

Best Dissertation of the Year

The Foundation for Iranian Studies

The Foundation for Iranian Studies is pleased to announce that the Committee on the Selection of Best Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies of the Foundation for Iranian Studies has chosen Dr. Shafique Nizarali Virani's dissertation "Seekers of Union: The Ismailis from the Mongol Debacle to the Eve of the Safavid Revolution," submitted to the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, as the recipient of the Foundation's annual Ph.D. dissertation award for the academic year 2000-2001.

In making its decision, the Committee, following the criteria established by the Foundation Board, noted, in part, "exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian Studies by using intelligently and efficiently an extraordinary array of primary sources to elucidate a possibly different history of the Eastern Ismailis after the fall of Alamut to the Mongols in 1256/654... approaching imaginatively the Ismaili politics, ideology, and religious doctrine, particularly its soteriology, to integrate the dimensions of Ismaili claim to legitimacy... stating clearly the study's theoretical foundation... judiciously using method to relate multivariate historical, intellectual, and sociological data to the specifics in the development of Ismaili strategic thinking and planning... grounding theory in facts through methodological rigor and judicious use of primary and archival source material... sensitivity to signification and nuance in different languages to produce lucid meaning in English...attention to detail...good organization of the work."

Notice of the award will appear in the MESA and SIS newsletters, in Iran Nameh, and in various other Persian and English language academic publications.

Gholam Reza Afkhami
Chair
Ph.D. Dissertation Committee