



**Research Center
Transformations
of Political Violence**



Call for Abstracts

TraCe Annual Conference 2025:

Beyond the Spectacle: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Slow Violence and Political Harm

Marburg, November 19–21, 2025

At a time when acts of overt political aggression and the excessive use of force by state actors dominate global media discourse and public debate, the more insidious forms of violence that unfold gradually and subtly often remain unacknowledged. How can we understand, observe, and theorize these forms of violence and how are they related to the more spectacular forms of direct violence that dominate public discourse? The concept of 'slow violence' provides one possible interdisciplinary framework for observing and examining these more subtle dynamics of harm, particularly their temporal and spatial dimensions. Defined as a form of violence that is gradual, dispersed, and often invisible (Nixon 2003), the concept disrupts traditional notions of violence and draws attention to how structural inequalities produce profound yet unrecognized suffering over extended periods. Initially articulated to capture environmental degradation in the Global South, the concept has since gained traction across disciplines as a tool for understanding intersecting social, political and environmental injustices.

Building on this conceptual opening, the TRACE Annual Conference 2025 aims to expand research on violence and its transformation. We invite scholars from all disciplinary backgrounds who aim to complicate conventional theories of political violence by foregrounding its intersections with time, space, and power, bringing together innovative approaches for addressing challenges of visibility, representation, or justice and accountability in local and transnational contexts.

We invite scholars and practitioners to engage with slow violence, political harm, and bordering concepts in the study and theory of political violence. This may take the form of exploring how slow violence can illuminate forms of political violence and oppression through an interdisciplinary lens, including political science, sociology, law, geography, history or cultural studies. Examples of such forms of violence may include systemic racial inequalities, environmental toxicity, and the erosion of social infrastructures. Contributions may also

address the intersections of slow violence with direct violence through aspects like temporality, power, and representation or the layering of violence in peace and wartime and examine the lived realities of those most affected. In this regard, we encourage submissions that foreground alternative epistemologies and amplify voices from the margins. Alternatively, submissions may also include critical engagements with the concept of slow violence, and attempts to expand it further, e.g. through feminist and/or intersectional perspectives.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

Theoretical/conceptual debates

- Defining and conceptualizing slow violence within the context of political violence
- Analyzing the interplay between slow violence and different forms of political violence
- Exploring the implications of slow violence for theories of conflict transformation
- Further developing the conceptualization of slow violence

Empirical studies

- Case studies illustrating slow violence and their interplay with political violence
- Comparative analyses of slow violence across different geopolitical contexts

Empirical studies can be from any geographical location and on different forms of political/slow violence. These can include but are not limited to forms of violence such as genocide, civil war, riots, human trafficking and migration, authoritarian political violence, etc. and their temporal and spatial implications.

Submission Guidelines:

Please send your abstracts (250 words max.) and bios (200 words max.) to trace@staff.uni-marburg.de by 1 April 2025. Panel submissions should additionally provide an abstract (250 words max.) explaining the rationale of the panel. The conference language is English.

Notifications are sent out by the beginning of May.

We have a limited amount of travel funds. If you require funding for your conference participation, please include this in your submission email.

Contact Information:

For submissions and inquiries, please contact:

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Organizers:

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