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## **Feminine De-feminisation of Harmful Cultural Practices in Pierre Meunier's *Chinyelu* (Tragedy of Dona Juana)**

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### **Abstract**

In contextual reflection, to de-feminise is to negate the main themes and tendencies of feminism no matter its brands and types. This negation is a situation whereby the female character uses her natural potentials and attributes to destroy her people, culture, society and herself. Just like the tragic hero who cannot escape tragic flaws which often lead to his destruction, the heroine of feminine de-feminisation also celebrates and exhibits multiple character disorder. Consequently, this study, through the theoretical foundation of mimetic criticism which Plato and later, Aristotle builds on, examines feminine de-feminisation of harmful cultural practices in Pierre Meunier's *Chinyelu* (Tragedy of Dona Juana). The relevance of this text within the current postcolonial order cannot be overemphasised. Indeed, the study has also established the fact that there is timelessness in the thematic concern of a good play and that adaptation or its postcolonial literary gaze which is transplantation in drama will continue to redefine the global theatre. The study concludes that feminist scholars, dramatists and writers should take the issue of feminine de-feminisation of harmful cultural practices serious by communicating, condemning and dramatising them. The standard bearer of feminine de-feminisation in this work remains Chinyelu, the eponymous character in *Chinyelu* (Tragedy of Dona Juana) who destroys her people, culture, society and herself.

**Keywords:** Culture, De-feminised Character, Disorder, Feminism, Tragic Flaw

### **1. Introduction**

The construction of gender identity has always been controversial. This controversy is not insulated from agonies and tensions which love, marriage, betrayal, passion, sex, emotion and so on, engender in the human race. However, gender is generally constructed on one-way notion; that the male, boys and men are the ones who often harass, oppress, subjugate, discriminate and visit sexual related violence against female, girls and women. Consequently, this study examines feminine de-feminisation as a trope of reality and negation to feminine attributes in a postcolonial literary text.

By the time feminists and feminist scholars begin to focus only on the dangers that male, boys and men posed to the human race, we will be witnessing the end of feminist ideology. To change this narrative, therefore, this study; feminine de-feminisation of harmful cultural practices in Pierre Meunier's *chinyelu* (Tragedy of Dona Juana) is conceived to expose the evils posed by the female character who uses her natural potentials and attributes to destroy her people, culture, society and herself. Feminine de-feminisation often produces a de-feminised character that celebrates and exhibits multiple character disorder. How this is played out in *Chinyelu* (Tragedy of Dona Juana) through the eponymous character, Chinyelu is examined against the background of various contestations in the larger brand of feminist politics.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framing on Feminine De-Feminisation

This study is built on the theoretical foundation of mimetic criticism which Plato and later, Aristotle builds on. In mimetic criticism, the artists essentially reproduce and imitate human favourable and unfavourable, logical and illogical actions for the same man who the artists have imitated in the first place. Consequently, Nwabueze (1) affirms that “mimetic representations, obviously, are props for games of make-believe and readers are portrayed as not merely participants but active participants in this game of pretence”. In essence, mimetic criticism falls under the celebrated traditional critical theories and its reference to literature cannot be over-emphasised.

In fact, it has come to the fore that, mimetic criticism views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is the “truth” and “adequacy” of its representation to the matter that it represents or should represent (Abrams and Harpham 69). Critical theories such as pragmatic criticism, expressive criticism, contextual criticism, deconstruction, Marxist criticism, feminist criticism, objective criticism and others fall under the traditional critical theories. One major advantage of mimetic criticism is the fact that, the truth (and its frequency) is often reflected and reported by the artists, writers and dramatists who try as much as possible to avoid unnecessary illusions which they subvert for reality.

Mimetic criticism has, however, been criticised for the simple fact that imitation itself is an illusion and that it is still not the reality of life or the originality of life. Yet, the sheer description of things that guide and bind us together, the sheer celebration of things that tear us apart and the polarity and divide that exist between people of diverse culture, race and religion make mimetic criticism a delight for literary critics.

In contextual reflection, to de-feminise is to negate the main themes and tendencies of feminism no matter its brands and types. This negation is a situation whereby the female character uses her natural potentials and attributes to destroy her people, culture, society and herself. Just like the tragic hero who cannot escape tragic flaws which often lead to his destruction, the heroine of feminine de-feminisation also celebrates and exhibits multiple character disorder. Feminine de-feminisation is not hinged on chauvinism or on the dialectics of the suppression of women but it shows how the de-feminised character in a culture or society alters or changes the existing mores, codes and ethics of the society even at the risk and downfall of the de-feminised character. Indeed, Farlex (1) has rationalised that to defeminise is “to divest of feminine traits, qualities or characteristics”. This divestment can be caused by any feminine character or the society through the interplay of various socio-cultural and socio-political variables.

Research studies on various brands of feminism such as Sisterism, African feminism, Womanism, Motherism, Sitwanism, Negofeminism, Femaleism and Black feminism, Dewomanisation and others have also been changing within the dynamics of certainty and the weight of uncertainty of gender and genderlessness in the society. The central focus of most of these works is on the liberation of women from a patriarchal society dominated by men. This domination, at least in Africa, is often placed on harmful cultural practices which have been captured in various literary works. One glaring reality, however, is that the dangers that the de-feminised character posed to the human race has been largely ignored.

Again, this conspiracy of ignoring the antics of the de-feminised character is often placed on “African culture’s insensitivity to gender” (Sikwese 80) and the “fact that women are fighting and resisting against marginalisation is enough sign that the African is not gender sensitive” (Udengwu 18). In fact, Udengwu also hits hard at African writers and critics who believe that, “women struggle for equality is senseless and a breach of family and society”.

She sees this gender insensitivity as the promotion of “dewomanisation” which is rooted in “dewomanising womanhood” (18).

If Ngozi Udengwu’s work casts shadow on the inequality in gender equation, feminine de-feminisation moves from the den of male archetypal stereotype to narrate how women, girls and ladies have celebrated the destruction of the world and in particular, African culture through the promotion of harmful cultural practices such as:

1. Domestic violence against men
2. Sexual assault and harassment against male characters
3. Moral ineptitude and self-indulgence
4. Psycho-social and nymphomaniac character disorders
5. Provocative dresses and the celebration of nudism
6. The subservient syndrome of begging and demanding from the male characters
7. Sexual denial and strike, and
8. Prostitution and sexploitation

Though men may not be isolated from some of the above, what is certain is that women and ladies in particular are mostly responsible for the above.

The supremacy between men and women has also enjoyed intellectual discourse and celebrated in different cultures. For example, “every orthodox male Jew is said to be in the habit of thanking Yahweh for three things in each morning. First, that he is not a Gentile. Second, that he is not a dog. Third, that he is not a woman” (Ekpe ix). This is to downplay the importance of women in the Jewish tradition. This same scenario is reduplicated in Chinese culture where:

Women have to strictly follow three principles of obedience: when she is a maiden at home, she shall obey her father; after she gets married she shall obey her husband; if her husband dies, she shall obey her son. Through all her life, a woman is always the dependent of men and never is allowed a moment of independence (cited in Yan 254)

Harmful cultural legislations like that of the Jew, the Chinese and other numerous traditions in Africa have been re-contextualised by feminist scholars for us to understand gender insensitivity and the inequality that exist between man and woman.

The contrast to some of these cultural prejudices is the fact that women have indeed escaped their bad narrative from being documented and researched in recent scholarship. Let us consider the following from (Chinweizu 17) about “everyday of a man’s life” in which he is subject to the dictates of womb, kitchen and cradle. The first set to rule him belong to his mother, the second is the wife. The first rules him in the vulnerable infancy, the second in his ambitious adulthood. His bride exploits his nostalgia for his mother’s set and manipulates his craving for his future wife. Thus - mother, bride and wife, control a man every day of his life by playing on his changing needs for womb, kitchen and cradle. The power of the womb is great. It holds the mightiest of men in the thrall.

The above can be interpreted by radical feminists as male chauvinism which Chinweizu himself called, “A Masculinist Dissection of Matriarchy”. Yet, the message therein cannot be wished away. It is linked to the ignored issues of women dictating, directing and coordinating the affairs of men directly or indirectly.

Feminine de-feminisation is not men subjugating women. It is a dangerous situation where the dignity of women, their pride, identity, ego and things that define them are destroyed by some of them. Through this self-inflicted destruction, a de-feminised character has no respect for herself or her culture. She is individualistic without having a sense of communalism that defines the people of Africa. She is wayward and sells her body without bothering about morality. She looks for sex and can do anything to have it without tarrying to

consider its destructive implication. She is an exploiter of man's sexual weakness and her psycho-social and nymphomaniac character disorders are limitless. The de-feminised character is a challenger. She is not contented with her gift as a woman or a lady rather she fight very hard indeed to change herself to a man. Feminine de-feminisation exposes the conspiracy of feminists who construct gender identity through one-way concept. After all, the group of feminists branded "Womb-men" believe "that they too are men, and capable of manly acts" and the "We-men" are certainly "not ready to concede the supremacy to men ... most of them are usually on guard, ready to compete with men in any sphere of life" (Afolabi 127).

Importantly, feminine de-feminisation is not an attempt to rationalise male domination or recall the numerous cultural biases and pressures that are destroying the female gender but to objectify various ways in which women and ladies are serving as clogs in the much desired wheel of female emancipation. In the psychology of a de-feminised character, desperation is a key word, arrogance is its sister, possibility is a war song and impossibility has no place.

The de-feminised character celebrates the culture of independence and resists the notion of dependence in which family values and cultural ethics are repressed for her wishful desires. Feminine de-feminisation is not about male-female relations alone. Its claw often extends to female to female relations and essentially the new trends of female relations in her society, and in the postmodern age. Our ladies are out pride. Our ladies are our future mothers who will keep the race going. But if our ladies, under the guise of westernisation, cultural subjugation or hybridism now destroy the best values that we are known for; writers, critics and dramatists should not ignore these new trends. They should be condemned, communicated and dramatised the same way patriarchy and harmful cultural practices against women are condemned, communicated and dramatised.

The unnecessary quest for freedom by the de-feminised character is partly as a result of western ideas and doctrines which are the subversion of the will of the people and culture of Africa. This should be resisted. Also, while condemning the western notion of painting African and African institutions as polar opposites of the good and humane nature of the western world, Owomoyela (132-3) proposes seven organic laws that influence people, culture and institution:

First, societies work and persist only to the extent that they succeed in establishing consensual arrangements that accommodates the interests of the indispensable categories among their membership. Second, males and females are fundamentally indispensable categories in any society. Third, particular social institutions come into being as response to particular eventualities societies face from time to time, the nature of the eventuality dictating the degree of deliberation that characterizes the formulation of these responses. Fourth, under normal circumstances institutions evolve as a result of customary usages that accord with the first result of these propositions. Fifth, in assigning roles societies match tasks and capabilities and their own conception of propriety, again in accordance with the first proposition. Sixth, as a corollary of the preceding, the greater the centrality of a role to the survival and well being of the society, the greater the perquisites and esteem that attach to it. Seventh, in the course of the society's development, an anarchonising trends sometimes result in the persistence of arrangements and relationships long after the social contexts that brought them into being have undergone drastic transformations.

An egocentric rebellion, contradiction and anarchy against a group of people, culture, or society by a de-feminised character may cause unmitigated disaster for the inhabitants of that community. In truth, the dynamic tension and the unpredictable differences of one culture to the other have made it impossible for the acceptance of the doctrine of

globalisation in some African societies. Certainly, majority of African societies do not want women or ladies to engage in sexual assault, prostitution, domestic violence, nudism and so on considered to be anti-culture. This reality housed the doctrine of feminine de-feminisation.

### 3. Pierre Meunier and the Textuality of *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)*

With over twenty six plays, Pierre Meunier has not enjoyed wider scholarship in the Nigerian theatre. Unlike the 1990s when artistic directors and scholars such as E. O. Kofoworola, Bayo Oduneye, Ruth Sankey, Saidat Garba, Abdullahi Mahad and others have directed and written a few works about what can be aptly described as the Meunierian dramaturgy, nothing of such creative efforts can be found in the Nigerian theatre scholarship now.

For a start, a combination of factors must have been responsible for this. One, Meunier plays enjoyed relative circulation and the ones available are in old hands. The second factor is his sudden change of work from a top management staff in SCOA to the creative industry as a playwright. This late entrance into the theatre and the creative world and his cultivation of linguistic conservatism in language use cannot be ignored if this is subjected to, and compared with linguistic experimentations and possibilities from the works of Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, Sam Ukala, Femi Osofisan, Irene Salami-Agunloye and others. Yet, the problem of social contact and vices of the Nigerian society expressed in his plays make him a dramatist that cannot be ignored.

Pierer Meunier was born on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1926 at Grand (Vosges), France. He came to Nigeria in 1948 and he worked at Jos, Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu, Zaria and Port-Harcourt as top management staff of SCOA before setting up many private business outfits which include (Space 2000) a theatre/production outfit in Zaria. Some of his major plays include *John Briggs Paradise*, *Zumji and Uchenna*, *Every Rogue has its Match*, *Rabeh and the Scramble for Chad Basin* and *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)*.

*Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)* is an adaptation of Moliere's *Don Juan* into the Nigerian (Igbo) setting. The eponymous character in the play, Chinyelu - a beautiful lady destroys every known good attributes of a lady in Igbo culture for her sexual satisfaction. The play has Five Acts with twenty one scenes. Act I has four scenes, Act II has five scenes, Act III has four scenes, Act IV has three scenes while Act V has five scenes all written in the Brechtian episodic form with simple linear plot structure.

The play starts with a serious conversation between Ngozi (Chiyenlu's maid) and Kachi (a servant to Emeka). Kachi's intention is to appeal to Ngozi to help beg Chinyelu on behalf of Emeka, so that Chinyelu can accept Emeka, the seminarist back as lover. In contrast, Ngozi narrates to Kachi that Chinyelu is a devil reincarnate who doesn't deserve Emeka. The play moves to the appearance of Chinyelu herself in Act I, scene two. Here, she tutors Ngozi about the joy inherent in waywardness, heartlessness, prostitution and her various antics of seducing men. She also narrates to Ngozi that she is currently fighting men so as to destroy them. Her anger is that her mothers and great grandmothers should have started the termination of men since. Now, she is ready to do what they refuse to do which is the total eradication of men from the surface of the earth.

From then on, Chinyelu moves swiftly from one suitor/lover to the other, showing her real life as a professional Casanova. Later, her miserly and wicked attitudes are extended to her tailor, Friday and a Beggar in the play. Her courage for evil and crusade to conquer and subjugate everything she comes across makes her to deconstruct her mother by insulting her. The play moves from a comic illumination to a tragic strand when she meets her Waterloo at the Juju Rock. Here, the Stone Giant strikes her dead for daring to seduce the honest and

saintly god of the Juju Rock in a clear show of vengeance and retributive justice which is directed to actualise the conception in the feminine de-feminisations cant.

#### **4. Feminine De-Feminisation of Harmful Cultural Practices in *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)***

Pierre Meunier has succeeded to Nigerianise Moliere's *Don Juan in Chinyelu (Tragedy of a Dona Juana)* in his attempt to drive home the point that though, one culture is different from the other yet, the glaring meeting point cannot be ignored. If a style or a form of action is happening in a continent, sooner or later the style or form of that action will spread to another continent. This is what Pierre Meunier did in *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)*. His play also brings to the fore, the beauty of adaptation in global theatre. The nature of adaptation is also changing and a recent pattern is seen as the:

Assumption of a collapse of the spatio-temporal distance between the model and the modification. The Nigerian adapter sees some universal values in his society and in the world of the model text. He then draws upon correlations between the two worlds, while not elevating the foreign above the local. In this sense, adaptation celebrates a common humanity across cultural and historical divides. The adaptation makes a strong statement about a homology of man, culture and society in spite of widely acknowledge differences (Adeoti 19).

The glaring need to “celebrate a common humanity” and bring the French happenings to Nigeria through feminine de-feminisation has made Meunier to adapt Moliere's play and this effort has only confirm the fact that race may differ but the lure of one culture can influence the other, and the power of one culture destroying the other can also not be ignored.

Our concern in this sub-heading is to examine various ways in which feminine de-feminisation happens in *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)*. First is Chinyelu's denial of the existence of God. She believes that there is no God, no devil, nothing. Her humanity ends because she believes in nothing. Chinyelu is like Tristan Tzara in Dadaism and Fredrich Niezsche through NiezscheFabulla in which the celebration of “God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!” (Cited in Common 1 – 3) holds sway. In spite of Ngozi's warning about the omnipresence power of God, Chinyelu disagrees and the conversation below in the play will drive this atheistic point to certain banal illusion:

NGOZI: You have no fear of God, Lady Jane, but you will pay one day, for all your wicked deeds!

CHINYELU: Yes, you are right, no fear of God and fear of the devil either. These two characters are meant to scare little children not me... (Meunier 24).

To our knowledge, there is no culture in Africa in which God is rejected. The acceptance of the existence of God also transcends borders in spite of the existence of many powerful and small gods and deities. Chinyelu's rejection of God is seen by Kofoworola (3) as a critical factor in the “preparation for her damnation exit”. A well-bred lady who knows little about her God and understand the dynamics of African worldview and cosmology will not de-feminise herself. This is Chinyelu's first attempt at deconstructing her culture by de-feminising her essence.

Second is Chinyelu's unsolicited but dangerous war of revenge against men. She hates her mothers and grandmothers who can't raise a voice against the men. She hates their subservient and dependence dispositions. She sees this as a crusade which she is ready to wage. She is not aiming at liberating women but to destroy men. To her, men are the problem of the universe. They should be tamed, cut to size, used and dumped like toilet paper. Chiyenlu says this without regret in her conversations with Ngozi:

CHINYELU: Am I not right, Ngozi? Man has played that part for millions of years! They have been boasting, and they still boast about it, the bastards reducing women to the rant of servitors...

NGOZI: How can you...

CHINYELU: It is time that men too suffered. They have made women suffer long enough, boasting of having between their legs a bird capable of singing anytime!

NGOZI: Chinyelu how dare you...

CHINYELU: A bird, yes! A bird of ill omen, keen only on its own pleasure when it nestles down in the cosy little nest which stupidity we lend to him

O Juno! Mother to all of us women, protect us, guide us, in the crusade I am leading against our arch-enemy: MAN! (Meunier 9-10).

Chinyelu's first crusade is to deny the existence of God. Her second crusade is to destroy men, celebrate their failure and sing a dirge as they kneel down begging her for sex. But a critical question can be asked: If men are destroyed, what will our society become? The two - male and female are inevitable in the socio-cultural and political equations of the human race.

Another important issue in the play is Chinyelu's desire to destroy the established order. There are rules and orders guiding the survival of any society. In the cosmological world - there are cosmic rules for its inhabitant. In the physical world - there are rules and orders which sanitise the society and rid it of lawlessness, banditry, conflict, crisis, war and so on. Attempt to turn the established order upside down is seen as an attempt to cause disorder in an ordered society. Doing this amounts to the subjugation of the society with its wider implication for the existence of our humanity. Chinyelu, the non-conformist, neo-radical and anti-Christ in the play disobeys the law of love which is trust, commitment, honesty, self-esteem and sincerity, and so on for distrust, dishonesty, and lack of self-esteem, moral ineptitude, insincerity, discontentment and others. She has reflected all these in her dealings with her innocent suitors and lovers. Again, she destroys Innocent, the groom of a newly wedded couple in the play by making him to break his vow to his wife in a marriage consummated in the presence of Chinyelu. This is disorder par excellence. She disobeys her guardian angel, Ngozi; insults her mother and attempts to turn the world upside down by seducing the god of Juju Rock which leads to her untimely death.

In the present age, the culture of impunity is being celebrated as a spine that often upsets an organised society. Most ladies now in their love affairs often attempt to disobey the rule of love and this has made many of them to become unmarried women in the house of their parents instead of the need for them to enjoy the marital bliss of marriage. Many are also wedded but never in marriage because they don't prepare for the challenges of marriage. The end result of this is divorce. The present age also harbours ladies and women who have no respect for their parents and husbands but for their selfish love desires.

Closely related to the issues above are the destruction of saints and the lower rung of the society. Two examples will be relayed here. First is Emeka, the great seminarist - the pure man of God that Chinyelu's desperation makes to break his seminary vows. She later discards him like an unwanted rag. The conversation below is instructional:

CHINYELU: What else do you expect from me Emeka? I pulled you out of the prison which you were stagnating! It is nothing? Was not the seminary a prison for a young man like you, with his powers at their peak! I brought you from darkness to open air and made you taste heavenly delights. And you are here in my own house pestering me endlessly.

EMEKA: Chinyelu!

CHINYELU: I made you throw away the skimpy frock in which you were choking! And your ridiculous admonitions are your only words of thanks!

EMEKA: Chi-Chi! I left all for you, my studies, my friends, my family, my faith in God. All the things which were my life! And now you reject me as you would a toy!

CHINYELU: You'll still have access to my body, Emeka, but at hours and days convenient for me!

EMEKA: I'll be one among others?

CHINYELU: You must understand, Emeka. My heart is too big to become attached to only one man. Give the others a chance, and let them enjoy my body as you have (Meunier 12).

The second example is Friday, Chinyelu's poor tailor who is faithful to Chinyelu by doing his tailoring work diligently. However, as at the time Friday wants to collect his money for a job well-done for Chinyelu she chickens out that she can only pay at her own time, Friday can go to hell or hang.

Furthermore, Chinyelu has many antics and methods of seducing men. The following are some of her well-rehearsed, well-planned and orchestrated ways:

1. showing off her physical beauty. Her beauty is visibly irresistible and she knows this, flaunts it and radiates the psychology of self-elevation and self-indulgence;
2. oratorical display. Chinyelu is an orator with a tongue of fire and the sophistry of her communicative power can only be resisted by a few men. She has used this to her advantage in the play;
3. money and ostentatious displays of wealth. She has an expensive car. Her house is the best around and the interior decorations therein cannot escape the prying eyes of men with hot pants;
4. devilish intelligence. Chinyelu is brilliant and with irresistible power of surprise and attack. She has used this to track most men and in turn, she uses the same fox wisdom to discard them. To her, no lamb of humility, and
5. sexual power. Chinyelu is hot in bed. Chinyelu has many sex styles and energy that she even insults one of her lover for "getting tired after thirteen rounds".

Chinyelu combines money with beauty and intellect to prove to the human race that she is the lion of the jungle. For destroying many people, Ngozi describes her as "Chinyelu, DONA JUANA, CASANOVA, NARISSUS and now the great Columbus!" (Meunier17). Chinyelu later accepts Ngozi's descriptions as apt, correct and even flaunt them.

As submitted earlier, a de-feminised character attempts to celebrate and mock manhood. Chinyelu does this with impunity in the play, *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)*. She keeps a record of the men she has dated and lured to bed. Some of them are: Emeka, the seminarist; her American lover, Juscelino; Innocent, the new Groom that Chinyelu abducts; and Chunchang, the Chinese who is Chinyelu's number 154 lover. Chinyelu also adds international dimension to her prostitution. Tired of Black men, she calculates very well and spreads her tentacles to other continents of the world such as Asia, America and so on. This has enabled her to describe the depth and energy of some of her preys.

A careful study of the play, *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)* also reveals that feminine de-feminisation is evil because the playwright describes Chinyelu as; shameless, impudent, too hungry for sex, a devil, a heretic who believes neither in God nor in Satan, inscrutable and enigmatic, the sphinx herself, a monster, a spider which spins its webs and lurks in waiting for a prey to come, black heart, wicked woman, disorderly, heart hard as the black stone, an octopus and a praying mantis among others to metaphorically capture

Chinyelu. She allows her illicit sexual escapades and her cultural subjugation to destroy her society, people, culture and ultimately herself.

## 5. Conclusion

It is easy to conclude that all the vices committed by Chinyelu in the play are not caused by her alone and that men contribute to her escapades and de-feminisation. Feminist scholars can also argue that all the atrocities committed by Chinyelu are not exclusive of women only and that men too are responsible. No matter the direction that we want to approach feminine de-feminisation from, the truth is that this act is destroying the foundation of our culture and it should be condemned the same way men are using their power or cultural advantage to destroy women.

All the vices committed by Chinyelu that can be found in other literary works should be condemned, communicated and dramatised. The idea of seeing men as women's main enemies cannot liberate the womanhood. The women, and in particular, feminist writers should begin to write on the core themes and tendencies within the expanse of feminine de-feminisation. Such writings can be seen as "re-writing the self" and the attempt is to condemn the harmful cultural practices which a de-feminised character must have visited on herself, people, culture and society.

If harmful cultural practices are propagated by men, it should be repelled. However, if they are promoted by women - such should be kicked against. This in the words of Fadirepo (492) is "the incantation of the feminist male" or the rebellion of the "female male". The incantation this time around is feminine de-feminisation in which the tragic actions of the de-feminised character, if not checked, can dangerously lead to health problems such as HIV, STDs, the production of unwanted children and bastards into our society and the long road to the de-population of the human race through untimely death. A lady selling her body, boasting about it, showing no feeling or affection for the person who loves her and at any given opportunity; expressing anguish, anger, sorrow, and using her money to oppress her biological mother and people who have carried out genuine works for her in the case of Chinyelu cannot be part of our socio-cultural structure. These devastating displays of vices by female to female and from the female to her larger society and culture should prick the conscience of radical feminist scholars, majority of whom are concluding that the entire problems of women are caused by men.

This study has established the fact that there is timelessness in the thematic concern of a good play, and that adaptation or its postcolonial archetype which is transplantation in drama will continue to redefine the global theatre as *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)* has done through its thematic celebration of feminine de-feminisation of harmful cultural practices. Feminist scholars, dramatists and writers are also called upon to take the issue of feminine de-feminisation serious by communicating, condemning and dramatising it for the success of the society and its moral standards. The standard bearer of feminine de-feminisation in this study remains Chinyelu, the eponymous character in *Chinyelu (Tragedy of Dona Juana)* who destroys her people, culture, society and herself.

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