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In 1913 the anthropologist Goldenweiser proposed his “principle of limited possibilities,” noting that once a line of cultural development has begun it develops increasingly massive inertia and becomes very hard to reverse. Despite claims by such scholars as Wallerstein and Taylor that a reversal is on the horizon what we have come to call, on the basis of Wallerstein’s pioneering work, the Modern World-System, a form of societal self-organization based initially on capitalist agriculture, now possesses massive, probably irreversible inertia. In the late 1930s the economist Schumpeter, analyzing Marx’s failure to predict the demise of capitalism, suggested that capitalism periodically renewed itself by “the process of creative destruction.” In 1988 the geographer Hägerstrand proposed the idea of de-novation as a logical corollary to the idea of innovation, suggesting that innovation was only possible in the presence of de-novation. I have argued that innovatory technologies, especially in transportation and communication, have driven successive waves of economic and political development for the past several hundred years of the World-System. If we are to successfully analyze, not just describe, the World-System, two core questions that must be answered by historical macro-social science are where, how, and why de-novation and innovation occur and along what pathways and with what success such forces diffuse. Significant elements of these questions are inherently subject to geographic analysis.