

A Review of Johan Normark's paper titled "The 2012-phenomenon and the (new) age of hyperobjects," presented at the Association of Art Historian's 40th Conference in London on April 11, 2014.

Online at: https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/2012_Mayan_Calendar

John Major Jenkins. May 26, 2014.

There are several problems with the specifics and the overall approach of Normark. First, he accepts that Mayanism, as defined and argued by John Hoopes, is a valid concept. There are two issues here. First, Mayanism is treated by Hoopes synonymously with "the 2012 Phenomenon," which was coined by Geoff Stray as early as 2002, and was used *before* Sitler's adoption of it (in 2006) by Stray, myself, and a few other writers in a way that includes scholarly writings as well as what the modern Maya think about 2012.

Generally, even before it was named "the 2012 phenomenon", the milieu of writings, authors, and ideas that would come to be associated with the 2012 Phenomenon was critiqued by myself in the 1990s, as early as my 1992/1994 book *Tzolkin*, which dealt with both scholars and popular writers. Within that milieu I would gladly see my own work, as long as it was placed in the sub-category of 2012 writings that were concerned with reconstructing what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. I've made this distinction in my examination of the 2012 phenomenon but can only identify a very few efforts by others that fall into this category, each of which can be eliminated as a invalid effort because they indulge in false assumptions and embrace factual errors. As for the scholarly papers (there are no books dedicated to the effort) that fall into this category, which began late with Gronemeyer & MacLeod's August 2010 Wayeb monograph, many of the interpretations offered by scholars echo my own ideas (such as worldrenewal and the alignment astronomy involving precession), which I published many years earlier, in the 1990s). Robert Sitler, in his essay titled "The 2012 Phenomenon," identified me as a major force behind the 2012 phenomenon, which is true because my work holds to a central concern of the 2012 phenomenon which any scholar should be able to appreciate, that being *the effort to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012*. However, without my permission my interpretation of ancient Maya beliefs about 2012 have been appropriated in documentaries and in the marketplace, and were used for various theories I don't agree with.

Second, Mayanism has been challenged on the grounds of its previous historical coining and use in the 1990s by other scholars, in a way completely opposed to Hoopes's use. And since his Mayanism, in his use, is virtually synonymous with the 2012 phenomenon, one wonders why the term is needed at all. If we default back to the 2012 phenomenon and eliminate the superfluous and redundant Mayanism category, then we should look to the writers who first used that phrase to understand how they were using it, before it was appropriated by scholars like Hoopes for their own purposes of denunciation. Quite simply, Stray and I included within "the 2012 phenomenon" category all writings on 2012. We often critiqued and proofread each others writings. We both critiqued popular and academic writings on 2012 as well as mass media reports, and were interested in what the ancient and modern Maya thought about 2012. Robert Sitler, who is often and wrongly credited with coining the phrase in 2006, also embraced this larger definition of the 2012 phenomenon, reflecting how it was already being used by Stray and myself. (I actually thought the phrase "2012ology" was better, and introduced that in

my introduction to Stray's 2005 book.) It was only with the appropriation of the phrase by John Hoopes and a few other 2012 debunkers (such as Johan Normark), who often employed ad hominem attacks and unsupported denigrating assertions about writers working outside of their academic guild, that the concept became a categorical prison reserved largely for investigators operating outside the dark and narrow hallways of academia.

I've encouraged 2012 critics who employ the Mayanism or 2012 phenomenon categories to acknowledge a stand-alone category (or sub-category) where could be placed the researchers who were attempting to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. But the problem here is that 2012 debunkers like Hoopes and Normark do not acknowledge that 2012 is a valid artifact of ancient Maya thought, a valid concept whose meanings could be subjected to evidence-based reconstruction and articulation. Nowhere in Hoopes's writings is this apparent. In fact, he and Normark both assert that the "2012 mythology" has little valid basis in Maya traditions and that it's been around for only about 50 years (beginning with Coe). Hoopes claims to trace the earlier seeds of Mayanism/The 2012 Phenomenon in Theosophy and even back to Columbus. But the point is that they categorically ignore that I (to give the most durable long-term example) have been engaged in reconstructing ancient Maya cosmology with a focus on figuring out what the ancient Maya likely believed about 2012.

I identified an ancient Maya doctrine of worldrenewal at big period endings in the Long Count calendar. And that renewal must be facilitated (it is not an automatic, fated occurrence) by deity sacrifice. To the extent that the renewal ceremonies of fire and incense and sacrifices can *transform the consciousness* of the participants (which the modern Maya practitioners are well aware of), this is how a "transformation of consciousness" may occur at period-ending rituals. Among the ancient Maya I've discussed the transformational activities of Maya shamanism; I also have discussed the psychological and symbolic dialectic between the deity figures Seven Macaw and One Hunahpu, where they are two sides of the same coin and one transforms into the other.

I wasn't aware that it needed to be emphasized, because it's so obvious to anyone who reads my books, but my work here is oriented to articulating ancient Maya ideas, which are evident in the material and can be argued with citations and examples. I have done this in my work. My 1998 book was called *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012*, "cosmogenesis" being a term I selected because it expresses the concept of worldrenewal. *Now, what follows is a big problem; it needs to be called out and identified because it is a core fallacious assumption that distorts the perceptions and critiques of most of the 2012 debunkers.* Critics like Hoopes and Normark are incapable of seeing that central concern of my work because **they confuse the valid Maya doctrine of worldrenewal with the similar modern New Age interest in a "New Age."**

They accuse me of being a "New Ager" because they superficially think I'm talking about some New Age that is fated to occur, but I merely identified a valid concept of period-ending renewal within ancient Maya traditions. This must mean, in the thinking of Hoopes and his followers, that the ancient Maya indulged in invalid New Age fantasies. They disagree with those ideas and therefore they must be criticized and degraded when they appear in ancient Maya cosmology. Normark ignores how I arrived at these ideas in my work, imposes a false and misleading framework of interpretation,

and asserts superficial summaries and conflation of me with “2012ers” and “New Agers.”

Among many other published locations, the clear expression of my ideas is found in my 2009 book *The 2012 Story*, which Normark claims to have read. In my chapter in the Gelfer anthology (December 2011), which was the subject of debate on Normark’s blog in early 2012, I wrote:

To clarify, hopefully once and for all: I am not saying the Maya predicted the solstice-dark rift alignment with *exact* precision, and my theory does not require exact precision. I am not saying that the alignment happens *only once* on the solstice of 2012 (it happens on winter solstices within a range of 2012). I am not saying that the alignment causes pole flips, solar flares, or *anything* necessarily. I am not saying that the ancient Maya believed the alignment signals the end of time, the end of their calendar, or the end of the world (Jenkins 2011:179).

Normark asserted in his essay that I believe that a transformation of consciousness *will happen* in 2012, but — as he so cleverly observes — this *didn’t happen* and he thereby passes judgment on my work as a failed prophecy. But what we see in his comments, which we can judge as truly flawed, is that Normark doesn’t acknowledge that my work is not about some prophecy that *must* come true — and I aver that *neither did the ancient Maya hold to such a belief regarding 2012!* Again, my work has sought to reconstruct what *the ancient Maya believed* about 2012. And ultimately it doesn’t matter if that belief was to be disproved — we are trying to understand ancient Maya cosmology. If I had found and articulated solid evidence that the Maya believed pizza would rain from the sky in 2012, and it didn’t, that wouldn’t mean that my reconstruction work was incorrect. It would only mean that the identifiable Maya prophecy was wrong. The actual situation is that the Maya held to a doctrine by which worldrenewal was possible *if deity sacrifice was successfully performed*.

So, as it turns out, such a doctrinal “belief” hinges on a contingency. In addition, it can be applied to situations outside of 2012. It can be elaborated and qualified as a general truism about life that many might recognize: illusions need to be abandoned before one can open up to a new understanding. Let go before moving on. Sacrifice allegiance to false masters, ideas, and frameworks so that one can be renewed in a larger context and a new approach. Ironically, this is exactly what 2012 critics like Normark need to apply in their own flawed approaches.

Deity sacrifice as the necessary prelude to worldrenewal is found in Mesoamerican tradition, usually in relation to Creation Myth themes and calendrical period endings. Lord Jaguar seems to have utilized this construct in his Monument 6 text (which is NOT about a “descent” of Bolon Yokte, as Normark stated, following an old translation by Stuart). It’s a cosmological paradigm and a spiritual teaching, not a fated prophecy. Normark, Aveni, and other blind critics continue to assert that I hold to a predetermined prophecy of some kind, further suggesting it is my own personal belief. Again, they don’t seem to be able distinguish between a scholar’s work to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012, and whatever they may or may not believe about 2012. What I believe isn’t relevant — it’s the cogency of my arguments and the evidence I cite, which I’ve constantly — for over twenty years — invited scholars to discussion and engage. But

they NEVER have accurately done so. Their critiques consist of delusions, opinions, fictions, straw man constructs, *ad hominem* insinuations, and inaccurate summarizations and paraphrases of my work. Considering that I've pointed these problems out for many years now, scholarly critics really need to grow up and behave responsibly and professionally.

Some Background on Normark

My review of Normark wouldn't be complete with a little background that reveals his ideological predilections. Normark is/was the director of the Archaeological Haecceities website for many years, which he used to propagate and condone false assertions about my work and my associations. His site was a favorite haunt of several unprofessional debunkers of my work, one of whom I unveiled in an exposé which I wrote and tried to post to Normark's site during a discussion in which I was trying to defend myself, but Normark censored the link. It involved an unethical debunker named Jim Smith who used many aliases online and in his communications with me, and who hijacked my Wikipedia name-entry page in mid-2010, filling it with defamatory and false statements. My fact-based detective work in figuring out Jim Smith's aliases didn't serve Normark's own debunking agenda against me, so he censored my attempt to share the facts of the matter. I include it here, in the event that thinking people want to review the kind of people I had to deal with in my attempt to put forward my well-argued and documented reconstruction of what the ancient Maya thought about 2012.¹

Other debates I engaged on Normark's website, during which he always gave ideological support to the person who I was trying to inform about what my work is actually about, yet who were more akin to rabid attack dogs than thinking scholars, included an exchange in March of 2012 with Dr Stanley Guenter. This is here, with my comments: <http://www.update2012.com/Demonstration-for-Guenter.pdf>.

Again, as I mentioned above, Normark and other scholars never seemed to have created a category in their minds for those researchers, like myself, who were attempting to reconstruct what the ancient Maya believed about 2012. Instead, because of a refusal to acknowledge such a category, Normark's assessment of my work gets forced into a category in which it doesn't belong, side by side with Calleman or Arguelles. For example, Normark doesn't point out that I've critiqued the work of Arguelles and Calleman at great length, often being the first to do so. My chapter in Gelfer explains this contradiction in the critique of my work, where critics place me in a New Age category that I've been highly critical of. I'm happy to have my own work critiqued on its own merits (and I've persistently invited this), but the simplistic "guilt-by-association" critique employed by scholars is just juvenile and lazy. I suggest critics read my Update2012.com website. Then read my books *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* and *The 2012 Story* and compare them to Arguelles's *The Mayan Factor*, Clows's 2012 books, Calleman's books, or Pinchbeck's book.

A false assessment is evident in one of Normark's statements, which is also emblematic of comments by Hoopes and Kevin Whitesides, and indicates that these scholars have not logically thought their criticism through. He writes that the precession of the

¹ [Hhttp://www.update2012.com/Jim-Smith-Tom-Brown.pdf](http://www.update2012.com/Jim-Smith-Tom-Brown.pdf)H

equinoxes “is central in New Age mythology because it determines astrological ages” (page 2). Does the reader perceive what has been done here? And why it is objectionable? Let me spell it out. Normark has taken an astronomical phenomenon, the precession of the equinoxes, which in a scientific study of Maya astronomy would simply be a valid topic of rational investigation, and has spuriously associated it with an idea within “New Age mythology.” It thereafter becomes a dubious topic. It’s a way of attacking a premise in my work (that the ancient Maya were tracking precession) by defining it to be an invalid “New Age” idea. This is not scholarship my friends, it’s a cheap dismissal that avoids engaging my arguments and the evidence I’ve assembled. This is turf protection.

Similarly, if we identify a World Age doctrine in Maya thought that involves worldrenewal at a period ending (as we see in the *Popol Vuh*), that would be laughably criticized as an expression of “New Age” thought — it cannot be treated seriously by Normark, Hoopes, Whitesides, and other critics of all things 2012 because it’s an idea that can be found in modern New Age literature. I’m not sure if I need to emphasize how absurd and superficially flippant such a criticism is; I think they just must be intellectually lazy. But I do think it is the source of why so many scholarly critics have a problem with my reconstruction, which identifies an authentic World Age doctrine of the ancient Maya (it’s in the *Popol Vuh*) and argues for the idea that the ancient Maya believed period-endings involve transformation and worldrenewal.

As I’ve stated over and over again in my work, Maya religious concepts do not make some absolute prediction about this, as a fated prophecy. The 2012 date is a period ending, but it’s not a fated doomsday and its also not a fated renewal (or transformation of consciousness, as Normark asserts that I believe it is). It doesn’t matter what I believe. My work is concerned with reconstructing what the ancient Maya believed about big period endings like 2012. The problem here is the inability of critics like Normark to discern what I’ve actually said. They instead craft a false polarity, much like Anthony Aveni did in his narratives, that “2012ers” believe it’s going to be either a doomsday or a “bliss out” (renewal, rebirth, enlightenment).

The key distinction is that within Maya thought the “renewal” is not predetermined or automatic. The assumption that 2012 must be an automatic this-or-that seems to be a conceptual reflex of the convictions of scientific materialists based in their Doctrine of Causality; it doesn’t allow for the contingency that the Maya themselves require, and which I have elucidated in my evidence-based reading of ancient Maya cosmology — that is, *deity sacrifice* as the necessary prerequisite for a successful worldrenewal.

The poor level of factual rational processing and discernment in essays like Normark’s is deplorable. And he merely follows in the footsteps of Hoopes. It’s curious that these scholars evince admirable intelligence elsewhere in their discourses, so it’s quite likely they are (consciously or unconsciously) biased toward mitigating 1) my work 2) any idea that leads to a serious discussion about the level of Maya astronomical and/or conceptual achievement that the 2012 topic invites.

It may be that since I’ve covered a lot of this ground at great depth and length for over twenty years, scholars simply must avoid having a rational look at the evidence because it would mean they might agree with the same ideas and interpretations that I’ve offered (which is what has happened among the few scholars who did take a serious look

at what 2012 may have meant to the ancient Maya). During this period of twenty-plus years of seriously treating 2012 as a rational topic from the vantage point of reconstructing what the ancient Maya actually thought about 2012, Maya scholars largely dismissed the topic as a joke or treated it with disdain. When they started treating 2012 after about 2006 (When TRT Monument 6 came to widespread attention), they did so largely through the sociological lens of critiquing “millenarianism” and “New Age mythology.” In other words, many still refused to acknowledge that it was a valid artifact of ancient Maya thought.

Normark’s adherence to Hoopes’s flawed Mayanism construct needs to be called out. Normark stated on his bog that he read my 2009 book *The 2012 Story*, but he must have glossed over my exposé (in two sections) on Hoopes’s Mayanism construct, which was also cited in the Talk pages of the Wiki entry for Mayanism.

Normark’s paper has no bibliography or citations. I think it’s worth adding these to your paper, including any image used in a slide presentation, as I did for my 2010 SAA presentation, which is included in *The MEC-FACEBOOK Discussion* sponsored by the *Maya Exploration Center* (on their research page: <http://www.mayaexploration.org>). It is also on *The Center for 2012 Studies* website: <http://thecenterfor2012studies.com>.)

The False Assumptions Underlying Normark’s Comments

Generally, readers of Normark’s essay are likely to get the following impression about my work. He states that my “prophecy” about 2012 was not about doomsday, but a definitive transformation of consciousness that was fated to occur on December 21, 2012. But nothing happened so it’s a failed prophecy. I’m a “New Ager” and a “2012er” whose work is on the same level with Carl Calleman, Frank Waters, and “others” in the milieu of popular trade books on 2012. Normark did state the astronomical part of my reconstruction, in the following way:

“John Major Jenkins later argued that it cannot be a coincidence that the 13 baktun date in 2012 ended on a winter solstice and he worked out what has been called the galactic alignment theory that sees the Long Count as a countdown to the event when the winter solstice sunrise intersect with the center of the Milky Way. This event would initiate a New Age.”

Some clarifications, as usual, are needed to this inaccurate summary of my work. First, the “sunrise” criterion is not critical to a definition of the galactic alignment. Second, the “center of the Milky Way” should refer to the visual nuclear bulge, which would have been a general signifier that the Maya mythologized as the womb of the Great Mother. “Center” is a loose term in this instance, because Normark might intend it to mean the abstract center-point that scientists believe they can isolate (itself a difficult task because their are gravitational, electromagnetic, and abstract geometrical centers).

To be more clear with what the ancient early Maya were targeting with their forward precessional calculation, the astronomical features of central relevance (because they are found in the Maya Creation Myth, the Popol Vuh, and are found at the early Maya site I studied called Izapa), are 1) the southern terminus of the Dark Rift and 2) the

crossing point of the Milky Way and the ecliptic. Both of these features are within the nuclear bulge that Normark refers to as “the center of Milky Way.”

Normark also states that my “working out” proposes that the alignment is an “event” that “would initiate a New Age.” In fact, in my work I’ve clarified that the galactic alignment must be seen as covering a range of time, based on the ½-degree width of the body of sun, at the minimum being some 36 years (1980 AD to 2016 AD). Here’s the critical point that I’ve endlessly emphasized in my work and have tried to clarify time and time again to critics: The alignment does not automatically initiate a New Age independent from human engagement with the period-ending deity sacrifice described in the Popol Vuh. (I’m articulating what I’ve concluded the ancient Maya thought about period endings; such a belief is even retained in modern Maya ceremonial practices connected to calendrical period endings.) It’s almost as if critics like Normark do not have the neurological or cognitive wiring required for comprehending what is essentially a Maya conception: the alignment *signifies* (but does not *cause*) the time for a deity sacrifice ceremony which is necessary for worldrenewal. The summary given above by Normark is a parody, useful because it gets associated with the “pseudoscience” of astrology, dire “countdowns,” and loaded phrases like the “New Age.”

He says the precessional basis of my theory is “central in New Age mythology because it determines astrological ages” (with the obvious implication that it is not valid because astrology is pseudoscience). This does a disservice to the non-dual World Age conception of the Maya which is contingent upon human participation in the process of period-ending transformation and renewal. Normark then associates me with the “purposeful universe” language of Carl Calleman’s new book: “Jenkins, Waters and other New Agers did not argue for an apocalypse but rather a transformation of consciousness within a purposeful universe.” For Normark this is a useful (but false) framing since later he critiques Calleman’s work; thus a premeditated guilt-by-association indictment is constructed.

The closest thing I can find in my work to this “purposeful universe” concept is my discussion of teleology, which is about final ends or built-in purposes to processes in nature. I explored this as early as my 1989 book and in my 1994 book *Mayan Sacred Science*, explicating the metaphor of the tree and exploring the idea of whether the seed generates the fruit or the fruit generates the seed. Are processes drawn toward their conclusion, or are processes driven by prior causes? It’s a worthy conundrum to contemplate, and I’ve pointed out that teleology is abhorrent to scientific materialist who worship causality (see my discussion of causality as a false basis for astrology in my 1992 book *Tzolkin* and my discussion of teleology in my 2009 book *The 2012 Story*).

I’ve pointed out (notably in my 1998 book *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012*) that the Maya seem to have a teleological understanding of time, in which the important thing happens at the end of the time cycle or process. For example, the 260-day Tzolkin calendar is said by Maya daykeepers to be based in the 9-month period of embryogenesis, in which the important thing (birth) happens at the end of the process. Similarly, within the Long Count time periods (mini-cycles within the larger structure), end-naming is used. A Katun, for example, is named after its last day. The thing is complete, it reaches its teleological fulfillment, **at the end**; you might say its purpose is fulfilled when the completion point is reached.

This is relevant to 2012 because the 13-Baktun date in 3114 BC is stated in Maya Creation Texts as the “completion” of a previous period of 13 Baktuns. Meanwhile, all pre-Classic and Classic Period Long Count dates are written with the assumption that the 3114 BC “completion” was also equivalent to zero (0.0.0.0.0) — even though it is written as 13.0.0.0.0 in the Creation Texts. The end is the beginning; it’s cyclic. The “purpose” is a teleological manifestation of the fruit from the seed and a cyclic return to the starting point, a new seed.

So, these concepts within Maya metaphysics, or religion, or philosophy, can be explicated if we apply the same discernment and intelligence that we do to understanding many other ancient paradigms around the world. It always amazes me that otherwise intelligent commentators become idiots when dealing with Maya cosmology. The problem is that 2012 debunkers begin with the premise that 2012 is a joke; they treat the Maya with contempt or don’t even acknowledge that any of the concepts critiqued were valid or applicable to the ancient Maya. It’s like some unconscious reflex to deny and denigrate the primitive savages. This contempt is targeted specifically at the core ideas of my two-part reconstruction (which identify and celebrate the genius of the Maya), resulting in the following false equations:

- The galactic alignment is not real astronomy; it is astrological pseudoscience
- The doctrine of “a successful period-ending deity sacrifice is necessary for facilitating worldrenewal” becomes “a New Age bliss-out is fated to occur in 2012” (cue the laugh track)

It is difficult to have rational conversations with critics about the facts when such juvenile and self-defeating perspectives are forced onto the discussion. In fact, my recent exchange with Aveni ended (he stopped responding to my emails) when I presented him with facts that contradicted his assessments of my work.² And Normark, like other 2012 debunkers (he devoted much of his blog to 2012), abet and faithfully parrot talking points crafted and repeated endlessly by architects of deception like John Hoopes, Jim Smith, and Stan Guenter. Meanwhile, a critique of his degree-holding colleagues who espouse the same idea I’ve advocated for decades is off limits. What do I mean by this?

On Carlson

For example, John B Carlson’s take on 2012, as can be seen in his published essays of 2011 and 2012, is that the ancient Maya believed a deity (the “lord of Maya Creations”) is involved in making a sacrifice in order to bring about renewal at the 2012 period ending. If one reads Carlson and compares his ideas with my work at Izapa, one sees that he examined various Classic Period manifestations of the same complex of ideas I identified at Izapa. One wonders what led Carlson into this path of investigation, because my long-held interpretation for 2012 that “deity sacrifice is necessary for worldrenewal” is now emerging as a completely agreeable reading of what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. Well, I pioneered these perspectives in late 1994 and 1995 with my study of

² See exchange from late 2013 here: <http://www.update2012.com/Responseto-Aveni-on-my-TRT-essay.pdf>

Izapa, first published in early 1995 in my book (two booklets) called *The Center of Mayan Time*.

In November of 1994 I pitched an article idea to Carlson who was editor-in-chief of the *Archaeoastronomy Journal*. The archaeoastronomy angle was relevant because my findings at Izapa were based on the astronomical alignments and monument orientations at the site. No response from Carlson. In March of 1995 I queried again, and sent him my book. No response. In May I queried again and sent him several essays including a long letter I wrote to Dr. Robert Hall which contained descriptions of my work. Well, maybe he just didn't receive my letters. Nope. Years later, John Hoopes said he had a Xerox copy of my early book, which Carlson had Xeroxed and sent to him. So, by 1995 Carlson was well informed of my work and unprecedented findings and interpretations of what 2012 meant to the ancient Maya. Let's not forget my 1998 book, which Carlson pointedly refused receiving a review copy of (when I offered it to him in 1997 and 1998), but then he later stated that he had read the book and was familiar with my material, so much so that he felt confident in saying, in a presentation of May 2010, that I didn't know much about Maya astronomy (for example, I didn't know anything about the Year Drift Formula). But I discuss that in my 1992/1994 book *Tzolkin* (it's even in the Index) and in my 1998 book (it's in the Index there, too).³

With Carlson we see an architect of obfuscation and mitigation operating behind the scenes. He's tried to keep a mention of my work out of the essays written by contributors to his *Archaeoastronomy Journal*. And meanwhile, his own articulation of what 2012 meant to the Maya echoed one-half of my own two-part reconstruction. The other part is the galactic alignment, which Carlson has refrained from commenting on, except for one talk in July of 2012, which was described thusly:

>"Speculation about what ancient Maya sources tell us about 2012 is becoming a global phenomenon in popular culture as the great 5,125-year Maya "Long Count" cycle reaches completion on December 21. How did the ancestral ancient Mesoamerican peoples understand the world in terms of their astronomy, conceptions of space and time, calendrical divination, and prophecy? Is it coincidence that the sun will pass through the plane of the Milky Way near the galactic center around December 21? Did the Maya intentionally create this coincidence?"

So, it seems Carlson was prepared to offer his assessment of my 2012 alignment reconstruction by June of 2012. This may have been his latest pre-2013 work, because his last 2012 essay was already in the pipeline at that time, and was published in *Archaeoastronomy Journal* (Vol. XXIV) in August 2012. His July talk would likely avoid mentioning or crediting me, and his consideration was likely forced by the paper of Michael Grofe he was publishing, which presented evidence and arguments that ultimately support my work. I asked Grofe, in late December of 2012, if Carlson had discussed with him or commented on the findings in his paper, and he said no.

As the eternal optimist I'd like to think that Carlson and I could have a cordial conversation since his thinking on 2012 in many ways reflects my own. In fact, I sent him a cordial "laurel wreath" letter when I saw the announcement of his July 2012 talk (above). However, the track record shows he has been extremely reticent about communicating with me. His few comments and behaviors toward me that have leaked

³ More details on my efforts to communicate with Carlson, including a comparison of his ideas about 2012 with mine, which I sent him in 1995: <http://www.update2012.com/Mayanism-John-Hoopes.pdf>.

out of his tight-lipped stance suggest a desire to mitigate me and keep me out of the discussion and the published record (to the extent that he can control it). A reasonable interpretation as to why, is that his own perceptions about 2012 closely reflect my own, and he wishes to mitigate me so as to clear the space for him to have the sole credit for the ideas that I arrived at and published before him, including in academic venues such as SAA (my April of 2010 presentation at SAA was even before his My 2010 Robbins Museum talk) — not to mention my books and articles and presentations at universities, colleges, and academic venues going back to 1995, of which he was sent and received my earliest work!).

It's hard to know to what extent his thinking gelled due to exposure to my work. My articulations could have solidified his own suspicions about 2012, but he would never admit this. He would probably want to downplay the appearance of any such possible influence, which explains his odd insistence on not receiving my MC2012 book, in 1997 and 1998. In retrospect I was naively unaware of such politics, but as Carlson's interpretation of 2012 emerged in 2011 and 2012, it has become clear. It's pretty sad, because it's all based on his closed-minded resistance to collaboration and acknowledgement, to an egoic position that judged me as inferior and resisted my offerings. That must have been painfully difficult for him to process, creating a cognitive dissonance, if someone he judged so unworthy of his time was articulating and publishing pioneering work that he knew to be true. Then why didn't he write about it, or join the conversation much earlier? God knows I tried to invite discussion and pitched articles to his journal, beginning in 1994 and continuing in 1995, 1997, 1998 and 1999. After my last pitch in 1999 I pretty much gave up with him until his talk in 2010.

Hyper Objectives

I'm glad to have this opportunity to critique a linguistic issue that always bothers me. I myself have fallen prey to this problem in the past, but I learned the distinction through my readings of profound thinkers within the milieu of Traditionalist writers such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Titus Burckhardt. Learning is good. It's the distinction between super and supra, which can also be applied to hyper vs hypra. Except hypra is not a recognized construct, although its meaning can be inferred for the purpose of this discussion. Normark's use of "hyper" in "hyperobjects", which he draws from another researcher, begs a clarification. Hyper, like super, expresses a state of extreme energetic activity. If not "activity" then it's at least a state which is not ontologically different from the state which it is an attenuated form of. The "supra" state is ontologically different, above or transcendent to, the other state.

This is relevant to Normark's discussion of how 2012 is a "hyperobject" that exists beyond the field of the objects but impends itself into, or is perceived manifesting through, a variety of "object" topics or concepts like UFOs, crop circles, and so on. This linguistic distinction invites a reassessment and correction of the same problem in the "hyper Chaos / super Chaos" terminology of Normark's hero, Meillassoux. Normark states that "no 2012er rethinks reality as profoundly as Meillassoux does." I suggest that Meillassoux and/or Normark rethink the reality of their terms, which do not accurately reflect the concepts.

Normark concludes with an odd and inaccurate blanket statement:

“Each 2012er is a correlationist that basically create his or her own universe and seldom engage in a critical discourse about each other’s work, like academics do with their colleagues.”

No, what I’ve presented is a reconstruction of early Maya (or Izapan) cosmology based on an unprecedented interdisciplinary analysis of the archaeoastronomy, iconography, ballgame symbolism and astronomy, and Creation Mythology at Izapa, the site credited with being involved in the formulation of the Long Count / 2012 calendar. Normark may disagree with my work; it’s really hard to tell. He clearly disagrees with his false fantasy projection of what it is. He would probably agree with it if he heard my ideas coming out of the mouth of John B Carslon. But he has never accurately summarized what my work actually is nor has he ever cited and discussed the evidence I’ve brought to bear on my reconstruction.

Second, SELDOM? Normark writes that “each” of the “2012ers ... seldom engage in a critical discourse about each others’ work.” Since Normark has already previously labeled me a 2012er, then I must be someone who seldom critiques the work of other 2012ers. This is a completely false assertion. Since 1989 I’ve commented on and critiqued the work of Arguelles, Calleman, Waters, McKenna, Pinchbeck, Joseph, and numerous other “2012ers” — and this is evident in many of my books and articles and web pages. My critiques were often the first and remain the most detailed critiques. And I’ve also critiqued the academic 2012ers such as Aveni, Freidel, Van Stone, Hoopes, Guenter, Stuart, and others.

What is curious about Normark’s comment is that half of my chapter in Gelfer’s 2012 anthology (published December 2011)⁴ details some of my critiques of the “New Age” writers on 2012, and this anthology *was reviewed and discussed on Normark’s blog in early 2012*. This must be a case of selective memory, or intentional forgetting, in order to falsely put me in a denigrating narrative of “2012ers” and “New Agers.”

Normark’s statement above is emblematic of the low resolution and inaccurate way that 2012 debunkers have conflated and mischaracterized my work. It indulges in vague generalized lampooning and an undiscerning grouping of many writers into one category. If it’s not intentionally malicious, at least it can be called out as a critique built on a poorly performed, flawed, undiscerning, and superficial scholarship.

In Conclusion

To underscore some general and specific problems with Normark’s assessment of 2012:

- He uncritically accepts Hoopes’s flawed and appropriated Mayanism construct
- He doesn’t understand, or neglects to mention, the more inclusive definition of “the 2012 phenomenon” employed by those who coined and were first using it.
- In an apparent “guilt-by-association” attempt, he associates my work with Calleman’s “purposeful universe” construct
- His definition of my 2012 alignment theory is misleading

⁴ My chapter is online here: [Hhttp://alignment2012.com/Jenkins-in-Gelfer-anthology2.pdf](http://alignment2012.com/Jenkins-in-Gelfer-anthology2.pdf)H.

- He asserts that my 2012 prophecy has failed because nothing happened, based on his belief that I predicted something specific to happen on the 2012 cycle-ending date (which is not true)
- He has no category for those, like myself, who have been concerned with reconstructing what the ancient Maya thought about 2012.
- Without discernment he lumps a wide spectrum of writers into the same category of “2012ers,” New Agers, or 2012 “proponents.”⁵
- He asserts that I, as a typical “2012er”, “seldom engages in discourses” about other’s work. This is a gross error of assessment, as Normark himself should know since he claims to have read my book *The 2012 Story* (2009). And it’s not just that book, it’s very many of my articles, books, and web pages, including my posts to his blog.

In general, Normark’ exposition on Meillassoux’s ideas needs to be fleshed out better, explained more clearly, and documented in this print version of his presentation in London (April 11, 2014). There are vague allusions to how those ideas might contribute to the ideas of “2012ers”, but he doesn’t even hint at what he means. It’s difficult to even engage a conversation about the concepts he lays out, since they are vaguely defined and summarized. I think the hyperobject framework is being used by Normark to critique the way that the marketplace was seeing 2012 everywhere in the run up to 2012 — crop circles, UFOs, Nostradamus, climate change, asteroid impacts, and so on. This certainly was a problem, but Normark also states in his hyperobject list that 2012 was seen in the Milky Way (an obvious allusion to my work), which should inaugurate a discussion about my 2012 alignment work and the evidence for it at Izapa, in the ballgame, in the Creation Myth, at Palenque and Copan, on Tortuguero Monument 6, on La Corona block 5, in MacLeod’s 3-11 Pik work, and in the work of Michael Grofe.⁶ Instead, Normark lets the association alone once he has stated it because it serves his purpose of casting aspersions on my work — yet another potshot by a biased 2012 debunker that is simplistic and undiscerning.

Johan Normark is with the Department of Historical Studies, University of Gothenburg. Of his *Archaeological Haecceities* web blog, he says it was “used to convince 2012ers” that the “metaphysics” of something prophesied by the Maya calendar to occur in 2012, a departure into another dimension, or an “apocalyptic fantasy” is not what is “at stake.” (page 3 of his article) His article is at Academia.edu: https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/2012_Mayan_Calendar

John Major Jenkins is a pioneering voice in the evolving 2012 discussion with over twenty years of experience defining and debating the issues. Informed by innovative field work at key archaeological sites and inspired by living and working among the Highland Maya, Jenkins’

⁵ “2012 proponents” was a label used on Bill Hudson’s 2012Hoax site, with the clear meaning that 2012 proponents were doomsday advocates. My own name was listed under the heading of the “2012 proponents” for years and it took me months of communications with Bill Hudson before it was slightly modified. Hudson, like Normark, permitted and approved of the slanderous and false writings of Jim Smith (aka Tom Brown), who I exposed as a deceptive lair using aliases on multiple websites in order to spread misinformation about me and my work.

⁶ As I’ve laid out in a half-dozen books since 1995, articles and interviews, direct communications with Normark on his blog and via email, and in over two dozen essays at *The Center for 2012 Studies* website: [Hhttp://thecenterfor2012studies.com](http://thecenterfor2012studies.com)H.

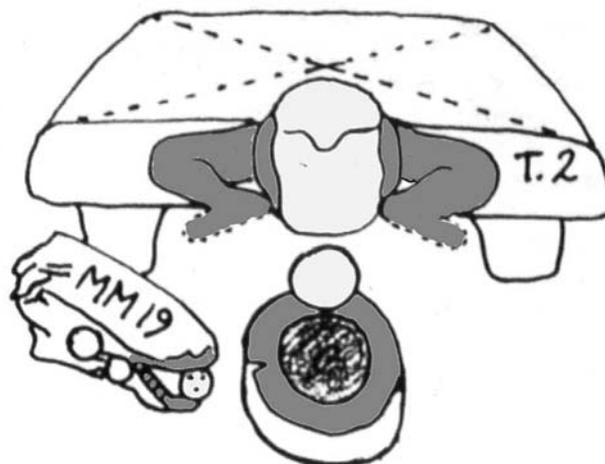
comprehensive work covers media misconceptions, assessments of 2012 theories, consciousness studies, Maya shamanism, archaeoastronomical research, Perennial Philosophy, academic misconceptions, and the crisis of sustainability faced in the modern world. His own unprecedented “galactic alignment theory” is now receiving new support from recent discoveries in the Maya inscriptions. While integrating the scientific and spiritual viewpoints, Jenkins honors contemporary Maya calendar tradition and the ancient Maya vision of a unified cosmos.

- Advisory director and founding member of *The Maya Conservancy*, a non-profit foundation dedicated to education and preservation of ancient Maya sites
- National Fellow member of *The Explorer’s Club*
- Director of *The Center for 2012 Studies*
- Manager of *Update2012.com* and *Alignment2012.com*
- Member of *The Society for American Archaeology* and *The Institute of Maya Studies*

His work has been featured since 1998 in media produced by *ABC Nightline*, the *U.S. News and World Report*, the *New York Times*, National Geographic, Discovery Channel, The History Channel, and NBC’s SyFy Channel. He has taught at numerous institutes and universities nationally and abroad, including the Universidad Francisco Marroquin in Antigua Guatemala, the Esalen Institute, Kingsley Hall in London, the Society of Henry XIII in Belgium, the University of Southern Oregon, the New England Antiquities Research Association, the Institute of Maya Studies in Miami, the Society for American Archaeology, and Naropa University. He is also a regular at popular venues such as the Conscious Life Expo, Megalithomania, and the Mind Body Spirit Expo.

Since the 1980s John’s articles have appeared in many magazines, newspapers, websites, journals, and book anthologies, including: *The Mystery of 2012* (2007, Sounds True), *You Are Still Being Lied To* (2009, Disinformation Company), *Towards 2012* (2008, Penguin). His major works include *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* (1998), *Galactic Alignment* (2002), *Unlocking the Secrets of 2012*, (3-CD audio program 2007), *The 2012 Story* (2009), *Lord Jaguar’s 2012 Inscriptions* (2011), and *Reconstructing Ancient Maya Astronomy* (2012). His books have been translated into twelve languages. His work appeared in a feature profile in *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, July 2007. Websites:

<http://Alignment2012.com>, <http://update2012.com>,
<http://www.the2012story.com>, <http://thecenterfor2012studies.com>



Izapa ballcourt throne and associated monuments