Foundations of the Imperial State
Foundations of the Imperial State

1. Historical and geographic overview
2. 100 Schools revisited: Legalism
3. Emergence of the centralized, bureaucratic state
4. New ruler, new rituals
5. History in the making
Major states of the Warring States Period, ca. 400 BCE
Qin conquest
completed 221 BCE

Wei R. valley

"Region within the passes"
guanzhong 關中

Central States

Sichuan basin
秦
Qin Empire
221-206 BCE

"All under Heaven"
*tianxia* 天下
Liu Bang 刘邦
d. 195 BCE

Xiang Yu 項羽
232 - 202 BCE
Chinese personal names

Liu Bang

Xiang Yu
Liu Bang 劉邦
d. 195 BCE

Han Dynasty 206 BCE - 220 CE

Western Han / Former Han
206 BCE - 9 CE

Interregnum of Wang Mang
9-25 CE

Eastern Han or Later Han
25 - 220 CE

China Proper
秦
Qin Empire
221-206 BCE

Ordos plateau
Han Empire
206 BCE-220 CE

Emperor Wu
Han Wudi 漢武帝
r. 140-87 BCE

Xiongnu Empire

The Han Empire, 202BC – AD220

- Former Han Empire c.140BC
- territory added by Former Han by AD9
- territory added by Later Han AD25–220
- main Han military expeditions
- Great Wall, rebuilt 220–210BC
- trade routes
- trading centres
- imperial centres
1. Historical and geographic overview
2. **100 Schools revisited: Legalism**
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The Hundred Schools

Confucianism
Daoism
Legalism
Legalism
*fajia* 法家

Shang Yang (d. 338)
商鞅

Han Feizi (d. 233 BCE)
韓非子
fa
model, standard, law
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Shang Yang
商鞅
d. 338

The Book of Lord Shang
Shang jun shu 商君書
junxian system

directly administered geographic units

jun 郡 (prefecture)

xian 縣 (county)
Implementation of legal codes

Fragments of the Qin legal code
Discovered at Yunmeng, Hubei
Great Wall of China
Standardization of Writing System
Qin "small seal" script ca. 220 BCE
Standardization of Measuring System

weight standard

volume standard
Coins of the various states before Qin’s unification
Standardization of Currency
Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280-208 BCE)
Chancellor of Qin, ca. 235-208 BCE
mutual responsibility
corvée labor

"burning of the books" (213 BCE)
burying alive of 460 scholars (212 BCE)
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king (wang)
King Zheng of Qin
Qin Zheng Wang 秦正王
r. 246-221 BC

The First Emperor of Qin
Qin Shi Huangdi 秦始皇帝
r. 221-210 BC

Huangdi 皇帝=Emperor/Thearch
Liu Bang 刘邦  ➔  Emperor Gao
Han Gao di 漢高帝
r. 202/206-195 BCE

Yao 堯 (mythical ruler and culture hero)
imperial progress

sites of sacred mountains during Early Empire
Mt. Tai 泰山
Shandong Province

*feng and shan* sacrifices
*feng shan ji* 封禪
The August Emperor embodies sagehood,
And after having pacified all under
Heaven
He has not been remiss in rulership.
He rises early, retires late at night;
He establishes and sets up enduring benefits,
Radiates and glorifies His teachings and instructions.
His precepts and principles reach all around,
The distant and the near are completely well-ordered
And all receive His sage will.
The noble and the mean are distinguished and made clear,
Men and women embody compliance,
Cautious and respectful to their professions and duties.
Xi'an
咸陽
Chang'an (Han)
長安
Reconstruction of the palace in Xianyang (Qin capital)
State cults in the Han

sacrifices to Heaven
*tian* 天

sacrifices to the Five Emperors
*wu di* 五帝
The Funerary Park of the First Emperor (built 246-210 BCE)
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3. Emergence of the centralized, bureaucratic state
4. New ruler, new rituals
5. History in the making
Records of the Historian
Shiji 史記
compiled by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145-86 BCE)

standard (dynastic) history
zhengshi 正史
Standard Histories of the Han Dynasty

**History of the [Former] Han**

*Hanshu* 漢書
submitted to throne in 92 CE
compiled by Ban Gu 班固 (32-92 CE)
completed by Ban Zhao 班昭 (?48-?116 CE)

**History of the Later Han**

*Hou Hanshu* 後漢書
submitted to throne in 445 CE
compiled by Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445 CE)