

Shihuangdi was not always ordering positive new things for his empire. He also banned the practice of Confucianism. This was the following of the thoughts of a philosopher named Confucius. Confucius taught that a good leader is one who is fair and leads by example. The leader must follow the same laws that he expects his subjects to follow. Shihuangdi did not want to follow these rules, for it would limit his power as emperor. He wanted to be able to follow his own laws, if he followed any at all... Shihuangdi ordered many of the analect books of Confucius to be destroyed and hundreds of scholars who followed Confucianism were killed.

One of Shihuangdi's more famous legacies was the discovery of his tomb. In the 1970's a farmer discovered a life sized terra-cotta (clay) soldier. Archaeologists soon un-earthed over 8,000 of these soldiers. Each one was individually sculpted, and all were life sized. Full sized chariots and even terra-cotta horses were found. Shihuangdi had an entire army of soldiers buried surrounding his tomb to protect him in the afterlife. He thought he would rule his next empire with this army in the afterlife. Archaeologists have yet to enter the tomb of Shihuangdi.

Ancient stories exist telling of the interior of the tomb having a river of mercury representing the Huang River. Huge storage tanks of oil feed lamps to give light to the tomb. The ceiling of the tomb has thousands of jewels, glimmering from the light of the lamps, which looks like the stars at night. Traps also are said to exist, killing anyone who dared enter the tomb to loot it of its treasures. The modern government of China will not allow anyone into the tomb.

Shihuangdi's reign as emperor did not last very long. On one of his trips around China in 210 B.C., he died. He had ruled for only about 10 years. His oldest son was supposed to take over after Shihuangdi died, but this did not happen. Government officials plotted against his son and forged a letter to him. Shihuangdi's son thought the letter was from his father. In it, the letter told his son to commit suicide, which he did. One of Shihuangdi's less powerful sons then took over as the new emperor of the Qin dynasty. Unlike his father, Shihuangdi's son had no power over the people of China. A period of civil war and unrest lasted for 4 years during his rule. Eventually Shihuangdi's son was killed in a civil war, and a new family, the Han dynasty came to power. The dynasty that was said to last for 10,000 generations had lasted for only 2 generations and 15 total years!

Even though the Qin dynasty of Shihuangdi was short lived, his ideas and improvements lived on. Later emperors and dynasties adopted his single systems of currency, writing, and government. People may not have liked how Shihuangdi ruled as Emperor, but they respected his ideas and creations. These legacies helped shape the growth of China for hundreds of years after his death. To this day, the people of China see Shihuangdi as their first true emperor and "creator" of the land of China. Even the name of China today comes from the name of Shihuangdi's dynasty.

