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An Exclusive Interview With Taisha Abelar
of Carlos Castaneda's Elusive Sorcerer's Clan.
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"Reflections on don Juan by Carlos Castaneda"

by Keith Nichols

Real root expansion of thought is one that causes us to reevaluate the way that we interpret our reality. Although at first it may only affect our intellectual perspectives, its repercussions over time carry through our culture and civilization, changing the forms of who we are and what we will be. Root expansions are rare because they entail a breaking of any ethos or system of thought. Since the late sixties, an interesting root expansion occurred with the entry of the sorcerer apprentice Carlos Castaneda and his books about the training he received under the Mexican Indian sorcerer named don Juan. His books are a hallmark of the present-day urge to return to a cultural ethos where wonder, magic, and spiritual abilities break the chains that strict reason and cynicism have placed upon our realities. Taisha Abelar, sorcerer and author of *The Sorcerer's Crossing*, is one of the members of Carlos Castaneda's sorcerers' party. In this interview she discusses her lineage, how they see the mechanics of the energy body, and some of her sorcerer's techniques for attaining spiritual and perceptual freedom by breaking the intellectual and energetic chains that bind.

"If you try to hold back your present knowledge about the consequences of Columbus' trip and project yourself into his situation, then you can begin to see that our present moon exploration must be like a tea party compared to what he went through. Moon exploration doesn't involve any real root exploration of thought....It's really just an expansion of what he did." Robert Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*

Could you tell us how you got involved with sorcery?

Taisha Abelar: I met don Juan and his people when I was in my twenties. Most of my adult life was actually spent under their guidance and training. Don Juan belonged to a generation of sorcerers that have 27 Naguals, or spiritual leaders, behind him. Each Nagual had his certain apprentices that learned dreaming, stalking, and a number of other things. The techniques that we learned have a historical background that dates far back in this long line of sorcerers.

Are there any differences between the ancient and modern sorcerers?

Taisha: Yes, when we talk about the ancient sorcerers we think in terms of manipulating people, amassing power, and controlling the entities from other realms or realities. As this tradition was handed down, subsequent seers realized that the practices of the ancient sorcerers didn't lead to freedom. Instead, it lead to a dependence upon rituals and compulsive behavior, such as the amassing of power and the enhancement of the self. Yet these practices were very effective in making the sorcerers very powerful beings who could control other people, command the elements in nature (such as rain), transform themselves into different animals, or perform other feats of sorcery. Despite these powers, modern sorcerers realized that power alone didn't lead to true freedom. Instead, most of the ancient sorcerers became entrapped behind what we call the Second Gate of Dreaming.

Can you explain what you mean by the Second Gate of Dreaming?

Taisha: When the body changes energetically into the energy body, that energy can perceive "other realities," or other aspects of the universe. What is presented before us, or what we see now this room, that wall, the street outside is not the only reality that exists. Yet the modern seers saw that the ancient rituals and training didn't lead to the ultimate goal: freedom from **entrapment** within any reality; whatever that reality may be.

How have the techniques changed with the modern seers?

Taisha: The techniques that were handed down to us were the only ones that they saw were the most likely to enable the practitioner to attain total liberation. This total liberation for us is freedom from "humanness" or anything human, and the ability to utilize the total potential of oneself. These techniques are the recapitulation and certain dreaming practices.

When did the division between the ancient sorcerers and the modern sorcerers occur during history?

Taisha: The division came at the time of the Spanish Conquests of Mexico. When the Spaniards came, most of the ancient sorcerers were destroyed. In spite of their ability to turn into animals or harness the elements or manipulate allies, their power was unable to withstand the onslaught of the Spaniards. The ancient sorcerers were unable to affect the Spaniards because their culture was so strong and fixed that sorcery had almost no effect on them. The Spaniards were operating within a

different cognitive field, or reality. Another turning point occurred within Don Juan's lineage in 1725 when an entity came into contact with the Nagual, Sebastian.

Who was that entity?

Taisha: We call him the Death-defier. He is really one of the ancient sorcerers who had survived many hundreds of years by being entrapped behind one of the Gates of Dreaming. His consciousness was still intact, but there was no way that he could escape because of his training. We learned that inorganic beings who inhabit certain realms of dreaming entrapped the male sorcerers who entered because they preyed on their energy. The only way the Death-defier could escape was by making a pact with different Naguals in Don Juan's lineage. From that point on, he merged with our lineage and gave gifts of power in exchange for their energy.

What kind of gifts did the Death-defier give?

Taisha: He gave different positions of what we call the Assemblage Point. We see that there is a place on the luminous cocoon or energetic body that is very bright. That place we call the Assemblage Point because it lights up filaments on lines of energy upon the energetic body. We have seen that when certain fibers light up, an alignment takes place with similar fibers outside the energetic body within the universe at large, that in turn, causes perception to occur. Sorcerers see that in order to perceive reality, this matching of the energetic filaments within and without the luminous cocoon always takes place. The Death-defier gave to this lineage the different positions of this Assemblage Point or the ability to perceive different realities, for each position lights up inconceivable possibilities. He gave each Nagual a different number of possible points, and these were handed down. The new sorcerers coming from this transition stage realized that sorcery really is a question of perception. A definition of sorcery is the ability to perceive more than the average human being, whose perception of the universe is limited because s/he has only one place of the Assemblage Point: the one into which s/he is born. As the seers became more experienced, they realized that any of these other positions were just as limiting as the reality to which man was born into. This had led us to realize that our goal is not to fix ourselves at any permanent position. This is what happened to the Death-defier; he was trapped at a certain position of the Assemblage Point.

How do you keep from being trapped?

Taisha: Our practices are geared toward not becoming fixated at any one particular position. The recapitulation is one such method. All of the ancients' practices enhanced the elf to such an extent that they were no longer able to move or be fluid. This was one of the principle reasons why they were trapped in the different realms. So now we seek fluidity.

What is recapitulation?

Taisha: The recapitulation is a method of bringing back all of the energy trapped in the world in order to have it available to use for other things. It enables one to see that the reality to which you're born isn't the only reality, but merely a fixation of energy. When an infant is born, his Assemblage Point is very erratic; he isn't able to perceive as a functional human being. As he matches the adults around him, his energetic body emulates their position. Energetically, he patterns himself on those who are around him. We all have the position of our Assemblage Points on more or less the same place, enabling us to perceive the same reality. The recapitulation enables you to move that point by using a psychic process of extending your breath to call back any energy you've left throughout your lifetime. Every epoch is characterized by what Don Juan calls the "modality of the times": a specific pattern of ideas or cultural ethos. The modality of our times is what's on our televisions, in our books and newspapers. We're constantly bombarded with certain themes and ideas that we have to adhere to. Sorcerers call this ethos of our day the "poor baby, me" syndrome because everyone out there is dominated by that sentiment. It's not only a poor baby world, it's a poor baby universe with black holes consuming constellations and planets. Sorcerers see that our energy is constantly being consumed by something else. In order to go where we want to go, we have to have energy. In our waking state, all of our energy is used up in our waking concerns: our jobs, our families, or wherever we are. To move away from that position, we have to have extra energy. The recapitulation is the fundamental means of storing that energy.

How does one recapitulate?

Taisha: First, you make a list of everyone you've known in your lifetime, every person you've ever come across. That, in itself, is an endeavor of intense concentration. Just making the list loosens up things and enables you to focus your attention on something specific. When you have your list, find a place that puts pressure on the energetic body, like a closet. Sit comfortably and begin with the first person on your list. Work backward, recapitulating or visualizing all the

situations in which you encountered this person, those interactions in which energy was exchanged. See yourself interacting and going through all sorts of energetic maneuvers in order to maintain the situation. We all construct our reality energetically. Even when we are just driving down the street, we're constructing. We take that act for granted and say that the street is always there. But really, we're all sorcerers who are **constituting** the world around us, and we're agreeing upon it's **tacticity**. [Sic.] Through recapitulating, you take back energy of the past that is lost in your personal history and hangs around you like a comet's tail of **debris**. To disentangle yourself from your remembered pasts, start at your right shoulder and, moving your head from right to left, breathe in. Then, turn your head back again and exhale, sending everything back that you no longer want to be connected with. Then bring the head back to the center again. You don't have the sensation with every image, but you breathe everything out deeply, sending out lines with each breath. When you have pulled your energy back, breathe that in as a **clump** and proceed on until there is no more energy left there. The scene will be **vacuous**, empty because there's no energetic component in it.

What effect does recapitulating have on your life?

Taisha: You'll find that your attachment with your family and friends will be **lessened**. You can still interact with them, but you're no longer attached to them because you won't have that energetic dependence upon them.

What is stalking?

Taisha: Stalking is the ability to fixate the Assemblage Point on any given position in order to give structure and **coherence** to chaotic perception. We're stalking our realities every day, every minute, finding out what it means to drive down this street or be in the **mall**. Stalking means to make our categorization **schemes** of objects and things that we know by names.

How do sorcerers see dreaming?

Taisha: Dreaming is a movement of the Assemblage Point that we do naturally when we sleep. That's our energetic body randomly moving. Dreaming for sorcerers is the control of one's dreams. You have to stalk your dreams, which is really just moving your point to a new location on purpose and holding it there for as long as your dreaming energy can allow you to do so. When you find yourself in a dream world, before it shifts away and turns into something else, you want to hold that reality and stalk it. If you're a very **practiced** stalker and dreamer then that reality can become your only reality. That's what happened to the ancient sorcerers when they became entrapped in another realm and could no longer return to our normal reality. In fact, time **wiped** out the reality into which they were born. Because they were able to sustain their energy within that reality for a longer period of time, hundreds of years they found themselves unable to return to our own because the modality was gone. When we stalk our realities, we never keep any of them as the primary reality. The minute we think that this or any other reality is the primary one, then we become **imprisoned** at that level, no matter where it may be.

What do you think is the significance of publishing The Sorcerers' Crossing and all of the other information about your lineage?

Taisha: The reason that you and I can even talk is because of the tremendous necessity of altering the modality of our culture. Sorcerers say that inside the modality of our day, the **prognosis** is totally negative. If change is to come, it has to come from outside to show that movement is possible. We have put out this information, not as information, but as a possibility. First of all, it's an idea that people can grab hold of in order to realize there is something out there besides our popular culture, dominated by the "poor baby" syndrome. We are imprisoned in this reality as much as the Death-defier is imprisoned behind the second Gate of Dreaming. The Death-defier has said that the position of mankind has been pretty much the same for thousands of years with only minute changes. There were shifts in the **Renaissance** when man's perception of God shifted, causing a perceptual shift of himself. Another shift must have occurred in the **Grecian** times when we went from being able to see and have contact with fairies and gods to believing it was a myth or a product of man's imagination. So, there are shifts from things that we no longer perceive. Our lineage's contact with the larger cultural ethos of man is causing another shift: away from reason and a **confined** sense of reality toward a system where everything is alive and has awareness that we can perceive.

Where do you see your group going after death?

Taisha: I see ourselves going into a never-ending revolution. We are merging with that inconceivable, unnamable force of which we are just a tiny **speck**. The less human we are energetically, the more we merge with the vastness. That might sound cold and heartless, but it's

not. Sorcerers have feelings and tremendous affection, but they're almost impersonal. They're part of the energy that comes from a state of well-being. When your energetic body is in a healthy state, you have strong, positive feelings that come from the universe itself. Everything out there is aware and intelligent and is part of Intent itself. Affection is there; you need only link yourself to it to feel it. It doesn't stem from the personal self. These things are out there. It's not cold empty space. With the dreaming body you can move beyond the limitations of the body, take on different forms, and perceive reality from those configurations, which means you can go through walls and move into sheer energy that is our quest. When this merging takes place through evolution, we move into a different realm. We move away from anything human. Our apelike existence just falls away like prison bars and what remains is really inconceivable. The structure of language can't contain the vastness of silence that whispers to you directly without words. We won't stop knowing or becoming aware, because it'll trickle down from Intent. The awareness that fills you with wonder is our link to the vastness.

(The Sorcerers' Crossing, by Taisha Abelar, is available from Viking Penguin Press. Keith Nichols is a freelance writer, clairvoyant, and editor located in Berkeley, California.)

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