



English
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
S C A R B O R O U G H

Selection committee, Dissertation Completion Fellowship
Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies
University of Toronto
August 15 2024

Dear members of the selection committee

I am the supervisor of Niyosha Keyzad's PhD thesis in the Department of English, on *Diasporic Pilgrimage in Iranian Women's Return Narratives*. Niyosha examines three memoirs by women writers of the Iranian diaspora, who write of their exile and return visits to Iran. She shows how the writers configure their returns as pilgrimages, journeys where they walk in the footsteps of their earlier selves or of their parents and family, seeking to merge the writerly self with another self, the self as it might have been had they never left Iran. Such a merger is never fully successful, and in taking the measure of the distance between the authors' various selves -- American, French, or Iranian; daughters and lovers; adult and child; the self of personal memory and that defined by geopolitics -- the memoirs reveal fascinating insights into gender, ethnicity, and class. The thesis delivers important lessons into the nature of migration and identity.

Niyosha has completed the thesis and is about to submit. She will defend in September or October.

Niyosha is eminently deserving of a dissertation completion fellowship.

Sincerely

Neil ten Kortenaar
Professor of English and Comparative Literature
neil.kortenaar@utoronto.ca