



The Huns (Peoples of the Ancient World)

By Hyun Jin Kim

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This volume is a concise introduction to the history and culture of the Huns. This ancient people had a famous reputation in Eurasian Late Antiquity. However, their history has often been evaluated as a footnote in the histories of the later Roman Empire and early Germanic peoples. Kim addresses this imbalance and challenges the commonly held assumption that the Huns were a savage people who contributed little to world history, examining striking geopolitical changes brought about by the Hunnic expansion over much of continental Eurasia and revealing the Huns' contribution to European, Iranian, Chinese and Indian civilization and statecraft. By examining Hunnic culture as a Eurasian whole, *The Huns* provides a full picture of their society which demonstrates that this was a complex group with a wide variety of ethnic and linguistic identities. Making available critical information from both primary and secondary sources regarding the Huns' Inner Asian origins, which would otherwise be largely unavailable to most English speaking students and Classical scholars, this is a crucial tool for those interested in the study of Eurasian Late Antiquity.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Kim's book is a highly readable, masterful and comprehensive summation from the perspective of Eurasian history as a whole of what is known about this complex, heterogeneous and occasionally enigmatic confederation. *The Huns*, thoroughly versed in the Chinese and Graeco-Roman sources, including a number of neglected accounts, as well as the most recent archaeological discoveries, provides an excellent introduction to the political and cultural history of Central Eurasia and the role of the "Hunnic peoples" in shaping the world of Late Antiquity in Asia and Europe."

- Peter B. Golden, Rutgers University, USA

"As one of the best known of the Eurasian steppe warriors to make significant inroads into Western Civilization, the Huns, like the Mongols, have always been a source of fascination for historians of East-West contacts. This new book, by an author who has the linguistic skills to conduct in-depth research in Greek and Latin as well as classical Chinese sources, breaks new ground in both the amount of new information it provides but also in the many new questions it asks of the original sources. It will undoubtedly prove indispensable to both research scholars and university students."

- Samuel N.C. Lieu, Macquarie University, Australia

"This book is a necessary read for those interested in either the Huns or Late Antiquity in the West. For the most part the conclusions Kim draws are reasonable and thought-provoking, and even where he appears to over-extend himself, the over-extension results in the reader being forced to re-evaluate everything that has previously been read on the subject. This by itself makes the book a worthwhile read, as it forces the reader to "think outside the box"; no mean feat given the rapid pace of change being made in the study of Late Antiquity in the West. As a result, I have no reservations about recommending this book to those interested in the period.'

- Ian Hughes, UNRV

"This brief but accessible book is an ideal volume for an introduction to the Huns, as well as one that scholars will still find enlightening. Although the focus is on the Huns of Europe, Kim convincingly discusses the connection of the Huns to the Xiongnu of Mongolia as well as to the Hephthalites of Central Asia, who caused so much havoc for the Gupta Empire of India ... Additionally, chapters on the Xiongnu and Hephthalites provide ample historical and cultural information to show the regional variations of what might be termed the Hunnic cultural zones. Finally, in regard to Attila and the Huns of Europe, the author traces the rise of the Hunnic Empire in the West. Kim also closely examines the Western primary sources as well as the historiography of the Huns, while revealing that the Hunnic Empire was much more complex and enduring than the traditional views (based on Roman-era sources) allowed."

- T. M. May, University of North Georgia (USA), CHOICE reviews, rated Essential

About the Author

Hyun Jin Kim is Lecturer in Classics at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Users Review

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Sharon Hall:

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