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# Pantacle





## TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

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

Welcome to this edition of the *Pantacle*. The richness and diversity of the Martinist Tradition is demonstrated by a selection of studies, reflections, and meditations that span over 1,500 years and come from many diverse places on our planet.

First, we experience “Mystical Renewal Through Martinism,” from Regional Administrator and Provincial Master Kenneth Idioidi’s presentation at the recent English Grand Lodge Trilingual Convention in New Orleans. Following this, Christian Rebisse discusses the Unknown Philosopher’s works dedicated to “Music and Mysticism.”

Then Provincial Master Judith Stewart offers Martinist reflections on “The Art of Being,” and former TMO Grand Master Augustin Chaboseau considers “Will in Buddhism.”

Finally, we encounter the ineffable goal of our Martinist quest in the meditative selection “What Is the Divine Darkness,” by the fifth century Neoplatonic Syriac mystic, Pseudo-Dionysius, who is often referred to in our studies.

I hope that you enjoy these writings, and find them inspiring on all levels.

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

Julie Scott  
Grand Master  
Traditional Martinist Order

# Mystical Renewal Through Martinism

*by Regional Administrator Kenneth Idiodi, Provincial Master*

*This discourse was presented at the General Conventicle at the Trilingual New Orleans Convention of the English Grand Lodge for the Americas, June 13, 2008. It has been adapted for this Pantacle edition.*

Brothers and Sisters of the Traditional Martinist Order,

*Under the Auspices of the Rose-Croix,  
Greetings in the Light of Martinism!*

## Introduction

Please permit me to thank our most Venerable Grand Master, Sister Julie Scott, for her courtesy in inviting me to not only participate in this Convention, but to also present a discourse. I cherish this privilege! I also thank our Most Venerable Sovereign Grand Master, Brother Christian Bernard, for graciously leaving the honor to me to address this Conventicle.

This discourse, which I have entitled “Mystical Renewal Through Martinism,” is a brief overview of Martinism within the context of the Convention theme. It is my hope and prayer that this message of light will find a responsive chord in our hearts to embrace the Martinist studies more intimately and become even more serious about the application of our Rosicrucian principles in the true spirit of mystical renewal.

## The Human Fall

Martinists are familiar with the so-called “Fall of Humanity,” which is described in extremely veiled and allegorical language in the Biblical account by Moses, the Egyptian initiate of the Mystery Schools. Our tradition also relates that prior to this Fall, human beings existed in the allegorical Garden of Eden in greater spiritual glory—a purely divine luminous state—and enjoyed uninhibited direct closer attunement with Omneity and the luminous entities of the Cosmic Hierarchy. Humans, like God, were all-knowing, all-powerful, endowed with God’s free will and capabilities. The inadvertent pollution of this highly vibrated, fluidic, and luminous state with discordant vibrations resulted in the drastic change downwards into

the coarsely physical, mundane, vibratory condition in which humans now dwell in exile from the Divine. As a consequence, all automatic contacts and communications with the Cosmic Hierarchy are lost, except during occasional periods of sleep, when the human psychic body is in attunement momentarily with the original source.

### Knowledge of Self

During the normal physically-conscious state, the illusory vibrations of the mundane world captivate and enslave our physical senses and the consciousness of the Divine realm is completely lost. This apparent loss of knowledge of the Absolute and Divine capabilities which humans enjoyed in the Divine estate is the so-called Fall of Humanity from a state of Divine Grace to grass. Unfortunately, most human beings are unaware of this Fall, and so make no meaningful effort at regaining their original state, even though there still exists a silver chord linking the psychic self to the Divine Absolute.



*Hermes Trismegistus*, Fifteenth Century. Floor Mosaic, Cathedral of Sienna.

Some religions advocate the Way of Salvation through faith and belief in God. In such religions, the individual responsibilities of those seeking salvation are not emphasized. Others such as Judaism, Hinduism, and other Eastern religions teach their devotees the exercise of individual self-effort based on the true knowledge of self.

In the Egyptian mystery schools and the authentic initiatic mystical orders which perpetuate their traditions, initiates are taught the true nature of self as the first step in the process of regeneration and advancement towards a return to their original state and reintegration with the Absolute. Initiates are made to know that they consist of both the physical and other subtle etheric bodies which interpenetrate the mundane physical body. They become aware of the links

that still exist between their subtler bodies and the entities of the Cosmic Hierarchy. The combined radiations emanating from these subtler bodies with that of the physical body extends as an electromagnetic force around the initiate's body. This subtle emanation or aura is the initiate's medium of communication with the entities of the Divine World. As we exercise our divine powers of thought and imagination, we cause changes in our auric field, and this is recognized by the Invisible Hierarchy, who respond to our pure wishes. Such initiates are guided through the impeccable path on their journey back to a regenerated existence in the original estate.

### **The Mystical Path**

Initiatic science is organized and taught in mystical orders, of which the Traditional Martinist Order is one. It takes its initiates through a system of practical mystical instructions in which the candidate undergoing regeneration is isolated within the Heptad, which is a physical representation of the blueprint of the Microcosm within the candidate. The Heptad is the workshop and laboratory of the initiates, where ritualistically they are taught the art of stimulating the sephirotic Tree of Life, which links them to the Macrocosmic World.

By the use of signs, symbols, vibratory emanations from powerful passwords, mystical formulae, and invocations, the members are guided through a three-tier initiation process. The first tier starts the journey out of the darkness of the forest of errors into the region of diffused Light. The second tier takes the initiate through the Penumbra region towards the region of Divine Spiritual Light. The third tier ushers the initiate into the realm of the upper trinity of Lights, where he or she becomes a true unknown and begins to catch a glimpse of the original estate from which he or she fell. This Kabalistic pattern of progression transcends the initiatic paths of all sacred and authentic mystical orders. Its roots are traceable to the "Great White Lodge" of the G.W.B. to which all authentic initiatic mystical Orders belong. This represents the famous right hand path.

To ensure that what is transmitted to the initiates intellectually in ritualistic and conventicle sessions within the Heptad is utilized in effecting

the needed changes within each initiate undergoing regeneration, periods of introspection and entry into the Silence of the Invisible World alternate with periods of study in both the Heptad and the Oratory. Since the Heptad setting, including the locations of the stations and officers, is a mirror image of the sephirotic Tree of Life within each member, the meditation sessions serve as regular, practical, internalization of the steps and processes enacted in the ritualistic sessions. Initiates are left to their thinking and imagination in translating what they are taught physically in the Heptad—the mirror image of the temples within and above them—into their tools for advancement.

### **Martinist Renewal**

The Martinist Order ensures that all that is required to set the initiates on the Path of Renewal and Regeneration is embodied in its tradition, which is passed on untainted from one generation to another. Every speech and motion by the officers, every instruction of the Master at each session, every knock with the gavel, every stamping of the rods, every invocation of the Masters of the Past, the opening and closing rituals, the ritualistic lighting of the mystical East and the luminaries at the central altar, and the art of forming the chain, are potent tools given to all initiates to agitate and stimulate their subtler bodies towards the attainment of final perfect union with their original estate which is the initiate's birthright.

To this end our Venerated Master, the Unknown Philosopher, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin declared that he considered it the obligation of the mystic teacher "...to lead the human mind by a natural path to the supernatural things of which we have lost all conception, in part by our degradation, in part by the frequently false instruction of our teachers.

"Since the Fall, the single aim of humanity unrecognized by the majority who walk in spiritual darkness, has been reconciliation and reintegration with God. While on Earth our objective is to employ all rights and powers of our being in rarefying as far as possible the intervening media between ourselves and the true Sun, so that there may be a free passage, and the rays of Light may reach us without refraction."

The Martinist teachings are unique in their presentation of an inspiring conception of the original nature and Fall of Humanity, and in their offering of a technique for the redemption, salvation, or reintegration of individuals comprising the body of humanity. It is a sure way for us to

wend the long way homewards to God. This Order presents to you “the ancient equilibrating path leading to mastership and profound spiritual unfoldment. As you resolutely ascend the difficult, perilous, yet joyful, way, there will come a blessed day of true renewal when transformed into a New Person, you will forever be a regenerated and reintegrated being.”

Herein lies the beauty of Rosicrucian and Martinist initiations in our Sanctum or Oratory as well as in the Temple or Heptad. Initiation accomplishes for the consciousness what a good night’s sleep with beautiful dreams accomplishes for the body. You awake reinvigorated, rejuvenated, and with a sense or feeling of true renewal. Through initiation, you truly become “born again” or a “new person.” By undergoing or witnessing Rosicrucian and Martinist initiations, by reflecting upon the principles and how we are positively affected by them, we implement the *renewal process*.

### **Application of these Principles**

By way of practical application of this discourse, let us consider the principle of forgiveness in our character as part of our personal philosophy of life. It is true that you have done some bad things to people in the past. However, you have also accomplished many good deeds for any number of people and for humanity as a whole! The time has now arrived for you to effect a change for the better in your life because you want to experience renewal at this Convention. God made each of us sufficient to stand, but also free to fall!

The past is the past. Yesterday is gone forever. You cannot actually return to the past. In the past is your old self. Be prepared today to become a new person. Do a mind cleansing exercise on a daily basis. The things other persons have done to you, which hurt you, should not be stored in bags and suitcases in your consciousness. Learn to forgive others! The acts of omission or commission on your part, which have hurt others, must not be retained by you indefinitely in your consciousness. Unfortunately, many do this even after they have apologized and those that they hurt have forgiven them.

We must remember that Omneity is not interested in our sins, which we committed either out of sheer ignorance or even deliberately. Our weaknesses, human frailties, and errors of judgment up until this moment are of the past. You are burdened with a load of guilty conscience! You made some serious mistakes or committed certain sins. *Congratulations!*

Today, however, is a new day! Resolve to be positive henceforth. Go and sin no more! Life must go on. Forgive yourself and become a “new person!” This truly is *renewal*.

Brothers and Sisters, come to think about it, of what use is it to you or to Omneity to carry in your consciousness such a burden of grudges or load of grievances towards your neighbor—day after day, month after month, or year after year! If you truly love your neighbor as yourself and would do unto others as you would want others to do unto you, why not forgive others and forgive yourself? This Martinist Path is the way of the heart, and with a heart full of love, forgiveness, and gratitude for the lessons of life, radiate the Light in you no matter how dull and no matter how brilliant, to all of humanity.

### **Mystical Exercise**

Brothers and Sisters, let us now follow a procedure in a self-initiatic mystical exercise which will harmonize all aspects of our being with those principles and techniques that bring about a rejuvenation of the body, mind, and soul, and which therefore is a true mystical renewal.

First of all, sit relaxed and close your eyes.

Visualize yourself standing upon the sand of Mother Earth at the finest beach beside a beautiful ocean on a sunny day.

As you breathe in and out, reflect briefly upon your life with a determination to leave your past—your old self—behind you, and let bygones be bygones.

Listen to the natural music of the ocean waves. As you breathe in and out, feel yourself being cleansed of all impurities of mind and body. Feel the gentle breeze from the ocean caress your face and your entire body as you express your love for nature, for humanity, and for God.

Step forward and immerse yourself in the ocean while visualizing yourself as a drop of water in the ocean of being. Having been cleansed of all impurities of mind and body, be humble and ask for divine empowerment. Feel like a child once again, for we must be like little children to enter the sublime Kingdom of God within us.

As you feel the warmth of the Sun's glorious rays, emerge from this ocean and see yourself enveloped in the Light, Life, and Love of



Omneity. Say to yourself, Divine Love is mine! Divine Love is mine!

Divine Love is mine!

Now, enjoy the warm embrace of Omneity—the warm embrace of an ever merciful, ever forgiving, ever loving God by whose Divine Grace you are now a *new person*. Be grateful for this realization!

*(Pause)*

Gradually, gradually, return to objective consciousness and open your eyes.

This renewal exercise may be repeated by you from time to time as your Inner Self directs.

*(Pause)*

In conclusion, Brothers and Sisters, let us remember that Rosicrucian and Martinist mystics joined the rest of the world three years ago in sending prayerful and healing thoughts to all citizens of our planet residing in this city and neighboring states that were affected by Hurricane Katrina. Today, we are living witnesses of the recovery from this natural disaster that impacted so adversely upon the lives and property of so many people. In the spirit of this Convention and its theme, which is “Renewal through Mysticism,” may our presence and activities here in New Orleans bring solace to those who still feel a huge sense of loss on the individual and collective levels. May God Almighty walk with them and bless all of us!

May our Fratres and Sorores, Brothers and Sisters, throughout the face of the Earth successfully overcome the “hurricanes” in their personal lives!

To the glory of Ieschouah, Grand Architect of the Universe, may we ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.



# Music and Mysticism

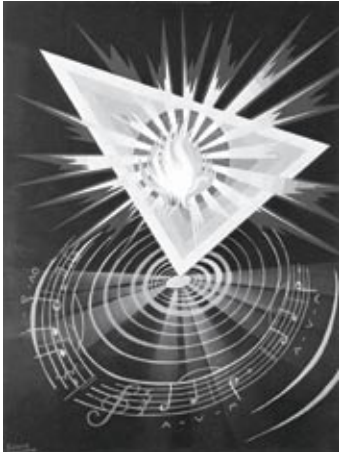
## In the Works of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin

by Christian Rebisse

“Music is Ariadne’s only thread that is given physically and generally to everyone to guide them through the labyrinth. The other threads are reserved for certain individuals, and for chosen ones, generally and in particular. It follows from this that there is no excuse for anyone not to open their eyes to the Truth.”

This reflection, at the beginning of one of Saint-Martin’s texts dedicated to music in *The Spirit of Things*, shows the importance he gave to this art form. In his first book, *Of Errors and of Truth* (1775)<sup>1</sup>, he gave an important place to music. In his following books this theme remained trivial: *The Person of Desire*<sup>2</sup> mentions music only in passing, *The Ministry of the Human Spirit*<sup>3</sup> barely touches the topic in the third

part of the book, as do chants 33 and 41 in *The Crocodile*.<sup>4</sup> After his first book, Saint-Martin developed this theme most extensively in *The Spirit of Things*,<sup>5</sup> where he dedicated two studies to music. Lastly, there is a very little known text, published for the first time in 1977: *The Letter on the Relations between Harmony and Numbers*.<sup>6</sup> This is one of the most interesting texts dedicated by the Unknown Philosopher to the art of music. The recurrence of the reflections on music in his work has led us to look closely at this original aspect of the Unknown Philosopher’s thoughts.



Nicomedes Gómez, *The Creative Word*.

### Music and Numbers

The eighteenth century is full of reflections and controversies on the topic of harmony. After the “Buffoons’ Quarrel,” when Jean-Philippe Rameau and Jean-Jacques Rousseau confronted each other, a quarrel between the followers of Gluck and Piccinni raged at the same period that the book *Of Errors and of Truth*<sup>7</sup> was being published. It is therefore probable that Saint-Martin read

some of the treatises on harmony published in his day, such as that of Jean-Philippe Rameau (1726). The latter, a musician, severely judged the texts concerning music that were published by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in Diderot and Alembert's *Encyclopaedia* (1751-1776). Even though the Unknown Philosopher did not make any reference to Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his writings about music, his influence is apparent in several instances.<sup>8</sup>

Saint-Martin's reflection essentially follows two currents. The first, based on an Arithmosophy rooted in Martinist cosmogony, analyzes its symbolic aspects. The second emphasizes the virtues of this art and presents its subtle, even magical, powers. These two points of view are found throughout the Unknown Philosopher's writings in a more or less organized way. The symbolical aspects dominate his early writings, such as *Of Errors and of Truth*, and *A Letter on Harmony*—even though not dated—probably belongs to this period.<sup>9</sup> Later writings, such as *The Person of Desire* and *The Spirit of Things*, delve more into the virtues and properties of music.

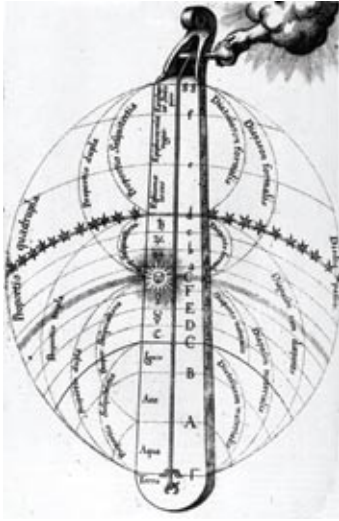
### **The Original Harmony**

For Saint-Martin, music lends itself marvelously to describing the state of the world, from its original principle of harmony up to its current state of disorder and dissonance. In fact, music shows us “the two laws of force and resistance, of action and reaction which rule the material universe and the spiritual universe...”<sup>10</sup> It also presents “the image of universal division that operated between the regular powers and the irregular powers in the first crime ever committed.”<sup>11</sup>

As we can see, and it is one of the essential characteristics of his analysis, Saint-Martin tried to make the principles of his cosmogonic system coincide with those of musical harmony. His demonstration rests on a vision of the world that comes from the teachings of his first master, Martinès de Pasqually. His arguments, in which Arithmosophy occupies an important place, can only be truly understood by those who have knowledge of the doctrine of the Élus-Cohens. Note that the relation established by the Unknown Philosopher between harmony and numbers seems to move away from the ideas of Rousseau and become closer to those of Rameau.

In his *Letter on Harmony and Numbers*, as in *Of Errors and of Truth*, Saint-Martin developed his reasoning from a reflection on the perfect chord, which he presents as the image of Creation, before its harmony

was destroyed by the dissonance of a double Fall, the Fall of the first angels followed by the Fall of Adam. The topic of the perfect chord is an opportunity for him to highlight an essential principle: the intimate relation between divine unity and the number four. The perfect chord “bears the number 1, which is unique and singular, which is filled entirely with itself, and which is unalterable in its intrinsic value as unity.”<sup>12</sup> Saint-Martin indicated that the perfect chord “is composed of four sounds comprising three intervals.”<sup>13</sup> In *Of Errors and of Truth*, he stated that the “first three notes which compose it are separated by two intervals of thirds”<sup>14</sup>—thirds that “are surmounted by an interval of a fourth, whose ending sound is called an octave.”<sup>15</sup>



Robert Fludd, *The Divine Monochord*, 1617. From *History of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm*, 90.

For Saint-Martin, this quaternary, the principal agent of the chord’s harmony, is the image of the “active and intelligent Cause,”<sup>16</sup> the Christ which presides and governs all corporeal beings. We find here a diagram often used in the rituals of the Élus-Cohens: two triangles united to form a six branch star, enclosed in a circle surmounted by the cross. This cross, symbol of the quaternary, is for Saint-Martin the symbol of the “double power” of Christ, which he therefore associates with the number eight. Thus, for the theosopher, the octave represents the superior principle of harmony and universal Creation. The number eight of the octave is “the alpha and the omega: indicating the universal power of the eighth in Creation.”<sup>17</sup>

### Broken Harmony

The dissonance brought about by the Fall broke the primordial harmony, and Creation then passed under the domination of the number seven. For the Unknown Philosopher, the chord of the seventh is that of dissonance, and the return to harmony can only be brought about by transition to the perfect chord, which will allow all beings to find rest “in the unity which is their source.”<sup>18</sup> It is the passage through the octave, which Saint-Martin associates with Christ, the “Repairer,” which brings a

possible return to balance: "...the ear is not at rest in the seventh of these notes, but only when it has reached the eighth."<sup>19</sup>

Aside from these technical aspects of harmony, the Unknown Philosopher also wonders about the fascinating effect music and concerts can have on people. In *The Spirit of Things*, he presents this attraction as a sort of reminiscence of the true purpose of music. The more that concerts "contain a marvelous timeless order, the more appealing they are; that is, the more they produce this state of exultation which takes us out of time and closer to our primal state, active and full of wonders, the more we find ourselves in our natural element."<sup>20</sup> Performances set into motion, in the eyes [and minds] of humans, the principles of Creation and the opposing forces which drive it. If music holds a foremost place here, it is because in the order of Creation, the Word preceded the Light, or as Saint-Martin wrote, "sound preceded light."<sup>21</sup>

### **The Virtues and Purpose of Music**

Beyond some of the symbolical aspects that we have briefly mentioned, Saint-Martin also considered music from a different angle, by looking at its virtues and purpose. He emphasized the interest humans should take in using its properties, not only in their spiritual quest, but also to fulfill their mission.

In *Of Errors and of Truth*, the Unknown Philosopher integrated his observations about music in his reflections on the "first and universal language," which humanity has lost the capacity to use. He considered this art to be one of the products of the true language, which employed music for measure and speech for meaning. Of course, since Adam's Fall, humans only produce an "artificial music" in comparison with the "original music." However, this art of music still retains a certain power. These principles echo those found in the *Essay On the Origin of Languages*, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau—particularly in chapter 12 of that work—however with the difference that, unlike Rousseau, Saint-Martin does not place the origins in a distant past, but in an ahistorical period.

For Saint-Martin, music has the essential virtue of allowing humans to break temporal barriers that surround them, so that "virtues from above can permeate them."<sup>22</sup> He also thought that God made people like a "divine lyre,"<sup>23</sup> so that they can produce beneficent harmonies in all Creation. Those who take the lyre or sing to set into motion the "active treasures of

harmony,” make these treasures radiate around them. By thus linking the inner self to these powers, people can “communicate with this pure and superior region,” not only to “bring their being into the divine realm, but to bring this divine realm down into their being.”<sup>24</sup>

Such ideas are reminiscent of the Italian philosopher, Marsilio Ficino, who, during the Renaissance, composed magical hymns designed to capture the planetary virtues. Furthermore, Saint-Martin’s theories on the role of air, the medium for musical vibrations, are similar to those of the Italian philosopher:<sup>25</sup> “Can music exist without sound, sound without air, air without spirit, spirit without life, and life without God? What wonders and what powers are not contained in music?”<sup>26</sup>

The Unknown Philosopher advanced an original idea by stating that humans should use this art to fulfill their mission. For him, humans were chosen “to be God’s chanters and to celebrate all the wonders; they were chosen to rectify all the dissonant chords trying to cloud the harmony of truth.”<sup>27</sup> Thus humans lose their way when they use music only for “singing the praises of inferior things.” Saint-Martin therefore considered modern day music as “weak and powerless,” and he added, “You can please us sometimes, you can even stir us; but can you advance us and instruct us? Can you satisfy all these nuances?”<sup>28</sup> In *The Person of Desire*, the

Unknown Philosopher launches a nostalgic plea for distant eras when pure humanity still possessed its original knowledge; for the times when all of nature formed chords on its lyre, and humans did not commit “violence, like today, to this sublime art, by applying chaos and ravages to painting, but maintained the order and harmony of their original state.”<sup>29</sup>



Musical Cherub.

### The Original Music

Yet, to return music to its original purpose, humans would need to have the key. However, this key was taken away. In *The Crocodile*, Saint-Martin placed these strange words in the mouth of an animal that represents the agent of evil forces: “I told music that I would give it the

broadest function to paint whatever it wanted, but on two conditions: first that the tuning fork would remain in my archives; and second, that the reach of its voice and its instruments would be limited to the planetary range known to nations....”<sup>30</sup>

It is up to humans to rediscover this true music, the original music whose harmony resonates outside of the temporal world bounded by the circle of the planets. In order for their music to reach the higher harmonies, “we must join our pure word to it, because the air is tainted like the whole of nature and the impure word would taint it more so. Furthermore, when the air is purified by the pure word, music in turn will be able to attract the living word which exists above it and which seeks only to make it its organ and instrument.”<sup>31</sup> Saint-Martin alluded to finding this idea of purity among the Chinese, because it is said their musicians must have “pure morals and a taste for wisdom to draw regular and perfect sounds from their musical instruments.”<sup>32</sup>

The few points we have brought forth demonstrate the richness of Saint-Martin’s discourse, whose point of view constantly shows a rare capacity to bring everything back to a philosophy in which humans hold a central place. He regards music, concerts, or theater as pretexts to remind humanity of the paradisiacal principle of a harmony whose keys we have lost. However, we would be mistaken to take his ideas about harmony literally. Louis Claude de Saint-Martin even warned his reader in the introduction to the *Letter on Harmony*, by emphasizing that his theories should not be taken as a “true science.” According to him, such a science does not reside in “cold reasoning or ingenious dissertations, but in the virtuous desires of the soul and the use of all the forces of our being.”<sup>33</sup>

## Endnotes

1 Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Des erreurs et de la vérité, ou les Hommes rappelés au principe universel de la science (Of Errors and of Truth)* (Edinburgh [Lyon]: by an Unk... Ph..., [Jean-Andre Perisse-Duluc], 1775), chapter VI, 507-525.

2 Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *L’Homme de désir (The Person of Desire)* (Lyon: J. Sulpice Grabit, 1790), no. 84, 140; no. 112, 77; no. 180, 262, and no. 191, 276.

3 Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Le Ministère de l’homme-esprit (The Ministry of the Human Spirit)* (Paris : Migneret, an XI [1802]), 402-403.

4 Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Le Crocodile, ou La Guerre du bien et du mal arrivée sous le règne de Louis XV (The Crocodile)* (Paris: Librairie du Cercle Social, an VII [1799]), chants 33, 128 & 41, 170.

- <sup>5</sup> Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, *De l'esprit des choses ou Coup d'oeil philosophique sur la nature des êtres et sur l'objet de leur existence, par le Philosophe Inconnu (The Spirit of Things)* (Paris: Laran-Debrai-Fayolle, an VIII [1800]), vol. I, 170-179.
- <sup>6</sup> Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, "Lettre sur les rapports de l'harmonie avec les nombres" ("Letter on the Relations between Harmony and Numbers"), Green book, manuscript from the National Library of France, FM4 1282. This text was published by R. Amadou, with commentary and musicological notes by Jacques Rebotier in *Renaissance traditionnelle*, no. 32, October 1977, 247-269.
- <sup>7</sup> For the influence of Rousseau on the Unknown Philosopher, see Nicole Jacques-Lefevre, "Saint-Martin et Rousseau," appendix III of *Lettre à un ami ou Considérations politiques philosophiques et religieuses sur la révolution française* (Grenoble: Jerome Millon, 2005).
- <sup>8</sup> See Jean Starobinski, "Presentation" de *L'Essai sur l'origine des langues*; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Folio essays" (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 9-54.
- <sup>9</sup> The "Letter" takes many elements from chapter seven of this book. It follows the organization to a certain extent, and uses the same arguments.
- <sup>10</sup> Saint-Martin, *Spirit of Things*, 170.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.
- <sup>12</sup> Saint-Martin, "Letter," 1; we give here the pages for manuscript FM4 1282 of the BnF of the "Letter on the Relations between Harmony and Numbers."
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.
- <sup>14</sup> Saint-Martin, *Of Errors*, 508.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 509.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> Saint-Martin, "Letter," 4.
- <sup>18</sup> Saint-Martin, *Spirit of Things*, 171.
- <sup>19</sup> Saint-Martin, "Letter," 5.
- <sup>20</sup> Saint-Martin, *Spirit of Things*, 182.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 179-180.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.
- <sup>25</sup> See D. P. Walker, *La Magie spirituelle et angélique de Ficin à Campanella* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988), chap. I, "Ficin et la musique," 19-36.
- <sup>26</sup> Saint-Martin, *Person of Desire*, no. 84.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 112.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> Saint-Martin, *Crocodile*, chant no. 33, "Suite du cours scientifique du crocodile. Députation des sciences," 128.
- <sup>31</sup> Saint-Martin, *Spirit of Things*, 176.
- <sup>32</sup> Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Ceuvres Posthumes (Posthumous Works)*, (1807), 169.
- <sup>33</sup> Saint-Martin, "Letter," 1.





# The Art of Being

by Judith A. Stewart, Provincial Master

**B**rothers and Sisters, Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

## Introduction

Questions that are frequently asked by both mystics and non-mystics alike are: “What am I?” “What is this existence we as human beings call ‘living’?” “What does it mean ‘to be’?” Many of the mystical studies with which Martinists specifically concern themselves address these very questions. As knowledge and personal experience unfold and grow within each of us, we as mystics develop the very “art of being.”

One of the primary subjects of Martinism is that of humanity’s Fall, and how we can return to the original State of Grace. In order for us to understand how to achieve this state, we must first understand these terms in the Martinist sense. According to Martinès de Pasqually, as described in his *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings*,<sup>1</sup> humanity originally existed in the Supercelestial Immensity with God. A race of celestial beings, which also existed in the Supercelestial Immensity prior to our creation, chose to follow their own less-than-perfect path: humanity was created to assist in returning this “perverse” race to God. However, men and women were themselves corrupted and fell from grace into the state in which we exist today. The goal of humanity is to return to the Supercelestial Immensity, in other words, to “reintegrate with God.”

It is important to remember that just as so much of the contents of the books of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are allegorical and couched in esoteric text, so too are the writings of Pasqually. To attempt a literal interpretation of his work is to place us at a childlike level, which, as Saint Paul stated, “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child; but when I became an adult, I put away childish things” (1 Cor. 13:11).<sup>2</sup> That is why we must meditate in our own oratories on the complex meanings of the “perverse” beings which we were meant to rescue, of our becoming corrupted and falling from grace, and how to reintegrate

with God. This article is not meant to address the complexities of the Fall; rather, this article attempts to address the complexity of the state of being that has resulted from the Fall, and the changing state of being as we progress on the path toward reintegration.

The primary result of the Fall was the fracturing of the awareness of self. Most people today view themselves as separate and apart from the rest of humanity; this in itself sufficiently explains the wars, destruction, and general cruelty that so much of humanity has seen fit to engage in against itself, not to mention the callous disregard and destruction toward other life on Earth and its environment. As long as a person can look at a group of people and not see oneself in them, the fracturing of self-awareness remains. The fracturing must heal before reintegration can truly begin. Using another verse of Saint Paul, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13.12).<sup>3</sup> When we can see others and ourselves clearly, we will "know" each other, and know that we are not separate and apart, but one and the same, fully integrated with ourselves, each other, and God. As Paul implies, this face-to-face knowledge is not achieved until we fully "know," that is, until we are fully reintegrated with God.

Another way to describe reintegration with God is by the concept of Unity. This concept was frequently a subject of discussion and discourse among early Greek and later Christian philosophers. The concept of Unity was incorporated into an analysis of what was meant by the word *Being*. Of course, there are almost as many definitions of *Being* as there are philosophers discussing it, so one can pick and choose a definition, if so desired. However, by approaching Unity and Being from that of a Martinist mystic, a sound analysis can be made, and a reasonable attempt at answering the questions with which this discourse opened can also be made.

### **What Am I?**

The first question is easily answered by the materialist as a physical body of flesh and blood that has a mind exhibiting a form of self-awareness, which ceases at the time of the body's death: Nothing before, nothing after, and very little in between. The typical Christian, Muslim, and Jewish adherent would answer the question more spiritually, but still generally have an individual mind inhabiting an individual body. There are other religions that take a more holistic approach, incorporating some form of

the concept of reincarnation and the concept of oneness with God. But it is not until one moves into the more complex analyses within mysticism and metaphysics that the question begins to develop some satisfactory or at least thought-provoking answers.

“I am a composite of many things: a soul, a body, a part of the Cosmic.” As mystics, we are well-equipped to answer this question, at least intellectually. However, when we reach past the intellectual state, the outward logical reasoning state, do we really know? There must be an awareness reaching down into “the depths of our soul” (so to speak), that although we have many parts, we are truly part of Unity; that the word “at-one-ment” truly means “at one with God.”

### What Is This Existence We Call “Living”?

The second question is certainly thought-provoking. We often struggle to give meaning to what we sometimes describe as “our meaningless existence.” The cries in the night to whomever or whatever might hear us, the pleas for help, for an answer, something to make life worth living, are so frequently left unanswered because those who are crying have not yet become aware. They have not become aware of self, aware of the fractured self, and aware of the need to heal the fractures—the need to reintegrate, to achieve Unity. Unfortunately, the exoteric side of most of today’s great religions do not provide this information, this knowledge of lessons that must be learned in order to progress to a state of peace, a state of grace.

There are many clichéd answers to this question. “We are here to provide service to humanity.” And while “duty,” “service,” and “helping others” are part of the answer, there’s got to be more than that! The answer that reaches the heart of the issue is: “Go into your oratory and commune with God.” When we slough off the daily grind of humanity, of living, by being still and knowing that God is God and that we are one with God, life becomes more than existing and truly becomes living; life becomes “the art of being.”



Detail of the Philosopher Plotinus from *The School of Athens* (1510-11), Raphael.

## What Does “To Be” Mean?

The final question is far more than a question of existence. In the sense of the question, being is experienced in a state of self-awareness. Those who exist in a blind materialistic existence are not “being”; they are merely “existing.” “Being” requires us to be aware, not only of our individual self, but of ourselves being part of the universe, part of the whole. It also affirms our “right to be here!” We were created for a purpose, therefore, we have a right to be here; we violate that right and our own selves when we ignore that purpose—when we insist on being separate and apart from the rest of humanity.

The Greek philosopher Plotinus, who experienced transition in 270 CE, wrote extensively on the nature of being. In the Fifth Tractate of his Sixth Ennead, he stated:

“When we look outside of that on which we depend, we ignore our unity; looking outward we see many faces; look inward and all is the one head. If we could but be turned about—by our own motion or by the happy pull of Athena—we would see at once God and ourselves and the All. At first, no doubt the All will not be seen as one whole; but when we find no stop at which to declare a limit to our being, we cease to rule ourselves out from the total or reality; we reach to the All as a unity—and this not by stepping forward, but by the fact of being and abiding there where the All has its being.”<sup>4</sup>

As humans we tend to look outside of ourselves, and therefore see discrete individuals, creatures, and environmental surroundings, such as rocks, trees, and streams. Becoming self aware and aware of our connection with Unity requires us to look inward, which as mystics we generally do. As we achieve more and more of this connection, we can see our lives flowing backward and forward into infinity. Differentiation of the individual self and all of the trappings that go with it fall away. There is no fear of the unknown, no regret for lost opportunities or lack of material possessions; no anger, no pride—simply an all-encompassing peace.

We have addressed all three questions, but have we answered them? “What am I?” As mystics, we should be able to answer this as “I am all things; I am me; I am God.” “What is this existence we as human beings call ‘living’?” For the mystic, living is being at one with God. “What does it mean ‘to be’?” As mystics, ‘to be’ is becoming self aware and aware of our connection with Unity.

## The Art of Being

Based on the above analyses and the answers provided, we as Martinists can develop guidelines for “the art of being.” It is so important to remember that, as mystics, we have unique tools at our disposal. It is easy to fall prey to approaching life’s challenges using only those tools available in the mundane world—those of logical analysis, verbal and written communication, and other material solutions. Daily use of our home oratories is critical to healing our fractured selves and starting back up the path toward reintegration. An appropriate verse from the Hebrew Psalms says, “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).<sup>5</sup> This is all that is needed. If we do this at least daily, our path towards reintegration will be smooth, the rocks and roughness removed, and we will be able to transcend this state of being for the highest level of being, that of God.

Plotinus described this changing state of being in his Sixth Ennead, Ninth Tractate: “It is not in the soul’s nature to touch utter nothingness; the lowest descent is into evil and, so far, into non-being: but to utter nothing, never. When the soul begins again to mount, it comes not to something alien, but to its very self; thus detached, it is not in nothingness but in itself; self-gathered it is no longer in the order of being; it is in the Supreme.

“There is in this a converse of virtue of which the essential person outgrows Being, becomes identical with the Transcendent of Being. The self thus lifted, we are in the likeness of the Supreme: if from that heightened self we pass still higher—image to archetype—we have won the Term of all our journeying. Fallen back again, we awaken the virtue within until we know in ourselves all order once more; once more we are lightened of the burden and move by virtue toward the Intelligible Principle and through the Wisdom in that to the Supreme.”<sup>6</sup>

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

### Meditation

An experiment is provided below to illustrate “the art of being.” Make sure to allow the full amount of time suggested for each part of the visualization process.

Close your eyes and relax. Take three deep breaths.

First, see yourself in the Now, where you are physically at this moment. Completely immerse your awareness in this moment.

*(Pause 2 minutes.)*

Now, with your mind's eye, look back at your past in this life and other past lives. See the events in your past as a chain, everything linked together and connected to this moment in the Now.

*(Pause 2 minutes.)*

Again, with your mind's eye, look forward to the future of this life and future lives. Connect all the future and the past into this moment in the Now.

*(Pause 2 minutes.)*

In your mind's eye, eliminate the discrete connections to your past and future, and view all in the Now. See that all time exists in the Now and that all is present in infinity, which is God.

*(Pause 2 minutes.)*

You have achieved the art of being. You may gradually return to conscious awareness and open your eyes.

This concludes the meditation.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Martinès de Pasqually, *Traite de la réintégration des êtres créés dans leurs primitives propriétés, vertus et puissances spirituelles divines* (Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings...), 1775.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor., 13:11 (King James Version), adapted.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor., 13:12 (King James Version), adapted.

<sup>4</sup> Plotinus, Sixth Ennead, Fifth Tractate, adapted.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 46:10 (King James Version), adapted.

<sup>6</sup> Plotinus, Sixth Ennead, Ninth Tractate.



# Will in Buddhism

by Augustin Chaboseau  
from Buddhist Philosophy<sup>1</sup>

*The former Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order introduces Westerners to several key concepts in Hinduism and Buddhism which are applicable to Martinism. Although many of the symbols in Martinism originated in Western spirituality, it is important to note that they have universal significance and can be found throughout the world. Thus Martinists also recognize familiar concepts in all world traditions.*

Because of a strange but frequent contradiction in the history of sophism, theism generally acknowledges that humans enjoy the right to decide between two possibilities of action to make a choice that is not in the plans of the Supreme Being.

Non-theistic traditions have rarely fallen for such an absurdity. Their constant doctrine is that the faculty of free will is only free in appearance—each of its operations being motivated in actuality by multiple sequences of causes.

This is, of course, the opinion of Buddhist philosophy.

Will is the relation between Karma and *Tanha* (desire); it is pure individuality. However, it only exists through objective differentiation, meaning through the relation with *Maya* (illusion). Will is therefore determined by the surrounding ambiance.

It is thus settled in the highest, largest, and most powerful place that has ever been granted to it since our species has the knowledge of self. Being alone, facing the phenomenal world, will represents in this way one of the poles of dynamism, whose nature is opposing potentialities. Since dynamism is nothing other than a tension between two energies



Grand Master Augustin Chaboseau (1868-1946). Photo from the Archives of the TMO.

increasing and decreasing in turns, there is nothing superior to will before *Sunyata* (emptiness), if only fatality—and fatality is above everything, except for will.

On one side, Maya's instincts are combined to smother beings within its perfidious embraces, and on the other side human intelligence is fighting against this embrace and struggling to break free. The evolution of planetary collectivities is simply the battle between these two tensions, with the alternate triumphs and debacles for each of the adversaries.

If diversity is unlimited in the manifested forms known to nature, which holds its domination over humans, nature also has a great number of ways to bend diversity to these concepts. It is enough to concentrate the attention on the power to reduce to the strict essential the needs of *Sthulopadhi*<sup>2</sup> (the complete human person):

- That of creating and destroying the four conditions of *Prana* (breath, vital life force)
- That of exerting a therapeutic action by psychic influx
- That of separating and reuniting the two inferior *Upadhi* (limitations, boundaries)
- And finally, that of penetrating, dissociating, modifying, and reconstituting the substance

It is not necessary to insist once more on these acts of will that persist after the annihilation of the being from whom they have emanated. However, it is not superfluous to note how much the doctrine of Gautama (the Buddha)—by affirming that integral consciousness and emancipation from the *Samsara* (cycle of reincarnation) are brought about only by the efforts of contemplation within—is apt to develop in the hearts of those permeated by the essence of this interior attentiveness, the resolution and resolve of individual initiative.

For the maturation of the Seven Purities,<sup>3</sup> the choice between *Laukika* (the mundane) and *Lokottara* (the transcendent), the acquisition of the *Iddhividhanana* (direct knowledge of the modes of supernatural power)<sup>4</sup>, any assistance, except at times of extreme peril, is refused to a *Chela* (disciple); and when she or he rises as *Anagami* (those who do not return to the wheel of Karma) and *Arhat* (those who have achieved



Nirvana),<sup>5</sup> they become free to rest in this stage as long as they please. Once they have completed their mission as Bodhisattva, they have the right to prefer the Nirvana of the *Pratyekabuddha* (solitary Buddha) to that of the perfect Buddha.

Thus...instructed not to depend on the help from others, except for the work that requires the approval of a collectivity; in other words, enslaved to no subjective hindrance, conscious Buddhism is a living energy.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Augustin Chaboseau, *Essai sur la Philosophie Bouddhique* (Paris: G. Carré, 1891). The translation has been adapted for Western readers to facilitate understanding Buddhist concepts.

<sup>2</sup> “The gross base or vehicle in the human constitution, consisting of the physical body (sthula-sarira), the astral model-body (linga-sarira), and the vital activities (prana).” From “Theosophical Dictionary” at *The Oneness Commitment Website* <http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Sthulopadhi/id/195052>.

<sup>3</sup> “Purity in terms of virtue, mind, view, the overcoming of perplexity, knowledge and vision of what is and is not the path, knowledge and vision of the way,” from *Ratha-vinita Sutta*, (The Simile of the Relay of Chariots), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu in *Access to Insights*, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.024.than.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Guang Xing, *The Concept of the Buddha* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 137.

<sup>5</sup> See “Sravaka,” in *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Ar%C4%81vaka>.



Buddha Amitabha, “Fully Conscious Infinite Light.”

## What Is the Divine Darkness?

by *Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite*  
Adapted from *The Mystical Theology*

**T**he fifth-century CE writer who used the name of Paul's disciple from Athens (Acts 17:34) was most probably from the Syriac Christian community, and was clearly an initiate of the Neoplatonic Mysteries. His work also reminds us of both the Corpus Hermeticum, and some of the texts of the Nag Hammadi Library. While he is speaking from his own Christian context, Martinists will recognize in his deep mysticism universal experiences of all those who delve into the innermost depths of the Heart.

Supersensual Trinity, you who are beyond Divinity, beyond Good, you who keep us in the knowledge of things divine, conduct us, through Unknowingness, toward the most elevated and most luminous heights of the mysterious sacred writings. There are found veiled the simple, insoluble, and unchangeable mysteries of theology, in the trans-luminous Darkness of Silence, where one is initiated into the secrets of this radiant and resplendent Darkness, in its total obscurity, absolutely intangible and invisible, the Darkness which fills those intelligences with indescribable splendors, who know how to close their eyes.



Icon of Dionysius the Areopagite, whose name the Fifth Century Syriac mystic used for his writings.

That is my prayer. As for you, my dear Timothy, practice without ceasing your mystical contemplations, leaving behind all sensations and speculations of the intellect. Let go of everything of the senses, everything of the intellect, everything of being and non-being. Then, as soon as you are able to experience it, you will be lifted up on the path of Unknowing to the point where you are one with the One who is beyond all essence and all knowledge. It is by leaving yourself and everything—a total and irresistible ecstasy—that you

will be brought before the superessential splendor of the Divine Darkness, having been set free and relieved of everything.

It is good in this sense that the Divine Bartholomew has said that theology is at the same time developed and short, while the Gospel is spacious and grand, but nonetheless concise. That is, in my opinion, a remarkable reflection, for, if one can exhaustively discourse on the subject of the Cause which brings about good for all that exists, one can also explain very well and briefly—and indeed by even saying nothing at all. This Cause has, in essence, no speech or thought; it transcends in a super-essential manner everything created and only manifests itself truly and unveiled to those alone who pass beyond all that is pure and impure, who surpass all the highest and most holy ascensions, who abandon all divine lights, and their sounds and speeches of heaven, in order to penetrate the Darkness of That which is really, according to the scriptures, beyond everything.

It is therefore not without reason that the Divine Moses received the order to purify himself and then to avoid that which was not pure. After his total purification, he heard the many trumpet blasts, saw the numerous fires shining with their pure light, and then separated himself from the crowds, and, together with his chosen priests, ascended the summit of the divine ascensions.

However, at that stage, he did not yet enter into communion with God—he did not contemplate the Divine. For the Divine was invisible; Moses could only see the Divine dwelling. This signifies, it seems to me, that the most high and most divine realities, in the visible and intelligible order, are only hypothetical analogies of everything which we attribute to That which is beyond everything, and through which analogies, reveals the presence of That which outstrips all our thoughts, and remains on the intelligible summit, and in the most holy places.

It is then that Moses freed himself even of that which he saw and of those who saw him. He penetrated into the true mystic Darkness of Unknowing. He closed his eyes to all that his intelligence grasped, and, in a total departure from everything that he could touch or see, he appeared completely before That which is beyond everything. He was no longer himself or anyone else. He was united by the best of himself with That which one absolutely cannot know, through the inactivity of all knowledge, and through this Unknowing itself, he knew beyond intelligence.



