

The Qin Dynasty

221-206 BCE

The Rise of Qin



The First Emperor



*19th-century illustration
of Qin Shi Huang*

Legalism

“Punishment should not be other than severe and definite, thus making the people fear them; and laws should not be other than uniform and steadfast, thus making the people comprehend them. . . . the enlightened [ruler] uses his men's strength but does not listen to their words, rewards them for their meritorious services but always eliminates the useless.”

– Han Fei (280-233 BCE)

Qin Dynasty



*Left: The Great Wall of China between Inner Mongolia and Shanxi province in 2006
Right: A 209 BCE bronze plaque with official order from the Qin dynasty*

Fall of Qin



Terracotta Army in the Mausoleum of the first Qin Emperor, built 246-209 BCE

Central Historical Question

*What caused the fall of the
Qin dynasty?*