

# BHĀRATĪYĀ VIDYĀ

A quarterly research organ of the Bhavan  
on all subjects connected with Indian Culture

VOLUME XVII : Nos. 1 & 2

1957

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BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN  
BOMBAY

Issued in October 1958

## SOME EARLY REFERENCES OF SMOKING IN INDIA

BY JNAN CHANDRA, BOMBAY.

I read with great interest Dr. P. K. Gode's article "The History of Tobacco in India and Europe" published in your esteemed journal.<sup>1</sup>

In the said article the earliest reference of tobacco given by Dr. Gode is of year 1604-05 A.D.<sup>2</sup> But in Hindi literature, there are some earlier references of smoking in India. In Amir Khusru's *Mukariyān* there is a couplet:

न्हाय धोय सेज मेरी आयो, ले चूमा मुँह मुँहहि लगायो,  
इतनी बात पै थुक्कम थुक्का, ऐ सखि साजन, ना सखि हुक्का ।

—"After taking bath came to my bed. Kissed and then mouths of both of us conjugated. Only on this much I had to spit". On hearing this a friend of her asked— "Well *sakhi*, was he your husband?" She replied—"No, *sakhi*, it was *hukkā*."<sup>3</sup>

*Hukkā* is the pipe through which only tobacco is smoked. Before using it, generally it is made wet, which is referred by *Khusru* as bath.

With *hukkā*, *Khusru* refers to '*Chilam*' also. There is a *Prahelikā*.

नयी की ढीली, पुरानी की तंग ।  
बूझो तो बूझो, नहीं चलो मेरे संग ॥

—The hole of the new one is spacious and that of the old one is narrow. You reply the puzzle correctly or accompany me.<sup>4</sup>

The hole of a *chilam* is alright when it is new and becomes narrower by nicotine-silt when it is used for a long time. As such the reply of this *prahelikā* is '*Chilam*'.

Amir Khusru died in 1324 A.D. If these quotations are taken to be genuine the history of tobacco goes three centuries back.

1. *Bhartiya Vidya* Vol. XVI. No. 1.

2. *Ibid.* page 66.

3. *Kavita-Kaumudi* 8th Edition page 139.

4. *Ibid* page 137.

In *Hindi-Vishwakosha*—while giving the history of tobacco in India—it is written that the plant was known to Indians even in olden days and it refers a word कलञ्ज for tobacco.

*Shabdārth-Chintāmani Kosh* translates कलञ्ज as तमाकू सुरती इति भाषा and quotes a book विष्णु-सिद्धान्त-सारावली as such:

कलञ्जसंवेष्टन धूमयानात् स्यादन्तशुद्धिर्मुखरोगहानिः ।  
कफघ्नमामज्वरहानिकृच्च गान्धर्व विद्या प्रवर्णक सेव्यम् ॥<sup>5</sup>

*Vāchaspatya Kosh* also takes it in the same meaning ताम्रकूटे च (तमाक) and quotes the same *shloka* of *Vishnu-Siddhānt-Sārāwali*.<sup>6</sup>

*Shabda-Kalpādrum*<sup>7</sup> and *Shabda-Ratna-Mahodadhi*<sup>8</sup> also take the word कलञ्ज for tobacco.

Monier Monier Williams Samskrit-English Dictionary<sup>9</sup> and *Vrihat Hindi Kosh*<sup>10</sup> also agree to it.

The *shloka* of *Vishnu Siddhānt Sārāwali* referred above not only refers to some smoking leaf (tobacco) but also to cigar-like thing for which word कलञ्ज संवेष्टन has been used.

Although the time of this book विष्णु सिद्धान्त सारावली is not known, by its reference in the *Hindi-Vishwakosha*, it is clear that it is an earlier work.

But still earlier references, of smoking, we get in Pali. It refers, not only to smoking and smoking-stick but to smoking-pipe and its pouch also.

In *Mahavagga* of *Vinaya-Pitakam* Buddha has allowed smoking.  
*anujānāmi bhikkhave dhūman pātūn ti.*  
--Bhikshus, I allow to smoke.

On this bhikshus asked "When we smoke the smoking-stick (*vaṭṭim*) direct, we fell like burning in the throat". Thereupon Buddha allowed the use of "Dhumanett" (smoking pipe) to avoid it. Bhikshus then complained "Often insect enters into the pipe". On this Buddha allowed them to use a cork (*apidhan*). Bhikshus then

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5. *Shabdārtha-Chintāmani* Vol. 1 page 520.
  6. *Vāchaspatya Kosh* page 1777.
  7. *Shabda Kalpādrum* II Kand page 56.
  8. *Shabda Ratna Mahodadhi* Part I, edited by Mukti Vijayaji, page 472.
  9. Monier Monier Williams Dictionary page 260.
  10. *Vrihat Hindi Kosh* page 253.

asked— “Sir, how to carry the pipe?” And then, Buddha allowed a pouch (*dhumanett-thavikan*) of double cloth<sup>11</sup> to avoid inconvenience.

Here I may mention this also that both in Sanskrit and Pāli the references of smoking are on medical grounds and both of them refer to the same type of things (सवेष्टन and वह्नि) to be smoked.

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11. *Vinaya Pitakam* (Pali) Edited by Hermann Oldenberg, Vol. I, page 204. (VI-13-2).