

# Summaries

*Karin Sommen*

## **Luce Irigaray: political philosopher or philosophical politician?**

*The balance between philosophy, politics and sexual difference*

From her earliest writings, Luce Irigaray's philosophical reflections can be considered to strive for a humane society for both women and men. Already in the early seventies she developed a philosophy of sexual difference. The aim of this philosophy is, among other things, to accomplish a positive articulation for the female in our western culture, which, according to Irigaray, is still dominated by men. In recent years Irigaray expresses, next to her philosophical concerns, an increased interest in political practices. In this context, her latest writings have become more concrete, and even propose new laws, rights and duties.

This article deals with the question to what extent Irigaray's recent, political writings still correspond with her earlier theoretical-philosophical considerations. Does the shift from 'philosophy' to 'politics' produce tensions or even contradictions within her philosophy of sexual difference? Moreover, the article will discuss a topical element of Irigaray's 'political' move: the relation between sexual difference and other differences in our society. While Irigaray will always maintain that sexual difference is the most original and important difference between people, her recent work does open up the possibility of extending our attention to differences in race, culture, class, age, et cetera.

*Josje Weusten*

## **Beyond the boundaries of language**

*Narrative Identities of Mothers of Autistic Children*

In this article the author makes an in-depth analysis of the ways in which motherhood is constructed in three personal stories, written by mothers of children with autism. The cultural stereotypes about motherhood and autism that are available for these three mothers to articulate their motherhood often appear to be problematic. A central theme in the stories is, consequently, the struggle of the main characters with their identity as a mother. Against this backdrop, it is assessed how motherhood is constructed in the three narratives. Do the authors swerve away from the problematic cultural stereotypes in their narratives? Special attention is paid to the role language plays in the narrative constructions of motherhood. The author argues that some of the authors studied rewrite the narrative identity of the mother successfully through articulating motherhood in hybrid ways. In order to do this, they mobilize language in embodied ways and tell their stories partially beyond words. In addition to this, it is claimed that to be able to detect these unconventional narrative strategies, it is necessary to employ a way of reading that is similar in its unconventionality.

*Caroline Essers, Yvonne Benschop en Hans Doorewaard*

## **Entrepreneurial women between two cultures**

*Identity constructions of female entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish origin in the Netherlands*

This article examines the entrepreneurial identities of female entrepreneurs of Moroccan or Turkish origin living in the Netherlands. It takes issue with theories of entrepreneurship that traditionally address white, male entrepreneurs and depict migrant women as the 'Other' entrepreneur. We use the concept of intersectionality to understand how ethnic, gender and entrepreneurial identities are co-constructed instead of being mere accumulations of those identities. Four life stories illustrate the tensions these women encounter when constructing their professional identities in dialogue with various relevant others. The interviewed business women develop several strategies to deal with these tensions, exemplifying how agency emerges from the intersection of entrepreneurship, gender and ethnicity.

*Halleh Ghorashi*

## **Paradoxes of cultural recognition**

*The management of diversity in the new Netherlands*

The arrival of new migrants in the Netherlands challenges the whole society to create conditions for unity with space for diversity. I argue that the migration and integration approach in the Netherlands during the last decades has been based on categorical thinking with the assumption that the new migrants have an entirely different socio-cultural background as well as a socio-economic deficit. The new shift in the dominant discourse has not introduced any shift in this basic assumption. What is new in the discourse is that there is a shift in focus (from socio-economic to socio-cultural), in tune (from mild to harsh), and in attitude (from optimism to pessimism). In order to find answers for the new challenges with regard to cultural diversity in the Netherlands, we need to develop new visions that can stimulate cultural sensitivity and combat categorical thinking. For example, in the case of emancipation of migrant women we see the mentioned categorical thinking within the dominant discourse. It is commonly accepted that these women are subordinated by their men and their culture and need to be emancipated. This assumption leaves little room for the initiatives and capabilities of the women themselves. We need to be aware of our categorical assumptions and make room for different forms of connections with the other.

*Renée Kool*

## **The female victim revisited?**

The women's movement has lobbied extensively for the improvement of the position of the (female) victim in criminal law. A considerable number of rights have been granted to the victim, either by law or legal practice. The Dutch legislator is now proposing to codify these rights in one new chapter (title) to be added to the Code of Criminal Procedure. The author critically assesses the gains from a gender perspective. She concludes that procedural rights are of limited significance so long as the interpretation of criminal offence provisions remains

biased. A case in point is the judges' interpretation of the behaviour of rape victims; sexy dress and 'loose' behaviour may still be accepted as indications that it was not absolutely clear to the perpetrator of rape that the victim was unwilling. Cultural stereotyping and the individualizing tendencies of law practice all seem to work against women's rights here. After all, to be granted victim's rights, it is necessary that the victimizing act is recognized as a criminal offence in the first place.

*Mirjam Westen*

## The F-word is buzzing ...

*The feminist commitment of present-day female artists*

From the seventies onwards, feminism has had a continuous influence on the visual arts, in particular on female artists. While for years the contribution of feminist artists has been labelled marginal, from the end of the nineties we witness a markedly positive change in appreciation. Increasingly, art institutions and art critique are paying attention to work that addresses feminist themes. Westen presents a selection of work by present-day, successful artists like Alicia Framis, Regina Galindo, Julika Rudelius and Ann-Sofi Sidén. She shows how in their work gender themes are being caustically addressed, and interwoven with general societal issues. She concludes that we see both continuity between the work of the various generations of feminist artists, and some new characteristics of the work of present-day artists.

*Liesbeth Bervoets*

## Care under a regime of market and state

*The liberal-communitarian hotchpotch of the Law on Social Support*

Successive Dutch cabinets have tried to curb the costs of health care. The dominant ideology for the last decade was marketisation: the introduction of market principles was seen as a remedy to stimulate health care organisations to efficiency and clients to frugality. Now that the limits of market steering become apparent, another steering principle is introduced. The Law on Social Support that will become effective in 2007 introduces the caring role of the community as an important principle. The author criticises both mechanisms on the ground that they tend to be invoked in a gender blind discourse. Citizens are seen as self supporting human beings, very well capable of organising their own care arrangements. Civil society is praised as the safety net, while the state is withdrawing funds from professional care arrangements. This obscures the fact that many individuals do not have the resources to fulfil this ideal of citizenship. It also neglects changes in orientation of modern citizens towards voluntary activity. Most importantly: it obscures the deeply gendered nature of care arrangements as well as civil society.