

Paul Brunton on Martinus

In 1949 Paul Brunton read a summary of Martinus' teachings and a translation of his book "Mankind and the World Picture". These inspired Brunton to study with Martinus, and from May to August 1952 he lived with his wife at the Martinus Institute in Copenhagen where he spent 2-4 evenings a week with him. In these sessions Martinus systematically explained his symbols for Brunton, and Brunton had the opportunity to have his many questions discussed. "Mankind and the World Picture" has not yet been published since the translation needs to be revised. The following article was written in the 1950's by Brunton as a Foreword to "Mankind and the World Picture". (MMcG)

In the course of extensive travels around the world, it has been a part of the research work, which is my vocation in life, to delve into the philosophic, mystic, and religious literatures, organisations, and traditions of each country I have visited. But another and not less important part of this work has been the deliberate ferreting out of unusually gifted and spiritually advanced individuals in much the same way that was recorded many years ago in the books, *A Search In Secret India*, and *A Search In Secret Egypt*. Some of them have been obscurely hidden away in private life, but others have been the heads of influential movements.

This is how I came to meet the man who composed this work, which is now presented for the first time in an English translation. We became good friends. He prefers to be known only by his first, or Christian, name which is Martinus.

His principal work is *Livets Bog (The Book of Life)*, of which five large volumes have already been published. The sixth is still in the course of composition, and the seventh, which is to be the final one of the series, is yet to be started. In addition he has written three medium-sized books. The first, entitled *Logic*, is an attempt to get its readers to question their conventional ideas and traditional beliefs, especially religious beliefs, and to rethink them in a more courageously logical manner. The second, *Funeral*, is a treatise on different ways of burying the dead and recommendation for their disposal in zinc-lined coffins placed in above-the-surface mausoleums. The third and only translated work (*For an up-to-date list of Martinus' books available in English contact the Martinus Institute. MMcG*) is *Mankind and the World Picture*, which will be described later. He has also written several short monographs and books on such varied subjects as *Mental Sovereignty*, *The Ideal Food*, *The Longest-Living Idol*, *What is Truth?* and *The Mystery of Prayer*.

When I first met Martinus some years ago in Copenhagen, I found him a simple, unpretentious individual who dressed, spoke, and lived in quite an ordinary manner. No one looking at his physical exterior could easily guess that it concealed a man who must be regarded as the outstanding living seer of his own country, and who, his disciples assert and his teachings predict, will eventually be recognized as the prophet of the modern world. In some ways he reminded me of Jacob Boehme, "the illumined shoemaker of Goerlitz".

Since he is virtually unknown outside Scandinavia, it may be useful to the reader to give a few facts about his life. In 1950 he celebrated his 60th birthday. His parents lived and worked on a lonely farm in the part of Denmark called Jutland, which is a large peninsula lying to the west of the country. His home was situated in a region of few inhabitants, forests and open rugged fields. This solitary environment developed within him a close kinship with Nature, made him accustomed to being alone with his own thoughts and fostered his innate religious yearnings.

He spent the summers out in the pastures looking after herds of cows. The nearest house was about two-thirds of a mile away. He especially liked to play in a little neighbouring wood. Each day in winter he had to walk for half an hour to reach the school house, where he was taught enough letters to be able to add, to write, and to read, but little more. He told me that the most visible fruit of this simple and brief schooling was that it enabled him to read The Holy Bible. For this he is immensely grateful, as he considers it a book of inestimable worth when correctly interpreted. It is a work of which only certain parts should be taken literally, while other parts must be taken symbolically or allegorically. Apart from this scripture, he never cared for reading and is unfamiliar even with the limited amount of literature with which any Danish schoolboy of the present day is familiar.

Approaching adulthood, he was called to spend eight months in the Navy on compulsory service, after which he changed his whole life by settling in the town of Copenhagen instead of returning to the country. He found employment in the office of a great dairy-company and remained there for several years.

Hitherto, the two signs indicative of the course of his future development had been a deeply religious temperament and the resolute adoption of a fixed attitude when confronted by any situation calling for a moral decision. He then always asked himself, "What would Jesus have done in these circumstances?" The answer that evolved out of his own mind became his guide for action.

One day someone lent him a little book about Theosophy, a subject about which Martinus knew nothing at all, and handed it to him with the suggestion that it might be found interesting. Martinus, unaccustomed to reading as he was, idly turned over two or three pages and then his eyes alighted on a reference to "meditation". This single word was enough to ring a bell deep inside his inner consciousness. Obeying a sudden urge, he lay down in a chair and started to meditate on God. Almost immediately his first "cosmic" (*The terms "cosmic experience" and "cosmic consciousness" are used to refer to a fully conscious, completely controlled awareness of a higher dimension of being which accompanies and does not cancel out ordinary physical dimension. It is not used by Martinus for any mystically-occult or yoga experience/P.B.*) experience followed.

Far off he noticed the appearance of a tiny speck of radiant light. It then moved slowly towards him, enlarging itself as it did so, until it took the visible shape of a man -none other than the master Jesus, himself. This luminous form then entered into Martinus' own physical body and since that time has lived within him as the Christ consciousness.

The next day he went into the same deep state of introverted consciousness again, and during this experience there was revealed to him the fact that God was present in every part of the universe, that a perfect pattern was hidden behind the movements of everything and the lives of every creature within it. There was meaning and purpose behind the activities of suns, stars, planets, seasons, and all the grand panorama of Nature. What he thus saw intuitively constituted a large revelation which he set himself to



Paul Brunton and his wife with Martinus in May 1952

communicate to his fellow men. The method of communication which naturally suggested itself to him was two-fold.

The first, writing descriptive and explanatory books, was the conventional and traditional method, but the second one was most striking and indeed the unique feature of his contribution - since so many of these teachings are already familiar to students of these subjects. It was the series of coloured drawings and geometrical diagrams which he calls "Symbols", because they explain the laws, forces, entities and evolutionary movements active in the universe.

He tried to resume his everyday life but found it impossible to continue in the old groove. He had to withdraw from his employment and start a new life, one entirely devoted to the mission which, he knew, had been invested in him. This was made possible for him by the financial help of a few good friends. Henceforth, he occupied himself with writing at a feverish ardour, setting down in long sentences, sometimes a whole page long, the truth which had come to him, but on a later day rejecting and rewriting most of his manuscripts because he then regarded them as being imperfect or inadequate. He found it difficult to obtain the right words with which to describe his knowledge; the latter came, and even to-day still comes through, with such an uprush that he recognizes it to be a great mass of knowledge from former incarnations suddenly revived again. His literary does not conform to any known Danish styles; even there he expresses *himself*. It appears closer to Latin than to any other European language. This period of rapidly developing knowledge and improving capacity to formulate it lasted for seven years. It constituted a kind of apprenticeship to the full proficiency with which he started the second period of work that was deemed fit to find its way into print.

During this apprenticeship he also experimented with various regimes of ascetical living to purify the nervous system of his body, so as to receive with less resistance the higher vibrations of spiritual forces which were daily entering into it. It was a time of great stress and suffering as his physical system slowly adjusted itself to the influx of these forces. Now, however, he laughs at extreme forms of asceticism and declares them to be either premature or unnecessary. Nevertheless, both he and his convinced followers feel it quite natural not to smoke tobacco, drink alcohol, eat meat and fish, since these things are regarded as pernicious poisons which impair the body's health, and hinder spiritual development. Indeed he predicts that the perfectly developed human being of the far future will subsist exclusively on fruits, but says it would be foolish for the present-day man to imitate him. Martinus himself has never married, yet celibacy is not encouraged.

Along with some of his written "Analyses" of the world picture, Martinus during this time began to create the series of coloured geometrical patterns, "The Symbols", which now number nearly eighty.

A large copy of his most important symbol, drawn during the third year of his apprenticeship, hangs always on the wall beside his desk. It is a symbolic representation of "God's Living Universe" with the circular course of the evolution marked out for all the beings, including the earth, within the cosmos. Martinus himself explains the purpose of his Symbols in these words, "...I have considered it helpful to give visible material expressions of those mental realities so that instead of forming mere mental manifestations, of use only to the trained thinker, or occultist, they now will appear as palpable material picture, which are amenable to physical sight and hence can be explored in the same easy and plain way as a far-off landscape with its rivers, mountains and cities can be studied on an exactly prepared map. Thus the intention with my illustrations is to make the access to the study of the cosmic or spiritual universe just as easy to humanity in general, as the study of the physical, materialistic territories now are accessible to each pupil in school by help of geography."

Every winter Martinus lectures to public audiences of five to six hundred people in the city of Copenhagen, and in addition and during other seasons, to somewhat smaller audiences of convinced followers and interested listeners. Martinus says that by such occasions new cells may be born in the brains of his audiences as a result of the forces playing through him the auditorium. Until he was sixty-two years old he had never stepped across the frontiers of Denmark, but at that age he went to lecture in Iceland at the invitation of the Theosophical Society.

A small magazine entitled "Kosmos", which has a circulation of nearly 1000 copies per month and carries a serialized contribution from Martinus in every issue, is made up of articles written by students of his teachings. His secretary, Erik Gerner Larsson, has also composed a six-volume course, *An Outline of Martinus' Spiritual Science*, which is an attempt to express fluently the teaching in easier and more popular and less detailed form. Gerner Larsson was one of the first disciples to recognize the worth of these teachings, and he has devoted his whole life to the work of ardently propagating them since they were launched by Martinus, a quarter century ago.

Gerner Larsson also edits and writes the major part of a fortnightly *Newsletter* in mimeographed form. The main article deals at length with some problem sent in by

a reader, whether a personal or religious or occult problem, which is judged to be of sufficiently wide interest to be worth treating in this form. The next article is an instalment of a serial course explaining, in easy popular language, *Livets Bog's* teachings. Formerly, Martinus himself wrote a page answering questions submitted by readers, but he dropped this out lately.

About a hundred kilometres northwest of Copenhagen Martinus has established a colony and vacation home on the coast near the village of Klint. Here he spends some summer months and together with two secretaries delivers two or three lectures a week. About two hundred persons spend short holidays or long periods here in a friendly, cheerful and elevated atmosphere. This friendliness emanates from the teacher himself and spreads around the place, but the teaching itself must have some power in producing it. Martinus once summed it up as being fulfilled in Jesus' admonition to love one's neighbour as oneself. Indeed, his entire cosmological scheme, with its descriptions of the movements of Life and Mind through the boundless space of the cosmos, is intended solely to supply a scientific foundation for the tightness of this admonition, and to bring popular knowledge of it on an intellectual basis instead of an emotional one.

Such is the importance the Danish seer attaches to this attitude that he ardently expects that a motion picture film will be made one day, whose scenes will be drawn by hand as those of a Walt Disney cartoon are drawn. The great circular symbol already mentioned will be its central theme. This picture will be an attempt to provide for the masses of theatre-goers proof that the only sound ethical basis for their lives is that love towards all creatures, including the animals.

I have heard it said a number of times that Martinus does not show any outward signs of being an extraordinary individual. He has a bespectacled face, massive head, wide shoulders and a figure of medium height. But his black hair and the dark colour of his eyes is unusual in a Nordic Scandinavian country, while their large dilated pupils bespeak to me an indication of his clairvoyant seership. Moreover for a man of his age his vitality he is astonishingly youthful.

He does not want to glorify his personality at the expense of his principles, does not seek to push himself forward so that a disproportionate attention is given to the man at the expense of his message, and he discourages worship of, or dependence on, the master by the disciple, in the Oriental manner. Hence he gives no initiations to individuals, offers the followers no free gift of a sudden expansion of consciousness, and bestows no spiritual cosmic glimpses to aspiring candidates.

Martinus has the useful knack of falling instantly asleep if he has nothing to do. This happens often when he is in street cars and trains, for instance. In his private talk he is quite animated, speaking rapidly and fluently. In public discourses on the platform his manner is equally vivacious, and at times even excited. It is full of gestures with his hands; his arms wave and he emphasizes points by pounding the air. Indeed he seems almost carried away by his subject but in reality he has himself under complete control.

He answers only the most urgent of his letters and grants only the most urgent interviews. He says that it is more important to attend to his true mission of serving humanity by writing books, than to let himself get involved with individuals who seek him out for personal motives. So important does he regard *Livets Bog (The Book of Life)* that he lets no other work or activity come before his daily writing on it. He some days even starts at 4 a.m. or 5 a.m., composing directly on a typewriter, and continues until about 10 a.m.

He is fully convinced that Providence deliberately kept him away from education, teachings, cults and movements in order to keep him free to express his own inner knowledge unimpaired by other people's ideas and uninfluenced by their work. Even the work on the *Symbols* was technically self-taught. From 12 to 30 years of age he wrote nothing except a few letters to his parents and read nothing except the *New Testament*. He says that he learned in former lives the art of literary writing and the art of drawing, which both now enter into the activity of his mission.

He had, especially in the earlier days of his movement, his share of that criticism and even slander which every public spiritual teacher or writer who is really effectual or who follows an unorthodox path must expect to receive. One who was close to him said to me that his usual response to it was: "What a pity that they are making more bad Karma and hence more suffering for themselves! I feel so sorry for them."

All through his career he has found that his mission receives the help it needs. He does what he can for it, but at the same time he believes that Providence is taking care of its success. So even when troubles or setbacks occur, they do not trouble him. And the help he receives outwardly is, he feels, inwardly inspired by unseen higher beings who are allotted to this task and who also protect him. He has complete faith in this protection. During the war, he was walking one night in a blackout when a man suddenly appeared and warned him not to continue in that direction as a shooting battle between Germans and members of the Danish resistance movement

was happening there. The figure of this stranger immediately vanished. This turned out to be his protection, for he would have walked straight into the line of fire and his life would have been endangered. He says that it was a psychic not physical appearance, sent to enable him to continue his mission of earth.

It may startle many students of these subject to hear it, but it is needful to mention here that Martinus disagrees with the teaching of most mystics, whether Western or Eastern, about the necessity of meditation. Indeed, except in the case of highly advanced types, he is strongly opposed to it. Most readers have become accustomed to consider it inseparable from mysticism. But in his view the dangers of meditation are too great, while its necessity was valid only for former epochs when the human race was primitive and intellectually underdeveloped, In our epoch its place is fully taken by the use of prayer combined with the use of intelligence. He considers the development of logical intellectual thinking an absolute necessity in the spiritual progress of the human race at its present stage. Anything which detracts from it is therefore to be given up and he asserts meditation does lead away from it.

A further surprise for students is his coupling of religion with meditation as likewise suited only to primitive mentalities, of course quite apart from the previous exception. He considers the era of blind belief to be a dying one, and the era of rational intelligence to be the dawning one. He says that whereas people in the past accepted religious doctrines, whether the latter were true or false, on the sole basis of authority, they now will increasingly accept them on a basis of proven scientific factuality alone. Any doctrines which cannot meet this test will be rejected by the coming generations. Therefore, he does not even view the spread of atheism and materialism with undue alarm, since they are the products of the young intellect asserting itself in an unbalanced manner, and with the passage of time better balance will be restored.

On the grounds of out-of-date and unsuitable primitivity, Martinus discourages the growing European interest in Oriental religions, mysticism, and yoga. He is himself quite unfamiliar with those teachings, literature and scripture except by hearsay. He has not even read the *Bhagavad Gita*. He regards the works of all the Asiatic prophets, including Krishna, Buddha, Christ and Mohammed, as being merely preparatory to the unfoldment of the Christ-consciousness in mankind.

A very controversial feature of the practical consequences of his teaching, and which is hard for most people to accept, is that of the refusal to bear arms in the event of war. Martinus asserts - just as Gandhi did in India - that truly spiritual persons

could not and would not take the life of another, not even in self-defence. Therefore, they should not take the lives of invading soldiers even in defence of their own country. However, since the great majority of present-day people do not seek to emulate such an ideal man, he sees no likelihood of the danger of any innocent country being left defenceless against an aggressor nation.

Martinus declares that he is acting as an invisible helper at night, when out of the body during its sleep, on the Korean battlefield, helping newly-slain soldiers pass through their ordeal peacefully and understandingly, instead of being bewildered, or self-deceived into the belief that they are still physically alive.

Martinus has selected this book *Mankind and the World Picture* as the introductory volume to put his work before English-speaking readers because although it is of modest size, it contains many of his basic doctrines. It should constitute a revelation to a number of people as to what can be done by keen intellectual analysis to bring the human being into a truer understanding of its relation to the universe, to other human beings and to God. In it, he proves, by a scrupulously logical argument, the eternal existence of the "I".

He asserts that the wars which afflict mankind, being fought by the physical weapons produced by modern science, can only be ended by the psychological weapons produced by spiritual science. He describes the limitations of scientific instruments and shows why they cannot bring man to the discovery of the ultimate truth of life, which is hidden within himself and not in the external surroundings, with which these instruments deal. He calls the materialistic conception of the universe a dead one, because it fails to include as a separate principle the really living elements of thought and consciousness. He declares that the correct explanation of life is to be sought and found exclusively within the "I", which seeks the explanation, and not in the body, which is merely the organism of the "I".

Martinus gives some new and interesting interpretations of certain teachings of Jesus. The belief held in many religious sects that Jesus will return again in a physical resurrection or, alternatively, reincarnation, is rejected as erroneous. Martinus looks upon Jesus as a world redeemer whose teachings, when correctly explained and expounded by spiritual science, are destined to be spread throughout the globe, and this alone will constitute his second coming. This spreading of the truth by its intellectual acceptance and inward realization is said to be the inner meaning of the phrase, "the descent of the holy host".

Martinus looks forward to a golden age in a few thousand years when the leaders and rulers of mankind will themselves be spiritual initiates, truly wise men gifted with the power of clairvoyant insight into the cosmic realities.

The value of a movement must be judged partly by its effects. The moral effects of Martinus's teachings are definitely good. This is doubtless due in part to the fact that his followers are constantly urged to stop blaming others for their troubles, or events for their misfortunes, and to scrutinize their own characters for the true causes of these troubles or misfortunes. This inevitable leads to constant endeavours in the improvement of character and the discipline of emotion, with beneficial results to the individuals concerned and to their relations with those in their immediate surroundings.

At this point the reader may see that a man and a teaching of living spiritual value have appeared in Scandinavia and it is not proper that the rest of the world should remain ignorant of them. Although Martinus has been at work in Denmark for twenty-five years as a lecturer, a magazine contributor and an author, his name and ideas are still unknown to the reading public of English-speaking countries. That is a gap which should no longer be left unfilled. Therefore, I take pleasure in helping to make him known to my fellow students. He is a man whom to know is to take into one's heart. He embodies the intelligence, the selflessness, and the love, which constitute the essence of his moral and practical teaching.