



## A Culture of Smoking: Artistic and Cultural-Historical Significance of the Japanese Smoking Tradition

Günther Heckmann and Dr. Achim G. Weihrauch of IFICAH



Pipe case, ojime, and tobacco pouch. Textiles, leather, lacquer, and metalwork.  
19th century, Japan. IFICAH Collection

Tuesday, March 1, 2022 16:30 – 17:30  
University of Zurich,  
Room KOL-G-217

*The presentation will be held in English and German and is open to the public (no registration is necessary).*

*For questions, please contact the Section for East Asian Art History: [kgoa@khist.uzh.ch](mailto:kgoa@khist.uzh.ch)*

This event is presented by a non-profit foundation IFICAH (International Foundation of Indonesian Culture and Asian Heritage), planned in cooperation with the Section for East Asian Art at the University of Zurich.

**Abstract:**

Tobacco was introduced to Japan by the Portuguese in the late sixteenth century and quickly became a mainstream enjoyment of the Japanese public. During the Edo period (1615-1867), it became common for men and women to enjoy smoking in public and private spaces, and artists competed with each other in making the most attractive pipes, pipe cases, tobacco pouches, and related paraphernalia using luxurious and rare materials and complex techniques. Examination of these objects reveals the innovative powers of the artists and show intermedial, even intercultural, aspects of these fascinating and innovative artforms, that included metalware, textiles, leather, bamboo, precious stones, and a wide range of materials. The objects also provide an excellent way to engage with and understand Japan's early modern material culture.

In 2024 and 2025, the IFICAH Foundation will create an exhibition and comprehensive publication on the topic of traditional Japanese smoking culture. In this context, a cooperation with the University of Zurich is planned, in which students will deal with a series of topics on Japanese smoking culture and provide written contributions.

IFICAH is represented by:

**Günther Heckmann** is a restorer and conservator of Japanese lacquer objects. He is a publicly appointed and sworn expert for Japanese lacquer works. He serves as chairman of the IFICAH Foundation and Director of the Museum of Asian Culture affiliated to the Foundation.

**Dr. Achim G. Weihrauch** studied ethnology and prehistory at the University of Basel. He finished his doctorate in 2002 with a research focus on East and Southeast Asia. He worked as a scientific assistant in the Departments of Southeast Asia and Oceania at the Museum der Kulturen Basel from 1994 to 2003. From 2003 to 2014, he was employed for engineering and patent processing. Since 2014, he serves as a scientific advisor and author for the IFICAH Foundation. He is also a freelance bladesmith and restorer since 1995 until today. He is a publicly appointed and sworn expert for edged weapons.

**Covid-19 related precautions: In order to ensure everyone's safety, we recommend all attendees to wear masks for the duration of the event.**