

ISBN 978-1-4092-7411-7

Copyright © 2001-2009 by Mirella Izzo (mirella@mirellaizzo.it)

Copyright © 2009 by Lulu.com

Last revision: july 2007

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanicals, photocopyng, recording, or otherwise, except as permitted by the law of USA and UE.

© 2001-2009: *Mirella Izzo*

© 2009 *Lulu.com*

English translation from Italian: Simona Continente

AZIONETRANS MANIFESTO

(TransAction Manifesto)

by Mirella Izzo

translated by Simona Continente

Preface to the 7th Edition

By Mirella Izzo

The idea of a transgender Manifesto was born towards the end of 2000. It was raised from within Crisalide, a voluntary transgender organization which had recently abandoned the late ArciTrans, and achieved autonomy under the name of AzioneTrans. We could not understand why the once very active and to a certain extent self-argumentative Italian transgender organizations appeared to have disappeared. These were the years during which the Radical Party driven MIT – a movement born from the ashes of the well-known Movimento Italiano Transessuali (same acronym but different organization) - was facing competition from the brand new and highly ambitious but poorly resourced ArciTrans. In about a year, and following the departure of Circolo Crisalide from its affiliation, ArciTrans shrank almost to nothing. It was at this point that although unwittingly the newly born Crisalide became a competitor of the modern MIT whose present acronym stands for Movimento Identita' Transessuale (Transsexual Identity Movement).

At this stage I was invested with the task to draft a Manifesto (and think of a possible new name) to propose to MIT and other small groups derived from the old ArciTrans. It was hoped all this would pilot a debate during which further proposals and necessary amendments would lead to an official Manifesto. This would have to gather all Italian Transsexual Organizations under its common ideology. It was not meant to create one single group but some kind of shared pattern. The project was ambitiously regarded as worth translating and selling throughout Europe; and thus incorporated a specific section to be amended by each state according to national requirements.

Unfortunately MIT did not even take it into consideration. At the time Crisalide was a very small group and although it was engaged in

some activity in Milan too, its sphere of action was mainly limited to Genoa. Our optimistic venture was maybe considered utopian and was not appreciated or simply did not raise enough interest. ‘It’s too long’ was the concise reply I personally received over the phone from the president of MIT whom I had been pressurizing for a response which did not seem to arrive. However, once submitted to some of our trustworthy readers and above all to the National Assembly of Crisalide Members, this Manifesto became the perfect emblem of Crisalide. We would welcome other people to join in but we would continue our journey on our own under the vision of this document which represented our organization at its core.

Later the Coordinamento Nazionale Transgender FtM (female to male) adhered to the Manifesto, and few years ahead we all dissolved into Crisalide. Behind this decision stood a political evolution that needed no longer to work disjointedly from the MtF (male to female) movement and which was overflowing with the wish to work together whilst confronting each other in a more advantageous manner. It is important to remember that for quite a long time MtF transsexuals had not been highly regarded by FtM transsexuals. They were seen as too camp and noisy to match their aspiration for a stealthy life within the genetic male scene. But Crisalide was different. It attracted a less extreme and more sober and intellectual type of MtF transgender people. In addition thanks to the unique work of co-ordinators Davide Tolu and Matteo Manetti the FtM movement was discovering a certain pride in being transgender and started to dump the principal of concealment ‘at all costs’.

Today Crisalide is a shared platform for an equal number of FtM and MtF individuals. Until recently this had been seen as unlikely and indeed it still is in many other Italian transgender groups. Therefore this Manifesto is an old idea dated 2001. Since then many events have taken place but apart from some minor changes the intuitions of that document have withstood the challenge of time. Whilst editing it for the seventh time I realized how contemporary it all still is, and not only because it highlights how much work still needs to be done on society’s comprehension of the transgender reality. This

Manifesto is an unsurpassed expression of our philosophy of life. It is the very conception of the human being as generated by our transgender thought. It is condensed in a small amount of words which are both intense and comprehensible and challenge the need for wordy volumes

I thought it would be useful to revise it and make it available again to those who wish to read it and keep it as a synthesis of the Italian transgender thought. It obviously lacks reference to some inevitable aspects of what is an ongoing journey which will feature in a future appendix that is presently being planned. One thing is sure. Many issues like transphobia, homosexual transsexuality (of both translesbians and transgay individuals), the transfeminist project, the 'New Man' (or antithesis of the male chauvinist) project centred on a man liberated from sexist influences are sooner or later to be raised in Italy too. Failure to do so would once again make our country appear as the provincial outsider we have become accustomed to being called.

Genoa, 23rd July 2007

Mirella Izzo

1st Revision

Part 1

A Foreword

A Foreword

The definition of the male/female gender derives from a simplistic and dualistic position based on the examination of the genitals and the observation of the chromosomal map. The scientific validity of this definition is narrow because nature actually features intermediate or intersexual conditions from both a physical (presence of mixed genital characteristics) and a chromosomal perspective. In reality in nature there are more than two sexes. This means that the identification of an individual with the male or female gender is arbitrarily imposed on all intersexed people. In addition, the attribution of the male or female gender is based exclusively on physical parameters, and does not consider the psychological aspect or sense of belonging to one gender rather than another. It is therefore imposed on us all. An empirically and ethically valid process of sexual identification should consider all the variables and possible combinations which constitute the 'shaping' of a sexual human being. These are:

1. Identity of gender (the intimate sense of belonging to the male or female gender i.e. to feel male or female or also intermediate areas between the two sharp genders)
2. Gender role (the social milieu which one might feel in tune with in relation to the male/female stereotypes within one's cultural reality)
3. Chromosomal sex (the effect of the chromosomal sex in the body including the genitals)
4. Sexual orientation (the desire to establish relationships which involve sexual desire with people who belong to the same/opposite biological gender or the same/opposite psychological gender when it does not correspond to the biological gender)

These reveal a hidden and neglected truth: The array of sexes and gender identities is certainly more varied than two options and is best represented by a continuum of possibilities which features at its two

extremes the models/stereotypes of masculine and feminine. (See Appendix 1) The terms male and female are usually accredited by a mere chromosomal conclusion and as such are considered invariable. But within the context of transgenderism it would be more appropriate to speak of transition from male to woman and from female to man rather than from male to female and vice versa. Despite the usual practice of assigning sex and what is thought of as the implicit gender on the basis of biological data only, people's gender should in no way be defined until they identify themselves with a gender identity or psychological sex.

What happens today in the majority of societies notwithstanding, genital attributes and gender identity are not the same thing and should not always be synonymous.

Many authorities do not even differentiate between sex and gender and yet the first only refers to one's personal karyotype in the individual combination of chromosome X and chromosome Y, whilst the second stands for a sense of belonging.

It should then be commonsense that in the process of choosing one's own gender higher importance should be given to personal identification with a gender rather than predetermined and sometimes mandatory definitions. Gender and gender identity take into consideration the chromosomal sex too whilst the last only refers to one karyotypical truth. Gender and Identity denote a global evaluation of the individual, whilst sex only indicates that a clinical observation has taken place. It is therefore perfectly plausible to encounter individuals with male chromosomal characteristics and a female gender identity or vice-versa. There certainly is no need to use terms like 'abnormal' or 'abhorrent'. This applies to transgenderism and intersexuality, as well as to any other form of departure from gender stereotypes. In addition, because sexual orientation is the social and communicative aspect of gender identity, individuals should be able to express it regardless of their chromosomal sex and/or their gender identity even when the two factors do not coincide with society's expectations. It is appropriate to affirm that the range of possible sexual orientations is directly proportional to that of gender identities. This reality (which even if unquestionably present within society nobody seems to want to

analyze seriously) can cause some kind of confusion only in those who are victim of the male/female dualistic idea, and therefore able to conceive only of three sexual typologies namely heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual. In reality the innumerable gender and sexual orientation² variants increase human possibilities of expression. This is in addition to the emancipation already achieved in terms of male and female oestrus or fecundity but still unaccomplished as far sexual dualism is concerned. A partial directory of possible variants (which does not take into account intersexuality - androgynous and gynandrous - or the possibility of multiple and differently orientated affective affinities or even variations of relationship types within the same existence) is available in Appendix 2 of this Manifesto.

² Gender Variants are all those identity typologies that do not correspond to those physical or psychological criteria that are attached to male, female or transsexual individuals who by transitioning from one gender to the other do not put into question sexual binarism

Part 2

On fundamental rights

On Fundamental Rights

- The right of any individual to express one's own gender identity applies to all beings and it is therefore fundamental and absolute. It is indeed entrenched at the root of the uniqueness of every existence and as such crucial for self-realization.
- A self satisfying adjustment of one's own gender identity that does not necessarily correspond to one's biological sex at birth or the associated cultural stereotypes of masculine/feminine (in terms of clothes, gestures, style etc.) is part of the human cultural heritage and expression of free will.

Such freedom has been expressed by humans throughout time and in every land. Terms like Winkte (Lakota), Nadle (Navajo), Hijiras (Indian), Xaniths (Oman Islamic), Mahu (Tahitian), Sekrata (Madagascar), Gallae Frigi (Gallic and Roman) are some of the names given to individuals who transitioned through their attire, behaviour and social role from one gender to the other. These often enjoyed a relevant social status and took on significant responsibilities like that of 'bridge' between the male and female communities. Transgender is the current international term through which the entire human experience listed above harmoniously converged into modern culture. Thanks to evolution in technology, science and medicine it is now possible to reinforce the adjustment of self perceived gender identity through changes that directly affect the body. These can be chemical, like an appropriate hormonal therapy, or aesthetic like surgical procedures affecting primary and secondary sexual characteristics. Such modifications are none other than outcomes owed to the availability of more refined means which by now have become part of humanity's history. These resources are to be considered legitimate and appropriate for those persons who wish to modify their gender identity status beyond transvestitism and transgenderism, and thus opt for genital reconstruction too. It is important to mention here that not so long ago the last was

considered the only foreseeable ‘answer’. In their cultural, ethnic, and anthropological history, and for several different reasons, human beings have always chosen to express themselves by using a variety of clothes, colours and other tools through which they painted or even modified their bodies. How can one possibly exclude gender and identity amongst these underlying causes? It is instead unavoidable to deduce how especially within their context that rearrangements are particularly justifiable. Hence the right to have access to those instruments which allow such realignments becomes indisputable. Scientists continue debating whether people are born or become transgender. Is it a static or an evolving condition? Is it caused by a genetic predisposition or by family/environmental factors? An ultimate answer has so far failed to emerge and even if it will it can only be accurate if it does not affect our right to assert the gender identity we perceive as our own. Today the apparent conflict between chromosomal sex and gender identity must not be considered pathology. Although maybe side-lined, this is instead one of the possible combinations that happen to amongst sexual human identities. People who live this condition are not psychiatrically ill without doubt. Neither are they unquestionably dysphoric or mentally disturbed. They simply experience a condition which science has not yet fully explained. They have to or can undergo a process of transformation that often makes them more fragile than those whose gender identity matches their chromosomal sex as per popular convention. The only pathology one should be aware of is that identifiable with a specific accepted and hostile phenomenon that generates an inexcusable social stigma. The only dysphoria applicable to transgender people is a social one and it emerges when they realize that to be who they are is considered a shame or a terrible sin. A healthy and fair society should help those who struggle through their transition and endeavour to pave their way back into being serene and active members of the community.

Social and political rights

Despite what happened in earlier cultures the advent of monotheistic and revealed religions (basically those revealed by Abraham) rapidly affected the social status of transgender people. By causing a split and a rigid partition between sexes, and by considering legitimate only the male and female sexes, religious moral codes influenced and even determined the way future civilizations have developed. In addition a long list of different compartmental codes was forced on people (gender role). These also restrained communication exchanges between the two poles, and caused the quasi constant and ubiquitous subjection of the female sex. No room was virtually left for intermediate conditions (intersexed individuals) or people transitioning from one sex to another. For centuries, intersexed and transgender people were considered either repellent or psychologically damaged. In the last decades and only in those civilizations that have raised science above religion, a sluggish and firmly challenged public consciousness of gender identity and its variants managed to emerge. However, this awareness is mainly academic and its impact on the world legal systems is still very modest. After birth intersexed people are still made to undergo genital surgery to allocate them within one of the two approved sexes. They are given no time to develop their own gender identity or understand the naturally intermediate position they embody and maybe decide to remain so. Consequently many cases of transgenderism are artificially brought about by this very practice in synchronicity with the normal psychosexual development of the human being whom surgery has been imposed on. In few states transgender people become juridical subjects only if they agree to transition into the accepted models of male and female. If they wish to have their existence legally and fully recognized they have no option but let themselves being bullied into undergoing mutilation and reshaping of their genitals. Intersexuality and transgenderism are therefore thought of as socially acceptable only when (re)absorbed into the mainstream dualism of the masculine/feminine path. Whilst in the case of intersexuality the right of free will is extirpated at birth, those transgender people who do not feel the need or want to adjust

as programmed by others are bound to face a life in which from a juridical angle their miscellaneous gender condition is unrecognized. In the eyes of the law these individuals live in an eternal limbo which leaves them exposed to the most outrageous forms of abuse and biased interpretations by the administrative and juridical establishment. In some countries it is possible to change name according to the self-perceived gender whilst retaining the sex of birth. Needless to say, the hybridization of name and sex causes at the least a threat to stability in the life of these female ‘Arthurs’ and male ‘Marthas’. This is a misunderstanding of our transgender philosophy whose focus remains on the repudiation of the irrefutable unification of sex and gender, and not that of registered sex and name. Indeed, as far as we are concerned names could be all neutral. Besides, in our society (and especially In Italy where the fiscal code clearly reveals if one is male or female), far from improving people’s conditions, any discrepancy between name and sex does actually strengthen any social stigma. It would for instance be preferable to allow a Martha to be issued with an id which shows a chromosomally male Martha of female gender.

Nations like Great Britain and Spain recently opted for a different choice by making gender the main evaluation factor in the process of attribution of sex. This means that in those cases where sex differs from gender identity the last will determine what is indicated in people’s ID. This civil accomplishment will positively affect transgender people’s privacy and safety and generally speaking improve their quality of life. In Great Britain and Spain (and shortly maybe in Cuba too) it is possible to change id and status even without undergoing physical transformations or genital surgery. This can be achieved by demonstrating that in the alleged conflict between chromosomal sex and gender identity the last is harmoniously stable. AzioneTrans remains however hopeful that in a future characterized by deeper understanding and awareness, what is today thought of as a disconnection between name and name sex will be as a rule considered natural and therefore possible.

Part three

The Objectives

The Objectives

The primary objectives are:

- Eradication of the illegal status for the condition of transgender or transsexual in all those countries where it incurs punishment, fines, jail and death penalty
- Legislation against sex reassignment at birth for intersexual people except for those cases where the intersexuality is identified as a health risk. In that case surgery should be as minimum as possible and thus leave all options open once the person reaches adulthood
- Removal of sex and gender from the list of essential data held by the registry office until coming of age to:
 - Protect intersexed babies from genital surgery performed only to satisfy unjustified red tape rules
 - Protect adolescent transgender people from the pressure to take premature decisions that society inflicts on them
 - Grant any individual the right to choose the gender they feel they belong to at any stage in their lives
 - Free matrimonial unions from the heterosexual monopoly

EU (and Italian) Objectives:

(This section refers partially to international and partially to national objectives and should be modified according to the different political, social and legislative situations of each country and the *Manifesto* adhesion)

The Right to Identity

Pressurize the Italian government to introduce and approve a bill that should emulate the relevant Spanish legislation and the decisions of the European Courts and Parliament. These leave room to no doubt on the absolute equality of transgender people with any other man or woman.

Free Transition

It is often the case that if unable to take medications and/or undergo surgery to modify their body and image transgender people feel overwhelmingly unable to cope. This uneasiness can easily drive them to extreme measures. One example is suicide. Another is the total rejection of their condition and the attempt to lead their life according to the sex and gender imposed on them at birth. This choice has dramatic implications even for those people they have relationships with. This is because they might choose marriage and parenthood as some sort of rehabilitation course, and after only some years spent under the inescapable strain of their true gender identity dramatically flee both. It is a tendency that can lead to permanent self-denial and is often characterized by a loss of capacity to relate to other human beings. From this distress a whole series of mental health problems do normally spring forth. These include total or partial isolation from society like autism, and violent or pseudo-violent forms of self repression converging to ‘unexplained’ suicide. Like all other individuals affected by pathologies that are treated for free under the National Health Service, people with a gender related condition should receive suitable care free of charge.

Social Inclusion and Employment

Presently the ‘civil’ society’s knowledge of the transgender and transsexual reality is confused, approximate and full of severe prejudice. Such prejudice starts from the assumption that Trans equals Prostitute. It denies the very existence of a transgender conscience and causes transgender people’s alienation from the places where they are born, grow up, live and die. The only option this society leaves them is to undergo surgery, change name and records and disappear from home to resurface ‘magically’ somewhere else in the hope that nobody will discover their past. In the end, the only way to escape ostracism is paradoxically achievable by denying one’s identity, past, transition, family and habitat! Although this might happen to coincide with personal choice it should not be imposed on those transgender people who would instead opt to stick to their own roots and perceive their own unique biography and condition with dignity and pride. The truth is that the integration of transgender people (and especially that of the mtf group) into the employment sector is undoubtedly much more problematic than that of non-transgender people. This drawback also affects those who are already employed when they decide to start transitioning. The price they pay is ‘mobbing’, namely discrimination, bullying and demotion. To put an end to all this it is necessary to modify the whole social perception of the transgender situation and emancipate it from this sort of ‘catch 22’ loop in which it has been enveloped. Transgender people cannot find other work than prostitution, but if they want to find another job they must first of all remove from the collective notion the idea that due to their own personal need they are always and any which way prostitutes. Indeed society appears to drive transgender people to prostitution even further by charging enormous amounts of money for those treatments they must undergo. In addition transgender people are frequently victim of disowning by their own family which causes loss of emotional and financial support. It is then easy to figure out how limited any alternative option to prostitution really is when a healthy transition demands a constant high financial income.

Prostitution

The prostitution ‘army’ could be considered a workforce like any other. To sell one’s own body to give pleasure to others is no less decent or moral than selling one’s intelligence to the construction of weapons or any other instrument aimed at destroying life. However, prostitution could only be considered a free choice if it were not caused by the instigating force of discrimination. For genetic or transgender men and women personal choice and free trade will only mean something when discrimination ceases to exist. Until then freedom will always be ‘polluted’ by psychological coercion and self defence. Real human dignity is only available in conjunction with the possibility to choose freely and the prerequisite of equal opportunities for all. Whenever prostitution is caused by social conditions, a policy of damage reduction devoid of moral and humiliating prejudice possibly remains the only method for promoting ways out of it. The medium and long term struggle should focus on ceasing to create those conditions which make prostitution more or less unavoidable.

Anti-discriminatory legislation

At present in Italy there are no specific anti-discriminatory regulations that protect transgender people. Within this context it is useful to enclose a full record of the judgment in the case of P v S and Cornwall County Council of 30 April 1996:

“In view of the objective pursued by Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, Article 5(1) of the Directive precludes dismissal of a transsexual for a reason related to a gender reassignment.”

The European Court of Justice held:

The scope of the Equal Treatment Directive cannot be confined simply to discrimination based on the fact that a person is one sex or the other sex. The Directive is the expression of the principle of

equality, which is one of the fundamental principles of Community law. In view of its purpose and the fundamental nature of the rights which it seeks to safeguard, the scope of the Directive also applies to discrimination based essentially, if not exclusively, on the sex of the person concerned.

Where such discrimination arises, as in the present case, from the gender reassignment of the person concerned, he or she is treated unfavourably by comparisons with persons of the sex to which he or she was deemed to belong before undergoing gender reassignment. To tolerate such discrimination would be tantamount, as regards such a person, to a failure to respect the dignity and freedom to which he or she is entitled, and which the Court has a duty to safeguard. Therefore, dismissal of a transsexual for a reason related to a gender reassignment must be regarded as contrary to article 5(1) of the Directive, which provides that: "Application of the principle of equal treatment with regard to working conditions, including the conditions governing dismissal, means that men and women shall be guaranteed the same conditions without discrimination on grounds of sex."

Thanks to this historical judgement the European Court of Justice established that transgender people are protected by obligations which forbid sexual discrimination³.

³ In Italy these legislations are also supposed to promote equal opportunities and should in theory be applied to transgender people too. They are:

- **Law n. 903 of 9/12/1977** Equality of treatment for men and women at work (implementation of the European directive n. 207 of 1976 Equal Treatment Directive and n. 117/75 Equal Pay Directive)
- **Law n. 125 of 10/4/91** Positive Action for the implementation of equality between men and women at work
- **Law n. 300 of 20/5/1970** Workers' Statute and in particular section 15 which forbids discriminatory behaviour
- **Law n. 108 of 11/5/90** Regulations on the termination of individual contracts

The recent **Directive 2006/54/CE of the European Parliament and the Council of 5th July 2006** regarding the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equality of treatment for men and women in the context of employment endorses the above mentioned ruling of the Court of Justice and others through the introductory deliberation n.3 which states:

The Court of Justice is of the opinion that the principle of equality of treatment of men and women should not only be interpreted as applicable to discrimination driven by bias against one sex or the other. Taking into consideration its aim and the nature of the rights it is supposed to protect this principle should also be applied to unfairness determined by discrimination towards people who have undergone sex reassignment.

Therefore, according to active EU legislation the condition of transgender people in Italy should at present already be safeguarded, and thanks to more recent directives any future Italian government should be even more sympathetic. But neither the professionals nor the courts seem to be knowledgeable on this specific matter and the relevant obligations. It follows that the principles according to which any discrimination against sexual transition should be regarded on the same terms as that against one sex or the other sadly remains ignored. It is the job of those politicians who endorse this Manifesto to introduce public opinion to these European rights, and make sure that the Italian justice system fully embraces them (see Appendix 3 for Italy law). This is why to avoid unwitting ignorance any new law on this issue should clearly refer to the above mentioned deliberation n.3 or more precisely to the summary of the related ruling⁴ ..

⁴ It is also useful to remember that in matters of selection and hiring **Article n.8 of the Italian Workers' Charter** forbids taking into consideration any issue that is not relevant to the professional competence of the worker. Any investigation aimed to dig into the private life of the transsexual candidate or employee, even if meant to discover if the person is transsexual is therefore illegal

Emancipation of partnerships from gender restrictions

Since human beings may manifest complex range of gender identities it would be absurd and discriminatory to think of marriage as a possibility available only to male and female couples. This is anachronistic and simply does not honour every person's fundamental and inalienable need to love and enjoy equal rights. Everyone should be entitled to build a family nucleus with a partner of their choice. Therefore matrimony and other types of civil partnership should be free from gender and sexual orientation limitations. Until then it will not be possible to speak of all individuals in their multi-faceted variety as having equal rights and dignity.

Right to remain wedded

According to the Italian law 164/82 the marriage of individuals who undergo a gender reassignment process in accordance with the same legislation becomes automatically dissolved once the process of change is recognized by the court. It is obvious that the present Italian moral code sees marriage as an exclusive privilege for male/female couples only. A couple in which one of the partners undergoes reassignment is deprived of the right to choose whether to preserve its conjugal union.

This choice should instead be completely left to both spouses. The absurdity of the present situation finds its climax in the fact that a transgender person who has undergone every possible change but genital correction, and therefore is not entitled to amend his/her ID, can instead remain married and claim parenthood.

It is then vital to fight to put an end to the absurd conviction which makes all rights related to love, affection, relationships and unions dependent on the co-presence of a vagina and a penis (which in transgender people because of medications would incidentally be infertile).

Right to adopt

With reference to adoption by homosexuals, our main objection is centred on the principle that parenthood can only be exercised fittingly by couples made up of one male figure and one female figure. Therefore this questionable hypothesis should recognize fit for the purpose any heterosexual couple in which one of the two is ex-transgender. But by law people's transgender past is recorded in their original birth certificate and any judge ruling on their request for adoption would have access to it and consider it an alarming imperfection. In addition, if one considers that adoption is totally denied to any transgender person who has not undergone genital surgery, it is easy to see how for any transgender person parenthood does virtually remain a dream. In the name of impartiality, the state should therefore allow transgender couples the same right to adopt it grants any other couple. Our main objection is also aimed at those principles according to which parenthood cannot exist in the absence of a female/male bipolarization. Plenty of research on children of gay, lesbian and transgender parents demonstrates the peripheral nature of such position. As well as positive and meaningful models of affection children need love and care. These models are not necessarily to be a father and mother. They should also include encouraging grandparents, relatives and friends. These should bring value into their lives and allow them to develop a constructive notion of differentiation between sexes and genders and not only a male/female concept. Any child growing with an all inclusive awareness of sexual and identity pluralism, including not only heterosexuality and the male/female extremities, but homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, intersexuality and transgenderism, will surely develop remarkable comprehensiveness. This child would incur a lower risk of being affected by psychological traumas, and should therefore develop a richer personality and see value in diversity. In addition this openness would make it easier and more natural for this child to understand his/her own gender identity and role and sexual orientation. Besides, evidence shows that the presence of homosexual or transgender parents makes a child neither homosexual nor transgender which makes it all the more appropriate

to extend the right to adopt to homosexual couples, whether these be genetic or constituted by one or two transgender and/or intersexed individuals.

Right to parenthood

Chapter 1 (Cases where a couple has no children)

A heterosexual couple made of a genetic woman and a transgender man could have access to parenthood through heterologous insemination (where the male gametes do not originate from the couple itself). A lesbian couple made of a genetic woman and a transgender woman could have access to parenthood through homologous insemination by storing the transgender person's sperm prior to her transition. But due to prejudice in Italy unless the couple is married and made of 1 genetic male and 1 genetic female, both types of insemination are illegal. It is worth mentioning that according to fresh studies on stem cells it might be soon possible to obtain an egg from any human cell. If these findings were to be confirmed, any type of couple will technically speaking be able to conceive and preserve at least some component of their own genetic code. Indeed, as long as it does not violate the child's right, the right to parenthood should apply to any individual. Children's rights should be founded on their entitlement to grow up in a caring establishment which since the early years allows them to be acquainted with a true and thus versatile concept of gender. Paradoxically the child of a genetic man/transsexual woman couple or that of a genetic woman/transsexual man couple is offered a much more appropriate image of the male and female models than for instance one orphan of its mother or father, or raised by a mother/grandmother family where the father is virtually absent.

Chapter 2 (cases where children are conceived before transition)

In terms of parenthood the Italian law does not protect in any way the rights of those who have conceived before starting their transition. As per law 164/82, by successfully undergoing reassignment, any

person's marriage is by default annulled. Many judges do normally top this up by terminating any maternity or paternity right for the legitimate parent(s). Any change of gender identity should never symbolize a decline in parenting competence, but an improvement in the psychological, physical and moral integrity of the same person. In order to overturn this unreasonable state of affairs which also feeds an erroneous public perception, the state should instead legislate to protect transgender people.

The relationship with the media

In Italy and the rest of the world the media's relationship with the transgender and intersexed reality has always been a morbid, ignorant and often grammatically incorrect one. The media are only interested in transgender people when these are involved in crimes, or as topic for their gossip columns and light entertainment features. They regularly fail to report about the cultural value many transgender individuals bring into our society, or the various acts of discrimination and injustice they fall victims to. The media's interest in intersexed people is only aroused by the possibility of portraying them as genetic errors or freaks of nature. The media show no interest to delve into the specificity of the transgender and intersexed realities. They confuse the first with a mixture of homosexuality, fetishism and transvestitism, and often ignore the second. The media's grammatical fallacy is plain to see in the erroneous use of nouns, pronouns and adjectives that newspapers, TV and Radio channels make when referring to transgender people. The transgender and intersexed movement has no choice then but to strive to educate the media through formative action:

- We want to drive the media to abandon their unhealthy interest towards transgender and intersexed people, and cultivate unhindered respect towards their human dignity
- We want to educate the media by providing them with all appropriate information on the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation

- We want to educate the media to use the right nouns, pronouns and adjectives when referring to transgender people. For instance if they talk of a Maria who is a transgender woman but fathered a child they should say that she loves **her** daughter and not **his** daughter

But the media's attitude to transgender individuals is not only due to ignorance but often to intentional segregation and moralistic impediments. This is why if the transgender and intersexed movement intends to turn ignorance and discrimination into knowledge and respect it needs to be strong willed and clear in its endeavour.

Part four
On the fights leading to
emancipation

On the fights leading to emancipation

A movement whose aims are emancipation, freedom and fight for civil rights must necessarily identify the means and the ways it intends to push its cause forward.

Dialogue with the institutions

Improvements in the life of transgender and intersexed individuals depend on working for a constructive relationship with the local, national, European and international political establishments. We must put ourselves forward as the driving force of transgender and intersexed people's concerns and campaigns. We must also work hard for the creation of rehabilitation centres for those abandoned by their family and by our society. Our movement must inform and argue against misinformation associated with our acquired rights by drafting competent legislative proposals aimed at promoting the rights of transgender and intersexed people.

Direct and non-violent action

Where political pressure does not bring results the transgender movement should promote direct action through non-violent civil disobedience. Whenever the authorities ignore our requests for freedom and equal opportunities, and to attract the media's attention, we may embark on actions like fasting and protest in sensationalist ways. The history of the LGBT movement is rich of episodes featuring active and passive resistance against the police or the army. Like in the historical Stonewall case, transgender people have often fronted such protests, and these are fundamental aspects of the political heritage of anyone who identifies with and embraces this Manifesto.

Liberation Movements

In those countries where everyone's civil rights are abolished and/or the transgender condition is punished with jail or the death penalty, our movement may become integral part of those liberation groups aimed at defending themselves from armed aggression and repressive judiciary power.

Part 5

Organisational models and services

Organisational model and services

The transgender movement is traditionally a counter informative pressure group. As such it wants to demolish prejudice and promote a correct and no-nonsense vision of reality. It is an invaluable asset and it should be protected from decline and fragmentation. But however important it may be to fight for the implementation of laws and introducing equal rights and opportunities for transgender people, it is equally crucial that transgender people themselves be committed to provide comfort, help, support and services to those in the same situation. We must create appropriate contact points where transgender individuals can go for informed advice and dedicated counselling. Within this context self help groups should take a leading role. AzioneTrans considers the voluntary model the most suitable for the delivery of all the above much needed services. For the creation and promotion of work opportunities, it would also be constructive to set up co-operative schemes with entrepreneurial projects. Because of and despite the present unfair work legislation and attitude inflicted upon transgender people, transgender and transgender friendly employer should make every possible effort to employ transgender individuals. In addition any lobbying activity undertaken by the transgender movement to cause positive changes in the employment sector should be encouraged and supported.

Part 6
The International Transgender
Unity Movement

The “Transgender Internazionale”

During the last twenty years the transgender movement has ranked amongst the most lively active and groups. Especially in the USA transgender partnerships have been branching out at an extraordinary rate. However this did not give rise to any significant trans-national coordination. All members of AzioneTrans must work towards international coordination and identify common goals to pursue with utmost dedication and determination.

Part 7

Conclusion

Conclusion

The AzioneTrans Manifesto:

- is based on democracy and equality and aims to gather all political, cultural, and philosophical endeavours of intersexed and transgender people from all over the world. The main objective is to conquer full social and political rights and turn society into a civilization where the pressure to belong exclusively to the male or the female gender is eradicated.
- promotes freedom to be male, female or ‘other’ no matter what the genetic, cultural or social predetermination might be. This is because to be male, female or ‘other’ should coincide with self perception and not be imposed from above.
- claims that all differences and ‘nuances’ pertaining identity and gender are in no way limited to the male and female karyotypical stereotypes. Gender identity is diverse or even multi-layered and all its manifestations should enjoy the same rights and opportunities.
- has no intention to demolish the ‘traditional concepts of masculine/feminine and man/woman. Indeed it wishes to enrich their meaning by promoting the right of every individual to choose which to belong to according to their psychological sex. But the same right should also be enjoyed by those who do not identify entirely with either and discover themselves male-‘other’, female-‘other’ or simply ‘other’.

Part 8: Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1

Even the simplest genital examination of males and females clearly shows many analogies between their primary sexual characteristics i.e. testicles/ovaries, penis/clitoris and mammary glands. These developed from a common origin, thus do overlap and compliment each other at the same time even when considered in their most extreme male/female manifestation. In the middle ages it was thought that in reality there was only one sex which would develop into a male or a female depending on whether the genital shape worked its way in or out. Ovaries were considered testicles that had not 'come down'. It is interesting to note how in the absence of sophisticated medical knowledge and equipments intuition managed to come so close to the truth. It is now known that even if genes contain an anatomical sexual destiny the human foetus is initially and for a few months fundamentally neutral. At a later stage the x and y chromosomes cause the production of male or female hormones. When equipped with XXY or X chromosomal elements, these hormones will affect the sex of the soon- to- be-born baby one way, the other or the intersexed one. The sexualization of the brain only happens at a later stager and it is this that forms the person's gender identity. In most cases this agrees with the chromosomal sex. One scientific hypothesis identifies the cause of transsexuality in certain external influences like intake of male or female hormones, or their excessive production by the pregnant mother. This theory states that this extra absorption or production can cause a sexual conflict between the psyche and the genitals, and that this leads to gender identity variances. Other theories focus instead on internal factors like possible off-key genes giving life to anomalies. But it seems more appropriate to support the idea that wants to find the cause of transsexuality in the more complex combination of biological, chemical, physical, psychological and social factors. Nevertheless these remain assumptions, and as such they have no scientific

validity. Nature does not appear to be limited by repetitiveness or automatism. This is the truth which generates the naturally infinite variety of (even sexual) possibilities which typify humanity.

(courtesy of Davide Tolu)

Appendix 2

(The game of countless sexual orientations)

1. Biological male with male gender identity attracted by biological females with female gender identity (male heterosexuality)
2. Biological male with male gender identity attracted by biological males with male gender identity (male homosexuality)
3. Biological female with female gender identity attracted by biological males with male gender identity (female heterosexuality)
4. Biological female with female gender identity attracted by biological females with female gender identity (female homosexuality or lesbianism)
5. Biological male with female gender identity (male to female transgender) attracted by biological males with male gender identity (trans-heterosexuality)
6. biological female with male gender identity (male to female transgender) attracted by biological females with female gender identity (trans-heterosexuality)
7. biological male with female gender identity (male to female transgender) attracted by biological females with female gender identity (female trans-homosexuality or trans-lesbianism)
8. biological female with male gender identity (female to male transgender) attracted by biological males with male gender identity (male trans-homosexuality)

9. biological male with female gender identity (male to female transgender) attracted by biological females with male gender identity (female to male transgender) (transsexual to transsexual female heterosexuality)
10. biological male with female gender identity (male to female transgender) attracted by biological males with female gender identity (male to female transgender) (transsexual to transsexual female homosexuality or trans to trans lesbianism)
11. biological female with male gender identity (female to male transgender) attracted by biological males with female gender identity (male to female transgender) (trans to trans male heterosexuality)
12. biological female with male psychological sexuality (female to male transgender) attracted by biological females with male psychological sexuality (female to male transgender) (trans to trans male homosexuality)
13. biological male with male gender identity attracted by biological males with female gender identity (male to female transgender) (male trans-heterosexuality)
14. Biological male with male gender identity attracted by biological female with male gender identity (female to male transgender) (male trans-homosexuality)
15. Biological female with female gender identity attracted by biological female with male gender identity (female to male transgender) (female trans-heterosexuality)
16. biological females with female gender identity attracted by biological males with female gender identity (male to female transgender) (female trans-homosexuality – female trans-lesbianism)

17. biological male or female equally attracted by biological male or female (bisexuality)
18. biological male or female possibly attracted by biological male or female with male or female gender identity (pan or omni-sexuality)

There possibly still remain opportunities for more subtle subdivisions that could show further examples of additional sexual orientations. A masculine homosexual woman might prefer feminine women, or other masculine women and so on. Indeed variety is identifiable within both homosexuality and heterosexuality. Thus the list could be continued:

19. butch individual with female gender identity attracted by the same (butch lesbianism)
20. individual with female gender identity and feminine aspect attracted by the same (lipstick lesbianism)
21. butch individual with female gender identity attracted by feminine individual with female gender identity (para-heterosexuality or heterosexual mimetic lesbianism)

...And so on starting with male homosexuality and continuing with all possible variables applicable to androgynous or gynandrous intersexed people. However, this list does never intend to be a scientific classification, and only represents a suggestion of possible connections between gender identity and sexual orientation.

Appendix 3

An informative leaflet called ‘**Transsexuality and Employment**’ and focussed on the employment rights of transgender and transsexual people is available now and will be revised shortly. The revised version was edited by Crisalide AzioneTrans, CGIL Settore Nuovi Diritti and C.E.R.S.G.O.S.I.G /Informagay of Turin.

First Draft November 2001	Genoa, 28 th
Second Draft December 2001	Genoa, 25 th
Third Draft December 2001	Genoa, 26 th
Fourth Draft January 2002	Genoa, 21 st
Fifth Draft January 2002	Genoa, 25 th
Sixth Draft February 2002	Genoa, 12 th
Sixth Draft Revision 2003	Genoa, 1 st June
Seventh Draft 2007	Genoa, 10 th July
Seventh Draft Revision 2007	Genoa, 23 rd July

© 2001-2009: Mirella Izzo

© 2001-2008 Crisalide AzioneTrans

Acknowledgements

For their collaborative efforts in drafting and/or revising draft 1-6 I would like to thank:

- Davide Tolu (founder of the Coordinamento Nazionale Italiano Trans FtM)
- Stefano Fabeni (Graduate Research Student at the Columbia University School of Law of New York)

For their cooperation and useful suggestions I also wish to thank:

- Matteo Manetti (co-founder of Crisalide AzioneTrans)
- Daniele Marinelli (co-founder of Crisalide AzioneTrans)
- Maria Gigliola Toniollo (National Manager of Settori Nuovi Diritti C.G.I.L)
- Katia Sopranzetti
- Anna Cohen
- National Members Assembly of Crisalide AzioneTrans 2001

INDEX

❖ Preface to the 7 th Edition by Mirella Izzo	pag. 05
Part One	pag. 09
❖ A Foreward	pag. 11
Part Two	pag. 15
❖ On Fundamental Rights	pag. 17
❖ Social and Political Rights	pag. 19
Part Three	pag. 21
❖ The Objectives	pag. 23
❖ Eu (and Italian) objectives	pag. 25
- The Right of Identity	pag. 25
- Free Transition	pag. 25
- Social Inclusion and Employment	pag. 26
- Prostitution	pag. 27
- Anti-discriminatory legislation	pag. 27
-Emancipation of partnerships from Gender Restrictions	pag. 30
- Right to remain Wedded	pag. 30
- Right to Adopt	pag. 31
- Right to Parenthood	pag. 32
- The relationships with the Media	pag. 33
Part Four	pag. 35
❖ On the Fights leading to emancipation	pag. 37
- Dialogue with Institutions	pag. 37
- Direct and No-Violent Action	pag. 37
- Liberation Movements	pag. 38

Part Five	pag. 39
❖ Organisational Model Services	pag. 41
Part Six	pag. 43
❖ The “Transgender International”	pag. 45
Part Seven	pag. 47
❖ Conclusion	pag. 49
Part Eight	pag. 51
❖ Appendices	pag. 53
- Appendix 1	pag. 53
- Appendix 2	pag. 55
- Appendix 3	pag. 59
❖ Acknowledgments	pag. 61

