

1

00:00:00,893 --> 00:00:10,889

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:10,889 --> 00:00:20,885

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

3

00:00:21,884 --> 00:00:30,880

The only man made object on earth the astronauts could see from outer space was the Great Wall of China.

4

00:00:38,877 --> 00:00:46,874

Although it is one of the most astounding accomplishments of man, it failed to keep out wave after wave of barbarian invaders.

5

00:00:47,873 --> 00:00:57,869

Startling new archaeological discoveries in China may shed light on why it was built and on the character of the Emperor who completed it.

6

00:01:05,866 --> 00:01:15,862

The Great Wall of China. This huge stone serpent winds across nearly 2,000 miles of rugged mountains in the People's Republic of China.

7

00:01:17,861 --> 00:01:21,859

It is the longest structure in the world.

8

00:01:24,858 --> 00:01:27,857

The vast land of China has always held mystery for us.

9

00:01:27,857 --> 00:01:34,854

Her customs, her language and her way of life have differed vastly from the rest of the world.

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00:01:35,853 --> 00:01:38,852

Her very remoteness has lent an air of mystery.

11

00:01:39,852 --> 00:01:43,850

We have admired her ancient culture and her appreciation of beauty.

12

00:01:46,849 --> 00:01:55,845

In search of is the first major film unit allowed into the People's Republic of China, seeking answers to some of her secrets.

13

00:01:58,844 --> 00:02:04,841

An ancient ruler who could be the key to some of the puzzles is Emperor Xi Chuan Di.

14

00:02:04,841 --> 00:02:08,840

He became China's emperor in 221 BC.

15

00:02:09,839 --> 00:02:21,834

In Chinese, last names come first. The word China comes from the family name Xi. So the land of Xi became China.

16

00:02:23,833 --> 00:02:28,831

Even before Xi, however, China had rulers who lived behind this land of walls.

17

00:02:29,831 --> 00:02:34,829

Each one built sections of the Great Wall in hope it would keep out the barbarians.

18

00:02:35,828 --> 00:02:43,825

The great Tartar leader, Genghis Khan, a brilliant military strategist, had little trouble crossing the Great Wall.

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00:02:44,825 --> 00:02:50,822

No mad scouts from the Khan's Gobi Desert Hordes reported that the Chinese government was weak.

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00:02:51,822 --> 00:02:57,819

There were traitors to open the gates and the long old hordes swept through to conquer China.

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00:02:58,819 --> 00:03:05,816

The irony was that after two generations the new conquerors were totally absorbed by the Chinese.

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00:03:06,815 --> 00:03:14,812

Kubla Khan, the grandson of Genghis and the most familiar name to us through the tales of Marco Polo, lived in the height of luxury

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00:03:15,812 --> 00:03:19,810

and ruled over the most splendidly opulent court in Chinese history.

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00:03:20,810 --> 00:03:31,805

A later emperor, Yong Lo, ordered the city of Peking built with high walls and made it his capital because of its proximity to the Great Wall.

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00:03:32,805 --> 00:03:38,802

The ancient Chinese believed that they were the only civilized people in the universe. All others were barbarians.

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00:03:39,802 --> 00:03:43,800

In early times many local rulers had built sections of walls for the protection of their area.

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00:03:43,800 --> 00:03:50,797

But in 207 BC one man came to power who was to be one of the most dominant figures in early Chinese history.

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00:03:51,797 --> 00:03:59,793

He not only filled in the gaps and completed the Great Wall of China, but he conquered all of the local rulers and consolidated China for the first time.

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00:04:00,793 --> 00:04:07,790

His name is Xi Chuang Di. He was China's first emperor. His accomplishments were many.

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00:04:07,790 --> 00:04:13,787

A skilled general, he put down all opposition by defeating all local marks.

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00:04:22,784 --> 00:04:26,782

He built roads connecting his capital with the far corners of his empire.

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00:04:27,782 --> 00:04:33,779

He standardized writing, coinage, weights and measures throughout the land.

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00:04:34,779 --> 00:04:40,776

At the University of California at San Diego, we spoke with professor of history, Dr. Pikowitz.

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00:04:41,776 --> 00:04:47,773

Virtually everything that he did tended to bring China closer together as one unit. It put an end to feudalism.

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00:04:48,773 --> 00:04:52,771

And that's the reason why China today, although it's the size of Europe, is one country.

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00:04:53,771 --> 00:04:58,769

We sometimes don't think why Europe, for example, is so many different countries and China is only one country.

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00:04:58,769 --> 00:05:06,765

It's because of what this man did in 221 BC that China is one nation. To call him a Chinese Caesar

perhaps is underestimating it.

38

00:05:07,765 --> 00:05:11,763

The Great Wall of China defined the emperor's territorial limits.

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00:05:12,763 --> 00:05:18,760

The 2,000 miles of wall was purposely built along the most difficult mountain ridges of northern China.

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00:05:19,760 --> 00:05:30,755

This huge stone casing filled with tamped earth and rock is larger in bulk than the combined pyramids of Egypt and Mexico.

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00:05:34,754 --> 00:05:39,752

It rises to precipitous heights and plunges into deep gorges.

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00:05:40,751 --> 00:05:46,749

It is one of the wonders of the ancient world. Some parts of it are so remote they are seldom seen by man.

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00:05:51,747 --> 00:05:58,744

Old sections of wall were linked together from the Pacific Ocean to the vast westward stretches of the Gobi Desert.

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00:06:00,743 --> 00:06:05,741

It meets the eastern terminus for camel caravans on the fabled Silk Route from the Middle East.

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00:06:05,741 --> 00:06:09,739

The path followed by Marco Polo in his famous travels.

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00:06:24,733 --> 00:06:29,731

Chinese travelers of the period were terrified that they would die beyond the Great Wall.

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00:06:30,730 --> 00:06:37,727

They were afraid their spirits would be unable to pass through the wall to find rest in their homeland.

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00:06:42,725 --> 00:06:47,723

The emperor's most astounding accomplishment was the completion of the Great Wall.

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00:06:48,723 --> 00:06:57,719

It was however constructed at enormous human cost. Many peasants who built it froze to death in the

severe northern winters of the land.

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00:06:59,718 --> 00:07:06,715

Hundreds of thousands of conscripted workers died from extremely harsh treatment at the hands of the emperor's guards.

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00:07:08,714 --> 00:07:17,711

Beneath the massive stones lie the remains of those laborers who perished, earning it the name of the longest graveyard in the world.

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00:07:19,710 --> 00:07:26,707

The emperor's harsh measures were not only felt by the laborers, but also by scholars and intellectuals.

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00:07:27,706 --> 00:07:33,704

Their thinking had been formed by the great teacher Confucius. They were pledged to respect tradition.

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00:07:34,704 --> 00:07:40,701

Xi Chuan Di wanted just the opposite. He was determined to break with the past completely.

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00:07:42,700 --> 00:07:47,698

He was known to have carried out a cultural revolution. Although it wasn't called a cultural revolution at the time,

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00:07:47,698 --> 00:07:54,695

it was in fact a movement to erase the history of China in the period preceding his rise to power.

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00:07:54,695 --> 00:08:00,693

He burned books. He buried scholars alive, quite literally. One of the methods used to kill scholars,

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00:08:00,693 --> 00:08:04,691

and I think there were some 460 scholars killed in a four or five year period.

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00:08:04,691 --> 00:08:11,688

One of the methods of killing scholars was to bury them up to their neck and then to take an axe and lop their heads off.

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00:08:12,688 --> 00:08:19,685

One of his concerns is that he still had rivals in these former kingdoms, these feudal kingdoms, who could threaten his rule.

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00:08:19,685 --> 00:08:24,683

And so he decided, for the first time in Chinese history, to simply collect all of his enemies.

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00:08:24,683 --> 00:08:31,680

120,000 families were assembled in his capital. He built palaces for them. He built homes for them.

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00:08:32,679 --> 00:08:37,677

But he could keep an eye on them this way. And this is the kind of grand scale in which he always did things.

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00:08:38,677 --> 00:08:48,673

As time passed, he became fearful of reprisals. He would travel incognito across the empire with a small group of trusted followers.

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00:08:50,672 --> 00:08:57,669

Unannounced, he would inspect progress on the Great Wall, arriving and disappearing quietly.

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00:09:02,667 --> 00:09:08,664

The Great Wall became an obsession. It was more to him than a structure of defense.

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00:09:08,664 --> 00:09:14,662

It was a statement that defined the line between his China and the outside world.

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00:09:15,661 --> 00:09:26,657

Standing on these ancient stones, hearing the eerie sound of the winds blowing along the wall, it is easy to imagine the scene of 2000 years ago.

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00:09:31,655 --> 00:09:37,652

Stone fortresses were built at intervals as living quarters for guards who were on constant duty.

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00:09:38,652 --> 00:09:42,650

They watched for barbarians threatening from the north.

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00:09:45,649 --> 00:09:49,647

The Great Wall

72

00:10:01,642 --> 00:10:08,639

The fear of death haunted the emperor's dreams. He built many palaces for himself across his empire.

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00:10:09,639 --> 00:10:20,634

At his treasured hot springs, the long, cool vistas of crepe myrtle and willow, designed to soothe and calm the mind, brought little solace now.

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00:10:24,633 --> 00:10:29,631

He scurried from palace to palace, sleeping under a different roof nightly.

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00:10:31,630 --> 00:10:37,627

Drawn sword by his side, he was haunted by his enemies, living and dead.

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00:10:39,626 --> 00:10:45,624

Even the roof demons confirmed the fear in his heart that assassins were everywhere.

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00:10:49,622 --> 00:10:56,619

There were many attempts made on his life, as re-enacted in the summer palace by members of the Peking Theater.

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00:11:09,614 --> 00:11:23,608

It was his who veridically collected snails that had unfortunately kept him from killing them online and fe Bethel un■tein,

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00:11:23,608 --> 00:11:50,357

He was a very mysterious figure in some ways, and this is what has interested Chinese historians

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00:11:50,357 --> 00:11:55,715

in him for centuries. He was in search of immortality. He didn't want to die. He had

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00:11:55,715 --> 00:12:00,593

heard a story that in the eastern coastal area of China, there were some islands where

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00:12:00,593 --> 00:12:04,511

sages and immortals lived, and he wanted to find these areas. He became increasingly

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00:12:04,511 --> 00:12:09,269

preoccupied with this in his later years.

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00:12:09,269 --> 00:12:14,627

One day, as his search for immortality continued, a magician asked for an audience with the

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00:12:14,627 --> 00:12:21,024

emperor. The magician spun tales of a wondrous place to the east where sages knew of a liquid

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00:12:21,024 --> 00:12:25,822

potion which granted immortality.

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00:12:25,822 --> 00:12:34,059

The emperor insisted on all the details of the miracle potion.

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00:12:34,059 --> 00:12:41,336

The magician complied and even provided directions to the mysterious land. Shortly thereafter,

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00:12:41,336 --> 00:12:45,054

the emperor embarked on his journey.

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00:12:45,054 --> 00:12:52,531

It is ironic that during his travels, while trying to find eternal life, he died at the

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00:12:52,531 --> 00:12:58,688

age of 49. During his lifetime, he exerted tremendous effort seeking immortality because

92

00:12:58,688 --> 00:13:04,926

of an inordinate fear of death. Even at the early age of 13, Xi Chuan Di began construction

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00:13:04,926 --> 00:13:10,763

of his own tomb so that he would be insured protection in the afterlife.

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00:13:10,803 --> 00:13:18,040

During 700,000 laborers, the emperor spent 37 years building a lavish subterranean palace

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00:13:18,040 --> 00:13:25,477

to protect him after his death. His grand design was an enormous map of China. Each city was

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00:13:25,477 --> 00:13:31,715

represented in miniature, complete with rivers of mercury. The emperor himself was to be laid

97

00:13:31,715 --> 00:13:35,753

in a coffin on a huge dragon boat.

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00:13:35,753 --> 00:13:41,390

The statues of members of his personal army were placed to guard the emperor in death.

99

00:13:41,390 --> 00:13:47,628

Legend has it that over 24,000 clay soldiers were buried with him.

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00:13:47,628 --> 00:13:52,666

The legendary location of this tomb was said to be under a huge artificial mound called

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00:13:52,666 --> 00:13:59,183

Mount Li in the province of Senchi. Stories had been passed down that an army of clay

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00:13:59,223 --> 00:14:07,819

soldiers had been buried near the tomb, but none had ever been found. Then in 1974, in

103

00:14:07,819 --> 00:14:15,136

this quiet rural setting, a great discovery was made. Some workers digging a well near

104

00:14:15,136 --> 00:14:22,493

Mount Li were amazed when they unearthed strange clay figures. Could these be part of the fabled

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00:14:22,493 --> 00:14:26,172

buried army of the emperor Xi Chuan Di?

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00:14:29,690 --> 00:14:36,487

In a peaceful rural area of Senchi province, 500 miles west in Peking, these farmers planted

107

00:14:36,487 --> 00:14:45,724

and harvested grain. When the clay soldiers and horses were discovered in 1974, scientists

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00:14:45,724 --> 00:14:52,241

realized this might be part of the legendary buried army of the emperor Xi Chuan Di. If

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00:14:52,241 --> 00:14:58,518

so, it would be one of the greatest archaeological finds of all time.

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00:14:58,558 --> 00:15:01,517

Some clay miniatures had been found in royal tombs before.

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00:15:07,115 --> 00:15:12,512

They represented guards, wives, and servants placed there to care for the monarch after

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00:15:12,512 --> 00:15:20,029

death. The figures found near the emperor's tomb, however, were life-size, and there appeared

113

00:15:20,029 --> 00:15:22,028

to be an entire army of them.

114

00:15:29,505 --> 00:15:37,182

When the enormity of this discovery was realized, a huge structure was built over the site of

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00:15:37,182 --> 00:15:43,979

the buried clay army. After further investigation, archaeologists found the army was larger than

116

00:15:43,979 --> 00:15:50,417

at first imagined. The emperor's subterranean legions occupied an area of over three acres.

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00:15:50,417 --> 00:15:58,293

More than 600 life-size figures have so far been uncovered, and test digs indicate they will be

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00:15:58,293 --> 00:16:06,450

at least 5,000 more. Over a period of six years, hundreds of skilled men and women have continued

119

00:16:06,450 --> 00:16:14,646

the painstaking work of restoration. One of the original archaeologists at the site discusses

120

00:16:14,646 --> 00:16:22,203

the significance of this extraordinary find. It was on this very spot that the weld diggers

121

00:16:22,203 --> 00:16:29,280

discovered the first clay figures beneath the earth. As archaeologists continued to dig, they

122

00:16:29,280 --> 00:16:36,717

were profoundly moved by what they saw. An entire army, battle lines formed, ready for attack.

123

00:16:41,715 --> 00:16:49,752

Rank upon rank they stood, silently waiting. They had stared into the darkened silence as 22

124

00:16:49,792 --> 00:16:57,589

centuries slowly ticked away. The only sound, the snap and sag of a pottery neck as it slumped

125

00:16:57,589 --> 00:17:13,422

against the ground in some earth tremor. Each face is unique. Perhaps each one is the portrait

126

00:17:13,422 --> 00:17:15,421

of a long forgotten warrior.

127

00:17:19,739 --> 00:17:38,012

The logistics of creating this vast assemblage were staggering. An artist imagines the scene as

128

00:17:38,012 --> 00:17:45,529

it was over 22 centuries ago. Thousands of skilled craftsmen spent their entire lives on the project.

129

00:17:46,328 --> 00:17:54,325

Each figure was carefully modeled in clay, oven fired, and then placed in formation. It was

130

00:17:54,325 --> 00:17:59,643

often the practice to bury live members of a monarch's personal guard with him at his death.

131

00:17:59,643 --> 00:18:06,720

If these are indeed the likenesses of she's guards, their loyalty to the emperor may have rested in

132

00:18:06,720 --> 00:18:10,078

the knowledge that they would not be required to die with him.

133

00:18:10,638 --> 00:18:20,474

A museum has been built adjacent to the site where these remarkable examples of ancient Chinese

134

00:18:20,474 --> 00:18:31,629

art can be seen and admired. Details such as the bronze bridles found on some of the horses can

135

00:18:31,629 --> 00:18:39,026

be studied. A high degree of artistry, even on such a massive scale, was far above that

136

00:18:39,106 --> 00:18:44,904

it believes possible for this early period. The armor worn by the men and the different

137

00:18:44,904 --> 00:18:50,661

dress and hairstyle denoting rank or occupation were carefully reproduced by the artisans.

138

00:18:55,659 --> 00:19:03,576

Much can be learned here of the Xi dynasty and of its emperor who built the wall. Perhaps his vast

139

00:19:03,656 --> 00:19:11,413

clay army was yet another kind of wall. The controversy over the emperor Xi Chuang

140

00:19:11,413 --> 00:19:17,490

D continued for centuries. The positive view stresses his unification of China. The negative

141

00:19:17,490 --> 00:19:22,768

view of the emperor points out the tremendous cost in human lives of his vast projects and his

142

00:19:22,768 --> 00:19:27,726

repression of scholastic learning. There could be no doubt, however, that shortly after his death,

143

00:19:28,446 --> 00:19:35,643

China was in turmoil. A commoner named Shen stepped from the ranks of the soldiers and inspired a

144

00:19:35,643 --> 00:19:43,319

revolt against the weak son of late emperor Xi Chuang D. This soldier became the first emperor

145

00:19:43,319 --> 00:19:57,314

of the Han dynasty. The Xi dynasty fell, but the great wall of China has remained for 2,000 years.

146

00:19:58,353 --> 00:20:04,511

Often neglected, in some places it is little more than a pile of rubble repaired many times to

147

00:20:04,511 --> 00:20:11,548

a semblance of its former condition. Today, the many walls in China are merely decoration,

148

00:20:12,107 --> 00:20:18,825

attracting visitors from around the world. The greatest of these walled palaces is the

149

00:20:18,825 --> 00:20:24,902

forbidden city of Peking. It is the most perfect example of the individual isolation

150

00:20:24,902 --> 00:20:26,501

of early Chinese rulers.

151

00:20:34,818 --> 00:20:39,776

Only the emperor or empress, their close relatives, servants, and high officials

152

00:20:40,336 --> 00:20:48,812

were ever allowed through these gates. The great wall today represents a eulogy to emperor Xi

153

00:20:48,812 --> 00:20:56,969

for the many positive accomplishments of his rule. It is also a huge stone epitaph upon which

154

00:20:56,969 --> 00:21:04,406

is written the horrors that he perpetrated. Perhaps it is a timeless comment on the futility of

155

00:21:04,406 --> 00:21:12,642

isolation. Late in the evening, when the last visitor is gone and the wind blows again from

156

00:21:12,642 --> 00:21:18,560

the north, the sounds of the dead seem to cry out to us in the whining and sighing of the winds.

157

00:21:18,800 --> 00:21:19,839

Along the pyramids.

158

00:21:28,316 --> 00:21:34,953

One might ask the question, did the great wall keep the world out or did it imprison the Chinese

159

00:21:34,953 --> 00:21:42,790

within? As with many other great works of man, was it worth the thousands upon thousands of lives

160

00:21:42,790 --> 00:21:44,389

it cost to build?

161

00:21:44,389 --> 00:21:52,945

Coming up next in search of continues with an expedition into the sacrificial past of the

162

00:21:52,945 --> 00:21:58,623

great Mexican pyramids. Then 20th century with Mike Wallace reports on the winners and losers

163

00:21:58,623 --> 00:22:04,620

of America's ever expanding gambling mania. And later tonight, history's mysteries goes hunting

164

00:22:04,620 --> 00:22:10,458

in Sherwood Forest for the true story of Robin Hood. At eight here on the history channel where

165

00:22:10,458 --> 00:22:11,737

the past comes alive.