

Karla Mallette

Professor of Italian, Romance Languages and Literatures
Professor of Mediterranean Studies, Middle East Studies
University of Michigan

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Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1275

EDUCATION

University of Toronto, Centre for Medieval Studies
Ph.D., 1998

Stanford University, Modern Thought and Literature
M.A., 1988

Hampshire College, Comparative Literature
B.A., 1985

LANGUAGES

Italian (fluent)
Arabic (reading competence)
French (reading competence)
Spanish (reading competence)
Latin: Classical and Medieval (reading competence)
Old Occitan (reading competence)
Ancient Greek (reading competence)
German (reading knowledge)

HONORS, AWARDS AND GRANTS

Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione award for best book in Comparative Literary Studies, 2022

Helmut F. Stern Professor Fellowship, University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities,
2012-13

Susanne M. Glasscock Humanities Book Prize for Interdisciplinary Scholarship (for *European
Modernity and the Arab Mediterranean*), 2011

American Institute for Maghrib Studies Grant (Tunis), 2008

Resident fellowship, University of California Humanities Research Institute, 2007

Visiting scholar, American Academy in Rome, 2007

Assigned Research Appointment, Miami University, 2007

Summer Research Appointment, Miami University, 2006

Philip and Elaina Hampton Fund for Faculty International Initiatives, Miami University, 2006

Hewlett Paid Research Leave, American University of Beirut, 2004-2005 (deferred)

University Research Board Grants, American University of Beirut, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003

Ontario Graduate Scholarship, 1995-96

University of Toronto Connaught Scholarship, 1993-97

Mellon Fellowship in the Humanities, 1985-87

Hampshire College Threshold Grant, 1985

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Lives of the Great Languages: Arabic and Latin in the Medieval Mediterranean. A comparative study and conceptual analysis of the cosmopolitan language system. University of Chicago Press. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. Winner of the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione award for best book in Comparative Literary Studies, 2022

Reviews: *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 54 (2022): 779-81; *Speculum* 98 (2023): 1282-83.

European Modernity and the Arab Mediterranean: Toward a New Philology and a Counter-Orientalism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

Reviews: *Textual Cultures* 6 (2011): 145-47; *Revue critique de philologie romane* 12-13 (2011-12): 140-62; *Journal of Islamic Studies* 23 (2012): 118-120; *Cultural History* 1 (2012): 138-142; *Modern Philology* 111 (2013): E273-E277.

The Kingdom of Sicily, 1100-1250: A Literary History. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

Reviews: *Comparative Literature* 61 (2009): 160-76; *Encomia* 29-30 (2008): 32-34; *Speculum* 82 (2007): 1016-18; *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (2007): 150-51; *Studi medievali* 48 (2007): 664-73.

Edited volume

Co-editor (with Suzanne Akbari), *A Sea of Languages: Rethinking the Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History.* A collection of essays on literary and cultural contacts between Arabic, Hebrew, Latin and Romance vernacular cultures in the medieval Mediterranean. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013.

Reviews: *The Medieval Review* (2015): 15.03.20; *University of Toronto Quarterly* 84 (2015): 147-148; *Common Knowledge* 22 (2016): 317-318.

Edited journal issues

Co-editor (with Roland Betancourt), Medieval Academy of America centennial issue, *Speculum*, vol. 100, no. 1, January, 2025.

Co-editor (with Brian Catlos), "New Approaches to the Study of Muslims in Medieval and Early Modern Europe." *Scripta Mediterranea* 19-20 (1998-99).

Articles in journals and edited volumes (forthcoming)

"Production." *A Cultural History of Media in the Middle Ages*, ed. Carol Symes. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Articles in journals and edited volumes

"*Furtuna fallenti*: Postcolonial studies and the Italian Middle Ages." *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, special issue, "New Directions in Medieval Postcolonialism," 53 (3) 521-42.

"Introduction: Medieval Studies and Its Institutions," with Roland Betancourt. *Speculum*, 100 (1), 1-11, DOI: [10.1086/733247](https://doi.org/10.1086/733247).

"Concluding Roundtable: Crisis and Optimism", with Roland Betancourt. *Speculum*, 100 (1), 178-179, DOI: [10.1086/733248](https://doi.org/10.1086/733248).

"Sicilian Multilingualism and Cosmopolitan French." *Medieval French Interlocutions: Shifting Perspectives on a Language in Contact*, ed. Thomas O'Donnell, Jane Gilbert, and Brian J. Reilly, 269-92. York: York Medieval Press, 2024.

"Territory / Frontiers / Routes: Space, Place and Language in the Mediterranean." *Towards a Theory of Mediterranean Literature*, ed. Angela Fabris, Albert Göschl and Steffen Schneider. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Press, 2023, 159-74.

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110775136/html?lang=en#overview>

"The *1001 Nights* and Mediterranean Framed Narrative Traditions." *Approaches to Teaching the 1001 Nights*, ed. Paulo Lemos Horta. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2023, 140-45.

"Narration as *Raumschach*: *Kalila and Dimna* in Time, Space and Languages." *Postmedieval* 13 (2022): 313 – 329.

"Wisdom Literature and Medieval Bestsellers." *Reading the Middle Ages: The Changing Medieval Canon*, ed. Heather Blurton and Dwight Reynolds. Manchester (UK): Manchester University Press, 2022, 215-33.

"Dante and the Mediterranean." *The Oxford Handbook of Dante*, ed. Manuele Gragnotati, Elena Lombardi, and Francesca Southerden, 368-82. Oxford University Press, 2021.

"The Hazards of Narration: Frame-Tale Technologies and the 'Oriental Tale.'" *The Oxford Handbook of Chaucer*, ed. Suzanne Conklin Akbari and James Simpson, 184-96. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020.

"The Secular Wisdom of *Kalila and Dimna*." *Wiley-Blackwell Companion to World Literature*, ed. Christine Chism. Malden, MA and Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2019.
<https://www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118635193.ctwl0098>

"Sanskrit Snapshots." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 38 (2018): 127-35.

"The Mediterranean is Armenian." *An Armenian Mediterranean: Words and Worlds in Motion*, ed. Kathryn Babayan and Michael Pifer, 309-21. Palgrave MacMillan, 2018.

- "Translation in the Pre-Modern World." *Middle Eastern Literatures* 20 (2017): 18-30.
- "The Seven Sages at Sea: Framed narrative systems in the pre-modern Mediterranean." *Philological Encounters* 2 (2017): 6-27.
- "St. Elmo's Fire: Fortune and Fortune Telling in Mediterranean Literature." *The Idea of the Mediterranean*, ed. Mario Mignone, 114-32. Stony Brook [NY]: Forum Italicum, 2017.
- "Palermo." *Europe: A Literary History, 1348-1418*, ed. David Wallace, 2:12-24. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- "Vernacular and Cosmopolitan Language in Late Medieval Europe: Petrarch at Sea." *Interfaces* 1:1 (2015). <http://riviste.unimi.it/interfaces/article/view/4931>
- "Cosmopolitan Philology." *Postmedieval* 5 (2014): 414-427.
- "The Seven Sages of Rome: Narration and Silence." *D'Orient en Occident : Les recueils de fables enchâssées avant les Mille et Une Nuits de Galland*, ed. Marion Vuagnoux-Uhlig and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, 129-46. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014.
- "Lingua Franca." *Companion to Mediterranean History*, ed. Peregrine Horden and Sharon Kinoshita, 330-44. Malden, MA and Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2014.
- "Ahead of the Swerve: From Anachronism to Complexity." *Exemplaria* 25 (2013): 359-62.
- "Reading Backward: The *1001 Nights* and Philological Practice." *A Sea of Languages: Literature and Culture in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Suzanne Akbari and Karla Mallette, 100-116. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013.
- "Boustrophedon: Remembering the Medieval Mediterranean." *A Sea of Languages: Literature and Culture in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Suzanne Akbari and Karla Mallette, 254-66. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013.
- "The Metropolis and its Languages: Baghdad and Venice." *Cosmopolitanism and the Middle Ages*, ed. John Ganim and Shayne Legassie, 21-37. The New Middle Ages. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- "Dante as Poet of Exile and Resistance." *'Like Doves Summoned by Desire': Dante's New Life in Contemporary Literature and Film*, ed. Massimo Ciavolella and Gianluca Rizzo, 111-32. New York: Agincourt Press, 2012.
- "I nostri Saracini: Writing the History of the Arabs of Sicily." *California Italian Studies* 1 (2009-2010). <http://escholarship.org/uc/ismrg_cisj>
- "Beyond Mimesis: Aristotle's *Poetics* in the Medieval Mediterranean." *PMLA* 124 (2009): 583-91.
- "Muhammad in Hell." *Dante Studies* 125 (2007): 207-24.
- "Insularity." In *A Faithful Sea: Religious Cultures and Identities in the Mediterranean, 1250-1750*, ed. Adnan A. Husain and Katherine E. Fleming, 27-46. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007.
- "Dante e l'Islam: Sul canto III del *Purgatorio*." *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 41 (2005): 39-62.
- "Orientalism and the Nineteenth Century Nationalist: Michele Amari, Ernest Renan, and 1848." *Romanic Review* 96 (2005): 233-52.
- "Misunderstood." *New Literary History* 34 (2003): 677-97.

"Translating Sicily." *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue* 9 (2003): 138-61.

"*Terra Recognita*: Excursus on the Literary History of Sicily." *Mediaevalia* 24 (2003): 125-46.

"Poetries of the Norman Courts." In *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Al-Andalus*, ed. Maria Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells, 377-87. Cambridge: University Press, 2000.

"The Idea of Vernacular Literature in the Arabic and Romance-Speaking World during the Middle Ages." *Scripta Mediterranea* 19-20 (1998-99): 29-44.

"Arabic and Italian Lyric in Medieval Sicily." In *The Future of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Problems, Trends, and Opportunities in Research*, ed. Roger Dahood, 81-92. Tempe: Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, 1998.

Encyclopedia article

"Arabic Literature in Italy." In *Medieval Italy*, ed. Christopher Kleinhenz, 45-46. New York: Routledge Press, 2004.

Reviews

Review of Zrinka Stahuljak, *Fixers: Agency, Translation, and the Early Global History of Literature*, in *The Medieval Review*, February 7, 2025.

Review of Ulrich Marzolph, *101 Middle Eastern Tales and Their Impact on Western Oral Tradition*, in *Speculum* 98 (2023): 622-23.

Review of Adele Cilento and Alessandro Vanoli, *Arabs and Normans in Sicily and the South of Italy*. *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, forthcoming.

Review of Muhsin J. al-Musawi, *The Islamic Context of the Thousand and One Nights*. H-Levant, forthcoming.

Review of Cynthia Robinson, *Medieval Andalusian Courtly Culture in the Mediterranean: Hadith Bayad wa Riyad*. *Fabula* 50 (2009): 363-65.

Review of Tommaso Astarita, *Between Salt Water and Holy Water: A History of Southern Italy*. *Medieval Encounters* 12 (2006): 296-300.

Review of *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300-900*. Edited by Leslie Brubaker and Julia M.H. Smith. *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies* 7 (2005): 252-55.

Review of María Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage*. *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies* 6 (2004): 180-83.

Review of Jareer Abu-Haidar, *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*. *Al-Abhath* 50-51 (2002-3): 218-21.

Review of *Word and Drama in Dante: Essays on the 'Divina Commedia'*, ed. Barnes and Petrie. *Rivista di Studi Italiani* 12 (1994): 76-78.

Translations

Patrizia Onesta, "Lauzengier-Washi-Index, Gardador-Raqib-Custos: The 'Enemies of Love' in Provençal, Arabo-Andalusian, and Latin Poetry." *Scripta Mediterranea* 19-20 (1998-99): 119-42.

Translator: Antonino Pellitteri, "Reflections on the Study of Muslim Sicily: History, Politics, and 19th-century Sicilian Historiography." *Scripta Mediterranea* 19-20 (1998-99): 109-118.

LECTURES AND TALKS

Invited lectures

"Languages of space, languages of place, and language actors: Trans theory and transnational languages." Literature without Borders conference, Researchers of Latinate Identities, Cosmopolitanism, and the Schools, Palace of the Academies, Brussels, June 19, 2025.

"Hang time: Gambling and risk in late medieval Italy." Albert Mancini Lecture, Department of French and Italian, the Ohio State University, March 5, 2025.

"Hang time: Thinking about the future in the medieval Mediterranean." Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, January 26, 2024.

"Dante's Mediterranean Awakening." The Humanities Institute, University of California at Santa Cruz, February 22, 2022.

"Dante and the Arab Mediterranean." Islamic Studies Department and Italian Department, Georgetown University. October 22, 2021.

"Edward Said and Higher Education: Orientalism and philology." Centre for Problem-Oriented Learning, Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark, May 6, 2021.

Keynote roundtable. "Medieval French without Borders." Fordham University, New York, March 20-21, 2021.

"The Mediterranean Lingua Franca: Threshold or Holdover?" Thresholds of Change: Modernity and Transformation in the Mediterranean, 1400-1700, NEH Seminar, Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Collegeville, Minnesota, June 19, 2018.

"Endings: Storytelling from a Mediterranean Perspective." Ariosto and the Arabs: Contexts of the Orlando Furioso, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, October 18, 2018.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Arabic, Latin and the Mediterranean Lingua Franca." King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies, University of Arkansas, September 20, 2018.

"Fortune, Hazard, Risk: Thinking about Contingency in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean." Medieval and Early Modern Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, September 21, 2017; Distinguished Visiting Lecture, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of California at Los Angeles, May 3, 2017.

"Life Writing: Print and the New Life of Languages in Sixteenth Century Venice." Department of Italian, University of California at Los Angeles, May 2, 2017.

"Cosmopolitan languages, lingua franca, and linguistic frontiers in the medieval Mediterranean." Riggsby Lecture in Medieval Mediterranean History and Culture, Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, November 16, 2016.

"Life Writing: Lingua franca and cosmopolitan languages in the Mediterranean." Wilson Distinguished Lecture, University of Georgia at Athens, November 4, 2016.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Cosmopolitan languages in the medieval Mediterranean." Medieval Studies, University of Connecticut, Storrs, February 29, 2016.

"Writ in water: Poetry on paper in late medieval Italy." Tucci-Cornetti Lecture, University of Pittsburgh, January 14, 2016.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Latin and Arabic in the medieval Mediterranean." Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, October 29, 2015.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Cosmopolitan language systems in the Mediterranean." School of Literatures, Cultures & Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, October 19, 2015.

"Philology without texts: Framed narratives and linguistic complexity in the late medieval Mediterranean." Yale Lectures in Medieval Studies, February 27, 2014.

"Against Translation: The Cosmopolitan Language as Literary Medium." The Mediterranean Seminar, University of California Multi-Campus Research Program Workshop and Conference, Berkeley, November 15, 2013.

"'A Narcocracy of Language': The Cosmopolitan Language against Translation." Department of Literature, University of California at Santa Cruz, November 13, 2013.

"Petrarch at Sea: Late Style in the *Canzoniere*." Italian Research Seminars, University of Notre Dame, September 26, 2013.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Linguistic Complexity in Medieval Europe." Crossing the Languages of Medieval Europe: Historical, Linguistic and Literary Approaches (organized by the Centre for Medieval Literature, Odense, Denmark), Rome, June 4, 2013.

"Lives of the Great Languages: Cosmopolitan Language and Mother Tongue in the Medieval Mediterranean." Medieval and Early Modern Studies workshop, Stanford University, May 1, 2013.

"Lingua Franca: Muslims, Christians and Interconfessional Communication in the Medieval Mediterranean." Medieval Studies Program, Princeton University, October 25, 2012.

"Petrarch at Sea: Mediterranean Studies and the Literary Historian." Cornell University, September 26, 2011.

"Lingua Franca in the Mediterranean." Department of Romance Languages and Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, November 3, 2008; Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of California at Los Angeles, January 20, 2009; Department of French and Italian, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, October 9, 2009; Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Binghamton University, New York, October 21, 2009; Department of French, Classics and Italian, Michigan State University, September 24, 2010; Western Mediterranean Workshop, University of Chicago, February 23, 2011; Glasscock Center, Texas A&M University, February 15, 2012.

"The Literatures of Medieval Sicily: Greek, Latin, Arabic and Italian" and "Poetry on Paper in Medieval Italy." Lansdowne Lectures, University of Victoria, British Columbia, February 7, 2009.

"The Sea of Stories: Framed Narratives and Medieval Mediterranean Poetics." Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of California at Los Angeles, November 14, 2007.

"Intellectual Geographies in the *Divine Comedy*." Department of Italian Studies, University of California at Los Angeles, February 12, 2007.

"Muhammad in Hell." Dante Society of America Annual Meeting, May 20, 2006.

"Vox Populorum: Muslims, Christians, and Sicilian Literary History 1100-1250." University of California at Santa Cruz, February 2, 2006; Center for Medieval Studies, University of Minnesota at Twin Cities, October 27, 2005.

"European Modernity and the Arab Mediterranean." Department of Humanities and Center for Arab-American Studies, University of Michigan, Dearborn, March 20, 2007; Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, March 2006; Seminar on Cross Cultural Rhetoric and Poetics, The Humanities Center, Harvard University, April 2005; Center for Middle East Studies, at Berkeley, November 3, 2005.

"Dante and Islam: The Last Word." Department of Italian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, April 21, 2005.

"Muhammad in Dante's *Inferno* XXVIII." Center for Medieval Studies, University of Minnesota at Twin Cities, March 2, 2005.

"Dante, Sicily, Islam." Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, 2004.

"Translations, Counterfeits University of California, and Modern Mediterranean Literature." The Anis K. Makdisi Program in Literature, American University of Beirut, June 2004.

"The Mediterranean/Al-Bahr al-Mutawassit." Center for Arabic and Middle East Studies, American University of Beirut, 2003.

"The Many Faces of Scheherazade." Behind the Veil: The Islamic World in Western Art and Literature, Humanities West (San Francisco), 2000.

"Arab Sicily." Casa Italiana, Stanford University, 2000.

Public-facing invited lectures

"Sicilian Syndicate: The Mafia in Detroit." Hamburg Public Library, Hamburg, MI, February 3, 2026.

"Detroit's Sicilian Mafia." Huntington Woods Public Library, Huntington Woods, MI. January 29, 2026.

"The mafia in the US: The devil is in the details." Southeast Michigan MENSA, Southfield, MI, October 18, 2025.

Conference papers

"The Sicilian mafia and gambling in Detroit, 1940-1963." Michigan in Perspective: Local History Conference, 2025.

"Hang time: Gambling on the future in late medieval Italy." *Lost in transfer? Misunderstanding, Miscommunication, and the Production of Knowledge in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean*, Center for Early Global Studies, University of California at Los Angeles, 2025.

"A Brief History of Risk." Medieval Academy of America annual conference, 2024.

"Medieval Italy and Translation Networks." *The Transient Worlds of Immanuel of Rome*. Centro Primo Levi, New York City, 2023.

"Posthuman Bawdy: Cosmopolitan languages and vernaculars." European Society of Comparative Literature Annual Conference, 2022.

"Posthuman Bawdy." American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference, 2021.

"Sicilian poetry, ca. 1100-1400: A Biggish History." *Poetry in the Eastern Mediterranean from the 11th to the 15th century: Transcultural perspectives*. Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, 2020.

"Territory/frontiers/routes: Space, place and language in the Mediterranean." *A Sea of Literatures: Theories, Concepts, and Methods of Mediterranean Literary Studies*, Universität Graz, 2019.

"Spoiler Alert: Comicsgate, Muslim characters, and the future of popular comics." MLA International Symposium, Lisbon, 2019.

"Furtuna fallenti: Sicilian vernacular history as affective history." *Narrating History Across Languages in Medieval Europe*, King's College, London, 2019.

"Fortune, Hazard, Risk: Accounting for Contingency in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean." *A Meeting of Medievalists*, Universiteit Vienna, 2018.

"A Man Walked into a Casino." *Babel 17*, University of Nevada Reno, 2017.

"Fortune as narrative logic in tales of the Mediterranean." American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference, 2017.

"La Serenissima: Venice + Detroit." Center for European Studies, University of Michigan, 2016.

"Indefinite Places: Venice, Italy, Europe." *Theorizing Medieval European Literatures*, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of York, 2016.

"Significant geographies, definite places: Languages in manuscripts, song and printed books in Venice, ca. 1350-1550." *Multilingual Locals and Significant Geographies before Colonialism*, School of Oriental and African Languages, London, 2016.

"Is there a medieval Muslim Mediterranean?" Organizer and moderator. Middle East Studies of America Annual Conference, 2015.

"Writ in water: Paper and watermarks across the Mediterranean." Medieval Academy of America Annual Meeting, Notre Dame University, 2015.

"The Long Death of Latin: Language and Imperium in Quattrocento Italy." *Imperial Languages*, Syddansk University, Denmark, 2014.

"Ring Composition in the *Versio Italica*." *Les Sept Vizirs et les Sept Sages: Vers une histoire comparée des textes*, University of Geneva, 2014.

- "Fortune, hazard, risk: Words and ideas across the Mediterranean." *Missing Links: Islamic Civilization and the Formation of the Modern West*, Brown University, 2014.
- "Mega-Languages and Micro-texts: The Lingua Franca and Mediterranean Connectivity." *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, 2013.
- "Mediterranean Studies as Area Studies." *Mediterranean and Maritime Perspectives*, University of California at Santa Cruz, 2013.
- "A Spy in the House of Language." *American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference*, 2013.
- "Sacred languages and secular texts in the medieval Mediterranean." *Religious Pluralism In Europe and Asia: Conditions, Modes, and Consequences*. Department of Religious Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 2012.
- "Les sept sages vont en bateau: Framed narrative systems in the medieval Mediterranean." *Lingua Franca: Explorations of the Literary Geography of the Mediterranean World*. *Zukunftphilologie*, Berlin, 2012.
- "Baghdad and Venice: The Cosmopolitan Metropolis and the Non-Territorial Language." *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, 2012.
- "Territory, Frontiers, Routes: Linguistic connectivity in the pre-modern Mediterranean." *Frontiers Conference*. Durham University [U.K.], 2012.
- "From Baghdad to Venice: Translation networks in the pre-modern world." *NYU Abu Dhabi*, 2011.
- "'Dialogo dei massimi sistemi': Imperial Languages at the Edge of Empire." *Rivalry and Rhetoric in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Envisioning Empire in the Old World*, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California at Los Angeles, 2011.
- "Italy, Crisscrossed: Intellectual History and Textual Systems in the Italian Peninsula." *The Mediterranean: Crisscrossed and Constructed*, Harvard University, 2011.
- "Lives of the Great Languages: Lingua Franca in the Medieval Mediterranean." *Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting*, 2011.
- "Le Roman des Sept Sages : au-delà de la coupe mortelle." *D'Orient en Occident : Les recueils de fables enchâssées avant les Mille et Une Nuits*, Université de Genève, 2010.
- "Lingua franca in the Mediterranean." *American Association of Italian Studies Annual Meeting*, 2010.
- "Corsairs as cosmopolitans in late medieval letters." *American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference*, 2010.
- "Deus ex Littera: Mimesis and Medieval Representation of the Divine." *American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference*, 2009.
- "Framed narratives and literary transmission in the medieval Mediterranean." *Alternative Teleologies: The Mediterranean and the Modern World(s)*. University of California at Santa Cruz, 2009.
- "Orbits: Toward a Mediterranean Literary History." *Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting*, 2008.

- "The Nights before Globalization: Scheherazade and the Sage Yunan in Italy, 1300-1500." American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference, 2008.
- "Reading Backward." The Persistence of Philology: Rethinking Comparative Literary History on the Twentieth Anniversary of *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*. University of Toronto, 2007.
- "Mediterranean Orientalism: Enrico Cerulli on Dante and Islam." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 2006.
- "'De quoi me divertir pendant les longues soirées': The *1001 Nights* as Playground of the Western World." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 2006.
- "Philology and Fundamentalism." International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 2006.
- "*Parte per te stesso*: Dante as Poet of Exile and Resistance." Dante's New Life in Twentieth-Century Literature: Modern Intertextual Appropriation of Dante. University of California at Los Angeles, 2006.
- "Insularity." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 2005.
- "Romantics, Nationalists, and the Arab Past in Malta." Mediterranean Studies Association Annual Conference, 2005.
- "Orientalist Philology and National Narrative in Mediterranean Europe." Modernity and Modernism in the Mediterranean, University of Toronto, 2003.
- "Michele Amari, Sicilian." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 2002.
- "Translatio Siciliae." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 1999.
- "Parklands and Preserves: Arabic Culture in Norman Sicily." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 1999.
- "Baptized Sultans, Infidel Kings: Postcolonial Sicily, 1130-1300." Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference, 1998.
- "Translating Sicily." Islam in Europe (The Twenty-Sixth Medieval Workshop), University of British Columbia, 1997.
- "New Approaches to the 'Arabic Theory': The Case of Sicily." Modern Language Association of America Annual Meeting, 1996.
- "Arabic and Italian Lyric in Medieval Sicily." Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference, 1996.

TEACHING

- "Demons, jinn, curses, and ghosts: Global horror and the supernatural."
University of Michigan, Winter 2024; Winter 2025
- "Reading the Qur'an."
University of Michigan, Winter 2019; Fall 2019; Winter 2021; Winter 2022; Winter 2023
- "The Italian Mafia"
University of Michigan, Fall 2015; Fall 2017; Fall 2020; Fall 2021; Fall 2022; Fall 2023; Fall 2024

"Dante's *Divine Comedy*."

University of Michigan, Winter 2015; Winter 2016; Fall 2018; Winter 2020

"Italy and the Muslim World"

University of Michigan, Fall 2016; Fall 2019

"Petrarch's *Canzoniere*."

University of Michigan, Winter 2012; Winter 2019

"Great Books of the Middle East: The Qur'an."

University of Michigan, Winter 2017

"Theories of the Mediterranean"

University of Michigan, Winter 2016

"Jihad and Crusade in the Medieval Middle East."

University of Michigan, Fall 2014

"Islamic World Literature"

University of Michigan, Winter 2014; Winter 2015

"Introduction to Italian literature, cinema and graphic novels: The art of war"

University of Michigan, Winter 2014; Fall 2016

"The Italian Renaissance"

University of Michigan, Fall 2010; Fall 2013

"Modern Italian Poetry"

University of Michigan, Fall 2013

"The Renaissance in Rome"

University of Michigan program in Rome, Summer 2013

"Modern Classics: Dreams and Madness"

University of Michigan, Fall 2010; Fall 2011; Fall 2012

"Lingua franca"

University of Michigan, Winter 2011

"Petrarch"

University of Michigan, Winter 2010

"Medieval Mediterranean Literature: the *1001 Nights* and the *Decameron*." University of Michigan, Fall 2009

"From Marco Polo to Machiavelli: History, culture and letters in Renaissance Italy"

Miami University, Spring 2009

"Mediterranean Modernity" (Honors course)

Miami University, Fall 2007; Spring 2008

"Italy: Matrix of Civilization"

Miami University, Fall 2005; Fall 2008

"Introduction to Italian Literature: Medieval to Early Modern"

Miami University, Fall 2005; Fall 2008

"Introduction to Italian Literature: The Twentieth Century"

Miami University, Spring 2006; Spring 2007

"Dante's Divine Comedy"

Miami University, Spring 2006; Spring 2008

"Dante's Divine Comedy"

Northwestern University, Fall 2004

"Sicilian Literature: History and Theater"

Northwestern University, Fall 2004

"The *1001 Nights* and the *Decameron*"

Northwestern University, Winter 2005

"Islam and Europe"

Northwestern University, Spring 2005

"Elementary Italian"

Northwestern University, Spring 2005

"Epic: Texts and Contexts"

American University of Beirut, Fall 2003; Spring 2004

"Mediterranean Encounters"

American University of Beirut, Spring 2003

"Literature of the Middle Ages"

English Department, American University of Beirut, Fall 2002

"Civilization Studies 201: Ancient Culture"

"Civilization Studies 202: Medieval and Renaissance Culture"

"Civilization Studies 203: Modern Culture"

"Civilization Studies 204: Contemporary Culture"

American University of Beirut, 2001-2004

"The Avant-Gardes of the Middle Ages"

Departments of French and Italian and Comparative Literature,
Stanford University, Winter 2000

"Dante"

Departments of French and Italian and Comparative Literature,
Stanford University, Spring 2000

"Latinity and Vernacularity"

Departments of Classics and Comparative Literature,
Stanford University, Winter 2000

"The *1001 Nights* and the *Decameron*"

Departments of French and Italian and Comparative Literature,
Stanford University, Fall 1999

M.A.-level Latin, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto

Sole instructor and designer, M.A. Latin summer course, 1996

Ph.D.-level Latin, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto

Sole instructor and designer, Ph.D. Latin summer course, 1995

Teaching assistant, 1994-96

"American Literature from 1917," Stanford University
Teaching assistant, 1986

"Aspects of Semiotics," Hampshire College
Co-designer and teacher, January term course, 1985

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Professor of Italian and Middle East Studies
University of Michigan, 2013-present

Associate Professor of Italian and Near Eastern Studies
University of Michigan, 2009-2013

Assistant Professor of Italian Studies
Miami University, 2005-2009

Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian
Northwestern University, 2004-2005

Assistant Professor of Civilization Studies
American University of Beirut, 2001-2004

Acting Assistant Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature
Stanford University, 1999-2000

Teaching Assistant, Medieval Latin
Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, 1994-96

UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Administrative positions at the University of Michigan

Chair, Department of Middle East Studies, 2020-25

Director, Global Islamic Studies Center, 2018-20

Director, Islamic Studies Program, 2014-2018

Director, Center for European Studies, 2014-2016

Interim Director, Center for European Studies, 2011-2012

Associate Director, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, 2009-2011

Organizer, conferences and speaker series

Halaloween: A Muslim Horror Film Fest, Michigan Theater, Ann Arbor, 2019; online, 2020-2022;
blended online and in person, 2023; in person, 2025

Destination: Detroit / Communities of Migration in Metro Detroit, University of Michigan, 2018

After Alexander: Classical Texts in Arabic, Persian and Armenian, University of Michigan, 2016

The European Mosque, University of Michigan, 2015-16

National Languages and the Globalized University, University of Michigan, 2015

Crusade, Jihad and the Multi-Sectarian State, University of Michigan, 2014

Michigan Medieval Seminar, University of Michigan, 2014

The Qur'an in the World (CMENAS colloquium and Honors mini-course), University of Michigan, 2013

Crepuscular Secularism: The Post-Secular Intellectual in Europe and the Middle East (co-organizer), University of Michigan, 2013

Alphabet Wars: Language and Ideology in the Middle East (CMENAS colloquium), University of Michigan, 2011

Designing Nations: Maps and Statistical Modeling in the Middle East (CMENAS colloquium), University of Michigan, 2010

The Persistence of Philology: Rethinking Comparative Literary History on the Twentieth Anniversary of *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History* (co-organizer) University of Toronto, 2007

The *1001 Nights*: Story Without End (film and lecture series), Miami University, 2006

Mediterranean Studies: Identities and Tensions (co-organizer), American University of Beirut, 2003

Medievalists' Working Group, American University of Beirut, 2003

Director, Brown Bag Seminar Series, Civilization Sequence Program, American University of Beirut, 2001-2003

Member, Work in Medieval Studies, 1995-1996; co-director, 1996-1997, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto

Co-organizer, A Celebration of Medieval Poetry, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, January, 1995

Co-organizer, The Classical World and Early Christianity, San Francisco State University, Spring, 1993

Student mentoring at the University of Michigan

Faculty mentor, Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies Seminar, 2014-18

Faculty mentor, Mediterranean Topographies Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop, 2010-2011

Dissertation committee chair: Leonardo Chiarantini (Italian); Harry Kashdan (Comparative Literature, 2018); dissertation committee member: Jim Carter (Italian); Emily Shearer (English, 2019), Will Stroebel (Comparative Literature, 2018), John Paul Hampstead (English, 2018), Jeremy Ledger (History, 2017), Michael Pifer (Comparative Literature, 2014), Shannon Winston (Comparative Literature, 2014)

Mentor: Francesca Minnone (Italian, 2010-2012), Roberto Mosciatti (Italian, 2011-2014)

Fourth term review committee member: Chad Simpson (French, 2010), Anna Mester (chair; Spanish, 2011), Francesca Minnone (Italian, 2012); Qian Liu (Italian, 2020)

Preliminary exams committee, Tom Maranda (French, 2010)

Reviewer and editorial board member

Reviewer: *Speculum*, *PMLA*, *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, Edinburgh University Press, University of Pennsylvania Press, *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Modern Philology*, *Studies in Travel Writing*, *Digital Philology*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *Medieval Encounters*, American Comparative Literary Association Presidential Undergraduate Prize

Editorial board member: The Mediterranean Seminar, Mediterranean Studies (Palgrave MacMillan series), *Postmedieval*, *Interfaces: Medieval European Literature, Renaissance et Réforme / Renaissance and Reformation*

Committee memberships

Chair, tenure review panel, Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 2024-25

Chair, Modern Arabic Literature search committee, Middle East Studies, University of Michigan, 2024-25

Executive committee member, Middle East Studies, University of Michigan, 2019-20

Committee member, Italian Studies hiring committee, Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 2018-19

Curriculum committee, Italian Studies (chair), University of Michigan, 2013-2014, 2018-20

Committee member, Graduate Committee, Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 2018-19

Committee member, Curriculum committee, Middle East Studies, 2018-19

Committee member, Pre-Modern Arabic Culture hiring committee, Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 2017-18

External committee member, Persian Literature hiring committee, Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 2014-15

External committee member, Mediterranean Studies position hiring committee, Department of Literature, University of California at Santa Cruz, 2013-2014

Mediterranean position hiring committee, Romance Languages (chair), University of Michigan, 2011-2012

Curriculum committee, Romance Languages, University of Michigan, 2010-2011

Water theme semester, University of Michigan, 2010-2011

Graduate committee, Romance Languages, University of Michigan, 2010-2012

Other

Podcast episodes:

- "Distinctly Detroit" (on the Detroit mafia, August 2023, <https://detroit.umich.edu/detroit-center/programs-and-events/distinctly-detroit-podcast/>)

- “Kindergeist” (on *Madayen* and *Ring*, July 14, 2023, <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/kindergeist-podcast/episodes/41-Madayen-2016--Ringu-1998--Muslim-Horror-with-KARLA-MALLETTE-e26v27h>)
- “The Spouter-Inn” (on Dante’s *Purgatorio*), September 8, 2020, <https://www.megaphonic.fm/spouter/tag/Divine+Comedy>
- “Eclectic Intellection” (on Orientalism, Modernity, and the Arab Mediterranean), May 31, 2020, <https://eclectic-intellection.simplecast.com/episodes/orientalism-in-the-mediterranean-a-conversation-with-karla-mallette>

Faculty lecturer, National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute: Networks and the Transmission of Knowledge in the Medieval Mediterranean, Barcelona, 2012

Participant, National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute: The Medieval Mediterranean and the Emergence of the West, 2008

Interviewed as expert on Arabo-Norman Sicily for “An Islamic History of Europe”; BBC documentary, broadcast Spring 2005

Member, Task Team on General Education, American University of Beirut, 2002-2003

MEMBERSHIPS

American Comparative Literature Association

American Institute for Maghrib Studies

Dante Society of America

Medieval Academy of America

Middle East Studies Association

Modern Language Association of America

Renaissance Society of America

SELECTED NON-ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

« The allure of cosmopolitan languages to courtiers and pop fans. » *Aeon*, 15 March 2022.

<https://psyche.co/ideas/the-allure-of-cosmopolitan-languages-to-courtiers-and-pop-fans>

« How 12th-century Genoese merchants invented the idea of risk. » *Aeon*, 2 November 2021.

<https://psyche.co/ideas/how-12th-century-genoese-merchants-invented-the-idea-of-risk>

Richard Baron: Photographs (catalogue essay). Bridge Center for Contemporary Art, El Paso, and Diverseworks, Houston, 1989.

Memory (catalogue essay). Mincher/Wilcox Gallery, San Francisco, 1989.

Restraint Intent Manipulation (catalogue essay). Mincher/Wilcox Gallery, San Francisco, 1989.

Art reviewer, San Francisco Bay Guardian, 1988-89.