

'The piety of Afrikaner women': In conversation with Prof. Christina Landman on the piety of Afrikaner women

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In conversation with Prof. Christina Landman's analysis of the piety of Afrikaner women, this article explores the role patriarchy and misogyny played in subduing and silencing Afrikaner women from revolting against their male counterparts in the midst of male domination in the 19th and 20th centuries in South Africa. It asks questions around whether or not concluding that Afrikaner women remained silent and accepted male domination because of their conservative religious beliefs is oversimplification. This article further attempts to offer a deeper version of why white Afrikaner women did not protest against the patriarchal system that denied them their full humanity and freedom. The study starts by proposing a theoretical framework within which research on the subject of the Afrikanerdom's and the Calvinism Reformed Churches' treatment of women evolved, all the while in conversation with Prof. Landman on her thesis that Afrikaner women's silence in patriarchal hegemony was a result of conservative Calvinism and sin-soul-salvation piety.

Keywords: Patriarchy; Misogyny; Sexism; Piety; Decolonisation; Chauvinism; Feminism; Dominance.

Introduction

Prof. Christina Landman has done enormous work on the piety of Afrikaner women. Her contribution began with her pioneering book, *The Piety of Afrikaans Women*, in 1994 (Landman 1994). Landman, through her works in the last three decades, has ventured to expose the masculinity embedded in Calvinist tradition. In her works, she has provided explanations for the pietistic expression of Afrikaans women, especially from reformed faiths (Landman 2009:89–102). Her analysis is unique in that she points out the ideological tools that domesticated Afrikaans women and convinced them to accept that their role in society was that of submissiveness to the male-engineered environment. She contests that this submissiveness was further propelled by extreme suspicion of other cultures – especially British and black culture¹ – and, invariably, caused them to embrace self-hate and defeatism, which enabled men to exploit them further (Landman 1994:3). Van der Westhuizen (2017:95) sees this as being transformed in the new post-apartheid culture into an ethnic form of respectability, which would serve a panacea for the stain of the dark past of apartheid while still earn them the respectability of the *volksmoeder*.²

My conversation with Landman on male chauvinism in the Reformed Churches spans two decades. On 08 and 09 March 2018, I continued my conversation with her through an open-ended interview that also involved Rev. Aletta Pretorius,³ with the intention of shedding further light on Afrikaner women's response to patriarchy in the 19th and 20th centuries and establishing the origin of anger that Landman eloquently describes in *The Piety of Afrikaans Women* (Landman 1994:vi). She describes her research on the piety of Afrikaans women as triggered by the way in which Afrikaans women were socially and politically enslaved by their piety and the history that denied them universal franchise in their country of birth.⁴ In such a context, self-sacrifice had

1.Christi van der Westhuizen (2017:95) maintains that the Afrikaners – as the descendants of the Boer settler class – constructed their identity in opposition to black identities on the one hand, and to Anglo whiteness on the other hand.

2.Van der Westhuizen (2017:193) maintains that the fall of apartheid and the introduction of constitutional democracy resulted in an Afrikaner identity crisis exacerbated by a collective humiliation and shame that had fallen on them because of apartheid and its demise.

3.Aletta Pretorius is emeritus minister of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). She joined URCSA in the 1980s, where she was subsequently ordained as a minister of the Word and Sacraments, as she could not be ordained in the white Dutch Reformed Church from where she received her theological training.

4.This mentality was questioned by Marie du Toit in 1921, when she reacted to the 1920 Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika synod argument that women were given a gentle and quite spirit to prepare them for private life within the family (in Landman 2009:9).

Note: The collection entitled 'Christina Landman Festschrift', sub-edited by Wessel Bentley (University of South Africa) and Victor S. Molobi (University of South Africa).

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become synonymous with Afrikaans women (Landman 1994:vi). The main source of Landman's research was Dutch and Afrikaans diaries and archival material, which results in her conclusions being life-experienced. The article takes the discourse that the docility of Afrikaner women in South Africa was also a result of patriarchy and misogyny further.

Pretorius⁵ was included in the conversation in order to establish similarities and contrasts between the milieu in which the two women grew up and the severity of patriarchy on women within the Reformed Churches in South Africa,⁶ and how this affected or shaped their theology or lives. Pretorius completed her theological studies at Stellenbosch University a few years before Landman, while Landman went to the University of Pretoria (S.T. Kgatla pers. comm., 8-9 March 2018). Both women experienced the same kind of resentment from their white male lecturers as well as from their fellow students at the two seminaries. My attention is, however, particularly focused on the theological journey of Landman, who has written extensively about feminism and piety in Reformed Churches women⁷ (although she denies that her feminist interpretation influenced her initial research, as indicated earlier).

Landman's overview of her life

Landman was born on 08 February 1956 into an Afrikaans-speaking family in Pretoria. She completed matric at Lyttelton Hoërskool in 1973 with five distinctions. According to Landman, her father⁸ suggested that she enrol for a degree in theology at the University of Pretoria (UP) – an idea she had already entertained. Subsequently, she registered for a BA degree at UP, where she obtained seven distinctions (Landman 2009). Her subsequent academic qualification trajectory included a BA (Hons) Greek, a Bachelor of Divinity (BD), an MA Greek, two DTh degrees and a BA (Hons) Latin. She has authored seven books and 14 popular works, and has written more than 56 scientific articles in accredited journals. She belongs to local and international academic organisations (including the Circle of Concerned African Female Theologians), to which she has read more than 49 papers in the last 8 years.

Both Pretorius⁹ and Landman were told by their church (the Dutch Reformed Church [DRC]) in no uncertain terms that they would never be allowed to enter into full ministry in the church.¹⁰ When Landman could not continue her theological

5. Pretorius was treated similarly to Landman by the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). I hope that her inclusion in the study would bring more clarity to the nuances of DRC theology on the admission and ordination of women in the church.

6. There are three Afrikaans reformed churches in South Africa: The DRC, which is the largest one, the Hervormde Church and the Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika (Landman 2009:9).

7. The article is written in honour and on occasion of Landman's 60th birthday.

8. Her father was a professor of Education at the University of South Africa and a member of the DRC.

9. Both Pretorius and Landman studied theology with 20 or more male students and were scolded as misplaced young women. Both of them opted for secular jobs (outside the church) after completing their theological studies. It became very clear to them that the DRC would not accept them as ministers in the church. Pretorius said that the authorities asked her whether she was coming to a male profession to look for a man to marry her.

10. The first woman to be ordained in the DRC was Gretha Heymans, who has served in the *Koviekampus* DRC congregation since 1995.

studies at the University of Pretoria because she was a woman and her church did not support women for ordained ministry,¹¹ she switched over to the University of South Africa (UNISA) to continue her studies. Pretorius, in contrast, continued with her theological studies at Stellenbosch University for 7 years and obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Theology followed by a Licentiate in Theology, but she was not ordained until she joined in 1987 the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) Circle of Concerned Church Leaders, called the *Belydende Kring*.¹² At UNISA, Landman obtained a Bachelor of Divinity,¹³ Master of Arts, and two doctorates in theology, as stated above. Subsequently, in 2006, she joined the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA), where she was ordained in 2008 (Plaattjes-Van Huffel 2013:329) and elected as Actuarius for two terms at her first Northern Regional Synod in 2010. In 2019, she was elected as Actuarius for the URCSA's (2011) National Synod.

According to Landman, the discrimination meted out to women in the DRC did not incentivise them to turn to feminist theology and resist patriarchy in the church, although later, together with a few white theologians at white universities, she did engage in the academic study of feminist theology.¹⁴ Later in her academic career, Landman became involved in the Circle of Concerned African Theologians, led by Ghanaian feminist theologian Mercy Amba Oduyoye (2004). Her participation here enriched her tremendously in terms of her development in feminist theology, especially as the Circle writers use discussions to critique patriarchal cultures that keep women oppressed (Dube 2016:3).

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework followed in this article is what Manne¹⁵ (2016) calls 'the logic of patriarchy and misogyny' in naming, defining and curtailing a space for women within the cultural space. The five scholars (Brison, Manne, Frost, Perry and Sommers) who contributed to the debate about President Donald Trump's misogyny at the *Boston Review* on 11 June 2016 concur that patriarchy and misogyny are not identical (Brinson 2016; Frost 2016; Manne 2016; Perry 2016; Sommers 2016). Patriarchy is a system of gendered/subordinated relations, while misogyny is about patriarchal norms and the enforcement of these norms (Manne 2016). However, I argue that these terms share the same space in domesticating, controlling and forcing women into their

11. Although Landman had obtained seven distinctions and passed Latin, Hebrew and Greek (the classical languages required for the study of theology), she had to switch over to UNISA for a Bachelor of Divinity, which she completed under Prof. Stoop of Church History (Landman 2009).

12. The *Belydende Kring* (Circle of Confessing Christians) played a crucial role in the formation of the Uniting Reformed Church, which in 1994 culminated in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

13. She did B.Div at UNISA and completed her script, titled 'Aspects of the Exetical Method of Augustine', under Prof. Stoop of Church History. She also did some courses with Profs. Bosch and Simon Maimela.

14. She first studied feminist theology under Prof. Maimela, who introduced a module at UNISA in 1984.

15. Manne and seven other American women exchanged views on Donald Trump's misogyny during the 2016 election and provided insights into the theory and practice of misogyny in the *Boston Review* under the heading 'The logic of misogyny'. This research has benefitted from the theory of misogyny from the debate of the seven academics.

subordinate role in society (Campbell 1981:67). Both operate from a common cause of creating an environment in which women may be subjected to the rule of men.

Methodological approach

A combination of two methodological approaches is used to reach a better perspective for this study. Macedo (2015:1) of Clark University (Department of International Development) argues that the combination of desk research and interview research methods can yield results that cannot otherwise be achieved. In this study, desk research (a literature review) and a research interview (exploring views, experiences and beliefs on the matter of a lack of feminist activities among Afrikaner women during the 19th and 20th centuries) are combined to develop a new ground theory of explanation. Oakley (1998:iv) argues that a qualitative research methodology is most suited to investigate a new field of study in which one intends to ascertain, challenge or reinforce theories. A combination of qualitative methods is used to provide a deeper understanding of the social phenomenon under study, in which women's indifference to their marginalisation is inspired by Calvinism and Kuyper philosophies, as postulated by Landman's argument of Afrikaner women's piety.

Epistemological lens

The article distinguishes patriarchy, sexism and misogyny from each other, even though they are closely related and operate within the same space of male dominance. The Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (Collins Cobuild 2001:518) defines patriarchy as the system in which men have all or most power and importance in a society or a group. Campbell (1981:68) sees patriarchy as 'any group or organisation in which male roles hold dominant power and determine how things ought to be done'. Sexism, in contrast, is the discriminatory belief that members of one sex are more intelligent and have more capabilities than those of the other, and that they need not be treated equally; it is also the behaviour which results from this belief in a patriarchal system (Manne 2016). Misogyny, though related to the above, is more hostile and entails a dislike of women. It is embedded in patriarchy and derives its shape and form from a patriarchal social stereotypical framing of women (Campbell 1981:68). Misogyny is like a lawnmower that levels the grass and tolerates no dissent when it comes to male dominance over women. Patriarchy is more entrenched and may give rise to sexism and misogyny, which are outright disapprovals of recognition of women or any behaviour that threatens men. Both patriarchy and misogyny have the ability to remain concealed and even dominant where they are not challenged directly. They continue policing women's situations to ensure that the 'law and order' of patriarchy is maintained (Manne 2016).

Scholars such as Frost (2016), Manne (2016) and Sommers (2016) – who contributed their views on misogyny in the *Boston Review* on 16 June 2016 – see patriarchy as a societal system that may depend on 'loving mothers', good wives,

loyal women and heroines of the nation while socialising them into a situation of political naivety. Patriarchy, as a system, shapes gender norms as well as male expectations of women (Manne 2016). Frost (2016), for example, sees patriarchy as a gendered political, social and economic arrangement of power, while sexism refers to the cultural interpersonal manifestation of patriarchy. Patriarchy employs stereotypes such as male chauvinism, contempt, aggression (if necessary) and, where necessary, invites misogyny to 'level the grass'. Patriarchy depends on submissive 'loving mothers' (Manne 2016) and sometimes operates as unconscious hatred towards women (Brogaard n.d.).

The subtlety of misogyny

According to Kimberly (2006:127–128), who quotes Gilmore's (2001) *Misogyny: The Misogyny as Male Malady*, misogyny is universal and is an institutionalised and ritualised fear of women by men. It cuts across all nationalities, although it is more pronounced in some nationalities, especially in poor communities (Schutte 2013:4). Misogyny in society is subtle; in its subversive form, it hides and obscures its colours while stereotyping its victims (Campbell 1981:69). Andrews (1981:4) describes misogyny as wearing many guises and revealing itself in different forms, but also describes its chief characteristic as pervasiveness. It uses commodities such as wealth, education, race, religion and dramatised language to gain hold of its subjects (Andrews 1981:4). Brogaard (n.d.), in her article 'The Mysteries of Love: 12 ways to Spot a Misogynist', describes misogyny as typically an unconscious hatred that men form early in life as a result of some form of traumatic experience. In some societies, women are encouraged to internalise the system of misogyny and the belief that they need male policing (Sommers 2016), while it is used to maintain as well as control the structures of male dominance (Andrews 1981:5). In its concealment, it takes numerous forms – at times overt and blatant brutality, and at others, covert and difficult to identify (Sommers 2016). In this way, it obscures its severity even in punishing women who are perceived as not toeing the line (Brison 2016). Sometimes, according to Manne (2016), women are rewarded when they respond to male expectations to fulfil certain roles, although they are not really appreciated. Where misogyny's operations yield desired fruits and women play their roles as dutiful mothers and caring wives, women are treated as heroines for their conformity to the system. Those who overstep the limits are labelled as rebellious, and, for example, are accused of being involved in witchcraft (Kgatla 2000:30). In some cases, women give up the struggle for their full humanity against misogyny because male dominance appears insurmountable. Some have to come to believe that their socialisation into male-dominated society is seen as divinely ordained (Andrews 1981:6). But their portrayal and the praise for their heroism, patriotism and imagined worthiness add to their complacency in their socialisation. In some cases, Andrews (1981:6) argues, women do not need men to put them down, violate them or denigrate them, as they do these things quite well without being reminded (Manne 2016).

Landman's thesis of sin–soul–salvation piety

This article aims to further explain Landman's thesis that Afrikaner women were locked in the naïvety of a sin–soul–salvation piety, and that this should serve as an explanation for why they did not fully engage with the patriarchal system that menaced their lives. I contest that Landman's explanation does not go far enough and lacks a full grasp of clandestine patriarchal operations. This article argues that patriarchy, sexism and misogyny have shaped political, social and economic controls and have rendered Afrikaner women in South Africa numb when it comes to feminist issues. It uses literature from different sources to argue that misogyny, a branch of patriarchy, was, in fact, at play in enforcing Afrikaner women's submission to male domination. Patriarchy is formative to the concepts of both personhood and ownership of women by their male counterparts (Perry 2016). In its subtle ways, patriarchy punishes women who are not sufficiently oriented to men's interests (Brison 2016).

Landman (1994:3–26; 2009:3–26, 89–102) was correct in observing that religious piety (Calvinism and Kuyperism) – especially as inherited from Europe (Holland) and introduced into South Africa by people such as Jan van Riebeeck in 1652, George Schmidt of the Moravian Brothers in 1737 and Ritzema van Lier in 1786 as well as by other religious leaders that were sent to South Africa – instilled a strong sense of piety in Afrikaner women. Inner spiritual experience, manifested by fervent prayer and tolerant of self-affliction, self-denial and personal salvation, played a marked role in women's lives as Afrikaners were *trekking* from the Cape Colony into the interior of the country. Their denouncing of the real world in favour of the mystic world of joy and eternal happiness became the pedestal on which pious spirituality was transported, but the full picture remained hidden. In this respect, leaders such as Andrew Murray, who served the DRC for more than 50 years as a minister and influenced many missionaries, made an irrevocable mark on this religious community. With his piety, he influenced many young people who felt 'called' to ministry (Elphick 2012:18), some of whom died in tropical Africa due to malaria and other diseases (Kgatla 1988:112).

An opinion piece in *Die Vryburger* (2013, 'Die vrou van ons volk') found the same tendencies in the life of white Afrikaner women during that time. But the impact of idealised titles given to Afrikaner women such as '*die boerwrou*' [the boer woman], '*moeder van haar volk*' [mother of her nation] and '*volksmoeder*' (the nation's mother), and the position that women occupied in the society went a long way in distracting them from male domination in their lives (Walker 1990). The process of development of the above-mentioned images of women contributed to the style with which their community was imagined and had to be built (Walker 1990:10).

Binary of control through social apparatus such as lofty language and pursuance of self-preservation

The contention of this article is that Afrikaner women were controlled on two levels: Socialisation and the ideology of self-preservation. Religion in all its ramifications, politics in all its subtleness, economic interest and social love of dominance played a crucial role in the lives of Afrikaner women in their response to the patriarchal order, with resultant silence in response to their oppression by men. Manipulation through social apparatus and religious means as well as political instruments was used by men to keep (Afrikaner) women silent in an oppressive environment. I concede that Calvinism (with its pietistic promises) played its part, but the political, economic, social and cultural roots went deeper in determining the responses of white women to the patriarchal regime. Piety could serve as a form of dereliction from real issues, but it also served political and religious interests.

The argument in this article is that as much as Calvinism played a fundamental role in shaping the religious outlook of Afrikaner women as far as their emancipation from male dominance was concerned, it is an overstatement to conclude that their piety – rather than the result of their manipulation from outside their bodies – was solely responsible for their complacency. Such a conclusion is tantamount to blaming the victims for the crime committed against them. In a patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic society, the indifference of victims to their oppressive conditions should be addressed in terms of the structural arrangements and the tools of oppression used to maintain the status quo. Wa Thiong'o (1986:387) argues that the language used by a dominant group in a particular environment has an effect on determining and reinforcing other 'selves' on the victims. The language used by a dominant group has the effect of concealing exploitative underlying motives and keeping its victims unaware of actual intentions (Biko 2009:53). Biko called for the Black Consciousness Movement in order to draw the attention of the black masses in South Africa to the menacing and exploitative policy of the dominant white people that used the black masses' very own 'mind' to capture them (Biko 2009:26). The true cause of Afrikaner women's silence in the face of their oppression by men should be sought somewhere else rather than solely in their piety. Calvinistic piety played an enabling role in, but was never a sole source for, Afrikaner women's inaction and docility.

There is much literature that confirms Landman's analysis that Afrikaner women were applauded for their submissiveness, and monuments were erected to honour their willingness to sacrifice their rights. Their quest was to remain undefiled by politics and exemplary of what it meant to be an Afrikaner woman (and mother). In her article on the institutionalisation of Christian women's organisations in the former Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) and the DRCA, Plaatjies-Van Huffel (2011:105–119) shows

how subversive language could become. She argues that the values and norms of patriarchy were disseminated through lofty language such as referring to women as the 'mothers', 'wives' and 'daughters' of the nation (Plaatjies-Van Huffel 2011:105–119). The same sentiments are still alive to this day. Van Wyk (2010) portrays revivalist Angus Buchan of Greytown, KwaZulu-Natal, as the Billy Gram of South Africa. Buchan (in Van Wyk 2010) regards (Afrikaner) woman as the heart of the house, with the house being as healthy as the woman who manages it.

Landman (2009:89–102) argues that the submissive position of Afrikaner women in the church could be explained historically. Women mostly felt at ease with piety and revivalist experiences while condemning themselves as sinners who needed redemption for their souls. Landman (2009) sees the flocking of these women to revivalist churches as the result of their conditioning to see their liberation as lying in a sin–soul–salvation model. Historically, Landman (2009:89–102) argues, these women saw the subordination of their bodies to male dominance and rule as the salvation of their souls.

A factor that has kept Afrikaner women complacent with regard to their role in emancipating themselves from male rule is the discourse of 'folk other' (Landman 2009:102). In this regard, women were encouraged to honour and crown their husbands as the heads of their families. In support of the notion of the glorification of Afrikaner women as an exercise of control, Walker (1990:12) asserts that there was a clear convergence between the development of the ideal of the '*volksmoeder*' (folk mother) and the rise of Afrikaner nationalism. According to Landman (2009:102), this socialisation made women feel uncomfortable with the idea of standing up against and renouncing domination over them. The ideals of womanhood in the 19th and 20th centuries were undergirded by patriarchy (Walker 1990:12) and continually became inferior in the eyes of men. Despite this, these women carried an unbearable burden without complaining (Walker 1990). One of the means of keeping Afrikaner women in their male-dominated positions was to give them statues of honour (which became the symbols of ideal womanhood) and respectability (as heroines) (Walker 1990:13). Bodies such as the Suid-Afrikaanse Vroue Federasie, the Oranje Vroue Vereniging and the Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereniging were part of the ideology that worked for the compliance of Afrikaner women within the system (Walker 1990:13). They were described as extremely courageous and ready to suffer for a good cause (Walker 1990:14).

Historical reinforcement of Afrikaner ties to bolster identity and self-preservation

Giliomee (2003:254–256) portrays Afrikaner women during the Anglo-Boer war, during their containment in concentration camps and during the recession of the early 1930s as exhibiting extreme sufferings, which left the indomitable resistance

mark of true Afrikaner women. Their resilience and willingness to suffer and endure baffled their men (Giliomee 2003:256). In some incidents, they went to the extent of scorning men for giving up the fight (Giliomee 2003:256). Defeat in the wars made many women cling to their religious and political convictions (Die Vryburger 2013). The outlet from this conditioning of women was not necessarily piety but subjects of misogyny.

The Afrikaner nation had always seen itself as a threatened nation that needed protection in order to fulfil their God-given mandate in Africa (Coetzee 1963:91–107). Their understanding of being racially superior and 'pure' infused a sense of a common goal and cause. They perceived themselves as a nation that had been called by God in a particular time and had been equipped with talents and possibilities to carry out God's mandate (Coetzee 1963:91). They had to listen to what God was saying and strictly follow that calling. Imbued by Calvinism as taught by Dutch statesman and academic Abraham Kuyper,¹⁶ the Afrikaner nation, in both political and religious leadership, geared the nation to be bolstered in a particular form to serve its mythical and political agenda (Dobosova 2009:305–323). For the Afrikaner nation to fulfil its God-given mandate in South Africa, it had to understand that its identity was in danger and had to close ranks by rejecting the Anglicisation policy and the distortion of divine order that came from accepting equality between whites and blacks (Dobosova 2009:308). In order to foster a national identity, especially after the first war in 1881, Afrikaner Nationalism was established through the secret organisation of the Afrikaner Bond in 1880, with apartheid (in order to plan segregation) beginning in the church in 1857 (Corrado 2013), and many other Afrikaner organisations which affiliated themselves with the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Association, including the Afrikaner churches (Giliomee 2003:401).

In pursuance of these ideals, a convergence of different ideologies had to be forged in order to form one encompassing philosophy. Afrikaners had to embark on this self-understanding to consolidate their identity of Afrikanerdom to survive in a hostile environment. In any group pursuing survival imperatives, differences that may prevent the centre from holding together are either eliminated or effectively ignored. The societal concerns fall within the ladder of the hierarchy of needs because of the position they occupy on that ladder. Explaining the elimination of societal needs from its radar of attention through religious affiliation and conviction may be amorphous and inaccurate. Giliomee (2003:374) asserts (in this respect) that Afrikaner women had been remarkably independent and knew what they needed. During the Great Trek, the Transvaal rebellion, the Anglo-Boer war and the violent strikes of 1922, they rallied behind their husbands and sons to resist British dominance. It was only after the National Party came to power that women increasingly became full-time wives and mothers. With their

16. Kuyper was a Dutch statesman and theologian who had a profound influence on Afrikaner nationalism. In 1914, he published a book titled *De eereposisie der vrouw* (*Honorary Position of Woman*), in which he encouraged women to stay away from politics (Landman 2009:8) for their souls to remain pure.

men in power, they became politically conservative and thereby resigned themselves to the judgement of men. The Afrikaner churches participated in influencing women to see their main role as the anchor of their families in their homes (Giliomee 2003:376). They resigned themselves to the judgement of men, including that of church (Giliomee 2003:376).

Secular newspapers such as *Die Burger*,¹⁷ which was launched in 1915, played a significant role in rehabilitating the poor white to the ideology of housewives (Giliomee 2003:375), while family magazines such as *Die Patriot* (1876), *Huisgenoot* (1916) and *Die Boerevrou* (1919) addressed the concerns of Afrikaner women (Giliomee 2003:375). In the political arena, it became abundantly clear that Afrikaner men served the ideals their wives would embrace of a 'safe South Africa for them and their children' (Elphick 2012:219). All the privileges that come with white supremacy, such as legalised discrimination that shaped the economy to favour them and their children and social and political enclosures that insulated them from the 'swart gevaar' [black threat], seemed benevolent enough for women to support the ideology. Andrews (1981) maintains that the images of benevolence were meant to cover and mask the atrocities that were being committed against women. The denial of the black franchise reduced black people to non-citizens of the country and 'hewers of wood and carriers of water', which served the Afrikaner ideal of self-preservation (South African History Online 2018). Weighing their interest, it was better for women not to rock the boat for women's franchise but to leave politics to men. Men, therefore, represented their interest in politics.

In the midst of external threats and self-preservation, women had succumbed to the system of dominance

In search of an Afrikaner identity and a means of self-preservation, Afrikaner male leaders rejected the anglicisation policy and equality with black people and crafted a discourse through religious, mythic and political elements to remain in charge (Dobosova 2009:305) while keeping women silent on matters that affected them. Patriarchy and misogyny were ingrained in the psyche of men through the ages, and rooted in legal, economic, social and religious systems (Perry 2016), and was exported to sustain the philosophy of white survival in the hostile environment of South Africa. Patriarchy and misogyny had to be employed to 'keep the things as they were'.

The system helped the Afrikaner leaders preserve the ethos and way of life that were unique to them. Although they were rigid, they could evolve segregationist (Worden

17. In her construction of Afrikaner women's post-apartheid crisis, van der Westhuizen (2017) studied Afrikaans women's magazine, *Sarie*, concentrating on 12 issues from 2009. She believes that self-acknowledgement of their guilt could serve as a catalyst for true transformation in the post-apartheid era and restore their ethnicised respectability (*ondentlikheid*).

2012:20) thoughts through the employment of the Afrikaner Broederbond¹⁸ (Zaaiman 2010), Afrikaner nationalism, Afrikaner experience and Calvinism, with the internal logic of eliciting cooperation from women (Dobosova 2009:310). The initiative to instil political indifference in and obtain the consent of women to male domination was not with the 'undersiders' but with the 'topsiders'.¹⁹ The environment in which Afrikaner women found themselves was not conducive to feminism because it was not only subdued but also non-virulent. A cloud of violent suppression was always hanging over women's heads whenever men felt that they were losing their grip and becoming powerless. The case of Maria Magdalena du Toit, who protested when women were denied the right to vote in the church (Landman 2009:9), epitomises the hegemony that encompassed women. In 1921, du Toit²⁰ published a book on women and feminism,²¹ which was an attack on generally accepted notions of womanhood, but her pleas fell on deaf ears (Walker 1990). Andrews (1981) concludes that where male dominance has come to fruition, women do not need men to put them down or violate them because they perpetuate male dominance themselves. Women can internalise misogyny to the extent that they frown on other women who resist the system of their subordination (Landman 1994:3).

Conclusion

The article was an attempt to converse with Prof. Landman on her scholarly work on piety and Afrikaner women. It tried to articulate the role of patriarchy, misogyny and sexism as the logic behind Afrikaans women's docility towards politics and patriarchy as clandestine in creating conformity to male-engineered structures in order to control women in society. In conversation with Landman, the article tried to pinpoint some salient points not fully actuated in her work, as she attempted to locate the role piety played in the lives of Afrikaner women in remaining silent about their rights in male-dominated society. Factors such as their own security, self-preservation and avoidance of chastity by a male-dominated society played a role in the submission of women to male rule. This was done through employing the theoretical framework of 'the logic of patriarchy and misogyny' in naming, defining and curtailing a space for women within the cultural space. The central argument of the article was that Afrikaans patriarchy hid behind biblical texts to continue a dominant role that has subjection of women in its interests. Under the subtlety of lofty religious language and political uncertainties that agitated for self-preservation and security, the patriarchy succeeded in

18. On 05 June 1918, disaffected Afrikaners were brought together in a new organisation called *Jong Suid-Afrika* (Young South Africa). The following year, its name was changed to the *Afrikaner Broederbond* (AB). The organisation had one main aim: to further Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa, which included maintaining Afrikaner culture, developing an Afrikaner economy and gaining control of the South African government (South Africa History Online 2011).

19. The concept of 'undersiders' and 'topsiders' is a liberation metaphor that refers to oppressed people as undersiders in history, while their oppressors are topsiders (Kgatla 1997).

20. Maria du Toit was the first Afrikaner woman to question the ideology of womanhood (Landman 2009).

21. The exact title of the book could not be found, but Landman (2009:9) refers to one with the title of '*Vrou en Feminist*' ['Woman and Feminist'].

pushing women to submissiveness. It is my hope that the article triggers further research and debate on the subject.

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S.T.K. is the sole contributor to this research article.

Ethical considerations

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