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One face with two Sexes? – Attempting to analyse the insights of a psychophysical experiment

This article analyses some very specific processes of knowledge- and evidence-production in the field of human psychophysics concerning the question whether gender is a category of human visual perception, specifically of face recognition. Methodologically speaking, the article conducts a discourse-analysis on a micro-political level and addresses the question of how the experiment itself, the form of knowledge behind it, together with the applied media devices, produces some kind of truth or evidence about gender as it is represented in the form of text, diagrams and pictures. This kind of scientific “truth” was published in one of the most famous scientific magazines of the disciplinary field, *Vision*, in 2005. The media technique which was used for the experiment is a morphing procedure based on complicated statistico-mathematical calculations and elaborated algorithms. In terms of effect on the level of picture production the medium primarily erased all difference between two categories of sex which were not only extracted from „reality“ and then digitalized but also a foreclosed presumption of the experimenters. The following article shows how the morphing procedure destabilizes this presumption on an epistemological level, how the process of presenting the pictures to the subjects in a static, photographic manner seeks to regulate this destabilization and how, finally, the presumption is – as experimental solution – at the risk of being not verifiable at all but has to be rationalized and re-established for this very reason in order to keep sexual difference intelligible in the form of two categories of sex.