

2012ology

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I coined the term 2012ology in my Foreword to Geoff Stray's book *Beyond 2012* (written in March 2004, published in 2005, Vital Signs Publishing). I also named Stray as a "2012ologist" --- one who studies all-things-2012. My terms were picked up by others, including academic critics (Sacha Defesche, David Stuart, Mathew Restall and Amara Solari among others). It's amazing, for example, to see how many online piece highlighted Restall's use of the term, many giving the impression that he devised the term to corral all the 2012-related nonsense --- a diminishment of my original non-pejorative sense of the term I coined). I've used it on many occasions, in public presentations, interviews, and articles (e.g., in *New Dawn* magazine, in my review of David Stuart's book, in my 2009 piece in "You're Still Being Lied To," and in my book *The 2012 Story*). I'd like to explain what is meant by this term and why it is a less loaded and problematic term than "the 2012 phenomenon" and John Hoopes's version of "Mayanism."

2012ology is simply the study of all things 2012. It is 2012-ology, Twenty-twelve-ology. The study of 2012. This includes the Long Count calendar, theories about 2012, reconstructions of what 2012 meant to the ancient Maya, critics of 2012, the media and 2012, movies and documentaries on 2012, all writers on 2012. A very simple categorical "study of" ... 2012.

As for "the 2012 phenomenon," the difficulty is knowing what that "phenomenon" is. It relates to 2012, clearly, but what *is* and what *isn't* included under the umbrella of a perceived "phenomenon" arising from or related to 2012? Some academic critics of "the 2012 phenomenon," such as Kevin Whitesides and John Hoopes (2011, "Seventies Dreams and 21st-Century Realities", in *Zeitschrift für Anomalistik*), use a limited definition that excludes themselves and their academic colleagues. According to them, the 2012 phenomenon is: "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 is problematic because 1) it is a limited definition that excludes the Maya and 2) they exclude themselves from scrutiny as being *part of* the 2012 phenomenon.

The difficulties with the 2012 phenomenon phrase are several. First, it was initially used as a large and inclusive phrase by the first researchers who began using it, Geoff Stray and myself (John Major Jenkins) --- beginning at least by 2002, with antecedent phrases such as "the phenomenon of 2012" being used in 2001. Robert Sitler picked up the phrase and used it in the title of his 2006 *Noval Religio* essay (some writers erroneously credit Sitler with coining and defining the term in that essay). Sitler also used it in a wider sense that included the views of modern Maya leaders.

Most problematically, scholars quite prominent in the critique of the "2012 mythology" (such as Whitesides and Hoopes) conflate it with an invented "Mayanism" and even use both terms interchangeably. The issue here is that "Mayanism" is a construct developed by John Hoopes, on Wikipedia, where it has been seriously challenged and questioned on the grounds of illegitimate semantics and inversion of prior historical uses. Furthermore, his article of 2011 ("Mayanism Comes of (New) Age" in *2012: Decoding the Countercultural Apocalypse*) waffles back and forth with similar descriptions labeled both Mayanism and the 2012 phenomenon.

2012ology does not have this problem. It is the study of all things related to a legitimate concept, an artifact of the ancient Maya Long Count calendar and demonstrated on two Classic Period monuments (at La Corona and Tortuguero). It is a wide umbrella. It is not the critique or study of a category that needs to be defined or constructed, whereby the different agendas and projections of its various builders must then also come into question.