

## Early Societies and the Arts: The Foundations of A Civilization

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[From the Online Exhibit, "From Heaven and Earth: Chinese Jade in Context:"]

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## NEOLITHIC BEGINNINGS

For more than six millennia, Chinese culture has created sets of values and solutions to questions and issues common to all human societies, while continuously accepting and modifying external influences into the persistent dynamic of its history and traditions. In recent years, enthralling archaeological revelations from ancient sites have dramatically amplified the view of this process. As in other sectors of the world, evidence has been found of stone-age settlements in numerous locations along rivers and coastal areas. Clearly, by the fifth millennium BCE China was developing the basic elements that were to identify it as a civilization: social structure, agricultural skills, the domestication of animals as well as concepts related to the order of the natural environment, and to life, death, and life after death.<sup>1</sup>

Fundamentally, Neolithic China may be divided into several broad cultural zones: one located on the central northern plain with the Yellow River (Huanghe) Valley as the focal point, another to the east in Shantung, a third in the far west, and others in the south. Of these, developments within the Yangshao or "painted-pottery" culture of the central northern plain represents a turning point in Chinese history. In a number of ways, China's cultural identity, as it is known at the end of the twentieth century, can be considered a direct descendent of the endeavors of the Neolithic village communities of the Yangshao culture, which originated with two primary agricultural settlements along the middle reaches of the Yellow River and its tributary the Wei River (Weihe). Flourishing in the fifth millennium BCE, these Yangshao cultural communities produced several types and grades of pottery, including coarse cooking vessels and burnished wares painted with free-flowing geometric patterns.<sup>2</sup>

With an appropriate appreciation for diversity, present-day historians acknowledge the existence and contributions of a variety of discrete cultures in the other regions of ancient China. A wealth of information is available for some, while others are only preliminarily understood.<sup>3</sup> In the east and southeast along the coast, archaeological research has documented an influential principal series of Stone Age population groups, such as the Dawenkou, Hongshan, and Liangzhu peoples who are recognized for the specialized production of refined objects in jade.<sup>4</sup> Other eastern groups have also received broad recognition, especially the late-Neolithic Longshan culture for the production of fine black ceramic wares. Also appreciated for their contributions are additional populations that settled along the Yangzi River and its tributaries, in the southern coastal areas, and in what is modern Vietnam.<sup>5</sup>

## WELL-BEING AND IMMORTALITY

Although only fragments and traces of items created in ephemeral materials remain from the prehistoric and early historic periods, numerous ancient Chinese objects of jade, earthenware, and metal have survived in relatively good condition, many of them preserved in ancient burial sites. These ancient burials and their contents provide invaluable information related to social structure, cultural development, and religious beliefs. The ordered arrangement of the cemeteries together with the grave goods found in them clearly indicate a belief in an afterlife.<sup>6</sup> Items for everyday use were placed in the tombs along with those made specifically for internment. Grave goods were made of a wide range of materials and include large numbers of earthenware storage jars, bone and jade objects for personal adornment, and objects for ritual also made of jade and subsequently of bronze. The grandeur of a burial and value of its contents bear a direct relationship to the social status of the individual, with the more elaborate burials containing works of the finest and most technically sophisticated craftsmanship.<sup>7</sup>

## JADES FOR RITUAL AND BURIAL

During the later part of the Stone Age or Neolithic period polished stone implements were developed. There can be little doubt that the use of and appreciation for the tonalities and lustrous qualities of jade evolved from a selective process within a highly developed lithic industry. The visual sensibility to and high regard the ancient Chinese had for jade is clearly attested by the surprising number of finely cut and polished jade ceremonial tools, ritual objects, and ornaments produced by some of China's earliest Neolithic cultures.<sup>8</sup> Prismatic tubes (cong), and discs (bi) together with weapons and tools of jade and other hard stones have been found in large numbers in burials of the Liangzhu culture (c. 3300 ~ 2250 BCE). Given the age of these and other early examples, it is not possible to define precisely the symbolic content or uses of these jade tools, weapons, and ritual objects such as cong and bi. However, as the tools, weapons, cubes, and discs evidence none of the typical characteristics of usage, such as scaring and chipping, it is reasonable to suggest that they served ceremonial and possibly protective functions.<sup>9</sup> (For more examples, see Ritual/Ceremonial Jade image index page.)

Cut and polished ornaments of jade, which had become part of the decorative tradition for clothing and furnishings during the Neolithic period, continued to be used throughout the early historic periods of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties. The use of jade in burials, including plaques sewn onto shrouds or other coverings for corpses during the Han dynasty period, can be traced back to these Neolithic beginnings. Undoubtedly, ritual objects as well as small ornamental pieces, with their geometric and zoomorphic forms and motifs, held potent meanings for those responsible for their creation. It is also probable

that they served as emblems of rank, as in many other early societies.<sup>10</sup> (For examples, see Ritual/Ceremonial Jade and Pendants/Plaques image index pages.)

## NEOLITHIC CERAMICS

The use of ceramics for burial predates the use of jades, and, while objects of clay like those of jade have been recovered from many Neolithic settlements and burials, the number of ceramic pieces is vastly greater, reflecting obvious differences in accessibility and inherent workability of the materials. Even during these early times in China, a visual-design sense is revealed in both the shape and decoration of the earthenware. Among the commonly found, coarser, Neolithic period cooking-vessel types is the very efficient li (trilobed cooking vessel), its contours recalling bags of skin or the shapes of animal udders. Typically, the sides are ornamented by scoring or impressing with a twisted rope or basket-weave pattern. More widely appreciated are the large, painted Yangshao grain-storage jars.<sup>11</sup>

The Yangshao painted wares of c. 4500 BCE are the oldest ceramics of quality and diversity to have been recovered in large numbers. Typically they are found buried in clusters near the remains of the deceased and thought to have had ceremonial significance. Until recently, it had been assumed that the storage vessels were manufactured specifically for funerary rites. That they may have been used by the individual prior to death is now being reconsidered, in part due to the large quantities found.<sup>12</sup>

Many beautiful decorative styles and techniques were developed by Yangshao potters. The shapes of the vessels and their decorative schemata, although distinctive to the period, show a sensitivity to materials and judgment of scale, which were to distinguish Chinese aesthetics in succeeding centuries. Storage vessels of this type, created using the coil method, are surprisingly thin-walled and light despite their large size. Once a desired profile was achieved, the vessel was beaten and subsequently smoothed until the final, refined form was achieved. (For examples, see Clay/Earthenware image index page.) Prior to painting, the surface was scraped and burnished and, on occasion, burnished again prior to firing.<sup>13</sup> Characteristically, Yangshao ceramics display polychrome designs in free-flowing brush strokes of black, white, and maroon.<sup>14</sup> As most communities of that period settled near and were dependent on rivers and their bounty, it is not surprising to discover a number of clearly recognizable wildlife designs, such as those of frogs and fish. Others, more geometric and less obvious, remain subject to controversy. Some ornamental patterns have been identified variously as wave and net designs, and others as either zoomorphic or anthropomorphic.<sup>15</sup> (See Selected Motifs.)

## **FAITH, RITUAL, AND AUTHORITY**

Through the recovery of new archaeological materials and multidisciplinary approaches, which include individuals specializing in Bronze Age inscriptions (the earliest extant forms of Chinese writing), a working knowledge of the structure of society and of early ceremonial practices and beliefs has been achieved.<sup>16</sup> Founded on the presupposition that the well-being of those on earth was directly linked to their ancestors, Chinese ceremonial traditions were closely associated with the concept of life-after-death and the value of continued communication with deceased family members. A boundary, thought to exist between this world and the realm of life after death, was crossed as ancestors of both individuals and rulers were propitiated through religious rites and practices associated with respect for these ancestors. As with many agricultural societies, the deities and spirits of nature were of central importance to the ancient Chinese. The good grace of these deities and spirits of nature was thought to be achievable, at least to some degree, through the ceremonies performed by the ancestors. Rulers honored their own ancestors and interceded with the spirits and deities of nature on behalf of their subjects.<sup>17</sup>

Complex ceremonies to honor the dead were developed and carried out by their descendants in ancestral temples and offering halls. Equally complicated ceremonies were developed for internment of the dead. Tomb structures were designed to enable the continued existence of the deceased by providing for the necessities of a successful life in the next world. During various periods different types of ritual implements and objects for burial were esteemed. Despite differences in detail that developed over the millennia, burial practices show clearly that the idea of life continuing after death was a constant in the Chinese perspective from at least as early as the Neolithic period.<sup>18</sup>

## **BRONZE AND BRONZE CASTING**

Although initially employed primarily for weapons, bronze, like jade, was also selected early in China's history as a material for the society's most precious objects. Inherently appealing, this alloy was chosen for special ritual or ceremonial versions of standard, everyday items with visual and physical distinctions employed to separate the ceremonial from the everyday. Differences can be seen in scale, attention to ornamental detailing, and the technical skills of the craftsmen. By the middle of the second millennium BCE in the central northern plains area of China, bronze had become the material of choice for the highest-quality cooking pots and wine vessels. In this region during the Shang and Zhou dynastic eras (c. 1500 ~ 221 BCE), large sets of bronze vessels were used in ancestral temples or offering halls for ritual offerings and sacrifices to the ancestors. As these practices were thought to continue after death, the deceased were buried with the requisite

sets of vessels.<sup>19</sup> Over time, with the ascendancy of human relationships, bronze vessels assumed secular commemorative functions.<sup>20</sup>

Most bronze ritual vessels are highly ornamented. The earliest and most frequently occurring motifs, or the patterns derived from them, are called taotie (monster mask), a term first used more than two thousand years after the motif was introduced. Characteristically presented in a bilateral symmetrical manner, taotie appear as composite creature motifs. A great many speculations and deductions by analogy have been advanced about the symbolic and magical significance of the taotie and other patterns in Shang and subsequently in Zhou art. The universal application of these zoomorphic designs on ritual objects leaves little doubt that these creatures were of religious significance and not purely decorative.<sup>21</sup>

The number of bronze vessels produced in ancient China is remarkable. Thousands of vessels survive today; recently excavated, intact tombs of the wealthy and influential from the late thirteenth century BCE have revealed that more than four hundred bronzes might be interred with a single member of a royal family.<sup>22</sup> The willingness to use such large quantities of bronze for this purpose clearly suggests that the Chinese considered ritual vessels fundamental to the well-being of their society, ranking them in importance equal to or even above weapons.<sup>23</sup>

## PIECE-MOLD CASTING AND CERAMICS

Although modern viewers are conditioned to appreciate the dark brown and green patinas resulting from extended burial, bronze, an alloy composed largely of tin and copper, is a light, bright gold color when first cast. The scarcity of the metals and the labor required to manufacture objects of bronze marked them as exceptional. Hundreds of men would have been employed in mining and smelting and in the transportation of materials from mining areas to the workshops in and around the capital cities. Some objects were extremely difficult to cast, such as bronze cooking pots in complicated forms, with knobs and handles and dense decorative patterns. The large scale and weight of many vessels are also distinguishing characteristics. Clearly, exceptional craftsmanship was directed to exploiting and displaying the particular qualities of bronze in demonstration their exalted functions.<sup>24</sup>

For casting bronze, the early Chinese favored a piece-mold method in which sectioned molds of clay were manufactured from a model and subsequently fitted together to receive the molten metal.<sup>25</sup> Although earthenware seems to have lost much of its status with the introduction of bronze, the Chinese bronze industry of the second millennium BCE was dependent on piece-mold clay systems for casting, and, therefore, required the expertise of

ceramists.<sup>26</sup> Through the interrelationship between the two disciplines, technical knowledge of the handling and firing characteristics of clay increased dramatically. As potters continued to manufacture molds for bronze casting and various types of domestic utilitarian wares, they developed new, advanced techniques for making fine and durable ceramic objects.<sup>27</sup> Gradually evolving, these techniques resulted in the production of higher-fired wares using indigenous clays and down-draught kilns. The remarkably early development of stoneware and "proto-porcelain" (wares compositionally similar to porcelain), which differ from earthenware in being non-porous and non-absorbent, resulted from these methods.<sup>28</sup>

## SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

### Neolithic and Bronze Age Jades

\* Yang Boda, "Jade Zhang in the Collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing," in *Chinese Jade: Selected articles from Orientations 1983 - 1996* (1995; reprint, Hong Kong: Orientations Magazine Ltd., 1997), 141-48.

\* Kwang-chih Chang, "An Essay on Cong," in *Chinese Jade: Selected articles from Orientations 1983 - 1996* (1989; reprint, Hong Kong: Orientations Magazine Ltd., 1997), 70-76.

\* René-Yvon Lefebvre d'Argencé, *Chinese Jades in the Avery Brundage Collection* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1977).

\* Angus Forsyth "Neolithic Chinese Jades: Hemudu to Erlitou Period," in Ladislav Keverne, ed., *Jade* (New York: Lorenz Books, 1995), 49-87.

\* Carol Michaelson, "All Excellent Qualities... Chinese Jade from the Neolithic to the Han," in Jill Tilden, ed., *Silk and Stone: The Art of Asia* (London: Hali Publications Limited, 1996), 176-85.

\* Julia K. Murray, "Neolithic Chinese Jades in the Freer Gallery of Art," in *Chinese Jade: Selected articles from Orientations 1983 - 1996* (1983; reprint, Hong Kong: Orientations Magazine Ltd., 1997), 4-12.

\* Elinor Pearlstein, "Salmony's Catalogue of the Sonnenschein Jades in the Light of Recent Finds," in *Chinese Jade: Selected articles from Orientations 1983 - 1996* (1993; reprint, Hong Kong: Orientations Magazine Ltd., 1997), 130-140.

\* Jessica Rawson, "Jades and Bronzes for Ritual," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art* (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1996), 44 and 48-54.

\* Huang Xuanpei, "Liangzhu Jades in the Shanghai Museum," in *Chinese Jade: Selected articles from Orientations 1983 - 1996* (1991; reprint, Hong Kong: Orientations Magazine Ltd., 1997), 90-94.

### Neolithic Period Ceramics

\* Kwang-chih Chang, "The Earliest Farmers," and "The Lungshanoid Cultures," in Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), 80-184.

\* Ping-ti Ho, "Pottery," in Ping-ti Ho, *The Cradle of the East: An Inquiry into the Indigenous Origins of Techniques and Ideas of Neolithic and Early Historic China, 5000-1000 B.C.* (Hong



Kong, Chicago, and London: The Chinese University Publications and The University of Chicago Press, 1975), 121-175.

\* Jessica Rawson, ed., "Unknown China: The Neolithic Period," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *Mysteries of Ancient China* (London: British Museum Press, 1996), 31-50.

\* Julia M. White and Ronald Y. Otsuka, *Pathways to the Afterlife: Early Chinese Art from the Sze Hong Collection* (Honolulu: Denver Art Museum and University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 12-45.

## Bronze Age Ritual Vessels

\* Robert W. Bagley, *Shang Ritual Bronzes in the Arthur M. Sackler Collection* (Washington, D. C.: Arthur M. Sackler Foundation; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, 1987).

\* René-Yvon Lefebvre d'Argencé, *Bronze Vessels of Ancient China in the Avery Brundage Collection* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1977).

\* Dawn Ho Delbanco, *Art from Ritual: Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections* (Washington D.C. and Cambridge, Mass.: The Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, 1983).

\* Wen Fong, *The Great Bronze Age of China: An Exhibition from the People's Republic of China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980).

\* George Kuwayama, *The Great Bronze Age of China: A Symposium* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1983).

\* Max Loehr, "Bronze Styles of the Anyang Period," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 7 (1953): 42-53.

\* \_\_\_\_\_, *Ritual Vessels of Bronze Age China* (New York: The Asia Society, Inc., 1968).

\* *Masterworks of Chinese Bronze in the National Palace Museum* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1973).

\* John Alexander Pope, Rutherford John Gettens, James Cahill, and Noel Barnard, *The Freer Chinese Bronzes: Catalogue* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1967).

\* Jessica Rawson, *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections* (Washington D.C. and Cambridge, Mass.: Arthur M. Sackler Foundation and Harvard University, 1990).

\* Jenny So, *Eastern Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995).

## NOTES

1. For a brief but informative essay on the implications of the recent archaeological record and remarkable contrasts between ancient China and early cultures of West Asia and Egypt, see John King Fairbank, *China: A New History*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 40-45. Although it has been almost a quarter of a century since first published, Ping-ti Ho presents a useful and cohesive view of the origins of Chinese civilization in *The Cradle of the East: An Inquiry into the Indigenous Origins of Techniques and Ideas of Neolithic and Early Historic China, 5000-1000 B.C.* (Hong Kong, Chicago and London: The Chinese University Publications and The University of Chicago Press, 1975). An survey of recent findings and perspectives on Chinese history by fourteen leading scholars is provided by Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, ed., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* (Cambridge, England; New York, New York; Oakleigh, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

2. The beginning phase of the Yangshao culture from central and western China on the Wei River dates from c. 4800 to c. 4300 BCE. For an informative introduction to this period, including field photographs and reconstructions of two houses at the Neolithic village of Banpo (the earliest stage of settled farming, Yangshao culture) near Xi'an in Shaanxi, see William Watson, *Ancient China: The Discoveries of post-Liberaton Chinese archaeology*, (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1974), 23-34.
3. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, ed., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, 13.
4. For an extremely useful glossary of early jade shapes and chronology of jade-using and jade-influenced Neolithic cultures, see Angus Forsyth "Neolithic Chinese Jades: Hemudu to Erlitou Period," in Ladislav Keverne, ed., *Jade* (New York: Lorenz Books, 1995), 52.
5. John King Fairbank, *China: A New History*, 44-42. The short essays found in "Chronologies," the appendices section of Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art* (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1996) provide an overview of early population groups and areas in which they settled; see pages 293-307. While much has been accomplished in archaeology since Edmund Capon wrote *Art and Archaeology in China* (Melbourne and Sydney: Melbourne and Sydney, 1977), the sections titled "Archaeology in China," and "Paleolithic and Neolithic," on pages 30-53 offer informative and useful insights in Chinese culture prior to the introduction of bronze.
6. The collation of information from numerous authorities together with the objects recovered from recent archaeological undertakings provide unique and inspiring perspectives into the origins of Chinese culture. Modern scientific advancements and art-historical analyses and comparative methods also contribute a wealth of new information to the evaluation and assignment process. For an in-depth discussion, see, Jessica Rawson, ed., *Mysteries of Ancient China* (London: British Museum Press, 1996); for a general introduction, see, Bradley Smith and Wan-go Weng, *China: A History in Art* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., NDG), 15-27.
7. Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 22, 38-9; Hao Qian, Heyi Chen and Suichu Ru, *Out of China's Earth: Archaeological Discoveries in the People's Republic of China* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1981), 21-27.
8. Angus Forsyth, "Neolithic Chinese Jades: Hemudu to Erlitou Period," 52; Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, "Jade as Material and Epoch," in Howard Rogers with Naomi Richard and Sylvia Moss, eds., *China 5,000 Years: Innovation and Transformation in the Arts* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 1998), 61.
9. Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, "Jade as Material and Epoch," 56; Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, "Symbolic Jades of the Erlitou Period," *Archives of Asian Art* 48 (1995), 65-66; Angus Forsyth, "Neolithic Chinese Jades: Hemudu to Erlitou Period," 56-7; Maxwell Hearn and Wen Fong, "The Arts of Ancient China," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 32 (1973-1974), 2:20, figs. 33-35 (as stated above, this Metropolitan Museum bulletin, published as an exhibition catalogue and as a monograph, may be difficult to locate as only the authors names and exhibition title appear in the publication itself).
10. Given the difficulties associated with the acquisition of the material and the length of time required by an arduous manufacturing process, there can be little doubt that these objects belonged to individuals of position and wealth.
11. Maxwell Hearn and Wen Fong, "The Arts of Ancient China," 2:2.
12. Julia M. White and Ronald Y. Otsuka, *Pathways to the Afterlife: Early Chinese Art from the Sze Hong Collection* (Honolulu: Denver Art Museum and University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 12-45. Bradley Smith and

Wan-go Weng, *China: A History in Art*, 15-27; Wang Qingzheng, "The Development of Chinese Ceramics: A Brief Survey," in Howard Rogers with Naomi Richard and Sylvia Moss, eds., *China 5,000 Years: Innovation and Transformation in the Arts* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 1998), 114-121.

13. Shelagh Vainker, "Ceramics for Use," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 221.

14. The decorations were made with a mineral-based slip baked onto the surface in a kiln heated to between 800 and 1020 degrees centigrade: see Julia M. White and Ronald Y. Otsuka, *Pathways to the Afterlife*, 13.

15. For drawings of some of the most controversial motifs, see Jessica Raison, ed., *Mysteries of Ancient China*, 33-41. For a number of excellent drawing of these motifs as well as information related to the possibility that these designs represent the precursors to the Chinese writing system; see Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), 80-143, 274-275.

16. Kwang-Chih Chang, *Shang Civilization* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), 240-259; Roger Goepper, "Precursors and Early Stages of the Chinese Script," in Jessica Raison, ed., *Mysteries of Ancient China*; 273-281; Lie, Chen, "The Ancestral Cult in Ancient China," in Jessica Raison, ed., *Mysteries of Ancient China*, 269-272.

17. Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 22. Dawn Ho Delbanco, *Art from Ritual: Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, (Washington and Cambridge: The Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, 1983) 15-17.

18. Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 22.

19. Through the study of oracle inscriptions, which represent the sole written documents of the Shang, scholars have reconstructed an outline of Shang history: see Dawn Ho Delbanco, *Art from Ritual: Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, 15-17; Jessica Rawson, "Jades and Bronzes for Ritual," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 54-71.

20. Dawn Ho Delbanco, *Art from Ritual: Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, 17.

21. Dawn Ho Delbanco, *Art from Ritual: Ancient Chinese Bronze Vessels from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, 19.

22. Four hundred and forty bronzes (as well as five hundred and ninety jades) were recovered from the tomb of Fu Hao; see Kwang-Chih Chang, *Shang Civilization* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), 87-90.

23. Jessica Rawson, "Jades and Bronzes for Ritual," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 50.

24. Jessica Rawson, "Jades and Bronzes for Ritual," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 49-50.

25. For a discussion of how and why this system was used, see Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 287-88.

26. Shelagh Vainker, "Ceramics for Use," in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, 221.

27. Wang Qingzheng, "The Development of Chinese Ceramics: A Brief Survey," in Howard Rogers with Naomi Richard and Sylvia Moss, eds., *China 5,000 Years: Innovation and Transformation in the Arts* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 1998), 114-121.

28. Mary Tregear, *Chinese Ceramics in the Ashmolean Museum*, (Oxford, England: Ashmolean Museum, 1987), 2-4. The term earthenware is used for porous, low-fired (temperatures between 600-1150C.) ceramics made from many types of clays. The term stoneware is used for non-porous, non-translucent, hard ceramics varying in color from light gray to black. Stoneware is very often glazed and fired between 1150 and 1300C. In the West, the term porcelain is used specifically for high-fired (temperatures in excess of 1300C.) white ceramics that are translucent and make a ringing sound when struck.

The civilization dates back to 10,000 BC when people around the area found the concept of agriculture and began domesticating animals. Mesopotamia gave birth to written literature and several other inventions such as art and culture and trade. Although the foundation of ancient Rome is surrounded by myths and legends, it became so powerful that it took control over the land surrounding the present-day Mediterranean Sea. The early Romans were ruled by kings but after seven kings, they took over power and turned into a republic. Norte Chico civilization was a complex society in the Pre-Columbian era that was made up of over 30 main population regions in the modern Norte Chico in Peru. The civilization was at its peak between 4th and 2nd millennium BC.