

An Exhibition at the
Salar Jung Museum
Hyderabad
September 2 - 14, 1979

*Tobacco
its
impact
on Art*





Foreword

The Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad could be termed one of the art wonders of India, for it houses composite objects of art of Eastern and Western origin. One experiences a feeling of joy and pride while appreciating these things of beauty, for even though they speak of a culture that is past, the past is linked with the present and inspires the future. The art itself is capable to inspire and leave a direct impact on our everyday lives.

The Museums of India tell a story, one with historical sweep, and for this reason must be brought closer to the people. I believe that our contemporary world has learnt to gain their appreciation of the world of art. It is gratifying to realize that the Salar Jung Museum has for the first time decided to have an Exhibition on Tobacco—the impact on art is thereby which is of interest to people everywhere. ITC considered it a privilege to be associated with this Exhibition and our hope that our contribution will help bring art closer to everyday life.

We express our thanks to the management of the Salar Jung Museum for giving us the opportunity to produce a *Tobacco* for this occasion, involving skilful and customer interaction on the art activities, many of which are being publicly displayed for the first time. We hope 'tobacco tobacco' will afford a 'perfect type of a perfect pleasure' to the many art-lovers who will see on Exhibition.

A. N. HANMAN

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Tobacco - its impact on art

Although smoking in India had gone into vogue during the Gupta age, yet tobacco—the prime substance of smoking—figures only during the medieval period of Indian history. The earliest literary references in ancient Sanskrit texts, like 'Harshacharita' and 'Kadambari' by Banabhatta, a contemporary of the king Harshavardhana, dating 6th century A.D. and 'Kullavastava', a treatise on the life of courtiers by Chetochandragupta in 9th century A.D., refer that smoking in India was prevalent during 6th century A.D., if not earlier. The text 'Dharmasamgraha' further supports this some sort of evidence, specially pointed out of the virtues of healthy and good smoking ingredients, like opium, sindoor, musk, sandalwood, cardamom and dandi-oli, was used in smoking. Another Sanskrit treatise 'Nigamantra' also refers to smoking.

The significant points, which can be borne out by the scrutiny of the alleged literary references are, that, the concept of smoking in India has been prevalent since ancient times. Secondly, tobacco was unknown till the advent of Europeans in India.

However, it is not precisely known when and how tobacco was first introduced in India. An interesting account is the 'Wakil Akad Bag' refers to the introduction of tobacco to the Mughal court. Akad Bag was sent as an emissary of Akbar to the Adil Shahi Court of Bijapur. Akad Bag brought a few pipes along with a jewelled pipe and a golden coffee to his country, Akbar. The emperor Akbar, by the first time, enjoyed smoking of tobacco before his audience. However, he was opposed by the court physicians and he ordered tobacco which was then an unknown commodity to the Indians. This interesting episode is an adequate proof to show that tobacco was first introduced to the court of Bijapur in the Deccan and the same was taken to the court of Akbar of Delhi, during 1580 circa, A.D.

Another manuscript, 'Mullas-ul-adwarah', further mentions that tobacco was introduced in India by the Portuguese, who brought it from the 'New World' (Am-ri-Judd). Thus, the Portuguese, who had close political relations with the Adil Shahi Court of Bijapur must have brought tobacco with them and introduced it in the Deccan or the East Indies. The reference to 'New World' here of course means North and South America, when Christopher Columbus had found the natives using tobacco much in the same manner as it is used to-day.

A similar account also figures in "Shujuan-in-Tianzhu" written by Siun Singh (the Jesuit) (1607-1628), equivalent to 1600 A.D. The author of the above manuscript informs us that tobacco was brought to India from the European countries during the later part of Akbar's reign. Initially, tobacco was advised for its medicinal properties and was prescribed for patients only, later on, it was initiated for smoking by the people at large. The author further states that the emperor Akbar had put a ban on the smoking of tobacco due to its hazardous effects on human health. The persons found defying the royal order were subjected to a special kind of punishment called "sarsir". Accordingly, a person found smoking was made to ride on an ant-eating the island was taken around the main roads of the city.

Besides India, tobacco found its way to France in 1550, Portugal in 1588, Spain in 1558 and England in 1565 A.D. In China, tobacco seems to have been introduced by the Portuguese when they established their colony at Macao in the 15th century A.D. The stems of tobacco grown in China were considered of a very low quality. Similarly, a manuscript "Zhidigaoji-shi" Abbas (?) describes that tobacco was known to Arabs and Persians long before 1600 A.D. However, smoking of tobacco came into existence only after 1590 A.D.

In spite of the growing popularity of tobacco in various parts of the world, it met strong resistance from the rulers of different countries. Besides Jehangir and Aurangzeb who had banned smoking within their dominions in India, Louis XIV (1643-1715 A.D.) of France reacted against smoking and banned snuffing in his court and issued edicts against it, though he himself was an addict of tobacco. Even among the rulers of the Manchu dynasty in China, snuffing was considered as a "vicious habit" and was subjected to a ban. Yet tobacco had more impact and smoking became the symbol of status with the upper strata of the society everywhere. During the latter part of the 17th century tobacco seems to have gained immense importance and was used freely on important social occasions.

Thus, the introduction of tobacco for smoking, chewing and snuffing provided a new theme to the artists for producing very beautiful art-objects, such as hukkas, hukkah pipes, sugar boxes, pen-cases, and snuff bottles of various shapes and sizes in diverse media. The pomp and glory of the Mughal court is reflected through such objects which are abundant in almost all the important art collections of the world. Similarly, the magnificence of pieces with exquisite workmanship produced in foreign countries such as China, Persia, Turkey, France, England, Italy etc., are the pride of possession of museums and art galleries.

Every possible medium of art, both hard and soft, such as metals, jade, Agate, Marble, Glass, Porcelain and Clay have been employed freely to manifest magnificent works of art in green space and time. The elegance and profes-

sional skill of the artists, which were linked to the classical equations in dealing with the religious art, attained complex hues and subtle factors in the production of these art objects of a secular nature. The immense technical savoir-betwixt and profound ornamentation of the hukkah bottoms, no-frank snuff-bottles, tobacco pipes and pen-cases, exhibit not only the brilliant artistry but also varying trends and tastes of the Hindu society.

The ancient mode of smoking tobacco, both in India and Middle East, seems to have been through "hukkah" or "Hakim's Bubble", as they call it in European terminology. The earliest objects resembling hukkah bowls consist in the sophistication of Huzagar in Persia belonging to 9th-10th century A.D. The objects are discovered as conical in shape. It is not exactly known whether the hukkah was introduced to the Mughal court through Persia. However, a good number of Mughal residences represent the hukkah being smoked both by the male and female nobility of the Mughal court. Thus, it is evident that hukkah was the most common mode of smoking in India, right from 17th century onwards.

The hukkah bottom falls into three different categories, depending on their shape viz., the hukkah with a spherical body or globular shape, the hukkah bottom flat and dome-shaped and the hukkah bottom intended to be held by hand.

They are further sub-divided into different types on the basis of decoration and manufacturing technique. The hukkah bottom can also be categorised retrospectively.

The existing examples of the hukkah bottom in museums and other private collections are generally made of glass, metal, stone, porcelain and wood. The excellent examples of Mughal hukkah bottom are made of glass, which seems to have been considered most favourable during that period. Later examples of the hukkah bottom belonging to 18th and 19th centuries, are made of "Bata", a special alloy of zinc, copper and lead.

Mughal glass workmanship was preeminent and most in the history of glass-making in India. Abu'l-Fazl in "Ain-i-Akbari" states that glass was produced abundantly in the royal Kashmir during the reign of Akbar. A large number of surviving examples of Mughal glass have also been testimony to this fact. It is a well known fact that the best examples of Mughal glass were fabricated during the subsequent reigns of Jehangir and Shah Jahan, who were also great lovers of art.

Looking at the existing examples of the Mughal glass, specially hukkah bottoms, it will be observed that there is total perfection in the blowing technique practised by the craftsmen. A notable characteristic of early Mughal glass is the use of the opaque surface. Even in the shape of *calices*, green and gold seem to be predominant, although there was a preference for the deep copper

blue in the early stages. The later specimens exhibit a blueness for bright cyan, lemon-yellow and also vibrant blue. However, gilding is the most characteristic feature of Mughal glass objects. Flowers, arabesque trees and other motifs arranged in diagonals are very helpful in identifying and dating the Mughal glass hukkahs. The same motifs are also found repeated in the various paintings and aspects of the period.

The main techniques of decoration are the gliding, wheel-cut patterns, enamelling and gold painting on the surface. Amongst the numerous motifs employed in decoration, the delicately carved lotus flowers, the stylized flowers in a wreath and bold designs, traditional cypress trees, sometimes worked in gold, mango leaves, lotus blossoms, crescent designs and geometrical patterns figure prominently.

It is also their coincidence that the Mughal period witnessed the establishment of several East India Companies by the European powers, which ultimately resulted in the splendid blending of Occidental and Oriental cultures. It is at this juncture that the European glass vessels made its advent in the Eastern market, especially in the form of the hukkah bottom and similar other wares, which found favour with the Eastern nobility.

The glass hukkah bottom of European origin received its various variations and art patterns are readily datable to the 16th and 17th centuries. The important techniques of decorating the opaque and enameled surface of the hukkah bottom are engraving, enamelling and painting with brilliant colours. The introduction of cut-glass also made its impact on the hukkah bottom. Though the shapes of these hukkah bottoms are assimilable of Eastern origin, yet European workmanship has endowed them with an acute artistic elegance and grace.

The floral motifs, geometrical designs and cut diamond patterns of the European hukkah bottom, so boldly executed in contrasting colours, produced the most spectacular and dramatic effect. Besides, porcelain and enamelled hukkah bottoms had also come into vogue.

While the Mughals preferred glass for their hukkah bottoms, the Subans of Deccan introduced a totally new medium, popularly known as Bakli, which is an alloy of zinc, copper and lead. It is noted that Bakli, the product of the Miran (Miran) and Barak kingdoms¹⁴. Amalgam Bakli-were hukkah bottoms are probably the earliest specimens which were worked out in a wide range of forms. The designs and technique of Bakli exhibit a close synthesis of indigenous traditions with those of Persia and Central Asia.

The other being of a soft nature yields itself easily to intricate artistic workmanship. The design consists of Tahashis (leaf of rose), Tahashis (leaf of sheet), Zarihas (rose leaf), Zarihas (leaf of rose), and Afshar (leaf of design in ovaloid metal sheet).¹⁵ Usually, several of these

techniques are worked together. A combination of Tahashis and Tahashis is very common. Generally silver is the metal used by silvering, an opaque, a beautiful shimmer against the black background.

The designs employed to decorate the hukkah bottom are varied and various. The most frequently used designs are the conventionalized floral motifs, such as peacock design, vine creepers, lotus-embellishes, arabesque-trees, stars and swastika. Among the geometrical patterns used for decoration, there is a great variety, such as leaf, square, circle, various angles, rhombs etc. 'Mans-pati' or fish-scale pattern is another interesting design found on hukkah bottoms.

A hukkah is incomplete without its accessories, such as the flexible tube (sheela), the tin container for tobacco (dildara), and last but not the least, the mouthpiece or Mihril. The Mughals again made a significant contribution by adapting Jada for the fastening of beautiful motifs.

Jada seems to have been specially favoured for its hard smooth surface, pleasing colour and for the medicinal properties of the wood itself. The Jada Miranais are often decked with beautifully carved designs, inlaying of gold and inlaying of precious gems.

While hukkah was the accepted mode of smoking by the nobility of the Mughal Court, a new convenience of smoking in the form of a tobacco pipe had also come into vogue in Europe and America. While tracing the origin of tobacco pipe, it is believed that this custom has existed in America since the earliest times. The remains of these ancient pipes have been found in Mexico at a town called 'Pipe Mound', situated in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa in America.¹⁶ These early pipes were made of hard woods. The tobacco pipes were objects of professed veneration for the North American Indian tribes, as they attached symbolic and ritual significance to this usage. However, the introduction of the tobacco pipe in Europe is generally ascribed to Ralph Lane, first Governor of Virginia, who presented an Indian pipe to Sir Walter Raleigh in 1585.

The invention of tobacco pipes gave birth primarily to art and various materials, such as wood, ivory, porcelain, metal and even clay were employed to fashion them. The decorations consisted mostly of painted or carved landscapes, hunting scenes, amorous figures etc.

Apart from smoking, tobacco was also used for snuffing. Snuff is powdered tobacco especially prepared for inhalation. The practice of snuffing snuff seems to have started simultaneously both in East and West roughly during the mid 17th century.¹⁷ In spite of stiff opposition from the royal courts, in China as well as in Europe, it was not long before the use of snuff became a social ritual of the upper classes. In China the art

became a part of life and the same can be testified by the exquisite snuff bottles which (such money, time and skill) were expended. The Maratha dynasty (1688-1812 A.D.) extended an overwhelming patronage to the art of producing snuff bottles which reveals the marvellous ingenuity of the artists.

The snuff bottles were made of every conceivable material, such as, porcelain, faience, ivory, agate, shell, glass, jade, agate and other semi-precious stones. The latest ornamentation is carved with exquisite skill and ingenuity. The real craftsmanship of the artists lies in the intricate carvings of snuff bottles which involves a totally new and difficult procedure.

Exquisite patience and diligence must have been expended in meticulous carving of the intricate though the tiny hole probably with the help of bamboo chips and single hair brush. The pattern chosen generally include portraits, scenes from fair legends and mythology, birds, landscapes and flowers.

While the Chinese made bottles, the Europeans used beautiful painted and enamelled boxes as containers for keeping snuff. Besides, they also occasionally made snuff boxes of gold and silver studded with gems or decorated with ivory, as a symbol of status.

Besides smoking and snuffing, the usage of tobacco for chewing is a common practice in India. Finely ground tobacco is used with betel leaf by both men and women. Even now the Indian craftsmen still use tobacco to add their taste and originality to the making of exquisite pen-stems of Gold, silver and sometimes with gold. Intricate designs are carved and etched to beautify pen-stems throughout India.

With the dawn of the 19th century, the age-old feudal system began to collapse. With the result there appears a certain decline in the field of arts and crafts everywhere. The commercial outlook and hectic life dominated hands and newly made material for smoking, which gave birth to cigars and cigarettes.¹¹

The new cigarette denoting a paper-wrapped roll of finely cut tobacco is an adaptation of the Spanish Cigars. Its original meaning was 'tiny cigar', but cigarette tobacco is usually of a different type, rather than that of a cigar. The first cigarette factory was set up in Havana in 1855. Another factory was established in London in 1860.

Today, a wide range of cigars and cigarettes are being produced with the help of machines. No doubt, tobacco continues to enjoy widespread patronage, but the romance of smoking and its vapour descent on earth has faded into history.

Text by Dr. M. L. NIGAM

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Glaze (yellow) bottom
No. 17.8 cm. Dia. 15.7 cm.
Mughal - late 17th century
S. J. M. 148

The yellow glaze is applied to the bottom of the bell.
The main body of the bell is covered with a
glaze of the same color as the bottom of the bell.
The glaze is applied to the bottom of the bell.
The glaze is applied to the bottom of the bell.

1851-1852
1853-1854
1855-1856
1857-1858
1859-1860

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1893-1894
1895-1896
1897-1898
1899-1900





19th glass goblet bottom

no. 19.8 mm., dia. 15.4 mm.

Moscow—late 19th century

0.2.66.181

The glass goblet from Moscow or Petrozavodsk, attractive
it is decorated with a complex surface of small squares
distributed all over its body. There are two marginal
bands of small squares at the top and shoulder, which
relieve the monotony of the design.

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Enamelled faïence vase

Ht. 17.7 cms., Dia. 18.3 cms.

Mughal—early half of the 18th century

S. J. M. 138

The decorative motifs are punctuated by panels, the most being a series of stripes in red-pink outlined with gold. The vase is given over a turquoise-chalk background. The neck is decorated 63 times over the body.

Decorative vase
18th century
18th century
18th century
18th century

Decorative vase
18th century
18th century
18th century
18th century





Venetian glass *favosoli*

18th century A.D.

The Venetian glass *favosoli* (shown on the right) is an excellent example of European craftsmanship. The dark red colour achieves a shimmering effect.

Musical notation

no. 21 A only

18th century A.D.

The *favosoli* notation (left) of digital signs is printed with fine design and style.

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Porcelain bullet

Ht. 23.6 cm.

French - 18th century

The porcelain bullet is that of a girl who has been riding on these two closed legs. The painted surface depicts her waist and back.

Enamelled bullet

Ht. 37.7 cm.

French - 18th century

The porcelain bullet is painted to represent that of a child and their mother.

Number 1000000
Price \$100.00
Number 1000000
Price \$100.00
Number 1000000
Price \$100.00
Number 1000000
Price \$100.00





Waldenwood ruffled collar

fit 22 1/2 cm

England - 1960s vintage

£15.00

The full strand fur is cut by silk white cotton
against and woven against the dark blue background
providing a pleasing contrast to the eye.

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Silver bucket
Ht. 6.6 cms.
Made—2005 century
#2287

Cylindrical silver bucket with incised decoration,
engraved with floral pattern and the monogram of Queen
Sung-It.

THE
MUSEUM OF
ARTS AND
CRAFTS

THE
MUSEUM OF
ARTS AND
CRAFTS
1850





White Tuxedo bottom
no. 300 - new

The full skirted White Tuxedo bottom will be designed
and will be made in a series of
and being with a flower pattern at the base. The new
border along the base will be decorated with busy
pattern.

BRASS CANDLESTICK
No. 1000
The above is a fine specimen of the
work of the artist in brass. It is
made of the best material and is
of the most elegant design.
Price \$10.00





Jade Mirrors
Mughal
17th-18th centuries

The jade mirror mirrors with fine relief work surface and has a ring on inside of Mughal workmanship. Stability of green on jade is a characteristic feature of Mughal art.

THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE

THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE

THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE
THE BOTTLE





Tobacco pipe
Europe—19th century

Tobacco pipe, made of ivory, porcelain and wood, are covered with falling red alpacas scales.

THE
THE
THE
THE



Seal: Bottle

China—17th century to 19th century

The seal bottle of lead glass, porcelain, and wood are excellent examples of Chinese artistry. The red painted surface of the glass seal bottle added colors from Chinese mythology.

Chinese Vases
and other objects of art
from the collection of the
British Museum, London
1900





Mixtures printing

28.2 x 28.71

Dezhan—18th century

11/00079

Court scene depicting a couple making tskhebi.

सुन्दर-सुन्दरी
१७५५-५६
प्रमाण-१००-सुन्दरी
१७५५-५६



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700

3605/5

*For those who
value taste*



Made for each other