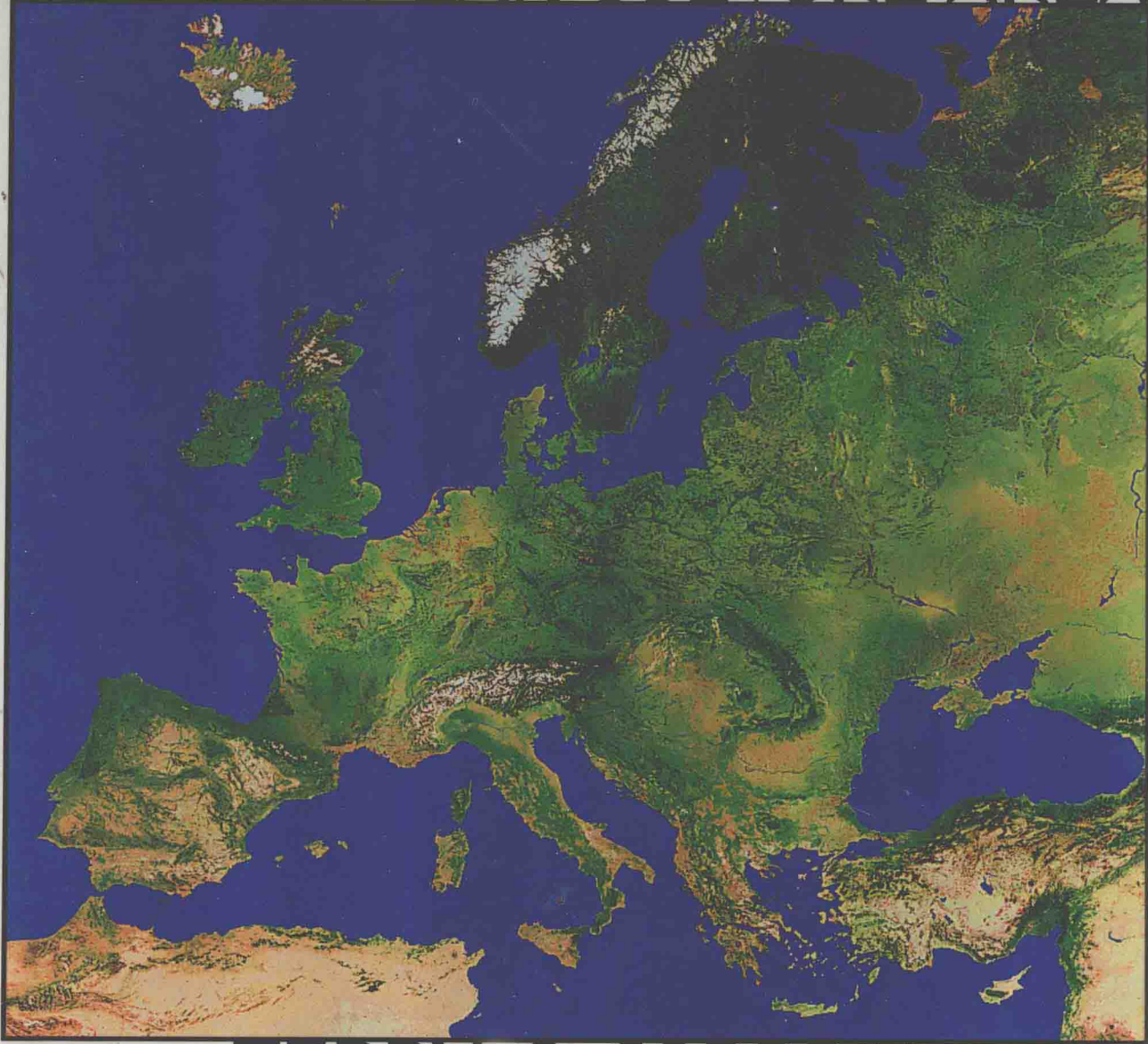


THE EUROPEAN CULTURE AREA



TERRY G. JORDAN

third edition

The European Culture Area

A SYSTEMATIC GEOGRAPHY

Third Edition

TERRY G. JORDAN


*Walter Prescott Webb Professor
University of Texas*

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*To my wife, Marlis, born and raised a European,
without whose assistance, advice, love, and companionship
this book could scarcely have been created.*

Preface

The third edition of the *European Culture Area* reflects one geographer's interpretation of a fascinating, influential, and ever-changing part of the world. Firmly based in my experiences gained during seventeen seasons of travel and field research in Europe, it reflects journeys from Gibraltar to North Cape, from the westernmost promontories of Ireland to the Russian steppes and taiga, from Cyprus to Iceland the Faeroes.

Fundamentally revised from its 1988 predecessor, the present edition reflects the far-reaching changes that have reshaped Europe in the 1990s. The book derives from the rich humanistic tradition of geography and represents an attempt to interpret Europe as a cultural entity. It treats Europe both as one and many, as a people adhering to an overarching culture while at the same time exhibiting a bewildering internal regional variety.

Throughout the book, preference will be given to the indigenous form of place names, as for example *Napoli* instead of *Naples* and *Bayern* instead of *Bavaria*. I felt that the English forms of these toponyms serve no useful purpose and often lead to confusion. One American tourist bound for the wonders of Florence reportedly refused to get off the train at the station bearing the placard "Firenze," convinced that the conductor intended to cheat him! Why bother to learn names that the local citizenry do not use? A few exceptions have been made. The names of independent countries appear in English form, even though this leads us to the absurdity of calling Hrvatska "Croatia" and Deutschland "Germany." Also, if a river, city, mountain range, or other geographic feature extends across linguistic borders and is as a result known by more than one native name, then the English version receives preference. Thus I use Danube instead of Donau/Duna/Dunarea. The English version of names occasionally appear in parentheses following the native form, and the *Index* also directs the reader from English to native forms.

Similarly, preference is given to the metric system, which enjoys almost universal usage in Europe. English measure equivalents follow in parentheses, and a conversion table is included here (see Metric Conversion and Abbreviation Table, page xv). Also, since metric measures often appear in abbreviated form, such as *km* instead of *kilometer*, a key to these is contained in the same table.

Use will also be made of the internationally approved postal code abbreviations for European and neighboring countries. These abbreviations appear in bibliographies, on many maps, and in some captions. In Europe they are used in postal zip codes and often are affixed to the rear of automobiles. For example, the letter code for Germany is D (see Table of Official Letter Codes for Countries, page xvi). Also in that same table are listed the native forms of the names for countries.

Statistical subdivisions of most countries appear on maps throughout the text, in order to present a more detailed geographical pattern of data. While based upon administrative and censal units, these subdivisions almost always represent some lumping of units, in order that the maps not become overly complicated.

Numerous persons have contributed to the writing of the third edition by providing ideas, suggestions, data, assistance, and criticism. My research assistants, Alyson Greiner and Jane Manaster, deserve special thanks, as do the professors who read the first draft and offered numerous suggestions for improvement, including Dr. Mary Lee Nolan of Oregon State, Dr. Ary J. Lamme III of the University of Florida, Dr. Brad Baltensperger of Michigan Tech, and Dr. John U. Marshall of York University. Other valuable contributions came from professors Guy Manaster, Andreas Grotewold, Bruce S. Young, Kirk H. Stone, Kazimierz J. Zaniewski, John Sallnow, Wilbur Zelinsky, Michael Kukral, Robert A. Sirk, Dale J. Stevens, Robin Elisabeth Datel, Ramesh Dhussa, H. Gardiner Barnum, and Joseph Brownell.

Dr. John Cotter of Austin created nearly all of the attractive, functional cartographic work for this book. His maps reveal the human touch that can only be achieved the old-fashioned way, by rejecting computer graphics and employing instead a skilled hand and sensitive eye. I am fortunate to have had his services. Long may his eyes remain keen and his hand steady.

The modest success of *The European Culture Area* reflects in part the resurgence of interest in regional geography and in the humanistic method of study. Renewed and growing attention to the geography of Europe was also revealed in the 1992 establishment and subsequent growth of a "European Specialty Group" within the Association of American Geographers. Earlier editions of *The European Culture Area* have been translated into Italian and Japanese, suggesting an international appeal, and the book has often been cited in European scholarly journals, both within and outside the discipline of geography. The third edition now renews the availability of *The European Culture Area* to the English-speaking countries, presenting the geography of a dynamic and influential region on the eve of a new century.

Terry G. Jordan

METRIC CONVERSION AND ABBREVIATION TABLE

METRIC SYSTEM

AMERICAN MEASURES

Length

1 meter (m) = 3.281 sq. ft.

1 ft. = 0.348 m

1 kilometer (km) = 0.621 mi.

1 mi. = 1.609 km

1 centimeter (cm) = 0.3937 in.

1 in. = 2.54 cm

Area

1 sq. m = 10.764 sq. ft.

1 sq. ft. = 0.092 sq. m

1 sq. km = 0.386 sq. mi.

1 sq. mi. = 2.59 sq. km

1 hectare (ha) = 2.471 acres

1 acre = 0.405 ha

100 ha = 1 sq. km

Volume / Capacity

1 cu. m = 35.3 cu. ft.

1 cu. ft. = 0.028 cu. m

1 cu. cm = 0.061 cu. in.

1 cu. in. = 16.39 cu. cm.

1 liter (l) = 0.264 gal.

1 gal. = 3.785 l

1 hectoliter (hl) = 2.84 bu.

1 bushel = 0.35 hl

Weight

1 kilogram (kg) = 2.2 lbs.

1 lb. = 0.45 kg

1,000 kg (1 metric ton) = 2,205 lbs.

1 ton = 0.91 metric ton

100 kg = 1 centner (ct) = 220.5 lbs.

TABLE OF OFFICIAL LETTER CODES FOR COUNTRIES

EUROPE

A	Austria (Österreich)
AL	Albania (Shqiperi)
AM	Armenia (Hayastan)
AND	Andorra
B	Belgium (Belgie/Belgique)
BA	Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosna-Hercegovina)
BG	Bulgaria (Balgarija)
BY	Belarus
CH	Switzerland (Helvetia)
CY	Cyprus (South) (Kipros)
CZ	Czech Republic (Čechy)
D	Germany (Deutschland)
DK	Denmark (Danmark)
E	Spain (España)
EW	Estonia (Eesti)
F	France
FL	Liechtenstein
FR*	Faeroe Islands (Føroyar)
GB	United Kingdom
GBZ*	Gibraltar
GE	Georgia (Sakartvelo)
GR	Greece (Hellas)
H	Hungary (Magyarország)
HR	Croatia (Hrvatska)
I	Italy (Italia)
IRL	Ireland
IS	Iceland (Island)
L	Luxembourg
LR	Latvia (Latvija)
LT	Lithuania (Lietuva)
M	Malta
MC	Monaco
MD	Moldova
MK	Macedonia (Makedonija)

N	Norway (Norge)
NL	Netherlands (Nederland)
P	Portugal
PL	Poland (Polska)
RO	Romania
RSM	San Marino
S	Sweden (Sverige)
SF	Finland (Suomi)
SK	Slovakia (Slovensko)
SLO	Slovenia (Slovenija)
SU	Russia (Rossiya)
UKR	Ukraine (Ukraina)
V	Vatican City (Citta del Vaticano)
YU	Yugoslavia (Jugoslavija)

BORDERING COUNTRIES

AZ	Azerbaijan
DZ	Algeria
ET	Egypt
HKJ	Jordan
IL	Israel
IR	Iran
IRQ	Iraq
KWT	Kuwait
KZ	Kazakhstan
LAR	Libya
MA	Morocco
RL	Lebanon
SYR	Syria
TCY	Turkish Cyprus
TM	Turkmenistan
TN	Tunisia
TR	Turkey

* = dependent territory

Contents

PREFACE xiii

METRIC CONVERSION AND ABBREVIATION TABLE xv

TABLE OF OFFICIAL LETTER CODES FOR COUNTRIES xvi

CHAPTER ONE

EUROPE DEFINED 1

Europe as a Continent	1
Europe as a Human Entity	7
European Great Ideas	12
Boundaries	15
Core and Periphery	18
Advance and Retreat	20
Sources and Suggested Readings	25

CHAPTER TWO

ECOLOGY 27

The European Mountains	27
Earthquakes and Vulcanism	33
The Plains of Europe	33
The European Hills	39
Human Modification of Terrain	41
Major Climate Types	41
Minor Climate Types	48
Human Influence on Climate	49
Vegetation Regions	52
Forest Death	63
Soil Regions	63

Hydrogeography	66
Dutch Coastline Alteration	69
Coastal Silting	75
Sources and Suggested Readings	77

CHAPTER THREE

RELIGION 81

Pagan Europe	81
Diffusion of Christianity	84
Christian Fragmentation	88
Roman Catholicism	90
Pilgrimages	92
Protestantism	94
Eastern Orthodoxy	98
Uniate and Armenian Churches	101
Dechristianization	101
Non-Christian Minorities	104
Sources and Suggested Readings	108

CHAPTER FOUR

GEOLINGUISTICS 111

The Indo-European Language Family	111
Indo-European Diffusion	115
Romance Languages	116
Germanic Languages	120
Slavic Languages	123
Celtic Languages	124
Other Indo-European Groups	127
Non-Indo-European Languages	128
Sources and Suggested Readings	130

CHAPTER FIVE

GEOGENETICS 135

Pigmentation	135
Stature	138
Cephalic Index	138
Other Traditional Indices	141

Subraces	143
Blood Chemistry	147
Racially Exotic Immigration	149
Sources and Suggested Readings	153

CHAPTER SIX

DEMOGRAPHY 157

Numbers	157
Density and Distribution	158
Explaining Distribution: The Environment	158
Cultural Factors in Distribution	163
Emigration	166
Immigration	168
Internal Migration	170
Ethnic Cleansing	171
Fertility	174
Age Structure	178
Education	178
Health	181
Wealth	184
Quality of Life	187
Sources and Suggested Readings	190

CHAPTER SEVEN

GEOPOLITICS 195

Fragmentation	195
Separatism	197
The Ethnic Mainspring	198
Nonethnic Separatism	199
Boundaries	200
Types of States	204
Political Geography of France	208
Germany: Federalism in the European Core	211
Switzerland and Belgium	215
Yugoslavia: A Balkan Tragedy	219
Russia: Nation-State or Empire?	221
The European Union	223
Electoral Geography	225
Sources and Suggested Readings	227

CHAPTER EIGHT

AGRICULTURE 233

Origin and Diffusion	233
Mediterranean Agriculture	235
Three-Field Farming	241
Hardscrabble Herder-Farmers	243
Burnbeaters of the North	244
Nomadic Herding	246
New Crop Introductions	247
Specialization and Commercialization	249
Market Gardening	251
Dairying	252
Cattle/Hog Fattening	254
Sheep Raising	254
Cash Grain Farming	255
Reindeer Ranching	255
Fish Farming	256
Land-Tenure Changes	256
Development of Core and Periphery	260
Rural Depopulation	263
Sources and Suggested Readings	267

CHAPTER NINE

RURAL LANDSCAPES 271

Settlement Patterns	271
Village Types	272
Dispersed Settlement	278
Semiclustered Settlement	280
Field Patterns	284
Land Consolidation	287
Farmstead Types	288
Folk Architecture	294
Preserving the Landscape	298
Sources and Suggested Readings	300

CHAPTER TEN

CITIES 305

Origin and Diffusion	305
The Industrial City	312
Counterurbanization	313
Urban Site	314

Cityscapes	319
Urban Zones	326
Human Patterns	330
Types of Cities	335
The Urban Network	343
Sources and Suggested Readings	348

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY INDUSTRIES 353

Historical Geography	353
Traditional Manufacturing Systems	356
The Industrial Revolution	356
Diffusion to the Mainland	361
Spreading Beyond the Coalfields	365
Deindustrialization	368
Industrial Rejuvenation	370
Core and Periphery	372
Environment Damage	373
The Green Vote	375
Sources and Suggested Readings	377

CHAPTER TWELVE

SERVICE INDUSTRIES 381

Highways	383
Railroads	389
Waterways	392
Pipelines	396
Air Transport	397
Energy Production	398
Producer Services	400
Consumer Services	402
Tourism	402
Sources and Suggested Readings	408

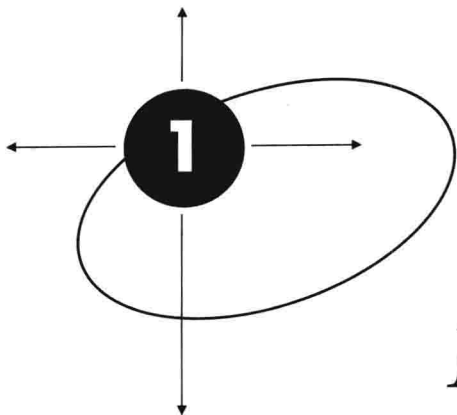
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

REGIONS 411

West versus East	411
North versus South	413

Core versus Periphery	415
Eight Regions	416
General Readings on Regionalism	418
Readings on East versus West	420
Readings on North versus South	421
Readings on Core versus Periphery	422

INDEX	425
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Europe Defined

Europe as a Continent

What is Europe? The answer is by no means as simple as might be imagined, for Europe represents, in the words of Norwegian geographer Leif Ahnström, “an elusive notion.” Even so, most people would probably define Europe as a *continent*. You may recall from elementary school days being asked to recite the names of the family of continents, in which Europe held a place of full membership. Support for the continental status of Europe appears in various dictionaries and in the writings of numerous geographers. For example, *Webster’s New World Dictionary* defines Europe as a “continent between Asia and the Atlantic Ocean,” while the British geographer Lionel Lyde entitled his textbook *The Continent of Europe*. In this view, then, we are led to believe that Europe constitutes a distinct *physical* entity because a continent is a sizable landmass standing more or less separate from other landmasses. North and South America, connected by the narrow Isthmus of Panama, form continents, as do Africa, linked to Asia only by the severed land bridge at Suez, and Australia, fully separated from other landmasses by surrounding seas.

Europe, however, cannot meet the definition of a continent since it does not form a separate landmass. To be sure, the Mediterranean Sea provides a clear separation from Africa in the south, while the Atlantic and Arctic oceans well define Europe’s western and northern limits, but in the east, the notion of continentality founders. Only the beginning of a water separation appears in the southeastern fringe, where an arm of the sea reaches northward from the Mediterranean, through the Aegean, Dardanelles, and Bosphorus to the Black Sea, and still beyond to the Sea of Azov. There the division ends, and to the north of Azov stretches the vast East European Plain. Instead of a narrow isthmus similar to Panama or Suez, the map reveals a wedge of land broadening steadily to the east, welding Europe and Asia into one large continent called Eurasia. Europe lacks a clear-cut oceanic border and as a result is not a continent. In fact, a glance at a map of the Eastern Hemisphere reveals Europe as simply one rather small

appendage of the continent Eurasia, merely a westward-reaching peninsula. At most, Europe forms only about one-fifth of the area of Eurasia.

The erroneous belief that Europe possesses the characteristics of a continent came down to the modern day from the civilizations of the ancient Mediterranean, in particular from the Greeks and Romans (Figure 1.1). The Greco-Roman world view in turn owed much to other, older cultures. One theory concerning the origin of the words *Europe* and *Asia* relates them to the Semitic Assyrian-Phoenician *ereb* ("sunset") and *acu* ("sunrise"). The "land of the sunset," Europe, may have first appeared as an entity among the peoples of the Fertile Crescent, meaning simply "the western land." Too, an ancient, mythological ruler of Sidon in Phoenicia reputedly had daughters named *Europa* and *Asia*. The legendary Europa married the Greek king of gods, Zeus, and accompanied him back to the Aegean, while her sister remained in the east.

From their vantage point on the Aegean, the ancient Greeks perceived a world divided into three parts—Europe, Africa (then called Libya), and Asia—and the Romans accepted the Greek outlook. Greece was always a nation of seafarers, and its sailors from the time of Ulysses and earlier had charted the marine separation of Europe and Africa. In addition, the classical Greeks knew of the division of Africa and Asia, for the Phoenicians before them had apparently circumnavigated the African continent. The Argonauts and other Greek explorers had probed into the Black Sea, founding trading colonies as far away as present-



FIGURE 1.1 World map drawn by the ancient Greek geographer Hecataeus about 500 B.C. Note that he erroneously linked the Caspian Sea to the open ocean so that Europe and Asia joined only at the Caucasus isthmus. (Source: Adapted from Parker, 1960.)

day Ukraine. Intrepid Greek merchants probed beyond the Black Sea to the shores of the landlocked, saltwater Caspian Sea. Certain Greek scholars evaluating the information brought back by traders assumed that the saline Caspian was part of the ocean. To them, the Caucasian isthmus between the Black and Caspian seas was the only land bridge connecting Europe and Asia (Figure 1.1). Little did they know that the Caspian was an inland sea, with no opening to the ocean, and that north of the Caspian stretched a huge expanse of land. Certain other classical scholars, including Strabo, Pomponius Mela, and Ptolemy, mistakenly believed that only a narrow isthmus lay north of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, separating them from the Arctic Ocean, and they placed the Europe-Asia border along the course of the Don (ancient Tanais) River (Figure 1.2). Their lack of accurate information led them to whittle down the expansive Russian plains to a narrow land bridge. The classical Greeks and Romans, then, believed in a threefold division of the landmasses, and Europe was to them a separate physical entity, a mere geographic term.

From the Greeks and Romans, the concept of the three continents passed intact to monastic scholars of the medieval period. Perpetuation of the classical view became guaranteed when a Christian religious significance was attached to it in the Roman church. The result of churchly interpretation of cartography was the famous "T in O" map. The map of the known world was deliberately simplified in such a way that the pattern of land and seas formed the letters T, for *terrarum* ("earth") and O, for *orbis* ("circle"), suggesting that God had shaped the world in a sort of Latin shorthand. The Mediterranean Sea represented the lower

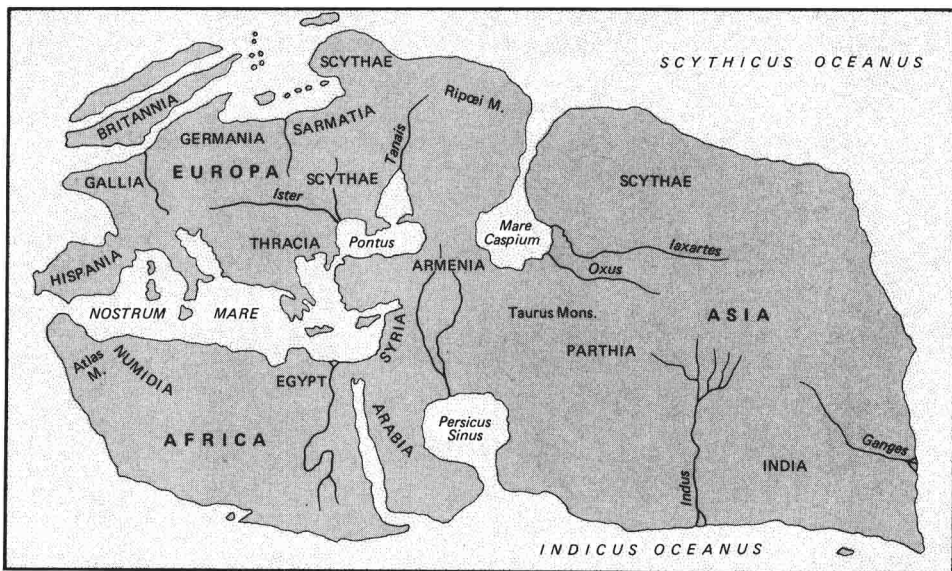


FIGURE 1.2 World map of the Roman geographer Pomponius Mela, drawn in A.D. 43. The Caspian Sea is still depicted as an arm of the ocean, but Russia has also been narrowed to form an isthmus. (Source: Adapted from Parker, 1960.)