Brunner, Paul van Caspel, Wayne F. Cooper, Keith W. F. Stavely, Harriet Blodgett, Emily W. Sunstein, William Merrill Decker, Marie-Laure Ryan, Hans J. Rindisbacher, Olga Augustinos, Kenneth M. Cameron, Nora Sayre, Graham Robb, Gary Schmidgall, Janet Galligani Casey, Stephen J. Holmes, Joe Snader, David Roessel, Diana Saco, Dana Phillips, Alan Palmer, June Yip, Henry Hitchings, Eric Paras, William Pallister, and Susan E. Whyman. Charles Musser, David B. Morris, Carl Hill, Mary Price, and Carolyn Burke have received honorable mention.

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 Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition and for a Distinguished Bibliography; 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 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, for a Translation of a Literary Work, for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies.