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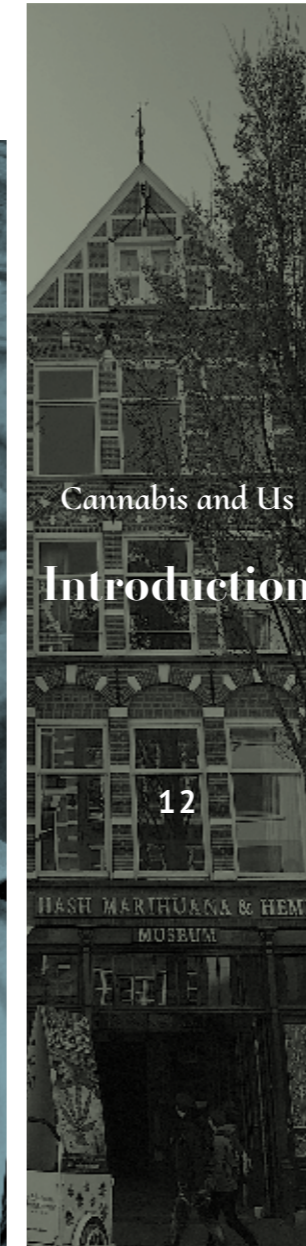
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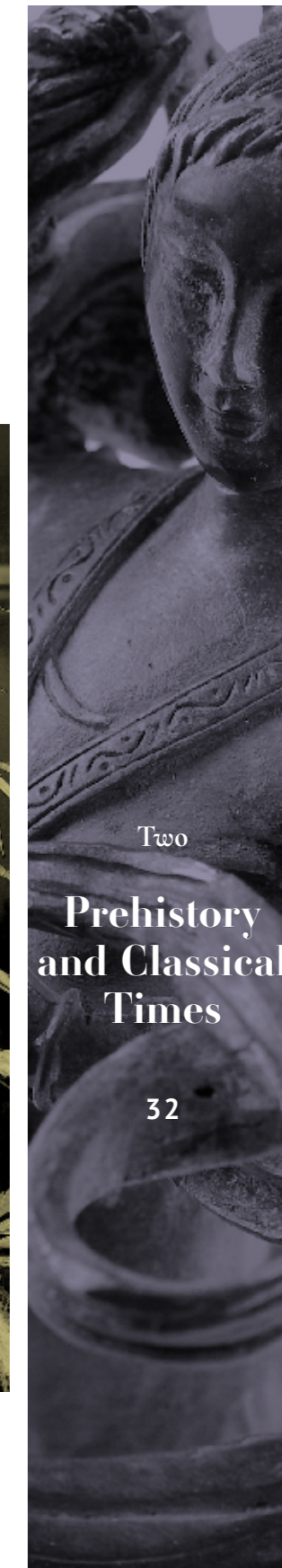
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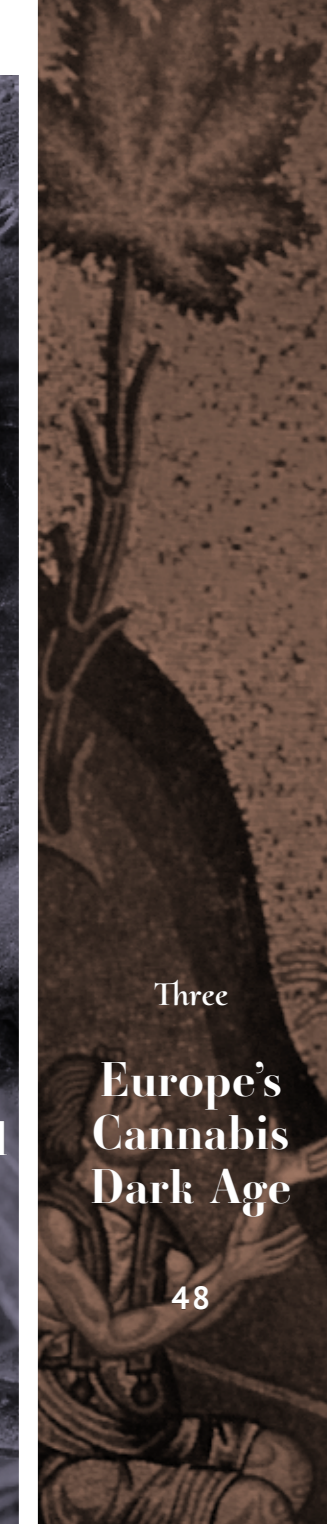
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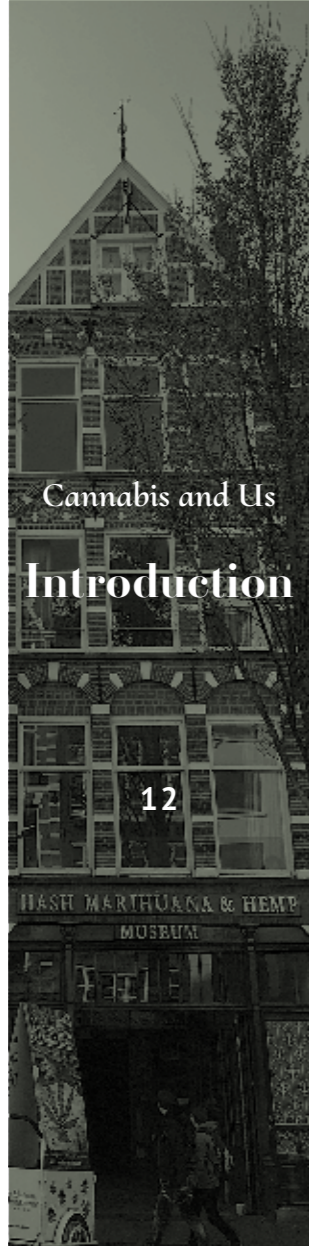
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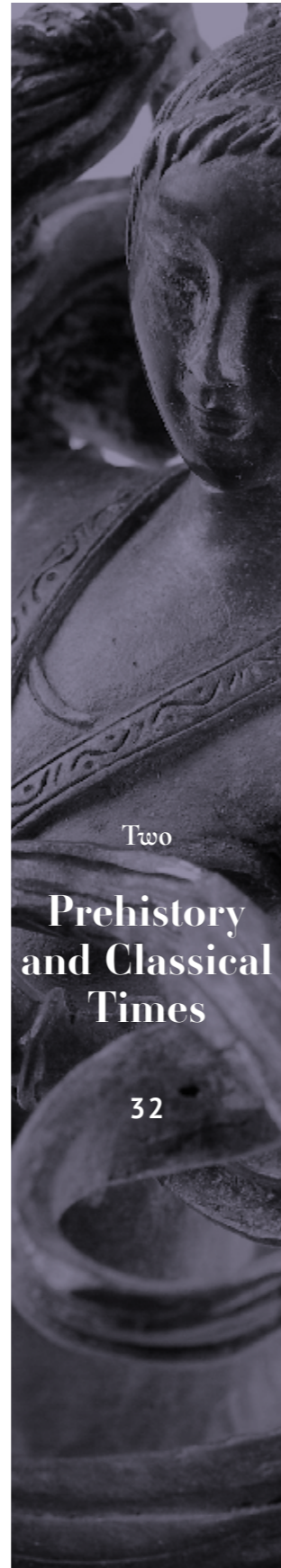
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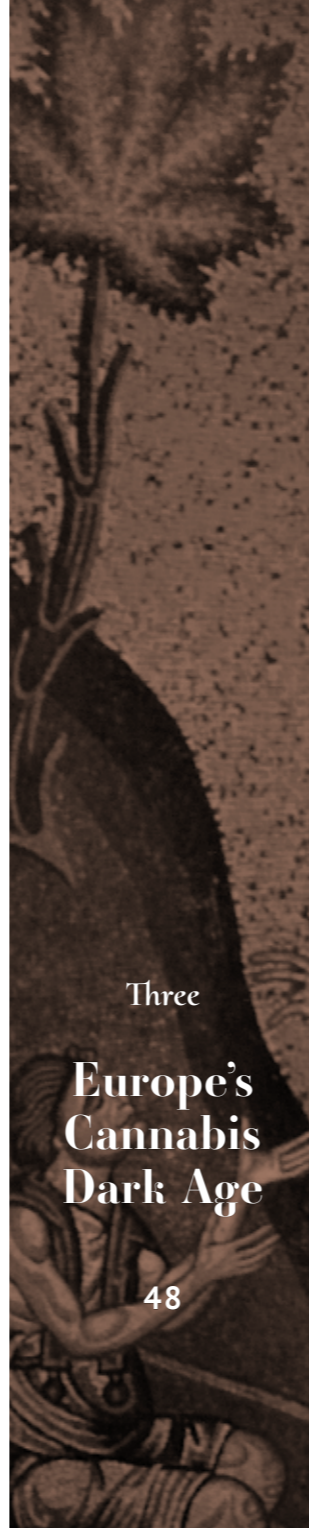
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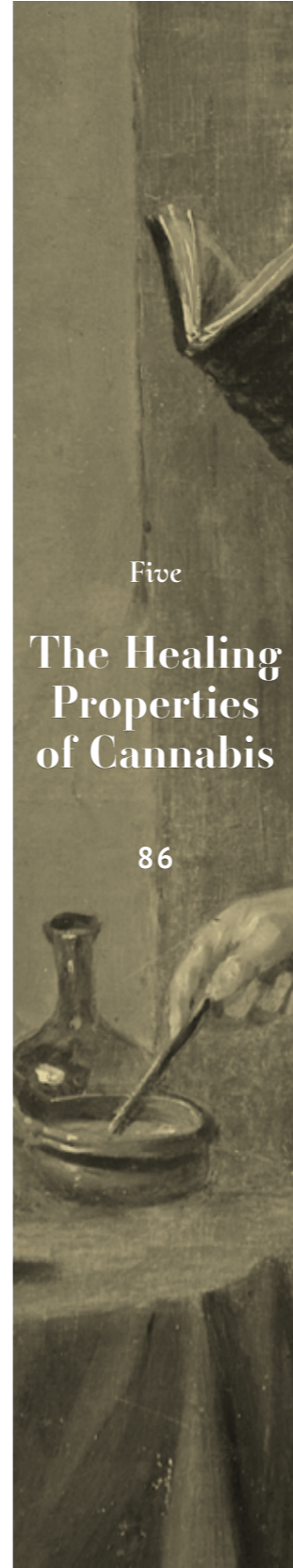
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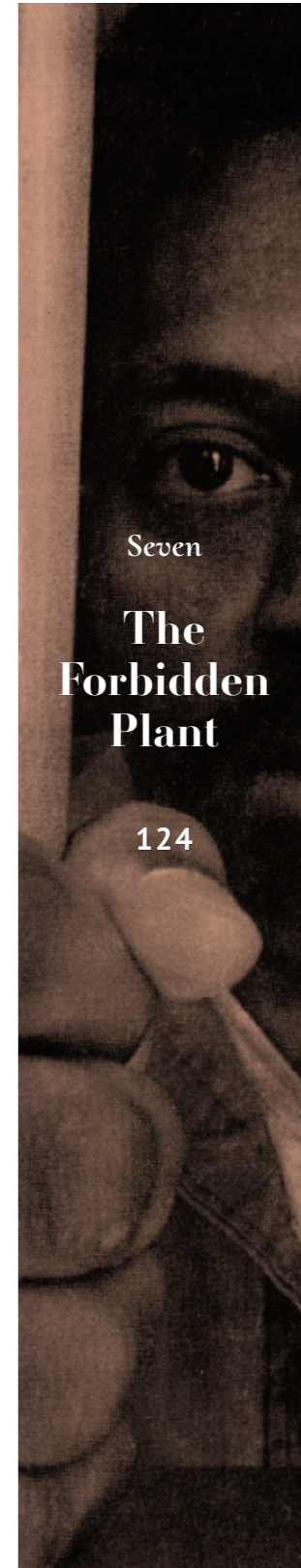
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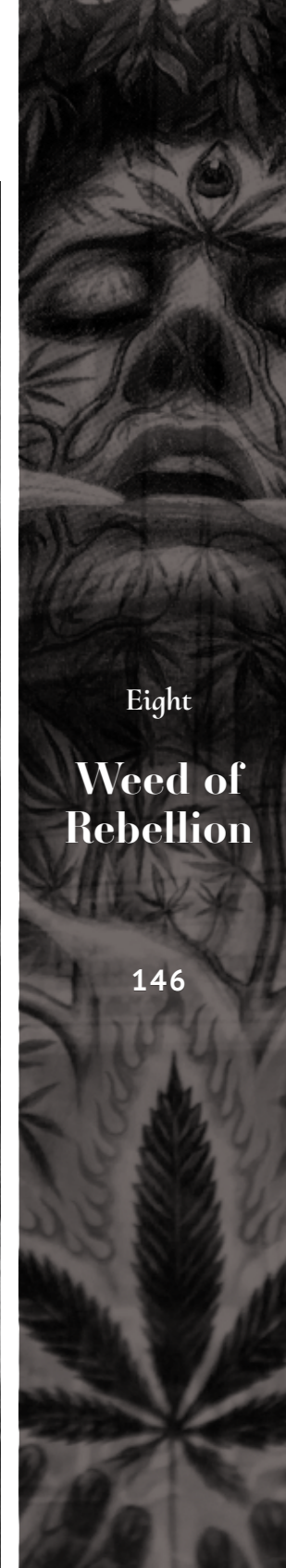
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Chapter One

A Wondrous 'Weed'

Cannabis was with us in our emergence as tool-making, herb-collecting, hunter-gatherers. It helped us settle into agricultural societies, providing many of the raw materials needed to begin building urban civilisation. In regions where the resinous psychoactive varieties grew, its inspirational and revelatory effects may have helped give rise to our sense of spirituality. Fibre hemp was one of the raw materials that made long sea voyages possible, thus powering exploration and trade. Oil and food were made from its nutritious seeds. Throughout history this complex plant has been with us every step of the way.

To understand humankind's unique and enduring relationship with cannabis, we need to examine the biology of the wild plant, and how that biology was changed through human intervention. Only by looking at the relationship between people and plant can we appreciate how cannabis is so versatile and valued.

Our uniquely adaptable green ally

Plants of the genus *Cannabis* have been used by humans for thousands of years – first gathered as wild plants, most likely for food. As hunter-gathers became settled people, cannabis was cultivated for the many uses of its fibre and oil, its nutritious, protein- and omega fat-rich seeds, and the medicinal and psychoactive effects of its flowers and resin. Most cannabis-related artefacts from this time have perished, leaving only traces: the occasional piece of hemp cord or seed sample in a frozen or waterlogged grave to examine.

Male Cannabis plant with bell-shaped clusters that contain pollen.



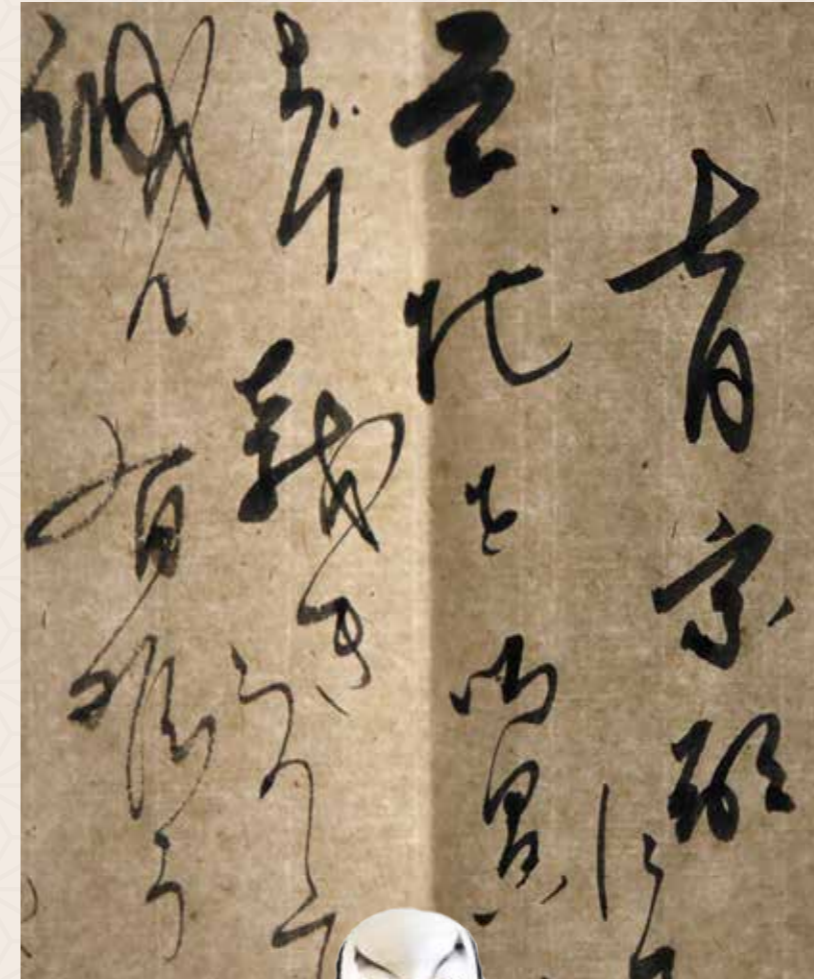


Hemp for purification

Shintō is the term for a set of indigenous shamanic beliefs representing the Japanese conception of the cosmos, and combining nature and ancestor worship.

Shintō priests traditionally dress in hemp robes. Hemp is associated with purity, and hemp cloth, ropes and fibres are used at most Shintō shrines. Hemp cloth also features in ceremonial offerings associated with the Japanese imperial family, including the accession rites (daijosai) of each new emperor.

Apart from this grand ritual, performed only once in each reign, one of the main Shintō rituals is called taima (the Japanese word for hemp and for paper offerings), held five times a year to honour Amaterasu, the goddess of the sun.



Left: Japanese text written with a Genpin, a hemp oil soot ink-stick produced by Kobaien, one of the oldest black ink makers in Japan. This traditional method of making ink from the soot of burned hemp oil was recently revived after 300 years. Right: Entrance of the Kumano Hongu Taisha that serves as the head shrine of over 3000 Kumano shrines across Japan. Here Amaterasu is honored, head of the Shinto gods, and mythical founder of the Japanese imperial lineage.



Early nineteenth century Japanese samurai doll dressed in hemp clothing. Hemp was a luxury product and wearing an outfit made from its fibres was something reserved for only the highest social classes. The figure appears to be deep in concentration as he assumes a meditative – mokuso – attitude. He is preparing himself mentally for an intense training session in Japanese martial arts.

Bottles from the Golden Age of Medicinal Cannabis: 1840-1937

In the past, almost all glass bottles were hand-blown without the aid of moulds of any kind. Such work required skilled craftspeople and a great deal of time. Small wonder, then, that in many cases the bottle represented more than half the cost of the product. Pre-bottled medicines were expensive in the early part of the nineteenth century.

By the 1860s, glass-making technology had progressed enough to allow manufacturers to make extensive use of moulds or prefabricated forms. This greatly simplified the process of bottle making, as well as the amount of time it took to manufacture each one. Bottles could now be made in sections which were subsequently joined together, making factory-style production lines possible.

One manufacturer's successful new technique was quickly copied by the rest of the industry, and by the late nineteenth century, machinery and manufacturing techniques had lowered bottle prices so much that they became disposable items.

Studies by major pharmaceutical houses in the early part of the twentieth century showed that when exposed to sunlight, *Cannabis indica* loses half its medicinal potency within three years. In order to preserve the efficacy of their product, most manufacturers began using dark-coloured bottles as protection against sunlight.



Smoking Devices from Around the World

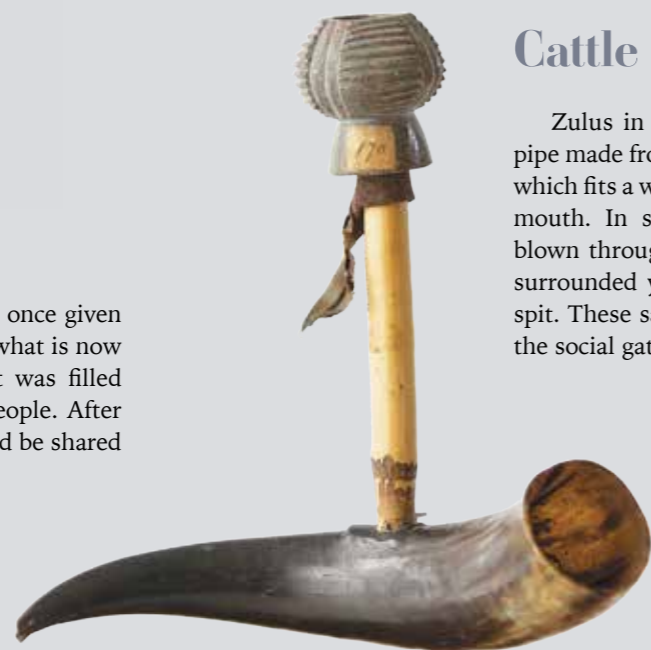
Bong

A bong is a standing pipe which forces smoke to pass through a small water reservoir, cooling it for inhalation. The term is probably derived from the Thai word *baung*, a cylindrical bamboo pipe. The first bongs were produced in China in the sixteenth century, adapted from Middle Eastern hookahs which spread to Asia around the same time tobacco was introduced. The bong is still the smoking method of choice in much of Southeast Asia, and has become popular around the world.



Ceremonial pipe

This pipe, weighing almost twelve kilos, was once given to a chieftain of the Bamum, an ethnic group in what is now Cameroon. Its function was primarily ritual: it was filled with cannabis or tobacco in order to impress people. After the event was over, the cannabis or tobacco would be shared among the chieftain's subjects.



Cattle horn pipe

Zulus in South Africa smoked cannabis with a pipe made from cattle horn and a short cane tube on which fits a well-made pottery bowl with constricted mouth. In smoking games, smoke and spit was blown through a straw on the ground. To win you surrounded your challenger's 'army' in a circle of spit. These saliva challenges were intertwined with the social gatherings in South Africa.



Red Clay Pipe Bowl

Archaeological finds indicate that a rudimentary object that looks like a pipe was known in the Stone Age. When humans were able to make small portable braziers and stick a hollow reed in to inhale smoke, the pipe was born. They have been made from many materials, including stone, bone, metal, wood, or clay, such as this simple earthenware pipe bowl from South America.

Gouda pipes

Thin earthenware pipes such as these were made from the early seventeenth century onwards in the Dutch town of Gouda, where the industry flourished for two centuries. The oldest examples had small bowls because tobacco was expensive, but over the years these became larger. Many Gouda pipes are depicted in the museum's collection of seventeenth-century paintings.



Ritual pipe

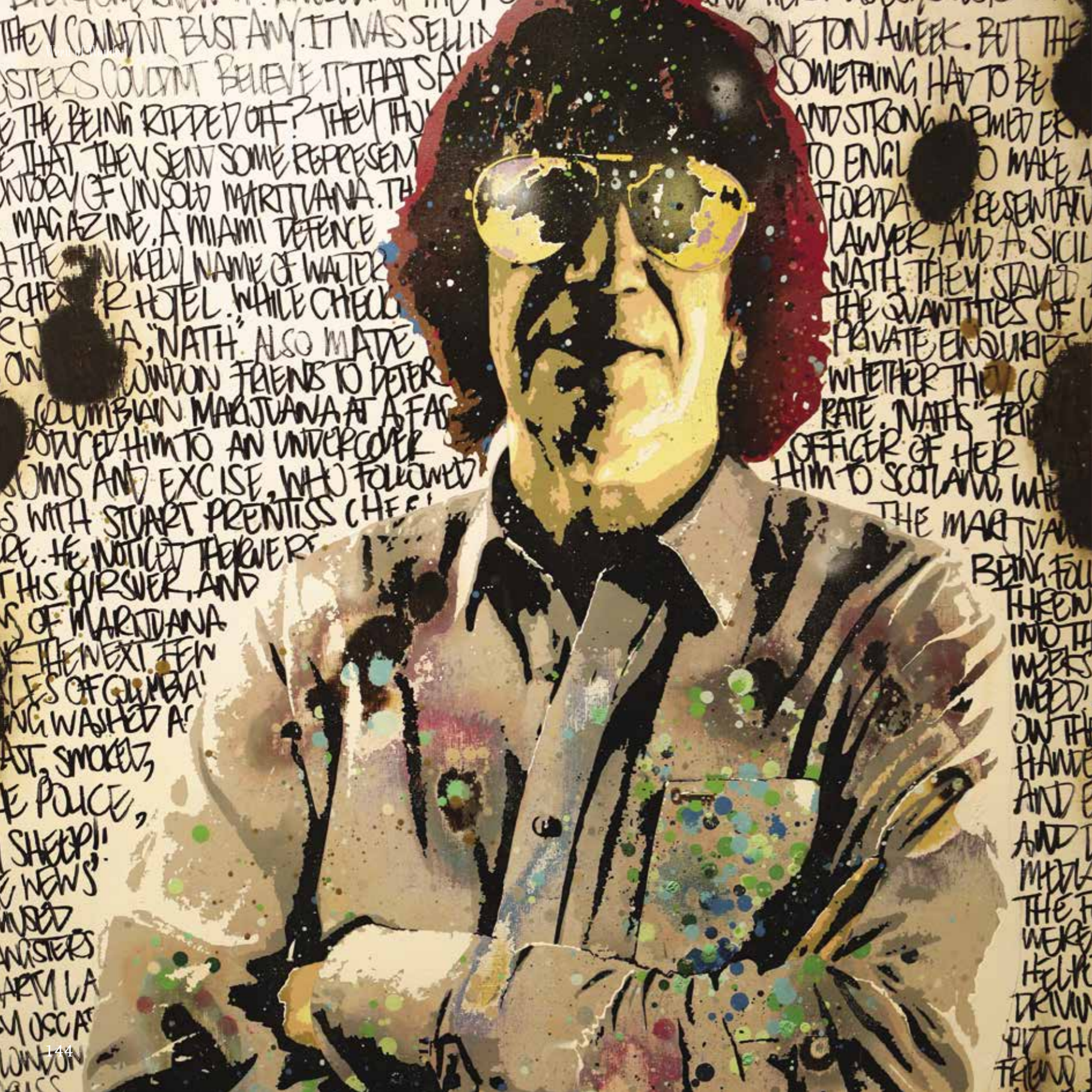
The wooden stem of this almost sixty-centimetre long ritual pipe from circa 1930 to 1950 is covered in snake skin and decorated with bronze rings representing antelope heads. It probably originates from the Senufo people, a West African ethnic group that lives in the Ivory Coast and Mali. The Senufo are famous as musicians and superb carvers of wood sculpture, masks, and figurines.



Chillum

Since time immemorial, the *chillum* has been the preferred smoking method of India's *sadhus* – wandering Hindu holy people who renounce all earthly attachments. This short, straight pipe became popular in Europe and North America in the late 1960s, introduced by hippies who had visited India.





Mr Nice, last of the old-school smugglers

For many, Howard Marks was Europe's most successful cannabis smuggler and perhaps the last of the old-school hippie idealists in his trade. This working-class Welsh boy went to Oxford University, where he encountered cannabis and turned to smuggling it himself. By the mid-Eighties Marks had as many as forty-three alter egos, eighty-nine telephone lines, and twenty-five companies in Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia. He had contacts with the British MI6 (Military Intelligence, Section 6), the Central Intelligence Agency (America), and the mafia. At the height of his career, his network managed to smuggle thirty tonnes of hashish per shipment.

Following an international manhunt by the American Drug Enforcement Administration, Marks was arrested and given a twenty-five-year prison sentence in America. In 1995, he was conditionally released for good behavior after seven years and donated his inmate card to the museum.

Marks' autobiography *Mr. Nice* (1996) became an instant bestseller and was made into a film in 2010. He was a dedicated activist for cannabis legalisation until his death in 2016.

As part of *The Mr. Nice Project*, an exhibition about Marks, the musician Goldie made a portrait of the famous smuggler, which the museum bought in 2014. Goldie, a pioneer of the musical genre drum 'n' bass, has also acquired global fame for his work as a graffiti artist. The text on the front of the artwork comes from Marks' autobiography.

for medical use, while many have decriminalized personal use. As of 2020, though, there is yet to be a full federal reversal of anti-cannabis laws.

The Netherlands' liberalism might have been overtaken in recent years by other countries, notably Canada and Uruguay, which have fully legalized cannabis use. But for decades, the country's approach was so unusual that it gets its own chapter in this book.

A complex and ongoing dance

Throughout the Western world, the youth revolution of the Sixties generated a complex dance between repression and celebration, ignorance and enlightenment. There were law changes and periods of relative sanity followed by renewed efforts at achieving the fantasy of 'victory' in an unwinnable War on Drugs.

It has been pretty clear, for one side at least, that this has in fact been a war on drug users, whose effects have been exactly the opposite of its original stated intentions. Rather than fading away, cannabis became the 'weed of resistance', a symbol of a wider struggle, an emblem of rebellion, a source of inspiration and identity for artists, musicians and assorted freaks, hippies, users of cannabis as a religious sacrament, social outcasts, and self-styled revolutionaries.



Left page: Goldie, Portrait of Howard Marks, 2014. Mixed media on panel.



First coffeeshop in Rotterdam

In 1983, two years before the official start of Sensi Seeds, museum director Ben Dronkers (on the right of this photo next to his friend and cannabis expert Ed Rosenthal) opened Sensi Smile. It was the first coffeeshop in Rotterdam: a pick-up point for hashish and weed on the premises from which Dronkers used to sell clothes. Later, other Sensi coffeeshops opened in Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Groningen, but once Dronkers shifted his full focus to cannabis seeds, most were sold.

attended by 1,300 people. Another subsidized space, Fantasio, was soon opened, and the two venues became the first youth centres where the sale and consumption of cannabis in small quantities was more or less tolerated.

By 1970, soft drugs were being used and sold openly (though not aggressively) in music venues in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, without substantial police intervention. While the government felt that the law ought to be upheld, it could not ignore social reality. It feared that enforcing the law by closing youth meeting places could lead to the spread of cannabis dealing to seedier areas of town. This fragmentation could expose many otherwise law-abiding users to the world of hard drugs, which was unacceptable.

Eventually, these venues (which were often government subsidised) tolerated so-called house dealers. Known and trusted cannabis sellers could rent tables to sell hashish and marijuana. By 1977, the public prosecutor's office had decided to make prosecuting house dealers a low priority, and their numbers duly increased.

Europe's Woodstock and the expediency principle

A landmark event in 1970 was the Holland Pop Festival held in the Kralingen Bos, a park on the outskirts of Rotterdam. It was the first event of its kind in mainland Europe, and police expected 5,000 attendees. Despite the rain, more than 120,000 Dutch, German and Belgian rock fans turned up for 'Europe's Woodstock'. That three-day festival was the first time Dutch police allowed the open sale of cannabis without making any arrests.

Public prosecutors may instruct the police to follow

“Individual freedom and responsibility are central values in our society, and should also apply to drug use. This assumes that potential users know as much as possible about the advantages and disadvantages of the different substances, so that they can make realistic, responsible choices.”

– The Hulsman report, 1972



From its opening on 29th March 1968, club Fantasio became a central venue for underground youth culture in Amsterdam. Fantasio hosted pop concerts and performances; the original Pink Floyd staged a legendary show there. It was also one of the first locations in Amsterdam with its own house dealer, and where cannabis was sold and consumed in the open, which laid the foundations of the Dutch coffeeshop system.

Chapter Ten

A Very Modern Medicine

The early twenty-first century has seen a reawakened and extraordinary interest in the broad therapeutic potential of cannabis-based medicines on a worldwide scale.

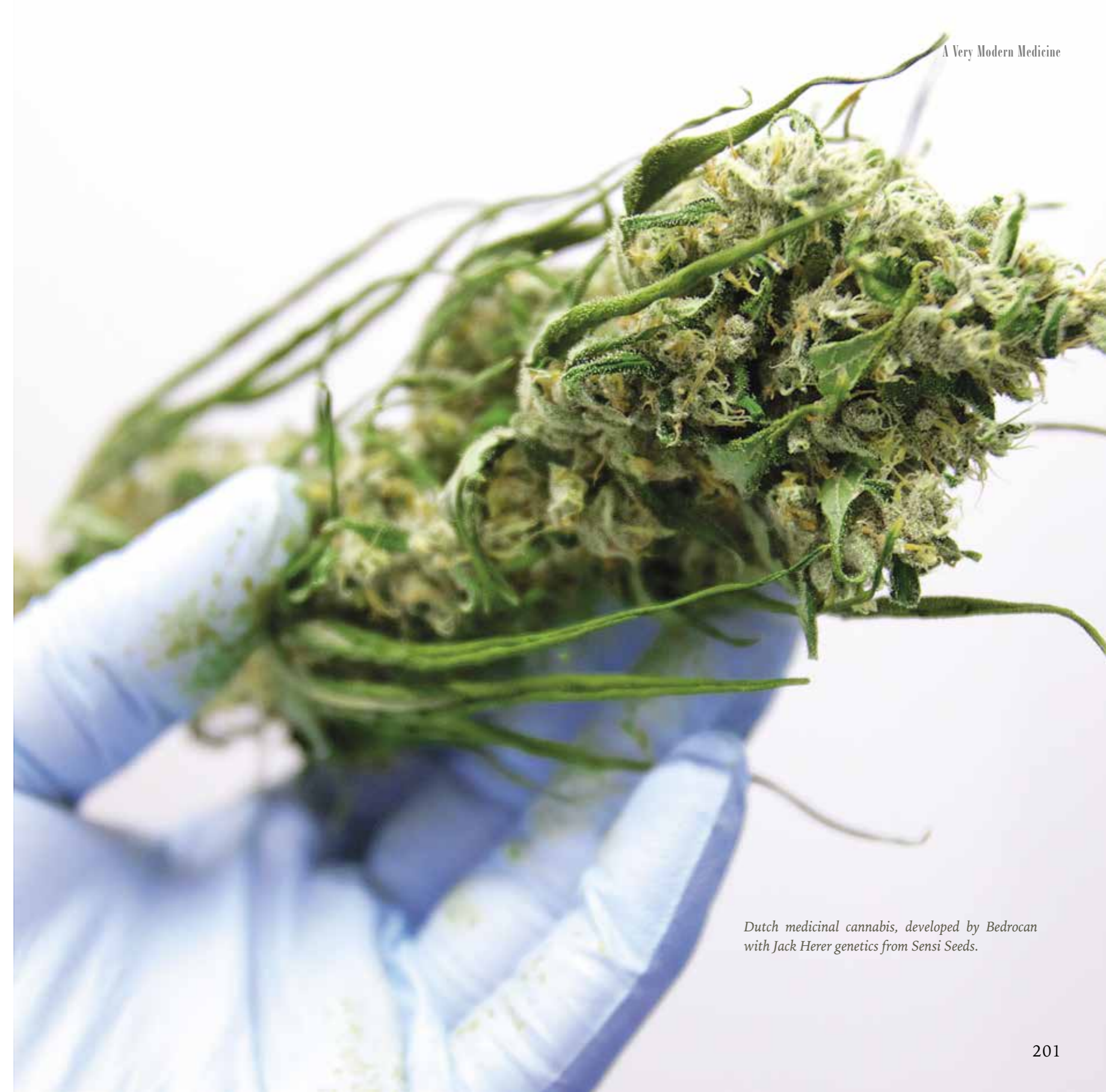
There are thousands of completed studies on the effectiveness of the *Cannabis* plant and its healing compounds in treating a wide range of mental and physical conditions. Over 1,000 have been published on the non-psychoactive cannabidiol (CBD) compound alone. Dozens of other cannabinoids (and even the terpenes and other non-cannabinoid substances found in the plant) are being investigated for their therapeutic potential.

Clinical studies are providing substantial evidence for the effectiveness of cannabinoid receptor agonists against chemotherapy-induced nausea, vomiting and appetite loss in cancer and HIV patients, chronic and neuropathic pain, and spasticity in multiple sclerosis. There is

also evidence suggesting a therapeutic potential for cannabis-based medicines in other applications including Tourette's syndrome, spinal cord injury, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, and glaucoma. Several small, uncontrolled and single-case studies report beneficial effects in post-traumatic stress disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, epilepsy, and migraine.

Cannabis history repeats itself

It is clear that there is something medically remarkable about cannabis. Indeed, many researchers say that if it were to be discovered today (say, in some remote rainforest) it would be hailed as a miracle plant. Of course, it was not discovered today; its medicinal value has been known and used for thousands of years.



Dutch medicinal cannabis, developed by Bedrocan with Jack Herer genetics from Sensi Seeds.

The Many Uses of Hemp



Chapter Thirteen

Ben Dronkers – Cannabis Pioneer

This book can be seen as a fruit (or perhaps a seed) of the Hash Marihuana & Hemp Museum. The museum, in turn, is one of three main branches of a mighty cannabis project germinated by Ben Dronkers almost forty years ago and carefully nurtured and propagated by Ben and his family and friends ever since.

The last four decades have been a tumultuous time in the world of *Cannabis*. Whichever aspect of the plant one considers – its use as a drug, an industrial resource, a medicine, a catalyst of political resistance, or locus of counterculture and spirituality – the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have brought more rapid changes to *Cannabis* and its relationship with humans than any other period in our shared, symbiotic history.

The cannabis renaissance we enjoy today was brought about by a relatively small number of people who had

a disproportionately huge influence in creating the current green revolution. These people represent a diverse cross-section of humanity, but they generally share one notable trait – they are tireless in promoting the liberation of cannabis and the value of hemp, while remaining remarkably uninterested in self-promotion.

Ben Dronkers fits this description very well. While he is well known in cannabis circles, his achievements have affected many more people than know his name. Ben's work and endless enthusiasm for *Cannabis* have, in subtle yet significant ways, changed the world for the better. His life's work can be seen in the three main branches of the Dronkers project - the museum, the Sensi Seed Bank, and HempFlax.

The Hash Marihuana & Hemp Museum exists to showcase the amazing history of *Cannabis*, to disseminate knowledge, and to stoke interest in the multifaceted plant. Sensi Seeds

