



The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe

By Hyun Jin Kim

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The Huns have often been treated as primitive barbarians with no advanced political organisation. Their place of origin was the so-called 'backward steppe'. It has been argued that whatever political organisation they achieved they owed to the 'civilizing influence' of the Germanic peoples they encountered as they moved west. This book argues that the steppes of Inner Asia were far from 'backward' and that the image of the primitive Huns is vastly misleading. They already possessed a highly sophisticated political culture while still in Inner Asia and, far from being passive recipients of advanced culture from the West, they passed on important elements of Central Eurasian culture to early medieval Europe, which they helped create. Their expansion also marked the beginning of a millennium of virtual monopoly of world power by empires originating in the steppes of Inner Asia. The rise of the Hunnic Empire was truly a geopolitical revolution.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Kim argues that the Huns played a large and positive role in the fall of Rome and the birth of Europe ... This challenging reassessment ... should be in all research libraries. Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above."

G. G. Guzman, Choice

About the Author

Hyun Jin Kim is the Australian Research Council DECRA Fellow at the University of Sydney. His first book, published in 2009, was a comparative analysis of Greece and China: Ethnicity and Foreigners in Ancient Greece and China. He has taught Greek history and Greek literature at Sydney University and has also given numerous invited talks and special seminars in the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Greece and Kazakhstan on topics related to comparative literature, Greece and the Near East, and the importance of wider Eurasia to the study of Greco-Roman civilization. He is currently undertaking a research project funded by the Australian government titled Transfer of Hegemony: Geopolitical Revolutions in World History.

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