

## **Introduction and background on the video “The Hunters”**

© Copyright Bruce Owen 2008

- Anthropology 341: Emergence of Civilizations
  - I’m Bruce Owen
    - I am an archaeologist who works in Peru
      - I’ve spent over 5 years there since 1983
    - My main interest is in complex societies, and that is mostly what you will get in this course:
      - the rise of states and civilizations, the kinds of cultures that built pyramids, palaces, and temples
      - the kinds of societies that had powerful elite classes lording it over vast numbers of commoners -- much like our own
  - Enrollment details
    - Please tick your name on the roster, or fill in the wait list
- This course satisfies the World History and Civilization (D2) General Education requirement.
  - This course also counts as one of your three required upper division GE courses *if* you have 60 units by the end of this semester (that is, for juniors, seniors, and some second-semester sophomores).
  - If you won’t have 60 units at the end of this semester (that is, if you are a freshman or a typical sophomore), this course will still satisfy the GE requirement, but it will NOT count as one of your three required upper division GE classes.
    - In that case, you are still completely welcome in this class, but you might want to consider whether taking it later might be a better strategy.
- What the course covers
  - The "Emergence of Civilizations"
    - Why should you care about a subject so far in the past?
      - it is interesting in it's own right
      - understanding where our own kind of society came from should give you a richer and more complex appreciation of our society today
      - working on a more subtle comprehension of civilization and its origins should help you develop ideas that are useful for understanding the real world around us right now that is constantly in the news:
        - the "clash of civilizations"
        - "tribal" governments and "tribal" warfare
        - "non-state actors"
        - and how state societies respond to them
  - We'll have to figure out what we mean by "civilization"
    - We presumably live in a civilization
    - You can quickly think of other civilizations: Greece, Rome, Pharaonic Egypt, the many dynasties of China, and so on
    - what is it about these societies that makes us call them "civilizations"?

- Regardless of how we define a "civilization", if we were to go far enough back in time, we would get to a point when nobody lived that way
  - So, if once there were no civilizations, and now there are many, how did that happen?
  - How did civilizations come to be?
- This course will focus on how civilization emerged
  - both the archaeological evidence of what happened as civilizations first appeared
  - and some theoretical ideas that try to explain how and why it happened
- in general, civilizations first arose before writing was well developed
  - so we have few or no written records to consult
  - so, if we want to know how civilization came about, our only source of information is archaeology
    - the study of the material remains of human activities
    - buildings, artwork, bones, garbage...
    - getting the answers we want from sources like these can be a challenge
    - this course focuses on the findings of archaeology, rather than the methods used by archaeologists, but you will get a good taste of them even so
- The main focus is on narrow slices of time in which civilization appeared relatively independently in five different regions:
  - Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus region, China, and Andean South America
  - in an ideal world, we would also cover Mesoamerica, and perhaps a sub-Saharan African case, but there just is not enough time, so that is what I elected to cut... sorry.
- Not much on earlier or later periods
  - no human evolution, paleolithic, New Kingdom Egypt, Roman, Inka, or Aztec empires...
- During the semester, we will
  - Establish the context from which civilization emerged
    - starting with foraging
    - moving through the adoption of agriculture
    - and the development of large towns
  - figure out what we mean by "civilization"
  - look at some theories that have been proposed to explain the origins of civilization
  - Then we will examine archaeological evidence of what actually happened in the five cases
  - We will compare the cases, to see
    - what, if anything, they have in common
    - and what might be unique about each
  - In each case, we will test the theories against the archaeological data
    - The theories will bring out, maybe even explain, interesting aspects of the emergence of each civilization
    - And we will use the evidence to test the theories, to see which ideas work well and which do not in each case
- By the end of the course, you will
  - have a general idea of what happened as civilization first appeared in half a dozen different parts of the world

- know a bit about how the various early civilizations were similar and different
- have some ideas about how and why civilization arose
- and also have some idea of how archaeologists and anthropologists approach these questions and use archaeological evidence to reconstruct the past
- I hope that this will give you a richer appreciation of the civilization we live in today
- The not-very-hidden agenda:
  - This should be a good exercise in logical, critical thinking
  - using complex and incomplete evidence
  - and explaining yourself in writing
  - that should sharpen skills that you will use not only in other social sciences, but also in real life
- General thrust
  - a lot of facts, names, dates, etc.
  - there is no avoiding these
  - nevertheless, the emphasis is not on memorization, but on logical thinking, arguments based on evidence, and clear written explanation
- Format of the course
  - Mostly lectures, mostly with a lot of slides
  - I hope you will ask questions and make comments
- Course mechanics: review of the syllabus
- Key to the course: the class web page
  - You are responsible for checking it regularly
  - It will change over the semester, so check it!
    - I post new announcements, assignment information, deadlines, study guides, etc.
    - I may adjust the reading schedule if we fall behind or get ahead
    - I may change some readings, or add new ones
    - I may change deadlines, exam dates, etc.
- The web page features:
  - Class news, reminders, changes to assignments deadlines, readings, test dates, etc.
    - These can be important!
  - The schedule of readings
    - Each day shows what you should read from the textbook, and has links to online assigned readings
    - Please do the readings *before* the class session
  - The readings are relatively serious, about 25 pages per class, about 50 pages per week
    - lots of new terms, names, etc.
    - the tests emphasize the most important points
    - the additional details will help with written assignments, where you are free to consult the book, reader, and notes as much as you want.
- The schedule also has links to
  - lecture notes
    - Usually be posted before the class session
    - These notes can be useful for studying and writing essays

- Some students print them and bring them to class, saving a lot of writing by just adding their own notes to them
- PowerPoint slides used in class
  - usually posted after the class session
  - also good for assignments and preparing for tests
- Optional online sources of additional information and images related to some class sessions
- The schedule also shows
  - dates when each assignment is due
  - dates of the tests
- Virtual handouts
  - the syllabus
  - detailed information about each assignment
  - charts, maps, and other items
  - study guides, etc.
- Links to other websites with useful and interesting information and images
- The class web page URL is
  - <http://bruceowen.com/emciv/341-08f.htm>
- You can click to it from the SSU web page (sonoma.edu), by clicking on "Information for...students", then "Class web pages", then "Anthropology 341.1: Emergence of Civilizations (Owen)"
- To access some items, you will need a class user ID and password
  - because much of the reading is copyrighted
  - restricting access meets the requirements of use for "educational purposes"
  - Class user ID:
  - Class password:
- We use one textbook:
  - Wenke and Olszewski 2007, *Patterns in Prehistory: Humankind's First Three Million Years*, fifth edition, Oxford.
    - Available from Northlight Books, Amazon.com, and elsewhere
    - Use copies of earlier editions are available, but please avoid them, because the page numbers are all different
    - A copy of this edition is on reserve at the library for this class, under my name
    - The library also has some earlier editions, but again, please avoid them. It will be difficult to ensure that you are reading the right sections, and some of the material has changed.
- Grading
  - 20%: Short reading quiz at the start of each class (about 0.8% each)
  - 40%: Two essay assignments (20% each)
    - three to five page essays
    - these are not primarily research papers, but instead have you make arguments about definitions, concepts, and theories, and support them with evidence provided in the class and readings
  - assignment details will be posted on the class web site

- 40%: In-class midterm and final exams (20% each)
  - essays, short answers, possibly some objective questions, and map questions
  - study guides will be posted on the web page
  - map questions are based solely on the standardized maps in the Reader, at the beginning of each regional section. I will not test you on the hundreds of additional places shown on maps in the textbook and online sources.
- Submitting assignments:
  - The three assignments all have to be submitted BOTH on paper AND as computer files
    - The paper copy is due in class on the day indicated on the syllabus
    - The computer version is due by midnight of that evening
    - no credit unless *both* are received
    - the two versions must be identical
    - the best way is to email the file to me as an attachment
      - also paste the text into the message, as a backup
    - I will also accept a floppy disk, CD, or USB drive with your name written on it.
      - I will return the media
  - I will count the assignment as being on time when I get *either* the paper *or* the computer version by the day of the deadline.
    - I must have both eventually to give you credit
  - You may submit assignments by email at the last minute, but you do so at your own risk.
    - It is your responsibility to make sure I get it, so send it in plenty of time to correct any problems that arise
    - I will reply by email when I receive your message, usually within 24 hours. If you don't hear from me within 48 hours, I may not have gotten your message.
- Late assignment policy:
  - I will accept assignments up to a week late with a 15% grading penalty
    - That means up to the end of the second class session after the paper was due.
- Plagiarism
  - Don't do it!
  - I have failed students for plagiarism
  - I have posted an explanation of plagiarism on the course web page that you may want to look at. It explains how to easily avoid plagiarizing
  - Please see me if you have any doubts or questions about this
- Drafts of assignments
  - You can send me drafts of your written assignments for comments by email
    - please indicate that you are sending a draft, and not submitting a final version
- I do not take attendance (after the first week or two, for add-drop purposes), but
  - I cover things in class that are not in the readings
  - I return essays and tests with comments in class
  - I show lots of pictures that make things easier to visualize and remember
  - I explain overall patterns, important points, and errors in the readings
  - You and your colleagues can ask questions
  - Sometimes I announce changes to assignments, deadlines, readings, etc. in class

- Students who come to class tend to do better on the assignments and tests.
- But I won't patronize you or waste time by taking roll, so I'll leave attendance up to you.
- Disability accommodations
  - if you have a disability and think you may need some accommodations, please see me
  - the syllabus includes some more details on this
- University policies
  - the syllabus includes a link to University policies on adding and dropping, appealing grades, cheating, and other things you might want to know about
- Contacting me:
  - My office hours:
    - Tuesday and Thursday 4:00-5:00
    - Thursday 12:30-1:30
    - in Stevenson 3007
    - or see me after class
    - or arrange to see me at some other time, if none of these are convenient
  - email me at: [bruce.owen@sonoma.edu](mailto:bruce.owen@sonoma.edu) , which I usually check at least once every day
  - or click on the email link near the top of the course web page
  - Don't bother with my office phone, since I am rarely there except during office hours, and I rarely check the voice mail.
  - I have a box in the Anthro department office, Stevenson 2054, where you can leave messages or papers for me
    - If the door to Stevenson 2054 is locked, go in through Stevenson 2070
    - please don't slide things under my office door, stick them to a nearby bulletin board, etc., because I share that office with several other people who may not correctly figure out what to do with your paper.
- Mugshots
- Let's start with the content of the course...
- A kind of society that is not a civilization
  - In order to help us figure out what we mean by “civilization”, we will first look at some people who do *not* live in a civilization: foragers, or hunter-gatherers.
  - **Foragers:** People who live off the land without intentionally modifying it.
  - One such group is the !Kung, or Ju/'hoansi (although even they have been forced to live in fixed settlements in recent decades)
  - They will serve as an example, to help us visualize what a foraging lifestyle is like
  - We'll start with part of a video about them.
  - Your first reading assignments are about this same culture, but written by a different anthropologist who worked with a different group in a slightly different area.
- Intro to the video “The Hunters”
  - Laurence Marshall founded the Raytheon Corporation and made a fortune during World War II on radar and other military gear.

- On a business trip in South Africa in 1950, he met a surgeon who wanted to go to the Kalahari desert to look for a “lost city”. Marshall decided to come along for a brief adventure, and brought his wife, daughter, and 18 year old son.
- They didn’t find a city, but they met a !Kung man and became interested in !Kung culture.
- Marshall was pushed out of Raytheon, and as an idle millionaire, went back with his family to stay with the !Kung for six weeks.
- Without the benefit of any training, his wife, Lorna Marshall, began working out the social structure of the !Kung, and the son, John, shot movies of them with a wind-up 16mm camera
- They quickly went back for another stay, this time for a year and a half.
- Lorna Marshall went on to become a respected anthropologist, and John Marshall shot and produced numerous classics of ethnographic film
- This film, “The Hunters”, was John Marshall’s first, essentially amateur, long film.
- It is dated, but it is a classic and is a reasonable introduction to the !Kung. The others tend to have specific themes, like music, marriage, technology, etc.
- John Marshall recently went through all his !Kung footage and produced a retrospective and updated summary film series called “A Kalahari Family” that you may have seen on PBS.
- We won’t watch all of this film, just enough to give you a feeling for the !Kung.
- You will notice that the reading, by Richard Lee, sometimes contradicts the film
  - Is one of these sources wrong, or is there some other reason why they might disagree?
- As you do the readings and watch the video next time, you might look for clues to the following themes:
  - How is their lifestyle different from what we might call “civilization”?
  - Subsistence:
    - how do they get their food?
    - who does the work?
    - how is the work divided up?
  - Social organization:
    - how big is the group they live in?
    - how is the group organized?
    - do they have a leader?
      - to the extent that they do, how much power does he have?
      - how did he get his position as leader?
  - What sort of belongings do they have?
    - are there differences in wealth between them?
    - who owns the land, water, etc.?
    - what good does this “ownership” do them?
  - What do you think of this lifestyle?
  - Remember, at one time all humans lived more or less like this
    - this lifestyle is broadly similar to the original state of human society
    - we will spend most of this course trying to figure out what happened to change the way people live from variants of this to “civilization”