

FROM OSMOSIS TO DIFFUSION

(MIGRATION AS MOVEMENT)

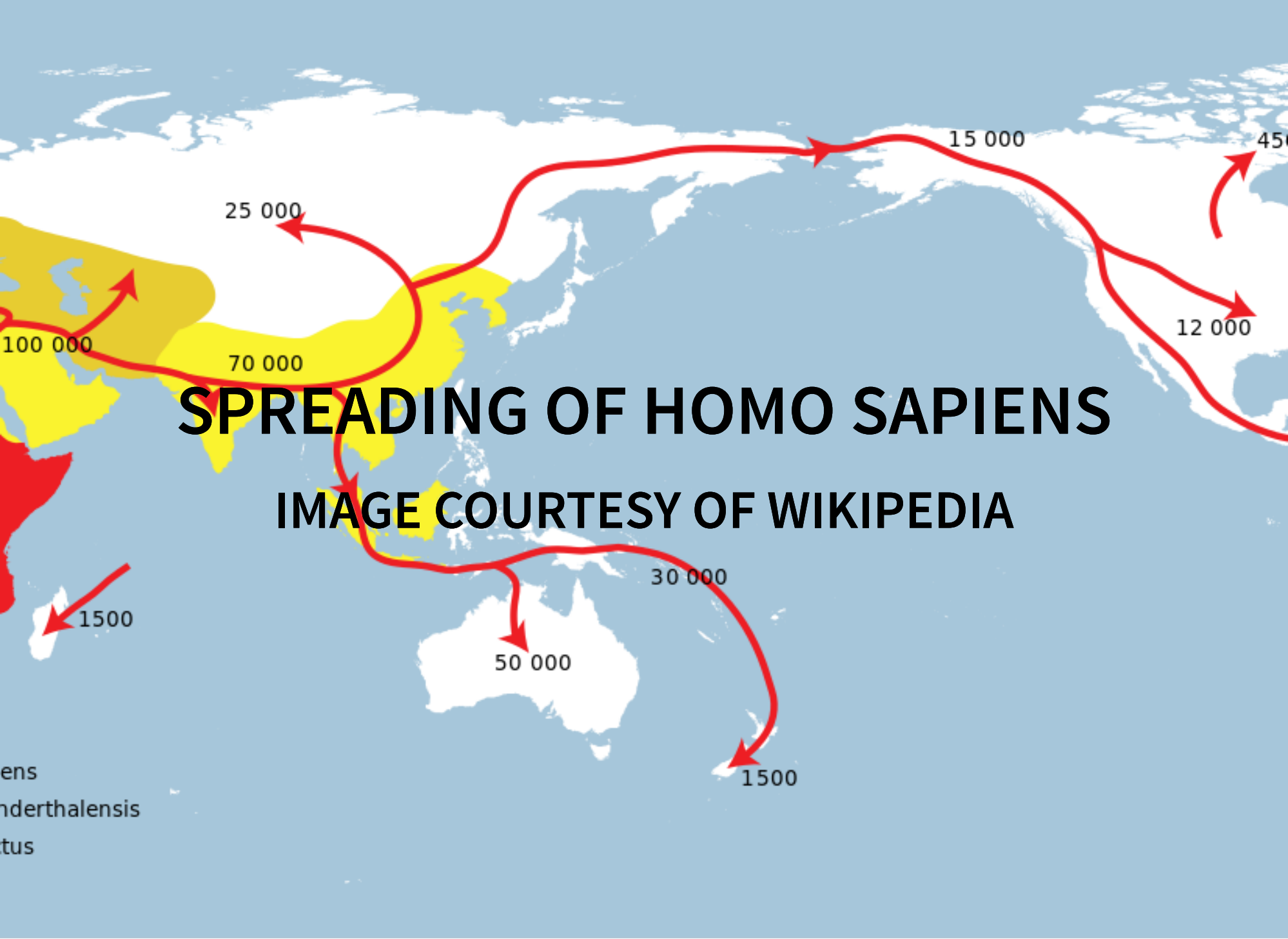
DIGITAL ART FOR DISMANTLING
MEMBRANES

An idea by [Terhi Marttila](#)

MOVEMENT AS DIFFUSION

MIGRATION

Or human movement,
is an essential component of human behavior



SPREADING OF HOMO SAPIENS

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

ens
nderthalensis
tus

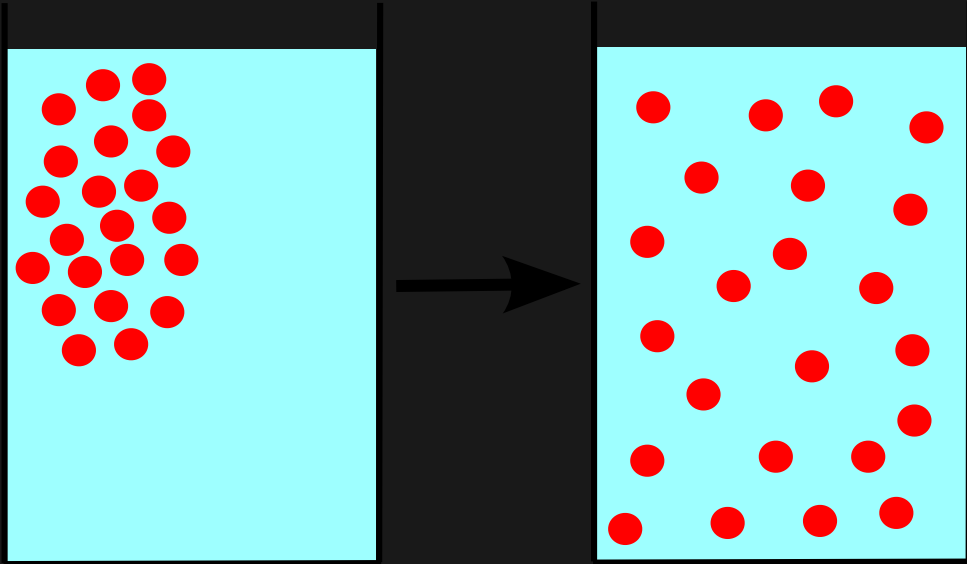
THE MOVEMENT YOU SAW IN THE PREVIOUS SLIDE

can be likened

to a process of

DIFFUSION

THE DIFFUSION OF HUMAN PARTICLES



DIFFUSION

Image courtesy of JrPol [CC BY 3.0
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>)]

**WHY DO HUMAN PARTICLES
MOVE?**

HUMAN PARTICLES

move, in order to
seek opportunity

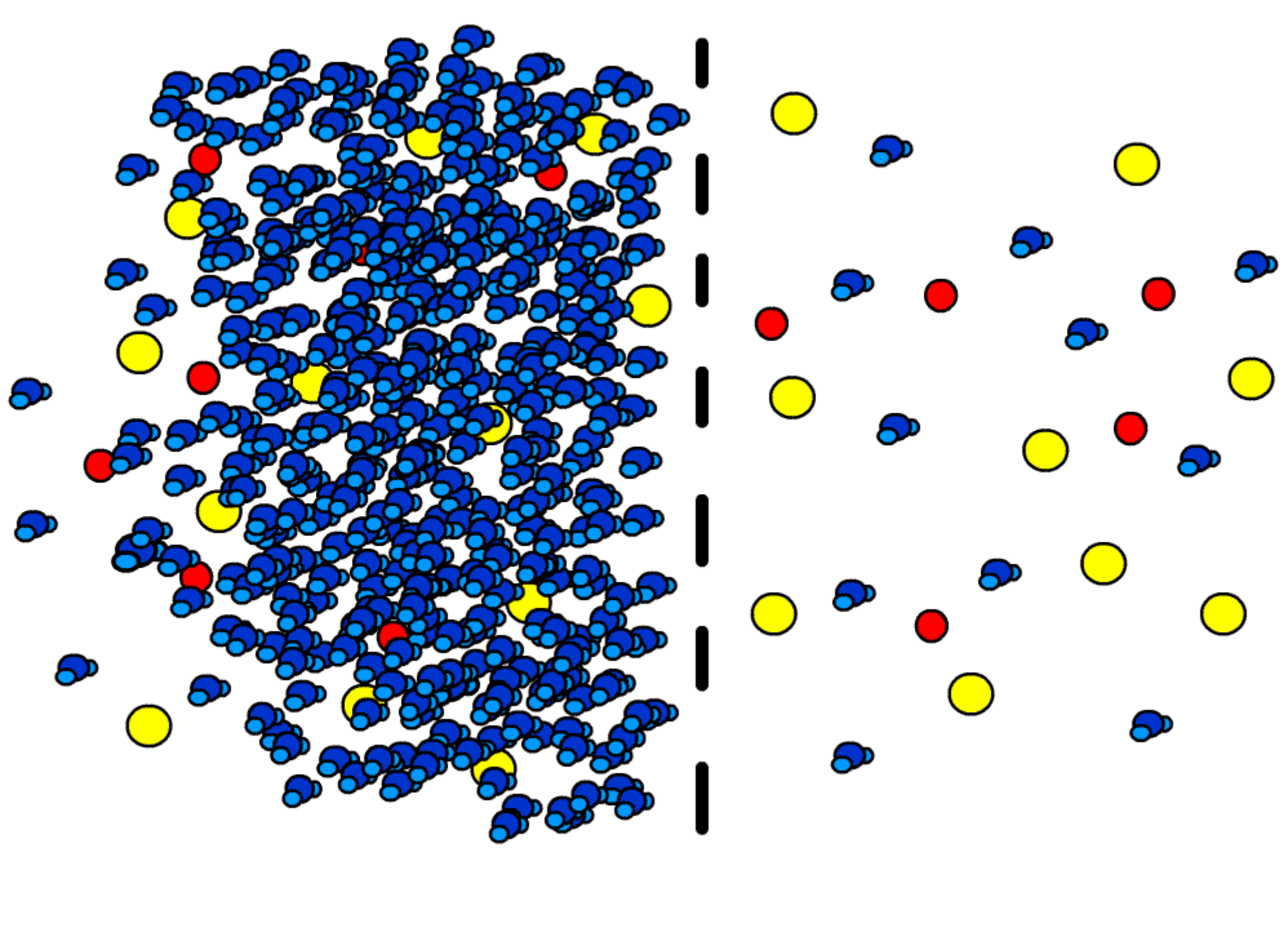
MOVEMENT AS OSMOSIS

**AS ALWAYS, HUMAN PARTICLES CONTINUE TO BE
DRIVEN BY THE PURSUIT OF OPPORTUNITY**

**HOWEVER, SELECTIVELY PERMEABLE MEMBRANES
EXIST IN TODAYS WORLD,**

EXPRESSED AS THE BORDERS OF NATION-STATES

IN TODAYS REALITY,
the pursuit of opportunity
creates osmotic pressure
for human particles to cross
the selectively permeable membrane
from areas of less opportunity
to areas of greater opportunity



OSMOSIS

IMAGE SOURCE: [TRANSPORTEKARLA BLOGSPOT](#)

MIGRATION AS OSMOSIS, IN 2019, IMPLIES THAT:

THE RIGHT PASSPORT

(usually determined by random chance, ie. birthplace)

is what determines

whether any given selectively permeable membrane

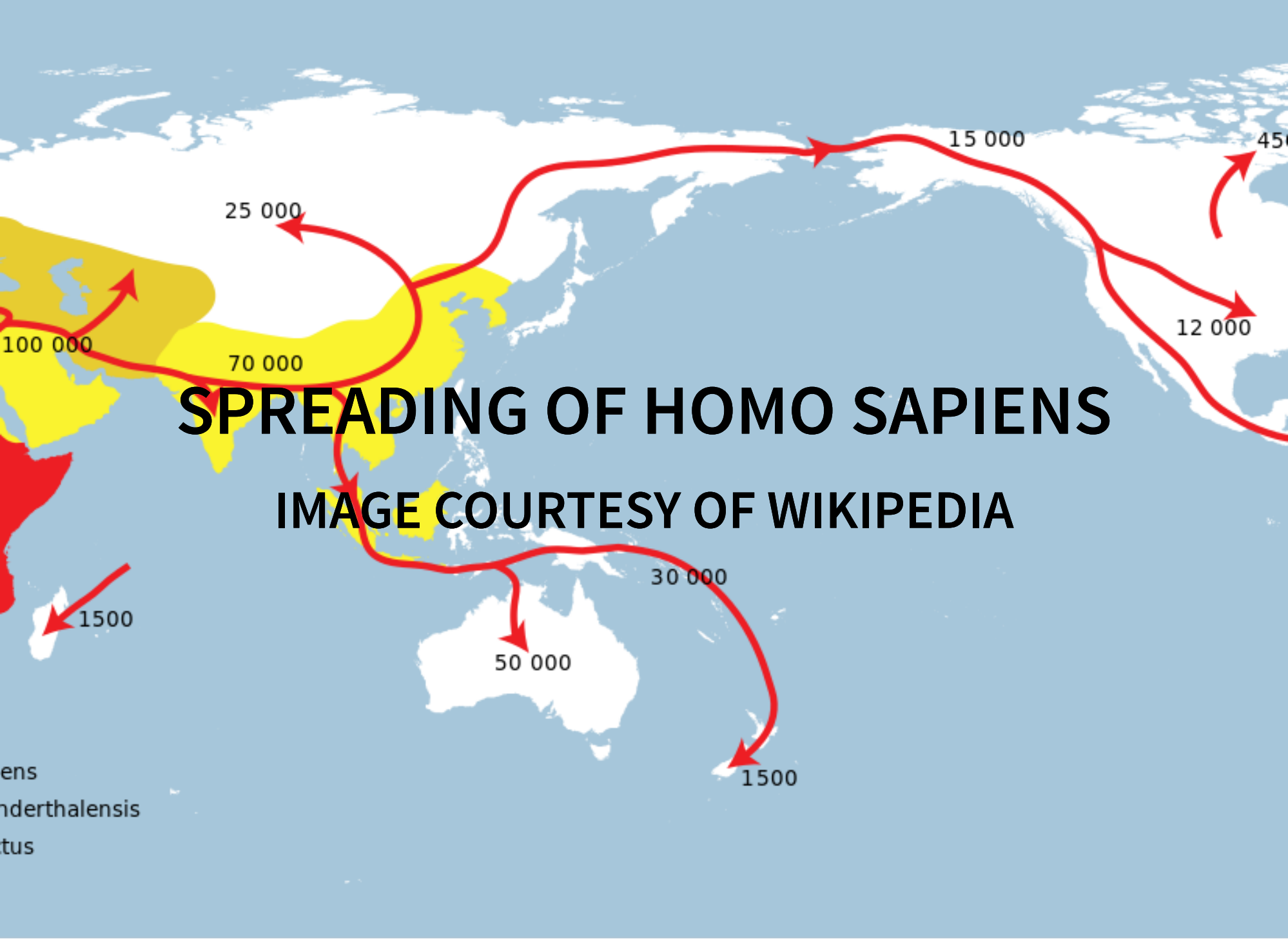
will allow a human particle to pass through

Given that some human particles are not allowed to pass the selectively permeable membrane,

We have become accustomed to speaking about
"illegal" immigrants

**MIGRATION AS DIFFUSION, APPROXIMATELY 200,000
YEARS AGO:**

**LET'S REVIEW AN IMAGE WE SAW
PREVIOUSLY**



SPREADING OF HOMO SAPIENS

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

ens
nderthalensis
tus

NONE OF THESE HUMAN PARTICLES

had to present a PASSPORT

as they propagated on the surface of our planet...

**THE MOVEMENT OF THESE HUMAN PARTICLES
WAS IN NO WAY ILLEGAL**

**THERE WERE NO SELECTIVELY PERMEABLE
MEMBRANES TO CROSS THROUGH**

**THE MOVEMENT OF THESE HUMAN PARTICLES
WAS SIMPLY A PROCESS OF DIFFUSION**

DRIVEN BY THE PURSUIT OF OPPORTUNITY

JOSEPH CARENS ARGUES

for the moral right of humans to move
given that the distribution
of opportunity
across our planet
is not homogenous

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF
OPPORTUNITY
ACROSS OUR PLANET
IS NOT HOMOGENOUS**

**INDEED, IN OUR CURRENT
SOCIAL ORDER,
ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY
IS DETERMINED BY
THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
BIRTHPLACE
OF ANY GIVEN HUMAN PARTICLE**

"Citizenship in Western democracies is the modern equivalent of feudal class privilege - an inherited status that greatly enhances one's life chances. To be born a citizen of a rich state in Europe or North America is like being born into the nobility..." (Carens 2015, 226)"

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

"Like feudal birthright privileges, contemporary social arrangements not only grant great advantages on the basis of birth, but also entrench these advantages by legally restricting mobility, making it extremely difficult for those born into a socially disadvantaged position to overcome that disadvantage, no matter how talented they are or how hard they work." (Carens 2015, 226)

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

"Freedom of movement is essential for equality of opportunity" (Carens 2015, 227)"

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

**OSMOSIS AS
BLATANT SYSTEM FAILURE:**

**CERTAIN HUMAN PARTICLES
HAVE THE RIGHT TO MOVEMENT
AND ENTRY THROUGH THE
SELECTIVELY PERMEABLE OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

by virtue of their right to protection under refugee and
asylum law.

Note that in order to claim this right, these human particles must pass through the selectively permeable membrane of European Union.

To do this, they must first illegally enter the country, for example, they cannot book a plane ticket in order to claim this right.

In other words, by virtue of the design of the system and our current social order, countless human particles qualify for entry and residence through the selectively permeable membrane yet in practice, by virtue of the design of the system and our current social order, they have no realistic and legal means to exercise this right.

**ALSO: WE HAVE THE
TECHNOLOGY**

to enable human movement over water

YET THOUSANDS HAVE DIED

crossing, among others, the Mediterranean sea.

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

to enable human movement in the air

YET THOUSANDS

are put into air vehicles and moved in OPPOSITION to
the osmotic pressure

THIS OSMOTIC PRESSURE

is COUNTERED

because certain human particles

ARE DEEMED ILLEGAL

LET'S REMEMBER THAT

illegality is determined by
what is written in the law

WHICH IS ILLEGAL?

The law?

Or the human particles?

“Migrants and other “asylum seekers” can only become “illegal”, after all, if there have been legislative or enforcement-based measures to render particular migrations or types of migration “illegal” — to illegalize them.” (Nicholas De Genova, 2017)

De Genova, Nicholas (2017) “‘Crises,’ Convulsions, Concurrences: Human Mobility, the European Geography of ‘Exclusion,’ and the Postcolonial Dialectics of Subordinate Inclusion. In PARSE Journal: “Exclusions”, Issue 8. Available at: <https://metapar.se/article/crises-convulsions-concurrences-human-mobility-the-european-geography-of-exclusion-and-the-postcolonial-dialectics-of-subordinate-inclusion/> (Accessed May 2019)

THESE SYSTEM FAILURES

point towards a necessity

to transition from movement as osmosis

BACK TO movement as diffusion

**THIS IMPLIES THE DISMANTLING
OF THE SELECTIVELY PERMEABLE
MEMBRANES**

"The control that democratic states exercise over immigration plays a crucial role in maintaining unjust global inequalities and in limiting human freedom unjustly. (Carens 2015, 230)"

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

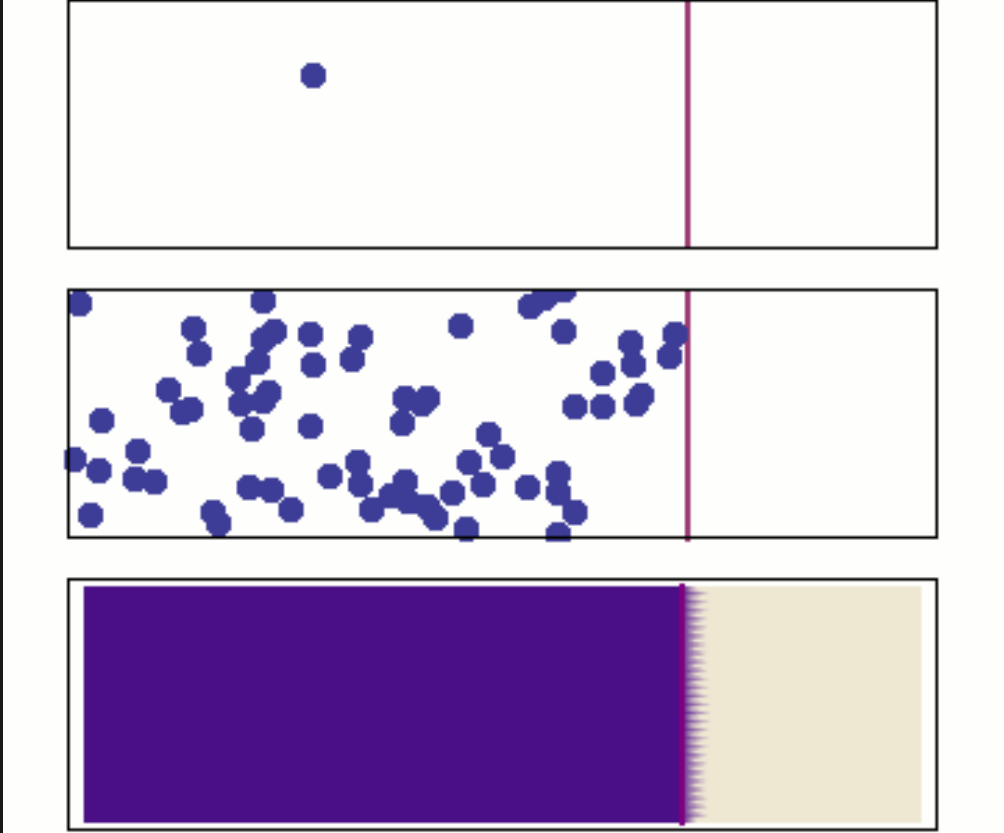
TRANSITIONING FROM OSMOSIS TO DIFFUSION

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS

to particles

when a semipermeable membrane

is removed



DIFFUSION MICRO MACRO

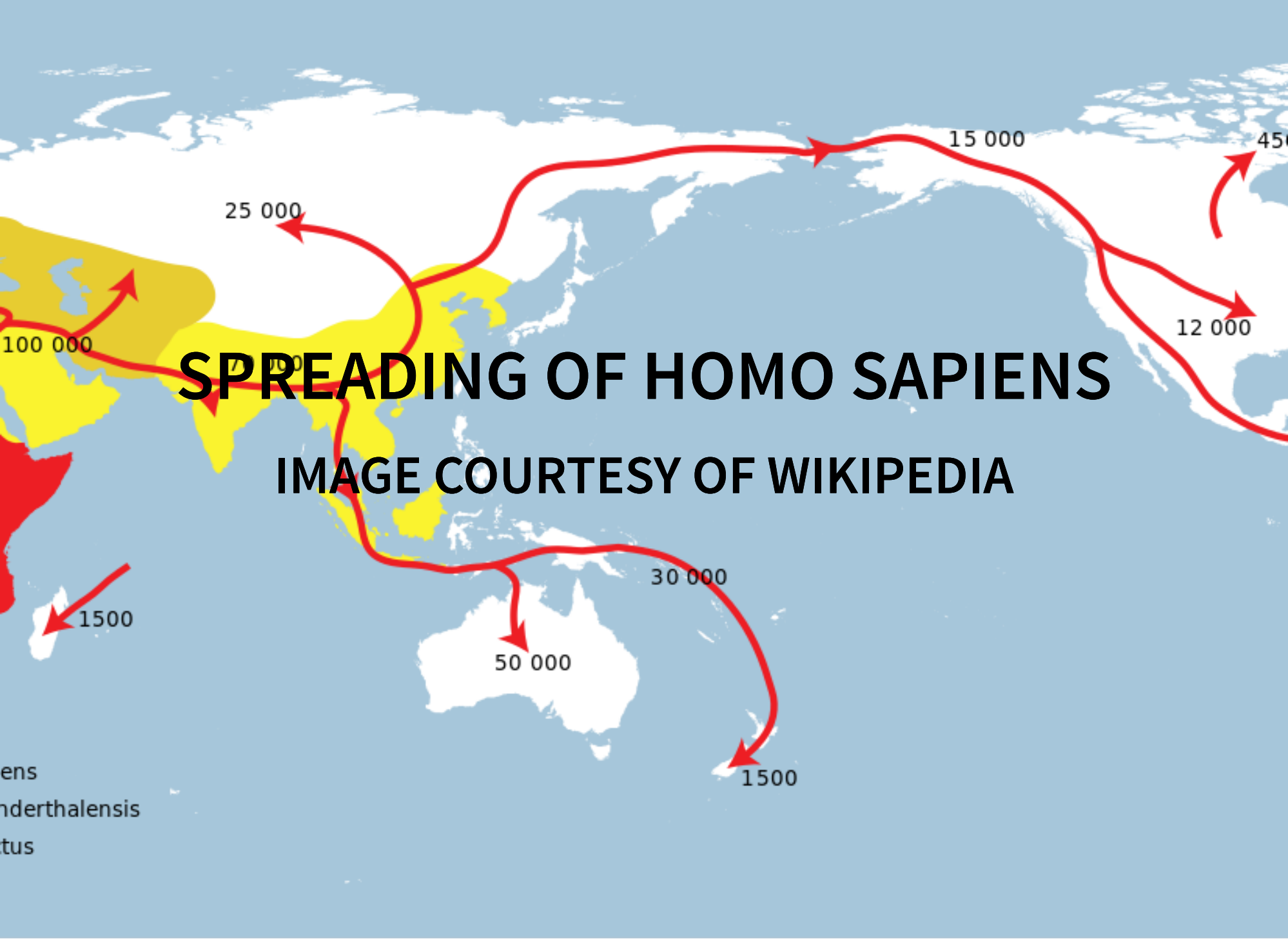
Image courtesy of JrPol [CC BY 3.0
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>)]

**IF MEMBRANES WERE
DISMANTLED,**

human particles

would diffuse

much like in the previous gif



SPREADING OF HOMO SAPIENS

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

ens
nderthalensis
tus

**ALTHOUGH THE DISMANTLING
OF THE CURRENT BORDER
SYSTEM**

MIGHT BE HARD TO IMAGINE,

**IT IS NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT
TO CRITICISE IT
AND IMAGINE AN ALTERNATE
REALITY**

"For a long time, there was no real hope of transcending [the feudal system, nor slavery].

**YET CRITICISM WAS STILL
APPROPRIATE” (CARENS 2015, 229)**

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

**OPPRESSIVE SOCIAL SYSTEMS
SUCH AS
THE FEUDAL SYSTEM
OR SLAVERY
AT ONE TIME SEEMED
UNQUESTIONABLE**

**EVENTUALLY,
THE FEUDAL SYSTEM
AND SLAVERY
WERE BOTH ABOLISHED
BECAUSE THEY WERE UNJUST
SOCIAL SYSTEMS**

I AM NOT A POLITICIAN

so I cannot press a button

that would dismantle

these membranes

AS ARTISTS

we can create expressive media
in order to bring into existence
a space in which to play with
ideas which yet seem beyond feasibility.

**A SPACE IN WHICH TO PLAY WITH
IDEAS WHICH YET SEEM BEYOND
FEASIBILITY**

**WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THESE
PLAYGROUNDS, WE CAN CREATE FROM
THE PREMISE THAT BORDERS ARE OPEN
AND RESTRICTIONS LIFTED**

**IN SUCH A WORLD, OPPOSITION TO
MIGRATION WOULD BE INVALID, AS THE
“ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT” WOULD NO
LONGER EXIST.**

**HOW WILL OUR EXISTENCE BE SHAPED
ONCE ALL HUMAN PARTICLES,
ALONGSIDE PHENOMENAL ADVANCES IN
THE TECHNOLOGY OF MOVEMENT,
RECLAIM THE INITIAL HUMAN
CONDITION OF UNRESTRICTED
MOVEMENT?**

**THE POETICS OF HUMAN PARTICLE
MOVEMENT AS A NATURAL
PHENOMENON OF DIFFUSION DRIVEN BY
THE PURSUIT OF OPPORTUNITY
EVENTUALLY INFUSE OUR
CONSCIOUSNESS AND FINALLY
MATERIALISE INTO LAW, PRACTICE AND
SOCIAL ORDER.**

THANK YOU

REFERENCES

Carens, Joseph (2015) *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

De Genova, Nicholas (2017) “‘Crises,’ Convulsions, Concurrences: Human Mobility, the European Geography of ‘Exclusion,’ and the Postcolonial Dialectics of Subordinate Inclusion. In *PARSE Journal: “Exclusions”*, Issue 8. Available at:

<https://metapar.se/article/crises-convulsions-concurrences-human-mobility-the-european-geography-of-exclusion-and-the-postcolonial-dialectics-of-subordinate-inclusion/>
(Accessed May 2019)

ONE ARTISTIC PROPOSITION



NO ONE IS ILLEGAL
KEIN MANN ODER FRAU IST ILLEGAL
<http://www.contra2.org/borders>



HYBRID WORKSPACE AT DOCUMENTA X, 1997

Image from 20 years of No One Is Illegal (2017)

Image source: <https://noii2017.wordpress.com/>

kein

mensch

ist

illegal

KEIN MENSCH IST ILEGAL LOGO

Image source:

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b8>

KEIN MENSCH IST ILLEGAL

a project initiated at Documenta X, 1997

by artist Florian Schneider

composed of a manifesto claiming that

no human is illegal and calling for

rights and legalisation for "illegal" migrants

For the full manifesto see: [The kmii Manifesto](#)