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# The Distinction Between True Knowledge & Sorcery/Shamanism

Owing to the widespread destruction of sacred records, as well as the destruction of so many plain historical records, such as codices, by the Spanish conquerors, there is little evidence now of the true height of the civilisation and advanced nature of very early cultures.

It is hardly surprising then that the word Toltec should inspire an association in many people’s minds with the practices of sorcery and shamanism. This has not been helped by the later activities of Carlos Castaneda and his followers. However, a closer reading of Castaneda’s books reveals that his teacher, don Juan, was always clear and uncompromising in maintaining that sorcery/shamanism was not compatible with the pathway to becoming a man or woman of knowledge.

Thus, to repeat from “The Fire From Within,” where don Juan describes some of the early Toltec history; “Ages before the Spaniards came to Mexico," he said, "there were extraordinary Toltec seers, men capable of inconceivable deeds. They were the last link in a chain of knowledge that extended over thousands of years.

"The Toltec seers were extraordinary men, powerful sorcerers, somber, driven men who unraveled mysteries and possessed secret knowledge that they used to influence and victimize people by fixating the awareness of their victims on whatever they chose."

…

"But you don't consider yourself a sorcerer, don Juan, do you?" I asked.

"No, I don't," he said. "I am a warrior who sees. In fact, all of us are los nuevos videntes, the new seers. The old seers were the sorcerers.

"For the average man," he continued, "sorcery is a negative business, but it is fascinating all the same. That's why I encouraged you, in your normal awareness, to think of us as sorcerers. It's advisable to do so. It serves to attract interest. But for us to be sorcerers would be like entering a dead-end street."

Don Juan later elaborates about the old seers and the new seers: "Those conquerors," he went on, "took over the Toltec world - they appropriated everything - but they never learned to see."'

"Why do you think they never learned to see?" I asked.

"Because they copied the procedures of the Toltec seers without having the Toltecs' inner knowledge. To this day there are scores of sorcerers all over Mexico, descendants of those conquerors, who follow the Toltec ways but don't know what they're doing, or what they're talking about, because they're not seers."

"Who were those conquerors, don Juan?"

"Other Indians," he said. "When the Spaniards came, the old seers had been gone for centuries, but there was a new breed of seers who were starting to secure their place in a new cycle."

Further in this book, Castaneda reveals more about the fact that he had not really been taught about sorcery, and how all the talk of sorcery was simply a clever ruse to catch his attention; “It was in his teachings for the left side that don Juan let on what he, don Genaro, and their companions were really doing to me, and who they were. They were not teaching me sorcery, but how to master three aspects of an ancient knowledge they possessed: awareness, stalking, and intent. And they were not sorcerers; they were seers. And don Juan was not only a seer, but also a nagual.”

Don Juan then explains more to Castaneda about one of the reasons why sorcery never actually leads anywhere; “He stated once again that the old seers had concentrated exclusively on developing thousands of the most complex techniques of sorcery. He added that what they never realized was that their intricate devices, as bizarre as they were, had no other value than being the means to break the fixation of their assemblage points and make them move.”

“I asked him to explain what he had said.

"I've mentioned to you that sorcery is something like entering a dead-end street," he replied. "What I meant was that sorcery practices have no intrinsic value. Their worth is indirect, for their real function is to make the assemblage point shift by making the first attention release its control on that point.”

In “Tales of Power” Castaneda makes it clear that he knew that the practices of sorcery did not lead to freedom, for in this book don Juan reveals to him; “Sorcerers have learned after generations of using power plants to account in their views for everything that is accountable about them. I would say that sorcerers, by using their will, have succeeded in enlarging their views of the world. My teacher and benefactor were the clearest examples of that. They were men of great power, but they were not men of knowledge. They never broke the bounds of their enormous views and thus they never arrived at the totality of themselves, yet they knew about it. It wasn’t that they lived aberrant lives, claiming things beyond their reach; they knew that they had missed the boat and that only at their death would the total mystery be revealed to them. Sorcery had given them only a glimpse but never the real means to get to that evasive totality of oneself.”

In “A Separate Reality,” don Juan provides this final epitaph; “To be a sorcerer is a terrible burden,” he said in a reassuring tone. “I’ve told you that it much better to learn to see. A man who sees is everything; in comparison, the sorcerer is a sad fellow.”

# Freedom Vs Shamanism

In response to on-going questions posed by many readers, I would like to clarify some of the misconceptions surrounding the relationship between Carlos Castaneda and his teacher Juan Matus. In the first place I would like to point out that Don Juan was indeed an utterly impeccable warrior dedicated to the Path of Freedom, and nagal of the Toltec tradition. On the other hand, Carlos Castaneda, as is clear from his books, was not interested in freedom, but rather in the Path of High Adventure and sorcery/shamanism.

A fact that is also made clear in his books, but which seems to have escaped the attention of most readers, is that Castaneda’s training was never completed. Indeed, at his final meeting with Don Juan, Castaneda still did not have a fully restored memory. The result of this is that Castaneda still very much laboured under the influence of a highly selective perception, which enormously affected his ability to pass on or to interpret the Toltec teachings with any degree of reliability or authority. In this respect, what has always grabbed the attention of the serious reader of his books are those passages where Castaneda directly quotes Don Juan verbatim. The value of these passages should be contrasted with the unreliable field notes recorded and fancifully misinterpreted by Castaneda and which constitute the bulk of his work.

In relation to the references to sorcery in Carlos Castaneda’s books, I should further point out that whilst knowledge relating to sorcery is indeed part of the history of the Toltec tradition, its practice does not lead to freedom. With respect to this, it is also important to point out that the Toltec teachings as taught by the Warriors of Freedom have nothing to do with the shamans of ancient Mexico. This is another fact that Don Juan repeatedly stressed to Castaneda. Indeed, Castaneda’s books are littered with statements to this effect made by Don Juan, but people read so selectively today that they miss them. As Don Juan so aptly put it, “sorcery is a dead-end street”, and “by comparison with a man of knowledge, the sorcerer is a sad fellow.” However, it is amazing how the true impeccable warrior, Don Juan, has become forgotten in Castaneda’s shadow.

With respect to the above it should be remembered that when reading Castaneda’s books, the only parts of value are what Don Juan taught, leaving aside any of Castaneda’s interpretation of what he thought he was being taught. Castaneda completely missed the plot in his training, and became hooked only to the phenomenal. What he perceived, and how he interpreted what he perceived, was so far from reality, that the mind boggles. Castaneda died a bitter shell of a man. This is the lot of sorcerers.

Furthermore, the “magical passes” taught by Castaneda have no place in any Toltec lineage. They were taught to Castaneda by Howard Lee, and not by Don Juan or any member of his unit of warriors as Castaneda claimed. Similarly the “foreign installations”, the so-called “fliers”, also have no place in any Toltec lineage.

Finally, there are no further representatives of Don Juan’s lineage. Don Juan’s lineage ended with Don Juan.

In the name of freedom,  
Théun Mares

# Meeting Life

For those people who feel that there is a greater purpose and meaning within life, there is a fundamental truth. This truth is that we are born with a particular fate to unfold and fulfil.

This truth lies at the heart of all major belief systems – a truth to which the legacy of the Toltec teachings also bears witness. Our fate starts to unfold with the specific time in history, place and other circumstances of our birth – our race, our parents, our siblings. Our intellectual ability, emotional make-up and physique are also put in place, setting the scene for our challenges and ensuring that we tend to respond to the events of our lives in a specific way, in order to learn what we need from them, and so to fulfil our fate.

Consequently, for those who believe that there is a purpose to life, there are no victims. The circumstances of each of our lives are known to the indwelling spirit well before the great event of our birth, and therefore our lives are always perfect to enable us to experience whatever we have come to experience and learn whatever it is we need to learn.

The logical consequence of this that it is only through meeting all of our challenges that we can acquire that knowledge which will enable us to realise our full potential, fulfil our fate and meet life head on. The Toltec teachings, as expressed by Toltec nagal Théun Mares, show that the arena in which we acquire our own knowledge is our own life, and the only real way in which we can acquire this knowledge is experientially – by taking action in our daily life; by fully living.

Learning how to meet life fully, so that we can fulfil our fate, is the most important journey we will ever undertake.

Yet, so many people today are dissatisfied with their lives. Instead of recognising that they have their own unique talents and forms of expression, people, through their social conditioning, “think” that they should be doing something else. Then, either consciously or unconsciously, they start to search for whatever they feel is lacking in their lives. If their searching is unconscious, they will often immerse themselves in work, or take up pastimes, or watch a lot of sport, etc. If this searching is more conscious, people often search out a spiritual path in the hope that this will provide the meaning that they are lacking. However, in both cases, these people will mostly end up seeking outside of themselves for satisfaction and fulfilment.

And yet, no spiritual path can give you what you lack inside. Any spiritual path is primarily a vehicle through which we can learn to meet life, and in meeting life, learn to meet ourselves. In one important respect, choosing a spiritual path is very similar to any other path in life that we may choose.

This point is conveyed by one of the aphorisms of the Toltec teachings in the following way:

“Any pursuit in life is one of a great many different paths. And the value of any particular path lies only in how you walk it. If you feel that the path you are walking is not for you, then you should abandon it immediately. However, your decision to walk a path or not should be based on that clarity which springs from living the disciplined life of a warrior, and not on fear or ambition; for any decision taken in the sober light of clarity cannot possibly offend anyone, least of all yourself. Therefore consider every path carefully, testing it in whichever way you feel necessary — then ask yourself, but only yourself, one question: ‘Does this path have a heart?’”

In this respect the ancient admonishment: “Know thyself” is so very apt. Yet, to become a true man or woman of knowledge, which is the meaning of Toltec, is one of the hardest tasks that we can ever hope to achieve. But if we do hope to achieve this, we must find in every possible area of our lives what constitutes for us a Path with a Heart, and then follow it faithfully, over hill and down dale, through the thick of our challenges, always meeting life head-on, until we can finally meet ourself as we truly are.

The true value of any path is perhaps best encapsulated in the following Toltec aphorism:

“Any path is much the same as any other path. Some paths wind this way and that — some paths go straight; but in the end, nopath goes anywhere at all. The only real difference between one path and another is that some have a heart and some do not. The path that has a heart will uplift you, ease your burden and bring you joy. But the path with no heart will make you stumble, it will break your spirit, and finally cause you to look upon your life with anger and bitterness. The first empowers you; the second disempowers you.”

# The Knowledge Seekers (As Expressed through the Toltec Teachings)

To define the real meaning of the term “the Knowledge Seekers” is to de-fine, that is, to do an injustice to a symbol that is very dear to the heart of every Warrior of Freedom - a symbol which is for them the materialisation of the unspoken hope that has accompanied countless lifetimes of work and perseverance upon the peculiar path known as the Warrior’s Path, which reveals the secrets and mysteries pertaining to the Toltec teachings.

To truly explain the Knowledge Seekers is impossible, for it is only by working with the Warriors of Freedom that their true nature can be absorbed and assimilated through the process of osmosis. But for the sake of those who do not have such an opportunity I will attempt to impart here at least a feeling for what is implied by the term the Knowledge Seekers; that little- understood, but nonetheless vital aspect of what constitutes the heart of the Toltec teachings.

How does one explain an unspoken hope? The fact that it is unspoken is precisely because words fail to give expression to that feeling. How does one explain that a hope can be more substantial than a physical reality? How does one explain that the hope which is referred to here is not a pie in the sky, but a fact at once as substantial and yet as insubstantial as the law of gravity? I cannot show you that hope, but I can show you the effects of that hope, and it is these effects that should be self-evident to every serious student of the Toltec teachings.

The term “Toltec” as used within the Toltec teachings is an accolade which practitioners of the Toltec teachings accept in the same way as any man or woman accepts being addressed as Sir or Madame respectively, even though that man knows he is not a knight, and that woman knows she is not a dame. Such an address, like all accolades, is in recognition of the inherent potential of the person who is being addressed.

In the books written by me on the Toltec teachings I explain what it is to be Toltec, and I also explain how short-lived is the career of the true-blooded Toltec. In any one lifetime the term “Toltec” can only really be honoured once the person concerned has reached a point in his or her career as warrior, at which his or her full potential is being manifested upon the physical plane. This automatically means a full restoration of memory, as well as the ability to live as man (as opposed to hu-man). Only then can the person rightfully claim the accolade of Toltec, meaning a man (or woman) of knowledge, for the simple reason that, by definition, there can be no hu-men of knowledge. To be caught in hu-man-ness is not to have knowledge of what it is to be man. But even then the term Toltec is relative to that lifetime, and it is for this reason that there have always been those amongst Toltecs who prefer to look upon themselves as being simply The Knowledge Seekers, or alternatively, The Seekers of Knowledge.

For those who are dedicated to living the life of the true Warrior of Freedom as expressed through the Toltec teachings, the term “Toltec” implies concretisation and absolutism - concepts which are alien within a universe of relativity and fluidity. Thus there never have been formal insignia for the ranks of Toltec. The rings worn by Toltecs upon the fourth or the fifth finger of the right hand are merely a symbol of their unequivocal commitment to all of life upon the physical plane - the ultimate symbol of intelligent co-operation. Furthermore, the various insignia accorded to hunters, warriors, atl’aman, etc., are likewise symbols serving to remind the owner of such a symbol that he or she already has the necessary expertise in the particular area of awareness denoted by the symbol, and therefore cannot plead ignorance or helplessness in that area. But going beyond this, how does one ever claim to have knowledge in seeking for knowledge? If one is seeking for knowledge it implies that one does not have the ultimate knowledge; that is, absolute knowledge. In mapping out the unknown we are forever up against that which is not known, and therefore, irrespective of their official ranks, the most honest title Toltecs can give themselves is that of Knowledge Seeker.

Those of the Warriors of Freedom who have travelled the Warrior's Path as depicted within the Toltec teachings a little further than most, have come to understand the truism inherent within the statement that the Warrior's Path truly does not go anywhere at all; for ultimately the Warrior's Path is nothing more than a "U-turn." We struggle to become warriors. Then we struggle to become Toltec. Then we struggle to grasp that to be Toltec means to meet our fellow men in the midst of their folly. Why is this so? Because there is only the One Life, the one awareness and the one humanity.

Consequently, although Toltecs have often been likened to the beautiful blossoms on a tree - the Tree of Life - Toltecs themselves have known that not all Toltecs share the same destiny with respect to the Toltec tradition. In order to grasp this it is important to realise that only the arrogant fool will choose to look upon the blossom of a tree as being better than, or more important than the roots of the tree buried deep in the darkness of the earth: buried in the muck and the mire that feeds the tree. Toltecs have always acknowledged both the blossoms as well as the roots of the tree as being different but equally important expressions of the tree. As a result, Toltecs have come to learn that both blossoms and roots serve the one purpose of the tree, albeit each in their own unique way.

There are those amongst Toltecs whose destiny it is to tend to the roots of the tree, by adding their greater vision and their greater knowledge to that of the workers within the darkness of the earth, in an attempt to bring about even more abundant and even more beautiful blossoms and fruit than was possible before. These are the true Seekers of Knowledge, who work silently behind the scenes, and to whom that transmutation which leads to transformation and eventual transfiguration is an expression of their innermost predilection. To the Seekers of Knowledge the journey is more profitable than the goal, for they acknowledge that any goal, like the blossom, after serving its purpose, withers, dies, and falls from the tree, where it rots and becomes incorporated back into the process of life.

Yet throughout the ages of life upon this planet there have also been those from amongst the practitioners of the Toltec teachings who have served the process of life as blossoms of the tree in one way or another. These are those from amongst the Toltecs whose destiny it is to be a living light out in the open, a shining example of the inherent beauty within the fruition of the evolution of awareness. These are the bodhisattvas of humanity, and they tread in the footsteps of the World Teacher, the Christ, Who proclaimed, "I am the Light. I am the Way. I am the Word."

For the bodhisattva there is no greater honour than to be the Light, the Way, the Word, and for these it is good and right, for they tread the Path of the Bodhisattva, which is still an aspect of the Warrior’s Path. Like the sacred lotus, their symbol, they stand tall and proud, head and shoulders above the world around them; not in arrogance, but by virtue of their truly awesome beauty, colour, perfume, and utter impeccability. Indeed, the very sight of them is a breathtaking delight to the human spirit. Such is their destiny, and for this they are both loved and respected. It is not easy to be the radiantly beautiful and delicate blossom that invariably gets picked, and therefore torn from the process of life, only to be admired in the vase of separativeness in which the blossom must whither and die. But even if the blossom is not picked, it still withers and dies, for such is the nature of the blossom - to provide seed, and then to die so that the seed may fall into the earth.

On the other hand, the deepest predilection of the Knowledge Seekers is the alchemical process of transmutation, transformation and transfiguration - work which at best never does attract any real attention. People, after all, grow trees for their blossoms and their fruit, not for their roots! Yet the Knowledge Seekers also know that for there to be blossoms as well as that fruit, termed the evolution of awareness, the roots of the tree too must be tended to and cared for. Therefore the work of the Knowledge Seekers seldom sees the light of day, for they do not attract the attention that comes so naturally to the blossom. But this too is right and good, for they tread the Path of the Warrior, and upon that path it is not the acknowledgement of the potential which is important, but the materialisation of that potential.

Therefore the Bodhisattva demonstrates for man his potential by holding aloft a light, whilst the Knowledge Seeker feeds man's potential by bringing his own light into the darkness of the fruitful earth; that is, life upon the physical plane. Between these two expressions of Toltec; the Bodhisattva and the Knowledge Seeker, there is a profound love for one another, for both know that in the final analysis, they but serve the purpose of the One Life, the one tree, the Tree of Life.

Blossom, root, trunk, branches, leaves or sap, how can one be more important than the other in that wholeness we term the Tree of Life? It is in this knowledge that Toltecs rejoice, and in their rejoicing their work becomes filled with the richnesses inherent within the process of life. As each part of the tree fulfils its function, the tree grows, life becomes richer and more abundant, and the spirit of the tree - the spirit of man - begins to resonate to the Song of Atl’aman. This is what is meant by singing into existence the tree - the Tree of Life.

In singing we not only give thanks for the awesome opportunity to partake in the process of life, but in singing we also learn how to tune our voices to harmonise with the dissonances inherent within the evolution of awareness, so that our creations reflect harmony, rather than chaos. For the Warriors of Freedom singing is not only a Path with a Heart, their innermost expression of the Toltec teachings, but it is also a way of life; the only way of life, the only way in which it is possible to live with constant dissonance. To sing is to harmonise. To harmonise is to live, as opposed to merely existing.

This then brings us back to the unspoken hope. Song, with its rhythm, melody, phrasing and nuances of key and pitch, can convey what the spoken word can never ever convey. Therefore to understand the unspoken hope means that we must know what it is to sing in the truest possible sense of the word. Until we have learned to harmonise our tears with our laughter, our disappointments with our triumphs, our sorrow with our joy, we screech and wail instead of sing, and without the ability to sing we can never grasp the ecstasy of true flight through time and space. To unfold the wings of perception to touch both the nagal and the tonal, is to sing - to sing the song of Atl’aman. To not only sing that song, but also to become the embodiment of that song, is to know the meaning of the unspoken hope.

The best I can do is to say that the unspoken hope is the belief through experience that there is no discord; no dissonance, that cannot be beautiful if it is correctly harmonised, and that ultimately, man must be able to transmute the solar debris into the most divinely beautiful song. What a song this promises to be! No pretty frilly phrases of complicated melody. No fancy trills on nuances of sounds. No grand chords based upon perfect resolutions. No fixed structure based upon the rules of composition. But instead this is a song which is already showing all the signs of becoming, in time, a grand and magnificent work of singularity and utter uniqueness. A work which will be hauntingly poignant, as dischords gently ascend to melodious transpositions in the second and third voices, and will at the same time be unspeakably beautiful in its daring disregard for the accepted rules of musical composition. This is the unspoken hope - a hope that is constantly being sung into existence, as opposed to the futile undertaking of trying to verbalise that which cannot be verbalised.

In Wolf's terms, that hope, that song, is the song of freedom. Not freedom to escape the world. Not freedom to change the world. But the freedom to harmonise the world; to sing the world into its full potential. Yet hope also implies resistance, and where there is resistance there is shadow. Therefore the song of the Wolves may be beautiful, but just like the beauty of the blossom, that song too casts a shadow. Burning within the heart of every Wolf is the all-consuming fire of hope: the hope of freedom. However, every fire casts a shadow, and hence we have the Shadows of Wolf Fire.

Do the other dreaming classes also cast shadows? Yes, but not in the same way as the Wolves. Being the sixth Dreaming class, and so caught eternally in having to choose between the old and the new, the Wolf chooses to work with the darkness of the human spirit by day, and howls at the moon by night. In this the Wolf instinctively knows that the real work for him lies in tending to the freedom of the tree to grow, and so to bring into existence the new. Therefore the Wolf never hesitates to voice his dis-ease at humanity's infatuation with the romanticism of the illusory and glamorous light cast by the moon; the old.

Yet, through working with the darkness of the human spirit the Wolf is often not seen in true perspective, for his howling at the moon casts a long and baleful shadow across the romantic vision of humanity - a shadow and a sound which cause him to be feared and therefore hunted. But even that fear of him and hunting of him, is part of the Wolf's song. To be feared is to know fear, and to be hunted is to know hunting. Such is the nature of a Wolf's gifts from power. Knowledge Seekers belonging to the other dreaming classes have their own songs, or rather, parts of the One Song, and therefore their gifts from power also are different. Yet for the Wolf, the gentle and subtle modulations between one key and another, are the very essence of freedom and of being Wolf.

In all of the above I have tried to impart to you the meaning and the essence of the Knowledge Seekers, and yet I have told you nothing - no-thing - for that is the essence of what it is to seek out knowledge. It is truly no-thing as known to humanity, and yet it is every-thing as known to man. For a humanity that is goal-orientated it is nothing. For man who is versed in song, it is his everything, his hope, his love, his predilection, his song, and ultimately his only purpose. To have a goal is to live in dissonance, disappointment and disillusionment. To have a song, is to walk a Path with a Heart. What more can I say?

The bodhisattvas choose to shine. That for them is a Path with a Heart as well as their song. The Seekers of Knowledge choose to work behind the scenes in tending the roots of the tree. This for them is a Path with a Heart and also their song. Such are two of the seven paths constituting the Toltec tradition, to which the Toltec teachings bear witness.

*Théun Mares*

# True Change

Although people talk freely of change, there are few who really know how to bring about fundamental change within themselves. The external circumstances of people’s lives may change, and they may sometimes succeed in changing some or many of their habits, but all too often, when something unexpected happens, they find that the changes they believed were solid, are not, and they are back, in some strange way, at where they started.

What then constitutes true inner change?

Any valid pathway can result in change – as long as it is pursued faithfully. However, nowadays most people tend to pick and choose from out of a path what they like and what fits in with their current frame of reference. Yet, this tendency towards dabbling simply reinforces their existing beliefs and prejudices, rather than allowing for new knowledge.

True change requires; firstly, being open to learning, in its proper sense; and secondly, being dedicated to continuing to learn. This untiring dedication is vital, because learning about the self is the most frightening and absorbing pursuit there is. It is in recognition of this fact about the true nature of learning that one of the aphorisms of the Toltec teachings gives this warning: “True knowledge is ever incomprehensible, greater and more powerful than man. Consequently to walk the Path of Knowledge is to fight for survival; therefore if you come to this path to learn, then you must be prepared to fight for your life.”

Partly to force apprentices to fathom and live out for themselves certain fundamental truths, Toltecs have always verbalised these truths in the form of aphorisms, like that above, conveyed orally. These aphorisms serve to guide the seeker into a deeper insight in how to master his or her awareness. Thus all aphorisms have been designed to be both springboards into the unknown, as well as beacon lights within the unknown. For rather than meandering the byways of the known, the seeker of knowledge ventures into the unexplored realms of the unknown. This is the journey that leads to true change.

In recognition of the many opportunities presented by the current world situation, the Toltec aphorisms have, for the first time, been committed to writing by the Toltec and seer, Théun Mares, and are published as The Toltec Teachings – Volume VI.

This book is part of Théun’s task to reveal to humanity its legacy, which includes a knowledge of learning - thus enabling the sincere seeker to bring about real change in his or her life.

# The True Meaning and Age of Toltec

For many people, the term Toltec refers to a Mesoamerican culture. It is also widely associated with the practices of sorcery/shamanism, deriving from a popular misreading of the books of Carlos Castaneda.

However, for a vast expanse of time and in various parts of the world, Toltec has meant “A man or woman of knowledge.” In the Toltec context, the pursuit of true knowledge bears no relation to the practices of sorcery/shamanism with which the word Toltec is today so often associated. In relation to this, the origins of the word Toltec are much older than is generally credited – even by our modern-day shamans.

Since much of the current popular views have been erroneously based upon a misreading of the books of anthropologist Carlos Castaneda, it may be useful to look at what is actually contained in his books, beginning with what is said about the origins and true meaning of the word Toltec, and moving on to what is said about the practices of sorcery/shamanism.

In “The Fire From Within,” we find the following statement concerning the Toltec tradition, and in particular the mastery of awareness:

“In this case the action at hand was, naturally, the elucidation of the mastery of awareness. Don Juan understood the mastery of awareness as being the modern-day version of an extremely old tradition, which he called the tradition of the ancient Toltec seers.”

Don Juan, Castaneda’s teacher, and a true nagal of this Toltec tradition goes on to clarify: "Ages before the Spaniards came to Mexico," he said, "there were extraordinary Toltec seers, men capable of inconceivable deeds. They were the last link in a chain of knowledge that extended over thousands of years.”

Castaneda then continues; “Don Juan explained then that his use of the term "Toltec" did not correspond to what I understood it to mean. To me it meant a culture, the Toltec Empire. To him, the term "Toltec" meant "man of knowledge."

“He said that in the time he was referring to, centuries or perhaps even millennia before the Spanish Conquest, all such men of knowledge lived within a vast geographical area, north and south of the valley of Mexico, and were employed in specific lines of work: curing, bewitching, storytelling, dancing, being an oracle, preparing food and drink. Those lines of work fostered specific wisdom, wisdom that distinguished them from average men. These Toltecs, moreover, were also people who fitted into the structure of everyday life, very much as doctors, artists, teachers, priests, and merchants in our own time do.”

In “The Second Ring of Power”, one of Castaneda’s fellow-apprentices explains more about the meaning of the word Toltec: “"The Nagual told us that we are Toltecs. All of us are Toltecs. He said that a Toltec is the receiver and holder of mysteries. The Nagual and Genaro are Toltecs. They gave us their special luminosity and their mysteries. We received their mysteries and now we hold them."

“His usage of the word Toltec baffled me. I was familiar only with its anthropological meaning. In that context, it always refers to a culture of Nahuatl-speaking people in central and southern Mexico which was already extinct at the time of the Conquest.

"Why did he call us Toltecs?" I asked, not knowing what else to say.

"Because that's what we are. Instead of saying that we are sorcerers or witches, he said that we are Toltecs."”

Further in the same book, another fellow-apprentice confirms and amplifies this:

“"The Nagual told me that sorcerers used to be called Toltecs in his benefactor's language," she replied.

"And what language was that, Gorda?"

"He never told me. But he and Genaro used to speak a language that none of us could understand. And here, between all of us, we understand four Indian languages."

"Did don Genaro also say that he was a Toltec?"

"His benefactor was the same man, so he also said the same thing."

“From la Gorda's responses I could surmise that she either did not know a great deal on the subject or she did not want to talk to me about it. I confronted her with my conclusions. She confessed that she had never paid much attention to it and wondered why I was putting so much value on it. I practically gave her a lecture on the ethnography of central Mexico.

"A sorcerer is a Toltec when that sorcerer has received the mysteries of stalking and dreaming," she said casually. "The Nagual and Genaro received those mysteries from their benefactor and then they held them in their bodies. We are doing the same, and because of that we are Toltecs like the Nagual and Genaro.””

The clear conclusion from these excerpts is; firstly, that the word Toltec has a very different meaning to that currently attributed to it; secondly, that it is far older than is usually postulated; and thirdly that it was in current use, not only at the time of the Spanish conquests, but also at the time that Castaneda wrote his books. Therefore, in its wider sense, it is incorrect to state that the term Toltec simply refers to a Mesoamerican civilisation – a civilisation that was already extinct well before the time of the Conquest.

In relation to the current use of the term Toltec as meaning “a man or woman of knowledge,” in “The Fire From Within,” don Juan specifically states; “"I am a warrior who sees. In fact, all of us are los nuevos videntes: the new seers.” Later, Castaneda questions him on what he means by this:

“"Were there a great many new seers during the Conquest?" I asked.

"At the beginning there were. Near the end there were only a handful. The rest had been exterminated."

"What about in our day, don Juan?" I asked.

"There are a few. They are scattered all over, you understand."

Outside of Castaneda himself, there is much evidence that points clearly to the fact that the term Toltec was more widely used and also older than currently stated.

Miguel León-Portilla is a Mexican anthropologist and historian, and an authority on Nahuatl thought and literature. He has maintained that in Nahua legend, the Toltec were the originators of all civilisation.

This points clearly to the much older origins of the Toltecs and fits in with much other historical evidence, firstly relating to the Nahua, and secondly to the earlier history of the Toltecs.

In terms of earlier Nahuatl migrations into the Valley of Mexico, Tlakaelel (Francisco Jímenez Sánchez) has found persuasive evidence throughout the American continent of an ancient Toltec migration known as the Four Arrows, since it went in four different directions. His theories are supported by many petroglyphs; as well as place names, such as Tulare and Tularosa, which are Nahuatl in origin rather than Spanish or English.

In addition to these, many old maps also support the theories of older and more widespread origins. Thus, according to Roberto Rodriguez & Patrisia Gonzales in “The Story of Maps: Mesoamerica in North America,” virtually all early chroniclers agreed that the Aztec/Mexica were the last in a series of migrating waves of nations/tribes to migrate from somewhere in the north.

Most allude to three major waves; first the Toltecas, then the Chichimecas, then the Azteca/Mexica nations, which purportedly migrated with seven other peoples. Of particular note is the fact that many chroniclers do cite an earlier migration of the Nahuatl-speaking peoples as having come from across the ocean, landing in what is today the Panuco River. Half the people purportedly went north, the other half went south.

Charles A. Shook, (1876-1939) in his book, “Cumorah Revisited,” takes the matter further: “With this century [6th] we have the advent of the Toltecs into Mexico. They were a Nahuan tribe and the most prominent representative of that people's culture of which we have any record. The unanimous testimony of tradition is that they came from the north, from the mysterious Hue Hue Tlapallan (Old Old Red Land), the nursery of the Nahua people, which has been variously located. Briart locates it near Lake Tulare in California; Becker, on the Rio Colorado; and Baldwin, Short and Foster in the Mississippi Valley.”

How did these Toltecs arrive there? In “Atlantis - The Antediluvian World,” by Ignatius Donnelly, we find the following account:

“The native Mexican historian, Ixtlilxochitl, gave this as the Toltec legend of the Flood:

"It is found in the histories of the Toltecs that this age and first world, as they call it, lasted 1716 years; that men were destroyed by tremendous rains and lightning from the sky, and even all the land, without the exception of anything, and the highest mountains, were covered up and submerged in water fifteen cubits (caxtolmolatli); and here they added other fables of how men came to multiply from the few who escaped from this destruction in a "toptlipetlocali;" that this word nearly signifies a close chest; and how, after men had multiplied, they erected a very high "zacuali," which is to-day a tower of great height, in order to take refuge in it should the second world (age) be destroyed. Presently their languages were confused, and, not being able to understand each other, they went to different parts of the earth.

"The Toltecs, consisting of seven friends, with their wives, who understood the same language, came to these parts, having first passed great land and seas, having lived in caves, and having endured great hardships in order to reach this land; . . . they wandered 104 years through different parts of the world before they reached Hue Hue Tlapalan, which was in Ce Tecpatl, 520 years after the Flood." ("Ixtlilxochitl Relaciones," in Kingsborough's "Mex. Ant.," vol. ix., pp. 321, 322.)’

If we look even further afield than these mainly historical and anthropological sources, we can find many references to the term Toltec in a number of ancient mystical traditions. These point to much older origins still.

For example, in Rudolph Steiner’s “Cosmic Memory (Prehistory of Earth and Man)” we find this allusion: “This kind of social communal life became fully developed only among the third subrace, the Toltec.”

The topic of the earlier origins is more fully developed in a wide variety of Theosophical texts.

In “The Secret Doctrine” H.P. Blavatsky also alludes to these ancient origins when she discusses the existence of a very ancient book: “…there was a time when its language (the Sen-zar) was known to the Initiates of every nation, when the forefathers of the Toltec understood it as easily as the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis…”

It is in “The Secret Doctrine” that one finds a clue as to why there are not more written records of our early history - records that might also reveal the true nature and extent of the Secret Mysteries, which have become appropriated and debased to form what we have come to think of as our religions. There it is said; “It has been claimed in all ages that ever since the destruction of the Alexandrian Library, every work of a character that might have led the profane to the ultimate discovery and comprehension of some of the mysteries of the Secret Science, was, owing to the combined efforts of the brotherhoods, diligently searched for. It is added, moreover, by those who know, that once found, save three copies left and stored safely away, such works were all destroyed.”

Everything that now remains in the public domain is but the palest shadow of what had existed before. Today the need for secrecy has served its purpose. However, whilst many of the ancient secrets are starting to be revealed, the plain fact is that because of the widespread destruction of virtually all the ancient records, there is little hard evidence available to relate these truths to what has happened in the past.

Having said that, a fair amount of indications exist within Theosophical literature for the diligent researcher into ancient history. But in terms of the earlier Toltec migrations, it will suffice to quote a short passage from the work by Lieut–Col. A.E. Powell called, “The Solar System.” “The Toltecs, having emigrated chiefly to the west, spread abroad and flourished on what are now the continents of North and South America. The Peruvian empire under their Inca sovereigns, about 14,000 years ago, may be regarded as a traditional though faint echo of the golden age of the Toltecs on the mother-continent of Atlantis.”

# Testing for the Wolf Dreaming Class

The Testing for the Wolves below is a transcription of an ideogram that depicts the progression of the challenges set up by the Dreamers of the Wolf Dreaming Class, for those who belong to this Dreaming Class, to ensure steady and measured learning; meaning, the expansion of awareness.

This process within evolution is not easy to verbalise, but in order to get a true feeling for what this implies, in terms of the Toltec teachings, it may be helpful to look at it in the following manner: When you have come to grasp the meaning within the first question, through facing and conquering your challenges surrounding this question, your Dreamer then progresses you to the challenges that teach you the meaning inherent within the second question, and so on up to 33. Needless to say, no one lifetime is long enough to learn the “answers” to all 33 questions. Therefore these questions are progressively answered across many lifetimes, and once they have been answered you start again from the beginning, for now you have the knowledge to go even “deeper” still!

So the best approach to these questions, is not to try to “answer” them intellectually, but to grasp them at a feeling level, and then to compare your “answer” with your actual understanding of the teachings! In other words, you can use these questions to measure your grasp of the teachings in terms of how you are facing and handling your challenges within life. As you progress, you will also see how this “testing” helps to reveal the deeper meanings to be found in the Jewels of Awareness.

Please note that there is a different Testing for each of the Dreaming Classes, as expressed by the Toltec teachings. As Théun Mares is a nagal belonging to the Wolf Dreaming Class he does not consider himself qualified to give transcriptions of the other Dreaming Classes.

**Questions:**

1. What is the circle of my being, and where is its centre?  
2. What am I?  
3. What is destiny, and what is my part in it?  
4. What are my duties?  
5. What is power?  
6. What is freedom?  
7. If freedom is what I claim it to be, then why do I seek it?  
8. What is justice?  
9. Where am I going?  
10. What is the meaning of the Wheel of Destiny?  
11. What is my purpose?  
12. What is the earth to me?  
13. If the earth is what I claim it to be, then what is death?  
14. What is awareness?  
15. What is my relationship to the Darkness?  
16. What is now my view of the world?  
17. How will I take from the Stream of Life that which I need?  
18. How will I proceed from here?  
19. What constitutes the Sacred Grove?  
20. What is life?  
21. What is my vision, and what do I know now?  
22. Is there one person on earth who has benefited from me being born?  
23. Whom have I liberated by destroying his prison?  
24. How often have I forced someone into accepting my view of the world?  
25. If I have the power to move mountains, will I do so?  
26. Why am I walking the Path with a Heart?  
27. How often have I set myself apart from those around me?  
28. How many people have had to bow down to my will?  
29. How often do I rape another being physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually?  
30. Is there anyone in my life whose freedom I have respected more than my own wishes?  
31. What idea do I consider fundamental to my existence?  
32. Is my personal rhythm compatible to the rhythm of life?  
33. Freedom. Pure white light.