

# The Neoplatonic cosmology of *Kitāb Ġāyat al-Ḥakīm* and the philosophical legitimation of magic.

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## Abstract

In the *Kitāb Ġāyat al-Ḥakīm*, magical incantations and receipts for the confection of talismans alternate with philosophical passages related to metaphysics, cosmology, physics and psychology. Although the sources of these passages remain to be identified, most of them reflect an Islamized form of Neoplatonism, close to the Arabic paraphrases of Plotinus and Proclus. As is clear from some examples, the author (or authors) of the *Ġāyat al-Ḥakīm* quote(s) these texts in order to provide at the same time a philosophical and an Islamic legitimation for the art of magic. The magician is not invoking demons or pagan deities, but his aim is to influence the secondary causes — stars and planets — which, according to the Islamic Neoplatonic worldview, act on behalf of the first cause, the one and unique God of Islam.