

MARTINISM: HISTORY OF A TRADITIONAL ORDER

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In this article Christian Rebisse presents a comprehensive review of the history of the Traditional Martinist Order, from its beginnings with Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin's mentors, Jacob Boehme and Martinès de Pasqually, to today's worldwide mystical order.



In 1889, the Fourth World's Fair, celebrating the centenary of France's 1789 Revolution, opened in Paris. It was a splendid fair where the marvel of electricity triumphed. The fair's main attraction was the inauguration of the Eiffel Tower, a gigantic metallic monument that was soon to become the symbol of triumphant materialism, technology, and industry. Was it not the very incarnation of a new Tower of Babel?

Meanwhile, Martinism was in the process of being reorganized and had just begun publishing its magazine *L'Initiation*. Upon what foundations did the Martinists of that time rely to erect their Temple, and who were the craftsmen of its reconstruction?

In answer, one may date the birth of the Martinist Order to the meeting of two custodians of an "initiation" that had been passed down from the time of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803). Their names were Gérard Encausse (better known as Papus) and Augustin Chaboseau.

The Élus-Cohen

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin was the disciple of Martinès de Pasqually. Around 1754, Pasqually founded the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen* (Order of Elect Priests) so as to have his disciples work toward personal reintegration through the practice of theurgy, which relied on complex ceremonial practices aimed at what Pasqually termed the reconciliation of the "minor" person with Divinity. This was to be ac-

complished through human communication with the so-called angelic hierarchies. According to Pasqually, the angels were humankind's only support in his efforts to become reconciled with the Divine after "The Fall."

Thus, contrary to what is generally thought, Martinism is not a mere extension of the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen*, and Martinès de Pasqually should not be considered the founder of the Martinist Order.

In 1772, before the organization of his Order was completed, Martinès de Pasqually left France on family business for Haiti—from whence he never returned. He died in Santo Domingo in 1774. After the disappearance of Pasqually, several disciples of the master continued to spread his teachings, each from a unique perspective. Two disciples particularly distinguished themselves—namely, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz and Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin.

An ardent adept of Freemasonry and theurgy, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz (1730-1824) was in contact with the German *Stricte Observance Templière* (Strict Templar Observance). In 1782, at a Conventicle of the Order in Wilhelmsbad, Willermoz incorporated Pasqually's teachings into the higher degrees of that order—the degrees of *Profès* and *Grand Profès*—but did not pass along the theurgic practices of the *Élus-Cohen*. During the Conventicle, the *Stricte Observance Templière* was reformed under a new name, the *Cheva-*



liers *Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte* (Knights Benefactor of the Holy City).

Meanwhile, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin had renounced Freemasonry. He forsook theurgy—"the exterior way"—in favor of the benefits of "the interior way." In fact, he considered theurgy to be dangerous, and angelic evocation far from infallible when conducted through "exterior" methods. We might even put into Saint-Martin's mouth the following excerpt from a poem by Angelus Silesius, entitled *Chérubinique*:

Go away Seraphims, you cannot comfort me!

Go away angels and all that may be seen close to you;

I jump all alone into the uncreated sea of pure Deity.

According to Saint-Martin, the implement and crucible of this mysterious communion is the heart of humankind. He sought "to enter into the heart of the Divine and make the Divine enter his heart." It is in this sense that we call the path advocated by Saint-Martin "The Way of the Heart." The evolution of Saint-Martin's interior perspective can be traced to his discovery of the works of Jacob Boehme. In his personal diary, Saint-Martin wrote, "It is to my first master [Pasqually] that I owe my first steps upon the spiritual path, but it is to my second master [Boehme] that I owe the most significant steps." He enlarged upon the ideas of his two masters and incorporated them into a personal system passed on through an "initiation" to a few chosen disciples.¹

Saint-Martin was not the founder of the Martinist Order, which was a later

development. However, we do know that a group formed around him, alluded to in the letters of some of his friends (circa 1795) under the name *Cercle Intime* (Intimate Circle) or *Société des Intimes* (Association of Intimates). In *Le Lys dans la Vallée* (The Lily in the Valley) the great novelist Honoré de Balzac refers to the existence of groups of Saint-Martin's disciples: "An intimate friend of the Duchess of Bourbon, Mme. de Verneuil, belonged to a holy society whose soul was Mr. Saint-Martin, born in Touraine and nicknamed the Unknown Philosopher. This philosopher's disciples practiced the virtues recommended by the high speculations of mystical Illuminism."²

The Initiation originally transmitted by Saint-Martin was passed down to modern times through various so-called filiations. By the end of the nineteenth century, two men in particular were the custodians of the Initiation, Dr. Gérard Encausse and Augustin Chaboseau, each through a different filiation. Let us briefly examine these filiations.



Jacob Boehme.

Martinist Filiation

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin died on October 13, 1803. He had initiated Jean Antoine Chaptal, a chemist to whom we owe the discovery of certain manufacturing processes for alum and the dyeing of cotton, as well as the vinification process called *chaptalization* (the process of adding sugar to the must). Chaptal had several children, among them a daughter who married to become Mme. Delaage. She had a son, Henri Delaage, who wrote many books on the history of ancient initiation. He in turn was initiated by someone whose name we do not know—probably his father or mother, for when his grandfa-

ther (Chaptal) died, the young Henri Delaage was only seven and too young to receive the Initiation. Henri Delaage passed on the Initiation to Gérard Encausse (Papus) in 1882.

The second filiation proceeded as follows. About the middle of 1803, Saint-Martin was staying at Aulnay with his friend, the Abbot de la Noue, whom he had long since initiated. This clergyman, an independent priest possessing an encyclopedic knowledge, initiated the lawyer Antoine-Louis Marie Hennequin. The latter initiated Hyacinthe Joseph-Alexandre Thabaud de Latouche, better known under the pen name of Henri de Latouche, who in turn initiated Honoré de Balzac and Adolphe Desbarolles, the Count of Authencourt, to whom we owe a famous dissertation on palmistry. The latter initiated Henri de Latouche's niece, Amélie Nouël de Latouche, the Marchioness of Boisse-Mortemart who, in 1886, initiated her nephew, Augustin Chaboseau.³

The Creation of the Martinist Order

It was from the meeting of these two spiritual descendants of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin—Augustin Chaboseau and Papus—that an initiatory Order called *Ordre Martiniste* (Martinist Order) was born. Papus and Augustin Chaboseau were both studying medicine. A mutual friend, Gaëtan Leymarie, Director of *La Revue Spirite*, knowing of their deep interest in esotericism, arranged for them to get together. The two medical students soon became friends and discovered their mutual participation in initiatic filiations going back to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. In 1888, they pooled what they had received

and made plans to pass this on to a few seekers of truth. To achieve their goal, they founded what we call the Martinist Order, and it is only after this time that the Martinist Order can be said to have existed as such. (We will see later how the name of the Order was altered by adding such qualifications as “Traditional” or “Synarchical.”)

Although the Order had no structure at that time, the number of initiates increased rapidly. It was then that Papus created the magazine *L'Initiation*. As Papus had not yet finished his education, after which he was to complete his military service, it was not until July 7, 1892, that he successfully defended his medical thesis. Still, what activity! He had already organized the *Ordre Martiniste*, established *l'École Hermétique* (the Hermetic School), created the magazines *L'Initiation* and *Le Voile d'Isis*, and written, at age twenty-three, *Le Traité Élémentaire de Sciences Occultes* (The Elementary Treatise on Occult Sciences) and, at age twenty-four, *Le Tarot des*



Papus.

Bohémiens (Tarot of the Bohemians). His associates were not much older than he, except for F.C.H. Barlet.

In 1887, Papus's esoteric interests had been aroused by the writings of Louis Lucas, a chemist, alchemist, and Hermeticist. A student of occultism, he studied the works of Eliphas Levi and made the acquaintance of Barlet (Albert Faucheux), a learned occultist, and Félix Gaboriau, director of the Theosophical magazine *Le Lotus Rouge* (The Red Lotus). In 1887, Papus also joined the Theosophical Society, founded earlier in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott.



The 1891 Supreme Council

Papus soon adopted a detached attitude toward the Theosophical Society. It promoted an Eastern, Buddhistic concept of esotericism which went so far as to trivialize, even suppress, the perspectives of Western esotericism. This attitude—proclaiming the superiority of Eastern over Western tradition—alarmed Papus. At the same time a more serious danger appeared on the horizon which made it impossible to perpetuate the Western tradition in its customary silence and obscurity. According to Papus and Stanislas de Guaita, some occultists were trying to shift the hub of esotericism away from Paris—its traditional center—to places more favored by the Eastern enthusiasts.

“Thus it was decided in high places,” Papus wrote, “that a campaign of extension should be undertaken to select true initiates capable of adapting the Eastern tradition to the century which was about to open.” The purpose was to preserve the perenniality of the Eastern tradition while at the same time opposing a trend which would have led sincere seekers toward an impasse between Eastern and Western esotericism. Martinism was to be the instrument of this plan.

In 1890, Papus resigned from the Theosophical Society. From that date, Martinism became better organized. Martinist initiations became more frequent, and in the following year, July 1891, the Martinist Order created a Supreme Council composed of twenty-one members.⁴ Papus was elected Grand Master. Through Papus’s many talents and the material support of Lucien Mauchel (Chamuel), the Order grew rapidly. The first Martinist Lodges were established, and four soon appeared in Paris—*Le Sphinx*, headed by Papus, which offered general studies; *Hermanubis*, headed by Sédir, which taught mysticism and eastern tradition; *Velleda*,

headed by Victor-Emile Michelet, devoted to the study of symbolism; and *Sphinge*, intended to promote the arts. Martinist groups formed in several other French cities as well. The Order also spread to Belgium, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Egypt, Tunisia, the United States, Argentina, Guatemala, and Colombia. The April 1898 issue of *L’Initiation* claimed as many as forty lodges throughout the world, and later that year it could boast one hundred thirteen.

The Faculty of Hermetic Sciences

Martinists wanted to revive Western esotericism; however, there was no place in France where Hermetic sciences could be studied. Papus reflected, “Since there exist faculties where we can learn materialistic sciences, why shouldn’t there be one where we can learn esoteric sciences!” To meet that need, Martinists organized a school that would create courses and lectures intended to communicate Western esoteric values to seekers drawn from the public. This school became the breeding ground from which prospective Martinists were selected for initiation. In fact, it was to become the outer circle of the Martinist Order, and was called the *École Supérieure Libre des Sciences Hermétiques* (the Independent High School of Hermetic Sciences). It later changed its name to *Groupe Indépendant d’Études Ésotériques*, then to *École Hermétique*, and finally to *Faculté des Sciences Hermétiques* (Faculty of Hermetic Sciences).

It offered a multitude of courses (about twelve monthly), with subjects ranging from Kabbalah to Alchemy, Victor-Emile Michelet to the Tarot, covering the history of Hermetic philosophy. The more diligent teachers were Papus, Sédir, Victor-Emile Michelet, Barlet, Augustin Chaboseau, and Sisera. A special group under Augustin Chaboseau studied the Eastern sciences. Another under F. Jollivet Castelot studied

Alchemy and took the name *Société Alchimique de France* (Alchemical Society of France).

Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix

Having organized the outer circle—then called the *Groupe Indépendant d'Études Ésotériques*—the Martinists also created an inner circle, the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* (Kabbalistic Order of the Rose Cross). On July 5, 1892, the Martinist Order and the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* were linked by an agreement. According to Stanislas de Guaita, “Martinism and the Rose-Croix constituted two complementary forces in the full scientific meaning of the term.”⁵ The Kabbalistic Order of the Rose Cross had been revived in 1889 by Stanislas de Guaita and Josephin Péladan. Admission was reserved strictly for Martinist S.I.’s who had attained that Degree at least three years before and under special circumstances. The number of members was to be limited to one hundred forty-four, but apparently this number was never reached.

The purpose of the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* was to complete the spiritual formation of those in the S.I. Degree. It was divided into three Degrees, leading to the following diplomas: Bachelor in Kabbalah, Kabbalah Graduate, and Doctor of Kabbalah. When Stanislas de Guaita died in 1897, eight years after the Order’s founding, Barlet was appointed head, but never fulfilled his duties; the *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose-Croix* became more or less dormant. As late as World War I in 1914, Papus was still trying to revive the Order, without success.

To spread Illuminism, the Martinists did not hesitate to merge with other initiatory organizations. Thus, in 1908 Papus organized a great international spiritualistic convention in Paris—an event which brought together no fewer than thirty initiatory organizations. The secretary of this

huge undertaking was Victor Blanchard, a Martinist who later made use of this technique to organize the F.U.D.O.S.I.

Sometimes, in his many alliances, Papus would allow himself to be overwhelmed by the emotional zeal of his colleagues. So it was with the *Église Gnostique* (Gnostic Church), founded around 1889 by Jules Doissel after a spiritual experience. It is often claimed that the Gnostic Church became the official church of the Martinists. In fact, the importance of the alliance has been exaggerated by some of the pseudo-successors of Papus. Although the Martinist Order merged with many organizations—*Les Illuminés* (The Illuminati), *Les Babistes* (The Babists), *Le Rite Écossais* (The Scottish Rite), or *Memphis Misraïm*—it always maintained its independence. It was common practice in those days to belong to several initiatory organizations at once. Some, unfortunately, abused the privilege, becoming afflicted with a terrible disease that often appears among the superficially initiated: the tendency to collect titles as a substitute for true esoteric study.

Papus and most of the Martinist leaders had assumed important responsibilities in the Egyptian Freemasonry of the Rite of Memphis-Misraïm, for example. But compared to its ninety-seven degrees, the few Martinist degrees seemed infinitesimal! A number of Martinists, dazzled by the prodigious titles of the Memphis-Misraïm Degrees, no longer took time to study the teachings. Thus, many plunged into a kind of initiatory promiscuity and lost the underlying purpose and essence of initiation.

World War I (1914-1918)

With the onset of World War I the Order became dormant. Everyone was involved in defending France. Papus volunteered for the front and was assigned the post of chief physician, with the rank of Captain. He viewed as sacred his obliga-



tions to his country. Augustin Chaboseau, unable to serve in a physical capacity, joined the departmental staff of Aristide Briand's ministry, first as a magistrate, then as Chairman of the Board. Papus died before the end of the war on October 25, 1916. By the time the war was over, members of the Supreme Board were scattered; no new Grand Master was elected. "With Papus gone, Martinism is dead," Jollivet Castelot lamented.⁶ Several Martinists tried to assume leadership of the Order, but they altered the essence of Martinism so drastically that many Martinists preferred not to participate and remained independent.

Short-Lived Successions

Several Martinist groups came into existence at that time, but most were short-lived, and followed no single leader. When a Russian Martinist asked Barlet who was the Order's leader in France, Barlet answered, half-smiling: "Martinism is a circle whose circumference is everywhere with its center nowhere."⁷ Let us take a quick look at the organizations of this period, which are often confused, and some of the issues that historians have enjoyed clouding.

The first of these organizations was formed under the leadership of Jean Bricaud, who claimed that Papus had designated Teder to be his successor, and Teder in turn, on his deathbed, had named Bricaud as his successor. He showed the Parisian Martinists a document purporting to certify his appointment as the head of the Order, but no one took it seriously, believing that Bricaud had probably written it himself, and he was not recognized.⁸ Jean Bricaud formed a small group in Lyon which "masonized" the Order by admitting only eighteenth-degree Masons. The result was a version of Martinism which had little to do with that of Papus and Augustin Chaboseau. In addition, Jean Bricaud claimed an *Élus-Cohen* filiation



Augustin Chaboseau.

which Robert Ambelain has shown to be without foundation.⁹ Bricaud's movement remained essentially centered in Lyon.¹⁰

A second group was established under the leadership of Victor Blanchard. Blanchard had been Master of the Parisian Lodge *Melchisedec* and was recognized by a number of Parisian Martinists. On November 11, 1920, the *Journal Officiel* announced the establishment of Victor Blanchard's Order under the name *Union Générale des Martinistes et des Synarchistes* (General Association of Martinists and Synarchists), or *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* (Synarchical Martinist Order). In 1934, Victor Blanchard initiated H. Spencer Lewis into that Order. Later, Lewis would receive from Blanchard a charter to be Grand Inspector for the Americas, another to be Sovereign Grand Master Legate for the United States, and authorization to establish the Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin Temple in San Jose. (Ralph Maxwell Lewis would also be initiated into the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* in September 1936.) We will return to the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* later.

In Paris, several independent groups were created, but there was no Supreme Council acknowledged by Martinists as a whole. In fact, most Martinists preferred to continue working independently in the background instead of rushing into quarrels over succession.

Birth of the Traditional Martinist Order

There seemed to be no solution to the problem. In 1931, Jean Chaboseau suggested to his father that the survivors of the 1891 Supreme Council meet to reestablish the Martinist Order on its pristine foundations. Apart from A. Chaboseau, the only survivors were Victor-Emile Michelet and Chamuel.

We must not forget that Augustin Chaboseau was the co-founder of Martinism in 1889 and had received his initiation through the direct filiation of his aunt Amélie de Boisse-Mortemart. Victor-Emile Michelet had been an important member of the Hermetic University and Master of the Velleda Lodge. Chamuel had been the material organizer of the Order, using the back room of his bookstore to shelter the first activities of the Order. Other Martinists joined them: Dr. Octave Béliard, Dr. Robert Chapelain, Pierre Lévy, Ihamar Strouvea, Gustave Tautain, as well as Papus's son, Philippe Encausse. Philippe associated with the Martinist Order for a time, then parted from it. His concerns seem to have been elsewhere, as confirmed by a book he devoted to the memory of his father the following year.¹¹

On July 24, 1931, the Martinists, meeting again with Augustin Chaboseau, decided to revive Martinism under its authentic and traditional aspect. To distinguish it from numerous pseudo-Martinist organizations, they added the qualification *Traditional* to the name of the Order. In doing so, the survivors of the 1891 Supreme Council laid claim to "the perpetuity of the Order founded by them with Papus."¹²

Martinism was regaining some of its strength. A Grand Master was appointed. As tradition dictated, it was the oldest member, Augustin Chaboseau. As early as April 1932, he chose to relinquish the office to Victor-Emile Michelet. Although active, the Order remained relatively secret under his leadership. When Michelet died on January 12, 1938, Augustin Chaboseau resumed the office of Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order.

Martinism and F.U.D.O.S.I.

In August 1934, the first meetings of the F.U.D.O.S.I. were held in Brussels.¹³ Various initiatory Orders were brought together to unite their efforts. Through the F.U.D.O.S.I., Victor Blanchard hoped to restore the worldwide unity of Martinism under his leadership. However, many Martinists were absent. The Traditional Martinist Order was not represented and does not seem to have been invited. Jean Bricaud, probably fearing that his title would be challenged, preferred to abstain. On August 9, during a Martinist meeting, Victor Blanchard was recognized as Sovereign Grand Master by attending Martinists, and Georges Lagrèze as Deputy Grand Master.¹⁴

Victor Blanchard authorized Dr. H. Spencer Lewis to establish Lodges of the Synarchical Martinist Order in the United States, but was unable to deliver the required documents to either Lewis, Émile Dantinne, Edouard Bertholet, or others. As a precaution, Dr. Lewis preferred to wait for formal general rules before venturing further. Martinists from other jurisdictions adopted the same attitude. It turned out that the activities of the Synarchical Martinist Order were limited to the transmission of the various Martinist Degree Initiations, and the Order otherwise had no actual existence. There was no Martinist Lodge in Paris at the time, and Victor Blanchard gave his initiations in the temple of the *Fraternité des Polaires*.



Five years later, not much had improved. In 1939 the F.U.D.O.S.I. resolved to remove the trust that had been bestowed on Victor Blanchard. Georges Lagrèze took the opportunity to point out to members of the F.U.D.O.S.I. that there was indeed a Martinist fully qualified to lead the Order, whose existence Blanchard, intentionally or not, had never mentioned. This Martinist, Augustin Chaboseau, past collaborator of Papus and last survivor of the 1891 Supreme Council, was also the only one entitled to direct the destiny of Martinism. Consequently, a delegation was sent to meet with Augustin Chaboseau. After considering the situation, he agreed to head the Martinist Order. At a special F.U.D.O.S.I. meeting, all the attending Martinists rallied before the authority of the Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order. Thus, in July 1939, the Traditional Martinist Order was admitted into the F.U.D.O.S.I., resulting in a drop in the membership of the Synarchical Martinist Order.

Augustin Chaboseau, who had just assumed the leadership of Martinism, replaced Victor Blanchard as Imperator of the F.U.D.O.S.I., becoming one of a triad of Imperators running that organization, the two others being Sâr Hieronymus (Émile Dantine) and Ralph M. Lewis (his father having passed through transition on August 2, 1939). A few days later, a letter from the International Supreme Council of the Traditional Martinist Order confirmed Ralph M. Lewis's appointment as Regional Grand Master for the United States of America and member of the International Supreme Council.

World War II (1939-1945)

Just as Martinist tradition was being reestablished across the Atlantic Ocean (and none too soon), European Martinists, a few months later, were subjected to a new and terrible ordeal. World War II was to



Ralph Maxwell Lewis.

have dire consequences for the Martinist Order. Many Martinists lost their lives on battlefields and in concentration camps. On August 14, 1940, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, the French official newspaper published a decree from the Vichy Government banning all secret societies in France. Most of the leaders of these organizations were arrested. The Traditional Martinist Order became dormant in France in an official sense, but underneath the true work never stopped as Athanor and Brocéliande Lodges remained secretly active. Taking refuge in Brittany, Augustin Chaboseau was not overtly harassed, but Dr. Béliard had some difficulties with the Gestapo. Georges Lagrèze was forced to hide in Normandy, then in Angers,¹⁵ but despite constant searches of his residence, he continued to communicate with Ralph M. Lewis through Jeanne Guesdon.

By the end of the war in 1945, there were only a few survivors left. The Traditional Martinist Order was officially revived under Augustin Chaboseau, but unfortunately he passed through transition on January 2, 1946. Georges Lagrèze died



in Angers on April 16 of that year. The Order in France had, with their passing, lost essential elements. Jean Chaboseau was appointed to succeed his father. Though a worthy Martinist, he was a poor organizer and failed to revive the Order in France. The members of the Supreme Council gradually lost confidence in him and resigned. It should be stated, however, that some Martinists did much to complicate his work; tired of quarreling, Jean Chaboseau decided to declare the Order dormant. Belgian Martinists, under the leadership of Sâr Rénatus (René Rosart), tried to continue the work of the Order under the name *Ordre Martiniste Universel*, and Victor Blanchard approved the decision. But René Rosart's transition in October 1948 effectively checked any further development of the Universal Martinist Order. Brother Heb Ailghim Sî (Dr. E. Bertholet) succeeded René Rosart, but chose to allow an Order that had never been active to die out. On May 13, 1965, Dr. Bertholet passed away without appointing a successor.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Traditional Martinist Order had suffered no harm in the United

States and was working quietly, waiting for affairs to calm down in Europe. Ralph Lewis kept his title of Regional Grand Master, and ten years later, when the Traditional Martinist Order was reestablished in France and other countries, he assumed the title of Sovereign Grand Master. For forty-eight years Ralph M. Lewis led the Traditional Martinist Order. After his transition on January 12, 1987, he was succeeded by Gary Stewart. In April 1990, Christian Bernard was appointed Sovereign Grand Master of the Traditional Martinist Order.

Today's Traditional Martinist Order

As you can see, the Martinist Order, despite adversity, has always succeeded in transmitting its Light through time. Though there exist several Martinist "obediences" today, it is the Traditional Martinist Order which has the largest membership. In the last few years, Sovereign Grand Master Christian Bernard, has been patiently reorganizing the Order. One hundred years after the establishment of the Supreme Council in 1891, and sixty years after the founding of the Traditional



Martinist Order, he announced plans both to re-center the Order on its traditional values and practices and to adapt it to the modern world. Under his leadership, the Order appears to be experiencing a new birth.

One hundred years after the French Revolution, Martinists under the leadership of Papus sought in their own way to contribute to the spiritualization of their time. In their desire to execute this mission, they scattered *Serviteurs Inconnus* (Unknown Servants) throughout the world in furtherance of the Great Work. The stakes at the time were considerable—the threats hovering over Eastern esotericism, the ascent of an industrial civilization, the advent of the “reign of quantity”—all posed real dangers to the interior life of humanity. The present bears similarities to that period, and all could see, in the bicentennial celebration of the French Revolution in 1989, that much remains to be done. Victor Hugo said: “Revolution changes everything, except the human heart.”

Humanity now, as in the period of the Martinist resurgence, is imperiled by progress. It is not by chance that initiatory organizations such as the Traditional Martinist Order have been so active as of late, for they teach that it is not outside that a revolution must take place, but inside of us, within the heart of each. Martinists call this *The Way of the Heart*.



ENDNOTES

1. Not all Martinist historians agree on this point. Some believe that Saint-Martin did not pass on initiation in the usual sense of the term. According to them, Papus should be looked upon as the founder of the Martinist Initiation. See *Le Martinisme* by Robert Amadou, Ascèse publishers, 1979, chapter IV. Up till now, nothing warrants a definite judgment one way or the other.
2. de Balzac, H. *Le Lys dans la Vallée* (Nelson: 1957) p. 64.
3. Regarding the circumstances of this Initiation, see the article, “Pierre-Augustin Chaboseau—An Unknown Servant,” by Christian Rebisse, published in the *Rosicrucian Digest*, Spring 1993 issue, p. 14.
4. This creation was announced in the following issues of *L’Initiation*: No. 10, July 1891, pp. 83-84; No. 11, August 1891, p. 182; and No. 12, September 1891, p. 277.
5. Carré, G. *Essais de Sciences Maudites*, 1, Au Seuil du Mystère (Paris: 1890) p. 158.
6. Castelot, F. Jollivet *Essai de Synthèse des Sciences Occultes* (Paris: E. Nourry, 1928) p. 189.
7. Ventura, Gaston *Tuttigli Uomini del Martinismo* (Rome: Atanor Publisher, 1978) p. 59.
8. Ibid.
9. Ambelain, Robert *Le Martinisme* (Paris: Niclus, 1946) pp. 151-155.
10. JeanBricaud had successors we cannot mention here for lack of space.
11. Encausse, Philippe *Papus, sa Vie son Oeuvre* (Papus—His Life, His Work) (Paris: Pythagore Publisher, 1932). In the December 1932 *Voile d’Isis*, pp. 793-794, Jean Reyor was the first to mention this aspect of Papus’s son: “It seems we systematically lay aside all that could be truly interesting in the extremely active career of this astonishing Papus . . . not a word about the constitution and the life of this Martinist Order of which Papus was the promoter.” Philippe Encausse corrected this flaw in successive editions of his work.
12. Ambelain, Robert *Le Martinisme* (Paris: Niclus, 1946) p. 174.
13. F.U.D.O.S.I. is the abbreviation of *Fédération Universelle des Ordres et Sociétés Initiatives*.
14. This event was announced in the August-September 1934 issue of *Adonhiram* magazine, p. 6.
15. In 1942, Georges Lagrèze “revived” an Order of *Élus-Cohen*. This Order had no direct filiation with that of Martinès de Pasqually, but an indirect filiation through the C.B.C.S., since Georges Lagrèze had the grade of *Grand-Profès* in that Order. After G. Lagrèze’s transition in 1946, Robert Ambelain claimed the succession to G. Lagrèze. Yet, a few days before his transition, Georges Lagrèze had written a letter to Ralph M. Lewis in which he announced his decision to make this Order dormant as it had no solid foundation. In 1967, Ivan Mosca (Hermete) succeeded Robert Ambelain as the head of the *Ordre des Élus-Cohen*. In 1968, concerned about the legitimacy of the 1942 resurgence, he decided, in agreement with Robert Ambelain, to make the Order dormant (see Proclamation in the October 1968 *L’Initiation* magazine, pp. 230-231).
16. Contrary to certain legends, Dr. Bertholet was never Sovereign Grand Master of the *Ordre Martiniste Synarchique* and consequently never passed this title down to an eventual successor. A recent visit to Mrs. A.R., the present successor to Mr. Genillard—himself successor to Dr. Bertholet in other initiatory functions—has confirmed it to us. Moreover, Dr. Bertholet’s initiatory name in the Martinist Order was not “Sâr Alkmaïon,” this name being his in the O.H.T.M. In Martinism, his name was Heb Ailghim Sí.