

Chapter 5

“Warning: Contents under Pressure...”

Not all of our source material originates with Nostradamus, but quite a large portion of it does. Whether this is because the material he provided is fresher or just enigmatic is a good question that we will not be asking here.

Regardless of the source however, virtually all of the material we have has been ‘bottled’ for later consumption. What does that mean? It means that the form of transmission chosen to pass this information on through the ages has been both confining and opaque.

Most of our information concerning this predicted World Jihad has been preserved through a poetic medium. Why use poetry for such a horrific scene? Because poetry was in fact, a song. Maybe a song without music, but a song never the less. In times long ago, information was put into poetry so it could be remembered and passed down from generation to generation. There is another aspect to putting information into poetic form, it preserves the data.

We have all played the ‘telephone game’ where a phrase or sentence is whispered from person to person in a large circle around the room. When the final person gets the message and writes it down, it rarely resembles the content of the original message that was started. This illustrates how data can become damaged through repetitive transmission over time. The function of a rhyme actually prevents this, and is the reason we still remember phrases such as “Jack and Jill” and “ashes, ashes, we all fall down”.



It did not quickly become “Jack and Margaret” because the rhyme had to be with the word “hill”. Over time we may see this evolve into “Jack and Bill”, but that is years in the future. The reference to “ashes” has to do with the Bubonic Plague that swept over England in 1665. Almost 400 years later, the rhyme is intact, but we see another interesting thing, the meaning has become somewhat clouded.

It appears that the integrity of the data has outlived the cultural environment it was originated in. I have heard (and read) that the ‘ashes’ were supposed to represent a sneezing sound ‘ah-choo’, and also that it represented ‘hush’, in silent respect for the dead. The reality may be even simpler, the ‘ashes’ could represent the cremation of diseased bodies, which is what the English historians believe.⁽¹⁾

In short, the format of the information preserves the integrity of the data, and provides a redundancy check as well.

Here we also see how culture can evolve past data that was 'locked' in poetic form and thus lose some of the connotations and meanings associated with the era.



We mentioned earlier that the poetic form was used because it was a form of song, and indeed, we can clearly remember nursery rhymes we 'sang' as children. The simple melodies compliment the simple rhymes, and make the data retention that much stronger. In fact, poetry is a kind of intermediate form of song. There is a 'spectrum of complexity' where we have straight data (prose, narration) growing into more complex forms of constrained rhythm (poetic meter and rhyme) to actual rhythm and beat tied to poetry itself, (songs).

The point of this review is that our early data comes to us in the form of poetry, therefore we can make some assumptions based on what we know about poetry in general.

- Assumption 1 - The data is largely intact and unaltered.
- Assumption 2 - The meaning, connotation, and symbolism of the data may have changed with cultural changes.

Knowing these things ahead of time, we can look more carefully at certain aspects of the data. It is similar to looking for clues at a crime scene, except we already know they are there. Now we can focus directly on the meanings of the clues, rather than looking for them.

Much of the Biblical Old Testament was in the form of songs. "The Song of Deborah" is one of the oldest surviving fragments of the Pentateuch⁽²⁾. The reason Moses could transcribe the early Jewish history was because he had heard the songs himself, as they were sung from generation to generation. Many other 'songs' make up large portions of the Old Testament, "Psalms", "The Song of Solomon", "Lamentations" are among the many. In these songs, there is data. We know the data is intact, but the meanings and symbolism we may miss, being from a distant culture in time.

If someone wants to pass a quantity of information into the future, one needs a very efficient container, for the longer the data is, the more likely it is to become damaged in transit.

This is the function of poetry, the transmission of maximum information in the smallest possible container. This is done through the use of word choice, connotation, implication, rhyme, meter, and symbolism.

For example, let us use the word “red”. We want to pass this down to the future. We want to convey a message. A simple rhyme may help here, an example from the past. “Better dead than Red” was a common expression in the 60’s. Easy to remember, and could be passed on without fear of modification or breakdown. But let’s look at the other hidden context.



“Red” here meant many things. “Russian”, “Communist”, “blood”, “danger”, “warning”, an alternative to “dead”, “worse than dead”, etc. etc.

See how many meanings can be compacted into such a small phrase?

This is the essence of poetry and song.

Pack the meaning, the symbolism, and the implications, into a container that will resist tampering because of the rhyme condition.

We have finally worked our way back to Nostradamus.

Our old friend Nostradamus wrote in a style known as the ‘quatrain’, four lines of verse with every other line rhyming, (more or less). His skill at crafting well-built poetic lines is not overwhelming, however this may be due to his haste to finish the book of rhyme predictions he was making (Le’s Prophecies). This book was supposed to contain 1,000 quatrains of predictions for the world, presumably from his own time to the stated year of “3,797”, when he claims his prophecies will end.

“But after being surprised sometimes by day while in a trance, and having long fallen into the habit of agreeable nocturnal studies, I have composed books of prophecies, each containing one hundred astronomical quatrains, which I want to condense somewhat obscurely. The work comprises prophecies from today to the year 3797.” ⁽³⁾

Note carefully what is said between the lines as well. He has *already* composed the books and now wants to *condense* them, not in terms of making the quantity of them less, but by packing more into them using words that will convey multiple meanings. His later work consisted of reworking each quatrain to make it more “obscure” and to randomize its order. He did this in three sections, the first three

hundred and fifty were published in 1554, and the next set of about the same were published in 1555. The last remaining quatrains were not to be published until after his death, except for a few advance copies, one notably to King Henry II.

The haste in which he appears to get these into print, and the care in how it is done makes it seem that he was keenly aware that any misstep in the handling of this information could cost him his life, not just from the earthly realm of the Inquisition, but from the heavenly realm as well. There is a sense that there is a “forbidden zone” concerning information like this, information not supposed to be revealed due to potential effect of the knowledge before its time, very similar to that of the time-traveler rules.

“Carl Sagan also once suggested the possibility that time travelers could be here, but are disguising their existence or are not recognized as time travelers, because bringing unintentional changes to the time-space continuum might bring about undesired outcomes to those travelers. It might also alter established past events.”

[11] [12]

Nostradamus made another claim. The work will contain prophecies from “today” to the year “3797”. This destroys the arguments some present that many of his prophecies were “retroactive” or “retrospective” since “today” must be considered as the era when he wrote this letter in 1555.

Subtracting 1555 from 3797 we find that these prophecies cover a time span of 2,242 years, an average of one prediction every two years, although in practice these are clustered into groups of events, most likely due to the method Nostradamus used to see these events.

Being an educated and well-traveled man, Nostradamus wrote not only in the medieval French of the day, but in Latin and German as well, and was not averse to manufacturing words in order to complete the rhymes of his quatrains. As an added ‘bonus’, when he thought things might be a bit too easy to understand, he resorted to anagrams for specific words or phrases. For an added difficulty factor, he was known to drop or substitute some of the letters in the anagrams as well.

Some well-known anagrams of his, a few of which we may cover later:

- DUUMVIRAT
- MABUS
- TORRENT
- PAU NAY LORAN
- HISTER

There are many more, but most do not impact the studies presented in this book, such as ‘Napoleon’ from PAU NAY LORAN, among others.

Nostradamus never quite finished his book, as there are only 942 quatrains in “Le’s Prophecies” with chapters (called ‘centuries’) broken down into groups of 100 quatrains. Other quatrains are floating about as well, since prior to his desire to

publish "Le's Prophecies", he had published almanacs with quatrains for the month and year. Lately some verses called 'Sixaines' have surfaced, six lines of similar rhyme which I suppose he could have written, but we really have no proof or historical record that he ever wrote this type of rhyme. Other supposed quatrains and Sixaines have appeared over the years, but like the early apostolic writings of the Christian church, these were often published under his name by people seeking the status and fame of the original.⁽⁴⁾

We do have proof he wrote prose, as his letter to King Henry is preserved, as well as a letter to his son Cesar, both containing predictions in simpler narrative form. In these he was much more straightforward with his predictions, maybe because they were only to be read by those he intended rather than the masses that had access to his published almanacs.

Like the nursery rhymes, while the form has not been altered much, the cultural meanings and symbolism certainly have, making the transition to modern day ideas sometimes difficult.

Other things influenced Nostradamus as well. The Inquisition was constantly after him, waiting for him to make some fatal mistake. Nobles were also after him for predicting the death of the king during the jousting match^[7] because for them, predicting this was similar to carrying out the deed. At times, even the townspeople went after him, especially after he could not save them or his own family from the plague. He did not really settle down until much later in life, and at that point it seems as if he wanted to get the years of built up visions out of his mind and on to some paper. To that end, his writings had to be partially disguised. He avoided straight-out prophecy since that could have easily landed him in trouble with the church. The king and nobles could also be a problem if they were able to easily discern what would happen to France (and themselves) in the near future.

He settled on a form of 'cloudy' prediction which had multiple possible meanings as well as a kind of 'reverse predictive' element. Only after the event occurred would the identification and accuracy of the prediction be realized. This was a kind of 'prophecy-insurance' to protect him from false-prophecy claims by the church, since in theory they would only be discovered after the fact.

For times and dates, he turned to symbolism. Most often used were astrological signs. These were convenient since they could occur anywhere from several times per year to once every several years. There are very few quatrains that use an astrological dating scheme that occurs rarely. Other dating schemes he used were leadership titles, (calling Napoleon's France an 'empire' during the monarchy period)⁽⁵⁾, land areas and possessions, (calling Great Britain the 'land of 5 rivers to 1' - the British Empire once oversaw 5 major rivers)⁽⁶⁾, and using natural phenomena like earthquakes, asteroids and comets.

As a final defense against simply writing them down in order, he wrote them on individual pieces of paper, then threw them up in the air. Supposedly, he then recorded them in the order in which he picked them up.

Somewhere between these steps, one last defensive step was taken, translating the narrative of what he had seen into the rhyming couplet pair that he called a quatrain.

As a result, when we explore these quatrains he has left us, we must diligently pry under all the rocks of words and expressions to extract as many meanings as we can find. Only by doing this archaeological dig into verse can we be sure we have narrowed the possibilities to a level that identifies the subject at hand.

One other issue comes to mind when any conversation about Nostradamus pops up, and this concerns the 'failed' predictions.

There is an unspoken acknowledgement that a prophecy must come true for the prophet to be 'real', otherwise he is a fraud. I used to hear this frequently in church by the "unenlightened ones" and it was some of the associated dogma that the uneducated clung to. "If the prophet made a prophecy and it did not come true then he is a false prophet."

I suppose these people did not read their Bible very well. One of the oldest books we have is the sad story of a prophet whose predictions did not come true. Most people remember Jonah from the whale episode, not that he was trying to escape traveling to Nineveh (in present day Iraq directly across from Mosul) to announce a prophecy of destruction on the city. Since Divine 'guidance' delivered him directly to the city, he began a furious campaign of vindictive prophetic utterances against the city and its inhabitants. To his surprise and dismay, the people repented of their ways, and God rescinded the imminent punishment, much to the prophet's disappointment.

Why was Jonah disappointed? Because "prophecies that do not come true are not from true prophets!"

Jonah was more concerned over being seen as a fraud than he was over the fact the people had actually repented and saved themselves from immediate destruction. ^[7]

So here I introduce the "Jonah Factor".

Nostradamus was very clear in his letter to Cesar, that human will can affect the outcomes of the prophecy. ^[8]

Here is one famous example -

Century 1 Quatrain 35

35

*The young lion will overcome the older one,
in a field of combat in single fight:
He will pierce his eyes in their golden cage;
two wounds in one, then he dies a cruel death.*

Even while Nostradamus was alive, the noble class talked about this one. There was much speculation that the "old lion" was the king, Henry II. Another astrologer (Luc

Gauric) warned the king to avoid combat during his 40th year as well. On the occasion of the marriage of the king's daughter to King Philip of Spain, there was planned three days of royal festivities, which included a jousting event. The king took part in this event, apparently ignoring all advice, and on the third day of the festivities faced off against the captain of his royal guard, a man named Montgomery.

Cheetham relates that both the king and his captain had a lion on their coat of arms, ^[9] (and thus apparently on shields as well), although I have not been able to confirm this with research. Lions may simply be the metaphor of choice in this case, (as in "king of the jungle"). On the third pass, Montgomery's lance splintered and impaled the king through the eye slit in the helmet. The King died ten days later.

We see a typical Nostradamus 'fulfilled' quatrain here.

The king had the choice as to participate or not. Had he actually avoided combat, this quatrain would go down in history as "failed". Would that have meant that Nostradamus was a fraud? Maybe he just saw both sides of the coin, "free will" making the final coin toss.

Note the prediction is not exact. While we may assume that the "golden cage" means the king's helmet, the "two wounds in one" needs to be explained, as there appears to be only one (physical) wound. It could be argued that the other wound was that France was deprived of a king, but that starts to stretch the facts a bit.

Then again, Nostradamus tells us to expect this, "Since all these portents are produced impartially, prophecy comes to pass partly as predicted". ^[8]

One last note. There are a few quatrains with absolute dates, including the year and month and sometimes even actual days, spelled out in minute detail.

Much speculation surrounds these dates. What calendar system are they in? In the time of Nostradamus the European world used the Julian Calendar. After 1582, Europe switched to the Gregorian Calendar. There are ten days difference between the two. In fact, as we will see, I think Nostradamus did not use either of these, but that's for the next chapter.

In all the predictions in "Le's Prophecies", there are only about a dozen with specific dates, and many of them have disclaimers attached, so knowing what he meant is impossible without information he does not readily provide. Some have claimed to have discovered a "code" which allows them to interpret the dates, but I side with Nostradamus scholar and astrologer John Hogue on this, there is no code. These prophecies are designed to be understood *after* they happen, not before. This may just be the reason Nostradamus was able to publish them at all without invoking a lightning strike on his head!

One thing we can assume though, where he attempts to give us a specific date the prediction must be very important and the associated visible events are not easily described. It is simple to describe a great fire or flood, but not as easy to describe a treaty or change in the calendar.

This tends to throw into doubt some of his most obvious quatrains that give what appears to be an outright exact year of occurrence. These are a very small percentage of the total, and after all we know about how hard he tried to 'fog' the predictions themselves, it seems quite out-of-character for him to simply give an outright date in a quatrain. More likely, these 'dates' are anagrams or mathematical puzzles he would like us to solve, rather than something the ignorant masses would simply latch on to. I think this is what has happened with the now infamous '1999' prediction, as well as the other 'failed' date predictions.

As Churchill said of Russia, the predictions of Nostradamus remain a "riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma".

FOOTNOTES:

[1] <http://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/more-nursery-rhymes/>

[2] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deborah>

[3] Nostradamus, "Letter to Cesar", March 1555 , paragraph 19

[4] Erika Cheetham, "The Final Prophecies of Nostradamus", pg 23, 31

[5] Nostradamus, "L'es Prophecies", Century 1 Quatrain 3

[6] Nostradamus, "L'es Prophecies", Century 6 Quatrain 27

[7] The Holy Bible, Jonah 4:1-3

[8] Nostradamus, Letter to Cesar, 1555 ... " Gods mysteries are incomprehensible and the power to influence events is bound up with the great expanse of natural knowledge, having its nearest most immediate origin in free will and describing future events which cannot be understood simply through being revealed.... Since all these portents are produced impartially, prophecy comes to pass partly as predicted" (paragraphs 12 and 14).

[9] Erika Cheetham, "The Final Prophecies of Nostradamus", pp 59