

## Our Present Paranormal Paradigm, and a note to skeptics

An excerpt from "Inner Journeys, Cosmic Sojourns: Life transforming stories, adventures and messages from a spiritual hypnotherapist's casebook", by Stephen Poplin, M.A., CHT

I felt I was New Age before it became hip (and now passé), and disliked the name given to this "recent" wave of spiritual interest in the 1980s because the word "new" was in it: this word automatically implies that the phase will soon pass into something either "established" or stale, or will be chronicled as an ephemeral fad or phase to be found on some old bookshelf one day. Again, passé. For instance, the *New Thought* movement faded with the smoke of the Great War, the war to end all wars – which later was reclassified as WWI. Indeed, just a few years into the new 21st century, New Age was becoming old. Smooth jazz seemed to replace the name in music, and *holistic* and *integral* were the latest catch words describing the eclectic philosophy of the past decades. Astrologers were laughing: they knew the planetary alignments that predicted this network of integrated thought; it was the same inspiration behind the world wide web. Uranus (technological innovations, groups) and Neptune (images, imagination) reunited in the mid 1990s in the practical sign of Capricorn; we all became more connected with the next jump in electronics, technology and vision, right on cue. The world wide wave (www) was here. That wave came in, peaked in the 1990s, everyone was refreshed and expanded (some got drenched), and the promoters were now looking for new packaging. By the end of the 1990s, the Dot.com bubble burst. It was time for the next phase.



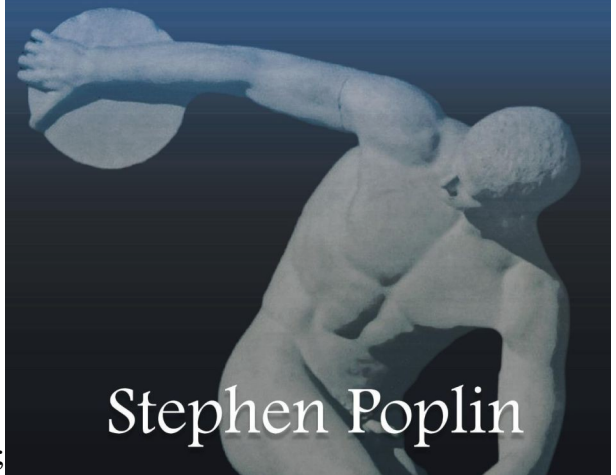
One needs to be discriminating in the modern spiritual or metaphysical supermarket; wisdom is to be found amid some wild speculation and other-worldly theories, just as precious gems are buried in dirt and rock. I am reminded of the Tarot card *The Star*, depicting a lovely, naked ethereal being on a surreal landscape with one foot standing on water. My interpretation of this card varies depending on the situation, but basically the rules and realities from another world, another Star, as consistently logical and true for that existence, may not apply here on Earth. And so my skeptical mind periodically comes across some theories and claims that, even to me as an astrologer and reincarnationist (Yes, some might judge that someone with such beliefs might not have his feet on the ground.), seem quite outlandish and ungrounded. As Socrates warned, "Some men, like arguments, are pretenders." And so, the Mayan prophecy pointed to the end of days in 2012, ... and here we are, still. False prophecy, or interpretation? Some psychics tell us we are moving into the 4th or 5th dimension, but this would upset the Order – here on the Earth, where we live and experience the 3rd dimension – and shall continue to do so. This is like the law of gravity or the speed of light – they are constant here, and will be long after I die. But perhaps on some other star ... realities and dimensions flux.

Some esoteric notions remind me of the Wizard of Oz, and advice akin to telling Dorothy to tap her ruby slippers together three times while repeating the magic mantra is told with a straight face. A few years ago there was an Australian psychic who made great claims about a monumental change on the Earth; aliens in spaceships would reveal themselves and aid us all. She gave a date. This did not happen ... and she was surprised, dismayed, and embarrassed. To her credit, she admitted she was

## Inner Journeys, Cosmic Sojourns

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wrong, and apologized. She retreated from public view. Prophecies can be disappointing. William Miller, founder of the Christian Millerite movement, predicted that Jesus would come on 21 March 1843. A very large number of followers accepted his prophecy. When Jesus did not return, Miller then predicted a new date - 22 Oct 1844. Many Christian followers sold their property and possessions, quit their jobs and prepared themselves for the second coming. When this too failed to happen, this was called "The Great Disappointment." Astrologers were somewhat amused, for this was some mischief, and profound lessons, connected to Neptune, which was discovered around the same time. Look back at the origins of the Jehovah's Witnesses and you will read that their founders made their own predictions. Jesus would return, invisible, in 1874 – and that 1914 would mark the end of a 2520-year period called "the Gentile Times." Unfortunately that prophesied date, 1914, was the beginning of the First World War. A few years ago the Christian preacher Harold Camping of Family Radio had predicted the rapture & the end of the world in 2011. Also to his credit he apologized in 2012. Prophecies are tricky, like some humans.

The things that humans do. To follow the imagination, wishful thinking, or the rules and teachings? To follow and trust the institutions? The religions? The Market, the stocks, - the almighty dollar? The paid experts, the head hunters, pundits, poachers, fanatics, deceivers and egomaniacs.... ?? One can get way off track believing in fairy tales and second hand wizzard and self-appointed gurus. Like the craziness and irrationality of commerce, economics and backroom deals, the esoteric landscape sometimes can look like a surreal postcard from some star, and it is advisable to check the other-worldly theories with some real world reasoning (and get references!).

There is another extreme to be wary of, I remind myself. Behind my desk I have a good library and a philosophy degree on the wall. I appreciate solid research and reasoned conclusions, but I get impatient when academicians limit the boundaries of truth within the five senses and the bicameral brain. At that point I put aside the book and step outside. There, with the warm colors of a sunset or the pastels of a rainbow, I breathe in the clear air and sense again my own Self. A bird chirps, a squirrel scurries up a tree. This divine Essence is greater than my body and utilizes more senses than my physical limitations. Scientists know that colors vibrate at a particular frequency, but there is much more going on; sentient beings delight in the pulsating rhythmic waves and lovers swoon in romantic locales. My own inner barometer senses a higher Order. A hawk or eagle catches my eye. It majestically circles above me, high in the blue sky, then it shoots off towards the west, where rain clouds gather. The sun is setting, light beams through, and a rainbow forms. Thank you Hawk. I get a thrill, my hair stands on end. Something else is here. Signs in the sky. Auspicious. Yes. The mysteries are still here, and we are being called.

*Stephen Poplin*

*Roaming somewhere in Europe or in North America, on planet Earth, like his guide suggested.*

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