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**THE PIPES AS AN ASPECT OF HOUSEHOLD ART AND CULTURE,
DURING THE XVIIIth - XIXth CENTURIES**

- *Abstract* -

The article is dedicated to the culturological analysis of the pipes as to the things with the utilitarian and art appointment. Here are allocated the following basic directions of the research: historical, social and psychological, philosophical, esthetic, and the direction of the art criticism. The culturological interpretation of the attribute of the small plasticity in the context of the cross-disciplinary disciplines of the humanitarian knowledge allows the comprehending of the history and the evolution of a pipe, its contents and the specific functions in society, interaction with other art forms. The attention is focused on the cultural aspects of “reading” of the pipes in the space of the art picture of the world. In this regard, there are considered the style, the specifics of the language of the object of art that is represented in signs and symbols. It is summarized that the approaches and the methods of the cultural science in the study of the pipes as the works of the art, enrich and expand the common cultural meanings which art brings in general.

Keywords: cultural science, humanitarian disciplines, pipes, small-sized plastics, arts and crafts, the art picture of the world, style, the specifics of the language.

The art research in the aspect of the cultural science is rational and is proved by the science. This direction of the investigation allows the understanding of not only the specifics of the art content, but also its influence on the social-cultural space. In this context, it is vividly seen the significance of the research of the pipe as the plastic attribute in the sphere of the cultural science and art criticism.

In this article it is represented that the pipe as the most interesting object of the small plasticity is not only the element of the art culture, but is also the culture of the society in general. Taking into account the basic theses of the cultural concept of

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the Lyah V. I.¹, we will allocate the most fundamental directions for the analysis of the smoking device. They are the historical, social and psychological, philosophical, esthetic, and the art criticism directions. The cultural interpretation of the small plasticity subject bounded with the other cross-disciplinary branches of humanitarian knowledge is focused on the identification of the genesis of a pipe, its contents, specific functions of the pipe and its place in the system of the culture of the society and the conjunctions with the other art forms as well.

The emergence of the pipe was directly allied with the appearance and the distribution of the tobacco. This narcotic plant has appeared in Europe during the era of the great geographical sensations of the 15-16th centuries. The Christopher Columbus discovery of the American continent on which Indians grew up several types of tobacco has put its spread into the Old World. Jean Nicko – the envoy of France in Portugal, brought the seeds of this effective plant with a wide foliage on a direct thick stalk to a French court in 1560. In 1565 it was already known in Germany, in 1579 – in Italy, at the time of the Ivan Grozny – in the Moscow state. At first the West countries apprehended the tobacco as a cultural artifact of the Indian civilization, and as an effective herb from different illnesses. So, in 1561 Ekaterina Medici, the queen of France, received a gift from her ambassador in Lisbon Jean Nicko. It was a tobacco with the recommendations to use it as migraine medicine. There started to appear many popular scientific medical editions advertising tobacco as a miracle herb. In 1571 the famous Spanish doctor Nicholas Mondares published the work about the medical plants of the New World. In his research he wrote that tobacco had the ability to cure people from 36 different illnesses. The book *Vegetable Panacea (De herbe panacea)* appeared in 1587 in the Netherlands.

Such stereotypes in society developed a human habit and a thirst for smoking. The smoking of the tobacco gained a big popularity despite of the inquisition in the 16th century that considered smoking as the most immoral and ungodly phenomenon for which people had been cruelly punished. The economic situation of the society and the fashion of the tobacco use influenced the active development of smoking. Accordingly, there had arisen the need of the creation of the other necessary functional attributes of the tobacco use, such as: a pipe, tobacco pouches, a tobacco-user and various snuffboxes. On the European continent there were the first factories processing tobacco and pipe manufactories. They turned the

¹ Valentina, Lyah, *The Culturology of the art as the cross-disciplinary branch of the humanitarian knowledge*.

URL: <http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/kulturologiya-iskusstva-kak-mezhdistsiplinarnaya-otrasl-gumanitarnogo-znaniya>.

smoking devices into a subject of the mass production. In such a way, they implanted the dependence of the person on tobacco smoking. Tobacco expansion had gradually captured not only Europe, but also Asia, Japan, China and the countries, neighboring to them. By the outcome of the 18th century in the world there was practically no corner where it was not known about tobacco or where it was not smoked it. In the 19th century smoking had come round the poorest regions of the world, such as the Central and the South Africa.

The basic object of the tobacco use was the pipe. As a piece of the material culture, the pipe has undergone considerable changes throughout its development and therefore the attitude towards it changed as well. The history of the pipe is interesting not only from the point of view of the art criticism, but also from the cultural reflection. This special thing forms our idea about the participation of humanity in the culture genesis, and about the process of the continuity and innovation in the culture. The history of the small plasticity subject clearly demonstrates the preservation of the unique traits in the art and its further development and transition to the new steps of the creation of the work of art.

The pipes and tobacco were known among the ancient Indians. They have appeared in the Western Europe after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. Indian tubes were made of clay and a soft red stone mainly, their characteristic feature was a short middle part called chibouque. The tribes of the American continent used the smoking device as the main means of the communication with the world of spirits, and as a “diplomatic” ritual ceremony (“pipe of peace”) and as treatments for different diseases. The manufacturing techniques of the tubes didn’t change after the spread of the tobacco attribute in the Old World. The most common material for their production still was a clay. The heyday of the production of the ceramic tubes, small by the size, fell on the end of the 16-18th centuries in Europe. England became the first country vendor of the clay pipe. The most specific features of the ceramic tubes of the 16-17th centuries were a simple type of their form. They didn’t have any decor, except the easy relief study on the edges of the objects. The creators and the potential owners still didn’t treat the pipes as the high work of art or as a refined accessory at that period. Smoking was just an exclusively psychophysiological phenomenon. It came down only to the satisfaction of the physiological desires.

The situation changed in the middle of the 18th century. Holland became the center of the clay manufacture. In its town Gouda there had been about 500 workshops producing graceful tubes from white clay that had a mouthpiece and a chibouque as one part. They were decorated with painting or carving, and had got a glaze covering. They had been polished and had a brand of the workshop as the distinctive sign of a certain production. Such tubes had already had not only

utilitarian, but also esthetic function. They were in a great demand and had turned into profitable goods for the Dutch merchants trading with different countries.

The smoking and the use of snuff tobacco started to become a cultural marker of the “civilized” person. A good example of it is Russia at the period of the Petro ruling. The emperor, after a try of smoking in Holland, helped to spread the white clay “Dutch” tubes in Russia very actively. The achievement of the western level for him was connected not only with the ideas but with the production of fashionable European things as well. Therefore, in the middle of the 18th century there had been a big development of the pipe production in Russia. The time between 17th and 18th centuries can be easily called a period of the conversion to the new materials for production of more difficult shapes of the pipes due to the various tastes of their consumers. There had started to appear the porcelain tubes in the 18th century as the alternative to the English and Dutch clay pipes. Mainly they were made by German, Danish, and later by the French masters. Berlin, Cologne, Meysen, Frankfurt am Main were treated as the most known German centers. At the beginning of a gallant century in Meysen the way of production of solid porcelain was found. It had allowed beginning the production of porcelain tubes in the North manufactory in France for the last two decades: as usual, it had been white objects or the ones without any significant decoration on them.

The porcelain tubes turned out to be heat-resistant and the ones that gave good decorative opportunities: they could be painted in accordance with the desires of the buyer. Porcelain tubes often had the scenes of hunting or military pictures on them; it covered the smoking device with a “male” sense. However, one could see the scenes from the country history and the images of the symbols of the various professions. The porcelain tube became a part of the plastic art. It was not only a practical thing, but also the work of art in which there had been reflected a figurative awareness of reality. At the same time porcelain tubes, as well as ceramic, had their shortcomings: they were fragile, they had been broken easily due to the big heat conductivity.

Soon people started to produce wooden smoking devices and the tubes. It had been considered that carvers that were engaged in pipe business were those from the cities and villages located near the Danube River where the trade ways from the East to depth of the European continent came.

The wooden tubes were made in Bavaria, Thuringia, Schwarzwald, the Carpathians, in the Vyatka province of Russia. The main center of the tubes production was the German city of Ulm and its settlements. Alder or ash-tree, birch, nut, plum, pear or linden were used as material wood as a rule. In the 18th century, wooden tubes were smooth generally but masters passed to the traditional plastic processing gradually. At the end of 18th – the first half of the 19th century they

were polished, varnished, decorated with the carved heads, inlaid with nacre and metal. A Skillful hands of masters turned wooden tubes into the original work of art, using for its decorating the plots and the motives of the folk art, antique mythology. Unlike ceramic and porcelain tubes the woodenhead could lie on a floor, the servant lighted up the tobacco after what the master began to smoke. He used long wooden chibouque for this purpose; sometimes it could reach several meters in length.

However, the wooden tubes had their shortcomings as well. They burned through for a very short time; besides, wood material could add its specific, sometimes bitterish, taste to the tobacco.

The most graceful pipe can be treated a hempen tube, made from unknown material – crust (meerscham – magnesium silicate, the fossilated remains of mollusks). This light porous material of white color was extracted in Turkey in the neighborhood of the city of Eskisehir. A crust material was better than clay, porcelain and wood in its practical properties. It had heat stability, hygroscopicity, and high absorbing properties. Thanks to these qualities, the tube made of a crust was painted in saturated honey-brown tone. It had got the elegant surface and a noble color which improved tastes a lot.

In 1723 the Hungarian master from Budapest, the professional turner Karl Korvach, made a tube from this material. We don't have the remains of it nowadays but the memory of it has become the history of pipe business. The crust was a favorable material for master carvers who created tubes of high art level with various figured compositions. Using a crust they had cut out tubes with figures of people from a skin, animal, portraits of historical persons, with genre and even erotic scenes.

The Hungarian carvers of Adler Philipp and Sohn, Spiro dynasty, the Vienna masters of firm of family Hiess Highly made the artistic tubes from a crust. The tube became a very expensive piece thing of the high quality from the mass product of unknown craftsmen and factories. Sample forms were forced out by handworks that contributed to the development of the collecting of rare and highly artistic samples.

The evolution of the pipe as the attribute of the small-sized plastics demonstrates clearly “the dialectic law of transition of the quantitative changes in qualitative” that resulted “a denial of the oldness and a perception of the new, but on the basis of old”.² It became a marker of the social status and a part of the owner image.

² Ibidem.

Pipes are very interesting things in the space of the art pattern of the world. L. Poltoratskaya writes in her scientific research: “The art pattern of the world is the difficult emotional and rational, personal or collective cogitative representation including the cultural, conceptual, emotional components represented in the sign form of language that fully reflects the world outlooks of the personality”.³ It is true that the art pattern of the world is shown in different types of art, not depending on its specifics; it reflects the general processes that characterize this or that historical era. The entity of the work of the art in space is revealed through the style tendencies of the time, a genre and specifics of the language.

In this sense, the most indicative are the pipes from the 19th century. They had composite and plastic solutions that were created under the influence of mainly realistic direction in the art culture of this time. It is possible to name several theme groups that have found the general reflection in painting and works of small plasticity. These are the genre sketches devoted to a hunting subject, men's portrait images, and figured compositions of erotic charact.

It got a big popularity the realistic and animalistic painting connected with such names of the artists as Kessler Augustus, M. A. Henrik, R. F. Frents, N. E. Sverchkov, V. S. Perov in the 19th century, and especially in its second half.

One could see a diverse world of wild animals and hunting scenes on their works. Similar genre paintings are in the decoration of the pipes as well. So the porcelain tube with the image of deer (*ill. 1*) correlates with M. A. Henrik's picture “Deer” (*ill. 2*). Both works of art combine the aspiration of masters to transfer the interrelation of the nature and animals, they have similar receptions of composition. Animals play a role of a composite axis here, and the landscape acts as the background recreating the native habitat of red deer. The artists and carvers of pipes used psychological methods of realistic painting representing their hunting scenes. The most popular plots were the reconstruction of painful expectation of the emergence of the animal (*ill. 3*). For example, the relief image of the hunter with two dogs among trees on the crust tube. Here can be also put a sketch of the culmination hunting action – the fight between a wild animal and pursuing fleet dog, – imprinted on the Kessler Augustus's picture “A forest landscape with a scene of hunting” (*ill. 4*). Pipes with animalistic images served as a peculiar sign of male addictions and hobbies.

Under the influence of the portrait genre in painting of the 19th century there appeared highly artistic crust tubes with the portraits of the historical persons. The famous historical persons represented on the crust tubes from the palace of

³ Lyudmila Poltoratskaya, *The art in the space of the artistic picture of the world*, Krasnodar, 2009, p.25.

Anichkov are detail described in the book by I. N. Ukhanova “The smoking tubes”.⁴ The crust tube with the expressive image of Otto von Bismarck (*ill. 5*), the German emperor William I can be also taken into account (*ill. 6*). He was described with the magnificent whiskers and the award of Black Eagle on a neck. The Prussian field marshal H. Moltke was pictured in a military uniform with the sign of the award of Pur-le-Merit on a neck (*ill. 7*).

The artists-carvers created portraits of charismatic leaders of Prussia with the academic severity. They transferred their internal force and the significance in these small miniature sculptures. The similar tubes being treated as the art objects and containing ethical concepts that were perceived by men as the courage character, associated with own involvement in historical action. I. N. Ukhanova remarks that “the list of the portrait images on carved crust tubes from the Anichkov Palace specifies the art historical value of the remained works of small-sized plastics differing in eccentricity and high workmanship; that shows the individual approach to the development of miniature sculptural forms”.⁵

In the second half of the 19th century appeared the worship of a fine body. The artists (Manet, Degas, Sisley, Renoir), sculptures (Rodin, Stavasser), and the masters working in small-sized plastics put it as their direction (*ill. 8-10*). The fine nakedness of a female body decorated numerous porcelain and crust tubes, which demanded from the author a special plastic skill. Similar refined things were highly appreciated; they were created as a magnificent and amusing toy for gentlemen who could turn a tube and examine a naked figure of the pretty woman while smoking it in the secret office. Thus, a plastic language of the pipes can be carried to the sign system defining unity of form and content of the work of art, which is the character of male culture. “Reading” the objects of small-sized plastics as the artistic text is represented perspective and requires an independent research. The culturological aspects of the study enrich and expand common cultural meanings of works of arts and crafts assignment, create the esthetic culture of society.

⁴ Irina Uhanova, *The smoking tubes*, Saint- Petersburg, 2009, p.103-113.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 114.



Illustration 1. The tube with the deer images. The second half of the 19th century. Bavaria.

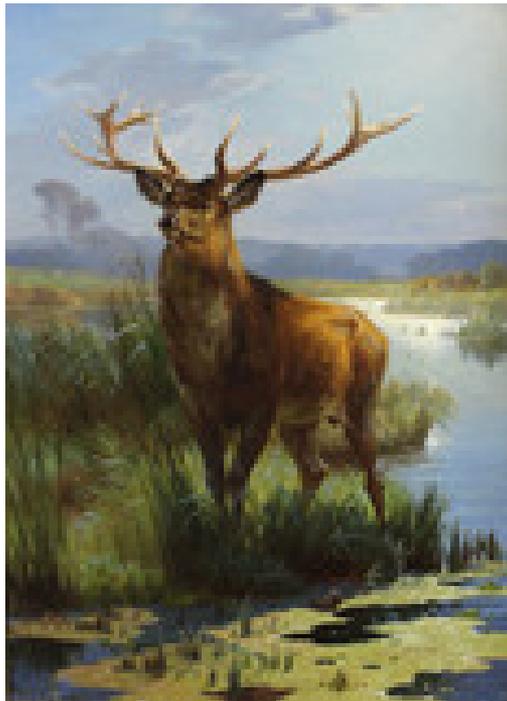


Illustration 2. M. A. Henrik "Deer". The second half of the 19th century.



Illustration 3. The tube with the hunters and the dogs. The crust. The second half of the 19th century. Saint-Petersburg.



Illustration 4. Kessler August. "The forest image with the hunting scene", 1848.

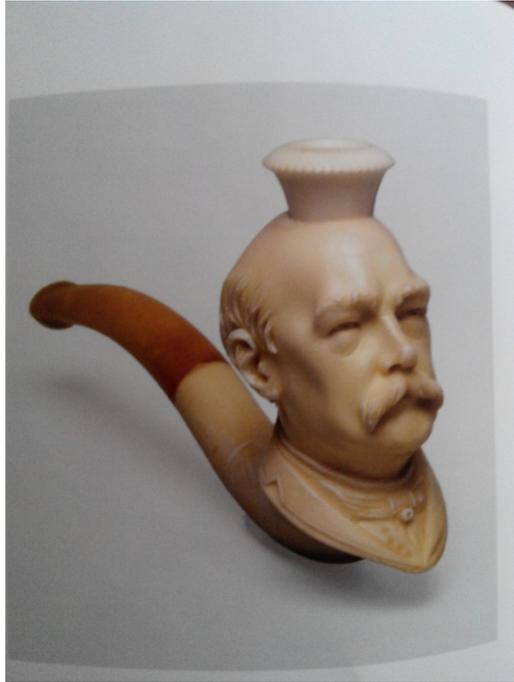


Illustration 5. The tube with the Bismark portrait. The crust. The second half of the 19th century. Germany.



Illustration 6. The tube with the portrait of the emperor Wilhelm the first. The crust. The second half of the 19th century. Germany.



Illustration 7. The tube with the portrait of the H. Moltke. The crust. The second half of the 19th century. Germany.



Illustration 8. The tube with the naked feminine figure. The crust. The second half of the 19th century. Europe.



Illustrations 9-10. The crust and porcelain tubes with the naked feminine figure 18th –19th centuries. The Western Europe.