

**In Search of Liberation: An Analytical Look at
the Treatise "The Tale of Western Exile" by
Sheikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi**

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Abstract

Among Suhrawardi's symbolic narratives is "The Tale of Western Exile," which, in comparison to his other allegorical works, is shorter and more concise, yet simultaneously a profoundly complex and dense text. This story, alongside his other narratives, forms a piece of a philosophical-mystical puzzle. Its precise understanding requires a systematic and holistic view of his entire corpus, particularly those works based on the Philosophy of Illumination (Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq). The primary objective of this article is to interpret and analyze the mystery of human estrangement in the earthly realm—an estrangement that seeks, by traversing the stations of spiritual wayfaring (relying on practical functions), to ultimately return to its original homeland. The narrative of the story contains exhortations to perseverance, avoidance of temptations, and warnings about the "brigands" and perilous passes along the path. In this analysis, utilizing mystical literature and supporting textual evidence, we aim to re-examine and illuminate the hidden aspects of this treatise. Furthermore, these objectives will be pursued through an analytical and interpretive method, proceeding step-by-step alongside the original text.

Keywords: Light, Darkness, East, West, Liberation, *The Tale of Western Exile*, Suhrawardi.