

Monica Carrer - *'Everyone wants peace': everyday pacifist responses to violent conflict and structural violence*

While conducting fieldwork interviews with local people who experienced the Maoist conflict in rural India, I was often told that they all wanted peace. In fact, a dominant theme that emerged from this research project was that, in a context of violent conflict and structural subjugation, many people rejected violence and actively sought to end it. This paper looks at individuals and communities who silently reject the violent logics of conflict and oppression by engaging in everyday nonviolent resistance and peacebuilding practices. With a focus on the local level reality of conflict, in this paper I discuss the meaning of pacifisms in contexts characterized by both direct and structural forms of violence. Furthermore, I explore how individuals and communities practically respond to violence during a conflict. This paper is based on two case studies: the Maoist conflict in West-Bengal, India, between 2008 and 2011, and the experiences of pacifists in Italy during World War I and II. Although the two case studies are very different, in both cases the research draws from in-depth interviews with ordinary people who experienced life in a context of war, poverty, and political oppression, and actively rejected violence. A discourse analysis approach was adopted to investigate how ordinary people construct concepts such as peace, violence and nonviolence in their discourse.