

**Tribhuvan University**

**Subversion of Gender Roles in Doris Lessing's *The Cleft***

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to Faculty of Humanities and Social Science**

**Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal, in the Partial Fulfilment of**

**the Requirements for the Degree of Master's of Arts**

**in English**

**By**

**Rajendra Adhikari**

**Central Department of English**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**2010**

## **Letter of recommendation**

Mr. Rajendra Adhikari has completed his thesis entitled “Subversion of Gender Roles in Doris Lessing’s *The Cleft*” under my supervision. He carried out his research work from August 12, 2009 to July 30, 2010. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

---

Dr. Yam Sharma

Central Department of English

Date:

## Approval letter

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Subversion of Gender Roles in Doris Lessing’s *The Cleft*” by Rajendra Adhikari, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Supervisor

---

External Examiner

---

Head  
Central Department of English

Date:

## **Acknowledgements**

My first veneration goes to my Supervisor Dr. Yam Sharma, for his precious suggestions, inspiration and scholarly guidance.

Similarly, I would like to express my gratefulness to Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, who provided me the opportunity to write this thesis, and all my respected teachers: Mr. Badri Acharya, Dr. Beerendra Pandey, and Mr. Ghanashyam Bhandari who conveyed their timely and significant suggestions for this dissertation both in formal and informal ways.

Above all, existence of my thesis has its root in the relentless inspiration, support, love and encouragement of my parents Mr. Puspa Lal Adhikari and Khaga Maya Adhikari, my brothers Lila, Hari, Narendra and Tika, my sisters Kamala and Sita and my “vaujus” Januka, Sarita, Sita and Bhima. At last, I shall not forget to thank my friends Denish, Arjun, Indra, Govinda, Prafulla and Devhermit for their support.

July 30, 2010

Rajendra Adhikari

## **Abstract**

Doris Lessing's *The Cleft*, tries to turn upside down, the notion that maleness is the origin of the human society and female were made out of the body of male to accompany them. Lessing, challenging the history of Christian Mythology, posits her hypothetical idea that, the origin of the human society is not male but female. The novel has raised voices against the otherness and secondary position of female. The novel can be seen as the speculative study on the initiative of women, in the formation of modern society. Though most of the narratives are based on the myths and oral records, it provides an acknowledgement that, the females were first teacher, caretaker and the savior of male.

## Contents

	Page No.
Letter of Recommendation	
Approval Letter	
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Contextualizing Doris Lessing's novel	1-7
II. Subversion of Gender Roles	8-24
III. Gender Reading in Doris Lessing's The Cleft	25-45
IV. Conclusion	46-47
Works Cited	