

Figure 10.3. Cities of the Roman Empire by the third century CE. Note the clusterings in central Italy, southern Spain, and Greece. Source: After Pounds 1969.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe's urban population shrank, and some towns became totally abandoned, particularly north of the Alps. Europe entered its last great age of city-founding in the Middle Ages, taking advantage of increased security

The Medieval City

The heritage of Roman urbanization is considerable. Many sites have been continuously occupied since Roman times, for example, the city of Trier in Germany. Other sites were reoccupied after a period of abandonment. Even names are often corrupted by the Arabic Moorish conquerors to Zarakusta and again by the Christian "reconquerors" of Spain to its present form.

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provided by the mature feudal system and increasingly agricultural productivity as the climate warmed between the ninth and fourteenth centuries. Germanic peoples established most of the new cities during this era. Europe's urban focus shifted to new regions, particularly the Po-Veneto Plain and the Germanic Low Country/Rhinelands in northwestern continental Europe (fig. 10.4). A combination of factors explains the concentration of cities in these two regions. First, they were both areas of relative political stability. Second, they were agriculturally rich areas, for example, the Po Valley and the rich agricultural lowlands and deltas of the North European Plain. Finally, they were geographically strategic sites for the development of significant trade networks. Northern Italy was in a position to capture a share of trade movements across the Alps and could take advantage of the Po River and the northern Adriatic Sea to build a far-flung

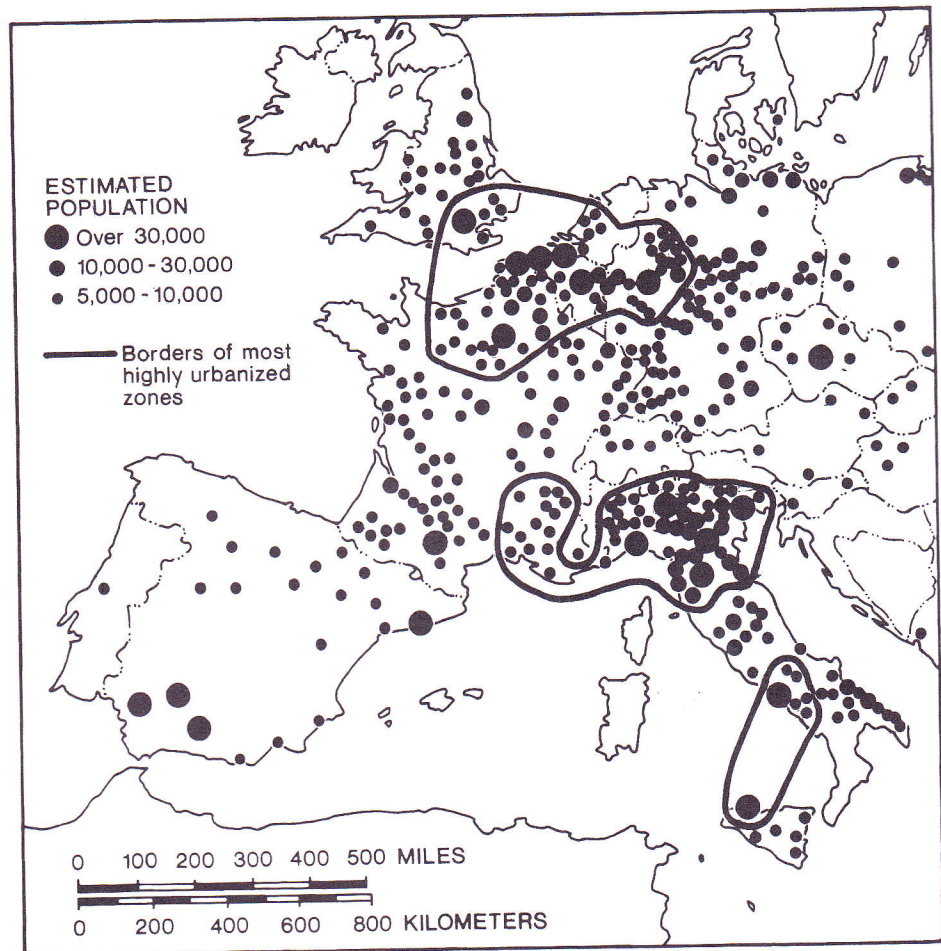


Figure 10.4. Distribution of important cities, about 1500 C.E. Northern Italy and north-west continental Europe had become the new urban centers in Europe. Thousands of smaller towns do not appear on the map. Source: Pounds, N. J. G. 1989. *Hearth and Home*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 260.

trade network. The Low Country/Rhinlands area could take advantage of the great rivers draining northwestern continental Europe and their strategic location adjacent to the meeting point of the English Channel and the North Sea. This helps to explain why some of the largest cities at the time were Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp, and, across the English Channel, London.

Most of the towns in the Germanic Low Country/Rhinlands region grew from fortified preurban cores, sites dominated by the stronghold of a feudal lord. The ninth and tenth centuries had been a major period of castle construction by feudal landowners as they sought to secure the surrounding countryside. The catalysts in changing most preurban cores to towns were itinerant traders, who initially made use of secure marketplaces adjacent to strongholds along transport routes. In time, the desire for safe winter quarters led the traders to establish permanent residence at the preurban cores, creating merchant colonies. Artisans were attracted by the presence of merchants, and the town population grew steadily. In an early stage of development, a town often consisted of several distinct nuclei: the feudal fortress; one or more marketplaces; scattered, fortified houses of merchants; a church; and some farmhouses. The German city of Braunschweig, for example, originated in 1269 through the union of five distinct nuclei, each of which had its own name. In an earlier era, Rome had arisen in a very similar manner as the union of adjacent hilltop villages.

CITY SITES

Geographers study diverse spatial and ecological aspects of urbanization. Perhaps none is more fundamental than an analysis of the specific physical location, or **site**, of a city. Decisions that determined the sites of most medieval European cities reflected the need for defense and access to trade routes. An easily defended site was particularly important to feudal lords who built strongholds during the insecure period after the Roman Empire fell. Romans themselves rarely chose protected sites for their army camps and other settlements because their military force enjoyed superiority to that of neighboring tribes. Roman camps typically possessed offensive advantage along roads and navigable streams rather than on high points. Still, episodes of piracy in the classical and preclassical Mediterranean may well have influenced the defensive siting of Athens and Rome, both of which lie a short distance inland from the coast.

Many types of defensive sites exist. The **river-meander site**, with the city located inside a loop where the stream turns back upon itself, leaves only a narrow neck of land unprotected by the waters. Besançon on the Doubs River in far eastern France provides an example of a river-meander site. Incised meanders proved particularly popular because the river loop became permanent by cutting down to form a steep-sided valley. The city of Bern, capital of Switzerland, on the Aare River, offers a splendid example of an incised river-meander site, as does Toledo in Spain (fig. 10.5). Similar to the river-meander site but even more advantageous, the river-island site combined a natural moat with an easier river crossing, the latter an advantage for the merchant trade. Paris began on an island in the middle of a major river (the Ile de la Cité in the Seine River), as did Limerick in Ireland and others. Stockholm, the capital

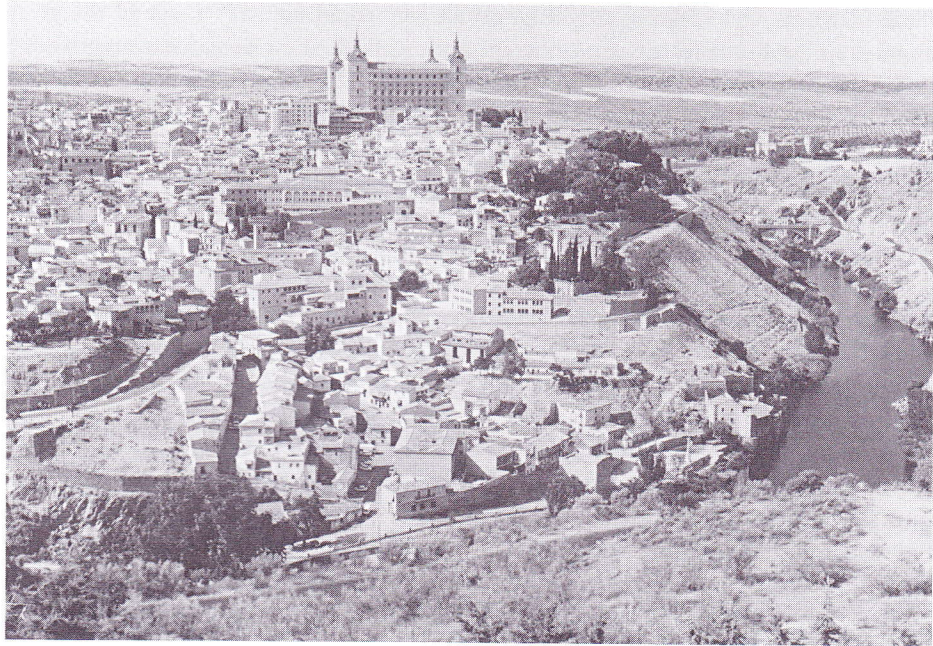


Figure 10.5. Toledo, in the central Meseta of Spain, an example of a river-meander urban site. The original settlement, now the core of the city, lay inside the loop of the incised meander of the Tajo River. Such a location provided natural defense on three sides. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1986.)

of Sweden, occupies a lake-island site, originating on a dozen or so small islands in the area where Lake Mälaren joins the Baltic Sea. Perhaps even more appealing, the offshore-island site combined defense with a port facility. The classic example, Venice, rests on wooden pilings driven into an offshore sandbar, which separated a coastal lagoon from the open Adriatic Sea. Larch wood imported from Russia serves as Venice's foundations. Defensive concerns were also an ingredient in the choice of sheltered harbor sites, where narrow sea entrances could be easily defended from attack by sea. Oslo, at the head of a fjord in Norway, and the Portuguese capital of Lisbon both occupy sheltered harbors.

High points offered obvious defensive advantages. Many towns lie at the foot of a fortified high point (fig. 10.6). Such cities often derived their names from the stronghold, as is indicated by many place names ending or beginning in *-burg*, *-bourg*, *-borg*, *castelo-*, *-grad*, and *-linna*, all of which mean *fortress* or *castle* in various European languages. Scottish Edinburgh (Edwin's fort), dominated by the impressive Castle Rock, provides a good example, as do Salzburg in Austria and Castelo Branco in Portugal. Other cities sited adjacent to fortified high points include Prague, Vaduz in Liechtenstein, Sion in Switzerland, and Budapest. Closely akin are those towns and cities that, in their formative stage, lay entirely on high ground, often adjacent to the stronghold. Examples include Belgrade (white fortress) on a high bluff overlooking the confluence of the Danube and Sava Rivers; Segovia and Zamora in Spain; Laôn in France; Shaftesbury,

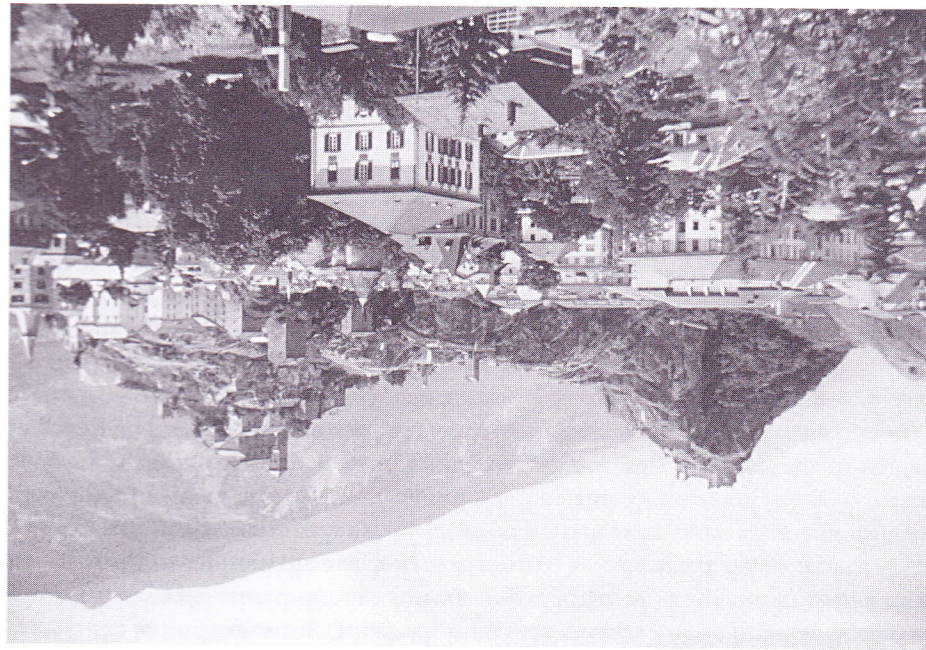


Figure 10.6. The city of Sion/Sitten, in the Swiss Canton of Valais/Wallis, an example of the high-point urban site. Sion developed at the foot of not one but two fortified high points, secular and ecclesiastical. The beautifully preserved fortresses still dominate the skyline of the city. Merchants who were responsible for creating the original urban nucleus chose to locate adjacent to the fortresses, for security. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1978.)

a Saxon hill town in England; and Castelo de Vide in Portugal. Often such hill towns in Romance-language lands bear the place name prefix *Mont-* or *Monte-*, as in Monte

Corno, Italy.

Merchants, largely responsible for the development of cities from preurban cores, generally selected stronghold sites that lay on trade routes. Numerous types of sites possessed advantages for the merchants. In the early medieval period, before bridges became common, river ford sites, where the stream was shallow and its bed was firm, offered good sites. Some cities bear names that indicate the former importance of fords, including the German and English suffixes of *-furt* and *-ford*. Frankfurt (Frankfurt) in Germany lies at an easy crossing of the Main River, where the ancient trade route from the Upper Rhine passes northward toward the North European Plain. Upstream on the Main River from Frankfurt, we find the towns of Ochsenfurt (ford for oxen), Schweinfurt (swine-ford), and Hassfurt (Hessians' ford). The English cities of Oxford on the Thames, Hertford on the Lea, and Bedford on the Ouse again suggest the former importance of river shallows in urban siting.

A similar function was served by sites where narrowed streams and firm banks and beds facilitated the building of bridges. Town names, including *pont*, *bridge*, *brück*, and the like, signal the centrality of the bridge to the urban area. Good bridge sites help

explain the location of many cities back in Roman times. Historic London Bridge, of which several have existed through history, originally stood at a point on the Thames River just upstream from the marsh-flanked estuary, at a site where the banks were firm and the stream was narrow. It served as an important river crossing on the Roman route from the Strait of Dover to the interior of England. Examples of bridge-centered cities from the medieval period include Cambridge (bridge on the Cam River) in England, Pontoise (bridge on the Oise River) near Paris, Bersenbrück (broken bridge) in northwestern Germany, Innsbruck (bridge on the Inn River) in Austria, and Puente-la-Reina (queen's bridge) in Spain.

Many city sites north of the Alps are riverine because navigable streams have long served as trade routes. Confluence sites, where two rivers meet, are common. The German city of Koblenz, at the juncture of the Rhine and the Mosel Rivers, actually derived its name from the Latin word for *confluence*, while Passau in the German province of Bavaria may be the only city where three rivers—the Danube, Inn, and Ilz—meet at precisely the same point. The rise of Paris was facilitated by the convergence of the Marne, Oise, and Seine Rivers in the general vicinity of the city, and Lyon profited from its position at the confluence of Rhône and Saône Rivers. Head-of-navigation sites serve as transshipment points, such as Basel on the upper reaches of the navigable sector of the Rhine River in Switzerland. In countries such as Finland, where an intricate network of lakes and rivers provided the major trade routes, fortifications built at strategic narrows sometimes provided urban nuclei, as at Savonlinna (castle in Savo province) and Hämeenlinna (castle in Häme province).

Crossroad sites occur throughout Europe. One of the more famous is Vienna, the Austrian capital, located where an east-west route connecting the Hungarian Plain with southern Germany along the Danube Valley met the ancient north-south route, which skirted the eastern foot of the Alps and passed through the Moravian Gate to Poland and the Baltic Sea. Hanover in Germany stands at the juncture of an old route that runs along the southern edge of the North German Plain and the road that follows the course of the Leine River through the Hercynian hills south of the city. Leipzig was made famous by its trade fair, which occurred there because the city was situated at the intersection of two main trans-European trading roads during the Middle Ages.

Seaport sites often are found at or near the juncture of navigable rivers or estuaries and the coast, for example, London, Hamburg, Bordeaux, and Gdansk. In southern Europe, however, the seasonality of precipitation and short length of many streams rendered rivers less useful for transportation. Great ports usually developed at the juncture of highways and the coast rather than at the marshy, shallow river mouths. Cádiz lies some 30 km south of the mouth of the Guadalquivir River, and Marseille is well to the east of the Rhône delta marshes in southern France. Other Mediterranean rivers such as the Po and Tevere also have no major ports at their mouths, in part because of silting.

Although mercantile activity was by far the most significant of the economic functions served by the medieval city, other economic factors were occasionally determinant in siting, in particular mining and the operation of health resorts. Extraction of iron ore, copper, salt, silver, and other minerals or metals often gave rise to mining

towns. In Germany and Austria, place names, including *salz* or *hall* (salt), *eisen* (iron), *gold*, and *kupfer* (copper), as in Salzburg in Austria as well as Eisenach and Kupferberg in Germany, indicate the present or former importance of mining. The German city of Halle still has a saline spring in its very center, where the settlement began in Celtic times. Spa sites include towns that developed around mineral or hot springs, long sought by Europeans for relief from any number of ailments. Spa towns often date to Roman times. These places typically bear names indicative of their function, including elements such as *bains*, *bad(en)*, or *bagni*, all of which mean *bath*. Examples include Wiesbaden in Germany, Bagnoli (bath) near Naples in Italy, and Luxeuil-les-Bains in eastern France. The English city of Bath, known to the Romans as Aquae Sulis, has an ancient resort tradition. In the Slavic lands, the name elements *-vody* (waters), as in Mineralny Vody (mineral waters), a city near the Caucasus Mountains, and *-wany* (hot springs), as in Karlovy Vary, Czechia, describe resort towns.

CITY ATTRIBUTES

The three essential attributes of the medieval northwestern European city were the charter, town wall, and marketplace. The charter, a governmental decree from an emperor or lesser ruler granting political autonomy to the town, freed its populace from the manorial restrictions of the rural areas. The city became self-governing and responsible for its own defense. Charters were typically requested by colonies of well-to-do merchants, who found that manorial restrictions hindered the mobility and exercise of personal initiative so vital in trading activities. Many cities date their founding from the granting of a charter, though most existed prior to that time. City-states similar to those of classical Greece, legitimized by charter, appeared throughout most of central and western Europe. So important were the charters that the citizens of the cities of medieval Flanders would build great towers to house them and to symbolize their freedoms. These towers dominated the skyline, sometimes even overshadowing the main church (fig. 10.7).

Self-government demanded self-defense, and the castles and fortified houses found in feudal kingdoms gave way to city walls (fig. 10.8). All important parts of the city lay inside the wall, including the mercantile and manufacturing establishments, fortress, church, and homes of the majority of the population. Urban expansion often required the construction of new, more inclusive walls, and some larger cities eventually needed three or four rebuildings. In the period before gunpowder came into widespread use, city walls were usually sufficient to repel invaders.

The marketplace, often supplemented by a trading hall (*bourse*), served as the focus of economic activity in the town, for the mercantile function remained dominant throughout the medieval period. Larger places held annual trade fairs, some of which began in the days of itinerant traders before permanent settlement had transformed the preurban cores into towns. Some of the more famous of these fairs survive to the present day, as at Leipzig, Frankfurt-am-Main, Milan, Lyon, and Lübeck (fig. 10.9). Many of the cities in the northern Italian realm developed out of towns that could trace their roots to Roman times. There were exceptions. Most notably, Venice

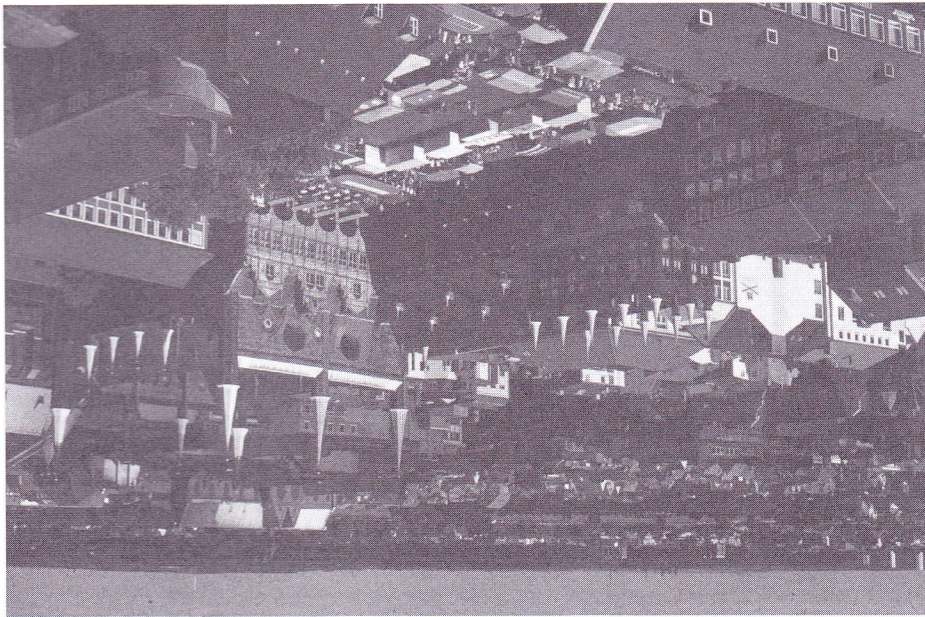


Figure 10.9. The central market square in Lübeck, Germany. An important site for traders when Lübeck was a leading city in the Hanseatic League, the square continues to be used today for weekly markets and annual trade fairs. (Photo by A.B.M., 1973.)

developed as a major city between the ninth and twelfth centuries on a series of picturesque islands in a lagoon off Italy's northwestern coast. From that position, however, merchants were able to build it into a major center that, for a time, dominated the exchange of goods between western/central Europe and the Byzantine and Islamic realms to the south and east. But Venice was joined by a variety of other northern Italian towns that prospered through a combination of trade, agricultural production, and the manufacture of specialty goods.

Whether north or south of the Alps, most of the towns of the Middle Ages were modest in size. Few exceeded 100,000 in population. The famous textile center of Ghent had only 56,000 inhabitants in the mid-fourteenth century. Paris, the largest European city, and Naples were the only cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants by 1400. Moreover, the vast majority of people continued to live in rural areas. When viewed at a global scale, however, the level of urbanization in Europe by 1400 was greater than any part of the world other than parts of South and East Asia.

MEDIEVAL URBAN MORPHOLOGY

Europe's medieval urban places were characterized by a distinctive morphology, or cityscape. In most cities north of the Alps and Pyrenees, the street pattern was

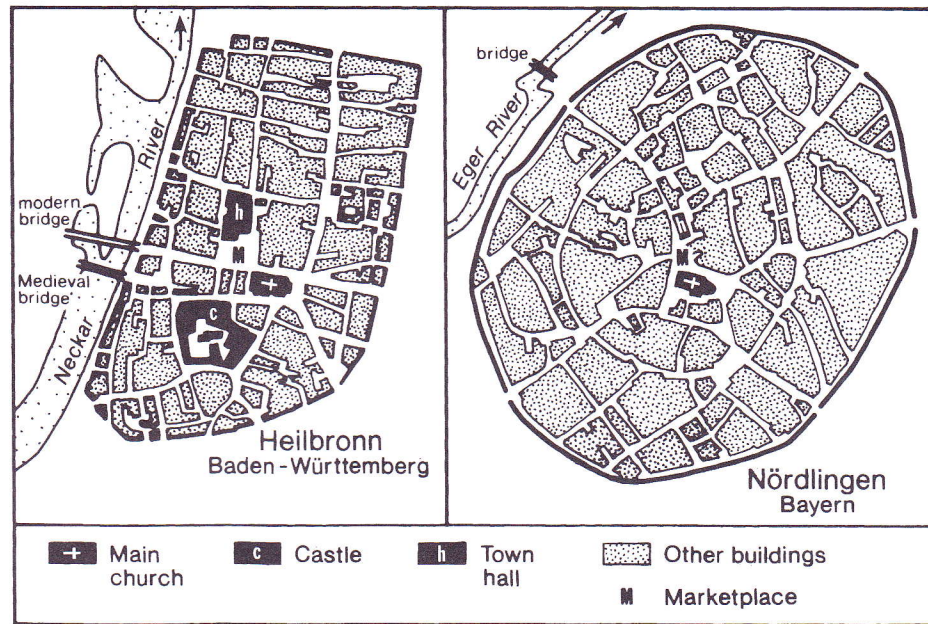


Figure 10.10. Street plans of medieval towns in Germany. In Heilbronn the castle-fortress, the Deutschherrenhof, was the successor to an ancient Frankish fortress. The church, town hall, and marketplace shared the center of the city with the fortress. Heilbronn was heavily damaged in World War II. Nördlingen, where the old outer wall is still intact, has the maze of streets typical of medieval towns. An earlier wall that was outgrown is clearly traced by the circular street. Sources: Gutkind, E. A. 1964–69. *International History of City Development*. New York: Free Press; Dickinson 1945.

irregular, a function of a lack of planning (fig. 10.10). The city's most important church, marketplace, and civic buildings were often found near the center of the town, but streets met at odd angles, and blocks (to the extent one can use the term) took on the shape of parallelograms or triangles. Many of these cities had walls, which gave rise to an abrupt urban-rural transition. As cities expanded and those walls had to be built farther out, the traces of the former walls were left in the street pattern. Note the inner circle of streets in the urban plan for Nördlingen (fig. 10.10).

In marked contrast to the irregular street pattern of most northern European cities, the cities of the south that could trace their roots to the Romans, Etruscans, or Greek colonists were characterized by a grid pattern. One can still see traces of the ancient pattern today in cities such as Pavia and Naples in Italy, Cologne (Köln) in Germany, Zaragoza in Spain, and Chester in England (fig. 10.11), although later irregularities in the street pattern often make it difficult to detect the original grid. In the late Middle Ages, the gridiron plan experienced a revival and served as the model for new towns founded by the Germans in east-central Europe and by the French kings in southern France. The latter were often fortified towns designed to

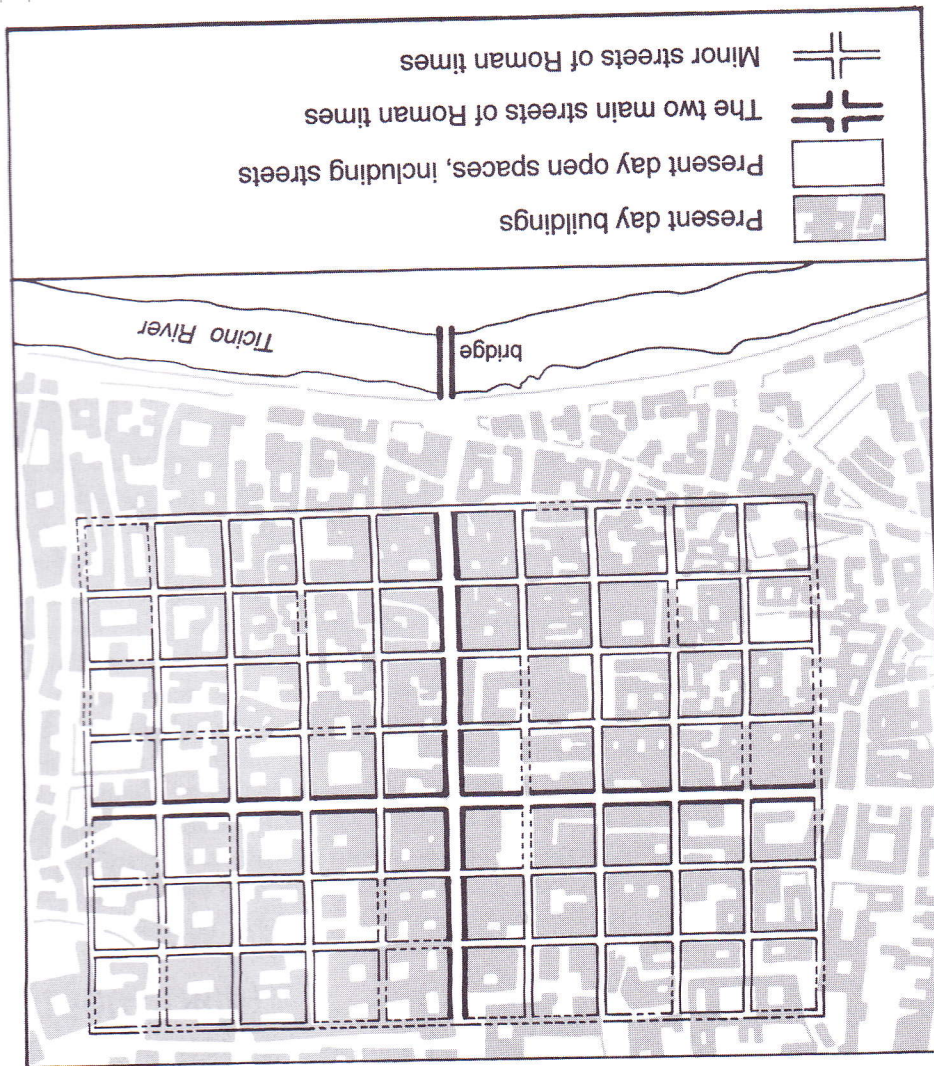


Figure 10.11. Survival of the Roman grid pattern in Pavia, Italy. To walk in the central section of modern Pavia (Roman Ticinum) is to tread in the footsteps of the ancient Romans. The degree of survival of the Roman checkerboard pattern is quite remarkable, for most of the original streets are still in use after 20 centuries. The two main intersecting streets of Roman times have maintained their dominance. Note how much less regular the streets are outside the old Roman core. Pavia is on the Ticino River south of Milan. Source: After Gutkind, E.A. 1964-69, *International History of City Development*, New York: Free Press.

help extend the control of the monarchy farther south during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Sometimes they started with preexisting settlements, as was the case with the famous walled city of Carcassonne. The older city has an irregular street pattern, but the part constructed in the fourteenth century has a grid street pattern.

Renaissance–Baroque Urban Development (1500–1800)

After about 1500, the founding of new cities declined markedly, except in the far north. City-states gave way to larger, more powerful kingdoms. Urbanization continued to affect a small part of the European population. In 1600, only 4 million of the 85 million Europeans lived in towns with populations of 15,000 or more, about 5% of the total. The Low Countries and northern Italy, the most highly urbanized areas, could claim only about 12 or 13% of their populations as urban, whereas only 2% of the Germans, French, and English lived in large towns at that time.

Nonetheless, a number of noteworthy developments in the urban structure of Europe occurred from about 1500 to 1800. Most notably, this period saw the rise of national capital cities to urban primacy, particularly in western Europe. Fueled by the growing concentration of wealth associated with the increasingly successful European state-building project (see Chapter 6) and by the wealth flowing into parts of Europe from the early period of colonization, some cities exploded in size. In 1400, London had only 50,000 inhabitants, and Bristol, its major rival English port, had 30,000. Three centuries later, London had grown to 700,000, while Bristol remained at 30,000. Cities such as London, Amsterdam, Paris, and Madrid underwent dramatic modifications as they grew, as seen in major public projects that served to enhance their grandeur. But, in many cases, it was a grandeur not just borne of internal successes but of an exploitive colonial relationship with other parts of the world.

A related feature of the Renaissance and Baroque periods was the development of urban planning. Inspired by classical ideas and the field of geometry, Renaissance town builders laid out districts with, for example, radial street patterns focused on a royal palace. Cases such as Palmanova, Italy, provide an extreme case, with a street pattern radiating out in a full circle from a point at the center of the town (fig. 10.12). Not all parts of Europe had the resources or space to devote to such projects, however, and in some places, towns declined during this period. The disruption of trade ties in northern Italy, for example, led to some outmigration from towns and cities.

The Industrial City

European cities changed rapidly after about 1800 as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Manufacturing became the dominant function of many urban centers, putting an end to the age of mercantile cities (see Chapter 8). The hallmark of the industrial phase was a great increase in city size, prompted by the gravitation of the majority of the European population to urban, industrial areas. England and Wales urbanized more than half their population by the 1850s. A half-century later, more than three-quarters of the English and Welsh lived in cities, and Germany had become the second country to have over half of its population living in urban areas. Many other countries, especially in northwestern Europe, reached this level by 1930, and the trend continues to spread toward the peripheries (fig. 10.1).



Figure 10.12. Central part of Palmanova, Italy, in the far eastern Po-Veneto Plain. Founded in 1593 during the Renaissance era, Palmanova displays a highly planned street pattern, as did most of the cities established after the end of the Middle Ages.

The Industrial Revolution produced new cities in places such as northern England and Germany's Ruhr Valley. It also gave rise to the first European cities to have more than a million inhabitants. London passed the million mark in the first decade of the nineteenth century and exceeded 2 million by 1850. Paris claimed more than a million by 1846. By the turn of the twentieth century, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Moscow had reached this level. As people and industry arrived in already established cities, they found a **preindustrial core** that was often relatively densely packed and fairly prosperous. Around that core was a **preindustrial periphery** where more recent, poorer immigrants had concentrated. As industrialization unfolded, this was the area where the railroad stations could be built. The tight clustering of venerable, old structures made it impossible for railroad lines to penetrate the preindustrial core. Large cities such as Paris and London have a circle of rail terminals, and the stations typically

bear the name of the major city that lies on their rail route. In Paris, one finds the Gare de Lyon (station of Lyon) at the terminus of the rail line leading out to that city, the Gare St. Lazare, the Gare d'Orléans, and so on. In some instances, one suburban railroad station serves as the main one, where trains for all destinations may be taken, but the traveler must sometimes choose correctly among five or more stations to find the right train.

In time, the slum hovels of the preindustrial periphery gave way to more substantial buildings as the city grew, and some prosperous neighborhoods developed. In function, this ring came to be dominated by residences, railroad stations, and retail activity. In capital cities, a nationalist-infused desire to develop visually impressive symbol of greatness, and a concern to break up or control worker ghettos led to plans to build grand, straight ceremonial avenues or boulevards in the preindustrial periphery, sometimes even penetrating into the preindustrial core. Thousands of Parisians, for example, lost their homes through royal decree to make way for the Champs Elysées (fig. 10.13). These impressive avenues provide a marked contrast to the remainder of the street pattern.

As the preindustrial periphery was made over, the poorer people, the new migrants, and many of the factories were pushed out to another ring around the European city, that is, the **industrial suburb**. This area was characterized by a dingy halo of factories, huge apartment blocks or row houses for the workers, and railroad

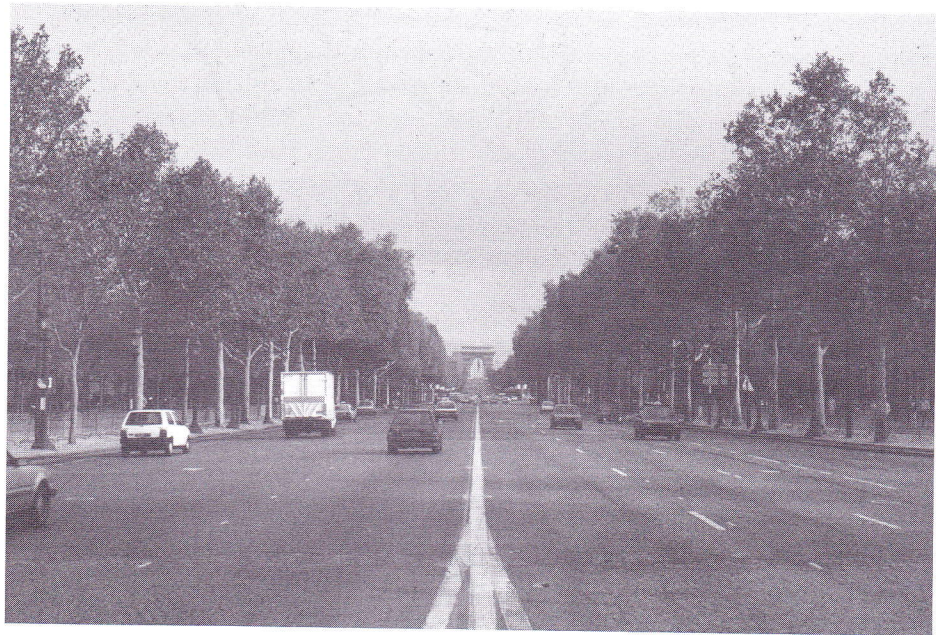


Figure 10.13. The Champs Elysées in Paris, a classic example of a nineteenth-century urban development project designed to highlight the glories of France and facilitate movement within the French capital. (Photo by A.B.M., 2001.)

yards. Yet this became the largest part of the typical European city, dwarfing the older preindustrial core and periphery. It housed the burgeoning population that made Europe dominantly urbanized, as commoners finally became urbanites.

Characteristics of the Mid-Twentieth-Century European City

By the middle of the twentieth century, the effects of industrialization had been felt in most European cities, and some were on the cusp of entering a postindustrial era. Most European cities have experienced significant change since then, but a template had been set around 1950 to 1960 that still is very much in evidence and that continues to influence what these cities look like and how they function. That template reflected many of the different influences on city development described above. As we review its main characteristics, it may be useful to think about how the identified characteristics differ from the typical North American city, as such an exercise can provide insights into the role urban morphology and social geography play in the life of cities.

The most notable characteristics of the mid-twentieth century European city were:

1. *A set of more or less concentric rings with the preindustrial core at the center, surrounded by the preindustrial periphery, surrounded by the industrial suburbs. The preindustrial core was the mercantile city of past times, including all districts that formerly lay within the ramparts and walls. Remnants of these walls often survived, marking the outer limits of the core. The famous Porta Nigra (black gate) in the German city of Trier is a Roman survival, while the Holstentor (Holstein gate) at Lübeck survives as a remnant of medieval walls. In some instances, the entire circuit of city walls continued to enclose the old core, and that is still the case today. Lugo in Spanish Galiza retains its Roman walls, and Avila in the Castilian heartland of Spain boasts a medieval ring of walls and gates that ranks among Europe's finest (fig. 10.8). More often, the walls no longer exist, their place taken by a ring street and a string of parks. Riga in Latvia and Frankfurt-am-Main fit this description, as do many other places.*
2. *A low degree of functional zonation, that is, the separation of different functions into different spaces. Each of the rings had a mix of residences, retail establishments, and manufacturing activities. The medieval custom of combining residence and place of work continued on, and most cities never had zoning ordinances such as those common to North American cities. Many bakers, butchers, and restaurant owners lived above their shops, and it was not unusual to encounter small-scale manufacturing and a variety of services activities taking place on the same block with apartments and retail establishments.*
3. *A high degree of compactness. In comparison to North American urban centers, mid-twentieth-century European cities of comparable population covered much less geographical area (figure 10.14). A foreign visitor could easily gain the impression that European cities were smaller in terms of population than they actually were. In 1960, for example, single-family detached homes accounted for only*

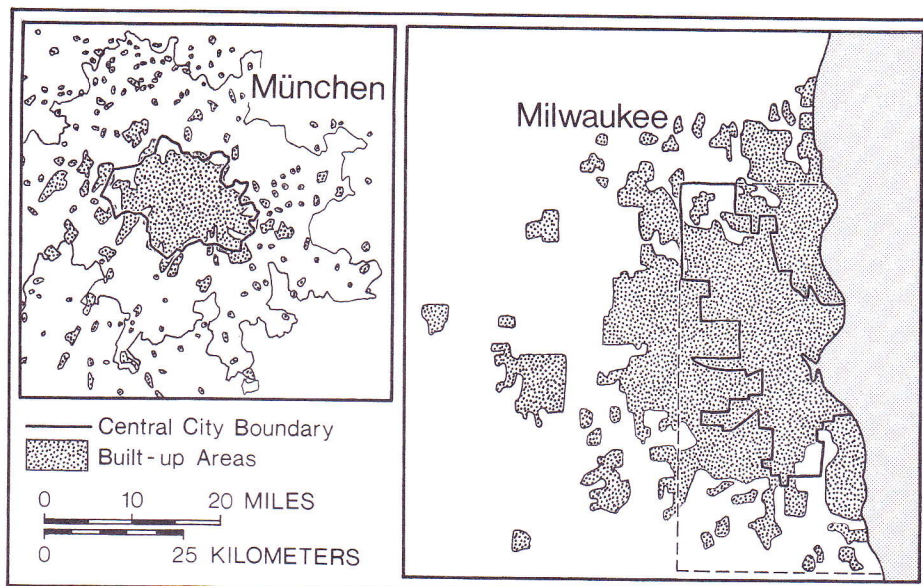


Figure 10.14. Munich, Germany, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, metropolitan areas drawn to the same scale. The two urban areas have similar populations, but notice how much more compact the built-up area of Munich is. *Source:* After Holzner, L. 1986. In *Research Profile*, Milwaukee, WI: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Graduate School, 9 (2): 18.

16% of all urban residences in West Germany. Throughout Europe, many urbanites preferred to live close to the center of town, where the old city core served as a place to gather after work, to stroll, and to dine. Many city dwellers resided at least within walking or cycling range of their place of employment, though commuting was becoming increasingly common.

4. *An irregular street pattern in the preindustrial core and periphery.* This was a product of the unplanned development that occurred before the Industrial Revolution, and it was only broken up in parts of some cities by the decision to channel industrial wealth into the kinds of grand urban planning initiatives described above. But irregularity was the norm. In parts of southern Europe, particularly Iberia, Arabic influence in street pattern produced a particularly twisted maze with numerous dead ends, as in the old quarters of Toledo, Lisbon, and Seville. As cities industrialized and grew, planners often succeeded in creating more regular street patterns farther from the core, but, even there, a strict regularity was hard to achieve because of the need to connect the new street pattern with the old, winding pattern of the core. Most of the streets in the core were narrow and ill-suited for the age of the automobile, and, in many instances, attempts to modify the crazy quilt pattern of streets and render it more suitable for motorized traffic flow were resisted. Wartime destruction leveled as much as 80% of the buildings in some German cities, providing an opportunity to revise street patterns in the central portions. Urban planners wanted to lay out broader and straighter streets, but

few West German cities actually acquired thoroughfares in the process of rebuilding. There were exceptions to this, of course. The Dutch and British reconstruction of Rotterdam and Coventry produced cities better adapted to the needs of the automobile. But most cities kept their irregular street patterns, leading to traffic problems that have become ever more critical because of the narrowness of thoroughfares and the scarcity of parking space.

5. *A religious building or palace at the symbolic center of the city.* Unlike American urban areas such as Chicago, where an intersection at the center of the commercial district has long served as the focal point of the city, the equivalence at most European cities was a building of religious or governmental significance at the heart of the old preindustrial core, often in conjunction with a square or marketplace. Impressive cathedrals are particularly common focal points, bearing witness to the extraordinary importance and vitality of Christianity in the Middle Ages. Even as early as the era of classical Greece, municipal pride in public buildings and religious edifices was one of the traits that distinguished townsfolk from residents of farm villages, and citizens bore the large expense involved in cathedral construction with little complaint. Many of these churches—such as Notre Dame de Paris on the Ile de la Cité; San Marco in Venice; St. Stephens in Vienna; the magnificent cathedral at Chartres southwest of Paris; and Santa Maria in Burgos, Spain—rank among the great architectural treasures of the world. If the city served as the residence of a royal family, the focal point might have been a palace or fortress. Examples include Edinburgh Castle in Scotland and the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, the latter located right next to the cathedral.

6. *A skyline with the tallest buildings on the periphery.* Standing in contrast to the North American city, which is dominated by high-rise buildings at the center of the city, most of the commercial skyscrapers and tall apartment blocks in the typical European city were constructed outside the urban core, often in the industrial suburbs (fig. 10.15). This is still true today. The central skyline of most cities will have a few tall structures such as church spires, a venerable hilltop fortress, or a special landmark such as the Eiffel Tower. But the urban core is dominated by historic buildings of considerable age, erected before the elevator and modern structural technology permitted thin-walled buildings to reach great heights. Edifices of more than five or six stories are uncommon. Even when catastrophes destroyed the old urban cores, Europeans generally rebuild them as before, keeping the taller buildings on the periphery. Photographs of pre- and post-World War II Munich reveal striking similarities, even though 80% of the city was destroyed by bombing. Perhaps the most remarkable re-creation took place in the former German Baltic port city of Danzig (present-day Gdansk) in Poland since 1945. The German population of the severely damaged city was expelled, but the Poles then proceeded to spend huge sums of money to produce a duplicate of the old German Hanseatic city. Their attention to detail in reconstruction was simply astounding. The end product was a museum town from another age. Yet with time, effort, and money, Poland solidified a valid claim to a city that Germans and Russians had destroyed.



Figure 10.15. Paris, looking westward from the Eiffel Tower. An American would mistake this for a view toward the center of the city, whereas in reality the modern high-rise buildings stand in Paris's outer ring. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1978.)

7. *A concentration of significant wealth in the core.* Many North Americans think of the inner city as a zone of poverty and crime. But the cores of most European cities were very different. Traditionally, the most expensive and prestigious residences had been near the city center, creating a concentration of wealth at the heart of the city that often endured. There were pockets of poverty nearby and areas where only those of a certain ethnic background or those practicing a particular craft would live (see Chapter 11), but the heart of the preindustrial core was generally a prosperous area with a variety of small retail stores, cafés, restaurants, multifamily residences, and workshop-like factories of craftsmen workers. Guild houses of the medieval crafts still stood in some preindustrial urban cores, as did the old trading hall for merchants. Institutional functions also remained common in the central city, including governmental agencies and museums. By contrast, more recent immigrants and members of the poorer working class had moved to the peripheries where land was cheaper and low-skills jobs were found.

The Late/Postindustrial European City

Sweeping changes have occurred in the European city over the past five to six decades. The catalysts for change are:

- The decline of secondary industry
- The rise of tertiary and quaternary activities

- The expansion of public transportation networks
- Growing automobile ownership
- The arrival of new immigrants
- The growing size and prosperity of the middle class

These circumstances, in turn, helped to bring about suburbanization, counterurbanization, and gentrification, that is, three developments that have had a significant impact on the character of the typical European city over the last 60 years.

Since about 1950, some wealthier Europeans began to move out beyond the industrial suburbs to a newly developing outer ring of **postindustrial suburbs**. The outer ring consists of a loose assemblage of low-density residences dominated by detached single-family houses, modern factories devoted to high-tech industry, and firms specializing in data gathering and processing. Some planned satellite towns also appear here, as do the garden plots and dachas (cottages used sometimes as summer homes, particularly in Russia) of the inner-city population. In spite of the low density of building, the outer ring sometimes contains American-inspired, high-rise commercial structures made of glass and steel. Access to the city center by mass transit is normally available. Typically, the outer ring developed in segments and usually remains incomplete. In London, where the outer ring lies beyond a zoned, largely open green belt, a high-class residential fringe began taking shape in the western periphery by the 1950s, and it has since spread clockwise around to the northeast.

In other words, **suburbanization** is occurring in Europe. Though it began later than it did in North America, due in part to a lag in accepting the private automobile to commute to work, suburban development is bringing urban problems very similar to those in the United States, especially sprawl on the peripheries of cities and decay in the center. The suburban shopping mall, another symptom of urban Americanization, made its appearance in Europe's outer rings in the 1980s. France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Germany now have hundreds of malls. From Lisbon to Budapest and beyond, shopping malls with hundreds of stores have opened over the past fifteen years, and they are transforming the retail landscape. Some countries have passed legislation in an effort to control the proliferation of malls, but the retail patterns of most sizable cities have been Americanized to a fairly significant extent.

In the period after about 1965, **counterurbanization**, the movement of population from the largest cities to areas that lie beyond the commuting range of those cities, also began to influence Europe. For a time, counterurbanization caused some of Europe's larger cities to stagnate or decline, while villages and smaller urban places grew. This, in turn, helped to create larger second- and third-order cities in Europe. The movement away from cities is typically driven by the more affluent segment of the population, and it often occurs in stages, beginning with the acquisition of a second home for vacation purposes. An author, data processor, or designer comes to realize that his or her job can be performed just as well in locations remote from the urban office. The products of their work can be shipped, mailed, or electronically transmitted to the city. The sudden, rapid decline of such traditional manufacturing industries as textiles and steel also caused many overspecialized cities to lose less well-off segments of the

population. Among the hardest hit by manufacturing decline were Glasgow, Manchester, Belfast, Turin, and many cities in the formerly Communist East. Equally important, waves of foreign immigrant guest workers began arriving in parts of many cities, causing some longer-term residents to flee.

The United Kingdom, the first country to urbanize massively, also became the first to feel the effects of counterurbanization in the 1960s. West Germany experienced an almost simultaneous onset of the phenomenon, followed by the Low Countries, France, and Denmark. In France, the period from 1975 to 1982 saw the rural population grow more rapidly than the urban population for the first time in well over a century. France's Atlantic coastal, Mediterranean, and Alpine provinces gained population most rapidly.

Counterurbanization slowed in most countries in the 1980s, leading some urban geographers to label it as a temporary shift. France experienced a resurgence of growth in the largest metropolitan areas by 1990, and only the decaying heavily industrial cities exhibit long-term population losses. Germany, too, saw a slowing down of counterurbanization in the late 1980s, following 15 years during which the trend intensified. Today, counterurbanization is occurring most profoundly in eastern Europe. The cities of the southern Urals region in Russia are among the most severely impacted.

The slowing or reversal of counterurbanization throughout much of Europe can be attributed in part to the **gentrification** of areas within major cities. Gentrification refers to the rehabilitation of deteriorated or abandoned areas and the concomitant replacement of low income by more affluent populations. Gentrification can occur either through the private property market, that is, individuals or firms buying up and converting areas, or it can be a product of urban redevelopment policies. Both are common in Europe, and they have made the cities more attractive places to live for the middle and upper classes. But the less well-off often face displacement and the prospect of moving to even less desirable areas.

Generous social welfare policies have blunted the social impacts of gentrification in some parts of Europe (see Chapter 11), but gentrification can still pose significant challenges for the poor. Perhaps the group most adversely affected consists of urban squatters, that is, homeless people who illegally take up residence in derelict, empty buildings. Called *kraakers* in the Netherlands and *squats* in Britain, this preponderantly young group began moving into abandoned central city buildings in the 1960s. Amsterdam, London, Hamburg, West Berlin, and Copenhagen became the major scenes of urban squatting. The movement peaked in the 1980s, and it has since largely succumbed to police pressure and gentrification.

On a more positive note, the gentrification of abandoned areas in old industrial cities can be a boost to the city at large. The redevelopment of former industrial areas in cities such as Duisburg in Germany's Ruhr Valley is bringing new people into the city and even attracting some tourists (fig. 10.16). Gentrification is also improving the fiscal viability of some cities that were struggling from the loss of tax revenue as people moved out to the suburbs and beyond.

These general processes have worked together with the economic, social, and technological developments mentioned at the beginning of this section to change the character of the typical European city to some degree over the past 60 years. But the change

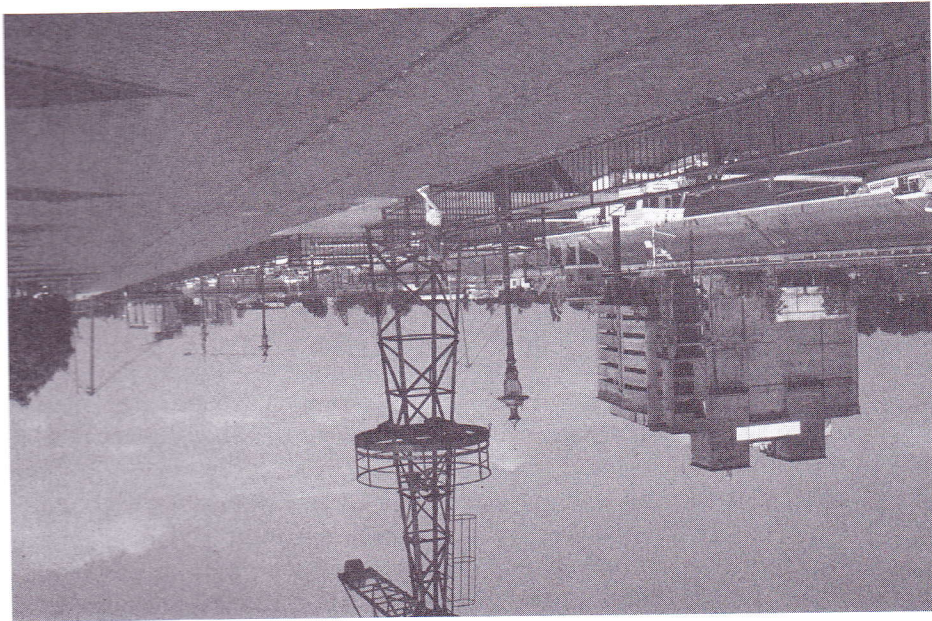


Figure 10.16. Urban redevelopment in Duisburg, Germany. Middle-class residents and even some tourists, are being drawn into old industrial districts. (Photo by A.B.M., 2001.)

has only been partial because many of the characteristics of the industrial city described above could not easily be altered. The best way to see what has remained the same and what has changed is to look at the modern city in terms of its various zones.

THE PREINDUSTRIAL CORE

Changes to the preindustrial core have been comparatively minor. As in the industrial period, this part of the city is generally prosperous and suffers relatively low levels of blight, decay, and crime. In most instances, the preindustrial core is still dominated by compact settlement, low levels of functional zonation, older buildings, and winding streets. Automobile traffic moves with great difficulty, for thoroughfare avenues are rare. Though some European central cities remain choked by automobile traffic, a number have taken major steps to restrict motorist access. Parking space has been drastically reduced, bicycle routes have been provided, and mass transit has been upgraded. Zürich eliminated 10,000 central city parking spaces, and governmental restrictions on automobile traffic in cities such as Amsterdam, Freiburg in Germany, and (most recently) London have led to significant declines in the use of cars in the inner city. A particularly noteworthy response to the challenges presented by the street pattern has been to designate certain streets or even entire districts as pedestrian zones. Pedestrians in these areas no longer feel intimidated or repelled by traffic or the visual blight of machine space.

Certain well-preserved urban central areas have become virtual outdoor museums, bypassed by the usual range of economic activity. Some central city dwellers complain that they cannot be expected to live in an unchanging, romanticized setting of past times. The crumbling architectural heritage of the past is expensive to maintain and difficult to adjust to the modern age. Venice's core area, largely a historic district, provides an extreme example. Plagued by flooding, decay, and pollution, Venice's central area population has declined from 137,000 in 1961 to only 62,000 today.

In an effort to preserve the historic character of central cities while adapting them to the needs of the twenty-first century, **façadism**, that is, the complete gutting and remodeling of the interior of a building while preserving its façade, has become increasingly popular. Outwardly, buildings look much as they did 500 years ago; inwardly, they are a product of the Contemporary Era.

THE PREINDUSTRIAL PERIPHERY

The preindustrial periphery is a zone where redevelopment and gentrification has been particularly concentrated. As a result, in the typical city, there are fewer pockets of poverty in this zone than in previous times. Much of the urban landscape remains historic in character, but it is more likely to be punctuated by modern structure and developments than is the landscape of the preindustrial core. Former industrial sites are particularly common candidates for redevelopment. Since this part of the city is often redeveloped in chunks, functional zonation is somewhat higher than in the preindustrial core, but it is still low in comparison with the typical North American city. In some cases, major upscale shopping districts have developed in this part of the city, taking advantage of the proximity of many well-to-do consumers and easy-to-use public transportation facilities.

A controlled access perimeter highway now often marks the outer limits of the preindustrial periphery. Inside that highway, regulations often keep buildings at relatively low heights. Street patterns remain fairly irregular, but there are more thoroughfares and arteries than in the preindustrial core. In many cases, the most important of these follow the routes of former roads leading out of the medieval city. Paris's Avenue d'Italie, running through the southern part of the city's preindustrial periphery, is the old road one would have taken out of the old city to go to Italy. Street names can be tricky in Europe, though, as they change frequently, even in places where the street does not take a notable turn. Munich provides an extreme example. Over a length of only six blocks, one reasonably straight street bears the names Maxburgstrasse, Löwengrube, Schäfflstrasse, Schrammerstrasse, and Hofgraben.

THE INDUSTRIAL SUBURBS

Since these areas were not developed prior to the Industrial Era, most buildings are relatively modern, and many are tall. Modern and tall does not necessarily mean nice, however. Many were erected hurriedly and cheaply to house an influx of low-wage

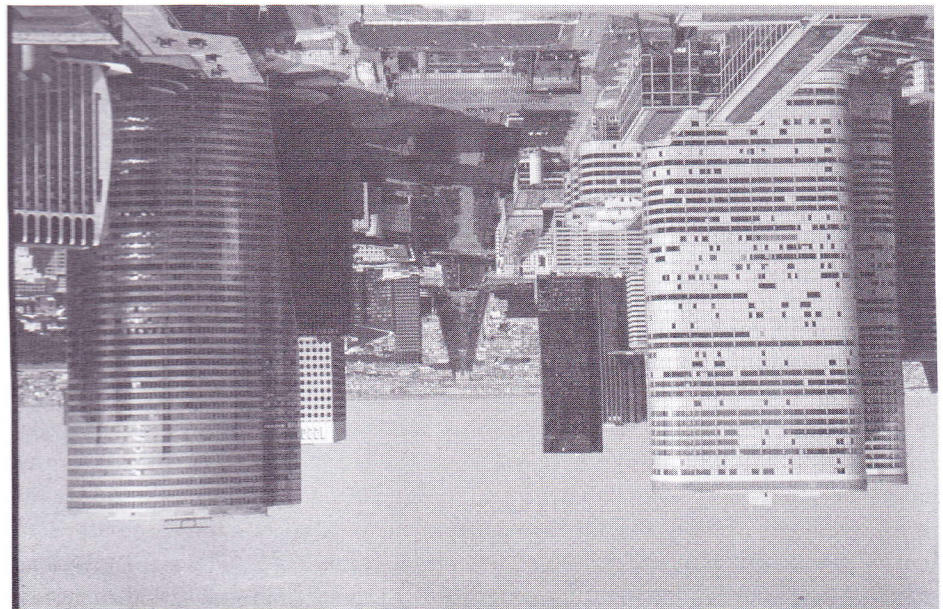


Figure 10.17. La Défense, a hub of Paris's quaternary economy, lies just beyond the preindustrial periphery. (Photo by A.B.M., 2001.)

workers. Others were developed to meet the industrial needs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, only to fall into wrack and ruin as the economic tides turned. The industrial suburbs are not uniformly areas of poverty. Some parts developed as middle-class areas with good, quality housing and nice public amenities. Whether the housing is in good shape or not, much of it takes the form of high-rise apartment complexes. This is true in countries as diverse as Iceland, Spain, Czechia, and Latvia. Population density is generally high in the industrial suburbs, but parks and shopping centers are relatively common, and streets are relatively wide. In some places, large tracts of land in particularly poor parts of the industrial suburbs were entirely redeveloped in the post-World War II era. Basically, everything was cleared, and a district of a very different character was planned and built from scratch. In some cases, the goal was to create a middle-class residential area. In others, it was to make room for a postindustrial center for business and commerce. Perhaps the most famous example is La Defense, just outside of Paris proper (fig. 10.17). To the extent that Paris has a downtown reminiscent of something like midtown Manhattan, this is where it is found.

THE POSTINDUSTRIAL SUBURBS

On the periphery of most European cities lie the newest suburbs, home to the residences of wealthier people and selected tertiary and quaternary economic activities. We

have already reviewed the principal characteristics of these suburbs, including less compact with a mix of nice apartment blocs, stand-alone houses, and tertiary and quaternary sector businesses. Where single-family houses are found, lots tend to be considerably smaller than in the suburbs of Canada or the United States, and front yards are often absent. For the apartment dwellers in this zone as well as in the nicer industrial suburbs, garden allotments serve in effect as backyards. Large tracts of *kleingärten* (small garden complexes) can be found on the periphery of many German cities; indeed, this phenomenon has spread to cities throughout Europe. These allotments were intended as places where urban dwellers could escape their apartments and the unhealthy inner-city environment to the relative solitude of a small hut or garden. These became increasingly widespread during the nineteenth century when railroads were being built on a large scale. Hence, these complexes often adjoin train tracks.

Generally, population densities are much lower in the postindustrial suburbs, and street patterns are more regular, a function of modern planning. Nonetheless, it is much rarer in Europe than in North America to find houses standing off completely by themselves. Instead, they tend to be built adjacent to one another, creating a relatively sharp break between urban and rural. The break may be less abrupt than in the days when city walls were common, but the inertia of a long-standing settlement pattern with a sharp break between urban and rural may help explain why the edges of European cities are so much more distinct than their North American counterparts.

Regional Variations

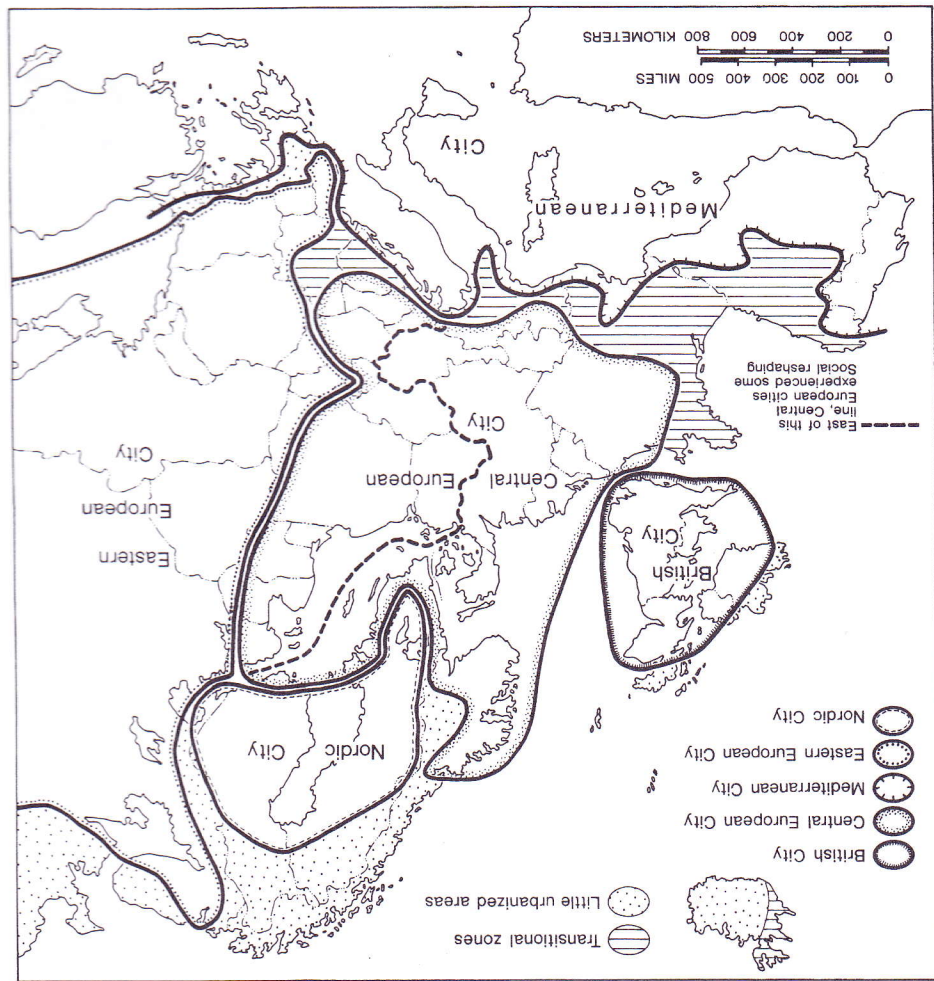
Preceding sections of this chapter perhaps led you to believe that a European type of city exists; indeed, some features occur widely. For example, most cities have a preindustrial core, most are compact, and most have an important religious structure, civic building, or old market square at the center. Still, we have been operating at a very high level of generalization. Each European city possesses its own distinct character and personality, and many aspects of European urbanism vary regionally. To provide a little more sense of some of the differences, it is useful to look at a few of the distinctive characteristics of urban areas in different parts of Europe (fig. 10.18). Even this exercise requires us to generalize at a fairly high level, but it provides interesting insights into the variable influences on urban development found in different parts of Europe.

The **British city**, more than others in Europe, resembles the urban centers of the United States, but major differences between the two can also be identified. A high rate of owner-occupied housing, detached or semidetached single-family residences, as well as flight to the suburbs of the outer ring characterize both British and American cities. Inner urban decay and blight, coupled with poverty, diminishing services, and crime, afflict most of the major British conurbations. Britons devote less attention to the preservation of inner-city historic structures than most Europeans do. Concerns over urban decline and crisis have long been heard in Great Britain. As a result, counterurbanization and suburbanization have worked more vigorously in Great Britain than the rest of Europe. This dispersal also feeds upon the British perception that the real England lies in the countryside and that the city is an anomalous aberration. Suburban

expansion causes the British city to be less compact than normal for Europe and produces a steep population density gradient from core to periphery. Americans find all these British conditions familiar, but continental Europeans are more likely to regard them as odd and generally undesirable.

At the same time, the British city has experienced far more inner area gentrification than its American counterpart has, and the government is quite active in the effort to stem decay. In Belfast, for example, the proportion of unfit housing declined from 25% to 8% between 1978 and 1992, largely as a result of public expenditures on urban regeneration. The figure now lies below 5%. The walled inner city of Londonderry (or

Figure 10.18. Distribution of European city types. Considerable overlapping of types occurs but is not shown, as for example where socialist influences partially reshaped many Central European cities in the Communist era. Sources: Leontidou 1990, 4; Hamilton 1978; Ford 1985; Gritsal 1997 a and b; Argenbright 1999; Pacione 1997; Sabelberg 1986.



Derry, as Irish separatists prefer) has undergone refurbishment, the once-blighted East End district of Glasgow became transformed in the 1980s, and many similar projects are presently under way. In urban regeneration, the British city occupies an intermediate position between those of the United States and western Europe.

The **Central European city** conforms most closely to what we have been describing as the typical European city (fig. 10.18). In origin, the Central European city reflects mainly the period of urban genesis led by Germanic peoples during the feudal Middle Ages. The early attainment of city-state status, which allowed a quasi-democratic form of government to take root in the Germanic cities while the countryside remained under feudal despotism, fostered a sense of urban superiority and a strong antirural bias. One is either a *burgher* (a city-dweller) or a *bauer* (farmer). City governments, visually represented by the town hall, retain considerable importance. Some cities even preserve a vestige of their former independent city-state rule; for example, Hamburg and Bremen enjoy provincial status within Germany, and Luxembourg remains, in effect, a free city-state. Central European citizens attach great importance to the preindustrial core, the root of urban self-government and democracy. As a result, central city decay has never approached the British levels (fig. 10.19). The preindustrial core, wreathed by parks and remnant walls, remains a prestigious place to live, and historic preservation and renewal



Figure 10.19. The preindustrial core of the small Hessian city of Weilburg, on the Lahn River in Germany. A typical Central European city, Weilburg perches on an incised meander of the river. The urban core retains its royal palace, cathedral, and town hall. Many people still reside in the central city, though new suburbs appear in the distance. Little evidence of urban decay can be found in such places. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1991.)

projects, including abundant facadism, typify the Central European city. The central public square retains great importance. In World War II, many German preindustrial cores were destroyed by bombing, but these old districts, so prized by the citizenry, were lovingly rebuilt, a process still underway today in cities such as Dresden (fig. 10.20). Counterurbanism and suburbanization, blunted by the appeal and snobbery of the city and the antirural bias, proved weaker than in Britain. In housing density, the

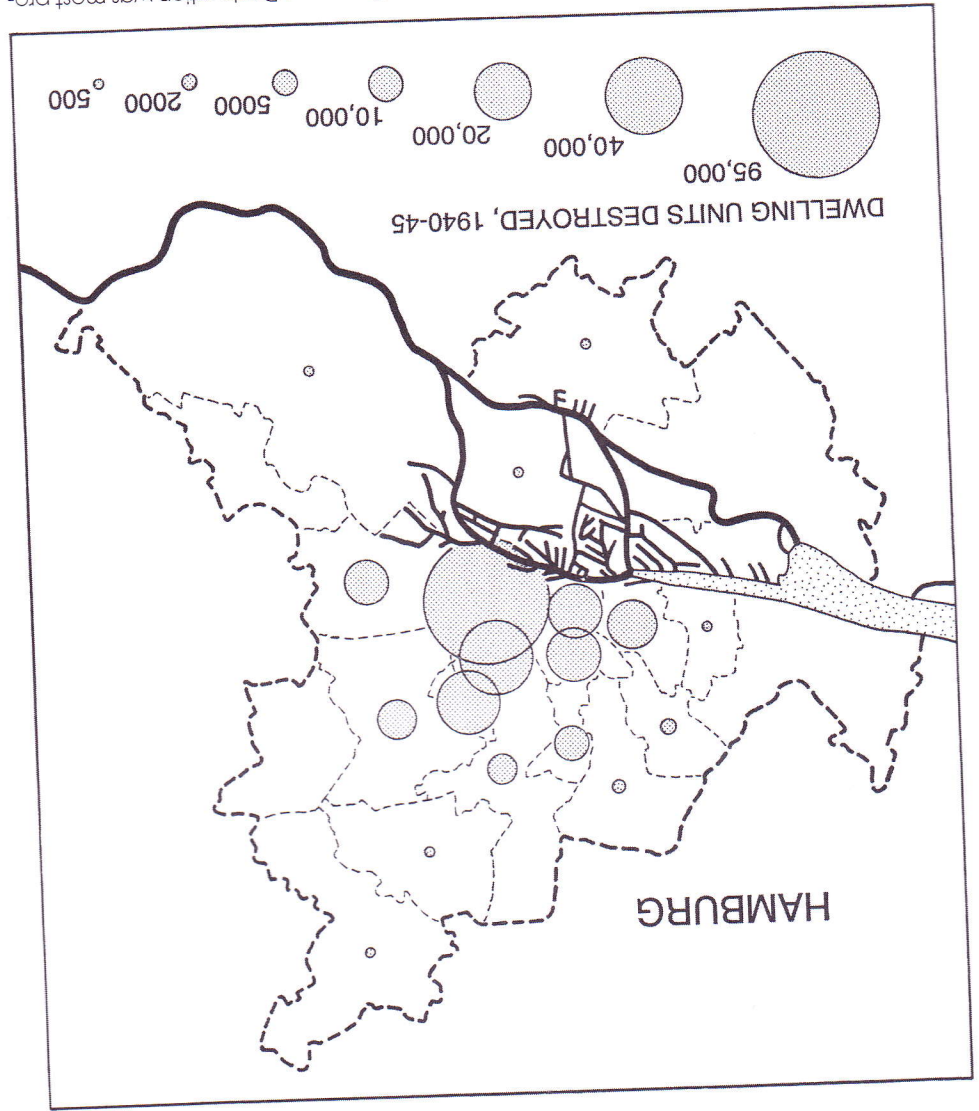


Figure 10.20. War damage to housing in Hamburg, Germany. Destruction was most pronounced in the old preindustrial core, but the visitor today will not find much evidence of the damage. Most Europeans prize very highly their medieval urban cores. Sources: City of Hamburg, 1951. *Hamburg in Zahlen*, Statistisches Landesamt, 29: 6; *Erdkunde*.

Central European city falls between the extremes of the British urban area with its relatively high number of single-family residences and the cities of southern and eastern Europe, where apartment housing prevails. Urban planning and land use zoning enjoy popular support and have greatly contributed to the renewal, aesthetic appeal, and livability of cities. The pedestrian zone movement began here and still enjoys its greatest acceptance in central Europe.

In some areas, the problems associated with British cities have taken root in central Europe, but they are aggressively combated. Economically depressed industrial cities in Germany's Ruhr area and the coalfields of the Belgian-French border region offer examples of blight and decay, as do many cities in the east that long remained under Communist rule.

Some Central European cities experienced a half-century or more of Communist rule, which imposed rigid socialist control over what had been a capitalistic urban structure. Warsaw, Budapest, Leipzig, Prague, and Riga provide examples. These cities all bore the earlier imprint of Central European urban culture, reflecting a long tradition. Socialist ideals and planning never completely transformed them, though change did come. In Warsaw, for example, an early Communist-directed residential mixing of social groups after 1945 steadily gave way during the following 40 years to a reemergence of class-based neighborhoods. Budapest became an odd amalgamation of Central European and Communist urbanism (fig. 10.21). Most of these cities have

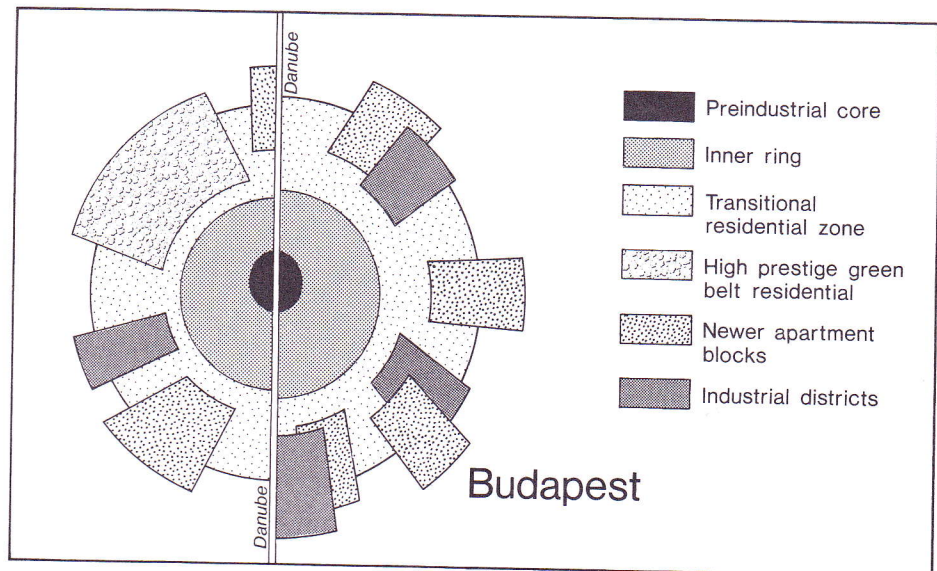


Figure 10.21. A stylized scheme of modern Budapest. A Central European type of city in heritage, Budapest reflects that tradition in its preindustrial core and inner ring. A socialist city from the late 1940s until 1990, Budapest accordingly has peripheral apartment blocks located adjacent to industrial complexes. The high-prestige green belt represents an anomaly for a communist city and reflects significant new influences on urban development in Hungary, beginning as early as 1970. *Source:* Enyedi/Szirmai 1992, 99.

even more rapidly regained their central European character and identity since the fall of Communism in the early 1990s.

In the **Mediterranean city**, a greater spontaneity of growth and development occurred with minimal attention to urban planning or zoning (fig. 10.18). The Germanic rural-urban dichotomy is less common in Mediterranean civilization, and the transition from the city to the countryside is more gradual. Since classical times, many farmers and rural laborers have resided in Mediterranean cities. Less social segregation occurs, and the juxtaposition of good and bad districts is common. A diversity of social classes is found in most parts of the Mediterranean city in mixed neighborhoods, though squatter slums and low-income apartment high-rises dominate the outer peripheries.

Small workshops of self-employed artisans are scattered through the city, and mixed land use reflects the lack of zoning, or, more exactly, widespread disregard for zoning regulations. Owners more typically live above their place of business than in the British or Central European cities, and most other people live close to their place of work. Inhabitants tend to view the city rather than the home as the principal venue for life, and, as a result, more people are to be seen in the streets, plazas, and shops. A central business district in the British/Germanic sense does not exist, and small shops appear even in the finer residential neighborhoods. To the Germanic eye, the Mediterranean city seems disorderly, but the people of the south instead see their cities as places of light, heat, and spontaneity, a welcome contrast to the cold, disciplined cities beyond the Alps.

Mediterranean cities represent the most compact type in Europe, with very high residential densities and virtually no development of an outer ring. High-status residential areas instead lie in the preindustrial periphery, adjacent to the preindustrial core and linked to it by a fine boulevard (fig. 10.22). While the old, walled part of the town retains great prestige and swarms with life, it is often largely given over to institutional functions, especially schools, museums, churches, and convents. A failure to restrict automobile access to the center creates a nightmare of traffic congestion, noise, and air pollution in the preindustrial core, and the pedestrian zone concept remains in its infancy here. The periphery of the Mediterranean city is the most stigmatized section, in contrast to the British model. Industries are concentrated there, as are poor people. Many of them live in spartan, high-rise apartment blocks.

The **Eastern European city** bears the residual imprint of socialism and Communism (fig. 10.18). In fact, this urban type was formerly called the **socialist city**. Eastern Europe was very weakly urbanized prior to the Communist era. In the Soviet Union in 1926, for example, only 18% of the population lived in cities, but, by 1989, the proportion there reached 66%. In such countries, socialist doctrine shaped urban development in diverse ways, and the legacy will persist long into the future. Under Communism, the government controlled urban development, including the demand for and supply of housing. Land, in effect, had no monetary value.

In its idealized form, the socialist city would have:

- Abolished socioeconomic residential segregation
- Guaranteed availability of public services such as child care

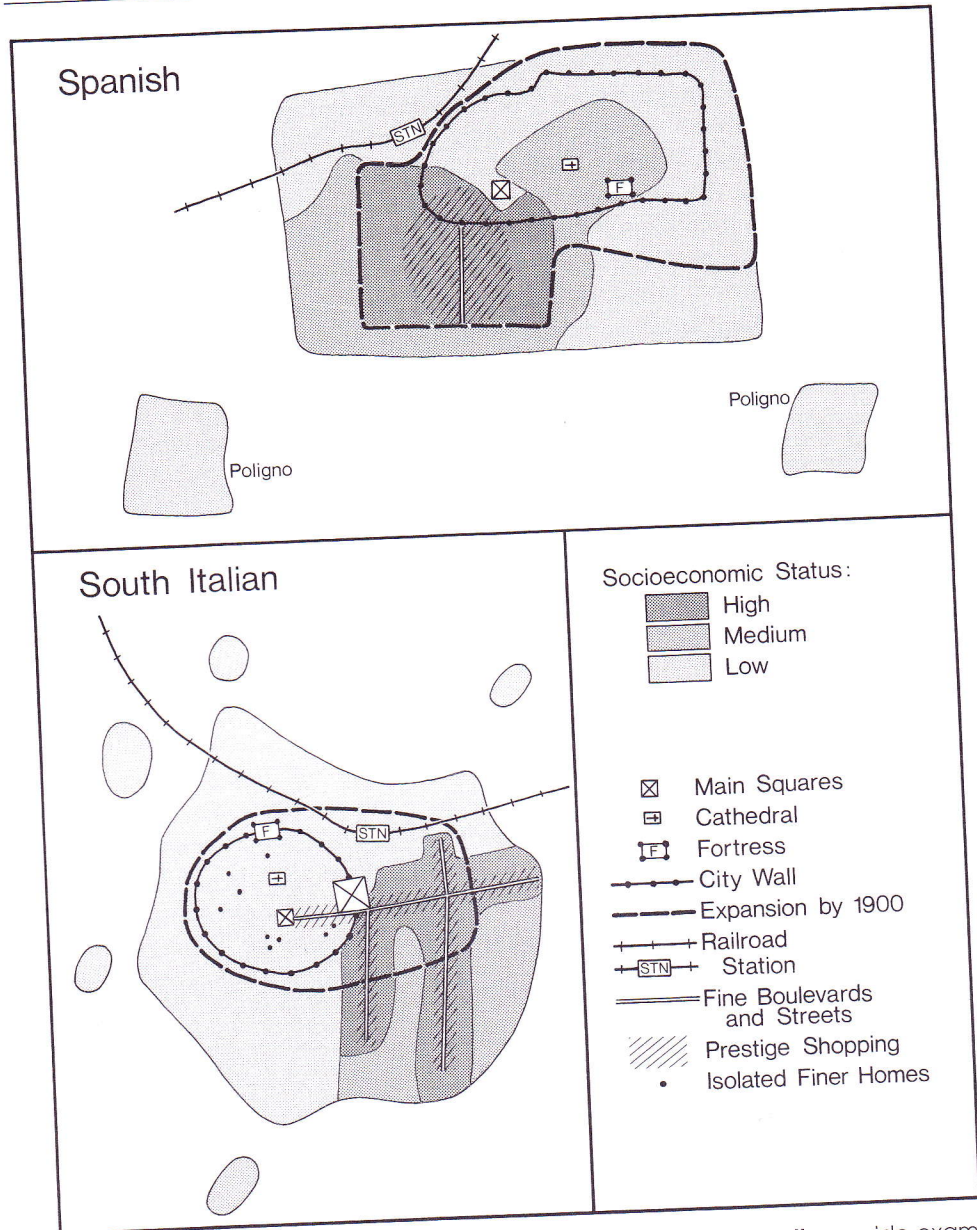


Figure 10.22. Models of the typical Spanish and southern Italian city provide examples of the Mediterranean city type, but they are sufficiently distinctive to be considered regional subtypes. The outlying clusters, called *polignos* in Spain, are recent laborer apartment blocks or squatter settlements. In the southern Italian type, the core has a maze of dead-end streets and remains largely residential, while in the Spanish type, most of the core is now institutional and has connecting streets. Sources: Ford 1985, 268; Sabelberg 1986; Fusch 1994; Pacione 1987.

- Provided abundant public green space
- Offered equal, if rudimentary, access to all consumer goods
- Created self-sufficient, small neighborhoods where residents lived, worked, and shopped

In many respects, eastern European cities still reflect these socialist goals, particularly in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Balkans. The Eastern European city resembles a collection of separate towns tied together. Population densities remain remarkably high in comparison to cities in most of the remainder of Europe, and the normal gradient toward lesser densities on the urban periphery is retarded and, in some cities, even reversed, with an outer rim of higher concentration of people (fig. 10.23). All of Moscow has a population density comparable to that of central London.

Less marked functional zonation occurs within the city than in the West, including a much more even spread of industries throughout the urban area, a phenomenon associated with the former absence of cash values for land. Social, economic, and ethnic segregation by districts or sectors is diminished. Workers in a particular industry might be segregated in response to a desire to minimize the journey to work. Public mass transportation prevails, and the automobile remains a less important means of moving about the city than in countries to the west. Even those workers who inhabit the characteristic

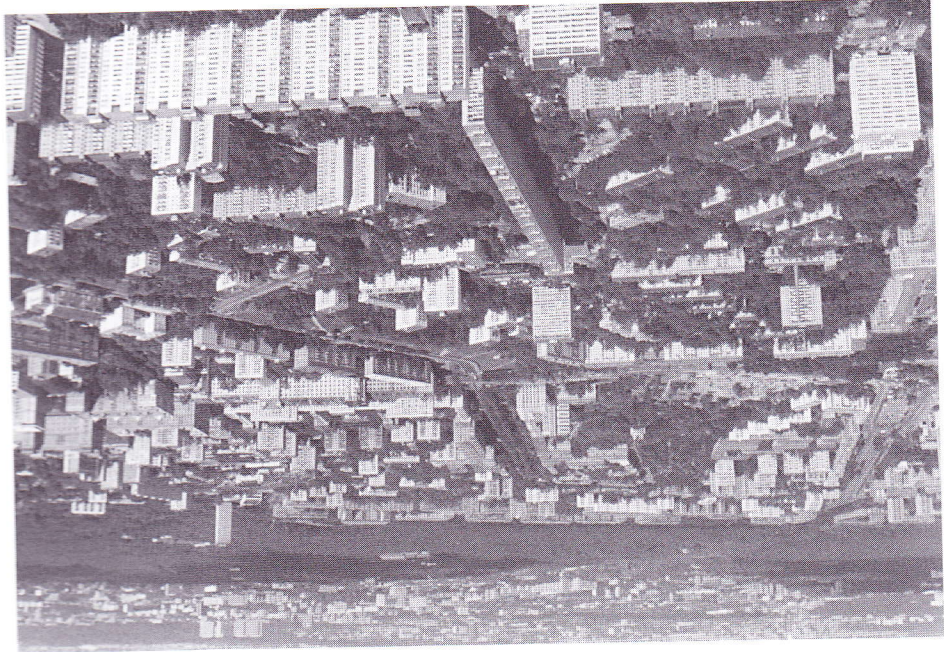


Figure 10.23. The northern periphery of Moscow. Huge complexes of high-rise apartments produce dense concentrations of population even on the outer margins of the city, a typical phenomenon in the Eastern European city type. Even so, much green space is preserved, catering to the Russian love of the forest. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1997.)

belt of prefabricated high-rise apartments, grouped in neighborhoods of 2,000 to 5,000 people, enjoy easy access to the city center. In comparison to the West, a higher proportion of the urban workforce finds employment in manufacturing, construction, and transportation, with lower percentages in trade, administration, and services.

Other socialist ideals will long leave a visible legacy in the European East. During the Communist era, authorities sought to convey the power of the state and the insignificance of the individual person. Governmental buildings of overwhelming size, reflecting monumentality in architecture, provide one example. Oversized public squares, in which mass political rallies could be held, appear gargantuan, cold, and empty at other times. And the cult of personality associated with some Communist dictatorships, most notoriously in Romania and Albania, allowed megalomaniacal leaders to massively reshape cities, often destroying much of the beauty from earlier eras. The pre-Communist city disappeared from central Bucharest, and the imprint of a personality cult will long linger there.

At the same time, infrastructure is decaying alarmingly in many eastern European cities. Shoddily constructed and inadequately maintained buildings abound. The eastern European cities inherited these from the socialist era, and the cost of correcting them creates enormous fiscal challenges. Still, pervasive change has come since the fall of Communism. Moscow, the Russian capital, provides an example, if somewhat atypical. A July 1991 decree provided for privatization of apartments in Russian cities. In Moscow, some 25% of all housing had been privatized by 1993, as had nearly 5,000 businesses, mainly those engaged in consumer services. The socialist city had few shops, but, in Moscow today, retail outlets abound, from upscale boutiques to makeshift sidewalk markets. One finds more automobiles. Moscow now has legendary traffic jams. One also finds more light, including neon signs. One finds more litter, color, outdoor advertising, and crime. By contrast, many Communist monuments have toppled, and the socialist slogans that formerly festooned public places have all vanished. Numerous factories closed, and the proportion of the urban workforce employed in manufacturing plummeted. Service sector jobs multiplied rapidly, involving everything from clerks and fast-food workers to realtors, banks, lawyers, and stockbrokers. The proportion of Moscow's labor force engaged in service activities passed 50% as early as 1993 and is substantially higher today.

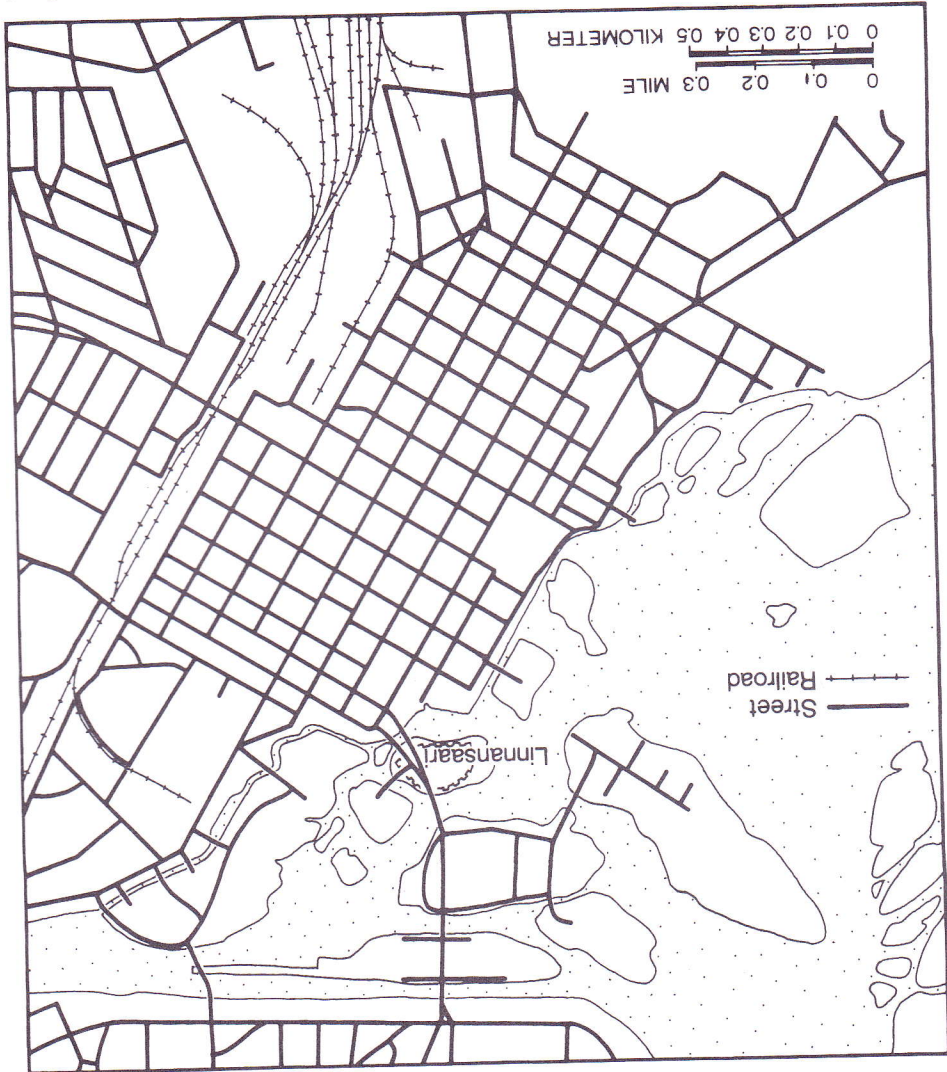
A less widespread city type, the **Nordic city**, occurs in Scandinavia and Finland. More recent in origin, these cities generally date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the era of the Swedish Empire when new cities were laid out by planners. A grid pattern of streets characterizes the core of the Nordic city, though often that pattern breaks down in the suburbs (fig. 10.24). A waterside site was unfailingly chosen for the Nordic city, whether marine, riverine, or lakeside. Of the various European urban types, the Nordic city is the least compact, with broad avenues; abundant free-standing, single-family residences (fig. 10.25); and spacious open areas. In fact, some Nordic cities consist of several different clusters separated by green space or even farmland, heightening the dispersed urban character. Trees grow more abundantly along the urban streets, revealing the strong northern love of forests. The Nordic city is modest in size, usually having less than 100,000 inhabitants, and the local industries typically consist of small firms manufacturing high-quality, even luxury products. In spite of

Site, morphology, and internal cultural/economic patterning, while essential geographical attributes of cities, do not complete the spatial analysis of urbanism. The distribution of cities must also be considered. In spite of the fact that Europe forms the most highly

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their size, Nordic cities offer an impressive array of amenities, from museums, sport complexes, and hospitals, to symphony orchestras and bicycle paths.

Figure 10.24. Oulu, a Nordic city of Finland. Clearly preserved in its central section is the gridiron plan and public squares laid out by its Swedish founders. The city dates from 1605 and was originally protected by the island fortress on Linnansaari.



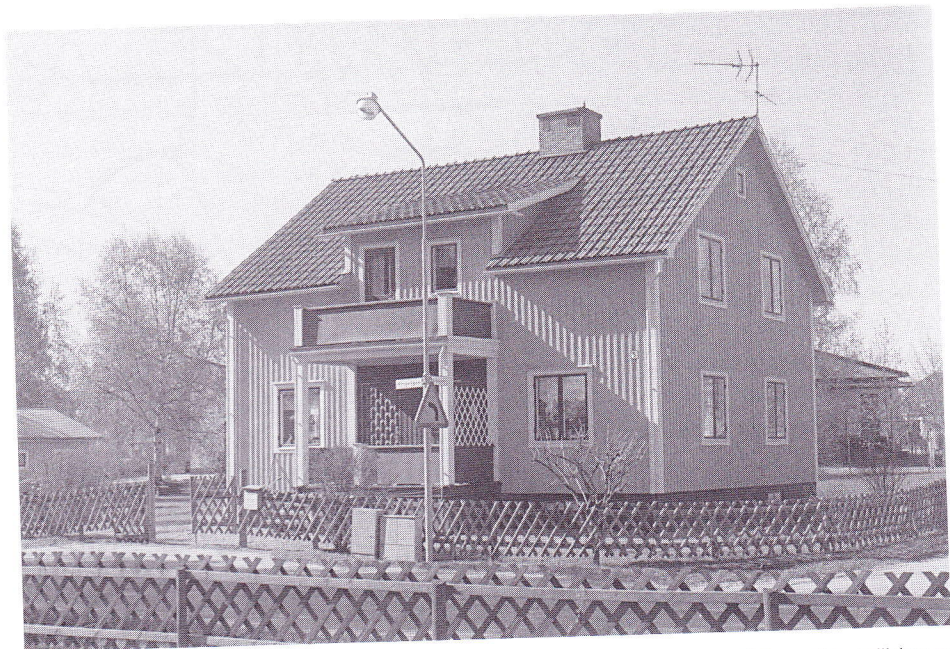


Figure 10.25. Single-family detached private housing in the small Swedish mill town and service center of Torsby, in Värmland province. Surrounded by a well-kept, fenced lawn and garden, this home is typical of smaller urban centers in northern Europe. (Photo by T.G.J.-B., 1985.)

urbanized culture area in the world, **megalopolis** development is not common there. A megalopolis forms when adjacent cities grow until they coalesce, forming a polynucleated urban complex. The region from Boston to Washington, DC, in the United States is a megalopolis. In most parts of Europe, land use planning and green belt preservation worked against the development of megalopolises. Among the few examples are Randstad in the Netherlands (fig. 10.26) with a collective population of 7.5 million; the Rhine–Ruhr in western Germany, containing about 11 million inhabitants; Lancs-Yorks in the old industrial heart of England; Donbas in eastern Ukraine; and the somewhat more spread-out Flemish Triangle of northern Belgium (fig. 10.27). These megalopolises retain more open space than might be expected, thanks to rigorous zoning policies. Randstad Holland, for example, remains doughnut-shaped, due to a largely successful plan to keep the center (the Green Heart) open (fig. 10.26).

The area encompassing Randstad Holland, the Rhine–Ruhr, and the Flemish Diamond contains the greatest concentration of cities in Europe. Moving up in scale, some geographers make reference to a great arc of urban areas stretching from Lancs-Yorks to Rome, sometimes called the *big banana* because of its shape (fig. 10.27). Since the urbanized banana is interrupted by the Alps, it should not be seen as a zone of continuous urbanization, but much of it is an area of unusually high levels of urbanization and urban-related economic activities. There are, of course, many important cities outside of the banana, but they tended to be somewhat more widely separated from one another and less intimately interconnected with a wider hyper-urbanized zone.

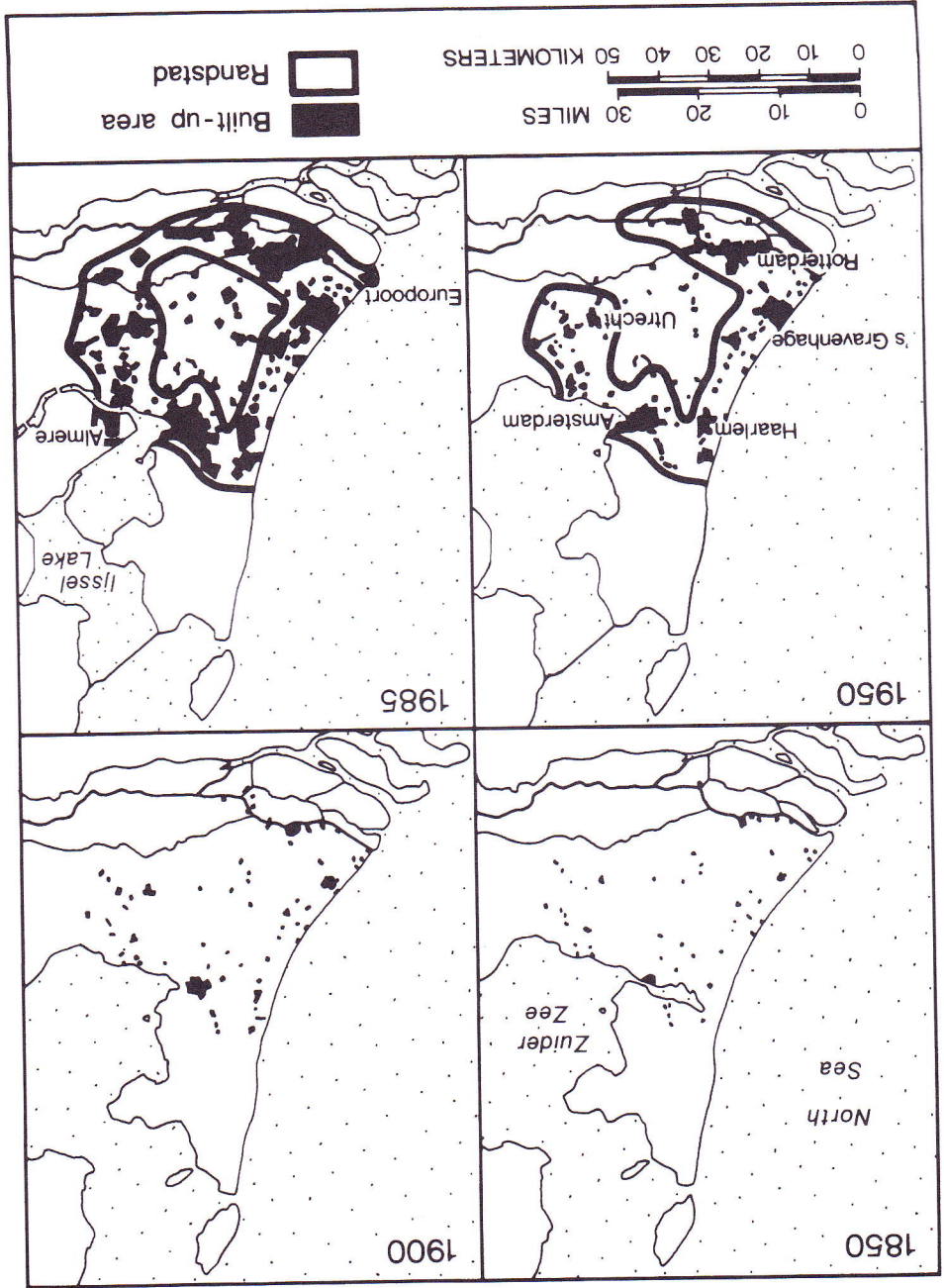


Figure 10.26. Development of Randstad Holland, megalopolis in the Netherlands. Land-use planning and zoning are being employed to keep the central area, or "doughnut hole," open, but suburban development is encroaching. Note the use of some reclaimed Zuider Zee polderland for expansion of the Randstad. Sources: Randstad Holland, 1980; Utrecht and 's Gravenhage, NL: Centre for the Geography of the Netherlands, 14; van Wesspep et al., 1993.

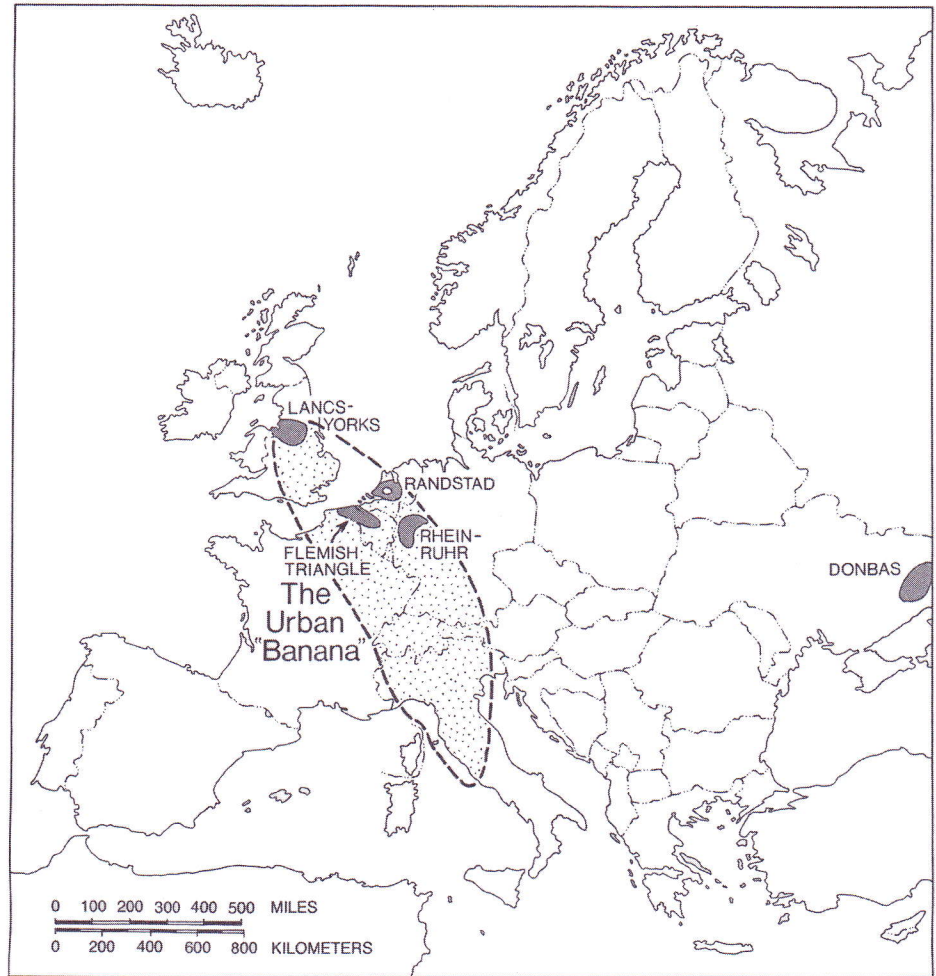


Figure 10.27. European megalopolises and the "Big Banana" dominate Europe's core. Sources: After Wessep et al. 1993; Dieleman and Faludi 1998.

Our focus in this chapter has been on the locational, morphological, and economic attributes of European cities. Since the vast majority of Europeans live in urban areas, they play a major role in Europe's social and ethnic geography as well. We turn to these matters in the next chapter.

Sources and Suggested Readings

- Agnew, J., J. Mercer, and D.E. Sopher. 2007. *The City in Cultural Context*. London: Routledge.
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- Argenbright, R. 1999. Remaking Moscow: New Places, New Selves. *Geographical Review* 89 (1): 1–22.