

**Tribhuvan University**

**Rhetoric of War on Terror and Discursive Hegemony:  
A Study of Representation of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal**

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Rhetoric of War on Terror and Discursive Hegemony: A Study of Representation of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Khem Raj Khanal in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of M. Phil. in English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee.

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## Abstract

This research work explores the interpellation between the U. S. discourses of “war on terror” and counter insurgency in Nepal. It interrogates how the discourse of “terrorism” and “war on terror” flows to Nepal through mediascapes. For this, I analyze the news headlines of *The Rising Nepal*, in relation to the U. S. War on terror. I scrutinize news headlines, published between 9/11 and November 26 (on the date Maoists were declared terrorist by the government of Nepal), which share the semiotics of the powerful rhetoric of war on terror and also the responses back. The research reveals the hegemonizing effect of the rhetoric of war on terror especially in the Nepali politicians who adopted it to conceptualize and represent the Maoists insurgency. After exploring the connection between war on terror and the Maoists insurgency, it moves on to expose how the U. S. and Indian attitude have influenced Nepali political discourses especially regarding the label ‘terrorist.’ To explore American attitude, a speech of an American envoy to Nepal has thoroughly been analyzed, particularly in reference to the Maoists conflict. The discourse also helped India continue its influence in Nepal’s defense system and political directions of the conflict in Nepal. Thus the discourse helped weakening the sovereign decision making power of Nepali politicians and made the nation susceptible to international interference. During the insurgency, the Maoists resisted the label of terrorist on them through the rhetoric of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist dialectics re-contextualized as ‘prachandapath’ to fit in Nepal. The research explores that the hegemony of the rhetoric of war on terror discourse in non-Maoist parties collides with the Maoist’s rhetoric of ‘capturing of the power.’ In such collision, a ‘state of exception’ is created, in which the country is disposed further to the foreign interference, and each individual in the state turns into the ‘*homosacer*/bare life,’ losing every right to life.

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