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**Introducing Khorassan's Khanghahs and their Social Functions**Farideh Davoudy Moghadam <sup>1</sup>**Abstract**

Khorassan area has been among the most important centers of formation and dissemination of Gnosticism, and many prominent mystic scholars have been born and grown up there. Some of the major reference books in Sufism such as *Kashf al-Mahjub*, *Risalah Qushairiyah*, *The Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, *Al-Luma-fi-Tasavof* have been written in this area, and the Gnostic geniuses such as Attar and Mevlana rose from Khorassan. This area is also among the first places in which Gnostic Khanghahs were built, and some of the highest Gnostic teachings were taught to its followers. This study introduces Khanghah and its functions in the history of mysticism in general and Khorassan's Khanghahs and some of their social functions in particular. This research aims to show a part of Khorassan's rich history and culture.

The results show that khanghahs played multiple social, religious and cultural functions ranging from offering shelters to the poor and travelers, to playing a role in fighting and resisting against oppression in society. They were sometimes centers to spread ethnic music and Persian poetry, and in this way, they would introduce customs and represent Persian arts and architecture. Because of the Gnostic scholars' way of thinking and method of teaching, Khanghahs, in their own time, turned into places for free thinking, places in which different religions would meet and engage in dialogue.

**Keywords:** Khanghah, Mysticism, Khorassan, Society, Culture.

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