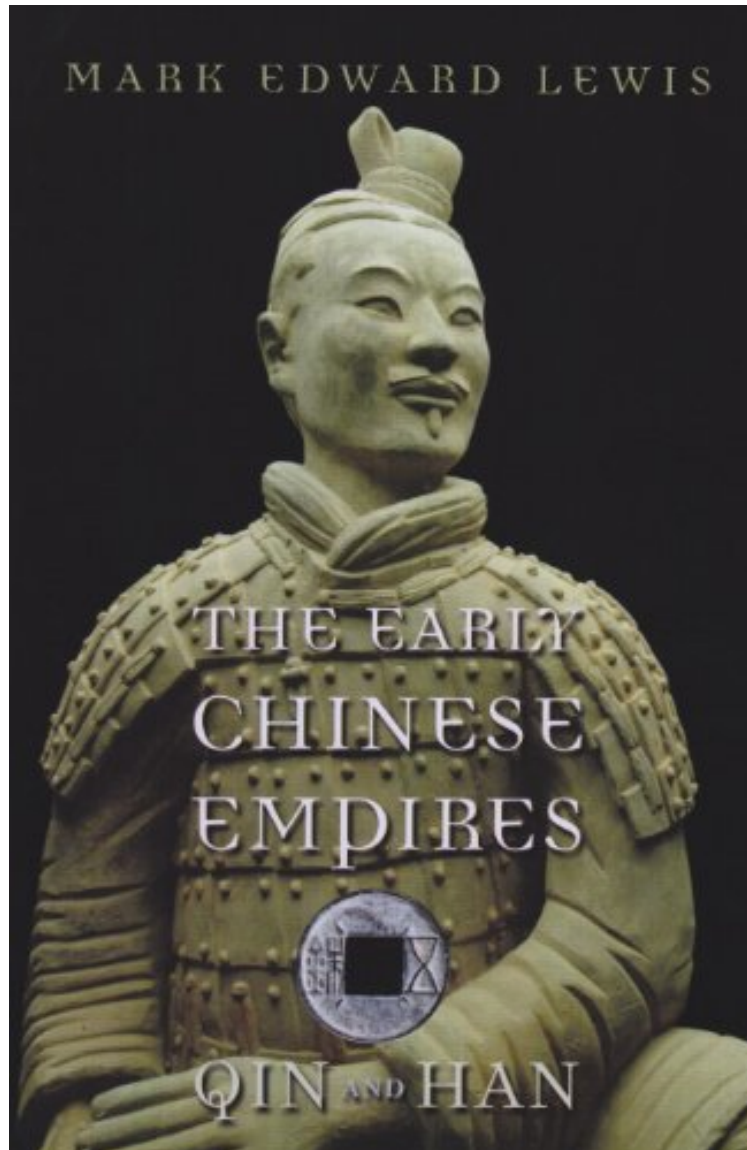


(Free read ebook) The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han (History of Imperial China)

The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han (History of Imperial China)

Mark Edward Lewis

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#429331 in Books Belknap Press 2010-10-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.18 x .88 x 6.141, 1.06
#File Name: 0674057341336 pages Belknap Press | File size: 60.Mb

Mark Edward Lewis : The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han (History of Imperial China) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han (History of Imperial China):

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Very good coverage of the subject By landi3337 This is a very

good book covering this time period. It's broken down into sections (religion, law, literature, etc.) to make it easy to follow, or easy to research just a particular topic. It's well written and easy to read and even enjoyable, which is a tough feat for a history book. Some minor critiques: I wish the author or publisher had included the Chinese characters next to the pinyin words, so those familiar with the written language could better understand. Also, I think it should have started out with a long chapter giving a linear, chronological history of the Qin and Han periods. That would have made it better to understand some of the subsequent chapters. Reading this from front to back, you still get a good sense of the chronology, but starting out with that would have helped. I'm looking forward to subsequent books in this series, plus I understand the author is also working on a different project discussing pre-imperial China. That will be nice. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A different perspective on Chinese history! By Peimath Easy to read! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent introduction to Early Chinese history. By Art S. Excellent introduction to Early Chinese history. Next volume is also worth owning. There are a few spots where I felt the exposition of the era or personage involved was not as clear as it could be. Still, excellent place to start if you know nothing about Chinese history.

In 221 BC the First Emperor of Qin unified the lands that would become the heart of a Chinese empire. Though forged by conquest, this vast domain depended for its political survival on a fundamental reshaping of Chinese culture. With this informative book, we are present at the creation of an ancient imperial order whose major features would endure for two millennia. The Qin and Han constitute the "classical period" of Chinese history--a role played by the Greeks and Romans in the West. Mark Edward Lewis highlights the key challenges faced by the court officials and scholars who set about governing an empire of such scale and diversity of peoples. He traces the drastic measures taken to transcend, without eliminating, these regional differences: the invention of the emperor as the divine embodiment of the state; the establishment of a common script for communication and a state-sponsored canon for the propagation of Confucian ideals; the flourishing of the great families, whose domination of local society rested on wealth, landholding, and elaborate kinship structures; the demilitarization of the interior; and the impact of non-Chinese warrior-nomads in setting the boundaries of an emerging Chinese identity. The first of a six-volume series on the history of imperial China, *The Early Chinese Empires* illuminates many formative events in China's long history of imperialism--events whose residual influence can still be discerned today.

From Booklist Inaugurating a six-volume series on the history of imperial China, this volume holds that characteristics of the first Chinese empire broadly endured for the succeeding 2,000 years. Structuring the subject topically while integrating chronology in a supporting capacity, Lewis explains the geographical advantages that the Qin enjoyed over its competitors in China's Warring States period (481-221 BCE). Curiously, the Qin empire existed for only two decades--long enough, however, to ordain the emperor as semidivine and to establish other features of state, such as bureaucracy. Describing its moving parts of army and administration, Lewis attends to military campaigns of the Qin and its successor dynasty, the Han. Beyond the statecraft, the author delves into the Confucian culture that informed it, presenting extracts from Chinese literature of the period that instructed officials on correct conduct. Confucianism itself was drawn from deeper cultural wells of family relations and cultic worship, which Lewis brings out in glimpses into everyday life provided by archaeological discoveries. Libraries planning to acquire the entire series mustn't omit Lewis' solid foundation. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved As the first volume in the History of Imperial China, *The Early Chinese Empires* sets an authoritative, reliable tone that bodes well for this important new series. The book meets a high standard of historical accuracy and covers an impressively broad range of topics. Accessible to a wide audience, it will appeal to anyone interested in the foundations of the Chinese imperial tradition. (Victor H. Mair, University of Pennsylvania) Inaugurating a six-volume series on the history of imperial China, this volume holds that characteristics of the first Chinese empire broadly endured for the succeeding 2,000 years... [Those] planning to acquire the entire series mustn't omit Lewis' solid foundation. (Gilbert Taylor Booklist 2007-04-15) The standard multivolume history of China has long been the magisterial, exhaustive Cambridge History of China. Now Harvard University Press has announced a six-volume series that will cover the rise, development, and decline of dynastic China from the second century B.C.E. through the early 20th century in an up-to-date, compact, and approachable way. This opening volume by Lewis foretells that the series will become the new gold standard, as the author explains in clear and telling detail how the Qin dynasty ruthlessly defeated a succession of rivals to unify briefly what we now call China in 221 B.C.E. We then see how the succeeding Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.) combined social engineering and political savvy to institutionalize control and form a 'classical' era parallel to the Greeks and Romans in the West. Han imperial structures, including religion, literature, and law, were quite different from what evolved out of them, but Lewis convincingly argues that later societies cannot be understood without understanding this classical foundation. (Charles W. Hayford Library Journal (starred review) 2007-04-01) Mark Lewis's mind-opening and readable book reminds us of the enduring but changing realities of China. (Jonathan Mirsky Times Literary Supplement 2008-03-14) *Early Chinese Empires* is a brilliant example of nuanced, responsible popularization. As the first in a series of six volumes that will cover all of Imperial China, it sets a very

high standard. (Grant Hardy *The Historian* 2009-08-01) This series on China, brilliantly overseen by Timothy Brook, is a credit to Harvard University Press. Above all, it encourages us to think of China in different ways. (Jonathan Mirsky *Literary* 2010-11-01) About the Author Mark Edward Lewis is Kwoh-Ting Li Professor in Chinese Culture at Stanford University. Timothy Brook is Professor of History and Republic of China Chair at the University of British Columbia.