

# Black Earthenware Clay Pipe

## ORIGINS

*Date:* Late 1800's

*Place:* Africa, Country or Region Unknown

*Materials:* Clay Mold



Caption

*Donated*

*By:* Unknown

## DESCRIPTION

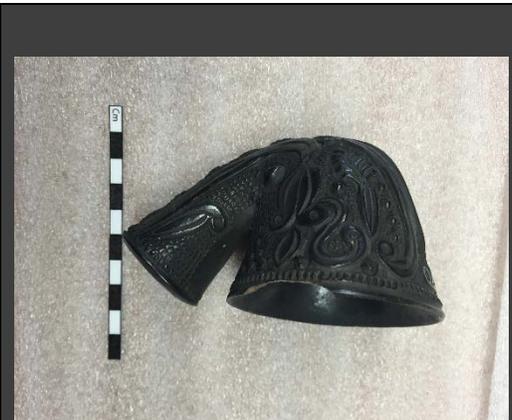
This piece can be described as a black earthen ware clay pipe which is inspired primarily by European art of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century time period. The pipe weighs in at 147 grams and was presumably used more as a decorative piece than for recreational use. Its length is  $4\frac{3}{4}$  cm, width of 3 cm on the larger side and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cm on the smaller side. The diameter for where the tobacco would be placed is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  and the smaller hole is  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cm. Although there is a small chip on the larger side, nothing could take away from the beautiful detail surrounded by this mold. This piece has a complex scale like theme to it which can best be described as a nature inspired flow of artwork.



View from above



View from below



View from the side

## CULTURE

### Description:

These types of pipes were being made in every European town and city until 1720 when the health risks in relation to smoking pipes became public knowledge. Their popularity eventually came back during industrial revival and population growth. The designs amongst these types of clay pipes range significantly from plants and animals to royal events and mythological characters, and often times symbolize the geography of the region it was made. Such pieces made their way along trade routes from Europe to Africa and Northern America. Today we can use the knowledge of these pipes to determine when Native American groups were displaced from their eastern homelands based on what European style pipes they used. We can also see the influence their design had on the making of pipes in the African continent, which vary in size much more than European-made pipes. African pipes were important during the late 1800's because they symbolized the cultural acceptance of smoking. Whether looking at West African archaeological excavation sites in Ghana all the way to the ruins of Savi in today's Benin, there is a strong resemblance in the kinds of pipes they made. It's just as likely to find a small pipe as it is a larger one in the same excavation site where as European pipes are typically smaller and lighter in color and vary much less in size.



*Caption:* Beautiful designs cover the sides of the pipe bowl

**Use within Culture:**

These styles of pipes were used by African people as European-influenced status symbols. This pipe was most likely not used for smoking, specifically because of its condition, size, and weight. The earthen design resembles the terrain and landscape of the region it was made in. This was important to who it belonged to because it symbolized where they came from and in a sense who they were. This pipe could have belonged to an African of high status in society who was thrown into the slave trade and took this along as their last memory of home or it may have been collected in Africa. It is not identifiably clear where exactly this piece was made in Africa or how it ended up in the Cazenovia Library, however it has a story to tell like any other artifact and is as beautiful as any European inspired pip should be.

**Report written by:** Daniel R. Crozier