

Introducing a Radical African Indigenous Feminist Principle

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Abstract

She saunters around her homestead. She is confident, assertive and commanding. She decides her own life and brooks no nonsense from any quarter, including from the man who might be married to her (our inversion here is deliberate and mirrors her approach to marriage. See, e.g., Chitando (2021)). Whatever patriarchy throws at her, she ensures that it boomerangs and hurts the sender even more. She makes no apology for who she is, namely, a black Zimbabwean/African woman with an attitude. She is Chihera. She is the epitome of a liberated woman and the nemesis of patriarchy. Freedom she breathes, controversy she brews, attention she commands and agency she exercises fully. Chihera is the theatre of contestation. Her supporters lionise her. Yet, her critics loathe her for daring to deflate patriarchy. They worry that she will instigate a “shemurenga” (Essof, 2013), that is, a women’s struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe, and by extension, across the continent and beyond.

Key Words: Feminist Principle, liberated woman, Freedom.