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THE HUNS, ROME AND THE BIRTH OF EUROPE

The Huns have often been treated as primitive barbarians with no advanced political organization. Their place of origin was the so-called 'backward steppe'. It has been argued that whatever political organization 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.

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 new research project funded by the Australian government titled 'Transfer of Hegemony: Geopolitical Revolutions in World History'.

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Contents

<i>List of maps</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
1 Introduction 1	
Steppe empires and their significance in the history of wider Eurasia and Late Imperial Rome	1
The Huns, a new world order and the birth of ‘Europe’	5
2 Rome’s Inner Asian enemies before the Huns 9	
The Parthian Empire	9
The Partho-Sassanian confederacy	14
3 The Huns in Central Asia 17	
Inner Asian empires before the fourth century AD	17
Contemporary Inner Asian empires (fourth, fifth and sixth centuries AD)	35
4 The Huns in Europe 43	
The Hunnic Empire, the Germanic tribes and Rome	43
The impact of the Hunnic Empire and Roman military collapse	69
5 The end of the Hunnic Empire in the west 89	
Civil war and the rise of Ardaric	89
Odoacer the king of the Torcilingians, Rogians, Scirians and the Heruls	96
Valamer the king of the Huns and founding king of the Ostrogoths	105
Orestes the royal secretary	127
New invasions from the east	131
6 The later Huns and the birth of Europe 137	
The later Hunnic Empire of the Bulgars, Oghurs and Avars	137
The birth of a new Europe	143
Conclusion	156
<i>Notes</i>	159
<i>Bibliography</i>	276
<i>Index</i>	333

Maps

1 Eurasia in the late fourth century AD	<i>page</i> 18
2 The Hunnic Empire in Europe at its maximum extent under Attila	44
3 The breakup of the Hunnic Empire in Europe	90

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