

Copycat terracotta warriors spur discussions

Copycat terracotta warriors in east China have fueled hot discussions after pictures of the army replica recently surfaced on the Internet.

The replica, located in a theme park in Taihu County, Anhui Province, boasts up to 1,000 warriors. Pictures on the park's official website show the warriors standing in line, and on one side of the army stands a statue of China's first emperor Qinshihuang, waving his hand.

According to the website, the park was completed in 2008, and the warriors have been open to visitors ever since.

The original terracotta warriors are located in Xi'an City, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province. The relics were first discovered by farmers underneath a pomegranate orchard in Xi'an in 1974.

The images of the copycat army fueled a heated discussion on the Internet, with many questioning whether the display of the Anhui warriors is an act of infringement.

Authorities with the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, which manages the Xi'an terracotta warriors, apparently caught wind of the replica and have issued a statement on its website.

The museum said that any act of using the museum's name and its registered trademarks without authorization is an act of infringement.

"The museum did not permit or give authorization to the displaying of the copycat terracotta warriors in Taihu County of Anhui Province," said the statement. "We reserve the right to take legal action against any violators in accordance with law."

"The replicated warriors pose unfair competition," said Yan Yuxin, a lawyer for the museum. "We have sent a lawyer's letter to them."

Yang Ming, a law professor with Peking University, said that the key is to find out whether the Anhui organizers have advertised their replica as the genuine one. "If they did promote it as a replica, then it is a debatable issue."

On the Anhui park's official website, an introduction to the warriors said that "the replica of the terracotta warriors is intended to let the public feel the culture of the Qin Dynasty."

Liu Simin, deputy head of the tourism branch of China Society for Futures Studies, said that such copycat behavior is not worth promoting.

"Making such replicas is disrespectful to the original ones," Liu said.

“Related departments should come up with ways to handle infringing behavior, which are still rampant in China.”