

Architecture, Power, and National Identity

Second edition

This new, expanded edition of *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* examines how architecture and urban design have been manipulated in the service of politics. Focusing on the design of parliamentary complexes in capital cities across the world, it shows how these places reveal the struggles for power and identity in multicultural nation-states. Building on the prize-winning first edition, Vale updates the text and illustrations to account for recent sociopolitical changes, includes discussion of several newly built places, and assesses the enhanced concerns for security that have preoccupied regimes in politically volatile countries. The book is truly global in scope, looking at capital cities in North America and Europe, as well as in India, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Kuwait, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Tanzania, Papua New Guinea, and Australia. Ultimately, Vale presents an engaging, incisive combination of history, politics, and architecture to chart the evolution of state power and national identity, updated for the twenty-first century.

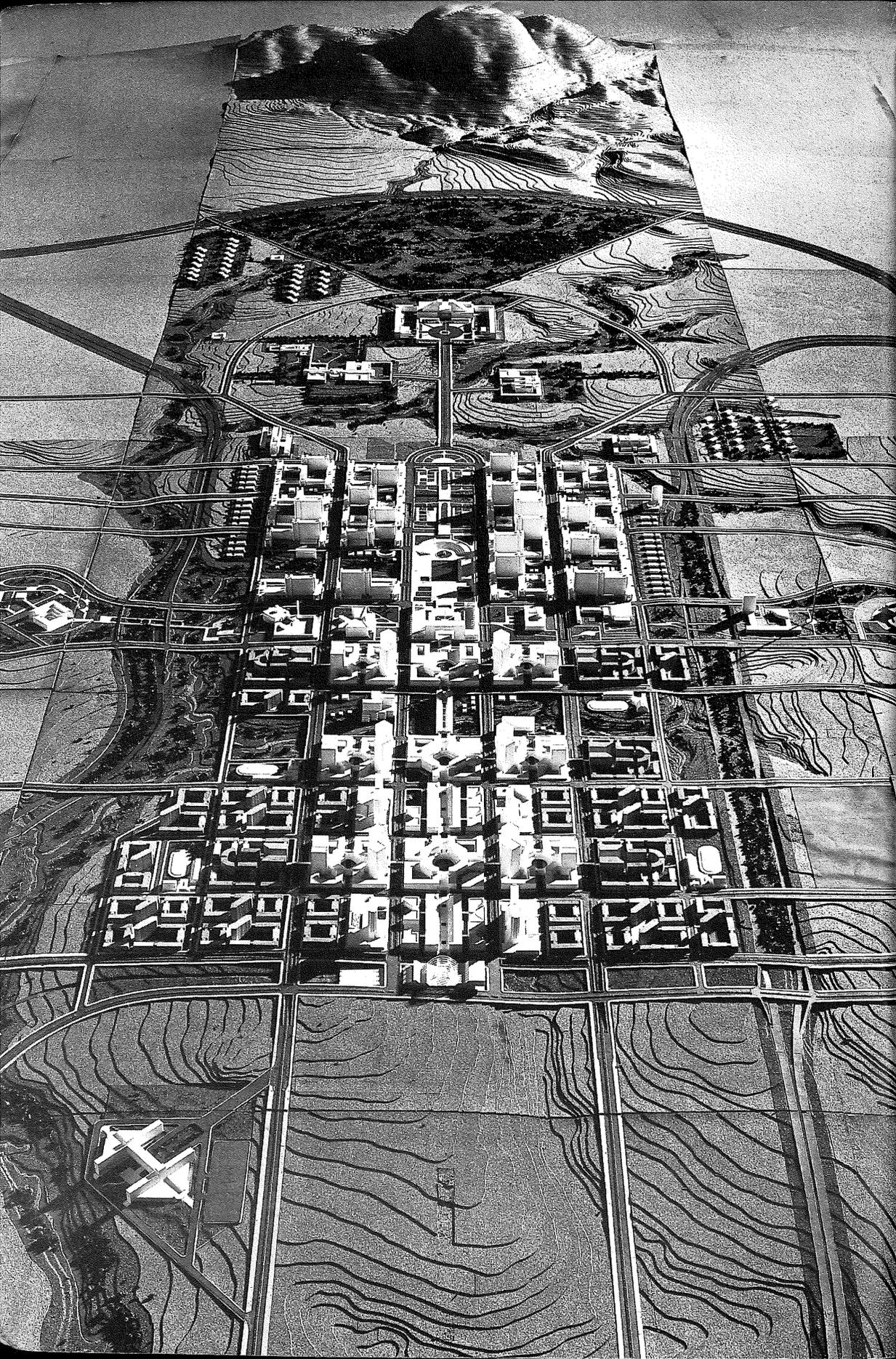
Lawrence Vale is the Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. He has published six previous books, including the first edition of *Architecture, Power, and National Identity*, which received the Spiro Kostof Award from the Society of Architectural Historians.

Praise for the first edition:

"Lawrence Vale's *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* is a powerful and compelling work and is a major contribution to the history of urban form."
David Gosling, *Town Planning Review*

"[Vale's] book makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in the cultural forces behind architecture and urban design and in the ways that parliamentary and other major government buildings are emblematic of the political history and power elites of their countries. This work represents a valuable expansion of the purview of design criticism by treating the designs of government officials as equal in importance to the physical designs of architects."

Michael Y. Seelig, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*



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Second edition

Lawrence J. Vale

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to engage political issues in diverse war-torn parts of the world will be outdated even before it is published. While I cannot control such matters, I can accept responsibility for other errors that remain. Those who are not responsible for errors include the following:

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Lincoln, Massachusetts
November 1990

Part I

The locus of political power



CHAPTER I

Capital and capitol: an introduction

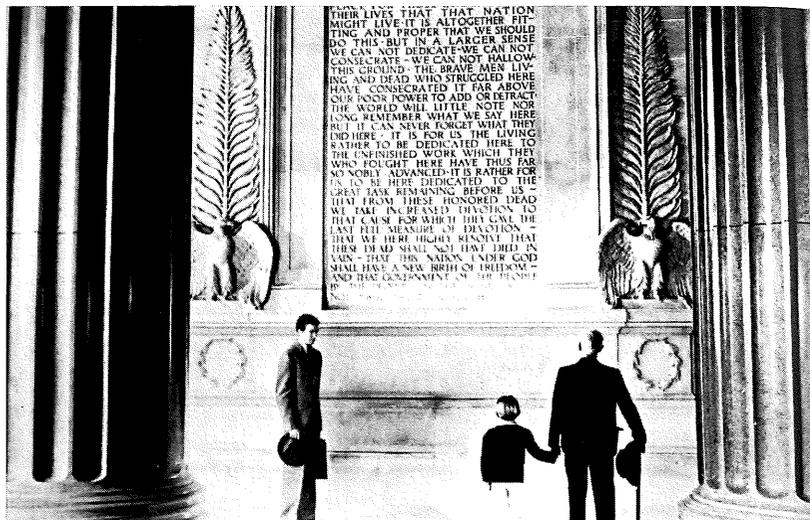
Political power takes many forms. In addition to the power evinced by a charismatic leader, an indomitable military presence, an entrenched bureaucracy, or an imposing network of laws and statutes, many political regimes make especially powerful symbolic use of the physical environment. Throughout history and across the globe, architecture and urban design have been manipulated in the service of politics. Government buildings are, I would argue, an attempt to build governments and to support specific regimes. More than mere homes for government leaders, they serve as symbols of the state. We can, therefore, learn much about a political regime by observing closely what it builds. Moreover, the close examination of government buildings can reveal a great deal about what Clifford Geertz has termed the “cultural balance of power”¹ within a pluralist society.

Much recent writing on architecture and urban design rightly stresses that all buildings are products of social and cultural conditions. This book carries that argument a step further by exploring the complicated questions about power and identity embedded in the design of national parliament buildings and the districts that surround them in various capital cities around the world. It is based upon a simple premise: grand symbolic state buildings need to be understood in terms of the political and cultural contexts that helped to bring them into being. The postcolonial parliamentary complex provides an excellent vehicle for exploring these issues, since it is an act of design in which expressions of power and identity seem explicit and inevitable, both for the government client and for the designer.

HOW DO GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS MEAN?

In his essay “How Buildings Mean,” the philosopher Nelson Goodman argues that we must consider the question of *how* a particular work of architecture conveys meaning before we are able to address the issue of *what* the

1.1 Meanings of the Lincoln Memorial: Lincoln's words speak directly.



building may mean. In so doing, Goodman aims to identify the categories of meaning that the built environment may convey as well as to elucidate the mechanisms by which these meanings are transmitted. This sort of analysis is crucial for understanding the nature of the relationship between the design of a parliamentary complex and its political history. As Goodman notes, "A building may mean in ways unrelated to being an architectural work—may become through association a symbol for sanctuary, or for a reign of terror, or for graft."² Such symbolism need not be so architecturally arbitrary, however. Buildings may also mean in ways very much tied to choices made by architects and urban designers.

Goodman identifies four such ways—denotation, exemplification, metaphorical expression, and mediated reference—each of which would seem to enhance the possibilities for multidimensional interpretation of government buildings. Some part of a building's meaning may often be read literally or otherwise directly denoted. In the case of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., for example, meanings are denoted by the extracts from Lincoln's speeches carved into its walls and by the presence of the large statue of Lincoln himself (1.1). In this most direct of ways, the memorial communicates messages; these messages are, of course, open to multiple interpretations.

The Lincoln Memorial conveys meaning in a second way by drawing attention to certain of its properties to the exclusion of others. In this view, it is not only a self-contained building but also a dramatic urban design gesture, a terminus that gathers in the linear force of the Washington Mall (1.2). The solid-void-solid rhythm of the memorial's east facade draws the eye toward its center and the statue, even from a great distance. This mechanism for conveying meaning seems quintessentially architectural.

A third way that such a building may mean is through the expression of metaphor. This method is used quite powerfully in the case of the memorial, architecturally treated as a kind of analogous temple, with Lincoln taking the place of the classical deity (1.3). In case the metaphor is missed, however, the

1.2 Meanings of the Lincoln Memorial: exemplifying some architectonic properties more than others.



1.3 Meanings of the Lincoln Memorial: temple as metaphor.

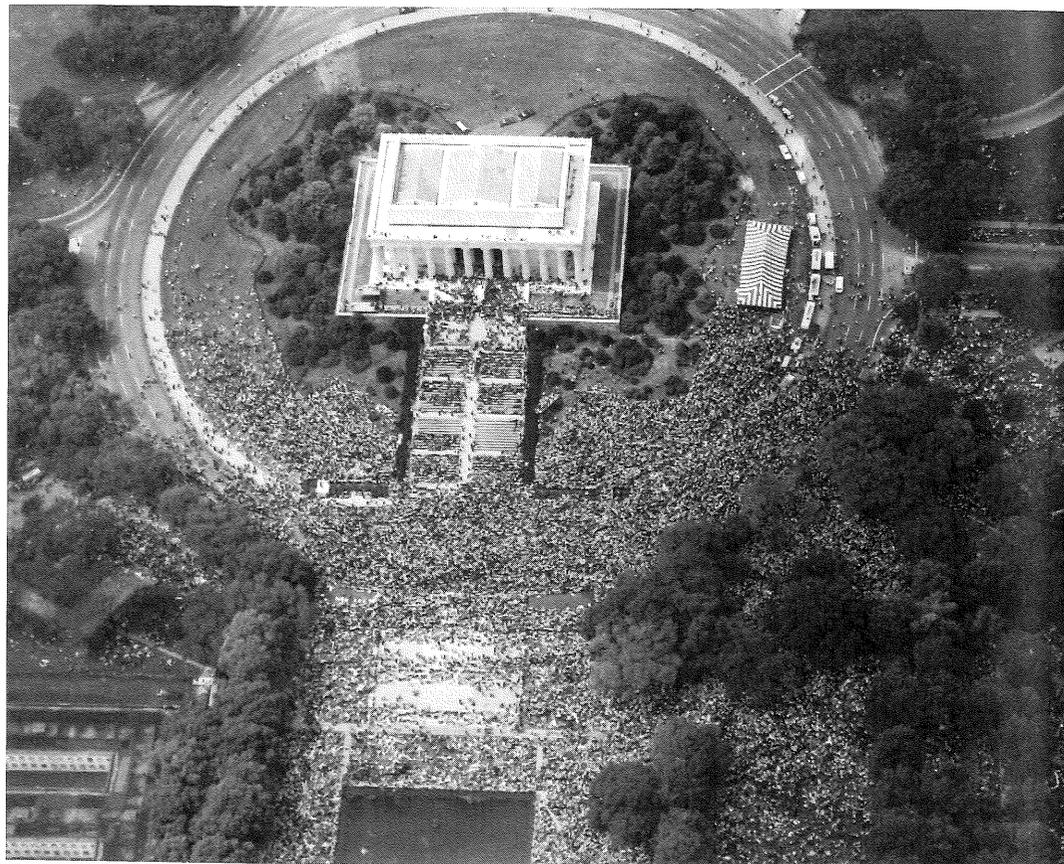


message is reiterated quite literally, carved into the wall above the statue: IN THIS TEMPLE AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN IS ENSHRINED FOREVER.

Building on this predilection for metaphor, the Lincoln Memorial demonstrates a fourth way of meaning, that of mediated reference. There is a chain of reasoning that leads from the deification of Lincoln as a savior to broader consideration of the values of national unity and racial equality promoted by Lincoln's presidential acts. From this, in turn, the memorial becomes associated with the process of advancement of civil rights. It is not by coincidence that many of Washington's civil rights rallies are held in front of the Lincoln Memorial (1.4).

Such mediated references may lead the construction of meaning far afield from the detailed physical particularities of the architectural object itself. As Goodman puts it, "Even when a building does mean, that may have nothing to do with its architecture. A building of any design may come to stand for some of its causes or effects, or for some historical event that occurred in it or on its site, or for its designated use; any abattoir may symbolize slaughter, and any mausoleum, death; and a costly county courthouse may symbolize extravagance. To mean in such a way is not thereby to function as an architectural work."³

1.4 Meanings of the Lincoln Memorial: mediated references carry forward broad conceptual associations, from Civil War to civil rights.



Goodman's distinction is useful for identifying the mechanisms of "how buildings mean," but it is much less helpful as an analytical tool for understanding the subsequent question of *what* buildings may mean, since these sorts of nonarchitectural associations seem central to the way that most people think about buildings. What value is there, then, in privileging only those kinds of meanings that are termed architectural? It may be that because these other associative sorts of meanings are so powerful and often so predominant they threaten many architects and others whose professional self-esteem is dependent on their buildings' being able to communicate effectively their designer's intentions, whether aesthetic or social. How can a designer defend an exquisite formal gesture if it becomes publicly overshadowed or undermined by the indefensible acts of the building's institutional inhabitants or by some other historical relationship in which that building may stand?

To focus our concern only on the architectural portions of a building's meaning takes too limited a view of what is involved in the design of a building. If a goal of this book is to explore the complex meanings of government buildings, then one must treat the political designs of government officials as equal in importance, and often intimately related, to the physical designs of architects. So, too, if an overriding issue is the meaning that these places may hold for diverse segments of the public, one must try not to let interpretation of these buildings be too dependent on specialized knowledge of comparative architectural history and formal precedents. It is here that the mechanisms of metaphor and mediated reference become valuable analytical tools. Even if the average American citizen knows little about the details of classical systems of proportion and cannot comprehend the richness of meanings encoded into an ancient temple's entablature, that citizen will sense the metaphor of Lincoln as an enthroned deity and will know something of his deeds.

Government buildings would appear to serve several symbolic purposes simultaneously. Some of these meanings may be traceable to a designer's—or a politician's—intentions, even if the interplay of ideas within such designer–client partnerships cannot usually be clearly charted or differentiated. Other meanings are not introduced by an individual's formative act but arise as unintended and unacknowledged products of a widely shared acculturation. In the United States, citizens are socialized to regard the most prominent neoclassical edifices of Washington as the reassuring symbols of such concepts as "equal justice under the law" and government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." The buildings housing principal public institutions are unconsciously perceived as metonymous reinforcement for an idealized and stable democratic government, worthy of our tacit trust.⁴ The political scientist Murray Edelman, author of a seminal book on the subject of political symbolism, has argued that such buildings "catalyze the common search for clarity, order and predictability in a threatening world."⁵

At the same time, however, the buildings themselves can appear to be part of that threat. "The scale of the structures reminds the mass of political spectators that they enter the precincts of power as clients or as supplicants,

susceptible to arbitrary rebuffs and favors, and that they are subject to remote authorities they only dimly know or understand."⁶ Moreover, this monumentality may reciprocally reinforce the self-perceptions of those government officials and bureaucrats who identify this exalted territory as their own. In this way, existing hierarchies can be legitimized at all levels, and extremes of power and impotence intensified.

The manipulation of civic space thus tends both to sanction the leadership's exercise of power and to promote the continued quiescence of those who are excluded. Reassuring civic messages and discomfiting authoritarian ones engage in a kind of cognitive coexistence. As Edelman contends, "Everyone recognizes both of them, and at different cognitive levels believes both. . . . Logical inconsistency is no bar to psychological compatibility because the symbolic meanings both soothe the conscience of the elites and help nonelites to adapt readily to conditions they have no power to reject or to change."⁷

Design manipulation that promotes this dual sense of alienation and empowerment occurs at all scales of a country's civic space, ranging from the layout of a parliamentary debating chamber to the layout of a new capital city. The design of a government building's interiors holds many clues about the nature of the bureaucracy that works therein. The privileged location of a high official's office and the gauntlet of doors and security checkpoints one must traverse to reach it help clarify the structure of authority. Or, conversely, the deliberate locating of a leader's office or principal debating chamber so that it is open to public view (if not public access) may be an attempt to convey a sense of governmental approachability, either genuine or illusory.

Charles Goodsell's comparative analysis of the layouts of American city council chambers demonstrates how the distribution of political power can be observed even in a single room. Relying on close examination of the relative positions of speaker's podium, council members' seating, and public galleries in the design of seventy-five chambers constructed during the last 125 years, Goodsell identifies two basic and interconnected long-term trends in democratic governance: a trend away from "personalistic rule" expressed by "the shift in central focus away from the rostrum's presiding officer to the council's corporate existence" and a trend toward the "downgrading of geographic representation" as evidenced by a move from separated aldermanic desks to a common dais table. Equally indicative of evolving attitudes is the treatment of the public. The more illuminating architectural shifts include the reorientation of the council's seating in such ways that members communicate with the public instead of with each other, the downgrading or removal of barriers between government and public, the addition of increasingly greater amounts of public seating, and the provision of increasingly more prominent public lecterns. Taken together, Goodsell concludes, these and other changes "generally convey concepts of promoting popular sovereignty and democratic rule, of viewing the people as individuals rather than an undifferentiated mass, and of establishing the moral equality of the rulers and the ruled." To his credit, Goodsell takes his analysis one step further to question whether this seemingly positive visual trend toward

increased democracy is, in practice, little more than an insidious deception, an "empty, hypocritical ritualism that only masks the powerlessness of the ordinary citizen."⁸

Thus, even in those contemporary council chambers in which government and citizens are spatially conjoined by seating arrangements, it surely seems possible that the dual sense of alienation and empowerment could be reinforced. Moreover, at the level of national government symbolism—the locus of this book's principal concern—the layout of parliamentary chambers, even contemporary ones, consistently treats the public as detached spectators of government rather than potential participants. Here, given the large number of elected representatives that must be seated in most national parliamentary chambers, it is the representatives themselves who tend to become the participatory audience for debate, with the public relegated to the periphery. In many places, even the seating of the parliamentarians is carefully choreographed to correspond with long-standing traditions and ongoing partisan divisions. The arrangement of the seating in a postcolonial parliamentary chamber frequently identifies much about the political traditions of the colonial regime that ruled before independence, with oppositional layouts reminiscent of the British House of Commons and curved, concave rows suggestive of the French Chamber of Deputies. The expression of meaningful hierarchies may well be centered in debating chambers where public access and participation are indirect at best, yet the symbolic expression of central government also reaches far outside the walls of parliament.

Not limited to matters of interior configuration and architectural expression, decisions about urban design may also foster mutually reinforcing alienation and empowerment by magnifying hierarchies in the outdoor public realm. The source of potential meanings for a government building extends far outward from its facades. A government building's spatial relation to other important structures sends additional complex messages about how the leadership wishes others to regard the institution it houses. Its apparent dominance or subservience depends on the scale of the building and the architectural manipulation of its proportions and materials, but also may be influenced by its relative degree of isolation and its accessibility to the public. To view government buildings as acts of urban design as well as instances of architecture is to be able to judge how the larger design carefully delimits the zones for public gathering and defines areas of increasingly exclusive privacy.

The influence of urban design on the structure of a government building's meaning is especially clear during times of high pageantry involving processions. All forms of procession—military review, presidential motorcade, celebratory parade, civilian protest—consist of power moving through space. All parts of the setting—the point of origin, the route, and the destination—may be symbol-laden and can become part of the meaning of the event.

The perceived need to make architecture and urban design serve politics is most salient in those countries where the form of politics is new and the forms of architecture are old, though the phenomenon has a long and

global pedigree. In the emerging postcolonial world of the middle and late twentieth century, the leadership of newly independent states frequently attempted to use architecture not only to house a new form of government (parliamentary democracy), but also to proclaim the worthiness of the new regime and advance its status. The professed goal of such government buildings is to forge something most often termed national identity or national unity; yet, as I will argue, the design of these buildings remains closely tied to political forces that reinforce existing patterns of dominance and submission.

THE LOCUS OF POSTCOLONIAL POWER

Dozens of new states have gained their independence in the years since the Second World War. Not all of these, however, have had the appropriate combination of political and financial resources necessary to mark this independence with the design and construction of a new capital city or a new parliament building. On one hand, the commission of a new capital city—or even of the construction of a new parliamentary district within or adjacent to an existing capital—is too costly for many leaders to contemplate seriously. On the other hand, there is the temptation to expropriate and reuse the opulent edifices of the colonial *ancien régime*. To be sure, these two pressures have been frequently conjoined. In some instances, however, the government leaders of newly independent states have spent lavishly on new facilities despite the overall poverty of their country or the availability of transformable colonial structures. The decision to build a new place for government is always a significant one; the decisions about *where* and *how* to house it are more telling still.

Designing the place for national government in the postcolonial city involves far more than architecture. Parliament buildings are located not only in relation to neighboring buildings but also in relation to a city and to the country as a whole. These larger questions of siting are hardly matters left to architects alone, since many architects tend to regard the site as consisting merely of a building's immediate, visible surroundings. Beyond such relatively narrow concerns, the location of parliament buildings is a product of social and cultural forces. The placement of parliament buildings is an exercise in political power, a spatial declaration of political control.

In postcolonial states that have planned new parliamentary complexes in the twentieth century, the buildings are located in one of two ways. In places such as Australia, Turkey, Brazil, Pakistan, Belize, Mauritania, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, and Kazakhstan the government has sponsored the construction of an entirely new capital city, whereas in places such as Israel, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and Kuwait the new parliamentary complexes have been created within or adjacent to the existing capital.

Several examples of new capital cities are discussed in the first part of this book, while the latter category—capitol complexes—constitutes the major focus of the second. In this latter group, the construction of a new

capital has, in effect, been distilled to its programmatic and symbolic essence. The capitol complex, by which I mean not only the capitol building itself but also the relation of that building to the assemblage of structures around it, is designed to house the means of government and to communicate this government visually to the governed. Not all capitol complexes contain exactly the same set of institutional elements or arrange them in the same hierarchy. Some juxtapose the parliamentary function with judicial and executive functions; some relate the legislature to the presence of other nearby national institutions such as museums and libraries; others isolate the capitol from everything else. Ironically, many of the more imposing capitol complexes deliberately exclude the strongest government powers. As architecture and as urban design, these places are necessarily infused with symbolism and are revealing cultural products. Examination of these parliamentary complexes offers an opportunity to assess certain architectural and urban design devices that seem markedly prominent in central areas of capital cities. This is not to suggest that any city (even ones established by executive decree) is solely formed by the actions of the state building for itself. It is merely an acknowledgment that a book that seeks to be both comparative and brief cannot hope to address the full range of pressing issues affecting contemporary urbanization. Though I do not focus on the multitude of social, economic, political, and cultural factors that affect the development of the postcolonial capital city as a whole, I do believe that close examination of their symbolic centers carries meaning for their peripheries as well as their cores. With this somewhat more bounded objective in mind, I seek to define and discuss the relationship between a designed capital city and its symbolic center, the capitol.

WHAT IS A CAPITOL?

Capitol is an odd word, even to those living in the fifty-one United States cities that have buildings bearing this name. Commonly confused with *capital*—meaning a city housing the administration of state or national government—*capitol* with an *o* usually refers to the building that houses that government's lawmakers. It is an old word, centuries more ancient than the domed edifices of Boston or Washington. And, as is true of many words that have a long evolution, the early meanings retain a core of relevance.

Capitol originally connoted a citadel on a hill. Rome's Capitoline Hill, site of the ancient Temple of Jupiter, within which the Roman Senate sometimes convened, provides a clue to both the political and topographical origins of the word. Moreover, the notion of citadel suggests roots that extend even deeper in the past. The word *citadel*, derived from the Italian *cittadella*, "little city," is an imperfect translation of the Greek word *akropolis*, "upper city." The ancient citadel, as an architecturally dominant minicity within a city, combines both of these notions.⁹ It is, to be sure, a long way from the Athenian massif to a hillock above the Potomac, but one must not dismiss the connections.

Though the gap between an ancient citadel and a modern capital city may

seem immense, important continuities remain. A capital city, more than most other cities, is expected to be a symbolic center. As such, it is not so distant from the primal motivations that inspired the first cities. According to Lewis Mumford, who drew rather generously upon the work of archaeologists, the "first germ of the city . . . is in the ceremonial meeting place that serves as a goal for pilgrimage." This city, he continues, is

a site to which family or clan groups are drawn back, at seasonable intervals, because it concentrates, in addition to any natural advantages it may have, certain "spiritual" or supernatural powers, powers of higher potency and greater duration, of wider cosmic significance, than the ordinary processes of life. And though the human performances may be occasional and temporary, the structure that supports it, whether a paleolithic grotto or a Mayan ceremonial center with its lofty pyramid, will be endowed with a more lasting cosmic image.¹⁰

Even though the goal of pilgrimage has not infrequently been supplanted by the quest for patronage or the diffuse pleasures of tourism, some cities (many of them capitals) have not fully forsaken their claim to wider significance.

Capital cities have become almost unrecognizably large and complex, and autocratic political power has often been transformed to include varying degrees of democratic participation, yet certain cities retain their symbolic centrality and importance. According to the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, "At the political center of any complexly organized society . . . there is both a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing."¹¹ While these symbolic forms have changed in the intervening millennia, the need to signal the presence of the ruler to the ruled has not diminished. Geertz continues,

No matter how democratically the members of the elite are chosen (usually not very) or how deeply divided among themselves they may be (usually much more than outsiders imagine), they justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities, and appurtenances that they have either inherited or, in more revolutionary situations, invented. It is these—crowns and coronations, limousines and conferences—that mark the center as center and give what goes on there its aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built. The gravity of high politics and the solemnity of high worship spring from liker impulses than might first appear.¹²

If the activity of the center features a variety of rituals, nothing more directly "mark[s] the center as center" or legitimizes a regime that claims to be democratically supported than the architecture and planning of the seat of government—the capitol.

To the ancient Romans, the capitol was the *caput mundi*, literally, the head of the world.¹³ This direct connection between the symbolic center

of a city and the rest of the universe is, of course, hardly a claim made by Romans alone; cosmic conjunction is explicit in Chinese geomancy and in Indian mandala plans, and is implicit in less well understood ceremonial centers across all continents.¹⁴ Some modern capital cities—Athens, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Moscow, for example—have grown up around ancient centers of power (though of these four, only the last city still attempts to use its Kremlin as the locus of a national government presence). In most other cities that have developed over many centuries, any surviving notion of a *caput mundi* functions much less overtly or dramatically. Still, though the urban umbilicals to the heavens have been weakened or cut in the centuries since capitals first unknowingly vied for cosmic centrality, earthbound articulations of power have remained robust.

The first city, according to Mumford, began with the coming together of shrine and stronghold in a single place.¹⁵ As the centuries passed, this joining of spiritual and temporal power took on the characteristic form of the citadel, a precinct of power and privilege spatially dominant over the larger city:

In the citadel the new mark of the city is obvious: a change of scale, deliberately meant to awe and overpower the beholder. Though the mass of inhabitants might be poorly fed and overworked, no expense was spared to create temples and palaces whose sheer bulk and upward thrust would dominate the rest of the city. The heavy walls of hard-baked clay or solid stone would give to the ephemeral offices of state the assurance of stability and security, of unrelenting power and unshakeable authority. What we now call "monumental architecture" is first of all the expression of power, and that power exhibits itself in the assemblage of costly building materials and of all the resources of art, as well as in a command of all manner of sacred adjuncts, great lions and bulls and eagles, with whose mighty virtues the head of state identifies his own frailer abilities. The purpose of this art was to produce respectful terror.¹⁶

The capitols of today continue to crown many a frail regime and still tend to delineate the head of the city. Whether, in so doing, they induce terror (respectful or otherwise) or merely enhance the cause of irony is another question, one to which I will return. For now, I wish only to suggest that the designers of modern capitols have repeatedly sought to regain or retain vestiges of the earlier notions of acropolis and citadel.

For centuries, it was conceivable for a capitol in its various nascent forms to exist almost independently of its surrounding city. In its walled precinct, the capitol appeared spatially separate, a ruler's refuge. As long as it was a sacred center as well as an administrative and a military one, access was strictly limited to the priests and the privileged. In palaces and courts, temples and shrines, the concept of a Forbidden City extended far afield from China. In this view, capitol precedes capital, or—as Mumford puts it—"the magnet comes before the container."¹⁷ Magnetized by the presence of a monarch or a religious institution, the capital container grew around this capitol center, designed for ritual and devoted to ceremony.

WHAT IS A CAPITAL?

Capital cities may be categorized in many ways, but no single criterion for identification does justice to the complexity of forces that make cities. It is tempting to follow the lead of many geographers and historians and posit a clear distinction between cities that are *natural* capitals and those whose status as capital is *artificial*. There does seem to be some value in seeking criteria to distinguish a capital such as London from one such as Washington, D.C., yet these labels do not seem adequate to this task. Some capitals that may appear natural—such as Rome, Athens, or Moscow—have been redesignated as capitals only in the relatively recent past. Even modern capitals that appear to have a continuous history of administrative and symbolic centrality are not necessarily a natural choice. What tends to be termed natural is often merely that which has had its origins obscured by the passage of time and the accretion of complex layers of development.

The motives for designating a city as a capital are not easily separated. There are, however, identifiable and instructive characteristics. Capitals do not merely exist; they are the various products of human will and historical circumstance. The existence of a particular form of capital in a particular location at a particular time is dependent upon a delicate and shifting balance among many kinds of contending forces. A capital may be located for reasons of climate, which could push it into the interior or toward an area of great natural beauty. Its site might also be a function of geopolitical strategy, which could dictate that it be near or away from a sensitive border. A capital may be located at some central point for purposes of convenient access to and from all parts of the territory under its administrative control, or its placement may be deliberately eccentric to allow easy access to international trade routes. In addition, it may be chosen for its impact on regional development, which could require great distance between it and other existing cities. Alternatively, it may be envisioned as purely an administrative enclave that could parasitically rely on the nearby presence of established economic, social, and cultural networks. Capital placement may result from the idiosyncrasy of an indigenous leader's autocratic decree or may be externally imposed to service the needs of an overseas power. A capital may be established as a kind of binding center to mediate among rival regional or ethnic factions, or it may be sited explicitly to favor the claims of one group over others. So, too, the designation of a capital may be part of an attempt to revive some period of past glory or to disassociate a place from more recent historical events. And, finally, a capital may be selected to maximize international visibility, or it may be chosen for more purely domestic and regional reasons. The choice of a capital city is nearly always the product of compromise among these competing motives, frequently ones that seem most mutually contradictory. Every capital city's history reveals a different set of motives for its founding.

London, for example, has existed at least since Roman times and was the Romans' largest outpost on the island. Recent archaeological evidence of large buildings containing courts of justice and municipal offices as well as a governor's palace suggests that Roman Londinium was the imperially

designated capital of Britain as early as the first century A.D.¹⁸ The site of Londinium was selected because it constituted the first point at which the Thames was both navigable and bridgeable and because it featured a hill for the construction of a citadel.¹⁹ Eventually, the geopolitical logic of this location led Norman rulers to take up residence in London in the eleventh century, more than 650 years after its Roman heyday. Still, London did not displace Canterbury as the ecclesiastical capital of Britain for many centuries, if it ever has. In short, it is difficult to say when and how London became a capital city rather than simply an intermittently large and influential one. Perhaps it was not truly a capital until it became the symbolic center of a United Kingdom, a union that has never remained entirely free of dispute.

Of course, no L'Enfant was hired to plan the whole of London in a single flourish, but the growth of London is not wholly attributable to natural forces either. As human creations, all cities are natural in one sense, but this human nature is always tempered and directed by the force of reasoned decisions. Cities are not the result of a biological inevitability; they arise out of choices. Even when the state has sponsored initial construction of a new city or district, it is up to a wide range of individuals and groups to sustain and extend urban development. As the product of a multiplicity of choices, cities are intellectual constructs as well as physical artifacts and social networks, and all three are closely related.

Geographer and urbanist Peter Hall has argued that there are seven types of capital city. His useful typology distinguishes such cities chiefly according to the functions they perform in the national and global economy, and in terms of the period and reasons for their ascendancy. In terms of economic influence, Hall discriminates between *political capitals*—those that were created chiefly to serve as a seat of government, such as The Hague—and those that serve more broadly as *multi-function capitals*, such as London or Stockholm. He also separates out *global capitals* for their transnational role in the global economy, and identifies *super capitals*—cities that house international organizations, but are not necessarily national capitals. Then, acknowledging that circumstances change, Hall distinguishes among various kinds of *former capitals*, depending on whether they were *ex-imperial capitals* or merely important cities, and on whether they retain important status as *provincial capitals* in federal nation-states.²⁰ Many capitals may fall into more than one category, and a chief advantage of this schema is that it acknowledges the historical dynamism that buffets and shifts capital city status. For better or worse, Hall's typology also permits a more inclusivist compass to the canon of capitals, since it admits cities such as New York based on its economic might ("global capital") or role in hosting the United Nations ("super capital"), and elevates Brussels less because of its role in Belgium and more due to its EU position as an alleged "capital of Europe."²¹ Perhaps most importantly, Hall's framework also reminds us that the planning and design of national capitals cannot be detached from the political, economic, and social forces that sited them and shaped their development.

Of the many ways geographers have distinguished among capital cities, two distinctions—closely related to each other—seem useful. One is between cities that have evolved into capitals and cities that have been

expressly designed to serve this function. The evolved/designed distinction, while more accurately descriptive than the natural/artificial schism, fails to do justice to the fact that any decision to designate a city as a capital is also an intentional move, an evolutionary break. If some cities appear to have always been capitals, they have been so only through our ignorance of their history. Whether gradual or abrupt, the capitalization of a city is guided by underlying physical, social, economic, and political motives. Nonetheless, there does seem some value in distinguishing between those capitals that have evolved to a point where they have been designated capitals and those cities where designation as capital has necessitated an entirely new overall design, premised upon the city's role as a capital. To posit the importance of this distinction between evolved and designed capitals is not, however, to deny that some capital cities are both evolved and designed at different stages in their growth. This changing nature of capital cities over time suggests the need for a second kind of measure.

Over the centuries, as cities have grown and forms of government have diversified, the nature of what it means to be a capital city has changed. Though we may call them both capitals, Roman Londinium and contemporary London, for example, bear little resemblance to one another in overall form, size, socioeconomic structure, or political sphere of influence. Moreover, cities that serve as capitals for long periods may evolve almost unrecognizably even without a gap in their status as capitals. Ancient Rome itself underwent many changes during its five-hundred-year tenure as a capital, clinging to its capital status long after it had ceased to be an appropriate demographic, commercial, industrial, or cultural center for the Mediterranean world.²² Even over the course of a relatively short period, the role and jurisdiction of a capital may waver. The answer to the question Capital of what? or, more precisely, Capital of whom? is rarely resolved. Many distinctions could be made in discussing the evolution of the capital city as an idea. The most pressing need here is to differentiate between the premodern and the modern capital.

THE SYMBOLIC ROLE OF MODERN CAPITALS

In the modern age, by which I mean the two hundred years or so since the birth of the modern nation-state, the capital has taken on important new aspects. Even more so than in the past, the modern capital is expected to be, above all else, the seat of government and the focus of its symbolic presence. Programmatically, the modern capital is expected to be both the practical and the symbolic focus of national administration; furthermore, especially in states emerging from control by an external power, it is also required to serve as the focus of efforts to promote a sense of national identity. In these ways, modern capitals may differ from other cities.

As Arnold Toynbee notes, the cities that have been created expressly to serve as national capitals in the last 220 years are rarely as populous as commercial and industrial cities that have emerged in the same period, whereas capitals prior to the Industrial Revolution were commonly the

largest concentrations of population.²³ What the modern capital lacks in size and diversity of economic base, it is asked to make up for in sheer density of symbolism. In this regard, the modern capital, far from being a departure, is heir to the practice of ancient empires by which a capital's splendor served to legitimize the power of the ruling individual or group. In most places, perhaps, the capital still acts as a drain on the resources of the peripheral areas under its administrative control; in this sense, too, its imperialism may operate domestically as well as internationally.

Although all capitals, beginning with the earliest citadel, have had symbolic roles that fortified and magnified the presence of government, nothing seems quite comparable to the manifold pressures of modern nationalism. In the modern capital, symbolic tasks seem both enhanced and increasingly complex. To the apologists of modern nationalism the capital itself is to be the grandest symbol of the cause. Many modern capitals must act as the mediator among a collection of peoples who, one way or another, have come to be recognized as a single sovereign state. In more distant times, selection of a capital was usually motivated by the presence of a shrine, a defensible fortress, or a trade route; in the modern age, new capitals are most often sited to favor political factions. Such rivalries may be rooted in ethnic or religious schisms or may result from competition among alternative poles of urban economic growth. Like the ancient citadel, constructed to combat enemies both from within and without, the modern capital is likely to be more a center of controversy than consensus.

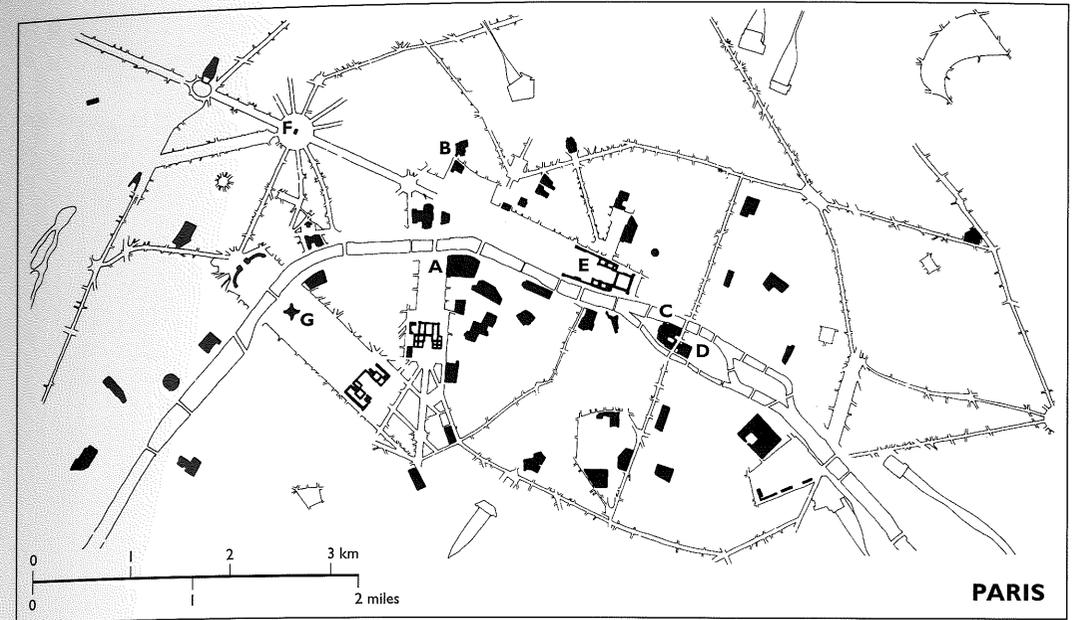
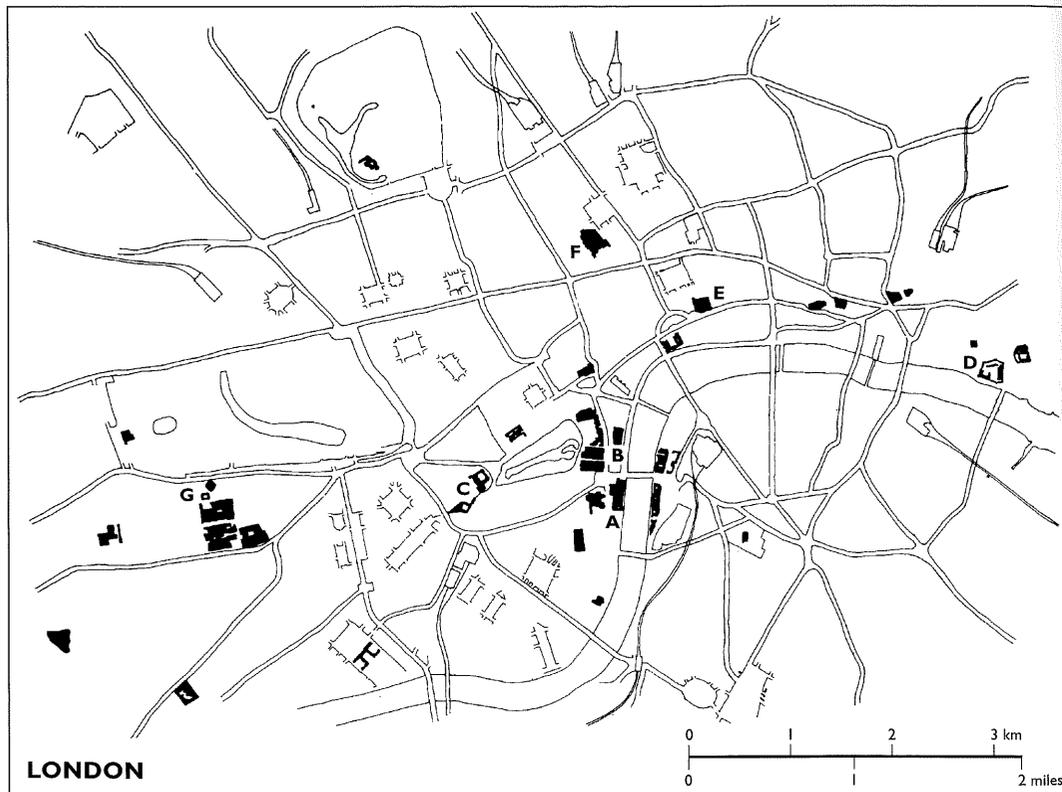
The modern capital is more than the seat of government in another way as well. With the rise of parliamentary democracy has come an increase in the number of persons involved with government at every level. Though the notion of a government office building has existed at least since the time of the ancient Romans, the rapid burgeoning of the bureaucracy of government is a phenomenon of the last hundred years. While palaces had always been maintained as nearly self-sufficient minicities, the concept of designing a city to showcase the organs of government administration is a modern idea. In earlier eras, when the apparatus of domestic rule depended more explicitly upon a large military presence, an extended civil administration was unnecessary. In the present age, in which nearly every regime professes to be the bearer of democracy, an entire capital city can be dominated by the purposes of national administration, purposes that include the management of ceremony as well as the performance of more mundane tasks. A modern capital city of a large country is not only a source of pageantry but also the workplace for tens of thousands of bureaucrats who staff executive ministries and departments, serve the needs of legislative representatives, high court justices, and resident diplomats, run national libraries, archives, and museums, and toil away at an ever-burgeoning array of lobbying efforts, media coverage, and support services. In many places, the business of government has burst the bounds of the capitol to fill the capital as well.²⁴ With this transformation of the scale and structure of government, and often coincident with a resurgence of nationalism, comes the development of the modern capital city.

THREE KINDS OF MODERN CAPITAL

What follows, then, is an overview of examples of three types of modern capital cities, emphasizing two things: the reasons the capital was founded and the spatial relation between the capitol and the capital. The first two varieties, *evolved capitals* and *evolved capitals renewed*, are discussed in this chapter, while the third, *designed capitals*, is introduced here but becomes the subject of Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Cities in all three categories feature periods of large-scale urban design intervention in governmental sectors; no urban evolution proceeds at a uniformly even pace. To differentiate among the categories is therefore to identify a continuum and to recognize that each city is being observed from the perspective of its present-day development.

Evolved capitals: London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin

For capital cities with long, complex histories, no simple model of spatial organization is likely to be usefully descriptive. In all cases it is possible to trace the architectural locus of government, but in no case is it an easy matter to comment upon the relation of this place to the larger city or to interpret meaning from this juxtaposition. Most European capital cities do not have a single, readily identifiable architectural center. They are polycentric, with a great multiformity of nodes, both sacred and secular (1.5, 1.6).

**1.5, 1.6 London and Paris: dispersion of major government/civic institutions and monuments.**

A Houses of Parliament	A Palais Bourbon (French Parliament)
B Whitehall	B Palais de l'Elysée (president's residence)
C Buckingham Palace	C Palais de Justice
D Tower of London	D Notre Dame
E Royal Courts of Justice	E Louvre
F British Museum	F Arc de Triomphe
G Museums and colleges	G Tour Eiffel

London

In London, the nineteenth-century Houses of Parliament together with the rest of the Palace of Westminster and Whitehall may constitute one such node, but parliament must share prominence with Buckingham Palace, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the capital's true citadel, the Tower of London, built in the eleventh century on the exact site of the Roman citadel that preceded it by a millennium.²⁵ This architectural power sharing is not surprising, given that political power in Britain in the last thousand years has shifted dramatically among crown, church, and parliament, and each of these forces retains its architectural presence in the London cityscape. What is missing, however, among these grand edifices is a monumental treatment of the contemporary center of British political power: the prime minister's abode is modestly located at 10 Downing Street and is known by that name only. In recent years, Downing Street having been fenced off, the residence is not even a visible part of the London streetscape (1.7).

David Cannadine argues that the British government's conscious physical



1.7 No. 10 Downing Street: no longer a street.

transformation of London into a capital city is of relatively recent origin, as is the profusion of ceremony associated with British royalty: "It was not until the closing decades of the nineteenth century, when national prestige was seen to be threatened, that action was taken, converting the squalid fog-bound city of Dickens into an Imperial capital." Aided by the creation in 1888 of the capital's first single administrative authority, the London County Council, architectural embellishment and urban design coordination soon became evident with the construction of County Hall, the War Office in Whitehall, and the Government Buildings at the corner of Parliament Square. This was matched, between 1906 and 1913, by the construction of London's first and only "triumphal way," achieved through the widening of the Mall, the building of the Admiralty Arch, the refronting of Buckingham Palace, and the construction of the Victoria Monument. With the addition of buildings to serve as headquarters in London for the various outposts of empire, the city—while still polycentric in its nodes of power—became somewhat more like imperial capitals elsewhere.²⁶

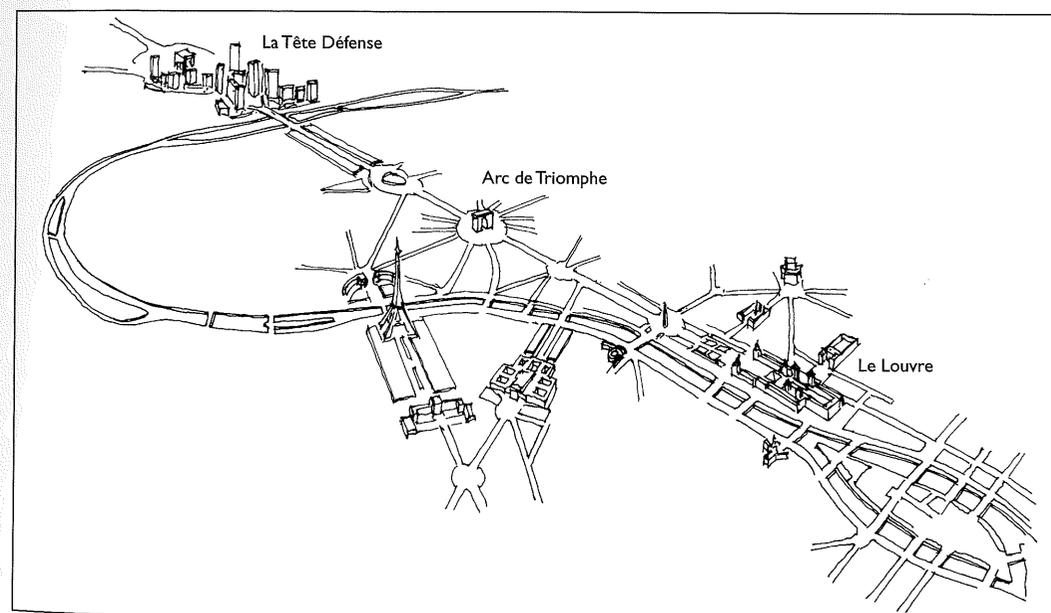
In London, the relationship between government and architecture came under scrutiny in the 1980s in a different way, owing to provocation from an unlikely source, the Prince of Wales. A critique that initially centered on a single public building (the "monstrous carbuncle" proposed as an extension to the National Gallery) soon escalated into speeches, an exhibition, and a television program that lambasted postwar Britain's modern architecture and urban design. Carried to its logical conclusions in the social and economic policies that so deeply affected what was built, the prince's aesthetic archconservatism seemed, at least to some, to imply a social radicalism

he presumably did not intend. In any case, the royal involvement sparked discussion not only about architecture but about the relationship between government power and design decisions. One extreme reaction, published in the *Architectural Review*, compared Prince Charles's interventions to Nazi propaganda. More recently, however, London has lost much of its centrality in the discourse about political architecture in the United Kingdom, with greater attention devolved onto the dramatic new presences granted to parliamentary autonomy in Scotland and Wales.²⁷

Paris

The urban development of Paris since the 1970s has also raised controversial questions about government patronage and the distribution of public facilities across the city. Although the architectural iconography of modern Paris retains a medieval core on the Île de la Cité, the Parisian spatial hierarchy is also quintessentially polycentric, with grand squares to commemorate military triumph and boulevards designed for imperial procession and imperious promenade. The world-renowned royal axis, extended from the Louvre over a period of eight hundred years, has undergone a parallel set of alterations in its meaning (1.8). Until the end of the nineteenth century, as Wolfgang Braunfels has observed, "every stage in this development was conditioned by the attitude of the king and, later, the emperor toward Paris and their conception of the monarchy itself."²⁸ The end of the monarchy did not preclude further changes of meaning to the monarchically inspired traces that remained. This central axis underwent another shift of symbolism in the Second World War when, during four years of humiliating occupation of the city, the Nazis ritually repeated their triumphal march along the Champs Élysées every day at noon, passing in review at the Place de l'Étoile.

1.8 Paris's "royal axis" now conjoins high culture and high capitalism.



The locus of political power

"Although the physical fabric of the city remained intact, major monuments received an appliqué of swastikas and German victory slogans, streets carried signposts in German to direct military traffic, and about two hundred bronze statues were removed by the Germans and melted down for their metal"; only procrastination by the German commander saved the city from Hitler's orders for an eleventh-hour destruction as Nazi power collapsed.²⁹

In the late twentieth century, the symbolism underwent other profound shifts. With the redevelopment of the Louvre under I. M. Pei's glass pyramids and the extension of the axis through the high-rise business district of La Défense, culminating in Spreckelsen's Grand Arch, what once was a ceremonial way for kings now conjoins high culture and high capitalism. From the stone walls of the medieval fortress that have been excavated and revealed beneath the Louvre's new entrance court to La Tête Défense, the new Parisian axis of power reveals its military origins in name if not in function. And future extensions of the axis beyond La Défense will alter and expand its meanings yet again.

As successive French presidents try to consolidate central Paris as a district of museums and other cultural facilities, the presence of government, ironically perhaps, becomes less prominent. In its complex arrangement of urban axes and controlled building heights, Paris's most visible buildings are not ones that house government officials. As in most capitals that have evolved over many centuries and have gradually accommodated themselves to changes in the nature of government, the urban design of Paris provides no overwhelmingly privileged place for the trappings of contemporary parliamentary democracy.

Vienna

Vienna, of Neolithic origin and for seven centuries the seat of the Hapsburg empire, became a modern capital only in the late nineteenth century: the creation of the Ringstrasse epitomizes the transformation of a premodern into a modern capital. A half-circular boulevard fronted by civic institutions and parks, it was built on land freed after the dismantling of the city's defensive walls and glacis in 1857 (I.9). In Vienna, the citadel of the Hapsburgs was literally broken open to include a larger capitol complex, one that afforded greater public participation. Though initiated by a near-autocratic regime in the late 1850s, the buildings along the Ringstrasse were built in accordance with the wishes of a new, ascendant, liberal middle class that gained political power in subsequent decades. As Carl Schorske puts it, "Not palaces, garrisons, and churches, but centers of constitutional government and higher culture dominated the Ring. The art of building, used in the old city to express aristocratic grandeur and ecclesiastical pomp, now became the communal property of the citizenry, expressing the various aspects of the bourgeois cultural ideal in a series of so-called *Prachtbauten* (buildings of splendor)."³⁰ Its last building completed in 1913, just in time for the war that would bring an end to the imperial power that inspired its creation, the Ring became home not only to separate facilities for the three primary branches of liberal government (executive, legislative, and judicial)

Capital and capitol: an introduction

I.9 Vienna: before and after Ringstrasse institutions.

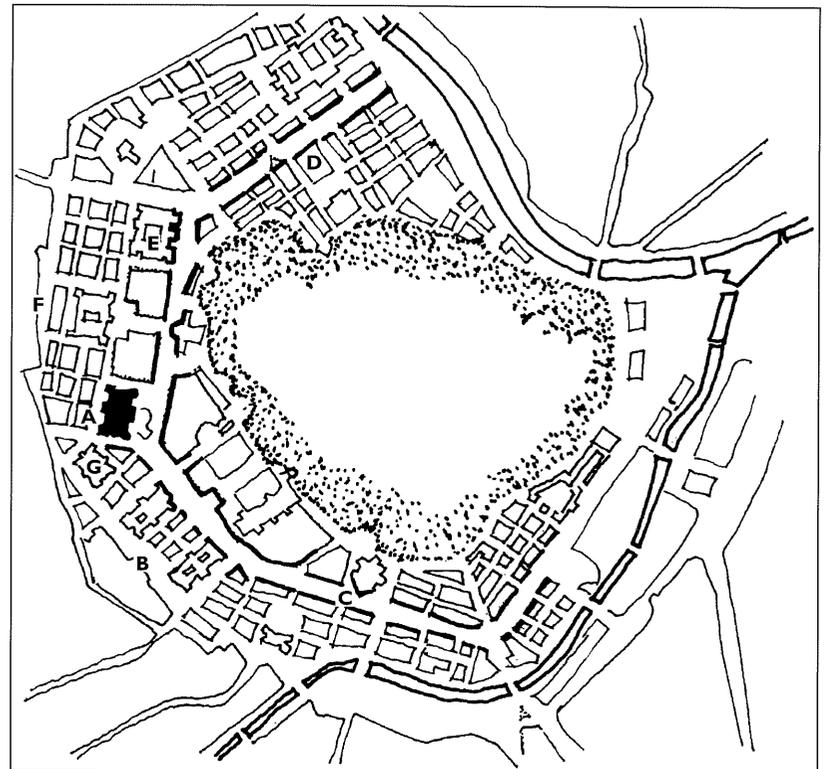
(above) Remains of the defensive system around the old city are still visible prior to 1857.

- A Hofburg Palace
- B St. Stephen's Cathedral



(below) New institutions built along the Ringstrasse include many features thought necessary for a modern liberal capital.

- A Parliament
- B Museums
- C State Opera
- D Bourse
- E University
- F New town hall
- G Palace of Justice



but also to a great assortment of cultural institutions. Not only was there a new portion added to the Hofburg Palace, a new Parliament building, and a new Justice Palace, there was also, among other buildings, a new university, theater, city hall, opera house, a pair of sizable museums, and many palatial apartment complexes for the new elite. Though fin de siècle Vienna was hardly a harbinger of democracy, the large-scale construction of buildings for civic and cultural institutions provides an index of those buildings thought necessary for a modern liberal capital.

Although Vienna's Ring renders it formally atypical of other capitals, it does exemplify the political changes that underlie the development of the modern liberal capital. It suggests that the institutions of democratic government have common origins with other bourgeois institutions and that it is possible to construct a new capitol sector within the boundaries of an existing capital. In Vienna, as in London and Paris, the political institutions of the capitol are set out as coequal with public institutions housing nongovernmental functions. In contrast to most modern capitals that came after it, in Vienna the institutions marking democratic government receive no special emphasis in the larger urban design. The new institutions are architecturally treated more or less equally, each subordinate to the horizontal movement of the boulevard itself—and all still less prominent than the mass of the Hofburg Palace or the spire of St. Stephen's. Vienna may serve as a reminder that the conversion of capital cities into centers of national culture and politics depends upon the existence of a growing middle class to staff and frequent the new institutions. All too often in new capitals the visibility of the architecture precedes the viability of the institutions it houses.

Berlin

An especially complex set of historical and political issues has influenced the urban form and symbolism of Berlin, raising questions that require a bit more elaboration than I have given for London, Paris, and Vienna. Even before serving as the capital of the Kingdom of Prussia, Berlin had existed for five hundred years. After 1871, it was successively the capital of the Second Reich, of the Weimar Republic, of Hitler's Third Reich, and, after World War Two, of East Germany. At the beginning of the 1990s, the status of Berlin shifted yet again, this time toward renewal as the capital of a reunited Germany. At each stage of Berlin's development, the ruling regime has imprinted signs of its power on the architecture and urban design of the city, though the most megalomaniacal dreams of Hitler and Speer for a monumental new Berlin were never constructed.

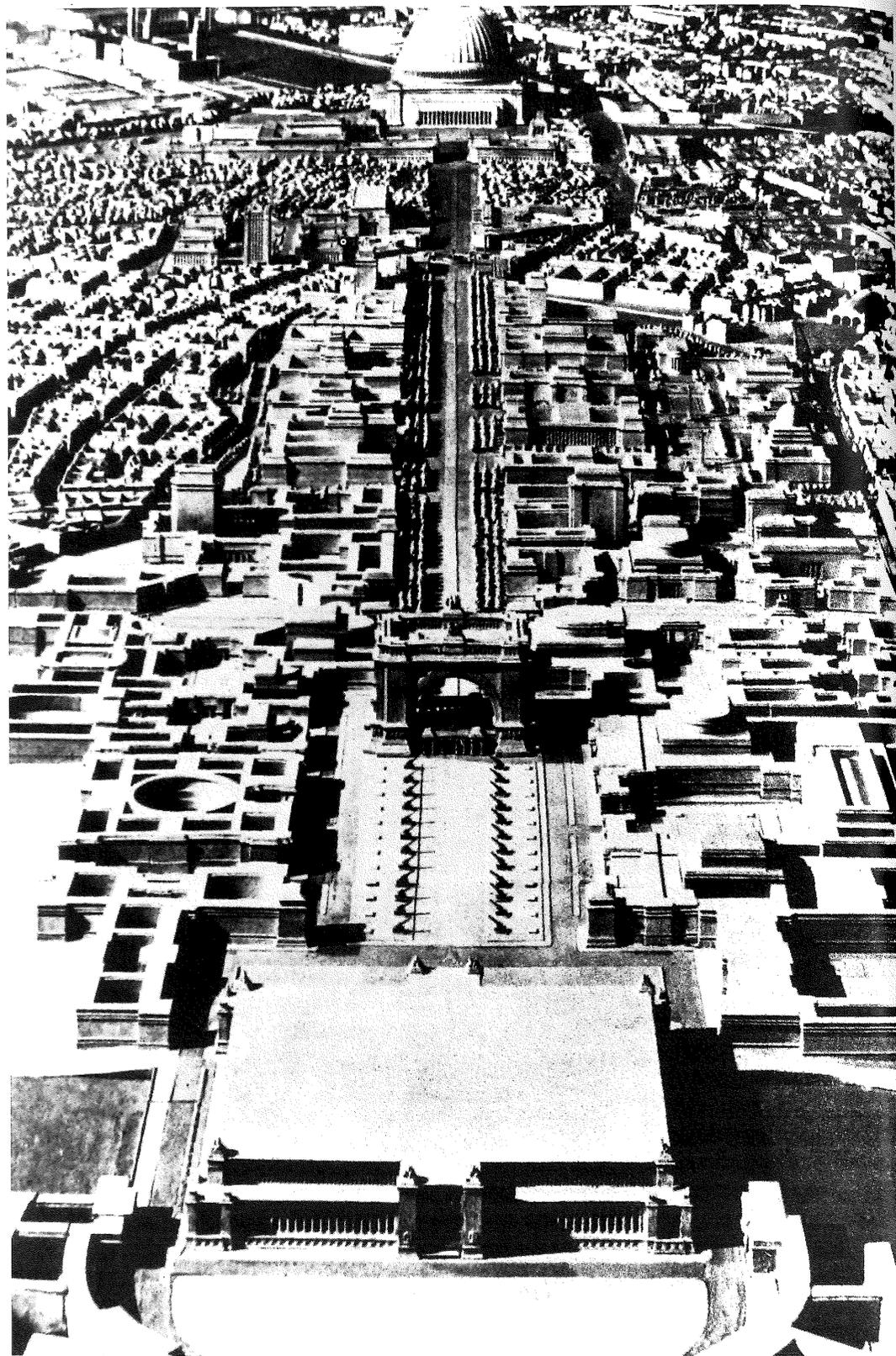
The growth of the twin towns of Berlin and Kölln (united as Berlin in 1709) began in the thirteenth century on an island in the River Spree, a strategic site for east-west trade. By the middle of the fifteenth century, this island site was marked by a well-fortified castle, and its significance as a center of rule continued to increase. That centrality was progressively reinforced by the construction of axial roads focused on the Palace, most notably Unter den Linden, the grand tree-lined way that was begun in

the mid-seventeenth century. Intended as a military parade route, this ceremonial way demonstrated the power of the ruling soldier princes and the rise of the state.³¹ With the extension of this major royal axis, its functions began to expand as well. Gradually in the nineteenth century, the avenue became lined with buildings that served a growing middle-class culture: an opera house, a university, the State Library, the Academy of Fine Arts, and on the island itself, the famous Altes Museum, designed by Karl Friedrich von Schinkel, Friedrich Wilhelm III's state architect. In this way, as with Vienna's Ringstrasse, the later nineteenth-century developments along Unter den Linden and other commercial and residential avenues helped Berlin surpass its status as a royal seat and strive toward that of a full-service capital.³²

The tempestuous saga of united Germany's rises and falls between 1871 and 1945 changed the urban fabric of Berlin at every turn. I have chosen to look only at the beginning and the end of this period, ignoring the six decades in the middle that brought about both the continued rise of a capitalist bourgeoisie and the ascension to government of authoritarian and imperialist leaders that led to two world wars.

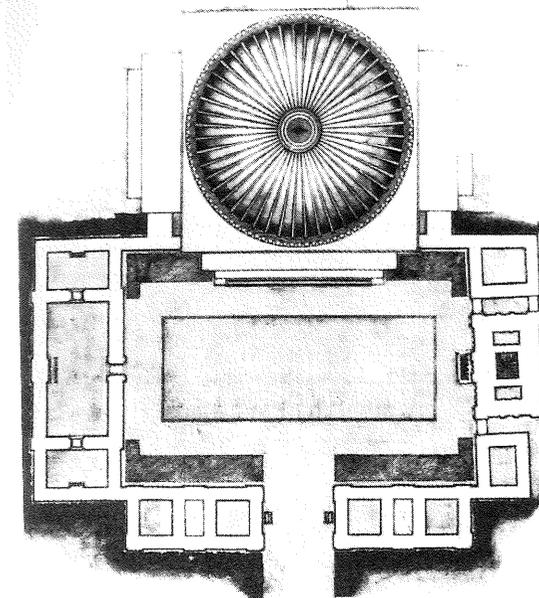
Bismarck, in making Prussian Berlin the capital of the imperial union of German states, could simply add his government's own mark as an extension to the existing city. The result was a new node of government buildings around the Königsplatz at the edge of the old city at the west end of the historic royal axis of Unter den Linden. The Reichstag, as the new National Parliament, was given ornate headquarters but far less elaborate powers; it was the most visible result of a constitution that served to "create the institutions for a national state . . . without, however, sacrificing, or even limiting, the aristocratic-monarchical order of the pre-national period."³³

Hitler's grandiose plans for a new monumental Berlin envisioned a reshaping of the capital's center almost as dramatic as that caused by the destruction of the war, though in exactly the opposite extreme (I.10, I.11). Albert Speer's Berlin Plan, which provided a massive cross-axial ensemble of enormous buildings (some of which were sketched by Hitler himself), attempted not only to outdo the urban axes of power of earlier German rulers but to outscale every effort at architecture and urban design that the world had ever known. Speer termed its north-south axis "a Berlin Champs Élysées two and a half times the length of the original." This was to culminate in a Great Hall capable of accommodating a standing audience of 150,000 to 180,000 to listen to Hitler. Speer described it as "essentially a place of worship" and wished that "over the course of centuries, by traditions and venerability, it would acquire an importance similar to that St. Peter's in Rome has for Catholic Christendom"; he noted elsewhere that the volume of St. Peter's would fit inside his own grand dome sixteen times over. On one side of the square fronting the Great Hall, Speer sited Hitler's multimillion-square-foot palace in which diplomats would have to hike half a mile in order to meet with the Führer. The proposed palace was no less than 150 times as large as the chancellor's residence in Bismarck's day. This monstrous display of power was also intended to overwhelm the dimensions of the Chancellery Speer had built for Hitler in 1937, which itself required visitors to Hitler's



I.10 (left) Hitler's Berlin: model of the north-south axis.

I.11 (right) Hitler's Berlin: model of capitol complex.



office to traverse a gallery "twice as long as the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles." Curiously, the building opposite Hitler's palace in this gargantuan capitol complex was to be the old Reichstag, though Speer assures us that it was included by "mere chance" and "in no way signified that Hitler meant the German parliament to play an important part in the exercise of power."³⁴

The official and semiofficial German press viewed these schemes as another aspect of the party's revival of past German greatness. Masking substantial changes in national policy with rhetorical emphasis on stability and continuity, these documents "describe Hitler as building on the accomplishments of the Prussian monarchs, even fulfilling their greatest dreams for Berlin."³⁵ In the end, however, the Nazi plans for Berlin envisaged nothing short of a preposterous shrine to power and nationalism, "a second, self-absorbed city which made nonsense of prevailing traffic patterns, severing vital links and imposing new demands largely left unmet. Speer's design is little more than a display piece, a massive political stage set."³⁶ Fortunately, little of the plan was ever realized, and only a small portion of the east-west axis has survived.

When Berlin was divided into zones of Allied occupation following World War Two, the eastern part became designated as the capital of socialist East Germany, while the rest was developed as an urban island of the West. With West Germany's national government housed in Bonn, the status of West Berlin as a city suffered from the loss of national administration, as its role shifted from capital to merely capitalist. Divergent patterns of development on the two sides of the Berlin Wall during the next four decades highlighted different economic priorities by giving them architectural form, as West Berlin developed a typical capitalist central business district, while East Berlin's planners gave urban dominance to noncommercial facilities.³⁷ Unlike their eastern counterparts, West Berlin's planners consistently worked on

1.12 View past the Federal Chancellery toward the new domed Reichstag, 2005.



the assumption of eventual political and urban reunification, attempting to site major developments in ways which would be viable following a merger of the two urban centers.

Of the few government buildings of Berlin that had survived the war (and outlasted subsequent destruction aimed at exorcising reminders of the Nazi past), most were located in the eastern sector, which held the historic heart of the capital. The western sectors did gain the Reichstag building, isolated next to the wall between 1961 and 1990. Prior to German unification, the building was expensively restored in the hope that it could be used for periodic sessions of West Germany's Parliament, but when this intention proved too controversial the Reichstag became a museum of German political history. Following reunification, however, the Reichstag, dramatically reconfigured by Norman Foster, again plays an important part in this history, after decades of spatial and institutional marginalization. With the glass-topped Reichstag now joined by a "Federal Ribbon" of buildings including the Federal Chancellery (located on the Spreebogen site once designated for Hitler's gigantic Great Hall), twenty-first-century Berlin boasts a new capitol complex for a renewed pan-German democracy (1.12, 1.13).

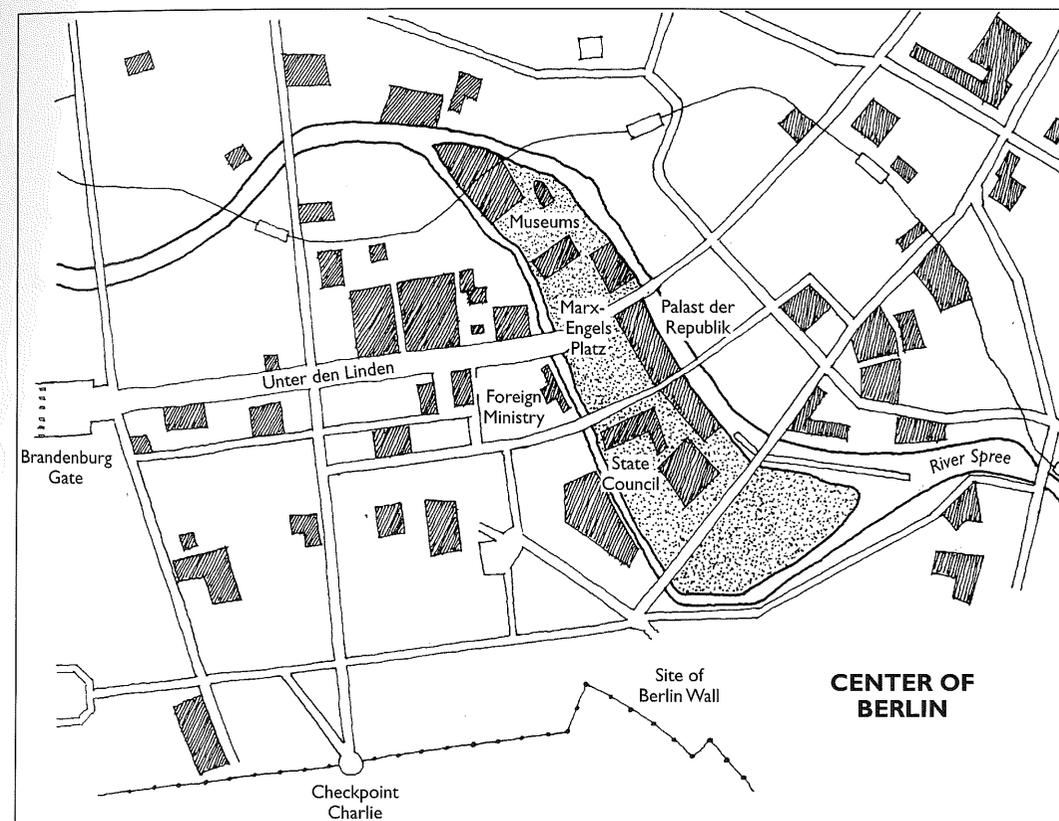
In the former East Berlin, by contrast, urban design continues to be contested. In 1976, the East Germans erected the Palast der Republik to house the Volkskammer (people's chamber) on the site of the Berlin Palace and Lustgarten, the center of rule since the mid-fifteenth century (1.14). Located on a newly created government square known as Marx-Engels-Platz, the building included not only a parliament chamber but also an entertainment center. Although some experts felt that the venerable

1.13 Norman Foster's glass cupola allows visitors to ascend above the German parliament.



1.14 Berlin's center: from the Royal Palace to the Communist Parliament to . . . ?

Some of the most important public buildings of postwar East Germany occupied the island in the Spree which used to be dominated by the Berlin Palace.



I.15 The waning days of the Palast der Republik, 2005.

“Zweifel” (doubt) seems appropriate commentary on the future of the decaying structure that once housed the East German parliament. The foreground shows archaeological investigation of past palatial glories.



Berlin Palace could have been restored, its destruction in favor of a modernist alternative seems to have been motivated partly by the East German regime's wish to demonstrate a departure from past symbols of oppression and partly by a need to expedite creation of the vast Marx-Engels-Platz for mass demonstrations. Whatever the logic behind this rather extreme capitol intervention, little has turned out as initially intended: the Marx-Engels-Platz soon became devoted to party parking lots rather than party rallies. Moreover, East Germany's parliament was hardly the most significant political institution of its regime. At the time the new home of the Volkskammer was constructed, real power emanated from party buildings located both nearby and in Moscow, a reminder that spatial centrality may connote the trappings of power but does not always mark its wellspring. Then, following reunification, the East German capitol slipped from calculated charade into irritating irrelevance. An abandoned Palast der Republik fell into severe disrepair amidst calls to replace it with a version of the old Palace (I.15).³⁸ As before, Berlin's planning and symbolism continue to evolve in turbulent and polemical ways.

Evolved capitals renewed: Rome, Moscow, and Athens

Some cities have actually been founded as capitals more than once, at different periods in their growth—Rome, Moscow, and Athens are good examples. Most capitals that have undergone centuries of evolution have, like Berlin, also served as headquarters for a variety of disparate regimes. Often, as in Beijing, new regimes have brought about significant transformations in city form and meaning. Following the People's Revolution of 1949, Mao demonstrated his consolidated power by turning the south-facing wall of the Forbidden City into a city-scaled gallery housing a single portrait—the iconic image of himself, scaled even larger than the massive archway beneath

it. Mao also dramatically reconfigured Tiananmen Square itself, turning what had long been a more modest T-shaped palace approach into a vast masonry expanse intended to be able to assemble one million Party faithful.³⁹

In an extreme case of an evolved capital renewed, such as Jerusalem, the heritage of successive capitals may stretch back thousands of years. There, as elsewhere, the controversies surrounding a capital's contemporary political status remain tied to interpretations of its earlier history. Some instances of momentous political change have been accompanied by dramatic acts of urban design and development. Architecture and urban planning can play a pivotal role in a city's symbolic renewal, sometimes by the consolidation of an image, sometimes by the polarization of debate. The symbolic recall of earlier golden ages, whether through works of architecture that make use of highly charged precedents or through the reclaiming of hallowed or strategic sites as capitals, has occurred throughout history and remains powerful.

Rome

Rome, designated as the capital of a united Italy only since 1870, is a capital that has undergone extreme variations of stature and influence. The Rome that was a capital of an ancient empire, the Rome that served as the seat of Renaissance papal power, and the Rome that is capital of a modern Italian state share a lineage that is common but hardly continuous.

Rome's selection in the nineteenth century as a national capital achieved many purposes simultaneously. Intended as a direct recall of earlier glories, the choice was also an attempt to find a compromise site acceptable to factions from both the north and south. As Toynbee comments, “It would have been difficult for the Italians to make a choice among this host of possible claimants to serve as the capital of a united Italy if one of them had not possessed a prestige that incontestably outshone the prestige of all the rest. The choice was bound to fall on Rome; yet, on every count except prestige, Rome was a still less suitable choice for the capital of modern Italy than Turin would have been.”⁴⁰ In addition to the issue of prestige, however, the selection of Rome served directly as a form of national secular occupation of the papal center at a time when victory over the papacy was of preeminent concern.

Whatever its causes, the choice of Rome as national capital precipitated many changes in the city. The influx of persons needed to staff the government constituted only a small part of those attracted by the promise of employment opportunities in the new capital. In its first thirty years as Italy's capital, Rome's population doubled, reaching a half million. This increase brought new housing facilities, new institutional buildings, and a new infrastructure of roads and public services. Beyond all this, there was the need to build and develop a national image, what the architectural historian Spiro Kostof has termed “the iconography of unity.”⁴¹ Symbols of the Third Rome abound, many of them making conscious reference, whether literal or metaphorical, to the iconography of earlier Roman glories, even as some of those same glories were destroyed to make way for the new structures.

Rome's multiplicity of historical roles retains many prominent urban



**I.16 Rome's
Via della
Conciliazione: urban
rapprochement of
church and state.**

traces, both physical and symbolic. To many visitors, contemporary Rome still looks more like the capital of Catholicism than the capital of a modern secular state. It is the dome of St. Peter's and its carefully wrought centrality within the larger composition of Vatican structures that mark this place, even more than the citadels of the ancients, as the model for subsequent attempts to design a capitol complex. The Via della Conciliazione, carved out to commemorate the rapprochement of church and state following the Lateran Treaty of 1929, provides an axial approach to St. Peter's that extends the urban design presence of the Vatican complex toward other prominent parts of the city (I.16). In other ways, however, the shifting spatial relationship between the church and state may be better characterized by replacement than by rapprochement; the former papal summer residence in the Palazzo del Quirinale served as the royal palace from 1870 to 1947 and subsequently has been designated the official residence of the Italian president. By contrast, the central institutions of contemporary Italian government are housed much less pretentiously in urban palazzi marked by flags and guards, but otherwise urbanistically indistinguishable from other institutions in downtown Rome.

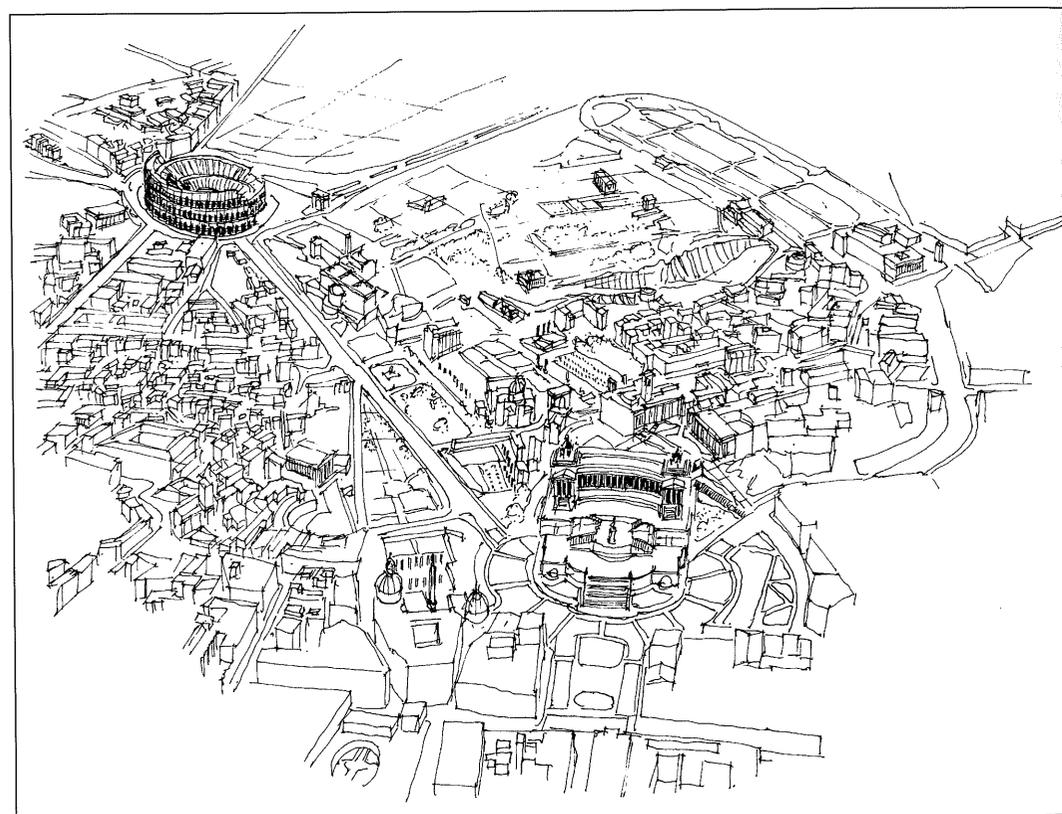
The ancient Capitoline Hill, redeveloped as the symbolic center of Roman government following the sixteenth-century design of Michelangelo's Campidoglio, constitutes yet another node of power in this most polycentric of cities. This place has undergone a succession of transformations of appearance and meaning. The hill that once featured a temple towering over the Roman forum and reached by flights of recently reconstructed steps has for the last eight centuries had its buildings oriented in the opposite direction, facing away from their ancient context. Michelangelo's re-planning of the Capitol accepted this basic orientation for the Senate building as the communal center for Christian Rome but also recalled the sacred meaning of the place as the *caput mundi*. In more recent decades, even as it has retained

its central role in communal government, the Campidoglio's civic presence has been sorely undermined by the King Victor Emmanuel II Monument, a looming pile of nationalism that cuts harshly into Capitoline Hill's northern flanks. Though this placement may have been intended to signify an alternative authority to papal rule and even, through symbolic fusion, a kind of alliance with the periodic populist rule associated with the Capitoline's communal government, the juxtaposition was not wholly auspicious. Braunfels has commented that the commission and siting of this gigantic national monument served to "conceal the limitations of the state" and to make clear "the limitations and the utopian, fatalistic nature of this sacred hill. The two together are documents which, with the greatest precision, illustrate and interpret political situations and weigh their power."⁴² As if competition from the Vittoriano monument were not insult enough, the insensate swath of a Mussolini-era boulevard at the base of the hill soon rendered the Campidoglio even more of an urbanistic orphan. Afflicted with a carbuncle more monstrous than anything threatening princely London, the urban context of the *caput mundi* has been almost unrecognizably defaced by the symbols of political megalomania and the perceived demands of modern traffic circulation (I.17, I.18).

Even before the rise of Mussolini, then, there were attempts to fashion a national Italian identity through the glorification of the statesmen and soldiers of the Risorgimento. Yet these served as merely a preamble to the full range of Fascist symbol-mongering. Mussolini's heavy hand is visible in many of the Third Rome's urban design projects, which aimed not only to advance Italian nationalism but to do so by associating Fascist rule with the imperial triumphs of the past. In a speech made in 1925, Il Duce made his views clear: "In five years Rome must appear marvelous to all the people

**I.17 The rear of
the Campidoglio
overlooks the
Forum, as the
Victor Emmanuel
Monument
looms behind.**





I.18 The Victor Emmanuel Monument overwhelming the Campidoglio.

of the world: vast, ordered, powerful as it was in the time of the first emperor Augustus."⁴³ In a succession of Haussmannesque interventions, Mussolini's planners and designers cut through a series of straight-line avenues linking favored monuments. Perhaps the most invasive of these was the Via dell'Impero, which destroyed 5,500 units of housing to expose the ruins of the imperial fora (a good portion of which were then buried under the roadway). Designed as a traffic link between two monumental urban presences, the ancient Colosseum and the Piazza Venezia, site of Mussolini's office and of the Victor Emmanuel Monument, the avenue was supposed to signify a continuum of power culminating in Fascism (I.19). Like Hitler, Mussolini wanted to outdo his imperial predecessors on their own terms. In 1934, he sponsored a design competition for a new and imposing twelve-hundred-room national Fascist party headquarters, to be located at the midpoint of this avenue, directly opposite the ruins of the Basilica of Maxentius. Like his old office in the fifteenth-century Palazzo di Venezia, this new central symbol of Fascist rule would need to have a high balcony from which the leader could address the assembled faithful, a conscious emulation of the pope's balcony outside St. Peter's. Though the plan for the new national party headquarters was not executed, the proposal is indicative of Mussolini's obsession that architecture and urbanism be under his political tutelage.

Mussolini's most overtly Augustan ambition came to pass in the mid-1930s with the construction of Piazzale Augusto Imperatore around the excavated remains of that Roman emperor's mausoleum, in bimillennial commemoration of his birth. While the idea of using a hall in the mausoleum's center for Fascist rallies was not carried out, the square surrounding the "liberated" structure was flanked on two sides by new buildings for the National Fascist Institute of Social Insurance, which featured friezes showing explicit iconographic comparisons between the powers of ancient and Fascist Rome.

The last major gesture of Mussolini's urbanism took the form of plans for something much like a new capitol complex, initially planned as the site of a forum to be held in 1942 to celebrate the achievements of Fascism. The event was known as the Esposizione Universale di Roma (EUR). Mussolini's architectural ambitions here were no less grandiose than the ideas that prompted them. Under the guise of a universal exposition, he sought a way to demonstrate that twenty-seven centuries of Roman and Italian culture had made superior contributions to human knowledge. Timing the exposition to coincide with the twentieth year of Fascist rule, Mussolini desired a global theater with a monumental stage from which to extol his regime's accomplishments. Like the rest of his urban interventions, this one aimed to emulate and surpass the physical achievements of his ancient predecessors. As he put it, EUR was "above all an act of faith in the destiny and constructive capacity of the Italian Nation, a solemn affirmation of its will to act."⁴⁴ Part of that destiny was to include the onward march of Rome to the sea, with EUR as a midpoint on a new Via Imperiale linking the ritual center of Piazza Venezia with the ancient port of Ostia.

Though the exposition was never held, the grand cross-axial scheme

I.19 Via dell'Impero: an avenue to link empires. Mussolini's avenue connects the Piazza Venezia (in front of the Victor Emmanuel Monument) with the Colosseum, cutting through the Imperial Fora.



1.20 EUR: the Square Colosseum.

for this alternative urban core did experience considerable growth after the Second World War. With its wide, tree-lined avenues and substantial buildings housing government ministries, a congress hall, numerous museums, and corporations, EUR is yet another symbolic node of political power in the Italian capital. Planned with clear reference to the imperial fora by Marcello Piacentini, Mussolini's favorite architect, the austere marble of much of the architecture, such as the arched cube of the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana (later called the Palace of Labor and popularly known as the square Colosseum), was also intended to evoke earlier Roman buildings (1.20). Since 1960, by contrast, the main axis of EUR has culminated in the famous Palazzo dello Sport, designed by Pier Luigi Nervi and the ubiquitous Piacentini for the Olympics. And so, the complex layers of Roman architectural symbolism continue their accretion. EUR, with its urban references to the history of Roman civilization, to the ambitions of Fascist rule, and to the pageantry of international athletic competition, is, like the rest of the Italian capital, undergoing perpetual symbolic renewal and transformation.

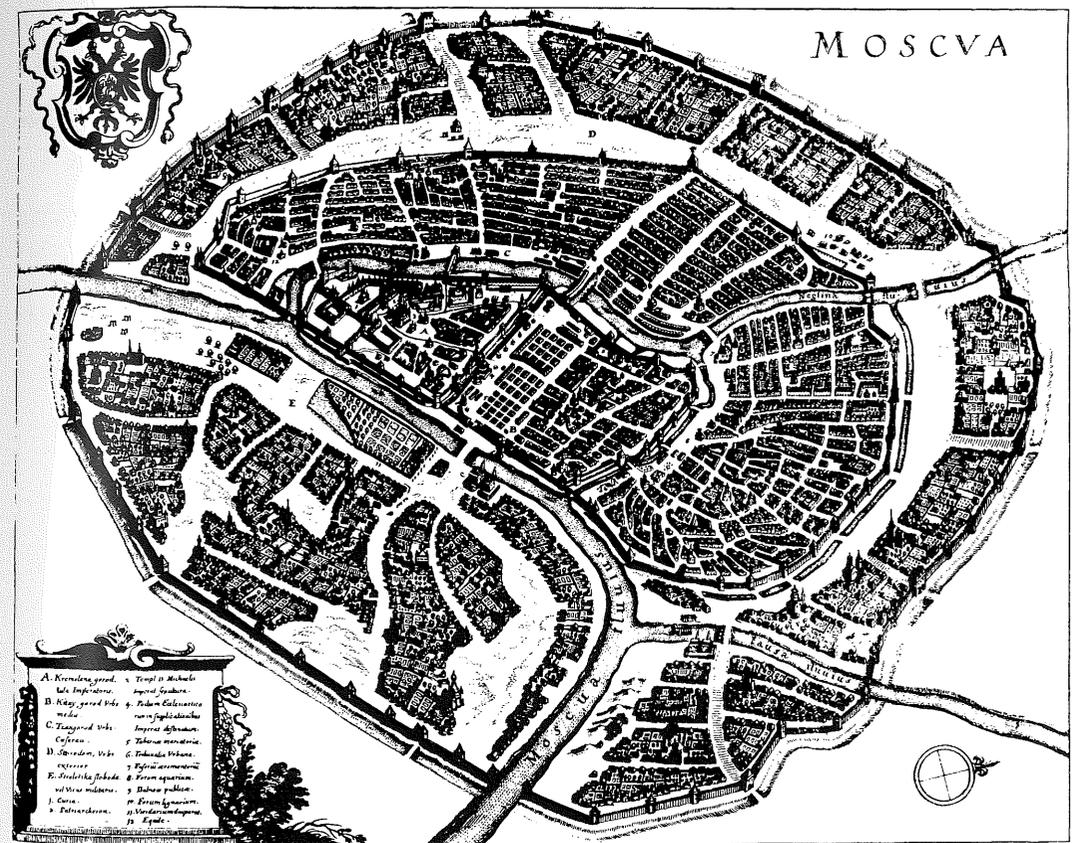
Moscow

The tale of the glory and decline of Moscow is not quite so well rooted in ancient history as that of Rome but is at least as tumultuous, featuring more than eight centuries of sieges, invasions, and cataclysmic fires.⁴⁵ The development of its capitol complex, the Kremlin, was influenced not only by tsarist patronage but also by tsarist rejection and tsarist overthrow. Peter the Great's angry exodus from Moscow, commencing in 1712, to found

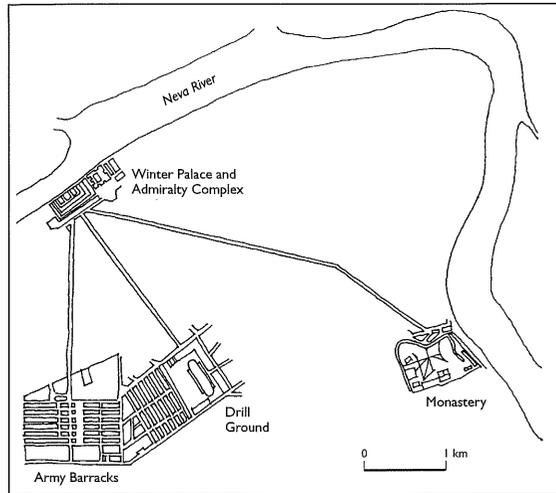
St. Petersburg on the swampy northwestern frontier of his empire was the move of a monarch and his court. Two hundred years later, when the capital was shifted back to Moscow, the move was of an entirely different order: it was that of a revolutionary government and its attendant bureaucracy to reclaim the historical heartland, at a time when Petrograd (as it was then known) was thought vulnerable to attack.⁴⁶ Pre-eighteenth-century Moscow was the undisputed capital of Russia and the center of the Russian Orthodox church; postrevolutionary Moscow was expected to be the capital of the USSR. The return to the Kremlin (the term is derived from *kreml*, meaning "citadel" or "high town")⁴⁷ afforded architectural proof of political authority, useful initially for consolidating Bolshevik control and subsequently as a symbol of Communist party rule over the distant and disparate array of non-Russian Soviet republics.

Designed concentrically around the Kremlin, Moscow epitomizes the power of a capitol to dominate a capital (1.21). Significantly, the evolving urban plan of St. Petersburg, Moscow's chief rival for capital status, had also featured a politically centralized design. Even in the new city of rational planning, "a city of science and exactitude rather than the medieval jumble of leaning buildings, narrow lanes, dirt and ignorance that was Moscow," the ancient need to draw special spatial attention to a secure center could not be denied. Thus, St. Petersburg's three major radial avenues converged upon the Admiralty Complex, opposite the Peter and Paul fortress and adjacent

1.21 Plan of Moscow in the seventeenth century, showing concentric growth out from the Kremlin.



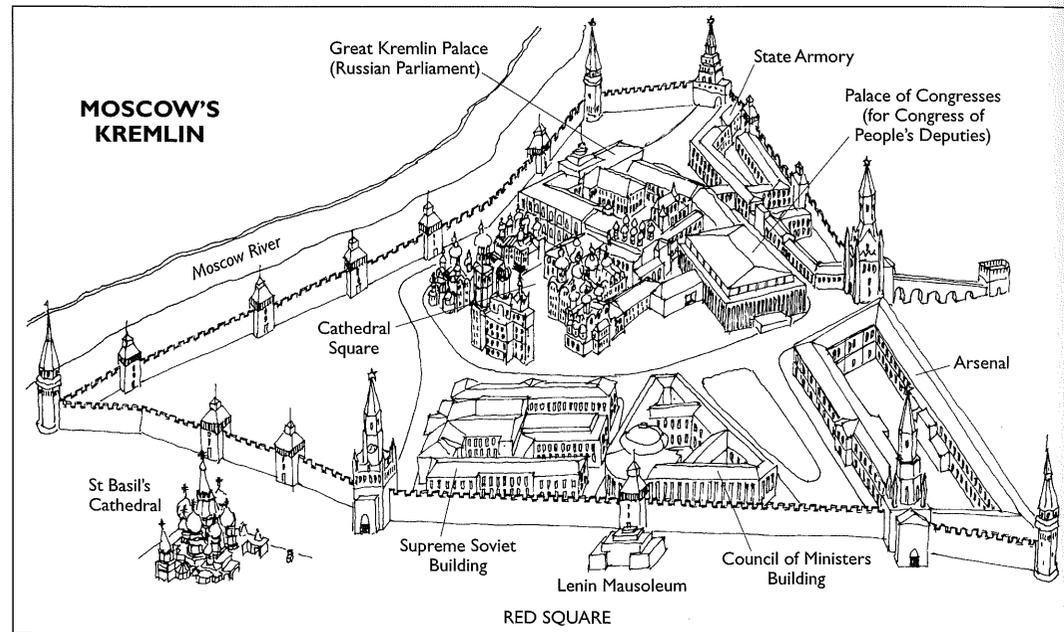
1.22 St. Petersburg plan: linking admiralty and palace with the army.



to the Winter Palace, seat of the autocracy. These same three radials led outward to the army barracks, the drill ground, and the Aleksandro-Neviskiy Monastery, thereby connecting the center of power with the means of its enforcement and its spiritual roots (1.22).⁴⁸

1.23 After the October Revolution: cathedrals and Communists within the Kremlin walls. The drawing shows the political institutions as of 1990, before the breakup of the USSR.

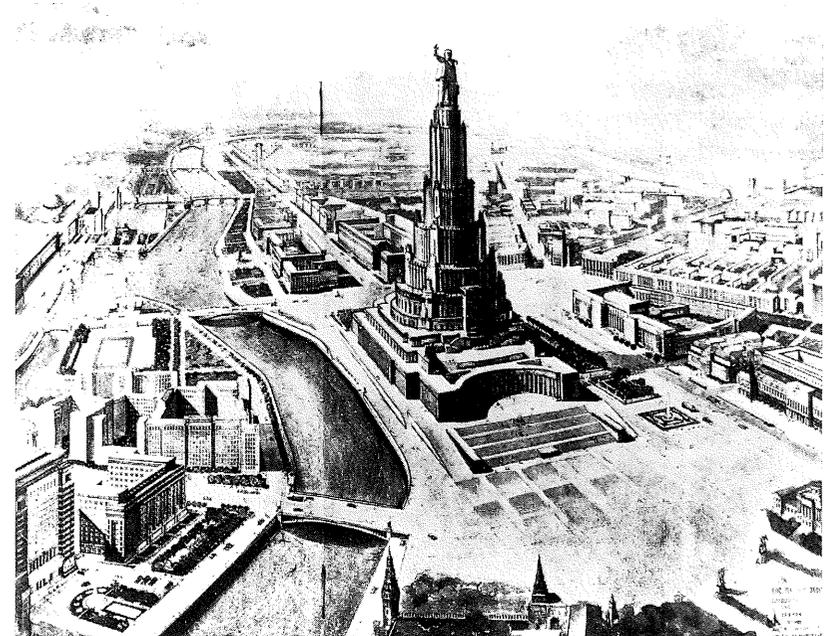
Following the return to Moscow in March 1918, the Bolshevik leadership gained an even more reassuring spatial hierarchy (1.23). Though Leon Trotsky maintained that there was “great, almost universal” opposition to this move, it took place rapidly. Trotsky criticized the choice of the Kremlin with its forest of cathedral spires as a “paradoxical place to establish a stronghold of the revolutionary dictatorship” and found the “close daily contact between the two historic poles” in the Kremlin to be both “astonishing and amusing.”⁴⁹ Nonetheless, with the bells in the Saviour’s Tower adjusted to play the first



bars of the “Internationale” instead of “God Preserve the Tsar,” Communist party occupation of the Kremlin continued. The immediate consequence of the Bolshevik occupation was that the whole Kremlin complex, which before the revolution had been a free museum, was closed to the general public in 1918, not to be reopened until 1955.⁵⁰ Its monasteries and cathedrals ceased to function as religious institutions, the red banner of the revolution flew over the buildings, and Lenin announced his Plan of Monumental Propaganda. By the 1930s, red stars were fixed atop the spires of the Kremlin’s gatetowers, and Red Square (which was initially created in the fifteenth century as a firebreak in front of the Kremlin’s walls and, after centuries of encroachments and redesigns, served as the location of nineteenth-century Moscow’s main market)⁵¹ became the site of massive military parades. It was reported that Stalin even planned to tear down the celebrated St. Basil’s Cathedral because its placement at one side of the square disrupted the flow of troops. He was deterred, the story goes, only when a famous architect threatened to slit his throat on the cathedral’s steps.⁵²

As in Hitler’s Berlin, the Stalin era’s most grandiose proposals for urban transformation were not executed. Designs for the Palace of Industry and the Palace of the Soviets promised enormous buildings which would flank the Kremlin and challenge it for symbolic dominance. Intended for erection just downriver from the Kremlin on a 110,000-square-meter site cleared of two churches, the projected Palace of the Soviets was to be nothing less than the largest building in the world. In the design’s final version of 1937, following the gradual intrusion of Soviet officialdom into a protracted design competition, two immense halls (with enough space to seat 20,000 and 8,000 persons), offices, and restaurants were contained in a massive stepped pedestal surmounted by a 75-meter-high statue of Lenin, his arm raised in a gesture curiously reminiscent of the Statue of Liberty (1.24). The height

1.24 Proposed Palace of the Soviets: designed to outflank the Kremlin, shown at bottom of drawing.



of this tower of government managed to outstrip even capitalism's recent best effort, the Empire State Building, with which it was proudly compared. In any event, neither this structure nor the Palace of Industry, which was intended to sprawl from Red Square to the Moscow River, was ever finished. The poor soils of the riverbank site for the Palace of the Soviets threatened the foundations, and the huge steel superstructure was dismantled during the 1940s for use in the war effort. Eventually, in 1960, the foundations were reused for a massive municipal swimming pool, and a less immense Palace of Congresses was completed within the Kremlin complex itself.⁵³

With the government's vital centers of decision making gathered within the walls, this fortress remained both the symbol and the synonym for Soviet authority. Apparently not even this satisfied Stalin. Beginning in the 1930s, he authorized construction of deep tunnels under the Kremlin, including a secret passage leading to a private station of the Moscow Metro, theoretically enabling the entire Politburo to evacuate Moscow secretly in fifteen minutes.⁵⁴ Such was the concentration of both power and paranoia. Even though the buildings for ministries and other government departments were scattered throughout the inner city, the Kremlin's metonymous image of totally centralized command long remained dominant. While many parts of the Kremlin are, at the time of this writing, open to visitation by the public at most times of the year, ceremonial public gatherings are kept outside and beneath the citadel's walls. For many decades, the Lenin Mausoleum in Red Square was probably the only Moscow government building readily identifiable to foreigners, who marveled at its long lines of pilgrims and its goose-stepping guards. In this snapshot view of Soviet political space, the Kremlin appeared as an insurmountable barrier of crenellated brick and distant spires, a generic expression of power lacking any evidence of human presence (1.25). Slowly, the combination of late-1980s glasnost and television

1.25 Lenin Mausoleum and Kremlin, as seen from Red Square in the 1980s.



began to yield more penetrating views of government activities within the Kremlin's buildings and elsewhere in Moscow.

Nearly three-quarters of a century after the government's return to the seeming impregnability of Moscow's Kremlin, however, the symbolism of this capitol complex shifted yet again. In 1991, as USSR leaders lost control over diverse and disaffected constituent republics, public open spaces in Moscow became transformed from rallygrounds for the party faithful into places of protest and Russian nationalist fervor. At the center of resistance to the failed coup of August 1991, the Russian Federation's Parliament building (known as the White House), located on the newly dubbed Square of Free Russia, challenged the Kremlin and Red Square for symbolic supremacy. In the symbolic landscape of post-Soviet Russia, the White House now houses the Russian government, the Parliament (Duma) is located in another nearby building, and the residence of the Russian president remains within the Kremlin itself. Once again in Moscow, architecture, power, and national identity have been conjoined in new ways.

Athens

No less intermittent in its glories than Moscow and the Eternal City is Athens, which, although resplendent in the age of Pericles, subsequently suffered through two millennia of repeated acts of warfare, invasion, and occupation. Like Rome and Moscow, Athens is the capital of a modern nation-state as a result of a relatively recent act of will inspired by the presence of the past. When Greece gained independence from the Ottoman Turks, establishing Athens as the new capital of its kingdom in 1833, there was almost no Athens left to so designate. In 1827, the Greek population of the city, who constituted 90 percent of the city's denizens, had to take sanctuary on the nearby island of Salamis; in 1831, the physical inventory of Athens consisted of "150 destroyed houses . . . 125 churches and very few public buildings." As an observer reported in 1835, "Athens, which before the War of Independence had three thousand houses, now has not even three hundred. The rest turned into shapeless piles of building materials. Most of them still remain like this."⁵⁵

Under such conditions the choice of Athens as a capital was hardly inevitable. During the preceding fifty years the city had lost whatever regional role it had held in the Ottoman Empire and had experienced a decrease in population and the removal of administrative and educational institutions. As its roads declined, its isolation increased. From the beginning of the Greek Revolution in 1821, all major meetings and provisional governments were held elsewhere, and modern Greece's first capital was established at Nafplion in the Peloponnese, one of the few cities which had escaped wartime destruction and which featured buildings suitable for the temporary housing of a monarch, his court, and his army. Nafplion, however, had been a hotbed of internecine discord during the revolution and remained as such after independence. Leaders from many parts of Greece soon pressed for alternative capital sites. Peloponnesians, who had led the independence struggle, favored nearby Argos, Tripoli, home of the

revolutionary leader Kolokotrónis, or Corinth, fortified and at the center of the new state. Others lobbied for Mégara in Attica and for the Aegean island of Syros, at the time a major commercial port. Still others argued that the only appropriate capital for Greece could be Constantinople, and that any new capital should be seen as temporary. Athens does not seem to have been among the sites initially considered.⁵⁶ In the end, the selection of Athens is perhaps best explained as an outcome of the romantic, neoclassical dreams of King Ludwig I of Bavaria and his son Otto, independent Greece's first monarch.

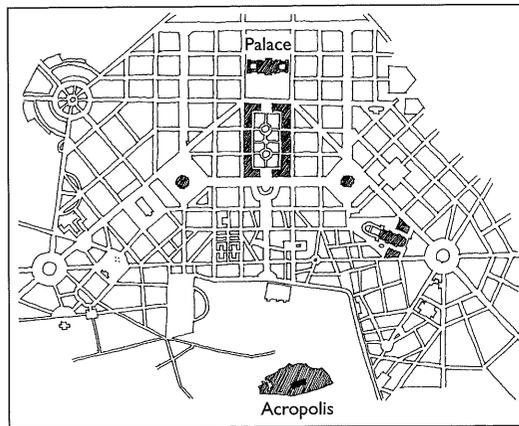
King Otto, like many of the world's rulers before him and since, treated the selection of a new capital as an executive decision, taken in collaboration with his vicereignty. Sensitive to the internal rivalries that would inevitably plague the new state, the king and his advisers regarded the proposed new capital alternatives as tainted by "barren localist" considerations. As Eleni Bastéa observes in *The Creation of Modern Athens*, "The unified Greek nation, with one language, one culture, one religion, and a common historical consciousness was created after the War of Independence by the first governments . . . It was primarily the Greek state, after 1833, that 'made the Greeks.'" One of King Otto's many complex cultural tasks was to help modern Greece "build a coherent national culture that was shared by its citizens." Moreover, as a monarch imported from Bavaria in an age when European royalty were "supplied from an interrelated set of families whose personal nationality (if they felt themselves to have one) was entirely irrelevant to their function as heads of state,"⁵⁷ the new king was interested not solely in issues of contemporary Greek protonationalism but, like his Germanic compatriots, in a broader revival of ancient classical civilization. One aspect of this interest was an international Greek Revival in architecture, spurred by a spate of archaeological expeditions and publications. Judging by the account that Ludwig von Maurer, a member of the vicereignty, gave in 1835, Otto was willing to consider Corinth not because of its commercial, military, and strategic advantages, but because of its ancient ruins and historic vistas. Only if these last features are taken as the primary criteria for selection of a new capital does the ultimate choice of Athens become obvious. Extolling the Athenian litany of "memories" relating to classical civilization, von Maurer concluded with a rhetorical question: "Which king could choose another place for the headquarters of its government? At the moment, he had in his hands the intellectual spring of the world."⁵⁸

Otto may well have also had in his hands a completed master plan for the development of Athens as the new capital of Greece, based on an unsolicited document prepared in 1832, when this notion carried little official support. In an explanatory memorandum sent to the royal headquarters in Nafplion, the master plan's architects, Stamatios Kleanthes and Eduard Schaubert, both educated in Berlin under Schinkel, confidently articulated the logic of their proposal: "Love for the cradle of the arts and sciences, Athens, and the absence of a good plan for it, which is noticeable to all visitors, prompted us . . . to make an exact map of the city and the nearby suburbs." Kleanthes and Schaubert expected that "the learned world of Europe would take an

interest in this work," and also "believed that the government might later use our survey as a useful preliminary plan for the reconstruction of Athens out of its ruins, whether or not this city should be designated as the future capital of Greece." Then, casting aside doubt about the future status of the city, the architects concluded that "we had better foundations following public opinion in Greece and the collective expectation of the Hellenes; thus in our work we imagined Athens to be the future capital of Hellas and the seat of the king."⁵⁹ As it turned out, whatever the state of public opinion, the architects did indeed manage to anticipate the opinion of the state. In May of 1832, the provisional Greek government commissioned the youthful architects to design a new Athens, intended to be "equal with the ancient fame and glory of the city and worthy of the century in which we live."⁶⁰ When Athens was proclaimed the capital in 1833, King Otto and his regents approved the master plan as part of the same decree.

The neoclassical plan for Athens was as redolent of northern Europe as its client: a system of formal geometries, featuring a grid crosscut with radial streets, focused on freestanding public buildings and open squares. This plan (I.26), which bears formal relation not only to various European royal seats but also to such capitals as Washington, New Delhi, and Canberra, is premised on the exalted centrality of the King's Palace, sited to afford an unobstructed view southward to the Acropolis. The two great symbols of authority, those of ancient culture and modern politics, were in this way to be placed in a deliberate visual dialogue, with all else subordinate. The existing streets of the town were to be eliminated, reconfigured, or regularized to conform with the plan, and ancient names were assigned to them.⁶¹ The plan as a whole revealed a mind-set common to many designers of major urban interventions: that which was new and modern should be treated not as a continuation of the old and indigenous, but as a substitute for it. Only the deep past of ancient Athens interested these architects; a vast zone for archaeological excavation was to be left free of all development. On the other hand, however, Eleni Bastéa astutely points out that Kleanthes and Schaubert also incorporated buildings for a Senate and a House of Representatives as well as several ministries, "even though Greece did not have a parliamentary system at the time." "While the formal design of New Athens may communicate a static vision of a city centered on the king," she concludes, "the diverse program . . . does acknowledge the needs and the sites of a commercial, political, and cultural center. Taken together, the plan and the memorandum for New Athens describe a capital that sits at the cusp of a transition from the monarchical to the bourgeois state."⁶²

When a variety of disputes involving land expropriation caused this plan to be revoked after only eight months, a revised version was prepared by the famed Bavarian architect Leo von Klenze. Von Klenze was sent to Athens by King Ludwig, who remained the prime mover behind the plans for the new capital. Von Klenze's more compact plan retained the basic triangulated geometry of the earlier scheme but accepted more of the existing settlement and thereby offended fewer landowners. This scheme allocated the palace a less imperious site in the triangle's west node instead of at the central apex, and proposed to use that northern node to accommodate a



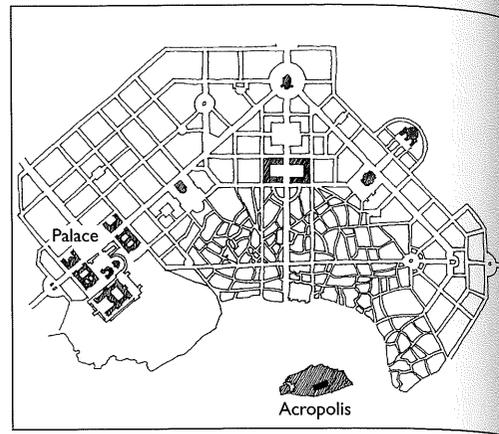
1.26 The Kleanthes and Schaubert plan for Athens. Centered on the palace, all of the urban fabric except the Acropolis is regularized.

1.27 The Von Klenze revision of the plan for Athens. Here, the king is shifted to one side, and there is less disruption of the existing urban fabric.

tall church (1.27). As an alternative to this plan, Schinkel himself proposed an even more extreme articulation of royal power: a design that dared to impose a sprawling new palace across the top of the Acropolis. This plan met with much objection on both practical and symbolic grounds. Following further compromises and alterations by the architect Friedrich von Gärtner, in which, at Ludwig's insistence, the palace was shifted to the east corner node (thought to be a healthier location and, not coincidentally, the point furthest from the existing public bazaar), a version of the original master plan was approved, though never substantially implemented.⁶³

As Bastéa's account of the nineteenth-century development of Athens makes clear, big plans for capital cities face many local obstacles, even as royal political power offered "specific and prescriptive" decrees. "Nation-building presupposes the codification and showcasing of the *past*," Bastéa observes. Yet, as the growth of Athens progressed, "it was the unglamorous and needy *present* that primarily concerned everybody and with which the state had to contend. It is the ongoing anxiety about the present, bracketed in a politically and economically unstable framework, that made residents approach the grand designs alternately with awe and irrelevance, desire and irony. While the timeless shadows of Pericles, Pheidias, and the heroes of 1821 continued to be revered and recalled, the cynical press commentary captures the ever-changing, ephemeral nature of the city." Political space, Bastéa shows, is not merely the space of government but also the repository of meaning for residents. As early as 1834, it was clear that the plan for New Athens faced contentions between the nationalist goals of a new Greece and the local demands of established Athenians. "The former required a design that would facilitate settlement and showcase the capital of the new kingdom; the latter concerned the interests of the autochthon and heterochthon Greeks who had bought property in Athens and were going to be affected by any changes in the street pattern." Ultimately, the development of planned Athens proceeded less coercively than Haussmann's Paris, though the lax enforcement of regulations (seen as "negotiable propositions") may have resulted more from bureaucratic weakness than from commendable enlightenment.⁶⁴

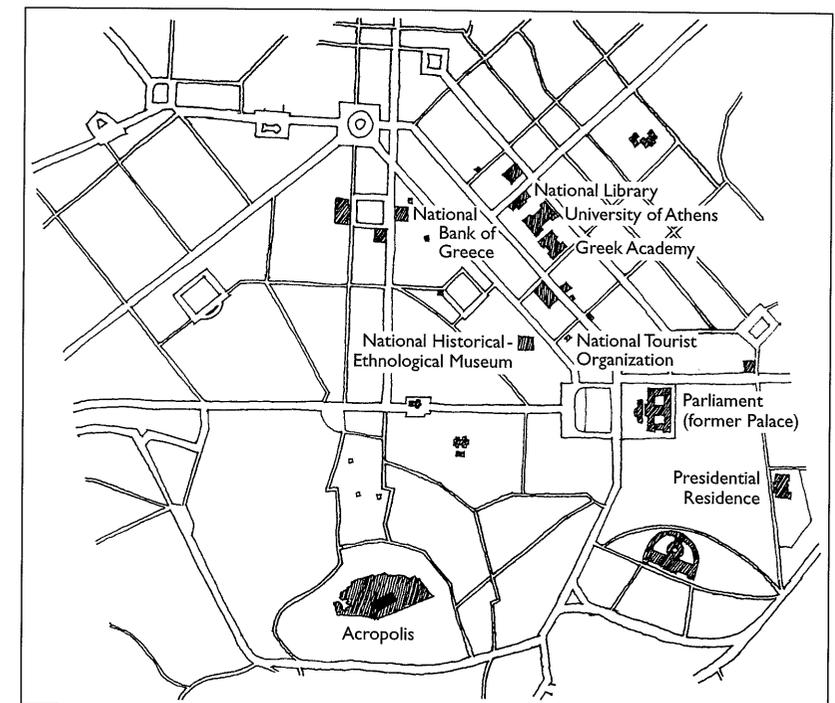
The subsequent turbulent history of Athens has been inextricably tied



to the fate of the Greek state. Greece has had to overcome protracted conflict between Liberals and Royalists (who favored the Bavarian monarchy and supported the Germans in World War One), wars fought over the Balkans, a massive influx of refugees in the aftermath of Ottoman imperial collapse, destruction and occupation during World War Two, and a Civil War in 1946–1949, all accompanied by dozens of changes of government, which certainly worked against efforts at long-term planning. Only gradually did nineteenth-century Athens become more than an isolated outpost of administrative facilities and educational institutions, and only with difficulty did the Greeks manage to outlast the attempts of foreigners (as well as Greeks in the diaspora) to control their land and culture for the purposes of tourism, economic exploitation, and dewy-eyed aestheticism: colonialist planning influences linger long after independence movements seem to have been consolidated.

In spite of the subsequent century-and-a-half of near-constant political turmoil, basic traces of the early planning ideas seem to have influenced the placement and concentration of national government institutions in Athens. It is not only the government's administrative functions that are still highly centralized; most other national institutions seem to have followed the palace to the eastern side of the city center. The University of Athens, the Greek Academy, the National Library, the National Bank of Greece, the National Historical-Ethnological Museum, and even the National Tourist Office are grouped in an area not much larger than the Acropolis itself and are all within a ten-minute walk of the site allocated in the master plan for the palace (1.28). One Greek commentator, writing in 1960, described this central zone as being enclosed by virtual walls within which "all of Greece

1.28 Contemporary Athens. The palace is transformed into a parliament building, and other significant national institutions are clustered nearby.



is judged and directed. The walls, at first view, are not closed to anybody. People are coming and going from their entries all day. Nevertheless, under the surface, the walls are entirely closed, the gates are impassable, as with the museum doors when the time comes. The 'inside' people live a life of their own, where nobody from 'outside' can penetrate."⁶⁵

However daunting these institutional presences may remain, at least one symbolic shift did occur in the course of the tortuous rise of parliamentary democracy in Greece: the palace was transformed into the headquarters of the Parliament. This act symbolized that transfer of power in the most highly charged location, Síntagma Square, site of long-standing prodemocracy rallies. Though periods of military rule and one-party control suggest that the practice of Greek politics has lagged behind the idealism of its symbols, adaptive reuse of the palace, including the extensive National Gardens behind it, indicates yet again the need for a new regime to express its presence urbanistically. As Bastéa puts it, "In a newly-founded state, where even the notions of 'government,' 'kingdom,' and 'parliament' were novel and continuously redefined, architecture helped anchor them spatially and physically and allowed the Athenian public to begin forming a concrete image of its governing institutions."⁶⁶

Evolutionary breaks: designing a new capital

The example of Athens represents an extreme case of an evolved capital's renewal. Here, the scale of design intervention is so large that nineteenth-century Athens could almost be considered an entirely new city. Yet the centrality of the Acropolis with all of its associations inextricably roots the new city in the old; Athens's existence as a new capital is predicated on its continuity with the past, however disjointed. In other large design interventions, however, the urge to create a new capital has been more pronounced than the urge to recall the glories of the past, though modernity is not always viewed as antithetical to a return to roots.

Any time capitals are designed as well as designated, political will is underscored by a physical plan, designed according to the priorities of those who hold power. This is true whether the design intervention is piecemeal or total. It is true at the level of the building, the square, the precinct, or the city. Most "evolved" capitals have sizable sectors that have been "designed," and it is the largest of these design interventions that reveal most about social-spatial fit and misfit. When a new capital city is designed as a whole, the designers necessarily confront a broader array of spatial and social relationships. Though much of capital city design may involve residential areas that seem to have little connection to government functions, the social and spatial hierarchies of the city must be seen as a totality. Privileged sectors for work and privileged places for residence are often intimately and complexly intertwined. Capital city design involves not only a new center of government, but also a new container in which to locate this center. The spatial resolution of this capitol-capital relationship can be immensely revealing of the political relationship between the governors and the governed.

The idea of a designed city, at least in the West, probably has its origins in

the colonial outposts of ancient Greece and Rome. Here, cities were planned according to established principles and were intended as architectural statements about the superior civilization at the center of an empire. Like the subsequent Spanish colonization of Central and South America according to the Laws of the Indies, however, planned colonial cities cannot fully be considered national capitals. As long as a city is an imposed presence, an administrative outpost of an alien government, it cannot take on the symbolic attributes of an indigenously created center. From Miletus to British Imperial Delhi, the limitation is the same. Over time, however, such symbolic attributes will change, as when Imperial Delhi became rapidly transmuted into the capital of independent India. Here, as elsewhere, the colonial origins of *capital city* as a concept may retain relevance. Grafting and crafting the qualities of an indigenously created center onto a place which had its origins premised upon a different socioeconomic system is never an easy task.

Though the designed capital city is descended from colonially imposed cities of the past, its lineage may be traced to another important typology—the palace and its gardens. For centuries, most large-scale attempts at urban design were sponsored by the wealth of the court or the church and were intended as extensions of the royal or priestly realm into the public domain. From the Rome of Pope Sixtus V to the Versailles of Louis XIV, political power was extended horizontally across the landscape. No longer confined by the walls of a citadel, power went public. By the sixteenth century, in Europe the palace had begun to extend across the city and out into the countryside. As Mumford puts it, "Baroque city building, in the formal sense, was an embodiment of the prevalent drama and ritual that shaped itself in the court: in effect, a collective embellishment of the ways and gestures of the palace."⁶⁷ Even after the age of royal residence cities, like the suburban capital at Versailles, had passed, remnants of palatial baroque order continued to be set into the fabric of European capitals. In Paris, Madrid, Vienna, and Berlin, in Wren's unexecuted plan for London after the great fire, and, most audaciously, in St. Petersburg, grand processional axes, long, imposing facades, enormous squares, and converging diagonals provided a common design repertoire for the European capital city. When, in the inspired work of Major Pierre L'Enfant, these tools of baroque order were combined with the primal symbolism of the capitol and applied in the service of democracy, the world gained its first postcolonial designed capital.

As the world's first capital to be designed in the aftermath of a revolutionary change of government, Washington, D.C., was heir to more than the long history of European urban design that had so opulently served the powers of church and state. Washington's founders—designers as well as American politicians and other influential citizens—also needed to confront the perennial challenges of symbolizing a new country and demonstrating the legitimacy of its government. In the more than two hundred years since the founding of Washington, the leadership of new regimes across the globe has repeatedly exploited the potential of new capitals and capitols in support of these same goals. At their heart, these daunting tasks involve attempts to construct a sense of national identity.

The haughty reliance on hillside ascents, the calculated drama of long, broad axes, the fearful arrogance of protected cantonments, the coveted security of massive structures set off by water, and the hierarchical distribution of residence according to courtly rank are all familiar features of a premodern Western urbanism that seems to linger in the designed capitals and capitols of the twentieth century and beyond. The privileged zones once reserved for the gods and for kings claiming divine sanction are still opportunistically commissioned by intermittently powerful secular regimes. Even as the rhetoric and the reality of democratic political institutions have burgeoned, the support systems of authoritarian rule have been encouraged to reemerge when these new institutions are given architectural form and urban status. Wolfgang Braunfels concludes his sweeping survey of a thousand years of urban design in Europe with a triple epigram: "One cannot build for strangers; history cannot be planned in advance; what is necessary needs aesthetic exaggeration."⁹ These thoughts, written to reflect on the designs of the tenth through the nineteenth centuries, have continued relevance for more recently built capitol complexes. Regimes build capitol complexes chiefly to serve personal, subnational, and supranational interests rather than to advance national identity; designers cannot mold political change; and governments still find it necessary to demonstrate their power through aesthetic exaggeration.

Notes

CHAPTER I CAPITAL AND CAPITOL

- 1 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 245.
- 2 Nelson Goodman, "How Buildings Mean," in Goodman and Catherine Elgin, *Reconceptions in Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), 33.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 43–44. For an extended discussion of the history of the Lincoln Memorial and the evolution of its constructed meanings, see Christopher Thomas, *The Lincoln Memorial and American Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). For a sophisticated analysis of the changing nature of constructed meanings of many other American "icons," see Albert Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons: A Plea for Patriotic Iconoclasm in a Nationalist Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- 4 More than a mere stand-in, such buildings can serve as metonyms. For a discussion of the architectural aspects of metonymy, in which "a word or an icon stands for something else, to which it is related by contiguity," see James S. Duncan, *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandy Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 21. Duncan cites examples of metonymy given by Umberto Eco in *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). These include cases in which a place of origin is used to stand for the original object, cause is used to stand for effect, container for content, instrument for operation, and emblem for object emblematicized.
- 5 Murray Edelman, "Architecture, Spaces, and Social Order," in Edelman, *From Art to Politics: How Artistic Creations Shape Political Conceptions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 75. See also Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*, rev. ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985).
- 6 Edelman, "Architecture, Spaces, and Social Order," 76.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 77.
- 8 Charles T. Goodsell, *The Social Meaning of Civic Space: Studying Political Authority through Architecture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988), 198–199. Goodsell subsequently extended his analysis to include state capitols in the United States; see *The American Statehouse: Interpreting Democracy's Temples* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000).
- 9 It is possible also to distinguish between two different types of citadels—"crag-citadels" built on isolated outcrops of rock (such as the acropolis of Athens or certain Rajput fortresses), and "swamp citadels" (such as Ravenna or the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan), built on a cluster of islands. See Arnold Toynbee, *Cities on the Move* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 26–30.
- 10 Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961), 10. Mumford here seems to draw heavily from the writing of the archaeologist Henri Frankfort and from

- V. Gordon Childe, whose scholarly work and more popularized accounts address many factors affecting the origins of cities, especially *Man Makes Himself* (New York: New American Library, 1951), 117–119. Mumford's work also seems colored by the pioneering work of Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980 [1859 original]), especially book 3. For an illuminating discussion of Mumford's evolving ideas, together with an appreciative response to them by a variety of academic specialists, see Carl H. Kraeling and Robert M. Adams, eds., *City Invincible, A Symposium on Urbanization and Cultural Development in the Ancient Near East Held at the Oriental Institute of Chicago, 4–7 December 1958* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), esp. 224–248.
- 11 Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 125.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Peter Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), 178–179. One story has it that the Roman capitolium got its name from the word *caput* after workmen digging the foundations for the Temple of Jupiter (consecrated 509 B.C.) found "a skull of immense size which was regarded as prophetic of the future greatness of the city": Paul Norton, *Latrobe, Jefferson and the National Capitol* (New York: Garland, 1977), 264, n. 4.
- 14 Kevin Lynch, *Good City Form* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 73–77.
- 15 Mumford, *The City in History*, 64.
- 16 Ibid., 65.
- 17 Ibid., 9.
- 18 Ralph Merrifield, *London: City of the Romans* (London: Batsford, 1983), 71–72.
- 19 Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900*, trans. Kenneth J. Northcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 328.
- 20 Peter Hall, "Seven Types of Capital City," in David L. A. Gordon, ed., *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 8–14. For an alternative framework, see Amos Rappaport, "On the Nature of Capitals and Their Physical Expression," in John Taylor, Jean G. Lengellé, and Caroline Andrew, eds., *Capital Cities/Les Capitales* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993).
- 21 See Carola Hein, *The Capital of Europe: Architecture and Planning for the European Union* (New York: Praeger, 2004).
- 22 Toynebee, *Cities on the Move*, 80.
- 23 Ibid., 70.
- 24 Even in the United States, where democratic institutions have long been in place, a dramatic increase in the size of the bureaucracy is evident. When Franklin Roosevelt took office in 1932, the White House staff numbered about a dozen—it now includes more than 300 persons; the Capitol Hill staff serving senators and representatives, according to a recent count, numbers 18,659, as compared with only 2,030 in 1947, and executive departments have experienced similar increases (cited in James Reston, "Speakes: Product of the System," *New York Times*, 17 April 1988, E27).
- 25 Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 328.
- 26 David Cannadine, "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition', c. 1820–1977," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 127–128.
- 27 Martin Pawley, "A Precedent for the Prince," *Architectural Review* 187 (January 1990): 80–82. See also H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture* (New York: Doubleday, 1989); Peter Davey, "Fairy-Tale Prince," *Journal of Architectural Education* 42 (Summer 1989): 34–38; and Peter Davey, "Prince's Political Manifesto," *Architectural Review* 186 (August 1989): 4 and 8. On the Parliament Building for Scotland, see Charles Jencks, *The Scottish Parliament* (London: Scala, 2005) and EMBT: Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue: *Work in Progress* (Barcelona: Actar, 2004). On the National Assembly for Wales, designed by the Richard Rogers Partnership, see Catherine Slessor, "National Assembly for Wales," *Architectural Record* (August 2006), 100–105.
- 28 Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 318.
- 29 Norma Evenson, *Paris: A Century of Change, 1878–1978* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 279. See also, Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris: An Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); and Paul White, "Paris: From the Legacy of Haussmann to the Pursuit of Cultural Supremacy," in Gordon, ed., *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*, 38–57.
- 30 Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1981), 31.

- 31 Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 213–214.
- 32 Ibid., 220.
- 33 Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 39.
- 34 Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 77, 70, 152–153, 103, 156, 151.
- 35 Stephen Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin: The Speer Plans for Reshaping the Central City* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1985), 70.
- 36 Ibid., 8. See also Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918–1945*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985); Mathias Schmidt, *Albert Speer: The End of a Myth*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984); and Robert Taylor, *The Word in Stone: The Role of Architecture in National Socialist Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).
- 37 See T. H. Elkins and B. Hofmeister, *Berlin: The Spatial Structure of a Divided City* (London: Methuen, 1988), 156–214; Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
- 38 Elkins and Hofmeister, *Berlin*, 201, 205; Wolfgang Sonne, "Berlin: Capital under Changing Political Systems," in Gordon, ed., *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*, 206; Michael Z. Wise, *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).
- 39 Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
- 40 Toynebee, *Cities on the Move*, 84–85. Other historians have suggested different preferable alternatives to Rome, most prominently Milan and Bologna. Several cities—including Milan, Genoa, Palermo, and Naples—had larger populations than Rome in 1870.
- 41 Spiro Kostof, *The Third Rome, 1870–1950: Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley, Calif.: University Art Museum, 1973), 9.
- 42 Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, 365.
- 43 Cited in Spiro Kostof, "The Emperor and the Duce: The Planning of Piazzale Augusto Imperatore in Rome," in Henry Millon and Linda Nochlin, eds., *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978), 284.
- 44 Kostof, *The Third Rome*, 37.
- 45 An official Marxist-Leninist history of Moscow contends that the site of Moscow has been "inhabited from time immemorial," with settlements in the area known to date back five thousand years. The USSR Academy of Sciences and The Institute of History of the USSR, S. S. Khromov, ed., *History of Moscow: An Outline* (Moscow: Progress, 1981, Eng. trans.), 13.
- 46 Moscow's historic centrality between major river systems, facilitating both commerce and tax collection, helps explain its initial growth as a Russian capital. See Kathleen Berton, *Moscow: An Architectural History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 13–16. In the official explanation, "The emergence of the united Russian state was the result of the growing social division of labour, the development of productive forces, in the towns first and foremost. Moscow was the heart of an economically advanced area": Khromov, ed., *History of Moscow*, 21.
- 47 While this is the etymology suggested in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and elsewhere, others have suggested that the term is derived from the Russian word *krem*, meaning "conifer," used as a building material.
- 48 James H. Bater, *The Soviet City* (London: Edward Arnold, 1980), 15–16. The Nevsky Prospect now terminates not with the monastery but, appropriately enough, with the Moscow Railway Station.
- 49 Cited in Steve Crawshaw, "Again, Power Shifts in the Kremlin," *The Independent*, 7 July 1990, 26.
- 50 Berton, *Moscow*, 197, 202, 239.
- 51 Ibid., 36, 146, 159, 164.
- 52 Ibid., 43.
- 53 Ibid., 222–225. See also Anatole Kopp, *Town and Revolution: Soviet Architecture and City Planning, 1917–1935* (New York: Braziller, 1970), and *L'Architecture de la Période Stalinienne* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1978), as well as Peter Lizon, "The Palace of the Soviets: Change in Direction of Soviet Architecture" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1971).
- 54 See Lawrence J. Vale, *The Limits of Civil Defence in the USA, Switzerland, Britain and the Soviet Union: The Evolution of Policies since 1945* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), 164, 174.
- 55 L. Maurer, *Das Griechische Volk* (1835), cited in Dimitris Loukopoulos and Polyxeni Kosmaki-Loukopoulos, "Athens 1833–1979: The Dynamics of Urban Growth" (Master of Architecture in Advanced Studies thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1980), 23.

- 56 Loukopoulos and Kosmaki-Loukopoulos, "Athens: 1833–1979," 23–25.
- 57 Eleni Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens: Planning the Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 29; E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 84.
- 58 Cited in Loukopoulos and Kosmaki-Loukopoulos, "Athens: 1833–1979," 26.
- 59 Stamatios Kleantes and Eduard Schaubert, *Explanation of the Plan for the City of New Athens* (1832), reprinted in full as an Appendix in Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, 217.
- 60 Cited in Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, 71.
- 61 Loukopoulos and Kosmaki-Loukopoulos, "Athens: 1833–1979," 30–37.
- 62 Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, 83. See also Alexander Papageorgiou-Venetas, "Green Spaces, Archaeological Excavation Areas and the Historic Site in the Town Planning Schemes for the City of Athens: German Plans and Other Concepts during the Foundation Decade (1833–1843)," *Planning Perspectives* 6 (1991): 69–94.
- 63 For more detailed discussions of the various plans for Athens, see Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, 69–92, 151–156.
- 64 *Ibid.*, 106, 108, 121, 137.
- 65 V. Vassilikos, cited in Loukopoulos and Kosmaki-Loukopoulos, "Athens: 1833–1979," 219–220.
- 66 Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, xix.
- 67 Mumford, *The City in History*, 375.

CHAPTER 2 NATIONAL IDENTITY AND THE CAPITOL COMPLEX

- 1 See Anthony D. King, "Actually Existing Postcolonialisms: Colonial Urbanism and Architecture after the Postcolonial Turn," in Ryan Bishop, John Phillips, and Wei-Wei Yeo, eds., *Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian Cities and Global Processes* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 167–183; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 238.
- 2 Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 71.
- 3 Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 239.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 240.
- 5 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1.
- 6 Massimo d'Azeglio, cited in E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 44; see also 60.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 121. Although Hobsbawm suggests that the term *nationalism* is of late nineteenth-century origins, Peter Alter attributes its first use to the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder, in 1774. The term "did not begin to enter into general linguistic usage until the mid-nineteenth century"; Peter Alter, *Nationalism* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2nd ed., 1994), 3.
- 8 Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 42; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, rev. ed., 2006), 36.
- 9 Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 83.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 77.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 31–38.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 136–137.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 153.
- 14 Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 252.
- 15 Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 3, 16.
- 16 Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 237, 245.
- 17 Young, *Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, 65.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 38.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 261–263. Young challenges Geertz's use of the term *primordial* and argues convincingly that the consciousness of these ties to larger groups is of relatively recent origin. Nonetheless, Geertz's categories seem a useful analytical tool for assessing the present situation (see Young, *Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, 65).
- 20 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 57, 112.
- 21 Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge, "Public Modernity in India," in Breckenridge, ed., *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 2; Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 41; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.
- 22 Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 258. Geertz here is drawing upon the writings of Isaiah Berlin and Edward Shils.
- 23 Edward Shils, "The Military in the Political Development of the New States," in *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 486.

- 24 James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 4–6, 82.
- 25 Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," in *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1965), 277.
- 26 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 48.
- 27 Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 13–14; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 8; Steven Kemper, *The Presence of the Past* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 6.
- 28 See Anthony D. King, *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World-Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System* (London: Routledge, 1990), 79.

CHAPTER 3 EARLY DESIGNED CAPITALS

- 1 E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 78.
- 2 Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961), 403–404.
- 3 L'Enfant's father spent eight years there, beginning in 1758, when his son was four. See John W. Reps, *Monumental Washington: The Planning and Development of the Capital Center* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 5; Scott W. Berg, *Grand Avenues: The Story of the French Visionary Who Designed Washington, D.C.* (New York: Pantheon, 2007), 25–26; 113. As Berg puts it, at Versailles, L'Enfant "would have seen for the first time in his life a true man-made vista, a place where the eye could run all the way to the horizon without interruption, a world seemingly without end" (26). Berg also notes that, while an art student at the Royal Academy in Paris, L'Enfant would have "watched the Champs-Élysées punch its way westward . . . ruler straight and 160 feet broad—a figure that L'Enfant would later duplicate down to the foot in the grandest of his avenues in America's capital" (29).
- 4 See Robert Fortenbaugh, *Nine Capitals of the U.S.* (York, Penn.: Maple Press, 1948). The others were New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, York (Pennsylvania), Lancaster, Princeton, Annapolis, and Trenton.
- 5 *New York Advertiser*, 27 January 1791, cited in Lois Craig, ed., *The Federal Presence* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 16.
- 6 In this regard, it may be recalled that four out of the first five U.S. presidents came from Virginia. For a more extended discussion of L'Enfant's complicated relationships with many key political figures of the era, see Berg, *Grand Avenues*.
- 7 Elbert Peets, "Famous Town Planners III—L'Enfant," 1928 essay included in Peets, *On the Art of Designing Cities: Selected Essays of Elbert Peets*, ed. Paul Spreiregen (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968), 4.
- 8 Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 2; Berg, *Grand Avenues*, 70–71; Carl Abbott, *Political Terrain: Washington, D.C., from Tidewater Town to Global Metropolis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 29. Some of the power of northern and eastern states is made apparent in the hierarchy of street names provided for L'Enfant's plan: Pennsylvania and Massachusetts gained some limited appeasement through the toponymy of significant roadways.
- 9 Abbott, *Political Terrain*, 29, 31, 34–35, 37, 62–63.
- 10 Cited in Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 9. See also Berg, *Grand Avenues*, 35–65, 78–79, 84.
- 11 Reps, *Monumental Washington*, 16.
- 12 The comparison is noted in Peets's essay of 1928, included in Peets, *On the Art of Designing Cities*, 17.
- 13 Author's conversation with Reginald Griffith, executive director of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), 1990. In the late 1990s, under Griffith's leadership, the NCPC produced the *Extending the Legacy* plan, which included a proposal to move the Supreme Court: "If the Supreme Court decides to move, it should be located at the tip of South Capitol, on the river. Such a move would follow the Architect of the Capitol's suggestion that a special site for the Court be found within the Core that underscores the importance of three separate branches of government"; NCPC, *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: NCPC, 1997), 20.
- 14 This group, also known as the Senate Park Commission, was sponsored by Senator James McMillan and consisted of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and architects Daniel