

## **The collection of ottoman clay tobacco pipes from Ismailia Museum Reserve in Egypt (Unpublished)**

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### **Abstract**

Ismailia Museum is the regional museum in the city of Ismailia in Egypt. It was the first regional museum in Egypt, the museum was built by engineers working for the International Maritime Company (now the Suez Canal Authority) in 1911 AD<sup>1</sup>. It takes the form of a temple pylon and displays a variety of unique antiques discovered in the Suez Canal and Sinai region, in addition to a collection of artifacts from the different eras of Egypt's history, beginning with the Pharaonic era until the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha<sup>2</sup>. The study aims to Shed the light on the collections of the regional museums all over Egypt and the importance of these museums in spreading the magnificent history and culture and studying one of the tools of smoking tobacco that was widely used in the ottoman empire from the seventeenth century AD to the beginning of the nineteenth century AD and its various materials of manufacturing and different decorations.

**Keywords:** Tobacco pipes, Ottoman era, Ismailia Museum.

### **Introduction**

The collection of the museum comprises twelve pieces of ottoman tobacco pipes in a very good condition, showing a great example of such utility of smoking, and its various materials of manufacturing and decoration during the times of the ottoman empire. Tobacco cultivation first appeared in South America around the fifth century BC. The plant belongs to the Solanaceae family, the most well-known members of which, *nicotiana rustica* and *nicotiana tabacum*, were named by Jean Nicot, the French ambassador to Portugal in the second half of the sixteenth century<sup>3</sup>.

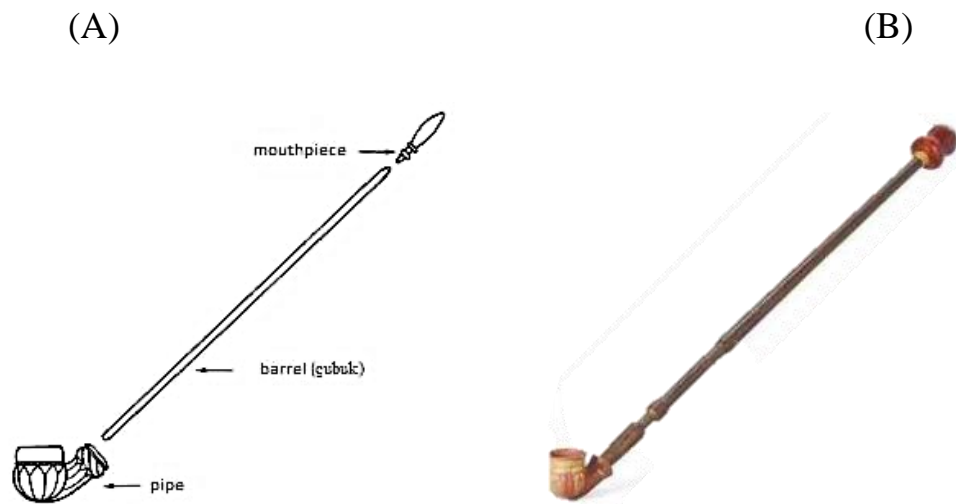
the first evidence of tobacco in the Ottoman court was in Istanbul goes back to 1576.<sup>4</sup> That is around 100 years after its arrival in Europe, according to the Arab author Al-Ichakee, tobacco was introduced by English sailors in Istanbul, Turkey, and the Levant about 1599 AD, or by Portuguese in Egypt in 1606 AD.<sup>5</sup> Tobacco was not a product for the common people at the time, but rather for the rich elite due to its high cost.<sup>6</sup> Its intake was initially medical, as a painkiller or for healing burns and bites, and its juice was employed as an antidote for poisons or an abortifacient.<sup>7</sup> since the herb was supposed to help people stay awake and heal different aches. It rapidly became an addiction.<sup>8</sup>



**Plate 1:** ottoman elite smoking tobacco pipes dates to the end of the eighteenth century in Istanbul.<sup>9</sup>

### The Ottoman clay tobacco pipes

Ottoman tobacco pipes “Al-Šhūbūk” (“çubuk” in Turkish),<sup>10</sup> a portable smoking device, that was widely spread in the ottoman era, it consists of three parts, a small clay or stone bowl (a head) in which they put the tobacco, a long wooden stalk of four or five feet and a mouthpiece.<sup>11</sup>

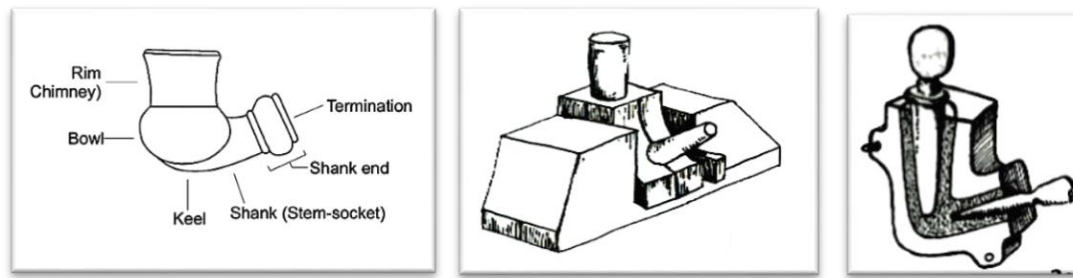


**Figure 1:** The structure of a tobacco pipe of the “Oriental type” (A)<sup>12</sup>

**Plate 2:** The structure of a tobacco pipe of the “Oriental type” (B)<sup>13</sup>

The head or bowl was often constructed of burned clay or smooth stone, wood, metal, or pyrolytic graphite. It was formed first in a mould, then ornamented. The pipe's stalk or shank was made of reed, cherrywood, jasmine wood, orange, lemon, or olive wood.<sup>14</sup> Dense-grained wood is preferred for pipe chambers while the cheap types were made of

bamboo, sometimes inlaid with silver wires and had a silk cover with a tassel, this shows that the processing of the tobacco pipe always commensurate with the social status of its owner;<sup>15</sup> These stalks were used to filter smoke and to cool the tobacco before it reached the mouth, considering that filtering it does not reduce the danger of tobacco. The mouthpiece frequently had a many-part structure and could be made of various materials: bone, amber, coral, or gilded enamel,<sup>16</sup> they usually used to put it on a small plate to keep the area clean from tobacco.<sup>17</sup>



**Figure 2:** The morphology of a clay tobacco pipe of the “Oriental” type and the shape of manufacturing pipes<sup>18</sup>

The affluent who smoke usually moved with a special servant for this purpose, they carry more than one tobacco pipe and a packet for tobacco, they also stuff the pipe with tobacco, fire it, and clean it, their profession was known as “*Al-Šhūbūksī*”.<sup>19</sup>

### **Prohibition of tobacco and smoking in the Ottoman empire**

Tobacco was not mentioned in the Qur'an as it was unknown during the Prophet's lifetime.<sup>20</sup> As a result, a debate concerning its prohibition erupted across the ottoman empire.<sup>21</sup> The main issue in the arguments was "whether or not tobacco smoking harmful to the individual and his or her surroundings." Islamic scholars interpreted board guidelines given in the Qur'an or hadith to support their arguments either with or against its usage.<sup>22</sup>

Smoking tobacco was not easy or accepted for the middle Easterners. Due to Islamic fatwas issued by many ottoman officials like Sultan Ahmet I (ruled 1603-1617 AD), and subsequently by Mecca's religious officials, who believed that people smoked too much and did not concentrate sufficiently on their jobs or religious rituals, the outlawing of tobacco lasted for two decades.<sup>23</sup> Sultan Murad IV (ruled 1623-1640 AD) outlawed its production once more.<sup>24</sup> In 1646 AD, Sultan Ibrahim issued a new order formally authorizing its use, as it brought a large prophet to the treasury of the country.<sup>25</sup>

The last sericeous of anti-smoking campaign was carried out in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century early-19<sup>th</sup> century by the Wahhabi religious movement, they outlawed smoking and then collected pipes and publicly burned them, shortly thereafter smoking became very popular, and consequently, the empire officially encouraged the cultivation and production of tobacco products, considering them a viable commodity and an important source of national income.<sup>26</sup>

**Our Case study:**

The collection of ottoman tobacco clay pipes in Ismailia Museum which is the main subject of this paper consists of twelve pieces all made of pottery, they differ in the details of their shapes, sizes, and decorations, I will classify them due to the color of pottery used in mounding as the follows:

**Dark gray clay tobacco pipes**

**First pipe, Plate 3**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

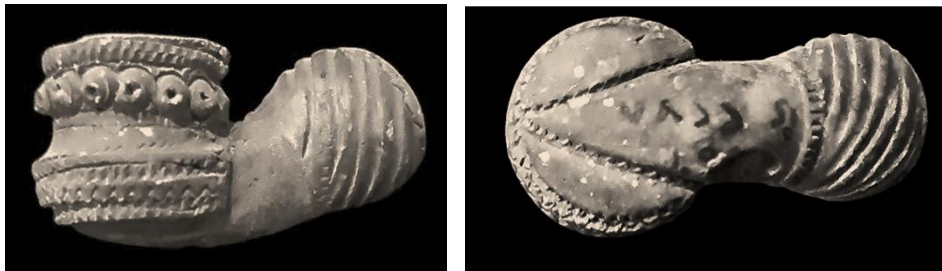
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, moulded

Dimensions: 7 cm L, 3.5 cm H.<sup>27</sup>

Museum Inventory number: 2278

**Description:** Fine clay tobacco pipe, dark-gray ware, a well-preserved example for such pipes, it has a round-bowl decorated by incised zigzag bands topped by a band made by rouletting, the rim has a band of protruding close knobs, topped by rouletting groove ring, it has a wide opening of 4 cm diameter, the keel is outlined by incised rouletted lines, the shank is short and plain, it has a thickened wreath with a rouletted line band, decorated by diagonal grooves ends by a ring termination.



**Plate 3:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Second pipe, Plate 4**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

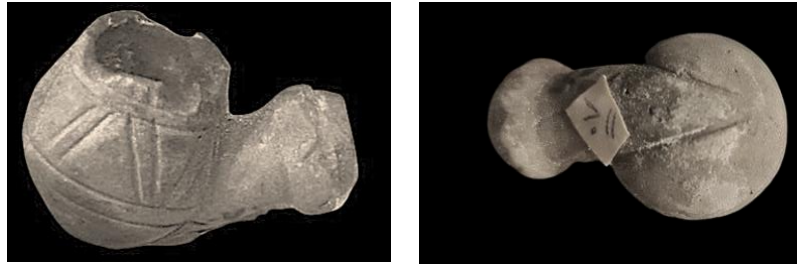
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 6 cm L, 4 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2280

**Description:** Fine dark-gray clay tobacco pipe, with a round shaped bowl, decorated by a band of geometric lines forming triangles, some parts of the rim are missing, the opening diameter is about 2.5 cm, decorated by vertical grooves, the keel is outlined by two diagonal lines, the shank is short and plain, it ends with a thickened wreath.



**Plate 4:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Gray clay tobacco pipes**

**Third pipe, Plate 5**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

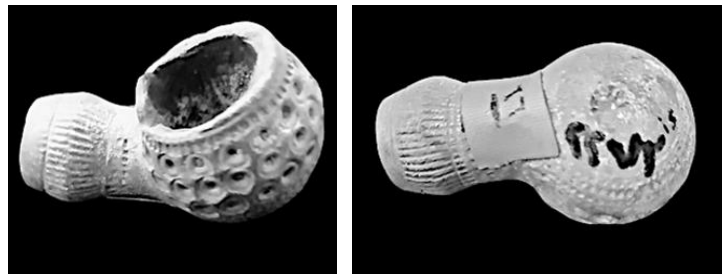
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 7 cm L, 4 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2273

**Description:** Fine dark-gray clay tobacco pipe, it has a round-bowel decorated by circumferential impressed circles and bands of rouletting on the top and the bottom, the keel was outlined by circumferential grooves made by roulette with a floral shape in the middle, it has a plain rim, the shank is short and decorated by rouletting bands, with a thickened wreath covered by diagonal lines and its terminations bore vertical grooves.



**Plate 5:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Fourth pipe, Plate 6**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 6 cm L, 3.5 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2277

**Description:** Fine clay tobacco pipe, with a rounded shaped bowel decorated by grooves of circumferential impressed elaborate rouletting, the rim is long and plain, its opening

diameter is 2.5 cm, the keel is outlined by two wide bands, it has a short shank with conical wreath bore vertical impressions of lozenge grooves lined from two side by rouletted bands, ends by a plain stepped-ring termination.



**Plate 6:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Fifth pipe, Plate 7**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

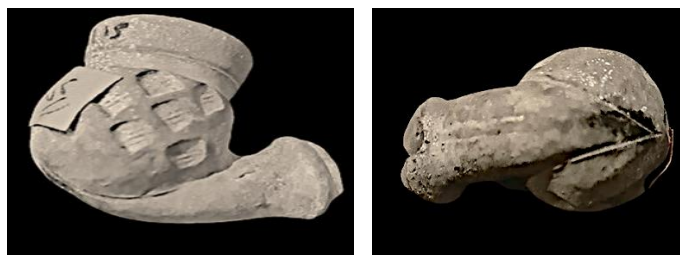
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone clay ware, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 5 cm L, 4.5 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2281

**Description:** fine gray clay tobacco pipe, it has a lily shaped bowel decorated by deep impressed lozenges filled with cross patches with a long rim decorated by a tiny increased band, the diameter of the bowl opening is about 2.5 cm, the shank is short and plain with a thickened wreath and a stepped-ring termination.



**Plate 7:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Sixth pipe, Plate 8**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired earthenware, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 7 cm L., 4 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2275



Description: Medium fine clay tobacco pipe, it has lily shaped bowl topped by rouletted bands, the rim is separated by a curved ring, the diameter of the rim is about 3.5 cm, the keel outlined by two rouletted lines, with a short plain shank.



**Plate 8:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Seventh pipe, Plate 9**

Discovery place: Al-Qalzum, 4/6/1914 AD

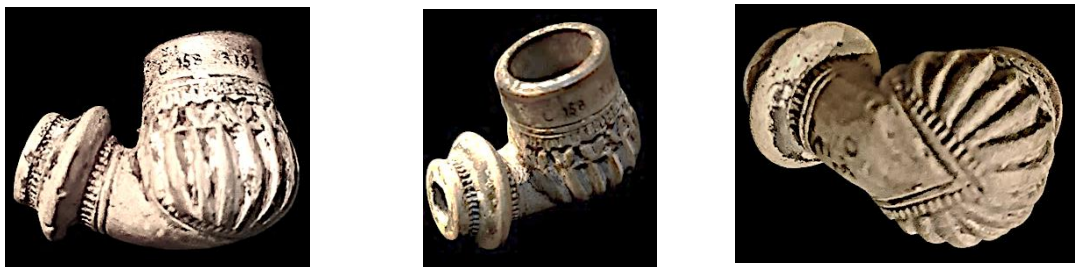
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 5.5 cm L. ,3.5 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 504/2

**Description:** Fine gray clay glazed tobacco pipe, it has lily shaped bowel with wide vertical flutes radially diverging from the bottom, the The upper part of the bowl boasts elaborate rouletting topped by a band of narrow rifling, with a long plain rim, the diameter of the opening is about 2cm, keels are outlined with roulette rows, the shank is short an plain ends by a thickened plain wreath with rouletting only on the very end and a stepped ring termination.



**Plate 9:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Eighth pipe, Plate 10**

Discovery place: Al-Qalzum, 1914 AD

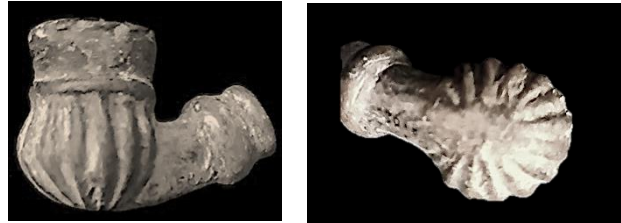
Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired stone ware clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 4cm L., 3.5cm H

Museum Inventory number: 504/2

**Description:** fine gray clay tobacco pipe, it has a lily shaped bowl with a sculptured diamond-shaped grid, topped by a protruding band with a long plain rim, the diameter of the opening is about 2cm, the shank is long and plain ends by thickened plain wreath with a stepped-ring termination.



**Plate 10:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Reddish-brown clay tobacco pipes:**

**Ninth pipe, Plate 11**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired earthenware, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 5.5 cm L, 3 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2276

**Description:** Medium fine clay tobacco pipe, it has round shaped body almost plain of decoration the diameter of the opening is about 2.5 cm, the rim has a protruding band topped by a band of triangular stamp made by roulette, The keel is plain too, it has a short shank with a thickened plain wreath.



**Plate 11:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Tenth pipe, Plate 12**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

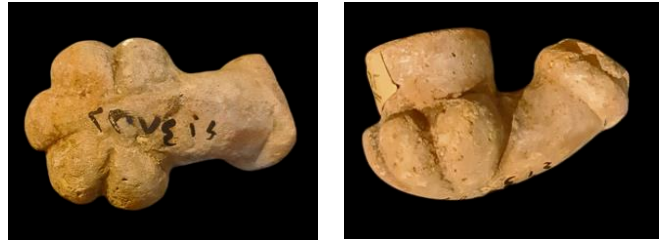
Materials and techniques: Fired earthenware, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 4.5 cm L, 5 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2274

**Description:** Medium fine clay tobacco pipe, it has a floral shaped bowl of five protruding petals, the rim is long and plain, the diameter of the bowl opening is about 2.5 cm, with short plain shank and a thickened wreath with a plan termination ring.





**Plate 12:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**Eleventh pipe, Plate 13**

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

Materials and techniques: Fired earthenware, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 6.5cm L, 4cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2279

**Description:** Medium fine clay tobacco pipe, it has a round shaped bowl taking the shape of a shell with wide vertical flutes radially diverging from the bottom, the keel is out lined by two rouletted lines, the rim is lined and protruding. The diameter of the bowl opening is about 3cm. the shank is small ends with a thickened wreath decorated by diagonal grooves.



**Plate 13:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

**White clay tobacco pipes**

Twelfth pipe, Plate 14

Discovery place: Al-Fustat

Date / period: Ottoman period

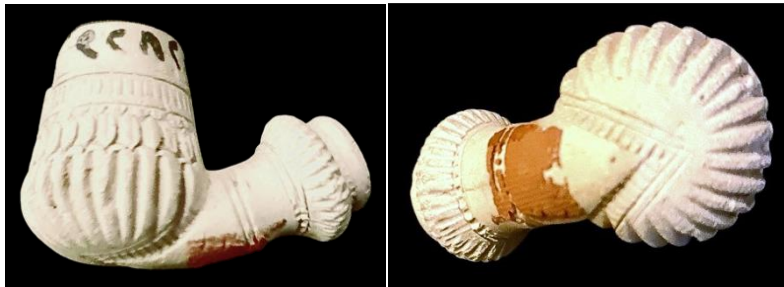
Materials and techniques: Fired Kaolin clay, formed in a mould

Dimensions: 5 cm L, 3 cm H.

Museum Inventory number: 2282

**Description:** Fine clay kaolin tobacco pipe, it has a lily-shaped bowl decorated by a shell shape of vertical flutes radially diverging from the bottom above it three bands of geometrical shapes and narrow rifling, the rim is long and plain, the diameter of the bowl opening is about 2 cm, the keel is outlined by two rouletted lines, it has an elongated shank

with an incised band, it ends with a thickened wreath decorated by diagonal groves and lined from the two sides by roulette lines, with a stepped ring termination.



**Plate 14:** A dark clay tobacco pipe  
(Captured by the researcher)

### **Discussion**

The collection described above illustrates the different shapes of ottoman tobacco pipes from the collection of Ismailia Museum, they were classified due to the color of pottery into four groups as the following:

- **The first group of pipes** were dark-gray clay pipes, it has two examples of pipes, they were of fine clay either polished or unpolished, decorated by various geometrical shapes and lines mostly rouletted lines, the shank was short and plain, with a thickened wreath decorated by vertical, diagonal groves or plain.
- **The second group of pipes** were gray clay pipes, it comprises six pipes, they were polished and decorated by various types of decorations mainly geometrical of impressed circles and bands of rouletting, lozenges and one of them bore a vegetal ornament of a floral shape, with a short shank, a thickened wreath, and a step-ring termination.
- **The third group of pipes** were reddish-brown clay, it has three pipes, this group stand out for their larger size compared to the previous types, their decoration was very simple, and generally depicted on a large scale of triangles, rouletted lines, and vertical flutes, with a short shank, a thickened wreath, and a step-ring termination.
- **The fourth group of pipes** has a unique pipe of white kaolin clay that was not common in the tobacco pipes, it has very fine and remarkable decorations and sharp lines of vertical flutes, narrow rifling and rouletted line, with a short shank, a thickened wreath, and a step-ring termination.

### **Conclusions:**

- The number of pipes in the museum is twelve ottoman tobacco pipes of formed from different types of clay.

- The Muslim tobacco pipes of Ismailia Museum collection are of the "Oriental" kind. That resembled a smoking set, with three connected parts: a clay tube (a head), a long wooden sack, and a mouthpiece.
- The pipes were created in moulds of high-quality clay in white, light grey, brown, beige, and dark grey colours, and were embellished with plunge-in and stamped embellishments.
- The pipes were sometimes coated by glazing or engobing, to add more durability for it.
- the collection of the Ismailia Museum, provide a tiny addition to our understanding of Ottomans everyday life and society. A 'dry' pipe was the smoking device under discussion here. It was most likely manufactured and used in Egypt, turkey, Yemen, and Bilad ash-Cham region. Even yet, this form of smoking equipment was far less popular than the typical hand-held pipe. As a result, it appears that these instruments were very infrequently manufactured by local urban artisans and were popular only throughout the 17th or even 18th centuries.
- As a result, the mentioned smoking implement is a rare example of an Ottoman-period archaeological find that may be linked to a specific ethnic group
- The bowls of the pipes might be hemispheric, elliptic, plane-spherical, or discal in form.

## End Note

<sup>1</sup> The official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiques;

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<sup>2</sup> الوكيل (فايزة)، أدوات التدخين في مصر في عصر محمد علي، دراسة أثرية حضارية في ضوء مجموعة متحف جابر. اندرسون وقصر المنيل، مجلة كلية الآثار، جامعة القاهرة، العدد السادس، ١٩٩٥م، ص ٤١٢.

<sup>3</sup> Barbier (C.), *Histoire du tabac*, Paris, 1861, p.27.

<sup>4</sup> Simpson (St J.), "Analysing the Recent Past: The Archaeology of Death, Pastoralism, Pots and Pipes in the Ottoman Jazira and Beyond", *al-Rafidan* 32, 2011, 57-58.

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<sup>8</sup> Lingen (B. Van der), Smoking in the Ottoman empire and an introduction to the clay tobacco pipes from the Beirut Souks excavations, January 2003, p. 34; Khalil, Collection Of Ottoman Tobacco, p. 239.

<sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/famercenter/status/1227956316393607169>, 22/10/2021.

<sup>10</sup> Taxel (Itamar), AN UNCOMMON TYPE OF SMOKING IMPLEMENT FROM OTTOMAN PALESTINE, Palestine Exploration Quarterly, 140, 1, 2008, p. 39; Hayes. J.W , Turkish Clay Pipes: A Provisional Typology, The Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco Pipe, 1980, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Simpson (St John), THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE CLAY PIPE IN THE NEAR EAST, AL-RĀFIDĀN Vol. XXX 209 , p. 67.

<sup>12</sup> Robinson (R.), Clay tobacco pipes from the Kerameikos, *Mittlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Athenische Abteilung*, Bd. 98, Berlin, 1983.

<sup>13</sup> A wooden thin-stemmed smoking pipe covered silk and an ebony mouthpiece from the collection of Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities Museum, Islamic Antiquities, showcase 26; <http://antiquities.bibalex.org/Collection/Detail.aspx?collection=42&a=1020&lang=en>

<sup>14</sup> Al-Houdalieh (Sarah.), "Ottoman Clay Tobacco Pipes", *Liber Annus* 58, 2008, p. 457.

<sup>15</sup> Columbia University, The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001, p. 32.

<sup>16</sup> Khalil (Walid Ali), The Collection of Ottoman Tobacco Pipes from Azov Museum-Reserve in Russia, *JGUAA*, Volume 15, Issue 15, p. 232;

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<sup>20</sup> Matney (T.), "Rapporto di scavo a Khirbet Hatara Saddam Dam, Eski Mossul, Iraq, n°18", *Mesopotamia* 32, 1997, p. 84.

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<sup>23</sup> Dickson (Sarah), *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Literature*, New York, 1954, P. 154.

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<sup>25</sup> Barbier (C.), *Histoire du tabac*, Paris, p. 46.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Houdalieh, *Ottoman Clay Tobacco*, pp. 457-458.

<sup>27</sup> The measures of the tobacco pipes imentioned in the directory of Ismailia museum were inaccurate and I measured them again.

## مجموعة من مجامير الشبك العثمانية المحفوظة بمتحف الإسماعيلية (غير منشورة)

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### الملخص العربي

تشمل الدراسة اثني عشر قطعة من مجامير الشبك التي عثر عليها بمنطقة الفسطاط، قمت بفحصها ودراستها وتصويرها بعد الحصول على التصاريح اللازمة من إدارة متحف الإسماعيلية ووزارة السياحة والآثار المصرية، الشبك، في التركية "جبوب" و"جبوب" بالجيم المشربة، وشبك الدخان عبارة عن أنبوبة بإحدى طرفيها مبسم، وفي الطرف الآخر مجمرة أو حجر يوضع به التبغ والفحم، وعرف الشبك أيضا باسم الغليون، والجمع: غلايين، وغلاويين. كان التدخين في بدايته مقتصرًا على الطبقات المخملية لارتفاع تكلفته ومع الوقت انتشر بين الطبقات الاجتماعية المختلفة في مصر، وأصبح عادة يوميًا ترمز لمكانة الشخص الاجتماعية. اختلفت الغلايين التي استخدمها الفقراء عن غلايين الأغنياء التي كانت قطعًا من الفنون الجميلة ومطلية بالذهب أحيانًا، ظهر الشبك لأول مرة في تركيا في أوائل القرن السابع عشر بعد الميلاد، وكانت له أنابيب يتراوح طولها بين أربع لخمس أقدام تستخدم لتصفية الدخان وتبريد التبغ قبل وصوله إلى الفم، مع مراعاة أن تنقيته لا تقلل من الضرر الناجم عن التبغ. تختلف تلك الأنابيب في الأشكال والأحجام. ينقسم الشبك إلى ثلاثة أجزاء رئيسية: تجويف الغليون الذي يسمى "لولاس" من الكلمة التركية "لول"، حيث يتم حرق التبغ، والجزء الثاني يتكون من الجذع أو الساق، والجزء الثالث هو المبسم.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مجامير الشبك، العصر العثماني، متحف الإسماعيلية.