

ADOBE MOULDING



Egypt - Adobe making
Tomb of Queen Hatshepsut (Courtesy Hassan Fathy)

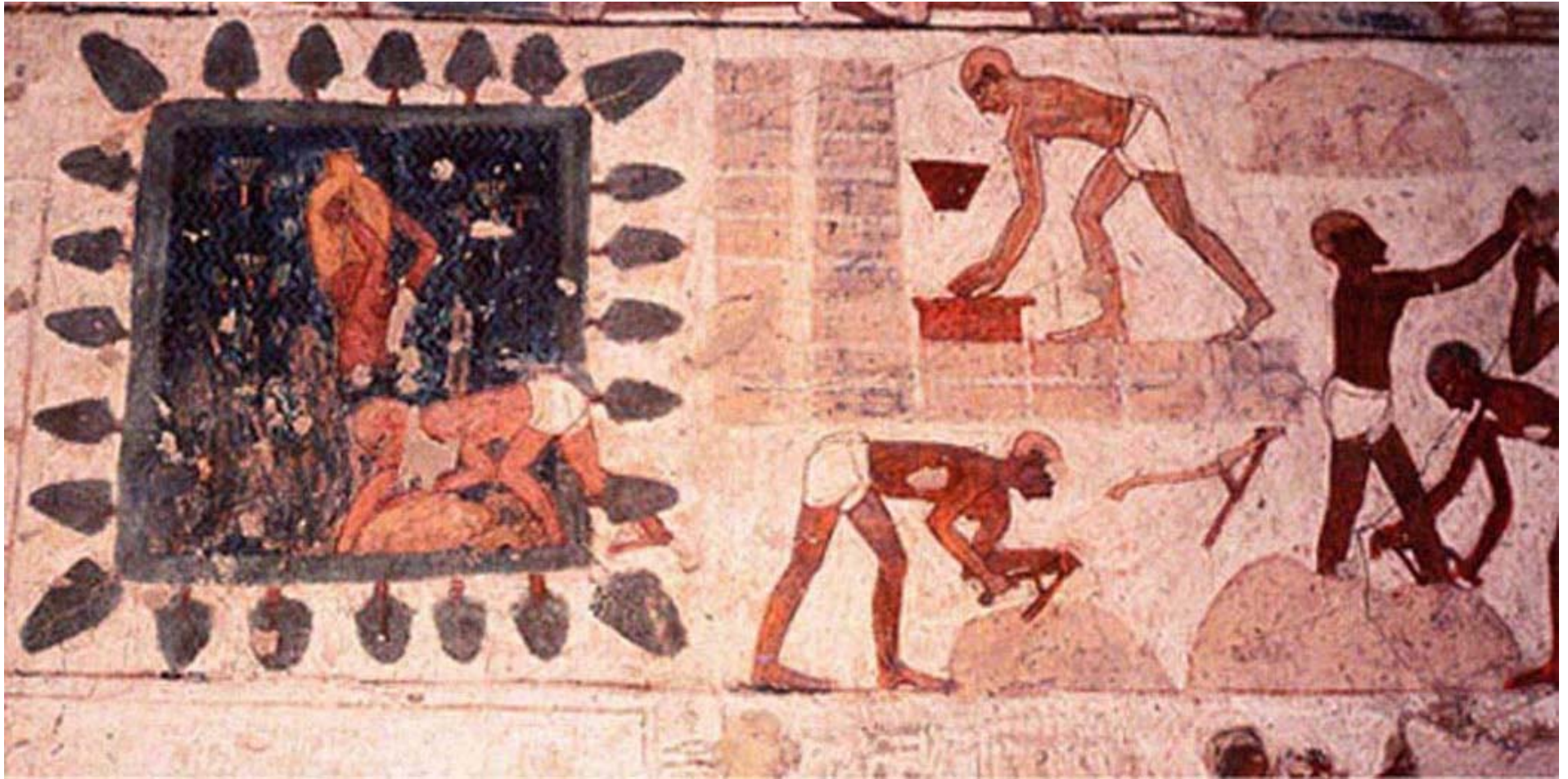
Sun dried clay brick, named *Adobe*, is undoubtedly one of the oldest building materials used by mankind: The oldest identified adobes were produced around 9,000 BC at *Dja' De El Mughara* in Syria. Adobes are made of thick malleable mud, often added with straw. After being cast they are left to dry under sun. They are traditionally either hand shaped or shaped in parallelepiped wooden moulds.

The name adobe comes from the Egyptian hieroglyph *dbt*, meaning brick. It has passed via Coptic τωωβε in Arabic, as *Al-tūb*. When Arabs invaded Spain and France, the word has been deformed progressively as *A Thob*, *A Dob* and it became finally adobe in French and in English.

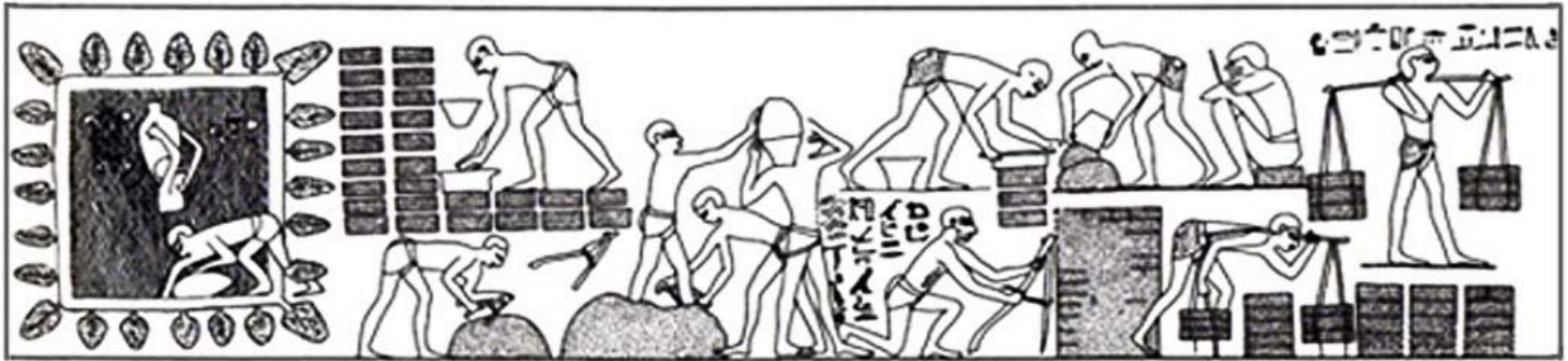
This technique has been used all over the world since memorial times, as can be seen on various hieroglyphs and Egyptian scriptures. The oldest samples known were found on the site of Jericho, in the Jordan Valley, in Mesopotamia. They date from around 8000 BC and they were hand shaped. They looked like an elongated loaf. Fingerprints of the craftsmen who did them are still visible on some of them.

In Peru the hand shaped adobes were long ago conical. In the Middle East they were at a time hemispherical and humpbacked. In India the archaeological site of Chitradurga in Karnataka state shows also hand shaped adobe of the 15th century. They were like quadrangular loafs. Today one can still find hand shaped bricks in Africa, in countries like Nigeria or Niger where they are called *Tubali*.

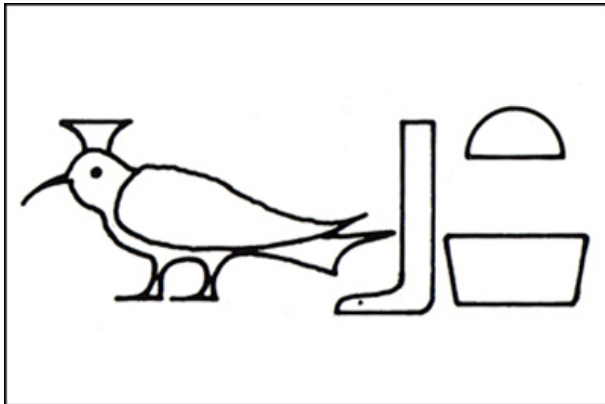
Adobe production has been industrialised in Western USA. Several states in USA have codified adobe making and construction.



Egypt, Thebes, Tomb of Rekmire - 15th Century BC - Adobe making (Portion of the fresco)



Egypt, Thebes, Tomb of Rekhmire - 15th Century BC - Adobe making (Drawing of the entire fresco)



The Egypt hieroglyph dbt, meaning brick



Hand shaped adobe – Chitradurga, Karnataka, India – 15th century



Hand shaped adobe, named Tulali – Tambo, Niger



Niger, Kalandi - Adobe making



Haiti - Adobe making (Photo CRATerre / EAG)



India, Ladakh, Near Tikse - Adobe making



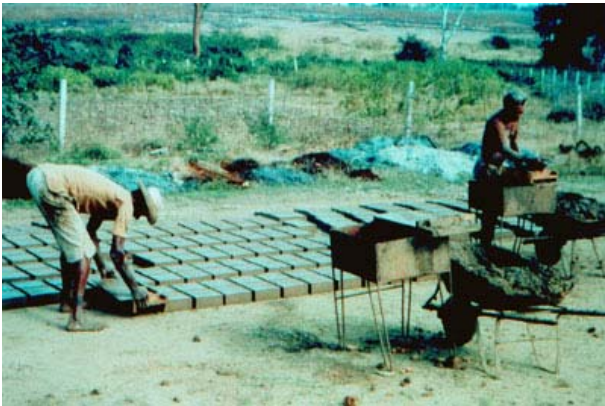
Tibet, Ambo, Labrang - Adobe making



Burkina Faso, - Adobe making



Morocco - Adobe making



Cuba - Adobe making



India, Tamil nadu - Adobe making



Iran - Adobe making



USA, New Mexico - Adobe making



*USA, New Mexico - Adobe making
(Photo J. Evrard)*



Libya, Ghadames - Adobe making