

Comments on *2012: Decoding the Countercultural  
Apocalypse* (ed. Joseph Gelfer, Equinox Pubs, December 2011)

John Major Jenkins

January 23, 2012

Thank you to Joseph Gelfer for providing a wonderful opportunity, and for the work he has done to make this much needed book. His introduction is a fair and open-minded guide to the anthology and to the various contributors. He said a few things that are particularly important to underscore. In disclosing his early work with Daniel Pinchbeck and the Evolver group, he addresses the fair fact that such associations should not be a reason to disqualify someone's perspectives or contributions. Inquiring minds will engage with topics of interest in a great variety of participatory ways. The scientific myth of the objective observer is thus called into question, or at least put into perspective. Several persistent critics of all-things-2012 love to use such associations to place 2012 researchers into virtual concentration camps. Obviously, the problem with using such associations as a blanket brand to dismiss unwanted people, is that such a strategy reveals elitist agendas by small-minded pedants. Usually, the perpetrators are selective; they give a pass to selected individuals who they do not wish to mitigate (usually because they are a colleague) while amplifying — and often inventing — compromising associations for others.

In various published places, going back many years, I have also addressed this conceit which is maintained and consciously practiced by many ethically challenged scholars; at least one can be identified among the contributors to Gelfer's anthology. In the interest of having a discerning approach to how investigators study and relate to their subjects, I have often alluded to Barbara Tedlock's early discussion of the framework of "human intersubjectivity" in her 1982 book *Time and the Highland Maya* (see, for example, my comments in Jenkins 1992/1994)

A larger and more open-minded approach is necessary, and Gelfer puts this on the table. Gelfer thus addresses an important caveat in regard to the 2012 topic, which often involves participation in — and attempts to speak to or address — pop-culture, "visionary" creative processes, and fringe media venues. Such a caveat should be taken to heart by two contributors to this anthology who frequently invoke the value (and possibility) of scientific objectivity — Mark Van Stone and John Hoopes. Van Stone's personal attitude and ideological alliances are transparently revealed in a pop-media interview agreeing that the whole 2012 thing is "a lot of crap" and that "the world *is* ending!" (John Gambling show, December 20, 2011). We should acknowledge that Van Stone is speaking loosely here, off-the-cuff, but nevertheless his ideological convictions are revealed in this pop-radio conversation. As for Hoopes, in late 2008 he was interviewed by Jan Irvin on an internet radio program called "Gnostic Media." Applying Hoopes's own strategy that he has leveled at me — the "guilt by association" strategy — we should therefore conclude that Hoopes is a Gnostic.

Involvement and participation in the larger 2012 interest of global culture and media is unavoidable. I myself have been on a wide variety of television and radio shows and speak at many different types of conferences — both academic and popular venues.

But, again, having an association with a magazine or a conference obviously does not necessarily mean that one agrees with the beliefs of the conference organizers, or even the overall theme of the conference itself, which are usually promoted in the typically kitschy ways. Such venues are, simply, another venue where one may present one's work, reaching demographics not available elsewhere. In fact, due to the utter disregard and pejorative judgment of 2012 by academia for many many years, during which few academic journals or publishers or conferences would touch the 2012 topic, I've been forced by default for many years to present my research almost exclusively to non-academic conferences, publishers, and magazines. The exceptions include two presentations I gave to the Institute of Maya Studies (in 1997 and 2011), and unofficially at various schools in Mexico, Guatemala, and the USA (namely, the Universidad Francisco Marroquin in Antigua, Guatemala, the Universidad del Valle in Tapachula, Mexico, Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, and a student-group-sponsored event at the University of Oregon in Eugene). More recently, due to the increasing interest among scholars, I was invited to present my work at the highly regarded academic *Society for American Archaeology* conference (April 2010).

So, Gelfer's observations and framing caveats are most welcome. More can be said on this, but Gelfer's pointing out that a reading of my own summary of what my work has consistently been about for over 20 years (which I offer in my chapter) can be compared to what critics in this same anthology (such as Larsen and Hoopes) imaginatively state about me and my work. The discrepancies that result are testimony enough to the "contradictions" that exist between what I've actually stated in my published work and what my critics choose to mis-paraphrase or otherwise selectively misrepresent (see my detailed comments on Larsen and Hoopes below). In my 2009 book *The 2012 Story* (Tarcher/Penguin) I identified this as a predictable consequence of an outsider doing valid scholarly research on a topic (namely, 2012) that was maintained as a running joke among professional scholars for many years, who are then forced into a real consideration of the topic by unexpected new evidence (namely, Tortuguero Monument 6). When ideas are then identified that echo what the dismissed independent outsider had been saying for years, an extreme cognitive dissonance ensues, and irrational summaries with intent to mitigate begin to occur, committed by those, such as John Hoopes, who see themselves as gate-keeping protectors of their elite guild. It's a text-book situation, really, well known from other examples throughout the history of science. First, the independent outsider who "got there first" is ignored or wanly dismissed, then they are violently opposed and attacked; then, the professional scholars adopt the new breakthroughs *as if they had known them along*.

The past twenty years of my work, and the documented reception of my work including the shift in scholarly attention that occurred in 2011, is testimony to this process. The shift I allude to is the recent publishing of articles by scholars in the Cambridge IAU Vol. 278 (July 2011) and the interpretations by scholars offered at the 7<sup>th</sup> Palenque Round Table (in November 2011). Here, in these two academic venues, we see an echoing of both my ideological and astronomical interpretations of what 2012 meant to the ancient Maya. Partial precursors to these full-blown events of 2011 include Gronemeyer & MacLeod's Wayeb no. 34 study (<http://www.wayeb.org>) released in August 2010 (in which the discussion of TRT astronomy, already presented in my April 2010 SAA piece, was not mentioned or treated), John B. Carlson's museum presentation

of May 2010 (during which he stated factually incorrect things about my understanding of Maya astronomy), and Van Stone's self-published book of March 2010 (an elaboration of his power-point-style treatment of 2012, posted on the FAMSI website in late 2008). All of Van Stone's treatments — including his contribution to this Gelfer volume — are highly problematic and misleading, in the selective presentation style as well as in the content, citation practice, presumptions brought to his analysis, and in the logic of his deductions. See my review of Van Stone's 2010 book at <http://www.Update2012.com>, November update).

### **General comments**

As with many academic treatments of 2012, the contributions to Gelfer's anthology largely analyze 2012 through the lens of the pop-culture phenomenon that surrounds it. In fact, only my article, and parts of Van Stone's and Sitler's, address any evidence for how the ancient Maya thought about 2012. I appreciated Robert Sitler's chapter (and his more recent findings on a possible 13-Baktun reference in Makemson's *Jaguar Priest*) and discuss his work with the world-renewal theme and the contemporary Maya Spiritual Guides in more detail in my 2009 book *The 2012 Story*.

### **Summary of my article**

There are basically two parts to my article: my response to scholarly critics, and new breakthroughs on understanding 2012 based upon the Tortuguero Monument 6 text. On the first part, it is abundantly clear that every single scholarly critic of my work never accurately summarizes my work or the evidence I bring to bear on my conclusions. Instead, in a completely reprehensible way they conflate me with other writers in the 2012 meme or draw from distorted appropriations of my work committed by other writers. My 20+ years of critique of "New Age" writers within "the 2012 phenomenon" (a term Geoff Stray and I were using well before 2006) is never acknowledged, while scholars begin to repeat the same critiques (of Calleman, Arguelles, etc) that I made long ago. In the second part of my chapter, I summarize progressive breakthroughs in understanding the astronomy of the 13 dates on Tortuguero Monument 6, drawing from the work of Maya scholars Barb MacLeod and Michael Grofe as well as my work as presented to the by-invitation-only academic venue, the *Society for American Archaeology*, in April 2010. This work was later expanded in my essays released in 2010-2011 at *The Center for 2012 Studies* and in my recent book *Lord Jaguar's 2012 Inscriptions* (September 2011). This work was also presented and subjected to scholarly critique in a public Facebook discussion approved and moderated by the scholars at the Maya Exploration Center (Dr. Ed Barnhart and associates) in December 2010. See the resulting 206-page PDF file at: <http://thecenterfor2012studies.com>.

### **Mark Van Stone**

Van Stone's ideation and comments on 2012, and the 2012 milieu of writers, is consistently problematic. He doesn't distinguish my pioneering work from its later distortions by other writers. In fact, in a polemically effective putting-the-cart-before-the-horse, he exploits those later distortions while neglecting to quote, cite, or even mention my first enunciation of those ideas. Rather than citing me specifically, he alludes generically to "2012 millennialists" or "latter-day prophets." I'd be needlessly repeating

myself here to go into more detail, so I direct the interested reader to my critique of his work in Jenkins 2009 (*The 2012 Story*) and in the freely available link-threads at [http://www.Update2012.com/Review\\_Mark\\_Van\\_Stone-book.html](http://www.Update2012.com/Review_Mark_Van_Stone-book.html). These links provide email conversations between myself and Van Stone going back to early 2008. Mark Van Stone, like Hoopes, sees himself as a debunker-gatekeeper, and cannot bring himself to actually cite my work—even when he critiques and dismisses in his book the relevance, or fact, of the era-2012 galactic alignment. Quite astounding to witness, actually.

### **Michael Coe**

Coe loosely cites “galactic alignments” in a list of nefarious topics. I wish Coe would have read my work on the galactic astronomy, available in my many books, online essays, and published articles going back to 1994, before misrepresenting the galactic alignment in such a way. Or, perhaps, he will read my chapter in this book, and understand that types of “galactic alignments” are indeed embedded into TRT Monument 6 and elsewhere (e.g., the 9.14.0.0.0 date on Copan Stela C). Ironically, my article doesn’t explore all the various manifestation of galactic alignments throughout Maya history. Coe states his belief that the Maya had only a “rudimentary, naked-eye astronomy” and that their “mystic” understanding of the world is “trumped any day by what modern science has to tell us” (p. xi). Such a position on their level of astronomical knowledge is clearly mitigated by Grofe’s work, MacLeod’s work, my work, Hatch’s work on precession at La Venta and Takalik Abaj, and recent studies of the Dresden, Madrid, and Paris codices. The scientism evident in wielding the club of science over mysticism would benefit from understanding *the non-dual basis of Maya cosmovision*, as I discussed at length in my book *The 2012 Story* (2009). The larger questions would be: What are the limits of what can be known and calculated with what modern science pejoratively identifies as “primitive” techniques? (The Greek astronomer Hipparchus discovered precession with only naked-eye observations.) And how effective can the one-sided paradigm of science be in understanding the non-dual paradigm of the Maya?

### **Kristine Larsen**

Larsen believes “there will be no alignment in 2012” (p. 99). I have already addressed the fallacious basis of her now-cliché argument long, long ago, in my debates with astronomers in 1999 and 2004 (see [http://alignment2012.com/maya\\_calendar.html](http://alignment2012.com/maya_calendar.html) and <http://alignment2012.com/responsetostrous.html> and <http://alignment2012.com/openletter.htm>). I coincidentally addressed Kristine Larsen’s main objection — that there is a discrepancy between the precise calculation of the galactic alignment (in 1998) and the Maya’s 2012 cycle ending — in my own chapter, because I addressed Ed Krupp’s same fallacious position. This unstated assumption, which — amazingly — is still used as a legitimate critique of my 2012 alignment theory, is that a 14-year discrepancy in a precessional calculation projecting forward over 2,000 years is enough to render the theory “debunked.” Such a position, evidently held by Larsen as well as Krupp, requires that the Maya had a superhuman ability to know and calculate the precession of the equinoxes with absolute precision. I actually anticipated and addressed this critique in previous works many years ago, which my critics don’t read and so continue to propagate fallacious and baseless “debunkings.” The ridiculous nature of such a position should be readily obvious. One wonders if Larsen would be

amenable to my theory should the Maya cycle ending have fallen in 1998? That would provide a precise calculation of the solstice point's alignment with the galactic equator made by Meeus (in *Mathematical Astronomy Morsels*, 1997).

Of course, as I pointed out Meeus did not offer an error range, as most astronomical calculations of this nature should. We might want to apply a minimal plus-minus 3-year error range. Then, would Larsen be okay if the 13-Baktun cycle ending of the Maya pointed to 1995, or 2001? And what about allowable ranges that we might tolerate for the ancient Maya astronomers who were trying to make forward calculations in precession? Would we grant them, say, a 10-year error range? That would be 1/7<sup>th</sup> of a degree of precessional motion. How about 14 years? That's 1/5<sup>th</sup> of a degree — a tiny sliver of the width of the full moon. The issue here is that the “debunking” critique offered by Larsen is absurdly unreasonable, IF we think the implications through. That is not something that my critics often do; they seize upon a misleading talking point and just repeat it *ad nauseum*, without caring to access or respond to my own published analysis.

Larsen's other *faux pas* involves her loose paraphrasing summary that I believe the galactic alignment to be “an alignment of the solar system with the galactic centre ... heralding the birth of a new spiritual age” (p. 98). Although in some very generalized contexts it may be permissible to use this kind of loose phraseology, in actual fact I have clearly defined, in astronomical terms, what the galactic alignment is — and I have done this many many many many many times. It can be found on the back cover of my 1998 book *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012*. I posted my “What is the Galactic Alignment?” page on my website 11 years ago (<http://alignment2012.com/whatisGA.htm>). It is discussed at length, with a consideration of the various ranges and definitions, in my 2002 book called *Galactic Alignment* (which is Larsen's primary source for my work!). I've discussed the various misconceptions about the galactic alignment in many articles over the last decade. My 2009 book *The 2012 Story* — which thoroughly summarizes and also treats this issue in-depth — was already out well before the deadline for the Gelfer anthology.

Furthermore, as proof of the deceptive and inaccurate nature of Larsen's critique she cites two pages from my book *Galactic Alignment* as the place from which she derived the above quote, which I'll provide here in full: **“According to Jenkins, the alignment of the solar system with the galactic centre on the Winter Solstice was interpreted by the Maya to be the Great Mother (Milky Way) giving birth through the Great Cygnus Rift, heralding the birth of a new spiritual age (Jenkins 2002: 18, 259)”** (Larsen 2011:98). Now, let's read the two pages that she cited (18 and 259), reproduced for your edification [here](#) and [here](#). The reader will find that instead of the vague and inaccurate definition of the galactic alignment that she ascribes to me (involving “the solar system” and the “Great Cygnus Rift”), I in fact provide a detailed and careful definition and discussion of the galactic alignment that is astronomically accurate and highlights the Maya concepts that are relevant to my reconstruction. And instead of claiming that the alignment heralds “a new spiritual age” (as Larsen claims I do) my discussion is much more involved (see page 259) and focuses on Maya concepts of world-renewal.

What she is doing is smearing out the clarity I actually brought to the topic; we should suppose that she would also tend to say that Einstein believes if you take a magnet and twirl it around you on a string, then you won't age. I'm willing to give the benefit of

the doubt and assume that she simply doesn't know what she is talking about; then again, she did cite those two pages. I'm glad scholars are exercising their imaginations, however. My actual comments in those two pages can be stretched and twisted into her misleadingly inaccurate paraphrase only if they are forced through a biased and highly imaginative filter of distortion.

Later on in her review (p. 102) Larsen pejoratively dismissed the NBC Syfy documentary I was in (*2012: Startling New Secrets*). She neglected to point out that the focus of my appearance was on my documenting of a previously unknown large carved boulder near Izapa — an important and legitimate archaeological find. My full report with photos was posted on *The Center for 2012 Studies* website: <http://www.thecenterfor2012studies.com/birth-sacrifice-boulder.pdf>.

The thing that needs to be addressed here is how scholarly critics chose to dig through my large legacy of writings, looking for compromising statements found in general discussions, and exploit those exceptions to the rule while ignoring my own stated definitions and positions. The irony is that one can engage in a polemical misrepresentation of ANYONE and ANYTHING, if that is what one wants to do. Scholars are either intentionally doing this, as with John Hoopes, or are reflexively and semi-unconsciously doing it. In the end, the fact remains that to this day no scholarly critic has publicly and accurately summarized my work in a fair, accurate, and thorough way, yet they presumptively reject and dismiss my work. David Stuart's 2011 book on 2012 is a perfect example of this, which I reviewed at length (<http://www.Update2012.com>). Many of the Maya scholars are not applying rational assessments; they are more akin to the talking-point wielding pundits who reinforce misleading interpretations on Fox News.

### **John Hoopes**

John Hoopes claims that I stated my work was inspired by Helena Blavatsky's Theosophy, and cites my comments in my 1992/1994 book *Tzolkin*. He also states that I avoided such an admission in my later work. Both of his characterizations are wrong. This is yet another example of Hoopsian chicanery in his misleading disinformation campaign. It's rumor and innuendo, which has effect among undiscerning readers because he doesn't cite the actual quotes. Let's take a look. In my book — the book he cited (without a page reference) — Blavatsky does not appear in the index; none of her books were summarized in my Annotated Bibliography section, and a reference to Blavatsky can be found in only one place in the entire book. This is a 1-page section called "New Age Thoughts" in which I critique the unfortunate development of spiritual materialism in the New Age marketplace in the 1980s. I recounted how, as a 15-year growing up in the western suburbs of Chicago in the late 1970s, I happened across the Theosophical Society's library in Wheaton. And I was amazed to find all kinds of books in their library — far more interesting and thought-provoking than normal public library holdings. Being 15, I was indeed interested in all kinds of things, including oriental religions, spiritual schools of thought, Jungian psychology, and — well, here, let's just read what I wrote, and wonder at how John Hoopes could twist this into his two-pronged accusation:

The New Age movement has gotten more and more bizarre and differentiated in the last twenty years. I'd like to mention some thoughts on its development. Its spontaneous inception in the early seventies was mixed with the dying embers of the sixties. Astrology, the spiritual quest, Casteneda's books, meditation and Eastern Religions all offered an alternative to the traditional Judeo-Christian paradigm. By the late 70's the New Age movement had gathered a life of its own. Originally, it had the respected foundation of Jungian psychology, Joseph Campbell's ideas about mythology, and Buddhist/Tibetan doctrines. But then in the early 80s it began to be Yuppified and commercialized. This was similar to the demise of astrology in the 1600s, when it was sold to the capitalist dogs and marginalized. I can remember the process myself. **In '79 and '80 I was interested in fringe theories and radical philosophies. I used to ride my bike along the Prairie Path to Wheaton, where the national headquarters for the Theosophical Society is at. They had an esoteric library and bookstore where I found amazing books—Alan Watts, Casteneda, Jung, and Blavatsky.** It seems that a greater degree of simplicity and dignity were conveyed by the books available then. Throughout the 80's, everything differentiated into a multiplicity of crystals, therapies, workshops and seminars—and nothing was affordable. It almost became a joke, like the next thing you would expect to see was McDonald's giving away little crystals with the Big Deal Kid's Meal™.

Another way of looking at the process is that the 60s was like a collective psychic opening; the seventh seal was torn open, and then our culture became frightened in the face of the unknown and soon returned to a myopic fundamentalism. The simplicity of old ideas and tradition was like a haven of security, and this attitude spilled into politics and religions alike (e.g., the Ray-gun administration and televangelism). It even infiltrated elements of the New Age movement, infusing it with get-rich-quick opportunists and insta-guru recipes.

One way of looking at this is in good/evil terminology. In the aftermath of the 60s, magic and miracles happened, people were transformed and reborn, but, as time wore on, "evil spirits" were able to incarnate through the opened door and manifest dubious agendas. So there is much to critically examine in the New Age market. And yet, nothing should be condemned or banished. If such censorship begins to happen, we move closer to a sanctioned and subtle fascist control of the population. Such are the agencies which have damned many non-Christian religious groups as "cults." The Cult Awareness Network (C.A.N.) has a propaganda campaign against groups it feels are threatening, calling them cults, and the list ranges from Mormonism to the Sierra Club. Sounds like Jack London's *Iron Heel*. Oh well. I guess they are allowed to speak their minds, because this is a country which promotes freedom of speech and expression. Isn't it? (Jenkins 1992/1994: 167-168).

Let me highlight the three relevant sentences: “In ‘79 and ‘80 I was interested in fringe theories and radical philosophies. I used to ride my bike along the Prairie Path to Wheaton, where the national headquarters for the Theosophical Society is at. They had an

esoteric library and bookstore where I found amazing books—Alan Watts, Castaneda, Jung, and Blavatsky.”

The Theosophical Society library IS, indeed, filled with amazing books, including sacred texts of all the world’s major religious traditions. This doesn’t mean that I read them all; it doesn’t even mean that I read the ones by “Alan Watts, Castaneda, Jung, and Blavatsky” that “I found.” It certainly doesn’t mean that Blavatsky inspired me, or informed my later work. In my book I mention a great variety of personalities throughout history, including Jack London, Marilyn Monroe, Dostoevsky, the Buddha, Jesus, Karl Marx, Emily Bronte, Joseph Smith, Walt Whitman, Susan B. Anthony, Harriet Tubman, Gregor Mendel, Charles Meryon, William Blake, Goya, Shelly, Goethe, Sir Richard Burton, Baudelaire, Mirza Ali Muhammed, Florence Nightingale, Joseph Campbell, Carl Jung, Gottfried Leibniz, Napoleon Bonaparte, Olaf Stapledon, Galileo, Kepler, etc, etc, etc, etc. It’s fascinating that Hoopes chose to zero in on my brief, one-time, one-word, reference to “Blavatsky.”

Hoopes’s obsessive hook for his accusation is my frequent discussion in my books of the World Age doctrine. He believes that all ideas about World Ages are “Theosophical” and stem from Blavatsky. Thus, in Hoopes’s imagination anyone who writes about the World Age doctrine in any tradition must have been influenced or inspired by Blavatsky. This is, quite simply, a ridiculous position. As I’ve stated dozens of times, including in direct emails responding to Hoopes’s queries about my influences and sources, I learned of the relationship between the World Age doctrine and astronomy via the work of Joseph Campbell and Carl Jung. It is an idea that one routinely encounters in readings of global religions and philosophies.

Blavatsky certainly was an interesting character. And although I’ve never fully read her books — they are quite onerous, in my opinion — I’ve read about her life. I’ve also read about Rudolf Steiner and his work, about early Christianity before the Nicean council, about the life and teachings of Suhrawardi, about the cultic horrors of Jim Jones, about the messianic life of Sabbatai Sevi (through the work of Gershom Scholem) —but that does not that make me a follower of those people or their teachings. There are certain ideas present in Theosophy which do not exclusively belong to theosophy. The World Age doctrine is one. The idea that characters from various myths or religions represent avatars or archetypal energies, or human faculties, is another. These ideas have their own integrity apart from the Theosophical usage.

So, Hoopes’s accusations are inaccurate, childish, and self-serving, intended to defame. With his “Mayanism” construct he is engaged in creating a virtual concentration camp for those he wishes to brand as heretics, exponents of the “New Age” (who in his presentation in Austin Texas in March 2011 he associated with Nazis). The time I spent honestly responding to Hoopes’s questions, and my naïve assumption that he would accurately paraphrase what I shared with him, was betrayed by an intellectually dishonest scholar who was fishing for mitigating bits of personal history. He did not find what he was looking for, so he had to make it up and initiate another level of deceptive polemics. This is clear in his accusation that I sought to later conceal my “inspiration” from Blavatsky. Well, there was no inspiration, and in public talks through the years I have frequently alluded to that day in the late 1970s when I discovered the Theosophical Library in Wheaton. I’m talking frankly about it now; so what? I am a voracious reader



of many things — including fiction, biography, philosophy, and other non-fiction — which I assess carefully and critically.

I couldn't check out anything from the Theosophical library, so I had to sit there and read. I remember reading *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and *The Myth of Meaning* by Aneila Jaffe, on Jung's work, and *Jung, Synchronicity, and Human Destiny* — a very interesting book! I also was intrigued and challenged by the ideas of Krishnamurti, on emptiness and silence. This interesting figure, by the way, rejected the Theosophical Society's desire to groom him in the 1920s for a mission as a messiah figure. I guess that means — using Hoopsian logic — that I was “inspired” by a person who rejected Blavatsky's school! Hoopes is a perpetually narrow-minded pedant who is unwilling to assess my work accurately. For example, because I write about Maya spirituality and the perennial philosophy, he loves to throw me into his “Mayanism” pile, or the “New Age” box. I've encouraged him to read the sources on the perennial philosophy that have influenced me — Henry Corbin, Coomaraswamy, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, etc. In his limited, low resolution, undiscerning paradigm he thinks all of these writers are expositors of New Age thought. He grasps at straws, tries to craft misleading narratives designed to cast aspersions on me. Hoopes might want to actually read what I've written before he keeps spewing his misleading and factually flawed rhetoric.

Finally, in my 2002 book *Galactic Alignment* it is quite clear that I agree with René Guénon's assessment of Blavatsky and Theosophy as a modern derivation and distortion of ancient tradition doctrines (pp 144-45).

I just spent a good amount of space to addressing Hoopes's comments, because his is a serious lapse of professional responsibility and intellectual honesty, committed by him repeatedly — recently, for example, in *Archaeoastronomy* journal (released April 2011, sanctioned and protected by his editor John B. Carlson when I sought redress for the unsupported statements in July-August 2011).

### **Graham St John**

St John's piece deals with aspects of the 2012 “movement” that I haven't actively pursued. The rave / music / Be-ins / psychedelic trance events that grew up around McKenna and Arguelles are a phenomenon unto themselves and seem to be bolstered by speakers seeking to be the screen for such projections of the pop consciousness. I do not seek this. However, I have studied and written about Maya shamanism, use of sacred plants, consciousness and healing, and have taught classes in creative process. I have played the guitar and bouzouki for many years, and played at the Harmony Festival and at the Coalescence Festival in Arkansas. My earliest “gig” was at the Chicago Peace and Music Festival in 1989. I have written openly about my experiences with psychedelics, including isolation tank experiments I conducted in 1984. Related to all this is my advocacy for the perennial philosophy, which I've come to understand more deeply through my personal experiences as well as studying the writings of Henry Corbin, Rene Guenon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, Titus Burckhardt, Kathleen Raine, Seyyed Hossein Nastr, and others.

It can also be said that my early direct experiences with non-dual state of consciousness (which I've recounted in my early books as well as in my poetry) found form and expression through the language of the perennial philosophers — profoundly

challenging and intellectually rigorous expositions. As such, I clearly see how the insights into time and renewal that are expressed in the Maya Creation Mythology are archetypal expressions of the same universal and perennial insights found in other global traditions. My small-minded critics in Maya studies, namely John Hoopes, seem incapable of acknowledging or understanding the deep philosophical, metaphysical, and spiritual insights that are available for the rational intellect to study and instead they choose to denigrate it all, wholesale, as New Age poppycock. That's not discerning critical thinking, which Hoopes pretends he practices.

I was glad that Graham St John cited a contribution I made to a Reality Sandwich thread. This was way back in 2008, I believe. I was addressing Erik Davis's comments on Arguelles's Dreamspell system. I felt I had something to contribute that was not being covered, since I was the first to publish a systematic critique of Dreamspell in my 1992 book *Tzolkin* — 16 years earlier — and I continued to deal with Dreamspell fallout for many years, including the ideological legacy of the deposed Dreamspell system, Carl Calleman. In that thread, my comments galvanized a typical "skeptical" response from Hoopes, which led to an interesting exchange, which can be accessed in the online Reality Sandwich archives. The upshot is that people like Hoopes cannot acknowledge an ineffable reality transcendent to their scientism.

The specific comment that Graham St John cited related to my attempt to emphasize (for those on the list that were conflating the nature of my work, as John Hoopes likes to do, with Arguelles and Calleman) that my work has a *totally different approach to 2012*. I have offered a well-documented reconstruction of what the ancient Maya thought about 2012, starting with the site (Izapa) that many scholars believe was involved in the formulation of the Long Count/2012 calendar system. No one else has pursued that, before or since. In comparison, Arguelles invented a day-count at odds with the authentic day-count and a game that nobody could really understand so that we could divest ourselves of the 12:60 clock-time. And Calleman, following in that mode with his own invention, abandon rational research and the basic established facts of the Maya calendar to proselytized his own model of fractal time pointing not to 2012, but to October 28, 2011 — his own invented end-date. My work could not be farther from such free-form, irrational, poorly argued and supported mystifications.

### **Update and Conclusion**

All of the papers in the 2012 anthology edited by Gelfer were written over two years ago, with little chance for major revisions. Since December 2009, much has happened in the 2012 discussion. In the following list I focus on contributions to understanding what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. much of this necessarily revolves around my own work, because my work always has been and continues to be about this "aspect" of the larger 2012 phenomenon.

1. My SAA presentation (April 2010)
2. My email with Ed Barnhart (July 2010)
3. Gronemeyer & MacLeod Wayeb August 2010
4. The MEC-FACEBOOK discussion, December 2010
5. Oxford Peru IX conference (Jan 2012)
6. Interview on KPFC radio, with C.S. Soong (March 2011)

7. I finalized my Benfer article (March 2011)
8. My visit to TRT in Villahermosa March 2011
9. My review of Stuart's book on 2012 (June 2011)
10. Cambridge *IAU Vol. 278* — Grofe's response to Aveni
11. Release of my *TRT Report* and the *Birth-Sacrifice Boulder* (June 2011)
12. Release of my other essays at *The Center for 2012 Studies* (summer 2011)
13. My booklet: *Lord Jaguar's 2012 Inscriptions* – September 2011
14. Fall conferences: Seattle, LA, Toronto, CT, Little Rock
15. *Nexus* interview with Ravi Dykema, November 2011
16. *Wisdom Magazine* interview / piece.
17. Palenque Round Table 7 – November 2011 (Gronemeyer and Velasquez)
18. I send my review of MacLeod's/Van Stone's essay to them - lengthy
19. *IMS newsletter* TRT piece profile, by Jim Reed – Dec 2011
20. *Common Grounds* magazine interview (December 2011)
21. My last Aztlán post of 2011
22. *2012 Decoding* / Gelfer, released December 2011
23. I quit Aztlán (January 2011) – reasons: [Wiki / Aztlán censoring](#)
24. release of piece in *Mindscape* magazine (Andrew Gough, Jan 2012)
25. release of piece in *New Dawn* magazine (published Feb 2012)

As a final note, I fully recognize that Gelfer's anthology focuses on the larger pop-culture and media "phenomenon" of 2012, with relevant discussions about how humans respond to such archetypally-charged "end-dates" and their (often misguided) apocalyptic or transformational implications. As such, it deals less with attempts to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012 than, for example, the Cambridge *IAU Vol 278* (July 2011). The sociological, marketplace, and pop-culture inflections of the 2012 meme are certainly worth exploring and exposing. My own contribution to Gelfer's anthology, and my 2009 book *The 2012 Story*, shares my work on commenting on and critiquing the various writers within the "2012 Phenomenon" (a term that Geoff Stray, Jonathan Zap, and I were using long before Robert Sitler's piece, of that title, appeared in 2006). My work on this demonstrably goes back to my books in 1989 and 1992, so I can justifiably lay claim to providing the first exposés on "the 2012 phenomenon." In any case, I greatly appreciate the inclusion of my piece in Gelfer's anthology.

Since the second part of my piece provides a treatment of the new discoveries regarding Tortuguero Monument 6, and thus points the way to some evidence for how 2012 was being utilized and conceptualized by Lord Jaguar of Tortuguero, I open a way for deeper rational investigation.. Augmenting that evidence, which clearly requires and utilizes the "galactic alignment" dismissed by Coe, Van Stone, Hoopes, and Larsen in their essays, I point the interested reader to online links for several of the sources in the above list:

- My *Society for American Archaeology* presentation, "Astronomy in the Tortuguero Inscriptions" (April 2010, freely available at the Maya Exploration Center website and the Institute of Maya Studies website).\*

- The exhaustive debate about the above paper: the MEC-FACEBOOK discussion, sponsored by the Maya Exploration Center, available in full as a 206-page PDF at The Center for 2012 Studies website.\*
- Email with Ed Barnhart of the Maya Exploration Center, which addresses some of the typical questions about my work.\*
- My January 2011 *Institute of Maya Studies* presentation. [The video is posted in full and freely available on Youtube.](#)
- [My interview with C. S. Soong on KPFA radio, Berkeley.](#) A very good interview.
- My essay on my visit to TRT Mon 6 in March of 2011, posted on *The Center for 2012 Studies* website. My close-up photos force a re-evaluation of the currently-used line-drawings and allow for an argument that narrows Lord Jaguar's birthday to within one day of the exact sidereal-year parallel to the sun's position on 13.0.0.0.0 in 2012.\*
- Many other essays posted on *The Center for 2012 Studies* website.\*
- [My booklet titled \*Lord Jaguar's 2012 Inscriptions\*](#) (September 2011)

\*at: <http://thecenterfor2012studies.com/>

This list is the minimum reading assignment if one wants to be up-to-date on the recent breakthroughs in understanding how the ancient Maya thought about 2012. If that means anything to the pop-culture appropriation of 2012 for its own purposes.

### **Sources:**

Jenkins, John Major. 1992/1994. *Tzolkin: Visionary Perspectives and Calendar Studies*. Garberville, CA: Borderland Sciences Research Foundation.

—1998. *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012*. Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co.

—2002. *Galactic Alignment*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions.

—2009. *The 2012 Story: The Myths, Fallacies, and Truth Behind the Most Intriguing Date in History*. New York: Tarcher / Penguin.