

The Third ‘Reference’ to the 2012 Date

John Major Jenkins

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We actually have what I believe to be a third ‘reference’ to the 2012 period ending. I put ‘reference’ in single quotes because it would be better to call it an ‘anti-reference.’ Let me explain. This 2012 allusion, which has been overlooked because of its unexpected “outside the box” status, occupies a special position because it draws attention to itself by the fact that *it is omitted*. It is valuable because, by its very absence, it tells us something about how the 13th Baktun in 2012 was being thought about. This may sound odd, but consider the following list of numbers:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17

What do you notice? The number 13 is missing. Now, let’s say there is some context for these numbers: they are the floor numbers in a hotel elevator. The 13 doesn’t exist, and for this reason it stands out. Knowing a little context about the common superstition or prejudice against the number 13, you can deduce the reason why it is missing: many people don’t want to stay on the 13th floor of a hotel, or push the number 13 in an elevator. With very little information, which is rooted in *the absence of 13*, you can actually deduce a lot of information. Even if you didn’t know the background to the superstition about the number 13, you could still easily deduce that there is something unique and important indicated here about the number 13 — suggested not by anything explicitly stated, *but by its very absence*.

Now to our Maya example. On the West Tablet from Palenque’s Temple of the Inscriptions, we find many period-ending dates, including 9.13.0.0.0, 10.0.0.0.0, 20.0.0.0.0, and others. In a sequence of Baktun endings we find the future period-ending 12.0.0.0.0 followed by 14.0.0.0.0. Here, 13.0.0.0.0 is skipped. Why? We’ll, some context from the narrative and in the relationship between Palenque and Tortuguero helps us understand. 13.0.0.0.0 belongs to Lord Jaguar, while Pakal claims the 20th Baktun. This is *Pakal’s* legacy text. He simply doesn’t want to validate 13.0.0.0.0 by mentioning it in any way. It is the date that Lord Jaguar used in his own legacy text (Tortuguero Monument 6), and we know there was some friction between the two sister-cities, whose two kings were close contemporaries, a dance between collaboration and competition. By the time Pakal went to Xibalba, retrospective legacy was at stake. As expressed in grand building programs, Pakal and his son Kan Bahlam were trying to upstage and out-do Lord Jaguar. They didn’t want to mention and thereby reinforce the propaganda of their competitor.

So, 13.0.0.0.0 in 2012 does seem to have had meaning to the propagandists at Palenque. By thinking outside the box, we can thus identify this *third* source of information that tells us how the ancient Classic Period Maya — at least from the self-interested vantage points of Pakal, his son Kan Bahlam, and Lord Jaguar — thought about the future 13th Baktun period-ending in 2012 AD.

—excerpt from *Time Conscious Kingdoms* (Four Ahau Press, 2012)