

## Preface

You would be hard-pressed to find a field in recent years and decades that has provided humanities and social sciences with more innovative approaches than gender studies. Modern gender studies take an intersectional approach and also scrutinise many other forms of discrimination, such as racism, sexism or classism. Largely because of feminist approaches, cultural sciences have come to focus on questions about stereotypical or allegorical representations as well as about linguistic, medial and literary construction of gender categories. Furthermore, gender studies have brought to light that gender identity is in many cases a social construct that is in no small part based on linguistically and culturally transmitted concepts. Inherent to this connection are numerous overlaps with the field of metaphor and metonymy – the research and description of which is the main objective of *metaphorik.de*. What are the metaphorical dimensions of gender-based identity constructs? Is there something like a specific realm of metaphor used to describe gender stereotypes? Might there even be a gender-specific use of metaphor? These were the central questions posed in the call for papers preceding this issue.

The *metaphorik.de* issue you are reading is dedicated to the topic of gender and compiles various articles submitted after our call for papers. We are very pleased at the many submissions, which are a sign of how relevant this topic must be. This issue's first article is written by Marina Bletsas, who shows that the *metaphorical* construction of femininity in French and Italian phraseologies literally builds on deep-rooted cultural beliefs. Using a French corpus, Francesca Capacchietti then discusses to which extent female influencers use specific metaphors when representing athletic activities. Which traits are being metaphorically associated with femininity? Jennifer Henke looks at Japanese comic and manga adaptations of a number of Shakespeare plays and analyses how gender-related metaphors are visualised in the images. Her study clearly demonstrates the untapped potential of comprehensive semiotics research that ties together language, metaphor and their representation in images. Suneeta Mishra follows with a study of the political discourse in India, in which she investigates the relationship between grammatical gender in Hindi and gender identity, which is reinforced by metaphor. How far does the grammatical gender of the source noun condition its potential to be projected onto a human target? Finally, Annegret Richter's article has a literary topic. She studies the metaphorical construction of gender

in connection with Raewyn Connells' concept of hegemonic masculinity in a French-Algerian work of literature. The studies published in this issue are testament to the diversity, topicality and relevance of research questions at the interface of metaphor and gender.

In a further study outside the thematic focus, Hanna Bruns examines the metaphorical use of language in internal discussions of the right-wing populist party *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany). In doing so, she examines the question of the extent to which metaphorical concepts that were already popular under National Socialism are activated here.

We hope that many will find this special issue interesting and are convinced that the analyses it contains will spark much further research. We would like to thank Marisa Sieberg (Essen) and Kerstin Sterkel as well as Vera Neusius (Saarbrücken), in particular, for designing the layout templates. Our thanks to the Wehrhahn-Verlag for the print issue and to Bernd Backhaus (Bochum) for his technical support with the online version.

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