

PhD thesis project **"Comparative analysis of Brazil and South Africa in search of international leadership in the LGBTI+ rights agenda"**

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The general objective of this thesis project is to comparatively analyze processes of construction of international leadership of emerging and regional powers of the South. Thus, we intend to investigate this search for leadership in a unique agenda for Southern powers, which is the LGBTI+ rights agenda. It is said to be unique because the LGBTI+ rights agenda has a robust interface with democratization processes that may face additional challenges related to inequalities, injustices, and historical and cultural perceptions in developing countries. In this way, we intend to verify the variation of these strategies and trajectories of the search for leadership in this specific foreign policy agenda here conceived as a *sui generis* public policy. The search for a leading role for Brazil and South Africa in the LGBTI+ rights agenda is the dependent variable that will be analyzed from three axes: First, the axis of the interface of LGBTI+ activism with domestic institutions and foreign policy institutions, including from a transnational perspective, to verify if, as a result of the boomerang effect, there is a search for incidence on the domestic agenda. The independent variable of this model is the domestic and international activism networks that eventually connect.

The second axis is the analysis of foreign policy bureaucracies, their interface with other domestic political institutions and civil society in the domestic sphere. Thus, we intend to compare the diplomatic capacities of Brazil and South Africa for the construction of this dialogue with agents of national civil society on each side of the South Atlantic. Also, we intend to verify to what extent this interface with the domestic contributes (or generates constraints) for the search for international leadership of both countries. Finally, the third axis is the analysis of the regional-global nexus in which the region's dilemmas may present to these two regional powers of the South in their respective contexts. From these three axes, we intend to structure an analysis model to investigate the variations of these trajectories of ambition and leadership in the LGBTI+ rights agenda.

If these powers have regional leadership ambitions, then this regional/global dilemma/nexus can pose a challenge. Briefly summarized, these challenges have different

nuances from the analyzed region. In the case of the African continent, the recognition of LGBTI+ rights confronts resistance and contradictions based on colonial legal traditions and the political and social particularities of each country. In this sense, most of the countries that still criminalize LGBTI+ orientations and identity today are on the African continent, whose legislation dates back to the colonization processes of the 19th century. In addition, resistance to human rights discourses (among which LGBTI+ rights) is observed in some cases, in which it is argued that they would be Western impositions and that disregard the traditions and practices of the African continent.

In South America, on the other hand, there is a more remarkable confluence of practices and interests in recognition of LGBTI+ rights, which represents fewer tensions and fewer obstacles to the construction of a common agenda. In the Brazilian case, this nexus seems preliminarily optimistic, especially from including this theme in the scope of the Meeting of High Authorities on Human Rights of Mercosur from 2006. In the South African case, it seems more challenging from analyzing the regional context in which there is resistance in multilateral spheres on this issue, such as the SADC (Southern African Development Community), African Union (UA) and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

Initially, we intend to establish a systematization of the acquisition of rights in the countries under analysis and create indicators for the governments of Brazil and South Africa. The objective is to highlight the contradictions and tensions regarding LGBTI+ rights in the governments of both countries through the analysis of government positions and interviews. In a comparative perspective, we also intended to systematize the votes in the United Nations Human Rights Council regarding resolutions on LGBTI+ rights to build a timeline regarding the positions of both countries on this topic.