

The Zelovo pipe – an autochthonous Croatian product

- After the Morean War emigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina settled in the village of Zelovo, 15 km southwest of Sinj, and started to produce clay pipes. Because of their originality the pipes were eventually grouped into one of the four variants of the so-called Eastern pipe. The Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj highlighted this product in the exhibition *Pipes and the Beginnings of the Tobacco Industry in Cetinska Krajina*, held between 1 August and 30 October 2013.

Key words: clay pipes, pipes, Zelovo

INTRODUCTION

Pipes were for a long time neglected finds in archaeological exploration and were considered as part of ethnology. Although international studies of pipes are of older date, until recently in Croatian archaeology there was no particular interest in this part of modern age archaeology. The first analyses of pipes are found in the ethnological studies of Božidar Širola (Širola 1934: 27-37). More detailed archaeological descriptions of pipes are found in studies by Zdenko Brusić (Brusić 1934: 473-490) and, more recently, Luka Bekić (Bekić 2000: 249-279), Karla Gusar (Gusar 2008: 135-153; 2009: 213-222), Branka Milošević and Nikolina Topić (Milošević-Topić 2011: 297-328) and Elvin Zejnilhodžić (Zejnilhodžić 2012: 163-191). Recent exhibitions dedicated to the theme also contributed substantially to the scientific outreach of this interesting object¹. This article is also related to the catalogue of the Exhibition staged in the Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj. It attempts to provide answers to questions such as the origin, development, dating and typisation of the Zelovo pipes, and expand the horizon in the study of this unique Croatian product.

1 *Pipes and the Beginnings of the Tobacco Industry in Cetinska Krajina*, authored by Daria Brković and Danijela Petričević, Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj, August-October 2013. *On Tobacco and Pipes*, authored by Tatjana Kolak, Lika Museum in Gospić, November 2013. *Smoke The Tobacco Story*, authored by Marija Živković, Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, January 2015.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After the so-called Morean War between the Holy League and the Ottoman Empire, the Venetian Republic and Cetinska Krajina emerged as victors. In other words, in 1686 the *Provveditore Generale* (Governor-General) Girolamo Cornaro succeeded in liberating Sinj and its immediate environs. The Karlowitz Peace Treaty in 1699 determined the so-called new acquisition (*acquisto nuovo*). The border, the so-called *Linea Grimani*, named after the *Provveditore Generale* Francesco Grimani, spread into the interior to the line Potrvavlje – Hrvace - Mrgude – Jasensko – Glavice – Mandačeva Glavica – Turjaci – Trilj to the benefit of the Venetian Republic (Vrgoč 2010: 48). Having conquered the territory, the Venetian authorities first had to deal with the problem of scarce population. The native population had fled before the Turkish onslaught, while the newcomers, Muslim settlers, retreated to Bosnia after the liberation of Sinj. The Venetians managed to resolve the problem by bringing in Christian population from neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. There were no particular difficulties in the realisation of the plan because the situation in Bosnia was chaotic. The ever higher state and war taxes imposed by the Ottoman authorities, looting, hunger and the plague caused revolts of the non-Muslim population, instigated by the Venetian authorities. An example of Venetian incitement is mentioned in the *bujruldija* (order) of the Bosnian Vizier to the Jajce Captain Ibrahimaga, stating that the commander of Zadar had sent his man to Zmijan in order to stir up mutiny among the lower-class Christian Turkish subjects (*rayah*) along the border (Sokolović 1943: 19).

These migrations increased the population of Zelovo, situated on the northeastern slopes of Mount Svilaja along the *Linea Grimani*². The walls of the Zelovo fort (*Jukića Gradina*) from Illyrian times were reinforced in the period, and the fort was adapted for a Venetian guardhouse. The Busovača Hill, southwest of the village, served the same purpose. During the so-called Small Venetian-Austrian-Turkish War (1716-1718), Venice spread its territory eastwards and won the so-called *latest acquisition* (*acquisto novissimo*). The border with the Ottoman Empire, the so-called *Linea Mocenigo*, named after the *Provveditore Generale* Alvise Mocenigo, moved to the present-day border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Venetian guardhouses in Zelovo were no longer necessary and were abandoned as military facilities; their remains are still visible.

According to land registry records of 1709, the Delaš, Domazet and Jukić families lived in the village of Zelovo. The Delaš family came from Livno, and the Domazets from Mostarsko Blato. The Jukić family had settled in Zelovo somewhat earlier or had already lived in the area. That is, the surname Jukić is mentioned somewhat earlier than that of Domazet and Delaš. In 1693 *harambaša*³ Šimun Jukić was given 40 *kanaps*⁴ of land and the tower (the so-called Jukića Gradina [fort]) with a well. On 3 June 1698 Alvise Mocenigo, *Provveditore Generale* of Dalmatia, confirmed his title to the land (Soldo 1989: 114).

2 Zelovo (Sinjsko) and not Zelovo (Sutinsko), the latter being situated on the southeastern slopes of Mount Svilaja.

3 (hist.) brigand captain; during Venetian rule, village headman.

4 *kanap* = *campo padovano*, approx. 3800 sq. m.

ZELOVO AND PIPE PRODUCTION

After settling in the new territory, the villagers of Zelovo began to produce clay pipes. They had already become familiar, in their former homeland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the smoking of tobacco in pipes of the Turkish type. In Zelovo they tried to imitate the production of Turkish pipes, but their efforts were not quite successful. The probable reason was the fact that craftsmen, including pipe-makers, in the Ottoman Empire were mainly Muslims. Although Christians were not forbidden to pursue a trade, regulations made this rather difficult, and they mainly found a source of living in farming or marginalised urban jobs (Jurin-Starčević 2006: 142). It is no wonder, therefore, that the process of pipe production was relatively unknown to the new, Christian inhabitants of Zelovo. While attempting to imitate Turkish pipes they developed their own style and created a special variant of the Eastern pipe. This original domestic system became the main source of income for the villagers of (Sinjsko) Zelovo in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (Fig. 1/p. 178).

However, production apparently started in the first half of the 18th century, i.e., immediately after arrival in the new area. This claim is maybe best confirmed by archaeological finds round the Nutjak fort near Trilj (Tabak-Petričević-Alduk 2010: 435). In other words the finds are dated no later than the mid-18th century,⁵ and include a Zelovo type pipe. The Nutjak fort was abandoned in the mid-18th century and was not used again. The strategic function was taken over by a smaller Venetian fortification, the so-called *Guardia*, situated in the present-day village of Gardun overlooking Trilj. A small quantity of Zelovo type pipes was also discovered at Gardun (Bekić 2000: 258).

Only a fragment of a Zelovo pipe shank was found in the old Sinj fort.⁶ The pipe had a shank decorated with a plastic zigzag line. On the ring of the shank there was a mortise with remains of the wire of the system used to close the bowl. The fragment is dated in the 19th century.⁷

Several Zelovo type pipes were discovered at Kwartiri – Alkarski Dvori in Sinj; these are the so-called *delašice*, with a reticular motif, dated in the 19th century.⁸ Other pipes in the Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj were fished from the rivers Cetina and Rumin.

In addition to Cetinska Krajina, clay pipes have been discovered on sites from Zadar (Gusar 2008: 146) to Dubrovnik and Split (Gusar 2009: 216).

In the late 19th century the pipes were also marketed in Trieste by street vendors from Zelovo and Imotski.⁹

5 The same dating was also confirmed by material found during the explorations at Nutjak in the archaeological explorations in 2010 and 2011. We are grateful to Angela Tabak, Director of the Trilj Museum, for this information. The material gained through these explorations has not been published.

6 Cetinska Krajina Museum, Sinj (inv. MCK-7621).

7 Protective archaeological explorations were carried out by the Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj after 2004 within the scope of the *Programme of Preservation and Reconstruction of the Sinj Fort Walls* Librenjak-Čerina-Župić 2005: 393-396; Librenjak-Čerina 2006: 432-433; Librenjak-Brković-Čerina 2009: 585-587; Librenjak-Čerina 2010: 619-621.

8 Protective archaeological explorations were carried out by the Cetinska Krajina Museum in Sinj in 2007 and 2008. Librenjak 2007: 484-488; Librenjak 2008: 23-28.

9 According to the information provided by Mirko Domazet of Zelovo, grandson of the hawkler Stipan Domazet.

Pipe production in Zelovo was especially intensive because it was fairly lucrative. In the Delaši hamlet they were produced by the family of Ivan Delaš, in the Domazeti hamlet by the families of Stipan and Marko Domazet, and in the hamlet of Jukići by the families of Ante, Stipan and Jure Jukić. There are no reliable data on which family started producing pipes first. The answer to this question may be traced to the name of the basic type of the Zelovo pipe, *delašica*, produced by all the mentioned families. The origins of the Delaš family also contribute to this supposition. As already mentioned, they came from the area of Livno. Livno was the only town in the immediate area with all the characteristics of a *seher* (large town) although it was formally a *kasaba* (small provincial town). Livno was a town with bustling handicrafts and trade, and the members of the Delaš family could very early on become familiar with the production of Turkish pipes. The Jukić family did not fit into this combination because they were indigenous farmers.¹⁰ As for the Domazets, they came from Mostarsko Blato, also a farming area.

PIPE TYPOLOGY

In terms of form European clay pipes are divided into the Eastern and Western types. The Western pipe is made of one part and consists of a small bowl and a long shank. In addition to form, pipes of this type are also distinguished by the material of which they were made, i.e., white clay (Robinson 1985: 153).

Pipes of the Eastern type are mainly made of reddish clay, and have a bowl, shank and mouthpiece. There are four variants of the type: the Italian, Austro-Hungarian, Turkish and the Zelovo type (Gusar 2008: 137).

The Zelovo pipe is closely related to the Turkish *chibouk* pipe.¹¹ Its bowl is ball-shaped and it has a hole connecting it to the shank. The fluted mortise at the end of the shank served to introduce the copper wire of the bowl closure system (Drawing No. 1/p. 180). Almost all Zelovo pipes had this system. The mandatory use of the bowl closure system in Austria was enforced by law in 1788 because of too many fires (Tonković 2008: 8). It would be difficult to say to which extent this legal provision was related to the closure system on Zelovo pipes because Austria only took over control of this territory after the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797. However, in the Culture&History Collection of the Cetinska Krajina Museum there are moulds used for producing Zelovo pipes with no mortise on the shank, i.e., no system for bowl and shank closure. These moulds are assumed to be part of the earliest moulds in the first half of the 18th century.¹² This may warrant the conclusion that the earliest pipes had no closure systems, and that later products were made exclusively with such a system.

The pipes were produced from a special kind of local clay, the so-called *gnjilo*, found on the nearby Busovača hill. The clay was of good quality and pliant. It was crushed in

10 The name Jukić derives from the Greek *georgius*, farmer.

11 In Cetinska Krajina they still use the words *čibušenje* or *čibučenje* („chibouking“) for „smoking.“

12 Cetinska Krajina Museum, Sinj (inv. MCK-EZ-182).

basins carved in stone blocks and mixed with water. The prepared mixture was placed in oiled brass moulds placed on a wooden base (*tereže*). The moulds had small holes through which the clay was tamped with wooden sticks until it adhered perfectly to the mould wall. The mould was then pressed by *menđule* (Fig. 2/p. 178), a wooden vise-like implement for mould tightening, in order to additionally promote clay adherence. While the clay was still in the mould, holes were drilled in the bowl and the shank. The pipe was then dried and baked in an outdoor kiln. The “kiln” was a hole in the ground filled with a faggot of sticks. A metal grate with pipes was placed over the hole, and the whole was covered with a stone mound. After cooling the pipe was ready for use.

The dating of pipes in terms of form as in Turkish pipes is not applicable to Zelovo pipes. Zelovo pipes come in four basic forms: pipes with a ball-shaped bowl and a bevelled rim; pipes with a ball-shaped bowl and a straight rim; pipes with a bowl resembling a human head; and pipes with a bowl in the form of a flower.

The decorations are geometrical, ribbed, plant and anthropomorphic. The lower part of the bowl was usually decorated while the top carried no decorations because of the closure system. In most cases the shank was not decorated, although decorated specimens can also be found. The decorations were made by using a mould but additional operations were also used, e.g., scoring of reticular motifs or zigzag lines. Zelovo pipes can be dated exclusively by their decorations because they changed over time following European trends.

Geometrical decorations are the oldest. They include primarily reticular decorations probably taken over from 17th century Turkish pipes such as found in the old Sinj fort.

On Turkish type specimens the reticular motif was found mainly on the shank; on Zelovo pipes it was most often carved on the lower part of the bowl. There are several variants of the reticular motif.

Pipes with such decorations are also called *delašice* (Fig. 3/p. 179). These are typical pipes of the Zelovo type, the production of which was sustained continuously from the start to the closing of the family businesses. Large and small *delašica* pipes were commonly used.

Other geometrical motifs include alternate triangles making up a zigzag band, and parallel slanting or straight vertically or horizontally laid lines.

Ribbed decorations are found in three variants: parallel ribs along the bowl and shank; ribs on the bowl or shank; ribbed decorations combined with plant or geometrical decorations.

Plant motifs in the form of tendrils, flowers etc. are fairly stylised and very reminiscent of decorations on 19th century Turkish pipes. This is borne out by Turkish pipes found at Kvartiri – Alkarski Dvori in Sinj, dating from the 19th century, i.e., from the period when Austro-Hungarian troops were quartered in the barracks. Turkish pipes were obviously popular among the soldiers, and the masters of Zelovo adroitly took advantage of the fact and adapted their product to the new trends which maintaining the traditional style and form. Plant motifs were carved both on the bowl and on the

shank, often in combination with other motifs. In Imotska Krajina they also started to decorate Zelovo pipes in the production of a pipe called *zagoždanka* (Tonković 2008: 3). Contacts between Cetinska Krajina and Imotska Krajina were intensive, and the similarity is not surprising.

In the 19th century the masters of Zelovo also started to imitate pipes of the Austro-Hungarian type. A Zelovo type pipe with a ball-shaped bowl decorated with parallel ribs and, in-between, point-like decorations resembling granulation, was discovered at Kwartiri.¹³ Such decorations are also found in pipes of Austro-Hungarian type produced by an unknown master and found in Dubrovnik (Milošević-Topić 2011: 313).

A pipe (Fig. 4/p. 179) has a bowl in the form of a moustached man represents an Austro-Hungarian soldier. Similar figures are also found on pipes of the *Chioggia* type (Bekić 2000: 254), and they were probably produced under Italian influence. There are two variants of such pipes – with a plant motif on the shank and without it.

In addition to the pipe with a soldier-head bowl, there is also a pipe bowl with the image of Emperor Francis Joseph. All the types of such pipes date from the 19th century.

The anthropomorphic form also appears as a decoration of the ball-shaped bowl in two variants: in combination with a reticular motif and in combination with a plant motif.

Quite a few Zelovo pipes bear the master's stamp in the form of initials: *D-*, *MD*, *ISD*, *AD. JJ...* The stamp and the year of production are found on the shank. The oldest mould – that of master Stipan Domazet – dates from 1801 (Fig. 5/p. 179).¹⁴

Along with pipe-making, the masters of Zelovo also produced wooden *kamishes* (*chibouks*) [long stems; Turkish *kamish* = *reed*] attached to the shank. The wood primarily used for production was mahaleb cherry; maple and hazelnut could also be used. Several kinds and dimensions were produced: large, small, straight, quarter bent, half bent etc., the original form of the twig was also often used. Straight stems were mainly used because of easier maintenance and cleaning. In the production of quarter and half bent stems the wood was first softened by heat treatment, and then formed in special moulds, the so-called *krivače* (Fig. 6/p. 180). The bark was removed in most cases, although there are specimens with fully or partly removed bark. Partial bark removal facilitated the creation of nice patterns; sometimes, especially later, the stems could also be painted.

Zelovo pipes were sold throughout Dalmatia and Herzegovina, and only small quantities were sold in other parts of Croatia because they were not marketed in an organised way. Namely, the producers themselves sold them in market-places and fairs (*derneks*). This limited trade as well as production. However, even with such constraints the pipes reached their users, as witnessed by folk songs about the village of Zelovo sung in Cetinska Krajina and related to the production of pipes and long stems:

Moja mala u Zelovu živi, lulu puši i kamiše krivi.

13 Property of the Alka Knights Society (MCK-POH-64).

14 Today the mould is owned by Ivan Delaš of Zelovo, who has revived this traditional craft.

[My girlfriend lives in Zelovo, smokes a pipe and bends stems]

Mala moja sa Zelova Đula, ćaća joj je ministar od lula.

[My girlfriend Đula lives in Zelovo, and her father is the pipe minister]

The pipes were transported on donkeys to *Pijaca*, the main square in Sinj, where a special place was reserved for the pipe-traders of Zelovo.¹⁵ The following song by Duje Manzano was popular in Sinj in 1878:

Masovčića di je kula,

Ondje viču: evo lula

[There, by the Masovčić Tower,

They shout: the pipes are there] (Dalbello 1996: 63).

The family crafts were known far and wide, which is also borne out by the following fact: in the Second World War German soldiers came to Zelovo and looked for the pipe factory, intending to put the machines in the plant to military use.¹⁶

In line with Western trends, i.e., with the transition from pipe smoking to cigarette smoking in the mid-20th century, habits in the East also changed, and the last pipe-maker in Istanbul closed his workshop in 1929 (Robinson 1985: 152). The Zelovo pipe-makers found themselves in an unenviable position because pipe-making was their main source of living. However, they soon coped with the situation and adapted to new circumstances by producing wooden cigarette holders (*cigaršpici*, *cigale*).

The production of cigarette holders in Zelovo was a mass effort and turned into an important social gathering. Almost every home engaged in the activity known as *diljanje*. Since cigarette holders brought in little money, large quantities had to be produced. This was a painstaking and laborious job – not so much because of the difficulties involved but because it was performed mainly at night, after the completion of household chores. The activity included almost all the villagers, from children to old people. In order to cope with work in such difficult conditions, song proved to be quite useful, and amorous encounters were also possible. Mahaleb cherry and hazel nut were the best kinds of wood. The tools used to work the wood included penknives, small pieces of glass and the *first* and the *last gimlet* (Fig. 7/p. 179). The first gimlet was used to drill the initial hole, and the rest of the pith was removed by the somewhat larger last gimlet. Penknives and pieces of glass were used to work the outer side. The bark was never removed.

The production and marketing of cigarette holders is perhaps the most interesting in terms of organisation. That is, the exclusive producers were the families Domazet, Delaš and Jukić, while the members of the Gabrić family engaged in their sales. In this way the village functioned like a small cooperative. The villagers of Zelovo sold their products throughout Croatia, but also beyond, all the way to Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Belgrade and Trieste.

15 The Zelovo pipe-makers sold their clay pipes in front of the Masovčić House, opposite the entrance to the Church of the Miraculous Our Lady of Sinj.

16 Confirmed by living people who witnessed the event.

CONCLUSION

As already mentioned, Zelovo pipes belong to one of the four variants of pipes of the Eastern type. They are related to Turkish pipes, which they copied. Their production was started by the new inhabitants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, then part of the Ottoman Empire, who settled in Zelovo. The Zelovo pipe-makers followed the European trends in pipe-making, which they got to know by selling their own products on fairs, and adapted the latter in terms of decorations. Because of this their product always followed the fashion and it was always a low cost item for most of the people. Zelovo pipes can only be dated in terms of decoration.

This text intends to pave the way for future studies of this autochthonous Croatian product, primarily with regard to the beginning of its production and development, as well as to sales channels and successful competition in the pipe-rich market.

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