

World Religions and Norms of War

Edited by

Vesselin Popovski
Gregory M. Reichberg
Nicholas Turner



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Endorsements

“As long as religious differences and religious doctrines remain significant sources of war and conflict, it will be vitally important for potential adversaries to achieve a greater mutual comprehension of the beliefs about the morality of war in their different religious traditions. But it is perhaps even more important for people to understand clearly the moral teachings about war in their own religion. This splendid new book provides a starting point for enhanced understanding in a series of concise, accessible, and historically informed expositions and analyses of diverse religious views of the morality of war. Among the book’s many virtues is that it does not treat the dominant religions as monolithic but devotes a chapter to each major branch, thereby revealing both harmonies and differences not only between but within the different religions. There could hardly be a more timely or important book.”

Jeff McMahan, *Professor of Philosophy, Rutgers University*

“All great religions hold life to be sacred; all profess peace; yet few are absolutely pacifist. The exploration of circumstances in which the use of force may be justified by religions offers rich potential to distil a universe of original wisdom and interpretive essays to shed light on an eternal question of philosophy, politics, law and morality. The chapters are full of insights into the contemporary human condition and offer a more nuanced and illuminating, not to say politically much needed, antidote to simplistic and self-fulfilling commentary on the clash of civilizations.”

Ramesh Thakur, *Director, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Canada*

“This book is both timely and timeless: timely because of the surge of interest in the subject of religious perspectives on war and timeless because it covers millennia of human thought and principles that will remain with humanity for all time to come. The volume is incredibly rich: rich in historical description, rich in scriptural references and rich in illustrations of diversity within each religion. This magnificent collection demonstrates not only the wide divergences but also the many strong commonalities among religious traditions. The conclusions in the book come naturally from the depth of expert analysis, they reach beyond theology and make a powerful commentary on humanity’s efforts to curtail and civilize the initiation and conduct of brutal wars.”

Walter Dorn, *Professor, Royal Military College, Canada*

“This extraordinary edited volume should speak to those who are fed up with the use of religion to fuel conflicts. The original contributions in this volume represent the diversity of religious thinking about the variety of justifications for going to war (jus ad bellum) and ethical debates regarding methods of warfare (jus in bello). The discussion in this book is especially relevant and propitious at this moment in our history when the global hegemon seems to be signalling a potential policy shift from a ‘clash of civilizations’ to a ‘dialogue among civilizations’ framework. The content of this book is not just for theologians, historians and political scientists. Ordinary citizens from every civilization should read this book.”

W. Andy Knight, *Professor of International Relations, University of Alberta, Canada*

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