

María León-Olarte

Women-of-Faith in Processes of Peacebuilding: An analysis of Women's Spiritualities as a Resource for Healing, Agency and Political Participation in Peacebuilding in Colombia.

The role of women in peacebuilding is a topic that has been researched more deeply in the last twenty years within different academic fields such as peace & conflict studies, among others. However, different religious scholars argue, the role of religious women (women-of-faith) as peacebuilding partners remains invisible; not much data is found on the peacebuilding work of religious women themselves.

These religious scholars point out that women, of course, have no monopoly on certain peacebuilding skills, and not all women peacebuilders draw on their religious traditions. However, women inspired by religious beliefs tend to use spiritual gifts and assets to contribute to processes of peacebuilding -which is most often ignored.

In accepting this hypothesis, I investigate specifically the contributions that women-of-faith make to peacebuilding in the five decades long armed conflict in Colombia, based on their different spiritualities (ecumenical approach) and theological reflections (Latin-American feminist intercultural-decolonial theologies). My research explores how women's spiritualities empower women's agency and healing processes that have resulted in women-of-faith participation in the public sphere, contributing to peacebuilding in manifold regards.

--