**Ashtari  Babak**

November 2022

**Statement of purpose**

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# Cover letter:

*Babak Ashtari*

*Tehran, Iran*

*Study Permit visa applicant*

*November 2022*

*Dear visa officer,*

My name is Babak Ashtari and I am applying for a study permit which allows me to study French Language Literature at University of Manitoba for master’s level.

I have already a master’s degree from *Tarbiat Modares University* of Tehran but in the field of translation studies with the [GPA 18.72](#_Master_degree_transcript) out of 20 and [IELTS Academic module band score 7.5](#_IELTS_Academic_Module) and [General module band score 8](#_IELTS_General_Module), which are far more than the minimum requirements of Manitoba University and more than 10 years of work experience both in teaching and translating French and English.

Initially, I had applied for a PHD position, but since my background was more aligned towards didactics and translation studies, the Committee of Graduate Studies at Manitoba University, which is renowned for its expertise in literature, decided to grant me a position in master’s degree first in order for me to earn the necessary experience needed in literature before I could start any PHD program.

Unfortunately, I have already requested the study permit for my current position twice and been rejected both times, stating that I do not have enough financial assets to manage my living expenses and tuition fees during my stay in Canada and that I have not provided enough evidence to prove I will leave the country once I will have graduated.

I have my own reasons to choose this particular program in Canada at University of Manitoba. There are also some incentives urging me to return back to my country at the end of my studies, which are all explained in detail in my SOP and I hope they could earn your kind approval this time.

I would also like to request a visa for my wife as we have known each other for more than 5 years now and we have been living together ever since we got married (our marriage certificate is uploaded [here](#_Marriage_certificate_(translated)). I am sure that her presence besides me will positively influence my academic performance.

That being said, however, her father was the major reason why she was not able to come before. Indeed, he is a veteran war hero with many injuries remained from his honorable service during 8 years of military campaign against Iraqi intruders (his medical records are uploaded here). Fortunately, I could convince my wife that her father is now in good hands (I finally could manage to hire a 24/7 nurse to look after him). Consequently, my wife is a bit relieved and has agreed to accompany me during my studies. Now that she is convinced, I am not going to submit to any long stays overseas without her being beside me. Therefore, I would appreciate it if you could also grant her a visa.

# Study plan:

## Why do you wish to study in Canada in the program for which you have been accepted?

It is evident that studying in a native speaking environment, where students are exposed to the language spoken by indigenous people on a daily basis is an advantage for any language learner.

I could have chosen to study in France, or any other French-speaking nation (such as Switzerland). However, as a bilingual, who knows both English and French to some extent, I have decided to apply for Canada. The reason for this is because in most European multilingual nations, such as Switzerland and Belgium, non-English languages are more prevalent, and students are more exposed, after French, to languages like German and Italian, which are not my targeted languages currently.

In Canada, however, since both English and French are instructed as a second and not a foreign language, this country appears to be an ideal location for me to hit two birds with one stone: mastering both my English and French.

Furthermore, French spoken in Canada is quite distinctive from the one spoken in France. While the latter is quite accessible as it is considered the Standard French (it is the language of all books, exams and the prevalent accent adopted in most audio didactic materials), Canadian French seems to be sometimes an unknown world and significantly more difficult for me to understand (primarily due to its heavy accent. Secondly because of its cultural differences : vous pouvez jamais imaginer comme surpris je suis devenu quand Dr. Isabelle Masicotte Kirouac m’a dit ‘’bienvenu’’ à la réponse de mon expression de gratitude pour m’avoir envoyé un ensemble d’articles à étudier par courriel. Pourquoi *bienvenu* quand je suis toujours en Iran ??? peut-être elle ne sait pas que je suis pas au Canada !!! et quand je lui ai reformuler mon lieu d’habitation, elle le savait déjà et j’étais extrêmement embarrassé en tant qu’un étudiant de master que je savais pas la signification du mot *bienvenu*…).

Manitoba University, in which I have been admitted, is among the high-ranking educational institutions of the world. in the USA ranking system, it was ranked 387[[1]](#footnote-1), therefore, outranking almost all Iranian Universities. Its Faculty of Arts and languages (French, Spanish and Italian) is internationally renowned for offering a wide range of intensive and specialized language-related courses you cannot find in Iran. Furthermore, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) of Iran has officially recognized it as one of the top universities of Canada and accepts the degrees granted to Iranian students by this institution[[2]](#footnote-2).

I have been working in Iran since 2009 ([my Social Security Report certifies this](#_Social_Security_Organization)) in different posts, ranging from part-time employee during my academic studies to foreign business manager of a large and thriving business company (and I have saved enough money throughout all these years to handle all financial costs, both for myself and for any family member I bring with me (my proof of financial support is also attached along with all the necessary documents).

Regarding my ties to my home country, I have explained everything in detail [here](#_What_ties_do) and I would like to bring it to your attention. More notably, my utmost valuable tie to my country lies within my fellow compatriots, who have been fighting valiantly with me these days for our freedom; after recent social events in Iran, my wish to spend here the remaining days of my life as a free citizen with my honorable countrymen and women, is more than ever before.

I do believe that we are on the brink of a new Iran, where people will live in peace, harmony and equality with each other and move towards a flourishing future. Although it sounds impossible to predict the exact time for this auspicious moment of liberation, it is possible to project with reference to history that it has always been the liberal people the definitive victors of civil brawls and not their despotic rulers, who reign over bloodshed and infanticide. I do believe that soon, we will restore the former glory of Persia and people will find true human rights back in our home country. In this situation, not only I, but all Iranian elites, who are currently living somewhere around the world in a kind of self-selected exile, will actually find nowhere as appealing as our fatherland and return to live with our fellow countrymen. I am sure that soon all Iranians’ long stay overseas would be for the sake of acquiring new sciences and technological advancements of the world and adopting them to our advantages as it has always been the case: Dar al Fonun was a famous educational center in Iran for elite Iranian students whose outstanding performance had earned the Shah’s grant for their dispatch to foreign universities primarily in France and Great Britain to pursue their studies).

*two-thousand-five-hundred-year-old civilization.*

## What is your overall educational goal?

I have a valid job offer as the head of the French department of [Andisheh Parsian Language Academy](https://andisheparsian.com/)[[3]](#footnote-3) (official center for International tests OSD and TEF, organized under Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology of Iran (I have attached the official letter). The position, however, requires me to have studies in Canadian French language as well as an international diploma for teaching foreign languages. I am currently partaking TESOL diploma e-classes[[4]](#footnote-4), and Hopefully I will have secured my TESOL degree by the end of August. Then I will start studying French literature in Canada, which I will have finished at the second semester of 2023-2024. This will not only make an important milestone in my educational and financial development, but also give me a better alignment towards my future job circumstances as most clients in the Academy are studying French in order to immigrate to Quebec. Therefore, having an extensive knowledge of Canadian French would definitely reinforce my future professional prospect.

## Why would you not pursue a similar course program in your country of residence?

To my utmost regret, limitations set upon Iranian students due to sanctions against my country is a major issue leaving a detrimental impact on quality education. Not having visa or Master Cards to make an online purchase from Amazon or any other online bookstores and not being able to have the books delivered to Iran are quite a few examples of such difficulties.

The low level of scientificity here is another concern. That is mainly because most university classes are prescriptive and grammar-based, relying on old reference materials. In Manitoba University, however, classes are all descriptive with a focus on the latest prevalent teaching techniques and the use of authentic Canadian authors for referencing.

Also, there is no course program offered in Iran for studying French in the framework of Canadian civilization and their cultural considerations since the majority of professors in Iran instruct standard French (of France) in their classes and have never lived in Canada.

Dr. Isabelle Masicotte Kirouac, on the other hand, is a native Canadian professor, a member of Manitoba University French department, who is also an expert in literatures autochtones, franco-canadienne et Quebecoise[[5]](#footnote-5). Her course entitled : *Identité nationale et altérité: le cas du cinéma québécois* is an invaluable asset for giving insight towards the extent to which diversity is recognized and accepted in Quebec. This is particularly paramount for my future career prospect.

## What research have you done in your country of residence or citizenship?

I have already obtained a master’s degree of French Translation Studies from Tarbiabt Modares University of Iran in 2014. In my master thesis, I have focused on *Madame Bovary* of *Gustave Flaubert* and the cultural differences between France of that time and Iran in recent years.

In 2015, I published my first article at Ferdowsi Mashhad University of Iran[[6]](#footnote-6) under my supervising professor, Dr. Shairih, about the meaning-making process of the book and how translators have transferred author’s values without falling for the trap of sacrilege (which makes a typical crisis for any literature-based research work in Iran).

I have also translated a book called *Mes Souvenirs* by *Adelaide Herculine Barbin* to Persian. It is an autobiography reciting the story of tribulations an intellectual hermaphrodite undertakes until death due to his health issues in France. Although this could be an enlightenment towards recognition of LGBT and other sexual minorities in Iran, unfortunately, it was considered against social norms by authorities and, therefore, failed publication.

## How will this program enhance your employment opportunities in your country of residence or citizenship?

In Iran, in order to work as the head teacher in an educational institution, you are required to have:

* A valid teaching certificate, such as TESOL or DELTA/CELTA
* a university degree or anything that proves broaden knowledge of the field (in my case, French spoken in Canada)
* many years of related work experience.

Since I wish to work as the head teacher of the French department of Andisheh Parsian Academy in Iran, I have enrolled in an online TESOL course and, hopefully, I will earn it in a couple months from now. I have also many years of work experience both teaching and translating English and French. That being said, however, the only requirement that I should have fulfilled before starting my new position is obtain a French university degree from a Canadian Institution in order to illustrate sufficient knowledge of Canadian French, which will give me a significant upper hand for the job.

## What ties do you have to your country of citizenship or residence?

There are many factors linking me back to my country, which originate from both my familial and professional circumstances.

I have no relatives or friends in Canada; My whole family resides in Iran, and my wife cannot accompany me to Canada due to her current professional constraints (I have attached her letter of employment as well as her insurance record). I am also the youngest member of the family, which means my parents are in their late 70s. In addition to that, my sister is still single, and they all need me back in Iran.

With regards to my professional incentives, I have an appealing job offer in Iran, urging me to return back to my country once I have graduated. I have also more than 12 years of work experience with a fraction of my salary reduced on a monthly-basis for paying insurance premium fees (I have attached my insurance record). Subsequently, not returning back after my studies will squander all the time and money I have spent those years and deprive me definitively from any retirement pension entitlements.

Finally, I have managed to purchase a family house in Tehran where my parents, my wife and I are living (I have attached the deed of ownership contract), and hopefully I will get a chance to give birth to my children and raise them here.

Evidently, starting all over again elsewhere is not an option, and I would prefer to benefit from Manitoba University’s Master Degree in Iran as a head teacher rather than stay in solitary in a developed country where French is the official language for everyone.

## What are your Sources of funding for the duration of your stay in Canada?

I have saved enough money to cover all my expenses, including tuition fees as well as the cost of living in Canada during my whole education (as stated in the bank Statement attached). I also have a part-time teaching assistance position available in my letter of admission, granting me the permission to work for 15$ to 20$ per hour at Manitoba University. Moreover, I am nominated for the International Graduate Student Entrance Scholarship, which could partially cover my academic expenditure. Furthermore, despite my temporary educational leave from work, my wife is still a full-time employee, meaning that she is a final financial shelter should any unexpected incidences occur.

# Supporting documents:

## Social Security Organization report:

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## Educational documents:

### Bachelor degree certificate (original document)

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### Bachelor degree certificate (translated document)

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### Bachelor degree transcript (original document)

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### Bachelor degree transcript (translated document)

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### Master degree certificate (original document)

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### Master degree certificate (translated document)

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### Master degree transcript (original document)

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### Master degree transcript (translated document)

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## English language test Certificates:

### IELTS Academic Module

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### IELTS General Module

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## Family information:

### My birth certificate (original document)

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### My birth certificate (translated document)

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### My mother-in-law’s birth certificate (translated document)

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### Marriage certificate (original document)

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### Marriage certificate (translated document)

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1. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/university-of-manitoba-503954> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://letsgouni.com/blog/msrt-approved-universities-canada> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://andisheparsian.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://tesolcanada.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/fsi/staff/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://ensani.ir/fa/article/352526/%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%84%DB%8C%D9%84-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A2%DB%8C%D9%86%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B2%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87-%D9%88-%D9%86%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B2%D8%B4%DB%8C-%DA%AF%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B8%D8%B1-%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%87%D9%86%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D9%88-%D8%B0%D8%A7%D8%AA%DB%8C> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)