

Tribhuvan University

Female Resistance in Alice Walker's *Possessing The Secret of Joy*

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

By

Bhupendra Gurung

September, 2007

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

This thesis entitled “Female Resistance in Alice Walker’s *Possessing The Secret of Joy*” by Bhupendra Gurung has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

Members of Research Committee

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head
Central Department of English

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

First of all, it gives me pleasure to express my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Mr. Bal Bahadur Thapa, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, who made close and indispensable comments on various aspects of this research work. This research would never have appeared in its present form without his encouragement and precious guidance.

I am profoundly grateful to Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head of the Central Department of English, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Mr. Pom Bahadur Gurung and all the respected teachers, whose words of wisdom and experience have helped me in the completion of this study.

I am deeply indebted to my respected father Mr. Narendra Gurung, mother Mrs. Gau Subba Gurung, sisters Amrita, Shiba and brother Dujen for their warm love, inspiration, support and the environment they created for my study. I also like to thank my friends Dipak, Bal, Pol, Narendra, Indra, Uttam, Manoj, and Yam for their kind help and suggestion.

September 2007

Bhupendra Gurung

Abstract

This dissertation examines Tashi's resistance to African ritual in Alice Walker's *Possessing The Secret of Joy*. The novel revolves around an African woman, whose life changes after she undergoes circumcision, an ancient African tradition of female genital mutilation. The protagonist, Tashi, fights against the tradition of female circumcision, which is deeply rooted in Olinka village. She undergoes female circumcision in the name of cultural heritage. This ritual almost destroys her emotionally and physically. Her psychological tension along with her repressed memories of her sister Dura's death due to the very same ritual encourages her to kill M'Lissa. This murder stands for her resistance and the black women's struggle against tradition. This courageous woman's fight against the patriarchal society leads her to selfhood and self-determination.

Contents

Acknowledgement	Page No.
Abstract	
I. Alice Walker: A Black Feminist	1
II. Feminism	12
III. Female Resistance in <i>Possessing the Secret of Joy</i>	32
IV. Conclusion	52
Works Cited	