

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.

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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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In loving memory of Mary Burch Tracy Ford

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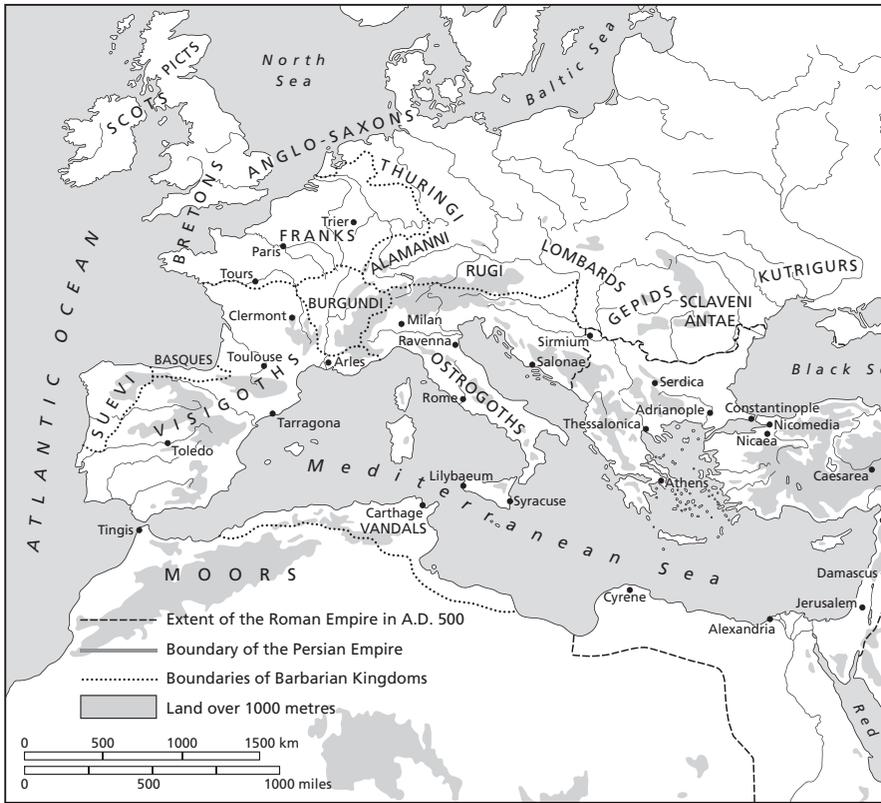
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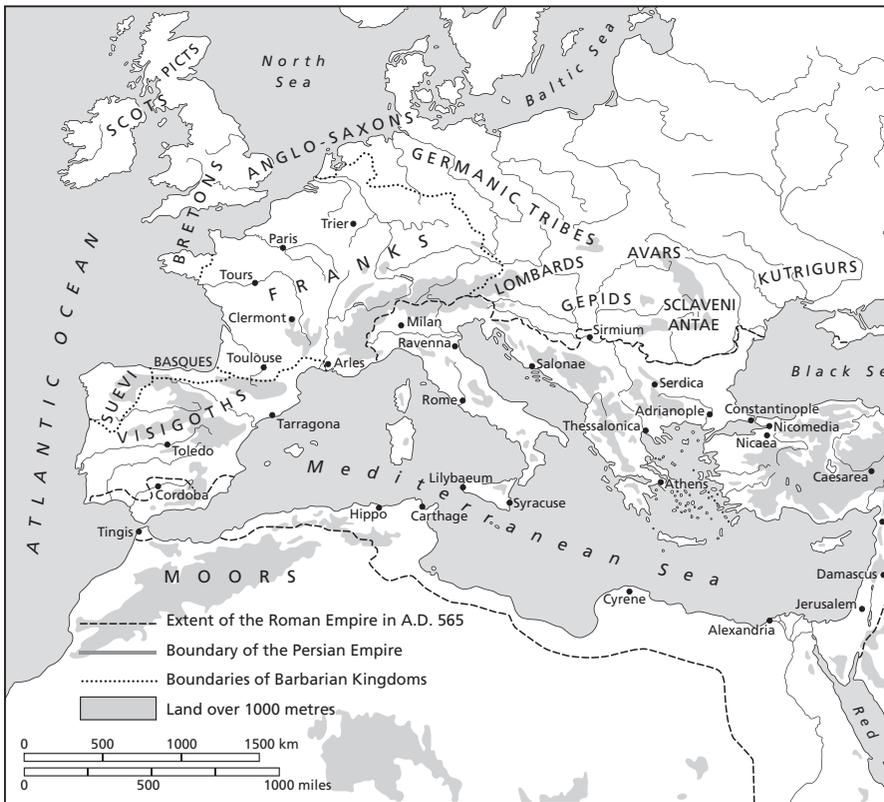
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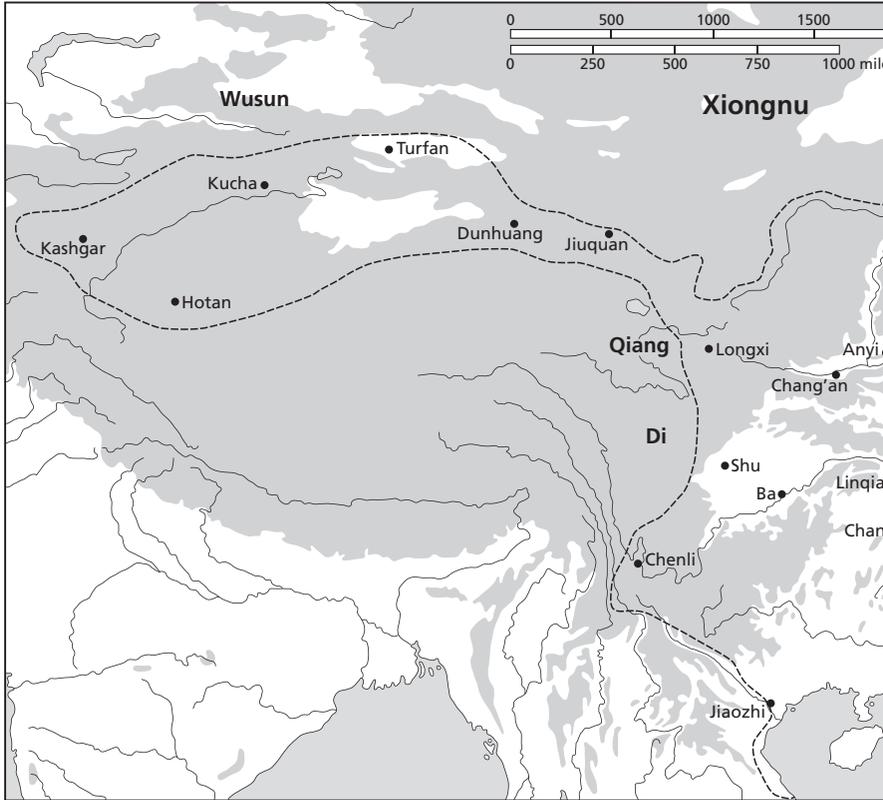
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Map 3 Rome in AD 565

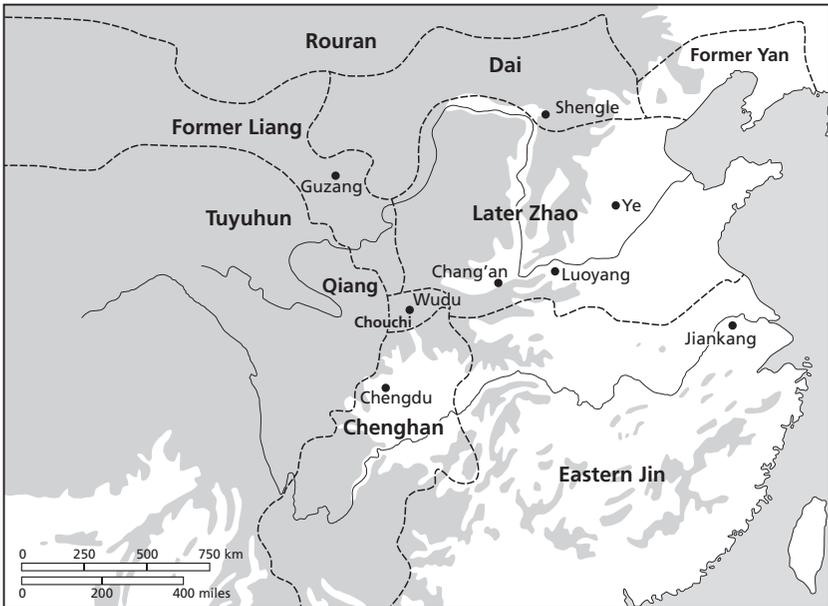
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Map 4 Han dynasty at its greatest extent

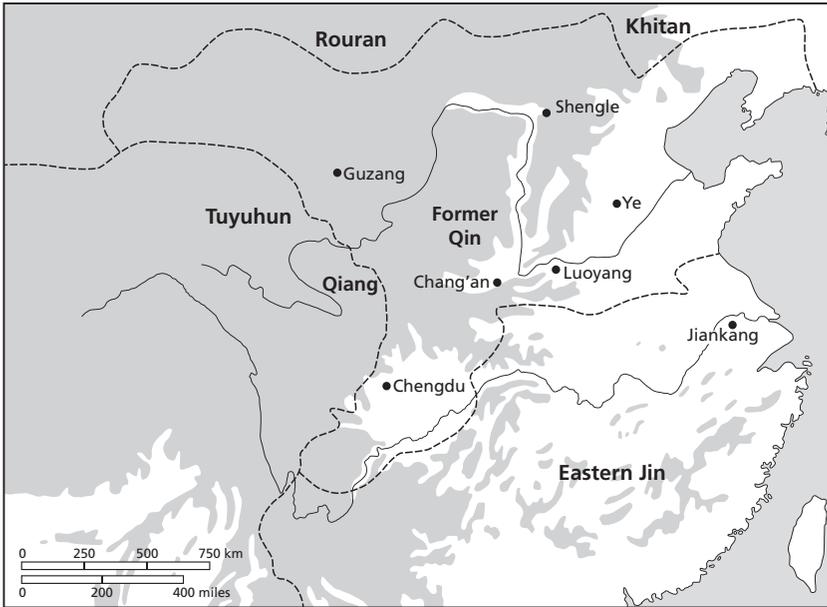


Map 5 Northern China in AD 317

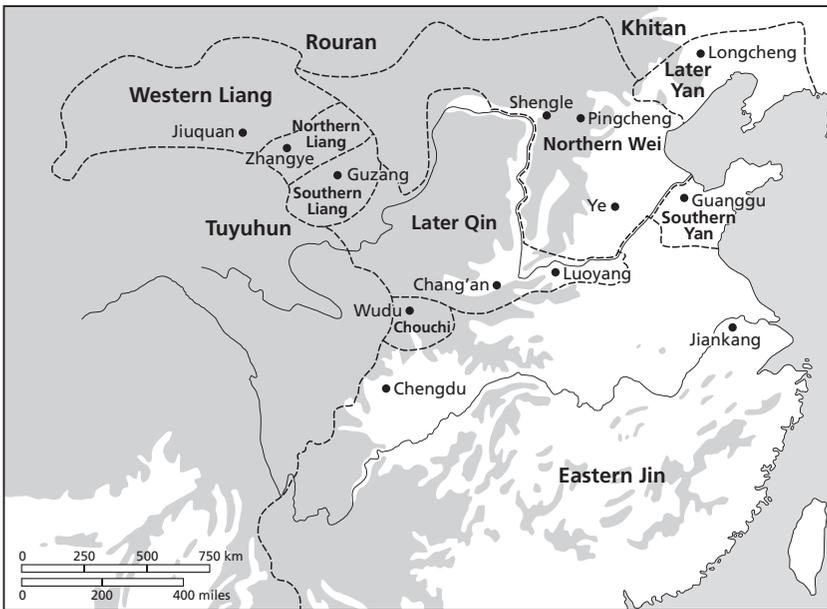


Map 6 Northern China in AD 338

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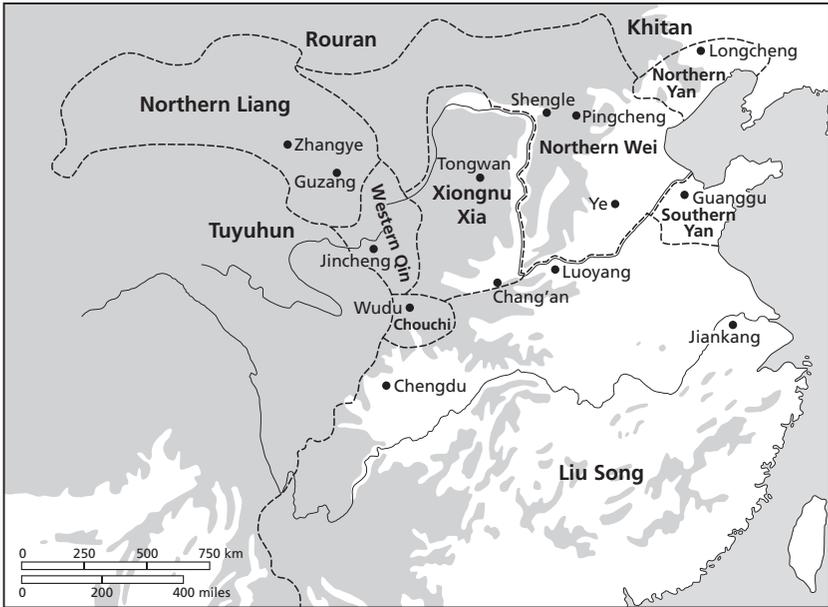


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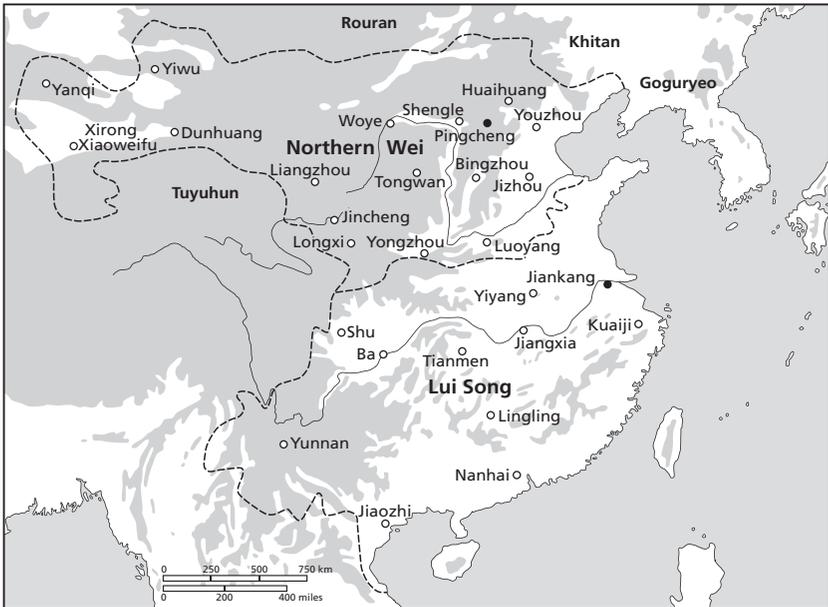


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Map 9 Northern China in AD 423

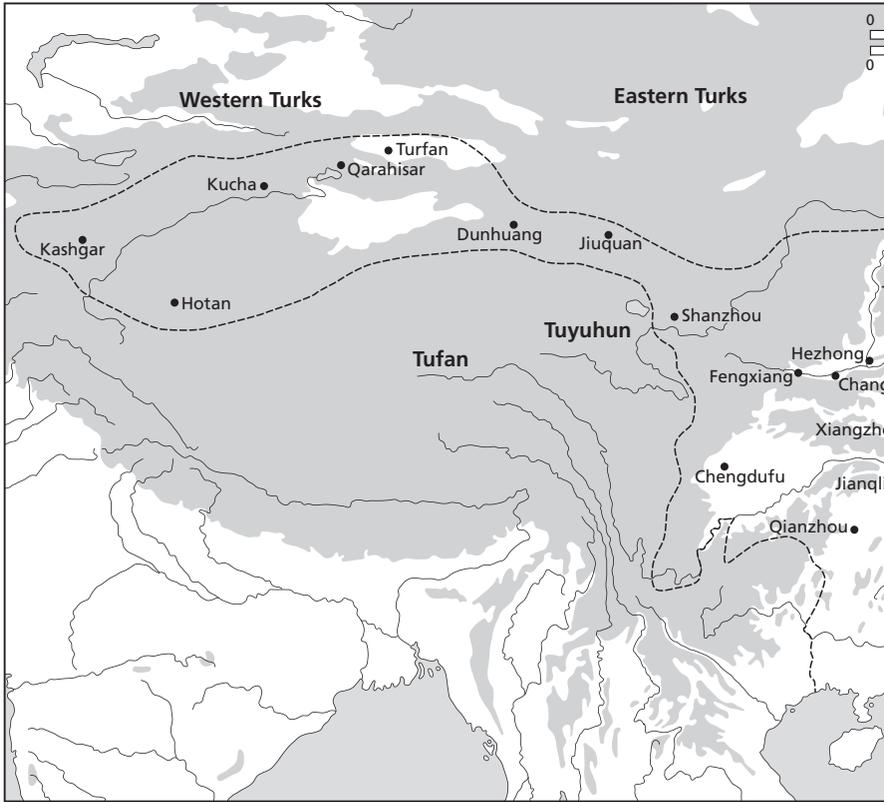


Map 10 Sārbi-Xianbei Northern Wei dynasty; Chinese Liu Song dynasty

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Map 11 Sürbi-Xianbei Northern Zhou and Northern Qi dynasties; Chinese Chen dynasty



Map 12 Tang dynasty c. AD 650

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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.