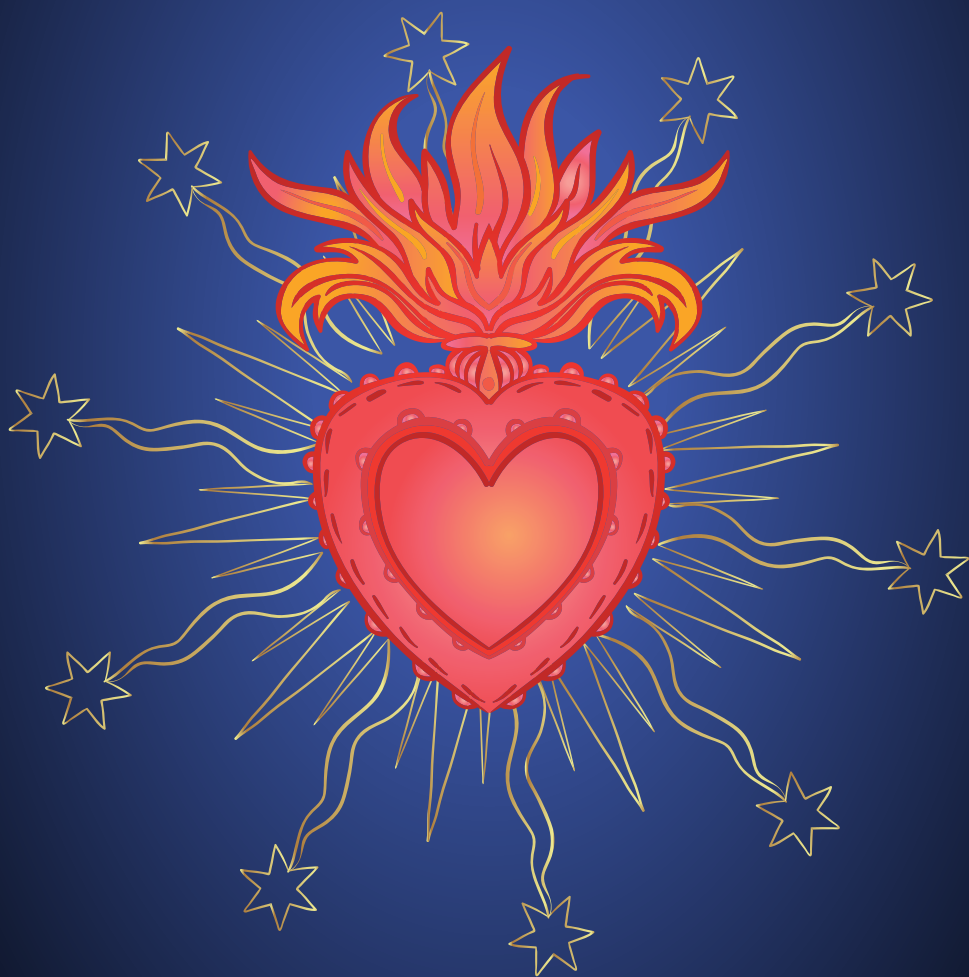


No. 22 2022

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# Pantacle





# Traditional Martinist Order

San Jose CA USA

[www.martinists.org](http://www.martinists.org)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*Greetings in the Light of Martinism!*

Welcome to the twenty-second edition of the *Pantacle*, the official magazine of the Traditional Martinist Order.

In this issue, we begin with Brother Lonnie Edwards' explanation of "The Continuum of Life and the World of Relationships." Frater Edwards, a longtime Martinist and retired Provincial Master, recently went through transition. He regularly contributed to Martinist and AMORC publications, videos, and gatherings during his long association with both Orders. He was a trained surgeon who authored one of the most popular modern books and video series on Rosicrucianism: *Spiritual Laws that Govern Humanity and the Universe*, and he served as the Vice President of the English Grand Lodge for the Americas.

Our second article, by Provincial Master Michael Shaluly, invites readers to imagine the heart as having complicated layers that we can explore and move beyond in order to reach "our intimate connection to the Divine."

Next, after quotes from this Order's namesake that we would like you to consider, Sister Gail Butler offers a new perspective on mirrors, and what they mean in regards to "the inscribed image of the Divine upon our Souls."

Following this is an exploration of the ideas of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin's "second Master," Jacob Boehme, with special focus on how Boehme shaped Saint-Martin's notion of the "Way of the Heart."

Brother Joe van Dalen wrote our fifth article, which is about Kabbalah providing a "path of reintegration through the way of the heart." Studying the Kabbalistic Tree offers a "path of health, healing, and becoming whole."

Finally, Sister Josselyne Chourry-Benvelica takes a broader perspective by exploring the unseen astral and spiritual influences on our existence. She writes that she does this so that, one day, we can have access through the "Way of the Heart" to the "Central Initiation."

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

Julie Scott  
Grand Master

# **The Continuum of Life and the World of Relationships**

by Lonnie Edwards, MD, SI

Brother, Mentor, Friend

1924 - 2022



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Life expresses itself as one grand and glorious continuum. Life begins, protected in the healthy womb, and then flows from infancy through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and on into our mature years. Each of these stages of life is intimately connected to the previous stage. Because of this interconnection, each stage of life receives and exerts a powerful influence upon those stages preceding it and those following it.

To truly understand this concept and make practical use of its value for teaching us a better way of fulfilling our lives, we must first enlarge our understanding of who we really are. What is the essential purpose of our lives? What is the meaning we are meant to contribute to the wholeness of life? As we ask ourselves these questions, we must

stop thinking of our purpose and our meaning as being singular and confined to the short span in which we will live on this earth. We must begin, instead, to think of our lives and our contributions as a part of that great and glorious continuum that we share in space and time. Our oneness in this chain of events, of which we are a part and to which we will make our contribution, refines and evolves the continuum on this plane for centuries to come.

As I look into the face of a newborn infant, I see a micro-image and a reflection of that continuum. In my mind's eye I see that infant striving to become a living part of the fabric of society. Even before this, I see the unborn child making preparation for the coming newborn infant as the physical body develops into its various systems: endocrine, cardiovascular, reproductive, and so forth.

I see the spiritual body of the infant striving toward “becoming” – seeking its nourishment of love, soothing rhythmic sounds, and harmonic feelings. I see “mind” drawing on all of these as it pushes forth toward its best potential. I see the precious infant drawing at the same time upon its inborn potential and its external environment. Along the continuum we are called to help this microreflection of ourselves – and our greater collective selves – to release its full potential. The wholeness of life is in our hands, and we are a part of that wholeness.

As this precious infant's life is reborn into the earthly environment, I also see that it is born into a “world of relationships.” The characteristics, meaning, and purpose of these relationships vary with regard to character, quality, and quantity. They may be pleasurable, challenging, stimulating, rewarding, spiritual, loving, or of many more types. All of these relationships are designed to aid the infant in its growth and evolvment, and they provide an opportunity for it to add to the glorious continuum of life. The infant's travels and experiences are a micro-image of our own.

Relationships characterize our earthly lives. The manner and attitude in which we deal with these relationships determine their overall outcome, as well as the effect they will have upon our sense of physical, mental, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being.

All relationships provide an opportunity for the Divine to flow to and through us. When the Creative Divine flows from us, it connects with its kind in others, and the resulting contact produces greater light. When our consciousness observes this, a feeling or sense of being separate is lost. The realization comes that we are experiencing the “one life” secretly veiled in many bodies. Our challenge is to see and live beyond the appearance of the veil.

This world of relationships provides the opportunity for us to participate constructively in the glorious continuum of life and the unfolding of Divine Universal Intelligence in all human affairs. These relationships include human beings and all life forms. They are at all levels and in all activities of organizations, groups, individuals, families, friends, tribes, and clans. All these varieties of relationships provide the same opportunities if we but face them with a broader vision of unity, seeing ourselves in those with whom and for whom we interact. Seeing beyond and through the illusory veils that separate us is necessary. In addition, always realizing the Divine Within, we can see the face of the Divine in those with whom we relate.

We can innately be the Divine and permit the Divine to flow through us to others. Intuitively, when we think of the Divine, thoughts of light, love, beauty, patience, understanding, and compassion bathe our mind and consciousness. When we assume the attitude of Divinity, our relationships become meaningful and we perceive and accomplish the cosmic lessons they bring. This is the means by which the grand and glorious continuum of life evolves and contributes to all humanity.

In the world of relationships we must make choices. As we function in this world, we discover that there are alternatives for the actions, thoughts, motives, or beliefs facing us. To make wise choices, we need to always bear in mind the resources that are ours to use. Prudent thinking and the capacity to scrutinize thinking are part of those resources. Our will and emotions must be poised and balanced. We must bring into consciousness some degree of foresight and futurity, for these will permit us to consider the consequences.

The recognition of choices is extremely important to the student seeking growth and spirituality. The art of being aware of choices

and then exercising and demonstrating wisdom in selection must be acquired. In the process of learning to make wise choices, many spiritual attributes are developed. As human beings, we recognize that free will is an inherent human attribute and right. We must also realize that, as human beings, we must accept and live with our choices and our preferences, be they good or “bad.” The student should regard this as a right as well as a divine endowment.

We are taught that we must walk through the pillars of opposites. This means that we must also wrestle with pairs of opposites. In so doing, we learn to acquiesce in favor of a greater principle over a lesser one. Here is where we learn to distinguish between “good,” “better,” and “best,” and to realize that the good of the whole transcends self-interest and the ego. Here is where the sincere student begins to exercise the will freely and gradually use its tremendous and enormous power for spiritual purposes – for right action and right relationship. We must become increasingly aware that life with its myriad experiences is not something that happens to us unbidden; it is a creative work for which we are the artist, architect, engineer, and builder. By experiencing chaos, we sometimes learn how to make life’s best choices. Questions will appear to be more simple, and yet of utmost importance. For as the student is drawn to seek the Master Within, and hence is drawn closer to his or her soul, this influence will make the line of choice become clear and well defined. So Mote It Be!



Let's Apply What We've Learned . . .

### **Exercise for Contemplating the Continuum of Life**

*(Read silently or aloud three times before performing.)*

Sit in contemplation for a few moments regarding the continuum of life and how you have been a part of this great continuum. Then visualize your participation in your present life.

## Delving Into the Folds of Our Hearts

by Provincial Master Michael Shaluly, SI

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The medical fields of today recommend that we keep active physically and mentally to maintain health. What we don't hear is how we should continuously take care of and explore the boundaries of consciousness for our growth and well-being. Certainly, most of the healthcare industry is not yet focused on the expansion of awareness for the betterment of our health. Society as a whole accepts that we are born into families, traditions, and ways of thinking that tend to define us. Our awareness is inclined to linger within this limited realm, fitting into a tradition-shaped box and seldom peeking outward towards other possibilities. But there is a deeper root within us that is linked to infinite possibilities. We should cherish our traditions and heritage, of course, and yet we can recognize an ever-greater perception of ourselves if we exert the mental will to redirect thought.

Jean-Baptiste Willermoz, a mystic of the past well known to Martinists, spoke of the "practice" of delving into the heart. Stating that this practice requires laborious work, he understood the effort it takes to search for and find a different level of thinking, to recognize thought that is beyond objective thought, and a guidance that is ever-present but masked in the illusions we create. Willing ourselves to find the strength of quiet and get past our mental obstacles is difficult, but this is the work required to unfold the way of the heart. It requires that we stretch our thinking on all planes in which we think.

We, as mystics, do probe our conscious boundaries. In return, we receive inspirations that are difficult to define. We analyze all forms of relatable human experiences, a compilation of the awareness of our world that we have developed. Science, religion, and the arts inspire us and in their own way point to a great power behind creation. From centuries of human effort to now, mysticism within humankind has ceaselessly searched for origins and clues to the perplexity of human awareness. We are aware that we are unaware of something deeper, and

it is that deeper something that we desire to become aware of. This mystical directive is a remnant of our connection to Omneity, peeking at our objective mind from within the folds of our hearts. It manifests to us as we ponder the movement of the heavens or marvel at how our body functions and wonder just how or why “all” exists as it does.



The Traditional Martinist Order superbly guides us to this mystical directive by engaging our inner church, an experience that differs from an objective one. We tend to place our objective thinking upon even an unknown state such as Cosmic Consciousness. In a state of all-knowing Cosmic Consciousness, what is it that we would know? Would it be earthly, intellectual knowledge? Or would it be

beyond this objective world, a deeper awareness and understanding of the essence of all of creation? The sermons of the inner church are given in the language of inspiration, and with reverence we must wait for her quiet and sublime directive. We look outside ourselves to answer an inner desire that speaks its own language; thus, when

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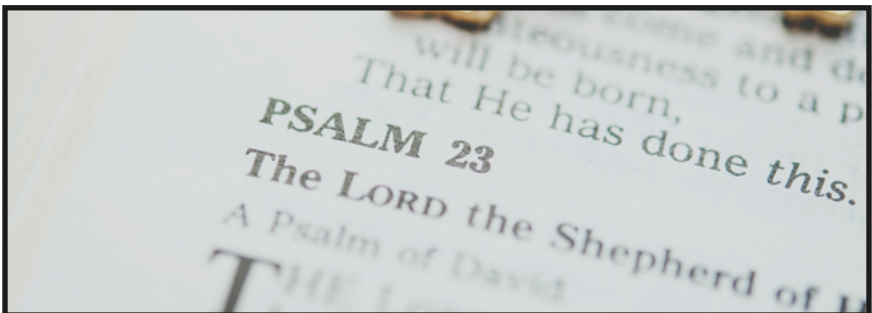
we explore the outer world, we are exploring that wordless language. We are exploring our deeper selves. Let your mind dwell on that: we look outside ourselves to answer an inner desire, thus, when we explore the outer world, we are still exploring ourselves. Allow your thought patterns to pay homage to that intimate desire that drives us to ponder and seek. All of your explorations are within you.

As infants our awareness is for a time focused inward and the folds that eventually cover our intimate connection to the Divine have yet to develop. Eventually, awareness must look outward and begin to confront this wondrous world that we are born into. Our attention is drawn away from that inner observance into the various activities that require our attention to learn and survive in society. This is as it must be as we make our way into and through our human experience. Finding our way back to our inner nature is that aforementioned laborious process. It is laborious because it requires our will to overcome our illusions. We live in this world, and it is oftentimes hard to recognize anything beyond the physical. In this physical world, we experience difficulty and tragedy, beauty and love, the ups and downs of life. The laborious task before us is to change our thought patterns even in the midst of chaos. When we look across the various sources that vie for

our attention, it is important to find a way to steady ourselves with that great guiding power that creates everything. Indeed, stop for a moment and ask yourself, in the quiet of your mind – is it truly possible to access a power that created everything?

Perhaps we can access this power by contemplating where it is and where we are in relation to it. Ask yourself – where do you live? The first thing that comes to mind is perhaps your current residence. Contemplate the question more deeply and let it settle – where do you live? Besides our physical surroundings, we could also say that we live in a certain mental state familiar to ourselves. More deeply, we can understand that we reside in a state of being that is within the folds of consciousness, an eternal home, a state our soul personality abides in, ensconced in the arms of that which created us. Our teachings state that we live in consciousness. Consciousness is not separate from our physical presence or our physical world, we live in it. During our waking hours, we are unaware that we live in a guiding consciousness because we seem to be only an observer to it. Yet, we observe and contemplate the very consciousness that allows us to observe.

Psalms 23 perhaps is an attempt to guide us to a realization of living in conscious creation. This prayer ends with the words “goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life for I dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Open your consciousness to a higher realization of sacred writings such as this, for they may be guiding you to a higher awareness of yourself. When you get consumed in what seems to be the outer movements of the world, might it help you to remember that you dwell in the house of the Lord...forever?



Now think of a person you know well. What is it that you know? Allow this question to settle...what is it that you know? In our mind's eye, we see their physical features. We instinctively know that while their outer form is familiar to us, there is a deeper part of them. We have an impression of their personality and various traits such as their sense of humor, their temperament, and so forth. From our previous introspection of our deeper "home," we can also know that they too share the ultimate home in the arms of our creator just as we do. We can therefore know that in some way, hidden in the folds of our hearts, we are connected.

Now think about the love that you have for someone. What is it that you love? It may be fair to say that your love for someone is physical, emotional, and beyond. As human beings, we get to experience many kinds of love toward others. Examine the love you have for someone close to you, go inward and ask yourself, what is it that you love in



this person? As you wish, you can progress to other people and things. What is it that you love in your family pet, or your garden, and so forth? This analysis, if you allow it to grow, may reveal deeper levels of love and where that love stems from within you.

It may be difficult to recognize the actuality of connecting to the force that creates us. We know that force exists, but our objective consciousness tends to separate itself from that force. It is an oxymoron; we are conscious of that energy that gives us life, we can and do observe it, but since we observe it, we feel we are separate from it. We even know that it is a part of us, but still feel we are observing from outside



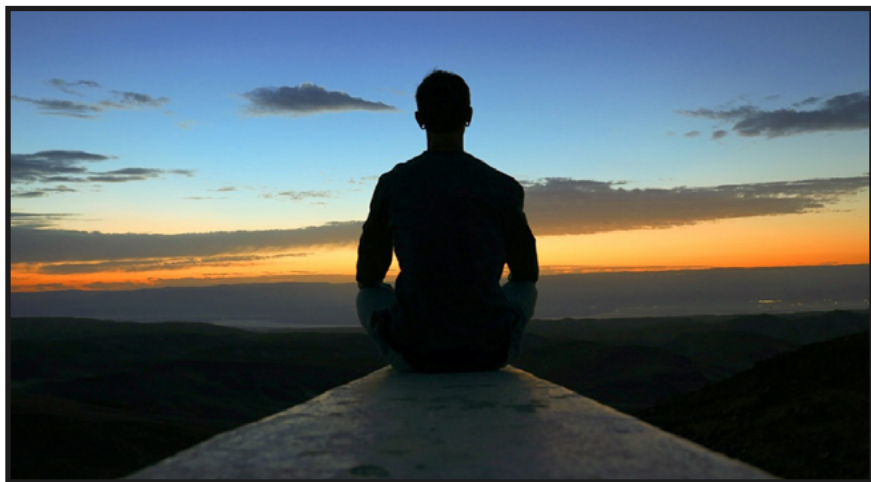
of it. But we are connected with that which we observe; indeed, we exist with it through consciousness.

Through scientific observations, we discovered that the cells of our body regulate through electrical signaling, using electrically charged flows to communicate, a touchless signaling system across tissues. It is a sprinkling of light into the chambers of our being. We receive impulses that obviously perform necessary functions, but we are consciously unaware of them. The field of evolutionary biology has begun to relate this bioelectricity to consciousness, recognizing that in nature, electric fields power the processes of life, including consciousness. We are gradually learning that these energy fields reveal key aspects of consciousness. The prevailing view was that the brain's electric fields are a side effect of the brains' activity. Now, there are active theories that these fields drive the brain and help explain consciousness. In other words, scientific inquiry shows the possibility that the body's electric fields are associated in some manner with some kind of outer, directing consciousness.

A scriptural view of this living field can be contemplated from the Book of Genesis: "darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God [the Divine] hovered over the surface of the water." Roam with the meaning of these beautiful and profound words for a moment. That spirit hovers over all of us, connecting us to everything, to the very source of life. It is always there, sprinkling us with the light of

life. You are a vessel receiving this guidance. It is animating your body and animating your awareness. Turn your thoughts toward this light sprinkling down upon you and let it settle into you. The energy of creation hovers, holding galaxies together just as it holds us together as sentient beings. We are observing this divine flux even as we are a part of it. It is as if we can confirm that hermetic law that states the universe is mental, that there is a guiding thought in all things. With this knowledge, consider that the word “Lord” from Psalm 23 mentioned earlier is not something outside of us. It is that part of us that invisibly guides us in life, as the shepherd guides the sheep, just as we see the cells guided and transmitting knowledge within us.

This beneficent power is always with you and can help you to reconcile situations in life. Sit now, and simply relax into yourself. Think of anything that may be bothering you, a memory, a situation, a person. We will call it a visitor. Welcome this visitor into your inner home; as you exhale, let it settle with you. You are together in the house of the Lord! In this house, the forces that benevolently hold the fabric of the universe together converge around you. Visualize now the light that contains this power encompassing your visitor. Allow this brightness to grow in illumination until your visitor disappears within it, absorbed into the goodness of this light. Now, feel that goodness permeate your entire being.



This force always functions completely selflessly for you. Whether you have been kind or unkind, whether you have helped or harmed, this force serves you. It is a noble love of autonomic consciousness operating behind your objective consciousness within the folds of your heart. All of these universal forces envelop you, creating the miracle of you! You are a holy being, privileged to be selfless love in action. That pure love hovers and remains with you for all of your terrestrial days. Look within where you reside. Say mentally to yourself, "I am." We are fortunate to witness consciousness through this world of experience.

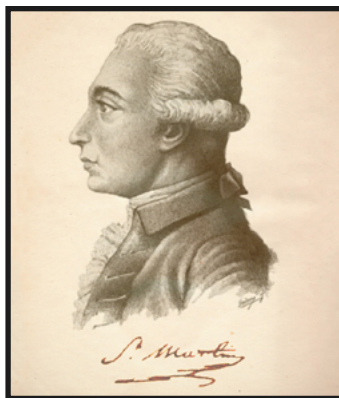


Contemplating the Pantacle of our Order with interlaced triangles pointing in opposition, as well as the arrangement of the officers in our Heptads, can reveal the ebb and flow of our conscious journey. From our human perspective, we follow a pattern of light, life, and love. With that first breath, there is the light of consciousness, followed by our ability to live and grow into this world, followed by

love for others and for life itself. Perhaps from Omneity's point of view, it is the opposite – love, life, light. From that all-creating essence, pure love existed with a pure desire to share; from that love and desire, life developed to begin a journey through consciousness; and then light shown in the form of human consciousness to become aware of that pure love that is our origin. Our awareness is to develop an awareness of Omneity.

While we cannot see Omneity, we know she is there because we live. Abide in her grace. Close your eyes often and enter that quiet that selflessly awaits to guide you. Settle into your conscious being with simple pauses, looking into the surface of the deep within you, and recognizing that Divinity moves you. With this practice, you will delve into the folds of your heart, and your heart will blossom like the rose upon the cross and release the aroma of pureness into your world.





## LOUIS-CLAUDE DE SAINT-MARTIN

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“It is not the head which is necessary to advance in Truth; it is the heart.”

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“Wake up each day before dawn to accelerate your work, for the soul of humanity was produced to serve both as a receptacle and medium. Be vigilant, for the Creator of beings wishes to come and make an alliance with your soul.”

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“Books are windows of the truth, but they are not the door; they point out things and yet they do not impart them. It is within that we should write, think, and speak, not merely on paper.”

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“The mind is required for human sciences; for divine sciences mind is not needed, for they are the offspring of the soul.”

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“We cannot produce a thought, a word, an act, which is not imprinted on the eternal mirror on which everything is engraved, and from which nothing is ever effaced.”

# Polishing the Mirror of Self

by Gail Butler, SI

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Our study of the “mirror of self” begins with a look at ancient “enigma” mirrors<sup>1</sup> of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and how they may offer a metaphor for the processes of self-growth.

During ancient times, in the Middle East and Asia, mirrors were often made of bronze (an alloy made primarily of copper and tin, with other elements like lead sometimes added), which could be polished to a fairly high degree of reflective capacity. Some of these mirrors, called “enigma” or “magic” mirrors, were fashioned via a process of casting an image of a deity onto the backside of a bronze plate. The other side – what would become the reflective face of the mirror – was etched or inscribed, copying the decorative casting on the back. A mercury-based substance was then applied to the face of the mirror, which filled in the inscribed design, rendering the surface of the mirror even and smooth while simultaneously hiding the inscribed image. The face was then polished to the highest possible sheen so that one’s own image could be seen for grooming purposes and cosmetic applications. Additionally, a “vision” of the inscribed deity would manifest under particular conditions of angle and light. This effect, gained from the inscribing and laminating processes, happened when sunlight hit the reflective surface and the hidden image was revealed in the mirror or projected upon a wall, creating an illusion as if light was passing through the mirror rather than reflecting off of it.

The initial process of polishing<sup>2</sup> a bronze mirror was long and laborious, requiring a succession of finer and finer silica sands and polishing powders. The process is likely to have taken many hours to achieve a reflective result. Frequent but less lengthy polishing was required to maintain reflectivity and prevent oxidation. Mirrors of this type were time-consuming and costly to make, thus only the wealthy could afford them.



Nineteenth-century scientists were baffled as to how the sacred imagery was achieved. Present-day scientists understand both the optics and process, yet the precise means used to work the metal still remain a mystery.

Because ancient enigma mirrors have oxidized over the centuries, their reflective capacity, and concealed imagery, appear to be absent. With careful restorative polishing their reflectivity and visionary secret again becomes apparent, enchanting all who have the opportunity to view them in museums around the world.



**If you want to know others, begin by knowing yourself, because everyone is a mirror.**

-Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin



Our consciousness is our own metaphoric enigma mirror. Without the Light of the Divine manifesting in conscious awareness, our mirror may remain dark and void, and we would subsist in a world of separation and tension. In order to polish our mirror of consciousness we may choose to begin the task of reintegration of self by considering what processes might be helpful.

Might our mirror be occluded on some level by fear, rigidity, emotional reactivity, resentments, or unexamined opinions and beliefs?

By what methods is the light of understanding brought to the mirror that it might better reflect one's own Inner Light?

Might consideration of new information, even if it contradicts the foundational "truths" of one's accepted selfhood, reveal heretofore-veiled reality or knowledge?

As the oxidized surface of an ancient mirror may be re-polished to reveal its inner secret, our own mirror of self may wait in crystal clarity beneath obscuring thoughts and the concepts hindering synchrony with our own inner Christ Consciousness.

When our thinking and self-concepts are scrutinized and rectified, an expanding sense of unity of being and purpose whets our desire for

more knowledge and wisdom that can only arise through the mirror of consciousness. Therefore, the work of the mystic always begins with examining his or her thoughts for any inconsistencies with one's highest virtues, aspirations, desires, and conceptions of the Divine nature within.

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What hinders us from seeing and hearing the Creator, is our own hearing, seeing, and willing; by our own will we separate ourselves from the will of the Creator. We see and hear within our own desires, which obstructs us from seeing and hearing beyond our own human nature.

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-Jacob Boehme

A further consideration is that while mystical studies from a purely cerebral standpoint may be interesting, a wholly theoretical knowledge will not move the consciousness. Mystical comprehension should also be applied at the level of the heart by incorporating the techniques of self-reflection, meditation, and prayer. Otherwise one remains a student in a state of self-imposed postponement, one whose quest has mired in mentality rather than elevated through the processes of mystical distillation.

Saint-Martin has said that we must separate the pure from the impure by rectifying our own spiritual natures and virtues. He further asserted that we must also attempt to evoke these same attributes in others by becoming living examples of our inner light.<sup>3</sup>

The process of illumination continues with the recognition that we are always at the center of a sphere of Consciousness.<sup>4</sup> We may expand our own conscious further into this sphere depending upon our desire to do so. By asking Divinity to give us Its Wisdom instead of using solely our own, we begin an expansion in awareness and our mirrors begin to further clarify.

Prayer, contemplation, introspection, and meditation – in addition to study – are key techniques that aid in polishing the mirror of self.

Saint-Martin continued by saying that we “fall” whenever we fail to desire a Being greater than ourselves for the “Soul can only live on admiration.”<sup>5</sup> It is through sacred admiration that we employ the spiritual alchemy that begins the dissolution of that which obscures our encounters with the Divine. If our mirror is not regularly polished the cares, fads, and uncertainties of a material world begin to impair our inner vision. A failing to admire leaves us empty and void, and instead we may attempt to fill our inner yearnings with the sometimes-inadequate cravings of the material world.

A condition of peace and happiness internalizes when the mystic has achieved balance – a state of nonconflict – between material and spiritual desires.

### Through A Glass Darkly

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**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 Corinthians 13:12, KJV

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Paul the Apostle describes our knowledge and awareness of the Divine as clouded, dim, incomplete...as “darkly.” His use of the word “glass” is most often interpreted as “looking glass” or “mirror.” Paul’s statement may have utilized the concept of an enigma mirror – as we too are doing – as a metaphor to reveal a mystical truth. If the mirror of consciousness is unpolished, the Divine Mystery, or enigmatic “Image,” cannot become realized – seen face to face.

The traditional religious interpretation of Paul’s statement is that after Christ’s return, and when the “church” is fully mature, we will see Yeshua Christ face to face.

However, from a mystical reading of Paul’s verse, we may apprehend that there is no need to wait for a future Second Coming to come “face to face” with the Divine Image. Instead, as we brighten the mirror of consciousness, it’s possible to interface with our own concept of the Repairer, as reflected by the Divine within each one of us.

If at first our vision seems partial, clouded, or darkened, it is through sacred work and worship that the mirror of self begins to attain more light, and our vision of the Divine grows clearer. We come to know the rich inner reality and character of nature and of our own being. We come to know the Divine as an inclusive circle of consciousness and experience this knowledge as if “face to face.” We comprehend that we are an integral – and necessary – component of the Divine Mystery.

The mystic recognizes that while the Divine is unknowable, it’s possible to unite, commune, and attune with It.

Because the Divine vibrates and moves in all things and beings, we can harmonize and know It via our hearts and Soul-natures beyond the constraints imposed solely by reason or logic.

We realize our Oneness with all things both incarnate and abiding in potentiality and comprehend the hidden unity lying behind a veil of appearances. Seeming dualities are resolved in “complementarity,”<sup>6</sup> rather than by the tension caused by opposition or division.

In the Gospel of Thomas, recorded by “Didymos, Judas Thomas,” Ieschouah (Yeshua) says, “When you know yourselves, you will be known.” These are words we find echoed by Paul’s verse. For Men and Women of Desire, knowing ourselves becomes more than a mere wish, it becomes as necessary to our being as breathing is to the existence of the body.

Perhaps the “church” alluded to by religionists as part of the meaning of Paul’s verse – although going unmentioned in it – is what mystics term, “the Inner Church,”<sup>7</sup> the one without material structure, the operation and apprehension of which constitutes the “True Church” because it is the eternal “inscription” realized upon the mirror of self.

Without awareness of the inscribed image of the Divine upon our Souls, our mirrors of consciousness, and the True Church it reflects, cannot yet be known within. When a solely outer veneration begins to incorporate, an inner search for an emergent Light results. It is then that we become part of the shared quest of all Souls who inhabit what Karl von Eckartshausen termed, “The Community of Light.”

Since the Fall, the single aim of humanity, unrecognized by those who walk in spiritual darkness, has been reconciliation and reintegration with the Creator. 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 us and the true Sun, so that there may be a free passage, and the rays of Light may reach us without refraction.

-Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Oscar Holland, "Magic Mirror: Hidden Image Revealed In Reflection of Centuries-old Artifact," CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/magic-mirror-cincinnati-art-museum-scn/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> HANS, "Mirror Polish – Bronze Mirror Restoration In 15 Hours," YouTube, <https://youtu.be/Phnso5C5CWc>.

<sup>3</sup> Supreme Heptad of the Traditional Martinist Order, "Relations of Humanity With the Divine, According to the *Table Of the Natural Relationship Between the Divine, Humankind, and the Universe*, by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin," Cup Level Monograph no. 7, page 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, page 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, page 1.

<sup>6</sup> Supreme Heptad of the Traditional Martinist Order, "Divine Reconciliation," CUP Level Monograph no. 70, page 3.

<sup>7</sup> Supreme Heptad of the Traditional Martinist Order, "The Inner Church," SI Degree Monograph No. 10, page 2.

# Jacob Boehme and the Way of the Heart

From a Martinist Manuscript

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*The Jacob Boehme monument in Görlitz, Germany.*

Approaching the subject of the Way of the Heart is to make an incursion into the heart of the Western Esoteric Tradition, in its noblest and purest form. Also, what other traditional current, if not Martinism, can be described as the Way of the Heart?

The Martinist teachings are based on the writings of Martinez de Pasqually and Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. The latter read the voluminous works of Jacob Boehme and immediately recognized him as his second Master, both by the bright light he brought to the teachings received from his first School, and through the development of a fully complementary concept he had to make with the Sophia. The last works of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, who became known

as the Unknown Philosopher, especially in the *Ministry of the Human-Spirit* and *Of the Spirit of Things* were infused with the philosophy of Boehme. Therefore, it is worth studying the writings of the Teutonic Philosopher in relation to Martinism, since Boehme and Saint-Martin, who complement each other, are themselves directly in line with this particular current of thought in Western Esotericism known as the Enlightenment. As part of this article, we will focus primarily on the contribution of Boehme to this particular path Saint-Martin called “the Internal” and that Papus described as the Way of the Heart. When necessary, we will also call on the writings of the Unknown Philosopher to clarify certain points.

In the early twentieth century, Papus wrote: “True esotericism is the science of heart adaptations. Feeling is the sole creator in all planes, the idea is creative only in the human mental plane; it only reaches the Higher Nature with difficulty.” He thus introduced the Way of the Heart and gave us the heart over the mental, in accordance with what Saint-Martin taught: “It is not the head which is necessary to advance in Truth; it is the heart.”



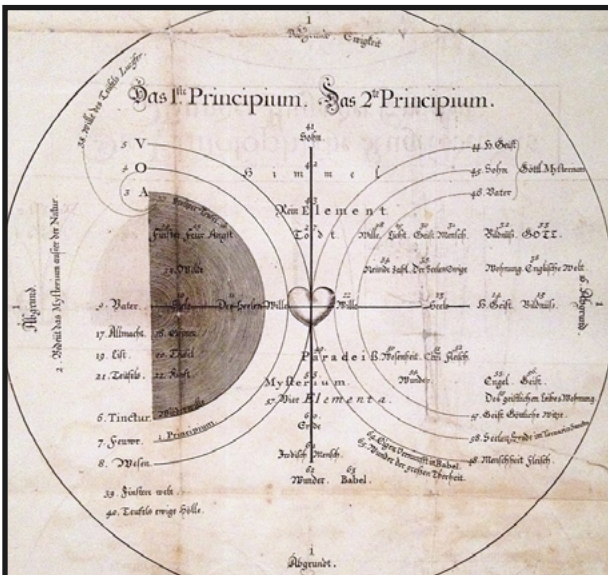
*Gérard Encausse (Papus).*

But what is the Way of the Heart?

Let us first specify what it is not. The Way of the Heart is the opposite of sentimentality, emotionality, and attitudes related to them. Contrary to what one might think, it is neither for the weak nor the coward. The Kingdom of the Divine must be conquered. The doors will not open by themselves, just to please us. We must go forward boldly to conquer the Adventurous Castle. As Knights of Christ, we must clad our hearts with charity, waving before our enemies the spear of prayer and the shield of Love!

The Royal Path par excellence, the Way of the Heart requires voluntary and gradual purification of the being leading to the mystical marriage of the Lamb. It will culminate in the reintegration of the being within the Divine. It calls for strength because it requires us to practice the difficult art of the custody of the heart, so as to progressively control our emotions, thoughts, words, and actions. Finally, it requires perseverance, because throughout this work of transmutation and advancement, we will be tested in our Desire.

The Way of the Heart aims at favoring the heart, the true sanctuary of the Inner Temple, which brings enlightenment by Divine Wisdom, but can also, if we are not careful, facilitate the worst excesses through our passions, our instincts, and our shortcomings. Saint-Martin conceptualized the Way of the Heart by teaching that the heart has two doors, one upper and the other lower. “We must,” he said, “be sure to close the lower door that opens into the world of darkness and open the upper door, the only one by which we can access Divine Light.” “In this sense,” he said again, “the Way of the Heart leads humanity to open itself to the Divine and to participate in the harmony of Creation, learning to fully control the upper door of the heart.” Boehme expressed a similar idea in *Life Beyond the Senses*: “The soul has [...] heaven and



A drawing of Jacob Boehme's cosmogony in *Vierzig Fragen von der Seele* or *Forty Questions of the Soul* (1620).





*The Seal of Martinez de Pasqually.*

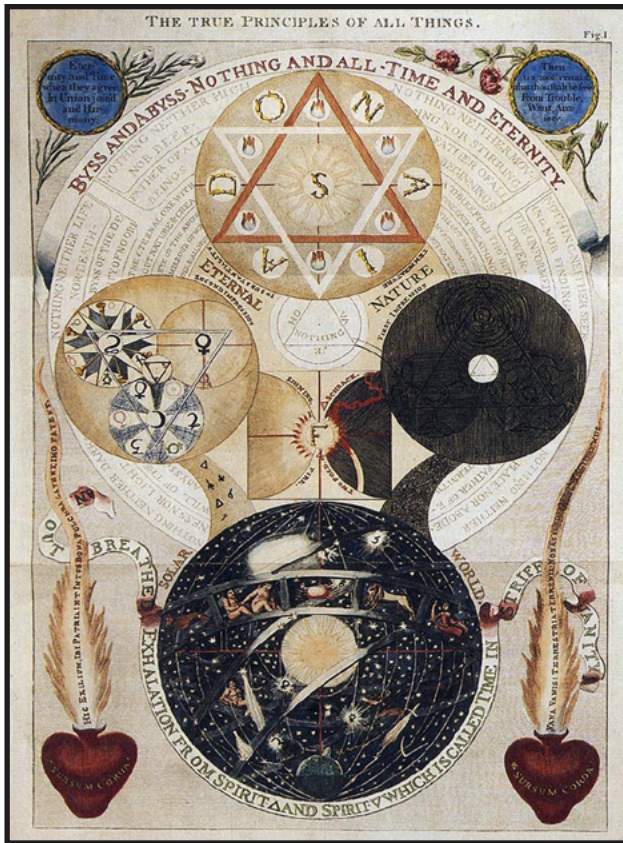
hell within itself.” He also wrote: “The kingdom of the Divine does not come accompanied by spectacular signs. We will not say, ‘See, it is here or there, for the kingdom of the Divine is within you.’”

Having experienced the theurgical way that he considered illusory and presenting a real danger for those who were not prepared, Saint-Martin developed an opposite method he called “internal,” which was, according to him, safer because of being on an infinitely higher plane. “The internal learns everything and preserves everything,” he said. In essence, Saint-Martin strove to internalize and sublimate the work proposed by Martinez de Pasqually. Robert Amadou, a specialist of Martinism, expressed the following on the evolution that the Unknown Philosopher experienced:

Saint-Martin believed that working with and on [the] virtues and powers are performed best within us: operation of the heart having a triple meaning; a work of knowledge (the eye of the heart is the organ of spiritual science); labor of love (the heart is the organ of feeling); finally, a work of the inner vital forces linked to blood (imagination, speech, and gestures).... The heart is the organ of Knowledge and Love inseparable. After making me discover myself, the heart reveals the Divine.

Having briefly defined the Way of the Heart, and grasped something of its meaning, let us try to analyze what could have been the contribution of Boehme to the development of this method by Saint-Martin.

Apart from his cosmogony that Saint-Martin could easily credit to that of his first instructor, and to whom he remained faithful until his death, Boehme brought to the Unknown Philosopher the basic idea of Sophia, or Divine Wisdom, in support of the concept of Regeneration. Boehme’s developments came to strengthen Saint-Martin in his internal



*Eighteenth-century illustration by Dionysius Andreas Freher for the book The Works of Jacob Boehme.*

approach and provided him with the key that allowed him to enhance the spiritual society he had so patiently built over the years.

For Boehme, the ideas of Sophia and Regeneration are inseparable. He saw in Sophia the Light springing from darkness when Divinity revealed Itself. This is the Celestial Virgin who appears in the first instant of Creation and is the mirror in which Divinity contemplates Itself. Originally, the primordial Adam was a being of light and not of flesh, and Sophia was his celestial spouse. It is thanks to Sophia that Adam was united with the Divine. With the Fall, Adam lost his body of light, was encased in a body of flesh, and walked away from his celestial spouse. From this rupture was born True Desire. Humanity thus became desiring, and ever since has been seeking everywhere

for our other half, Sophia, in order to recover our completeness. Humanity is, therefore, a widower and must unite with Sophia in order to find completion. This Spiritual Wedding to which we aspire can be achieved if humankind works diligently towards its inner regeneration. Regeneration corresponds to a new generation, therefore a new birth, consisting of finding the inner state that was originally lost.



Divine Union is possible only by the action of the Christ, the Word, in the heart of humanity, transforming it into a holy receptacle of Celestial Light. This mystical marriage will effectively regenerate us and return to us our body of light. Thus regenerated, we will be able to radiate Love, as did the original Adam, because then we will hear directly, in our heart, the Divine Word. For Boehme, Christ is the Divine Wisdom itself emanated from the Divine. The Temple of Wisdom is the Temple of Light: Sophia. To be admitted, you must be dressed in your body of light. This is the prerequisite for access.

*Depiction of a possibly legendary episode in the life of Jacob Boehme by Joseph Mulder (1686). The caption reads: "Jacob Boehme with the preacher Gregor Richter in Görlitz, who was hostile to him in front of everyone, putting in a good word for a certain young baker from his followers. The gentleman became very angry about this, showed him the chamber door and threw one of his slippers at his head. But the good man meekly picked up the slipper, put it back on the foot of the angry preacher, and went on his way, wishing him every blessing."*

Boehme, in *The Election of Grace*, gave us a clear explanation of the process that has just been described in these terms:

The veritable spouse of the being of the celestial world was the Virgin, Sophia, the Eternal Virginity, or the Love of humanity; this Love, this Virgin, was manifested originally in Adam when he was still within Jehovah; but now the Voice of the Divine is

manifested in Yeshua's Name that developed from Jehovah into an Alliance. This is the Covenant whereby Yeshua's Name must be introduced into the obscure being born of Jehovah during the accomplishments of the times, the Holy Being of Sophia or the Holy Essence of Love.

What is the most effective method to get there? To one who follows the Way of the Heart, there is only one that is effective when used properly and wisely. It is prayer. Boehme, Saint-Martin, and Papus, the three proponents of the Internal, all considered it to be the key leading to the Kingdom of Love. The following quotes are more than edifying in this respect.

First, here is what Boehme wrote:

The Divine requires for prayer a pure soul, simple and bare,... that will appear pure before the Divine, so that It begins to operate.... The will must strongly attach itself to the Divine, so that it could say with Jacob when he had struggled all night with the Divine: "Lord, I will not leave thee, that Thou would bless me...." One who prays properly operates internally with the Divine.

Then, let us quote Saint-Martin when he stated in *Person of Desire*: "When your heart is full of the Divine, it employs verbal prayer which will be the expression of the Spirit as it should always be. When your heart is dry and empty, use the silent and concentrated prayer; it gives your heart the time and means to warm and refill."

Finally, Papus said: "Prayer is the great mystery and can, for those who perceive the influence of Christ, the Divine who became flesh, enable one to receive the highest influences of action in the Divine Plan."

But, one might ask, when Boehme evokes the soul, what does he mean? For the cobbler of Gorlitz, as for Saint-Martin, the soul is not of a separate nature than the Divine. In *Confessions* he wrote: "Where do you want to go to look for the Divine? Seek only in your soul, which is the eternal nature in which is the divine begetting."

Jacob Boehme introduces this same truth to us in *The Rising of Dawn* with all its purity, simplicity, and disconcerting clarity, thereby summing up all his work in the Way of the Heart so dear to Saint-Martin that it was his guiding principle: “The Divine is so close to you, that the generation of the Holy Trinity takes place within your heart. All three persons, the Parent, the Son and the Holy Spirit are generated within your heart.”



*Karl von Eckartshausen.*

We better understand the interest of Saint-Martin in Boehme, whom we consider the “Father of the Interior Church.” The Church was referenced by Karl von Eckartshausen in his two books: *The Cloud Upon the Sanctuary* and *Some Characteristics of the Interior Church*. The Unknown Philosopher found in his second Instructor a similar path to that which he advocated and in which “...an invisible and immediate contact with the Divine

is possible in the secrets of the heart.”

We will conclude this article with a short passage from Boehme’s book previously quoted, *Life Beyond the Senses*. It consists of a dialogue between the Inner Master and his disciple. It summarizes very well the goal to be reached through the Way of the Heart:

The disciple said to his Master: “How may I come to the life beyond the senses, so that I may see the Divine, and hear the Divine speak?” And the Master said: “If you will but rise a moment into that where dwells no creature, then you will hear the Divine speak to you.” “Is that near at hand; or is it afar off?” “It is in you,” said the Master, “and if you can, keep silent for a while neither thinking nor willing, then you shall hear the unspeakable Words of the Divine.”

# The Kabbalah, Health, and Healing

by Joe van Dalen, SI

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The Kabbalah provides one explanation of our relationship with the whole, of how creation came to be. It provides a view of the appearance of Light and its reception into the lower realms, to use terms of the temporal world of time and space to explain this.

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The purpose of the Kabbalah is to channel human existence into physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being, or as Martinists describe it, to provide a path of reintegration through the way of the heart while emphasising the close relationship between the physical and non-physical.

The capacity to receive the Light of Infinity depends on the harmonious flow of the vital energy. The person who is ill or the body that ails has this flow blocked or obstructed. The Kabbalah speaks of *tsinorot*, channels through which the human being is linked to infinity. When they become blocked, when they become tangled or knotted, the Kabbalah speaks of *stimat hatsinorot*, obstruction of the channels. Healing then, is untying the knots that block the circulation of the vital or personal influx “SHePHaH” (*shin – peh – ayin*).

ע פ ו\*

It is interesting to note that if two letters of this word are transposed, it becomes the word “PeSHaH” (*peh – shin – ayin*) which means “fault, prevarication, sin.” Prevarication or sin here is not primarily a moral failing but an existential one in terms of the Kabbalah. It is the fact of not being open to the possibility of receiving the light of the *Ein-Sof*. It is related to the idea of “missing the mark,” just as an archer may miss the target.

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\* **Note:** Hebrew is read from right to left.

In kabbalistic terms, the influx of “Energy-Light” tends to concentrate in the Hebrew alphabet, particularly in the letters of the “Holy Name.” Harmony is therefore attained through a link with the intermediary worlds of the ten *sephiroth*, a harmony created by the correct use of the letters and figures which give access to this intermediary world. Language then, in the context of reality, is to remind us that the world is filled with signs which we need to know how to read and exist as only a part of our momentum of being. To unravel the knots that impede the flow of light, language needs to maintain a momentum and requires understanding.

It is our birthright to be joyous, enabling us to express the self, to say what has to be said, to break the chains of captivity, to reinvent ourselves and inject new breath into life. Kabbalists will, through their own experiences, aim to develop a coherence to the acts of their lives and have an awareness of the triangular manifestation of their daily thoughts, words, and actions. They will try to not “miss the target.” The secret of health is in the here and now; it is lived in the renewed presence of oneself. The study of the Kabbalah is a “return to self” in an intensely lived present. At the right moment, a new breath will be added to our experience, as Abraham Abulafia, the great Jewish mystic, wrote in his *The Treasure of Hidden Delight*:

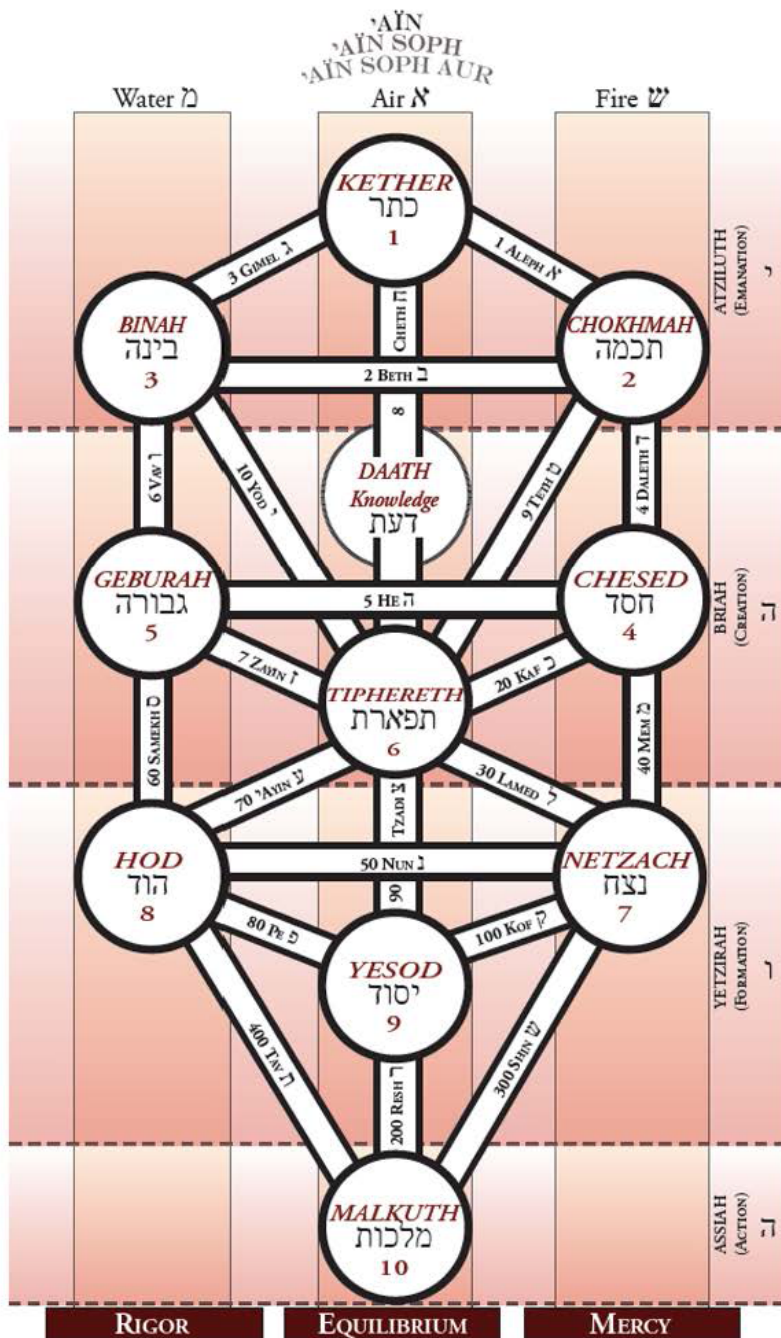
You shall feel that a new breath will be added to you, that will awaken you and will pass through your whole body. And it will cause you pleasure and you will have the impression that there falls upon you, from head to foot, the oil of a perfumed balm. And you will feel a contentment and great joy, mixed with ecstatic joy and trembling which will fill you completely, body and soul.

### **Light – Vibration - Energy**

The essential concept of the kabbalah is movement as the origins of life. What is energy? It is a series of constant vibrations of particles of invisible light. It is the triad “light-vibration-energy,” the “three in one.”



# Tree of Sephiroth





The eLoHiM declared: “Let there be light,’ and there was light.” It is the fiat lux! Everything is energy, and so is thought. But it is not confused thought. It must have a meaning, an orientation, and a direction. Those who can orientate their thoughts in the right direction are on the harmonious path. Today, the science of particles, the study of cells, and bio-hermeneutics acknowledge that we can modify the vibrations of our body by the force of thought, in a positive or negative sense.

To conceptualise the process of Creation, Kabbalists used the illustration of the Tree of Life, also known as the Sephirothic Tree. Thus, from the fiat lux, “Let there be light,” the light progressively invaded Creation, infusing it with density through the ten receptacles, which are the sephiroth. Similarly, Kabbalists say that the inner vibration of the human being corresponds to ten rhythms or ten pulses. In fact, the ten sephiroth are both the sensors and transformers of energy. An identical deployment of energy can be found throughout the Hebrew letters and their corresponding numbers.

From the earliest days of the *Merkavah* school of the kabbalah, techniques were developed to energise the body, as was the case in other cultures. As students of AMORC, we are familiar with the importance of breathing, vowel sounds, and posture to put these into effect. From a therapeutic point of view, the combination of these produces specific vibrations that improve blood circulation and vital energy in our cells and nervous system.

As an example, one Kabbalistic source gives an exercise in the Hebrew language, with the emphasis on the following vowel sounds with their own sphere of influence:

- ‘o’ acts upon the thorax and diaphragm, and tones the heart.
- ‘a’ acts upon the esophagus, the upper ribs and the upper pulmonary lobes.
- ‘e’ acts upon the throat, the vocal cords, the larynx, and the thyroid.

- ‘i’ vibrates upward, toward the larynx, the nose, and the head, and dispels migraines.
- ‘oo’ acts upon all the abdominal viscera, including the stomach, liver, intestines, and gonads.

Other exercises involve intoning consonants added to vowels amounting to some 11,100 possible combinations. Or there are visualization exercises focusing on the letters, combined with vocalization and movement. These exercises are designed to keep the channels open for the experience of a greater influx of light-vibration-energy.

### **What is an Illness?**

Since everything is energy and vibration, we can see that disease appears when there is an obstacle in the circulation of the vital energy. From the spiritual point of view (without making any judgement), we could say that an illness exists when there is near incapacity (temporary or chronic, besides so-called karmic illnesses) to receive divine vibrations. The sick person, whatever the illness, is a being who comes up against a blockage or an obstacle.

Dr Edward Bach, in his book *Healing Through Flowers*, wrote:

The illness is, in its essence, the result of a conflict between the soul and the mind, and will never be eradicated without some spiritual and mental effort. Suffering is a corrective measure that brings to light a lesson that we have not understood in other ways, and it can never be eliminated so long as this lesson has not been learnt.

Sri Aurobindo, in his book *The Guide to Yoga*, wrote:

Chronic or recurrent illnesses are mainly due to the subconscious, to its stubborn recourse to and habitual repetition of everything that has been impressed on the consciousness of the body.

Illness then, is a subtle adaptation game and each person is a different vibratory type. Our troubles are therefore a field of vibrations that resist the cosmic influence in matter. Each of our pains is like a weight on a scale, and we have to find the corresponding measure of light so that our plight is straight and we can achieve equilibrium. We should maintain our compassion and not be quick to make judgements about our own or others' personal deceptions. Why seek to explain everything? None of us is always an open receptacle to the Light. Each of us follows our own path and encounters the practical hardships that provide the necessary effects for evolution.

Every cure then goes through a modification of the ill person's thinking patterns. It implies a questioning at the existential level and especially at the level of consciousness. This work is found through the word that comes from "the Word."

### **Healing and the Name of the Divine**

The English word "therapy" mainly implies healing or providing a cure. The remedy or therapist are produced after the event to repair a break in the body, spirit, or soul. Nowadays, the meaning has extended to mean a preventative measure and a particular attitude to sickness.

The Hebrew THeRouPHaH, like the Greek *therapeiā*, has a deeper meaning than the common definition. In the healing process, the Kabbalistic tradition insists on bringing to the fore a sense of responsibility of every human being by raising awareness of their problems through words. In Exodus 15:26, the Divine actually presents Itself as the healer:

He [It] said, "If you will listen intently to the voice of ADONAI your God [Divinity], do what he [It] considers right, pay attention to his [Its] mitzvot and observe his [Its] laws, I will not afflict you with any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians; because I am ADONAI your healer."

Kabbalistic commentaries interpret this as meaning: "If you understand the meaning of the tetragrammaton, YHVH, you will be

protected from sickness and you will receive the light and energy of the infinite in the most perfect way possible.”

Created in the image of the Divine, Adam appears after the 26th phrase of the first chapter of Genesis. Now, 26 is the numerical value of Yod He Vav He, four consonants designating the Creator.

י ה ו ה

$$(10 + 5 + 6 + 5)$$

It turns out that the number 26 is predominant in the human architecture.

- Each foot has 14 phalanges + 5 metatarsals + 7 tarsal bones = 26.
- Each hand has 14 phalanges + 5 metacarpals + 7 carpal bones = 26.
- The thorax is composed of 2 clavicles + 24 ribs = 26.
- The vertebral column comprises 7 cervical + 12 dorsal + 5 lumbar + 1 sacrum + 1 coccyx = 26.

Health means taking care of the tetragrammaton. Taking care of being means taking care of time and ensuring temporal existence does not become dysfunctional. French writer Jean-Yves Leloup expressed it this way:

This means that we must care particularly for that which is not sick and that which is not mortal within us. Thus, the therapist does not concentrate first and foremost on the sickness itself or on the patient, but on that which is beyond the reach of sickness and beyond death in him. Philo puts it this way: taking care of being and not of my being or his being. Being is not a thing, but a space, an opening which must remain free. The Divine is the freedom of humankind. Take care of this liberty, do not alienate it from anything or anyone, keep it alive and humble. Take care of people

in that which escapes humankind. The cure is something which is given to us as a bonus.

In Martinism, the “Great Name” is of course extended, and, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin would say, is transcended by the “Holy Name” with the addition of the letter shin, to create Ieschouah, the “Great Repairer.”

## י ה ש ו ה

In *Of the Spirit of Things*, Saint-Martin wrote:

The character of the Name of the Divine is that of a physician, so gentle, so beneficent, that It comes within us and comforts us without ever being hidden, and what, therefore will It not do if we invoke It?

## Therapy

The Way of the Heart is to find the essential vibration of our being, the ensure the ShePHaH, our personal influx, flows freely. Where knots or obstacles are encountered, a “therapist” may be needed to untie the ball of knots, to shake us up into a new opening of vitality, a new breath.

All therapy, from the Greek *theós*, meaning “divinity,” comes from the permanent “Source” and flows into the “temple of Humankind.” The therapist is an interMEdiary, a MEdiator (same root as MEdecine, MEdiuM), a sort of MEdiAN channel between the earthly and celestial planes. The diaGNosis is a word which alone falls within the limits of duality and the mystery of GNosis. The therapist, of course, needs to start with himself or herself. Another cannot be treated unless you treat yourself first. The therapist must have three necessary qualities: knowledge, practical experience, and the intelligence of the heart.

The therapist is one who listens, who will redirect because we can give no meaning to the worst of suffering. The therapist is going to have to give a meaning to the sickness expressed by the words of the “patient.” Isn’t the word “patient” an interesting description of the

person who comes to consult? Patience is a virtue on the path of life. We have to agree that we are powerless in the face of suffering, rather ignorant in the face of disease, perhaps because the conditions of coming into the world and each newborn's vocation are still a mystery for us, as is death.

We could say that each being incarnates into a body that will be the fertile ground in which it will grow physically but which he or she will have to fertilize and water with the mind to find the path of return on a higher step on the ladder of evolution of consciousness. The body is therefore only the shell (that will pass away), the carcass (that will break down), of a vaster inner earth.

As Annick de Souzaenelle wrote in her book *Job on the Path of Light*:

If we accept an approach of total not-knowing and of absolute emptiness, then from our depths and from the grace of the Divine will emerge this light that fills our being and make us proclaim: A person is a Divine Whole!... The inner earth means the level where a person is situated in relation to the rise in consciousness which he is called upon to raise much like the rising sap of the tree which he is.

The Kabbalistic Tree of Life is worthy of study to assist in the reintegration of being, in the ascent to the Illimitable Light. It is the path of health, healing, and becoming whole.

May You Ever Dwell in the Light of Divine Wisdom.

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## Astral and Spiritual Influences

by Josselyne Chourry-Benvelica, SI

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What part do astral and spiritual influences play in our existence?

Although our goal is not to perfect our divine nature, since the emanated soul of the Divine is of necessity already perfect, our thought consciousness, nevertheless, maintains an illusory perception of the world. Therefore, how can we aspire to free will if we are prisoners of our lower nature?

It is up to us to unravel the astral aspect of our existence and to develop the spiritual influence, the aspiration of the soul towards its higher dimension, so that one day, we can have access through the “Way of the Heart” to the “Central Initiation.”

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin deplored the fact that most people making up earthly humanity are bogged down in the sidereal relationships at the level of their astral body:

For it is a truth that is most certain, that instead of seeking to break their chains, people seek almost everywhere only to add more; and whether out of negligence to repel their enemy, or through their careless enthusiasm to fly before them, the whole of humanity is almost divided into two parts, in which one is constantly in the passive sidereal mode or in a servile and fatal somnambulist state, and the other is in a sidereal and more fatally active state, in which after having reached its limit, falls again into the most difficult and frightening of slaveries. (Saint-Martin 1800, vol. 1, p. 193)



We can see the diverse reactions in matters of politics, the economy, competition, finances, even religion, and so on. Many people are all swilling from the same trough of karmic astral programming, giving rise to formatted responses, conditioned by a computer drive on which the best and the worst (all the slag) of humanity have been gathered and recorded. From this our mechanistic thoughts arise, affecting our conditioning, our beliefs, and most of the dogmas that have ossified the moving and creative thoughts of the Divine. We are therefore “individually” and consequently “collectively” the authors of our evils and madness in all spheres of society, with the responsibility falling as much among governments, financiers, and most religious authorities as among the ignorant majority who get trapped in the mesh of astral influence. And so, the wheel of incarnations (which could be described as an astral clock of fatalism) uncoils an ever-continuing history upon the stage of humanity and is repeated to varying degrees.

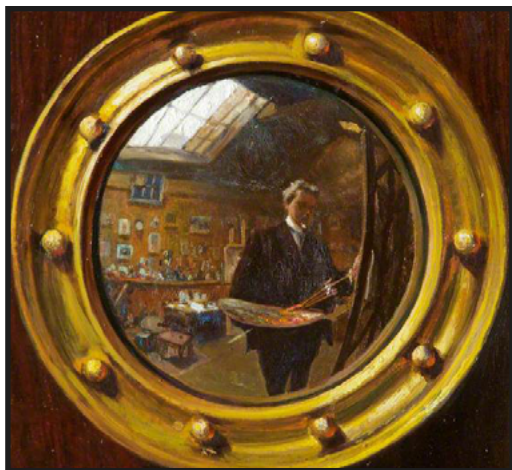


To conquer the astral, to get off the beaten paths, to get out of *samsāra*, to kill the old person, to become a “New Man or Woman,” these expressions are all invitations to a new dawn. This is the rebirth to which Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin invited us: “Yet if our temporal destiny is interlinked with the astral it disappears before the Divine, for this is the eternal unity to which a person, above all beings, has the power to rejoin” (Saint-Martin 1800, vol. 1, p. 197).

The word “power” here is understood to have no relation to a temporal and egocentric power.

The “Eastern Theosophy of Lights” or “Eastern Theosophy,” according to the Platonists’ philosophies of Persia (Avicenna, Suhrawardī, Ibn ‘Arabī), believes in something that is the equivalent of our Inner Master, which it presents under the guise of an Intermediary Angel (which has nothing to do with the idea of a Guardian Angel) attached to each of us as a double at the soul level. In some ways it calls





to mind our Higher Self directing our lower self. This angel confines itself to the east of the soul (our perfect, immortal, human soul) and waits for us to hear its voice (our inner voice) prompting us at each moment, while our soul personality continues to delude itself by confusing the astral and the spiritual.

The soul is thus a mirror with two faces, so to speak:

- The practical face intervenes on the level of thought, judgment, emotion, and intellect.
- The contemplative face is on the level of the spiritual, unconditional love of Pure Knowledge.

Whether it is the Intermediary Angel or the Inner Master (what do terms matter?), it is important to open one's heart to Sophia (Wisdom) to allow the "dawning lights" to penetrate the Self so that we are no longer "disoriented." Whether we are conscious of it or not, only spirituality can give meaning and direction to our being.

All sages have expressed this longing of the soul towards its higher dimension, towards the fiery and luminous center that Buddhists call the "Jewel in the Heart of the Lotus," so that one day soon we will be able to reach the "Central Initiation" through the "Way of the Heart." Saint-Martin said: "This initiation is one by which we can enter the heart of the Divine and make the heart of the Divine enter us to make an indissoluble marriage."

In Suhrawardī's view, the purpose of life is to make the soul grow so that it can radiate throughout the body and transfigure it into spiritualized matter. It thus makes humanity the recipient of Divine Light. Suhrawardī thinks that the purifying effort of each soul is like an eclipse, a beautiful poetic image to invoke the required unveiling.

If only one verse of Sri Aurobindo's poems were to be quoted to talk about the human soul, then the following would be my preferred one: "To put the Divine's joy into the self awakens our souls." The great poets were able to draw upon the inspired word with their Muse or Inspirer-Angel, grasping through the poetic voice the illumined



meaning of the Word, because the Word comes secretly from beyond thought. It has wings like the Simurgh (the fabulous bird of the *Epistle of Birds* from Avicenna, an initiatic tale); it rises from its ashes through inspiration like the Phoenix; it is white like the Peace Dove; and it strings words together like the pearls on a Divine Crown (*Kether*).

There are flashes of light from the east once a soul has been purified and can reach beyond the astral into the spiritual realms that belonged to it. In this situation "the souls of people are soaring above the sidereal to be directed by pure spirit. They are a class of people truly within the line of those who have separated the metals within them and have formed a marriage with the proven gold" (Saint-Martin 1800, Vol. 1, p. 195).

How can we not wonder, like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in *Hymn of the Universe*, what more essential thing there is in the mystical quest than "to have found the Word to dominate matter, or to possess the matter to attain and be affected by the light of the Divine?" Is he not suggesting that "the stuff of the Universe, in becoming thinking, has not yet achieved its evolutionary cycle?" The evolution of humanity's consciousness advances according to the breakouts made from within the confines of astral thought, going round and round in the mental

scaffolding that always ends up collapsing crossing the desert, or among the ruins stuck in the mesh of the fluidic envelope. How many dark nights, ascents and descents, are a prelude to “this transformation consisting of going from a life of the senses to a life of the spirit?” This questioning, according to John of the Cross, makes the cause of the darkness due to two opposites (the astral influence and the spiritual influence). “Now, two opposites are incompatible upon the same subject, and the soul being the subject where these two opposites fight each other, there must of necessity be suffering,” he said in the *Dark Night of the Soul*.

The astral system, operating in a continuous loop, has a tendency to reduce all thought to the mechanical, and every word to some ancestral conditioning and defensive activity. In short, we are always at war with ourselves, creating more internecine wars on a human scale. In fact, it is noticeable that when all is quiet and easy, people have the tendency to “rest on their laurels.” When people are this way, they need dramas, catastrophes, and strong emotions to regain the impulses of generosity and solidarity present at times of tests and trials. Yet once the events have passed, they return to their thought patterns and their lies. Suffering, the crossing of the desert, and the dark night are all products of the response to the call of the inner master that we do not see in our mirror, so blinded are we by the astral envelope and egotistical illusions. To seek perception of the ONE, to tame the natural self by means of the spiritual self, to emerge from ignorance and aspire to knowledge, these are the processes towards liberation and accession of real free will.

There is a time to name, conceptualize, separate, and list, as well as to analyze, compile, and study. Then there is a time when “the tangible contours of individuality disappear,” a time when “the feeling of our finiteness no longer confines us.” Even if we became well-versed in the greatest subtleties of Buddhist philosophy, Kabbalah, Sufism, or any other spiritual tradition, only a certain mystical thread would remain in common among them. There is no other way to convert our ignorance into knowledge or to transform darkness into light than by the awakening of our deepest desire. We have to dismantle our mechanistic thinking and the tendency to intellectualize everything, to stop fighting windmills and talking like a puppet on a string; all these only give the astral world more force. Let us be Men and Women



of Desire. Let us open the higher door of the heart. Let us go and meet our Angel, in the manner that Hermes and Poimandres meet in the first book of Hermes Trismegistus's *Corpus Hermeticum*. Here, the Egyptian Promethean, the personified Nous, appears to Hermes and instructs him:

It chanced once on a time my mind was meditating on the things that are, my thought was raised to a great height, the senses of my body being held back – just as people are who are weighed down with sleep after a fill of food, or from fatigue of body.

Methought a Being more than vast, in size beyond all bounds, called out my name and said: What would you hear and see, and what have you in mind to learn and know?

And I do say: Who art you?

The Being said: “I am the Human-Shepherd, Mind of all masterhood. I know what you desire and I am with you everywhere.”

I reply: “I long to learn the things that are, and comprehend their nature, and know the Divine.” “This is,” I said, “what I desire to hear.” (Tresmigistus, Book 1, p. 1)

On that day, we will be a New Person on this calm Earth. Let us exhort ourselves each day to respect this injunction:

Therefore, human, wake up each day before the dawn to speed up your work. It is to your shame that your daily incense only burns after sunrise. It is not the light of the dawn that once had to

tell your prayer to come and pay homage to the Divinity of beings, and ask for mercy. Your prayer itself should have called the light of the dawn and made it shine upon your work so that then you could pour it from the height of the celestial east upon their nations slumbering in inaction, and pull them out of their darkness. Only through such vigilance can your edifice grow, and enable your soul to become like one of the dozen pearls that must one day serve as gates to the holy city. (Saint-Martin 1798, p. 43)

Let us not delay this living alchemy, let us not postpone this meeting with the other half of ourselves, with our spiritual twin!

Let us never again be our worst enemy, for the Universal Divinity longs to pass through our entire being so as to become our companion. This friend is us, this companion following us like our shadow is always us, the angelic mediator is again us, and this radiant soul that dwells in us is a soul which the Divine has just visited, and left Its precious tokens of love and wealth. It will live forever in the Divine East, its first home, because the Lord gave it the creative Word that has developed all of its properties, its gifts, and its attributes of which it is the result and the agent. It has cast over this radiant soul Its vivifying eye, and it was regenerated in Its entire being, as all of nature regenerates itself through the vivifying gaze of the sun. (Saint-Martin 1796, p. 14)

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