

# Chinese Cosmetics from the Tang Dynasty



**BLUE AND SANCAI-GLAZED POTTERY FIGURE OF A WOMAN HOLDING A MIRROR, 11 3/4 INCHES TALL (ARTNET, 2016).**

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## Introduction and Purpose

Women's cosmetics were an essential part of personal adornment in Tang Dynasty China (618-907 CE), and a "pleasing appearance" of extreme importance (Benn, 2001, p. 107). Makeup trends came in and out of fashion just like hairstyles and other aspects of female clothing and adornment, and was subject to foreign influence.

It is not my goal to recreate the makeup routine of Chinese women by using period materials. This is due in part of the toxicity of substances used in period, and the availability of the non-toxic period options. Instead, my goal is to affect how a Chinese woman would have made herself up using easily available modern materials.

What follows is a description of what women in Tang Dynasty China used as cosmetics and the general look that they were striving to achieve with them. I identified three different makeup styles from a combination of the literature and visual art that I have attempted to reproduce using modern materials.

### A Note on Sources

As cosmetics were essential to a woman's appearance during the Tang Dynasty, they are mentioned, if only in passing, in nearly every source on Chinese clothing and adornment focused on the period; however, there are few, if any, sources that go into much detail. Dr. Edward H. Schafer's "The Early History of Lead Pigments and Cosmetics in China" (1956) appears to be the authoritative source for Tang Dynasty cosmetics, and describes the chemical makeup and general application of lead-based pigments. *China's Golden Age: Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty* by Dr. Charles Benn (2001) is a synthesis of his course notes on the subject, and includes information about cosmetics and hygiene. Other sources include state-sponsored websites, which have no external citations.

I should note that there are language and technological barriers to doing research on Chinese adornment and culture. Many origins are chalked up to legend, with circular citations and sometimes no real way to determine truth from fiction-turned-assumed-fact. What is available for online viewing outside of China may be different on the other side of the "Great Firewall," and even scholarly publications inside China can have a very nationalistic lens.

I am incredibly thankful to Lady Song Zidie of Ealdormere and Lord Þórfinnr Hróðgeirsson of the East for their help with translations and all things Chinese-language related.

## Period Practice








The 1 <sup>st</sup> step	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> step	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> step	The 4 <sup>th</sup> step	The 5 <sup>th</sup> step	The 6 <sup>th</sup> step	The 7 <sup>th</sup> step
						
Put powder	Rouge	Darken the eyebrow	Decorate fore-head with a yellow crescent	Put ornament on the cheek	Paint "red slant"	Put lipstick

FIGURE 1: CHART OF MAKEUP APPLICATION PROCESS (HUA, 2010, P. 30).

Zhou Xun and Gao Chunming lay out the following process (Figure 1) for applying cosmetics in *5000 Years of Chinese Costume* (1987), compiled from “various records and literary sketches” (p. 86): “first, apply powder; second, apply rouge; third, apply dark yellow cream; fourth, draw the eyebrows; fifth, apply lipstick; sixth, paint the cheeks; and seventh, apply the ornament between the brows” (p. 86). As makeup trends fluctuated, it can be surmised that not all of these steps were used each time. For example, Tibetan fashions became briefly popular in the early ninth century, and cosmetics changed along with them – women forewent the powdered skin and blushing cheeks and drew eyebrows that looked mournful and wore black lipstick (Benn, 2001, pp. 108-109). Additionally, the small dots on either side of the lips (called *mian ye*, 面靨, or “dimples”), were supposedly originally used by consorts and concubines to subtly indicate to the Emperor that they were menstruating, and later became a general ornament (“面靨”, n.d.).

By the Tang Dynasty, there were a variety of pigment sources available to artisans for a variety of applications, including the production of cosmetics. The poet Jiang Yan (444-505 AD) wrote a description of a painter’s palette in the fifth century, the content of which “will indeed hold good throughout Chinese history,” and which includes the following pigments, presented by Schafer (1956) with their associated minerals and colors:

Pigment Name	Wade-Giles	Character	Mineral	Color
“Hollow Verditer”	<i>k’ung-ch’ing</i>	空青	Nodular azurite	Blue
“Female Yellow”	<i>tz’u-hsiung</i>	雌黃	Orpiment	Yellow
“Cinnabar Stone”	<i>tan-shih</i>	丹石	Cinnabar	Red
“Prasine Marrow”	<i>pi-sui</i>	碧髓	Malachite	Green
“Powder”	<i>fen</i>	粉	Ceruse	White
“Lampblack”	<i>mo</i>	墨	Carbon black	Black

(p. 433)



FIGURE 2: DETAIL FROM MOGAO CAVE 130, SOUTH WALL, PORTRAIT OF THE DONOR'S DAUGHTER (DUAN, N.D.)

## Foundations, Powders, and Face Creams

### Pale Complexions

Beautiful Tang women are often described in period poetry as having “cream-like” and “snow-like skin” (Liu, 2014, p. 14, 63), “jade-like” and “lotus” faces (pp. 65, 59). Pale, clear skin was the starting point for the Tang Dynasty ideal of feminine beauty, and its women obtained it either through natural or artificial means. The “natural” method was more medicinal than cosmetic and consisted of women ingesting substances or applying them to the skin to improve their complexions (Benn, 2001, p. 107).

Among the recipes and methods Benn (2001) mentions are

- bat brains applied to remove blackheads;
- “pulverized dried tangerine peel, white melon seeds, and peach blossoms” strained through a sieve and taken three times a day for 30 days for fair skin;
- dried, crushed, and sifted peach blossoms mixed with ale, taken by the spoonful before eating three times a day to improve complexion and slim the waistline;
- boiled apricot pits pulverized with skinned sesame seeds “that have been fried in their own oil” blended with Chinese powdered hemp seeds “until the mixture turns creamy white” as a face cream to “make the face glow and protect it against harsh cold in winter”;
- three chicken eggs steeped in fine ale, sealed in a pot, and left unopened for 28 days to make another face cream; and,
- smearing the “face and body with the blood of a black-boned, silky bird on the seventh day of the seventh moon [...] Apply the gore three times” (p. 107).

Cosmetics were the artificial means of achieving the same goal. One of the primary, oldest, and cross-cultural cosmetics used to whiten the face was ceruse, or white lead (Benn, 2001, p. 107; Schafer, 1956, p. 427). In ancient China, white lead was produced by exposing lead to vinegar (Schafer, 1956, p. 428). This was then mixed with ointment and used as a cosmetic (Schafer, 1956, p. 428). Ceruse and the far safer rice-powder are both referred to in period literature as *fen* (粉), so it can be difficult to know what substance is being referred to (Schafer, 1956, p. 429).

The earliest documentable use of ceruse in China is the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), but it seems that its production was kept a secret by Taoist alchemists until the sixteenth century, where we see the first reference to the procedure (Schafer, 1956, p. 430-1). The use of it as a cosmetic to whiten the face is documentable to the Han Dynasty – ceruse was found in a toilet case, and is mentioned in poetry as “blended lead” applied to the face and “congealed vermillion” applied to the lips (Schafer, 1956, p. 435). Zhou states that ceruse as a foundation dates back to the Xia and Shang Dynasties, but offers no further citation (1987, p. 86). Ceruse was used by upper class women through the Six Dynasties period to the Tang Dynasty, with a short period during the Sui Dynasty when the austere Empress Dugu banned the practice (Schafer, 1956, p. 436). Tang Dynasty women used ceruse to whiten not only their faces, but also their breasts (Benn, 2001, p. 107), and it was during the Tang Dynasty that the use of ceruse was transmitted from China to Japan (Schafer, 1956, pp. 436-437).

## Yellow and Flowered Foreheads

Yellow foreheads, known as *e'huang* (額黃), became popular with the spread of Buddhism that began in the Han and Wei (386-534 CE) Dynasties (Gao, 2010, p. 186). Inspired by gilded images of Buddha, women painted their foreheads, either completely or partially with a blurred effect, yellow; this became known as “Buddhist makeup” or *fozhuang*, 佛裝 (Gao, 2010, p. 186). Because other lead pigments were used in cosmetics, massicot, another lead-oxide mixture, may have been used to paint foreheads yellow, but orpiment or a vegetable pigment should not be ruled out (Schafer, 1956, p. 419). Another method to achieve the yellow forehead was to glue “ornamental patches” to the skin, engraved with patterns and referred to as “flower yellow” (Gao, 2010, p. 186). Eventually, this method became less associated with *fozhuang* and potentially evolved into *huadian* (花鈿), which eventually replaced the yellow forehead as the in-fashion style (Gao, 2010, p. 186). Lu Yuan, the founder of the Tang Dynasty, claimed to be a descendent of Lao Tzu, the father of Taoism (Benn, 2001, p. 60), so it would make sense for fashions inspired by Buddhism to fall out of favor.



FIGURE 3: A WOMAN WITH HUADIAN DECORATING HER FOREHEAD, FROM A SILK PAINTING UNEARTHED IN TURFAN (ZHOU, 1987, P. 86-7)

seeds, and kingfisher feathers (Chu, 2011). Women affix the *huadian* to their foreheads with glue made from “fish maw” – to prepare the glue, she would “blow on the glue and add a bit of saliva” to prep the glue and stick it to her skin (Gao, 2010, p. 186). The glued-on *huadian* was removable with hot water (Gao, 2010, p. 186).

The origin of *huadian* is tied to a story from the Southern Dynasties (420-589 CE). A princess, a daughter of Emperor Wu of Song (363-422 CE), was sleeping under a plum tree outside the palace when a light breeze blew a single plum blossom unto her forehead, dyeing the skin where it landed for three days and leaving an attractive fragrance – the palace maids imitated the look and from there it spread to other aristocratic women (Chu, 2011; Hua, 2010, p. 34.). It fell out of fashion, but was brought back into vogue by Empress Wu Zetian (624-705) (Benn, 2001, p. 108).

*Huadian* range from simple dots (Figure 4) to complex designs (Figure 3). *Huadian* were either painted onto the forehead or cut from various materials and pasted on (Gao, 2010, p. 186; Chu, 2011). Materials used for the pasted *huadian* included paper, silk, gold or silver lead, mother of pearl, flower



FIGURE 4: EXAMPLE OF A SIMPLE HUADIAN ON CLAY AND WOOD BURIAL FIGURINES FOUND IN ASTANA CEMETERY IN TURPAN, XINJIANG (CHU, 2011).



## Rouge and Scars

Red pigment came from a variety of sources, including minium, vermillion, cinnabar, or safflower (Schafer, 1956, pp. 420-421, 425). The production of red lead from metallic lead in China dates to the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BCE), but cinnabar and true vermillion were more highly valued as red pigments (Schafer, 1956, pp. 422, 424). Descriptions of red pigment used for cosmetics in period poetry leaves is vague as to the origin of the pigment, referring to it as *hongfen* or “pink powder” (Schafer, 1956, 426). Rice-powder was also stained pink for use as rouge, just as ceruse was colored with vegetable pigments and used as rouge in ancient Greece and Rome (Schafer, 1956, p. 426). Tang Dynasty rouge was more likely either safflower or vermillion (Schafer, 1956, p. 426; Benn, 2001, p. 107).

A cursory survey of visual art from the period shows that Tang Dynasty women wore heavy rouge, often covering the cheek from the temple to the jawline (Figure 5) (Benn, 2001, p. 109). A style of makeup is referred to as “red clouds at dawn,” and is associated with a story of a female musician at the palace who touches her face to a screen and “leaves a mark like red clouds at dawn, scattered” (Chu, 2011). An imperial concubine then copied the motif with rouge and animal fat, naming it “red clouds at dawn makeup” (Chu, 2011). It is unclear if this style is referring to the broad application of rouge or the “slanting red” mark near the temple.

“Slanting red” makeup is a rouge variation that became developed in the Tang Dynasty and consisted of a curved mark, resembling a crescent moon, scar, or rolled flower petal, that ran from the temple to the cheek (Figures 6 and 7) (Chu, 2011). This mark is said to have originated in the Three Kingdoms Period (220-280 AD), when the Weiwen Emperor Cao Pi’s favorite concubine, Xue Yelai accidentally cut herself on her way to visit him (Hua, 2010, p. 34). The wound healed with a scar, but the emperor still loved her, and



FIGURE 6: TANG DYNASTY PAINTING OF FEMALE MUSICIAN ON SILK, EXCAVATED FROM THE TOMB OF ZHANG LICHEN AT ASTANA IN TURFAN, XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION (IMAGE FROM ZHONGGUO GU DAI SHU HUA JIAN DING ZU, IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND FOUND ON WIKIMEDIA COMMONS).



FIGURE 7: TANG DYNASTY PAINTED WOODEN FIGURE, DRESSED IN SILK AND PAPER, FROM THE TOMB OF ZHANG XIONG AT ASTANA IN TURFAN, XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION (WATT & HARPER, 2004, P. 288-9)



FIGURE 5: TOMB FIGURINE OF A COURT LADY, FIRST HALF OF THE 8TH CENTURY (KIMBELL ART MUSEUM, 2016).

other concubines and ladies imitated the style with makeup (Hua, 2010, p. 34). Much like the *huadian*, this may be one of the makeup styles brought back into fashion by Empress Wu Zetian during her brief Zhou Dynasty.

## Eyes and Eyebrows

Women in the Tang Dynasty would pluck their natural eyebrows and used a blue-black pigment from charred willow trees to paint them back on in a variety of shapes subject to the latest fashion (Zhou, 1987, p. 86). Other eyebrow pigment was derived from conch shells or indigo and included a popular greenish-blue hue (Benn, 2001, p. 108). In the early seventh century, palace officials supplied the emperor's harem with twenty-seven quarts of eyebrow pigment each day (Benn, 2001, p. 108). Eyebrow styles came in and out of fashion (Figure 8).

I have not seen anything in the literature to support the use of eyeliner, but looking at the visual art of the period – particularly paintings such as Finger 9 – it appears that the top lid is indeed lined and often drawn out to line up with the edge of the exaggerated eyebrow (Figure 10). In paintings where women and men are depicted together, it is difficult to tell if the women are painted as wearing eyeliner; however, in these paintings the use of other cosmetics, such as rouge and lip color, is also not evident.



FIGURE 9: DETAIL OF ZHOU FANG'S PAINTING COURT LADIES WEARING FLOWERED HEADDRESSES, 8<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY (LIAONING PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, IMAGES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND RETRIEVED FROM WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

	Zhenguan Period (627-649)
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Linde Period (664)
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Zongzhang Period (668)
	The 4 <sup>th</sup> year of Chuigong Period (688)
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Ruyi Period (692)
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Wansui Dengdui Period (696)
	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of Chang'an Period (702)
	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of Shenlong Period (706)
	The 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Jingyun Period (710)
	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of Xiantian Period — The 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of Kaiyuan Period (713-714)
	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of Tianbao Period (744)
	The 11 <sup>th</sup> year of Tianbao Period (after 752)
	About the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of Tianbao-Yuanhe Period (about 742-806)
	About the last year of Zhenyuan Period (about 803)
	Late Tang Dynasty (about 828-907)
	Late Tang Dynasty (about 828-907)

FIGURE 8: EVOLUTION OF EYEBROW STYLES IN THE TANG DYNASTY (HUA, 2010, P. 33).



FIGURE 10: DETAIL FROM ZHANG XUAN'S PAINTING "SPRING OUTING OF THE TANG COURT," DEPICTING A WOMAN WITH LITTLE EVIDENCE OF COSMETICS (BARNHART, 2002, IMAGE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND RETRIEVED FROM WIKIMEDIA COMMONS).

One notable style are the *ba* (八) shaped brows, which became popular between the reign of Emperor Xuanzong (712-762 CE) and the Yuanhe era (806-820 CE) (Chu, 2011) and were the result of Tibetan influence (Benn, 2001, p. 108). The style was also referred to as “weeping makeup” or “tears makeup” (Hua, 2010, p. 35), because the brows gave the face a mournful expression (Benn, 2001, p. 108). According to the poet Li Shangyin, these brows were paired with the yellow forehead fashion (Chu, 2011). This style is described in the poem “The Fashion of the Times” by Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi (772-846 CE). The poem is presented below, with the English translation beside the original Chinese (emphasis added):

时世妆·时世妆，	The fashion of the times, the fashion of the age,
出自城中传四方。	They came from the city and spread to four corners.
时世流行无远近，	Trends of the age... a fashion travels to all places, near and far,
腮不施朱面无粉。	<b>Cheeks not applied with rouge, a face with no powder.</b>
乌膏注唇唇似泥，	<b>Raven black paste smeared on lips, those very lips like mud,</b>
双眉画作八字低。	<b>A pair of eyebrows painted and made out low as the character 八.</b>
妍媸黑白失本态，	Beautiful and ugly, black and white, all have but lost their former looks,
妆成尽似含悲啼。	Made-up to the hilt as if hiding in a sorrowful cry.
圆鬢无鬓堆髻样，	Those round loops of hair without sideburns, piled like a chignon,
斜红不晕赭面状。	<b>An oblique rouge not glowing her face so reddish brown</b>
昔闻被发伊川中，	I have heard that long ago when people in the Yi river area [near Luoyang, the heart of China] let their hair loose,
幸有见之知有戎。	Xinyou knew the place was soon to be stormed by barbarians.
元和妆梳君记取，	The style and manner of Yuanhe, you sir, should remember,
髻堆面赭非华风。	Piled chignon and this reddish brown face are not the customs of China.

(Gwyther, 2013, pp. 121-122)

China was at war with Tibet after being devastated by An Lushan’s rebellion in the latter half of the eighth century (Benn, 2001, pp. 11-12) and only recovered briefly during the reign of Emperor Xianzong (p. 15). This “fashionable makeup” (Chu, 2011) is not one I have been able to find depicted in artwork, but if Bai was not alone in his opinion of it, it stands to reason that images of women adorning themselves this way during a time of rebellion, war, and economic upheaval have not survived.



## Lips

Like rouge, Tang Dynasty women used cinnabar (mercuric sulfide) to color their lips, the cosmetic often scented with powder made from grinding up the plate that closes mollusk shells (Benn, 2001, p. 109).

Based on Figure 11 and visual art, while lip styles varied throughout the Tang Dynasty, it would appear that the lips were never completely covered.

## Nails

Nail care is mentioned very briefly by Benn (2001) – women used impatiens flowers blended with aluminum sulfate and garlic to dye their fingernails (p. 109). This practice persists in China and other East Asian culture, and is usually practiced by young girls in the summer, when impatiens are in bloom (Fauna, 28 August 2011; Song Z., personal communication, 21 November 2016). Nails were worn long, and it was believed that cutting ones nails too often would weaken one's muscles (Benn, 2001, p. 109).

The Han Dynasty	
The Wei Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Song Dynasty	
The Ming Dynasty	
The Qing Dynasty	
The Qing Dynasty	

**FIGURE 11: LIP COLORING STYLES THROUGHOUT ANCIENT CHINA (HUA, 2010, P. 47).**

## Modern Application

### Red Cheeks

The first style that I tried to achieve was the “red cheeks” style that is so pervasive in visual art. This would include the rogue worn from temple to jaw, a *huadian*, and eyebrows based on one of the paintings from the Astana Cemetery (Figure 12).

First, I prepared the *huadian*. I used a scrap of lightweight habotai silk and drew a design on it with fabric markers.



FIGURE 12: DETAIL OF WOMAN PLAYING GO, UNEARTHED AT THE ASTANA CEMETERY, XINJIANG UIGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION MUSEUM, IMAGE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND RETRIEVED FROM WIKIPEDIA COMMONS).

I started by cleaning my face with my usual cleanser<sup>1</sup>, and also moisturizing<sup>2</sup>. I then used concealer<sup>3</sup> to cover my darker spots and blemishes. There are so many recipes designed to clear the skin and make it glossy, that I felt my use of moisturizer and concealer was a justified analog. I also used clear brow mascara<sup>4</sup> to groom and prime my eyebrows, making them easier to re-draw.

Next, I applied a mixture of my cream foundation<sup>5</sup> and a white liquid foundation with a foundation brush and blending it down my neck. My skin is already fairly light, and the white liquid foundation by itself was too runny a consistency. Combining it with a matte cream foundation slightly lighter than my skin tone helped ensure full coverage. I then set this with translucent powder<sup>6</sup>.

Using a greenish-blue eyeliner pencil<sup>7</sup>, I traced the bottom and top lines for my brows, then used eyeshadow<sup>8</sup> to fill them in, making sure that the pigment faded at the ends, as seen in Figure 11. I then used black eyeliner<sup>9</sup> to line my top lid.



<sup>1</sup> Neutrogena Ultra Gentle Daily Cleanser

<sup>2</sup> Oil of Olay Complete All Day Moisturizer

<sup>3</sup> Maybelline NY Instant Age Rewind Dark Circles Treatment Concealer, Becca Under Eye Brightening Corrector

<sup>4</sup> e.l.f. Eye and Brow Mascara, clear

<sup>5</sup> e.l.f. HD Mattifying Cream Foundation, Manic Panic NYC Dreamtone in Virgin

<sup>6</sup> Dermablend Professional Setting Powder

<sup>7</sup> Sephora Contour Eye Pencil in Good Mood (Blue-green)

<sup>8</sup> e.l.f. Little Black Beauty Book Cool Edition

<sup>9</sup> NYC Kohl Brow/Eyeliner Pencil

I then applied rouge<sup>10</sup>, using both a blush brush and an eyeshadow brush. In Figure 12, the red pigment is blended about halfway across her eyelid and down into her cheek, coming up right underneath the eye and going all the way down to her jawline.

Lastly, I used red lip liner<sup>11</sup> to outline the new shape for my lips. I then filled this shape in with liquid matte lipstick<sup>12</sup> in a bright red color.

Next, I used eyelash glue<sup>13</sup> to apply the *huadian*, holding it in place until the glue had set.



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<sup>10</sup> e.l.f. Blush Palette

<sup>11</sup> Sephora Lip Liner to Go in Deep Ruby

<sup>12</sup> Too-faced Melted Lip Color in Melted Ruby

<sup>13</sup> Duo Eyelash Adhesive, Latex-free, clear

## Fashionably Dark

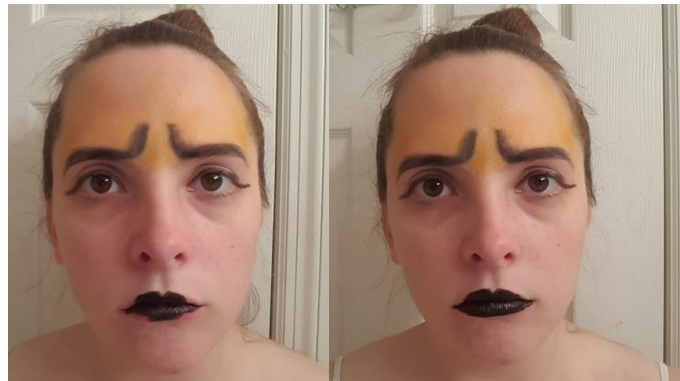
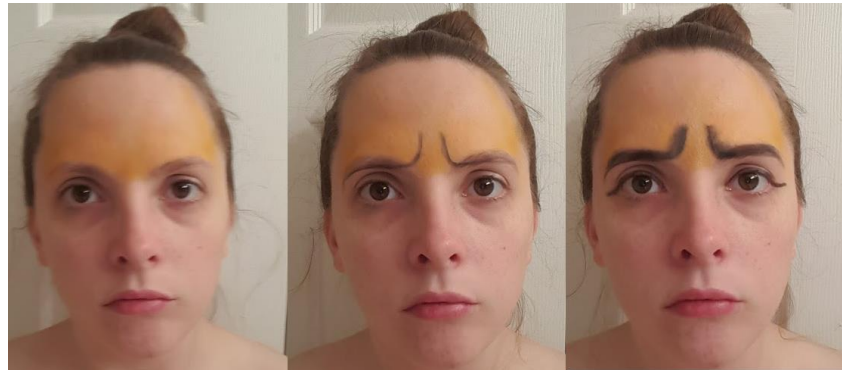
The second look I wanted to try is the “fashionable makeup” – the face left ruddy with no powder to whiten it, eyebrows shaped like 八 to make the wearer look like they are about to weep, a yellow forehead, and black lips.

I started by washing my face with my usual cleanser<sup>14</sup>. Since this makeup style is specified as without any powders, and results in a ruddy complexion, I did not put on any foundation. Tang Dynasty women plucked their natural brows, but this was not an option for me. Instead, I used concealer<sup>15</sup> to hide the areas of my brows that would not be covered with cosmetic – the first ¼ inch by my nose and the last ¼ by my temples.

I used powdered yellow eyeshadow<sup>16</sup> to color my forehead, concentrating the pigment right above my eyebrows and then using a combination of my brush and blender to blend the color toward my hairline.

I then traced the bottom edge of the 八-shaped brows with an eyeliner pencil<sup>17</sup>. Next, I used an angled eyeshadow brush and a combination of black and dark blue eyeshadow<sup>18</sup> to fill in the brow shape. I then used black eyeliner<sup>19</sup> to line my top lid, extending the line out to the edge of my 八-shaped brows.

Lastly, I applied black lipstick<sup>20</sup>. At first, I did not cover my lips completely, drawing from the visual art and the lip-shape chart (Figure 9) from Hua (2010). Then, due to the phrase from Bai Juyi’s poem “Raven black paste smeared on lips, those very lips like mud,” I went ahead and applied the lipstick to my full lips.



<sup>14</sup> Neutrogena Ultra Gentle Daily Cleanser

<sup>15</sup> Maybelline NY Instant Age Rewind Dark Circles Treatment Concealer, Becca Under Eye Brightening Corrector

<sup>16</sup> Sephora Colorful Eyeshadow in Sunglasses Needed, e.l.f. Little Black Beauty Book Cool Edition

<sup>17</sup> Sephora Collection Contour Eye Pencil in Galaxy Girl (black blue)

<sup>18</sup> e.l.f. Little Black Beauty Book Cool Edition

<sup>19</sup> NYC Kohl Brow/Eyeliner Pencil

<sup>20</sup> Cover Girl Katy Kat Matte Lipstick in Perry Panther



## Golden Brow

The last style I wanted to try was the yellow forehead, without a *huadian*. This style would be similar to the “red cheeks” style, but earlier eyebrow and lip styles selected from Hua’s (2010) charts (Figures 8 and 10 ). I knew from the “fashionable makeup” that it was going to be difficult getting full coverage on my forehead with the yellow eyeshadow, but I was hoping that the addition of foundation would give me a better base to work on as opposed to my bare skin, making the color more opaque.

I once again started by cleaning my face with my usual cleanser<sup>21</sup>, and also moisturizing<sup>22</sup>. I then used concealer<sup>23</sup> to cover my darker spots and blemishes. Next, I used clear brow mascara<sup>24</sup> to groom and prime my eyebrows, making them easier to re-draw.

I then applied a mixture of my cream foundation and a white liquid foundation with a foundation<sup>25</sup> brush and blending it down my neck, then set this with translucent powder<sup>26</sup>.

Using my largest eyeshadow brush, I applied yellow powdered eyeshadow<sup>27</sup> to my forehead. Unlike the application of the yellow for the “fashionable makeup” my goal was to cover my brow as completely as possible.

I then used my greenish-blue eyeliner<sup>28</sup> to trace the outline of brows from the late 7<sup>th</sup> century and filled them in with eyeshadow<sup>29</sup> using my angled brush. I also lined my top eyelid with black eyeliner<sup>30</sup>.

I applied rouge<sup>31</sup> to my cheeks with a blush brush. I did not cover as much area as I did in the “Red Cheeks at Dawn” makeup, opting for a look more similar to what is seen in Figure 13.



FIGURE 13: DETAIL OF THE MOGAO CAVE 130, SOUTH WALL, PORTRAIT OF THE DONOR'S WIFE AND DAUGHTERS WITH RETINUE (DUAN, N.D.)



<sup>21</sup> Neutrogena Ultra Gentle Daily Cleanser

<sup>22</sup> Oil of Olay Complete All Day Moisturizer

<sup>23</sup> Maybelline NY Instant Age Rewind Dark Circles Treatment Concealer, Becca Under Eye Brightening Corrector

<sup>24</sup> e.l.f. Eye and Brow Mascara, clear

<sup>25</sup> e.l.f. HD Mattifying Cream Foundation, Manic Panic NYC Dreamtone in Virgin

<sup>26</sup> Dermablend Professional Setting Powder

<sup>27</sup> Sephora Colorful Eyeshadow in Sunglasses Needed

<sup>28</sup> Sephora Contour Eye Pencil in Good Mood (Blue-green)

<sup>29</sup> e.l.f. Little Black Beauty Book Cool Edition

<sup>30</sup> NYC Kohl Brow/Eyeliner Pencil

<sup>31</sup> e.l.f. Blush Palette



Next, I used red lip liner<sup>32</sup> to outline the new shape for my lips. I then filled this shape in with liquid matte lipstick in a bright red color<sup>33</sup>. For the final touch, I used the lip liner to dot *mian ye* on my cheeks, near my nasolabial fold.



## Final Thoughts

I was generally pleased with my application of the period styles. I am not a professional makeup artist, nor do I wear cosmetics on a daily basis, so I have a fair way to go to hone my skills in precise application. I'd like to try again, this time making more of an effort to match the types of products – powders, creams, etc. – to the types used in period. That way, even if I am not using exactly what was used in period, I can approximate the consistencies and behavior of the products based on their type.

I'd like to do more research into the depictions of these styles in period art, and references to female appearance in primary source material. A survey of the art, cataloging the styles of cosmetics, dress, and other adornment, would help make the almost 300 year-long period less daunting.

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<sup>32</sup> Sephora Lip Liner to Go in Deep Ruby

<sup>33</sup> Too-faced Melted Lip Color in Melted Ruby

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