

HESSAM ABEDINI

Ph.D. Candidate in Comparative Literature
Department of Comparative Literature · University of Oregon
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Comparative Literature

2021–present

University of Oregon, USA. Villard Scholar with full funding (6 years); expected completion 2027. Tuition waiver, health insurance, and Graduate Employee stipend.

Dissertation: “When the Three Magi Serve Homer: Asymmetric Hermeneutics and the Victorian Translation of Firdausi’s *Shahnameh*.”

Committee: Professors Leah Middlebrook (Chair), Michael Allan, Christopher Eckerman, Gantt Gurley, Alexander Bubb.

M.A. in Modern and Contemporary Literature and Culture

2016

University of York, UK. Thesis: “The Art of Absence in Samuel Beckett and Abbas Kiarostami.”

B.A. in English Language and Literature

2014

Azad University of Tehran, Iran.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Iranian–Greek Epic Traditions · Phenomenological Hermeneutics and Translation Theory · Byzantine–Islamic Textual Transmission · *Shahnameh* Manuscript Traditions · Religion and Aesthetics in World Cinema

PUBLICATIONS

Books

In safhe sefid ast: bonar-e qiāb-e Sāmu'el Beckett va Abbās Kiārostami [The Art of Absence in Samuel Beckett and Abbas Kiarostami]. Tehran: Nazar Art Publication, 2018. Held at the New York Public Library: nypl.org/research/research-catalog/bib/cb13604980.

Major Translation Projects

Darabnameh (Persian Alexander Romance) by Abu Tahir Tarsusi. The first complete English translation, in two volumes, with scholarly introduction and apparatus. Ten of thirty-six chapters drafted; full two-volume manuscript expected 2029. Under consideration at Brill.

Book Chapters and Translations

“How Zaal met with Rudabeh” from Firdausi’s *Shahnameh*. Under review for *Rapunzel: A Casebook*, ed. Martha Bayless, University of Wisconsin Press, expected 2027.

“How Zaal met with Rudابه” from Firdausi’s *Shahnameh*. English translation in blank verse. *The Brazen Head* (UK), Summer 2025 issue (July 8, 2025). Available at: brazen-head.org.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

“The Syncretism of Fate: Tyche, Moira, and Bakt in the Speaking Tree Episode of *Shahnameh* as a Reflection of Hellenistic-Iranian Cultural Integration in the Seleucid and Parthian Eras” (with Mehdi Fayaz). *Persian World* 3, no. 6 (July 2026): 63–82. doi.org/10.22034/pw.2026.584994.1044.

“Contemplative Absence: Sacred Experience in Abbas Kiarostami’s *The Wind Will Carry Us* and the Aesthetics of Slow Cinema.” *Journal of Religion & Film* 30, no. 1 (2026), Article 40.

“In the Beginning Was Madness: Divine Folly in Shakespeare’s *King Lear* and Tarkovsky’s *Nostalghia*.” Special issue, “Religion and Film in the 21st Century: Perspectives and Challenges,” ed. Irena Sever Globan and J. Lorenz. *Religions* 16, no. 12 (2025): 1560. doi.org/10.3390/rel16121560 (invited).

“An Imagined Conversation as a Comparative Method: Encountering Samuel Beckett and Abbas Kiarostami.” *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature / Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée* 52, no. 3 (September 2025): 332–55.

Forthcoming

“Documenting the Ineffable: A Comparative Analysis of Mystical Representation in Kimiavi’s *The Garden of Stones* and Western Sufi Documentary.” *Journal of Religion & Film*.

Under Review

“When the Three Magi Serve Homer: Asymmetric Hermeneutics and the Victorian *Shahnameh*.” *PMLA*.

“The Divided Meat and the Ordered Cup: Two Feasting Codes in Homer and Firdausi.” *Classical Antiquity*.

“The Partial Corpse: Sophocles, Firdausi, and the Genre-Engine of Tragedy” (with Mehdi Fayaz). *Arethusa*.

Book Reviews

Review of *Iranian Culture in Bahram Beyzaie’s Cinema and Theatre: Paradigms of Being and Belonging (1959–79)*, by Saeed Talajooy. *Journal of Religion & Film* 29, no. 2 (2025): Article 12. digitalcommons.unomaha.edu.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Harry Ransom Center Research Fellowship

2026–2027

University of Texas at Austin. Residential research fellowship for on-site consultation of the Omar Khayyam Collection (MS-03103), examining Victorian Persian translation methodology and Orientalist poetics.

Oregon Humanities Center Dissertation Fellowship

Spring 2026

University of Oregon. Competitive fellowship awarded by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, providing a one-term research-only appointment with full funding to support dissertation completion.

Global Oregon Graduate Research Award

Summer 2025

University of Oregon. Funded archival research examining 78 Shah Tahmasp *Shahnameh* folios (ca. 1525–35) at the Metropolitan Museum and 14 Great Mongol *Shahnama* folios (ca. 1330) at the Freer Gallery.

Global Oregon Summer Translation Studies Award

Summer 2025

University of Oregon. Funded translation of four pivotal *Shahnameh* episodes for dissertation: Rostam and Sohrab, the Speaking Tree, Kay Kavus's ascension, and the Prelude.

Comparative Literature Educational Opportunity Award (three awards)

2025

University of Oregon. Departmental travel and training funding for conferences and medieval Greek paleography.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

"From Symposium to Bazm: Feasting Rhetoric in Greek and Iranian Epic." Mediterranean Seminar Spring 2026 Workshop: Food and Foodways across the Mediterranean World, University of Oregon, May 22–23, 2026. Respondent: William Granara (Harvard University).

"When the Three Magi Serve Homer: Asymmetric Hermeneutics and the Victorian Translation of Firdausi's *Shahnameh*." Work-in-Progress Talk, Oregon Humanities Center, University of Oregon, May 15, 2026.

"Bad Breath and Bloodline: Alexander's Persian (Kayanian) Paternity in Firdausi, Nizami, and Tarsusi." 60th Annual Comparative Literature Conference: Legacies: Nostalgia, Adaptation, and Reimaginings, California State University, Long Beach, April 22–24, 2026.

"What Leaves When Farr Becomes 'Glory': Cosmological Loss in English *Shahnameh* Translations." Western States Folklore Society Annual Meeting: Folklore as a Resource—Old and New, University of Oregon, April 16–18, 2026.

"The Sacred Act of Burial: Death Rituals as Reconciliation from Firdausi's *Shahnameh* to Abbas Kiarostami's *Taste of Cherry* (1997)." Boston University International Conference on Religion & Film, May 29–31, 2025.

"The Mystical Exit: Haiku Aesthetics in Samuel Beckett's *Film* (1965) and Abbas Kiarostami's *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999)." Annual Graduate Student Conference, Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto, March 14–16, 2025.

"Sir William Jones's *A Grammar of the Persian Language* (1771) and the Victorian Poets." University of York Symposium: Persianisms: Cultural Encounters in the Anglophone World, December 10–12, 2020.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Sole Instructor, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Oregon

COLT 211 — *Dragonslayers: Translating Indo-European Epics*

Fall 2025–26

Instructor, Department of English, University of Oregon

WR 121Z — *Rhetoric and Composition*

2023–2025

Teaching Assistant, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Oregon

COLT 102 — *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Prof. Leah Middlebrook

Spring 2023

COLT 103 — *Visual Culture*, Prof. Michael Allan

Winter 2023

COLT 231 — *Literature and Society*, Dr. Dawn Marlan

Fall 2022

COLT 102 — *100 Years of Solitude*, Prof. Leah Middlebrook

Spring 2022

COLT 103 — *Visual Culture*, Prof. Michael Allan

Winter 2022

COLT 101 — *Introduction to Comparative Literature*, Prof. Kenneth Calhoon

Fall 2021

WORKSHOP AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Mediterranean Studies Summer Skills Seminar

May 2025

Reading Medieval Greek Manuscripts. Mediterranean Seminar, University of Colorado Boulder. Intensive four-day remote workshop in Greek paleography under Dr. Manolis Ulbricht.

LANGUAGES

NATIVE Persian, Azerbaijani · NEAR-NATIVE English · ADVANCED French · CONVERSATIONAL Turkish

READING KNOWLEDGE Latin, Ancient Greek, Old English

RESEARCH LANGUAGES Classical Persian (manuscript expertise), Arabic (for marginalia and Islamic contexts)

REFERENCES

Prof. Leah Middlebrook

Comparative Literature & Romance Languages,
University of Oregon
middlebr@uoregon.edu

Prof. Michael Allan

Comparative Literature, University of Oregon
mallan@uoregon.edu

Prof. Christopher Eckerman

Classics, University of Oregon
eckerman@uoregon.edu

Prof. Gantt Gurley

German & Scandinavian, University of Oregon
gantt@uoregon.edu

Prof. Alexander Bubb

English & Creative Writing, University of Roehampton
Alexander.Bubb@roehampton.ac.uk

Prof. Andrew Laird

Classics & Hispanic Studies, Brown University
andrew_laird@brown.edu