

Levi Thompson
Curriculum vitae

EDUCATION:

2017: Ph.D., Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA

Diss.: “Speaking Laterally: Transnational Poetics and the Rise of Modern Arabic and Persian Poetry in Iraq and Iran”

In this comparative analysis of minor modernist traditions, I demonstrated how deeply self-referential and intertextual connections to the shared poetic past of the Middle East led to parallel changes in the poetry of modern Iraq and Iran. By focusing on lateral (East-East) exchanges instead of vertical (West-East) relations of influence, I offered a new understanding of modernist poetry’s development in Iraq and Iran. Ultimately, I made the case for the broader transnational study of modern Arabic and Persian literatures.

2015: C.Phil., Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA

2010-2011: Fellow, Center for Arabic Study Abroad in Cairo

2009: M.A., Arabic and Islamic Studies, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania

Thesis: “The Autobiography of Muḥammad Shukrī: Modern *ṣu‘lūk*”

2007: B.A., History, Government, College of William and Mary

EMPLOYMENT:

2017-2018: Artemis A.W. and Martha Joukowsky Postdoctoral Fellow in Gender Studies, Pembroke Center, Brown University

PUBLICATIONS:

ARTICLE:

2016: “Strange Bedfellows: The Crisis of Modernity in Najīb Maḥfūz’s *al-Qāhira al-Jadīda* (Cairo Modern),” *Middle Eastern Literatures* 18:3, 264-282.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1475262X.2016.1199094>.

BOOK CHAPTER:

2017: “Translating Tahrir: From Praxis to Theory with Tahrir Documents,” with Emily Drumsta and Elias Saba, *The Routledge Handbook of Arabic Translation*, eds. Sameh F. Hanna, Hanem El-

Farahaty and Abdel Wahab Khalifa. (Forthcoming book chapter; blind peer-review submission.)

BOOK REVIEWS:

2017: Review of Ikram Masmoudi, *War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction*, Edinburgh Studies in Modern Arabic Literature Series (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015). H-Levant, H-Net Reviews. May, 2017. <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=49367>.

2017: Review of Waed Athamnah, *Modern Arabic Poetry: Revolution and Conflict* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017). (Forthcoming in the *Journal of Arabic Literature*.)

FELLOWSHIPS:

2016-2017: Dissertation Year Fellowship, UCLA

2014: Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA

2013 – 2014: Graduate Research Mentorship, UCLA

2013: Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA

2012 – 2013: Academic Year FLAS for Persian, UCLA

2012: Summer FLAS for Persian, University of Wisconsin, Madison

2011 – 2012: NELC Department Fellowship, UCLA

2008 – 2009: Academic year FLAS for Persian, University of Pennsylvania

2008: Summer FLAS for Arabic, Arabic Language Institute in Fes, Morocco

2006: William and Mary Reves Center Critchfield Scholarship, American University of Beirut

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Brown University

2017: Framing Gender in Middle Eastern Cinema (self-designed course)

Middlebury at Mills Summer Arabic Program

2017: Beginning Arabic, Instructor of Record (self-designed course)

2016: Beginning Arabic, Instructor of Record (self-designed course)

2015: Upper Intermediate Arabic, Graduate Intern

2014: Beginning Arabic, Graduate Intern

UC Berkeley Near Eastern Studies Department

2016: Beginning Arabic 1B, Graduate Student Instructor, sole-taught course

The Short Story in Modern Arabic Literature, substitute instructor (7 sessions; all in Arabic)
2015: Beginning Arabic 1A, Graduate Student Instructor, sole-taught course

UCLA NELC Department

2015: Beginning Arabic 1C, TA, shared teaching and grading duties for 3 classes
2015: Beginning Arabic 1B, TA, shared teaching and grading duties for 3 classes
2014: Beginning Arabic 1A, TA, sole-taught course

Arcadia University History and International Studies Department

2010: The Rise of Islamic Empire in the Middle East, Instructor of Record (self-designed seminar)
2009: The Modern Middle East, Instructor of Record (self-designed course)

INVITED TALKS:

2017: “*Iḍād anshīṭah fa‘ālah l-istikhdāmihā fī al-muḥādātah wa-l-ḥiwārāt al-ṣaffiyyah*” (“Preparing Effective Activities for Conversation and Class Discussions”), Weekly Teacher Workshop, Middlebury at Mills Arabic School, 29 June. (In Arabic.)

2017: “Cosmopolitanism at the Margins: Transnationalism and Modernist Poetry in Iraq and Iran,” Alternative Cosmopolitanisms: Transnational Solidarities from the Margins workshop, Tufts University, 7-8 April.

2011: “Tahrir Documents,” Creative Time Summit: *Living as Form*, New York University Skirball Center, 23 September.

2010: “Navigating a Crisis Workshop: Iran,” Camden County College, Blackwood, NJ, 12 April.

ORGANIZED PANELS:

2017: “Schooling in Iraq: Modernity and Education in Iraqi Memory,” with Pelle Valentin Olsen, Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., November. (Sponsored by the The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq [TAARI]).

2016: “South by East: Decentering and Reorienting Intellectual and Literary Exchanges in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia,” Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November. (Supported by the University of California Humanities Research Institute.)

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION:

- 2017: "The Poets of the Baghdad Teachers College," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., November.
- 2016: "Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb's Transnational Turn," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, 18 November.
- 2016: "Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb's Transnational Turn," University of Chicago's 31st annual Middle East History and Theory Conference, 6-7 May. (Panel sponsored by the Farouk Mustafa Memorial Fund.)
- 2016: "At Far Off Points, People Pass By: A Transnational Approach to Iranian and Iraqi Modernist Poetry," UCLA International Institute Third Annual Conference, Going Global: Transnational Issues in Interdisciplinary Applications, 25 April.
- 2016: "At Far Off Points, People Pass By: A Transnational Approach to Iranian and Iraqi Modernist Poetry," American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, Cambridge, MA, 18 March.
- 2016: "Travel Forms: The Reception of Arabic Prosody in Tehran," Modern Language Association Convention, Austin, TX, 8 January.
- 2015: "A Phoenix in Ashes: Modernist Poetry in Iran and Iraq," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, 22 November.
- 2015: "al-Mas'adī as Arab Mythmaker in *The Dam*," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, 21 November.
- 2014: "The Modern Crisis in Najib Mahfuz's *al-Qahirah al-Jadidah (Cairo Modern)*," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 25 November.
- 2014: "Capital, the Individual, and the End of the *Nahḍah* in Maḥfūz's *al-Qāhirah al-Jadidah*," American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, New York University, 22 March.
- 2013: "The Mission of the Intellectual in the Developing World and the Works of Maḥmūd al-Mas'adī," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, 11 October.

2012: "Symbol and Tahrir Square: The Struggle for Revolutionary Legitimacy," Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Denver, 19 November.

2012: "An Introduction to Tahrir Documents," 16th Annual Symposium of the Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Graduate Students' Association at the University of Toronto, 6 March.

2010: "The Autobiography of Muḥammad Shukrī: Modern *Ṣuʿlūk*," Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference on the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa, Columbia University, 15 April.

2008: "Albert Camus, the *Pied-Noirs*, and the Search for Identity," Graduate Student Workshop on North Africa and the North African Diaspora, Princeton University, 4 April.

TRANSLATIONS:

2017: "Until the Red Blossom of a Shirt (1950)," by Ahmad Shamlu, *Purple Ink*, Brown University. <https://brown.edu/Research/poetry-in-translation/category/body/>. (Persian)

2017: "Poems by Nima Yushij," ["The Swan" (1926), "The Phoenix" (1938), "The Raven" (1938), "The Bird of Grief" (1938),] *Inventory*, Princeton, 66-74. (Persian)

2016: "Al-Azhar Draft Constitution of 1979," translated with Elias Saba in Assem Hefny, "Religious Authorities and Constitutional Reform: The Case of Al-Azhar in Egypt," *Constitutionalism, Human Rights, and Islam after the Arab Spring*, Rainer Grote and Tilmann J. Röder, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 113-121. (Arabic)

2014: "Badr Shakir al-Sayyab: The Poem and the Phoenix," *Jadaliyya*, 24 Dec. http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/20361/badr-shakir-al-sayyab_the-poem-and-the-phoenixn. (Arabic)

2014: "Badr Shakir al-Sayyab: Whorehouse," *Jadaliyya*, 2 June. http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/17960/badr-shakir-al-sayyab_whorehouse. (Arabic)

2013: "Condoleezza Rice's Piano by Sa'dī Yūsuf," *Transference*, 1:1, Article 13. <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/transference/vol1/iss1/13>. (Arabic)

OTHER WRITING:

2012: "Like a Straw Bird It Follows Me: Poetry by Palestinian Poet Ghassan Zaqtan," with Suleiman

Hodali and Rawad Wehbe. <http://web.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/128774>.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:

2016-2017: Member of University of California Humanities Research Institute working group
“Translation and Exchange in Middle Eastern/South Asian Literary Culture”

2015-2016: Research Assistant for Ismail K. Poonawala, UCLA NELC Department
Assisted with Ismail Poonawala, “Wealth and Poverty in the Qur’an and Traditions of the Prophet, and How Those Concepts are Reflected in the *Rasa’il Ikhwan al-Safa’*,” *Journal of Shi’a Islamic Studies* (Summer 2015).

2015: Translator, WORLD Policy Analysis Center, UCLA

2015: Persian language consultant, PBS *Finding Your Roots*, “The Long Way Home,” [Azar Nafisi episode] (aired 1 March 2016)

2009 – 2010: Teaching and Research Assistant for Pardis Minuchehr, UPENN NELC Department

2007 – 2010: Research Assistant for Holly Pittman, UPENN Department of the History of Art

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE:

2014 – 2015: Secretary, Graduate Student Association Humanities Council, UCLA

2014 – 2015: NELC Dept. Representative, Graduate Student Association Humanities Council, UCLA

2012 – 2013: Working Committee Member, Center for Near Eastern Studies Graduate Group, UCLA

2008 – 2009: NELC Dept. Representative, Student Government of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania

VOLUNTEERING:

2011 – now: Co-founder and Editor at Tahrir Documents, www.tahrirdocuments.org

2014: Translation Consultant, WORLD Policy Analysis Center, UCLA

OTHER WORK:

2016: Translator for *Arab Comics: 90 Years of Popular Visual Culture* exhibit, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley

2012 – 2014: Library Assistant to David Hirsch, Middle East Studies Librarian, UCLA Library

2007: Intern, Palestine Center, Jerusalem Fund, Washington, D.C.

SERVICE TO PROFESSION:

2014, 2016 - 2017: Reviewer of poetry translations for *Transference*, Western Michigan University

INTERVIEWS:

2014 - 2015: *Nigāhī dīgar* [*Another Look, parts 1-12*], Noveen TV, 27 Ādhar 1393 [18 Dec. 2014] - 21 Isfand 1393 [12 March 2015] (in Persian). <http://www.noveentv.org>.

2013: "Interview with PhD Student Levi Thompson, Co-Founder of TahrirDocuments.org," G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA, 29 Oct.
<http://web.international.ucla.edu/cnes/video/134778>.

2011: *Tahrīr; Maydān-i Nātāmām* [*Tahrir: The Ongoing Square*], interview with Gelare Khoshgozaran for Mardomak, 7 Mihr 1390 [29 Sept. 2011] (in Persian).
http://mardomak.org/story/tahrir_square. English translation by Gelare Khoshgozaran
<http://w--o--r--d--s.tumblr.com/>.

2011: *Gulf Times: Weekend*, "Pulse of the people: Egyptians race to save fleeting mementos of their revolution," Hannah Allam, 13 May 2011.

LANGUAGES:

Arabic: fluent

Persian: fluent reading, good writing and speaking

German: fair reading, writing, and speaking

French: can read with a dictionary

Greek (ancient): some reading ability

Middle Persian: novice

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Middle East Studies Association

American Comparative Literature Association

Modern Language Association