‘THESE SEEDES, WHICH YET UNPOLISHT WERE’:
TOBACCO AND THE SOCIAL LIFE OF CONQUEST IN LONDON, 1580-1625*

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Abstract: From its origins in the Chesapeake or the Caribbean to its transformation into smoke in a Jacobean chamber, tobacco entered drastically new contexts of use as it travelled from indigenous America to the social spaces of early seventeenth-century London. This article draws on comparative anthropology and archaeology to explore how early colonization, particularly in Jamestown, influenced the development of smoking among the English political elite. This offers a case study into the way indigenous commodities and knowledge were integrated into English ritual practices of their own; but it also reveals the deliberate choices made by the English to set themselves apart from those they sought to colonize. Placing the material practices and wit poetry of gentlemen within the geopolitics of colonialism raises attention to the acts of erasure or dispossession that accompanied the incorporation of tobacco into urban sociability. Here, the practices of Algonquians were modified and altered, and the pleasures of plantation expressed as an intoxication as potent as the plant itself.

The English founding of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, and the rapid growth of tobacco cultivation that ensued, created a distinct relationship between tobacco and empire, between plantation and London fashions. Although James I detested the plant, the early seventeenth century saw a prolific rise in smoking that only escalated in the decades that followed.[1] While beleaguered planters in the Chesapeake learned how to cultivate tobacco from the Algonquian-speaking Powhatans on the eastern coast of North America, smoking also fuelled the social rituals of the 'curious, costly, and consuming gallants' in London.[2] Despite the king's best efforts to diversify industries in Virginia to discourage tobacco production, the Virginia and Somers Isles (Bermuda) companies secured a monopoly on tobacco imported into England in 1624, solidifying the relationship between tobacco and English colonial aspirations.[3]

Drawing on comparative anthropology and the material conditions of tobacco, this article explores the influence of Anglo-Algonquian exchange on the sociability of London gentlemen in this early moment of colonization. The social spaces of the metropolis brought tobacco out of American ecosystems and into drastically new contexts of use. Scholars have demonstrated the ubiquity of tobacco in a range of English discourses about health, medicine, and moral regulation, where men and women of all ages adopted smoking for a variety of reasons.[4] Merchants, sailors, and smugglers served as conduits for the circulation of commodities throughout the Atlantic world and helped diffuse tobacco and other goods in Europe and further east.[5] By the 1630s, tobacco had become imbedded alongside older intoxicants like alcohol in early modern societies and political economies, providing 'the lubricant of political patronage'

and involving displays of 'civility, privilege, subordination, and exclusion'.[6] Examining smoking and sociability in England prior to the commodity's mass consumption offers the opportunity to investigate these elements of politics, civility, and social interaction through cross-cultural encounter.

As Marcy Norton pointed out in her study of the assimilation of chocolate into Europe, the adoption of American goods cannot be understood solely through economic essentialism or cultural functionalism.[7] Cultural transmission and borrowing, social networks, and innovations in material practices all contributed to the way non-European goods were integrated into Europeans' value systems and daily lives.[8] Archaeological and anthropological approaches can provide clues towards how Indigenous 'things' were incorporated into the social rituals and masculine rites of English gentlemen, and challenge the idea that 'ethnographic' perspectives should be relegated solely to the beliefs and lifeways of those 'others' that the English encountered through colonization and trade. Michelle O'Callaghan's study of London 'wits', the gentlemen participants in urban convivial societies, itself contains language that lends itself to an anthropological approach. Jacobean gentlemen, O'Callaghan noted, had 'rituals of association' in 'quasi-ceremonial' spaces of interaction that imbued individuals with the ability to store 'knowledge of shared rituals and possession of cultural artefacts, such as…poems and songs'.[9]

The interactions between Chesapeake Algonquians and Jacobean gentlemen exhibit a broad spectrum of exchange, but also highlight the deliberate choices made by the English to set themselves apart from those they sought to colonize. The first section explores how Anglo-Algonquian interactions both demonstrate and complicate the narratives of 'improvement' presented by colonial promoters. Archaeologists' insights into 'artefact recontextualization' help to expose the imperial aspirations evident in questions of taste and appropriation.[10] In the

material culture of pipes and tobacco boxes, as in literature, gentlemen celebrated the power of artifice in transforming 'savage' or raw material through elaborate modes of interaction that allowed them to enact the notion of improvement so fundamental to early modern socio-political thought.[11] Presenting tobacco as an artefact, produced, packaged, and consumed in different ways, implies that what the English called 'improvement' was often shorthand for a more complicated process of modification and acculturation. The second section discusses what such acculturation meant in practical terms, where the materiality of smoking came to reflect the beliefs and concerns of gentlemen smokers. The final part considers what happened when tobacco became integrated in wit literature and urban rituals of sociability. While gentlemen did celebrate tobacco for its role in elevating the individual to the exalted realms of convivial refinement in ways that fit into pre-existing attitudes about intoxication, the appeal of tobacco's intoxicating powers could not be extricated from the thrill of colonizing America. The function of tobacco in wit sociability reveals how pro-colonial gentlemen consciously modified and appropriated Native American practices to perpetuate distinct ideas about their own civil refinement, one enhanced by demonstrations of colonial intervention.

I. Enacting Improvement

Tobacco connected metropolitan social arenas to America and the Native groups that had gathered knowledge about its botanical properties for millennia. 'The people of the South-parts of Virginia esteeme [tobacco] exceedingly', noted one English writer in 1615.[12] Archaeologists have excavated pipes in North and South America that incorporated anthropomorphic and zoomorphic carvings, particularly birds that drew connections with drug-induced 'flights' and their spiritual connections.[13] Though Native Americans consumed tobacco largely for religious

purposes, they also did so socially and for diplomatic reasons.[14] Tobacco frequently mediated early interactions between Native groups and colonists in the Chesapeake, at a time when the English often relied on Indigenous groups for their survival.[15] It is not despite but because of these shared moments of exchange that the English likely sought to differentiate themselves more forcefully from those cultures they sought to colonize. This section explores some of the ways in which English gentlemen sought to do this, where attitudes towards the transformation of nature, and even the production and packaging of tobacco, became a means for colonial promoters to articulate the value of 'improvement' and providentialism.

To Elizabethan and Jacobean gentlemen, the value of civil society lay in its artificiality. Following the writings of Aristotle and Cicero, authorities viewed social organization and the subordination of what was raw or savage as a key differentiation between humans and animals. The successful conquest of human nature and the natural world made civil society possible, a concept that informed domestic ideas of authority and justified intervention in America.[16] The English subscribed heavily to the idea of 'improvement', a term Paul Slack argues was a pervasive feature of elite discourse in the seventeenth century, tying land and social endeavours to plantation and socio-economic change.[17] 'Improvement' linked policy-makers' hopes for territorial expansion to individual virtue and the Protestant belief in divine revelation, as scripture existed 'to teach, to improve, to correct'.[18] In 1607, Ferdinando Gorges, captain of the harbour defences in Plymouth, wrote to James' secretary of state, Robert Cecil, complaining that the idleness of the soldiers and young gentlemen imperilled the fledgling colony in Virginia.[19] Gorges insisted on industry as the solution to the colony's current failures, for it was 'arte, and industry, that produceth [commodities], euen from the farthest places of the worlde'.[20]

Sustained interaction with the Algonquians had revealed fundamentally different ways of viewing the world. Virginians 'say that God in the creation did first make a woman, then a man, thirdly great maize...fourthly, Tobacco'.[21] Writing about his time in the short-lived Roanoke colony in the mid-1580s, Thomas Hariot wrote that Algonquians 'make hallowed fires & cast some of the pouder therein for a sacrifice…all done with strange gestures, stamping, sometime dauncing, clapping of hands, holding up of hands, & staring up into the heavens, uttering therewithal and chattering strange words & noises'.[22] Concerns over degeneration through smoking went beyond rhetoric to the perceived reality of savagery as a religious and moral evil, and Protestant authorities accused smokers of seeming to 'degenerate into the nature of the Savages, because they were carried away with the self-same thing'.[23] Adopting a practice entrenched in Indigenous socio-cosmic belief created anxieties around orthodoxy and pollution that necessitated differentiation.

At the same time, tobacco was the only colonial industry that brought any significant profit to gentlemen investors in the 1610s, and policy-makers increasingly articulated its cultivation as a marker of imperial success and economic good. The Crown began receiving customs and impositions from tobacco in 1619, following the expiration of the clause in the Virginia Company's charter that exempted them from customs in the early years of plantation.[24] When the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War in 1618 brought fears of Spanish Catholicism to a fever pitch, Protestant MPs promoted tobacco as a means of supporting Virginia while curbing Spanish expansion in the Atlantic, diminishing the reliance of English consumers on Spanish exports. Once Virginia was settled and more economically diverse, maintained Edward Bennett in parliament in 1620, planters would 'quickely finde better Commodities'. Until then, 'to inhabite *Virginia,* and to draw from thence greate benefit into this Land, is nothing but

prohibiting the bringing in of Spanish *Tobacco*'.[25] Planting colonies and establishing a sustained, Protestant presence in America became a means of legitimizing consumption by emphasizing godly industry and improvement, though bitter disputes between merchants, courtiers, and MPs over the tobacco monopoly continued into the later 1620s and 1630s.[26] The proclamation announcing James' support of American-grown tobacco in 1624 articulated the importance of granting Virginia and the Somers Isles a monopoly for the good of 'our Empire' – a significant shift from the king's previous, vehemently anti-tobacco rhetoric in texts such as *A counterblaste to tobacco* (1604), and from earlier proclamations that had supported colonial tobacco but not used the word 'empire'.[27]

The way tobacco leaves were cultivated and packaged mattered to English imperial self-fashioning. Commodities, in the words of Arjun Appadurai, have 'social lives' that bond them to a 'variety of social arenas', ones that are linked while retaining distinct contexts of use.[28] As physical entities, tobacco plants were produced in ways that related to specific geographies. Gentlemen drew distinctions between pudding/roll tobacco and cured leaves, aware of their geographic associations with either the Spanish West Indies or English North America.[29] Some ten years after Hariot's contact with Algonquians, the London poet Anthony Chute remarked that 'it seems that the [South American] Indians use to take this *Tabacco* in other maner of pipes than we...which the Indians make of Palme leaves and such like'.[30] These wide 'leaves' referred to the rolled tobacco favoured by the Spanish, which English writers related to the Spanish empire but also to the longstanding practices of Native groups. Tobacco, wrote one physician, was of 'high respect among the Indians' of South America and the Caribbean, who 'smoak through a Cane'.[31] Since tobacco labourers on Spanish plantations, including enslaved Africans and poorer

Europeans, chewed pulverized, lime-enhanced tobacco to relieve hunger and fortify their strength, chewing tobacco could be associated with manual labour or the 'poorer sort'.[32]

While the Spanish learned to consume tobacco as Mesoamericans did, in thick rolls or with reed pipes, the Indigenous groups whom the English encountered in eastern North America smoked their tobacco through right-angled clay pipes. Pipe-smoking emerged, therefore, in large part from European intervention in North America. The English were aware of the importance of pipes in the Algonquians' highly ritualized practices, where the transformation of tobacco leaves into smoke allowed tobacco's properties to elevate a person towards spiritual realms.[33] For this reason, early endorsements of tobacco from the mid-sixteenth century often praised the medicinal properties of tobacco, such as the application of leaves to body parts or diffused into hot liquids, but described the social consumption of smoking as uncivil.[34] Physicians often recommended that leaves 'be ashed or warmed in imbers' rather than smoked.[35]

As the English began to cultivate a distinct strand of tobacco in Virginia from the mid-1610s, one that combined seeds from potent West Indies tobacco with methods of cultivation learned from the Powhatans, gentlemen began to relate tobacco to their colonial success.[36] By the 1630s, merchants wrote to Charles I complaining of the interference of the Dutch in the trade of their 'Virginia leaf tobacco', which they related to 'the growth of the King's colonies'.[37] Those who endorsed English-grown tobacco in the Chesapeake or in England argued that Iberian tobacco came corrupted with artificial dyes, the product of 'a kinde of filthy leafe, sold by the Portugalles residing in London, the same beeing made up in rolles'.[38] English merchants and members of the gentry who pursued colonial interests in parliament framed Chesapeake tobacco as a specifically English, even patriotic endeavour.

With their matrilineal societies and use of tobacco in spiritual ceremonies, Algonquian ways of life stood at odds with the patriarchal, Protestant society that English authorities sought to establish in America, so that gentlemen sought to 'improve' and transform the objects and social practices around the commodity they appropriated. While conveying them as a 'loving' people, Hariot also noted that Algonquians lacked 'skill and judgement in the knowledge and use of our things...howe much they upon due consideration shall finde our manner of knowledges and craftes to exceede theirs in perfection'.[39] This was evident in Edward Waterhouse's description of the colonist George Thorpe's attempts to change the Algonquian built environment. Whereas the paramount ruler Wahunsenacah (Powhatan) 'dwelt onely in a cottage, or rather a denne or hog-style...covered with mats after their wyld manner', Waterhouse wrote, 'to civilize him, [Thorpe] first, built him a fayre house according to the English fashion, in which hee tooke such joy, especially in his locke and key, which he so admired, as locking and blocking his doore an hundred times a day'.[40]

An account circulating in Wampanoag oral history may suggest that the English not only sought to 'civilize' Native Americans with objects 'according to the English fashion', but also by re-forming Native American material culture with European technologies. The story draws on Algonquian ideas of boundary-crossings between the spiritual and earthly realms, in a narrative that carries a didactic message about honouring the dead. According to the account, James I sent a Wampanoag *sachem*, or leader, a silver pipe as a token of amity. 'King James of England, on hearing of the goodness and virtues of Massasoit, once sent him a present of a silver pipe. The chieftain prized it highly as a gift from his "white brother over the sea"'.[41] Despite the story's supernatural elements, in which the pipe gains animate qualities when it is not buried with its owner, Massasoit was a known historical figure who forged ties with William Bradford and other

English colonists in the 1620s and who remained neutral even after the outbreak of the brutal Pequot war in 1636. Although recorded in the nineteenth century with language characteristic of the era in which it was passed down ('white brother', 'chieftain'), the story drew on a much older oral tradition that is still used by Algonquians to pass down and preserve memories about significant events in the past. If James, or members of the Virginia Company, did send silver pipes to high-ranking Algonquians as gifts, it offers further evidence of the English desire to encourage Native Americans to embrace English civility through interfering with or transforming their material ways of life. While 'god indueth thise [*sic*] savage people with sufficient reason to make thinges necessarie to serve their turnes', the English nonetheless sought to demonstrate their ability to fashion nature into art in accordance with European conceptions of value.[42] In doing so, the material conditions of craft, like metalworking, and sustained colonial intervention through plantation became a manifestation of English authority as much as it purportedly 'improved' the lives of those in the colonies.

II. Pipes Forms and Priming Irons: Appropriating Atlantic 'Things'

Easily broken and discarded, their brittle clay fragments unearthed by the thousands in London and other major port cities, early modern English tobacco pipes can seem numbingly quotidian. Found in back gardens, riverbanks, and archaeological sites for theatres and artisans' workshops, extant pipe fragments overwhelmingly support the scholarly consensus that tobacco became an object of mass consumption in England by the 1630s.[43] Assuming the commonplace nature of pipes – that they 'naturally' embodied the forms that were so readily adopted in Europe – risks glossing over the possibility that the English intentionally modified or appropriated Algonquian forms in the formative early years of contact. As archaeologists have long made evident, pipes,

as artefacts, were consciously constructed. They were utilitarian but also used socially, existing as indicators of a society's beliefs, aspirations, and ideologies.[44] Since objects are relational and operate differently according to their social contexts, their forms should not be taken for granted.[45]

While difficult to establish the extent to which the earliest European pipe forms were consciously modelled differently from Indigenous artefacts, Algonquian and English pipes contained marked differences in colour, material, and form. Algonquian pipe stems were shorter and thicker than English pipe stems. English pipe bowls were very small, shaped like a bulb rather than an octagon and manufactured in a clear response to the commodity's costliness prior to the 1630s. Spanish attempts to establish a colony in the Chesapeake in the 1570s had failed, meaning English activity in the region in ensuing decades brought colonists in direct, prolonged contact with North Americans before the Dutch and French settled in New Amsterdam and Canada.

The differences in form are especially worth considering given that English craftspeople have been credited with bringing pipe manufacturing to the Continent. The small, white, bulbous-shaped prototypes manufactured by the English became the templates for the pipes that spread to the Netherlands from the 1580s. Tightly-knit communities of English merchants and artisans dominated the pipe-making industry in the Dutch Republic into the early seventeenth century, with women finishing and glazing the pipes that men moulded into their definitive shape.[46] This was a time when English soldiers and sailors were garrisoned in the Netherlands, but also when Hariot and other colonists were observing Algonquian customs first hand. As Dutch pipe specialists acknowledge, migrant English soldiers and artisans appear to have been largely responsible for introducing pipe-making techniques to Amsterdam and Gouda, which

became major centres of pipe manufacture in subsequent decades.[47] Records from the Chapel of the Begijnhof in Amsterdam document disputes between pipe-makers over the right to use the Tudor rose mark in the 1610s and 20s, and in Gouda the 1640s the wives of a large number of English soldiers and pipe makers opposed the establishment of a domestic pipe making guild by claiming responsibility for the prosperity of the city.[48]

Even in Virginia, local clays and firing techniques did not contribute significantly to an American pipe-making industry at this time. Algonquian pipes (and later, African ones) in the Chesapeake were made of local terracotta, while English pipes were manufactured in large part from the white Dorset clay brought to London to supply the monopoly held by Tobacco Pipe Makers of London and Westminster. The pipes uncovered by archaeologists in early plantation sites, such as Flowerdew Hundred or Martin's Hundred, are overwhelmingly full of European-made pipes. Only 3.9 per cent of pipe samples found at the Sandys plantation site, for example, were locally made.[49] Much later, in the 1660s, the pipe maker Emanuel Drue consciously made two types of pipes: ones mimicking white European clay pipes, the others more angular and resembling Algonquian models, which he manufactured using red and brown clays.[50] This suggests that Drue chose to make different pipes for particular markets and consumers, supporting the idea that colonists preferred pipes that resembled English-made ones. As the archaeologist Charles Orser posited, English colonists' insistence on smoking white pipes may complement the argument made by James Deetz in 1983, who believed that colonists' move from redware to white ceramics and delftwares in the eighteenth century reflected a belief in the superiority of the artificial over the natural, becoming a symbol of refinement in Anglo-America.[51]

Two pipes from early colonial Jamestown, differing significantly in colour, material, and form: an English pipe bowl, made with white ball clay, c. early seventeenth century, 8237-JR, and an English-made pipe by Robert Cotton, manufactured in imitation of Algonquian pipes, c. 1608, 8238-JR. Courtesy of Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation (Preservation Virginia).

In the early Jamestown years, at a time when death rates were incredibly high and the English 'on the ground' were forced to make material concessions to survive, local clays and ceramics were found with higher frequency, but these existed as a small percentage of a much larger assemblage that also included Dutch pottery with painted figures, Venetian glass, and even Chinese ceramics. Moreover, archaeologists have found very few Indigenous artefacts in James Fort after 1622. This suggests that the attack in March that year, in which an alliance of Algonquian groups killed 347 English men, women, and children, led to the colonists' conscious and near-complete rejection of Indigenous goods.[52] In many ways, 1622 brought the strict policies against assimilation that London councillors had advocated for years, and which were forcefully articulated in the first General Assembly of the House of Burgesses in Jamestown in 1619. Colonists were directed to cultivate 'the better disposed of the Natives…thereby they may growe to a likeinge and love of Civility', but were to abstain from living among the Powhatans,

or from allowing Algonquians into their homes without permission.[53] Even as planters sought to produce tobacco for a growing English market, resisting cultural assimilation remained a prominent concern.

The formidable hybrid pipes made by the Englishman Robert Cotton are a seeming exception, exhibiting a remarkable engagement with Algonquian design and technique.[54] Little is known of Cotton, who arrived in Jamestown in the spring of 1608. Identified by John Smith as a pipe-maker, Cotton manufactured a series of pipes made from local clay. The pipes closely resemble Native-made pipes from the Chesapeake, with similarities in length and form, including the shape and angle of the bowl. At the same time, the pipes were differentiated from their Native counterparts in striking ways. Many of the surviving examples were imprinted with a fleur-de-lis and/or diamond shape, using small iron stamps that archaeologists have recovered in their excavations. These stamps provided the first example of print in English America, and they closely resembled those used to decorate the products of another European industry: books. The use of metals to mark pipes may have further reinforced, to the English, a sense of their advanced craftsmanship through ironwork. Hariot listed iron among those objects that 'were so straunge unto [the Algonquians], and so farre exceeded their capacities to comprehend the reason and meanes how they should be made and done', alongside sea compasses, mathematical instruments, guns, books, and clocks.[55] By the 1650s, the mathematician Robert Wood, an affiliate of the Hartlib circle who supported the diversification of colonial economies, voiced the belief that 'the maine & original difference betwixt that which we call Civility of the Europeans & Barbarisme of the Americans arose chiefly from this, that the former had the use of Iron'.[56]

Another Cotton pipe manufactured in imitation of Algonquian pipes, this one imprinted with a diamond-shaped metal stamp similar to those used to decorate books, c. 1608, 8238-JR. Courtesy of Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation (Preservation Virginia).

Along with stamping foliage, Cotton marked his pipes with words, inscribing them with the names of prominent supporters and investors of the Virginia Company including Walter Ralegh, Thomas West, lord de la Warr, and Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton. Although found in Jamestown, the Cotton pipes were likely intended to be sent to England as gifts to the investors whose names appeared on the artefacts. One such pipe contains the name of Walter Cope, an avid collector who built an extravagant 'castle', later known as Holland House, in Kensington in 1605. Visitors to Cope's residence, including the king and James' wife Anne of Denmark, would have walked through a garden of trees brought from other parts of the world, and into rooms stuffed with 'holy relics', 'porcelain from China', 'heathen coins', 'a [Native American] canoe', and 'a Madonna made of Indian feathers'.[57] Had the Cotton pipes ever left Jamestown, Cope's pipe may have found itself in this environment. Alongside relics, coins, and feathers, such objects placed the English in an alluring world of commercialization and global exchange, but one that nonetheless viewed these artefacts as curiosities to be and wondered at, not practically appropriated into everyday use.

Far from Jamestown, the social performance of smoking in London involved an array of objects that recontextualized the meaning and purpose of smoking. Gentlemen used tobacco to set distinctions within their own carefully-constructed social hierarchies. Anthony Chute's posthumous *Tabacco* (1595) engaged with the opinions of physicians and sought to redeem the reputation of the plant by illuminating its health benefits. But the tract, dedicated to 'Heroicall minded Gentlemen' and concerned with the quality of the plant and its cultivation, was deeply imbedded in the social lives of urban wits, containing an engraving of a smoking gentleman and a humorous coat of arms that juxtaposed rapiers with a similarly-shaped pipe.[58] Chute dedicated his book to fellow poet Humphrey King, playing on King's name by crowning him '*Sovereign of Tabacco*'.[59] In his conclusion, Chute invoked 'the planter, the writer, and the reader', relating the world of educated Londoners to those who effecting plantation in America.[60]

By praising tobacco for its subversive qualities while associating the commodity with political expansion through the efforts of Hariot, Ralegh, and other peers, wits differentiated their practices from Algonquian beliefs around the essential properties, function, and value of tobacco. However disposable pipes were, the elite often carried tobacco in costly accoutrements. Pipe cases, tamps, and boxes set further distinctions. Engraved with monarchs, imperial crowns, and, most often, heraldic motifs, tobacco boxes reflected the tastes of a demographic that concerned many Jacobean moralists in the early decades of consumption: the gentry who arrived in London for the fashionable 'season' and who had rapidly taken up smoking. '[O]ur gallant', wrote the London pamphleteer Thomas Dekker in 1609, must 'draw out his Tobacco-box, the ladell for the cold snuffe into the nosthrill, the tongs and priming Iron: All which artillery may be of gold and silver (if he can reach the price of it)'.[61] The status of the fashionable London gentleman depended on attention to what he smoked, and where he sourced it: 'heere you must observe to

know in what state Tobacco is in towne, better then the Merchants...then let him shew his severall tricks in taking it...For these are complements that gained Gentlemen no meane respect'.[62]

Silver and tortoiseshell tobacco box, British, c. seventeenth century, 14.58.224 © Met Museum.

The rituals around smoking involved knowing the 'state [of] tobacco' and acknowledged global networks of exchange. The English love of tobacco, Dekker wrote, 'make the phantastick *Englishmen* (above the rest) more cunning in the distinction of thy *Rowle Trinidado, Leafe,* and *Pudding*.[63] Dekker related tobacco to preference and taste, where gentlemen knew the difference between 'rowle' and 'pudding' tobacco sourced from the West Indies and the 'leafe' sent from North America. As the antiquarian William Camden noted, pipe smoking among the English was popular just as much out of 'wantonnesse, or rather fashions sake' then for 'healths sake'.[64] Smoking redefined patterns of sociability in London, where gentlemen evoked and

simultaneously sought to differentiate their practices from the use and function of tobacco among Native Americans.

III. Intoxication and Imperial Fantasy

Unlike other Atlantic goods that gentlemen sought to regulate in parliament, such as sassafras or cod, tobacco was a potent intoxicant whose colonial associations lent themselves to the exhilarated language of possession and discovery. A glorification of empire and intoxication blossomed together in the literature of wits who penned verses intended to be shared and performed in social settings. The appeal of tobacco as an intoxicant was apparent in the opening lines of Raphael Thorius' *Hymbus tabaci,* first published in Latin in 1626 but composed and circulated around 1610:

> Of harmlesse bowles I mean to sing the praise,
> And th'Herb which doth the Poets fancy raise…
> Fill me a Pipe, boy, of that lustie smoke
> That I may drink the *God* into my brain
> And so enabled, write a buskin'd strain.[65]

Though presented as a native plant of the Americas, the poem projected tobacco as an intoxicant that belonged in the hands of Europeans. In its ludicrous scenario, Bacchus, god of wine and fervent endorser of communal debauch, conducted a war against Native Americans to claim tobacco for himself and his fellow carousers. Not only that, but Bacchus presented wine and tobacco as a civilizing force that contained the power to transform the Indigenous peoples of

America into refined beings. Deep in a cannibal bower, Bacchus told his anthropophagous companion he had but 'play'd the man'.[66] Only by knowing how to drink and smoke – not alone, but in good company – would he 'still the *Arts*' into 'their gross minds'.[67] The poem presented sociability in relation to a Protestant masculinity that defined itself against Native Americans and advanced Atlantic intervention to the disadvantage of other European empires, repeatedly questioning what it meant to be a man and placing intoxication within the behavioural rites that inspired both literature and action. 'Banish (my Friends) these *unclean* rites,' Bacchus' adherents coaxed the 'savages' who crouched before them, 'and live/The life of *men*'. Then, offering the pipe: 'here…your *recovery* lies,/Onely be willing to be cur'd'.[68] To 'live the life of men' was not to be bloodied in war but to spar with words and mix with friends.

In the private chambers and taverns where gentlemen met to discuss matters of state and share poetry, the materiality of tobacco lent itself to the celebration of tobacco's refining qualities. The elongated stems of English pipes, which could extend to ninety centimetres, made boring holes for the smoke more difficult than the thicker, sturdier Algonquian models. This suggests that rather than convenience, these pipes were specifically constructed in such a way for other reasons. This likely had to do with managing the heat of the pipes after smokers lit their tobacco, but this invariably influenced the performativity of civility at dinner tables or among friends, where discourses and patterns of drinking were interrupted by the need to 'drink' in smoke. How did the act of smoking break up speeches and songs, and influence gesture? This is easier to reconstruct in the popular citizen comedies of the Jacobean era, which often included stage directions that involved tobacco, pipes, and exchanges in tobacco shop interiors.[69] Nonetheless, the way that gentlemen wrote about tobacco suggests that they may have performed their writings at dinner parties and private gatherings. Verses telling the reader to '[t]ake up these

lines Tabacco-like unto thy braine,/And that divinely toucht, puffe out the smoke againe' encouraged participation, instructing gentlemen to enjoy good company while relating tobacco to the English presence in Virginia by citing texts like Hariot's.[70] Pipes were likely used to animate, perhaps even play out, those poems like *Hymnus tabaci* that were specifically about the triumphs of civil intoxication in the context of masculine conviviality.

The integration of smoking into metropolitan wit coteries involved social differentiation but also a clear self-fashioning against Indigenous practices. Despite the thirty-four-year period separating their publications, the images in Hariot's *A briefe and true report* (1590), and those in John Smith's *The generall historie of Virginia* (1624) showed Algonquians incorporating tobacco pipes and leaves in their 'strangest gestures' at a time when the English colony in North America remained tenuous and two-way assimilation continued to be seen as politically-disadvantageous.[71] The religious ceremonies or small, full-lined interiors in which Algonquians were shown using tobacco reinforced their remoteness from European conceptions of civil society. Conversely, woodcuts and stage directions depicted English smokers in a symbiotic relationship with their pipes, standing confidently in the tavern or sitting at a table with friends, surrounded by other markers of leisure and consumption including playing cards, plates, cutlery, and drinking vessels. The pleasuring of drinking and writing poetry could be enhanced by imagining a 'golden worlde in this our yron age', one where intervention in America would yield 'good Tobacco' and submission to the English.[72]

The desire to appropriate tobacco into metropolitan consumption while rejecting Native ways of life sheds light on some of the consequences of English 'improvement'. In the light of colonization, the absence of Native American-made objects in English self-fashioning is significant. Scholars have found that on the whole, eastern goods like textiles became the

commodities with global appeal in England, rather than those of the Americas.[73] Intricate patterns of Indian chintz or Chinese porcelain, like the vogue for Ottoman carpets seen in countless Tudor and Stuart portraits and interior furnishings, visually demonstrated elite access to the developing trade routes of the East and its associated luxuries. Conversely, the English elite showed little appreciation for Native American methods of production. To have widely acknowledged the levels of craftsmanship involved in producing dyed moose-hair, or *roanoke* beads drilled and polished from shells – as a few colonists did, usually in unpublished letters and reports intended for select, private audiences – would have challenged commonplace English depictions of Algonquians as 'pagans' in need of assimilation and redemption. Nor did English motifs on tobacco boxes seek to connect tobacco to its American origins. Although tobacco boxes appeared to have become curios and gifts exchanged among the elite very quickly, these boxes were overwhelmingly engraved with heraldic devices or symbols of Stuart royalty, and were inscribed with mottos and messages in English or Latin.[74] Pipes themselves were stamped with Tudor roses, foliage, and the initials of merchants and pipe makers.

In a matter of decades, English gentlemen had successfully championed the subordination of Indigenous cultures as markers of their own civility. By 1630, the witty dialogue, *Wine, beere, ale, and tobacco. Contending for superiority*, personified the figure of Tobacco not as a Native American, as typified in its earlier representations in English drama, but as 'a swaggering gentleman', deeply entrenched, as Phil Withington pointed out, in the social world of urban wits.[75] Playing on the language of 'soveraigne' tobacco that had long informed gentlemanly discourse, Wine (a 'gentleman') acknowledged that 'Tobacco is sophisticated'.[76] Tobacco's status was related to his smooth ability to persuade, evoking the wits at the Inns of Court who enthusiastically adopted smoking at the time. He could, Tobacco boasted, 'distill eloquence and

oracle upon the tongue...words flowing in so sweet distinction'.[77] As Ale (the 'country man') acknowledged, Tobacco was a 'most excellent discourser', possessing the rhetorical abilities that were fundamental to elite concepts of political authority.[78] Despite its foreign origins, Tobacco now had an entrenched place in the world of European intoxicants. The play concluded with Wine seeking friendship with Tobacco, acknowledging his elevated status and expressing a fear of being replaced altogether unless the two formed a kinship. Tobacco's essence had been fully domesticated: there was no trace of Native America in his character at all.

Conclusion

This investigation of the incorporation of tobacco into late Elizabethan and Jacobean metropolitan sociability offers a socially-specific exploration of an intoxicant in a particular moment in time. Nonetheless, these conditions reveal several important insights into the entangled nature of colonization and the material assemblages of sociability that developed in England as a result. Firstly, the fluidity of exchange between Jamestown and London provides a case study into the process whereby sought-after Indigenous goods, knowledge, and practices were integrated into England, something that is often lost in studies of the *longue durée*. Secondly, gentlemanly attitudes towards tobacco raise attention to the impact of English encounters with Algonquian peoples on the elite's self-conscious understanding of their own civility, adding a new dimension to scholarship about the development of English civility in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[79] The way gentlemen integrated tobacco into their forms of social interaction, from the poems they penned to the way they responded to access to or methods of smoking, demonstrates how a Native American commodity became incorporated into

their codes of behaviour. More research remains to be done on the extent to which middling and labouring men and women may have associated tobacco with the colonial project in urban centres, and whether images of Native Americans on tavern signs, tobacco packaging, and on the stage may have shaped their sociability.[80]

The growing taste for a potent American intoxicant among urbane gentlemen brought imperial aspirations within the associational politics of elite London society. The archaeologist Ian Hodder wrote that 'things show up or matter or count in terms of how they are fitting in our future-directedness – our human projects'.[81] The proliferation of tobacco, pipes, and boxes in the chambers and pockets of colonial-minded gentlemen was often related to a specific project: that of empire and the pleasures it afforded. Cultivation was nothing if not 'a [conversion] from that most brutish condition of life, to...pollitícke government', and transplanting tobacco into the spaces of the political elite often explicitly celebrated this transformation.[82] Linking a 'new' intoxicant to the virtues of plantation enabled gentlemen, as consumers, to legitimize what many Jacobean moralists considered to be a social and political ill. The glories of empire hinged on a 'yet' – 'those seeds, which *yet* unpolisht were' – and the English enacted what seemed like the inevitability of fruition through how and what they smoked.[83] Once grown and cured, those tobacco 'seedes' were put in gilt boxes stamped with coats of arms and the faces of kings, and consumed in far different environments than those of the Algonquian Chesapeake, or even the hybrid space of the plantations.

To consider the social life of things is to recognize the potency of objects in influencing the behaviour of those who use them, but also to recognize the human intent through which borrowed or appropriated things were modified in different settings. The English specifically related the success of plantation to the acquisition of a Native intoxicant, one they learned to

cultivate through the direct assistance of *quiakros,* revered Powhatan religious men and healers.[84] For this reason, the presence – and absence – of indigeneity matters to scholarly assessments of how civility and social habits developed in England. More so than the French or the Spanish, the English were vehement in their rejection of overt cultural hybridity. The allure of smoking among gentlemen often depended on an awareness of the existence of Native peoples while denying the value of their socio-religious practices, craftsmanship, and aesthetics. '[I]mbrace/My *Art*', pressed Bacchus in Thorius' poem, using the sensual language of submission to conviviality to advocate control.[85] This curious meshing of moral uprightness and 'buskin'd' intoxication uniquely contributed to how gentlemen 'play'd the man'.[86] Contextualizing the political aspirations of the urban gentlemen who partook in such rituals enables a better understanding of what the English were rejecting, and what they were promoting, when they cried, 'Give him the *Pipe*'.[87]

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