

POLS 227

Africa in World Politics

Class 18:
Politics of sex

Popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZNcuQhktnQ>

Politics of homosexuality in Uganda

- Sexual Minorities Uganda
- *Rolling Stone*, 2010
- Kato's murder, 2011
- Outside attention, including *God Loves Uganda*



Politics of homosexuality in Uganda

- Introduction of the Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2009 ('Kill the Gays' bill)
 - Passed in 2013 and invalidated by constitutional court in 2014
 - Reintroduction in 2019



Uganda plans
'kill the gays' bill

Politics of homosexuality in Uganda



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yzu4WgUOWUM>

Politics of homosexuality in Uganda



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DF-wwZfRYPw>

God Loves of Uganda as a source

- Normative components
- Empirical components:
 - Some effects of popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda
 - Some causes of popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda

What have been the effects of popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda?

What explains the popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda?

Drivers of popular attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda

- “Homosexuality as Western, ‘un-African’ and culturally inauthentic” (Rao)
- Christianity
- External promotion of attitudes by Christian missionaries
- Domestic policies

History of homosexuality in Uganda

- Precolonial Buganda Kingdom
- Social acceptance of homosexuality
- Polarization of the court between religious (Catholic, Muslim, and Protestant) factions in the late precolonial period
- Kabaka Mwanga II



History of homosexuality in Uganda

- Execution of the (Anglican and Catholic) Uganda Martyrs
- Rebellion and colonization
- Imposition of colonial legislation
 - Rao, Rahul. "Re-Membering Mwangi: Same-Sex Intimacy, Memory and Belonging in Postcolonial Uganda." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 9, no. 1 (2015): 1–19.



To what extent can we attribute contemporary attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda to the influence of Christian missionaries from the United States?

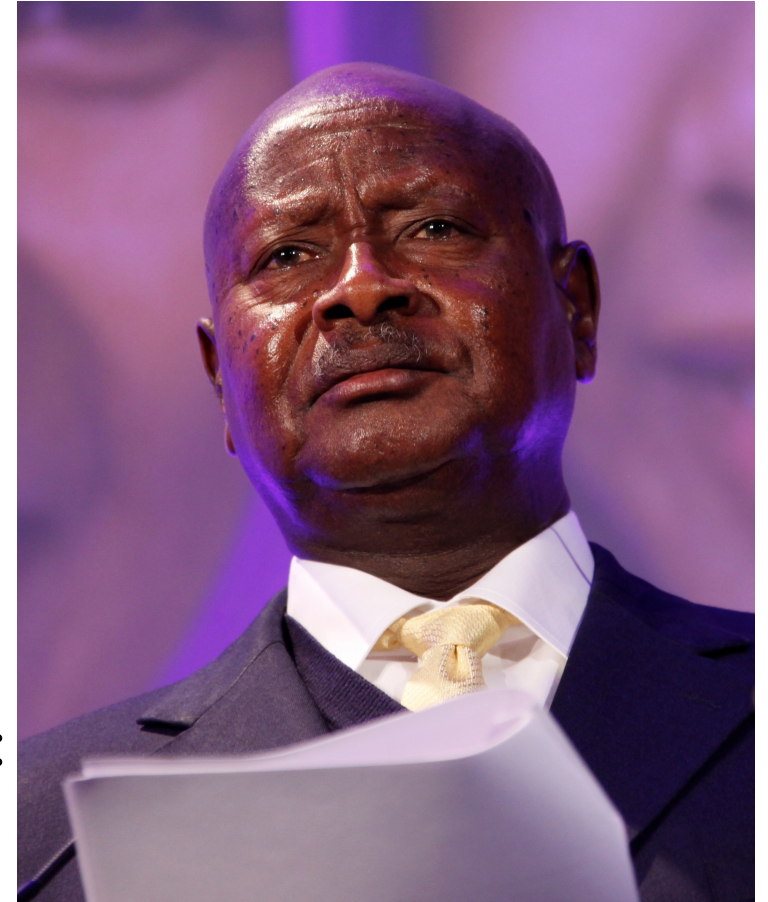
What explains the contemporary attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda according to Sadgrove et al.?

Contemporary attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda according to Sadgrove et al.

- Social relations:
 - Constructions of the family
 - Societal morality
 - Understandings about reciprocity and material exchange → importance of bridewealth
- Elite manipulations of anxieties about destabilization of those social relations:
 - Formation of alliances between the state and religious leaders
 - Otherization of the West as materialistic and opposed to God-fearing, family-oriented Uganda, with homosexuality cast as a Western vice

Uganda's political system

- Consolidated and personalistic authoritarian National Resistance Movement regime controlled by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, in power since 1986
- History of dependence on aid from the Global North:
 - In 2006, 42% of the government budget funded by international donors
- Efforts to reduce dependence:
 - In the 2010s, ~25% of the government budget funded by international donors
- Neopatrimonialism and widespread corruption:
 - In 2011, 6% of government revenue withheld after a corruption scandal



Resistance to the NRM regime

- War in Northern Uganda, 1987-:
 - 100,000 deaths
 - 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)
- Walk to work protests, 2011
- Bobi Wine's campaign, 2018-



Resistance to the NRM regime



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53TNM3nE3FA>

How does shaping the contemporary attitudes towards homosexuality help the Ugandan government stay in power?