



INTERNATIONAL
PSYCHOANALYTICAL
ASSOCIATION



SEXUAL
AND
GENDER
DIVERSITY
STUDIES
COMMITTEE

Second Brussels Study Weekend,
IPA Sexual & Gender Diversity Studies Committee

Transgender: Transference and Countertransference Anxieties

17 January 2025-19 January 2025



In person

BRUSSELS AND ONLINE



Friday, January 17, 2025

19:00-20:30 Arrival, registration, and welcome reception at the EPF house

Saturday, January 18, 2025

09:00 Introduction: Leticia Glocer Fiorini (Argentina), Chair of the IPA Committee on Sexual and Gender Diversity Studies

Jan Abram (UK), EPF President

09:30-12:15 First panel, Chair Konstantinos Argyropoulos (Greece)

09:30-09:55 Nicolas Evzonas (France):
Terrors of Shapelessness, Gender, and Countertransference Dreams

09:55-10:15 Discussion

10:15-10:40 Ângela Vila-Real (Portugal): Vertigo: Transference countertransference dynamics and theoretical reflection on a trans case

10:40-11:00 Discussion

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-11:55 Elisabeth Imhorst (Germany): Disembodiment and operative thinking in the context of trans phenomena

11:55-12:15 Discussion

12:15-14:30 Lunch Break

14:30-15:30 **Small Discussion Groups** (for in-person participants): The audience will be divided into four small groups. Each group will have the opportunity to discuss with one of the three presenters from the morning; additionally, in the fourth group will be one case presentation. Each group will have two moderators. (Case presenter in the fourth group tbc)

Moderators for the small discussion groups:

Ferhan Ozenen (Turkey) and Esther Hutfless (Austria),
Silvia Acosta (Portugal) and Petra Heymanns (Germany)
Bernd Heimerl (Germany) and Eija Repo (Finland)
Clinical Case: Anna Cordioli (Italy)

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-16:30 General discussion with contributions from all small group moderators and the audience

19:00 Dinner at the restaurant "Les petits oignons"
(for those who register for it, minimum 45 persons)

Sunday January 19, 2025

09:00- Second panel, Chair Eva Reichelt (Germany)

09:00-09:25 Tillman-David Schneider (Germany):

Shipwreck with a tiger? - Reflections on the significance of inner and outer reality for trans* male patients in an analytical group

09:25-09:45 Discussion

09:45-10:10 Anat Schumann (Israel):

Encountering otherness: On the ability (or inability) for psychic movement in sexual states of mind

10:10-10:30 Discussion

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-11:25 Dana Amir (Israel):

From countertransference towards transgender patients – to transference towards transgender therapists

11:25-11:45 Discussion

11:45-12:30 Concluding discussion between all six panelists and the audience

12:30 Farewell reception



Abstracts:

Nicolas Evzonas (France):

Terrors of Shapelessness, Gender, and Countertransference Dreams

This presentation describes the psychoanalytic work with two trans identified patients prone to mirror anxieties and terrorizing feelings of falling, decomposing, or disfigured faces. Evzonas argues that these “terrors of shapelessness” can be bound, regulated, and coagulated through gender transition and body modifications. It is emphasized that these primary fears can remain unrepresented and countertransference in this case is the only way to access to these states. Evzonas thus recounts a series of disconcerting countertransference dreams in which he sees his face collapsing in front of a mirror and experiences a breakup of personal continuity. Accordingly, he illustrates the risk of going astray in violent, projective, or even delusional interpretations if the analyst fails to sufficiently work through the death-associated elements that circulate in the transference behind the mask of the masculine and the feminine.

Ângela Vila-Real (Portugal):

Vertigo: transference-countertransference dynamics and theoretical reflection on a trans case

In a trans case, variable transference-countertransference dynamics are described. These refer to specific biographical experiences that require clinical chances and give rise to various theoretical formulations.

Elisabeth Imhorst (Germany):

Disembodiment and operative thinking in the context of trans phenomena

Unconscious inner conflicts and dysfunctional defense mechanisms appear to play a significant role in late onset gender dysphoria - not only in the sense of a “trans away the gay” to ward off homosexual desire that is experienced as threatening. Identifying as trans in puberty or adolescence can be the result of a complex chain of defensive operations which have their roots in childhood, and which have to do with depersonalization in the sense of a withdrawal from reality (of the body and relationships with parents), in the wake of which the primary process, i.e., phantasmatic thinking, has taken control of thinking.

I will present material from the (low-frequency) analytical treatment of a 14-year-old trans boy who came to me because he was afraid of not being trans after all. My ability to allow “inner diversity” (Dogan 2024), which I understand as the potential of a bisexuality that is not only psychological, was one of the prerequisites for the treatment to take place at all. The greatest challenge for me was to bear confusion and rapid changes of mood and direction in his narrative flow, but most of all the despair and pain that his erogenous inner body image (Dolto 1999) would never match his outer body.

Tillman-David Schneider (Germany):

Shipwreck with a tiger? - Reflections on the significance of inner and outer reality for trans* male patients in an analytical group

In analytical therapies with trans* people there is often a risk of fronts being formed: The outer reality of a gender assigned at birth clashes with the patient's inner reality. The analyst is quickly attributed with being an unyielding representative of this first reality, whereas the patients experience themselves as the defender of their inner reality and just as unyieldingly separating it from the supposedly hostile and threatening external attributions. This raises the question of how analytical work is possible under these conditions and to what extent one's own analytical attitude can be helpful or blocking. The almost 8-year course of an analytic group and the transference and countertransference that unfolds over that time there serve as clinical material.

Anat Schumann (Israel):

On Psychic Movement within Sexual States of Mind

I suggest several psychoanalytic reflections on the capacity (and incapacity) for psychic movement within sexual states of mind. Drawing on the concept of archaic bisexuality as described by Winnicott (1966) and Tustin (1981), along with Kristeva's (1982) elaboration on the concept of abjection, I explore various psychic scenarios in which the sexual difference may represent the traumatic encounter with the ‘not-me’. This scenario may lead to the splitting of psychic bisexuality, which affects the individual's sexual and gender-related states of mind at different levels of integration. Through clinical illustration, I suggest listening to compulsive and fetishistic sexual states of mind as reflecting the ‘Sexualization of Abjection’ - a manifestation of an early traumatic encounter with the otherness of the ‘not-me’. Finally, the significance of a bisexual analytic container is emphasized, which may facilitate psychic movement within anxiety-laden and rigid sexual states of mind.

Dana Amir (Israel):

From countertransference towards transgender patients - to transference towards transgender therapists

We are used to talking about trans patients and the complex countertransference that arises toward them. I have a master's degree student who is transgender and who wrote a research paper on trans therapists and how they work with patients during the transformation process. The work was based on three open and courageous interviews with three therapists who have spent at least 15 years since their transformation process: one works in the USA, one in France, and one in Israel. I want to bring here some of the material that came up in the interviews, along with my thoughts on the meaning of psychoanalytic thinking on patients and transgender therapists.



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REGISTRATION FEES

Registration is open to the following categories.

- IPA members
- IPA analysts-in-training
- Qualified psychodynamic psychotherapists
- Students

The conference fees are \$50 for in-person attendance and \$30 for online attendance.

The fee includes coffee and receptions for in-person attendees.

Registrants for online attendance will receive links to connect on January 15.

[Click Here for](#) 
[More Infos and Registration Form](#)

