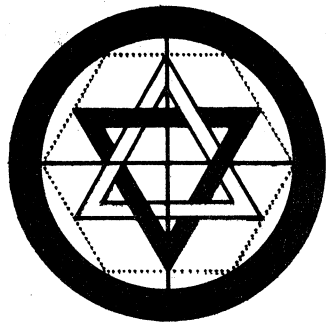


THE MARTINIST

review



Martinist Review

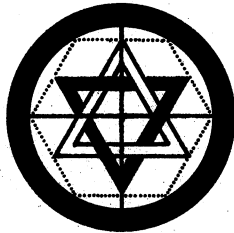
I have desired to do good but I have not desired to make noise, because I have felt that noise did no good, and that good made no noise.

LOUIS-CLAUDE de SAINT-MARTIN.

C O N T E N T S :

VOL. 3 No 1.
Spring/Summer '62

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Cover : "Of what use are flambeaux, torches and spectacles to him who shuts his eyes so as not to see."
" Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae " (H. Khunrath)

Private Circulation

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Alchemical Poems of Louis Cattiaux

THE UNION .

As I was approaching
The near, the closer, the Sun of Wisdom,

My spirit began to melt away
And my soul to flow until,

When with horror filled
I entered the furnace

And found myself bathing
mysteriously, in the freshness of water.



NICOLAS FLAMEL .

On far away peaks,
The assembly of great sages meditated -

- in silence, as all words are empty
In this astonishing magistry

Which, dividing shadow and light
Has made us witness its greatest mystery.



TO A SECRET .

When I understood that I had always been
Alone and free,

My heart no longer doubted anymore.

This made me laugh,
Irresistibly.



FRIENDS .

You have wasted your life ! Said they,
Looking at my empty hands;

And NO ONE heard the Lord
Singing in my heart.





Union des Ordres Martinistes

Introduction of the MARTINIST OPERATIVE & GENERAL RITUAL.

*optional
not compulsory*

High Martinist Authorities constituting the Union of the Martinist Orders introduced, on December 25-th, 1961, the MARTINIST OPERATIVE AND GENERAL RITUAL, recommending its adoption to ALL members of both sexes and of all degrees, provided they satisfy their conscience as to the ability to conform to it.

(X)

The aim of this General Ritual is to allow Martinists dispersed all over the world to unite their efforts, to work together - at certain monthly periods - on their common Work : the UNIVERSAL REINTEGRATION.

This ceremonial is, of necessity, a mixed one including the two traditional paths of Martinism: "the Operative Way" and "the Way of Heart", in order that all Martinists may participate in its working regardless of their lineage.

It may be recalled that, while the direct disciples of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin have practiced exclusively the method of ACTION THROUGH PRAYER from the 19-th century, the emulators of Martinez Pasquallis had to follow, obligatorily, both methods : PRAYER AND OPERATION from the 18-th.

The General Ritual is thus a return to the most traditional sources since it constitutes a manifestation of a veritable Culte - in the sense the Initiatic Founders of our secular chain understood it.

The Manifesto introducing the Martinist Operative and General Ritual is signed by Brothers Jean ; and Aurifer ;, the Sovereign Grand Masters of Ordre Martiniste and Ordre Martiniste des Elus-Cohen, founder members of Union des Ordres Martinistes.

Copies of this General Ritual are available to ALL MARTINISTS of the Orders belonging to the Union, and all inquiries should be directed to the Administrative Officers of the respective Jurisdictions.

Note : Some extracts from this Ritual are given on page 21.

This Search of Ours

originally a lecture prepared for the Martinist Conventicle on June 7-th 1962, of the Lodge "La Canadienne", Toronto, Canada, dedicated to a Friend N.N. in appreciation of his help.



- ◇ .. There is only ONE Religion, because there is only ONE Truth (Martinist Ritual)
- ◇ .. Nihil tam occultus erit quod non revelabitur. (Paracelsus)
- ◇ .. but still the heart needs a language. (Schiller)

INTRODUCTION : The two different worlds - Materialistic and Initiatic.

a) The world of the materialists : - The Temple of Reason.

The materialist interpret LIFE simply as a play of some blind physico-chemical forces and for him there exists, actually and solely, MATTER with its form energy.

Spirit, thought, our psychic and even social activities are interpreted as a direct product of some secretions of our cerebral cells conditioned by complex physico-chemical reactions, or, as a conflict of the actions and reactions of material energies.

Religions are interpreted en bloc as institutions propagating superstitious practices - they are "the opium of the masses" that soften the citizen in his duties towards the state, political or economic planning.

All this seems to have the indelible stamp of what Nietzsche said :

"There is only one divinity which should be loved on our earth and it is SCIENCE, the great redeemer, which has been and always is seeking how to improve the human lot."

God, the Ineffable Source of All, does not exist; it is simply the blind forces of nature that have moulded us and the universe, and govern all. Initiatic activities are interpreted as dangerous political schemes, certain profound experiences are thus hysterics, or phantasies of inefficient or sick minds.

The propagation of materialistic theories has brought us in return, first, a general disbelief in anything that escapes "the logics of reason", then a degrading cult of money with its greed and murderous tempo of life, an exces-

sive cult of personal pleasures - entirely material and immediate - with their unbridled passions, an actual cult of the arrogant and brutal physical force with a ferocious selfishness and egotism.

The Initiates have realized well the results to come and have not spared their efforts to warn Humanity - alas, without success. Even ourselves, we can see the results within our own generation : the bloody wars of mass destruction, revolutions, deterioration of religions and of secret societies.

"The profane have now infiltrated everywhere, and at present, they dominate the world, the Churches, and Initiatic Societies" laments our contemporary sage, the late Louis Cattiaux. (MR XXXI,29)

How much have the materialistic doctrines affected esoteric work ?

Charity, Love, Universal or Natural Laws having been belittled, many wonder whether it is really worth while to labour for 'abstract' ideals, to love their neighbours, and especially now when momentary pleasures are accepted as the ultimate end.

How many members of the Initiatic Orders, who call themselves "Initiates", have lost sight of the GOAL, and the purpose of the ORDERS ?

Many seek nowadays, even in the most August Initiatic Orders, solely the keys to personal power - only to abuse it, the keys to immediate happiness - to enrich themselves in material possessions, the mastery - over others !, only to enslave them !

Instead of striving to become Initiates in the true meaning, to become dedicated to the Quest of Reintegration, how many are not able, and do not care, to evolve themselves even beyond the tepid predilection towards 'esotericism'. How boastfully some of them display their diplomas of initiations, charters, etc., how carefully - not to omit any - they put the many letters after their names, titles, degrees achieved, to imply their esoteric progress, the progress of their hearts, yet remaining spiritually empty like broken jugs.

From this group come also the "big organizers", inflated with vanity and self-importance. They join many Orders (or orders), they invent or "improve" the rituals - understanding little the message they contain or should contain. Into what karmic debt they fall misleading others !! However, it so happens that on their death-beds, when confronted with Truth, they retract all and condemn their own works ! Why ?

These are the fruits of materialism.

b) The world of the Initiates : - "To believe in the unbelievable".

The Adepts, some of whom were direct or indirect founders of the Initiatic Orders, are exponents of the unitive doctrine the beliefs of which are of a profoundly religious nature and are immortalized, in a more or less veiled form, in their works or in the landmarks of the Orders they founded. They teach that the spirit and matter are of an identical essence and that these two forces, both of them, come from the primordial source of the universal energy, GOD. They imply that it is possible for the matter, even for the

inanimate things, to become ONE'd or united in some way with the source itself - God, under special circumstances, and thus to take on some of the 'attributes' of God - with the explicit understanding that only reasonable beings can share His Wisdom.

Human being is a compound but basically a dual being and thus, his "life" is also dual - the life of his imperishable Spirit, or Soul, and the life of his perishable body. This simple doctrine is sometimes abused, being interpreted as if there was a hostile or irreducible antagonism between the two; further, some of those who are exclusively dedicated to the spiritual life insist that we should not occupy ourselves with the life of the body - that perishable compounded matter, but should become wholly dedicated to the cultivation and development of the Soul - the spiritual and the only imperishable and eternal 'body'.

The Adepts have always realized that we must not forget the intermediate necessities of our terrestrial existence as otherwise, we might become addicted to some very narrow-minded and sectarian practices, void of any social or fraternal activities. They thus show us the 'middle way', and their Initiatic Orders, in essence, help us to get out of the Forest of Errors by introducing doctrines, yet, not imposing dogmas. They have cleared and untangled the ways, set up landmarks and beacons by which we can be directed, on a lineal path, towards the GOAL.

The Adepts are firm in their convictions and doctrines - because a good worker does not quarrel with his tools, and moreover, they are ALWAYS at harmony, and do communicate, with the sincere followers of all religions, disregarding the questions of dogmas that divide.

Why? Although there are many schools of thought, all True Schools come from one root, and are concentrating upon one thing: the progress of what is called the human soul towards its source - God.

This short lecture is an essay on the life of the Soul in God and the story of its deep experience which is otherwise portrayed in Tradition under the symbolism of a Second Birth, a Life of Regeneration, Reintegration, a Mystical Death and Resurrection; it has been described by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin as the life of Christ in the Soul and the life of the Soul in Christ. There is no question that these symbolical representations correspond literally to the states and stages of the soul's experience on the Path of Return to its Source - God.

The unitive doctrine elevates man to the summits of Tolerance in its most comprehensive and fraternal aspects - but it also demands a constant practice of what could be called gentleness, charity, truth, love. The Adepts teach how man can transcend himself and contact higher and higher planes until, finally, he becomes a Regenerated One, ONE'd or UNITED with Divinity. ("ONE'd" - to use the expression from "The Cloud of Unknowing").

For those who have passed, unawares or otherwise, behind the 'veils' or achieved that state of Experience of being ONE with Divinity, the doctrines and dogmas cease troubling and symbols come to rest. This principle has been recognized by Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin who said that all those who have attained, truly, their spiritual adulthood, use the same language since they come from the same country.

That Experience of "passing behind the veil" is the ultimate goal of all Initiatic Orders and, indeed, of all Religions. This is the Secret of Secrets that cannot be communicated but only experienced. This is the Initiate's Goal, to quote from the Martinist Catechism : the conquest of the Adventurous Castle, where he expects to find the Sacred Vase whose liquor will quench his thirst for higher evolutions. The Soul has been often portrayed as a Castle in the Western Tradition, to mention some early works like : "The Castle of the Inward Man" or "The Castle of the Soul".

This GOAL is the Union of the most subtle part of our soul with that which is unknowable to our mind, and which remains hidden because it defies expression and, paradoxically, seems to be veiled more whenever it is announced most.

Such has been the general belief of all Initiates of all ages and regions of the world, of all sages, magi, alchemists, and the Rose+Croix claim to have been its depositaries since the Middle Ages. There was never any real difference of opinion about this true object of Search - the modes and forms of it have and do vary, and widely, but all the ways converge to a single point - which is always the union between the consciousness of the Soul with the Word of God.

Such are the promises and, finally, the fruits of Initiatic life.

THE EXPERIENCE.

The Journey of the Soul.

.... I sought him whom my heart loves
I sought him but I did not find him.

Return, return o Shulamite,
Return, return that we may look upon thee.

-The Song of Songs.

Is it possible for a human being to express what is unknowable to his mind ?

Let us state at the very beginning that man, as he is here and now, is in a state which can be termed separation and that he is driven by some inward force towards RE-integration with the First Principle, which is otherwise the union between the consciousness of the Soul with its Source or Creator.

For all those who dwell outside the threshold, such Experience may seem to be a rare and a kind of madness. However, this Great Experience occurs in an activity of our consciousness so far removed from our normal modes of emotion and thought that some compare, by analogy, the difference between the normal state and that of the attainment of the goal, to a difference between animal and human minds.

Whatever be the School, all their doctrines revolve around this great Experience and all of them call this same experience differently, using their own terms often to suit their doctrines. Thus it is called by some Union with God, Rest in the Centre, Illumination, Nirvana, Satori, Experience, Physical

Possession of God, Marriage, Chemical Wedding, Marriage with Sophia, Marriage of the Lamb, Reintegration, etc. It would be foolish to try to get the true meaning of these names from their etymological roots.

Actually, it does not matter much how we call it; there is usually a question of its intensity or 'purity', which ranges from the 'emotionalism' of Gichtel to the calm usually ascribed to the Eastern mystics. Here one might say that the experiences of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (who admitted that he had not reached the depths), Swedenborg, Jacob Boehme, Gichtel, were of the visual kind and therefore were illusions.

We will talk about it later on. However, at this stage, we must stress the point that the true Experience is beyond any participation of the senses and that all descriptions of it are only representations of what the senses can make out of that which is Unknowable. Moreover, all those who have not, yet, attained the highest level of attainment stress that there are states beyond the visions, the states where, as I said before, no senses can participate - but this is impossible for us to comprehend fully, intellectually. We must be also well aware of the fact that one can live in spiritual Light yet remain "unfamiliar with Divinity".

It is thus impossible for a human being "to see God and live" and this points to another fact that we cannot be in full 'Union' (or 'Nirvana' etc.), and yet make use of our senses; this is why the Buddhists stress that whatsoever comes through the senses is an illusion. This is not only in perfect concord with our Western Tradition, but it also means that man ceases to be a man and that he must acquire some more 'perfect body'. This is the BODY GLORIOUS of the Western Tradition with all its modalities. It is when, to quote from Zohar : "the flesh is transformed into fiery torches".

However, whenever one wants to SHARE his great Experience with others, he must translate what is super-transcendental into the imperfect human language, into human senses and emotions. Here lies the source of all different doctrines, of all misunderstandings, even derisions, about personal gods, mystic betrothals, sexual unions with Divinity etc., mainly due to the lack of comprehension of the modalities of this profound experience. Ibn-al-Arabi throws some good light on this in his "Effects of the Vision" (see page 35 of this issue).

Let us now examine what was said about this Experience by those who have attained it. First, let us refer to the MARTINIST REVIEW, SUMMER 1961 issue, where we read, in conjunction with the plate : "The Emerald Table of Hermes" :

"Like a rock, Truth emerges from the earth in front of the sage; it absorbs and illuminates him in such a way that IT is in him and he is in IT. From the summit where he has attained, his eyes see all, and no additional knowledge is needed. "It is the invisible Sun that illuminates the Sages, the Light in which are inscribed God's plans."

"What is he who obtains this grace for which God has chosen him ?

"Rosicrucian ? Theosophist ? Adept ?

"This would mean very little, these names having been so often misused !

"Saint of God ? Friend of Jesus-Christ ? Light of Heaven ?

"It could not mean more, no word could express what such a man would then be."

Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin described it as the Initiation :

"The only Initiation which I preach and seek with all the ardour of my soul is that by which we may enter into the heart of God and make God's heart enter into us, there to form an indissoluble marriage, which will make us friend, brother and spouse of our Divine Redeemer."
(Letter CX)

WHAT IS IT ?

How others describe this great Experience ?

- a feud about words would prove idle.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child ; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" I Cor.11.



"Entre Dieu et nous, combien de zones, de sphères, de plans, de degrés, qui ont leur lois propres."

Bréviare du Rose+Croix.

Quotations :

- Jane Lead : ... it is the supernatural state of the human soul, manifested in the body and in the order of things visible by effects that are also supernatural.
- St.Thomas Aquina : ... that knowledge ... consists not in operation of the intellect but in an experimental act of love.
- Abulafia : ... it becomes part of the world of Divine Light ... in which the ineffable mysteries of the Divine Name and the whole glory of its realm reveal themselves to the illuminate.
- Ruysbroeck : ... it is the secret union of the soul with God.
... the spirit is undifferentiated and without distinction, and therefore one feels nothing but the unity.
... introverted into the superessential unity.
- Dionysius the pseudo-Aeropagite : ... absolute and felicitous ignorance constituting precisely the science of Him who surpasses all the objects of human science.
... the dazzling obscurity which outshines all brilliance with the intensity of its darkness.

... and is revealed in its naked truth to those alone who pass right through the opposition of fair and foul, and pass beyond the topmost altitudes of the holy ascent and leave behind them all divine enlightenment and voices and heavenly utterances and plunge into the Darkness where truly dwells that One which is beyond all things.

- St. John of the Cross : ... the mysterious and supernatural knowledge of God.
 ... infused contemplation, whereby God secretly instructs the soul in the perfection of love, without efforts on its own part beyond a loving attention to God.
- A. Rimbaud : ... and it will be permitted me to possess the Truth in a soul and a body.
- Prof. Rufus Jones : ... it is the eternal rest in Buddha.
 ... knowledge of unity which according to Krishna, is above wisdom.
 ... the Sufic union of the lover and the beloved.
 ... the vision from above.
- Upanishads : ... beyond the senses, beyond the understanding, beyond all expression.
 ... it is the pure unitary consciousness, wherein awareness of the world and of multiplicity is completely obliterated. It is ineffable peace. It is the Supreme Good. It is ONE without a second. It is the Self.
- Tennyson : ... all at once, as it were out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, individuality itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being (God).. the loss of personality, if such it were, seeming no extinction but only true life.
 ... pure peace, beatitude, joy, bliss.
- Meister Eckhart : ... when the naked essence of the Soul finds the naked, formless, essence of the Divine Unity.. reposing in itself.
 ... God ... in pure Nothingness.
 ... Darkness of God.
 ... when the Darkness is Light.
 ... when there is no distinction left in the Soul's consciousness between itself and God, though God still regards it as a creature.
- St. Maximus : ... when the Soul is united with the Unknown Divinity by the suspension of all cognition.
- Plotinus (Enneads) : ... we must not be surprised that that which excites the keenest of longing is without any form, even spiritual form, since the Soul itself, when inflamed with love for it, puts off all the form which it had, even that which belongs to the spiritual world. For it is not possible to see, or to be in harmony with it, while one is occupied with anything else.
 ... it is that union of which the union of earthly lovers who wish to blend their beings with each other, is a copy.

Plotinus
(Enneads)
-cont.

: ... the soul is no longer conscious of the body, and cannot tell whether it is a man or a living being or anything real at all.

Tibetan Book of the Dead : ... the clear light of the void.

Hugh of
St. Victor

: ... that knowledge of God which is attained in exploration of the world within us.

John Sectus

: ... to ascend unto God is to enter into oneself and to transcend oneself.

Others

: ... incommunicable experience.

... to be confined in the naked Godhead, where is neither form nor image.

... self-precipitation into the depths of Divine Darkness, understood as a void in respect of images but plenum of Godhead.

... the most secret discourse of the mind with God.

... the most ardent intuition of Divine Darkness.

... indwelling power in which all beings are one.

... forgetfulness of oneself, to be lost in God.

... the blissful realization of the unity of all things in oneself.

... the mysterious and supernatural knowledge of the source of Universal energy - God, the experimental cognition of the merging of the Soul with its source.

... when the illuminate feels himself not only aglow with heavenly fire, but also as if were anointed with sacred and miraculous oil.

... love so ecstatic that the soul goes "out of itself" and passes entirely into God, to be consummated in unity with HIM.

... when the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening (Zohar)

... the vision of the Merkavah.

... the ascent (or descent) to the Merkavah.

... when he perceives the interior and the chambers of the Merkavah, as if he saw the seven palaces with his own eyes, and it is as though he entered one palace after the other and saw what is there.

... when the flesh is transforming into "fiery torches".

... His body is like chrysolite. His light breaks tremendously from the darkness, clouds and fog are around Him, and all the

princes of the angels and the seraphim are before Him like an empty jar. Therefore no measure is given to us, but only secret names are revealed to us.

... God who is beyond the sight of his creatures and hidden to the angels who serve Him revealing Himself in the vision of Merkavah.

... it is the Stone of Philosophers.

... that brilliant light which is hidden, the sparks of all sparks, of all Lights, is therein invisible and hidden, concealed and made known, seen and not beheld.

LOUIS CATTIAUX :

... it is the rest in the Centre of Light, where the most perfect Lord dwells.

... it is like fire in the middle of great water.

... it is Salt but it is also sugar,
it is Earth but it is also Fire,
it is Water but it is also Air,
it is Light but it is also an abyss.

Let us now conclude with the quotations from Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the Unknown Philosopher :

... it is the repose of our minds in their centre where they enjoy all joys of angels, even before the throne of the Eternal.

... it is the birth of the WORD within us ... true love which is without form, as no man has ever seen God.

... it is delicious internal transports and sweet instructions which are found here and there in my writings.

WHO ARE SUCH MEN ?

- Sons of the Sun -

Eliphas Levi summed it up very well by saying that those who have attained this unitive Experience "have reached the Real Kingdom of God, the Sanctum Regnum of Qabala. They have, on their own, attained, in certain measure, the omnipotence of a God".

I will recapitulate first by repeating myself, that the goal of the Initiates - that conquest of the Adventurous Castle where the Sacred Vase is to be found to quench all thirst for higher evolution - is nothing else but the Union of the Soul with Omneity - God, in contemplation.

The presence of God is felt in a spiritual touch: without images, as a

direct experience, always remaining somewhat obscure and partly incomprehensible to the senses. We have also seen that although there is a difference in the definitions of this unitive experience, the difference is only one of terminology. Those who have attained the heights stress that it cannot be really described, is not reducible to words, and that only indications, or intimations, can be given - which may, or may not, make sense to the enquirer.

In all cases those who experienced it seem to be convinced that what they experienced, so far from being illusory, is on the contrary something far more real than what they experience normally through their five senses or what they think with their finite minds. A certain feeling of bliss and joy accompany it but it is totally different from any other feeling experienced before. Saint-Martin wrote that "Union with God engenders joy and peace".

Perhaps it should be pointed out at this stage, that there is a great difference between psychism, mysticism as known popularly, and true Experience. Hallucinations are not Beatific Visions, and many "visions" or "mystical" experiences could never be classified as true Experience.

Psychical experiences are sought in the world of images, many experiences have not reached the depths of ultimate attainment, namely the "Physical Possession of God" of the Alchemists, where certain bodily "transmutation" takes place.

THE MARKS AND STAGES OF THE EXPERIENCE :

William James, in his "Varieties of Religious Experience" formulates four marks or stages of this Experience : (quoted)

- 1) **INEFFABILITY** - which means that its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others. In this peculiarity these states are more like states of feeling than like states of intellect. No one can make clear to another who has never had a certain feeling, in what quality or worth of it consists.
- 2) **NOETIC QUALITY** - although so similar to the states of feeling, they are also states of knowledge, states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for aftertime.
- 3) **TRANSIENCY** - These states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade into the light of common day. Often, when faded, their quality can but imperfectly be reproduced in memory; but when they recur it is recognized; and from one recurrence to another it is susceptible of continuous development in what is felt as inner richness and importance.
- 4) **PASSIVITY** - Although the oncoming of these states may be facilitated by preliminary voluntary operations, as by fixing the attention

or going through certain bodily performances, or in other ways which certain manuals may prescribe; yet when the characteristic sort of consciousness once sets in, the person feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power.

So much from William James. Dr. R.M. Bucke in his book "Cosmic Consciousness" gives the following marks of what he calls "Cosmic Sense": (quoted)

THE SUBJECTIVE LIGHT - the person has a sense of being immersed in a flame, or rather that the mind is itself filled with a cloud of haze.

THE MORAL ELEVATION - he is, as it were, bathed in an emotion of joy, assurance, triumph, "Salvation".

THE INTELLECTUAL ILLUMINATION - quite impossible to describe. Like a flash there is presented to his consciousness a clear conception (a vision) in outline of the meaning and drift of the universe. He learns in a few moments more than in months or years of study, and will learn much that no study ever taught or can teach.

THE SENSE OF IMMORTALITY - not an intellectual, nor as an experience such as learning something unknown before, but rather certainty of distinct personality.

THE LOSS OF THE FEAR OF DEATH - and **OF THE SENSE OF "SIN"** - (logical conclusion of the previous mark - Editor)

THE SUDDENNESS, INSTANTANEOUSNESS, of the awaking - can be compared with nothing so well as with a dazzling flash of lightning in a dark night bringing the landscape which had been hidden into clear view.

THE PREVIOUS CHARACTER OF THE MAN - intellectual, moral and physical of the man who enters the new life is an important element in the case.

THE AGE OF ILLUMINATION - must be mature man.

THE ADDED CHARM TO THE PERSONALITY - thus attracting? (author's mark) others towards himself.

THE TRANSFIGURATION - the change in the appearance of the subject of illumination.

The Zohar implies that "the Glory of the King", which is the Experience, manifests in three colours which are beheld below but are in the likeness of colours that are above and are unseen by eyes of flesh, and are perceived by no one who depends on bodily vision.

The Flemish mystic Jan van Ruysbroeck, enumerates four modes:

- 1) That which begins in precept,
- 2) that of elevation of spirit,
- 3) that of the Sons of God,
- 4) that which is of union with God in love, which is the state of emptiness in bare love and in Divine Light.

he also enumerates the seven steps :

1) Good will, 2) voluntary poverty, 3) chastity, 4) humility, 5) desire for the Honour of God, 6) dilucid contemplation, the three characteristics of which are : insight, purity of spirit, and nakedness of mind, 7) sublime contemplation.

*)

Sirius gives four stages : (Ruysbroeck called it stages of contemplation).

ONE : a light descends from the face of Divine Charity, while the Spirit of the Saviour speaks in the loving heart.

TWO : is one of abiding in God's presence unveiled. The soul receives light and counsel from the Father in a state of uplifted thought, apart of images it causes the soul to behold the face of the Father, meaning the substance or nature of God, in a simple gaze, beyond reason and without preparatory considerations.

THREE : is rendered SPECULATION and is said to be like mirror - a form of symbolism which leaves us where we should look to be - still in a world of reflections.

FOUR : an elevated and illuminated exercise of love for the most sweet will of God.



According to LOUIS CATTIAUX there are three stages of cognizance (knowledge) of God. They form the whole of the processes of the Reintegration of Man. He adds that the attainment of all three states rarely happens and that very few persons in the world know the modalities of these divine experiences.

The first stage is what he calls SPIRITUAL COGNIZANCE which is acquired through prayer and metaphysical meditation and is the cognizance of the dazzling love of the Father, the abstract principle, the essence.

Next comes the ASCETIC COGNIZANCE which is acquired by Yoga (in its true sense) and by asceticism proper. This is the cognizance of the Holy Ghost, the substance and light, consubstantial with the Father and Son, it is the astral sphere, the Heavens.

Finally, there is the PHYSICAL COGNIZANCE which is acquired through Alchemy and is the possessive, direct knowledge of Christ, of the Son and of the corner stone, of the body, where the other two principles are conjoined in a BODY GLORIOUS, and tangible. This cognizance brings about the two lesser ones.

He adds that now we may understand what Christ said about himself : "I am the Way and the Life, and also the Truth". This is the corner stone, the holy stone, the Stone of Philosophers.

The above was taken from the article "ALCHEMICAL COGNIZANCE" in the Summer 1961 issue of the Martinist Review.

*) See pages : 34. for the full description of the 7-th step of Ruysbroeck, and 25. for the Seven Stages of Avicenna.

To add, we may now better understand the works of the Elus-Cohen (Elected Priesthood) whose final goal was to communicate with the world of pure spirits in order to pave the way to a direct contact with Christ, thus regaining the lost kingdom. The evocation of Christ would constitute the Great Work. (Readers are referred to the Fall 1961/Winter 1962 issue of our Martinist Review for more information concerning the Order of the Elus-Cohen.)

CONCLUSIONS : The Path.

"Of what use are flambeaux, torches
and spectacles to him who shuts his
eyes so as not to see !! "

H. Khunrath

"Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae"

"Whom shall he teach knowledge ?
And whom shall he make to under-
stand doctrine ?
- Them that are weaned from the
milk, and drawn away from the breasts.
Isaiah, 28.9.

In its proper understanding, the object of our Search, referred to in this lecture as the Experience, is an union between our consciousness of the soul and that of God. It has been said that this Search is love - just as depth and height of the knowledge of God are depth and height of love. The true definition of Love has not been found because it is an absolute state in attainment and is therefore ineffable, or outside the possibility of expression. We can approximate only.

The attainment of it is the most difficult enterprise which can be undertaken by the human mind, and those who pretend that there is an easy path to this state of consciousness in God, only delude themselves and others.

The true nature of this Experience does not, and cannot, appear fully in any texts. Realizing that there are different stages, or depths of it, and God being what He is - truly unknowable, yet somehow knowable by direct personal experience only, any intellectual debates on which experience or tradition is better will prove futile.

To give an example of the disagreement of the doctrines :
"The Christian could accept the Eastern idea of 'liberation' as simply the realization of man's immortal soul in separation from God, and a stage in the path of the beginner. The Buddhists, on the other hand, could call the Christian experiences as 'bhakti', or devotion to a personal god, carried to ludicrous extreme". (R.C. Zaehner, *Mysticism - Sacred & Profane*).

Who is right ? Both ? Neither of them ?

We have already pointed out that the doctrines, ALL doctrines, and descriptions of the Experience are only representations of what the senses can make out of that which is Unknowable.

The path of the attainment is called, by universal consent, a path of contemplation and the meditation is always regarded as its initial state. When it is discursive, when it reflects and compares, it is purely intellectual.

Admittedly, an intellectual knowledge of God may be reached rationally in the work of meditation, but properly understood contemplation is an ascent of the inward path, where it passes above reason and then, it is comparable to the revelation.

There are, undeniably, many helpers of the soul in the course of its progress and among them are the Secret Orders. They do not offer "a royal road" simply because there is no such road, but they may, AND DO, shorten some of the preliminaries, awaking and unfolding man's consciousness, thus setting him, the seeker, on a lineal path.

There are, of course, some who enter the Orders having no special call and they see very little of what lies beyond the official workings. Realizing that life is individual, each of us is led therefore on a Path proper to his needs.

Although there is ONLY ONE INITIATION within the domains of what is called Secret Tradition, there are as many initiations as there are schools of thought. The True Schools, which belong to the High Orders come from the same root and their heart is fixed upon this one thing: the Experience, the Union with Divinity; they may differ, or rather they seem to differ, but they are never far apart. It is the general intimation of the Secret Schools that "somewhere in time and the world there is that which can confer upon the candidate a real as well as a symbolic experience".

Certain 'occult societies', and there seems to be a lot of them, claim to convey secrets as such or as if such, but "they traffic only in bogus wares" to quote A.E. Waite. It is the Experience therein which is forever secret and incommunicable to those who have not shared it.

All this seem to be pointing to certain Rites, to greater and exalted Ceremonies, somewhat shadowy, somewhat dubious, yet distinguishable in their purpose, which seem to remain among the records of the past. However, we are being assured, that even at this day, the Mysteries have not died utterly, and if they always survive, it is because they correspond to the processes of man's internal life and are outward visible signs of inner spiritual realities.

To repeat, the Adepts have prepared the Way for us, cleared and untangled the ways, set up landmarks and beacons by which we can go straight towards the goal, but, unfortunately, many of us have only a vague suspicion of what is hidden in the symbols put into our own hands.

We are told that the most important lights are either in very old books or in the Secret Rituals which are not known to the outside world. However, the purpose of real books is not to assist us in gathering information, indexing the facts, but TO AWAKEN WHAT IS IN OURSELVES. The real purpose of the Rituals is exactly the same !!

To end, in order to learn the secrets of any science, one goes to the experts and not to the pupils. Those who "know", like to define themselves as "very traditional" and yet they harmonize with everybody. They never change what has been transmitted to them.

A person who walks, travels differently from him who drives a car, but

They may take the same road and go to the same place. Also, some prefer to carry a lot of baggage whereas others prefer to travel lightly ; some multiply their cares - others cast them all aside.

Where and how do you travel ?

I now close this lecture with the usual Martinist benediction, so profound in meaning :

MAY YOU EVER DWELL IN THE ETERNAL LIGHT OF DIVINE WISDOM.

As I said at the very beginning of this lecture, I dedicate it to a Friend, in appreciation of his help - and thanks to whom I am being orientated towards the "lineal" Path.
MR XXXIX,1'.

Sendivogius.

Toronto, Canada, June 1962.



This day, this day, this day,
The nuptials of the king take place;
If thou art born to share in them
Chosen of God for joy and grace,
Go unto the mountain heights,
The three-templed mountain,
Witness there the rites.
Take heed for thyself,
Read into thy soul.
If thou art not carefully purified
The nuptials will bring thee wee.
A curse on him who lingers long,
Let him not pure in heart be gone.

from Chymical Wedding of Christaan Rosenkreuz.

The Initiatic Corner

In this purely 'initiatic' corner readers are given some excerpts from different rituals. We believe that it will be of great benefit to analyse them in the light of the lecture "This Search of Ours".

Martinists of the "Way of the Heart" will at once recognize in their own rituals the perfume of a much older tradition; Martinists of the Elus-Cohen will feel rather "at home".

QUI POTEST CARERE, CAPIAT.

The excerpts quoted are from the following rituals :

- PART A. - Rose + Croix.
- " B. - Martinist Operative and General Ritual.
(see official announcement on page .. 3.)
- " C. - Masonic Egyptian Rite.

THE EXCERPTS :

PART A.

From the rituals of the Rose + Croix.

The Prayer : (All Rose + Croix kneel down for this prayer)

" Great and Sublime Architect of this Vast Un.^o. who penetrateth with Thy divine eye the most hidden recesses of the hearts of mortals, deign to kindle in our hearts that sacred fire of Thy Love. Guide and direct our steps unto the path which leads to the true Science. Keep away from us all sophists. Diffuse Thy Holy Grace into our souls so that we may come to know the true Mine, the veritable philosophical light. Do so that we shall never have any other aim but Thy Glory, the Salvation of our souls, the splendour of Thy Holy Religion and the comfort of the poor. Amen."

From the Closing of the Works :

Very Wise One : What is the time ?

Guardian : This is the Hour when the Word is being retrieved, when the cubic Stone changes into mystic Rose, when the flamboyant Star

appears in all its splendour, when the Light shines in all its brilliancy, and when the new Law begins to reign in our works, henceforward.

From the Communion of the Rose + Croix : (excerpts from the prayer)

"Oh Lord, nourish us with the bread of the Angels and allow us to drink from the Source of Life."

From a Catechism :

- Q. What is the hour ?
 A. It is a broad daylight which does not know the darkness.
- Q. Why do you not answer my question properly ?
 A. Can one determine the hours of an perpetual day ?
- Q. Where have you found the Light ?
 A. In the darkness.
- Q. How do you work ?
 A. When I repose.
- Q. What is your pay ?
 A. The perfection of my work.
- Q. To what do you aspire having all such possessions ?
 A. To the pleasure of providing the needs of men of good will.
- Q. Don't you aspire to anything else ?
 A. Oh yes ! Not to pay any attention to men but to live only for God who is the unique aim of our true Brothers.

From the Induction :

... Here is a Brother wandering in the mystic Forest, who has lost the Word at the time of the second destruction of the Temple, and who's aspiration is to retrieve it, with our help.

... Let him enter the ruins of our Temple.

... What do you want to see and to hear my Brother ?
 What do you wish to learn and to know ?

*)

- (he answers to the best of his abilities and aspirations)

*) see the Martinist Review, Fall 1960 & Spring 1961 issues for the "Vision of Hermes".

*) ... My Brother, Pymander has thus answered these questions :
Meditate upon the Light and arrive to know IT.

Man, who was a superior harmony, has fallen into slavery because he wanted to penetrate it, but he was told : You, who have a portion of the Mind, to whom a spark of the Spirit had been given, know your proper nature and consider your immortality. The love of the corporeal part of yourself shall be the cause of your death.

It is therefore by the spirit of sacrifice that we hope to attain this illumination.

We search to retrieve the WORD by a new law.

PART B.

From the MARTINIST GENERAL RITUAL **)

**))

(to be performed each month, the first Sunday after the full moon, at 11 p.m. true time)

" I conjure you Uriel, invoking you by the word, by all that is in your power and in mine, so that your Spiritual Fire may embrace the matter which I consecrate to the Eternal within these circles.

"May the elementary fire residing there unite with yours to contribute to the Spiritual Light of Men of Desire - my Brothers, so that they may become thus animated by your Fire of Life.

"By Ieschouah, Our Lord. Amen. (+)

"Pure Light, symbol of the Superior of my Soul, to which the Eternal has entrusted the care of my thought, of my will, of my actions, of my words, do so that by your Radiant Fire my Soul become purged of its dross and my lips sanctified for the words I am going to pronounce, to operate for a greater Glory of the Eternal, for my own tuition, for the edification of my fellow men.

"By Ieschouah, Our Lord. Amen. (+)

.....

"Holy Ghost, descend ! Surround the Fire which has been consecrated to Thee to become Thy Radiant Throne dominating over all regions of the Universal World. Govern my thought accordingly.

"Govern over me and my Brothers, remove all Spirits of Darkness, Error and Confusion from these Circles, so that my Soul may profit from the Works which the Order extends to those who prove worthy to become penetrated by Thee, the Holy Ghost, who liveth and reigneth for ever with the Father and the Son.

"By Ieschouah, Our Lord. Amen. (+)

*) see the Martinist Review : Fall 1960, and Spring 1961 issues for the "Vision of Hermes".

**) see special announcement on page 3 introducing this Ritual.

Excerpts from the Catechisms :

- Q. What is the place of this celestial commerce between the spiritual beings and man ?
- A. The interior of the Temple where you will acquire the greatest Knowledge.
- Q. Can I not then learn anything more in this Chamber ?
- A. No, but I would like to say what is permitted for your consolation:

After you finish the works of a Companion, and your own work having been approved, you may be admitted into the Interior of the Temple where you will find a Superior, clothed with supreme authority and power, who will purify you according to the laws of the founder, and who will consecrate all those things which are required by you.

.....

Man, you have been already forewarned that the aim of our Works is as much removed from frivolity of this world as the ordinary masonry is removed from the real philosophical Knowledge.

All our operations, all our mysteries, all our steps do not have any other motive but to glorify God and to penetrate into the sanctuary of nature. One does not arrive there without difficulties, but, with determination, patience, and within the time prescribed by the laws of our Founder, you may hope to see your own efforts crowned with the most happy success.

From the Catechism of the Master of the Egyptian Lodge :

- Q. What is the result of this great Operation ?
- A. Your Soul will exalt, your heart will become enflamed with love for the Eternal and, having learned the last Mystery which He has permitted to reveal to you, the gratitude for our Founder will increase.

After the thirty-third day and until the fortieth, the Supreme Being confers upon the assistants an inestimable favour of a visible communication with the seven primary An.... and confers the knowledge of the seals and glyphs of these immortal beings and which shall be engraved, by each of these beings, on the virgin paper.

After the Operation had been accomplished and perfected, the man, who was so far happy to be counted as one of the Elect, now attains the heights of the glory and happiness. He becomes a MASTER and an active SUPERIOR without the help of any mortal being. His spirit becomes filled with the divine fire, his body

as pure as that of a most innocent child, his insight without limits, his power - immense. He will contribute to the propagation of the Truth over the whole world, and finally, he shall attain the perfect knowledge of the great Chaos, as well as of good and evil of the past, present and future.

.....

- Q. What is the outcome of this Regeneration ?
 A. The old man disappears as new one begins his carrier. This regeneration renews itself with the same success every fifty years until it pleases the Eternal to call you to Himself - for ever.

- Q. Is there any example of such Regeneration ?
 A. Certainly. The Scriptures give you one example which relates to Moses :

After the retreat of forty days and nights on the Sinai mountain to form the sacred pentagon, Moses returned there for a second time and remained there for another forty days and forty nights.

The Scriptures tell us also, that after the second retreat Moses came back with a countenance so brilliant, and so resplendent with the Light, that people were not able to sustain such brilliance and he had to cover his head with a veil.

WHEN THE ROSE BLOSSOMS ON THE CROSS .

One day, after how many voyages and years - the Heavens have rewarded my efforts !

The Heavens have recollected their servant who, clothed in nuptial garments, had the privilege and grace to be admitted like Moses before the Eternal.

From then on, under a new name, I was given a unique mission.

Free, and master of life, I dreamed only of employing myself to the Work of God. I knew that He would confirm my acts and my words just as I would confirm His Name and His Kingdom on Earth.

There are beings who do not have anymore a guardian Angel - I was one of them.

From : "Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro". Paris, 1786.

Out of Charity ◊

"If I stripped off the veil which I have assumed, if I uttered the name of this beneficent Cause, on which I would direct the gaze of the entire universe, that utterance would move the majority of my readers to deny the virtues which I have attributed thereto, and to disdain my entire doctrine.

To indicate it more clearly would therefore destroy my object. I shall leave it to the penetration of my readers, convinced that in spite of the envelopes with which I have covered the truth, the intelligent will understand it, the truthful appreciate it, and even the corrupted will divine it."

-Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin in "Of Errors and Truth".



The following are the excerpts from the letters

of LOUIS CATTIAUX to

a friend of his.

Dear Friend,

You have mentioned 'Celestial Jerusalem.' Well, very few have tasted it but practically no one knows its hidden origin and the way it manifests in the visible world. Those who had command over it were truly Masters of miracles and in some way Masters of Creation, or Coadjutors of God.

Imagine what such men - I should have said : such gods - must have been or rather ARE, to obtain this ultimate confidence of the Unique. All religions, all occultism pivot around this formidable secret and existing rites and practices of all sorts remind us, from the outset, the mystery of life and its differentiated manifestation of darkness.

Many have talked and still do talk from a hearsay, but only a minute minority talks from experience and they should be studied exclusively.

As to the powers acquired by such direct and effective possession of a part of the materialised Mother, it means passing into consciousness of the cosmic substance and to act as the First Essence which it animates; this means : to act and do the will of the Father. Thus it is the Mother who brings forth and furnishes the substance to the ideal form. All this is a sublime reality and not a mere chimera ! However it is so much beyond our understanding that the truest reality appears to all as a pure chimera !

We must realize that it is necessary to possess our body in the spirit and our spirit in the body - the soul acting as a medium and unifier. This is Love, beyond intuition itself and above science. You may now easily recognize the royal path of our Christ who taught truthfully, but a bit obscurely because of our limited understanding : When you possess your soul, you shall have everything for ever.

When we refer to Christ, let us think about the Sun, without any dross, which shines in the sky and which sparkles in ourselves as well, but is veiled very much to our sight. This is the divine essence, the Living Light.

As far as the states of consciousness are concerned, do not force anything. They will come by themselves and will grow in their proper time - without you even realizing. It is enough to be of good will and to pray for help to make us grow within. Here, first of all, one must submit himself to Him humbly, without reasoning, as the psychological temptation breeds doubt and eventually will disorientate oneself.

Thus leave the self-styled initiates - whom they are not - to themselves and consider only those who never separate God from His Work.

There are, admittedly, very few true experts on these matters in the Occident, but what quality is to be found in those few !! What a concentration of Light - inherited from the Orient many centuries ago ! Those who seek the Knowledge in the Orient or in the Indies make me smile. They ignore or treat with contempt our own holy books of the Middle Ages, books which contain clearly almost all that is prodigious.

Myself, I am not a disciple of Christ, neither His companion nor friend or faithful, and it is for a good reason, because I am his younger brother; consequently, I cannot see Him through eyes of a stranger even if I am myself agonizing with love for Him.

There is no barrier between us at all and our familiarity prizes our unity of origin. He has made, and still does, great things for me and I do small for Him; I am His clumsy imitator. Sometimes He improves and corrects my work in a brotherly manner; he smiles at my whims but at times he severely reprimands my mischiefs. He instructs me patiently and allows me to play at His feet with the dust of the worlds. Sometimes, He rocks me and sings an old song of heaven to put me into sleep. I have no fear of Him; He covers up my faults as a loving brother would, and gives me all His saints as guardians, friends, companions for a laugh or for a game. He dictated me a beautiful book (The Retrieved Message - Ed.) and kindly corrected the grossest errors. I gave this book to men so that they may learn by reading it - but it annoys them; it may be so because it is without pictures. May be I will make such a book after all ?

We eat at the same table and it is Him who gives me at times an extra portion of the desert, and when I am sick after having imprudently played in the world, it is Him who takes care of me, who consoles me and explains to me how things should have been done. But I am thoughtless and without attention, like a child who prefers to day-dream rather than to listen to the lessons of his school teacher.

What shall I know ? Who shall I be ? What shall I be able to do ?

No one can answer that but our Father who has made us and who (alone) knows us completely. You may now understand my love for OUR MOTHER and how much I need her for daily cares - as I have not weaned myself completely.

You should now understand why I am at times so disrespectful of the sacred things, of the saints themselves, although paradoxically I love them so profoundly. You may also realize their patience with me and my contradictions, my joyful humour, my love of games, my horror of work and of all things that are called 'serious', but especially horror of the 'pedagogues'.

If I play with the Stone it is without malice, envy or ostentation, it is just like a child playing with sand and making mud pies.

It is most unfortunate that nowadays everybody seems to be ignoring the formidable possibility of the first path which was that of ADAM and of CHRIST, conjointly with the second, in which they become Sons of God, totally. Others will have to await the judgement to find their bodies - do you understand the enormity of the proposed plan ? The pure divinity of this doctrine is hidden as the proverbial talent.

This is the retrieved terrestrial paradise, the Celestial Jerusalem descended onto the earth, This is the rehabilitated creation, renewed, saved. This is the revelation of the Sons of God to which all creation aspires. This is the secret of God which all saints desire to possess.

The Stone contains in itself, the secrets, the riches, the miracles and forces of the three realms. All comes from one and only thing.

You cannot attain your goal without an illumination and patience to wait; a person who has no patience cannot progress in this Art at all.

You are searching for a great secret - why don't you make the proper effort ?

Turba Philosophorum.

Our work comes from God and touches at one end the heaven and the earth at the other. It is therefore terrestrial as well as celestial.

Thus strive, you unbelieving men, to possess this great treasure, as having possessed it - you will have nothing more to desire on this earth.

Cambriel, Cours de Philosophie Hermetique.

POEMS

I stood enraptured in ecstasy, beside myself,
And in my every sense no sense remained,
My spirit was endowed with understanding,
Understanding nought, all science transcending.

The higher I ascended the less I understood.
It is the dark cloud illuminating the night.
Therefore he who understands knows nothing
Ever all science transcending.

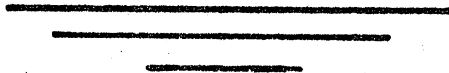
He who really ascends so high annihilates himself,
And all his previous knowledge seems ever less and less;
His knowledge so increases that he knoweth nothing,
All science transcending.

This knowing that knows nothing is so potent in its might
That the prudent in their reasoning never can defeat it;
For their wisdom never reaches to the understanding
That understandeth nothing, all science transcending.

This sovereign wisdom is of an excellence so high
That no faculty nor science can ever unto it attain.
He who shall overcome himself by the knowledge which knows nothing
Will always rise, all science transcending.

And if you listen, this sovereign wisdom doth consist
In a sense profound of the essence of God;
It is an act of His compassion, to leave us,
Nought understanding, all science transcending.

John Yepse.



A radiance of Light surrounds the world of the mind.
We forget each other, quiet and pure, all-powerful and empty.

Emptiness is lighted up by the radiance of the Heart of Heaven.
The sea is smooth and mirrors the moon on its surface.

The clouds vanish in blue space.
The mountains shine clear.

Consciousness dissolves itself in vision.
The disk of the moon floats solitary.

Hui Ming Ching.

Seven Steps of Avicenna

Every created thing, by its nature, longs for the perfection which means its well-being, and the perfection of the created being is brought about by the grace of that One Who is essentially perfect. The most perfect object of love is the First Cause of all things : for His Glory revealed, except to those who are not able to receive the revelation.

He is hidden only from those who are veiled by shortcoming and weakness and defect. But the gnostics have stripped off the veils of their bodies and have devoted themselves to concern with God. The soul then has reached the light of the Sun and is able to receive the Divine Illumination when it wills, free from all worldly distractions, until it is wholly sanctified.

There are stages and degrees in the contemplative life, to which the gnostic alone in this world attains.

The first step for the gnostic is called Will, which means certainty as to the Way. Through this the gnostic will discipline his soul, through his faith, and will direct it towards God, so that he may attain the joy of union.

The second stage is that of self-discipline, which is directed towards three things, removing all save God from the Gnostic's choice, subduing his carnal soul to his rational soul, so that the imagination and intellect shall be attracted to the higher things, not the lower, and making the conscience mindful of admonition.

The third stage means that the soul, now free from sensual desires, is filled with good thoughts and gives itself up to the spiritual love which seeks to be ruled by the qualities of the Beloved.

Now appear to the gnostic flashes of the Divine Light, like fleeting gleams of lightning, which pass away. By those who experience them, these are called "mystic states" and every state brings joy and becomes more frequent, as the gnostic is more able to receive them.

In the fourth stage the mystic sees God in all things and then in the fifth stage he becomes accustomed to God's Presence, the brief flashes of lightning become a shining flame, and he attains to direct knowledge of God and is continually in fellowship with Him.

Then the gnostic passes on to the stage of contemplating God in Himself: he is absent, he is departing yet abiding. Then he turns to the world of Reality and his contemplation of God is stable and continuous, and when he passes from striving to attainment, his inmost soul becomes a polished mirror reflecting the Face of God.

In the final stage he passes away from himself and contemplates only the Divine Glory and if he looks upon himself, it is only as the one contemplating, and when he has come to this, he has attained complete union with God.



Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite

29.

.... guide us to that topmost height of mystic lore which exceedeth light and more than exceedeth knowledge, where the simple, absolute, and unchangeable mysteries of heavenly Truth lie hidden in the dazzling obscurity of the secret Silence, outshining all brilliance with the intensity of their darkness, and surcharging our blinded intellects with the utterly impalpable and invisible fairness of glories which exceed all beauty !

.... and, if the Divine Initiation is beyond such men as these, what can be said of others yet incapable thereof, who describe the Transcendent Cause of all things by qualities drawn from the lowest order of being, while they deny that it is in any way superior to the various ungodly delusions which they fondly invent in ignorance of this Truth ?

.... but it is revealed in ITS naked truth to those alone who pass right through the opposition of fair and foul, and pass beyond the topmost altitudes of the holy ascent and leave behind them all divine enlightenment and voices and heavenly utterances and plunge into the Darkness where truly dwells, that One Which is beyond all things. Nevertheless he meets not with God Himself, yet he beholds - not Him indeed (for He is invisible) - but the place wherein He dwells.

And this I take to signify that the divinest and the highest of the things perceived by the eyes of the body or the mind are but symbolic language of things subordinate to Him who Himself transcendeth them all.

Through these things His incomprehensible presence is shown walking upon those heights of His holy places which are perceived by the mind; and then It breaks forth, even from the things that are beheld and from those that behold them, and plunges the true initiate unto the Darkness of Unknowing wherein he renounces all the apprehensions of his understanding and is enwrapped in that which is wholly intangible and invisible, belonging wholly to Him that is beyond all things and to none else (whether himself or another), and being through the passive stillness of all his reasoning powers united by his highest faculty to Him that is wholly Unknowable, of whom thus by a rejection of all knowledge he possesses a knowledge that exceeds his understanding.

.... Unto this Darkness which is beyond Light we pray that we may come, and may attain unto vision through the loss of sight and knowledge, and that in ceasing thus to see or to know we may learn to know that which is beyond all perception and understanding (for this emptying of our faculties is true sight and knowledge), and that we may offer Him that transcends all things the praise of a transcendent hymnody, which we shall do by denying or removing all things that are.

Now we must wholly distinguish this negative method from that of positive statements. We strip off all qualities in order that we may attain a naked knowledge of that Unknowing which in all existent things is enwrapped by all objects of knowledge, and that we may begin to see that super-essential Darkness which is hidden by all the light that is in existent things.

Once more, ascending yet higher we maintain that It is not soul, or mind, or endowed with the faculty of imagination, conjecture, reason, or

understanding; nor is It any act of reason or understanding; nor can It be described by the reason or perceived by the understanding, since It is not number, or order, or greatness, or littleness, or equality, and since It is immovable nor in motion, or at rest, and has no power, and is not power or light, and does not live, and is not life; nor is It personal essence, or eternity, or time;

Nor can It be grasped by the understanding, since It is not knowledge or truth; nor is It kingship or wisdom; nor is It one, nor is It unity, nor is It Godhead or Goodness; nor is It a Spirit, as we understand the term, since It is not Sonship or Fatherhood; nor is It any other thing as such as we or any other being can have knowledge of;

Nor does It belong to the category of non-existence or to that of existence; nor do existent beings know It as it actually is, nor does It know them as they actually are; nor can the reason attain to It to name It or to know It; nor is It darkness, nor is It light, or error; or truth; nor can any affirmation or negation apply to It; for while applying affirmations or negations to those orders of being that come next to It, we apply not unto It either affirmation or negation, inasmuch as It transcendeth all affirmation by being perfect and unique Cause of all things, and transcendeth all negation by the pre-eminence of Its simple and absolute nature - free from every limitation and beyond them all.

... from Plotinus :

You ask, how can we know the Infinite ?

I answer, not by reason !

It is the office of reason to distinguish and define the Infinite, therefore, cannot be ranked among its objects. You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state in which you are finite self no longer - in which the divine essence is communicated to you.

What is the ecstasy ?

It is the liberation of your mind from its finite consciousness. Like only can apprehend like, when you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the Infinite. In the reduction of your soul to its simplest self, its divine essence, you realize this union - this identity.

But this sublime condition is not of permanent duration.

It is only now and then that we can enjoy this elevation (mercifully made possible for us) above the limits of the body and the world.

Jacob Boehme : Earthly language is entirely insufficient to describe what there is of joy, happiness, and loveliness contained in the inner wonders of God.

PROTINUS - excerpts from Enneads

But how shall we find the Way ?

What methods can we devise ?

How can one see the inconceivable Beauty which stays within the holy sanctuary and does not come out where the profane may see it ?

Let him who can follow and come within, and leave outside the sight of his eyes and not turn back to the bodily splendours which he saw before. When he sees beauty in bodies he must not run after them; we must know that they are images, traces, shadows, and hurry away to That which they image.

.....

By continually contemplating the object before him the spectator sees it no more. The vision is confounded with the object seen, and that which was before object becomes to him the state of seeing, and he forgets all else.

.....

But in the vision that which sees is not reason, but something greater than and prior to reason, something presupposed by reason, as is the object of vision.

We ought not even to say that he will see, but he will be that which he sees if indeed it is impossible any longer to distinguish seer and seen, and not boldly to affirm that the two are one.

He belongs to Him and is one with Him, like two concentric circles, they are one when they coincide and two only when they are separated.

For how can one describe, as other than oneself, that which, when one saw it, seemed to be one with oneself ?

The Soul then occupies itself no more even with beautiful things; it is exalted above the Beautiful, it passes the choir of the virtues. Even as when a man who enters the sanctuary of a temple leaves behind him the statues in the temple, they are the objects which he will see first when he leaves the sanctuary after he has seen what is within, and entered there into communion not with statues and images, but with the Deity Itself.

Perhaps we ought not to speak of Vision, it is rather another mode of seeing, an ecstasy and simplification, an abandonment of oneself, a desire for immediate contact, a stability, a deep intention to unite oneself with what is to be seen in the sanctuary.

He who seeks to see (God) in any other manner, will find nothing.



Meister Eckhart

Whatever the soul does, it does through agents.

It understands by means of intelligence. If it remembers, it does so by means of memory. If it is to love, the will must be used and thus *it* acts always through agents and not within its own essence. Its results are achieved through an intermediary.

The power of sight can be effectuated only through the eyes, for otherwise the soul has no means of vision. It is the same with the other senses - they are effectuated through intermediaries.

In Being, however, there is no action and, therefore, there is none in the soul's essence, the soul's agents, by which it acts, are derived from the core of the soul. In that core is the central silence, the pure peace, and abode of the heavenly birth, the place for this event, this utterance of God's Word.

Thus the soul gets at things by means of ideas and the idea is an entity created by the soul's agents. Be it a stone, or a rose, or a person, or whatever it is that is to be known, first an idea is taken and then absorbed, and in this way the soul connects with the phenomenal world.

But an idea, so received, necessarily comes in from outside, through the senses. Thus the soul knows about everything but itself. There is an authority who says that the soul can neither conceive nor admit any idea of itself. Thus it knows about everything else but has no self-knowledge, for ideas always enter through the senses and therefore the soul cannot get an idea of itself.

That indicates that within itself the soul is free, innocent of all instrumentalities and ideas, and that is why God can unite with it, He too, being pure and without idea or likeness.

Thus it is true that, if you are to experience this noble birth, you must depart from all crowds and go back to the starting point, the core of the soul, out of which you came.

The crowds are the agents of the soul and their activities : memory, understanding, and will, in all their diversifications. You must leave them all ; sense perception, imagination, and all that you discover in self or intend to do. After that, you may experience this birth - but otherwise NOT - believe me !!

In this exalted state the soul has lost her proper self and is flowing full-flood into the unity of the divine nature.

But what, you may ask, is the fate of this lost soul :
Does she find herself or not ?

It seems to me that though she sinks all sinking in the oneness of divinity she never touches bottom. Wherefore God has left her one little point from which to get back to herself and know herself as creature.

St. John of the Cross

THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL .

Let me clarify the nature of this union by a simile.

Picture a ray of sunlight that is striking a window. Now if the window is coated with stains or vapours, the ray will be unable to illumine it and transform it into its own light; this it could do only if the window were stainless and pure.

And the greater or lesser degree of illumination will be strictly in proportion to the window's greater or lesser purity; and this will be so, not because of the ray of sunlight but because of the condition of the window. Thus, if the window were entirely clean and pure, the ray would transform and illumine it in such a way that it would become almost undistinguishable from the brightness of the ray and would diffuse the same light as the ray.

And yet, however much the window may resemble the ray of sunlight, it actually retains its own distinct nature. But this does not prevent us from saying that this window is luminous as a ray of the sun or is sunlight by participation.

Now the soul is like this window : the Divine Light of the Being of God is unceasingly beating upon it, or, to use a better expression, the Divine Light is ever dwelling in it.

.....
.....

The sensual and the spiritual desires are now put to sleep and mortified so that they can no longer enjoy the taste of any Divine or human thing; the affections of the soul are restrained and subdued so that they can neither move nor find support in anything.

The imagination is bound and can no longer reflect in a rational manner; the memory has lost its strength; the understanding is in darkness, unable to comprehend anything; and hence the will, too, is in aridity and constraint.

In short, all the faculties are void and useless; and, in addition to all this, a thick and heavy cloud oppresses the soul and keeps it, as it were, away from God. It is in this kind of darkness that the soul, according to its own words, travels securely.

For, when all these operations and movements are arrested, it is evident that the soul is safe from going astray. And the deeper the darkness is in which the soul travels, and the more the soul is voided of its natural operations, the greater is its security.

All the desires, energies, and faculties of the soul are now detached from all other things, and all its powers are recollected and employed in the effort to please Him.

In this manner the soul goes forth from itself and from all created things and travels "securely and protected by darkness" towards the sweet and blissful union of love with God.

Jan van Ruysbroeck

THE SEVENTH STEP :

Here follows the seventh and the last step, the most excellent and highest which can be realized either in time or eternity.

It comes about, when above all conception and knowledge we find in ourselves a certain infinite or abyssal unknowing; when transcending every name which has been given to God or to any created thing, we expire into the eternal namelessness, wherein we are lost.

When, beyond any practice of virtue we contemplate and find within us an eternal repose, in which no man can work; and, above all blessed spirits, a blessedness without measure, in which we are all one, and that same one which is that blessedness itself in its essence; and when at length we contemplate all blessed spirits as in essence drowned and melted and lost in the supersubstantial essence, in a pathless darkness.

from : The Spiritual Espousals :

For in this unfathomable joy of simplicity, all things are embraced in a delectable blessedness, and the depths themselves remain uncomprehended, except it be in our essential unity with God. Before this all created personality must fail, and all that lives in God, for here is nothing but an eternal resting in a delectable embrace of the flowing-out love.

from : The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage :

It is the new birth and a new enlightenment without interruption; for the ground from which the Light shines forth, and which is the Light itself, is life-giving and fruitful, and therefore the manifestation of the Eternal Light is renewed without ceasing in the hidddened of the spirit.

Behold, every creaturely work, and every exercise of virtue, must here cease; for here God works alone in the high nobility of the spirit. And here there is nothing but an eternal seeing and staring at that Light, by that Light, and in that Light.

And the coming of the Bridegroom is so swift that He is perpetually coming, and yet dwelling within with unfathomable riches; and ever coming anew, in His Person, without interruption, with such new brightness that it seems as though he had never come before. For his coming consists, beyond time, in an eternal Now, which is ever received with new longings and new joy.

Behold, the delight and the joy which this Bridegroom brings with Him in His coming are boundless and without measure, for they are Himself.

And all those men who are raised up above their created being into a God-seeing life are one with this Divine brightness. And they are that brightness itself, and they see, feel, and find, even by means of this Divine Light, that, as regards their uncreated essence, they are that same onefold ground from which the brightness without limit shines forth in the Divine way, and which, according to the simplicity of the Essence, abides eternally onefold and wayless within.

And this is why the inward and God-seeing men will go out in the way of contemplation, above reason and above distinction and above their created being, through an eternal intuitive gazing.

By means of this inborn light they are transfigured, and made one with that light, same light through which they see and which they see. And thus the God-seeing men follow after their Eternal Image, after which they have been made; and they behold God and all things, without distinction, in a simple seeing, in the Divine brightness.

And this is the most noble and the most profitable contemplation to which one can attain in this life; for in this contemplation, a man best remains master of himself and free.

Effects of the Beatific Vision

In the Beatific Vision God manifests Himself to the elect in a general epiphany which, nevertheless, assumes various forms corresponding to the mental conception of God formed by men on earth.

There is, then one single epiphany, which is multiple only by reason of the difference of forms by which it is received. The Vision impregnates the elect with Divine Light, each experiencing the Vision according to the knowledge of the Divine dogma or dogmas gained on earth.

The Divine Light pervades the beings of the elect and radiates from them. The spiritual enjoyment produced by the contemplation of this reflection is even greater than that of the Vision itself. For, at the moment when they experience the Beatific Vision, the elect are transported and losing all consciousness, cannot appreciate the joy of the Vision.

Delight they feel, but the very intensity of the vision makes it impossible for them to realize it. The reflected light, on the other hand, does not overpower them, and they are thus able to participate in all its joys.

from works of Ibn al-Arabi

13-th century.

Jacob Boehme

His first Experience :

Suddenly my spirit did break through ... even into the innermost birth of Geniture of the Deity, and there I was embraced with love, as a bridegroom embraces his dearly beloved bride.

But the greatness of the triumphing that was in the spirit I cannot express either in speaking or writing; neither can it be compared to anything, but with that wherein the life is generated in the midst of death, and it is like the resurrection from the dead.

In this light my spirit suddenly saw through all, and in and by all the creatures, even in herbs and grass, it knew God, who He is, and how He is, and what His will is; and suddenly in that light my will was set on, by a mighty impulse, to describe the being of God.

Some years after :

The gate was opened to me that in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at a university, at which I exceedingly admired and thereupon turned my praise to God for it.

For I saw and knew the Being of all beings, the byss and abyss and the eternal generation of the Holy Trinity, the descent and original of the world and of all creatures through the divine wisdom.

I knew and saw in myself all the three worlds, namely :

- 1) the divine (angelical and paradisical)
- 2) and the dark (the original of the nature to the fire)
- 3) and then the external and visible world (being a procreation or external birth from both the internal and spiritual worlds).

And I saw and knew the whole working essence, in the evil and the good and the original and the existence of each of them, and likewise how the fruit-bearing-womb of eternity brought forth.

So that I did not only greatly wonder at it but did also exceedingly rejoice.

St. John of the Cross :

In so far as this becomes pure contemplation, the soul sees clearly that it cannot describe it otherwise than in general terms which the abundance of delight and happiness forces from it. And though at times, when this knowledge is vouchsafed to the soul, words are uttered, yet the soul knows full well that it has in nowise expressed what it felt, because it is conscious that there are no words of adequate signification.

Message Retrieved

by Louis Cattiaux.

37.

(Editions Denoel, Paris.)

There is a difference which the religionists will notice, because if a partial Union with God is worthy of praise and admiration, only the total Union in Spirit, in Soul, and in body, is worthy of adoration.

XXIX. 45'

The true Wisdom, the Ultimate Knowledge, isolate man from his fellow-creatures much better than any crime or worst case of leprosy, or whatever death could ever do.

The Union with God is the reward of the Perfect.

I. 26

To be possessed by the multitude of the Universality - it is to be a fool.
To be possessed by the Unicity of One - it is to be a saint.
To be possessed by the Unity of the Unique - it is to be a sage.
But to penetrate the plenitude of vacuity - is to be God with God.

XIV. 56'

The appearances of this world are strangely deceptive and they confuse the best informed as well as they mislead the best prepared. Thus it is better to reserve our judgement until such time when all things and all beings will manifest themselves to us without a veil and without a disguise.

'Many criticise everything and propagate discouragement and hate.; very few console and offer their help and their love.'

XV. 39'

The Absolute is unknowable in its totality but may be approached in its parts that are like images of all.

XIV. 25'

And who shall be unified with the Elohim in the Unique God ?

XXXV. 9'

The spirit is hidden in the body and the soul manifests herself by the separation and union of these two in the eternity of the Unique.

IX. 61'

Love has begun with the first separation and will come to a rest with the last reintegration in the identification of complete Union.

V. 45'

It is a sincere love of God and an ardent desire to know Him that bring about the conditions for our meeting and Union with the Glorious Living.

XVIII. 71'

Church

It is the (Hidden) Church of within, immortal and pure by the union of the Saints in God that we should honour in our hearts - and not the Church of without, temporal and soiled by men which we are required to idolize in this world.

XXVI. 15'

Calming of the whole body leads to the interior vision and to the Divine Union.

XIII. 4.

Meditation causes at first a great dizziness, then an immense disillusion and a poignant deathlike solitude. Later it leads to an immense admiration of the Mother and to the dazzling love of the Father.

Finally, it brings peace with the Union which engenders the most perfect Son.
VII. 13

It is the contemplation of the first and the last unity which engenders a true union and true peace.
XIII. 5

The Saint Mother is as light as the Air and as unsteady as the Water.
The Holy Father is as heavy as the Earth and as immutable as the Fire.
The Union of these four engenders a triple Son, who manifests the prodigious creation of the Unique.
VIII. 38

The union of the Water with Earth causes the purity of the luminous garment of the Lord appear and the Fire manifests the secret virtue of the treasure of God.
XII. 33'

- Oh sweet Light of the Divine Union .
XIV. 51

The Return of the Soul to its source is like a prefiguring of the end of times as everything is accomplished according to a geometric progression, which means with an acceleration of the pure bodies rejoining their primordial centre.
XIV. 51'

After we shall have unified the Word of God with the Knowledge of God there shall be nothing else but an admirative silence and intense jubilation within ourselves.
XXXVI. 3'

Thus, having penetrated into the secret centre each one shall be unified into the unity of the Unique and become a "Messenger Retrieved".
XXXV. 31'

However, a divine gift is required to practice the great ART of the All-Mighty here on this earth.
XXXV. 43''

This (the book "Message Retrieved" - Ed.) is a Book for the aflamed for the heaven who, weeping bitterly, search for their lost native land.
XXXV. 41'

A person who has found God and His Love cannot be forgotten anymore because God IS Life, Love and the Union.
VI. 34

There^{are} those who are promised by the revelation of the Lord of Charity.
There are those who are pledged by the faith in the living Eternity.
There are those who are linked by the grace of the All-Mighty.
There are those who are enchained by the love of the Beloved.
There are those who are fixed by the Union with the Most Perfect.
There are those who agonize by the integration into the Unique Splendour.
There are those who are dead by the Knowledge of the Most-Hidden and they do not talk anymore and are not active personally, because they dwell in the repose and in act(ivity) of the Unknowable who IS.

XVI. 37.