

Draft September 7, 2000

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Europe is the most intensively settled of the major world regions, with a population of 728 million, 75 percent of whom live in Europe's cities, 142 of which have populations of over 500,000 (**Figure 3.1**). The western, northern, and southern limits of Europe as a whole are quite clearly defined, since they are formed by the Atlantic Ocean on the west, the Arctic Sea on the north, and the Mediterranean Sea on the south. The eastern edge of Europe merges into the vastness of Asia and is less easily defined. The upland ranges of the Urals are sometimes used by geographers to mark the boundary between Europe and Asia, but the most significant factors separating Europe from Asia are human and relate to race, language, and a common set of ethical values that stem from Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox forms of Christianity. As a result, the eastern boundary of Europe is often demarcated through political and administrative boundaries rather than physical features. For a few decades, between 1945 and 1989, there was a significant geopolitical division within Europe into Eastern and Western Europe. These two subregions share a great deal in terms of physical geography, racial characteristics, and cultural values, but for a while they were divided by the Cold War territorial boundary that separated the capitalist democracies of Western Europe from Soviet **state socialism**, a form of economy based on principles of collective ownership and administration of the means of production and distribution of goods, dominated and directed by state bureaucracies. The result was what Winston Churchill called an "Iron Curtain" along the western frontier of Soviet-dominated territory: a militarized frontier zone across which Soviet and East European authorities allowed the absolute minimum movement of people, goods, and information. Soviet influence to the east of the Iron Curtain created significantly different economic, social, and cultural conditions for a long enough period to have resulted in some modifications to the geography of Eastern Europe. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, however, its former satellite states in Eastern Europe have reoriented themselves as part of the broader European world region. Meanwhile, most European states have joined together in the European Union, creating an extremely powerful economic and political force in world affairs. Europe as a whole still bears the legacy of a complex history of social and political development, but it has reemerged since World War II as a crucible of technological, economic, and cultural innovation.

**Fig 3.1 : map: political boundaries and major cities**

## ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY IN EUROPE

Two aspects of Europe's physical geography have been fundamental to its evolution as a world region and have been important influences on the evolution of regional geographies within Europe itself. First, as a world region, Europe is situated between the Americas, Africa, and the Middle

East (see Figure 2.x). Second, as a satellite photograph of Europe reveals, Europe consists mainly of a collection of peninsulas and islands at the western extremity of the great Eurasian landmass (**Figure 3.2**).

**Fig 3.2: satellite image of W Europe**

The largest of the European peninsulas is the Scandinavian Peninsula, whose prominent western mountains separate Atlantic-oriented Norway from continental-oriented Sweden. Equally striking are the Iberian Peninsula, whose square mass projects into the Atlantic, and the boot-shaped Italian Peninsula. In the southeast is the broad triangle of the Balkan Peninsula, which projects into the Mediterranean, terminating in the intricate coastlines of the Greek peninsulas and islands. In the northwest are Europe's two largest islands, Britain and Ireland. The overall effect is that tongues of shallow seas penetrate deep into the European landmass. This was especially important in the pre-Modern period, when the only means of transporting goods were by sailing vessel and wagon. The Mediterranean Sea and North Sea, in particular, provided relatively sheltered sea lanes, fostering seafaring traditions in the peoples all around their coasts. The penetration of the seas deep into the European landmass provided numerous short land routes across the major peninsulas, making it easier for trade and communications to take place in the days of sail and wagon. As we shall see, Europeans' relationship to the surrounding seas has been a crucial factor in the evolution of European—and, indeed, world—geography.

Europe's navigable rivers were also important in shaping the human geography of the region. Although small by comparison with major rivers in other regions of the world, some of the principal rivers of Europe—the Danube, the Dneiper, the Elbe, the Rhine, the Seine, and the Thames—played key roles as routeways, and the low-lying watersheds between the major rivers of Europe's plains allowed canal building to take place relatively easily, so increasing the mobility of river traffic.

### **Climate**

Another important maritime influence on the geography of Europe is the moderating effect of the seas on climate. In winter, seas cool more slowly than the land, while in summer they warm up more slowly than the land. As a result, the seas provide a warming effect in winter and a cooling effect in summer. Europe's arrangement of islands and peninsulas means that this moderating effect is particularly marked, contributing to an overall climate that does not have great seasonal extremes of heat and cold. This moderating effect is intensified by the North Atlantic Drift, which carries great quantities of warm water from the tropical Gulf Stream as far as the British Isles and the North Sea. Given its latitude (Paris, at almost 49° N, is the same latitude as Vancouver and Newfoundland in Canada), most of Europe is remarkably warm. It is continually crossed by moist, warm air masses that drift in from the

Atlantic. The effects of these warm, wet, westerly winds are most pronounced in northwestern Europe, where squalls and showers accompany the passage of the succession of eastward-moving weather systems. Weather in northwestern Europe tends to be unpredictable, partly because of the swirling movement of air masses as they pass over the Atlantic, and partly because of the complex effects of the widely varying temperatures of interpenetrating bodies of land and water. Further east, in continental Europe, seasonal weather tends to be more settled, with more pronounced extremes of summer heat and winter cold. In these interior regions, local variations in weather are influenced a great deal by the direction in which a particular slope or land surface faces and its elevation above sea level.

The Mediterranean Basin has a different and quite distinctive climate. In winter, low pressure systems along the northern Mediterranean draw in rain-bearing weather fronts from the Atlantic. When low pressure over the northern Mediterranean coincides with high pressure over continental Europe, southerly airflows spill over mountain ranges and down valleys, bringing cold blasts of air. These events have local names: the *mistral*, for example, which blows down the Rhône Valley in southern France, and the *bora*, which blows over the eastern Alps toward the Adriatic region of Italy. In summer, hot, dry air masses from Asia and Africa dominate the Mediterranean Basin, producing dry, sunny conditions.

### Landforms and Landscapes

The physical environments of Europe are complex and varied. It is impossible to travel far without encountering significant changes in physical landscapes. There is, however, a broad pattern to this variability, and it is based on four principal **physiographic regions** that are characterized by broad coherence of geology, relief, landforms, soils, and vegetation. These regions are the Northwestern Uplands, the Alpine System, the Central Plateaus, and the North European Lowlands (**Figure 3.3**).

#### Fig 3.3: map of physiographic regions

The Northwestern Uplands are composed of the most ancient rocks in Europe, the product of the Caledonian mountain-building episode about 400 million years ago. Included in this region are the mountains of Norway and Scotland and the uplands of Iceland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall (in England) and Brittany (in France). The original Caledonian mountain system was eroded and uplifted several times, and following the most recent uplift the northwestern uplands have been worn down again, molded by ice sheets and glaciers. Many valleys were deepened and straightened by ice, leaving spectacular glaciated landscapes. Since

the last glaciation, sea levels have risen, forming **fjords** wherever these glaciated valleys have been flooded by the rising sea (**Figure 3.4**).

**Fig 3.4: photo of Norwegian fjord**

The Alpine System is the product of the most recent of Europe's mountain-building episodes, which occurred about 50 million years ago. The Alpine System stretches west to east across the southern part of Europe from the Pyrenees, which mark the border between Spain and France, through the Alps and the Dolomites and on to the Carpathians, the Dinaric Alps, and some ranges in the Balkan Peninsula. The Apennines of Italy and the Pindus Mountains of Greece are also part of the Alpine System. The Alpine landscape is characterized by jagged mountains with high, pyramidal peaks and deeply glaciated valleys (**Figure 3.5**). Seven of the peaks in the Western Alps exceed 4000 meters (13,123 ft) in height.

**Fig 3.5: photo of Alpine Mts/valley**

Between the Alpine System and the Northwestern Uplands are the landscapes of the Central Plateaus and the North European Lowlands. The Central Plateaus are formed from 250-300-million-year-old rocks that have been eroded down to broad tracts of uplands. Beneath the forest-clad slopes and fertile valleys of these plateaus lie many of Europe's most important coalfields. For the most part, the plateaus reach between 500 and 800 meters (1640 and 2625 feet) in height, though they rise to over 1800 meters (5905 feet) in the Central Massif of France. The Central Plateaus were generally too low to have been glaciated and too far south to have been covered by the great northern ice sheets of the last Ice Age. Rather, their landscape is characterized by rolling hills, steep slopes and dipping vales, and deeply carved river valleys (**Figure 3.6**).

**Fig 3.6: photo of Rhine or Mosel Gorge**

The North European Lowlands sweep in a broad crescent from southern France, through Belgium, the Netherlands, and southeastern England and into northern Germany, Denmark, and the southern tip of Sweden. Continuing eastward, they broaden into the immense European plain that extends through Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, all the way into Russia. Coal is found in quantity under the lowlands of England, France, Germany, and Poland, and in smaller deposits in Belgium and the Netherlands. Oil and natural gas deposits are found beneath the North Sea and under the lowlands of southern England, the Netherlands, and northern Germany. Nearly all of this area lies below 200 meters (656 feet) in elevation, and the topography everywhere is flat or gently undulating. As a result, the region has been particularly attractive to farming and settlement (**Figure 3.7**). There is a great deal of variation, however, in the fertility of the soils, so that settlement patterns

are uneven and agriculture is finely tuned to the limits and opportunities of local soils, landscape, and climate.

**Fig 3.7: photo of lowland farming landscape**

### Europe's Environmental History

Temperate forests originally covered about 95 percent of Europe, with a natural ecosystem dominated by oak, together with elm, beech, and lime. By the end of the medieval period, Europe's forest cover had been reduced to about 20 percent; and today it is around 5 percent. The first clearing of natural forests took place as Europe's small prehistoric populations began to cultivate small patches of land under the 'slash-and-burn' or **swidden** system. Under the swidden system, people would create clearings in the forest, cultivate the land for several years, and then abandon it once fertility had declined, allowing the area to revert to secondary growth. As population slowly increased over many centuries, permanent fields were established, usually through clearing the woodland around small villages in small increments.

Then, between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1300, a period of warmer climate, together with advances in agricultural knowledge and practices, led to a significant transformation of the European landscape. The population more than doubled, from around 36 million to more than 80 million, and a vast amount of land was brought under cultivation for the first time. By about 1200 most of the best soils of western Europe had been cleared of forest and new settlements were increasingly forced into the more marginal areas of heavy clays or thin sandy soils on higher ground and heathlands. In many parts of Europe, large-scale drainage projects were undertaken in order to reclaim marshlands. The Romans had already demonstrated the effectiveness of drainage schemes, reclaiming parts of Italy and northwestern Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there were important and extensive drainage and resettlement schemes in Italy's Po Valley, in the Poitevin marshes of France, and in the Fenlands of eastern England. In eastern Europe, clearances were organized by agents acting for various princes and bishops who controlled extensive tracts of land. The agents would permit for settlers, and develop villages and towns, often to standardized designs.

This great medieval colonization came to a halt nearly everywhere around 1300. One important factor was the so-called Little Ice Age, a period of cooler climate during which the growing season was reduced significantly—perhaps by as much as 5 weeks. Another factor was the catastrophic loss of population in the Black Death (1347-1351) and the periodic recurrences of the plague that continued for the rest of the fourteenth century. The Little Ice Age lasted until the early sixteenth century, by which time many villages had been and much of the more marginal land abandoned.

The resurgence of European economies from the sixteenth century onwards coincided with overseas exploration and trade, but domestic landscapes were significantly impacted by repopulation, by land tenure and reforms, and by advances in science and technology that changed agricultural practices, allowing for a more intensive use of the land. In the Netherlands, a steadily growing population and the consequent requirement for more agricultural land led to increased efforts to reclaim land from the sea and to drain coastal marshlands. Hundreds of small estuarine and coastal barrier islands were slowly joined into larger units, and sea defence walls were constructed in order to protect low-lying land, which was drained by windmill-powered water pumps, the excess water being carried off into a web of drainage ditches and canals. The resulting **polder** landscape provided excellent, flat, fertile, and stone-free soil. Between 1550 and 1650, 165,000 hectares (407,715 acres) of polderland was established in the Netherlands, and the sophisticated techniques developed by the Dutch began to be applied elsewhere in Europe—including eastern England and the Rhone estuary in southern France. While most of these schemes resulted in improved farmland, the environmental consequences were often serious. In addition to the vulnerability of the polderlands to inundation by the sea, large-scale drainage schemes devastated the wetland habitat of many species, while some ill-conceived schemes simply ended in widespread flooding.

These environmental problems, though, were but a prelude to the environmental changes and ecological disasters that accompanied the industrialization of Europe, beginning in the eighteenth century. Mining—especially coalmining—created derelict landscapes of spoil heaps; urbanization encroached on rural landscapes and generated unprecedented amounts and concentrations of human, domestic, and industrial waste; and manufacturing, unregulated at first, resulted in extremely unhealthy levels of air pollution and in the devastating pollution of rivers and streams.

## EUROPE IN THE WORLD

The foundations of Europe's human geography were laid by the Greek and Roman empires. Beginning around 750 B.C., the ancient Greeks developed a series of fortified city-states (called *poleis*) along the Mediterranean coast, and by 550 B.C. there were about 250 of them. **Figure 3.8** shows the location of the largest of these trading colonies, some of which subsequently grew into important cities (for example, Athens and Corinth) while others remain as isolated ruins or as archaeological sites (for example, Delphi and Olympia). The Roman Republic was established in 509 B.C. and took almost 300 years to establish control over the Italian Peninsula. By A.D. 14, however, the Romans had conquered much of Europe, together with parts of North

Africa and Asia Minor (Figure 3.8). Most European cities that are important today had their origin as Roman settlements. In quite a few of these cities, it is possible to trace the original Roman street layouts. In some, it is possible to glimpse remnants of defensive city walls and of paved streets, aqueducts, viaducts, arenas, sewage systems, baths, and public buildings. In the modern countryside, the legacy of the Roman empire is represented by arrow-straight roads, built by their engineers and maintained and improved by successive generations.

**Figure 3.8: map showing Greek colonies and extent of Roman empire**

The decline of the Roman empire, beginning in the fourth century A.D., was accompanied by a long period of rural reorganization and consolidation under feudal systems, a period that is often characterized as uneventful and stagnant. In fact, the roots of European regional differentiation can be traced to this long feudal era of slow change. **Feudal systems** were almost wholly agricultural, with 80 or 90 percent of the workforce engaged in farming and most of the rest occupied in basic craft work. Most production was for people's immediate needs, with very little of a community's output ever finding its way to wider markets.

By A.D. 1000 the countryside of most of Europe had been consolidated into a regional patchwork of feudal agricultural subsystems, each of which was more or less self-sufficient. For a long time, towns were small and relatively unimportant, their existence tied mainly to the castles, palaces, churches, and cathedrals of the upper ranks of the feudal hierarchy. These economic landscapes—inflexible, slow-motion and introverted—nevertheless contained the essential preconditions for the rise of Europe as the dynamic hub of the world economy.

### Trade and the Age of Discovery

The rise of Europe as a major world region had its origins in the emergence of a system of merchant capitalism in the fifteenth century. Long-standing trading patterns that had been developed from the twelfth century by the merchants of Venice, Pisa, Genoa, Florence, Bruges, Antwerp, and the Hanseatic League (a federation of city-states around the North Sea and Baltic coasts that included Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, Rostock, and Danzig [see **Figure 3.9**]) provided the foundations for a trading system of immense complexity that soon came to span Europe.

**Fig. 3.9: map of Hanseatic League**

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a series of innovations in business and technology contributed to the consolidation of Europe's new merchant capitalist economy. These included several key innovations in the organization of business and finance: banking, loan systems, credit transfers, company partnerships, shares in stock, speculation in commodity futures, commercial insurance, and courier/news services. Meanwhile, technological innovations began to further strengthen

Europe's economic advantages. Some of these innovations were adaptations and improvements of Oriental discoveries—the windmill, spinning wheels, paper manufacture, gunpowder, and the compass, for example. But in Europe there was a real passion for the mechanization of the manufacturing process. Key engineering breakthroughs included the more efficient use of energy in water mills and blast furnaces, the design of reliable clocks and firearms, and the introduction of new methods of processing metals and manufacturing glass.

It was the combination of innovations in shipbuilding, navigation and naval ordnance, however, that had the most far-reaching consequences for Europe's role in the world economy. In the course of the fifteenth century, the full-rigged sailing ship was developed, enabling faster voyages in larger and more maneuverable vessels that were less dependent on favorable winds. Meanwhile, navigational tools such as the quadrant (1450) and the astrolabe (1480) were developed, and a systematic knowledge of Atlantic winds had been acquired. By the mid-sixteenth century, armorers in England, Holland, and Sweden had perfected the technique of casting iron guns, making it possible to replace bronze cannon with larger numbers of more effective guns at lower expense. Together, these advances made it possible for the merchants of Europe to establish the basis of a worldwide economy in the space of less than a hundred years (see *Geography Matters: European Exploration and the Age of Discovery*, p. 000).

*Geography Matters: European Exploration and the Age of Discovery*

Gold and silver from the Americas provided the first major economic transformation of Europe, allowing Spain and Portugal, in particular, to live well above their means. The bullion created an effective demand for consumer and capital goods of all kinds—textiles, furniture, weapons, ships, food, and wine (see *Geographies of Indulgence, Desire and Addiction: Wine*)—thus stimulating production throughout Europe and creating the basis for a Golden Age of prosperity for most of the sixteenth century. Meanwhile, overseas exploration and expansion made available a variety of new and unusual products—cocoa, beans, maize, potatoes, tomatoes, sugar cane, tobacco, and vanilla from the Americas, tea and spices from the Orient—that opened up large new markets to enterprising merchants. It is also important to note that the emergence of a worldwide system of exploration and trade helped to establish the foundations of modern geography (see *Geography Matters: The Development of Geographic Thought*, p. 000).

*Geography of Indulgence, Desire, and Addiction: Wine*  
*Geography Matters: "The Development of Geographic Thought"*

The demands of overseas expansion stimulated Europeans to achieve new developments in nautical mapmaking, naval artillery, shipbuilding, and the use of sail. Maritime insurance emerged as one of a growing

number of sophisticated business and financial services industries; and the whole experience of overseas expansion provided Europeans with a great practical school of entrepreneurship and investment. Just as important was the way that the profits from overseas colonies and trading provided capital for investment in domestic agriculture, mining, and, most important of all, manufacturing.

These changes also had a profound effect on the geography of Europe itself. Before the mid-fifteenth century, Europe was organized around two subregional maritime economies—one based on the Mediterranean and the other on the Baltic. The overseas expansions pioneered first by the Portuguese and then by the Spanish, Dutch, English, and French, reoriented Europe's geography toward the Atlantic. The river basins of the Rhine, the Seine, and the Thames rapidly became the focus of a thriving network of **entrepôt** seaports, intermediary centers of trade and transshipment, that transformed Europe. These three river basins, backed by the increasingly powerful states in which they were embedded—the Netherlands, France, and Britain, respectively—then became engaged in a struggle for economic and political hegemony. Although the Rhine was the principal natural routeway into the heart of Europe, the convoluted politics of the Netherlands allowed Britain and France to become the dominant powers by the late 1600s. Subsequently, France, under Napoleon, made the military error of attempting to pursue both maritime and continental power at once, allowing Britain to become the undisputed hegemonic power of the industrial era (see Chapter 2, p. 00).

### **Industrialization and Imperialism**

Europe's regional geographies were comprehensively recast once more by the new production and transportation technologies that marked the onset of the Industrial Revolution (from the late 1700s). New production technologies, based on more efficient energy sources, helped to raise levels of productivity and to create new and better products that stimulated demand, increased profits, and created a pool of capital for further investment. New transportation technologies enabled successive phases of geographic expansion that completely reorganized the geography of Europe. As the application of new technologies altered the margins of profitability in different kinds of enterprise, so the fortunes of particular places and regions shifted.

There was in fact not a sudden, single industrial revolution but three distinctive transitional waves of industrialization, each having a different degree of impact on different regions and countries. The first, between about 1790 and 1850, was based on a cluster of early industrial technologies (steam engines, cotton textiles, and ironworking), and was highly localized. It was limited to a few regions in Britain where industrial entrepreneurs and workforces had first exploited key innovations and the availability of key resources (coal, iron ore, and

water). These included north Cornwall, eastern Shropshire (where Abraham Darby II built the world's first iron bridge—at Ironbridge, on the River Severn), south Staffordshire, south Lancashire, southwestern Yorkshire, Tyneside, and Clydeside (**Figure 3.10**).

**Figure 3.10: composite figure on spread of industrialization in Europe**

The second wave, between about 1850 and 1870, involved the diffusion of industrialization to most of the rest of Britain and to parts of northwest Europe, particularly the coalfield areas of northern France, Belgium, and Germany (Figure 3.10). New opportunities were created as railroads and steamships made more places accessible, bringing their resources and their markets into the sphere of industrialization. New materials and new technologies (steel, machine tools) created opportunities to manufacture and market new products. These new activities brought some significant changes in the logic of industrial location. The importance of railway networks, for example, attracted industry away from smaller towns on the canal systems and toward larger towns with good rail connections. The importance of steamships for coastal and international trade attracted industry to larger ports. At the same time, the importance of steel produced concentrations of heavy industry in places with nearby supplies of coal, iron ore, and limestone.

The third wave of industrialization saw a further reorganization of the geography of Europe as yet another cluster of technologies (including electricity, electrical engineering, and telecommunications) brought different needs and created new opportunities. During this period, industrialization spread for the first time to remoter parts of the United Kingdom, France, and Germany and to most of the Netherlands, southern Scandinavia, northern Italy, eastern Austria, Bohemia (in what was then Czechoslovakia), Silesia (in Poland), Catalonia (in Spain), and the Donbas region of the Ukraine, then in Russia. The overall result was to create the foundations of a core-periphery structure within Europe (see Figure 3.10), with the heart of the core centered on the “Golden Triangle” stretching between London, Paris, and Berlin. The peripheral territories of Europe—most of the Iberian peninsula, northern Scandinavia, Ireland, southern Italy, the Balkans and east-central Europe—were slowly penetrated by industrialization over the next 50 years. The environmental impacts of these changes were profound. Much of Europe's forest cover was cleared, while remaining forests and woodlands suffered from the **acid rain** resulting from heavy doses of atmospheric pollution. Many streams and rivers also became polluted, while the landscape everywhere was scarred with quarries, pits, cuttings, dumps, and waste heaps.

Meanwhile, several of the most powerful and heavily industrialized European countries (notably the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the Netherlands), were by now competing for influence on a global scale. This competition developed into a scramble for territorial and commercial

domination through imperialism—the deliberate exercise of military power and economic influence by core states in order to advance and secure their national interests. European countries engaged in preemptive geographic expansionism in order to protect their established interests and to limit the opportunities of others. They also wanted to secure as much of the world as possible—through a combination of military oversight, administrative control, and economic regulations—in order to ensure stable and profitable environments for their traders and investors. This combination of circumstances defined a new era of imperialism.

Africa, more than any other peripheral region, was given an entirely new political geography. It was carved up into a patchwork of European colonies and protectorates in just 34 years, between 1880 and 1914, with little regard for either physical geography or the preexisting human geographies (see Chapter 6). At the same time, the major powers jostled and squabbled over small Pacific islands that had suddenly become valuable as strategic coaling stations for their navies and merchant fleets. Resistance from indigenous peoples was quickly brushed aside by imperial navies with armored steel steamers and high-explosive guns and by troops with rifles and cannon. European weaponry was so superior that Otto von Bismarck, the founder and first Chancellor (1871–1890) of the German empire, referred to these conflicts as “sporting wars.” Between 1870 and 1900, European countries added almost 22 million square kilometers (about 10 million square miles) and 150 million people to their spheres of control: 20 percent of Earth’s land surface and 10 percent of its population (**Figure 3.11**). The imprint of imperialism and colonization on the geographies of the world was immediate and profound. Within Europe, port cities, manufacturing regions, and, in particular, the capital cities of the imperial powers all experienced a significant boost to their economies.

*Figure 3.11: map of colonial powers in 1914*

During the first half of the twentieth century, the economic development of the whole of Europe was disrupted twice by major wars. The devastation of the First World War was immense. The overall loss of life, including the victims of influenza epidemics and border conflicts that followed the war, amounted to between 50 and 60 million. About half as many again were permanently disabled. For some countries, this meant a loss of between 10 and 15 percent of the male workforce.

Just as European economies had adjusted to these dislocations, the Great Depression created a further phase of economic damage and reorganization throughout Europe. The Second World War resulted in yet another round of destruction and dislocation. The total loss of life in Europe this time was 42 million, two-thirds of whom were civilian casualties. Systematic German persecution of Jews—the Holocaust—

resulted in approximately 4 million Jews being put to death in extermination camps such as Auschwitz and Treblinka, with up to 2 million more being exterminated elsewhere, along with gypsies and others. The German occupation of continental Europe also involved ruthless economic exploitation. By the end of the war, France was depressed to below 50 percent of her pre-war standard of living and had lost 8 percent of its industrial assets. The United Kingdom lost 18 percent of its industrial assets (including overseas holdings), and the Soviet Union lost 25 percent. Germany lost 13 percent of its assets and ended the war with a level of income per capita that was less than 25 percent of the pre-war figure.

After the war, the Cold War rift between Eastern and Western Europe resulted in a further erosion of the coherence of the European economy and, indeed, of its economic geography. Ironically, this rift helped to speed economic recovery in Western Europe. The United States, believing that poverty and economic chaos in Western Europe would foster communism, embarked on a massive program of economic aid under the **Marshall Plan**. This pump-priming action, together with the backlog of demand in almost every sphere of production, provided the basis for a remarkable recovery. Meanwhile, Eastern Europe began an interlude of state socialism.

### **Eastern Europe's Interlude of State Socialism**

After the Second World War, the leaders of the Soviet Union felt compelled to establish a **buffer zone** between their homeland and the major Western powers in Europe. The Soviet Union rapidly established its dominance throughout Eastern Europe: Estonia, Moldova, Latvia, and Lithuania were absorbed into the Soviet Union itself, and Soviet-style regimes were installed in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia. In addition to the installation in 1947 of the Iron Curtain, which severed most economic linkages with the West, this intervention resulted in the complete nationalization of the means of production, the collectivization of agriculture, and the imposition of rigid social and economic controls within the East European satellite states.

It should be emphasized at the outset that the economies of the former Soviet Union and its satellites were *not* based on true socialist or communist principles in which the working class had democratic control over the processes of production, distribution and development. Rather, they evolved as something of a hybrid, in which state power was used by a bureaucratic class to create **command economies** in the pursuit of modernization and economic development. The Communist Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA, better known as COMECON) was

established to reorganize Eastern European economies in the Soviet mold—with individual members, each pursuing independent, centralized plans designed to produce economic self-sufficiency. This quickly proved unsuccessful, however, and in 1958 COMECON was reorganized. The goal of economic self-sufficiency was abandoned, mutual trade among the *Soviet bloc*—the Soviet Union plus its Eastern European satellite states—was fostered, and some trade with Western Europe was permitted. Meanwhile, Albania withdrew from the Soviet bloc in pursuit of a more authoritarian form of communism inspired by the Chinese revolution of 1949 (see Chapter 9); and Yugoslavia was expelled from the Soviet bloc (because of ideological differences over the interpretation of socialism) and allowed to pursue a more liberal, independent form of state socialism.

The experience of the East European countries under state socialism varied considerably, but, in general, rates of industrial growth were high. As in Western Europe, industrialization brought about radical changes in economic geography. In practice, however, the command economies of Eastern Europe did not result in any really distinctive forms of spatial organization. As in the industrial regions of the West, the industrialized landscapes of Eastern Europe came to be dominated by the localization of manufacturing activity, by regional specialization, and by center-periphery contrasts in levels of economic development. The geography of industrial development under state socialism, as in democratic capitalism, was in practice heavily influenced by the unevenness of the distribution of natural resources and by the economic logic of initial advantage, specialization, and **agglomeration economies**. The most distinctive landscapes of state socialism were those of urban residential areas, where mass-produced, system-built apartment blocks allowed impressive progress in eliminating urban slums and providing the physical framework for an egalitarian proletariat—though at the price of uniformly modest dwellings and strikingly sterile cityscapes (**Figure 3.12**)

**Figure 3.12** photo of social housing in Hungary

Eventually, the economic and social constraints imposed by excessive state control and the dissent that resulted from the lack of democracy under state socialism combined to bring the experiment to a sudden halt. By the time that the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989 (see Chapter 4), Poland and Hungary had already accomplished a modest degree of democratic and economic reform. By 1992, East Germany (the German Democratic Republic) had been reunited with West Germany (the German Federal Republic); Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had become independent states once more; and the whole of Eastern Europe had begun to be reintegrated with the rest of Europe. Only Kaliningrad, a small province on the Baltic between Poland and Lithuania, remains as part of the Russian Federation, retained as a Russian exclave because of its important warm-water naval port.

## THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE

A distinctive characteristic of Europe as a whole is the size and relative density of its population. With less than 7 percent of Earth's land surface, Europe contains about 13 percent of its population at an overall density of nearly 100 persons per square kilometer (km<sup>2</sup>). Within Europe, the highest national densities (344 per km<sup>2</sup> in the Netherlands, 325 per km<sup>2</sup> in England and Wales, and 322 per km<sup>2</sup> in Belgium) match those of Asian countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Sri Lanka. On the other hand, population density in Finland, Norway, and Sweden stands at about 15 persons per km<sup>2</sup>: the same as in Kansas and Oklahoma. This reflects a fundamental feature of the human geography of Europe: the existence of a densely populated core and a sparsely populated periphery. We have already noted the economic roots of this core-periphery contrast.

While the population of the world as a whole is increasing fast, the population of Europe is roughly stable. Europe's population boom coincided roughly with the Industrial Revolution of the late eighteenth to late nineteenth centuries. Today, Europe's population is growing slowly in some regions, while declining slightly in others. The main reason for Europe's slow population growth is a general decline in birth rates (though certain subgroups, especially immigrant groups, are an exception to this trend). It seems that conditions of family life in Europe, including readily available contraception, have led to a widespread fall in birth rates. The average size of families has dropped well below the rate needed for replacement of the population (about 2.1 children per family), to about 1.75 per family. A "baby boom" after World War II has been followed by a "baby bust." Meanwhile, life expectancy has increased, due to improved health care, medical knowledge, and healthier lifestyles. The effect is not sufficient to outweigh falling birth rates, but it has meant a dramatic increase in the proportion of people over the age of 65, from 9 percent in 1950 to nearly 17 percent in 2000. Germany's population (**Figure 3.13**) reflects these trends, shows the impact of two world wars.

**Figure 3.13** population pyramid for Germany

### The European Diaspora

The upheavals associated with the transition to industrial societies, together with the opportunities presented by colonialism and imperialism and the dislocations of two world wars, have dispersed Europe's population around the globe. Beginning with the colonization of the Americas, vast numbers of people have left Europe for overseas destinations. The full flood of emigration began in the early nineteenth century, partly in response to population pressure during the early phases of the demographic transition, and partly in response to the poverty and squalor of the early phases of the Industrial Revolution. The

main stream of migration was to the Americas, with people from northwestern and central Europe heading for North America and southern Europeans heading for destinations throughout the Americas. In addition, large numbers of British left for Australia and New Zealand and eastern and southern Africa. French and Italian emigrants traveled to North Africa, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, and the Dutch went to southern Africa and Indonesia. The final surge of emigration occurred just after the Second World War, when various relief agencies helped homeless and displaced persons to move to Australia and New Zealand, North America, and South Africa, and large numbers of Jews settled in Israel.

### **Migration Within Europe**

Industrialization and geopolitical conflict has also resulted in a great deal of population movement within Europe. With the onset of industrialization, the regional redistribution of population within Europe followed the pattern described above, with three major waves of industrial development drawing migrants from less prosperous rural areas to a succession of industrial growth areas around coalfields.

As industrial capitalism evolved, it was the diversified economies of national metropolitan centers that offered the most opportunities and the highest wages, thus prompting a further redistribution of population. In Britain this involved a drift of population from manufacturing towns southward to London and the southeast; in France, migration to Paris from towns all around France resulted in a polarization between Paris and the rest of the country. Some countries, developing an industrial base after the "coalfield" stage, experienced a more straightforward shift of population, directly from peripheral rural areas to prosperous metropolitan regions. In this way, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Madrid, Milan, Oslo, Stockholm, and Turin all emerged as regionally dominant metropolitan areas.

Wars and political crises have also led to significant redistributions of population within Europe. The First World War forced about 7.7 million people to move. Another major transfer of population took place in the early 1920s, when over 1 million Greeks were repatriated from Turkey in the aftermath of an unsuccessful Greek attempt to gain control over the eastern coast of the Aegean Sea. Soon afterwards, more people were on the move, this time in the cause of ethnic and ideological purity, as the policies of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy began to bite. Jews, in particular, were squeezed out of Germany, Italy, and Spain. With the Second World War, there occurred further forced migrations involving millions of people. After the war, the geopolitical division of Europe also resulted in significant transfers of population: West Germany, for example, had absorbed nearly 11 million refugees from Eastern Europe by 1961, when the Berlin Wall was built.

More recently, the main currents of migration within Europe have been a consequence of patterns of economic development. Rural-urban migration has continued to empty the countryside of Mediterranean Europe as metropolitan regions have become increasingly prosperous. Meanwhile, most metropolitan regions themselves have experienced a decentralization of population as factories, offices, and housing developments have moved out of congested central areas. Another stream of migration has involved better-off retired persons, who have tended to congregate in spas, coastal resorts, and picturesque rural regions. The most striking of all recent streams of migration within Europe, however, have been those of migrant workers (**Figure 3.14**). These population movements were initially the result of Western Europe's postwar economic boom in the 1960s and early 1970s, which created labor shortages in Western Europe's industrial centers. The demand for labor represented welcome opportunities to many of the unemployed and poorly paid workers of Mediterranean Europe and of former European colonies. By the mid-1970s, these migration streams had become an important early component of the globalization of the world economy. By 1975, between 12 and 14 million immigrants had arrived in northwestern Europe. The majority came from Mediterranean countries—Spain, Portugal, southern Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. In Britain and France, the majority of immigrants came from former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia. In the Netherlands, most came from former colonies in Indonesia. Most of these immigrants have stayed on, adding a striking new ethnic dimension to many of Europe's cities and regions.

**Figure 3.14** map of international labor migration

Finally, it is estimated that more than 18 million people moved within Europe during the 1980s and 1990s as refugees from war and persecution or in flight from economic collapse in Russia and Eastern Europe. Civil war in the former Yugoslavia displaced over 4 million people in the early 1990s, and by 2000 another 2.5 million had been displaced as a result of continuing conflict in the region (see p. 000).

### **European Cultural Traditions**

The foundations of European culture were established by the ancient Greeks, who, between 600 B.C. and 200 B.C. built up an intellectual tradition of rational inquiry into the causes and explanations of everything, along with a belief that individuals are free, self-understanding, and valuable in themselves. The Romans took over this intellectual tradition, added Roman law and a tradition of disciplined participation in the state as a central tenet of citizenship, and spread the resulting culture throughout their empire. From the Near East came the Hebrew tradition, which in conjunction with Greek thought produced Judaism and Christianity, religions in which the individual spirit is seen as having its own individual responsibility and destiny within the

creation. At the heart of European culture, then, are the curiosity, open-mindedness, and rationality of the Greeks, the civic responsibility and political individualism of both Greeks and Romans, and the sense of the significance of the free individual spirit that is found in the main tradition of Christianity.

When Europeans pushed out into the rest of the world in their colonial and imperial ventures, they took these values with them, imposing them onto some cultures, grafting them into others. By the eighteenth century, they were also the carriers of a new dimension of their own culture. This was the idea of Modernity, an idea whose genesis was in the changing world geography of the Age of Discovery. As Europeans tried to make sense of their own ideas and values in the context of those they encountered in the East, in Africa, in Islamic regions, and among native Americans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many of the old certainties of traditional thinking were cracked open. In the eighteenth century, this ferment of ideas culminated in the Enlightenment movement, which was based on the conviction that all of nature, as well as human beings and their societies, could be understood as a rational system. Politically, the Enlightenment reinforced the idea of human rights and of democratic forms of government and society. Expanded into the fields of economics, social philosophy, art, and music, the Enlightenment gave rise to the cultural sensibility of Modernity, which emphasizes innovation over tradition, rationality over mysticism, and utopianism over fatalism.

In the late twentieth century, after the decline of heavy industry and repeated episodes of economic recession; after two terrible world wars; after interludes of fascist dictatorships in Germany, Italy, Greece, Portugal, and Spain; after a protracted period of being in the front line of a Cold War that divided European geography in two; and after intermittent episodes of regional and ethnic conflict, it is not surprising that the culture of Europe is a culture of doubt and criticism, heavily influenced by a search for radical rethinking. In this search, Europeans have not only established a new cultural sensibility for themselves but also generated some powerful new ideas and philosophies that have begun to influence other cultures around the world. Dismay with the side effects of laissez-faire industrial capitalism and, later, horror at the results of fascism and Nazism, gave a strong impetus to left-wing critiques that have been powerful enough to reshape entire national and regional cultures and, with them, some important dimensions of regional geographies.

The most profound influence of all was Karl Marx, whose penetrating critique of industrial capitalism (written in London, and drawing heavily on descriptions of conditions in Manchester, England, supplied by his colleague Friedrich Engels) inspired both a socialist political economy in

Russia and a fascist countermovement in Germany. After the Second World War, Western European left-wing critique portrayed both fascism and Soviet-style socialism as essentially imperialist, while American-style capitalism was critiqued as being intrinsically exploitative in privileging the individual and property over the community and the public good. Another powerful post-war movement that was deeply critical of the dominant structures of capitalist society was feminism, built on the ideas of Simone de Beauvoir in her book The Second Sex, published in 1949.

Subsequently, Europe has generated a succession of cultural impulses that, together, provide contemporary Europe with a distinctive cultural cast. Intellectual debate—about the role of culture itself; about whether people’s thoughts and lives should be understood in terms of the dynamics of the cultures in which they are embedded (*structuralism*) or in terms of individual consciousness (*existentialism*); and about whether any kind of single-viewpoint, big-picture understanding of the world is really possible (*postmodernism*)—has spilled over into European literature, cinema, television, magazines, and newspapers, with the result that contemporary European culture is marked by a critical awareness of the role of culture itself (see *Movies, Books, and Music*, p. 000).

### **Culture and Ethnicity, Nations and States**

While European culture is distinctive at the global scale, it is also characterized by some sharp internal regional variations. In the broadest of terms there is a significant north-south cultural divide. Southern Europe has always been more traditional in its religious affiliations—not just in terms of the dominance of Roman Catholicism over Protestantism, but of the prevalence of the conservative and more mystical forms of Catholicism. The Roman Catholic Church, still one of the most widespread within Europe, emerged in the fourth century under the bishop of Rome and spread quickly through the weakening Roman Empire. Missionaries helped spread not only the gospel but also the use of the Latin alphabet throughout most of Europe. The Eastern Orthodox Church, under the auspices of the Byzantine Empire centered in Constantinople, dominated the eastern margins of Europe and much of the Balkans, while Islamic influence spread into parts of the Balkans (present day Albania, the European part of Turkey, and parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina) and, for a while, southern Spain. With the religious upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Protestant Christianity came to dominate much of northern Europe (**Figure 3.15**).

**Figure 3.15 map of religions**

Another distinctive aspect of the cultural makeup of southern Europe is the continuing importance attached to traditional patterns of family life, with larger, close-knit families that tend to stick together as a buffer against unemployment and poverty in societies with relatively under-developed social welfare systems. The western part of southern Europe

also shares the same family of languages: the Romance languages whose development was fostered by the spread of the Roman Empire. A second major group of languages, Germanic languages, occupy northwestern Europe, extending as far south as the Alps (**Figure 3.16**). English is one of the Germanic family of languages, an amalgam of Anglo-Saxon and Norman French, with Scandinavian and Celtic traces. A third major language group consists of Slavic languages, which dominate eastern Europe.

**Figure 3.16: map of languages**

These broad geographic divisions of religion, language, and family life are reflected in other cultural traits: folk art, traditional costume, music, and folklore. Thus there is a Scandinavian cultural subregion with a collection of related languages (except Finnish), a uniformity of Protestant denominations, and a strong cultural affinity in art and music that reaches back to the Viking age and even to pre-Christian myths. A second distinctive cultural subregion is constituted by the sphere of Romance languages in the south and west. A third is constituted by the British Isles, bound by language, history, art forms, and folk music, but with a religious divide between the Protestant Anglo-Saxon and Catholic Celtic spheres. A fourth clear cultural subregion is the Germanic sphere of central Europe, again with mixed religious patterns—Lutheran Protestantism in the north, Roman Catholicism in the south—but with a common bond of language, folklore, art, and music. The Slavic subregion of eastern and southeastern Europe forms another broad cultural subregion, though beyond the commonalities of related languages and certain physical traits among the general population, there is considerable diversity.

It is, in fact, the cultural and ethnic diversity of Europe's peoples and their languages, religions, and cultures that is one of the most significant aspects of its geography. Europe's cultural diversity has made it vital and attractive; it has contributed in large measure to the modern ideal of nation-states; and it has also made it the theater of innumerable wars, including two world wars within a single generation.

#### Ethnicity and National Identity

Europe's broad cultural subregions underpin complex patterns of national, regional, and ethnic identity. It is important to recognize that many of the countries of Europe are relatively new creations and that the political boundaries of many of them have been changed quite often. The whole idea of national states, in fact, can be traced to the Enlightenment in Europe, when the ferment of ideas about human rights and democracy, together with widening horizons of literacy and communication, combined to create new perspectives on allegiance, communality, and identity. In 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia, signed by most European powers, brought an end to Europe's seemingly interminable religious

wars by making national states the principal actors in international politics and establishing the principle that no state has the right to interfere in the internal politics of any other state.

Gradually, these new perspectives began to undermine the dominance of the great European continental empires controlled by family dynasties—the Bourbons, the Hapsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, the House of Savoy, and so on. After the French Revolution (1789) and the kaleidoscopic changes of the Napoleonic Wars (1800-1815), Europe was reordered, in 1815, to be set in a pattern of modern states. Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom had long existed as separate, independent states. The nineteenth century saw the unification of Italy (1861-1870) and of Germany (1871) and the creation of Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland as independent national states. Early in the twentieth century they were joined by Norway, Sweden, and then Finland. Austria was created in its present form in the aftermath of the First World War, as part of the carve-up of the German and Austro-Hungarian empires. In 1921, long-standing religious cleavages in Ireland resulted in the creation of the Roman Catholic Free State (now known as the Republic of Ireland), with the six Protestant counties of Ulster remaining in the United Kingdom.

The European concept of the nation-state has been of immense importance in the modern world. As we saw in Chapter 2 (p. 00), the idea of a nation-state is based on the concept of a homogeneous group of people governed by their own state. In a true nation-state, no significant group exists that is not part of the nation. In practice, most European states were established around the concept of a nation-state but with territorial boundaries that did in fact encompass substantial ethnic minorities (**Figure 3.17**), and the result has been that the geography of Europe has been characterized by regionalism and irredentism throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

**Figure 3.17: map of minority ethnic sub-groups in W Europe**

We have already cited the example of Basque regionalism in Spain and France (see p. 00). Other examples of regionalism include regional independence movements in Catalonia (within Spain), Scotland (within the United Kingdom), and the Turkish Cypriots' determination to secede from Cyprus. Examples of irredentism include the Irish Republic's claim on Northern Ireland (renounced in 1999), the claims of Nazi Germany on Austria and the German parts of Czechoslovakia and Poland, and the claims of Serbia and Croatia on various parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some cases of regionalism have led to violence, social disorder, or even civil war, as in Cyprus. For the most part, however, regional ethnic separatism has been pursued within the framework of civil society, and the result has been that several regional minorities have achieved a degree of political autonomy. A good example is the creation within the

United Kingdom of regional parliaments for Scotland and Wales. Most cases of irredentism, on the other hand, have contributed at some point in history to war or conflict. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the troubled region of the Balkans.

### Ethnic conflict in the Balkans

The Balkan Peninsula is one of the world's most complex areas in terms of linguistic and religious composition. Three of the region's peoples claim descent from classical times: Greeks, Thracians, and Albanians (descendants of ancient Illyrians). As a result of its situation at a geographic crossroads between Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East, the region has in addition acquired a diversity of population groups, each with their own identity. In between successive occupations (**Figure 3.18**) by the Roman Empire (in the second century A.D.), the Bulgarian Kingdom (in the tenth century), the Byzantine Empire (in the twelfth century), the Serbian Empire (in the fourteenth century), and the Ottoman Empire (in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), the region was infiltrated by various Slavic and Asiatic tribes.

### **Figure 3.18: maps of empires in the Balkans**

The region's complex ethnic geography, originally a consequence of the ease of accessibility by land and sea from neighboring regions, was compounded by the abundance of easily defended mountain strongholds and remote upland plateaus that led to the isolation of specific ethnic subgroups. Subsequently, the geography of ethnicity within the region was further fragmented as imperial powers moved loyal groups to border areas while administratively dividing potentially hostile subject peoples. More recently, political boundaries have been negotiated and imposed by the world's great powers with little regard for, or knowledge of, the detailed geography of ethnicity within the Balkans.

By the early 1800s, as the Ottoman Empire retreated in the face of expansionist European powers, ambitions of independent statehood were stirring among the various groups in the Balkans. The Congress of Berlin (1878) attempted to resolve the complex claims of sovereignty within the Balkan region, but territorial disputes and irredentist claims led to a series of conflicts. First, Bulgaria vied with Serbia for control of Macedonia. This was followed the First Balkan War (1912), which pitted Turkey against Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia, and the Second Balkan War (1913), when Bulgaria again attacked Serbia in pursuit of Macedonia but was soundly defeated. Finally, Serb ambitions of establishing a "Greater Serbia" led to increasing tension between Serbia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. With geopolitical tension elsewhere in Europe running high, the 1914 assassination in Sarajevo of Austria's Archduke Ferdinand by a Serb was the spark that ignited the First World War.

After the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles (1919) re-drew the political map of Europe (**Figure 3.19**). In the Balkans, Greece, and Romania were rewarded with territory at the expense of Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, while a new state—Yugoslavia—was established at the expense of Hungary and Austria in the hope of uniting Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes within a single territory. The Second World War (1939–1945) left all of the Balkans, with the exception of Greece and the European part of Turkey, within the orbit of the Soviet Union. Soviet domination provided an extended period of territorial stability. In Yugoslavia, the potentially volatile mixture of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was held together by the country's leader, Marshall Tito, and the country became one of the most prosperous and autonomous of all the Soviet Union's communist satellite states.

**Figure 3.19 map of changing national borders**

With the death of Tito in 1980, Yugoslavia began to unravel, as Serbian nationalism began to reassert itself. Shortly afterwards, in 1989, the wave of post-Soviet revolution swept across the whole of Eastern Europe, releasing long-repressed feelings of ethnic and national identity. In 1990, civil war in Yugoslavia resulted in the creation of five new states—Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Macedonia (formally known as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM, in order to differentiate it from the Greek province of Macedonia). In 1992, Serbia renamed itself as Yugoslavia while Bosnia-Herzegovina, initially conceived as a unique, multiethnic, multireligious republic, was partitioned into **cantons** as a result of irredentist pressure from Serbia that had inflamed conflict between Serbs, Croats, and Muslims throughout the region. The breakup of Yugoslavia involved full-scale war, with the call-up of thousands of reservists, the blockading of ports, the destruction of cities, villages, and economic infrastructure by heavy artillery, rocket, tank, and aircraft fire, the seizure of territory and expulsion of population, and a death toll in the tens of thousands.

The repeated fragmentation and reorganization of ethnic groups into separate states within the region has given rise to the term **balkanization** in referring to any situation where a larger territory is broken up into smaller units, and especially where territorial jealousies give rise to a degree of hostility. In the Balkans themselves, the geopolitical reorganizations of the 1990s have left significant **enclaves**, culturally distinct territories that are surrounded by the territory of a different cultural group, and **exclaves**, portions of a country or of a cultural group's territory that lies outside its contiguous land area, that remain the focus of continued or potential hostility. In Romania, for example, there are more than 1.6 million Hungarians; while in Bulgaria there are more than 800,000 Turks (**Table 3.1**). It is Serbian nationalism, however, that continues to provide the principal catalyst for violence and conflict in the region. Within Yugoslavia, Serbian nationalism has led to attempts at

**ethnic cleansing:** the forcible expulsion of non-Serb minorities from certain areas, accompanied by rape, murder, looting, and torture. The most extreme example of this has been in the Kosovo region, where the systematic persecution of the majority Albanian population led to the intervention of NATO forces in 1999 (see *Geography Matters: Kosovo*, p. 000).

Table 3.1: ethnicity in Balkan countries  
*Geography Matters: Kosovo*

#### A "European" identity?

Ethnic tensions and feelings of nationalism throughout Europe have been intensified by globalization. Globalization has heightened people's awareness of cultural heritage and ethnic identities. As we saw in Chapter 1, the more universal the diffusion of material culture and lifestyles, the more valuable regional and ethnic identities tend to become. Globalization has also brought large numbers of foreign immigrants to some European countries, and their presence has heightened still further people's awareness of cultural identities. In the more affluent countries of northwestern Europe, immigration has emerged as one of the most controversial issues since the end of the Cold War. Although the economic benefits of immigration far outweigh any additional demands that may be made on a country's health or welfare system, fears that unrestrained immigration might lead to cultural fragmentation and political tension have provoked some governments to propose new legislation to restrict immigration from the former communist states of Eastern Europe and from outside Europe. The same fears have been responsible for a resurgence of popular **xenophobia** in some countries. In Germany, for example, right-wing nationalistic groups have attacked hostels housing immigrant families, while citizenship laws have prevented second-generation Gastarbeiter ("guest worker") families from obtaining German citizenship. In France, claims that immigrants from North Africa are a threat to the traditional French way of life have led to some success for the National Front Party. Similar xenophobic and nationalistic impulses were reflected in election results in both Austria and Switzerland in 1999.

All this raises the question of how "European" are the populations of Europe. There can be no doubt that European history and ethnicity have resulted in a collection of national prides, prejudices and stereotypes that are strongly resistant to the forces of cultural globalization. Germans continue to be seen by most other Europeans as a little over-serious, preoccupied by work, and inclined to arrogance. Scots continue to carry the popular image of a dour, unimaginative, ginger-haired people who love bagpipe and accordion music, dress up in kilts and sporrans, live on whisky and porridge, and generally spend as little as possible. The English are seen as a nation of lager-swilling hooligans, well-meaning middle classes, and out-of-touch aristocrats (**Figure 3.20**). Norwegians

and Danes continue to resent the Swedes' "neutrality" during the Second World War, and so on. In reality, such stereotypes are of course exaggerations that stem from the behaviors of a relative minority, and opinion surveys show that these stereotypes, prejudices, and identities are steadily being countered by a growing sense of European identity, especially among younger and better-educated persons. Much of this can be attributed to the growing importance and influence of the European Union, which is discussed in the next section.

**Figure 3.20: cartoon—the English as seen by the French**

## REGIONAL CHANGE AND INTERDEPENDENCE

Contemporary Europe is a cornerstone of the world economy with a complex, multilayered, and multifaceted regional geography. In overall terms, Europe, with about 13 percent of the world's population, accounts for almost 35 percent of the world's exports, almost 43 percent of the world's imports, 33 percent of the world's aggregate GNP. Europe's inhabitants, on average, now consume about twice the quantity of goods and commercial services than they did in 1970. Purchasing power has risen everywhere to the extent that basic items of food and clothing now account for only about 30 percent of household expenditure, leaving more resources for leisure and consumer durables. Levels of material consumption in much of Europe approach those of households in the United States (**Figure 3.21**). The development of European welfare states has helped to maintain households' purchasing power during periods of recession and to ensure at least a tolerable level of living for most groups at all times. Levels of personal taxation are high, but all citizens receive a wide array of services and benefits in return. The most striking of these services are high-quality medical care, public transport systems, social housing, schools, and universities. The most important benefits are pensions and unemployment benefits.

**Fig. 3.21: photo of German family with material possessions**

Contemporary Europe is a very dynamic region that embodies a great deal of change. Because of the legacies of European history and culture, and because modern regional development in Europe was so closely tied to the technology systems of the Industrial Revolution, the challenges and opportunities presented to places and regions within Europe by economic globalization and by the new, high-tech, information-based technology system are immense. Formerly prosperous industrial regions have suffered economic decline, while some places and regions have reinvented themselves in order to take advantage of new paths to economic development. Meanwhile, the former Soviet satellite states have been reintegrated into the European world region; and much of

Europe has joined together in the European Union, a supranational organization founded in order to recapture prosperity and power through economic and political integration (see p. 000).

### Growth, Deindustrialization, and Reinvestment

Europe provides a classic example of the way that longer-term shifts in technology systems tend to lead to regional economic change (see Chapter 2). The innovations associated with new technology systems generate new industries that are not yet tied down by enormous investments in factories or tied to existing industrial agglomerations. Combined with innovations in transport and communications, this creates windows of locational opportunity that can result in new industrial districts, and in some towns and cities growing into dominant metropolitan areas through new rounds of investment. Within Europe, the regions that have prospered most through the onset of a new, high-tech, science- and information-based technology system are the Thames Valley to the west of London, the Île de France region around Paris, the Ruhr valley in northwestern Germany, and the metropolitan regions of Lyon–Grenoble (France), Amsterdam–Rotterdam (Netherlands), Milan and Turin (Italy), and Frankfurt, Munich, and Stuttgart (Germany) (**Figure 3.22**).

**Figure 3.22 : map of regions of science-based growth**

Just as these high-tech industries and regions have grown, the profitability of old, established industries in established regions has declined. Wherever the differential in profitability has been large enough, disinvestment has taken place in the less profitable industries and regions. **Disinvestment** means selling off assets such as factories and equipment. Widespread disinvestment leads to deindustrialization in formerly prosperous industrial regions. **Deindustrialization** involves a relative decline (and in extreme cases an absolute decline) in industrial employment in core regions as firms scale back their activities in response to lower levels of profitability. This is what happened to the industrial regions of northern England, South Wales, and central Scotland in the early part of the twentieth century; and it is what happened to the industrial region of Alsace-Lorraine, in France, and to many other traditional manufacturing towns and regions within Europe in the 1960s and 1970s.

### The European Union

The European Union (EU) had its origins in the political and economic climate following the Second World War. The idea behind the EU was to

ensure European autonomy from the United States and to recapture the prosperity that Europe had forfeited as a result of the war. The first stage in the evolution of the EU was the creation in the 1950s of three institutions that were set up in order to promote economic efficiency through integration: Euratom, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC). These were amalgamated into the European Community (EC) in 1967, and in 1992 the Maastricht Treaty extended the scope of the EC, creating the European Union (EU).

In 1972 the EC expanded from its six original members—Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany—to include Denmark, the Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Greece was added in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1984, and Austria, Finland, and Sweden in 1995. The European Union now boasts a population of over 370 million, with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) 10 percent larger than that of the United States. The EU has developed into a sophisticated and powerful institution with a pervasive influence on patterns of economic and social well-being within its member states. It also has a significant impact on certain aspects of economic development within some non-member countries.

The cornerstone of the EEC was a compromise worked out between the strongest two of the original six members. West Germany wanted a larger but protected market for its industrial goods, while France wanted to continue to protect its highly inefficient but large and politically important agricultural sector from overseas competition. The result was the creation of a tariff-free market within the Community, the creation of a unified external tariff, and a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to bolster the EEC's agricultural sector. Some of the most striking changes in the regional geography of the EU have been related to the operation of the CAP. Although agriculture accounts for less than 3 percent of the EU workforce, the CAP has dominated the EU budget from the beginning. For a long time, it accounted for more than 70 percent of the EU's total expenditures, and it still accounts for more than 45 percent. Its operation has had a significant impact on rural economies, rural landscapes, and rural standards of living; and has even influenced urban living through its effects on food prices.

#### The Impacts of EU Agricultural Policy

The basis of the CAP is a system of EU support of wholesale prices for agricultural produce. This support has the dual effect of stabilizing the price of agricultural products and of subsidizing farmers' incomes. The CAP was originally designed to encourage farm modernization by securing higher incomes for farmers. An additional attraction of the policy, though, is that stable, guaranteed prices provide consumers with security and continuity of food supplies. Stable markets also allow trends

in product specialization and concentration by farm, region, and country to proceed in an ordered and predictable fashion.

The overall result has been a realignment of agricultural production patterns, with a general withdrawal from mixed farming. Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Denmark, for example, have increased their specialization in the production of wheat, barley, poultry, and milk; while France and Germany have increased their specialization in the production of barley, maize, and sugar beets. It is at regional and subregional scales that these changes have been most striking. CAP support for oilseeds, for example, made rapeseed a profitable crop in cereal-producing regions of the United Kingdom, where the bright yellow flowers of the crop bring a remarkable change to the summer landscapes of the countryside.

The reorganization of Europe's agricultural geography under the CAP also brought some unwanted side effects, however. First, environmental problems have occurred as a result of the speed and scale of farm modernization, combined with farmers' desire to take advantage of generous levels of guaranteed prices for arable crops. Moorlands, woodlands, wetlands, and hedgerows have come under threat, and some traditional mixed-farming landscapes have been replaced by the prairie-style settings of specialized agribusiness.

A second serious problem concerns the large surpluses fostered by the price-support system. Prices that were set to give a reasonable return to producers on small farms were so favorable to the modernized sector of European agriculture that mountains of beef, butter, wheat, sugar, and milk powder and lakes of olive oil and wine had to be sold off at a loss to neighboring countries, dumped on world markets, or denatured (rendered unfit for human consumption) at a considerable cost.

A third set of problems arose from the indirect transfers of income that were brought about by CAP policies. The CAP's price-support mechanisms involve an indirect transfer of income from taxpayers to producers and from consumers to producers. These transfers are regressive (that is, the benefits disproportionately favor the better-off). Expenditure on food generally accounts for a larger proportion of disposable income in poorer households than in better-off households. Furthermore, because farmers, , benefit from price-support policies in proportion to their total production, the larger and more prosperous farmers receive a disproportionate share of the benefits. Regional inequity arises because countries or regions that are major producers of price-supported products receive the major share of the benefits, while the costs of price support are shared among member nations according to the overall size of their agricultural sector. The CAP pricing system made no concessions, for a long time, to the variety of agricultural systems

practiced on farms of different sizes and in different regions. As a result, areas with particularly large and/or intensive or specialized farm units (such as northern France and the Netherlands) benefited most, together with regions specializing in the most strongly supported crops (cereals, sugar beets, and dairy products). Effectively, this has meant that the most prosperous agricultural regions have benefited most from the CAP, so that farm income differentials within member countries have been maintained, if not reinforced.

By 1983, the budgetary cost of the CAP had become burdensome, and the CAP had become a source of serious disharmony, particularly in the United Kingdom, where the CAP brought a higher and regressive system of food prices without any compensatory benefits. Peasant farming and inefficient agricultural practices had been purged from the UK economy long before. Together with increasing awareness of the unwanted side-effects of the CAP, these considerations eventually led to a major reform of the CAP, with drastic reductions in guaranteed cereal and beef prices through the 1990s, along with sharply reduced production quotas for dairy farmers.

#### The EU and Regional Interdependence

By the early 1980s, the U.S. and Japanese economies had become increasingly interdependent and prosperous on the basis of globalized producer services and new, high-tech industries. In response, the European Community relaunched itself as the European Union. The Treaty of European Union of 1992 (the Maastricht Treaty) gave to the EU most of the major functions of a sovereign national state, including the creation of a single currency (the euro, launched in 1999), the coordination of economic policies, the redistribution of wealth between regions, and the management of a common external policy covering foreign relations and defense. This relaunching represents an impressive achievement, particularly since it was undertaken at a time when there were major distractions: having to cope with the reunification of Germany and the breakup of the former Soviet empire in Eastern Europe and, not least, having to deal with a resurgence of nationalism within Europe.

The overall economic benefits of EU membership are widely recognized and have been apparent for a long time. Not surprisingly, there is a growing list of countries seeking membership. In 2000, the official EU list of candidates numbered 11: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Turkey. Of these, the most likely to be admitted in the near future are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Yet EU membership brings regional stresses as well as the prospect of overall economic gain. Existing member countries have found that the removal of internal barriers to labor, capital, and trade has worked to the clear

disadvantage of peripheral regions and in particular to the disadvantage of those farthest from the Golden Triangle (the region between London, Paris, and Berlin) that is increasingly the European center of gravity in terms of both production and consumption.

This was recognized by the Single European Act (SEA) of 1985, which included "economic and social cohesion" as a major policy. The SEA doubled the funding—in real terms—for grants for regional development assistance and established a Cohesion Fund to help Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain achieve levels of economic development comparable to those of the rest of the EU. Regions that are eligible for these funds are shown in **Figure 3.23**. In its 1994-1999 budget cycle, the EU spent \$159.5 billion on funding projects and policies designed to improve economic and social cohesion within and among its member countries. The 2000-2006 budget cycle includes an allocation of \$339 billion, about one third of the total EU budget.

**Figure 3.23: map of EU regions eligible for aid**

The scale of the EU and its maintenance of a strongly protectionist agricultural policy has inevitably had a significant impact on nonmember countries. The EU does extend favorable trading privileges to a large group of countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, most of them former colonial territories of EU member states. Nevertheless, sensitive products (that is, those that compete directly with EU agricultural and industrial products) are excluded from preferential treatment or are subject to seasonal restrictions.

Because the whole idea of the EU is based on improving Europe's competitiveness with the United States and Japan, it is not surprising that the EU's trade relations with those countries have been fractious. Other countries, especially those with strong traditional ties to European markets, have found themselves excluded by the EU's external tariff wall. New Zealand is a good example. The United Kingdom used to take nearly all of New Zealand's butter, cheese, and lamb. But after the United Kingdom joined the EU, New Zealand no longer had access to markets in the United Kingdom. As a result, New Zealand's agriculture had to be restructured, new products had to be developed—a notable success here being the kiwi fruit—and new markets had to be developed in Latin America, India, and Japan (see Chapter 10).

### **The Reintegration of Eastern Europe**

Between 1989 and 1992, all of the former satellite states of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe turned away from state socialism with command economies and began the process of establishing democracies with capitalist economies. In 1991, COMECON was abolished, and one by one Eastern European countries began a complex series of reforms. These included the abolition of controls on prices and wages, the removal

of restrictions on trade and investment, the creation of the financial infrastructure to handle private investment, the creation of government fiscal systems to balance taxation and spending, and the privatization of state-owned industries and enterprises. After more than 40 years of state socialism, such reforms were both difficult and painful. Indeed, the reforms are by no means complete in any of the countries, and economic and social dislocation is a continuing fact of life.

Nevertheless, the reintegration of Eastern Europe has added a potentially dynamic market of 344 million consumers to the European economy. Within a capitalist framework, Eastern Europe has the comparative advantage of relatively cheap land and labor. This has attracted a great deal of foreign investment, particularly from transnational corporations and from German firms and investors, many of whom have historic ties with parts of Eastern Europe. In some ways, the transition toward market economies has been remarkably swift. It did not take long for Western-style consumerism to appear on the streets and in many of the stores in larger Eastern European cities. But it did not take long for inflation, unemployment, and homelessness to appear either. Overall, Eastern Europe is increasingly reintegrated with the rest of Europe, but for the most part as a set of economically peripheral regions, with agriculture still geared to local markets and former COMECON trading opportunities and industry still geared more to heavy industry and standardized products than to competitive consumer products. The service sector in general and knowledge-based industries in particular remain very weakly developed.

In detail, the pace and degree of reintegration varies considerably across Eastern Europe. Ethnic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Yugoslavia has severely retarded reform and reintegration, while Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldova, and Romania suffer from the combined disadvantages of having relatively poor resource bases, weakly developed communications and transportation infrastructures, and political regimes with little ability or inclination to press for economic and social reform. In Ukraine, which has a much better infrastructure, a significant industrial base, and the capacity for extensive trade in grain exports and in advanced technology, reintegration has been retarded by a combination of geographical isolation from Western Europe, continuing economic and political ties with Russia, and a surviving political elite that has little interest in economic and social reform.

The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have been more successful in reintegrating with the rest of Europe. Their small size and relatively high levels of education have made them attractive as production subcontracting centers for Western European high-technology industries. They are reviving old ties with neighboring Nordic countries, and in this regard Estonia is particularly well placed because its language

belongs to the Finnish family, and it was part of the Kingdom of Sweden when it was annexed by the Russians in 1710. The best-integrated states of Eastern Europe are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. All have a relatively strong industrial base, and Hungary has a productive agricultural sector. Poland and Hungary have been especially open to foreign direct investment and have been swift and vigorous in pursuit of economic and institutional reform. They are among the principal contenders for membership in an expanded EU.

### **Reinventing Europe: Place Marketing**

Throughout Europe, disinvestment, deindustrialization, and economic restructuring following economic integration mean that many places and regions throughout Europe are increasingly seeking to attract new forms of investment and new jobs. As a result, places are increasingly being reinterpreted, reimagined, designed, packaged, and marketed, in order to influence the ways in which they are perceived by tourists, businesses, media firms, and consumers. Sense of place has become a valuable commodity, and culture has become an important basis for economic activity. Furthermore, culture has become a significant factor in the ability of places to attract and retain other kinds of economic activity. Seeking to be competitive within the globalizing economy, many places in Europe have sponsored extensive makeovers of themselves that include the creation of pedestrian plazas, cosmopolitan cultural facilities, festivals, and sports and media events.

Central to place marketing is the deliberate manipulation of material and visual culture in an effort to enhance the appeal of places to key groups. These groups include the upper-level management of large corporations, the higher-skilled and better-educated personnel sought by expanding high-technology industries, wealthy tourists, and the organizers of business and professional conferences and other events that bring money into the local economy. In part, this manipulation of culture depends on promoting traditions, lifestyles, and arts that are locally rooted; in part, it depends on being able to tap into globalizing culture through new cultural amenities and specially organized events and exhibitions. Some of the most widely adopted strategies for the manipulation and exploitation of culture include investments in facilities for the arts, investment in public spaces, the re-creation and refurbishment of distinctive settings like waterfronts and historic districts, the expansion and improvement of museums (especially with blockbuster exhibitions of spectacular cultural products that attract large crowds and can be marketed with commercial tie-ins), and the designation and conservation of historic landmarks.

The Dutch city Amsterdam provides a good example of how investment in the arts can provide a catalyst for economic development. The construction in the late 1980s of an arts and civic complex, the Stopera, in

a declining neighborhood in the eastern part of the central area of the city led to the recovery of the whole area within less than a decade. By the early 1990s, nearly 2,000 people were working in the Stopera itself, and its presence had attracted bookstores, record and magazine stores, restaurants, cafes, and specialized food stores. Altogether, the neighborhood experienced a 60 percent increase in the number of shops in the area between 1988 and 1998. A number of small businesses have also been attracted into the area because of its new atmosphere, and increasing numbers of tourists, who previously avoided the area, now seek it out.

## CORE REGIONS AND KEY CITIES

The economic and political integration of Europe has intensified core-periphery differences within the region. The removal of internal barriers to flows of labor, capital, and trade has worked to the clear disadvantage of geographically peripheral regions within the EU, while core metropolitan regions have benefited. The principal core region within Europe is the Golden Triangle that stretches between London, Paris, and Berlin. A secondary emergent core is developing along a north-south crescent that straddles the Alps, stretching from Frankfurt, just to the south of the Golden Triangle, through Stuttgart, Zürich, and Munich, to Milan and Turin. Both are linked by an important new development in European transportation: a high-speed rail system (see *Geography Matters: “New Infrastructure for an Integrated Europe”*).

### *Geography Matters: New Infrastructure for an Integrated Europe*

#### Europe’s Golden Triangle

The character and relative prosperity of the Europe’s chief core region, the Golden Triangle, stems from four substantial advantages:

1. Its geographic situation provides access to southern and central Europe by way of the Rhine and Rhône river systems, and access to the sea lanes of the Baltic, the North Sea, and, by way of the English Channel, the Atlantic.
2. Within it are found the capital cities of the major former imperial powers of Europe.
3. It includes the industrial heartlands of central England, northeastern France, and the Ruhr district of Germany.
4. Its concentrated population provides both a skilled labor force and an affluent consumer market.

These advantages have been reinforced by the integrative policies of the European Union, whose administrative headquarters are situated squarely in the heart of the Golden Triangle, in Brussels, Belgium. They have also been reinforced by the emergence of Berlin, Paris, and, especially, London, as **world cities**—cities in which a disproportionate

share of the world's most important business—economic, political, and cultural—is conducted (see Chapter 2). As these world cities have come to play an increasingly important role in the world economy, so they have become home to a vast web of sophisticated financial, legal, marketing, and communications services. These services, in turn, have added to the wealth and cosmopolitanism of the region. Agriculture within the Golden Triangle tends to be highly intensive and geared toward supplying the highly urbanized population with fresh dairy produce, vegetables, and flowers. Industry that remains within the Golden Triangle tends to be rather technical, drawing on the highly skilled and well-educated workforce; most heavy industry and large-scale, routine manufacturing has relocated from the region in favor of cheaper land and labor found elsewhere in Europe or beyond.

The landscape of the Golden Triangle is highly urbanized, with a tightly knit network of towns and cities linked by an elaborate infrastructure of canals, railways, and highways. The region has reached saturation levels of urbanization, as exemplified in Randstad Holland (see *Sense of Place: Randstad Holland*, p. 000). Nevertheless, the region still contains fragments of attractive rural landscapes, together with some unspoiled villages and small towns. These landscape elements have survived partly because of market forces: They are very attractive to affluent commuters. Equally important to their survival, though, has been the relatively strong role of environmental, land-use, and conservation planning in European countries.

#### *Sense-of-Place: Randstad*

Surrounding the advanced city regions of the Golden Triangle are the fruit orchards and hop-growing fields of Kent, in southeastern England; the bulb fields of the Netherlands; the dikes and rectangular fields of the reclaimed marshland (polders) of North-Holland, Flevoland, and Friesland along the Dutch coastal plain; the pastures, woodlands, and forests of the upland plateaus of the Ardennes, the Eifel, the Westerwald, and the Harz; and the meadows and cultivated fields separated by hedgerows and patches of woodland that characterize most of the remaining countryside: Picardy in France, Flanders and Brabant in Belgium, Limburg, Nordrhein-Westphalia, and Saxony in Germany, and Gelderland in the Netherlands, for example. Embedded among these distinctive landscapes are hundreds of villages and scores of market towns. Those villages and market towns within the orbit of the metropolises and advanced city regions have lost a great deal of their character. A few, like Rye, in southeastern England, have been bypassed both by industrialization and by the post-industrial economy and have retained much of their traditional character. Some, like Bruges, in Belgium, have traded on their legacy to become important tourist stops. It is the metropolises and advanced city regions, however, that both define and dominate the Golden Triangle (**Figure 3.24**).

Fig. 3.24: composite figure—photos of landscapes in paragraph above

### Berlin

If it were not for the geopolitical aftermath of the Second World War, Berlin would probably be a world city to rival Paris and London. Berlin is situated on a natural east-west commercial axis on the north European plain, with a favorable location on the river system that provides connections to the Elbe and Oder rivers. It is at once the most westerly city of Eastern Europe and the most easterly city of Western Europe. As such, it enjoys an excellent strategic location within continental Europe. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Berlin became the capital of the Hohenzollern dynasty of the Prussian monarchy. By the late eighteenth century it had a population of about 150,000, with soldiers and their families accounting for one in every five inhabitants. Berlin's position was further enhanced by the formation of the German Customs Union in 1834 and by the creation of the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian War (1871). The city is still graced by the monumental architecture of this period, although much was destroyed during the Second World War. With the Industrial Revolution, Berlin became an important producer of machinery, chemicals, textiles, electrical goods, electronics, and clothing, an important hub in the central European transportation system, and a major banking center. At its peak, in 1939, Greater Berlin had a population of 4.3 million. In physical terms, the building blocks of Berlin were *Meitskaserne* ("rental barracks"), four- or five-story apartment houses arranged around a courtyard and often extended by a series of rear courtyards, with access to the street only from the first court. With a new building ordinance in 1925, the classic *Meitskaserne* was effectively outlawed. The term continues to be used, however, for large-scale working-class housing developments.

Berlin was an important cultural and intellectual center in the early part of the twentieth century. It was a seedbed of avant-garde theater, film, cabaret, art, and architecture. The Second World War changed everything. By the end of the war, 34 percent of Berlin's housing had been destroyed, and another 54 percent damaged. The city found itself embedded within the eastern, socialist part of a partitioned nation, and was itself partitioned into an Eastern and a Western sector. As a result, Berlin's dynamism was seriously disrupted. Economic hinterlands for both halves of the city were truncated. West Berlin had to develop a new **central business district** (CBD), the old one having fallen within the eastern sector. In 1961 the division between the two half-cities was physically reinforced when East Germany built the Berlin Wall (**Figure 3.25**) in order to stem the flow of migrants to West Berlin. After the wall went up, both East and West Berlin remained highly militarized, with troops and their equipment in a very visible part of the urban landscape. Both also redeveloped their industry and refurbished their housing. East

Berlin, with a population of just under 1.5 million by the late 1980s, was a showcase for the German Democratic Republic, but was nevertheless dominated by bleak modernist architecture. West Berlin, with a population of well over 2 million (of whom over a quarter of a million were foreign workers and their families), developed a significant youth counterculture, partly because of its many institutions of higher education (which between them account for more than 120,000 students), and partly because its residents were not required to perform military service in the army of the Federal Republic of Germany.

**Fig 3.25—photo of Berlin wall**

With the reunification of Germany in 1989, Berlin reassumed its prewar role as a national political and cultural center. The city experienced a surge of construction as the two parts of the city were reconnected, wired and plumbed together again, and as the federal government and investors raced to install new infrastructure, department stores, office blocks, hotels, and entertainment centers in keeping with the city's restored position in the world (**Figure 3.26**). Federal offices have been moved from Bonn to Berlin, and Potsdamer Platz, once a no-man's-land of barbed wire, tank traps, and mines, has been redeveloped with 111,000 square meters (about 1.18 million square feet) of apartment space, 310,000 square meters (about 3.3 million square feet) of office space, 57,000 square meters (about 613,500 square feet) of retail shops and restaurants, plus two Imax theaters, eight cinemas, a concert stage, an underground train station, and a shopping arcade.

**Fig 3.26—photos of new construction in Berlin**

### London

London is a vast, sprawling city that covers over 3900 square kilometers (about 1500 square miles) of continuously built-up area. It has a total population of just over 7 million (13 million including the metropolitan fringes). In the nineteenth and early twentieth century it was the center of global economic and geopolitical power. It dominates the economic and political life of the whole of the United Kingdom and remains the single most cosmopolitan city in Europe.

London grew up around two core areas: a commercial core centered on its port and trading functions and an institutional core centered on its religious and governmental functions. The commercial core has Roman roots: Londinium was the fifth largest Roman city north of the Alps, a major trading center that enjoyed the advantages of a deep-water port (on the River Thames) and a key situation facing the continental North Sea and Baltic ports. These same advantages helped London prosper with the resurgence of trade in the medieval period, when the wealth accumulated by wool merchants provided the economic foundation for future growth. From this commercial nucleus grew an extensive merchant and financial quarter (**Figure 3.27**). The docks spread eastward

from the financial precinct (the City), and specialized market areas grew to the north and east. Today, this area remains the commercial core of the city. It contains the Stock Exchange, the Bank of England, the Royal Exchange, the Guildhall, and the Central Criminal Courts, as well as specialized commercial areas like Fleet Street (the press/media precinct), Lincoln's Inn Fields (the legal precinct), and the sites of old marketplaces like Billingsgate (fish) and Smithfield (meat). Older docks, like St. Katherine's next to Tower Bridge, have meanwhile been renovated and now boast yacht basins, hotels, a trade center, upscale pubs, bistros, specialty retail stores, galleries, and condominiums.

**Fig 3.27—photo of financial core of London**

London's institutional core developed around Westminster Abbey, some 3.2 kilometers (2 miles) upstream from the commercial core (**Figure 3.28**). Early meetings of Parliament were held in the Abbey's Chapter House—the present Houses of Parliament date only from the nineteenth century. St. James's Palace was built as a London residence for the monarchy in the sixteenth century; Buckingham Palace, built for the Duke of Buckingham in 1703 and purchased by George III in 1762, became the royal residence during Queen Victoria's reign. To the north of the Houses of Parliament, along Whitehall, are government offices; between these and Buckingham Palace is St. James's Park; and to the north of the park are the palaces and mansions of the nobility, centers of culture (the Royal Academy, the National Gallery and the Royal Opera House), the exclusive shops that cater to the city's elite, and the squares and townhouses of the rich and powerful.

**Fig 3.28—photo of institutional core of London**

London's population grew sixfold during the nineteenth century, reaching more than 6 million by 1900. As it grew, the two core areas merged together as part of a huge central business district. Down-river from the CBD, new docks and manufacturing industry attracted concentrations of low-income housing in the city's East End, while from around 1840 the railways triggered a process of suburbanization that created a mosaic of neighborhoods of high-density terrace housing. These inner-city neighborhoods are now mostly obsolescent, and a good deal of the original housing has disappeared, having been replaced by high-density social housing projects. In addition, the Dockland Development Corporation, established in 1981, has regenerated large tracts of formerly derelict docks and slums in the East End (see *Sense of Place: London's Docklands*, p. 000). Extensive areas of poor housing remain in much of inner London, however—a mixture of older terraced housing and newer, but run-down municipal housing.

***Sense-of-Place: London's Docklands***

London's outer suburbs are the product of the extension of the city's Underground rapid-transit system, the establishment of a suburban

railway network, and the diffusion of the private automobile. London's outer suburbs are relatively affluent and conservative, characterized by semidetached "villas" that form a broad ring about 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) deep, punctuated only by neighborhood shopping streets and industrial parks. London's outer suburbs stopped suddenly at the point they reached in 1947, when a strategic plan for the city established a greenbelt that was designed to halt suburban sprawl, protect valuable agricultural land, and provide an amenity for the city's population. Inside the greenbelt, which covers some 2330 square kilometers (about 900 square miles) in a zone between 8 and 16 kilometers (5 and 10 miles) wide, development has been strictly policed by city planners, with the result that villages and small market towns have a picture-postcard quality that is much sought after by affluent commuter households. The major problem for outer London is traffic, the whole region being swamped by a density of automobiles that is several times the capacity of the road system.

Beyond the outer suburbs there is a metropolitan fringe that extends between 32 and 64 kilometers (20 and 40 miles) from the central area and contains nearly 6 million people. Within this zone are older market towns like Luton, Reading, Guildford, and Maidstone, together with eight New Towns. These New Towns were established as part of the strategic plan for London, and were designed to house "overspill" population and light industry as inner London was thinned out and rebuilt after the Second World War.

### Paris

While London is the most cosmopolitan of European cities, Paris is the most urbane, and the most spectacularly monumental. Paris is the unrivaled focus of political, economic, social, and cultural life in France. It is an important industrial center as well as a major international financial center. It is, in short, *the* French city; and there are few cities in the rest of the world (perhaps only Tokyo) that so dominate their national urban systems, their national economy, their politics, and their culture. Paris is by far the largest city in France, with a central-city population of 2.2 million in 1998, compared to 808,000 in Marseille, 422,000 in Lyon, and 366,000 in Toulouse.

In Paris itself, this dominance is reflected in the monumental buildings of the central core, or Ville de Paris. The nucleus of this core is the Île de la Cité, a boat-shaped island about ten blocks long and five blocks wide, the site of the palace of the city's Roman governor and of the great cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris (**Figure 3.29**). The whole historic core is dominated by the river Seine, which runs some 9 meters (about 30 feet) below street level and is bordered by trees and shrubs, with another line of trees at street level, providing a sequestered setting in the heart of the city. Along the river are some of the greatest examples of urban design to

be found anywhere in the world. Beginning in the seventeenth century, royal sponsorship rebuilt and embellished the route from the Louvre (the old royal palace) through the Tuileries Gardens to the Champs-Élysées. In the nineteenth century, Napoleon built the Arc de Triomphe, giving a focal point to the far end of this axis. Napoleon took a particular interest in the development of Paris as a deliberate reflection of the power and glory of his empire. In addition to monumental embellishments like the Arc de Triomphe, the church of the Madeleine, and the stylishly arcaded Rue de Rivoli, Napoleon initiated many public works and infrastructure improvements. It was his nephew Napoleon III, however, who presided over the most comprehensive program of urban redevelopment and monumental planning. This work was directed by George Haussmann, Prefect of the Seine region between 1853 and 1870. It was Haussmann who demolished large sections of old Paris in order to create a network of broad, new, tree-lined avenues that today form the basis of the most extensive one-way street system in Europe (**Figure 3.30**).

**Fig 3.29—photo of Ile de la Cite**

**Fig 3.30—photo of Haussmann boulevard**

Despite this redevelopment, the continued growth of central Paris as a place of government, retail, office, and service employment has meant that central Paris is now characterized by acute congestion that has fostered widespread conflict over land use and urban planning. The built environment has become a major focus of Parisian (and, indeed, French) politics. Some of the most intense and long-running conflicts have been focused on modernization projects—such as the redevelopment of Les Halles (the old produce market for Paris). More recently, however, the emphasis has been on the conservation of historic buildings and districts.

Beyond the historic core, suburban Paris extends for some 16 to 24 kilometers (10 to 15 miles), with a further 16 kilometers (10 miles) or so of metropolitan fringe. The inner suburbs date from the 1880s. They are relatively high-density, by North American standards, with piecemeal development that now contains a mixture of middle-and high-rise apartment blocks and single-family homes. Many of the gaps left by earlier speculative development, along with much of the outer suburbs, are filled with *grands ensembles* of social housing. Built in haste to accommodate the city's postwar growth, these soon acquired a very negative reputation because of their uninspired architecture and lack of social facilities. The suburbs are heavily interspersed with industry, much of it large-scale and involving various kinds of electrical or mechanical engineering.

Managing the growth of the suburbs and metropolitan fringe while encouraging the decentralization of central Paris has been the principal concern of urban and regional planners. Central to their efforts has been the development of master plans. One early master plan sought to

counteract the primacy of Paris by establishing eight growth centers, or *métropoles d'équilibre*, in other regions of France. Subsequently, planners sought to reduce the dominance of central Paris by establishing five new towns and encouraging nodes of commercial development outside the city center. The biggest and most successful of these suburban nodes is La Défense, a major set piece of modern planning (**Figure 3.31**). La Défense is a complex, multilevel, multiuse development with over 1.39 million square meters (about 15 million square feet) of office space, 150,000 workers, and 20,000 residents. Meanwhile, however, the dominance of central Paris has become stronger than ever, with the new towns serving as dormitories for clerks and mid-level executives who are among the 1 million who commute to central Paris every day.

**Fig 3.31—photo of La Défense**

### The Southern Crescent

Stretching south from the Golden Triangle is a secondary, emergent, core region that straddles the Alps, running from Frankfurt in Germany through Stuttgart, Zürich, and Munich, and finally to Milan and Turin in Northern Italy. The prosperity of this Southern Crescent is in part a result of a general decentralization of industry from northwestern Europe, and in part a result of the integrative effects of the European Union. Some of the capital freed up by the deindustrialization of traditional manufacturing regions in northwestern Europe has found its way to more southerly regions, where land is less expensive and labor is both less expensive and less unionized. The urban centers within the Southern Crescent have become key nodes in the spatial reorganization of these southern growth regions, and in linking them with the rest of the world economy. Frankfurt and Zürich are global-scale business and financial centers in their own right, while Milan is a center of both finance and design, and Munich, Stuttgart, and Turin are important centers of industry and commerce.

This Southern Crescent stretches across a great variety of landscapes, from the plateaus of central Germany, across the Alps, and into Northern Italy and the Apennines. Overall, these landscapes are much less urbanized than are those of the Golden Triangle. However, the rate of urbanization is much higher. Much of this urban growth is taking place in smaller towns and cities that are part of new-style industrial subregions. These new industrial districts have been the chief beneficiaries of the deindustrialization of northwestern Europe, and they represent a very different form of industrialization. This new form of industrialization is based on loose spatial agglomerations of small firms that are part of one or more leading industries. Small firms using computerized control systems and an extensive subcontracting network have the advantage of being flexible in what they produce, and when and how they produce it. Consequently, the new industrial districts with which they are associated are often referred to as **flexible production**

**regions.** Within each of these regions, small firms tend to share in a specific local industrial culture that is characterized by technological dynamism and well-developed social and economic networks.

Northern Italy provides examples of a number of flexible production regions (**Figure 3.32**). Here, regional networks of innovative, flexible, and high-quality manufacturers make products that include textiles, knitwear, jewelry, shoes, ceramics, machinery, machine tools, and furniture. Other examples of flexible production regions based on a similar mixture of design- and labor-intensive industries include the Baden-Württemberg region around Stuttgart in Germany (textiles, machine tools, auto parts, and clothing) and the Rhône-Alpes region around Lyon in France.

**Fig 3.32—map of industrial districts in the Third Italy**

The northern end of the Southern Crescent is dominated by the pastures, woodlands and forests of the upland plateaus of the Hunsrück, the Taunus, the Odenwald, and the Franconian Jura. To the south is the imposing landscape of the Black Forest, or Schwarzwald, with its silent, solid mass of fir forests, edged with cheerful farms set amid small fields and meadows. All of these uplands are crossed by rivers whose valleys contain prosperous, manicured landscapes of mixed farming, vineyards, and orchards (**Figure 3.33**). Farther south still are the rich meadows and dairy farms of the Alpine fringe, followed quickly by the spectacular mountains and lakes of the Alps themselves. Beyond the Alps is a belt of **moraines** that dam a series of sub-Alpine lakes (Maggiore, Lugano, Como, Iseo, and Garda) and form the hills upon which Northern Italy's distinctive hill towns (such as Bergamo and Brescia) stand. The landscape then flattens out into a zone of low terraces that descend to the rich, broad floodplain of the River Po before rising again toward the hills of the Apennines.

**Fig. 3.33 composite figure—photos of landscapes in paragraph above**  
*Day-in-the-Life: Anne-Lise Bamberg*

### Milan

Milan provides a good example of the prosperity of the Southern Crescent. Although Rome is the Italian capital and Naples is perhaps better known, Milan is the leading city of the country: the richest, the most fashionable, the most innovative, and the best governed. With only 7 percent of the country's population, it accounts for 28 percent of Italy's national income. If Milan were still an independent city-state, it would be richer than Switzerland. It has a diversified economic base that has expanded in recent years as, along with other cities in the European sunbelt, it has attracted a significant amount of foreign investment. The most important industries include automobile assembly, aircraft, motorcycles, electrical appliances, railroad materials, metal trades, chemical production, and graphic and publishing industries. Although parts of the industrial sector have declined—Pirelli, for example, closed

its huge tire factory in the northern suburbs of the city in the 1980s—the service sector is growing rapidly. For every manufacturing firm that closed down or moved out during the 1990s, three service firms were created. Services now account for 70 percent of the local economy, and Milan has gained international significance as a financial center and as a center for design—both industrial and fashion. The Milanese are hard-working and entrepreneurial, with a strong progressive streak that is vigorously pursued by the (traditionally socialist) city government. The city exudes an exhilarating combination of the historic and the modern, of industry and culture, and of the fast-track and laid-back urbanity.

The center of the city owes its street pattern to the pattern of successive defensive walls. It is dominated by the Duomo (cathedral), begun in the fourteenth century and completed in the nineteenth, and the Castello Sforzesco, a fifteenth-century castle. They look out on a low-rise city center in which are tucked away such landmarks as the Piazza Mercanti (the center of activity in medieval times), the theater of La Scala facing onto the Piazza della Scala with its statue of Leonardo da Vinci, the church of Santa Maria Delle Grazie with its fresco of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci, and the magnificent indoor shopping arcade of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele (**Figure 3.34**). The narrowness of the streets in the center has precluded the development of much industry; it is the suburbs, particularly to the north/northeast and south/southwest, that are the setting for Milan's industry. These suburbs are for the most part well-built and well-served. The pressure of population growth has, however, resulted in the expansion of slum housing and the appearance of shantytowns such as Brianza on the urban fringe.

**Fig. 3.34: composite—photos of Milan**

## DISTINCTIVE REGIONS AND LANDSCAPES

Beyond Europe's core regions, major metropolitan areas, and specialized industrial districts, a mosaic of different landscapes has developed around the broad physiographic regions described at the beginning of this chapter. In detail, these landscapes are a product of centuries of human adaptation to climate, soils, altitude, and aspect, and to changing economic and political circumstances. Farming practices, field patterns, settlement types, traditional building styles, and ways of life have all become attuned to the opportunities and constraints of regional physical environments, with the result that distinctive regional landscapes have been produced.

The landscapes of mountain regions are the most natural. These are essentially physiographic subregions, with just a scattering of isolated settlement. The farmers in these mountain subregions depend on **pastoralism**, a system of farming and way of life based on keeping herds

of grazing animals, eked out with a little produce grown on arable land on the valley floors. In the less mountainous parts of Scandinavia, as in much of Baltic Europe, with their short growing season and cold, acid soils, agriculture supports only a low density of settlement. Landscapes reflect a mixed farming regime of oats, rye, potatoes, and flax, with hay for cattle.

The more humid and temperate regions of Atlantic Europe (Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) are dominated by dairy farming on meadowland, sheep farming on exposed uplands, and arable farming (mainly wheat, oats, potatoes, and barley) on drier lowland areas. Settlement density tends to vary according to the productivity of the land, and the traditional settlement form is mostly the Haufendorf (**Figure 3.35**). The exceptions are those areas where the initial colonization was by Celtic peoples and where environmental conditions support only low population densities (much of Brittany, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, for example). In these areas, dispersed settlement, in the form of hamlets and scattered farms, is characteristic.

*Fig. 3.35: plan of haufendorf*

The traditional form of settlement throughout most of Mediterranean Europe is the very large nucleated village. This form of settlement is partly a product of traditional forms of land holding, and partly a product of past needs for people to cluster together for reasons of defense. The dry, warm climate of the Mediterranean is reflected in its landscapes, with agricultural regimes based on pastoralism, extensive arable farming (mainly hard wheat), and tree crops (especially olives).

It should be stressed that, within these broad divisions, marked variations exist. The mosaic of regions and landscapes within Europe is both rich and detailed. Physical differences are encountered over quite short distances, and there are numerous specialized farming regions where agricultural conditions have influenced local ways of life to produce distinctive landscapes. Within these landscapes are towns and cities of regional importance whose characteristics owe a great deal to the life and traditions of their region. The following sections describe the attributes of Europe's most distinctive regions, together with representative examples of major settlements.

### **Alpine Europe**

The Alps occupy a vast area of Europe, stretching eastward for nearly 1290 kilometers (about 800 miles) from Montélimar, France, to Vienna, Austria, and with a maximum width of approximately 195 kilometers (about 120 miles) (**Figure 3.36**). The Alps are a recently created range of mountains, dating from about 20 to 100 million years ago. Their relative youth explains the sharpness of their outlines and the boldness of their peaks. The highest peak, Mont Blanc, reaches 4810 meters (15,781 feet).

Most of the rest of the mountains are between 2500 and 3600 meters (about 8,200 and 11,800 feet) in height. Although the Alps pose a formidable barrier between northwestern Europe and Italy and the Adriatic, a series of great passes—including the Brenner Pass, the Simplon Pass, the Saint Gotthard Pass, and the Great Saint Bernard Pass—and longitudinal valleys have always provided transalpine routeways.

*Fig. 3.36: map of Alpine Europe*

The dominant direction of the Alps and their parallel valleys is roughly southwest to northeast. The major Alpine valleys thus have one sunny, fully-exposed slope that is suitable for vine growing and a shaded side rich with orchards, woods, and meadows. The mountains and valleys of the Alps proper are surrounded by an Alpine foreland that provides rich farmland on glacial outwash deposits. The limestone of the Alpine region is economically important for quarrying and cement, while mineral deposits—lead, copper, and iron—and small deposits of coal and salt have been locally important throughout the region. In addition, the Alps are a valuable source of hydroelectric power: about 65 billion watt-hours in Switzerland (60 percent of the country's electricity consumption), about 72 billion watt-hours in France (15 percent of the country's electricity consumption), and about 45 billion watt-hours in Austria (85 percent of the country's electricity consumption).

The traditional staple of the economy, however, has been agriculture, and it has been farming that has given the Alpine region its distinctive human landscape. The Alpine rural landscape is a patchwork of fields, orchards, vineyards, deciduous woodlands, pine groves, and meadows on the lower slopes of the valleys, with broad alpine pasture above. In these pastures, which are dotted with wooden haylofts and summer chalets, dairy cattle wander far and wide. Farmers attach bells around the necks of their animals in order to be able to locate them, and the consequent effect is a resonant pastoral "soundscape" of clanking cowbells. Farms and hamlets tend to cling to lower elevations, the chalet-style architecture drawing on timber or rough-cast stone construction, with overhanging eaves, tiers of windows, and painted ornamentation (**Figure 3.37**). The landscapes of the Alpine foreland are more lush. Lavender and fruit have been introduced to enrich and give variety to the mixed farming regime of the foreland, which features vine and wheat growing, along with dairy cattle. The higher slopes, which receive more rainfall, provide lush pastures that have made the region famous for its rich cheeses, such as Gruyère.

*Fig. 3.37: photos of Alpine landscapes*

The principal industry of the Alpine region, however, is not farming but tourism. Attractive rural landscapes, together with magnificent mountain scenery, beautiful lakes, and first-class winter sports facilities,

have attracted tourists to this region since the 1800s. Lakeside resorts such as Lucerne and Lugano, Switzerland; mountain resorts such as Chamonix, France, and Innsbruck, Austria; and winter sports resorts such as Val d'Isere, France, Davos, St. Moritz, and Zermatt, Switzerland, are all well established, with an affluent clientele from across Europe. With the growth of the global tourist industry, these resorts, along with many others, have attracted an important new clientele from North America and Japan.

### **Nordic Europe**

The term Nordic refers to the entire northern part of Europe: Scandinavia (Norway, Denmark, and Sweden), plus Finland and Iceland. The whole region is sometimes referred to as "Norden." The three Scandinavian countries have been closely interlinked since 1397, when they were united under the Danish crown. In 1523 Sweden (incorporating the southwest part of modern Finland) separated from Denmark, and in the early nineteenth century lost Finland to Russia, but meanwhile gained control over Norway. Norway gained independence in 1905, and Finland in 1917. All are closely allied by ties of soil, custom, and common interest, and all except Finland have a close linguistic affinity.

The Nordic countries are also tied by their peoples' orientation to the sea. Surrounded variously by the North Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, Arctic Ocean, and the Baltic Sea, the peoples of Nordic Europe have a deep-rooted seafaring tradition. This orientation is reinforced by the inhospitable (though spectacularly beautiful) nature of much of the land. The region experienced several successive phases of glaciation, which have left a distinctive imprint on the landscape. *Cirques*, deep, bowl-shaped basins on a mountainsides, shaped by ice action, glaciated valleys, and fjords (some as deep as 1200 meters--about 3900 feet) in Norway; countless lakes (nearly 100,000 of them in Sweden alone); lines of moraines that mark the ice sheet's final recession from Denmark to Sweden, Norway, and Lapland; extensive deposits of sand and gravel from ancient glacial deltas, and vast expanses of peat-bogs that lie on the granite shield that forms the physiographic foundation of the region.

This formidable environment is rendered even more forbidding as a result of climatic conditions. In the far north, the sun shines for 57 days without setting; but the winter nights are interminable. Helsinki sees a *total* of only 17 hours of sunshine in the whole month of December. Rivers and lakes in the north are frozen from mid-October on, while even farther south in Norway, Sweden, and Finland they freeze at the end of November and remain frozen until May. Snow, which is permanent in parts of Iceland and Lapland, begins to fall toward the middle of September and it covers much of the landscape from October through early April.

The single most dominant feature of the landscapes of Nordic Europe is the forests (**Figure 3.38**). There are fine forests of beech trees, with their smooth majestic trunks, in parts of Denmark and southwestern Sweden. Farther north, more and more conifers (mostly evergreen trees such as pine, spruce, and fir) are mixed with birches and other deciduous trees, until the conifers become entirely dominant. In the far north, toward the North Cape, the forest gives way to desolate treeless stretches of the tundra, with its gray lichens, and dwarf willows and birches. Overall, forests cover more than half of the land. Not surprisingly, forestry is a major industry. The forests supply timber for domestic building and fuel and produce the woods that are in greatest demand on world markets: pine and spruce for timber and for the paper industry; birch for plywood and cabinet-making; aspen for making matches. Sweden and Finland are second only to Canada as exporters of paper and wood products.

*Fig. 3.38: photos of Nordic landscapes*

The forests give way to agriculture along the coasts, on valley floors, and across the gentler and more fertile outwash plains of southeastern Norway, southern Sweden, and most of Denmark. In Denmark, about 60 percent of the land is farmed, with another 5 percent under permanent pasture. Throughout the rest of Norden, however, only about 5 percent of the land is farmed, with less than 1 percent under permanent pasture. More than two-thirds of the area under cultivation outside Denmark produces food for livestock. Oats, the largest single crop, often has to be harvested while it is still green. More than half of the milk from dairy cattle is used to produce butter and cheese. In Denmark, agricultural cooperatives have established a highly efficient and very productive industry that includes dairy farming, pig-raising, and the cultivation of wheat, oats, barley, and root crops. The dependence of Danish agriculture on exports led the Danes to become early members of the European Union (in 1973); in contrast, Norway remains outside the European Union, largely because its farmers, subsidized by Norway's North Sea oil revenues, could not survive in open competition with farmers elsewhere in Europe.

The contrast between Denmark and the rest of Norden carries over into settlement patterns. In Denmark, a feudal system (until 1788) led to the development of large farms and estates, with settlement concentrated into compact villages. Elsewhere, with less rigid traditional landholding systems and with no history of invasions between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century, farms and hamlets are casually situated on any habitable site, their buildings often widely scattered. The countryside is dotted with trim wooden houses, roofed with slate, tiles, shingles, or even sods of turf. Often, the buildings of a particular district are distinguished by some special stylistic feature. In some places, the old weather-board houses that were used as shelters in bad weather still exist. They date back to the Middle Ages, as does the custom of storing reserve stocks of

food or hay in a special isolated building, the *stabbur*, decorated with beautifully carved woodwork. The predominant color of the buildings is gray, the natural color that wood acquires with age. Nearer to towns, the houses are painted brighter colors: light brown, light yellow, or white in Finland; yellow, dark red, and mid-blue in Norway and Sweden.

The larger towns and cities of Nordic Europe, as elsewhere in Europe, are the nodal points of the economy. Some owe their existence to mining and metallurgy (Karlskoga and Eskiltuna in Sweden, for example), and some to textile manufacture (Tampere and Turku, in Finland, for example). Most of the important towns and cities are ports, like Bergen (**Figure 3.39**): shipbuilding and repair, fishing, and shipping are key industries. Some cities have a significant manufacturing base. Sweden is a major producer of automobiles, trucks, and aircraft and has significant steel, chemical, plastics, pharmaceutical, and biotechnology industries; cities such as Malmö and Huskvarna are primarily industrial cities. It was upon their productivity that Sweden developed a prosperous economy that has been able to sustain a model welfare state. Sweden's prosperity was also helped by its avoidance of involvement in both world wars (Sweden's industries, in fact, profited from both wars). Meanwhile, the prosperity of both Norway and Denmark was boosted by the discovery, in the late 1960s, of extensive oil and natural gas deposits in the North Sea. The most significant economic change, however, has been a more recent shift toward service-sector employment, which now accounts for more than 65 percent of employment throughout Norden, with most of the advanced service jobs concentrated in the major cities of Århus (population 280,000), Bergen (224,000), Copenhagen (1,362,000), Göteborg (454,000), Helsinki (532,000), Oslo (494,000), and Stockholm (718,000).

*Fig. 3.39: photo of Bergen*

### The Danubian Plains

The Danube River is one of the most important waterways in Europe, stretching 2859 kilometers (1776 miles) from Donaueschingen, in southwestern Germany, to the Black Sea. Over the second half of its course, it passes through two broad lowland plains, each surrounded by complexes of mountains and uplands. The Danube pierces these uplands at a gorge known as the Iron Gates, which separates the mid-Danubian Alföld, Vojvodina, and Pannonian Plains from the Wallachian Plains of the lower Danube (**Figure 3.40**). These Danubian Plains share some fundamental physiographic features--lowland river basins with a rolling cover of **loess** and sandy river deposits--and they developed a considerable unity in terms of landscape and human settlement as a result of the influence of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires (see Figure 3.18). The constrained economies of Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria during the second half of the twentieth century,

under state socialism, meant that the rural and small-town landscapes of the Danubian Plains have remained largely unaltered for decades.

**Figure 3.40: location map of Danubian Plains**

The Danube enters its first basin of broad plains by swirling through a series of picturesque gorges, surrounded by hills that, to the west, are covered with oak and beech forests and, to the east, are volcanic upland with fertile soils that are favorable for market gardening and vineyards that produce, for example, the famous Bull's Blood wines of the Eger region in Hungary. The city of Budapest straddles the river and commands the gateway to the the mid-Danubian plains. These lands were depopulated during the Ottoman occupation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The advances of the Turkish army in its campaigns were marked by swaths of smoking hamlets, and its withdrawals were followed by long trains of captives destined for the slave markets of Anatolia. When the Turks took control of the region, people flocked to town-sized villages, where they enjoyed a measure of protection. The country between the towns was left empty except for scattered huts (*tanyas*) in which the menfolk spent the summers tending the fields. The vast town-like villages, and a few of the *tanyas*, survive as distinctive features of the region's heritage.

When the Ottoman Empire was rolled back in the eighteenth century, the landed gentry of the Austro-Hungarian Empire attracted Serbs, Hungarians, and Germans who built villages, repopulated the tributary valleys of the Danube, drained marshes, and tilled the plains. This gave rise to the *Alföld*, or "cultivated plain." Before the Second World War, the Alföld was dominated by huge estates worked by thousands of peasant-servants. The Esterhazy family, for instance, owned more than 129,600 hectares (320,000 acres), which included 164 villages. Much of the region consists of loess plateaus where rainfall is very irregular and averages around 40 centimeters—approximately 16 inches—a year; there are no woods and irrigation is often necessary to sustain the typical 2-year rotation of corn and wheat. The region's tradition of large, townlike villages was continued by the Serbs, Hungarians, and Germans who resettled the plains, building *varos*, or trading villages with an open, rectilinear central area surrounded by administrative buildings, inns, and shops, and roads radiating from this central nucleus like spokes from a wheel, bordered for kilometers by straggling farms (**Figure 3.41**). Some villages have grown to several tens of thousands of inhabitants. The whole way of life is inherently rural, though a few centers, such as Pécs, Debrecen, and Szeged, have acquired something of an urban character as a result of their regional administrative functions (See *Sense of Place: Szeged*, p. 000).

**Figure 3.41: village plan**  
*Sense-of-Place: Szeged*

In the Hortobágy area, west of Debrecen, there is a residual region of **steppe**, semiarid, treeless, grassland plains known as the Puszta. This land, which is too dry or too marshy to have invited cultivation, was once the domain of virtually wild horses, cattle, and pigs, but today huge flocks of sheep find pasture there. This is the landscape of old, traditional picturesque Hungary, associated in the national consciousness with shepherds, poets, gypsies, fine horses, and colorful costumes.

In contrast, the southern part of the mid-Danubian plains, to the north of the River Sava and extending eastward beyond Belgrade, have long been famous as prosperous cereal-growing areas. These are the Pannonian Plains and the Vojvodina (**Figure 3.42**), where several meters of loess and rich, sandy soil rest on the rocky substratum. Stone and trees are so scarce that houses are built of *pisé*, a kind of rammed-earth brick. Storks' response to the scarcity of trees is to build nests atop chimneys and telegraph poles (Figure 3.42). The large villages are less compact than farther north, and some are strung out as street-villages, along major routeways. The rich soils produce high yields of wheat and corn, together with hops, sugar beets, and forage crops for livestock.

**Figure 3.42: photos of pise house w. stork nest/monotonous Wallachian Plain; Danube Delta habitat**

Beyond the Iron Gates, where a canal allows shipping to avoid the river's turbulent passage over rocky ledges, the Wallachian Plains offer a landscape that is infinitely monotonous (Figure 3.42). These also are fertile lands, with rich soils washed down by the Danube's tributaries. As in the rest of the Danubian Plains, wheat and corn are the principal crops. The climate, though, is harsh, with seasonal extremes of burning hot and freezing cold, the winter easterlies blowing down from mid-continent Russia. Population densities are low, and there are few villages. At the eastern extremity of the region is the Danube delta, where the river meets two tributaries—the Siret and the Prut. Here, low, marshy country, with patches of oak forest and both freshwater and saltwater lagoons, offers a rich habitat for a great diversity of birds and wildlife (Figure 3.42), now recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### **Mediterranean Europe**

Mediterranean Europe is an extensive region that stretches along the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea from southern Spain to eastern Greece, a distance of some 2414 kilometers (about 1500 miles). The distinctiveness of the region derives not only from its ties with the sea but also from its climate and vegetation and its long tradition of urban life. The watershed of rivers that drain into the Mediterranean provides a good approximation of the extent of the region (**Figure 3.43**).

**Figure 3.43: map of Mediterranean watershed**

The Mediterranean climate is such that winters are cool, with an Atlantic air stream that brings overcast skies and intermittent rain—though snow is unusual. In spring the temperature rises rapidly and rainfall is more abundant. Then summer bursts forth suddenly as dry, hot, Saharan air brings three months of hot, sunny weather. There is no rain save an occasional storm; the soil cracks and splits, and is easily washed away in the occasional downpours. In October the temperature drops, and deluges of rain show that Atlantic air prevails once more.

In such conditions, delicate plants cannot survive. The Mediterranean climate precludes all plant species that cannot support cold as well as heat, and drought as well as wet conditions. The result is a distinctive natural landscape of dry terrain that is dotted with cypress trees, holm-oaks, cork oaks, parasol pines, eucalyptus trees (**Figure 3.44**); or that is covered with a low scrub of asphodel, cistus, lentiscus, and myrtle (known as *maquis* or, in its more sparse version, as *garrigue*). These same conditions make agriculture a challenge. The crops that prosper best include olives, figs, almonds, vines, oranges, lemons, wheat, and barley, with sheep and goats on dry pastureland and stubblefields. Irrigation is often necessary, and in some localities it sustains high yields of fruit, vegetables, and rice, as in the *huertas* (derived from the Latin *hortus*, a garden) of southeastern Spain (**Figure 3.45**).

**Fig. 3.44: photos of Mediterranean landscapes**

**Fig. 3.45: map/photo of *huertas***

In a few subregions, conditions are naturally more favorable, making for rich rural landscapes. Examples include the coastal plains of the Tyrrhenian (western) side of the Apennines in Italy, where volcanic soils contribute to productive agricultural regimes. Tuscany, in particular, has evolved a regional landscape that reflects an intensive and carefully developed regime that is closely adapted to the land. On the better and well-watered soils of the valleys there are artificial meadows that favor stock-breeding, along with fields of wheat, mulberries, and corn. On the hills around the scattered farms and villas, elegant cypress trees stand out against the silvery-green of olive trees, and in the fields there is a rich mixture of cereals, vegetables, fruit trees, and vines (for Chianti wine). This classical Tuscan landscape (Figure 3.44), developed over centuries, became emblematic of Italy itself with the creation of modern Italy and the *Risorgimento* ("revival through unification"—1815-1861), and has been the subject of landscape painters, romantic poets, and novelists ever since.

The landscapes of the Mediterranean reflect the imprint of successive cultures over a very long history. The fields themselves are a good example. Under Roman colonization, land was often subdivided into a checkerboard pattern of rectilinear fields. This highly ordered system was known as *centuriation*, and the pattern can still be seen in some districts today--in parts of the Po valley, for example. Elsewhere, across

large tracts of the Mediterranean, the soil can be cultivated only on a large scale, and the poor quality of pastureland necessitates vast untilled areas being left for flocks and herds. In these areas, successive conquerors, from the Greeks, Phoenicians, and Carthaginians to the Ottoman Turks and Christian Crusaders, carved out huge estates, known as **latifundia**, on which they set peasants to work. Land that did not belong to these big estates was often subdivided by independent peasant farmers into very small, intensively cultivated lots, or **minifundia**, most of which are barely able to support a family.

Settlement patterns also reflect these influences. Both *latifundia* and *minifundia* systems tend to result in clustered settlements. In more productive districts, these can be quite large, with "villages" of 10,000-12,000 people, as in the huerta districts of southeastern Spain, and the picturesque whitewashed villages of the Greek islands (Figure 3.44). The history of the Mediterranean, however, has made it above all a land of towns. Fears of invasion encouraged people to cluster together in easily defended sites: typically on steep-sided hills, as in Avila and Toledo in Spain; and Siena, Perugia, and Potenza in Italy. Other towns naturally emerged at strategic locations: at the foot of a pass (for example, Susa, Italy); at the entrance to a valley (for example, Murcia, Spain, and Verona, Italy); and bridging points (for example, Piacenza, Italy, and Seville, Spain).

More recently, the urban landscapes of the Mediterranean have been transformed by tourism and retirement migration. The classic landscapes, picturesque hill towns, and ancient cities of the Mediterranean have attracted affluent tourists and retirees from the rest of Europe since the late 1700s, but the advent of mass-market tourism after the Second World War has created resort towns and brought tourist amenities—hotels, restaurants, night clubs, bars, and so on—to much of the region's coastline. Benidorm, on Spain's Costa del Sol, was a fishing village of just 1500 inhabitants in the early 1950s. Today, it is a mass-market, package-tour resort with over 30,000 hotel beds and 100,000 more in rental apartments. Similar transformations have taken place elsewhere, as millions of vacationers and retirees from the colder, industrialized regions of northern Europe have made Mediterranean beaches their destination (**Figure 3.46**). The impact on local economies is markedly seasonal, and the physical results are not always pleasant, as noted by travel writer Paul Theroux as he passed through Spain's Costa del Sol one winter:

It was a sort of cut-price colonization, this stretch of coast, bungalowoid in the extreme—bungalows and twee little chalets and monstrosities in all stages of construction, from earthworks and geometrically excavated foundations filled with mud puddles to brick and stucco condos and huts and houses. There were cheap hotels, and golf courses, and marinas and rain-sodden tennis courts and stagnant swimming pools at Estepona, where "Prices Slashed" was a frequent

sign on housing developments in partially built clusters with names such as “Port Paradise” and “The Castles” and “Royal Palms”—no people on the beach, no people on the road, no golfers, no sign of life at all, only suggestions here and there that the place was known to English-speaking people: “English Video Club” was one, and another that was hardly out of view from Gibraltar to the French frontier at Port-Bou: “Fish and Chips.” (P. Theroux, *The Pillars of Hercules*. New York: Putnam, 1995, p. 28)

**Fig 3.46: beach photo plus map of tourist flows**

Athens

Athens, like Rome, was once one of the centers of the world economy. Like Rome, it is now semiperipheral within Europe. Having given birth to Western civilization through the development of philosophy, political ideals, literature, and architecture, Classical Athens was eclipsed in the second century B.C. and fell into decline and neglect for almost two thousand years. In 1833, when the modern nation-state of Greece gained independence, Athens was no more than a village of some 4,000 inhabitants. Thus, although it is semiperipheral, its immediate past has been one of growth. In 1921 the resettlement of Greeks from Turkey increased the city’s population to 750,000, intensifying the pressure on land and housing caused by rural-urban migration, and leading to the appearance of unauthorized suburban sprawl and shantytowns. Before the city could recover, it went through a period of brutal Nazi occupation, followed by a violent communist rebellion. Under repressive fascist governments of the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s, Athens resumed its economic and demographic growth; but the speed of growth led to acute problems of traffic congestion, water supply, land price inflation, and air pollution that have carried over into the democratic period of the past 15 years.

Modern Athens is a sprawling metropolis of more than 1.5 million, an administrative, financial, publishing, and commercial center with a broad manufacturing base, and an exporter—through its port city of Piraeus—of marble, minerals, and agricultural produce. Classical Athens is very much in evidence in the city center, where the Parthenon looks down from the Acropolis onto the restored Agora (**Figure 3.47**). “Old” Athens is also present in neighborhoods such as Pláka (on the northern slopes of the Acropolis), where small, white-washed houses cluster along narrow streets and around small squares with taverns and vine-covered arbors. For the most part, however, Athens is a modern, sprawling city with a rather characterless and unfinished appearance that derives from speculative building in concrete and stucco. Migrants from the Greek countryside and immigrants and refugees from the Balkans have to endure harsh conditions in comparison with the majority of West Europeans (see “A Day in the Life of Daniela Stefani,” p. 000).

**Fig 3.47: photo of Athens**

*Feature: “A Day in the Life of Daniela Stefani*

Rome

Rome is one of the most beautiful and exciting cities in the whole Western world. Known as the Eternal City, it is associated with some of the pinnacles of humanity’s artistic and intellectual achievement. It is also one of the most congested, noisy, and debt-ridden cities in Europe. Located on a defensible hilltop site dominating the last high-banked crossing point of the river Tiber in central Italy, Rome was on an important trade route between Tuscany to the north and Greek colonies in southern Italy. By the second century A.D., it had become the capital of an empire of over 100 million people, its own population reaching almost 2 million by the third century. After the transfer of the capital of the empire to Constantinople (present-day Istanbul) in A.D. 330, Rome was sacked by barbarians and there followed a thousand years of decline and stagnation. Earthquakes, invasions, and the pillaging of old buildings for quarry stone left much of the classical city in ruins, and it was only with the return of the papacy to the city from Avignon in 1378 that it began to grow again. Rome became the center of Renaissance culture in the early sixteenth century, only to be sacked by the armies of Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) in 1527, when thousands of churches, palaces, and houses were destroyed in just over a week. This led, in turn, to one of the more important redevelopments of the city in the 1580s, when Pope Sixtus V and his architect Domenico Fontana undertook a vast program of city planning, laying out new streets and squares, building palaces, and repairing walls, bridges, and aqueducts. Yet the influence of the church was not always conducive to successful economic development, and it was not until the unification of Italian states in 1870 and Rome’s selection as the national capital that it began to grow and prosper as a modern city. By 1910 the city’s population had reached 500,000, and by 1930 it reached 1 million, expanding for the first time beyond the city walls (the Aurelian Wall) that had been built in A.D. 270.

It is within the compass of these walls that most of the glory of Rome is to be found. Within this area, which extends for little more than 1.5 kilometers (about 1 mile) in every direction from the Colosseum, are the ruins of the Roman Forum, the Pantheon, the Capitoline, the column of Marcus Aurelius, the Piazza del Popolo, the Via del Corso, Bernini’s fountains, the Scala di Spagna (the Spanish Steps), the Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta, the Piazza Navona (**Figure 3.48**), and hundreds of other historic structures and monuments. Embedded within this historic fabric are some of the world’s most exclusive shops and restaurants, together with a tremendous mixture of other shops, offices, and workshops, providing a diversity that is emphasized by the variety of people—including artists, students, movie and fashion people, as well as

tourists from all over the world—who pack the central spaces (Figure 3.49).

*Fig 3.48—photo of Piazza Navona*

*Fig 3.49—photos of Spanish Steps, via Condotti*

The major employers in modern Rome are the building, tourism, movie industries, and the government. While not an industrial city of international or national significance, Rome does have quite a broad industrial base in which the most prominent activities are engineering, electronics, chemicals, printing, clothing, and food processing. The modern city's growth has been reflected by an increase in population (mostly migrants from poorer regions of southern Italy) from 1.7 million in 1960 to 2.7 million in 2000.

The city's extensive historic fabric has made it difficult to cope with this growth. The most immediate problems are traffic congestion and pollution. Traffic fumes and vibrations are so bad that the city's monuments have deteriorated rapidly in the past 25 years. These, however, represent only part of the problem for Rome's inhabitants. Acute housing shortages, rampant land speculation, uncontrolled building, deteriorating slums, inadequate infrastructure, and overstretched social services are endemic, adding up to a city that is sharply polarized and acutely distressed. Although Rome has had a long history of urban planning, the modern planning system is complex, slow-moving, and ineffective. Plans can take so long to be adopted that the growth they are intended to regulate has already taken place, while patronage and influence have resulted in thousands of exceptions to planning regulations.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Contemporary Europe is highly urbanized and is a cornerstone of the world economy with a complex, multilayered, and multifaceted regional geography. In overall terms, Europe accounts for almost two-fifths of world trade and about one-third of the world's aggregate GNP.

The rise of Europe as a major world region had its origins in the emergence of a system of merchant capitalism in the fifteenth century, when advances in business practices, technology, and navigation made it possible for the merchants of Europe to establish the basis of a worldwide economy in the space of less than 100 years. These changes also had a profound effect on the geography of Europe itself, reorienting the region toward the Atlantic and away from the subregional maritime economies of the Mediterranean and the Baltic. Since then, Europe's regional geographies have been comprehensively recast several times: by the new

production and transportation technologies that marked the onset of the Industrial Revolution; by two world wars, and by the Cold War rift between Eastern and Western Europe.

The European Union emerged after the Second World War as a major factor in reestablishing Europe's role in the world. The EU is now a sophisticated and powerful institution with a pervasive influence on patterns of economic and social well-being within its member states. It has a population of over 370 million, with a combined GDP 10 percent larger than that of the United States. The reintegration of Eastern Europe has added a potentially dynamic market of 344 million consumers to the European economy. Overall, Eastern Europe functions as a set of economically peripheral regions, with agriculture still geared to local markets and former COMECON trading opportunities, and industry still geared more to heavy industry and standardized products than to competitive consumer products.

The principal core region within Europe is the Golden Triangle that stretches between London, Paris, and Berlin. A secondary, emergent, core is developing along a north-south crescent that straddles the Alps, stretching from Frankfurt, just to the south of the Golden Triangle, through Stuttgart, Zürich, and Munich to Milan and Turin.

Beyond Europe's core regions, major metropolitan areas, and specialized industrial districts, a mosaic of different landscapes has developed around Europe's broad physiographic regions. In detail, these landscapes are a product of centuries of human adaptation to climate, soils, altitude, aspect, and to changing economic and political circumstances. Farming practices, field patterns, settlement types, local architecture, and ways of life have all become attuned to the opportunities and constraints of regional physical environments, with the result that distinctive regional landscapes have been produced.

## KEY TERMS

acid rain  
 agglomeration economies  
 balkanization  
 canton  
 central business district (CBD)  
 command economy  
 deindustrialization  
 disinvestment  
 enclave  
 Enlightenment  
 entrepot

ethnic cleansing  
 exclave  
 feudal system  
 fjord  
 flexible production region  
*garrigue*  
 imperialism  
 latifundia  
 loess  
 Marshall Plan  
 minifundia  
 Modernity  
 moraine  
 pastoralism  
 physiographic region  
 polder  
 satellite state  
 Soviet bloc  
 state socialism  
 swidden  
 world city  
 xenophobia

## EXERCISES

[To follow]

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## **MOVIES, BOOKS, AND MUSIC**