

## Gender(ing) Naxalism in India: A Discourse on Unchanged Stereotypes

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### Abstract

One major problem that sought to had debase the basic chassis of Indian democracy for the past fifty years is the Naxalite movement. Mainly confined to the hills and jungles of central and eastern India, it is a cause of concern as it calls for massive human rights violation and terrorism taken recourse by both the state machinery and the rebels. More than 10,000 people have been killed and 12 million displaced since the 1980s. A large number of tribal, peasant and urban middle class women participated actively in the movement but were made invisible in the mainstream historiography of the movement. An analogy of a movement is incomplete if the most marginalized section of a society is further marginalized in the process of history writing. They were drawn to this struggle for it promised a chance to redefine relations in Indian society and was envisioned as the harbinger of a just socioeconomic order for the oppressed and exploited. The movement seemed a way to free themselves from the shackles of patriarchy. However, since its inception gender equity remained a second-class issue and was subverted by a fundamental objective of establishing equality through a classless society. What was the structure of these Naxalite groups? Did women cadres suffer from patriarchal norms within the guerilla hierarchies? Did it re-impose stereotype gender roles? This paper aims to review the participation of women in the Naxalite movement in India and how they left their homes to establish a society grounded on justice, equity and honour.

