

## ‘Exogeny’ and ‘Silence’ in the Current Queer African Studies<sup>1</sup>

*Francisco Miguel*

UNICAMP

Bolsista de Pós-doutorado FAPESP - 2020/11927-1

[fpvmiguel@gmail.com](mailto:fpvmiguel@gmail.com)

### **Abstract:**

Since the establishment of Anglophone queer African studies in the 1990s, numerous outstanding ethnographies have been conducted in Africa by both African and non-African researchers. From this extensive pool of data collected over the past thirty years, two aspects frequently emerge among research: that the African continent is characterized by both the nativist discourse of the exogeny of sexual dissidence and the widespread silence on the subject. Leveraging the ethnographic experience with queer issues in two Lusophone African countries and an extensive literature review, Anonymous offers a comprehensive overview of this field and presents some original insights on these topics.

**Keywords:** Queer Africa; Lusophone Africa; Anthropology; LGBTQ; homophobia.

### **The ‘exogeny’ issue**

*When we watch some soap operas and we see some things ... [People think,] “Wow, what is it about such behavior? Oh, those are Whites, and this is something White people do. It’s not a Black thing.” Because ... They say homosexuality was imported, something that comes from Whites to Blacks. We hear this a lot. So, [people think] “Blacks must be doing it out of necessity because they want to make money” or for whatever reason.*

—Interview with Caetano, Maputo, June 21, 2018 (author’s translation).<sup>2</sup>

When I started my ethnographic research on homosexuality and LGBT activism in Cabo

---

<sup>1</sup> This text is the result of the lectures I delivered in 2023 at the Seminar Series on Studies in National and International Development at Queen's University and the *Quartas da Antropologia* seminars at UNICAMP. I thank the audiences at both universities for their generous and valuable feedback.

<sup>2</sup> I use pseudonyms for all my interlocutors to maintain their privacy.

Verde for my master's degree (Anonymous, 2016), and then later when, inspired by the work of Tom Boellstorff (2005), I resumed my readings for new research on the same topic in Mozambique, I found an insistent narrative in the social science literature stating that “homosexuality” was a practice or identity exogenous to the “African tradition.” In my fieldwork, I heard this numerous times, as also noted in the epigraph above from a Mozambican gay interlocutor of mine. Kapya Kaoma (2009), a Zambian Anglican priest who supports LGBT rights, observed the same narrative (13), despite empirical evidence to the contrary provided in several studies (Evans Pritchard 1970; Murray and Roscoe 1998). Moreover, Kwame Otu (2021) has observed that “in spite of the existence of such studies, arguments around homosexuality and its un-Africanness still proliferate extensively in both social and cyberspaces” (11).

In analyzing documentaries by Roger Williams on the issue (for example, *Gospel of Intolerance* and *God Loves Uganda*)<sup>3</sup> as well as the research report by Kapya Kaoma (2009), it becomes clear that Kaoma's main point is that the culture wars in the US have become globalized. In other words, North American conservative clergy (who form minority groups within the main Anglican currents) began to seek political legitimacy in Africa in the 1990s by mobilizing African religious leaders and focusing on the issue of moralizing sexuality. This occurred, as Kaoma describes it, because North American Anglican churches had started ordaining homosexual priests as well as celebrating and promoting same-sex marriages. That would have caused a schism within the church. Thus, theological and political disputes generated by the issue of “homosexuality” within American Christian denominations reached Africa through missions led by American conservatives. They would have found the theme of “homosexuality” to be an opportunity for their domestic political rise (Kaoma 2009, 19).

Analyzing these and other works has called my attention to the fact that those who support Kaoma's (2009) thesis have a hard time explaining why hate speech against homosexuality in Africa is so widespread.<sup>4</sup> This is the case despite their willingness to

---

<sup>3</sup> Roger Ross Williams, 2013, “Gospel of Intolerance,” *New York Times*, January 23, 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/23/opinion/gospel-of-intolerance.html>; *God Loves Uganda*, directed by Roger Ross Williams (United States: Full Credit Productions and Motto Pictures, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> One should keep in mind, however, that when Kaoma (2009) refers to Africa, he, in fact, has only three African countries in mind as a reference (Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya)—and he does so for reasons that he himself lists (2). In any case, according to Amnesty International (2013), in 2013 at least thirty-eight African countries criminalized homosexuality and four of them applied death sentences. Since then, the situation has not changed much.

identify and highlight contemporary actors behind the persecution of LGBT people. Such authors only go so far as concluding that the institutionalization of homophobia is to be blamed on colonialism and postcolonialism (Langa 2018; Asante 2022), due to not only the past European imposition of Christianity, but also the current Western political and economic impositions in Africa (Abbas and Ekine 2013; Broqua 2021)<sup>5</sup>. In my view, along with other authors such as, von Hesse (2019, 598), Garrido (2020)<sup>6</sup> and Rao (2020, 33), although true, neither conclusion is enough to explain the wide dissemination of “homophobia” across the continent, or rather the insistent local narrative of the exogeny of homosexuality (Kaoma 2009, 22).<sup>7</sup>

Kopano Ratele (2014) suggests that the outbreak of homophobia on the continent is one of the responses of ordinary African men who, while living in the postcolonial and neoliberal context, find themselves unable to participate in traditionally male roles. Such a “masculinity crisis” based explanation (Uchendu 2008, Edwards and Epprecht 2020) seems quite plausible to me, although the term has gained powerful criticism (Connell 1998). Other researchers do not blame homophobia solely on colonialism (Otu 2021, 11), with some suggesting that the customary laws of some African peoples punished homosexuality even before colonial laws came into being (Penwill 1951, as cited in Santos and Waites 2019, 22; Tabengwa and Waites 2020). Henri Junod (1927a), a turn-of-the-century pastor and anthropologist, told the story of a Shangaan man who would have been punished, if not by local laws, by his wife’s family, when he paid a bridewealth to have his brother-in-law as a wife in the South African mines (494). But according to the data available, native pre-colonial penalties for homosexual practices really do appear to be an exception.

I suggest that for a better understanding of the growing homophobia in Africa since the

---

<sup>5</sup> Gaurav Desai (2001) offers a brilliant demonstration of how post-colonial African fiction literature has read local homoeroticism through the lens of compulsory heterosexuality.

<sup>6</sup> Garrido provides some interesting examples: "In other African countries, colonial legacies are not the explanatory mechanism for criminalizing homosexuality or homophobic political discourse. Take the case of Equatorial Guinea under Spanish colonial rule. The Penal Code from the Franco era, still in force in the country, is silent on regulating these issues. However, the dominant political discourse of President Obiang is manifestly homophobic. The country is discussing a bill that could criminalize homosexuality (Carlos, 2020). States that were never under colonial rules, such as Ethiopia and Liberia, but that criminalize consensual sexual relations between adults of the same sex are also exceptions to criminalization based on or justified by colonial legislation (Bertolt, 2019)." (Garrido 2020, 143)"

<sup>7</sup> For some criticism of the term “homophobia,” see the work by Klinken and Chitando (2016), Mathisen (2018), and Freude and Waites (2022).

1990s, derived from this overall view on exogeneity of homosexuality, it is essential to understand the colonial history and cultural premises of each culture being studied, as suggested by Sadgrove et al. (2012) and Epprecht (2004). It is also essential to take native speeches seriously—not only from those in leading political and religious positions, as is usually done by scholars, but also from regular individuals who are not merely repeating them thoughtlessly, but possibly confronting the empirical data of their daily lives and updating their opinions. Some authors have taken this path and thus have brought to light a universe that contains many more variables that can contribute to explaining this issue (Epprecht 2004, 183).<sup>8</sup>

In my own field research in Mozambique, I found out that some of the possible responses to this perception of homosexuality as exogenous to the continent have to do with the way in which the Mozambican press have reported on the matter (Anonymous, 2023a), the history of the emergence of the local homosexual movement (Anonymous, 2021a), and the supposed absence of terms in local languages (Anonymous, 2021b). But an even more important contribution that the Mozambican case makes to the international debate on so-called “African homophobia” is that the homosexuality-is-UnAfrican narratives do not always or necessarily translate into a picture of generalized homophobic violence (Anonymous, 2023b).

In 2005, the Brazilian anthropologist Luiz Mott was committed to demonstrating to the Lusophone audience that the exogeneity of homosexuality in Africa was a problem of greater historical depth and was nothing more than a “myth.”<sup>9</sup> As Mott (2005) argued,

Officially, the English historian Edward Gibbon was the first to assert, in 1781, the non-existence of homosexuality in Africa (in his work *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*): “I believe, and hope, that the negroes, in their

---

<sup>8</sup> As for the case of Zimbabwe, Epprecht (2004), after a thorough analysis, summarizes and lists the reasons for this: pre-modern transphobia; Christian missionary propaganda; structural changes brought about by racist capitalism (in particular, the new work regimes in mining); the Western media; and imported fetishes of previously non-sexual parts of the body. In a more recent piece, in which they sought to explore the theme of same-sex relations from its intersection with involuntary servitude, Andam and Epprecht (2019) added one more possible reason: “The long history of slavery, servitude, and the same sex relations makes it difficult for many Africans to imagine same-sex sexuality as potentially loving, equal, and deserving of human rights protections” (843).

<sup>9</sup> For Robert Aldrich (2020), “the Brazilian scholar Luiz Mott, in particular, should be credited for pioneering work in charting same-sex cultures, both indigenous and colonial, in the Lusophone Atlantic” (2).

own country, are exempt from this moral pestilence.” (9; author’s translation)

However, Mott (2005), like Murray and Roscoe (1998) and other scholars, operates within a basically essentialist frame,<sup>10</sup> and he does not relativize or problematize (neither diachronically nor synchronically) categories such as “homosexuality” and its correlates (“sodomites,” “fanchonos,” etc.).<sup>11</sup> Mott (2005) demonstrates that such a “myth” had in fact been known for at least a century (10). He does so by referring to Portuguese Holy Office proceedings pertaining to two cases in the territory of the Cabo Verde archipelago. Mott also quotes yet another case from the beginning of the twentieth century—the account of Henri Junod, the aforementioned Swiss pastor and anthropologist, on the phenomenon of “Greek heathenism” among Indigenous people in the Maputo region, in the then colony of Mozambique. Junod (1927a) wrote:

Greek heathenism knew this refinement of immorality and indulged in it, but Bantu heathenism, whatever may be its corruption, never dreamed of it. Even today, though it is said to have penetrated into some parts, as in Maputju country, the Native kraal feels a real abhorrence of it (494).

Mott (2005) deals with two more cases pertaining to such a myth, which both acknowledge the existence of homoeroticism among Africans, but claim the Arabs are

---

<sup>10</sup> To be fair, Murray at one point explicitly criticizes social constructivists, who for the sake of a certain “postmodernist nihilism,” will argue that no one can either know anything or compare anything anymore (see Murray and Roscoe 1998, 284). I should mention that my own work falls somewhere between what Adeagbo and Naidoo (2020, 5) have called “essentialist theory” and “social constructionism.” I’d rather describe my own approach as “moderate social constructionism” because even if sexual orientation and the very deployment of sexuality were socially invented, homosexual desire itself seems to be innate and to precede culture. I argued along these lines in Anonymous 2021b, where I carefully analyze the narratives and the languages/wording of my Mozambican interlocutors. However, I have made this choice not only based on empirical evidence, but also for theoretical–political reasons. In the same way a narrow essentialist theory can lead to ethnocentrism and epistemicide, a narrow social constructionist theory can lead to genocidal political proposals such as those of “healing” and “reversing” homosexuality, or annihilating those who desire people of the same sex. Finally, aspects of both theories make the comparative enterprise possible.

<sup>11</sup> In one of his texts, Mott (2005) sees “flashes of identity” (20) in European and African historical figures who, even in the sixteenth century, either saw themselves as being of the opposite gender (regarding the sex they were born with) or were repeatedly caught for taking part in sodomy by the Holy Inquisition—which would demonstrate a persistence of their homoerotic desires and acts and, consequently, a type of homosexual identity. That is, such an identity existed long before the nineteenth century, contrary to what Foucault (1978) argued. As for the Portuguese Inquisition data, regarding the “fanchonos” dance in sixteenth-century Lisbon, it is indeed hard to deny the existence of “flashes of identity” among those Portuguese men and even among the enslaved Africans, as seen in the historical records. I argue, however, that this does not allow one to claim that homosexuality (as it was modernly conceived in the nineteenth century) is universal or that homoerotic desire has always been tamed into a specific identity—in fact, homoerotic desire is still in the process of being reinvented and/or updated (Bleys 1995, 82).

the source of it. He writes:

Another version of this myth does acknowledge the presence of homoeroticism amongst African populations since at least the mid-nineteenth century, but attributes the origin and dissemination of it on the Black continent to the Arab slave traders, to the Turks, or to Islamized Africans. The Sudanese blamed Turkish pirates for the expansion of this “vice” (1848), while Eastern Bantu groups, in their turn, blamed the Nubians for the same evil (1885) (11; author’s translation).

Regarding European ethnographic discourses on Africa, Rudi Bleys (1995, 125) found a merely occasional interest in homoeroticism. Mott (2005) blamed Africanist anthropologists, who, due to the Victorian morality of their times, failed to recognize the existence of homoeroticism or simply denied it.<sup>12</sup> Other authors, such as Lyons and Lyons (2004, 11) and Adeagbo and Naidoo (2020, 3) would agree with Mott’s argument, emphasizing the delicate moment that anthropology was going through at the turn of the twentieth century. Back then, anthropology was in search of becoming a “legitimate discipline” and a “genuine science,” with the aim of being able to be institutionalized in universities. Researching homosexuality would have supposedly undermined this project.

Moving away from simplistic conclusions that merely point to the “invention” of homosexuality’s exogeny in Africa by foreign researchers (Chipenembe 2018, 23), I propose a third and complementary explanation. Inspired by the apparent lack of a conscious interest I found in the Mozambican media of the 1980s on the topic of local homosexuality (Anonymous, 2023a), I suggest that for most anthropologists of the Victorian period and even in the immediate post-Victorian period, native homosexuality

---

<sup>12</sup> Historian Marc Epprecht (2004) goes along the same lines, affirming that “even self-consciously gay authors have contributed to the stereotype of a homo-free Africa” (8). Epprecht also adds, based on Rudi Bleys’ (1995) ideas, that one of the possible reasons for this would have been to prepare the groundwork for British, French, and German public opinion to accept the abolition of the slave trade in Africa by arguing that “decent” Africans were being enslaved by Arab and Portuguese sodomites (Epprecht 2004, 137). Notably, Bleys (1995) has demonstrated that Orientalist scholars have often preferred to be silent in the face of empirical evidence of homoeroticism, in order to preserve a good image of Arab culture (113–14). Some ethnographers have also denied or minimized native homosexuality in their research contexts out of a fear of endorsing racist discourses that argue that there was a connection between the incivility of the “savages” and the presence of such “vices” among them (see Lyons and Lyons 2004, 238). The situation was the same for the first ethnographers who did research in the Afro-Brazilian world. In their case, in attempting to celebrate Candomblé cults in Brazil, they feared that the people’s intimate relationship with homosexuality could throw Afro-Brazilian culture into a bad light (Fry 1982).

practices might simply not have been of curiosity at all—especially for those (heterosexual) anthropologists who lacked anxiety around homosexual subjectivation. And even in the case of those who had such anxieties themselves (like Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead), an internalized homophobia could have competed with these feelings (Lyons and Lyons 2004, 254). In addition, the case of Evans-Pritchard (1970) is exemplary. A very well-known anthropologist, Evans-Pritchard collected oral memory data on what he called “sexual inversion” among the Azande, claimed he had never himself observed homosexual practices among them.

Thus, beyond the issue of the real Puritanism that indeed existed (Bleys 1995, 219),<sup>13</sup> it is clear that in order to perceive homoeroticism, one should be both trained and interested in seeing it—especially in cultural contexts where it is not only not ritualized, but also silenced by the natives themselves (Lyons and Lyons 2004, 71), the latter of which causes what Chantal Zabus (2013) called “epistemic blindness” (26). Matebeni and Pereira (2014) claim that “there are not enough images of gender transgressive Africans” and that “this lack of imagery restricts our own thinking and language of what we see as gender non-conformity” (8).<sup>14</sup> One should bear in mind that, more contemporaneously, even Ana Loforte (2000), a Mozambican anthropologist interested in gender issues, explicitly says that “we have not found data that can support the existence of female or male homosexuality in the place of study” (205; author’s translation). But what if homosexual cultures in Africa, as it was in many other places until very recently were actually experienced in the form of secret societies?<sup>15</sup>

But returning to Mott’s (2005) arguments, he concludes with what would be the other prejudices behind such exogeny myths:

Behind the myth of the absence of homoeroticism (in pre-colonial Africa) lie two other myths that are no less prejudiced: the naturalization of Black sexuality (which, driven by its animalistic instinct, would, if left alone, ignore the unnatural vices of whites); and, secondly, the supposed physical superiority of the primitive

---

<sup>13</sup> An obvious illustration of these authors’ puritanism is the excuses Henri Junod was used to offering whenever he wrote about the Tsonga’s sexuality (e.g., Junod 1927b, 360) and his habit of writing about sexuality issues in the Latin language.

<sup>14</sup> Jack Goody (1997) argued that this lack of iconoclasm concerning sexuality in Africa was a product of oral traditions.

<sup>15</sup> See the Brazilian-Mexican movie *El baile de los 41* (2020), directed by David Pablos.

African, averse to the effemination that is characteristic of civilization (11; author's translation).

The decolonial criticisms of these racist gazes on Africa and Africans are already known in current scholarly knowledge. I agree with the decolonial critique, but I would like to re-insert an argument in this often-repetitive African Studies debate. Leaving the African context and moving to other regions of the world, there is a very widespread historical persistence globally, especially in the modern period, in terms of treating homosexuality as a phenomenon exogenous to one's own culture.<sup>16</sup> Daniel Borrillo (2010), an Italian-Argentine jurist who specializes in the theme, has claimed:

Confined to the role of the marginal and the eccentric, homosexuals are identified by the social norm as bizarre, strange and extravagant. And on the assumption that evil always comes from outside, in France, homosexuality was classified as the "Italian vice" or the "Greek vice", or rather as the "Arab custom"<sup>17</sup> or something "colonial". Like the Black, the Jew or any other foreigner, the homosexual is always the other, the different one, the one with whom any identification is unthinkable (13–14).

Regarding the Dutch colonial archives, Stoler (1995) shows us the same phenomenon: "When homosexuality is breached, it is always in the form of a deflected discourse, one about sodomitical Chinese plantation coolies, about degenerate subaltern European soldiers, never about respectable Dutch men" (129). For Dutch colonizers, homosexuality was something introduced by Spanish Catholicism, while for Spaniards it was a Moorish thing (Epprecht 2004, 53).

Returning to the African continent, I would like to call attention to the following examples that illustrate this notion of homosexuality as only being practiced by others. Otu, in an article published in 2021, denounces a poster hung on one of the pillars at the arrival hall of the Kotoka International Airport, on which there is a prohibition in print that warns arrivals against engaging in sexually aberrant behavior (8). For a Senegalese journalist,

---

<sup>16</sup> I advanced this argument in a recent forum that reflected on the twenty-year anniversary of the publication of *Boy Wives and Female Husbands* (Anonymous, 2019). At the time, I did not know that McAllister (2013, 94) had already pointed to this issue six years earlier, and Pincheon (2000, 46), nineteen years earlier.

<sup>17</sup> If the French and others attributed the custom to the Arabs, the latter, in turn, claimed that homoeroticism had become common due to the influence of the Persians (Bleys 1995, 114).



as Mbaye (2021) reports, one should blame a Guinean woman for the “Lesbians of Grand-Yoff,” a scandal involving a sex tape of the woman and two Senegalese women (11). For a Zimbabwean interviewed by Epprecht (2004), homosexuality was something that predominated among the natives of Malawi and Mozambique (122). And while in socialist Mozambique homosexuality was called a “bourgeois vice” (Ba Ka Khosa 2013, 61), in Brazil during the right-wing civil–military dictatorship (Quinalha 2018, 25) and in the United States during 1980s McCarthyism (Warner 2002), it was considered a communist attack on Christian–Western values. Therefore, the idea of homosexuality as exogenous to one’s own culture is neither new nor an exclusively African phenomenon.<sup>18</sup> But, this discourse has in each place its historical and cultural specificities, as in Mozambique (Anonymous, 2019).

More contemporaneously, the denial of “homosexuality” in Africa has been explained by the social sciences (Kaoma 2009; Rea 2021), as coming from some recent and powerful North American neo-Pentecostal Christian influences on the continent.<sup>19</sup> And that being so, the resonance of this discourse in Africa took place not due to some African “innate homophobia,” but rather due to the symbolic association between “homosexuality” and a latent criticism of the West.<sup>20</sup> However, the origins of the denial of homosexuality in Africa could be much wider and older than neo-Pentecostal religious strife. Such origins could be traced both to a certain disregard for the theme—as well as a consequent general ignorance about it—and to racist colonial gazes on African bodies.

There is still a third elaboration on the theme that confirms both the influence of the West in the new (conflicting) conformations of homosexuality in Africa and the historical and colonial origins of these modern moral panics on the continent. However, it raises doubts about the universality of “homosexual” as a category, and demonstrates in a more careful manner the exogeneity of the homosexual subject—or the homosexual identity. Researchers particularly connected to this trend, such as Kendall (1998), O’Mara (2013), and Tushabe (2013; 2017), have revived a debate that destabilizes the current conceptual framework

---

<sup>18</sup> For a reflection on relationships between homophobia and xenophobia, particularly in African countries, see Freude and Waites (2022).

<sup>19</sup> As for Lusophone Africa, we could point to the current influx of Brazilian churches and missions there, among others (see Mary 2002).

<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed analysis of homophobia outbreaks on the part of the media as well as African presidents in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, see the work of Awondo (2012), Mwikya (2013), Bompani and Brown (2014), Mbaye (2018; 2021), and Broqua (2021).

employed in the West to approach the issue.<sup>21</sup> According to these authors, there is evidence that in Africa there are indigenous ways of signifying certain practices that would have been mistakenly translated by Westerners as “homosexual.”

One such researcher is Tushabe wa Tushabe from Uganda, who is harshly critical of LGBT movements in Africa. According to this author, LGBT activism in several countries on the continent has been erroneously following the strategy of betting on the identities contained in its acronym, based on what would be an “epistemology of the closet” (Sedgwick 1990, as cited in Tushabe 2013, 153). Tushabe argues that such a paradigm being imported from the West corroborates the colonial attitude when it is employed to approach what are called “non-sex-crossing” sexualities in Africa. It does so by implying that a civilized sexual identity—the homosexual—is something with which one supposedly comes to terms at a certain point in life (“to come out of the closet”)—as if it were the linear, self-civilizing process of a supposedly universal gay subject (Tushabe 2013, 149). According to Tushabe, the homosexual identity (as opposed to heterosexual identity) was imposed by colonial empires in a way that was already ripe for criminalization and in such a manner that would not necessarily correspond to indigenous experiences. The author discloses the myth of *ebihindi*, as it was told to them during their childhood by their own grandmother. This myth seems to have inscribed the author with “non-sex-crossing” subjectivity within other premises:

I would like to proceed here with a myth of *ebihindi* that my grandmother told me when I was growing up as a way to explore the sense of making claim and making relation to global sexual identities. *Ebihindi* are people who transition from one form of being to another. In the village I was raised there was a tree called *omusisa* by the *akayanja* or swamp. The myth explains that at night *ebinhidi* would gather under the *omusisa* and make fire, dance, and change from female to male, to half female and half male, and to one whole of four parts consisting of one fourth of each. At dawn, *ebihindi* reverse their being and reintegrate themselves into community. The ethic of the myth is that there exist different possibilities of being

---

<sup>21</sup> Such a perception, however, is not entirely new. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the French physician and criminologist Emile Laurent (1991) observed the *sharimbavy* men among the Hova (in Madagascar), who shaved their bodies and wore women’s clothing, but did not engage in oral or anal sex with other men. Laurent then tried to fit them into the three categories in vogue at the time of his writing (“pederast,” “real invert,” and “male prostitute”), but he came to the conclusion that such a subject would not fit into European sexual taxonomy (as cited in Bleys 1995, 170–71).

and that we ought to respect the existence of this difference. There is also a notion that people *know* and this *knowing* requires no finger pointing or public discussion. (Tushabe 2013, 152; emphasis original)<sup>22</sup>

Tushabe certainly has a powerful argument that comes from an equally powerful empirical case, yet fails to answer why, after all, the “closet paradigm” tends to make sense to so many Africans nowadays or why “the closet framework” has “proliferated” (147). At any rate, the “mistranslation” of the contexts such as those demonstrated in the myth would indeed have social and political consequences. According to Mack (2019), some authors have argued that

it is the imperative of identification imposed by the Gay International that endangers visibly effeminate or non passing practitioners of same-sex sexuality, and that prior to the Gay International’s interventions and the globalization of sexual identity categories there was no moral panic triggering homosexual witch hunts (at least nowhere near the same extent) (752).

And this is not conjecture. A Ghanaian interlocutor of the anthropologist Kwame Otu (2020) once stated: “Whenever I am walking in town, clearly the way I walk betrays my effeminacy. I did not use to be called names before. These days, with the entire gay stuff happening, with everybody talking about gay people, I am always jeered” (218). In Namibia, the anthropologist Robert Lorway (2015) registered the same from one of his interlocutors: “I have been very close to Ovambo guys. So they knew I was gay. But after the [Namibia president’s] hate speeches [against the homosexuality] I could see that they were starting to withdraw from me, moving away slowly but surely. Many are cousins to me, but they don’t want to be seen with me and go out with me clubbing like they use to” (33). The rise of homophobia after media scandals, it is important to remember, was also noted in the West too (Josephson 2020).

Massad’s (2007) concept of “Gay International,” however, also has its weaknesses.

---

<sup>22</sup> When I think of a certain Germanic ritual that took place amongst the Nahanarvali tribe (possibly related to—or a part of—the larger group called the Vandals) in the first century of the Christian Era, as described by Cardin (1984, 134), it strikes me that there is a similarity: a male priest dressed as a woman would gather other pagans in a forest to worship a pair of gods (who, as the Romans interpreted it, were Castor and Pollux).

According to Mack (2019),

restricting one's view of local sexual cultures in the Global South in terms of a "before" and "after" contact with the Gay International is problematic for two reasons: one, because it romanticizes a golden age of purity, authenticity, and isolation from cultural admixture; and two, because it presents the globalization of sexual identity categories as a kind of contagion. (752)

The "pre-colonial utopia", marked by a supposed "traditional sexual life" (Lorway 2015, 17) is sought both by African traditionalists who argue for the exogenousness of homosexuality and by those who see in the pre-colonial period a greater freedom for sexual dissent. African LGBTIQ+ people are thus at an impasse (McAllister 2013, 91). As Goltz et al. (2016) observed in Kenya, "while LGBTI Kenyans may find the symbolic resources of Western LGBTQ culture useful or adaptable in articulating their experiences and identities, the invocation of these same resources provides evidence for homophobic claims that such identities and experiences are un-African" (114–15). According to Desai (2001), "the question at this point, for most scholars, is not whether or not indigenous alternative sexual practices existed or continue to exist in Africa, but rather, how one understands their historical emergence, the conditions of (im)possibilities for identity formations based on these practices and in particular the relationship of these identities to racial and national identities." (156) This is why I argue that even if an "epistemic blindness to African marginal sexualities" (Zabus 2013, 26) has been empirically verified in some contexts, like in Mozambique, this does not mean that things cannot change. African queer subjects exist, and some of them even feel contemplated by an "identity politics" today (Spronk and Nyeck 2021, 393). Many of my interlocutors expressed feeling this way<sup>23</sup>.

### **When "Silence" Doesn't Necessarily Mean Oppression**

If the relativistic and inclusive ethics of the myth described by Tushabe (2013) cannot be generalized to the whole continent, it seems to be beyond any doubt that a properly "homosexual" identity does not necessarily stand out as the best translation in some

---

<sup>23</sup> So as some LGBT Namibians interviewed by Lorway (2015, 44-45)

African contexts. Furthermore, several African individuals who engage in homoerotic practices and have homo-affective feelings have, despite the “visibility” proclaimed by various local LGBT movements, defended the banner of maintaining a silence about it. As I wrote in my last book:

Among African intellectuals, activists and artists interested in these debates, however, this policy pursued by the LGBT movement (of giving visibility to subjects with dissident sexualities) is not a peaceful point. Kenya film producer, writer, and sexual rights activist Kegendu Murungi (2013, 239) argues that Africans’ autonomy must necessarily include respecting the secrecy of each individual regarding his or her sexuality. According to Nigerian feminist writer Sokari Ekine (2013, 85), in the last ten years something has changed in her country regarding the old paradigm of silence (now replaced with visibility). This, she argues, has caused serious problems. According to feminist lawyer Sibongile Ndashe (2013, 155), the “don’t ask, don’t tell” formulation is still the only form of activism in many African countries, where people know that there are LGBTI people in their communities, but this is not an issue to be discussed. (Anonymous, 2016; author’s translation)

Therefore, several intellectuals, researchers, and activists in and from Africa have repeatedly pointed out that “silence” and “discretion” are two categories that seem to be central when it comes to (homo)sexuality on the continent (see, among others, Epprecht 2013; Gaudio 2009; Dankwa 2009; Kendall 1998; Nyanzi 2013; Oduro and Miedema 2020)<sup>24</sup>. According to some researchers such as O’Mara (2013, 165–66) and Tushabe (2013, 149), if silence can sometimes operate within a Western “epistemology of the closet” as a strategy to escape oppression, amongst some African groups it can actually be the norm and not necessarily something oppressive.<sup>25</sup> In Mozambique, researchers such as Bagnol (1996), Souza (2015), Chipenembe (2018), Mugabe (2019), as well as myself (Anonymous, 2016) have observed the same silence. However, these researchers have not always corroborated its effectiveness for the full citizenship of Mozambican LGBT people—especially in the case of transgender people, who have the most explicit

---

<sup>24</sup> Other authors, such as Jack Goody (1997) and David Webster (2009), in focusing their research on African arts, discover additional possibilities for public discourses on sexuality.

<sup>25</sup> Lobo and Miguel (2015) have already demonstrated how discretion is the norm in Cabo Verde—even for heterosexual couples, who also avoid making public displays of affection.

empirical evidence of their non-hegemonic gender identity and sexuality inscribed onto their very bodies. As Nelson Mugabe (2019) writes, “in my view, discretion and silence is a privilege accessible only to those who manage to manipulate their sexual and gender identities. Choosing invisibility is not available to all sexual and gender dissenting subjects in Mozambique” (103).

Signe Arnfred (2004, as cited in Dankwa 2009, 193) points out that there are different types of silence and claims that discretion prevents mostly discursive acts, rather than sexual practices. However, even within this group of authors from and within Africa, I have not found a reflection on silence in relation to sexuality (and more specifically, homosexuality) that avoided the interpretative keys of either silence-as-a-strategy (of survival) and/or silence-as-an-ontology. If the first seems to respond to an originally Western phenomenon, the second does not seem to respond to the African dynamic reality either. I agree with Peter Geschiere (2012, 144; 2017) that the anthropological concept of “ontology” would be dangerous in African contexts, where politics and history are fundamental elements of social change<sup>26</sup>. I would like to have understood such a defense in the hands of the heralds of the ontological turn in anthropology—who see such a turn as a “revolutionary” policy (Holbraad, Pedersen, and Viveiros de Castro 2019) and not as a strategy for maintaining ethnographic authority (Hansen 2015). However, I am afraid that their language games are not pedagogical enough. At any rate, what bothers me about these ontological readings is that they often erase the political dimension of the internal dispute over the categories in question. Annemarie Mol (1999) has a promising approach for pondering ontological disputes, but I agree with Nyeck (2021) that “African queerness is not satisfied with simple ontological pursuits. And beyond functional imperatives, it remains appreciative of negotiation with history, including the history of postcolonial queer negations and possible futures in the now” (11).

That’s why it seems to me that a third explanation of a historical and anthropological character is essential. The silence on homosexuality in African societies is not only about escaping oppression, nor is it only the result of an “African” ontology (as white supremacists and certain Afrocentrists would have it). This manner of framing the issue

---

<sup>26</sup> Anthropologist Glick Schiller (in Allen & Jobson, 2016, 141) is even more critical: “The ontological turn in anthropology, which reduces these struggles to accounts of the timeless radical alterity of alternative cosmologies, contributes to the narratives of essentialized difference that not only mask but are central to the extraction of value within processes of dispossession.”

actually reifies an allegedly pre-existing and static Black African culture.<sup>27</sup> Inspired by Jack Goody (1997), I suggest that up to the colonial invasions, this silence seems to have been the result of civilizational and historical negotiations (the origin of which is impossible to define) that allocated homoerotic practices and feelings into the sphere of intimacy, which also often made them invisible in terms of the linguistic record, as Bleys showed (1995, 168). Colonialism was certainly a force complementary to this silencing, despite contributing, with its anti-homosexuality repression laws, to implementing the “deployment of sexuality” in Africa.<sup>28</sup> I am in agreement with Nyeck (2021) that such practices and identities are not imprisoned in “African” assumptions and are therefore fully subject to transformation once Africans want and fight for it. And some of them have been fighting for it, albeit with different strategies. Some authors have highlighted the so-called “silent revolution” that has occurred on the African continent in recent decades with regard to the transformation of sexual practices and the emergence (and visibility) of new sexual identities (Gilroy 1995; Ekine 2013; Mbembe 2020).

It is in this way that we can better explain why “silence-as-strategy” and “don’t ask don’t tell” have long been so appealing, for both those who govern and the governed, in the current scenario of so many persecutions of LGBT subjects on the continent. At the same time, we can envisage changes and reconciliations that do not place such subjects at risk of not enjoying “livable lives” (Butler 2004).

In Mozambique, the National Director of Human Rights and Citizenship (a secretariat linked to the Mozambican Ministry of Justice) said some years ago that it was better not to touch on the LGBT issue so that Mozambique would not run the risk of “becoming Uganda” (interview with Bambina, Maputo, July 27, 2018). That is, he assumed that interrupting the silence on the topic could lead to the transformation of an allegedly current peaceful scenario—pertaining to homosexuality in the country—into a scenario

---

<sup>27</sup> For some critiques of this, see Bussotti and Tembe (2014) and Gilroy (1995).

<sup>28</sup> Currier and Migraine-George (2016) agree that “Foucault’s ‘repressive hypothesis’ can therefore be seen as applicable to modern African contexts as well” (288). And despite the strong criticisms against Foucault’s neglect of the colonial role in the production of metropolitan ideologies, and his chronological errors, Stoler (1995) states that “the distinctions he draws between deployments of alliance and sexuality make some sense when applied to the colonial society of the Dutch East Indies.” (42). Lorway’s (2015) book, which seems to criticize the application of Foucault’s theory in the African context, competently demonstrates the post-colonial process of implementing the “deployment of sexuality” through an LGBT non-governmental organization in Namibia.

of generalized social and state persecution.<sup>29</sup> However, it is critical to advance that nowadays, silencing the people's wishes for the visibility presupposed in a "closet paradigm" (Tushabe 2013) no longer seems possible—at least in Mozambique. In other words, I am not sure whether it is still possible to convince part of the LGBT people in Mozambique that the "closet paradigm" or visibility is not a good framework or guideline because they have a colonial origin. At this point in history, such paradigms and guidelines are already incorporated into the lives of many postcolonial subjects. And we also need to be aware of the kind of paternalistic approach expressed in the secretary's speech. The dilemma of the paternalistic approach, for both the silence and visibility strategies, is that it can genuinely seek to protect/save people from the violence they suffer, but in doing so, it can deny the very possibility of existence for them on their own terms, inflicting even more violence. This is an important warning for us academics and activists as well.

## References

- Abbas, Hakima, and Sokari Ekine. 2013. "Introduction." In *Queer African Reader*, edited by Hakima Abbas and Sokari Ekine, 454. Dakar: Pambazuka Press.
- Adeagbo, Oluwafemi, and Kammila Naidoo. 2020. "Africa's LGBT Movement and Interest Groups." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, edited by Donald P. Haider-Markel. Oxford University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1271>.
- Aldrich, Robert. 2020. "Historical Views of Homosexuality: European Colonialism." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, edited by Donald P. Haider-Merkel. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1246>.
- Allen, Jafari Sinclair, and Ryan Cecil Jobson. 2016. "The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology since the Eighties." *Current Anthropology* 57 (2): 129–48. <https://doi.org/10.1086/685502>.
- Andam, Kuukuwa, and Marc Epprecht. 2019. "Involuntary Servitude and Same-Sex Sexuality in Africa." In *Global Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) History*, 840–43. Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Asante, Godfried. 2022. "Unexpected Intimacies: Exploring Sasso Relationality in Postcolonial Ghana." *Journal of Homosexuality* 70 (1): 53–70.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2022.2121193>.

---

<sup>29</sup> I reflected on the supposed "tolerance" of Mozambique regarding homosexuality in my latest article (Author)



Awondo, Patrick. 2012. “Médias, politique et homosexualité au Cameroun. Retour sur la construction d’une controverse.” *Politique africaine* 126 (2): 69–85.

<https://doi.org/10.3917/polaf.126.0069>.

Bagnol, Brigitte. 1996. “Diagnóstico Da Orientação Sexual Em Maputo e Nampula.” Maputo.

Ba Ka Khosa, Ungulani. 2013. *Entre as Memórias Silenciadas*. Maputo: Alcance Editores.

Bleys, Rudi. 1995. *The Geography of Perversion: Male-to-Male Sexual Behavior Outside the West and Ethnographic Imagination, 1750-1918*. New York: New York University Press.

Boellstorff, Tom. 2005. *The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bompani, Barbara, and S. Terreni Brown. 2014. “A ‘Religious Revolution’? Print Media, Sexuality, and Religious Discourse in Uganda.” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 9 (1): 110–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2014.987507>.

Borrillo, Daniel. 2010. *Homofobia: História e Crítica de Um Preconceito*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica.

Broqua, Christophe. 2021. “Homosexuality in Francophone West Africa: The International Context of Local Controversies.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 923–43. Oxford University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1316>.

Bussotti, Luca, and A. Tembe. 2014. “A Homossexualidade Na Conceção Afrocentrista de Molefi Kete Asante: Entre Libertação e Opressão.” *Revista Ártemis* 17 (1): 15–24. <https://doi.org/10.15668/1807-8214/artemis.v17n1p15-24>.

Butler, Judith. 2004. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.126.1.78>.

Cardín, Alberto. 1984. *Guerreros, Chamanes y Travestís: Indicios de Homossexualidad Entre Los Exóticos*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores.

Chipenembe, Maria Judite Mario. 2018. “Sexual Rights Activism in Mozambique A Qualitative Case Study of Civil Society Organisations and Experiences of ‘Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Persons.’” Universiteit Gent.

Connell, Raewyn W. (2015) *Masculinities*. Polity.

Currier, Ashley, and Thérèse Migraine-George. 2016. “Queer Studies / African Studies: An (Im)Possible Transaction?” *Glq* 22 (2): 281–305. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-3428783>.

Dankwa, Serena Owusua. 2009. “‘It’s a Silent Trade’: Female Same-Sex Intimacies in Post-Colonial Ghana.” *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 17 (3): 192–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740903117208>.

Desai, Gaurav. 2001. “Out in Africa.” In *Post-Colonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections*, edited by John C. Hawley, 139–64. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Edwards, Iain, and Marc Epprecht. 2020. *Working Class Homosexuality in South African History*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Ekine, Sokari. 2013. "Contesting Narratives of Queer Africa." In *Queer African Reader*, edited by Hakima Abbas and Sokari Ekine, 78–91. Dakar: Pambazuka Press.
- Epprecht, Marc. 2004. *Hungochani: The History Of A Dissident Sexuality In Southern Africa*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press
- Epprecht, Marc. 2013. *Sexuality and Social Justice in Africa: Rethinking Homophobia and Forging Resistance*. London: Zed Books.
- Epprecht, Marc, Stephen O. Murray, Kuukuwa Andam, Francisco Miguel, Aminata Cécile Mbaye, and Rudolf P. Gaudio. 2019. "Boy Wives, Female Husbands Twenty Years on: Reflections on Scholarly Activism and the Struggle for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression Rights in Africa." *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 52 (3): 349–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2018.1546604>.
- Evans-Pritchard, Edward Evan. 1970. "Sexual Inversion among the Azande." *American Anthropologist* 6 (72): 1428–34.
- Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Freude, Leon, and Matthew Waites. 2022. "Analysing Homophobia, Xenophobia and Sexual Nationalisms in Africa: Comparing Quantitative Attitudes Data to Reveal Societal Differences." *Current Sociology*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001139212211078045>.
- Fry, Peter. 1982. *Para Inglês Ver: Identidade e Política Na Cultura Brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores.
- Garrido, Rui André Lima Gonçalves da Silva. 2020. "Cidadania, Direitos Humanos e Minorias Sexuais Na África Lusófona." Instituto Universitário de Lisboa.
- Gaudio, Rudolf P. 2009. *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an African Islamic City*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Geschiere, Peter. 2012. *Política de La Pertenencia: Brujería, Autoctonía e Intimidación*. México: FCE.
- Geschiere, Peter. 2017. "A 'Vortex of Identities': Freemasonry, Witchcraft, and Postcolonial Homophobia." *African Studies Review* 60 (2): 7–35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.52>.
- Gilroy, Paul. 1995. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Goltz, Dustin Bradley, Jason Zingsheim, Teresa Mastin, and Alexandra G. Murphy. 2016. "Discursive Negotiations of Kenyan LGBTI Identities: Cautions in Cultural Humility." *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication* 9 (2): 104–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17513057.2016.1154182>.
- Goody, Jack. 1997. *Representations and Contradictions: Ambivalence Towards Images, Theatre, Fiction, Relics and Sexuality*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

- Hansen, Thomas. 2015. "On Anthropologists and Other Cultural Interpreters." In *Anthropology Now and Next: Essays in Honor of Ulf Hannerz*, edited by Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Christina Garsten, and Shalini Randeria. Berghahn Books..
- Hesse, Hermann W. von. 2019. "Gender, Flexible Systems, in Africa." In *Global Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) History*, 594–99. Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Holbraad, Martin, Morten Axel Pedersen, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro. 2019. "A Política Da Ontologia: Posições Antropológicas." *Ayé: Revista de Antropologia* 1 (1): 95–102.
- Josephson, Jyl. 2020. "Theoretical Perspectives on LGBTQ Movements." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, edited by Donald P. Haider-Markel. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1303>.
- Junod, Henry. 1927a. *Life of a South African Tribe I. The Social Life*. London: Macmillan and co.
- Junod, Henry. 1927b. *The Life of a South African Tribe II. Mental Life*. Macmillan and co.
- Kaoma, Kapyá. 2009. "Globalizing the Cultural Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia." Sommerville.
- Kendall, K. L. 1998. "'When a Woman Loves a Woman' in Lesotho: Love, Sex, and the (Western) Construction of Homophobia." In *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African Homosexualities*, 223–41. New York: Palgrave.
- Klinken, Adriaan van, and Ezra Chitando. 2016. *Public Religion and the Politics of Homosexuality in Africa*. Routledge.
- Langa, Ercílio Neves Brandão. 2018. "A Homossexualidade No Continente Africano: História, Colonização e Debates Contemporâneos." *Cadernos de África Contemporânea* 1 (2): 52–72.
- Lobo, Andréa de Souza, and Francisco Miguel. 2015. "'I Want to Marry in Cabo Verde': Reflections on Homosexual Conjuality in Contexts." *Vibrant: Virtual Brazilian Anthropology* 12 (1): 37–66. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1809-43412015v12n1p037>.
- Loforte, Ana Maria. 2000. *Género e Poder: Entre Os Tsonga de Moçambique*. Maputo: Promédia.
- Lorway, Robert. 2015. *Namibia's Rainbow Project: Gay Rights in an African Nation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Lyons, Andrew P., and Harriet .D. Lyons. 2004. *Irregular Connections: A History of Anthropology and Sexuality*. Edited by A.P. Lyons and H.D. Lyons. London: University of Nebraska Press
- Mary, André. 2002. "Brazilian Pentecostalism in Africa: The Kingdom of God's Abstract Universality." *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 42 (3): 463–78. <https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesaficaines.152>.
- Massad, Joseph Andoni. 2007. *Desiring Arabs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Matebeni, Zethu, and Jabu Pereira. 2014. "Preface." In *Reclaiming Afrikan: Queer Perspectives on Sexual and Gender Identities*, edited by Zethu Matebeni, 7–9. Athlone: Modjaji Books.

Mathisen, Ruben Berge. 2018. "A Postmaterialist Explanation for Homophobia in Africa: Multilevel Analysis of Attitudes Towards Homosexuals in 33 African Countries." University of Bergen.

Mbaye, Aminata Cécile. 2018. "Queer Political Subjectivities in Senegal: Gaining a Voice within New Religious Landscapes of Belonging." *Critical African Studies* 10 (3): 301–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21681392.2019.1610007>.

Mbaye, Aminata Cécile. 2021. "The Spectacle of the 'Other': Media Representations of Same-Sex Sexuality in Senegal." *Sexualities* 24 (1–2): 13–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460719893623>.

Mbembe, Achille. 2020. *Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization*. New York: Columbia University Press.

McAllister, John. 2013. "Tswanarising Global Gayness: The 'unAfrican' Argument, Western Gay Media Imagery, Local Responses and Gay Culture in Botswana." *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 15 (SUPPL1): 88–101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2012.742929>.

Miguel, Francisco. 2016. *Levam Má Bô: (Homo)Sexualidades Masculinas Em Um Arquipélago Africano*. 1st ed. Curitiba: Editora Prismas.

Miguel, Francisco. 2019. "Mariyapáxjis: Silêncio, Exogenia e Tolerância Nos Processos de Institucionalização Das Homossexualidades Masculinas No Sul de Moçambique." Tese de Doutorado. Programa de Pós-graduação em Antropologia Social. Universidade de Brasília.

Miguel, Francisco. 2021a. "Uma História Do Movimento LGBT Em Maputo." *Afro-Ásia* 64 (64): 320–62. <https://doi.org/10.9771/aa.v0i64.36387>.

Miguel, Francisco Paolo Vieira. 2021b. "Mariyapáxjis: Língua, Gênero e Homossexualidade Em Moçambique." *Mana* 27 (3): 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-49442021v27n3a204>.

Miguel, Francisco. 2023a. "'Exogenia' e 'Tolerância': O Duplo Papel Da Mídia Impressa Na Institucionalização Da Homossexualidade No Sul de Moçambique Pós-Colonial (1975-2007)." *Revista de Antropologia* 66: 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.11606/1678-9857.ra.2022.193086>.

Miguel, Francisco. 2023b. "Mozambican 'Tolerance' toward Homosexuality: Lusotropicalist Myth and Homonationalism." *Sexualities*, March, 136346072311600. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13634607231160054>.

Mol, A. (1999). Ontological Politics. A Word and Some Questions. *The Sociological Review*, 47(1\_suppl), 74-89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1999.tb03483.x>

Mott, Luiz. 2005. "Raízes Históricas Da Homossexualidade No Atlântico Lusófono Negro." *Afro-Ásia* 33 (2005): 9–33.

- Mugabe, Nelson André. 2019. “A Graça Da Desgraça: Socialidades e Processos de Engajamento No Universo LGBT Em Duas Experiências Etnográficas No Sul Global (Rio de Janeiro e Maputo).” Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro.
- Murray, Stephen O., and Will Roscoe. 1998. *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African Homosexualities*. Edited by Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe. New York: Palgrave.
- Murungi, Kagendo. 2013. “Small Axe at the Crossroads: A Reflection on African Sexualities and Human Rights - Life Story.” In *Queer African Reader*, edited by Sokari Ekine and Hakima Abbas, 229–43. Dakar: Pambazuka Press.
- Mwikya, Kenne. 2013. “The Media, the Tabloid and the Uganda Homophobia Spectacle.” In *Queer African Reader*, edited by Hakima Abbas and Sokari Ekine, 141–54. Dakar: Pambazuka Press.
- Ndashe, Sibongile. 2013. “The Single Story of ‘African Homophobia’ Is Dangerous for LGBTI Activism.” In *Queer African Reader*, edited by Hakima Abbas and Sokari Ekine, 155–64. Dakar: Pambazuka Press.
- Nyanzi, Stella. 2013. “Rhetorical Analysis of President Jammeh’s Threats to Behaead Homosexuals in the Gambia.” In *Sexual Diversity in Africa: Politics, Theory, Citizenship*, 67–87. Québec: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Nyeck, S. N. 2021. *African(a) Queer Presence Ethics and Politics of Negotiation*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- O’Mara, Kathleen. 2013. “Kodjo Besia, Supi, Yags and Eagles: Being Tacit Subjects and Non-Normative Citizens in Contemporary Ghana.” In *Women, Gender, and Sexualities in Africa*, edited by Nana Falola, Toyin; Akua. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.
- Oduro, Georgina Yaa, and Esther Miedema. 2019. “‘We Have Sex, but We Don’t Talk about It.’” In *Routledge Handbook of Queer African Studies*, edited by S. N. Nyeck, 236–53. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351141963-25>.
- Otu, Kwame Edwin. 2020. “Normative Collusions and Amphibious Evasions: The Contested Politics of Queer Self-Making in Neoliberal Ghana.” In *Routledge Handbook of Queer African Studies*, edited by S. N. Nyeck, 213–24. New York: Routledge.
- Otu, Kwame Edwin. 2021. “Queer Slacktivism as Silent Activism? The Contested Politics of Queer Subjectivities on GhanaWeb.” *Sexualities* 24 (1–2): 46–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460719893620>.
- Penwill, D. J. 1951. *Kamba Customary Law*. London: Macmillan.
- Pincheon, Bill Stanford. 2000. “An Ethnography of Silences: Race, (Homo)Sexualities, and a Discourse of Africa.” *African Studies Review* 43 (3): 39–58.
- Quinalha, Renan. 2018. “Uma Ditadura Hetero-Militar: Notas Sobre a Política Sexual Do Regime Autoritário Brasileiro.” In *História Do Movimento LGBT No Brasil*, edited by James N. Green, Renan Quinalha, Marcio Caetano, and Marisa Fernandes, 15–38. São Paulo: Alameda.

- Rao, Rahul. 2020. *Out of Time: The Queer Politics of Postcoloniality*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ratele, Kopano. 2014. “Hegemonic African Masculinities and Men’s Heterosexual Lives: Some Uses for Homophobia.” *African Studies Review* 57 (02): 115–30. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2014.50>.
- Rea, Caterina Alessandra. 2021. “Fundamentalismos Evangélicos e Guerras Culturais Em Contextos Africanos: O Debate Ao Redor Das Leis Anti-Homossexualidade.” *Anuário Antropológico* 46 (2): 127–51.
- Sadgrove, Joanna, Robert M. Vanderbeck, Johan Andersson, Gill Valentine, and Kevin Ward. 2012. “Morality Plays and Money Matters: Towards a Situated Understanding of the Politics of Homosexuality in Uganda.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 50 (1): 103–29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X11000620>.
- Santos, Gustavo Gomes da Costa, and Matthew Waites. 2019. “Comparative Colonialisms for Queer Analysis: Comparing British and Portuguese Colonial Legacies for Same-Sex Sexualities and Gender Diversity in Africa – Setting a Transnational Research Agenda.” *International Review of Sociology* 29 (2): 297–326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2019.1641277>.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Spronk, Rachel, and S. N. Nyeck. 2021. “Frontiers and Pioneers in (the Study of) Queer Experiences in Africa Introduction.” *Africa* 91 (3): 388–97. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972021000231>.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. 1995. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Souza, Fabiana Mendes de. 2015. “Discretos e Declarados : Uma Etnografia Da Vida Dos Homossexuais Em Maputo.” UNICAMP.
- Tabengwa, Monica, and Matthew Waites. 2020. “Africa and the Contestation of Sexual and Gender Diversity.” *The Oxford Handbook of Global LGBT and Sexual Diversity Politics*, 200–215. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190673741.013.35>.
- Tushabe, Caroline. 2013. “Decolonizing Homosexuality in Uganda as a Human Right’s Process.” In *Women, Gender, and Sexualities in Africa*, edited by Nana Falola, Toyin; Akua, 147–54. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.
- Uchendu, Egodì. 2008. *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa*. Edited by Egodì Uchendu. Vol. 7. Dakar: CODESRIA.
- Warner, Tom. 2002. *Never Going Back: A History of Queer Activism in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Webster, David. 2009. “Indivíduo, Liderança e Facções.” In *A Sociedade Chope: Indivíduo e Aliança No Sul de Moçambique, 1969-1976*, 345–415. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais.
- Zabus, Chantal. 2013. *Out in Africa: Same-Sex Desire in Sub-Saharan Literatures and Cultures*. Rochester: James Currey.