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Occult Sciences, Philosophy, Theurgy: Talismanry in Suhrawardī's Ishraqism

Summary

The dynamic development of conceptual and historical studies of the phenomenon of esotericism in recent decades has also opened new horizons for the long-marginalised study of Islamic esotericism, in which the interaction between Islamic esotericism and the occult has become particularly important. Both disciplines have a strong aspect of secrecy, requiring initiation, transmission to the disciple from the master. The theories and practices of many *Tariqas* and Sufi thinkers are inextricably linked to the occult, as both Islamic esotericism and magical/occult practices are oriented towards transcendence, the supernatural and the soul. It is not surprising that occult acts and instruments derived from pre-Islamic rituals became so inte-

grated into esoteric practices in the Islamic Golden Age that they eventually became an integral part of Sufi metaphysics and cosmology, with the active development of philosophical Sufi thought, and took on quite clear philosophical definitions.

In this paper, by analysing the conceptual development of the talisman as an instrument of magic, the legitimate inclusion of talismanic science and practice into Sufi philosophy will be proved. Drawing on the expressive conception of the talisman (*tillasm*) as a human being developed by Shihāb ad-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 1191), it will be shown how the talisman eventually evolves from a practical instrument used in pre-Islamic magic to a metaphysical concept and an integral part of Sufi philosophy, metaphysics and *tariqa*.

Keywords: Sufism, occult sciences, theurgy, talisman, Suhrawardī, Islamic philosophy.