

Hookah

Description & History

Terminology

A hookah, nargile in Turkish or shisha, is a single or multi-stemmed (often glass-based) water pipe for smoking shisha (a type of tobacco). Originally from India, hookah has gained immense popularity, especially in the Middle East and is gaining popularity in the USA, Canada, UK, and elsewhere. Today, some of the highest quality and most extravagant hookah pipes come from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Turkey. The hookah operates by water filtration and indirect heat. It is used for smoking fruits although some

people have now used hookahs to smoke other items such as hashish or marijuana products.

Often there is confusion with terminology. In

the west, the device itself is referred to as a Hookah, and the tobacco/molasses is referred to as the Shisha. However, in the Arab world, the device itself is called a shisha (in reference to its glass base) and the tobacco is called moassel. Depending on locality, hookahs or Shishas may be referred to by many names: Arabic Language use it as Shisha or Nargeela or Argeela and they use it throughout the whole of the Arab World; Turkish people use it as Narghilé but pronounced "Argilah" is the name most commonly used in Turkey, Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, and Syria. Narghile derives

from the Persian word narghile, meaning coconut, which in turn is from the Sanskrit word narikela, suggesting that early hookahs were hewn from coconut shells.

In Albania, Bosnia, Croatia the hookah is called "Lula" or "Lulava" in Romani, meaning "pipe," the word "shishe" refers to the actual bottle piece.

Shisha, from the Persian word shishe, meaning glass, is the common term for the hookah in Egypt and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf (including Kuwait, Iraq, Bahh-grain, Qatar, Oman, UAE, and Saudi Arabia), and in Morocco, Tunisia, Somalia and Yemen.

In Iran, hookah is called "Ghalyoon". In Uzbekistan, hookah is called "Chillim". In India and Pakistan the name most similar to the English hookah is used: huqqa.

The commonness of the Indian word "hookah" in English is a result of the British Raj, the British dominion of India (1858–1947), when large numbers of expatriate Britons first sampled the water-pipe. William Hickey, shortly after arriving in Kolkata, India, in 1775, wrote in his Memoirs: "The most highly-dressed and splendid hookah was prepared for me. I tried it, but did not like it. As after several trials I still found it disagreeable, I with much gravity requested to know whether it was indispensably necessary that I should become a smoker, which was answered with

equal gravity, "Undoubtedly it is, for you might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion. Here everybody uses it."

History

The Hookah was invented in India in the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar (1542 - 1605 AD). Following the European introduction of tobacco to India, Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani a descendant of Abdul Qadir Al-Gilani came from Baghdad to India who was later a physician in the court of

Mughal raised concerns after smoking tobacco became popular among Indian noblemen, and subsequently envisaged a system which allowed smoke to be passed through water in order to be 'purified'. Gilani introduced the hookah after Asad Beg, then ambassador of Bijapur, encouraged Akbar to take up smoking. Following popularity among noblemen, this new device from Arabia for smoking soon became a status symbol for the Indian aristocracy and gentry. The Indian Hookah was designed differently from the Arabian Hookah or Shisha which was invented during the Abbasid

Empire in Baghdad. They were different in shape and design.

has been recorded that the Arabs are the biggest shisha smokers in the World and have the most shisha Cafes.



Culture Arab world

In the Arab world, people smoke it as part of their culture and traditions. Social smoking is done with a single or double hose, and sometimes even more numerous such as a triple or quadruple hose in the forms of parties or small get-togethers. When the smoker is finished, either the hose is placed back on the table signifying that it is available, or it is handed from one user to the next, folded back on itself so that the mouthpiece is not pointing at the recipient. It

In cafés and restaurants, however, it is common for each smoker to order an individual hookah, as the price is generally low, ranging from USD 3 to USD 25.

Most cafés (Arabic transliteration: maqah, translation: coffee shop) in the Middle East offer shishas. Cafés are widespread and are amongst the chief social gathering places in the Arab world (akin to public houses in Britain). Some expatriate Britons arriving in the Middle East adopt shisha cafés to make up for the lack of pubs in the region, especially where prohibition is in place.

