

[Call for papers: Mediation in the process of exiting political violence](#)

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Call for Papers

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Diplomacy and International Relations, Nationalism History / Studies, Peace History / Studies, Political History / Studies, Borderlands

Violence: An international journal is launching a call for papers on the theme “**Mediation in the process of exiting political violence**”. This theme section will be coordinated by Michel WIEVIORKA (EHESS) and Jérôme FERRET (Ut Capitole, MSHS T, CNRS).

For its general articles’ section, *Violence: An international journal* is also welcoming papers that deal with issues of violence and exiting violence. Each issue will be coordinated by its two editors-in-Chief: Scott STRAUS (UW-Madison) and Michel WIEVIORKA (EHESS).

Dossier: Mediation in the process of exiting political violence

Sooner or later, campaigns of political violence—whether civil war, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, or revolution—come to an end, more or less completely and permanently. This has happened recently with Colombia (following the negotiated agreement reached in Cuba between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrillas) and Spain (where ETA has abandoned armed struggle). Looking further back, there are also the Northern Ireland peace process in the 1990s and the “Matignon Agreements” in the case of New Caledonia.

In some instances, the exit from violence comes as the result of the military or the police victory of one side overcoming the other. In other cases—and these are the chief focus of this article—it is achieved only with the intervention of a third party. This can imply the diplomatic involvement of a third country, an NGO, or other organization—religious or humanitarian, for example—, or even individuals who have worked to achieve a compromise through a more or less publicly visible mediation.

Straightaway, we must emphasize the importance of this last concept, which we wish to distinguish from that of “negotiation”, which is higher-profile and more formalistic, particularly when seen in the context of international relations (political science and the political sociology of trans-national relations). Nevertheless, mediation and negotiation can easily be confused. These two processes can of course come together and complement each other, but it seems to us, in light of our extensive reading in political philosophy, ethics, criminal mediation, public policies, and so on, that these two terms are clearly distinguished by their natures.

Negotiation is undoubtedly a more prescriptive, strategic, formalistic process, built on objective

concerns. It implies an institutionalized power relationship and aims, at very least, to impose an alternative outcome, by threat or by force if necessary (i.e., through diplomacy). Mediation is based rather on the more peripheral aim of allowing the actors in a conflict to begin a process of reflection—by inviting them to talk to each other, to put themselves in the psychological position of understanding the other’s viewpoint, to agree among themselves. In both configurations, the role of the third party is not the same, or, at least, so it seems to us.

Paradoxically, little is known about the complex mechanics of these mediation dynamics, which are generally secret and therefore outside the purview of scientific observers. So, the preparation of a compromise may involve the prior intervention of mediation with both sides, or between them. In concrete terms, then, what are the areas (intermediate, official, unofficial, friendship networks, family, emotional, and so on) where mediation processes emerge; where do networks and/or individual actors—whatever their status— come into play?

What are the timelines of these mediations? Long, or short? At what point in the process do the mediators intervene? Can we learn a little more about the social origins and identities of these experts in de-escalation?

We can also look at the structural mechanisms of mediation—for example, judicial mechanisms, speeches, exchanges, all of which we can call official—, but also other emerging forms of mediation, especially cultural ones.

So, if we take a logical interest in open, comprehensible, manifest processes, we should also take into account, if possible, all the phenomena of evasion, defection, ambiguity, and cunning that could mitigate the antagonisms in place and neutralize polarization. What is the best platform to enable collective or individual mediators to promote an agreement that will eventually lead to disengagement?

The outcome of this generally open process can be to transform a faction into a political actor, who could make the choice either not to use violence when they could or, having engaged in violence, effectively to abandon the use of arms.

However, it can also appear to be the dissolution (sometimes at the cost of internal schisms) or self-dissolution of an organization that has resorted to violence. Can we learn more about such decisions and their material, strategic, cognitive, or moral justifications?

Do we have oral, historiographical, or other sources that allow us to understand better the calculations and the reasons that persuade actors to choose such options? This is also one of the concerns in this dossier.

A process of exiting violence can also fail, as did the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993 in the United States between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which did not lead to peace. What are the reasons that can objectively explain such failures, and fruitlessness in mediation work?

The articles in this proposed dossier could look at a specific experiment, or a set of comparative experiences. They might focus on a given actor: e.g. an organization that has chosen to abandon the armed struggle, a mediating state, a humanitarian NGO specialized in this type of mediation, a group

or even a central individual; or they could even look at a particular aspect of the topic, such as the emergence of new thinking, for example the impact of pressure from public opinion, international institutions and organizations or indeed other political, economic, or societal change.

A comparative dimension will be welcome, in time or space. Finally, any article will have to bring into discussion both empirical elements and theoretical considerations—even if that article may be generally theoretical, or generally empirical.

About *Violence: An international journal*

Today, violence, in all its forms, constitutes a vast field of research in the social sciences.

The same is not true of preventing and exiting violence, which do not have their own well-structured space within the humanities. Much more empirical than theoretical, understanding of these issues is produced more by actors (NGOs, associations), experts, and practitioners than by social science scholars.

Violence: An international journal endeavors to gather together and support a large community of scholars and practitioners, focusing on two complementary yet distinct scientific and intellectual issues: the analysis of violence, in its diverse manifestations, and preventing and exiting violence.

In doing so, *Violence: An international journal* aims to develop understanding about violence, but also to build up a delineated field of research for preventing and exiting violence, with its contributions and debates.

Each issue opens with a series of general articles, which are followed by a theme section, composed by articles, debates and interviews. *Violence: An international journal* also makes a special effort to link together research in the social sciences and other fields of knowledge, forging bonds with literary and artistic circles in particular, with contributions dealing with exiting violence through the lens of art.

Violence: An international journal has the ambition to reach a readership composed of academics, but also a larger audience, including the actors involved in preventing and exiting violence: NGOs, associations, politics, legal experts, and civil society. Articles for *Violence: An international journal* will nonetheless go through the usual process of academic journals. Once accepted by the editorial board, each article will be sent for peer-review. Changes may then be asked to the author.

The journal is published twice a year in English by Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme and SAGE Publications.

Guidelines

Articles should include a summary, a detailed bibliography and a short biography. Each article should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length (including footnotes, bibliography, biography). It should be sent, preferably, in Word format and use, systematically, Harvard Reference Style, as follows:

Book

Clark JM and Hockey L (1979) *Research for Nursing*. Leeds: Dobson Publishers.

Book chapter

Gumley V (1988) Skin cancers. In: Tschudin V and Brown EB (eds) *Nursing the Patient with Cancer*. London: Hall House, pp.26-52.

Journal article

Huth EJ, King K and Lock S (1988) Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. *British Medical Journal* 296(4): 401-405.

Website

Website National Center for Professional Certification (2002) Factors affecting organizational climate and retention. Available at: www.cwla.org/programmes/triechmann/2002fbwfiles (accessed 10 July 2010).

Newspaper / Magazine

Clark JM (2006) Referencing style for journals. *The Independent*, 21 May, 10.

We ask you to pay particular attention to the quality of your writing style.

To contribute to *Violence: An international journal*, please send an article, **fully written**, either for the general articles' section or for a theme section.

Calendar

Fully written articles for the theme section "Mediation in the process of exiting political violence" must be sent before **September 30, 2021**.

You can send articles for the general articles' section throughout the year.

Submission of articles

For both the theme "Mediation in the process of exiting political violence" and for the general articles' section, and other sections, please upload your article on the journal's online platform, hosted by our co-publisher, SAGE Publications: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/violence>

If you have any question on the submission process or on the journal, please write to *Violence's* managing editor, [Charlotte Groult](#).

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<https://www.fmsh.fr/en/dissemination/31324>