

News from the Library of Congress ¹

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The Druze Heritage is Subject of Feb. 7 Symposium

The Druze are a thousand-year-old religious community of the Middle East, whose members today live primarily in Lebanon, Syria and Israel, while others have emigrated to the United States, Europe and Africa. Their historical and intellectual legacy will be examined by 10 scholars from the U.S. and Middle East who will participate in a symposium to be held at the Library of Congress from **8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 7** in Room LJ-119, located on the first floor of the Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First Street S.E., Washington D.C. Sponsored by the Library's African and Middle Eastern Division, the John Kluge Center in the Library of Congress and the American Druze Foundation, the symposium is free and open to the public. Tickets are not required.

The symposium will be followed by a reception from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in the Northeast Pavilion of the Jefferson Building. During the symposium, selected items from the Library's holdings by and about the Druze will be on display in Room LJ-113.

Scholars participating in the symposium include **Sami Makarem**, American University of Beirut; Majid Fakhri, Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University; Abbas Hamdani, Wisconsin University; Linda Clarke, Concordia University; Melhem Salman, American Druze Foundation; Sumaiya Hamdani, George Mason University; Erlendur Haraldsson, University of Iceland; Intisar Azzam, Lebanese American University in Beirut; Kais M. Firro, Haifa University; and Dr. Anis Obeid, State University of New York, Upstate Medical University. Haraldsson will deliver a luncheon speech titled "Reincarnation, Ancient Beliefs and New Evidence Among the Druze."

Through a generous endowment from John W. Kluge, the Library of Congress established the Kluge Center in 2000 to bring together the world's best thinkers to stimulate and energize one another to distill wisdom from the Library's rich resources and to interact with policymakers in Washington. For further information on the Kluge Center, visit www.loc.gov/kluge/.

The African and Middle Eastern Division was established in 1978 as part of a reorganization that combined the Near East Section, the Hebraic Section and the African Section. Together they cover some 78 countries and regions from Southern Africa to the Maghreb and from the Middle East to Central Asia. For more information go to www.loc.gov/rr/amed.

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