

Fortgesetzte Diskussionen zu früheren Beiträgen

Continued Discussion on *Seventies Dreams and 21st-Century Realities* by Kevin A. Whitesides and John W. Hoopes

In: *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik* 12 (2012), 50-74

JOHN MAJOR JENKINS¹

The Coining of the Realm (of the 2012 Phenomenon): A Critique of the Whitesides and Hoopes Essay

In their article in *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*, Kevin Whitesides and John Hoopes state that Robert Sitler was “the first to use and define the term ‘2012 phenomenon’” (Whitesides & Hoopes, 2012: 50). They cite Sitler’s 2006 *Nova Religio* essay as the source. But Sitler himself, in his essay, mentions Geoff Stray’s book *Beyond 2012*, published in 2005, which Sitler states “promises to be the most comprehensive book on the 2012 subject to date” (Sitler, 2006: 29). In that book of 2005, Stray uses the term “the 2012 phenomenon” more than once,² first in a note to his Introduction, where he states:

www.diagnosis2012.co.uk – also known as 2012: Dire Gnosis, where *Dire* means serious or urgent, as well as dreadful, and thus sums up the ambiguous nature of the 2012 phenomenon. (Stray, 2005: 288)

-
- 1 John Major Jenkins is an independent researcher and an expert on the Maya calendar and Maya astronomy. He has defined and debated key issues relating to the 2012 phenomenon for over twenty years and has taught at both popular and academic venues around the world, including the Institute of Maya Studies and the Society for American Archaeology. His books include *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* (1998), *The 2012 Story* (2009), and *Reconstructing Ancient Maya Astronomy* (2012). He is the Director of The Center for 2012 Studies
 - 2 For example, Stray (2005: 239, 288). The original version of my Foreword, completed by March 18, 2004, used the phrase “the 2012 phenomenon.” The excised section was originally placed before the second-to-last paragraph, and is here in full: www.Alignment2012.com/the2012phenomenonMarch2004.html. I was unconcerned with cutting it, as I preferred to use the term “2012ology” and called Stray “the first 2012ologist.” See www.Alignment2012.com/2012ology.html for more. In the first paragraph of the published version I state “the plethora of writings on it [2012] is a phenomenon in itself” (in Stray, 2005: 9).

Stray's book was written largely in 2003, with the first manuscript completed by March 2004 at the latest (when he sent it to me). Sitler may have been aware of Stray's prior use of the phrase, and he did not claim to have coined it. Whitesides & Hoopes, however, have assumed and asserted this and for the record it needs to be corrected. Stray's book is also acknowledged and cited in the Whitesides & Hoopes article, but in a misleading construct in which it is paired with Lawrence Joseph's *Apocalypse 2012* (Joseph, 2007), a doomsday book, as books "characterized by a preoccupation with physical disasters" (51). This is an incorrect characterization of Stray's book; it is concerned with assessing the full spectrum of 2012-related ideas (as its sub-title suggests). Although Stray's 2005 book was known to the authors, his prior use of the "2012 phenomenon" phrase in that book was overlooked and "the first to use" the term was incorrectly credited to Robert Sitler.

The fact is that the "2012 phenomenon" phrase was being used by Geoff Stray and myself for at least three years prior to 2005. For example, Stray used the phrase in news items of August 2002 and September, 2003.³ My own uses of the explicit phrase are found in various emails, such as one to Stray on January 15, 2004 and one that I posted online in April 2004.⁴ To the best of my knowledge Geoff Stray coined the phrase, and was evidently using it four years prior to 2006.

In addition, although Whitesides & Hoopes also claim that Robert Sitler *defined* the term in his 2006 essay, *there is no definition of it in that source*. Sitler was using it as if it was already a known phrase, a known concept. Which it was. A sense for Sitler's perspective on what the 2012 phenomenon is can nevertheless be gathered from his treatment throughout his essay, and it emphasizes the views of modern Maya leaders. In the abstract of the Whitesides & Hoopes article, they define the 2012 phenomenon as "a polythetic set of romantic beliefs that derive from eclectic assertions about the ancient Maya woven into a diffuse mythology with specific relevance to contemporary issues" (50). This definition is more narrow than the framework embraced by Sitler, Stray, and myself, as it omits inclusion of recent academic writings of scholars on the topic as well as modern Maya perspectives on the matter.

Their definition sounds very similar to Hoopes's description of "Mayanism" in the Wikipedia entry that he has developed since 2008, which he elaborated in a 2011 article called "Mayanism Comes of (New) Age" (Hoopes, 2011). In that article, similar descriptions shift between being called Mayanism and the 2012 phenomenon. Supporting this conceptual conflation of terms, I note that Whitesides & Hoopes use the term "Mayanism" interchangeably with "2012 phenomenon" (Whitesides & Hoopes, 2012: 53). This is done without explanation or a distinction offered. The problems with Hoopes's Mayanism construct are several, on grounds of

3 See Item 72 at www.diagnosis2012.co.uk/new3.htm#judge; also at www.diagnosis2012.co.uk/newz13.htm. The news item of September, 2003, is at www.diagnosis2012.co.uk/newz25.htm. Stray's website developed from his booklet of 1999.

4 See www.Alignment2012.com/zap-jenkins-dialogue.html. On October 26, 2001, I sent an email to Geoff Stray and proposed we collaborate on a book that would be "an effort to explore and understand the phenomenon of 2012 as an eschatological vortex, and the ideas being projected on to it."

semantics and prior usage of the term, which were brought up as challenges on the Wiki Talk page for the entry.⁵

In their abstract we also read that “This paper includes the fullest historical account so far of the emergence of the 2012 phenomenon” (50). Four pages later we read that “The history of the 2012 phenomenon has been detailed in two recent articles (Hoopes, 2011a, 2011b). For this reason, only a brief summary is given” (54). This is a contradiction, and should be flagged for clarification.⁶ One of the sources cited in the quote (2011a) is that same essay by Hoopes, which, as the title suggests, is a historiography *not* of the 2012 phenomenon, but of Hoopes’s challenged “Mayanism” project on Wikipedia. Here, a history of the problematic category of “Mayanism” is apparently intended to stand in by proxy for a history of the 2012 phenomenon.

Whitesides & Hoopes criticize Wouter Hanegraaff for “neglecting to acknowledge” earlier mentions of 2012 ideas, and they point out that he “overlooks significant antecedents” in the work of earlier writers (68). This is a valid criticism, which can be applied to the supposedly “fullest historical account” of Whitesides & Hoopes. For example, all of my earlier critiques and comments, in many books, articles and online venues including e-list groups that Hoopes belonged to (Aztlán), were neglected and overlooked.⁷ In my 1992 book on the Maya calendar (Jenkins, 1992/1994) I discussed and critiqued various calendar correlations (including the Waters/Coe error); I thoroughly critiqued the errors in Argüelles’ Dreamspell system, clarified the origins of the Harmonic Convergence in Tony Shearer’s work, mentioned the 20th-Baktun ending at Palenque, discussed astronomical tracking of seasonal quarters in the Long Count leading to the solstice 2012 period-ending, and criticized the burgeoning New Age spiritual marketplace.⁸ My 1992 book could justifiably be identified as providing a very early, if not the first, critique of many items, ideas, authors, and issues later identified with “the 2012 phenomenon.”

Another oversight is the claim of there being “only four” books on 2012 by “academic scholars” (53). They neglect to mention PhD-holding Robert Sitler’s book *The Living Maya: Ancient Wisdom in the Era of 2012* (Sitler, 2010) which updated some of his views.

-
- 5 One challenge is that it appropriated a term already in use by other scholars (anthropologists Kay Warren and Victor Montejo) and *inverted its meaning*. Within an earlier “Pan-Mayanism” concept elaborated by scholars in the 1990s it was essentially a proactive term uniting diverse Maya groups under similar beliefs and goals, not unlike similar proactive terms like Hinduism or Judaism. Hoopes’s inversion makes it a negative label for criticized theories, people, publishers (see also Jenkins, 2009: 224-225, 228, 361-364). Also, Warren’s Pan-Mayanism is predicated on the existence of a Mayanism of congruent meaning (see Warren, 1998).
- 6 The “history of” the 2012 phenomenon is semantically inclusive of its “emergence”; at the very least some clarification of the Abstract’s ambitious self-description is necessary.
- 7 See Jenkins (2009; 2011), www.Update2012.com, and www.Alignment2012.com/Chapter3.html.
- 8 Hoopes cited my book in an earlier paper he wrote (Hoopes, 2011) and I had mentioned it to him several times in emails before 2011. See also my detailed history of the galactic alignment idea in Appendix 1 of Jenkins (1998).

Response to the Critique of My Work

My work is not treated in the Whitesides & Hoopes article until the final section, titled “Conclusion.”⁹ Only my 1998 book is cited as support for several dense sentences of assertions. They state that I “promoted” the “ideas” of McKenna and Argüelles (69). No specific page numbers in my book are offered, and this assertion is demonstrably false. As mentioned, I was the first to publish a detailed critique of Argüelles’s systemic errors in 1992. I continued the effort through the 1990s, in 2002, and in my book *The 2012 Story* (Jenkins, 2009), which Hoopes told me in 2009 that he had read), where I also stated my disagreements with McKenna’s core notion about 2012 (that a sudden, radical change is to be expected).¹⁰

After my book *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012* (Jenkins, 1998) was released, for which McKenna wrote the Introduction, we both noticed that a superficial reviewer conflated our respective ideas and framed me, incorrectly, as merely echoing McKenna’s work. Even though we both wrote about 2012, our approaches and conclusions were very different. We both wrote letters to the editor of the magazine in which the review appeared to clarify the originality of my findings.¹¹ My work was never concerned with promoting the ideas of McKenna and Argüelles, but rather with documenting and presenting my study of Izapa and my reconstruction of the cosmological preoccupations of the culture that scholars had credited with being involved in the formulation of the Long Count calendar.¹² Their critique, here, is a misleading guilt-by-association construct.

9 Sitrler described my work as “a central influence on the 2012 phenomenon” (Sitrler, 2006: 29), so it is odd that Whitesides & Hoopes began what should be a discerning and detailed treatment in the Conclusion to their article, where they treated it superficially.

10 See, e.g., www.Alignment2012.com/following.html, Jenkins (2009:90-95) for the McKenna critique and Jenkins (2009:104-109) for the Argüelles critique.

11 The review appeared in *Magical Blend* magazine in the Fall of 1998. Our Letters-to-the-Editor were published later in truncated form; they are in full here: www.Alignment2012.com/lettoed.htm. McKenna had *already made the distinction* in his Introduction to my book, saying it was “a revolutionary work of discovery and synthesis” and his “path of discovery was different” than mine (Jenkins, 1998: XXV).

12 I identified a pre-Classic period-ending doctrine of “transformation and renewal,” which has a *superficial* resonance with the ideas of McKenna and Argüelles, as well as the general “New Age” milieu. (It is superficial because among the various writers there are many differences in the details of how the renewal concept is used and implemented; those ideas do not “belong” to McKenna or Argüelles.) My usage was not derived from McKenna, Argüelles, Blavatsky, or the New Age movement, as some critics assert (e.g., Whitesides & Hoopes, 2011; Hoopes, 2011: 54). It arose from my investigation of the evidence at the site of Izapa. That the ancient Izapans and Maya (and other cultures) had a World Age doctrine in which world renewal occurs at specific intervals should not be obviated by the fact that such ideas are superficially echoed in the modern New Age marketplace. Critics need to apply discernment to recognize the distinction.

Whitesides & Hoopes next state that:

[...] a hermeneutic technique of “unburdening” oneself of the need to be an expert by adopting an idiosyncratic analytical technique supposedly immune to literary scholarship is one also employed by John Major Jenkins (1998) in claiming that iconography on Maya monuments (especially at the site of Izapa) can only be analyzed “archetypally” based on the insights of an assumed “perennial wisdom tradition. (69)

Each of these assertions is contradicted by my published words and efforts, as I show below. The one and only cited source that allegedly supports these assertions is my book *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* (Jenkins, 1998). Nowhere in that book is there a reference to, or discussion of, a “perennial wisdom tradition” or an interpretive analysis of the Izapan monuments that proceeds “archetypally.”¹³ They further state that I utilized an “assumption of a pure truth (or insight into the nature of reality) attained prior to cultural dilution, corruption, and textual exegesis.” (69) This seems to be a grossly distorted reading of my view that it is best to study the origin, place and time of the Long Count (the pre-Classic “Izapan civilization”) because it would provide the clearest window into the undiluted original cosmology before historical degenerations inevitably occurred.¹⁴ Their distorted reading of what is a rather commonplace observation about how the passage of time changes the original beliefs of a religious movement or cultural paradigm gives a pejorative slant on my actual approach – which was to study the evidence at the probable origin site of the calendar that gives us the 2012 period-ending date.¹⁵

None of these assertions by Whitesides & Hoopes are supported by anything that can be found in the cited book source, and I suggest this is a serious breach of academic standards. What they asserted can be obviated with my actual statements taken from that same book. In sharing my actual words below I am not trying to present an argument for my 2012 alignment reconstruction; rather, it is necessary to illustrate that the source cited by Whitesides & Hoopes, allegedly containing support for their contentions, actually provides a completely different picture of my approach and methods, and my consequent evidence-based deductions and interpretations.¹⁶

13 Also see my chapter-by-chapter summary of *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* for a complete lack of evidence for the contentions of Whitesides and Hoopes: www.Alignment2012.com/mc2012summary.html.

14 I have repeated this rationale many times in my presentations and publications (Jenkins, 2009: 151). Michael Coe uses the phrase “Izapan civilization” (Coe, 1966).

15 I found this in Michael Coe’s statement: “The priority of Izapa in the very important adoption of the Long Count calendar is quite clear cut” (Coe, 1988: 86). Later scholars concurred (e.g. Rice, 2007).

16 Relevant quotes and references to the archaeological and astronomical bases of my interpretations are ubiquitous throughout my book, and it’s striking that Whitesides & Hoopes selectively ignore them. Five chapters in the Izapa section (Jenkins, 1998: 219-298) focus on topography, archaeology, calendrics, site history, and especially astronomical orientation. My analysis of the birth of the Hero Twins (ibid: 155-166) is based in astronomy, following the work of Tedlock (1985).

Although other academic studies also help to clarify the meaning of Izapan symbols and their relationships to other [Mesoamerican] art traditions, those studies were limited to looking at the symbolic or iconographic content of Izapa's monuments. My approach to understanding Izapa's monumental message begins with examining the local topography and astronomy as a basis for iconographic interpretation. Most of the iconographic studies completely ignore the orientations of the monuments within each plaza, their directional relevance to horizon astronomy, and their spatial relationships (Jenkins, 1998: 223).

The quote above demonstrates that my analysis and iconographic interpretations (of the Hero Twin episodes carved on the monuments) are based on evidence within and around Izapa with a focus on local topography and astronomy. And:

We must understand that disparate ancient cultures who derived their worldviews from observing the natural world, a natural world that includes the sky, might have formulated very similar ideas. As archaeoastronomer Anthony Aveni said, "In ancient societies the sky and its contents lay at the very foundation of human cognition," meaning that the shared backdrop of the night sky provides celestial dramas that were mythologized by diverse people in similar ways (ibid.: 162).¹⁷

This quote shows that my approach is congruent with comments by archaeoastronomer Anthony Aveni. Many additional comments in the section of my book called "Izapa Cosmos" likewise illustrate that my approach is based primarily on astronomy.

Most importantly, I discuss a methodology of environmental determinants presented by Billie Jean Isbell (1982), leading to my focus on the topography surrounding Izapa, the archaeoastronomical orientation of Izapa's monument groups, and the astronomical movements above Izapa and along its horizons.¹⁸ My interpretations of the Hero Twin episodes portrayed on Izapa's monuments were drawn from readings of the creation mythology already proposed by scholars,¹⁹ and my identifications of astronomical components of the myth and its characters *as expressed specifically at Izapa* were deduced from archaeoastronomical alignments of monuments and the known symbolism of the ballgame's role within the Hero Twin myth. There was no requirement of, or use of, an "archetypal" or "pure truth" reading, or an assumed "perennial wisdom tradition."²⁰

17 The Aveni quote is from Aveni (1984: 255).

18 For the full excerpt from Jenkins (1998: 383-384) see: www.Alignment2012.com/mc-dialectic.html.

19 Tedlock (1985), Barba de Piña Chan (1988), Schele *et. al* (1993).

20 In later publications I recognized how the Hero Twins represent the archetype of the Trickster and Seven Macaw the archetype of the Tyrant, or vain egoism. I recognized that a doctrine of "solar deity sacrifice and rebirth" (evident in the Izapa ballcourt) is also found at the root of many world religions (the paradoxical "dying and resurrecting god") and I elucidated this through the non-dual concepts supplied by writers on the Perennial Philosophy such as Joseph Campbell, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Ananda Coomaraswamy. However, none of this was in place in my 1998 book, and it is a fallacy to

The assertion that I desire to unburden myself from a need to “be an expert” and that I wish to be immune from literary critique and scholarship is contradicted by over twenty years of actively inviting discussion and debate with scholars about my reconstruction work. I feel no need to unburden myself from the need to be an expert because *I am an expert* on Izapan archaeoastronomy, iconography, and cosmology, as demonstrated in my many publications, presentations, and findings at the site.²¹ I was the first to deduce and publish the fact that the Izapa ballcourt is aligned to the December solstice sunrise azimuth, and can claim several other unprecedented observations about the site which primarily involve archaeoastronomy.²²

I have had numerous discussions and debates with scholars, including John Hoopes, who I invited to participate in the debate about my work sponsored by Dr Edwin Barnhart and the scholars at the *Maya Exploration Center*.²³ He declined, and avoided a discussion about it when I sent him the 206-page transcript of the debate afterward.²⁴ Years earlier, after a lengthy discussion with Hoopes in late 2007, I responded to his suggestion that I write a concise summary of my work. The draft was titled “A Rational Approach to 2012” and was sent to him, which he read in early 2008.²⁵

My effort to engage in dialogues with scholars is also illustrated by my invitation to scholars to receive my 1998 book, offering to send them copies for review and discussion. In 1999 I engaged in debates on my work and had discussions with scholars on the Aztlán e-list, which at that time was moderated by John Hoopes.²⁶ From 1994 to 2000 I had exchanges with Susan

suggest that my reconstruction at Izapa is rooted in this later framework, is an imagined “pure truth”, or has no basis in the evidence at the site. The flawed description of my work by Whitesides & Hoopes, asserted but not demonstrated, suggests they may have adopted a superficial understanding of a later elaboration in my writings and then mistakenly applied it retroactively (in a “cart-before-the-horse” operation) to my original pioneering analysis of the interdisciplinary evidence at Izapa.

- 21 Including presentations at Naropa University (in 1999), the *Society for American Archaeology* (2010), *The Institute of Maya Studies* (in 1997 and 2011), the Universidad Valle del Grijalva (2007) and the *First Izapa Round Table Conference* (where Garth Norman and Mark Van Stone also spoke).
- 22 See Jenkins (1996) and www.Alignment2012.com/summary-of-my-work-on-Izapa.pdf. Aveni & Hartung (2000) later published a confirmation of my earlier ballcourt-solstice discovery (Jenkins, 1996; 1998). See also www.Alignment2012.com/izapa-solstice-2006.html.
- 23 The *Maya Exploration Center*, at www.mayaexploration.org.
- 24 The *MEC-FACEBOOK* Discussion of December 2010, moderated by Dr Edwin Barnhart, posted at www.mayaexploration.org and www.thecenterfor2012studies.com.
- 25 At: www.Alignment2012.com/rationalapproachto2012.html. The first part was published in the Institute of Maya Studies newsletter as a response to a critique by Dr Susan Milbrath (see Jenkins, 2008). The “lengthy discussion with Hoopes” alluded to was in the comments section of a Lawrence, Kansas newspaper, and is reproduced here: www.Alignment2012.com/Hoopes-Jenkins-Lawrence.html.
- 26 The Aztlán archives for mid-1999 have disappeared, but my exchanges and debates with scholars at that time are preserved here: www.Alignment2012.com/chapter3.html.

Milbrath, Dennis Tedlock, Gordon Brotherston, Linda Schele, Barbara MacLeod, Ed Krupp, Anthony Aveni, Timothy Laughton, David Kelley, and other scholars and astronomers, sharing my articles, responding to critiques and discussing Maya astronomy, mythology, archaeology, ethnography, iconography, and Izapa. These and dozens of other examples, continuing to today, demonstrate that I have in fact actively sought discussion and debate and have responded to my critics.²⁷ This is not the behavior of someone who seeks to be “immune” from “literary scholarship,” discussion, or critique, as Whitesides & Hoopes asserted in their article. To be clear, the *appearance* of support for their contentions is suggested by the citation to my 1998 book, but is not confirmed when that source is actually consulted. In fact, a logical method of interdisciplinary analysis of the evidence at the relevant archaeological site (Izapa) is demonstrated by my statements in that same book.

Conclusion

The brevity required in this review doesn't allow a full treatment of many other aspects of the Whitesides & Hoopes paper. Apart from specific factual corrections and my noting of various oversights, a general critique is that their definition of the 2012 phenomenon is narrow and barely acknowledges any scholarly efforts to reconstruct authentic Maya beliefs about 2012. They may respond to this by saying that they are not concerned with that approach and that it's not part of the 2012 phenomenon as they define it. But if that is so then a conundrum appears, because *that is my stated and demonstrated primary concern since the early 1990s*²⁸ – yet they seek to critique it. In doing so, they do not accurately portray my interpretive methodology nor do they cite or address any of the evidence I've brought to bear on my interpretations and reconstruction work (since that is not their concern); instead, they engage in vague citation practices, insinuations of unscientific methods, guilt-by-association constructs, and assertions that are not verifiable and are not supported by the source they cite.

A more complete narrative of the 2012 phenomenon that includes scholarly reconstructions of what the ancient Maya thought about 2012, that includes ancient and modern Maya notions of reciprocity and cyclic renewal associated with calendrical period endings, and that gives a critical eye to academic perspectives on the topic, has actually been underway for longer than Kevin Whitesides and John Hoopes have acknowledged, since well before either of them had published on the topic. This earlier pioneering work occurred in conversations and publications among researchers who have been discussing and critiquing the 2012 phenomenon (or, at least, what came to later be designated “the 2012 phenomenon” *by those same researchers*) since the 1990s.

27 See www.Update2012.com/Jenkins-Guenter-Normak-Archaeological-Haecceties.html, www.Alignment2012.com/milbrath9.html, www.Alignment2012.com/Response-to-Mark-Van-Stone.html, and other exchanges and reviews at www.Update2012.com.

28 See Jenkins (1992, 1998, 2009).

References

- Aveni, A. (1984). The view from the tropics. In Krupp, E.C. (Ed.), *Archaeoastronomy and the Roots of Science*. AAAS Selected Symposium 71 (S. 253-288). Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Aveni, A., & Hartung, H. (2000). Water, mountain, sky: The evolution of site orientation in Southern Mesoamerica. In Quiñones Keber, E. (Ed.), *Precious Greenstone, Precious Quetzal Feather*. Lancaster, CA: Labyrinthos.
- Aztlan. Listserve of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc., www.famsi.org/listinfo.html.
- Barba de Piña Chan, B. (1988). *Buscando raices de mitos y leyendas Mayas*. Campeche, Mexico: Ediciones de la Universidad Autonoma del Sudeste.
- Coe, M. (1966). *The Maya*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Coe, M. (1988). *Mexico*. 3rd revised and enlarged edition. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Hoopes, J. (2011). Mayanism comes of (new) age. In Gelfer, J. (Ed.), *2012: Decoding the Countercultural Apocalypse* (S. 38-59). London & Sheffield: Equinox.
- Isbell, B.J. (1982). Culture confronts nature in the dialectical world of the tropics. In Aveni, A., & Urton, G., *Ethnoastronomy and Archaeoastronomy in the American Tropics* (Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 385 (S. 353-364). New York: New York Academy of Sciences.
- Jenkins, J.M. (1992). *Tzolkin: Visionary Perspectives and Calendar Studies*. Boulder, CO: Four Ahau Press. [Republished, 1994, Garberville, CA: Borderland Sciences Research Foundation]
- Jenkins, J.M. (1996). *Izapa Cosmos*. Louisville, CO: Four Ahau Press.
- Jenkins, J.M. (1998). *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012: The True Meaning of the Maya Calendar End-Date*. Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Company.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2008). December 21, 2012: Some rational deductions. In Reed, J. (Ed.), *Institute of Maya Studies Newsletter*. Miami, FL: www.instituteofmayastudies.org.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2009). *The 2012 Story: The Myths, Fallacies, and Truth Behind the Most Intriguing Date in History*. New York: Tarcher / Penguin Books.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2011). Approaching 2012: Modern misconceptions vs. reconstructing ancient Maya perspectives. In Gelfer, J. (Ed.), *2012: Decoding the Countercultural Apocalypse* (S. 163-181). London & Sheffield: Equinox.
- Joseph, L.E. (2007). *Apocalypse 2012: A Scientific Investigation Into Civilization's End*. New York: Random House.
- Rice, P. (2007). *Maya Calendar Origins*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Sitler, R. (2006). The 2012 phenomenon: New age appropriation of an ancient Maya calendar. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, 9, (3), 24-38.

- Sitler, R. (2010). *The Living Maya: Ancient Wisdom in the Era of 2012*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Stray, G. (2005). *Beyond 2012: Catastrophe or Ecstasy – A Complete Guide to End-Of-Time Predictions*. East Sussex, UK: Vital Signs Publishing.
- Schele, L., Freidel, D., & Parker, J. (1993). *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*. New York: William Morrow.
- Tedlock, D. (1985). *The Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Warren, K. (1998). *Indigenous Movements and Their Critics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Whitesides, K., & Hoopes, J. (2012). Seventies dreams and 21st-century realities: The emergence of 2012 mythology. *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*, 12, 50-74).

KEVIN A. WHITESIDES, JOHN W. HOOPES²⁹

Mythology and Misrepresentations: A Response to Jenkins

In Jenkins' rejoinder to our article, he notes that we state³⁰ that Sitler was the first to use and define "2012 phenomenon." We were referring to its use *and* definition. We might also have cited Defesche (2007), who was the second. Both used the phrase in the titles of their respective studies. We were following and extending this specific scholarly use, not its casual mention. Jenkins says Sitler provides no definition. This is incorrect. The definition is in the subtitle and Sitler's opening sentences demonstrate precisely what he meant:

There is intense and growing speculation concerning the significance of this date among many New Age aficionados and others interested in Mayan culture. (Sitler, 2006: 24, emphasis ours).

It was this speculative discourse concerned with the significance of 2012, not reconstructions of Maya beliefs, on which we focused.

29 Kevin A. Whitesides is a doctoral student in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Dr. John Hoopes is a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Kansas.

30 References to statements by Jenkins that do not have specific citations are ones he makes in the present issue of the *Zeitschrift*.

Jenkins incorrectly claims we do not include academic treatments of the phenomenon within its framework. However, our analysis explicitly implicates academic contributions as central to our historical account. We thus identify Coe (1966), Sharer (Morley, 1983), and Freidel *et al.* (1993) and the effect their work had on 2012 mythology.

Jenkins wants us to define our terms only as he would have them. However, academic definitions delimit phenomena to effect analytical purchase. The narrowness or breadth of any definition depends entirely on the research questions. For example, one could limit “2012 phenomenon” to an emic realm focused on discourse about the *significance* of the date.³¹ Our own primary foci are:

(1) attachment of specific (millenarian) significance, and (2) transmission of various tropes that make up 2012 mythology.

Jenkins claims our definition is similar to Mayanism as presented in Wikipedia.³² However, the relationship between this and the 2012 phenomenon is complex. They overlap only partly and we do not use the terms interchangeably, nor do we conflate them. “Mayanism” refers to romantic assertions about ancient Maya beliefs, while “2012 phenomenon” refers to a much more recent history of millenarian discourse focused on a particular moment in time that may make only incidental reference to Mayas.

Jenkins mistakenly claims contradiction in statements about the ‘fullness’ of our account. Our emphasis, as should be clear from our title, was specifically on the *emergence* of 2012 mythology.³³ This did not include detailed historical analysis of pre-“appropriation” (*sensu* Sitler) issues such as Columbus’ interests in astrology and prophecy, Goodman’s misidentification of a 13-baktun “Great Cycle,” Blavatsky’s New Age beliefs, Förstemann’s and Morley’s allusions to “apocalypse,” or even extensive treatment of Coe’s influential 1966 statement. Rather, we were focused on – as the title of our article also indicates – the “Seventies Dreams,” i.e. the emergence of a body of mythology *primarily* in the 1970s but also afterwards, a process to which Jenkins himself contributed beginning in the early 1990s.³⁴

31 Jenkins aligns himself most strongly with this very issue of the significance of the date, writing, “My feeling is that any argument for a causal, scientifically rigorous explanation [...] is not as important as *the potential for spiritual and social transformation that the knowledge of our impending alignment with the Galactic Center might have for people [...]* The lingering unresolved suspicion here, of course, is that this ancient galactic cosmology does offer a valid insight superior to any developed by our own cosmologists” (Jenkins, 2002: 30, original emphasis).

32 The editing history of the Wikipedia entry for “Mayanism” shows that Hoopes neither created it nor has he been its only editor.

33 We use “2012 mythology” to refer specifically to discourse whereas “2012 phenomenon” includes many other activities and forms of expression.

34 Our use of the term “New Age” is in the sense used by academic scholars such as Sutcliffe (2003) and Hanegraaff (1997), especially in the latter’s ‘strict’ (millenarian) sense, indicating expectation of an approaching new age.

Jenkins claims his earlier critiques and comments were “neglected and overlooked.” This is not true. We were well aware of these materials, did not neglect them, and *did* consider them. We just did not cite them in our article because we did not, and do not, consider them to be relevant to our discussions there.

Jenkins says that, in citing books by academic scholars, we neglected to mention Sittler’s book. This was not an oversight. We consider that work to be in a different category and therefore did not treat it – as we did not treat many other popular trade books – as being equivalent to those by noted epigraphers, archaeoastronomers, ethnohistorians, and art historians.

Jenkins notes that only his 1998 book is cited as support for several assertions. This is correct. Academic citations are expected to be sufficient, not comprehensive. Although we were familiar with a great deal of Jenkins’ work, we did not think it was necessary to cite his other trade books, much less his oft-cited, self-published “books” (which are actually photocopied, desktop-published manuscripts, more properly identified as “zines”) from his own “Four Ahau Press,” his blog posts, his email communications, or his discussions on Facebook.

Jenkins accuses us of having improperly associated him with the ideas of McKenna and Argüelles. He complains that because he disagreed with and critiqued certain of McKenna’s and Argüelles’ ideas, our claim that he promoted their work is unfair and meant to diminish him through “guilt-by-association.” This simply is not so. Our professed goal in the article was to track the 2012 “meme,”³⁵ and in so doing we sought to document paths of transmission of key concepts. On that epidemiological level, despite his points of contention with those authors, he also *did* very clearly promote their ideas.

For example, he notes, “McKenna suggested that a resonant relationship between DNA molecules and the Galactic Center might be elaborated through the growing paradigm of chaos dynamics. *This is without doubt the right track...*” (Jenkins, 2002: 30, emphasis ours).

Jenkins also promoted Argüelles’ ideas, among them the “Hunab Ku” and its esoteric significance as a “polar reversal symbol” (Jenkins, 1998: 329).³⁶ Jenkins’ promotion of Argüelles’ ideas, including the Dreamspell system, is most obvious in *Tzolkin* (Jenkins, 1994b).³⁷ In it, Jenkins reproduces a March 17, 1992 letter to the editor of *Time Bandit*, a Dreamspell-oriented newsletter. In this letter, he says he “would be happy to contribute to your Dreamspell network-

35 The authors actually question the value of the “meme” concept, but intended by its use to draw attention to processes of cultural transmission and modification.

36 Jenkins erroneously claims that the “Hunab Ku” symbol (first identified as such not by indigenous traditions but by Argüelles in *The Mayan Factor*) is from the Mixtec *Nuttall Codex* (Jenkins, 1998: 329). It is actually from the Aztec *Codex Magliabecchiano*, where it is not a “polar reversal symbol” but one associated with a festival of lip plugs.

37 The 1994 version being the only edition available for analysis despite numerous requests to Jenkins for scans of his 1992 edition so that we could check it against his claims. It is among the “Four Ahau Press” zines that are virtually impossible to obtain.

ing project in as positive a way as I can” and emphasizes that “[t]he focus of Dreamspell, to do away with environmentally destructive habits and industries, is commendable and worthy of backing” (1994b: 160, 162; see also *ibid.*: 155-6, 159; Jenkins, 1995a: 19). Jenkins states that he himself distributed copies of Argüelles’ Dreamspell between January and March 1992, writing “I have sent twelve kits far and wide, from Germany to Mexico to New York” (1994b: 164). Yes, he follows this with some specific critiques, but he was clearly offering assistance with *correcting and improving* the Dreamspell system.

Our only point in mentioning Jenkins was to emphasize that each individual receives influence from those who come before them and then adopts and adapts those concepts in their own distinct ways. Furthermore, in adapting them, these concepts are also modified in accord with new mental and cultural contexts. Thus, we explicitly included our qualification that both Jenkins and Pinchbeck promoted the ideas of their predecessors *and “added new elements.”*

Jenkins quotes us correctly in our assertion regarding “unburdening.” However, our use of that term must be considered in the context of the immediately preceding quotation from McKenna. We identify Jenkins as similarly “unburdening” himself in the sense that, just as McKenna did not feel he needed to assume the role of a Sinologist (an academic specialist in Chinese culture), Jenkins did not feel he needed to be a Mayanist (an academic specialist in Maya culture). However, we acknowledge that Jenkins self-identifies as an expert despite the fact that he has no formal degrees, no publications in peer-reviewed journals, and is someone whose work has been repeatedly rejected by academic specialists in the very areas in which he claims expertise (cf. Aveni, 2009; Malmström, 2003).

Jenkins’ claim that we overlooked his earlier works shows a misunderstanding of the intention of our article. Neither his critique of “various calendar correlations” nor his critique of “the errors of Argüelles,” nor his “mention” of “the 20th-Baktun ending at Palenque” (as though he were the first) had any bearing on our own account. Our information did not come from Jenkins’ critiques, but directly from works by authors such as Shearer, Waters, and Argüelles.

Jenkins also claims that in *Tzolkin* he “discussed and critiqued various calendar correlations (including the Waters/Coe error).” However, *Tzolkin* makes no mention of Coe. Jenkins does discuss Waters and his error in using the December 24, 2011 date. He also praises Waters’ *Mexico Mystique* as an “otherwise excellent book,” (Jenkins, 1994b: 43) despite its references to Atlantis, UFOs, astrology, hyperdiffusionism, and impending cataclysms. However he makes no connection to, claim about, or even mention of Coe as the source of that date, let alone as the origin of the 2012 “meme” in general. In fact, Jenkins has explicitly acknowledged that he learned of the significance of Coe from one of the authors, writing, “Hoopes also has pointed out that the very first connection between the end of the 13-Baktun cycle of the Long Count and an interpretation of cataclysm appears in Michael Coe’s 1966 book *The Maya*” (Jenkins, 2009: 226). Jenkins is therefore claiming to have addressed a fact in an earlier publication he claims we overlooked when not only does he *not* address it there, but his actual source is one of the authors of the article he is now critiquing for failing to give him credit!

Jenkins claims that nowhere in his 1998 book is there a reference to a perennial wisdom tradition or an archetypal analysis of Izapan monuments. However, in that book, Jenkins writes:

Our culture, with its growing appreciation for the reality of nonmaterial worlds and inner experience, is opening to vast storehouses of *universal knowledge that the Maya were very familiar with [...]* But the shamanic quest for knowledge is perennial, universal, and unstoppable[...] Only in that numinous nowhere can they contact beings from other worlds and times. It is the center and source that, in fact, is found in the religious ideas of all cultures (Jenkins, 1998: 210 [emphasis ours]).³⁸

Jenkins' archetypal analysis is clear. In Chapter 15, "The Man Who Was Swallowed by an Alligator," he expands upon an interpretation of Izapa Stela 11:

This story contains metaphors found in other world myths. For example, a man traveling to another world recalls the shamanic journey to the Underworld. The belly of the sea monster (the Jonas/whale motif) is a common symbol of the center of the cosmos, *and partakes of universal or archetypal themes* in the hero's quest (Jenkins, 1998: 184 [emphasis ours]).

Jenkins states, "There was no... use of... [a] 'pure truth' reading." We disagree. The subtitle of his 1998 book is "*The True Meaning of the Maya Calendar End Date*" [emphasis ours].

Jenkins asserts that he went to great lengths to engage with scholars in dialogues about his work, even "offering to send them copies for review and discussion." However, for years he has repeatedly declined courteous requests from the authors for copies of his works from "Four Ahau Press," ones that a research librarian at the University of Kansas asserts are not available from any library and which Jenkins himself has affirmed were produced by him in quantities of fewer than 75 copies. Those "books" that we have been able to obtain in original versions (Jenkins, 1994a, 1995a, 1995b, 2012a, 2012b, 2013) are photocopied, stapled, hand-made items.

Jenkins refers to his exchanges with many different scholars, claiming, "This is not the behavior of someone who seeks to be 'immune' from 'literary scholarship,' discussion, or critique." However, Hoopes repeatedly asserted to Jenkins that he should submit his evidence and theories to rigorous peer-review, a process that is standard for scholarly publication.

Jenkins repeatedly declined, choosing instead to publish books with presses whose standards are the opposite of academic rigor. The fact that Jenkins has been proactive in approach-

38 This statement is the principle position of the Perennialist stance, that there is a common core to the inner traditions of all religious traditions, a universal truth directly accessible to the mystic (or, more recently, 'shaman'). A Perennialist orientation is so infused into the framework of the 'new age' milieu that Jenkins' retort that he did not explicitly explore the work of some of its key proponents until after his 1998 book is essentially irrelevant. The core concepts of Perennialism are front and center from Jenkins' earliest publications through to the present.

ing practically every relevant scholar in Maya studies and archaeoastronomy and has had virtually no success at persuading them of the merits of his arguments is evidence of his persistence and little more.

Jenkins is not only concerned with what ancient Mayas thought, but with what *we* should think. It is here that his work enters the realm of the moralizing mythology of a New Age expressed in archetypal terms. In the last paragraphs of *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012*, Jenkins writes:

In this emerging paradigm, we are indispensable cocreators of this post-shift world. The real pole shift may thus be about a shift in our fundamental orientation to each other and the world[:]... we must abandon our illusions and return to the center, back to rejuvenation within the Great Mother, our cosmic heart and source [...] Our committed, willing participation in the galactic processes of Maya comogenesis [...] is what enobles our souls and elevates our spirits [...]. The opening door of baktun thirteen offers us conscious relationship with each other and a creative participation with the Earth-process that gives birth to our higher selves (Jenkins, 1998: 332).

Jenkins is correct in saying that we “barely acknowledge” any scholarly efforts to reconstruct Maya belief systems. That was simply not a goal of our article, though it was the goal of another article in the same issue (MacLeod & Van Stone, 2012) – one that also gives Jenkins’ work minimal consideration. We mentioned Jenkins as one example of an author whose work derives from ideas that emerged in the 1970s and who provides a bridge into subsequent New Age discourse. We feel his work has been some of the most representative of 2012 mythology as it was manifest in the 1990s and early 21st century. However, since our focus was on an earlier period, a closer focus on his work was not required in our treatment.

References

- Aveni, A.F. (2009). *The End of Time: The Maya Mystery of 2012*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Coe, M.D. (1966). *The Maya*. New York: Praeger.
- Defesche, S. (2007). “*The 2012 Phenomenon*”: *A Historical and Typological Approach to a Modern Apocalyptic Mythology* (M.A. Thesis), Department of Religious Studies, University of Amsterdam [electronic document, <http://skepsis.no/?p=599>, accessed August 29, 2011].
- Freidel, D., Schele, L., & Parker, J. (1993). *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman’s Path*. New York: William Morrow.
- Hanegraff, W.J. (1997). *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Jenkins, J.M. (1994a). *Jalox Xexoj and PHI-64: The DualPrinciple Core Paradigm of MayanTime and its Conceptual Parallel in Old World Thought*. Boulder, CO: Four Ahau Press.

- Jenkins, J.M. (1994b). *Tzolkin: Visionary Perspectives and Calendar Studies*. Garberville, CA: Borderland Sciences Research Foundation.
- Jenkins, J.M. (1995a). *The Center of Mayan Time, Book Two: Astrolo-Mythic Creation Day*. Louisville, CO: Four Ahau Press.
- Jenkins, J.M. (1995b). *The Center of Mayan Time, Book Three: The Monuments of Izapa*. Louisville, CO: Four Ahau Press
- Jenkins, J.M. (1998). *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012: The True Meaning of the Maya Calendar End-Date*. Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Company.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2009). *The 2012 Story: The Myths, Fallacies, and Truth Behind the Most Intriguing Date in History*. New York: Tarcher/Penguin Books:
- Jenkins, J.M. (2012a). *Lord Jaguar's 2012 inscriptions*. Windsor, CO: Four Ahau Press.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2012b). *Reconstructing Ancient Maya Astronomy: The Field of 2012 studies in year 2012*. Windsor, CO: Four Ahau Press.
- Jenkins, J.M. (2013). *Remembering 2012*. Excerpt, published in a limited release by the author. Windsor, CO: Four Ahau Press.
- MacLeod, B. & Van Stone, M. (2012). The Great Return: An investigation into Classic Maya beliefs about the close of the thirteenth baktun. *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*, 12, 17-49.
- Malmstrom, V. (2003). The astronomical insignificance of 13.0.0.0.[0.] <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~izapa/M-32.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2014].
- Morley, S. (⁴1983). *The Ancient Maya* (4th ed.), revised by R.J. Sharer. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Sitler, R. (2006). The 2012 phenomenon: New Age appropriation of an ancient Maya calendar. *Nova Religio*, 9, (3), 24-38.
- Sutcliffe, S.J. (2003). *Children of the New Age: A History of Spiritual Practices*. London: Routledge.

**Weitergeführte Diskussion zur Rezension des Buches *Die Merseburger Zaubersprüche* von Wolfgang Beck (2011) durch Gerd H. Hövelmann
In: *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik* 13 (2013), 413-418**

GERD H. HÖVELMANN³⁹

Wortzauber und Zauberwort. Nachgedanken zu den „Merseburger Zaubersprüchen“

Einem eigenen, bereits veröffentlichten Text selbst nochmals mit einigen verspäteten Anmerkungen hinterherzuspüren, gehört sich eigentlich nicht. Es sei denn, es gäbe einen besonderen Anlass oder Grund, dem man sich als Autor oder Herausgeber nicht verschließen dürfte. Folgendes darf vielleicht als ein solcher Anlass gelten: Mehrere Leser haben nämlich bedauert, dass die beiden kurzen, spätestens aus dem 9. Jahrhundert stammenden, wahrscheinlich aber noch etwas älteren Merseburger Zaubersprüche in meiner Besprechung (Hövelmann, 2013) des grundlegenden Werks von Wolfgang Beck, das diesen frühen, kultur- und magiehistorisch so auskunftsträchtigen Dokumenten deutscher Sprache gewidmet ist (Beck, 2011), zwar vollständig zitiert, dann aber doch nicht zur bequemeren Lektüre ins Neuhochdeutsche übersetzt worden seien. Ich will nicht in Abrede stellen, dass diese Beschwerde eine gewisse Berechtigung hat. Allerdings hatte ich sie bei der Abfassung meiner Rezension aus mehreren Gründen absichtlich, gewissermaßen sehenden Auges, in Kauf genommen. Das veranlasst mich nun gleichwohl zu den folgenden kurzen Bemerkungen. Es gab im Wesentlichen zwei (mutmaßlich gute) Gründe, seinerzeit, im Rahmen der Buchbesprechung, auf eine zusätzliche neuhochdeutsche Wiedergabe der beiden Zaubersprüche zu verzichten.

(1) Der erste von ihnen (und der gewiss weniger wichtige) war ein damals immerhin bereits angedeuteter pragmatischer Grund. Ich war zuversichtlich, dass jedenfalls die „Übersetzung und Auslegung des zweiten, neunzeiligen Zauberspruchs [den Lesern] nicht sonderlich schwer“ (Hövelmann, 2013: 415) fallen werde. Denn wenigstens die althochdeutschen Wendungen dieses Zweiten Zauberspruchs schienen mir (und scheinen mir auch weiterhin) durchaus leichter zugänglich als die des stark „verdichteten“ ersten. Lesern mit einem einigermaßen ausgeprägten Sprachgefühl sollten sie, so hatte ich angenommen, nicht nur zumutbar, sondern im Prinzip auch deutbar bis verstehbar sein. Dass „Phôl ende Uuodan uuorun zi holza“ nichts anderes als „Phol und Wodan begaben sich in den Wald“ heißen könne, schien

39 Gerd H. Hövelmann, M.A., studierte Philosophie, Linguistik, Literaturwissenschaft und Psychologie; von 1984 bis 1993 wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter am Institut für Philosophie der Universität Marburg, seither selbständig; zahlreiche wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen in einem breiten Spektrum disziplinärer Kontexte, Redaktionsleiter der *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*.

mir immer auf der Hand zu liegen. Diese Einschätzung mag dann doch ein wenig zu optimistisch gewesen sein.⁴⁰

Der relativ leichten Verstehbarkeit wenigstens des Zweiten Zauberspruchs hätte zudem der Umstand in die Hände spielen können, dass selbst uns Heutigen mehr oder weniger ausgeprägte Neigungen zu einem gewissen Wortzauber sozusagen als historisch-mythologische Kernkompetenz weiterhin zu eigen sind – schon seit dem wirkungsgewissen „Werde!“ oder „Sei!“ fast aller religiösen Schöpfungsmythen gehören sie gewissermaßen zu unserer intellektuellen und ikonografischen Standardausrüstung (eine umfangreiche und lohnende Nachweisübersicht dazu stellt der Ethnologe Klaus Müller [2001] zur Verfügung). Freilich ist kaum zu übersehen, dass Inklinationen solcher Art sich mittlerweile zunehmend verflüchtigen.

(2) Für meinen Verzicht auf eine aktuelle neuhochdeutsche Übertragung der beiden althochdeutschen Merseburger Zaubersprüche war indessen eine zweite Überlegung viel entscheidender und grundsätzlicher: Ist denn (bzw. inwiefern ist denn), selbst wenn wir dauerhaften Gebrauchswert und Wirksamkeitserwartungen der Sprüche vorab zuversichtlich und großzügig unterstellen wollten, ein übersetzter Zauberspruch *überhaupt noch* ein Zauberspruch? Diese Frage ist äquivalent mit der Frage: Bedarf – oder bedurfte zu Zeiten vormoderner Gesellschaft – ein Zauberspruch zur Entfaltung seiner intendierten, erhofften oder unterstellten praktischen Wirksamkeit nicht vor allem der tatsächlichen Aktualisierung eines ganz bestimmten, rituell oder anderweitig empfohlenen oder vorgeschriebenen, jedenfalls aber sorgsam eingeübten lautsprachlichen Schemas? *Wenn nämlich die Kraft der Magie auf der Kraft des Wortes beruht, so folgt daraus, dass der ursprüngliche Wortbestand eines Zauberspruchs (auch durch Übersetzung) eigentlich nicht geändert werden darf, damit Funktionsfähigkeit und Wirksamkeit erhalten bleiben.*

Und kommt es (bzw. wiederum: inwiefern kommt es) denn auch darauf an, wer derjenige ist, der die betreffende Lautfolge hersagt? Etwa ein zur professionellen Zaubertätigkeit Geborener, Erwählter, Ermächtigter oder Initiierter? Dem Zauberspruch geht mindestens sein Klang, sein lautsprachliches Realisat verloren – aber kann ihm dann seine „magische Potenz“ erhalten bleiben? –, wenn er durch die Übersetzung sein expressives Gewand wechselt. Verfliegt der „ganze Zauber“ nicht, sobald sich seine sprachliche Gestaltung und deren faktische Äußerung nachhaltig ändert, und sei es bloß durch Übersetzung oder eine andere Form der Transliteration oder gefälligen Aktualisierung?⁴¹ Ist es auch in diesem Kontext zu sehen, dass es gerade die Zauberwörter mit besonderen lautmalerischen Eigenschaften sind, die übersetzungsinvariant zugleich in mehreren oder vielen Sprachen Verwendung finden: *abracadabra – hokuspokus – simsalabim – mutabor?*

40 Es ist ja im übrigen, wie auch Beck (2011: 229ff., 315ff.) betont, keineswegs endgültig ausgemacht, dass beide Zaubersprüche tatsächlich dasselbe genetische Alter haben. Mehr oder weniger unterschiedliche Entstehungszeiten würden aber sogleich auch voneinander abweichende Ansprüche hinsichtlich der Übersetzungsschwierigkeit und -genauigkeit besser nachvollziehbar machen.

41 Vgl. auch den Abschnitt „Zur Vortragsweise“ bei Beck (2011: 286-290).

Die zauberische Wirkung beruht, wie alle Magie, vorwiegend auf dem Prinzip der *Formalisierung*, damit der angesprochenen Schematisierung und deren Realisation. Die Magie sei nämlich „an die pedantische Beobachtung von Form und Formel gebunden“, hatte schon Schirokauer (1954: 364) notiert; und „[e]rst die Regeltreue garantiert den Erfolg,“ betont auch Müller (2001: 87). Regeltreue aber unterstellt wenigstens die zuverlässige Einübung in eine Praxis und die tatsächliche Realisierung eines zauberischen Handlungs- und (hier) Lautäußerungsschemas. Zaubersprüche, wollte man ihnen Wirksamkeit denn beimessen, setzen unabdingbar bekannte, ja prognostizierbare Situationen voraus, die als problematische wiederkehren, erkannt und bewältigt werden müssen. Wäre dies nicht der Fall, dann wären Zaubersprüche wie jene beiden aus der Merseburger Sakramentarhandschrift weder formalisiert worden, noch wären sie über die Jahrhunderte hinweg erhalten und in Gebrauch geblieben.

Ich stelle mir freilich vor, dass magische Äußerungen – die beiden Merseburger Zaubersprüche zumal – nicht so sehr kraftvoll intoniert als vielmehr mit verhaltener Inbrunst, eher *submissa voce*, „mit gedämpfter Stimme“, ausgesprochen wurden. Die Wörter leiten und lenken, sprechakttheoretisch gewendet, als „illocutionary force“ („illokutionäre Wirkkraft“), mithin als Zünd- und Sprengstoffe magischer Akte, die intendierte zauberische Handlung (Tambiah, 1968: 72, 80).

Da aber nun offenbar erwünscht, folgen hier – wenn auch eingedenk vorstehend benannter wirkungsbedachter Vorbehalte – nochmals die 13 Langzeilen der beiden Merseburger Zaubersprüche in der sogenannten „normalisierten Orthografie“. Neuhochdeutsche Übersetzungen, die ohne nennenswerte Abweichungen den Versionen von Beck folgen, sind jeweils hinzugesetzt:

Eiris sâzun idisi, sâzun hêraduoder.
 Suma hapt heptidun, suma heri lêzidun,
 suma clûbodun umbi cuonio uuidi:
 insprinc haptbandun, inuar uîgandun!

**Einstmals saßen Idisi, saßen auf den Kriegerscharen.
 Einige fesselten einen Gefangenen, einige hemmten die Heere.
 Einige zertrennten ringsherum die scharfen Fesseln.
 Entspringe den Fesseln, entfahre den Feinden!**

Phôl ende Uuodan uuorun zi holza.
 dû uuart demo balderes uolon sîn uuoz birenkict.
 Thû biguol en Sinhtgunt, Sunna era suister;
 thû biguol en Frîja, Uolla era suister;

thû biguol en Uuodan, sô hê uuola conda:
 sôse bënrenki, sôse bluotrenki,
 sôse lidirenki:
 bën zi bêna, bluot zi bluoda,
 lid zi geliden, sôse gelîmida sîn!

**Phol und Wodan begaben sich in den Wald.
 Da wurde dem Fohlen Balders der Fuß eingerenkt.
 Da besangen ihn [das Fohlen] Sinhtgunt und Sunna, ihre Schwester.
 Da besangen ihn Friia und Volla, ihre Schwester.
 Da besang ihn Wodan, so wie er es gut verstand:
 Wenn Knochenrenkung, wenn Blutrenkung, wenn Gelenkrenkung:
 Knochen zu Knochen, Blut zu Blut, Glied zu Glied!
 So seien sie zusammengefügt! [Als ob sie verleimt seien.⁴²]**

Literatur

- Beck, W. (2011). *Die Merseburger Zaubersprüche*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag.
- Betz, W. (1956). sose gelimida sîn. *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter*, 21, 11-13.
- Hövelmann, G.H. (2013). Rezension zu W. Beck, *Die Merseburger Zaubersprüche* [2011]. *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*, 13, 413-418.
- Müller, K.E. (2001). *Wortzauber. Eine Ethnologie der Eloquenz*. Frankfurt/M.: Verlag Otto Lembeck.
- Schirokauer, A. (1954). Form und Formel einiger altdeutscher Zaubersprüche. *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, 73, 353-364.
- Tambiah, S.J. (1968). The magical power of words. *Man*, 3, 175-208.

42 Den strikten Ausschluss einer „Als-ob“-Übersetzung für „sôse gelîmida sîn“, den Betz (1956) geltend macht und den auch Beck (2011) akzeptiert, finde ich nicht ganz überzeugend.

**Weitergeführte Diskussion zur Rezension des Zeitschriftenbandes *Astrology Under Scrutiny* (Final Issue) durch Suitbert Ertel
In: *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik* 13 (2013), 431-437**

WOUT HEUKELOM, GEOFFREY DEAN, ARTHUR MATHER, DAVID NIAS, RUDOLF SMIT⁴³

Erwiderung auf Prof. Ertels Besprechung von *Astrology Under Scrutiny*

Prof. Ertel bemerkt, „das Blättern in diesem Buch ein visuelles und taktiles Vergnügen“ (S. 431) und seine Leser würden den Erwerb nicht zu bereuen haben (437). Ferner sagt er, es werde künftig kaum möglich sein, sich zur Astrologie zu äußern, ohne auf dieses Werk Bezug zu nehmen (432). Lob für wahr, für das wir ihm sehr dankbar sind

Unglücklich ist indessen seine Andeutung, dass alles im Buch auf Geoffrey Dean zurückgehe: (1) hat der Herausgeber nämlich den Inhalt vorab festgelegt, denn dieser sollte der abschließenden Ausgabe einer niederländischen Fachzeitschrift angemessen sein, und (2) hat es sich stets um eine gemeinschaftliche Teamleistung gehandelt, in die auch noch Hilfen Anderer eingegangen sind, einschließlich selbst, wo erforderlich, der Dienste von Google für die Übersetzung aus weniger geläufigen Sprachen. Sollten Leser den Eindruck haben, dass bedeutendes deutsches Material vernachlässigt worden ist, wollen sie uns das bitte mitteilen.

Professor Ertel bemängelt, dass die „Vielfalt der Thematik zur Astrologie konzeptuell unzulänglich geordnet“ sei (432), ohne den Lesern aber zu verraten, wie genau unsere Ordnung denn aussehe und inwiefern sie „konzeptuell“ zu wünschen übrig lasse. Ohne Zweifel sind hierfür vielerlei mögliche Organisationsweisen denkbar, aber Ertels eigene vier Kategorien wären für unsere Zwecke ungeeignet gewesen, denn letzteren ging es vor allem darum, die Beweislage zugunsten bzw. zuungunsten der Astrologie einzuschätzen.

So stellt Ertel beispielsweise fest, dass wir uns kaum mit seiner Kategorie #2, der wissenschaftlich nicht fundierten Zurückweisung der Astrologie befasst hätten. Wenn Beweise fehlen,

43 Wout Heukelom MSc ist theoretischer Physiker sowie Herausgeber und Verleger von *Astrologie in Onderzoek / Astrology Under Scrutiny*. – Dr Geoffrey Dean ist ein britischer, in Australien lebender ehemaliger Berufsastrologe; er ist freiberuflich als technischer Redakteur tätig. – Arthur Mather hat einen MSc-Grad in Information Science, er ist Geologe, Schulungsleiter und zusammen mit Dean Herausgeber von *Recent Advances in Natal Astrology* (1977). – Dr. David Nias ist forensischer Psychologe in England; zusammen mit Professor Hans Eysenck hat er den Band *Astrology – Science or Superstition?* (1982) verfasst. – Rudolf Smit war früher Editor bei einem führenden Technologie-Institut in den Niederlanden, ehemaliger Berufsastrologe und Autor von *Die Planeten Spreken* (1976). Gemeinsam verfügen die Autoren über mehr als 180 Jahre praktische Erfahrung mit der Astrologie, und sie haben zahlreiche einschlägige Aufsätze und Buchkapitel über Forschungen zur Astrologie veröffentlicht.

ist die Frage der *Akzeptanz* der Astrologie unkompliziert; etwa im Falle: „Astrologie funktioniert, aber keiner weiß, weshalb.“ Die *Ablehnung* hingegen ist dann problematisch: So ist zum Beispiel „Astrologie funktioniert nicht, aber keiner weiß, weshalb“ keine kohärente Aussage. Wir vermeiden Probleme dieser Art, indem wir grundsätzlich feststellen, die unbegründete Ablehnung der Astrologie sei „simply not good enough“ (S. 170 von *Astrology Under Scrutiny*).

Professor Ertel vertritt nun die Auffassung, dass zwei Studien von Jan Ruis möglicherweise wissenschaftliche Unterstützung für die Astrologie lieferten. Ruis hat Aspekte zwischen den Geburtsbildern von 2174 verheirateten Paaren und einer erweiterten Stichprobe von 2824 verheirateten Paaren ausgezählt, die beide den Gauquelinischen Hereditätsdaten entstammen. Die erste Studie schloss Jupiter aus, während die zweite Jupiter einschloss. In beiden Studien zeigten sich die größten Unterschiede in den durchschnittlichen Anzahlen von Trigonon und Quadraten ungefähr 0.08 über den erwarteten Durchschnittswerten für verheiratete Paare mit 3.6 ohne Jupiter und 4.3 mit Jupiter. Anders gesagt, stützt der Überhang von Trigonon (die als gut für Beziehungen gelten) die Astrologie, während der Überhang von Quadraten (angeblich schlecht für Beziehungen) Annahmen der Astrologie widerspricht. Sextile (die wiederum als gut für Beziehungen gelten) ergaben die nächstgrößte Differenz von ungefähr 0.03 unter dem erwarteten Durchschnittswert, was wiederum Annahmen der Astrologie widerspricht. Eine mögliche wissenschaftliche Unterstützung der Astrologie ist daher schwer auszumachen, insbesondere, weil keine dieser Differenzen statistisch signifikant war. Die Studie von Ruis über Serienmörder, die Ertel vor allem dadurch überrascht hat, dass sie in unserem Buch angeblich „gar nicht erwähnt“ (436) wird, wird tatsächlich aber zusammen mit einem Diagramm auf Seite 334 diskutiert.

Die vorstehend genannten Punkte sind jedoch eher unbedeutend im Vergleich mit Professor Ertels Vernachlässigung dessen, was das Buch tatsächlich enthält. Hier folgen einige Beispiele: Kaum Erwähnung finden die Ergebnisse von 27 Jahren niederländischer Forschung, obwohl diese rund ein Fünftel der 364 Seiten des Buches füllen. Außerdem gibt er keinen Hinweis darauf, dass unser Buch Meta-Analysen Hunderter empirischer Studien mit rund 20 Trichter-Diagrammen enthält, auch zu so entscheidenden Forschungsfragen, (1) wie gut Astrologen miteinander über Analysen der Geburtsbilder im Einklang sind, und (2) ob ihre Klienten falsche von richtigen Analysen unterscheiden können.

Ebenfalls unerwähnt bleibt unsere Behandlung von Sonnenzeichen in unserem Buch (mit Stichprobenumfängen von bis zu vielen Millionen), von Zeitzwillingen (mit Stichprobengrößen von mehreren Tausend) und Preiswettbewerben (zehn sind beschrieben) sowie eine große Anzahl weiterer Aspekte und Themen: Er nennt nicht unsere dokumentierten kritischen Übersichten zu Themen, die nicht nur relevant für Astrologie selbst sind, sondern auch für die Anomalistik im Allgemeinen. Zu diesen zählen zum Beispiel Intuition, psychische Fähigkeit, Weissagung, Fantasieanfälligkeiten, der Glaube an verborgene Wirklichkeiten, die Wichtigkeit von Kontrollgruppen und der Replikation, Bayes-Theorem und (am wichtigsten) Artefakte der Daten und Argumentation. Zusammen mit anderen Themen, welche kaum einmal an anderer Stelle diskutiert werden, umfasst all dies mehr als 40% unseres Buches.

Mit anderen Worten erlaubt Prof. Ertel den Lesern nur einen sporadischen Einblick in unser Buch. Stattdessen widmet er 60% seiner Besprechung den Debatten um den Gauquelinschen Planeteneffekt, ohne etwas Neues hinzuzufügen. Er trägt auch keine eigene plausible Erklärung vor, falls er denn eine hat. Um diesen Disput einer Lösung zuzuführen, hatte Wout Heukelom im Jahr 2004 Dean und Ertel eingeladen, ihre jeweiligen Argumente zum leichteren Vergleich Seite an Seite in *Astrologie in Onderzoek* zu präsentieren. Ertels Bedingung dafür war eine wiederholte vorherige Bearbeitung der Veröffentlichung, so lange, bis keine Änderungen mehr in den zwei parallelen Texten mehr vorgenommen werden müssen. Dies sollte der Verhinderung von Fehlern und Ablenkungen dienen und niemandem irgendwelche Privilegien einräumen. „So wäre eine nicht enden wollende Reihe von Artikeln und Gegenartikeln zu vermeiden gewesen. Die Interessen der Leser würden zuerst kommen“ (S. 79 von *Astrology under Scrutiny*). Dean hatte sofort zugesagt, Ertel jedoch (nach mehreren Monaten) abgelehnt, weil er das letzte Wort behalten wollte. Selbstverständlich können die Leser die Angelegenheiten für sich selbst beurteilen, wenn sie seinem Rat folgen und das Buch lesen.

(aus dem Englischen von Gerd H. Hövelmann)

SUITBERT ERTEL⁴⁴

Astrologie: Was unmöglich scheint, verdient erhöhte Beachtung

Den Autoren habe ich insofern zuzustimmen, als ich nur einen „sporadischen Einblick“ in ihr Buch gebe. Mir kam es indessen nicht darauf an, eine Inhaltsangabe zu liefern über die „110 best articles from 27 years of Dutch research“. Die Zusammenfassungen der 110 Artikel sind lediglich chronologisch aneinander gereiht und zusätzliche „other areas“ bleiben inhaltlich auch ziemlich ungeordnet. Wichtiger war für mich eine Kritik des Buches an seinen wichtigsten Stellen.

Meine inhaltliche Differenzierung in vier Felder ließ erkennen, dass die Autoren, unter denen Geoffrey Dean der Hauptverantwortliche ist, die im Feld #4 einzubringenden Inhalte sträflich vernachlässigt haben, nämlich Informationen über wissenschaftlich fundierte astrologische Forschung mit positiven Ergebnissen, die man nicht auf methodische Fehler oder Artefakte zurückführen kann.

Die Ergebnisse der Lebensarbeit der Gauquelins gehören dazu an erster Stelle. Geoffrey Dean hat in diesen Arbeiten tatsächlich keine schwerwiegenden Fehler gefunden und sogar den Einwänden, die die organisierten Skeptiker vorbrachten, entschieden widersprochen. Doch ist er der Meinung, die positiven Gauquelin-Befunde seien auf ein *Parental Tampering* (astrologiegläubige Falschmeldungen der Geburtszeiten bei den Registrierämtern) zurückführen und also nicht-astrologisch zu erklären.

44 Prof. Dr. Suitbert Ertel ist emeritierter Professor für Psychologie an der Universität Göttingen.

Nicht nur gegen Deans Erklärung des Gauquelin-Planeteneffekts waren in meiner Rezension Einwände nachzutragen. Ich bemängelte vor allem, dass in *Astrology under Scrutiny* meine über fünf Jahre sich erstreckende Kritik an seiner PT-Erklärung stillschweigend ignoriert wird. In sechs Aufsätzen in *Correlation* (publiziert 2000-2004) habe ich in statistischen Nach-Untersuchungen nach Evidenzen für Deans Erklärungsansatz gesucht und nur über negative Ergebnisse berichten können.

In die Kategorie #4 gehören unter anderem auch die Ergebnisse von zwei Untersuchungen von Jan Ruis, auf die die Autoren der „Erwiderung“ zu sprechen kommen, weil ich in meiner Rezension von *Astrology Under Scrutiny* auch deren Behandlung vermisste. In der „Erwiderung“ steht, dass Ruis' Untersuchung über die Serienmörder von ihm auf Seite 334 diskutiert werde. Doch weder auf Seite 334 noch im Literaturindex ist diese Arbeit von Ruis zu finden. Auf eine Anfrage von mir schreibt Ruis, er habe über diese Untersuchung mit Dean eine Korrespondenz geführt und versucht, Dean von methodisch falschen Entscheidungen in seiner Reanalyse zu überzeugen. Über diese Diskussion also erfahren die Leser nichts. Über die Untersuchung von Ruis zur Synastry (Partner-Korrelationen) und deren Indikatoren (Differenzen), von denen in der Erwiderung gesagt wird, „keine dieser Differenzen“ sei signifikant, schreibt Ruis zusammenfassend: „*His wrong use of statistics eliminates the significant effect*“ (briefliche Mitteilung). Auch diese Kommunikation mit Ruis wird in *Astrology under Scrutiny* und in der Erwiderung ignoriert. Nach solchen Erfahrungen werde ich in meiner früheren Empfehlung verunsichert, *Astrology Under Scrutiny* als Nachschlagewerk zu verwenden, denn ich habe die vielen andere Inhalte des Buches tatsächlich nur sporadisch geprüft.