

Voss, Heinz-Juergen (2012): *Court rules that circumcision constitutes bodily harm – The circumcision of the foreskin in boys is not equivalent to violent medical treatments directed against intersexes!* ILGA WORLD, 7/7/2012.

Heinz-Jürgen Voß, Ph.D.:

The circumcision of the foreskin in boys is not equivalent to violent medical treatments directed against intersexes!

The circumcision of the foreskin in boys does not mean the removal or reduction of glans or clitoris as was and still is the case in treatments directed against intersexes. Nor will gonads be removed or a vagina painfully produced and dilated, and afterwards no life-long taking of hormones is necessary as intersexes often have to cope with. Therefore it is inappropriate to equate one with the other and make a case for limiting the freedom of religion.

Rather, society should start debating about how to overcome the narrow gender norms infringing people's right of self-determination. This would soon raise questions about social norms in general, it would mean to *really* end violence against women, *really* go against gender stereotypes and stop the medicalization and psychiatrization of people... However, this is not happening. Instead, the judgment about the circumcision of the foreskin in boys fits in a German policy that wanted "Christian values and traditions" even to be inscribed in the European Constitution and that cites the rights of women and homosexuals (which it could bring itself to grant only after much deliberation) as arguments for war against other countries.

What use is all this talk about "intersectionality" when even people who otherwise like to think in terms of emancipation refer to a "Christian Occidental" understanding "in the case" where for once an intersectional approach is indeed indispensable?

Does anybody wonder why the Cologne district court did not reject the operative assignment of intersexes to one sex or the other as well? The court failed to do so because it would have meant to go against the supposedly sound "medical indication" which is really in the tradition of the European modern age. This seems to be too delicate to deal with, as generally with "medical diagnosis."

For the same reason the district court did not include in its decision the circumcisions of the foreskin in boys for "hygienic" reasons routinely carried out in the U. S. and also known in West Germany. Here, too, the terse reply is "medical indication." So let's get to the point: While it appears difficult to tackle the dogma of "medical indication" that has become so powerful in the European modern age (and still is), it is easy enough to follow the racist and anti-Semitic *Zeitgeist* and tell Jews and Muslims how to view the world.

But we must never forget how many people had to suffer, how many people were killed since the beginning of the European modern age with reference to a Christian understanding. Tens of thousands fell victim to the witch-hunts, tens of thousands to the persecution of "Sodomites", tens of thousands to psychiatry. Half the world was colonized, whole populations murdered or enslaved. And with the beginning of "modern medicine" more people were locked up, treated under force, sterilized, castrated, murdered; "races" were invented, "homosexuals", "intersexuality". And the ideas behind that are still at work: Psychiatry is psychiatrizing as always, the German ministry for scientific research supports studies on "racial differences," and European "values" are brought to the rest of the world with military force.

Strange, how on this basis one could feel comfortably at home with the majority and superior to the "others" - but then this, too, is a modern European tradition.