

An Urban History of China

In this accessible new study, Toby Lincoln offers the first history of Chinese cities from their origins to the present. Despite being an agricultural society for thousands of years, China had an imperial urban civilization. Over the past century, this urban civilization has been transformed into the world's largest modern urban society. Throughout their long history, Chinese cities have been shaped by interactions with those around the world, and the story of urban China is a crucial part of the history of how the world has become an urban society. Exploring the global connections of Chinese cities, the urban system, urban governance, and daily life alongside introductions to major historical debates and extracts from primary sources, this is essential reading for all those interested in China and in urban history.

Toby Lincoln is Associate Professor of Chinese Urban History at the University of Leicester.

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Toby Lincoln
University of Leicester



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Pinyin is now the standard system for Romanizing Chinese characters, and I have used it throughout this book, with the exception of a few instances where people's names are more commonly known via other systems. For ease of use I have converted some names to pinyin.