

The Metaphysics of Martinus: Exploring New Territory

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How to cite this paper: Petersen, N. P. (2022). The Metaphysics of Martinus: Exploring New Territory. *Open Journal of Philosophy*, 12, 665-681.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojpp.2022.124045>

Received: September 16, 2022

Accepted: November 15, 2022

Published: November 18, 2022

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Abstract

The Danish thinker and mystic Martinus presented a comprehensive metaphysical system that explores and explains a wide range of topics, from the nature of consciousness and reality to an objective ethics and the structure of a just and fair society. Although a mystic, his argumentative justification for this system is not based on transcendent experiences but instead on rational arguments and methods and is thus broadly philosophical. This paper argues that since his views stand almost entirely untreated in contemporary philosophical research, it is of interest to examine them further, partly in the context of the history of ideas, but not least, given their unconventional nature, to provide fresh perspectives on the complex problems faced by contemporary philosophy. For example, the problem of decombination: To circumvent the difficult problem of consciousness, which challenges materialism, the position of cosmopsychism claims that the consciousness of the subject is constituted in a cosmic consciousness. How, then, to explain the differentiation or “decombination” of this cosmic consciousness into individual minds? Martinus has a triunic conception of the subject, and a theoretical metaphysical model based on this concept seems to be able to handle the decombination problem. It could be of explanatory benefit to examine other philosophical topics, both theoretical and practical, in light of Martinus’ views. Thus, this paper aims to introduce the views of Martinus into contemporary philosophical debates and argue the value of its further examination.

Keywords

Cosmopsychism, Decombination Problem, Idealism, Martinus, Mystics

1. Introduction

It is quite uncommon to incorporate thoughts from the mystical tradition into

modern professional philosophical thinking¹. However, interesting exceptions demonstrate that such involvement can lead to new perspectives and solutions to current philosophical problems (e.g., [Albahari, 2019](#); [Maharaj, 2020](#); [Taylor, 2020](#)). This is especially true of the particularly difficult mind-body problem: the relationship between the physical and the mental. In a materialist context, this translates into “the hard problem of consciousness”: there is, it seems, an insurmountable explanatory gap between physical, neural states and non-physical mental states. In an attempt to get closer to solving this problem, theories of constitutive panpsychism have been presented (see, e.g., [Brüntrup & Jaskolla, 2017](#)). This view holds that the subject’s consciousness is constituted by a combination of microconsciousnesses, which are possessed by the fundamental units of the physical. However, this position is faced with the “combination problem”: How is this combination to be explained, not least when it comes to combining discrete perspectives into a single perspective ([Coleman, 2014](#))? In response to this difficult problem, the position of cosmopsychism has been introduced and advanced in the debate (e.g., [Jaskolla & Buck, 2012](#); [Shani, 2015](#); [Shani & Keppeler, 2020](#); [Petersen, 2021](#)). Rather than positing microsubjects, the cosmopsychist instead proposes that the whole of the cosmos possesses one (single) consciousness. The consciousness of individual subjects is then claimed to be constituted by or grounded in this fundamental, cosmic consciousness. However, this approach leads to the so-called “decombination problem”: How is this differentiation or “decombination” (of a single perspective into individual, discrete perspectives) to be understood or explained?

One approach to incorporating the mystical tradition into the cosmopsychism debate is to include concrete, first-person descriptions of mystical experiences in support of a position ([Albahari, 2019](#)). This approach is not an uncontroversial one in contemporary philosophy, however. Possible objections to this approach include a rejection of a claim that there is a sufficient coincidence between the various reports of the mystics, not least due to the esoteric or theistic language used by mystics; and the claim that pure unmediated experiences, as mystics are contended to have, are not possible at all. Another approach is to embrace the teachings of a specific mystic directly ([Maharaj, 2020](#)); a possible objection here would be that mystical experiences do not provide an adequate philosophical justification for such teachings.

A third approach, which seems to avoid a number of the objections, is also possible. Instead of an empirical approach, where the mystics’ experiences are held to provide argumentative support for the position advocated, the basis for justification can be constituted in the rational epistemological method (broadly understood). This, however, requires that a (broadly) rational rather than transcendent and empirical justification for a worldview along the lines of the one described by mystics can be found, which is precisely the case with the Danish

¹In the sense of incorporating mystics’ metaphysical claims themselves in a serious way as constructive input for philosophical debates (and not in the sense that topics concerning mystical experiences are not discussed philosophically; see, e.g., [Jones & Gellman, 2022](#)).

mystic Martinus (1890-1981). An introduction of his metaphysics to the contemporary philosophical debate will be the focal point of this article.

Several paths are available. One is to employ a sociohistorical perspective: to attempt to understand his views in the context of the ideational currents of his time and to engage with the literature on Western esotericism². Another path is to examine the arguments he presents for his views, that is, to evaluate his metaphysics philosophically. While important, such engagement and examination are beyond the scope of the present paper. The aim of this paper is more modest. It is twofold: 1) to introduce the views of Martinus into contemporary philosophical debates and 2) to argue the value of its further examination. This will be done by first presenting an introductory overview of his metaphysics and then applying selected elements to some of the philosophical problems mentioned initially, demonstrating that his views point to a way to address or solve them. My focus will be the core ontological aspects of Martinus' metaphysical system, which includes elements that can be applied fairly directly to the problems in question.

2. An Unconventional Choice

Martinus' system of ideas as a subject for philosophical investigation on its own terms is quite unconventional in the context of contemporary mainstream philosophy. However, several reasons demonstrate that it is nevertheless worth examining in some detail. As already stated, the most important is the opportunity to gain a broader perspective on the problem of consciousness—and, more generally, on the question of the nature of reality itself. As this unsolved problem plays such a pivotal role in contemporary philosophy, it seems valuable to explore all options in an attempt to come closer to a solution—even unconventional ones. This includes options based on otherwise rarely advocated metaphysical positions, such as metaphysical idealism, i.e., moving beyond metaphysical materialism, which is the most common position today.

Letting the reports of the mystics form a direct empirical basis for the development of solutions seems to be a very controversial point of view. An epistemology based primarily on mystical experience is arguably located outside of established philosophical methods. While arguments can be made supporting such an approach, everything else being equal, it seems quite controversial. Martinus, however, differs from at least some mystics by not primarily justifying his metaphysics or “world picture,” as he terms it, through reference to transcendent or mystical experiences, but instead on, he argues, rational arguments. While he explicates that the source of his claimed insights is such experiences, he nevertheless insists that his world picture is “logically” structured and consequently can be justified through rational thought. The presentation of it, he emphasizes,

²This would clearly be the preferred approach if the context was one of history of religion. If this were the case, it would be important to explore the role of esoteric Christianity in his teachings, for example. As the context in the current paper is a different one, however, such aspects of Martinus' views will not be treated here.

“is not in any instance based on unsubstantiated claims, but strictly expresses coherent logical conclusions that can be examined and verified by the genuine intellectual and impartial reader or seeker of truth”³ (Martinus, 1987: p. 17). This approach seems to be much closer to established, traditional methods within philosophy than a reference to mystical experiences. Whether his arguments hold must be tested by closer examination but, as a starting point, his approach points in the right direction, viewed in the context of philosophical activity.

Notably, the world picture exhibits many of the strengths that make the mystics’ view of the reality of interest concerning the unsolved philosophical problems mentioned above, as it offers suggestions for new solutions (see Section 6 below). In addition, Martinus’ system of thought has received minimal professional philosophical treatment thus far, making it of further interest to examine his thinking given the stance that it is worth applying new and fresh perspectives to these difficult and unsolved problems. Martinus’ work, described as “a vast textual corpus” (Hammer, 2009), counts more than 40 books and numerous articles and manuscripts⁴. While his ideas have been presented in a non-academic context, primarily in the form of various representations of his worldview, this is not the case when it comes to academic research. They have been briefly introduced in the English language as part of examinations of Western esotericism (ibid.; Krall, 2019), i.e., within the framework of religious studies, but apart from in a few untranslated Master’s theses and referenced in a paper (Petersen, 2021), they have not been treated in a professional philosophical context.

Furthermore, Martinus’ metaphysical system is rather comprehensive, treating and explaining numerous and varied subjects and phenomena, often in relatively fine detail, while at the same time being metaphysics of a grand scale. The overarching theme is the fundamental nature of reality, but it is treated not just at an abstract and general level but also regarding the concrete conditions of human existence. In addition to such metaphysical issues as the nature of reality, the nature of consciousness, free will, etc., subjects such as objective ethics; historical and future societal, economic, and political development; psychological stages; health and disease; and traditional religions are also addressed, all from a metaphysical foundation. New and, in several cases, seemingly quite novel perspectives on topics such as these are thus to be found in his writings.

Lastly, an introduction to Martinus’ thoughts can be imagined to be of some interest in the context of the history of ideas, partly because they in some respects, share elements with other historical philosophical positions, not least German and British idealism, and partly because, as noted, his thoughts are so far almost entirely untreated philosophically.

³Author’s translation.

⁴Most significant is his *magnum opus*, *Livets Bog* (“The Book of Life”—Martinus wished it to keep its original title even for translated editions), an extensive work of seven volumes published 1932-1960, in which he presents his metaphysical system and worldview in its entirety; so far, five of the seven volumes have been translated to English. His other main work is *The Eternal World Picture*, of which four of the six volumes have been translated.

Overall, there are thus a number of factors that point toward the philosophical interest in taking a closer look at Martinus' metaphysical system.

3. Martinus' World Picture

According to Martinus (2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 543)⁵, ultimately, the only thing that can be said about reality is that it is “something that is”. As soon as we want a more detailed explanation, we move into the world of description and theoretical models. Every description and every concept must necessarily be rooted in our world of experience (in the broadest sense), and to the extent that the fundamental nature of reality lies outside this world, it thus becomes a theoretical rather than a self-perceived understanding, with all the limitations that this entails⁶. In concordance with the mystic tradition, Martinus argues that everything is fundamentally one—a single entity. However, when it comes to the theoretical descriptions—his analyses, as he calls them—he presents a *triunic* view. The living being can be conceived as consisting of three components: the substantial and eternal core, that which experiences, termed the “I” or “X1”⁷; a metaphysical structure that allows for interaction and experience as such, termed the “faculty for sensing or creating” or “X2”; and the phenomenal world, that which is experienced, termed “matter” or “X3.” Thus, the living being consists of something that experiences, something that allows for experience, and something that is experienced—according to Martinus, this is the minimally or most metaphysically parsimonious requirement for the existence of the experiencing subject. Our whole world of experience is made up of the manifestations, X3, of innumerable I's, X1, not only in terms of physical phenomena but also when it comes to our inner world of thoughts and feelings. Every single experience is thus comprised of manifestations of the I's behind it. Experience *per se* is thus the interaction of the I with other I's. Thus, the metaphysics of Martinus can be interpreted as one of absolute idealism⁸ in the sense that the noumenal, substantively existing world, X1, is experienced as a world of appearance, X3—while everything is basically one, due to the faculty of sensing or creating, X2, we experience things as being discrete, including ourselves as individuals.

This triunic structure is immutable and thus eternal—change, including creation and destruction, belongs to the sphere of experience, X3. Consequently, the individual living being possesses eternal existence. In Martinus' view, each subject is on a never-ending journey through different stages of existence towards ever new experiences. That is what “life” fundamentally is. While that which experiences, X1, does not change, the effects of all of the experiences are stored, so to speak, in X2. As the characteristics and traits of the individual are a function

⁵Martinus (2000-2020) provides an overview of his entire worldview in 1932-1961/2000-2020, vol. 1.

⁶We cannot truly grasp the deepest nature of reality with our current modes of understanding (rational and empirical), Martinus holds: a third mode, “intuition”—the mystic experience—is required.

⁷“X,” since at the most fundamental level it is simply “something that is.”

⁸In some respects, relatively close to e.g., Bradley's and T. L. S. Sprigge's positions, but less so to e.g., Hegel's.

of what is stored in X2, the living being is in a continuous and never-ending process of (very slow) evolution and personal, existential development. This development occurs cyclically over immeasurable epochs⁹ (or more precisely, using Martinus' terminology, upward "spiraling"¹⁰) through six major stages or planes of existence—"kingdoms"—of which we are familiar with the mineral, the plant, and the animal kingdoms, with the next stage in our current development being "the real human kingdom."

A primary driving force in this evolutionary process is that the experiences caused by the pain and suffering of the individual through many, many incarnations¹¹ lead to that individual's empathy and understanding for other beings' suffering slowly increasing, causing the rise of increasingly more altruistic ethics and loving way of behaving toward all living beings. The human being, however, is currently "a wounded refugee between two kingdoms" (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 1, sect. 82): no longer an animal in the purest sense, but neither a fully developed human (this not least due to ethical shortcomings). While there are significant individual differences, most people struggle between expressing egoistic and altruistic behavior, and this represents an inner transformation. The very presence of conscience, of basic narratives of good vs. evil, of the concept of the "ought" of ethics are due to humankind currently finding itself in this transitory phase. This is not an evolution toward simply emotional or unreflective compassion, but rather this ethical and emotional progress is combined with increased insight and wisdom, leading to "intellectualized feeling" (Martinus, 2013: vol. 1, 11.3), that is, an all-encompassing love rooted in a deep understanding of the true nature of reality. In addition to the ethically oriented development, other basic characteristics slowly change as well, including psychological and even biological ones¹².

A personal focus on ethics and altruism is thus one of the most important goals of a human being, according to Martinus—if not the ultimate goal. One major reason for presenting his world picture is, he says, to provide a "logical" or rational basis for a worldview that meets and intellectually justifies the internal need to strive to become a kind and altruistic person, which can be found in

⁹A living being goes through "thousands" (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 1, sect. 45) of individual lives in each of the six "kingdoms" before gradually moving to the next kingdom.

¹⁰Although the same overall kingdoms and principles of development are repeated, this happens at ever new levels of existence, thus the specific experiences of an individual are never repeated.

¹¹According to Martinus, a specific principle of reincarnation allows for living through this (immensely) long sequence of physical lives.

¹²E.g., the human being's psyche slowly changes from the ability to accept claims or demands grounded solely in authority, to requiring a logical explanation in order to accept a given claim. The person loses religious belief, for a time focusing instead purely on the materialistic aspects of the world, but eventually ends up with a more spiritual (but still rational) and holistic understanding of reality. In earlier societies, Martinus contends, humans were satisfied with and even happy living a life of monogamy with a life-long commitment to a single individual, their spouse. However, for many people this is no longer the case, and he thus terms the current phase of evolution "the zone of unhappy marriages" (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 1, sect. 130). In the (very) long term, he claims, the division into the male and female sexes, which is often found in the animal kingdom (not least among the animals most closely related to humans, such as mammals), will at some point be replaced by biologically single-sex beings.

some people today. As an increasing number of people become more ethically inclined and altruistic, this will impact at the societal and eventually global level. Martinus interprets historical-cultural development as illustrative of this ethical evolution of humankind, which will eventually, he claims, result in the creation of an international world state. Much of his work was written during and in the decades following the Second World War, and he stresses that much strife and conflict are still to come, but eventually, permanent world peace will be a reality.

While the evolution of humankind—and all other beings—is deterministic in its overall structure, Martinus' metaphysics allows for the genuine—although in a sense limited—free will of the individual. The overall frame of what an individual fundamentally wants, and thus what the individual *can* will, is determined by its evolutionary stage. However, in terms of the details of everyday life, actual free will is exercised. Any primary want of an individual slowly shifts between hunger and satiation for certain types of experiences. At the current stage, for example, most people no longer wish for war and associated glory but instead for peace and prosperity; the ideal is the denial of selfish and egoistic behavior and the adoption of selflessness and altruistic acts (although this is merely at an early stage of development for many people, and it is thus often difficult to live up to this ideal in daily practical life). At the end of the entire cycle of evolution, after eons where the being has been through ever-higher planes of existence, where no suffering and only altruistic love exists, it is satiated of even this blissful way of life and starts longing for the opposite, and a new cycle begins. Thus, in the grand scheme of things, the living being always achieves what it most profoundly wants throughout its eternal journey of life.

Since experience as such is the manifestation of the interaction between oneself (or one's "I") and other selves, everything one experiences is fundamentally dependent on oneself. Due to the specific organization of the fundamental structures of reality, positive or altruistic actions (or even thoughts) will result in positive experiences, that is, a good life, while the opposite is true for acting in a harmful or selfish way (even when causing harm only indirectly, such as by eating animal products or not tending to the microorganisms that constitute one's physical body). Thus, a metaphysical karmic causal mechanism is in operation, according to Martinus: it drives the evolution from selfishness toward selflessness and, thereby, toward a happy and blissful life. Therefore, he holds, even suffering and hardship are fundamentally positive—there is no true evil in the world, only "the 'unpleasant' good" (as well as, of course, "the 'pleasant' good") (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 1, sect. 28). Thus, he contends, ultimately, "everything is very good" (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 617).

As implied in this short overview of some central features of Martinus' world picture, it touches upon a great number of the phenomena encountered in human existence. If one takes this worldview as a basis, new perspectives become available regarding these phenomena and, following this, suggestions are revealed to resolve various difficult problems associated with such phenomena. Given the aim of the current paper to (provisionally) shed light on the potential

of using some of the elements of Martinus' metaphysics to provide new perspectives on—and consider solutions to—the philosophical problems of consciousness, combination, and decombination, the focus will be on the most relevant part of the metaphysical system, its ontological core¹³.

4. Deductive and Rational Reasoning

Martinus (2000-2020: vol. 3, sect. 669-762)¹⁴ argues for the ontological core of his system of ideas, the so-called “basic solutions (*grundfacitter*) to the mystery of life” (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 559)—statements explaining the most fundamental structures of reality and human existence—through a (claimed) deductive chain of rational arguments¹⁵. He initiates this chain of arguments by stating that the living being is not a “nothing”¹⁶ but a “something” (basic solution no. 1); this “something”—that is, its organism and whole manifestation—reveals cause and effect (no. 2). This unfolding of cause and effect creates logical end results that are utilitarian¹⁷ in nature and fulfill useful purposes, and thus this unfolding is according to purpose, that is, “logic” or planning (no. 3). This means that thought, and consequently consciousness, is a fact (no. 4), and, following this, that a thinker or creator of ideas, the living being, must exist (no. 5).

Through the concept of a creator, we encounter our own highest self, and hence we must differentiate between that self, “I,” and the rest of existence, “it” (no. 6). Thus, matter and its inherent cause and effect reveal a “something”—this “I” or “self”—that differs from matter and is thus not subject to causality, which is inherent to matter. So, this “I” cannot be the effect of a preceding cause. It can only be the “cause” (and is indeed the “primary cause”) of something coming after. This is the “creative faculty” of the living being and the manifestation produced by this faculty, which is creation and experience (no. 7). So, the living being constitutes a “triune principle”—matter or manifestation, termed “X3;” the “creative faculty”, “X2;” and the “something” that holds this, the “creator” or “X1” (no. 8). This is true not only for the individual living being but for the universe itself, since exactly the same analysis can be applied here—it too consists of “created phenomena” that express “logic” and therefore reveals that a “thinking” and “creating” “something” exists behind it. This “something” existing be-

¹³While this part of the system, expressing a form of absolute idealism, is in itself unconventional in the current philosophical climate, many parts of Martinus' metaphysical system more broadly perceived are likely to be even more controversial, and no stance on their philosophical plausibility is taken in this paper, since that would require a comprehensive inquiry, which is beyond the scope of this introductory presentation of his thoughts.

¹⁴A shorter variant of his reasoning can be found in Martinus (2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 558-617).

¹⁵The deduction of these 12 “basic solutions”—“twelve facts or irrefutable and fundamental key points, the revelation of the mystery of life itself or the riddle of existence” (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 558)—is the part of his work where he most explicitly uses comprehensive deductive reasoning.

¹⁶Martinus often uses inverted commas in conjunction with his more specialized terms. In the summary of his arguments that follows, all quotation marks on single terms mark this rather than indicating direct quotations from his text.

¹⁷Not in the sense of ethical utilitarianism, but in the sense of being useful and suitable.

hind and serving as the “primary cause” of the universe is, in a certain sense, “God” (see Section 5 below) and, therefore, “the living being” is manifested “in God’s image after his likeness” (no. 9).

Since the “I” of the living being, the creator (X1), cannot have come from nothing, there cannot have been a time when there was no creator, and thus the creator must necessarily be eternal. Similarly, the creative faculty (X2) must be eternal since the absence of it would mean no possibility of creation, including creating the faculty itself. The only factor of the living being that is temporary in character is the way the being manifests itself and the content of its experiences (X3). Therefore, the living being possesses “eternal existence” or “immortality” (no. 10). As per solution no. 8, the organism of the living being is a self-constructed tool for manifestation and the experiencing of “life.” Should a renewal of that tool not exist, this would contradict the planning and the logical, utilitarian end results observed (and, not least, contradict culminating justice or love). The being would then be fettered to that particular form of manifestation in question, including the injuries and disabilities its organism will suffer.

However, “death,” which is simply renewal, allows the living being to transcend this suffering. Moreover, by a principle of reincarnation, it then manifests itself in a new self-created organism, continuing the eternal experience of “life.” This explains, among other things, why some people have “inborn” talents that cannot be accounted for by heredity¹⁸—these people simply have been occupied with that particular action in previous incarnations, and the talents have been carried over to the current incarnation. Since the living being is thus the primary cause of its own existence and the source of its own fate, “as a man sows, so shall he also reap” (no. 11). After a further, and somewhat lengthy, examination of various aspects of reality, the “great conclusion,” Martinus holds, can be expressed: “Everything is very good” (no. 12)¹⁹.

As this is merely a short overview of the overall chain of arguments for the 12 “basic solutions,” it does not do the arguments justice when it comes to the details—where the entire chain to be structured and organized into individual steps in a loosely formalized way, the argumentation would easily span more than 100 individual steps. However, this overview does illustrate that Martinus does not simply refer to transcendent experiences or mystical insights (or religious doctrine) in order to justify his metaphysics but attempts to base it on rational and logical deduction²⁰. This is clear both indirectly through his wording during the presentation of the arguments (e.g., *Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 2, sect. 568*) as well as explicitly (e.g., *Martinus, 2013: vol. 1, sect. 5*). To further streng-

¹⁸An argument along similar lines has recently been advanced, based on the latest developments in DNA research (*Christopher, 2017*).

¹⁹Interestingly, significant parallels are to be found between Martinus’ arguments (and his idealistic, cosmopsychistic metaphysics) and the arguments and panpsychistic views of the Indian monk and mystic Swami Vivekananda (see *Maharaj, 2020*).

²⁰While the strictly deductive aspect of Martinus’ arguments wanes somewhat toward solutions 11 and 12, he still justifies the solutions by (claimed) rational reasoning. Also, in some cases he presents inductive arguments or uses abductive arguments by inference to the best explanation rather than adhering to deductive argumentation.

then his line of argument, he examines the hypothetical—according to his view—situations of each of the 12 solutions being false (Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 2, sect, 575-616) and concludes that this would lead to illogical results; that is, methodologically he uses proofs by contradiction, another established strategy when it comes to rational reasoning.

While his presentation of arguments cannot live up to the technical requirements of academic philosophical argumentation in the present day—he was completely unschooled in philosophical methods, precision in wording, etc.,—and, as already indicated by the short overview above, a claim of logical necessity throughout the entire chain of arguments seems hard to uphold, his arguments and views nevertheless are worthy of further examination. Not only do they constitute a yet largely unexamined position, which can be of interest in the context of the history of ideas, but this is true in the context of contemporary philosophical debate as well. This will be discussed in section 6. First, some possible objections against the idea of examining them in a philosophical context will be discussed in brief.

5. Some Possible Objections

Various objections to Martinus' worldview can be proposed. While each of the objections mentioned in the following deserves a more detailed treatment in order to be fully considered—they each open up to further discussion and the weighing of multiple arguments *pro et contra*—the present aim is simply to suggest that, at least on the face of it, counterarguments can be presented against some possible objections to the approach of the present paper.

First, Martinus' worldview is not a materialistic metaphysics and is, compared to this common and widespread position, vastly different in character. As initially touched upon, however, metaphysical materialism can be questioned. Martinus' metaphysics can be characterized as a variant of (in a broad sense) absolute idealism, and a number of arguments support that position²¹. In addition, Martinus' world picture generally does not appear to contradict the empirical observations grounding the theories of science (if only contradicts the materialist assumptions attached to these theories).

Second, as seen above, Martinus quite often uses religiously oriented language, and his worldview shares a number of similarities with esoteric Christianity and some New Age views, which may lead to a perception of it as a religious worldview. His usage of religious terminology can partly be attributed to his upbringing and lack of scholarly education. Martinus had no academic education and was unfamiliar with the philosophical tradition and related terminology, and thus invented terms for many of the elements in his metaphysics. A significant part of his terminology, it seems, he drew from the Sunday school he attended—as was common in the rural areas around the year 1900, when he was a child, such attendance was prioritized: it was seen as a very important part of

²¹See, e.g., Sprigge (1983, 2006) and Mander (2011); for arguments against materialism (supporting a phenomenalist version of idealism), see Foster (2008).

children's education. At the same time, however, there are clear religious overtones in his work. Thus, he sees the presentation of his metaphysics and its metaphysically grounded, strongly ethical focus as a direct continuation of the ethical message of Christ adapted to suit the people of today, with their orientation toward rational arguments rather than faith or dogmatic belief²². Likewise, "God" or "the Godhead" plays a very central role in Martinus' world picture, and the long-term aim for the individual is to achieve a personal relationship with the Godhead. On the other hand, he rejects many Christian dogmas and attributes them to human construction and misunderstanding, just as his concept of "Godhead" covers simply everything that exists—there is no creator separate from a work of creation but instead "the Godhead" grounds and in a certain sense constitutes reality. Thus, the "I" of the individual living being is part of the "I" of the Godhead.

Third, Martinus claims that the basis of his metaphysical knowledge is transcendent or mystical experiences and insights²³. An epistemological basis like that is outside of what is usually to be found or accepted in the philosophical tradition, not least in an academic context. But precisely because of this specific epistemological basis, and since he clearly does not want to refer to some particular authority as the basis for justification—as is often seen in connection with religious dogmas—he thus tries to argue through rational arguments. As mentioned above, he stresses that when it comes to his analyses, it is not simply a question of belief or dogma (e.g., *Martinus, 2000-2020: vol. 1, sect. 15*), but the fundamental nature of reality is now explained through "logic" and rational arguments, and these arguments can be tested by the reader²⁴ (*Martinus, 2013: vol. 2, sect. 24.12*).

However, Martinus employs a special kind of rationality or "deduction." Strict, deductive inference is usually understood as consisting of certain premises, a number of argumentative steps, and a conclusion, each step and the conclusion following from the previous by logical necessity; thus, the conclusion is necessarily true insofar that the premises are true. The deductive form of argumentation is most prominent in Martinus' works on the derivation of the 12 basic facts outlined above, and while logical necessity between the individual ar-

²²In accordance with this, shortly before his death Martinus decided that his collective works should be titled "The Third Testament," referring to the continuation of the ethical core of the message of Christ, as he understood his work. It should be noted, though, that apparently, he was careful not to place himself at the center of attention. To the contrary, Martinus lived a life in avoidance of public attention, always pointing towards his works and not him as a person as being that which was important. The biographies on him agree that he lived his world picture, so to speak, as an undemonstrative, warm, and highly ethical person (e.g., *Christiansen, 2005*)—not unlike Spinoza.

²³*Martinus (2000-2020)* stresses that he came up with his world picture entirely independent of philosophical, theosophical or other written sources (2000-2020, vol. 1, Section 22). It might be objected that this seems unlikely and that he developed his views against the background of the interest of his time in theosophical and other occult views. The current paper will not to delve into this question, however, since the focus here is on the philosophical content of his ideas rather than their origin and historical context.

²⁴In addition to its rational aspects, his world picture contains some elements (though not too numerous) that can, in principle at least, be tested empirically; e.g., future cultural and political development and a close relationship between ethical attitude and (true) mystical experiences.

gumentative steps is to be found for many of them, this is not always the case²⁵. Martinus still finds, however, that it is a derivation of indubitable truth. It simply requires certain specific preconditions of the reader to be able to accept the arguments—only when reaching a certain stage of development—among others ethical, interestingly—is the individual able to accept the arguments and conclusions as an expression of actual truth. Just as many people no longer possess the capacity for pure faith or believe in religious dogmas but require substantiating rational arguments to be able to accept a claim, Martinus argues; likewise, not everyone *can* accept the validity of the arguments he presents. This view is clearly not unproblematic in the context of (not least academic) philosophy, where arguments are ideally conceived as being acceptable by everyone, at least in principle, if they are sufficiently persuasive. However, it is also within academic philosophy and is historically the case that strongly founded views do not enjoy universal acceptance—although the reason for this is usually not attributed to a metaphysically grounded stage of personal evolution, as is the case for Martinus²⁶.

While logical necessity thus does not run all the way through the chain of the deductive arguments he presents, this does not make his arguments and metaphysics uninteresting from a philosophical point of view (nor from an existential one). Firstly, the idea that metaphysical truth about reality can be uncovered through comprehensive chains of arguments based on logical necessity at all steps, *modus Spinoza* for example, is, after all, generally abandoned in present-day philosophy. Secondly, Martinus presents some novel views on the nature of reality, and it seems to be at least potentially fruitful to examine those in greater detail, perhaps synthesized with current philosophical positions that share elements with Martinus' metaphysical system. This not least the difficult problems faced by contemporary philosophy that were mentioned in the introduction held in mind. Given these, it seems worthwhile to at least take a closer look at alternative and yet untreated views and positions, *in casu* Martinus' metaphysics, in the hope of progressing toward solutions to those problems—this will be exemplified in the following.

6. Martinus' Views and Contemporary Philosophy

Pointing to the usefulness of Martinus' worldview in the present is a suggested solution for the decombination problem of cosmopsychism, which will be outlined in the following. This will be done only sketchily, as the main focal point of the current paper is not the decombination problem in itself²⁷, but instead, this problem serves as an *example* of how specific elements of Martinus' metaphysics

²⁵In the short overview of the chain of arguments above, this is to some degree apparent for, for example, "basic solution" 7 and 11-12.

²⁶It can also be pointed out that Martinus' view on the (lack of) acceptance of his arguments and claims is consistent with his metaphysical system overall, i.e., insofar as the perspective is "from within" his metaphysics, precisely the mentioned situation regarding acceptance of his arguments is a natural consequence of the way human evolution progresses.

²⁷Instead, the decombination problem is indeed the focal point in Petersen (2021). Here, arguments sketched in the following are presented in more detail.

can be applied on present philosophical problems.

Most cosmopsychist models subscribe to *constitutive* cosmopsychism, according to which the one absolute or cosmic consciousness grounds or constitutes the consciousness of individual subjects, i.e., the consciousness of subjects is a derivative of the fundamental, cosmic consciousness. But how, then, to explain the “decombining” of the absolute consciousness into the individual minds of subjects, especially the division of its single perspective into multiple individual perspectives?

Martinus’ triunic approach offers a slightly different view: the living being consists of three parts, that which experiences (the “I” or “X1”), that which allows for or creates experience (“X2”), and that which is experienced (“X3”). The totality of the individual subjects’ “I’s” is precisely the “I” or “X1” of the Godhead, i.e., everything that exists (substantively). Attempting to loosely apply this concept to the context of cosmopsychism, the subject can be defined triunically as consisting of three metaphysical components: a substantive component that possesses “real” or substantive existence, and that is that which experiences; a metaphysical structure that allows for creating an experiential manifestation or appearance of the substantive component and for experiencing the appearances of other parts of substantive reality (i.e., other subjects); and the subject’s sphere of experience, with the concrete experiential content here thus being the appearances of other subjects. Further, the totality of the substantive parts of all individual subjects (that is, the totality of everything that possesses substantive existence) in sum is the (one and undivided) substantial part of an absolute subject, and the totality of experienced phenomena is the manifestation of this absolute subject.

This leads to a theoretical model for the nature of reality according to which all that exists (in a substantive way) is the one, undivided substance. Due to the second of the three components, a particular experience- and interaction-constituting and organizing metaphysical principle or structure inherent to the one substance²⁸, this substance is not entirely homogenous or “quiet,” however: it holds internal contrasts in the form of internal impulses or interactions between different parts of it. Attached, so to speak, to each such part is—in virtue of this structure—a discrete perspective, with these interactions resulting in the content of that experiential sphere or perspective; the substantive parts with which that part interacts manifest themselves in the form of appearances, that is, the concrete experiential content.

This theoretical model is one of quantitative substance monism, since only one undivided substance exists, and cosmopsychism, since the entire cosmos possesses consciousness in the form of the absolute subject. At the same time, however, it arguably allows for consistently upholding the existence of individual subjects. The key concept here is the *triunic* rather than monistic or dualistic conception of the subject, with the second component, an experience- and inte-

²⁸Thus, this structure can be interpreted as a specific feature of the one substance (and is thus not something external to it).

raction-constituting and -organizing metaphysical principle or structure, being the metaphysical cause of perspective as such, i.e., it is that in virtue of which perspective *per se* exists—and consequently separate spheres of experience and thus individual minds or subjects²⁹.

Merely sketched here, this line of thought obviously needs to be presented in more detail to comprise a fully-fledged theory or suggestion for a solution to the decombination problem. Nevertheless, the crucial concept in potentially resolving the decombination problem is presented here: the idea of introducing a specific and fundamental metaphysical structure or principle that is the metaphysical cause that perspective as such exists, and consequently that discrete spheres of experience, the feeling of “mineness,” and ultimately individual subjects exist. So, unity or oneness is present at the substantive level of reality, while the differentiation into individual subjects is already in place at the level of experience or consciousness. When it comes to other cosmopsychist models of reality, a single, all-encompassing cosmic *consciousness* is often taken as ontologically fundamental, leading to the decombination problem, but in the present model, it is the all-encompassing, one *substance* that is held to be ontologically fundamental, and although it is experiencing and thus inextricably linked to consciousness, it is not consciousness *per se*, but is instead that which experiences. Thus, it is not a matter of a single, fundamental consciousness (or perspective) differentiated into multiple individual minds (or perspectives) and, therefore, it can be argued, the decombination problem is avoided and, in that sense, solved. So, bringing the views of Martinus into the realm of contemporary philosophy might allow, at least *prima facie*, for developing a theory of “non-constitutive” cosmopsychism and thereby avoid the difficult decombination problem caused by the constitutive aspect of such theories (i.e., that individual minds are constituted in a cosmic consciousness)³⁰.

7. Conclusion

In sum, although Martinus can be categorized as a mystic in a fairly traditional sense, he stresses that the argumentative justification for his world picture is not

²⁹It should be noted that in this view, the division of the subject (and reality in general) into three components or parts is a purely analytical one, required if an intelligible model of the nature of reality is to be expressed. Fundamentally, the three are one (merely expressing different aspects of the one substance) and thus there are no ontological gaps between the three layers, including between the substantive part of the subject (and reality) and the sphere of experience.

³⁰In case the suggestion for handling the decombination problem by the triunic approach is not found to be persuasive, a different path is also possible. According to Martinus (2000-2020), in the final analysis, the only thing that can be said about reality is, as mentioned above, that it is “something that is.” “X1” is the only thing that exists in an absolute sense. Ultimately, everything else is “perspectives” or “illusions.” Everything we experience expresses merely relations between “illusions,” i.e., perspectives—these “illusions” are what life ultimately is (2000-2020, vol. 2, sect. 542-549). Thus, the decombination problem dissolves. (Albahari (2019) advocates a somewhat similar view). This might not seem like a very satisfying solution to the problem, Martinus acknowledges, but as soon as we want a more detailed explanation, we move into the world of “illusions” or phenomena (in the very broadest sense)—any rational understanding or theoretical model or system necessarily requires this.

one of transcendent experiences but of rational arguments and “logic,” and he does indeed follow that methodological approach in his work. While there are significant religious overtones, not least connections to and interpretations of key aspects of Christianity—and his terminology borrows terms from that tradition—his works can thus be classified as being of broadly philosophical rather than religious character. Although his argumentation generally cannot be said to meet the requirements of contemporary philosophical work regarding precision and stringency, his comprehensive metaphysical system is indeed coherent and, in that sense, rationally based.

Indeed, its coherent comprehensiveness is perhaps its greatest strength. It deals with almost every, it seems, significant phenomena of human experience, ranging from explaining consciousness and the fundamental nature of reality to topics such as personal ethics and the development of society. Key concepts in his metaphysics include the notion that fundamentally all of reality is one, “the Godhead” in a sense, but nevertheless, the existence of individual subjects is upheld, and through a principle of reincarnation, these subjects are on an eternal journey toward ever new experiences—the journey is life itself. Especially important for the human being is an existential focus on personal ethical development toward altruistic attitudes and behaviors based on wisdom and insight—the only path out of misery and suffering.

Since the work of Martinus has received almost no attention when it comes to philosophical research, and in that sense is a blank page, it can be of potential interest in the context of the history of ideas. Moreover, it is of interest to investigate his views further with the aim of providing fresh perspectives on and suggestions for solutions to difficult, unsolved problems within contemporary philosophy. For instance, the metaphysical system of Martinus can, as discussed, be interpreted as a variant of absolute idealism, possessing the characteristics of quantitative substance monism and cosmopsychism (and thus panpsychism), and at the same time upholding the notion of individual subjects. This is possible due to the particular, triunic conception of the metaphysical structure of the subject: a substantive component, which is a part of the one substance and is that which experiences; an experience- and interaction-constituting and -organizing metaphysical principle or structure, which is that which allows for experiencing; and the sphere of experience, i.e., that which is experienced, with its concrete content being the appearance of other parts of the one substance in the form of other subjects (in the broadest sense). The metaphysical principle or structure in question is the theoretical expression of a specific key feature of the one substance: internal interaction and to this interaction, inextricably linked discrete perspectives and consequently centers of experience, the basis for individual subjects. With (conceptually) the unity of reality present at the level of the first, substantive, component, and the individuation of the subjects happening at the level of the second and third components, the difficult problem of decombination, troubling the position of cosmopsychism, is avoided.

As exemplified through this discussion of the problem of decombination seen in the light of Martinus' metaphysical views, it can arguably, despite the unconventional nature of these views, be of potential value to bring in elements of his world picture (or perhaps the world picture in its entirety) to the debates of contemporary philosophy. The above example targets a specific problem related to a rather narrow philosophical subject, but since his world picture encompasses such a multitude of different topics, it could potentially provide interesting perspectives on other areas of philosophy. This includes both theoretical problems, such as the question of free will, and practically oriented themes, such as an objective, altruistic ethics or the good of society and world peace.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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