

The Qin triumphed over six rival states and emerged as the only power posed to unify China. King Ying Zheng accomplished this goal and founded the Qin Empire in 221 B.C. with the capital in Xianyang, northwest of present-day Xi'an. For the first time in history, China's domain extended to the Guangdong and northern Vietnam. After the founding of the imperial empire, King Ying Zheng assumed the title Shi Huang (First Emperor) and decreed that his successors be called Second Emperor, Third Emperor, and so on. Until this time, the term "huang" had been reserved for gods and legendary sages (Yong Ho, Chinese historian, 2000).

"Recent finds include a giant bronze cauldron, terra-cotta acrobats as large as the warriors, and a cache of rare, armored vests made of polished stones. Archaeologists have also found the graves of 300 laborers who toiled at the site. East of the mound, 17 graves with the remains of decapitated bodies have been unearthed, and scholars speculate that they may be Qin Shihuangdi's children, executed by Hu Hai, the son who succeeded the first emperor." (Erling Hoh, archaeologist, 2001)

"Immediately following the founding of the Qin, Shi Huang embarked on a number of massive construction projects throughout the country such as the building of national highways, irrigation canals, an extravagant imperial city, and palaces. The most noteworthy of these construction projects was the Great Wall, undertaken in 221 B.C., the year the dynasty was established. The wall was built to keep away the Huns (Xiongnu), a Turkic-speaking nomadic tribe that had made continual border raids on the Qin Empire from the north." (Yong Ho, Chinese historian, 2000)

"The King of Qin was born with a prominent nose, elongated eyes, the beast of a bird of prey, and the voice of a jackal: he seldom extends favor, and has the heart of a tiger or wolf. Once he really has his way in the world, he will hold the whole world captive. He is ruler without benevolence or respect for learning." (Sima Qian, *Grand Historian*, 221 B.C.)

“The First Emperor has always been a powerful presence in Chinese history. The discovery of the terracotta army has only added a new dimension to his achievements, which were great. He created a centralized bureaucracy, unified laws, and a standard script: he established the right to own land: he provided for common security, as exemplified by the building of the Great Wall; and he promoted interregional economic activity, with new roads, and canals, standard currency, weights, and measures, and uniform axle wheels.” (Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., Curator of Asian Art, 1997)

As soon as the First Emperor became king of Qin (246 B.C.) Excavations and building were started at Mount Li, and after he won the empire more than 700,000 conscripts [recruited workers] from all parts of the country worked there. They dug through three subterranean streams and poured molten copper for the outer coffin, and the tomb was filled with models of palaces, pavilions, and offices, as well as fine vessels, precious stones, and rarities. Artisans were ordered to fix up cross bows so that any looters breaking in would be shot. All the country’s streams, the Yellow River, and the Yangtze were reproduced in quicksilver and by some mechanical means made to flow into a miniature ocean” (writings by an unknown historian who during the following dynasty).

“Large-scale public construction projects were made possible by the unification of the country, when territorial conflicts no longer existed. The Great Wall is a case in point, Shihuang did not build it from scratch; the wall had already existed in various former states. Shi Huang had only to link it into a 4,000-mile wall” (Yong Ho, historian, 2000)