

The Druze: A Secret Esoteric Sect

Donna M. Brown

Abstract

The Druze are a tightly-knit, mysterious community with a tradition over a thousand years old. They were likely first brought to the attention of the esoteric community by Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), who initially came into contact with them and other Middle Eastern sects through her friend, Author L. Rawson (1828–1902), the only known outsider to have been initiated into the highly secretive Druze sect. Blavatsky and Rawson’s comments on the Druze, along with those of Charles Leadbeater who claimed that the Master Jesus “lives among the Druses of Mount Lebanon,”¹ have long generated interest in this unique and mysterious faith. But it was not until 1926, and more recent efforts by members of the Druze community, that certain features of their belief system have come to light. Drawing upon these and other sources, this article explores the origins of Druzism, its primary tenets and its connections to Islam, the Gnostics, Persians, Hindus, Templars and Masonry.

Introduction

The Druze are an esoteric, ethno-religious sect who refer to themselves as *Ahl al-Tawhīd* (People of Unitarianism), and as *Al-Muwahhidūn*, which translates to people of “the One, Eternal Religion.” The racial profile of the Druze is mixed. For the most part, the Druze are of Arab descent, but they also have Iranian, Kurdish, European and, according to some, Phoenician and ancient Israelite roots.

It is estimated that there are between 700,000 to 1.2 million Druze in the world, concentrated primarily in the mountains of Lebanon and Syria, with smaller groups in Iraq, Israel, Jordan and Turkey.

The Druze are a fiercely independent group who see themselves as “the self-appointed standard-bearers of *Tawhīd*”²—the belief in

the One God—in the sense that the unist concept became the nucleus around which their entire religion revolves. The word “Druze” is a misnomer that is usually traced to Muhammad bin Ismail Nashtakin ad-Darazi, a dissident 11th-century Isma‘ili missionary and early leader of the Druze faith who was executed for his heretical beliefs. But a number of authorities maintain that the name “Druze” is merely a descriptive epithet, derived from the Arabic *yadrisun* (“those who ‘study’”). Others claim that the word comes from the Arabic-Persian word *daruri* (intuitive knowledge), and *darazo* (bliss),³ or from Shaykh Hussayn ad-Darazī, one of the early converts to the faith.

Helena Blavatsky, and many Druze themselves, trace the Druze brotherhood to more ancient sources that long predate Islam, sources which this article will discuss later in the text. But in its present form, the Druze faith emerged over a thousand years ago in Cairo and had its beginnings in a form of unorthodox Islam. Druzism is an eclectic, syncretistic faith. In addition to including elements of Isma‘ili doctrine, it contains strong currents of Gnosticism and Neo-platonic thought. Adherents of the Druze faith recognize Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad as Major Prophets. The Druze also revere a number of ancient Gnostic Sages such as Enoch and Hermes along with various Greek Philosophers, especially members of the so-called “Eight Sacred Druze Order.”⁴ An ancient Druze manuscript—the *Unique Fifth Science*

About the Author

Donna M. Brown is a long-time student and teacher of esoteric philosophy. Her background includes a career in the arts and election to public office in the District of Columbia. She has served as a Board Member for the *Center for Visionary Leadership*, and the *School for Esoteric Studies* where she continues as a commentator.

— identifies these eight sages as Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, Plotinus, Plato, Parmenides, Democritus and Empedocles.⁵

Some scholars claim that Druzism has links to the Essenes, while others, such as Gerard De Nerval (1808–1855), claim that “the Knights Templar exploited many of the Druze ideas, and that the Rosicrucians and Freemasons have done the same.”⁶ Although many Druze identify as Muslims, many others do not. Rather, these Druze see themselves as members of a heterodox religious sect.⁷ Kamal Jumblatt (1917–1977), a Druze philosopher and influential Lebanese politician describes the Druze faith as a meditative religion and an inclusive method for knowing the Absolute. Druzism has no clergy, rituals, or obligations that are believed to distract one from contemplation of God. Hence, there are those who do not see Druzism as a religion at all, but regard it as a veiled and complex philosophical belief system.

Like many secret societies that claim to possess a hidden, mystical knowledge (*‘irfan*), the Druze community is divided into two groups, the elite few who are initiated into the mysteries (*al’uqqāl* or sage), and the uninitiated or secularist masses (*al’juhhal*) who do not have access to the Druze sacred texts. While instruction into the initiated ranks is possible for both men and women, the process is described as “so demanding that it can discourage the ordinary person who expresses a desire to enter into it.”⁸ Within the *uqqāl* there is a further division or rank called *ajawīd*. The *ajawīd* are the wisest of the wise and the decision makers and leaders within the Druze community. Due to strict vows of secrecy the precise functions of the *uqqāl* and *ajawīd* are difficult to determine. They do, however, exert a tremendous influence over their people, who consult them on important earthly matters and view them as ministers of reconciliation and peace whose very presence banishes discord and chaos.⁹ The so-called pleasures of life are of little interest to the *uqqāl*. Although they are permitted to marry, they seldom do, choosing instead to “detach themselves as much as possible from the ordinary pursuits of mankind” in order to “lead a life of the strictest devotion,

passed in profound contemplation of the mysteries of religion.”¹⁰

Despite the differences in rank and function between the *juhhal* and the *uqqāl*, the Druze have been able to maintain a high degree of communal unity and there is little if any tension among them.

While the Druze have formed thriving communities with a focus on the all-important role of the mind, a strong sense of personal responsibility, moral integrity, hard work and self-reliance,¹¹ the average Druze living in the Levant is likely to have minimal interaction with non-Druze neighbors. What contacts there are tend to be formal and mainly at official levels.¹² Furthermore, there is no conversion to the Druze faith, and exogamy or marriage outside of the community is rare and strongly discouraged. The sect’s beliefs can only be passed on to those who are born to Druze parents. When a member of the Druze community dies, the soul of the deceased is thought to “immediately reincarnate into the body of a newborn Druze babe.”¹³

Although the majority of Druze have taken on the vestitures or outward coverings of Islam, they interpret the fundamental pillars of the Islamic faith—the profession of faith, prayer, charity, fasting in the month of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca—in an entirely different way. Muslims, for example, are obliged to pray five times day. These prayers consist in part, of repeating 3 times the phrase: “There is no God but God...” For the Druze this injunction is transformed into the aim of constantly holding this Supreme Truth in the mind. So too, the mandatory pilgrimage or Hajj, becomes the inner pilgrimage to “the House of God,” and the symbolic seat of Union in God.¹⁴

Due to their lack of nationalistic ideals and their outward adaptability to other faiths, the Druze have been able to integrate into the various countries in which they live and where they have held, and continue to hold, outsized influential political, economic and social positions. Yet their beliefs and customs continue to distinguish them from their Muslim, Christian and Jewish countrymen. This is due in large

part to the fact that the Druze formed closed communities in which their cultural and religious beliefs were concealed from outsiders. What these secretive beliefs are, where they originated, and why the learned system that the Druze developed has remained hidden and unchanged for over a thousand years are questions that this article seeks to address.

The Origins and History of the Druze

Generally Accepted Historical Overview

Most exegeses on Druze origins and history begin in or around the year 1017, and trace Druzism's roots to al-Ḥākīm bi-Amr Allāh (985–1021), the sixth Fatimid¹⁵ caliph and 16th Shia Isma'ili imam, and the Iranian Isma'ili teacher Hamza ibn-'Ali (985–1021). Many adherents to the faith consider Druzism to be an Abrahamic religion, based on the initial impulse from al-Ḥākīm, and the teachings of Hamza. Thus, Druzism is seen as having its roots in Isma'ili esotericism,¹⁶ whose beliefs include, among other things: a belief that God is an Absolute Infinite Reality embracing all realities, a mystical exegesis of the Qur'an, metempsychosis, the return of the Lord of the World and adherence to a form of rigorous occult meditation or *Ibadat* that is thought to eventually produce spiritual elevation.

The Egyptian born al-Ḥākīm (whose name means the one who is commanded by God), was arguably the most controversial Isma'ili Shia caliph and imam,¹⁷ due in part to erratic and ruthless behavior, the strict imposition of legislation on Muslims as well as non-Muslims, and heretical claims made by al-Ḥākīm himself¹⁸ and/or by ad-Darazi that he was God and the prophesied redeemer. Despite much egregious behavior, al-Ḥākīm is said to have been indefatigable in his efforts to defend and consolidate his realm and improve the standard of living for his people.¹⁹ Even his critics described him as a generous and pious man, who placed an immense priority on the education of his people and the Isma'ili Fatimid *da'is* or emissaries of the faith.

Al-Ḥākīm's primary objective was to further the Isma'ili movement, which was then cen-

tered in Cairo. He accomplished this aim by creating an institute (*Dar-al Hikma* or House of Wisdom) for unrestricted scholarly and philosophical studies in which all the religious sciences were taught. Attached to it was *Dar al-Ilm* (the House of Learning), a library that contained a vast collection of manuscripts and books. One source writes that there were:

more than 200,000 bound books, amongst which were manuscripts in all domains of science and culture; books on jurisprudence of all the schools, grammar, philology, traditions of the prophets, history, biographies of rulers, mathematics, astronomy, spiritual knowledge and alchemy.²⁰

Another, the famous Shia historian Ibn Abi Tayyi' (1180-1228), described the library as "The Wonder of the World."²¹

But as Anis Obeid, a Druze physician and founder of the Druze Society in America explains, in May of 1017, after "exploring theological and philosophical approaches that were bolder and more daring than the limits of Isma'ili doctrine,"²² Ḥākīm sought to modify the standard doctrine and to unify the Sunni and Shia sects in a single belief—*al-Tawhīd*—the religion of Unity. In a famous decree, al-Ḥākīm announced a new era of unity and freedom by reminding believers of the Quranic principle that: "There is no compulsion in religion,"²³ that "believers have free will and reason" and should be liberated so they could discern the truth for themselves.²⁴

On the very same day in May 1017, al-Ḥākīm appointed Hamza, who is considered to be the true founder of the Druze faith, to the Imamate. Hamza was a central figure in the intellectual ferment and cross-cultural interface that characterized Cairo at the time,²⁵ but he was a highly controversial choice since his appointment was in breach of the four hundred year old Isma'ili tradition that only passed the Imamate to those with Fatimid blood.²⁶ Nevertheless, Hamza pronounced the divine Call (*da'wa*) to the faith and was tasked by al-Ḥākīm with developing and organizing the newly modified Isma'ili doctrine.²⁷ Thus, it was Hamza who authored the main corpus of

the Druze sacred texts—the *Rasa'il al-Hikma* or “Epistles of Wisdom.”²⁸

During the first year of his neo-imamate, Hamza instructed a group of missionaries and then sent them out to spread the true knowledge of God’s absolute oneness and unity with all creatures. The people who accepted the Call were required to sign a written vow or “Pact of Time Custodian” (*Mithaq Walley El-Zaman*). It’s believed that every Druze has signed this Charter in one of their past lives. According to the Druze Professor Sami Nasib Makarem:

Those who took these vows would be liable for them on the final Judgment Day and their lives would be measured against the promise they made in these contracts.²⁹

These contracts, as Makarem explains, are made possible by the Druze belief in reincarnation, a belief that will be discussed in more detail later.

One of those who aided Hamza in spreading the new Druze doctrine was the missionary, ad-Darazi. But within a year Hamza and ad-Darazi were at odds. Not only was ad-Darazi professing the apotheosis of al-Hakīm, he was using violent means to gain converts. The dispute between the two men escalated when ad-Darazi, who had been distorting aspects of the Druze doctrine and using his position for personal gain, argued that he should replace Hamza as imam. Although ad-Darazi won a number of converts to the faith, his unethical and dishonest methods caused many others to reject the new movement. As a result, the divine Call was withdrawn, and the movement suspended. Shortly, afterwards, in 1019, as Robert Breton Betts writes, in *The Druze*,

Darazi was assassinated (probably with the blessing of al-Hakīm, who saw him as a divisive force in the movement) and then anathematized by the Druze faith as a heretic.³⁰

In the period that followed, a reassessment of the new faith, its structure and tenets took place. The changes that ensued, writes Obeid, “pushed the envelope of Shia Isma‘ili doctrine further from the Isma‘ili mainstream than ever

before.”³¹ The new movement relaxed certain outer, ritualistic ordinances (*zahīr*), such as daily prayer, fasting and the pilgrimage to Mecca, placing the emphasis instead on access to their inner or esoteric (*bātin*) referents. After a year, the suspension was lifted and the Call was reopened. Thus a new religion was born that continued for almost two years, until 1021. Then an unforeseen event took place. Al-Hakīm disappeared on one of his nightly walks into the desert. (While most Muslims believe he died in 1021, many Druze maintain that al-Hakīm departed from them due to the great discord within Islam at the time, and is waiting to return to the world to inaugurate a new golden age when inclusiveness, wisdom and mercy descend into hearts of all Muslims).³² Hamza, along with members of his inner circle, went into hiding. From his place of concealment Hamza imparted instructions to the new Caliph, az-Zāhir who promised to protect the followers of al-Hakīm. Instead, a furious reign of terror ensued in which the followers of the new movement were killed and tortured, forcing the movement to go underground for a second time. This time the suspension lasted 7 years until Hamza, still in retreat, instructed one of his emissaries, Baha’ al-Din (also Bahā’uddīn), to begin to nurture the faithful who had survived az-Zāhir’s persecution.³³ But since open involvement was not possible, Baha’ al-Din set to work codifying the religious teachings of the Druzism, to which he, Hamza and al-Hakīm contributed.³⁴

It was not until 1037 that Baha’ al-Din issued another Call to the faith and a third phase of open enrollment was initiated. Az-Zāhir had been dead for two years, and Baha’ al-Din had gained the respect of the new caliph. After the last of the Druze Cannon had been organized and dated in 1042, the call was permanently ended. The sect would no longer accept new pledges and since that time proselytization has been prohibited. But according to Breton Betts, al-Hakīm continued to send mystic meditations to Hamza until 1047, after which time, as Druze tradition has it, Hamza purportedly left his hiding place in Cairo and traveled to the land of the Chinese oases (Shangri-La or Shamballa), to join al-Hakīm in meditative

contemplation.³⁵ This belief was made somewhat plausible by the fact that al-Hakīm established diplomatic relations with the Song Dynasty in China and some of his retinue were known to have made pilgrimages to Buddhist sites in Shandong. Such ideas certainly contributed to the Druze belief that the souls of many pious Druze have been reborn in parts of western China.³⁶

Most scholars, however, believe al-Hakīm was murdered. But many Druze, continue to hold the belief that he entered into a state of Occultation (or *Ghaybah*) and is concealed by God.

Thus it was from 1047, as Breton Betts tells it,

until the appearance fifty years later of the Crusaders... in 1097, the Druze all but disappear from the stage of history, to reappear only briefly from time to time until their rise as a major political force in the Levant following the Ottoman conquest in 1516.

But the many years of harassment and suffering left a permanent scar on the psyche of the Druze people. What was designed to be a universal faith has survived as a remnant that has been secreted away for nearly a thousand years.³⁷

Alternative Views of the Druze and their Faith

There are a number of other intriguing points of view regarding Druze history. Helena P. Blavatsky, for example, did not concur with scholarly reasonings on the origins of the Druze religion. She writes that “the religious system of the Druse is one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Religion” whose origins are “next to unknown,” but she adds that they are

the descendants of, and a mixture of, mystics of *all nations*--mystics, who, in the face of cruel and unrelenting persecution... have been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the vastness of Syria and Mount Lebanon, where they had from the first found refuge. Since then, they have preserved the strictest silence upon their beliefs and truly occult rites.³⁸

She also says that Hamza, who most Druze view as the Founder of the Faith, was the incarnation of Hamsa (Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib), the uncle of Muhammad. Hamza, she holds, traveled to Tibet in 625 in search of secret wisdom. From that time “he is said to reincarnate in the chief body of the Druze Hierophant (or Okhal) in the same way the Buddha is said to reincarnate among the Tibetan Lamas and Guru-Kings of the Sikhs.”³⁹

The Druze, writes Blavatsky:

are more Lamaistic in their beliefs and certain rites than any other people on the face of the globe. H’amsa, the Founder of their Order, came to Syria from the “Land of the Word of God,” which is a literal translation of Lhasa, the sacred city of Tibet. The spiritual titles given to H’amsa correspond perfectly with those of the Dalai Lama.⁴⁰

Her knowledge of the sect no doubt stemmed, in part, from her friendship with A. L. Rawson (who thought that the Druze held the secrets of the true Chaldean Magi), her travels in the Mid-East and her studies with the various groups she encountered there. In an article titled *Lamas and Druses*⁴¹ she says that contrary to the beliefs of “foolish spiritualists, she was not initiated in the Buddhist pagodas, but belonged to the secret sect of the Druze.”⁴²

In that same article she goes on to equate the Druze with the Sikhs of Asia Minor,

finding many similarities with the late “commonwealth” of the followers of Guru Nanak⁴³--even extending to their mysticism and indomitable bravery. But the two are still more closely related to a third and still more mysterious community of religionists, of which nothing, or next to nothing, is known by outsiders: we mean that fraternity of Tibetan Lamaists, known as the Brotherhood of Khe-lang [a group of Tibetan Lamaists or Chakravartins—wheel-turners or enlightened renunciants.] (author’s brackets.)

The Comte de Saint-Germain is said to have belonged to the Khe-lang Brotherhood.

David B. Wolf, PhD, author of *Jethro, the Druze and Vedic Origins*, seems to affirm Bla-

vatsky's remarks on the East Indian connection when he says that many

Druze consider their roots to be Indian. Their beliefs are pervaded by characteristically Vedic conceptions. For instance, their scriptures, like the Vedic puranas and itihāsas, and unlike chronicles of Middle Eastern religions, describe history dating back hundreds of millions of years, with incarnations of God in a human form appearing at regular intervals. This is akin to the Vedic idea of regular appearances of avatars. Transmigration of the soul is also a central tenet of Druze philosophy. In fact, to describe this principle the Druze use the same analogy as Kṛṣṇa uses in the Bhagavad-gītā [2:22]: "As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones."⁴⁴

Wolf notes further that

Kamal Jumblatt, the late Druze political hero and renowned spiritualist, often extolled Kṛṣṇa, the Bhagavad-gītā, the Rāmāyana, and other Vedic books and personalities in his writings ... He also spoke of Druze going to India and taking sannyāsa... and Jumblatt was himself a vegetarian and considered himself, in his later years, to be living as a vanaprastha, the retired order of life in the Vedic social system.⁴⁵

Dr. Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, in a new study on the Druze,⁴⁶ points to recently discovered manuscripts confirming Hindu and Buddhist influences. Her study shows that there were Isma'ili Fatimid missions at work in India in the 10th century and that a state owing allegiance to the Fatimid caliph was established in Sind. More importantly, recently recovered manuscripts say that al-Hakīm traveled to Sijistan on the Indian border where in meditation he had a vision of a universal religion—a religion in which he "bids the *muwahhidūn* [Druze] to take *hikma* [wisdom] from any lamp or candle they chose. The various paths, means and light are one path and light from the sun of the One Truth and of the One Real, Single and Eternal."⁴⁷ (author's brackets)

Others have suggested that the recorded roots of Druzism go back to ancient Egypt, specifically to the heretical Pharaoh Akhenaten⁴⁸ who replaced the Egyptian pantheon with a single god, the Aten. Akhenaten is sometimes described as the first monotheist and the one who influenced Moses and the Israelite monotheism.

Many Druze believe that they descend from Jethro (meaning pre-eminent,) the priest of Midian, who initiated Moses and is viewed as one of the embodiments of the Universal Mind. In the Biblical story, Jethro not only initiates Moses, he gives him Zipporah (the shining one), one of his seven daughters ("one of seven occult powers"—the light of knowledge—"that the Hierophant is supposed to pass on to the initiated novice"⁴⁹). Midian was one of Abraham's sons through Keturah, and Ishmael was Abraham's son through Hagar. These two sons and their followers, the Midianites and the Ishmaelites, merged into a single group of people.⁵⁰ And it is from this group that the Druze are thought to have come.

Tracing the invisible thread of Druze origins still further, the Druze author, Chadi Ghaith, in an article titled the *Forbidden Fifth Science*⁵¹ considers the Druze to be the Surviving Gnostics who have been able to preserve the wisdom of the Original Cause through the ages. He goes on to state that

the enlightened among the Druze consider their gathering under the Druze name and flag since 1000 years ago as merely one chapter of their very ancient history as Carriers of the Gnostic Flame ever since Atlantis and even before.⁵²

Fundamental Tenets of the Faith

The Druze are a mysterious and secretive sect who rarely speak openly about the more significant tenets of their faith. Furthermore, they practice *al-Taqiyya* or dissimulation, wherein the core elements of the faith are deliberately concealed, denied or even distorted for purposes of safekeeping. However, it should be noted here that *al-Taqiyya* is an inherent characteristic of Gnosticism and many

other esoteric traditions in which important doctrines and practices are kept from those who are uninitiated and unprepared for full access to *hikma* or wisdom.⁵³ Although very little is known about the deeper esoteric aspects of the Druze faith, which can vary for different Druze groups, some of the basic tenets have been made public.

The Concept of Tawhīd

Druzism is a path designed to lead to the recognition of *Tawhīd*—an Arabic term meaning “unification” or “oneness.” *Tawhīd*, says Obeid, “is a concept that combines absolute oneness of God and the unity of all creatures in the oneness of the One and only God.”⁵⁴ *Tawhīd* is not a static belief, but rather a dynamic action that must be lived in virtually every aspect of one’s life.

Members of the Druze community are strict and unequivocal believers in the One God who cannot be defined or fully known by humans. Yet Druze doctrine does not conceive of a God who is solely transcendent, or wholly independent of material existence. While God transcendent is above, beyond, and distinct from creation, God immanent is the sustaining cause within each and every aspect of creation. Makarem elucidates by saying that: “God is Existence itself. He is the only Existent; nothing outside of Him exists.”⁵⁵ “He is the One, without being numerical.”⁵⁶ Druzism can best be described as Panentheism, a form of monistic monotheism, the belief or doctrine that God is greater than the universe but includes and interpenetrates it. Consequently, the Druze reject all notions of plurality and believe that God has no partner or son, nor is He part of a Trinity.

While the Druze concept of *Tawhīd* is virtually identical to Islamic doctrines of *Tawhīd* and to monotheistic beliefs overall, the Druze scriptural view, according to Dr. Sami Swayd, maintains that

monotheists throughout history have generally fallen into three categories: (1) those

who pursue spirituality through vision [of the heart] (ru'yah), (2) those who pursue it through speech [mythic narrative, song and utterances] (qawl), and (3) those who seek it through reason (‘aql). The ... Druzes [are instructed] to apply their own reason and to lead a simple ascetic life that is devoid of worldly comforts and pleasures. Druzism is referred to in the sect’s authentic manuscripts as “the Sect of Reason” (Madhhab al-'Aql).⁵⁷ (author’s brackets)

The emphasis on reason in the Druze faith follows the Gnostic Law

that Cosmic Reason or Divine Mind is the ordering principle in creation. Hence, it is reason, emancipated from all passions and egotistic urges and obtained through a lengthy and arduous process of initiation, which leads to knowledge and union with the One. But *Tawhīd* is more than intellect or knowledge. In an essay on the theme, Omar Wahab describes it as “an experiential certitude,” that depends upon the “re-cognition” that there “is no separation in either space or time between the One and the rest of creation.”⁵⁸ *Tawhīd* in the Druze faith is accomplished through the most profound reflection and meditation where one “bridges the perceived separation and internalizes the all encompassing oneness of existence.”⁵⁹ This process was initiated when existence came into being and continues until the end of time and space.

The religious system of the Druze is “one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Tradition” whose origins are “next to unknown,” . . . they are the descendants of, and a mixture of, mystics of all nations—mystics, who in the face of cruel persecution . . . have been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the vastness of Syria and Mount Lebanon where they had . . . found refuge. Since then, they preserved the strictest silence upon their truly occult rites.

Thus, *Tawhīd* is “a metaphysical truth and a way of life”⁶⁰ as revealed in the Qur’an, the Epistles of Wisdom and in the many other great Unitarian religions and spiritual trends throughout history.⁶¹ It is, says Jumblatt, the essence of knowledge and spiritual ethics based on Greek philosophy, and the very means by which religion itself can be transcended.⁶² Moreover, Druze conceptions of *Tawhīd*, which derive from Sufi notions of *ma’rifā* or gnosis and *fana*, the process by which the individual self is completely annihilated in the ecstasy of union with the Divine, are the ultimate goals of the Druze faith.

Conceptions of God

The Druze do not believe that it is possible for the human intellect, which is bound by the limitations of space and time, to comprehend the infinite, unlimited and immeasurable Absolute in its Essence. As such, God in the absolute sense is referred to as *Lahūt*, an appellation that Obeid says “defies definition, since to define is to know”⁶³ or recognize God as He is in Himself. This is why the Druze adopted an unyielding de-anthropomorphism that divests all attributes from the Divine. In Hamza’s 13th Epistle, the “Disclosure of Truth” (*Kashf al-Haq’iq*), he states:

The Lord [*Lahūt*] does not come under names, languages, and attributes. And I do not say that he is ancient or permanent because the state of being ancient or permanent are mere conditions created by God... His true essence cannot be recognized by sense or imagination and cannot be known through logic or analytical measurement. He is not subject to a known location because that would make him surrounded by boundaries and other locations would be devoid of his presence. Yet no location is devoid of his presence because that would leave a diminution of power. He has no beginning as that would necessitate an end, and he has no end because that would necessitate a beginning. He is not manifest, for that would demand occultation, and he is not occult for that would demand manifestation, for each adjective by necessity needs its counterpart... He has no likeness. God is exalted above and beyond traits, ap-

pellations, languages and everything else, bar none.⁶⁴

Although the Druze deity in the Absolute sense is a pure abstraction and cannot be known (an apophatic belief about God that is shared by many of the western Christian mystics, and is also equivalent to the *neti neti* of jnana yoga and Advaita Vedanta), humanity can understand God as he is reflected in the mind. The Arabic term *Nasut* is used to denote God as he is revealed or reflected to humanity, especially in the form of His Light manifest in a created being. Yet, as Kais Firro points out in his *History of the Druze*:

The *nasut* is not an incarnation of God but an image through which He brings himself closer to human understanding, each manifestation containing a unitarian message.⁶⁵

Nasut, as the Epistles caution, is not the image of deity itself. *Nasut*, according to Swayd

refers to the light of God experienced by certain mystics who have reached a high level of purity in their spiritual journey. Thus, God is perceived as the *Lahūt* [the divine] who manifests His Light in the Station (Maqaam) of the *Nasut* [material realm] without the *Nasut* becoming *Lahūt*. This is like one’s image in the mirror: one is in the mirror but does not become the mirror. The Druze manuscripts are emphatic and warn against the belief that the *Nasut* is God ... Neglecting this warning, individual seekers, scholars, and other spectators have considered al-Hakīm and other figures divine.⁶⁶

The Druze Concept of Creation: The Five Cosmic Principles

The Druze concept of creation is based on emanationism, a cosmological theory asserting that all things flow from an underlying principle or reality, most often conceived as the Absolute Spirit or Ground of Being. Druze emanationism, which has its roots in Neoplatonic philosophy in its Isma’ili elucidation, affirms that creation proceeds from one divine substance or Godhead in a descending progression or series, where each reality arises from the previous one. Emanation theory advocates that everything has always existed (as expressions

of *Tawhīd* or God's Unity) and has not been created *ex nihilo* (from nothing). Although emanationism usually sees creation as unwilled and spontaneous, the Druze believe creation proceeded from God's Will, or "the Cause of Causes." From this essential belief the Druze elaborated a unique hierarchical view with respect to the process of creation. This approach, which also contains Manichaeistic conceptions of the creation of evil, holds that there exists a hierarchy of five cosmic principles (*al-Hudūd*, Arabic: "the boundaries, limits") or graded emanations from God, which exist outside of the space-time framework.⁶⁷ These five are generally understood as: *al-'Aql*, Universal Mind or Intelligence; *al-Nafs al-Kullīyya* or Universal Soul; *al-Kalimah* or the Word; *as-Sābiq*, the Precedent or mental power of the Will and *at-Tālī* or the externalization of God's Will in the corporeal world.

The first archetype (*al-'Aql*) is the intelligent, purposeful principle that comprehends all things and preceded all other beings or things. The first aspect of creation, according to Obeid, "has to be conceptualized in a non-dimensional context and as an expression of God's Will."⁶⁸ Although "this Universal Mind was perfect in enlightenment and power and complete in character and action,"⁶⁹ having no rival or second, it began to take joy in its own perfection, forgetting that creation is the product of the Creator's exalted Will, Thought and Vision. In this way *Aql* was deflected from its purpose and was retarded in its love for the Whole by arrogance, pride and self-love. The result was a creation of an exact antithesis (*dhidd*) or adversary and the struggle between the pairs of opposites. (This particular aspect of Druze thought can be traced to elements of Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism and to the struggle between creation and destruction or the forces of darkness and light.)

Then, as Kais Firro tells it in *The History of the Druzes*:

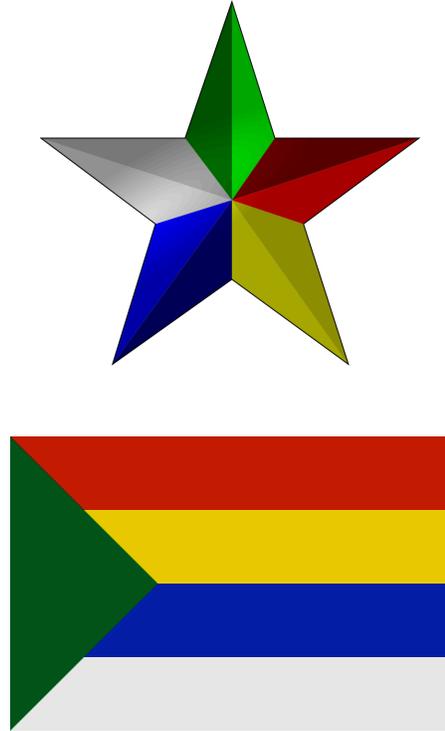
From the *Aql's* Light, God created the Universal Soul (*al-Nafs al-Kullīyya*) as its partner in the fight against the darkness and evil

of *dhidd* [opponent]. From the light of the Soul emanated the Word (*al-Kalimah*); the Precedent (*as-Sābiq*); and from it the Follower (*at-Tālī*). God then issued the spheres, the earth, and the elements. These five cosmic principles form the *Hudūd* (Spiritual *Dignitaries*) with their counterparts on earth.⁷⁰ (author's brackets.)

Although the Druze eschew strict iconography, they depict the Five Cosmic Principles as a five-colored star or pentagram, as shown in Figure 1 below. Intelligence/reason, which is needed for the recognition of Truth is represented by green. The Soul is depicted by red. Yellow represents the Word, which is the purest expression of Truth. The Precedent is represented by blue, which symbolizes the mental power of the will. And Immanence or power realized in the world of matter is depicted as white. The downward triangle in the star symbol is also said to represent the descent of the Universal Intellect into man. The ascending triangle symbolizes the progression of the soul on its return journey toward the One.

In a slightly different interpretation of the Druze star and the flag:

- Green symbolizes "the mind," Christ Consciousness, the pristine mirror of truth, Plato's sun whose light makes knowledge of the truth possible.
- Red symbolizes "the soul," the moon (the gentle reflector of the sun) the receiver of the light, and the *shaheed* [witness] of the truth in every age.
- Yellow symbolizes "the word," or the mediator between Plato's realm of eternity and Aristotle's realm of material existence. "The word" is the purest expression of the truth.
- Blue symbolizes the potential, the mental power of the will to be-come.
- White symbolizes the actualization of the potential, the be-coming of the blue power, the full materialization of Plato's world of forms in the world of matter.⁷¹ (author's brackets)



Figures 1, The Druze Star and Druze Flag⁷²

The five aforementioned principles are also always associated with various human individuals or luminaries who embody the archetypes they represent. For example, the Druze associate *Aql* (Universal Mind or Nous) with Hamza himself. These five “messengers” or “interpreters” of the “Word of the Supreme Wisdom,” as Blavatsky says in her article on the Druze, “are equivalent to the five chief Bodhisattvas each of whom is the bodily temple of the spirit of one of the five Buddhas.”⁷³ It is of interest to note here that associations also exist between the teachings on the Druze star and the *Order of the Eastern Star*, which assigns the names of five biblical heroines, each of whom represents a Masonic virtue, to the colored arms of the Order’s star.

Between the emergence of these five spiritual luminaries and the creation of man, says Firro, “there was a span of three hundred and forty-three million years, consisting of cycles lasting thousands of years until the beginning of the first manifestation of Deity in the human era.”⁷⁴ This figure corresponds roughly to the 306, 720, 000 years of a round or globe manvantara, the Hindu time scale of creation, plus a sandhi (1,728,000 years), and to the 300-320

million year period before the material emergence of man in the Fourth Round.

At the time of that emergence, according to the Druze faith, all human souls [monads?] were created at once and their number is fixed for all time. No sources seem to agree on what that number is, so it is not known whether it coincides with the 60 billion figure given by the Djwhal Khul through Alice A. Bailey.⁷⁵ According to Druze philosophy these souls did not enter into the first human prototypes or bodies that were created. They entered at a later date at which time humans longed to know their Creator. Thus, with the aid of Universal Intelligence, and a measure of free will, humanity acquired the capacity to know God.⁷⁶ (author’s brackets.)

The capacity to know Deity is not limited to earth’s human inhabitants. The Druze believe that there are people living in universes beyond our own, writes Abu Izzeddin, who points to a passage in the recently discovered manuscript *al-Munfarid bi-Dhdtih*, written in 1019, which says:

the planets and luminaries which you see and do not see,- in skies above and below

you, on your right and on your left, are an abode and a resting place for peoples like yourselves, but who have risen high and have been exalted and live eternally in paradise.⁷⁷

The Concept of Cycles

One of the central tenets of the Druze faith is the concept of cycles (*adwar*), wherein awareness of God can be reached through cyclic levels and manifestations. This concept applies to the cyclicity of revelation in which divinely inspired messages are revealed to humankind through a dominant messenger or prophet in a particular period or era, and also to the resultant cyclic spirals of evolutionary growth and development. Although Druzism resorts to *taqiyya* (dissimulation) to protect the tenets of the faith, it usually places an emphasis on two major cycles—“Cycles of Concealment” in which spiritual teachings are limited or veiled, and “Cycles of Disclosure,” in which an advanced understanding of God’s unity or Oneness is possible.⁷⁸

The Druze hold that seven is a sacred number and that time itself is divided into seven cycles each corresponding to the manifestation of Deity. However, it is one single entity that appears in the world in these seven different periods and forms.⁷⁹ In other words, one single being is expressed into seven different fractal aspects.

The first of these messengers was Adam (*Shatnīl* in the Druze faith) the spiritual father of all humanity who transmitted the monotheistic seed and called humanity to the true knowledge of God.⁸⁰ This Adam is also described as the incarnation of ‘*Aql*, Universal Mind or Wholly Mind (sometimes also referred to as the Christ of the Ages). Druzism accepts two, three and sometimes seven Adams, who Obeid describes as “archetypes representing different role models.”⁸¹ The first of these archetypes manifests only after many cycles have elapsed and these cycles of activity are all thought to be the result of Deity’s energizing Will. However, this first archetype or Adam is not the one mentioned in the Bible or the Qur’an. The first Adam symbolizes the creation of Cosmic Mind, the Adam Kadmon

of the Manichaeans and Qabbalah and *Adam al-Safa* (primordial Man) of the Sufis.

The second Adam, the rebellious Adam, is the Adam of the Biblical and Quranic traditions, which tells the story of human consciousness, or the mind that was once defined by wholeness or unity consciousness but became fractured, thereby giving birth to the individual mind and ego. However, the Druze do not see the story of Adam and Eve’s Fall as the “original sin.” Rather, the “Fall” is interpreted as a representation or a facet of the struggle between the pairs of opposites. The third Adam, as Makarem describes him, is a reference to Eve, Adam’s spiritual wife, not his physical wife, but “the emissary who received the seed of knowledge from him and served as the receptacle for its germination and dissemination, just as woman serves as the receptacle for the seed of man where it is germinated and brought forth to life.”⁸² The real Eve, according to Markarem, is the Universal Soul. Thus, as Marakem explains, the Druze do not believe that Adam was the first man or human on earth, for humankind “existed long before the Biblical and Quranic Adam and Eve who go back no more than several thousand years before the birth of Christ.”⁸³

It must be added here that the aforementioned ideas regarding Adam correspond to esoteric philosophy’s Four Adams or Archetypes, as described by Blavatsky; likewise to the existence of the Four Adams each dwelling in the Qabbalistic Worlds; and to the Zohar’s two Adams, the Higher Celestial Adam not subject to decay, and the Lower Adam/Eve or male-female mortal portion who has temporal existence in the Higher.⁸⁴

Reincarnation

The concept of cycles also extends to the Druze view on reincarnation (Arabic: *taqammus*), which asserts that it is only through a series of rebirths that individual human souls, having originated as a spark from the One, can grow and evolve. *Taqammus*, or re-embodiment, which is philosophically related to the Hindu concept of Samsara, is a pivotal component of the Druze faith despite the fact

that it is not mentioned in the Qur'an and is rejected by most Muslims as heretical.

Druzism holds that the number of days in a person's life is fixed. While the body is subject to decay and death, the soul is seen as immortal. Furthermore, it instantaneously incarnates into a new physical form at the time of death. However, after signing the "Time Custodian Pact" or Unitarian Vow taken in a particular lifetime, many Druze believe that the soul can only pass into the body of another Druze. Other Druze dispute this view, along with the generally accepted notion that it is not possible for a male to incarnate as female and vice versa, saying that not only are these matters not referenced in the *Epistles*, they are not in keeping with logic and the concept of divine justice which allows for no discrimination.⁸⁵ For Obeid, incarnation starts from a neutral position since it "provides the only setting for free choice"⁸⁶ and accountability. He notes further, "according to the concept of *Tawhīd*, the only mechanism that levels the playing field is an extension of the human life span to the limits of existence through reincarnation."⁸⁷ Over the course of many lifetimes a soul will undergo a full range of experiences. Whether a particular rebirth is blessed or unfortunate is dependent on one's actions, in a manner that can be likened to the concept of Karma. Importantly, each soul has the opportunity to progress in successive incarnational cycles until it reaches a state of high purity and wisdom and can merge with its spiritual source.

Based on cabalistic figuring in which the number seven and seventy are prominent, many Druze hold that there have been seventy incarnations of God. Others give ten as the number of times God has incarnated in human form on earth. Druzism teaches further that the "true Christ" is a reincarnation of the Cosmic Intelligence or Ultimate Reason on earth. In keeping with certain theosophical conceptions of Jesus Christ, a distinction is drawn between Jesus, the son of Joseph and the Christ his teacher, who the Druze hold is second to God. As Philip Kuri Hitti, the Lebanese American scholar describes him,

the Jesus (ʿĪsa ibn-Yūsuf) of the Druze manuscripts is also somewhat different

from the Jesus of the New Testament. He is rather the Moslem Jesus patterned after the conception of him by the ancient heretic sect of the Docetae⁸⁸ who held that Christ suffered only in appearance.⁸⁹

Others maintain that it was Jesus who suffered and died and not the Christ, but that Jesus is the same identity as the Holy Spirit.

Heaven and Hell

Heaven and hell, in the Druze worldview, are viewed in a metaphysical and spiritual context. Heaven is seen as the apprehension of divine knowledge and the outward demonstration of the soul's utmost perfection. "Hell is the failure to attain this state."⁹⁰ Reward and punishment are seen as self-generating in the Druze faith.

In speaking of Heaven and Hell in his article on the *Forbidden Sixth Science*, Ghaith states the following:

... there is no such thing as HEAVEN or HELL anywhere beyond this world in some realm that transcends the mind's ability to conceive.... Accordingly, eternal punishment takes form in the gradual karmic entanglement of the soul in a behavioral chain-of-causality here on earth.⁹¹

Thus, Heaven and Hell are states of mind. Heaven is the emancipation from ignorance (*jahl*) and illusory existence. Hell is the pain that comes from being deprived of the divine Presence.

Although, certain members of the Druze community believe in a Day of Judgment (*Yawm al-dīn*), others do not. Those who believe in a final Day of Judgment or "Day of Faith" view it as the period wherein al-Hakīm will return again and confront each soul with the memory of all its previous lives and their consequences. Others perceive it as the culmination of a long series of the soul's transmigrations toward illumination and mystical union, or as a kind of Golden Age when death will still continue but be painless for those who have attained a real measure of union or *Tahwīd*. Still others see this day as a judgment that one inflicts upon oneself due to a loss of hope and the inability

to realize that there is no absolute opposition between Existence and Non-Existence.⁹²

Morality and Virtue

Morality is traditionally viewed from two perspectives: 1) as a fixed system of values and principles of conduct that regulate human behavior in the interests of the common good; and 2) a set of rules or commandments laid down by a divine being. Although Druze morality consists of a strict code of ethical conduct and might be said to represent one of the most important aspects of the spiritual life, it dismisses traditional systems of morality as inadequate. From the Druze point of view, writes Wahab, existence is the projection of the Divine; morality and virtue are the divine Norm and part of our original nature; they are not based on specific outcomes. Virtue is not a means to an end. Motive is all-important. One's actions must be based on pure motive, humility, a desire to diminish the ego, and for the purpose of facilitating the knowledge of or expression of unity or oneness.⁹³

Druze morality is most often based on the following Seven Precepts, which must be willingly followed:

- Veracity and truthfulness in speech—the love of Truth
- Fellowship, Brotherhood and aid to one's brethren along the way to Truth
- Renunciation of all forms of former worship (specifically, invalid creeds) and false belief that negate God's fundamental Oneness or Unity
- Repudiation of selfishness, confusion, and all the forces of evil or despotism
- The realization of God's Unity and its expression in the world
- Forbearance which implies moral strength, courage and endurance
- Absolute submission to God's divine will (*taslim*) and service through right thought, speech and action.

Related to these seven precepts are: purity of the mind, the spirit and the body, compassion, justice, tolerance, and fortitude, which involves the practice of detachment and the need to realize a peaceful state of mind regardless of circumstances, austerity, and dignity. Rawson

suggests that some of the above seven precepts are blinds, and there are others that are not printed or written down.

The Role of the Mind

The Druze, whose philosophy is based on Greek and Pythagorean notions of liberation through knowledge, place tremendous emphasis on the role of the mind. As such, they hold that humans are thinking beings with the freedom to explore without restriction all that is possible to be known.

As previously mentioned, Druzism places the Universal Mind (*Aql*), the intelligent purposeful principle, at the apex of its evolutionary scheme. The individual mind is conceived of as the microcosmic representation of the Universal Mind and indestructible with respect to the notion of Time.⁹⁴ Because the mind is thought to be ahead of the Soul in the Druze system, and unique to human beings, it is seen as “a prerequisite for spiritual development.”⁹⁵ Mind, in the Druze view, gives one the power to shape, create and control matter making it an evolutionary agent par excellence. Moreover, mind or knowledge, and reason, are seen as the gateway to awareness or Truth, and the means of *Taqammus or* uniting with the Divine.

But achieving union with the Supreme Source is predicated on having sound ethics, an open mind, pure thoughts, detached focus and the ability to reason and discriminate or see things as they are in reality. Union is also dependent upon listening to the all-important dictates of conscience or the voice of meaning from within. Developing the mind in this way, says Wahab, allows one to develop “pristine awareness” or the intuitive realization of the meaning behind the phenomenal world of existence. He describes this faculty further as “existential insight,” which bypasses the analytical process of reason and judgment to serve as a perfect mirror reflecting God's Will and Purpose. To the Druze then, mind is the means by which humanity as a whole can evolve to become one intelligent consciousness or a single universal mind within the Mind of God.

The mind also plays a significant role with respect to the way that the Druze interpret their

holy texts. Although they recognize the significance of the Qur'an, the Torah, the Bible and other sacred texts, such as Vedic and Greek theological and philosophical literature, these are, as Robert Engelbach describes them, "viewed as shells from which the inner meaning must be extracted."⁹⁶ In fact, the Druze believe that there are three levels to interpreting the sacred texts and that each of these reflect a level of spiritual development and progression. They are:

1. the exoteric, available to anyone
2. the hidden, or allegorical, accessible to those who can reflect or think deeply
3. the esoteric of the esoteric, or *batin al-batin* (a concept also known as Anagogé), a level that is inaccessible to all but the enlightened few.⁹⁷

In Hindu philosophy these are called Śabdārtha, Bhāvārtha and Guhyārtha respectively.

These three levels of interpretation are also equivalent to the method as outlined by Djwhal Khul through the work of Alice A. Bailey on developing the intuition through the study of symbol. They are 1) the exoteric interpretation, based largely on its objective utility and the nature of the form; 2) the subjective or conceptual interpretations, wherein the idea lying behind the objective manifestation is revealed; 3) the spiritual meaning behind the subjective, i.e., its energetic effect and its purpose.⁹⁸

The Druze and Their Relationship to the Templars and Masonry

It is a fact, as Bernard H. Springett wrote in 1922, in the *Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*,⁹⁹ that what we now know as Masonry "has been part and parcel of the religions of the Middle East for thousands of years."¹⁰⁰ Springett based much of what he wrote on the connection between the Druze and Masonry on his own researches and on the notes of A. L. Rawson, a Druze initiate and high-ranking member of several Masonic lodges. Before them, Geoffrey Higgins (1722–1803), whose work also influenced Helena Blavatsky and the early theosophists, along with the French poet

and historian Gerard de Nerval (1808–1855), and the British diplomat, author and mystic, Laurence Oliphant (1829–1888), concluded that certain secret Islamic communities, chiefly the Druze and the Isma'ili Nizaris Assassins¹⁰¹ were responsible for transmitting the ancient Gnostic wisdom to Europe through their influence on the Knights Templar, the Freemasons and the Rosicrucians.

Albert Pike in his *Magnum Opus* or *Great Work* writes in his commentary for the Ritual of the 22nd Degree—"The Knight of the Royal Axe or the Prince of Libanus,"—that the Colleges on Mount Lebanon, begun by Solomon, "were perpetuated by the Druze, from whom the Crusaders obtained their knowledge of this degree."¹⁰²

In the 1890s the Rev. Haskett Smith reasoned that the Druze "retain many evident tokens of their close and intimate connection with the Ancient Craft of Freemasonry."¹⁰³

It is not possible to assert with any certainty that the Druze, who took part in the Crusades under the banner of Islam,¹⁰⁴ conferred initiation on the Knights Templar, whose order was founded in 1118, to guard the Holy Land and protect Christians pilgrims during the crusades, or if it was the Templars who passed on their doctrines to the Druze. Rawson thought that Druzism and its origins are and must forever remain an unsolvable mystery. But, like Pike, he supposed: "that this peculiar sect originated with the Freemasons that followed upon the steps of Solomon."¹⁰⁵ He went on to say that Druze influence on the mind and life of medieval Europe could not be overstated.¹⁰⁶

Indeed, the relationship between the Druze and Masonry is now fairly well established among many historians, Masons, and quite a few Druze themselves. The Mason Jean-Pierre Schmit, who based his article, *The Secret Statutes of the Knights Templar*, on documents from the Vatican archives which belonged to the Masonic Grand Lodge of Hamburg and which describe the secret statutes of the order, makes various references to the Druze.¹⁰⁷ Among other things these official Rules, composed in 1205, refer to the Saracens¹⁰⁸ and the Druze as "fraternal brothers."

In another article on “Freemasonry in Lebanon,” written for the journal of *Archeology and History in Lebanon*, the authors claim that:

the Druze belonged to the subsidiary branch of the first Freemasons, and that their connections with Freemasonry date to the Crusaders, who themselves discovered Freemasonry during their occupation of Palestine. Some Masons go even further, affirming that the titles of the 21st and the 22nd degrees of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Prince of Libanus refer to the followers of that symbolic religion.¹⁰⁹

Timothy Hogan, “Grand Master Ordre Souverain du Temple Initiatique,” in *The Way of the Templar* explains that the primary reason the Christian Gnostics, the traditions of the Rose Cross and the Chevaliers or Knights of the Temple were closely associated with the Druze, the Isam’ilis, the Sufis, and other Muslim brotherhoods was because they acknowledged the same source for many of their doctrines and beliefs.¹¹⁰ These groups also shared an interest in the esoteric interpretation of sacred texts, as well as an interest in Alchemy, Gnosticism, Hermeticism and Astrology. Hogan notes that the Templars were part of a secret mission to establish a link between Christianity and Islam. This mission entailed “seeking out and rescuing from annihilation the secret doctrines”¹¹¹ that were being protected in Europe, but also by schools in North Africa and the Middle East. He goes on to say that associations between the various Muslim Brotherhoods and the Knights of the Temple were so close that the latter were referred to as the “Chevaliers of the Allah.”¹¹²

According to Hogan, these traditions had a special interest in certain fixed stars and their cycles in the heavens. Of particular interest was:

the star of Aldebaran [Alpha Tauri: The Star of Illumination or Revelation in the Bull’s eye that irradiates the Way], was associated with St. Michael in the heavens and St. George on earth. To this day, many Druze Temples in Lebanon feature statues of St. George in their sanctuaries [*Khalwa* or Lodge], and certainly these figures of St. Michael and St. George have been featured in the traditional Knighthood accolade of ‘dubbing.’¹¹³ (author’s brackets)

There are a number of other resemblances and unifying factors between the Druze and Freemasonry. Both groups incorporate the gnostic wisdom of Egypt, Greece, Persia and Islam, and revere Hebraic mystical traditions. Both employ secret handshakes, grips, signs and passwords

that are adopted for purposes of recognition and to make certain that no information pertaining to the esoteric tenets and mysteries of the religion is shared with anyone who is not an initiate. The Druze and Freemasons each utilize circumambulations and hollow pillars¹¹⁴ signifying, among other things, the foundation of the “Sacred Science” and the number two or the pairs of opposites between which one must pass as one of the stages of the initiatory process. Additional similarities can be found with respect to the Druze catechism and Grand Orient Freemasonry in that one can only receive instruction from the *uqqāl* or initiates after taking a number of solemn oaths under the Law of Silence (*Kitman al Dinn*) before entering a cycle of initiation. Moreover, for both the Druze and the Masons, the oath, once

Many Druze identify as Muslims, many others do not, nor do they believe in the principles of the Islamic faith. Rather, they see themselves as members of an heterodox religious sect. Kamal Jumblatt . . . describes the Druze faith as a meditative religion, and inclusive method for knowing the Absolute. Druzism has no clergy, rituals or obligations. Hence there are those who do not see Druzism as a religion at all, but regard it as a veiled and complex philosophical system.

taken, can never truly be rejected or taken back—once a Druze always a Druze; once a Mason, always a Mason. Although a Druze or a Mason may be expelled for unacceptable conduct, neither can be released from his or her contract or pledged word.

Yet another tie between these two groups is the Grand Lodge. Groups like the Rosicrucian Fellowship maintain that the “House of Wisdom or Science” (*Dar al-Hikma*) and the adjacent “House of Learning or Knowledge” (*Dar al-Ilm*), built under the auspices of al-Hakīm in Cairo, constituted a Grand Lodge.¹¹⁵ According to the *Ordre Kabbalistic de la Rose Croix*, Christian Rosenkreuz, after traveling to the mystic city Damcar in Arabia in search of lost knowledge, is said to have established a “House of the Holy Spirit,” modeled after al-Hakīm’s “House of Wisdom,” upon his return to Europe. The young C.R.C. is said to have been instructed by the Arabian adepts during his three year stay in the Mid-East.¹¹⁶

Based on firsthand experience with the Druze in Lebanon and Syria, Rawson elucidates further:

To the central *Dar ul-hikmat* “House of Science” was attached a Grand Lodge, where the candidates for initiation into the esoteric doctrines of Ismailism were instructed in the articles of the faith. Twice a week, every Monday and Wednesday, the *Dai ud-Daawat*, the Grand Prior of the Lodge, convened meetings, which were frequented by both men and women, dressed in white, occupying separate seats. These assemblages were named *Majalis ul-hikmat* or “philosophical conferences.” Before the initiation the *Dai ud-Dawaat* waited on the Imam (the Caliph), the Grand Master, and read to him the discourse he proposed to deliver to the neophytes, and received his sign-manual on the cover of the manuscript. After the lecture the pupils kissed the hands of the Grand Prior, and reverently touched the signature of the Master with their foreheads. Makrisi’s account of the different degrees of initiation adopted in this Lodge forms an invaluable record of freemasonry. In fact, the Lodge at Cairo [which had nine degrees] became the

model of all the Lodges created afterwards in Christendom.¹¹⁷ (author’s brackets)

This model seems to have continued in its basic shape within the context of the current Druze faith.

Druze Initiation

Very little is known about the Druze system of Initiation. However, Rawson communicated some of what he knew to Springett, who wrote about it in the *Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*. Jean-Marc Aractingi’s more recent *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*¹¹⁸ also provides a good outline of admission and initiation into the Druze initiatory scheme.

Aractingi describes admission into the Druze sect as beginning with a period of six months or more in which the Sheikhs or members of the *uqqāl* observe the candidate’s general behavior. Rawson says the probation is long and severe. In evaluating the candidate’s character and actions, his or her past and present circumstances are taken into account. Testimony as to the candidate’s worthiness and sincerity is taken from his or her associates and members of the community. Thus the aspirant faces not only the judgment of the Sheikhs but also that of society in which he or she lives. If the candidate is deemed worthy, he or she then undergoes a preliminary test, which consists of questioning by the Sheikhs.¹¹⁹

Once entered as a beginner or Apprentice (*Mubtadi*), the candidate must undergo a two-year period of probation. If the probationer passes the *first initiatory test*, which Rawson says is a daylong ordeal designed to rigorously test the candidate’s self-control and physical and mental endurance,¹²⁰ he or she must undertake a solemn oath and make a written contract before entering a cycle of initiations.

The oath, taken on a section of the Epistles of Wisdom, as Rawson explains, involves the unequivocal acknowledgement of the Oneness or Unity of God (*Tawhīd*) and surrender to God’s Will. The written contract makes one a secret guarantor of the Unitarian religion.¹²¹ It is also thought that the initiate must commit him or herself to playing a part in the rebuild-

ing of Solomon's Temple.¹²² This is not as surprising it may seem given that the Druze in Lebanon claim to have supplied the "Cedars" (a symbol for "Great Men" or "trees of Righteousness") that were used in the building of the arc of the first Temple. Hence the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite assignment of the Druze, i.e., the Royal Axe or Prince of Libanus to the 22nd degree, which deals with "great work or labor."

At each initiation the candidate is given gradual access to the various ancient manuscripts. Some of these manuscripts are part of a long initiatory chain given only to those who have been prepared to receive them. A portion of these manuscripts, according to Kamal Jumblatt, a Lebanese Druze initiate, are "certain works of ancient Egypt, in particular the secret work of Hermes Trimégiste, known to us under the name of Imhotpe... the builder of the first Pyramid in Sakharah, one of the first initiatory centers of antiquity."¹²³

Instead of the nine Degrees instituted at the Grand Lodge in Cairo, the Druze are said to have five Degrees. According to Rawson, the "first three degrees are typified by the three feet of the candlestick of the inner Sanctuary.... The 'three feet are the holy Application, the Opening, and the Phantom.'¹²⁴ These three correspond to man's inner and outer soul, and his body, which is viewed as a phantom or a passing shadow. The five degrees are emblematic of the five mystic elements or cosmic principles, with the "last two being the most important and terrifying in their grandeur."¹²⁵

In the closing paragraph of his letter to Blavatsky about his initiation into the Druze sect, Rawson, who was given special dispensation to move through the stages of aspirant and apprentice quickly, concludes by saying that the Druze initiation

is so peculiar that it could not be printed so as to instruct one who had not been "worked" through the "chamber." So it would be even more impossible to make an exposé of them than of the Freemasons. The real secrets are acted and not spoken, and require several initiated persons to assist in the work.¹²⁶

Conclusion

This article has sought to tell the story of the mysterious Druze, a small and exclusive group that has baffled and intrigued scholars, missionaries and the curious for centuries. The complex origins of the Druze people and their rich syncretic beliefs, which presents as a complex mix of Neo-Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy, Gnosticism and Shia Isma'ili Islam, along with elements of Persian, Hindu and Judaic thought, have been discussed. The Druze lineage, as this article has also attempted to show, has clear links to the Templars and Freemasons, suggesting that Druzism has the hallmarks of an occult fraternity that has endured from ancient times.

One of the most important tenets of the Druze system is its emphasis on *Tawhīd* or God's absolute Unity or Oneness. For the Druze *Tawhīd* "does not simply mean that all religions are of the same monotheistic source, but that the source is the essence of everything in it. There is no separation between God and man, or between God and any other aspect of the universe."¹²⁷ Hence, *Tawhīd* is more than a fundamental concept; it is something that is to be perceived and lived in every single moment of life.

In addition to the concept of God's Absolute Oneness, the Druze adopted the Neo-Platonic doctrine of cyclic re-embodiments of the Universal Intelligence emanating from the Ineffable Logos or Creator, wherein each succeeding manifestation is the result of the previous cycle. Reincarnation is another feature of this eclectic sect, along with a strong emphasis on brotherhood, morality, initiation and reason.

Because the sacred literature of the Druze is not widely circulated, and its inner teachings, like a precious gem, are still hidden away or conveyed in the language of occult blinds, any attempt to write their story will consist of a mixture of fact and various speculative theories. Complicating matters further is the fact that the Druze themselves hold very different views about their origins, beliefs and practices. Many Druze identify as Muslims and rely on the Qur'an (along with the Epistles of Wisdom) as their primary books. Yet there are also

Druze communities who maintain that Islam has nothing to do with Druzism at all, that its language is universal and that Druzism is not a religion but more of a sacred science or a “timeless Mind creed than anything else.”¹²⁸ Despite these, and other complicating factors, it is clear that the Druze have deep esoteric roots and are one of the keepers of the Ancient Wisdom.

At present the Druze are facing a number of challenges. They are a people without geopolitical allies, and as such, they are a forgotten minority in the Middle East. The Druze are also under threat in countries like Syria and Iraq where once again they are being persecuted for their beliefs, and in Lebanon, due to political tensions in the region. Moreover, many Druze communities have lost contact with the modern world owing to long entrenched Druze traditions and habituated ways of thinking that run counter to the dynamic and progressive intent of *Tawhīd*.¹²⁹ Their numbers continue to dwindle because of their exclusive nature and their strict rules on endogamy and entrance into the faith. On the positive side, there has been renewed interest in this unique and highly guarded sect along with the emergence of new information, much of it coming from the Druze themselves regarding the basic tenets of their faith and its sacred literature. In light of these factors some Druze, such as Obeid, have called for reforms that would allow for greater openness, access and entry into the Druze faith as well as greater adaptability to the societies, especially in the West, where a number of Druze now live.¹³⁰ But it is an open question as to whether the Druze people, their sacred texts and their secrets will continue to survive.

¹ Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Masters of the Path* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925), 42.

² Anis Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 11.

³ *Druze or Druze*, Online Encyclopedia, http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/DRO_ECG/DRUSES_or_DRUZES_Arab_Druz_.html (accessed August 30, 2016).

⁴ Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*, <http://www.druzenet.net/dn-thefifthscience.html>. (accessed December 1, 2016).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Gerard De Nerval, *Journey to the Orient* (reprint 2012; Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1930), 238.

⁷ Miriam Cooke, *Nazira Zeineddine: A Pioneer of Islamic Feminism* (London: Oneworld Publications

⁸ Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 100.

⁹ George Washington Chasseaud, *The Druze of Lebanon: Their Manner, Customs and History* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan, 2009), 378.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Robert Breton Betts, *The Druze*, Hartford, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 54.

¹² Ibid., 36.

¹³ Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 145.

¹⁴ Jean-Marc Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2008), 23.

¹⁵ The Fatimid or Isma‘ili Shia Caliphate trace their lineage to Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad and her husband Ali ibn Abi Talib, who the Shia believe should have been the first Caliph after the death of Muhammad.

¹⁶ Ismā‘īlism is a branch of Shia Islam with an emphasis on the engagement of both the spirit and the intellect. Ismā‘īlism contains Gnostic and Neo-platonic influences, which posits the creation of the universe by a process of emanation from God. It also contains a strong esoteric dimension based on the idea that the Qur’an contains an inexhaustible wellspring of allegorical and symbolic inspiration lending itself to a spectrum of interpretations. The unity and absolute transcendence of God is the first and foremost article of the Isma‘ili faith. The Druze adopted these and other Isma‘ili and Shia beliefs and practices.

¹⁷ For contrasting views of the controversial al-Hakīm, see: *Caliph of Cairo: Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah*, by Paul E. Walker (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010) or *The Shi’a Imamate: A Fatimid Interpretation*, by Sami Marakem (London: I.B. Tauris and Co., 2013).

¹⁸ Both the Isma‘ili’s and the Druze dispute the assertion that al-Hakīm claimed to be God,

- since such a contention is considered to be blasphemous in Islam. They maintain that such claims were made by ad-Darazi and compounded by information on the part of the Abbasid Caliphs. It should also be noted that while al-Hakīm was viewed as an infallible leader among the Druze and the Isma‘ili’s, the Jews and Christians saw him as a tyrant who destroyed their synagogues and churches—places of worship that he eventually rebuilt.
- 19 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 56.
- 20 Pensator, “Dar Al-Ilm: The House of Knowledge in Cairo,” *The Rosicrucian Heritage Vol. 20, No. 2, 2013*, 16. Online at: www.amorac.org.uk (accessed January 21, 2017).
- 21 See for example: “The Father of Alchemy,” by Jābir ibn Hayyān, in the *Rosicrucian Beacon*, September 2016, Vol. 25. No. 4. Online at: https://amorac.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/2016-09_RC_Beacon.pdf.
- 22 Pensator, “Dar Al-Ilm: The House of Knowledge in Cairo,” 80.
- 23 *The Qur’an*, 2: 256, trans. A. Yusuf Ali (reprint 1977; Lahore: Asharf Printing Press, 1975).
- 24 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 80.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 The Fatimids claimed descent from Fatima bint Muhammad, the daughter of the prophet Muhammad.
- 27 It should be noted here that some Isma‘ili’s discount the belief that al-Hakīm supported and encouraged Hamza and the deviant teachings of the Druze. However, most scholarship corroborates the Druze version of events.
- 28 Other ancient Druze texts the *Rasa’il al-Hind* (Epistles of India) and the previously lost (or hidden) manuscripts such as *al-Munfarid bi-Dhatihi* and *al-Sharia al-Ruhaniyya*, having to do with the unique essence of the Divine and spiritual law respectively, as well as others including didactic and polemic treatises.
- 29 Sami Nasib Makarem, *The Druze Faith* (Ann Arbor, MI: Caravan Books, 1974), 18.
- 30 Robert Breton Betts, *The Druze* (London: Yale University Press, 1988), 11.
- 31 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 89.
- 32 Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society*, 105.
- 33 Breton Betts, *The Druze*, 12-13.
- 34 Ibid., 13.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 This information was related by the Druze to Sir Lawrence Oliphant and is discussed in his book (*The Land of Gilead*), which is based on his travels to Egypt and the Mid-East. According to recent statistics, there are 14.6 million Muslims living in China today.
- 37 Breton Betts, *The Druze*, 14.
- 38 Ibid., 176.
- 39 “Great Theosophist: The Druze of Mount Lebanon,” *Theosophy Vol. 26, No. 1, 1937*. <http://www.wisdomworld.org/setting/druzes.html> (accessed Oct 26, 2016).
- 40 H. P. Blavatsky, “Lamas and Druses,” in *H. P. Blavatsky’s Collected Writings* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1996), 175.
- 41 Ibid., 176.
- 42 H. P. Blavatsky, *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*, vol. 1, 1861-1879 (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2003), 413. Despite Blavatsky’s claim to “belong to the secret sect of the Druze,” it does not appear that she was actually initiated into the faith. She did however, study with them.
- 43 Guru Nanak (1469–1439), was the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus.
- 44 David B. Wolf, *The Druze and Vedic Origins*, <http://www.veda.harekrsna.cz/connections/Vedic-Druze.php> (accessed December 20, 2016).
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society* (Leiden. NLD: Brill Academic Publishers, 1993), 121.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Timothy Hogan, *Entering the Chain of Union* (Lulu.com, 2012), 211.
- 49 H.P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (reprint 1966; CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 1892), 386.
- 50 See *The Exodus Route: The Wilderness of Shur*, <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-wilderness-of-shur-ishmaelites-midianites-amalekites.htm> (accessed December 20, 2016).
- 51 Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*, <http://www.druzenet.net/dnthe5thscience.html> . (accessed January 8, 2017).
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Kais Firro, *The History of the Druzes* (Leiden, NLD: Brill Academic Publishers, 1997), 22.
- 54 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, xi.
- 55 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 41.

- 56 Hamza ibn ‘Alī, *The Epistles of Wisdom*, No. 5-14. The Epistles are held in the Shay Nasib Makarem collection, Aytat, Lebanon.
- 57 Sami Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*. Online at: www.eial.org/mesp/Swayd.rtf.rtf (accessed December 23, 2016).
- 58 Omar Wahab, *A Glimpse of Eden*. Online at: <http://www.druzeworld-wide.com/Articles.html>. (accessed December 31, 2016).
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*. www.eial.org/mesp/Swayd.rtf.rtf (accessed January 8, 2017).
- 62 Kamal Jumblatt, as quoted by Dr. Nazek Abu-Ilwan Abed in *Jumblatt, Religion, and Tawhid*.
- 63 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 103.
- 64 Ibid., 104.
- 65 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 13.
- 66 Samy Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*.
- 67 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 129.
- 68 Ibid., 130.
- 69 Ibid., 131.
- 70 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 11.
- 71 David Kendall, *The Druze People in Syria*. <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/sy-druz.html> (accessed January 8, 2017).
- 72 Both images are in the public domain.
- 73 Blavatsky, *The Lamas and the Druze*, 152.
- 74 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 11.
- 75 Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (reprint 1979, New York: Lucis Trust, 1951), 579.
- 76 Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society*, 113.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*.
- 79 See for example: *The Nusayri’s Religious System: The Concept of God*. Online at: http://mahajjah.com/5-the-nusayris-religious-system-the-concept-of-god/#_ftn32 (accessed January 3, 2017).
- 80 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 68.
- 81 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 124.
- 82 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 69.
- 83 Ibid., 70.
- 84 *The Qabbalistic Keys to Creation of Man*. Online at:
- http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/secret_teachings/sta30.htm (accessed January 9, 2017).
- 85 Obeid. *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 159.
- 86 Ibid., 153.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 The Docetae doctrine maintains that Christ’s body was merely a phantom or appearance, or that it was comprised of spiritual substance. This doctrine according to Philip Hitti, “was handed down to the Moslems probably through Manichaean channels. The Manichaean movement, which arose in close connection with Mandaeanism in ‘Irāq or southern Babylonia, about the middle of the third century A.D., and which, as *al-Fihrist* declares, was a blend of the old Magian cult with Christianity, was Iranian in its mythology and cosmological beliefs.”
- 89 Philip K. Hitti, *Origins of the Druze People and Religion* (reprint 2008; New York: Ams Pr Inc., 1928), 40.
- 90 Pam Rohland, *The Druze*, <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Bu-Dr/Druze.html>. (accessed November, 23, 2016).
- 91 Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Wahab, *A Glimpse of Eden*.
- 94 Obeid. *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 138.
- 95 Ibid., 267.
- 96 Robert Engelbach, *Esoteric Muslims: The Druze*. Online at: <http://www.spiritofthescriture.com/id2639-esoteric-muslims-the-druze.html> (accessed January 21, 2017).
- 97 Samy Swayd, *The Historical Dictionary of the Druze* (London: Rowan and Lightfield, 2015), 223.
- 98 Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (Reprint 1978; New York: Lucis Trust, 1950), 7-8.
- 99 Bernard H. Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon* (London: Kegan Paul, 2006).
- 100 Ibid., 1.
- 101 The Isma‘ili Nizaris Assassins have commonly been thought to be hashish smoking, murderers who assassinated their religio-political adversaries in parts of the Muslim world. New scholarship has largely discredited these long-standing claims as part legend and part intrigue among orthodox Muslims and Christians who viewed the esoteric Nizaris as heretics. The appellation, “Assassin” or Assesseen

- in Arabic, is now thought to signify the Nizaris as “guardians” of a secret wisdom that could not be given out to the unworthy or ignorant.
- ¹⁰² Albert Pike, “The Knight of the Royal Axe or the Prince of Libanus Degree.” This article was extracted from Pike’s *Magnum Opus or Great Work* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger), XXII...5.
- ¹⁰³ As quoted in *Heirs to Forgotten Kingdoms* by Gerard Russell (Philadelphia: Basic Books, 2014), 115.
- ¹⁰⁴ Hitti, *Origins of the Druze People and Religion*, ch. 2, p. 5. Hitti describes how the Tanūkh, one of the two most powerful families in Lebanon, “led their incursions into the Phoenician coast and finally succeeded in holding Beirūt and the maritime plain against the Franks.”
- ¹⁰⁵ Rawson as quoted by Springett in *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 40.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jean-Pierre Schmit, *The Secret Statutes of the Knights Templar*. Online at: <http://www.lesfilsdelavallee.fr/index.php/en/the-secret-statutes-of-the-knights-templar>. It should be noted here that these documents, which are copies of documents found in the Vatican and copied by the Danish scientist Fredrick Münter, were thought to have been fake. But new research based on the work of Benjamin Tudela (1130–1173) gives more credence to claims of their authenticity. Timothy Hogan discusses these matters in the *Way of the Templar* (Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publishing, 2015).
- ¹⁰⁸ The word “Saracen” is primarily associated with the Crusades and was synonymous with “Muslim” in the Medieval Period.
- ¹⁰⁹ Gerard Figuie, Rita Sayegh, Riad Abou Jaoude, “Freemasonry in Lebanon: An Overview,” *Archaeology and History in Lebanon*, Issue Twenty Five, Winter 2007, p.8. For additional information on the Druze and Masonry see: http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sumer_anunnaki/reptiles/serpent_tribe/serpent_tribe16.htm.
- ¹¹⁰ Timothy Hogan, *The Way of the Templar* (Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publishing, 2015). 22.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., 24.
- ¹¹² Ibid., 22.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 23.
- ¹¹⁴ “A Topic of Masonic Interest: The Druze.” Online at: <https://freshfromthequarry.com/2015/10/01/to-pic-of-masonic-interest-the-druze/>. (accessed November 18, 2016).
- ¹¹⁵ “The Secret Tradition of Islam,” by the Life Science Fellowship http://www.alpheus.org/html/articles/esoteric_history/secret_islam.html. (accessed February 4, 2017).
- ¹¹⁶ “Mystery of the Rose Cross,” *Ordre Kabbalistic de la Rose Croix*. <http://www.okrc.org/index.php/en-us/tradition-of-the-korc/the-rose-cross/6-mystery-of-the-rose-cross>. (accessed February 6, 2017).
- ¹¹⁷ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 41.
- ¹¹⁸ Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 70.
- ¹²⁰ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 206.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., 194-195.
- ¹²² See for example, *Sons of the Serpent Tribe-The Old Battle Axe: Qadosh, The Cedar Mountain*: www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sumer_anunnaki/.../serpent_tribe/serpent_tribe16.htm, and *The Way of the Templar*, by Timothy Hogan.
- ¹²³ Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*, 82.
- ¹²⁴ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 205.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 192.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid., 207.
- ¹²⁷ Engelbach, *Esoteric Muslims: The Druze*.
- ¹²⁸ Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*.
- ¹²⁹ Obeid, *The Druze and their Faith in Tawhid*, 263-264.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid., 264-265.