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FROM THE EDITOR

Peace is not merely a political condition or the outcome of diplomatic agreements. It is a multi-layered reality: cultural, moral, spiritual and existential, that, as UNESCO reminds us, “is born in the minds of men” (*Constitution of UNESCO*, Preamble). This understanding shifts the focus from political arrangements to the slow and demanding work of shaping persons and communities. In educational terms, peace becomes a task: a dynamic practice through which we cultivate the capacity for dialogue, reflection, presence, critical engagement with the world, and recognition of human dignity.

Contemporary societies, marked by global transformations, geopolitical tensions, migration, health crises and new forms of marginalisation, bring challenges that education cannot ignore. Children, people with disabilities, young people at risk of exclusion, older adults and those living in places of confinement form groups whose experiences reveal both human fragility and the possibility of reconciliation. Within such contexts, a pedagogy of peace is not simply a theoretical field but a practice of responsibility, care and justice, expressed through everyday relationships, institutional life, communicative habits and the wider social fabric.

Thinking about peace within educational discourse requires us to move beyond reductive interpretations and adopt a broad anthropological perspective. Peace is grounded in the way we understand the human person: in dignity, relationality, forgiveness and the ability to begin anew. For this reason, peace education is not an optional supplement to upbringing; it forms its very core. It teaches presence, understanding and the capacity to feel with others, while at the same time enabling us to recognise structures of violence so that they may be resisted and transformed. Insights drawn from religious humanism, value-based education, communication theory, critical pedagogy and restorative justice studies open up a space in which peace can be approached as a formative category for future societies.

This volume emerges as a response to these challenges. It gathers contributions that treat peace not as an abstract notion but as an everyday educational task.

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The chapters draw on spirituality, ethical communication, critical reasoning, inclusion, mediation, resocialisation, intergenerational solidarity and psychological resilience, together forming a diverse yet coherent landscape of peace-oriented pedagogy.

Within the volume, three thematic currents become visible. The first turns to the foundations of peace: the values, ideas and anthropological insights that shape our understanding of human dignity (texts 1–4). The authors explore religious initiatives, Christian educational traditions, the spiritual resonance of sacred music and pedagogical perspectives inspired by Montessori and Vanier. Across these reflections runs a shared intuition: peace grows out of attentiveness, contemplation, relationality and the values that organise the life of both the individual and the community.

The second current concerns education and the practices through which peace is cultivated in schools, institutions and wider educational environments (texts 5–9). Here, the teacher appears as an agent of peace, someone who shapes young people through language, ethical communication, critical thought and an intentional, value-oriented presence. The chapters also engage with questions of global change, emphasising that schools today must prepare learners to navigate conflict with responsibility and to act for the common good, including in intercultural settings.

The third current understands peace as relationship and experience, highlighting practices of repair, dialogue, creativity and communal life (texts 10–14). The contributions discuss mediation, resocialisation, art-based interventions, international exchanges and institutions supporting older adults. What links these contexts is the idea of peace as a space of encounter and restored connection, a process that involves confronting prejudice, strengthening resilience and building forms of community capable of sustaining dignity and mutual recognition. It is peace lived and embodied: shaped by practice, the arts, gesture and shared experience.

Peace as an Educational Task stands within an educational tradition that does not turn away from the tensions of the contemporary world, but seeks meaning and responsibility within them. It proposes a way of thinking about peace as an educational responsibility, a formation of conscience, a care for vulnerable persons and a work of building communities capable of dialogue and reconciliation. As the contributions in this volume demonstrate, peace is not a distant aspiration but a practice of everyday life. Education remains one of the most vital spaces in which it takes form.

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The Colloquia section opens with Kun Li and Liu Huijun's Basic Art Education in China and Kyrgyzstan: Challenges, Reforms and Opportunities for Cooperation, where a qualitative research design integrating comparative analysis, literature review, and case studies systematically examines developmental disparities and synergies. China emerges with advantages in policy frameworks, diversified teaching models, and digital technologies, while Kyrgyzstan excels in preserving traditional culture and artistic heritage. The authors propose concrete pathways for bilateral collaboration in curriculum design, teacher training, and resource sharing, positioning art education as a bridge for intercultural peace.

Emilia Śmiechowska-Petrovskij's Blind and Low-Vision Individuals in Public Libraries: A Transition from Segregated Services to an Inclusive Operational Model – An Analysis of Accessibility Conditions employs historical-legal analysis of legislation, statistics, and practices to document the shift from over fifty years of segregation to inclusive service delivery. The study delineates specific accessibility requirements—ranging from tactile resources to adaptive technologies—that libraries must implement, underscoring universal design as essential for equitable participation and human dignity.

Michał Stefan Rutkowski and Agnieszka Klimska's Decoding 'Environmental' Discourse: A Linguistic Approach to Improving Education for Sustainable Development leverages corpus linguistics and semantic prosody analysis to expose how the term "environmental" carries negative connotations of harm and risk, often neutralized by technocratic framing. Building on prior studies of terms like "sustainability," they advocate linguistic reframing in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to evoke emotional engagement, empowerment, and ethical action against ecological crises.

Oleksandr Kuchai's Development of Logical Thinking of Future Specialists in the Process of Professional Self-Improvement addresses a core pedagogical challenge through teacher-student co-creation, emphasizing flexibility, creativity, and practical training. This approach equips future professionals with analytical tools for complex problem-solving, fostering the multifaceted competencies needed for responsible decision-making in dynamic professional and social environments.

Jadwiga Daszykowska-Tobiasz's Dilemmas of Shaping Youth Identity in the Context of Consumerism interrogates how postmodern consumer society engenders insatiable needs and identity fragmentation. Through literature review,

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the analysis highlights adult roles in providing multidimensional developmental support during childhood and adolescence, framing identity pedagogy as a vital counterforce to alienation and a pathway to authentic relational peace.

Aleksandra Kulpa-Puczyńska's *Educational and Project Cooperation: Work Techniques, Outcomes of Activities and Directions of Development* champions action-service learning as an experiential integration of academic, social, and collaborative elements. Acknowledging youth enthusiasm for meaningful initiatives alongside challenges like group dynamics and evaluation, the text outlines practical techniques and future directions for projects that cultivate social responsibility and communal harmony.

Edyta Wolter's *Foreign Authorial Expressions Regarding Nature Conservation Used in Educational Practice in the Second Republic of Poland (1918–1939)* applies qualitative text analysis and hermeneutics to interwar curricula, revealing how foreign printed sources shaped environmental education. This interpretive study presents selected foreign works and printed sources used in teaching practice in public schools during the interwar period.

Agnieszka Szymańska's *Projective Identification in Educational Interactions: Mechanism Analysis and a Cybernetic Perspective* elucidates this primitive defense mechanism via cybernetic feedback loops in caregiver-child and adult relations. By modeling interactional reactivity, the article equips parents, educators, and therapists with strategies to modulate projections, diminishing relational conflicts and nurturing healthier communicative bonds.

Michał Daszkiewicz's *Reconciling the Positivist and the Constructivist Perspectives with the Notion of Positioning* proposes positioning—analogueous to digital navigation—as a hybrid human cognitive process blending scalable valuations and multidimensional attributes. Epistemological foundations yield methodological and instructional implications, particularly for language pedagogy, bridging paradigmatic divides toward a unified educational framework.

Jan Niewęglowski's *Salesian Pedagogy in the Light of the Second Vatican Council* traces the Preventive System's evolution from John Bosco's 19th-century response to youth marginalization through its post-conciliar *aggiornamento*. The reason-religion-love triad adapts to contemporary challenges, reaffirming salesian methods as a paradigm for preventive peace education amid social upheaval.

Izabela Gątarek's *The Family and the Child: Selected Contexts and the Thought of John Paul II* examines familial dynamics amid moral relativism, drawing on papal teachings to affirm the family as the primary locus of child development. Despite modern disruptions, it positions moral formation within family life as foundational for cultivating peace and human flourishing.

The last article in this section is authored by Katarzyna Błażejewska and entitled: *Supporting Student Autonomy in Early School Education: Teaching Strategies, Challenges, and Conclusions from Pilot Studies*. The article examines response strategies and autonomy-supportive styles used by early childhood

education teachers, based on a pilot vignette study using the Problems in Schools Questionnaire. Highly autonomy-supportive styles scored highest, while controlling styles scored lowest. It stresses deepening teachers' skills in modern motivation, relationship-building, balanced support, activating methods, and reducing controlling approaches.

The Reviews section offers critical engagement through Monika Wolińska's *In Search of a Pedagogy of Meaning: A Review of Jarosław T. Michalski's "Meaning of Life and Pedagogy. Impulses of Thought by Viktor E. Frankl"*, distilling logotherapy's existential impulses for educational practice. This appraisal highlights meaning-making as a resilient cornerstone for pedagogies oriented toward inner peace and ethical resilience.

The volume closes with *Chronicle*, featuring Jan Niewęglowski's report on the National Scientific Conference "Disability – a Task or a Challenge in the Modern World?" (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, 25 November 2024), synthesizing key discussions on inclusive pedagogy and contemporary responses to human vulnerability.