

Chapter 1 : Beijing - A Concise History : Stephen G. Haw :

Beijing: A Concise History (review) Yamin Xu China Review International, Volume 14, Number 2, Fall , pp. (Review) Published by University of Hawai'i Press.

Stephen Haw, a well-established author on China, outlines the establishment of the earliest cities in the years before BC, its status as regional capital during most of the long Zhou dynasty, and its emergence as capital of the whole of China after the conquest of the Mongol invaders under Chenghiz Khan and his successors. Overall, Stephen Haw gives an impressive account of the long and fascinating history of a city that is growing in prominence as an urban centre of global significance. Table of Contents Introduction: The Northern Capital 1. At the Edge of the North China Plain: The Location and Prehistory of the Beijing Area 2. The Ming Dynasty, to 6. The Manchu Conquest, to 7. The Late Qing Dynasty, to 8. The Republic, the Warlords and Communist Revolution, to 9. Government and Control of the Beijing Area. Chronology of Major Events. The Summer Palaces and Imperial Parks. Other Temples and Religious Sites in Beijing. Other Sites Outside Beijing City. He first visited China in and lived in the country for two years as a student and teacher at the University of Shandong. He has since travelled extensively around the country. He is the author of numerous articles and several books. About the Series Routledge Studies in the Modern History of Asia During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Asia has undergone immense and far reaching changes: This series includes in-depth research on aspects of economic, political and social history of individual countries as well as more broad-reaching analyses of regional issues.

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Immediately north and west of the city, the land is mountainous. The area is also dry, with annual rainfall of only about mm [20 inches] or less. Combined with a long, cold winter, this severely limits the agricultural potential of the area around Beijing. Throughout much of its history, water and food supplies for Beijing have been problematic. Water is still in short supply today. There seems to be no good reason why this city should have been chosen to be the capital of China. During the long Zhou dynasty, the capital of the state of Yan was in the vicinity of Beijing, but Yan was at first subordinate to the Zhou kings and was never more than one of several states within the area of China. After BCE, Yan was incorporated into the Qin Empire and its old capital city became a centre of only local administration. For all but about two and a half years, Beijing was outside the borders of the empire of the Song dynasty, one of the great dynasties of Chinese history. The Song capital was at Kaifeng, not far from Luoyang. During the period of the Song dynasty, the south developed into economically the most important part of China. With its warm, damp climate, where two or even more crops of rice could be grown in one year, the area from the valley of the Yangtze River southwards had much greater potential than the dry north. The centre of gravity of China shifted well to the south at this period, especially when north China was lost by the Song empire and the capital was moved to Hangzhou. First the Khitans and the Jurchens from the north-east used it as one of their capitals. Then the Mongols under the great conqueror, Chinggis Khan, swept across north China and incorporated it into their vast empire. Two generations later, the great Khan Khubilai rebuilt Beijing, founding the modern city, and made it capital of his domains. After he completed the conquest of south China, Beijing became, for the first time in its history, the capital of the whole of China. It was the interaction between the Chinese and their northern, non-Chinese, neighbours that gave Beijing its status. The Mongols had to build a long canal system to bring grain from the Yangtze region and even further south to feed the new city. When the Mongols were driven out of China and the Chinese Ming dynasty was established, the capital was at first moved to Nanjing. Moreover, being on the south bank of the wide river, Nanjing was comparatively safe from attack from the north: It seemed, then, that Beijing was again to be relegated to the lesser status of a purely regional centre. A mere accident of history, a power-struggle within the ruling family, led to the Ming capital being moved back north to Beijing after only about 50 years. This had great consequences for the later history of China and especially of Beijing. When the Ming dynasty collapsed, if the capital had still been at Nanjing, it is likely that a native Chinese dynasty would have been firmly established there before Manchu invaders from the north-east could have moved into China to threaten it. Perhaps these invaders would have been unable to overthrow such a dynasty. With the Ming capital at Beijing, however, close to their homeland just beyond the Great Wall, it was comparatively easy for the Manchus to occupy the city, driving out the rebels who had just destroyed Ming imperial power. Thus, once again, Beijing became the capital of an alien dynasty ruling over conquered Chinese subjects. The Qing dynasty established by the Manchus was the last imperial dynasty in China. When it fell in , it was replaced by a Republic. Again, the preferred choice of capital was Nanjing, but for various political reasons Beijing was used as capital for much of the Republican period. This was a sign of the weakness of the young Republic rather than of its strength. For many years, there were two at times, even three governments in China, all claiming to be the sole legitimate government of the nation. Eventually, the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in more or less uniting China under their rule. They made Nanjing their capital. The more important of these reasons were that their main power-bases were in northern China and that they took control of Beijing some time before they crossed the Introduction 3 Figure 0. Yangtze and took Nanjing. Despite problems with the water supply, the capital has remained at Beijing since and there seems to be absolutely no reason to suppose that it might be moved in the foreseeable future. The Municipality of Beijing The modern Municipality of Beijing has the same status as a province of China, its local government being directly subordinate to the central government. The Municipality includes not only the built-up area of the city of

Beijing, but also a large surrounding area. Overall, the Municipality is not far short of the size of Wales. For administrative purposes, it is divided into districts *qu* and counties *xian*. As the population of the Municipality has increased, with a corresponding growth in urbanization, several former counties have had their status changed to that of districts. The central area of the city, including slightly more than the area of the old, walled city of the Ming and Qing dynasties, is divided into four districts. The dividing line between them runs along the western sides of the Square and of the Forbidden City and then more or less straight north in line with the central axis of the old Imperial Palace area. Again, the division between them follows the line of the central axis of the Forbidden City. It is continuing to grow. The city has had this name only since the Ming dynasty. The earliest recorded cities at or near its site were called Yan and Ji. They were built before BCE. The city of Yan fell into disuse at some time probably not long after BCE, while Ji increased in importance. It was the capital of the state of Yan during most of the long period of the Zhou dynasty. During the Han dynasty, in BCE, it became the administrative centre of a province called Youzhou. The city was also known as Yanjing, a name derived from the former state of Yan. When the Khitans were driven out of northern China by the Jurchens, ancestors of the later Manchus, Yanjing very briefly became part of the Chinese Introduction 5 Song empire and was named Yanshanfu. This city was conquered and partially destroyed by the Mongols under Chinggis Khan. It retained this name until the twentieth century when, for a time, it again lost its status as capital and reverted to being called Beiping. Perhaps this is intended to make the word sound more foreign. It is very hard for them to pronounce it properly. There are many thousands of Chinese characters. For Chinese words to be rendered at all intelligible to most foreigners, they have to be transcribed from characters into a different script. For Westerners, this means transcribing the sounds of Chinese into the Roman alphabet. Chinese is a tonal language, but even if the tones are ignored, it contains sounds that simply do not exist in any European language. Naturally, there have been various attempts to represent these in a way that makes them at least roughly pronounceable for foreigners. In the past, there were a number of different systems for romanizing Chinese, some designed for native speakers of English, others for speakers of French, German and other European languages. No single, universally-recognized system existed. This caused many problems. This system has now become very widely accepted. It is used throughout this book, except for a few names which have become familiar to Westerners in some 6 Introduction other form e. Yangtze River, Sun Yat-sen. The Pinyin form of all personal names transliterated in an alternative form is always given in parentheses on the first occurrence of the name. The pronunciation of Modern Standard Chinese in Pinyin transliteration Modern Standard Chinese putonghua is the national language of China, taught in schools throughout the country. It is largely based on the Mandarin dialect as spoken today in Beijing. Each syllable of Modern Standard Chinese consists of one or more of the following elements: A semi-vowel *i* or *u*, written *y* and *w* as initials. A final vowel which may include the nasal sounds *n* or *ng*, or a diphthong *e*. A vowel or diphthong may occur alone *e*. In addition, each syllable has a tone, which may be indicated in Pinyin by a tone-mark over the vowel. Tones will be ignored here. Most of the letters used in the Pinyin system are pronounced more or less as they usually are in English, and should present no great difficulties. Some, however, are pronounced in a way which is not obvious, and a few represent sounds for which there simply is no near equivalent in English or any other European language. The letters most likely to cause problems are: If these four are remembered, most Chinese names should be pronounced more or less correctly. For those who wish to come closer to the original Chinese sounds, a more complete table of pronunciations follows. It must be remembered, however, that in many cases only a rough indication of pronunciation can be given. Names of people in Chinese commonly consist of two or three characters, the first of which is the family name and the other one or two the personal name there are a very few two-character family names. These are written in Pinyin with a space only between the family name and the personal name e. Lin Biao, Mao Zedong. No gap is left in the transliteration of a two-character personal name. Similarly, names of places consisting of two or more characters are often written with no space in transliteration e. Occasionally this could lead to confusion â€” for example, *xi* and *an* are two separate syllables, but when written together without a space they become indistinguishable from the syllable *xian*. Similarly, is *jinan* a combination of *ji* and *nan* or *jin* and *an*? It must not be thought that this represents a change in the name in Chinese. How can this be? The answer to this is

complex. It was devised more than three hundred years ago. At that time, standard Chinese pronunciation was not identical with modern pronunciation. The city was basically square and streets ran either from north to south or from west to east. This regular grid pattern was disrupted in places by irregular lakes within the city, but held good as a general rule.

Chapter 3 : Yanjing - Wikipedia

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