

## The Evolution of Malmö: Limits and Borders

Lore – Introduction:

Hello everyone. Today, we are going to talk about the evolution of the city of Malmö, located in the south of Sweden, just across the Öresund Strait from Copenhagen. The history of Malmö is marked by many changes of borders, but also by the evolution of its own urban limits over time.

Elyne – Medieval Origins:

Malmö appeared around the 13th century, under the name Malmhaug, which means “gravel pile.”

At the beginning, it was just a small fortified fishing village, taking advantage of its strategic position on the Öresund Strait, a rich fishing area for herring.

At that time, Malmö belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark, and its development was strongly connected to the Hanseatic League, a powerful trade network that linked the ports of the Baltic and the North Sea.

This position gave Malmö an identity that was already “at the border” — both Danish and European, open to trade and cultural exchange.

Lore – The Industrial Era and the 19th Century Transformation:

The major turning point for Malmö came in the 19th century.

Thanks to the expansion of the port and the arrival of the railway in 1856, the city became fully integrated into global trade networks.

These physical changes — new docks, railways, and warehouses — deeply transformed the shape of the city, which expanded to the south and the east.

Malmö then became an important industrial center, especially in shipbuilding and mechanical industries, symbolized by the famous Kockums shipyard.

Industrialization attracted thousands of workers, leading to the creation of new working-class districts such as Möllevången, while wealthy families built elegant apartment buildings around the historic city center.

Elyne – Administrative Expansion and New Urban Limits:

In the 20th century, the city’s rapid population growth pushed Malmö to extend its administrative boundaries.

- In 1915, Malmö annexed Limhamn, a former harbor village known for its cement industry.
- In 1931, it incorporated the parish of Husie, which allowed new housing developments in the east.

Later, other areas like Bunkeflo and Oxie were also annexed, to host large residential and industrial projects.

These expansions were not only geographical — they also reflected a strategy to manage urban growth, balance housing and industry, and build a more coherent city.

#### Lore – Malmö Today: A City Without Borders?

Since the industrial crisis of the 1980s, Malmö has changed into a post-industrial city, focused on services, sustainability, and innovation.

A key moment was the opening of the Öresund Bridge in 2000, connecting Malmö to Copenhagen.

This bridge symbolizes the disappearance of national borders and has made Malmö a cross-border city, part of a shared metropolitan region between Sweden and Denmark.

The old limits — political, economic, or geographical — have become zones of connection.

Malmö perfectly illustrates the theme of limits and borders, because it has managed to cross them, redefine them, and sometimes even erase them.

#### Elyne – Conclusion:

To conclude, we can say that the history of Malmö is the story of a city in motion, whose limits have constantly evolved:

- from a small medieval Danish port to a major Swedish city,
- and from an industrial center to a modern European metropolis.

Through this evolution, Malmö shows us how borders can become bridges, and how a city can reinvent itself by continually redefining its own shape and identity.