Preface

This is a tale of two Chinas, of rural China versus urban China. Urbanization is a process ending the urban–rural segregation, which means equal treatment of all Chinese, and equal opportunities for every resident, no matter where they live. If it is completed, this great event will set the foundation of a peaceful, united, and equalized China in the twenty-first century, a Chinese version of the liberalization of serfs, just like the emancipation of the slaves in the United States in the nineteenth century.

This book tries to depict an original picture of China’s urbanization, explaining the fundamentals and details of what has happened in China and the logic behind urbanization, and bringing vital aspects of China’s urbanization into clearer view. The book will explore how urbanization raised the ordinary citizen’s real income ten times from 1978 to 2011, and reallocated wealth among individuals in the past three decades. This book provides a forecast of China’s economic growth and estimations for important products up to 2030. I will simulate the decision-making of the leadership about China’s urbanization, explaining how crisis imposes choices between tough alternatives.

By evaluating China’s urbanization in a global environment, this book tries to treat domestic and international affairs as connected subjects, placing China’s urbanization within a broader global context. This book estimates the size of China’s domestic market, and the future demands for major products and services in domestic and world markets. This book also probes the costs and benefits of China’s urbanization from the viewpoint of both China and the rest of the world.

The scale of China’s urbanization is wholly without precedent in human history. It includes issues that no twentieth-century government had faced. The challenges are in keeping a group of intertwined factors under control and accomplishing correlated works virtually all at once. The difficulty is in incorporating the migrants and containing the dangerous features of a mass urban society at the same time.