

Teacher's info sheets from various references:

Terracotta army

The discovery of the terracotta warriors has gripped the imagination of people around the world.

The terracotta army was discovered by accident in 1974 at Xian, in China, when local farmers digging a well broke into a pit containing 6000 life-size terracotta figures. Excavation in 1976 revealed two further pits both filled with terracotta warriors. On the eastern side of the tomb a number of small pits have been found containing the bones of horses and smaller size terracotta figures of grooms. Since then discoveries have continued to be made at the site and to date the remains of nearly 8000 terracotta figures have been recovered.

The terracotta warriors are unique. Not only are they life-size and individually modeled in clay, but the detail of the figures is astounding. Not only can we observe the construction of body armor of terracotta army, with even the heads of rivets standing out, but the soles of the shoes of the kneeling warriors are modeled with fine tread patterns. The hands and the heads of the terracotta warriors were made separately, and each head is reputed to be different and individual. Although all the warriors were in the pits they had been buried in, many of them were in pieces and have had to be restored. The museum technicians and craftsmen who undertook this difficult task often had to remodel parts to restore areas of the figures that were too badly damaged to be reconstructed.

The terracotta army was guarding the tomb of the First Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang di, who lived over 2200 years ago. He became famous for unifying the warring states into what is now China, and for becoming the country's first emperor. He is remembered for instigating the building of the Great Wall of China, and the fanatical fear of death and an obsessive quest for the secret of immortality. This craze for life and the fear of death ultimately gave us the legacy of the terracotta warriors.

Xian 西安市 is ancient city of 长安 Chang'an (literally "Perpetual Peace")

Xian is the capital of the Shaanxi province in China. It is one of the Four Great Ancient Capitals of China because it has been the capital (under various names) of 13 dynasties, including the Zhou, Qin, Han, the Sui dynasty, and the Tang. Xian is also renowned for being the eastern terminus of the Silk Road and for the location of the Terracotta Army. The city has more than 3,100 years of history.

This part of today's Shaanxi Province was where the first two imperial dynasties made their capitals, taking advantage of the natural defenses of the Huang (Yellow) River to the east and the Qin Ling Mountains to the south.

Qin Shi Huang di

The Qin ruled here from 221 to 207 BCE., and their collapse was followed by the rise of the Western Han dynasty, which ruled from 206 BCE to A.D. 9.

Upon ascending the throne at the age of 13 (in 246 BC), Qin Shi Huang, later the first Emperor of all China, had begun to work for his mausoleum. It took 11 years to finish. It is speculated that many buried treasures and sacrificial objects had accompanied the emperor in his afterlife.

Why Qin s Huang di is the 1st emperor?

The rulers of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties controlled large territories, and those of the Zhou in particular believed they ruled by divine right – known as the Mandate of Heaven. However, they still saw themselves only as earthly monarchs. Qin Shi Huang di saw himself differently. He believed he was from the same lineage as the divine Sage Kings of China’s mythical past. He wished both to live forever and to go on ruling into eternity.

A Dynasty was a succession of rulers who all came from the same family or were associated with that family. Once Qin Shi Huang di had created the concept “Emperor”, all future rulers of China took that title for themselves. The principal Dynasties from his time up to the beginning of the 20th century were Han, Sui, Tang, Song, Liao, Jin, Yuan, Ming and Qing.

Why did he build a city-sized mausoleum guarded by a life-sized Terracotta Army?

The First Emperor knew that if he failed in his search for the secret of eternal life, he would still rule in the parallel world of the after-life. So within the inner and outer walls of his tomb complex, the First Emperor made sure he would have a palace complex every bit as grand and luxurious as the ones he had in life.

The achievements of Qin Shi Huang di:

Attitudes to Qin Shi Huang di have changed throughout history and periodically he has been known as a cruel and ruthless tyrant who may have united China for the first time but only at a terrible cost. It is seen that his obsessive quest for immortality came to nothing, and instead of ruling for 10,000 generations, his dynasty lasted only 15 years. Much of this, however, comes from the version of one historian writing for a dynasty that wished to discredit Qin Shi Huang di (see *Historical Records*).

In unifying China he brought to an end centuries of war between the rival states and there is only evidence of him treating one of these states harshly after conquest. In establishing a central government to control the new empire, he abolished the inheritance of titles and offices which had led to much corruption, and instead created a strict hierarchy based on merit and achievement. In standardizing all the coinage, weights and measures to be used across the empire he ensured fairness and uniformity in trade and commerce. It is not possible for us now to say how much of this was done from a sense of justice and how much simply stemmed from the need to control.

The system of laws and punishments the First Emperor introduced were certainly strict and severe, but they were also wider ranging and universally applied. We have detailed knowledge of them from the records on 1100 bamboo strips discovered in the tomb of a local magistrate dating to 217 BC. The strict penal code ensured that the Emperor had a ready supply of convict labor for his great projects such as the Great Wall (see *The Great Wall*), the road and canal systems, his palaces and, of course, his tomb. Every able-bodied male was also liable to conscription into the army for a year or more and after that to an annual period of labor in the emperor's service. He also continued an established practice of the Qin before conquest in which every household was registered and members of communities were placed into "responsibility groups" obliged to inform the authorities if anyone failed in their duty or broke a law.

However he was viewed, every dynasty that succeeded Qin Shi Huang di, including the Han which criticized him so severely, continued to use and benefit from the principles of government he laid down. In particular the absolute right of command he established has continued to be seen as the norm right up to modern times.

Qin Shi Huang remains a controversial figure in Chinese history. Having unified China, he and his chief adviser 李斯 Li Si passed a series of major reforms aimed at cementing unification, and they undertook some gigantic projects, most notably the precursor version of the current Great Wall of China, a city-sized mausoleum guarded by a life-sized Terracotta Army, and a massive national road system, at the expense of numerous human lives. To ensure stability, he outlawed Confucianism and buried many of its scholars alive, banning and burning all books other than those officially decreed.

For all the tyranny of his autocratic rule, Qin Shi Huang is still regarded by many today as a pivotal figure in Chinese history whose unification of China has endured for more than two millennia.

Li Si

Li Si was the influential Prime Minister of the feudal state and later of the dynasty of Qin, between 246 BC and 208 BC. A famous Legalist, he was also a notable calligrapher. Li Si served under two rulers: Qin Shi Huang, king of Qin and later First Emperor of China, and his son, Qin Er Shi. A powerful minister, he was central to the state's policies, including those on military conquest, draconian centralization of state control, standardization of weights, measures and the written script, and persecution of Confucianism and opponents of Legalism.

The Great Wall

The Great Wall of China that we are familiar with today dates from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). It built largely using previously existing foundations and the man credited with building the first Great Wall is Qin Shi Huang di. In fact the history of the Wall goes back even further. During the Eastern Zhou period (770-221 BC) a number of states built defensive walls against either northern tribes or neighboring states. It was the First Emperor, however, who took these existing walls and linked them, adding a further 5000 kilometers, to create a single northern defensive system. The Qin wall divides into an eastern, a central and a western section, and

together they run from the western end of the Yellow River into modern-day Korea. It was not made of brick like the later Ming Dynasty Wall, but of rammed earth and stone. It was built by hundreds of thousands of soldiers, convicts, slaves and ordinary people, countless numbers of whom died in the process. It served not just as a defense for the empire, but also as a symbol of the First Emperor's power.

Staggering as all the discoveries already made are, the greatest of all is still waiting for archaeologists to tackle it. Qin Shi Huang di's tomb mound itself has been completely untouched. The pits that were dug to hold the Terracotta Army cover an area of more than 2,500 square meters and are situated about 1.5 kilometers east of the Emperor's tomb mound itself. Four pits have been excavated, three containing figures and one empty.

TECHNOLOGY

Qin Shi Huang di made use of all the technology available to him in order to become and stay Emperor.

- At this time, the Chinese were experts at making objects using molds. This meant they could be very accurate in making things the same. They used molds to make bells and weapons out of bronze.
- They also used molds to make coins and weights.
- Music was very important; the bronze bells were used for special ceremonies not for entertainment.
- Qin Shi Huang di recognized that writing was a very important technology to help him keep power.
- Clay workers used molds to make plates decorated with animals for the roofs of the Emperor's palaces.

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