

The Terracotta Army



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The First Emperor

Qin Shi Huang became the first emperor of a united China, in 220 BC.

Qin Shi Huang ruled until his death in 210 BC.

Qin Shi Huang, was afraid of death and wanted to discover the secret of immortality. For this reason, he ordered the construction of the Terracotta Army soon after he became the king of the Qin State, at the age of 13, in 246 BC.

During his reign, he was responsible for the first version of the Great Wall of China.

Protection after Death

The army was built to protect Qin in the afterlife. It would take almost forty years to build.

After he died, production came to an abrupt end because there was a war.

40 years later...



Discovery of the Terracotta Army

In March 1974, farmers in Xian, China, were digging a well.

They unintentionally uncovered a huge pit and discovered a life-size model of a warrior made from clay. They informed the Chinese government, who sent officials to inspect the area.

After further excavations, three huge vaults were found. The vaults were filled with around 8000 life-size models of warriors. These models were made entirely from clay.



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What are your thoughts?

A Formidable Army



The warriors were positioned and created according to their rank.



There were charioteers, cavalrymen, armoured warriors, officers and generals.



They held different types of weapons, such as long spears, daggers or halberds.



The Making of a Warrior

It took 700 000 labourers to make the warriors.

Each part would have been made in separate moulds, fired in a huge kiln and assembled into a life-size warrior.

Each model has a different expression; the rivets on their armour stand out and the kneeling warriors have tread marks on the soles of their boots.

Each warrior weighs around 300kg.

Patches of paint indicate they were once painted in bright colours.

Each warrior is stamped with the name of the person who created it so any mistakes could be traced.



Conservation

In 1979, the Terracotta Army was opened to the public.

In 1987, it became a UNESCO World Heritage Site and it was given special protection.





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