

Nomads in the Middle East

A history of pastoral nomads in the Islamic Middle East, from the rise of Islam, through the middle periods when Mongols and Turks ruled most of the region to the decline of nomadism in the twentieth century. Offering a vivid insight into the impact of nomads on the politics, culture and ideology of the region, Beatrice Forbes Manz examines and challenges existing perceptions of these nomads, including the popular cyclical model of nomad-settled interaction developed by Ibn Khaldun. Looking at both the Arab Bedouin and the nomads from the Eurasian steppe, Manz demonstrates the significance of Bedouin and Turco-Mongolian contributions to cultural production and political ideology in the Middle East, and shows the central role played by pastoral nomads in war, trade and state-building throughout history. Nomads provided horses and soldiers for war, the livestock and guidance which made long-distance trade possible, and animal products to provision the region's growing cities.

Beatrice Forbes Manz is Professor of History at Tufts University where she teaches the history of the Middle East and Inner Asia, with a particular interest in pastoral nomads. She is the author of *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), which was awarded the Houshang Pourshariati Book Award in Iranian Studies, and the best-seller *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge University Press, 1989). She is also the author of numerous articles and chapters in collected works on the history of the Timurids, the Mongol Empire and nomad societies, including in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia* and *The Cambridge History of War*.

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Beatrice Forbes Manz
Tufts University, Massachusetts



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Dedicated to the memory of
Thomas T. Allsen, 1940–2019
and
David O. Morgan, 1945–2019

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Preface

A number of organizations facilitated the research for this book. A membership in the School of Historical Studies, at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 2003–4 gave me a year in which to begin this work in the best possible surroundings, and encouragement to explore fields I had not previously dealt with. Funds for the year were provided by a postdoctoral Research Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies and a Faculty Research Semester from Tufts University. Tufts University also provided a Research Semester grant in the spring of 2012. To all these institutions I express my heartfelt gratitude.

This book covers periods well outside my sphere of expertise, and I could not have written it without the assistance of other scholars. A number of generous colleagues have provided indispensable help by reading the chapters of the book as they were written, saving me from many potential errors. I want to thank Thomas Barfield, Tzvi Abusch, Marc van De Mieroop, the late Patricia Crone, Fred McGraw Donner, Louise Marlow, Kurt Franz, David Durand Guédy, Jürgen Paul, the late Thomas Allsen, Patrick Wing, Charles Melville, Rudi Matthee, Linda Darling, Rhoads Murphy, Lois Beck and Hugh Roberts for their generous gift of time and expertise. I am also grateful to Margaret Fearey for reading through the manuscript as an “educated reader.” I owe a particular debt to the Research Technology, TTS team at Tufts University, notably Patrick Florance, Carolyn Talmadge and Yuehui (Aurora) Li, for their painstaking work mapping often obscure locations, under the difficult conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have dedicated this book to the memory of two scholars who died in 2019, both of whom contributed enormously to the history of nomads, and particularly of the Mongol Empire. The work of Thomas Allsen transformed the field of Mongol history and serves as an inspiration to all writing in this field. David O. Morgan spent a long and productive career promoting the study of both medieval Iran and the Mongol Empire, and also helping to advance the careers of younger scholars.

I first came in contact with him when he wrote me a very kind letter as a reader for my first book, and from that time on I profited continually from his help and guidance. I am also grateful to him for encouraging me to widen my field by inviting me to write the chapter on the Mongols for the *New Cambridge History of Islam*.

Note on Usage and Maps

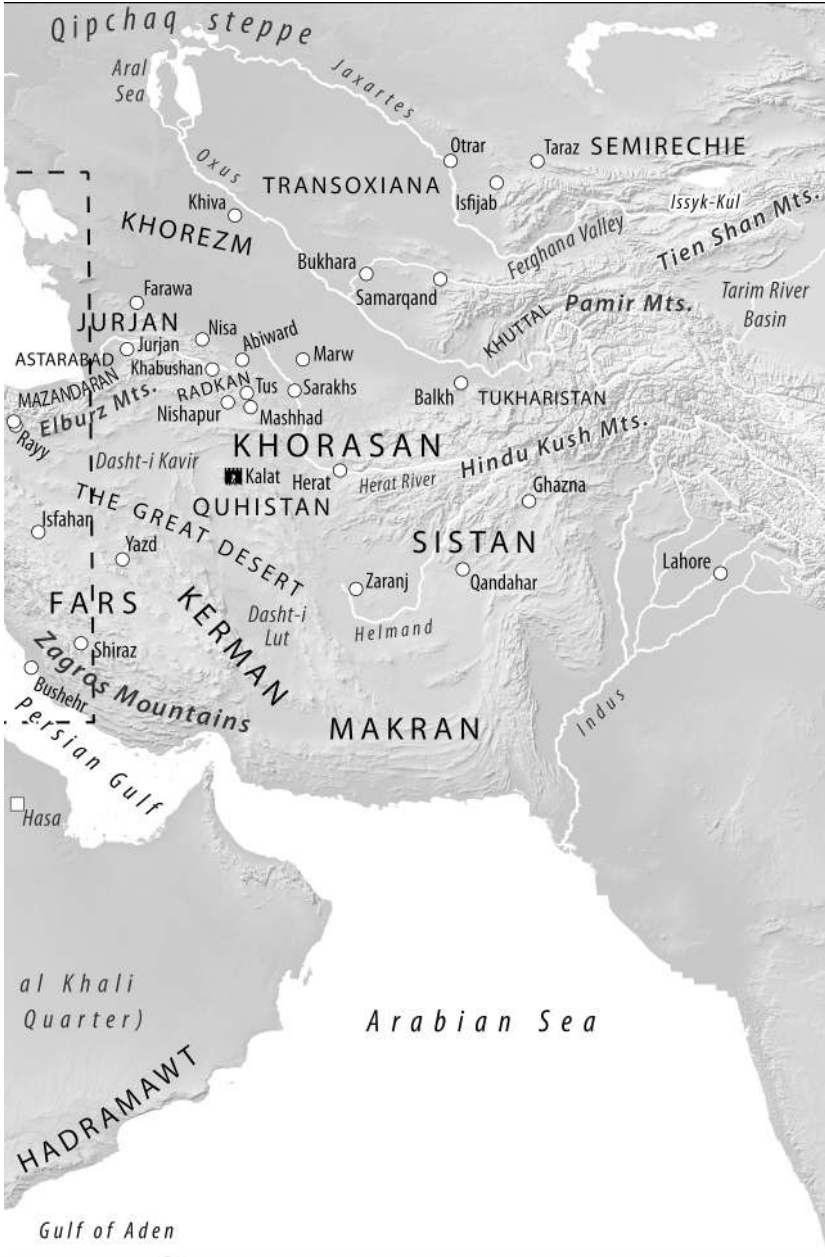
This book is designed for an audience that includes both specialists and non-specialists. I have tried to keep transcription as simple and as consistent as possible. For Arabic and Persian in the pre-modern period, I have used the classical Arabic transcription. Turkic and Mongolian names are transcribed according to systems specific to those languages. For the Ottoman Empire and modern Iran, I have retained the classical transcription for Arabic and Persian terminology, but for well-known figures I have used common modern spelling. For larger cities, likewise, modern spelling is used, while for smaller locations I use the classical transcription. I have omitted most diacriticals in the text but have retained them in the index.

In addition to maps showing cities and regions, I have included maps showing land use and pasture locations, based on a combination of modern maps representing primarily nineteenth- and twentieth-century conditions and information about earlier periods taken from historical texts. Since these maps are on a small scale and represent a period of more than a millennium, for any given time they must be viewed as approximations.

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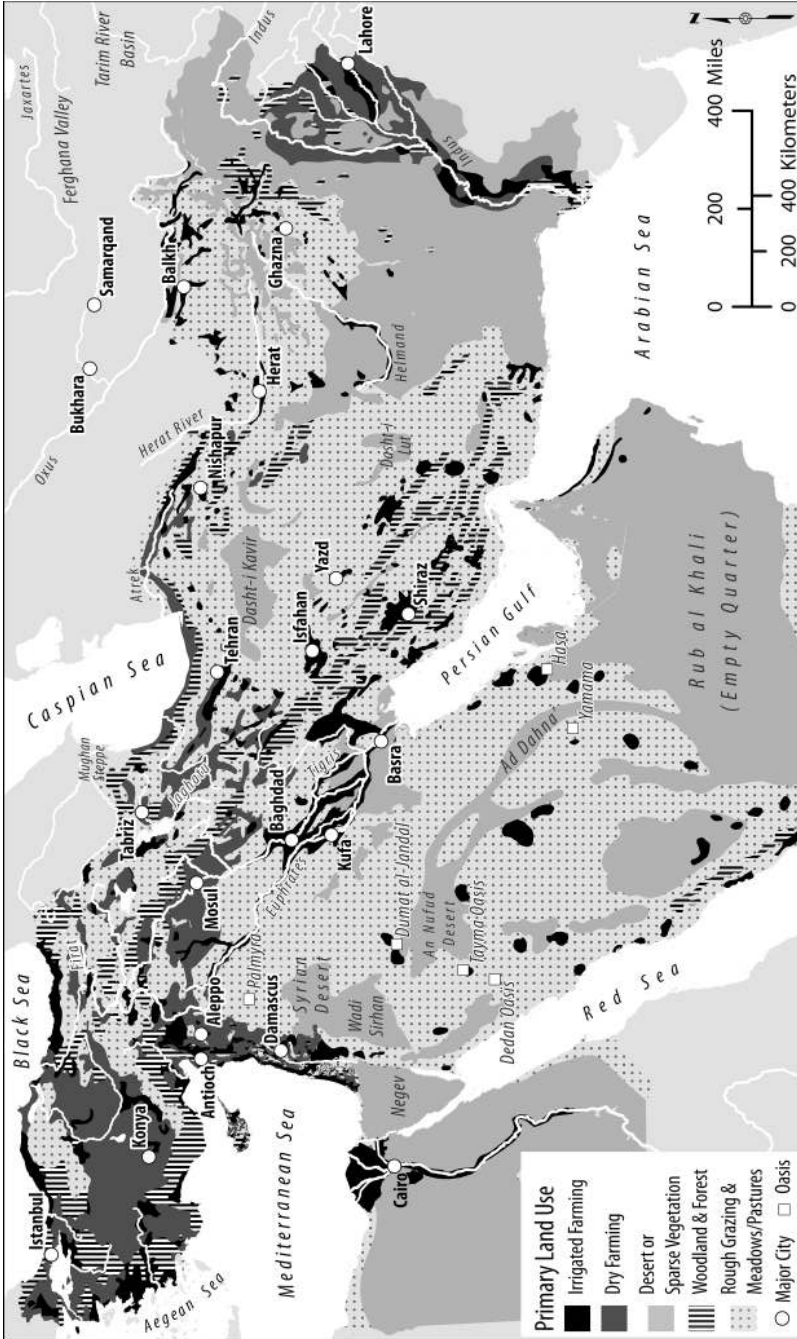


Map 0.1 The Middle East and Central Asia

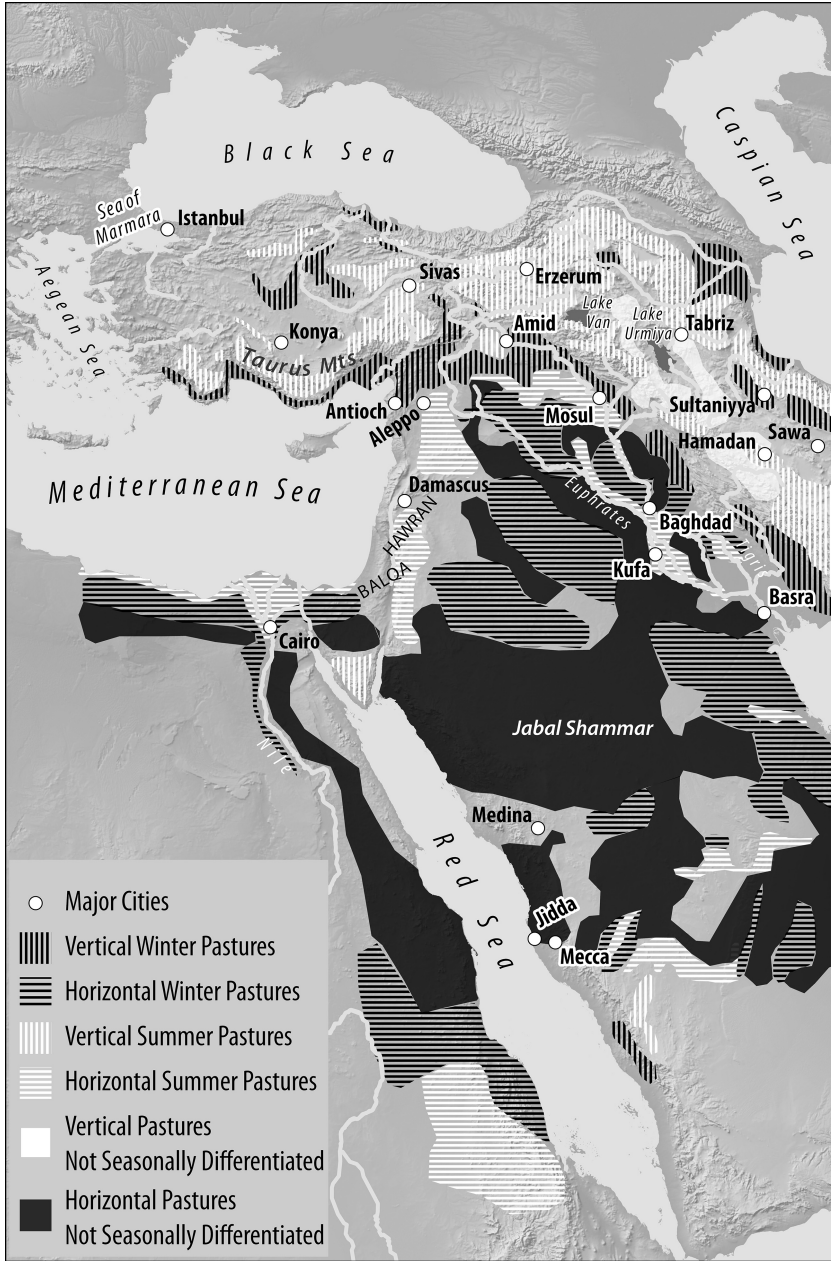


Map 0.2 Central Regions of the Middle East

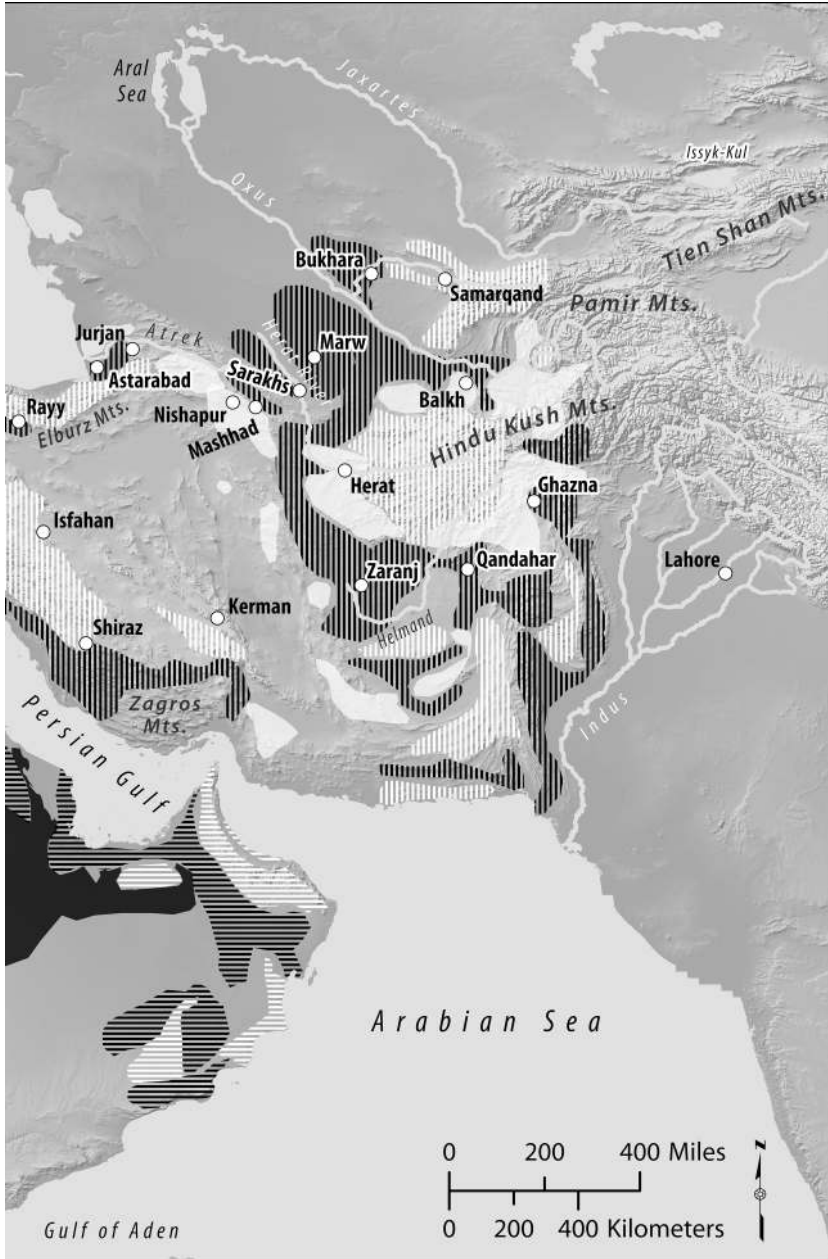
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Map 0.4 Nomad Pastureland