

No. 20 2020

Pantacle





Traditional Martinist Order

San Jose CA USA
www.martinists.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

First, I hope that you and those close to you are well and send you my warmest greetings.

This year we celebrate the twentieth issue of the *Pantacle*, the official magazine of the Traditional Martinist Order.

We continue our project of translating important Martinist texts into English with the publication of a new English translation of *Of Errors and of Truth*, written by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin in 1774. The Preface to this new translation and some excerpts are included in this issue.

Next we present “The Central Uncreated Fire Axis,” written by Provincial Master Michael Shaluly. This beautiful presentation is also available as a video at www.YouTube.com/RosicrucianTV. Then we share a Martinist manuscript entitled “The Great Year of Plato and the Theory of Ages,” which includes some fascinating details regarding the upcoming Grand Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn which will occur on December 21, 2020.

We hope you enjoy these writings.

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

Julie Scott 3:II

Julie Scott
Grand Master

Of Errors and of Truth

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin



Recently the Grand Heptad published *Of Errors and of Truth* in English. A complimentary copy of this book is available to Martinist members on the Member Home Page of www.martinists.org. The Preface to this book follows.

Preface

The original text for *Of Errors and of Truth* was written in Lyon, France in 1774, in a span of just four months, “by the kitchen fire, for there was no other at which I could warm myself,” according to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, who was 31 years old at the time.

It was released to the public in French in 1775, under the pseudonym of “The Unknown Philosopher,” *le philosophe inconnu*, the name under which all of Saint-Martin’s works were released during his lifetime.

Recently, a team of volunteers translated and reviewed the original text and edited the language for readability in English to aid the comprehension of contemporary students.

The original publication states it was printed in Edinburgh, but some biographers believe that was put there as a way to further obscure the text's origins beyond the pseudonymous author name. In obscuring the book's origins, Saint-Martin was following a tradition of the initiatic organizations of his era, which were often persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church.

Biographer Arthur Edward Waite, author of *The Life of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin* (London: Philip Wellby, 1901), writes that Saint-Martin explained his reluctance to attach his real name to the text was due to dealing “with truths and principles handed down from the beginning and in the custody of a small number of elect persons.”

Saint-Martin's concerns about his first book were well-founded, as *Of Errors and of Truth* landed after its release on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the list of books the Roman Catholic Church deemed forbidden to read.

Additionally, biographer Jacques Matter, author of *Saint-Martin Le Philosophe Inconnu* (Paris: Didier, 1862), quotes Saint-Martin as writing: “January 18, 1798, the day I reached my fiftieth year, I learned that my Book *Of Errors and of Truth* had been condemned in Spain by the Inquisition, as being prejudicial to the Divinity and to the repose of governments.”

Regardless of the church's dictum, the book was widely circulated in its era, and was translated into German as early as 1782. Saint-Martin wrote in his *Portait philosophique (Philosophical Portrait)* (1807) that Catherine the Great asked about *Of Errors and of Truth* and had the Bishop of Moscow give an account of the book to her.

There were likely many inspirations for this book, like the ongoing Enlightenment and Saint-Martin's dislike for the rise of atheistic ideas,

as well as the beginnings of the discontent in society that gave birth to the violent French Revolution.

Saint-Martin said: “It was at Lyon that I wrote the work *Of Errors and of Truth*. I wrote it partly to keep myself busy, and because I was indignant with the so-called Philosophers, having read in [Nicolas Antoine] Boulanger that the origin of religions was to be sought in the fear inspired by the catastrophes of nature.”

The book was also almost surely inspired by the transition in 1774 of Saint-Martin’s mentor, Martinèz de Pasqually, who wrote *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings*, a book of fundamental importance to Martinists. Biographer Matter writes that Saint-Martin “in his earliest writings...followed the ideas of Martinèz.”

Saint-Martin was writing this book while living in Pasqually’s intellectual base of Lyon at the same time as Jean-Baptiste Willermoz, another famous mystic of his era who contributed to the development of the high ranks of freemasonry. The two of them were disciples of Pasqually and his *Ordre des Élus-Cohen* (Order of Elect Priests), the initiatic tradition founded by Pasqually in 1754. The disciples eventually split after Pasqually’s transition over differences in their spiritual outlook. Whereas Willermoz believed in a more cerebral approach to spirituality, Saint-Martin believed in the way of the heart and a more humble approach that was heavy in prayer and imploration. In short, Saint-Martin believed in looking inward in order to get closer to the Divine and this book is an initial expression of that idea.

About *Of Errors and Of Truth*, biographer Matter writes that Saint-Martin had lofty goals for his first book:

A treatise on the great question of the nature of our errors and their cause must necessarily also deal with the nature and sources of truth, and indicate the means and the ways that lead to them. That is to say that a complete work on this vast subject would be nothing less than a system of philosophy, a theory of human intelligence, a complete analysis of human faculties and a serious search for the best job a person could do.

Written more than a decade before he discovered and became influenced by the works of German mystic Jacob Boehme, *Of Errors and of Truth* represents the first phase of Saint-Martin's philosophical education. Biographer Waite writes that the book was "designed to recall [people] to the real principles of knowledge."

The overall thesis of the book is that a person can attain knowledge of their Creator, of Creation, and of the fundamental laws of the material and spiritual Universe through knowing their own nature. This idea stresses the importance of free will, which can lead to a person's emancipation when used for good, or downfall when used for bad.

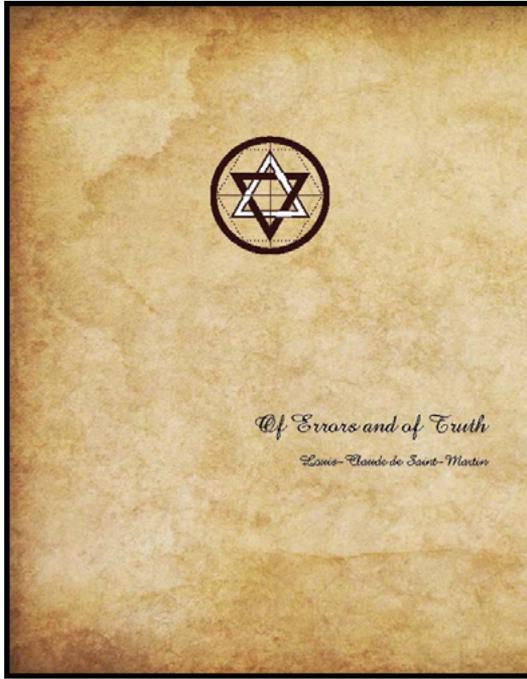
It is in this book that Saint-Martin begins his personal exploration of the idea of Humanity's Fall and the possibility of its Reintegration into its glorious origin, a theme that is central to Pasqually's work. By guiding people to the "real principles of knowledge" Saint-Martin said this book "may enlighten them upon the false ideas they have received about the Truth, as well as on the weak and dangerous weapons that unsafe hands have employed to defend it."



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Excerpts from *Of Errors and of Truth*



It is a very distressing spectacle when one desires to contemplate people, to see them all at once tormented by the desire to know, not perceiving the reason for anything, and yet having the audacity and temerity to insist upon giving reasons for everything. Instead of considering the darkness that surrounds them, and beginning by probing its depths, people proceed not only as if they were sure to dispel it, but also as if there existed no obstacles between Science and themselves. Soon, attempting to create a Truth, people dare put the Truth in the place of that which they should respect in silence and about which they have at present almost no right other than to desire and wait for it.

And, in fact, if people are entirely separated from the Light, how will they be able to light, on their own, the flambeau that must serve them as a guide? How will they be able to attain by their own faculties

a Science that will remove all of their doubts? Do not these glimmers and appearances of reality, which people believe they are discovering in the delusions of their imaginations, vanish under the simplest examination? And having brought forth phantoms without life and substance, do they not see themselves forced to replace them by new illusions, which soon after follow the same course and leave them stuck in the most dreadful uncertainty?

Fortunate, nevertheless, if their weakness was the only cause of their mistakes! Their situation then would be much less deplorable because being unable, by their nature, to find peace instead of truth, the more painful the trials would be and the more they should serve to bring people back to the only end suitable for them.

But their errors still have their source in their unrestrained will; one perceives that, far from employing to their advantage what little strength they have left, they nearly always direct it against the Law of their Being. One perceives, I say, that being restrained by this obscurity around them, it is by their own hand that they place the blindfold upon their eyes. Then, being unable to catch the least glimmer, despair or fear overcomes them, and they throw themselves into dangerous paths which remove them forever from their true course.

It is, therefore, by this mixture of weakness and imprudence that the ignorance of people perpetuates itself. Such is the source of their continual inconsistencies, so that, wasting their days in useless and vain efforts, one should be little surprised that their work either produces no fruit or that which is bitter.

However, when I recall here the mistakes and imprudent conduct of my fellow humans, I am far from desiring to debase them in their own eyes; my most ardent wish, on the contrary, would be that they never lose sight of the greatness which they are capable of. May I at least contribute by trying to dispel before them those difficulties which hinder them, to stimulate their courage, and to show them the way which leads to the object of their desires!

With the first glance that people direct upon themselves, they will experience no difficulty in feeling and admitting that there must exist

for them a Science or an evident Law, since one exists for all Beings, although it is not universally in all Beings, since even in the midst of our weaknesses, ignorance, and mistakes, we occupy ourselves only with the search for peace and light.

In that case, though the efforts that people make daily to reach the object of their search succeed so rarely, one must not think that this goal is imaginary, but only that people are mistaken about the road that leads to it, and that they are, consequently, in the greatest of need since they do not even know the way by which they must travel.

Consequently, one may agree henceforth that the actual misfortune of humankind is not to be ignorant of the existence of truth, but that they are mistaken about the nature of this truth, because in reality, the very ones who have pretended to deny it and destroy it have never believed that they could succeed without having another truth to replace it. And in fact, they have donned their fanciful opinions concerning force, immutability, universality – in a word, concerning all the attributes of a real and self-existent Being. They have strongly felt that a Truth could not be a truth without essentially existing, without being invariable and absolutely independent, deriving solely from itself the source of its existence; this is because, if it had received it from another Principle, the latter could return it to nothingness or to the inaction from which it would have drawn it.

Thus, those who have fought against truth have proved by their own systems that they possessed the indestructible idea of Truth. Therefore, let us repeat, what torments most people on this earth is not so much knowing whether Truth exists, but knowing what this Truth is.

But what disturbs this feeling in people, and so often obscures the vivid rays of this light in them, is the continuous mixture of good and evil, of light and darkness, of harmony and disorder that they perceive in the Universe and in themselves. This universal contrast disturbs them and spreads a confusion in their thoughts which they find difficult to untangle. Both distressed and surprised by so strange an assemblage, if they want to explain it, they surrender themselves to the most disastrous opinions, so that, soon ceasing to perceive this same Truth, they lose all the confidence they had in it. The greatest service that one could render

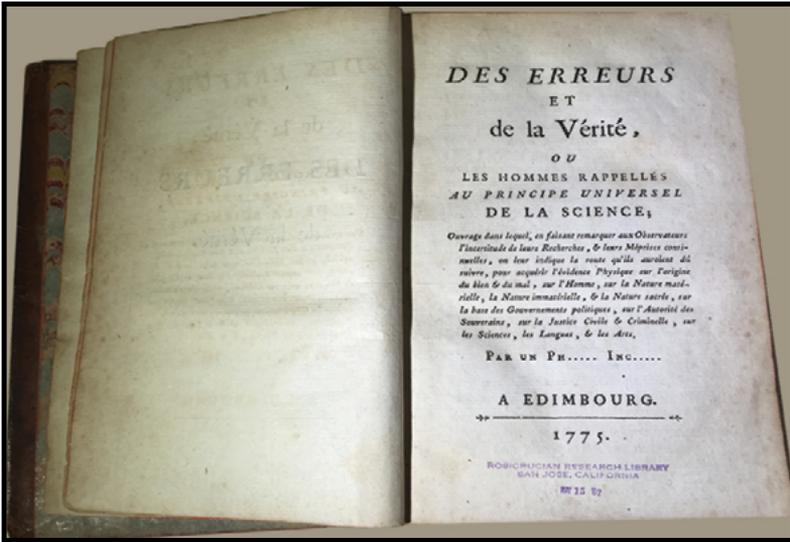
them in the painful situation in which they find themselves, would therefore be to persuade them that they could know the source and origin of this disorder which astonishes them, and, above all, to prevent them from reaching any conclusions contrary to this Truth which they recognize, love, and cannot do without.

It is certain that, when considering the revolutions and conflicts that befall all Beings in Nature, people must have acknowledged that it was subject to the influence of good and evil, which necessarily brought them to recognize the existence of two opposite Principles. Nothing, in fact, could be wiser than this observation and nothing more just than the consequence they have drawn from it. Why have they not been so fortunate when they have attempted to explain the nature of these two Principles? Why have they given too narrow a base to their science which forces them to continually destroy the systems they wish to support?

It is because, after having neglected the true means they possessed of instructing themselves, they have been inconsiderate enough to speak for themselves about that sacred subject, as if, far from the abode of light, people could be assured of their judgments. Also, after having recognized the two Principles, they have been unable to recognize the difference.

Sometimes people have accorded to these Principles an equality of force and antiquity that renders them rivals of each other by placing them on the same level of power and grandeur. Sometimes, in truth, they have declared evil as being inferior to good in every respect; but they have contradicted themselves when they wished to understand the nature of evil and its origin.

Sometimes they have not feared to place evil and good in one and the same Principle, believing that they were honoring this Principle by attributing to it an exclusive power which renders it, without exception, the creator of all things, meaning that this Principle is simultaneously parent and tyrant, destroying accordingly what it elevates; it is evil and unjust by force of its magnitude and opposition, and consequently it punishes itself for upholding its own justice.



First edition of DES ERREURS et de la Vérité (Of Errors and of Truth) in the Rare Books Room of the Rosicrucian Research Library at Rosicrucian Park.

Finally, tired of wavering in these uncertainties, without being able to find a solid idea, a few have denied the existence of either Principle, endeavoring to believe that everything progressed without law and order. Being unable to explain that which existed as good and evil, they have stated there was neither good nor evil.

When, on the strength of this assertion, they have been asked what was, therefore, the origin of all those precepts universally prevailing on Earth, of this uniform inner voice which, so to speak, forces all people to adopt them, and which, even in the midst of their aberrations, causes people to feel that they have a destination far superior to the objects occupying their attention, then these observers, continually blinding themselves, have treated the most natural feelings as habits. They have attributed to organization and mechanical laws all of humanity's thoughts and faculties. From this they have pretended that, by reason of humanity's weakness, great physical events have at all times produced in people fear and terror; that continually experiencing upon their feeble selves the superiority of the elements and Beings by which they are surrounded, they imagined that a certain indefinable power governed and upset Nature at will. Further, from

this people created for themselves a succession of fanciful principles of subordination and order, punishments and rewards, which education and examples perpetuated, but without considerable differences relative to circumstances and climates.

Then, by taking as proof the continuous variety of usages and the arbitrary customs of peoples, the bad faith and the rivalry of Instructors, as well as the conflict of human opinions – the fruit of doubt and ignorance – it has been easy for them to demonstrate that people, in fact, have only found uncertainty and contradictions surrounding themselves, from which they have believed themselves authorized to affirm anew that there exists nothing that is true – that is, nothing exists in essence – since, according to what has been already propounded, existence and truth are one and the same.

These are, however, the means that these imprudent Masters have employed to proclaim and justify their doctrine. These are the poisoned sources from which have flowed all the scourges besetting people upon Earth and tormenting them even more than their natural misfortunes.

Therefore, how much errors and suffering would these imprudent Masters have spared us if, instead of searching for truth in the appearances of material nature, they had decided to search within themselves, if they had attempted to explain matter by humanity and not humanity by matter, and, armed with courage and patience, they had pursued in the calm of their imagination, the discovery of this light that we all desire with so much ardor. Perhaps it would not have been in their power to withstand its brilliance at first sight. Struck by the splendor which surrounds it, and employing all their faculties to contemplate it, they would not have thought to pronounce in advance upon its nature nor desire to make it known to their fellow humans before having taken its rays for their guide.

When people, after having resisted courageously, succeed in overcoming all that is contrary to their being, they find they are at peace with themselves and, consequently, at peace with all nature. But, if through negligence or being tired of combat, they allow the slightest spark of a fire foreign to their own essence to enter within themselves, they suffer and languish until they are entirely delivered from it.

The Central Uncreated Fire Axis

by Michael Shaluly, SI

While writing this article, a member asked about the subject matter. Upon hearing that it would be focused on the Central Uncreated Fire Axis, the member's eyes glazed over, obviously unsure what this title meant, or if it would be something understandable and worth the time to read. This was an immediate object lesson about the word symbolism we use at times as mystics. This student's mind, and more importantly, something deep within, was immediately at work to try to untangle the words heard. While the Central Uncreated Fire Axis might at first sound obscure, a little introspection opens to an understanding that there is a central uncreated fire axis at work on all levels of being. This is word symbolism, that mysterious and hidden style of language that is helpful to speak to a different level within us.



Look at the image of the sunrise over a beautiful landscape, one that blends nature and human creation. At the center of this scene is the light of the sun, showering rays of warmth and light to the arms of acceptance here on earth and in this field of consciousness. Take a moment now to absorb this scene. Place yourself within it and take in all the beauty that is guided to your physical senses...the aromas, the warmth, the coolness of the grass. Just relax and be here. Do this for a minute or so.

What happens to your physical senses at moments like this? Certainly, some are heightened. Yet enjoying the moment, absorbed in a calming place with beauty surrounding you and beseeching you to enjoy her, quiets certain physical ambitions and raises our physical senses toward gratitude. This creates a tranquil feeling that goes beyond words. We may say in our minds things like “this is beautiful,” or “I wish so and so could see this,” but beyond that is something more, a joy we cannot quite reach but want to. It is wordless, a different kind of language that tugs your soul, bringing both peace to your being yet a longing for that deeper realization of beauty. If the light were not there, if there were total darkness in its place, this scene would not be. Our very existence as human beings depends upon light and all that light symbolizes...warmth, fire, desire, change, activity. We can symbolically and realistically say that we live in a world of light, a light dictated by the fire of the sun at the center of our solar system. We can also recognize that there seems to be some directing force or guidance to that light that is all pervasive. No one and no thing is denied these life giving rays. They are directed by a pure, unconditional, and selfless desire that exists in our universe. Somewhere deep inside of ourselves, we recognize this selfless giving, and a desire wells up within us to reach for this pureness. This desire hints to us of the central uncreated fire axis which guides us towards our efforts to find our creator.

The central uncreated fire axis is a realm that brings the creative fire of our creator into all the various worlds in which we exist. It unites the various levels of consciousness and physical matter to our inner and outer worlds. This fire axis is a concept introduced within the mystical teachings of the Traditonal Martinist Order. The Order is a mystical school that is associated with our AMORC teachings, though using a different form of guidance. It is often referred to as the “Way of the Heart,” and we will talk more about that later. However, the central uncreated fire axis, like so many mystical principles, is also very real and a part of our existence. It threads its way through AMORC, through other mystical teachings, and through our ever-evolving scientific understanding of our world, as we will show.

The human kingdom is a realm of pondering. We have no choice but to follow our instinct to gain an understanding of our existence, which

we can argue is an attempt to understand consciousness, our awareness of visible and invisible creation. As our ability to understand and work with our environment has increased over thousands of years, we have developed means of protection and self-care that allows us more time to study and delve into who and what we are. With more time on our hands, we have developed instruments to help our pondering minds. Today, utilizing instruments that continue to advance and standing upon centuries of human discovery, we recognize a vibrant universe in and around us, large and small, leading scientists, mystics, religious leaders, and laymen all to search using different means for answers to intriguing questions – Where does the energy come from that allows our universe to continually expand? Does this moving, living universe randomly operate? Or is there a form of consciousness everywhere, directing everything? How are we and our human consciousness related to this everywhere consciousness?



While we are unable to prove that there is conscious directing of the Cosmos, we certainly know there are invisible impulses directing universal movement and structure. Consider the work of a scientist by the name of Vera Rubin. She was a renowned astronomer who died in 2016 at the age of 88. She studied and tested the laws of gravity as they related to the movement of celestial bodies and she is credited with revealing the existence of an invisible force outside of gravity that seems to hold galaxies together.

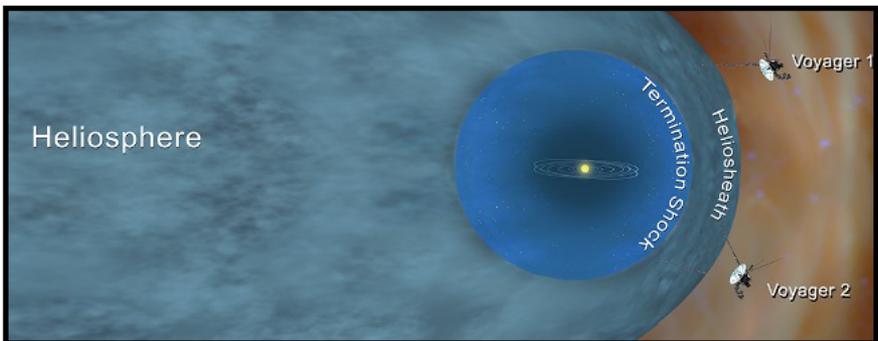
Her work showed that in our solar system, the outer planets move more slowly around the sun than inner ones. This is consistent with the laws of gravity in that the gravity of the center, the sun, has a greater gravitational pull on objects closer to it. For further analysis, she observed the stars in distant galaxies.



Obviously, stars that were more distant from the center of the galaxy should move more slowly than the stars closest to the center. After many observations, Dr. Rubin found that this was not the case. The outer stars moved as fast, and sometimes faster than, the stars in the center of the galaxy. Further, some of these stars were so distant from the center that, if they depended on gravity alone, they would be thrown off into space, as there would not be enough gravity to hold them in place. Yet, stay in place they did. Thus, the theory of dark matter and dark energy was born, combining to make up 90 percent of our universe, with solid things making up a very small percentage. It is this invisible force that seems to bind things together. It is a demonstration of a creative force, of a consciousness that is invisible to our physical observations but is very apparent in its application. Thus, we see a conscious guide to our universe. We see it in our solar system; we see it in our planet; we see it in our physical bodies. As above so below...what holds our physical bodies together?

Our teachings talk of the law of cohesion. It is interesting to note that as long as the Vital Life Force or consciousness is present, some invisible force holds our bodies together. Yet once this vital life force

leaves the body with the last breath, this invisible force weakens and retreats, allowing the physical body to eventually decay back to the dust of the earth. It is our conscious self, occupying our body, that arguably creates this invisible force. Further, our physical bodies function with an autonomic nervous system, sort of a dark matter or energy controlling and directing the functioning of our organs and our cells. It is not our human thoughts that guide this system, it is something beyond that. Might there be some form of an autonomic consciousness present in the universe holding all things together and giving them the impulse to function and continue as they do? There are many relationships we find in the vast expanse we live within, and these relationships extend and attach to the different realms of life, connecting the visible with the invisible, the physical to the spiritual. We certainly find evidence of the reality of the ancient saying: As above, so below, as within, so without.



And what about a central uncreated fire axis? Might there be a physical form of this that relates to us physically and spiritually? Let us consider the influence of our Sun. In August 2012, the Voyager 1 spacecraft escaped the bonds of our solar system, the first craft ever to do this. It is now in interstellar space after some 43 years of travel. Scientists knew when it escaped our solar system because the energy of our solar system bubble, or heliosphere, tumbled, and galactic cosmic rays spiked. It was the first time we have witnessed an energy shift from the influence of our sun to the influence of interstellar space. It was an object lesson that all things within our solar system are interconnected, both with the measurable and visible and with the immeasurable and invisible.

In November 2018, Voyager 2 also escaped the protective bubble of the heliosphere and joined Voyager 1 on the journey into interstellar space. The craft experienced something called termination shock, signifying the boundary marking one of the outer limits of the Sun's influence, where, measurably, the solar wind dramatically slows.

It is possible to conceive of an actual central fire axis with the sun at the center. All of us, all creatures, all planets, all forms of life, conscious and unconscious, live in the sun. Our sun is not just a bright point, it is a source of light, life and warmth for us, us being everything contained within its sphere of influence. It is the central point of a very real physical axis, as you can see here. When our TMO monographs relate to us the influence of the planets, it is in some ways symbolic, but it is also real. You are not separate from these elements, but a necessary part of them. Our sun and planets, with the heliosphere and surrounding aura of the Oort cloud, are indeed like a living cell in the vacuum of space. You live in and are a part of this living vital cell. Within this solar system in which we live, there is indeed a central uncreated fire axis that continues to live, expand, and create.

The elements of individual cells exert and receive influences within their realm. Here too is a central uncreated fire axis that continues to create. As above, so below, as within, so without! You create within the light of the sun, even as the invisible forces of the sun continue to animate your every cell and your movements.

Relax now with a few deep breaths, in and out. Focus on your heartbeat – recognize now that the force at work in your sympathetic system that allows this rhythm to occur is the same force at work throughout the universe, giving rhythm and life to the world we perceive. This simple exercise of universal awareness will reveal a great deal to you about you. Acknowledge this divine source at work within and without you as often as you can, and a spiritual consciousness will grow to your awareness through the way of the heart. Perhaps this is the pathway of the fire axis. We are guided towards spiritual consciousness as we develop as human beings; we can experience rejuvenation of our entire being through our elevated work with that animated light or fire that we find animating everything! Our consciousness flows upon a fire

axis, constantly creating and transforming our mundane thoughts into the creative regenerating power of pure desire and pure love.

Each of us know that at some point during our current incarnation, we became conscious. Try to go back now to one of your very first memories. Magically, when we were very young and from somewhere within us, a spark was lit, and we became self-conscious of ourselves and of our surroundings. Where were we before that? Where or what was our consciousness before our realization of this world? With this experiment, we can surmise that we, whatever we are, came into this world and into the body that we occupy. We also know that our consciousness developed through different stages, and at some point, we will leave this body and return to that unknown place from whence we came, and perhaps our consciousness will further change and develop. This gives us evidence that that conscious something that allows us to be and perceive is something other than our bodies. This fact of birth and death is at the root of mystical and scientific inquiry, and of course also at the root of the searching of the major religions of the world. In fact, the mystery of our coming and going into and from this world is a question that tugs at the heart and soul of all of us. Somewhere inside of every human being, we hear that voice within that tells us we are more than the physical presence and name that we have.

Yet, even though we have evidence to tell us that our real self is invisible, it is hard for us to get past that great illusion we have as human beings that we are a physical entity. Even us as practicing mystics face the daunting task of getting past this illusion. How do we make our way past our name, away from this “name” level of recognition in the world, to a higher understanding and living? In our attempts to understand who and what we are, we often utilize symbols to convey meanings and concepts to our objective consciousness. Some of these symbols are natural, such as the sun rising, and some are man-made, such as paintings or poetry. Some are a combination of man-made and natural symbols. Whatever form they may take, symbols are not static in our consciousness, they are dynamic. They convey certain principles to us, and as our understanding of these principles expands, so too does our view of these symbols expand and grow. We could say that symbols are always in motion within our consciousness, finding a different way

of reaching the depths of our beings and allowing that subtle voice found there to be heard.

The central uncreated fire axis is such a symbol, a concept within the TMO monographs that contains many lessons for us as mystics to work with. The wording elicits imagery of our consciousness continually changing, creating, and re-creating through the presence of an ever burning and transformative fire. Fire is a force that quickly changes the structure of things through heat. Thus, these four words, central uncreated fire axis, are a prime example of the power of our study and our work with symbolism to open different channels of learning within our consciousness.

The TMO is itself a grand symbol of humanity's efforts to understand our divine origin. If you look at the TMO from the outside, as an observer, you see that it is a group of people that get together, study, discuss, perform simple ceremonies, all centered around learning about the inner self. All the activities are designed to evoke an inspiration from within. It is a school devoted not only to intellectual study, but also to an effort to allow knowledge from within each student to make its way out to the conscious mind. Therefore, we say that the TMO is the Way of the Heart, for it is from the spiritual heart that true wisdom resides, where a different language must be used and time must be given to inspire this wisdom to manifest. We could say that the TMO is itself a fire axis, challenging the illusions of our everyday thoughts as to what life is, and transforming them through the fires of inner inquiry until we recognize those illusions as illusions.

You will also hear the TMO referred to as a form of Christian Mysticism, a method whereby we analyze our inner fire that gives us consciousness and animates us, so that we can eventually reveal to our conscious mind the Christ Consciousness that resides there. Once this Consciousness is revealed to our mortal consciousness, we then may embark upon the way of the Christ here on Earth. With this recognition, the world is looked upon from a higher perspective. We could say that through the contemplation of the central uncreated fire axis of our inner self, we come to a realization that we are living in an uncreated fire axis, and it is up to us to create within this world. Our

material world then becomes a great symbol of divine love, guiding us towards a reintegration with this love. Within our teachings, we use symbolism to guide us towards this understanding, for many concepts that we must ponder in our inward journey often defy words. The Central Uncreated Fire Axis, which is contemplated in our first degree Martinist monographs, is such a symbol, combining natural, symbolic, and spiritual elements.

In mystical circles, when we speak of fire, we often think of using heat to regenerate and change something from one state to another. This is the great work of alchemy, that of transforming the dross into gold. We use the vivifying power of fire on physical things to change their structural properties and to get to the root cause of those things. Yet scientists and mystics know that if we were to get to the root of any physical thing, we would find a spiritual energy that is responsible for the existence of it. These physical things exist upon the uncreated fire axis of our creator until we direct the energies of Earth and form them. We are creating constantly with the fire our Creator has provided us.

What is this fire our Creator has provided us? We have been given light and consciousness from a higher source. We too are a mystical fire while we are incarnate on Earth. Without this internal fire, we would not have the light of consciousness, nor would we have direction and purpose to co-create within this world. It is through this inner fire that we live as human beings, and it is this inner fire that guides us, first unconsciously through our ego, and later, consciously through our higher self. As part of this ever-evolving fire, all things are consumed and transformed. We consume this world with our five physical senses. We see it, taste it, smell it, feel it, and hear it. From our physical interpretations, an inner understanding is reached. Thus, through our consummation, we ultimately spiritualize this material world through our physical experience leading to mental thought and contemplation, and finally to a spiritualization. We consume the elements of this world and we give back these physical elements, transformed and spiritualized through our DNA. We mentally consume knowledge and create avenues for this knowledge to grow and recreate continuously, allowing this physical world to speak to us with the language of science. We spiritually consume love, for love, whether we recognize this or

not, is the guiding influence of human beings. We consume love in many ways, and through the inspiration of love, we recreate art, poetry, music, and all things that inspire humankind to something greater than itself. As we experience love here on Earth, our contemplation of love continues, our understanding of the intricacy of love grows, and we are drawn closer to the pure, selfless love that animates all things, just as our sun selflessly and without question, gives life and love to all that surrounds us.



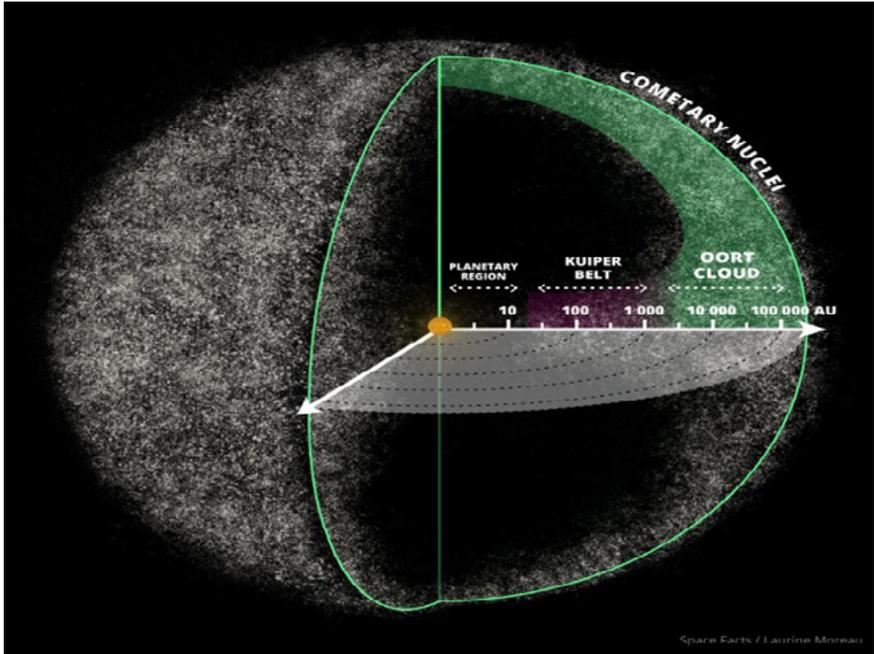
Indeed, we live with and through a central uncreated fire axis, and if we silence ourselves and become aware of it, we can see its functioning. All throughout our lives, we cycle through different phases. These phases occur hourly, daily, monthly, yearly, multi-yearly, and on and on. If we establish a greater mind-body communion, then we can more easily recognize these various cycles and renewals that occur in us and around us. This naturally leads to a deeper recognition that these cycles are integral to an inspired movement we see throughout all of creation, and thus we begin to see that we, through the fire of consciousness, are a part of this creation and the movement that takes place in it that makes it what it is. We are a part of “what is”, and we are inseparable from “what is.” Further, we have a hand in molding “what is,” which gives us a unique place upon the hierarchy of being. This connection to creation is the central uncreated fire axis, and our recognition of it is the beginning of our ability to create with its divine fire that is everywhere and that flows through us. It is this divine fire that we use to create and re-create, and this fire is our key to a reintegration with the Divine.

Our mystical heritage stems from a subtle urging of our consciousness to understand more of our surroundings and of ourselves. The TMO approaches this subtle urging by addressing us as men and women of desire, a pure desire from our heart to understand our true self, rather than a desire for physical gratification only. Thus, we must recognize desire in all its forms, and through the fire of study, determination, meditation, and will, transform this desire into the pure desire of selflessness in the service of Omneity.

We are creating this world in which we live, and we are responsible for that which we create. That physical world outside of us is not outside of us, but a part of us. We have an inherent responsibility in building that world with a recognition of the spiritual essence that is at its foundation. In the illusory nature of our material world nothing is as it seems; we cannot see the vibratory nature of things, yet we know all things vibrate, otherwise we would perceive nothing. Thus, we affect the vibratory nature of things not just with our physical actions, but also with our thoughts. Let our thoughts be spiritual so that nature herself grows spiritually.

In mystical studies we experience concepts that are difficult to understand and even more difficult to express to others. It is hard to define something that has a profound effect upon you, that is everywhere all the time, that is more a part of you than anything that you perceive, and yet is unperceivable to all of your physical and mental senses. Oftentimes, a mystical concept is but a subtle though powerful and very real inspiration within you. This is the central uncreated fire axis at work within you at a higher level. It is operating within you now so that you can raise your consciousness. Just as your body's autonomic system is guided by an unseen force, so is your mystical journey in this world also guided by a mystical autonomic system.

Our sun is at the core of a heliosphere surrounded by an aura called the Oort cloud. Imagine you are above our solar cell looking down at it. From your vantage point, you see this solar system as a cell in the void of space. It has a luminescence to it from its nucleus, our sun. See it now gently floating in the vastness of space. As you observe more closely, you see deep within this giant cell and towards its center,



the planets elegantly circling around the sun. You recognize that this giant cell is alive, animated, and vibrant, following a course of action unbeknownst to us. Observe how the rays of the sun illuminate this system. We live here. This Cosmic cell moves, expands, and breaths with us and we function in rhythm with it. While visualizing this, ask yourself: where is your consciousness? Your consciousness can rise above and beyond your physical body. While we are incarnate, we get to experience a limited consciousness that also gets to experience an illumination into a higher consciousness. What a wonderful privilege for human beings! This higher consciousness rides upon that central uncreated fire axis; it is always there, and you are always connected to it. This is where inspiration of your higher spiritual nature comes from. When you rise above material illusions, you see this Cosmic consciousness, which is everywhere. You live in it! Your consciousness is everywhere.

Our TMO speaks of the Grand Architect of the Universe, and through this Grand Architect, there are drawn up many relationships and hierarchies. There is that Architect above, and there is that Architect below. Within you is an Inner Architect. This Inner Architect

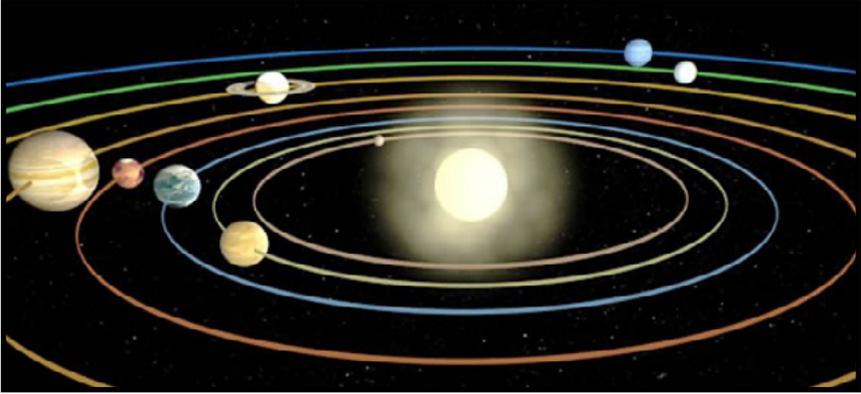


is connected to the Grand Architect, through the central uncreated fire axis. It is YOU who must create from the fire given to you. It is YOU who has access to this flowing, creative energy that is thought beyond your thought, knowing beyond your knowing, truth beyond your truth. Our efforts with our mystical work, from study and application, to meditation and visualization, is to discipline the objective self so that we can discern that creative fire, be illumined by it, and have it manifest here on Earth.

Brothers and sisters, we live in an ever-spiraling flow of energy. This energy is creative beyond our imagination, and it is ever there, patient, selfless, always burning and waiting for us to create with it from the uncreated source. We know inwardly that we have the power to direct this energy as co-creators. Recognize that it guides you and is guided to you by the creator; feel its ever-presence, and consciously attune with it and work with it during your lifetime here on Earth. Then the central uncreated fire axis becomes a tool in your hands to do great good, and to utilize the consciousness that guides the universe to assist you in discovering who and what you truly are.

The Great Year of Plato and the Theory of Ages

From a Martinist Manuscript



Plato taught the concept known as the Great Year or the Perfect Year, a concept that was shared by Aristotle. Since in the West we owe the most ancient account of this theory to the founder of the Academy, let us cite an extract from the *Timaeus* regarding it (sections 39cde):

In this wise and for these reasons were generated Night and Day, which are the revolution of the one and most intelligent circuit; and Month, every time that the Moon having completed her own orbit overtakes the Sun; and Year, as often as the Sun has completed his own orbit. Of the other stars the revolutions have not been discovered by men (save for a few out of the many); wherefore they have no names for them, nor do they compute and compare their relative measurements, so that they are not aware, as a rule, that the “wanderings” of these bodies, which are hard to calculate and of wondrous complexity, constitute Time. Nevertheless, it is still quite possible to perceive that the complete number of Time fulfills the Complete Year when all the eight circuits, with their relative speeds, finish together and come to a head, when measured by the revolution of the Same and Similarly-moving. In this wise and for these reasons were generated all those stars which turn themselves about as they travel through Heaven, to the end that this Universe might be as similar as possible to the perfect and intelligible Living Creature in respect of its imitation of the Eternal Nature thereof.

According to this citation from the writings of Plato, the Great Year or Perfect Year is the period of time that it takes for all the planets of our solar system to come back to their initial positions, as a prelude to a new cycle. The major problem was to establish this time period. The Pythagoreans estimated that it was approximately 10,000 years. According to Heraclitus of Ephesus (576-480 BCE), it was at least 10,800 years, a number obtained by multiplying 360 by 30. On the other hand, the Romans Cicero and Tacitus both thought that it was 12,954 years. Nearer to our time, a Christian author of the third century, Saint Hippolytus, guessed the symbolic number of 7,777 years.

Let us now approach the topic from an astronomical perspective. Every year, at the spring equinox, around March 21, the Sun intersects the celestial equator at a point called the Vernal Point, and appears in front of a particular group of stars, a constellation in the zodiac. However, careful observation shows that from one year to the next, the Sun moves in relation to this group of stars. This shift from the vernal point, called the Precession of the Equinoxes, takes place successively through the twelve constellations of the zodiac. The discovery of this phenomenon is attributed to the Greek astronomer Hipparchus, in the second century BCE. However, the Babylonians and the Pythagoreans already had knowledge of it.

In conformity with the previous explanations, the Great Year is the period of time that it takes for the vernal point to travel through the twelve constellations of the zodiac. Since the zodiac forms a circle of 360 degrees and the precession of the equinoxes moves the Sun by one degree every 72 years, this Great Year therefore lasts 25,920 years (72 times 360) and comprises twelve “months” or more specifically twelve Ages. Some esoterists attribute to each Age a duration of 2,160 years (25,920 divided by 12). Others, on the basis of the constellations established by astronomy, consider that the Ages do not have the same duration. Regardless, it is generally admitted that the passage of the vernal point into a new zodiacal constellation marks a change of Ages. Currently, it is now leaving the Pisces constellation and is entering Aquarius, allowing us to suppose that we are approaching the Age of Aquarius. As we will see later, authors do not necessarily agree about the exact date of entrance into this Age.

If it is true that the Great Year has a duration of 25,920 years, the question is to know exactly when it begins. From an astrological point of view, we can consider that it begins when a significant number of the planets in our solar system align in the same zodiacal sign, forming what is called a stellium. An archetypal figure *par excellence*, a stellium involving the majority of the planets is exceptional and constitutes a sort of return to the Ouroboros, the mythical serpent with its head and tail joined. We can say that this configuration is an ideal organization of the planets, with all the positive influences that result from it. In traditional language, it is considered the Cosmic Egg, which contains the seed of the past, the present, and the future of Creation.

As an example, we know that in late February 7 BCE, six planets (the Sun, the Moon, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus) formed a stellium in the zodiacal sign Pisces. In addition, the planets Jupiter and Saturn came together at 20 degrees, fifty-five minutes in Pisces on May 27, 7 BCE. Whenever these two planets meet, (which they do approximately every 20 years), astrologically they form a special type of conjunction called a grand conjunction or great conjunction. Grand conjunctions affect society in significant ways because they signal the start of a new era in social structures as well as culture, beliefs, economics, and politics.

Some mystics and astrologers think that this Pisces stellium and grand conjunction marked the entrance of humanity into the Age of Pisces and coincided with the birth of its avatar, the Christ Jesus. We also need to mention the famous stellium of February 3 through 5, 1962, when the Moon moved through Aquarius, increasing the number of planets in this sign to seven (the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn). This does not mean that the Age of Aquarius began at that time but does indicate humanity was already in a transition period between the Age of Pisces and the Age of Aquarius, a transitory period that probably will extend until the twenty-second century or even later.

When we study the history of humanity, measured against the precession of the equinoxes, which is the inverse of the usual succession of the signs of the zodiac, we notice that cultural and religious values specific to great periods correspond very well to the characteristics that traditional astrology attributes to the precessional Ages. Thus, during

Jupiter and Saturn will form a grand conjunction in Aquarius on December 21, 2020 (the same day as the solstice). This grand conjunction begins a 200-year cycle in which all but one of the Jupiter-Saturn meetings will occur in zodiacal air signs (Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius), which will increase humanity's focus on the mind and ideas, especially in communication, relations, and technology.

the Age of Cancer, placed under the sign of water, coastal and lakeside towns developed and gave rise to societies with matriarchal tendencies, thus marking the origin of the family and home. At that time, oral tradition predominated. The Age of Gemini, which succeeded it, marked the expansion of civilization and the birth of writing, notably under the form of cuneiform tablets and also the birth of arithmetic and medicine. The migration of populations developed significantly, as well as trade and commerce.

The next Age, Taurus, constituted the starting point for the history of humanity. This Age gave birth to religions in Egypt, Crete, Chaldea, and Assyria in which a bull was a symbol of Divinity. According to what Hesiod said in his *Theogony*, a sacred bull represents Poseidon. In *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, Homer said that Poseidon is honored by the sacrifices of black bulls. Plato, in the *Critias*, confirms this practice. In Egypt, the Apis bull is the emblem of Ra. It represents the god of light, of force and of creative power. In Persia, the bull was considered a sacred animal and was worshiped. The Spanish bullfights are derived from this cult, notably of the *taurobole*, which consists in sacrificing bulls. The Age of Taurus is also marked by a great expansion of the arts. Copper, characteristic of Venus, the planet of Taurus, was one of the metals most often used for craftworks.

According to the law of cycles, humanity left the Age of Taurus to enter the Age of Aries. In fact, we notice that around 2000 BCE, the worship of the ram Amun replaced the worship of the Apis bull.

All of Egypt was placed under the aegis of this symbol: the temple of Karnak has at its front an aisle bordered by a double row of rams, and on the tomb of Seti I a ram stands with its head surmounted by a solar disk. Certain pharaohs then took the name Ramses, a word derived from *Ram*, which is of Celtic origin. But the religion of Aries or the ram is not limited to the valley of the Nile. We also find it in Assyria, Chaldea, France, North Africa, and India. This Age also coincides with the Exodus of the Hebrews during which Moses received the Tablets of the Law on Mount Sinai. According to the instruction of YHVH (Yud-He-Vav-He), Moses forbade the Hebrews to continue to worship the Golden Calf, in order to break with the old religion. Further, we can note that Hindus consider the ram as being the vehicle of Agni, the sacred Fire. Iron, characteristic of Mars, the planet of Aries, was more and more frequently used in craftworks.

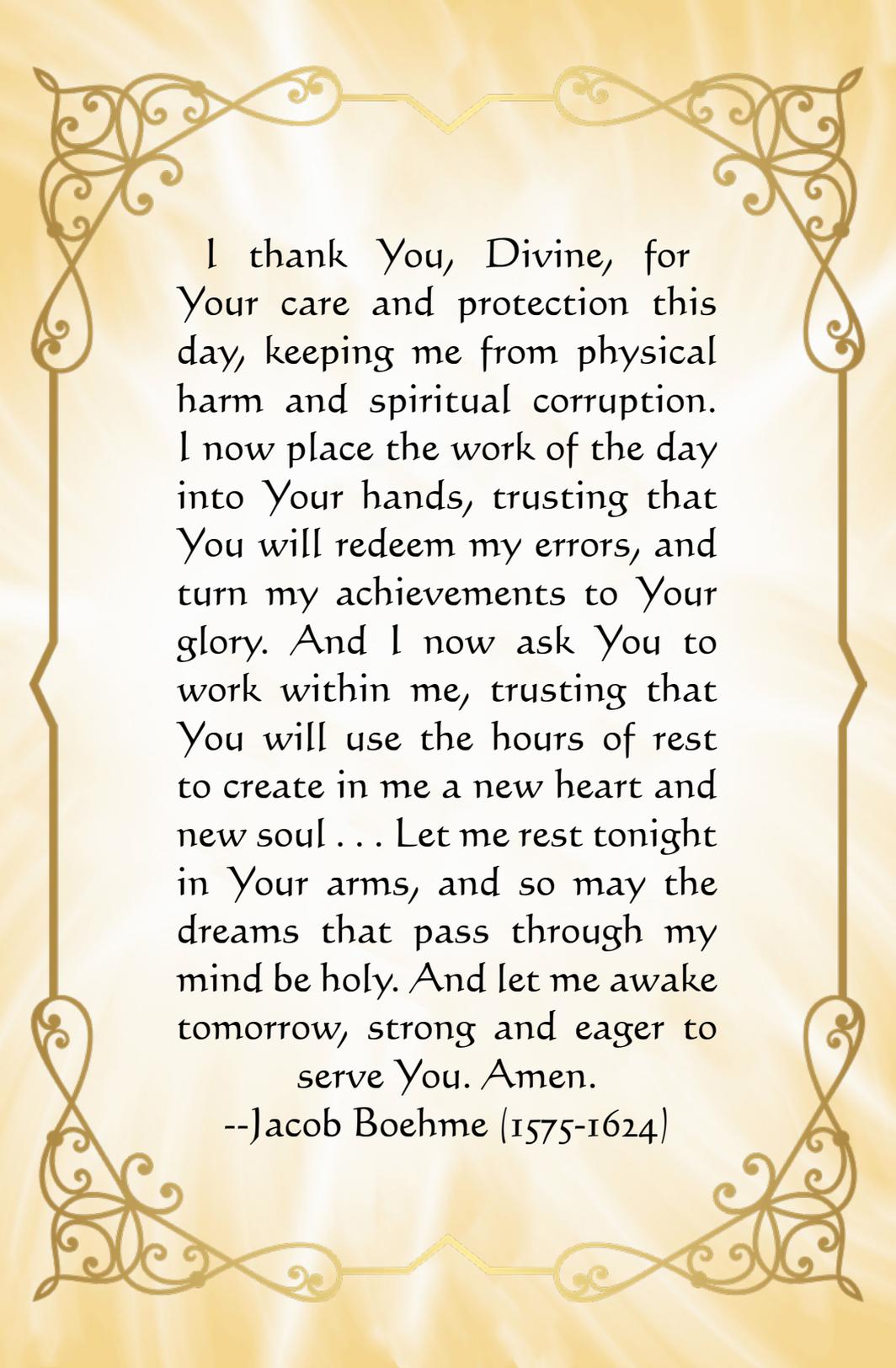
It is generally accepted that the Age of Pisces, which followed the Age of Aries began in the first year of our era and should end in the year 2160 CE. This is a convention founded on the date that the Fathers of the Church established for the birth of Yeshua. In fact, this Age probably started before the year 1 of our official calendar. Regardless, the doctrine preached by the Christ was destined to replace the old religions. Further, the Christ is represented by a fish, a symbol of recognition for the first Christians and the word *Ichthys* which is spelled "I Ch Th U S" and means "fish" in Greek. It corresponds to the Greek acronym formed by the first letter of the words in the sentence Iesous Christos Theos Uios Soter, which means *Yeshua Christ, the Son of God, the Savior*. After this, the fish was found everywhere, especially on stained glass in churches and cathedrals, on mosaic, on stelae, vases, holy water fonts, lamps, etc. In the Middle Ages, the art of heraldry united the representation of Christ to the pike, a fish whose Latin name is *lucius*, a word meaning light. Finally, it is obvious that fish have a major role in the Gospels. Beside the apostles being fishermen, let us remember the multiplication of fish and the miraculous catch of fish.

Let us now look at the Age of Aquarius. Some consider that it started in 1781, with the discovery of Uranus, the planet associated with this Age. Others, taking the birth of the Christ as reference, think that it will begin in 2160. Others think that it will arrive later in the third millennium. Astrological alignments indicate that the shift into

the Age of Aquarius is already underway. In addition to the 1962 stellium in Aquarius, Jupiter and Saturn will form a grand conjunction in Aquarius on December 21, 2020 (the same day as the solstice). This grand conjunction begins a 200-year cycle in which all but one of the Jupiter-Saturn meetings will occur in zodiacal air signs (Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius), which will increase humanity's focus on the mind and ideas, especially in communication, relations, and technology.

Wherever humanity is in its shift into the Age of Aquarius, remember that the passage from one Age to the next occurs as a gradual process. A period of transition always occurs during which the old values, even though they are passing away, remain present, while the new ones, borne by spirits that are looking ahead, gradually appear. As an analogy, just before the Sun rises, its light already begins to brighten the sky. At this precise moment, however, the Sun is three degrees, twenty minutes below the horizon. Brought back to proportions of a processional age, this luminous advance of three degrees, twenty minutes represents about two centuries. During this period, the influence of the Age of Pisces will be decreasing and the influence of the Age of Aquarius will intensify.

At this beginning of the third millennium, we cannot deny that humanity is going through a period that foresees the beginning of a new cycle. Although the Traditional Martinist Order does not take an official position on the Age of Aquarius and leaves members free to decide for themselves, there are numerous signs that argue in its favor. Among these signs are humanity's increasing attraction to spirituality; a general diffusion of esoteric teachings, which question materialism and its consequences; a rejection of totalitarian systems and behaviors that attack human dignity; an internationalization of consciousness; an increase in international trade, etc. Thus, whether or not we believe that humanity evolves following characteristic cycles, we can take note that the world has been confronted for many decades by great upheavals. As Martinists, we can act on all levels so that all these upheavals become precursors of an Age that will bring about the triumph of the noblest ideals, especially of humanism and spirituality.



I thank You, Divine, for
Your care and protection this
day, keeping me from physical
harm and spiritual corruption.
I now place the work of the day
into Your hands, trusting that
You will redeem my errors, and
turn my achievements to Your
glory. And I now ask You to
work within me, trusting that
You will use the hours of rest
to create in me a new heart and
new soul . . . Let me rest tonight
in Your arms, and so may the
dreams that pass through my
mind be holy. And let me awake
tomorrow, strong and eager to
serve You. Amen.

--Jacob Boehme (1575-1624)