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978-1-108-46301-0 — Rome, China, and the Barbarians
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ROME, CHINA, AND THE BARBARIANS

This book addresses a largely untouched historical problem: the fourth to fifth centuries AD witnessed remarkably similar patterns of foreign invasion, conquest, and political fragmentation in Rome and China. Yet while the Western Roman Empire was never reestablished, China was reunified at the end of the sixth century. Following a comparative discussion of earlier historiographical and ethnographic traditions in the classical Greco-Roman and Chinese worlds, the book turns to the late antique/early medieval period, when the Western Roman Empire “fell” and China was reconstituted as a united empire after centuries of foreign conquest and political division. Analyzing the discourse of ethnic identity in the historical texts of this later period, with original translations by the author, the book explores the extent to which notions of Self and Other, of “barbarian” and “civilized,” help us understand both the transformation of the Roman world as well as the restoration of a unified imperial China.

RANDOLPH B. FORD currently teaches Roman history at the State University of New York at Albany. He has previously taught Roman history, Rome–China comparative history, and Latin language at the University of Notre Dame. He obtained his doctorate at New York University’s Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, and his research has concentrated on comparative approaches to the study of the Greco-Roman world and ancient China.

ROME, CHINA, AND THE BARBARIANS

*Ethnographic Traditions and the Transformation
of Empires*

RANDOLPH B. FORD

State University of New York, Albany



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108463010
 DOI: 10.1017/9781108564090
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First published 2020
 First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

NAMES: Ford, Randolph B., 1976– author.
 TITLE: Rome, China, and the barbarians : ethnographic traditions and the transformation of empires /
 Randolph B. Ford, State University of New York, Albany.
 DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York : Cambridge University Press, [2020] |
 Includes bibliographical references and index.
 IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019046110 (print) | LCCN 2019046111 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108473958
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108463010 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108564090 (epub)
 SUBJECTS: LCSH: History, Ancient–Historiography. | Imperialism–History. | China–Ethnic
 relations–History–To 1500. | National characteristics, Chinese–History–To 1500. |
 China–History–221 B.C.–960 A.D. | Rome–History–Empire, 30 B.C.–476 A.D. |
 Rome–History–Germanic Invasions, 3rd-6th centuries. | Group identity–Rome–History. |
 National characteristics, Roman.
 CLASSIFICATION: LCC D56 .F65 2020 (print) | LCC D56 (ebook) | DDC 931/.04–dc23
 LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019046110>
 LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019046111>

ISBN 978-1-108-47395-8 Hardback
 ISBN 978-1-108-46301-0 Paperback

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In loving memory of Mary Burch Tracy Ford

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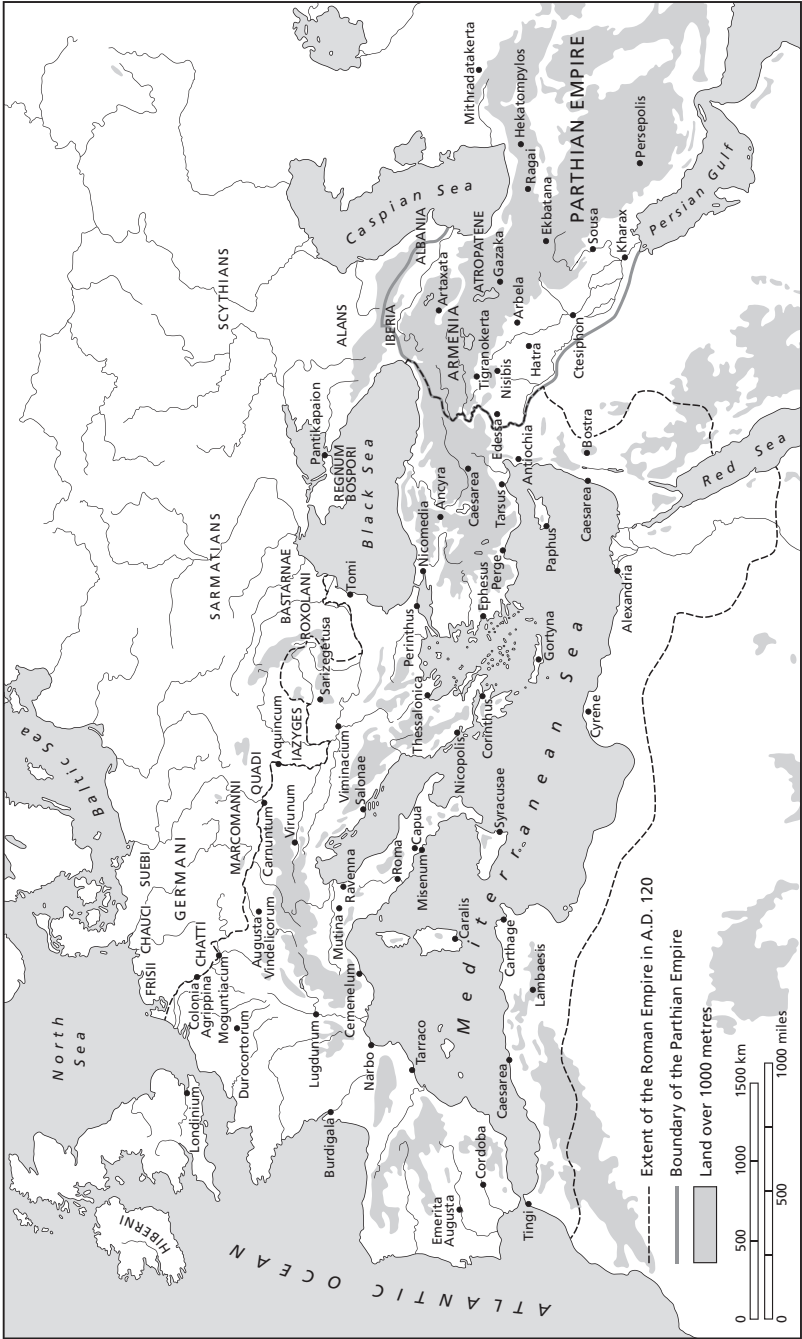
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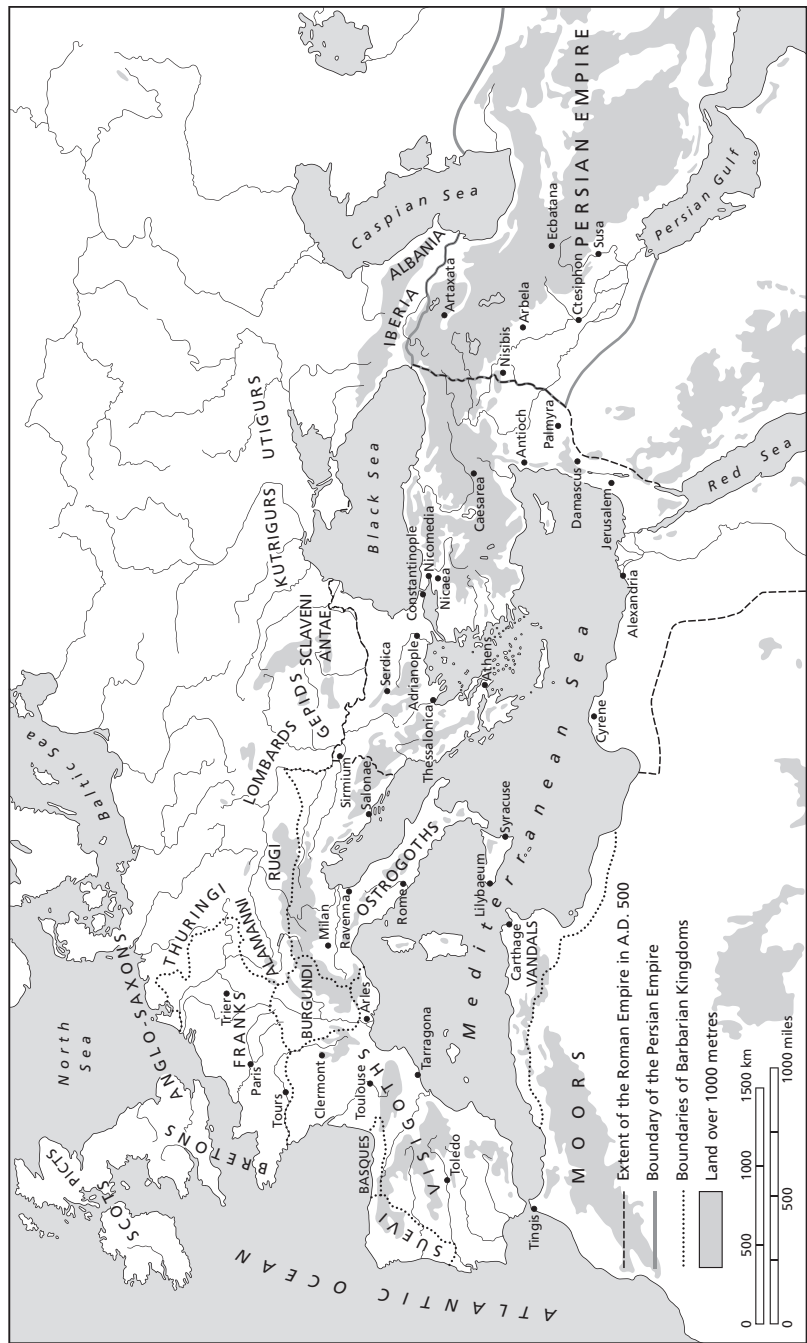
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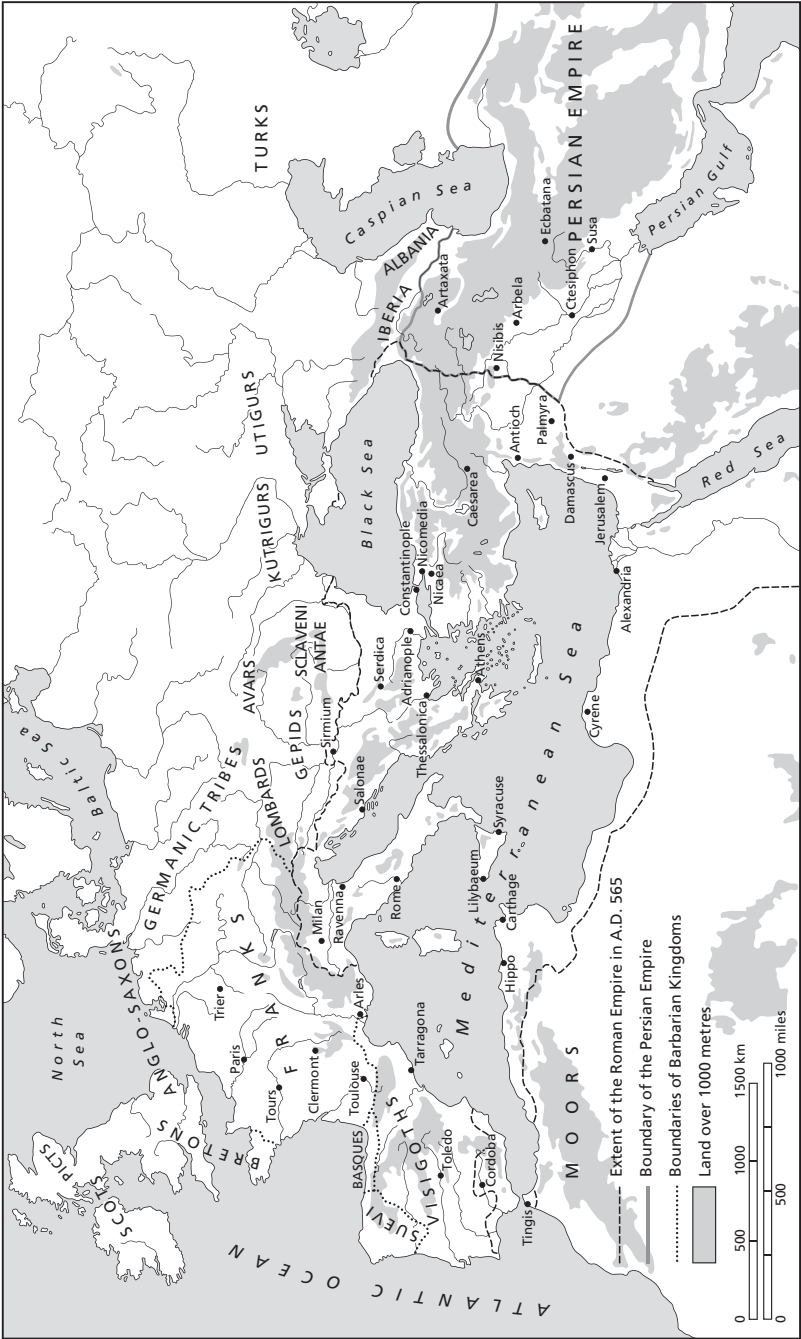
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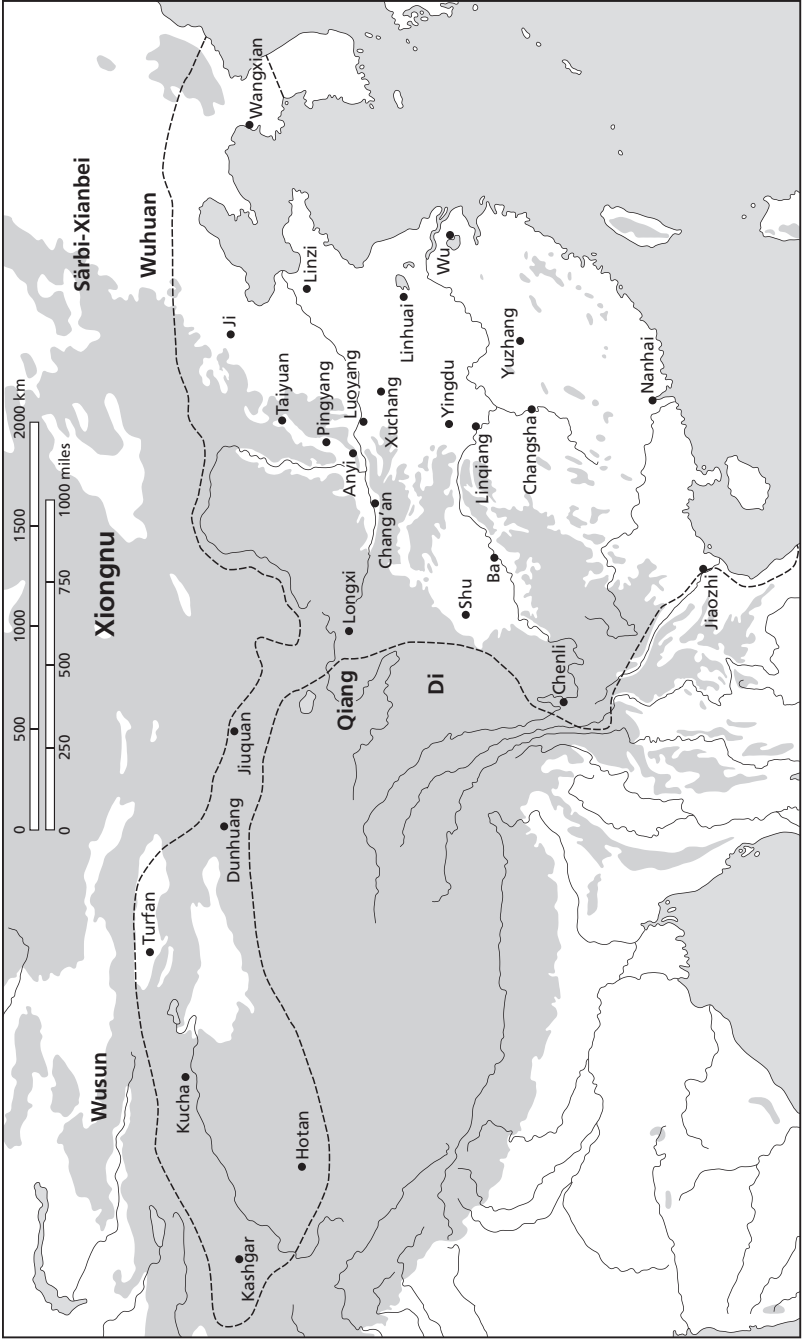
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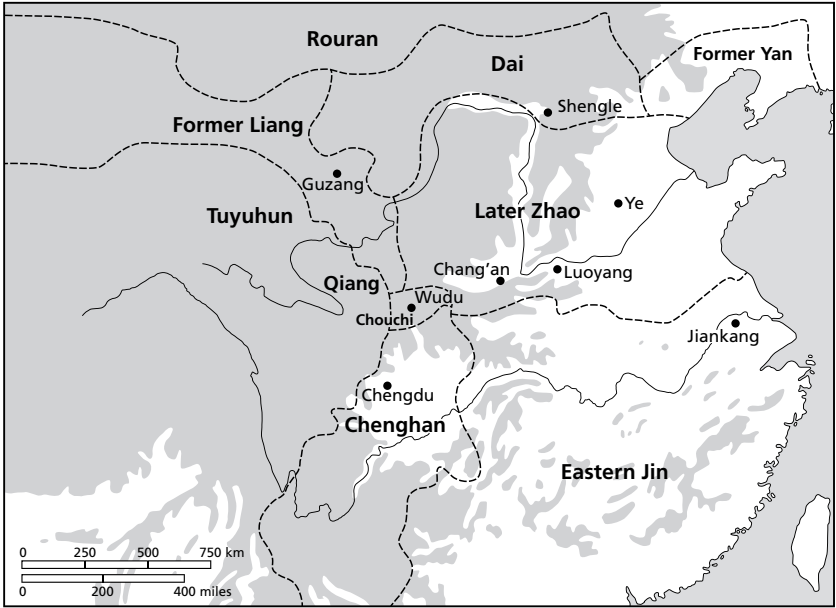
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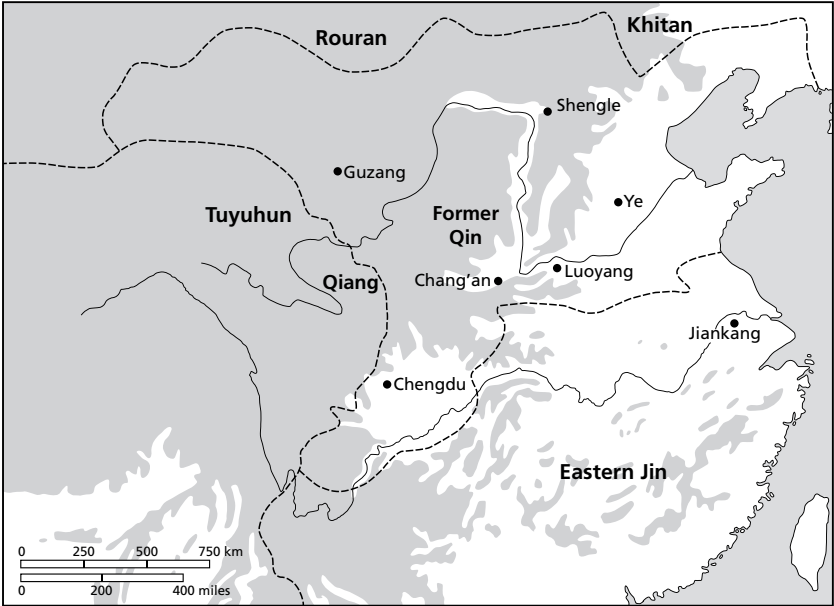
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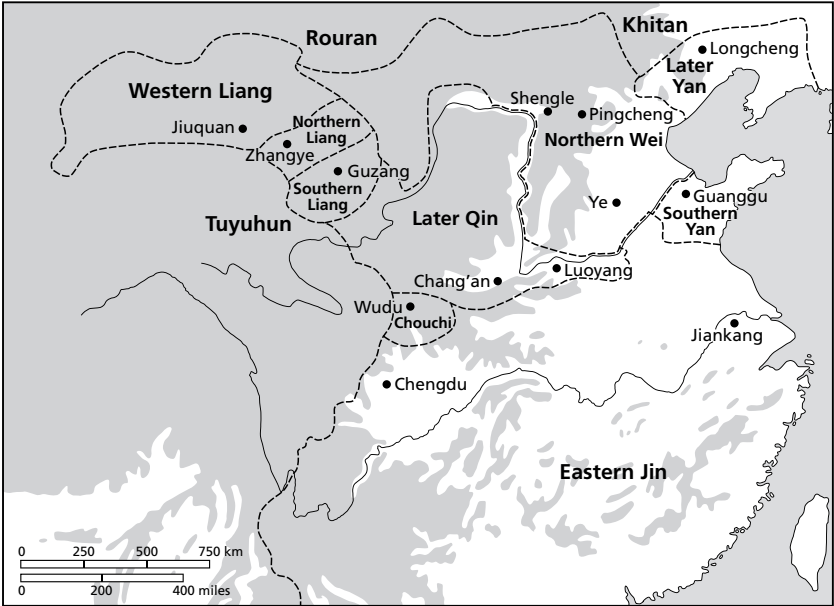
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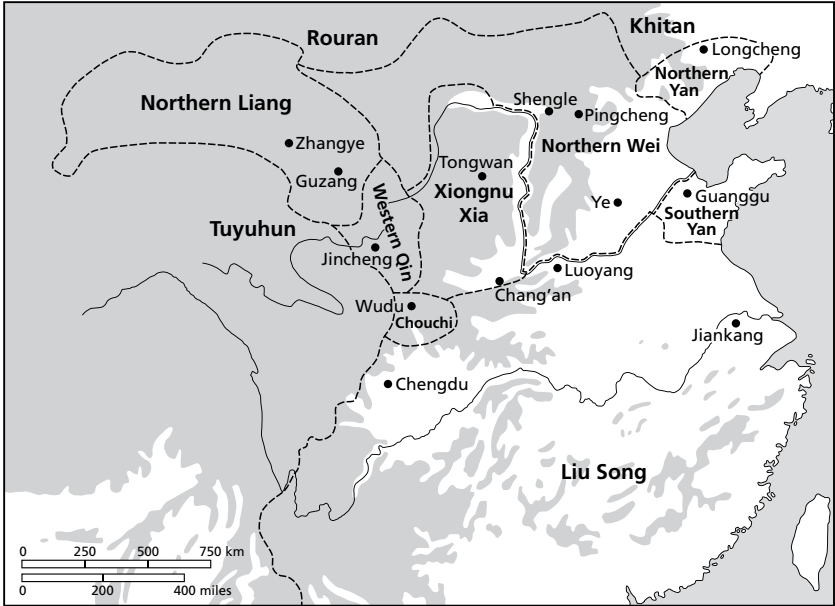


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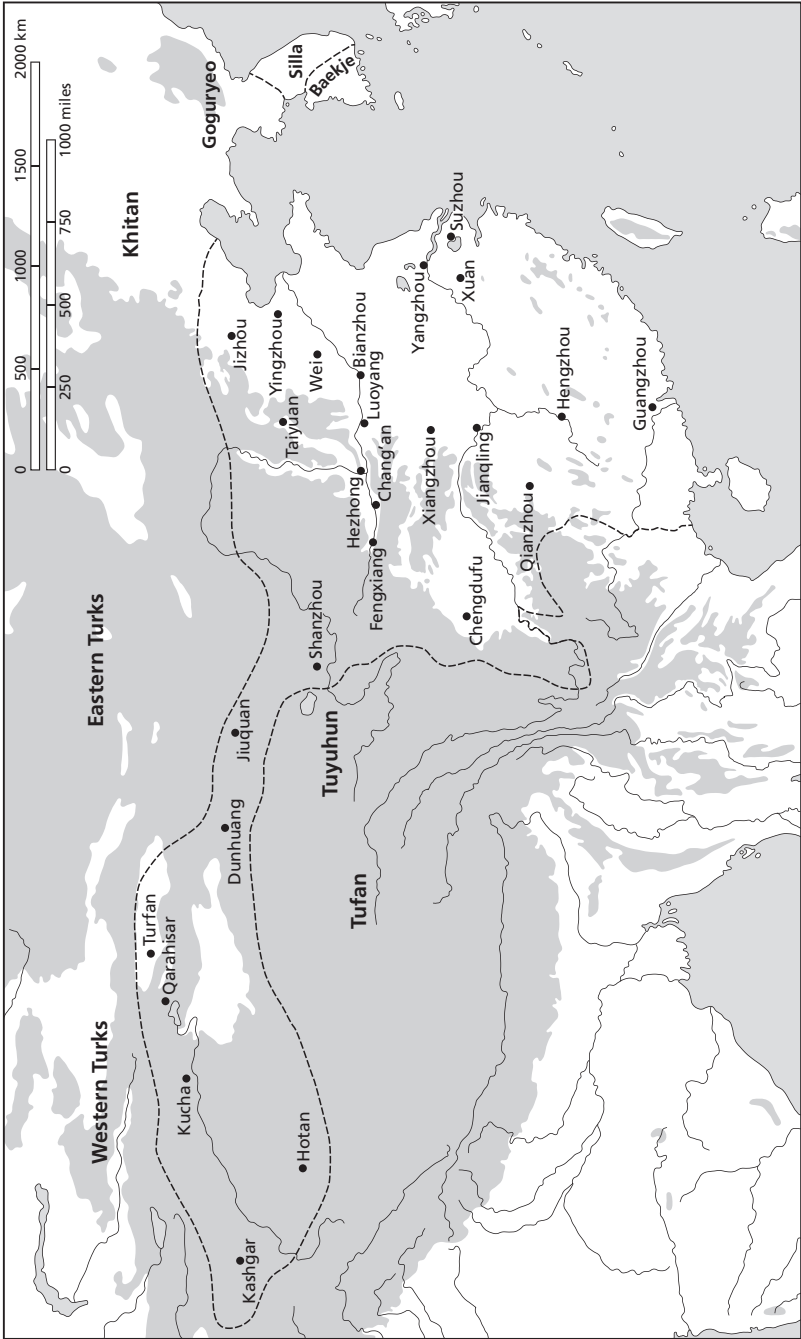
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Map 12 Tang dynasty c. AD 650

Acknowledgments

There are many scholars and mentors whose teaching and generosity have made this book possible. For my early studies, I would like to thank Nick Doane, John Niles, and especially Kirsten Wolf for their guidance and instruction. For later mentorship, I am most indebted to David Levene and Nicola Di Cosmo, without whose direction this book would not have come into being. Nicola Di Cosmo took the time back in 2008 to respond to an unexpected email from an unknown student in an unrelated field and later to advise me as a member of my dissertation committee. David Levene was willing not only to take on the role of advisor to an additional student outside of his own department but also to provide invaluable and generous guidance and support throughout my graduate studies and beyond. I would also like to express my gratitude to David Konstan and Helmut Reimitz, who have both gone far out of their way to open academic doors for me and to provide most helpful direction and feedback on my research. David Konstan in particular has been extremely generous with his time and counsel, for which I am deeply indebted. For their feedback on the manuscript of this book, I would like to thank both the anonymous reviewer and Geoffrey Greatrex, whose comments have greatly improved the quality of the work. I would also like to thank Roger Bagnall, Christopher Baron, Brian Ford, Rania Huntington, Josh Mannis, Elizabeth and Tadeusz Mazurek, Hildegund Müller, William Nienhauser, Charles Pazdernik, Walter Pohl, Sören Stark, New York University's Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, and the University of Notre Dame. Lastly, my gratitude goes to my wife, daughters, father, and brother – my reduced but growing family.

A Note to the Reader

In the hope of making this book as accessible as possible to non-specialists, a number of small measures have been taken. First, abbreviations of titles of texts have been kept to a bare minimum. Second, Chinese characters will be provided on the first appearance of proper nouns in each chapter; in instances where different Chinese characters have the same Romanized written form, characters will also be provided to avoid ambiguity. Third, dates (or approximate dates) for primary texts have been supplied following the individual entry headings in the bibliography.