

Pantacle





TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

This issue of the *Pantacle* magazine includes the discourses presented by the three Grand Masters at the first Trilingual TMO Convention held in Rye Brook, New York, in October 2003. Hundreds of members from the English, French, and Spanish-speaking jurisdictions gathered together for this wonderful event held on the 200th anniversary of the transition of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, the French mystic on whose philosophy the Traditional Martinist Order is largely based.

The discourse by Grand Master Serge Toussaint of the French language jurisdiction discusses the symbolism of the Mask. Grand Master José Luis Aguilar Moreno, of the Spanish language jurisdiction for the Americas, presents the symbolism of the Cordelier; and my discourse is on the symbolism of the Cloak.

The Sovereign Grand Master's presentation on "Prayer" that was presented at the convention will be included in the new Initiate degree discourses, which will be presented in the heptads around the jurisdiction next year.

We hope you enjoy these discourses and are inspired to further meditate upon the symbolism within our mystical tradition.

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

Julie Scott
Grand Master
Traditional Martinist Order

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MASK

*The Most Venerable Grand Master Serge Toussaint
French Grand Lodge*

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

LET US BEGIN by examining the symbolism which Tradition has generally associated with the mask. To this end, it is necessary to turn to the period of human origins. We soon realize that early humans felt the need to cover themselves in order to protect the body, as well as to keep it warm.

We know today that people of those primitive days used the skins of animals which they hunted and killed. It was much later that some of them invented the idea of creating masks and placing them upon their faces. In the beginning, this was purely instinctual, without much understanding of what effect this would have on themselves, and upon others. In most cases, they became aware that their family members did not recognize them, and this sufficed to engender fear in others. Realizing this, they made sure that the masks concealed them as much as possible, and frightened those who looked at them. Most often, they were made partly from vegetation, and exhibited elements borrowed from animals, such as horns, claws, furs, feathers, etc.



Furthermore, masks were also used for magical and religious purposes. Certainly, people always used masks to conceal their faces or to frighten others; however, the mask also served to represent magical or religious power. It was in this manner that, in most of the primitive tribes, the sorcerer possessed a mask which belonged to him or her alone, and one that was designed and fashioned solely by the sorcerer. In most instances, the sorcerer projected a frightening aspect in order to create feelings of fear, of respect, and to command submission.

Similarly, the shaman, to whom the power to communicate with the spirits of nature and with the souls of the departed was attributed, used the mask to perform certain rituals. At the time when the first religions appeared, priests, as well, had added the mask to their ritualistic tools in order to give their office a hierarchical character. For example, in some of the solar cults of antiquity, the high priest wore a golden mask, which represented the sun, in order to create a symbolic relationship between him- or herself and the daystar, which was then considered to be Divinity.

In Ancient Egypt, the mask assumed a new dimension. It was truly considered to have a mystical semblance, in the true and literal meaning of its representation. In this period, the mask was not utilized to induce fear

nor to symbolize any magical or religious function. As we now know, it was rather a headdress that was worn for this purpose. As for the mask, it was primarily utilized in funerary rites.

In this way, the pharaoh was mummified after death; then, the king was placed into a sarcophagus, and the face was covered with a mask made of gold, the symbol of royalty and of long life.

This ritualistic practice had two complementary goals: on the one hand, it immortalized and idealized the face of the departed; on the other, it served to retain the Vital Force which gradually escaped from the body in order that the soul might utilize it to elevate itself in the kingdom of Osiris. As a general rule, the funerary mask had its eyes open, which meant that the pharaoh continued to see all that transpired on earth. Furthermore, there was an expression of serenity on the mask because the Egyptians believed that death allowed a king to rejoin with God, and to live in the Divine Presence in the invisible worlds, which fact alone would make the king happy.

Since mystics have always considered death to be an initiation, the mask was very early utilized for initiatory purposes. In the Mystery Schools of Greece and of Ancient Rome, the Initiates would regularly assemble to present to neophytes a ritual drama that would recall the quest for Wisdom. At the beginning of the drama, the main actor wore a black mask, in order to symbolize the state of ignorance and the allegorical shadows in which the character finds him- or herself. As the Initiate became wise, towards the end of life, this personage died of old age at the end of the drama, surrounded by family. One of the family members would then remove the black mask and replace it with a white one. This done, they would turn the departed upon his or her face, against the ground, with arms crossed, then followed this with an invocation for divine benediction. As we should understand, this symbolic act had the purpose of showing that, after death, the soul regains its original purity and becomes elevated toward the domain of God, while the body is destined to disappear and return to the dust of the earth.

With time, the mask became a fundamental element in theatrical representations, as well as those which were open to the public. Independent from the funerary and initiatic symbolism that we have mentioned, the mask was increasingly utilized to hide or to alter the identity of persons. To this end, it is important to remember that the Latin word for mask is *persona*, and it was this word that created the concept of "person." Even at the present time, psychoanalysis teaches that all people to some degree mask their true personality behind their faces, so that one never knows who others really are.

Be that as it may, the Roman theater made the mask a symbol of either dissimulation or identification. Therefore, depending on the situation, it was utilized either to conceal the personality of an actor or to attribute a different personality to the actor. At times it was utilized, as well, to personify an

animal, a demon, or a divinity according to the needs of the scene. Stories and legends abound with examples of this use.

In Medieval Europe the mask was utilized by the populace on the occasion of the *Carnival*. This popular festivity took place during the month of February, immediately preceding Lent, and incited revelry during which people danced in the streets, disguised and masked. Some used this occasion to give vent to all sorts of foolishness, which explains why it was commonly called "The Feast of Fools." At other times, use of the mask allowed a pretext for rioting or violence among the participants. This tradition has persisted until the present day, and certain carnivals have become famous for their gaudiness.

The same applies to Hallowe'en, which is still celebrated in many countries of the world during the month of October. During this holiday, the mask is part of a disguise that generally evokes death in its most profane aspect. The goal of this disguise, which is often terrifying, is to frighten those who are exposed to its appearance and to attract their attention to the world of spirits. There is a belief that during this period the dead come into the closest proximity to the living.

During the Renaissance the royal courts of Europe regularly held masked balls that were reserved exclusively for the nobility and the courtiers. Indeed, the reason for the masked ball was to enable the participants to dance, but without being recognized by others, and even more often, to intrigue and start rumors about different court personages.

In most instances, the king and the queen themselves were also masked, which served the purpose of their remaining unknown and gave them the opportunity to hear the gossip of the court. Sometimes, the guests were required to disguise themselves according to a theme prescribed by the court. This could mean dressing as flowers, animals, seasons, legendary personages, or others.

In those instances, all of the masks were required to evoke a particular theme, and the one that brought to mind the most beautiful image was honored at the end of the evening. This custom of the masked ball exists even today.

Keeping in mind the preceding explanations, we shall now examine the place of the mask in the present world. Evidently, its usage for funerary rites has disappeared, perhaps because mummification of the dead is not practiced in today's world.

On the other hand, its magical and religious usage continues to be practiced in African societies, where it remains an attribute of the shaman and

sorcerer. Also, masks continue to be utilized in theater, although not in an initiatic sense, but to disguise the face of the actor or to convey a different identity. In addition, masks are still being used during certain popular feasts and for masquerade balls.

In a completely different sense, we should mention the illicit use of the mask by thieves and bandits who hide their identities while performing their misdeeds.

Therefore, we are aware that the use of the mask continues to the present day, although this use is mostly limited to the activities of the theater, festivals, or even profane activities.

Martinist Use of the Mask

Brothers and Sisters, we have just explored the evolution of the use of the mask during the preceding centuries, particularly as it concerned popular beliefs. Now, I suggest that we consider the significance that our Order assigns to it. To do this, I would like to mention what the first Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order wrote on this subject, in 1926:

"To hide one's face under a mask, either motionless or one which is full of character, to assume a new personality, to become someone else, and to exalt in the metamorphosis of the self, is to become endowed with mystery, and to feel the anxiety that the mask conveys. It is not without reason that, in Ancient Rome, the days of the Carnival were placed under the auspices of Saturn, the planetary god to whom all tradition attributes the anxious disposition of a seeker. Anxiety? Disturbance? Well, yes, since it consists in concealing one's personality under the appearance of another very different one; disguising one's own reality; augmenting to the maximum the distance between one's interior life and worldly activity; creating another person and superimposing it over one's own.

"In the theater of antiquity, a hero of Tragedy always kept connection with either the divine world or the daimonic world. To break through the passage, and to associate with supernatural beings, the hero always wore a mask that would impart a ritualistic appearance, fashioned according to the norm of hieratic art. Even today, in Africa, the sorcerer, in order to evoke the powers of the world of shadows, dons a solemn and phantasmagorical costume, and hides the face under a mask. To think of it, isn't it the Latin word 'masca,' meaning 'witch,' that has lent its name to our false face of velvet and of cardboard?

"Nature herself places a mask upon the person as he or she enters into life at birth, and as they exit at the time of death. Nature fashions the mask of the pregnant woman, and sculpts with tragic hand, the mortuary mask of the one in the clutches of death. Even further, and higher, mounts the symbolism of the mask.

"In fact, theology teaches that God is personal . . . the statement which may shock those people who do not understand the French language,

which has preserved in the word 'personal' its fundamental meaning of 'mask.' It means that God is masked, in other words, incommunicable to the human world."

Independent of the above citation, we should remember that the Martinist Order formerly functioned as a secret society, because it was forced to protect its members from religious or political persecution. Since then, the mentality of the world has evolved, so that our Order does not have the need to remain secret but rather, remains discreet. In other words, the Order is not hidden, but it does not attract attention to itself.

In this sense, we could consider the wearing of the mask as a symbol of the secrecy which was vigorously practiced in the past by Martinists. If, during our work, we remove it, it is for practical reasons, and also because we do not fear to reveal our identity to our Brothers and Sisters present in the Temple.

If this is so, it is because we have confidence in each other and we uphold the principle of not betraying that trust. It is just as well, since we do not keep secrets from each other as far as our Martinist studies are concerned. In other words, we are aware that we share the same ideal, and that it is in this common ideal that we come together.

For these reasons, it is clear that this secrecy is connected to the notion of protection. Therefore, on the symbolic plane, the mask protects us from the judgment of those who do not understand the nature of our works. In other words, it protects us symbolically from the negative influences that emanate from evil spirits who find themselves on the astral plane. This way we may consider the mask to be a veil that isolates us from the dark forces and prevents them from penetrating us with their negativity. On the other hand, it focuses our inner vision towards the exterior world. In the image that comes to mind, it serves as an opening to allow the light of the sun to filter through.

In this way, to the saying that "the eyes are the mirror of the soul," we may add, that the mask is a door that the soul can open or close, according to the need, to protect itself from the terrestrial world or, on the contrary, to act throughout the world. And, to expand the meaning further, it symbolizes the threshold that separates the sacred from the profane.

Spirit of Fraternity

In Martinism, the mask also symbolizes the spirit of fraternity that we cherish so dearly. In fact, all Martinists, of all degrees or of any nationality, possess it; it is, therefore, a common element of all Brothers and Sisters who traverse the world upon the Martinist path. Since this is so, it symbolizes the fraternal bonds that unite us beyond time and space. Along the same lines, the mask is a symbol of equality, because we do not recognize any distinction—racial, social, or other. If this is the case, it is because we are all equal as souls, desirous of better understanding the Divine Plan.

Besides being the symbol of fraternity and equality, Augustin Chaboseau, the co-founder of our Order, likened the mask to the symbol of liberty. To this effect he declared the following during the Martinist assembly in 1931:

"This protecting mask, by isolating the one who wears it, teaches the person to remain invisible. It places upon the wearer himself or herself, as well as upon their conscience, the responsibility for their actions while, at the same time, gives them the total freedom necessary to act."

And because of the fact that humans are free to choose, they craft their own destiny, as much on individual as on collective planes.

Besides symbolizing fraternity, equality, and liberty, the mask also symbolizes the golden rule that every Martinist must apply in the framework of his or her quest—namely, impersonality. As this word indicates, this virtue consists of achieving abstraction in one's personality, not only when we are engaged within the limits of the work of our Order, but equally when we are accomplishing good works in the outer world, the so-called "profane." It may have been this symbolism that inspired Louis Claude de Saint-Martin when he said: "Good does not make noise, and noise does not do good."

To continue along the same line, the mask is therefore the symbol of humility; in other words, an attitude of acting for the good of others, or in a worthwhile cause, without ever taking credit for it. Hence, we should convince ourselves of the fact that the more we seek admiration in the eyes of our fellows, the smaller we become in the eyes of God.

Unfortunately, the majority of people have a tendency to yield to the negative impulses of their ego, proving Qoheleth, the son of King David, to be correct when he declared that "Vanity of Vanities: all is Vanity."

The Soul Itself

In its most mystical application, the mask symbolizes that which is the most divine in humanity, namely, the soul itself. This signifies that while we are wearing it, we are facing our conscience, and are unable to lie to ourselves. Therefore, we see that if the mask disguises us from others, it reveals us such as we truly are, to God. It is precisely for this reason that it is impossible to hide from God the true nature of our thoughts and our intentions.

Seen from this aspect, the mask is the symbol of sincerity, not only as it concerns God, but also as it concerns ourselves. In other words, it symbolizes the fact that a Martinist must always act in his or her own soul and conscience, in order to be as true as possible in behavior and on the spiritual quest. Furthermore, this means that the mask represents Divine Truth. And, the precise reason for being Martinists is to discover this Truth, by means of study, meditation, and prayer.

We are not able to refer to the meaning of truth without also considering justice. In fact, it is because humans possess the consciousness of good and

evil that they instituted laws to live in society. From the moment that an individual violates these laws, he or she must be judged, and eventually condemned. Formerly, in certain communities, those who dispensed justice would wear a mask.

The major reason for concealing the face was to remain unknown, and thus to prevent eventual retaliation. However, there were others who wore it to emphasize the impersonal quality of their judgment and the absence of prejudice. In those cases we find notions of impersonality and sincerity as previously described. Having this ideal before their eyes, Martinists possess a profound sense of justice and they know that, although it is possible to deceive human beings, no one is able to deceive God. Seen from this perspective, the mask that is worn in the Temple also represents Divine justice in its most impersonal sense.

The mask, however, is not limited to symbolizing virtues and the concepts just described. It represents, as well, the fact that a Martinist must learn to mask his or her objective sight and to look at the world with the eyes of the soul. In other words, it is also the symbol of the interior vision, which sees beyond appearances, and perceives that which is hidden from our physical senses. In its most pure expression, this interior vision is akin to contemplation, which is the faculty to "see" the works of God in all beings and in all things. To this effect, allow me to quote St. Augustine:

"I entered into myself and I contemplated the Creation with the mysterious eye of my soul, the eye which transcends my senses and my intelligence. And, what I was contemplating, was the pure Light of God. And I felt that this contemplation was Truth, because only Truth is able to appear inside the Light of God."

Thus, each time that we wear the mask, we must make an effort to look within, in order to see there the luminous face of God and to receive inspiration therefrom.

As Victor-Émile [Michelet] proclaimed: "God is masked by his Creation!" This signifies that it is impossible for people to see God or, to use the terminology of the Old Testament, to contemplate God's face. Besides, you will notice the fact that all religions and every tradition make of God a Being or a Principle that is inconceivable and unintelligible. Because we are incarnated beings, it is effectively impossible to know what God really is. We can only marvel at God's works, give God thanks for having created them, and study the laws by which The Divine manifests itself in the universe, in nature, and in humanity itself.

However, if we assume that God is masked by Creation, we then can infer that "Creation is the mask of God." Therefore, humanity becomes an integral part of the Creation, in a way that it also becomes the mask of God; in other words, the veil through which God contemplates the Divine

Self. Finally, this amounts to the conclusion that the only way to reintegrate is to unmask the Divinity and to do so in the most mystical sense.

As you know, the mask that we wear during our work is black. This color symbolizes the fact that our quest must guide us from darkness into Light; from ignorance into Knowledge; from earth towards Heaven. During the time that we wear it in our Conventicles, it indicates that, during our presence in the Temple, our goal is to communicate with Divinity, not as mere individuals, but as souls in search of Wisdom. It also expresses the fact that we aspire to lift the veil that covers the Light for which we search, in order to contemplate it in all of its purity.

As to the mask of the initiator, it is red . . . the color of the spirit. If this is the case, it is to demonstrate that the one who transmits the initiation represents the Holy Spirit at the moment of this act. As we can see, the trinity of Martinist colors includes the black, the red, and the white. Therefore, you may be asking if there also exists a white mask in Martinism.

In the Absolute, we may say that, in effect, it does exist, and that it is those who are the True Unknown Superiors, our Venerable Masters, who wear it in the invisible world. On the symbolical plane, this color represents the fact that they are endowed with the purity of soul, and that they have become agents of Divinity, the state that we, ourselves, are destined to attain at the completion of our spiritual evolution.

Brothers and Sisters, to summarize this message, we can state that the mask is an archetype, in the sense that its symbolism recalls the origins of humanity. It should also be noted that its significance has changed according to the evolution of human consciousness. It was thus utilized for primitive ends before being used for more mystical purposes. Nowadays, it continues to be used for diverse ends, most often of a festive nature, as during the celebrations of Carnival, Hallowe'en, and other similar types of festivities. In fact, it may only be the Martinists who perpetuate its esoteric symbolism. As we have noted, it represents such concepts as fraternity, equality, and liberty. It also symbolizes greater virtues, such as impersonality, humility, and sincerity. To these are added the notions of secrecy and protection that the Martinist Tradition attributes to the mask.

But, if we had to choose one single meaning for the mask, it would be that it represents the human soul in its quest of Understanding and Wisdom. In this, let us always remember that humanity itself is the mask through which God contemplates the Divine Creation, and this confirms the saying that was engraved above the portals of the Temple of Delphi: "Know thyself, and thou shalt know the universe and the gods." Such is precisely the path that we must follow to unmask the Supreme Truth and obtain our Reintegration in the bosom of Divinity.

THE CLOAK

*The Most Venerable Grand Master Julie Scott
English Grand Lodge*

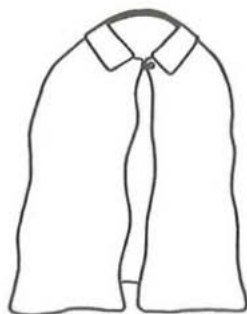
Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

THE CLOAK is a sublime and powerful tool for the Martinist student, providing protection from the mundane, creating a purified environment for our inner transformation, and symbolizing our extraordinary inheritance and duty to the highest good.

Before I speak to you about these lessons of the cloak, I would like to first share a little of its history.

The cloak has represented various archetypal motifs in different cultures throughout time.

In our earliest history our most ancient ancestors wore animal skins to camouflage themselves during a hunt or battle, and in order to embody the characteristics of the animal itself, for example the strength or fierceness of a lion or the cunning of a wolf. It also represented the ability of the person wearing it, for to master a bear (by taking its skin) requires strength, courage, and skill. Eventually the skin represented the wealth and power of the group, especially if it was adorned with ornamental items significant to the local tribe and its enemies, such as bear or lion claws or feathers.



Eventually cloaks were made of fabric, including the finest linens, wools, and silks—again representing the wealth of the wearer and in some cases the purity or power of the material.

Kings and queens, and emperors and empresses around the world have worn royal cloaks, in many cases jewel-studded and fur-trimmed, representing their authority and wealth, and thereby the power of their kingdoms.

Popes and cardinals of various traditions wear cloaks signifying their rank in their orders and the particular branch they represent. This practice exists in Catholicism, Buddhism, and Eastern Christianity to name a few.

In the Greek Orthodox Church today, on Easter Sunday in Jerusalem, the high priest dons a special cloak and, at a certain time, with no matches or other lighting tools in his hand, reaches forth to re-ignite the sacred flame of the church. It is believed that it is the spiritual power of the cloak that allows him to do this, as this is reportedly the same cloak that was worn by the high priest of the Eleusinian mystery school.

In more recent history, the cloak has been used by Hollywood to represent intrigue or magic. An entire genre of film has centered on the cloak and dagger.

Several fictional characters' cloaks or capes empower them with magical abilities such as super strength or the ability to fly. In *Harry Potter*, the cloak allows the characters to travel amidst others invisibly. In the Lord of the Rings film, *The Two Towers*, Frodo hides himself and his faithful friend, Sam, by throwing his cloak over them so they blend in with the environment.

In some of the examples above, the cloak was used to represent deeds, for example to symbolize what a person may have done, or to signify their position or what they possess.

In the Martinist tradition, the symbolism of the cloak is quite different.

In our work as Martinists, we are introduced to two teachers for whom the symbolism of the cloak was important—Elijah, who reportedly bequeathed his cloak to Elisha, and Apollonius of Tyana.

In the second Book of Kings in the Bible, the story of Elijah and Elisha is told.

Elijah was already a great prophet when he came upon Elisha plowing his fields. Elijah placed his cloak upon Elisha and Elisha instantly comprehended the significance of this act—he was to carry on Elijah's work when he was gone. Elisha immediately put down his plow, prepared a great feast for his community, and left with Elijah, to follow the great prophet.

Elisha remained loyal to Elijah, and to God, following Elijah through the desert as he traveled to eventually be carried up to heaven by fiery chariots and horses in a whirlwind.

Elisha, humble and quiet of spirit, asked Elijah for a double portion of the spirit that was upon Elijah, and God granted it to him. Elisha went on to perform exactly twice as many miracles as Elijah. Following Elijah's ascension to heaven, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and used it shortly thereafter to perform the miracle of dividing the River Jordan. Later, God performed many miracles through Elisha, who became the successor to Elijah's ministry.

In *Man, His True Nature and Ministry*, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin wrote, "... as we ascend (the holy Mount) we put on Elijah's mantle, which we may inherit during this life, and by means of which we may bring down fire from heaven; divide the waters of the river; cure diseases; raise the dead; for nothing but this Elijah's mantle, or our pure and primitive garment, can preserve the *Word* in us, as an earthly garment preserves our bodily warmth. Our animal being cannot contain this living Word; our virginal bodies only can hold it."

Apollonius of Tyana was another significant teacher of the meaning of the cloak. Apollonius was born in Cappadocia, in what is now Turkey, and

lived in the earliest years of this era. He was a Greek, of noble birth, well educated and wealthy. Apollonius traveled extensively throughout the world, studying various cultures including Jainism, Buddhism, the ancient Egyptian religion and Indian cultures. In fact, he spent over thirteen years studying in India and brought back much of what he learned there to Greece. His journey in India is said by some to be symbolic of the trials of the neophyte.

He was familiar with the Eleusinian mysteries and studied at Delphi. He was a prolific writer and often referred to the inscription above the door of the temple at Delphi, attributed to the Oracle of that place: "Know thyself, and thou shalt know the Universe and the Gods."

Apollonius was most dedicated to the school of Pythagoras. He was a strict vegetarian and observed silence for five years. During his lifetime Apollonius was renowned for performing miracles, which he called "natural laws."

After raising a young girl from her own funeral procession, Apollonius said, "There is no death of anything save in appearance. That which passes over from essence to nature seems to be birth, and what passes over from nature to essence seems to be death. Nothing really is originated, and nothing ever perishes; but only now comes into sight and now vanishes. It appears by reason of the density of matter, and disappears by reason of the tenuity of essence. But it is always the same, differing only in motion and condition."

Apollonius, the miracle worker of noble birth, always wore a simple cloak of white linen.

Message of the Cloak

The message of the cloak represents the humble seeker. It also symbolizes a person's intention and preparation for inner transformation.

As we learn in our earliest initiation, the cloak renders us invulnerable to attacks of ignorance; it symbolizes the hermetic seal, which creates a place for inner transformation to take place.

The cloak renders us invulnerable to attacks of ignorance. I still remember the first time I heard this explanation of the cloak. I felt great comfort and strength in it. But how would the cloak make us invulnerable? Just like the mask, making us undifferentiated, the cloak veils our individuality. It gives us the power of being withdrawn from the world rather than in it, where we are in the midst of reaction and even pro-action.

Through the cloak we learn that we can choose whether or not to be vulnerable to attack. Think of an example for yourself. If you are a parent, or have been in the presence of a young person going through a difficult time, you may have been verbally attacked by that young person, yet you know, through your maturity and stability, that they are simply misguided, misdirected, or going through "one of their phases."

In the same way, when we are attacked unfairly, through the ignorance of another person who may not have all the facts, who may be deceived by prejudice or insufficient education, or may be unable to see the bigger picture, we can choose not to react, to instead act in a confident, unwavering manner. The cloak makes us strong—strong enough to withstand attack without taking it personally.

When donning the cloak, we resemble the knight of old who places a powerful and pure vestment upon his shoulders before going about his most important, and possibly dangerous, duties. It is a protection and the symbol of the ideal, of the impersonal good for which we personally strive.

The cloak also serves as a hermetic seal; it creates a metaphorical womb, for the place of transformation is truly within us. What creates the seal is our intention, and the cloak symbolizes our inner purification, a willingness to let go of the material, and a commitment to focus on our true nature and communion with God.

Enfolded in the hermetic seal of the cloak, we do the work on our individual selves, on our own transformation that cannot be done by or shared with others.

Augustin Chaboseau, former Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order and Imperator of the F.U.D.O.S.I., wrote, "The cloak is like the walls of a deserted room where a lamp has been lit. I was alone in this room with a light. I left the room without touching the flame, and on my departure, I carefully locked the door. No one can receive this light but it continues to shine. I just have to re-open the door, enter the room, and I would find what was illuminating me, with all that this light illuminated for me. Further, as long as I am enfolded in the cloak, and every time I wear the cloak, I am the companion of light, and light is my companion."

The cloak encloses us in a metamorphic field that facilitates transformation. Perhaps this is where the image of a magical cloak comes from. We enfold ourselves in the cloak with the expectation of something different taking place. It is not a magical piece of cloth that causes the transformation to occur; it is our intention to transform and the symbolic hermetically sealed space in which this transformation can take place. When donning the cloak we anticipate the best of ourselves and are open to communion with God.

Of course, great evolution of the soul takes place through our interaction with others and the lessons we learn in the mundane world as well. In my experience, however, this is significantly different from the transformation that takes place when we touch the inner depths of our soul, when we speak with the mystical voice within, when we enter the divine stillness that the cloak engenders.

When we enter our meditation with this intention, we truly purify our inner selves and create an atmosphere where great transformation can take place.

I have spoken about Elijah bequeathing his cloak to Elisha, the life of Apollonius of Tyana, of being invulnerable to attacks of ignorance, and the hermetic seal. All of these lead to the most important significance of the cloak, which is that of silence.

The Silence

In my final degree of study in the heptad, I chose to remain silent during all the classes. This was a very interesting exercise for me as our class, which had journeyed together for several years, frequently engaged in lively discussions. Often there was something I wanted to say, however my commitment to being silent and unknown during these classes was more important to me, being an ideal I wanted to live up to during this period.

I found great strength in my silence. Perhaps I missed the opportunity to make a salient point or two (and perhaps I didn't), however this was insignificant in comparison to the inner power I felt from keeping silent, from keeping my own counsel and reflecting on what was happening in the moment rather than blurting out every thought that crossed my mind, irrespective of its significance.

On several occasions I have had the opportunity to participate in silent retreats. In each case not only did I feel greater peace, I also experienced greater vitality, as if every word withheld was rewarded with increased life force.

The cloak symbolizes the entrance into silence, and the place of silence is where God and our inner selves meet.

Pythagoras required his students to remain silent for five years before he allowed them into his school of study. Besides the discipline this requires, it slowly opened up the students' other senses and sensibilities.

Recently I had the privilege (and challenge) of climbing to the top of Mt. Sinai in Egypt. Typically one leaves with a guide at 2 a.m., completing the ascent in time for the impressive sunrise at the top of the great mountain. I took my time coming down and at several moments I was all by myself. There was no wind blowing through this rough terrain, there were no animals or even insects buzzing around. I stood in the midst of absolute silence.

Even my own body slowed its breathing until I heard nothing but absolute stillness. It was clear at that moment why so many people, including Moses and Elijah, have been inspired by this place. This calm brought the present moment into focus. Trying to hear something, my senses became keenly aware

and then the stillness washed over me a great peace, a calm and a quietness of the soul.

Perhaps you have had an experience similar to this. Free from the chains of chatter and a darting mind, silence brings us back within where we find our peaceful core.

Entering the Silence

And now, brothers and sisters, we shall enter the silence, each of us individually, going inward, deeper and deeper until we reach that place that is no place, where peace profound resides; until we reach the time, which is no time, that has always and never existed.

Please sit in whatever position is most comfortable for you.

Take a deep breath and exhale completely . . . completely.

Focus on your breathing, gradually bringing it to a pace slower and slower, quieter and quieter.

Choose a place where you can feel your breath—in your chest—or feel it entering and exiting at your nostrils.

Now, in your mind's eye, see yourself in a room filled with light. Everywhere around you it is bright and filled with energy. Walk toward a place in this room where there hangs a white cloak, vibrating in its purity.

Take that cloak and begin to slowly place it around your shoulders, every moment keeping in mind the transformation you want to take place when the cloak is in place.

You are now safely enfolded within the cloak, protected from all possible attacks. You stand tall, confident, knowing that you are utterly safe.

Close the clasp of the cloak around your neck. Now the seal has been created that fully envelops you for the transformation that you most deeply desire.

Know that you are worthy of this ideal, of this transformation, that you are worthy of your very best—of right and good and justice. Moreover, in being allowed to incarnate on Earth you have a *responsibility* to fulfill your part in the plan of the Grand Architect of the Universe.

Now, safely enfolded in the possibility and duty of the white cloak, enter into silence. You will be in this place for some time.

Listen very carefully for the call from within, the sirens drawing you to the mysteries of the deep, to the ancient stillness that has existed forever and will continue beyond eternity, in its radiant splendor and glory.

"Great truths can only be taught in silence."

—Louis Claude de Saint-Martin

"If only all might be hushed, sense impressions, the soul itself, all imagery, all symbols, all things transient, then we might hear the very voice of the eternal, and if that experience were prolonged, we would indeed enter into the joy of our Lord."

—Augustine

"Silence is the language God speaks and everything else is a bad translation."

—Thomas Keating

"There is nothing mind can do that cannot be better done in the mind's immobility and thought-free stillness. When mind is still, then truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence."

—Sri Aurobindo

"This silence, this moment, every moment, if it's genuinely inside you, brings what you need. There's nothing to believe. Only when I stopped believing in myself did I come into this beauty. Sit quietly, and listen for a voice that will say, 'Be more silent.' Die and be quiet. Quietness is the surest sign that you've died. Your old life was a frantic running from silence. Move outside the tangle of fear-thinking. Live in silence."

—Rumi

"Words stand between silence and silence: between the silence of things and the silence of our own being, between the silence of the world and the silence of God. When we have really met and known the world in silence, words do not separate us from the world nor from other men, nor from God, nor from ourselves because we no longer trust entirely in language to contain reality."

—Thomas Merton

"We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature—trees, flowers, grass—grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence . . . we need silence to be able to touch souls."

—Mother Teresa

—Amen—

THE CORDELIER

*The Most Venerable Grand Master José Luis Aguilar-Moreno
Spanish Grand Lodge for the Americas*

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

WE RECALL the correct observation that was made to us in the first Degree of the studies of our Venerable Order, as seekers of the Light, that we cannot overlook having an awareness of, and knowing the significance of, all the things that surround us in our environment. We should know their nature, their objective, and what they represent to us, with the goal of gaining a better usage and understanding of them so that they permit us to live with greater harmony every day.

If this is the ideal for all that concerns us in the material world, it is even more reasonable that we should be completely conscious of all things that are part of a context so serious and profound as that which integrates the traditions and lessons of the Martinist Path.

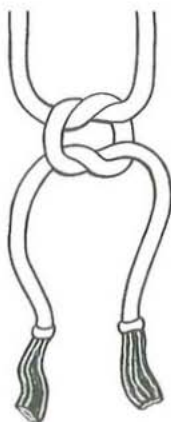
Thus, it is fundamental to immerse ourselves as much as possible in all that there is to know concerning the particular ritualistic implements that surround us in the enclosed places where we study and pray in our Venerated Order, as well as about all the items that make up our ceremonial clothing. In this way we will be acquiring a more ample and accurate knowledge of those things that constitute the Martinist symbolic phrases and rituals.

As we know, the ritual garb used by Martinists consists basically of the mask, the robe or tunic with a cloak, and the cordelier. In this dissertation we specifically refer to the latter, naturally focusing our attention toward the esoteric symbolism that encircles the members of the Traditional Martinist Order.

Toward that end, we will first discuss the cordelier within the physical arena, as an object, as well as a verbal expression. Then, we will talk about it in religious and philosophical terms, and then complete our review with a succinct examination from the esoteric point of view.

The origin of the cordelier, as a simple physical object, is lost in the dawn of history. Perhaps the first cordeliers used by human beings consisted of vines or other soft, long and flexible plant stems that served to tie up or pull objects or secure them to the body.

With time, humans discovered the use of various plant fibers, giving rise to the birth of the cordelier as one of their ingenious creations. In the



beginning it consisted of a short cord, only long enough to make it into a belt, formed by various woven fibers that were intertwined with other strands of lesser thickness. Knots to secure the ends of the cordeliers were, over time, replaced by tassels of the same material.

As an integral part of clothing, the cordelier was used to secure everything from undergarments to the most elaborate clothing that was designed throughout the ages.

There is no doubt that, in the development and evolution of clothing for men and women, the cordelier has also been used as not only a necessary part of the garment but also as a fashion accessory. Still, in antiquity, it was very common to wear tunics or loose-fitting garments that didn't close up easily. But passing over this brief history of clothing, the cordelier was always present, although at times under certain conditions.

For example, the cordelier or belt was used more by the common folk than by the well-to-do. Among the latter, it was more likely that a cordelier was worn during special occasions with luxurious or gala clothing adorned to make a simple piece of apparel more beautiful.

In Egypt, where the cordelier was used more commonly, people wore armbands decorated with shells covered in gold or silver leaf, as well as pieces of precious stones and other materials. From then on, similar bands were used by royalty or by wealthy families.

As a complementary article of clothing, the cordelier was used in the dress of many other Eastern cultures, including the Syrian and the Hebraic. Very likely it carried significance greater than simply as a clothing accessory. But what is certain is that it held great significance when worn by priests or ministers of particular religious cults.

With the evolution of clothing, marked by the daily necessities imposed by lifestyles from those times to the present, the cordelier was gradually replaced by the sash or belt that lent greater utility in daily living and work, shifting the cordelier into a position as a secondary fashion accessory.

For example, the leather belt proved itself more durable, and therefore more suitable, for carrying swords or other arms, and found its place on military uniforms.

As an important part of a complete garment, the cordelier has passed its time of prime usage and today is only used as a secondary or minor fashion accessory, as its original use by the wearer has been replaced by the sash, the belt, and other articles used on different types of clothing.

Reminiscent of the original use of the cordelier in the military arena, the cordelier has also been worn over the shoulder of various officials or as an insignia by certain soldiers. The use of cords and cables is more common within the naval forces.

With regard to the material used to make it, as noted earlier, initially vegetable fibers were used, then linen, and later generally cotton. In certain countries and ancient traditions the material of choice was silk, and wool was also used. Even so, some sashes or cords were made from fine metallic threads.

In modern times many of the vegetable fibers have been replaced by plastic or other synthetic fibers that have a similar appearance and texture, such as nylon, acrylics, or other similar threadlike materials.

A variant of the cordelier is certainly the stole. It originally consisted of a piece of the long and loose-fitting clothing of the Greeks and Romans, adorned by a fringe that tied around the waist and fell all the way to the floor. Over time this developed into a sacred garment consisting of a long band of cloth of only a few centimeters width with or without embroidered or stamped symbols on it, that the official placed over his neck, then let fall on either side of the body to below the waist. The stole, as a sacred ornament, is used in liturgies as part of the ritualistic garment. As a reference point, we can recall that the stole is part of the ritual garb worn by the Chaplain in Rosicrucian Convocations.

As a word in Spanish, the term *cordón* (cordelier) has many synonyms. They include, among others, *cíngulo* (cord), lace, braid, ruffle, border, fringe, angling-line, *sutas*, cord, fiber, cable, ribbon, string, etc. The first of these, *cíngulo*, comes from the Latin word derived from the word *cingere*, meaning to encircle or surround. Also in Spanish there is the word *cingula*, which means cord (religious) or belt.

The word *cíngulo*, synonym of *cordón* in Spanish, is rarely used and has become part of the Spanish of antiquity, although it can be used today with total confidence. In Christian ecclesiastical circles the *cíngulo* is a belt made from silk or linen, with a tassel at each end, which forms part of the priests' robes.

In martial arts, such as Karate and Kung Fu, whose origins are from Japan and China, the cordelier was replaced by the belt, which besides forming part of the uniform suitable for wearing during the practice of the sport, also indicates the level of development of the wearer, as determined by its color.

Cordón, essentially a common word, has also been applied to numerous and diverse applications, that with the passage of time have become a regular part of our culture.

Let us consider, for example, its use in the community. We talk about a *cordon* of protection; we also talk about a surveillance *cordon* or a police *cordon*. Other examples include a health barrier and a troop *cordon*. In these cases the intent is to isolate persons or objects, by use of other persons or objects, to provide an effective level of security and protection.

In anatomy there are various types of "cords," such as the nervous cord. But the most common is the umbilical cord, by which the fetus is nurtured,

receiving the food and sustenance of life. In biology, the DNA cord or strand, also known as the DNA double helix, contains the chromosomal characteristics that regulate the physical existence of the individual.

Within the material realm, where we have so far only spoken about the cordelier as a part of clothing, we also want to point to its presence in everyday life as a method of connection with an *energy source*. It is a simple fact that a cord(elier) always comes with a computer and office machines, radios, televisions, telephones, heaters, kitchen appliances, lamps, vacuum cleaners, electrical equipment, etc.; always as something that both ties objects to, and conducts power from, the *source of energy*.

In the material world, the cordelier and the rope frequently symbolize the power of the ruler or the magistrate, in either case symbolizing the power *to tie and untie*. In other contexts they can be emblems of responsibilities or obligations that are entered into voluntarily.

Sacred Use of the Cordelier

So, from a philosophical or religious point of view, the cordelier, as well as the chain, is symbolic of all that ties and unties, especially the link between heaven and earth. The chain also carries the symbolism of all that unifies and ties together. On occasion, when alluding to the union of heaven and earth, at times it is used in the sense of the fertilization of the latter by the former. For the Neoplatonists, a chain symbolized the uninterrupted emanation of the One towards beings and things.

Christianity has similar notions, in that it holds that the individual is united with God by a chain of gold, and also that prayer has been compared to a golden chain.

Referring to the *cincture* (the cord in a religious context), as we have cited previously, the Christian officiant or priest, in order to celebrate the Divine Offices, dons a pure white linen cloth with a cross in the middle, which is called an *amice*. An *alb* is worn over the latter, consisting of a white vestment. This last vestment—the *alb*—is tied at the waist with a cincture or liturgical cord.

In the monastic orders, the cincture is also utilized to tie at the waist the garment referred to as a habit, the distinctive vestments with particular characteristics for each order, that although they pertain to most things ecclesiastical, they are usually associated more generally with monks.

For Freemasons, a cordelier with knots symbolizes the community of the initiated.

In Tibetan Buddhism, once a candidate has been initiated into the first portals, he is given various objects to commemorate his progress, among these, a blue cordelier that symbolizes the union established with his Lama as his Spiritual Mentor or Initiator.

In addition, according to Buddhist and Hindu notions that are also found among Neoplatonist and other philosophical systems, the human spirit is united with the soul or body by an astral golden thread. In this category we would also include the astral link, which we know by the name of the Silver Thread.

According to the assessment of some philosophical schools, the "silver thread or thread of silver is an etheric string that connects the superior bodies to the physical body via the atom seed of the heart. It is a very fine and vibrant thread (or cord) that has the form of two numbers six united, one end connected to the heart and the other to the vortex of bodily desires.

"During the vigilant state, when the human being functions consciously in the physical world, the diverse bodies are in a concentric relationship—occupying the same space—but at night, while the body sleeps, there is a separation.

"The consciousness of the Soul Personality—which intertwines the mind and the body of desire—leaves the dense body, which stays in the bed. The psychic body floats above or stays nearby and is always connected to the denser body by the Silver Thread.

"At death, this thread, the Silver Thread, is broken by the seed atoms of the heart, and the Soul Personality is freed from all contact with the material world."

In the Rosicrucian teachings, we are advised about the Silver Cord or Thread as a marvelous link that unites the physical body of the human being with the psychic or astral body, in a way that both can work together harmoniously. When the psychic or astral body separates from the physical, as in a dream or projection, the connection of the Silver Cord always remains. The connection is broken definitively only at the final death or transition of the individual.

In our Martinist lessons, this concept is referred to as the fluidic envelope or the plastic envelope.

The cordelier is notably part of the vestment of the Jewish priests of antiquity, and appears as well in art related to sibyls or oracles. Among the Greeks and the Romans, it appears as part of the regular dress of several of the Olympian Gods.

In India, some of the statues of Vishnu and Shiva carry as part of their clothing the sacred cordelier. Among members of the three superior castes of Hindus, especially among the Brahmans, the sacred cordelier, consisting of a thin cotton cord, is used beginning with their first initiation. It is worn across the chest, over bare skin, and never taken off.

The Cordelier in Initiation

Various historians have said the following, referring to the initiation in which the cordelier is conferred:

"The special training of the Brahman is the Brahman Cordelier which is put on during the first day of initiation, and which consists of a triple cord of moundja fibers; this is substituted during sacrificial rites for one made of three strings of cotton. It is worn diagonally from the left shoulder to the right side of the body.

"The Brahmans celebrate their mysterious and secret sessions in subterranean caverns found inside of grand and colossal temples, like that of the Elefanta, Ellora, and Salsette. The temples, dug out from rock, have long and wide meeting rooms, chapels and cells for the seemingly infinite number of priests required by this cult.

"These temples are adorned with pillars and columns, obelisks, bas-reliefs, and statues of the Divinities. The *sacellum* (Holy of Holies) is accessible only to initiates, and in It is seen the representation of the supreme deity.

"The periods of neophyte initiations are regulated by the phases of the moon. The mysteries consist of four levels and the neophyte is eligible for the first one at the age of eight years and is prepared by a Brahman who also serves as his spiritual father.

"The neophyte is subjected to a series of preparatory tests within the various caverns and when he has passed them successfully, and having completed his purification, he is introduced to the initiation cavern which is illuminated with dazzling clarity; in the center await three seated Hierophants in the East, West, and South, representing the gods Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu.

"The initiation process begins with a prayer to the sun called *Poorosh*, or rather the vital spirit of Brahma. It continues with various preliminary ceremonies throughout several different rooms that include more tests for the neophyte. Upon opening the door of the last one, the candidate is introduced to a splendidly illuminated apartment decorated with statues and emblematic figures, adorned with precious stones and perfumed with soft smells from incense and balms from the Orient. This cave represents the Mansion of Paradise, which has the name of the Temple of Ellora.

"Assuming that the candidate has been duly regenerated, he is dressed in a white tunic, a tiara is placed on his head, and he is presented with the sacred bell; a cross is marked upon his forehead and a Tau (the Greek 't') on his chest; he is also given the *salagrama* or black stone as a guarantee of protection by Vishnu and the stone called serpentine as reptilian antidote. Certainly, the sacred cordelier is also placed upon the candidate during this ceremony.

"Finally the sacred name of *Oum* is bestowed upon him, signifying the comprehensive solar fire of the great Trimurti, with which the initiate finds himself completely imbued with the knowledge of the essence of the Divine."

In addition to Hinduism, a reference to the cordelier is made among other religions of great antiquity, including Zoroastrianism and Sufism, and in a

few Biblical and Celtic passages, which we learn about in our studies of the Associate Degree of our Order.

Going forward from this retrospective review of the cordelier, we are satisfied that with the various uses humanity has made of it, the cordelier has always had specific and significant purposes.

As a fashion accessory, as well as an object and a word, the cordelier has had intrinsic characteristics as a means of binding or union. It has also had the same characteristics as a means of nutrition, nourishment, and health. At the same time, the cordelier can be said to be a connection to the source of energy.

More philosophically, the cordelier shows itself to be a link between the material and the astral, as well as the means of astral information and perception. And finally, in certain religious environments, it is a bond for the connection with the Divine, with the Light and Illumination.

Esoteric Symbolism of the Cordelier

From the *esoteric* point of view, which is what interests us the most, the Martinist cordelier is one of the first mystical symbols that we receive from the first initiation on the path of our Venerable Order—a symbol that we preserve and use indefinitely as one of the emblems of our affiliation and permanency in the path we have undertaken towards Reintegration, the essential objective of our zeal.

Once we have placed the cordelier upon ourselves, not only do we receive it as one of the important ritualistic elements with which we are invested, and by which we will be recognized by other *Unknowns* as seekers of the Light, but additionally it is also explained to us, in precise and clear words, what the traditional significance of its nature is, and of its use within our lessons.

We are shown that the cordelier is the symbol of a link in the great Astral Chain made up of all Martinists, and that it will give us the protection and isolation necessary to enter and remain in that chain. Once we are initiated onto the Path, we must invariably wear it in all Martinists conventicles, along with the other elements of the ritual that have already been noted, as well as in other ceremonies of specific importance such as the initiations imparted by the Order on the candidates in this Forest of Errors.

Our presence would not be adequate, nor would we be in conformance with the formal Ritualist Décor established since the beginning of our Order, if we did not wear this element—the cordelier—as part of our distinctive vestments.

Its construction is very simple, for it is made up of only a few rough braided strands, usually two or four, that form the round cord of about a centimeter in width, with sufficient length to encircle the waist and permit

a knot with adequate looseness. It is finished off with tassels that grace and embellish each end. The latter are properly proportioned and usually consist of small spheres or circular bands that hold sufficient numbers of thinner threads of a few centimeters in length.

Its color is one of those traditional to the Martinists: black. However in the ascent of the degrees of study, the cord eventually becomes gold, while still preserving all of its other original characteristics.

As noted at the beginning of this discourse, we can glimpse with greater clarity the broad significance of the symbolism of the affirmation contained within the words that are expressed by the candidate in her initiation, about the link established with her Initiator and with the Light.

The double duality of the threaded ends that are part of the cordelier, the two tassels that tie its two respective ends, makes us reflect on this union (between Initiator and Initiate) that is also dual, that is, that the link created by the imposition of the cordelier in the Initiation is established not only on the material plane but on the astral plane.

The cordelier is tied with a simple knot, not tightly. This encourages us to consider the ties established as being firm, but that their permanence depends on our wish to preserve the link or undo it. That is to say, it depends on our *free will*. If our wish is truly to go towards the Light, then we are establishing the *magic path* which through the Martinist Chain will conduct us to it—to the road of our faith and our understanding.

The place on our body where the knot of the cordelier rests is significant; it has to do with the center of our self, it will bring to mind in a given moment the *Middle Path*, the pathway of equilibrium between the two great columns, moderation, the harmony between the two principal aspects that rule our lives.

If the site where we place the knot were on the left side of our body, it would symbolize the side of reasoning, of the will, the objective, and the left side of our brain that decides things rationally. At the same time it would mean the ventricle by which our heart receives from the lungs the inhalation of air and *nous* that infuses life in every instant, as well as signifying other movements found in the rituals of mystical orders that traditionally begin with the symbolic left side.

In a mystical ceremony of our sister Rosicrucian Order, the cordelier is also used with a similar symbolism—placed around the waist and tied with the Knot of the Adept on the left side. The Initiator indicates to the candidate that with the cordelier, “you have been endowed with the destiny of the Adeptus Major and united by the mystical knot of all the other Adepts of advanced degree.” At the same time in this manner, “the cord has been tightened around your waist so that your body is united, as well as your head and your soul, to the corresponding degree.”

Thus, the cordelier is the symbol of the link, the bond of union, the tie between the seeker of Light—the candidate—to his or her Initiator and the entire chain of Initiators and Venerable Masters of the past and present, up to the fundamental Light of the Grand Architect of the Universe. It is also the symbol that binds one to all other seekers of Light, and to other Martinists on the Path.

The cordelier confirms the voluntary intention of the candidate to accept the Martinist path as the path towards Reintegration, focusing on the Path that his or her Initiator will conduct him or her on towards the Light, towards Illumination.

There is nothing easier than to come to the Door of Truth.

There is nothing more difficult than to enter through it.

This applies to the majority of the sages of this world.

—Louis Claude de Saint-Martin—

“Man, always keep this solid principle clearly in your mind, as well as its constant truth which must serve as a rule for the conduct of a wise man; never forget the final term of things on earth; think often of the limitations the Creator has placed on your power because you depend on Him; be convinced that everything that happens in this world by earthly means is only a forgetfulness of the first being to which all is connected; be convinced that the superiority men try to attain over each other is only a chimera and has only an imaginary foundation; always have in mind the stable laws established within that can teach you to discern the true from appearances; listen to the voice within which tells you that in you, one part must obey and the other must have absolute dominion; then all will be in order and vanity shall not longer be feared.”

—Louis Claude de Saint-Martin

Erratum

Pantacle, No. 1, 2001

In the article entitled “Martinism, History of a Traditional Order,” on page 2, third paragraph, it reads that Martínez de Pasquales “. . . died in Santo Domingo in 1774.” Actually Martínez de Pasquales died at Port-au-Prince, Saint Domingue, the French part of the island of Hispaniola that later became the Republic of Haiti after its independence.



*"It could be said that the
Prayer of the Heart
is more of an art than a technique,
and it is necessary to practice it regularly
in order to master it.
If you do it with constancy,
you will discover the treasures of
the Way of the Heart."*

Christian Bernard, Sovereign Grand Master



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