

5th International Conference and Exhibition on

Pharmacology and Ethnopharmacology

March 23-25, 2017 Orlando, USA

Marquesan (French Polynesia) cosmetopoeia assessment

Phila Raharivelomanana, Xénia Jost, Jean-Luc Ansel, Gaël Lecellier and Jean François Butaud
University of French Polynesia, French Polynesia

Marquesas Islands (French Polynesia), have a strong culture which is still very conspicuous today. Natural fragrance is an important characteristic of Marquesan beauty concern, flowers and fragrant plants being omnipresent in traditional cosmetic preparations. This study, the first specific inquiries on the French Polynesian “cosmetopoeia”, is based on ethnobotanical investigations focusing on traditional cosmetic. Ethnobotanical surveys of Marquesan traditional practitioners were performed in Tahiti and in Nuku Hiva islands. Prior to each interview process, a free and informed consent PIC (Prior Informant Consent) was signed by both interviewer and informant. A semi-directive methodological approach with open-ended questions was performed and allowed to establish a list of cosmetic allegations per target or per use. Survey was based on three standards: application area (hair, body, face), uses (care, protection, hygiene, embellishment and perfume), and ethnobotany. Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is the most used species as a traditional cosmetic ingredient. *Ocimum basilicum* (basil) and *Curcuma longa* (turmeric) are the second most important plants. This study allowed to document a list of more than 500 recipes with almost 80 different plant species. For example, for hair care, natural shampoo were mainly constituted of 'ekapuhi plant - shampoo ginger (*Zingiber zerumbet*), and for baby care, daily bath are given with cooked leaves of *Annona muricata* (soursop) or other plants. There is a very close link between traditional cosmetic uses (Cosmetopoeia) and pharmaceutical uses (Pharmacopoeia), but compared to pharmacopoeia, cosmetopoeia involves more native species. It symbolizes the practice of a lively heritage in the Marquesas archipelago.

Biography

Phila Raharivelomanana is a Chemist (PhD-Chemistry) and now is a Full Professor of Chemistry at the University of French Polynesia. She obtained her PhD Diploma in Molecular Chemistry at the University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis (France) in 1992. She has more than 20 years of experience in phytochemical science research. When she joined the UPF in the 1990s, she was one of the pioneer researchers working in phytochemistry of Polynesian plants. Then, she focused on medicinal plant investigation aiming at a better understanding of ethnopharmacological aspects. She is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of *Natural Product Communications Journal*.

phila.raharivelomanana@upf.pf

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