
LGBT RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN AFRICA AND THE MYTH OF THE WHITEMAN'S SUPERIORITY

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The West's commitment to fervidly push the LGBT rights philosophy in the world in general and Africa in particular has caused it to embark on a number of questionable advocacy tactics. In Africa, precisely, the West has proffered coercive ploys in the form of threats and bullying approaches to reform the African minds in favor of the LGBT right concept. However, this muscled activism by the West could, in many respects, be viewed more as an imperialist and neo-colonialist strategy than a humanistic project. In effect, the West seems more determined to let its voice and idea(l)s prevail at all cost in the world (particularly in Africa) than it is bent on championing the course for human rights. This paper argues that this particular attitude by the West brings to the fore the myths of race supremacy and Western cultural hegemony. The West's strategic use of threat (of discontinuing its financial aid destined to poor African countries) as a weapon to bully and force African states to decriminalize homosexuality is clearly illustrative of its enthusiasm at stultifying African's voice and philosophy on the LGBT rights issue. The fact that the West visibly tolerates gross violation of fundamental human rights (such as the death penalty in force in the USA) in its socio-cultural system is the proof of the fact that its mission is less to promote the respect of human rights. If not, its advocacy approach would have included sanitizing its own social system (its human right framework) and excluding hypocrisy and the use of bullying tactics and subtle force against poor African nations – notably Malawi – which cannot fight back.

Keywords: *myth of race supremacy, Western cultural hegemony, gay-right, African inferiority complex, American exceptionalism.*

1. Introduction

The hot debate over the thorny question of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual) rights has provoked the birth, resurrection or reconsideration of a number of (concurrent and controversial) schools of thought, socio-cultural theses and movements. Indeed, this debate has generated a series of binary oppositions: the pro *versus* the anti-gay schools of thought, nature *versus* nurture theories on homosexuality, westernization *versus* indigenization/Africanism, modernization *versus* culturalism and so on. One of the most captivating binary oppositions within this lot has been the ideological battle opposing the pro-gay countries (mostly western and some South-American nations) to the anti-gay countries (mostly African and Asian nations). In effect, contrarily to the

over 15 western and South-American nations which, after condoning waves of sexual revolutions in their respective territories, have exercised tolerance toward same-sex relationship, most African states have been terribly hostile to homosexuality. African nations have therefore, not only adopted terrific anti-gay laws, but also developed and propagated a political discourse which derogatorily brands homosexuals and encourages their stigmatization, victimization and their being ostracized in African communities. While President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has, for instance, employed a vitriolic discourse on the issue, equating homosexuals to ‘dogs’ and ‘pigs’ or creatures that are of a lower class and value, his counterpart from Gambia (Jammeh), has used the metaphoric coinage of ‘mosquitoes’ in reference to the queer community (Zabus 2014; Gervisser 2015; Endong 2015a, 2015b; Endong and Veraba 2015; Paulat 2015). With equal measure of intolerance as his African peers, Namibian President, Sam Nujoma (cited in Phillips 2004: 157), equated homosexuality to a gruesome inhuman perversion which ought to ‘be uprooted from [the Namibian] society’. Even President John Mills of Ghana – one of the most celebrated democracies in Africa – has non-hesitantly associated homosexuality with an antithetical force to core Ghanaian cultural values. He has wholeheartedly ‘vowed’ ‘never [to] initiate or support any attempt to legalize [it]’ (BBC News 2011). Similarly to the Cameroonian and Ugandan legal systems, the Nigerian law severely criminalizes homosexuality. It prescribes a sentence of 14 years imprisonment for any convicted case of homosexuality. Additionally, the Nigerian law condemns same-sex groups and fervently exhorts masses to promptly denounce suspected cases of homosexuality to the cops.

African counties presumptuously reject homosexuality on purely religious/moral and cultural bases, brandishing, with trepidation, the thesis of the *unafrikaness* and ‘satanic’ nature of both homosexuality and the LGBT right movement. In line with this theory, homosexuality is (arguably) considered a ‘western social cancer’, a terrible cultural *dysnomia* or social anomie. Therefore, any attempt by the West at pressuring African states to legalize or decriminalize the phenomenon is inextricably interpreted as a strategy to catalyze or reinforce socio-cultural pollution (westoxification) and western cultural imperialism in Africa. However, a number of cultural anthropologists, sociologists and media scholars have sought to disprove the thesis of the *unafrikaness* of homosexuality, brandishing thought-provoking evidences of same-sex relationship in a number of African ethnic communities as well as in a number of socio-cultural rituals practiced among certain tribes based in the Black Continent. These evidences somehow give credence to the myth of African homosexuality thereby discrediting the thesis of the western nature of homosexuality. These classes of anthropologists and cultural sociologists equally tend to clearly indicate or allude to the fact that the religious and cultural arguments mobilized by African nations (especially political leaders) are not only ‘untenable’ or somehow unfounded, but that they (these homophobic arguments) hide a more profound and pro-negritude, Africanist, or African renaissance philosophy or feeling. African leaders' adoption of a culturalist and Afro-centric position only reminds us of the counter-imperialistic efforts or discourses constructed by most African countries, particularly the negro-struggle to challenge and ultimately shatter the myth of the Whiteman's superiority. In corroboration of this position, Paulat (2015) pointedly re-

marks that the popular logic in Africa ‘often decries homosexuality as a “western concept” and just another import from colonial days. Pressure from the West to give LGBT citizens equal rights is often seen as further coercion from former colonialists, trying once again to control the African agenda.’ In effect, the West’s utilization of multiple strategies including subtle coercion and bullying techniques to push pro-gay proselytism and the LGBT right movement in Africa could be read as an attempt at western cultural and socio-political domination. In line with this, Chika (2014) passionately notes that:

What is certain is that Africa will continue to remain a very hostile continent to the gay community. There is not only the fact that Africa considers homosexual acts unnatural and a bane to African culture, the continent sees it as an example of the West again trying to impose their will on a continent whose member-countries are dependent on handouts from the West, that even Malawi has resisted the pressure brought on her. As Africa sees it, there is barbarism in America with capital punishment, execution of convicts, which many African countries have outlawed and which Africa has not tried to foster on America. There should be a *quid pro quo* here. Africa says leave us alone just as we have left you alone on capital punishment.

This paper seeks to explore the cultural war triggered by the LGBT right movement, demonstrating how the African leaders’ arguments are more a strategy to question and ultimately neutralize the perceived hegemonic moves by the West. The paper starts by defining the myth of the Whiteman’s superiority and its kissing cousin, the myth of the black’s man inferiority (in the context of the study) stressing particularly on their modern facets. The paper thereafter proceeds to showing how the above mentioned myths are reflected in the pro-gay countries’ approaches to globalizing the LGBT right concept. The paper ends up discussing African countries’ resistance to this LGBT right movement as a counter-hegemony strategy.

2. The Myth of the Whiteman’s Superiority and the African Inferiority Complex

People naturally tend to take great pride in the culture, civilization or race to which they belong. This is often summarized or captured in the term of race pride. It has been noted in history that almost all peoples who have successfully achieved a high culture, have tended to develop a serious race pride. They have often assumed a (questionable) superiority over other cultures, sometimes legitimizing their philosophies with religious myths. In line with this, the Greeks fondly considered themselves descendants of the gods while relegating non-Greeks identities to barbarians. Similarly, the Romans tended to proudly associate themselves with nobility – they referred to themselves as the ‘noble Romans’ – while the Chinese viewed themselves as ‘celestial people.’ The Jews likewise took pride in considering themselves to be created in ‘the image of God’ and to be a chosen race that is entitled and divinely empowered to rule the universe; while the Japanese equated themselves with an excellent race. Even aboriginal people as the African pigmies and American Indians showed remarkable pride in race. However, the race pride which has, over epochs, attracted attention – and which is still so remarkably prevalent in today’s world – is the myth of Whiteman’s superiority otherwise called the

myth of racial supremacy. According to this myth, the Whiteman's civilization or culture enjoys an 'uncontestable' hegemony over that of other races (Black, Yellow, and Red). According to such a school of thought, the Whiteman's civilization should therefore rule the world and function as the standard or yardstick by which other civilizations are assessed or measured. In tandem with this, critics such as Tunde (2005) opine that the White race (the West) has profoundly defined human development and set the pace of change which other nations must follow.

Over years and decades, the myth of the Whiteman's superiority has taken various facets, and has been facilitated by multiple factors including slavery, (neo-) colonialism, Christian missionary activities in Africa, apartheid, and media/cultural imperialism among others (Help Me 2015; Webb 2012; Opuka 2007; Gabriel 2007; Salfa 2002; Carlson 1944). It has been captured in a number of European-born neologisms such as 'The Whiteman's Burden' (Britain), '*la Mission Civilisatrice*' (France), or *missão civilizadora* (Portugal). According to these neologisms, the West proudly and 'unilaterally' assumes the duty to spread its ideas, knowledge and civilization around the world. By such a system, any worldview which runs counter to those of Europe and America is utterly considered primitive, inferior if not irrelevant. Likewise, peoples who adhere to religious vitalities and cultures which are different from those of the West are considered primitive and inferior. Such primitive or backward people should consequently take lesson from Europe and America. In his book titled *La Reforme Intellectuelle* [The Intellectual Reform], Renan (cited by Cesaire [1972]) makes allusion to this Whiteman's burden and White race superiority when he passionately notes that:

The regeneration of the inferior or degenerate races by the superior races is part of the providential order of things for humanity. With us, the common man is nearly always a *de classe* nobleman, his heavy hand is better suited to handling the sword than the menial tool. Rather than work, he chooses to fight, that is, he returns to his first estate. *Regere imperio populos*, that is our vocation. Pour forth this all-consuming activity onto countries which, like China, are crying aloud for foreign conquest. Turn the adventurers who disturb European society into a *ver sacrum*, a horde like those of the Franks, the Lombards, or the Normans, and every man will be in his right role. Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese race, who have wonderful manual dexterity and almost no sense of honor; govern them with justice, levying from them, in return for the blessing of such a government, an ample allowance for the conquering race, and they will be satisfied; a race of tillers of the soil, the Negro; treat him with kindness and humanity, and all will be as it should; a race of masters and soldiers, the European race. Reduce this noble race to working in the *ergastulum* like Negroes and Chinese, and they rebel. In Europe, every rebel is, more or less, a soldier who has missed his calling, a creature made for the heroic life, before whom you are setting a task that is contrary to his race – a poor worker, too good a soldier. But the life at which our workers rebel would make a Chinese or a fellah happy, as they are not military creatures in the least. *Let each one do what he is made for, and all will be well.*

The myth of racial supremacy seems to victimize the black race (particularly the Black African nations) more than any other race, especially as it is partially rooted on some arguable interpretations of biblical predictions or prophetic statements. In effect, according to some exegeses of the Bible, Black Africans inferiority to other races is the consequence of Noah's curse on his son Ham, the legendary ancestor of the Negro people. According to these objectionable exegeses, Ham was definitively cursed to be 'the servant of servants' to his brothers Sem and Japheth. White racists and anti-Africanist schools of thought have thus non-hesitantly found refuge in such arguable but convenient exegeses to advocate the continuous domination of the White race over the Black race. Up till today, staunch racists and pro-western imperialist critics continue to hinge on similar racist interpretations of the Holy Scriptures to legitimate and strongly encourage the White hegemony in the world. A number of schools of thought have for instance argued that God is on America's side. Such schools have even gone to the extent of defining America's sometimes cohesive approaches to promoting Western values as democracy and human rights in the world as a divine duty bestowed on the USA (Walt 2011; Raskin 2009; Dietrich 1992).

Given the fact that it has most often been brandished as a vindication of various crimes (notably slavery, colonization, apartheid, and Nazism) committed by the powerful capitalists against the so-considered 'inferior nations', the myth of racial supremacy has been equated with economic exploitation and socio-political injustice. In tandem with this, Betita (1990: 2) defines the myth of Whiteman's superiority as 'a historically based [and] institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression' of continents, nations and peoples of other races by white peoples and nations of the European continent 'for the purpose of maintaining and defending system of wealth power and privilege.' The myth of Whiteman's superiority is therefore not grounded solely in the skin color but principally in the interests, needs and values of those racialized as White or categorized as western. With close respect to the West's vindication of colonialism, Cesaire (1972) associates the myth of Whiteman's superiority – particularly the Whiteman's burden – with a range of negative symbols. This includes symbols of barbarism and incivility. In his seminal essay titled *Discourse on Colonialism* he pointedly and derogatorily notes that: 'a civilization which justifies colonization – and therefore force – is already a sick civilization, a civilization that is morally diseased, that irresistibly, progressing from one consequence to another, one repudiation to another, calls for its Hitler, I mean its punishment.' A modern facet of the myth of (White) race superiority is viewable in the two inter-related (detestable) phenomena of neo-colonialism and Western imperialism which involve a high measure of subtle cohesion and consent, as shall be illustrated in subsequent sections of this paper.

Another contemporary facet of the myth of racial superiority is the concept or idiom of American exceptionalism which engulfs a number of 'unproven' beliefs and blanket postulations. According to some of these beliefs and postulations, (i) there is something exceptional about American exceptionalism, (ii) the United States behave better than other nations, (iii) the US spectacular success is thanks to its special genius, (iv) the USA is the major force responsible for the existence of Good in the world and (v) God is on the side of the USA. In line with the last belief mentioned in the

above list, a number of American heads of State notably Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan have particularly stressed the indispensable place and role played by the US to orchestrate and maintain world political stability and economic prosperity. According to the myth of the American exceptionalism, the USA has a central role in the spread of democracy and a liberal or international order in the world. Still according to such a myth, the future of freedom, liberal economies and human rights lies principally in the hands of America. Former US President Bill Clinton (quoted by Walt 2011) once said, America's primacy is 'indispensable to the forging of stable political relations.' In the same line of argument, American Journalist Michael Hirsh (2004) has gone further to thinking – in his book *At War With Ourselves* – that America's global role is 'the greatest gift the world has received in many, many centuries, possibly all of recorded history.' In view of all these postulations, Walt insightfully concludes that in view of all the high-fives American leaders have unfailingly given themselves, it is not surprising that most Americans fervidly see their country as an overwhelmingly positive and indispensable force in world affairs. In many respects, the crusade adopted by the US to spread democracy and human rights mostly in Third and Fourth Worlds including Black African countries is not so different from the civilization missions ostentatiously adopted by European nations in the (pre-)colonial period.

Despite the arguments given in favor of these racist and hegemonic systems, critics have questioned the concepts of (White) race supremacy and Western cultural hegemony, particularly American exceptionalism. Challenging a wide range of myths which support the belief that America is a major moral and highly civilized nation, Walt (2011) passionately notes that:

The United States talks a good game on human rights and international law, but it has refused to sign most human rights treaties, is not a party to the International Criminal Court, and has been all too willing to cozy up to dictators – remember our friend Hosni Mubarak? – with abysmal human rights records. If that were not enough, the abuses at Abu Ghraib and the George W. Bush administration's reliance on waterboarding, extraordinary rendition, and preventive detention should shake America's belief that it consistently acts in a morally superior fashion. Obama's decision to retain many of these policies suggests they were not a temporary aberration [...].

The White race supremacy and the thesis of western moral hegemony are, on many such bases, questionable and – of course – to be queenly debunked. However, instead of critically assessing these myths, a number of (mostly westernized) Africans and non-White critics has embraced the White civilization and post-modern culture as an automatic civility, to the detriment of the totality of the African worldview. In tandem with this, even laudable African values – such as ancestral worship, African communalism, African folk cultures and the like – have been relegated to inferior status by such westernized observers. This has led to what is often named 'the African Inferiority Complex'. This complex solidly rests on the assumption that the West has set the pace – in terms of civilization and development – for non-Whites (notably African nations) to follow unquestionably and uncritically. The African inferiority complex equally doubts the

possibility to design an African model of development, underscoring the primacy of the Whiteman's culture and civilization in African nations' efforts towards human and economic development. The myth of Whiteman superiority has thus facilitated the prevalence of the African inferiority complex and the construction by the US-led West of stereotypical views that elevate the Whiteman to the rank of a hero, a conqueror, a moralist, and a savior. Such stereotypical postulations likewise elevate anything western to the universal. Such heavily westernized Africans and other apologists of the African inferiority complex buy Tunde's (2005) argument that:

The dilemma facing Africans is how to deal with the overwhelming presence and power of western civilization. If the desire of Africans for modern facilities – electricity, pipe borne water, cars, modern medicine, television *etc.*, is legitimate, then we [Africans] should accept the position of 19th century evolutionists that western civilization is of a higher material order to African civilization. It is able to meet the new aspirations of Africans, which traditional society cannot.

The African inferiority complex seems to be exacerbated by the prevailing inequalities in power relations between the West and Africa. Most Africans are more and more conscious of the regrettable fact that their nations or countries of origin (the Black Continent as a whole) 'suffer' from a 'negligible' weight in the global debate arena and that, only a 'miracle' would reverse the scenario. Many Africans have thus adopted various defeatist paradigms, looking to the West for behavioral, philosophical, cultural and developmental models, dogmas and inspiration.

3. How is the White Race Supremacy and Western Hegemony Visible in the Struggle for/against LGBT Rights in Africa?

As earlier mentioned, the myth of the Whiteman's superiority – particularly western cultural hegemony – systematically informs the West's pro-gay proselytism (global movement in favor of the LGBT rights) as well as Black African nations' resistance to such a movement. Though the West and pro-West voices will likely discard the prevalence or importance of such a myth in their support of LGBT rights, a critical analysis of Western powers' approaches to pro-gay advocacy in Africa amply suggests that most of these European or American countries want to capitalize on their economic supremacy and political primacy in the international scene to impose their own framework of human rights, irrespective of the African cultural values and the voice of African nations in the international scene. With rage and trepidation, the US-led West is embarking on a series of bullying tactics aimed at letting its say and will prevail in the international scene, particularly in the African socio-political and cultural ecology. The US-led West very much capitalizes on its economic power to tentatively reform and 're-create' the African mind on the LGBT right issue. As British Prime Minister James Cameron (quoted in Steward 2014: 19) succinctly puts it, '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? [...] So look, this is an issue where we want movement, we're pushing for movement, we're prepared to put some money behind what we believe.' In the same line of thought, international bodies such as the European Union,

special agencies of the UN and similar bodies that are largely driven by western ideals have adopted the technique of conditioning their financial aids destined to African countries on the latter's strict respect or acceptance of the LGBT rights philosophy. The West's monumental belief in anchoring its advocacy of the LGBT right movement on its economic power is visibly in line with Van den Berg's (2011: 56) contention that the White race or West supremacy is nourished by capitalistic forces. Such a myth of superiority is legitimized or justified on the grounds of the economic hegemony of the West or White men. As she succinctly remarks:

History speaks of many instances where different cultures have built their empires from around the world. The Mayans, the Incas, the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Greeks, the Romans, the Jewish, and the Christians; all these cultures have at one time or another, ruled their world with fear, violence and death. When did human beings start believing that their particular cultures were better than others? Many of these aforementioned empires have faded into oblivion, only to be read about in history books. What drove the white European cultures to be more powerful, and more universal, than all the other empire builders? The answer is the accumulation of wealth, the prestige that having power emits and the privilege of being 'white'. Whiteness, in this modern age, opens doors that remain closed to the other; unless of course, the other has money and power to back up their blackness (*Ibid.*).

According to the logic highlighted by Van den Berg above, due to their economic inferiority, African countries will find it difficult not to succumb to the very wealthy West. Western ideas will ultimately prevail thanks to the West's economic supremacy. The West whose moral supremacy is clearly to be questioned – given its endorsement of morally objectionable practices such as capital punishment, – seems ironically determined to pursue a moralist exercise specially conceived for Africans and very poor Third world countries. As earlier alluded to, the West hopes – through force or coercion – to successfully impose the LGBT rights agenda (a predominantly western idiom) on the African through subtle force or coercion. Such coercion is viewed in numerous expressed threats to withdraw its financial aid to anti-gay African countries.

It should continually be emphasized that, though endorsed by a number of South American countries, the LGBT rights movement remains a largely – nay exclusively – western concept or value. Apart from South Africa and some few other nations, most Black African countries have rejected homosexuality on purely cultural and religious bases. Over 37 out of the 54 nations of the Black continent have adopted homophobic legislations (Zabus 2015; Chika 2014; Endong 2015a, 2015b; Desilver 2013). Though the myth of African homosexuality has to an extent been proven, the LGBT right movement is not welcomed in most Black African countries. According to recent surveys conducted on the morality of homosexuality in a number of Black African countries, the African populace is still predominantly anti-gay – homophobic to an extent – and staunchly opposed to the decriminalization of homosexuality (TIERS 2014; Desilver 2013; Tamale 2014; Chika 2014; Zabus 2015). Populism has even caused a number of African political icons to openly castigate the LGBT right movement, sometimes arguably branding it an un-African way of life. All these are indications that, for the mo-

ment, Africans are not ready to embrace the LGBT rights idiom. Africa's voice in the international debate on LGBT right movement is clearly negative (anti-gay). However, the West – which has been accustomed to disregard, if not silence African voice in the international scene – seems dogmatically bent on using its economic and political weight and might to degrade, ridicule and systematically overshadow African countries' position(s) or voice(s) on the issue. Such an attitude by the West clearly discredits theses (notably Tunde's (2005) contention) that the Western civilization has always been adopted by other races not through force (hard power) but thanks to its attractiveness (soft power). According to Tunde (2005)

Since the nineteenth century the West has defined human development and set the pace of change which others have followed. The West has not imposed its will on the world by force but by the sheer attractiveness of its civilization and the belief in the desirability of material progress and prosperity. It is able to get people in other nations to desire what it desires and thereby manipulates their aspirations. This is the bedrock of imperialism. It is what enables it to control and use the resources of underdeveloped nations in a manner advantageous to the developed nations and at the expense of the economies of underdeveloped countries.

It is once more important to negate Tunde's postulation that the West has been spreading its civilization – to the extent that it is today viewed as the standard – without the use of force or coercion. One can easily remember that colonialism – which entails military conquest and brutal repression of indigenous resistances against colonialists' rule – helped the West impose its civilization on Africans. As demonstrated in the paragraphs above, even in contemporary times, the West continues to use multiple forms of pressure, and threat of economic sanctions – which, of course, are coercive strategies – to spread its values or civilization in Black Africa in particular. In other words, the civilization mission of the West continues in a subtle way in contemporary Africa. The West's use of pressure and bullying tactics to push the LGBT right movement in Africa is highly imperialistic as it is based on the political and economic supremacy of the West in the international scene. To borrow Chika's (2014) language, Africa sees the West's muscled activism in favor of the LGBT right philosophy in the Black Continent 'as an example of the West again trying to impose their will on a continent whose member-countries are dependent on handouts from the West, that even Malawi has resisted the pressure brought on her'.

The US-led West's systematic domination of the global debate over the LGBT rights idiom clearly reminds the world public opinion of the fact that the determining factors in world politics or international relations are socio-economic and geopolitical forces rather than intellectual and moral argumentations. As Nordenstreng (2015) beautifully puts it, 'power, rather than reason sets the rules of debate' in international politics.

However impressive your facts and however persuasive your arguments, you will not gain recognition in the global debate arena, unless you are backed by significant political forces [...] The intellectual reflection does influence the course of political events. Yet, in the final instance, it is the political [weight

of a given power bloc in the international scene] that determines the global (political) agenda (Nordenstreng 2015: 9–10).

With such a definition of the global debate arena, it appears clear that Black Africa as well as Third World nations will find it difficult – nay ‘miraculous’ – to successfully advocate their stance on the LGBT right idiom and let their voice be heard in the global political ecology. It equally remains clear that the West is – and will continue to be – more programmed to impose its will and ideas – through an exploitation of its presumed economic hegemony over Africa. As demonstrated in its present LGBT right advocacy tactics, the US-led West is more programmed to ‘impose’ its will and values with regard to the idiom than it is bent on pursuing the course for human right. If really the West was solely enthusiastic in pushing human right, it will have primordially given a modicum of attention to such violations of human rights as capital punishment in its own soil. To borrow a famous biblical wisdom and injunction¹, one will say that, for credibility sake, Europe and America would have endeavored to remove the plank which is in their eyes as a prerequisite for removing the speck which is in Africa's eye. The West seems to overlook glaring violations of human rights in its social system to ironically assume the responsibility of the supreme judge of the world. For the moment, most black African states seem not ready to continuously endure such an ‘injustice’.

4. Conclusion

There is no doubt that the LGBT rights movement has been acclaimed and ‘tentatively universalized’ by a number of schools of thought in the world. The movement has been viewed as an important facet of the human right idiom and an indispensable revolution in black societies where there is still need to efface various forms of inequalities between social groups. However, the LGBT right movement will continue to be viewed as a symbol of the western culture and western cultural hegemony so long as the Western nations and West-based organizations persist in using pressure and imperialistic strategies to advocate for its prevalence in Africa. The West has for long assumed the responsibility of moral arbiter vis-à-vis Africa; without making sufficient efforts to be saint; and it is right time Africa's voice ceases to be automatically, uncritically and forcefully imbibed with or oriented by the western thought. This paper is not categorically antithetical to the LGBT right movement in Africa – as advocated by the West. However, it has sought to seriously crack down on the glaringly imperialistic approach the West is using to push the LGBT right idiom in Africa.

The West's strategic use of threat (of discontinuing its financial aid destined to poor African countries) as a weapon to bully and force African states to decriminalize homosexuality is clearly illustrative of the West's enthusiastic stultification of African's voice and philosophy on the LGBT rights issue. As has been argued in this paper, Africa's position on the LGBT right question has largely been negative. The fact that the west visibly tolerates gross violation of fundamental human rights (such as the death penalty) in its system is proof of the fact that its mission is less to promote the respect of human rights. In effect, through its advocacy for LGBT rights in Africa it principally longs once more, to let its ideas and culture prevail in the Black Continent like in other Third

and Fourth Worlds. If not, its advocacy approach would have excluded hypocrisy and the use of bullying tactics and subtle force against poor African nations – notably Malawi – which cannot fight back.

Though recent studies in anthropology, art, archeology and anthropological linguistics have clearly associated a number of African cultures with gayism/lesbianism, most Africans continue to interpret western gay-proselytism (particularly the pressure the western democracies exert on African countries) as a form of cultural imperialism or (attempted) neocolonialism. With this, any effort by African governments to arrest such a nefarious phenomenon (western cultural imperialism) is, according to popular imagination, an action worthy to be lauded. In tandem with this, African governments' resistance to pro-gay proselytism systematically builds the image of an audacious and seemingly strong Africa, terribly struggling to let her voice and agenda be valued in international politics. It also builds the image of a Black Africa fervently checking western cultural imperialism and *westoxification* and 'westocracy'.

NOTE

¹ In Mathew 7:3–4, the Bible frowns at the hypocritical judging of peoples or nations saying: '[...] with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measure back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eyes? Or how can you say to your brother 'Let me remove the speck from your eye; and look, a plank is in your own eyes? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.'

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