

Summaries

Inez van der Spek

What if religion is not just elegant and sexy....

A triptych on women and religion in the Netherlands

Each panel deals with an aspect of religion at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The left-hand panel ('provided religion is elegant and sexy') and the right-hand panel ('veiled views') focus on the representation of religion in the media, and on the public debate on the meaning of religion in Dutch society. In general, religion is seen as either a private and spiritual activity for the weekend or a fixed set of rules and values root-

ed in a closed system of Truth. Instead, the author suggests to understand religious traditions as pluralistic and dynamic stories and practices creating meaning and identity for groups and individuals.

On the panel in the middle ('critical appropriation') she sketches two practices in which women step outside the constraints of public representation, creatively appropriating their own Christian tradition.

Chia Longman

The priestess of the miniature temple: oppressed, empowered or liberated?

Women in orthodox (Jewish) religious traditions

In light of the cultural diversification of feminism, and contemporary debates on women's rights, multiculturalism and globalisation, it is argued that we need to rethink the place of religion in feminist research. This article tackles the assumed incompatibility between women's emancipation and religion. A case study on religious identity among strictly orthodox Jewish women in Antwerp is discussed. Interviews showed that despite conservative gender role-differentiation, these *Charedi* women do have agency and practice forms of female religiosity such as that related to the

laws on menstruation. The orthodox community nonetheless shows an intensification of gender segregation and gender norms which has consequences for women's choices and their participation in the broader society. However, only research that moves beyond essentialist dualisms such as women as 'agents or victims', as 'modern or traditional, or 'liberated or oppressed', can allow room for the question what the challenges are that religion offers to western secular feminism and gender studies.

Ge Speelman

Intercultural communication as means of negotiation

In marriages between Dutch women and their Egyptian partners, complex processes of negotiation take place. Wives and husbands try to reach a compromise between the expectations and wishes of their partners and their own wishes and expectations. How can we analyse such negotiations? In this article, I give a model for the classification

of different types of negotiation. I try to use this model for an analysis of a specific conflict between two partners, Linda and Mahmoud. Both reflect in interviews with me on the ongoing debate they have about their different religious affiliations and their expectations vis a vis one another in this respect.

Haleh Ghorashi

Ayaan Hirsi Ali: daring or dogmatic?

In this piece I focus on the growing rightist dominant discourse in the Netherlands in relation to Islam and its impact on women with an Islamic background. Within this discourse Islamic migrants are pictured as problems and enemies of the nation. This discourse has found in Ayaan Hirsi Ali a strong advocate who attracted both the media and the politics. What the prominent figures of this discourse in the Netherlands have in common, is their emphasis on the incompatibility of cultures, protecting Dutch culture and identity from cultural invasion, and promoting Dutch cultural norms

and values. This new kind of exclusion in the name of culture and enlightenment not only deepens the "us and them" dichotomies within the society, it also creates a new dilemma for Islamic women. They have to turn against their religion in order to be considered emancipated. This is an impossible choice for many that wish to combine the two. Above all, this is also an unnecessary constructed dilemma, because there are various examples such as Shirin Ebadi which show that there are different roads to emancipation.

Agnes Elling

Moving images: sex, sports and ethnicity

Since long the world of sports is like other former male bastions a social practice, in which women and girls also take part in several ways. Nevertheless, especially the symbolic in- and exclusion mechanisms in sports are strongly connected to the traditional denotations of and relations between the sexes. As concerns ethnicity, the dominant image of sports and

particularly (male) football is the image of biased inclusion, of fraternization in and through sports. In short, besides physical achievements, in sports normative denotations are continually rendered, confirmed and breached. This article discusses interacting gender- and ethnic-specific denotations in sports.

Amade M'charek

A Body is a Body is a Body. On the moral imperative of health research

A reply to Ineke Klinge

In her discussion paper Ineke Klinge comments on a special issue of the Tijdschrift for Gender Studies 'Biology made every day' (De Biologisering van het alledaagse). Amade M'charek takes the argumentative strategy of Klinge seriously and uncovers how the latter sets up her arguments. Two strategies come to the fore. Firstly, Klinge seems to have serious problems with the language of various gender studies scholars. Klinge makes a distinction between those active in practice and those sitting in their ivory towers, which however, neither takes the complexity of the biological into account nor the heterogeneity of academics work.

Secondly, Klinge aims at setting health research on the agenda. To do that she argues that now that biomedical research is appropriating the body, gender experts need to counter that by paying more attention to processes *in* the body. For this argument Klinge does not only reduce *the body* to allegedly 'natural' processes, she also marginalizes a large corpus of literature within gender studies about the body. Again these scholars' work is being trivialized. Which leads M'charek to conclude that the body is not only appropriated in biomedical research but also in health research.

Jantine Oldersma

Feminism and Pimmism

Comment on Mieke Aerts' lecture

Feminism and Pimmism is a comment on Mieke Aerts' lecture 'Might Pim Fortuyn have been a woman?'. The search into the feeling of discomfort caused by Mieke Aerts' article leads the author first to a more literally interpretation of the initial question. Could a woman in politics have done what Pim Fortuyn did? What do we consider to be the achievements of Fortuyn in this respect? After that the comparison between the

Fortuyn movement and feminism is examined. The author contradicts the opinion that Fortuyn has caused an expansion of politics, comparable to feminism, and is of the opinion that Fortuynism has led to a narrowing of the political discussion. Not the closed, but rather the open nature of the Dutch political system is, according to her, frustrating for those politicians who consider themselves 'strong'.