Indo-European Languages replaced non-Indo-European Languages in a multi-staged, uneven process that continues today, with the worldwide spread of English. No single factor explains every event in that complicated and drawn-out history-not race, demographics, populations pressure, or imagined spiritual qualities. The three most important steps in spread of Indo-European languages in the last two thousand years were the rise of the Latin-speaking Roman Empire (an event almost prevented by Hannibal); the expansion of Spanish, English, Russian and French colonial powers in Asia, America, Africa; and the recent triumph of the English-speaking Western capitalist trade systems, in which American-Business English piggybacked onto British-colonial English. If we can draw any lessons about language expansion from them, it is perhaps only that an initial expansion can make late expansions easier, and that language generally follows military and economic power.

The earliest Indo-European expansions described in this book laid a foundation of sorts for later expansions by increasing the territorial extent of the Indo-European languages, but their continued spread never was inevitable, and each expansion had its own local cause and effects. These local events of those tribal cultures are much more important and meaningful that any “imagined” spiritual cause.