



Indian Perfumery Tradition: Excellent Intelligence Of India Making Of Perfume And Perfume Related Materials.

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Abstract:

This paper based on analysis the works of mediaeval period which include Abul Fazal's Ain-e-Akbari, emperor Jahangir's The Tūzuk-I-Jahāngirī, Ni'matnāma of Ghiyath Shahi and the books discovered by P.K Gode, Gandhasara of Gangadhara or Gandhavada of unknown author. Through which the science of making cosmetics and perfumes of mediaeval India is highlighted on the best skills. Both the books Gandhasara of Gangadhara and Gandhavada of unknown author contain the perfumery traditions of their times as well as the fragrant knowledge of ancient times. Even the Gandhasara of Gangadhara highly technical in nature but here we discuss a cultural aspects of book and Gandhavada contains valuable information like Kasaturipanksa (Testing of musk) and Kasturi Karani (Preparation of musk), which will also help the new perfumer to survive in the modern context. Next turn to the Amazing book 'The book of Delights' by Malwa Sultan Ghiyath Shah (1469-1500). This book has covered a very wide area of fragrance and flavour. Perfume practices and perfume making science took new heights in Mughal times. Akbar Make a Separate Department For Perfumery and Emperor Jahangir Appoint Khushboo-a-Daroga for Kannauj (perfume capital of India) Region. The greatest achievement of his emperor's seventeenth year was that Nurjaha's mother discovered the method of making Attar from roses. Last but not least, this paper focuses on 'Itryā-i Nauras Shāhī', which tells about the perfumery products used in the seventeenth century.

Keywords: perfume, cosmetics, mediaeval, perfumery tradition, flower, Recipe

Introduction:

“Cosmetics and perfumes are as old as humanity but with the development of civilization the art of manufacturing them appears to have been developed to cater to the needs of the accomplished ladies and gentlemen of the different periods of human civilization” **Dr.P.k Gode**¹. Indian civilization is no exception to these lines.

From 1200 AD to 1700 AD and also in the Mughal period, there has been continuous progress in the science of making cosmetics and perfume. But till now, due to lack of evidence, the credit of science of making cosmetics and perfume has been given to the West. There is no doubt that West has made great achievements in this field by moulding itself according to the demand of the customer and the needs of the changing times, France's Grasse and Paris is a very good example of this, Paris is the hub of big beauty brands and styling capital, then Grasse is the word perfume capital.

Gandhasara of Gangadhara:

To know the progress of cosmetic and perfume making science in mediaeval times, we will first analyse Gangadhara's Gandhasar.

Gangadhara wrote Gandhasara, a rare treatise on cosmetics and perfumery. Dr. P K Gode, an Indologist, discovered a unique two-in-one manuscript from the Raddi collection of BORI Poona in 1944, as mentioned in the introduction. The manuscript was edited by Dr. Ramakrishna T. Vyas, Director of Oriental Institute, Vadodara, and published in Gaekwad's Oriental Series by the University of Baroda in 1989. The text is titled Gangadhara Pranitha Ganda Sarah (Ajhatalekhakaviracitasca Gandhavadah in Marathi)².

An interdisciplinary approach to carry out an in-depth analysis of Gandhasar is required for those scholars who are well versed in perfume making technology, chemistry or Sanskrit literature. This text is divided into three Prakarana . Prakarana And in the final stanza³.

This text deals with six production processes like:

(1) Bhavanam (Saturation); (2) Pacanamor Paka (Heating); (3) Bodha (Manifestation); (4) Vedha (Penetration); (5) Dhupana (Fumigation); (6) (Vasanam (Transmission)⁴ .

Gandhasara is believed to have been written in the late 12th century AD and is divided into three Prakaranam (parts). The author's name is clearly mentioned at the end of each

Gandhsara describe about Grouping of substances

मित्रद्रव्यं सम देयमुदासीनं तदर्धम् ।

ie: According to padmnabh an agreeable substance should be blended in equal quantity, the neutral substance should be half the substance with which it is to be blended and only a quarter of the substance, that is contradictory in

Nature should be blended with any other substance. In Gandasara, plants have been divided into three classes Mitragana, Udasmagana and Satrugana⁵.

Second Prakarana: - this is a very important chapter and discusses various points.

(1) Gandhodakani (Perfumed water); (2) Mukhavasah (Mouthodorants); (3) Parijata; (4) Gandhataila (Scented Oils); (5) Udwarthanam (Rubbing); (6) Snanajalam (Perfumed water for bathing); (7) Jalavasa (perfumed water); (8) Lepas (Compounds of applications); (9) Mrgaraja (Preparation of artificial musk); (10) Dhupa (aromatised fumes)⁶.

Gangadhara provides instructions for making incense sticks. Then he lists 49 (Aguru, Can, Devadaru, Surabhi, Silha, Mamsi, Mura, Valaka, Kuta, Musta, Rala etc.) aromatic compounds that, when combined, yield 8,59,00,584 different products in different proportions (7x7 columns & rows)⁷.

In the last section the author provides a dictionary of aromatic compounds.

Gandhavada of unknown author:

This text of the manuscript was edited by Dr. Ramaknshna T. Vyas, Director of the Oriental Institute in Vadodara, and it was published in Gaekwad's Oriental Series in 1989. Gangadhara Pranitha Gandhasarah, Ajnatalekhakaviracitasca Gandhavada is the title of the publication (Marathi Sameta)⁸.

According to Dr. P.K. Gode, the Gandhavada's likely date is between 1530 and 1550 AD⁹. According to Sri R.T. Vyas, the year was between 1250 and 1300 AD¹⁰.

The text Gandhavada is not divided into chapters or the like; instead, section titles are chosen based on the subject matter or substance like:

(1) Pistaka (Aromatic paste); (2) Kasaturipanksa (Testing of musk); (3) Kasturi Karani (Preparation of musk); (4) Karpuracaran (Manufacture of Camphor); (5) Javadici Karani (Preparation of Javadi); (6) Kacaulyataila (Variety Of oil); (7) Buka (Fragrant powder); (8) Gandharaj (Aromatic unguents); (9) Sugandha Taila (Scented oil); (10) Dhupacikarani (Discussions on Dupas); (11) Vartih (Incense sticks); (12) Vati (Mouth odorant pil); (13) Agarbatti is described in a separate section¹¹.

Here we discuss the most attractive two section of this text named Kasturi Karani(Preparation of musk)and Kasaturipanksa (Testing of genuineness of Musk) Musk is a valuable aromatic compound for perfumery.Nowadays, due to restrictions, we cannot use naturally occurring musk, so this text gives an alternative.

भृङ्गराजरसं मासि श्रीखण्डं रक्तचन्दनम्।
जातिफलं लवङ्गं च ककोलग्रन्थिपर्णिकम्॥
पूहिकचाष्टभागं ब्याज अजामूत्रेण पेषयेत्।
केतकीपुटपाकेन मृगनाभिश्च जायते॥GV sec 15

ie: Take Bhrngarajarasa, Mamsi, Srikhanda, Raktacandana, Jati, Lavanga, Kankola, Granthi Parnaka and putt and pound unthAjamutra, or goat's urine, before administering Putapaka of Ketaki, This turns into a musk.

In addition, the author describes a another way to make musk, in which goat's urine is substituted with she-buffalo's urine

The mention of Ajamutra (goat's urine) in one method and Mahisimutra (she-buffalo's urine) in another way demonstrates that various combinations would yield various results. It also sheds light on the biochemical understanding at the time¹¹.

An alchemical treatise named Rasaratnakara from the thirteenth century AD mentions analogous concepts for producing musk from different sources.

Kasaturipanksa (Testing of genuineness of Musk)

This work also provides knowledge of testing of valuable Musk.

या गन्धकेतकीनां च विहित परिमलंवर्णतः पिजराभ्यो
स्वादे तिक्ता कटुर्वा परिलघुतुलना मर्दिता चिक्कणा च।
दिवा या याति भस्म चिमचिमीकरुते चर्मगन्धा हुताशे
सा श्रद्धा शोभनीय वरमृगतनया राजयोग्य प्रदिष्टा॥ GV sec 13-1

ie:The best musk which bears the sweet smell of Ketaki and yellowish in colour, pungent or bitter in taste, very light if weighed & sticky when pressed & rubbed, if burnt it does not reduce to ashes, but creates a peculiar sound, finally it emits the odour of burnt leather It is auspicious & suited for Kings¹².

This passage is also found in Bhaisajyaratnavali. Dr. R.T. Vyas claims that this resemblance establishes the Gandhavada author's debt to the Bhaisajyaratnavali author and shows that the Gandhavada author should be dated after 1200 AD¹³.

The diversity of aromatic and other materials that were employed in mediaeval India for the manufacture of cosmetics and perfumes is detailed in the Marathi commentary¹⁴

Fifteenth century:

Taimur's invasion in 1398 AD led to the end of the centralised Delhi Sultanate and after this Malwa in central India emerged as a kingdom of Ghiyath Shahiking in 1469.

An eccentric and bon viveur, he delighted in the Ni'matnāma, or Book of Delights, in a unique way. The contents and drawings of the manuscript (IO Isl. Ms. 149) provides ample evidence of the pleasures of life. Since its discovery and publication by Robert Skelton in 1959, this work has been one of the gems of the India Office Library (now part of the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library). Chronologically dated to 1495–1505, it seems to have encompassed the time leading up to Ghiyath Shahi's demise in 1500 as well as the initial years of his son and heir, Nasir Shah, who most likely added an addition. The title Ni'matnāma-i al-Dīn Shāhī is now attached to it¹⁵.

This book has covered a very wide area of fragrance and flavour. There is hardly any other book which has clearly explained the importance of fragrance and flavour in life so much. In this book the most attractive thing is the diversity of uses of rosewater in different preparation of food, mood and making cosmetic products and other food recipes. And second is the variety of methods of making food will make your mouth water and the many methods of making samosa will make a food lover happy and shocked. But the main focus of the author of this book is in making fragrance or fragrance related products like instructions for rose water distillation, fragrant oil, high quality attar, deodorants and perfumes.

Many chapters of this book are devoted to making perfumes and perfume related products.

This book provides recipes for scenting clothes and hair:

honey (shahd), potherbs, gum lac, Saul tree resin, jasmine, small cardamoms, molasses, rind of sugarcane, catechu essence, wild spikenard, spikenard, aromatic paste (chūva), white sandal, oil seed, ambergris, white China rose, wax, sandal, gum resin, scented mollusc, musk, sugar, cardamom oil, saffron, camphor, rosewater mix with Agarwood¹⁶.

An additional recipe for perfumed creams for ladies. Apply a different scent to every joint. Pellets of scented paste are used. Rinse hands with rosewater.

In this method the author advises to cleanse the body with the juice of the bark of Mango, Peepal and Wild Fig trees. To make the armpits fragrant, use scented paste, musk and perfume. Use chūva, rosewater and musk for private parts and sandal for throat. Use scented flower oils of all kinds, polish the two front teeth, rub perfume into the handkerchief, rub saffron on the face, smell flowers, apply ointment made from bodily oils, rub rosewater on the forehead, massage saffron on the face, and make "abīr" (scented powder) with the sweet scent of jasmine flowers. Put on some perfume and a white chādor. Use twigs to massage the body, then rinse with cold water¹⁷.

The advancement of perfume and cosmetic making science represents the highest level of luxury and development in any civilization. The higher level of science in the fifteenth century can be clearly traced by Gyanath Shahi's book 'The Book of Delight'. A great achievement of this book is that it brought together two traditions: first the fragrance lovers of the Middle East and the perfumery tradition that has been going on in India since the Vedic times.

Mughal period:

Perfume making science was most developed, recorded or used during the Mughal period. Abul Fazal has not only given a long list of the favourite perfumes of the Mughals in his Ain-a-Akbari but has also mentioned the perfume ingredients, their recipes, price or place of origin.

Abul Fazal says about Akbar's love for fragrance:

“His Majesty is very fond of perfumes, and encourages this department from religious motives. The court-hall is continually scented with ambergris, aloewood, and compositions according to ancient recipes, or mixture invented by his majesty and incense daily burnt in gold and silver censers of various shapes, whilst sweet-smelling flowers are used in large quantities”¹⁸.

The greatest achievement of his emperor's seventeenth year was that Nurjaha's mother discovered the method of making Attar from roses¹⁹.

The story of the discovery of the method of making attar from roses is very interesting. Begum Salima Sultan named this Attar 'itr-i- Jahangiri and Jahangir himself says about the Attar that:

“It is of such strength in perfume that if one drop is rubbed on the palm of the hand it scents a whole assembly, and it appears as if many red rosebuds have bloomed at once. There is no other scent of equal excellence to it. It restores hearts that have gone and brings back withered souls”²⁰.

But Manuchi has given a romantic twist to the story of discovery 'itr-i- Jahangiri in his book *stori do mogor*. In this, Jahangir adores Noor Jahan with great love and Noor Jahan announces a feast and during the preparations for this feast, this perfume is discovered and Manuchi says that today one has to pay 100 rupees for this fragrance²¹.

Seventeenth century

Next, we discuss here 'Itryā-i Nauras Shāhī, which is related to Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, who is also known as Nauras Shah (King of Nine Essences). The book "Itryā-i Nauras Shāhī" discusses a variety of rasas and fragrance combinations that strengthened the heart and promoted wellbeing. The perfumer ('atār) Nizamuddin Mahmud, Maulana Habibullah Sharif's son, assembled the treatise from older works. It was given to Ibrahim Adil Shah II, the sultan of Bijapur (1580–1627), according to folio 1 of the manuscript²¹.

The word "nauras," a significant word in Dakhni Urdu that means "nine favors," "nine sentiments," and "nine forms of versification", comes from the root word *rasa*, which means "juice," "sap," or "essence," and is a fundamental idea in Indian aesthetics. The sultan held a particular interest in Nauras. Thus, the word "nauras" originated in Nauraspur, the town the sultan had established as the new capital of the sultanate in 1603, and the sultan's preferred location in Nauraspur became known as Nauras Mahal because of its musical establishments. Perhaps most significantly, the word "nauras" appears in the title of an anthology of songs written by the sultan, called *Kitāb-i nauras*²².

There are eighteen chapters in this book the eight discourses are concerned sequentially with the eight discourses are concerned sequentially with (1) the names of single, un-compounded fragrances (simples); (2) fragrances from animal extracts; (3) the origins, natures, and benefits of single fragrances; (4) the preparation of *abīr* paste (an elaborate aromatic paste made up principally of sandalwood but including oak moss, ginger root stalk, and cut mica); (5) the distillation of *ambergris* ('*ambar*); (6) the preparation of *camphor* (*kāfūr*) and *barley powder* (*jau dāna*); (7) the preparation and cleaning of *civet* (*zabād*, a pungent animal product used in perfumery); and (8) the testing, use, storage, and benefits of *musk*, *ambergris*, *aloeswood*, and *camphor*, being the essential ingredients of all fragrances in the view of the writer²³.

This recipe serves as an example of one of the nine techniques for making incense that are covered in Chapter 5. According to the author, this section deals with making *aloeswood incense* ('*ūd*). He gives the reader instructions to chop up one *ser*, or roughly one kilogramme, of the finest *aloeswood* ('*ūd ā'la*), into small pieces, and soak these pieces in *rose water* for three days and three nights. It will be even better, he says, if the *rose water* is fortified with *Rosa damascena* petals (*gul-i surkh*). The *aloeswood* chips should be thoroughly crushed after being dried in the shade. After this procedure, the author says, one and a half cups of

sugar syrup should be made. Then, roughly 25 grams of ambergris that has been soaked in rosewater and crushed aloeswood should be added, and everything should be left to cool. Ultimately, this paste is made into small balls the size of grapes (or, alternatively, each the shape of a miniature three-sided sambosa, or samosa), dried in the shade on a porcelain dish, and used (burned) when needed (to scent a room or to perfume one's garments)²³.

Nizamuddin Mahmud suggests a few techniques for perfume the royal khwābgāh, including keeping citrons in a dish by the pillow and topping them with fragrant flowers like jasmine (*Jasminum sambac*, or *mogrā*, and *Jasminum officinale*, or *chambelī*), *kūza* (likely the musk rose, *Rosa moschata*), *gul-i surkh* (the atar rose, *Rosa damascena*), *niwālī* (another rose or fragrant lower whose identity is unclear), and *gul-i champā* (the showy and very fragrant *champā* lower, *Michelia champaca*). The author suggests scattering distilled aloeswood (*chūvā*) and *bālā* lowers (?) soaked in sandalwood throughout the room. Aloeswood should be smoked, the bedroom door should be tightly shut, and the bedsheet should be ignited so that it would absorb the fragrance²⁴.

Conclusion:

From the above example it is clear that the tradition of fragrance which has been going on since ancient times was not only preserved in the mediaeval times but the contemporary rulers also revived this tradition in a big way. Books from the Mediaeval period mention the use of Perfumery products in large quantities. Rulers brought together India's grand fragrance tradition with the technologically advanced fragrance traditions of the Middle East. In the Mughal period, perfumery skill achieved different heights when following the perfumery tradition, Akbar the Great created a separate department for it. Emperor Jahangir gave it protection and appointed an inspector to ensure the supply of attar in the palace. Therefore, in the mediaeval times, perfume and cosmetic science were given a strong impetus by the emperors of different regions.

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²Marathe, M. P. (2009). Cosmetics and Perfumes in Sanskrit literature.

³ibid.

⁴ Ibid,p 157-163.

⁵Ibid,p 164

⁶Vyas, R. T. (Ed.). (1989). Gaṅgādhara's Gandhasāra and an unknown author's Gandhavāda, with Marathi commentary (No. 173). Oriental Institute.

⁷Ibid

⁸Marathe, M. P. (2009)p 212.

⁹Gode, P. K. (1960). Studies in Indian cultural history. (No Title).

¹⁰Marathe,M.P.(2009)p 212.

¹¹Ibid p 218.

¹²Ibid p 217.

¹³GSGV,RT Vyas,p26.

¹⁴Gode,P.K.(1960).

¹⁵Titley, N. M. (2004). The Ni'matnama manuscript of the Sultans of Mandu: The Sultan's book of delights. Routledge.

¹⁶Ibid p51.

¹⁷Ibid p53.

¹⁸Allami, A. F. (1873). The Ain-Akbari, translated by H. Blockmann and Colonel HS Jarrett, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1907(1), 166.

¹⁹Irvine, W. (1910). The Tūzuk-I-Jahāngīrī, or Memoirs of Jahāngīr. Translated by Alexander Rogers I. CS,(retired); edited by Henry Beveridge I. CS,(retired). Oriental Translation Fund, New Series, Vol. XIX, 1909. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 42(3), 947-955.

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²²Husain, A. A. (2017). Perfuming the Heart: A Study of A Seventeenth-Century Perfumery Treatise from Islamic India. *Sound and Scent in the Garden*, 107-122.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.