

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMIE INTERNATIONALE DE LA PIPE



Edited by
Anna Ridovics and Peter Davey

VOLUME 3
2010

**JOURNAL OF THE
ACADEMIE INTERNATIONALE
DE LA PIPE**

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Académie Internationale de la Pipe
Liverpool
2010

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Meerschaum pipes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hungary

by Anna Ridovics

(Translated into English by Andy Rouse)

First evidence for meerschaum pipe-carving

In twentieth-century specialist literature it was Robinson's article of 1985 that re-drew attention to the early days of the meerschaum pipe. According to seventeenth-century travellers meerschaum pipes were already being produced in Greece, then part of the Turkish Empire, in the middle of that century. In 1668 Evelyia Celebi travelled to Greece, visiting Thebes (Théba, Thivai, Thiva, or Theben can be found north of Athens in Boiotia) (Fig. 1). Here he observed that:

of this white stone they make chibouk bowls, which they carve very beautifully... they also make various vases, incense-burners and carved cups, which, when they work them with yellow wax, appear to be gold; when they are polished with butter they become hard as stone (Robinson 1985, 168).

The English traveller George Wheeler (1650-1723) visited Thebes in 1675 (Wheeler 1682). According to his description:

The Stone... is of the colour of the new Cheese, and almost as soft, ... carve very curiously into Bowls of Pipes... as soon as it is dry, groweth very hard, as white as Snow... The best are sold for Ten Aspers apiece, and the worser sort for Five Aspers.... Some of them I bought, and do reserve among my natural curiosities (Beckmann 1782, 54-56; Robinson 1985, 168).

Between 1700 and 1702 the French botanist Tournefort noted the characteristics of Thebes and Negropont (today Euboea island, Greece) meerschaum:

The bowls of their pipes are larger and more commodious than ours. Those of Negropont and of Thebes are of a natural earth which one carves with a knife as it leaves the quarry, and which hardens afterward (Robinson 1985, 168).

One hundred years later, in around 1809-1810, Hobhouse visited Thebes, but saw no trace of pipe-making. Presumably all the meerschaum of Thebes had been quarried by that time (Robinson 1985, 168). By the beginning of the nineteenth century these quarries



Figure 1: Map of the Ottoman empire at the end of the seventeenth century (detail of the central part). Thebes and Negropont (Euboea) island - meerschaum mining places in Greece in seventeenth century. Eskisehir - the most important meerschaum mining centre till now.

were exhausted, which is why nothing is heard of these territories later on.

In the course of the eighteenth century increasing scientific interest was attracted to this substance, which was the raw material for quality pipe-cutting. It was greatly valued. In the seventeenth century the meerschaum pipe and meerschaum as a substance had been viewed as rarities in Europe. Wheeler purchased meerschaum pipes for his 'natural curiosities' collection (Beckmann 1782, 55; Robinson 1985, 168). At that time they were uncertain as to its composition. As it was light, white and floated on water, at first, in the eighteenth century, explorers considered it to be the casing of the squid, which contained lime (from which it later received one of its scientific names - sepiolite). Others believed it to be hardened sea-foam, from which is derived the Latin, German and Hungarian names – *spuma maris*, *meerschaum*, *tajték*. According to the Hungarian historical etymological dictionary (*Történeti Etimológiai Szótár*) the Hungarian word *tajtékkő* first appears in sources of 1570.

Mineralogists published a number of serious studies on the subject from the 1780s. The results of eighteenth-century research in mineralogy and pipes were summarized in a lecture in 1781 by the Göttingen university professor, Johann Beckmann (1739-1811) (Beckmann 1782).

Other works from the period are by Georg Friedrich Wille (1796) and J.G. Binz (1799). In 1781 Johann Wiegels was among the first to perform a chemical analysis 'on the nature of this earthy material, as its name causes some to have an entirely false impression as to its origin':

Es wäre wohl gut, wenn ich von der Naturgeschichte dieses erdigen Körpers etwas anführen könnte, zumahl da dessen Benennung bey einem und dem anderen von seinem Ursprunge einem ganz falschen Bedriff veranlasset haben mag' (Wiegels 1782).

Meerschaum is a mineral which in scientific circles was known as *sepiolith*, *Argilla lithomarga* or *Talcum lithomarga*, *spuma maris* (Beckmann 1782, 52; Wille 1796, 337). It is a magnesium silicate, which essentially is a combination of feldspar, magnesium, carbon, water and clay. It can be found at a depth of around 40 metres, in lump-shapes. Eighteenth-century studies place its main provenances as the area around the Sea of Marmara and the settlement of Kitchik or Kiltchik, which was owned by a dervish monastery, some five hours distance from the town of Konya in Central Anatolia, Turkey (Beckmann 1781, Wille 1796, 337). In this Anatolian region we can find today Eskişehir which is one of the most important and famous meerschaum mining centres with the best quality meerschaum (Fig. 1).

Early meerschaum pipes

Rebecca Robinson surmised that the meerschaum pipes discovered in the course of excavations in Corinth and Athens were similar to those produced in Thebes, or may even have been made there, or their material originated from there (Robinson 1985, 167-170, 192-193, 201). Seventeen meerschaum fragments were unearthed at the time of the excavations, of which two were coloured black and seven can be dated as seventeenth to eighteenth century. Their form in all aspects is akin to the red clay pipe (*lüle*). Two pipes are from Athens and one from Corinth which has a bent tube (Fig. 2, No. 1-3). In the pipe A43 (Fig. 2, No. 1) the shank is at right angles to the bowl. The other pipes from Corinth have more sack-like or tulip formed bowls (Fig. 3). These pipes are simple pieces with incised decoration easily confused with grey clay pipes. Robinson saw this kind of meerschaum pipe only in Constanza (Museum of Natural History and Archeology of Constanza) and Mangalia (Museum of Curiosities) in Romania (Robinson 1985, 169, 62, note). Citing Beckmann, Ferenc Levárdy also writes in his book that simple meerschaum pipes pressed from meerschaum were made in Turkey, of which many made their way



Figure 2: 1. Meerschaum pipe from Robinson's excavations in Athens, from a grave dated from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries (after Robinson 1985, Pl. 64, A44 (MC1281)) [L: 4.9cm, H: 3.8cm]; 2. Meerschaum pipe from Robinson's excavations in Athens, seventeenth century (after Robinson 1985, Pl. 64, A43 (MC1306)) [L: 4.7cm H: 4.7cm]; 3. Meerschaum pipe from Robinson's excavations in Corinth, seventeenth century (after Robinson 1985, Pl. 59, C127 (MF-11419)) [L: 2cm. H: 3.5cm].



C 132



C 133



C 132 (bottom)



C 133 (bottom)



C 134



C 135



C 135 (bottom)



C 137



C 136

Figure 3: *Meerschaum pipes from Robinson's excavations in Corinth, eighteenth century (C 132, 133, 134); eighteenth to nineteenth century (C 135, 136, 137) [C132 L: 6.1cm H: 4.5cm; C133 L: 6.3cm H: 3.4cm; C134 L: 5.8cm H: 5.1cm; C135 L: c4.6cm H: 2.5cm; C136 L: 6.6cm; and C137 L: 7.4cm H: 4.7cm] (after Robinson 1985).*

along the trade routes. In the last third of the seventeenth century, in the Balkan, Eastern-Central European areas under Turkish occupation, high-ranking soldiers may have smoked pipes made from meerschaum alongside those of clay at diplomatic meetings relating to Turkish-Balkan trade.

The literature on pipes has not really discovered these pieces. It is known from Levárdy that pipes made out of white stone (*lülletaschi*) were among the items plundered from the Turks by the Polish King John Sobieski at the 1683 siege of Vienna (Levárdy 1994; 2000, 121, following Rapaport 1998, 50). Unfortunately it has not been possible to discover the original source (Ferenc Levárdy died while the manuscript was at the printer's, and the task remained with his friend, Dr. Irnák Osskó. This is why references in the footnotes are missing in many parts of the volume). It is possible that meerschaum pipes were smoked along with coffee and sherbet before the battle at the August diplomatic discussions between the commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces camped in front of Vienna and his arriving ally, Prince Mihály Apaffi of Transylvania (Sachslehner 2004). It should be pointed out, merely as a matter of interest that Mavrokordatos, the main interpreter of the Turkish commander-in-chief, was of Greek origin.

Only few early simple meerschaum pipes are known from Hungarian collections. Levárdy was able to mention only one, which was unearthed in the course of excavations in Pécs (Levárdy 1994; 2000, 116). Unfortunately, at present this pipe cannot be identified. Szabolcs Kondorosy recorded two meerschaum pipes from the excavated material in Buda. One is a fragment of a cylindrical pipe neck, the other is also a cylindrical pipe neck with a small part of the bowl (Kondorosy 2005, 45, 247-248). Emese Varga published four very fragmented early meerschaum pipes (second part of the seventeenth, turn of the eighteenth century) from Eger Castle in her dissertation (Varga 2011, 204-205). Two stem socket fragments have rich incised decoration. One of the pipe socket fragments has a point and circle decoration at the junction of the socket and bowl and on the outside of the socket, the rim of which is rouletted (Fig. 4, No. 1). The other slightly flared socket fragment, pale, coffee-coloured fabric has unusual incised motifs around the end of the socket and a point and circle above its rim; there is a narrow collar in the middle of the socket with rouletted ring decoration just above it (Fig. 4, No. 2). The third piece has an undecorated socket and base of bowl. It is a cream-coloured fabric with flat, compound, disc-shaped neck ring (Fig. 4, No. 3). The fourth pipe socket fragment is a pale coffee-coloured fabric. It has

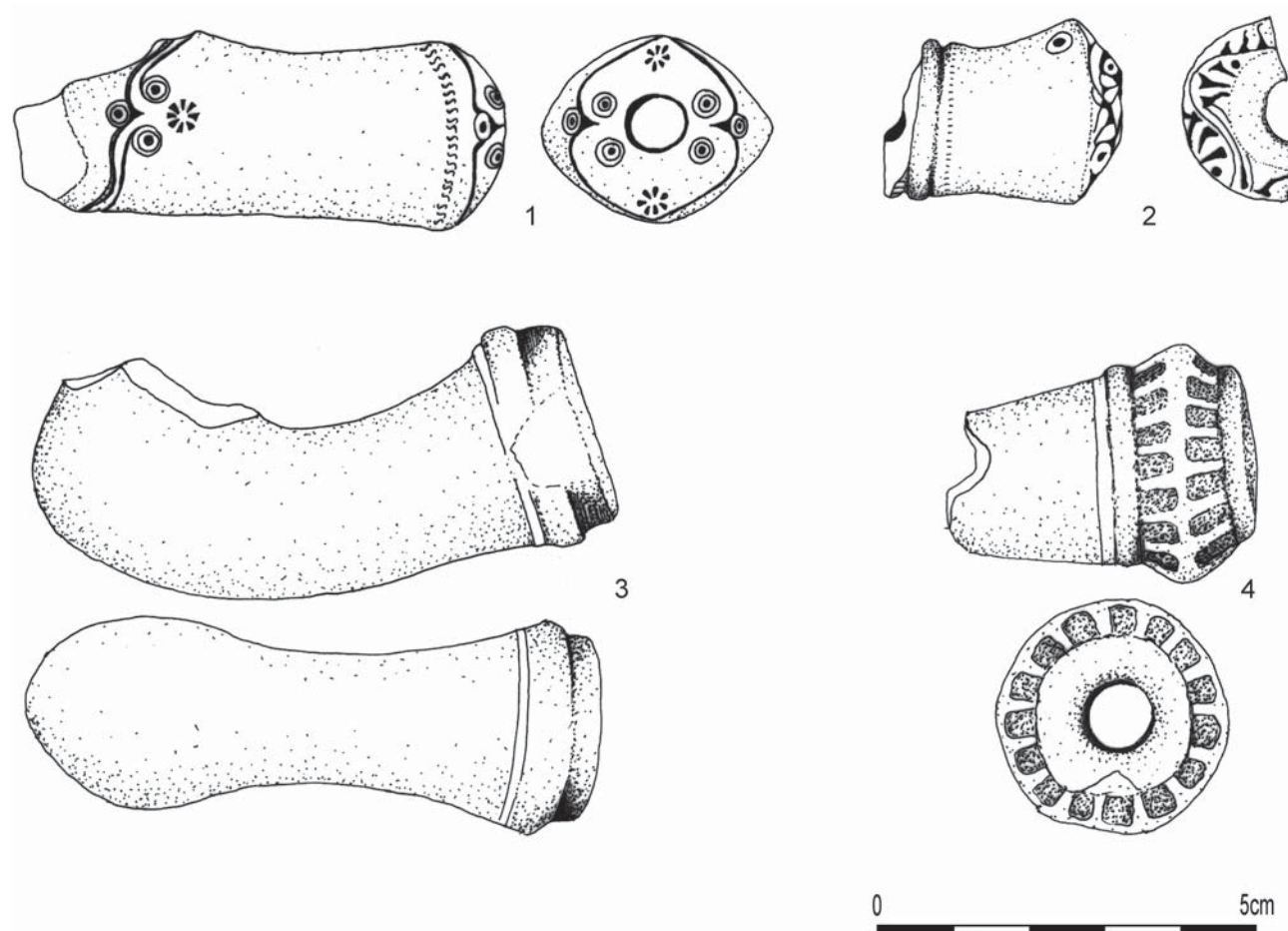


Figure 4: Meerschaum pipes from Eger, second part of seventeenth century turn of the eighteenth century (after Varga 2011) [1: Inv. n. V.2010.73.10. L: 6.2cm. H: 2cm; 2: Inv. n. V.2010.80.1. L: 3cm. H: 2cm; 3: Inv. n. V.2010.80.2. L: 7.7cm. H: 2.8cm; 4: Inv. n. V.2010.80.3. L: 3.8cm. H: 2.9cm.]

expanded neck ring with incuse petal-shaped grooves on the side and the outside (Fig. 4, No. 4). Another pipe turned up when the Castle of Szeged was demolished between 1881 and 1883. The undecorated pipe head is shaped similarly to a tulip cup and has a volume of 6.4 ml (Tomka 2000; Szeged, Castle, eighteenth century? 50/2 121- 122.; Kondorosy 2008, 331-364, 331, 346, 363 Sz 157) (Fig. 5). There is a small hole, not pierced through, on the right side. It is certain that this form was known in the Turkish period, and blossomed in the eighteenth century.



Figure 5: *Meerschaum pipe from Szeged, eighteenth century [MFM 5.19.2. L: 3.7cm H: 4.69cm] (after Tomka 2000).*

There are also some pipes from foreign collections. Some early meerschaum pieces were discovered at different parts of the excavation of Belgrade Fortress (Figs. 6-7). These pieces have yet to be published; all information and stratigraphic data has been provided through the kind offices of the archaeologist Vesna Bikić. The burnt meerschaum pipe fragment with a small rounded bowl and vertically scored decoration was found in the cellar of the medieval metropolitan palace in the layer above the floor, which can be dated between the end of the sixteenth to the second half of the seventeenth century (Fig. 6). More meerschaum pipe fragments were excavated at



Figure 6: *Meerschaum pipe from Bikić's excavations of Belgrade Fortress, from the cellar of the medieval metropolitan palace, the end of sixteenth to the second half of the seventeenth century*

the southeastern wall of the fortress, in the underground chamber beneath of the blockhouse from the infill layer dated in the early eighteenth century, between the end of the seventeenth century to 1725. The pipe with a tulip form bowl is decorated with an incised rosette motif. A smaller pipe with also a tulip form bowl was found at the same place.(Fig. 7)

Svitlana Biliaieva has published an interesting piece in this volume from the Ochakiv collection:

In form it is similar to clay pipes in the form of a pot. The rounded bowl was framed from the rim by two lines from the lower and upper part and one notch-rouletting strip in between. Under the upper line was a decoration like 'three full moons' (Biliaieva 2011, Fig. 13).

The surface of the bowl was divided by a composition resembling trees, each of which ended with the sign of 'the eye against evil' with an incrustation of blue glass in the centre of each eye. The stem ended with a bulbous wreath and stepped-ring termination.



Figure 7: *Meerschaum pipe from Bikić's excavations of Belgrade Fortress, the end of the seventeenth century to 1739.*

Pipe smoking and trading in the second part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century in Hungary

Hungary came into contact with pipe-smoking via the Turks and western mercenaries fighting within the country's border during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The first local production of Turkish-style pipes may have begun in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. In Hungary by the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth century the elite circles were able not only to smoke from simple clay pipes but

from more decoratively formed luxury pipes made from other materials. The 1683 inventory of the Rákóczi in Makovica includes a tobacco pouch, two pipes, silver pipe accessories and pipe stems. The prince must have had in his possession a number of remarkable pipes, for among their activities the silversmiths at his mint in Kassa (today's Košice, Slovakia) made him silver pipe stems and silvered his pipes between 1709 and 1710 (Thaly 1887, 163; Haider 2000, 20). What his pipes were made of - wood, bone or possibly meerschaum - is unfortunately unknown. But it is quite sure that they were not clay-pipes. At that time in Hungary it was not only the local potters who made pipes in their workshops. That more elaborately-made pipes were ordered to be made from other materials is borne out by the letter sent by János Széles, the chief artillery inspector to Bercsényi Miklós (1665-1725), one of the military leaders in the Rákóczi struggle for freedom:

I send you the pipe which Your Excellency commanded to be made from horn by the local turner; if it pleases you, another shall be made of the same shape, silvered *cum majori industria et arte* (Thaly 1882, 574).

This pipe was in all probability made from stag horn. This text demonstrates that, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in addition to the pipe-making technology of the potters other technologies, like turning were also known and used. The silvering of pipes was also pursued to a high technical and artistic standard: *cum maiori industria et arte*.

Sources show that the meerschaum pipe was already being used in Hungary, thanks to the bulk imports into the country by Greek merchants whose role must be considered at greater length (Petri 1975, 17- 76; Bánkúti 1975, 79-100). Trade with the Balkans was already flourishing in the sixteenth century, mainly comprising oriental carpets and silk transported along the Levant trade routes, partly through royal Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania into Europe. At the very beginning of the seventeenth century it became necessary to regulate Balkan trade. In 1615 Sultan Mohamed Mustafa signed an agreement with King Matthias II which guaranteed free trade by land and water. In December of 1665 a new trading contract was signed by the imperial court and the Turks as part of the Vasvár peace treaty. By this time Greeks, arriving mostly from the Balkan areas of the Ottoman Empire were settling in great numbers in and around the Hungarian towns of Debrecen, Miskolc, Tokaj and elsewhere.

Greeks and 'Cincars' or Aromanians lived in the southern areas of Western Macedonia. Their main occupation was trade, they adopted the culture of the Greeks with whom they lived and spoke Greek themselves as this was the international language of Balkan trading. The Greek merchants gathered in caravans (between 1650 and 1850 some million-and-a-half people were involved in trade over these territories). Among the caravans' points of

departure were Janina, Kozani, Moss-hopolye and Siatista. By 1662 many traders had come to Hungary from Kozani, several of them settling there.

Reception of the settlers was reserved, and more than once they were accused of espionage. They frequently travelled between the two hostile territories, bringing and taking goods and information with them. In 1660 the Greeks fled Kassa, in 1663 they were banned, and from 1665 Greek trade was regulated by the National Inspectorate. Despite potential danger, the court nevertheless placed them under their patronage as they meant a significant material profit for the imperial purse. In the seventeenth century Greek merchants were given the rights to trade in a number of Hungarian centres. According to the 1699 Peace at Karlóca (now Sremski Karlovci, Serbia) the massive profit emanating from duty belonged to Austria. In 1701 Leopold I issued privileges in which the Greeks settling in Transylvania were placed under royal protection. In 1704 efforts were made to form a mutual trading agreement, but fighting with the Porte was soon to resume. In 1716 Austria formed an alliance with Venice against the Turks. In 1718 the peace treaty of Pozsrevác was signed in Požarevac (Serbian Cyrillic: Пожаревац, German: Passarowitz, Turkish: Pasarofça), a town in the Ottoman Empire (today Serbia) 80 kms from Belgrade, between the Ottoman Empire on one side and the Habsburg Monarchy of Austria and the Republic of Venice on the other. This saw the birth of the Austrian-Turkish mercantile and shipping agreement, which gave preferential duties to Turkish traders. Many of these Turkish (Greek) merchants were already permanently domiciled in Hungary by this time (Petri 1975). From the second half of the seventeenth century tobacco played a significant part in eastern trade affecting Hungary. Alongside skins, textiles, fruit and spices, merchants brought Turkish tobacco, pipes and pipe stems into the country (Bánkúti 1975, 93-97). However, by that time tobacco was being grown in Transylvania and the tobacco gardens of the territories of the Occupation, and there was much domestic production of pipes (Haider 2000, 21; Bogdán 1973, 298).

Surviving documentation from the 1700s shows that meerschaum pipes entered the Hungarian market via the Greek traders. One of the important trade centres was Kecskemét, which had flourished even during Turkish occupation. Settlement began in around 1690, and outlets were being opened in the town by 1698. In 1708 there were twenty-six Greek merchants living in the town, forming a separate association. There was much traffic on the road between Szeged and Kecskemét, and at Szeged a variety of duties was charged on the merchants' goods. Between 21 June and 7 October, 1710, that is, within the space of three-and-a-half months, the names of 124 merchants were recorded (Bánkúti 1975, 84). Four of the shipments mention pipes. Two of these, probably belonging to the same family, arrived from Belgrade, the third was that of a Greek trader from Kozani and the fourth that of an Armenian merchant. The pipes came under two names: *communes pipas* or common pipes, that is, clay pipes, and *Pipas marinas* or *Pipas albas marinas*. These items

known as 'sea pipes' or 'white sea pipes' may well have been meerschaum pipes. They were few in number and much more expensive than the ordinary pieces:

September

(...)

David Aermen pro 40 f. Marinas Pipas, item Longas Arundines vulgo Pipaszár, pro 12 f. taxatas Dimitro Arnouth ex Bellgrad ... per 6. f. Tabaccae communis, 3.f. Pipas

October

Jorgath Graecus ex Kozany, pro 72. f. Communem Tabaccam... et pro 30. f. Marinas albas Pipas

Antonj Arnouth ex Bellgrad... 2. f. Communes Pipas (Bánkuti 1975, 95- 96).

The second data is later. In 1736, in Kecskemét, the shop of a Greek trader named Kandes was closed and an inventory made of the goods found there (Petri 1975, 17-18). Among other items were two meerschaum pipes, 30 pipe stems, 260 common clay pipes and 230 packs of ordinary tobacco (According to the specifications of goods in Kandes's first shop on Sept. 6, 1737 /Pm. Lt. Misc. Pol. Ant. 1737-1./). That is, alongside 260 ordinary pipes there were altogether two made from meerschaum, which is a good indicator of the difference in quality and price even within a narrow consumer community. At all events, at this time some 26 Greek traders kept a shop, and frequently more than one shop, in Kecskemét.

Unfortunately a significant part of the archive material was destroyed in the Second World War, but in 1930 the eighteenth-century municipal records still existed in Kecskemét (Petri 1975, 17-18).

Master Pipe-Makers in Pest-Buda

Subsequent to the liberation from Turkish occupation (after 1686) more and more people settled in Pest-Buda. The 1689 census of Pest citizens indicates that more than one was engaged in pipe-making, for it includes the names Lukács Pfeifenmacher and Ferenc Pipatsináló (Both the German and the Hungarian surname mean 'Pipe Maker', Haider 2000, 65). The Serbian (*Rác*) pipe-maker Lukács, or Lukas Pfeifenmacher, obtained the rank of citizen in 1689. In Pest, besides those of the local master craftsmen, pipes were made by Jews and *Rác* - that is Orthodox Southern Slav Serbians and Greeks (Illyefalvy n.d., Levárdy 2000, 122). There is no data as to what basic materials they used. But sources distinguish between the pipe-makers (*Pfeifenmacher*), and the pipe-carvers and pipe-cutters (*Pfeifenschnitzer*), from which conclusions can be drawn (Levárdy 1994; 2000, 122). At first, the makers of clay pipes pursued their craft within the potters' guilds. The pipe-carvers mostly worked with wood, bone and so on, while the pipe-cutters made pipes made out of meerschaum. The pipe-cutters worked outside the guild structure, and throughout this branch of the craft preserved its independent nature. A level of artistic ability

was required in the making of these valuable, carefully shaped meerschaum pipes.

There are several legends linking the birth of the meerschaum pipe to Hungary. According to one of these, it was a cobbler lad from Veszprém by the name of Bíró who in the eighteenth century paid a visit on a family matter to the Kuruc insurrectionists in hiding and who, returning from Turkey with the first block of meerschaum, carved the first pipe head for his relative, Márton Padányi Bíró (1693-1762), Bishop of Veszprém (Eötvös n.d., 193-195; Csorba 1995, 42). Another story, well-known in the international literature of pipe history, claims that Károly Kovács (woodcarver, inventor of the meerschaum pipe, born in Hungary) lived in or around the middle of the eighteenth century (1750) in Pest, and made the first meerschaum pipe from a piece taken from Turkey by one of the ancestors of Count Andrassy (Gyula Andrassy 1823-1890), minister of foreign affairs for Austria in 1874, thus becoming the inventor of an industry that later spread on a very large scale. According to this story the first meerschaum pipe made by Kovács was kept in the Hungarian National Museum (Wurzbach 1874, 396; Levárdy 2000, 121; Ridovics 2000, 75). For more information, new findings and literature see Ridovics 'True or false' in the wake of a legend. The so Called 'Pipe of the first Meerschaum Carver', Károly Kovács, in the Hungarian National Museum?' (Ridovics 2011, next volume). This much is true: that the Hungarian Museum of Applied Art preserves two beautifully carved Baroque meerschaum pipes which can be connected with the 1718 Peace Treaty of Pozsarevác. These in all probability were made in the first third of the eighteenth century. The two pipes were carved in honour of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, or in Hungarian terms King Charles III (1711-



Figure 8: Peace Treaty-pipe, first third of eighteenth century, Museum of Decorative Art (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. 10.418. H: 10.5cm. L: 10.5cm]

1740) (Fig. 8). By this time meerschaum pipes could already be acquired in Hungary; Greek settlers lived there who must have known the special techniques involved making meerschaum pipes. Blocks of meerschaum may have entered the country now and then or possibly as specific orders.

As to when meerschaum for carving was regularly imported to the territories of the country there is no precise data: the meerschaum trade became profitable after the Seven Years War (1753-1763) which spread across the continent. The quarried meerschaum was selected in Bursa and transported in chests by Greek and Jewish merchants across Moldova, Wallachia, Transylvania, Poland and Russia to the markets in Vienna, Leipzig and Wrocław, to Frankfurt (Oder), to Ruhla and later to North America. Sea cargoes were destined for Trieste, whence they were carted overland via Zemlinen to Vienna (Beckman 1781; Levárdy 1994; 2000, 116; Haider 2000, 63). In the second half of the eighteenth century there

was a boom in meerschaum carving in Nuremberg, Ruhla and Lemgo, in Vienna and Pest-Buda (Beckmann 1781, Morgenroth 1999, 40-44). In Pest-Buda and Vienna the making of meerschaum pipes was raised into an art form. In the second half of the eighteenth century the valuable meerschaums were much sought after among the nobility, who were in the thrall of the pleasure of tobacco smoke as is indicated by the ornamental silverwork and artistically made lids. Sometimes the name of the owner can be read on the silverwork. Antoine Grassalkovich smoked the famous pipe upon which a flat engraving, beautifully shaped, late Baroque scene comes to life (Hungarian National Museum Inv. No. D. 1974. 192). Hades, Lord of the Underworld, is in the throes of abducting Persephone (Ridovics 2000, 181; 2008, 52-53) (Fig. 9). The relief of the mouth and stem opening is gilded in silver, a reticulated lid resembling an onion being attached to it with a chain. The owner was Hungarian, but there is no information regarding the place of manufacture. There was a succession of three Antals in the Grassalkovich



Figure 9: *Abducting of Persephone-pipe, eighteenth century, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974.392. L: 12cm. H: 12cm]*

family. Antal Grassalkovich I (1694-1771) was the king's privy counsellor, Lord Chancellor, and the trusted servant of Maria Theresa. In 1736 he was given baronial rank, soon to be raised to that of count. His son, Antal (1734-1794), Lord Lieutenant of Bodrog and Zólyom, won the title of Imperial Duke. He served in the imperial army during the Prussian War. The third Antal Grassalkovich (1771-1841), imperial duke and royal chamberlain, was the last of the Grassalkoviches, with whose death the male line of the family became extinct. On the basis of the style of the carving the pipe can be dated to the second half of the eighteenth century.

Although somewhat worn through use, the meerschaum pipe with its figure of Diana raising her bow is a masterpiece of the period's rococo style (Hungarian National Museum Inv. No. D. 1974. 201; Fig. 10). An artistic depiction of a sitting dog (Fig. 11) can be seen on the mounting of the pipe lid of the bridged, rimmed pipe bearing the Pest hallmark guaranteeing a silver standard of 13 (around 83%), the year D and the master's stamp IS (Brestyánszky 1977, 340; Fig. 12). From the hallmark stamped into the mounting the silversmith, the time and probable place of manufacture can be identified. It is one of the earliest known masters' marks, that of the



Figure 10: Diana-pipe, 1760s, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. 1974. 201. L: 10cm. H: 12cm]



Figure 11: Sitting dog on the Diana-pipe (photograph by András Dabasi).



Figures 12: Silver marks on the Diana-pipe, Pest assay hallmark, year letter D 765-67, IS master's mark of Josephus Schätzl (photograph by András Dabasi).



Figure 13: Pipe with the Hungarian crest, 1780s, Blaskovich Museum [Inv. n. 67.231. L: 11cm. H: 9.5cm] Insert shows Pest hallmark, H year letter 1783, master's mark GR Georgius Raisch (photograph by Gócsa Mihály).

Pest craftsman Josephus Shätzl, from the period 1765-1767 (Ridovics 2000, 181; 2008, 52). According to the Pest hallmark and the H year stamp with the beautiful silverwork by Georgius Raisch (GR), the tubby, pitcher-shaped meerschaum pipe bearing the Hungarian coat of arms (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67. 231) preserved in the Blaskovich Collection in Tápiószéle (Fig. 13) was carved in around 1783 or even earlier (Ridovics 2005, 14, 77). The heraldic symbols of the Esterházy family emblazon the pipe (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67.288.1) the silverwork of which was made in Pest by Matthias Kuhn in around 1785-1786 (Ridovics 2005, 14, 80). Brestyánszky's book on silversmiths in Pest-Buda also mentions master craftsmen who made mountings for meerschaum pipes: Xavér Ferenc Huber became a master craftsman in Pozsony (now Bratislava, Slovakia) in 1775, and then moved to Buda in 1784. The volume lists a late eighteenth century-mount. Lipót Fischer's pipe mount was made in 1803. He had been granted Pest citizens'

rights in 1795. But pipe lids were made in other towns too; such as the one from the 1790s in the Blaskovich Collection, which also bears the Hungarian coat-of-arms (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67.243), the lid of which is the work of the Gyöngyös master craftsman Carolus Goldberger (Ridovics 2005, 77). The formation of the early pornographic product type featuring a female figure astride a phallus (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67. 251) can be placed in the late eighteenth century, judging from the date 1797 stamped into the silver and the Temesvár (today's Timișoara, Romania) hallmark (Ridovics 2005, 53). A pipe-cutter's name cannot be attached to the above-mentioned eighteenth-century pipes. Master craftsmen's names are known from the turn of the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries: in 1799 Carolus Czerha, the pipe-cutter (*Faicarum scissor*) from Mannheim, received Pest citizenship, as did the meerschaum pipe-cutter (*Faicarum spumacéarum scissor*) Joannes Popovits in 1808 and the pipe-carver from Unterammergau Josephus Teissenberg

in 1809 (Haider 2000, 65). But these master craftsmen's names or work are not encountered later on. Based on the research of Edit Haider, there are ten pipe-cutters (*Pfeifenschneider*) listed in the 1815 Pest Adressbuch, among whom are found those of Spiró and Weiss, who are also encountered later. Six masters are listed under the heading *Pfeifenschneider* in the Pest address book dated 1822; however, none of these can be identified with those named in 1815, and another member of the Spiró pipe-cutting family, Anton, appears. The Spiró family, after it's name of Greek origin, pursued the pipe-carving craft for more than one hundred years, their most famed member being Emil Spiró, who was active toward the end of the nineteenth century. A number of his high quality, signed pipes are preserved in the Hungarian National Museum. Pipes are known from the first third of the nineteenth-century pipes where the meerschaum master craftsman also stamped his completed work with his own mark and name: DEMETER JOAN (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67.252; Fig. 14), worked together with TAS GÁL (Hungarian National Museum Inv. No. D. 1974. 450) probably in Pest, JACOB FELL presumably in Óbuda (Blaskovich Museum Inv. No. 67.326.1; Hungarian National Museum Inv. No. D.1974.484; Haider 2000, 65; Fig. 15). Imre Ákosi worked in Buda (SCIDIT EMERICUS AKOSI BUDAE; Hungarian National Museum. Inv. No. D. 1974. 157; Ridovics 2001, 107-114; Fig. 16).

The tobacco trader József Medetz received Pest citizenship in 1838. There are many pipes bearing his name. Research suggests that he not only traded in pipes, but worked as a



Figure 14: Demeter Ioan: Jonah and the whale pipe, first half of nineteenth century, Blaskovich Museum (photograph by Gócsa Mihály) [Inv. n. 67.252. L: 8.5cm. H: 9.8cm]



Figure 15: Jacob Fell-pipe, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974.484. H: 8.5 L: 9cm]



Figure 16: Emericus Ákosi: *Family on journey* pipe, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974. 157. H: 9.5cm. L: 8.5cm]. Stamps on the pipe: A. 'SCIDIT', B. 'EMERICUS', C. 'AKOSI', D. 'BUDAE'.

pipe-cutter himself (Haider 2000, 66). In January 1848 the register of the 'society for the Hungarianization of Pest Israelites' appeared, the statements of which list the Jewish artisans in Pest, giving 25 pipe-cutters among the 13 goldsmiths, two cabinet makers, 12 button-makers, 17 cap-makers, 204 tailors with 410 apprentices, one soap maker, 42 painters, 7 glaziers and 13 stockingers (Supka 1985, 141). At the time of the Hungarian millennium there were nearly fifty pipe-cutters in the capital, the most outstanding of which throughout the entire century was the Adler Workshop. Only 13 pipe-cutters were known in 1921 and 6 in 1931 but, according to the 1931 issue of *Új Nemzedék* not even these made pipes any longer (Haider 2000, 33).

Joseph Schweger

By all accounts one of the most important pipe-cutters of the first half of the nineteenth century was the master craftsman Schweger (Haider 2000, 67; Ridovics 2003, 186-190). His exact name, Joseph Schweger 1837, was discovered on a bridged pipe in the private collection of Frederico Bayleander, who lives in America (Ridovics 2003, 186-190) (Fig. 17). American research held it to be high quality Austrian work (Rapaport 1999, 35). Hungarian collections preserve several signed works by

this excellent pipe-cutter; however, none of them bears his entire name. The signature can be read as Schwäger, Schwager, J. Schweger, SI, S, or it is possible to identify his works on the grounds of stylistic analysis. While there is no mark on the meerschaum, these pieces can be attached to one workshop, and in most cases SI or IS can be seen on the silver. A similar mark can sometimes be found on the meerschaum. Based on the solution of the silver mark with which Johann Nepomuk Schweger, silversmith in Pozsony (today Bratislava, Slovakia) between 1830-1840, marked his work (at present only known from pipe lids; Kőszeghy 1936; Mihalik 1911, 145), it appeared logical that the person of J. Schweger the pipe-cutter was identical with that of the silversmith (Haider 2000, 67; Ridovics 2000, 206-208). However, the pipe in the Bayleander collection caused this position to be modified (Ridovics 2003, 186-190) (Fig. 18). There appear to have been two individuals, evidently members of one family, either father and son or two brothers. In all probability they worked in the same workshop. This is borne out by one of the characteristics of the Schweger pipes; the lids crowning the pipes are not always of pure silver, but often of finely carved meerschaum set in a silver frame. There is only one pipe with the Schweger mark, the meerschaum lid of which is by a different silversmith



Figure 17 (above): Joseph Schweger: Neptune-pipe, 1837.

Figure 18 (below): Joseph Schweger's signature on the Neptune-pipe, Bayleander Collection.





Figure 19: Joseph Schweger: Palatin Joseph, 1837, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974. 390. H: 12cm. L: 11cm]



Figure 21: Joseph Schweger: Coronation-pipe, around 1830, Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974. 397. H: 13cm. L: 11cm]



Figure 20: Detail showing the name of J. Schweger on Palatin Joseph pipe.

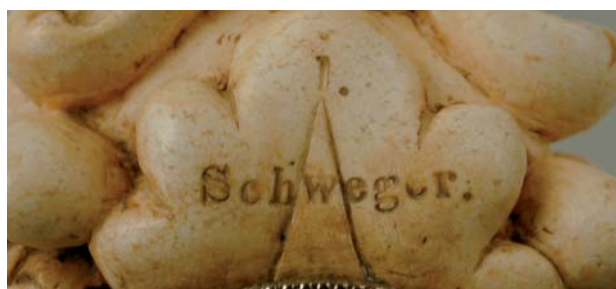


Figure 22: Detail from the Coronation-pipe showing the name Joseph Schweger (photograph by András Dabasi).

(Budapest Historical Museum Inv. No. 20.401). A number of marks can be found on the silverwork (Haider 2000, 211, Pl LIX). The filigreed date of 1816 can be read on its lid. The maker's hallmark of the renowned nineteenth-century master craftsman József Szentpéteri, together with the Pest authentication mark of 1832, can be seen in the silver. However, the silver hallmark JG and another unidentifiable mark can be found on the rim. The style of meerschaum carving differs from the rest of the known work. The carving is flatter and depicts animal shapes instead of figures. The form of the pipe is different and the distinctive acanthus leaf motif is absent. Could this be an early piece in the Schweger oeuvre? The date 1816 would allow this to be the case.

The majority of his work consists of bridged pipes. More than ten pieces are preserved in the Hungarian National

Museum collection: the figure of a man resting on his elbow (S sign) (Hungarian National Museum. Inv. No. D. 1974.365), a portrait of the Palatine Joseph (J. Schweger. 1837). (Hungarian National Museum. Inv. No. D. 1974.390) (Figs. 19-20), the story of Hero and Leander (IS) (Hungarian National Museum. Inv. No. D. 1974.156), an ornamentally decorated pipe (IS) (Hungarian National Museum. D. 1974.426) and a coronation procession (J. Schweger) (Hungarian National Museum. Inv. No. D. 1974.397) (Figs. 21-22). Both of the pieces known so far to have been dated and signed in the meerschaum were made in 1837. The meerschaum of the exceptionally beautiful piece in the Blaskovich Museum (Blaskovich Museum. Inv. No. 67.323) (Fig. 23) is not marked, but the IS mark appears on the silver rim. The body of the pipe forms a Renaissance *tempietto*; in front of the arcade arch is a naked male figure seated on a lion's skin footstool

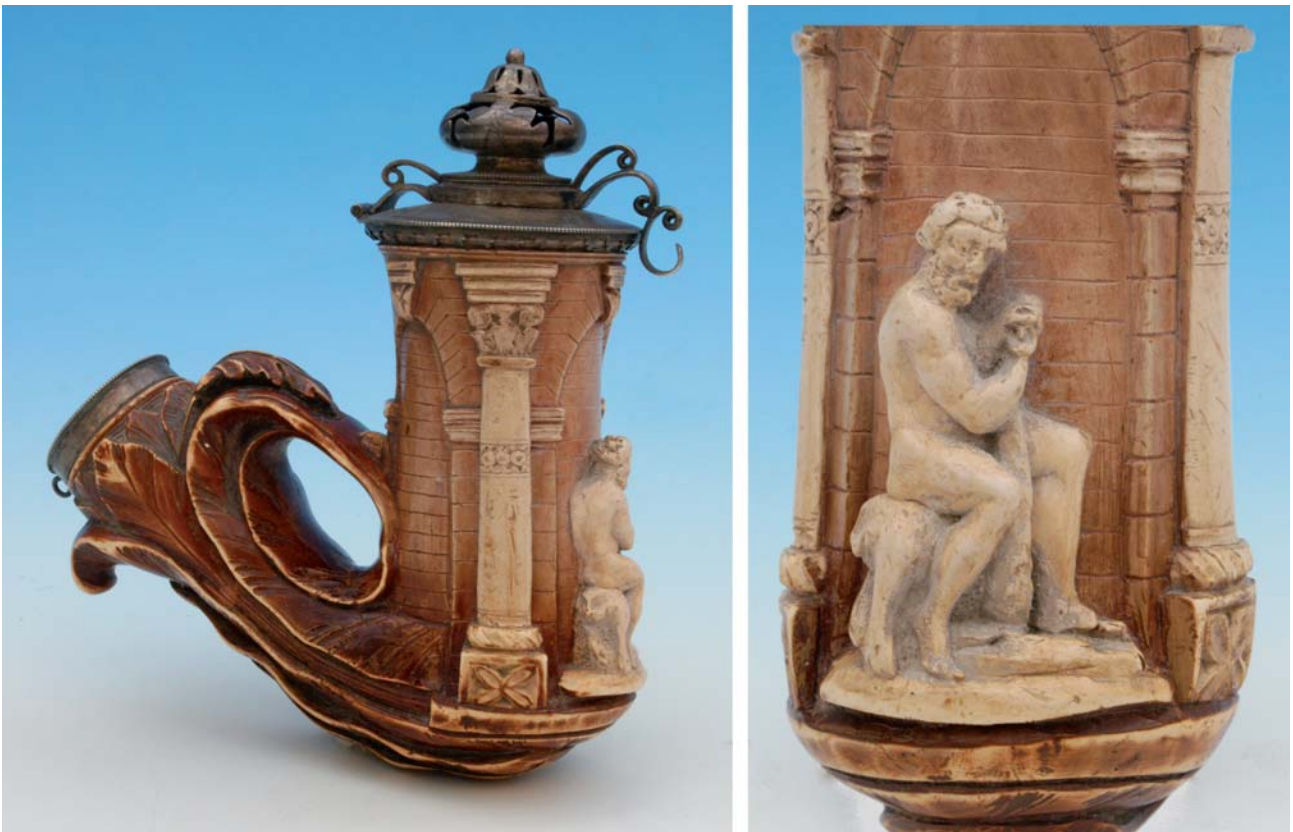


Figure 24: Joseph Schweger: *Hercules-pipe*, first half of nineteenth century, Blaskovich Museum (photograph by Gócsa Mihály) [Inv. n. 67.323. L: 12.5cm. H: 14cm]

leaning on a cudgel. Given its attributes, this can be identified with the person of the mythological Hercules. The body is miniature, and the sensitive surface carving, playing with light and shade, can relate it to the pipe in the Hungarian National Museum depicting Hero and Leander and especially with the pipe with the Neptune figure in the Bayleander collection; the agreement in composition is also conspicuous (Fig. 24). With both pipes a leafy motif curves backward from the neck section to the pipe head, forming a bridge. From the artistic execution in forming the figure it can be said that the Hercules pipe is from the hand of Joseph Schweger, from the 1830s. According to the IS mark, the silverwork was done by Johann Nepomuk Schweger. The lid is reticulated, multi-jointed with a foot and lid, reminiscent of flattened rotund silverwork. What is unusual about this pipe is in part the leafy motif that forms the bridge and the foot. Here the Baroque, twisting, *rocaille* acanthus leaf is not found. The foot, neck and bridge of the pipe form a single unfolding leafy plant with long, thin, deep brown leaves with light edges. The brown colouring of the meerschaum is exciting and unusual as it separates from the white columns and the statue-like figure of Hercules.

In the pipe exhibition of 2000 it was possible to exhibit twelve pieces that can be listed as belonging to the oeuvre of the master craftsman Schweger. Ten of these were from the National Museum's Collection, one the possession of the Budapest Historical Museum and one



Figure 24: Joseph Schweger: *Hercules -pipe*, first half of nineteenth century, Blaskovich Museum (photograph by Gócsa Mihály) [Inv. n. 67.323. L: 12.5cm. H: 14cm]



Figure 26: Joseph Schweger: Napoleon-pipe, with detail of IS mark inset. Hungarian National Museum (photograph by András Dabasi) [Inv. n. D. 1974. 517. H: 11.5cm. L: 12cm]

from the Blaskovich Museum. Since then, alongside the lovely pipe of Neptune and Amphitrite in the Bayleander collection, yet another of his splendid pipes can be added to the list, thanks to Heike Helbig's communication at the 2009 pipe conference. The musical genius of the nineteenth century, Franz Liszt (1811-1886), who was partial to a smoke, received this well-carved Napoleon pipe as a gift from Count Kázmér Esterházy (1815 - 1876). At present it is preserved in the Liszt Museum in Weimar (Inv. No. Kg-2007/439). A pipe with an identical motif can be found in the collection of the Hungarian National Museum (Hungarian National Museum. D. 1974. 517; Haider 2000, 67; Ridovics 2000, 206-207; Figs. 26-27).

Tobacco-growing, the tobacco trade and tobacco monopoly in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hungary

Last, but not least, something must be said about the economic and sociological background to Hungary's unique pipe culture, of tobacco-growing and the tobacco trade in Hungary. Due to a favourable climate tobacco-growing began early on in Transylvania, to be followed by tobacco horticulture in the territories occupied by Turks. In 1701 the annual trade figures for Transylvania show 53½ quintals of tobacco export (Takács 1961, 258; Vajkay 1975-1977, 119-120). The tobacco trade proved an exceptionally profitable form of income. In 1702 the Viennese Court wished to extend to Hungary the operative tobacco monopoly that had been in place in Austria since 1670. However, the insurrectionist Kuruc uprising led

by Ferenc Rákóczi II succeeded, at least for a while, in preventing Vienna's absolutist economic policy, and with it the introduction of the tobacco monopoly (Haider 2000, 21; Bogdán 1973, 298). In 1783 the tobacco monopoly was placed under state control, but it was impossible to maintain inspection in Hungary, which was Central Europe's largest market for the production and consumption of tobacco. The boom in home production can be placed at the time of the American War of Independence (1775-1783). At this time the whole of Europe became familiar with Hungarian tobacco. Napoleon's continental blockade brought fresh economic opportunities for the Hungarian producers.

The greater part of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century domestic tobacco trade was in the hands of Greek merchants. Based on the study by László Csorba (1995) it is known, that with the exception of the Greek banker Baron Sina, who was in a special position, by the beginning of the nineteenth century the largest tobacco traders were from among the circle of businessmen of Jewish origin (even if they had been Christianised in the meantime). The 1783 decree of Emperor Joseph II made it possible for Jews to settle in the free royal boroughs; it is from this time that the majority of Jews settled in Pest. The census-takers of 1787 reported altogether 14 families 'of the Moses faith'; by 1820 that number had risen to 549, among whom the head of the family was involved in trade (Csorba 1995, 41-45). There was a tobacco factory in one of the areas settled by Jews, the street leading to which was given the name Tabakgasse (Schmall 1906, 129). Tobacco for smoking was distributed by the

merchants, who maintained a tight economic connection with the large production estates and who at that time made up some three-quarters of the Jewish population. It was here in Dohány utca (Tobacco Street) that this social group, which was growing dynamically in numbers and wealth, discovered a site for its most important religious institution (Csorba 1995, 41-45). Construction began in 1854 and 1859 saw the completion of the world's second-largest and to this day Europe's largest synagogue, the cost of which could only have been covered by a community of considerable wealth. The extent of the domestic tobacco trade is demonstrated in the construction of a tobacco warehouse valued at 80,000 forints on the Danube waterfront in the first half of the nineteenth century by one of Pest's most important merchants, Mór Ullmann of Sztány. In 1844 Mór Wodianer and Baron Georg Sina of Vienna signed a five-year contract for tobacco freight over the whole of the Plains area beyond the Tisza. Between 1843 and 1847, Wodianer alone had a turnover through Szeged of 91,000 quintals (Bácskai 1989, 148, 160; Csorba 1995, 42). Seen in this perspective it is easier to understand how in Hungary, with its massive consumer circle, a unique Hungarian pipe-smoking culture and pipe-making manufacture of artistic proportions should evolve.

Until 1850 the production and sale of tobacco over the Hungarian territories was free. It was no coincidence that the danger of the introduction of a tobacco monopoly during the Age of Reform was handled as a symbol of intensified economic exploitation, and so it was only after quashing the struggle for independence, in the November of 1850, that the Emperor's express order could be executed (Delbrück 1857, Remethey 1937, Minárovics 1962). From March 1, 1851, the treasury tobacco monopoly already in place in Austria was introduced under the patent of Emperor Francis Joseph. The order affected a total of 40, 500 producers working 35,000 *holds* (0.57 hectares, 1.42 acres), attached tobacco production to permits and laid down the conditions for submission of and payment for the crop at the imperial royal offices, only allowing minimal free production for personal use over a few *négyszögöl* (3.57 sq. m., 38.32 sq. ft.).

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Frederico Bayleander for the photographs of his Schweger-pipe and to Frank Burla for sharing the English translation of Georg Friedrich Wille's 1796 article on meerschaum pipes in Ruhla with the AIP Meerschaum Research Work Group. My thanks go also to Vesna Bikić who selflessly offered for this article the unpublished data and a photograph of the meerschaum pipes from Belgrade Fortress and also many thanks to Emese Varga for the data and pictures about the pipes from Eger.

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