

Evidence that 2012 Represents a New Creation, or Worldrenewal

John Major Jenkins. *The Center for 2012 Studies*, Note 10. © June 9, 2010.

Several scholars have been looking at Classic Period texts in an effort to identify Bolon Yokte or his analogues. John B. Carlson, for example, posted some comments on Aztlán in 2007 and 2009, summarized here: <http://www.famsi.org/pipermail/aztlan/2009-November/006975.html>. It turns out that Carlson presented his research [at a talk held on May 15, 2010, in Middleboro, MA](#). Here's the subtitle of his talk: "Lord of the Maya Creations on his Jaguar Throne: The Eternal Return of Elder Brother God L - Senior Cosmogonic God and First Shaman - to Preside over the 21 December 2012 Transformation." Please note that the subtitle of the talk contains perspectives on 2012 that precisely echo the "First Shaman", "Lord of Creation," and "transformation in 2012" reading I've been offering since the early 1990s. Carlson deduces that scenes on the Vase of the Seven Lords and elsewhere "seem to portray the 'gods' in a cosmogonic conclave, gathered in the darkness of night (the Maya Underworld), to re-create the world on the last completion of the 13.0.0.0.0 cycle on 4 Ahaw 8 Cumku 9 (11 August 3114 B.C.E.)." Additional phrases used by Carlson in his write up on Aztlán, which was the source of the promotional summary of his talk, reflect my previous work (highlighted in red):

It is a reasonable hypothesis to propose that the same cosmogonic entities, presided over by the enigmatic Old God L, would be back for the completion of the next cycle on 13.0.0.0.0, 4 Ahaw 3 Kankin (21 December 2012 C.E.).

Carlson suggests that the name of the God L was "May" or "Ch'ul May: 'Holy Tobacco,'" or "Holy Medicine." His readings are based in epigraphy. Here's where it gets interesting. Carlson wrote that God L is

essentially the "First Shaman" or "First Priest," the primary Maya God of Medicine and Curing. ... Old God L is the senior cosmogonic god, at least by the Late Classic Period, who presides over the gathering of supernaturals for the almost endless cyclical renewals or re-creations of the Maya cosmos in the great 13 Baktun cycle, the cycle that will complete and continue on, once again, around December 21st, 2012 C.E.

So, Carlson's perspective is in effect vindicating my core interpretations of how the ancient Maya thought about 2012. The role of the "period ending" or "period measuring" deity on Stelae 11 and 67 at Izapa, who I identified in *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012* with the "First Shaman" figure (the primordial Mam or Year-Bearer corresponding astronomically to the December solstice sun and mythologically to One Hunahpu), could very well be the archetypal predecessor to the "God L / Bolon Yokte" complex at Tortuguero and the latter-day MaXimon figure. We'll see that Michael Grofe's work makes a cogent connection between Bolon Yokte and MaXimon. My own "9 steps of tzolkin progression equal 360" also provides a connection between Bolon Yokte and MaXimon, who is the deity of the tun renewal (see Vincent Stanzione's book *Ritual and Sacrifice*).

Carlson claims that his work on God L goes back many years, but it was [Michael Grofe's Wayeb Notes piece of 2009](#) that nailed the connection between Bolon Yokte, God L, and MaXimon. That material will be discussed in more detail in a later note, the post-2008 phase of official academia's attention to 2012. Carlson's material on God L was not widely known, and was presented publicly for the first time, as far as I know, in May of 2010 at his talk in Middleboro, MA. He possibly used the material in his classes; I can't be sure because he doesn't respond to my email. Years ago, I believe around 2000, I submitted a proposal to the *Archaeoastronomy Journal* that Carlson manages. It involved the astronomical alignments I had identified in the Izapan ballcourt and my reading of the sacrifice-and-renewal deity construct which the Izapans apparently intended to apply to the period ending in 2012. I never received a response. It's ironic that the ideological reconstruction I presented in that proposal (which in any case had already appeared in my 1998 book *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012*, and even earlier in my 1995 book *The Center of Mayan Time*) expressed ideas similar to the ones Carlson recently presented publicly at his talk in Middleboro, MA. I'm not at all suggesting he lifted them from me. Rather, it's more likely that he tapped into the same construct as it survived in Classic Period contexts, whereas I had decoded it in its iconographic, Izapan origins. This more likely situation calls into question Carlson's motivations in referring to my work as "nonsense" in his talk, and dismissing it in other ways, all of which were completely devoid of actually summarizing or defining my work, or providing fact-based information. But then again, that's been the pattern with scholars and how they've treated my work, even, in Carlson's case, while echoing very closely what I've already said. So, instead of a collaboration and respectful cross-citation of each other's work (I've cited Carlson on various points many times in my books) we instead have, well, something else.

II.

In March of 1998, right before my breakthrough book *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* came out in June, I called John B. Carlson and we chatted briefly. I was fishing for scholars that might be interested in receiving a pre-pub copy of my book. Maybe, I so naively dreamed, they might even be willing to write an endorsement statement. I started with the first offering, but Carlson didn't want to receive it. He said he was working on 2012 himself, and did not want to be exposed to "other people's views" on it. I think that was code language for "noxious irrelevant ideas." Now, 12 years later, Carlson is finally coming out with his work that he relates to 2012. And, to my utter chagrin and bemusement, I find that he, of all scholars, is echoing what I said about 2012 long ago: that the Maya thought of it as a transformative worldrenewal symbolized a primordial "First Father" deity's rebirth.

A recording of Carlson's presentation in Middleboro, MA on May 15, 2010 was made by a guy who attended the talk, which he sent to me. There were no prohibitions against taping that were displayed or announced at the talk. The *modus operandi* that Carlson used to discredit my work is not unlike that used by other elitist academics; namely, he didn't accurately summarize my work, referred to it loosely as "nonsense" without providing any details, and he conflated my work with authors such as Daniel Pinchbeck and Jose Arguelles (who I myself have critiqued in detail). As one example of the extremely unreliable and misleading nature of Carlson's comments on my work, he

incorrectly stated that I "know nothing about" the tropical year value and the year-drift formula by which the ancient Maya apparently had a precise understanding of the tropical year. While Carlson also stated that he had read my work, I guess that's just a tall tale, because I discussed the year-drift formula in many of my books, including *Tzolkin* (1992), *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* (1998), and *The 2012 Story* (2009). If he cared at all about accurately characterizing my work, and not being a presumptuous purveyor of misinformation, he could have simply looked up the term "year-drift formula" in the Index to any of those books, and thereby easily locate the page numbers. And here's the real interesting point about Carlson's dismissal of my work — as I mentioned above, his rather recent views on 2012 are late echoes of ideas I've been publishing for a long time. His online summary of his work is fairly detailed (see <http://www.famsi.org/pipermail/aztlan/2009-November/006975.html>), so I'm not out of line in seeing a parallel between what he's saying and what I've said. The connection between our respective conclusions is based on a simple idea --- that the archetypal nature of cycle endings has been preserved in Mesoamerican thought and manifests in similar deity complexes through time. His reading of God L closely reflects Grofe's work on God L / Bolon Yokte, which in turn echoes my work with the One Hunahpu complex at Izapa. The use of this deity-complex shows that the Tortuguero Monument 6 text assumes that 2012 is attended by a ceremony and a period-ending worldrenewal.

Carlson was apparently privy to some of the epigraphic ruminations taking place in late 2009 / early 2010 about the Tortuguero 2012 inscription. Carlson has served as editor of *Archaeoastronomy Journal* for many years. He is, at heart, an astronomer, and has made solid contributions to reconstructing astronomical components of ritual warfare. I wondered recently in an email to a friend whether Carlson is aware of the patterns of embedded astronomy on the entire Tortuguero Monument 6 inscription. There's no indication that he is, in any of the summaries of his work nor in his recent talk in Middleboro. I am hopeful that he, unlike many epigraphers who don't care about astronomy, will be interested in the astronomical implications of the Tortuguero inscription, which has not received much attention.