

Our true mind is the body

THE ENERGY THRESHOLD

BOOK ONE - THE MASTERY OF AWARENESS

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Marco Baston

The Energy Threshold

Toltec Shamanism in Daily Practice

BOOK ONE

THE MASTERY OF AWARENESS

(Shifting the Attention)

Edizioni Intento

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PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

Together with *The Art of Stalking* and *The Mastery of Intent*, this book forms a single corpus named “The Energy Threshold.” In its original, 2013 edition, it had been published in a single volume. Now, however, the need has clearly manifested to re-edit the whole text, making it more precise and delving deeper into and expanding on several of its sectors. This operation has resulted in an even more extensive work, making it necessary for me to divide it in three books, which are easier to handle, also thanks to the different layout and fonts. Consequently, the book has also become easier to read.

Moreover, this separation enhances both the differences and connections between the three fields of activity of Nagualism, making it possible to use the three parts separately and, thus, in a more flexible form.

PROLOGUE

THREE FUNDAMENTAL EPISODES

The Dream

Night.

I'm in the midst of my dreaming and a special aspect of the dream draws my attention, an energy configuration that appears like a gateway. I get closer: there is a breach in the continuity of the dream, created by a cluster of energy that organizes itself in a whirl. It irresistibly attracts me to the point where it includes me, and I enter some sort of very narrow tunnel, made exactly to fit my measure. It feels like I am sliding through it, being pushed forward by its own pressure. I cannot stop anymore and, finally, I emerge at the other end, quite like coming out from the uterus again.

The place I arrive at is outstanding for its emotional quality. Visually it appears like a valley in the midst of soft hills, a small village in its center. Apparently it is early morning. There is a strange hidden peculiarity that touches me deeply. I know that the sight is a result of the deployment of the dreaming attention, mediated by my interpretation, and that this world's energetic reality could be very different from what it seems. At first, I believe that all this is sustained thanks to my dreaming attention, and nevertheless I'm impressed. Never before had I succeeded in maintaining a dreaming position with such a coherence, precision and depth of intent. Every detail is perfect, delightful: it has the consistency of the ordinary reality, with the plus of the possibilities of dreaming. I am satisfied with the result, I must admit. But there is something more, something different. An indefinable property of this place keeps my center for the vibratory aspect of energy lit, without me doing anything, without any effort. It seems that this place is donating awareness. It is freedom.

I decide to go down to the village. I walk a small country lane that leads through grassland and bushes. Approaching the first houses, I see some people there. Usually, I'm rather wary regarding encounters in this kind of dream; however, this time I feel the urgent need to reach those people. It is a basic need that touches something at the very center of myself: a mixture of unconditional love and nostalgia.

As soon as I get close enough to recognize them, I am left dumbfounded, breathless. There they are: the people I never expected to meet again in my existence as a human being. Then, suddenly, I start to understand. It is the understanding of the energy body, hence I know without the shadow of a doubt where I am: this is a world of free beings. I burst into tears, already knowing that I cannot stay. They gather round me; silently they welcome me. Felipe comes near and speaks to me:

"It was necessary to say goodbye coherently, as we could not do so in the other attention mode. Unfortunately your time here is about to end, you don't have enough energy. For you it has already been much to reach us in this aspect of awareness. It is what we expected and hoped; that you could develop enough discipline to get a guide to this world. As you now know, it is from this territory that freedom starts. It is the threshold of a different universe. However, to gather the qualities needed to cross this threshold you must return from where you came and undertake a task. Bringing this task to an end could give you the necessary inner power to finally join us. There is no other way."

I know that there is nothing I can say or do to modify the direction of the intent of infinity and to stay here immediately. *"What is this task?"*, I ask. Felipe looks at me, smiling. For a moment I can see in his eyes what this different universe he is talking about could be, but for me it is totally incomprehensible, beyond my receptivity. *"The task will unequivocally reach you, don't worry."* Felipe steps aside, while the other warriors of his group come to say goodbye, one at a time, each in his own way. Each one brings a gift, a fragment of what will be useful to me.

Lastly, my teacher of stalking comes closer. *"We are waiting for you, bring the other people, too"* After having heard her last words the dream starts to lose its coherence; I am not able to hold this position of the assemblage point anymore.

Then, an uncontrollable force sucks me back to my origin, my physical body.

The Appointment

During the wintertime of 1994 I was in Mexico, visiting some communities as part of a development project regarding medicinal plants. One day, accompanied by a professor from Tlaxcala University, I went to a village at the feet of Pico de Orizaba. First we took a walk to examine some areas in the immediate neighborhood of the village, used for the community cultivations. We were about fifteen people, among whom a traditional healer, and we were talking about the use of medicinal plants in that area and about the possibility to introduce some into the cultivation (I am an agronomist, and in those days that was my field of interest). After the visit to the plots of land we all went to one of the families' house to continue our conversation.

The building was made of adobe and wood. It was a rural Mexican environment, one room with a wood-fired stove in brickwork, where the courtyard animals moved freely, with a table and a few chairs. A hammock hung from a couple of wooden pillars in the back of the room. The *cafe de olla* boiled on the fire, and we all got offered a cup. During the discussion my attention was drawn to a man who sat apart. He gazed at me fixedly. It seemed as though his eyes were piercing through me, catching something that was hidden to everybody else. He seemed to be of a certain age and yet, although he stood completely still, something, simply in the way he was sitting, transmitted a strange youthful vigor. Or maybe he emanated an inner discipline that manifested as tangible energy. After we had finished talking, I left the building to have a look at the volcano. While I was absorbed in admiring the mountain, somebody drew near me. I turned to the person: it was the same man who shortly before had contemplated me in that particular manner.

He did not look at me. Remaining oriented towards the volcano, he started talking: *"Don't worry, the form you don't possess anymore wasn't necessary, on the contrary, it was only an obstacle. The thing you need now is a new order in your existence. It was unavoidable that you couldn't find it. You have not understood the necessity of discipline yet. The way you overcame the human form has dragged the inconsistency of the abyss into your life. To make it concrete, you must reach unbending intent."*

I was petrified. At the very moment he expressed these words, I knew exactly what he meant. I literally understood the significance that his words had for me, not by some strange magic, but because they were the answers, regarding my situation, that I had expected for years. The second this understanding reached me, I also realized that I always knew these answers, but that I never could give a meaning to what had happened to

me. It was as though that man were translating words from an apparently incomprehensible language, the key to which simply lay in listening. Later this language would become very familiar to me. Then he turned to me and said straightforwardly that he was there for me, that infinity had set up this meeting point, this appointment, with the purpose to offer me a unique opportunity. There would not be another. I would need to decide the direction of my existence in that moment, on the slopes of the volcano. The man I met on the side of the volcano was my benefactor. The intermediary of infinity.

Infinity (the Nagual)

Years before.....

While I'm having dinner, I feel a cold shiver, like fluid ice, that ascends my spine. It is "internal," as if it were inside the spinal marrow. After a moment it passes. I don't know what it is, but it seems to be over. Later I go to bed. But while falling asleep, it happens: something changes deeply and irreparably, the whole of myself opens and I literally start falling to pieces, fragmenting.

I get on my feet, trying to stop this devastation. It is not a mental process, my thoughts are separated from each other; I can watch them fluctuating, blocked, but they don't have the slightest influence on the ongoing process. What happens to me is physical, totally physical. After a moment (today I consider it that, but in reality I don't know the time measure in that place) my body does not exist anymore. I have no possibility to perceive it as we usually do. Instead, there is an infinite quantity of my selves, of possible I, which slowly but relentlessly drift away from each other. As they diverge, I can see what separates them, the space in between, which my possible selves are now able to include. In this space there is everything that exists, every possible thing, any universal element. As soon as I direct my attention to a detail of the world, I immediately "know." It is not a thought, there is no thought, there is only knowledge, knowledge and possibilities.

At the same time I am aware of each of my viable selves, of any form I could assume. Yet, there is a further awareness: there is a limit. Beyond this limit, my vital force is not able to guarantee the bond between the parts that compose me. Beyond this threshold, there is only the final abyss, the end of what I am as a whole of possible conscious beings. This is death, I recognize it, I remember it.

At the same time when I realize this shattering truth, I become aware of a special point in a part of myself that has no motion in that instant and yet it is completely defined. It is the only immovable part of myself, not affected by the wind of infinity that is scattering me. I know that, if I want to survive, I will need to gather myself around this center. Immediately. Hence, I begin to recall my pieces, exerting power on the energy bonds that emanate from this point (later on I will find out that this power center regulates the vibratory aspect of energy). It takes me all night long, without stopping the fight for a moment.

The next morning I am more or less re-composed, although parts of me continue to reach strange places at the slightest impulse. All day long I am in an ineffable state, having a strange and immediate knowledge of anything that crosses my path. The trouble is that every time a unit of knowledge reaches me, I am risking falling into pieces again. In the evening, I am near the window that looks over the hills towards the sea. I pick up the book I began to read a few days ago; but I open it randomly and, when I start flicking through it, the understanding of the event reaches me. There I find an exact description of my experience, told differently, yet my body (today I would say **energy** body) recognizes the deeper sense of the text. Then I look out of the window at the sunset. An entity touches me in the center that enabled my re-composition and lights it with an incomparable power, creating a connection. All at once I recognize the being that has touched me: it is the Earth, alive and aware. I know that I love it and that my *unconditional* love for this being will be my guide.

The book was *Tales of Power* by Carlos Castaneda.

Finally, I managed to regain unity. Yet, I was not the same anymore. What I knew as myself had vanished, an unreachable, fading phantom. Any traits I might have cataloged as my own had disappeared, beyond reach. I had forever lost my self-image. In my new condition I could be anything but, for years, I was not able to find a sustainable arrangement, suitable for the conditions of this world. I had to get to the appointment to be shown what to do with this new opportunity.

INTRODUCTION

The dream narrated above represented for me the end of a cycle and the start of a totally new and unexpected task. I now understand that I received a command from the active side of infinity, which I cannot ignore. This command is to make some parts of the rule and the Toltec knowledge system accessible.

Gradually, everything will have to come to light, it is no longer necessary to keep anything secret. These books are a collection of operative practices directly related to the Toltec tradition. They are part of the Toltec heritage. This new mode of knowledge dissemination was launched, with an incomparable mastery, by the last Nagual in the lineage of Don Juan Matus, Carlos Castaneda. I have done nothing but follow directions for a new time mode, trying to offer something more, to increase the fluidity in favor of the human spirit. The new course shows a direction that is called **evolution**, and it also shows that such development should be available to all.

I will say something about myself now, at the beginning of the book, to make it as clear as possible what the origin of everything discussed below is, from which context it originates, and why it has been decided to disclose it. The three experiences that I narrate at the beginning, which are connected to each other, reflect the sense of this and of the other associated texts, their reason. They are meant to emphasize the importance of energetic integrity, and this is the reason why they were placed in the opening. As you read, you will find other episodes connected to specific techniques. Keep in mind that they serve to indicate the crux of the matter and to understand the practice. For this reason I will call them the *“nuclei of the practice.”*

I was lucky enough to take the warrior's path more than thirty-five years ago, thanks to a person who was able to show me energy as it flows in the universe. I owe him my eternal gratitude, but unfortunately I no longer have any way to thank him directly and appropriately for the gift I received. Through the spirit, however, of which this person was an instrument, I still have a chance to thank him, and this book bears witness of it; in some way, it is his perpetuation.

At the time of that first experience of mine, I knew nothing of Nagualism, Toltecs, or Carlos Castaneda. I then started reading his books, finding there

a lot of my experiences and much more. It was natural for me to accept that Castaneda had related facts that had really happened.

At that point, having understood through direct knowledge that everything described in Castaneda's texts was true, I committed myself deeply, I would say with almost unbending intent, to the practical application of what was reported. My commitment was such as to lead me to results well beyond my expectations... and my limits in the ability to control the situation. The situation went so far beyond that I had to suspend, take distance from Nagualism. I never abandoned it completely, but I could not push onward. Instead, I had to reacquire my balance and inner strength. The problem, as I comprehended much better later on in Mexico, resided in the lack of understanding of the need and nature of stalking.

Thereafter, I was nevertheless able to preserve my energy until I reached a crucial point that allowed me to make a special meeting. A number of coincidences, that today I know were not random, took me to the *appointment* with my benefactor. Of this person I can only relate one of the names he uses, not because it is forbidden to talk about him, but out of respect for the warrior's battle against his own image. I therefore call him Felipe Amezcua. He belongs to the same Toltec tradition as Don Juan and his group, although he is part of another lineage. So this is a different branch of the new seers, yet generated from the same tree. Even though it was part of the same tradition, Felipe Amezcua's method of making me understand the nature and the maneuverability of the assemblage point differs from that described by Castaneda and used with him by Don Juan and his group. The difference lies not so much in the structure and the purpose of the cognitive system, but rather in the nature of what originates the displacement of the assemblage point in the learning phase (if you do not know what is meant by "assemblage point," see a little below the "observations by the seers on the nature of universe"). The lineage that Felipe belongs to prefers, apart from totally exceptional cases, a method that tends to encourage, from the very beginning, the displacement **from within**.

Let me clarify what I mean. The assemblage point can move because "pushed" by external causes or as a result of an internal maneuver of the living entity it belongs to. In this second case, it is the being itself that generates the energy momentum necessary to displace the assemblage point. External causes may be accidental (trauma, disease, frightening events, etc.) or induced, as in the case of power plants and the famous "Nagual's blow," or otherwise through systems where the energy to move the assemblage point is borrowed from another being or force.

The maneuver from within, on the other hand, takes place through a

constant and unbending application of specific techniques and a perceptual and behavioral reeducation; but especially by leading the apprentice to the understanding of the nature of the assemblage point and of the need to acquire its maneuverability.

From what I am given to understand, in the lineage of Don Juan both systems were used alike; in that of Felipe, however, mainly the second, the internal one, was used. This difference arises from the different history of the two lineages. At one time, the *Nagual's blow* (and not only) was also used in Felipe's lineage for clearly specified reasons. Apprentices, thanks to the Nagual's blow, immediately join the system, although they do not remember it in their state of normal awareness. The demonstrations of the assemblage point movements are quick, immediate, and hence, if all goes well, the progress of the apprentice is very fast too.

But then the situation changed. About two hundred years ago there was an incident that almost led to the extinction of the lineage and thus induced everyone to re-evaluate the nature of the method. The main risk, they realized, is that the apprentice gets used to obtaining the assemblage point shift through the intervention of external factors. This, in beings already prone to indulging, can result in total disaster.

Consider also that lazy warriors are actually not few. If, however, the inner strength is fostered and developed from the beginning, a person either learns what sobriety is, or gives up immediately. In short, there is a very narrow selection straightaway.

Furthermore, inducing the displacements of the assemblage point through external factors is antithetical to the freedom of choice, that is, to the final purpose of Nagualism, which is precisely freedom.

The method from within implies that the apprentice has freely understood and accepted everything that the decision to safeguard energy in order to obtain the maneuverability of the assemblage point involves. It lastly requires to gain a special harmony and precise coordination of stalking and intent, a condition that allows to endure unharmed the wind of infinity.

So, in our case, the apprenticeship initially occurs in the state of normal awareness; only after the apprentices have learned to intensify their state of consciousness does the apprenticeship move to the left side. For those who transmit knowledge, drawing great benefit and enjoyment from this task, such a method also requires an extremely sophisticated application of the art of stalking. Moreover, I now realize another reason why the movement from within is advantageous: this method is available to anyone, you do not need a Nagual that will push your assemblage point, you can do it yourself. Another reason, among others, for which this book has been written.

I could indicate Felipe as the true author of this book because, despite the fact that I was already applying many techniques when I met him, I owe to him the deeper understanding of their scope, as well as having been able to go to the bottom of the practices and principles and thus to achieve final and fully aware outcomes. Above all, thanks to his guidance, I was able to grasp the fundamental connection between the components of this system. So my only task was to arrange the words in order to make this knowledge accessible. I must say that such exercise was crucial for me, since I was forced to make an effort to connect different worlds, an effort that I would have never made otherwise. Developing the necessary discipline to accomplish this task was for me a priceless act.

This book is a collection of “Nagualistic” practices (below I will use the term “Nagualism” to refer to the set of knowledge and practices also described by Carlos Castaneda in his books/testimonies and aimed at reaching the possibility of freedom).

Apart from the episodes that serve, as I said above, to highlight the very heart of the matter, I wish to point out that this is a strictly technical work, a sort of *manual*. In this sense it is aimed at the exposition of those methods I know which allow you to head for a number of objectives. Among these, the ones mainly treated in this book are the cutting-off of the internal dialogue and the consequent voluntary displacement of the assemblage point. Therefore, the book doesn't relate my own experiences, drawing from them a framework of the Toltec cognitive system, as Castaneda has done. For various reasons I decided to follow a different method to transmit this knowledge.

I am aware that it is perhaps less glamorous than a collection of short stories “from the battlefield.” But I needed to obtain two main results: the first was my intention to let my person disappear as much as possible, placing it in the background, behind the content; the second was that the explanation of the Toltec system should result in being as accessible as possible in the first attention. In fact, the books of Castaneda require a double reading: in the first attention and then in a condition of heightened awareness, so as to grasp different contents. I have tried, wherever possible, to raise to the surface, that is, within direct reach of the first attention, everything I could. And the best way to do so was to use a “technical” style and language.

I did not decide to subtitle this book *Beyond Tensegrity* because I consider Tensegrity to be outdated. Still, based on my experience, I know that Tensegrity must go alongside other practices that allow its effects to be truly effective. These techniques, together with Tensegrity and the “right way of living” or “warrior’s way,” allow to draw closer to the goals of Nagualism in a fast, direct, and efficient way. Moreover, the reference to the practice of Tensegrity helps to attract the attention of all who have already come close to this discipline, as it is the best known among the Nagualistic practices. I have maintained this term in the book out of respect for the person who has brought the knowledge of this technique to the masses, even though, in my lineage, movements of this nature are known with other names, such as “reaching the energy threshold” or “exploring the area of possibilities.” There is also a series of movements that are a great deal more elaborate and complete, with respect to the single Tensegrity passes, that my lineage calls the “Sequence for the Predominance of the Energy Body.” I have already published the relevant book prior to this new edition of *The Energy Threshold*.

This book specifically deals with the mobility of the assemblage point and, therefore, how to obtain the suitable conditions to ensure that this displacement takes place. Needless to say, the effectiveness of these arts will depend entirely on your personal commitment. Basically there is only one way to get results: apply an unbending intent that is targeted or, in other words, with a very clear purpose and take it, without hesitation, to its natural conclusion. To take the path of a warrior requires being fully aware of the need for a constant, nonstop commitment.

Having clarified this, we can move on. A part of the techniques listed here has already been described more or less explicitly in Carlos Castaneda’s books. Since they are part of the same tradition to which I belong, and since they are fundamental practices, also connected to all the others contained in here, I could not do anything else but try to give them a non-random order, inserting them into a system of practices aimed at specific results. Then there is a whole other part of techniques that have not been treated in Castaneda’s books, but are an integral part of Nagualism, belonging to the human spirit. I have received them from my lineage, or I simply caught them in the flow of possibilities as a gift from the spirit, when displacing my assemblage point. Others derive directly from the legacy of the ancient seers, whose tradition cannot at all be ignored. Of the latter I have only included the practices related to reiteration and interaction, because only from these I have been able to complete an extraction of the basic principles and apply them in an abstract way, in order to render them suitable to

modern man. I left out other practices I know about, but that I myself avoid using. However, I reserve the possibility to treat them in the future, if I can make them accessible with the least possible side effects. In short, I have tried to make available *a method* to meet the challenge of the warrior in the most effective way possible. I hope I succeeded in the intent.

The language and terms used to describe reality as perceived by the seers are the same as those used by Castaneda, and with exactly the same meaning. Or, where I use different terms, arising from my own lineage, I also recall the name used by Castaneda to describe that particular notion. For example, instead of “gait of power” I have resort to “pace (or cadence) of attention.” Not to fancy myself, but because I think this terminology is far more appropriate to the function of this technique. Still, I use both expressions in order to recall immediately what it is. The use of a similar language is partly due to the fact that we belong to the same line of knowledge, but also to the need to transmit the information in a way that does not give rise to confusion, or at least limits the risk of misunderstandings as much as possible.

To describe the energy flow comprehensibly is already an enterprise that requires inhuman efforts. Therefore, once a term has assumed a particular meaning, to use the same word with a different meaning, or change the term to indicate the same thing, without having shared pragmatic references, risks frustrating the efforts of generations of seers. An evolution of the terminology actually can and should take place. It is very desirable in order to renew the description of the world and make it more and more precise (and in the book you will find several examples), but only if the new language is accompanied by a functional description that is really effective and precise. It must never be about changing the meaning of words already in use, but rather about the use of a new and more precise description instead of the existing one.

For each technique you will find described the mode of execution, its purpose and the “recommendations for use.” It is of vital importance not to exceed the limits imposed by our available energy (or the entirety of our personal power), although no one can say how far one can go. When in doubt, always stop in time.

When is the right time to stop?

It is the moment when, in order to go further, you have to use coercion against yourselves. This will only deplete you. I will return to this concept throughout the book, so I want to try to clarify it from the beginning. When I say that we must not use coercion against ourselves to go further, that we

must not violate our spirit to achieve results, I do not mean that we should not work hard or struggle.

The actual meaning is very different, and I know it can be confusing or become an excuse for not applying oneself with an unbending purpose. In practice, warriors must exercise a continuous, merciless battle against everything that, within themselves, prevents them from making the breakthrough. However, they should never, ever use violence.

The risk is of deforming their energy structure with unpredictable damage. The art of stalking exists also for this purpose: it dictates the exact modalities through which the warrior can lead a balanced battle. So we design and apply a strategy that moves us harmoniously beyond our (apparent) limits. That is why it is good to know one thing as of now: actually we do not have any limits, we ourselves set them. The unbending strategy of the warrior permanently puts an end to this situation. To overcome these constraints, however, we must become fully conscious that we can do so.

I have divided the techniques into sections that deal with different aspects of the Toltec system of knowledge. It is not so easy to separate the various aspects of Nagualism, because, on the practical level, they are not separate at all, they are one. However, I had to make this separation for didactical reasons, based on my personal experience and on that of some other people with whom I work on these techniques. At bottom, this exposition is nothing but a human inventory and, as such, subject to the constraints of the Tonal. Therefore, if you find better ways to order this system, extrapolating them from the flow of the rule, I can only thank you.

Basically, you will realize that everything is closely interconnected, one technique supports the other and can hardly be practiced in isolation and not aimed at general purposes, without triggering imbalances. Some principles are repeated in different sections of the book, but addressed from different angles and, therefore, their various purposes are brought to light. I had to do so because there are techniques or aspects of knowledge that overlap various Toltec arts of knowledge. Thus, the only choice was to examine them in their various facets, addressing them from the different points of view of their practical use. This also means that a first reading of this text may sometimes result in being unclear, until you have put all the items together. My advice is to just read it a first time as any reading, and then re-approach it as a manual, once you will have all the parts clear.

Some so-called techniques will simply appear as a series of behavioral observations. The fact is that many of the most effective practices, especially those regarding stalking and intent, derive closely from a change

in perspective that is not obtained by performing practices, movements, rituals or whatever, but through substantial changes of our world vision and our daily behavior.

Two key chapters cover stalking and dreaming, that is the two main ways to displace and fix the assemblage point. Then, there are some other groups of techniques treated separately, both because they are of fundamental practical importance for the displacement of the assemblage point, and because they have their history and own life related mostly to the mastery of intent or awareness.

It is my intention, however, to make it clear that *you cannot use one practice only* and think that this can bring really effective results. Nagualism is a system; indeed, it is not only Tensegrity, or this plus recapitulation, it requires much more. It requires an unbending intent, it requires a lucid strategy, it requires the mastery of attention, and so on.