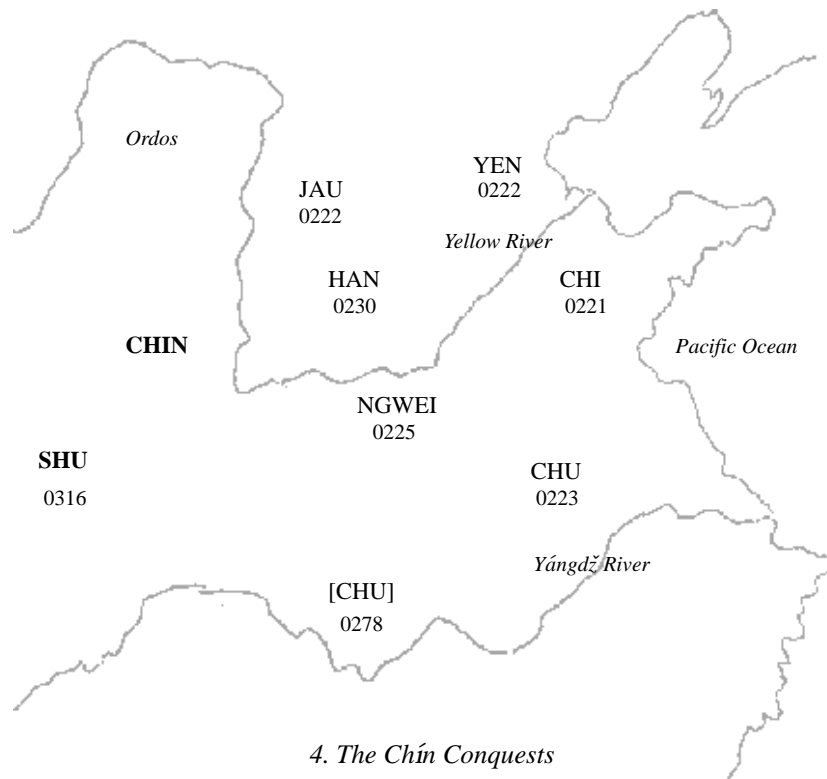


Lǚ Bù-wéi's book, LSCC 1-12, was finished in 0241. He was disgraced in 0237 and committed suicide on his way to exile in 0235. Chín's success came not from this or any other book, but from steady application of military force. The final conquests were Hán (0230), Ngwèi (0225), Chǔ (0223), Jàu and Yēn (0222), and finally Chí in 0221. The classical period was at an end.



### The First Emperor

**The Question of Feudalism.** One might imagine that, on the morning after the last conquest, the Chín leadership would ask, How is all this territory to be governed? The answer had already been decided: central control. As states were conquered, they were governed by men like Official Syǐ (#5:113), who had been trained and appointed by Chín, and were responsible only to Chín.

At some point the archaizing party, perhaps a remnant of the Lǚ Bù-wéi group, did suggest refeudalizing:<sup>5</sup> parceling out the land to the ruler's family, and dividing Chín sovereignty itself on the Jōu model.

<sup>5</sup>According to SJ 87, the proposal was advanced by Chún'yw Ywè 淳于越, a man of Chí, who emphasized the security that would result from following ancient practice.

To this, the high legal official Lǐ Sǐ replied:

**8:4** (SJ 6, excerpt, c0221). The sons and younger brothers enfeoffed by the Jōu Kings Wǎn and Wǔ were very numerous, but afterward they became estranged, attacking each other just as though they were enemies. The lords even invaded each other's territories, and put each other to death, and the Jōu rulers could neither restrain nor prevent them. Now, all within the Seas is subject to His Highness' divine and undivided rule. Let it all be made into administrative regions and districts, and let those who have earned merit be richly rewarded from revenues; this will be entirely adequate and easily instituted. But let the lands under Heaven have no divergent intentions: this is the way to secure peace. To set up feudal lords would not be suitable.

And the Emperor agreed, in these words:

The First Emperor said, That the world has suffered endlessly from war is because there were Lords and Kings. Thanks to the favor of the Ancestors, the world is now at last stable. To again establish separate states would be merely sowing weapons of war. And if we should then seek to pacify them, how could it but be difficult? The opinion of the Chamberlain 廷尉 is correct.

And so Chín organized its territories into 36 administrative regions (jyǜn 郡),<sup>6</sup> and no Kings at all.

The First Emperor did not see himself as reviving Jōu, but as making a new beginning. He scorned the Jōu title King, and reached back to the Shāng title Dì 帝, with its overtones of divinity. His preferred title, "The First Emperor" (Shǐ Hwáng-dì 始皇帝), openly proclaimed a departure from earlier precedent.

The First Emperor's successor was to be designated "The Second Emperor" (Àr-shì Hwáng-dì 二世皇帝), and so on for a myriad Emperors into the future. There would be no more dynastic transitions: Chín was there to stay.

**Cosmic Cycles.** The old Lǚ Bù-wéi group ventured to dissent. They saw Chín as occupying a limited period within history: part of the Five Phases sequence. In the Lǎn, an addendum to the LSCC, they put it respectfully, comparing the First Emperor with several esteemed figures of antiquity:

**8:5** (LSCC 13/2:1, excerpt, c0221). When an Emperor is about to arise, Heaven will first display omens among the people below. In the time of the Yellow Emperor, Heaven displayed great worms and crickets, and the Yellow Emperor said, The force [chì 氣]<sup>7</sup> of Earth is dominant. Earth being dominant, for his color he honored yellow, and in his actions he imitated earth. Then in the time of Yǔ . . .

<sup>6</sup>Plus the capital. The number of jyǜn later increased; Loewe **Biographical** 806f.

<sup>7</sup>The meanings of this word includes breath, vapor, ether, or other intangible force.