

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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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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