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Pantacle





Traditional Martinist Order

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

This is the fifteenth issue of the Pantacle magazine, launched in the year 2000. In this edition, Sovereign Grand Master Christian Bernard shares his insights on the meaning of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty – forces that play a prominent role in the Traditional Martinist Order.

Then we explore the Inspiring Life and Work of our Venerable Master – Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the Unknown Philosopher.

Next, excerpts from a Martinist manuscript reveal some of the Symbolism of the Pantacle – the symbol of the TMO.

Then an Unknown Sister examines – What does the “Middle Way” Mean on the Initiatic Path? And finally we have a selection of writings “On Numbers” from Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin’s letters to Kirchberger, Baron de Liebistorf, written in 1796 and an article on The Chivalric Ideal.

We hope you enjoy these thought-provoking and inspiring messages.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom!

Julie Scott
Grand Master
Traditional Martinist Order

Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty

By Christian Bernard, SI

Brother Christian Bernard serves as the Sovereign Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order as well as the Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. The following text is from his book entitled Rosicrucian Reflections on three subjects very important in the Martinist Tradition – Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty.

WISDOM

To be wise means being thoroughly familiar with all aspects of human duality and to apply the mastery of these aspects in all of our relationships. Wise is the one who always shows the way to follow without ever imposing it and who never does for others that which they are always well advised to do for themselves. Wise also are those who know how to be silent when they should just listen, and to speak when they can and must be heard. The true wise person is not the one who speaks well about wisdom, but the one who is favorably spoken of because of the wisdom of his or her actions. From all the foregoing, it follows that true wisdom always listens more than it talks, much less than it acts, and never acts without thinking ahead. To show wisdom does not mean to want to absolutely reform the evil we believe we see in others, but to harmonize with the good that we are certain to perceive within them. Broadly speaking, the mission of wisdom is to preserve harmony where it exists and to do everything possible to put it where it is not.

To hold in one's hand the sword of wisdom and to use it wisely is not an easy task, even for a grand and noble knight. Great is the temptation for people to believe they are wise just because they wear this sword upon them. To convince ourselves of this, all we need to do is to think again of the legendary and initiatory epic of the Knights of the Round Table. Excalibur, the sword of power, broke when through ignorance and pride, young Arthur invoked its magical power to defeat the Knight Lancelot, who symbolized nobility and idealism. It was only because of his deep repentance and his immediate and definitive realization of his error that the Lady of the Lake restored to him the sword of kingship. So it is with the sword of wisdom—if we use it with impunity to satisfy our ego's wrongful desires, we will turn it into an instrument of madness and evil power. It is not by accident that Kabbalists have always taught that madness is the opposite of wisdom.

Therefore, a pilgrim-knight must understand the true meaning of the word "sage" before it is too late. In order to do so, it must be learned through

initiation that, just as it is not the cowl that makes the priest, so the sword, whatever it may be, does not make the Knight. To carry the sword of wisdom on oneself without being wise is tantamount to gazing at daylight while being blindfolded. It is only by uniting the Cosmic Power of Wisdom with the human virtues of the sage that one can attain the ideal state of the Rose-Croix Knight. The ancient mystics spoke about the Wisdom of the Sages because they understood the necessity for this union. It is also perhaps for this same reason that King Arthur, after having received Illumination, cried out, pointing Excalibur toward the sky: "Earth and King are one!" Had he not indeed just attained the state of Rose-Croix wherein Wisdom and Sage are actually one?"

What I said then about wisdom seems to me just as true now. I would however, like to provide a few more details. Too many mystics confuse knowledge with wisdom. Knowledge is to know, whereas to be wise is to understand and apply what we know. To illustrate, many people have read many works, including sacred, religious, or philosophical texts. But who can say that they have understood and integrated everything contained in these writings? How indeed can we apply in our daily lives, a knowledge that we have not understood? The problem is thus, where wisdom is concerned, to know what we are talking about, and to only talk about that which we are sure we have understood.

This should instill modesty, for we can never be truly certain of the understanding we have of something. It is preferable, in this regard, to put into daily practice a special quality that we have perfectly incorporated, than to speak eruditely about all the virtues without being able to apply any of them. Humanity's goal, in fact, is not so much to acquire knowledge, as to apply it.

When the Master Jesus taught people to love one another, he also said that there was no commandment greater than this. What could be simpler than to say, read, or write the phrase "Let us love one another." Everyone knows of it, but who understands the essence of it enough to put it into practice in daily life?

When we reflect on the meaning of this special commandment, we see that it reveals the ideal of behavior that all people will one day attain, but that only some have achieved. Moreover, the very few who have actually achieved it were more than just wise. Each of them could have been called "Christ." Since the state of wisdom must be attained before the Christ state, it follows that there exists a commandment that is easier to follow for the evolving beings that we are.

This more attainable commandment is one that the wise person is capable of keeping, which I think may be expressed by the statement, "Let us understand one another." In other words, let us learn to know one other and appreciate one another as we are, for we are not yet able to love our neighbor as ourselves. Let us strive to apply this mutual understanding in all of our human relationships. In so doing, we will accomplish much more for our evolution and for that of the world than we will by reading the greatest precepts—Christian and other—without understanding them.

If we manage to bring this commandment into our lives—not by loving all beings, but by not detesting any of them—then by our very attitude, we will have grown closer to great and genuine wisdom.

STRENGTH

From a traditional point of view, it is said that human beings were created in the image of God. Thus, at the moment of our creation, humans received "strength." On the mystic plane, this strength is our ability to concentrate each of our thoughts, words, and actions towards the Divine Absolute. It represents the state of consciousness that is designated by the name "Christ state," "Buddhic state," and many others. For my part, I will call it the "Rose-Croix state."

The strength to which I am referring is perfectly illustrated in the allegorical story of David and Goliath; this is a profound illustration of its power. Using a pebble, the young David strikes down the giant Goliath, hitting him fatally in the center of his forehead. When we know that in this story the future king David symbolizes the power of spirituality, and Goliath that of materiality, we better understand to what extent thought is victorious over matter. This shows that the strength, which must be ours, is not that of the body, but that of the soul.

We find another illustration of this principle in the eleventh card of the tarot, where strength is symbolized by a young woman holding a lion's mouth open using just her hands. It is clear that the strength thus represented is not in any way physical. Here again it symbolizes the supremacy of the strength of the soul over that of the body. This does not mean that bodily energy cannot serve a spiritual end, quite the contrary. The body and its functions in fact serve as a vehicle for the soul, permitting it to evolve while in contact with the material world.

In speaking, we use the vocal organs to express what we are thinking. When doing this, we are calling on a part of our physical force. The best proof

of this is that the intensity of our words is very closely linked to our mental and emotional state at the time. So when we are irritated or angry, we tend to concentrate a greater than usual force into our voice. Conversely, when we pray aloud, the words we speak become a vague whisper.

The force of our words often reflects our inner condition, that is, the condition of our soul. The same can be said for the movements we make. An act of ritual, for example, is completely different from a gesture of annoyance. The interesting thing about this body-mind-soul connection is that we can take action to alter our inner state by observing the intensity of the force we are manifesting in our behavior.

Going back to the example of anger, becoming aware that we are speaking loudly and that our gestures are belligerent ought to prompt us to act on ourselves, and calm down. Unfortunately, through lack of will or control, we do not always think of doing this. Conversely, when we are praying or meditating, we ensure that we are calm and relaxed, so as to be inwardly receptive.

And so I think that the force or strength of the human being lies not only in the power of mental concentration, but also in the ability to control what is said and done, meaning one's words, gestures, and actions. In so doing, the person will be placing their whole being at the service of the soul, which is evolving through them, and contributing positively to their spiritual evolution. This realization is the key to true strength, and to the mastery of self.

May strength always be within you, and may it help you to go through life in peace and with success.

BEAUTY

The saying "If you want to be beautiful, stop for one minute before your mirror, five before your soul, and fifteen before your God" sums up rather well one of the goals that every human being should pursue. To honor Divine Beauty should be our most important objective; it is one that cannot be achieved unless we ourselves become beautiful. When I speak of beauty, I do not of course mean the bodily beauty that many attach too much importance to, and which at present, has unfortunately become an absurd cult. I am thinking instead of the beauty of our inner sanctuary, which whatever the external appearance of the temple to where it resides, may at any time radiate in the form of a magnetism that nothing and no one can distort or weaken.

Ugliness should not be considered in this respect as a lack of physical beauty, but as the expression of a great paucity of spirituality. What makes a lightbulb beautiful, however pure the shape and quality of its glass may be, is above all the degree of luminosity it is capable of emitting. The same is true of the human being. As long as the person goes on hiding their inner light under a bushel, they remain a prisoner in their body, and can at best only manifest a veneer of what seems beautiful to them.

It is mysticism alone that can give us the power to unveil our spirituality and set free the virtues hidden in our soul. Let us take truth for example. There is no error more serious than refusing to see and hear the truth. This is so because God is One, but errors are many since ignorance has an unlimited number of followers. What makes an individual beautiful is knowledge of self; that knowledge can raise them up to the farthest stars and bestow on them the gift of Divine Consciousness.

Let us also observe that it is not by chance that the state of Christ Consciousness is symbolized in the Kabbalistic Tree by the sephiroth Tiphereth, itself the symbol of the Adamic Beauty on Earth. Is it not said that the Master Jesus himself came to manifest Divine Beauty?

Let us strive to emulate the beauty of intention and action that motivated the Master Jesus throughout his ministry. This does not of course mean that we should think we are him, seeking to flatter our own ego by self-importantly imitating what we think we know of him. It just means that we should do everything we can to increase awareness of beauty on the part of the people around us, and help their sense of what is beautiful to move towards a higher embodiment.

I think that this goal is difficult to attain through art, for at this point in human evolution, it is still too imperfect an expression of Divine Perfection. It is true that there are many masters who, through music, painting, sculpture, and other branches of art, have embodied thought-forms of great purity and perfection. But for most people, such works are beyond what they are capable of sensing and understanding, where beauty is concerned. This is no doubt the reason that an inspired painting is, for some, the epitome of ghastliness, and why for others, decadent music is the height of inspiration.

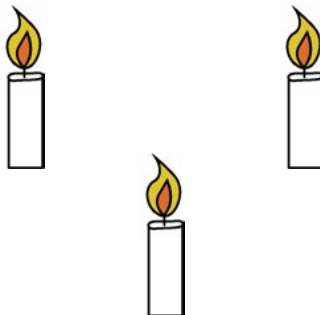
None of this means of course that there is no such thing as Universal Beauty. It simply shows us that incarnate human beings, before being able to discern the existence of such beauty, remain long-term prisoners of our false conception of what is beautiful.

It is only by evolving towards higher and higher planes of consciousness that each person can raise the veil and draw nearer to the magnificence of true beauty. Until humans attain a certain degree of evolution, all we do is project into our environment, the meaning that our minds give to beauty. In other words, we seek what is beautiful through the eyes of our body and not through the eyes of our soul. In this respect, we can say that there are as many criteria for beauty as there are individuals, and this is true when we compare all civilizations and all forms of society, even current ones. We can observe though, that there are certain things that everyone agrees emanate beauty, reflect harmony, give rise to inspiration, or bring calm.

Just to present a few examples, I suspect you have never heard it said that a sunrise or sunset, or a starry sky, are ugly things. Things are altogether different if you ask several people what they think about the beauty of some object or another. You then obtain variances between different concepts of beauty, each of them being the result of the education, personality, and inner evolution of the individual. It is thus simple to see that the problem of humans is not that we are insensitive to Universal Beauty, but that, in most cases, we are not conscious of it, do not know where to place it, and are unable to express it in what we think, say, and do.

As I have just stressed, every person is sensitive to the beauty that manifests by means of nature. We should therefore lead those around us, and even a wider group of people if we can, to reflect on the why and how regarding this sensitivity to beauty. In so doing, what we will be gradually leading them to is this: instead of continuing to make do with that which encompasses the beauty of nature and the universe, they will be consciously taking part in it—as performer and spectator. Let us guide them to want to open the *Book of Man [Humanity]* and the *Book of Nature*. Let us inspire them to want to know and understand the laws that are operating in them and around them.

This is what I have done my best to do through these reflections; I hope that you will find, within you and around you, sublime Universal Beauty.



The Inspiring Life and Work of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin

By Julie Scott, SI
Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order



Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin was born in 1743, in Amboise, France – the same hamlet where Leonardo da Vinci had lived and died two hundred years earlier.

Saint-Martin was raised as a devout Catholic and was heavily influenced by the kindness of his stepmother, whom he loved very much. His mother had died a few days after his birth.

Saint-Martin was educated as a lawyer, however he wasn't interested in that profession. He joined the French army during a period of peace, and so had time to study mystical subjects, which interested him very much.

It was during this period, in 1767, that he met Martinès de Pasqually, the founder and leader of the Order of the Élus Cohen. Saint-Martin was accepted into the Order of the Élus Cohen in 1768 and later became the personal secretary to Pasqually.

In 1774, Pasqually died while traveling in the Caribbean, leaving no successor. Jean-Baptist Willermoz and Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin took the work of Pasqually in different directions.

Saint-Martin did not found the Martinist Order. Gerard Encausse, MD (commonly known by his esoteric name, Papus) and Augustin Chaboseau founded the Martinist Order in 1889.

However, Saint-Martin and his well-known and well-connected circle of friends formed several groups and their practices included an initiation which has been passed down to us through various filiations.

In 1775, Saint-Martin wrote *Of Errors and Of Truth, or Humanity Recalled to the Universal Principle of Science*, under the pseudonym of the “Unknown Philosopher.”

During the next fourteen years he wrote much and traveled often – to Paris, to England, and on a mysterious trip to Russia.

In 1788, he met Charlotte de Boecklin who introduced him to the works of Jacob Boehme. At the age of forty, Saint-Martin learned German so that he could read Boehme’s work in its original language.

In 1790, *The Man [Person] of Desire* was published and in 1792, *The New Man [Person]*. In 1794, Saint-Martin returned to Amboise.

Saint-Martin was well-educated and respected. He was a master mathematician and philosopher. A close friend of his wrote after his death that, “Saint-Martin was admired for his good sense and his simple and amiable modesty. His endearing character and communicative spirit would, doubtless, have secured to him many partisans, but he did not seek to make proselytes; he wanted only friends for disciples—friends, not of his books only, but of each other.”

Above all, this brilliant and humble man (although born into French aristocracy) sought communion with the Divine.

He wrote,

The only initiation which I preach and seek with all the ardor of my soul, is that by which we may enter into the heart of God, and make God’s heart enter into us... There is no other mystery, to arrive at this holy initiation, than to go more and more down into the depths of our being, and not let go till we can bring forth the living vivifying root, because then all the fruit which we ought to bear, according to our kind, will be produced within us and without us, naturally.

Saint-Martin had a singleness of purpose. He felt the way to achieve his goal was to have one focus only—union with God, or the Divine.

Saint-Martin believed strongly in the power of the word. He wrote, “When we penetrate to the very ground of our being, we find that we can unite ourselves by our word with the ineffable source of truth; but that we can also, by its criminal use, unite ourselves with the awful abyss of lies and darkness.”

He believed there is great power in the words we choose to use and a responsibility to use them correctly. He wrote,

We should regard human intelligence so highly that nothing unworthy should be presented to it. We should approach our listeners as certain high personages in the East are approached – by offering them an intellectual gift through our words. We should strive to add to the light and virtue of those with whom we converse. We should make our conversation center around spiritual truths, and should distribute our words with moderation and discrimination.

Saint-Martin presented simple standards for living, which he believed led to justice, human dignity, and regeneration:

Not a desire, but in obedience.

Not an idea, which is not a sacred communication.

Not a word, which is not a sovereign decree.

Not an act, which is not a development and extension of the vivifying power of the Word.

In this way, through every thought, word, and deed, we move closer to God and to regeneration.

He wrote, “There is nothing more easy than to come to the gate of truth; there is nothing more difficult than to enter it.”

Also, “Had we the courage to make voluntarily the sincere and continual sacrifice of our entire beings, the ordeals, oppositions, and evils which we undergo during life would not be sent us; hence we should always be superior to our sacrifices; like the Repairer, instead of being almost invariably inferior to them.”

And, “There are for man three desirable things: 1) Never to forget that there is another light than the elementary, of which this is but the veil and the mask. 2) To realize that nothing either can or should prevent him from accomplishing his work. 3) To learn that what he knows best is that he knows nothing.

For making a statement similar to this last one, two thousand years earlier, the Delphic Oracle called Socrates the wisest person in the world.

Saint-Martin espoused simplicity. He wrote,

It is in vain that we pretend to arrive at the fullness of truth by reasoning. By this way we reach only rational truth; still it is infinitely precious, and full of resources against the assaults of false philosophy. The natural lights of every person of aspiration have indeed no other font, and it is therefore of almost universal use; but it cannot impart that sentiment and tact of active and radical truth from which our nature should derive its life and being. This kind of truth is given of itself alone. Let us make ourselves simple and childlike, and our faithful guide will cause us to feel its sweetness. If we profit by these first graces, we shall taste very soon those of the pure spirit, afterwards those of the Holy Spirit, then those of the Supreme Sanctity, and lastly, in the interior person we shall behold the all.

Saint-Martin wrote often about death and did not fear his own passing. He wrote, “If this world will seem to us, after our death, as nothing but magical illusion, why do we regard it otherwise at present? The nature of things does not change.” And “Fear walks with those who dwell upon death, but those who think of life have love for their companion.”

Saint-Martin quietly passed on while in prayer, surrounded by friends, on October 13, 1803.

As we can see, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin was a man for all times. He was humble and kind, well-educated and congenial. His first and only goal was communion with the Divine.

Although Saint-Martin wrote about complex methods of mathematics and elaborate cosmology, his basic tenet was that until we turn our will over to the Divine, we will not be happy, nor fulfilled.

He wrote:

Take back my will, O Lord, take back my will; for if I can suspend it one instant before Thee, the torrents of Thy life and light, having nothing to resist them, shall pour impetuously within me. Help me to break down the woeful barriers which divide me from thee; arm me against myself; triumph within me over all Thine enemies and mine by subduing my will.

O Eternal Principle of all joy and of all truth! When shall I be so renewed as no longer to be conscious of self, save in the permanent affection of Thine exclusive and vivifying will? When shall every kind of privation appear to me a profit and advantage, by preserving me from all bondage, and leaving me ample means to bind myself to the freedom of Thy spirit and wisdom?

Each Martinist SI member, through his or her SI initiation in a Heptad, is directly linked to this Master of the past. In silence and unknown, these Women and Men of Desire are initiated by the Provincial Master, who was initiated by the Grand Master, who was initiated by the Sovereign Grand Master, all the way back to the intimate initiations which took place among the circle of philosophers of Saint-Martin.

But more importantly, we are linked to a kindred soul, to our humble brother on the path, to the Unknown Philosopher – Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin.



Commemorative bronze medal made in 1971 by Marcelle Mouroux for the Paris mint.

The Symbolism of the Pantacle

From a Martinist Manuscript



The official symbol of the Traditional Martinist Order is the Pantacle.

First, let us indicate that the word *Pantacle* is actually a Martinist neologism, since it is not found in dictionaries. We should also mention that it is written with an “a,” and it should therefore not be confused with its homonym, “Pentacle,” written with an “e.” The latter comes from the Greek word *pente* signifying “five,” which explains why it is sometimes used to designate a talisman in the shape of a five-pointed star. As for the word *Pantacle*, on the etymological plane, it comes from the Greek word *panta*, meaning “the all.” According to the Martinist Adolphe Desbarolles (1804-1886), this word comes from the Latin *pantaculum*, meaning, “that which contains all.” Likewise, Papus indicated that the Pantacle is “a diagram of the all, summarizing in a unique symbol, an entire wealth of knowledge.” Stanislas de Guaita shared this interpretation, since he considered this symbol to be the hieroglyphic summary of a complete doctrine.

If you observe the Pantacle you will notice that it is composed of many elements. At first, we immediately distinguish the six-pointed star formed by the two interlaced triangles. We then notice that they are contained within a hexagram, itself placed within a circle. Finally, we see a cross extending from the center of this circle to its circumference. These diverse elements, the two interlaced triangles, the hexagram, the circle, and the cross, belong to universal symbology; therefore, we could be tempted to consult what tradition has said in general about these symbols in order to understand the meaning of the Martinist Pantacle. However, this would be a mistake. To discover its true symbolism, we must focus upon the meaning that our tradition attributes to these different symbols.

You will remember that it was Papus who, when he created the Martinist Order, chose the Pantacle to symbolize Martinism. Actually, he took only one of the essential symbols of the Order of the Élus-Cohen, founded in the eighteenth century by Martinès de Pasqually. For Pasqually and his disciples, the Pantacle

had a precise meaning. It represented *Universal Creation*, the material world, conceived to serve as a place of exile for the beings that had moved away from God following the Fall. In their eyes, it also symbolized the place that humanity occupied at the origin of Creation, as well as the path that we must follow to recover this position, while laboring for our own Reintegration, and that of all beings. Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin himself spoke about the symbology of the Pantacle in many of his writings, particularly in *The Natural Tableau* and in *Of Numbers*. By basing it upon the Pantacle that Saint-Martin drew in the latter book, Papus conceived the Pantacle that would become the symbol of the Martinist Order.

In the Pantacle, the circle represents the limit of Creation. Indeed, when it appears without the dot marking its center, the circle does not symbolize the Divine Immensity, rather, the Uncreated Fire Axis surrounding the material world, the world in which we can no longer perceive the Divine Center from where it emanated. Further, it is the radius that makes possible the division of the circle into six equal parts, thus producing a perfect hexagram. It is interesting to note that in his book, *Of Errors and of Truth*, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin strove to show that the radius of the circle provides the basic structure to the two triangles of the Pantacle, which form a six-pointed star.

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, as did Martinès de Pasqually, saw the symbol of the six Days of Creation in the hexagram. The number six is also symbolized by the two interlaced triangles. In the Pantacle, these two triangles represent the creation of the material world by the Divine, who joined the triple power of Thought, Will, and Action, together with the work of sulfur, salt, and mercury, for this occasion. The spirits, whose initial mission was to produce matter, produced these three essences.

In his book, *Of Numbers*, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin declared: “the upper triangle and the lower triangle, by reacting to each other, manifested life.” And he added later: “It is then that the Quaternary Human appeared,” being represented by the cross found in the Pantacle. The center of this cross coincides with that of the circle, and the four arms go beyond the limits fixed by the two triangles to finally rejoin the circle. This means that the Quaternary Human, also called the *Minor Quaternary*, was placed at the center of Creation, not only to direct it; also to work toward Reintegration. This double mission constitutes what the Unknown Philosopher called, “humanity’s first religion,” by which, we “had to continually sweep our gaze from the East to the West, from the North to the South.” In fact, Saint-Martin considers humanity, “a being charged with continuing God, where God does not make Divinity known any longer,” that is, in all the parts of Creation.

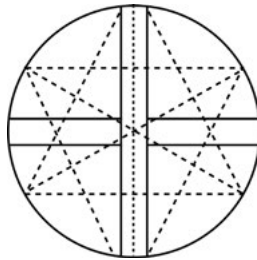
In Martinism, the cross does not symbolize the idea of death, as is often the case in Christianity. Martinès de Pasqually, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, and Jean-Baptiste Willermoz called it a *Receptacle* because they saw in its shape the idea of radiation, taking its source from an invisible point and then extending it in all the directions of space. According to them, at the beginning, Primordial Humanity was destined to receive the Divine Energy emanating from the invisible center of Creation, and to then transmit it to the entire universe. In all of the initiations created by Martinès de Pasqually, whose goal was to symbolically re-live the various stages of the history of humanity, the candidates were placed lying down in the center of a large Pantacle traced on the ground, with their arms in the shape of the cross. While in this position, they were covered with three superimposed pieces of fabric – one black, one red, and one white. In one of these initiations, two large pieces of white fabric were added, in order to form a cross on their body. This cross was then called the *Receptacle*.

According to the *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings*, the Quaternary Minor, Adam, was placed at the center of Creation to direct it; however, he was unable to accomplish his mission. The First Adam having fallen; it is the Second Adam, the Christ, who was called to occupy this central place. However, in his *Treatise of the Two Natures*, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz indicates that if the mission of the Christ necessitated that he pass through the cross, it was to remind us of our original condition. According to Willermoz, “This Cross, by figuratively dividing with its four arms, the four parts of created space, reminds us clearly of the four celestial regions that were the first domain of humanity in our state of purity and innocence. Its center, on which the Divine Repairer died, reminds us of the terrestrial paradise, which was the seat of our glory and our dominion.” For Jean-Baptiste Willermoz, as for Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the cross symbolizes the Redemption, and indicates the path that humanity must follow to recover our original place.

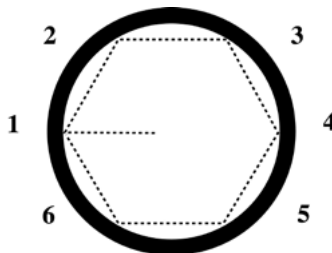
As you know and as you can see on the diagram, the S.I. symbol is represented by a cross, surrounded by the letters “S” and “I” and by two groups of three points. Regarding the Martinist Tradition, this highly significant symbol represents the Mastery to which the Initiate aspires, the Mastery that will one day make us true Unknown Superiors. After having ripped away the dark veil of ignorance that is obscuring our mission, we will become Divine Humanity on Earth, and again direct Creation, represented by the six points. From then on, the circle will no longer limit the radiation of our action, it will embrace the All.

To reach this Mastery, we must begin by turning toward the Christ, who, since Adam’s fall, occupies the center of Creation. In effect, for Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the Christ is the mediator, the invisible center to which we can link ourselves, in order to know regeneration. Just like the rose at the center of the cross, the Christ is found in our hearts and constitutes the source from which we can drink in order to be regenerated. That is why the Unknown Philosopher insisted so strongly on the necessity of continuing to delve into the depths of ourselves, in order to extract the “vivifying root, because then all the fruits that we must bear, according to our species, will be naturally produced within us and outside of us.” Such is, for Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the true initiation, which again makes us a Receptacle of the Divine.

As we have seen through this article, the Pantacle is an expression of the All. It represents, not only the process by which the Divine gave birth to Creation; it also represents the place of humanity in creation and the path that we must follow in order to regenerate ourselves, while working on the Reintegration of all beings. It is precisely for this reason that the brilliance of the symbol “assists and supports the trained eye of the Initiate in the search for the lost mysteries.” Naturally, other teachings can be drawn from the Pantacle; it is for you, through meditation, and in the silence of your heart, to discover them.



The Pantacle, according to a drawing from Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin.



The Pantacle formed by the division of the circle by the radius.



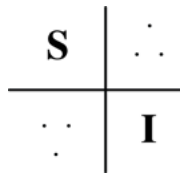
Two interlaced triangles (The six-pointed star).



The six days, foundation of Creation.



The six days, foundation of Creation (Represented by a cross)



The S.I. symbol.

What does the “Middle Way” Mean on the Initiatic Path?

by Sister Unknown



In all Traditions, the “Middle Way” is presented as one of the goals to attain in terms of initiation. But what does this entail exactly? Is it about a third way? Is it an entirely separate path, a union of two others, or rather one that integrates or transcends both? What is the role of this way and in what way can it be useful on the initiatic path?

Tradition teaches that the concept of “The Middle Way” was inherited from Buddhist teachings. In fact, the Buddha, the Awakened One, experimented with

the two extreme poles during his lifetime, that is, exacerbating earthly pleasures on the one hand and, on the other, adopting a rigorous asceticism and even mortification. Having experienced in his body the harmful effects of these two approaches to existence, he arrived at a median approach whose application, according to him, leads to “Nirvana,” the state of complete detachment and perfect realization, leading to the complete cessation of suffering and the final ending of the cycle of reincarnations or “Samsara.”

The Middle Way is therefore founded on the fundamental Law of Equilibrium. It sits midway between two extremes, which each in its sphere expresses a specific polarity (Positive negative, masculine feminine, active passive, light darkness...). It reconciles these into a powerful, harmonious, and living synthesis.

The Kabbalah has also perfectly expressed this idea in the representation of the Tree of Life or Sephirothic Tree. In this symbolic representation of Creation, the left and right columns, Mercy and Severity, harmonize into the central column of Equilibrium, representing the union between the divine and material worlds.

The “Middle Way” is also known within the Tradition as the “Eight Times Holy Path” or the “Noble Eightfold Path,” in reference to the number of branches composing it. The eight traditional paths have the following names: Pure (or Right) Belief, Pure Will (or Thought), Pure Speech, Pure Conduct (or Action), Pure Livelihood, Pure Application (or Effort), Pure Mindfulness, and Pure Meditation (or Concentration).

As the eight times repeated adjective suggests, the common denominator of these eight mystical paths is “purity.” This makes complete sense when we refer to the Martinist cosmogony described in the *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings* by Martinès de Pasqually. Actually, according to this Tradition, before the transgression leading to the symbolic Fall, humanity was pure. The misuse of Free Will, in an attempt to create, begins without the Divine’s approval, ends in immediate loss through Divine Decree, of the first glorious body which is substituted by a body of flesh, and which must submit to the laws of the material world. Having abandoned this unalterable body of pure glory, it had to be re-clothed by a physical body subject to corruption.

People, therefore have, from that moment, a dual mission: to allow the first prevaricating spirits to become conscious of their error, to purify themselves and willingly reintegrate with the Divinity, and at the same time, to regain our original purity. For Martinists, the expression “original purity” is synonymous with the Divine and Reintegration. The Traditional Martinist Order makes this a sacred ideal, as the words of Ieschouah, the Redeemer and the Regenerator of humanity demonstrate: “Happy are those who have a pure heart, for they shall see [know] God [the Divine].”

The “Middle Way” or “Eightfold Holy Path” is one of the techniques allowing us to attain this Pureness and the Truth.

On Numbers

By Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin

The following is a selection from Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin's letters to Kirchberger, Baron de Liebistorf, in 1796, which were translated into English by Edward Burton Penny and published in Exeter, in 1863, under the title Theosophic Correspondence.

I am quite satisfied, my dear brother, that you should look upon numbers as expressing truths, not giving them. I wish you would add to this, that men did not choose numbers, but that they perceived them, in the natural properties of things. To be sure of their steps, they could not have taken any other guides; for true sciences are those in which man puts nothing of his own. Figures, even, which are but the material expressions of numbers, were not originally so much an arbitrary conventional work of men, as might be supposed, seeing the fantastic use to which they have been brought in the arts and sciences: they have several sources, whether in languages, in which letters were used for figures, or in nature, which has given us the Arab figures.

For, in short, it is clear that, since the fall, we have nothing of our own, and consequently everything must have been given to us; then we have abused, and still abuse everything daily, believing ourselves to be great doctors, especially in our benighted academies: our eminent quality is to abuse; and, ever since Adam, we have done nothing else. But this subject is too vast for a letter.

Numbers are no algebra, my dear brother, but men have sometimes lowered them to it. They are only the sensible expression, whether visible or intellectual, of the different properties of beings, which all proceed from the one only essence. Traditional theoretical teaching may transmit to us a part of this science, but with the risk of our seeing what is false therein, as much as the good, according to the teacher's standing. Regeneration alone shows us the ground, and therein we obtain the pure key, without masters; every one, however, in his own degree

Look at our friend B. [Boehme] Who taught him the seven forms of universal nature? who taught him the number of the Ternary shown in the cross by means of the will? who told him of the ten mirrors at the end of which the last finds the first, &c. &c.? The fountain itself gave him the knowledge of these things, whether it be that this fountain came to him, or that he ascended into it. He went out of the earthly man, which sees only errors and

darkness, notwithstanding his sciences and his reason; and he sought to live only in his divine man, which ought naturally to reflect every light, for these vary not, and he is, by birth and adoption, their mirror. The number of the universal forms of the Spirit being 7, as proved by a thousand reasons, we may follow its course, which I call a vegetative one, because everything in it ought to be living.

Now, it is only by carrying the roots to their powers that I get an image of the life of properties, and it is by multiplying this root that we find the fruits, 49, the product of 7×7 . But, though I thus arrive at this product, the root that engendered it does not, therefore, change its nature; it increases and pullulates without losing its own character. Thus 49 is still 7, for me, but 7 in development; whilst, in its root, it is 7 only in concentration.

Nevertheless, development is necessary for it to go to 8, which is the temporal mirror of the invisible incalculable Denary. Now, while it passes from 7 to 8 by means of the great unity with which it unites, it also passes from 49 to 50 by means of the same unity; and it draws the quaternary or human soul into this reunion, by making it traverse and abolish the novenary of appearance, which is our limit, and the cause of our privation. This, my dear brother, is a brief sketch showing how 5 is equal to 8, and 8 equal to 5 in the great wonder which the divine Repairer has wrought for our regeneration. This is a thing which came directly to my intelligence, and which I received from no man. I wish it may give you what it has given me.



Jacob Boehme
(1575 – 1624)

You cannot form 50 by $8 + 2$, because you would here use as element number 8, which does not yet exist, and must appear only after the operation; and number 6, which is not an active number, but only the organ through which life passes; and, lastly, number 2, which is the number of iniquity, and cannot be found in the constituent numbers of the Repairer, since it is said that He learned everything from man except sin.

I do not enter into all your other questions about the meaning of each number, the mode of calculating, the formulas, and results. Not only volumes would be insufficient to accomplish satisfactorily such a task, but I say all in repeating to you, that it is in regeneration, and that alone, we can discover anything certain in this line. There are several degrees in this regeneration; there are also several in the dark ways of human reason; my whole life would not be enough to sound all their limits, and if I undertook it of myself, I should still run the risk of coming to doubtful results.

I do not know why your friend takes the year of the Christian era for his calculation; not knowing the ground he goes upon, I cannot say whether he is right or wrong. In this order of things an immeasurable immensity of points of view are given to every one; and we can make sure of the nature of the tree, and its fruits, only by reciprocal explanations and confrontation of principles.

You know our true aim, my dear brother, when you say we must, on the one hand, *detach* ourselves, and, on the other, *attach* ourselves; and the only office I can exercise towards you is to encourage you; for I am still far from being able to instruct you. Yes, the only thing we want, is, as you say, a firm will to come out of our Sodom, which is capable only of the wrath and of the Sulphur Spirit, to return to the open air and the divine protection.

And before the great Name can teach us everything, we must, by our own efforts, faith, and perseverance, begin by approaching this great Name, which, though it acts and speaks incessantly, is, nevertheless, neither perceived nor heard by the beastly creature which encloses us. Read Boehme here; he is the doctor of doctors. . . .

The Chivalric Ideal

From a Martinist Manuscript

“The Martinist Order, as a whole, is especially a school of moral knighthood, endeavoring to develop the spiritual aspect of its members by the study of the invisible world and its laws, by the exercise of devotion and intellectual assistance and by the creation in each a spirit of an all the more solid faith as it is based on observation and science...”

Papus (Gerard Encausse)

Chivalry has been perpetuated throughout the centuries and still lives on today. It has animated those who have consecrated their lives to preserving the flame of wisdom, knowledge, and virtue, so that they can be passed on to those who succeed them and become, in their turn, the servants of humanity. In all periods and in all places, these knights were guided both by love for their fellow humans and by an intense religious or spiritual quest. So it is in their faith in humanity and in the Divine that they drew their courage and determination to work in the service of the noblest ideals.

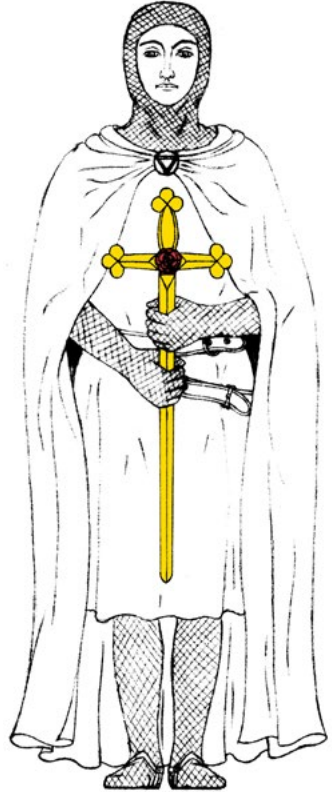
When we speak of chivalry, we immediately think of illuminated images in history books. In the modern era, this somewhat succinct imagery has grown through cinema, television shows, and documentary films consecrated to the knights of old. We notice that they were present on all continents, from the West to the East. Certainly, their rules, customs, and clothing varied, but their goal was generally the same: serving Truth and defending the weak. If these knights have fallen into obsolescence, the chivalric ideal remains a fundamental expression of the very best in humankind and is a truly traditional path.

There have always been and there will always be men and women of heart who combat injustice, misery, ignorance, and oppression, and are ready to devote themselves to its victims, to assist them materially, morally, and spiritually. Chivalry did not begin in a particular era; it is a permanent value and an essential function in the lives of people. An extensive historic study has shown that chivalry has existed ever since people sought to improve their conditions and to understand the profound meaning of existence. This tradition contains its moral, scientific, and esoteric notions, as well as its initiations and its own conception of an ideal society. It is of the world while not being in the world. This is why it was sometimes so misunderstood.

The objective of the knight is not war, but peace. This places them above all combats that people create for selfish or narrow interests. The qualities that they use are manifested in a way of living that is the very essence of chivalry, and they are described with emphasis in works of literature that have come down to us through the centuries. Outside of their moral and historical aspect, the stories of chivalric literature are allegorical and symbolic. Generally speaking, they evoke humanity's quest for reintegration, which is often called, "The Quest of the Grail." The most well-known example of this is probably the epic of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

In the beginning, a knight had to possess two major qualities: on the one hand, valor in combat, maintained and developed by education and practice; on the other hand, loyalty expressed through respect of oneself, as well as one's enemy. A knight worthy of the name must also be courtly. Besides obedience that they vowed to their lord, they assumed duties toward the lady, an esoteric aspect that was poorly understood, by both the non-initiated historians and by certain knights. Yet, courtesy was a school of thought that contributed to the emergence of a chivalry of both heart and soul, founded on "Courtly Love."

In ancient Egypt, the formations of the pharaoh's army created a knighthood devoted both to the protection of the oppressed and to the defense of the country. All those who were part of it had faith in the beyond. In China, it is the School of Mezi (around 2300 BCE), which was the beginning of a codified knighthood. These members made a vow of poverty and placed themselves in the service of the oppressed. They worked at avoiding wars and defended cities that were unjustly attacked. In Japan, the knighthood of the Samurai is well known. Their ideal was not only military, but also political, moral, and religious. They could never take advantage of their strength, but enforced justice and religious laws, and ensured that order reigned. Their ethics served as an example for youth education. India also possessed its knighthood, and the Bhagavad-Gita illustrates this through allegory in the battle of Kurukshetra, a battle that marked the beginning of the Kali Yuga, the Dark Age.



If chivalry is often associated with Europe, it is because it was favored by the feudal system and was the foundation of royalty, as it existed in the Middle Ages. During this time, it was expressed through hierarchy, from the king to his subject, and the lords who were his vassals, making the existence of knights necessary. Furthermore, this period of European history was marked by the emergence of numerous religious and military orders, such as the Knights Templar, the Knights Hospitaller, the Teutonic Knights, and the Knights of Malta. Most of these knights were directly or indirectly associated with the Catholic Church. However, there were also independent knights who offered their services to whomever they pleased.

Now, let us look at the spiritual aspect of the chivalric tradition—in other words, its mystical aspect. If in the past, the warrior aspect, meaning the exoteric aspect of knighthood, was highlighted, it was because the world was more primitive and barbarous. For common mortals, the prowess of the knights was mainly in their physical strength and their ability to kill the enemy. People admired the heroic acts accomplished with vigor, although they did not always consider justice and the law. If people admired such exploits, it was because their spiritual evolution did not allow them access to a superior ideal. Only rare individuals surpassed the level of this exoteric knighthood to see the inner Knighthood that served as its foundation.

With time, the rules of chivalry were refined and gave more and more importance to moral values and justice, symbolized by the knight's sword. Generally, these rules were the reflection of virtues praised by religion. In Christianity, it was naturally the four cardinal virtues (courage, justice, prudence, temperance) and the three theological virtues (charity, hope, faith). That being said, the knights associated with other religions promoted virtues that were very close, if not the same virtues. In any case, faith was a fundamental element in the knightly quest, The Divine being at once the confidant, the protector, and the inspiration of the knight.

From a mystical viewpoint, true knights are those who carry out a holy war against themselves, not against an outside enemy. In their case, it is the strength of the soul that is tested, not physical strength. It means fighting one's own faults and weaknesses so that what is most divine within triumphs. This reminds us of the spiritual alchemy that is so dear to Martinists. Along this line of thought, let us remember that the Martinist knight represents the archetypes of virtue and perfection, such as incarnated beings can express through their behavior in contact with other people.

With the disappearance of the religious and military orders like the Knights Templar, we could think that the chivalric tradition has been lost.

In reality, it has been perpetuated century after century, particularly through esoteric movements. Of course, there is an honorary knighthood, where such-and-such a person is raised to the rank of knight for having distinguished themselves in the realm of the arts, sciences, or literature, but this recognition is purely an honor; it does not correspond to a philosophical or mystical quest. In some cases, it is even overused. True knighthood is in an inner process and is based fundamentally on merit.

Because chivalry has a past and a present, it also has a future. As Martinists, we are knights of a present that rests on the foundations laid by knights of the past. With this foundation and because of our own work, it is our duty to transmit to the knights of the future an inheritance that is as noble and pure as possible. Thus, the chivalric ideal that lives inside of us will be perpetuated and will continue to inspire generations of men and women of good will, eager to serve their fellow humans, under the auspices of the Divine.



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