Tribhuvan University

Atwood's *The Penelopiad* as a Feminist Critique of Homeric Myth

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

in the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in English

By

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Letter of Recommendation

Gopikesh Acharya has completed the thesis entitled "Atwood's *The Penelopiad* as a Feminist Critique of Homeric Myth" under my supervision. He carried out his research from May 2012 to April 2013. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva-voce.

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Badri Prasad Acharya

Supervisor

Date…….....……

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled "Atwood's *The Penelopiad* as a Feminist Critique of Homeric Myth" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Gopikesh Acharya has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of Research Committee

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Abstract

This research explores the ideas of revisiting the Homeric myth on Penelope from the perspective of contemporary 'feminist critique' of male writers' representation of females. Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* deconstructs the Homeric myth thereby highlighting the roles, structures and space of female characters and subverting the tradition of epic genre. The narrator in this novella makes a bespoke response to Homeric epic, *The Odyssey*. Instead of emphasizing on the heroic and adventurous deeds of Odysseus as related in the Homeric myth, Atwood stresses on the stories of marginalized women like Penelope, 12 Maids, Helen, Anticlea and Eurycleia. In her revisionist version, Atwood represents the female characters as bold and assertive. Thus, Atwood revisits the past from the perspective of 'feminist critique' and emphasizes on the female writings as well as female identity.

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