

THE ROLE OF POSITIVE ACTION IN BUILDING A BETTER WORLD: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE RISALE-I NUR

16-17 February 2017, Istanbul

Organized by Department of Arabic, Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam, India

CALL FOR PAPERS

In these difficult times, humanity is besieged by problems which threaten both our spiritual and material well-being. Throughout the world, hunger, poverty, social injustice, oppression, war, enforced migration, anarchy, violence, terrorism, climate change, environmental pollution and a host of other negative trends are on the increase. Despite numerous efforts to better the human situation, lasting solutions to these problems have not been found.

How can the happiness of humanity be obtained both in this world and in the next? What kind of approach is needed in order to solve or, at least, reduce these problems? Is reconstruction possible without further spiritual and material harm being done? Can a universal and sustainable solution be found that targets these problems at their very roots? The need for answers to these kinds of question is more urgent than ever before.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's life and works, and his *Risale-i Nur* collection in particular, constitute an important means of providing answers to these questions and problems. Solutions to these individual, societal and global problems are related to the way in which mankind approaches the creation. Said Nursi propounded an original way of looking at, and responding to, the universe and humanity that is best described as "positive action". Positive action, based on revelation and faith, is an important way of approaching life which needs to be discussed both in theory and in practice. Serious discussion is needed to explore how this concept can give meaning to all aspects of life and human relationships, and how it can provide sustainable solutions for mankind's problems. And

the time for that discussion is now.

On 16-17 of February 2017, the 6th International Risale-i Nur Conference in India will be held. The overarching aim of the Symposium is to promote the development of peace and happiness, both in this world and the next, for Muslims and for humanity as a whole. The central theme of the Symposium will be: “THE ROLE OF POSITIVE ACTION IN BUILDING A BETTER WORLD: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE RISALE-I NUR”

Within the scope of the sub-themes below, academics from the all over the world are invited to share their understandings and perspectives.

1. Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives on Positive Action

- The perspective of the Risale-i Nur
- The ontological view: faith; belief in Divine Unity; belief in the Hereafter; *ma'na-i ismi* and *ma'na-i harfi* (self-referential and Other-indicative views of creation).
- Positive concepts such as brotherhood, love, compassion, patience and solidarity; the maintenance of public order; trust in God; social unity.
- Negative concepts such as disorder, gossip/slander, hatred, malice, jealousy; negative criticism; despair; prejudice.
- The issue of absolute justice v. relative justice

2. The perspective of the Islamic sciences

- The perspective of the Qur'an
- The perspective of Prophetic Traditions (*hadith*)
- The perspective of Islamic law
- The perspective of theology and/or philosophy

3. The perspective of the social sciences

- Sociology
- Economics
- Politics
- Ethics

- Pedagogy
- Psychology

4. Positive action and current global problems

- Racism
- Terror and violence
- Nationalism
- Environmental pollution and climate change
- Income inequality
- Excessive consumption
- Secularization
- Human rights and human rights violations
- Individualism, egocentrism, nihilism, hedonism, sadism
- Multi-culturalism and its problems
- The 'six sicknesses' of despair, deceit, enmity, disunity, individualism and despotism.

5. Positive action in practice

- Tolerance of diversity
- Peaceful co-existence
- Implementation of legal rights
- Service to society
- Peace and tolerance

6. Comparative studies

- Positive action in the world religions
- Philosophical movements
- Civil disobedience
- Positive action in social and political movements

Points to remember

1. The Symposium will be held in at Gauhati University in Assam on the dates of 16-17 February 2017.
2. Before sending papers to the Symposium Secretary, please follow the instructions and the timetable below:-
 - a) The abstract of the paper must be submitted to the Symposium Secretary no later than the 15 November 2016 and should not exceed 250 words. Along with the abstract, the author should send a short CV, not exceeding 200 words. The papers accepted for inclusion will be announced on the 20 November 2016.
 - b) If your paper is accepted, you should submit a completed draft for reviewers to evaluate by 30th December 2016 at the very latest. The paper should be no longer than 12 pages.
 - c) Authors will be notified that their papers have been accepted for presentation at the conference no later than 15 of January 2017.
3. Papers should focus on the Risale-i Nur and address one of the sub-themes listed above. Papers which do not discuss a sub-theme with special focus on the Risale-i Nur will not be considered for inclusion.
4. Additional information on academic studies regarding Said Nursi and the Risale-i Nur can be obtained from the Symposium secretary. Additionally we recommend that you visit the websites www.iikv.org/academy for further resources and information.
5. The Symposium will be conducted in English and Arabic.
6. Limited grants will be made available for travel and accommodation expenses for researchers presenting papers at the symposium.

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