Twilight of Patriarchy in a Southern African Kingdom: A Case Study of Captives and Women in the Ndebele State of Zimbabwe

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Abstract
Patriarchal ideology was a fundamental organizing tool used by the ruling pre-colonial Southern African kingdoms to keep women, the youth and captives outside the corridors of power and influence. This powerful ideology was underpinned and mediated by complex politics of exclusion and inclusion, as well as delicate, ambiguous and contradictory forms of patronage, patrimonialism, oppression, kinship, exploitation and domination. This article seeks to analyse the major manifestations of patriarchal ideology in the Ndebele State in the 19th century. The focus is on three major aspects, that is; existing major forms of oppression and domination; treatment of captives and the nature of gender relations in the Ndebele State.

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