

are red, and those produced with roughcasts of fine mud mixed with fine grains of sand are brownish red. Most decorative patterns were painted in black, and the rest in red. Sometimes a thin layer of red or white coating was applied to the roughcasts, on which decorative patterns were then painted, in order to ensure a greater contrast of the colors.

The Yangshao culture dates back to a period from 5,000 years BC to 3,000 years BC. Primitive sites and ruins found later in other parts of central China are culturally similar to the Yangshao ruins. For that, the Yangshao culture has been recognized as synonym of the culture prevalent in central China during the matriarchal clan society – in a region with Gansu, Shaanxi and Henan as center while encompassing Hebei, Inner Mongolia, Shanxi, Qinghai, as well as parts of Hubei.

Painted patterns on Yangshao pottery (1)

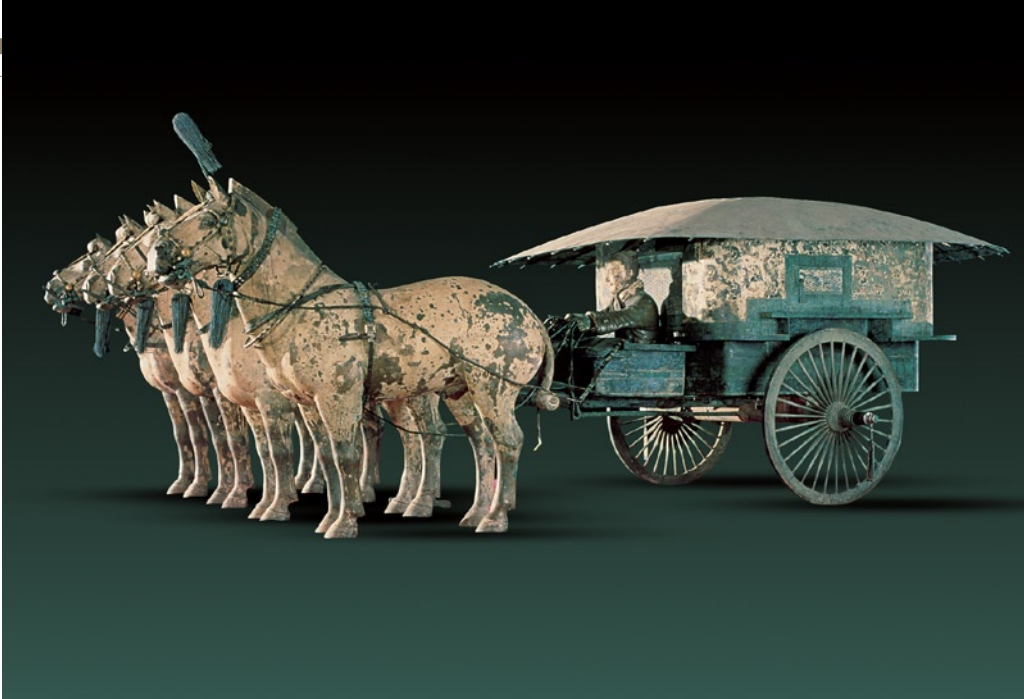
In 1957, the so-called “Miaodigou branch of the Yangshao culture” became known with excavation of a primitive site at Miaodigou in Sanmenxia City, Henan Province, which archeologists believe existed during the transition of the Yangshao culture to the Longshan culture. Painted pottery utensils found at Miaodigou were produced around 3,900 years BC. Flying birds, distorted bird patterns done with crude



Picture shows a painted pottery cup produced 3,000-2,000 years ago. Identified as of the Tanshishan culture, the cup was unearthed at Minhou, Fujian Province.



Picture shows a painted pottery pot in the shape of a boat, a relic of the Yangshao culture that existed 4,800-4,300 years ago. It was unearthed at Baoji City, Shaanxi Province.



Here is a horse-drawn chariot of bronze, a funerary object for Emperor Shi Huang of the Qin Dynasty.

warrior with an armor suit on.

Use of bronze weapons kept decreasing in step with a constant increase in the use of iron and steel after the Shang-Zhou period. After China became unified under the Qin, the country's first feudal dynasty, all bronze weapons were confiscated on order of Emperor Shi Huang, the dynasty's first and, in fact, China's first, and were replaced by weapons of forged steel. As sculptural art objects, however, bronze artifacts have always important. To name just a few of such artifacts produced during and after the Qin Dynasty: a chariot from the tomb of Emperor Shi Huang, a horse from Gansu with a falcon under a hoof, as well as those lions guarding the Forbidden City and Summer Palace in Beijing. While known worldwide for an artistic beauty, these tell people stories that happened in China for a period of well over 2,000 years.

north of the Yangtze River in succession from 386 to 518, namely, the Northern Wei, East Wei, Northern Qi, Western Wei and Northern Zhou.

Murals constitute a most salient feature of tombs built during the Northern Dynasties period which, in recent years, have been repeatedly found in Henan, Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi and Ningxia. The most representative are murals found in a tomb at Zhangwan of Cixian County in Hebei, which was possibly occupied by one of the Northern Qi emperors. The walls of the tunnel leading to the chamber where the occupier's coffin is placed, which is 17 meters long, are painted with murals bright in color and magnificent in artistic style. The murals can be divided into four parts.

Immediately after entering the tunnel we come across huge dragons and tigers on the walls which, facing outward, are against a background consisting of clouds, honey-sucker flowers, as well legendary birds and animals. An imperial guard of honor is painted on walls of the middle section, and the ground is painted with designs of lotus and other flowers – obviously an imitation of a carpet. As we go deeper, we find pictures of the Scarlet Bird – the legendary bird supposedly guarding the south of the Earth – above the gate of the chamber, along with legendary animals on either side of the gate. Near the gate of the coffin chamber



A gatekeeper as depicted in a mural found in a tomb of the Northern Qi Dynasty.



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Porcelain

- ◇ Primitive porcelain
- ◇ Porcelain of the Six Dynasties
- ◇ White porcelain and porcelain with underglaze paintings, the Sui-Tang period
- ◇ Porcelain kilns of the Song Dynasty
- ◇ Painted porcelain of the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties