

# Announcement

## On the Question of Devil Worship in the Middle East

by

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After over twenty years of research on the religious beliefs and mythology of the Yezidis and Yarsan / Ahl-e Haqq / Kaka'î, the writer can state categorically that these religious communities do not in any way worship Shaytan or any other malign power.

The figure of *Melek Tawus* / *Tawusi Melek* is much revered by the Yezidis and is also respected by some – though by no means all – Yarsan.

The veneration of *Melek Tawus*, who is represented in the shape of a Peacock with many eyes in its tail – is a continuation of the ancient worship of the 1000-eyed Mithra in the Kurdish lands. Mithra is responsible for all that takes place on earth. He is a divine being, like an angel, and no way evil.

The unfortunate association of this figure with a Devil goes back to pre-Islamic times, and is the result of Zoroastrian misunderstandings about the western Iranian / early Kurdish Mithra. It has no basis in fact and the religious life of the above-mentioned communities is not in any way informed by the worship of the Principle of Evil.

To refer to members of the above mentioned communities as worshippers of the Principle of Evil is therefore a calumny based on pre-Islamic misconceptions and without any foundation in fact.

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