

Fighting and Living in the Revolution: Everyday Experiences of Female Pdf Warriors in Myanmar

Yuya Han Htwe

Abstract

Following the 2021 military coup in Myanmar, large numbers of civilians joined armed resistance movements, including the People Defense Forces (PDFs), which are opposed to military rule. Among them, women have increasingly taken part in armed struggle, but their everyday experiences within these movements remain underexamined. This article explores how female warriors of the PDFs experience participation in armed resistance, focusing on the challenges and opportunities they encounter in their daily lives within male-dominated revolutionary organizations. I argue that female PDF warriors are not only combatants but also act as political actors in everyday life, and that their agency is exercised through practices of survival, negotiation, and resistance. Despite challenging dominant gender norms associated with warfare and political authority, women's participation continues to be shaped by hierarchical structures and exclusion from decision-making processes. Drawing on the concepts of everyday experience and everyday resistance, the article highlights how women adapt to armed life, manage hardship, and how these struggles are often reinterpreted by the women themselves as opportunities. Existing literature on Myanmar's armed resistance has largely focused on military dynamics and political developments, but there is limited attention to internal social relations and gendered experiences within resistance movements. By examining female PDF warriors who joined armed resistance after 2021, this finding will contribute to a better understanding of revolutionary participation and demonstrate how armed involvement reshapes women's identities, roles, and perceptions of agency in the post-coup context.