CHAPTER FOUR

Europe
Figure 4.1
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I. THE GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

- Best example of indeterminacy of region boundaries
- Europe: peninsulas branching off of peninsulas; main peninsulas:
  - Scandinavia
  - Iberian
  - Italian
  - Balkan
A. Physical Patterns

► Landforms

- Mountains, uplands, and lowlands
  - Stretching in east-west bands
  - Alps: Collision between African and Eurasian plates
  - North European Plain: Stretches across northern Europe

- Other mountain ranges: Southern peninsulas, Scotland, and Norway
A. Physical Patterns

► Landforms
  ▪ Uplands to the north of the Alps: navigable rivers, mineral wealth, and industry
    ▶ Large rivers link interior Europe to the seas
    ▶ Rhine, Danube Rivers

► Vegetation
  ▪ Crops and pasture grasses replace former forest cover
    ▶ Except Scandinavia and selected areas of forest regrowth
Alpine Village Near Innsbruck, Austria

Figure 4.4
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A. Physical Patterns

► Climate

- Temperate midlatitude: North Atlantic Drift brings moderate temperatures and rain
  - Northwestern Europe
- Mediterranean: hot, dry summers/mild, rainy winters
  - Southern Europe
- Humid continental: temperatures not moderated by the sea
  - Eastern Europe
Climate Zones

North Atlantic Drift, an ocean current, brings warm water from the Gulf of Mexico across the North Atlantic toward Europe.

Eastward-blowing winds push the warm wet air above the North Atlantic Drift over northwestern Europe and the North European Plain.

Figure 4.5
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B. Human Patterns Over Time

- Many “European” ideas and technologies came from elsewhere
  - Cultural borrowing from Mesopotamia
    - Greeks directly borrowed, Romans borrowed from Greeks and spread with their empire
  - Cultural borrowing from Islamic culture
    - Moorish conquest of Spain, Ottoman influence in southeastern Europe
    - Reintroduced ideas from Rome, Greece, Egypt, Persia after Dark Ages
B. Human Patterns Over Time

Feudalism as a Social, Economic, and Political System

- **Objective**: to organize rural areas for defense
- **Knights** emerge as permanent aristocracy collecting revenues from serfs
- **Serf**: land cultivators, bound by law to land
- **Monarch**: Chief aristocrat who emerges dominant over others
Remnants of Feudalism in Slovenia
B. Human Patterns Over Time

► The Rise of Towns
  ▪ Towns able to defend themselves, hence no feudalism
    ▶ Starting point for capitalism
  ▪ Town charters: established rights of weak against the strong
    ▶ Led to increased innovation
  ▪ Renaissance: cultural movement tied to humanism
    ▶ Dignity and worth of individual
  ▪ Protestant Reformation
    ▶ Led to increased literacy, colloquial languages
B. Human Patterns Over Time

- **Age of Exploration**
  - Technological innovation in navigation, shipbuilding, commerce
  - Establishment of colonies around the world
- **Mercantilism**
  - Colonization and management of production, transport, and trade for the colonizer’s benefit
Transfers of Wealth from Colonialism

Figure 4.8

Transfers of Wealth to Europe, 1500–1840 (in billions of 1990 U.S. dollars)
- Profits from slave trade (British ships)
- Profits from slave trade (French ships)
- Silver exports to Spain and Portugal (1531–1810)
- Gold exports to Spain and Portugal (1503–1800)
- Sugar profits from use of slave labor in North America and Caribbean (18th century)
- Profits from Dutch spice trade (1650–1780)
- Profits from India-China opium trade (1800–1840)
- Land rents, taxes from small farmers (1760–1810)

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B. Human Patterns Over Time

Evolution of European Cities

- Medieval trading wealth (Venice, Genoa) shifted to mercantilist cities (NW Europe)
- Resources from colonies create wealth in manufacturing centers
  - England, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany
  - Paris, London: imperial status later results in “world city” status
Shifts of Power Among Urban Areas, 1450-1800

**Figure 4.9**

*Trading Areas Map (a)*
- Hanseatic
- Genoese
- Venetian
- Empire of Charles V (1519–1556)
- Center of European capitalism in 17th century
- Main centers of metal industry

*Trading Network of First Bankers Maps (a) and (b)*
- Parent company
- Branches
- Mines
- Trade connection

*Maps (a), (b), (c)*
- 50,000–100,000 inhabitants
- 100,000–200,000 inhabitants
- More than 250,000 inhabitants

*Empire of Charles V (1519–1556)*
- Main marine trade routes

*Maps (a), (b), (c)*
- TO THE AMERICAS
- TO THE EAST INDIES

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© 2008 W.H. Freeman and Company [This map was prepared for this text with the assistance of geographer John Agnew.]
B. Human Patterns Over Time

- Age of Revolutions: colonialism fueled two revolutions:
  - The Industrial Revolution: mechanization of industry to meet demand in textiles and later coal and steel
  - Led to global power of the United Kingdom, armed with the world’s greatest navy to protect its trading networks
B. Human Patterns Over Time

► The Democratic Revolution

- Financial power and independence of urban merchants and industrialists led to compromise with nobility
- French Revolution: 1st inclusion of common workers in democratic institutions
- Nationalism: political structures aligned with loyalty to cultural group
  - However, numerous minority groups
- Marxism: lead to post-WWII welfare states
B. Human Patterns Over Time

- World War, Cold War, and Decolonization
  - World Wars ended European hegemony
  - Holocaust
  - Germany, Europe split by Iron Curtain
    - Ideological divide
    - Demotion of geopolitical importance vis-à-vis USA and USSR
  - End of colonialism (1950s-1960s)
B. Human Patterns Over Time

Europe’s Rebirth and Integration

- In 1950s, some Western European countries began economic integration
  - Free movement of people, goods, money, and ideas
  - Policy coordination in civil, judicial, economic, military, environmental, and foreign affairs
- Expansion of European Union to include most countries in the region
  - Recent expansion into Cold War enemies in Eastern Europe
B. Human Patterns Over Time

- Ethnic Cleansing in Southeastern Europe
  - Breakup of Yugoslavia
    - Led to ethnic cleansing in Bosnia in attempt to create ethnic majority
  - Later, intervention by U.S. and EU peacekeepers
    - 5% of Bosnian population killed
C. Population Patterns

- 525 million people
- One of the most densely occupied regions
  - Esp. NW Europe, Northern Italy
- Population Density and Access to Resources
  - Europe has exceeded its own resource base and depends on global resources
Population Distribution

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C. Population Patterns

► Modern Urbanization in Europe
  ▪ High urbanization: From 72% in North Europe to 62% in Central Europe
  ▪ Medieval central cities, with apartment blocks in concentric circles outside
  ▪ High density: excellent public transportation, few detached houses
  ▪ High quality of life in large cities; relatively few slums

Cosmopolitan Urban Life