

Fuori le Mura: The productive compartmentalization of the megalopolis

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Fuori le Mura is a radical speculative proposal provoking inquiry into right-sizing the contemporary megalopolis. Through a size comparison of various urban configurations with strictly defined perimeter boundaries, from the Italian city-state to the urban growth boundaries exemplified in contemporary cities like Portland, OR, a cohesive urban identity and scale is defined. Could “walled” mega-enclaves (scaled to match the ideal city size of Portland) create manageable urban nodes with a territory of free experimentation replacing suburbia.

Fuori le Mura—Outside the Walls—is a proposal for Los Angeles that draws a dividing line between two complementary modes of living, reinstating the historical concept of *Urbs* vs. *Rure*. No longer prolonging the corrosive dynamic between City and Suburb, where the suburb is simultaneously culturally subservient to the city and parasitic in its consumption of resources, *Fuori le Mura* instead proposes two different modes of sustainable development and resource management that operate in parallel. Outside the walls the ultimate fantasy of “no government” prevails—the obvious repercussions being the lack of infrastructure or utilities. The only dictates outside the walls are proscriptive: no impact/no emissions. Beyond this anything is possible. Within the walls infrastructure and utilities are heavily regulated, providing inhabitants with easy, prescriptive models for sustainable living.



The Walled City

Medieval Siena’s wall operates as more than a simple fortification against the outside world. Instead it fosters a complex negotiation between the extra-urban activities still very much networked to those inside the walls.



The Scale of Governance

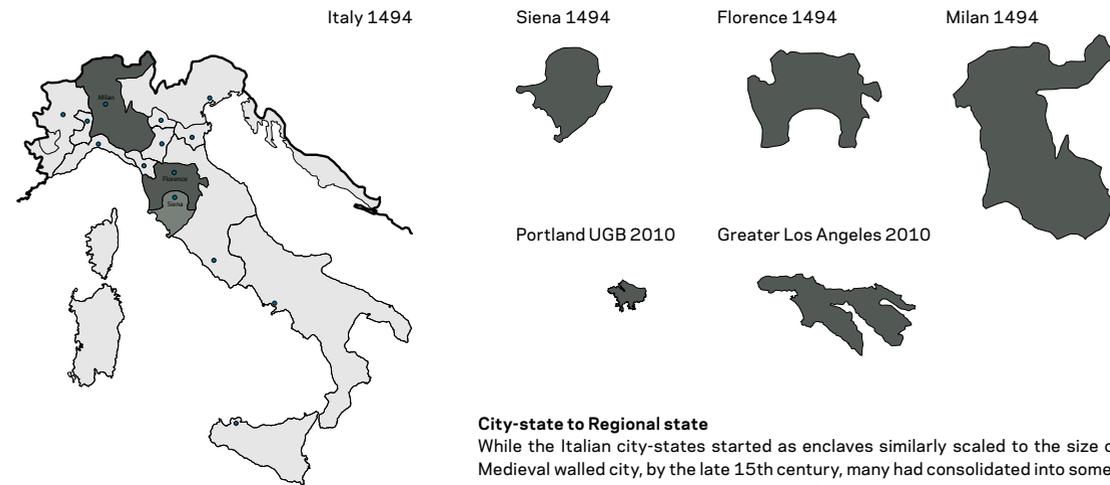
Lorenzetti’s *Allegory of Good and Bad Government* (1339) demonstrates the productive relationship between the distinct *Urbs* and *Rure*. The 14th century Italian city state of Siena exemplifies the calibration of scale and well-defined zones of urbanity, rural lands, and the co-dependent relationship managed between the two.



Puerta de Santa Clarita

Here, we see the Puerta de Santa Clarita viewed from inside the CityState of San Fernando. While High Speed Rail connects the *Urbs* with the *Rure* beyond, the Freeways have been dismantled within the walls, where cars are no longer allowed.

The wall itself, and more specifically the Gates or Puertas become the spaces of negotiation between the two modes of living—a transfer of goods, technologies, and social knowledge. The productive difference between the *Urbs* and the *Rure* becomes mutually beneficial, re-forming the experience of contemporary living.



City-state to Regional state

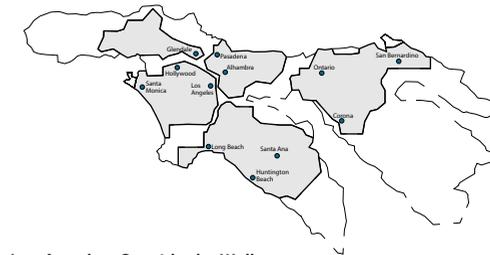
While the Italian city-states started as enclaves similarly scaled to the size of the Medieval walled city, by the late 15th century, many had consolidated into something more at the scale of a region, encompassing multiple urban nodes and extra-urban territories at a scale on par with the contemporary megalopolis.

MEGA-ENCLAVE OR CITYSTATE



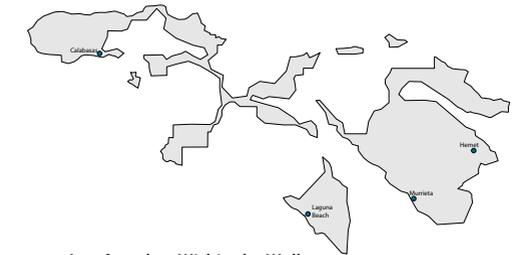
Portland UGB

Portland’s Urban Growth Boundary is accepted as the ideal “right size” for approximate population and surface area. With this goal, Greater Los Angeles is walled into five distinct mega-enclaves, each scaled to meet this model of properly sized urban development.



Los Angeles: Outside the Walls

Outside the walls the role of the State 1 is simply to ensure zero impact. Here the ends justify the means. One would initially expect the political geography to remain intact—blue cities versus red suburbs and rural areas. But soon a new dynamic emerges: Radical Do-It-Yourselfers and Mad Max Off-Gridders live alongside Experimental Libertarians and Contemporary Homesteaders—anyone preferring autonomy to governmental control. Here, light, dispersed infrastructure is key. With the exception of High Speed Rail connecting CityState to CityState, Outside the Walls, the State has no obligation, and is not allowed, to build, maintain, or demolish any form of infrastructure. Without the nourishment of public infrastructure and utilities, the areas outside the walls initially languish, creating derelict monuments to overextended modes of human habitation. Soon, however, innovative experimentation transforms the former suburbs from the spaces of default consumerism into incubators of a new post-urban society.



Los Angeles: Within the Walls

Within the walls the CityState² legislates and enforces sustainable living. Here inhabitants of the *Urbs* must submit to this collective lifestyle. Cars and personal forms of transportation are outlawed in favor of mandated public transit. Density and verticality are increased. Resources and services are provided in livable quantities, however their uses are heavily monitored and controlled. Shared resources are strictly managed ensure that the default condition of habitation is a sustainable one.