

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-107-01268-4 — The Muslim Merchants of Premodern China
The History of a Maritime Asian Trade Diaspora, 750–1400
John W. Chaffee
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The Muslim Merchants of Premodern China

In this major new history of Muslim merchants and their trade links with China, John W. Chaffee uncovers 700 years of history, from the eighth century, when Persian and Arab communities first established themselves in southeastern China, through the fourteenth century, when trade all but ceased. These were extraordinary and tumultuous times. Under the Song and the Mongols, the Muslim diaspora in China flourished as legal and economic ties were formalized. At other times the Muslim community suffered hostility and persecution. Chaffee shows how the policies of successive dynastic regimes in China combined with geopolitical developments across maritime Asia to affect the fortunes of Muslim communities. He explores social and cultural exchanges, and how connections were maintained through faith and a common acceptance of Muslim law. This groundbreaking contribution to the history of Asia, the early Islamic world and maritime history explores the networks that helped to shape the premodern world.

John W. Chaffee is Distinguished Service Professor in the Departments of History and Asian and Asian American Studies at Binghamton University. He also directs the Institute for Asia and Asian Diasporas. He co-edited with Professor Denis Twitchett Volume 5, Part 2 of The Cambridge History of China: *Sung China, 960–1279*.

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John W. Chaffee
Binghamton University



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Acknowledgments

In many ways the origins of this book can be dated to 1997, when Angela Schottenhammer invited me to attend an international conference at Leiden University on maritime trade and the economic and social development of the Quanzhou region during the Song and Yuan dynasties. I was just finishing work on my history of the Song imperial clan, who during the Southern Song were concentrated in Quanzhou and, I had discovered, had been much involved in maritime trade. My findings with regard to that involvement were presented both in the conference volume, *The Emporium of the World*, and in my book on the imperial clan, but this exposure to maritime trade whet my appetite. I was particularly fascinated by the Muslim communities of the Song and Yuan periods, whose physical legacy is much in evidence in the mosques of Guangzhou and Quanzhou and in the cemetery and huge collection of tombstones in Quanzhou. Just who they were and how they evolved through the centuries are questions with which I have been engaged for many years. This volume represents an attempt to provide my answers to them. That these merchants were, with few exceptions, without names or individual identities – in the sources we have about them – has been a constant frustration. However, that has not dimmed my admiration for their fortitude or accomplishments in establishing themselves so far from their homelands.

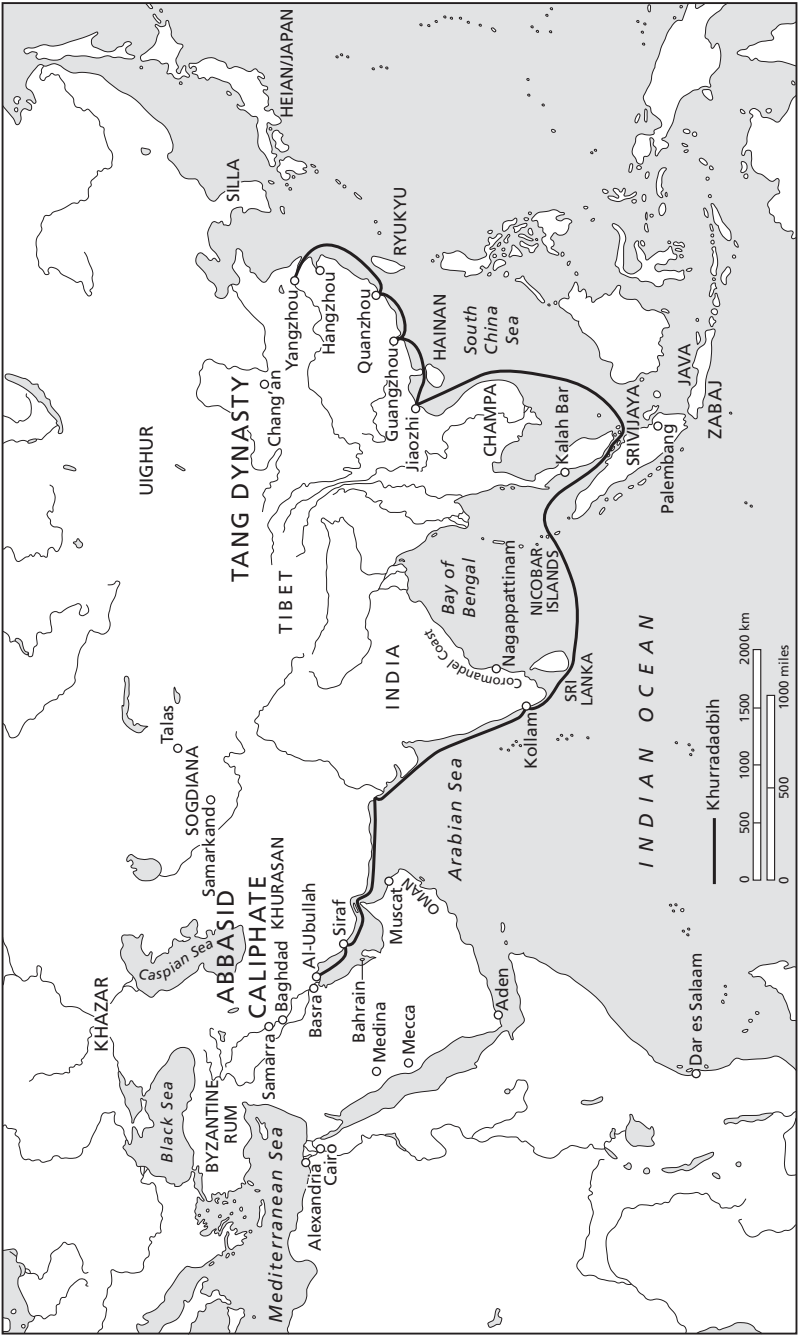
The list is long of those who have aided me in my work, whether through their own writings, their responses to my writings and presentations, or through conversations and email exchanges. My greatest debt of gratitude is to Angela Schottenhammer, who through her friendship as well as the many conferences and publications she has organized and edited has provided me with opportunities to share my ideas and my research. In a similar vein I am thankful to Elizabeth Lambourn, Kenneth Hall, Tansen Sen, and Robert Antony for their work and for the conferences that they have organized. I am grateful to John Guy, not only for his stimulating work on the material culture of this era but also for permission to use two of his photographs in the book. My work would not have been possible without the many important scholars in this field who

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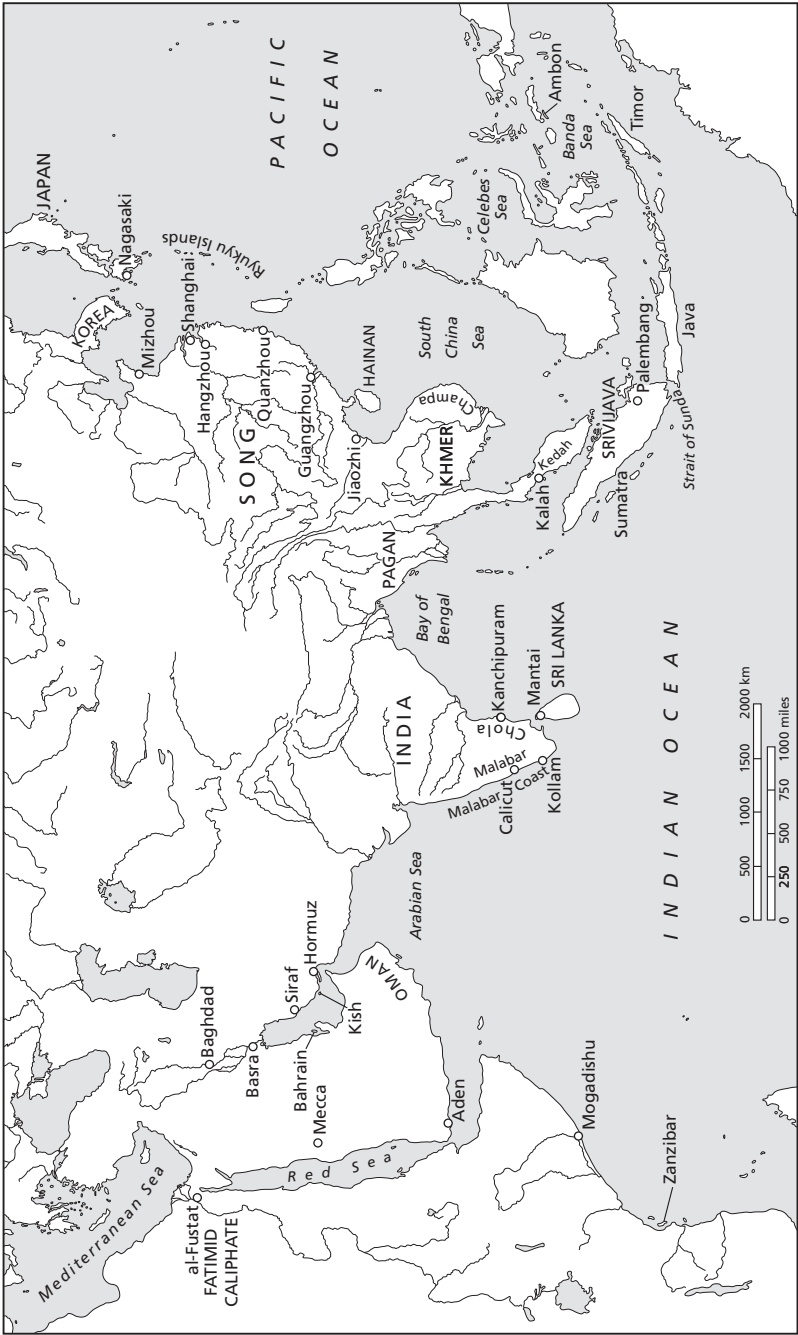


Map 1 Maritime Asia during the Tang

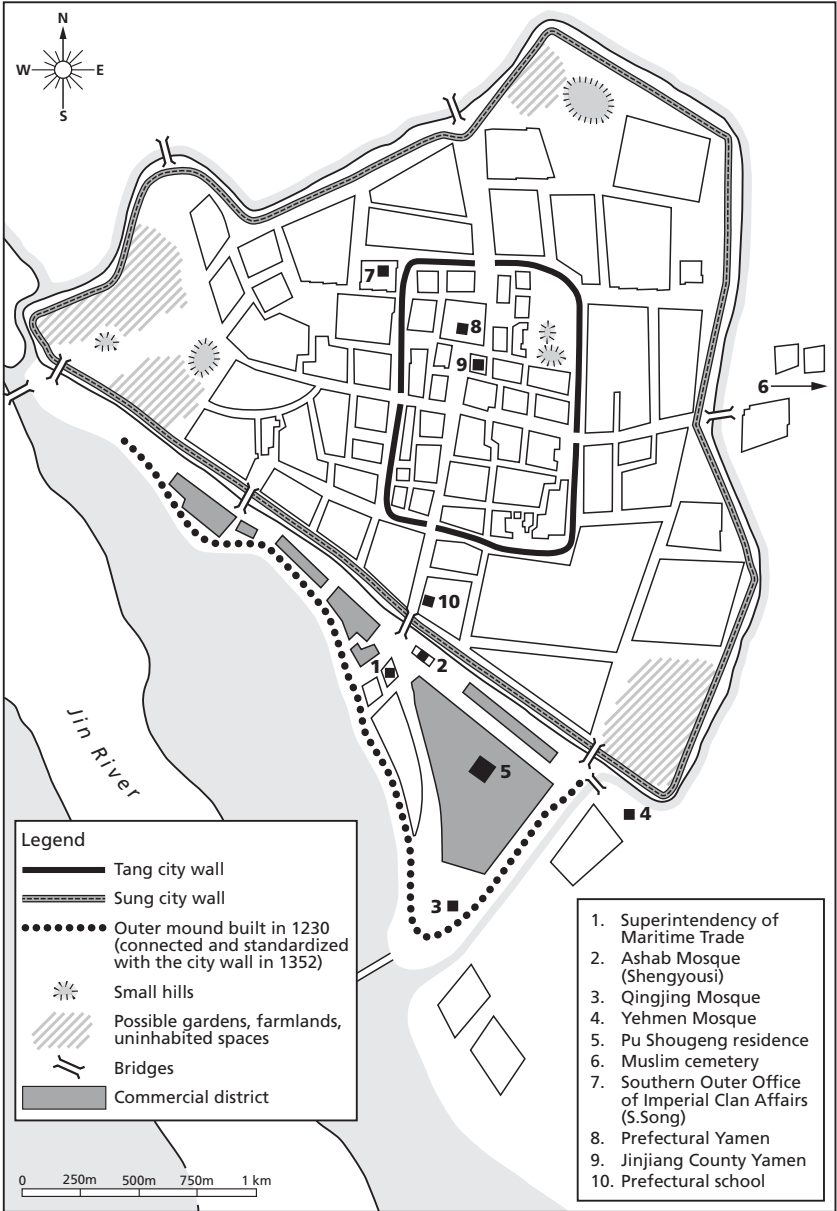


Map 2 China and southeast Asia in the ninth to tenth centuries

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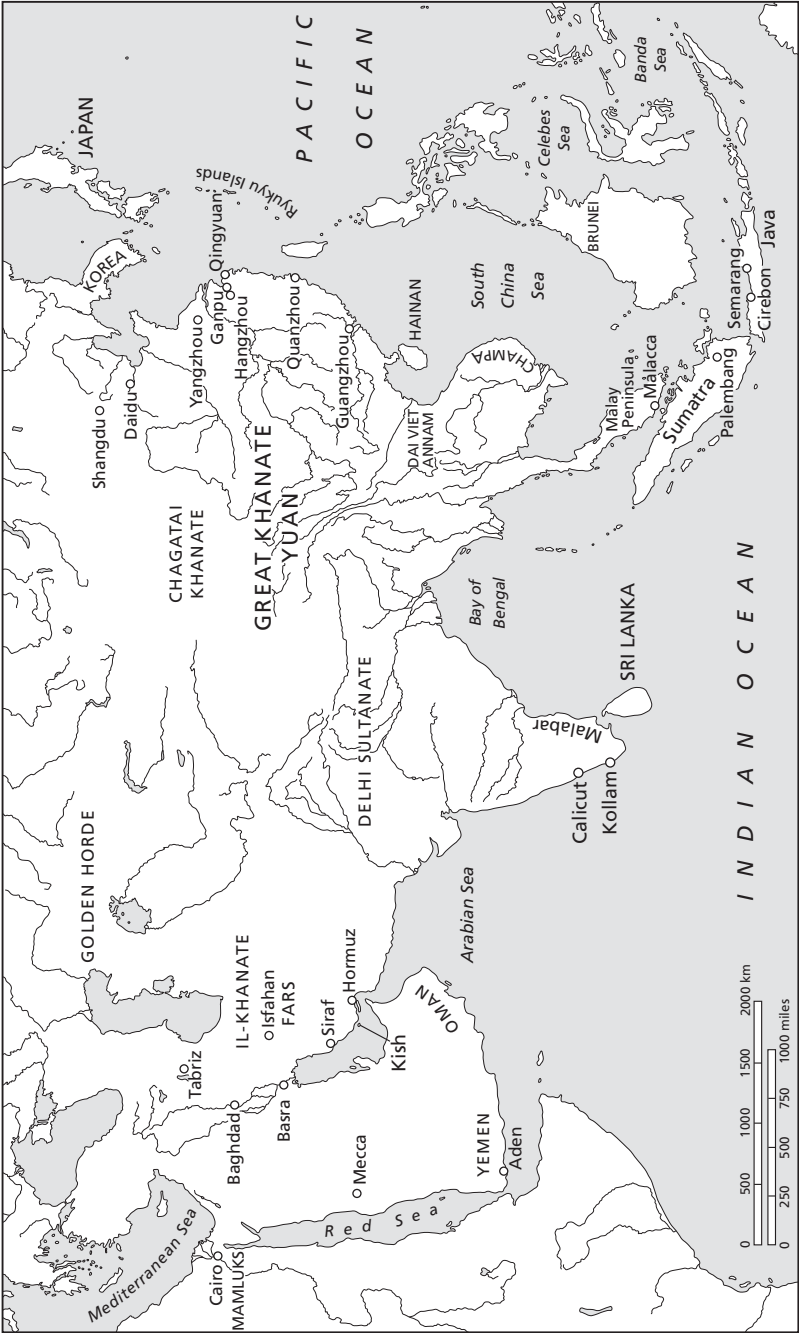


Map 3 Maritime Asia during the Song



Map 4 Quanzhou city

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Map 5 Maritime Asia during the Yuan