

**Smoking**



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Smoking is a practice in which a substance is burned and the resulting smoke breathed in to be tasted and absorbed into the bloodstream. Most commonly the substance is the dried leaves of the tobacco plant which have been rolled into a small square of rice paper to create a small, round cylinder called a "cigarette". Smoking is primarily practiced as a route of administration for recreational drug use because the combustion of the dried plant leaves vaporizes and delivers active substances into the lungs where they are rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream and reach bodily tissue. In the case of cigarette smoking these substances are contained in a mixture of aerosol particles and gasses and include the pharmacologically active alkaloid nicotine; the vaporization creates heated aerosol and gas to form that allows inhalation and deep penetration into the lungs where absorption into the bloodstream of the active substances occurs. In some cultures, smoking is also carried out as a part of various rituals, where participants use it to help induce trance-like states that, they believe, can lead them to "spiritual enlightenment".

Smoking generally has negative health effects, because smoke inhalation inherently poses challenges to various physiologic processes such as respiration. Diseases related to tobacco smoking have been shown to kill approximately half of long-term smokers when compared to average mortality rates faced by non-smokers. Smoking caused over five million deaths a year from 1990 to 2015.

Smoking is one of the most common forms of recreational drug use. Tobacco smoking is the most popular form, being practiced by over one billion people globally, of whom the majority are in the developing countries. Less common drugs for smoking include cannabis and opium. Some of the substances are classified as hard narcotics, like heroin, but the use of these is very limited as they are usually not commercially available. Cigarettes are primarily industrially manufactured but also can be hand-rolled from loose tobacco and rolling paper. Other smoking implements include pipes, cigars, bidis, hookahs, and bongs.

Smoking can be dated to as early as 5000 BCE, and has been recorded in many different cultures across the world. Early smoking evolved in association with religious ceremonies; as offerings to deities, in cleansing rituals or to allow shamans and priests to alter their minds for purposes of divination or spiritual enlightenment. After the European exploration and conquest of the Americas, the practice of smoking tobacco quickly spread to the rest of the world. In regions like India and Sub-Saharan Africa, it merged with existing practices of smoking (mostly of cannabis). In Europe, it introduced a new type of social activity and a form of drug intake which previously had been unknown.

Perception surrounding smoking has varied over time and from one place to another: holy and sinful, sophisticated and vulgar, a panacea and deadly health hazard. In the 20th century, smoking came to be viewed in a decidedly negative light, especially in Western countries. This is due to smoking tobacco being among the leading causes of many diseases such as lung cancer, heart attack, COPD, erectile dysfunction, and birth defects.[2] The health hazards of smoking have caused many countries to institute high taxes on tobacco products, run ads to discourage use, limit ads that promote use, and provide help with quitting for those who do smoke.

**Early uses**

Aztec women are handed flowers and smoking tubes before eating at a banquet, Florentine Codex, 1500

The history of smoking dates back to as early as 5000 BCE in shamanistic rituals.[3] Many ancient civilizations, such as the Babylonians, Indians and Chinese, burnt incense as a part of religious rituals, as did the Israelites and the later Catholic and Orthodox Christian churches. Smoking in the Americas probably had its origins in the incense-burning ceremonies of shamans but was later adopted for pleasure, or as a social tool.[4] The smoking of tobacco, as well as various hallucinogenic drugs, was used to achieve trances and to come into contact with the spirit world.

Substances such as Cannabis, clarified butter (ghee), fish offal, dried snake skins and various pastes molded around incense sticks dates back at least 2000 years. Fumigation (dhupa) and fire offerings (homa) are prescribed in the Ayurveda for medical purposes, and have been practiced for at least 3,000 years while smoking, dhumrapana (literally "drinking smoke"), has been practiced for at least 2,000 years. Before modern times these substances have been consumed through pipes, with stems of various lengths or chillums.

Cannabis smoking was common in the Middle East before the arrival of tobacco, and was early on a common social activity that centered around the type of water pipe called a hookah. Smoking, especially after the introduction of tobacco, was an essential component of Muslim society and culture and became integrated with important traditions such as weddings, funerals and was expressed in architecture, clothing, literature and poetry.

Cannabis smoking was introduced to Sub-Saharan Africa through Ethiopia and the east African coast by either Indian or Arab traders in the 13th century or earlier and spread on the same trade routes as those that carried coffee, which originated in the highlands of Ethiopia. It was smoked in calabash water pipes with terracotta smoking bowls, apparently an Ethiopian invention which was later conveyed to eastern, southern and central Africa.

Reports from the first European explorers and conquistadors to reach the Americas tell of rituals where native priests smoked themselves into such high degrees of intoxication that it is unlikely that the rituals were limited to just tobacco.

**Popularization**

For more about the impact and development of tobacco, see History of tobacco.

For more about the commercial development of tobacco, see History of commercial tobacco in the United States.

A Persian girl smoking by Muhammad Qasim. Isfahan, 17th century

In 1612, six years after the settlement of Jamestown, John Rolfe was credited as the first settler to successfully raise tobacco as a cash crop. The demand quickly grew as tobacco, referred to as "golden weed", revived the Virginia Company from its failed gold expeditions.[9] In order to meet demands from the old world, tobacco was grown in succession, quickly depleting the land. This became a motivator to settle west into the unknown continent, and likewise an expansion of tobacco production.[10] Indentured servitude became the primary labor force up until Bacon's Rebellion, from which the focus turned to slavery.[11] This trend abated following the American Revolution as slavery became regarded as unprofitable. However the practice was revived in 1794 with the invention of the cotton gin.

A Frenchman named Jean Nicot (from whose name the word nicotine is derived) introduced tobacco to France in 1560. From France tobacco spread to England. The first report documents an English sailor in Bristol in 1556, seen "emitting smoke from his nostrils".[13] Like tea, coffee and opium, tobacco was just one of many intoxicants that was originally used as a form of medicine.[14] Tobacco was introduced around 1600 by French merchants in what today is modern-day The Gambia and Senegal. At the same time caravans from Morocco brought tobacco to the areas around Timbuktu and the Portuguese brought the commodity (and the plant) to southern Africa, establishing the popularity of tobacco throughout all of Africa by the 1650s.

Soon after its introduction to the Old World, tobacco came under frequent criticism from state and religious leaders. Murad IV, sultan of the Ottoman Empire 1623-40 was among the first to attempt a smoking ban by claiming it was a threat to public morality and health. The Chongzhen Emperor of China issued an edict banning smoking two years before his death and the overthrow of the Ming dynasty. Later, the Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty, would proclaim smoking "a more heinous crime than that even of neglecting archery". In Edo period Japan, some of the earliest tobacco plantations were scorned by the shogun as being a threat to the military economy by letting valuable farmland go to waste for the use of a recreational drug instead of being used to plant food crops.[15]

Bonsack's cigarette rolling machine, as shown on U.S. patent 238,640

Religious leaders have often been prominent among those who considered smoking immoral or outright blasphemous. In 1634 the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus' forbade the sale of tobacco and sentenced men and women who flouted the ban to have their nostrils slit and their backs whipped until skin came off their backs. The Western church leader Pope Urban VII likewise condemned smoking in a papal bull of 1590. Despite many concerted efforts, restrictions and bans were almost universally ignored. When James VI and I, a staunch anti-smoker and the author of A Counterblaste to Tobacco, tried to curb the new trend by enforcing a whopping 4000% tax increase on tobacco in 1604, it proved a failure, as London had some 7,000 tobacco sellers by the early 17th century. Later, scrupulous rulers would realise the futility of smoking bans and instead turned tobacco trade and cultivation into lucrative government monopolies.

By the mid-17th century every major civilization had been introduced to tobacco smoking and in many cases had already assimilated it into its culture, despite the attempts of many rulers to stamp the practice out with harsh penalties or fines. Tobacco, both product, and plant followed the major trade routes to major ports and markets, and then on into the hinterlands. The English language term smoking was coined in the late 18th century; before then the practice was referred to as drinking smoke.

Tobacco and cannabis were used in Sub-Saharan Africa, much like elsewhere in the world, to confirm social relations, but also created entirely new ones. In what is today Congo, a society called Bena Diemba ("People of Cannabis") was organized in the late 19th century in Lubuko ("The Land of Friendship"). The Bena Diemba were collectivist pacifists that rejected alcohol and herbal medicines in favor of cannabis.

The growth remained stable until the American Civil War in the 1860s, from which the primary labor force transition from slavery to sharecropping. This compounded with a change in demand, lead to the industrialization of tobacco production with the cigarette. James Albert Bonsack, a craftsman, in 1881 produced a machine to speed the production of cigarettes.[18]

**Opium**

An illustration of an opium den on the cover of Le Petit Journal, July 5, 1903

In the 19th century, the practice of smoking opium became common. Previously it had only been eaten, and then primarily for its medical properties. A massive increase in opium smoking in China was more or less directly instigated by the British trade deficit with Qing dynasty China. As a way to amend this problem, the British began exporting large amounts of opium grown in the Indian colonies. The social problems and the large net loss of currency led to several Chinese attempts to stop the imports which eventually culminated in the First and Second Opium Wars.

Opium smoking later spread with Chinese immigrants and spawned many infamous opium dens in China towns around South and Southeast Asia and Europe. In the latter half of the 19th century, opium smoking became popular in the artistic community in Europe, especially Paris; artists' neighborhoods such as Montparnasse and Montmartre became virtual "opium capitals". While opium dens that catered primarily to emigrant Chinese continued to exist in China Towns around the world, the trend among the European artists largely abated after the outbreak of World War I.[19] The consumption of Opium abated in China during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s.

**Anti-tobacco movement**

With the modernization of cigarette production compounded with the increased life expectancies during the 1920s, adverse health effects began to become more prevalent.[citation needed] In Germany, anti-smoking groups, often associated with anti-liquor groups,[20] first published advocacy against the consumption of tobacco in the journal Der Tabakgegner (The Tobacco Opponent) in 1912 and 1932. In 1929, Fritz Lickint of Dresden, Germany, published a paper containing formal statistical evidence of a lung cancer–tobacco link. During the Great Depression, Adolf Hitler condemned his earlier smoking habit as a waste of money,[21] and later with stronger assertions. This movement was further strengthened with Nazi reproductive policy as women who smoked were viewed as unsuitable to be wives and mothers in a German family.