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Why Were Chang'an and Beijing So Different?

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Historians of premodern Chinese urbanism have long assumed that the origins of the Chinese imperial city plan stem from a passage in the Kaogong Ji (Record of Trades) section of the classical text Rituals of Zhou which describes the city of the King of Zhou. Taking this description as the single source of all Chinese capitals, these historians have gone on to write that any Chinese imperial city constructed during the last 2,000 years not only has much in common with any other one, but that all have been built according to a single scheme.

Yet the plans of the two most important Chinese imperial cities, Chang'an in the 7th to 9th century, and Beijing after the 14th century, indicate that a crucial feature of the Chinese imperial urban plan, the position of the imperial palaces, is in the north center at Chang'an and roughly in the exact center at Beijing, thereby dispelling the myth of the direct descent of all Chinese imperial city plans from the King of Zhou's city. Moreover, an examination of excavated cities of the first millennium B.C. shows that the Chang'an plan, the Beijing plan, and a third type, the double city, have their origins in China before the 1st century A.D., when the Kaogong Ji is believed to have been written. Moreover, all three city plan types can be traced through several thousand years of Chinese city building.

After stating the hypothesis of three lineages of Chinese imperial city building, the paper illustrates and briefly comments on the key examples of each city type through history. More than 20 cities are involved in understanding the evolution of the imperial Chinese plans. Thus this paper also includes many Chinese capital plans heretofore unpublished in a Western language.

The plan of Chang'an is different from that of Beijing because the latter city was built on the ruins of a city designed anew by the Mongol ruler of China, Khubilai Khan, with the intent of adhering to the prescribed design of the Kaogong Ji; whereas Chang'an was built according to a plan used by native and non-Chinese rulers of China only until the advent of Mongolian rule (with one exception.)

Finally, this paper examines the assumption that there was little variation in Chinese imperial city building. A main reason for the assumed uniformities in Chinese capitals is because the imperial city is traditionally one of the most potent symbols of imperial rule, such that digression from it might imply less than legitimate rulership. Thus it can be shown that Chinese and non-Chinese dynasties had their actual city schemes amended for the historical record through the publication of fictitious city plans.



Fig. 1. Aerial photograph of Chang'an in the 20th century (University of Pennsylvania slide collection # X53 C456 3 [A], gift of the late E. A. Gutkind).

THE TWO CITIES that immediately come to mind when one thinks about premodern Chinese capitals are Chang'an, specifically Chang'an at the time of the Tang dynasty (618–906), and Beijing, an imperial city since the 10th century but especially important in the history of Chinese city planning from the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) onward. Although nearly 1,000 kilometers separate these two northern Chinese cities, the earlier capital located on the bank of the Wei River in south central Shaanxi province and the later one surrounded by what is today Hebei province, many obvious similarities appear in both early and modern aerial views of the two cities (Figs. 1, 2). Both cities are organized by clearly articulated and directed spaces, confined by sometimes perfect and often nearly perfect geometric shapes for the outer walls, and divided into similarly nearly perfect geometric shapes within those walls. Spatial magnitude within the Chinese cities is expressed along the horizontal plane: the city is composed of low buildings interrelated by connecting or enclosing units that extend for kilometers. Both cities were huge in size and population at their times of greatest flourishing. Chang'an in the 7th century

had an outer wall of 36.7 kilometers in perimeter and a population of more than one million in the 8th century. At the time of its rebuilding between 1407 and 1420 Beijing was smaller, but after its southern extension was built in the 16th century the northern so-called inner city was 23.15 kilometers in perimeter and the two city portions together occupied an area of 62 square kilometers. Beijing's population reached nearly one million before the end of the 16th century.

Furthermore, both Chang'an and Beijing were built on or near sites with long histories that predated their respective apogees. The village Banpo had stood in the vicinity of Chang'an (modern-day Xi'an) in about 4000 B.C., and the capitals of the Qin (221–206 B.C.) and Western Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 8) and a lesser town between the fall of the Western Han and the rise of the Sui (589–618) had also been there.¹ The area would revive again, although never to its former splendor, in Ming times (1368–1644). By the first millennium B.C. the town of Ji was located in what is today Beijing, and it remained a large northern town through the Tang dynasty, after which it became first the southern of the five Liao (947–1125) capitals, then the central of the five capitals of the Jin (1126–1234), the primary capital of the Mongols in the Yuan dynasty (1267–1368), and again the primary Chinese capital in the 1420s, as it is today.

Plans of the two Chinese capitals (Figs. 3, 4) also show many similar features.² Walls define boundaries of both cities, and the outermost of the city walls often have three gates on each side. Within the outermost walls are two additional enclosed regions, known as the "palace city" (and later the Forbidden City) and the "imperial city" at both Chang'an and Beijing.³

1. The recorded urban settlements in the vicinity of Chang'an span an area of about 30 miles as the crow flies (from neolithic Banpo to Qin Xianyang). Both of these sites were outside the boundary of the 7th- through 9th-century city. The spread of pre-15th-century urban settlement in and around Beijing is equally great, but much more of it is included within the city and its suburbs today than is the case at Xi'an.

2. In Fig. 4 and other illustrations in this article, neither scale nor north indicator appears in the original source. When plans from Chinese publications are used, I have not made additions based on my own conjectures.

3. Chinese names for the walled enclosures of an imperial city vary. In general, the innermost wall is referred to as *gongcheng* (palace city), *danei* (great inner), *zicheng* (prince's city), *yacheng* (city of the flag with a forked edge), or in the case of Ming-Qing Beijing, *zijingcheng* (Purple or Polar Forbidden City). When a Chinese imperial city has three distinct sets of walls, the middle set if the three are concentric, or the one directly south of *gongcheng* if they are not concentric, is most often called *huangcheng* (imperial city or administrative city) and less frequently *neicheng* (inner city). *Neicheng* is also used to designate the outer wall of the northern city of Beijing after its southern extension was built in the 16th century. A second infrequent reference to the second wall is *licheng* (inside city). For the outermost walled area, *waicheng* (outer city) or *dacheng* (great city) are the most common names. *Luocheng* ("spread-out city") is also occasionally



Fig. 2. Aerial photograph of Beijing in the 20th century (Wan-go Weng/Inc./Palace Museum, Beijing).

The palace city was the location of the emperor's residence and the residences of his closest family members as well as his main hall of audience; the imperial city housed important government offices and bureaus. Outside of the two imperial and governmental sectors the rest of the city also was divided into small spaces. Chang'an had 108 wards, each enclosed by its own wall, and although the ward system was never as strictly employed in a Chinese capital built after Tang Chang'an, the division of the city into four-sided sectors or enclosures is maintained even in the *hutong* system of Beijing, which survived into this century (Fig. 5). The plans of both cities also show a T-shaped approach to the imperial sectors, a combination of imperial way (*yudao*) and palace place (*gongting guangchang*), a feature that can be observed in Chinese impe-

rial-city planning from the Tang dynasty through the Ming-Qing (1368–1911).⁴

Finally, certain specifications of the often quoted *Kaogong Ji* (Record of Trades) section of the *Zhou Li* (Rituals of Zhou) are apparent in both city plans.⁵ According to the text, the builder should start the ruler's city (*wangcheng*) with the outermost wall, which should have three gates at each face. Major north-south and east-west arteries connect those gates, obstructed, according to illustrated versions of the text, only by a second walled enclosure, presumably, although never named in the text, the palace city (Fig. 6). A temple for the imperial ancestors stands to the east of the city center, altars to soil and grain to the west, the ruler's audience hall to the south, and markets to the north of it. It will be clear from the plans

used. Here the three walled regions will be referred to, from inner to outer, as palace city, imperial city, and outer city, respectively.

4. Plans of Chinese imperial cities that illustrate the palace-place and imperial-way combination are published in R. Hou and L. Wu, "Tian'an Men Guangchang Lican" (Paean to Tian'an Men Square), *Wenwu* (1977), 9, 1–15. This feature is also discussed as an aspect of pre-Tang imperial planning in Z. Wang, "Zhongguo Gudai Ducheng Jishuo" (Notes on Traditional Chinese Cities), *Kaogu*, (1982), 5, 505–515.

5. The text may be found in *Kaogong Ji*, L. Song, ed., Guangzhong Congshu edition *juan* (section) 2/11b–12a. It has been translated into French by Edouard Biot as: "Les constructeurs, *Tsiang-jin*, lorsque

l'on établit une capitale, nivelent par l'eau le terrain, en se servant de la corde pendante. Ils dressent le poteau, avec la corde pendante. Ils observent au moyen de l'ombre. . . . Les constructeurs tracent l'emplacement de la capitale. Elle forme un carré ayant neuf *li* de côté. Chaque côté a trois portes. Dans l'intérieur de la capitale, il y a neuf rues directes, et neuf rues transversales. . . . A gauche (à l'orient), est la salle des Ancêtres. A droite (à l'occident), est le lieu consacré au génie de la terre. En face (au midi) est la salle d'audience. En arrière (au nord), est le marché public." See *Le Tcheou-li*, Paris, 1851, II, 553–559. My translation of the passage into English appears in N. S. Steinhardt, "The Plan of Khubilai Khan's Imperial City," *Artibus Asiae*, 44 (1983), 2/3, 137–158.

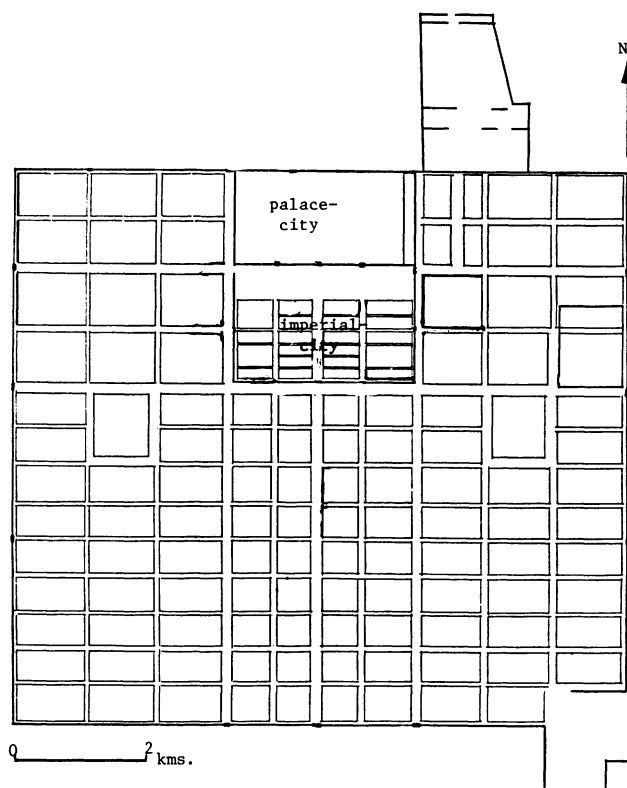


Fig. 3. Plan of Chang'an in the Tang dynasty, 630s-918 (*Wenwu* [1977], 9, 2).

published here that the last piece of information, the location of markets with respect to the audience hall, seems not to have been taken seriously by any Chinese city planner. Rather, the classical dictum *qianchao houqin*—"in front, hall of audience, behind [to the north], private residential chambers"—seems to have had a more profound influence in planning the ruler's quarters of a capital city.

Imperial cities had in common features such as the outer and inner sets of walls and gates, the clearly articulated spaces, implementation of a sort of grid pattern, the direction of movement along major north-south and east-west axes, the centrality of imperial sectors, and the existence of prescribed ceremonial places. One can observe also in city designs uniformities or continuities such as are often noticed in other aspects of Chinese civilization over long periods of time.

6. The passage from the *Kaogong Ji* is used as a starting point or the focus for discussion by almost every writer about the Chinese city. The publications include: Y. Chen, *Sui-Tang Zhidu Yuanyuan Liulun Gao* (An Investigation of the Sources of the Sui-Tang System), Beijing, 1954; P. Clément, *Les capitales chinoises, leur modèle et leur site*, Paris, 1983; J. Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi Jianshe Shi* (History of the Construction of Chinese Cities), Shanghai, 1982; K. Komai, of whose

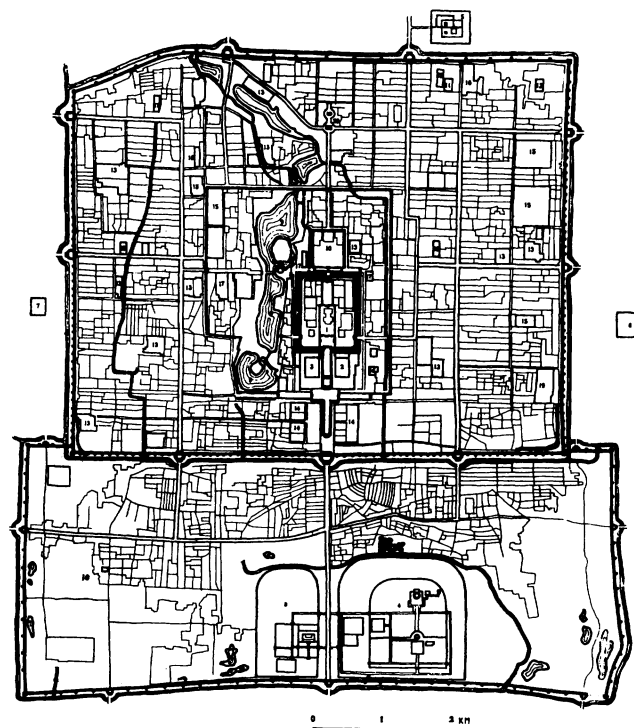


Fig. 4. Plan of Ming-Qing Beijing, mid-16th century to 1911 (*Zhongguo Jianshu Jianshi*, Beijing, 1963, 183).

These factors may be the reason that the question of differences in Chinese imperial cities, specifically the two most important Chinese capitals, has never been raised. Both in China and the West studies of the Chinese imperial city as recently as 1983 have stressed instead the similarities between all Chinese capital city plans, invariably looking to the *Kaogong Ji* prescription as the best evidence for their assumptions.⁶

The fact is that not every Chinese imperial city conforms to the specification for the Zhou ruler's city given in the *Kaogong Ji*. Beijing, one of the latest Chinese capitals, is one of the few cities that does. A comparison of the plans of Tang Chang'an and Yuan or Ming-Qing Beijing clearly shows that at the 7th-through 9th-century Chinese capital the palace city was in the north center of the outer walled enclosure, and at the later capital the palace city was much nearer to, although slightly

many writings on the Chinese city *Chūgoku tojō/Bokkai kenkyū* (Chinese Cities/Bohai Researches), Tokyo, 1977, is representative; J. Murata, *Chūgoku no teito* (Chinese Imperial Cities), Kyoto, 1981; Wang, "Zhongguo Ducheng"; P. Wheatley, *The Pivot of the Four Quarters*, Chicago, 1971; and A. Wright, "The Cosmology of the Chinese City," in G. W. Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China*, Stanford, 1977, 33-73.

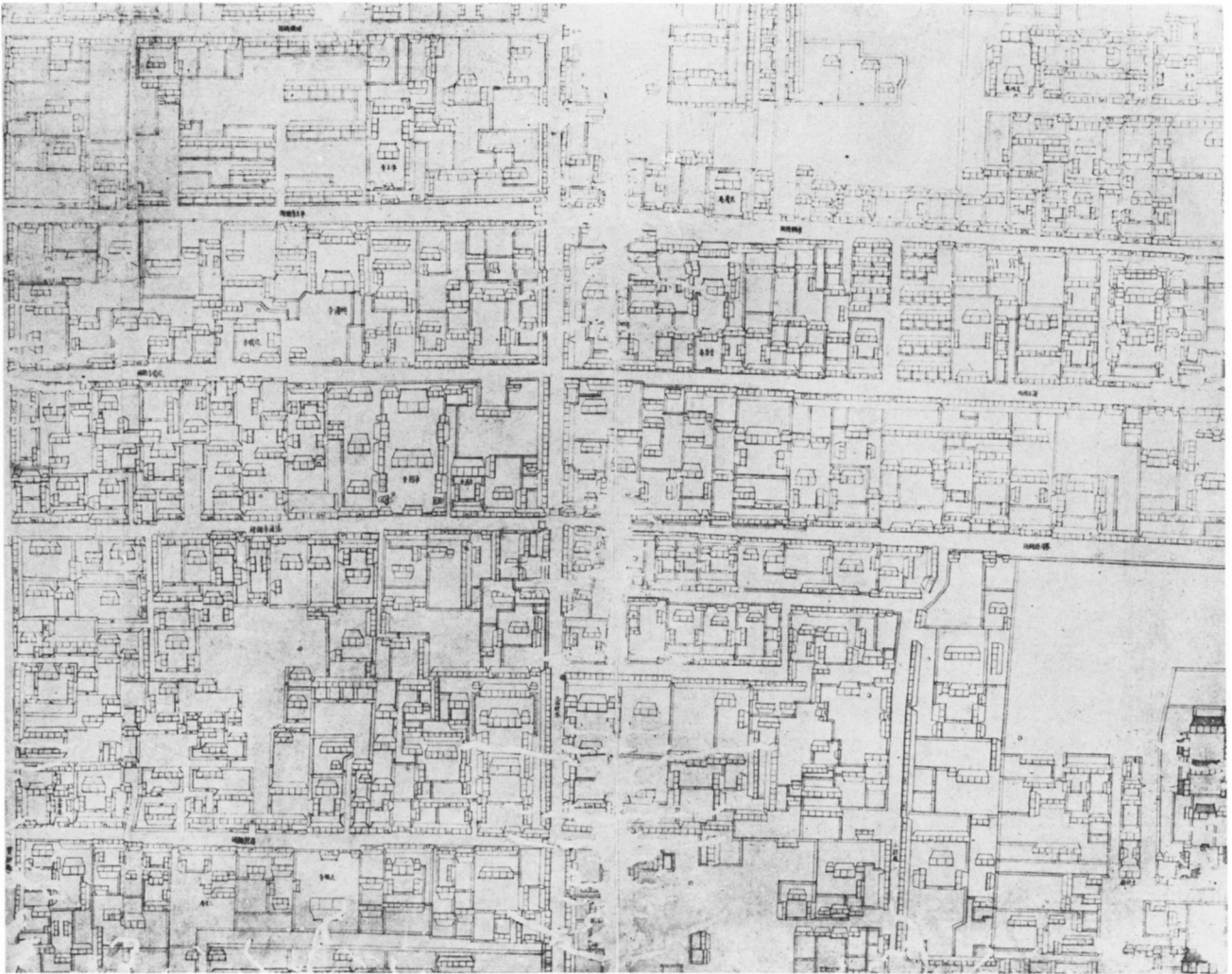


Fig. 5. Beijing *hutong* (lanes and alleys) (*Qianlong Jingcheng Quantu* [Complete pictorial record of the imperial city of the Qianlong emperor], reprinted Beijing, 1940 [Japanese edition], folio 2, 5).

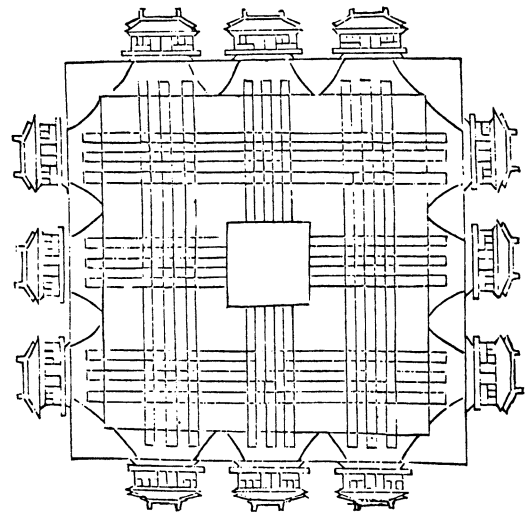


Fig. 6. *Wangcheng* (ruler's city), from *Kaogong Ji* (*Sanli Tu* [Illustrated "Three Rituals"], Tongzhi Tang Jingjie ed., 1873, *juan* [section] 4/2b).

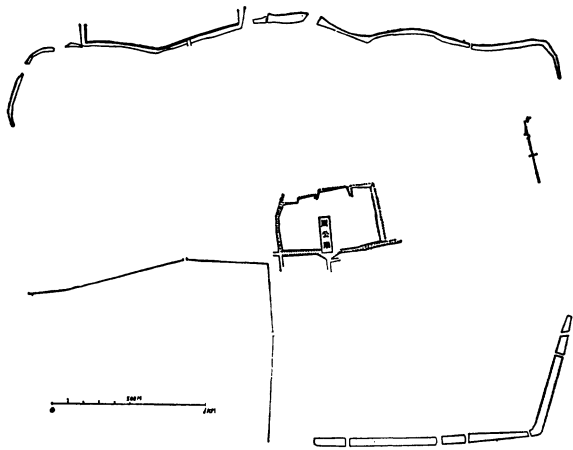


Fig. 7. Qufu in the Warring States period (Komai, *Chūgoku tojō*, 25).

south of, the true middle of the city (see Figs. 3, 4).⁷ Both known illustrated versions of the *Kaogong Ji* show the palace-city in the exact center of the outer city wall.⁸

An examination of the plans of the primary and secondary capitals, and in some cases additional auxiliary capitals, of each major dynasty from the early imperial period on provides evidence of three distinct imperial city plans. In fact, even before the unification of Chinese by the First Emperor in the 3rd century B.C., each of the three schemes was utilized. Furthermore, each type continued to be used throughout the history of Chinese imperial city planning.

The three imperial city plans

The first type of imperial plan is the one specified in the *Kaogong Ji*, namely a palace city at or near the true city center, surrounded by a second enclosing outer wall. It is exemplified by Qufu, capital of the state of Lu in Shandong province in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (722–221

7. Those who have commented on the position of the palace city in the north center of the Tang capital include: Chen, *Sui-Tang Zhidu*, 62–81, explaining the palace city's position by what he presumes to have been the great influence of non-Chinese traditions in the plans of N. Wei cities like Ye and Luoyang; Komai, *Chūgoku tojō*, 12–16, seeing the northern position of the palace city as an example of the cosmological symbolism of the Chinese city plan, whose palace takes the name and position of the north star; H. Li of the Yuan dynasty, who wrote in *Chang'an Zhi Tu* (Illustrated Record of Chang'an) that the placement of the palace area typified the ruler's desire to sequester himself as far as possible from the general populace; and Wang, "Zhongguo Ducheng," who writes that in spite of the position of the Tang palace city the plan is still in accordance with the *Kaogong Ji* scheme. These theories are summarized by T. Tanaka in "Zuichō kenchikusha sekkei to kōshō" (Investigation and Proof of Sui Dynasty Architects), *Chūgoku no kagaku to kagakusha*, Kyoto, 1978, 209–306.

8. The two premodern surviving versions are from the *Yongle Dadian*, 1st ed., 1403–1424; and C. Nie, ed. (Song dynasty), *Sanli Tu* (Illustrated "Three Rituals" [Li Ji, Zhou Li, and Yi Li]), Tongzhi Tang Jingjie ed., 1873, 335–336.

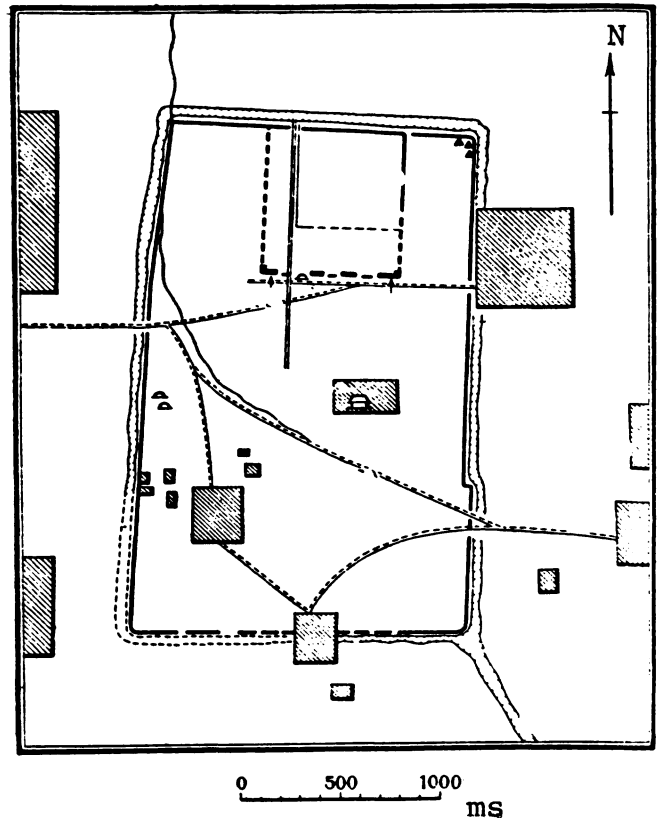


Fig. 8. Jiang in the Spring and Autumn period (*Kaogu* [1963], 10, 544).

B.C.) (Fig. 7)⁹ The second plan type has the palace city in the north center. An example was excavated in Xiangfen, Shanxi province, in the early 1960s, and is believed to have been Jiang (or Ju), the sometime capital of the Jin state during the Spring and Autumn period (Fig. 8).¹⁰ The presumed palace area of the Jiang capital was enclosed on four sides by a wall, and the north wall of the outer city shared its central portion with the northern portion of the smaller wall and then extended be-

9. The excavated remains at Qufu indicate that building foundations within the inner precinct are at least as old as the Warring States period (403–221 B.C.) and may survive from the preceding Spring and Autumn period, by which time Qufu was the capital of the Lu state. On the excavation of Qufu, see Komai, *Chūgoku tojō*, 21–49, and T. Sekino, *Chūgoku kōkogaku kenkyū* (Researches on Chinese Archaeology), Tokyo, 1956, 327–339. A second example of this type of city plan from the first millennium B.C. is Anyi, Shanxi province. For an illustration of the plan, see K. Chang, *The Archeology of Ancient China*, New Haven, 3rd ed., 1977, 331.

10. The site in Xiangfen, Shanxi province, is published in "Shanxi Xiangfen Zhaokang Fujin Gudai Chengzhi Diaocha" (Excavation of an Ancient City in the Vicinity of Zhaokang, Xiangfen, Shanxi), *Kaogu* (1963), 10, 544–546. See also Chang, *Ancient China*, 327–328.

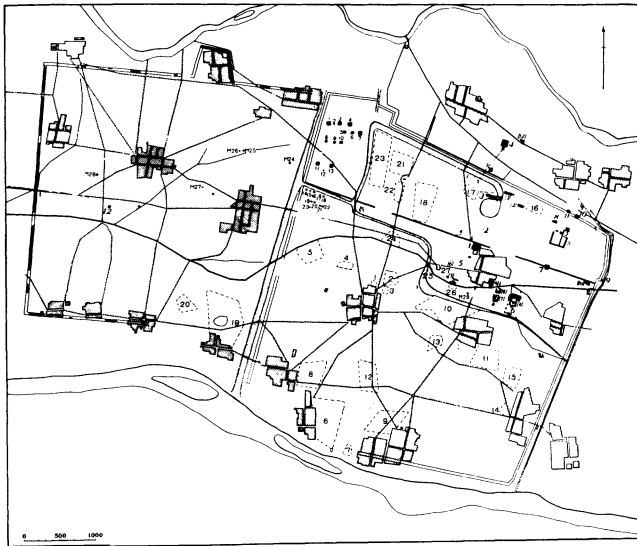


Fig. 9. Xiadu of Yan in the Warring States period (*Kaogu Xuebao* [1965], 1, fold-out between 84 and 85).

yond it. The third variety of capital city plan in use by the end of the Spring and Autumn period might be called the double city. The double city consisted of two walled enclosures, which may or may not have been in use at the same time. Even when only one walled portion was the site of building and activity, both walls stood simultaneously. Three examples of double cities—Xindian near Houma in Shanxi province; Handan, capital of the state of Zhao in Hebei; and the Yan capital Xiadu near Yi Xian, Hebei (Fig. 9)—all have one common feature: one wall face, or corner in the case of Xindian, is shared by the two enclosures.¹¹

Nonconventional imperial city plans (221 B.C.–A.D. 220)

The three city plans do not appear again, at least not as imperial cities, until the period of disunity between A.D. 220 and 589. The three important capital cities built between the unification of China by the First Emperor and the fall of the Eastern Han in 220 adhere to no set plan, largely, it seems, due to practical reasons. The first of the three cities, the capital at Xianyang during the second to the last decade of the 3rd century B.C., was essentially a conglomerate of palaces, those modeled after the residences of rulers of the conquered states as well as the First Emperor's own creation, Epang Palace.¹²

11. The results of excavations at Xindian have been published in the periodicals *Wenwu Cankao Ziliao*, *Wenwu*, and *Kaogu* beginning in the late 1950s. Several of the more important publications are found in *Wenwu* (1962), 4/5; *Wenwu* (1972), 1, 4, and 8; *Wenwu* (1975), 5; and *Kaogu* (1963), 5. A more complete list of publications and a brief discussion of the site appears in Chang, *Ancient China*, 324–327. Handan is published in Komai and Sekino, *Hantan*, *Archeologia Orientalis Series B*, vol. 7, Tokyo and Kyoto, 1954. Yan Xiadu is well published in “Hebei Yi Xian Yan Xiadu Gucheng Kanca he Shichu” (Reconnaissances and Trial Diggings on the Site of Yan Xiadu at Yi Xian, Hebei), *Kaogu Xuebao* (1965), 1, 83–106.

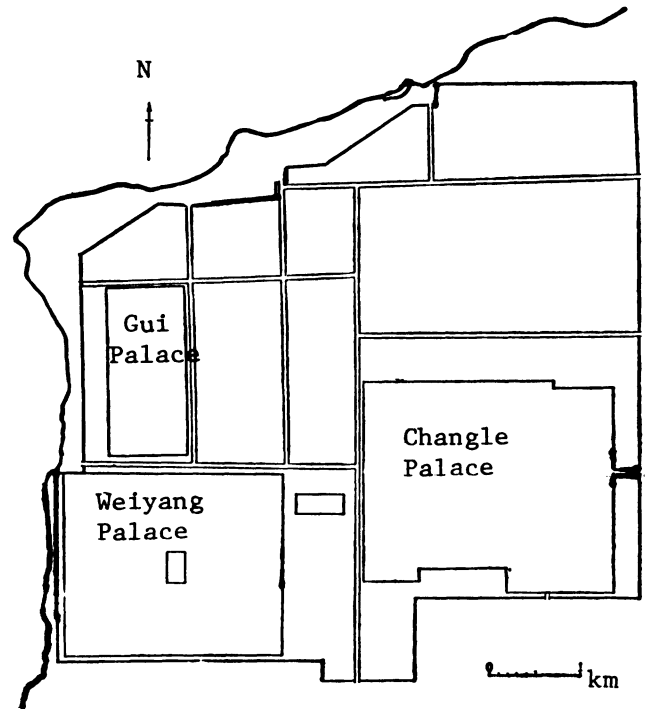


Fig. 10. Chang'an in the W. Han (*Kaogu* [1982], 5, 506).

Although Epang Palace burned during the conquest of Qin, several of the former Qin palaces were used by the new dynasty, the Han, whose unusually shaped imperial city was built south of the Wei River, southeast of Xianyang.

The design of the Han capital Chang'an (Fig. 10) may be explained by three reasons. First, the city was not built anew but was constructed on the ruins of the previous age. Thus it was impossible to follow the prescription for imperial city building in the *Kaogong Ji* and begin with the outer city wall; instead, Qin palaces were restored, new palaces were built, and then under the second Han emperor Huidi (reigned 194–187 B.C.) the outer wall was made.¹³ Second, the northern city wall especially, and to a lesser extent the western outer wall, had to be built in accordance with the course of the Zao River. This would not be the last time that a natural constraint such as water would dictate an irregular city shape. Finally, in contrast to most later Chinese capitals, Western Han Chang'an

12. Xianyang is discussed in: “Qin Xianyang Gucheng Yizhi de Diaocha he Shiqu” (Excavation and Examination of the Remains of the Old Capital City of Qin Xianyang), *Kaogu* (1962), 6, 281–284; “Qindu Xianyang Diyhao Gongdian Jianzhu Yizhi Jianbao” (Excavation of the Architectural Remains of Palace No. 1 at the Qin Capital Xianyang), *Wenwu* (1976), 11, 12–24; and “Qin Xianyang Gong Diyhao Yizhi Fayuan Wenti” (Questions about the Excavation of Palace No. 1 at Qin Xianyang), *Wenwu* (1976), 11, 31–41. The Qin palaces are discussed also in *Sanfu Huangtu* (Illustrated Description of the Three Districts of the Metropolitan Area), probably late 3rd century A.D., Taibei, Shijie Press ed., 1974, 8–13.

13. An English summary of the remains at Han Chang'an, based on numerous excavation reports, is found in Z. Wang, *Han Civilization*, New Haven, 1982, 1–10. The Han city and its architecture are discussed also in *Sanfu Huangtu*, 13–72.

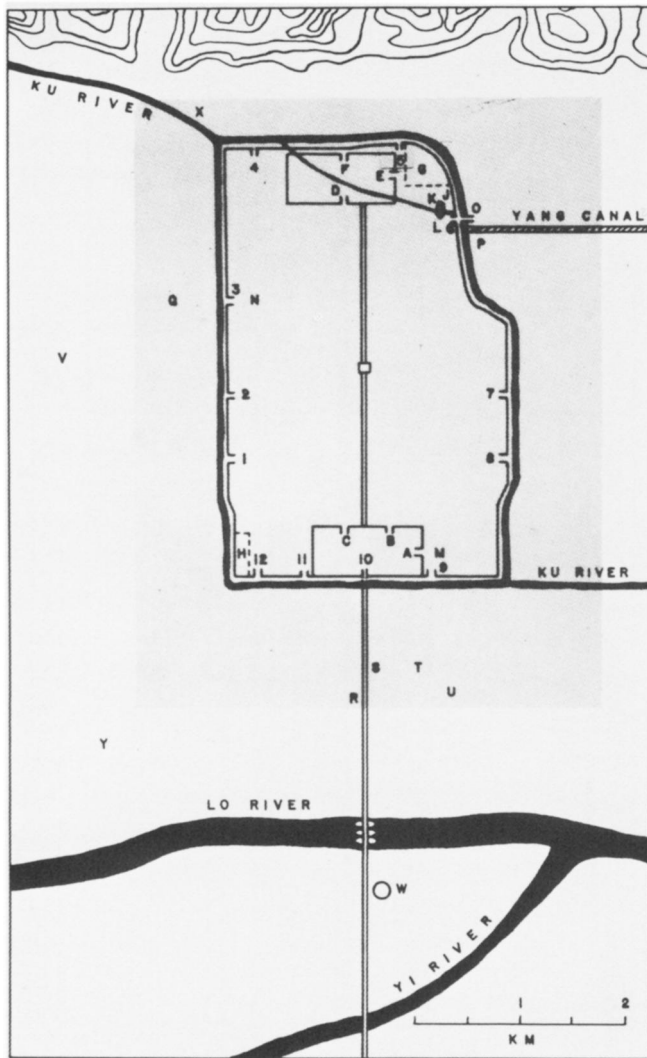


Fig. 11. Luoyang in the E. Han (courtesy *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, 48 [1976], 124).

was essentially a city of palaces, with some major arteries of access intersecting each other at right angles and providing passage to and from the city gates. It did not offer the residential space within its walls that came to be expected in later Chinese capitals.

Eastern Han Luoyang, to which the remnant of the Han regrouped after the Wang Mang interregnum (A.D. 8–23), was built according to yet another nonconventional plan. Its outer wall shape was rectangular, with the northern boundary dictated by the Mang Mountains and the southern border by the Luo River (Fig. 11).¹⁴ The plan of Eastern Han Luoyang shows a major north–south artery and suggests other north–south and east–west arteries running as far as possible from the 12 outer wall gates through the city but impeded by the

14. In Fig. 11 the Luo River is spelled Lo, in accordance with the Wade-Giles system for the transcription of Chinese characters into English. Here the *pinyin* system has been used in all cases except for the titles of already published Western-language material.

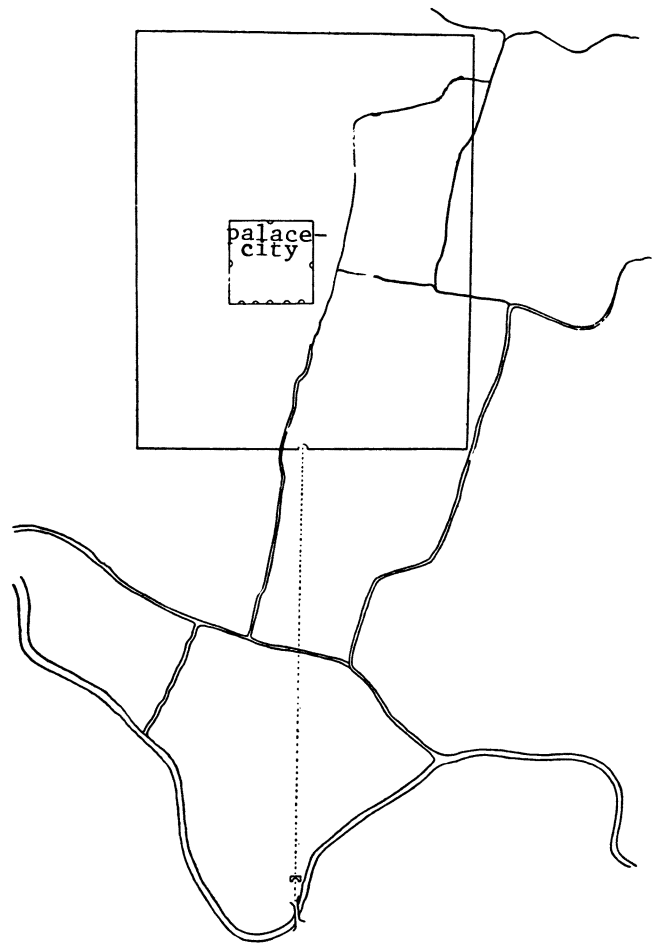


Fig. 12. Jianye of the Wu Kingdom, 222–280 (Zhu, *Jinling*, between 104 and 105).

unusual feature of the plan, the two distinct palace cities. One should be aware, however, that only one of the palace areas was the primary imperial residence at any time during the period of the city's flourishing,¹⁵ so that one might interpret the Eastern Han capital plan as a final stage in the change from a system of multiple imperial palaces to a single one. All imperial cities in China proper after the fall of the Han would have a single palace city.

Reappearance of the three imperial plans

Each of the scores of rulers of China during the period of disunity between the Han and the Sui (589–618) had a capital. Among these cities the plans of five primary capitals—Nanjing (called Jianye and then Jiankang during this period), Ye, Luoyang, Shengle, and Pingcheng—are especially perti-

15. On E. Han Luoyang, see H. Bielenstein, "Lo-yang in Later Han Times," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, 48 (1976), 3–142, and Wang, *Han Civilization*, 29–41. A slightly different plan of Luoyang in E. Han times that shows the major north–south and east–west thoroughfares is published on p. 45 of Wang's book.

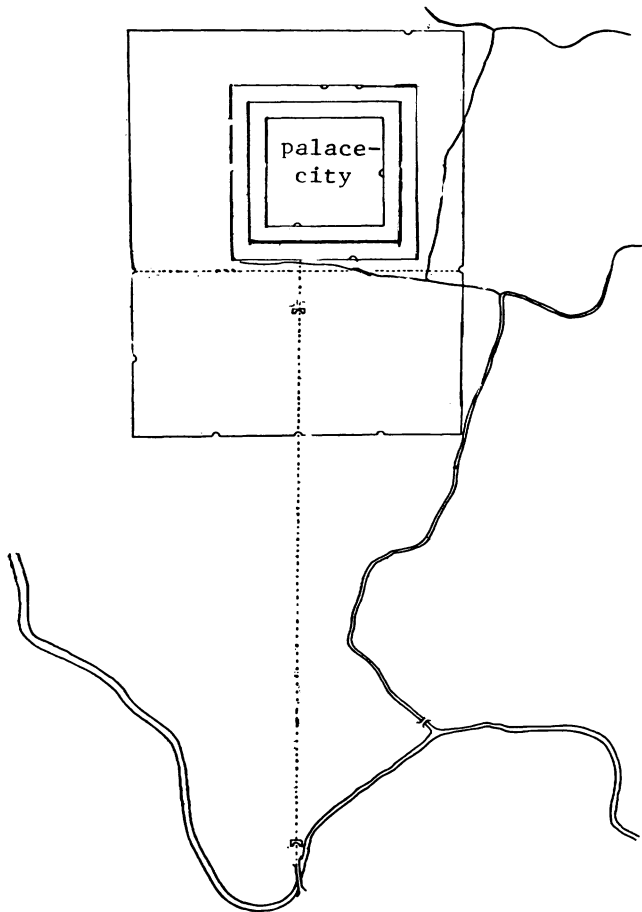


Fig. 13. Jiankang under the Liang, 502–557 (Zhu, *Jinling*, between 104 and 105).

nent to tracing the history of the three plan types established during the first millennium B.C.

Jianye, built as the capital of the Wu kingdom in 222, was a city whose plan conformed to the scheme of *wangcheng* described in the *Kaogong Ji* (Fig. 12). It had a roughly square shaped outer wall with its palaces enclosed by an inner wall slightly west of the city center. Successive stages of imperial-city building at the site of modern-day Nanjing during the period of disunion utilized the same outer wall, but under the Eastern Jin (317–420) the palace city was enlarged and moved north and eastward, and a second wall was added around it. By the time of Liang (502–557), the fifth dynasty to rule from the same site, a third wall came to enclose the palace city (Fig. 13). Another feature of the imperial plan which begins at the southern capital under the Eastern Jin is a long imperial way (*yudao*), leading from a gate 5 *li* (1 *li* = ½ km) south of the outer city wall to the main south gate of the palace city.¹⁶

In the first decade of the 3rd century A.D., even earlier than the founding of Jianye, Cao Cao (155–220) established his

16. The best source for the 3rd- through 6th-century capitals at Nanjing is Zhu Xie, *Jinling Guji Tukao* (Illustrated Research on the Remains of Jinling [Nanjing]). Shanghai, 1936.

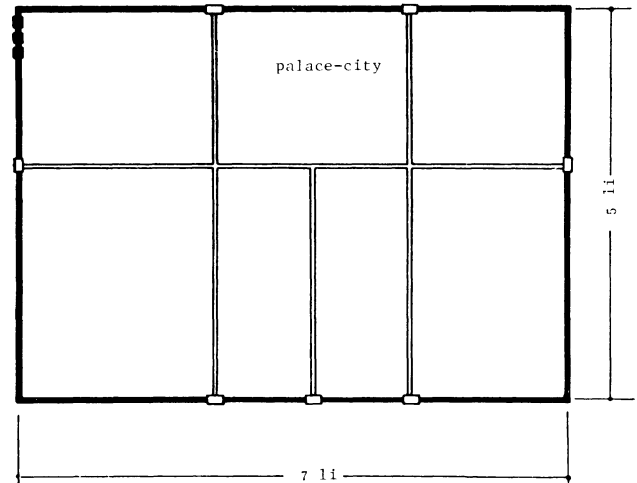
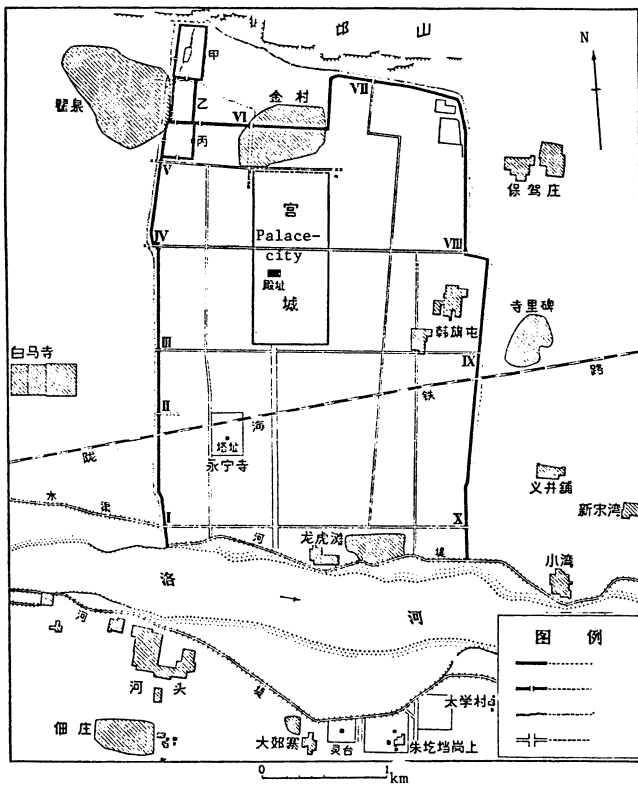


Fig. 14. Ye at the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. (Murata, *Teito*, 195).

power base at Ye. Although the center of Wei-Jin power would move to Luoyang during the reign of Cao Cao's son, the plan of the short-lived capital is important, for it represents the earliest post-Han implementation of the second imperial city type. Built with a palace city in the north center of its outer wall, and having major north-south and east-west streets running from one outer wall gate to an opposite one (Fig. 14), the plan of Ye was in the tradition of Jiang of Zhou times, and it anticipated what was to become a standard plan for larger and larger imperial cities built in north China through the period of Mongolian rule. The same plan would be employed at Luoyang when it became the primary capital of the Northern Wei (386–534) beginning in the 490s (Fig. 15).¹⁷ It was also to be used after the return to Ye upon

17. On N. Wei Luoyang, see W. Yan, "Luoyang Han-Wei-Sui-Tang Chengzhi Kancha Ji" (Record of the Investigation of the Han, Wei, Sui, and Tang City of Luoyang), *Kaogu Xuebao* (1955), 9, 117–136; "Han-Wei Luoyang Jiucheng Chubu Kancha" (Early Stages in the Excavation of Han-Wei Luoyang), *Kaogu* (1973), 4, 361–379; B. Su, "Bei-Wei Luoyang Cheng he Bei-Mang Lingmu" (N. Wei Luoyang City and the North Mang Mt. Tombs), *Wenwu* (1978), 7, 42–52; P. Ho, "Lo-yang. A.D. 495–534," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 26 (1966), 52–101; and references in *Luoyang Qielan Ji* (Record of the Monasteries of Luoyang), partially translated and discussed in W.J.F. Jenner, *Memories of Lo-yang, 495–534*, New York and Oxford, 1981, and fully translated in Y. Yang, *A Record of Buddhist Monasteries of Lo-yang*, Princeton, 1984. There is some scholarly controversy about whether the location of the palace city of N. Wei Luoyang was where it appears in Fig. 15, the plan of the city most frequently published in China. Several Japanese scholars suggest that the northern gardens of the city extended farther south of the northern wall, and that the palace city was actually more centrally located than it is shown in Fig. 15. These opinions are expressed in M. Ueda, ed., *Tōjō* (Cities), Tokyo, 1976, especially 99–139. Another controversy concerning the N. Wei capital at Luoyang is the extent to which a ward system was built beyond the city walls as they are shown in Fig. 15. This point is beyond the scope of this article, but interested readers can find an illustration of how the wards might have looked in Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi*, 23.



图一 汉魏洛阳城平面实测图

Fig. 15. Luoyang between 495 and 534 (Kaogu [1973], 4, 199).

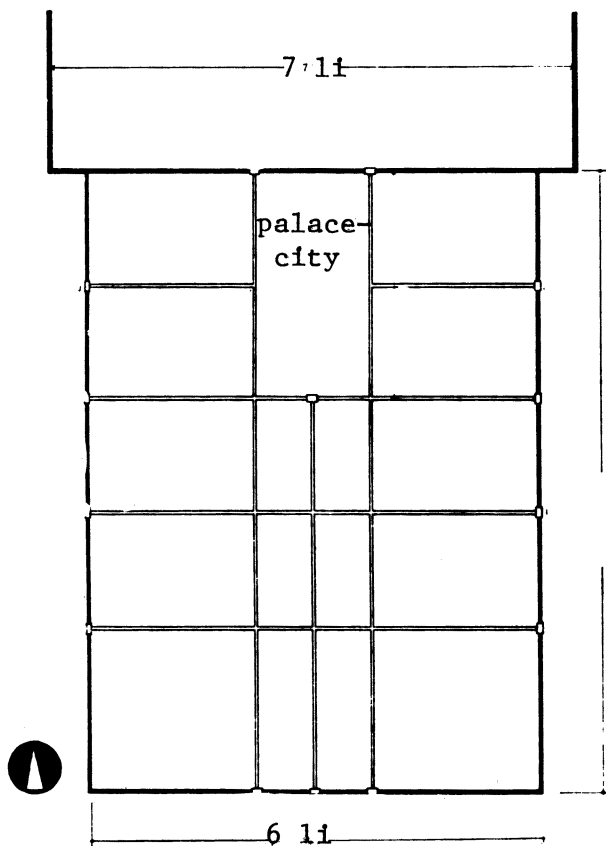


Fig. 16. Ye under the E. Wei, 534-550 (Murata, Teito, 227).

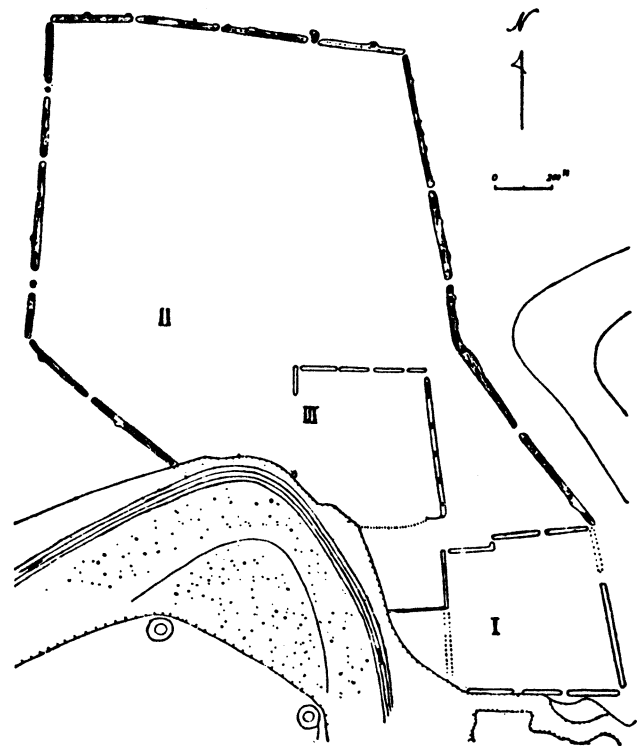


Fig. 17. Shengle in the 4th century (Murata, Teito, 70).

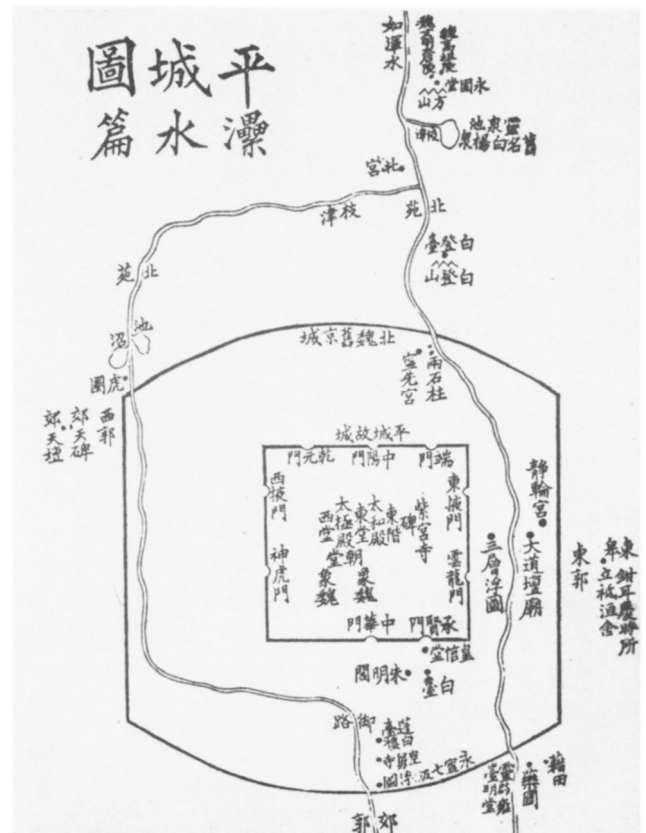


Fig. 18. Pingcheng under the N. Wei, 422-495 (Shui Jing Ju Tu, 77b).

the fall of Northern Wei Luoyang in 534. The later Ye, capital of the Eastern Wei (534–550) (Fig. 16), was a much larger and grander city than the remnant of Cao Cao's city, which lay directly to its north. With a palace city located in the north center, Ye of Eastern Wei times had three major north–south and three main east–west avenues, and a perimeter of nearly 30 *li*, in contrast to the 24-*li* outer-wall measurement of Ye in the early 3rd century.¹⁸ Like the capitals located at Nanjing during this period, the three northern capitals built at Ye and Luoyang had imperial ways which began at a south gate of the outer wall and formed major approaches to the south center gate of the palace city.

The third type of Chinese imperial city plan is found only north of the Great Wall during the period of disunity. Shengle, the first site used by the N. Wei as a capital, was a walled enclosure adjacent to what had been a military town, also walled, under the Han (Fig. 17).¹⁹ At Shengle, as at some of the first-millennium B.C. double cities, the two walled enclosures did not flourish contemporaneously. Shengle was located about 12 kilometers north of present-day Hologol, in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.

The primary N. Wei capital between the move south from Shengle in 313 and the establishment of Luoyang as the main N. Wei capital in 495 poses a yet unresolved case in the history of imperial city design in China. The site of great building activity in the 390s, and walled in 422, the city of Pingcheng was located outside of Datong, in northern Shanxi province. Limited excavation there in the 1930s yielded only a sketchy plan. The better-known plan of Pingcheng is found in the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) illustrated version of the 6th-century geographical text *Shui Jing Ju* (Commentary on the *Water Classic*) (Fig. 18). Literary records confirm that Pingcheng was a doubly walled city, but the location of the inner city is subject to debate.²⁰ If one accepts Figure 18 as an accurate picture of Pingcheng in the 5th century, then imperial cities with palace area in the center were built in far north and in south China, but not in the central Chinese provinces. In any case, the outer boundary of Pingcheng, with two parallel and

two curved sides, is unique among plans of Chinese imperial cities from any time.²¹

Capital cities such as Jianye, with palaces in the center, did not occur again in China until long after the fall of the Tang. The double city appeared sooner, but also not until the post-Tang period. Instead, imperial city building in China after the reunification by Sui (589–618) was dominated by the second imperial plan type. Since it can be proved that the source of the second type, represented in China after the 6th century by Chang'an, was a first-millennium B.C. city which had a continuous history between the 3rd and 10th centuries, the question why that plan was not implemented at what would be the only other Chinese capital as impressive as Chang'an becomes even more intriguing. Doubly so, in fact, because for a time it seemed that the plan of the primary Sui-Tang imperial city would reign unchallenged in East Asia as the ultimate manifestation of Chinese city building.²²

Almost as soon as the first Sui capital Daxing was built by Emperor Wendi (reigned 589–604) a second Sui capital was constructed by his son and successor at Luoyang, the site that had vied with Chang'an for the position of primary capital in the past. Sui-Tang Luoyang was built as a replica of Chang'an, and even after it was decided not to disturb tomb and other monuments of former times located in what would have been the western half of Luoyang, thus creating a lopsided version of the now ideal Chinese plan (with palace city in the northwest instead of north center), the city still was, and is, described as an image of contemporary Chang'an.²³ That it was such in the minds of its creators and inhabitants is important, for by the 8th century the Chang'an plan had come to be a universal East Asian symbol of rule according to the Tang model. In the year 710 the Japanese capital Heijo-kyo, built at modern-day Nara, was conceived according to the Chang'an design, and even though by the end of the century, when the Japanese built a second capital, Heian, according to the same plan, the Nara city districts had grown beyond the ideal form in order to include some monasteries to the east, this plan, like Sui-Tang Luoyang, has also always been considered an ideal

21. One explanation for this unusual configuration will be offered at the end of the article.

22. The bibliography on Sui-Tang Chang'an is extensive. Three good summary articles are: "Tang Chang'an Cheng Diji Chubu Tanze" (Early Stages in the Investigation of the Tang Chang'an Foundation), *Kaogu Xuebao* (1958), 3, 79–94; D. Ma, "Tangdai Chang'an Cheng Kao Jilie" (Brief Research on the City Chang'an), *Kaogu* (1963), 11, 595–611; and Su, "Sui-Tang Chang'an Cheng he Luoyang Cheng" (Chang'an and Luoyang in Sui-Tang Times), *Kaogu* (1978), 6, 409–425. An important 19th-century study is S. Xu (1781–1848), *Tang Liangjing Chengfang Kao* (Investigation of the City Districts of the Two Tang Capitals).

23. For a discussion and plans of Sui-Tang Luoyang, see Su, "Sui-Tang," or "Sui-Tang Dongdu Chengzhi de Kancha he Fazhan Xuji" (Continuation of the Investigation and Excavation of the Sui-Tang Eastern Capital), *Kaogu* (1976), 6, 361–379.

18. Ye was first published in J. Murata, "Gyoto koryaku" (Brief Investigation of the City Ye), *Kenchikugaku kenkyū* (Architectural Researches), 89 (1938). The revised version of this article appears in the same author's *Teito*, 181–260. On Ye, see as well W. Yan, "Ye Cheng Diaocha Ji" (Record of the Excavation of Ye), *Kaogu* (1963), 1, 15–24.

19. On Shengle, see Murata, *Chūgoku tojō*, 72, and *Teito*, 69–71. In Fig. 19 enclosure I is the Han city, II is Shengle, and III is the boundary of a later Liao city.

20. Information about Pingcheng comes from the 6th-century commentary written by Li Daoyuan, on the 3rd-century text *Shui Jing* (Water Classic), and from Wei Shou (506–572), *Wei Shu* (Book of the Wei). Pingcheng is discussed also by S. Mizuno in two articles on the city Datong in *Kōkōgaku*, 9 (1938), 8, 410–415, and 9, 434–437. The sketch plan is published on p. 435 of the second article.

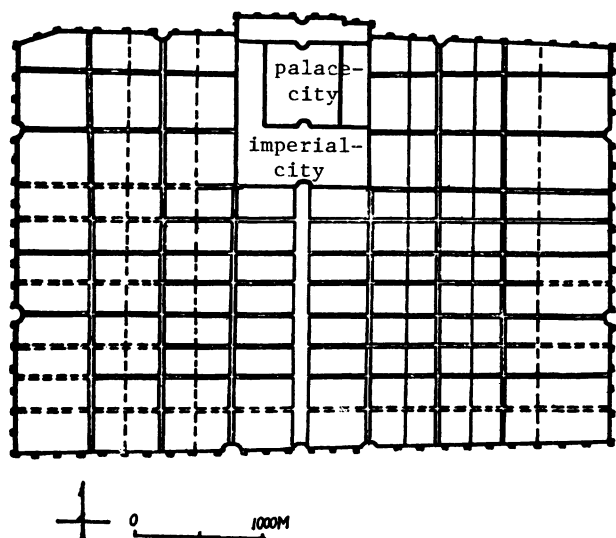


Fig. 19. Plan of Bohai capital at Longquan Fu, 8th–9th century (Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi*, 37).

Tang scheme. So too the 8th-century Japanese capitals of Naniwa, Shigaraki, and Kuni,²⁴ and the Bohai kingdom capital Longquan Fu in modern Heilongjiang (Fig. 19).²⁵ Even under Mongolian rule of China a small city based on the Tang Chang'an plan was built at Yingchang Lu (Fig. 20). The Yuan administrative town, less than two-thirds a kilometer on any side, had its palatial and administrative focus in the north center, which was separated from the rest of the city by an east–west boulevard which roughly bisected the city and a main north–south street emerging from the south center gate.²⁶

The reason for the differences between Chang'an and Beijing may be explained by the history of imperial-city building in China under Mongolian rule. Yet before this can be discussed it is necessary to trace capital-city building in and around China between the fall of the Tang and the takeover of China by the Mongols.

The post-Tang imperial city

Shortly after the fall of the Tang a group of Khitan tribesmen banded together under the Yelu clan and established themselves as the Liao empire in northernmost China and farther north. One means of imperial consolidation according to the Chinese model was capital-city building, and using several older capital sites of non-Chinese rulers and the site that

24. On the Heijo capital at Nara, see K. Tsuboi, *Heizeikyū seki* (Remains of the Heijo Palace), Tokyo, 1975. For other Japanese capitals of the 8th century, see Ueda, *Tojō*, 191–226 and 227–253.

25. The Bohai capital is discussed in X. Chen, "Tangdai Bohai Shangjing Longquan Fu Yizhi" (Remains of the Bohai Upper Capital at Longquan Fu of the Tang Dynasty), *Wenwu* (1980), 9, 85–89.

26. On Yingchang Lu, see Y. Li, "Yingchang Lu Gucheng Diaocha Ji" (Record of the Excavation of the Old City Yingchang Lu), *Kaogu* (1961), 10, 531–533 and 554.

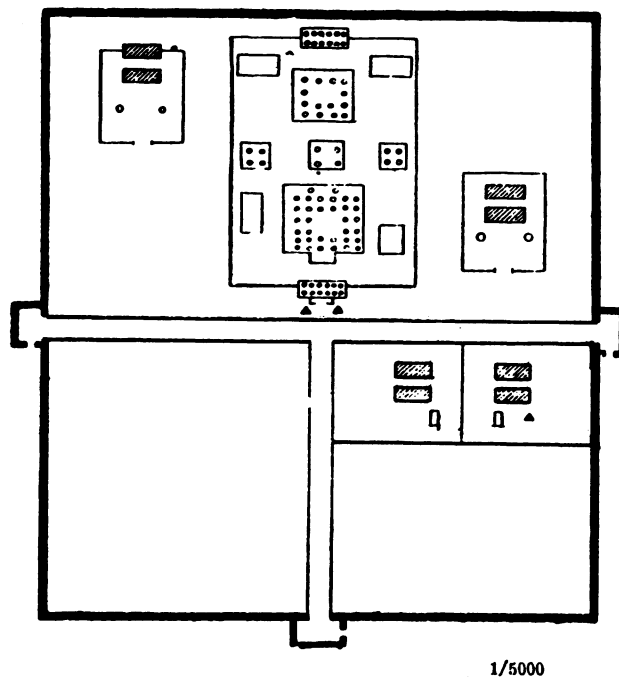


Fig. 20. Yingcheng Lu, 14th century (*Kaogu*, [1961], 10, 532, Fig. 2).

was to become Beijing the Liao eventually came to have five capitals.²⁷ The Liao upper capital at Linhuang Fu (Fig. 21), today in Hebei, and their central capital at Dading Fu in present Liaoning, are both examples of double cities. Although the double city type had not been used in China proper for imperial purposes since the first millennium B.C., it was common among the Liao capitals and among the five capitals of the non-Chinese dynasty Jin, who ruled the former Liao empire and portions of China as far south as Kaifeng. Among Jin imperial cities the double city occurred at the upper capital Huining Fu (Fig. 22) and at the northern capital at Dading Fu, the latter built on the ruins of a Liao capital.²⁸ In the cases of both Liao and Jin imperial cities, an important purpose of the dual city division was population control: one of the two walled areas was Hancheng, for Chinese and other non-native residents, and the second was for natives of the ruling dynasty.

27. The five Liao capitals were: Shangjing, the upper capital, at Linhuang Fu, whose outer wall was begun in 918 and palace city in 926; the eastern capital Liaoyang, where settlers were brought in 927; Nanjing (Xijin), formally the southern capital after 937; the central capital Dading Fu, established in 1002; and Datong, the western capital, established in 1044. On the Liao and Jin cities, see X. Zhu, "Liao-Jin Yanjing Chengguo Gongyuan Tukao" (Illustrated Investigation of the Palaces and Parks of the Liao-Jin City at Yanjing [Beijing]), *Wenzhi Jikan*, 6 (1936), 1, 49–81; and J. Tamura, *Chūgoku seifuke ōchō no kenkyū* (Researches on the Chinese Conquest Dynasties), Tokyo, 1964, especially Vol. 1.

28. The five Jin capitals were: Shangjing, the northern capital, located at the former Liao capital site Dading Fu and established in 1153 after the destruction of the Liao city remains; Liaoyang, the eastern capital, where new palaces were built in 1144; Datong, the western capital, established in 1125; the central capital Zhongdu, where the Jin

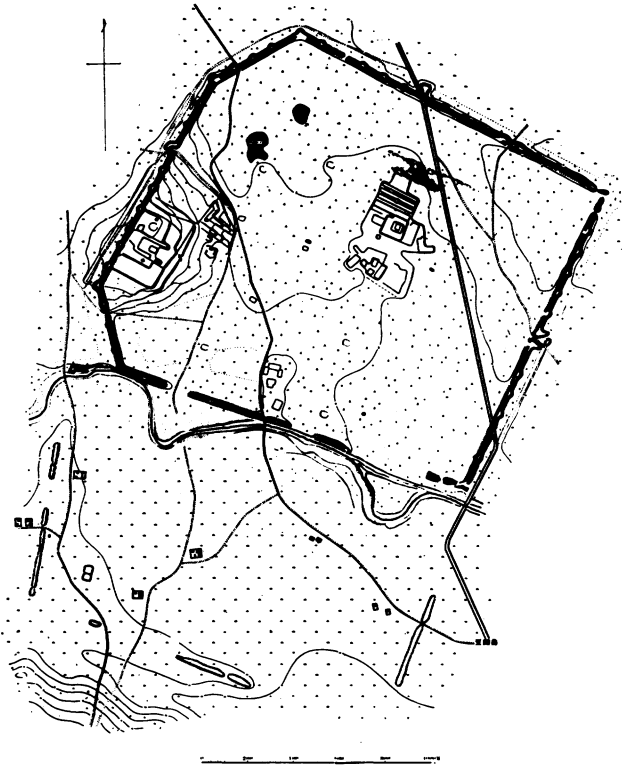


Fig. 21. Liao upper capital at Linhuang Fu, 10th–12th century (Tamura, *Chūgoku seifuku*, 1, 320).

The four imperial cities built in China between the 10th and 12th centuries have more in common with the *Kaogong Ji* plan of *wangcheng* than with the other two Chinese capital schemes; but none of them was planned with the intention of imitating the classical Chinese plan. The Song dynasty (960–1126) eastern capital Dongjing—later known as Bianliang, Bianzhou, or Bianjing, and nowadays by a pre-Song name, Kaifeng—had a long history before it came to be used as the primary Song imperial city. Initially a small town with a single wall, the Later Zhou (951–960) added a second wall called *luocheng* in 955. The two-walled city, with the outer wall of more than 40 *li*, was taken over by the Song, who repaired both the wall and palace buildings in the 960s. The tremendous influx of population to the new Song capital almost immediately necessitated the construction of another outer wall. Even this third wall could not accommodate the 1.7 million population, which by the 12th century expected to live within a walled

ruler moved in 1151 and which was established in 1153; and the southern Jin capital at modern-day Kaifeng. Bibliography on the Jin capitals includes: K. Sonoda, “Jin no jokyoshi Hakujo ni tsuite” (Remains of the Jin capital: Concerning the “White City”), *Kōkogaku zasshi*, 29 (1939), 2, 411–443; R. Torii, “Jin Shangjing Cheng ji Qiwenhua” (Jin Shangjing and Its Culture), *Yanjing Xuebao*, 35 (1948), 129–204; and Susan Bush, “Archeological Remains of the Chin Dynasty,” *Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 17 (1981), 6–31.

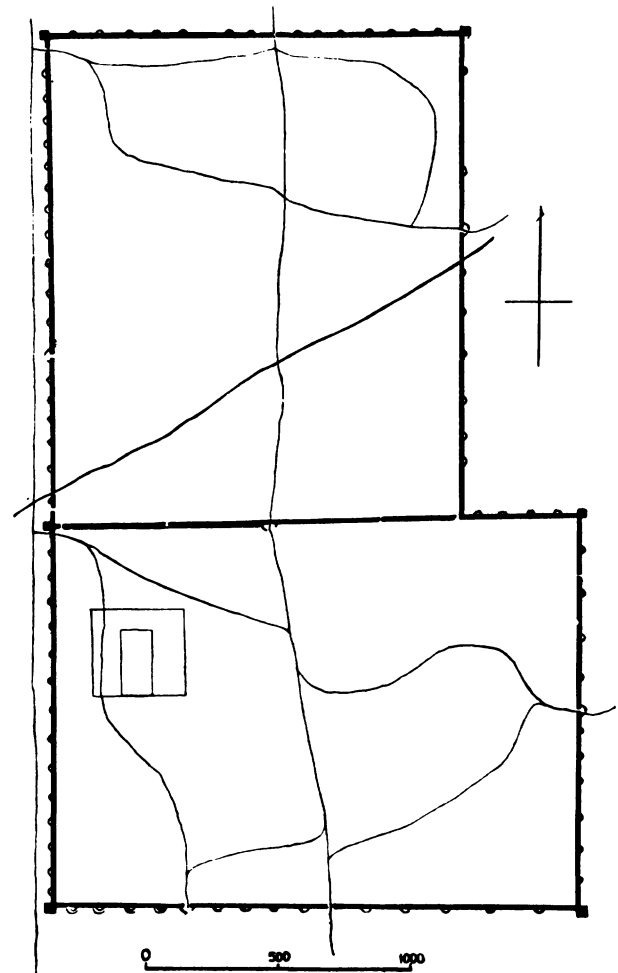


Fig. 22. Jin upper capital at Huining Fu, 12th–13th century (Sonoda, “Jin no jokyoshi,” 413).

enclosure.²⁹ Thus, unlike most Chinese imperial cities, and in contrast to the stipulations of the wall-building order imposed by the *Kaogong Ji*, Song Bianliang was constructed in response to the organic growth of a boom town.³⁰ The various published plans of the first Song capital, such as Figure 23, concede only slightly that the city’s outer wall was not geometrically perfect. Probably only the drawing published by Yue

29. Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi*, 46, estimates the population of the N. Song capital to have been 1.7 million, including the military quartered there. Other estimates may be lower.

30. The growth of the N. Song capital is discussed in E. Kracke, “Sung K’ai-feng: Pragmatic Metropolis and Formalistic Capital,” in *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, J. W. Haeger, ed., Tucson, 1975, 49–77. The most important contemporary text on the Song capital is Y. Meng, *Dongjing Menghua Lu* (Record of Dreams of the Eastern Capital), 12th century. Palaces of Bianliang are described in Z. Tao (1346–1415), *Zhuogeng Lu* (Record of Rest from the Plow), Taipei reprint, Shijie Press, 1977, 264–268.

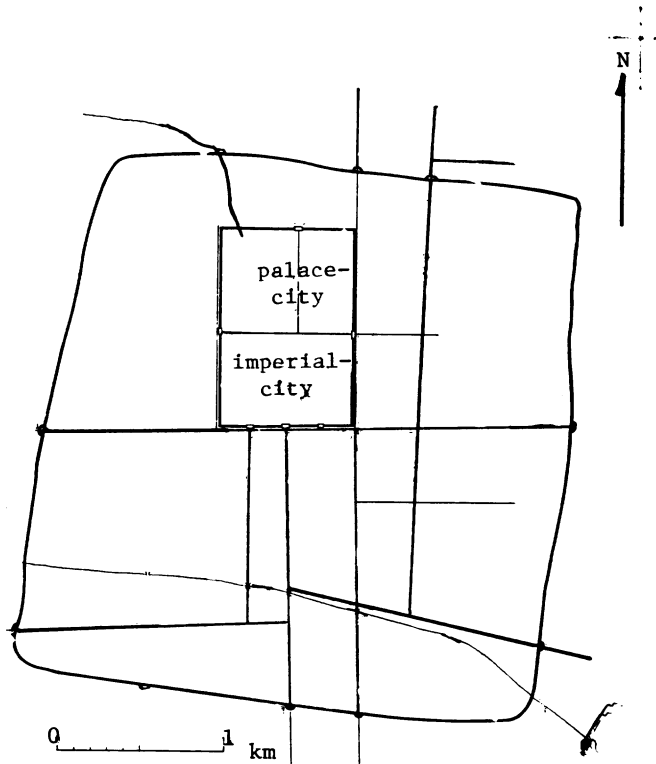


Fig. 23. N. Song Bianliang, mid-10th century to 1126 (Murata, *Teito*, 124, after unpublished map of Mei Yuanyu).

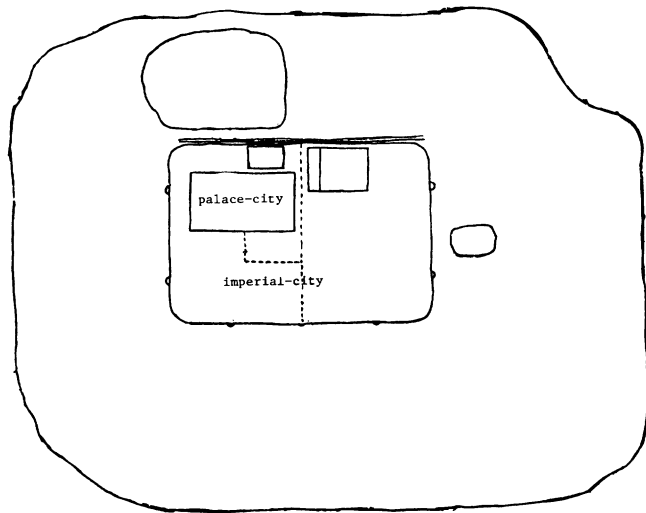


Fig. 24. N. Song Bianliang (J. Yue, *Zhongguo Jianzhu Shi*, Fig. 96).

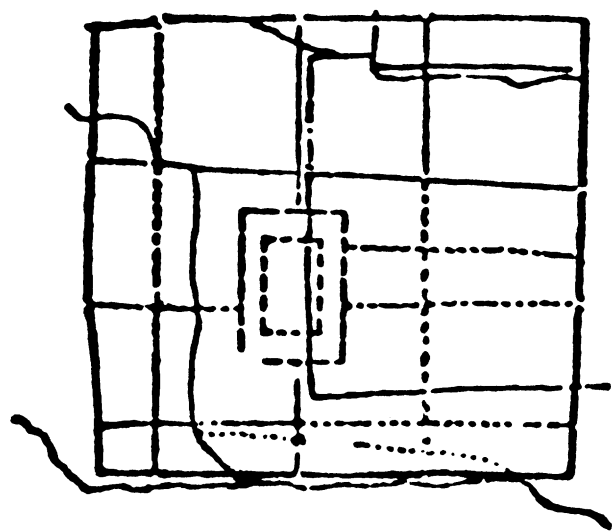


Fig. 25. Jin Zhongdu, 12th century to 1234 (*Wenwu* [1977], 9, 4, Fig. 4).

Jiacao in 1933 (Fig. 24) gives a more accurate shape for the outer wall of Bianliang.³¹

While Bianliang was capital of the Song dynasty, a second multiwalled capital stood in China. It was the southernmost capital, Nanjing, of the Liao dynasty. This bi-walled city was partially destroyed by the conquering Jin armies, but some of its buildings were reused when the Jin built their central capital there in the early 1150s.³² The Jin central capital Zhongdu was an enlarged version of the Liao city, built on its ruins (Fig. 25). Literary records state that before building Zhongdu the Jin sent craftsmen-designers to the former Song capital Bianliang to copy plans of the city and its buildings; and in a few cases actual building parts from the Song capital were transported northward to Zhongdu.³³

31. It is interesting that in the rarely published plan of the N. Song capital reproduced as Fig. 23 the palace city is shown north of the imperial city, rather than within it. As will be explained below, post-Song conceptions of the ideal Chinese imperial city resulted in more than one erroneous plan of earlier Chinese capitals, including Bianliang. It is my belief that these later drawings of Bianliang have had too great an influence on renderings of this still-unexcavated city, and that one should be open to the possibility that the plan published here is accurate.

32. On Jin Zhongdu, see Zhu, "Liao-Jin Yanjing," and "Jin Zhongdu Gongdian Tukao" (Illustrated Research on Palaces of the Jin Central Capital), *Wenwu Cankao Ziliao*, 1955, 7, 69-75.

33. The Bianliang-Zhongdu connection is discussed in Steinhardt, "Khubilai's City," 147-148, and Zhu, "Liao-Jin Yanjing."

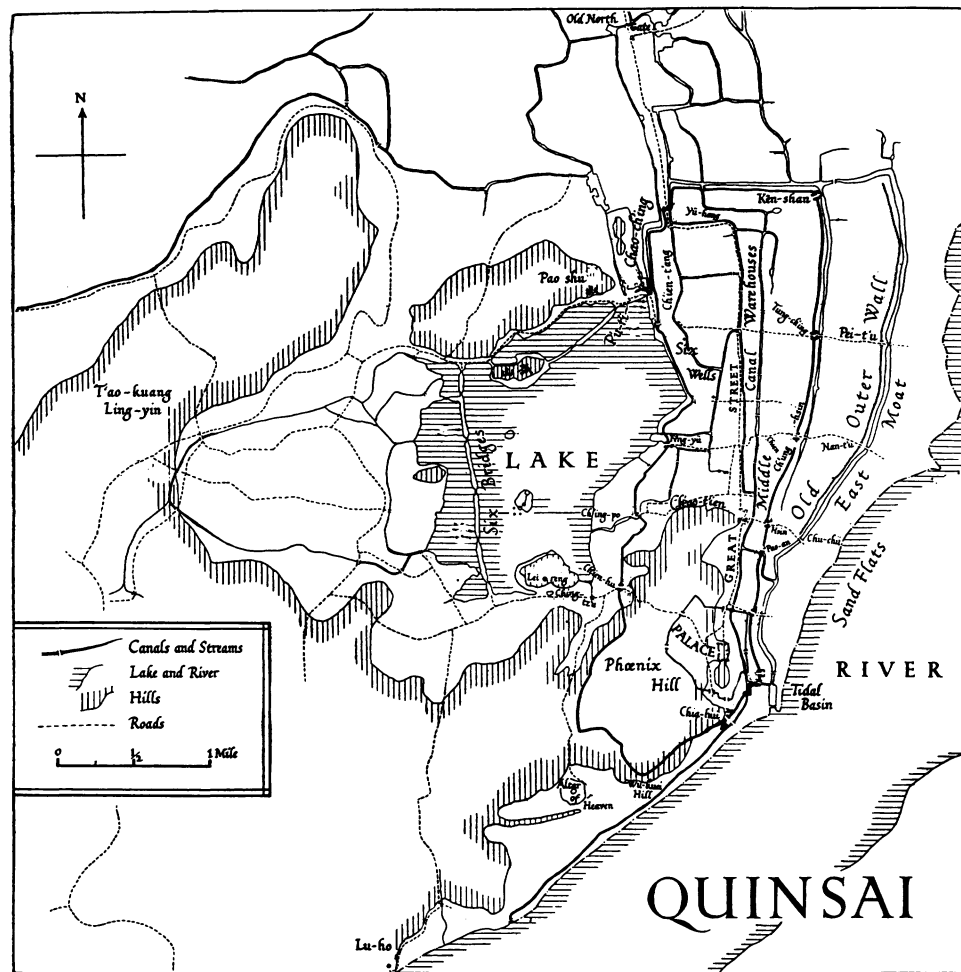


Fig. 26. S. Song Lin'an, mid-12th century to 1279 (from A. Moule, *Quinsai with Other Notes on Marco Polo*, 1957, Fig. 1).

The fourth capital city built between the beginning of Song rule and the Mongolian takeover of China was the second Song capital, built at Lin'an Fu (present Hangzhou) by the remnant of the imperial Song who came to be known as the Southern Song. Like Bianliang, thenceforth known as the N. Song capital, the capital of the S. Song (1126–1279) had an outer wall of irregular shape (Fig. 26).³⁴ A doubly walled city, its western outer wall border was determined by West Lake, and its eastern boundary by the Zhe River, resulting in walls that followed the water courses. Moreover, the palace city at Lin'an was located in the south end of the city, and the imperial way that approached the palace city south wall began in the north and continued southward. The most unusual of all known Chinese imperial city plans, Lin'an in Song times is the only Chinese capital that does not conform to one of the three city types discussed above.

There is no question that the plan of Lin'an had no bearing on the design of the first Mongolian capital in China, Dadu, built by Khubilai Khan (1214–1294) beginning in 1267. The influence of the other three 10th- to 13th-century cities, contrary to common belief, is also debatable.

Although one can find literary and physical evidence of similarities between Song Bianliang, Jin Zhongdu, and the Yuan capital Dadu (Fig. 27), one outstanding and so far unique feature separates the imperial city built by Khubilai Khan from all other imperial cities built on Chinese soil or at China's north by non-Chinese conquerors. It is the center marker (*zhongxin zhi tai*), which was excavated slightly west

34. On Lin'an, see A. C. Moule, *Quinsai with Other Notes on Marco Polo*, Cambridge, 1957.

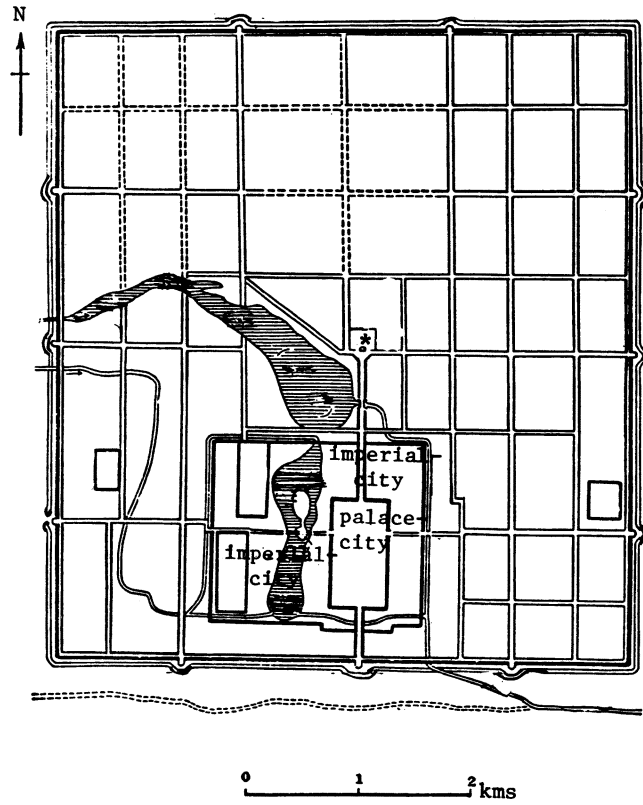


Fig. 27. Dadu, 1267-1368 (*Wenwu* [1973], 5, 4).

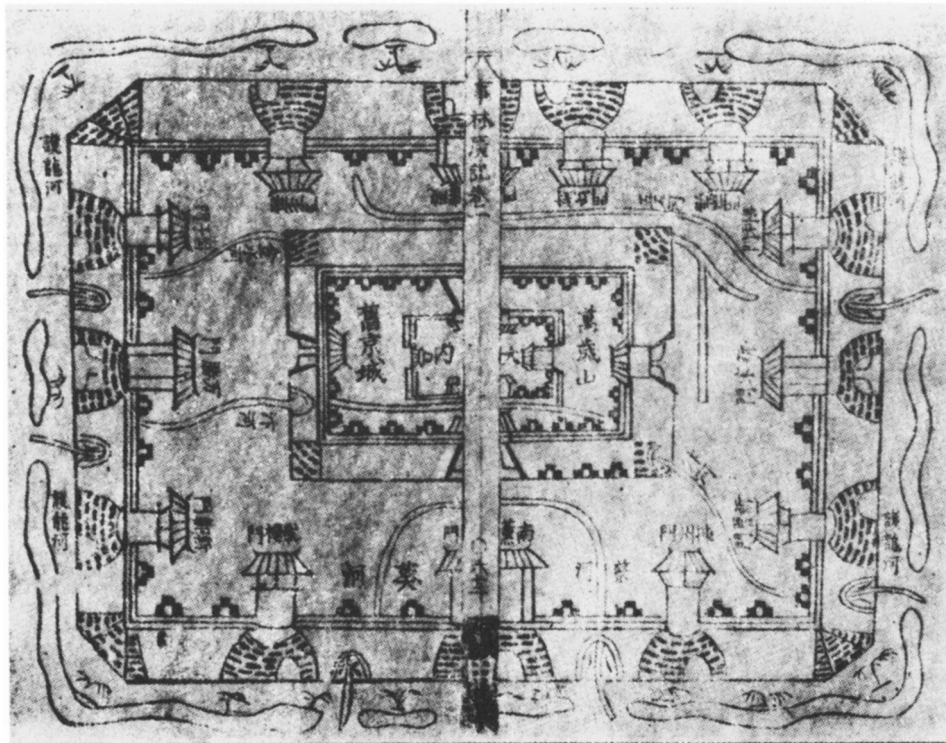


Fig. 28. N. Song Bianliang (*Shilin Guangji*, from H. Fang, *Song Shi*, II, Fig. 3).

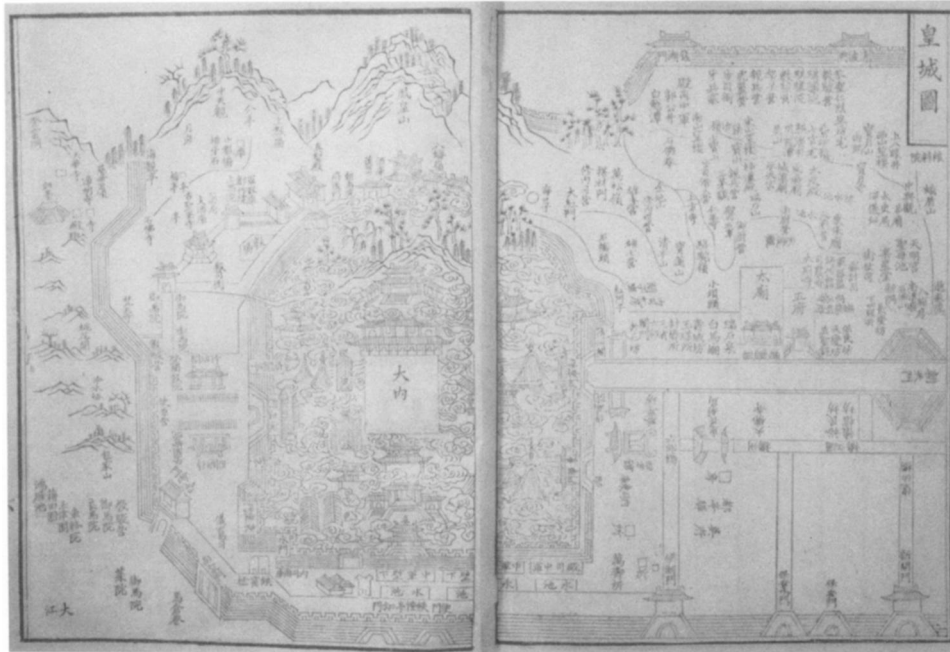


Fig. 29. S. Song Lin'an (*Xianshun Lin'an Zhi* [Record of Lin'an in the Xianshun era], 1867 reissue, 5a-b).

of the center pavilion (*zhongxin ge*) (Fig. 27).³⁵ Laid in the ground even before the building of the Dadu outer wall, the center marker was equidistant from the midpoint of each outer wall face. Although, as Hou Renzhi has explained, the necessities of water supply were such that the Dadu imperial city had to be constructed south of due center, the Mongolian capital in China was intended from its inception to replicate the idealized plan of *wangcheng* described in the *Kaogong Ji*. It should be emphasized that not only has no center marker been found at the similarly appearing capitals Song Bianliang and Jin Zhongdu, but neither is one mentioned in the building records of either city. Building order, then, is only one of the distinctions between the N. Song and Yuan capitals.

Evidence also exists that suggests the Chinese advisor of Khubilai, Liu Bingzhong (1216–1274), who had designed the

plan of Khubilai's earlier capital at Kaiping Fu (later known as Shangdu), in the present Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, was more instrumental in directing the building of Dadu according to the Chinese scheme prescribed by the *Kaogong Ji* than were non-Chinese builders working in Dadu who have also been associated with the great capital's planning.³⁶ One important purpose for the selection of a purely Chinese plan was to legitimize the non-Chinese regime according to Chinese customs. The program of legitimization by architecture was still a concern of the Mongolian court in the 1330s, for the officially sponsored encyclopedia *Shilin Guangji* (Compendium of a Forest of Matters), published in that decade, included a plan of N. Song Bianliang in which the city was drawn as a replica of *wangcheng* of the *Kaogong Ji* (Fig. 28), the very design that had inspired Khubilai's capital. So much of the Song city was lost by Mongolian times, and even more by now, that it is not surprising that the image of Bianliang that has survived, due largely it seems to the Mongolian published plan, was of a classical and idealized Chinese city. In fact, a plan of Bianliang showing the truncated corners of the *Shilin Guangji* rendering was published in China as recently as 1977.³⁷

35. The center marker is discussed in Z. Zhao, "Yuan Dadu Pingmian Gueihua Fuyuan de Yanjiu" (Researches on the Reconstruction of the Yuan Dadu Plan and Scale), *Kaogu Xuebao* (1966), 1, 14–17, and R. Hou, "Beijing Jiucheng Pingmian Sheji de Gaizao" (Restructuring of the Plan of the Old City of Beijing), *Wenwu* (1973), 5, 2–13, 29. Other bibliography relevant to Dadu includes: P. Wang, "Yuan Dadu Pingmian Gueihua Shulie" (Brief Discussion of the Scale and Plan of Yuan Dadu), *Gugong Bowuyuan Yuankan*, 2 (1960), 61–82; R. Hou, "Beijing Cheng: Lishi Fazhan de Tedian ji Qigaizao" (Beijing City: Historical Development of Special Features and Their Restructuring), *Lishi Dili*, 2 (1982), 1–20; Hou and Wu, "Tian'an Men"; Zhu, "Yuan Dadu Gongyuan Tukao" (Illustrated Research on the Palaces and Parks of Yuan Dadu), *Zhongguo Yingzao Xueshe Huikan*, 1 (1937), 2, 1–116; Tao, *Zhuogeng Lu*, *juan* 21; X. Xiao, *Gugong Yilu* (Record of the Remains of the Imperial Palaces), 14th century; Steinhardt, "Khubilai's City," and Steinhardt, "Imperial Architecture under Mongolian Patronage: Khubilai's Imperial City of Dadu," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1981.

36. On Liu Bingzhong, see H. Chan, "Liu Ping-chung (1216–74): A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan," *T'oung Pao*, 53 (1967), 98–146. On Liu's role at Dadu, see also Steinhardt, "Khubilai's City." The presumption that a man with non-Chinese name, Yeheidie'er, was the designer of the plan of Dadu seems largely due to the writings of Y. Chen, translated as *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols*, Los Angeles, 1966, 217–222.

37. This plan of Bianliang is published in Hou and Wu, "Tian'an Men," 3, Fig. 2.

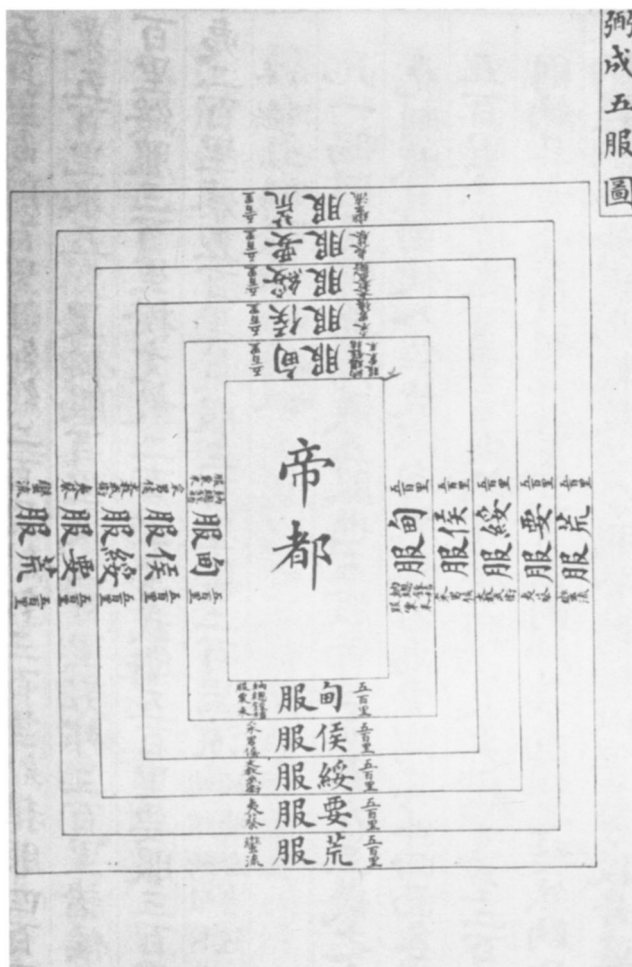


Fig. 30. The Imperial City (*Shui Jing Tu Shuo*, juan 6).

The Bianliang plan is not the only case of a city scheme published as an ideal image of the Chinese imperial city based on the *Kaogong Ji* description, in contrast to its actual appearance. An even more blatant example of the fictitious creation of ideal imagery of legitimization through an urban scheme is the plan of the S. Song capital Lin'an shown in Figure 29, originally from a 13th-century text. The perfectly formed outer walled city with palace city in the true center bears little resemblance to the actual Song city shown in Figure 26. Yet given the destructibility of human creations like timber buildings and mud-brick walls, what survives of the now-lost Song cities are the idealized images published in books.

Furthermore, the *Kaogong Ji* is not the only illustrated classical text in which the Chinese city has been rendered ideally. Several illustrations of the Chinese imperial city or related subjects are found, for instance, in *Shu Jing Tu Shuo* (Illustrated Notes on the *Book of Documents*), published in 1905 (Figs. 30, 31). It is thus no surprise that the plan of the N. Wei capital Pingcheng, whose outer wall shape could hardly have been built, is published as it is in *Shui Jing Ju Tu* (see Fig. 18).

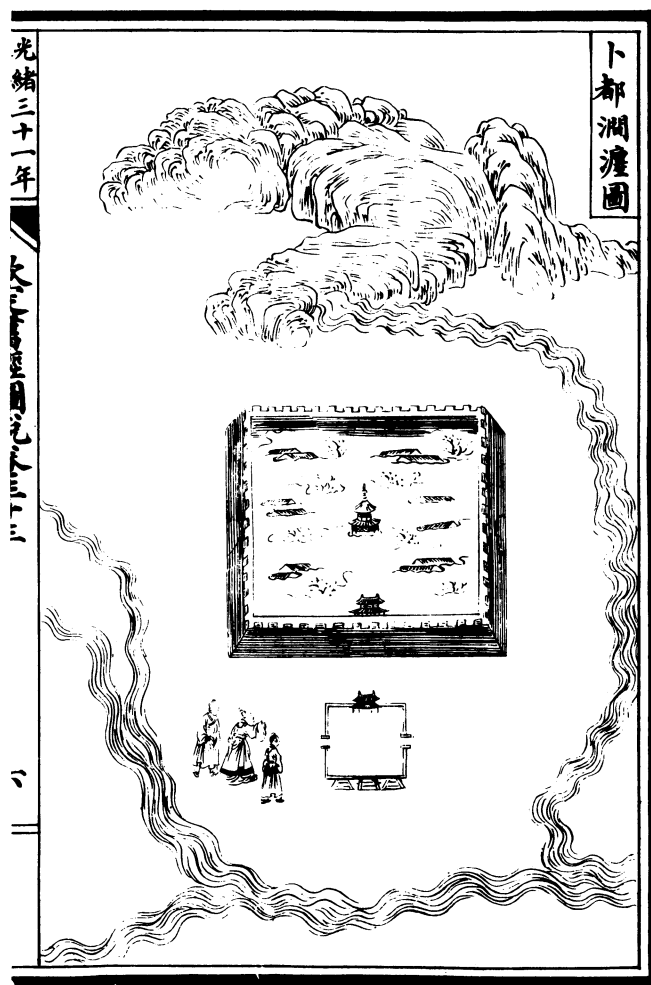


Fig. 31. Divining the Location of the Capital (*Shui Jing Tu Shuo*, juan 33/6a).

Indeed, the power of the center³⁸ was so profound in Chinese city imagery that almost any city with inner and outer walls can be drawn in accordance with the *Kaogong Ji* prescription. The most amazing example is the publication in *Henan Zhi* (Record of Henan province), in the Yuan dynasty, of the "western capital" Chang'an as an ideal city according to the King of Zhou's *wangcheng* model (Fig. 32), for at no time in Chang'an's history did it resemble such a design.

Thus it is easy to document and just as easy to understand why Beijing is as it is. The city built on the ruins of Khubilai Khan's capital retained the plan resurrected by the Mongols, which at the same time was a plan with outstanding pedigree according to Chinese tradition. The plan of the Yuan city had also been implemented at Nanjing during the brief period from the late 1360s until the return of the primary Ming cap-

38. On the "power of the center" in other contexts, see Rudolph Arnheim, *The Power of the Center*, Berkeley, 1982.

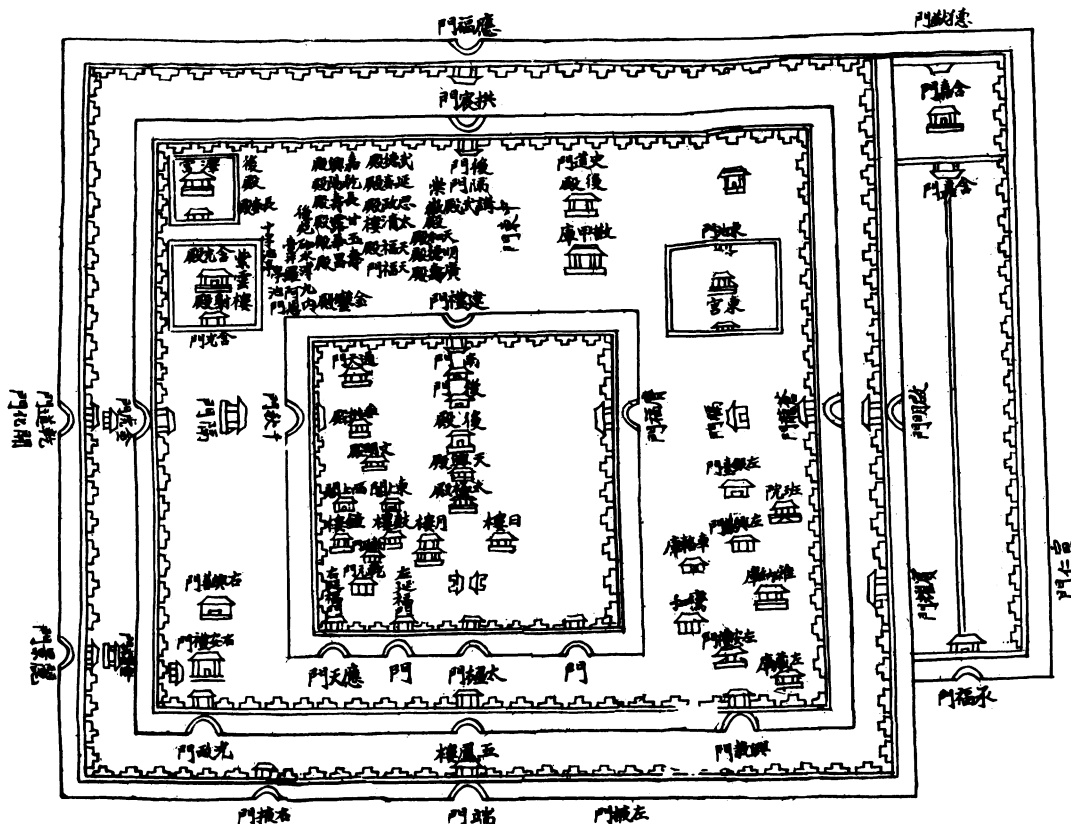


Fig. 32. Chang'an, the Western Capital (*Yuan Henan Zhi*, 5th illustration).

ital north to Beijing in the first quarter of the 15th century.³⁹ The same plan was used as much as possible, given the topography and already existing buildings, for Fengyang, a candidate for becoming the main Ming capital at the beginning of the Hongwu reign (1368–1398) but an auxiliary capital during the years Nanjing served as the primary Ming imperial city.⁴⁰ The Beijing plan, with Forbidden City center approached by the T-shaped combination of imperial way and palace place, has even been successfully adapted as a people's place, Tian'an Square, by the People's Republic of China, the city center now serving as a political focus.⁴¹

What becomes harder to explain is why Chang'an in Tang times was as it was. The best explanation is that the Chang'an design, with a palace city in the north center, was considered at its time a plan with as long-standing, and thereby presum-

ably as legitimate, a history as the plan utilized by the Ming for their capital cities. The irony, of course, is that it was due to the Mongol Khubilai Khan that the *Kaogong Ji* plan was revived and that the plan of N. Song Bianliang came to be construed after the fact as an ideal city built according to the classical model.

What has become clear is that there is more than one lineage of city plan, each considered ideal at its time of employment, in the history of Chinese imperial planning. It is true that for a city to be imperial the list of criteria presented at the opening of this article must be found. Yet it is also a fact that not all Chinese imperial cities adhere to the *Kaogong Ji* description as rigorously as has been supposed. Rather, three different city designs can be found in China during the first millennium B.C., and each has a history of nearly 2,000 years, at least.

39. For plans of Nanjing in Ming times, see Zhu, *Jinling*, fold-out map between 192 and 193, and Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi*, 72, 73.

40. For the plan of Fengyang, see Dong, *Zhongguo Chengshi*, 75–77. On the role of Fengyang in early Ming imperial planning, see: E. Farmer, *Early Ming Government: The Evolution of Dual Capitals*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976, esp. 175–182; and T. Matsumoto, "Mindai

Chuto kensetsu shimatsu" (Circumstances Surrounding the Establishment of the Ming Central Capital), *Tōhō gaku*, 67 (1984), 62–75.

41. For plans of the newly designed city center, see L. Wu, "Tian'an Men Guangchang de Gueihua he Sheji" (Plan and Design of Tian'an Men Square), *Jianzhu Shi Lunji*, 2 (1979), 14–47.