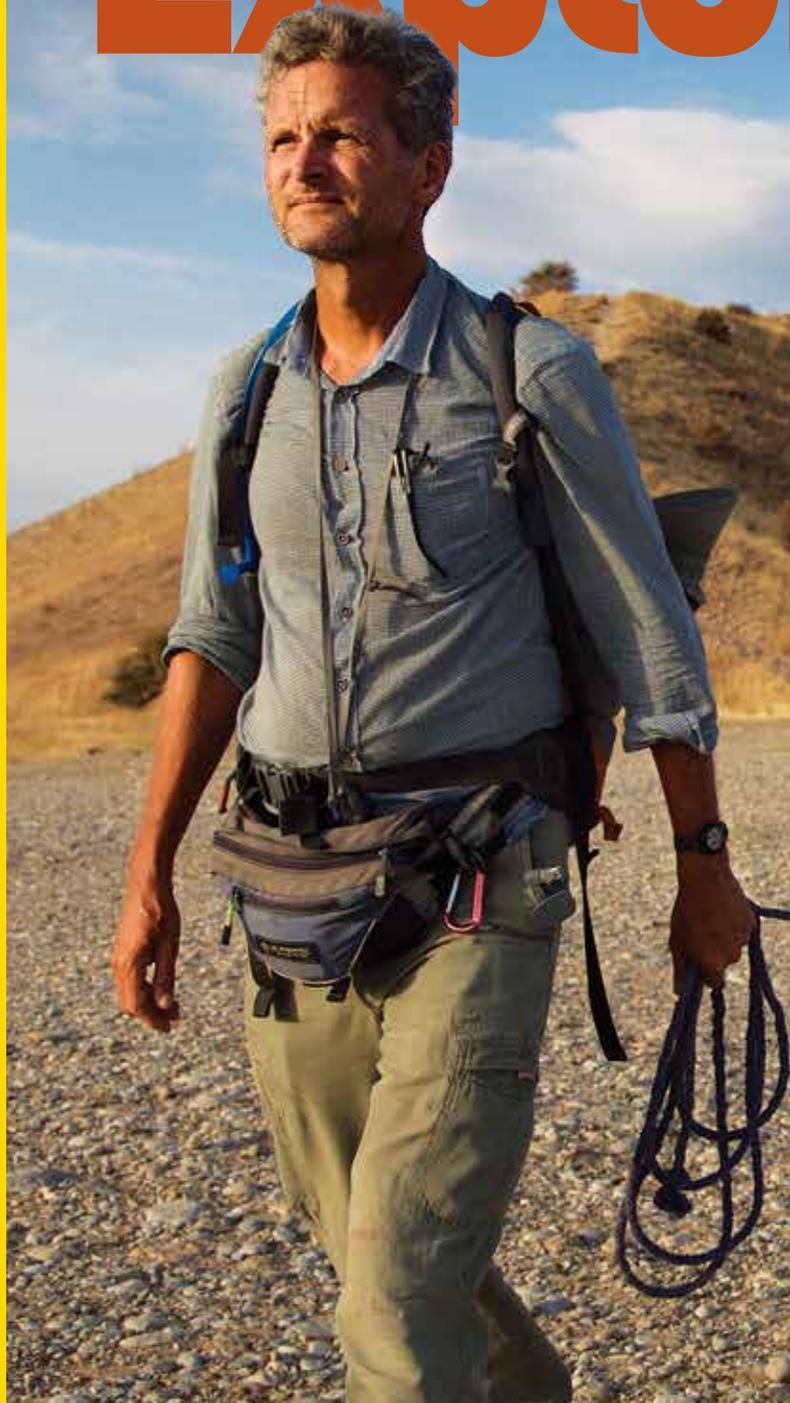


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OUT OF ED



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Human Journey

GEOGRAPHY

As you read, think about what you learn about the people Salopek meets on his journey.

Journalist Paul Salopek is taking a long walk. A *really* long walk. He is following the route of the first humans who migrated out of Africa. Read about his adventure in his own words.



Sole Brothers

Rift Valley, Ethiopia

January 31, 2013

Salopek's trip will take millions of steps, so his footwear is pretty important. In Ethiopia, there aren't many shoe options.

How do you judge a man? Look at his shoes. Shoes can tell a lot about a person. It's odd, then, to be in a place where millions of people wear the same style of shoes every day. In Ethiopia, most people buy cheap, plastic sandals.

A few of the camel handlers on this part of the journey wore lime-green plastic sandals. The surface of the Rift Valley is covered in footprints stamped by these shoes. They look the same, but the wearers are not. The footprints identify different people. Our guide spots tracks. He knows the wearer. "La'ad Howeni will be waiting for us in Dalifagi," he says. And he was.

Many Ethiopians wear the same style of shoe.



Around 60,000 years ago, humans migrated out of Africa to the rest of the world. Traveling on foot, Salopek is following their path.



Awad's Refrigerator

Umlajj, Saudi Arabia

October 30, 2013

Salopek and his guides must carry everything they need. Carrying water across the desert is essential. But who said anything about it being cold?

The first modern people, or **Homo sapiens**, walked out of Africa. We don't know what they experienced. But what is certain was their need to carry water. What did the first humans use as containers? No one knows. Canteens or buckets made of natural materials? A gurba, or goatskin water bladder?

Awad Omran, my camel handler, has his own solution to quench our thirst. He builds a thermos.



Awad's cold-water canteen is made from a sack, cardboard, plastic twine, and a plastic water bottle.

The water-cooling thermos is made from junk found around a farm. He wraps a large water bottle with cardboard. He wraps a sack around the cardboard. Then he makes a long handle from string. He hangs it on a saddle. Soon, the wetted cardboard cools our drinking water.

Mule-ology

Near Siverek, Turkey
December 11, 2014

Salopek rarely travels alone. He's usually joined by a guide and pack animals to carry supplies. Here, he writes about his mule while traveling through Turkey.

First things first: A mule is not a donkey. A donkey is a small creature with long ears. A mule is the offspring of a donkey and a horse. The males are called jack mules. The females are called a jenny or molly.

It doesn't matter what you call a mule, though. It won't answer to it. Each of my walking partners has called our white jenny by a different name. One guide called her Barbara. Another called her Sweetie. My photographer calls her Snowflake.

My preference is Kirkatir, a Turkish name meaning "grey mule." But, like all mules, she answers to no label. She comes when she feels like it. And she does what she pleases. Thankfully, that includes carrying our supplies.

Paul Salopek's mule carries his supplies in Turkey.





A farmer carries a heavy load of hay.

Walking Grass

Near Khurramabad, Pakistan

January 02, 2018

Along his travels, Salopek meets many people going about their daily lives. Here, in Pakistan, he comes across some farmers harvesting and carrying hay.

The mountains here are cold and dry. In the summer, melting snow streams down. It washes away at roads and villages. In fall, pastures become dry again. Then farmers harvest hay.

Among the farmers are Rehman Ali and Bibi Pari. They are old now. Their sons have moved to big cities.

But they remain to harvest their rocky fields themselves. I can barely help Pari carry her load. Yet, to her, it seems like nothing.

I stand by as she carries the hay. She says, “Thank you, brothers,” for the simple act of watching her work.

WORDWISE

Homo sapiens: the species to which modern humans belong

migrate: to move from one place to another



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Cover: a red-winged parrot
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