

Call for Papers – LIMINA 8:2 (Autumn 2025)

Peace in Times of Political and Moral Uncertainty

ENGLISH



Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the ensuing war, there has been a growing multidisciplinary debate about peace, pacifism and peacemaking. This has been further intensified by the military conflict between Israel and Hamas after the terrorist attack of 7 October 2023. A certain shift in discourse triggered by these events can be observed, especially in traditionally pacifist circles such as left-wing political parties or in theological debates. Accordingly, former staunch pacifist standpoints increasingly incorporate considerations around justified military self-defense, including offensive military action. Examples include the Israeli army's attacks in Gaza and the Ukrainian army's attack on the Russian administrative district of Kursk. In this context, various questions have been raised about an adequate understanding of "just war", the concept of peace, and the possibilities and limits of international peacemaking. At the same time, these debates converge with growing political and moral uncertainties, at least in the Global North.

Religions and religious denominations are involved in many of today's conflicts. In addition to their role as peacemakers, they can also be a driving factor in warfare and its justification. This often raises the question of whether, to what extent and in what way a violence-legitimizing role of religion can be considered an abuse of religion, or whether it arises from specific characteristics of a religion. At the same time, (theological) assessments of conflicts and peace processes within the international community cannot disregard religious-theological aspects, like common historical and religious destinies such as these shared between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

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Given current environmental, political, military, social and technological developments, the challenge is to constantly rethink peace and to develop concepts of peace that honour traditional religious or political ideas of peace while also taking these new changes into account. At the same time, these processes are characterized by a tension between idealistic concepts of peace, such as positive peace or liberal peace, on the one hand, and the actual possibilities and limits of concrete and realistic peace practices, on the other.

The symbolic power of peace, in part because of its association with religious notions of salvation, makes it vulnerable to abuse and manipulation. Thus, the concepts of peace or peacemaking can be used to legitimize and support military operations or political and religious authorities. A critical perspective on the concept of peace is therefore crucial in order to examine where and how peace is publicly talked about today, and to uncover underlying dynamics (of power).

Peace in its individual, spiritual, but also social and political dimensions is in many ways a core aspect and internal concern of religion and as such should also be discussed in the context of contemporary problems. Because of these multiple layers and its relevance across all areas of human reality, a critical examination of the concept of peace must take place in dialogue with many other scientific disciplines.

Therefore, any thinking and theorizing about peace must reflect multiple perspectives and approaches. On this basis, the editors propose the following questions for a comprehensive discussion:

- How do idealistic notions of peace as a (religious and historical) ideal state and radical demands such as those in the Sermon on the Mount relate to the actual practice of peace, which is bound by limitations, uncertainties and pragmatism?
- How can the concept of peace be rearticulated as the international community increasingly abandons the Enlightenment fiction of continual geopolitical improvement towards an ideal state in favor of more sober positions that take into account that human extinction has become a realistic possibility in times of climate crisis?
- What role do religions and faiths play in contemporary conflicts, both as peacemakers and as drivers of conflict? Should they be seen

as a potential obstacle to peace or as a resource for greater stability and social cohesion?

- How can intellectual engagement and practical action for peace take into account the perspectives of the LGBTQIA+ community?
- How can peace education be successful in different educational contexts?
- What forms of power influence the theory and practice of peace, and to what extent do positionalities and epistemic violence determine supposedly universal approaches?
- Which biblical and theological conceptions of peace can have an impact on contemporary conflicts?
- What religious and theological debates and narratives are at work in contemporary conflicts? How can the issue be discussed theologically in inter-religious dialogue?
- What historical perspectives on war and peace are embedded in religions? How are historical conceptions of peace and war discussed today and do they promote certain political narratives (e.g. Crusades, Reconquista, Islamic expansion into India, al-Andalus, Pax Mongolica...)?
- What concepts of peace are suitable for pluralistic, religiously and culturally heterogeneous societies?
- What religious peace initiatives are currently taking place and what role do they play in the international community and its strategies for maintaining peace and security?
- To what extent are economic goals and capitalism still relevant factors for war and peace in the 21st century?
- To what extent are religious and nationalist narratives still relevant to war and peace in times of climate crisis?

The Journal [LIMINA – Theological Perspectives from Graz](#) is looking for academic papers in the above-outlined scope. Articles may be in German or English and interdisciplinary or methodologically unconventional. Please submit the concept of your paper (max. 4,000 characters) to

limina(at)uni-graz.at.

We welcome articles in German and in English as well as interdisciplinary perspectives and methodologically unconventional approaches. Please note that articles submitted must not yet be published elsewhere.

The final article should not exceed 40,000 characters. For more information about the journal, the peer review process and publication guidelines please visit: <http://unipub.uni-graz.at/limina>.

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