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This book offers a new perspective on Chinese urban history by exploring cities as habitable spaces. China, the world's most populous nation, is now its newest urban society, and the pace of this unprecedented historical transformation has increased in recent decades. The contributors to this book conceptualise cities as first providing the necessities of life, and then becoming places in which the quality of life can be improved. They focus on how cities have been made secure during times of instability, how their inhabitants have consumed everything from the simplest of foods to the most expensive luxuries, and how they have been planned as ideal spaces. Drawing examples from across the country, this book offers comparisons between different cities, highlights continuities across time and space; and in doing so may provide solutions to some of the problems that continue to affect Chinese cities today.

About the Author Toby Lincoln is Lecturer in Modern Chinese Urban History at the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, UK. He is a historian of urbanization in China, the history of urban planning in the twentieth century, and the interaction between war and the city. His most recent publication is *Urbanizing China in War and Peace: the Case of Wuxi County* (2015). Xu Tao is Assistant Professor at the Institute of History in the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China. His research focuses on mobility and transport in the context of urban history and the study of politics in China. He has published two monographs and over twenty articles in Chinese and English, including *A History of the Bicycle and Modern China* (2015).