

Sep 11th, 2023

The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali  
Faculty of Arts & Science,  
Institute of Iranian Studies at the University of Toronto  
4 Bancroft Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1C1

**Dear Members of Selection Committee,**

I am applying to the University of Toronto for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies for 2023-2024. This is to assist me in pursuing the revision and publishing of my dissertation as a book, at an academic institution which specializes in contemporary Iranian history and related fields as well as to gain access to the university library collection, which will provide solid ground for my research in the field of Iranian studies.

My doctoral project was part of the broader Zentrum Moderner Orient project in Berlin (ZMO), in cooperation with the School of Oriental and African Studies in London (SOAS), on “Urban Violence in Middle East” in 2011-2014. The topic of my dissertation was Tabriz Between Socio-political Struggles and Imperial Violence: The Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.

My dissertation research project contributes to the urban and social histories of Iran in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The investigation touched upon major themes that formed part of the processes and trajectory of modernization and democratization in Iranian society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. To achieve this, the study has explored various aspects of religion, economy, society, women’s rights, labor, and minorities. These were the materials from the city of Tabriz that were used to analyze the urban collective violence and social and political struggles and transformations that have been the main topic of the dissertation.

Thus, I am confident that my project will contribute not only to a broader understanding of wide-ranging forces and developments that contributed to the urban transformation of cities in the Middle East, but will also shed light on its ramifications, linking it to the social and political transition culminating in violent upheavals in the early decades of the 20th century. In spite of the fact that this topic has so far attracted little attention, it is certainly of high relevance in view of the current events in the region and their future developments.

During my junior research fellowship, I will turn my completed dissertation into a book in a year of 2023-2024. In addition, I would like to publish an article on this project in a peer-reviewed journal. My long-term career aim is to remain in the academic world as well as contributing to ongoing women movement in Iran and be active in teaching and research.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration of this application and I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Fatemeh Masjedi

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