

Field Note

"Moving out from central Cairo, evidence of the city's rapid growth is all around you. These hastily built housing units are part of the (often losing) effort to keep up with the city's exploding growth. From a city of just one million people in 1930, Cairo's population expanded to six million by 1986. And then high growth rates really kicked in. Although no one knows the exact size of the contemporary city, most estimates suggest that Cairo's population has doubled in the last twenty years. This growth has placed a tremendous strain on city services. Housing has been a particularly critical problem—leading to a landscape outside the urban core dominated by hastily built, minimally functional, and aesthetically non-descript housing projects."

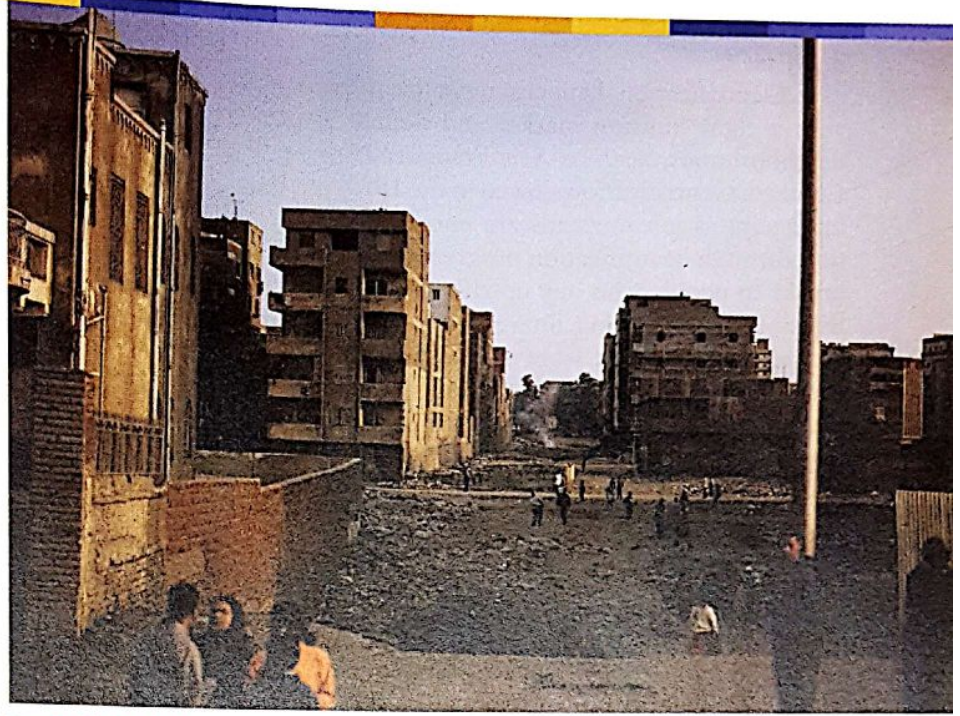


Figure 9.31
Cairo, Egypt. © Alexander B. Murphy.

to be risky neighborhoods in cities and refuse to offer loans to those in the districts (marked by red lines on a map). This practice, which is now illegal, worked against those living in poorer neighborhoods and helped to precipitate a downward spiral in which poor neighborhoods became increasingly rundown because funds were not available for upkeep.

Before the civil rights movement, realtors could purposefully sell a house in a white neighborhood at a very low price to a member of the African American community. In a practice called **blockbusting**, the realtors would solicit other white residents of the neighborhood to sell their homes under the guise that the neighborhood was going downhill because an African American person or family had moved in. This produced what urban geographers and sociologists call *white flight*—movement of whites from the city and adjacent neighborhoods to the outlying suburbs. Blockbusting led to significant turnover in housing, which of course benefited real estate agents through the commissions they earned. Blockbusting also prompted landowners to sell their properties at low prices (to get out of the neighborhood quickly), which in turn allowed developers to subdivide lots and build tenements. Typically, the developers did not maintain the tenements well, dropping the property values even further.

Developers and governments are also important actors in the making of cities. In cities of the global core that have experienced high levels of suburbanization, people have left the central city for the suburbs for a number of

reasons, among them single-family homes, yards, better schools, and safety. With suburbanization, city governments lose tax revenue, as middle- and upper-class taxpayers leave the central city and pay taxes in the suburbs instead. In order to counter the suburbanization trend, city governments are encouraging commercialization of the central city and gentrification of the central city's neighborhoods.

The plans that city governments draft to revive central cities usually involve cleaning streets, sidewalks, and buildings; tearing down old, abandoned buildings; and building up commercial offerings and residences. In the downtowns, city governments have often created programs to encourage **commercialization**, which entails transforming the central city into an area attractive to residents and tourists alike. Several cities, including Miami, New York, and Baltimore, have created waterfront "theme" areas to attract visitors. These areas include festival marketplaces, parks with exotic sculptures and play areas, and amusement zones occupying former industrial sites. Such ventures have been successful in attracting tourists and in generating business, but they alone cannot revive downtowns because they cannot attract what the core of the city needs most: permanent residents with a stake in its future. The newly commercialized downtowns often stand apart from the rest of the central city.

Since the 1960s, some people have moved back into central cities—often in conjunction with a process known as **gentrification**. Gentrification occurs when individuals buy up and rehabilitate the houses, raising the housing

value in the neighborhood and changing the neighborhood itself.

Gentrification happens most frequently in cities with a tight housing market and defined central city neighborhoods, such as San Francisco, Portland, and Chicago. Gentrification slowed in the 1990s but is growing again, as governments are encouraging gentrification through beautification programs and significant tax breaks to people who buy up abandoned or dilapidated housing. The growing interest in central city housing has resulted in part from the changing character of American society: the proportion of childless couples (heterosexual and homosexual) and single people in the population is growing, and for these urbanites, the suburbs do not look so attractive. Living within walking distance of the workplace, and very near the cultural and recreational amenities the central city still offers, attracts more residents every year. For them, the gentrified neighborhood is a good choice. In many cities, gentrification has displaced lower income residents, and for those displaced by gentrification, the consequences can be serious. Rising housing costs associated with gentrification have played a key role in the growing problem of homelessness.

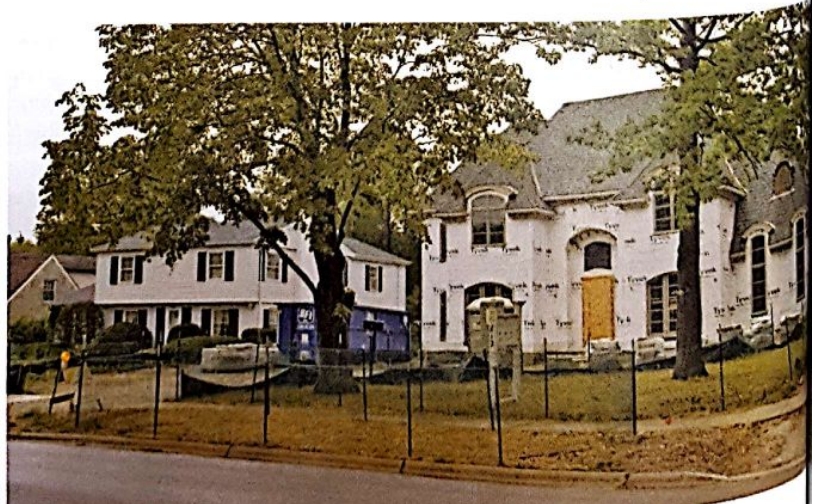
The suburb is not immune to gentrification. Rampant in many American suburbs (especially those close to the city) are **tear-downs**, houses that new owners bought with the intention of tearing them down and building a much larger home. The new homes, sometimes referred to as **McMansions** (because of their super size and their similar look), often stretch to the outer limits of the lot (Fig. 9.32). Like gentrification in the city, the tear-down phenomenon changes the landscape and increases average housing values, tax revenue for the city, and the average household income of the neighborhood. Unlike gentri-

fication, with tear-downs, the original houses are destroyed instead of preserved. Also unlike gentrification, tear-downs often occur in wealthy suburbs, such as Greenwich, Connecticut, and Hinsdale, Illinois. In Greenwich (just outside of New York City), the city issued 138 permits for tear-downs in 2004 (56 more than it did the year before). In Hinsdale (just outside Chicago), in the last 20 years, about one-quarter of the suburb's 1100 houses have been torn down. Those in favor of tear-downs argue that the phenomenon slows urban sprawl by replacing existing homes with new homes, rather than converting farmland to residential lots. Those opposed to tear-downs see the houses as too large for their lots, dwarfing the neighboring houses, and destroying the character of the place by demolishing the older homes.

Urban Sprawl and New Urbanism

As populations have grown in certain areas of the United States, such as the Sunbelt and the West, urban areas have experienced **urban sprawl**, unrestricted growth of housing, commercial developments, and roads over large expanses of land, with little concern for urban planning. Urban sprawl is easy to spot as you drive down major roadways in any urbanized part of the country. You will see strip malls, big box stores, chain restaurants, huge intersections, and numerous housing developments, all spread out over many acres (Fig. 9.33). Sprawl is a phenomenon of the automobile era. Cities that grew before the automobile typically grow "up" instead of "out." For instance, Boston grew around the marketplace and port, but it grew before the automobile, resulting in development over smaller areas. If you walk through the central city of Boston today, you can walk where you need to go or

Figure 9.32
Hinsdale, Illinois. In this upscale suburb of Chicago, a new McMansion stands in the place where a smaller house (similar in size to the one still standing in the left of the photo) used to stand. In the last 20 years, about 25 percent of Hinsdale's houses have been torn down to make room for much larger houses. © Dennis Light/ Light Photographic.



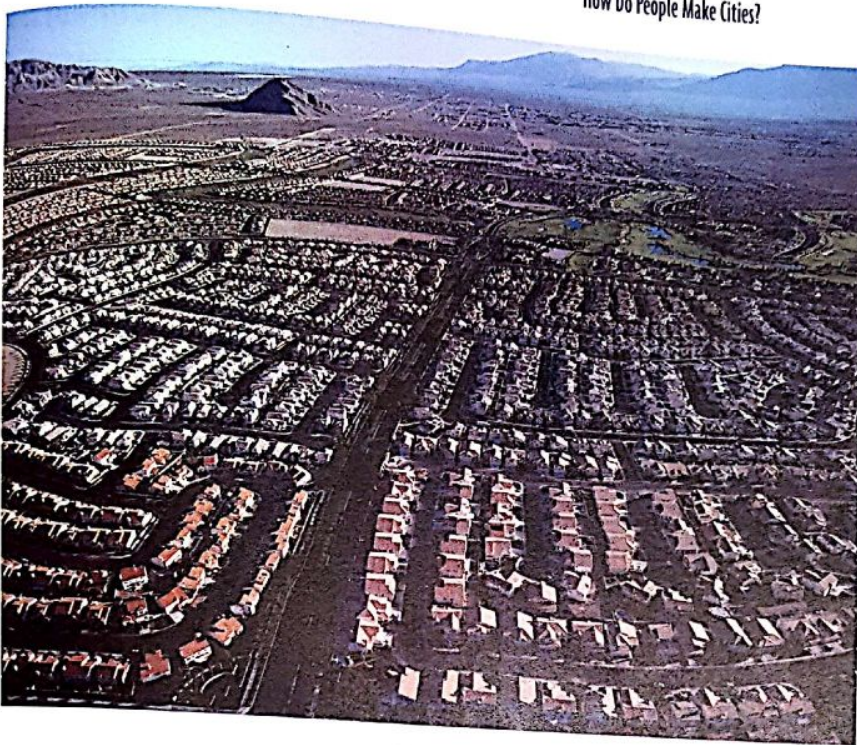


Figure 9.33

Henderson, Nevada. Henderson is the largest suburb of Las Vegas and it was also the fastest-growing urban settlement in the United States between 1990 and 2000.

© Mike Yamashita/Woodfin Camp & Associates.

take the T (metro). Places are built up vertically, and curving, narrow streets and commercial developments with a flavor of the old city (Quincy Market) give the city a cozy, intimate feel.

Does population growth explain which cities experience the most urban sprawl? In a study of sprawl from 1960 through the 1990s, Leon Kolankiewicz and Roy Beck (two antisprawl writers) used United States Census data on urbanized areas and found that urban sprawl happened even in urban areas without significant population growth. In the United States, urban sprawl is more rampant in the Sunbelt of the South (Atlanta) and in the West (Houston) in urban areas whose population is rapidly growing (Table 9.1). Yet, even in cities such as Detroit and Pittsburgh, where urban populations fell during the study period—by 7 percent in Detroit and 9 percent in Pittsburgh—urban sprawl increased the urbanized areas of the cities by 28 percent and 30 percent, respectively. For urban sprawl to happen, farmlands and old industrial sites are razed, and roads are built or widened, strip malls are erected, and housing developments monopolize the horizon.

To counter urban sprawl, a group of architects, urban planners, and developers (now numbering over 2000 in more than 20 countries) outlined an urban design vision they call new urbanism. Forming the Congress for the New Urbanism in 1993, the group defines **new urbanism** as development, urban revitalization, and suburban reforms that create walkable neighborhoods with a diversity of housing and jobs. On their website, The Congress for the New Urbanism explains that “New

Urbanists support regional planning for open space, appropriate architecture and planning, and the balanced development of jobs and housing. They believe these strategies are the best way to reduce how long people spend in traffic, to increase the supply of affordable housing, and to rein in urban sprawl.” New urbanists want to create neighborhoods that feel like places, that promote a sense of community and a sense of place.

The most famous new urbanist projects are cities that new urbanists designed from the ground up, including Seaside, Florida (featured in the movie *The Truman Show*), West Laguna, California, and Kentlands, Maryland. When new urbanists build a town, the design is reminiscent of Christaller over a much smaller area. The planners choose the central shopping areas and open spaces and develop the neighborhoods around them, with housing clustered a quarter mile around the central space, so that people can walk to the shopping area within five minutes. One goal of new urbanist designs is to build housing more densely, to take up less space. Along with that, making shopping and other amenities walkable decreases dependency on the automobile, thereby, as new urbanists claim, helping the environment.

Although some see new urbanist designs as manufactured communities and feel disconnected in a new urbanist space, others see new urbanist designs as superior to sprawl. Celebration, Florida, is a remarkable new urbanist space: it is adjacent to Walt Disney’s theme parks, was envisioned by Walt Disney himself, and is owned by the Disney Company (Fig. 9.34). Built in 1994, Celebration is

TABLE 9.1
Top 20 Urban Sprawl Cities in the United States. Several different ways to measure sprawl exist. This index measures residential density, neighborhood mixture of homes, jobs and services, strength of downtowns, and accessibility to the street network.

TOP 20 URBAN SPRAWL CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES	
Metropolitan Area	State
1. Riverside–San Bernardino	CA
2. Greensboro–Winston Salem–High Point	NC
3. Raleigh–Durham	NC
4. Atlanta	GA
5. Greenville–Spartanburg	SC
6. West Palm Beach–Boca Raton–Delray Beach	FL
7. Bridgeport–Stamford–Norwalk–Danbury	CT
8. Knoxville	TN
9. Oxnard–Ventura	CA
10. Fort Worth–Arlington	TX
11. Gary–Hammond	IN
12. Rochester	NY
13. Dallas	TX
14. Vallejo–Fairfield–Napa	CA
15. Detroit	MI
16. Syracuse	NY
17. Newark	NJ
18. Little Rock–North Little Rock	AR
19. Albany–Schenectady–Troy	NY
20. Hartford–New Britain–Middletown–Bristol	CT

Source: Smart Growth.org, <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/sprawlindex/measuringsprawl.pdf> last accessed July 2005.

centered on Market Street, a shopping district with restaurants (including a 1950s-style diner and a pizza place), a town hall, banks, a post office, and a movie theater with a nostalgic marquee (Fig. 9.35). The town includes schools, a health center, a fitness center, and a church. The Disney Company chose certain architectural styles for the houses in Celebration, and builders offer homes and townhouses in a price range from \$300,000 to over \$1 million. To meet the new urbanist goal of incorporating diverse people in a community, Celebration includes apartments for rent and condominiums for sale.

For geographers, new urbanism is seen as a redefinition of space in the city. Typically through new urbanism, public spaces become privatized for the privilege of the few (the residents of the neighborhood). Geographers Stuart Aitken, Don Mitchell and Lynn Staeheli note that as new urbanism strives to turn neighborhoods back in time, “spaces and social functions historically deemed public (such as parks, neighborhood centers, shopping districts)” are privatized. The houses with porches that encourage neighbors to talk and the parks that are within walking distance for the residents create “mythic land-

scapes that are ingratiating for those who can afford them and exclusionary for those who cannot.”

Noted geographer David Harvey offers one of the strongest critiques of new urbanism, explaining first that most new urbanist designs are “greenfield” projects designed for the affluent to make the suburbs more livable. This fact is evidence, Harvey argues, that the new urbanism movement is a kind of “spatial determinism” that does not recognize that “the fundamental difficulty with modernism was its persistent habit of privileging spatial forms over social processes.” Harvey, and others who critique new urbanism, claim that new urbanism does nothing to break down the social conditions that privilege some and disenfranchise others; that new urbanist projects take away much of the grittiness and character of the city; and that the “communities” that new urbanists form through their projects are exclusionary communities that further the racial segregation of cities.

Despite the critiques against new urbanism, developments in the new urbanist tradition are attracting a growing number of people, and when they are situated within cities, they can work against urban sprawl.

Field Note

When I visited Celebration, Florida in 1997, I felt like I was walking onto a movie or television set. The architecture in the Walt Disney-designed new urbanist development looked like the quintessential New England town. Each house has a porch, but on the day I was there, the porches sat empty—waiting to welcome the arrival of their owners at the end of the work day. We walked through town, past the 50s style movie marquee and ate lunch at a 50s style diner. At that point, Celebration was still growing. Across the street from the “Bank of Celebration” stood a sign marking the future home of the “Church in Celebration.”

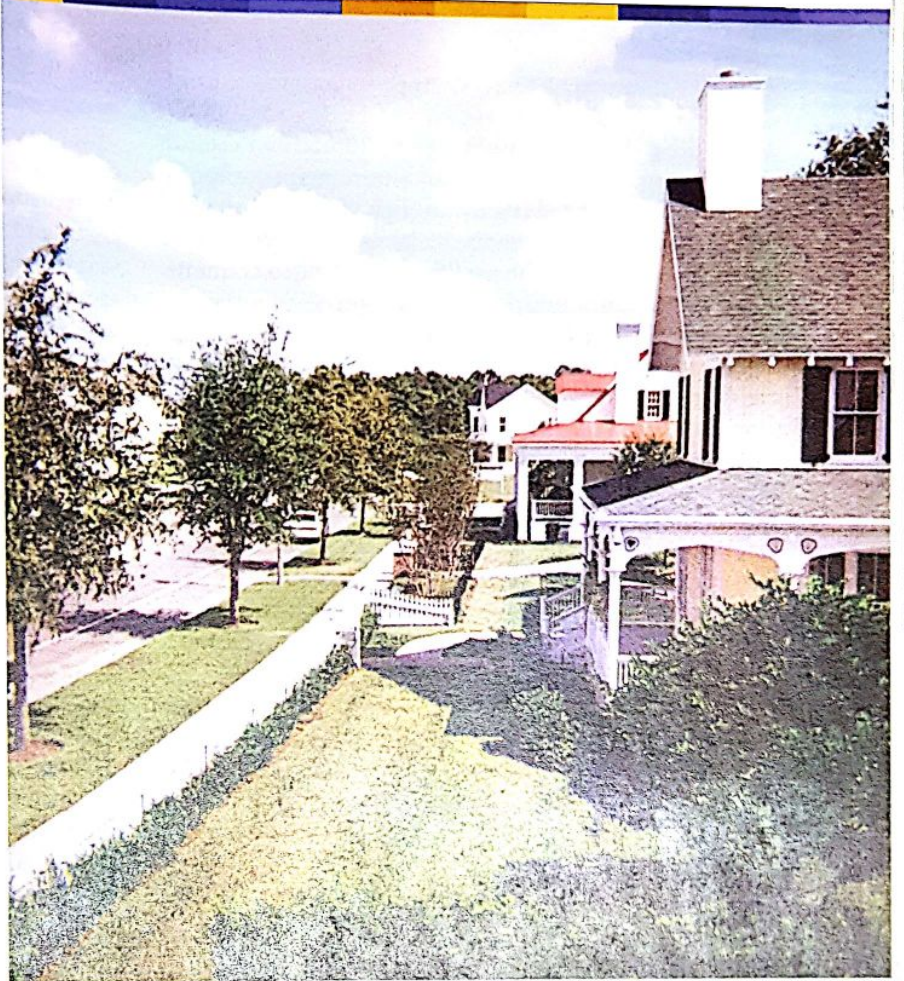


Figure 9.34
Celebration, Florida. © Erin H. Fouberg.



Figure 9.35
Celebration, Florida. © Erin H. Fouberg.

Gated Communities

As you drive through urban spaces, suburban and central city alike, you will note more and more neighborhoods being developed or redesigned to align with new urbanist principals. In your inventory of landscapes, even more overwhelming will be the proliferation of gated communities. **Gated communities** are fenced-in neighborhoods with controlled access gates for people and automobiles. Often, gated communities have security cameras and security forces (privatized police) who patrol the community, as the main objective of a gated community is to create a space of safety within the uncertain urban world. A secondary objective is to maintain or increase housing values in the neighborhood through enforcement of the neighborhood association's bylaws that control everything from the color of a house to additions.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, developers in the United States began building gated communities in urban areas around the country. In a 2001 census of housing, the United States government reported that 16 million people, or about 6 percent of Americans, live in gated communities. The urban design of gating communities has diffused around the globe at record speed, with gated communities in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

In poorer countries, where cities are divided between wealthy and poor, gated communities provide another layer of comfort for the city's wealthy. In the large cities of Latin America and Africa, you commonly see walls around individual houses, walling in yards and pools and keeping out crime. During the last 10 years, many neighborhoods in these cities have added gates around the neighborhoods in addition to the walls. Walled houses and gated communities in the wealthy northern suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa are threatening the desegregation of the post-Apartheid city. White, wealthy residents fear crime in the city with a murder rate, along with neighboring Pretoria, of 5000 per year (in an area with about 5 million people). In response to their fear of crime, people in the suburbs of Johannesburg blocked off over 2500 streets and posted guards to control access to these streets by 2004. Many fear that the gated communities are a new form of segregation. Since the vast majority of the crimes in the city occur in poor black townships or in the central city, the concern is that these developments only worsen the plight of less well-off segments of society.

In China, gated communities have taken off, now crossing socioeconomic classes and creating a ubiquitous feature on the urban landscape (Fig. 9.36). Like the gated communities in Europe and North America, the gated

Figure 9.36
Gated Housing Community in
Beijing, China. © Liu Liqun/China
Stock Photo Library.



communities of China privatize spaces and exclude outsiders with gates, security cameras, and restricted access. However, the gated communities in China are 5 to 10 times more densely populated than gated communities in Europe and North America. Geographer Youqin Huang has found other differences between gated communities in China and those in North America and Europe. China has a long history of gated communities, dating back to the first Chinese cities and persisting since. Huang argues that the “collectivism-oriented culture and tight political control” in China explain why the Chinese government built gated communities during the socialist period and why a proliferation of gated communities has occurred by private developers since China’s housing reform in 1998 promoted individual home ownership.

In Europe and North America, gated communities are not only for the wealthy and privileged. Especially since September 11, people have a growing desire to feel safe at home, and this is just as true of middle and lower classes as it is of the rich. Some urban planners have encouraged governments to recast low-income housing as small communities, gated from each other, in order to reduce the flowthrough traffic and crime associated with it. Cities have torn down the enormous high rises, typically ridden with crime and referred to as “the projects” such as Cabrini Green in Chicago and Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, in favor of redefining the spaces of the poor into “defensible” spaces (Fig. 9.37).

Urban planners want to gate middle-income and low-income neighborhoods in order to create a sense of community and to make the spaces “defensible” from undesired activities such as drug dealing and prostitution. One of the best-documented cases of gating a middle-

income community is the Five Oaks district of Dayton, Ohio, a neighborhood that is about 50 percent African American and 50 percent white and has a high rate of rentals. Urban planner Oscar Newman encouraged planners in Dayton to divide the 2000 households in the Five Oaks district into 10 smaller, gated communities with restricted access. The city turned most of the residential streets in each of these mini-neighborhoods into cul-de-sacs. They have seen a serious reduction in crime, and an increase in housing sales and housing values.

Ethnic Neighborhoods in the European City

Ethnic neighborhoods in European cities are typically affiliated with migrants from former colonies. For example, Algeria was a colony of France, and now Paris and other French cities have distinct Algerian neighborhoods. Similarly, London (the United Kingdom) has a Jamaican neighborhood, and Madrid (Spain) has a distinct Moroccan neighborhood, reflecting their colonial ties with these now sovereign countries. Other European countries cultivated relationships with countries outside of Europe after the colonial era. For example, after World War II, Germany invited young men from Turkey to migrate to Germany as guest workers (see Chapter 3). Cities in Germany, such as Frankfurt, have distinct Turkish neighborhoods. Current immigration to countries in Europe typically focuses on the cities. And most of the migrants to European cities come from the global periphery or from Eastern Europe, not from other countries in Western Europe.

Migration to Europe is constrained by government policies and laws. Many Western European cities have

Figure 9.37

St. Louis, Missouri. This photo taken in 1971 captured a view of the massive Pruitt-Igoe housing project, before it was demolished in 1972. Pruitt-Igoe was designed in 1951, and by 1972 the rampant crime among the project’s 33 apartment buildings solidified the image of this public housing project as a failure.

© Corbis-Bettmann.



public housing zones that were built after World War II following the devastation of the war years. Governments in Europe are typically much more involved in the social rights of people, such as health care and housing than the United States government. European cities are also much older than American cities, and when the cities were laid out they were designed for foot and horse traffic, not automobile traffic. Thus, European cities are typically more compact, densely populated, and walkable than American cities. European cities also have historic city centers where much of the city's history took place and is preserved and to which tourists are attracted today. Rather than the skyscrapers that are typically the focal point of downtown in American cities, a historic city center is the focal point of downtown in European cities and skyscrapers are reserved for developments on the outskirts of town. Housing in the European city is often combined with places of work, with work spaces on the bottom floors of buildings and housing above. Large zones of housing in Europe typically begin in a ring around the outside of the city center, in what Ernest Burgess called the zone of transition. After the war, many European governments built public housing structures in the spaces leveled by bombing *around* the city center.

Immigration is changing the spatial-cultural geography of European cities. As immigrants have settled in large numbers in the zone of transition, locals have moved out. Walking from the city center of Paris out through immigrant neighborhoods, one will see the cultural landscape change to reflect the significant number of immigrants from the "Maghreb" of Africa, the region of North Africa around Algeria and Morocco. Maghrebis are by far the most numerous inhabitants in the tough, hardscrabble immigrant neighborhoods around Paris, where unemployment is high, crime is widespread, resentment festers, and Islam provides solace. Walk along the tenement-lined, littered streets here, and the elegant avenues of historic Paris seem remote indeed—but they are not. A short subway ride takes you from one world to another.

Whether a public housing zone is divided into ethnic neighborhoods in a European city depends in large part on the government policies. Urban geographers Christian Kesteloot and Cees Cortie studied housing policies and zones in Brussels, Belgium, and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. They found that Brussels has very little public housing and that immigrants live in privately owned rentals throughout the city. Kesteloot and Cortie also found that immigrant groups in Brussels who came from a distinct region of their home country (especially rural regions), such as the Turks in Brussels, tend to cluster in ethnic neighborhoods. On the other hand, the researchers reported that immigrant groups who came from cities, such as the Moroccans in Brussels, chose rental units scat-

tered throughout the city and therefore did not establish ethnic neighborhoods in Brussels.

Amsterdam is quite different from Brussels: as Amsterdam has a great deal of public housing and few ethnic neighborhoods within the public housing units. When immigration to Amsterdam from former colonies (Indonesia, Surinam) and noncolonies (Morocco and Turkey) increased in the 1960s, Amsterdammers moved from the transition zone of public housing to neighboring towns such as Almere. The Dutch government then implemented a policy in the public housing zone that slowed the creation of ethnic neighborhoods. The Dutch government allots public housing to legal immigrants by assigning homes on a sequential basis in the city's zone of transition, where some 80 percent of the housing stock is public housing. As a result of government assignment of housing, if we walk through the public housing zone of Amsterdam, we will find a family from Suriname living next to an Indonesian family and a Moroccan family, not in a Surinamese neighborhood. The housing and neighborhoods are multicultural. The ethnic groups maintain their local cultures through religious and cultural organizations rather than through residential segregation. In Amsterdam, the call to Friday prayer for Muslims rings out all over the immigrant areas, as Muslims from various countries are spread throughout.

Ethnic Neighborhoods in the Global Periphery and Semiperiphery City

In cities of the periphery and semiperiphery, a sea of slum development typically begins where the permanent buildings end, in some cases engulfing and dwarfing the central city. If you stand on a hill outside Lima (Peru) or overlooking the Cape Flats near Cape Town (South Africa), you see an unchanging panorama of makeshift shacks built of every conceivable material, vying for every foot of space, extending to the horizon. You will notice few, if any, trees, and you will see narrow footpaths leading to a few unpaved streets that go into to the central city.

Millions of migrants travel to such ominous environments every year. The total number of people living in these types of slum developments is uncertain because government control is impossible and enumeration impractical. In Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), the migrants build their dwellings on dangerous, landslide-prone slopes; in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea), the migrants sink stilts in the mud and build out over the water, risking wind and waves. In Calcutta (India), thousands of migrants do not even try to erect shelters: there and in many other cities they live in the streets, under bridges, even in storm drains. City governments do not have the resources to adequately educate, medicate, or police the burgeoning

populations, let alone to provide even minimal housing for most.

Even the people living in the squalid conditions of shanty settlements are not really squatters—they pay rent. When the settlements expand outward from the central city, they occupy land owned by previous residents, families who farmed what were once the rural areas beyond the city's edge. Some of the farming families were favored by the former colonial administration; they moved into the cities but continued to own the lands their farms were on. As shanty developments encroached on their lands, the landowners began to charge people rent for living on the dilapidated housing the new residents built on the land. After establishing an owner-tenant relationship, the landowners steadily raise rents, threatening to destroy the flimsy shacks if residents fail to pay. In this way, powerful long-term inhabitants of the city exploit the weaker, more recent arrivals.

The vast slums of cities in poorer parts of the world are typically ethnically delineated, with new arrivals precariously accommodated. For example, Nairobi, Kenya, has a large slum area, one of the worst in Subsaharan Africa in terms of amenities, called Kibera. Much of the land where Kibera is located is owned by Nubians, who are of Sudanese descent. The Sudanese Nubians had settled in the area of Kibera during the colonial era. Many of the Nubians have become businesspeople in the city of Nairobi. The modern tenants of the shanty settlements in Kibera are largely Luo from western Kenya and Luhya from northwestern Kenya. During the fall 2001, some of the Kiberian tenants were unable to pay the latest increase in rents. The Nubian landowners came to evict them, and in the fighting that followed, a number of people were killed. Groups of Luo, Luhya, and others even took to fighting among themselves. The government intervened to stabilize the situation. The latest rent increases were withdrawn, but the fundamental problems—crowding, unemployment, unsanitary conditions, hunger, and lack of education—remain, and the ethnic groups living in the neighborhoods of Kibera will likely experience fighting again.

Geography plays a major role in the relationships among ethnic components of a former colonial city. The settlement patterns of cities developed during the colonial period often persist long after. In a study of the city of Mombasa, Kenya, during the 1960s, H. J. de Blij found that the central city, in effect the island on which Mombasa was built, was informally partitioned among major ethnic groups. Apart from the Swahili who occupied the Old Town and adjacent historic portions of the built-up area, the spatial pattern of occupancy by ethnic groups in the city of Mombasa mirrored the status of the ethnic groups in the country of Kenya as a whole. The port of Mombasa, the country's largest, was the city's major employer. The Kikuyu, whose historic homeland lies far away from Mombasa to the north of Nairobi, were privileged by the

British during colonial times. Because of their important position during colonialism, Kikuyu workers and their families living in Mombasa resided closest to the port and to the center of economic power. Although the most powerful workers lived closest to the central commercial district, the Asians (often from India and thus referred to as Indians in Mombasa) who controlled the city's commerce were concentrated on the opposite side of the island, away from the port. Another powerful ethnic group, the Kamba, occupied a zone farther outward from the port. The Mijikenda, a less powerful African ethnic group, migrated from off-island villages to work in Mombasa and lived farther from the commercial center.

In recent times, as the city's population has grown seven times larger than it was in the 1960s, the spatial pattern of Mombasa still reflects the power of ethnic groups. The most recent immigrants, desperate for jobs, crowd the outer zone of the city, off of the island, and in the shanty settlements.

How do the many millions of urban immigrants living in the slum-ridden rings and pockets of the cities of the global periphery and semiperiphery survive? Extended families share and stretch every dollar they manage to earn; when one member of the family has a salaried job, his or her income saves the day for a dozen or more relatives. When a member of the family (or several members of a larger community) manages to emigrate to a core country or an island of development and makes good money there, part of that income is sent back home and becomes the mainstay for those left behind. Hundreds of millions of dollars are transferred this way every year; *remittances* make a critical difference in the poorer countries of the world (see Chapter 3).

In the vast slums, barrios, and favelas, those who are jobless or unsalaried are not idle. Everywhere you look people are at work, inside or in front of their modest habitats, fixing things, repairing broken items for sale, sorting through small piles of waste for salvageable items, trading and selling goods from makeshift stands. What prevails here is referred to as the **informal economy**—the economy that is not taxed and is not counted toward a country's gross national income. What is generated in the informal economy can add up to a huge total in unrecorded monetary value. The informal economy worries governments because it is essentially a recordless economy and no taxes are paid. Remittances are usually delivered in cash, not via Western Union or a bank. Typically, a trusted community member (who might pay a comparatively small bribe at the airport when passing through immigration) carries remittances to family members.

Even as the informal economy thrives among the millions in the shantytowns, the new era of globalization is making a major impact in the major cities founded or fostered by the colonial powers. In 2002, geographers

Richard Grant and Jan Nijman documented this transformation in former colonial port cities, including Mumbai, India. In this city, formerly called Bombay, colonial rule produced an urban landscape marked by strong segregation of foreign and local activities, commercial as well as residential (Fig. 9.38), and high levels of functional specialization and concentration. Adjacent to the port area was a well-demarcated European business district containing foreign (mostly British) companies. Most economic activities in this European commercial area involved trade, transport, banking, distribution, and insurance. Zoning and building codes were strictly enforced. Physically separated from this European district were the traditional markets and bazaars of the so-called Native Town, a densely populated mix of commercial and residential land uses.

In this era of globalization, a new spatially demarcated foreign presence has arisen. The city now has a

global CBD at the heart of the original colonial city, housing mostly foreign corporations and multinational companies and linked mainly to the global economy. The former European Town has a large presence of big domestic companies and a pronounced orientation to the national (Indian) economy. And the Native Town now has a high concentration of small domestic company headquarters and the strongest orientation to the immediate urban area.



THINKING

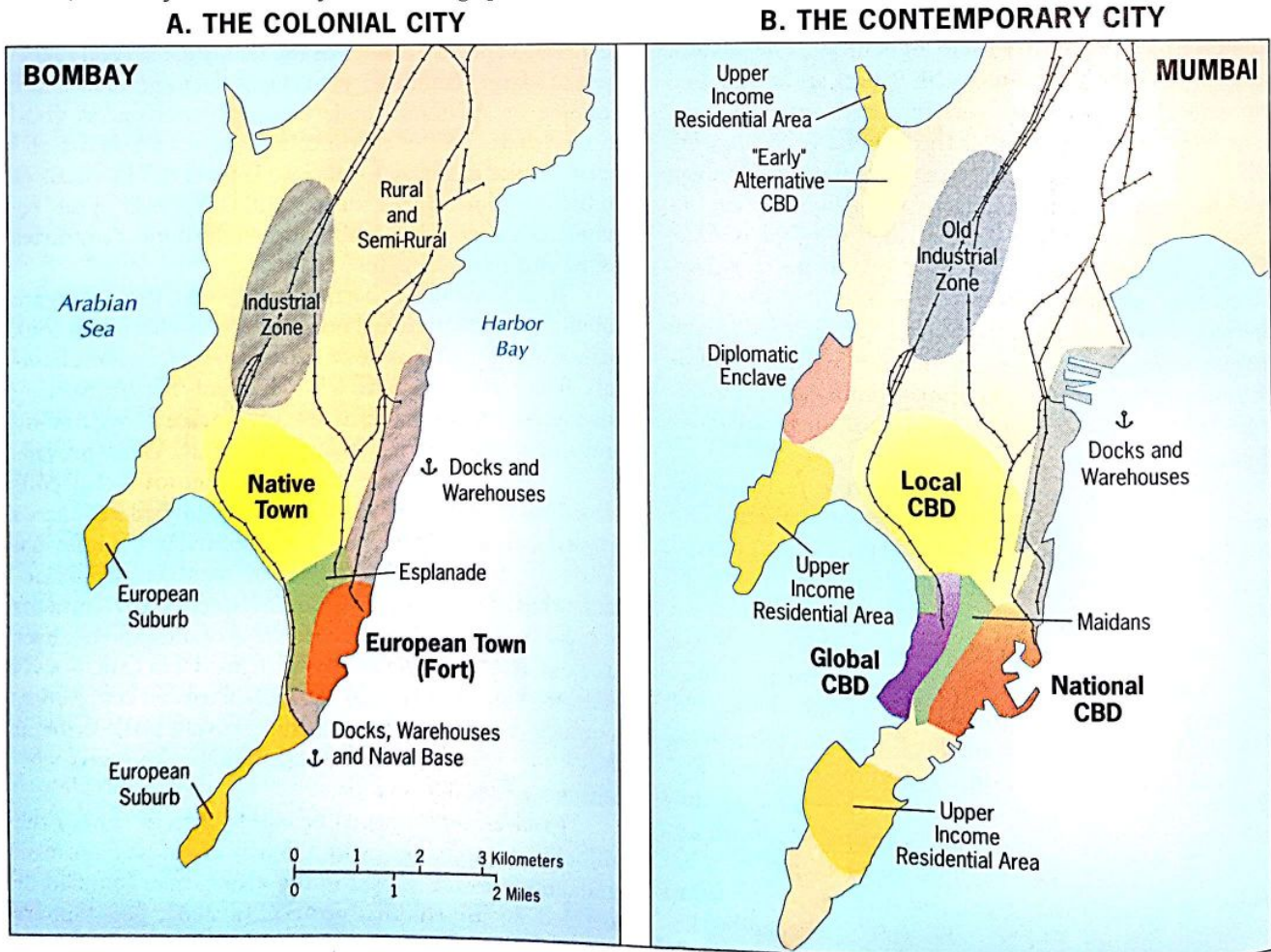


GEOGRAPHICALLY

Using the city you sketched in the last "Thinking Geographically" question, consider the concepts and processes introduced in this section of the chapter and explain how people and institutions created this city and the model you sketched.

Figure 9.38

The Changing Character of Mumbai, India. Adapted with permission from: Richard Grant and Jan Nijman, "Globalization and the Corporate Geography of Cities in the Less-Developed World," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92, 2 (2002).



WHAT ROLE DO CITIES PLAY IN GLOBALIZATION?

Globalization, as we defined the term in the first chapter, is a set of processes and outcomes that occur on the global scale, circumventing and leaping over state boundaries to affect the world. In the processes of globalization, cities are taking over in ways we barely understand. Most statistics about economic activity at the global scale are gathered and disseminated by states. Nonetheless, many of the most important processes occur among and between cities, not states as a whole, masking the integral role world cities play in globalization. **World cities** function at the global scale, beyond the reach of the state borders, functioning as the service centers of the world economy.

Contending that models of cities and hierarchies of cities within states (such as Christaller) no longer represent what is happening with the city, Taylor and Lang maintain that the city has become "something else" than a simple CBD tied into a hierarchy of other cities within the state. The world city is a node in globalization, reflecting processes that have "redrawn the limits on spatial interaction," according to Felsenstein, Schamp, and Shachar. A node is a place through which action and interaction occur. As a node, a world city is connected to other cities, and the processes of globalization pulse across these connections and through the cities.

Most lists of world cities provide a hierarchy of the most important nodes, the most important world cities, then the next most important, and so forth. Virtually all agree that New York, London, and Tokyo are the most important world cities, but beyond that point, the definition of what makes a world city and the list of world cities changes according to researcher. Geographers Jon Beaverstock and Peter J. Taylor and their Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network have produced nearly 200 research papers, chapters, and books on the geography of world cities over the past few years. By the geography of world cities provide producer services (integral to the processes of globalization) in the areas of banking, law, advertising, and accounting, the geographers produced an inventory of world cities mapped in Figure 9.39. They delineate 10 Alpha, 10 Beta, and 35 Gamma world cities. The Alpha cities (London, Paris, New York, Tokyo, Chicago, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Milan, and Singapore) have a global capacity to provide services in the world-economy.

World cities do not exist merely to service players in the global economy. Major world cities such as London and Paris are also capital cities. States concentrate development and encourage interconnectedness between certain cities and the rest of the world. Even though London

and Paris are a short distance apart, both function as world cities in part because of the role they play within their respective states: each became a magnet for economic and political activity within its state, and then the globe. States often focus development in one particular city, such as the capital city, thereby bolstering that city above the rest of the cities in the state. In 1939, geographer Mark Jefferson defined the **primate city** as "a country's leading city, always disproportionately large and exceptionally expressive of national capacity and feeling." He saw the primate city as the largest and most economically influential within the state, with the next largest city in the state being much smaller and much less influential.

London and Paris each serve as primate cities and world cities today, but some countries such as the United States and Germany have two or more world cities within their state borders. They thus do not have a single, distinct primate city. To understand the role of cities in globalization, the services cities provide to places and peoples around the world and the interconnectedness among cities must also be considered. Geographers have deciphered which cities are world cities and are now working to uncover the globalized flows and processes occurring across world cities, bringing world cities closer together.

Cities as Spaces of Consumption

In addition to being nodes in globalization, cities are also products of globalization. Major changes in cities, such as the refabrication of New York's Times Square and the re-making of Berlin's Potsdamer Platz, are the result of global processes. Frank Roost has found that "the global media industry is becoming the driving force in the reshaping of cities" such as New York and Berlin, turning city centers into **spaces of consumption**. Global media giants such as Time Warner, Viacom, and Walt Disney use cross promotion to encourage the consumption of their products. It is no accident that characters on television sit-coms produced and aired on ABC (a television channel owned by Walt Disney) visit Disney theme parks or host Disney Princess-themed birthday parties on a given episode. These same media companies are investing heavily in urban centers in order to create entertainment spaces, places where tourists can go to consume their products. Media corporations are helping transform urban centers into major entertainment districts ("variations on a theme park") where items are *consumed*.

For example, in New York City, government entities began to try to redevelop Times Square in the early 1980s. At that time, this area of the city was known for its neon lights, pornography movie houses, prostitution, and other illicit economic activities. The city sought to push these businesses out of Times Square and return the business district to a conglomeration of restaurants, hotels, bars, and

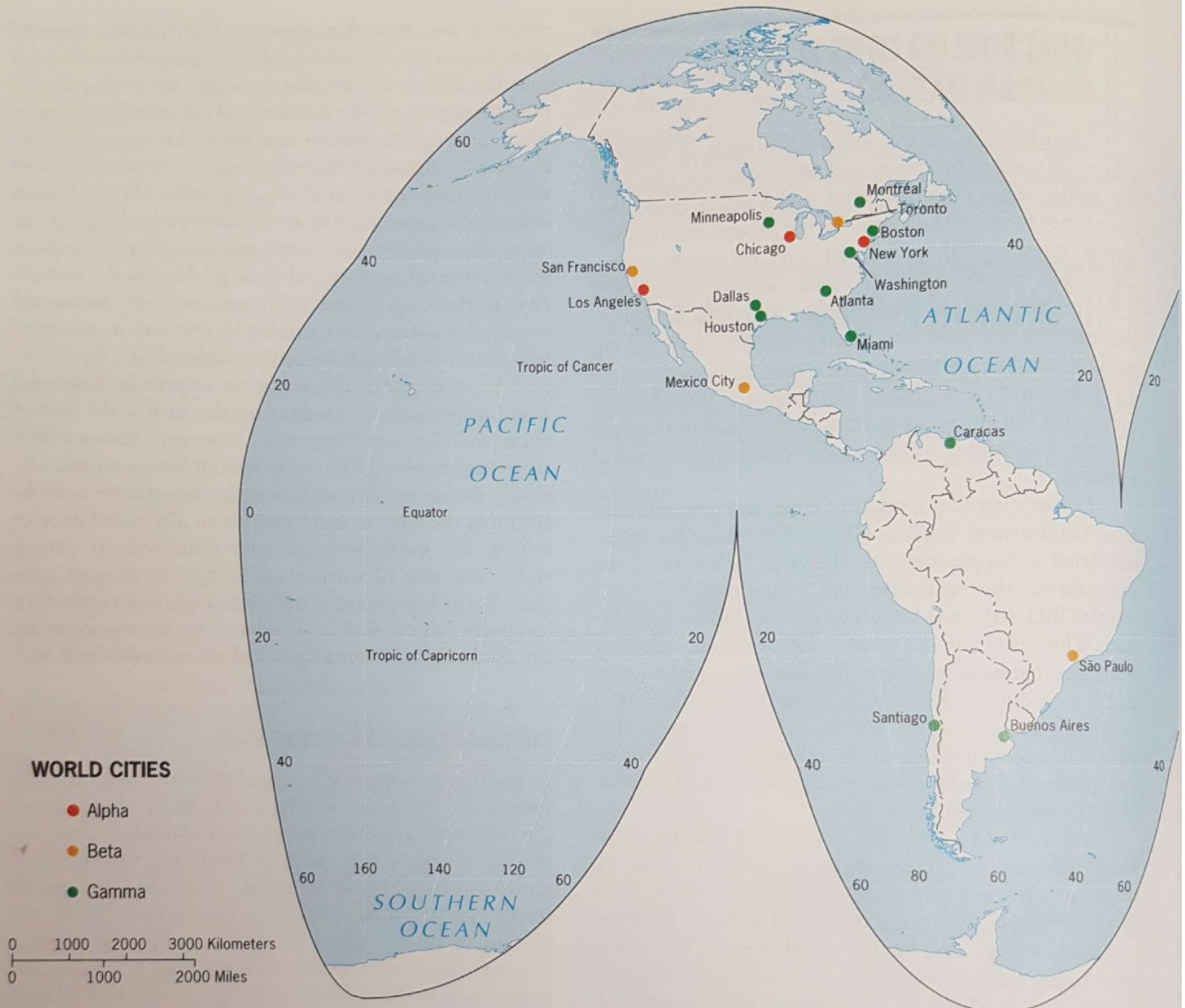


Figure 9.39

World Cities: Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. Data from: J. V. Beaverstock, R. G. Smith, and P. J. Taylor, "A Roster of World Cities," *Cities*, 16, 6 (1999): 445-458.

entertainment spaces (as it had been before World War II). Over the decade of the 1980s, the city closed hundreds of small businesses in Times Square. In 1995, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani reached a deal with Michael Eisner, CEO of Walt Disney. The mayor promised to remove the remaining sex shops, and Eisner committed to renovating the New Amsterdam Theater, a focal point in Times Square (Fig. 9.40 left and right). Secured with a \$26 million low-interest loan from the State of New York, Disney set the new course for a family-friendly entertainment district in New York. The restored New Amsterdam Theater hosts Disney musicals such as "The Lion King" and "Beauty and the Beast"

(both based on Disney movies). The Times Square area is assuredly a space of consumption and a variation on a theme park: themed restaurants (Hard Rock Café, ESPN Zone), cross-promoting themed stores (Warner Brothers Store, Disney Store), and retail stores that cater to families (an enormous Toys R US with a ferris wheel inside).

Potsdamer Platz in Berlin is also becoming a new space of consumption in the city center. Prior to the bombing of Berlin during World War II, Potsdamer Platz was a center of entertainment for Berlin's middle class. After the war, little was left of the area. Soon, a 500-yard border zone and the Berlin Wall occupied the formerly vi-



brant area of the city. After reunification, the city divided Potsdamer Platz and sold the land. The two largest owners are the German company Daimler-Benz and the Japanese company Sony. Sony built a huge entertainment structure called the Sony Center for cross promotion. According to Roost, much of the Daimler-Benz structure, Daimler City, is a space of consumption, with entertainment venues, restaurants, bars, and hotels.

Although the tourist will be focused on the theme park atmosphere of these spaces of consumption, the renovations of the districts in both of these cities have also brought spaces of media production to the cities. Sony has placed its

European headquarters in Berlin, Warner Brothers moved its offices to Times Square, and new office towers around Times Square house many other media companies.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

Thinking through the challenges to the state presented in Chapter 8, predict whether and under what circumstances world cities could replace states as the basic and most powerful form of political organization in the world.



Figure 9.40, left and right

New York, New York. (left) The New Amsterdam Theater in Times Square as it stood in 1947. Note the signs around the building, advertising arcade games and a flea circus. (right) During the 1980s and 1990s, Times Square was “cleaned up” and reinvigorated. The Walt Disney Company renovated the New Amsterdam Theater and now shows productions of musicals such as “Beauty and the Beast” and “The Lion King.” © Corbis-Bettmann.

Summary

The city is an ever changing cultural landscape, its layers reflecting grand plans by governments, impassioned pursuits by individuals, economic decisions by corporations, and processes of globalization. Geographers who study cities have a multitude of topics to examine. From gentrification to tear-downs, from favelas to McMansions, from spaces of production to spaces of consumption, from ancient walls to gated communities, cities have so much in common and yet each has its own pulse, its own feel, its own set of realities. The pulse of the city is undoubtedly created by the peoples and cultures who live there. For it is the people, whether working independently or as part of a global corporation, who continuously create and re-create the city and its geography.

Geographic Concepts

urban morphology
city
urban
agricultural village
agricultural surplus
social stratification

leadership class
first urban revolution
Mesopotamia
Nile River Valley
Indus River Valley
Huang He and Wei

Mesoamerica
acropolis
agora
site
Forum
situation