

Archaeologists unearth 800 years old rare turtle-shaped tomb in China

By **Nitin Agarwal** - October 6, 2015



A group of archaeologists in China has discovered a rare grave, shaped like a turtle. They claim that the well-preserved tomb might be 800 years old and that it probably contains what's left of a few generations that existed at the time.

The tomb was discovered accidentally by one of the residents of Shangzhuang village in Shanxi Province while making the foundation for his house.

Scientists believe that the tomb belonged to the **Jin Dynasty** from the year 1115 to 1234, measures 4 meters high and contains an octagon shape burial compartment. It also has five rooms cleverly situated beside the octagon chamber on the northern, northwestern, northeastern, southwestern and southeastern sides.

The hexagonal design plus the extra chamber makes the tomb appear like a turtle from an aerial view.

The interior of the chamber has 21 brick carvings, with three located on each side of the wall. The architectural designs and the carvings seem to support ancient folk tales of filial sons.

Archaeologists who have examined the tomb and its remains claim that the tomb was shared by some generations based on several archaeological clues.

Archaeologists are still studying the tomb to try and establish more facts. There is a lot of information they can collect from the tomb that can help them learn more about the history of the Jin dynasty. That way, they can fill in some of the historic gaps that have been present due to lack of proper documentation or loss of some of the historic material.

The discovery of the tomb suggests that a lot of history might be buried in the region. More archaeological excavations might reveal more archaic treasures just waiting to be discovered.

However, it will be hard to establish further information because finding the actual sites is a mystery in itself and most times it relies on sheer luck just like in the case of the turtle-shaped tomb.

The report was stated by **Bai Shuzhang**, a member of the Provincial Institute of Archaeology.

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