



## ČOPOQ

**ČOPOQ, ČEPOQ** (< Turk. *čobuq* < Pers. *čūbak* “wood” < Mid. Pers. *čōbag* “wand, arrowshaft,” *čōb* “wood, stick”), a long-stemmed pipe with a small bowl for smoking tobacco, distinct from the *ḡ/qalyān*, or water pipe. Tobacco was reportedly introduced to Persia by the Portuguese in 999/1590-91 (Pūr-e Dāwūd, pp. 199, 212-13), during the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I (996-1038/1584-1629), who was generally opposed to it and eventually made trade in tobacco and the use of it illegal (see [dokānīyāt](#)). Anyone caught smoking the *čopoq* was to lose his nose and lips. The shah is said to have had one merchant burned at the stake for approaching the royal camp with loads of tobacco. Nevertheless, in 1028/1619 the Mughal ambassador Kān-e ‘Alam Mīrzā Barkordār Khan, was permitted to smoke his *čopoq* in the shah’s presence (Falsafī, pp. 278-82). Despite Shah ‘Abbās’ disapproval, the *čopoq* and *ḡalyān* soon became important accessories to Persian life. According to Jean de Thévenot, “People of Quality . . . at Noon return home, where they spend the rest of the day in smoaking Tobacco. If they pay a visit to any of their Friends, all their Exercise is, smoaking of Tobacco” (II, p. 90). This observation was confirmed by other contemporary authors (Chardin, III, p. 306; Meier-Lemgo, p. 41; Fryer, II, p. 210, III, p. 34; Hanway, I, p. 171; cf. Binning, I, p. 323). Men smoked not only at home but also in [coffeehouses](#) and other public places. Important personages had special servants called *čopoqdār*, *ḡalyāndār*, or *ābdār*, who carried and prepared their pipes, even when they were out riding. Itinerant sellers of water pipes (*ḡalyānforūš-e dawragard*) also sold smokes to those who could not afford servants to carry their pipes (Kasrawī, p. 205; Kaempfer, p. 48; cf. Polak, II, p. 258).



Aḥmad Kasrawī believed that use of the Turkish word *tūtūn* (tobacco, lit. “smoke”) and the long-stemmed Ottoman *čopoq* in Persia are proof that the practice of smoking had been imported from Turkey (p. 208). He did not realize that early European pipes were long-stemmed as well. In fact, Adam Olearius defined the *čopoq* as “a pipe like ours” (p. 598). Mullahs used extremely long versions of the *čopoq*, which allowed them to sit up straight and maintain their dignity while the bowls of their pipes rested on the ground (Kasrawī, p. 212). Rich people spent large amounts of money on their *čopoqs*, which, in the 19th century, might be made of gold and silver, often studded with jewels, especially turquoises (Polak, II, p. 258). Commoners smoked simple wooden *čopoqs* (Semsār). Tobacco was sifted to rid it of stems and other high-nicotine parts that smelled strongly when burned; these parts were smoked by the poorer classes. It appears that when tobacco was first introduced into Persia the *čopoq* was used exclusively and that the more complex *ḡalyān* was later invented there. A Persian physician in India, Abu’l-Faḥ Gilānī, was said to have been the first to pass the smoke of tobacco through a bowl of water to purify and cool it (Elgood, 1970, p. 41). The *ḡalyān* became the preferred pipe for most Persians, who did not care for strong tobacco like *tanbākū-ye engelīsī*, actually Brazilian tobacco introduced by the English in the form of cigars (Chardin, III, p. 302). The *čopoq* did, however, remain in use among the poor, especially in northwestern Persia.

In modern times the Lurs in particular prefer the *čopoq*, which can consist of either an earthenware or metal bowl attached to a wooden stem or, more commonly, a block of dried mud in which bowl and tube have been hollowed out (*čopoq-e gelī*, *koška*). A fairly coarse type of *tanbākū* is powdered between the palms of the hands before use in the *čopoq* (Digard, pp. 202-04, figs. 159-61).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

R. Binning, *A Journey of Two Year’s Travel in Persia . . .*, 2 vols., London, 1857.

J. Chardin, *Voyages en Perse*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols., Paris, 1810.

J.-P. Digard, *Techniques des nomades baxtyāri d’Iran*, Paris and Cambridge,



1981.

C. Elgood, *Safavid Medical Practice*, London, 1970.

N. Falsafī, *Zendagānī-e Šāh ‘Abbās-e awwal II*, Tehran, 1334 Š./1956.

J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia*, London, 1909.

J. Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea*, 2 vols., London, 1753.

A. Kasrawī, “Tārīkča-ye čopoq wa ġalyān,” in Y. Dōkā’, ed., *Kārvand-e Kasrawī*, Tehran, 1352 Š./1973, pp. 201-19.

K. Meier-Lemgo, ed., *Die Reisetagebücher E. Kaempfers*, Wiesbaden, 1968.

A. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung der Muscowitischen und Persischen Reyse*, Schleswig, 1656; repr. Tübingen, 1971.

E. Pūr-e Dāwūd, *Hormazd-nāma*, Tehran, 1331 Š./1953.

M.-Ḥ. Semsār, “Naẓar-ī be peydāyeš-e ġalyān wa čopoq dar Īrān,” *Honar o mardom*, N.S. 17, 1342 Š./1963, pp. 14-25.

Idem, “L’apparition du narghileh et de la chibouque,” *Objets et mondes* 11, 1971, pp. 82-94.

J. de Thévenot, *The Travels of Mons. Thevenot*, 3 vols. in 1, London, 1686; repr. Westmead, U.K., 1970.

C. J. Wills, *The Land of the Lion and the Sun*, London, 1891.

(Willem Floor)