

# THE DRUSES

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## PREFACE

SOME explanation is necessary to account for the inclusion in the Islām Series of a book about the Druses. Though the Druses are not a Muḥammadan sect, yet their origin, like that of the Nosairis, is closely connected with the Ismā'īlian movement in Islām and their religion can only be understood in the light of their origin, which is a Muḥammadan one.

The most exhaustive work on the subject is Silvestre de Sacy's *Exposé de la religion des Druses*, and I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to it for a great deal of valuable information.

EDWARD SELL.

*September 1, 1910.*

## THE DRUSES

I HAVE shown in the *Cult of 'Ali* how the personal devotion to him and his family led to the formation of the dogma of the Imámat, and to many curious developments of religious thought, of which the Druse religion is one of the most peculiar. To make this clear I now give a somewhat fuller account of the methods of the Ismá'ilian teachers.

The Ismá'ilians are famous for the esoteric views they held and for the activity with which they propagated them. One extreme section received the name of Báṭinis, a word which means 'inner' and is applied to them because they held that there was an inner or esoteric meaning of the Qur'án, that this was of far more importance than positive law, and that this meaning was known only to the initiated. Revelation came through prophets, but interpretation came through the Imáms. They were the depositaries of all knowledge, and only from them, or from their emissaries, could men find the right path or the explanation of the many enigmas of life.

As the Imáms of the Ismá'ilians were concealed, their interpretations could only be given by men appointed for the purpose, who had been initiated into all the secrets of the sect. These were called Dá'ís, or missionaries. There were nine distinct stages or degrees through which the neophyte could pass. When a Dá'í wished to make a proselyte he proceeded to ask questions on obscure passages in the Qur'án, to point out that the intellect of man was powerless to understand them or even the events of daily life. If the Dá'í perceived that the person he addressed was intelligent and accustomed to controversy he accommodated himself to his opinions, showed him great respect and praised all he said. On the other hand, if the person addressed was a simple-minded ignorant man, the Dá'í would then affirm that religion was a secret science known only to a few, and that the great division amongst Muslims was owing to the fact that they did not recognize in the Imáms the special knowledge God had given to them. Gradually the pupil began to see that much in life and in religion was an enigma to him, and that the Dá'í possessed knowledge which he did not, so doubt imperceptibly crept into his mind, and he became more and more susceptible to the influence of the Dá'í, who now took for the subject of discussion the literal and allegorical<sup>1</sup>

١ تاويل الايات و تنزيلها

meanings of passages in the Qur'án. The esoteric meaning of these<sup>1</sup> was known to the Imáms and had been handed down from them to approved teachers in each generation. When the faith of the neophyte was sufficiently shaken and his curiosity excited, the Dá'í proceeded to put such questions as these: What is the meaning of the casting of the pebbles and of the running between Mounts Šafá and Marwa?<sup>2</sup> Why is a woman, who has omitted the fast and the namáz, obliged to keep the fast some other time but not to supply the omission of the prayers? Why did God take seven days to create the world, when He could have done it in an hour? How can it be true that the skin of the damned will be changed into a new skin, or that the new skin which has not taken on the sins of the other shall be tormented in fire?<sup>3</sup>

Who are Gog and Magog, Hárút and Márút? What are the seven doors of hell and the eight gates of heaven? What is the meaning of the words, 'Which move quickly and hide themselves away.'<sup>4</sup> What is the meaning of the letters, Alif

معانيها و بواطنها

<sup>2</sup> These are ceremonies connected with the Hajj. See Sell's *Faith of Islam* (3rd ed.) p. 340.

<sup>3</sup> Those who disbelieve Our signs, We will in the end cast into the fire: so oft as their skins shall be well burnt, We will change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the torment. —*Súratu'n-Nisá'* (iv) 59.

<sup>4</sup> *Súratu't-Takwír* (lxxxix) 16.

Lám, Mím, etc., at the beginnings of certain Súras? Why were seven heavens created and why has the first chapter of the Qur'án seven verses? Why did twelve fountains gush forth when Moses struck the rock;<sup>1</sup> why are there twelve months in a year?<sup>2</sup>

The Dá'í then led on the pupil through the mazes of philosophic speculation; puzzled him with recondite questions with reference to the spiritual and the natural worlds; and on the strength of the text, 'On earth are signs for men of firm belief and also on your own selves, will ye not then behold them?'<sup>3</sup> declared that it was incumbent on the believer to make great efforts to get at the inner meaning of these things. He also quoted the verses: 'God setteth these similitudes to men that haply they may reflect'<sup>4</sup> 'We will show them our signs in (different) countries and among themselves, until it is plain to them that it is the truth.'<sup>5</sup> These words plainly show, he said, that it is the intention of God to conduct you to the place where all these mysteries are made known, that is, to the true Imám. If you give your attention to his teaching, you will be delivered from error, and the most sublime truths will be made quite clear to you. Do you not see, he continued, that you are ignorant about

<sup>1</sup> Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) 57.

<sup>2</sup> Súratu't-Tauba (ix) 36.

<sup>3</sup> Súratu'dh-Dháráyát (li) 20-1. <sup>4</sup> Súratu Ibráhím (xiv) 30.

<sup>5</sup> Súratu'l-Fussílát (xli) 53.

yourselves and so are ignorant of all other things. Has not God said: 'He who has been blind here, shall be blind hereafter, and wander far from the way.'<sup>1</sup>

Having thus excited the desire of the neophyte, the Dá'í became as reticent as he had before been communicative. He said that all these matters were revealed to none but a few, and then only after a long and severe course of training, and that no one should be over eager in this matter. He quoted the verse, 'Remember that we have entered into a covenant with the prophets, and with thee, and with Noah, etc.'<sup>2</sup> to show that no further steps could be taken, unless a covenant were made and a promise of loyalty and devotion to the Imám were given. The inquirer had to swear not to divulge any secrets, not to assist the enemies of the Imám, nor in any way whatever to swerve from an unquestioning obedience to his spiritual directors, and not to require a reason for any instruction given to him, or for any duty required of him.

The oath once taken, the inquirer entered upon the second degree, in which he learned that true knowledge came only through the Imáms, and that the calamities which had fallen on Islám were due to the general neglect of this

<sup>1</sup> Súratu Bani Isrá'íl (xvii) 74.

<sup>2</sup> Súratu'l-Ahzáb (xxxiii) 7, 23; see also Súratu'l-Má'ida (v) 1; Súratu'n-Nahl (xvi) 93-4; Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) 77.

truth. Not until he had thoroughly grasped this idea was he allowed to pass on to a higher stage.

The object of the third degree was to teach him that the reason why there were seven Imáms and no more was that there were seven planets, seven climates, seven heavens, and so on. The number seven is a sacred one. He was also taught that the Imámities in recognizing twelve Imáms had departed from the true Faith, that only to those who recognized Muḥammadu'l-Ḥabīb as the seventh and last Imám would the mysteries of religion be revealed, and to such alone would be made known the exoteric and esoteric doctrine of things. All this was taught with much prudence and without haste.<sup>1</sup>

In the fourth degree he was taught matters of the utmost importance. He learned that the prophets entrusted with the production of new religions were seven in number. They are known as Nátiqs. Their names, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Muḥammad, and, last of all, Muḥammadu'l-Ḥabīb, the son of Ismá'il, in whose person was gathered up and terminated all preceding knowledge—'Ulúmu'l-Awwalín—a term which may be said to denote the idea that the esoteric meaning of religion was perfectly known to him.

الا ان ذلك يكون تفسيره على احكام و تمهيد بغير مجازفة<sup>1</sup>  
ولا استعمال

Nowári, quoted by Silvestre de Sacy in *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. 1, p. cxvi.

As Muḥammadu'l-Ḥabīb, then, alone had the key to all mysteries, as in him the 'cycle of the old faiths with their positive precepts and inculcation of the letter' terminated, and as with him began 'the knowledge of that allegorical significance latent in all the preceding religions', all who would be on the right path should follow him, in other words should become Ismá'ilians. Each prophet had a special companion, called Sús.<sup>1</sup> Thus Adam had Seth; Noah, Shem; Abraham, Ismá'il; Moses, Aaron; Jesus, Simon Šufá,<sup>2</sup> or the pure one; Muḥammad, 'Alí. The proselyte who passed through this degree ceased to be a Muslim, for he could only attain to it by acknowledging a prophet posterior to Muḥammad, the founder of Islám, and a revelation which superseded the Qur'án and all that had gone before. He was now committed to a very definite position of antagonism to the whole of the Muḥammadan world. The great majority of men stopped here, for the other five degrees were confined to a select few.

In the fifth degree the inquirer was taught many mysterious things with regard to the use of numbers and, above all, that moral commands and religious ceremonies were to be explained allegorically. He also learnt that each Imám

<sup>1</sup> سوس the Druses use the form أساس Asás. The word سوس means source or origin: أساس is a foundation.

<sup>2</sup> Called الصفا the Pure: it is evidently meant for Cephas.

had twelve ministers, each called the *Hujjat*, or Proof, whose duty it was to make known his teaching to men.

In the sixth degree the very foundation of religious belief was attacked. Hitherto the proselyte had been taught that though one religion superseded another, yet all came originally from God. Now he learned that the opinions of philosophers were superior to those of the prophets, that religious creeds were clever artifices to fetter reason. The race had now outgrown the need of such a fiction as revealed religion. The *Arkānu'd-din*, the obligatory practices of *Islām*, were all explained away allegorically, and so it was no longer necessary to observe them.

In the seventh degree it was shown that, as, according to the instruction given in the fourth degree, each great prophet had an assistant, so *Ismā'il* had his son *Muḥammadu'l-Ḥabīb*. This led on to the teaching of the principle of dualism—something which gives and something which receives. It was explained that this principle was to be found in the *Qur'ān* and in religion. Thus of creation it is said, 'When God createth a thing, He only saith *'Be' (كن)*.'<sup>1</sup> This is the first and the greater of two powers; but the second is found in the words, 'All things have We created after a fixed decree' *(تقدير)*.'<sup>2</sup> Thus.

<sup>1</sup> *Sūratu 'Alī 'Imrān* (iii) 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūratu'l-Qamr* (liv) 49.

will and necessity form a dualism. The Tablet and the Pen give another illustration. The Pen writes the *Qur'ān*, the Tablet receives it.<sup>1</sup> All this pointed to the existence of a dualistic principle in the universe. The object of it all was to destroy belief in *Tauḥid*, or the Unity.

Then came the eighth degree in which dualism was carried a stage further, and it was said that there were two Beings who rule the world, the one pre-existent to the other and raised above it. The pupil had by this time become completely bewildered, and so was prepared for the final stage.

In the ninth degree the neophyte was led on to nihilism. There was no God, no law, no religion. All who maintained the truth and existence of these things were to be treated as enemies. The universe was eternal.

The *Dā'is* thus led their more promising disciples on to unbelief in God and in man. 'These men were furnished with an "armoury of proselytism" as perfect, perhaps, as any known to history, they had appeals to enthusiasm, and arguments for the reason, and "food for the fiercest passions of the people and times in which they loved".'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the *Lauḥu'l-Maḥfūz* on which the decrees of God are written. It is referred to in *Sūratu'l-Burūj* (lxxxv) 21-2. 'It is a glorious *Qur'ān* written on the preserved table.'

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt*, p. 94.

Such were the methods by which the Ismá'ilians, emancipated from the control of a moral law, were formed into a fanatical sect, spreading destruction all around.<sup>1</sup>

When the various degrees had been passed through the initiation was complete, and after solemn oaths not to reveal anything, and to yield unquestioning and implicit obedience, further instructions were given to the new member of the confraternity as regards his conduct towards other men. If he met with a Shí'ah he was to express his sorrow at the cruel treatment 'Alí and his sons had received; if with a Sunni he must speak with respect of the Khalífas Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán. To the Magian he should expatiate on the glory of the sun and moon, to the Jew he should extol the merits of the Messiah whose advent they longed for, and should also before them speak evil of Christians. With Christians he would refer with disdain to the Jews and would express belief in much of the Christian creeds, with the esoteric meaning of which he would say that he was well acquainted. In short, he would so conduct himself with all varieties of men that they might all be brought to acknowledge Muḥammadu'l-Ḥabíb, as the seal of the Prophets, the last and final teacher of men. To the fully

<sup>1</sup> A very full account of these nine degrees will be found in Silvestre de Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, pp. xxv-cxxxviii.

initiated, he was to admit that the Imám was dead, that he comes now in a spiritual form, and that those who have reached the highest stages have in spiritual methods intercourse with him. Sleight of hand, fascination of the eye, aptness to mislead were all to be cultivated, in order that he might make a show of miraculous power before the ignorant multitude.

One of the most active of these Dá'ís was Abú 'Abdi'lláh, the Shí'ah, who in the year A.H. 280 (A.D. 893) came to Barbary. He was one of the most remarkable men of the age, learned in all mystical lore, subtle in the formation of plans, quick and bold in carrying them out. He was a thorough believer in the Ismá'ilian system and an active propagandist of it. When he had settled upon his plans, he first went to Mecca and ingratiated himself with the pilgrims from northern Africa, who invited him to visit their country. He did so and found the tribe of Kitáma the most ready to accept his teaching, and to them he declared that he was the messenger of the Mahdi, who would come to them soon and by whose power many signs and wonders would be wrought. In due time he became their leader in war. The Kitáma were termed the 'true believers', and on their banners was inscribed the verse of the Qur'án 'Victory belongeth unto God', and on the official seal were the words 'The orders of the Lord have been executed with



truth and justice'. Barbary had never been efficiently governed by the Baghdad Khalifas and was now ready for a revolution. Great confusion then arose amongst the different African tribes which we need not follow now;<sup>1</sup> but the result was that Abú 'Abdi'lláh's power rapidly grew and a large army gathered round him. Town after town was taken, the inhabitants of which were cruelly massacred. This went on until the time was ripe for the advent of the so-called Mahdi, the Imám 'Ubaidu'lláh, whose father when at the point of death addressed his son thus: 'You will be the Mahdi, you will fly to a distant country where you will undergo severe trials.'

The Dá'i Abú 'Abdi'lláh now sent secret messengers to Syria to summon 'Ubaidu'lláh to Egypt, but this journey was not an easy matter to accomplish. The Khalifa of Baghdad got news of the movement, and sent throughout his empire descriptions of the fugitive with strict orders that he was to be imprisoned. 'Ubaidu'lláh, disguised as a merchant, after many hairbreadth escapes, at last arrived in Egypt; but was soon taken prisoner, on suspicion, by the ruler of a place called Sigilmássa, and with his son cast into a dungeon. Abú 'Abdi'lláh was profoundly grieved at this, and at once set forth to interview Ilyás ibn Medrar, the ruler of Sigilmássa. His first

<sup>1</sup> For a full account, see Osborn's *Islam under the Arabs*, part ii, chapter 3.

envoys were put to death, which led to a state of war in which Abú 'Abdi'lláh came off victorious. 'Ubaidu'lláh was then released amidst great demonstrations of joy and the victorious Dá'i hailed him as the Imám 'Ubaidu'lláh al-Mahdi, Commander of the Faithful, intending, however, to use him and his office entirely for his own purpose. 'The Fátimide restoration was to him only a means to an end; he had used 'Ubaidu'lláh's title as an engine of revolution, intending to proceed to the furthest lengths of his philosophy, to a complete social and political anarchy, the destruction of Islám, community of lands and women and all the delights of unshackled license.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus 'Ubaidu'lláh came into power, and one of his first acts was, in true oriental fashion, to get rid of his powerful friend and subject. Abú 'Abdi'lláh was arrested on a charge of treason and put to death with a number of the Kitáma chiefs. The Imám 'Ubaidu'lláh then breathed more freely, and after much conflict, conducted with the utmost cruelty, gradually grew more and more powerful. Between the years A.H. 303-6 (A.D. 915-18) he built the city of Mehdia and when he saw it completed said: 'I am now at ease, regarding the fate of the Fátimides.' He was thus the first of the Fátimide Khalifas of Africa, a dynasty<sup>2</sup> so called from the descent

<sup>1</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> It lasted from A.D. 910 to 1171.

of these Imáms from 'Alí and Fátima, the daughter of the Prophet. The succeeding Khalifas had still to struggle on against opposition, but they gradually consolidated their power. In A.H. 359 (A.D. 969) Cairo (al-Káhira—the Victorious) was founded, and the Fátimide rule in Egypt was firmly established by the fourth Khalifa, al-Mu'izz (A.D. 953-75).

The fifth Khalifa al-'Aziz was a wise and tolerant ruler. He married a Christian wife, whose two brothers by his influence were raised to the dignity of Patriarchs. He refused to put a Muslim who had embraced Christianity to death, and for fifteen years his prime minister was a converted Jew. His only son was Hákim bi Amri'llah,<sup>1</sup> and it is with him we are now concerned in connexion with the rise of the Druses. He became Khalifa in A.H. 386 (A.D. 996). His reign is one long history of cruel actions. He persecuted the Sunnis and all who were suspected of enmity to the descendants of 'Alí. Many of the Christians had been hitherto employed in various departments of the State and had attained to wealth. The anger of the Khalifa was turned on them. For five years they endured a most bitter persecution. Their priests were flogged to death, their churches were destroyed, and the sacred vessels were taken to the palace of the Khalifa, or sold in the

<sup>1</sup> The name means 'The ruler by the command of God'.

streets and bazaars. The Jews were treated in a similar way. At length, weary with this constant slaughter, the Khalifa ordered that those who remained alive should wear black garments. In the public baths the Christians had to wear, suspended from their necks, a cross ten pounds in weight, and the Jews bells. In the streets Jews had to wear a piece of wood carved like a calf's head, to remind them of their apostasy at Sinai. They were forbidden to use embroidered saddles, and their stirrups had to be of wood. Muslims were not allowed to hold intercourse with them, nor slave dealers to sell them slaves.<sup>1</sup>

In the year A.H. 400 Hákim ordered the destruction of the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, partly, it is said, to outrage the memory of the Khalifa 'Umar who had spared it. The result of this wholesale persecution was that many persons became renegades, while others gave up all distinctive signs of being Christians and passed as Muslims. Those who kept their religion were compelled to wear a heavy cross as a mark of disgrace, and to show how degraded they appeared in the sight of their rulers.

Hákim sometimes obliged his Muslim subjects to follow the Shí'ah ritual in prayer and sometimes left them at liberty. At other times he abolished

<sup>1</sup> For the fatvás, or judicial decrees against them, see Sell's *Essays on Islám*, pp. 185-97.

the namáz and the khutba, or the public prayers and the Friday sermon, in the month of Ramadán. He set aside the feast at the end of that month, and for many years he stopped the pilgrimage to Mecca, the ceremonies connected with which he described as foolish and extravagant. He ceased to send the annual present of the kiswah, or the covering for the Ka'ba at Mecca, which had hitherto been sent and is now despatched annually with much ceremony.<sup>1</sup> He released his subjects from the payment of the legal alms, suspended the law of jihád, and set aside the decrees of the Khalifas, Abú Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmán, whose memory he denounced and cursed, and caused inscriptions to that effect to be written on the walls of the mosques in Cairo. One of his mad freaks was to amuse himself in this way. He caused a deep reservoir to be made in the palace, paved with marble of different colours to represent birds, which seemed through the transparent water to be sitting on a carpet or mat. Near the edge of the reservoir was a plank, heavily weighted at one end. When his guests were assembled, Hákim offered a reward of six hundred pieces of gold to any one who would go on the plank towards the birds. The desire of so much wealth led some to attempt it, with the result that they overbalanced, fell into the pool and were drowned.

<sup>1</sup> See Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, vol. ii, p. 213.

All this strange conduct on the part of the Khalifa horrified the good Muslims. It is very difficult to understand how they could have borne with it; but it must be remembered that the Fátimide Khalifas, though nominally Muslims, practically denied the chief dogmas of Islám. The orthodox hold that the Law given by Muḥammad was final and that nothing could be added to it. The Fátimide rulers, on the contrary, held that they themselves were incarnations of the Divine Reason, and that they alone were the interpreters of the inner meaning of the positive precepts of the Law. 'Their doctrine was that all the phenomena of this sensible and material world were types or symbols of corresponding realities in the spiritual and unseen world. Every positive precept of the Law was an allegorical statement of some unseen verity: and as one pure and universal Reason presided over the spiritual world above, so it was necessary that in this lower world also the pure Reason should be incarnate in a visible person. That Reason was so incarnate in Ismá'íl and in his descendants: it was so also in the Fátimide Khalifas of Egypt.'<sup>1</sup> They were in the words of the Qur'án, 'a fire lighted by God which penetrated the hearts of men.' All preceding dispensations had led up to this one. The knowledge of God could only be acquired through the Imám, and

<sup>1</sup> Osborn, *Islam under the Arabs*, p. 247.

the only true Imám was the Fátimide Khalifa of the age. The case is well stated by Major Osborn thus: 'Either,' said the Ismá'ilians, 'a man must maintain that he can attain to a knowledge of God by the unassisted reason, without the intervention of a mediator divinely commissioned, or that he cannot do so. But if he maintains the first thesis against an opponent who holds the second, in the very act of enforcing it he demonstrates its falsity; for he cannot deny that so far as his opponent is concerned an instructor is needed. . . . Clearly then this guide must be one elevated above the frailties of the flesh and incapable of falling into error. He must be able to teach as one having authority. When should such a teacher be found? Clearly in the family of the Prophet.'<sup>1</sup> This position the Ismá'ilians accepted, and it explains their tolerance of monsters of cruelty like Hákim.

Hákim now came under the influence of a man named Darázi, a leading Dá'í of the Bâtini section of the Ismá'ilian sect. Darázi encouraged the Khalifa in his pretensions to divinity, which he had announced in the year A.H. 408 (A.D. 1017),<sup>2</sup> and publicly taught that Hákim was the creator of the universe. He wrote a book to show that the soul of Adam passed into 'Alí, and that the soul of 'Alí had entered into the ancestors of

<sup>1</sup> Osborn, *Islám under the Arabs*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>2</sup> This date is the commencement of the era of the Druses.

Hákim, in whom it now resided. The result was that Darázi was promoted to high offices in the State and gained much influence. At length the people resented this and Darázi was slain by them. The Druses deny that this was the case, and say that he was secretly sent away by the Khalifa to Syria, where he preached with much success.

Another man, Akhram, succeeded Darázi and ascribed divine honours to Hákim, and exhorted men to accept this dogma. One day he presented to the Court of Justice a petition headed, 'In the name of Hákim, the merciful and clement'. This travesty of the Bismilláh roused the anger of the Qádi, and Akhram with difficulty escaped punishment by flight. His companions on the occasion were all killed by the indignant audience.

A third man, Hamza, now appeared and preached the same doctrine. It is this man whom the Druses look up to as the author of their religion. He took the name of Hádi, or guide, and called himself the 'Life of those who submit'.<sup>1</sup> He says of himself, 'I am the master of the Day of Judgement, by me all good things come without cessation. I abrogate preceding laws and exterminate all polytheists and the deluded. I destroy the Qiblas, and abolish the two systems of belief,

الهادى و حياة المستحيين<sup>1</sup>

i.e. the *tanzil*, or orthodox Islám, preached by the Prophet, and especially the literal interpretation of the words employed in the Qur'án, when speaking of God and which seem to attribute to Him a human form; and the *táwíl*,<sup>1</sup> or allegorical system, preached by 'Alí and the Imáms of his race. I deliver the instructions to the teachers of religion. I am the chief of the age, the possessor of power, the guide of men to the obedience of God, most merciful.'

Hákim now boasted that he had personal intercourse with God, as Moses had had at Sinai. By a very complete system of espionage he had perfect information of all that was going on, and then adduced this knowledge as a proof of his supernatural power. When he passed along the streets, the people said: 'O thou only one, the unique, who givest life and death.' Many who did not say this were beheaded. Hamza claimed for him miraculous powers, and said that paper and ink would not suffice to write them all down, according to the statement in the Qur'án: 'If all the trees on the earth were to become pens, and, if God should after that swell the sea into seven seas of ink, His words would not be exhausted.'<sup>2</sup> In accordance with Hamza's custom of applying the term Alláh to the humanity of Hákim, this

<sup>1</sup> This term is also used of Christians, with reference to their interpretation of the words of the Gospels.

<sup>2</sup> *Súratu Luqmán* (xxx) 27.

verse is said to refer to the multitude of the marvels wrought by him.<sup>1</sup>

So, the sect of the Darázis, which Hákim now openly joined, grew largely in numbers and in power. One of these men went to Mecca, struck the black stone of the Ka'ba, damaged it, and said to the astonished pilgrims: 'Why do you adore and kiss this which is useless and hurtful, and all the while neglect him who in Egypt gives life and death?'

One day when the courtiers were assembled before Hákim, one of them read the following verse: 'We have not sent any apostle but to be obeyed, if God so will; but if they, after they have sinned to their own hurt, come to thee and ask pardon of God and the apostle ask pardon for them, they shall surely find that God is He who turneth unto men.'<sup>2</sup> A learned Muslim who was present at once read the verse, 'Verily, they on whom ye call beside God, cannot create a fly, though they assembled first.'<sup>3</sup> Hákim, on hearing this, was much annoyed and changed countenance; but he dissembled before the audience and gave the old man a present. His friends, however, advised him to leave Cairo, which he very wisely did.

<sup>1</sup> An account of these is given in Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, pp. 159-65. What this author calls the 'Actions ridicules, bizarres et extravagantes de Hákim' are given in fuller detail in pp. 165-89.

<sup>2</sup> *Súratu'n-Nisá'* (iv) 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Súratu'l-Hajj* (xxii) 72.

It was considered to be an act of impiety and derogatory to Ḥākim to present before him what he had not asked for, to address him without being first spoken to, to raise the voice when speaking to him, or to make any signs with the hands or the eyes. For many years he had his palace lit up at night and kept dark during the day. One of his amusements was to write letters, addressed to one of his officials, and to throw them out of the window. Those who passed by picked them up and, on presenting them to the person named in the address, some found that the letters contained orders for money which they received, others that their letters instructed the officers to give them a good beating, which they also received.

On the authority of Ḥamza it is recorded that Ḥākim did not attend the Friday namāz, or public prayer, in the Mosque, that he absolved his subjects from the giving of alms, that he discouraged the pilgrimage to Mecca, stigmatizing its ceremonies as acts of folly, that he allowed the fast of Ramaḍān to be broken before midday on the last day.<sup>1</sup> He entirely repudiated the view that divine authority rested on the four first Khalifas,

<sup>1</sup> With their usual love for allegory, the Druses say that 'before midday' means when Ḥamza was absent; and 'after midday' when he was again present in the world. To fast means to renounce the tanzil and the tāwil (*ante p. 28*) and to profess the tauḥid, or doctrine of the Unity.

and after that passed on to the House of 'Ummaya and to the House of 'Abbās, for he affixed to gates in public places curses on them all and desecrated their graves.

Ḥākim also allowed the Ismā'īlian Dā'īs to hold meetings in which their peculiar tenets were fully expounded. He was merciless to his attendants and all around him, and seemed to look upon slaughter also as a mere pastime. One day he ordered a large collection of firewood and straw to be made in which he intended to burn all the Qāris, or Qur'ān Readers, of the capital and all the clerks in the government offices. The victims then went in procession to the palace, weeping bitterly, and falling at the feet of the Khalifa begged for mercy. He cancelled his order, but looked elsewhere for subjects of his anger. He slew the grooms in the royal stables, then the eunuchs, then the slaves attached to the palace establishment, and so glutted his diabolical thirst for blood. He forbade the sale of beer because 'Alī disliked it, and prohibited a certain kind of vegetable because the Khalifa Mu'āwiyah had relished it. He prohibited the sale of raisins, of grapes and destroyed the vineyards. The honey collected in the store-room of the Cairo merchants he cast into the Nile. Inscriptions denouncing the Companions of the Prophet were placed on the walls of the mosques and streets. Then he changed his mind and flogged those who spoke

evil of these men. During his various persecutions, it is said that 18,000 persons were slain. He published a decree forbidding women to appear in the streets, or to leave their houses; and those who disregarded it were put to death. One day when passing by a bath he heard sounds of merriment. On ascertaining that women were there, he ordered the doors to be bricked up and so left the poor women to die of hunger. A trick played upon him by the women of Cairo so enraged him that he allowed about a third of the city to be destroyed by fire. Half of it was plundered and a great number of its citizens were put to death. He threatened his sister Sittu'l-Mulk (The Lady of the Empire), an intelligent and honourable woman, whom he considered to have been the cause of the insult given to him, with death; but she was beforehand with him and formed a plan to murder him.<sup>1</sup> This object she successfully accomplished in the year A.H. 411 (A.D. 1020).

<sup>1</sup> It is said by Makrizi that he was not murdered at the instigation of his sister, but by a man who, being arrested four years after, confessed his guilt. Amīr 'Alī's *Short History of the Saracens*, p. 603.

However that may be it seems clear that she joined the Kitāma Berbers and the Turkish infantry who had rebelled. She heard that Hākim intended to set aside her brother Zahir and to appoint an outsider, 'Abdu'r-Rahmān, as his successor in the Khalifate. She wished to preserve the dynasty in the family and so supported the rebels.

Hākim's body was not found, and so his followers say that he was not really slain. Hāmza gave out that he had disappeared on account of the sins of the people, and prohibited any search being made for him.<sup>1</sup> Thus passed away one of the greatest monsters of cruelty whom the world has ever seen,<sup>2</sup> but whom, nevertheless, the Druses for nearly a thousand years have worshipped as a god.

I have already referred to the large body of Dā'is, connected with the Ismā'īliān sect. Hākim built in Cairo a college, called the Dāru'l Hikmat, or Hall of Science for the education of these missionaries. Twice a week the grand Prior of the Order convened a Lodge meeting for those who were to be initiated into the various degrees, and for the exposition of the dogmas of the sect. Some years after, Hasan ibn Sabbāh, afterwards the Grand Master of the Assassins, came to one of

<sup>1</sup> A good account of Hākim's character and habits will be found in Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, pp. cccxxx-xxxvii, and in Osborn's *Islam under the Arabs*, Part ii, chapter iv.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ce Prince avait l'aspect aussi terrible qu'un lion, ses yeux étaient grands et d'un bleu rembruni, on ne pouvait soutenir son regard, sa voix était forte et effrayante. Son caractère était la bizarrerie et l'inconstance jointes à la cruauté, et l'impiété unie à la superstition. Il adorait, dit-on, d'une manière spéciale la planète de Saturne et croyait avoir des conférences avec Satan. On assure que dans le cours de son règne 18,000 personnes furent victimes de sa féroceité.' Sacy, *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, p. cccxxix.

these meetings. He came to Egypt during the reign of the Khalifa al-Mustansir, who received him with marks of favour. This led to jealousy on the part of other officials, and at last Hasan found himself in prison. Having gained his freedom he spent three years in Syria, preaching the Isma'ilian doctrines, and made many converts, until, at last, partly by force, partly by stratagem, he obtained possession of a fortress called Alamut, or the 'Vulture's nest'. The stratagem was this. He was allowed to take as much land as a bull's hide would cover, so he cut the hide into strips and surrounded the fort with them. He now determined to raise himself to independent power and the means he used were devotion and the dagger.

He carefully instructed his followers in the most extreme form of the Isma'ilian cult, and pointed out to them that sufficient care had not been taken to conceal from the general public the blank atheism to which the system ultimately led. So, whilst appearing as a follower of 'Ali, he enjoined an outward observance of all the orthodox usages; but he ever kept before the minds of his adherents the coming of the Mahdi, now present in the Fatimide Khalifa of Egypt and soon to appear as the conqueror of the world. The age was one of war and strife, and this longing for the 'expected one', who was to bring peace and quietness, was to men weary of life

a constant and reviving hope which lightened the burden of existence. To carry out his plans, Hasan instituted a hierarchy of seven grades, he himself being the Shaikh, or the head of all. In addition to the Dá'is, he had one order, called the Fidá'is, or the devoted ones. These were the Assassins. They were carefully selected for their strength and courage and absolute submission to his will. They were taught that as the Prophet had slain Jews in Madina, so they were aiding true religion by putting away its enemies.

So completely were they under Hasan Sabbah's influence, and so obedient were they to his will, that at his command one stabbed himself, and another cast himself over the battlements of the fortress to convince a visitor of the power of their leader. When the Shaikh required the service of any of them, the Fidá'is selected for the special service were stupefied with opium, and carried into a splendid garden, where they awoke amidst all that could appeal to the sensual appetites—perfume of flowers, cool fountains of waters, companies of beautiful damsels. A few days were thus passed when they were again drugged and brought back to ordinary life, ready to obey any order given to them. The memory of those days of delight was looked upon as a taste of Paradise, from the continual enjoyment of which life only hindered them, and to which death was the door of admission. The Grand Master had shown them



what it was, and obedience to his will and death in his cause would lead to a more enduring state of such joy. No wonder that the Fidá'is were devoted to Hasan.

Next to these came two orders, consisting of the novices and of the common people. As regards these latter, the usual religious duties of Islám were not relaxed, for Hasan knew that in their case the binding force of law and of custom was necessary. It was only the initiated who possessed the greater freedom or license, and who inwardly rejected all positive dogma. The summary of their teaching has been described as, 'to believe nothing and to dare everything.'

Hasan was called the Shaikhul-Jibál, chief of the mountains, hence the name by which he is commonly known, 'Old man of the mountains.' He died in the year A.H. 508, but his family continued in power until destroyed by Halágú Khán in A.H. 654 (A.D. 1256).

It is said that Darázi,<sup>1</sup> after his departure from Egypt, won over the inhabitants of the Lebanon to his views in the year A.H. 410, but Hamza is regarded as the real founder of the Druses. He became a great opponent of Darázi and denounced him, and so we have the curious fact of a sect's being called by the name of a man whom its founder repudiated.

*Ante*, p. 27.

The basis of the religion is this. God is one and He alone is to be adored. He has often manifested Himself under human forms, but his last and final manifestation is in the Lord Hákim.<sup>1</sup> He is exalted far above all names which men employ to designate Him and which are suitable only to His creatures.<sup>2</sup> 'He cannot cease to exist, nor can he pass from one to another. He dwells immutably in the glory of his Sovereign Majesty, and is distinguished from all others by the eternity of His Unity.'<sup>3</sup> That Unity has no bounds, no origin, no end. By a true confession of the Unity, rightly believed, men gain eternal life; failing this, they perish eternally. It is said: 'The commencement of piety is to know God'. Believers in the Unity are of three kinds. First, those who follow tanzil, i.e. the letter of the Qur'án, and these are the Sunni Muslims; secondly those who follow táwil, or allegory and these are the Shí'ahs; thirdly those who confess the Unity in their hearts, who in thought

<sup>1</sup> 'Cette doctrine est encore enseignée d'une manière bien précise par Bêha-eddin. Il y établit que Dieu serait coupable d'injustice, si, après avoir manifesté la doctrine unitaire comme il l'a fait sous la figure nommée Hákim, il faisait succéder encore d'autres figures à celle-là.' Sacy, *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to refer to some usage by which the names الله الرحمان الرحيم 'Alláh, the merciful, the clement', are used to designate certain ministers in the Druse hierarchy.

<sup>3</sup> Sacy, *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, p. 218.

disengage it of all attributes, and do not conceive of it under any words or figures, nor under any definition. According to the books of the Druses there are two dangers to be avoided in the idea of one forms of the unity of God. They are expressed by the words *tashbih* and *ta'til*. The first word signifies comparison and in theological language comparison with something created; the second means a stripping off, and, in its application to God, the denial in Him of any attributes as being incompatible with His unity. Some extreme forms of the Mu'tazila doctrine led to those who upheld them being called Mu'ttalún. In some respects the Druses are close followers of the Mu'tazilas who, on this question of the attributes of God, held that the attributes of God were not eternal and had no real existence in the divine essence, which was in direct conflict with the orthodox view, that the attributes were eternally inherent in the essence of God.<sup>1</sup> The Druses also follow the Mu'tazilas in their views on the question of the freedom of the will.

Hamza himself taught thus: 'God cannot be expressed under any name, or any attribute. I do not speak of Him as the ancient, because this is created and it is God who gives existence. He is neither the first, which implies relation to

a second; nor the last, which presupposes a preceding one. We cannot say that He has soul or spirit, for that implies resemblance to created beings; we cannot, in connexion with Him, speak of body, form, substance, accident, for all these imply relation to time and space. I do not say He is a thing, for that is subject to destruction. I do not say He is not a thing, for that means non-existence. He does not stand or sit. Though the divine nature cannot be expressed in words, yet to enable us to see the veil under which He is hidden, in order that He may be adored under a form exterior and evident to our senses, He manifests Himself in the human form of Hákím. Thus the words and actions of that form are the words and actions of God. But in thus rendering Himself intelligible to men, God does not cease to be the Infinite, the Incomprehensible.'

In an ascription of praise to God, Hamza says: 'Praise be to Thee, who art distinguished by grandeur and by power, and art far above all creatures; who dost exist always in every age, time and place, who art beyond all comparison, definition and description, who cannot be multiplied by any number, nor augmented by any growth, nor be related to any genealogy;<sup>1</sup> who art the powerful without a rival, the victor against whom is no refuge; the judge not subject to

<sup>1</sup> See Sell's *Faith of Islam*, (3rd ed.) pp. 194-5.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. has neither ancestors nor descendants.

judgement; thou who orderest all by Thy now free will, who art exalted far above all sounds and words.'<sup>1</sup> Hākim himself is said to have appeared in ten persons at different periods of time and in various places. The whole subject is extremely obscure; but the general idea seems to be that the personality of Hākim, human and divine, was the same under all these diverse manifestations. They were but veils to cover him and their actions and their words were all his. He is highly exalted above all creatures, and one of the reasons given for this is the peculiar and real nature of his existence in all these varied personifications which, from time to time, have appeared in the world. One object in all this is to remove the doubts of men, and to incline their hearts to the true confession of the adorable Unity, which is free of all attributes.

The habits and the dress of Hākim all have some special signification to the Druses. He rode on an ass, an animal which is the emblem of the legislator. It is said that in the verse, 'the least pleasing of voices is surely the voice of asses'<sup>2</sup> the asses represent the prophets who support the exterior law. The black woollen robe he wore signifies the trials through which his followers must pass. In some of his wilder moods

بامرک العالی الممجد عن مقارفة الاصوات و اللغات<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sūratu'l-Luqmān (xxxi) 18.

he had gatherings of buffoons employed to dance, and those present amused themselves with playful striking of each other with whips, while the most obscene language was used and the most obscene actions were performed. This is all looked upon as allegorical. The dancing refers to prophets and their dispensations which have whirled away, the whipping means that knowledge is not hurtful, the obscenity refers to the power of the male over the female and resembles Hākim's power over unbelievers. Hākim is the supreme ruler over all Imāms and Hājīs. He is Hākim bi Dhātihi, that is, Lord in his own nature, Hākim bi Amri'llāh, that is, Lord by the command of God, and He is the Qā'im, or the durable. He is even called Allāh. Ḥamza said that the term Allāh may be considered under three relations, that is, simply as a word composed of letters, or as the being so designated, or as he to whom in a figurative way the name may be given. In the last use, it means the supreme Dā'i, who is Hākim, and the hidden divinity which dwells in him.

The term al-Hākim, the ruler, shows his sovereign authority over each Nātiq, or legislator of preceding dispensations; also over the Asās,<sup>1</sup> the Imāms and the Hājīs who are all his servants. He is also called al-Qā'im, a name also used by

<sup>1</sup> *Aufe*, p. 15.

Hamza, omitting the article *al*. This use of the article in Hákim's case signifies that no one else can be compared with him.<sup>1</sup>

There was a very curious discussion about the use of the phrase, 'The peace of God be upon him', a phrase used after the name of a prophet. It was considered derogatory to use it after the name of Hákim, as placing him in an inferior position. The argument against it was based on the text, 'God witnesseth that there is no god but He, and the angels and men endued with knowledge and established in righteousness *proclaim*, "There is no god but He, the mighty, the wise. The true religion with God is Islám"''.<sup>2</sup> The Druses say that it is Muḥammad who here speaks, and that he witnesseth that our Lord (Hákim) is God; the angels are the Hájis, the men endued with knowledge are the Dá'is. Thus the true Muslim should acknowledge Hákim as God.

<sup>1</sup> This is explained thus: The letters of the article *al* (ال) are reversed to make *lá* (لا) and *lá* means no, or not, and thus *al-Qá'im* comes to be equal to *lá Qá'im*, and so there is no Qá'im equal to Hákim. An argument as to the numbers of the ministers in the hierarchy is also made from two of the letters in *Ma'búd*, the adored, a name of Hákim. Thus *'abd* (عبد) is a servant, or an adorer: *ma'búd* (معبود), the adored, has two additional letters *mim* (م) and *waw* (و). The numerical value of these letters is forty-six, which is fixed as the number of the ministers, or those who serve.

<sup>2</sup> Súratu 'Alí 'Imrân (iii) 16-17.

It is believed that the Druses worship Hákim under the form of a golden calf; but some say that this is used not as an object of worship, but as an emblem of the dominant religions, superseded by their system. Some say that they repudiate idolatry, and compare Judaism, Christianity, and Islám to a calf. Others say that it represents Iblis, the devil, who is the rival of Hákim.

The hierarchy of the Druses is formed on the model of that of the Bâtinis. The five chief leaders are Universal Intelligence, or simply Intelligence<sup>1</sup> manifested in Hamza; Soul in Ismá'il ibn Muḥammad; Word (Logos) in Abú 'Abdi'lláh Muḥammad; Preceder in Abú'l-Khair Salama; Follower in Abú'l-Ḥasan. They are also called the *Hadúd*,<sup>2</sup> a word signifying boundaries, but applied in the Qur'án to the laws and precepts of God which must not be transgressed. Thus the assertion that he who does not know the *Hadúd*, or five Ministers, is ignorant of the true religion is supported by the verse, 'This is the precept (*ḥadd*) of God and whoso transgresseth the precept of God imperilleth his own self.'<sup>3</sup> This use of the word is borrowed from the Bâtinis

<sup>1</sup> According to the Tradition *أول ما خلق الله العقل*—The first thing God created was intelligence.

<sup>2</sup> *Ḥudūd* is the plural of *ḥad*. See Súratu'l-Ḥadíd (lviii) 7.

<sup>3</sup> Súratu't-Ṭaláq (lxv) 1.

who freely allegorized words taken from the Qur'án. This makes it extremely difficult to get at any very clear understanding of the Druse hierarchy, for Ḥamza, the chief authority on it, wrote for the most part for those who had already been initiated into the Bāṭini system and so does not enter into detail with regard to the explanation of mystical terms, with the meaning of which his readers were supposed to be acquainted.

These Ministers may be regarded as spiritual, or as corporeal beings. In the first case they always bear the same name, in the second their names may vary according to the different epochs of their several manifestations. In this personified form they have been opposed by five ministers of error, who, though contemporary opponents, were really personifications of Muḥammad, Abú Bakr, 'Uthmán, 'Umar, 'Alí, who were also ministers of error, because they taught and expounded an exterior law and not its esoteric meaning. Thus they missed its real point and led men astray from the truth—the confession of the divinity of the Lord Ḥakim.

The Intelligence is Ḥamza from whom all knowledge emanates. Since the time of Adam he has appeared in the world under seven different manifestations. He was created from the light of God before all worlds. Existing before all things, he will survive all. The period between the

manifestations is called the *fatra*,<sup>1</sup> but though then concealed he was still alive.

The Soul proceeds from Intelligence and bears to it the relation of female to male, but with regard to the other ministers it has the rank of male. In the person of Ismá'il, it was the vicar of Ḥamza, having authority over the rest of the Ministers and over all believers.<sup>2</sup> The Soul in its manifestation under Ismá'il is called the *Mujtabá*, or Chosen.<sup>3</sup> The verse 'I betake myself for refuge to

<sup>1</sup> *فترة* a term meaning interruption, and generally used by Muḥammadans to denote the period of time which passes between the mission of one prophet and another. It is also applied to the period in the early ministry of Muḥammad when his inspiration ceased for a while.

<sup>2</sup> In connexion with this a curious mystical interpretation is given of the words 'a Paradise vast as the heavens and the earth' [Súratu 'Alí 'Imrān (iii) 27.] If 'vast' refers to breadth what is its length? where is there room for hell? So the literal meaning is said to be wrong. The correct one is as follows. Vastness has length and breadth. The length is the Intelligence, the Imám of the Faithful; the breadth is the Soul which is the aid of the Intelligence—*بركات العقل والتأييد*—and from which come all spiritual forms—*الصور الروحانية*—as the child comes from the mother. Length and breadth must then be conjoined, and so Intelligence and Soul, these two Ministers cannot be separated. The blessing derived from them forms the fruit of Paradise, which is the Knowledge tree from error. This is said to be the 'Vast Paradise' of which the Qur'án speaks.

<sup>3</sup> *مجتبى* This manifestation is said to have taken place in A. H. 411. Ismá'il was a Dā'í of the Bāṭini sect before he accepted the teaching of Ḥamza.

the Lord of Men, the King of Men, the God of Men<sup>1</sup> is said to refer to the Soul, because the lower Ministers having been produced by the union of Intelligence with Soul, the latter stands to them in a superior relation, and is to them the viceregent of Hamza, the Intelligence and so is king of men.

The Soul in one of its previous manifestations appeared in John the Baptist, and in him bore witness to the Messiah of that age, just as in its later manifestation it bore witness to Hamza, the Messiah of another period.

The third Minister, the Word, is produced from Soul by Intelligence and so ranks third in the hierarchy. It was a term used by the Bāṭinis and was probably borrowed from the Logos of the Christians. Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad in whom it was manifested was surnamed Ridha and is called the Ambassador of Power.<sup>2</sup> The charge over all subordinate Ministers, Dā'is and others was committed to him.<sup>3</sup> He is also called the Wing, the Wing of the Lord,<sup>4</sup> in reference to the verse, 'Praise be to God, the maker of heaven and

<sup>1</sup> *Sūratu'n-Nās* (cxiv) 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> سفير القدر

<sup>3</sup> For full instructions as to his duties, see Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, pp. 262, 271.

<sup>4</sup> الجناح الرباني. This name 'Wing' is also given to the fourth and the fifth ministers, who are distinguished as Right Wing—الجناح اليمين and the Left Wing—الجناح اليسار.

of the earth, who employeth the Angels as envoys, with pairs of wings two, three and four.'<sup>1</sup>

The fourth minister is the Preceder,<sup>2</sup> which is produced from Word by Soul. He is also called the Right Wing.

The Follower,<sup>3</sup> called also the Left Wing, is sometimes named Bahá'u'd-dín, a man famous amongst the Druses and who was a most prolific author.

In the next order after these five principal ministers come the Dā'i, the Ma'dhūn and the Mukassir. The work of the Dā'i has been already described. As his name signifies he is one who calls men to the acceptance of the truth. Immediately under him is the Mā'dhūn one who has received permission to destroy men's beliefs in their old religions, and so to prepare them for the acceptance of a new one.<sup>4</sup> Then subordinate to both comes the Mukassir, who also breaks down the wall of doubt and by his presentation of the truth bears down all resistance.

<sup>1</sup> *Sūratu'l-Furqān* (xxxv) 1.

<sup>2</sup> سابق. He is called the Preceder, because in the Bāṭini system he held the first rank, preceding all other Ministers. For the difference between the order of Ministers in the Bāṭini system and in that of the Druses, see Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> The directions given to this Minister will be found in Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, pp. 198-308. For his place in the Bāṭini system, see pp. 314-5, 319.

<sup>4</sup> مَنْ أَدْنَى لَهُم فِي الْكُسْرِ وَالْجَمْرِ

These three ministers also possess allegorical names. The Dá'í is called the Endeavour, on account of his great devotion to the sacred cause. The Má'dhún is called the Opener, as he opens the door of entrance to all aspirants after the truth. The Mukassir is named the Phantom, who by his discourses gives a glimpse of the truth without unveiling the whole.<sup>1</sup>

There are a few other names which frequently occur in the Druse books. The Nátiq is one of the great prophets who introduces a new religion into the world. Each one has a subordinate Sús who succeeds him. During the existence of each such religion there is a succession of seven ministers called Samets, or silent ones. They are also called Imáms and each Imám has twelve Hujjats, or Proofs, who go into the world and teach the doctrines of their master. The 'Aqqál,<sup>2</sup> or the most wise, are those members of the inner circle to whom alone the most esoteric dogmas of the religion are known. They are said 'to bear themselves with great circumspection. They

سمى الداعى الجيد لانه جد فى طلب العلم من الامام وسمى الماذون  
نجا لانه يفتح باب العهد والميثاق على المستجيبين وسمى المكامر  
الخيال لانه يلوح بعلمه و مكامرته مثل الخيال اذ كان له التلويح  
بالكلام بغير كشف ولا نبيان

Sacy, *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> An intensive form (اسم مبالغه) of عاقل a wise man.

live sober and temperate lives, abstaining from all intoxicating liquors, from tobacco and even from coffee.' The Shaikhs of the 'Aqqál as leaders of the religious commonwealth, perform functions corresponding in some degree to those of the old Hebrew prophets and judges. At their word the hosts gather from far and near, place themselves under the command of chosen chiefs and go forth to warfare. They also convene councils for the discussion of weighty matters of religion or policy.<sup>1</sup>

Amongst those who believe in the existence of such Ministers of the Faith there are different ways of classifying them; but Hamza maintains that his method, which is given above, is the only true one and that all others are completely wrong. Lengthy discussions, too wearisome to reproduce here, have been held on this subject. Some of the Ministers also have many different names.

The Druses believe in the transmigration of souls, which, according to their views, first came into existence after the creation of the Minister, who is called Intelligence, that is, Hamza. They were formed from his light. The soul of a Druse after his death passes into the body of another Druse; that of a polytheist into another polytheist. The number of souls is fixed and they

<sup>1</sup> Ewing, *Arab and Druze at Home*, pp. 90, 94.

neither increase nor diminish as the years roll by. Their re-appearance in different forms is closely connected with good or evil deeds done in a previous life.<sup>1</sup> When an infidel, who has become a convert and, for a while, follows the path marked out for him by his Dá'i, recants and becomes a renegade and then dies, his soul returns to its original state, perverse and corrupt. The future lot of all such is to eat no 'food, but corrupt'<sup>2</sup> and to have no drink save the boiling water of hell. This punishment of apostates is a cause of great joy to the Faithful.

The Druses hold that man is formed of three parts, intelligence and soul, which they term substance, and a material part, the body, which they call accident. The body is the outward case or form.<sup>3</sup> Its union with intelligence and soul—the spiritual part of man—constitutes a person, into varied forms of which the soul passes again and again. The punishment is a severe one when it passes from a person of high religious rank into that of a lower one.

Some authors describe the transmigration of souls from man into the lower animals. Those of Christians, for instance, are said to pass into

بل تظهر بظهورات مختلفات الصور على مقدار اكتسابها من خير وشر.<sup>1</sup>  
Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, p. 414.

<sup>2</sup> Súratu'l-Háqqa (lxix) 36. Rodwell translates غلين as 'corrupt sores.'

<sup>3</sup> قميص—Chemise.

the bodies of apes and pigs. Hamza apparently did not accept this view, but believed in a spiritual transmigration.<sup>1</sup>

Some pious souls ceased to migrate after the advent of Intelligence, who came in the person of Hamza, and are now simply awaiting the day of judgement. They are concealed with the Imám, and when he re-appears in glory to execute judgement on the unbelievers they will form his retinue. They are called the Exalted People, the People Most High, the Sacred Lights, the inhabitants of A'raf.<sup>2</sup>

The terms, 'resurrection' and 'the last day' denote the time when the doctrine of the Unity will be made known to all people, and all other religions will be abolished, and when the lot of believers and unbelievers will be irrevocably fixed. There are differences of opinion as to the events which will usher in the last day. Before the

<sup>1</sup> This is called تغيير الصور—change of forms; the material transmigration is called مسوخ or مسوفية, which word, according to Sacy, is used by Hamza only once. Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> 'On (the wall) Al A'raf shall be men who know all by their tokens, and they shall cry to the inhabitants of Paradise, "Peace on you"; but they shall not enter into it, although they long to do so' [Súratu'l-A'raf (vii) 44]. Some Muslim commentators say that these persons are those whose good and evil deeds exactly balance each other, and so their condition is not fixed; others say they are the saints and holy martyrs. The Druses agree with the latter opinion. For an explanation of al-A'raf, see Sell's *Faith of Islam*, (3rd ed.) p. 261.



death of Hâkim, it was believed that it would occur in his lifetime and that he in person would triumph over all enemies. His followers were called upon to destroy the polytheists, to abolish their religions, to massacre those who walked in the path of error, to exterminate the men, and to take captive the women and the children.

After the death of Hâkim, the Druses were bidden not to be discouraged at the delay, but to look forward with hope and confidence to his return,<sup>1</sup> when by the aid of the ministry of Hâmza, the victory over all opponents will be complete. He will come surrounded, as with a veil, by multitudes of holy angels, and by a vast host of cherubim. The figure under which he will re-appear is called the 'spiritual resurrection form.'<sup>2</sup> The humanity in which he will come is called the abode or domicile.<sup>3</sup> The signs of his advent will, for the most part, be those to which Muslims look forward as destined to happen before the Day of Judgement. One special sign will be the falling of a thunderbolt on the Ka'ba,

<sup>1</sup> It was said that he would re-appear in Egypt in the month of Jamâdi, or of Rajab.

<sup>2</sup> الصور الانبيائية الروحانية

<sup>3</sup> The following expressions can also be used محل القدس—the Holy Place; قدس الامامة—the Sanctuary of the Imâmat; محل الطهارة—the Place of purity. Sacy, however, considers that these terms are more properly applied, not to the person of Hâkim himself, but to the palace in which he will dwell after his return. *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, p. 226.

the destruction of houses in Mecca and the ruin, through earthquakes, of mosques in Syria. Then the enemies of 'Alî will be compelled to wear heavy earrings made of lead and to pay a tax. The Jews and Christians will have earrings of iron and their tax will be heavier still. The severest punishment is to be reserved for the apostates, whose earrings will be of glass, which in summer burn like fire and in winter are as cold as ice. Their head-dress will be made of pig skin.

The Lord Hâkim will be adored in all languages, and with a loud voice people in all lands will say: 'To whom does the kingdom now and for ever belong?' The reply will be, 'To the Lord Hâkim, the victorious, the powerful'. Those who, before the day of resurrection, believed, who confessed the Unity, who accepted the Imâmat, and the various order of the spiritual hierarchy, will now enter into the felicity of life eternal; but those who did not these things will be delivered up to torment for ever.

In order to sustain the courage of those who suffered persecution, Hâmza spoke much of the triumphant return of Hâkim, and in figurative language bade them beware of the flowing river of tanzîl, whose waters were muddy, and of the steam of tâwîl, whose waters were sweet but deadly. They were to fear the darkness which precedes the dawn of Hâkim's advent. Those

who belonged to the Lord Hākim would find in him a powerful protector, when with angels and with cherubim he would appear in all his royal splendour. Then would all men bow in subjection to him. The Mīzān, or balances<sup>1</sup>, would be prepared, all actions tried, all excuses taken away from the wicked, and rewards be given to the good. The true believers would have abundance of gold and silver, authority would be given to them to rule in the new kingdom; they would be the Amīrs, the Shāhs, the Sultāns of the coming age.

Meanwhile the Druse religion excels all others and is superior to them. Previous religions have been those introduced by the Nātiqs,<sup>2</sup> and being exoteric beliefs are known as tanzīl; but each Nātiq before he passed away nominated an Asās, who gave the esoteric meaning of the religion founded by his master. This is known as tāwil. Thus the Nātiq and the Asās combine together as it is said: 'and of everything have we created pairs;'<sup>3</sup> but all this is inferior to the religion of the Unity.<sup>4</sup> The following verse of the Qur'ān is

<sup>1</sup> See Sell's *Faith of Islam*, (3rd ed.) p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante* p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Sūratu'dh-Dhārāyat (li) 49.

<sup>4</sup> It must be borne in mind that this use of the word 'Unity' is a technical one. The Druse writers mean by it the dogma that God is united to Hākim. Unitarians are those who believe in the divinity of Hākim, not as amongst Muslims those who believe that God is One, and who deny the doctrine of the Trinity.

cited as a proof of this fact: 'Between them shall be set a wall with a gateway, within which shall be the mercy, and, in front, without it, the torment.'<sup>1</sup> The words 'without it' are the tanzīl, the law of the Nātiq; the word 'within' is the tāwil, the law given by the Asās; but both lead up to something else, 'the mercy' which is the religion of the Unity. Another verse is also quoted to show the inferiority of all preceding teachers. 'Verily, We proposed to the heavens and to the earth and mountains to receive the Faith, but they refused the burden and they feared to receive it.'<sup>2</sup> The heavens, earth, mountains signify the Nātiqs, the Asās, the Hujjats who have rejected the true doctrine of the Unity and have preached error.

Christians are reminded that Christ said: 'Verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying he shall never see death.' The saying, or word, is the religion of the Unity, for the word is united to the Messiah, who is Hāmza; so Christians should awake, for already he who has sown rejoices in the approach of harvest:<sup>3</sup> already the word of truth<sup>4</sup> bears witness against error. Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom and said it would be preached in all the world. Now it has come and yet Christians refuse to accept the truth.

<sup>1</sup> Sūratu'l-Hādīd (lvii) 13.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to John (iv) 36.

<sup>2</sup> Sūratu'l-Aḥzāb (xxxiii) 72.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. Hamza.

In short, the case now stands thus. All ordinances of religion prescribed by the law have an outward form, and an inward signification; each revelation, which comes through a Nātiq, has an allegorical interpretation (tāwil). This is why the Ismā'īlians are called Bāṭinis, for Muḥammadu'l Ḥabīb, the founder of the system, had perfect knowledge of this inward signification and this allegorical meaning. Indeed, he could give not only the latter, but even the further allegorical meaning<sup>1</sup> of this allegorical interpretation of the outward revelation.

Ḥākim abolished the exterior religion, or the tanzil, when by his own example and by his edicts he released men from the observance of the laws of Islām; he put away the interior law, or the tāwil, of the Shi'ahs and of the Christians, when he established the religion of the Unity.

The Muslim creed consists of two parts. 'There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is the Apostle of God.' By a cabalistic use of the words and the letters in this creed, and their connection with the signs of the Zodiac, the planets and the months, the Bāṭinis find in them a description of their own hierarchial system. Ḥamza by a similar course of reasoning finds in them the hierarchy of his own system, and, therefore, teaches that it is not obligatory to repeat these words in their

natural sense as Muslims do, nor with the allegorical meaning assigned to them by the Bāṭinis; but to look upon them in the more mystical form which he gave to them, and which shows the superiority of his religion over that of Islām.

The Qur'ānic injunction to 'obey God and His Apostle,' and those placed in authority is interpreted by the followers of the tanzil to be the acceptance of the rule of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, and the Khalīfas of the family of 'Umayya and then those of the house of 'Abbās. It is explained by the followers of the tāwil to be obedience to the authority of 'Alī and of his descendants only, according to the verse: 'This day have I perfected your religion for you and have fulfilled my favours unto you; and it is my pleasure that Islām shall be your religion.'<sup>1</sup> This is said to indicate that the gift of the knowledge of the interior law was made to the Shi'ahs, and to refer to the bestowal of authority to 'Alī and his spiritual successors. Ḥākim set aside both these interpretations, and declared that authority resided neither with the Sunnis nor the Shi'ahs, but with the true Imām, that is Ḥākim alone. He quoted in proof of this the words, 'Every thing have We set down in a clear Imām.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sūratu'l-Mā'ida (v) 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sūratu Yā Sīn (xxxvi) 11. The Qur'ān reads thus—وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ  
أَخَصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ but it manifestly refers to the 'preserved

When Christ said: 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up,'<sup>1</sup> it is alleged that he then referred to three periods of time; the first when the Nātiq Jesus appeared; the second the age of the Paraclete, a name given to Muḥammad, who is thus said to have been announced by Jesus;<sup>2</sup> the third period when Ḥamza appeared and called on men to embrace the truth. The last day is the complement of the first, as when Jesus said: 'My time is not yet come'. Muḥammad in claiming to be the Paraclete seems to have misunderstood the word *παράκλητος*, and imagined it to be the same as *περικλυτός*, which has somewhat the same meaning as Aḥmad, from which word the name Muḥammad is formed. Many other passages in the Gospels are treated in the same fanciful way.<sup>3</sup>

The Druses deny the crucifixion of the true Messiah,<sup>4</sup> whom they believe to have been a personification of Ḥamza. They say that Jesus,

table '—*محفوظ*—*لوح*—on which all the actions of men are written down, and it is so explained by all commentators. Ḥamza took advantage of the double meaning of the word *Imām*, and taught that Ḥākim included all things, that is to say, the ministers of the true religion and all their authority in the person of the *Imām*, who is none other than Ḥamza himself.

<sup>1</sup> John ii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to John xvi. 7.

<sup>3</sup> The Druse interpretation of them will be found in Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. ii, pp. 534-52.

<sup>4</sup> The Druses follow the Muslims in this belief. See *Sūratu'n-Nisā'* (iv) 156.

the son of Mary, was taught by the real Messiah and, on his proving disobedient, the Jews were then allowed to rise up against him and to put him to death. When he lay in the grave, the real Messiah hid in the garden and so the news went abroad of the resurrection from the dead. At first sight, there seems no obvious reason why Ḥamza should have lent even this amount of support to the Christian religion; but it is said that, as the time had not yet arrived for the followers of the Unity to openly manifest themselves, it was convenient for them to have a religion in which they might live unrecognized.

For all these and for many other reasons, the Druses comfort themselves with the belief that the religion they profess is vastly superior to all which preceded it, or which can ever come into existence.

Ḥamza and other Druse writers had a direct interest in combating the opinions of the Muslims, by whom they were surrounded, and who looked upon their views and opinions with much contempt. So the great point in the teaching of the Druse leaders was to show that Islām as a religion had had its day, and was now of no authority at all. On the other hand, the Druses had nothing to fear from the Jews or Christians, who in Muslim lands possessed no power to do them harm, and so much less attention was paid to them and to their systems of religion. Still, Christians are

reproached for not living up to the standard of life laid down in the Sermon on the Mount.

Spiritual men<sup>1</sup> and women should be free from all faults and foulness. The Faithful, male and female, should be free from crime and impurity. A woman should so act and speak that other women may be led to accept the truth. Men, who do not keep in subjection their carnal appetites, are 'just like the brutes'<sup>2</sup> and are worse than the ox and the ass. A fornicator, on repentance, should be humbled for seven years and, if he remains unrepentant, be treated as an infidel.

A Druse, who marries a Druse wife, should place her on an equality with himself and share with her all his possessions. If a divorce is necessary, on account of some disobedience on the part of the wife, she should give up half of her property; but if her husband has ill-treated her, she takes it all away. It is so also in the case of the man. A divorce cannot be cancelled and either party may remarry. Marriage with a mother, sister or aunt is forbidden. A man can only marry the daughter of his uncle if she is a Druse, a believer in the Unity. Polygamy is not permitted.

In the place of the five articles of the Muḥammadan creed and of the arkān-i-dīn, or the five practical duties of religion, the Druses say that

<sup>1</sup> The various orders of Ministers.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūratu'l-Furqān* (xxv) 46.

Ḥākim appointed these seven as articles of faith and practice: Truth in speech; mutual help; renunciation of religions previously professed; entire separation from evil spirits and from those in error; belief in the divinity of Ḥākim; acquiescence in his actions whatever they might be; absolute resignation to his orders at all times and under all circumstances. The principal dogmas concerning God, His nature, attributes, and manifestations, concerning the Universal Intelligence, and all the other members of the hierarchy, formed a body of theological teaching, the acceptance of which preceded the confession of the seven articles of the creed just described.<sup>1</sup>

Truth in speech was to be maintained as regards the dogmas of religion, and in all the ordinary affairs of life amongst the Druses themselves; but it was allowable to tell lies to men of other religions who are in darkness and ignorance, and with whom it is merely a matter of politeness to speak the truth. It is not with reference to them an obligatory duty. Lying to a fellow-believer is a great crime and will be severely punished by Ḥākim. When a man imputes to a believer something false, or distorts his words he is lying to him.

<sup>1</sup> The number seven is considered by the Druses to be a sacred and mysterious number and for this many curious reasons are alleged. See Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, p. 462.

Some attention is paid to education and women are taught to read and write. Their literature is chiefly theological but for a tribe so limited in numbers is comparatively extensive. They guard the manuscripts of their more important works with great jealousy, but many are now to be found in the great European libraries.

As regards mutual help, the Druses were to carry a sword to defend their friends, to watch over them, to meet their wishes, to satisfy their wants, to help the poor and to succour the oppressed. All such good deeds would make the religious profession perfect. They still maintain the ancient custom of hospitality. Their bravery is notorious and the blood-feud is still kept up. Absolute submission to the will of the Lord Hâkim is enjoined. Should he require a man to slay his own son he must do it, for only unquestioning obedience will be rewarded.

With reference to the duty of renouncing all previous religions,<sup>1</sup> the convert was to learn that faith in the Unity was incompatible with the profession of any other religion than that which acknowledged Hâkim as its supreme lord. At the same time, his disciples, if previously Muslims, need not discard, at all times and under all circumstances, the outward observances of Islâm,

<sup>1</sup> These were all looked upon as types of the one perfect religion, and all their sacred books were to be interpreted allegorically.

nor be afraid to disguise their real convictions by such outward conformity. The following extracts from a Druse catechism illustrate this point:—

Q.—What is our object when we speak with praise of the Gospels?

A.—In the presence of the people of that religion, we are obliged to approve of the belief which they profess.

Q.—Why, when we are asked, do we say that there is no other (sacred) book than the Qur'ân?

A.—Know, that as we are obliged to hide ourselves under the veil of Islâm, we must outwardly acknowledge its book. We are not to be reproached for this, any more than for saying the usual Muslim prayers at the grave. We must hide our belief. The inner mysteries of the Faith and its esoteric teaching must not be revealed to any one outside the circle of the true believers.

The Druses are very reticent about their beliefs, and in order to avoid danger they may profess, outwardly and in appearance, any dominant religion of the place they may be in. This is a principle known as *taqiya*, and is common to all the Shi'ah sects. Meanwhile, in the heart must be firmly held the belief in the divine nature of Hâkim, which is the fundamental doctrine on which the whole system is based.

Such, in brief, is the religion of the Druses, a strange mixture of fanaticism and folly, though not without some redeeming points in the practical

duties of life amongst themselves. That a religion should grow out of the caprices of a madman, and that generation after generation should see in a bloodthirsty despot the incarnation of the Divine, shows to what an extent men may be deluded, when they close their eyes to the 'true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.'

The Druses are said to number over a hundred thousand. Their home for many generations was in the Lebanon; 'but now they are found as far north as Antioch and as far south as Carmel'; while since 1860 they have gone eastward, and settled in such numbers on the mountain, that the name Jebel Hauran, by which it was formerly known, is fast giving place to that of Jebel ed-Druze.<sup>1</sup>

'In the early part of their history the Druses, under the feudal rule of their chiefs and with the support of a powerful Arab tribe which had accepted their religion, possessed a great measure of independence and were looked upon as allies by the Muhammadan powers. When Sultān Selim I conquered Egypt in A.D. 1517, the Druses came under the power of the Turks and troubles began, which culminated in the early part of the eighteenth century in constant and bitter feuds between the Druses and the Maronites, a Chris-

<sup>1</sup> Ewing, *Arab and the Druze at Home*, p. 91.

tian sect owning allegiance to the Pope, though retaining the use of Syriac in their liturgy and observing certain other local customs. They form a distinct political and social body and number about 400,000, of whom a great part are to be found in the Lebanon. War broke out between them and the Druses in 1841 and this led to the appointment of Omar Pasha as governor, assisted by a council of four chiefs from the Druses and the Maronites respectively. This scheme failed. Then separate governors were appointed, but the hostilities still went on. The Turkish Government proved unequal to the task of restoring peace; the feuds continued and massacres ensued, and so in 1860 the European powers intervened and a French force was sent to restore order. The following year they were withdrawn, but a Christian governor was appointed and for a time order was restored; but insurrections still break out from time to time, the latest being in 1910 when the victims of the Druse massacres were estimated at one thousand. Whether under the new regime in Turkey any improvement will take place in this part of the Sultān's dominions has yet to be seen.