

## Call for Chapters

### **Gender and the periphery Grammatical and social gender from the margins**

Gender can be understood as a grammatical category, independent from the cultural construction imparting meanings and values to the physiological differences between male and female beings to explain the historical dissymmetry between men and women. It is also possible to consider that biological differences and their social interpretations are closely tied to language, and linguistic structure. In either case, the relationship between grammatical gender and social gender, as processes of categorisation, has become nowadays a scholarly topic, which constitutes an epistemological breakthrough (Hellinger & Bussmann 2002).

This “epistemological breakthrough” in linguistics has long been the topic of studies in English-speaking countries (Silverstein 1985, Baron 1986, Wattman Frank & Treichler 1989, Curzan 2003, Pauwels & Winter 2006, Huddleston & Pullum 2008), as well as in other fields of research, such as philosophy (Wittig 1980, Butler 1990), sociology (Delphy 1970, Mathieu 1985), or history (Knibielher 1977, Scott 1986, 1996). However, in numerous languages, in which grammatical gender may or may not be strongly marked, this critical and scientific investigation of the relationship between morpho-syntactical descriptions such as those concerning the feminine grammatical gender, and other social factors has been growing since the 1990s (see among others Violi 1987, Michard 2000, Khaznadar 2002 for French; Elmiger 2008, Gygax & al. 2009 for German; Gabriel & Gygax 2008 for Norwegian).

This volume aims to bring together studies on this morpho-syntactical phenomenon, focusing on its *periphery*. This periphery can be understood either in the sense that the studied languages are so called minority languages and thus less described (as for the Judeo-Spanish or Greek Cypriot), or because this morpho-syntactical dimension has not received the interest it deserves in the languages studied (such as for Hebrew and Arabic languages).

We also take interest in the periphery of uses. This volume can be seen as a partial answer to Butler’s call for a political project aiming at opening the horizon of possibilities, as far as gender configurations are concerned (Butler 2005: 118). Indeed, and as reminded by Scott (1986), the category of gender is multifaceted. The interweaving of semantic and morpho-syntactical gender on a gradual scale reveals different possibilities of challenging gender according to languages. That said, challenging the order of gender –that is, as a norm– has to begin ‘from margin to centre’ (bell hooks 1984). This challenge leads to a disturbance of what is institutionalised in languages, including linguistic structure, by the means of speakers’ practices.

To enlighten these peripheries is then to broaden the realms of possibility for a gender critique. It is also, according to the feminist tradition, giving voice to what is beyond the already mapped grounds.

Please send a 250 words abstract before **November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012** to Julie Abbou:  
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Your proposal should include the following information:

- Title of the Chapter
- Name of the Author, Affiliation, Email
- Abstract

Notifications of acceptance will be send by **December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

The full papers will be due by **February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Propositions and chapters will be anonymously reviewed.*