



In Defense of Dharma: Just-War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism)

Tessa J. Bartholomeusz

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This is the first book to examine war and violence in Sri Lanka through the lens of cross-cultural studies on just-war tradition and theory. In a study that is textual, historical and anthropological, it is argued that the ongoing Sinhala-Tamil conflict is in actual practice often justified by a resort to religious stories that allow for war when Buddhism is in peril. Though Buddhism is commonly assumed to be a religion that never allows for war, this study suggests otherwise, thereby bringing Buddhism into the ethical dialogue on religion and war. Without a realistic consideration of just-war thinking in contemporary Sri Lanka, it will remain impossible to understand the power of religion there to create both peace and war.

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