

# CHANG'AN 26 BCE

AN AUGUSTAN AGE IN CHINA

Edited by **MICHAEL NYLAN** and **GRIET VANKEERBERGHEN**



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*with the kind assistance of Michael Loewe*

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FRONTISPIECE: Detail of mural on ceiling of tomb at Jiaotong University, late Western Han. Reproduced with permission from Cheng Linquan 1991, fig. 1.

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE CHINESE SCHOLARS WHO HAVE HELPED THE volume editors most in their research on Western Han Chang'an: Wang Xiaomeng 王小蒙 and Hou Yongjian 侯甬坚, Tang Xiaofeng 唐晓峰 and Huang Yijun 黄义军, He Ruyue 何如月 and Tian Yaqi 田亚岐, Wang Shejiao 王社教, Zhang Xiangyu 張翔宇, Cao Long 曹龙, Liu Rui 劉瑞, Xiao Ailing 肖愛玲, and Pan Wei 潘葳, and last, but not least, Abby (Zhang Lizhi 张力之) and He Jianye 何剑叶. Without their unfailing intelligence, extraordinary resourcefulness, and exemplary organizational skills, this book would not have been possible.

本书谨献给几位曾经为此出版项目的编辑们在西安的研究提供了很大帮助的中国学者：王小蒙、侯甬坚、唐晓峰、黄义军、何如月、田亚岐、王社教、张翔宇、曹龍、刘瑞、肖爱玲、潘葳、还有张力之、以及何剑叶。没有他们的智慧和博学，以及非凡的组织能力，很难想象本书的顺利出版。







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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS BOOK GREW OUT OF A DOUBLE INTELLECTUAL CONCERN: TO DO JUSTICE to a place and to a period, and to bring the best Chinese scholarship to historians interested in comparisons in Europe and the United States. Western Han Chang'an, now hidden beneath the sprawling modern city of Xi'an, was, in its heyday, a magnificent city on a par with ancient Rome. Unlike Rome, it has remained largely unstudied, especially in Euro-America. Equally astonishingly, few even in China seem to realize that late Western Han was not a period of dynastic decline but an era in which the past was rethought and the present remade, with huge implications for the future course of empire in China.

The appeal to rethink late Western Han and the attempt to draw attention to Chang'an as a serious topic of historical study clearly resonated. The editors gathered an impressive array of scholars for an international conference, "Chang'an 26 BCE: From Drains to Dreams," held at the University of California, Berkeley, in April of 2011. Many of the scholars present at that conference became contributors to this volume. The editors were also successful in garnering institutional support for the project. Three agencies funded the conference: the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, the American Council of Learned Societies (Comparative Perspectives on Chinese Culture and Society Fellowship), and the Center for Chinese Studies at the UC Berkeley. A Collaborative Research Fellowship (2010) from the American Council of the Learned Societies enabled the editors to take the project to a higher level, providing both of them with opportunities to travel to China together and with substantial research time at their respective institutions. It therefore allowed the editors the time and resources to work across disciplinary, linguistic, and national boundaries in their attempt to create, in collaboration with the book's contributors, a new perspective on late Western Han Chang'an. Additional support for the production of the book was provided by an Insight Grant (2012–16) from the Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada and by a generous subvention from the American Council of Learned Societies.

In China, the editors were received with great openness, and this book is dedicated to the scholars in Xi'an and Beijing who hosted them, traveled with them through Shaanxi, showed them the archaeological sites, kept them abreast of recent discoveries, and engaged with them in lively and fruitful discussions.

In addition, Michael Nylan would like to thank Rafe de Crespigny for introducing her to several valuable secondary sources; Bill Nelson for his masterful mapmaking on

repeated occasions; Erich Gruen for his help in regard to a few crucial bibliographic questions; Scott McGinnis for his patience with GIS inquiries; Brian Lander for his careful reading of the introduction; Spencer Wayne Smith for his collation of parts of the immense bibliography; and Ding Yan, a Xi'an archaeologist, for his offer of better images of Zhang Anshi's tomb. Throughout, Vivian Sophia and Paul Colley put up with innumerable questions about computing. Erin Leigh Inama and Stuart Aque took time out of their busy schedules to revise tables and charts for the book. John Ceballos was patient with a pesky problem about a 1924 image. The International and Area Studies Academic Program at UC Berkeley paid for two Xi'an archaeologists to come to Berkeley to discuss their work with graduate students and the editors. Peter Zhou, director, and He Jianye, Chinese reference librarian, at the East Asian Library at UC Berkeley, gave tirelessly throughout the entire research and editing processes in their own inimitable ways. Their colleagues, especially Deborah Rudolph, Susan Xue, and Bruce Williams, at key points supplied critical help. Robert J. Litz substantially improved early drafts of certain chapters. Finally, Christian de Pee cheerfully let me "borrow" a Weber quotation that he had used.

Griet Vankeerberghen thanks her coeditor for introducing her to the fascinating world of Western Han Chang'an; Huang Wen-yi for help inputting editorial changes and much appreciated assistance with the bibliography and with correspondence; Daniel Shultz for applying his newly acquired skills in GIS toward producing many imaginative maps for the book; Lin Fan and Lee Jae-yeol for their early research contributions on Chang'an; Rebecca Robinson for help at a crucial stage in the compilation of the bibliography; Hans Beck, for a joint first visit to the remains of Chang'an city; Hou Xudong for key information on a primary source; Liu Rui for sharing his thoughts on a newly excavated royal tomb; Macy Zheng, reference librarian at McGill's Humanities and Social Sciences Library, for being willing to marshal all available resources to meet the project's needs; and Tom Beghin for lending a trusted helping hand and a comforting listening ear, whenever needed.

The editors jointly thank Michael Loewe, who has solved many a difficulty with his usual spirit and erudition. Naomi Noble Richard has vastly improved the stylistic coherence of the book with her superb editing. Elinor Levine of the Center for Chinese Studies at UC Berkeley, gave, on innumerable occasions, her expert assistance in organizational matters, as did Martin Backstrom. He Jianye went far beyond her duties as a reference librarian as she almost daily mustered her many talents to move the project forward. Lorri Hagman and Tim Zimmermann at the University of Washington Press have proven not only able but imaginative editors; they have, throughout the process, shown both professionalism and good cheer. Julie Van Pelt's persistent queries during copyediting prevented many a slip. Last but not least, Nylan and Vankeerberghen thank their contributors for their unstinting hard work and their patient answers to endless questions.



## EDITORIAL NOTE

THIS BOOK FOLLOWS MICHAEL LOEWE'S RENDERING OF HAN TITLES, RATHER than those proposed by Charles Hucker for Ming officials or those proposed by Han Bielenstein for Han officials, aside from two changes: (1) as "Gentleman" seems to convey little to American readers and it can be used simply as a polite term of address in early China, we have changed Lang 郎 to Courtier, aside from Kroll's chapter; (2) where Loewe very occasionally uses internal commas and brackets in his titles (as in Colonel, Central Ramparts), we have rendered the meaning (as in Colonel of the Central Ramparts). Readers should meanwhile note that Loewe himself has changed the Superintendent in titles to Commissioner, also that he uses Imperial Counsellor for two titles, that of Da Sikong 大司空 and Yushi Dafu 御史大夫. Where this might create confusion, we have rendered Da Sikong as Imperial Counsellor of the Executive Council. All other titles follow Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary*.





## CHRONOLOGY OF DYNASTIES AND HAN REIGN PERIODS

Five Lords . . . . .	Legendary; traditionally third millennium BCE
Xia . . . . .	Traditionally 2205–1766 BCE
Shang . . . . .	Traditionally 1600–ca. 1050 BCE
Western Zhou . . . . .	ca. 1050–771 BCE
Chunqiu. . . . .	770–481 BCE
Zhanguo. . . . .	475–222 BCE
Qin. . . . .	221–210 BCE
Western Han . . . . .	206 BCE–9 CE

### *Reign periods*

Gaodi (Gaozu). . . . .	206–195 BCE
Huidi . . . . .	195–188 BCE
Shaodi Gong. . . . .	188–184 BCE
Shaodi Hong. . . . .	184–180 BCE
Wendi. . . . .	180–157 BCE
Jingdi . . . . .	157–141 BCE
Wudi . . . . .	141–87 BCE
Zhaodi . . . . .	87–74 BCE
Xuandi . . . . .	74–48 BCE
Yuandi. . . . .	48–33 BCE
Chengdi . . . . .	33–7 BCE
Aidi . . . . .	7–1 BCE
Pingdi. . . . .	1 BCE–6 CE
(Liu Ying) . . . . .	6–23 CE
Xin dynasty. . . . .	9–23 CE (Wang Mang Interregnum)
Eastern Han. . . . .	25–220 CE

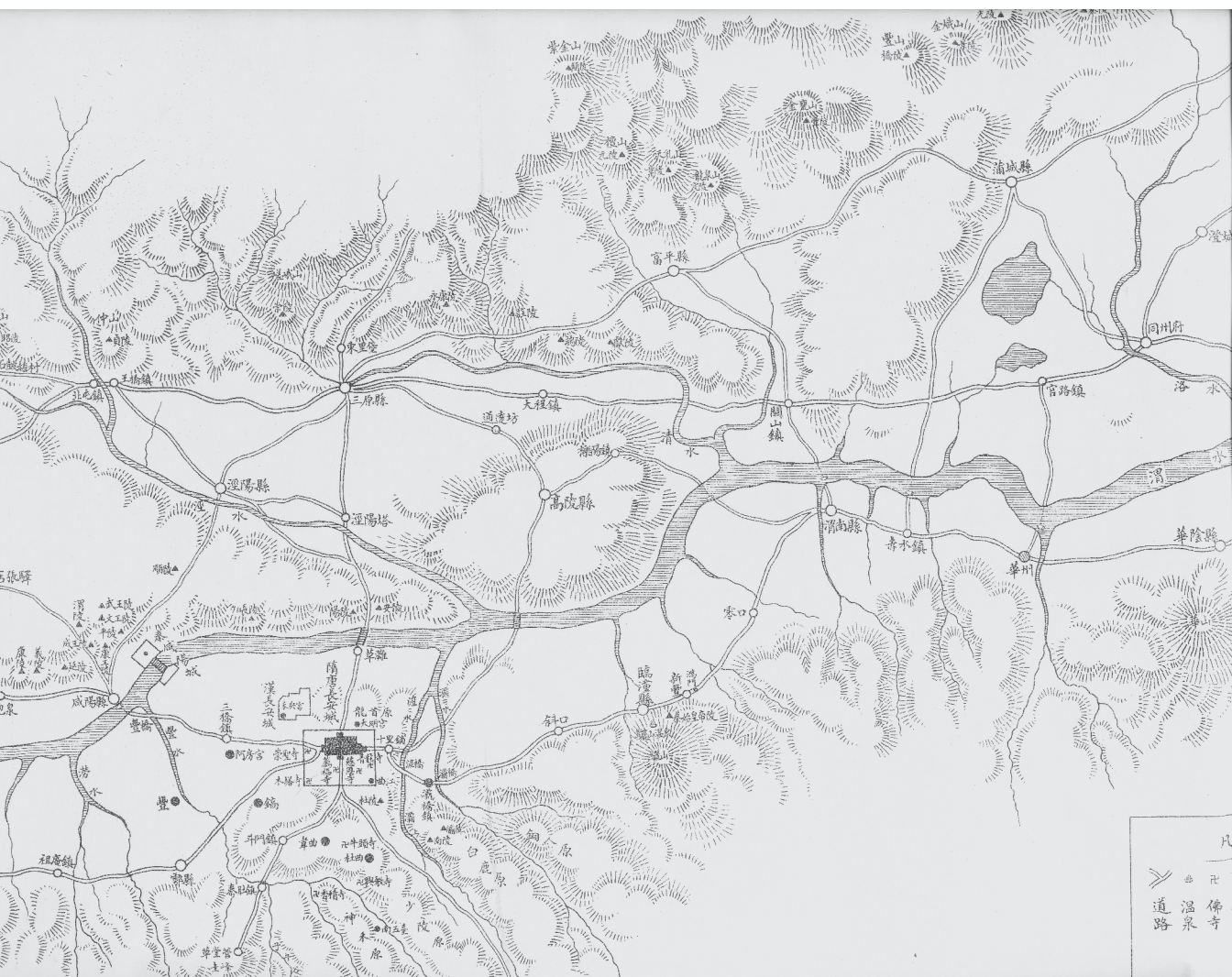
### *Reign periods*

Guangwudi . . . . .	25–57 CE
Mingdi . . . . .	57–75 CE
Zhangdi . . . . .	75–88 CE
Hedi . . . . .	88–105 CE
Shangdi. . . . .	105–106 CE
Andi . . . . .	106–125 CE
Shundi . . . . .	125–144 CE

Zhidi . . . . .	144–146 CE
Huandi . . . . .	146–168 CE
Lingdi. . . . .	168–189 CE
Xiandi . . . . .	189–220 CE
Sanguo . . . . .	220–65 CE
Jin . . . . .	265–420 CE
Western. . . . .	265–316 CE
Eastern . . . . .	317–420 CE
Nanbeichao (a.k.a. Six Dynasties) . .	420–589 CE
Sui . . . . .	589–617 CE
Tang . . . . .	618–907 CE
Song . . . . .	960–1279 CE
Northern . . . . .	960–1126 CE
Southern . . . . .	1126–1279 CE
Yuan . . . . .	1279–1368 CE
Ming. . . . .	1368–1644 CE
Qing . . . . .	1644–1911 CE



**CHANG'AN 26 BCE**



Old Japanese map of the Xi'an area and surrounding mountains forming the Guanzhong basin. Dated 1933 CE. After Adachi 1933, frontispiece.

# Introduction

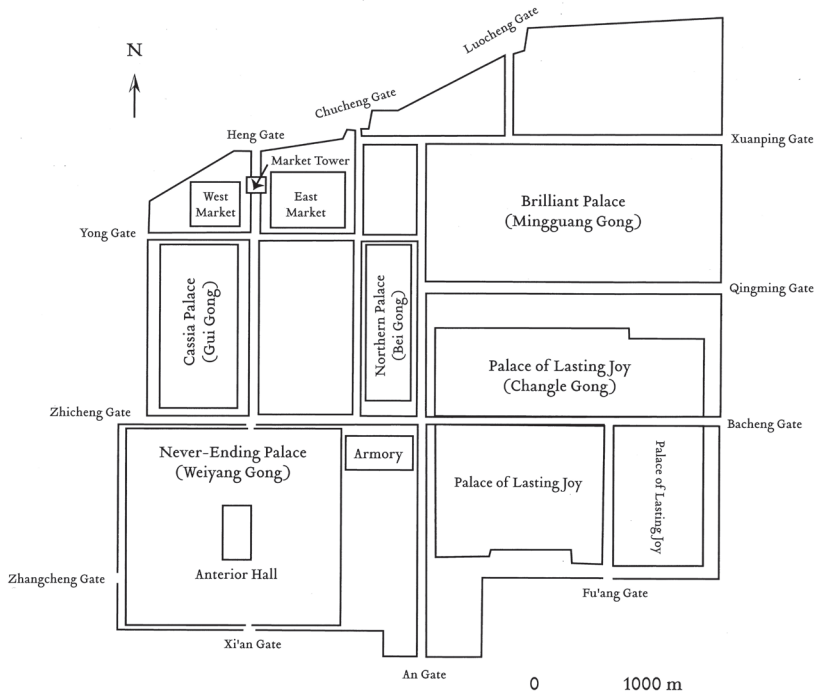
Michael Nylan 戴梅可

The certainty of cultural generalization is reassuring but hollow;  
uncertainty is challenging but rewarding. Context is everything.

—John R. Clarke

**L**EWIS MUMFORD SAW THE CITY AS BOTH A COLLECTION OF ARCHITECTURAL forms in space and the container and transmitter of culture and history.<sup>1</sup> Mumford's observation is surely germane to the great capital cities in antiquity, since they tended to have only one dominant "high culture"—that performed and exemplified by the governing elites of the time.<sup>2</sup> This book concerns one of the most important cities of the distant past: Western Han Chang'an, which was nearly three times the size of Rome, nearly four times larger than Alexandria, and seventeen times bigger than Byzantium (Fig. 1.01).<sup>3</sup>

Literally thousands of studies discuss Augustan and Hadrianic Rome, celebrating imperial Rome as the premier city of the Mediterranean (Alexandria, Athens, and later Constantinople being but poor rivals). Yet no single work in a Western language (and remarkably few in Chinese or Japanese) provides an overview of Western Han Chang'an, the fabled capital of that realm halfway around the world, though that imperial capital boasted comparable numbers of residents, comparable numbers of imperial subjects (more than sixty million, or roughly a quarter of the world's population), and comparably vast territories. That such a treatment of the Western Han capital is long overdue is demonstrated by a rough comparison of book-length treatments on Rome and the Roman empire to those devoted to the Western Han center of power: in the library of the University of California, Berkeley, some 7,635 books (4,588 in English)



**FIG. 1.01** Plan of Han Chang'an, giving English renderings for the palace but no dates for the construction of the various palaces. After Barbieri-Low 2007. Note that we have not translated the Chang'an palaces as per Barbieri-Low, but for many people his translations represent the standard.

take classical Rome as their principle subject. By contrast, at the time of this writing, only a handful of books—fewer than thirty in Asian languages and none in English or the major European languages—examine the Western Han capital at Chang'an. Nonetheless, more literary records exist from the reign of the tenth Western Han emperor, Chengdi (33–7 BCE), at the capital than from any era before the eleventh century CE.<sup>4</sup> Read in light of the wealth of newly excavated artifacts and sites, these records allow us to aim at what is hitherto unprecedented in early China studies: a richly textured and fully annotated microhistory of roughly three decades in the capital region, when the Western Han capital flourished brilliantly before it was partially razed, in 23 CE.<sup>5</sup> This in-depth survey by some of the world's best scholars, Chinese and Western, builds a strong (if often implicit) case for the need to thoroughly revise the standard narratives we have inherited for the two Han dynasties—the Western/Former Han (202 BCE–9 CE) and Eastern/Later Han (25–220 CE), which were separated by a brief interregnum, the Xin dynasty.

Over the millennia, remarkably little thought has gone into Chengdi's reign, presumably because its history was told first by a "restored" Eastern Han dynasty whose rulers were happy to co-opt the signal achievements of Chengdi's reign, and, most recently, by nationalistic historians who have deplored Chengdi's refusal to engage in



expansionist ventures. To those who cling to the nativist versions of history put forward in the twentieth century, this book quite unaccountably concentrates on Chengdi, an emperor usually dismissed as being of “no significance”; up to now Chengdi has been fortunate to escape blanket condemnation for his lack of an heir and his tumultuous consort relations, seen as key factors contributing to the eventual downfall of Western Han in 9 CE at the hands of the “usurper” Wang Mang. Things were hardly so simple, as this volume attests. At the time of Chengdi’s death, the Western Han empire was still in fairly good shape, so far as we can tell, as the chapters by Michael Loewe, Tian Tian, Huang Yijun, and Shao-yun Yang suggest.<sup>6</sup> To blame Chengdi for the demise of Western Han, which came nearly twenty years after his reign (as did the moralizing Eastern Han and post-Han historians), is to indulge in anachronistic retrojections and also to ignore the sheer brilliance of the age led by an emperor whom contemporaries likened to a “god.”<sup>7</sup> Chengdi cannot be faulted for snoozing on the job or even, perhaps, for ceding too much power to the Wang consort clan, as he created far fewer new noble titles than other emperors who escaped censure:

Xuandi 21 (during the supposed mid-dynastic florescence)<sup>8</sup>

Yuandi 2

Chengdi 10

the post-Chengdi era of 16 years

Aidi 13

Pingdi 22

Chengdi was hardly excessive in his generosity toward his allies,<sup>9</sup> though he undoubtedly found it difficult to resist powerful forces at court.<sup>10</sup> In addition, Chengdi’s decision to enforce the sumptuary regulations in Chang’an aimed to diminish the cultural capital of the consort clans, for it placed limits on their lavish displays at funerals, where patronage ties were performed and strengthened.<sup>11</sup> For the first eleven years of Chengdi’s reign, the powerful Wang clan members and their opponents seemed in balance at the court. The Han histories further relate Chengdi’s various attempts to curb Wang family power, not all of which were successful (see the chapter by Habberstad).<sup>12</sup> To promote the health of the body politic, Chengdi ensured that the territories of nobles and kings be surrounded by commanderies under his direct control, which is significant, as is the remarkable stability of Chengdi’s relations with the high-ranking princes (see the chapter by Vankeerberghen).<sup>13</sup> But early on, the Chengdi reign witnessed at least two major floods on the Yellow River, and massive outlays for disaster relief and flood control measures surely complicated the court’s finances, especially with productivity sharply down in the North China Plain near the river. At one point, there was even talk of evacuating the capital,<sup>14</sup> such was the threat to life and property. Astrological measures had had to be devised quickly to avert crises, through ritual renewals of Heaven’s Mandate (see Liu Tseng-kuei’s chapter). Still, a few local outbreaks

of rebellion, here and there (contra Wang Zijin and other mainland scholars), plus a spike in natural disasters, hardly portended the collapse of the Liu ruling house, as such crises never reached levels like those besetting the end of Wudi's reign (r. 141–87 BCE) (see Shao-yun Yang's chapter).<sup>15</sup> Chengdi's anti-expansionist inclinations, his failure to produce a viable male heir, and possibly his rejection of Lady Ban (Ban Jieyu) for the post of empress, may have left him a ready target for the ire of military families like the Bans, when members of the Ban family were compiling the first systematic treatments of Chengdi's reign a century later.<sup>16</sup>

For our purposes here, far more intriguing is a constellation of projects initiated by Chengdi or his court—it is always hard to tell which, given the rhetorical style employed in the early histories. These projects included reorganizations of the capital bureaucracy and the administration of both commanderies and kingdoms, the subject of Luke Habberstad's chapter; an impressive imperial library project begun in 26 BCE that either subsumed or was superimposed on older administrative archives, as detailed earlier by Michael Nylan;<sup>17</sup> the systematic collection and collation of local maps and surveys of local customs by court envoys (see below);<sup>18</sup> a dramatic reorganization of the imperial sacrificial schedule that consciously sacralized the capital city as holy site of the emperor's person (see Tian's chapter);<sup>19</sup> and a major change in the utilization of the imperial mausoleum towns (see Loewe's chapter on Yanling and Changling).<sup>20</sup> Chengdi also used his capital city in unprecedented ways, in that he seldom ventured far outside his city walls and never went on the extensive tours of inspection, or “progresses,” that his predecessors deemed necessary and enjoyable (see Map 1.05a–b).<sup>21</sup> Taken together, Chengdi's projects were to instantiate a new notion of fully unified empire. (Historians once confidently ascribed the first conceptions of unified “empire” on this grand scale to Han Wudi and his court, but the focus of Wudi's ambitions lay elsewhere, judging from the extant records.)

Just as historians of imperial Rome have only recently begun to consider shifts in the use of monumental buildings as backdrops to compel an appreciation of the exercise of power,<sup>22</sup> so are historians of Western Han Chang'an learning to inject more material specificity into their portrayals of dynastic operations and charisma. Thus the starting point for this volume must be the topography of Chengdi's capital at Chang'an, insofar as its walls, towergates, and buildings provided dramatic settings for the cast of characters in the capital and court (see Fig. 1.08a–c). Continual reference to the built environment (up to now nearly ignored in Western-language treatments of the dynasty) is crucial to the reconstruction of aspects of Chengdi's era and late Western Han urban life (see Zhang Jihai's chapter).<sup>23</sup> The Western Han founder, Liu Bang (r. 202–195 BCE), and his chief advisor had established the principle that improvements to the infrastructure and embellishment of the capital city were both the responsibility and the glory of the ruling house. Monumental architecture—what one authority dubbed the “great universal writing of humanity”—was inscribed there for all to see,<sup>24</sup> in its vertical and horizontal extensions. Decorated surfaces, like architecture, were

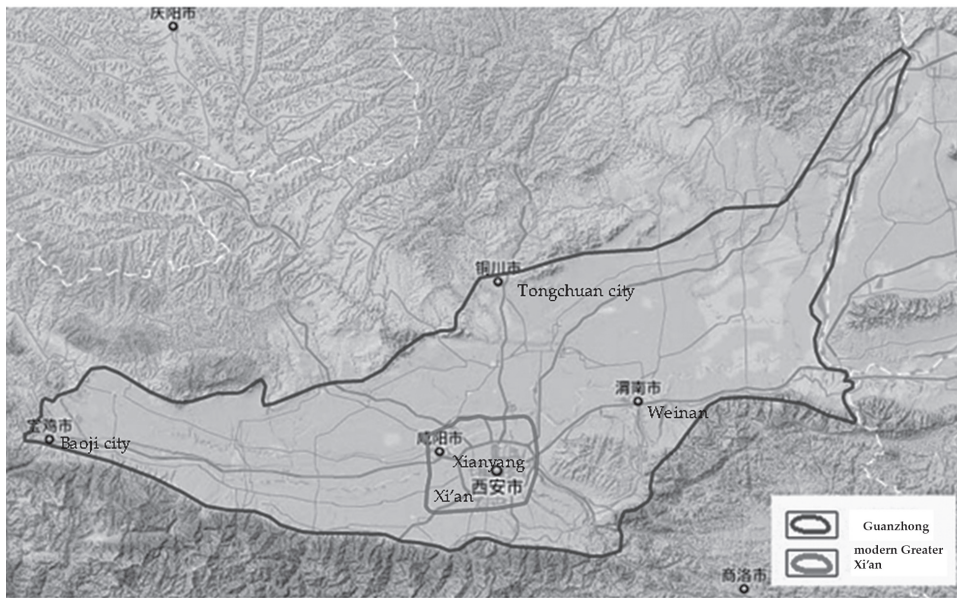


**FIG. 1.02** Rubbing of a pictorial stone image, probably from Eastern Han (otherwise undated), depicting animal combat scenes. The stone was excavated in 1988, in Henan, Nanyang, Wolong Qu, Qilingang. Dimensions: 40 cm high, 145 cm long. The original stone is held in Henan Province, Nanyang city, Hanhuaguan. This photograph is by Michael Nylan of a rubbing in her possession.

**FIG. 1.03** This large Western Han wooden puppet (to hold imperial clothes during a parade?) was excavated, according to identifications, in Yexi county and is currently on display in the Yexi City Museum. Height: 193 cm (or approximately life-size). Photo courtesy of Antonia Finane.



widely read as “texts” by the literate, semiliterate, and illiterate alike. Every visitor to early Chang’an would have been struck by its unique concentration of multistory buildings and high walls that communicated and enhanced supreme power and authority, even without tenements in concrete.<sup>25</sup> Spectacles, pageants, and entertainments, both regular and irregular, further distinguished life at the capital from the rest of the major cities; these included animal combat games (Fig. 1.02) and solemn ritual processions of the deceased emperors’ personal effects (Fig. 1.03).<sup>26</sup>

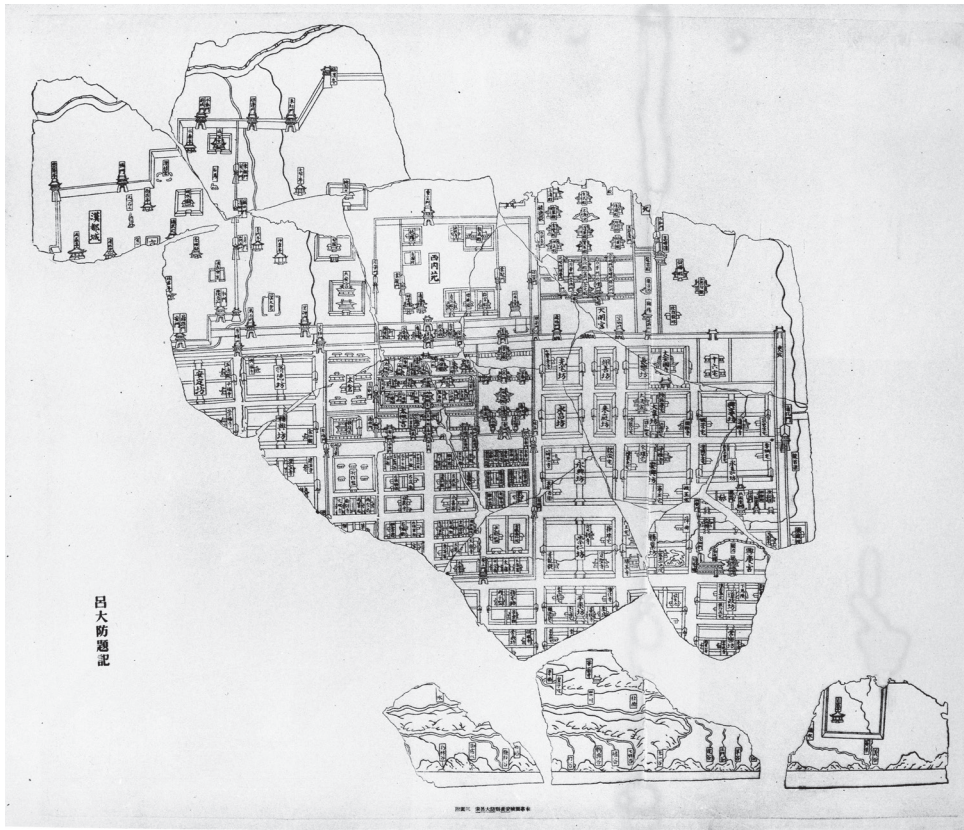


**MAP 1.01** The Guanzhong basin, including Xianyang and Chang'an, the capitals of Qin and Han, respectively.

The high percentage of gardens and parklands attached to palaces and villas was unusual, if not unique, for Han cities. The capital at Chang'an enjoyed abundant water sources, in the form of internal lakes and ponds, rivers and canals, hot springs and wells. No fewer than eight rivers—by some reckonings, ten—and a host of canals supplied clean water to the city, allowing inexpensive transport of goods and people and adding to its beauty (see Map 3.01).<sup>27</sup> Numerous gardens and parks were attached to the palaces and noble residences, and some of the grander city wards, at least, sported extensive gardens, orchards, parks, and fields (*yuan*);<sup>28</sup> the perimeter wall of Shanglin Park at its greatest extent was purportedly some 400 *li* (roughly 166 km, or 103 mi.) in length. These green spaces would have supplied at least some food for daily life and ritual exchanges, as they did in early Rome. The region's abundant water supplies, when combined with efficient drainage and sewage systems, afforded the sort of urban amenities that only plentiful water can provide. (Only quite recently, however, has there been vague talk of "public baths" in connection with administrative seats in Western Han.)<sup>29</sup> Faced with such marvels, the viewer would most likely have considered the larger realm of which he was a part, whether or not he caught a glimpse of the emperor or the members of his court—all the more so because every Western Han authority was trained to regard urban life as the chief instrument of civilization (*jiaohua*), given the assembly of exemplary models gathered there.<sup>30</sup> That aura perhaps may explain why early writers of the time discussed the walled capital of the Western Han emperors, who functioned simultaneously as the political, military, and religious heads of state, as a great metropolis rightly commanding attention, as much on its own merits as for



a



b



**MAP 1.02** (a) Photograph of fragments ascribed to Lü Dafang's map of Han and Tang Chang'an, which was inscribed on a stone stele erected in 1028 CE. After *Tōhō kōkogaku sōkan*, *kōshu* 4 (1939): fig. 4, which identifies the stele fragments as a "Song inscription of Chang'an city in the Tang," without mentioning Han Chang'an. The fragments, interestingly enough, show the southeastern part of Western Han Chang'an in the fragment's northeastern corner, indicating a strong sense of continued history in the area. This stone stele was formerly in the possession of the Xi'an Beilin (Forest of Steles). Sometime in late Qing or the early republican era, the stele broke into pieces, of which seventeen remained at Beilin. Although a photograph of those remaining pieces was published in a Japanese publication dating from the early war years, the research institute attached to Xi'an Beilin can now locate only a single piece belonging to the stone stele, the rest having disappeared at an unknown date. (b) Line drawing generated from old rubbings and photographs that reproduce the seventeen stele pieces of a rubbing taken in the 1930s. Such line drawings are reproduced in multiple sources, including Hiraoka 1957, map 2 stele.

what its distinctive forms of social organization implied about the capital's relations to the larger realm and outlying areas. With surprising frequency, however, the same early writers failed to distinguish different administrative units of different size (e.g., the greater metropolitan capital region of Guanzhong, the "area within the passes," basically the Wei River Plain, versus Chang'an county or Chang'an city (Map 1.01). Specialist and nonspecialist readers alike will therefore wish to consult the section in this introduction defining the terminology used to indicate these often overlapping units. Many additional maps grace this volume, including the 1080 CE map of Lü Dafang (Map 1.02a–b), at one time reassembled from fragments and stored in the Xi'an Forest of Steles but now unaccountably lost.

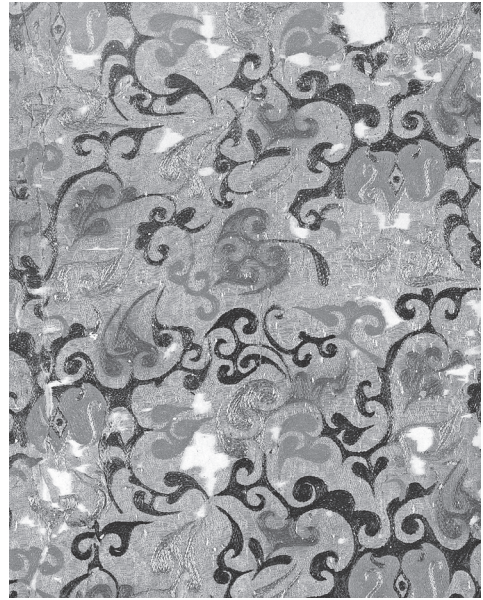
Long before Chengdi's reign, the walled palaces rising up from earthen platforms and the wards, as well as the libraries, parklands, markets, and worship sites, conferred undoubted prestige on the privileged members of the governing elite, even as the capital shaped inhabitants' and visitors' sense of themselves, their empire, and their emperor. Three chapters—those by the Roman historian Carlos Noreña; by Tang Xiaofeng, leading historical geographer in the People's Republic of China; and by Huang Yijun, Tang's former student—showcase the cumulative impact exerted by the Western Han capital upon the metropolitan Chang'an region and outlying lands, even as the archaeological record attests subtle continuities over centuries, for example, in the continuing preference for decorative volutes in high-status items, and the ubiquity of jade ornaments.<sup>31</sup> The surviving records reveal the sheer splendor of above- and belowground residences, which housed artifacts of amazing variety. Hundreds of thousands of mostly unskilled laborers worked on the major building projects in rammed earth undertaken at the capital (during Chengdi's reign, principally at the two imperial mausoleum sites). (Archaeologists have found the laborers' cemeteries near Chang'an.)<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, highly skilled craftsmen inevitably gravitated toward the capital, plying their trades in imperial factories but also in commercial workshops for private patrons.

In all likelihood, the Western Han capital of Chang'an could not have attracted the quantity and quality of sites and artifacts we find there today had three factors not been in place well before Chengdi's reign of twenty-six years: (1) a good highway system, which had been built by Chengdi's predecessors during Qin (221–210 BCE) and Western Han;<sup>33</sup> (2) an immense and effective bureaucracy, which administered the capital and commanderies, by reference to precedents, ruled through internal checks and balances and adjudicated civil and penal laws;<sup>34</sup> (3) a knowledge (then unique in the world) of the production methods for silk and lacquer (Fig. 1.04a–b), the two coveted luxury items that largely underwrote the throne's initiatives for centuries, they being heavily taxed, exported to areas as far as Rome, and sold for fabulous sums. (The tax on grain production could not have yielded much surplus, given that a good harvest in antiquity yielded, on average, some 3–4 percent profit on agricultural lands.)<sup>35</sup> Major infrastructure and cultural improvements under Han often reflected deliberate decisions by the emperor or his court to curry favor with the locals, high and low. After

a



b



**FIG. 1.04** Examples of a (a) lacquer and (b) silk found in the environs of the Western Han capital. The lacquer is reproduced from the *Wenwu*, no. 1 (2010), cover, with permission from Wenwu chubanshe. The Han embroidered silk is reproduced with the kind permission of the director of the Nelson-Atkins Gallery, in Kansas City.

all, such improvements afforded the high-ranking and ambitious opportunities to gain official “merit” through planning and donations, which meant long-term wages for skilled and unskilled laborers, not just employing those on *corvée*. (Of course, historians and archaeologists in the People’s Republic of China have tended to stress the use of convict, *corvée*, and indentured bondservants, for ideologically driven reasons.)<sup>36</sup> So while the standard histories are wont to denounce all such projects as “wasteful” and “extravagant,” the projects probably reflected protracted negotiations at court concerning the proper level of benefices owed the Chang’an populations.

Obviously enough, the vast majority of Chengdi’s subjects enjoyed no great wealth or political power. Still, the inhabitants of the capital region, living at the apex of the administrative hierarchy, could expect the dynasty to provide, at a minimum, clean water, fairly priced grain (during shortages), and some limited social services for the elderly and disadvantaged (see the discussion below in this chapter, also Chart 3.01). The capital’s economic system (as that of the larger realm) had long mixed imperial monopolies, factories, infrastructure projects, and boons, on the one hand, and alienable lands, free or alienable labor, and assorted moneymaking ventures, including commercial factories, workshops, and businesses, on the other.<sup>37</sup> Unlike Rome, Western Han made little resort to slave labor, though the highest ranking enjoyed possession of their personal attendants.<sup>38</sup> Nor did professional standing armies exist in late Western



Han, so far as we know, outside the palace and capital guards, under their respective generals. (Professional armies came after Western Han, in Eastern Han, just as they came later in Roman imperial history.)<sup>39</sup> This introduction, along with Zhang Jihai's chapter on the wards, alludes to these topics, despite the paucity of information that currently exists. It is nevertheless worth asking who controlled whom in late Western Han Chang'an, even if the extant sources supply no answers. Were those nominally in power as frightened of collective action undertaken by the masses as their counterparts in Rome? Reports of the Queen Mother healing cult in 3 CE, a decade after Chengdi, not to mention references to children's ditties and other ominous events, suggest surprising volatility for a capital whose ruling house had occupied the throne for some two hundred years and nine reigns.<sup>40</sup> Could fears account for the provision of welfare services concentrated in the capital and extended to lesser urban centers? A. F. P. Hulsewé went so far as to speak of a "proto-welfare state" in late Western Han, and Lü Simian made nearly the same observation.<sup>41</sup> After all, one anecdote from the reign of Yuandi, Chengdi's father, has the emperor emptying the imperial storehouses to alleviate the distress of those hit by famine.<sup>42</sup>

As the capital culture was transformed quite dramatically under Chengdi, several chapters highlight some of the main changes that took place then. For example, Jurij Kroll and Hans van Ess discuss two of the leading figures in the reign of Chengdi's father, contributing to the comparatively sudden elevation of Sima Qian's monumental history, *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*), written earlier in the first century BCE, to the status of a model for history.<sup>43</sup> And because Chengdi's reign constituted the "high tide" of what scholars are coming to call the "classical turn," when devising the specific policies and projects catalogued here, the court consulted a battery of classicizing and pseudo-archaizing works ascribed to times before 221 BCE, as noted by Mark Csikszentmihalyi in his chapter.<sup>44</sup> These classicists at court, only a smallish percentage of whom would likely have identified themselves as ethical followers of Kongzi (Confucius), were routinely called upon to provide rhetorical flourishes to court documents, to advise on changes to court rituals and schedules, and to weigh in during policy discussions convened by court ministers and emperors alike.<sup>45</sup> Nor is it mere coincidence that Chengdi's reign was also the time when the three foremost thinkers of the two Han dynasties—Liu Xiang, Liu Xin, and Yang Xiong—were hard at work collating new collections of writings for the imperial libraries, producing the precursors of the books in all fields of knowledge that we hold in our hands today (Fig. 1.05); when we see the scale of the activist editing going on during the period 26–6 BCE, we realize that many of the texts we routinely identify as pre-Qin texts were substantially reconfigured by and for Chengdi's Western Han court.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, those same men commanded sufficient expertise in the technical arts (especially astronomy, mathematics, and philology) that all such disciplines were put on a brand-new footing, as Miranda Brown's chapter suggests. Thus the scope and significance of the world making conceived and executed during Chengdi's reign far outweigh that which may be fairly ascribed to the reign of Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE),



contra the “common wisdom” of most China experts.<sup>47</sup>

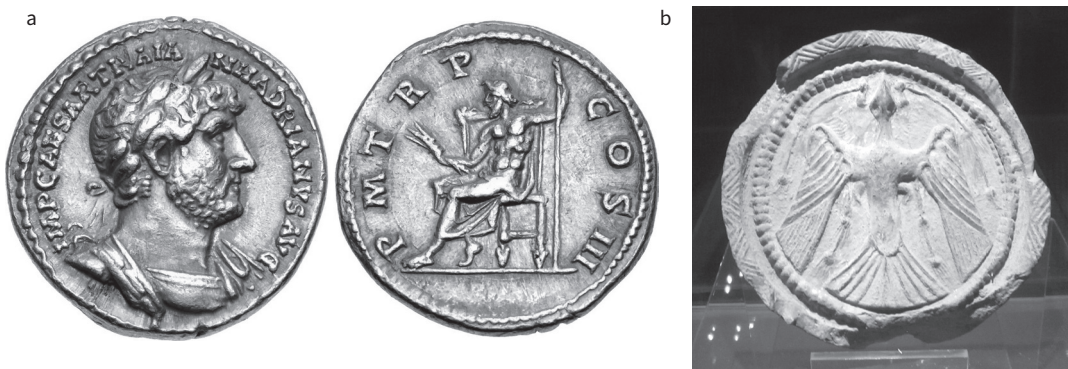
What does *not* appear in this book is quite as important as what features here. Given the relative infancy of Han studies in the West in comparison with studies of Rome, this volume can provide no more than a brief overview of several issues crucial to the formation of the Western Han capital. Chinese archaeologists and historians have devoted little attention to the subject of provisioning the capital, despite the excavation of one Western Han palace icehouse (see Fig. 3.03) and several granary sites. A later chapter, chapter 3, therefore offers a preliminary sketch of the available evidence for food and water supplies.<sup>48</sup> Another source of frustration relates to the mural tombs in the Chang'an area studied by Arlen

Lian. Some of the lead excavators of these special tombs, discovered within the last few decades, barely remember anything beyond their hasty initial site reports, so that the earliest murals' precise history, functions, and iconographic readings may continue to elude us; after all, the received literature seldom focuses on building activities of any type, aboveground or below, so we can only live in hope of future archaeological finds. Nor can we confidently date the first wide circulation of key texts (oral or written) or verify the location of such an important site as the Imperial Academy (Taixue) prior to 4 CE; some early texts indicate that the academy had no freestanding building until Wang Mang's own Xin dynasty (9–23 CE), it being before then part and parcel of the ministry for ritual,<sup>49</sup> under the Commissioner for Ceremonial.

Readers will recall that in Western Han Chang'an, unlike in Rome, there existed no public cult of the emperor, so far as we know, beyond those public parades of imperial effects.<sup>50</sup> And while Roman historians have long seen depictions of the reigning emperor on statues and coins as the vital visual “glue” binding disparate ethnicities and illiterates to the idea of Romanness, no historians of China to date have proposed a counterpart to that “glue” for the comparable Qin or Han empires (Fig. 1.06a–b), though this author suspects that the ubiquitous presence of the decorative roof tile ends crowning all imperial administrative sites may have functioned as a similar marker of civilized order.<sup>51</sup> The issue of literacy rates, not to mention the complications in calculating rudimentary levels versus the high cultural literacy expected of some members of the governing elite, is still another



**FIG. 1.05** Tentatively identified as site of the Tianlu Ge library, with a memorial construction now marking that location. Photograph courtesy of Michael Nylan, taken on the outskirts of present-day Xi'an in the summer of 2012.



**FIG. 1.06** (a) Roman gold coin with the head of the Emperor Hadrian. Reproduced courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group Inc. (lot 64, coin no. 1168). (b) Typical *wadang*, or roof tile end. Photograph by Michael Nylan.

topic that no conscientious Han historian can comfortably evade.<sup>52</sup> Specialists of Roman history may inquire why so few contributors to this volume refer to Chinese inscriptions of the period, to which the simple answer is, only around 300 inscriptions exist for both Western and Eastern Han, in contrast to the nearly 400,000 generated for Rome and its far-flung empire during imperial times.<sup>53</sup> The subject of Western Han Chang'an in post-Han memory is too unwieldy a subject to undertake here, as it includes painting, poetry, essays, and other forms of writing over nearly two millennia.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, the editors have decided to reserve treatment of this subject for later publications, given (a) this volume's focus on Chang'an realities, (b) the excellent renditions of *fu* poems provided by David Knechtges's translation of Xiao Tong's *Wenxuan*, and (c) the undeniable fact that post-Han exercises in nostalgia commingle fact and fantasy in such complex ways as to require substantial new studies devoted to single works.<sup>55</sup>

A final word concerning the methodology adopted in this volume: First, all the contributors consistently link textual sources with the most up-to-date archaeological evidence. This allows, within the limits of what is known about the distant past, a more nuanced understanding of historical events and practices in their material settings and institutional contexts. That, in turn, enhances our reading of the textual sources, generating lists of research questions and avenues overlooked in earlier studies on Western Han. Second, the contributors' inquiries have been continually propelled by wider, cross-cultural questions, seeking to elicit first, how Chang'an's urban landscape shaped and was shaped by the local cultures endemic to the area we now call "China," and second, how that Chang'an culture differed from those of other great classical-era capitals, such as Rome and Alexandria. Third, this study approaches Chang'an not merely as a repository of artifacts but as a site carefully constructed, for practical, theoretical, and rhetorical reasons, to impress a series of new orders not only upon those residing within or near its walls but also upon those living within and beyond the borders of the Western Han empire.<sup>56</sup>

## Specialized Terminology for the Study of Western Han Chang'an

Traditional Chinese accounts define the “capital” as the site where a ruler had his own residence and his ancestral shrines.<sup>57</sup> Newcomers to the field need to refer continually to highly specialized vocabulary, just as did Chinese readers in the early, middle, and early modern periods. The following terms will be used consistently throughout the rest of the book:

GUANZHONG 關中, also called “the area within the passes,” which consists of the Wei River plain, a basin ringed by mountains. The term, inherited from Qin, the short-lived dynasty that preceded Western Han and unified the empire, is sometimes said to be the territories lying between Long Pass on the west, Hangu Pass on the east, Wu Pass and Yao Pass on the south, and Xiao Pass to the north (see Map I.01 and compare to Map 3.02). Of course, a number of other passes were built after Qin’s unification in 221 BCE, including Ziwu Pass to the south, so they become relevant to the definition in time. Guanzhong was considered the “upper reaches” of the rest of the world, as the basin was surrounded by mountains. To the south are the highest mountain ranges (esp. Qinling and Zhongnan), along which the Wei River flows; to the west is the Longshan range; and to the north is Qishan, and also other mountains that are not as high as Qinling or Longshan, but high enough to impress and to represent barriers. Guanzhong for these reasons has often been called the “area fast within the barriers on all four sides” (*si sai zhi gu* 四塞之固).

CHANG'AN CITY 長安城 refers to the area within the city perimeter walls, under the supervision of the Chang'an (City) Magistrate, or Ling 令. A high official named Colonel of the City Gates was responsible for security at Chang'an's twelve city gates; other troops were under the command of the Commissioner of the Guards. In addition, other high-ranking military officers, including the Palace Commandant and the Commissioner of the Palace, were to ensure peace and order within the palaces.

CHANG'AN COUNTY 長安縣 refers to the area under the Chang'an County Magistrate, which includes the area within the city perimeter walls and the suburbs just outside but does not include any of the imperial mausoleum towns, which are under their own jurisdictions as separate counties.

GREATER METROPOLITAN CHANG'AN is a modern rubric to refer to the counties under the Governor of the Capital, or Jingzhao Yin.<sup>58</sup>

GREATER METROPOLITAN CHANG'AN REGION, another modern rubric, refers to what the Chinese sources call the Sanfu 三輔 (Three Supports), that is, the area under the three parallel offices of the Governor of the Capital, the Zuopingyi 左馮翊 and the Youfufeng 右扶風.<sup>59</sup> For most of Western Han, public security for this region was the responsibility of the

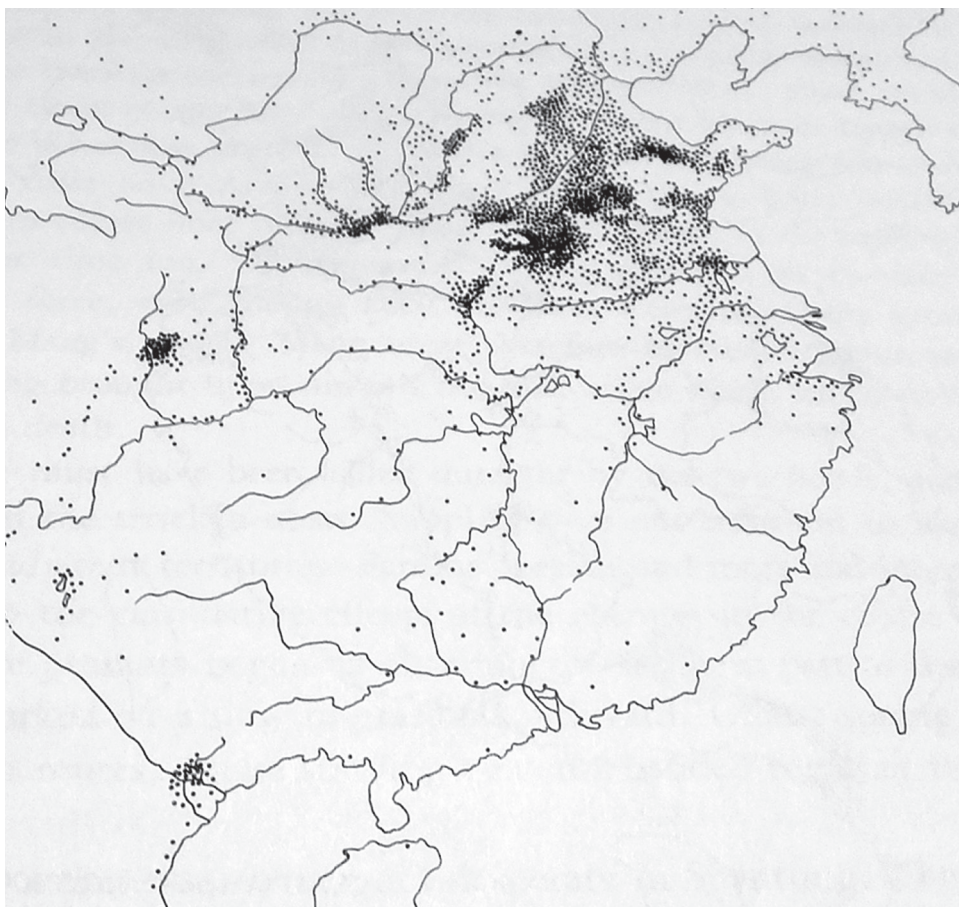
Colonel of Internal Security, though Chengdi in 10 BCE abolished the post.<sup>60</sup> Troops for the Three Supports region were the responsibility of the three Metropolitan Area Commandants, who also had concurrent jurisdiction over such nearby commanderies as Hongnong.<sup>61</sup> These high-ranking officers' overlapping responsibilities suggest first, the uniquely pressing need for security in the capital region, where so many nobles, officials, and sources of wealth were concentrated, and second, the throne's understandable unwillingness to see all of its troops under a single command.

FIVE CAPITALS (Wu Du 五都) refers to the great cities from the pre-imperial era: Luoyang (present-day Henan); Handan, capital of the old Zhao kingdom (present-day Hebei); Linzi, capital first of the old Qi kingdom and later of Qi Commandery (present-day Shandong);<sup>62</sup> Wan, capital of Nanyang Commandery (present-day Henan); and Chengdu, capital first of the old Shu kingdom and then of Shu Commandery (present-day Sichuan). Initially, these Five Capitals, along with Xianyang, last capital of the Qin kingdom and only capital of the short-lived Qin empire, rivaled Western Han Chang'an in size and economic importance, given their favorable locations and long-standing mercantile interests.

TRAVELING PALACE (*li gong* 離宮 or *xing gong* 行宮) is yet another term that nonspecialists may find puzzling. The emperor's formal place of residence in the capital was called the "palace proper" (*zheng gong* 正宮); for nearly all of Western Han, the "palace proper" meant the Weiyang Palace complex. An emperor might stay at so-called traveling palaces for long periods of time (as did Han Wudi at the Sweet Springs and Jianzhang Palaces), but only one palace could be considered his permanent residence. As a result, even other palaces inside the city walls (e.g., Cassia Palace, Northern Palace) were dubbed "traveling palaces" (meaning, not the main residence), along with palaces at some distance from the capital. How differently Western Han emperors used the monumental architecture of Chang'an city and Chang'an county, not to mention the hundreds of traveling palaces scattered through Guanzhong, is a research topic not taken up before this volume, except by students of the epideictic *fu*.

Timing matters to good historians. In this volume, "late Western Han" refers to the reigns of Yuandi (Chengdi's father), Chengdi, and the interval of Aidi and Pingdi from 7 BCE to 9 CE, before Wang Mang founded his own Xin dynasty. "Mid-Western Han" begins circa 100 BCE (i.e., midreign for Han Wudi) and then continues for the reigns of Zhaodi and Xuandi (i.e., up to 48 BCE). In hindsight, events and trends did not neatly align with dynastic reigns, but these are useful divisions nonetheless. Also, as timing matters, this volume adopts Michael Loewe's system of titles throughout (rather than Hucker's), with one exception: it replaces "Gentleman" with "Courtier," since the former





**MAP 1.03** Population density based on registered households (not the entire population). After Bielenstein 1947, map 1, itself based on Han maps in Tan Qixiang 1982–87, vol. 2. Image courtesy of Cambridge University Press, which reproduced this image in Bielenstein, “The Restoration of the Han Dynasty,” in *CHOC*, map 10.

seems to convey little of the specific duties of the Lang to American nonspecialists.<sup>63</sup>

Before proceeding, perhaps a word or two of caution. The Western Han empire that made its capital at Chang’an was not all that much like Rome, despite commanding capital regions and empires that were comparable in size and equally populous.<sup>64</sup> First, Chang’an did not build primarily in stone like Rome, but rather in rammed earth and wood. Second, the two greatest classical-era empires ran on entirely different bases: in Chang’an, battlefield victories seldom translated directly into political power; the army was composed largely of conscripts, rather than mercenaries; the imperial cult worshipped dead emperors, rather than living ones;<sup>65</sup> and Western Han emperors came to display themselves on set occasions less and less over time, rather than more often. Nowhere in the Western Han empire was the local economy primarily slave-based, in contrast to the Mediterranean world, where slaves accounted for an estimated 15 per-



cent of the total population (Map 1.03).<sup>66</sup> And while the Roman empire incorporated several ancient civilizations that were initially much more literate than Rome itself, the Western Han capital city, which undoubtedly served as the center of literary production for all of East Asia, witnessed several different reimaginings of its own role in relation to its impressive cultural heritage.

At the same time, all empires in the preindustrial period faced similar technological and logistical constraints. Transport overland in Western Han was as prohibitively expensive as in the Roman empire (if anything, more so, given the Han capital's landlocked status), where the exponential rises in prices for commodities hauled overland meant that stores for the grain dole were cheaper to bring by sea from Egypt, Spain, or Sicily than from farms on the Italian peninsula 100 kilometers away from Rome.<sup>67</sup> (Latifundia near Rome therefore turned to producing luxury items, manufactured goods, handicrafts, and perishable fruits and vegetables, and that was probably true of the rich suburbs of Chang'an as well.)<sup>68</sup> A single contemporary account provides a rough idea of transportation costs in the early empires in China: the short-lived Qin empire figured transport fees for grain measures delivered overland from the capital to the northern frontiers roughly 600 kilometers away at a ratio of 192:1.<sup>69</sup> (Grain prices naturally fluctuated during times of unrest at the borders and following natural disasters, as Table 1.01 and Chart 1.01 suggest.)

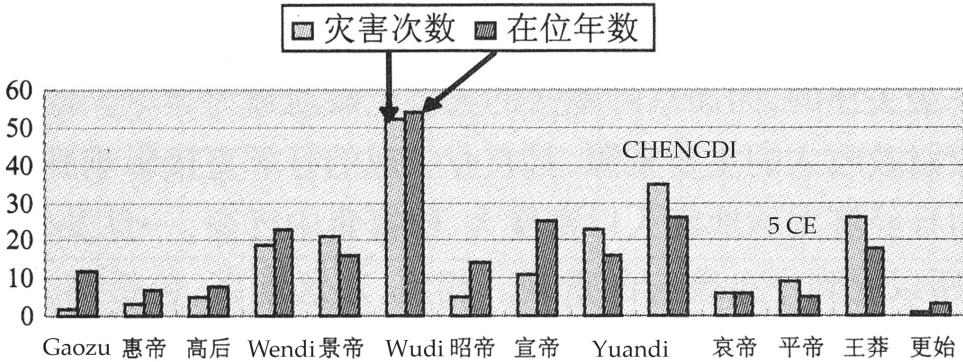
## Chang'an City and Environs

By mid- to late Western Han, the immediate Chang'an metropolitan area boasted well over a million residents; greater metropolitan Chang'an and the immediate suburban counties, an estimated two million.<sup>70</sup> By one reckoning, the "area within the passes," centered on the three metropolitan districts of greater Chang'an, commanded roughly three-tenths of the population of sixty million for the Western Han empire, but possibly boasted as much as six-tenths of the empire's total wealth.<sup>71</sup> But perhaps more importantly, in the Roman empire no city, with the possible exception of Alexandria (Egypt), ever commanded anything like the resources concentrated in the city of Rome, whereas the Western Han capital of Chang'an was expressly designed to outshine a great many large, wealthy, and populous cities in its own empire, especially the Five Capitals from the pre-Qin era listed above. Ergo, the Han policy that created a strict hierarchy for cities and towns, by which the capital stood out clearly above the capitals of kingdoms and commanderies and the county-level administrative seats, for which the capital supposedly served as supreme model.<sup>72</sup>

The remains of the old Chang'an capital city lie 3 kilometers northwest of present-day Xi'an (Shaanxi Province). The main outlines of Chang'an city and its environs are well established, thanks to excavations conducted between 1949 and 2010 that uncovered 5,300 major sites, each comprising multiple tombs or foundations of aboveground structures. (One Chang'an archaeologist recently spoke of personally "excavating"

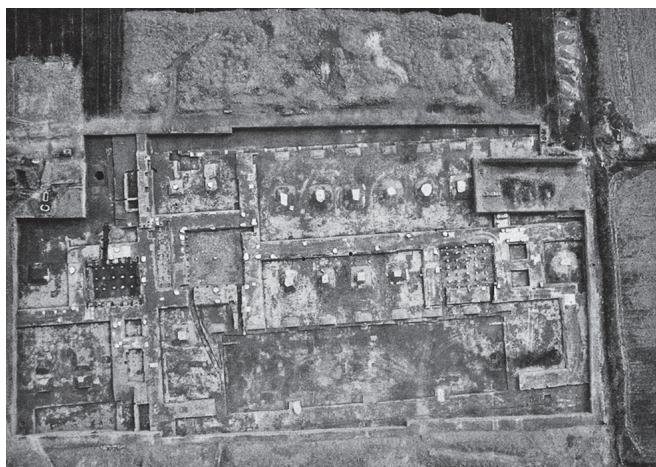
**TABLE I.01** Grain prices and inflation during Western and Eastern Han

EMPEROR	LOWEST PRICE, SAME GRAIN UNIT (EXPRESSED IN CASH)	HIGHEST PRICE, SAME GRAIN UNIT (EXPRESSED IN CASH)	DISCREPANCY	SOURCE OF DATA
<b>Western Han</b>				
Wendi	10–30	500	Factor of 15+	<i>Taiping yulan</i> 35/4a; <i>Fengsu tongyi</i> 2/9b
Wudi	30–80	No records	Cannot be calculated	<i>Shiji</i> 129.3257
Xuandi	5	100+	Factor of 20+	<i>Hanshu</i> 8.259, 69.2979
Yuandi	100+	200–500	Factor of up to 5	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 2/5b; <i>Hanshu</i> 79.3296
Wang Mang	2,000	10,000	Factor of 10+	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 18/1a; <i>Hanshu</i> 99A.3936
<b>Eastern Han</b>				
Guangwu	1,200–10,000	Several “tens of thou- sands”	Factor of 10–30	<i>Taiping yulan</i> , <i>juan</i> 840/15b
Mingdi	30	No records	Cannot be calculated	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 2/5a; <i>Hou Hanshu</i> 41.1395 (notes)
Zhangdi	More than 1,000	170,000–180,000	Factor of 70–80	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 86.2847; <i>Dongguan</i> <i>Hanji</i> 18/10a
Andi	20 or 30 to as much as 2,000	“More than ten thou- sands”	Factor 100+	<i>Jin shi cuibian</i> 2/3b; <i>Hou Hanshu</i> 10.237, 87.2886
Shundi	100	“Several thousands”	Factor of 20–30+	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 86.2841
Lingdi	500–700	10,000	Factor of 12+	<i>Lishi</i> 3/26a, 4/11a; <i>Hou</i> <i>Hanshu</i> 86.2847
Xiandi	30 to “several ten thousand”	100,000–500,000	Factor of up to 100 or more	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 9.376, 73.2354; <i>Taiping yulan</i> , <i>juan</i> 845/8a, 859/5b



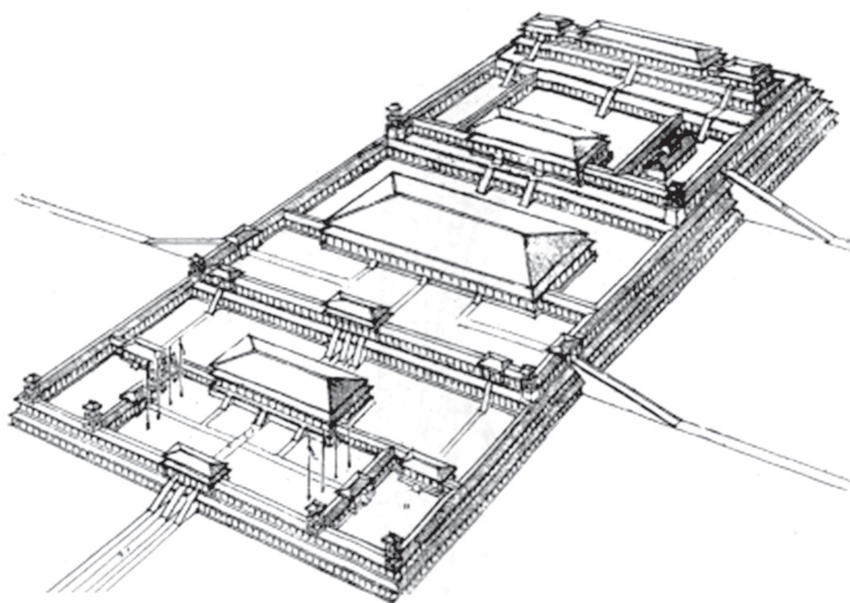
**CHART I.01** Number of natural disasters during the reigns of the Western Han emperors and Wang Mang. Two bars appear for every emperor: the lighter bar, on the left, indicates the total number of disasters per reign; the darker bar, on the right, indicates years of a given emperor’s reign. During Chengdi’s reign, the reported disasters outnumbered the years of his reign (equally true of the much admired Jingdi). After Wang Wentao 2007, 42.

a



**FIG. 1.07** (a) Aerial view of postholes at Weiyang Palace excavation site, once identified as the Shaofu (Privy Treasury) and now believed to have been a residence for palace administrators or staff. (b) Line drawing reconstruction of the Front Audience Hall of the Weiyang Palace complex. Image of the Weiyang Palace excavation site is reprinted from *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (1992): back cover and fig. 1.

b



more than 2,000 tombs in 2010, though it is unclear what nonstop “excavation” could mean in such situations, aside from salvage archaeology.<sup>73</sup> That said, surprisingly little work has gone into reconstructing any aspect of urban life in Western Han Chang’an, aside from sketching the approximate outlines of the monumental palace complexes, perhaps because wooden architecture and rammed-earth foundations have left few enduring traces, except for postholes marking palace, temple, factory, and residence sites (Fig. 1.07a–b);<sup>74</sup> also because most Chinese archaeologists are still primarily interested in sumptuous luxury items tied to people and events known from history and legend (as their Western counterparts once were).<sup>75</sup>

When looking either at old plans of the city or at modern images of the major archaeological sites (see Fig. 1.01), the observer is struck immediately by four features of Han Chang'an: the size of the city; the density and prominence of its walled enclosures; the dominance of the palace structures within the city; and the density of cult sites surrounding the city. The capital Chang'an was built in three main stages, we know. It began to be built even before the Western Han founder had assumed nominal control as emperor in 202 BCE, for an impressive capital was the best advertisement for the new regime, as the first Han Chancellor, Xiao He, realized. An impressive city it was, though some part of its scale and grandeur, not to mention the speed with which it went up, was made possible by the survival of Qin foundations and palaces after the dynastic transfer. The Changle Palace complex was built on the site of a Qin traveling palace, the Xingle Palace, on the outskirts of the Qin capital of Xianyang, and the Front Audience Hall in the Weiyang Palace complex took advantage of some of the foundations associated with the extensive Epang Palace foundations in Shanglin Park, built south of the Wei River by Qin Shihuang (r. 221–210 BCE), as well as the older Zhang Terrace.<sup>76</sup> Suffice it to say that an expert on Western Han Chang'an says, "All of the Han palaces were probably built on the foundations of the old Qin traveling palaces."<sup>77</sup>

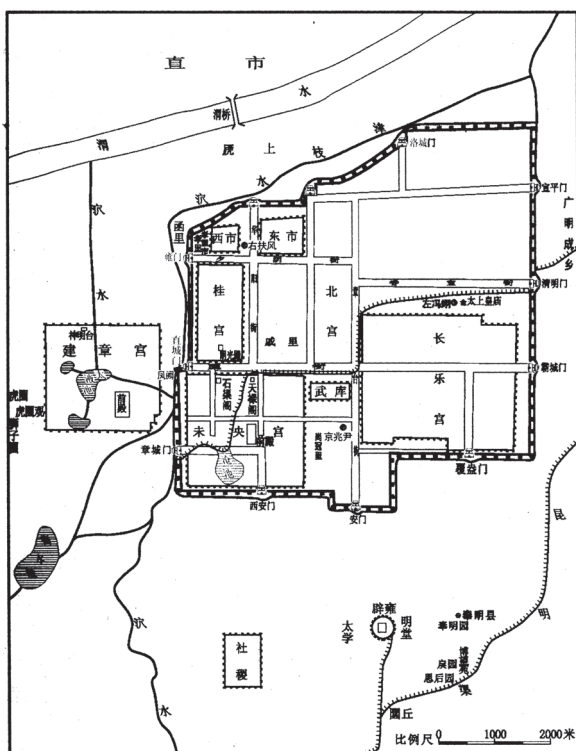
Scholars through the ages have tended, for simplicity's sake, to treat the capital at Chang'an as if it were a stable and unchanging site, since it was surrounded by perimeter walls by the end of Huidi's reign. But there were significant internal changes to the built environment, as a comparison of three dated maps shows (Fig. 1.08a–c). For instance, during the reign of Han Wudi we see major palace complexes springing up outside the city, most importantly, the Jianzhang Palace in Shanglin Park. In addition, an immense Mingguang Palace was constructed in the eastern part of the city. A comparison of Wudi's Chang'an city circa 87 BCE with Chang'an city shortly after Chengdi's death attests to retrenchment on several fronts: for instance, the Mingguang Palace has mysteriously disappeared, at least in one map.<sup>78</sup> And were these maps to trace the shifting boundaries of Shanglin Park (see Map 4.01),<sup>79</sup> we would also see the effect of Chengdi's decision to shrink his fabled pleasure park, so as to give part of it over to local farmers to cultivate. Later still, by 4–5 CE, a new set of structures was built south of the city: the ritual cult sites where the imperial suburban sacrifices were to be carried out, in the emperor's name on behalf of his subjects, making good on a proposal advanced in Chengdi's era.<sup>80</sup>

The three maps given in Figure 1.08—the most precise yet generated in the scholarly literature—give no idea of the considerable internal changes within the walled palace and market structures. For example, Chengdi's apartments, refurbished during his reign, supposedly sported the soft gray Lantian jade for the walls. Still more gorgeously, Chengdi's favorite apartments in the Zhaoyang Audience Hall had windows of green glass (Roman?),<sup>81</sup> gilt inlay doors and railings, jade beds, jade stools, and so on. The last word in luxury, this set of apartments was likened to "a fairyland."<sup>82</sup> Such detailed literary and archaeological evidence, ironically enough, has not prevented scholars from









**FIG. 1.08** Three views of Western Han Chang'an, in different reigns, dating to (a) 190 BCE, (b) 87 BCE, and (c) 5 BCE. Note the abrupt appearance and disappearance of the Mingguang Palace in these images—a problem that Liu Rui's revised palace plan (Fig. 1.11) obviates. All images reproduced from Wang Shejiao 2008, 16, 22, 27, with permission from the author.

c

ivers in the city environs and the ponds strategically placed within the palace complexes—would have made Chang'an an early example of a “green city.”<sup>88</sup> (The suburbs, of course, would have been greener still, as it was to them that the cartloads of the city's night soil would have been dispatched daily, for use as fertilizer.)<sup>89</sup>

Water, not to mention drains and sewage, may not strike newcomers to urban history as exciting topics, but they would do well to recall that visitors to Rome in the first century BCE were not particularly impressed with Rome's magnificent buildings but with its “aqueducts, paved roads, and the construction of sewers”—that is, with the luxuries and health benefits associated with a surfeit of water.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, in the case of Han Chang'an, the early sources describe at great length the various ponds in Shanglin Park and within the Han capital walls, the most famous being Kunming Pond (for Shanglin, see Map 4.01; for Kunming, Map 3.02). Kunming Pond was reportedly large enough that naval games enacted between multistoried seagoing vessels could be launched on its waters. (Again, such spectacles bring Rome to mind.)

The city itself was composed of three major parts: (1) the administrative and palace precincts; (2) the markets; and (3) the 160 walled residential wards, which were further subdivided into 800 administrative subunits (see Zhang Jihai's chapter).<sup>91</sup> By Chengdi's era, the palaces within the city walls, the biggest being Changle and Weiyang in the south, covered close to two-thirds of the city inside the perimeter wall. The encl-

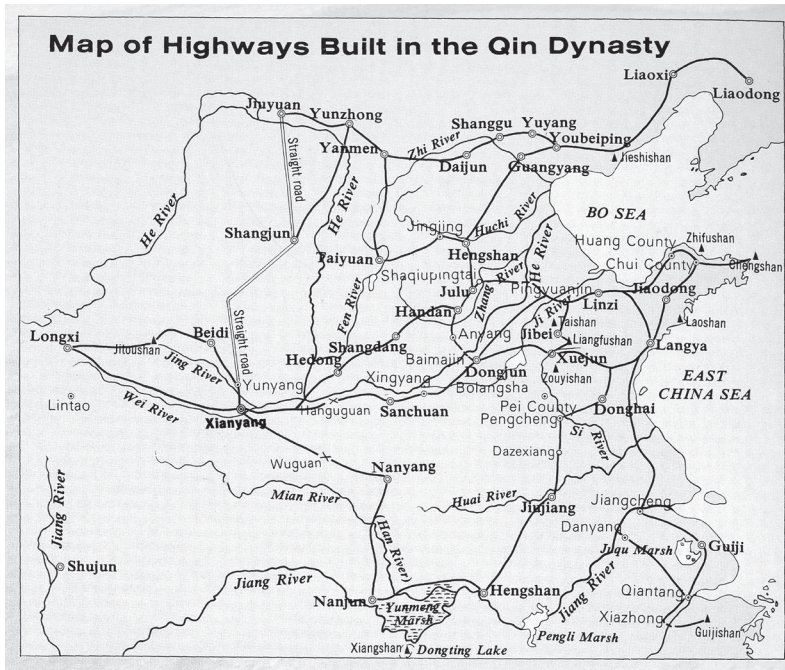


**FIG. 1.09** Remains of the perimeter walls of Western Han Chang'an at the Ba Cheng Gate, built of rammed earth, or *hangtu*. There are plans to save this site, but whether those plans come to fruition remains to be seen. Photographs by Michael Nylan, 2010.

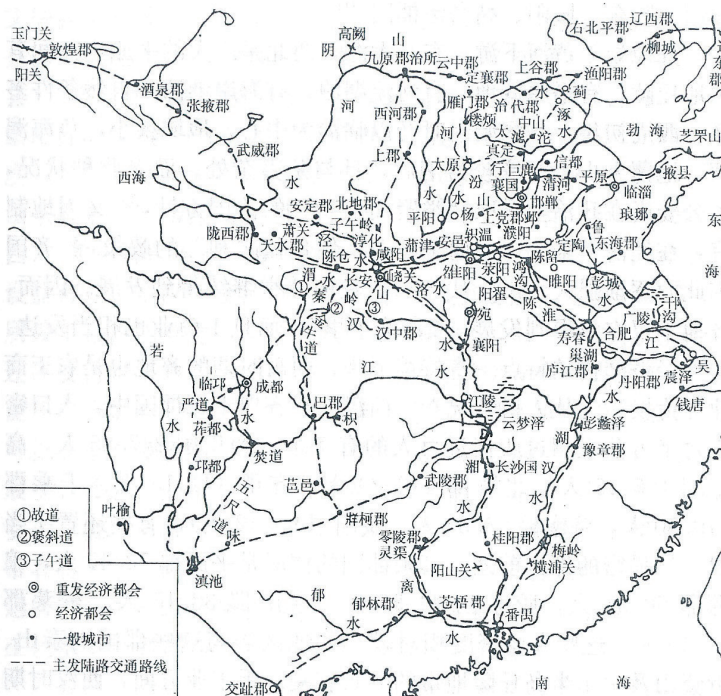
sure walls built around the palaces eventually stretched 22 kilometers. Notably, the Changle and Weiyang palace complexes (eventually assigned to the emperor and the dowager empress) were linked by elevated, covered passageways permitting free and private communication to select members of the governing elite. Serving the palaces was a Chang'an arsenal of enormous size occupying some 23 hectares (an area slightly larger than the Boston Common). The arsenal's location, wedged between the Changle and Weiyang Palaces, permitted easy access and the double protection afforded by the nested palace and arsenal perimeter walls. Several granaries serving the palaces were either attached to those palaces or within easy distance along water routes (see Nylan's chapter on supplying the city).<sup>92</sup> Substantial factories were moreover found within the palace precincts. Indeed, recent excavations have revealed an industrial complex under imperial management that comprised twenty-one potters' kilns producing gifts and tomb figurines for the imperial tombs (like those found at the Yangling), an iron foundry, a workshop minting coins, and possibly a lacquer factory as well.<sup>93</sup> The decision to locate factories inside the palace precincts, despite the obvious risk of fire to wooden buildings, was apparently motivated by the Western Han court's desire to monopolize the production of some necessities for use within the palace and administrative precincts or in diplomatic exchanges.<sup>94</sup> According to a rough figure supplied in contemporary sources, the central government dedicated one-third of its annual wealth for gifts and one-third for tomb building and imperial sacrifices, fully as much as for the administration of the realm.<sup>95</sup>

In 1986, in the Han Chang'an northwest city sector, archaeologists found remains of the Western Market (first built in 189 BCE) and, later, also those of the slightly larger Eastern Market. Market supervision was strong and extended to strict price controls.

a



b



**MAP 1.04** (a) Qin dynasty's road network. (b) The transport network during Western Han. Both images reproduced from Weichao Yu 1997, 72, fig. 76, with permission from Wenwu Press. This network of roads was further extended during Han times, but maps showing the major trade routes are largely conjectural outside of the Chang'an area. For the main Han roads radiating from the Chang'an area, see Map 3.05.



The “Treatise on Food and Money” in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) reports that the Han market officials in every season ascertained the highest and lowest prices, to ensure that none was outrageous.<sup>96</sup> That suggests that the market officials must have generated and regularly consulted extensive archives, although archaeologists have found no trace of these to date. Chinese scholarship has tended to focus on four main issues relating to these markets: (1) Were the markets closed shut? (2) How many entrances did the markets have? (3) Were the markets square or rectangular in shape? and (4) What were the roads like that ran through the markets? Recent excavations have answered all those questions: there were eight gates to each market (two per side); both markets operated from dawn to dusk; the markets were more nearly square, with two roads running through them.<sup>97</sup> But enough data now exists to ask, for the first time, Who were the principal customers for these markets? Were they the rank and file of Chang’an city or county residents, or mainly employees of the palace and administrative precincts in the capital, that is, the palace officials, the ladies of the back palace harems, and servants? Archaeology suggests that the Chang’an palaces probably included residences for thousands of such employees,<sup>98</sup> and we know the markets sold prepared foods, in an antique version of take-out. Then, too, the imperially reviewed *Taiping yulan* (*Encyclopedia of the Taiping Era*, comp. 984) preserves an early fragment of a text that claims that “merchants lived there [in the markets],”<sup>99</sup> which would allow double duty for the most crammed of the urban spaces (Fig. 1.10).<sup>100</sup> If we can extrapolate from such materials as a Sichuan tomb tile from the Eastern Han period,<sup>101</sup> then perhaps merchants lived over permanent or semipermanent stalls and shops, which in turn would suggest that only a few merchants were licensed to sell in the two main Chang’an markets.

Modern scholars speculate that private residences near the palace precincts and markets were monitored and licensed as well, but startlingly little has been said about the 160 wards in which most of the Chang’an city populace lived and worked—wards whose walls were surmounted with watchtowers and whose gates were closed at night, with sentries posted by each gate. Given the ratio of palace complexes to extrapalatial space within the city, at first glance it seems unlikely that in 2 CE Chang’an county would have had more than 80,000 registered households and 246,200 persons: Why, when the average ratio of households to persons was 1:5 elsewhere in the empire, was the ratio closer to 1:3 in and near the capital city?<sup>102</sup> And how many of the registered Chang’an county households could possibly have fit within the capital’s perimeter walls, even if we presume that the administrative and palace precincts included residences for nobles (many with prisons attached), dormitories for officials of senior and junior rank, and barracks for the guards and jailers in Chang’an city?<sup>103</sup> (That such small-size households are not believed to represent the norm in preindustrial Mediterranean societies is noteworthy, but not necessarily problematic, given the very different sort of early empire fashioned in China.)<sup>104</sup>

Debates over these very questions loom large in several chapters in this volume. Yang Kuan (1936–2005 CE) was but the most prominent scholar to register doubts as



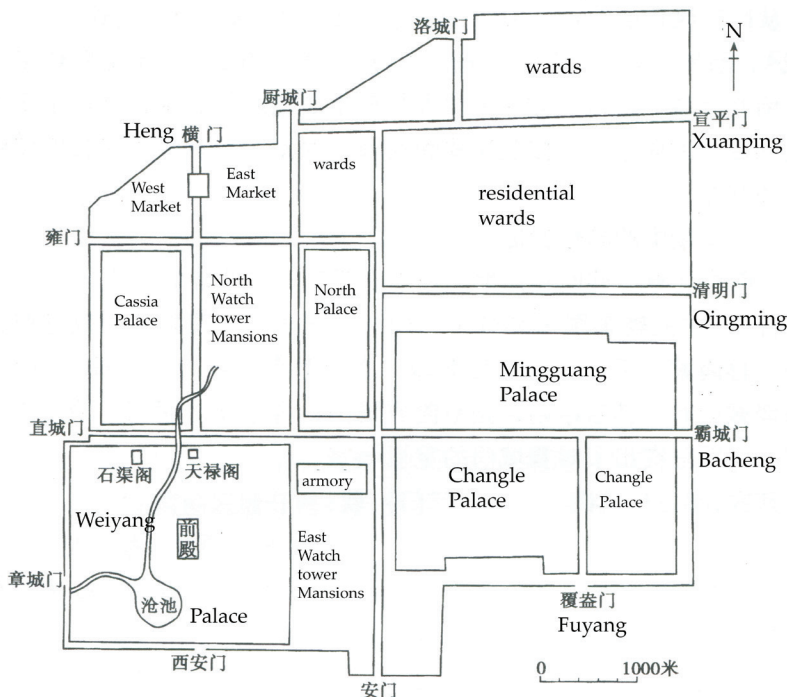


**FIG. 1.10** Sichuan pictorial stone, a photograph of which was given to Michael Nylan in 2001 by Sichuan archaeologists. This pictorial stone corresponds to one reproduced in Gong, Gong, and Dai, *Ba Shu Handai huaxiang ji*, fig. 29 (n.p.), identified as coming from Guanghan, but not specified as either “excavated” or “unprovenanced.”

to whether so many wards would have fitted inside the Chang'an city perimeter walls, given the enormous size of the palace complexes, which likely were more minimally inhabited. Zhang Jihai's chapter in this volume suggests a solution, assuming the figures for the registered population of Chang'an county in 2 CE (those figures reflecting Chengdi's reign, apparently) to be relatively accurate for Chang'an county and its environs during that reign.<sup>105</sup> Previous estimates for the ratio of resident households per ward, ranging from a low of twenty-five to a high of one hundred, may be off on either end; in any case, there was no mandated number of households per ward, as the Western Han texts themselves describe single wards having as few as twelve households and up to more than two hundred households per ward.<sup>106</sup> And, if we accept Liu Rui's reconstruction of Western Han Chang'an, which tallies well with earlier research (Fig. 1.11), the space occupied by the Changle palace complex merges with that of the Mingguang, allowing still more of that registered population to fit into those Chang'an city wards.<sup>107</sup>

What has never been in question is the extreme luxury of Chang'an's imperial palaces and noble homes, given literary records like the “Western Metropolis” *fu* and “Western Capital” *fu*, or the excavated pottery models like the one from Laodaosi, in the Chang'an area (Fig. 1.12a–b).<sup>108</sup> That said, we mostly still rely upon the received literary tradition for its descriptions of the architectural details and decorations inside the palaces:

There were carved columns of jade pedestals,  
Decorated brackets with cloud-patterned crossbeams,  
A triple staircase and a tiered balustrade,  
Engraved railings with figured edging.

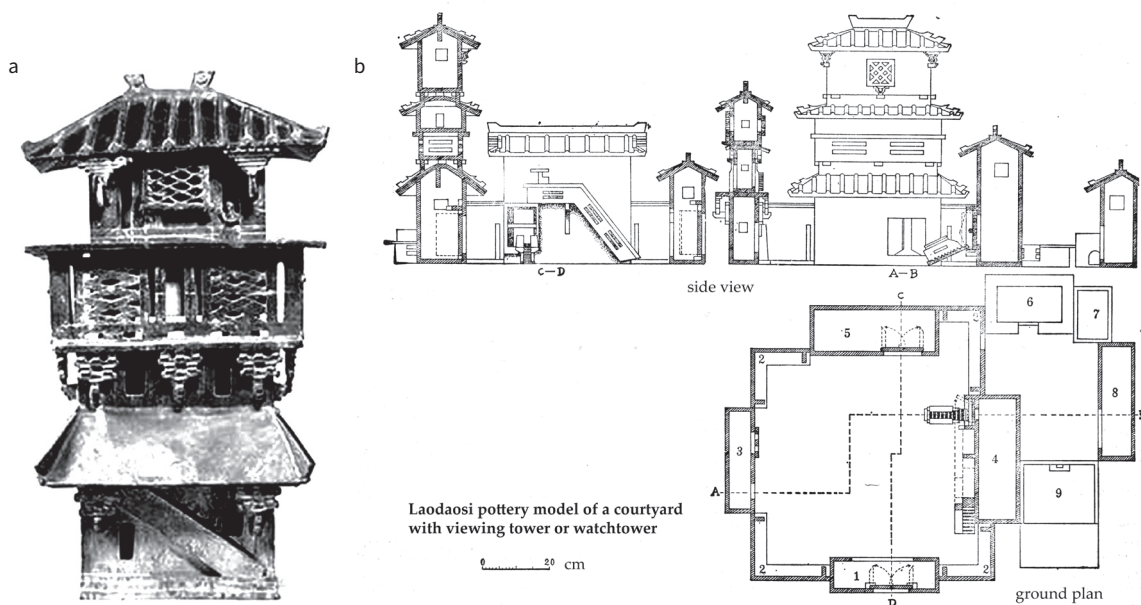


**FIG. 1.11** Ground plan of Western Han Chang'an. Reproduced with the author's permission from Liu Rui 2011, 25.

On the right was a ramp, on the left was a staircase  
Blue was the door-engraving; red was the floor.

. . . . .  
Gilt paving stones, jade-decorated staircases  
Vermilion courtyards shone with a fiery glow.<sup>109</sup>

Note the emphasis on color. The use of strong mineral colors was prized in early civilizations, in large part, presumably, because it screamed wealth. No one has as yet undertaken the enormous task of listing and creating typologies for the entire range of excavated artifacts—the drawings, murals, pictorial bricks and stones, as well as the small models found in tombs, not to mention texts and inscriptions—in preparation for critical analysis.<sup>110</sup> We have no digital reconstructions of the Western Han (as opposed to Tang) Chang'an buildings and cityscapes, such as exist for Rome in abundance (though some websites are currently under construction), nor do we have anything akin to the *Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae* (LTUR) published in 1999, which has revolutionized the Roman field.<sup>111</sup> That said, recent excavations in the modern Xi'an area allow us to say far more than we could before. Excavations at the Qin Xianyang Palace 3 site (Figs. 1.14a–c)<sup>112</sup> have proven particularly helpful, insofar as they have yielded enough aboveground mural fragments that we can now confidently



**FIG. 1.12** (a) Green-glazed pottery model of a tower (*lou*) found at Laodaosi, in Mian county, south of the Qinling Mountains. (b) Plan view and cross-section of the same pottery model of a manor house from Laodaosi. Such models give us our best idea of how the fabled towergates looked in Han Chang'an, as their roofs sport decorative roof tile ends. Both these images correspond to Guo Qinghua 1985, fig. 6, and are reproduced with permission from Wenwu chubanshe.

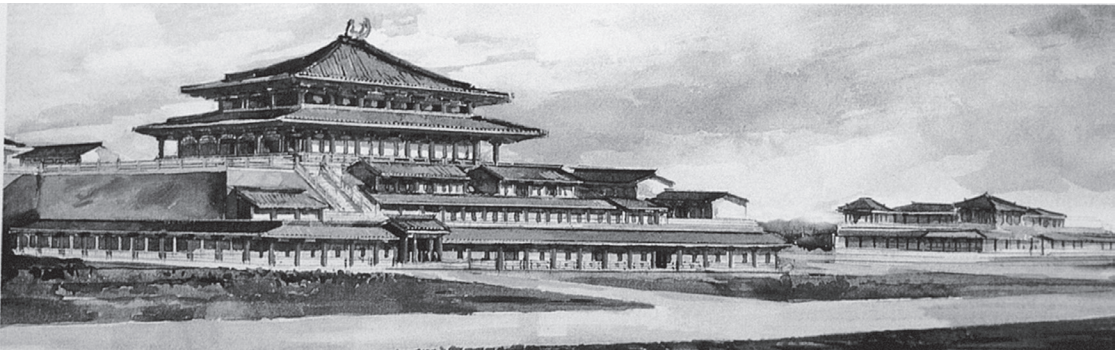
assert the similarities between the Qin palace decorations and those from the Western Han Chang'an and Weiyang palace sites, and hence the similarities between above- and belowground conventions of paintings. (Those Han-era fragments can be viewed by specialists, but as Chinese archaeologists have not yet published the images of them, they cannot be reproduced here.)

The level of artistry in luxury goods, like the level of sophistication in Chang'an's economic institutions, was on a par with or better than elsewhere in the classical world, including Rome.<sup>113</sup> Among the most spectacular finds made in the Chang'an area within the last twenty years are a splendid mural of a horse carriage; murals of the night sky with constellations and others showing men and women seated at a banquet (especially important for gender history);<sup>114</sup> and green-glazed pottery produced in imitation of bronze vessels with verdigris. Lacquers and silks in particular fed the local economy (see Fig. 1.04), with few slaves in the production line.<sup>115</sup> Many of the objects featured in this volume display great beauty (as do the line drawings from the mural tombs), suggesting that the tomb occupants were members of the governing elite, if not, perhaps, the highest-ranking officials and nobles lucky enough to be granted the privilege of attending the Han emperors in their mausoleum complexes.<sup>116</sup> For it is becoming ever more obvious that the gorgeous mural tombs so attractive to the modern eye may not have belonged to the very highest-ranking members of Western Han society. Some

a



b

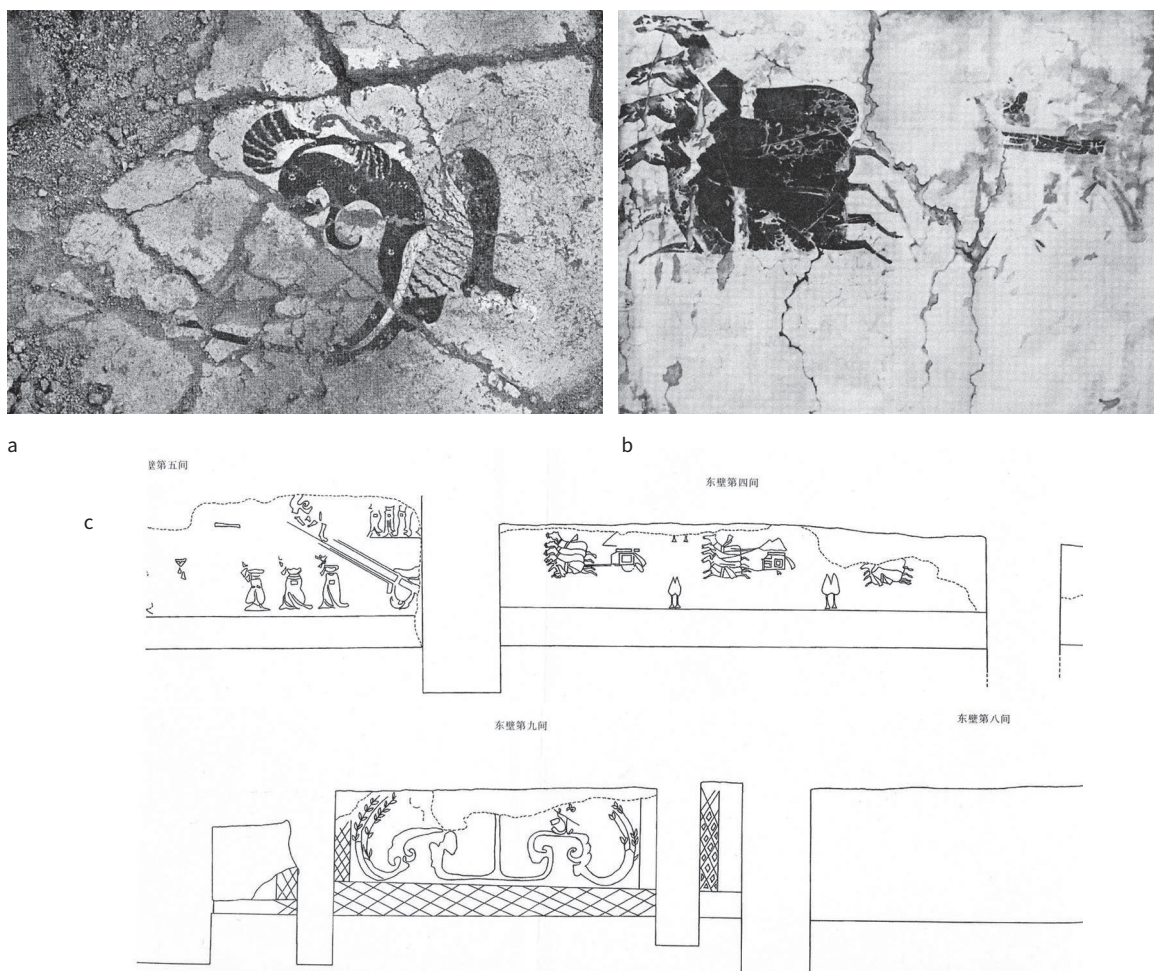


**FIG. 1.13** Comparison between palace architecture in Rome and early imperial China: (a) Reconstruction by Jacques Carlu, in 1924, of the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill; Carlu's reconstruction used the probable bright colors of Augustan times. Cf. *Roma Antiqua, envois degli architetti francesi 1788–1824* (Paris: École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1986), 62, fig. 24. More recent reconstructions—notably Packer 1997 and Meneghini and Valenzani 2007—emphasize color in similar ways. (b) The “imagined” Epang Palace in the Chang'an area, generated during the Mao era by politicized archaeologists. Although this image comes from a 1970s postcard, a similar reconstruction can be found in more recent scholarly books—for example, in Xu Weimin's authoritative *Qin Han ducheng yanjiu* (2012), 62—which ignore the fact that only the foundations for the Epang Palace were ever built.

time ago, the senior archaeologist Jiang Yingju suggested in a pathbreaking paper that the highest-ranking tombs in Western and Eastern Han had silk hangings on the wall, rather than the less costly painted murals or pictorial stones, and Jiang's hypotheses has been borne out in the family cemetery of the Chancellor and noble Zhang Anshi.<sup>117</sup>

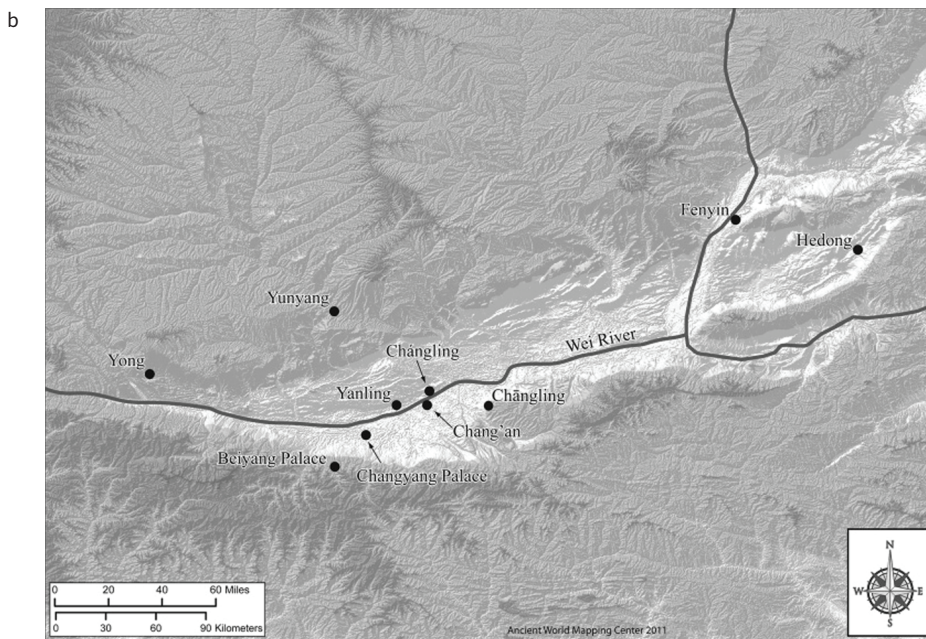
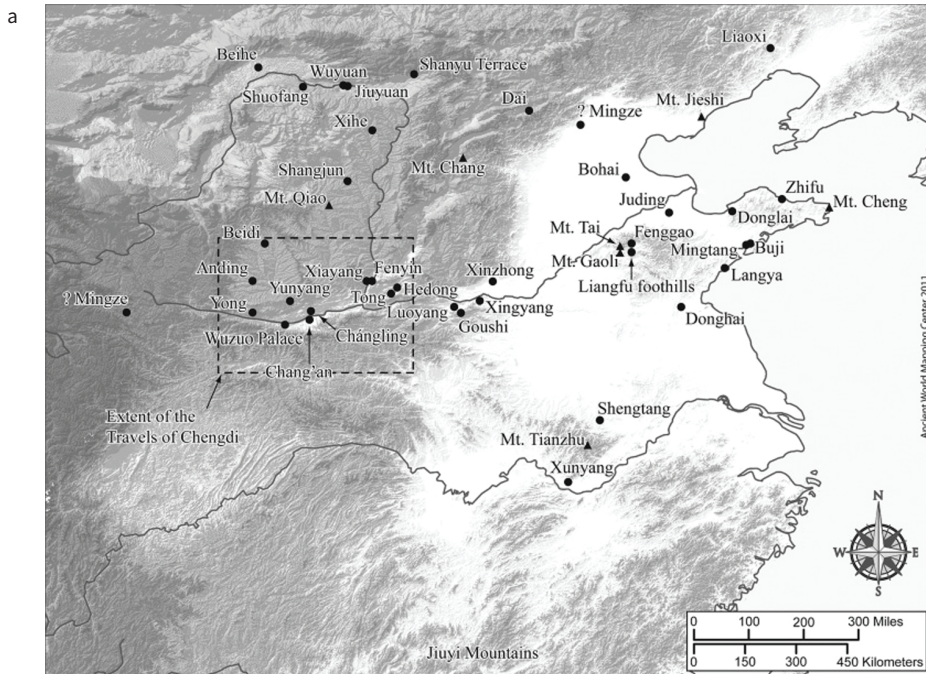
Cemeteries and ritual sites were almost always situated outside the walls, the one major exception being the Temple to Gaozu inside the capital city walls, near the south of the Changle palace complex. The location and frequency of visits to cult sites, duly noted in the sources, allow us to begin reconstructing the differing uses to which various





**FIG. 1.14** (a) and (b) Two fragments of murals from the Qin Palace no. 3 at Xianyang, northwest of the Western Han capital of Chang'an. The mineral paints are on dry plaster. Archaeologists estimate the fragments to be circa 250 BCE. (c) Line drawing of a proposed reconstruction of the palace wall mural in which the fragments were located. Reproduced with permission from Shaanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, the images correspond to *Qin du Xianyang kao gu baogao*, 42 (images of fragments), fig. 441 (line drawing).

emperors put the city. Chengdi rarely ventured outside the capital, except for mandated visits to the cult sites established in honor of his own ruling house (Map 1.05a–b).<sup>118</sup> Some of these were in or near the various mausoleum towns encircling Chang'an, which represented extraordinary concentrations of wealth and political power. For example, Changling and Maoling, and probably Duling as well, boasted nearly as many inhabitants as Chang'an county, according to the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography," and possibly quite a bit more, since unregistered people, including indentured servants, probably did not figure in the total counts of registered populations at the time.



**MAP 1.05** (a) The extent of the imperial tours of inspection by Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE). (b) The limited imperial progresses undertaken by Han Chengdi (r. 33–7 BCE). Whereas Han Wudi journeyed all over his empire, Chengdi barely left his capital and suburbs, aside from traveling to offer the customary imperial sacrifices at Yong, well within the Guanzhong basin. The dotted box on Wudi's map (a) indicates the general area traveled by Han Chengdi in Guanzhong. Maps generated by the Jowkowski Institute of Archaeology at Brown University, based on Michael Nylan's research and two preliminary sketch maps generated by Scott McGinnis.



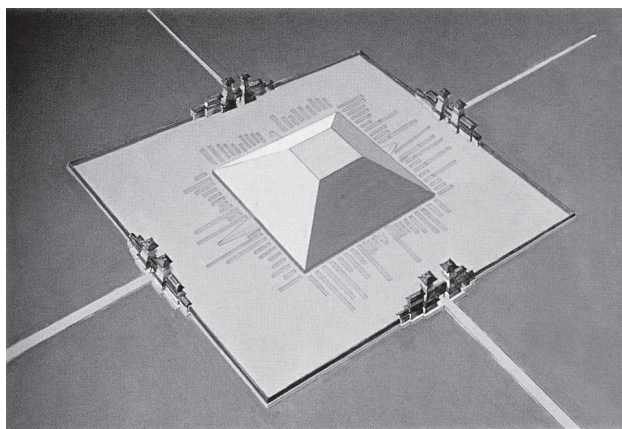
Chengdi is famous—infamous, really—for being the only Western Han emperor who is known to have commissioned two major mausoleum towns, as recounted in Loewe’s chapter on the two tombs. Each walled site, with its associated ritual complex (Fig. 1.15, Maps 1.06 and 1.07), would have housed—in addition to the graves of the emperor, empress, consorts, and empress dowagers—the graves and nearby burial pits of prominent ministers, successful generals, and others who had secured imperial favor. (More than two hundred “accompanying burials,” or *peizangmu*, have been located at each of the mausoleum towns at Maoling and at Duling.)<sup>119</sup>

Originally, the Western Han court forced many high-status and wealthy families to move to the mausoleum towns in the capital environs so that it could supervise them more easily.<sup>120</sup> Gradually, however, the chief residents of those mausoleum towns became both the makers and enforcers of Han policy, as powerful as or even more powerful than the emperor himself. (As it happens, Chengdi was the last Western Han emperor to insist that important families be relocated to the site of one of his two mausoleum towns, that at Changling.)<sup>121</sup> By contrast, conscript and convict laborers working on the mausoleum towns and in their related industries lived and died there in comparative poverty, as is clear from one excavated cemetery near Yangling, Jingdi’s (r. 157–141 BCE) mausoleum site. Extensive excavations at Yangling have given us a much clearer idea of how people lived in and around the mausoleum complexes dedicated to the care of the deceased Western Han emperors.<sup>122</sup>

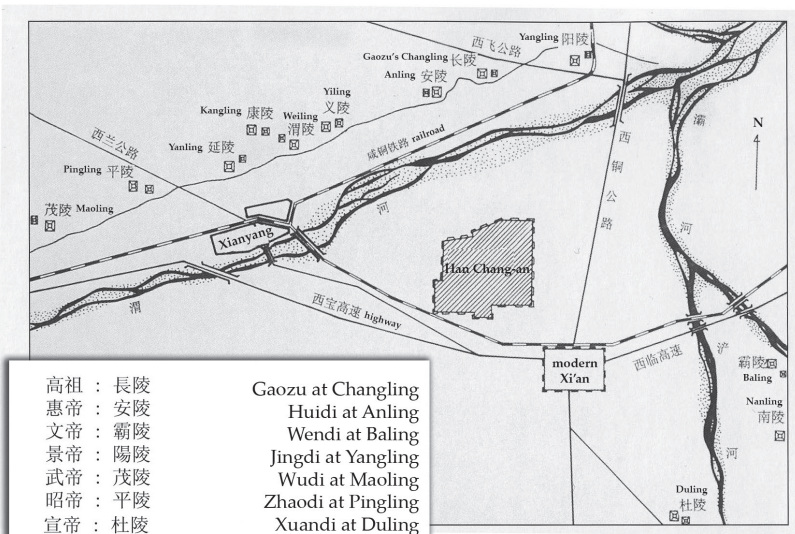
Armed with this information about Chang’an city and Chang’an county, we now turn to consider how comparative history may further our understanding.

## Preliminary Rome-China comparisons

The very title of this book encourages us to find illuminating comparisons and contrasts between the Roman empire and Western Han Chang’an. Classicists all recognize the significance of the date 27 BCE, for that is when Gaius Octavius became Caesar



**FIG. 1.15** Schematic illustration of an imperial mausoleum. Such images were first generated in connection with excavations at Jingdi’s Yangling, but scholars now believe that all imperial mausoleums would have looked much the same. Image after Nylan and Loewe 2010, 214, fig. 71.



**MAP 1.06** Location of the imperial mausoleums ranged along the Wei River (on the north bank) and also in the southeast (where Baling, Duling, and Chengdi's Changling were). This map is reproduced in nearly every book on Chang'an, and it has been modified by Michael Nylan and Erin Leigh Inama.

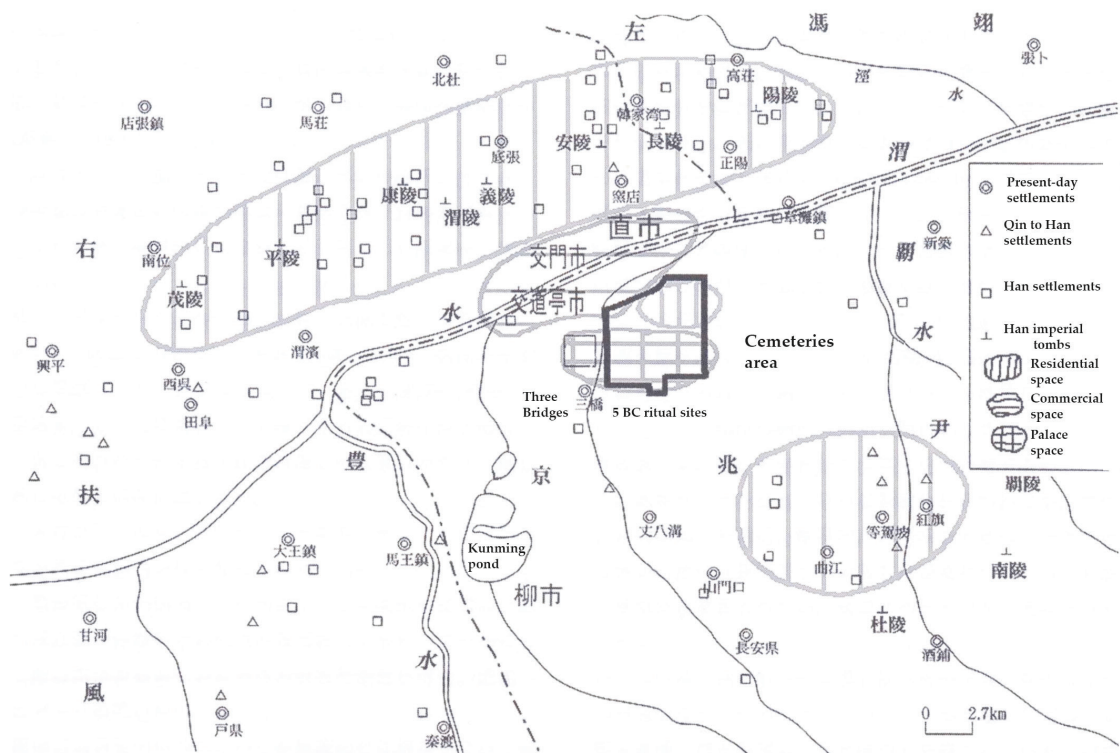


图 5 漢長安的空間構造

**MAP 1.07** Conceptual layout of the whole Chang'an area, with a focus on the functional division of space in the capital and environs. After Chen Li 1996, modified by Michael Nylan after Cheng, Han, and Zhang, *Chang'an Han mu*.



Augustus, over a Roman empire that replaced the old republic; in 26 BCE there began the reordering of the Capitoline area, to reinforce that hill's associations with the founding of Rome. Aspects of Chengdi's reign recall achievements made during both the age of Augustus and of Hadrian. As many contributing chapters in this volume attest, it was Chengdi's era that saw the creation and implementation of so many of the institutions that eventually served as bases for succeeding dynasties in China. That capital's promotion of varying forms of classicism and the distinctive practices and institutions it generated to adroitly underscore the immediacy and relevance of the distant past represents one obvious point of cross-cultural comparison likely to bear more fruit in the near future. Already we may surmise that it is hardly likely that Chengdi's era would have seen the birth of a new form of rhetoric laden with classical allusions and employed in *fu*, in memorials, and in commentaries<sup>123</sup> had it not been for the new library project begun in 26 BCE (hence this volume's title), just as it is hardly likely that Greek and Roman rhetoric would have taken their distinctive forms had it not been for the library at Alexandria. Thanks to the work done in Chang'an by activist editors under the direction of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, the literary heritage of the long pre-imperial age to which Han was heir was distilled and often reconceived. As this impressive literary heritage was transcribed in the same language, if not the same script, as that in use in Western Han, activist editing may have played a larger role in Chang'an than in Rome, but the propensity for *all* manuscript cultures is to introduce major changes into texts, during the long centuries before the notion of "authoritative editions" was conceived. (See below in this introduction for more on manuscript cultures.)

Contrasts between governance in Rome and in Western Han Chang'an prove highly illuminating as well. Chengdi never exercised a *de facto* monopoly on ultimate decision making. Unlike the situation under Augustus and his successors, Chengdi's word did not automatically constitute law: imperial edicts ratified decisions made at the consultative court, where precedents often dictated that ministers initiate policy discussions, and formal court conferences could decide policy questions by majority rule among the participants. Several other striking contrasts have been noted in passing above, including the lack of a professional army in Western Han, the different typical career routes for members of the governing elite in the two empires, and the singularly heavy reliance of the Western Han administration upon agrarian taxes, rather than war booty, when funding its ventures. Whereas Roman ideals among members of the governing elite still reliably invoked the gentleman-farmer who only engaged in entrepreneurial ventures on the side, given his preoccupation with public service, more typically Western Han ideals substituted for this aristocratic agrarian ideology a view of life that unabashedly reveled in the luxuries and sophistication afforded by the urban experience (the more cosmopolitan the better), even if the high life might have to be funded by large estates outside the city.

Deserving far greater attention and analysis, in consequence, are the nominal rates cited for urbanization in late Western Han Chang'an sources versus those from the

Roman empire: the surviving tax registration figures estimate that some 27 percent of the registered population was living in or near towns of 10,000 people or more, whereas Roman historians believe the figure for urbanization in the Roman empire could not have gone beyond 15 percent (Map. 1.03).<sup>124</sup> Such figures may seem less astonishing to those who do not recall the conditions pertaining to the Roman empire. No city in the empire—not Carthage or Alexandria in early times, nor Constantinople later—ever came close to rivaling Rome in size, even if our estimates for Rome’s population in the early empire run the gamut, from a low of 200,000 to a high of well over 1 million people. Moreover, if scholars compare the imperial population register for 2 CE with a variety of excavated documents dating from the Qin–Han transition or Western Han, they will soon notice the phenomenal growth of midlevel cities over the course of Western Han. In the era of Gaozu, the Western Han founder, there were only 800 county-level cities, judging by the surviving records; by late Western Han, that number had grown to over 1,500 (or nearly double). At the same time, the excavated Zhangjiashan and Yinwan documents, which mention a total of 265 towns, corroborate Sima Qian’s picture in the *Hanshu* of an extremely high rate of concentration of resources and high-ranking officials in the greater metropolitan region of Han Chang’an.<sup>125</sup>

If these figures are even roughly accurate, there are enormous implications of such high rates of urbanization, especially in the capital, especially if we factor in the higher proportion of officials (presumably literate for the most part) in Western Han versus the Roman empire.<sup>126</sup> Certainly, they might lead us to postulate somewhat higher rates of literacy for Chang’an and its realm, on the understanding that more urban dwellers would have found it convenient to attain basic literacy and numeracy. And *if* we can postulate higher literacy rates, these in turn may have hastened the invention of protopaper and paper during the two Han dynasties, for the material carriers of writing before paper (principally bamboo bundles and silk) were more cumbersome or expensive to produce than paper.

That said, specialized work on the city of Rome has gone on for roughly eighty years longer than such work in the Xi’an area. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, historians of China lack the sort of detailed information that Roman historians routinely cite (Chart 1.02a–b).<sup>127</sup> Historians of Western Han Chang’an do have a rough estimate of the size of the imperial bureaucracy in late Western Han (130,000 men in service); also a rough estimate of the officials who served in Chang’an (30,000 men in service). They have rough estimates for the registered population of Chang’an county and the greater metropolitan Chang’an region, even if these registries may or may not have included transient populations, bondservants, slaves, clients, diplomats, nobles, and guards on duty.<sup>128</sup> Han historians also are lucky enough to have certain statistics for omen spikes and natural disasters, as separate chapters in this volume attest.

Perhaps the worst approach we can bring to comparative work on the Roman and Western Han empires or on Augustus versus Chengdi is to rely too heavily on such few statistics as survive. As all scholars know, numerals are the characters most liable to

a

Name	Date	Length (m)	Source	Altitude of Source (m)	Level on entry into Rome	Average slope (m per km)	Length on arches (km)	Distribution within city
Appia	312 BC	16444.60	springs	30	20	0.6	0.1	II, VIII, IX, XI, XII, XIII, XIV
Anio Vetus	272–269 BC	63704.50	R Anio	280	48	3.6	–	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, XII, XIV
Marcia	144–140 BC	91424.10	springs	318	58.63	2.7	10	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XIV
Tepula	125 BC	17745.40	springs	151	60.63	5.0	9	IV, V, VI, VII
Iulia	33 BC	22853.60	springs	350	63.73	12.4	10	II, III, V, VI, VIII, X, XII
Virgo	19 BC	20696.60	springs	24	20	0.2	1.2	VII, IX, XIV
Alsietina	2 BC	32847.80	Lake Alsietinus	209	71	6.0	0.5	XIV
Claudia	AD 38–52	68750.50	springs	320	67.40	3.8	14	ALL
Anio Novus	AD 38–52	86964.00	R Anio	400	70.40	3.8	11	ALL
Traiana	AD 109	57700.00	springs	300	71.16	3.8	–	ALL
Alexandrina	AD 226	22,000.00	springs	65	43	1.0	2.4	IX

b

TABLE 1  
MATRIX OF DETERMINANTS OF ROMAN STATE REVENUE  
AND THE SHARE OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE

year	(1) population	(2) tax rate	(3) inflation	(4) real growth	(5) military budget	(6) State revenue	(7) military share
1	100	100	-	-	100	133	75
150	133	100	0	0	133	177	75
	133	100	0	0	156	177	88
	133	120	0	0	133	212	63
	133	120	0	0	156	212	74
	133	100	0.1	0	133	206	65
	133	100	0.1	0	156	206	76
	133	120	0.1	0	133	246	54
	133	120	0.1	0	156	246	63
	133	100	0	0.1	133	206	65
	133	100	0	0.1	156	206	76
	133	120	0	0.1	133	247	54
	133	120	0	0.1	156	247	63
	133	100	0.1	0.1	133	239	56
	133	100	0.1	0.1	156	239	65
	133	120	0.1	0.1	133	287	46
	133	120	0.1	0.1	156	287	54
	133	100	0	0.2	133	239	56
	133	100	0	0.2	156	239	65
	133	120	0	0.2	133	287	46
	133	120	0	0.2	156	287	54
	133	120	0.1	0.2	133	333	40
	133	120	0.1	0.2	156	333	47

**CHART I.02** Examples of the types of charts familiar to classicists studying the Mediterranean world but lacking for Han historians. (a) From Coulston and Dodge's classic *Ancient Rome*, showing aqueduct usage in Rome over several emperors. Reprinted courtesy of the School of Archaeology, University of Oxford. (b) From Walter Scheidel's comparative efforts, describing Roman military spending as a proportion of state revenue. Reprinted with permission from W. Scheidel, "In Search of Roman Economic Growth," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 22 (2009), 61.

mistranscription during the complex processes of manuscript copying and transmission. Moreover, we often do not have a very good idea of what exactly the numerals represent. As noted above, the 2 CE population register (misconceived by many as a “census”) only purports to tell us who paid certain taxes to the Han imperial administration; moreover, the round figures cited for certain locations (for our study, most relevantly, for Chang’an’s population) are an entirely different sort of figure than the exact figures given for other sites (figures probably based on the local accountings annually submitted to the throne).<sup>129</sup> Accordingly, to treat these statistics as reliable is very risky indeed, however tempting it is for chroniclers of Chengdi’s reign to rely on figures that seem actually to derive from Chengdi’s reign.<sup>130</sup> It is not that statistics are useless; it is that they are seldom handled with due care. Careful thought suggests that it may matter less what the population register does *not* specify (how the proportion of taxpayers relates to the empire’s total population) than what it *does* manage to say: that the registered population of Western Han Chang’an county in 2 CE did not far exceed the population for ten-odd administrative seats located elsewhere in the empire. In particular, the Five Capitals and two or three of the Western Han mausoleum towns (Maoling, Changling, and probably Duling) rivaled Chang’an county in size.<sup>131</sup>

Nativist narratives are apt to mishandle the sources when undertaking comparisons between imperial Rome and Western Han, given their inherent biases. To take but one example, modern economic historians in China tend to presume that the “free market” must have developed first outside China, since they associate anything “free” with the West for political reasons. By contrast, historians of Rome emphasize the “proactive role of government” in the social economy, reasoning that the Roman administration (not large by Chinese standards) in the first and second centuries CE tried to stimulate (or at least not hamper) private initiatives. But outside the two capitals of Rome and (later) Constantinople, local administration under Rome must have been self-perpetuating and more dependent upon local participation,<sup>132</sup> more or less as it was during Western Han Chang’an. Moreover, the imperial courts in both Rome and Western Han Chang’an, from Han Wudi’s institution of the monopolies on,<sup>133</sup> had economic policies that looked very much alike. The following statement said of imperial Rome could well apply to mid- to late Western Han: “The transition from private to state enterprise, from arbitrary disposition of warehouses to well-organized areal concentration, may have taken years to accomplish. With the increasing demand for grain in the first century, imperial confiscation of private property and ambitious building schemes inevitably went hand-in-hand.”<sup>134</sup> So whence the evidence for this perceived gap between free and unfree markets that Chinese economic historians so insist upon? For their part, Western historians are all too apt to speak anachronistically of “Eternal Rome,” although this sort of talk was popularized in the fourth century CE, with Pope Leo, just as the real fabric of the city of Rome was collapsing.<sup>135</sup>

. . .



Needless to say, the contributors to this volume hope that innovative forays into this fascinating period of early history, recently evinced in the preliminary attempts to roll out Rome-China comparisons, will spur the publication of many more specialized essays and monographs dedicated to the range of subjects broached here.<sup>136</sup> But as large-scale excavations are next-to-impossible to carry out in living cities like Xi'an and Xianyang, scholars may have to remain content for the foreseeable future with analyzing the undeniable riches already produced by excavations near old Chang'an. As noted above, that project alone would keep the entire early China field busy for decades to come.

For far too long one of Max Weber's silliest assertions has colored premodern urban studies in the China field, preempting the study of sustained, dynamic historical comparisons: his insistence that "an 'urban community,' in the full meaning of the word, appears as a general phenomenon only in the Occident."<sup>137</sup> As chapters in this volume show, late Western Han saw the gradual emergence of a highly sophisticated imperial court ruling a fully developed set of urban communities; capital and court were not just mere "settings" for interactions marked by complex norms, spatial characteristics, status hierarchies, shifting political alliances, and the family pedigrees of its leading participants. In focusing on the complex processes by which policy was made and lives negotiated by members of the governing elite at the capital and court during Chengdi's reign, the contributors hope that this volume will usher in a new day for early China in academic discourse. At any event, it is now time to turn to the chapters in the volume, a fine selection of studies representing the most recent research on late Western Han. The host of new perspectives driving the research of the contributors, along with several other issues, will be discussed briefly in the afterword.

## Appendix: On the Finances of Chengdi's Innovations

When I first began this project on Chang'an some years ago, I assumed that nearly everything about Chengdi's reign could be explained by the single fact that the Han throne had been left badly cash strapped by Wudi's expansionist policies and mismanagement. Certainly, Chengdi's first official act after ascending the throne was to dramatically reduce the scale and range of the burial goods used for his father, Yuandi. Chengdi denied his father the pomp and circumstance associated with the mass consecration of carriages, horses, and other rare animals to an imperial funeral and interment, on the grounds that such lavish displays were at odds with the ancient rituals.<sup>138</sup> The same ostensible reason—a shortage in funds—is usually thought to underlie a volley of unprecedented changes in the manner, object, schedule, and location of imperial sacrifices outlined in the edicts and memorials. Then, too, historians know that Chengdi made peace with the Huhanye leader of one Xiongnu seminomadic group (called *chanyu*; traditionally, *shanyu*) and to have refused to invest more in southern campaigns to secure the Lingnan area far to the south—two initiatives that can also be read as cost-cutting measures.<sup>139</sup>

A more careful review of all the evidence at hand cannot sustain the neat hypothesis that Chengdi's chief concern was to introduce fiscal restraint. Admittedly, just when Chengdi's court was embarking on the ruinously expensive construction work of a second imperial mausoleum at Changling (the subject of chapter 7, by Loewe), Chengdi's court also decided to tear down no fewer than twenty-five palaces and lodges in Shanglin Park that were infrequently used, including a special nature preserve built inside the park.<sup>140</sup> Soon after his accession, in 31 BCE, Chengdi moreover demanded a reduction in the total number of imperial chariots and horses. However, the backstory to this drama makes a hash of the fiscal narrative. The *Han jiuyi* (*Han Precedents*) says that Han Wudi ordered the servants and slaves of Shanglin Park, along with the capital's poor (defined as those whose assets were less than 5,000 cash), to raise deer in that pleasure park.<sup>141</sup> Under Chengdi's father, Shanglin Park had produced 70 million cash in profits (again keeping deer is mentioned)—a sum said to be sufficient to maintain all the troops operating in the Western Regions. Late omen reports blame Chengdi for treating Shanglin Park as his “private” preserve or resource,<sup>142</sup> but these are outweighed by the contrary image of Chengdi ceding to the Chang'an urban poor large tracts of parkland in three directions, the east, south, and west (the so-called *san chui*),<sup>143</sup> presumably “to extend favor to the people” in the same manner as the antique sages.<sup>144</sup> In any case, if Chengdi abolished a major source of income to the throne, as these sources insist, that is an extremely interesting phenomenon without known precedent. (It might tally with Chengdi's general antimilitaristic thrust, which earned him posthumous opprobrium by historians of the Ban family.)

Furthermore, we know that Chengdi's court, only shortly before the edict ordering laborers to return to work at the original mausoleum townsite of Yanling, had granted extensive tracts for tombs and residences at Changling to Xue Xuan, then Chancellor, as well as to Imperial Counsellor Wang Jun, to assorted generals and nobles (*liehou*), and to all the officials ranked at 2,000 bushels, grants that must have cost the throne a pretty penny. No less significantly, Chengdi or his court deemed it advisable to give out *nearly every year* lavish grants of wine, oxen, silk, and grain to groups in the empire (often to every adult male or every representative of a disadvantaged group, including widows, the aged, and the incapacitated), in addition to issuing nine general amnesties during his twenty-six year reign.<sup>145</sup> He sometimes reduced general taxes and poll taxes by as much as 40 cash, and he forgave loans to poor peasants for renting or buying land.<sup>146</sup> Meanwhile, he “restored” a number of marquisates that had been discontinued, though such high honors required fixed bestowals of land, houses, and servants or slaves, and sometimes other obligations.<sup>147</sup>

Homer H. Dubs makes much, in his treatment of Chengdi's reign, of what it cost to buy nominal rank at Chengdi's court.<sup>148</sup> Perhaps Chengdi's court needed such funds gained from selling noble titles (as opposed to real nobilities) to offset considerable outlays, but we can no longer see every instance of budget tightening as a top priority at Chengdi's court.

## Notes

- 1 Mumford 1968, 447–48.
- 2 As Assmann 2011, 130, notes with respect to early civilizations, there was no Great Tradition and Small Tradition: “not [being] a matter of elite culture as opposed to lower class culture, but of culture itself, . . . so one section of society (the elite) claims to be representative of the whole, . . . the bearer of culture itself” having valuable observations on the foreign and the political. See p. 109, on the “exotic” (cited here), and *ibid.*, 117–35, on the different modes in which elites “cast off savagery and put on humanity.” Of course, it is entirely possible that the “trickle-down” or “diffusion” presumption simply reflects that our sources were produced more often than not by members of the educated elite who deemed themselves worthy of emulation.
- 3 Knechtges 2002b. Western Han and Eastern Han (frequently conflated as “Han”) are two separate dynasties, run on rather different institutional bases, as will become clear in this volume.
- 4 That count includes Empress Lü but not Shaodi or the Prince of Changyi, who sat on the throne briefly.
- 5 This is the first book to focus on this age and place. For an all too typical view of Chengdi’s reign, see Wang Zijin and Fang Guanghua 2002; Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 218. Even the great Lü Simian shared this opinion; see his *Qin Han shi* (1947/1962), 181. For helpful studies of excavated materials, see Yang Zhenhong 2009; Yu Zhenbo 2012; Chen Wei 2012.
- 6 Homer H. Dubs portrayed Chengdi’s reign as a peaceful period, when “traditional practices were largely continued without change.” See Dubs 1938–55, 2:256. Zhu Shiguang 2000, 42, also emphasizes (in stronger language) how few disturbances there were in the capital region during Western Han.
- 7 See the final appraisal to *Hanshu* 10, the “Basic Annals of Chengdi,” for this observation. This chapter is presumed to be the work of Ban Biao, since the appraisal mentions Ban Jieyu, Biao’s aunt. See *Hanshu* 8.298–99n1, citing Ying Shao.
- 8 See protest, recorded in *Hanshu* 72.3087–89, against the nine ennobled *waiqi* (imperial distaff relatives).
- 9 Zhang Yu was appointed Chancellor in an attempt to diminish the influence of the Wangs, though he proved too timid to act, as *Qian Hanji* 26.474 attests. Feng Yewang was also considered for a high post, in hopes that he would oppose the Wangs. And Wang Zhang (2), became a close confidant of Chengdi, although he was “slandering” some of the powerful Wangs, especially Wang Feng. Evidently, Chengdi’s attempt to reorganize the highest posts in the central government was also meant to prevent concentration of power in the hands of the Wangs, who had monopolized the posts of Taiwei and Prefect of the Secretariat for too long. (Wang Feng held the latter post from 29 to 22 BCE; Wang Yin, from 22 to 15 BCE; Wang Shang, from 15 to 12 BCE; and Wang Gen, from 11 to 7 BCE.) Even the selection of the Zhao sisters of commoner origin may have been meant to offset the power of the Wangs, judging from Dowager Empress Wang’s angry reaction.
- 10 On this point, see Loewe’s chapters in this volume. Chengdi evidently “agreed” (*nuo*) to certain appointments and policies reluctantly, but not “without deliberation” (*wu jue*), to borrow the language of the *Yi Zhou shu* and *Da Dai Liji*. Richter 2013: 145–46, 150, suggests this phrase sometimes critiques the ruler, as in the Mawangdui *Jing fa* chapter, but this is not always the case (cf. *ibid.* 149, 152).
- 11 According to Chen Zhi’s 1980 *Sanfu huangtu jiaozheng*, 21, the capital was famous for the lavish way in which the locals “sent off their dead.” Chengdi also appointed Shao Xinchun, who had won great renown as a budget cutter, when privy treasurer for the Changxin Palace, the home of Dowager Empress Wang—perhaps to keep her on a tight leash! Moreover, Chengdi numerous times tried to play one member of the Wang family off against the others. See the appendix to the introduction.

- 12 For the balance at court, see Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 175, focusing on Wang Feng and his opponents.
- 13 Cf. Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 19, which says (in Chinese), “As for Chengdi, though his reign lasted twenty-six years (second only to that of Wudi), there were nonetheless no major changes in setting up or abolishing kingdoms.” The main activities by Chengdi’s court consisted of redrawing the boundaries of kingdoms and setting up new kings where there were no heirs.
- 14 Lu Yun 1991, 10. From the time of Han Wudi on, the area south of the Hebei Plain, along the lower reaches of the Yellow River, had frequently experienced floods. Things grew worse during the early years of Chengdi’s reign. In 29 BCE, for example, the Yellow River burst its banks at Jin Dike. There is the general sense among climatologists and geographers (e.g., Tan Qixiang) that the climate was gradually worsening by Chengdi’s reign, with flooding more severe. For a review of those arguments, see Chou Lihui 2011. See Loewe 1974, 188–90, for proposals to evacuate Chang’an in 30 BCE.
- 15 Tang Guxian and Xie Yanming 2012 shows that public security problems were at least as troubling under Han Wendi and Han Wudi as under Han Chengdi. Under Chengdi, Wang quickly suppressed bandits working at Nanshan, south of Chang’an. As Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 149, notes, Yuandi and Chengdi did not show any particular inclination to demote and punish high officials after omens; however, they seemed inclined to issue pardons in the wake of omens, especially those in the skies.
- 16 I suspect that at least part of Chengdi’s unrelievedly awful press may be due to the bad blood between the Ban and Zhao consort families (and hence bias on the part of Ban Gu, the historian). Lady Ban was second in line after Empress Xu, and she might have expected further elevation, once Empress Xu was deposed for barrenness in 18 BCE. Instead, Zhao Feiyan and her sister captured the emperor’s eye, and Feiyan was soon made empress. As soon as Zhao Feiyan was sure of her hold over Chengdi, she promptly tried to have Lady Ban charged with witchcraft (such activities being capital offenses), but Lady Ban cleverly defended herself against the charges, and upon her release she effectively removed herself from the imperial presence, so as not to incur future jealousy. Adding insult to injury, Zhao Feiyan and her sister were of commoner origin (they had been dancing girls) and many memorials sneer at their lowly origins. By contrast, Lady Ban came from a rich family allied with older distinguished lines like that of the Dus of Duling.
- 17 See Nylan 2011b. It is easy to overlook the sheer magnitude of the editorial changes wrought by the activist editors working under Liu Xiang’s direction, changes that ended in the compilation of “new texts” (*xin shu*) (Liu Xiang’s term). To take just one example, the new edition of the *Liezi* in eight scrolls, or chapters (*juan*), was produced after comparing and collating short works, only one of them a shorter *Liezi*, that once circulated under five separate titles in twenty *juan*. By Liu Xiang’s own account, he found many incorrect characters and some duplication among the various recensions. As similar accounts are given for many other “new texts” produced under Liu Xiang’s direction, Nylan concludes that many of the texts we hold in our hands and tend to label as “late Zhanguo” or “early Western Han” in fact date to late Western Han.
- 18 *Hanshu* 28, the “Treatise on Geography,” represents a major innovation, which many scholars believe is based upon the maps and master list of locations (and quite possibly, given those envoys, ethnographic descriptions of many locales) compiled under Chengdi. See Zhou Zhenhe 1987, esp. 1; Zhou concludes (pp. 23–24) that the figures for the registered population from 2 CE were merged with Chengdi’s political units from the Yuanyan and Suihe reign periods, with the result that many later scholars using these figures came to mistaken conclusions. For example, Chengdi, in 19 BCE, set up Guangde kingdom, and got rid of it in just a few months, for reasons that are no longer clear. For comparison, see the fragmentary marble plan of Severan Rome, as



- well as other early maps. Soon after Chengdi's reign (sometime during 1–5 CE), a certain Wang Jing was dispatched, along with maps and several classical texts, when he went to construct dams and locks on the Yellow River from Xingyang to the sea. See *Hou Hanshu* 76.2465, to which Wang Zijin 2007 adds little.
- 19 Notably, too, Chengdi visited one of the first museums, the so-called Wunderkammer (Feichang Room) at an unknown date. Chengdi's Feichang Room was included in a structure built earlier under Han Wudi inside the Weiyang Palace complex. During the Suihe reign period, Chengdi learned that a certain Wang Bao, wearing a sword, got as far inside the palace complex as the Feichang Room, and, when apprehended, Wang claimed that the Lord of Heaven had ordered him to live there. Chengdi also commissioned an extensive portrait gallery. For further details, see He Qinggu 2005 1.83–84.
  - 20 On this, see Tsuruma Kazuyuki 1980–81, esp. chart 3 (p. 18), which shows Chengdi placing far more emphasis than the preceding Western Han emperors on donating burial plots to his highest officials so that they would be buried near him, and raising the property qualifications for all others who desired proximity to his mausoleum site.
  - 21 For royal progresses, see Geertz 1983, 121–46. Arguably, the greater physical focus on Chang'an, the capital, meant less impetus to urbanization in the commanderies and counties and fewer local donations. However, archaeologists believe that this was offset by the enhanced desires of local elites to participate in the “core” capital culture and also the immense size of the bureaucracy outside the capital. See Huang Yijun's chapter in this volume on this.
  - 22 For example, Hölscher 2004; Boatwright 1987.
  - 23 Steinhardt 1990 includes a brief section, as does Victor Xiong 2000. Most of the very few exceptions are discussed in Baker 2006.
  - 24 Victor Hugo, in his *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, called architecture the “great universal writing of humanity,” which was superseded by the “new writing of humanity” (i.e., the printed book), which Hugo thought would eventually “kill” architecture. See Hugo, cited in Wright 1966, 53.
  - 25 The appearance of multistory buildings was achieved in Qin and Han wooden buildings by building the palatial structure around an earthen core. Watchtowers surmounted load-bearing perimeter walls. Typical buildings of wood were one-story high, in contrast to Rome, where concrete insulae could have five or six stories.
  - 26 See n. 28 below for the opening of the Shanglin parklands under Chengdi; cf. Hulsewé 1987.
  - 27 Of course, the largest of these rivers, the Wei, led out to the Yellow River and hence to the “area east of the passes.”
  - 28 The sources speak of 36 major parks, 12 palaces, and 25 lookout towers. After Wudi built Jianzhang Palace, there were said to be some 60 palaces and lookout towers. See Wang Shejiao 1995 for the size of Shanglin Park. One rich man from Maoling, named Yuan Guanghan, had ten thousand ingots of gold in assets, also eight or nine hundred servants. At Mount Beimang he built a park that stretched 4 *li* east to west, 5 *li* north to south, and that had water flowing through it. Yuan Guanghan later allegedly committed a crime, and all his birds and beasts and plants were confiscated for use in the Shanglin Park. See He Qinggu 2005, 4.234–35; the same story appears in *Xijing zaji*. (Neither story specifies a precise time period, unfortunately.)
  - 29 The 2012 exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, UK), *The Search for Immortality: Tomb Treasures of Han China*, displayed items identified as “exfoliators” and the exhibition labels spoke of “public baths.” The exfoliators appear in the exhibition catalogue (Lin Yongqiang 2012, 220, plate 102), but the catalogue makes no mention of “public baths” (only a toilet found in a Xuzhou tomb).
  - 30 Cf. Barrow 1951, 131. Barrow talks of every Roman town having two main streets at right angles, but his statement could only apply to planned towns in the provinces (not to Rome or the older municipalities).

- 31 For jade ornaments found in Han noble tombs, consult Erickson's unpublished paper on heart-shaped jade pendants.
- 32 Three large cemeteries of what appear to convicts and *corvée* laborers have been reported to date: one built circa 221 BCE, found 1.5 kilometers from Lishan, Qin Shihuang's necropolis; one near Jingdi's necropolis of Yangling; and third graveyard discovered 2 kilometers southwest of Luoyang. See Barbieri-Low 2007, 212–56, esp. nn. 136–37 and fig. 6.4.
- 33 See Wang Zijin 1994 for details; cf. Nylan 2011a.
- 34 An extensive bureaucracy based in Chengdi's capital provided the emperor and his court regular reports on the workings and welfare of the city. The size of this capital bureaucracy dwarfs any estimates for imperial Rome: some 30,000 bureaucrats were assigned to Chang'an (county?), out of the total of 130,000 on Chang'an's payroll (the rest performing functions at the commandery and county level), aside from the nobles and kings required to pay regular visits to court. The subtext of many court debates becomes, then, How to pay for such an extensive and expensive bureaucracy (whose ratio to subjects dwarfed the number of imperial bureaucrats in late imperial China)? Upkeep of the palaces and gardens must have been ruinously expensive as well. See the appendix to the introduction for indications that, during Chengdi's reign, efforts were made to exert tighter financial control over the administration of the capital and the other localities.
- 35 See Crone 2003, *passim*; Elvin 1973, chaps. 1–3.
- 36 See Qin Zhonghang 1972 for a convict laborers' cemetery near Yangling; for comparison, see n. 32 above. No cemeteries for convict or *corvée* laborers have been found elsewhere in the vicinity of Western Han Chang'an to date, aside from additional cemeteries found in connection with Xianyang, the Qin imperial capital. Convict graves have also been found in Luoyang from Eastern Han times.
- 37 In preference to Scheidel, in Harris 2008, readers are urged to consult two translations from the Chinese: Swann 1950; Watson 1969, vol. 2.
- 38 Unlike American and Roman masters, Chinese masters could not by law kill these slaves as animals.
- 39 See Lewis 2000.
- 40 A number of other cults seem to have arisen in late Western Han (e.g., worship of Gaomei, or cults established for the First Silk-Weaver and First Forester), but they cannot be precisely dated. See Bodde 1975.
- 41 Hulsewé 1979. Cf. Lü Simian 1982, 2:598–600. Moreover, the fourteenth-generation descendant of Kongzi, one Kong Guang, at the time of Chengdi was esteemed for his leniency in law cases and for his loans to migrants and poor people (*Hanshu* 81.336–66). For comparison, see the materials on Zhang Yu, Chengdi's tutor, as reported in An Zuozhang and Liu Dezeng 2000, 18.
- 42 *Hanshu* 71.3045.
- 43 Sometimes as an extension of trends begun under Yuandi's reign. Note that Yang Xiong was another key promoter of Sima Qian's history, though he registered two critical remarks about Sima Qian in *Fayan* 5.16, 7.8.
- 44 Nylan 2008b; Fukui Shigemasa 2005.
- 45 Astute students of Han history are only beginning to try to parse the formats and locations for these policy discussions, having belatedly set aside the outdated models for the Oriental despot. As literary specialists know well, edicts from the time of Yuandi and Chengdi are particularly replete with citations drawn from the Five Classics. See Wang Qicai 2009, esp. 115ff.; cf. Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 150.
- 46 See Nylan 2011a. Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 141–42, provides a helpful chart outlining the training of Yuandi, Chengdi's father, in the Five Classics.
- 47 See, for example, Fukui Shigemasa 2005; Kern 2005; Nylan 2008a, 2011a.

- 48 Contrast the extensive excavations at Cloaca Maximus, culminating in the discovery of Rome's "lost aqueduct" (the Aqua Traiana), dated early second century CE, reviewed in Taylor 2012.
- 49 *Yonglu*, *juan* 8, 170, cites a third-century source, Jin Zhuo, who argued, "In the Western capital, there was no Taixue." Cheng Dachang, after sifting through the evidence, concurs. Jin should have known what he was talking about, as a Jin dynasty minister, whose highest posts were very high indeed: Shangshu Lang and Yushi Dafu. Jin was also a specialist in phonology and author of the *Hanshu yinyi*, in 17 *juan*, and *Hanshu jizhu*, in 13 *juan*.
- 50 Xu Weimin 2011, 221, states, "In late Western Han they did not pay so much attention to the monthly parade of robes and caps," but Xu supplies no evidence for this statement, which implies that the monthly parades were usually within the mausoleum precincts. As "proof," he states that Han Chengdi even gave a burial plot beside Zhaodi's mausoleum for his tutor Zhang Yu to be buried in. The connection seems obscure, at best. For Rome, the degree to which the Roman fora were truly open to the public in imperial days is hotly debated; see Hölkeskamp 2010 versus Millar 1998. The physical evidence seems to favor Hölkeskamp.
- 51 Zanker 1988; Nylan 2008b; Nylan and Loewe 2010, introduction. That many of the ornamental roof tiles and bricks were made by offices supervised by the Zongzheng, office of the imperial clansmen, is surely significant.
- 52 On literacy, two articles by Robin Yates and by Anthony Barbieri-Low that are often cited in Branner and Li 2011 are deeply flawed. While Yates's essay contains useful information, it overplays the likelihood to which "ordinary members of the population in Qin and Han times could have possessed basic literacy" (p. 367); it also fails to consider sufficiently the difficulties of extrapolating literacy rates for different groups, different regions, and different levels of literacy. Meanwhile Barbieri-Low thinks writing essential to empire, even though the Incas had no writing in their administration of their empire. See Nylan 2000; Kern 2001.
- 53 Whereas Roman historians routinely make use of more than 396,000 Latin inscriptions listed at the Clauss-Slaby site ([www.manfredclaus.de](http://www.manfredclaus.de)), some 300 inscriptions of any length in Chinese date to the classical era, and less than a hundred to Western Han.
- 54 Admirable for Rome in memory is Edwards 1996.
- 55 Unfortunately scientific archaeology, which came late to the People's Republic of China, is to some degree still in thrall to the written sources (as others have noted before); hence, the relentless search for inscriptions on objects that may verify the early histories. Modern archaeology was born in China as the handservant of the nationalists; it explicitly sought to disprove the claims of the so-called antiquity doubters associated with Gu Jiegang and his circle. One might compare "pure Rome worship" as reported in Hermansen 1982, 139. Undoubtedly, the best of these post-facto accounts is Cheng Dachang's (1123–1195 CE) *Yonglu*, as the *Siku quanshu* editors acknowledge.
- 56 Hulsewé 1979.
- 57 See, for example, the *Bohutong* section on "Capitals" (Jingshi). Liu Qingzhu describes an evolution under Western Han whereby the first ancestral shrine erected to the founder was placed inside the capital city; succeeding ancestral shrines were then located outside the walls; and finally the ancestral shrines were placed beside each other within the grounds of an individual emperor's mausoleum. Liu sees this evolution as reflecting the declining status of the ancestral shrine during Western Han, but this evolution also prompts other interpretations. See Liu Qingzhu 2007, esp. 134.
- 58 The extent of his powers is indicated by the fact that his written assent was apparently required for troops to be raised in the area under his jurisdiction, even when an imperial rescript ordered the call-up (*Hanshu* 76.3233), judging from an incident during Chengdi's reign. That four out of the five late Western Han Governors of the Capital (Zhao Guanghan, Zhang Chang, Wang Zun, Wang Zhang, and Wang Jun)—all with good reputations—were charged with high

crimes while in office, upon which they suffered dismissal, demotion, or execution, suggests the difficulties attached to this post. On the one hand, officeholders were expected to rigorously enforce the laws; on the other, they were forbidden to put innocent people to death or engage in “oppressive activity.” Wang Jun was asked as Sili Xiaowei to frame the indictment that led to Kuang Heng’s dismissal as Chancellor in 30 BCE.

- 59 These Three Supports were established in 104 BCE, replacing the Neishi of the Left and Right. The office of Neishi was established during Qin and split into the two offices in 155 BCE, as the capital population grew. Up to fifty-seven counties were administered by these Three Supports in Western Han (twelve more counties than existed in the same area under Qin). For the Sanfu, see Kamada Shigeo 1949; Ōkushi 1992.
- 60 It was quickly restored under Chengdi’s successor but put under the command of the Da Sikong, one of the Three Lords of the Executive Council.
- 61 *Shiji* 104.2778; *Hanshu* 19A.736; *Hou Hanshu* 28.3261, 87.2887. Giele 2001, 55 (sec. 3.2.2), says, “Although he [the person in this post] shared the name *xiaowei*, usually translated as “colonel” with military officers stationed around the capital, his duties were actually more akin to those of a police officer or to those of the Regional Inspectors who scrutinized the work and behavior of the provincial [i.e., local] officials for signs of misconduct. . . . He . . . somehow enjoyed the institutionalized, if not personal, trust of the emperor.”
- 62 For this, see *Linzi Qi mu*.
- 63 Readers may consult Loewe’s *Biographical Dictionary* for lists of official titles. Hucker’s list (however excellent for Ming) is not used, because the duties attached to the same title changed substantially over time.
- 64 According to the registers of the taxpaying population dated ostensibly to 2 CE, the greater metropolitan Chang’an region had a registered population of more than 682,000. NB: (a) We have precise figures for no more than ten of the county units in this region, and probably home county figures include inhabitants of the surrounding countryside as well (b) As a round figure, this surely represents an estimate, as contrasted with exact figures given for the other counties in the same population register. (c) We will never know how many unregistered subjects the region had. Estimates for the population of Augustan Rome vary greatly, ranging from a low of 250,000 estimated by Ferdinand Lot, to a high of 1,487,560 (plus slaves) estimated by Giuseppe Lugli. Packer 1967 argues, on the basis of evidence from Ostia, that Rome’s population was probably far less than one-third the usual figure given of 1 million. Packer 1967, 85–87, therefore opts for well “under a million” (agreeing with Armin von Gerkan in this).
- 65 Strictly speaking, in Roman times, emperors were consecrated only after their deaths, but Roman rhetoric tended to exalt living emperors to godlike status. See Barrow 1951, 145. Also, some Roman emperors were described as *divus* on the coins that featured their images (unless those coins were issued posthumously). The cult of Rome and Roman generals began with Pompey (who predates Augustus). Barrow thinks the cult took on different form by the end of the second century CE, because the emperors by then were of foreign extraction. See Noreña 2011.
- 66 See Knapp 2011, 129.
- 67 See Vitelli 1980. The Roman empire did not face as many transportation problems as other early landlocked empires, as its location on the Mediterranean made long-distance commodity trading and the shipping of tax grain relatively cheap. See Horden and Purcell 2000.
- 68 See n. 67.
- 69 Elvin 1973, 27. Elvin assumed a “great measure” (*zhong*) of 6 *hu*, 4 *dou*. I am figuring the distance from the Ordos region, where the Xiongnu were based, during Qin, but this figure may be too large, as the Xiongnu came close at times to the Qin capital of Xianyang. As during



- overland transport, the oxen or horses pulling the vehicles ate some of the grain themselves; thus the longer the transportation took, the less grain remained. See *Hanshu* 94B.3824–25 (Yan You’s memorial to Wang Mang).
- 70 See Zhu Shiguang 2000, 38, for this estimate.
- 71 *Shiji* 129.3262 (by Sima Qian’s reckoning). Ban Gu thought the region around Chang’an was “so wealthy in its suburbs and fields / They call it ‘nearly Shu/Sichuan.’” See *Hou Hanshu*, 40A.1338. Of course, it is possible that Guanzhong represented 60 percent of the empire’s wealth that was “available to the state,” though by Wudi’s reign, when Sima Qian was writing, the empire was centralized to a very high degree. We should not forget that the plains to the east of Guanzhong were highly developed and populous as well. I thank Brian Lander for his word of caution on Sima Qian’s percentages.
- 72 Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 2010.
- 73 Generally speaking, locally hired manual laborers dig down to the bottom of the tomb, when alerted to the possibility that it exists. When the locals find something of interest, the educated professional archaeologists take over to supervise their work. As the locals often have been doing fieldwork for a long time, they are often quite knowledgeable, despite their lack of formal training. Chinese archaeologists are extremely good at excavating tombs, since they do this all the time. But given the speed with which tombs need to be excavated, if they are not to be entirely lost to the archaeological record, the decisions made about sites are often unduly hasty. Often the wisest decision is simply to “cover over a site” (*hui tian*), once its contents are known and photographed. One expert, Sophia-Karin Psarras, has written in a forthcoming book that “the tendency among Chinese archaeologists to associate archaeological date with textual history and particularly to equate luxury with nobility, rather than simply with wealth . . . becomes necessary in order to achieve a positive date for the tomb” (draft p. 19). This is a particular problem with the mausoleum towns, where the merely wealthy lived nearby nobles.
- 74 The importance of the wooded mountains around Chang’an cannot be overestimated, since architecture in Guanzhong was mainly constructed of timber and tamped earth. Huge forests of bamboo lay south of the city, according to *Shuijing zhu*, *juan* 18–19, in the Qinling Mountains, where precipitation was high.
- 75 The ironies of this relative disinterest in commoners’ dwellings in a socialist state are obvious. See Snodgrass’s essay in Nyman and Loewe 2010. For the attention drawn to certain luxury items, especially those with inscriptions, see Glover 2006.
- 76 Not coincidentally, the mausoleum town of Baling, to take another example, was built close to or on the Qin cult site of Zhiyang. Also, almost certainly the walls that surrounded the Capital Granary were originally the walls surrounding a Qin county seat. This repurposing of old sites went on continually, so as to save men, materiel, and time.
- 77 Li Lingfu 2009, 33. Cf. Xu Weimin 2011, 118.
- 78 By contrast, the map given in Liu Rui 2011 (Fig I.11 in the current volume) situates the Mingguang Palace where most maps put the northern half of the Changle Palace.
- 79 See Arlen Lian’s chapter for the best available map of Shanglin Park, even if it fails to reflect changes to the park over time.
- 80 He Qinggu 1995/2006, 2.111, notes the following: “Some would say that a Circular Moat (Biyong) existed already at the time of Wudi, but the usual story is that under Chengdi, in the Jianwei Commandery, they found a set of sixteen old musical chimestones, at which time Liu Xiang persuaded the emperor that he ought to institute a Circular Moat ritual center.” Cf. Guo Handong 1997, for newly discovered stone chime sets, with more than 1,200 characters on them specifying songs mentioned in the Han literature, such as “Wuxing” 五行.
- 81 Borell 2010.

- 82 Chen Zhi 1980, 2.122. *Wenxuan* 1.13 (*Xidu fu*), suggests that Chengdi's imperial apartments were the most luxurious of those belonging to the Western Han emperors. On the repurposing of old jades, see Rawson 1997; *Zhongguo yuqi quanji* 1993.
- 83 Contrast the north–south orientation derived from GIS maps by Timothy Baker in his 2009 PhD dissertation with the east–west orientation Liu Rui proposes in his 2011 book.
- 84 *Leibian Chang'an zhi*, *juan* 2, moreover, adds: “From the two Han dynasties [i.e., Western and Eastern] on [until Sui], between the palaces and watchtowers there were dispersed [ordinary] people's households. Sui Wendi [the founder of Sui] thought this was ‘not convenient’ with respect to matters, so [he decreed] that within the imperial city, there would only be offices. He refused to allow others to live there; the offices had their duties, and they tended to be more meticulous and refined. This was Sui Wendi's innovation, most probably.”
- 85 As other chapters in this volume discuss the configuration of its perimeter walls, I do not discuss this here in great detail. However, Koga 1980 emphasizes some discrepancies between the archaeological record and received accounts regarding the shape and size of Western Han Chang'an, as well as the capital's thoroughfares.
- 86 For this, see also Wang Zijin 1994; Nylan 2011a. The Yangzi River was growing in importance, but the sources do not discuss it much. Li Ying's *Yizhou ji* (now in fragments) says that “small walled cities have nine gates.” See *Taiping huanyu ji*, *juan* 72.
- 87 I follow the *Shuowen* definition for *mo* here, but Koga Noboru 1972, 546, takes this undefined term to mean “road running *either* north–south or east–west,” the particular orientation being region specific but north–south in the area around Chang'an.
- 88 See *Hanshu* 51.2328 for the phrase “planted them with green pines.”
- 89 All the palaces and their subsidiary buildings had extensive water intake and drainage systems, by which wastewater was collected outside the city walls and in the city moat, rather than spewing it into local waterways, as was done in Rome. For Xu Weimin's theory about drainage, see Xu Weimin 2011, 116; Xu's ideas were corroborated by Chai Yi (Xi'an Shi Kaogu yanjiusuo) during a personal interview, but they have not appeared elsewhere in print.
- 90 See, for example, the remarks by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BCE), in *Ant. Rom.* 3.67: “The extraordinary greatness of the Roman Empire manifests itself above all in three things: the aqueducts, the paved roads, and the construction of the drains.” By way of comparison, the sixth-century writer of *Zacharias's Chronicle* emphasizes the urban amenities represented by parks and water supplies.
- 91 The figure of 160 probably represents the highest number of wards in Chang'an city during Western Han; the number may have varied somewhat over time. See Ma Hsien-hsing 1976, 271–72.
- 92 For a list of granaries in the Chang'an area, see chapter 3.
- 93 Li Yufang 1996. See n. 43 in this introduction.
- 94 Many of these highly valuable objects were distributed only following an imperial order. See Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010.
- 95 *Jinshu* 60.1651.
- 96 *Hanshu* 24.1557.
- 97 See Zhang Jihai 2006, esp. 126–56, for an excellent summary of the extant date on markets.
- 98 See n. 101 in this introduction.
- 99 *Taiping yulan*, 827.13b (emphasis added).
- 100 People could sell from them during the day and sleep in them at night, saving money and protecting their goods.
- 101 Zhang Jihai 2006, fig. 13.
- 102 Judging from the Juyan documents, the five persons in a single household often meant a husband and wife, two children, and one grandparent. Were there fewer children and no

- grandparents in Western Chang'an? As shown in Utsunomiya 1955, 116, population figures are given for only ten of the cities or counties in the population register in the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography," in contrast to the commanderies or kingdoms. Utsunomiya adds "estimates" for areas where these are not supplied.
- 103 The site, once confidently labeled the Shaofu (Privy Treasury), is now believed to have been a dormitory for officers on palace guard duty.
- 104 Cf. Knapp 2011, 75, on what Knapp regards as the "normal pattern" in preindustrial societies: "In Egyptian documents, we find about 60 percent of households living as extended and multiple families, with 35 percent as conjugal (nuclear) families, and only 5 percent living as solitaires with no family." In Qin and Han, the laws actively discouraged extended family households, except in noble lines. On the morphology of the early empires, see Lai 1995.
- 105 The introduction in Xu Weimin 2010 draws our attention to this. Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 23–24, explains why the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography" almost certainly dates from Chengdi's reign.
- 106 Li Lingfu, personal communication, July 2012, drawing upon the Juyan materials, among others.
- 107 The work of Ma Hsien-hsing, once dismissed by leading Chang'an archaeologists, is increasingly the focus of the investigations into Chang'an city and its environs by younger scholars such as Liu Rui. For Ma's work on the capital, consult Ma Hsien-hsing 1976.
- 108 *Kaogu* 1985, no. 4.
- 109 Zhang Heng, "Western Capital" *fu*, trans. after Knechtges 1982–96, 1:192 (slightly modified).
- 110 Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009.
- 111 For a digital reconstruction of Tang Chang'an, see the website of Heng Chye Kiang, professor at Singapore National University.
- 112 The murals show a barbarian or general driving a chariot(?); a chariot racing scene; fragments of a curtain with swags (typically found in banquet scenes); and a small creature (probably mythological). A tentative reconstruction puts these fragments in a continuous frieze on the palace walls.
- 113 Unfortunately, Walter Scheidel, in Harris 2008, introduces a series of errors when surveying Han economic institutions. See Nylan, forthcoming a, on "money" (scheduled for publication late 2014).
- 114 For the banquet murals mentioned here, see Arlen Lian's chapter, Figs. 4.05a–d.
- 115 The overweening strength of the Chang'an economy may have suppressed economic development elsewhere, however, especially in Jiangnan, the area in the southeast farthest from the capital. See Zhu Yining 2011. For slaves, see n. 43 in this introduction.
- 116 As Arlen Lian's chapter notes, each of the major late Western Han mural tombs found in the last ten years has been looted, so only a relatively small selection of grave goods was found at each of the sites.
- 117 On this, see the chapter by Arlen Lian.
- 118 It is also crucial to notice the location where the emperors purportedly died, as emperors were meant to die in their main residence. Chengdi died in the luxuriously appointed Zhaoyang Palace, associated with the Zhao sisters; Wudi died in the Wuzuo Palace, outside the city walls, in the Sweet Springs Palace complex. Chengdi's death at the age of forty-seven was later blamed on the Zhao sisters, since supposedly Chengdi "had always been fit and strong, with no chronic illnesses" (*su qiang, wu jibing*). For the suspicions of murder, see the summary by Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 183n2.
- 119 This figure was repeated verbally by several archaeologists based in Xi'an during the summer of 2012.
- 120 See Tsuruma 1978, 1980–81.

- 121 Most scholars assert that Yuandi's famous decision "not to bother the common people" (*wang you dong yao zhi xin*) remained in force throughout the rest of Western Han, but that is incorrect. See *Qian Hanji* 25.445. We know of some people forcibly removed to Changling, including Ban Kuang, father of Ban Jieyu. See *Hanshu* 100A.4198; Clark 2008, 72.
- 122 See n. 31 above for details.
- 123 This new form of rhetoric is discussed in Wang Qicai 2009; Wang does not discuss reasons for its relatively abrupt emergence, however. A paper by Nylan prepared for a forthcoming volume in honor of Sir Geoffrey Lloyd shows that a similar rhetoric followed in the wake of the classicists' efforts at Alexandria's library.
- 124 I base this urbanization rate on the figures given in the "Treatise on Geography" in the *Hanshu*. See Xiao Ailing 2006 and 2010, for corroborative details. The rates for urbanization for Rome were given to me by Carlos Noreña (personal communication, spring 2012). Other estimates for the urbanization rates throughout the Roman empire hover around 10 percent.
- 125 Xiao Ailing 2006, 2010.
- 126 Nylan 2000 shows that Han officials were not all literate by any means. Knapp 2011, 3–4, says that Roman elites constituted roughly 40,000 adult males, or 0.5 percent of the population under Roman rule; however, if we figure 130,000 Western Han officials earning 600 bushels per year as the minimum definition of "Han governing elite," we already have a figure more than three times higher, and that does not account for other parts of the population, including wealthy female heads of households.
- 127 In place of these detailed charts, historians of early China continue to treat comparable issues in much vaguer terms. See Tang Guxiang and Xie Yanming 2012.
- 128 Some vague indication of how many nobles (as opposed to kings) were permanent residents in Western Han Chang'an can be derived from the figures given for 113 BCE: of 123 nobilities abolished by Han Wudi for an infraction, 40 nobles were listed as residents of Chang'an, while an additional 37 resided in nearby imperial mausoleum towns. On this basis, Wang Zijin 2007, 157, estimated that 73.39 percent of Wudi's nobles resided in the Chang'an area, regardless of where they hailed from; Wang presumes comparable figures for late Western Han.
- 129 Even more obviously different, the use of "three" to mean "many" and "ten thousand" to mean "legion."
- 130 See Zhou Zhenhe 1987. The literature noting some of the problems is reviewed in Wang Zijin 2007. See also nn. 13, 18 in this introduction.
- 131 See Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 132–34, for the administration of these mausoleum towns. Zhu Shiguang 2000, 39, mentions the theory held by some scholars that these imperial mausoleum towns virtually constituted a separate commandery under the Commissioner of Ceremonial (Taichang) until 43 BCE, during the reign of Yuandi, who took these areas from that minister's control.
- 132 Administration of the empire can be roughly divided into different sectors, including local administration. Cities (*coloniae*, *municipia*, *civitates*) each had their administrations and local laws as well as local regulation of private and public law. Each city had a council, or *curia*, whose administrative functions were filled by regular citizens and other people co-opted by the state. This local government was self-perpetuating and autonomous; only the provincial government could overrule it, except for the tax levy. In the capitals of Rome and Constantinople, there was a senate (a formal ruling body), but the real administration was carried out by urban prefects assisted by other staff. The two capitals were under direct imperial rule.
- 133 It is impossible to establish exact figures for the number of Roman citizens on the grain dole, but something like 15 percent of the urban population of Rome was entitled to receive free grain and olive oil. Nor is it possible to say to what extent the government relied on purchases from private entrepreneurs. See Vitelli 1980, 22.



- 134 Vitelli 1980, 64.
- 135 See Watkin 2009; cf. Edwards 1996, 28, citing a critique of descriptions where Rome is a “synchronous, permanent present.” Of course, “Eternal Rome” was first postulated by Propertius (reign of Augustus) in his lines “Romulus aeternae nondum formaverit urbis moenia.” And *urbs aeterna* occurs in several places, for example Tibullus; a similar phrase occurs in Livy (also a contemporary of Augustus). See Edwards 1996, 87, for details. The phrase was invoked far more often, however, in later centuries.
- 136 See the exemplary (if necessarily preliminary) studies included in Mutschler and Mittag 2008, for example.
- 137 Weber insisted in a posthumous paper that cities have “at least partial autonomy and autocephaly, thus also an administration by authorities in the election of whom the burghers participated” (and thus, by this standard, Rome was no urban community or city). I thank Christian de Pee for alerting me to this Weber quotation and for allowing me to see his forthcoming paper on this subject.
- 138 *Hanshu* 10.302; Dubs 1938–55, 2:373.
- 139 Shangguan 2009, treats Chengdi’s period as one where expenses were greatly reduced simply because there were no major wars. Table 1 in Gao Erwang 2012 (p. 33) shows how frequently Chengdi entertained *chanyu* at court (in 31, 20, 12, 8, and 7 BCE).
- 140 Xun Yue’s *Hanji* gives the backstory behind the abolition of the twenty-five “seldom-visited palaces” in the Shanglin Park, the abolition prompted by a memorial from Shao Xinchun (see above). See *Qian Hanji* 24.415–16.
- 141 See Chen Zhi 1980, 4.86–87. It is unclear whether the poor people then became part of the park administration or not; that they did seems likely. The *San Qin ji* (*Record of the Capital Area*), now in fragments, notes that that the park produced grain of such quality that fifteen stalks weighed 1 *sheng*; also the park produced great pears weighing 5 *sheng* each. As soon as they fell to Earth, they broke open (so bursting with juice were they). Those who picked the pears first brought bags to fill, and these were named “juicy” (lit., “filled with juice”). This is one more example of treating the park as a moneymaking venture.
- 142 For example, *Qian Hanji* 25.445 (for 20 BCE), like *Hanshu* 27B-shang.1368, has Gu Yong blaming Chengdi for “setting up private fields among the people and storing private slaves, carriages, and horses at the Northern Palace.” For a translation of the Gu Yong memorial, see the chapter by Liu Tseng-kuei in this volume.
- 143 In any case, we derive a very different picture for charity during Western Han than that supplied in Lewis 2009. As noted in Li Lingfu 2009, 202, Gong Yu wanted a lot of land in Shanglin Park to be given back to the neighboring peasants to farm. However, contrary to Li Lingfu’s account, it is not clear that Yuandi responded positively to Gong Yu’s memorial. Under Han Chengdi, we see the parklands’ distribution to the poor or commoners (ibid.). Long ago, such welfare provisions led one superb scholar to describe late Western Han as a “proto-welfare state.” See Hulsewé 1987. The great expense incurred by the imperial largesse was first mentioned, so far as I know, by Lü Simian (d. 1952) in his *Lü Simian dushi zhaji*, vol. 2, 598–600, 603–4. Mention was even made of “public birth houses” in Ying Shao’s *Fengsu tongyi*.
- 144 Compare *Shuoyuan*, *juan* 15, item 14 (“Kongzi Gives Advice to Lord Ai of Lu”).
- 145 He also gave five amnesties to condemned criminals, almost as many as all his predecessors combined (seven). See *Xi Han huiyao*, 630–31.
- 146 For the reductions—for example, those in 31 BCE—see *Hanshu* 10.305; Dubs 1938–55, 2:378. For loan forgiveness in 30 BCE, see *Hanshu* 10.306; Dubs 1938–55, 2:380. In 25 BCE, Chengdi also commanded that the indigent “be assisted with [government] loans.”
- 147 For example, in 19 BCE, Chengdi set up a grandson of a younger brother to continue a family

line that would otherwise have been extinguished; in 12 BCE, Chengdi enfeoffed a descendant of Xiao He as marquis; and in 8 BCE, Chengdi appointed Kong Ji, a descendant of Kongzi, to represent the Yin dynasty (not Kongzi's forebears) in state sacrifices. For further information, see Loewe 2004, 337.

148 Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, comments on Hongjia 3 (18 BCE).