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*A Forum on
Islamic Philosophy
and Mysticism
in the Contemporary World*



In the name of God

Booklet of Abstracts

**A Forum on
Islamic Philosophy
and Mysticism
in the Contemporary World**

May 29, 2016

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Philosophical Concepts of Nasir Khusraw

Tatyana Korneeva¹

Ismailism is the second largest branch of Shiism. Today, the Ismailis live in many countries, but for centuries the "native home" for them was Persia. Nasir Khusraw (1004 - after 1074) is one of the greatest Ismaili philosophers. Nowadays treatises of Nasir Khusraw are still read and discussed.

Nasir Khusraw was a philosopher, a poet and a traveler. He made a great contribution to the development of Persian poetry and Persian language and developed original philosophical concepts.

Nasir Khusraw actively developed philosophical terminology in Persian. It is worth noting that all the surviving treatises of Nasir Khusraw are in Persian. This was unusual for that time, when the language of science and philosophy was Arabic.

Nasir Khusraw proposed a novel solution to the problem of relationship between God and the world. In his teaching he developed the concept of the "Word of God (*kalima*) - Universal Mind (*aql-i kull*) - Universal Soul (*nafs-i kull*)", where each element is dependent on another and together they form the First Cause.

According to the teachings of Nasir Khusraw, a human being is a link between the material and the spiritual worlds. Universal Soul (*nafs*) imprints the knowledge of the Universal Mind (*aql*) in the matter, and human being is her "instrument" by which the Soul can achieve the fullness and perfection of the Universal Mind. The purpose of human life is to accumulate the knowledge, so that after the death the human soul may return to its source - the Universal Soul.

The concept of the Imamate occupies an important place in the teachings of Nasir Khusraw. Not every soul can return to its original source, but only the one that accepted the Ismaili "true" knowledge, which is only available with the Ismaili Imam. Thus, the development and improvement of the Universal Soul, and therefore of the whole of Creation, is directly dependent on the Ismaili society.

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From Arkady Nestrovic Hannibal to Ali Hannibal A glance at the Human Sciences' Position in Iran

Seyed Javad Miri¹

The purpose of this article is to look at the status of humanities in Iran from a perspective which has so far not been considered by scholars within humanities and social sciences. To this end, I shall speak of a very influential character in the field of humanities in contemporary history of Iran who has played a critical role but has also been surprisingly ignored. Ali Hannibal's name is rarely mentioned though he's the firm founder of the first scientific *Journal of Anthropology and Ethnography* in Iran; a deeply influential character who also founded many museums of ethnographical importance in Iran. He participated, at high levels, in activities in the area of science and culture, in three different periods. Furthermore, he was among those who, in addition to activities in the field of culture, also went to the court of Shah and in the field of cultural policy, social sciences and university, played a critical role. Nevertheless, on him, there's no book, no available biography about his personal or scientific life. It seems his life is shrouded in an aura of mystery and no exaggeration to say that the more one looks, the less could be found on this man. Looking at his life one is left with a great surprise as he has been deeply instrumental in the constitution of Iranian social sciences and humanities and rightly should be considered as one of the founding fathers of social and human sciences in Iran. For me, his importance is not cherished only due to his scientific achievements but as a symbol of cultural interaction between Iran and Russia. It is this point which makes Hannibal a very pivotal personality in re-interpreting the relationship between Iran and Russia in the 21st century.

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