

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

The Image of Women: A Feminist Reading of *The Golden Notebook*

by Doris Lessing

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in English

By

Krishna Kumari Shrestha

Campus Roll No: 14/069

Exam Roll No: 480172

T.U. Reg. No 6-2-295-23-2009

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara

July 2017

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

**Supervisor's Recommendation**

This is to certify that Miss Krishna Kumari Shrestha with T.U. Reg. No.: 6-2-295-23-2009 has prepared her master's thesis entitled "The Image of Women: A Feminist Reading of *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing" under my supervision, following the format as specified by the Research Committee of the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I, therefore, forward it to the Research Committee for final evaluation.

.....

Dr. Min Pun

Associate Professor

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus

Pokhara

Date: 25 July 2017

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Approval Sheet**

The thesis entitled “The Image of Women: A Feminist Reading of *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing” submitted to the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara by Miss Krishna Kumari Shrestha has been approved by the undersigned members of the Evaluation Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

-----

-----

Supervisor

-----

-----

Expert

-----

-----

-----

Head

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus

Pokhara

Date: .....

## **Acknowledgements**

This thesis would not have been possible without the inspiring guidance of my advisor Dr. Min Pun, Associate Professor at the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Pun for his excellent guidance, encouragement, patience and providing me with a conducive atmosphere for conducting my research successfully. His encouraging response to my draft paper led to the completion of my work.

I am also deeply indebted to Prof. Rajendra Prasad Tiwari, Head of the English Department, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara for his support and encouragement during my research.

I am also thankful to my teachers Prof. Bishwo Raj Adhikari and Hom Nath Sharma for providing me with helpful comments in response to an earlier proposal draft of this work.

Date: 25 July 2017

Krishna Kumari Shrestha

## Table of Contents

Supervisor's Recommendation	i
Approval Sheet	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter 1: Lessing and the Context of the Study	1-6
The Argument	1
Review of Literature	2
Outline of the Study	5
Chapter 2: Feminist Approach to Literature	7-15
Feminism: The Concept	7
Simon de Beauvoir's Women as Other	10
Feminism and Lessing's <i>The Golden Notebook</i>	12
Chapter 3: Women in Lessing's <i>The Golden Notebook</i>	16-28
Why Feminism	16
The Story	18
Women Characters	21
Women as Other	24
Chapter 4: Lessing's <i>The Golden Notebook</i> as a Feminist Project	29-31
Works Cited	32-33

## **Abstract**

*The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing is a powerful account of a woman searching for her personal and political identity. Anna Wulf, the protagonist, negotiates the trauma of emotional rejection and sexual betrayal, and the tensions of friendship and family. This study has been written with an aim to interpret Lessing's novel from the feminist point of view. The study shows how the novelist artistically discusses the challenges to feminism that is reflected in the novel. The study not only reflects the fragmentation of the protagonist's inner world, but also the chaotic society she lives in. This work examines the theme, structure, characters and narrative style of the novel, which serve well for the aim of its feminist interpretation. Most importantly, the study concerns about how women were considered subordinate to their male counterparts. For this purpose, Simon de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* has been taken as a tool to elaborate the concept of women as Other, which is projected in Lessing's novel.