

Good essay on tomb of shi huang di

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



The Qin emperor, Shihuangdi, was perhaps the most prominent emperor throughout the Chinese history. Ying Zheng invented the title Shi Huang Di, which means ‘ first emperor’, because he believed that he was superior, compared to the kings of other states of China. During his reign, he unified Chinese policies and culture through standardization of written language and bureaucracy. Furthermore, he aspired to live forever and rule eternally. Some scientists believed that Huang Di was obsessed with the idea of immortality that was why he had done peculiar things in search for an eternal life (Shank, 2009).

Shi Huang Di wanted to mark his name in history and so he ordered the constructions of an enormous tomb that was to be established in his name. In conjunction with the tomb was the founding of a great army that, he believed, would protect and serve him even to his next life (Shank, 2009). This essay attempts to unravel the mysteries and purposes of the emperor’s elaborate burial place. The paper also attempt to give scholarly theories which could explicate the mysteries. Then it will give the most conceivable and substantial reason why this theory is the best one to clarify the mystery. In order to accomplish the goals of this paper, we will first describe the famous tomb of Shi Huang Di and other related creations to the tomb. Then we will cite theories and beliefs of researchers and experts regarding the tomb constructions. From the given theories, we will choose the best assumption that would give us the most acceptable supports and justifications.

Huang Di was buried in an extremely intricate tomb. The tomb has an underground palace built by a large number of workers who were forced to

serve Huang Di. The palace had a large banquet hall that could accommodate hundreds of people. There was a model of China's topography in the center of the chamber. The map depicted unusual things such as rivers made of mercury, birds made of silver and gold and the sun, moon and stars that are made from pearls. There were also models of other precious stones, palaces and many more. Seeing the meticulous construction of the tomb proves that a lot of people worked hard for the emperor's tomb. Chinese history tells us that the construction of the tomb took thirty-six years and seven hundred thousand people. Nonetheless, it was also widely believed that individuals who worked on the elaborate burial place were buried alive at the time the tomb was closed (Portal, 2007).

The tomb chamber was surrounded by a vast terracotta army figures. Figures of infantry, soldiers, archers and chariots were all positioned for an upcoming battle. All soldiers have unique features, different colors and heights according to their ranks in the army (Portal, 2007).

In Wolff's article (2007), she noted that Qin's extravagant tomb along with its armies signify the things that were most important to the emperor. He wanted to take these things with him even through death and the life after. This need of creating particular aspects of his environment in his burial place may be traced from his immortality obsession.

There are numerous Chinese rituals of mortuary but there were only few documents about practices and beliefs during Qin period (221-206 BC). During this time, many believed that the soul possess two portions. The first portion remains with the body while the other one would go to heaven upon death. This belief explains the attempts of preserving bodies of a deceased.

Chinese commonly believe on life after death and so they practice rituals to guarantee a decent place afterlife. There were also the evidences of human sacrifices for elite members of the society that plays an immense purpose in burial rituals and traditions.

Dien (1987) explained that these beliefs about afterlife are visible in tombs and skeletons of humans that escorted the dead to the next life. He noted that there was a decline of human sacrificing practices during the unification of China. Statues and figures were utilized to replace human sacrifices. This transition of belief might explain the terracotta army surrounding Qin Shi Huang Di's tomb. The army figures might represent the real army that would be sacrificed upon the death of the emperor. They may be called as 'spirit vessels' which replaces things that cannot be put in the grave.

Considering Shi Huang Di's regard to his army, we can assume that the army is one of his topmost priorities. Here we can say that important things for the emperor were recreated for his tomb. Other important things include precious stones and gems that would represent his wealth. This practice would suggest that Shi Huang Di tried to recreate Qin's life in the next life for him to attain immortality. He may have believed that with the recreation of things in his tomb, he might be able to continue a similar life after death that can prove his immortality. This idea suggests that the elaborate tomb embodies the emperor's obsession on immortality. If we assume that the emperor ordered to build the elaborate tomb so that his priorities would be represented for the next life, then that would explain why the army was modelled with great accuracy, and that is to correctly embody the army to the emperor's next life (Thorp, 1987).

It was contradicting that a person who desires immortality made detailed plans for his burial place. The theory that gives a better explanation for the intricacy of the tomb suggests that Shi Huang Di is still searching for the means of an eternal life. And he might have believed that providing a detailed representation of the things he valued would allow him to bring them to his next life. Having similar possession for the next life would allow him to continue a similar life, which may mean immortality for him.

References:

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