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MA Thesis:

The United Kingdom's Pursuit of LGBT Rights in Uganda, in whose interest?

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights¹ are increasingly promoted by states around the world. The states that promote LGBT rights globally are often perceived as positive and modernising forces that seek to uphold human rights. However, LGBT rights have progressively become a powerful political tool that states can employ for motives that go beyond altruism. As Franke (2012) argues “in hugely interesting ways, states have come to see that their political power, their legitimacy, indeed their standing as global citizens, are bound up with how they recognize and then treat “their” gay citizens (4). Both the respect for human rights and the commitment to uphold these rights abroad have become an important part of the global self-image of states. Consequently, human rights and specifically LGBT rights are used “by state actors for purposes that well exceed the articulated aims of something called “human rights” (Franke 2012: 5).

Especially, LGBT rights appear an effective political tool, since the homosexual as Stychin (2004) notes, “is a particularly malleable subject position that has often been brought into the service of nations” (194). The LGBT rights norm creates a schism between liberal states that respect human rights versus the illiberal states that disrespect human rights (Symons and Altman 2015). The pursuit of LGBT rights is paired with strong connotations of both power and civilization. As Britt (2015) notes “LGBT rights as a discourse can be employed to diverse ends in ways that reinforce power relationships of contemporary neoliberalism, particularly insofar as it appears to isolate LGBT rights from other forms of political struggle with which it intersects” (ix). This, in combination with the already imperialistic nature of the human rights project, highlights the complexness of pursuing LGBT rights in other parts of the world.

Furthermore, the way in which these rights are pursued brings the true motives further into question. Especially when we realize that many efforts by Western governments fail to consult the LGBT community that is at the heart of the issue (Kretz 2013). As Seth (2013) emphasizes, specific ‘Western’ knowledges cannot simply be incorporated onto their ‘non-

¹ Since the terminology surrounding LGBT rights is highly contentious, some argumentation is required for the use of the LGBT acronym. This thesis is predominantly interested in looking at the rights of people with diverse sexual preferences, thus when using the LGBT acronym I am in this scenario not as much concerned with the T. I acknowledge that the LGBT acronym is limiting and does not incorporate much room for sexual diversity, however from a practical point of view it is deemed a suitable starting point for analysis. Furthermore will I be using the term *kuchu* in relation to LGBT rights with the acknowledgement that the term *kuchu* which is used in Uganda, is more comparable to the term queer than the term LGBT.

European object'. Additionally, Western governments pushing their ideas upon other states, conjures up a resemblance to the colonial master placing itself morally and intellectually above their former subjects. As Rohrich (2014) refers to it "one man's freedom fighter is another man's cultural imperialist".

For example, in 2009, following the announcement of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, which aimed at incorporating the death penalty for 'aggravated' homosexuality, Uganda came under fire from the international community. This Bill led to several states in the 'West' to designate LGBT rights in Uganda as a foreign policy priority. Amongst these states was the United Kingdom, led by then prime minister David Cameron (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018). Whereas the pursuit for LGBT rights at first appears to be a philanthropic cause, it is arguable that other motivations led to the U.K.'s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. For instance, by highlighting the LGBT rights abuses in 'illiberal' Uganda, the U.K. could position themselves as liberal. Moreover, the pursuit of LGBT rights deserves a critical view because the 'liberal' U.K. promoting LGBT rights in 'homophobic, backward Africa' creates a polarization that reduces the complexities of the situation since they are lost in these polarised images. The implications of this, as Rao (2015) accurately phrases it, is that "states that fail to respect rights around sexual diversity are, in retrieval of standard orientalist tropes, are increasingly characterized as backward and uncivilized, with the internationalization of LGBT rights taking on the character of a modern-day civilizing mission"(354).

Therefore part of this thesis is concerned with uncovering the complexities of applying 'universal' LGBT rights to a different culture which is rooted in a distinctive and heavily influenced history. Most analyses paint the 'Other' in terms of illiberal and backwards without discussing the extensive colonial history and the power dynamics involved in imposing human rights norms upon other cultures. Furthermore, do LGBT rights appear an effective political tool that states can employ for their own objectives. To demonstrate that the promotion of LGBT rights by 'Western' governments is not as philanthropic as it seems, this thesis seeks to investigate how LGBT rights are used by states for motives that go beyond altruism. Whereas the U.K. appears to be promoting LGBT rights as part of their intrinsic belief in these rights, this thesis will uncover other motivations, such as self-optimization objectives, that can explain Britain's pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. Therefore this thesis is motivated by the research question: *What are the motivations for the United Kingdom to pursue LGBT rights in Uganda?* To be able to answer this question, this

thesis will draw upon post-colonial theory. The secondary focus of this thesis will discuss the implications of such an approach on Uganda.

Theoretical framework

This thesis will draw upon post-colonial theory because post-colonial theory is best equipped to highlight power relations and is critical on current modernisations efforts such as the pursuit of LGBT rights abroad. Since this thesis aims to uncover how other motivations are at play when analysing the U.K.'s quest for LGBT rights in Uganda, this theory allows for a critical examination of the foreign policy. Post-colonial theory is especially relevant for this analysis because it is not just concerned with the era after colonialism but it recognizes that the world has been shaped through colonialism. Furthermore, post-colonial theory argues that without recognizing this fact and exploring the implications of this, our current reality is impossible to understand (Seth 2013). Post-colonial theory is concerned with “questioning the universality of categories of modern social scientific thought, and of the disciplines into which it is divided; it is an epistemological challenge to, and critique of, existing disciplines, including IR” (Seth 2013: 2).

There is some debate amongst scholars about the disciplinary boundaries and the political implications of post-colonial theory. For some, this is seen as a crisis in post-colonial theory, while for others, this is viewed in a more positive light. As Ahluwalia (2012) notes, with the intensification of globalisation, such developments in post-colonial theory should be viewed in favourable terms demonstrating the vibrancy of the theory. Post-colonial theory is arguably the best equipped to explain the situation of African states that have experienced and in a way, are still experiencing colonialism (Ahluwalia 2012). This theory allows for a critical view on current modernisation efforts and highlights how African states attempt to negotiate their ways through the complex situations that are (in)direct consequences of colonialism.

In light of Edward Said's Orientalism, Ahluwalia (2012) discusses how “the discursive construction of 'Africa' and 'the African' is a profound demonstration of the link between knowledge and power, and reaches even more deeply into the imagination of the West than does the Orient.” (Ashcroft and Kadhim 2001: XIV). In a similar context as Hill's (2005) analysis on the failed state thesis, this thesis not only constitutes “a rejection of a particular set of labels which are applied to African states, but of the continued positioning of African states and societies as the deviant Other to those of Western Europe and North America”

(140). This 'othering' is at the heart of post-colonial theory and contributes to the value of post-colonial theory for this thesis.

Identity plays a prominent role in post-colonial studies. The identity of the coloniser and the colonised, along with the respective characteristics, was able to emerge by juxtaposing them against each other (Hill 2005). As this thesis will highlight, a similar dynamic is constructed in recent times, where states that respect LGBT rights are juxtaposed against their illiberal Other and in the process, emphasize their own liberal identity. Post-colonial theory is critical of such dichotomies and highlights how entities such as 'First World' and 'Third World', the 'West' and the 'Orient', the 'Global North' and the 'Global South' are constructed in relation to each other. The mutual constitution of the Self and the Other plays a crucial role in post-colonial theory. Consequently, one of post-colonial theory's main aims is to "analyse, question and challenge these distinctions, and their assumed nature" (Hills 2005: 144).

Whereas post-colonial theory draws upon and is politically allied with anti-imperialism, post-colonial theory is not merely the continuation of this. The post-colonial theory takes a critical approach towards all 'essentialisms' meaning that for example, national identities are not viewed as fixed or natural. The theory is critical on the essentializing claims of nationalism while recognizing the varying degrees of sovereignty. With that in mind, post-colonial theory is concerned with deconstructing sovereignty, advocating for 'equal' sovereignties and highlighting inequalities in general which have created both poverty and suffering. At the same time, post-colonial theory is critical on the discourses surrounding development and modernization that are often employed to relieve such suffering (Ahluwalia 2012: Seth 2013)

One of the many misconceptions about post-colonial theory, as Seth (2013) points out, is the idea that post-colonial theory seeks to foster a non-Western IR. Here Seth (2013) accurately notes how the discipline of IR is principally Anglo-American and a non-Western form of IR would require a plurality of voices that reflect the diversity in the world. Because this thesis aims to look at the U.K.'s foreign policy, this is not deemed as a limitation of using post-colonial theory. Another misconception about post-colonial theory is highlighted by Ahluwalia (2012), who notes how post-colonial theory is characterised as epistemologically indebted to post-structuralism and postmodernism. Such characterization does not do justice to the authenticity of post-colonial theory.

Post-colonial theory is uniquely equipped to serve as the lens through which this thesis will be conducted since it aims to “explore the capacities and limitations of certain European social and political categories in conceptualizing political modernity” (Chakrabarty 2000: 20). Since LGBT rights are viewed as markers of a modern, civilized society, post-colonial theory appears best suited to uncover the limitations of such a perspective. Additionally, can it be argued that the current framework of LGBT rights is rooted in ‘Western’ conceptions of such rights and post-colonial theory highlights how ‘knowledges born in Europe are inadequate to their non-European object’ (Seth 2013:4). Furthermore, the focus on the mutually constituted identity is particularly relevant for this thesis, because by highlighting the illiberal nature of Uganda’s approach to LGBT rights, the U.K. is reminded of their liberal identity. Such constructions played a large role in the colonial era, and as the post-colonial analysis throughout this thesis will highlight, still play a role today.

Research Design and Methodology

This thesis will take a qualitative approach to uncover possible motivations for the U.K.’s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. In order to uncover the United Kingdom’s motivations, this thesis will conduct a discourse analysis of speeches by then prime minister David Cameron.

Case-study

States are increasingly aware of how human rights and the commitment to uphold these rights abroad play an important part in the construction of their self-image. This is certainly true for the United Kingdom and its desire to uphold their historic role in promoting democracy, freedom and the rule of law abroad (Beech and Munch 2019). In this case, the United Kingdom is deemed a representational example of a quintessentially liberal ‘Western’ state that attaches high value to their liberal identity and the related commitment to human rights. The choice for the Cameron government is motivated by developments of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and Act in Uganda, which took place during this government. These developments arguably triggered the United Kingdom’s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda.

Additionally, does this case-study provide an example of a ‘Western’ government pursuing a specific discourse of human rights and specifically LGBT rights upon a different culture. Because Uganda is a former British protectorate, this case-study is deemed a particularly interesting example of a neo-imperial pursuit of LGBT rights. Whereas the quest for LGBT

rights in Uganda is publicly motivated by a strong belief in human rights, it can be argued that other motivations are at play. Through the discourse analysis, this thesis seeks to uncover what these other motivations might be.

Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is concerned with how language constructs and shapes our understanding of social reality (Van Leeuwen 2008). Discourse analysis has its foundations on the premise that the words that are being used and how one writes or speaks shapes how we perceive the world and our experience of it. These discourses are often carefully constituted and can be very powerful since how we see the world is a result of discursive construction (Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999: Van Dijk 2008:). Discourse analysis is concerned with looking at the strategies that are used to achieve the desired discourse (Bryman 2012: Willig 2014). As noted by Jupp (2006) “the broad appeal of discourse analysis to social researchers lies in its ability to reveal how institutions and individual subjects are formed, produced, given meaning, constructed and represented through particular configurations of knowledge” (74). Discourse analysis provides a deconstructive reading and interpretation of a text.

This thesis will analyse speeches by David Cameron, during his term as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The speeches are therefore focused on the time period between 2010-2016. The speeches are retrieved from both the website of the British government (Gov.uk) and an online database of British political speeches (britishpoliticalspeech.org). Speeches have been selected based on a keyword search focused on human rights. The words ‘human rights, liberal, LGBT rights, Uganda, gay and freedom’ have been used to make a selection of relevant speeches. The analysed speeches include speeches directed at both a domestic as well as international audience, in order to establish a comprehensive view of the Cameron government’s position on human rights and LGBT rights.

The discourse analysis will analyse the speeches in-depth to uncover the hidden motivations of the British government’s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. More specifically, this thesis will conduct a critical discourse analysis (CDA) since this type of analysis is focused on the relationships between language, ideology, power and gender (Van Dijk 1997: Reyes 2011). CDA takes on a critical approach and deals with “the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance (Van Dijk 1997). Through this

type of analysis, one can explore the relationships between discursive practices and analyse how such practices are shaped through relations of power and struggles over power (Locke 2004).

A critical discourse analysis aims at revealing the motives and politics involved in the construction of a particular discourse (Chilton 2004; Reyes 2011). Such an approach is particularly relevant because as Van Dijk (2001) notes, the words of those in power are taken as “self-evident truths” and the words of those not in power are dismissed as irrelevant, inappropriate or without substance. A CDA looks at the discursive conditions and the consequences of both social and political inequality that have resulted from such (political) domination (Fairclough 1997). This analysis, in combination with the post-colonial approach, will uncover the ulterior motives of the British government to pursue LGBT rights in Uganda and will highlight the problematic power relations involved.

A critical component of a CDA is the role of intertextuality, which refers to the fact that discourse exists beyond the analysed discursive event and because of this, the social and historical context in which the discourse is rooted is crucial (Van Dijk 1994; Bryman 2012). Therefore this thesis will provide an overview of the context in Uganda and the Cameron government in the United Kingdom. This will give an adequate context for the discourse analysis, which will uncover the possible motivations for the Cameron government to pursue LGBT rights in Uganda. Following this analysis, the implications of such a foreign policy approach will be discussed, highlighting the discrepancy between interests for Britain and the actual needs of the LGBT population in Uganda.

Limitations

As a consequence of the specific focus on the pursuit of LGBT rights by the U.K., it does not suffice to reveal any general patterns with regards to the form LGBT rights are taking on a global level. However, there are many similarities with the U.K.’s approach compared to other states in the Global North, such as the Netherlands. Furthermore, the time frame which only looks at the U.K. under the Cameron government, can be argued to be another limitation since different governments have different priorities and policies. However, it can be argued that the pursuit for LGBT rights is an element which many (Western) governments, around the world have similarly adopted into their foreign policy. Another limitation is the focus on speeches by Cameron, since speeches are aimed at the public and are more focused on

displaying a specific discourse opposed to merely delivering information (Van Dijk 1997). Furthermore, the 'LGBT' acronym is limiting since this does not provide any room for sexual diversity or give sufficient credit to the local interpretations of sexuality. However, from an analytical point of view, the use of a category is deemed necessary.

This thesis takes a critical approach towards the 'global' pursuit of LGBT rights and will in-depth, discuss the motivations for the U.K.'s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. Although there is a sharp critique on how LGBT rights are being pursued, this thesis is not stating that such rights should not be pursued. This thesis merely seeks to highlight the problems with using 'universal' LGBT rights in foreign policy, especially when the motives arguably go beyond altruism. Hopefully, this will result in a more constructive approach in the future that takes into account the needs of the LGBT people in their local context. In the words of Foucault:

“A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest ... As soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes both very urgent, very difficult, and quite possible.”

(Foucault, 1988, 154–155)

Chapter 2: The Literature Review

When discussing how the United Kingdom employs LGBT rights in its foreign policy in Uganda, it is worth exploring the greater debate surrounding human rights and foreign policy. Debates surrounding the human rights norms are often overlooked by the idea that human rights are universal and thus should apply to all individuals globally (Ayoub 2014; Velasco 2018). However, when we critically engage with human rights, it becomes apparent that much more is at play when discussing human rights norms. Human rights have become a foreign policy tool, which has been used to influence decision making processes in other states (Franke 2012). The use of human rights for purposes that go beyond the promotion or protection of rights has some serious implications.

In order to discuss what the implications might be, it is vital to understand how states use human rights, including LGBT rights as a foreign policy tool and why. Firstly human rights will be discussed, with a focus on the debate between universalism and cultural relativism. This debate is especially relevant, since “the recent eruption in a number of African states regarding lesbian and gay rights suggests that there are still deeply rooted difficulties with the transcultural application of human rights concepts as they are received into local epistemologies” (Sadgrove et al. 2012: 108). Following this, there will be a critical engagement with the literature on human rights and LGBT rights as a foreign policy tool, highlighting the motivations for states to pursue human rights norms.

Human Rights: Universalism versus Cultural Relativism

Whether human rights are universal or culturally relative has been heavily debated. Universalists believe that the same legal enforcement mechanisms for human rights should exist globally. However, according to cultural relativists, there are multiple ways to interpret and use/abuse human rights (Le 2016). At the heart of the debate surrounding universalism/relativism with regards to human rights are questions about power and the potentially hegemonic nature of the human rights project (Mutua 2001; Sadgrove et al. 2012).

Universalism

Some authors argue that human rights are universal in the sense that almost all states have accepted them as ‘establishing obligations that are binding in international law’ (Donnelly 2013: 94). Human rights are ordinarily understood to be the rights that one has simply

because one is human. Therefore these are equal rights because we are either humans or not. Donnelly (2007) points out how human rights are also inalienable rights since being human is a basic fact of nature. Therefore human rights are universal rights since they are universally held by all humans. From this perspective, human rights apply to every single human being on the planet regardless of cultural interpretations. Duquette (2005) notes how universal human rights can be viewed as essentially valid moral claims with regards to both the recognition as well as protection of individuals 'in respect to particularly important dimensions of human dignity' (60). From this position, it does not matter where in the world one lives; the universal human rights mechanisms seek to protect every individual globally.

Cultural relativism

The idea that human rights are culturally relative means that human rights are dependent on socio-cultural context and settings. From this perspective, human rights are best understood in specific social and cultural contexts as opposed to having a universal character. Ibhawoh (2010) defines cultural relativism as the “descriptive of the wide-ranging positions of those who critique the human rights corpus for what they consider its cultural exclusivity” (25).

One of the most common fears of universalists is that cultural relativists approve of customs such as female genital mutilation. Furthermore, it is feared that recognizing cultural relativity will undermine the human rights movement (Ibhawoh 2011). Against this backdrop, Donnelly (2013) has made a distinction between strong cultural relativism and weak cultural relativism. Strong culturalism views culture as the principal source of validity of both moral code or rules. From this perspective, both rights, values and norms are culturally determined. Weak cultural relativists hold that human rights are universal but do recognize the importance of culture as a source for exceptions with regards to specific human rights (Donnelly 2013).

Broadly speaking, the Africanist approach to cultural relativism and human rights can be split into two sides. On the one hand, there are scholars such as Kofi Quashigah (1991) who argues that human rights which are rooted in specific social facts that are particular to specific societies cannot be viewed as universal. However, he also acknowledges that certain fundamental rights ought to apply to every individual in the world. The more radical view is aimed at challenging the Western perspective of human rights, which is dominated by a vision of the state and individualism, which does not correspond with all cultures (Ibhawoh 2011). According to Sinha (1981), there are three crucial elements of the human rights

framework that make it inappropriate to apply to non-Western and specifically African cultures. Firstly, the framework is based upon individualism as opposed to the family as the fundamental unit of society. Secondly, the primary way to secure human existence in society is through these rights as opposed to through duties. Lastly, the rights are secured through legalism, meaning through claiming and adjudication opposed to reconciliation, repentance or education.

LGBT Rights: Universalism versus Cultural Relativism

The discussion surrounding universality versus cultural relativism is even more complicated with regards to LGBT rights. The pursuit of LGBT rights globally, at first, does not appear to be a negative development. In the words of Rao (2015) “the construction of a global discourse of LGBT rights and a politics of LGBT solidarity has been empowering for many of its participants” (354). However, Rao (2015) also notes that it has not been “an entirely benign development, free from questions of power and hierarchy (354). Many governments and LGBT organizations fail to overlook that the extent to which such rights are ‘universal’ is questionable (Kollman and Waites 2009; Wilets 2011). This thesis does not seek to state that people do not deserve equal rights, but to highlight that the connection of same-sex attraction to human rights is new and not universal per definition. As Richards (2013) notes “if homosexuality is ancient, the right to gay love is quite recent” (232).

This connection to the human rights framework connected the LGBT rights with ‘universality’. Human rights are rights that people have based on their humanity and should thus apply to everyone (Evans 2001). The global LGBT rights comprise of a particular discourse and framework that is limited to sexualities being expressed by set categories of sexual identity. Whereas, logically, such identity categories have formed, especially in relation to a rights movement, the implications of such categories go beyond labelling same-sex desires, especially when enforced upon other communities (Kollman and Waites 2009). The current framework surrounding ‘universal’ LGBT rights is closely linked to the ‘West’ and questions of power and civilization. Additionally have colonial states been more occupied with obtaining/maintaining a state of their own opposed to the protection of international human rights regimes (Ingatoeff 2001).

The emergence of human rights, as Donnelly (1998) puts it, was the first international standard of civilization. For the (newly) independent sovereign states with a colonial past, the

pursuit of human rights takes place in the similar dynamics of ‘western superiority’. Kollman and Waites (2009) make us aware of a resembling sentiment, noting how the universalism of the human rights discourse risks being perceived as part of Western imperialism. This sentiment is very clearly felt in some African states where homosexuality is framed as ‘un-African’, meaning that homosexuality is framed as alien to ‘African Culture’ (Vincent and Howell 2014). Often these governments appeal to traditional values and the protection of the cultural and national sovereignty (Sadrove et al. 2012).

Amongst the many critics of the global pursuit of LGBT rights, is Massad (2008) who has coined the ‘Gay International’, which refers to universalizing claims on LGBT rights pushed for by ‘white Westerners’. He argues with a focus on Arab societies that such a discourse assumes that gays and lesbians are universal categories that exist everywhere in the world. Whereas there have been same-sex examples in almost every society in the world, the problem is with the LGBT rights discourse. According to Massad (2002), this produces homosexuals “where they do not exist, and represses same-sex desires and practices that refuse to be assimilated into its sexual epistemology” (363). The naming of the LGBT subject is a delicate matter that should be viewed in critical terms. Thoreson (2014) discusses how: “by seeking putatively universal categories and terms, however, human rights frameworks often erase the nuance and specificity that is necessary to describe populations whose behaviour, identity, and socially ascribed labels align and diverge in kaleidoscopic ways” (24-25).

In the eyes of Wilets (2011) “the arguments for cultural relativism in the context of LGBT rights are shorn of their power when it is understood that much of the contemporary opposition to gender nonconformity and homosexuality comes not from indigenous practice but largely from modern and predominantly Western phenomena”(632). Although Wilets makes a good point here, LGBT rights are not the same as the presence of homosexuality in history. Therefore, although same-sex sexualities have been present in history across many cultures, the shape in which the LGBT rights are being pursued now can be viewed mainly in ‘Western’ and ‘Modernizing’ terms. This is not to state that such rights should not be pursued. However, the connotations and way such rights are being pursued is a delicate matter that deserves more exploration and arguably a more critical approach.

Human rights as a foreign policy tool

The debate between universalism and relativism is profoundly connected to power and politics. Human rights have not only become an aspirational project pursuing rights for all human beings, but it has become a concept laden with issues such as (in)equality, civilization, modernization and neo-imperialism. Human rights are to be pursued through political practice, and political practice often involves asymmetric power relations. This becomes evident when taking a closer look at much of the pursuit for human rights in the international community, uncovering many other motivations for pursuing human rights. One of these motivations is the use of human rights as a foreign policy tool. The use of human rights merely for political purposes is problematic since this serves to “detract from the complex ways in which human beings and societies negotiate and understand their own identities amidst the prescription and proscriptions of states” (Sadgrove et al. 2012:108). There are various ways in which human rights are being employed to serve the goals of states. Such motivations include the pursuit of legitimacy in the international arena as well as the construction of a liberal identity.

Perception of legitimacy

There is a strong tension between human rights and legitimacy. Reus-Smit (2001) argues that these should not be treated as two contradictory elements but should be seen as normative elements of a ‘single, distinctly modern discourse about legitimate statehood and rightful state action’ (520). Reus-Smith (2001) continues, “the protection of basic human rights is integral to the moral purpose of the modern state, to the dominant rationale that licenses the organization of power and authority into territorially defined sovereign units” (520).

States use human rights to improve their image in the international arena. By complying with a human rights norm, states improve their reputation and are perceived as both legitimate and modern participants of the international community (Ayoub 2014: Velasco 2018). State legitimacy is here defined in line with Wight’s (1972) definition, that sees state legitimacy as the collective judgement of the international community regarding rightful membership of the family of nations. International legitimacy plays a crucial role in the adoption of human rights norms. Consequently, this explains why naming and shaming is a widely used tool to enforce norm commitment. The shame tied to exposing human rights violations is aimed at delegitimizing a state (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

The construction of identity

The human rights norms can be viewed as collective understandings that make behavioural claims on certain actors. Katzenstein (1996) explicitly incorporates identity in his definition of norms, being “collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors within a given identity” (5). They can constitute state identities and interests, as opposed to viewing norms as merely having a regulative function that focuses on aiding states with given interests to reach maximum utility. The identity of a state is not static but is developed and/or transformed through interaction. Wendt (1992) sees identities as a ‘relatively stable, role-specific understanding and expectations about self’ (397). Berger (1966) emphasizes that identities are relational and that they are always placed within a psychological reality in a specific, socially constructed world. Adding to this, Wendt (1992) notes how the process of identity formation under anarchy is predominantly concerned with the preservation of ‘security’ and the ‘self’. He notes how conceptions of the self and interests often mirror the practices of significant others over time, therefore noting that the self is a reflection of a state’s socialization. Social identities enable states to determine who they are dependent on the situation and in relation to other states (Wendt 1992). For example “one cannot be an “anticommunist’ if there are no communists around, nor a ‘balancer’ if there is no one to balance” (Wendt 1996:51)

The adherence to human rights is vital to uphold a liberal identity, and by focusing on these rights, states shape their identity in relation to the Other. This is especially evident in the discourses surrounding human rights norms where there is a clear distinction between the human rights upholding, liberal states versus the barbaric, norm-violating state. According to Mutua (2002), the discourse of human rights is a black-and-white construction depicting good against evil. He notes how: “the “good” state controls its demonic proclivities by cleansing itself with, and internalizing human rights. The “evil” state, on the other hand, expresses itself through an illiberal, anti-democratic, or other authoritarian culture. The redemption or salvation of the state is solely dependent on its submission to human rights norms” (11). From this perspective, it is understandable how human rights can be employed to highlight the ‘good’ self in opposition to the ‘bad’ ‘illiberal’ other.

Although many of the ‘liberal democracies’ culturally resonate with the ideas of specific human rights and adopt them both out of resonance, the maintenance of legitimacy plays a vital role as well. Liberal democracies are based upon the core principles of universal

freedom and equality (Held and McGrew 1993). Accordingly, is the relationship between democracy and human rights so intertwined, it is thought of as symbiotic (Evans 2001). Still relevant today is Donnelly's (1998) observation that "the states of western (and especially northern) Europe, for all their short-comings, have most consistently and most successfully sought to implement internationally recognized human rights"(15). Therefore, one of the most effective strategies employed by LGBT activists in liberal democracies is connecting the strong commitment to non-discriminatory practices, which is at the heart of genuinely liberal democracies, to the lack of rights of LGBT peoples. In this sense, if a liberal democracy does not uphold LGBT rights, is it truly liberal? Thus by implementing the LGBT rights, the identity of liberal democracy is re-affirmed (Kollman 2007).

How states perceive their interests and LGBT rights, is both a consequence of their identity and the interaction with other states. For example, the idea that LGBT rights are signals of liberal, modern and democratic states is a social construction. The rights on its own do not say anything beyond seeking rights for a marginalized population; however, how states have given meaning to these rights has affected the perception of LGBT rights. As noted Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink (2017), when states "put norm-violating states on the international agenda in terms of moral consciousness-raising. In doing so, they also remind liberal states of their own identity as promoters of human rights" (120).

Hegemony

Another way in which human rights are employed is as a tool for hegemony. According to Gramsci (1971), "the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'" (57). The latter recruits the willing consent of members of a subordinated group through persuasion, and this achievement is what Gramsci refers to as hegemony. According to Gilabert (2018) "hegemonic mechanisms involve (*inter alia*) normative discourses that capture some of the interests of the members of subordinated groups while being on balance tilted in favour of the interests of the members of the group shaping the discourses, thus cementing the power of the latter over the former" (384). The human rights regime can be viewed as a hegemonic mechanism that states can employ.

For example, one might point out how, during the Cold War, human rights discourse was used to diminish support for one another. For example, the USSR highlighted the U.S. lack of

civil rights of African-Americans while the U.S. criticized the USSR for the violations of freedom of speech and political participation. Furthermore, both parties funded NGO's that were in line with their positions on these matters (Gilabert 2018). Additionally, the enforcement of human rights is mostly dependent upon the foreign policies of the major powers (Evans 2005; Gilabert 2018).

Strategic interests

Human rights are frequently employed for strategic reasons. For example, the American invasion in Iraq was publicly motivated by the pursuit of democracy and the response to international terrorism. However, many believe the control for oil played a more significant role, if not the only role (Gilabert 2018). Humanitarian interventions are often on a slippery slope between interventions publicly motivated by human rights concerns but at the same time, internally motivated by (geo)political interests. Additionally, the fact that human rights are inconsistently implemented adds to the suspicion that human rights are often used for strategic objectives. For example, the United States heavily criticizes countries such as Iran for their human rights abuses, but similar abuses are accepted from important trading partners such as Saudi Arabia. Here it is worth mentioning that Saudi Arabia is the number one weapons importer from the United States. As Ignatieff (2001) accurately points out "it becomes incoherent for states like Britain and the United States to condemn Indonesia or Turkey for their human rights performance while providing their military with vehicles or weapons that can be used for the repression of civilian dissent"(22). Such examples demonstrate the selective use of human rights and the hypocrisy involved in the pursuit of human rights.

Especially LGBT rights carry a unique, political power with them which makes LGBT rights a particularly interesting strategic tool. As Franke (2012) discusses, if a state treats its homosexuals well, the international community will look the other way with regards to other human rights violations. Therefore certain human rights can be used as a form of window-dressing. This highlights the connection between that outward 'liberal' identity that is connected to LGBT rights and to an extent, the hypocrisy of the global pursuit of LGBT rights by 'Western' states. This is exemplified by Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005) who discuss how states often ratify human rights treaties as a form of window-dressing, but in reality, frequently do not internalize such treaties.

Conclusion

That human rights are being used for purposes that surpass the protection of the rights of human beings is evident. The ulterior motives such as strategic interests play a prominent role in the incorporation of human rights in foreign policy. Human rights are intentionally enforced in some cases while ignored in others to maintain trade relations. Furthermore, human rights are used to make states appear legitimate in the international arena or to highlight its 'liberal' identity. This, in addition to the debate between universalism and cultural relativism, highlights the complexity of the pursuit for human rights and especially LGBT rights. Much of the recent scholarly work focuses on the difficulty of applying 'universal' human rights norms to other states, however, relatively little focus has been given to the motivations for states to pursue the 'universal' LGBT rights. The works that have been focused on LGBT rights primarily discuss the resistance by 'illiberal' regimes opposed to critiquing the efforts by 'Western' governments. Furthermore, has the exploration of ulterior motives for pursuing human rights been limited mainly to the field of humanitarian intervention.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to add to the literature by highlighting how human rights, and especially LGBT rights, are used by state actors for purposes beyond altruism. It is often these kinds of states that seek to outwardly promote LGBT rights globally with a focus on promoting freedom and alleviating suffering. This kind of language is depicted as being 'salient', but as this thesis will argue, the motivations go beyond philanthropy.

Chapter 3: The United Kingdom, the Cameron government and LGBT rights

Respect for human rights and the commitment to defend and uphold these rights abroad form an essential part of the global self-image of states. The same applies for Britain and the desire to uphold the ‘historic role Britain has played as a beacon of democracy, liberty, freedom and respect for the rule of law around the world’ (Beech and Munch 2019: 127). As Mandelbaum (2007) discusses, during the eighteenth century and onwards, Britain “qualified as the freest country in Europe and therefore in the world” (9). Britain had a strong parliament that unlike in many other European states, effectively checked the power of the king. Liberty was viewed as one of the most cherished British political values and even as the essence of their national identity (Cain 2012).

Increasingly, during the 19th-century liberal and democratic ideas became more widespread. This was also reflected in Britain’s imperial endeavours. Because Britain, at that time managed to set ‘the greatest example of ordered progress the world has ever seen’ it enabled the country’s colonial efforts (Cain 2012). The achievements at home and consequently overseas gave Britain a sense of accomplishment because it was greater than any other power had managed to achieve thus far. This further encouraged the notion that Britain had a predestined role to play in the global evolution (Cain 2012). Consequently, it was clear for British imperialists that Britain was best equipped to bring both progress and morality to Africa and Asia. As argued by Statori (2006) “the nonwhite colonies had not yet reached their maturity and so required paternal rather than consensual governance” (625). This civilizing mission further contributed to Britain’s liberal self-image in contrast to the illiberal other. Arguably, this laid the foundation for Britain’s commitment to a liberal identity, which still plays an important role today. Through the post-colonial perspective, current efforts to implement specific human rights abroad, take place in similar dynamics.

The history of Britain as a beacon of democracy and liberal values laid the groundwork for the nation that it is today. That the core values of freedom and democracy still play an important role in British politics today is reflected by Cameron’s leader speech in 2006:

“I am a liberal conservative, rather than a neo-conservative. Liberal – because **I support the aim of spreading freedom and democracy**, and support humanitarian

intervention. Conservative –because I recognise the complexities of human nature, and am sceptical of grand schemes to remake the world.”

Because in the modern era, states in the ‘West’ are viewed through its commitment to human rights, these rights are closely related to state interests. Therefore human rights increasingly play an important role in foreign policy which is primarily understood through the lens of national interest. Consequently, during the Cameron Government, the liberal Conservatives could not help but view the United Kingdom’s foreign policy through a lens of universal human rights.

The Cameron Government

David Cameron was the leader of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom between 2005 till 2016. During this period he successfully led the Conservative party to a big win of seats in the parliamentary elections of 2010. Although the number of seats was too little for an absolute majority, Cameron formed a coalition with the liberal democrats after which Cameron became the Prime Minister of the coalition government. From 2010 till 2016 Cameron was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Modernisation of the Conservatives under David Cameron

The Cameron government was notable since the administration combined both Conservative and liberal policies. Cameron argued for the modernisation of the Conservative’s party’s culture, attitudes and identity. Peele and Francis (2016) discuss how “the key element in Cameron’s strategy in the early days of his leadership was the quest for a modern version of conservatism which could address the agenda of the twenty-first century and transcend the language and values shaped by Thatcherism” (1). Following three election defeats, the Conservatives elected Cameron as their leader due to his modernising agenda. His agenda included rebranding the Party through moving both the policy and ideological position more towards the political centre (Hayton 2016). The election of David Cameron was seen as an opportunity of the Conservative Party to step out of the shadow of Thatcherism.

Notable during Cameron’s government was a change in attitude towards specific key issues. In a quest to appear more centrist, specific issues were downplayed that were associated with

Thatcherism. Furthermore, Cameron attempted to focus on other issues that were not as closely associated with the Conservative party. For example, Cameron focused firmly on the environment, which was an under highlighted subject in the Conservative Party. The modernisation of the Conservatives under Cameron sought to highlight the diversity of the Conservative Party. The Party needed to overcome the perception that the Conservatives have little to offer besides a strong commitment to individualism and free markets. A stronger focus on liberalism was believed to widen the Party's electoral appeal due to the shift towards a more central political position (Hayton 2016).

The type of modernisation displayed by Cameron is often undertaken to remedy the failure of a political party to keep up with changes in the world. The lack of popularity of the Conservative party resulted in an adaption of the party to the new social and political conditions (Peele and Francis 2016). One of the predominant flagship 'modernisation' policy areas of this time are LGBT rights. Consequently, Cameron focussed on an inclusive approach to equality issues in his government. As observed by Maude (2013) "the centre of gravity of social attitudes has moved significantly towards much greater tolerance and respect. The Conservative Party does not have to run ahead of society – but it cannot lag too far behind either" (144). Largely thanks to Cameron, between 1997 and 2010 "the most significant division in the Conservative Party was along the social, sexual and moral policy divide" (Hayton 2012: 117).

LGBT rights during the Cameron Administration

The Cameron government has positioned itself as an ally of LGBT rights, both domestically and abroad. Despite the backlash from several Conservatives, Cameron committed to the introduction of the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act. From the domestic stance, the position of Cameron on LGBT rights has been interpreted from different perspectives. On the one hand, Beech (2015) argues that Cameron's focus on the issue of equal marriage for same-sex couples was rooted in Cameron's liberal ideology. The argument by Beech (2015) emphasizes how there could be no other 'reason to embark upon such a divisive, controversial and un-conservative policy' beside the desire to 'change a key aspect of British society – the definition of marriage- in line with their liberal ideology" (9).

However, as Hayton (2016) points out, Cameron himself argued that his position for same-sex marriage was driven by the desire to strengthen the institution of marriage which conservatives strongly believe in. In his party conference speech David Cameron (2011) highlighted this more conservative stance noting how “conservatives believe in the ties that bind us; that society is stronger when we make vows to each other and support each other. So I don’t support gay marriage despite being a Conservative. I support gay marriage because I am a Conservative”. Through this framing, Cameron attempted to merge liberal ideas and conservative values to transcend intra-party divisions.

As a consequence of the legal groundworks for a Civil Partnership Bill prepared in the previous government, the step to same-sex marriage was relatively small, at least legally speaking. In the light of the Partnership Bill, which was not widely supported by the Conservatives, Cameron’s pursuit for same-sex marriage appeared risky. According to Hayton and McEnhill (2015), Cameron’s pursuit of same-sex marriage was a combination of three factors. For starters, Cameron’s own socially liberal perspective followed by his desire to modernize the Party. Lastly, the electoral calculation played a role as well. The establishment of same-sex marriage could be seen as a way to emphasize conservative values surrounding marriage but updating it to the twenty-first century. Furthermore, does the incorporation of same-sex marriage make the British government appear both modern and liberal. With many other nations in Europe legalizing same-sex marriage, the U.K. could not stay behind.

With regards to LGBT rights abroad, the Human Rights and Democracy Report from the British Commonwealth Office discusses the LGBT policy of the United Kingdom. The report notes how “the Government is committed to the promotion and protection of rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people as an integral part of its wider international human rights work. It is our view that to render consenting same-sex relations illegal is incompatible with international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)” (the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office 2011: 68). In the foreword by Foreign Secretary Hague, the report of 2012 highlights the U.K.’s commitment to LGBT rights noting how “the U.K. will remain active, both in close cooperation with expert NGOs and local communities. We will speak up, in public and in private, to protect individuals from discrimination and violence. And we will keep on working to build tolerant and pluralist societies in the long run, which is core

business for our diplomatic and development strategies worldwide.” (The United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office 2012: 8).

Furthermore, the reports note how several developments in countries such as Cameroon, Nigeria and Uganda have raised concern due to their anti-homosexual sentiments. The report stresses the U.K.’s commitment to working with civil society, lobbying and raising concern with the respective governments. The most notable move during the Cameron government was making aid conditional to respect for LGBT rights, which will be discussed in more detail later on. The pursuit of LGBT rights by the Cameron government are in line with Cameron’s desire to portray Britain as an example for the rest of the world. This relates back to the desire to uphold the historical role of Britain as ‘beacon of liberty and freedom’ (Beech and Munch 2019).

Conclusion

The Cameron government moved away from traditional Conservatism and portrayed a liberal-Conservative approach. The modernising efforts in the Conservative Party contributed to the commitment to human rights abroad. Especially the commitment to LGBT rights was noteworthy since this was met with resistance from more conservative thinkers within the party. The Cameron government was outspoken about the U.K.’s commitment to LGBT rights and especially the announcement of aid conditionality was a remarkable move of this government.

Chapter 4: Colonialism, Society and LGBT rights in Uganda

The predominant focus of this thesis is concerned with the motivations for the U.K. to pursue LGBT rights in Uganda. However, to understand the backdrop against which this policy is taking place, the context of ‘LGBT’ rights in Uganda is essential. Whereas this chapter will discuss many elements which have contributed to the high presence of homophobic attitudes in Uganda, it is crucial to understand the full context in which these attitudes have arisen and are being maintained or fuelled. Consequently, part of this chapter will cover the colonial context and the colonial legacy of the British colonizers in Uganda. As Sadgrove et al. 2012 accurately point out, discussing the perspectives towards homosexuality in Uganda, the “situated discourses about gay and lesbian people need to be decoupled from universalising notions of an innate African cultural homophobia and explored through a contextual reading of such discourses” (109).

Especially following the announcement of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, Uganda came under fire from the international community. This Bill received a disproportionate amount of international attention and was seen as a “powerful magnet for newshounds and sexual rights activists’ (Epprecht 2013: 2). Whereas the Bill is highly problematic, most attention was focused on African homophobia, as opposed to an investigative portrayal of the context and situation in which this Bill had been proposed. As the colonial history will demonstrate, in contradiction to the many essentializing claims that homophobia is ‘African’, the homophobia can be argued to be a consequence of the colonial history (Vorhölter 2017: Kizito 2017).

Colonialism, same-sex history & ‘homosexuality’ in Uganda

Uganda, formerly known as the Buganda Kingdom, was a protectorate of the British Empire between 1894 -1962. During this time period, the British implemented legislation that outlawed ‘carnal knowledge of any person against the order of nature’ which has been interpreted to criminalize homosexuality (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018). The regulation of sexuality in Uganda took place at the same time as Britain’s Victorian period in which conservative and conventional views of both sexuality and family were dominant. These sentiments were then transferred onto the Ugandan population through the colonial administration. As noted by Tielman and Hammelburg (1993): “From a historical perspective, the English legislation against homosexuality has had (and unfortunately still

has) appalling consequences for the legal position of homosexual men, and, to a lesser extent, lesbians in the former British colonies” (251).

Besides the direct effect of colonialism in the form of anti-sodomy legislation, should the consequences of colonialism as a whole be taken into account. As post-colonial theory reminds us, the world has been shaped through colonialism and without recognizing this and exploring the implications, it is impossible to understand the current situation in Uganda (Ahluwalia 2012: Seth 2013). The repressive nature of colonialism has long-lasting effects on every part of society. Many of the contemporary problems that former colonies face today can be traced back to the colonial legacy. For example, the structures that have produced inequality have severely contributed to the cultural fragmentation, a lack of political control and the existence of dependent and subordinate economies (Kabwegyere 1974). The power dynamics portrayed during colonial times place the current efforts by Western governments to push for certain rights in a neo-colonial perspective. Therefore, the post-colonial context is crucial to understand the dynamics of pushing for LGBT rights in former colonies.

Furthermore has the focus of newly independent states in general been more occupied with the maintenance of their state opposed to the adoption of international human rights regimes (Ignatieff 2001).

Whereas homosexuality is frequently cited as ‘un-African’, this claim has been debunked by both historical and anthropological evidence. For example, ethnographies from the early 20th century portray same-sex activity and gender non-conformity. Murray and Roscoe (1998) point out how there was a group of agriculturalists in Uganda who were referred to as *mudoko daka*, which loosely translates to ‘treated as women’ but ‘could carry as man’. This is not the only registered example of same-sex behaviour. Evidence suggests that the Iteso of Eastern Uganda and Western Kenya, the Karamojan of Northeastern Uganda and Northwestern Kenya and the Bahima of Western Uganda and Northern Rwanda also engaged in same sex-practices (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018).

When the British arrived in Uganda, it has been argued that as part of the White Man’s burden, the region needed to be civilized and disposed of such immoral practices. Sex was seen in terms of primitive urges that threaten the social order, modernity and the nation (Hull 1982: Binnie 2004). As noted by Kizito (2017) “consequently, Christianity as a ‘civilizing’ practice and British sodomy laws were inherited into Uganda’s overall body of laws, and cultural way of life” (568).

After the colonial period, the colonial Penal Code Act, which criminalized same-sex relations in Uganda, remained in effect. This, in combination with several factors in society, contributed to the complicated situation for ‘LGBT’ peoples in Uganda. Many people who would most likely identify as LGBT in other parts of the world, often self-identify as *kuchu* in modern-day Uganda. Many *kuchus* lived and still live in fear of their true sexuality being discovered. However, a group of *kuchus* emerged from the shadows in 2007, with a campaign demanding rights. The ‘Let Us Live in Peace’ campaign was the beginning of a visible movement for ‘LGBT’ rights in Uganda. The campaign is seen as a critical turning point in the fight for the decriminalization of homosexuality. However, even before 2007, *kuchus* had managed to form several movements dating back to the late 1990s. The movements operated in the shadows due to fears for their safety. Many of the organizations were predominantly focused on issues such as HIV/AIDS and creating safe spaces and family support groups. However, when the Anti-Homosexuality Bill was introduced in the Ugandan Parliament in 2009, the movements prioritized the fight against this Bill (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018; Jjuuko and Mutesi 2018).

In much of the academic works, there is a lack of acknowledgements for the LGBT sector in Uganda. The common perception is that Ugandan LGBT persons live in constant fear and require the West to save them. However as Lusimbo and Bryan (2018) note “although it is extremely important to understand the human rights abuses that form part of the lived experience of many LGBTI Ugandans, it is equally imperative to recognise the successes they have experienced”(339). For example, LGBT organizations have been creating an LGBT community across the region and even attempted to host several prides (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018).

State-sponsored homophobia, media and society

The current situation for LGBT peoples in Uganda remains complicated and filled with tremendous challenges. Many of these challenges derive from a combination of state-sponsored homophobia, media and cultural views that play a dominant role in society. Sexuality is a complex phenomenon, and the debate surrounding sexuality is more complicated than often given credit to. Especially in the context of Uganda, the mix between culture, sexuality and power results in a situation that is difficult to summarize. This is exemplified by Epprecht (2013) who notes how “beyond the obvious homophobic rhetoric and laws, the conflicts over sexual diversity and gender variance lead us to debates about

gender-based violence and women's rights, communicable disease, commercial sex, racist and tribalist stereotyping, xenophobia, street kids, witchcraft beliefs and practices, elite hypocrisy and abuse of power, police corruption, sham elections, the meaning of culture and cultural appropriation, Christian fundamentalist and Islamist movements to promote intolerance, non-Africans' involvement and funding for such movements, foreign policy, and much more" (5).

The debate surrounding LGBT rights in Uganda is referred to as the war for the soul of Uganda. The 'Western' connotation of homosexuality played a crucial role in the resistance to LGBT rights and the backlash to this growing 'norm'. Nuñez-Mietz and García-Iommi (2017) note how the framing of homosexuality in terms of a 'foreign, neo-imperialistic imposition' partly motivated the Anti-Homosexual Bill. The Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Bill desires to protect the nation against both internal as well as external threats to the traditional (heterosexual) family and the culture of Uganda (Sanders 2016). As discussed in the literature review, sexuality plays a prominent role in society and the idea that homosexuality threatens the traditional family, which is at the foundation of many societies, makes homosexuality particularly 'dangerous'. This ties into Sinha's (1981) argument regarding the level of individualism in the human rights framework which makes it ill-suited to be 'exported' onto other cultures which have the family as the foundation of society. Therefore many *kuchus* attempt to pass on as straight in their daily lives and even marry and raise children (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018).

Additionally, does the lack of reproduction also pose a threat to the family and the future of Uganda. The discourse is focused in ways that pose homosexuals as rejecting their reproductive potential and therefore defying their responsibility to produce future citizens of Uganda. O'Murray and Roscoe (1998) note how fuelling anxiety about procreation is an effective way to garner support in a society where the social status is dependent mainly on the offspring. The combination of strong values attached to procreation and marriage in Ugandan society and the discourses produced throughout the media, state and religious leaders have all contributed to the anti-homosexual sentiments present in current day Ugandan society (Sadgrove et al. 2012; Sanders 2016)

Furthermore is the link to morality a crucial element that makes homosexuality perceived negatively. This is exemplified by the Ugandan Minister of State for Ethics and Integrity, James Nsaba Butoro, reaction to threats of losing donors over the Anti-Homosexuality Bill:

“keep their money and the homosexuality because it is not about charity at the expense of our moral destruction” (Sadgrove et al. 2012: 105). Also, MP Elijah Kteyunda was quoted in an Ugandan newspaper saying: “I would not forgive my government if it dares to mind about foreign aid and forget our cultural values” (Sadgrove et al. 2012: 115).

Whereas it is evident that both state and media discourses in Uganda portray homosexuality with a focus on the ‘moral bankruptcy’ of the West and concerns about family and traditional values, this does not reflect the individual opposition per definition. The state takes advantage of other anxieties and connects this to homosexuality, and in opposition creates an idea of national unity of purpose. In addition to state-sponsored homophobia, has the media played a substantial part in shaping current attitudes to homosexuality in Uganda. One specific publication of the notorious Ugandan tabloid, the Rolling Stone received significant international attention. In October 2010, the tabloid printed all the personal details, including names, addresses and photographs of suspected homosexuals. This publication is expected to be linked to the death of one of the most prominent LGBT activists David Kato, who was murdered three weeks after his details were published (Sadgrove et al. 2012: Lusimbo and Bryan 2018).

From some perspectives, the ‘threat’ of homosexuality to society, can only be combatted through the preservation of both culture and values intending to save national morality. Through this discourse, the internal factors of the degrading ‘good’ values in Uganda are amplified by the perceived threat of external ‘Western’ influences. Such a discourse is not only used in the media or the state but also by religious leaders. Because religion plays a significant role in Ugandan society, the views of the religious leaders have a tremendous impact. Particularly, high-profile born-again pastors have played a crucial role in the mobilization of anti-homosexual sentiments. As Lusimbo and Bryan (2018) note “without religious institutions in Ugandan Civil society lending support, full equality for LGBTI persons will be difficult to achieve” (335). Here it is interesting to note that many prominent pastors have strong ties to the American religious right and often receive support and funding. This combination of local and transnational religion-political networks has supported the establishment of the anti-homosexuality legislation. Furthermore, has the announcement of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill been linked to a visit from three well-known American Evangelists who were in Uganda to discuss the ‘truth about homosexuality’ (Sadgrove et al. 2012: Vorhölter 2017: Kizito 2017).

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill & the Anti-Homosexuality Act

In 2009 the Anti-Homosexuality Bill was brought in front of the Ugandan Parliament. The Bill threatened to create a whole range of new crimes, among which the death penalty for aggravated homosexuality. Furthermore, did the Bill threaten to criminalize people who advocate for sexual minority rights and even made it punishable if one fails to report suspected homosexual activity. The Bill suggested extraditing Ugandans who commit any of the above crimes while abroad (Sanders 2010: Sadgrove et al. 2012: Epprecht 2013). The Bill received much support, especially from prominent religious leaders. The Bill was promoted as a solution to protect the traditional family, protect children from homosexuality, safeguard the culture and traditional values (Jjuuko and Mutesi 2018).

In defence of the Bill, the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law advocated and lobbied MP's to oppose the Bill. Despite the lack of resources the Coalition managed to receive international attention for the Bill. As a result, many countries in the 'West' incorporated Uganda and their position on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in their foreign policy. The international attention and pressure slowed down the further progress of the Bill (Lusimbo and Bryan 2018). Despite the broad domestic support for the Bill, President Museveni was swayed by the threats of donor countries. The progress of the Bill was slowed down, and Museveni was domestically criticized for responding to international criticism. Although the Bill was removed from the eye of the international public, it was still on the table in Uganda. This resulted in the establishment of the Anti-Homosexuality Act (Sadgrove et al. 2012: Jjuuko and Mutesi 2018).

Luckily, a few months after the Anti-Homosexuality Act was passed, the Act was nullified because the Act had passed without the requisite quorum. For many, it was a surprise how relatively fast the Act was nullified by Uganda's Constitutional Court; it was quite frankly unprecedented. The Court did not state what supported the quick decision on the case. However, there is much speculation that there were political forces at play (Jjuuko and Mutesi 2018).

Conclusion

Following the announcement of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, Uganda came under fire from the international community. Some states in the 'West' even incorporated LGBT rights in Uganda as part of their foreign policy, as was the case for the United Kingdom. Whereas

Uganda was vastly dismissed as a backwards, uncivilized, homophobic country in the media. A closer analysis uncovers the complicated situation of sexuality in Ugandan society. The colonial legacies play a crucial role in the attitudes towards homosexuality. This, in combination with certain cultural factors and the strong influence of influential religious leaders, both from within and outside of Uganda, has led to a more complicated situation for LGBT people than often acknowledged. Such elements explain why the U.K. foreign policy aimed at pursuing LGBT rights is not as straightforward as it appears. The role of sexuality and the different values in society are drastically different than in the United Kingdom, further complicating the quest for LGBT rights in Uganda.

Chapter 5: Discourse Analysis: U.K. Foreign Policy on LGBT rights in Uganda – In whose interest?

The political power of LGBT rights and their liberal and modern connotation make these rights a particularly useful political tool. States that promote LGBT rights globally are seen as positive, modernising forces that fight for human rights. However, the less discussed perspective is how the promotion of LGBT rights serves the benefit of the state, that is promoting these rights. As noted earlier, Risse and Sikking (2017) discussed how states that put norm-violating states on the international agenda with regards to issues such as human rights, remind themselves of their liberal identity in contradiction to this illiberal, norm-violating state. Through discourse analysis, this thesis seeks to uncover how we can explain the U.K.'s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda and uncover the hidden motivations. The speeches of prime minister David Cameron are analysed to establish a more general pattern of his human rights agenda and also specifically on the issue of LGBT rights in Uganda.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis provides a critical lens through which texts are analysed, and relations of power and hidden motives are uncovered (Locke 2004; Reyes 2011). The previous chapters have provided the social, historical and political context during which this pursuit took place. Consequently, this analysis draws on a combination of both inductive and deductive research. The context of the previous chapters combined with an initial analysis of the speeches by David Cameron resulted in two main categories, through which the pursuit of LGBT rights can be viewed. These categories are from the nation's perspective and the perspective of the Conservative Party. The categories have been identified based on a reoccurring theme in the speeches which emphasized British commitment to human rights. Furthermore, liberal values have played an important role in British history and this is expected to be reflected in the speeches. Additionally, can it be argued that the pursuit of LGBT rights is motivated by Party interests. As a previous chapter has highlighted, the Conservative Party required modernisation and LGBT rights are one of the 'flagship modernisation' areas.

Motivations from the nation's perspective

As noted earlier, the foreign policy of a state can be understood through the primary lens of national interest (Beech and Munch 2019). Therefore, national interests can be argued to be one of the motivations for the pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. States in the 'West are

judged upon their behaviour as a ‘liberal’ state and upholding human rights is a crucial element of this liberal identity. With regards to the pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda, the motivations from the perspective of Britain, can be divided into four sub-themes: maintaining/constructing the liberal identity, moral authority, national security and atonement for the colonial past. These categories have been identified after analysing many speeches from Cameron and in combination with the knowledge from the previous chapters.

The liberal identity

Throughout Cameron’s speeches, we consistently witness Britain’s commitment to human rights. This can be explained by how liberal democracies are based upon the core values of respect for universal freedom and equality (Held and McGrew 1993). Much of the global human rights regime is focused on traditional Western Liberal values. This is largely a consequence of the fact that “liberalism, political democracy, and human rights are intrinsically part of the same historical and philosophical tradition” (Mutua 2013: 21). The construction of human rights as an embodiment of liberal values contributes to the perception that a commitment to human rights constructs a liberal identity. This is important because states are increasingly judged upon their commitment to human rights. As discussed in the previous chapter, liberty was perceived as a core value and even at the heart of Britain’s national character. Cameron highlights how this has historically been the case for Britain. For example, in a speech made in the honour of Britain heading the Council of Europe, Cameron noted the following:

“Human rights is a cause that runs **deep in the British heart and long in British history**.

“In the **thirteenth century**, Magna Carta set down specific rights for citizens, including the right to freedom from unlawful detention.” (Cameron 2012a)

“We are not and never will be a country that walks on by while human rights are trampled into the dust. This has a lot to do with **Britain’s national character** – a love of freedom and an instinctive loathing of over-mighty authority.” (Cameron 2012a).

As Beech & Munch (2019) discuss: “respect for human rights and commitments to defend and uphold them abroad are an essential element of a nation’s narrative self-understanding. The global self-image of Britain is also one that values the historic role Britain has played as a beacon of democracy, liberty, freedom and respect for the rule of law around the world”

(127). This sentiment is reflected throughout various policy documents and speeches from the Cameron government. By highlighting Britain's commitment to liberal values, he adds to the construction of Britain as a liberal state (Kollman 2007). The commitment to human rights has become a key aspect of any modern nation. Thus Britain's commitment to human rights and especially LGBT rights is crucial to maintain this image (Reus-Smit 2001).

Moral Authority

That global self-image of Britain embracing human rights by proxy gives Britain a sense of moral authority. This 'moral authority' is witnessed in several of Cameron's speeches. While honouring the leading role for Britain in the Council of Europe, Cameron (2012a) emphasized how:

“In other words, a commitment to human rights is both **morally right** and strategically right.”

Such a statement highlights how Cameron is convinced of Britain's leading role with regards to human rights and how this is the morally correct thing to do. By emphasizing how adherence to human rights is morally correct, one automatically makes disrespecting human rights, morally wrong—thus creating a dichotomy between the morally right and the morally wrong states. According to Mutua (2002), especially the discourse of human rights is a powerful tool to depict good versus evil, liberal versus illiberal. Since Britain respects human rights, they assume the 'moral authority' over morally wrong states. According to Gramsci (1971), intellectual and moral leadership is a way to achieve hegemony. Consequently, the assumed moral authority of Britain is closely linked to questions of power. The dynamics of Britain pursuing human rights abroad are very similar to the efforts of imperial Britain feeling moral responsibility to bring progress and morality to both Africa and Asia (Cain 2012).

During the Commonwealth Summit of 2011, David Cameron announced that he would make aid subject to respect for human rights. Cameron discussed the matter during an interview on The Andrew Marr Show. When Marr asked about the attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda and the efforts by the United Kingdom to raise the issue during the Commonwealth meeting, Cameron noted how:

“Well this is something **we raise continually**, and the fact is you know different Commonwealth countries are **at different positions** on this issue and **we want them**

to move. We're not just talking about it. We're also saying that British aid should have more strings attached in terms of do you persecute people for their faith or their Christianity, or do **you persecute people for their sexuality? We don't think that's acceptable.**" (Cameron 2011)

Here Cameron takes a clear stance, noting how the persecution of people based on their sexual orientation is not acceptable. The use of evaluations is a commonly used political tool. By focussing on Britain as the 'we' who continues to raise the issue to 'them', the norm-violating countries, including Uganda, Cameron creates a polarization. Such polarization is constructed through a positive self-evaluation versus negative evaluation of the Other (Van Dijk 1997). Also, the notion that British aid should have more strings attached gives an evaluation of the requirements to deserve British aid. The focus on 'British aid' and 'Our aid' is observed throughout Cameron's speeches. Such a focus demonstrates "the typical positive evaluation of us and OUR actions in positive terms and of THEM and THEIR actions in negative terms." (Van Dijk 1997: 28).

Post-colonial theory is critical on such constructions because it reinforces similar unequal power relations as witnessed in the colonial times. Cameron's speech displays a judgement of what is right or wrong, which hints towards the perception that Britain sees itself as morally superior and in a position to make such judgements. This is problematic because it displays the dynamics of a state placing itself morally above its former subject and by doing so, inevitably makes Uganda morally inferior (Dunne 2012). For example:

"But, as I say, even more than raising it, actually saying very clearly that remember Britain is now one of the premier aid givers in the world - saying that our aid, actually we want to see countries that receive our aid adhering to **proper human rights**, and that includes how people treat gay and lesbian people." (Cameron 2011)

Especially the emphasis on 'proper' human rights shows this moral authority that Britain is claiming to have with regards to LGBT rights. By highlighting the U.K.'s commitment to LGBT rights and condemning the states that disrespect LGBT rights, the United Kingdom is reminded of their liberal identity and by proxy their leading role as a moral authority (Risse and Sikkink 2017: Gramsci 1971). However, it is interesting to note that at this time, the U.K. did not have equal marriage for same-sex couples yet. Thus the U.K. claimed moral authority

over LGBT rights while not entirely giving equal rights to same-sex couples themselves (Hayton 2016).

Both as a consequence of developments within other states and growing demand for equality domestically resulted in the Cameron government's push for marriage equality. The domestic situation in the U.K. is closely intertwined with its foreign policy. The legislation of same-sex marriage in the United Kingdom contributed to the U.K.'s legitimacy as a 'moral authority' on LGBT rights. After legalizing same-sex marriage in 2013, Cameron was quoted saying:

“All over the world people would have been watching this piece of legislation and we've set something, I think, of **an example** of how to pass **good legislation in good time.**'

‘Many other countries are going to want to **copy this**.... And, as you know, I talk about the global race, about how we've got to export more and sell more so **I'm going to export the bill team.** I think they can be part of this global race and **take it around the world.**” (Cameron 2013a)

This example highlights how Cameron frames the U.K. as an example for the rest of the world and that the way in which Britain legalized same-sex marriage should be exported to other countries. Such framing is focused on this 'moral leadership' that Gramsci (1971) discusses in relation to the quest for hegemony. This is particularly relevant for Cameron's approach to LGBT rights since Cameron's approach shows how 'Western' LGBT rights are exported to other parts of the world. However, as discussed earlier on, the application of LGBT rights to other cultures is not as straight forward as it seems. Although the 'exportation' of same-sex marriage is not directly aimed at Uganda, the sentiment demonstrates a desire to follow similar steps taken for LGBT rights domestically, across the globe. The implications of such an approach will be discussed in more detail later on. What is also noteworthy about this statement by Cameron is the emphasis on 'good time'. Whereas, the United Kingdom, compared to other democracies in the Global North, was relatively late to the game. For example, the Netherlands legalized same-sex marriage in 2001, followed by countries such as Belgium in 2003 and Spain in 2005 (Cortina and Festy 2020).

The emphasis of Britain serving as an example with moral authority is a reoccurring theme in Cameron's speeches. At the Conservative Party Conference in 2013, Cameron noted how:

“Apparently some Russian official said: Britain is “just a small island that no-one pays any attention to.”

Really? Let me just get this off my chest. **When the world wanted rights**, who wrote Magna Carta? When they wanted representation, who built the first Parliament?

...Whose **example** of tolerance of people living together from every nation, every religion, young and old, **straight and gay?**

...whose **example do they aspire to?**” (Cameron 2013b)

Throughout Cameron’s speeches, there is a clear thread that highlights Britain’s commitment to human rights. Cameron focusses on not only highlighting the current commitment but noting how the values embodied by human rights run deeply through British history. The idea that Britain serves as an example for the rest of the world dates back to the eighteenth century when Britain was perceived as the freest country in the world. By focussing on LGBT rights, Britain is maintaining its global self-image of a liberal state that is morally correct.

The positioning of Britain as a moral authority takes place in similar dynamics as the beginning of Britain’s imperial rule. As Cain (2012) points out: “it was a fixed notion among the imperial elite that not only could Britons civilise Africa and Asia but that they were compelled morally to do so—hence the ‘white man’s burden’ with its undertone of self-congratulation at the selflessness of British rule.” (562). The British through its language represented itself as agents of civilization, which from a post-colonial perspective has a clear resemblance to the current efforts of the human rights project (Mutua 2002). Furthermore, the moral authority that the Cameron government displays with regards to LGBT rights demonstrates a desire for moral leadership. According to Kretz (2013), the policies of the Cameron government were consistent with the “government’s desire to serve as a leader in protecting the rights of LGBT people around the globe” (489).

National security

Although national security might not jump to mind when discussing the LGBT foreign policy of Britain, the Cameron government has continuously highlighted how the support for human rights and by proxy LGBT rights serves the national security. For example, the Coalition’s National Security Strategy of 2010 notes the following:

“Our national interest requires us to stand up for the values our country believes in – the rule of law, democracy, free speech, tolerance and human rights. Those are the attributes for which Britain is admired in the world and we must continue to advance them because Britain will be safer if our values are upheld and respected in the world.” (HM Government, 2010: 4)

Furthermore, does a quote earlier on discuss how a commitment to human rights is not just ‘morally right’ but also ‘strategically right’. This position has a lot to do with Cameron’s believe that:

“When a government respects its citizens’ human rights, that makes for a more stable country – and that is good for all of us.” (Cameron 2012a).

Atonement for the colonial legacy

The atonement for British colonial legacy can be argued to be another motivation for Britain’s pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda. According to Rao (2020) “the reminder that anti-sodomy laws are an inheritance from British colonialism has shaded into an argument for Britain to play a leading role in their removal, particularly in the institutional arena of the Commonwealth” (16). In the lead-up to the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, LGBT activist Peter Tatchell called upon Cameron to apologize for the British history of anti-sodomy laws. Several British organizations such as Kaleidoscope Trust and Huma Dignity Trust expressed concerns over the sodomy laws and urged the British government to take action. Even noting how Britain has an obligation to help due to the colonial past. The irony here is that the desire to take a stance against the anti-sodomy laws, which were an unfortunate colonial legacy resulted in an action that is problematic on many levels and can be viewed in neo-colonial terms.

During an interview, Cameron was asked about the reaction of states such as Uganda to the aid conditionality measure. Here Cameron acknowledges how Britain’s history was full of discrimination and highlights a need to help states achieve similar goals as Britain has achieved over the years:

“I think if you go back in our own country's history, there was a time when we, you know till quite recently, discriminated in lots of ways. I think these countries are all

on a journey and it's up to us to try and help them along that journey, and that's exactly what we do" (Cameron 2011).

As van Dijk (1997) discusses, in political discourse, there is often a focus on a 'positive future. For Cameron, focussing on the need for Britain to help other states such as Uganda achieve this positive future demonstrates Britain's superiority. Furthermore, the specific focus of 'Britain' as the only one that can help Uganda could be argued to be a form of both atonement and moral superiority. Apparently, Uganda is not capable of doing this on their own and thus requires the help of the morally superior Britain. The creation of this Us versus Them dynamic is a commonly used discursive tool to highlight how 'good' the Self is. According to Sabsay (2013) the sexually progressive rhetoric "functions today as a marker that distinguishes the so-called advanced western democracies in opposition to their 'undeveloped others', and in this way, it justifies the current re-articulation of orientalist and colonial politics" (606).

However, when considering the history of the United Kingdom one can question the 'moral authority' that the United Kingdom has on the issue. This question was raised by Dunne (2012) who asked: "how can it claim the moral authority to enforce LGBTI rights when many of the laws it is opposing were established during the colonial period?" (68). On the other hand, one could argue that it is precisely this colonial legacy that requires the United Kingdom to atone for their past and the progress made in the U.K. serves as evidence of their moral authority. Although the commitment to LGBT rights can be predominantly explained through the lens of both Britain's liberal identity and moral authority in combination with atonement for the colonial legacy, it can be argued that there were also interests for the Conservative Party involved.

Motivations from the Conservative Party's perspective

David Cameron was elected as the leader of the Conservative Party, partially due to his modernising agenda. The Conservative Party was perceived as a Party that only cared about a few issues, with the economy as their primary concern. However, by focussing on other issues, the Conservative Party could widen its public appeal. Cameron's modernisation efforts are witnessed in the progressive LGBT foreign policy.

Cameron was quoted at an LGBT reception in 2012, saying:

“I run an institution – the Conservative Party – which for many, many years got itself on the **wrong side of this argument**, it locked people out who were naturally Conservative from supporting it” (Cameron 2012a).

This example notes how Cameron seeks to change the Conservative Party and embrace LGBT rights. As discussed earlier on, LGBT rights have an extraordinary power that makes them a particularly interesting political tool. The equation of LGBT rights with liberal and modern values makes the promotion of LGBT rights an easy way to modernise the party and to increase the appeal to the public (Peele and Francis 2016).

The quest for LGBT rights can be argued to have taken place in a similar light as the pursuit for the environment. Under the Cameron government, the environment was embraced as a signature issue. However, according to Carter (2009), the focus on the environment was predominantly a tactical manoeuvre of great symbolic importance. By focussing on the environment, Cameron demonstrated that the Party does not only focus on business interests but is also concerned with the public good (Carter 2009: Hayton 2016). The same can be argued to the governments’ pursuit of LGBT rights, both domestically and abroad.

With regards to the domestic situation, Cameron’s support for same-sex marriage is arguably at least partially motivated by the need to cement the Conservatives position on key social attitudes. Consequently “as pragmatic act to confirm the detoxification of nasty party imagery, supporting gay marriage was a rational act for Cameron as a vote-maximising political leader (Heppel 2012: 184). Cameron noted how that “opinion polls consistently show that the public support the case for equality” (2012b). From this perspective, Cameron, who embraces rights and freedom simply stand-by and watch while Uganda sought to implement the Anti-Homosexuality Bill. The common conception throughout society has become a belief in human rights and to a large extent LGBT rights. Therefore support for LGBT rights was not only in line with the liberal values but also with the strategic interests of Cameron.

The implications of U.K’s pursuit for LGBT rights in Uganda

The secondary focus of this thesis are the implications of the U.K’s pursuit for LGBT rights in Uganda. Cameron’s motivation for the pursuit of LGBT rights might as well be partially motivated by a genuine belief in freedom and rights; however, it is clear that other motivations were at play. Such other motivations are problematic because this does not

enforce the best, possible approaches to the pursuit of LGBT rights in other cultures but rather approaches that will serve the nation. A prime example of this is the move for aid conditionality.

The concept of aid conditionality received mixed reactions. Whereas some viewed the move as a strong stance against homophobia, others were more sceptical about the decision to make aid conditional. Some critiques even point out, how aid conditionality was used as “a neoliberal intervention that aims to promote an ‘imperative of self-optimization’” (Pambazuka News 2011). Furthermore, as noted by Dunne (2012) “the decision to unilaterally impose aid conditionality, without considering the impact it will have on advocacy in affected countries, fails to appreciate the sensitivity of sexual politics in many parts of the Commonwealth and shows that Cameron is out of touch with the lived experiences of the very people he is purporting to help” (67).

Following the announcement of aid conditionality, a pan-African statement was issued by a large number of civil society organizations and activists, noting: “while the intention may well be to protect the rights of LGBTI people on the continent, the decision to cut aid disregards the role of the LGBTI and broader social justice movement on the continent and creates the real risk of a serious backlash against LGBTI people” (Pabazuka News 2011). Civil society organizations raised concern that this move would produce adverse outcomes for the LGBT communities since this might appear as if the LGBT communities blackmailing their societies to obtain rights (Seckinelgin 2018).

Using international aid in this way is a direct intervention in the legal structuring of societies. Even more so, does the aid conditionality reflect a moral evaluation which will judge whether a country is worthy of the United Kingdom’s aid (Seckinelgin 2018). The aid conditionality proposed by Cameron viewed from a post-colonial perspective highlights the troubling history of colonization and exploitation by Britain. The announcement of aid conditionality conjures “up the image of an old colonial master still seeking to place himself above his former subjects. By so openly holding the purse strings over the heads of its former colonies, the U.K. government has laid bare the power imbalance that persists between it and other Commonwealth nations” (Dunne 2012: 67). This reflects the power positions of both the donor and recipients. Despite the motivation focused on furthering human rights, by cutting aid, Britain is more likely to further its own foreign and domestic policy as opposed to helping the country reach its human rights goals. Such efforts take place in similar dynamics

as the imposed laws pushed upon by Colonial Britain. In this light, Cameron is again pushing ‘foreign legal standards while refusing to consider national will or culture’ (Dunne 2012: 68).

The aid conditionality has been widely debated and by some is interpreted as a way for ‘Western’ powers to establish governance structures that seek to exploit and externally control weaker African states. Although such perceptions are highly pessimistic, it is worth exploring the power dynamics through which the pursuit of LGBT rights takes place. By making aid conditional, the U.K. “positions itself as the arbitrator to pass judgement on whether these countries have achieved acceptability at the international level or not” (Seckinelgin 2018: 7). As can be expected, the announcement was not received in favourable terms in Uganda. With the Ugandan Presidential advisor, Mr Nagenda pointing out how “Uganda is, if you remember, a sovereign state and we are tired of being given these lectures by people” (BBC 2011). It is interesting to highlight how Cameron domestically pushed against the Human Rights Act, seeing it as a ‘foreign imposition’ but is more than willing to interfere in the domestics of another nation.

Furthermore, does the dominant use of the LGBT language generate specific responses from African political leaders who often view the LGBT rights project in terms of a neo-colonial intervention. As Seckinelgin (2018) notes “African politicians simplify their positions on homosexuality and use it for domestic political interests, broadly to hold onto the power they have as defenders of Africanness against neo-colonialism.”(4). Such sentiments are further fuelled by the Western efforts of helping states such as Uganda achieve LGBT rights. Cameron was quoted noting how certain countries with which he was referring to Uganda, are on a journey. This journey, will according to Cameron, lead to the destination of embracing LGBT rights according to our Western understanding of these rights. However, post-colonial theory reminds us to be critical of such applications of knowledges born in the West and applied to their non-European subject (Seth 2013). Especially, by challenging the “arrogant, neo-imperial arguments of universality, and draw attention to the civilizational asymmetrical power relations embedded in the international discourse” (Donnelly 2007: 297)

Despite the public commitment to LGBT rights, can it be argued that the strategies under the Cameron government are not well-informed and localized approaches. Truly altruistic motives would focus more on achieving the goal of obtaining rights for *kuchus* in Uganda. Several LGBT activists have suggested other methods such as travel bans on ‘anti-gay’ politicians which would target the correct people, as opposed to the withholding of aid. A

statement such as aid conditionality is a visually strong move to show Britain's commitment to LGBT rights. However, it is not as much an effective method to further the rights of LGBT peoples (Dunne 2012; Rao 2020).

Conclusion

By highlighting how the U.K.'s pursuit of LGBT rights can be explained by multiple motivations, this analysis sought to demonstrate that the pursuit of LGBT rights is not as altruistic as it initially appears. Furthermore, by considering the fact that the pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda does not efficiently serve the local *kuchu*'s, Britain's commitment is even further brought into question. Through post-colonial theory, the Western conceptions of LGBT rights have been questioned and critiqued for its Eurocentrism. Additionally, the power dynamics of a Western state pursuing their idea of moral correctness through the embodiment of LGBT rights is problematic and reminds us of Britain's civilizing missions.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The pursuit of ‘universal’ LGBT rights is often viewed as a positive development. However, the less discussed perspective is how LGBT rights are used by ‘Western’ governments for motives that go beyond altruism. Therefore, this thesis focused on the question: *What are the motivations for the United Kingdom to pursue LGBT rights in Uganda?*

As this thesis has argued, LGBT rights are often pursued for motivations that go beyond philanthropy. Specifically, in the case of the United Kingdom, the pursuit of LGBT rights in Uganda is arguably motivated by several objectives. As the discourse analysis uncovered, the Cameron government was concerned with maintaining the liberal image of the United Kingdom. LGBT rights are a strategical tool to achieve this due to their high symbolic and political power. The leading role for Britain in human rights promotion gives Britain a sense of ‘moral’ power which is particularly highlighted in contradiction to ‘illiberal’ states. Post-colonial theory offered a critical lens through which this construction can be viewed. Pointing out how this dichotomy is created by the juxtaposition against the Other and how this Othering can be employed for political purposes. Furthermore, the atonement for Britain’s colonial past, which is at the root of many of the current homophobic legislations worldwide played a role in the U.K.’s pursuit for LGBT rights in Uganda. Other motivations uncovered during the discourse analysis included strategic motivations, where respect for human rights leads to a safer world for us all, including the U.K.

Besides the motivations related to the United Kingdom’s image abroad, is it arguable that the pursuit of LGBT rights was also motivated by Party interests. David Cameron was elected as leader of the Conservative Party due to his modernising agenda. The pursuit of LGBT rights is a ‘flagship’ modernisation policy area which contributed to diversifying the image of the Conservative Party. Pursuing LGBT rights can be argued to have taken place in similar dynamics as the focus on environmental issues. Additionally, the world is rapidly changing, and a belief in equal rights has become the norm in many societies. It is therefore crucial that political parties adapt and stay up-to-date with such developments. As Cameron, himself acknowledged, legalizing same-sex marriage in the United Kingdom was also a smart move for increasing the Party’s appeal. The focus on LGBT rights in Uganda can be perceived in a similar light, where the quest of equality is pursued beyond the U.K.’s boundaries.

The implications of this approach uncovers a discrepancy between the objectives of the British government versus the needs of the local LGBT community. Especially the move to

make aid conditional to respecting LGBT rights serves as a prime example. Although it should be noted that the threat from donor countries contributed to the rejection of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which of course is a positive achievement, the aid conditionality method was not received in favourable terms by many local activists. Even more so, this move was viewed by some as a neoliberal invention aimed at self-optimization. Indeed, such a visual move contributes to the U.K.'s image of a moral authority with the capacity of deciding which states adhere to their values and thus deserve their aid. This again has a colonial undertone, where the superior U.K. has the power over its subjects.

Furthermore, can the current efforts be viewed in neo-imperial terms where a 'Western' government is seeking to apply a specific set of rights to their non-Western subject. Through the post-colonial perspective, the current 'modernisation' efforts in which a government seeks to 'help' other states achieve such rights are viewed in highly critical terms. The pursuit of LGBT rights in other parts of the world is paired with questions of power and civilization and therefore requires a more sensitive approach. Even approaches with the best intentions, often fail to acknowledge the neo-colonial connotation that is tied to such pursuits. As the implications in Uganda demonstrated, the quest for LGBT rights is closely related to the colonial past and the current neo-colonial sentiment surrounding the pursuit of rights upon other cultures. Furthermore, do the values in society in combination with both media and politics play an influential role in shaping attitudes towards the LGBT situation. All these elements need to be incorporated per country in order to establish the best methods for seeking protection for LGBT peoples.

Whereas this thesis, took a critical stance on the current efforts to pursue 'international' LGBT rights, the fact that governments even pay attention to these rights both domestically and abroad is a positive development. The fact that Museveni backed away from the Anti-Homosexuality Bill due to pressure, demonstrates the power that the international community can have. The critique is mainly on the current ways in which the rights are pursued which do not sufficiently incorporate the needs of the communities it claims to be helping and which mainly serves its state or Party interests. In general, the global pursuit for LGBT rights has been received in mostly favourable terms, however as this thesis has argued, a more critical perspective ought to be applied to these 'altruistic' endeavours. As more and more critical examinations are produced regarding the pursuit of 'international' LGBT rights, hopefully, governments will become more critical of their own (foreign) policies.

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