

Tribhuvan University

Female Masculinity in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English

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Letter of Recommendation

Puskal Bhusal has completed his thesis entitled “Female Masculinity in Mo Yan’s *Red Sorghum*” under my supervision. He carried out this research from April 2013 to January 2014. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

Khem Raj Khanal

Supervisor

Date: January25,2014.

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Abstract

The present thesis explores the female masculinity in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*, applying gender criticism, especially female masculinity. Female masculinity is a theory of the alternative masculinity which locates masculinity outside the male body. Any female having strong determination, courage, resistance, advanced thinking, is regarded as masculine woman. Judith Halberstam and Kamala Bhasin are the major theorists discussed in this theory. The thesis will introduce their concepts to interpret the book *Red Sorghum* that provides a new identity to Dai Fenglian, the female protagonist of the novel. The role of Dai Fenglian, is not tune with the traditional female identity, as weak, meek, passionate, docile, kind-hearted, submissive woman. She is portrayed like a man; bold, determined, strong hearted, decision maker and so on. The book highlights masculine actions of Dai Fenglian by exposing the subversion of the existing norms and values of the contemporary Chinese society. She stands as a revolutionary character, as an independent individual with unique identity and self-respect in the then society of China. She ruptures all established patriarchal norms and conditions of the society as well as the Confucian ethics, denying her husband and father, practicing adultery, inheriting and managing property and so on she goes on to a national heroine. The strong determination, thought and courage of Dai Fenglian has remained until the last moment of her life. She spends her whole life fighting against all social dogmas and injustice to women and ultimately establishes a uniquely dignified identity and pride. In this backdrop, she has become a liberated female character of China. But, her premature death is a tame subservience to patriarchy.

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