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Tobacco's Appeal to the Senses and the Early Modern Smoker's Still Life

Abstract

Smell and taste – of the five senses these are the two most strongly stimulated by smoking tobacco. The article presents an in-depth analysis of the reflection of both these forms of sensory perception in textual and visual sources concerning the early consumption of the herb. In a first step, tobacco's changing reception, first as medicine and then as stimulant, is traced through the years of its increasing distribution in Europe, starting in the middle of the 16th century. As this overview reveals, at that time the still little known substance gave rise to new forms of sense perception. Following recent studies on smell and gustation, which have stressed the need to take into account the interactions between these senses, the article probes the manifold stimulation of the senses by tobacco with reference to allegorical representations and genre scenes addressing the five senses. The smoking of tobacco was thematized in both of these art forms as a means of visualizing either smell or taste. Yet, these depictions show no indication of any deliberate engagement with the exchange of sense data between mouth and nose. The question posed at the end of this paper is whether this holds true also for early smoker's still lifes. In the so-called *toebakjes* or *rookertjes*, a subgenre of still-life painting that, like tobacco, was still a novelty at the beginning of the 17th century, various smoking paraphernalia – such as rolled or cut tobacco, pipes and tins – are arrayed with various kinds of foods and drinks. Finally, the article addresses a selection of such smoker's still lifes, using the *toebakje* by Pieter Claesz., probably the first of its kind, as a starting point and the work by Georg Flegel as a comparative example. Through their selection of objects, both offer a complex image of how tobacco engages different senses.

Keywords: (history of) tobacco, (history of) tobacco smoking, smoker's still life (*toebakje*), smell, taste, sensory interaction, allegories of the senses

Not long after its appearance in Europe, the “mighty Emperor Tobacco” also took the realm of the arts by storm. One aspect central to its quick artistic reception was the specific smell associated with the new substance when consumed in the most widespread manner: smoking.¹ As early as 1607, the English playwright Thomas Tomkis cast tobacco in his comedy *Lingua, or the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority*, a verbal duel in which the personification of sight in the end prevails over her companions, i.e. the senses of touch, taste, smell, and hearing.² Crowned by tobacco leaves and pipes and constantly emitting smoke from his mouth, the “mighty Emperor Tobacco” is introduced by Tomkis as an attendant of Olfactus.³

In the Netherlands, where tobacco became popular particularly among students and artists in the first half of the 17th century, its consumption became a common subject in genre and still-life painting. A subgenre of the latter art form, the smoker’s still life (*toebakje* or *rookertje*) – in which smoking paraphernalia, such as rolled or cut tobacco, pipes and tins, are brought together with different kinds of foods and drinks – grew in popularity. A striking example – for reasons that will be expounded on in greater detail at the end of this text – is the small panel by Georg Flegel (Fig. 1). The painting, executed between 1626 and 1628, forms an unusual arrangement in a niche, composed of a clay pipe with flowers on its bowl and on the adjacent part of the stem, a roll of tobacco leaves, two strawberries, and a still-glowing lunt hanging over the mouth of a rummer (a popular drinking vessel at the time) filled with liquid.⁴ In view of this surprising combination of bitter tobacco and sweet fruits, the question arises whether it is sufficient, as in Tomkis, to consider only the sense of smell as receptive to the new fashion of smoking tobacco.

Thus far, the smoker’s still life has been analysed primarily as a moralistic comment upon the newly imported substance that was praised by some as medicine but more often condemned as superfluous and unhealthy;⁵ or in light of its changing status as a commodity of increasing value.⁶ Only occasionally the appeal of smoking tobacco to the human senses, and particularly to the sense of smell, has been equally taken into account, for instance, with regard to Flegel’s above-mentioned still life or to works by Pieter Claesz., who allegedly created the first *toebakjes* in the 1620s.⁷

1 Cf. M. S. R. Jenner, “Follow Your Nose? Smell, Smelling and Their Histories”, *The American Historical Review*, 2011, 116, no. 2, pp. 335–351, here p. 342.

2 Cf. R. Jütte, *Geschichte der Sinne. Von der Antike bis zum Cyberspace*, Munich, 2000, p. 73. For an earlier adoption of tobacco in Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* (1590) see J. Knapp, “Elizabethan Tobacco”, *Representations*, 1988, no. 21, pp. 26–66.

3 T. Tomkis, *Lingua or the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority*, London, 1607, act 4, scene 4.

4 For the dating see *Meisterstücke: Vom Handwerk der Maler*, eds. W. P. Cilleßen, A. Tacke, exhib. cat. Frankfurt, Frankfurt, 2019, no. 5.3, p. 197.

5 Cf. S. Ebert-Schifferer, *Die Geschichte des Stillebens*, Munich, 1998, pp. 129–130.

6 Cf. J. Berger Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age*, New Haven, London, 2007, pp. 174–177.

7 Cf. C. Grimm, “Flandern, Holland, Deutschland”, in: *Stilleben. Die große Zeit des europäischen Stillebens*, Stuttgart, Zurich, 1979, pp. 37–82, here p. 57; M. Brunner-Bulst, *Pieter Claesz., der*



Fig. 1. Georg Flegel, *Smoker's Still Life*, c. 1626–28, Frankfurt, Historisches Museum. From: *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638: Stilleben*, ed. K. Wettengl, exhib. cat. Frankfurt, Stuttgart, new edition, 1999, p. 127

Following these interpretative approaches to the early modern smoker's still life, this article seeks to examine the many-faceted connection between tobacco and the senses. It begins with a short overview of tobacco's varying estimation within the European context and, more precisely, in England and the Netherlands. As becomes clear already in the first textual and visual sources dealing with tobacco, leisure smoking was not only thought to stimulate the sense of smell, but also the sense of taste. Probing this manifold stimulation of the senses, the text takes up recent studies of smell and taste that have stressed the need to investigate the interaction between these senses.⁸ Any attempt to define the working exchange of sense data between mouth and nose in the first decades of the 17th century must, however, proceed cautiously. As will be shown in the second part of this paper, tobacco's equal appeal to the senses of smell and taste was usually not seized upon in allegorical representations and genre scenes addressing the five senses. Whether this

Hauptmeister des Haarlemer Stillebens im 17. Jahrhundert. Kritischer Œuvrekatlog, Lingen, 2004, pp. 146–151, 156.

⁸ Cf. J. Reinartz, *Past Scents: Historical Perspectives on Smell*, Urbana, 2014, p. 6; V. von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment: The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, Baltimore, 2016, pp. 73, 83–86. Such an approach has likewise become central to the broader field of a cultural history of the senses. Cf. H. Roodenburg, "Introduction: Entering the Sensory World of the Renaissance", in: *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Renaissance*, ed. idem, London, 2019, pp. 1–17, esp. pp. 6–10.

holds true also for the early smoker's still lifes by Claesz. and Flegel is the central question posed at the end of this article.

From medicine to stimulant: Tobacco's early European history

A few years before Tomkis's comedy *Lingua* was published, the consumption of tobacco had become a major topic of dispute in England. In 1602, an anonymous doctor writing under the pseudonym "Philaretus" published the treatise *Work for Chimney-sweepers or A Warning for Tobacconists* in which he elaborates upon the health risks arising from the use of the substance.⁹ He enlists eight reasons that leisure smoking is harmful to a person's health, and is not willing to condone the medical use of tobacco.¹⁰ Weight loss, sterility, indigestion as well as melancholy are only some of the consequences the author discusses. In addition, he believed tobacco to contain various toxins that shorten a human life¹¹ – as Anne Charlton rightly states, with his critical assessment of tobacco and its use Philaretus was quite ahead of his time.¹²

With his explicit warning against tobacco, Philaretus objected to its appraisal – prevailing on the European continent in the 16th century – as a remedy. Christopher Columbus had already reported on rites, including the smoking of tobacco, that he had observed in the "New World" during his first voyage of 1492,¹³ however, the plant itself did not spread to Europe until the middle of the 16th century.¹⁴ Jean Nicot, the French ambassador to the Portuguese court, was the first to cultivate tobacco and to use it for medical purposes.¹⁵ The central agent within tobacco, nicotine, was later named after him. Giles Everard testifies to this naming in his work *De herba panacea* (The universal medicine), published in Antwerp in 1587.¹⁶ Among

9 Cf. M. C. Enke, *Über die Bedeutung des Tabaks in der europäischen Medizin vom 16. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1998, p. 87.

10 Cf. A. Charlton, "Tobacco or Health 1602: An Elizabethan Doctor Speaks", *Health Education Research. Theory & Practice*, 2005, 20, no. 1, doi:10.1093/her/cyg097 [accessed 1 October 2019], pp. 101–111, here p. 102.

11 *Work for Chimney-sweepers or A Warning for Tobacconists*, ed. S. H. Atkins, London, 1936, reasons 2, 4, 5 and 8.

12 A. Charlton, op. cit., p. 108.

13 *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America, 1492–1493. Abstracted by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas*, trans. and ed. O. Dunn, J. E. Kelley, Jr., Norman, London, 1989, p. 139 (6 November 1492). Cf. S. L. Gilman, Z. Xun, "Introduction", in: *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, eds. idem, London, 2004, pp. 9–28, here p. 9. While the *Diario* was not published until 1825, the described use of tobacco was transmitted by Ramon Pane, who took part in the second voyage, in his *De insularium ritibus* (1497). Cf. R. Augustin, *Der Geschmack des Neuen. Das Motiv des Tabakrauchens und seine Modernität in der niederländischen Kunst*, Frankfurt, 1998, p. 15.

14 Cf. I. Gately, *La Diva Nicotina. The Story of How Tobacco Seduced the World*, London, 2001, pp. 20–64.

15 Cf. M. C. Enke, op. cit., pp. 36–37.

16 G. Everard, *De herba panacea, quam alii tabacum, alii petum, aut nicotianam vocant, brevis commentariolus*, Antwerp, 1587, p. 12. The term "tobacco", on the contrary, can be traced back

various writings dealing with the medical use of tobacco in the 16th century, this was the first dedicated solely to the new substance and its potency.¹⁷ Even if Everard chiefly combined knowledge gained by other authors – such as the Spanish physician Nicolás Monardes, who in 1571 had included an entire chapter on the herb's merits in the second volume of his *Historia medicinal* – it is generally noted that *De herba panacea* was one of the most read books on tobacco in the 17th century.¹⁸ In 1659, an English translation of the work was published in London.¹⁹

While the discussion of tobacco's medical use was initiated in continental Europe, decisive impulses towards leisure smoking came from England.²⁰ By the time Philaretus prepared his *Work for Chimny-sweepers*, smoking a pipe of tobacco was not only common practice among sailors and explorers like Sir Walter Raleigh – the most prominent of the first English smokers – but, thanks to the latter, had also entered the courtly context; even Queen Elizabeth I, his patroness, supposedly tried the new custom under his guidance.²¹ Elizabeth's successor, James I, however, would never have even touched a pipe. In fact, shortly after his enthronement in 1603 he launched the polemic pamphlet *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (1604), in which smoking is condemned as a “vile and stinking” custom and is denied any medical application.²² This royal damnation of tobacco would provoke a controversy in which many books for and against smoking were published, and which was only settled in 1665.²³

to the military governor of Hispaniola, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, who for his part had supposedly learned it from the natives. Cf. J. E. Brooks, *Tobacco: Its History Illustrated by Books, Manuscripts and Engravings in the Collection of George Arents Jr.*, 5 vols., New York, 1937–1952, vol. 1, p. 202.

- 17 Cf. P. C. Mancall, “Tales Tobacco Told in Sixteenth-Century Europe”, *Environmental History*, 2004, 9, no. 4, pp. 648–678, here p. 659. According to the author's general assumption, books like the one by Everard played a decisive role in the positive assessment of tobacco in Europe. For an overview of the main sources dealing with the medicinal effect of tobacco: S. A. Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in Sixteenth Century Literature*, New York, 1954; G. G. Stewart, “A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco 1492–1860”, *Medical History*, 1967, 11, pp. 228–268; M. C. Enke, op. cit., pp. 47–74.
- 18 Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 63–65.
- 19 G. Everard, *Panacea; or The Universal Medicine, Being a Discovery of the Wonderfull Vertues of Tobacco Taken in a Pipe, with Its Operation and Use both in Physick and Chyrurgery*, London, 1659.
- 20 For a general overview see T. Pollard, “The Pleasures and Perils of Smoking in Early Modern England”, in: *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, op. cit., pp. 38–45.
- 21 Cf. M. C. Enke, op. cit., pp. 75–107; I. Gately, op. cit., pp. 44–47. According to T. Pollard, op. cit., p. 38, tobacco entered England already in the 1560s, followed by first descriptions of pipes and their use in 1573 and 1595 (note 6).
- 22 James I., *A Counterblaste to Tobacco*, London, 1604, p. B1v.
- 23 For detailed discussions of the so called tobacco war see D. Harley, “The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians”, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1993, 67, no. 1, pp. 28–50; S. Campbell Anderson, “A Matter of Authority: James I and the Tobacco War”, *COMITATUS. A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 1998, 29, no. 1, pp. 136–163. G. G. Stewart, op. cit., enlists all writings resulting from the dispute (p. 263).

The tense atmosphere in England at the beginning of the 17th century also had an impact on the northern Netherlands.²⁴ To be sure, smoking tobacco was widespread there, already since the late 16th century. In a letter to Johann Neander, the Delft physician Willem Willemsz. van der Meer reports on student smokers in Leiden, where he himself studied from 1588 onwards.²⁵ All the same, the fabrication of clay pipes, starting in Amsterdam around 1609, but more famously taken up in Gouda starting in 1617, is commonly ascribed to English emigrants.²⁶ As Don H. Duco has shown, many Dutch terms associated with the craft are closely linked to English words, and the names of the first experts within the field – such as William Baer-nelts or Barends and Willem Hoppe or Hop – likewise attest to an English origin.²⁷ It was between Barends and Hop that a dispute over the trademark of a crowned rose – the Tudor rose – broke out and was resolved in favour of the former. The choice of this symbol, applied to pipes in slightly different forms also by other pipe-makers, again points to England and more particularly to the reign of Elizabeth I, during which smoking was not rejected, as it would be in the years following her death in 1603.²⁸

Despite the rapid spread of pipe production, which was only initially opposed by general smoking bans such as the one in Gouda,²⁹ many authors were divided on the social benefits of tobacco. The Amsterdam corn dealer and poet Roemer Visscher incorporated the herb and its consumption into his *Sinnepoppen*, a collection of emblems published in 1614. Underneath the motto “Veeltijds wat nieuws, selden wat goets” (Often something new, rarely something good), a middle-aged man is shown sitting at a table, smoking an enormous pipe (Fig. 2). With his left hand he grasps the object’s long stem, which runs at a slight angle from his mouth (at left) to the right margin of the image field. Both from the man’s nostrils and from the pipe’s bowl issues dense smoke. Seen together, motto and image result in a clear criticism of smoking, but in the accompanying text a more scrutinizing assessment is made. Here, the consumption of tobacco is associated with curiosity. When it comes

24 The situation was tense not only with regard to smoking, but above all with regard to questions of faith. Cf. G. A. Brongers, *Nicotiana Tabacum: The History of Tobacco and Tobacco Smoking in the Netherlands*, Amsterdam, 1964, p. 31.

25 The letter was later published in Neander’s *Tabacologia. Hoc est, Tabaci, seu Nicotinae descriptio Medico-Chirurgico-Pharmaceutica*, Leiden, 1622, pp. 211–221. Cf. G. A. Brongers, op. cit., pp. 17–20; R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 18–19; B. B. Roberts, *Sex and Drugs before Rock ‘n’ Roll. Youth Culture and Masculinity during Holland’s Golden Age*, Amsterdam, 2012, pp. 176–177.

26 Cf. A. Brongers, op. cit., pp. 31–42. The cultivation of tobacco was initiated around the same time in the provinces of Zeeland and Utrecht. Cf. ibid., pp. 71–78; H. K. Roessingh, *Inlandse Tabak. Expansie en contractie van een handelsgewas in de 17de en 18de eeuw in Nederland*, Wageningen, 1976, pp. 186–194.

27 Cf. D. H. Duco, *Goudse pijpen. De geschiedenis van de pijpmakerij te Gouda vanaf haar ontstaan tot heden, met een bijlage van de merken van het Goudse gilde en hun eigenaren*, Amsterdam, 1978, p. 5.

28 Cf. ibid., pp. 5–6. Besides the Tudor rose, portraits of the Oranje rulers were favored as decor of pipes. Cf. idem, *De tabakspijp als Oranje propaganda*, Leiden, 1992.

29 Cf. idem, *Goudse pijpen*, p. 7.



Fig. 2. Roemer Visscher, *Sinnepoppen*, Amsterdam, 1614, *Veeltijds wat nieuws, selden wat goets*, p. 132
© Utrecht University Library

to the various uses of the substance, the author (in this case Visscher's wife Anna) abstains from denying the herb's medicinal effect, only questioning its tastiness.³⁰

Indeed, the matter of tastiness or, more broadly speaking, tobacco's appeal to the senses remained an open question, while the herb's medical use, frequently challenged in England, became, by 1622, thoroughly confirmed in the Netherlands by the Bremen physician Neander.³¹ When the first reports of American natives inhaling the smoke of a weed through pipes arrived in Europe, no comparable examples of such a form of consumption were at hand, as Wolfgang Schivelbusch points out.³² One of the first to compare the smoking of tobacco to the drinking of

³⁰ R. Visscher, *Sinnepoppen*, Amsterdam, 1614, p. 132. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 21, 26.

³¹ In his *Tabacologia* he praises tobacco, administered in various forms, as a remedy for such diverse diseases as headaches, cataracts, and siphylis. J. Neander, op. cit., pp. 74–75, 85, 151–152. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 19–20, and for a more general view on this treatise central to the Netherlands perception of tobacco as remedy: M. C. Enke, op. cit., pp. 128–130.

³² W. Schivelbusch, *Das Paradies, der Geschmack und die Vernunft. Eine Geschichte der Genussmittel*, Munich, Vienna, 1980, p. 108. For the further development and tobacco's fast rise to a popular stimulant: A. Menninger, *Genuss im kulturellen Wandel. Tabak, Kaffee, Tee und Schokolade in Europa (16.–19. Jahrhundert)*, Stuttgart, 2008, pp. 277–371.

wine, based on a kind of intoxication he had observed during a smoking ritual in Brazil, was the French explorer and cosmographer André Thevet.³³ Both in English as well as in Dutch, “to drink” became the standard verb to describe the inhalation of tobacco smoke by using a pipe (like a straw).³⁴ The Amsterdam-born poet Jan Jansz. Starter composed a poem on the origin of “tobacco-drinking”, *Den Oorsprong van Toback-drincken*, printed only in the fourth edition of his book *Friesche Lusthof*, which appeared in 1627, one year after his death.³⁵ In the German language, too, the smoking of tobacco was termed “drinking”, as becomes particularly apparent in Sigmund von Birken’s treatise *Die Truckene Trunkenheit* (The dry drunkenness) of 1658.³⁶ At the same time, however, one can detect first attempts at differentiating terminology, for already in the course of Starter’s poem the verb “smoken” is used alongside “drinken”.³⁷

In line with the conceptual assimilation of smoking into drinking, authors writing in favour of the new “vice” were eager to establish tobacco’s point of origin with recourse to Bacchus, the ancient god of wine. The English physician Raphael Thorius already drew on Bacchus in his *Hymnus Tabaci* (Hymn on tobacco), written before 1610 but not published until 1625, in Leiden.³⁸ No human, so the Latin text starts, could have possibly descried tobacco, but only a god like Bacchus.³⁹ In what follows, Thorius recounts the story of tobacco’s diffusion among men, starting with a campaign led by Bacchus in the New World, in which the plant itself as well as the possibility of smoking it are discovered and tried by the god and his corps

33 A. Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique*, Paris, 1558, pp. 60r-v. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., p. 16.

34 *Work for Chimney-sweepers*, op. cit., “To the Reader”. Only Petrus Scriverius later wondered whether smoking a pipe should be analogized to drinking at all, or if it should rather be conceived of as a form of eating. P. Scriverius, *Saturnalia, ofte Poëtisch Vasten-avond spel. Vervatende het gebruyk ende misbruyk van den Taback*, Haarlem, 1630, p. 31. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., p. 109. By posing the question of how to name the way tobacco is consumed, Scriverius does not describe the chewing of tobacco, which became a common practice only later.

35 J. Jansz. Starter, *Friesche lust-hof, beplant met verscheyden stichtelijcke minne-liedekens, gedichten, ende boertighe kluchten*, Amsterdam, 1627, pp. 34–36.

36 As the author unveils in the title of his book, its content is based on Jakob Balde’s *Satyra Contra Abusum Tabaci*, published only one year earlier. For more information on both texts: D. Niefanger, “In ‘Plutons Hof-Capelle’. Tabakrausch in Sigmund von Birkens ‘Die Truckene Trunkenheit’ (1658)”, in: *Trunkenheit. Kulturen des Rausches*, eds. T. Strässle, S. Zumsteg, Amsterdam, New York, 2008, pp. 225–239.

37 J. Jansz. Starter, op. cit., p. 38: “Strackx hiel *Vulcanus* op, en liet het smoken blyven”. A similar wording can be observed in Birken’s treatise, in which “schmäuchen” is used. S. von Birken, *Die Truckene Trunkenheit. Mit Jakob Baldes ‘Satyra Contra Abusum Tabaci’*, ed. K. Pörnbacher, Munich, 1967, p. 25, § 17, p. 54, § 43.

38 Cf. J. E. Brooks, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 108–112; R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 92–93; C. Harrauer, “Wer entdeckte tatsächlich den Tabak? Mythisches Erzählen bei Raphael Thorius und Jakob Balde”, in: *Antiker Mythos erzählt und angewandt bis in die Gegenwart*, eds. eadem, J. Dalfen, Vienna, 2004, pp. 157–180.

39 R. Thorius, *Hymnus tabaci*, Leiden, 1625, p. 1.

of satyrs.⁴⁰ The frontispiece to the Leiden edition displays this story of origination on the fictitious tapestry placed above the central cartouche containing the book's title and the author's name (Fig. 3). Bacchus, crowned with vines, is depicted in a carriage drawn by two leopards. To his right, his companion Silenus, his face turned down thoughtfully, rides a mole. A group of mounted satyrs follows them toward the left margin. Bacchus and this entourage, carrying long tobacco pipes instead of lances, have already successfully disseminated the new custom, so the frontispiece implies.



Fig. 3. Raphael Thorius, *Hymnus Tabaci*, Leiden, 1625, title page © Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library

By contrast, the connection between alcohol and tobacco consumption is discussed with a clearly negative undertone in Dirck Pietersz. Pers's *Bacchus Wonderwercken* (Bacchus's miracle works) of 1628. In his satirical analysis of the (im)proper handling of wine,⁴¹ the author does not miss the opportunity to also comment upon the "miraculous herb" (*wonder kruid*), alleging that it was first discovered and smoked by apes before being brought to the shores of the Netherlands, where

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 1–14.

⁴¹ Cf. A. Roberts, op. cit., pp. 82–83.

it would come to affect kings and other noblemen, as well as seamen, peasants, and even cookmaids and schoolboys.⁴² The engraving included in the paragraph on *smooken* – as the practice is termed by Pers, avoiding the verb “to drink” – shows the outcome of this widespread use of tobacco (Fig. 4). In a room with paintings on the wall matching the subject of tobacco – including a smoker’s still life on the right – men and women gather around two tables, where they smoke or prepare long pipes. Alluding to the text, a monkey is also depicted holding two pipes to his mouth and accompanying an adolescent boy towards another youngster in the bottom left corner. The negative consequences of early and superfluous consumption of tobacco are literally in the foreground. At the bottom right of the image, a grown man is shown vomiting. The main conclusion is: Whether smoked by young or old, when consumed excessively tobacco has an effect similar to that of alcohol.⁴³

As Roland Augustin has demonstrated in his comprehensive study of the motif of tobacco smoking in Netherlandish art since the 17th century, the dog shown licking up vomit can be traced back to earlier depictions of the deadly sin of



Fig. 4. Dirck Pietersz. Pers, *Bacchus Wonder-wercken*, Amsterdam, 1628, p. 69 © Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, O 61-617

⁴² D. Pietersz. Pers, *Bacchus Wonder-wercken*, Amsterdam, 1628, pp. 67–68.

⁴³ Cf. A. Roberts, op. cit., p. 182.

gluttony.⁴⁴ As this detail indicates, the smoking of tobacco became loosely linked to the sense of taste in the 17th century through its comparison with the drinking of wine. In contemporary moral writings, taste too was often considered a close neighbour of the vice of gluttony.⁴⁵

However, the smell of tobacco smoke, which James I had already perceived as a nuisance to his nose and to the noses of others, also led to a close association between the new stimulant and the sense of smell. On this account, Starter did not choose Bacchus, but Vulcan, the god of fire, as the appropriate mythological forefather of smokers. In his poem *Den Oorsprong van Toback-drincken*, already mentioned, he recounts how Jupiter once invited all the other Olympian gods and goddesses to a banquet, at which the beer brewed by Ceres quickly went to the guests' heads. Vulcan, preferring some tobacco to go with the drink, suddenly took his pipe and started smoking. The other gods and goddesses, first surprised by this unusual custom, soon turned angry, as the smoke issuing from Vulcan's pipe increasingly obscured their view.



Fig. 5. Jan van de Velde after David Vinckboons, *Den Oorsprong van Toback-drincken*, in: Jan Jansz. Starter, *Frische lust-hof*, Amsterdam, 1627, p. 35 © University Library Ghent, BIB.ACC.009100

44 R. Augustin, op. cit., p. 105.

45 Cf. V. von Hoffmann, op. cit., pp. 39–43.

The etching executed by Jan van de Velde after a design by David Vinckboons gives in its upper part a view of the further progress of the story (Fig. 5). Venus, who covers her nose in disgust, criticizes her husband Vulcan for causing the pungent odour and thick smoke that impairs the other guests in various ways. Even Bacchus, placed in front of the table, turns away from Vulcan with his nose covered. Following Jupiter's demand to leave tobacco smoking to Pluto, Mercury is finally shown throwing pipes and tobacco rolls down to earth. Here, the herb's worldly story of success is indicated by two groups of figures that in stereotypical terms reaffirm its way from the Americas to Europe.⁴⁶

From mouth to nose: Smoking in depictions of the five senses

Whether set into relation with smell or taste, the smoking of tobacco circulated within the lower register of the hierarchy of the senses. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle was the first to establish such a ranking among the five bodily organs of perception, and this would become the model for later scholars until the 17th century.⁴⁷ Like Plato before him, he gave priority to the sense of sight, which he described extensively in the second book of his treatise *De anima* (On the soul), followed by similarly detailed considerations of the senses of hearing, smell, taste, and touch.⁴⁸ Later authors who broached the subject endorsed the Aristotelian hierarchy by further highlighting the differences among the respective sensory organs, with an emphasis largely on each sense's ability to perceive an object either in close contact or from a distance.⁴⁹ In yet another interpretative approach, the importance of the senses was deduced from their locus within the human body.⁵⁰ This very mode of classification likewise helped to establish sight's preeminence over the other senses.⁵¹

The nose and the olfactory sense, in turn, were usually conceived of as an intermediary between the senses of sight, hearing, taste, and touch. While one can trace this ranking again back to Aristotle's *De anima*,⁵² the French physician Théophraste Renaudot testifies to its persisting significance in the 17th century, when he writes:

46 J. Jansz. Starter, op. cit., pp. 34–38. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 93–94.

47 Cf. R. Jütte, op. cit., pp. 46–54, 73. For general information on the Aristotelian system of the senses: G. Romeyer Dherbey, "La construction de la théorie aristotélicienne du sentir", in: *Corps et âme. Sur le De Anima d'Aristote*, ed. idem, Paris, 1996, pp. 127–147.

48 Aristotle, *De anima*, 418a27–424a16. Plato had already elaborated upon the bodily senses in his *Timaios*, but had only differentiated between four of them, excluding touch: *Timaios*, 65b–69a. Cf. R. Jütte, op. cit., p. 45.

49 Aristotle, *De anima*, 423b1–3.

50 Cf. R. Jütte, op. cit., pp. 69–72.

51 Cf. V. von Hoffmann, op. cit., pp. 73, 75. A late example for the continuing discourse on the sense's hierarchy is Tomkis's comedy *Lingua*, treated briefly at the beginning of this article.

52 Cf. G. Romeyer Dherbey, op. cit., p. 138; R. Jütte, op. cit., p. 79.

"As the nose, the instrument of smell, is situated in the middle of all others: so is this sense of average nature between the other senses, because it is more material than hearing and sight, but more subtle than touch and taste; although it has a big rapport with the latter".⁵³

The close connection between the olfactory and the gustatory senses, mentioned by Renaudot rather incidentally, was discussed over the centuries again and again. Already Aristotle had hinted at their similarities when adopting adjectives from the realm of gustation to describe different odours.⁵⁴ The ancient Greek physician Galen of Pergamon further affirmed their strong relation,⁵⁵ and in the 17th century authors such as Cureau de la Chambre attributed their synergy in discerning good and bad food to the close position of mouth and nose on the human face.⁵⁶ Thanks to new insights into the tongue and the taste buds, today the interaction of smell and taste seems beyond question.⁵⁷

Although the rapport between the senses of smell and gustation was challenged in a striking way by the practice of smoking tobacco, in personifications of the five senses the new habit was usually divided between the two. First attempts to visualize the five senses are known from the 9th century. Already then, the sensory organs were depicted allegorically, by allotting a male figure to each one of them.⁵⁸ Shortly before 1500, these were substituted with female figures in the famous Flemish tapestry series *The Lady and the Unicorn*, kept in the Musée Cluny in Paris.⁵⁹ Here, the sensorial perceptions are for the first time illustrated using attributes that in the following years would become central components of the iconography of the senses – namely, aromatic flowers for smell and selected sweets for taste. Both in Georg Pencz's copper engravings of the five senses, a widely received depiction of them combining female personifications with animals stemming from an older

53 Th. Renaudot, *Recueil général des questions traitées és Conférences du Bureau d'Adresse és années 1633–34–35 iusques à present, sur toutes sortes de matières, par les plus beaux esprits de ce temps*, vol. 2, Paris, 1655, 56th conference held on 11 December 1634, pp. 97–104 (1. *De l'Odorat*), here p. 101, trans. V. von Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 77.

54 Aristotle, *De anima*, 421a26–421b4. Cf. Reinartz, op. cit., p. 8; V. von Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 86.

55 C. Galeni, *De simplicium medicamentorum facultatibus, libri XI*, Lyon 1561, IV, 22 (pp. 268–271). Cf. G. Harig, *Bestimmung der Intensität im medizinischen System Galens. Ein Beitrag zur theoretischen Pharmakologie, Nosologie und Therapie in der Galenischen Medizin*, Berlin, 1974, pp. 80–81; R. Jütte, op. cit., p. 55.

56 C. de la Chambre, *Le système de l'âme*, Paris, 1664, pp. 69–70. Cf. V. von Hoffmann, op. cit., pp. 84–85.

57 Cf. C. Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food & Philosophy*, Ithaca, London, 1999, pp. 79–84; S. Veitinger, "The Secret Power of Fragrances", in: *Belle Haleine – The Scent of Art. Interdisciplinary Symposium*, ed. Museum Tinguely, Heidelberg, Berlin, 2015, pp. 27–34, here pp. 27–28.

58 Cf. C. Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1986, 48, pp. 1–22, here pp. 1, 7.

59 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 7. See also A.-M. De Gendt, "Du masculin au féminin: le changement de sexe des cinq sens aus seuil de la Renaissance", in: *Les cinq sens entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance. Enjeux épistémologiques et esthétiques*, eds. O. A. Duhl, J.-M. Fritz, Dijon, 2016, pp. 71–93.

pictorial tradition,⁶⁰ and in Frans Floris's series, which initiated an intense involvement with the topic in the Netherlands,⁶¹ flowers and food such as fruits remain the prime props.

By taking up these attributes, the artists clearly placed special emphasis on the pleasant aspect of the two sensory perceptions.⁶² Only in one series of copper engravings, designed by Maerten de Vos and engraved by Raphael Sadeler I, is the rather unpleasant effect of stench on the nose touched upon, and still only in the caption underneath the image that is itself dedicated entirely to its opposite, aroma.⁶³ The short inscription reads "GRATVS ODOR RECREAT NARES. OFFENDIT ACERBVS" (Pleasant odour refreshes the nose. Pungent [smell] offends it).⁶⁴ In a later depiction of the sense of smell by Crispijn de Passe I, however, stench takes centre stage (Fig. 6).⁶⁵ Following Hendrik Goltzius, De Passe visualized the sense of smell by representing a couple⁶⁶ – a male and a female figure who no longer approach one another to smell a bunch of flowers.⁶⁷ On the contrary, while the male figure – sitting at a table in the foreground and well equipped with various pipes, tobacco leaves and a small coal pan – smokes a long pipe with relish, his female companion remains in the background and covers her nose with a handkerchief in disgust.⁶⁸ De Passe plainly accentuates the nuisance caused by the new habit by letting the smoke encircle the woman's face. A dog entering the image field from the lower left corner points to an earlier iconographic tradition in which the animal, due to its keen nose, was chosen to accompany the personification of smell.⁶⁹ Besides the dog, the inscription underneath the whole scene clarifies the connection to *OLFACTUS* while also advising a moderate use of tobacco: "Est modus in rebus, certus sit et usus ODORIS / Omnia nam prosunt tempore sumpta Suo"

60 Cf. C. Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses in Late Medieval"..., pp. 19–21; K. Dyballa, "Die Fünf Sinne (um 1544) von Georg Pencz", in: *Zwischen Dürer und Raffael. Graphikserien Nürnberger Kleinmeister*, ed. K. Möseneder, Petersberg, 2010, pp. 161–178.

61 Cf. C. Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses in Flemish Art before 1600", in: *Netherlandish Mannerism*, ed. G. Cavalli-Björkman, Stockholm, 1985, pp. 135–154, here p. 135.

62 Cf. F. Quiviger, *The Sensory World of Italian Renaissance Art*, London, 2010, pp. 126–131.

63 Cf. C. Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses in Flemish Art"..., pp. 141–142.

64 By contrast, the epigraph to go with the allegory of taste only refers to flavour: "IVCVNDO QVIDNAM QVIT AMOENIVS ESSE SAPORE?"

65 For general information on the print: I. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and his Progeny (1564–1670): A Century of Print Production*, Rotterdam, 2001, p. 225.

66 Goltzius was the first to embed the objects and animals associated with the five senses into an erotic encounter between two figures. Cf. I. Veldman, "Goltzius' Zintuigen, Seizoenen, Elementen, Planeten en Vier tijden van de dag: van allegorie naar genre-voorstelling", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 1991–92, 42/43, pp. 307–336, here p. 308.

67 De Passe carried on this iconographic tradition in his earlier series on the allegories of the senses. Cf. I. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe...*, p. 224.

68 This gesture extends the previous iconography of stench. For further information on this: F. Quiviger, op. cit., pp. 132–136.

69 Cf. M. Pastoureau, "Le bestiaire des cinq sens (XII^e–XVI^e siècle)", in: *I cinque sensi / The Five Senses (Micrologus, 2002, X)*, pp. 133–145, here p. 141.



Fig. 6. Crispijn de Passe, *Smell*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. From: I. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and his Progeny (1564–1670): A Century of Print Production*, Rotterdam, 2001, p. 225

(There is moderation in things; so let smell too be used purposefully. For everything does good that is employed in its season).⁷⁰

In allegorical depictions of the five senses, the habit of smoking tobacco remained one among many ways to represent olfaction, and was usually selected to draw special attention to the negative side of smell. A similar focus can be discerned in genre painting. Here too, the sense of smell was often depicted with reference to its stimulation by stench, and again tobacco smoking was a popular means by which to visualize this.⁷¹ The Haarlem artist Jan Miense Molenaer, for instance, ironically contrasted pipe smoking with the cleaning of a child's bottom in a painting of 1637 devoted to the olfactory sense (Fig. 7). Although the gesture of the male figure on the left is primarily related to the action on the right, where a well-dressed and neatly coiffed mother attends to her child, the overall composition

⁷⁰ I. Veldman trans., "Elements of Continuity: A Finger Raised in Warning", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly of the History of Art*, 1990–91, 20, no. 2/3, pp. 124–141, here p. 137.

⁷¹ The first to address the significance of the five senses for genre painting was H. Kauffmann, "Die Fünfsinne in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts", in: *Kunstgeschichtliche Studien*, ed. H. Tintelnot, Breslau, 1943, pp. 133–157, esp. pp. 143–145. For further information on this alliance: *Over het genot van de zintuigen in de schilderkunst*, eds. A. De Gendt, S. Aps, exhib. cat. Sint-Niklaas, Sint-Niklaas, 2012, pp. 11–30.



Fig. 7. Jan Miense Molenaer, *Smell*, 1637, The Hague, Mauritshuis © Mauritshuis, The Hague

of the panel suggests that the artist did not intend to differentiate between the two odour sources in the painting. He rather made explicit how one stench can be surpassed by another.

While there are many tavern scenes dating to the first half of the 17th century that likewise thematize the sense of smell by referencing leisure smoking,⁷² the consumption of tobacco was also associated with the sense of taste within this genre.

⁷² Cf. M. Rath, "Tavern Odors in the Works of David Teniers the Younger (1610–1690) or Notes on a History of Art as a History of Scents", in: *Belle Haleine – The Scent of Art. Interdisciplinary Symposium*, ed. Museum Tinguely, Heidelberg, Berlin, 2015, pp. 105–114. For investigations into the moral implications of smokers in genre scenes see I. Gaskell, "Tobacco, Social Deviance, and Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century", in: *Holländische Genremalerei im 17. Jahrhundert*, eds. H. Bock, T. W. Gaehtgens, Berlin, 1987, pp. 117–137; R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 101–128; D. Harley, "The Moral Symbolism of Tobacco in Dutch Genre Painting", in: *Ashes to Ashes. The History of Smoking and Health*, eds. S. Lock, L. Reynolds, E. M. Tansey, Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1998, pp. 78–88; B. Tempel, "Symbol and Image: Smoking in Art since the Seventeenth Century", in: *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, op. cit., pp. 206–217.

Besides Molenaer, who addressed taste through a boy with a pipe and a rummer,⁷³ the Flemish painter Adriaen Brouwer highlighted the gustatory aspect of smoking tobacco in several of his genre scenes. According to Konrad Renger, Brouwer staged tobacco's effects on the human body like none other of his contemporaries.⁷⁴ One striking example is the small panel painting in Munich that shows three men occupied with different stages of the smoking process in a tavern-like interior (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Adriaen Brouwer, *Smokers (Taste)*, 1625–38, Munich, Alte Pinakothek. From: *Adriaen Brouwer – Master of Emotions: Between Rubens and Rembrandt*, ed. K. Lichtert, exhib. cat. Oudenaarde, Amsterdam, 2018, p. 80

⁷³ *The Sense of Taste*, c. 1628–1629, Amsterdam, Kremer Collection. Cf. *Adriaen Brouwer – Master of Emotions: Between Rubens and Rembrandt*, ed. K. Lichtert, exhib. cat. Oudenaarde, Amsterdam, 2018, p. 198.

⁷⁴ K. Renger, *Adriaen Brouwer und das niederländische Bauerngenre 1600–1660*, Munich, 1986, pp. 35–38.

The main figure on a chair in the foreground is lighting his pipe, his lips constricted and his eyes focused as he strongly sucks at the stem. The other two exemplify the moments shortly before and after: the senses of the male in the middleground seem to be already blurred by the nicotine, whereas the man in the background still concentrates on stuffing his pipe. As part of a whole series of images depicting each one of the senses, this panel must be construed as a representation of taste due to the artist's clear focus on the occupation of the mouth while smoking – at least with regard to the figures in the fore- and middleground.⁷⁵

A comparable incorporation of tobacco smoking into an allegory of gustation can be found in the series of the five senses designed by Dirck Hals and executed by Cornelis van Kittensteyn in 1623.⁷⁶ Following the lead of Goltzius, Hals depicts each sense as a couple, dressed in the latest fashion, sporting ruffs of different dimensions (Fig. 9). These protagonists of *GUSTUS* are positioned on a terrace that opens onto a garden with a tall monument among trees of various heights. While the gentleman sitting on a chair and turning his head towards the observer smokes a long and thin pipe, the lady elegantly holds a drinking vessel at its base. The monkey situated on the parapet of a fountain on the left leaves no room for doubt as to the couple's relation to gustation; it references the older iconographic tradition.⁷⁷ In the inscription beneath the image field, the consumption of tobacco is not taken into consideration. Instead, *GUSTUS* is characterized as an ability to perceive all flavours that demands a certain modesty in order to avoid diseases and pains caused by too much food and drink.⁷⁸

Among Netherlandish allegories of the sense of taste in the first decades of the 17th century, this engraving remains unique. For further allegorical representations of gustation including tobacco smoking one must turn to English prints. Around 1623, the London-based Dutch artist Johan Bara, for example, envisaged taste as a lavishly dressed lady in a three-quarter view, smoking a long pipe.⁷⁹

When smoking is assigned to the realm of smell, as in the etching by De Passe (Fig. 6), what comes to the fore is the olfactory nuisance caused by the smoke. This does not chiefly affect the smoker, but rather those nearby who react to it with clear gestures of dislike. The sense of smell is thus conceived of as a distant sense, carrying on the distinction made by Aristotle. But when smoking is attributed to

75 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 39. See also K. Lichtert, "Adriaen Brouwer: Master of Emotions", in: *Adriaen Brouwer*, op. cit., pp. 79–95, esp. p. 81.

76 Cf. *Immagini del sentire. I cinque sensi nell'arte*, ed. S. Ferino-Pagden, exhib. cat. Cremona, Milan 1996, no. VIII.7, pp. 228–231.

77 Since the 13th century, apes belonged to the iconographic repertory of allegories of taste. Cf. M. Pastoureau, op. cit., p. 142.

78 "Olfactum sequitur GUSTUS, quo lingua sapores / Percipit omnigenos, à curvo adjuta pallato. // Sit modus in Gustu, ne morbos atque dolores / Afferat immodicus Gustus potusque cibique".

79 For more information on Bara's and similar depictions of taste by George Glover: R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 77–78; M. Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England: A Historical Oversight*, New Haven, London, 2010, pp. 34–38; E. Welch, "The Senses in the Marketplace: Sensory Knowledge in a Material World", in: *A Cultural History of the Senses*, op. cit., pp. 61–86, esp. pp. 82–84.



Fig. 9. Cornelis van Kittensteyn after Dirck Hals, *Taste*, 1623, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

taste, as in the print by Hals, tobacco's immediate appeal to the smoker comes into view. Neither the countenance nor the posture of the lady accompanying the young gentleman provides any indication of disgust or rejection. In line with this is the Aristotelian conception of gustation as one of the contact senses: While the male figure smokes, the female figure is about to drink, devoting herself to another intimate sense impression.

Conclusion: The senses in the first smoker's still lifes

If, in the end, we turn our attention to the smoker's still lifes that were created in the first years of tobacco's circulation in taverns and artists' studios, it is not body language that is transferred to the picture plane, but a selection of objects that

convey the herb's appeal to the senses. The first to create a smoker's still life was Pieter Claesz., born in Berchem close to Antwerp, but active especially in Haarlem (Fig. 10).⁸⁰ Thanks to an inscription on the white paper in which the cut tobacco was wrapped and which is shown in the painting now unfolded on the greyish table,⁸¹ we can be certain about the attribution and dating of this early specimen.⁸² Executed in 1622, the small panel arrays everything that is needed for leisure smoking: a plain white clay pipe with a long stem, the tobacco already mentioned, a pan with glowing coals and a bunch of unlit fuses. The smoker's utensils are spread over the table and alternated with other items to drink, eat, and play with, such as a brass pot, a wine and a beer glass, a piece of bread and a knife, dice and a pack of cards. Martina Brunner-Bulst, who has studied the artist and his oeuvre in depth, construes these objects as an allegory of vanitas, each symbolizing the quickly elapsing pleasure in life.⁸³ Yet, taking into account another still life by Claesz., dedicated mainly to fruits and possibly conceived as a counterpart to the *toebakje*, she further proposes that the latter be regarded as a representation of the sense of smell.⁸⁴

Until his death in 1661, Claesz. occupied himself extensively with smoking paraphernalia, creating no fewer than 29 paintings in which they are either treated autonomously or combined with objects stemming from other spheres of activity.⁸⁵ Of these, the still life painted on canvas in 1623 is particularly interesting, since it has been convincingly interpreted as an allegory of all five senses (Fig. 11). It shows various dishes on silver plates – a bread roll, a selection of sweets, and a pie sliced open – placed on a table that is partially covered with a white cloth. To the right of this arrangement, different musical instruments are assembled, and on the left edge of the painting one can detect the familiar smoking equipment. A flute glass filled with red wine, a mirror in a black frame, a golden pocket watch, two bellied bottles of diverse size and a turtle occupy the remaining areas of the visual field. Comparing this ensemble to a vanitas still life by Dirck Matham, printed in 1622, and with recourse also to contemporary allegorical depictions of the senses, Brunner-Bulst identifies Claesz.'s work as a representation of the five modes of sense perception.⁸⁶

80 Cf. M. Brunner-Bulst, *Kritischer Œuvrekatalog...*, p. 155; eadem, "Pieter Claesz. Die Wiederentdeckung eines Malers und seiner Herkunft", in: *Pieter Claesz. Stilleben*, eds. eadem, P. Biesboer, H. D. Gregory, C. Klemm, exhib. cat. Haarlem–Zürich, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 36–60, here p. 42.

81 This particular placement deserves further analysis, for it may be related to a research approach that traces tobacco's sensory appeal to artistic creativity. Cf. R. Augustin, op. cit., pp. 53–74; A. Thum, "Rauchende Künstler", in: *Tabak und Gesellschaft. Vom 'braunen Gold' zum sozialen Stigma*, eds. F. Jacob, G. Dworok, Baden-Baden, 2015, pp. 313–345.

82 For an overview on this subgenre: S. Ebert-Schifferer, op. cit., pp. 129–132; J. Berger Hochstrasser, op. cit., pp. 171–187.

83 M. Brunner-Bulst, *Kritischer Œuvrekatalog...*, p. 155.

84 Ibid., p. 156.

85 Cf. M. Brunner-Bulst, *Kritischer Œuvrekatalog...*, no. 7–9, 12, 15–17, 28–30, 35, 57, 59, 65, 86, 95–96, 105, 130–132, 142, 152–154, 184, 227, 231–232.

86 Ibid., pp. 146–148.



Fig. 10. Pieter Claesz., *Smoker's Still Life*, 1622, private collection. From: M. Brunner-Bulst, *Pieter Claesz., der Hauptmeister des Haarlemer Stillebens im 17. Jahrhundert. Kritischer Œuvre-katalog*, Lingen, 2004, p. 13

According to this reading, the mirror refers to the sense of sight, the food to taste, the smoker's utensils to smell, the instruments to hearing, and the turtle, in line with an earlier iconographic tradition, to the tactile sense.⁸⁷

As these two examples demonstrate, the recreational use of tobacco was allocated to the realm of smell also in *toebakjes*. While this applies to Claesz's *Still Life with Musical Instruments*, the earlier panel containing the artist's signature brings up the question of whether such a division can be upheld in a broader perspective. The pairing of clay pipe and beer glass, taken up in many smoker's still lifes to follow,⁸⁸ not only points to the conceptual conjunction of drinking and smoking in the early 17th century, but, when compared to the allegories and genre scenes depicting taste (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9), also challenges the *toebakje*'s sole engagement with the realm of smell.

⁸⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 149–150. For more information on the animal and its relation to touch: M. Pastoureau, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

⁸⁸ Cf. J. Berger Hochstrasser, *op. cit.*, p. 173.



Fig. 11. Pieter Claesz., *Still Life with Musical Instruments*, 1623, Paris, Musée du Louvre. From: *Pieter Claesz. Stilleben*, eds. M. Brunner-Bulst, P. Biesboer, H. D. Gregory, C. Klemm, exhib. cat. Haarlem–Zürich, Stuttgart, 2004, p. 19

This objection is strengthened if we finally turn our attention to the still life by Flegel, touched on in the introductory paragraph of this article (Fig. 1). Flegel was born around 1566 in Olomouc, but is identifiable as a painter only following his relocation to Frankfurt on the Main, sometime before 1594.⁸⁹ He is best known for his banquet pieces and is regarded as a pioneer of still lifes.⁹⁰ Unlike Claesz., Flegel produced very few *toebakjes*, however – only two of them have survived.⁹¹ The way in which he became acquainted with this subgenre of still-life painting is not quite clear. It is generally supposed that Frankfurt and its surroundings, Hanau

89 Cf. K. Wettengl, “Georg Flegel in Frankfurt am Main”, in: *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638: Stilleben*, ed. idem, exhib. cat. Frankfurt, Stuttgart, 1993, pp. 16–28, here p. 16.

90 Cf. W. J. Müller, *Der Maler Georg Flegel und die Anfänge des Stillebens*, Frankfurt, 1956; P. Biesboer, “Pieter Claesz. in Haarlem”, in: *Pieter Claesz. Stilleben*, op. cit., pp. 10–26, esp. pp. 10–11; S. Ebert-Schifferer, review to A.-D. Ketelsen-Volkhardt (see below), *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 2004, 256, pp. 217–234, esp. pp. 226–227; J. Sander, “Die frühe Stillebenmalerei am Main. Die flämischen Emigranten, Georg Flegel und Sebastian Stoskopff”, in: *Das ‘neue’ Frankfurt. Innovationen in der Frankfurter Kunst vom Mittelalter bis heute*, eds. C. Freigang, M. Daus, E. Brockhoff, Frankfurt, Wiesbaden, 2010, pp. 22–34, esp. p. 27. For a catalogue raisonné see H. Seifertová, *Georg Flegel*, Prague, 1991; *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638: Stilleben*, ed. K. Wettengl, exhib. cat. Frankfurt, Stuttgart, new edition, 1999, pp. 296–312; A.-D. Ketelsen-Volkhardt, *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638*, Munich, Berlin, 2003.

91 The second *toebakje*, singular due to the inclusion of a candle, was made in 1631 and is preserved in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne. For further information on the panel see K. Wettengl, cat. 45, in: *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638...*, pp. 133–135.

in particular, were vibrant concentration points for new artistic tendencies, due to a thriving fair and the many immigrants from the southern Netherlands who came in search of a religiously liberal living environment.⁹² In addition, both cities rank among the first places in Germany in which tobacco was traded and soon grown as well.⁹³ On that account, Birken also refers to Hanau and Frankfurt in his *Die Truckene Trunkenheit*, discussed above.⁹⁴

In an article of 1979, Claus Grimm proposed that Flegel's *toebakje* be construed as an allegorical depiction of all five senses. According to this reading, the smoker's utensils arrayed in the painting should pertain to the sense of touch (the rolling of the tobacco leaves), of smell (the pipe), and of hearing (the fuse).⁹⁵ This rather far-fetched interpretation has since been eclipsed by Kurt Wettengl's more convincing approach taking into account the strawberries' link to humoral pathology.⁹⁶ Ascribing them the elemental qualities of "cold" and "moist", Johann Dryander advised already in 1557 that strawberries be eaten before other dishes to aid digestion.⁹⁷ Again due to their great moistness, Max Rumpolt later included them in one of his recipes, mixing them with wine and grated bread, a mixture that he considered particularly tasty.⁹⁸ Eventually, Johann Heinrich Zedler more explicitly stated, in his *Universal-Lexikon* (1732–1754), that the elemental qualities of strawberries could be balanced with wine.⁹⁹

As Wettengl suggests, the combination of fruits and wine in Flegel's painting, emphasized by the formal analogy between the strawberries and the rummer's berry-like decoration, could refer to humoral pathological associations such as these. He furthermore adds tobacco, usually conceived of as "warm" and "dry",¹⁰⁰ to this interpretative scheme, considering it a counterpart to the strawberry's elemental

92 Cf. G. Bott, "Niederländer bringen die Stillebenmalerei an den Main", in: *Die Magie der Dinge. Stillebenmalerei 1500–1800*, ed. J. Sander, exhib. cat. Frankfurt, Ostfildern, 2008, pp. 85–92; J. Sander, op. cit.

93 Cf. G. Schnapper-Arndt, *Studien zur Geschichte der Lebenshaltung in Frankfurt a. M. während des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. K. Bräuer, vol. 1, Frankfurt, 1915, pp. 105–107; *Brücke zwischen den Völkern. Ausstellung zur Geschichte der Frankfurter Messe*, eds. P. Stahl, R. Hoede, D. Skala, Frankfurt, 1991, pp. 184–189; *Blauer Dunst und flinke Finger. Der Tabak und die Zigarrenmenschen an Main und Kinzig*, ed. Archiv Frauenleben im Main-Kinzig-Kreis e. V., Hanau, 2009, pp. 28–35.

94 S. von Birken, op. cit., p. 108.

95 C. Grimm, op. cit., p. 57. Furthermore, the sense of taste is associated with the two strawberries and the sense of sight with the light reflections off of the rummer.

96 K. Wettengl, *Die Mahlzeitenstilleben von Georg Flegel*, Osnabrück, 1983, pp. 107–108, 130–134; idem, "Die 'gedeckten Tische' des Georg Flegel", in: *Georg Flegel, 1566–1638*, op. cit., pp. 71–90, esp. pp. 81–82; *ibid.*, cat. 40, p. 126.

97 J. Dryander, *Artzney Spiegel*, Frankfurt, 1557, fol. 34r.

98 M. Rumpolt, *Ein new Kochbuch*, Frankfurt, 1581, p. CXLIIIv.

99 J. H. Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. 8, Halle–Leipzig, 1734, col. 1529.

100 S. von Birken, op. cit., p. 97. Birken here refers to Monardes and others to determine tobacco's "temperament".

qualities.¹⁰¹ It was precisely these qualities that made the herb a remedy for phlegmatic people in the eyes of some authors, and the inhalation of its odorous smoke an appropriate medical treatment.¹⁰²

Against this backdrop, Flegel's smoker's still life appears as a witty recourse to the medical appreciation of tobacco as a medicine. At the same time, the sense of taste comes to the fore in this work, for the humoral pathological associations noted by Wettengl go hand in hand with references to the particular appeal of the sense of taste or, as a continuation of the same, to the digestive process. However, the sense of smell is not necessarily excluded in this context. On the contrary, the *toebakjes* by Claesz. and Flegel assemble objects that are used equally in the allegories of the senses and in the genre scenes discussed above, to visualize the interconnection between smell and taste. Without clearly assigning the objects to any one of the senses by means of bodily gestures, symbolic companions from the animal world or even captions, the smoker's still lifes exhibit a certain interpretative openness. This vagueness allows them to be related both to the sense of smell and taste – and ultimately, of course, to the sense of sight, which is engaged in the pictorial differentiation of various materials and surfaces.

Later smoker's still lifes often include precious tobacco tins or references to tobacco brands that by then were well known. They thus attest to the changing attitudes towards tobacco – in the course of the 17th century, smoking became more and more socially acceptable, the worldwide trade of the herb expanded and tobacco came to be not only smoked, but also sniffed and chewed. The early *toebakjes*, however, first and foremost testify to the new sensory stimuli that came from tobacco at the start of its triumphal march through Europe.

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¹⁰¹ K. Wettengl, *Mahlzeitenstilleben...*, p. 134.

¹⁰² S. von Birken, op. cit., pp. 138–139. Cf. K. Wettengl, *Mahlzeitenstilleben...*, pp. 132–133. The curative effect of tobacco smoke was also the subject of a dissertation completed in Gießen as early as 1628. Cf. M. C. Enke, op. cit., p. 127.

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