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Pantacle

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Traditional Martinist Order

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

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

In this issue, we begin with an article entitled “Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin—A Mystic for the Ages,” in which author Placida Benefactrix looks at the life and thoughts of “the Unknown Philosopher.” The namesake for the Traditional Martinist Order’s philosophy was characterized by the belief that the true path to the Divine is interior and moral.

In the next article, we present a selection from Dr. Lonnie C. Edwards’s book *Spiritual Laws that Govern Humanity and the Universe*. The article, entitled “The Plan,” explores how by awakening the higher self and embodying divine attributes such as wisdom and compassion, individuals help manifest the Grand Architect’s Divine Plan on Earth, bringing about harmony between the material and spiritual worlds.

In the third article, we offer a selection from a book by Papus, entitled *The Science of Numbers*. This selection summarizes his and F. Ch. Barlet’s esoteric philosophy that numbers embody metaphysical principles of Being, expressing the structure of creation through divine arithmetic in which unity, duality, and trinity mirror the unfolding of the cosmos and the soul’s relationship to the Absolute.

In the following article, entitled “The Traditional Martinist Order and Sacred Scripture,” author Hugh McCague explores how Martinist teachings encourage contemplative study of sacred scriptures, revealing multiple layers of meaning through which seekers progress toward spiritual illumination and the reintegration of all beings.

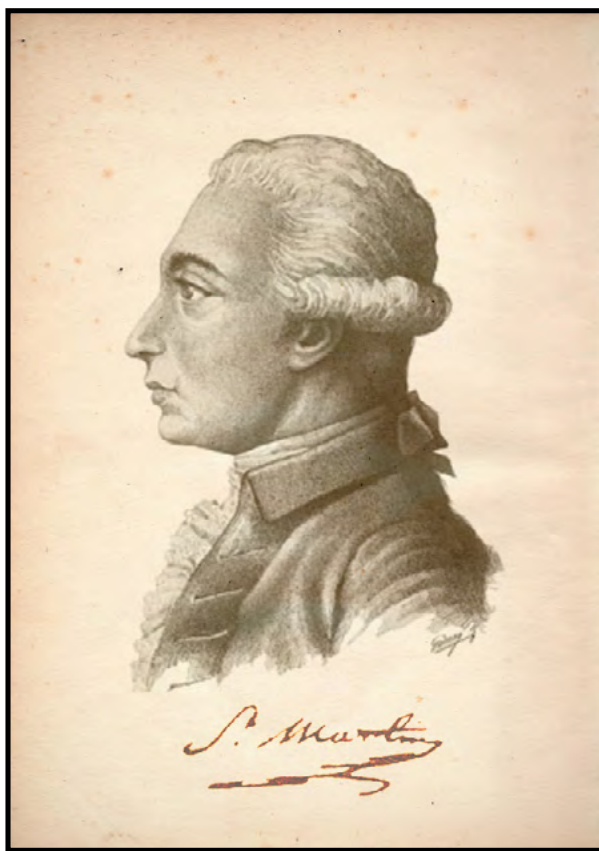
Finally, we close this issue with a poem by Provincial Master Michael Shaluly, titled “Moments That Stop,” in which the author ponders those times where life should give us pause.

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

Julie Scott
Grand Master

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin— A Mystic for the Ages

by Placida Benefactrix, SI



Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803), often referred to as “the Unknown Philosopher,” stands as one of the most profound mystical thinkers in Western esoteric tradition. Though less widely known than some of his contemporaries, his influence ripples through Rosicrucianism, Martinism, Theosophy, and other spiritual movements devoted to the inner path.

Born into French nobility, Saint-Martin began life in a world of privilege and education, but his soul yearned for something beyond worldly success: a communion with the Divine and a deeper understanding of humanity's place in the cosmos. Through his writings and spiritual practice, he became a quiet yet powerful voice of interior illumination—one who placed the human heart at the center of mystical knowledge.



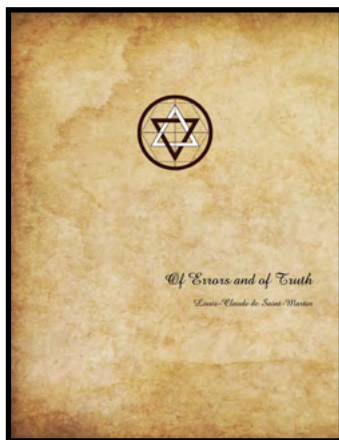
Plaque on the birthplace of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin in Amboise.

Born in 1743 in Amboise, France, Saint-Martin was educated in law but soon felt drawn to metaphysics and philosophy. While serving as a legal officer in the military, he met Martines de Pasqually, founder of the Order of Elect Cohens. This meeting was transformative. Pasqually introduced Saint-Martin to a worldview in which humanity, once divine, had fallen into materiality and needed to undergo inner reintegration with the Divine.

Pasqually's system was ritualistic and magical, emphasizing ceremonial theurgy. While Saint-Martin deeply respected his teacher, he eventually diverged from the outward, ceremonial emphasis and began to advocate a more inward and contemplative mysticism, focused on the heart and soul rather than elaborate ritual. Much of this influence came from the writings of the German mystic Jacob Boehme, who died more than one

hundred years before Saint-Martin was born. Saint-Martin called Boehme his “Second Master.” He was especially influenced by Boehme’s view of *Sophia*, or Divine Wisdom, and humanity’s need to reunite with this feminine archetype of the Divine.

Saint-Martin’s philosophy was characterized by the belief that the true path to the Divine is interior and moral—an awakening of divine truth within. He believed that the Divine Word (Logos) was inscribed within every human being and that spiritual progress involved removing the veils that obscure this truth. In his view, initiation was not into secret societies, but into the sacred chambers of one’s own being.



The cover for Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin’s book, Of Errors and Of Truth, available at: <https://www.martinists.org/texts>.

Saint-Martin espoused the “Way of the Heart,” a phrase that expressed his conviction that spiritual truth is not discovered through intellectual speculation or external rites, but through purification, prayer, and interior communion with the Divine. It invites the seeker to undergo an inner alchemical transformation, moving from ignorance to illumination, from separation to union.

Although he was never a founder of a formal order, Saint-Martin’s teachings became the cornerstone of Martinism, our mystical path formalized by Papus (Gérard Encausse, MD) and Augustin Chaboseau in 1889. Martinism remains a living initiatic tradition today, and Saint-Martin is revered as one of its guiding lights. His emphasis on humility,

ethical living, and spiritual discernment continues to shape esoteric studies and mystical orders around the world.

Saint-Martin was a prolific writer, though he often published anonymously or under his pseudonym, the Unknown Philosopher. In all his writings, Saint-Martin explores the duality of humans – as beings both fallen and divine – and the possibility of reintegration through interior awakening. He championed a universal spirituality, recognizing divine truth in multiple traditions and calling for a unity of all beings in the Divine.

Rosicrucians recognize Saint-Martin as a kindred spirit – a mystic whose life and work reflect core Rosicrucian principles:

- The inner path to wisdom
- The transformative power of self-knowledge and divine attunement
- The mystical understanding of nature and creation as emanations of a Divine Source
- The importance of service, compassion, and living according to Cosmic Law

Saint-Martin's quiet depth resonates with the Rosicrucian ideal of one who works not for recognition, but for the upliftment of humanity, from within.

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin passed on in 1803, leaving behind a subtle yet enduring legacy. He sought no followers, built no temple, and left no outer order. And yet, through the Way of the Heart, he continues to guide seekers of light.

In an age where noise can drown out spiritual truth, Saint-Martin's gentle voice reminds us that the deepest mysteries do not shout—they whisper. They are found not in outward displays, but in the silent chamber of the soul, where the Divine contemplates Itself through our longing, our love, and our light.

*I wanted to do good but I did not want to make noise,
because I felt that noise did no good and that good did not make noise.*

- Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin

The Plan

by Lonnie C. Edwards, MD, SI

Throughout mystical literature, including the Martinist and Rosicrucian teachings, we find reference made to a Divine Plan and the Divine (Grand) Architect. The term Grand Architect of the Universe implies that there is a Divine Creator or Builder. We can further assume that the Grand Architect of the Universe has a glorious and magnificent purpose. The great masters, avatars, and the hierarchy refer to this divine purpose as the Plan—the Divine Plan. An architect creates plans to be carried out and accomplished. As students of mysticism, it is also reasonable to assume that we individually and collectively have the capacity to know attributes or manifestations of this magnificent Plan.



*A mathematician draws a semi-circle while Minerva watches over him.
Engraving by Raphael Sadeler, 1591, after Maarten de Vos.*

We are all workers of the Grand Architect, the Absolute. Our responsibility is to attempt to perceive directions and guidance by doing our part in putting the components of this divine structure together. In reality, our higher selves, our true selves, are the component workers, which are to form, manifest, and comprise the architectural structure of the Plan.

What is this universal plan of the Divine? Can we know exactly what the Plan is and our relationship to it? The Grand Architect is infinite in

Its being, and we cannot define infinite beings. Neither can we know or define the Infinite Plan. How then may we gain a realization of the Plan and become conscious, willing workers and participants in it? Participation in the Plan may be conscious or unconscious. We strive to become increasingly conscious participants. The journey, which leads to knowledge of the Plan, is the journey that leads to knowledge of self. One must seek the doorway of the Master Within for this wisdom.

One point should be made perfectly clear in the beginning: There is a plan and purpose for humanity and for human evolution. One may gain a realization of the Plan by becoming aware of some of the Plan's attributes, qualities, laws, and purpose which govern its revelation or evolution. The degree of conscious apprehension of the Plan will necessarily vary according to the student's progress and response to the energies of evolution and growth. Our response to evolution dictates the level of consciousness and wisdom acquired. All points of evolution and levels of consciousness are essential and important and all levels of apprehension of the Plan serve. Some levels have greater responsibilities than do others.



An eighteenth-century depiction of Brahma, the Hindu deity of creation, riding Hamsa, a divine swan.

Participation in the Grand Architect's purpose for humanity, individually and collectively, is through response to "lesson plans" that are presented through all human experiences, relationships, circumstances, and affairs of life. These are designed to produce illumination and expansion of the consciousness. The expanded consciousness will enable the student to discern the attributes of soul and the higher self. Once the attributes of the spiritual self and its mission are realized, there will automatically be a strong urge and commitment to the will of the soul. This commitment brings about changes in life as expressed in the material environment. These changes

will be in harmony with spiritual laws that govern the universe and are in harmony with the Divine Plan.

The attributes of the Plan are revealed within the inner self. There follows an internal commitment and effort to spiritualize the expression of the human personality in the material world. A spiritual infusion takes place in all human activities and groups— political, economic, scientific, religious, artistic, and healing. Along these lines, this same infusion can bring about the spiritualization of money, for example. By the infusion of this purpose, more money is made available for the work of the Grand Architect and the hierarchy. The soul then begins to control the outer form of life and all events.

Three different approaches can be taken in bringing about a realization and manifestation of the Plan. The first approach is by continuing on the path to an understanding of who you truly are, and becoming aware of and identifying with the attributes and qualities of the true self. This is fundamental to advancing on the path and expressing its spiritual and mystical nature. A great deal of inner light will begin shining through the personality with the dawning of the realization of who you truly are. I urge you to give attention to this part of your being every day. Contemplate its meaning and visualize its manifestation and attributes.

One way to accomplish this is to ask, “What are the attributes of light?” After contemplation and meditation upon this question, make a list of these qualities. Place this list of attributes where you can think about them and be reminded of them daily. Contemplate these attributes one by one. Each of these is also an attribute of the true self and includes: cosmic light, unconditional love, cosmic understanding, harmony, peace, joy,

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Albert Anker, Schreibender Knabe (Writing Boy), 1908.

compassion, oneness with all life, unity with all souls, equanimity, grace, wisdom, strength, courage, kindness, forgiveness, beauty, animate and inanimate beauty, humility, and giving as well as receiving. These attributes are of your true self! Know this. You will no doubt be led to add to this list as your attunement grows. As you contemplate these attributes one by one, start to embody each one of them.

In contemplating each attribute, realize that you are truly that attribute, and then will yourself, daily, to externalize that attribute with increasing perfection. Commit yourself, in some small way, to living more and more as your true self—living as who you truly are.

You will gradually and progressively withdraw life from the false self, the ego, and will cease expressing and living the life of the lesser self. As you do, the soul will begin to take charge of your life. Practice this, and notice the changing patterns of your thoughts and feelings. This will bring an awareness of the quality and nature of your thoughts. If any thoughts fail to harmonize with the qualities of the true self and its attributes, the higher self will gently urge you to reject and neutralize them by expressing thoughts of love, light, and caring.

By following this process, the physical brain will gradually develop pathways to correctly perceive and interpret messages from the soul. The

mind will assume the function of transmitting to the brain the desires and will of the indwelling soul. The human personality becomes more beautiful as it now reflects and transmits the beauty of the soul's urges.

As you contemplate your true attributes and make a commitment to try daily to express them, you will be enhancing and building the most important relationship in your life: your relationship with soul personality and universal soul. You will gradually, slowly, and inwardly begin to perceive attributes of the Grand Architect and the Divine Plan. One cannot realize the Plan until a relationship with the true self is established.

Within each personality is a potential, specific part of the Plan. This part is to be worked out, developed, and manifested through you. Remember, your mission is to evolve and advance throughout this present incarnated life. There are no big or small parts of the Plan. You determine your involvement in the Plan by your awareness, evolution, choices, and cooperation with the indwelling soul and soul personality. All workers are important to the Divine Creator.

The second approach to bringing about a realization of the Grand Architect's Plan is through attunement with the Architect's major engineers; the great masters and children of the Divine, who expounded and taught the laws and truths that are fundamental to the Plan. Two of these great engineers are the Buddha and the Christ. They taught and demonstrated great and inspiring lessons to humanity.

Buddha's task was to supplant ignorance with true knowledge. Ignorance produces hindrances to building, evolving, and walking the inner path. Ignorance results in wrong habits and practices of thought and action, and the misuse of the laws that govern thought and



The Buddha, in an undated Tibetan painting.



Berthe Morisot,
Le berceau(The Cradle), 1873.

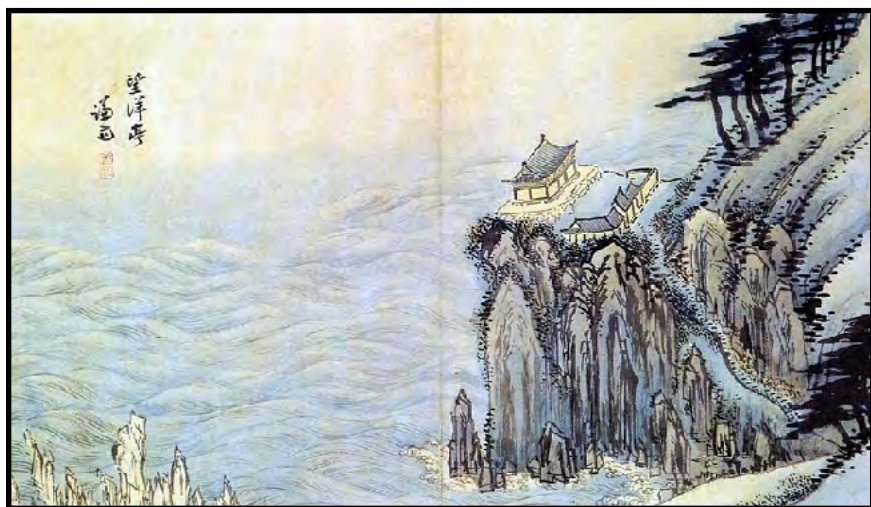
the thinking processes. Buddha taught pure reason as an approach to the inner divine self. He brought illumination to the world and embodied the principles of wisdom and light.

We often hear and read the words love and light in our mystical studies and rituals. Take the time to contemplate and meditate upon the deeper meanings that lie behind and above these word symbols and phrases. What do they symbolize? What silent wisdom are they trying to communicate? Do you feel that your present understanding of these words constitutes their ultimate meaning? Are you striving to pierce, veil by veil, the mystery and wisdom of the eternal

meaning of cosmic light and unconditional love? Remove any impediments from your mind that prevent you from entering the hall of wisdom and illumination.

The human consciousness generates a light that is commonly used in dealing with everyday, commonplace problems. This lesser, mortal light is intellectual and tends to be self-limiting, self-generated, and self-exhausting as it communicates beams to influence persons and conditions. This mundane light highlights appearances and illusions in the consciousness. It does not contain the higher vibratory energies that are capable of revealing true realities. True wisdom and reality lie behind and above the world of appearances. They bring harmony and peaceful conditions to relationships. The light of the soul eliminates illusions and sees behind, through, and above appearances. The qualities and vibratory nature of the light of the soul include revelation and illumination. This light promotes reintegration and regeneration. Its consciousness is in the eternal now.

The soul is essentially a being of light and love. Its light constitutes the true medium for universal mind. The soul is symbolically similar to the Sun, since the “rays” of both soul and Sun pour out into the darkness.



Jeong Seon, Mangyangjeong Pavilion, eighteenth century.

The rays of the soul pour out into the darkness located within the mortal consciousness of humanity, illuminating and radiating throughout the human personality, so that person's life truly begins to express its spiritual likeness.

Solitude is a condition that cultivates our consciousness to gain a realization of the Plan and to serve the Grand Architect. Contemplate the meaning and purpose of solitude. This is a time when the Divine speaks.

When in the midst of a troubling experience, quietly and mentally withdraw the mind from thoughts, emotions, and desires of the world in which you live and work. Withdraw from these: let them go. Silently and quietly center the consciousness in the world of the soul and be still. Patiently open windows of the mind and consciousness. Wait in the stillness of the lighted presence. Remain silent, knowing that the light of the Divine and the soul shine gently upon you, illuminating the dark corners of your mind. Let illumination take place. Surrender. Guidance and direction are received in the silence.

Illumination and the light of knowledge are synonymous terms. Illumination and the perception of truth are also one and the same. The quality of our perceptions determines the quality of our thoughts and

actions. Determine and pray that your perceptions are true. Develop the art of using the technique of the light of the soul.

The great engineer and son of the Divine, Buddha, perceived and embodied the Grand Architect's principle of wisdom and light. The other great engineer of the Plan, the Christ, brought the principles of love to humanity and embodied in Christ was a great cosmic law: the Law of Love. Just as with other universal laws, the Law of Love is inadequately understood and practiced. The Christ encouraged us "to love our neighbor as ourselves." We are to truly seek understanding of this enunciation through the practices of contemplation and meditation.

A large percentage of humanity is centered in a state of being where the full extent of their love is merely to love themselves and those who love them. The masters taught that we should love our fellow human beings universally, unconditionally, and truly. When we meet and seek to relate to other people, we must especially bear in mind that everyone has a soul, a divine nature, that is essentially perfect—a soul just as our own. Focus on the fact that they are traveling both a human and an infinite journey, just as you are.

Begin to see and relate to fellow beings as souls, and not as mere physical entities. Two thousand years ago, the Grand Architect's greatest



Sarcophagus of the Spouses from Caere (Cerveteri), Italy, ca. 530 BCE.



Katsushika Hokusai, The Seventh Month: The Bon Festival Dance, ca. 1793.

expression of love taught this principle and lived it. Let us pause for a moment and inwardly ask in silence: “Am I truly as loving as I could and should be? Do I really understand the power of love? Do I know how to love? Do I know how to send the Divine’s love to another? Is my love unconditional as is the Divine’s love, or do I send my love with some conditions?” Ponder with sincerity each one of these questions. The Divine and your soul will assist in finding the answers and guide you to the art of loving.

Love has the power to negate poisonous thoughts created by you or by others. Make the right choices and bring health, joy, happiness, and peace to yourself and to others. When sending resentment and hate seem so “natural,” make the choice of sending love instead. Petition for the Divine to send love to and through you to the person, place, or condition when the small self is calling on you, with the intensity of its feeling, to be revengeful and judgmental.

Observe your hesitations and answers to the questions above and note the work you are silently committing yourself to accomplish. Attune with your soul, for it knows how to assist you so that you can finish this work in your present incarnation. Remember that the art of loving is an eternal far-seeking wisdom, bringing with it much good karma. The reverse may be true as well, when we choose unwisely and miss an opportunity to love.

As we internalize the teachings of the Christ, we will individually and collectively begin to become more and more inclusive in our ability to experience love and compassion in all relationships. We become aware of the Divine sending love and caring to us through the people with whom we come into contact. As a result, we give thanks to the Divine for sending love through us to all those with whom we relate.

Practicing the art of loving may appear to be difficult at times; however, we who are on the path are up to the task. We may paraphrase Christ's teaching by saying, "Let me live a life that is harmless in every way, and loving, and giving in every discord." By practicing this great engineer's concept we learn that our thoughts, actions, or words are vibrating at such a divine frequency that they will only bring love and peace to ourselves and to all people.

The laws that the two great engineers and sons of the Divine, the Grand Architect, taught are part of a plan to bring a realization of heaven on earth. For behind these laws are the power and laws of the Divine Universe. Humanity's realization of the true validity of these laws is merely a matter of time, for evolution must produce realization eventually. The forming of an earlier recognition lies within our hands.

In conclusion I will only mention very briefly the third approach to a realization and participation in the Plan. The hierarchy might be regarded as custodian of the Plan for humanity, and as such impresses the minds of those who are prepared and dedicated with ideas and information. If these are correctly perceived and acted upon, they will bring about a degree of realization, evolution, and support for the Plan. Mystical intuition enables the student to be receptive and attuned to cosmic impressions and guidance.



John Constable, Hadleigh Castle, The Mouth of the Thames--Morning after a Stormy Night, 1829.

What greater plan can there be but to bring a realization of heaven within us and on Earth and to have the soul express with increasing perfection through our human personalities? In this manner the material world becomes spiritualized and proclaims the Kingdom of the Divine as a reality in the hearts and minds of humanity. The attributes of the kingdom and the attributes of the soul are one. They lie within each of us. May the light, love, and power manifest the Divine's Plan within and through each of us. You will then dwell within the light of cosmic wisdom.



Edward Hopper, Automat, 1927.

Close this reading with the following invocation. As you read these words aloud, let them resonate within you as your own words, spoken to the universal soul within you.

*O My Soul,
Who dwells within as an
Eternal Source of Love
Grant unto me your Eye that
I might see the Beauty that
Surrounds me.
Grant unto me your Ear that
I might sense and hear your
Soundless Voice.
Let your Light and Love
Radiate through and from me
That I might serve humanity and
All of Life. All to the Glory of the Divine.
So Mote It Be!*

May you ever dwell in the eternal light of cosmic wisdom.

Papus's *The Science of Numbers*

From a Martinist Manuscript

The text presented in the following pages is extracted from the book *The Science of Numbers* by Gérard Encausse, better known as Papus. He was born on July 13, 1865 in La Coruna, Spain, however he spent his childhood in Paris where his parents moved in 1869 (his father was French and his mother was Spanish). He performed brilliantly in primary school and then went on to study medicine. At the same time, he became very interested in the Hermetic sciences and often went to the National Library to read the oldest manuscripts devoted to the alchemists and the Rose-Croix. Although he was a rationalist in his understanding of the mysteries of life, he was very fond of spirituality and mysticism.

In 1887, at the age of twenty-two, he took the pseudonym Papus, a term mentioned in Apollonius of Tyana's book entitled *Nuctéméron* ("Night Illumined by Day" or figuratively—"The Light of Occultism.") Apollonius named the first of the divine spirits of the first hour, the spirit of medicine—Papus. From then on, Papus ceaselessly promoted his spiritual ideas and wrote occult and esoteric books. Unfortunately, he went through transition in 1916 while serving as a physician in a military hospital during World War I.



*Papus (Gérard Encausse, MD),
in an undated print.*

Having been introduced to Martinism in 1882 and admitted into the Theosophical Society in 1888, Papus decided to work for the reconciliation of Eastern and Western Traditions. Due to misunderstandings, he distanced himself from Theosophy and created the Independent Group of Esoteric



The grave of Papus in the Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris.

Studies, which eventually became known as the Hermetic School. In his own words, the school's goals were to:

1. Make known as much as possible the main principles of occult science in all its aspects.
2. Train educated members of all the initiatic organizations: Rosicrucians, Martinists, Freemasons, Theosophists.
3. Train speakers in all the occult branches.
4. Study the phenomena of spiritualism, magnetism, and magic, theoretically and practically.

Some eminent members of this group were Paul Sédir, François Jollivet Castelot, Charles Barlet, and Victor-Emile Michelet. The name Papus is generally associated with Martinism, although he was also very interested in Rosicrucianism, even to the extent that in 1892 he, along with Stanislas de Guaita, founded the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix.

The content of the following text can at times be itself difficult to grasp. Thanks to the special light it brings to numbers, we recommend that you read it several times and use it to support your meditations.

One of the points of view of the physiology of numbers is the action of a Number-Being upon another Number-Being; action enclosed at the calculation at all levels and especially in the four major operations: output of the unit to the multiplicity in line or addition, output in square (by Pythagoras) or simple multiplication, output in cube or cubic multiplication; it is through this path that the Number-Being goes from one plane to another.

The number three belongs to the spirit plane; 3×3 or 3^2 lies in the plane of astral forces; $3 \times 3 \times 3$ or 3^3 dwells in the plane of the material. For the first (3) works on the line, the second (3^2) on the plane, and the third (3^3) on solids.

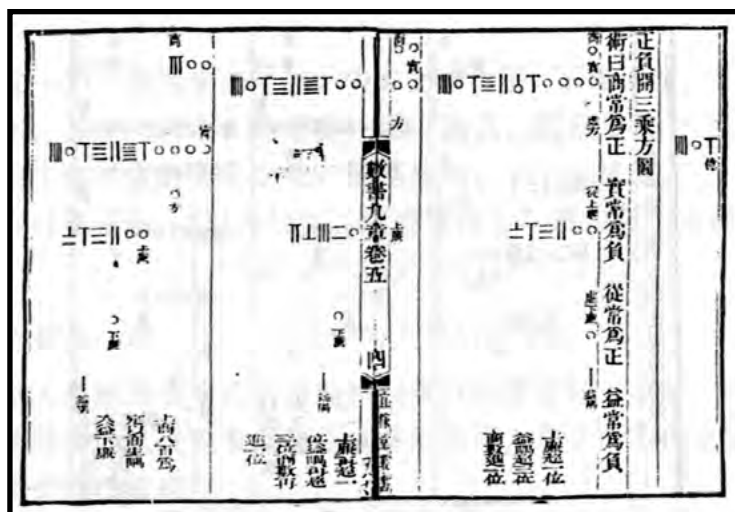
The transformation of multiplicity into unity is done by subtraction, division, and square root or cube according to the planes. Therefore, this is the positive and vivid representation of this famous evolution and of this mysterious involution.

After this initial classification of the numbers by their coded components, we are able to observe the representation of polarities or sexes. This representation is made by the existence of even, or feminine numbers, and odd, or masculine numbers.

- Examples of masculine numbers: 1-3-5-7-9.
- Examples of feminine numbers: 2-4-6-8-10.



Bernardo Strozzi, Allegory of Mathematics, seventeenth century.



Qin Jiushao, Third order equation—*Shu Shu Jiu Zhang*, 1842.

Let us note a property of the number 0: it creates even numbers by materializing essentially odd numbers. Thus, 3 is odd or masculine, while 30 becomes even and feminine.

Even numbers do not change their quality by the materialization of 0: 4, an even number, remains even while becoming 40.

Two even numbers joined together determine an even number: 2 and 2 give 22, 6 and 6 give 66, and, as you can see, all these numbers are even.

Two odd numbers joined together also give an odd number. Thus 3, an odd number, and 7, also an odd number give 37 or 73, also odd numbers.

The union (in juxtaposition and not addition) of an even number with an odd number is determined by the last digit. Thus, 3 (odd) and 2 (even) give the even number 32 when the 2 ends, and the odd number 23 when it is the 3 that takes the last place.

Another application pertains to sympathetic numbers or, to speak in images, the soulmates in numbers. To obtain the sympathetic number of any two-digit numbers, simply reverse the order of each of the digits. Thus, the odd number 13 has for sympathetic number the number 31 which is also odd, obtained by reversing the two digits 1 and 3. Similarly, the even

number 24 has for sympathetic number, the even number 42, obtained in the same manner.

Some numbers composed of two identical digits are presented under only one aspect; these numbers are called selfish, and they represent the neutral in the numeral hierarchy.

Examples of selfish and odd number: 11, 22, 33, 44, 55, etc.

Numbers have more luminous power if they are closer to the unit, and they have less light if they are more remote from it. In other words, a number is even greater in actual value as it is smaller in numerical value, the number 1 being the most powerful of all.

Geometric, or the figurative representation of a number, can by itself give us the key to force fields put into action along with the balance system for each number. Thus, the figurative representation of the number 3 is 3, and the geometric representation is the triangle. However, the number is always similar to itself and 3 is no different from 3, whereas the triangle may be equilateral or rectangle, and show us the different functions in the lines of force generated by the same number.

The psychology of numbers informs us of their action in the universe, along with the nature and origin of this action; knowledge that can lead its possessor to the effective handling of the little known power enclosed in numbers. This is the essence of *Schem HaMephorash* [a term describing a



Robert Indiana, Numbers 0-9, 1980-1983.



The divine name JHWH in Hebrew in a slightly edited image of a window piece above the altar in Karlskirche in Vienna, Austria.

hidden name of the Divine in Kabbalah] and is the really practical key of Kabbalah. This is the point that must remain forever closed to the profanes and profaners. One can, if one knows the number of every human faculty, act on this faculty, as long as one acts on the corresponding Number-Being. The tarot and birth chart are actual applications of this knowledge.

For this study, we cannot do better than reproduce the masterful work of F. Ch. Barlet who addresses the issue from a purely initiatory and ontological point of view. This study is entitled *The Numbers*:

The number is a language; it corresponds to what philosophy calls Ontology, or Science of Being.

Its alphabet is the series of the nine first numbers supplemented by zero. To understand this definition and this alphabet, one must go back to the notion of Being, a story that the number must tell.

The Being in itself has neither form nor limit, it is infinite. For the conception of our real world, the Infinite is twofold: Infinitely large as the Celestial space which extends around us; Infinitely small as the mathematical point we realize through our perfect lines, that is to say, by the intersection of three competing planes. We can therefore represent it materially and actually in its double design, as a mathematical point in the infinite space; this is the image that Pythagoras gave and that Pascal repeated in his famous formula. We



A section of the Hubble Extreme Deep Field (XDF), which combines 10 years of Hubble Space Telescope photographs taken of a small patch of sky. About 5,500 galaxies are visible in the full image in various stages of evolution.

must only add that this mathematical point is not Nothingness; we must look at it as the extreme condensation of the whole universe, gathering in itself, therefore, all the energy of any kind which is attached to it. It is the Total potentiality, the Omnipotence to act.

Space is not nothingness; it is a reality and perhaps the most certain and definite for us: it is the Omni-Impotence to act; it is the Void, the Being reduced to the faculty to contain, to receive; it is the power of to be.

The point and space are inseparable; it is necessary that the point be somewhere, otherwise it would not be. It is true that we can conversely, conceive such a tangible reality, the Omnipotence expanded in the infinite space and therefore canceled in favor of thereof; then the roles are reversed: the Almighty has become the All-Impotence with the only option to be condensed, and the space has become the Omnipotence to condense, reduce, cancel the All that it contains, to return to the Void, to destroy the manifestation of Power, in a word, the All-Resistance.

But whichever of the two conceptions adopted, the Absolute will always be defined as being the duality of the infinitely small immersed in infinitely large. This is the only possible conception for us because we are trapped in the real world where everything is dual; both

Infinites appear twofold to us: infinite in power if it is null in space, and vice versa (or the opposite if the power fills the space).

In addition, is not the Absolute what we call the Being? It is only conceivable to us by its two poles; we do not know anything more about it. What we commonly call a Being is the combination of these two poles: zero and infinity. Everyone knows indeed the mathematical demonstration that the formula summarizes $0 \times \infty = 1$. Any number, any individual reality, is the product of zero by infinity.

Extending this notion to its extreme limits, we call Being by excellence, the maximum of this individual, and Non-Being its minimum, that is to say, the two values of the actual quantity which get in contact with the poles of the Absolute.

The term *Non-Being* does not mean Null or impossible, but on the contrary, what is not yet, what has the potential to be. As for *Nothingness* itself, it is for us a concept as impossible as the Absolute, if not even more impossible.

There is therefore above all three key numbers: the Infinite, Zero, and One, their product. Leaving aside the first two, we must only focus on the last one; we will find in it the source of all numbers or individual beings.



Frontispiece to Christiani Adolphi Balduini's *Aurum superius*, 1675.



Jacopo de' Barbari, Portrait of Luca Pacioli, ca. 1500.

What is called One is any real being considered in itself, in its essence, in what distinguishes it from any other being, in what made it an in-dividu-ality, something that intelligence can no longer analyze, even if that something is clothed with a multiple form, which is usual.

The One can have an infinite number of varieties that are more or less similar to it, as we said earlier, from one or the other pole of the Absolute, all the way to the contact with these poles.

Therefore we see three kinds of One: the two extremes, and all the intermediaries, in infinite number. The two extremes are: firstly, the one which, without ceasing to be real, can fill any gap, all the differences between the two poles, and secondly, which on the contrary, is small enough to leave vacant all this gap; in other words, they are the All and the Nothing. They are still called, although a misnomer, which in fact does not have any downside once the definition is made: the Being and the Nothingness (or Non-Being).

In fact, the All and the Nothing differ from the poles of the Absolute to which the same names were given earlier, in the sense that this extreme One can generate the real and belong to it; they are, for us, as the right side of these poles, whose flipside is on the side of the Absolute. They are also called the Absolute One and the Absolute Zero (that is to say the ones that reach the limits of the real). Pythagoras

carefully distinguished the Absolute One from the Real One, or essence of all individuals. By definition, he has two poles: one infinite, the other null.

The Almighty pole of the Absolute One is the Being we call the Divine. The Non-Being pole of the Absolute One is what we call Nothing, or often, the Void. Every finite being is a combination of these two poles of the Absolute One, and as nothingness is essentially incapable of generating the Being, it is he who receives it to form the Individual One.

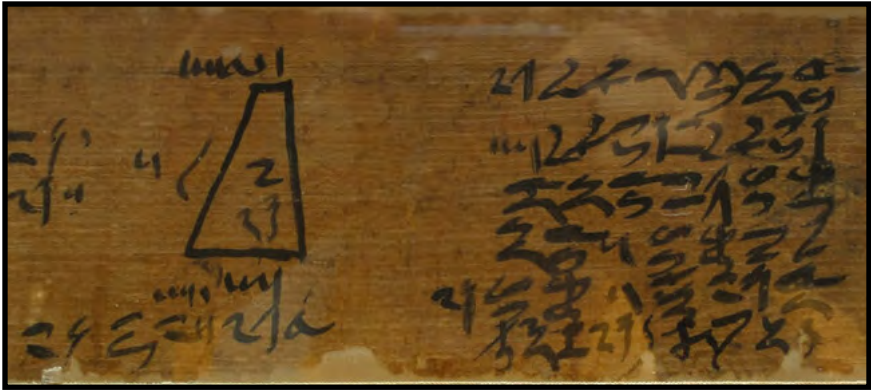
It is true that the Divine created all things from nothing as the Bible says; it could not even give another definition of the birth of the creature without falling into adversarial systems of Emanation, Pantheism, or Naturalism.

In every finite being, the element of infinite nature that animates is, in relation to us, what we call the Spirit. With regards to the Divine, we call it the Word because it is the particular thought that the Divine achieved through the creation; the form is the expression of this externalization of thought. All beings are thus made by the Word, and without it, all that was made would not be (John1:3).

The first act of creation is the extension from the Being pole to the Non-Being pole in order to combine itself with it; it is the manifestation of the Absolute One. This combination is called the Celestial Virgin, with the Tradition of all time: the Virgin is the first of the creatures. The Word that animates it is the total Divine Thought, since it fills the whole gap between the two poles. This spirit of the



Bernardo Cavallino, The Immaculate Virgin, 1650.



Problem 14 in the Moscow Mathematical Papyrus, from ca. 1850 BCE in Egypt, one of the oldest known examples of written mathematics.

Virgin, we call Wisdom; it is this absolute Wisdom that attended the creative formation from the dawn of the first day. It governs the Virgin in its informant function, nourishing and protecting the secondary beings, which we call Nature.

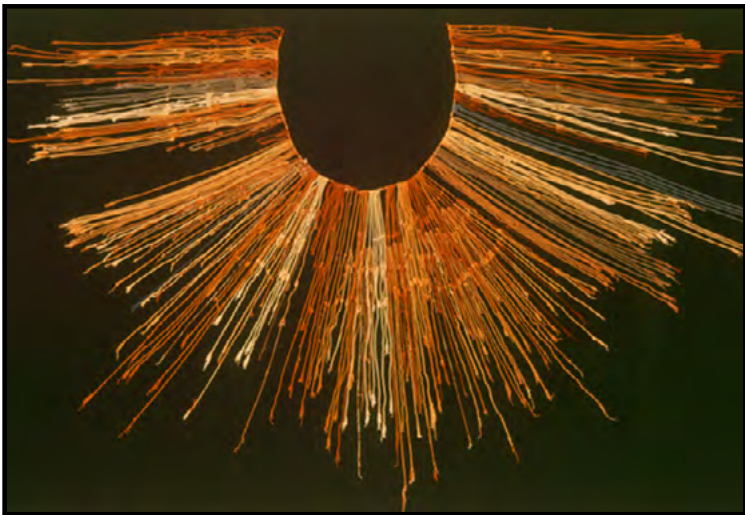
“There is no One without a Two” is a well-known adage. Indeed, the Individual One, whatever it is, produced by Zero, is different from each other; it only fills a portion of their interval; its existence therefore suggests an excess of this amount; this surplus is his Two. In other words, every human being exists for the sole purpose of differentiating itself from anything that is not it.

We usually have a different notion of the number Two; we understand it as the being created by adding one unit to another similar one to make a new All. In fact, this notion is still that of the One, that is to say, the partial extension of one of the two poles to the other. However, the movement is broken down into equal parts, which represent many distinct steps, the result remaining always One (one could formulate $1 = 0 \times \infty + 0 \times \infty$). The concept gained by this distinction is rather that of complexity and succession; in other words, that of Measurement and Time; it falls in the field of arithmetic, while we are in arithmology.

This remark applies to any kind of number other than the unit; it is the principle of all additive arithmetic operations (addition, multiplication, power, etc.). However, this arithmetic consideration of

the Two presupposes and includes another arithmological definition of this number: in order to see two or more parties in a complex number, we must first break it down: this is what we do through the arithmetic operation of the subtraction and its derivatives (subtraction, division, root, etc.). However, this separation is made by the power of the negative number (the terror of the beginner algebraist) and it is with this number that we enter arithmology: the negative number is one that, by nature, has a subtractive property; for example: a certain amount of ice added to hot water is a negative quantity; it cools down.

More precisely, we can say that the negative number is the one which, when added to any unit, causes the Two to show or increases the arithmological Two defined earlier. One must conclude that the negative unit is a Two, but a Two opposite to that defined above (we can write $1 = \infty \times 0$, instead of $1 = 0 \times \infty$), because it tends towards the Zero instead of heading to the Infinite. It is the principle of analysis, decomposition, negation; it is also the principle of opposition, by disjunction and consequently, that of evil and discord. When it is opposed to itself to the Positive One, it becomes the type of the impossible (whose mathematical expression is $\sqrt{-n^2}$). It is thus called the Devil, the divider, the letter D and its analogues (T, Tz, Z) being signs of division.



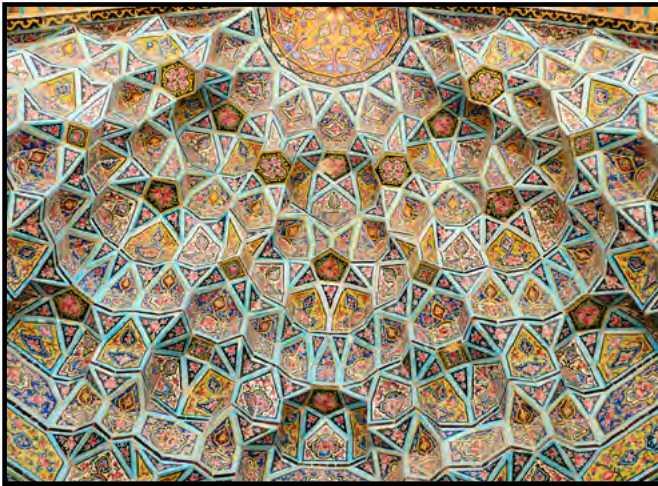
A Quipu, a record-keeping device fashioned from knotted cords that was used for math, among other things, in the Andes from about 2600 BCE to 1900 CE.

Moreover, the positive Two can have two varieties, depending on whether it is counted from one or the other pole; we will call it male if it touches the positive pole; female if it relates to the negative. For example, the angel minister of the Divine, is to It a male Two. Nature, in relation to the Virgin Wisdom is feminine; but this distinction is less deep than the last. In summary, we can define the Two as the relative complement of the One, that this One be the Absolute One or an individual unit.

“There is no One without a Two” is not a complete adage. One must add: “There is no Two without a Three.” And thus stated, this adage is the very definition of Three.

The One and Two have been separated in the Divine Mind, and therefore, the two poles of the Absolute, in order to give rise to the Love consented and assented that brings them in a new Unit where each becomes the life of the other. This is what Christianity expresses when it says that the Divine created the world to engage it in Its own Bliss, provided that he accepts and as long as he accepts.

The Three is the hyphen that restores the Unity between the One and the complementary Two, bringing them together in itself and penetrating both in its Essence, which is the invincible indivisibility. It is different from both, based on the fact that it has no complement, no



*A Muqarna (decorated vault) at the Nasr ol Molk Mosque
in Shiraz, Iran, built in 1888 CE.*

possible opposite; it defies all measurement, all variation, and all formal externalization: it is Pure Spirit; it is the Essence of the Being. Only the individual, the finite One, can accept or reject it in diverse proportions; its perception is for the creature a variable subjectivity, otherwise love would become for her a tyranny. Here is the source of evil, alongside that of freedom. The revolt against the Holy Spirit (which is the Three) is the only one that, by definition, the Divine cannot forgive, because it is the Free refusal of Its love. Penetrating the One and Two in order to unite them, the Three identifies itself in some way to gather them in itself; thus the Pythagorean calls it a Hermaphrodite Unity.

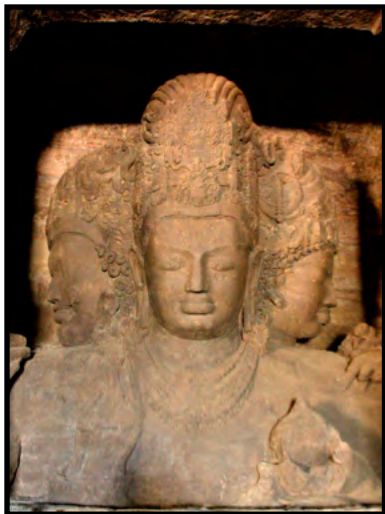


Albrecht Dürer, Melencolia, 1514.

For the One and the Absolute Two, the union thus formed is a Tri-unity. This is the Christian Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which expresses that the Word, in its creative and multiplier descent, is inseparable from the Father.

As the One and the Two are susceptible to quantity, their triune union is too. But in their highest quality, this partial union is always one; it corresponds to the current state of Eternal and progressive Union of the two extremes poles; it is always harmonious. Such are the generations of the heavenly powers (theogony, generation of the deities, angels, etc.) and the formations of nature.

But when it comes to creatures equipped with will and initiative, or primordial beings that are accessible only partially to the Spirit of unity, these beings cannot produce anything complete without borrowing the unity from nature by breaking down previous individualities (or their own, or others foreign to themselves). Moreover, their formations, more or less discordant, are subject to death. Then their union is expressed



An ancient sculpture of Shiva at the Elephanta Caves, Maharashtra, India, from the sixth century CE.

by a Special Trinity, the generator fully characterized by the Trinity Mass of India: Brahma, the creator; Shiva, the destroyer, the agent of division and decay necessary for the new formation, as the reduction of its imperfections; Vishnu, who preserves its harmony. Such is also our Trinity: Father, Mother, Child. It is never a Tri-unity.

Not only is the Three triple for the fulfillment of the unifying function, as has been said, but it also accomplishes it in each of the two other numbers a ternary disposition. It must in fact:

1. have the One unite with the Two in a sort of polarization towards it;
2. take it in its essential unity as an intermediate term;
3. make it enter the Two with it in order to accomplish the final union.

It accomplishes the same series of provisions inside the Two, and thus it is how the union takes place by mutual penetration.

Thus, for the creative union of the Absolute One to the Two, of the Creator to the Celestial Virgin, the Spirit of unity, Love, the primary source of all creation, makes the One a cause of realization: its first thought, its own Word. It then makes a way, a possibility, the plan of creation capable of realizing the thought. Thirdly, it makes it the source of efficiency or the end, the power over the inertia of the Non-Being. These are the various degrees of descent of the Word in his sacrifice of love.

In nature, the Spirit of unity also has the Intelligence capable of receiving the Divine Mind and the Energy which will create and retain this form. This is why John says in his Epistle: "There are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit (Intelligence), Water (Idea

of form), and Blood (Energy).” It is also what the Seal of Solomon symbolizes. From this point, there are several consequences:

First, there will be three phases in the creation, and therefore three classes of creatures: the divine plan or divine region of Thought, that of the One; the medium plane of transition or medium region, that of the intelligible and the Law; and the plane of effectuality, of possibility of true being, that is to say the Tri-unity, the region of forms.

Second, the existence or rather the operation of the Three immediately leads to the existence and the operation of the Six: they are concurrent because of the primitive polarization and of its purpose, so we can say: there is no One without Two, no Two without Three, no Three without Six.

Finally, not only the existence of the Spirit of unity carries that of the Six, but the fulfilling end which is its purpose and that of the Creation carry a third Trinity. It is not enough, in fact, that the Two has been able to accomplish the realization or final union; it must also carry it out, in turn, by its own effort.



Giovanni di Paolo, The Creation of the World and the Expulsion from Paradise, 1445.



A portion of the Timbuktu manuscripts, with Arabic writings about mathematics and astronomy, ca. 1731 CE.

In each of the faculties listed earlier, as received by the Two of the Spirit of unity, is added an awakening active faculty: to Intelligence Love, Attraction, Desire answer. They are the source of all evolution. To the Idea overlaps the Will, the decision to produce the form adequate to the one felt. To Energy, Movement is added, producing desire and will, actual occupation of the space for the scope. Therefore there are three trinities needed to create, and not just two.

Thus, the mere existence of the One which leads that of the Two requires also that of the nine numbers in total. This is why Pythagoras and the Ancients said

There is only one number; that which is written: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; anything else is not an actual number; it is a compound made more or less with the repeated number. Only this series is the Number. Two sections can be distinguished:

- 1. The Trinity, fundamental element of this series.
- 2. The following six numbers, duplicate of the Trinity.

The first set includes the numbers called ideal (1, 2, 3); the second series (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) is that of the mathematical numbers; as for all the other possible numbers, they are combined under the name of complex numbers. The Ten, which summarizes them expressing the completed union of the two poles, is the perfect number. This is the reason for the decimal count system. These are the main features of the creation that the Tree of the Sephiroth symbolizes.

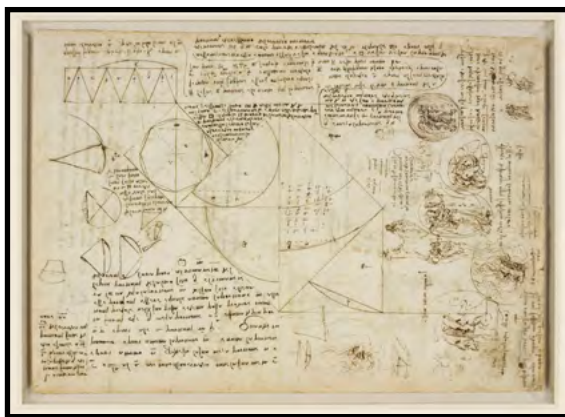
Numbers other than the One, the Two, the Three, Six, and Nine, are distributed in the three trinities to play the role corresponding to their rank, by analogy to the primitive Trinity, according to the table:

1 2 3

4 5 6

7 8 9

There is the key to their respective meanings. Those of the first column, acting as the One or the Being, are called divine; those of the third, acting as the Two born of the Non-Being are Natural, as for the others, they are referred to as voluntary or psychic because it is up to them to decide on the acceptance or the refusal of the Union of love and, therefore, the Holy Spirit. In them dwells the root of evil; we have already seen it in Two; it is much more in the Five, at the center of this table.



Leonardo da Vinci, Studies of emblems, geometrical diagrams, and notes, ca. 1508.



The Divine as Geometer, *a frontispiece for a Bible moralisée*, ca. 1230.

It is important to briefly review these arithmetic numbers in order to give an idea:

The Four, head of the second trinity, second One, is the second hypostasis of the Word: *Deus de Deo, Lumen Lumine, Deus verus de Deo Vero, ex Patre natus, ante omnia secula*, the developer of the Divine Thought. The Five, Word of this Trinity, is the source of the implementing power, free and responsible: Elohim, Adam Kadmon. The Six, Spirit of unity of this same trinity is especially the nurturing-nature, the beauty of the form.

The Seven is the captain of the third Trinity, that of the first realization; it is the vivifying spiritual power, the Divine's counsel (according to Saint- Yves), the pagan Olympus specializing in seven guiding principles. The Eight (third Two) is the number that regulates the wills, number of the law, thus of fate and death. Finally the Nine, harmony of this trinity, is the power of virtue, the blessing of harmonic forms.

However, these are only rough indications, for the stronger a number is, the more detailed a study it requires, because each one has as many different meanings as units.

This presentation by F. Ch Barlet gives in a few pages a striking summary of the traditional doctrine of the numbers and shows the profound philosophy they expressed - and still express - in the eyes of the initiates.

The Traditional Martinist Order and Sacred Scriptures

by Hugh McCague, PhD, SI



Visions of Ezekiel 1, after an engraving by Matthäus Merian, 1630.

The mystical meanings of certain tracts of the world's sacred scriptures are discussed in the teachings of the Traditional Martinist Order. The student is encouraged to continue these explorations of sacred texts. One of the distinctive features of the mystical approach to sacred scriptures is that the written text acts as an assisting medium, or catalyst, leading to an inner comprehension and divine afflatus. As part of this process, it is important to have time to reflect and sift over passages. A half hour on one verse or several verses can be helpful and greatly enriching. A passage can be contemplated before entering into the enlightening state of meditation. Also, a passage can be considered after meditation when one is in an ennobled state of mind. For quality of reading, the kind demanded for the mystical unfolding of sacred scriptures, the emphasis must be on a respectful and patient process, to allow our deeper nature, the Inner Self, to speak to the outer mind or self. The latter form of learning, gradual as it is, is the most direct in the long run for spiritual seekers, known in Martinsim as Men and Women of Desire.

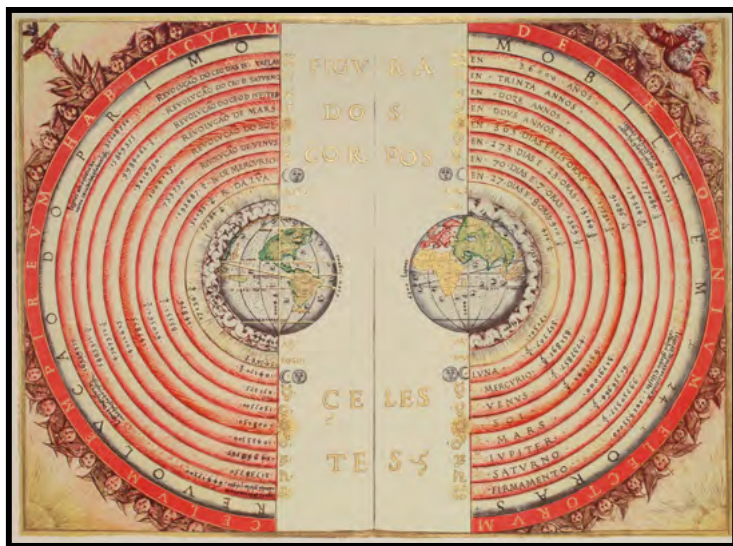
Multiple Senses of Interpretation

There were, traditionally, three to four levels or senses of Biblical interpretation or exegesis, depending on the classification system applied. A common classification of four levels was the literal (or historical), the allegorical, the moral (or tropological), and the mystical (or anagogical). The allegorical, moral, and mystical levels were sometimes referred to together as the spiritual.¹ In some classifications, there were, what can be referred to as, a cosmological and scientific level. This level shows the unity of science and spirituality that Martinism and Rosicrucianism actively advance.

An example of the four senses is found in the interpretation of Jerusalem in the Bible. Literally, Jerusalem was the geographic city, and historically, it conjured up a wealth of events of past memory and account that had taken place and culminated in this holy city of David, Solomon, and the mission of the Master Jesus. Allegorically, it signified the Church, or the collective body of spiritual aspirants and initiates. Morally, it represented the virtuous and “faithful soul.”² Scientifically and cosmologically, it is the Heavenly Jerusalem as a model of the cosmos or



John of Patmos watches the descent of New Jerusalem from the Divine in a fourteenth-century tapestry.



Bartolomeu Velho, Figure of the Heavenly Bodies, 1568.

a cosmogram with the twelve zodiacal gates in the four directions.³ On the mystical level, it was the Heavenly City,⁴ the abode of the spiritual elect and the experience of Cosmic Consciousness. These successive levels leading to the mystical sense require increasing maturity and responsibility to be aware of and to penetrate.

Origen, the Bible, and Inner Meanings

Notably, the founding Master of Martinism, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, found the Biblical commentaries of the Christian mystic Origen of particular assistance. The scope of our undertaking, the contemplation of sacred texts, is alluded to in the following remark by Origen:

If one wished to obtain means for a profounder contemplation of the entrance of souls into divine things, . . . let them peruse, at the end of Ezekiel's prophecies, the visions beheld by the prophet, in which gates of different kinds are enumerated, which obscurely refer to the different modes in which divine souls enter into a better world [Ezekiel 48]; and let them peruse also, from the Apocalypse of John, what is related of the city of the Divine, the heavenly Jerusalem, and of its foundations and gates [Revelation 21]. And if

they are capable of finding out also the road, which is indicated by symbols, of those who will march on to divine things, let them read the book of Moses entitled Numbers, and let them seek the help of one who is capable of initiating them into the meaning of the narratives concerning the encampments of the children of Israel; viz. of what sort those were which were arranged towards the east, as was the case with first; and what those towards the south-west and south; and what towards the sea; and what the last were, which were stationed towards the north. For they will see that there is in the respective places a meaning not to be lightly treated, . . . but they will distinguish in the encampments certain things relating to numbers that are enumerated, and which are specially adapted to each tribe, of which the present does not appear to us to be the proper time to speak.⁵

Strikingly, in this passage, Origen refers to the process of initiation and the instruction of the initiator through Ezekiel's visions and various sacred architecture or structures in the Bible. Note too that the master mystic Origen observed that he could not reveal more in the public context of his text. However, Martinism allows the seeker to proceed along such edifying lines.



Dutch illustration by Jan Luyken (1700), showing Origen teaching his students.



J. J. Dergh, The Israelites' Encampment in the Wilderness, 1866.

Sacred Diagrams for Our Spiritual Development

For the spiritual aspirant working in service for the welfare of others, known in Martinism as the Agent of Omneity, the Bible has many fascinating and intriguing description of sacred structures such as Noah's Ark, the Tabernacle of Moses, the Encampment in the Wilderness, the Temple of Solomon, Ezekiel's vision of the Wheels, and the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Some of these, such as Noah's Ark and Ezekiel's vision of the Wheels, intrigue many from the days of their childhood. As we mature, our early Inner attraction to these structures and allegories can come into full fruition in realization and illumination. Each of these structures is a sacred diagram for interior contemplation and instruction,⁶ a mandala-like psychocosmogram for initiation, and an instrument for effecting the maturation of the seeker and the evolvment of humanity, the Reintegration of All Beings, a central theme of Martinsim.

Endnotes

1. Harry Caplan, "The Four Senses of Scriptural Interpretation and the Medieval Theory of Preaching," *Speculum* IV (1929), 283.
2. Caplan, "Four Senses," 282. Beryl Smalley, "Stephen Langton and the Four Senses of Scripture," *Speculum* VI (1931), 60.
3. Adrian Snodgrass, *Architecture, Time and Eternity: Studies in the Stellar and Temporal Symbolism of Traditional Building*, (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1990), I, 298ff.
4. Caplan, "Four Senses," 282. Smalley, "Stephen Lang-ton," 60.
5. Origen, *Origen Contra Celsum* (Origen Against Celsum), II-VIII in *The Writings of Origen*, II, trans. Frederick Crombie. Ante-Nicene Library, XXIII. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1872. VI.XXIII.
6. Aryeh Kaplan, *Meditation and the Bible* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1978), 35-56 is helpful on the mysticism of Ezekiel's Vision of the Wheels (Ezekiel 1:1-2:2). Grover A. Zinn, Jr., "Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor," *History of Religions* 12 (1972): 317-341 is quite insightful on the mystical meaning of Noah's Ark (Genesis 6-9). Hugh McCague, "The Mystical Interpretation of Sacred Scriptures," Rosicrucian Podcast, July 1, 2007, <https://rosicrucian-podcasts.org/the-mystical-interpretation-of-sacred-scriptures-hugh-mccague-f-r-c-ph-d/>.



Simon de Myle, Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat, 1570.

Moments That Stop

by Provincial Master Michael Shaluly, SI

There are moments that stop
So we can take a look.
An instant to ponder why
Time stopped just now.
To see that there is much contained
In a brief fragment ignored.
To wonder if Divinity watches
Each breath we disregard,
And what might we say
If we knew each moment was holy.

