

The Scorpion in Muslim Folklore

Written by Administrator

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Abstract



In the dry zone between North Africa and South Asia scorpions have caught the imagination of nomads and sedentary people in various ways. First of all, venomous scorpions have long been considered as embodiments of evil, but also as protectors to counter the powers of other evil forces. This is reflected in beliefs, in pictorial representations of oriental art from early historic periods, and in contemporary Muslim folklore. In the mystical imagery of Islam the scorpion appears as a symbol for the dervish's power of mastering evil. On another level of meaning, the scorpion is also a metaphor for sexuality. The final part of the paper deals with the meanings and uses of scorpions in local folk medicine and magic.

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