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Clay Tobacco Pipes and Coffee Cup Sherds in the Archaeology of the Middle East: Artifacts of Social Tensions from the Ottoman Past

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Nearly all discussion in historical archaeology exploring issues of consumption and commodities is focused on the Euro-American world. This paper contributes data from archaeological investigations in the Middle East for exploring modern consumption. Commodities of pleasure, such as tobacco and coffee, entered Middle Eastern social life after the fifteenth century and greatly impacted the cultural landscape of the Middle East, entangling the peoples of the region into larger socio-political arenas. Examples from provincial corners of the Ottoman Empire illustrate the potential of historical archaeology for uncovering the material self-definition of peoples in the Middle East and for breaking down perceived divisions between components of the modern world.

KEY WORDS: commodities; Ottoman Empire; tobacco; coffee.

INTRODUCTION

During excavations in Istanbul, John W. Hayes (1992) uncovered several thousand clay tobacco pipe bowls. From the remains of a shipwreck on the floor of the Red Sea, Cheryl Ward (n.d.) recovered over 540 complete and several hundred partial Chinese porcelains along with still uncounted numbers of clay tobacco pipes. A survey of a rural area of Israel similarly brought forward large numbers of such artifacts (Baram, 1996, pp. 227–233). These two classes of objects, dating over several centuries, have been found in archaeological excavations from the Balkans through the Middle East. They have often been found in association with each other (see, for example, Ben Dov's [1982] excavations outside of the south

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wall of Jerusalem). As archaeological artifacts, until recently, they were avoided and ignored. Now a growing corpus of studies (e.g., Baram and Carroll, n.d.; Simpson, n.d.) are documenting, cataloguing, and analyzing these artifacts of the modern Middle East.

As part of an historical archaeology of the modern world (see Paynter, 1988; Orser, 1996), these objects have the potential for illustrating aspects of social and historical change for the Ottoman Empire. That empire, which reigned for six centuries, set the foundations for ethnic and national identities and polities of the twentieth century eastern Mediterranean. While understandings of the empire have been undergoing historiographic transformations (e.g., Abou-el-Haj, 1991; Kafadar, 1995), the archaeology of the empire lags behind. This article presents an interpretation of the growing corpus of archaeological evidence to provide greater social and global context for the dynamics of change in the region. The larger goal of examining the material culture of the Ottoman centuries is to challenge primordialist conceptualizations of Middle Eastern identities with a contingent anthropological understanding of the roots of the present.

What can porcelain sherds and clay tobacco pipes tell us about social change and identity in the Ottoman Empire? By avoiding or negating the Ottoman cen- turies, social identities are traced from the present to the deep past. Rather than examining the historical and contingent development and complexities of social identities, a timelessness is created with this gap in time. Even if the Ottoman centuries are included in analyses, passivity is assumed in traditional understand- ings of the era. Westernization is typically understood as the driving force for the transformation of the region in the nineteenth century, with the triumph of the West precipitating the collapse and dissolution of the empire in the aftermath of the First World War (e.g., Kinross, 1977). The dominant scholarly approach em- ploys Western goods to illustrate the subordinate position of the Middle East in relation to the West (e.g., Lewis, 1995; Kark, 1995). I argue that the archaeological evidence embodies a more dynamic process of change for the region over the last several centuries. The clay tobacco pipes and porcelain sherds aid in building this perspective on change for the region. This approach follows a suggestion from Kohl (1989): the archaeology of the Ottoman Empire can take the discourse of archaeology, which has been used to negate the achievements of modern Middle Eastern peoples (Silberman, n.d.) and use the methods of the discipline to aid us in rethinking the impact of colonialism and imperialism.

Rather than conceptualizing the artifacts of the modern period as simply the reflection of the West in the Middle East, the consumption of goods can illustrate "creative variants of social processes based around the possession and use of commodities" (Miller, 1995, p. 144). That agency was at work during the Ottoman centuries, encouraging the acceptance of the new commodities. The large-scale processes included Westernization (or more properly, Western Europeanization), centralization, and the separation of identities into nationalities. Those trends over

the Ottoman centuries, especially as they relate to issues of modernity and identity, have been receiving illumination by Ottoman historians (e.g., Wheatcroft, 1993; Abou-el-Haj, 1995; Kafadar, 1995). With the critique of the "decay and decline" hypothesis for the Ottoman Empire (e.g., Islamoglu and Keyder, 1977), localized studies have brought out the social complexities and social tensions in the cities of the empire (see Marcus, 1989, for Aleppo; Goffman, 1990, for Izmir). Contextual archaeological interpretations of material culture can help in this project, to rethink the processes of change for the peoples of the region.

PLEASURES OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The archaeological record for the Ottoman centuries contains a wide range of artifacts; clay tobacco pipes and porcelain coffee cup sherds are chosen because of their association with pleasure. They are the material correlations for the "Big Fix" of modernity (Wolf, 1982, p. 310), commodities of pleasure and recreation that gained global popularity after the sixteenth century. For the Middle East, the widespread consumption of coffee and tobacco represents the advent of new social behaviors. Those behaviors appear early in the process that leads to the emergence of the modern world. The consumption of the commodities became embedded into daily life for the inhabitants of the region: the tobacco pipe as a symbol of the Ottoman Empire (Kinross, 1977, p. 329) and coffee as a sign of hospitality (Birnbaum, 1956). These commodities of pleasure exist at the nexus of power and social relationships. Though impacted by global spatial inequalities, the behaviors did not arise because of the West; the social relationships engendered by the commodities can be traced to the transformations in the Middle East during the early Islamic period.

Early Islamic writings describe water and shade as sources of Middle Eastern pleasures. Poetry and painting illustrate the place of running water, shaded parks, and other images of coolness as essential to pleasure (e.g., Blair and Bloom, 1991). These images are not surprising for people who came out of the desert. However, places were not the only sources of pleasure for the people of the Middle East. Excluding alcohol and narcotics, which are prohibited by the Quran, several types of commodities provided pleasure.

One example is embodied by the twelfth century historian Ibn Asakir, who defined pleasure as "eating a banana in the shade of the Dome of the Rock" (Elon, 1989, p. 59). In this early example for a commodity providing pleasure, we can find the nexus of internal and external social dynamics. In the twelfth century, bananas were an innovation for the peoples of the Middle East. A stream of goods flowed from the Indian subcontinent towards southwestern Asia and northern Africa. The movement came with the wave of Islamic conquests from the seventh century onward. The introduction of sugar cane, cotton, spinach, and mangos, along with

bananas created an "agricultural revolution" in the Middle East (Watson, 1983), one that contributed to a social unity in the region under Islamic rule.

The sixteenth century witnessed the start of another transformation, bringing new commodities to the Middle East. That transformation similarly involved external processes intersecting with the internal social dynamics of the Middle East. Not only did the Columbian exchange impact the eastern Mediterranean on financial, economic, and political levels, the consumption of new commodities converged with social changes in the Ottoman Empire.

An ethnographic analogy can illuminate the intersection of consumption and social change in the region. In an important study, Shelagh Weir (1985) examined the intersection of economic life, social bonds, and social status with the spread of *qat* consumption in the highlands of northern Yemen. *Qat*, whose leaves are chewed as a mild stimulant, has been cultivated since the early 1600s in Arabia and the Horn of Africa. Yet its consumption remained confined to small, urban populations. Only in the twentieth century did that change. Weir documents an increase in the consumption of *qat* after 1970 and argues the increased consumption is related to transformations in social stratification. Consumption spread from the small urban elite to nearly three-quarters of the Yemenite population and included both men and women. Though *qat* is addictive, its rapid expansion, Weir argues, is related to the transformations in social and economic life. Those transformations are related to Yemen's increased dependence on wage labor from abroad and external agricultural goods. That led small scale farmers to turn to growing *qat*. With changes in the distribution of wealth and with the decline of traditional social hierarchies, new patterns of social life developed. The social gatherings for *qat* chewing facilitated participation in new social hierarchies and in new discourses on social status (for an analysis of the intersection of *qat* and national identity, see Varisco, 1986).

This new pleasure intersected with economic and social transformations that radiated from both the global and local levels (see also, Cassanelli, 1986). This example of a present-day pleasure provides insights into changing social discourses in times of social and political-economic transformations.

The details for the cultivation of tobacco and coffee in the Ottoman Empire are not as clear as for the above example (see Quataert, 1973). We do know from historians that economic and political dynamics changed, and we can trace the changes in the material culture and attempt to connect the social history and the material history. The sixteenth-century commodities were interconnected with social and economic transformations, though the interconnections are, for the most part, left in the shadows. We know from historical documentation about the use of coffee and tobacco in urban areas; the archaeological record provides the evidence for the spread and embeddedness of the consuming behaviors across all sectors and regions of the empire. As an historical archaeology of Ottoman life, both the historical background and artifacts will be presented to explore the social meanings and implications of the new pleasures.

THE HISTORICAL TRANSITION

In the fifteenth century, the eastern Mediterranean was divided by the remnants of the Byzantine Empire, several independent polities, the Mamluk Empire of Egypt, and the expanding Ottoman Empire. By the early sixteenth century, the Ottomans were conquering all of the Middle East and Southeastern Europe.

In 1516, on the eve of the Ottoman invasion of Syria, the Mamluk leaders in Cairo ordered a ban on all pleasures, specifically wine and hashish (Salmon, 1921). Both are excluded by Quranic law. The ban only illustrates what most of us know: laws that ban goods exist because people are using the substances.

With superior firepower, the Ottoman army was able to sweep through Syria and Egypt (Hourani, 1991, p. 215). The Mamluk leadership of Egypt was removed and a new era begun in the Middle East. Soon afterwards, from the shores of the eastern Mediterranean to the Euphrates and the Tigris to the Danube, Istanbul ruled the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

While the Mamluks sought to remove wine and hashish from the population in the face of Ottoman military might, a century later, other sources of pleasure and recreation were banned by the Sultan. Murad III (1574–1595) banned coffee houses—a policy that was unsuccessful both on the local and imperial levels (Birnbaum, 1956). His successor, Murad IV (1623–1640), in 1633 banned both coffee and tobacco. The trio of tobacco, coffee, and coffeehouses serve as markers of a great cultural change, the political and social unification of the eastern Mediterranean under Istanbul and the start of the modern age in the Middle East.

These commodities and the places to consume them were innovations for the region but also seen as threats to the social order. With war being waged against Persia, insurrections in Yemen, Egypt, and Lebanon (Lewis, 1995, p. 403), the Sultan moved against the local places and commodities perceived as threatening to Ottoman rule. The contrast in the bans on pleasures illustrate transformations in social life in the Middle East between the Mamluk and Ottoman worlds, between the past and the foundations of the present.

Please note that the Sultan's analysis of coffee houses was accurate. They served as places to gather, to discuss current affairs, and, for example in 1703, to explode into rebellion against the government (Hourani, 1991, p. 237–238). At the start of the modern age, the coffee houses were places for renegotiating the social hierarchy and for challenging the social order. The social dynamics of the transformation in commodities and the reactions of the elite to the consumption of those commodities frame the archaeological investigations into tobacco and coffee.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPEARANCE OF THE COMMODITIES

What brought these commodities of pleasure to the Middle East? Tobacco and coffee have two separate stories regarding their origins.

Coffee came from Yemen and/or Ethiopia. Sufis, Islamic mystics, were said to use coffee beans. According to the seventeenth century Ottoman chronicler Ibrahim Peçevi, two Syrians named Hakm and Shams brought coffee and the coffeehouse from the Arabian lands to Istanbul in 1555 (Hattox, 1985, p. 77). By the early 1600s, both coffee and coffeehouses were found throughout the Ottoman Empire. Though the product was regional in origin, the material culture used with the drinking of coffee point to entanglement of the Middle East with larger scale processes. The archaeological record contains uncounted numbers of sherds of Chinese porcelains, Iznik wares, and British wares, a subset of which were used for coffee consumption.

Tobacco is, of course, from the New World. Documentary sources point to English sailors bringing tobacco to Istanbul. Those documentary sources provide dates ranging within the first decade of the seventeenth century (Baram, 1996, p. 124–125). Ibrahim Peçevi tells us that:

> [t]he fetid and nauseating smoke of tobacco was brought in (1601) by English infidels who sold it as a remedy for certain diseases of humidity. Some ... pleasure-seekers and sensualists ... became addicted, and soon even those who were not pleasure-seekers began to use it (quoted in Lewis, 1995, p. 161).

That description fits the origins of tobacco for Istanbul. However, the empire was bigger than its capital. While English sailors might have brought tobacco to Istanbul, the widespread and seemingly instantaneous appearance of a different type of clay tobacco pipe across the region points to a separate origin for the commodity across the imperial realm. Tobacco was typically introduced around the world as a herb to be smoked in a pipe. Clay was widely used for pipes, and being readily breakable, they entered the archaeological record in massive numbers. An interesting division existed before cigarettes overcame clay pipes at the turn of the present century. While northwestern Europeans primarily used kaolin pipes, the peoples of Africa and the Middle East used an earthen-colored clay bowl with a replaceable wood stem or reed. The archaeological evidence points to an African rather than Northwestern European diffusion of the material culture of tobacco during the seventeenth century.

MATERIAL CULTURE OF TOBACCO

A brief history of the Ottoman style of tobacco pipes, with its clay bowl, replaceable stem and mouthpiece, finds a great diversity in shapes and styles over time. The archaeological component is the clay bowl, the other pieces rarely are uncovered because of issues of preservation (in the case of the stem) and re-use of the mouthpiece.

The first pipe maker's guild was established in Sofia in 1604 (Robinson, 1985, p. 151). Guilds manufactured clay pipes for the empire. In provincial regions such

as Palestine, both regional and village-level production were important (Baram, 1996, p. 161–167). Over the centuries, there are interesting patterns of change for the clay tobacco pipes of Ottoman Palestine. The limited range of styles in the seventeenth century is replaced in the eighteenth century with a wide diversity of shapes, colors, and styles. The shapes included rounded, disc-shapes, and lily-shaped bowls. The colors span the browns and earthen shades. The wide range of motifs include simple line drawings, stars, triangles, and wreaths. That diversity is displaced by a standardization through the nineteenth century to the point that only a handful of styles existed. That standardization occurred when tobacco cultivation came under the control of a French monopoly as part of the Ottoman Debt Authority. Even Ottoman style pipes were produced by French firms for the eastern Mediterranean markets. By the early twentieth century, large red brown lily shaped bowls dominated assemblages. The last clay tobacco pipe manufacturer closed in Istanbul in the 1920s, ending the popular use of these items in the region (Robinson, 1985, p. 152).

The patterns of material changes in this class of material culture illustrates a point that certain Ottoman historians have been arguing. Owen (1981, p. 2) notes that the passive view of modernization penetrating the region, the dominant paradigm for understanding the Ottoman centuries, rests on "the assumption that the economic impact of Europe only really began to be felt in the Middle East after about 1800, whereas in an uneven and disjointed way some such impact is apparent throughout" the post-fifteenth century period. The pre-nineteenth-century appearance of tobacco illustrates those impacts as interacting among internal social dynamics.

MATERIAL CULTURE OF COFFEE

The sequence for the ceramics used for coffee drinking is clear in its broad sweeps. The travelogue of Evliya Çelebi (von Hammer, 1834) describes the coffee cups found in the Istanbul markets in regards to the varying levels of prestige associated with the different types. From excavations across the region have come examples of that range of ceramics. However, the ceramics are best contextualized in the coffeehouse.

The sociability that coffee lubricates is the key to understanding the material culture of this commodity. The material arena for coffee is the coffeehouse; for the Middle East, the coffeehouse became the alternative to the mosque as a place for socializing outside of the home. Before coffeehouses, people entertained in their homes. With coffeehouses, men went out at night; the spatial divisions of urban areas were transformed by centrally located coffeehouses where people from many areas congregated (Hattox, 1985, p. 128).

Hattox (1985, p. 80–82) lists the three types of places to consume coffee: the coffee stall, which was simply a place to prepare coffee for delivery to merchants

and their clients; the coffee shop, which was common in neighborhood as a place with a few benches and which delivered coffee like the stall; and the coffeehouse, which was found in cities and on the major routes in the countryside. The coffeehouse would be surrounded by a park or garden, a large main room would be both the place to prepare coffee and a salon for patrons to sit on long benches or divans stretching along its walls. The physical comforts offered to the patron included cool shade trees and the splashing of waters. The park-like environment, similar to the pleasures of earlier time periods, provided a contrast to the heat, smell, and noise of Middle Eastern urban summers. The preferred place to drink coffee was not in the home, although it was prepared and drunk there, but in this public coffeehouse.

The material culture of coffee, during the early expansion of its consumption in the Middle East, includes earthenware and metal coffee bean roasters (circular plates pierced with small holes for cooking over coals), cylinder coffee mills, metal coffee boilers, and small cups of Chinese porcelains for drinking. The apparatus included either mortar and pestles or mills for grounding the coffee beans, large caldrons for cooking the coffee, large clay vessels (*major*) and vats (*mirkan*) for storing the coffee, and small copper kettles. Because coffee became associated with sociability, the objects took on social meanings. The serving cups were made of either earthenware or porcelain, depending on the establishment and its clientele. In particular, the Chinese and Iznik porcelain cups became symbols of prestige and authority (see Carroll, this volume).

Archaeologically, the porcelain sherds from those coffee cups are the most likely finds from the consumption of coffee. Typically dismissed as 'too modern' by archaeologists, few archaeological assemblages are extant. Evidence comes from shipwrecks (see Raban, 1971; Ward, n.d.) and the production centers of Iznik (Aslanapa *et al.*, 1989). The patterns for this class of material culture seems to consist of a shift in orientation: from local production of imitations of the Chinese styles to the dominance of Western European styles and products.

That pattern fits the shift in the use of coffee as it spread throughout the empire and from the empire to Central and Western Europe. As in the case of sugar, coffee production was taken over by Europeans in their colonial lands. By the early eighteenth century, mass cultivation in Java, the Caribbean, and Brazil overwhelmed Middle Eastern production (Wolf, 1982, p. 336–339; Ukers, 1935, p. 733). By the twentieth century, peoples of the Middle East were drinking coffee imported from those colonial lands (Winter, 1992, p. 246).

What was the impact of changing production patterns? Though consumption of the commodities is continuous throughout the seventeenth through twentieth centuries, the social meaning of consuming these items changed. Why did the consumption of these commodities flourish while their cultivation was incorporated into the European division of labor? What does this tell us about the social dynamics of the Ottoman centuries?

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THINGS

As Eric Wolf (1982) notes, the additive properties of the commodities do not explain their spread in the Ottoman Empire. Social conditions must be explored.

Was the Ottoman world more sociable than the Mamluk world? The coffee-house induced people to sit in the evening and partake in consuming the stimulants; as a place to see and be seen, it met a social need. But why in the mid-sixteenth century? Was the sociability related to changes in the political economy of the Middle East? The sociability correlates to the increasing social complexity of the modern era. With increasing internal and external trade and the creation of new bonds among producers and consumers, there arose competition among landown-ers, peasants, merchants, soldiers, religious groups, government officials, and mi-norities as all those groups increased in number.

One of the key issues for understanding the changes in pleasures and the in-corporation of global goods into the everyday lives of the peoples of the Ottoman Empire revolves around agency. There is nothing particularly natural about the choice of coffee and tobacco as pleasures. Hashish and wine were also avail-able; to the south of the Empire, *qat* is a widespread narcotic that could fill the same roles as tobacco. Later, tea was used in a similar social manner as coffee. The finds in Istanbul of thousands of clay tobacco pipes as well as the plentiful cof-fee cup sherds must be situated within questions regarding social practices during the post-sixteenth century period of Ottoman history.

Moving away from assumptions of decline in the empire after the sixteenth century—where Westernization is seen as imposed upon the peoples of the em-pire—we can explore the intersection of social and material worlds. Let us use one class of people from the Empire to illustrate that possibility for Istanbul.

The Janissaries are probably better remembered at the end of the twentieth century for their, let us say, interesting uniforms and the struggles over their hats than for their military prowess. The Janissaries, a slave army of impressed Chris-tian youth from throughout the empire, fought for the Sultan during the great wave of Ottoman conquests of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. The sixteenth century witnessed changes in the structure of this military force. Suleiyman the Magnificent (sultan from 1520 to 1566) allowed Janissaries to be married and have children. The sons of Janissaries received some of the rights and privileges of the corps (Lewis, 1995, p. 124–125). After the sixteenth century, a sizable population of these soldiers and their families lived in Istanbul. Even some Ottoman historians refer to the "riff-raff" that made up the Janissaries (Kocu Bey, as cited in Lewis, 1995, p. 124).

The Janissaries, often understood to have been reactionary forces in the Em-pire, prevented various Sultans from modernizing the imperial organization. In 1826, Sultan Mahmud II (1808–1839) proclaimed the fez the new headgear for the Ottoman army. To booster this transformation in social life, he orchestrated the

slaughter of seven thousand Janissaries to destroy that institution. The headgear triggered a clash between competing notions for the empire, usually portrayed as the new versus the old. Going beyond that simple dichotomy, Quataert (1997, p. 403) uses this event as a focal point to examine the processes of "transformation, elite formation, centralization, and state building" for the nineteenth century empire.

Rather than seeing the thousands of soldiers as reactionary, one can link the presence of these multitudes to a more sociable Istanbul under the Ottomans. Quataert (1997, p. 404) connects the Janissaries to urban workers and their guilds. The Janissaries, one of many classes to develop during the post-sixteenth century period in the Middle East, had the resources and time to drink coffee and smoke tobacco; Wolf (1982) refers to them as surplus-receiving. They also underwent the social disciplining that encouraged the ingesting of these drug foods. This turning of tradition around—because coffee and tobacco became quintessential Middle Eastern customs—had significant consequences for Ottoman society. The peoples who picked up the modern habits of the sixteenth and seventeenth century became the opposition to the modernizing impulses of the palace.

This framework situates the consumption of the commodities and the variation in their material culture within societal tensions and historical dynamics. This dynamic is found in provincial regions of the empire as well.

From excavations in Jerusalem come many more examples of the artifacts (see Ben Dov, 1982, p. 355–373; Baram, 1996, p. 151–155). Singer (1994) helps us to contextualize the social dynamics through her study of urban-peasant relationships found in the court documents of Jerusalem.

To situate the social meaning for drinking coffee and smoking tobacco in Jerusalem, let us turn to Singer's (1994) analysis of the social tensions and dynamics in the Jerusalem distinct. The court records (*sijills*) describe rebellious peasants and oppressive officials. Yet there was no revolt in sixteenth-century Palestine. According to Singer (1994, p. 116–177), the peasants:

> punched holes in water lines, stole grain from the threshing floor, beat up officials, and tried to cheat the tax collectors by various artifices. Had all these acts been coordinated and contrived to achieve a single goal, then one could label them the manifestations of a revolt. Yet they were individual actions, mounted by single persons, one village, or a village plus Bedouin help. There was no wider organization or coordination of defined common purpose. The "rebellious" deeds of the peasants were meant to achieve some local, immediate benefit; they were not aiming to overthrow the Ottoman governor or bring down the empire.

These social tensions between the local rulers and the ruled were part of a larger-scale tension between the sultan and his officials. Singer (1994, p. 121) finds that the peasants "participated actively in the struggle, defending the routines established by the sultan and their own custom." Those customs were not uniform; the peasants, as much as officialdom, had social stratifications. Ties of kinship and

geography between the countryside and the urban areas "wove the peasants into other hierarchies of power, wealth, and influence" (Singer, 1994, p. 124).

Similar to the ethnographic example regarding the connection between *qat* and changing social stratifications in late twentieth century Yemen, the dynamics of social change in Ottoman Palestine played a role in the consumption of coffee and tobacco. Consumption did not serve as an act of resistance to any mono-lithic authority, but was part of a social dynamic that reacted to local officials while retaining alliances with imperial rule. For instance, in the revolt of 1703–1705, a coalition of peasants, Bedouin, and urbanites lasted only long enough to remove the local officials in Jerusalem; Ottoman rule was not threatened. Sim-ilarly, the late eighteenth century polity ruled by Dahir al-'Umar al-Zaydani in northern Palestine organized imperial rule in a manner more advantageous, in the short run, for the peasantry of the region. Archaeologically, we find the pottery sherds that articulate that worldview: resistance with available resources making the new their own, against, but not in explicit opposition to, the existing social structure.

The social and economic intersection with consumption of these commodities can also be found in the individual level. Khater and Khater (1993, p. 35) describe their peasant ancestor of mid- to late nineteenth century Mount Lebanon based on oral histories and family papers. As the Khater family gained financial resources from selling silkworm cocoons to the French in Beirut during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, they replaced Yemenite coffee with the more expensive Brazilian coffee. For Assaf, returning to the village in 1898 after eight years in South America, he displayed a conspicuous consumption at the village coffee house—behaviors that alienated his wife and children (Khater and Khater, 1993, p. 40). Those consuming habits had a negative impact on Assaf's family, resulting in a "juggling ways of life that sometimes flowed almost effortlessly, and at other times came crashing down with a loud bang" (Khater and Khater, 1993, p. 42).

The habits of the Janissaries, the actions of peasants around Jerusalem, and the life history of a Lebanese peasant are examples of the social dynamics articulating through the commodities. The actions of these people were part of a subordinate discourse, whose traces can be found in court records (e.g., Singer, 1994), family histories (e.g., Khater and Khater, 1993), and the travelogues of Western Europeans (e.g., Baram, 1996, p. 73–77). The artifacts give the present tangible evidence for the contradictions and struggles of the people during the Ottoman centuries. By the end of the Ottoman period, a ripping of the social fabric occurred with the full incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the European division of labor and then direct colonial rule over most of the eastern Mediterranean after the First World War. The tearing of the social fabric removed all but the negative images of Ottoman rule from the collective memories of the peoples of the Middle East and replaced the social dynamics and tensions of the region with small states based on nationalisms.

If commodities embody human relationships (Orser, 1996, p. 113) and social meanings (Orser, 1996, p. 115), what did the coffeehouses, porcelain cups, and clay tobacco pipes mean to the people of the Ottoman Empire? It seems clear that the commodities were not simply the agents of Western Europeanization of the region nor did they reflect the dominant ideology of the empire.

It seems that at the start of the modern era, around the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, these commodities embodied the new, the modern, the rebellion against the social order. But by the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, these items became old fashioned, the vestiges of an old empire, commodities controlled by Western European powers, items to be replaced by tea, cigarettes, and nationalism, which only further entangled the peoples of the region with global processes of change. The commodities were a part of the social relationships as the world of these peoples was continually being reconstructed and recreated. The standardization of clay tobacco pipes and the replacement of Chinese porcelains by Western European produced ceramics provide archaeological correlates to that process.

This historical and material transformation is overdetermined with social identities for the region. The Ottoman divisions of *millet*, religious-ethnic communities, are usually understood to have formed the basis for the nationalist movements that colonial powers manipulated to construct the map of the modern Middle East. While the material culture of certain commodities point to the divide in the region between the elite (*khassa*) and the common people (*'amma*), the simple dichotomies hide the complexities of classes and social positions in the empire (Winter, 1992, p. 244–247). From those tensions, and the external pressures of the emerging capitalist world system, came even greater social tensions. Those social dynamics incorporated the new commodities, used them for pleasures and recreation, and in the process created a new social world in the Middle East.

This model for the entanglement of the region with global processes of change moves us away from the dominant paradigm for Ottoman history and opens up the material record as a source for understanding the social processes that led to the formation of the present-day Middle East. The juxtaposition of the archaeological record and the multilevel intersections of various social groupings of the Ottoman Empire with external processes of change opens up avenues for understanding the meanings of consuming the commodities over the last several centuries. Further explorations of local circumstances are needed to better understand the layers of social complexities that included these artifacts within the formation of the modern Middle East.

CONCLUSIONS

The archaeology of the Ottoman Empire is still in its infancy. Many more excavations and research projects are needed to fill out the sketchy outlines of

material changes over the last several centuries. However, as an avenue for exploring history and agency as well as social tensions, commodities and consumption seem very promising.

The growing interest in the archaeology of the Ottoman Empire can help in offering suggestions for the broad scope of archaeology in the Middle East (e.g., Kark, 1995). The complexities of artifacts within social contexts is a necessary step in the development of theory in Middle Eastern archaeology. For global historical archaeology, the archaeology of the Ottoman Empire fills a large geographic gap in studies around the world.

In terms of understanding the Ottoman Empire, the archaeology is significant for locating the local impact of large-scale processes of change. The cross-cultural influences are found in the material record, evidence that is significant for conceptualizing the habits and pleasures of the Middle East. Assumptions about Middle Eastern isolation and the barriers between East and West are belied by the archaeological evidence; goods were cycling among the peoples of the New World and Old World all through the modern era. Rather than a period of stasis, the Ottoman centuries contain the dynamics that produced the foundations for the present Middle East. Avoiding this period has allowed primordial conceptualizations of ethnicity to be assumed—that the groupings of the region have always been homogenetic and separate. The evidence from the archaeology and the archives challenges those assumptions.

The introduction and changing social meanings of the modern commodities bring forward issues of social dynamics and class tensions for the empire. By the nineteenth century across the eastern Mediterranean, the commodities were part of the "devastating changes" (Lewis, 1995, p. 3) involved with the emergence of the modern world system. However, rather than external changes, the transformations involved both external and internal dynamics. Those transformations are not ethnically linked, rather class and social status are significant for conceptualizing the various strategies taken by groupings in the region. Decentering ethnicity is a further challenge to primordialist understandings of social change. The approach outlined here for an archaeology of the Ottoman Empire can open up understandings of the development of social dynamics and ethnic tensions in the present.

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