

Smoking Party at the Court of Frederick I in the Palace in Berlin (c. 1710)

Abstract

Most likely originating in the Netherlands, smoking parties [*Tabagien*] had become part of European court culture by the seventeenth century. This painting depicts one such gathering held during the reign of Frederick I (r. 1701-13) in the comfortably furnished Drap-D'Or Chamber of the Berlin Palace. In contrast to the austere, all-male tobacco parliaments [*Tabakskollegien*] hosted by his son and eventual successor, Frederick William I (the “Soldier King”) (r. 1713-40), Frederick I’s smoking parties were social affairs with relaxed court etiquette and female participation. In this scene, black servants serve drinks and light guests’ pipes.

Source



Source: Paul Carl Leygebe, Smoking Party at the Court of Frederick I in the Palace in Berlin, oil on canvas, c. 1710.

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