

Aromatherapy rules as mentioned in the ancient Arabic manuscripts (Albucasis as example)

Chadi Khatib

Al-Jazeera University, Syria

For thousands of years people have recognized the beneficial properties of certain plants and natural substances to human health & well-being. The wide trade in spices and perfumes and aromatic substances such as musk, ambergris, cloves, camphor, sandalwood, and aloes wood, in the medieval period shows the importance of these substances, most of them used in the Near East and Spain were compounded to form perfumes and incenses; through that the industry of the aromatic substances and scents and fragrances become more developed especially its chemical and pharmaceutical forms. The important writer on aromatics is the Muslim cosmetologist Abu al- Qasim al-Zahrawi (Albucasis). He dealt with aromatic and cosmetics in the nineteenth book of his great work, Kitab "*al-Tasrif*" which is written in Arabic, this text would likely have added much to this practice.

The study of the commandments which given by Albucasis can be inferred and discuss the following results:

First: Albucasis was a distinguished figure especially when it comes to the making of various types of pharmaceutical forms related to perfume.

Second: Albucasis is considered the true founder of aromatherapy. His highly sophisticated taste and talent in making recipes is evident in each and every product he mentions in his encyclopedia.

Third: Albucasis mentions clearly major spectrum of perfume and scents; attitudes about aromatherapy did not undergo another shift until one thousand years later, when the physician and aromalogist Albucasis believed that aromatherapy constituted a legitimate branch of medicine.

Forth: Albucasis was pharmaceutical technician and has a wide knowledge in the aromatherapy field cause he introduced unique compositions and easy way to preparing it.

Fifth: Albucasis is considered to be the most effective inventor in this field and maybe he was the first who was talking about the following items:

1- Albucasis mentions a dying and perfuming clothes special for medical purposes.

2- Albucasis mentions the *muthallatheh recipe* for treatment the respiratory tract diseases based on the camphor contents like the vapor rub cream by topical application.

3- Albucasis mentions a slow-burning incense recipe.

4- Albucasis explains a special distillation method of plants, and he pioneered the preparation of medicines by sublimation and distillation.

5- Albucasis understands the main rules of compounding the components of the perfume preparations, and he classifies the perfume substances in special way closely like the modern classification (fragrance wheel).

5-1: Floral: floral, soft floral, floral oriental (*fresh-cut flowers; aldehydes powdery notes; orange blossom sweet spices*) such as jasmine, rose water...

5-2: Oriental: soft oriental, oriental, woody oriental (*incense & amber; oriental resins*) such as ambergris ...

5-3: Woody: woods, mossy woods, dry woods, aromatic (*dry woods & leather; oakmoss & amber; aromatic woods & vetiver*) such as frankincense, sandalwood...

5-4: Fresh: citrus, fruity, green, water (*aquatic notes; green notes; fruits; citrus oils*) such as lavender, sweet orange.

5-5: Aromatic: such as fagara, rose water.

5-6: Fougère: is a fifth family that is in the Centre of the fragrance wheel; fougère has a universal appeal as it combines the elements of the other four families, such as oak moss.

6- Albucasis classifies the using of perfume preparations as follows:

6-1: Aesthetic values: To enhance the smell of the body as an important part of beautification making as good social habits, and some recipes for beautification and take care of the skin such as '*duhun al-jamal*' beautification perfume recipe.

6-2: Medical properties: Albucasis classifies the active and basic fragrant substances into four groups according to its properties:

The first group is hot and dry fragrant substances: such as amber, nutmeg fruits, and elder

The second group is cold and wet fragrant substances: such as oak moss.

The third group is cold and dry fragrant substances: such as myrtle, camphor tree, and rose water

The fourth group is moderate in hot and cold: such as cubeb.

This classification serves the practicing in two subjects:

6-2-1: Technical guide: to know how to mix the different types of fragrant components, which is similar to the modern way of mixing the essence depending on the tone classification: the note of head (high tone) – the note of heart (middle tone) – the basic note (low tone).

Also Albucasis types the fragrant substances according to the possibility of heated it in the fire process into two groups:

A- Heated substances: such as musk, nutmeg, and sukk

B- Unheated substances: such as cubeb, sweet flag, and fagara

6-2-2: Therapeutic guide: Albucasis talks about many diseases could be treated by aromatherapy as following:

- Medical fragrant preparations for topical application: for dermal diseases treatment, for systematic disorders management, by using several pharmaceutical forms such as creams, ointment, and bandage or by perfuming the clothes for medical purposes.

- Medical incenses: for treatment by inhalation, and others for purifying the air and treating the epidemics.

7- Albucasis classifies the perfumes according to gender as follows:

7-1: Feminine fragrances: such as perfume's based on saffron and turmeric, and third kind of the rose water which is prepared by distillation, and myrtle petals (dhareerate nawar al- ās) calamus recipe.

7-2: Masculine fragrances: 'nudah' recipe without saffron and turmeric, and other perfumes recipe based on camphor, and first kind of the rose water which is prepared by distillation ...

7-3: Unisex perfume recipes: for each men and women such as 'al-ghafikieh' calamus recipe, and 'al-khuluk' perfume recipe

8- Albucasis classifies the perfumes according to age stage of users as follows:

8-1: special for children: such as 'al-ghaliyah' perfume recipes

8-2: special for teenagers: such as 'Jafariieh' calamus perfume recipes

8-3: special for elders: such as 'duhun al-Itrej' sweet orange aromatic oil recipe

9- Albucasis classifies the perfumes by season as follows:

9-1: Summer scents: such as the camphor preparations, and rose calamus recipe

9-2: Winter fragrances: such as the musk preparations, and light calamus recipe made with adru.

CONCLUSION

Albucasis considers that aromatherapy is a part of alternative medicine which involves the use of volatile botanical substances and aromatic substances; and it helps improve one's mood and temperament which, in return, helps improve general health. This study aims to highlight the contributions of Arabic literatures in the Arabic & Unani Medicine. The commandments of Albucasis are set of rules that must be performed by Aromatologist and is currently used aggressively by specialist So Albucasis was the father of cosmetics and perfumes, and his cosmetics chapter was the first original contribution to cosmetology worldwide. Apart from being a skillful surgeon, Albucasis both revived various kinds of perfumes and their preparations and developed aromatherapy and its applications. He made several advances in perfumery and invented perfumed stocks, rolled and pressed in special molds, similar to modern roll-on deodorants. He also recommended that after laundry, clothing should be in a room full of incense or perfume, so that the clothes will give a pleasant fragrance for medical purpose.