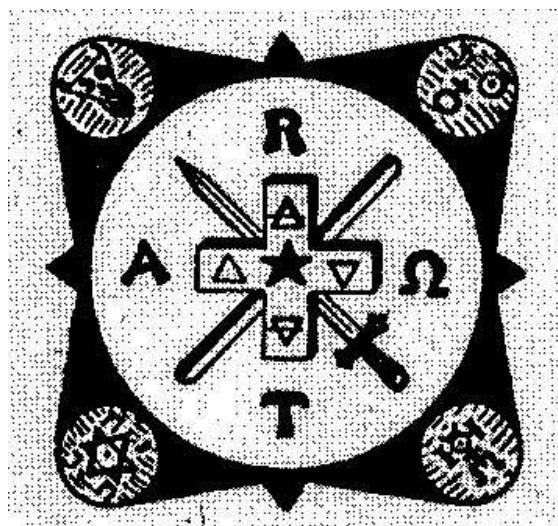


I

Contemporary Martinism and its true origins



By Robert Ambelain
Pub. March 1948 by DESTINS
108b, rue Championnet, PARIS

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR

This English translation is part of the Martinist Order of Unknown Philosopher's desire to make seminal Martinist works freely available to Francophones more readily available to the English speaking world.

This translation is not intended to be an exact and perfect transcription. I am not a professional translator. I also believe in translation rather than transliteration, in order to convey the sense of the author rather than directly translate words from one language to another. Given my interests, I probably have a better idea of the author's intention than a generalist translator who has no experience of occult matter.

The venerable Frenchman who passed me a copy of this work asked me not to let it be published on the internet or to have it handed to anyone other than experienced Martinists. Although this work was openly published in 1948, I am sure the circulation was small, and when you read the contents you will no doubt understand his caution. The material was written during a period when R. Ambelain's initial enthusiasm was replaced with a depressing cynicism, as he discovered that most of the romantic histories he had been told had no basis in fact. However, the reader can relax in the knowledge that scholarship over the past sixty years has gone a long way either to refute some of these finding or to uncover other avenues of research and possible lineages.

Nevertheless I ask anyone reading this document to remember the wishes of the original provider not to make it available on the internet, and add my own caution not to show it to anyone who is not an experienced Martinist, for read out of context, it may demoralize someone who is not very well read in Martinist works.

I would like to thank Gilbert Tappa, Michael Buckley, Ronald Blaisdell and Jason Sheridan for their support in this project.

Piers A. Vaughan
Martinist Order of Unknown Philosophers
February 2003

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Grand Lodge of France is shortly going to publish and openly sell a work on "Masonic Symbolism". The Grand Orient of France and the Grand Lodge of France regularly address the Public by means of the radio, and the first of these even commented on "Anderson's Constitutions". Finally, the Scottish Rectified Rite, through its Grand Prior and Grand Chancellor, has authorized R. Ambelain to publish a precise and detailed study in this collection on the sources – which have remained secret until this time – of its true lineage. In other words, contemporary Martinists should not blame the author of this present study for the information contained therein. In truth, it only draws from already published documents, albeit sparse, confronts them and draws conclusions. As for the letters given in the extracts, these come from documents for which permission to freely make use of them was given by a Member of their first Supreme Council of 1884, in the preceding book.

The conclusions he reaches are shared by qualified Martinists, since at the same time that the final edition of the manuscript of this study was sent to us, the Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order consequently reached the same conclusions...

Finally, do sincere Martinists believe that Initiates of the stature of Martinez de Pasqually and J.-B. Willermoz would approve of all the wild ideas, illusions and historical errors to which some of their successors had recourse, in order to support a tradition which above all draws its value and power from the sincerity which resides within it?

IN PREPARATION

- II - The Rose-Croix
 - III - Mediæval Fraternities and Secret Societies
 - IV - Ancient & Modern Gnosticism
 - V - Druidism
 - VI - Mediterranean Paganism
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PREFACE

We entrust the present study on the true origins of Martinism to the study services of A. R. O. T.¹ and to the Publisher DESTINS, that vast philosophical and mystical movement which for a long time was considered by some Catholics to be a diabolic synagogue where the most secret words of the Order of Freemasonry were uttered. Those of our readers who are particularly interested in this question are referred to the work we have just published on this subject². In this short work, which is intended to clarify some points about the origins of Martinism which have remained obscure, in order to complete the chapters of the preceding book, or to correct some errors which were involuntarily included, we will not discuss the doctrinal side of this school. Only its historical aspect interests us here. By doing this we are complying with the requirement also observed in similar studies currently sent to press: the Rose-Croix, Gnosis, Freemasonry, Fraternities. For this reason this small collection has the title: "Initiatic Survivals in the West".

To better portray the climate in which our observations will be generated, our critical studies and our conclusions, we can do no better than quote a passage from the astonishingly lucid book by René Guénon, a work which seems to answer any concerns about the principles of Initiation. In the opinion of all those familiar with such questions, "Observations on Initiation"³ is a veritable initiatic "Ordinary", or even a "Compendium"...

Now, here are René Guénon's conclusions on the origins, lineages, and regularity of Initiation considered as a transcendent principal of spiritual evolution, the true transmuting ferment of souls.

* * *

*"Initiation implies three conditions which appear in successive mode, and that one should note the respective correspondence with the three terms "potentiality", "virtuality" and "actuality": 1. the **qualification**, which is composed of certain possibilities inherent in the individual's own nature, and which are the *prima materia* on which the initiatic work must act; 2. the **transmission**, through attachment to a traditional organization, and a spiritual influence giving a person "illumination" which allows him to order and develop these possibilities which he carries within; 3. the **interior work** by which, with the combination of external "additions" or "supports", if they exist, and above all in the early stages, this development will be gradually effected, allowing the person to pass from level to*

¹ Association pour la Rénovation de l'Occultisme Traditionnel.

² *Le Martinisme* by Robert Ambelain, pub, 1946.

³ *Aperçus sur l'Initiation* by René Guénon.

level, across the different grades of the initiatic hierarchy, and conduct him to the final aim of “Deliverance” or “Supreme Identity”.

The joining of a regular and traditional organization, we have said, is not only a necessary condition to initiation, but it is also what constitutes initiation in the strictest sense, that which the etymologically defined word is found everywhere as a “second birth” or as a “regeneration”; “second birth”, because it opens a person to a world other than that where he exercises the activity of his corporeal modality, a world which will be for him the field in which he may develop the possibilities of a superior order; “regeneration”, because it re-establishes this being in those prerogatives which were natural and normal to him in the earliest ages of humanity, when he was not yet distanced from original spirituality, and sunk more and more into the materiality into which he was dragged during the course of subsequent epochs, and because he must take the first essential step in its realization, so that he restores the “primitive state” in himself, which is the fullness and perfection of human individuality, residing in that single central and invariable point where the being will then be able to raise itself up to the superior states.

It is very evident that one can only transmit that which one possesses oneself; in consequence, an organization must necessarily be an effective deposit of a spiritual influence in order to be able to communicate it to individual who join it; and immediately excludes all those pseudo-initiatic groups that are so numerous in our times, lacking any authentically traditional character. Under these conditions, in fact, an initiatic organization can't be the product of an individual's fantasy; it cannot be founded, like a profane company, on the initiative of some people who decide to get together and adopt a certain form; and, even if these forms are not completely invented plays, but borrowed from real traditional rites, of which the founders had some knowledge through “erudition”, they would be no more valuable for that, for, in the absence of a regular lineage, the transmission of spiritual influence is both impossible and nonexistent, so that, in this circumstance, all the effort would only create a vulgar counterfeit of initiation. An even more obvious example concerns the purely hypothetical – dare we say imaginary – reconstructions of traditional forms lost in more or less distant times, such as those of ancient Egypt or Chaldee, for example.

We may also add as another consequence of that which precedes, that, even though it acts as an authentically initiatic organization, its members do not have the power to change the ceremonial form at will or to alter those parts which are essential; this does not preclude the possibility of adapting to circumstances, which on occasion assert themselves on individuals, and which are not a result of personal will, but in this instance are limited to those which will not affect the means by which preservation and transmission of the spiritual influence, of which that organization is considered a depository, is assured; if this condition is not observed, it will result in a real rupture with tradition, which will result in this organization losing its “regularity”. Moreover, an initiatic organization cannot

validly incorporate into its rites elements borrowed from traditional forms different to those followed in its tradition⁴; such elements, whose adoption would have an artificial character, would represent nothing more than simple superfluous fantasy, with no efficacy from an initiatic point of view, and would consequently add absolutely nothing real to it, and whose presence by virtue of its heterogeneity would cause trouble and disharmony; the danger of such mixing is besides far from being limited to a single initiatic domain, and this point is important enough to be discussed separately. Another point: the laws which govern the management of spiritual influences are too complex and too delicate for those who do not have sufficient understanding to be allowed to make more or less arbitrary changes to ritual form, with its precise layout, and where its whole purpose resides, and which has a strong chance of being overlooked, with impunity.

We have said earlier that true initiation essentially exists in the transmission of a spiritual influence, a transmission which can only be effected by means of a regular and traditional organization, of such a type that one would not be able to talk of an initiation outside of such an organization. We have explained that “regularity” must be understood as excluding all pseudo-initiatic societies, that is to say, all those which, whatever their pretensions and the appearances in which they dress themselves up, are not effective depositaries of a spiritual influence, and thus in reality cannot transmit anything. From this it is easy to understand the capital importance with which all traditions attach themselves to what is called the initiatic “chain”⁵, that is to say a succession which assures the required transmission in an uninterrupted manner; and outside of this tradition even observance of the ritual forms will be in vain, since they lack that vital element which is essential to their efficacy.

We will return more specifically to the question of initiatic rites later, but now we will respond to an objection which could be raised at this point: is one then saying that these rites do not have an inherent efficacy within themselves? Certainly they have an effect, for if they are not followed, or if some of their critical elements are changed, no effective result will be obtained; but if there exists a necessary condition within them, that is still not enough, and in order for these rites to have their effect, it is also necessary for them to be performed by those who have the necessary quality to accomplish them. Besides, this is not a requirement peculiar to initiatic rites, for it applies equally to the rites of all esoteric orders, for example religious rites, which also have their own efficacy, yet which cannot be validly performed by anybody; in this case, if a religious rite requires sacerdotal ordination, if a person has not received this ordination can

⁴ This is why, quite recently, certain people wanted to try to introduce elements borrowed from Eastern doctrines, of which they only had a superficial understanding, into Masonry, which is an appropriately Western initiatic usage; one may find an example of this cited in the Esotericism of Dante (*Esotérisme de Dante*), page 20.

⁵ This word “chain” is the translation of the Hebrew word *shelsheleth*, the Arabic *silsilah*, and also the Sanskrit *parampara*, which essentially expresses the idea of a regular and uninterrupted succession.

well observe all the forms and even has the necessary desire⁶, he will accomplish nothing, as he does not carry that spiritual influence required to operate in performing the ritual forms which support it.⁷

Under such conditions, it is easy to understand that the role of the individual who confers the initiation upon another is truly the role of “transmitter” in the most precise sense of the word; he does not act as an individual so much as a support for an influence which is not under that individual’s command; he is a unique link in the “chain” whose point of origin is outside and above mankind. This is why he does not act in his own name, but in the name of the organization to which he belongs and from which he takes his powers, or, even more precisely, in the name of the principle which this organization visibly represents. That also explains that the efficacy of the rite performed by an individual is independent of the personal worth of this individual as such, which is also true of religious rites; and we don’t mean this in the “moral” sense, or in the “technical” sense, which would be only too evidently unimportant, but in the sense that, even if the individual in question does not possess the level of understanding necessary to understand the profound meaning of the rite and the essential motive of its various elements, that rite will be just as effective if, being regularly invested with the function of “transmitter”, he performs it while observing all the prescribed rules, and with an intent sufficient to demonstrate the consciousness of his attachment to the traditional organization. From this we may derive the following consequence: that even an organization where at a particular moment in time one can only find what we have called “virtual” initiates (and we will return to this shortly), no longer capable of truly transmitting the spiritual influence of which it is the depository; it is enough that the “chain” has not been interrupted; and, in this regard, the well-known fable of the “Donkey carrying the relics” is open to an initiatic significance worthy of meditation.⁸

From now on we will consider the fact of “lineage” as being **established** through the means of a traditional ceremony; **certified** by some manuscript or the possession of “signs” and “words” of probation regularly recognized; **emanating** from a legitimate possessor of the said lineage.

⁶ Here we are expressing that condition of intent, in order to explain that rites should not be the object of “experience” in the profane sense of the word; if one wishes to perform a rite for such a reason as simple curiosity in order to experience the effect, one can be sure that effect will be zero.

⁷ Even rites not especially requiring such an ordination cannot be performed satisfactorily by everybody indiscriminately, since a precise adherence to the traditional forms to which they belong is, in all cases, an indispensable condition for their success.

⁸ It is wroth remarking, in this regard, that the relics are precisely a vehicle for spiritual influences; that is the true reason for the cult of which they are the subject, even if this reason is not always consciously understood by the representatives of exoteric religions, who sometimes seem not to realize the character of the very “positive” forces they wield, which in any case do not prevent these forces from acting effectively, even without their knowledge, though

And we shall consider as "irregular" a pretended lineage which only rests upon gratuitous **affirmations**, possession of **archives** (however rare and respectable they may be), or the possession of **verbal instructions**, whose legitimate and regular proprietorship are yet to be proven.

I. THE INITIATES OF SAINT-MARTIN

Since several historical errors slipped into our work on Martinism, we have decided to make some corrections. As we stated in the course of this work, a document is a document, and a *story from verbal “traditions”* which is not written down, rapidly mutates.



One notable error was where we wrote that the Martinist lines of Lyons and Paris had joined together. This was intended to happen at the Liberation, but events in various orders had prevented this fusion up till now.

We ended our manuscript in 1944, and we intending to make corrections to the proofs, but a three month illness prevented us from proceeding with that. We apologize for this.



On page 172⁹ we included a study on the origins of the Ordre Martiniste, the work of a Martinist friend. Now this study requires some comments. Let us return to the text.



“The public interest in initiatic things and in esoteric mysteries is considerable, and it needs to be said that one of the factors behind the propagation of these doctrines is the renowned Ordre Martiniste. But few students of the Occult know exactly what is understood by that. This is why, in a Review which from its foundation has placed the Sign of this Order on its covers, it appeared to be necessary to give a few facts about this Society which is much talked about, usually incorrectly¹⁰.

“What one understands by Martinism is a collection of reflections and studies based on teachings transmitted by Claude de Saint-Martin, the Unknown Philosopher. In this Review you will find papers on the doctrine, life and works of

⁹ Page 139 in my translation – PV.

¹⁰ This text was destined for the magazine “l’Initiation” which was reappearing, although problematic circumstances were preventing its resurgence.

this Philosopher; and we will not stress these here, since this paper talks about the Order itself.

“The existence of a “Martinist Order” is a precise fact, and even the least knowledgeable reader knows that the Order was founded by Papus, follower of Saint-Martin. But it is understood that Papus is the successor of Saint-Martin, and as Papus himself said, this Order has as founders Martinez de Pasqually and Saint-Martin himself...”

“The truth is otherwise. Papus was the soul and the animator of a movement which resurrected the study of esotericism, at the end of the XIXth Century. Surrounded by talented writers, seekers and intelligentsia, he intended – and succeeded – to reach even the least informed public about this way of understanding the universe, metaphysics and science. Yet Papus quickly realized that, in order to group together the scattered elements discovered during his research, a Society was needed which would unite the threads into one bundle, and allow the study of these systems within a discipline which he and his friends would see spread abroad.”

“And so he started a specific type of Martinism. Papus had the idea of creating an analogous Order, whose method of work would be noticeably like the interior discipline inspired by Masonic Orders; and already being initiated into the tradition of Saint-Martin, he intended to place this Order which he had created with his friends under this aegis.”

“Already initiated, he put his vision into being, and we return to G. Van Rijnberk’s book on this subject: there we see how he grouped together Martinists who had been individually initiated like himself to bring this order to life – and it was born in 1891.”

“And yet it was necessary to put forward something which had an origin, a lineage, a tradition, and placing this Order under this name, he established something which had already existed in the past in the bosom of Scottish Freemasonry, an Order founded by Martinez de Pasqually, and, outside of Masonry, a Group created by Saint-Martin. We don’t intend to judge Papus, nor to attack him. Nevertheless, history requires us to explain that the lineage invoked by Papus between these organizations and that which he constituted in 1891 is a complete fabrication and marked by a desire for justification. In a manifesto dated 1906, Papus wrote that the Martinist Order was founded around 1750 by Martinez de Pasqually, continued by Saint-Martin, then by Willermoz until 1810, and that it had taken on a new vigor through the Supreme Council of 1887; announcing that the Supreme Council of which he was President had preserved archives since 1767. And so he put forth that one was in the presence of a Society with no issue of continuity, whose current Chief was the legitimate successor of the previous ones.”

"It is certain that the holders of this tradition were linked by a unity of doctrine, but that amounted to the sum of the Order's continuity. The Order founded by Martinez had officially and officially disappeared at the Convent of Wilhemsbad and, composed of Masons, it had one objective and one particular way of working. Saint-Martin never continued this Order, which didn't continue to exist under this name, and besides, since he demitted from all masonic organizations through his letter dated July 4, 1790, he only began to spread his personal system from 1793¹¹. As for Willermoz, preoccupied with transcendent Masonry, following the death of Martinez, he devoted his activity to rectified Masonry, a Scottish Rite which may be dissident, yet ever Masonic¹².

"Then what is the lineage that Papus can claim? Let us justify the origin of the Martinist Order founded by Papus – a lineage which goes back to Saint-Martin, be it through Chaptal, or through the Abbé de Lanoue, and which Van Rijnberk has analyzed in Volume II of his study of Martinez, which has no connection with his Order of Cohens, but rather with the Society of Unknown Philosophers whose Statutes were supplied by Baron Tchoudy in his "Flaming Star" (1784). It is this Order or mystic brotherhood, which included Khunrath, Gitchel, Salzmann and Boehme among its members, which attracted Saint-Martin when he demitted from the Cohens, the Masons, form the S.O.T.¹³ etc, in his letter dated 1790, when he was in Strasbourg. It is from this Order, which united with the "Brothers of the Orient" which counted Emperor Alexis Comnenus among its Patrons, and which is still older, that the fundamental and unique symbols of Martinism come, and the letters which accompany the "Chrismon" of the mysterious points of the Order also originate from this group. It is from this Fraternity that Saint-Martin received the keys of his Inner Path. It is these which he placed in the hands of his Society of Intimates, a Society whose existence is attested to in the letter from Professor Koëster in 1795, cited by Rijnberk, addressed to Von Meyer by J. Pont of whom Gleitchen spoke.

"Thus it is solely this Society of Intimates of Saint-Martin which Papus resurrected, which he constituted into an Order, and to which he gave a greater masonic form. In other words, under the form of a true obedience, he organized Lodges, Groups, a Supreme Council, etc. – something which had been indeterminate and free, which had been small.

"This Martinist Order saw a large amount of activity, so that one can no longer talk of Saint-Martin and Martinism without evoking the current existence of the Order of the same name.

¹¹ Our friend here commits an involuntary historical error. From research done by Le Forestier, it would appear to be 1777 that Saint-Martin began his personal doctrinal propaganda.

¹² In the previous pages we saw that the Order of Elus-Cohen had clandestinely survived its 'official' death...

¹³ Templar Order of Strict Observance (La Stricte Observance Templier)

"Following the death of Papus (1916), there was a blossoming of members of the Supreme Council each proclaiming themselves Grand Master, and each in turn recognized by a portion of the members. One published a Ritual; another continued the system of Free Initiators; and finally another which quickly reunited the majority of adherents was not content with the quarter Century tradition of the Order, and made so many modifications that they really gave birth to a new Order. Arrogating the statements of Papus, and pretending to be his legitimate successor, they claimed regular filiation from Martinez by means of the Free Initiators who would have transmitted this line, closing this renewed Order to non-masons, requiring masonic degrees prior to admission, rejecting women, fabricating a Ritual, and constructing an edifice which, from the outside stood upright, in which its constituents believed with a blind faith¹⁴.

"In view of these facts, a limited but sufficient number of survivors from the original Supreme Council of 1891 reunited in 1931, proclaiming the continuance of the Order founded by Papus with them as continuers of the Society of Intimates of Saint-Martin. Announcing themselves the only line justified in manifesting this regularity, they constituted a Supreme Council which, as had happened in 1891, chose by election the eldest in esoteric and profane age, and founded Groups according to ancient custom".

We will stop there and return later on

1. Where are the historical *documents* which would prove to us that there was an initiatic Order which counted Khunrath, Gitchel, Boehme and Salzmann in its ranks? Nowhere. It is but a hypothesis, *plausible* no doubt, but still a hypothesis, arising around 1943-44 and resulting from common conversations between various Martinists and ourselves. We had agreed on an indisputable doctrinal identity between these different authors, but that there was however nothing which would allow the idea of a *ritual lineage*. Over time, the hypothesis became sacrosanct "tradition"
...
2. What document allows us to count these same authors among the number of the "Society of Unknown Philosophers" whose Statues were published in the Cosmopolite in the XVIIth Century, and later republished in the XVIIIth Century in the work of Baron Tschoudy? None...
3. What document tells us about the "Brother of the Orient" (*Frères d'Orient*) who counted the Emperor Alexis Comnenus among its honourable patrons? None. If such exists, the *Traditional Martinist Order* should, in all good faith, should recognize that it omitted the location of this deposit! This "hypothesis" was put about by an S.I. called Dupré in all good faith, who had it from a verbal tradition from another S.I. of Greek extraction, called Semelas. From whom Selemas obtained his information from we

¹⁴ He is talking of Teder...

will leave for now, but will return to this later...As for Emperor Alexis Comnenus, this is the sovereign who invited the knights of the Western states to participate in the Crusade, *by offering them the “beautiful daughters of Greece” in exchange*...A strange “initiate” indeed this emperor-procurer, who himself convened two councils in Constantinople during 1120, at which, at his request, began the process against the Cathars of the East, a process which ended later with the sack of Béziers, Carcassonne, and the ruin of the South of France...

It is also this “initiate” who solemnly burned alive Doctor *Basilicos*, the leader of the Eastern Cathars, at Constantinople, “for his erroneous opinions...” (*sic*). See the Dictionary of Councils” by Abbé Migue (Paris 1846), page 773.



4. What document, what letter, allows us to understand that Saint-Martin was “ritually initiated” by Salzmann? None...

Matter, in his “Saint-Martin”, pages 160 and 161, shows us the short length of the connection between these two men, and their conceptual differences: “After their separation, they only exchanged a few letters”. That appears definitive to us.



5. “It is to this Order, or mystic brotherhood...that the fundamental and unique symbols of Martinism belonged, and the letters which accompany the Chrismon. The six mysterious points of the Order also have this origin”, our author tells us. Possible. But this is a tradition which ignores Papus and Chaboseau the elder, at the time of the constitution of the Supreme Council of 1891, and which was still being perpetuated by the same Semelas!

Now, we are not ignoring the fact that, during the 1914-18 war, when the Kaiser intended to declare himself “Emperor of the Orient”, the Greek Orthodox clergy had to go to the anointing and coronation, held in the crypt of the Basilica of Saint Sophia in Constantinople, and that the “Brothers of the Orient” had to participate in a second consecration on the following day in the same place. All this leads us to believe that Semelas was an agent for a political power¹⁵, and that the mysterious “Brothers of the Orient” were drawn from memory (or imagination) for very short term ends!

¹⁵ This was the opinion of J. Bricaud.



6. Did Claude de Saint-Martin originate individual initiations? Only oral tradition which everybody believes to be true supports this. But there is no written document which supports this. This tradition comes to us through the channel of Papus, initiated by Henri Delage, grandson of Chaptal, and by Augustin Chaboseau, initiated by his cousin, Amélie of Boisse-Mortemart.

If the “Society of Initiates” is attested to by a letter to an unknown person by Professor Koster, on 20th September 1794, this letter only mentions the Elus Cohen, who had already been initiated and the equals of Saint-Martin, his “*Brothers*”, in fact.

And this was only open to *men*, to the exclusion of any women: “And so I made the acquaintance, in Strasbourg, of these dear men and received much kindnesses”. (Van Rijnberk, “Martinez de Pasqually”, Tome I, page 161).

“Among the most faithful *Brothers* who formed a intimate circle with him, were some of the most excellent men of Paris...” (Op. cit., page 162).

Amongst modern Martinists, it is traditional to affirm that the first initiates of Saint-Martin were women! This, then, is a document which contradicts this “verbal tradition”...If one wants another reference, one only has to look at the genealogical tree in the same work “Initiates of Saint-Martin” published by Van Rijnberk in his same work, Tome II, page 30, *the first woman “S.I.” to figure there is Amélie de Boisse-Montemart, being almost a hundred years after Saint-Martin.*

The list of Russian Martinists initiated by Saint-Martin, published in 1867, in Longuinoff’s work (“Novikoff and the Moscow Martinists, Moscow, 1867) and reproduced in pages 233 and 234 of Papus’ “Saint-Martin”, contain not a single woman’s name either.

Regarding Saint-Martin’s opinion on the importance of initiating women, we do not pretend to judge him, but nevertheless reserve the right to make this opinion known. Here it is, as expressed in a letter dated 23rd March, 1777, three years after the death of Martinez, two years after the publication of his book “*Of Errors And Truth*”.

“I neither criticize nor approve your conduct with regard to M^{me} de Brancas. The example that Caignet has recently given us regarding women lets you know the reply you have been waiting for. I persist in the opinion that women must remain small in number among us, and above all

most scrupulously examined. This is why I give my complete suffrage to the article in our Statutes which prevents us from receiving them without a direct and physical proof from "la chose". I asked for proofs concerning Mme de la Croix in my last working, and as I didn't have the fortune obtaining them at my command, I determined to do nothing for her, as "la chose" had not spoken affirmatively, either to me or to those of my Brothers who have more power than me. From this, I believe that this should be the rule for us all, and that, even if you get a favorable response from Maître Caignet, that should not reassure you, even if he wrote on good authority¹⁶...

"In ending , the clergy of our Lord will always be a horror to me, and I believe we should treat priests as we treat women".

1777 was definitely the year when he began his personal propaganda towards the Elus Cohen in Versailles (Cf. Le Forestier, page 512: "In 1777, during a tour of duty in Versailles, he commenced propaganda towards the Elus Cohen of this town, where the Order counted its most faithful disciples...). And it was not until between 1788 and 1791 that he met Salzmann in Strasbourg, ten years later¹⁷. In consequence, this surely shows that the doctrine he communicated to his "intimates" was the result of personal work, and not teachings come from Boehme through Salzmann and Gitchel.

In the papers left by Saint-Martin at his death, which were published under the collective title of "Posthumous Works" (*Œuvres Posthumes*), we also find this:

"I sense a voice in the depth of my being, which tells me that I am in a country where there are no women..." (*Posthumous Works*, I, page 29).

"Since I have acquired profound illumination about Woman, I honor and love her more than during the effervescences of my youth; though I also know that her Matter is even more degenerate and more redoubtable than that of men... (*Posthumous Works*, I, page 29).

"Woman is better, but man to truer..." (*Posthumous Works*, I, page 29).

This opinion is not new to him. Above, we cited his opinion of 1777, and here is a passage from a letter of 25th April, 1792:

¹⁶ "La Chose" is none other than the Invisible Force manifested in "Passes" during theurgical ceremonies.

¹⁷ G. Matter: "Saint-Martin", pages 147 and 161.

"In this reading I have shown how much the feminine inspiration is feeble and vague, in comparison to masculine inspiration..."

"The great truths are best taught in silence, whereas woman forever need you to talk and for them to talk; and then everything becomes disorganized, as I have proved many times". (*Portraits*, No 145, page 21 – Cf. R. Amadou: "L. C. de Saint-Martin, page 52).



7. Numerous adversaries of Saint-Martin (and unfortunately some of his modern disciples) have presented him as a fervent Catholic and a committed monarchist. *Saint Martin was quite the opposite...*

Monarchist? History shows us that Saint-Martin set a guard at the Temple, where Louis XVI was imprisoned. History shows us the Convention carrying his name in the list of possible tutors of Louis XVII. IF Saint-Martin hadn't been republican, would he have inspired such confidence?

Besides, Saint-Martin, despite having himself been harassed during the Terror, for the single reason of his being a noble, remained no less a fervent admirer of the Revolution of 1789 and refused to emigrate:

"We are told that the People alone are sovereign. I glory in the thought and strongly agree with it... All men are kings...God is their only sovereign..." (*Letters on the Revolution*, An III).

The Terror did not terrify him at all, for he saw in it a trace of divine justice, the liquidation of the karma of a caste:

"Justice didn't reign when Spirit taught us with gentleness.. Now It is applied to us with force and virtue" (*Letters on the Revolution*, An III).

"But as I saw the hand of God in our Revolution, I must equally agree that victims of expiation are sometimes necessary" (*Posthumous Works*, I, page 87, Tome I).

As for his Catholicism, we will allow ourselves a little doubt! His letters show us that, all his life, he was violently anticlerical:

"The clergy of our Lord will always be a horror to me, and I believe we should treat priests as we treat women". (*Letter dated March 23rd, 1777*).

“Saint-Martin, Martinist tradition tells us, had a mass said after each initiation, a mass at which all present assisted”. However, Saint-Martin did not admit the validity and automatic efficacy of the Sacraments, and on his death-bed, he refused the viaticum and extreme unction. For him it was the personal value of the priest, his spirituality, his knowledge, which gave him more or less true efficacy:

“When he will become *regenerated*, no longer in a thought, but in his entire thought, in his word, in his operation, when the Spirit penetrates all his veins and clothes itself in him, when everything in him is transformed into a spiritual and angelic substance, only then does man find himself, in spirit and in truth, the priest of the Lord...” (“The New Man” – *Le Nouvel Homme*).

Saint-Martin was a pure gnostic, he was aware of the power of the Archons, of those gods responsible for the abuse of Man:

“These gods, who are only gods because of our Crime, and who, from the heights of their usurped thrones, smile and wag their heads in disdain for Man, their master become their slave...” (“The Spirit of Things” – *L’Esprit des Choses*).



8. There remains a final and important dilemma. Did Saint-Martin transmit his personal teachings in a ritualistic form to his last disciples, Guttinguer¹⁸, Branchu, and, above all, Gence?

We doubt it: after painstaking research, we have only discovered proofs to the contrary.

In fact, Gence tells us in a small brochure, published with the express purpose of destroying (already...) certain mistakes ascribed to Saint-Martin, by the “sect called Martinists”. He was alluding to the Elus Cohen of the “Société des Intimes”, being himself an Elu Cohen. He explained that the doctrine of this school could be found in the first works of Saint-Martin, and above all in his “Tableau Naturel”. But on the other hand he also says this:

“He (Saint-Martin) never had in mind the idea to found a sect..”
(Gence: *Biographic Notice on L. C. de Saint-Martin*, page 12).

¹⁸ This person also published in 1834 a “Selection of selected thoughts from Cl. De Saint-Martin”.

“My sect is Providence; my proselytes are me; my cult is justice!..” (*Portrait N°. 488*, page 68), (Cf R. Amadou: *L C. de Saint-Martin*, page 50).

It is this individual teaching, coming only from the doctrines of Martinez and Jacob Boehme, with which he said he was associated¹⁹, and to which Saint-Martin made allusion on the eve of his death:

“*The seeds I have tried to sow shall bear fruit...*” (13th October, 1803).

How, then, can we reconcile the ritual that modern Martinists claim comes directly from the *Unknown Philosopher*, with these principles?

All Martinist rituals mention three luminaries disposed in triangles upon three cloths of different colors²⁰: black, red and white.

Now, these colors are symbolic of the three shells covering Primitive Man after his Fall, in the teachings of Martinez... (see “*Ritual of the Apprentice Cohen*” described by Thory).

As for the number three, as seen in the luminaries, this is the overwhelming proof that those who established the Martinist Ritual ignored the teachings of Martinez de Pasqually and Claude de Saint-Martin.

These are from ordinary Masonic tradition, which they maladroitly copied by interpreting them in light of Christianity and the *Trinity*. Yet the luminaries normally used by the Elus Cohen were a minimum of four, “the perfect divine number”.

“The three numbers of *Matter* are *three, six, nine*”. (*Numbers, II: On the Natural Quantity of Numbers*).

So it is after the dearth of Saint-Martin that these rituals were established, when people had almost lost the true spirit of his teachings²¹.

Certainly modern Martinists understand that the three Degrees of the Order are a creation of Papus, and that Saint-Martin remitted everything at once.

¹⁹ See his letter dated 11th July, 1796.

²⁰ See “*Ritual of the Martinist Order*”, Paris 1913, Dorbon editor, page 48.

²¹ How can one reconcile the flabbergasting pomp of Teder’s ritual with the simplicity of Saint-Martin?

Yet where in all the numerous teachings provided by his last disciples may one find an allusion to a mask, a cloak and to all the accessories required by the present-day ceremonial? Nowhere.

The pretended “Seal” of the Martinist Order never had, in the spirit of Saint-Martin, a pantacular character, for if we read his treaty “*On Numbers*”, paragraph XVII, “Difference between spirit and body”, we find this as a simple explanatory schema!

The famous “six points” are found in paragraph VIII, where they depict “the inverse laws corresponding to the direct laws”! And the “Frères d’Orient” weren’t there for nothing!

There is nothing mysterious in all this.

As for the aforementioned “Ritual of Teder”, it is in reality Dr. Blitz’. Teder only translated it (see our work on Martinism, page 153, 1st paragraph).

Finally, here is a new fact which turns the official edifice upside down. In a study on the “*Unknown Philosopher, Claude de Saint-Martin*”, R. Amadou claimed to possess a letter from Augustin Chaboseau, founder of the first Supreme Council with Papus, in his archives, a letter in which he explains that at the start of everything he and Papus exchanged initiations...

If he was acting as a sort of initiatic “regularization” or as an initiative without any basis in the past, we don’t know. But in either case, doubt is cast on the true founding of the tradition which wants Papus to have been initiated by Delage, and Chaboseau by A. de Mortemart. Already we lack a name in the lineage of Papus, between Chaptal and Delage. Yet from this moment on, nobody henceforth can insist that our two founders were certain of their regularity, since they proved the need to assure *themselves* in a sort of “confirmation”...

II. ON THE POSSIBLE EXISTENCE OF A CONTEMPORARY MARTINIST LINEAGE

I. – WILLERMOZISM

“In 1943, when we asked Brother Georges Lagrèze to send us the Willermoz lineage, we expected it to contain not only the “Chevalier Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte”, but also one of the eight Grand Profès of France”, declares Aurifer.

Now, if Lagrèze was *affiliated* with the Grand Priory of Gaul in the quality of a “C.B.C.S.²²” (we possess a photograph of his identity card in the Inner Order) and a 33° in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, he was never – he told us on one occasion – a holder of the Grand Profession.

During a recent interview (28 June, 1946), Doctor Wibeaux told us that he had done some historical research in this area, and had concluded that:

1. not one dignitary of the Rectified Rite possesses this grade at the present time;
2. it disappeared a few years after its creation;
3. nobody had ever rediscovered the Ritual of its transmission, *if there ever was one*²³.

All this leads us to believe that the only part which survived from Willermoz is the transmission of the *Instruction*, whose text is in the Archives of the City of Lyons in any case.

Be that as it may, nobody can truthfully pretend to possess the grade of Réau Croix for the following reasons:

- a) Bricaud put out in his booklet that Dr Blitz was only in possession of the basic “C.B.C.S.” when he claimed to be Réau Croix, since nobody has ever told us that he was Grand Profès;
- b) Willermoz could only “transmit” the 3 Degrees of the Porch Class of the Order of Elus Cohen. His letter dated 12 October, 1781, to the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, written seven years before the death of Martinez (published in Tome I of Van Rijnberk, page 165) tells us:

²² Initials of the “Chevalier Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte ».

²³ Dr. Wibeaux is a very high dignitary in the *Scottish Rectified Rite*.

“At the beginning of 1767, I had the good fortune to obtain my first teachings from the Order which I previously mentioned to Your Serene Highness. Being predisposed to the information given to me in its teachings and research, I advance rapidly through the first six Degrees²⁴. One year later, I undertook another journey to this end, and obtained the 7° and last²⁵, which gave the title and character of chief in this Order. The one from whom I received this declared himself to be one of the seven Sovereign Universal Chiefs of the Order, and regularly proved his knowledge with facts. In receiving this final Degree I received at the same time the power to confer the lower Degrees²⁶, in conforming to the prescribed manner given to me.

“However I was unable to make any use of it for several years, except to instruct and strengthen myself as far as my civil occupations allowed. It was only in 1772 that I began to receive my Brother Doctor²⁷ and a little later the Brothers Paganucci and Perisse du Luc, whom Your Highness will have seen in the diagram of Grand Profès. And since then these three became my confidants in those specific things which I was at liberty to confide to others.

“It is important that I inform Your Serene Highness that the Degrees of this Order comprise three parts.

“The first three Degrees²⁸ teach about the divine, spiritual, human and corporal natures, and it is precisely this instruction which forms the basis of that of the Grand Profès. You Serene Highness will understand this by reading them.

“The following Degrees²⁹ teach both preparatory and practical ceremonial theory, which is exclusively reserved to the seventh and final³⁰.

“Those who receive this Degree, and their numbers are small, are subject to specific works or operations, which are essentially performed in March and September. I have practiced them constantly, and I have gained much happiness from them...”



²⁴ Apprentice Cohen, Companion Cohen, Master Cohen, Grand Architect, Knight of the East, Commander of the East.

²⁵ Réau Croix.

²⁶ Apprentice Cohen, Companion Cohen, Master Cohen.

²⁷ Pierre-Jacques Willermoz, doctor and alchemist.

²⁸ Apprentice Cohen, Companion Cohen, Master Cohen, being the Porch Class.

²⁹ Grand Architect, Knight of the East, Commander of the East.

³⁰ Réau Croix.

- c) The Grands Profès themselves were never in possession of this grade of Réau Croix, as we can see in the same letter of Willermoz of 12 October, 1781, to the Prince of Hesse-Cassel:

“Regarding the Secret Instructions³¹, my aim in revealing them was to Bound on the one hand by my own obligations³², and on the other having a fear of providing sustenance to a frivolous curiosity, or to over-excite some minds, if I presented Theoretical plans which suggested a Practical side³³, I saw myself obliged to make no mention of it, and even to only present a very abridged picture of the nature of beings, their respective correspondences, and the universal divisions”.



- d) The members of the Cohen Society of Lyons therefore having only received the lowed Degrees of the Porch Class, *were unable to transmit them*, for this transmission was, as we have seen, in the personal purview of the Réau Croix alone. A priest, even if regularly ordained, cannot ordain another... that is the privilege of the Bishop.



- e) This Cohen Society did not have Masonic requirement expected of members of the Elus Cohen of former years, as Willermoz explained in this same letter:

“Besides, although for nine or ten years there has been a small Society composed of those I have received in various Degrees in the Order I practice, which is only known to those who belong, Masons and others; nevertheless certain Brothers, who are today Grands Profès, for a long time supposed that I had acquired a particular knowledge of these matters, which I liked to discuss with a few special friends”.



- f) Thirty years after the Revolution, the Grands Profès had completely disappeared in France, and Willermoz was the only survivor (from his other letter to the same Prince of Hesse-Cassel dated 10 September, 1810, *written twenty-nine years later*):

“I remained alone in Lyons. Death, former resignations and emigrations had completely extinguished this (Directorate) of Burgundy at

³¹ Of the Grands Profès.

³² From earlier times, with respect to Don Martinez.

³³ Those of the Réau Croix, on Theurgy.

Strasbourg. The one in the Occitaine, at Bordeaux, had ceased to exist even before the Revolution. The Directorate of the Auvergne no longer existed except for me, and in consequence was unable to establish a quorum....”



- g) Willermoz was clearly not in possession of all the powers available to the senior members of the Order. Without talking of those exclusively belonging to Don Martinez, Bacon de la Chevalerie and de Lusignan were higher dignitaries than him. This is a letter from Bacon, dated 3 June, 1778 (*four years after the death of Martinez*), which explains this:

“My dear Willermoz, I am sending you the two folders signed and numbered from 1 to 44. When you have copied them, please return them to me, and I will then send you new ones, selected at random like these.

“Thus you will successively have everything you want, and which you have set apart, with the exception of the “Great Operation” of Don Martinez, which he absolutely forbade me to communicate to anyone except to M. de Lusignan. I will follow this, his wish, to the letter...”



There remains a final lineage which might have come to Antoine Pont from his nephew. He tells us the minimal importance of what he received in a letter dated 8 December, 1832, addressed to Willermoz' nephew, and which is in the Archives of the City of Lyons:

“I followed her counsel (that is, M^{me} Provensal) and around 1795, I was initiated. Like you, no doubt, very Dear Brother, I believed that in the following Grade I would receive the promised pearl; but like so many others, I found myself at the end of it still having not discovered this jewel...”

Antoine Pont wrote this eight years after the death of Willermoz.

In any case, one couldn't say that he would have been the conscious and well “educated” successor of Willermoz. Given his reservations, Willermoz' nephew considered burning all his secret archives. Finally, having hesitated, he sent them to Pont unconditionally, since Pont would only accept them under these circumstances: that he could then freely decide if he should preserve, communicate or destroy this deposit (see the work of Alice Joly, page 235: “A Lyonnais Mystery”).

So we are a long way from Pont being a “Réau Croix”...there is no evidence of a final initiation, only a simple remittal of secret papers. It is this portion of the archives which reached us, and which has been purchased by the City of Lyons.

And besides, we reiterate, we have seen that Willermoz recognized in 1781 (with Martinez dead) that he did not have the power to transmit more than the Porch Class. Antoine Pont therefore could not have been higher than *Master Cohen*...

III. THE MARTINIST GROUP IN LYONS AND ITS LINEAGE

The Lyonnais Martinists coming from the lineage of Jean Bricaud, pretend to be in possession of a regular filiation going back to Martinez de Pasqually, by the channel of Lyonnais initiates constituted by Willermoz and his successors.

We are therefore going to try to show here that Jean Bricaud never possessed anything other than the stated lineage of Saint-Martin, which he acknowledged receiving by means of the “Free Initiators”, those same which, in the XIXth Century, Augustin Chaboseau and Gérard Encausse received.

This lineage comprises the application of the symbolism of the Mask, Cloak and Cordelier; the black, red and white cloths; the three Luminaries; the signature of two letters and six points; and the possession – in principle – of the keys of the interior mystic Way which the “Unknown Philosopher”, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, transmitted to his “Intimates”.

As for the lineage of the Elus Cohen and their secret class of “Réau Croix”, a lineage going back to Martinez de Pasqually via Willermoz, in our opinion Bricaud never received this, and this is why.

In his “Historical Account of Martinism³⁴”, Mr. Chevillon, under the initials “C.C.”, resumes the following details, which he received from Jean Bricaud before his death. So it is not the good faith of Mr. Chevillon which we are calling into question (nor that of Bricaud, for that matter)...



“In 1893 (so the “Historical Account of Martinism” tells us), the Lyonnais Martinists entered into possession of the archives of J.-B. Willermoz and of the Cohen Temple at Lyons, which the widow of Joseph Pont, Willermoz’ successor, have bequeathed to Brother Cavarnier on the death of her husband”.

Did this sudden behest place these Lyonnais Martinists in possession of a sort of affiliatory “regularization”? Yes and no! Yes, if they had previously received the *ordination*. No, if their Martinism was only a simple *spiritual adherence* to the program of the Order...



³⁴ « Notice Historique sur le Martinisme » – PV.

"Doctor Encausse (the "Historical Account" continues) was not aware of that the regular transmission of the Elus Cohen had never been interrupted, and that this tradition never stopped having representatives, be it in Lyons, or in other foreign towns. Some of these were the Brothers Bergeron and Bréban-Salomon in the city of Lyons; Carl Michelsen in Denmark; Doctor Edouard Blitz in the United States.

"Dr. Blitz was a "Chevalier Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte", and had a high grade in the Masonic Rite of Memphis-Mizraïm. He was also the direct successor of Antoine Pont and Willermoz. He then became President of the Grand Council for the United States of the Order renovated by Papus. In this quality, (representing the legitimate heritage of Martinez de Pasqually) he resolved to re-establish the Order in the United States upon the old traditional bases. In France, his representatives were Dr. Fugiron, and then Charles Détré, who, under his esoteric name of Teder, established the Rituel Martiniste Français in agreement with Papus, (the Ritual which was edited in Paris, in 1913, under the auspices of Dorbon the Elder)".

This raises a question: Was Blitz (and how...?) the successor of Willermoz and Antoine Pont? Bricaud doesn't say so! But if the Lyonnais Elus Cohen lineage had been able, ignoring the immediate surrounds of Lyons and even Paris, to soar with wings across to the United States in order to fall into the hands of an American doctor, how is it that this Ritual, established by Blitz, only contains those symbols which come from that Ceremonial which contains the Cloak, Mask, Three Luminaries, two letters and six points? (Emblems which, we now know did not come from the "Unknown Philosopher", since it was alien to his personal symbolism). How is it that nothing in them recalls the Rituals used in former times by the true Elus Cohen, in the XVIIIth Century, even from the inferior Grades? And how is it that the symbolic Circles of Martinez – used in the Ordinations – simply became on the floor of the Lodge described in this Ritual, the Pantacle of the Order? How, by what aberration, did the "Secret Instructions" of Martinez and Willermoz on Reintegration and the Fall which preceded it, become, in Blitz' Ritual, a simple commentary on the first verses of Genesis – a suitably dignified commentary for a Protestant American, but unworthy of a Cohen initiate?

For the excellent reason that Blitz, perhaps titled with the high grades of the Rite of Memphis-Mizraïm (and what affinity?...) had only received initiation from Papus!...Not only had he never initiated the latter, but it was Papus who was his initiator... We are convinced of this fact since we have learned that Blitz was later struck off the rolls by Papus himself. Having committed notorious abuses of the Martinist spirit and the traditions of the Order which Papus had renovated, Papus withdrew his Charter as Sovereign-Delegate General for the United States. This fact is attested to by the Supreme Martinist Council, which published "from the Orient of France" an Edict, which appeared in the review

“The Star of the East³⁵”, withdrawing the commission of Blitz. The Edict declared that this commission was replaced by that of “Inspector General of the Order for the United States, in the person of Mrs. Margaret B. Peeke, also 33^o of the *Droit Humaine*”. This fact is attested to in a note by Dr. Spencer Lewis in 1937, which we possess, and in a letter by Jean Bricaud himself, also in our archives.

Can one conceive that Blitz, the initiator of Papus, having conferred the Cohen lineage upon him, of which the latter had been legitimately proud (and this was never a secret...), was then struck off by his spiritual son? One has never seen a case of an initiated person regularizing his initiator (as Papus did for Blitz), then striking him off (as happened here).

Finally, it appears to be given that:

1. Willermoz could not transmit the sacerdotal high Cohen grades;
2. Therefore Antoine Pont could not have received these, so Dr. Blitz could neither possess them, nor confer them on Dr. Fugairon!

For all these good reasons, supported by serious documents, we rejects the Ritual called the ‘Teder Ritual’, the work of Blitz, and we also reject the hypothesis that Blitz transmitted to the French branch the lineage of the Elus Cohen of Martinez de Pasqually.



Next comes the second hypothesis, that of Bricaud receiving his Elus Cohen affiliation form Dr. Fugairon.

Yet had Dr. Fugairon been to the United States to receive this Cohen pseudo-investiture of Blitz? Had Blitz been to Lyons in order to give it to him? Or did all this happen by correspondence? In this last case, we refuse to contemplate such an initiation as valid. But we don't need to take the trouble, as we have just shown previously that Blitz did not possess this lineage! We may conclude that, if Dr. Fugairon had been a Martinist, he only possess the lineage of Papus, Chaboseau, and all the members of the Supreme Council, that is to say the lineage of the “Unknown Philosopher”, Claude de Saint-Martin. And we now know how historically fragile this lineage is.



Bricaud then tells us that Teder succeeded Fugairon. The same denial of the Cohen lineage thus also applies to Teder. But, on the subject of Teder, a

³⁵ “L’Étoile d’Orient” – PV.

verbal tradition has circulated among the Lyonnais Martinists. This is that they confidentially affirm that Teder possessed the Cohen lineage and he would have transmitted it to Papus. *This is also untrue.* We shall now prove this...

Once again it was Papus who initiated Teder! In our archives we possess a letter from Papus, dated Tuesday, 30 December, 1902, and ends thus:

"Very Dear Brother Détré,

"Firstly permit me to congratulate you most sincerely for your activities and your devotion to Our Order. The Directing Committee of the Supreme Council meets very regularly, and you can be sure that I will bring up your request, and that, in consequence, they will be in agreement. While we wait, I am going to send you:

1. a Ritual, in English, which I enjoin you to send back to me after you have consulted or copied it. This Ritual is the one used by the rich American Lodges...It is not completely used in Europe, but it could give you some ideas.
2. I am also going to send you papers useful for advertising and for the Lodges...

"There is in England a "Sovereign Delegate General", Brother John Yarker, and an "Inspector General". I will put you in contact with them once you have your Charter as "Delegate General", at least with Brother John Yarker. All my best wishes, my Very Dear Brother, and fraternal greetings.

Signed: PAPUS".

So here is a package sending the Blitz ritual to Teder, and Papus giving Teder, his pretended initiator, a "promotion"...

But this is not all. We have another, dated 5 March, 1905, that is, three years later. The promised Charter had to be waited for.

"Very Dear Brother Détré,

"I have the honor of informing you that the Supreme Council of the Order has decided to create a post of "Inspector General: for England and the English Colonies. The Supreme Council has decided to name you to that post, in thanks for your devotion. I am personally delighted to be able to inform you. Yours fraternally.,

"Signed: PAPUS."

But this is still not all. We have extracted another authentic document from our archives, the Brief of the Supreme Council of Lyons, signed by Jean Bricaud: “33° – 90° – 95°, President of the Supreme Council, and Grand-Master General of the Ordre Martiniste”, which we reproduce here:

“Lyons, 29 September, 1918

“To the Sovereign Delegates Principal Inspectors General,

“To the Delegates and Inspectors General, to the Heads of the Groups, and to all the Members of the Order,

“Very Dear and Very Illustrious Sisters and Brothers,

“The first light of the Order has just gone out. Our Venerated Grand Master, the Very Illustrious Brother Teder has died, during the night of 25 to 26 September, at Clermont-Ferrand. I only wish for the moment to give a sketch of his life, all the dogged work, the strenuous activity, of our Very Illustrious Brother Teder...

“It was in England that he was invited into Martinism by the Very Illustrious Brother Papus, then named Representative and later Principal INsptector of the Order, for the Btiannic Empire and the Indies...

“Signed: JEAN BRICAUD (titles follow)”.

Can one still imagine Teder initiating Papus, then being regularized and honored by him?...

And so we equally reject the hypothesis of Teder as a regular successor of Martinez de Pasqually, since it is Papus, holder of the only lineage of the “Unknown Philosopher”, with no connection to that of the Elus Cohen, who was the origin of his Martinist lineage...



There remain Carl Michelsen, the Dane, (of whom Bricaud said nothing and did not pretend to be the successor), and the “Brothers Bergeron and Bréban-Salomon”.

Regarding these, none of the old Martinists, the ex-members of the Supreme Council of 1884, ever remember hearing these names spoken. In the hypothesis in which he acted as an authentic Cohen, issuing from the Lyonnais branch coming from the XVIIIth Century, why did Bricaud feel the need to mix in Michelson, Figairon, Blitz, and Teder?... I would have been enough to tell us that “Bergeron” or “Bréban-Salomon” had been his initiators. That would be the

attitude adopted by any intelligent man, and the first care of any Martinist is generally to cite his initiator without mixing him or her up with another unconnected name. Bricaud refrained from acting like this. He gave out vague, generalized teachings, and was happy to leave an interviewer free to believe any solution that appealed to him... And so he had no moral responsibility for the historical error which might have arisen from these affirmations, voluntarily nebulous...



Now, as for Mr. Bergeron, we have been able to discover traces of his existence by chance, in August, 1946, during the course of a conversation with Mademoiselle Morel, the late lamented librarian of the Theosophical Society.

She confided many pieces of information on the activities of the Lyonnais Martinists prior to the creation of the Ordre Martiniste by Papus. In consequence we returned to this subject many times, and despite her advanced years, her memory was never in doubt; never did she contradict herself. Here we set out our first interview:

"It was in Lyons in 1886, that I made the acquaintance of Mr. Bergeron, and through him, of Mr. Fouilloux and Dr. Souillé, also Martinists. At that time I was sixteen-and-a-half years old. Mr. Bergeron gave me "Man of Desire" by Louis-Claude de Satin-Martin to study and copy out. I was so impressed reading this that, seeing this, Bergeron then took to exposing me to and commenting on the doctrine of the "Unknown Philosopher".

"He was a man of high moral values, almost a saint. When I knew him, he was then over fifty years old. Artist, painter and violinist, he lived miserably in the top of the cupola of an old house in rue Saint-Jean. The people in that district had named him "the Man in the Tower"... Always dressed decently despite his extreme poverty, he was a manager in a shoe shop. Yet, faced with his distinguished mien and his natural reserve, people hesitated to offer him a tip. Since his income (30 francs only a month!) was so small, he lived on two apples at each meal, water, and a spoonful of olive oil each morning. I knew him well more than seventeen years, and never did I see him vary his dietary regime, apart from each Saturday evening, when he came to dinner with my parents. He was not a Freemason and was not a member of any official religion. Outside of Martinist traditions, he regularly supported the spiritualist theories which were then beginning to spread, as a complementary interest. His friend Fouilloux also became rather attached this type of phenomenon, to marvelous beings, analogous to the devas of the vedic teachings.

"From 1886, when I made his acquaintance on the bank of the Saône, till 1905, the year when our relationship became more and more infrequent due to my living in Paris, each week we met twice, once at my parents' house, at dinner

on Saturday evening, the other at his home, usually on Thursdays. There, in his tiny room, we squeezed in, whoever sitting on his bed, whoever on the trunk, whoever on the table, which comprised his furniture. He played the violin in an extraordinarily moving way, and this was an excellent prelude to our passionate discussions. In all this seventeen years period (he lived on till 1907) if we think about all he knew about the philosophy and metaphysics of Saint-Martin, never did he raise the issue of any ritualistic transmission of these teachings. I have a friend, older than me, also converted to Martinism. She also has no recollection of such a thing. It is possible that the Lyonnais group of Martinists had been more important, and was not limited to Messrs. Bergeron, Fouilloux and Souillée. But I never knew any others! One day, during a meal, while discussing a problem of metaphysics, he told me the manner in which he had come to it "in our meeting". I presumed therefore that he sometimes went to meetings where somebody had entered into this type of study. In any case, that did not imply the practice of a theurgy similar to that of the Elus Cohen of Martinez, for it would have been impossible for him – even if his room had all its furniture removed – to hide the paraphernalia needed (robes, pantacles, sword, ornaments, etc...). For he possessed almost nothing. It is possible, very possible in fact, that these meetings to which he made allusion have been spiritual reunions, for these practices were close to his heart. Sometimes he went to Perrache, rue de la Charité or rue Saint-Hélène, where the Lyonnais spiritualists definitely met.

"I never heard these three men, Messrs. Bergeron, Souillée, Fouilleux speak of Brothers Bréban-Salomon, they never made any reference to already deceased Martinists, either Pont or Destigny. As for Papus, they ignored him until the day he came to Lyons to hold a conference on Martinism, no doubt to see if he would awaken any echoes... But none of the three went...!"

"As for Bricaud, I saw him when he was a young man (he was about twenty) make his first steps in the occult arena of Lyons. Up till 1903, when our relationship ended, Mr. Bergeron ignored Bricaud. Had he known Teder? I don't know. But seventeen years of spiritual intimacy have convinced me that Mr. Bergeron never had knowledge of a Martinism descended from Saint-Martin which was communicated by means of some sort of ceremony. As for "Willermozism" in the present time, nobody ever spoke about this in the Lyonnais Martinist nucleus which I frequented.

"Legends are born quickly, and one must guard against them! Everyone knows the story of the arch stone which detached itself at the time of Papus' funeral. At Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. I was there, with some friends. When we read shortly thereafter the first echoes of this fact, we asked each other about this with some surprise: none of us had seen such a thing! And we were all in the first row, at the time of the departure of the coffin... It is good that you are reestablishing the truth on the subject of Mr. Bergeron and his friends, those old Lyonnais Martinists. I say to you once again that never, during this time in Lyons, had the initiation of Saint-Martin been remitted other than in the loan of

books and the comments of an older person to his junior. As for Martinez and Willermoz, the question of their systems never arose..."

Mme Morel died of a general cancer in July this year³⁶. She confirmed the information she gave once again, scarcely a month before her death. What more can one add? The Bergeron lineage, given before Bricaud, probably no more existed than that of Blitz.



Some Lyonnais Martinists have put forward the hypothesis that Teder, an affiliate of the Scottish Rectified Rite, as a "Chevalier Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte", thus possessed the lineage of the Grands Profès, the legitimate successors of the Réaux Croix, instituted in 1778 by Willermoz and his friends, at the heart of the Grand Priory of Gaul, and the Strict Observance.

But that cannot be taken seriously, for in the Brief of the Supreme Council, signed by Bricaud, and announcing the death of Teder (cited above), the titles of Teder, enumerated at length, are those of Phillippe Encausse in his "Biography" of his father, listed as having been belonging to Papus. One concludes that Teder, the inheritor of Papus, has the same ones. *Neither for Papus nor for Teder has there been made mention of the possession of a high grade from the Scottish Rectified Rite.*

This is easily understood then one calls to mind that the fusion of the Scottish Rectified Rite and the Ordre Martiniste, attempted by Papus and Dr. Ed. De Ribeaucourt (Grand Master of the Rite before the war of 1914) had been abandoned. In fact, the Scottish Rectified Rite was exclusively Masonic and reserved for men. The Ordre Martiniste was a *mixed* philosophical organization. Correspondence on this subject during the war is also in our hands. It is currently in the archives of the Ordre Martinisme Traditionnel.

So neither Teder nor Papus were Grands Profès and in possession of the regular and legitimate lineage of Willermoz and the Elus Cohen. We already know, in any case, that this has not existed for many years.



We have dispelled, using proof in our hands, Dr. Blitz, Dr. Fugairon and Teder. We have equally dispelled any idea of a true lineage from Willermoz or the Cohens proceeding from him or from Papus. Michelsen is not put forward by Bricaud as he says he was initiated by a French Martinist. So only Bergeron and

³⁶ This would probably have been 1947, given the time to publishing – PV.

Bréban-Salomon remain. These did not meet Bricaud, leaving it to the imagination of the reader (knowingly led by him...) about the others.

So?...Nothing. Nothing remains...And the "Grand Master Cohen", the "Knight of the East", the "Grand Elect of Zerubbabel" or the "Réau Croix" who presided over the commission of Teder and Kean Bricaud is yet to be discovered, if there ever was one.



We have considered a case where the survivors of the provincial Cohen Temples would have continued to transmit the initiation of Martinez de Pasqually. We have discovered some traces in the South, and original Rituals from the XVIIIth Century, those of the "communication" of the Porch Grades, of "Master-Elect Cohen", "Grand Master Cohen" (or "Grand Architect") have come to our notice and we have made copies of them. We also have *in our possession* the original Ritual of "Grand-Elect of Zerubbabel" or "Knight of the East", but this has not brought us the tangible proof of Cohen activity at the time of Teder and Bricaud. The existence of archives do not demonstrate the survival of officials...

So what is the lineage which could, incontestably, be known to Bricaud? That which he claimed himself in a letter – also in our possession – in which he declared "I am myself a *Free Initiator* for more than twenty years..."

This lineage of Free Initiator is that which uniquely goes back (...) to Claude de Saint-Martin, through Papus and Chaboseau, ending up either in Chaptal, or in the Abbé de Lannon, and which Van Rijnberk analyzed in Tome II of his work "Martinez de Pasqually".

Later, when Bricaud wanted to be linked to the Elus Cohen, in the absence of *real* documents and instructions (and for good reason...) he applied to those who he called "The Réaux Croix of Martinez" (the letter was also in our possession) for a Ritual Book which is in fact his own fabrication. And this Ritual, created before le Forestier had his study on "Occult Freemasonry in the 18th Century and the Order of the Elus Cohen" published by Dorbon the Elder, ignores (thereby destroying the pretensions of Bricaud...) both the rite of expiation, by means of the carbonization of the head of a black kid, on which Martinez particularly insisted, and the obligation requiring a new Réau Croix to drink "the Chalice in the ceremony and to eat the mystic and cementing bread"... While the Ritual of Martinez is profoundly occult and mysterious, that of Bricaud only reflects gnostic traditions, the symbols of that church, etc... The discourse to the new Elu is a simple commentary on general principles of Occultism, such as were defined at the end of the XIXth Century, or at the start of the present one. And the style does not rise above the level of the little advertising brochures edited by *l'Initiation*.

CONCLUSION

And so we have just successively eliminated:

1. The lineage of Claude de Saint-Martin;
2. The lineage of J.-B. Willermoz;

for which neither witness nor historical document have come down to us. Even worse, we have only encountered contrary conclusions from these sources. This is very serious for the *Ordre Martiniste* (of Lyons), the *Ordre Martinisme Traditionnel*, the *Ordre Martiniste et Synarchique* and the *Ordre Martiniste Rectifié* which, as non-Masonic Orders do not possess any lineage at all.

So the question remains: where does the movement set in motion by Martinez de Pasqually exist, and where might one rediscover an indisputable, uninterrupted ritual lineage? The answer is clear: in the bosom of the Scottish Rectified Rite.

In fact, we have carefully studied the various Rituals and Instructions of the Lodges of St. John as well as the Lodges of St. Andrew or its Inner Order. There everything is indisputably marked with the Martinist seal. One can compare the instructions from the various Elus Cohen Degrees, published by Papus in his work "Martinez de Pasqually" with those figuring in the "Ritual of the Scottish Rectified Lodges". In these one can clearly establish the very clear image of a theoretical perpetuation of the teachings of the Master. This is not at all astonishing when one remembers that, at the Convent at Wilhelmsbad, these Instructions were drawn up, presented and supported by Willermoz and his friends...

That theoretical Martinism was ignored by the majority of the Masons in the Scottish Rectified Rite, that practical Martinism (that is to say, theurgic) was equally ignored by the high dignitaries of the Inner Order (Squires of Knight Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte), is an equally indisputable fact. It is no less true that contemporary Martinists, desirous of truly attaching themselves, in the initiatic sense of the word, to real Martinist history, will have to go to receive the "Light" from the Lodges of the Scottish Rectified Rite... And the closing of that which, in 1945, under the name of "*Ark of the Covenant*", tried to reconstitute in our time a Workshop where the great problems of the Mystery of Initiation would have been broached, is to be regretted. That initiative merited being continued, since alone, because of its historic traditions and its origins, the Scottish Rectified Rite is capable of serving as the source of egregore of an authentic and active Martinism. It alone could give occult life to its Lodges. It alone could link us occultly across time and centuries to the true "Unknown Superiors" of olden

times, and those who aspire to join with them in spirit, in the fumes of the ritual censers and in the brightness of the mysterious flambeaux...³⁷

³⁷ At the moment this went to press, we learned of the official revival of this Lodge. Those of our readers interested in the story of the Scottish Rectified Rite and that of its Templar lineage, will very shortly have in their hands a study on that subject. This will constitute the second booklet in this little collection.