



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 2022

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 four 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 promises important lessons into the nature of migration and identity.

Niyosha has completed drafts of two chapters, on Gelareh Asayesh's *Saffron Sky* and Parnaz Foroutan's *Home is a Stranger*. She will complete the other two body chapters, on Tara Bahrapour's *The See and See Again* and Marjana Satrapi's *Persepolis 2*, and an introduction this Fall. She already has worked on all these chapters. She intends to submit early in 2023 and the committee agrees that that is a plausible schedule.

Niyosha is eminently deserving of a dissertation completion fellowship.

Sincerely

Neil ten Kortenaar
Professor of English and Comparative Literature
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