

Dear subscribers,

Here you will find the latest news from the IPU Berlin, information on upcoming **events** as well as the monthly **column** by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**.

The IPU Berlin and the KKC Bochum are currently offering a **postdoctoral fellowship** in social and cultural psychology and psychoanalysis. The application deadline is 30 June 2024. Further information can be found **on our website**.

Prof. Andreas Hamburger will soon be publishing a new book on film psychoanalysis with Routledge (use the code EFLY01 by 30 June 2024 for a special discount.). The IPU Berlin is represented on the **MS Wissenschaft**, which is on tour in Germany and Austria throughout the year. Find out more **in our spotlight**.

The IPU Berlin mourns the loss of Sudhir Kakar. The renowned Indian psychoanalyst recently passed away at the age of 85. Read more about Kakar **in our spotlight**.

Long Night of the Sciences 2024 at the IPU Berlin

Joint program with Berlin psychoanalytic institutes
22 June 2024



Events

23 May 2024 | 7 pm

Library Talk: Jacques Lacan – The Basics

With Leon S. Brenner and Calum Neill

Register **on our website**.

28 May 2024 | 8 pm

The Banalization of Antisemitism

Lecture by Rosine Jozef Perelberg as part of the summer lecture series organized by the initiative krIPU and funded by the StuRa and the IPU Sponsors and Fundraisers Association.

Register **on our website**.

29 May 2024 | 9 am

Negative Hallucinations, Dreams and Hallucinations – The Framing Structure and Its Representation in the Analytic Setting

Clinical Workshop with Rosine Jozef Perelberg.

Register **on our website**.

11 June 2024 | 5 pm

IPU information event for prospective students

Register **on our website**.

22 June 2024 | 5 pm

Long Night of the Sciences at the IPU Berlin

More information **on our website**.

Information event for prospective students

11 June 2024 • 5 pm



They broke the code

The **May column** by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**

First place in the *Eurovision Song Contest (ESC)* in Malmö was recently awarded to Swiss artist Nemo Mettler. Nemo is nonbinary, and the song “The Code” – an artistic mixture of rap, drum and bass, and opera – tells the story of a journey of self-awareness (and emancipation). This was the first time a nonbinary person has won the ESC.

My satirical side wanted to yell, “finally!”, but its more reflected parts of me recommended I look more closely, especially at the lyric, “*Somewhere between the 0s and 1s, that’s where I found my kingdom come*”. Nemo sings this in plumage reminiscent of Papageno with passages similar in coloratura to Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, and performs it with wild dance moves on a rotating shell-like platform that is neither a sphere nor a disk.

Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz has been President of the International Psychoanalytic University Berlin since July 2021. Once a month, he provides commentary here on contemporary, timeless, psychoanalytic and political issues.



Is this possibly making a statement, whose message spans far beyond binary gendering? One can plainly interpret the quoted line as a critique against dichotomizing, which portrays every opposite as an opposition. How quickly are facts, events, or processes labeled black or white, big or small, right or left, bottom or top, and how often does the entire spectrum “in between” fall out of sight? Breaking away from this is not without cause – gender included – even if it certainly doesn’t always promise happiness or success. It is questionable whether it’s even possible to escape these categorizations by simply picking new ones, which then just as quickly set one apart. However, if we could do without them completely, this would –perhaps – be possible. A criticism of digital structures, which represents everything with only two digits, can also be seen in these song lyrics. Recently, a young computer scientist opened my eyes to the infinite variations between even 0 and 1: Just within this small span, there are more numbers that cannot be expressed as fractions (such as periodic numbers) than there are natural numbers.

For nonbinary people, there is no pronoun yet identified in German – in contrast to the English singular “they”. Among a wide range of suggestions, “pi” came into discussion, the mathematical symbol π , which represents the ratio of a circle’s circumference to its diameter. Its value is approximately 3.14, but in reality, it’s an unending fraction, as there are an infinite number of digits to the right of the decimal. Squaring the circle can be approached in theory, but not in practice.

If the song were indeed that broadly defined, I would join the nonbinary community (if they would take me), as the unending scale between digital codes, and really behind almost every dichotomy, is surely negotiable from person to person and only in a society open to it. 0 and 1 do not allow for this.

