

Martin Kojc

THE **TEXTBOOK** *OF* **LIFE**

The laws of the mind.
How do I activate the power
of thought and achieve my goals?

What is the meaning of life?
It's finally time to discover
the truth of creation.

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ISBN EPUB 978-3-936612-47-9 (EBOOK)
ISBN 978-3-936612-24-0 (PRINT)
German original issue: ISBN EPUB 978-3-936612-42-4 (EBOOK)
German original issue: ISBN 978-3-936612-15-8 (PRINT)

Translated by Barbara Rhoton

Graphic design by verlag4you

2nd edition

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FOREWORD BY SIMON BORUT POGAČNIK

During the journey from the womb to the grave -- the journey we call life -- everyone is, despite apparent companionship, in fact responsibly, inescapably and fatedly alone. In this existential reality lies the tragicity, the challenge and the way of living that is bound to the endless asking of the question: WHO AM I? C. G. Jung says that a person knows that he is not an animal, vegetable or mineral, but that he does not know who he is. In order for a man to get to know and to recognize himself he needs many mirrors. Because he does not know himself, he does not know if perhaps concave or convex mirrors also do not show his real self. He constantly needs definers, regardless of whether they define him as bad or good. Everywhere and in everyone he sees only the dual nature between good and evil, warm and cold, youth and old age, birth and death. Polarization is fatal for human life, it shows life as unfulfilled, to be fulfilled only by yearning to overcome polarization. In knowing that the height of happiness is followed by a fall, there can be no wholeness, and it is hard to shake off the thought that perhaps hell exists already, here and now.

Precisely because of this need, it appears that the Absolute decided to help the *predestined* being to travel easier, with less troubles on the road between mother's and Earth's mantle. This help manifests itself in the sending of Teachers, founders of great religions or schools of Philosophy. It is true that sometimes religions contradict each other in minor ways, but in essence they answer even the unspoken questions of people who follow them. If they do not, the people choose another, different religion. The position of each individual in this moment and in this choice corresponds to his maturity...

The time has come when we again need the thoughts, teachings and originality of our native Slovene Teachers. One such Teacher is Martin Kojc, a Slovene, who by the year 1935 had written and published his Textbook of Life. This work had been previously published abroad, and the Slovene edition was a translation from German. The necessity of this journey of Martin Kojc's thought to German, and then from German to Slovene, confirmed the Biblical saying that a prophet is not honored in his own land.

Because we have heard so little about Martin Kojc, and because a full fifty-four years passed before the first Slovene publication of the Textbook of Life, one wonders if his ideas were ahead of his time, alien and incomprehensible to the spirit of his time -- or perhaps a one-day fad which could not survive the dawn of the next day. The Hindus have a saying: When the pupil is ready, the teacher will appear. These past years we are experiencing a certain spiritual awakening in this country. Perhaps this awakening is only apparent, but it may well have deeper roots and be the external manifestation of an inner reality. In this context the idea was born to reintroduce Kojc's work. This work appears to be designed specifically for our time -- a time which is unsettled and chaotic, a twilight of old values and a time of creation of new ones. Perhaps the Textbook of Life appears like a Phoenix. As we are taught by deep psychological thought and by the teachings of the great religions, nothing happens by coincidence. Martin Kojc again became mature and in season within the field of the collective unconscious, which C.G. Jung called the *reservoir* of human ideas, archetypes and symbols.

I did not know Martin Kojc personally. I did not have that privilege. I got to know him through his book, which I encountered more than six years ago on one of the shelves in the Trubar antique store (in Ljubljana, Slovenia). On first

reading it did not impress me as anything special. But then came times, moments, when I, like everyone else, experienced failures, disappointments and pain. It was then that I discovered the true meaning of the word: textbook. Among the flood of different kinds of textbooks relating to everything concerning human life, there were no, or very few, textbooks on life, signposts in the fog that covers the present and the future. How very little use to a person are those three factors which we hail so much and on which our whole life is supposed to depend, i.e., heredity, environment and our own actions. We frequently cannot pilot our life without spiritual directions. This holds true for every single one of us. This is especially true of our nation (Slovene), which has been paying a bloody tax, every year giving its best to the sacrificial altar of the goddess Fate. Like sacrificial offerings, the victims placed themselves on the altar. Most of them could not find their way any more -- perhaps they never correctly sensed it. The fact that these people included philosophers, psychotherapists, poets, and artists in general, is only proof of how weak are the roots in Life that this nation has sprouted. What is it afraid of, why does it not have self-confidence, from what is it running, and towards what?

Kojc's Textbook of Life gives answers to these and similar questions, even though some people might find them too plain, naive and simple-minded. As the Bible saying tells us, the stone which the masons have cast aside has become the corner stone. The psychology of fairy tales also shows us how most often the man who people did not bet on overcomes all difficulties, survives and acquires a pleasant life companion. Kojc is searching in a direction similar to the Little Prince. He knows that the essence is hidden, and that the external is manifested as a mirage (Maya).

We know that Martin Kojc was active in a practical way, that many of his works were translated into Dutch and German, and that he represented one of our nation's great potentials whose full realization was prevented by the last great war. Out of his fertile inheritance we are again acquiring his seminal work. In the last two decades a number of sages have appeared who teach a doctrine that is similar, and sometimes essentially identical, to that of Martin Kojc. Their popularity is great, and the printed copies of their published books can be counted in millions. In essence, these books contain nothing more than the postulates which were presented fifty years ago by Martin Kojc, but which are not a product of this century but rather of the thousands of years since the beginning of civilization, starting with the Vedas. Martin Kojc was influenced by Emile Coué (1857-1926), a pharmacist who postulated that all hypnosis is really self-hypnosis and that it only acquires power as such. Kojc was more in agreement with him in his other postulate which has also become an axiom of *alternative thinking* of that time and has remained such to the present, namely, that in a conflict between imagination and will, imagination always wins.

The postulates of Kojc's teachings are as follows:

- the significance of cause and effect connections
- observations are the basis for opinions and thus convictions
- convictions create imaginative pictures which correspond to these opinions
- imaginative pictures confirm opinions
- imaginative pictures contain a motorized element which strives towards realization
- existence of reincarnation

Before we begin a more detailed analysis of these postulates, it is important to acknowledge their daring and their probable source in the philosophical movements of the East and of Theosophy. Kojc was familiar with both. His daring was not so much because of the time, which was perhaps not receptive to such ideas, but in the strength of his opinions and his convictions.

The logic of the connection between cause and effect is of course the basis of the life wisdom in this textbook. This is true in teachings regarding this connection, but also the explanation in the context of karma and of course of reincarnation -- teachings which Kojc not only believes in, but also, one can say, knows about. He is that persuasive. Even though he appears to favor the predestination of man, he allows for creative power. If he did not this textbook would not be needed, since everything would be predetermined and decided in advance. We have to admit that he is somewhat unclear on this issue. The closest explanation of the activities which Kojc is suggesting for a full life can be found in the Taoist notion of wu-wei. This notion deals with letting things happen, allowing a natural course of events, and not intervening through our frequently erroneous strong will by which we would only disturb the natural order which operates on Earth as well as in the Universe as a whole. It's essence is a creative passivity which is a well for intuition and inspiration. The best way to think of this concept is to imagine a natural order which acts for the good of everyone. Many individuals would like it to act only for their own benefit, and for this and because of this they strive, but in vain...

Not only in the actionless activity of wu-wei, but also in other beliefs Kojc is very close to the Taoist fundamental notions about the world, man and life. Kojc renamed Tao a primeval power, but in terms of meaning the properties of

the two are quite equivalent and overlapping. Tao *does not do anything and yet everything gets done*. According to Kojc, the primeval power uses matter for its various manifestations. One of these is man. Tao, or the primeval power, is thus in everything, fulfills everything and manages everything according to its own order, which is to a person often irrational and impossible to understand. The words Tao and wu-wei are not mentioned anywhere, but it appears that Kojc knew the Taoist world view and concepts.

Opinions are formed on the basis of observations, ones own experiences and those of other people. These opinions get further reinforced according to the principle that we see that which we know. This can have a very beneficial influence, but can also lead into negativity because this is a way in which a negative picture of the world, the environment and people can become entrenched. Since negative opinions usually are in contradiction with the world, it follows predictably that they engender doubt in an individual, and with doubt ambivalence and neurosis. Martin Kojc was a psychotherapist in private practice, and it appears that he understood the process of the genesis of neuroses. He believed that the synthesis of a person's opinions -- i.e., his convictions or conception of life -- strengthen in him a corresponding view or picture of this world. In any kind of relationship of a person to the world, the pictures always necessarily correspond with the person's opinions or convictions.

According to the well known psychotherapist Robert Assagioli and to sages of times past, notions -- or mental pictures and ideas -- have the ability to create conditions for corresponding actions. In the world of the Magi this is expressed in another way: Every picture on a mental level strives to become reality on a physical level. Kojc writes that he is trying to persuade the person of his time, and of our

time, who has become increasingly more doubting and seemingly more knowledgeable. He is trying to persuade that person that conviction is the one thing that determines fate, and that a person is in fact led by his wishes. In the words of Emile Coué: Do not blame fate but yourself. It is only the belief that something good or bad can happen that makes possible the realization of either. The essence of Kojc's postulate consists of its attempt to lead the rationalists of this century to the realization of the cause and effect connection between convictions, which are formed by opinions, and the external manifestations of these convictions.

Imaginative notions, mental pictures and ideas are as elemental as that which is seen in the visual world. The Bible in Genesis speaks precisely of this when it says: In the beginning there was the Word and the Word was with God... The seminal work of Buddhist philosophy, Dhammapada, speaks of the same idea in the first line of the first verse:

Thought leads all things,
Thought begets and shapes them.
If a man full of evil thoughts
Talks or acts,
Suffering follows him
Like a cart the hooves of a harnessed steer.
(Dhammapada, MK 1987)

That which we wish must always be present in the form of an image, a picture. The more often we see such pictures, and the more energy we put into them, the more likely becomes their realization. This, which magic has known for thousands of years, now introduces itself in the methods of so-called creative imagery, creative imagination and positive thinking. Of course it is possible to implant such ideas, notions and pictures willfully into the consciousness

of other people, which is a method used not only by populist leaders, propagandists and other *seducers*, but also forms a part of any therapy, including psychotherapy. In order for that which is suggestive to act on a person it has to become auto-suggestive. As we have already mentioned, imaginative pictures and opinions strengthen each other if they are in harmony with each other. Kojc puts it this way: Same attracts same.

Thus, it is not only: I think, therefore I am, but also: I am what I think! C.G. Jung pointed out that the essence of neurosis is erroneous opinion. Neo-analytical schools of thought see symptoms of neuroses in what are they term illusory expectations, which correspond to the opinions of Jung's terminology. But the question is: Does not everything start with opinions? The psychotherapist is repaid for the effort of many months and years when erroneous opinions get corrected. It is not by chance that such opinions are the most stubborn cause of neuroses, for they are constantly reinforced by the neurotic's viewing of the world as he knows it through his own faulty optics. The paradigm from psychiatry is appropriate because of the nature of Kojc's work in general. We can find examples and confirmations in all areas of life.

It is perhaps worthwhile to examine at some length Coué's axiom that in a conflict between will and imagination, will always wins. This idea is embraced by Kojc, indeed it ties his Textbook of Life together like a red thread. We cannot deny will, since we need it even to read these lines, and in fact need it for any activity. When Kojc states that will is somehow an enemy to man, he is referring to what we could call stubbornness or the overly strong striving of an hypertrophied Ego. This neurotic striving or wrong will has a strong opponent in imagination. The collective unconscious ceaselessly influences the imagination of an individual,

since it is the source of all inspirations. If the will is, among other things, the ability to freely decide about a given activity, then we know that in many ways we are not free, since all that has passed -- all experiences and the opinions connected with these experiences by means of memory pictures -- always influences, by way of an individual unconscious, our every decision and choice.

Kojc's attitude towards reincarnation is very important. According to him, the present state of a person corresponds to the maturity which he gained in previous incarnations. The circle of births and deaths, *the ceaseless flow of being which flows from life to life* and which is in India called samsara, could also be one of man's opinions which, according to the above starting points and laws, can realize itself and become reality. Is this a law which is universal and not tied to the knowledge of it? The answer to this delves into the realm of metaphysics and as such remains an enigma. We decide about such questions on the basis of our (?) world view, intuition and other considerations. Thus it is possible with equal strength to agree or disagree with Kojc.

Answers to metaphysical questions never come to us when we are willing them to appear, but rather always -- and only -- in special life situations, crises, difficulties, and illnesses, as well as in happiness and in ecstatic experiences. Kojc does not give guidelines on how to escape from the charmed circle of birth and death, but he implicitly stresses what little significance a person should attach to all external manifestations of being. He teaches that we should not wish for those things which have until now been the object of our wishing, and that we should not desire that which has up to now been the content of our desires. In this he is very similar to the saying of Christ taken from one of his sermons: Whoever wishes to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses it for my sake will find it. Likewise, Buddhist