



Maya Classic Period

Presented by: *Russell Werner*

Wednesdays
September 10, 17, 24, & Oct 1, 2014

1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Maravilla - Club Room
5486 Calle Real, Santa Barbara

The ancient Maya civilization lasted over 1600 years, and then for the most part, vanished in the lush jungles throughout Guatemala, Southern Mexico, and Northern Honduras and Belize by 1000 AD. The “mysterious Maya” have perplexed historians since the earliest European explorers in the 18th Century began to find traces of advanced cities of cut limestone buried in the jungles. Who could possibly have had the sophisticated engineering and architecture to build these vast cities in an area inhabited by the simple farmers and jungle dwellers encountered by the explorers? And what to make of the elegant and carefully drawn inscriptions that covered the stelae and walls of these buildings? For over 200 years, all attempts to read the inscriptions came to naught.

The slow progress in understanding the ancient Maya is filled with colorful characters from the golden age of the amateur archeologists in the 18th and 19th Centuries before modern scientific methodology was developed. It was only in the 1970’s that a determined group of Mayanists “cracked the code” and began to read the Mayan hieroglyphs, opening the floodgates to the history of the ancient Maya.

This course will examine the modern understanding of one of the world’s great civilizations focusing especially on Maya Classic Period (AD 250-900) when great dynasties held sway over enormous city-states in capital cities of palaces, administrative complexes and residential compounds and populations surged. In royal courts, the arts, religious rituals, writing and architecture flourished.

As the Classic Period reaches its apex, the story gets more complex and darker as conflict between alliances of city-states spin out of control and populations and royal excess push the environment beyond its carrying capacity.

The story of the Maya is a universal story of a people who learned to harness the forces of nature, developed a sophisticated civilization and ultimately vanished. When we learn about the Maya, we learn a lot about ourselves.

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**Enrollment Form: Maya – September 10,17,24 & Oct 1**

**VISTAS Members \$40, Non-members \$60**

**Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Mail check to: VISTAS Lifelong Learning, Inc. P.O. Box 23228,  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121-3228**

***Please enroll by September 1, 2014***

**\_\_\_\_\_ Please check here if you would like to volunteer to help with refreshments**

**BIOGRAPHY: Russell Werner** For the past 15 years Russell Werner has been studying the ancient Maya and Aztec civilizations, including several courses in reading Maya Hieroglyphs and Mesoamerican studies given by Harvard's Anthropology Department. Mr. Werner, often accompanied by his wife, Nancy, has travelled extensively to archeological sites throughout Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.



“Overview of the Maya Classic Period” and a companion course “Overview of Ancient Mexico” have been enthusiastically received at adult education programs in the Boston area including those at Tufts University and Brandeis University as well as independently-run Beacon Hill Seminars.

Mr. Werner has been a senior executive in the high technology industry for the past 20 years. In 2011 the Werners moved to Santa Barbara, where Mr. Werner recently served as President of the Santa Barbara Newcomers Club.

**Optional Reading (A Syllabus with optional readings for each session will be distributed in-class): The Maya (Eighth Edition) by Michael D. Coe ISBN: 978-0-500-28902-0 Note: Make Sure you get the Eighth Edition**

| <b>VISTAS CALENDAR</b>   |                          |             |                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <b>Seminar/Event</b>     | <b>Dates</b>             | <b>Time</b> |                     |
| Annual Picnic            | Sunday, September 7      | 12:30 pm    | Tuckers Grove       |
| Documentary Film Club    | 3rd Thurs Monthly        | 10:00 am    | Valle Verde Theater |
| Maya Classic Period      | Sept 10,17,24 & Oct 1    | 1:30 pm     | Maravilla Clubhouse |
| Fall Ballot Propositions | Sept 22 & 29             | 1:30 pm     | Maravilla Valencia  |
| Women in Art             | Oct 8, 15, 22            | 9:30 am     | Ferrand Hall        |
| Amelia Earhart           | Oct 23 & 30              | 1:30 pm     | Maravilla Valencia  |
| History of Hawaii        | October 29, Nov 5 and 12 | 1:30 pm     | TBA                 |
| Poetry & Metaphor        | Nov 7, 14 & 21           | 9:30 am     | TBA                 |
| Pacific Coastal Fishes   | November 19              | 9:30 am     | TBA                 |



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*If you do not wish to receive these mailings, please let us know. vistas@silcom.com or 967-6030. We can keep you on the email list. Thank you.*