

HUMAN DISPERSAL AND SPECIES MOVEMENT

How have humans colonised the entire planet and reshaped its ecosystems in the process? This unique and groundbreaking collection of essays explores human movement through time, the impacts of these movements on landscapes and other species, and the ways in which species have co-evolved and transformed each other as a result. Exploring the spread of people, plants, animals, and diseases through processes of migration, colonisation, trade, and travel, it assembles a broad array of case studies from the Pliocene to the present. The contributors from disciplines across the humanities and natural sciences are senior or established scholars in the fields of human evolution, archaeology, history, and geography.

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HUMAN DISPERSAL AND SPECIES MOVEMENT

From Prehistory to the Present

Edited by:

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CONTENTS

<i>List of text boxes</i>	page vii
<i>List of figures</i>	viii
<i>List of tables</i>	xii
<i>List of contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Preface</i>	xxi
I. Introduction	
1 Human and human-mediated species dispersals through time: Introduction and overview <i>Nicole Boivin</i>	3
II. Origins: Species Movements in the Pleistocene	
2 Carnivore guilds and the impact of hominin dispersals <i>Margaret E. Lewis</i>	29
3 Pleistocene hominin dispersals, naïve faunas and social networks <i>Robin Dennell</i>	62
4 Hominins on the move: An assessment of anthropogenic shaping of environments in the Palaeolithic <i>Michael Petraglia</i>	90
5 Reconceptualising the palaeozoogeography of the Sahara and the dispersal of early modern humans <i>Nick A. Drake and Roger Blench</i>	119
III. Across the water: Species movements by Coast and Sea	
6 Coastlines, marine ecology, and maritime dispersals in human history <i>Jon M. Erlandson</i>	147
7 Breaking down barriers: Prehistoric species dispersals across Island Southeast Asia, New Guinea and Australia <i>Tim Denham</i>	164

8	The last great migration: Human colonization of the Remote Pacific Islands <i>Terry L. Hunt and Carl P. Lipo</i>	194
IV. Complexity: Species Movements in the Holocene		
9	Dispersals, connectivity and indigeneity in Arabian prehistory <i>Rémy Crassard and Lamya Khalidi</i>	219
10	Reconstructing migration trajectories using ancient DNA <i>Greger Larson</i>	237
11	Out of the Fertile Crescent: The dispersal of domestic livestock through Europe and Africa <i>Melinda A. Zeder</i>	261
12	Adapting crops, landscapes, and food choices: Patterns in the dispersal of domesticated plants across Eurasia <i>Dorian Q. Fuller and Leilani Lucas</i>	304
13	Tracing the initial diffusion of maize in North America <i>Bruce D. Smith</i>	332
14	Proto-globalisation and biotic exchange in the Old World <i>Nicole Boivin</i>	349
V. Invasion: The Movement of Invasive and Disease Species		
15	Invasive eusocieties: Commonalities between ants and humans <i>Patrizia d'Ettore</i>	411
16	Invasives, aliens, and labels long forgotten: Toward a semiotics of human-mediated species movement <i>Marcus Hall</i>	430
17	Multiple time scales for dispersals of bacterial disease over human history <i>Mark Achtman</i>	454
18	Early malarial infections and the first epidemiological transition <i>James L.A. Webb, Jr.</i>	477
19	The globalisations of disease <i>Monica H. Green</i>	494
20	Modern day population, pathogen and pest dispersals <i>Andrew J. Tatem</i>	521
	<i>Index</i>	535

Colour plates are to be found between pp. 26 and 27.

TEXT BOXES

2.1	Glossary of Terms	<i>page</i> 30
2.2	What Is an Ecological Guild?	35
2.3	Ecological Measures	38
2.4	The Expensive Tissue Hypothesis	42
6.1	The Life Aquatic: Sea levels, Shorelines, and Science	148
6.2	Shell Middens and the Anthropocene	156
7.1	The Out-of-Taiwan Hypothesis	167
7.2	Archaeobotany of the Wet Tropics	171
8.1	Radiocarbon Events and Target Events	201
8.2	The Long and Short	206
8.3	Reaching South America	211
15.1	How ants discriminate friends from foes	419

FIGURES

2.1	Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania	<i>page</i> 44
2.2	Representative species of the Early Pleistocene and Late Pleistocene carnivore guilds of eastern Africa	45
3.1	Responses of moose to auditory predator cues among predator-naïve and predator-savvy herds	73
3.2	Response of moose to olfactory predator cues among predator-naïve and predator-savvy herds	73
3.3	The response by movement by moose in areas with or without predators	74
3.4	Hominin dispersals in regions of predator-naïve and predator-savvy faunas. In this model, a hominin group targets four predator-naïve faunas in succession.	77
3.5	Two types of hominin dispersal	81
5.1	Maps that illustrate examples of the different animal biogeographical distributions that are considered in this study	126
5.2	Hartebeest distribution phylogenetics and fossil sites north of the Sahara	131
5.3	Map showing the palaeohydrology of North Africa with the distribution of: (a) hippopotamus fossils, rock art and barbed bone points, (b) Nilo-Saharan languages and barbed bone points	134
5.4	Common genet phylogenetic relationships inferred from Bayesian analysis of cytochrome b and the left domain of control region (900 bp + 3 indels)	136
5.5	<i>Tilapia guineensis</i> distribution	138
6.1	Changes in global sea level over the last 140,000 years, with oxygen isotope stages indicated	148
6.2	Todd Braje and Jenna Peterson of the University of Oregon excavating a buried shell midden and marine mammal bone bed on California's San Miguel Island	157
7.1	Places of origin for selected cultural items entering exchange networks in ISEA around 4,500–2,500 years ago	169
7.2	Distribution of red-slipped pottery and other pottery traditions within ISEA around 4,000–2,500 years ago	170

List of figures

ix

7.3	Archaeostratigraphic representation of early elements of the agricultural chronology at Kuk Swamp, highlands of Papua New Guinea	174
7.4	Chronology of practices and forms of plant exploitation in the Upper Wahgi Valley, highlands of Papua New Guinea	175
7.5	Distributions of yams (upper; <i>Dioscorea</i> spp.), taro (middle; <i>Colocasia esculenta</i>) and bananas (<i>Musa</i> spp.) in northern Australia	178
8.1	The Wallace Line and regions of Near and Remote Oceania	196
8.2	The Pacific showing the region of remote islands of East Polynesia	200
8.3	Models for chronology: long and short	207
8.4	Chronologies for episodic colonizations of the southwestern Pacific (Lapita), eastern Micronesia, and eastern Polynesia	209
9.1	Regions and archaeological sites mentioned in the text	221
10.1	A map depicting the geographic distribution of different mitochondrial haplotypes across Western Eurasia in four successive chronological bins	242
10.2	A map showing the geographic distribution of pigs possessing haplotypes belonging to three separate clades	246
10.3	Distribution of the Arctic Fox	250
10.4	A map of South America depicting the location of the Falkland Islands wolf (<i>D. australis</i>) and where on the continent samples of an extinct relative (<i>D. avus</i>) were sampled	253
11.1	Centres and probable dates of initial domestication of core livestock species and their dispersal in the Near East and Cyprus	265
11.2	Initial dispersal of livestock in Anatolia	269
11.3	Dispersal of livestock in the Mediterranean Basin	273
11.4	Dispersal of livestock in Continental Europe	278
11.5	Dispersal of livestock in Africa	283
12.1	An updated map of centres of likely independent plant domestication and agricultural origins in the Old World, with the frontier of agricultural dispersal by 500 BC	305
12.2	Diagrammatic representation of the feedbacks between harvesting and processing wild versus domesticated emmer wheat, with indications of the changes in practices and plant genetics during the domestication process	308
12.3	Diagrammatic representation of the feedbacks between harvesting and processing wild versus domesticated rice, with indications of the changes in practices and plant genetics during the domestication process	309
12.4	A schematic, quantitative diagram of the geographical evolution of weed flora as agriculture disperses and the weed assemblage shifts by recruitment and extirpation	312
12.5	The attrition of crop diversity during Neolithic dispersal across Europe, as indicated by the frequency of occurrence of crops in regional archaeobotanical evidence	314
12.6	The attrition of West Asian crop diversity during the dispersal of agriculture eastwards and southwards towards India and Arabia, as	

	indicated by the frequency of occurrence of crops in regional archaeobotanical datasets	315
12.7	Evidence for arrival, abandonment, and reintroduction of crops to prehistoric Britain, based on the summed radiocarbon age distribution of directly dated crops and wild foods	318
12.8	The geographical distribution of rice genotypes (DTH2 allele variants) relating to season of flowering, and the presence of wild rices, <i>indica</i> , temperate, and tropical <i>japonica</i> cultivars	320
12.9	Map summarizing the geographical distribution of sticky (low amylose) and non-sticky forms of cereals in Asia	323
13.1	Map showing the location of archaeological sites and regions discussed in the text, as well as the present-day geographical range of the wild progenitor of maize (<i>Zea mays</i> ssp. <i>parviglumis</i>)	334
13.2	Changing $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values in human bone indicate increased consumption of maize in eastern North America	341
14.1	Map of the Old World, showing key terrestrial and maritime trade and travel routes of the early centuries CE, together with names of major trading sites	373
15.1	Basic life cycle of an ant colony, with independent colony foundation by a single queen and dispersal via mating flights (males and females leave the natal nest)	415
15.2	Different strategies of colony foundation in ants	416
15.3	Reproduction and dispersal by budding	417
15.4	Typical gas-chromatogram of a cuticular extract from an ant's body	420
15.5	Schematic diagram of different kinds of colony organization in invasive and non-invasive garden ants	423
16.1	Percentages of intentional and unintentional plant species introductions to Europe	433
16.2	Cumulative number of terrestrial alien species established in eleven northern European countries from 1900 to 2008	434
16.3	Google Ngram Viewer showing the rise in the use of species terms 'wild, exotic, alien, and invasive' from 1700 to 2000	436
16.4	Diagram showing a way to distinguish between alien, naturalized, and invasive species according to the kinds of barriers they transgress	444
16.5	Map showing dispersal of muskrat (<i>Ondatra zibethica</i>) beginning with its initial introduction near Prague in 1905, and expanding to the boundaries of Central Europe by 1927	446
16.6	A compilation of 122 derivative terms of <i>Anthropochoren</i>	447
17.1	The distribution of <i>H. pylori</i> populations in Asia and the Pacific	458
17.2	A comparison of global <i>H. pylori</i> and human mtDNA phylogenies	460
17.3	Population structure of <i>Y. pestis</i> revealed by core genome SNP analysis	463
17.4	Postulated routes of migration of i.ORI since 1894	466
17.5	Maximum Parsimony tree based on 846 core non-homoplastic/mobile/recombinant SNPs	469
18.1	Global distribution of malaria from preintervention (1900–2002)	479

List of figures

xi

18.2	Global prevalence of Duffy antigen negativity	481
18.3	Global prevalence of the sickle-cell gene	483
20.1	Changes in duration of travel from England to Australia since 1800 by the fastest available passenger ship and by commercial aircraft	522
20.2	Examples of major disease outbreaks throughout human history and their speed and extent of spread	523
20.3	Air travel and malaria connectivity changes over the past century	524
20.4	Density of global commercial shipping activity 2004–2005, and climatic connectivity dendrogram of a selection of major world ports	526
20.5	Representations of continental connectivity in sub-Saharan Africa	528
20.6	Nighttime average annual brightness satellite image from 2009 showing southern Niger and northern Nigeria	531

TABLES

2.1	Taxa mentioned in the text	<i>page</i> 33
2.2	Carnivoran genera present between 7–5 Ma in Africa	36
2.3	Size class 3 and 4 carnivorans (taxa >21.5 kg) present at key time periods in eastern Africa	37
3.1	Pleistocene population estimates	70
3.2	Summary of the major effects of colonising carnivores on predator-experienced and predator-naïve moose in Europe and North America	75
4.1	Evidence for the anthropogenic shaping of global ecosystems in the Pleistocene epoch	107
5.1	Species with trans-Saharan distributions	122
5.2	Sources for animal distribution maps	125
5.3	The fauna found at the Aterian sites that contain faunal remains and their frequency of occurrence	130
7.1	Selected list of exotic food plants that were introduced to the interior of New Guinea in the pre-ethnographic past	182
8.1	Some assumptions made in long versus short chronologies	206
14.1	Examples of botanical translocations in the Bronze Age	356
14.2	Examples of some key animal species that saw significant translocation in antiquity (Bronze Age and later)	359
14.3	Examples of botanical translocations of the Iron Age and Classical periods (and chronologically parallel periods)	366
14.4	Examples of wild and commensal animal translocations to and within Europe	374
14.5	Examples of Medieval-era plant translocations	381
15.1	Characteristics that are typical of human societies, independently evolved by insect societies	413
17.1	Modern dating estimates	455
19.1	Eight paradigmatic infectious diseases	496

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xix

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PREFACE

This book is the result of an experiment in bringing together scholars from a range of different fields, providing them with a congenial setting for discussions in the form of the former residence of the “Sun King”, Louis XIV, in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, just outside Paris, and ensuring a healthy supply of fine French wine. This experiment was kindly conducted by the eminent Fyssen Foundation from 4 to 7 October 2013. We are grateful for their support both for the conference and its organisation, and for the production of this book.

The Fyssen Conference was entitled “From Colonisation to Globalisation: Species Movements in Human History”. Like this book, its focus was on the myriad ways in which humans have shaped the movement of other species – and, as a result, ecosystems – throughout their evolutionary history from the Pliocene to the present day. We are very pleased that both the conference and the resultant book managed to attract a range of top scholars from diverse fields, including archaeology, biological anthropology, history, epidemiology, ecology, geography, and molecular genetics. The conference featured stimulating dialogue and debate, much of which has worked its way into this finished volume.

Participants in the Fyssen Conference were asked to write pre-circulated papers that subsequently became the basis for the book chapters gathered here. The chapters were compiled by Geneviève Chertier, Julie Rubin, and Laure Dufour from the Fyssen Foundation (and their assistance in this, as well as so many other aspects of conference organisation, is gratefully acknowledged), and benefitted from multiple rounds of feedback and revision, both from other conference participants and also from outside reviewers. We would like to express our gratitude to this large team of anonymous outside reviewers, as well as to the two anonymous referees who took the time to read through the entire volume and provide useful comments that have helped to further improve the book. We are also grateful to our editors at Cambridge University Press, Asya

Graf and Beatrice Rehl, as well as the broader editorial team, for their advice, support, and important role in bringing the book to press.

Almost all of the original conference participants contributed a chapter to this book. One invited participant – George J. Armelagos – was unable to attend the conference for health reasons, and was subsequently prevented from contributing a chapter by his untimely passing. We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the important contributions of Professor Armelagos to the study of ancient disease. His chapter is sorely missed, but his important role as a pioneer in the exploration of health and disease in the bioarchaeological record is reflected in the extraordinary advances in the field that are addressed in multiple chapters.

This book is equally the outcome of two European Research Council-funded projects and the synergies that emerged between them. The Sealinks Project (Grant Agreement 206148) and the Palaeodeserts Project (Grant Agreement 295719) are funded under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme. In the interests of full disclosure, we note that the PIs of these projects are also married to one another. While recognition of the parallels between the processes of movement addressed in the two projects was undoubtedly facilitated by the discussion of dispersals at inappropriate domestic moments, however, the broader linkages are also the result of ongoing discussion between the project teams, and we wish also to acknowledge their important contributions here.

Finally, the book is also the result of collaboration across the Anglo-French academic divide, and reflects the existence of long-term working relationships – and, indeed, friendships – between scholars in France and the UK. The book reflects time spent in the UK and France by the editors (for two of them as an outcome of being awarded Fyssen Foundation postdoctoral fellowships) and the opportunities such research exchange has provided. By the time the book is published, two of the editors will have moved from Oxford to the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Jena, Germany, holding out the promise that such ties will expand their reach to the broader European context.

It is our sincere hope that these exciting and dynamic new linkages built across the boundaries of disciplines, projects, and nations will be reflected in the finished book you find before you here.

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