

Pantacle





TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

It is with great joy that I welcome you to this premiere issue of the *Pantacle*. We are ushering in a time of renewed energy and vigor for the Traditional Martinist Order in our jurisdiction, and I believe this magazine captures the essence of this energy.

In this premiere issue we will travel through the history of Martinism, beginning with an article by Christian Rebisse. Our journey begins with the founding of the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen* by Martínez de Pasquales in 1754 and the subsequent initiation of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin by Pasquales. It takes us through the ensuing chain of initiation of which the founders of today's Martinism are an integral part—Augustin Chaboseau and Gerard Encausse, or Papus. We review our tradition's place in the study of Hermeticism and Kabbalah and the trials and tribulations that it faced with the onset of World War I. Our journey brings us to where we are in today's TMO.

As Martinists of today we know we have much work to do, and we are inspired in this work by a Martinist of the past, our Venerated Master, Papus, who reminds us of our connection with the Earth, of which we are stewards, and our brother Benevolar who teaches us the way through Virtue.

We complete our journey through this issue with the circle—the symbol of unity, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. As you end your journey through this issue of the *Pantacle*, may another journey begin. Let us take the inspiration that we have found in these pages out into our world that each one of us may fully reflect the radiant Light of Martinism!

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

Julie Scott

Grand Master
Traditional Martinist Order

Martinism

History of a Traditional Order

by *Christian Rebisse*

IN 1889, the Fourth World Fair, celebrating the centenary of France's 1789 Revolution, opened in Paris. It was a splendid fair where the marvel of electricity triumphed. The fair's main attraction was the inauguration of the Eiffel Tower, a gigantic metallic monument that was soon to become the symbol of triumphant materialism, of technology and industry. Was it not the very incarnation of a new Tower of Babel?

Meanwhile, Martinism was in the process of being reorganized and had just begun publishing its magazine *L'Initiation*. Upon what foundations did the Martinists of that time rely to erect *their* Temple, and who were the craftsmen of its reconstruction?

In answer, one may date the birth of the Martinist Order to the meeting of two custodians of an "initiation" that had been passed down from the time of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803). Their names were Gérard Encausse (better known as Papus) and Augustin Chaboseau.

The Élus-Cohen

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin was the disciple of Martínez de Pasquales. Around 1754 Pasquales founded the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen* (Order of Elect Priests) so as to have his disciples work toward personal reintegration through the practice of theurgy, which relied on complex ceremonial practices aimed



Dr. Gérard Encausse, a.k.a. Papus



Pierre-Augustin Chaboseau

at what Pasquales termed the *reconciliation* of the “minor” man with Divinity. This was to be accomplished through human communication with the so-called angelic hierarchies. According to Pasquales, the angels were man’s only support in his efforts to become reconciled with the Divine after “The Fall.”

Thus, contrary to what is generally thought, Martinism is not a mere extension of the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen*, and Martínez de Pasquales should not be considered the founder of the Martinist Order.

In 1772, before the organization of his Order was completed, Martínez de Pasquales left France on family business for Haiti—from whence he never returned. He died in Santo Domingo in 1774. After the disappearance of Pasquales, several disciples of the master continued to spread his teachings, each from a unique perspective. Two disciples particularly distinguished themselves—namely, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz and Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin.

An ardent adept of Freemasonry and theurgy, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz (1730-1824) was in contact with the German *Stricte Observa Templière* (Strict Templar Observance). In 1782, at a Conventicle of the Order in Wilhelmsbad, Willermoz incorporated Pasquales’ teachings into the higher degrees of that order—the degrees of *Profès* and *Grand Profès*—but did not pass along the theurgic practices of the *Élus-Cohen*. During the Conventicle, the *Stricte Observance Templière* was reformed under a new name, the *Chevaliers Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte* (Knights Benefactor of the Holy City).

Meanwhile, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin had renounced Freemasonry. He forsook theurgy—“the exterior way”—in favor of the benefits of “the interior way.” In fact, he considered theurgy to be dangerous, and angelic evocation far from infallible when conducted through “exterior” methods. We might even put into Saint-Martin’s mouth the following excerpt from a poem by Angelus Silesius, entitled *Chérubinique*:

*Go away Seraphims, you cannot comfort me!
Go away angels and all that may be seen close to you;
I jump all alone into the uncreated sea of pure Deity.*

According to Saint-Martin, the implement and crucible of this mysterious communion is the heart of man. He sought “to enter into the heart of the Divine and make the Divine enter his heart.” It is in this sense that we call the path advocated by Saint-Martin “The Way of the Heart.” The evolution of Saint-Martin’s interior perspective can be traced to his discovery of the works of Jacob Boehme. In his personal diary, Saint-Martin wrote, “It is to my first master [Pasquales] that I owe my first steps upon the spiritual path, but it is to my second master [Boehme] that I owe the most significant steps.” He enlarged upon the ideas of his two masters and incorporated them into a personal system passed on through an “initiation” to a few chosen disciples.¹

Saint-Martin was not the founder of the Martinist Order, which was a later development. However, we do know that a group formed around him, alluded to in the letters of some of his friends (circa 1795) under the name *Cercle Intime* (Intimate Circle) or *Société des Intimes* (Association of Intimates). In *Le Lys dans la Vallée* (The Lily in the Valley) the great novelist Honoré de Balzac refers to the existence of groups of Saint-Martin's disciples: "An intimate friend of the Duchess of Bourbon, Mme. de Verneuil, belonged to a holy society whose soul was Mr. Saint-Martin, born in Touraine and nicknamed the Unknown Philosopher. This philosopher's disciples practiced the virtues recommended by the high speculations of mystical Illuminism."² The Initiation originally transmitted by Saint-Martin was passed down to modern times through various so-called filiations. By the end of the 19th century, two men in particular were the custodians of the Initiation, Dr. Gérard Encausse and Augustin Chaboseau, each through a different filiation. Let us briefly examine these filiations.

Martinist Filiation

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin died on October 13, 1803. He had initiated Jean Antoine Chaptal, a chemist to whom we owe the discovery of certain manufacturing processes for alum and the dyeing of cotton, as well as the vinification process

called *chaptalization* (the process of adding sugar to the must). Chaptal had several children, among them a daughter who married to become Mme. Delaage. She had a son, Henri Delaage, who wrote many books on the history of ancient initiation. He in turn was initiated by someone whose name we do not know—probably his father or mother, for when his grandfather (Chaptal) died, the young Henri Delaage was only seven and too young to receive the Initiation. Henri Delaage passed on the Initiation to Gérard Encausse (Papus) in 1882.

The second filiation proceeded as follows. About the middle of 1803, Saint-Martin was staying at Aulnay with his friend, the Abbot de la Noue, whom he had long since initiated. This clergyman, an independent priest possessing an encyclopedic knowledge, initiated the lawyer Antoine-Louis Marie Hennequin. The latter initiated Hyacinthe Joseph-Alexandre Thabaud de



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Symbol of the Traditional Martinist Order

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Latouche, better known under the pen name of Henri de Latouche, who in turn initiated Honoré de Balzac and Adolphe Desbarolles, the Count of Authencourt, to whom we owe a famous dissertation on palmistry. The latter initiated Henri de Latouche's niece, Amélie Nouël de Latouche, the Marchioness of Boisse-Mortemart, who, in 1886, initiated her nephew, Augustin Chaboseau.³

The Creation of the Martinist Order

It was from the meeting of these two spiritual descendants of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin—Augustin Chaboseau and Papus—that an initiatory Order called *Ordre Martiniste* (Martinist Order) was born. Papus and Augustin Chaboseau were both studying medicine. A mutual friend, Gaëtan Leymarie, Director of *La Revue Spirite*, knowing of their deep interest in esotericism, arranged for them to get together. The two medical students soon became friends and discovered their mutual participation in initiatic filiations going back to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. In 1888, they pooled what they had received and made plans to pass this on to a few seekers of truth. To achieve their goal, they founded what we call the Martinist Order, and it is only after this time that the Martinist Order can be said to have existed as such. (We will see later how the name of the Order was altered by adding such qualifications as “Traditional” or “Synarchical.”)

Although the Order had no structure at that time, the number of initiates increased rapidly. It was then that Papus created the magazine *L'Initiation*. As Papus had not yet finished his education, after which he was to complete his military service, it was not until July 7, 1892, that he successfully defended his medical thesis. Still, what activity! He had already organized the *Ordre Martiniste*, established *l'École Hermétique* (the Hermetic School), created the magazines *L'Initiation* and *Le Voile d'Isis*, and written, at age 23, *Le Traité Élémentaire de Sciences Occultes* (The Elementary Treatise on Occult Sciences) and, at age 24, *Le Tarot des Bohémiens* (Tarot of the Bohemians). His associates were not much older than he, except for F.C.H. Barlet.

In 1887, Papus' esoteric interests had been aroused by the writings of Louis Lucas, a chemist, alchemist, and Hermeticist. A student of occultism, he studied the works of Eliphas Levi and made the acquaintance of Barlet (Albert Fauchaux), a learned occultist, and Félix Gaboriau, director of the Theosophical magazine *Le Lotus Rouge* (The Red Lotus). In 1887, Papus also joined the Theosophical Society, founded earlier in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott.

The 1891 Supreme Council

Papus soon adopted a detached attitude toward the Theosophical Society. It promoted an Eastern, Buddhist concept of esotericism which went so far as to trivialize, even suppress, the perspectives of Western esotericism. This attitude—proclaiming the superiority of Eastern over Western tradition—alarmed Papus. At the same time a more serious danger appeared on the horizon which made it impossible to perpetuate the Western tradition in its customary silence and

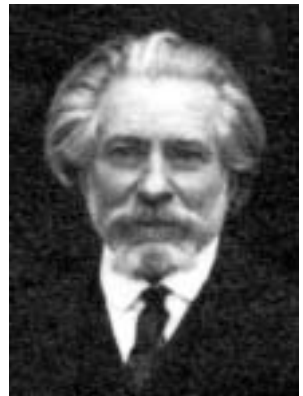
obscurity. According to Papus and Stanislas de Guaita, some occultists were trying to shift the hub of esotericism away from Paris—its traditional center—to places more favored by the Eastern enthusiasts.

“Thus it was decided in high places,” Papus wrote, “that a campaign of extension should be undertaken to select true initiates capable of adapting the Eastern tradition to the century which was about to open.” The purpose was to preserve the perenniality of the Eastern tradition while at the same time opposing a trend which would have led sincere seekers toward an impasse between Eastern and Western esotericism. Martinism was to be the instrument of this plan.

In 1890, Papus resigned from the Theosophical Society. From that date, Martinism became better organized. Martinist initiations became more frequent, and in the following year, July 1891, the Martinist Order created a Supreme Council composed of 21 members.⁴ Papus was elected Grand Master. Through Papus’ many talents and the material support of Lucien Mauchel (Chamuel), the Order grew rapidly. The first Martinist Lodges were established, and four soon appeared in Paris—*Le Sphinx*, headed by Papus, which offered general studies; *Hermanubis*, headed by Sédir, which taught mysticism and eastern tradition; *Velleda*, headed by Victor-Emile Michelet, devoted to the study of symbolism; and *Sphinge*, intended to promote the arts. Martinist groups formed in several other French cities as well. The Order also spread to Belgium, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Egypt, Tunisia, the United States, Argentina, Guatemala, and Colombia. The April 1898 issue of *L’Initiation* claimed as many as 40 lodges throughout the world, and later that year it could boast 113.

The Faculty of Hermetic Sciences

Martinists wanted to revive Western esotericism; however, there was no place in France where Hermetic sciences could be studied. Papus reflected, “Since there exist faculties where we can learn materialistic sciences, why shouldn’t there be one where we can learn esoteric sciences!” To meet that need, Martinists organized a school that would create courses and lectures intended to communicate Western esoteric values to seekers drawn from the public. This school became the breeding ground from which prospective Martinists were selected for initiation. In fact, it was to become the outer circle of the Martinist Order, and was called the *École Supérieure Libre des Sciences Hermétiques* (the Independent High School of Hermetic Sciences). It later changed its name to *Groupe Indépendant d’Études Ésotériques*, then to *École Hermétique*, and finally to *Faculté des Sciences Hermétiques* (Faculty of Hermetic Sciences).

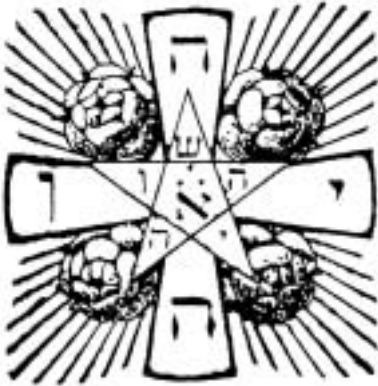


It offered a multitude of courses (about 12 monthly), subjects ranging from Qabala to Alchemy, *Victor-Emile Michelet*

to the Tarot, covering the history of Hermetic philosophy. The more diligent teachers were Papus, Sédir, Victor-Emile Michelet, Barlet, Augustin Chaboseau, and Sisera. A special group under Augustin Chaboseau studied the Eastern sciences. Another under F. Jollivet Castelot studied Alchemy and took the name *Société Alchimique de France* (Alchemical Society of France).

Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix

Having organized the outer circle—then called the *Groupe Indépendant d'Études Ésotériques*—the Martinists also created an inner circle, the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* (Qabalistic Order of the Rose Cross).



Symbol of "l'Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix"

On July 5, 1892, the Martinist Order and the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* were linked by an agreement. According to Stanislas de Guaita, "Martinism and the Rose-Croix constituted two complementary forces in the full scientific meaning of the term."⁵ The Qabalistic Order of the Rose Cross had been revived in 1889 by Stanislas de Guaita and Josephin Péladan. Admission was reserved strictly for Martinist S.I.'s who had attained that Degree at least three years before and under special circumstances. The number of members was to

be limited to 144, but apparently this number was never reached.

The purpose of the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* was to complete the spiritual formation of those in the S.I. Degree. It was divided into three Degrees, leading to the following diplomas: Bachelor in Qabala, Qabala Graduate, and Doctor of Qabala. When Stanislas de Guaita died in 1897, eight years after the Order's founding, Barlet was appointed head, but never fulfilled his duties; the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* became more or less dormant. As late as World War I in 1914, Papus was still trying to revive the Order, without success.

To spread Illuminism, the Martinists did not hesitate to merge with other initiatory organizations. Thus, in 1908 Papus organized a great international spiritualistic convention in Paris—an event which brought together no fewer than 30 initiatory organizations. The secretary of this huge undertaking was Victor Blanchard, a Martinist who later made use of this technique to organize the F.U.D.O.S.I.

Sometimes, in his many alliances, Papus would allow himself to be overwhelmed by the emotional zeal of his colleagues. So it was with the *Église Gnostique* (Gnostic Church), founded around 1889 by Jules Doissnel after a spiritual experience. It is often claimed that the Gnostic Church became the official church of the Martinists. In fact, the importance of the alliance has

been exaggerated by some of the pseudo-successors of Papus. Although the Martinist Order merged with many organizations—*Les Illuminés* (The Illuminati), *Les Babistes* (The Babists), *Le Rite Écossais* (The Scottish Rite), or *Memphis Misraïm*—it always maintained its independence. It was common practice in those days to belong to several initiatory organizations at once. Some, unfortunately, abused the privilege, becoming afflicted with a terrible disease that often appears among the superficially initiated: the tendency to collect titles as a substitute for true esoteric study.

Papus and most of the Martinist leaders had assumed important responsibilities in the Egyptian Freemasonry of the Rite of Memphis-Misraïm, for example. But compared to its 97 degrees, the few Martinist degrees seemed infinitesimal! A number of Martinists, dazzled by the prodigious titles of the Memphis-Misraïm Degrees, no longer took time to study the teachings. Thus, many plunged into a kind of initiatory promiscuity and lost the underlying purpose and essence of initiation.

World War I (1914-1918)

With the onset of World War I the Order became dormant. Everyone was involved in defending France. Papus volunteered for the front and was assigned the post of chief physician, with the rank of Captain. He viewed as sacred his obligations to his country. Augustin Chaboseau, unable to serve in a physical capacity, joined the departmental staff of Aristide Briand's ministry, first as a magistrate, then as Chairman of the Board. Papus died before the end of the war on October 25, 1916. By the time the war was over, members of the Supreme Board were scattered; no new Grand Master was elected. "With Papus gone, Martinism is dead," Jollivet Castelot lamented.⁶ Several Martinists tried to assume leadership of the Order, but they altered the essence of Martinism so drastically that many Martinists preferred not to participate and remained independent.

Short-Lived Successions

Several Martinist groups came into existence at that time, but most were short-lived, and followed no single leader. When a Russian Martinist asked Barlet who was the Order's leader in France, Barlet answered, half-smiling: "Martinism is a circle whose circumference is everywhere with its center nowhere."⁷ Let us take a quick look at the organizations of this period, which are often confused, and some of the issues that historians have enjoyed clouding.

The first of these organizations was formed under the leadership of Jean Bricaud, who claimed that Papus had designated Teder to be his successor, and Teder in turn, on his deathbed, had named Bricaud as his successor. He showed the Parisian Martinists a document purporting to certify his appointment as the head of the Order, but no one took it seriously, believing that Bricaud had probably written it himself, and he was not recognized.⁸ Jean Bricaud formed a small group in Lyon which "masonized" the Order by admitting only 18th-degree Masons. The result was a version of Martinism which had



Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, F.R.C.

little to do with that of Papus and Augustin Chaboseau. In addition, Jean Bricaud claimed an *Élus-Cohen* filiation which Robert Ambelain has shown to be without foundation.⁹ Bricaud's movement remained essentially centered in Lyon.¹⁰

A second group was established under the leadership of Victor Blanchard. Blanchard had been Master of the Parisian Lodge *Melchisedec* and was recognized by a number of Parisian Martinists. On November 11, 1920, the *Journal Officiel* announced the establishment of Victor Blanchard's Order under the name *Union Générale des Martinistes et des Synarchistes* (General Association of Martinists and Synarchists), or *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* (Synarchical Martinist Order). In

1934, Victor Blanchard initiated H. Spencer Lewis into that Order. Later, Lewis would receive from Blanchard a charter to be Grand Inspector for the Americas, another to be Sovereign Grand Master Legate for the United States, and authorization to establish the Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin Temple in San Jose. (Ralph Maxwell Lewis would also be initiated into the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* in September 1936.) We will return to the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* later.

In Paris, several independent groups were created, but there was no Supreme Council acknowledged by Martinists as a whole. In fact, most Martinists preferred to continue working independently in the background instead of rushing into quarrels over succession.

Birth of the Traditional Martinist Order

There seemed to be no solution to the problem. In 1931, Jean Chaboseau suggested to his father that the survivors of the 1891 Supreme Council meet to reestablish the Martinist Order on its pristine foundations. Apart from A. Chaboseau, the only survivors were Victor-Emile Michelet and Chamuel.

We must not forget that Augustin Chaboseau was the co-founder of Martinism in 1889 and had received his initiation through the direct filiation of his aunt Amélie de Boisse-Mortemart. Victor-Emile Michelet had been an important member of the Hermetic University and Master of the Velleda Lodge. Chamuel had been the material organizer of the Order, using the back room of his bookstore to shelter the first activities of the Order. Other Martinists joined them: Dr. Octave Béliard, Dr. Robert Chapelain, Pierre Lévy, Ihamar Strouvea, Gustave Tautain, as well as Papus' son, Philippe Encausse. Philippe associated with the Martinist Order for a time, then parted from it. His concerns

seem to have been elsewhere, as confirmed by a book he devoted to the memory of his father the following year.¹¹

On July 24, 1931, the Martinists, meeting again with Augustin Chaboseau, decided to revive Martinism under its authentic and traditional aspect. To distinguish it from numerous pseudo-Martinist organizations, they added the qualification *Traditional* to the name of the Order. In doing so, the survivors of the 1891 Supreme Council laid claim to “the perpetuity of the Order founded by them with Papus.”¹²

Martinism was regaining some of its strength. A Grand Master was appointed. As tradition dictated, it was the oldest member, Augustin Chaboseau. As early as April 1932, he chose to relinquish the office to Victor-Emile Michelet. Although active, the Order remained relatively secret under his leadership. When Michelet died on January 12, 1938, Augustin Chaboseau resumed the office of Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order.

Martinism and F.U.D.O.S.I.

In August 1934, the first meetings of the F.U.D.O.S.I. were held in Brussels.¹³ Various initiatory Orders were brought together to unite their efforts. Through the F.U.D.O.S.I., Victor Blanchard hoped to restore the worldwide unity of Martinism under his leadership. However, many Martinists were absent. The Traditional Martinist Order was not represented and does not seem to have been invited. Jean Bricaud, probably fearing that his title would be challenged, preferred to abstain. On August 9, during a Martinist meeting, Victor Blanchard was recognized as Sovereign Grand Master by attending Martinists, Georges Lagrèze as Deputy Grand Master.¹⁴



Symbol of the F.U.D.O.S.I.

Victor Blanchard authorized Dr. H. Spencer Lewis to establish Lodges of the Synarchical Martinist Order in the United States, but was unable to deliver the required documents to either Lewis, Émile Dantinne, Edouard Bertholet, or others. As a precaution, Dr. Lewis preferred to wait for formal general rules before venturing further. Martinists from other jurisdictions adopted the same attitude. It turned out that the activities of the Synarchical Martinist Order were limited to the transmission of the various Martinist Degree Initiations, and the Order otherwise had no actual existence. There was no Martinist Lodge in Paris at the time, and Victor Blanchard gave his initiations in the temple of the *Fraternité des Polaires*.

Five years later, not much had improved. In 1939 the F.U.D.O.S.I. resolved to remove the trust that had been bestowed on Victor Blanchard. Georges Lagrèze took the opportunity to point out to members of the F.U.D.O.S.I. that

there was indeed a Martinist fully qualified to lead the Order, whose existence Blanchard, intentionally or not, had never mentioned. This Martinist, Augustin Chaboseau, past collaborator of Papus and last survivor of the 1891 Supreme Council, was also the only one entitled to direct the destiny of Martinism. Consequently, a delegation was sent to meet with Augustin Chaboseau. After considering the situation, he agreed to head the Martinist Order. At a special F.U.D.O.S.I. meeting, all the attending Martinists rallied before the authority of the Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order. Thus, in July 1939, the Traditional Martinist Order was admitted into the F.U.D.O.S.I., resulting in a drop in the membership of the Synarchical Martinist Order.

Augustin Chaboseau, who had just assumed the leadership of Martinism, replaced Victor Blanchard as Emperor of the F.U.D.O.S.I., becoming one of a triad of Emperors running that organization, the two others being Sâr Hieronymus (Émile Dantine) and Ralph M. Lewis (his father having passed through transition on August 2, 1939). A few days later, a letter from the International Supreme Council of the Traditional Martinist Order confirmed Ralph M. Lewis' appointment as Regional Grand Master for the United States of America and member of the International Supreme Council.

World War II (1939-1945)

Just as Martinist tradition was being reestablished across the Atlantic Ocean (and none too soon), European Martinists, a few months later, were subjected to a new and terrible ordeal. World War II was to have dire consequences for the Martinist Order. Many Martinists lost their lives on battlefields and in concentration camps. On August 14, 1940, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, the French official newspaper published a decree from the Vichy Government banning all secret societies in France. Most of the leaders of these organizations were arrested. The Traditional Martinist Order became dormant in France in an official sense, but underneath the true work never stopped as Athanor and Brocéliande Lodges remained secretly active. Taking refuge in Brittany, Augustin Chaboseau was not overtly harassed, but Dr. Béliard had some difficulties with the Gestapo. Georges Lagrèze was forced to hide in Normandy, then in

Angers,¹⁵ but despite constant searches of his residence, he continued to communicate with Ralph M. Lewis through Jeanne Guesdon.

By the end of the war in 1945, there were only a few survivors left. The Traditional Martinist Order was officially revived under Augustin Chaboseau, but unfortunately he passed through transition on January 2, 1946. Georges Lagrèze died in Angers on April 16 of that



Victor Blanchard & René Rosart

year. The Order in France had, with their passing, lost essential elements. Jean Chaboseau was appointed to succeed his father. Though a worthy Martinist, he was a poor organizer and failed to revive the Order in France. The members of the Supreme Council gradually lost confidence in him and resigned. It should be stated, however, that some Martinists did much to complicate his work; tired of quarreling, Jean Chaboseau decided to declare the Order dormant. Belgian Martinists, under the leadership of Sâr Rénatus (René Rosart), tried to continue the work of the Order under the name *Ordre Martiniste Universel*, and Victor Blanchard approved the decision. But René Rosart's transition in October 1948 effectively checked any further development of the Universal Martinist Order. Brother Heb Ailghim Sî (Dr. E. Bertholet) succeeded René Rosart, but chose to allow an Order that had never been active to die out. On May 13, 1965, Dr. Bertholet passed away without appointing a successor.¹⁶



Georges Lagrèze

Meanwhile, the Traditional Martinist Order had suffered no harm in the United States and was working quietly, waiting for affairs to calm down in Europe. Ralph Lewis kept his title of Regional Grand Master, and ten years later, when the Traditional Martinist Order was reestablished in France and other countries, he assumed the title of Sovereign Grand Master. For 48 years Ralph M. Lewis led the Traditional Martinist Order. After his transition on January 12, 1987, he was succeeded by Gary Stewart. In April 1990, Christian Bernard was appointed Sovereign Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order.

Today's Traditional Martinist Order

As you can see, the Martinist Order, despite adversity, has always succeeded in transmitting its Light through time. Though there exist several Martinist "obediencies" today, it is the Traditional Martinist Order which has the largest membership. In the last few years, Sovereign Grand Master Christian Bernard, has been patiently reorganizing the Order. One hundred years after the establishment of the Supreme Council in 1891, and sixty years after the founding of the Traditional Martinist Order, he announced plans both to recenter the Order on its traditional values and practices and to adapt it to the modern world. Under his leadership, the Order appears to be experiencing a new birth.



Ralph M. Lewis, F.R.C.



Christian Bernard, F.R.C.

One hundred years after the French Revolution, Martinists under the leadership of Papus sought in their own way to contribute to the spiritualization of their time. In their desire to execute this mission, they scattered *Serviteurs Inconnus* (Unknown Servants) throughout the world in furtherance of the Great Work. The stakes at the time were considerable—the threats hovering over Eastern esotericism, the ascent of an industrial civilization, the advent of the “reign of quantity”—all posed real dangers to the interior life of humanity. The present bears similarities to that period, and all could see, in the bicentennial celebration of the French Revolution in 1989, that much remains to be done. Victor Hugo said: “Revolution changes everything, except the human heart.”

Humanity now, as in the period of the Martinist resurgence, is imperiled by progress. It is not by chance that initiatory organizations such as the Traditional Martinist Order have been so active of late, for they teach that it is not outside that a revolution must take place, but inside of us, within the heart of each. Martinists call this *The Way of the Heart*.

Footnotes:

- ¹ Not all Martinist historians agree on this point. Some believe that Saint-Martin did not pass on initiation in the usual sense of the term. According to them, Papus should be looked upon as the founder of the Martinist Initiation. See *Le Martinisme* by Robert Amadou, Ascèse publishers, 1979, chapter IV. Up till now, nothing warrants a definite judgment one way or the other.
- ² de Balzac, H. *Le Lys dans la Vallée* (Nelson: 1957) p. 64.
- ³ Regarding the circumstances of this Initiation, see the article, “Pierre-Augustin Chaboseau—An Unknown Servant,” by Christian Rebis, published in the *Rosicrucian Digest*, Spring 1993 issue, page 14.
- ⁴ This creation was announced in the following issues of *L’Initiation*: No. 10, July 1891, pp. 83-84; No. 11, August 1891, p. 182; and No. 12, September 1891, p. 277.
- ⁵ Carré, G. *Essais de Sciences Maudites*, 1, Au Seuil du Mystère (Paris: 1890) p. 158.
- ⁶ Castelot, F. *Jollivet Essai de Synthèse des Sciences Occultes* (Paris: E. Nourry, 1928) p. 189.
- ^{7,8} Ventura, Gaston *Tutti gli Uomini del Martinismo* (Rome: Atanor Publisher, 1978) p. 59.
- ⁹ Ambelain, Robert *Le Martinisme* (Paris: Niclaus, 1946) pp. 151-155.
- ¹⁰ Jean Bricaud had successors we cannot mention here for lack of space.

- ¹¹ Encausse, Philippe *Papus, sa Vie son Oeuvre* (Papus—His Life, His Work) (Paris: Pythagore Publisher, 1932). In the December 1932 *Voile d'Isis*, pp. 793-794, Jean Reyor was the first to mention this aspect of Papus' son: "It seems we systematically lay aside all that could be truly interesting in the extremely active career of this astonishing Papus . . . not a word about the constitution and the life of this Martinist Order of which Papus was the promoter." Philippe Encausse corrected this flaw in successive editions of his work.
- ¹² Ambelain, Robert *Le Martinisme* (Paris: Niclus, 1946) p. 174.
- ¹³ F.U.D.O.S.I. is the abbreviation of *Fédération Universelle des Ordres et Sociétés Initiatiques*.
- ¹⁴ This event was announced in the August-September 1934 issue of *Adonhiram* magazine, p. 6.
- ¹⁵ In 1942, Georges Lagrèze "revived" an Order of *Élus-Cohen*. This Order had no direct filiation with that of Martínez de Pasquales, but an indirect filiation through the C.B.C.S., since Georges Lagrèze had the grade of *Grand-Profès* in that Order. After G. Lagrèze's transition in 1946, Robert Ambelain claimed the succession to G. Lagrèze. Yet, a few days before his transition, Georges Lagrèze had written a letter to Ralph M. Lewis in which he announced his decision to make this Order dormant as it had no solid foundation. In 1967, Ivan Mosca (Hermete) succeeded Robert Ambelain as the head of the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen*. In 1968, concerned about the legitimacy of the 1942 resurgence, he decided, in agreement with Robert Ambelain, to make the Order dormant (see Proclamation in the October 1968 *L'Initiation* magazine, pp. 230-231).
- ¹⁶ Contrary to certain legends, Dr. Bertholet was never Sovereign Grand Master of the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* and consequently never passed this title down to an eventual successor. A recent visit to Mrs. A.R., the present successor to Mr. Genillard—himself successor to Dr. Bertholet in other initiatory functions—has confirmed it to us. Moreover, Dr. Bertholet's initiatory name in the Martinist Order was not "Sâr Alkmaïon," this name being his in the O.H.T.M. In Martinism, his name was Heb Aïlghim Sî.

Saint-Martin on Initiation

Worldly initiations are a necessary preliminary to Martinists, though we see them as earthly representations of a greater transformation. They only become meaningful when we receive the "central initiation." Saint-Martin tells us that this initiation is that by which "we can enter into the heart of God, and make God's heart enter into us, there to form an indissoluble marriage which will make us the friend, brother, and spouse of our Divine Redeemer. There is no other mystery in arriving at this holy initiation than to go further and further down into the depths of our being, and not let go until 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 and without ourselves naturally."

Mysticism and the Cultivation of Virtue

by *Benevolat S.I.*

AS MARTINIST initiates, the study and practice of mysticism is central to our individual and collective studies and endeavors. In exploring the topic “Mysticism and the Cultivation of Virtue,” the connection between these two concepts and the specific importance of virtue as a philosophy and a way of life for mystics in general—and Martinists in particular—is a subject deserving considerable reflection.

Failure to understand and fully appreciate the all-important principles that relate these two concepts risks experiencing a high level of frustration with the studies, consistent failure with our mystical experiments, and a less than rich and harmonious experience of membership in our Heptads.

Mysticism and virtue, considered individually, are both very complex subjects and there is a large body of literature available on each of these subjects. Therefore, for our purposes let us simply define mysticism as “a deep personal experience of unity of Self with the Divine Universal Intelligence.”

Philosophical literature abounds with references to virtue. In fact, there is even a branch of philosophy known as Virtue Theory—based on the premise that the foundation of morality is the development of good character traits, or virtues. A person is “good,” if he or she has virtues and lacks vices. Typical virtues include courage, temperance, justice, prudence, fortitude, liberality, and truthfulness. Some virtue theorists mention as many as 100 virtuous character traits that contribute to making someone a good person.

Throughout the ages various formulations of virtue have been proposed.

The Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Temperance, Courage, and Justice

Classical Greek philosophers considered these to be the foremost virtues. Early Christian Church theologians adopted these virtues and considered them to be equally important to all people, be they Christian or not.

The Theological Virtues: Love, Hope, and Faith

St. Paul defined these three chief virtues as the essential nature of God. They are called the three theological virtues because these virtues were not considered to be natural to man in his fallen state, but were conferred at baptism.

The Seven Contrary Virtues

The Seven Contrary Virtues are humility, kindness, abstinence, chastity, patience, liberality, and diligence. The Contrary Virtues were derived from the *Psychomachia* (*Battle for the Soul*), an epic poem written by Prudentius (c. 410). Practicing these virtues is alleged to protect one against temptation by the Seven Deadly Sins: humility versus pride, kindness versus envy, abstinence versus gluttony, chastity versus lust, patience versus anger, liberality versus covetousness,

and diligence versus sloth.

The Seven Heavenly Virtues

The Seven Heavenly Virtues are faith, hope, charity, fortitude, justice, temperance, and prudence. The Heavenly Virtues combine the four Cardinal Virtues—prudence, temperance, fortitude (or courage), and justice—with a variation of the theological virtues, namely faith, hope, and charity.

Continuing the numerological mysticism of the number seven, the Christian church assembled a list of seven good works, known as the “Seven Corporal Works of Mercy” that was included in medieval catechisms. They are: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, give shelter to strangers, clothe the naked, visit the sick, minister to prisoners, and bury the dead.

The great philosophers also had many things to say about virtue. For example, Aristotle said:

Persons therefore who are exceptionally zealous in noble actions are universally approved and commended; and if all men vied with each other in moral nobility and strove to perform the noblest deeds, the common welfare would be fully realized, while individuals could also enjoy the greatest of goods, inasmuch as virtue is the greatest good.

This quotation illustrates how the example set by a few virtuous souls can affect the harmony of the multitude. It speaks directly of the two-fold mission of Martinism, which is the spiritual awakening, or *reintegration* as we refer to it in Martinist parlance, at both the level of the individual initiate and of society at large.

The consistent practice of virtue naturally leads the sincere soul to those higher levels of cosmic awareness and attunement that we speak of as “the mystical.”

Also, while many who live a virtuous life may not be mystics, all true mystics lead a virtuous life.

A key point that I hope you will glean from this article for your personal work and study is that obtaining the most benefit from the Martinist work, and from the work of all true traditional and initiatic orders and societies, is commensurate with our dedication to living a virtuous life.

A mystical definition of the virtuous life is “a life so lived as to be in harmony with the Divine Will as reflected in Cosmic Laws and Principles which have been revealed to mankind.” As Martinists, it is our duty to discover the Divine Will. “It is insufficient,” said the Unknown Philosopher, “to say unto God ‘Thy will be done’; we must seek always to know that will; for if we know it not, who are we that we should accomplish it?”

As Martinists, we often salute each other with the benediction “May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Cosmic Wisdom.” This is such a powerful formula

for invoking Cosmic Blessings on our Brethren! Whenever we hear or see these words we are reminded of our oneness with the universe and the concept of silent service to all humanity. Such service is rooted in virtues such as love, honesty, patience, sincerity, charity, trust, and compassion.

Virtue Inspires Service

As is so beautifully expressed in the Martinist teachings, there is a duality of polar opposites underlying all manifestation. This duality extends to the mystical Path as well. As Martinists we receive from our Beloved Order the benefits of improved health, vitality, spiritual insight and support in our journey of reintegration with the Divine. Cosmic Law decrees that we must reciprocate such blessings by sharing the blessings we have received with those less fortunate, and by strengthening and perpetuating the Light of Martinism so that it can inspire future generations of workers in the Masters' Garden.

So that we may continue to deserve ongoing enlightenment and cooperation of the Unseen Masters we should seek for opportunities for Silent Service and act on such opportunities with zeal and enthusiasm, even to the point of personal sacrifice. In rendering silent service we seek no reward other than the inward knowledge that, in our own humble way, we are contributing to the ideals of the Order and to the fulfillment of its Cosmic Mission. We give strength and vigor to the symbols of our Order through the practical application of the Martinist teachings and the daily practice of virtue.

On a more objective and scientific level, it has been shown that a life of virtue eliminates any discordant and negative energy flowing into the body. A natural outcome of living the virtuous life is an accompanying increase of the vibratory rate within each cell of the body—perhaps even at atomic and subatomic levels. The accompanying quickening of the psychic consciousness will lift you up spiritually and help purge your body of all blockages caused by discordant and inharmonious activity.

This quickening produces extraordinary benefits. At the very least it can replace unhealthy cells with new and healthy cells and cure disease. Furthermore, at the higher spiritual level you will benefit from improvement in awareness, as evidenced in intuitive flashes and special psychic abilities. The potential benefits are infinite.

This quickening and raising of our personal vibration level is not instantaneous. It is an accumulation of small improvements that continue to build up until the desired result is achieved. It can take a short time or a long time, depending on our desire, motivation, and devotion to the virtuous life. It also requires a serious commitment to practicing the Martinist principles and exercises.

On the subject of exercises, I like to use the injunction: "Don't just go through practice, *grow* through practice." Just as one cannot expect plants to thrive by whimsical watering and fertilizing in place of an appropriate program of plant maintenance, our psychic and spiritual growth also needs continual nurtur-

ing by consistently practicing mystical experiments and exercises. In this regard, regular participation in Heptad activities provides the atmosphere and discipline for continuous improvement and progress toward our personal and collective goals as Martinists.

Having said that, I believe exercises and experiments, despite their importance, make up only 40% of what is really required to achieve progress on the spiritual path. The daily habit of striving to live a virtuous life constitutes, in my humble opinion, fully 60% or more of what is needed to advance to the higher planes of Cosmic Consciousness.

As Martinist initiates we are members of an Order of Christian Chivalry. As Women and Men of Desire, striving to be worthy Agents of Omneity, we are knights of the temple dedicated to restoring to all humanity its lost spiritual heritage. As our Most Venerable Grand Master, Sister Julie Scott, has said, "Our work is unfinished. It will remain so until a true Theocracy is established on the material plane and all humanity is awakened to their true place in the Divine Plan for Mankind."

There is so much work to do that it must seem to be an impossible task! In this regard I am reminded of an old Chinese fable. It goes something like this:

"Fill the Sea, Move the Mountain"

A huge mountain proved to be quite an obstacle for an old man and his family in traveling to the neighboring village. One day this old man gathered all the tools he could utilize in his poor surroundings and started to dig and shovel the mountain. His neighbors advised him to give up, but he persisted in his task and claimed that the mountain would be flattened eventually by his descendants for as many generations as needed. "Filling the sea, moving the mountain" has since become a famous idiom in the Chinese language.

There is an ancient Chinese proverb that goes like this: "We will perfect the opportunity as if heaven permits it; the condition will be suitable as if the earth promotes it; and the harmony unbelievable as if all men agree with one mind." Success is then easy because the wishes of all are being realized.

In other words, service motivated through the desire to live a virtuous life is blessed by the Cosmic. By our right thinking, right speech, and right conduct, we align ourselves with the all-powerful and creative forces of the Cosmic and experience the truth of the statement "With God all things are possible."

My Brothers and Sisters, as Martinists we are "filling the sea, and moving the mountain." At times I must admit being sad, even depressed, when I see the seats at a Martinist Heptad mostly empty and the burden of maintaining the Heptad falling on a few dedicated workers. The energy manifested under such conditions is only a fraction of the Heptad's true potential as a Center of Light.

There is, of course, a dynamic at play here. Energy can be drained. There are givers and there are takers. The system works well when there is constant motion,

ebb and flow. In dealing with humans this does not always happen. I am sure all of you have often had your energy depleted as if it was being drawn into a black hole.

The experience is analogous to sending a sound to the other side of the mountain and waiting for a sound to come back. I became frustrated when no sound was returned, and this caused me to spend long periods in what seemed like the bottom of a deep, dark abandoned well waiting for a sound from above.

I waited for someone to come, not to save me or pull me out, but only to make a sound, so I would not feel alone. That was wrong. One needs to re-energize from a very strong force that is the force of the universe. It is an endless and powerful source if one knows how to tap it. “It is from thyself, and in complete isolation that thou shalt draw out the principles of thy spiritual progress.”

The basic stuff of the universe is a kind of pure energy that is malleable to human intention and expectation—as though our expectation itself causes our energy to flow out into the world and affect other energy systems.

The more that we can love and appreciate others, the more energy flows into us. That is why loving and energizing others is the best possible thing we can do for ourselves. As the Unknown Philosopher, Our Venerated Master, put it: “As a proof that we are regenerated, we must regenerate everything around us.”

This way of consciously relating, in which everyone attempts to bring out the best in others rather than having power over them, is a posture the entire human race may eventually adopt through an evolution of understanding toward a higher spirituality and vibration.

Just as in the fable “Filling the Sea, Moving the Mountain,” each generation incorporates more energy and accumulates more truth, and then passes those gifts on to the next generation, who extend that legacy further into the future. Again, as our Most Venerable Grand Master, Sister Julie Scott, said at her installation as Grand Master, “This is our mystery school, we are its philosophers here and now, and each of us must discover the contribution that we can individually make to perpetuating our mystical tradition.” As Martinists, we know how true this is, and how humanity’s future depends upon its spiritual awakening. The realization of this goal is our great work as initiates.

As we know, love is the greatest virtue. Love does not stand alone, but blossoms in friendship and companionship—giving us courage, purpose, strength, and creating the magic that makes dreams come true.

Go now out into the world with the sure knowledge that your service, inspired by virtue, will manifest all the Divine Principles you will need to fill the sea and move the mountain.

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

The Earth Is a Living Being

by Papus

*This text is taken from the magazine *Mystéria*, No. 11, published in 1913. It shows that the concept of our planet Earth as a living being was already well known in esoteric circles at the dawn of the 20th century, and it is pleasing to note that this has now become commonplace in scientific and ecological circles. Once again, mystics were ahead of their time.*

This idea may seem strange at first glance, and yet, in reflecting upon it further, you will see that it is quite plausible.

What is shocking first of all is the matter of form. Humans have a tendency to imagine that every living being should have a form, vertebrates being an example. However, minerals are living beings that are characterized by a nearly total absence of determined form. Plants, all the way from bacteria up to the magnificent oak or the majestic baobab, also offer a remarkable multiplicity of forms. This is also true of animals.

According to the great classifications, every heavenly body is placed among plants, which cannot move, and animals, which move freely. This classification, due to J.-J. Jacob (Boucart) in his "Outline of the Universal All," shows that heavenly bodies do not move so much as they are moving with other heavenly bodies. Here there is movement through reciprocity.

The question of the Earth's mass is of no importance, because



there is no limit to the size of living beings. Contemporary scholars have a tendency to think of heavenly bodies as inert masses which are put into motion only by external forces. These are the traditions of occultism, synthesized through the revelations of Louis Michel de Figanières' "Keys of Life," which has given substance to the concept that the Earth is a living being, a concept that we, in turn, will do our best to summarize.

A living being is characterized by various functions of which the basics are: digestion, respiration, circulation, and, for higher beings, innervation. We should also add the function of relationship for beings of the same species or of different species. But first of all, let us recall what takes place in man so that we can apply these facts, by analogy, to the Earth.

In man, the heart is the organ which manifests the most rapid movements, when considering only the organic life of the being and not the life of the conscious nervous system. The heart beats sixty times per minute and directs the circulation of blood.

The lungs function at the rate of twenty times per minute, with the two phases of inhalation and exhalation, whereas the heart, in its movement, also exhibits two periods: one of contraction, or systole, and one of dilation, or diastole. The lungs direct the functions of respiration, a function which may be conceived as an assimilation or digestion of atmospheric air. That is why the lungs are connected with, embryologically, the endoderm and digestive cells.

Finally, there is digestion, whose duration is variable, but which normally should be accomplished once every six hours or four times every twenty-four hours, with a meal more or less abundant depending upon the time and the individual; furthermore, the absorption of liquids may be done almost constantly.

For higher entities, of which the human body is an example, to these functions should be added that of innervation or the functioning of the nervous system characterized in a general way by waking and sleeping, with sixteen hours of wakefulness and eight hours of sleep.

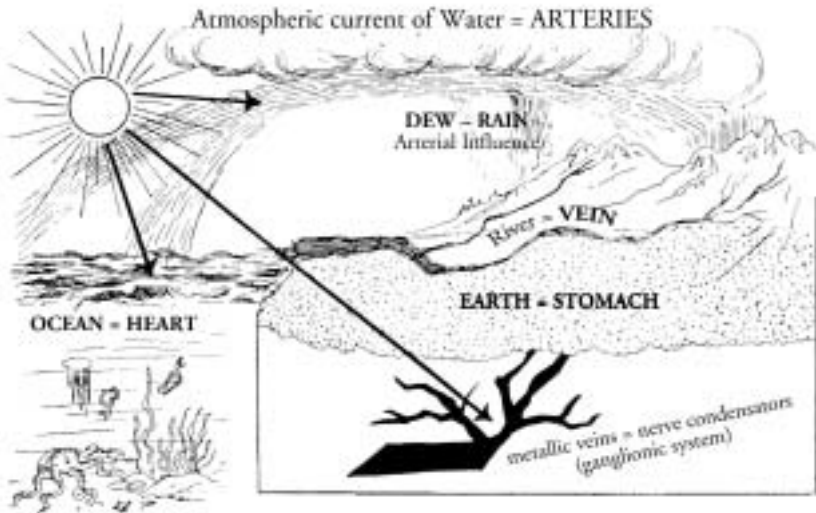
To all these functions should be added, when studying a living being, the duration of its physical life on the planet where it is incarnated, this duration being considered as an average of seventy-two for man, and quite variable for other animals. This function is divided into four periods, called childhood, youth, middle age, and old age. Now that these points are well established, let us return to the Earth.

First of all, let us say that the Earth's movements are slower than those of the human being and that a minute in human time corresponds approximately to a day for the Earth and that a day for man corresponds nearly to a year for the Earth. The ancient initiations examined these numbers very closely, while we can only indicate them here in a crude way.

Circulation—In a twenty-four-hour day, the Earth revolves on its axis according to a known cycle: morning, noon, evening, and night. During this period, half of the Earth is in darkness, and the other half is bathed in solar light. At the same time, the ocean, or terrestrial heart, displays a swelling or systole, characterized by a high tide; and a sinking, contraction, or diastole, characterized by a low tide.

Water, which is the true terrestrial blood, is inhaled from the ocean into the atmosphere; it circulates as an arterial current above the land, or it falls in the form of dew or rain. It is condensed in glaciers which constitute the aquatic or vital reserves of the planet, and this water returns by the rivers and streams to the ocean in forming the venous current. Such is the cycle of terrestrial circulation.

Respiration—While the circulation takes place over the Earth, this heavenly body absorbs and fixes the solar rays in its atmosphere, the latter constituting the lungs of the Earth. Each period of solar radiation, or day, and lunar radiation, or night, corresponds to an inhalation and an exhalation of solar rays. But the true period of a complete respiratory cycle is four weeks, each of which is characterized by lunar influence.



Thus, from the new moon to the full moon fixation takes place within the metallic veins of the inhalation from the solar rays, and in the period from the full moon to the new moon there occurs the departure or exhalation of everything in which the Earth sends back forces and beings outside of its realm.

Digestion—The functions of terrestrial digestion are characterized by the following stages:

1. Ingestion of food through terrestrial humus;
2. Separation of the absorbable parts from the useless parts—or digestion properly stated;
3. Fixation in the terrestrial organism and transformation into new products of digested parts—or assimilation and utilization;
4. Later transformation into inert substances of digested products—or excretion.

At every moment, the humus or terrestrial stomach is capable of receiving corpses or masses of terrestrial cells which it entrusts to a living being for forming its body. When the life coming from the heavenly bodies leaves this body, this mass of cells returns to the terrestrial stomach which then transforms it. When, instead of a corpse, a seed is entrusted to this terrestrial stomach, this seed is first of all transformed by fermentation into a vegetable corpse, before reproducing numerous examples under the influence of terrestrial digestion.

Let us say at once that at certain moments the Earth is hungry, more than at other times, and that at this moment, it will always make certain to increase

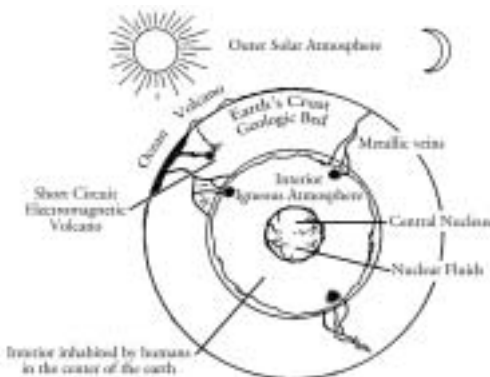
its supply of food through epidemics, cataclysm, or wars between animals or between human beings. This is an important idea to remember.

Michel de Figanières shows that digestion is a resumption by the Earth of what he calls the planet's compost heap, and agriculture is based entirely upon the cycle of terrestrial digestion we are now analyzing. In fact, in addition to daily or current digestion, the great transformations of seed are accomplished in a year, divided thus:

1. The ingestion of seeds and preparation of these seeds for their digestion (September to December) in our climates;
2. The assimilation by humus of ingested seeds, or true digestion by the Earth, a triumph of fermentation and of black forces, but the beginning of the victory of the forces of solar evolution (December to March);
3. The production and coming forth of transformed seeds, a union of terrestrial juices and of solar rays constituting the sap, a triumph of all the forces of evolution over those of involution, the spring (March to June);
4. The end of the evolution of new terrestrial beings; the fruit or grain, a living product of this evolution, is constituted at the same time that all of its byproducts return to the Earth in the form of vegetable corpses (June to September). For animals and minerals, there are similar periods, the details of which we will not enter into now.

Innervation—The forces which the Earth draws from the Sun and which are not used are concentrated in metallic veins which form a veritable ganglionic nervous system and which are the true origin of the planet's heat, seeing that the more one descends toward the center of the Earth, the warmer it gets, and the more one rises towards the Sun, the colder it gets. The central terrestrial fire is a utopia; it does not exist; volcanic eruptions are produced by short-circuits of the vital terrestrial electricity, and the center of the Earth is inhabited by beings of human form, but with gills. As this is of little concern for the moment, let us put it aside.

The time allotted to the cycle of terrestrial innervation is very difficult to determine properly. An Earth year is equivalent to 360 ordinary terrestrial years. The period of life and of death of the terrestrial continents is 25,000 years in round figures, with 12,500 years of absorption of cosmic forces and 12,500 years of expiration of these forces with continental transformation and deluge. We have only claimed to take a peek at the Earth's organic life; the study of spiritual life will lead us much farther.



THE CIRCLE

by an S.I.

IN MARTINISM the circle features in the Pantacle of our Order and as such we can say it is fundamental. Before lifting the veil on its symbolism, let us reconsider what a symbol is and what is its function.

A symbol is a mediator between the physical world and the world of thought. It is a language, or rather a meta-language which naturally depends on the culture and the context in which it is used. Since Jung's works in psychoanalysis, symbolism has again taken on an important place in the life of our materialistic society, which in itself is a good sign of its evolution towards the world of the spirit and spirituality.

The functions of a symbol in the esoteric tradition are multiple. In the first instance, the symbol suggests everything in a veiled way, structuring our thoughts and allowing us to have moments of awareness that lead us to "Know Thyself," as was so dear to the Pythagorean school. In principle, a symbol is never really fully interpreted because its veiled part is more important than its visible aspect; the symbol, said Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin in speaking of numbers, only expresses the "label" on the bag and does not commonly reveal the content of the thing.

How do we get this content or substance? Well, quite simply, by cross-checking between various symbols in the same tradition or with other traditions when our personal perception of this symbol is fairly solid. Symbols build bridges within the individual's consciousness and allow for an association of ideas that can awaken consciousness.

As an illustration of this phenomenon within the human consciousness, let's analyze a symbol of various facets but which is nevertheless quite simple: the apple. The word "apple" is immediately going to arouse images and associated ideas that can take us very far from the subject that presently holds our attention if we let our thoughts flow.

Literally, or on a material level, all those lacking food energy are going to imagine the apple they are going to bite into after reading this article, just like those who are particularly partial to this excellent fruit.

On a more figurative level, others will think of Adam and Eve, and according to the extent of their knowledge of the subject and their preoccupation at the time, they will think of the idea of the Fall in the Christian religion, then by association, the concept of the Fall in Martinism. Some will think of Newton and then stray in their thoughts from the subject at hand. All of this is to show you how a cascade of ideas and thoughts can be triggered by a symbol. Of course, the path of our thoughts will differ according to the context in which we find ourselves when a symbol comes to our attention.

And so through reflection during meditation over a period of time, a design, a fabric, a network of associated ideas, is woven into our consciousness, which progressively reveals the substance of the designated or illustrated symbol. The description of thought's mechanism allows us to understand why the initiatic path is long, given the number of important symbols concentrated in a temple or used in a ritual.

The progressive integration of each of them within consciousness manifests in us a spiritual alchemy, a restructuring of our being with the goal of one day being able to serve the temple, God's tabernacle within our heart, and to finally allow us to fulfil the divine mission we have been assigned as a mediator between the spiritual and material planes.

Now, in the Martinist tradition, the material plane is represented by a circle or the number 9. Why the circle? Why 9? We shall endeavor to answer these two questions step by step.

The simplest script mark we can make is the dot. This is what we also make physically by concentrating the light of the sun through a magnifying glass onto a sheet of paper. Immediately, this dot of light grows in turning the paper brown, then black because of the concentrated heat at this point and which then slowly burns a perfectly circular shape on the sheet of paper.

The symbolic application of this little experiment can be clearly explained in the following way: God, Light, is represented by a dot, while the circle represents the action of God, the material plane. Translated into symbolic numbers, the dot, God, is represented by the number 1, unity, since unity allows all other numbers to be generated. Furthermore, the number that most resembles the circle is the zero. And so it is possible to symbolize Creation by a circle with a dot in the center, or by a 1 and a 0, that is, the number 10.

But if we refine this first approach, it appears that a circle is really defined by three elements: its center, its diameter, and its circumference. What is missing therefore is the symbolic meaning of the diameter. To find this, let's return to our experiment with the magnifying glass and the sun: as soon as the sun's rays are concentrated on the sheet, the burning of the paper produces an extension of the point of light in all directions, thus forming the circle.

The extension of the dot in one direction is therefore a straight line which extends infinitely, at least in theory; by the straight line or a segment of it we define the diameter of the circle. What number should be attributed to this straight line which symbolizes an extension of a dot in one direction? This number should bear the infinite characteristic of a straight line, of the manifested Divine since the straight line represents the extension of a dot symbolizing the non-manifested Divine. The number 10 has this characteristic but is already attributed to the circle as a whole, the diameter being only one of its components.

Now, we know that each number can be associated with another number that corresponds to its theosophical sum, its root in the symbolic sense. As

the straight line is the root of the circle as well as the diameter, it will be given the first number whose root or theosophical sum is 10, in this case the number 4 since the addition of $1+2+3+4$ equals 10. To use Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin's expression at this stage of the circle's definition, the circle's center (1), the circle with its center (10), and the diameter (4) are "labels." It remains for us then to define the circumference of the circle.

The circumference is the perimeter of the circle without its center, that is, the All manifested without the Divine; in other words, the material plane. The number of the circumference will quite naturally be 10 from which is subtracted 1, that is 9. The material plane, 9, represented by the circumference of the circle is the term, the product of spiritual order. The principle from which it came has a value of 3 because in Martinist theosophical arithmetic, the multiplication of a number by itself, its square, expresses the extension of its principle, its manifestation.

The circumference (9) is the manifestation of the ternary principle (3) which presides over all created things. Since we have just discovered the ternary principle (3) of Creation, let us note that its root, its theosophical sum is 6, and in this way, we have defined the three numbers of the material plane: 3, 6, and 9.

It is interesting to note that the number 6 manifests in the circumference by the six equilateral triangles that together make up the hexagon we find on the Order's Pantacle. In this manner, we can continue to construct other numbers from those already defined, but that would take us further away from the central theme of this explanation of the circle.

The last point to raise regarding the circle is the concurrence between Martinist theosophical arithmetic and Euclidean geometry: in effect, we know that the circumference of a circle is equal to about 3.14 times its diameter, which makes approximately 13 for a diameter of the value 4. By combining the symbolic value of the circumference (9) with the symbolic value of its diameter (4), we arrive at the number 13.

This coincidence introduces another interesting aspect because it reveals the process of reintegration that each of us has undertaken to accomplish by following the Martinist path. Actually, symbolically combining the circumference with the diameter is to unite the material or physical plane with the interior of the circle, the consciousness, in order to regain the center of the circle, the Divine within the heart of our consciousness.

In this sense is Martinism described as the "Way of the Heart" in the Western Tradition, because it is the way that guides us through the language of its symbols to rediscover God within our own hearts.



The Traditional Martinist Order



The Traditional Martinist Order operates under the auspices of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. Our Imperator is the Sovereign Grand Master of the TMO and our Grand Master is the Grand Master of the TMO. If you are a Rosicrucian member who has reached at least the First Temple Degree in your studies and taken the First Degree Initiation, you are eligible to join the Traditional Martinist Order which offers initiation, systematic and inspiring studies conducted within a Temple, and a ritual followed by open discussion among our members.

For more information on how to join this remarkable Order, you may contact the TMO Administrator at tmo@amorcmail.org Or you may mail the following request for information to: **TMO Administrator, 1342 Naglee Ave., San Jose, CA, 95191.**

Name _____ AMORC key # _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip/ _____

Country _____ Telephone _____

E-Mail Address _____



Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin