

THE CAMBRIDGE WORLD HISTORY

\*

VOLUME I

Introducing World History,  
to 10,000 BCE

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## Migration in human history

PATRICK MANNING

Migration, because it inherently links points of origin and destination through trajectories, draws attention to the connections that are central to understanding world history. Studies of migration, especially in recent years, have been effective both in documenting the evolving patterns of human migration and in illustrating the accompanying historical connections. Migration history is thus a subfield of world history, and holds a place alongside other subfields that have become organized areas of study within world history: these include environment, health, empires, economy, genetics, and maritime history.

The study of migration is especially helpful in advancing the understanding of communities. Language communities, ethnic communities, political communities, religious communities – all of these are best studied not simply as discrete social groupings with their own traditions, but as permeable groups that are linked to each other through the voluntary and involuntary movement of individuals and groups. A migration-oriented approach to communities draws attention to heterogeneity and processes of interaction within communities. Further, study of migration facilitates the understanding of the multiple levels and scales at which the human experience unfolds. Effective stories of migration range from the individual tales of merchants, warriors, students, and the enslaved – male and female – to the chronicles of ethnic groups on the move or in formation, and to narratives of the repopulation of whole continents. More generally, studies of migration illustrate several types of scale: in space, in time, in the specific populations migrating, and in the range of human affairs affected by migration.

The study of migration relies on a range of methodologies, and recent research is bringing advances in the articulation of these methods. Documentary research based on records of governments and business firms has provided much of the information on migration in recent times. Written narratives and oral traditions have provided further information on migrations, especially in times before the past five centuries. Archaeological research was long the core

of research on migration for times before the written record began. It has now been supplemented by research in historical linguistics, comparative social anthropology, and chemical techniques. The most spectacular new results come from the expanding analysis of genetics, a field that has the potential (when linked to other data) to give detailed information on human movements and exchanges from earliest times until the very recent past. In addition, the field of demography provides the basic tools for analyzing the data on birth, death, and migration to give a fuller picture of changes in human population.

Studies of migration need not be limited to the movement of people: they can also trace movements of technology (from bows and arrows to telephones), of ideas (Buddhism, literacy), and of associated or commensal species (lice, dogs, and potatoes). Indeed, the relations of these different aspects of migration to each other form a growing portion of current studies in migration. The full range of these studies begins to make it possible to develop an assessment of the function of migration in human society. That is, at the most basic levels migration brings genetic diversity and allows exchange of innovations that have enabled humans to learn and spread in ways exceeding the range of any previous large animals. While migration-induced learning has brought dramatic and recurring change in human experience, migration also reveals a fundamental continuity in history. Social processes relying on cross-community migration have been at the core of the big changes from the early days of humanity, and give every indication of continuing in similar form far into the future.

#### Basic patterns in human migration

The basic patterns of human migration have doubtless changed somewhat over the years, but the underlying logic of human migration is remarkably consistent. The common pattern of human migration is for the migrants – dominantly young adult males and females though a minority of that age-group – to leave home and move away to a destination where the landscape, culture, and language are different. Some migrants move to sparsely settled frontiers and others to centers of population; some return home, while others remain at their destination or even move further. Migrations are initiated by human decision but also by natural disasters that can force whole communities to move. The motivations of migrants include adventure, escape, expulsion, commerce, war, and a search for resources to bring back to their home community. Such migration is a recurring yet fluctuating

process: for instance, migration has sometimes been principally along water routes and at other times along land routes.

Comparisons among species help to clarify certain unique characteristics in human migration. The general meaning of migration is movement of an individual organism from one habitat to another, where a *habitat* is a contiguous environment with resources enabling the organism to thrive. There is thus a difference between local mobility and cross-habitat migration. Migration generally serves a function in the life cycle of the individual and the species. Seasonal migration, commonly of whole communities, is thus important in reproduction and food supply for many species. In addition, species commonly migrate by diffusion as they gradually expand or contract their range. Thus *Homo erectus* spread, beginning a million years ago, from East Africa to various parts of the Old World, and gave rise to successor species in Asia, Europe, and Africa.

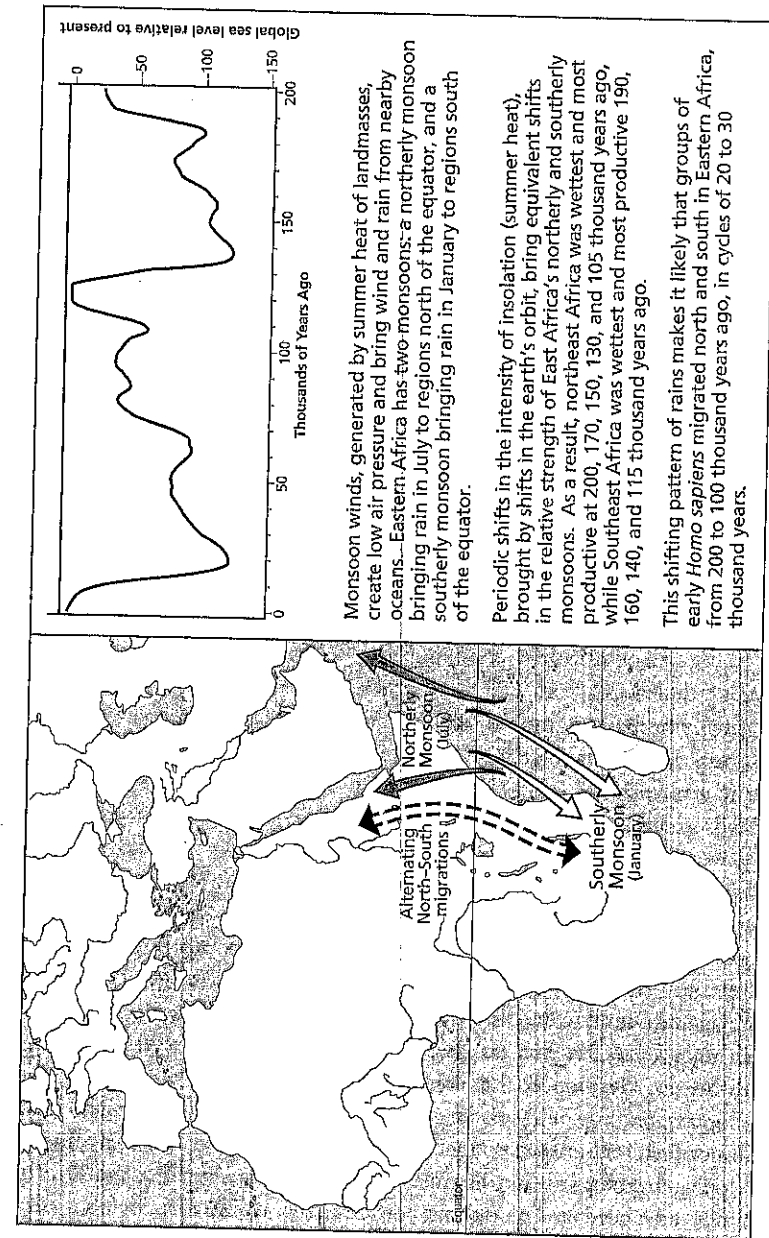
Our own species, *Homo sapiens*, succeeded in settling the whole world. The process for this migratory expansion was that of cross-community migration, in which young adults moved from one habitat to another. *Habitat*, however, must be redefined for human purposes to depend on the social as well as natural environment: that is, an environment with a given language and culture. The ancestral African habitat of *Homo sapiens* centered on tropical savannas, including locations at water's edge, and also including highlands – it was best to have a variegated habitat, which reinforced omnivorous eating habits. Humans hunted and gathered, but also ate plants and animals from the waters, swam, and created watercraft. These elements – the ancient migratory practices of mammals, the new practice of cross-community migration, and the reliance of humans on movement across water – provided a basis for modern *Homo sapiens* to occupy all the territories of the earth.

Human migrants, in entering new ecologies, transformed them as well as accommodated to them, making each into a new habitat. With each human colonization of a new continent, a great die-off of megafauna followed – for Australia (giant kangaroos), then in temperate Eurasia (mammoths), and later in the Americas (sloths). This was destructive behavior at one level, but also showed the potential of human migration for bringing about change. The social function of cross-community migration was to create and spread innovations from habitat to habitat, so that it has been a significantly adaptive behavior. The function of creating innovations – added to the benefits brought by sharing of the genome, technology, and culture – is important in explaining how learning got to be passed from generation to generation.

The early days of human history brought two big changes in migratory patterns that have been with us ever since. The first was determined

by environment and climate, the second by biological and social evolution. First is the rise of an expanded pattern of migration within the homeland of modern humanity. *Homo sapiens* first emerged on the East African savannas some 200,000 years ago. Then a long, cool, dry period in East Africa, from 190,000 to 130,000 years ago, encouraged human communities to move south across the equator to the similar lands of southeastern Africa, which were relatively warm and wet at that time. Indeed, the annual and longer-term shifts of the monsoons (bringing precipitation alternately to northeast Africa and southeast Africa) may well have built up a pattern of migration back and forth among those regions, along with social networks to facilitate these movements. The result was to favor the expansion of the human gene pool and to build in social habits encouraging migration. The results show up in studies of the early human genome. This process facilitated migration, specialization, and broad sharing among communities (see Map 12.1).

The second step was the rise of syntactic language. At some point, certainly before 70,000 years ago, our ancestors gained improved vocal articulation and with it the beginnings of fully articulated speech. At least four types of change overlapped to bring about the rise of syntactic language. Desire for communication put selective pressure on devices to facilitate it. Physical evolution of the larynx, selected by this demand, enabled more precise articulation of sound. Other genetic mutations created the logic to facilitate the syntactic conventions by which children form sentences. Then generations of practice with language turned it into a device for communicating, categorizing, and storing learning. This revolutionary transformation appears to have taken place within communities totaling several thousand people in Northeast Africa. Development of speech built language communities – groups of several hundred people sharing common speech practice. With the rise of language, individual human communities expanded in size, as they became united by language and no longer simply by co-residence. Further, various communities gained distinctive identities because of the gradual separation of their language and customs. Those who migrated from one community to another had to learn new languages and customs: this pattern emphasized learning in individuals, the exchange of customs and technologies among groups, and innovations in assembling old ideas and new. Consequently, migration facilitated an acceleration of social evolution that began to account for most of the change in human societies. Such “cross-community migration” remains the basic style of human migration. The same underlying logic of crossing community boundaries and generating social innovations continues to this day, but has transformed human society almost beyond recognition.



Map 12.1 Shifting climate and migration in Africa, 200,000 to 100,000 years ago.

Migration patterns of today rely on the same social processes. Modern communications technology has allowed language communities to grow to many millions of members and to extend over immense geographic spaces, so that the meanings of "community," "cross-community migration," and "habitat" have changed greatly. In a world of literacy and schooling, learning now takes place through mechanisms other than migration – although migration remains important in learning, as any migrant can testify. The risks in migration are now much lower than before, and the number of migrants can expand without great cost in human life. With the passage of time, diaspora communities (migrants and their descendants who maintain a sense of common identity with their homeland) have been able to grow and play a distinctive historical role. In current research, we have learned to distinguish among individual migrants, their communities, gendered patterns in migration, recruiters, dispatchers, members of the networks facilitating migration, gatekeepers restricting migrants, methods of maintaining family contacts, and the shifts in identity accompanying migration. Because of the basic continuity in migration, the details we have learned about migration in contemporary society can be helpful in reconstructing parallel details in early times.

#### Occupying the planet: from 100,000 to 15,000 years ago

In very early human migrations, the principal movements were to territories ecologically similar to the grasslands and waterways of eastern Africa. Within Africa it was easiest for humans to occupy similar ecologies such as the grasslands and watersides of southern and western Africa. More difficult to occupy were the forested areas of Central and West Africa. Meanwhile, shifts in climate brought changes in vegetation and habitat. A warm and wet time from 110,000 years ago to 90,000 years ago made the Sahara inhabitable rather than desert, and it is known that populations of humans settled as far afield as the Qafzeh cave in Israel, dated at 100,000 years ago. But as the climate again became colder and drier, these settlements did not survive.

The emergence of syntactic language, some 70,000 years ago in north-eastern Africa, developed the communities that spread throughout the planet, incorporating or displacing all other hominids and imposing their dominance on all other species. Christopher Ehret, elsewhere in this volume, draws on archaeological and linguistic evidence to trace the expansion of technically advanced and populous communities – almost certainly those with syntactic language – into region after region of the African continent

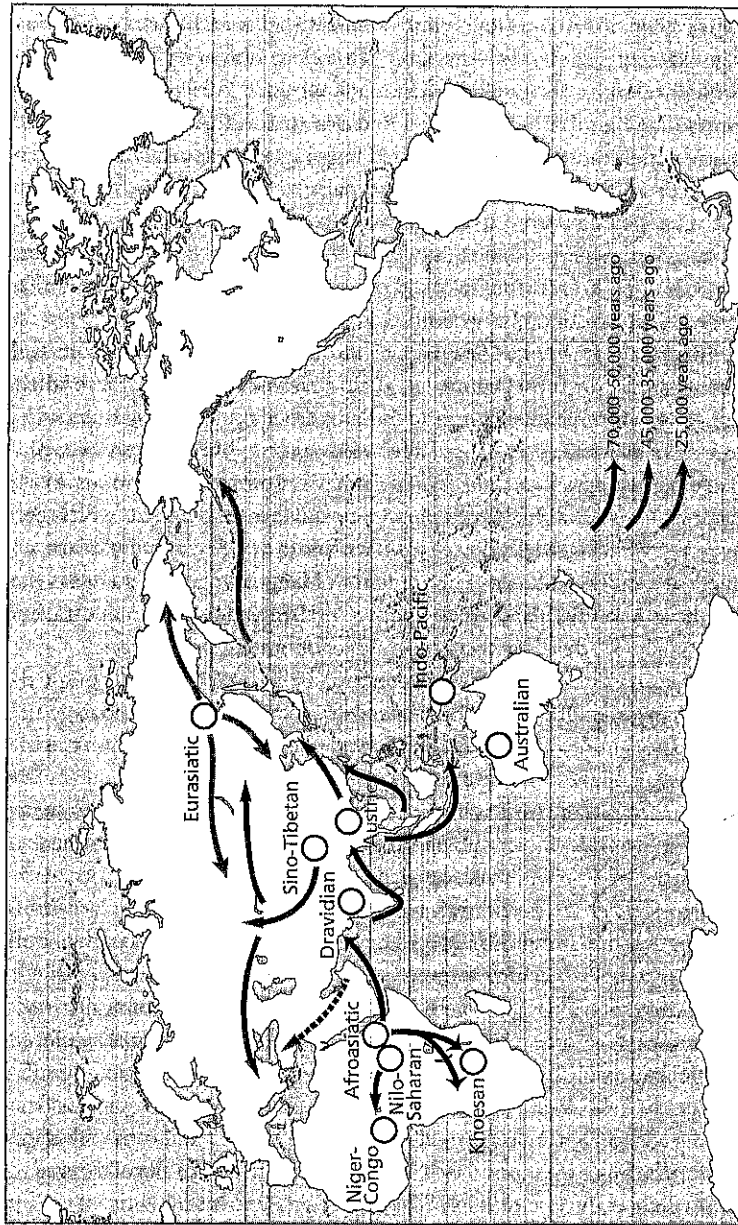
from 70,000 to 20,000 years ago, progressively incorporating populations that were physically similar but had simpler technologies and may have lacked language. This was the early expansion of modern humanity by land.

At much the same time, modern humans who left Africa went primarily by watercraft across the mouth of the Red Sea to South Arabia and beyond. With early watercraft and newly polished languages, these adventurers were able to cross the few kilometers from Somalia to South Arabia and remain within a relatively constant environment. (Sea levels were then much lower than now.) Somewhere in the time between 70,000 years ago and 50,000 years ago, human populations worked their way eastward along the Indian Ocean coastline, presumably on both land and sea (see Map 12.2).

The migrants were able to find animal and vegetable resources, from land and water, similar to those known to their ancestors in Africa. Beyond the coastline they were able to explore and settle river valleys – the largest included the Indus, Godavari, Ganges, Irrawaddy, and Mekong. Moving upriver within these valleys, the migrants would eventually have come to mountainous areas – tropical and sub-tropical highlands parallel to those in East Africa, which held the advantage of being well-watered and sustaining a wide variety of plant and animal life at varying altitudes. The evidence of language groups suggests that some of these Asian highland areas – above the Irrawaddy, Brahmaputra, and Red River Valleys – developed concentrations of human population.

Along the coastline, the migrants continued their expansion through the tropics, settling on both mainland and islands. They settled the archipelago that is now Indonesia and was then the much larger continent of Sunda, as the low sea level revealed lands linking many of the islands. At the end of Sunda, the migrants found ways to reach still more distant lands: Australia (dated to 50,000 years ago), New Guinea (then joined to Australia as part of the continent of Sahul), and the Philippines. Each lay across a great oceanic strait, so that the migrants crossed open water of 100 kilometers, and did so on multiple occasions, as the genetic record attests. Similarly, humans followed the coast of the South China Sea, eventually reaching more northerly and even temperate zones.

Human migrants, having mastered the tropics, did not automatically move north to temperate zones, since the colder climate and the sharply different flora and fauna required new technology. Humans may have remained settled throughout the Old World tropics for as much as 20,000 years (that is, from 65,000 to 45,000 BP) before moving into the temperate zone. From well-dated European remains, we know that *Homo sapiens* (known locally as Cro-Magnon) reached Europe as early as 45,000 years ago and Central Asia and Mongolia at roughly the same time. What is not certain is the route by which



Map 12.2 Occupying the planet, 70,000 to 25,000 years ago.

they moved from south to north. Potential routes include the Nile–Fertile Crescent corridor, the Persian Gulf–Caucasus corridor, routes north from India, and the Pacific coast of China. One route appears from present evidence to have had particular advantages – a corridor along the Ganges Valley and the slopes south and west of the Himalayas, to the grasslands in today’s Kazakhstan. Along one or more of these routes, humans reached and learned to live with the sharply varying temperatures and rapidly running rivers of the temperate zone. With this achievement, they gained the ability to range east and west across the Eurasian grasslands along routes that have been used ever since.

While this narrative has focused on migratory occupation of new lands, there was much more to human history in this era than frontier expansion. At each stage, changes took place in social structure, technology, and even in human biology. Occupying each region required learning to live in its micro-ecologies and becoming acquainted with its flora and fauna – for instance, learning to take advantage of bamboo in eastern Asia. Changes in clothing accompanied new techniques in hunting and fishing. Meanwhile, entirely unconsciously, as communities occupied regions for thousands of years, their bodies underwent pressures that affected their stature, body type, skin, hair, and facial features. We can say, therefore, that these superficial physical differences that we use to identify “race” exist because of migration, and that they mostly emerged between 40,000 and 10,000 years ago.

Further, early human migration was not only and not principally to settle “empty” territories. According to the interpretation developed here, most migration was back and forth among existing human communities, rather than for the creation of new communities. Inter-communal migration in the era of human expansion may be characterized especially through the spread of the major language groups or phyla. For instance, the Afroasiatic and Nilo-Saharan language groups appear to have had their ancestry in the western half of Ethiopia. Yet members of the two groups have clearly undergone migrations at various times in their long histories, so that speakers of the two language groups have become widely dispersed.

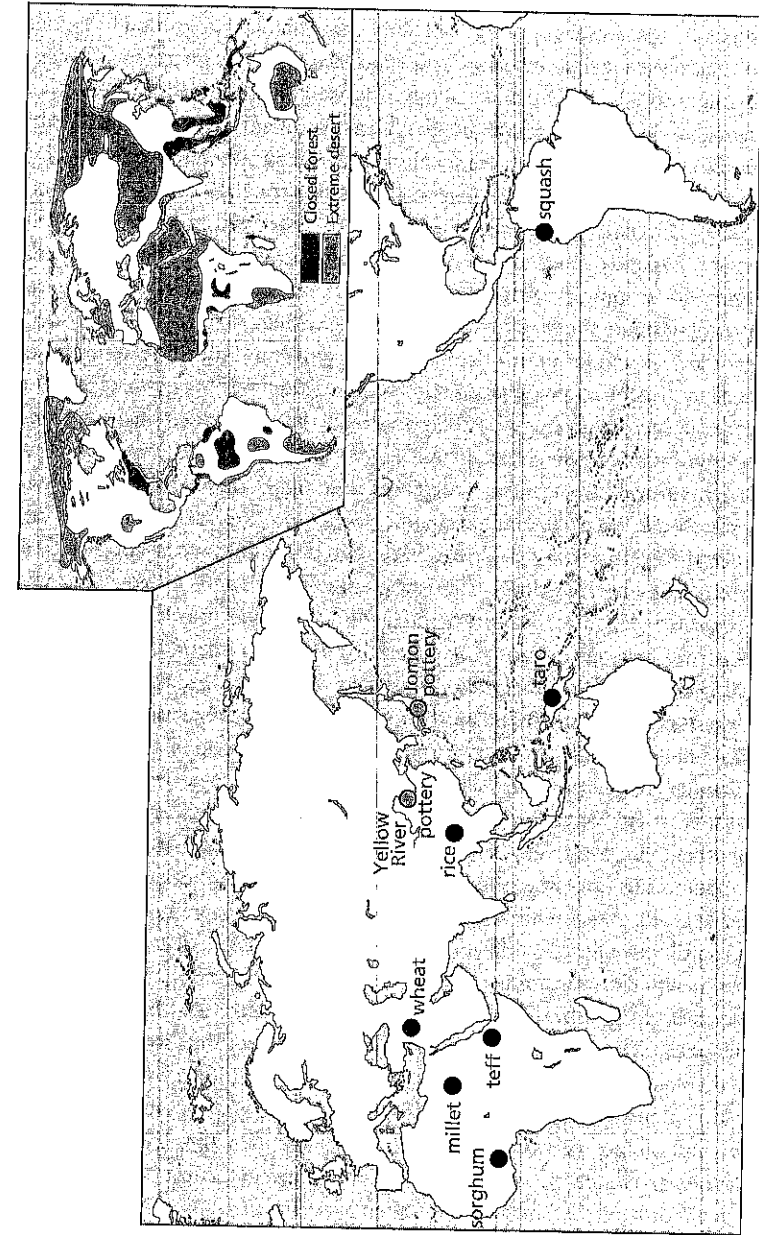
#### Community change during the Glacial Maximum and Holocene Epoch

The era from 25,000 years ago to 5,000 years ago brought what was probably the most extreme set of climate changes that humans have ever experienced. Recent research shows that climate change, while regionally specific, has

been chronologically united, so that no part of the earth escaped the sudden and repeated shifts in temperature and precipitation during these twenty millennia. First came the cold. From 25,000 to 15,000 years ago the Glacial Maximum brought a cold and dry time that reached its worst about 18,000 years ago, when the expansion of polar glaciers had lowered sea level, temperature, and humidity worldwide to the lowest levels of the preceding 100,000 years. Then came the warmth. The great fluctuations in climate continued with a warming period that melted glaciers, thus raising sea levels, temperatures, and precipitation. Within 4,000 years, the seas rose by nearly 100 meters, inundating coastlines everywhere. Even more remarkably, as of about 6,000 years ago this Holocene Epoch brought a suddenly stable climate, in contrast to the fluctuations that had long preceded. Geologists have drawn a line to specify the end of the Pleistocene Epoch and the beginning of the Holocene Epoch at about 12,000 years ago (see Map 12.3).

In this difficult time humans somehow accelerated a process of innovation that ultimately gave them increasing mastery over nature, even as nature provided the most severe of tests. Cross-community migration continued, and helped to provoke and disseminate the new ideas. The greatest attention in innovation has gone to the rise of agriculture during the first half of the Holocene Epoch. It is appropriate, however, to affirm a more general appreciation of human technological and social innovation over a somewhat longer era: the Glacial Maximum and the Holocene combined to bring the *era of production*. That is, in this era of turbulent environmental change, human innovation turned increasingly away from *collecting* and toward *producing* resources. While continuing to rely on hunting, gathering, and fishing, many types of community began to emphasize several new types of production – permanent homes, ceramics, new and increasingly precise sorts of tools, new forms of art, and experimentation with control of animals and plants. The new techniques appear in the record of the Glacial Maximum for Africa and Eurasia. Artisanal work persisted (as indicated by the art work, clothing, and watercraft on which humans had long relied), but the scope and skill of artisanal work expanded. Pottery began to appear, for instance in the Jomon ceramics of Japan beginning over 12,000 years ago. Archaeologists have long classified an aspect of this shift as the “Neolithic” era, referring to the “new” stone work that centered on very small and finely crafted stone implements. Social changes took place in this same era of innovation: for instance, unilineal descent systems appear to have arisen among African speakers of Nilo-Saharan and Afroasiatic languages.

The final great stage in occupying the continents was human settlement of the Americas. Migrants succeeded in moving further north and east in



Map 12.3 Glacial Maximum and Holocene eras, 25,000 to 5,000 years ago.

Eurasia, into North America, at times estimated as early as 30,000 years ago and as late as 15,000 years ago. This advance, though not yet known in detail, may ultimately reveal much about the cross-community patterns of early human migration. Both land and sea migrations to North America are known to have taken place in later times, so that either mode of transportation could have worked for the first entry. Travel by sea may have been more feasible in this cool and ice-ridden era: the Pacific kelp beds provided offshore nourishment in a great arc along the coast from the South China Sea to South America. Ultimately, migrants entered Arctic tundra, temperate forests, grasslands, desert regions, tropical forests, and further ecologies, with migration spreading innovations. The Clovis culture, with its focus on finely honed points for knives and harpoons dated to 13,500 years ago, was long thought to represent the first arrival of humans in North America. It is now understood to reflect the spread, among populations already in place, of an innovation in technology that found wide use.

The agricultural chapter in the story of expanding production seems to have been provoked by sharp climatic change. Several privileged regions (including at least one in South America) shared variety in botanical species and physical relief, thus enabling experimentation with numerous plants. When temperatures began to rise after the low-temperature trough of the Ice Age 18,000 years ago, vegetation flourished and humans began to depend on gathering expanding food supplies. But a thousand-year cold snap starting some 12,000 years ago (known as the Younger Dryas) brought a severe decline in food supplies and an impetus to discover ways to produce rather than just gather food. Further, the response to climate change was most productive in mountainous areas: it played out over several thousand years to bring the production of wheat in the Fertile Crescent, taro in New Guinea, rice in Southeast Asia, millet in Ethiopia, squash in South America, and sorghum in the Sahara.

As the Holocene era took form, the developing system of production began to influence patterns of migration. In some ways, developing productive activities tied communities to particular places, restricting their nomadic patterns of old. In other ways, productive skills meant that humans could forge a living wherever they wished to go, relying on their own resources rather than simply on those available in nature. Agriculture brought higher population density, development of new diseases, and migration of both humans and disease vectors. Debate continues as to whether the agricultural populations expanded systematically in number and in territory in contrast to their neighbors or whether the techniques of agriculture spread more rapidly than the initial farming populations. While the full results are not yet in, the

evidence is strong for a patchwork of particular cases. Rice may have spread through Southeast Asia through the expansion of farming communities, while wheat may have expanded through Western Asia through its adoption by different existing communities.

Growing populations tended both to concentrate and disperse. In concentrating, they created village communities, including several hundred or even more inhabitants. In a sense they can be seen as the initial stage of urban life. Equally important, villages established a style of life that thrives today throughout the world. With the greater concentration of labor power, it was possible for communities to undertake control of water flows and other public works: canals, dams, aqueducts, reservoirs, and ritual structures arose in many parts of the world.

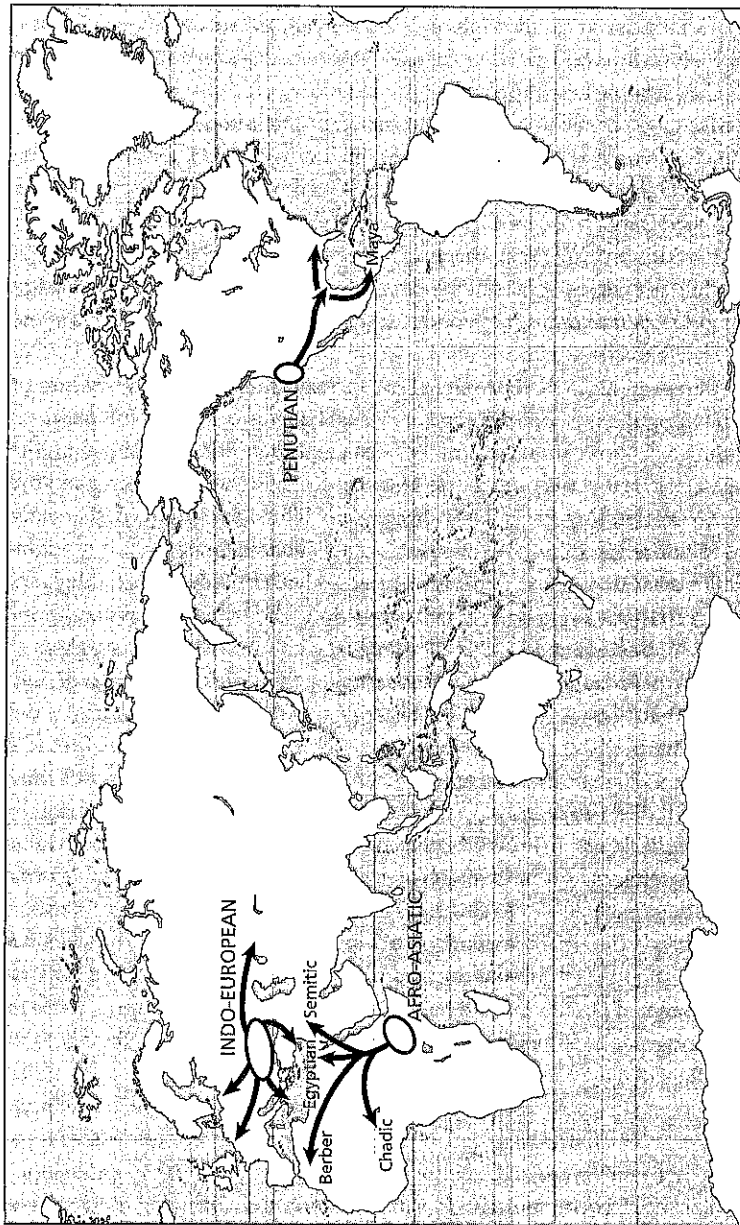
In dispersing – and whether relying on agriculture, pastoralism, fishing, or hunting – populations entered and contested lands occupied by previous communities. Traces of recurrent or sustained migrations survive in the languages that are spoken today in regions far from where their ancestral languages can be shown to have originated. Thus, in times of the early Holocene before agriculture became well established, several important migrations left traces in the language groups of today (see Map 12.4). Migrants speaking Afroasiatic languages moved north along the Nile River as conditions became wetter, and formed four major language communities: the speakers of Ancient Egyptian languages in the lower Nile, the speakers of Semitic languages in what became the Fertile Crescent and the Arabian Peninsula, the speakers of Berber languages in Northwest Africa, and the speakers of Chadic languages in the region surrounding Lake Chad. At much the same time speakers of Indo-European languages moved westward to settle in the area north of the Black Sea; from this homeland they spread in multiple directions. Somewhat later, speakers of Pama-Nyungan languages in north-central Australia began to expand, and over several thousand years their languages became dominant in all the southern and central portions of Australia. It will take further research to establish the time frame and the sequence of these important movements of population and language, but the language patterns confirm that great migrations stopped and started periodically over the millennia.

#### Global patterns, Eurasian specificity:

3000 BCE–800 CE

The Holocene Epoch climatic processes continued, bringing dependable if somewhat drier climate during the past 5,000 years. Societies on every





Map 12.4 Language migration and expansion, c. 10,000 to 5,000 years ago.

continent were able to expand the types of their productive activities, including domestication of new plants and animals, the expansion of villages and population centers, the development of new systems of social organization, and migration processes that carried innovations to new areas of settlement. For this time period it was the Eurasian continent that experienced the greatest social and technological change. Land that had previously been dry and unproductive now blossomed, and populations growing wheat, barley, rice, and yams – and caring for sheep, goats, cattle, and water buffalo – grew significantly. Early Holocene migrations, at much the same time as those mentioned just above, brought the expansion of substantial civilizations: Semitic languages, descended from Afroasiatic languages based in Africa, became predominant in the Fertile Crescent and Arabia. Indo-European languages, which spread both east and west from the Black Sea region, became predominant in Europe, in Iran, and in much of South Asia. Chinese languages, descended from Sino-Tibetan languages of the upper Yangzi Valley, spread north along the Pacific coast to the Yellow River Valley.

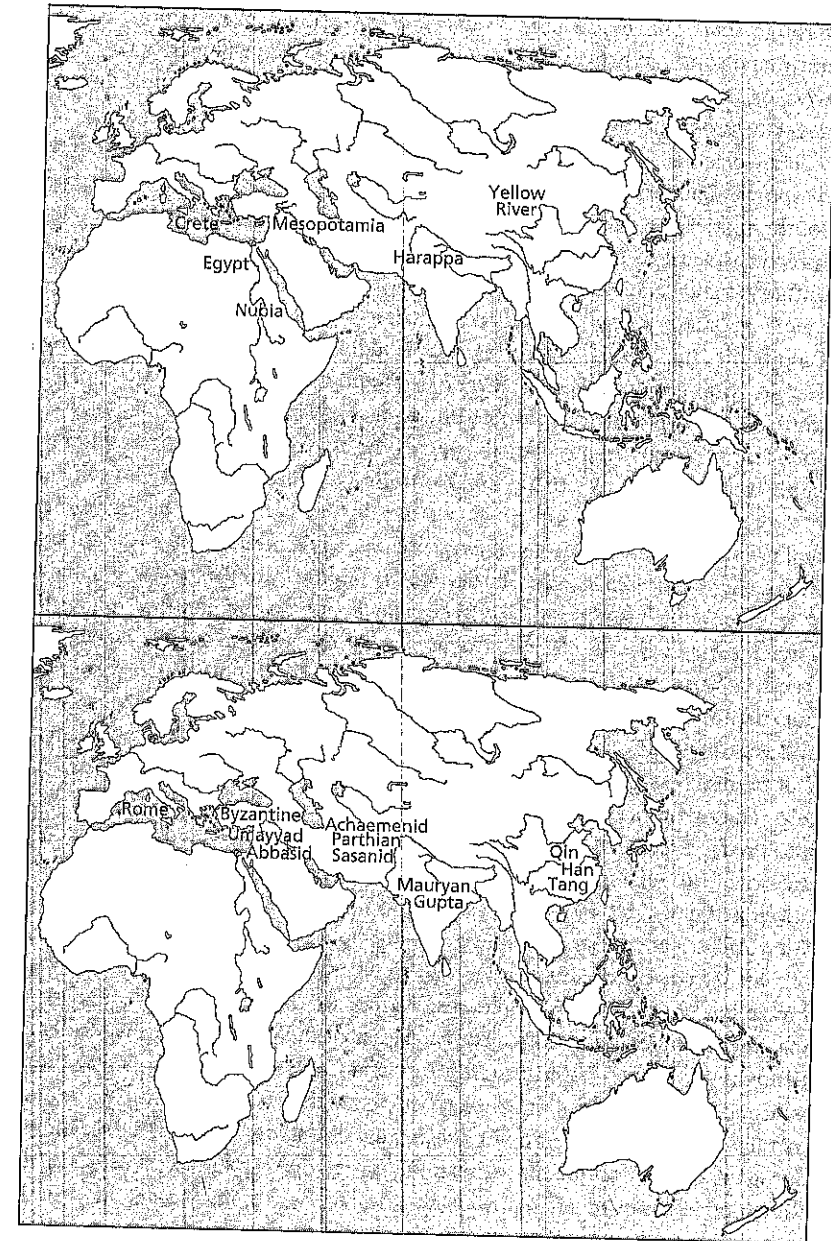
Interactions among these groups came with a late-arising domestication – that of horses, domesticated in the Central Asian steppes. The process took place through several stages requiring thousands of years, with breeding of horses for food as an early stage and harnessing of horses to pull chariots as a later stage. When harnessed to two-wheeled chariots, horses enabled peoples of the Caspian Sea region to raid and conquer in all directions. Surrounding states, at first suffering conquest, learned the new technology and later expanded their realms. Later, as saddles were developed, the cavalry formed to become an even more formidable tool of war. The military use of horses was sufficient to remake the political map of Eurasia from end to end, bringing migration both by conquerors and conquered. Horses became both the symbols and the motive force for hierarchical power – states and enslavement expanded from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. By 3,000 years ago horses had spread to almost every region of Eurasia and into northern Africa, bringing military, economic, political, social, and cultural change. In the wake of the restructuring of society around horses, new social structures evolved within the same Eurasian region: commerce, empires, and major religions (see Map 12.5). Camels came later, just 2,000 to 3,000 years ago, and brought a parallel but smaller effect.

In the terminology we use today, early civilizations gave rise to empires. In the rise of localized civilizations (initially along the Nile and Tigris–Euphrates Rivers), before the military use of horses, densely populated communities shared language and culture. Additional dense and coherent societies continued to emerge in various parts of the world. Empires, in

contrast, were rather different structures, that could take form only through aggregation of distinctive societies. Imperial military force and prestige brought together numerous units differing in language, culture, and political system. From the first large-scale empire, that of Persia, to those that followed it in rapid succession – the Hellenistic, Mauryan, Roman, Qin, and Han – the powers of monarchies and bureaucracies now dispatched armies and navies in distant campaigns, brought artists and craftsmen to their capitals, and encouraged travel within their domains. The succeeding empires of the Gupta, the Umayyads, Abbasids, Tang, and Song similarly stimulated migration both within and beyond their borders. Empires thus caused migration through the movements of armies, refugees, officials, captives, and subject peoples required to move. But empires were not alone as causes of migration. Documents from this era show how migrations of small numbers of people, especially merchants and religious missionaries, could bring major social transformations.

The expansion of formal trade in the first millennium BCE – with the development of money, the beginnings of banking, construction of ports and caravanserais – enabled merchant families to travel and sustain long-distance connections necessary to the movement of commodities. Just as early politics laid the groundwork for empires, the ancient heritage of long-distance exchange laid the groundwork for formal commerce. In parallel, the formation at much the same time of large-scale religions – Zoroastrian, Judaic, Buddhist, Jain – and the subsequent rise of Christian, revived Hindu, Muslim, and other religions – brought migrations and connections among the faithful. Networks of family, faith, and commercial interest sustained the movement and connection of migrants over large areas: the Islamic *hajj* remains the largest, most persistent religious pilgrimage. Religion, in particular, may have expanded more through the preaching of individual missionaries than through the invasion and conquest of armies.

The rise of empire, commerce, and perhaps even religion also provided scope for the expansion of enslavement. For those captured, whether in war or by kidnapping, their movement and sale required a network of a different sort, including those who guarded them, fed them, and transported them to their destination. Forced migration, the expulsion of people by human or natural causes, led migrants into catastrophic departure from their home, movement through unfamiliar regions, and settlement in lands of destination. Forced migrations had most likely existed for all human time, but increased in this era. Enslavement, an outstanding form of forced migration, likewise expanded, especially at the fringes of states from the Mediterranean

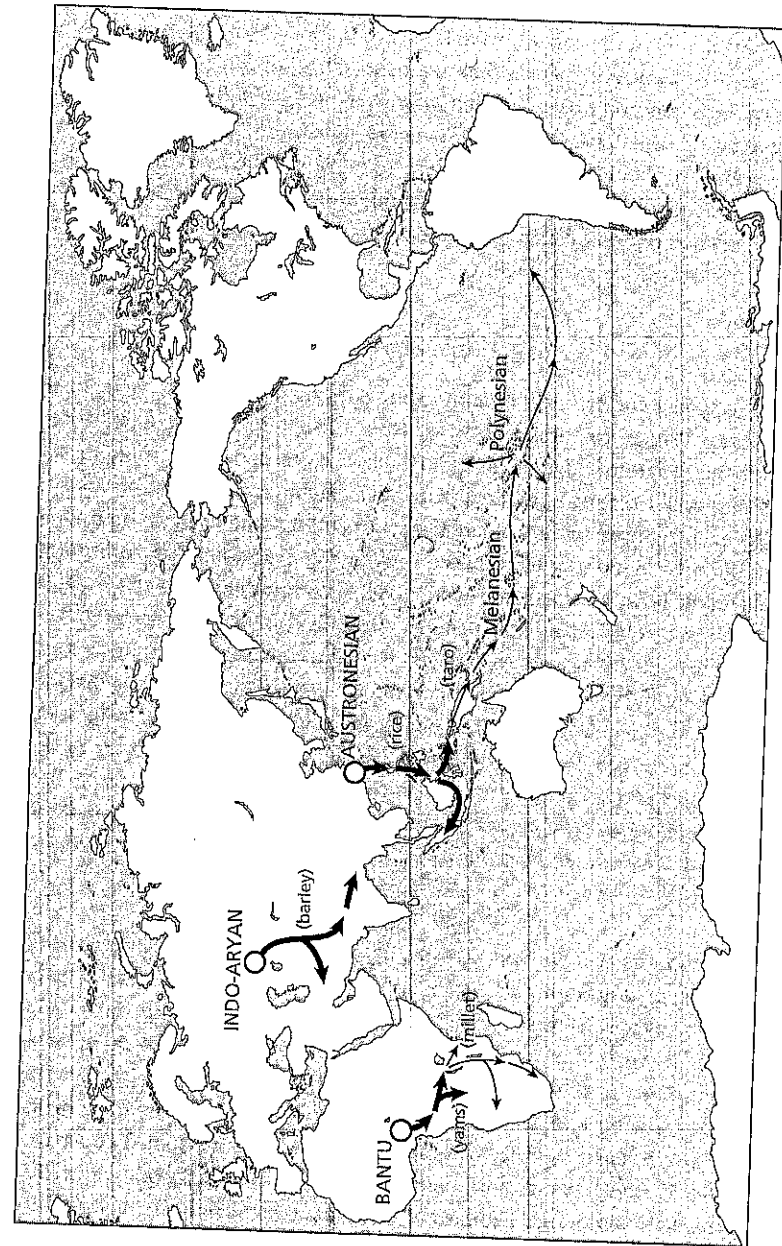


Map 12.5 Eurasian developments, 3000 BCE to 800 CE.

through Iran. This expansion of slavery drew captives from regions to the north and south and also within the core areas of Mediterranean and south-west Asian empires. Slavery in India developed less fully; in China slavery never became institutionalized as firmly.

The societies that absorbed the enslaved put them to work in building diasporas. Phoenician merchants spread west from the Levant along the southern Mediterranean; their Aramaic-speaking cousins, also merchants, spread eastward to the frontiers of India. A Greek-speaking diaspora spread both west and then east – all the way to Bactria under Alexander the Great. Later, migrants spread the Latin language throughout the huge Roman Empire. In these same centuries, the Buddhist religion spread from the Ganges throughout India to Central Asia and to China where it grew rapidly until a Tang dynasty repression of Buddhist monasteries in 845. Many more such stories add up to a remarkable set of Eurasian interconnections, linking lands from Britain to Vietnam, and from the Levant to Japan.

As striking as the growth of early cities, in this era, were the migrations and the social transformations of large regions, as documented through study of language and archaeology. In particular, linguistic studies show not only that agriculture thrived in major river valleys, but that agricultural migrants spread their ways of life over large areas (see Map 12.6). Rice-farming Austronesian speakers spread from Taiwan to the Philippines and throughout maritime Southeast Asia. As their outrigger canoes moved east, they met and intermarried with Papuan peoples of New Guinea and islands to the east. Out of this cross-cultural exchange emerged the Polynesians, now cultivating taro rather than rice, with a technology and social order enabling them to sail into the far reaches of the eastern Pacific, colonizing the remaining islands in the time from 1000 BCE to 1300 CE. At a similar time, Bantu languages, which developed out of a Niger-Congo subgroup that cultivated yams, spread from West Africa's Niger-Benue Valley far to the southeast. Once in the highlands of East Africa, the Bantu speakers adopted millet from local farmers, and spread its cultivation as they migrated further south and west. Overall, Bantu speakers occupied a territory as large as that of the Indo-European speakers. Penutian languages, based in California and Oregon, gave rise to migrants who moved east to the Caribbean coast (see Map 12.4). While they were not initially farmers, at some point these migrants adopted maize cultivation. Some of their descendants cultivated maize along the lower Mississippi River; others moved all the way to Yucatan, where their languages and ethnic groups became known as Maya. From the Maya archaeological record, we can estimate that these migrants must have reached the Maya



Map 12.6 Agricultural expansion, 3000 BCE to 800 CE.

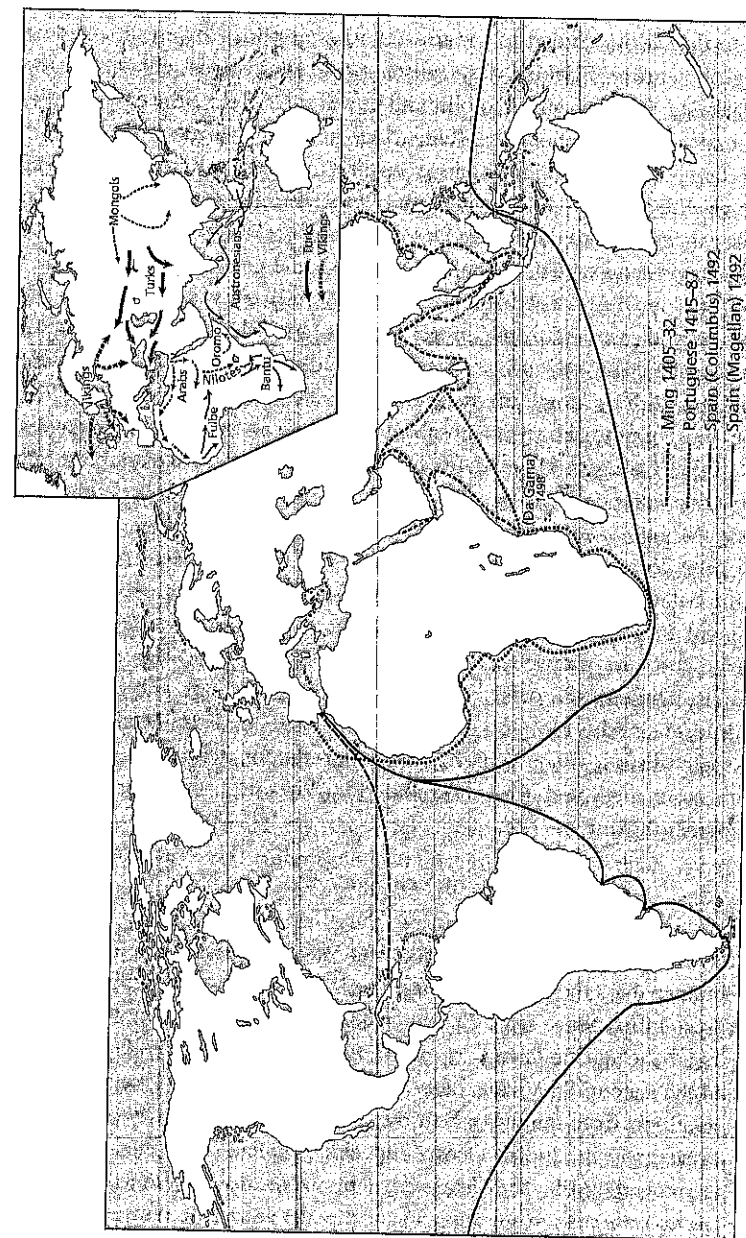
region 3,000 or 4,000 years ago. Yet another group of migrating agriculturists were the Indo-Aryan speakers, members of an Indo-European group who moved east to Central Asia and then south to settle in Iran and South Asia. Some of the songs and poems retelling the lives of these migrants were long preserved – as the Vedas they were incorporated into what became the Hindu religion. Other groups, smaller in number but still of historical importance, included the Na-Dene speakers, who moved from Central Asia to the Canadian region of Athabasca; a portion of them later moved south to become the Navajo.

### Connections, 800–1800 CE

Within just over the past millennium, four patterns of migration developed further importance: pastoral, maritime, forced migration, and urbanization. Each of these patterns depended on the basic rules of human migration – reliance especially on young adults as migrants, reaching across communities to learn by exchanging elements of language and culture, and reliance on improvised migratory networks to facilitate movement. Attention has commonly focused on the most spectacular breakthrough in communication – the voyages of Columbus, da Gama, and Magellan (the latter in 1519–22) (see Map 12.7). For overall interpretation, however, it is just as well to focus on the full thousand years of expanding movement and interconnection – the full range of changes that resonated with Magellan's circumnavigation. The four types of migration commonly interacted with each other as they influenced most corners of the world. By the end of this period, the expanded patterns of migration had brought three types of changes in identities: racial categorization and the formation of diasporas and nations as newly significant types of communities.

#### *Pastoral migrations*

Pastoral migrants had moved across Eurasia and Africa since the hunting and herding of large animals began, but an extraordinary period of such migrations continued from the eighth through the sixteenth centuries (see Map 12.7). In that era, numerous pastoral groups moved their animals across lands surrounding the great arid belt from Atlantic Africa to Manchuria: they grazed and marketed goats, sheep, cattle, camels, and horses. With the rise of Islam, armies from the Arabian Peninsula seized control of Mesopotamia, the Levant, Iran, and North Africa, and set up a capital for the Umayyad Caliphate in Damascus. Of those conquered, many gradually converted to Arab language and culture. Later, Arab pastoralists moved



Map 12.7 Maritime and pastoral migration, 800–1500 CE.

from Egypt west to the Maghrib in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and south to the Nilotic Sudan in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. From the eighth century, Turkish pastoralists spread west across the steppes to the Black Sea, into Iran and Anatolia, and into South Asia. To the east, peoples of the eastern steppes known as Khitan, Liao, and Jurchen moved southward both as families and as armies, gaining recurring influence in northern China up to the twelfth century. In the far west, Berber-speaking peoples known as Sanhaja expanded from the Sahara Desert in the eleventh century, establishing the Almoravid state with its capital at Marrakech and extending their conquest throughout North Africa and Iberia. South of the Sahara, cattle-keeping Fulbe families moved eastward from Senegal as far as Lake Chad, and cattle-keeping Nilotic speakers moved upriver from the middle Nile to Lake Victoria and beyond, establishing kingdoms including Rwanda.

The most extraordinary pastoral expansion was that of the Mongols, who, under Chinggis Khan, launched conquests in the early thirteenth century that extended the logistics of communication and control all across Eurasia. Mongol and other pastoral rulers moved to capital cities from which they dominated commerce, but new migratory movements arose to shift the balance of power. In sum, pastoral migration remained especially prominent in the Eastern Hemisphere from the eighth to the sixteenth century. The very nature of empire in this era depended significantly on pastoralist armies and social institutions, as seen through the Umayyads, the Almoravids, the Mongols, the Golden Horde, and the Manchu. Even after pastoralists lost the upper hand in interaction with settled polities, pastoralist alliances and armies remained important in global politics until the nineteenth century.

#### *Maritime migrations*

The world's best navigators, during the first millennium CE, were the Polynesian and Micronesian sailors of the Pacific, whose complex array of techniques enabled them to complete pinpoint navigation so that they reached tiny islands in immense seas. Their vessels and populations were small, but they linked the Pacific Islands to maritime Southeast Asia. Related groups founded the state of Sri Vijaya, based in Sumatra, which linked commerce of China and India from the seventh through the thirteenth century. Along with other mariners in the Indian Ocean – speaking Greek, Austronesian, Arabic, and Gujarati languages – they learned the monsoon system and expanded the range and volume of their shipping. In another dense area of maritime contact, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese mariners traded and warred with each other.

Their ships, built for the rough seas of the north Pacific, were able to make long voyages to Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean. The exchange among these competitors brought such technological advances as rudders, the compass, watertight compartments, and innovative configurations of sails and masts. The Mongols, in their conquest of China, learned from this naval tradition and led major expeditions against the Song, Japan, and Java.

Mariners from the Baltic Sea and North Sea suddenly expanded their range in roughly 800 CE, relying on light but seaworthy vessels for 300 years of prominence. To the west, these Viking warriors raided across open seas to the British Isles, along the north coast of Europe, across the Atlantic, and into the Mediterranean where they encountered dense waterborne traffic relying especially on galleys and their oarsmen. To the east, they raided along rivers to Slavic-speaking areas, leaving major imprints in Constantinople, on the Caspian shores of Persia, and among the Turkish-speaking rulers of the middle Volga. For other regions – the Americas and Africa – while the vessels rarely carried more than fifty oarsmen, mariners nevertheless traveled the coasts, the lakes, and great river systems. As a result, it can be said that, even before the voyages of Columbus, people all around the world were in maritime contact with one another.

It was European voyagers who achieved decisive advances in technology and social organization of long-distance seafaring. An earlier Chinese lead in long-distance voyaging was not sustained, so it was Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Dutch mariners who did the extraordinary work of mapping the coasts and charting the winds and currents of the open seas. The volume of trade and migration increased steadily across the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, and the Western Pacific. By the late eighteenth century the volume of oceanic commerce and migration had increased several times over; with the mastery of longitude, the world became almost completely mapped.

#### *Forced migrations*

Forced migration also expanded during this millennium, especially as large states became established, and especially in the zone from the Mediterranean to the Indus, the historic center of slave societies. North of this zone, merchants dispatched captives from Slavic, Turkic, and Caucasian societies; from south of this zone, captives came from societies of the Nile Valley and West Africa. Still others came from South India and Southeast Asia. Enslavement became central to war and politics, as Slavic, Turkish, East African, and Caucasian slave soldiers became central to the military forces of the great powers.

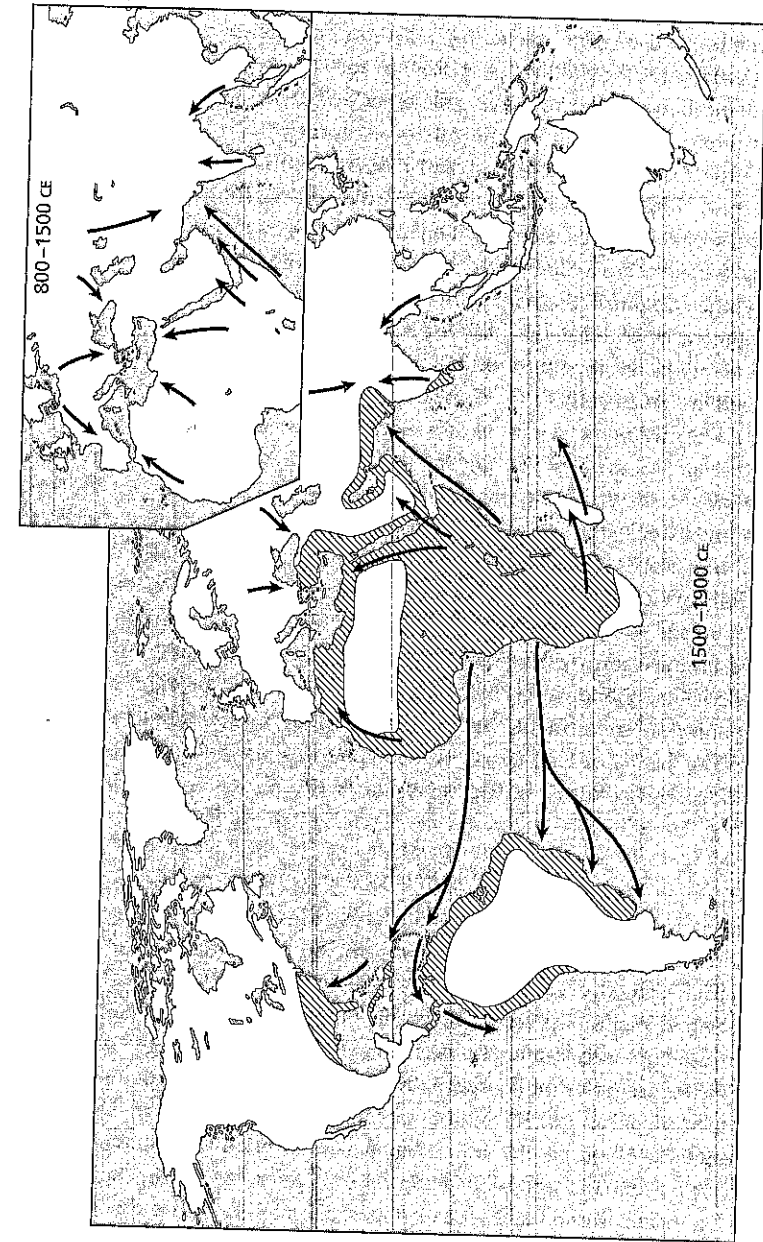
Overlaying this terrestrial wave of enslavement was a steadily expanding maritime slave trade, especially across the Atlantic but also in the Indian Ocean (see Map 12.8). As the capitalistic economy developed, this trade in slaves focused on production of sugar and other commodities for sale. Over ten million enslaved Africans made the voyage to the Americas in the years up to 1850, far more than the number of European migrants to that time. (Other waves of slave trade – from the Eurasian steppeland, across the Sahara, and across the Indian Ocean – were also large but have yet to be estimated with precision.) Finally, expanded slave economies developed within Africa and Asia, reaching their peak in the late nineteenth century, after which slavery declined rapidly in the face of a worldwide anti-slavery movement. Yet racial categorization, reinforced by the centuries of enslavement, remained after slavery as an extreme form of social discrimination.

#### *Urbanization*

Urbanization, a fourth dimension of migration, developed gradually in this period. The leading cities included such imperial capitals as Constantinople, Baghdad, and later Beijing, and such commercial centers as Alexandria, Guangzhou, and the Silk Road center of Sarai on the lower Volga (though it prospered only in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries). Cities maintained their size only through in-migration, as their death rates were high. After 1500 three great capital cities – London, Edo (later to be renamed Tokyo), and Constantinople (though now under Ottoman rule) – led in population for three centuries. As the global economy expanded, port cities grew in size and significance, including Lisbon, Nagasaki, Amsterdam, Batavia, Genoa, and Havana.

#### *Diaspora, nation, and race*

The various streams of migration, structured increasingly by empire, changed the character and complexity of identity, both for individuals and groups. Individuals could be defined specifically by gender, age, birthplace, color, marital status, language, religion, occupation, and slave/free/elite status – or more vaguely with group labels of race or ethnicity. During this millennium of expanded migration, the localized notion of ethnic group gave rise to expanded types of identity: the diaspora, the nation, and racial groupings. In diasporas, migrants and their descendants maintained a common identity and culture linking them to their homeland. (The term “diaspora” has only recently come to be used as a general term for a dispersed community held together by informal structures, but it is now



Map 12.8 Forced migration, 800-1900 CE. The arrows represent primary streams of forced migration, and the shaded areas regions in which forced migration had the most impact.



recognized to reflect an important pattern in the modern world.) In nations, inhabitants of a region, including both migrants and locals, formed a common identity for political purposes. In racial categorization, one group labeled another in order to make a statement of social hierarchy.

Maritime migrations from the fifteenth century had built up diasporas around the Atlantic and Indian Ocean basins – people from many parts of Africa plus English, Irish, Scottish, Portuguese, Castilian, Dutch, Jews, German speakers, Arabs, Persians, Gujaratis, and Armenians. A Russian diaspora spread east across Siberia and a Chinese diaspora spread west and south, both within empires. Especially in the Americas, diasporas facilitated the development of nationhood: diaspora-based populations sought to redefine their identity in an imperial world. Thus, diasporas broke from their homelands and imperial centers to become nations in the cases of the United States and Haiti. Latin American nations defined themselves in wars of independence against Spain, ultimately recognizing national citizenship for members of European and African diasporas and for people of Amerindian descent. For Russia and China, the continental diasporas helped define and extend the nation. In Europe, national identities arose in France, briefly in Poland, and more fully in Germany. Racial categorizations, meanwhile, served to perpetuate hierarchies within empires and nations. In response the African diaspora, defined in racial terms, developed an increasingly influential common consciousness. The global reach of empires on land and sea brought about the interconnection, investment, and seizure of resources – primitive accumulation, in the words of Karl Marx, but also cooperation – that made possible dramatic global economic and demographic growth in the nineteenth century.

#### Capitalism since 1700

A series of great transformations intertwined with one another as the eighteenth century progressed. Capitalism, an economic system of new complexity, extended links in all directions, moving and transforming commodities and marketing them for profit. Globe-encompassing culture congealed as people continued to exchange foodstuffs, clothing, music, and sport. The categories of diaspora, race, and nation became increasingly explicit, bringing as much division as unity. War, made more destructive with capitalistic investment and racial passion, ended lives and expanded hierarchies. Population grew at gradual but accelerating rates, especially in cities. Languages shifted and spread, especially as linked to empires. Migration played a central role in linking these transformations; at the same time,

the global interactions transformed the practices of migration. The remainder of this narrative is an effort at once to entangle and untangle this list of factors, and to show the central and sometimes causal role of migration in the social change of the past two centuries, when the absolute and perhaps relative numbers of migrants reached a new peak.

The emergence of capitalism became evident wherever commerce was intensive. Factory production and wage labor expanded in parts of Western Europe and North America. Mechanized plantations operated by slave labor along the West Atlantic. Shipping and marketing firms expanded their activities to all the large ports of the world. Combinations of wage labor and forced labor carried out tasks on the ships linking the ports, and among the port workers and workers who transported goods on land: the Dutch East India Company expanded such a combination beginning in 1602. Mines expanded along with demand for extracting iron, gold, silver, lead, copper, diamonds, and other minerals. Bankers and insurance firms, usually held by wealthy families, provided finance and collected profits. Competition brought conflict: the European continent was engulfed with warfare for over twenty years from 1792 – even more massive wars were to come.

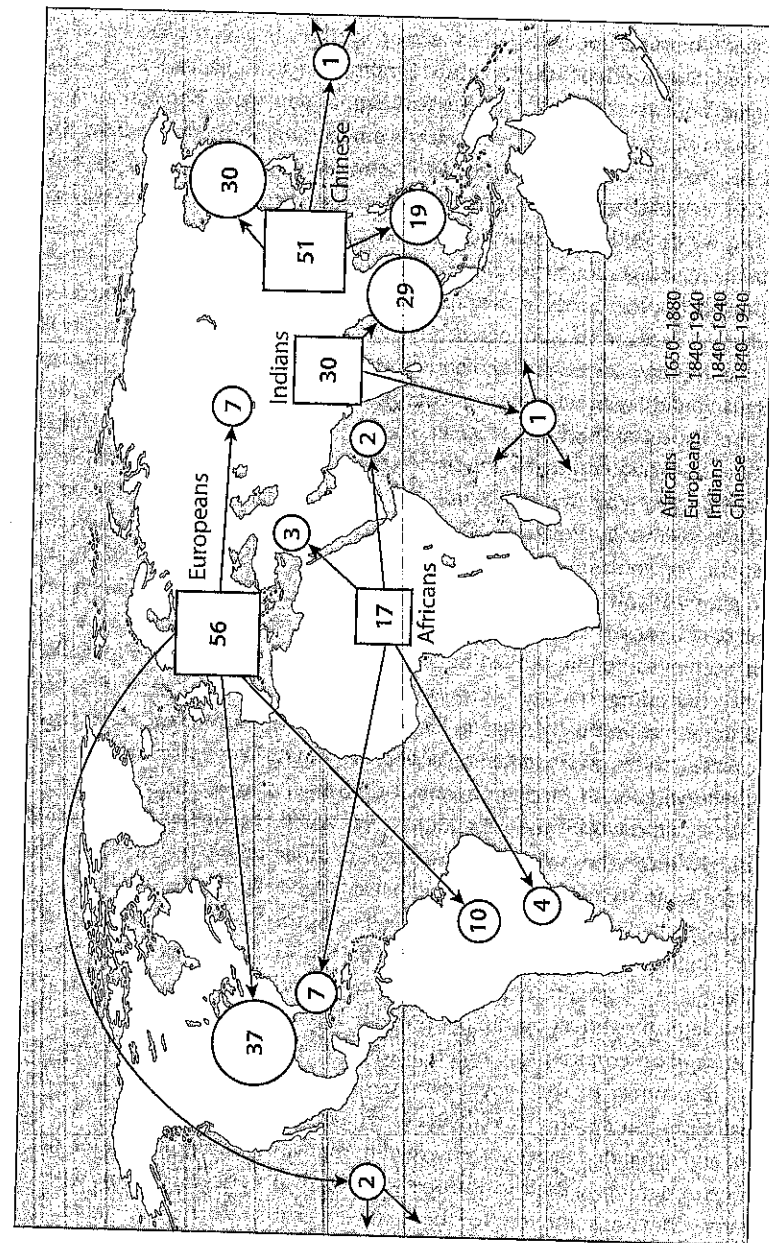
Despite the divisions of war and race, the world had expanded its unities by the early nineteenth century. Remarkably, death rates were in decline in many parts of the world so that populations began to increase steadily. Centuries of global cultural exchange – of foods, clothing, customs, and diseases – crossed all the lines of race, religion, social class, language. The sum of these provided a basis for death rates to decline. In fact, increases in European, Asian, and American populations had already begun, the latter especially because of immigration. African populations remained in stagnation in this era, as a result of war and enslavement. In addition the Pacific Basin, which had been at the fringe of global interaction in previous centuries, was now incorporated with a vengeance into the imperial and capitalist order, with resulting high rates of mortality and migration throughout the region.

A sudden shift in about 1850 brought a wave of long-distance migration that lasted to 1940 (see Map 12.9). As Europeans gained the upper hand in the world economy, breakthroughs in factory production brought steam engines, railroads, textiles, plus mining and shipping of coal. The principal character of long-distance migration shifted from the forced migration of captives to voluntary migration (though many such migrants were semi-voluntary contract laborers). Sometimes it took a crisis to launch the flow of migrants, as with Ireland's 1845–9 potato famine. The outstanding change, however, was the development of new technology, especially steamships

that traveled dependably and cheaply, but also telegraphs to convey information on conditions worldwide. The rise of industrial production expanded demand for minerals and agricultural produce.

Where ten million had crossed the Atlantic as slaves from 1550 to 1850, nearly fifty million Europeans crossed the Atlantic from 1840 to 1940, and another eighty million migrants moved from India and China. Two regions of sparse population – North America and Southeast Asia – each absorbed over thirty million immigrants. In addition, huge numbers of migrants traveled by land: North and Central Asia absorbed over twenty million immigrants in areas ruled by China and Russia. This great wave of migration transformed diasporas and formed nations. Diasporas, previously initiated by empires as much as by commerce, became more closely tied to capitalism. Diasporas sustained tradition and language among migrant communities; they also sought to influence affairs in their homeland. In Brazil and the United States, various diaspora communities joined each other to create nations by declaring independence; their westward-moving settlers became new diasporas that expanded the nation. Later diasporas coming to the United States and Brazil from Europe became part of each nation. The notion of nationhood was not necessarily inclusive, however: African diasporas of Brazil and the United States only became full citizens with the end of slavery; ultimately, many retained their African-diaspora identity too. The Chinese migrants north into Manchuria expanded the nation; the Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia remained a diaspora.

The nineteenth-century expansion of empires established imperial control from a few capitals over the great majority of the world's population. These empires accompanied – regardless of whether they caused – a huge expansion of intercontinental migration. In preceding centuries, as empires helped to mix populations to a new level, racial identities and antagonisms arose. Racial distinctions served to divide communities by color, physical type, even by dress and religious practice – and increasingly to place them in hierarchies. These factors of race, affirmed significantly in the eighteenth century, came to be reaffirmed even more forcefully in the expanding nations and empires of the late nineteenth century. Racial distinctions were to expand to a disastrous twentieth-century peak before declining. The African continent, which had been within the global system of interaction but beyond imperial control, succumbed to European conquest in the late nineteenth century and underwent most of a century of racially defined imperial rule. Much of Northeast Asia soon came under Japanese imperial rule. Empires, always eclectic collections of governing practices, now became reliant at once on racial divisions and on growing ties to industry.



Map 12.9 Global migration after 1850. The numbers in the squares represent numbers of emigrants, in millions; the numbers in circles represent numbers of immigrants, in millions.



As expanding industry led to an arms race among imperial powers, the competition became ferocious. Wars among empires broke out sporadically: the United States seized the Spanish Empire in 1898; Japan successfully challenged both the Chinese and Russian Empires in 1905. The Great War raged from 1914 to 1918: by the end of it the empires of Germany, Austria, the Ottomans, and Russia had collapsed. The remaining empires, badly shaken, sought to consolidate their holdings, yet continued to use racial discrimination as a major tool for sustaining empire.

Imperial tensions soon arose again, and Nazi Germany especially used race as its principal political tool in the peak of racial discrimination, defining Jews and others as races to be eliminated. At the conclusion of the Second World War – the most widespread and destructive of wars – the expanded empires of Germany and Japan were dismantled, but so as well was the general idea of empire, especially because of its association with racial hierarchy. Within another thirty years empires had been abandoned – in response to independence movements – by Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United States, and eventually Portugal. This appeared, at least for the time, to be a permanent decolonization.

The pause in war after 1945 brought the formation of the United Nations and the bare bones of a formal global community. Nevertheless, the threat of a great war continued for almost fifty years of Cold War, and decolonization brought continuing streams of casualties and refugees. A great postwar economic boom gradually fueled a new wave of migration. Increased economic productivity, while its benefits were distributed very unevenly, nevertheless allowed for an acceleration in population that eventually reached every area of the world; the expanding populations responded by crowding increasingly into cities. For the first time in millennia, peasants were no longer the majority of the human population (see Map 12.10).

Languages had shifted and moved for all of history, but expanded connections of language and diaspora developed in this era. Empires had imposed their language of government on small numbers of colonial officials, but migrants later moved along the paths created by imperial languages: people at far ends of an empire used imperial ties and imperial language to migrate in new directions. In this way Portuguese, Spanish, French, Russian, and especially English became worldwide languages.

New and expanded diasporas emerged in the wave of migration after 1950: Caribbean migrants settled in Europe and North America, Turks moved to Germany, Mexicans moved to the United States. With more advanced communications, people of the diaspora were better able to maintain contact

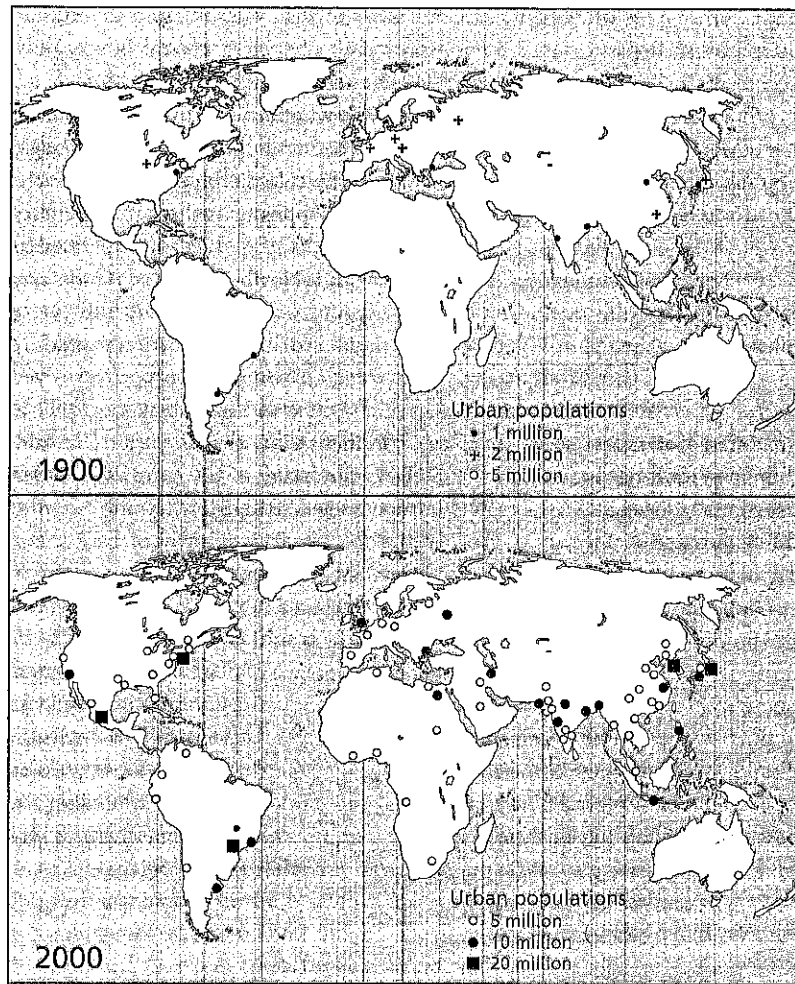
with home, even after generations. Chinese, Irish, Filipino, and Palestinian diasporas each participated actively in affairs of their ancestral home; diaspora Jews participated in the affairs of a newly created homeland.

Urbanization took a new turn in the late twentieth century. For much of the period after 1850, migration was mainly from crowded regions to sparsely populated regions. From the second half of the twentieth century, however, the dominant pattern turned out to be the opposite – the movement of people from rural areas or small towns to centers of population expanded as never before. Urbanization in European and North American lands had seized the lead during the nineteenth century and reached, by the 1960s, rates near to 75 percent. For other parts of the world, urbanization picked up to a rapid rate that brought region after region to urban proportions even exceeding 75 percent. A dozen urban areas grew to include twenty million inhabitants or more, some on every continent. The urban settlers, in addition, came primarily from the immediate hinterland of the cities rather than from great distances. As a result, human society reached a tipping point at the beginning of the twenty-first century, in which a majority of the human population came to live in urban rather than rural areas.

Global popular culture developed in remarkable new directions as a result of multiple types of connections. While electronic communications were most obviously important, the expanded migration and multicultural atmosphere in many parts of the world encouraged the sharing of many aspects of popular culture: music, cuisine, dress, film, images. Remarkably, the African diaspora and the people of Africa – large groups that had suffered severe discrimination – played a disproportionate role in creating and spreading the new popular culture. In the twenty-first century, wherever one lived, it was no longer surprising to see a migrant from anywhere on the planet.

### The future of migration

Migration remains a mix of old and new. With the expansion of higher education, one of the current migratory trends is that in which students leave home and even their country to attend university and prepare for their role in a high-tech world. Yet this same process includes much that is habitual. That is, young adults leave home, travel a distance, cross social boundaries, and learn new languages and customs (now those of the academic world); some of them will return home after the experience, while others will migrate further. The ancient human pattern of cross-community migration has now been put



Map 12.10 Twentieth-century urbanization.

in the service of contemporary globalization, demonstrating the role of underlying human habits in even the most dramatic of changes.

The continuities in migration remain impressive. Land and sea both remain central to human movement. It is true that travel is increasingly by air for long distances and by automobile, bus, and train for shorter distances.

But if human travel by water has declined, a steadily growing proportion of commodities moves by water whenever possible. In a similar continuity, it seems that national units and national identities will continue and perhaps strengthen, even as migration expands. By the same token, the informal social organization of diasporas seems likely to continue, to expand, and to remain influential in human affairs. Meanwhile, urban, suburban, and rural areas will surely change as agriculture continues to mechanize and urban areas become increasingly dominant.

Where will future migrants settle? Our biggest cities grow at water's edge, even as the waters rise in response to climate change. People continue to leave rural areas for small and large urban areas. Perhaps future migration will be mostly from city to city. Will we move mostly to the tropics? What changes can we expect in languages – will people learn more or fewer languages? The dramatic spread of the English language in the last half-century has made some suggest that it will become a dominant or even unique language. The number of native speakers of English, some 350 million, is 5 percent of the human population (a somewhat larger number speak English as a second language); another 5 percent are native speakers of Spanish. Yet while the smallest languages are disappearing, others are growing. Most of the great cities are multilingual. So we will have a multilingual rather than an English-only future and the experience of learning new languages and cultures through migration will still continue for a long time.

The development of our globally multicultural society will bring new commonality but also new differentiation. Past migration has dependably brought connection in history, but the connections have included cultural differentiation and inequality as well as sharing of resources. Hopefully, our future will include not only more migration but also more careful study of the past of migration – at local and global levels – in order better to observe the current changes in migration.

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## PART II

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THE PALEOLITHIC AND THE  
BEGINNINGS OF HUMAN  
HISTORY