

Clay Tobacco Pipes from the Royal Castle and Old Town in Warsaw, Poland

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Warsaw (Poland); 17–19th century; tobacco pipes; meeting point

All clay tobacco pipes collected during archaeological research from 1948 onwards within the town walls, the castle including, are stored in the Archaeological Department of the Warsaw Historical Museum. Altogether, there are 158 kaolin stemmed pipe bowls and 1021 stem fragments as well as 91 chibouk/lüle heads.

The first pipes discovered in Warsaw were found during rescue excavations (Żurowski 1951). Żurowski divided clay pipes into: homogenous – i.e. one piece, white clay pipes from Western Europe and composed – built of three pieces, mostly red clay – head pipes from Eastern Europe and Turkey. The next ones came to light in the 1952–53 exploration of two pottery kilns outside the second line town wall (Świechowska 1955). Papers publishing these finds are the first in Poland dealing with this kind of archaeological material.

For the present paper, material from two well-stratified and closed deposits was chosen. The first group comes from the Royal Castle south wing cellar, the other from the backyard latrine close to the Cracow Town Gate. These groups were deposited some 100 years apart.

Excavations in the Castle south wing cellar (Unit I) have produced 43 kaolin stemmed pipe bowls (pl. II, 3–5), 234 stem fragments and 23 chibouk heads (pl. IV, 1–4) in 6 layers of the fill (Meyza 1997a, 36; 39–40). They were found together with a purse holding 66 coins of small denomination issued between 1660 and 1681 (Suchodolski/Świechowska 1979, 128–130). This purse, together with latest pottery pieces, such as a complete Marbled pottery cup (Meyza 1991, 120 f.; Colour pl. 3, first from right; Meyza 1997b, 128, fig. 9, centre) suggest that the deposition date should be

situated in the end of the 17th or the very beginning of the 18th century.

The backyard latrine (Unit II) was filled in 8 layers when, or before, all the buildings immediately west of castle including the Cracow Gate were pulled down during the few years following 1818. This date of creation of the present Castle Square comes from historical records. In the fill an écu of Louis XVI (unfortunately the issue place and date are not legible) was found (Paszkievicz 1991, 83). The fill contained 3 white clay stemmed pipe bowls (pl. III, 2,3) and 33 stem fragments together with 4 lüle heads (Meyza 1999, 11–15).

It was possible to discern pipes made in Poland and determine the origin of the imported stemmed pipes and their directional frequency in these two groups. These contexts enabled a better dating of the imported chibouk finds as well.

Pipes (lüle) produced in Poland

In the entire collection, 3 types dating between 1650 and 1750 are distinct. First two of them were represented in Unit I; each made of a different clay type. These were the following:

I. Lüle, made of ferrous clay with opaque olive-green glaze and with characteristic ornament (pl. IA, 1, 2). Examples were found in Unit I (Royal Castle) and below the bridge of the Cracow Town Gate, in a layer deposited after 1656;

II. Lüle, white clay, transparent, light greenish-brown glaze, characteristic of Iłża (SE Poland) pottery (pl. IA, 3, 4). Found e. g. in the fill of a well in Market Square 28 house.

III. A simple lüle made of red clay, glazed. Produced in the Warsaw pottery workshop. No specialised pipe workshops dated to the 17th century have been found until now in the town. This workshop, dating to the beginning of the 18th century produced all kinds of ceramic wares: pots, stove tiles and pipes (Świechowska 1955). Their poor quality indicated that they were produced for indigent customers. In the town dump, used from Medieval times only one pipe locally made was found. Excavations of the kiln N° 1 (pl. IB, 1) have re-

sulted in the discovery of a firing stand for pipes (pl. IB, 2) and 7 lüle made locally, one of which is fused to a broken stand fragment. The pipes are large and simple both in shape and in decoration. They are covered with lead glaze (pl. IB, 3–6). Four stem pieces of white pipes and 2 imported lüle heads have also been found in the vicinity of this kiln. Stratigraphy of this site has been an object of revision, which lead to lowering the date of the workshop into the 18th century proper. One of the crucial arguments is the white pipe, similar to

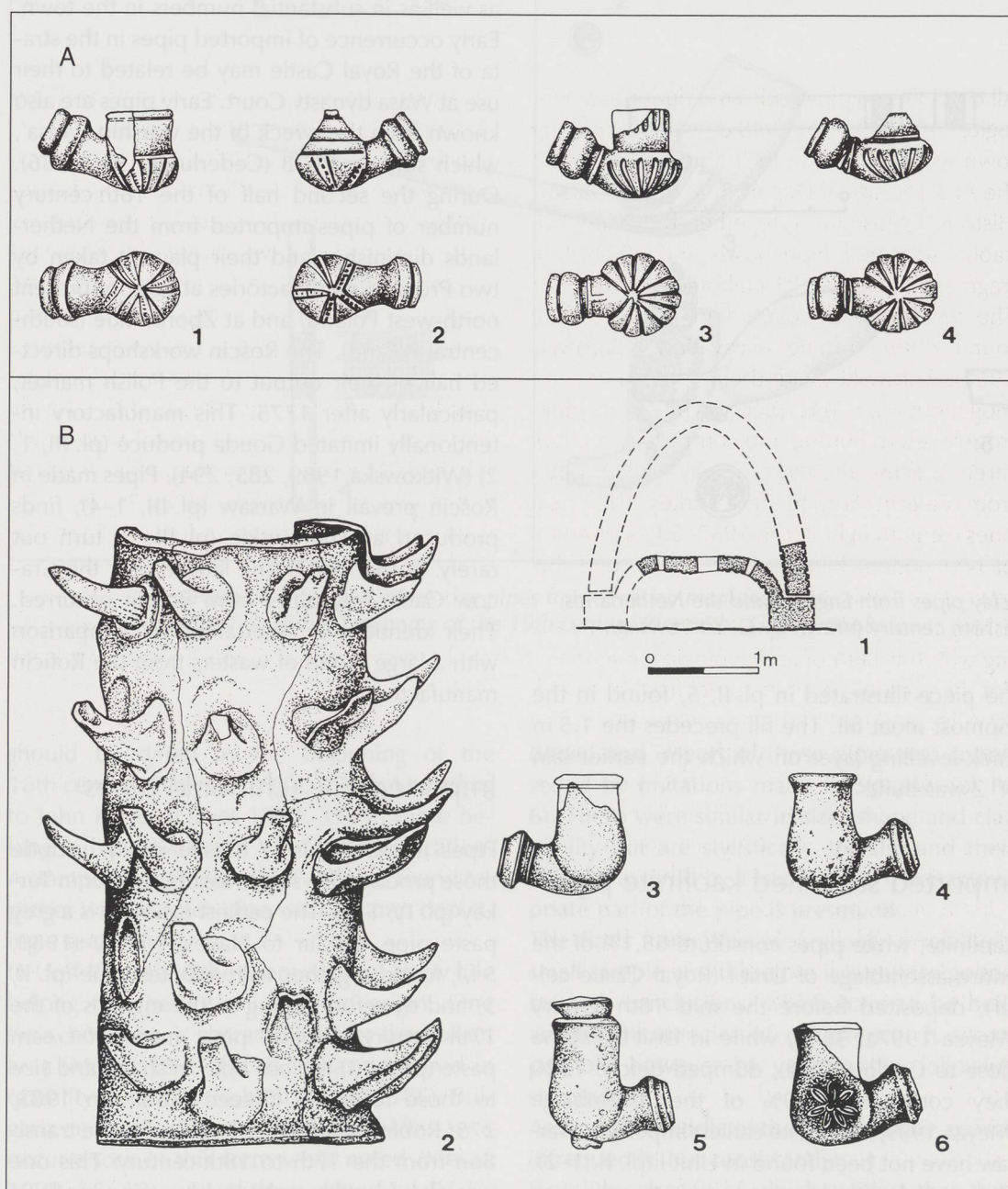


Plate IA: Lüle pipes made in Poland around middle of the 17th century (drawn by G. Zborowska);
IB: Warsaw pottery workshop, beginning of the 18th century (drawn by G. Zborowska).

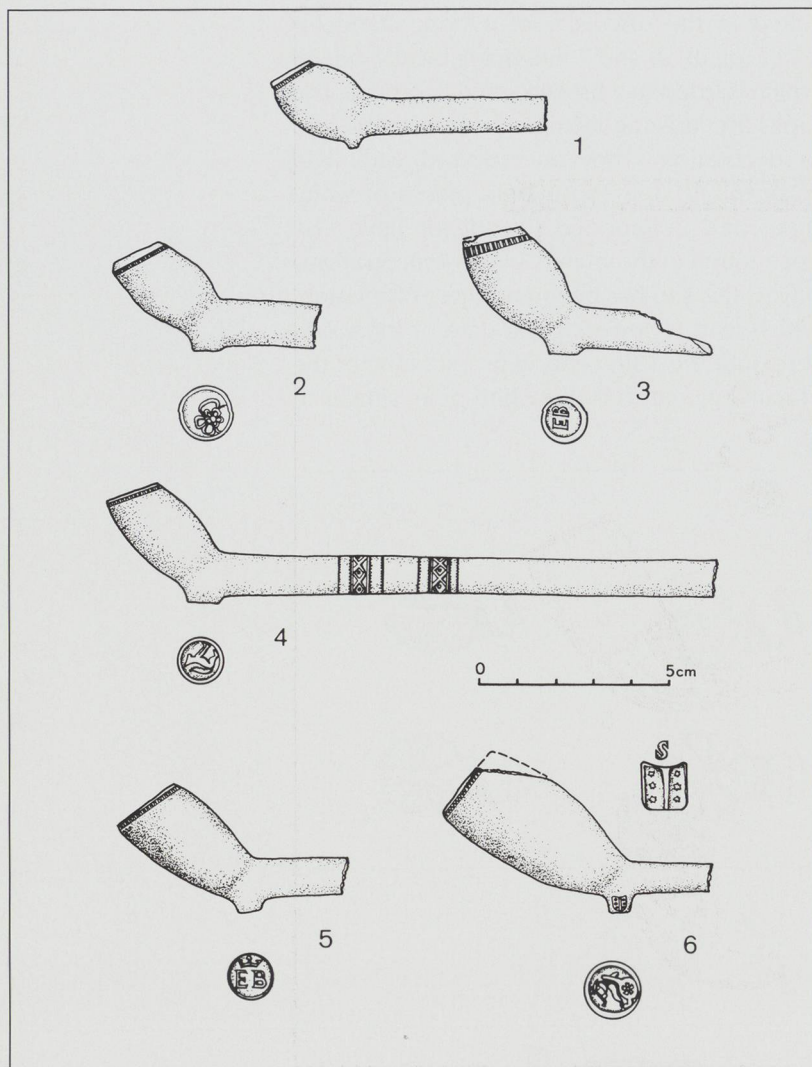


Plate II: Imported white clay pipes from England and the Netherlands, 17th – middle of the 18th century (drawn by G. Zborowska).

the piece illustrated in pl. II, 5, found in the topmost moat fill. The fill precedes the 1.5 m thick levelling layer on which the earlier kiln N° 2 was built.

Imported stemmed kaolinite pipes

Kaolinite, white pipes constitute 65.1% of the entire assemblage of Unit I (Royal Castle cellar), deposited before the mid 18th century (Meyza 1997a, 36 f.), while in Unit II (latrine close to Cracow Gate), dumped before 1820 they constitute 42.9% of the assemblage (Meyza 1999, 16 f.). The earliest imports in Warsaw have not been found in Unit I (pl. II, 1–2). They are datable by comparison to sequence of stamped Dutch pipes to the beginning or first half of the 17th century (Duco 1981, 452).

Their paste is yellowish cream and thus they were either imported from England or made from English clay in the Netherlands. Another type of early pipes was produced by a workshop of Edward Bird in Amsterdam and signed with initials EB (pl. II, 3). Beside the two pieces found in Unit I and others in various town deposits, four were found in the town dump. Pipes from Gouda workshops (pl. II, 4–6) constitute an important group introduced to Warsaw between the second half of the 17th to the mid 18th century. They occurred in Unit I (pl. II, 4, 5) and the service lodgings (pl. II, 6) as well as in substantial numbers in the town. Early occurrence of imported pipes in the strata of the Royal Castle may be related to their use at Wasa dynasty Court. Early pipes are also known from the wreck of the warship 'Wasa', which sunk in 1628 (Cederlund 1980, 256). During the second half of the 18th century number of pipes imported from the Netherlands diminishes and their place is taken by two Prussian manufactories at Rościn (present north-west Poland) and at Zborowskie (south-central Poland). The Rościn workshops directed half of their output to the Polish market, particularly after 1775. This manufactory intentionally imitated Gouda produce (pl. III, 1, 2) (Witkowska 1989, 285; 294). Pipes made in Rościn prevail in Warsaw (pl. III, 1–4), finds produced at Zborowskie (pl. III, 5) turn out rarely. In the Unit II (the latrine near the Cracow Gate) only pipes from Rościn occurred. Their identity was ascertained by comparison with a large group of wasters from the Roficin manufactory.

Imported lüle (chibouk) pipes

Pipes found in Unit I (Castle cellar) include those produced in south-east Europe or in Turkey (pl. IV, 1–4). The earliest example is a grey paste pipe, similar to Hayes' type IV (1980, 5 f.), found together with a Dutch pipe (pl. II, 3) and therefore dating to the eighties of the 17th century. Another pipe, made of cream paste (pl. IV, 3) is close both in shape and size to those found in Greece (Robinson 1983, 275; Robinson 1985, 171), dated to the transition from the 17th to 18th century. This one was also found together with a pipe made in the Netherlands (pl. II, 5). The following pipes from Unit I were made from red clay and

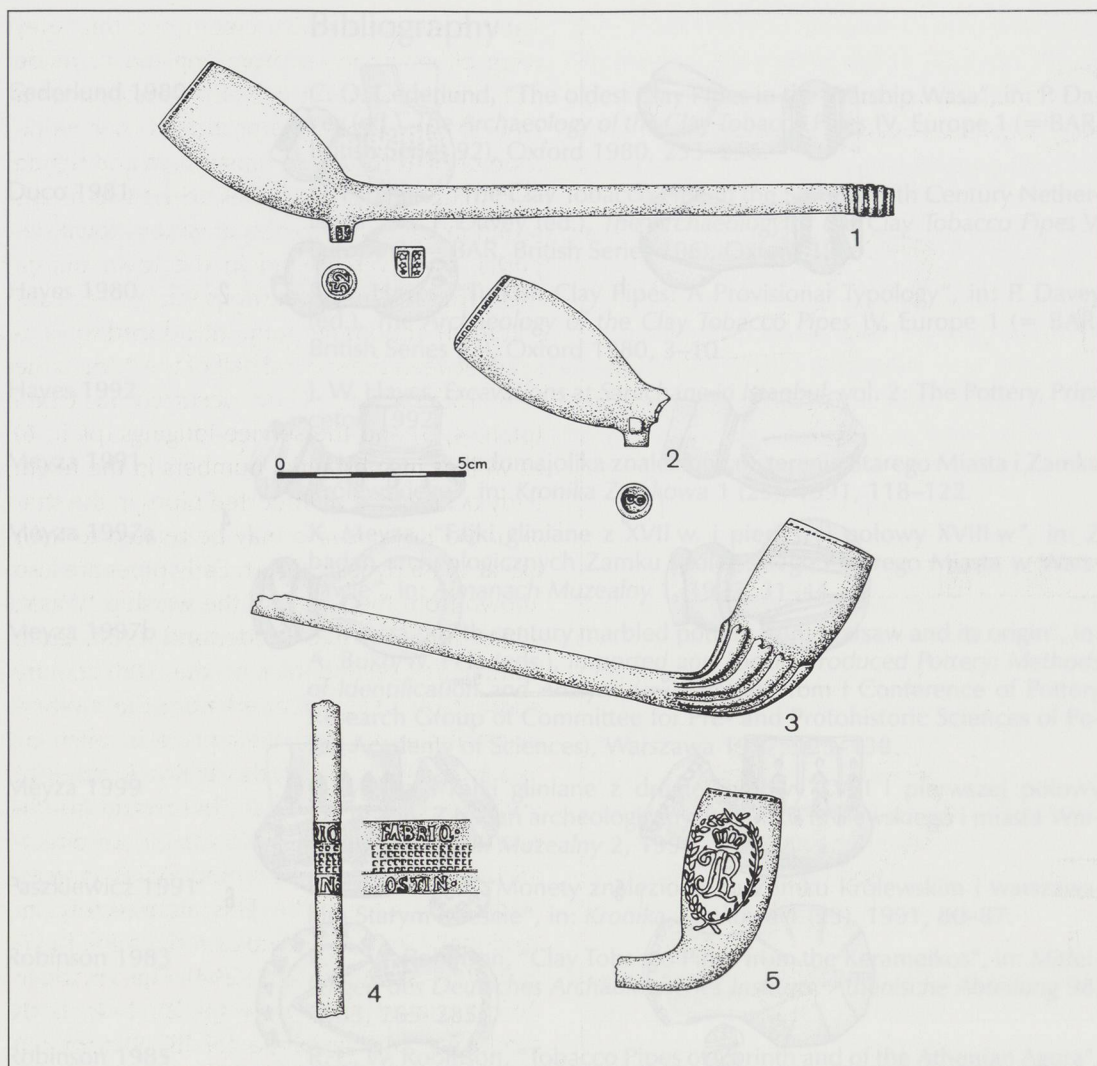


Plate III: Imported white clay pipes from Prussian manufactories, second half of 18th – beginning of the 19th century (drawn by G. Zborowska).

should be dated to the beginning of the 18th century (Meyza 1997a, 39 f.). According to John Hayes (Hayes 1992, 393 f.) these belong to types XXIV and VI of his classification. A stamped signed pipe (pl. IV, 4) was found together with a Dutch pipe with a stamp depicting a seated fox.

In Unit II (close to the Cracow Gate) many lüle belong to types of unidentified origin. One type, however, is characteristic for the Balkan area (Meyza 1999, fig. 9). It has appeared in quantity in Athens (Robinson 1985, 186), Bulgaria and Turkey (Hayes 1980, 7). In Warsaw 6 occurrences of this form were noted (Meyza 1999, 15; 19), one of them signed (pl. IV, 5). The whole assemblage is surely earlier than 1820. In 1823 a new customs tariff was intro-

duced and import of those pipes was superseded by imitations made in Staszów (pl. IV, 6). These were similar in size, shape and clay quality but are stylistically specific and their origin is assured by a trade mark, if the appropriate part of the pipe is preserved.

The finds from Warsaw are only a relatively small sample and therefore it is easy to go too far with conclusions, which have to be built around frequencies of occurrence. It seems possible however to venture the following statement.

Around the middle of the 17th century appear infrequently, but consistently:

First lüle, shapes of which suggest that they were produced in Poland, secondly several examples of pipes signed by Edward Bird's work-

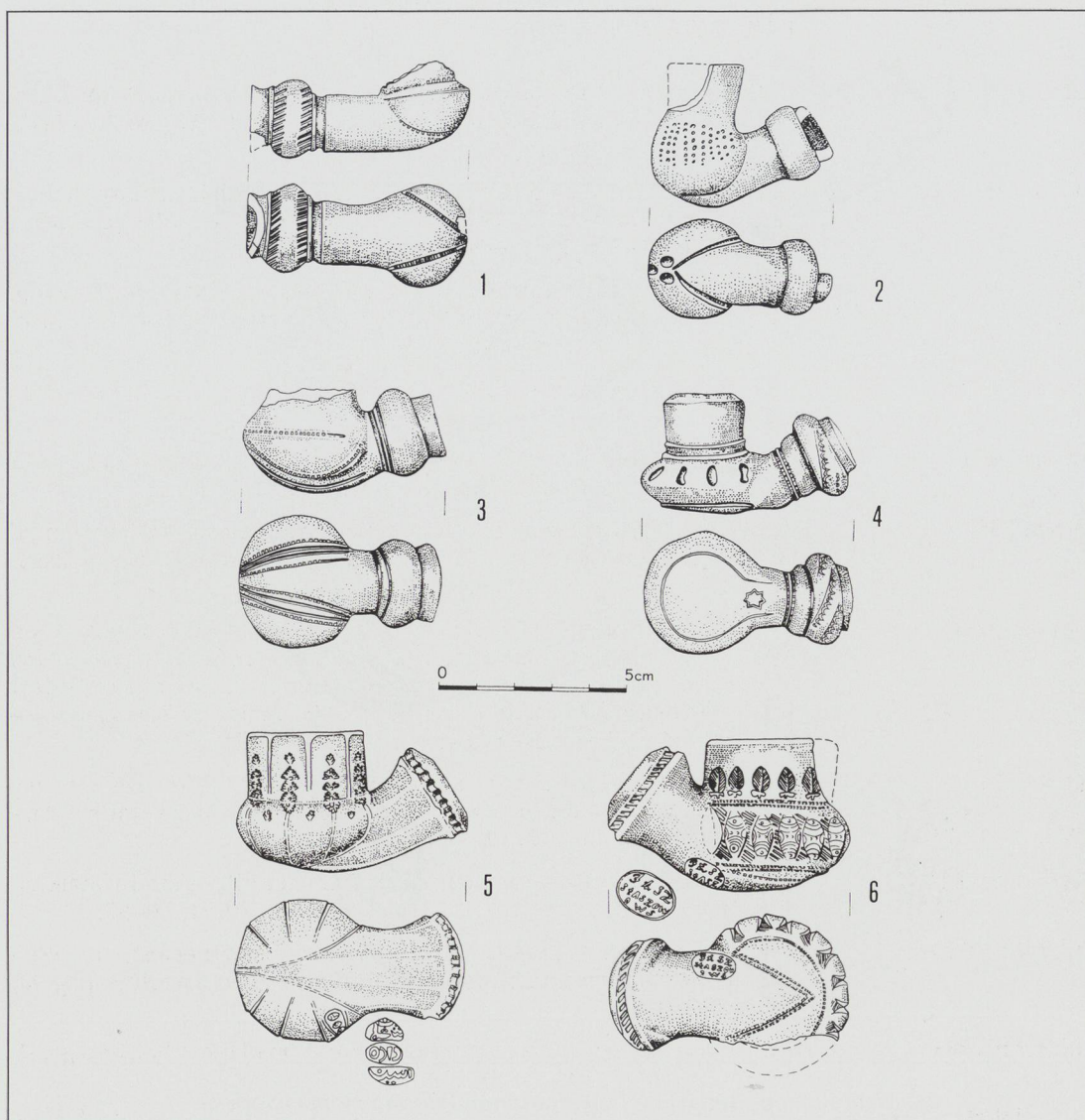


Plate IV: Imported lüle pipes from the Balkans and Turkey, second half of the 17th – the middle of the 18th century (1–4) and the beginning of the 19th century (5), imitations made in Poland (6) (drawn by U. Skwara).

shop in Amsterdam. Somewhat later only, in the eighties, isolated examples of various types of lüle arrive from Turkey and the Balkans. This reflects probably that at the very beginning the Balkan lüle were only a rarity, probably ac-

quired as private booty or purchase. This was followed by rapid launching of their imitation. The scale of lüle imports did not become substantial before the 19th century and even then only specific types were being traded.

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