



Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

August 12, 2022

Professor Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi
Director, Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies
University of Toronto

Re: Letter of Reference for Dr. Abolfazl Moshiri for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies for 2022–23

Dear Professor Tavakoli-Targhi,

I am writing in support of the application of Dr. Abolfazl Moshiri for the Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies for 2022–23. Abolfazl successfully defended his PhD dissertation, of which I was the supervisor, in 2021. The topic is rather novel—the portrayal of Iblis, roughly equated with the Devil, in Persian Sufism, in particular in the mystical poetry of ‘Attar and Rumi. Abolfazl’s knowledge of classical Persian language and literature is excellent. He is a native speaker of Persian and his English writing and communication skills are near-native level.

Abolfazl had been awarded a 3-year postdoctoral fellowship for the coming year at the University of Utrecht, which testifies to the high level of his qualifications and scholarly expertise. Unfortunately, due to the health issues of his spouse, he had to decline the fellowship and will remain in Toronto. This, however, is fortunate for the Institute of Iranian Studies, for he is an excellent candidate for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship. Abolfazl proposes to rework his dissertation into a book by shortening it and making it more accessible to a wider readership. The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship would provide him with the opportunity to do that and to complete the project in a timely manner.

Sincerely yours,

Maria Subtelny
Professor of Persian and Islamic Studies
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