

Interview: Advaita Journal Nr.7  
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## ENCOUNTER WITH A COSMIC MASTER

### **Background:**

Already last January an email had arrived on our computer screen from Mario Mantese. He introduced us to his new book, *'The Light of a Great Soul'*. He also let us know that he would be pleased if we would publish an interview with him in our journal. We had thought to do this at the right time, when our journal's topics and this 'Cosmic Master' were most compatible.

Sabine knew of M.M. from a calendar project two years before. She felt deeply connected to him. And in December of 2001 Sagra went to a *darshan* and seminar with him in Munich. She returned deeply moved.

Our preparations were a journey in itself. There were many contacts, travel plans, and we had to get our personal stuff together...inside and out. We had received a note from Mario Mantese's organization in which was written,

*"It is requested that from three days prior to the seminar you refrain completely from using alcohol and tobacco, and do not eat meat. Please prepare yourself internally during this time".*

We could accept this seemingly minor requirement. We were sure that underneath lay something much larger; Attention. Dedication. A deep listening.

Just before our departure we received a last email from Mario Mantese. He asked us not to do the interview with a tape recorder. He said we should bring a pencil and paper. OK. A flash of fear relaxed into a smile, and so we were ready, ready to comply, to accept these conditions wholeheartedly.

We made our way to Zurich without difficulty. We ate, took a look around the city, found a hotel on the outskirts, and settled in our rooms. The night passed. In the morning we had our breakfast.

### **The Gathering:**

We found ourselves sitting in a large hall that was slowly filling with people. Several hundred have come to experience him. Some people continue talking. All at once, Mario Mantese is simply there. First checking things at the reception, then ordering things at the book table, he goes and stands waiting at the edge of the stage while someone makes announcements for the seminar. Standing there, he is very much here with us.

Mario Mantese sits down. He has been physically handicapped since an attempt on his life in 1978. His movements and his speech are slowed, staggered, not smooth. It appears he could fall at any moment. He is fragile. We find it impossible to read the personality from his body language, to get any idea of him. The words don't find a form. But from this quiet and unpretentious simplicity, a deep compassion infuses us, surrounds us. The master is at work. He is not his body. An intense light radiates out from his being, filling the room, pouring into all those present.

Archaic words find expression on this occasion, phrases we know from the Bible. But the experience extends far beyond the written word. It is the spoken word, the vital word, the realized word. He is the word. A heaven actualized here on earth. A true blessing.

Mario announces a midday break. During his talks he had made it unmistakably clear that no one should approach him personally during these pauses. He is not there for the lone individual, not for personal dramas. He speaks to all. His words speak to each without having a personal meeting with anyone.

But then, he leans forward and calls to us..."Sabine and Sagra, please...". It is a very powerful moment. It had been agreed that we should approach him after the seminar. We stand, go forward as people shuffle around in the hall. No mistake. We have been called. But hearing our personal names has an irritating effect in this atmosphere of impersonality.

A paradox arises;  
He meant 'me'.  
Such deep kindness, unmistakably, simply, 'me'.  
And at the same time it is not about 'me'.  
It is clear, and so is a great relief.  
It all works together.

Arriving at the stage, M.M. extends his hand and we have moved to take it simultaneously. Synchronized. A big smile. The gate to the universe opens and embraces us. He asks humorously whether we have prepared our questions. Then he smiles again. He had in fact taken our questions away from us that morning. We knew it did not matter at all. Only these very sincere words, without that things should be different. We stand there with empty hands, but he has warmed them with his. Everything is full, complete, glowing.

### **The Interview:**

Mario Mantese is already sitting in the hotel lobby as we arrive on time at our early morning appointment. We take the elevator up to his suite. We are prive to view his space; his rooms, his closets, his bathrooms. We take our places and sit together.

We had brought with us a question, to introduce our journal-topic, 'death'.

**Q.** *Have you died?*

**Master M.** That which is real has never died. *Death* is only a concept, a subjective perception that has arisen through misunderstanding. I have never been born. How could I have ever died?

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We learn something of different periods in Mario Mantese's life. Already at the age of 12 he sensed a deep inner force working through him, and knew something of great magnitude would come in his life. He discovered he was clairvoyant at 13. At 17 he noted healing powers and other spiritual gifts. During these years there was no person this unusual young man could speak to about these things. Quite alone, he started to look within himself, and began a long and intense inquiry.

During the time of his greatest success in the 1970's, the pop musician Mario Mantese understood that he was unhappy. Seen from the outside he had everything. Inside was hollow. He had thought that travelling and a life as a musician would give him satisfaction. But success did not bring pleasure. He would read philosophers and mystics. But a truly joyful heart was not to be found here either. Disillusioned, what was it then, that was happening inside him, such an intense power?

He knew months before, "God sent me the knife", that something very big was coming. One day it was very clear, 'Tomorrow is the end'. He stopped smoking, drinking alcohol, and eating meat. Soon after, one evening following a gala event in London, Mario Mantese was cut down with a blade, which entered his heart.

When Mario was 17 years old, the whole world was travelling to India. He didn't go with them. Then, in 1982, when he finally made it to India for the first time, it was a homecoming. The people wanted him to stay, because he was one of them. Today he travels regularly to India, where he is available exclusively for the Indian people; for the men, the women, the families, those without caste, as well as the brahmans. They call him 'Mahatma', 'Great Soul'.

But Mario Mantese is incarnated in Europe. His life and work are here, as he says himself.

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**Master M.** Mankind is something powerful, universal, luminous. The *cosmic master* must be understood correctly. Reality is not a person or individuality. The person you think you are is only a product of your own concepts, and this is the source of the whole illusion, the illusion that you exist and have your own individual life. This image you have of yourself, is only a projection in the *Totality*. As long as you live from the contents of your personal views, formed by your own concepts, as long as you identify with all this, so long will you experience life and death.

So many people concern themselves with this topic of *death*. I ask these folks, "What do you mean by *death*? Have you seen your own *death*?" Many spiritual people declare, "There is no *death*. That is only a concept. *Death* is an illusion". But in fact *death* is something very deep and all-encompassing. *Death* is not only the shutting down of the physical body and the psychosomatic system. No. Seen in its most profound sense, *death* is, in fact, resurrection and transfiguration.

People always ask the same questions. I don't give answers. I take away the questions. No one wants to die, and for just this reason people come to me, though they are not aware of it. When you are ripe and have come to the point where *life and death* have become an unavoidable issue, then note:  
The Master finds you. You don't find him; he finds you.  
You are called from within. He who has ears, hears!  
The iceberg floats under the sunlight; the ice melts.  
Love has the energy of a thousand suns!  
Don't be afraid of the sunlight!

**Q.** *We read in your biography, 'Light of a Great Soul', that while in the presence of some students, with a short wave of your hand, you halted a powerful rainstorm. We read that it poured heavily to your left and right, but not one drop fell on the path of your party. Are you ever intimidated by your own power?*

**Master M.** How can I be intimidated by what I am? I am unlimited power, light and love!

As I mentioned already, the true person is universal. What happened on that day in that violent thunderstorm took place out of necessity, and was a deep lesson for everyone there.

**Q.** *What do you teach?*

**Master M.** The teacher is empty of teaching and learning.  
People who come to me experience something without the experiencer.  
On the evenings after our gatherings they ask, "What was that about? I can't remember a thing he said". My work entails the dissolving of the memories, and the dissolution of knowledge and the knower.  
Important: A good wanderer leaves no traces.

**Q. What is a Cosmic Master?**

**Master M.** The *Cosmic Master* is an inseparable embodiment of the *Totality*. He is the unfolding of what you are. Western culture is full of so-called spiritual people who believe, 'I can do that myself. I don't need a teacher'. This attitude is the birth of *death*. Each teacher has a teacher, each master a master. Reverence is very important. Humility and simplicity, kindness and generosity are the signposts of the awakened.

This is not about perfection. Only the ego looks for such a thing. It concerns our true humanity. I see only beauty. The eyes of love are light itself, healing kindness. He who sees objects sees nothing. Comprehend this deeply: No one meets the Cosmic Master! One discovers the Master in one's own heart!

### **Personal Reflections:**

In this entire meeting with Mario Mantese, much has fallen away. An old stock of longings, ideas of ways to proceed, imaginings of what should happen, how or what to do in such an interview, what questions should be asked. All that simply was not there anymore. And there was no process to it, no gradual '*letting go*'. It was '*me*'. Alone. Nothing taken from '*me*'. But only '*me*'. Not to be grasped, just so.

The questions dissolved. We never asked them, and didn't notice until much later. The meeting was a welcoming, an accompaniment, and a guide into the depths. And yet we were not at all sensing ourselves at home in this situation. There were no handrails, nothing to cling to. It was absolutely unfettered. All we had brought, our questions, our efforts to guide this conversation, had been addressed. Indeed, all those things had fallen away, were gone.

It is worthwhile to find the right words that express what happened to us. It is a flavor. This effort feels no effort, and is deeply gratifying. This is not to measure, for the scale itself doesn't strive for some good result.

*He is simply there.*  
*He called to us.*  
*He embraced us..*  
*He served answers and advice,*  
*without us ever forming a question,*  
*and without him ever needing the asking.*  
*He invited us.*  
*He is really interested.*  
*He overwhelmed us, pierced through us, and*  
*took the earth from under our feet.*  
*All the elements were set in motion:*  
*Water, Fire, Wind, and Earth.*  
*Unified and without gap, unceasing.*  
*This is the delight born of freedom.*  
*Seeing and being seen. A listening...*  
*In the depths... meeting.*

## **Mario Mantese - No ending...**

**Master M.** When there is no 'you', then there is also no *death*.  
Because *you* die, *you* believe in life; while *you* live, *you* believe in death.  
To die is to find it true that one lives. To live is to hold true that one dies.  
One assumes it true that indeed life and death exist, and in this context this word '*true*' is deceptive.

There is neither '*I*' nor '*you*', nor individual beings. Reality is not a person, not an individual.  
The person you believe you are is a product of your conceptual thinking,  
and this concept is the birth of *death*. You cannot exist outside of what you are,  
for outside the *Totality* there is absolutely nothing.  
So then, be formless! Joyful!

That which you call the world is not something existing outside yourself.  
The consciousness from which you take for real the outside world, is transient.  
Through the eyes of time you see coming and going, and you label this life and death.  
But what does this coming and going have to do with you,  
unborn, un-becoming, here and now?

*Universal Love* is another word for that which you really are.  
So why do you then worry yourself so about that,  
which you never were?