

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Evolution of Feminist Perspectives in Adrienne Rich's Poetry

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in English**

By

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This thesis entitled “**Evolution of Feminist Perspectives in Adrienne Rich’s Poetry**” submitted to Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Pramita Adhikari has been approved by the undersigned members of research committee.

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Abstract

In this dissertation, I have tried to analyze the poetic career of Adrienne Rich in terms of her poetics and politics, and her changing attitudes towards them. While her early poetry equally values poetics and politics, poetry written during the middle part of her poetic career shows her feminist beliefs. Her late poetry unfolds her previous feminism into broader amplitude of commitment to other social causes. All in all, her feminist consciousness occupies the major space in her poetic career.

Being a feminist activist, she ultimately deals with the female issues, but her method of dealing is not the usual attack on males; her emphasis is on creation of females' own community for the consolidation of their strength. While doing so, she supports lesbianism, which is the strategy to downplay the importance of men for women. Advocating a lesbian relationship among women, she challenges the notion of heterosexuality as a natural biological phenomenon. What is called natural is in fact constructed, and heterosexuality is also constructed by males for their pleasure. Thus, to challenge this masculine opportunism, she celebrates love among women.

Rich's feminism embodies broader political scope as compared to the parochial polemics of other feminisms. Her concern for the greater social issue can be recognized in her poetry of aging too. Aging and the traumatic feeling related to it are the concern of every woman. Despite being a woman Rich discards the traditional notion of youth and aging and urges all aged people to disown the feeling of trauma developing self-esteem and be the continuum to bridge the generation gap.

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