

English translation of abstract : **Het gebruik van chemische huidbleekmiddelen onder Indiase vrouwen in Bangalore**

Chemical skin bleaching occurs in most places where people with a coloured skin live. It is the consequence of interracial and intra-racial discrimination. But ideas about beauty and the making of the appearance also play a role. Except for household medicaments on a natural basis, such as fruit acids and other domestic resources, also beauty products on chemical basis are used. The most popular chemical bleaching substance is hydroquinone. Since the forties of the twentieth century, this substance has been processed in soaps, lotion and body milk. Nowadays hydroquinone-containing beauty products have been prohibited in the European Union and in several African countries, because of the side-effects of hydroquinone. Unfortunately this does not work everywhere. Also quest for a lighter skin colour continues to exist. For this reason manufacturers bring new products on the market. One of these is Fair and Lovely. This product is very popular in India, where a light skin colour, as from the days of Aryan invasion around 2500 BC, plays a dominant role. With this article we try to unveil the practice of skin bleaching of 22 women in the city of Bangalore, India, and to find out why these women have taken their refuge to these products. Furthermore, we looked into the structure of the Indian society (family-, caste-, and class system) and the role it plays in this practice of skin bleaching. It appeared to us, that these women close their eyes for the discrimination on the basis of skin colour. In India, skin bleaching is according to us an oppression instrument, wrapped up in a millennia old beauty tradition.