



assisting them in this task.

History of Pottery in Other Countries

In the Middle East and near the Mediterranean area, a number of countries had developed pottery even in the pre-historic times. It is said that these countries learned the craft of pottery from Asia Minor and it is presumed that this knowledge must have come to India at that time.

Pottery in Ancient Egypt

Many historians are of the view that Egypt was the first country in preparing pottery of high quality. The excavations under the pyramids reveal that the Nile Valley civilization dates back to 4000-5000 B.C. At that time there was a custom in Egypt of preserving dead bodies of members of the Royal family or the nobility embalmed in chemicals which we can see even to this day. Along with these mummies, small pigmy like toys were kept as attendants and a few small vessels with foodstuffs. The pigmies were to act as attendants and the food for the dead for their travel to the heavens.

Some bricks found in the Nile Valley are estimated to be as old as 10,000 years. At a later period, the potter's wheel was introduced and its effects could be seen in the paintings of Hummurabi's tomb. A thin light blue glaze was also developed at that time.

Pottery in Assyria and Babylon

Assyria and Babylon were equally well known for their artistic and high class pottery wares which existed even during the pre-historic times. These countries knew enamelling on red clay pieces. The walls of Ecbatara in Media, according to Herodotus, were decorated in seven colours. The paintings in the excavation of Khorsabad, an ancient place in the Assyrian empire, are exclusively of painted bricks, representing men, animals and trees.

Chinese Pottery

It is claimed that the first pieces of Chinese pottery were made as back as 200 B.C., during the reign of Emperor Hoang-T-Swing. The word "kaolin" (china clay) is derived from "kau-ling," which is a Chinese word for white burning clay used in those days.

The first example of what may be termed as true porcelain dates