

PANORAMA
A WORLD HISTORY
Volume 1: to 1500

ROSS E. DUNN
LAURA J. MITCHELL



Panorama

A World History

Volume 1: to 1500

The way we once learned history . . .

. . . IS NOW HISTORY

Just as a panoramic image provides a broad view, *Panorama* provides a ground-breaking, broad view of the world's history by reaching across regional boundaries and highlighting large-scale, global patterns. *Panorama's* easily understood chronology, coupled with its innovative, proven digital tools, ensures that learners are always moving forward as they study change and continuity across time, assess knowledge gaps, and mold critical thinking skills. The result is improved course performance through greater understanding of our world's past, its large-scale global trends, and its impact on and relevance to 21st-century students.



Panorama is a program for the 21st Century



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The highly specialized way of life in which communities subsisted primarily, if not exclusively, on animal products is called

pastoral nomadism.

rice cultivation.

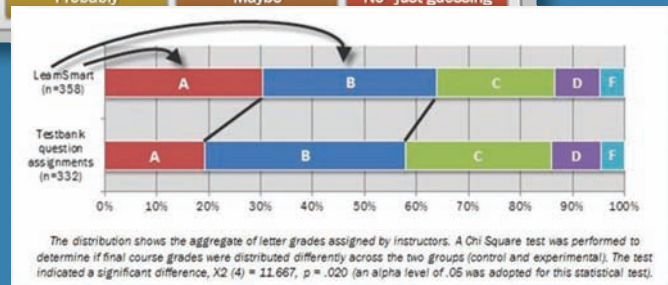
cattle ranching.

agrarian farming.

Click one of the buttons below.

Do you know the answer? (Be honest.)

Yes Probably Maybe No—just guessing



THINK CRITICALLY WITH CRITICAL MISSIONS

Critical Missions immerse students as active participants in a series of transformative moments in history. As advisors to key historical figures, students read and analyze sources, interpret maps and timelines, and write recommendations. As part of each mission, students learn to think like an historian, conducting a retrospective analysis from a contemporary perspective.

Critical Mission | Experience History | Imperialism in Africa

Learn About Your Mission

Dearest Colleague:

After four months of talks, the 1 reached a compromise at the Co Act of the Conference of Berlin king, Leopold II, as the leader of ground rules for European expats most influential newspaper in B to the Belgian people.

While the delegates have all agn the Belgian people's support for accomplished in two ways:

- 1) We must make sure our fellow of the Congo Conference were t
- 2) We must demonstrate what b territory in the heart of Africa w

I've chosen you for this vitally i article, you should research the l details about the conference. I'd your research to me to ensure y to the Belgian people.

Your editor,
Martin Van Bommel

connect

Critical Mission | Experience History | Imperialism in Africa

Analyze the Map

Use the timeline to view changes over time and explore all the information that the map has to offer.

African Resistance to European Control 1815 - 1885

1815

- British Possessions
- French Possessions
- German Possessions
- Italian Possessions
- Portuguese Possessions
- Spanish Possessions
- Turkish Possessions

1815 1820 1825 1830 1835 1840 1845 1850 1855 1860 1865 1870 1875 1880 1885



SUCCEED FASTER WITH CONNECT HISTORY

Connect History strengthens the link between faculty, students and coursework. Innovative, adaptive technology aligns the goals of students and faculty, allowing them to work together to accomplish more in less time. It engages students in the course content so they are better prepared, more active in discussions, and able to excel.



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Enjoy Easy Access with MHCampus, which integrates our digital tools into your school's course management system. This integration provides single sign-on access for students and a comprehensive grade book for instructors allowing for easy tracking of students' progress as well as remediation on challenging topics. MHCampus ensures that students will master the learning outcomes and core objectives of their world history course.

Map Activity: Agrarian Societies in Afroeurasia, 3000-2000 B.C.E.

MAP ACTIVITY

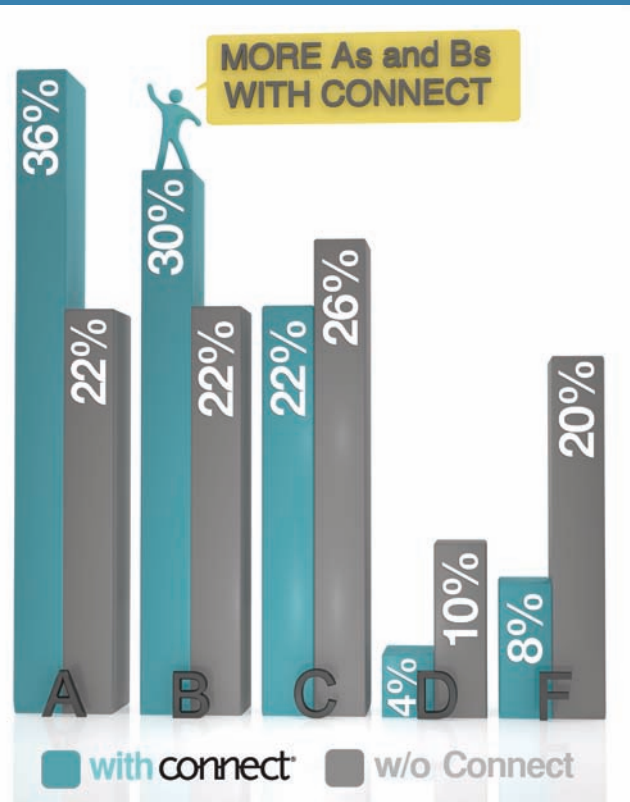
Map Activity: Agrarian Societies in Afroeurasia, 3000-2000 B.C.E.

Label the map.

Mesopotamia Levant Nile River Gonur Yellow River Eritou Indus River

Reset

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Praise for *Panorama*

“Finally, a world history text that puts human history on world time! Focused on humankind as a whole and its interactions over time, *Panorama* provides a conceptually organized and integrative approach to the human past.”

Edmund Burke III, University of California, Santa Cruz

“*Panorama* demonstrates the promise of the ‘new world history,’ as revealed in the authors’ skillful integration of far-reaching global connections with careful attention to the lives of individuals in specific places. Their discussion of peoples who are often found at the periphery of world history, such as Africans, is certain to push world historians and their students to diversify their historical perspectives.”

Richard Warner, Wabash College

“This is an excellent text. Dunn and Mitchell’s categories of analysis, global research, and their years of experience teaching world history are brilliantly displayed. For those of us who have been in the trenches teaching world history, we finally have a masterful global textbook by world history scholars who have extensive experience teaching such courses.”

-Elaine Carey, St. John’s University

“I think I’ve finally found a world history book that is truly ‘world’ in an intelligent and useful way. It’s readable, its coverage is very good, and it has a clear analytical framework. I particularly like its environmental perspective.”

-Phyllis Jestice, College of Charleston

“What makes *Panorama* unique is a truly comparative framework that is global in scope within successive eras. It lays a solid foundation for the development of individual societies in the Americas and the Pacific and the cooperative and competitive cultures of Afroeurasia before contact is established in the late 15th century. Then *Panorama* unfolds a gradual and impressive analysis of human interaction across the globe since that pivotal event.”

-Ryan Thompson, Cleveland State Community College

“Students want to understand the order of events, but so often world history begins to look like stacked timelines. *Panorama*’s format helps to bring global issues and broad themes together in a manageable, chronological way. It also prompts students to think of other examples that they may already be aware of.”

-Erika Briesacher, Worcester State University

“This is a compelling text that makes me eager to teach World History as soon as possible! *Panorama* introduces issues of climate and geography to the human story in a truly profound and innovative way.”

-Brian Black, Pennsylvania State University, Altoona



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A World History
Volume 1: to 1500

ROSS E. DUNN

San Diego State University

LAURA J. MITCHELL

University of California, Irvine

**Mc
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Education



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Ross Dunn is Professor Emeritus of History at San Diego State University, where he taught African, Islamic, and world history. In his early career he specialized in North African history, publishing *Resistance in the Desert: Moroccan Responses to French Imperialism, 1881–1912* (1977). Teaching world history inspired him to write *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta, a Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century* (1987). This book is in its third edition. A leadership role in the project to write national standards for world history led to publication, with Gary B. Nash and Charlotte Crabtree, of *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (1997). In 2000 he edited the essay collection *The New World History: A Teacher's Companion*. He is an associate director of the National Center for History in the Schools at UCLA. In 2012 he received the annual Pioneers of World History award from the World History Association. He was the first elected president of that organization.



Laura J. Mitchell

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Brief Contents

Introduction The Earth: World History's Theater 2

chapter 7 An Age of Giant Empires,
300 B.C.E.–300 C.E. 190

chapter 8 American Complexities,
900 B.C.E.–900 C.E. 220

part 1

Settling the Planet

Beginnings to the First Millennium B.C.E. 18

- chapter 1 The Peopling of the World,
7,000,000–10,000 B.C.E. 20
- chapter 2 Farms, Cities, and the New Agrarian Age,
10,000–2000 B.C.E. 48
- chapter 3 Afroeurasia's Moving Frontiers:
Farmers, Herders, and Charioteers,
3000–1000 B.C.E. 78
- chapter 4 Early Odysseys in the Americas, Australia,
and Oceania, 8000–500 B.C.E. 108

part 3

Shifting Power, Thickening Webs

Afroeurasia 200–1000 C.E. 246

- chapter 9 Turbulent Centuries, 200–600 C.E. 248
- chapter 10 Afroeurasia in the Era of Arab Empire,
500–800 C.E. 278
- chapter 11 State Power and Expanding Networks
of Exchange, 750–1000 C.E. 306

part 2

Agrarian Societies and Their Interconnections

1200 B.C.E.–300 C.E. 132

- chapter 5 Afroeurasia: Centers of Power, Trade,
and New Ideas, 1200–600 B.C.E. 134
- chapter 6 Empire Building and Cultural Exchange
from India to the Mediterranean,
600–200 B.C.E. 160

part 4

Interconnections and Their Consequences 900–1500 336

- chapter 12 Dynamic Centuries across Afroeurasia,
1000–1250 338
- chapter 13 Afroeurasia in the Era of Mongol Power,
1200–1350 368
- chapter 14 Cities and Empires in the Americas,
900–1500 398
- chapter 15 Calamities and Recoveries across
Afroeurasia, 1300–1500 424



Contents

Introduction 2

The Earth: World History's Theater 2

The Big Land Masses:

The Main Stage of History 4

Moving Land Masses 4

Seven Continents, or Only Five? 5

Afroeurasia 6

The Great Arid Zone 7

The Tropical Belt 8

The Northern Latitudes of Temperate Climate 9

Afroeurasia's Mountain Spine 9

The Eleven Seas 9

Rivers 11

Australia 12

North and South America 13

Connecting the Americas 14

The Americas' Long *Cordillera* 14

Rivers and Seas 15

The Oceans 15



Settling the Planet Beginnings to the First Millennium B.C.E.

part
1

1 The Peopling of the World 7,000,000–10,000 B.C.E. 20

Human Ancestors in Africa and Beyond 23

Early Hominin Evolution 23

Well-Traveled Hominins 24

INDIVIDUALS MATTER The Turkana Boy:

A Distant Ancestor 26

Other Traveling Hominins 28

Modern Humans in Africa:

The First 100,000 Years 30

The Debut of *Homo Sapiens* 30

The Power of Language 30

Colonizing the World 33

The Roads from Africa 33

South to Australia 34

Colonizers of Europe 34

The American Frontier 34

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE The Kennewick Man Controversy 36

Why Did *Homo Sapiens* People the Earth? 37

Homo Sapiens: The Last Surviving Hominin 38

Why People Look Different 40

Global Culture of the Upper Paleolithic 40

Dawn of a Multicultural World 40

Social and Economic Life 41

Technical Wonders 42

A World of Symbols 43

2 Farms, Cities, and the New Agrarian Age 10,000–2000 B.C.E. 48

The Coming of Farmers: A Peculiar Event 51

Early Farming and the Big Thaw 51

The Drift toward Domestication 52

Neolithic Innovations 53

The Spread of Agrarian Societies 54

Sunrise over the Village 55

Super Villages 55

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Ötzi: A Neolithic Traveler 57

Early Complex Societies 58

Irrigation and Complex Society in Mesopotamia 58

Complex Society on the Nile 66

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE A Pharaoh's Warning in Stone 68

Harappan Society in the Indus Valley 69

Interregional Communication and Commerce 72

Complex Societies and the Environment 74



3 Afroeurasia's Moving Frontiers: Farmers, Herders, and Charioteers 3000–1000 B.C.E. 78

Across Afroeurasia: More Farmers, More Cities 81

- The Cavalcade of Inventions 81
- Complex Society and Commerce in the Mediterranean Basin 82
- Developments in Western Europe 84
- The Oxus Civilization of Central Asia 85
- Complex Society in East Asia 86

Pastoral Peoples Ride into History 88

- Horses, Riders, and Wagons 88
- Pastoral Nomadic Society 89

Encounters between Agrarian Societies and Migrating Peoples 91

- Indo-European Speakers in Southwest Asia: The Hittite Empire 93
- States of Mesopotamia and Syria 95

From Middle Kingdom to New Kingdom in the Nile Valley 96

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE “Here Is the Situation”: The King of Alashiya Writes to the Pharaoh of Egypt 98

- Rivalry and Diplomacy among Militarized Kingdoms 99
- Early Greeks 99
- Indo-Europeans in Iran and South Asia 100
- Indo-Europeans and Chariots from the Far West to the Far East 101

INDIVIDUALS MATTER The Beauty of Xiaohe: A Woman of the Steppes 102

Developments in the Tropical Belt 103

- Herders and Farmers South of the Sahara Desert 104
- Austronesian Farmers in Southeast Asia 105

4 Early Odysseys in the Americas, Australia, and Oceania 8000–500 B.C.E. 108

Farmers and Platform Builders in the Americas 111

- American Farmer Power 111
- Platform Builders of Norte Chico 114
- Andean Societies in the Second Millennium B.C.E. 116
- The Mesoamerican Zone of Intercommunication 117

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE The Olmec Heads 119

North of Mexico 120

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Harvester Mountain Lord: A Mesoamerican King 121

Change in Australia 123

- Change over the Long Term 124
- A Continent without Farmers 125

Pioneers on the Pacific Frontier 126

- Colonizers of Near Oceania 126
- Into Remote Oceania 127



Agrarian Societies and Their Interconnections

1200 B.C.E.–300 C.E.

part
2

5 Afroeurasia: Centers of Power, Trade, and New Ideas 1200–600 B.C.E. 134

The Clang of Iron 137

- The Spread of Iron: The Southwest Asian Epicenter 137
- The Spread of Iron: The Tropical African Epicenter 137
- Iron's Benefits and Costs 138

Warfare, Empire Building, and Trade in Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean Lands 140

- Twelfth-Century Troubles 140
- The Neo-Assyrian Empire 142

The Hebrews and the Origins of Judaism 144

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Adad-Guppi: Babylonian Priestess and Queen Mother 146

- Phoenicians and Greeks: Trade and Migration 147
- Woodland Europe and the Mediterranean World 150
- Nubia on the Nile Corridor 151



South Asia: A New Era of City Building 152

- New Cities and Kingdoms 153
- The Development of the South Asian Class System 153
- Brahmins and Brahmanism 154

The East Asian Sphere 155

- The Era of the Western and Eastern Zhou 156
- Destruction and Innovation during the Later Zhou Period 156

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE *The Book of Songs (Shijing)* 157

6 Empire Building and Cultural Exchange from India to the Mediterranean 600–200 B.C.E. 160

Persia Ascending 163

- Empire Building on a New Scale 163
- The Achaemenids as “Universal” Rulers 165
- The Persian Empire as Communication Hub 165
- The Achaemenids and the Teachings of Zoroaster 167
- Achaemenid Multiculturalism 167

Inventive Greeks 168

- Government and Society in the Greek City-States 168
- The Flowering of Athens 171

Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Era 173

- Alexander’s Short, Brilliant Career 173
- Foundations of the Hellenistic World 175

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Queen Arsinoe II:

- Ruler of Ptolemaic Egypt 178
- Cultural Trends 179

Buddhism and the Maurya Empire in India 181

- Foundations of Buddhism 181
- The Reign of Ashoka Maurya 183

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Rock Edicts of the Emperor Ashoka 184

Cavalry and Caravans in Inner Eurasia 185

- Nomad Power 186
- Early Times on the Silk Roads 187

7 An Age of Giant Empires 300 B.C.E.–300 C.E. 190

Rome and Mediterranean Unification 193

- Rome the Republic 193
- Rome the Empire 196

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Boudicca:

British Rebel Leader 198

The Era of the Han Empire in East Asia 200

- The Qin Dynasty and the First Emperor 200
- The Han State and the Ascendance of Confucianism 202

States Between Rome and China 205

- The Xiongnu and Their Relations with Han China 205
- The Parthian and Kushan Empires 206
- The African Kingdoms of Kush and Axum 208

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Trade in the African Port of Adulis 210

Bridges Across Afroeurasia 211

- East–West Interregional Trade 211
- The First Missionary Religions 213

8 American Complexities 900 B.C.E.–900 C.E. 220

The Spread of Complex Societies in North America 223

- Empire Builders of Teotihuacán 224
- Zapotec Civilization in the Oaxaca Valley 228
- The Innovative Maya 229

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Lady Xoc: An Aristocrat Woman in Maya Politics 231

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE A Maya Bible: An Account of Creation in the *Popol Vuh* 234

- Developments in Upper North America 236

South America: Complex Societies along the Andean Spine 238

- Andes Urbanization: The Example of Chavín de Huántar 239
- Back to the Coast: The Moche Society 240
- The Nazca 242
- Troubles in the Sixth Century 243





Shifting Power, Thickening Webs

Afroeurasia, 200–1000 C.E.

part
3

9 Turbulent Centuries 200–600 C.E. 248

The Shifting Map of Empires 251

- Turbulence in Inner Eurasia 251
- China after the Han Empire: Growth without Unity 251
- The Sasanids: A New Power in Persia 253
- Crisis and Recovery in the Roman Empire 254
- The Huns and the Collapse of the Western Empire 257
- The Mediterranean Fractured 260
- A New Empire in South Asia 261

Religions for Troubled Times 264

- The Buddhist Web 264
- The Christian Web 267

INDIVIDUALS MATTER St. Augustine of Hippo:

- Christian Theologian 269
- The Manichean Way 271

Tropical Africa: Farmers, Towns, and Iron 271

- The Nok Culture 272

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE The Sculptures of Nok 273

- The African East and South 272
- Southeast Asian Contributions to African Society 274

10 Afroeurasia in the Era of Arab Empire 500–800 C.E. 278

New Empires of Steppe and Desert 281

- Empires along the Silk Roads 281
- The Arab State and the Emergence of Islam 283
- The Arab Muslim Empire 287

Christian Societies in Europe and Africa 291

- The Byzantine Empire Holds Its Own 291
- Christian Society in Europe 292

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Two Views of the Battle of Tours 296

- Dwindling Christian Society in North Africa 297

East Asia: Return to Unity in China 298

- The Tang State 298

INDIVIDUALS MATTER The Empress Wu: Patron of Buddhism 300

- Migrations to the South 302
- Cultural Integration 302

11 State Power and Expanding Networks of Exchange 750–1000 C.E. 306

Muslim Power and Prosperity 309

- From Damascus to Baghdad: The Abbasid Empire 309
- Rival Centers of Muslim Power 311
- The Byzantine Resurgence 312
- Islam on New Frontiers 313
- A “Green Revolution” in Muslim Lands 314
- Muslim Urban Society 314
- The Stream of Ideas 316

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Abu Bakr al-Razi: Muslim Physician 317

Cities, Merchants, and Kingdoms along the Chain of Seas 318

- Trade of the Arabian Sea 318
- The Maritime Empire of Srivijaya 319

- Chinese Trade and the Fate of the Tang Dynasty 320
- Japan and Korea at the Eastern End of the Chain of Seas 321

The Sahara Rim: A New Zone of Intercommunication 323

- Gold and Slaves, Copper and Salt 323
- The Empire of Ghana 325

Europe’s Struggle for Stability 326

- Muslims and Magyars 327
- The Viking Adventure 327

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Bjarni Herjolfsson and the Viking Discovery of America 330

- The Changing Shape of Western Europe 331





12 Dynamic Centuries across Afroeurasia 1000–1250 338

The East Asian Powerhouse in the Song Era 341

- The Elements of Chinese Prosperity 341
- Governing China in an Era of Change 343
- China and Its Near Neighbors 345
- Japan within and without the Chinese Sphere 345
- China in the Hemisphere 346

Conquerors and Migrants in the Muslim Lands 347

- Turkic Horse Power 348
- Muslim Ships on the Mediterranean 350
- New Empires in the Western Mediterranean 351

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE A Jewish Merchant Writes to His Wife 352

- Cultural Trends in the Muslim Lands 354

Foundations of Urban Civilization in Europe 356

- Warm Weather, Better Plows 357
- New Order in Political Life 358

INDIVIDUALS MATTER King Philip II:

- French State-BUILDER 360
- The Expansion of Western Christendom 360
- European Commercial Power in the Mediterranean 363
- Western Europe's Cultural Style 363

13 Afroeurasia in the Era of Mongol Power 1200–1350 368

The Ascendance of the Mongol Empires 371

- Chingis Khan's Path of Conquest 371
- Explaining Mongol Power 373
- Mongol Expansion after Chingis 374

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Sorghaghtani Beki:

- A Woman of Influence 376
- Mongol Murderers: A Deserved Reputation? 378

The Ambiguous Mongol Peace 379

- Silk Road Traffic 379
- Slaves, Diplomats, and Career Seekers 380
- Cross-Fertilization in Science and Technology 380
- The Changing Religious Map 381

Profit and Power in the Southern Seas 383

- Trade and State Building in Southeast Asia 384

- The South Asian Pivot 384
- East and Southern Africa in the Indian Ocean World 385

Urban Society in Europe 386

- Many Governments and Languages 387
- Private Groups and Charters 388
- The Flow of Ideas 388

Trans-Saharan Connections 391

- North Africa between the Mediterranean and the Sahara 392
- The Mali Empire 392
- Other West African Kingdoms 393

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Ibn Battuta Assesses the Mali Empire 394

14 Cities and Empires in the Americas 900–1500 398

American Societies in an Age of Environmental Change 401

- The Mound Builders of Cahokia 401
- Ancestral Puebloans of the Colorado Plateau 403
- Maya, Mixtec, and Toltec 405
- The Coming of the Nahuas 407
- The Caribbean and Amazonia 408
- States of the Andes 410

American Empires in the Fifteenth Century 413

- The Aztec Empire 413

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Nezahualcoyotl ("Fasting Coyote"):

- Political Strategist, Survivor, and Poet 415
- The Incas 417

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Chastity and Marriage in Inca Society 419



15 Calamities and Recoveries across Afroeurasia 1300–1500 424

**Environmental Crises of the
Fourteenth Century 427**

Downpour and Drought 427

The Great Pestilence 428

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE Perspectives on the
Black Death 430

Crises in the Political and Social Realms 431

China: The Collapse of Mongol Rule 432

Political and Economic Troubles in the

Central Muslim Lands 432

INDIVIDUALS MATTER Ibn Khaldun:

A Thinker for Troubled Times 435

Europe in the Aftermath of the Black Death 434

Fifteenth-Century Recuperation 436

Technologies for the Future 436

Ming China: New Prosperity and a

Maritime Thrust 439

South Asia: A Steadier Course of Change 442

Astronomy and Empire Building in the

Central Muslim Lands 443

The Meaning of Recovery in Europe 445

Glossary G-1

Recommended Readings RR-1

References R-1

Credits C-1

Index I-1



An Interview with the Authors of *Panorama: A World History*

Ross Dunn and Laura Mitchell discuss how they came to write *Panorama* and how they believe it contributes to the study of the human past.

Q: Tell us about the unique approach you have taken in *Panorama*.

A: In *Panorama*, we have created a unified narrative of world history, assuming that the primary subject we are investigating is humankind as a whole, and the primary setting of the narrative is the globe. We have organized the chapters chronologically, by consecutive historical periods—never repeating a period from different regional or thematic angles. Our aim is to advance the mission of conceptualizing the human experience in ways that are more holistic and integrated. To do this, we have had to select the very broad developments that define particular historical periods and that we think readers ought to understand.

Q: Why did you choose this approach?

A: We wanted to contribute to the important work of making the history of humankind intelligible, to write a unified narrative that is clear and coherent and that gives readers a sturdy framework for thinking about the global past. We believe we can begin to understand big and rapid changes in the world today only if we have a mental scaffolding of ideas and words for thinking, talking, and writing about the world as a whole. Similarly, we can begin to grasp how the world got to be the way it is only if we have world-scale narratives that help us connect the histories of particular groups—nations, civilizations, religions, corporations—to patterns of change in human society writ large.

Q: How do you balance large historical generalizations with knowledge about particular peoples, places, and events?

A: We know from experience that if the presentation is too broad, abstract, or theoretical, students may have a hard time grasping the generalizations. But if the writing is too loaded with historical details (all of which may be significant at some level), then the big pictures of change tend to get lost in thickets of information about particular societies, individuals, conquests, wars, philosophies, artistic movements, and so on.

Like all writers of world history, we have made choices to leave out a great deal of perfectly useful and interesting knowledge. Only by doing this are we able to keep our sights on the panoramic view and on the unified narrative. We have also, however, aimed to write in concrete, descriptive language, recognizing that history is fundamentally about human beings, individually or in groups, thinking, working, fighting, and creating.

Q: How are you able to combine the telling of “large-scale” history with in-depth, “small-scale” knowledge of people and events?

A: In every chapter, we shift between larger- and smaller-scale narratives, but we aim consistently to relate developments at relatively small scales to those at much larger scales. We cannot understand the Industrial Revolution as the world event it was by studying just one English factory town, but historians might write about such a town as an example of how large-scale changes played out on a local level and affected people’s lives.

Q: Does *Panorama* have a central theme?

A: Yes, it does. This theme is the growing complexity of human society from the early era of stone toolmaking to today. Looking over the very long term of history, we see a nearly continuous though by no means inevitable trend toward greater complexity in the relations of human groups with one another and with the earthly environment. This movement from lesser to greater complexity has been manifested across the ages in several nearly continuous trends of growth, even though the rates and dimensions of change in these areas have been uneven:

- Global population (more people and more groups interacting with one another)
- Human use of the planet’s energy supply to produce food and other goods
- Human intervention to alter the natural and physical environment
- The intricacy and sophistication of technology and science
- The density and speed of systems of communication and transport



- The density of human networks of interchange, including movement of people, goods, and ideas
- The size of governments and their capacity to manage and control people
- The technical capabilities of weaponry to kill people and destroy property
- The size and elaborateness of systems of belief, including religions, ethical structures, and philosophies

Throughout the book, we pose the same question in different ways: How and why did the world move relentlessly toward greater cultural complexity, despite breaks and unevenness in that trend, for example, short-term drops in global population, periods of economic contraction, or the disappearance of particular languages and local religions?

Q: How did you decide on the topics for each chapter?

A: In aiming to write a unified narrative of history, we followed the basic principle of bringing to the fore historical developments that had (and may still have) an impact on relatively large numbers of people, that is, developments of large scale. We let these big developments generally determine the chronological frame of each chapter, and we investigate them in whatever geographical context seems appropriate for clear discussion of their importance. If most chapters focus in part on developments in a region, it is because a development of large-scale significance happened or started there in that particular period. For example, we devote a primary chapter section to developments in China under the Song dynasties of the eleventh and twelfth centuries because China in those centuries generated exuberant economic innovation and growth, a phenomenon that had effects all across the Eastern Hemisphere.

Q: What is distinctive about *Panorama's* periodization of the past?

A: As a unified narrative, *Panorama* proposes a plan for dividing the past into specific chunks of time, with the beginnings and endings of those chunks determined by the important historical developments that occurred within them. Our periodization plan is a single chronology, or timeline moving from the remote to the recent past. One way that *Panorama's* periodization differs from the majority of world history books is its greater attention to very early human history, that is, to the long paleolithic era that preceded the coming of agriculture. The whole paleolithic era (old stone age), which started perhaps 2.5 million years ago, constitutes about 99.6 percent of the history of humankind and its near biological ancestors. Attention to early history encourages readers to think about how and why humans made radical changes in the way they lived—taking up farming, building cities, creating mechanized industries, populating the world

with billions—when they got along without doing these things for hundreds of thousands of years.

Q: You refer to your narrative as “unified”; can you elaborate?

A: One element of our approach to a unified narrative is to conceive of Africa, Asia, and Europe together as a single land mass, a sort of “supercontinent” within which humans interacted, or at least had the physical possibility of interacting, since paleolithic times. As discussed in our Introduction, we refer to this supercontinent as Afroeurasia. For periods of world history up to 1500 C.E., we conceive of the world as divided into four primary geographical regions: Afroeurasia (where the great majority of human beings have always lived—about 86 percent today), the Americas (North and South together), Australia, and Oceania (the Island Pacific). Within these regions, human groups interacted with one another, though with greater or lesser intensity and from different chronological starting points. On the other hand, people did not interact, at least not in any sustained way, between one of these regions and another because wide expanses of ocean and to some extent contrasting climatic conditions prevented or discouraged it. For periods up to 1500 C.E., therefore, we explore developments in these regions in different chapters or sections of chapters, even though we also introduce points of historical comparison between one region and another. Starting in the late fifteenth century, the four regions began to throw out lines of communication to one another, though not all at once. The Great World Convergence, as we call it, began when sea captains established regular transport routes between Afroeurasia and the Americas. For periods after 1500, we treat the entire world as a single zone within which human interrelations became increasingly complex and large-scale developments occurred. From that chronological point to the present, all the chapters are global in scope.

Q: How does *Panorama* cover the significance of individuals—both men and women—in the course of human history?

A: *Panorama* endeavors to take full account of the historical fact that men and women share the planet. Even though much of the narrative is not explicitly gender specific, it aims to be “gender sensitive.” This has meant repeatedly asking ourselves as we move from topic to topic how both men and women, whether aristocrats, city workers, peasants, or forager-hunters, acted as agents of change.

In every chapter of this book, the cast of characters is necessarily very large. We aim, however, to remind readers of the importance of individuals as agents of change by introducing a chapter feature titled “Individuals Matter.” It presents a biographical sketch of an individual whose life in some way illuminates the period the chapter addresses. In most cases, this individual is a person of public



importance, for example, Empress Wu of the Chinese Tang dynasty, or Diego Rivera, the twentieth-century Mexican artist. In a few chapters, however, the individual is an “ordinary” woman or man whose life or deeds illustrate some aspect of the period—for example, Ötzi, the ascribed name of a neolithic traveler in the Alps, or Olga Lisikova, a Russian combat pilot in World War II.

Q: Does *Panorama* incorporate primary sources?

A: Yes. A feature titled “Weighing the Evidence” appears in every chapter—and in the accompanying Connect History program—offering students an opportunity to critically examine a piece of historical evidence relating to the chapter content. The selection is usually a written document (for example, a nineteenth-century Moroccan diplomat’s description of France), though in a few chapters a visual artifact (for example, an image of a giant stone head from ancient Mexico) is included. In some chapters, we present two pieces of evidence to compare with each other. “Weighing the Evidence” includes questions that prompt readers to analyze, interpret, and discuss the selection. This feature reminds readers that the *Panorama* narrative rests on the work of thousands of professional historians and other scholars who have examined, authenticated, and interpreted written documents, works of art, fossilized bones, and numerous other kinds of primary evidence.

Q: Is there a theme to your chapter-opening vignettes?

A: Yes. A key element of the trend toward greater complexity in world history has been the development of systems of communication that have allowed humans to move from one place to another and to create networks for exchanging ideas and things in increasingly complicated ways and at faster and faster speeds. To highlight this aspect of human complexity, we open each chapter with a brief story or vignette that has to do with some kind of communication, transport, or movement pertinent to the historical period under study. The subjects of these stories range widely from camel caravans to the profession of telephone operator.

Q: Is *Panorama* available as an e-book?

A: Even better—it is available as a SmartBook, which means not only that students can read it online, but they can quiz themselves after every section. The SmartBook then adapts to their response, highlighting areas in the narrative that they need to study more.

Q: Are any other digital resources available?

A: Absolutely. The Connect History program offers activities with *Panorama*’s maps, primary sources, key concepts and terms, as well as auto-gradable test items and essay questions.



Panorama: A New View of World History

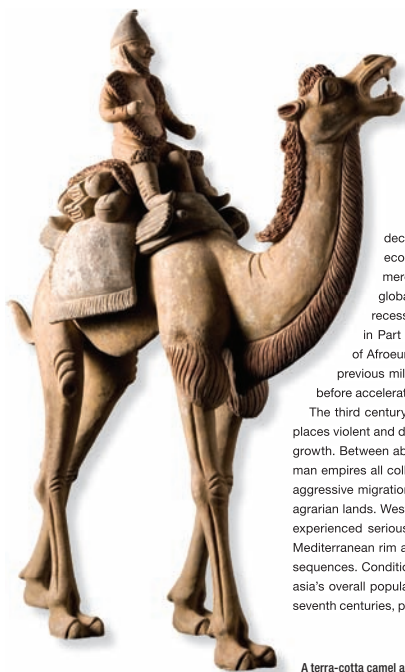
Panorama presents the big picture: a unified chronological narrative of world history that gives students a valuable framework for thinking about the global past.

Panorama's seven parts correspond to seven eras of global history. Within each part, chapters are organized chronologically by consecutive historical periods, never repeating a period from different regional or thematic angles. This organization gives students the mental scaffolding needed to think about the world as a whole. Each part-opening spread previews the major trends of the global era and includes both a time-band placing that period in the larger context of world history and a graph illustrating the era's population growth.

part 3

Shifting Power, Thickening Webs

Afroeurasia, 200–1000 c.e.



A terra-cotta camel and rider from the era of the Tang dynasty in China.

If in the very long term human history has been a story of more and more people sharing the planet, while inventing increasingly complex ways of organizing themselves, interacting with one another, and exploiting the earth's energy to their own benefit, this trend has not been entirely steady. Within the overall movement toward greater complexity, there have been cycles in which population has declined and recovered, cities have shrunk and flourished again, and economies have contracted and expanded. These cycles may be merely regional in scope, but they have also had interregional or even global dimensions, as we have seen in modern times when business recessions reverberate quickly around the world. The three chapters in Part 3 encompass approximately eight hundred years in the history of Afroeurasia, an era when the demographic and economic trends of the previous millennium temporarily slowed down or even reversed themselves, before accelerating again at an even faster pace.

The third century c.e., where Part 3 begins, represents a jarring break—in some places violent and destructive—in the prevailing pattern of population and economic growth. Between about 200 and 600, the Han, Kushana, Parthian, and western Roman empires all collapsed. These upheavals occurred partly in connection with the aggressive migrations of peoples from the Inner Eurasian steppes into neighboring agrarian lands. Western Europe, North Africa, northern India, and northern China all experienced serious economic turmoil. Disease epidemics that swept around the Mediterranean rim and across Southwest Asia in the sixth century had similar consequences. Conditions of life in several regions became harsh enough that Afroeurasia's overall population declined by several tens of millions between the third and seventh centuries, perhaps the first significant drop since the invention of agriculture.

- In western Africa, merchants who discovered the hardy qualities of the dromedary camel set up commercial operations that connected the Mediterranean lands with West Africa. This pioneering enterprise, well under way by the seventh century, lubricated the whole Afroeurasian exchange system with injections of West African gold.
- Assaults of Eurasian nomads on China, India, and Southwest Asia tailed off. In the steppes new warrior empires arose in the sixth century, but they also stabilized political conditions and recharged silk road commerce. In the late first millennium, Europe endured an incursion of Magyar warriors from the steppes, but these intruders settled down quickly.
- Finally, invaders from the Arabian Desert, who proclaimed Islam as a new universalist religion, politically united most of Southwest Asia, a region of agricultural and urban productivity that had been divided between rival states for nearly a thousand years. The cities of Southwest Asia had for millennia funneled commercial goods and new ideas along a corridor that connected the Mediterranean basin with the whole expanse of Asia

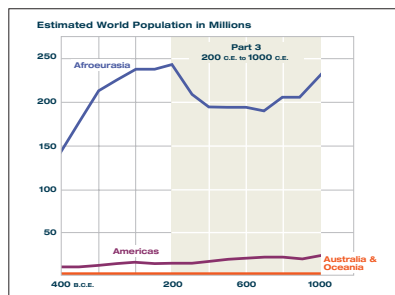
PART 3: 200 c.e. to 1000 c.e.

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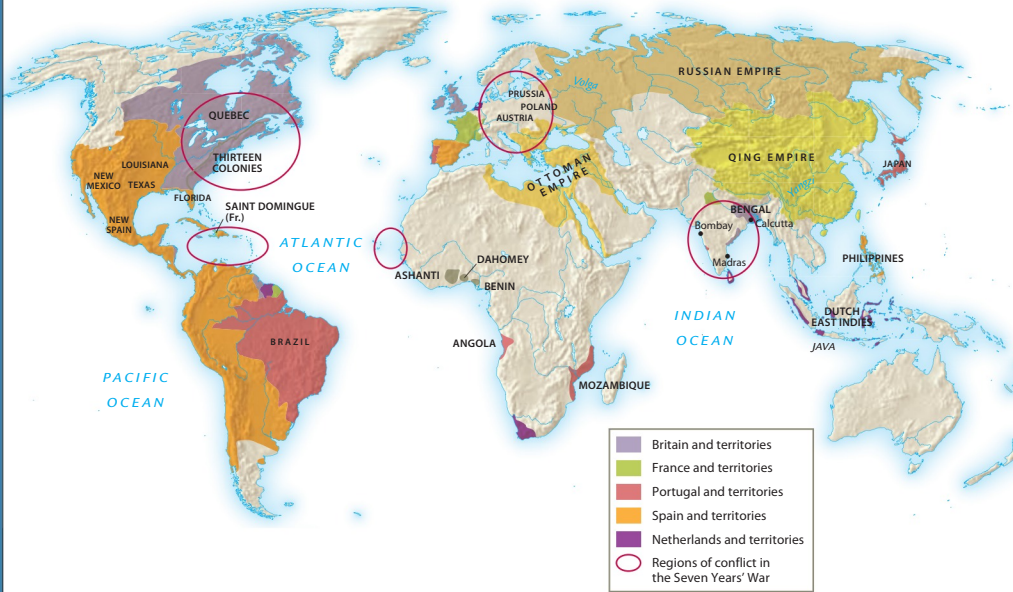
and eastern Africa. Following unification under Arab leadership, that corridor became more animated than ever before. From Southwest Asia, Arab soldiers, preachers, and merchants introduced Islam along the routes of conquest and trade. This new expression of monotheistic faith drew on the teachings of both Judaism and Christianity, and it put great emphasis on social cooperation and codes of proper ethical and legal behavior. Thus, Islam joined Buddhism and Christianity as a universalist faith offering the promise of community harmony and individual salvation. Together, these three religions reached just about every part of Afroeurasia in the late millennium.

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Between 200 and 1000 c.e. migrant farmers, long-distance merchants, conquering armies, and wandering missionaries brought more of Afroeurasia into a single arena of human interchange. This happened without any revolutionary breakthroughs in communication and transport technology, though artisans and engineers tinkered endlessly with ship designs, navigational tools, and more efficient systems of banking and credit. By the end of the millennium, signs of new economic growth and social complexity were abundant. Afroeurasia's overall population climbed nearly back to where it had been eight hundred years earlier. Interlinked commercial networks operated across the breadth of Afroeurasia. China was moving into an era of unprecedented industrial growth. And after suffering a half-millennium of chronic disorder, western Europeans were building a new urban civilization.



A Panoramic View

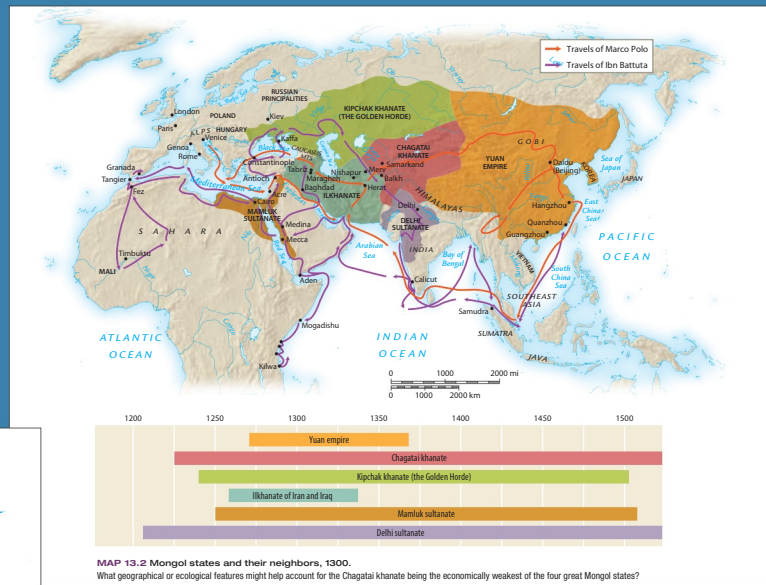


MAP 20.1 Major states and colonial territories after the Seven Years' War (1756–1763).

Empires claimed huge swaths of territory—some in contiguous stretches of land and others overseas. Desire for even more territory and wealth fueled rivalries among empires. What aspects of this political map of states after the Seven Years' War might explain the global nature of that conflict among European powers?

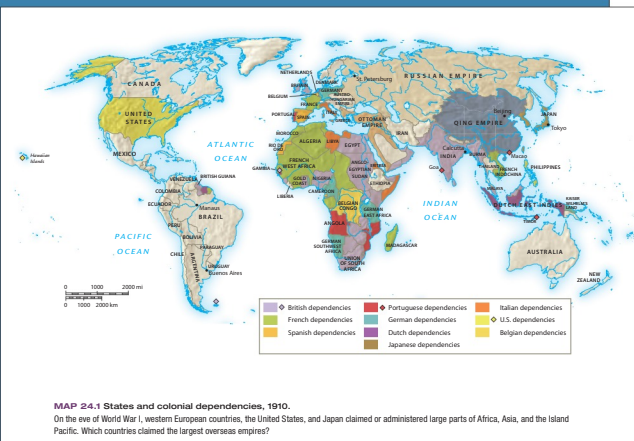
Panorama's maps are designed for optimal classroom projection as well as pedagogical clarity (see Map List, pp. xxvii–xxviii). Maps titled “A Panoramic View” at the beginning of each chapter provide a big-picture overview for the narrative. Within each chapter, additional maps zoom into the regional or local level or provide other views. Questions for each map engage students in thinking about geography and history.

Connect History, an online learning tool, offers 28 interactive maps that actively engage students, supporting geographical as well as historical thinking. These dynamic maps allow students to selectively focus on elements of the map. For example, they can examine the spread of specific crops one at a time, then reconstruct the full global process of agricultural diffusion. Other interactive maps enable students to analyze periodization, comparing changing political boundaries or the spread of technology over time.



MAP 13.2 Mongol states and their neighbors, 1300.

What geographical or ecological features might help account for the Chagatai khanate being the economically weakest of the four great Mongol states?



MAP 24.1 States and colonial dependencies, 1910.

On the eve of World War I, western European countries, the United States, and Japan claimed or administered large parts of Africa, Asia, and the Island Pacific. Which countries claimed the largest overseas empires?

Weighing THE EVIDENCE

Frantz Fanon on the Shortcomings of the National Bourgeoisie

One of the most influential texts to emerge from colonial independence movements is Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon (1925–1961) came from a middle-class family on the French Caribbean island of Martinique. During World War II he went to North Africa to join the Free French resistance against the Germans. He was wounded in battle and awarded the Croix de Guerre. After the war he studied medicine and psychiatry in France. There, he became starkly aware of the limits of social assimilation. Though he had grown up in a thoroughly French environment and fought for the country, whites never viewed him as an equal. His interest in the psychological effects of colonialism resulted in his first book, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952).

In 1953 Fanon accepted a position at an Algerian psychiatric hospital and gave support to FLN revolutionaries. He became acutely aware, through experiences of his patients, of the violent foundations of French colonial rule. In 1956 the French government expelled him from Algeria. He then moved to Tunisia where he continued his work on behalf of Algerian independence.

Suffering from terminal leukemia, Fanon wrote *The Wretched of the Earth* in 1961. The book attracted notoriety for its apparent approval of violence as a means to end colonial rule. Fanon recognized, however, that both perpetrators and victims of violence can never escape its psychological effects. In subsequent essays he explained that revolutionary violence must be short lived, or it will destroy all whom it touches.

In the excerpt below, he discusses how the nation (here referring to a body of people with shared political goals) must negotiate the transition from colonialism to independence. Within a general Marxist framework of class struggle, Fanon argues that the indigenous colonial bourgeoisie are ill equipped to lead the nation because they have identified with the values of their capitalist colonial oppressors and lost touch with the masses.

The national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime is an under-developed middle class. It has practically no economic power, and in any case it is in no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hopes to replace. . . .

Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the masque of neocolonialism. The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the Western bourgeoisie's business agent, and it will play its part without any complexes in a most dignified manner. But this same lucrative role, this cheap-jack's function, this meanness of outlook and this absence of all ambition symbolize the incapability of the national middle class to fulfill its historic role of bourgeoisie. Here, the dynamic, pioneer aspect, the characteristics of the inventor and of the discoverer of new worlds which are found in all national bourgeoisies are lamentably absent. In the colonial countries, the spirit of indulgence is dominant at the core of the bourgeoisie; and this is because the national bourgeoisie identifies itself with the Western bourgeoisie, from whom it has learnt its lessons. It follows the Western bourgeoisie along its path of negation and decadence without ever having emulated it in its first stages of exploration and invention, stages which are an acquisition of that Western bourgeoisie whatever the circumstances. . . . The national bourgeoisie will be greatly helped on its way towards decadence by the Western bourgeoisies, who come to

it as tourists avid for the exotic, for big-game hunting and for casinos. . . . Because it is bereft of ideas, because it lives to itself and cuts itself off from the people, undermined by its hereditary incapacity to think in terms of all the problems of the nation as seen from the point of view of the whole of that nation, the national middle class will have nothing better to do than to take on the role of manager for Western enterprise, and it will in practice set up its country as the brothel of Europe. . . .

If you really wish your country to avoid regression, or at best halts and uncertainties, a rapid step must be taken from national consciousness to political and social consciousness. . . . The battle-line against hunger, against ignorance, against poverty and against unawareness ought to be ever present in the muscles and the intelligences of men and women. . . . There must be an economic program; there must also be a doctrine concerning the division of wealth and social relations. . . . It is only when men and women are included on a vast scale in enlightened and fruitful work that form and body are given to that consciousness. . . . The living expression of the nation is the moving consciousness of the whole of the people; it is the coherent, enlightened action of men and women. . . . No leader, however valuable he may be, can substitute himself for the popular will; and the national bourgeoisie itself about international prestige to all citizens.

Source: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 149, 150.

Thinking Critically

Why, in Fanon's view, does the national middle class feel a stronger relationship to the colon than its own country? What do you think Fanon means by saying that the middle class will turn its Europe? What do you think he means by the term "neocolonialism"? What problems must ensure its viability? From this selection, what can you infer about Fanon's views of those take-
dent countries? In what ways, if any, does the selection reveal the influence of Marxism on F

Each chapter offers students the opportunity to examine historical evidence through a **Weighing the Evidence** selection. The primary sources in these boxed features include public and private documents, visual sources, and material artifacts; sometimes two sources are presented for comparison. A headnote puts the source in context, and a series of questions after the source challenges students to think deeply and analytically about its significance.

Individuals MATTER



Queen Arsinoe II: Ruler of Ptolemaic Egypt

Coruler, high priestess, and goddess, Queen Arsinoe II (316–270 B.C.E.) was one of the most powerful royal women in Egypt's long dynastic history. Her father was the Macedonian general Ptolemy I, who founded the Ptolemaic dynasty following the death of Alexander the Great. About 300 B.C.E., when Arsinoe was fifteen or sixteen years old, her father arranged her marriage, an entirely political transaction, to Lysimachus, the sixty-one-year-old king who ruled territory on either side of the Bosphorus Strait. The couple had three sons in rapid succession, but Agathocles, a child from Lysimachus's previous marriage, stood ahead of them in the line of royal succession. To improve her sons' political positions, as well as her own, Arsinoe accused Agathocles of plotting to kill his father. Consequently, Lysimachus ordered him executed, a vile act that triggered violent uprisings. In 281 B.C.E., less than a year after the murder, the elderly Lysimachus died in battle against Seleucus, ruler of the Seleucid empire of Persia.

When she lost her husband, Arsinoe fled to Macedonia. Once there, she soon accepted a second marriage, this time to her own half-brother Ptolemy Keraunos. Greeks generally regarded marriage between siblings as indecent, but Arsinoe and her new spouse took their cue from Egypt, where such royal unions were customary. Ptolemy Keraunos had

seized part of the dead Lysimachus's territories, and he assured Arsinoe that he would place her sons back in the line of succession as his adopted heirs. He deceived her, however, and fearing these sons as potential threats to his power, murdered the two younger boys, while the eldest escaped. Arsinoe fled once again, this time back to Egypt and the protection of her full brother Ptolemy II (r. 282–246 B.C.E.), who was by this time Egypt's king.

Arsinoe lost no time getting back on her feet and maneuvering for power. She persuaded Ptolemy II that his wife was plotting against him and deserved to be sent into exile. Ptolemy not only complied but also made Arsinoe his new queen. The evidence from surviving texts and images demonstrates convincingly that, although she lived only for another five or six years, she enjoyed equality with her husband-brother as coruler and may have governed more energetically than he did. Historians think she may have helped design the strategy that led to Egypt's victory in a war against the Seleucids for control of territory in Syria. She may also have supervised a major expansion of the Egyptian navy. She appears with her brother on some coins of the period but alone on others, implying her commanding status.

In the years leading to her death in 270 B.C.E. at about the age of forty-five, Arsinoe became not only priestess of her own cult, a typical practice among Egyptian rulers, but also a goddess, worshiped warmly during her own lifetime and for a long time after. A grand shrine was dedicated to her in Alexandria, and towns were named after her in Greece.

Historians, both ancient and modern, have often represented Arsinoe as conniving and power hungry, though these qualities were hardly rare among monarchs of the Hellenistic centuries. She doubtless exercised great political influence during her brief reign, and she offered a model for ambitious Ptolemaic queens that followed her. For example, Cleopatra VII (r. 51–30 B.C.E.), the last of the Ptolemaic rulers, adopted Arsinoe's crown as her own.

Thinking Critically

What political advantages might Arsinoe have gained by encouraging her subjects to worship her as a deity while she shared the throne with her brother?

Arsinoe II strikes a characteristically Egyptian pose, but she sports a Greek hairstyle.

Individuals Matter spotlights women and men—some public figures, others “ordinary” people—whose life or deeds capture an aspect of the period. These biographies remind readers of the importance of individuals as agents of change in world history.

Focus questions at the beginning of each major section help students focus their reading.

Key terms are defined in the margins as well as in the glossary. They are also listed with other study terms at the end of each chapter.

The Coming of Farmers: A Peculiar Event

FOCUS Why did humans in several parts of the world take up farming, given that our species had survived without it for 200,000 years?

The activity we call farming refers specifically to the technical process of *producing* food in a systematic way by planting, tending, and harvesting edible plants and by grazing domesticated animals on pasture. These new methods allowed humans to capture and consume much more of the sun's energy, the source of all plant life, than in earlier times. But coaxing food energy and surplus wealth from the soil involved more than tools and techniques. Woven into the activity are social habits, moral rules, and supernatural beliefs. Until the start of the industrial age barely

agrarian society A society in which agriculture, including both crop production and animal breeding, is the foundation of both subsistence and surplus wealth.

more than 200 years ago, all complex societies were **agrarian societies**, based on farming as the primary way of life. And like the earlier colonization of the world, farming emerged as

a consequence of human beings making countless everyday decisions century after century, though no one at the time could see where these experiments might be taking our species.

Change over Time

1582	Confucian scholars encounter Catholic Christian missionaries in China.
1632	Galleo Gallei offers proof of heliocentric theory of planetary motion.
1639	Russian explorers advancing across Siberia reach the Pacific.
1642–1660	The English Civil War involves temporary abolition of monarchy.
1643–1715	Louis XIV rules France, promoting absolutist principles.
1644	The Qing dynasty comes to power in China, replacing the Ming dynasty.
1648	The Peace of Westphalia proposes principles to guide international relations in Europe.
1652	Khoisan peoples of South Africa encounter Dutch East India Company (VOC) colonizers.
1654–1722	The Kangxi emperor expands China's land frontiers.
1675–1676	Native Americans unsuccessfully rebel against settlers in Massachusetts Bay Colony.
1682–1725	Peter the Great transforms Russia into a major European power.
1687	Isaac Newton publishes <i>The Principia</i> , detailing laws of gravity and motion.
1688	The Glorious Revolution in Britain limits the monarchy's power.
1689	China and Russia settle land frontier disputes with the Treaty of Nerchinsk.
1690	John Locke publishes <i>Two Treatises of Government</i> , criticizing absolutist government.
1690s	The Austrian Habsburg empire drives Ottoman forces out of Hungary.
1701–1714	The War of the Spanish Succession drains economies of western European states, especially France.
1713–1740	Frederick William I consolidates power in Prussia.
1792	Mary Wollstonecraft publishes <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> , arguing for equal education for women.
Early 1800s	The Spanish American empire reaches its greatest territorial extent.

Change over Time chronologies help students review each chapter's significant events.

Instructor Resources for *Panorama: A World History*

More Primary Sources in Create

The World History Document Collection in McGraw-Hill's Create (www.mcgrawhillcreate.com) allows you to choose from over 100 primary and secondary sources—each with a headnote and questions—that can be added to your print text. Create also allows you to rearrange or omit chapters, combine material from other sources, and/or upload your syllabus or any other content you have written to make the perfect resources for your students. You can search thousands of leading McGraw-Hill textbooks to find the best content for your students, then arrange it to fit your teaching style. When you order a Create book, you receive a complimentary review copy in three to five business days or an electronic copy (eComp) via e-mail in about an hour. Register today at www.mcgrawhillcreate.com and craft your course resources to match the way you teach.

Instructor Resources on the Online Learning Center

The Online Learning Center for *Panorama* at www.mhhe.com/panorama1e contains a wealth of instructor resources, including an Instructor's Manual, Test Bank, and PowerPoint presentations for each chapter. All maps and most images from the print text are included. A computerized test bank powered by McGraw-Hill's EZ Test allows you to quickly create a customized exam using the publisher's supplied test questions or add your own. You decide on the number, type, and order of test questions with a few simple clicks. EZ Test runs on your computer without a connection to the Internet.

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List of Maps

- I.1 Mercator, Gall-Peters, and Robinson map projections
- I.2 Major physical and climatic features of Afroeurasia
- I.3 The eleven seas of Afroeurasia
- I.4 Physical features of Australia
- I.5 Two northerly views of the earth, one focused on the Atlantic and one on the Pacific
- I.6 Physical features of the Americas
- I.7 Ocean wind patterns
- 1.1 Early hominin finds and the spread of *Homo ergaster/erectus*
- 1.2 Neanderthals and other close human ancestors
- 1.3 Global migrations of *Homo sapiens*
- 2.1 Early domestication and the spread of agriculture
- 2.2 The earliest complex societies
- 2.3 Early states in Mesopotamia
- 2.4 Egypt from 3000 to 1000 B.C.E.
- 2.5 Complex society in the Indus valley
- 2.6 Trade in the region from South Asia to the Mediterranean, third millennium B.C.E.
- 3.1 Agrarian societies in Afroeurasia, 3000–2000 B.C.E.
- 3.2 Spread of Indo-European languages
- 3.3 Major states of the eastern Mediterranean in the second millennium B.C.E.
- 3.4 Mycenaean centers, second millennium B.C.E.
- 3.5 Diffusion of grain farming in the Afroeurasian tropical belt
- 4.1 The Americas, Australia, and the Pacific basin, to 500 B.C.E.
- 4.2 Urban centers in the Norte Chico region of Peru
- 4.3 Olmec civilization in Mesoamerica
- 4.4 Early farming and mound-building societies in North America
- 4.5 Settlement in Australia and Oceania to 1000 B.C.E.
- 5.1 Major states and the spread of iron metallurgy, 1200–800 B.C.E.
- 5.2 Sites of Sea People attacks, 1200–900 B.C.E.
- 5.3 States, cities, and trade routes of the Mediterranean region, 1000–600 B.C.E.
- 5.4 States of South and East Asia, 800–600 B.C.E.
- 6.1 Major states in Afroeurasia, 500 B.C.E.
- 6.2 The Achaemenid empire, 550 B.C.E.
- 6.3 Alexander’s empire, 325 B.C.E.
- 6.4 The Hellenistic world and the Maurya empire, ca. 300–200 B.C.E.
- 7.1 Major states and empires in Afroeurasia, 100 B.C.E.
- 7.2 Roman imperial expansion, to 300 C.E.
- 7.3 The Qin and Han empires
- 7.4 The states of Kush and Axum
- 7.5 The growth of Buddhism and Christianity, 200 B.C.E.–300 C.E.
- 8.1 Major agrarian societies in the Americas, 900 B.C.E.–900 C.E.
- 8.2 Major states in Mesoamerica, 500 B.C.E.–800 C.E.
- 8.3 Major settlements and societies in upper North America, before 400 C.E.
- 8.4 Major states in South America, 900 B.C.E.–800 C.E.
- 9.1 Major states in Afroeurasia, 250 C.E.
- 9.2 Armed migrations, fifth and sixth centuries
- 9.3 South Asia in the Gupta era, 320–550 C.E.
- 9.4 Religious diffusion, 200–600 C.E.
- 10.1 Major states in Afroeurasia, 500 C.E.
- 10.2 Empires of steppe and desert, seventh and eighth centuries
- 10.3 The Arab empire at its height, 750
- 10.4 Sui and Tang empires, 589–907
- 11.1 Major states in Afroeurasia, 800
- 11.2 Spread of key crops in Muslim lands, 700–1500
- 11.3 Connections along the chain of seas, tenth century
- 11.4 The Sahara rim, 1000
- 11.5 Invasions, migration, and settlement in Europe, ninth to eleventh centuries
- 12.1 Major states of Afroeurasia, 1100
- 12.2 East Asia, 1200
- 12.3 Major states in western Afroeurasia, 1200
- 12.4 Europe and the Mediterranean, 1200
- 13.1 Afroeurasia at the death of Chingis Khan, 1227
- 13.2 Mongol states and their neighbors, 1300
- 13.3 Maritime trade in the southern seas, 1200–1350
- 13.4 Major states in Europe, 1300
- 13.5 Trans-Saharan connections, 1200–1350



- 14.1 The Americas, tenth through thirteenth centuries
- 14.2 Major mounds and earthworks in North America to the fifteenth century
- 14.3 The roads from Chaco Canyon
- 14.4 Growth of the Aztec empire
- 14.5 Growth of the Inca empire
- 15.1 Spread of the plague pandemic (Black Death), 1330–1355
- 15.2 The empire of Timur in 1404
- 15.3 The Zheng He expeditions, 1405–1433
- 15.4 Europe in 1455



Acknowledgments

We undertook to write *Panorama* out of a conviction that we must construct holistic, integrated, earth-scale accounts of the past because they will surely help us understand how the world came to be the staggeringly complex place it is today. Such accounts may also help us imagine alternative futures for ourselves as the species that now dominates the earth but that nonetheless faces profound ecological, economic, and social challenges.

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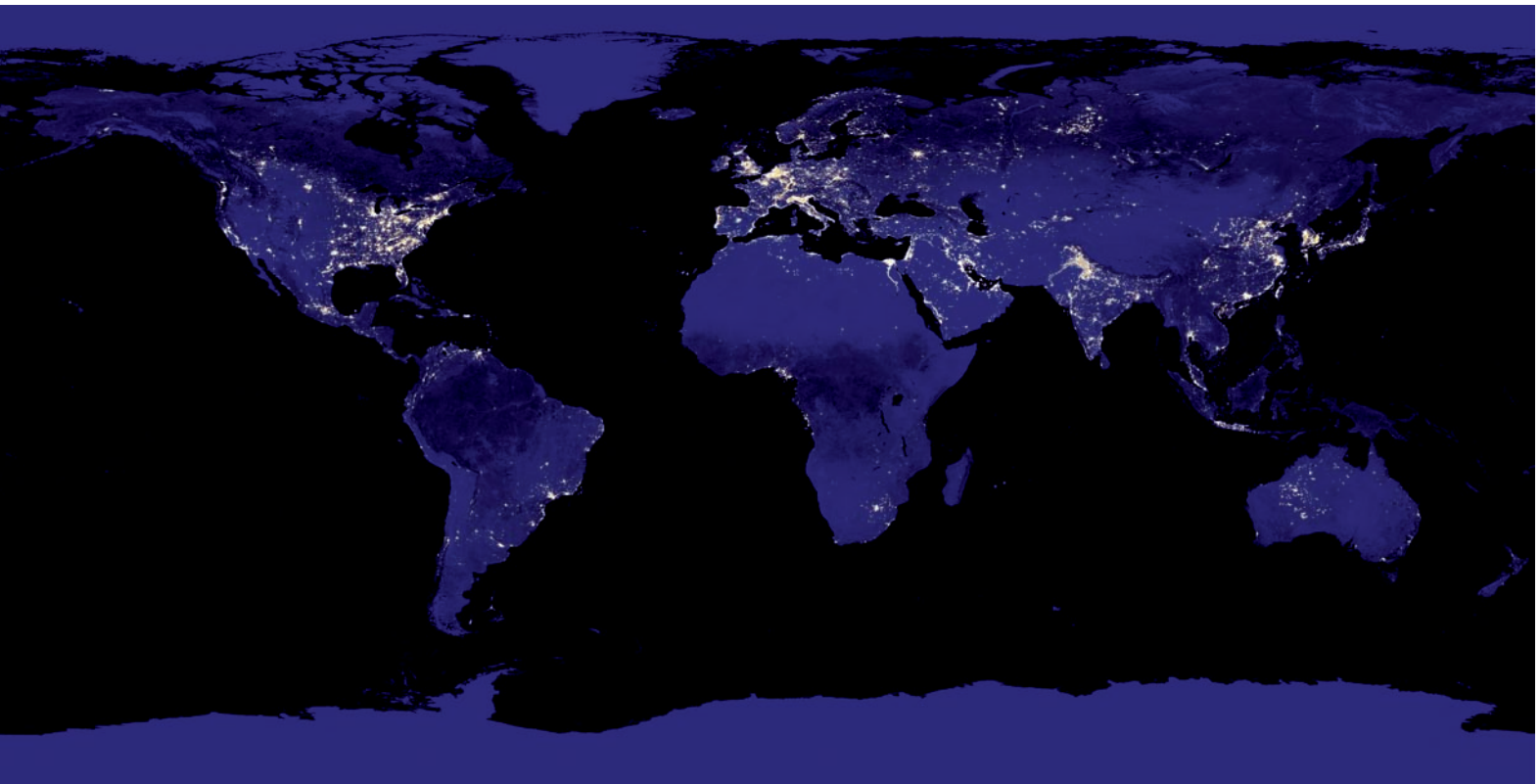


Panorama

A World History

Introduction

The Earth: World History's Theater



A composite satellite view of the earth at night.

Most of us spend our typical days (when not staring at cell phones or computer screens) in the company of friends, family, or work and school associates. But we are also connected, often unconsciously, to numerous other networks of human relationships that affect the course of daily life. Some of these “communities” may be fleeting (passengers sharing an airplane flying at 30,000 feet), and some may be very large (all members of the Greek Orthodox Church). No individual anywhere in the world is truly isolated from global relationships, not hunters in the Amazon rainforest, not peasants in high Himalayan valleys.

The global nature of change is not simply a matter of one event there (war in the Middle East) affecting some condition of life here (a rise in the price of

gas). Nor is it just that products or ideas spread quickly from one place to another. The most striking feature of global interaction is that a significant development occurring in one place is likely to set off a complex chain reaction, disrupting and rearranging numerous relationships over an extensive area. A surge of change in one network of relationships, international trade for example, easily sparks changes in other networks, such as diplomatic negotiations or the migration of workers from one country to another.

As individuals we carry on our daily routines right in the midst of this tumultuous restructuring. We are shielded to some extent from its more jarring effects by our cultural and social bonds, some of them new, some long tested. Even so, all aspects of life are subject to disturbance and revision. The “cultures” that we like to think of as solid and enduring are themselves undergoing ceaseless change.

For how long have peoples of the world been interconnected? Since the Industrial Revolution? Since World War II? A better question might be: How far back in time would we have to go to find a world divided into a collection of separate, self-contained societies, each moving through time along its own track, and unresponsive to wider regional developments? The answer is that we could cast back hundreds of thousands of years and still not find a world of completely atomized societies. Indeed, the earliest history of humankind is a story of long-distance migrations of hunting and foraging bands to all the world’s land masses, a process that involved interaction between one group and another and therefore at least small disruptions and surprises wherever such contact occurred. In a sweeping way, then, the history of humanity from remote times is a tale of how groups of men and women connected with one another and how those interactions affected and complicated the lives people lived in different parts of the earth. This challenges us to rethink humanity’s history in a more holistic, interconnected way, history that is not only the stories of different nations, civilizations, and regions but also a single story of the species and its development on the spherical earth over the past few million years. Indeed, the history of humankind and the planet are inextricably connected.

We may find it easier to think about human history on a large scale and over the very long term if at the outset we have some familiarity with the planet’s geographical “personality,” that is, its major land masses, oceans, and large topographical and climatological features. If we consider the whole sphere as the primary “place” where history has unfolded, and keep that context in mind as we investigate the past, we may better grasp the location of particular places and peoples in relation to one another. We may also better

Chapter Outline

THE BIG LAND MASSES: THE MAIN STAGE OF HISTORY

Moving Land Masses
Seven Continents, or Only Five?



AFROEURASIA

The Great Arid Zone
The Tropical Belt
The Northern Latitudes of Temperate Climate
Afroeurasia’s Mountain Spine
The Eleven Seas
Rivers



AUSTRALIA

NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

Connecting the Americas
The Americas’ Long *Cordillera*
Rivers and Seas



THE OCEANS



equip ourselves to make historical connections between one place or group of people and another, to compare historical developments in different places, and to understand large-scale developments that cut across the conventional borders between states, cultural groups, or civilizations.

The Big Land Masses: The Main Stage of History

Most of us think of the earth's surface as the two-dimensional space where ground meets sky. In fact the human drama has unfolded on a stage that has depth as well as length and width. This

biosphere The zone of the earth that can support life.

is the **biosphere**, the zone that shelters all life-forms, including human beings.

The biosphere may be visualized as constituting three layers, each one making up part of the whole. On top, as it were, is the atmosphere. About 78 percent of this layer of gasses is nitrogen and about 21 percent oxygen, the substance humans and other higher life-forms need to survive. Second is the hydrosphere, the watery realm, about 97 percent of which is the oceans. Third is the lithosphere, that is, the solid earth, or outer crust of sand, soil, rock, and fossilized organic matter that we recognize as coal, oil, and natural gas. Humans depend for survival on the stability of the biosphere and live in relationship to its sun-powered cycles—photosynthesis, wind, and the evaporation and condensation of water. Our species has a genetic relationship to all living organisms, sharing, for example, a significant portion of our genes with the banana. In short, the arena of history is not just Asia, England, or the Aztec empire, but the “green skin” that envelops the earth.

For thousands of years, humans have known how to move across water, which covers about 71 percent of the planet, in various types of boats. Recently, we have mastered air travel and even ventured beyond the atmosphere into space. Nevertheless, our history has played itself out mostly on the surface of the lithosphere, the rocky earth, which we see on the globe as chunks of land, some enormous and some small.

Moving Land Masses

The science of tectonics tells us that the lithosphere is an interlocking puzzle board of sections, or plates. Heat and turbulence in the softer part of the earth's mantle below the lithosphere cause these plates to move. Sometimes they

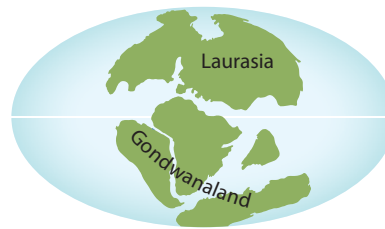
tectonic plates Irregular blocks of solid rock that make up the earth's lithosphere and that constantly shift and change shape.

drift apart, sometimes they converge. The seams between the **tectonic plates**, which for the most part lie along the floors of the oceans, are places of volcanic activity and earthquakes. The movement of the plates relative to each other changes the shape and position of the land masses. This phenomenon happens of course in geological time, at the rate of not more than a few centimeters a year.

About 200 million years ago, one giant land mass, the continent geologists call Pangaea, dominated the earth. Over the succeeding tens of millions of years, it slowly broke



More than 200 million years ago



180 million years ago



65 million years ago



Present

Changes in the earth's plate structure. The land masses that humans inhabit sit atop tectonic plates that are continually in motion. Satellite imagery can accurately detect the tiny distances that continents move in a year's time. On the scale of hundreds of millions of years, patterns of continental drift have affected the ways living species have evolved.

into segments along several lines of seismic upheaval. First it split into two supercontinents, then into several. India, once part of the continent called Gondwanaland, broke off to glide relentlessly northward. It rammed into Eurasia about 30 million years ago, the collision buckling the earth to form the Himalaya Mountains. Because the process of continental drift continues, the land mass configuration that has endured for the past 20 million years or so is only temporary. Africa is heading toward Europe, eventually to close off the Strait of Gibraltar and transform the Mediterranean into an inland sea. Coastal California, part of the Northern Pacific Plate, pushes northward and, to the possible satisfaction of some New Yorkers, might someday separate itself from the rest of North America.



Seven Continents, or Only Five?

Schoolbooks still teach that there are seven primary land masses, or continents: Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America. In our view this convention needs rethinking. If we accept even a loose physical definition of a continent as a distinct land mass surrounded, or nearly so, by water, Europe and Asia do not separately qualify. No significant waterway or other partition divides the eastern side of Europe from the western side of Asia. Rather, the two places constitute, and have constituted for millions of years, a single great land mass. A little more than a century ago, scholars named this land mass Eurasia. Since then, many have recognized that the standard physical definition of a continent properly applies to it. Logically, then, Europe is a long peninsula at the far western end of Eurasia, that is, a *subcontinent* roughly comparable to South Asia (Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan), a peninsula that juts south.

The precept that Europe is a continent goes back to the ancient Greeks, whose world centered on the Aegean Sea in the eastern Mediterranean basin. They conceived the planet as made up of three parts: Europe was the territory generally north and west of the Aegean Sea (including the Republic of Greece today), Asia was all land to the east and southeast, and Africa (called Libya) lay south and southwest.

In the Middle Ages, European scholars perpetuated the Greeks' three-part scheme, though recognizing that these territories were much larger than the Greeks had known them to be. Europeans came to identify their region with "Christendom," the land where most Christians lived, and they defined Asia and Africa as the continents inhabited

mainly by people who were *not* Christians. Therefore, religion, not an ocean or a sea, separated Europe from Asia. This was one way to define what continents were, but this definition was based predominantly on *cultural*, not *physical* distinctions.

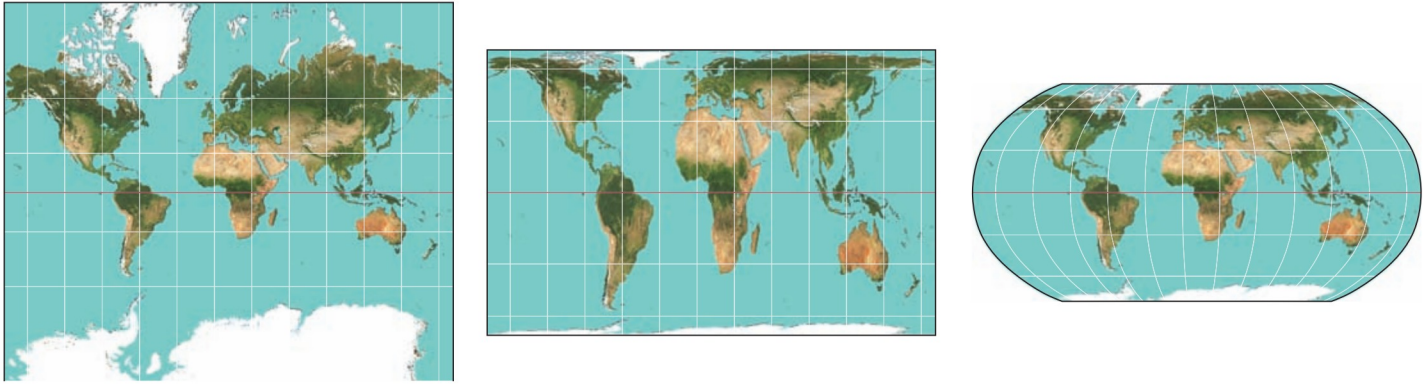
But where exactly did Europe leave off and Asia start? In the eighteenth century, a Swedish military officer who traveled to Siberia proposed the Ural Mountains of Russia as a suitable continental boundary.¹ Debates over the proper dividing line continued, but gradually European scholars came to accept the Urals as a "natural" partition, even though those round-topped mountains rise no higher than about six thousand feet and have no compelling significance as a topographical, cultural, or historical boundary. The same may be said of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, the two straits that connect the Mediterranean with the Black Sea and that have served conveniently to demarcate Europe from Asia. But those straits have hardly ever impeded the flow of history, and today one can drive from "Europe" to "Asia" on either of two bridges across the Bosphorus. Yet despite the obvious artificiality of the markers, the doctrine of European continent-hood has persisted. European nations came to dominate much of the world militarily and economically in the later nineteenth century. To them, the idea of Europe as a primary world region seemed more natural than ever.

One standard map of the world has reinforced this idea. In 1569, Gerardus Mercator, a Flemish cartographer, devised a flat projection of the world as an aid to sea captains: A straight line drawn between any two points on the map represents a constant true compass bearing. The Mercator map of the world, which until recently served as the standard

An ancient Greek map of the world.

Hecateus of Miletus, a Greek scholar of the fifth century B.C.E., conceived of this circular map of the world. Why do you think Hecateus located the Mediterranean Sea at the center of the map?





MAP I.1 From left to right: Mercator, Gall-Peters, and Robinson map projections.

The sixteenth-century Mercator world map, which severely distorts the relative size of land masses, was used in school rooms for centuries. In 1973, Arno Peters published an equal area map of the world. It represents the relative size of land areas accurately but distorts their shapes. The Robinson projection, devised in the 1960s, attempts to strike a balance between size and shape distortions. Peters aimed deliberately to correct what he regarded as the Eurocentric bias of the Mercator projection. How do you think the Gall-Peters map accomplishes that aim?

projection, makes Europe look much bigger than it actually is relative to regions that lie farther south. This is because this projection severely distorts the size of land masses toward

latitude The imaginary east-west lines that circle the earth and that indicate distance in degrees north and south of the equator, which has the value of 0 degrees.

the poles, so that territories at far northern or far southern **latitudes** appear much larger than they actually are relative to lands nearer the equator. Consequently,

Europe, from the southern end of Greece to the northern tip of Norway, looks much bigger relative to South America, Africa, or the Indian subcontinent, for example, than it really is on the round globe.

Mercator maps also sometimes situate Europe in the center of the flat map relative to all four of its edges. That configuration requires pushing the equator to the lower third of the map, which falsely compresses the size of lands in the Southern Hemisphere relative to Europe and the rest of the Northern Hemisphere. Looming as large and conspicuous as it does on this projection, Europe appears as though it might deserve membership in the club of continents.

All flat map projections distort size, shape, distance, or direction in *some* way because the surface of the earth is not flat but curved. Accuracy of all these elements requires a globe, an object impossible to reproduce on a book page. Since the eighteenth century, cartographers have been publishing various equal area maps that rectified Mercator's size perversions. Projections in wide use today, such as Robinson maps, make agreeable compromises between shape and volume of land areas, though they may still somewhat exaggerate size near the poles (see Map I.1).

Afroeurasia

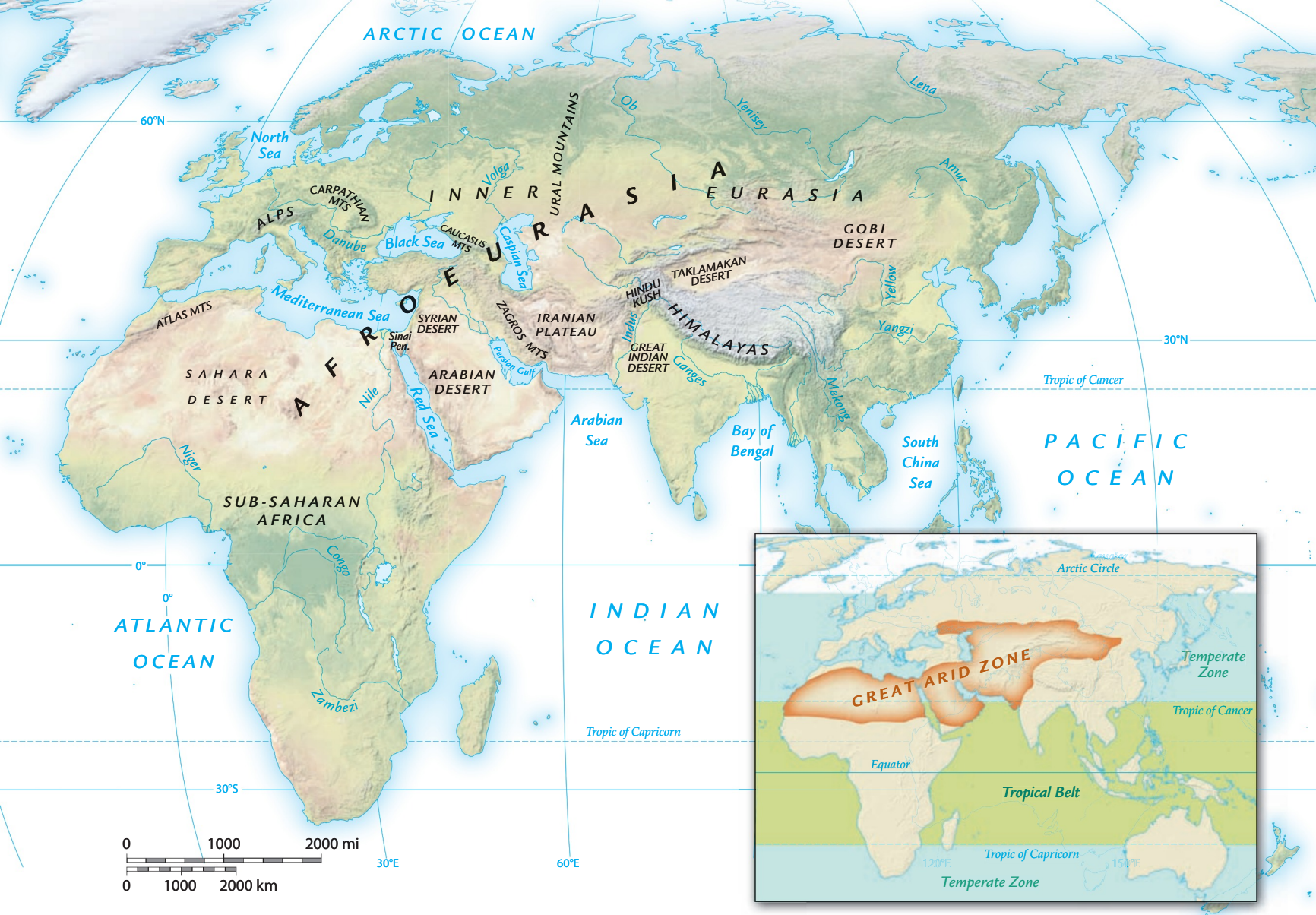
Accepting the idea of Europe as an integral part of geophysical Eurasia, students of global history should find it easier to conceive visually of that entire land mass from the North

Atlantic to the North Pacific as a continuous stretch of territory within which humans have lived, migrated, fought, and traded for many thousands of years. But what about Africa? Because it is separated from Eurasia only by the Mediterranean and the Red Seas, it qualifies as a continent by the conventional definition, though barely. Africa also rests on one of the large sections of the lithosphere known as the African Plate. Is it possible, nevertheless, to conceive of Eurasia and Africa together as constituting *one* continent? Look at Map I.2. Cover up the Mediterranean Sea with the thumb of your left hand and place the index finger of your right hand over the Red Sea. Notice that with those two seas covered, it is not hard to see Eurasia and Africa together as a single land mass, and one much bigger than Eurasia alone. Compared to the Atlantic or the Pacific Ocean, the Mediterranean and the Red Seas are merely "lakes." Humans have been shuttling routinely back and forth across them for thousands of years. And it is worth noting that one can *walk* from Africa to Eurasia by crossing the Sinai Peninsula and one of the bridges that spans the Suez Canal.

Because of regular interaction among peoples living around the rims of the Mediterranean and the Red Seas, historical developments in Africa, Asia, and Europe have been intertwined far more intensely than the conventional continental divisions would encourage us to think. In other words, an integrated approach to world history demands that we visualize not only Eurasia as a whole but Africa and Eurasia together (plus adjacent islands or island groups like Japan, the Philippines, and Britain) as a *single space* within which important historical developments have taken place from very early times.

In fact, ancient scholars had no trouble imagining Africa, Asia, and Europe together as constituting a larger interconnected whole. The Romans called it the *Orbis Terrarum*, or "the circle of the world." However, the three-continents scheme, a product of human invention to start with, has become so standardized in schoolbooks as the "right" way to





MAP I.2 Major physical and climatic features of Afroeurasia.

What physical features work to connect Afroeurasia as a single geographical unit? Which features support an understanding of this landmass as three continents?

see the world that modern geographers have never settled on a label for all of Africa and Eurasia together. In the sixteenth century the term “Old World” appeared in European languages to distinguish the land masses of the Eastern Hemisphere from the “New World,” that is, the Americas. These terms, however, are vulnerable to criticism because the Americas were only “new” to the Europeans who first visited them, not to the people who had been living there for thousands of years. In this book we adopt the single word

Afroeurasia The land masses of Africa and Eurasia, together with adjacent islands, as a single spatial entity.

Afroeurasia to express the continuum of lands comprising Africa and Eurasia. It will serve as a convenient geographical tool for discussing large-scale historical developments that cut across the conventionally defined continental boundaries.

Afroeurasia takes up nearly 60 percent of the surface of the earth that is not water. This land mass is not only the biggest one on the planet, it is also where the human species

first evolved (as far as we know), and it has historically been home to most of the humans who have ever lived. Today, about 86 percent of the globe’s population inhabits Afroeurasia. To understand the patterns of migration, settlement, exchange, and conquest that unfolded on this land mass, it helps to know its broad physical and climatological features.

The Great Arid Zone

A large part of the Afroeurasian land mass is a belt of dry or semidry country that extends all the way from the Atlantic coast of Africa in a generally northeasterly direction to the northern interior of China. This enormous tract, which we refer to as the **Great Arid Zone**, comprises a chain of

Great Arid Zone The belt of arid and semiarid land that extends across Afroeurasia from the Sahara Desert in the west to the Gobi Desert in the east. It has been home to both pastoral nomadic communities and to farming societies where sufficient water is available.





The Great Arid Zone. Climate in the long band of dry country that stretches across Afroeurasia ranges from extreme year-round aridity to semiarid conditions in which winter rains nourish spring grasses. Dromedaries, or one-humped camels, shown here (left) ambling across the western Arabian Desert, are in several respects biologically better suited to harsh environments than are horses, which for several thousand years have thrived on the grassy steppes of northeastern China.

interconnected deserts, mountains, and semiarid steppes. A steppe may be defined as flat or rolling grassland, equivalent to what Americans call “prairie” and Argentineans call “pampas.” The main climatic characteristic of the Great Arid Zone is low annual rainfall, which may range from an average of less than five inches in the bleakest of deserts to twenty inches or so in better watered steppes.

The Sahara Desert, the largest area of intense aridity in the world, constitutes the western end of the Great Arid Zone. The Arabian and the Syrian Deserts, climatological extensions of the Sahara, connect on the east to the Iranian Plateau. A spur of dry country extends eastward from Iran across southern Pakistan to form the Great Indian Desert. North and northeast of Iran lie the steppes that cover a

Inner Eurasia The interior land mass of Eurasia, whose dominant features are flat or rolling regions of grassy steppe or forest, interrupted by deserts and highland areas.

significant part of the huge interior region we call **Inner Eurasia**. Rainfall on the grasslands of western Inner Eurasia, that is, the lands roughly north of the Black Sea, is relatively

abundant, as much as twenty inches a year. But further east, Inner Eurasia becomes progressively arid. The Gobi Desert, which overlaps China and Mongolia, marks the eastern end of high aridity, though much of northern China is semiarid.

Old Hollywood stereotypes represent the Great Arid Zone as a hellish sea of sand frequented only by camel nomads and French Foreign Legionnaires. Some sections of the belt are indeed infernal and uninhabited, but the movie image is way off the mark. Densely settled farming populations have inhabited dry lands for thousands of years. In fact, the earliest farming societies arose in the Great Arid Zone or on the margins of it. Aridity does not necessarily mean infertility as long as water for crops and pasture is available from rivers or underground sources. The Tigris-Euphrates, Nile, Indus, and Yellow (Huang He) Rivers, which nourished the earliest civilizations, all flow through parts of

the Great Arid Zone. Indeed, oases supporting farmers and even great cities have sprung up wherever aquifers (areas under the earth’s surface containing significant amounts of water) could be tapped by springs, wells, or underground channels. Moreover, the zone includes highland regions as well as grassy plains. Rainfall and runoff in mountain valleys have nourished farmers from very ancient times.

Where farmers could not make a living in the Great Arid Zone, people found another way to survive. Beginning between four thousand and five thousand years ago, small communities adapted to low precipitation by raising domesticated animals. These stock breeders developed a specialized economy based on herds of sheep, horses, goats, cattle, or camels that could be exploited for meat, milk, blood, hide, and bone. The earliest pastoralists, that is, people whose living depends on pasture, inhabited the semiarid grassy steppes of Inner Eurasia. Stock raisers also adapted long ago to the Sahara, the Arabian Desert, and the Iranian Plateau, in places where seasonal rains and strategically placed wells could keep herds alive. Because herding communities required extensive grazing land, their population densities had to remain low compared to farming societies. Nevertheless, pastoral peoples—hardy, mobile, and often militant—have, as we will see, played a role in world history out of all proportion to their sheer numbers.

The Tropical Belt

South of the Great Arid Zone a broad belt of tropical or subtropical territory runs across Afroeurasia, straddling the equator. In basic geographical terms, the “tropics” is the region bounded by two latitudinal lines: the Tropic of Cancer on the north and the Tropic of Capricorn on the south. The sun shines from directly overhead at least once a year in all areas between these lines. In the west of Afroeurasia lie the humid grassy or wooded savannas and the equatorial rainforests of Africa south of the Sahara. To the east are

the woodlands and tropical forests of southern India, the Ganges River plain, Southeast Asia, and southern China. In contrast to the Great Arid Zone, the wet tropics have a short annual dry season and rainfall as high as 430 inches a year. Both plant and animal life are luxuriant and vastly diverse. The earliest human societies made their living hunting and foraging on tropical, sometimes wooded grasslands in eastern Africa. Farming and herding peoples settled the tropical zone of both Africa and Eurasia starting about the second millennium B.C.E., though encountering great ecological challenges owing to nutrient-poor soils and a range of tropical diseases.

The Northern Latitudes of Temperate Climate

Running along the northern tier of the Afroeurasian land mass from the Atlantic to the Pacific is the wide band of temperate climate that was once covered in boreal and deciduous forests. Westerly winds, encircling the earth, blow across northern Eurasia year-round. They create alternating conditions of warm and cold, wet and dry weather, as polar air masses compete for dominance with warm, tropical air. Streaming across the North Atlantic, the westerlies bring high rainfall, mostly in winter, to ocean-facing Europe. But deeper into Eurasia, and especially east of the Ural Mountains, the climate is much drier and winters much colder. From late in the first millennium C.E., the immense hardwood forests of Europe dwindled gradually before the axe and the plow, though east of the Urals and on across Siberia, the taiga, or coniferous forestlands, remained sparsely settled right into modern times.

Sandwiched between the northern forest belt and the Great Arid Zone at the western end of Eurasia is the basin of the Mediterranean Sea, the largest of the “internal” seas of Afroeurasia. Mild, rainy winters and hot summers of almost complete drought characterize the mountains and plains of the Mediterranean basin. Open woodlands once covered much of this temperate region, but in ancient times farmers converted plains and hillsides into wheat fields, olive orchards, and vineyards.

Afroeurasia’s Mountain Spine

The regularity of the broad east-to-west climatic zones of Afroeurasia is broken partially by the string of mountains that extends across the land mass. Map I.2 (inset) highlights the mountain chain, which begins in the west with the Atlas Mountains of North Africa and extends eastward to the highlands of southwestern China. Afroeurasia’s mountains, where they are high and rugged enough, have frustrated communication between peoples living on either side of their ridges. The Himalaya and Kunlun ranges, for example, were formidable barriers to direct overland communication between China and India. The towering Alps also made travel difficult between the Mediterranean and the forested lands to the north. Indeed, the Alpine wall explains in some



A high pass in the Himalaya Mountains. Merchants have carried goods across high Himalayan passes since ancient times. Only in 1986, however, was a route marked out for trekkers across the 19,500-foot Gondogoro Pass in northern Pakistan.

measure the cultural differences that characterized the development of the southern and northern parts of Christian Europe.

By contrast, Afroeurasia’s highland valleys became home to foraging and hunting bands early in human history, later to farmers and herders. The highlands were explored and settled, and ancient trekkers mapped out trails over summer passes. Gaps in even the most foreboding of ranges became channels of slow but regular communication that linked distant peoples in trade. Nomads migrating with their herds and flocks, not to mention great armies of horsemen hell-bent on conquest, also crossed high passes of the Atlas, Carpathians, Zagros, or Hindu Kush at different times in history, appearing suddenly out of the hills and plunging down on unsuspecting villagers in the plain below.

The Eleven Seas

A chain of seas also links the extremities of Afroeurasia. Map I.3 identifies the sequence of seas, beginning with the

