#AmINext: The Link Between European Colonization and Gender-Based Violence in Contemporary South Africa

Presented to the Faculty of the

Department of Historical and Political Studies at

Arcadia University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirement for the degree of the

Bachelor of Arts in

International Studies

By: Jenna Meredith Pagel

Senior Thesis Advisor:

Dr. Jennifer Riggan

12 May 2021

Introduction

On 24 August 2019, a South African student who attended the University of Cape Town went missing, her body was found a week later. Uyinene Mrwetyana was 19 years old when she was raped and murdered by a post office worker (BBC News 2019). This case was the catalyst for many days of protest in the city of Cape Town, and the creation of the hashtag #AmINext which became the slogan of the movement that sought to bring the issue of violence against women to the forefront of the political conversation and demand resources and solutions from the South African government. Tragically, the case of Uyinene Mrwetyana is one in a series of high-profile stories. Hers was a single event among many. Violence against women in South Africa has reached epidemic-level proportions, many in the country are labeling it a 'femicide' (Wilkinson 2019). Alarmingly, the female murder rate in South Africa is five times the global average (BBC News 2019). According to data from 2017 and 2018, a woman is murdered every four hours in South Africa (Wilkinson 2019). More than 30 women were killed by their spouses in August 2019, and at least 137 sexual offenses are committed per day in South Africa (Francke 2019).

For this thesis, and in order to understand why South Africa has some of the highest rates of violence against women in the world, I consult a number of scholars who conclude that the overall issue of gender-based violence against women in the region needs to be put into the context of colonization and history of apartheid in South Africa. I take those arguments into consideration and acknowledge that the unique and lasting violence certainly contributes to the levels of sexual violence, but nevertheless, I believe that the transmission of the patriarchy during colonization into indigenous society is the starting point for violence against South African women and girls.

This thesis argues that the European colonization of South Africa brought over and established patriarchal ideologies in South African society, thus creating systemic and internal inequalities for South African women that continue today, specifically in the form of

gender-based violence. I demonstrate that Western patriarchal ideals were transferred to colonized society during the European colonization of South Africa by presenting a historical case study of British patriarchal values in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Second, I provide examples of pre-colonial African gender roles, to contrast the agency and power that indigenous women and girls possessed prior to European colonization. Finally, I analyze how the transmission of colonial patriarchal values happened to South Africa by the European domination of the region and subjugation of indigenous peoples to connect the European patriarchy to modern gender inequalities, specifically gender-based violence.

This thesis is organized into three major sections. The first section provides a context of gender-based violence and a brief background on the history of colonization and apartheid in South Africa, to contextualize the wider argument. Then an overview presents various scholars' works on the possible causes of the high rates of gender-based violence in South Africa, to understand explanations for the root of the violence. The final section includes a historical case study of British patriarchal values, demonstrating the gendered hierarchical society that existed, using feminist theorists' works of the time. To provide a contrast, pre-colonial African gender roles illustrate how indigenous women and girls were not bound by the same systems of a gendered hierarchical society. Further analysis provides an explanation for the transmission of British patriarchal values into social, legislative, and economic South African systems, and suggests that the patriarchy is maintained through institutionalized gender-based violence.

A Brief Historical Context of Colonization and Apartheid in South Africa

South Africa has a long history of European exploration and colonization, the Portuguese first landed on the South African Cape in the fifteenth century, but the Dutch were the first to colonize the area in 1652 and expand inland. The British took over in 1795, and the region passed back and forth between the Dutch and the British during a series of anglo-wars but was finally formally included in the British Empire in 1815, and British immigration to South Africa began around 1818 (Thompson 2001).

Apartheid was a system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South Africa from 1949 to 1994. Essentially, it was legalized white supremacy. The country was dominated by the minority white population in which they held the highest social and legal status, followed by other racial groups, and then the majority population of black Africans held the least amount of social and legislative power. The Dutch Empire began the informal system of segregation in the eighteenth century. However, the first set of formal apartheid laws were the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Immorality Amendment Act (1950), which made it illegal for South African citizens to marry or conduct sexual relationships across racial groups. The Population Registration Act (1950) classified all South Africans into one of four racial groups based on appearance, known ancestry, socioeconomic status, and cultural lifestyle: 'Black', 'White', 'Coloureds'', and 'Indian'. There were legitimized segregated neighborhoods for each racial group. Between 1960 and 1983, three and a half million black Africans were removed from their homes and forced into segregated places of residence as a result of apartheid laws. Apartheid legislation was repealed in 1991, and multiracial elections were held in 1994 leading to the election of Nelson Mandela, who was the first black head of state. The political, social, and economic effects of apartheid continue to the present day (Thompson 2001).

Gender-Based Violence: Types, Forms and Impacts

Gender-based violence (GBV) disproportionately affects the lives of women and girls. Gender-based violence can be physical, mental/emotional, systemic, financial, or institutional. Violence against women stems from historical patriarchal power structures, in which men hold a majority of the power, the patriarchy is a social and political system that treats men as superior to women. Gender-based violence can take multiple forms, and because most acts of violence are committed by men against women, the terms 'gender-based violence' and 'violence against women' are often used interchangeably.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a form of gender-based violence, "IPV is the most common form of GBV and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by a current or former intimate partner or spouse, and can occur in heterosexual or same-sex couples" (Safer Spaces 2014). The statistics illustrate that Intimate partner violence is the most common form of GBV, more than half of all the women murdered (56%) in 2009 were killed by an intimate male partner and it is estimated that between 28% and 37% of adult men report having ever raped a woman (Safer Spaces 2014). Another form of GBV is domestic violence (DV), which can be similar to intimate partner violence but also includes violence between family members, for example, a father committing violent acts towards his children. It is difficult to obtain accurate statistical data for domestic violence and intimate partner violence in South Africa because it is rarely reported to the police. An additional form is sexual violence, which is defined as, "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work" (Jewkes 2002). Sexual violence is one of the obvious physical forms of GBV, however, it can also have lasting mental health effects on the women and girls who experience it. Furthermore, it is important to note here that sexual violence can occur by

someone the survivor knows and also by a stranger. The final form is structural violence, which

is the broadest category, and can be defined as:

> Where violence is built into structures, appearing as unequal power relations and,
> consequently, as unequal opportunities. Structural violence exists when certain groups,
> classes, genders or nationalities have privileged access to goods, resources and
> opportunities over others, and when this unequal advantage is built into the social,
> political and economic systems that govern their lives (Safer Spaces, 2014).

We can usually find racial and gendered structural violence in most institutions across the globe.

What sets structural violence apart from the other forms of violence is that systemic violence

does not involve an individual, it has to do with structures built into society and government.

Examples of systemic sexism or structural violence can be rape in the military, a lack of paid

maternity leave, women's unpaid labor (ie: raising a family), victim-blaming, rape as a weapon of

war, etc. Each form of gender-based violence has its own series of consequences and effects

on individuals.

Gender-based violence has strong long-lasting physical and mental effects on the

women and girls who survive it. The most prominent repercussions are psychological,

behavioral, and physical; over a third of women and girls suffer from post-traumatic stress

disorder (PTSD) after experiencing sexual assault, not to mention the physical injuries that

occur after an attack (Safer Spaces 2014). Additionally, "women who have been raped are at

risk of unwanted pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections", the physical

repercussions of sexual assault do not end at the attack itself (Safer Spaces 2014). Family

members and friends of survivors can experience indirect trauma, and they may not know how

to provide effective support to individuals (Safer Spaces 2014). Professional psychological and

medical aid is important for survivors to receive, however, access to these services can be

difficult for some individuals. "In many parts of [South Africa], there is poor access to formal

psychosocial or even medical support, which means that many survivors are unable to access

the help they need (Safer Spaces 2014). Leaving survivors without proper support can be detrimental to their recovery and lengthen the process.

Gender-Based Violence in South Africa: Why are the rates so high?

When I think about Uyinene Mrwetyana, who was only 19 years old when she was brutally raped and murdered, and all the other women and girls who make up the numbers in a statistic about gender-based violence in South Africa, I want to know why the country is one of the most dangerous places in the world for a woman. For the purposes of this thesis, I set out to explore and answer this question. One popular theory is that in order to explain the high rates of gender-based violence in South Africa, the issue needs to be put into the violent historical context of colonization and apartheid (Graham 2013; Buiten and Naidoo 2016; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015; Gqola 2007; Moffett 2006). The authors say that African men, historically, have been denied power and agency within their own lives, in the socio-economic and political contexts, due to the racism during colonization and the apartheid regime. Therefore, South African men seek power wherever they can, in this case, they take the opportunity to flex their sexual power over women, leading to the striking number of cases of sexual violence in the country. One scholar, in particular, Moffett (2006), argues against this theory because it perpetuates the idea that only black South African men commit violence against women when statistically white South African men can commit violence as well. Another scholar, Gqola (2007), disagrees and argues that a combination of violent masculinity and 'the cult of femininity' together, create the conditions for gender-based violence. Violent or toxic masculinity is when the socialization that occurs for young boys focuses on lessons of aggression and violence as a way to express emotion, and over time, that aggression shifts to a form of asserting power over others, in this case, women. The 'cult of femininity" is defined as the socialization of young girls to be submissive and perform acceptable forms of femininity.

The theories for the rates of gender-based violence in South Africa set out by scholars is central to the understanding of the argument in this thesis because it provides alternative theories and a broader conversation about the causes of gender-based violence, specifically in the South African context.

Shanaaz Mathews, Rachel Jewkes, and Naeemah Abrahams (2015) come to the conclusion that the legacy of apartheid leads men to believe that they are not living up to the prescribed power that men should possess under the patriarchal system, mostly in terms of economic opportunity and social position (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015, 120). Therefore, men take out their frustrations and exercise the only real power they have in their lives, they abuse and often murder their female partners. "Within this context the use of violence within intimate relationships is instrumental as it provides men with control over women whilst they lack control in other aspects of their lives" (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015, 120). The scholars boil down the issue of gender-based violence in South Africa to men's desire to control. The scholars interviewed 20 incarcerated men who killed their partners and specifically explored their views on women (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015, 107). Rather than limiting themselves strictly to using a historical lens to view the issue, the authors go directly to the source, the men who have committed violence against their own partners, in order to answer the question. In their analysis of the interviews, the authors reiterate that the social and structural inequalities that exist in South Africa limit men in obtaining a traditionally successful masculinity. This historical framing of the study echoes other scholars (Graham 2013; Buiten and Naidoo 2016; Moffett 2006). They finish the study by saying, "This points to a contribution to prevention in changing constructions of masculinity in South Africa that emphasize control of women by men, as well as shifting social norms of female acquiescence, which render women vulnerable" (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015, 122). The sentiment echoes Gqola's (2007) piece in which she attacks violent masculinities and 'the cult of femininity' which she would argue perpetuates the vulnerability of women and calls for a societal shift in male/female relations.

Pumla Dineo Gqola (2007) takes a different angle and argues that violent masculinity is the root of gender-based violence in South Africa today. Violent masculinity is when the socialization that occurs for young boys focuses on lessons of aggression and violence as a

way to express emotion, over time, the aggression shifts to a form of asserting power over others. Gqola introduces the 'cult of femininity', what she describes as the widespread social beliefs and expectations on how a woman should behave, ie: acceptable ways to perform femininity. Gqola argues that societal expectations for women to retain the cult of femininity and for men to perform violent masculinity supports endemic gender-based violence in contemporary South Africa. "We know what is responsible for the scourge of gender-based violence, and we need to confront violent masculinities. We need to confront and reject violent men and the patriarchal men and women who protect and enable them" (Gqola 2007, 118). Gqola believes that patriarchal ideals reinforce the high rates of GBV in South Africa. She stresses that all men have a responsibility to show up and reject toxic masculinities, and think before they perpetuate the cycle of violence in terms of masculinity.

Gqola also uses Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement as a template that can be placed in the context of women's oppression and says that "psychological liberation matters" (Gqola 2007, 119). Black Consciousness was an integral part of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa during the 1970s. Created by Steve Biko, two pieces make up Black Consciousness, the philosophy, and the movement. A major component of Black Consciousness is the internal enlightenment that the black person must realize regarding their identity and oppression. Biko argues that for black people to be emancipated, firstly, they must be liberated from their mind and shed the negative connotations surrounding blackness that the white-dominated society perpetuated: "the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed" (Biko 2017, 50) Biko strongly believed that the first step to freedom was to decolonize the individual mind, and then that would lead to the decolonization of society. Once the black person is aware of their blackness and all of the oppressive elements that accompany being black there is a responsibility for the black person to combat and resist the oppressive system that is subjugating the individual: "liberation, therefore, is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves

and yet remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self" (Biko 2017, 49). Black Consciousness contains two fundamental pieces, internal cognizance of blackness and the conditions surrounding being black, then as a result, seeking emancipation and equality. Gqola takes this framework of Black Consciousness and applies it to the liberation of women. She believes women can unlearn how they function in the world and can liberate themselves from violent masculinities and the cult of femininity. However, Gqola finds fault in the Black Consciousness Movement. In her article, Gqola (2001b) talks about the erasure of black women from the Black Consciousness Movement and finds an issue with Black Consciousness' propensity to identify racism as the primary form of oppression for those subjected in South Africa because it ignores the experience of black women who face racism and gender discrimination. Gqola points out that experiences of oppression differ within Black society. Black Consciousness assumes the reverse is true (Gqola 2001b). Gqola's commentary here relates to the idea of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989), something that Steve Biko never considered.

Another scholar, Helen Moffett (2006) adds a critique to the idea that GBV in South Africa must be put into the historical context of colonization and apartheid. Moffett agrees with the theories discussed by others (Graham 2013; Buiten and Naidoo 2016; Gqola 2007; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015) but warns that looking exclusively at historical contexts furthers the racial stereotype that all black men are dangerous rapists:

> Like most feminists, I believe the cause of sexual violence lies in the construction of dominant masculinities found in all patriarchal social systems. Nevertheless, I believe that questions about the relation between apartheid's legacy and the current scenario of unchecked sexual violence must be framed - but in such a way that they do not focus exclusively on black men (Moffett 2006, 137).

Since the historical legacies of colonization and apartheid in South Africa focus on the disenfranchised black South African man, this limits the perceived scope of men who rape, "The truth is that the majority of rapists in South Africa are black only because the majority of the South African population is black" (Moffet 2006, 135). Moffett counters the argument of a

historical lack of agency by introducing the idea that in the colonial and apartheid system social hierarchies were organized by race, with white at the top and black on the bottom. Moffett argues that in the "new South Africa", post-1994, the hierarchies have now shifted to being designated by gender, with men at the top and women at the bottom (Moffett 2006).

The patriarchy is a social system that places men with a majority of the power and women as their subordinates. The patriarchy is central to understanding the source of gender-based violence in South Africa since it is the patriarchal attitudes that are steeped in society that lead to violence against women. The patriarchy cannot be separated from violence. Some scholars argue that the patriarchy does not have its origins in African society, they argue that patriarchal systems and beliefs were created in the West, and as a result of colonization, replaced African gender roles already in existence (Amadiume 1987; Chilisa and Ntseane 2010; Oyěwùmí' 1997, 2002). This piece is central to the main argument of the paper, the idea that colonization transported and established patriarchal ideals into South African society, contributing to the high rates of gender-based violence in the country today.

The reviewed literature presents various explanations for the rates of gender-based violence in South Africa, some scholars are inclined to agree with each other and others do not. The scholars that have been highlighted in this paper, such as Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams (2015), Gqola (2007), and Moffett (2006), all agree that violence against women can only be understood within the violent historical context of apartheid and colonization, but they differ in key ways. Gqola (2007) focuses on the concept of violent masculinity, blaming the socialization of young boys and girls, in addition to current patriarchal values on the high rates. Moffett points out that black South African men are not the only individuals who commit violence against women, white men also participate. The white South African men did not experience racism and the effects of colonization and apartheid, and they have not been historically disenfranchised. So the idea that men are seeking power due to the past systems of oppression does not apply to white South Africans', which leaves a hole in the argument. Despite the various points of

view, all the scholars agree that the explanation for the present situation of gender-based

violence lies in the history of South Africa. The literature indicates that complexities exist within

the issue itself and its causes, allowing for alternative theories. These scholars, with their works,

strengthen the underlying theory this thesis presents, that systemic and internal inequalities for

South African women continue today, specifically in the form of gender-based violence, due to

the European colonization of South Africa exporting and establishing patriarchal ideologies in

South African society.

Western Roots of the Patriarchy

To prove that the establishment of the patriarchy was a byproduct of colonization, it must be demonstrated that the patriarchy itself is a western concept and was not a universal system. To do this, I present the works of various scholars who argue in different ways that the patriarchal system was created in the West (Amadiume 1987; Oyĕwùmí 1997; Spencer-Wood 2016; Chilisa and Ntseane 2010).

Amadiume's main argument (1987) is that the concept of gender, as constructed in Western feminist ideologies, did not exist in Africa before colonialization; and the import and application of Western ideas onto local African cultures erased the social positions, of neither masculine nor feminine, that existed previously. Amadiume argues that sex and gender are not interchangeable, but notes that the West typically believes the opposite. Amadiume criticized Western systems and institutions for being "characterized by a rigid gender ideology". Therefore, when women in other societies defy those gender norms they are labeled as 'manly', rather than understanding that sex and gender roles differed between communities. Amadiume notes that in other non-Western societies women filled empowered roles that were neither masculine nor feminine. Amadiume critiqued the Western habit of imposing their structures and identities onto the entire world, negating the possibility of fundamental differences between societies (Amadiume 1987).

Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyĕwùmí (1997) argues in a separate piece that the center for knowledge production has always been, and continues to be the West. She criticizes the West's use of biological determinism, the idea that human behavior is determined by an individual's genes or physiology, as a way to organize society and social hierarchies. She argues that the idea of 'women' and gender binaries are not universal in every society across the world, and that sex and gender are Western creations pushed on the rest of the world by European domination, due to their status as the primary knowledge producers. Oyĕwùmí uses Yorubaland (a region of West Africa that spans the modern-day countries of Nigeria, Togo, and Benin) as the base for

her argument and analysis. She argues that social identities and roles were not divided or organized by gender assumptions before the European colonization of Yorubaland, instead social organization was determined by relative age.

Oyěwùmí critiques five common ideas in Western feminist writing: the first, gender categories have been in existence in all societies since the creation of man. Second, that gender is the fundamental organizing principle of every society. Third, that there is a universal category of 'woman' that individuals from any society can identify with. Fourth, that the subordination of women is universal. Finally, the concept of 'woman' is the opposite, or antithesis, of 'man'. Oyěwùmí goes on to critique traditional theorists of colonization like Franz Fanon and Albert Memmi for using a male point of view to write the histories of the colonized and the colonizer (Oyěwùmí 1997, 121). Oyěwùmí argues that indigenous women faced a very different type of colonization because they were being subjected under multiple identities: being black and female. The author writes that there are four important categories of colonizers and colonized: European men, European women, indigenous men, and lastly, indigenous women (Oyěwùmí 1997, 122). Oyěwùmí's argument closely mirrors Amadiume, they both argue that social organization by gender was not prominent in African societies prior to European colonization.

Suzanne Spencer-Wood (2016) goes further than others (Oyěwùmí 1997, 2002; Amadiume 1987) and analyzes how the patriarchy was used as a weapon towards indigenous peoples during colonization. Spencer-Wood explains that post-colonial feminist theories and research indicate that "the social institution of the patriarchy … was fundamental to European military conquest, colonization, economic exploitation of indigenous people, and cultural entanglements" (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478). Spencer-Wood argues that the ideals of the patriarchy were used as a weapon during colonization to subjugate indigenous peoples; women were knocked down to a lower status compared to men to undermine their sources of power. Spencer-Wood names actions such as limiting women to the domestic sphere, exploiting and

classifying unpaid domestic labor as unskilled, denying women land rights, and not allowing women into public or religious positions (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478).

Spencer-Wood argues that the patriarchy has been sustained and preserved through social and cultural ideologies and political institutions. More specifically, she presents the idea that, "radical feminist theory argues that patriarchal male domination has been enforced through culturally condoned systematic institutionalized violence against women (Spencer-Wood 2016, 480). Spencer-Wood writes that not only was the patriarchy imposed on indigenous societies during colonization, but the patriarchal system is also still maintained today via violence against women.

Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) take an interesting angle, their central argument is that because patriarchal values stem from the West, so too does feminism and Western feminism cannot be applied to women in the global south. The authors argue that "hegemonic Western gender theory" primarily used the experience of white women to build a narrative about sexism that women in the 'non-west' did not experience (Chilisa and Ntseane 2010; Lewis 2001, 1993; Gqola 2001a). Western feminism cannot be applied to the non-West because women from both spheres experience different oppressions, therefore, there is no one universal solution (Chilisa and Ntseane 2010; Lewis 2001, 1993; Gqola 2001a). This is an argument that Chilisa and Ntseane share with Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí. Oyěwùmí's (2002) main argument is that the African patriarchy as it exists today is a foreign ideology that was brought over from Europe during the colonization of Africa. Feminism is the belief and movement created to dismantle patriarchal systems and to de-internalize patriarchal ideologies. Oyěwùmí argues that because the patriarchy is European at its core, then so too is feminism, and therefore, feminism cannot be applied to African women (Oyěwùmí' 2002).

Amadiume (1987), Oyěwùmí (1997, 2002, 2001a), Spencer-Wood (2016), Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) all present separate arguments on how patriarchal ideals were created in the Western world. Further evidence, later on, will be presented to demonstrate what exactly those

patriarchal values were, how they differed from pre-colonial African gender roles, how the patriarchy was used by colonizers during colonization, and finally how the patriarchy is maintained through gender-based violence.

The Importance of Intersectionality

A final connection to be made is with the idea of intersectionality since the intersection of multiple identities is central to the female experience and helps us to understand the complex oppressions and privileges that individuals face (Crenshaw 1989; Chilisa and Ntseane 2010). Spencer-Wood states that "colonized women suffer the most oppression from interlocking sexism, racism, and classism" (Spencer-Wood 2016, 480). Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term 'intersectionality' in 1989 and defines it as how various identities or oppressions, like race, class, and gender, intersect with each other and overlap causing multiple oppressions (Crenshaw 1989). In some cases, identities can provide both privileges and oppressions, for example, white women are privileged in their race but are disadvantaged due to their gender, black men experience the opposite, they are privileged due to their gender but are disadvantaged in their race. Adding further elements of class, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability create a full picture of an individual's identities, all of which intersect at varying degrees. Chilisa and Ntseane have their version of intersectionality, which they call "triple oppression", the idea that poor black women are at the bottom of the pyramid of the sociological categories of race, gender, and class; therefore experiencing multiple oppressions (Chilisa and Ntseane 2010; Gqola 2001a). This concept is relevant because it links back to the power dynamics of gender-based violence in South Africa, the most vulnerable women are poor black women (Davis 1982), one of the most marginalized groups in the country (Safer Spaces 2014).

Methodology

I argue that the European colonization of South Africa established patriarchal ideologies in contemporary South African culture, thus contributing to the high rates of gender-based violence in the country today. I show how the transmission of colonial patriarchal values led to gender inequality and gender-based violence in contemporary South Africa in three main steps.

First, I prove the systemic and social subordination of English women by analyzing Feminist theory and legislation of the past to show how European colonization altered gender equity in South Africa today. British immigration to South Africa began around 1818 (Thompson 2001). Due to this date, and for the purposes of this thesis, the focus will be on British attitudes towards women during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to illustrate the specific values of the British patriarchy of that time and establish a link between post-colonial gender attitudes in Southern Africa.

I consult the works of English feminist theorists to depict the European patriarchal values of the time, works include, Mary Wollstonecraft's "*The Vindication of the Rights of Women: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*" (1792), William Thompson "*Appeal of One Half the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain Them in Political, and thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery*" (1825), Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill's "*The Subjection of Women*" (1861). Additionally, I use English women's rights legislation to illustrate the societal attitudes towards women in the nineteenth century, laws such as the Custody of Infants Act of 1839, which allowed a mother to petition the courts for custody of her children after divorce. And the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, which permitted married women to be the legal owners of the money they earned and to inherit property. British women were suppressed by societal and institutional systems, they lacked political rights by being denied the vote and they were limited by land ownership and property laws. Women were seen as second-class citizens and after industrial capitalism was implemented in the eighteenth century, were pushed out of the male-dominated workforce and were economically

disadvantaged. Thompson (1802) and Mill (1878) liken the women of that era to slaves, while this comparison is precarious, it also illustrates to what degree these women were viewed in society.

Second, to show how British colonization altered gender roles and introduced the patriarchy into African society, I discuss several works by African scholars to illustrate the pre-colonial gender roles of African societies in southern Africa and modern-day Nigeria and analyze how those social categorizations changed after British colonization (Amadiume 1987; Oyěwùmí 1997; Moagi and Mtombeni 2020). The sources tell us that not all societies in the world have historically been organized by gender, with an active inequality between the two roles. Specifically, the data shows, supported with work by Amadiume (1987), Oyěwùmí (1997), Moagi and Mtombeni (2020), those pre-colonial African societies were not governed by patriarchal systems, that indigenous women possessed their own agency and fulfilled similar, if not the same, roles as indigenous men. Furthermore, the paper outlines specifically how the patriarchy was used by colonizers during the process of colonization. These pre-colonial African gender roles changed after colonization as a direct result of colonizers using the patriarchy as a tool to control and suppress indigenous societies.

Finally, the work of Spencer-Wood, "Feminist Theorizing of Patriarchal Colonialism, Power Dynamics, and Social Agency Materialized in Colonial Institutions" (2016), details precisely how colonizers used the patriarchy during colonization, to provide an overview of the lingering effects of forced patriarchy on colonized societies, and introduces how the patriarchy is maintained through social and institutional gender-based violence. Bauer and Ritt's, "'A Husband Is a Beating Animal': Frances Power Cobbe Confronts the Wife-Abuse Problem in Victorian England" (1983) is used to further establish that, historically, the patriarchy has always been violent.

English Patriarchal Values: What did the patriarchy look like?

I demonstrate the societal values of the patriarchy by using feminist theorists around the time of the British colonization of South Africa. Mary Wollstonecraft, William Thompson, and John Stuart Mill were all Western philosophers, writers, and activists. Most of these works were written in direct opposition to other scholars of the time. Their writings provide a social commentary on gender attitudes of their time that I use to construct a broader picture existing of patriarchal values.

Wollstonecraft was one of the earliest feminist writers, is the classic traditional liberal feminist, while her ideas were groundbreaking and forward-thinking for the time, it must be acknowledged that she was writing for and about women like her: white, European, and middle class, she did not consider women outside her own identities. Industrial capitalism in the eighteenth century took labor out of the private home and into the public workforce. Previously, women would participate in productive work that centered around earnings sufficient for living. Once work moved into the factories it became more difficult for women to earn a wage, especially for the middle and lower class mothers. In her book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects* (1792), Wollstonecraft compared wealthy and middle-class women to birds that are confined to cages and that have nothing to do but preen themselves and "stalk with mock majesty from perch to perch" (Wollstonecraft 1792, 118). Wollstonecraft's solution to gender differences in society was education. Providing an equal, egalitarian education for boys and girls, for them to develop logical and ethical minds and be fully formed people who possessed agency over their lives. Wollstonecraft was under the belief that the traditional traits for women were lesser than men, centrally emotion or sensibility. Her idea of equality was for women to achieve the traits traditionally associated with men, rather than critiquing masculine behaviors, Wollstonecraft still believed women the weaker and men the ideal. She called on men to save women because until women and girls were educated, they could not pull themselves out of their situations. Wollstonecraft's idea for women was to

deny them the placement as the sidepiece next to the male, she wanted women to take up the position of men for complete autonomy. Furthermore, Wollstonecraft did not believe that women needed to be economically and politically independent from men to be autonomous over their lives, she believed that educated women were autonomous enough. Wollstonecraft's piece presents the typical white, middle class or bourgeoisie woman of the Georgian era, one who is trapped in a cage like a bird, with no agency or fulfilling purpose in life other than to complement the domineering male figure.

Wollstonecraft's piece tells us how certain women were viewed at the time of her writing. Wollstonecraft leans on the metaphor of a bird in a cage, her description tells us that white, middle, and upper-class women felt trapped, with a lack of agency and power. Wollstonecraft believed the solution for these women was education, also implying that Wollstonecraft's women were not educated enough. Further evidence will be used to create a complete picture of all women and will outline how they were disempowered.

William Thompson is remarkably progressive for the time in his book, *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain them in Political, and Hence in Civil and Domestic, Slavery* (1802). He claims women are at a disadvantage due to their ability to conceive children and thus are expected to raise them. He argues that women are further disempowered due to their continued and deliberate exclusion from knowledge, work, property ownership, and political rights (Rowbotham 1973, 40). Thompson critiques the existing system of marriage for contributing to the power dynamics of domination and subjugation. He dismisses the notion that masculinity is akin to domination and femininity submission. Thompson claims that under the existing system of competitive society men were afraid of the competition of women's work, and without compensation for women's unpaid labor (ie: childcare and housework) or a social system for childcare, women would continue to be pushed out of the workforce. Thompson compares the female situation to slavery, due to the social designation at birth, and the biological determination that women are naturally

submissive. Thompson takes a philosophical approach and determines that once women become conscious of their oppression, the chains would be loosened, "their magic depends on your ignorance, on your submission" (Thompson 1802, 194) (Rowbotham 1973, 40). This aligns with Steve Biko's ideas of internal individual liberation, as previously outlined (Biko 2017). Thompson argues for women's inclusion in knowledge, work, property ownership, and political rights, suggesting that women were excluded from these spheres at the time of his writing. His likening of women to slaves, while seemingly drastic and unfair to us now, demonstrates how women were treated and considered in English society. As an early feminist theorist, Thompson identifies precisely the ways in which women were forced to ne second class citizens, they were not on a level playing field as men, they were excluded from knowledge, work, property ownership, and political rights. It is precisely these causes that future feminists took up and worked for women to be included.

John Stuart Mill also goes further than Mary Wollstonecraft, in his book *The Subjection of Women* (1878), by claiming that for society to reach gender equality, then society must provide women with the same political rights and economic opportunities as well as the same education that men enjoy. What is clear is that biological determinism was central to the subjugation of women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the idea that biology or physiology was the basis on which human behavior is controlled, ie: men are stronger with bigger brains and women are weaker with governing emotions. Mill believed biological determinism and stereotypes of women as simply mothers, wives, and homemakers to be outdated; and that the devaluation and exclusion of half of society was a hindrance to human development. Mills equates marriage to the slavery of women and campaigned for the reform of marriage legislation and suffrage with his position as a Member of Parliament. Overall, Mills believed that the equality of women, socially, politically, and economically, to be for the greater good of society.

What these theorists and thinkers present is the social and legislative subordination of women. English women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a lack of agency, personally, politically, economically, and socially, which is evident in the arguments of Wollstonecraft, Thompson, and Mills. Wollstonecraft argues for the education of women, signifying that there is a gap between the education of British boys and girls. Wollstonecraft believed that the education of girls would be enough to procure the rights of women. Thompson and Mills go much further. Thompson argues for women's paid labor in the home, as a way for women to become economically independent, he believes that marriage is a system to bind women in an inferior position. Thompson's radical beliefs and arguments signify what the status of women was during his time, he writes that women are excluded from knowledge, work, property ownership, and political rights, and so then, in reality, they must have been excluded from those spheres. Thompson's illustration of women during his time paints a picture of a figure with no agency, no power, and who does not have equal status to men. Mills supports this picture with his writings that were published about 75 years later. Mills believed that women were oppressed beings in English society, and he used his position as a Member of Parliament to advocate for the political rights of women, including suffrage.

Legalized Subordination of Women

What were the institutionalized inequalities that feminist theorists of the time were writing to dismantle? The following laws denote the precursory legalized subordination of British women, until these laws were established, women were viewed as second class citizens under their male counterparts. There is a handful of landmark legislation that seeks to undo the sexist nature of the law, what must be noted is the year in which the laws were enacted, exemplifying the previous attitudes and marking the changing attitudes of society.

The Custody of Infants Act (1839) allowed mothers to petition the court for custody of their children up to seven years of age after the divorce was granted since previously child custody was awarded to the father. The passing of this law demonstrates that, under the law,

mothers were subordinate to fathers because custody of children was automatically granted to the father in cases of divorce. This law allowed mothers to be able to petition for custody of their children, still implying that without a petition fathers would still be granted automatic custody. This signals that attitudes of the time believed fathers to be the better custodians of their children, and only in certain exceptions were mothers fit as well. Perhaps this belief was due to economic reasons, we know for a fact that men produce more income than women, and thus a father could provide more for the child.

The Married Women's Property Act (1882) gave married women the right to own their share of the family property. This was one of the first acts of legislation that gave Victorian women a slice of agency, but only if she was married, so her fate was still tied to her relationship with a man. Previously, women were limited as to what they could own. When a man and a woman married, legally they became a single entity and the husband was in control of the property (this refers to land and personal property). This signifies the lack of power that women held in British society, once married, everything they owned became under the control of their husband. Only women who never married or who were widowed could maintain ownership of their inheritance. The law of 1882, enacted almost 65 years after British immigration to South Africa began, significantly altered married women's level of agency over their property and their lives.

The Representation of the People Act (1918) gives women the vote who are over thirty years of age and who meet minimum property qualifications, one hundred years after Britain begins to colonize South Africa, only a fraction of women are granted the vote. Young women and lower class women are still excluded from the political process, due to the age restrictions and the property requirements. Men could vote from the age of 21 and there were no property requirements imposed on them at this time so women were still politically unequal to men. Not until the Equal Franchise Act (1928) did British women over twenty-one years of age get the right to vote, ten years after the initial act.

The Sex Disqualification Removal Act (1919) introduces equal employment status for women. What this act signifies is that prior to 1919, women were not legally privy to equal employment status, perfectly demonstrating the societal, political, and economic inequality between men and women. The next two laws, passed roughly fifty years later, also indicate the very same inequalities. Under the Equal Pay Act (1970) women workers are granted fair and equal pay under the law. The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) grants women equal treatment in work and society under the law.

As late as 1984, the Criminal Law Revision Committee decided that rape couldn't be committed within a marriage, and therefore marital rape was not considered illegal in the U.K. until 1991. This piece is relevant because it illustrates the legal and social ownership that husbands possessed over women's bodies. Until 1991, it was inconceivable to the U.K. government that a woman could choose to deny her husband access to her body. The Criminal Law Revision Committee's decision illustrates the lingering attitudes of male domination over women, if these attitudes lasted in the U.K. until 1991, isn't it possible that the same attitudes would be possessed by colonizers and enforced in the British Commonwealth?

These laws indicate perfectly the degree to which women were dominated and controlled. They were not equal to men under the law, the changes were made slowly, and still, no country in the world has achieved gender parity. The purpose of presenting these laws is to mark precisely the ways in which the patriarchy functioned legislatively and politically. Further, the laws exhibit and spotlight the social attitudes that existed prior to the implementation of the legislation. The themes being the exclusion of women from property rights, from political rights, from economic and social parity with men. Putting together the qualitative examples of British women's disempowerment and the theoretical and narrative arguments of Wollstonecraft, Thompson, and Mills, paints a convincing picture of the societal and institutional subjugation of British women and girls. The following sections will present a direct contrast between the roles of British women and the roles of pre-colonial African women.

Pre-Colonial African Gender Roles: Did gender inequalities exist everywhere?

The idea that the patriarchy is a western import is central to the overarching theme of this paper. Some scholars argue that many African societies were not organized by gender, as they are traditionally seen in the West, and it was not until after colonization that male hierarchies were established in modern African culture (Amadiume 1987; Moagi and Mtombeni 2020; Oyěwùmí 1997, 2002; Sudarkasa 1986). There will also be an exploration of African women in positions of power, specifically motherhood, to illustrate that African women held significant and influential positions within their indigenous societies (Walker 1995; Stephens 2013).

Amadiume (1987) examines gender roles in her hometown, Nnobi of Igboland in Southeastern Nigeria. For the purposes of this paper, data from Nigeria was included and used as evidence to forward the argument about South Africa for two reasons. Firstly, while it is not South Africa, Nigeria was also colonized by the British, and the indigenous societies underwent the same process of patriarchal colonization and erosion of indigenous gender roles and societal structure. Second, copious amounts of study have been done on the precise argument of this thesis, specifically in Nigeria, providing perfect examples of the effects of British colonialism on African nations and demonstrating the replacement of gender attitudes. What is evident is that although there was a separation between the genders, it was not structurally rigid and women could cross into positions held by men. For example, women were still seen as laborers and reproducers but it was not under the exclusive authority of men. Women could marry women, not because they were lesbians, but so one could benefit economically and for the acquisition of power. While the power is not divided as male=superior and women=inferior, women are able to access both roles, a position that Amadiume titles the "female husband". There is no mention of "male wives", so there is no evidence that men were ever in the subordinate position within the marriage. Additionally, when the father failed to have a son, a woman could obtain the role of "male daughter" and secure the father's line of succession, in

terms of name, property, and wealth. In Nnobi of Igboland, there was a women's council, where

rules and regulations surrounding women were reviewed and enforced, policies like a ban on

sexual intercourse with women who were nursing, and a two-year spacing between children.

Placement on the council and title as head of the council were honored positions. This illustrates

the agency that women held in the society, and demonstrates that they had safeguards in place

to protect each other. In a review of Amadiume's work, Christine Oppong (1989) says:

> We are shown how these new institutions, with their linked ideologies and cultures, greatly affected the structural position of women in modern Nnobi society and how Western concepts introduced through colonial conquest brought with them strong sex and class inequalities supported by rigid gender ideologies and constructions (Oppong 1989, 511).

The claim is maintained through the evidence, that after the British invasion, once the

indigenous institutions were suppressed and European systems of economy, education, and

Christianity were introduced and imposed, Nnobi women began to lose their achievement and

status (Oppong 1989). It was Western colonizers who imposed 'sex and class inequalities', the

evidence being that Nnobi society was not primarily structured by gender and class, and not

until the process of colonization began when European colonizers established their systems

onto this 'new' land they had conquered:

> overwhelming evidence shows that women in Nnobi and in Igboland in general were neither more comfortable nor more advantaged from an economic point of view under colonialism. They had lost their grip on the control of liquid cash; men had invaded the market, and women were becoming helpless in their personal relations with husbands .... But most important of all, pro-female institutions were being eroded by the church and the colonial administration (Amadiume 1987, 132).

Exclusion of women from the labor market was an act of disenfranchisement that institutions

applied to women in Britain, an action that William Thompson and John Stuart Mill argued

against in their respective writings. Colonizers attempted to subordinate indigenous women by

actions such as limiting them in the economic sphere. If the Nnobi indigenous systems of

hierarchy and gender roles were organized in their own ways and then replaced by Western

systems of gender inequality and patriarchy, could the same be possible in another region

colonized by the British?

In Oyĕwùmí's (1997) examination of gender roles of the Yorùbá people in West Africa

(primarily the region of modern-day Nigeria), she quickly realized that to get a complete

analysis, she would need to look at the organization of social categories before and after

prolonged contact with the West. According to the research, social categories like 'woman' did

not exist in Yorùbáland prior to contact with the West (Oyĕwùmí 1997, ix). Western cultures'

reliance on biological determinism is blamed for sustained inequalities because Yorùbá society

did not use biological determinism, "prior to the infusion of Western notions into Yorùbá culture,

the body was not the basis of social roles, inclusions, or exclusions; it was not the foundation of

social thought and identity" (Oyĕwùmí 1997, x). Precolonial Yorùbáland did not use the human

body as the foundation for social ranking, instead, there was a hierarchy determined by relative

age. Additionally, the social positions of individuals fluctuated in relation to whom they were

interacting, and therefore "social identity was relational and was not essentialized" (Oyĕwùmí

1997, xiii).

Colonization was implemented on Yorùbá society by British colonizers who established

separate gender roles in the indigenous African societies, excluding women from political

spheres and creating a gendered division of labor. "In Britain, access to power was

gender-based; therefore, politics was largely men's job; and colonization, which is fundamentally

a political affair, was no exception" (Oyĕwùmí 1997, 123-124). Under colonization, African

women lost their roles in a judicial capacity, which was disadvantageous when marriage,

divorce, pregnancy, and ownership became under the jurisdiction of the law (Oyĕwùmí 1997,

127). Education and the church played a role in the process of implementing colonization and

the patriarchy. As outlined in the previous section, European women were excluded from land

and property ownership, further pushing women into the margins and overturning their previous

positions of power. The West has a sustained place as the forefront of knowledge producers

and the continued worldly hierarchy of race and gender, leaving African women continually

being diminished and erased, particularly from historical analysis. Oyěwùmí's analysis of gender

roles of Yorùbá people and the process of colonization in Yorùbáland, focusing on the

implementation of gender categories which stems from the European use of biological

determinism, supports the claim that European colonization introduced the patriarchy into

certain African societies.

In their book chapter, Moagi and Mtombeni (2020) reject the assumption that pre-colonial

women in Southern Africa were seen as second-class citizens and suffered from similar

oppressions as European women, who were confined to domestic labor and existed with a lack

of agency over their lives. This idea is overturned by examining oral sources as well as primary

and secondary literature of women in pre-colonial Southern Africa (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020,

18). According to the authors, "The James Stuart Archives, which is a collection of recorded oral

evidence on the history of the Zulu Kingdom and neighboring peoples, is one of the main

primary sources for this study" (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 3-4). Women in pre-colonial

southern Africa were visible and played central roles in their communities, "they occupied

positions of influence in the public space and were active in domains that were dominated by

male stereotypes" (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 4). The assumption that gender oppression is

prevalent in all societies across the world, is dispelled by the author's analysis, by comparison,

women in pre-colonial southern Africa fulfilled much different roles in their societies. Women are

identified as active agents of production, women had influence in politics and religion, women

were political leaders, and women were religious and spiritual leaders. Southern African

societies provided far more roles and opportunities than European women. Southern African

women were treated quite the opposite of their European counterparts, they were fully equal

contributing members of society:

> Women in pre-colonial southern Africa were thus not oppressed nor trapped in
> domesticity; they were active in production, political, and religious spheres. They

ventured into male-type domains, controlled their bodies, owned their labor, and determined their destinies (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 18).

Moagi and Mtombeni's work supports the idea that the patriarchy was not universal across the world. Unlike the picture of women that Wollstonecraft, Thompson, and Mills present, Moagi and Mtombeni provide an account of a pre-colonial society that did not have a gender hierarchy. The authors go so far as to point out that the roles of women changed after the beginning of colonialism, Southern African women became victims to a gendered division of labor, confined to domesticity and reproduction (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 18).

Some scholars claim that there were already separate roles for South African men and women, and with the practice of polygamy being common for carrying on family lines, "many women end up being at the beck and call of just one man" (Hutson 2007, 83). Implying an existing separation between the genders and the subordination of women. While this may be true, there is enough evidence that many indigenous African societies existed with a lack of emphasis on gender. Particularly with the accounts of West African societies like the Ibo, Tallensi, Asante (Ashanti), Nupe, and Yoruba. There is the conclusion that:

> The absence of gender in the pronouns of many African languages and the interchangeability of first names among females and males strike me as possibly related to a societal de-emphasis on gender as a designation for behavior. Many other areas of traditional culture, including personal dress and adornment, religious ceremonials, and intra-gender patterns of comportment, suggest that Africans often deemphasize gender in relation to seniority and other insignia of status (Sudarkasa 1986, 101).

A handful of scholars have been outlined that believe in the possession of agency and power that pre-colonial indigenous African women held in their society. What they all agree on is that pre-colonial African women held status and authority and it wasn't until after colonization that the place of women was lessened, particularly due to the written laws that gave women fewer rights than men (Amadiume 1987; Oyěwùmí 1997, 2002; Moagi and Mtombeni 2020; Hutson 2007; Sudarkasa 1986).

To understand the power of women's position in certain African societies, some scholars have chosen to explore women's history through motherhood. When the role of the Queen Mother or Nnàmasòle of Buganda (in the area now known as Uganda) is examined, specifically in precolonial times, we can see that the mother of the king held significant political power: "the queen mother was a power in the land at least equal to her son" (Stephens 2013, 107). Within the kingdom of Buganda, there existed a position for a woman with great influence and respect, in fact, "...no radical political changes could take place without her sanction" (Stephens 2013, 108). The position of the Nnàmasòle demonstrates that within African societies there were positions of power that only women could inhabit.

As much influence as the Nnàmasòle held in their royal society, some could argue that she only held this power due to her position as a mother. It was only due to her role of giving birth to a significant male that she held any relevance or influence. Therefore, the power of the Nnàmasòle was still completely constructed under the position and in relation to men. In contrast, Cherryl Walker states that the "'collusion with patriarchy' approach is too unidimensional, failing to accommodate the complexity of women's construction of motherhood as identity and through practice, rather than simply shaped by an imposed discourse" (Walker 1995, 17). So, Walker disagrees with the notion that a mother's power is strictly in relation to the domestic sphere and her position is granted by the nature of her relationship with her son. The notion of motherhood demonstrates the complexity of the connection between the patriarchy and the societal attitude towards women and girls.

Moagi and Mtombeni (2020) include specific examples of women in pre-colonial southern African communities who possessed agency and power through their positions. They use work by Jennifer Weir (2000), who analyzes women and women's leadership in pre-colonial Zulu women in southern Africa, and "concludes that women in pre-colonial southern Africa were not restricted in the domestic space; they performed leadership roles in the military, economic, and religious domains of their communities" (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 3). This illustrates that

Zulu women in southern African bore no resemblance to the birds in cages that Mary Wollstonecraft described, on the contrary, they possessed power and agency of their own. Moagi and Mtombeni (2020) go on to describe the work of Sifiso Ndlovu (2008) who also uses pre-colonial Zulu women in southern Africa but focuses more on Regent Queen Mkabayi's influence in the Zulu Kingdom by using Zulu oral literature (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 3). Ndlovu (2008) comes to the conclusion that "women in the Zulu Kingdom were involved in production and were leaders in the family homesteads" (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 3). Providing compelling evidence to dispel the notion of gender oppression in most pre-colonial southern African states (Moagi and Mtombeni 2020, 3). There is a singular limitation to focusing on the roles of royal women, that it provides limited attention to other categories of women in Zulu society. Nevertheless, examples of royal women in pre-colonial African society strongly demonstrates that there were African women who occupied spaces of power.

According to the scholars provided in this section (Amadiume 1987; Oyĕwùmí 1997, 2002; Moagi and Mtombeni 2020; Sudarkasa 1986; Chilisa and Ntseane 2010; Stephens 2013), there are widespread examples across the African continent, and specifically in southern Africa, of African women possessing more power and fulfilling roles not accessible to European women. In fact, much of the evidence suggests that pre-colonial African women represent a direct contrast to European women, and speaks to the notions of which each society regarded women and girls. The next section will observe and reflect how colonizers used their power structures of female inferiority to undermine pre-colonial African societal structures, to siphon away power from indigenous women and weaken the community as a whole.

Transmission of the patriarchy: How do we get from the violence of colonialism to current rates of violence against women in South Africa?

Suzanne Spencer-Wood (2016) goes further than others (Oyěwùmí 1997, 2002; Amadiume 1987) and analyzes how the patriarchy was used as a weapon towards indigenous peoples during colonization as a way to subvert power from indigenous women and control the overall population. Spencer-Wood (2016), uses a feminist lens to understand patriarchal power dynamics between colonizers and the colonized, she relies on archaeological research and feminist theories to support her theoretical argument.

Since indigenous gender roles were not based on biological determinism, they differed from traditional European gender roles, colonizers would use the patriarchy, a system that by definition limits the power and agency of women, to suppress indigenous women in their own societies as a way to take control of the entire population. Post-colonial feminist theories and research indicate that:

> **...**the social institution of patriarchy, including sexual relationships, was fundamental to European military conquest, colonization, economic exploitation of indigenous people, and cultural entanglements (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478).

The ideals of the patriarchy were used as a weapon during colonization to subjugate indigenous peoples; women were knocked down to a lower status compared to men to undermine their sources of power. Another scholar, Linda Gordon (2006), outlines a precise process of colonization:

> ... the colonized underwent (1) a forced, involuntary entry into the dominant society, (2) the erosion or even outright suppression of indigenous cultures, (3) subjugation to administration by representatives of the colonial power, (4) subjugation to racist ideology, and (5) subordination within a division of labor (Gordon 2006, 431).

Gordon and Spencer-Wood agree that colonization is a violent process that erases the existing culture and replaces it with the enforcement of the colonizers. In the case of Southern Africa, that would leave the South Africans as the colonized, the Dutch and the British as the colonizers.

The patriarchy is also implemented during colonization and erodes women's power in these specific ways:

> Patriarchy undermined indigenous women's sources of power through actions such as limiting them to the domestic sphere, exploiting and classifying then unpaid domestic labor as "unskilled" and therefore low status, denying women's land rights, not allowing women to exercise public or religious powers and positions, imposing the institution of patriarchal monogamy, outlawing extramarital sex, and lowering the status of children born out of wedlock as illegitimate (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478).

These systems of oppression are what British feminist theorists were arguing against in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This thesis has outlined previously how Mary Wollstonecraft, William Thompson, and John Stuart Mill, identified these precise actions in their work and were actively writing against them. In pre-colonial Britain, certain British women themselves were limited to the domestic sphere, denied land rights, and not allowed to hold certain powers and positions (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478). The laws the British government imposed on women, to keep them politically and legally oppressed have also been outlined. The patriarchy and all the tools within it was consciously used against indigenous women to subvert their power in the very same way that the patriarchy functioned in Britain.

The patriarchy has been sustained and preserved through social and cultural ideologies and political institutions, examples of this are found in widespread social gender roles and linger in legislation. The most potent form in which the patriarchy has been maintained throughout the years is gender-based violence or violence against women:

> Radical feminist theory argues that patriarchal male domination has been enforced through culturally condoned systematic institutionalized violence against women (Spencer-Wood 2016, 480).

Not only was the patriarchy imposed on indigenous societies during colonization, but the patriarchal system is also still maintained today via violence against women.

> Second wave structural-feminist theory neglects women's social agency but analyzes how patriarchy has been maintained and reproduced through cultural ideology, laws, policies, and political, legal and social institutions (Spencer-Wood 2016, 480).

Specific actions such as limiting women to the domestic sphere, exploiting and classifying unpaid domestic labor as unskilled, denying women land rights, and not allowing women into public or religious positions leave women vulnerable to the suppression of the patriarchy (Spencer-Wood 2016, 478). All these processes were used consciously by colonizers, to weaken colonized communities and disrupt existing societal structures.

> Radical feminist analyses reveal that the debris of "patriarchal colonialism" includes the continuing subordination of women through culturally condoned, widespread, and institutionalized male violence that survives in various forms to contemporary times. This includes the under-prosecuted, and therefore underreported, crimes of domestic violence, and rape (Spencer-Wood 2016, 488).

Once the colonizers introduced and enforced the patriarchy, the system maintains itself through cultural ideology, political, legal, and social institutions, and violence. This is the case in South Africa. Indigenous Southern African gender roles varied from traditional European gender roles, once the British colonized South Africa, the patriarchy was introduced, erasing those indigenous gender roles, then it was enforced and maintained through social and institutional gender-based violence.

For further evidence that the patriarchy is a violent system that maintains itself through violence against women, Bauer and Ritt's (1983) analysis of Frances Power Cobbe's groundbreaking article, "Wife Torture in England" (1878) will be presented. Cobbe was a nineteenth-century women's rights activist and she took a particular interest in the issue of domestic violence. According to court records, there was an average of four cases of aggravated assaults of husbands on wives every day, this figure merely represents those cases that came before the court (Bauer and Ritt 1983, 100). There was a historical acceptance of domestic violence in English law, prior to Cobbe's article, evidence to this fact being that there was no major legislation that deemed wife-beating illegal or inappropriate. In this Cobbe found an issue, prompting her to write her article. Cobbe uses evidence of widespread wife abuse by using police reports going back only three or four months, all of which are alarming:

George Ralph Smith, oilman, cut his wife, as the doctor expressed it, 'to pieces,' with a hatchet, in their back parlour. She died afterwards, but he was found Not Guilty, as it was not certain that her death resulted from the wounds… (Bauer and Ritt 1983, 105-106).

James Mills, John Mills, James Lawrence, Frederick Knight, Richard Mountain, John Harris, Richard Scully, William White, William Hussell, Robert Kelly, William James, Thomas Richards, James Frickett, James Styles… all documented as assaulting, and in some cases, murdering their wives. Cobbe was able to present evidence that wife-beating was widespread and argued that it was a prevalent issue. As for the causes of wife-beating, "[Cobbe] clearly recognized that the fundamental cause of wife-abuse could only be seen in the conventional attitudes toward the female sex. The widely accepted notion of women's inferiority, therefore, was at the heart of the wife-beating problem" (Bauer and Ritt 1983, 99). Cobbe, in addition to Bauer and Ritt, identify conventional attitudes of women's inferiority, or the patriarchy, as the root of the violence against women that Cobbe outlines. This statement aligns with Spencer-Wood's that the system of the patriarchy, in other words, the subordination of women, maintains itself through "culturally condoned systematic institutionalized violence against women" (Spencer-Wood 2016, 480). Cobbe's article contributed to the passage of the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1878, making it easier for women to escape their husbands' torture. For us, Cobbe's writing establishes the continued connection between systemic patriarchal values and gender-based violence. The patriarchy was identified in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain, and so too was violence against women. The patriarchy was also identified in post-colonial African societies, and so too was violence against women. Further evidence has provided the connection between the patriarchy and colonization, and how the two are intertwined. If one connects the dots, then gender-based violence can be established as a byproduct of patriarchal ideals, which emerge in Britain and can be traced to colonized countries like South Africa.

To summarize, scholars were used to demonstrate that the European colonization of South Africa established patriarchal ideologies in South African culture, thus contributing to the

high rates of gender-based violence in the country today. First, the data showed that British women were suppressed by societal and institutional systems, they lacked political rights by being denied the vote and they were limited by land ownership and property laws. Furthermore, women were seen as second-class citizens and after industrial capitalism was implemented in the eighteenth century, were pushed out of the male-dominated workforce and were economically disadvantaged. Certain femininist theorists of the time, like William Thompson (1802) and John Stuart Mill (1878) likened the women of the time to slaves, which illustrates to what degree these women were viewed in society. Then, pre-colonial gender roles were explored that existed in certain African societies, to determine how those gender roles changed after British colonization. The sources explained that not all societies in the world have historically been organized by gender with an active inequality between the two roles. Specifically, work by Amadiume (1987), Oyěwùmí (1997), Moagi and Mtombeni (2020), and Sudarkasa (1986) illustrated that pre-colonial African societies were not governed by patriarchal systems and that indigenous women possessed their own agency and fulfilled similar, if not the same, roles as indigenous men. Furthermore, Spencer-Wood (2006) showed that the pre-colonial African gender roles changed after colonization as a direct result of colonizers using the patriarchy as a tool to control and suppress indigenous societies. Finally, the section connected the violence of colonization to the continued male violence against women that perpetuates the patriarchy to this day in South Africa by introducing that the patriarchy was violent in Britain by using Bauer and Ritts (1983) analysis of Frances Power Cobbe's confrontation of the wife abuse problem in Victorian England, "Wife Torture in England" (1878).

Conclusion

In South Africa, rates of gender-based violence are the highest in the world, the current President Cyril Ramaphosa, admitted in 2019 that the country is facing a national crisis of violence against women (Franke 2019). The female murder rate in the country is five times the global average (BBC News 2019). In addition, at least 100 rapes were reported daily in 2018 (BBC News). As of 2020, around 51% of women in the country have experienced violence at the hands of their partners, and domestic violence cases have spiked alarmingly since the coronavirus lockdown began in March 2020 (Adebayo 2020). "As a man, as a husband, and as a father, I am appalled at what is no less than a war being waged against the women and the children of our country," said President Cyril Ramaphosa in an address on 17 June 2020, "We note with disgust that at a time when the country is facing the gravest of threats from the pandemic, violent men are taking advantage of the eased restrictions on movement to attack women and children," (Adebayo 2020). As a response to the murder of Uyinene Mrwetyana, Ramaphosa pledged $75m to strengthen the criminal justice system and provide better care for victims (Adebayo 2020). However, South African activists are demanding more action on behalf of the government, the authorities, and the broader community. They ask individuals to be vigilant, and identify signs of aggressiveness and violence, and report to the police before incidents occur (Adebayo 2020).

This thesis argues that the European colonization of South Africa brought over and established patriarchal ideologies in South African society, this created systemic and internal inequalities for South African women that continue today, specifically in the form of gender-based violence. Other scholars have demonstrated that to explain the high rates of violence against women in South Africa, the issue needs to be put into the historical and racial contexts of apartheid and colonialism, and more recently the formal push for gender inequality (Graham 2013; Buiten and Naidoo 2016; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015; Gqola 2007; Moffett 2006). The authors say that African men, historically, have been denied power and

agency within their own lives, in the socio-economic and political contexts, due to the racism during colonization and the apartheid regime. Therefore, South African men seek power wherever they can, in this case, they take the opportunity to flex their sexual power over women, leading to the striking number of cases of sexual violence in the country. Another scholar, Moffett agrees with the theories discussed by others (Graham 2013; Buiten and Naidoo 2016; Gqola 2007; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015) but warns that looking exclusively at historical contexts furthers the racial stereotype that all black men are dangerous rapists. This work is different from Mathews (2015) because while the historical context of the country is important from a foundational standpoint, to use history as the primary explanation for rates of GBV ignores the patriarchal systems and influence in society. This work aligns with the work of Gqola (2007, 2001a, 2001b), Moffett (2006), and Spencer-Wood (2016) because their work is centered on using broader feminist theories to explain patriarchal structures.

This paper consulted the works of English feminist theorists to depict the European patriarchal values of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, for example, Mary Wollstonecraft's "*The Vindication of the Rights of Women: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*" (1792), William Thompson "*Appeal of One Half the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain Them in Political, and thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery*" (1825), Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill's "*The Subjection of Women*" (1861). Additionally, English women's rights legislation was used to illustrate the societal attitudes towards women in the nineteenth century, laws such as the Custody of Infants Act of 1839, which allowed a mother to petition the courts for custody of her children after divorce. And the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, which permitted married women to be the legal owners of the money they earned and to inherit property. Demonstrating the legislative and societal actions that sought to maintain women into the status of second-class citizens.

Furthermore, to demonstrate that British colonization altered gender roles and thereby introducing the patriarchy into African society, this thesis used the works of Amadiume, "*Male

Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society" (1987); Oyěwùmí,
"Invention Of Women: Making An African Sense Of Western Gender Discourses" (1997); Moagi
and Mtombeni, "Women in Pre-colonial Africa: Southern Africa" (2020), to illustrate the
pre-colonial gender roles of African societies in southern Africa and modern-day Nigeria and
analyze how those social categorizations changed after British colonization.

Finally, the work of Spencer-Wood, "Feminist Theorizing of Patriarchal Colonialism,
Power Dynamics, and Social Agency Materialized in Colonial Institutions" (2016), was used to
detail how colonizers used the patriarchy as a way to diminish power from indigenous peoples
during colonization, to provide an overview of the lingering effects of forced patriarchy on
colonized societies, and to analyze how the patriarchy is maintained through social and
institutional gender-based violence. Bauer and Ritt's, "'A Husband Is a Beating Animal': Frances
Power Cobbe Confronts the Wife-Abuse Problem in Victorian England" (1983) was used to
further establish this point.

The data presented British patriarchal values during the time that Britain colonized South
Africa, by analyzing Feminist works and legislation of the past to prove the systemic and social
subordination of English women. In contrast, pre-colonial African gender roles were included to
illustrate how European colonization altered African gender roles and gender equity in South
Africa. And how the transmission of colonial patriarchal values led to gender inequality, and
specifically, gender-based violence in modern-day South Africa.

Violence against women and girls should be considered a global crisis, South Africa is
not the only country in which this kind of violence is pervasive, studies indicate that one in three
women globally experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes (WHO 2021). With
violence against women this widespread, what is the solution? How do we move forward? How
can we solve this crisis? If we listen to Pumla Dineo Gqola (2001b), we can take the framework
of Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement, which includes psychological liberation, and
apply it to combat patriarchal ideals. If every individual takes responsibility to look inside

themselves and oppose the patriarchal values we are each socialized to believe, we can stop

the power of the patriarchy from the inside out. Then, women like Uyinene Mrwetyana, whose

life was ended too early by the hands of a man, would be free to live without the shadow of male

physical and sexual violence pursuing her.

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