

The Justifications for War and Peace in World Religions

Part III: Comparison of Scriptures from Seven World Religions

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Abstract

One of the most important decisions of any nation or armed group is when, if ever, to wage war or apply armed force. Such life-and-death judgements are informed by and sometimes determined by ethical principles and religious beliefs. World religions all provide guidelines on when armed force is justified. Are the permissions and prohibitions similar among religions? The present work seeks to map out the range of religious approaches to armed force, as expressed in the scriptures of the world's largest religions. Though the interpretations of religious scriptures vary considerably, the texts themselves provide a sense of each religion's approach to the important issue. Covering values from absolute pacifism, where armed force is not permissible under any circumstances, to strong militancy, where armed force is readily adopted, this research compiles, compares and contrasts important scriptural passages. Along with the associated DRDC reports, it presents a *tour d'horizon*, surveying scriptures from seven world religions. The previous reports analysed the three Abrahamic religions (Part I: Christianity, Islam and Judaism) and religions of Indic origin (Part II: Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism). The important scriptures from each religion were briefly introduced and the relevant verses were extracted, categorized and summarized. This makes possible, in each religion, the juxtaposition of passages justifying the use of force with passages suggesting the opposite. More broadly, a comparison is presented here, in Part III, in both a descriptive and a schematic fashion to illustrate the differences between the scriptures within each religion and the differences between the religions. The religious approaches are compared by examining how they answer basic questions about war: Why? Who? When? Where? What? How? This variance is illustrated in this report by locating religious scriptures along a spectrum of force.

Résumé

L'une des plus importantes décisions qu'un pays ou un groupe peut être appelé à prendre, même si ce n'est que rarement, est celle de partir au combat ou de prendre les armes. De telles décisions de vie ou de mort reposent parfois sur des principes éthiques et des croyances religieuses. Toutes les religions du monde définissent des balises pour justifier l'utilisation de la force armée. Les autorisations et les interdictions à cet égard sont-elles les mêmes dans les différentes religions? Le présent document tente de décrire, en se reportant à leurs textes sacrés, comment les plus grandes religions abordent la question de la force armée. Les interprétations des textes sacrés sont très variables, mais les textes à proprement parler contiennent des indications quant à la position de chaque religion par rapport à cet important enjeu. En compilant, comparant et mettant en contraste des passages fondamentaux des textes sacrés, la présente étude a permis de faire ressortir des valeurs fort diversifiées allant du pacifisme absolu qui interdit tout recours à la force armée en toutes circonstances, au militarisme radical qui prône d'emblée l'utilisation de la force armée. A l'instar de rapports connexes de Recherche et développement pour la défense Canada (RODC), le présent rapport présente un tour d'horizon des textes sacrés de sept religions du monde. Les rapports antérieurs contenaient des analyses des trois religions abrahamiques (Partie I: le christianisme, l'islam et le judaïsme) et de religions d'origine hindoue (Partie II: le bouddhisme, l'hindouisme, le jaïnisme et le sikhisme). Ces deux premières parties présentaient brièvement les textes sacrés de chaque religion ainsi que les versets pertinents qui en avaient été extraits, classés par catégorie et résumés. D'où possibilité de juxtaposer, pour chaque religion, les passages justifiant l'emploi de la force et les passages suggérant le contraire. De façon plus générale, la comparaison présentée ici, dans la Partie III, est descriptive et schématique, ce qui permet de mettre en lumière les différences entre les textes sacrés de chaque religion ainsi que les différences entre les religions. Les approches religieuses sont comparées en examinant leurs réponses aux questions fondamentales au sujet de la guerre : Pourquoi? Qui? Quand? Où? Quoi? Comment? Dans le présent rapport, ces divergences sont expliquées en situant les textes sacrés de chaque religion dans l'éventail des recours à la force.

Executive summary

The Justifications for War and Peace in World Religions Part III: Comparison of the Scriptures of Seven World Religions

A. Walter Dorn; DRDC CR 2010-36; Defence R&D Canada – Toronto; 2010.

Religious scriptures have often been used to justify a particular course of action, be it violent or peaceful, as shown in the Executive Summary of Part I (Abrahamic Religions). The immediate purpose of this project is to identify and summarize the relevant excerpts from religious scriptures from seven world religions. Scripture is defined as a common document or documents to which a wide number of adherents refer. Most of the sacred works used here were composed and transmitted orally over many centuries, and thus gave rise to significant variant recensions. The authors of these reports have employed scholar-edited critical editions where possible, while bearing in mind that the concept of “scripture” as understood in Abrahamic faiths does not always apply in the Indic context. Nevertheless, these works afford at least a peephole into strains of ethical discourse of these religions.

The companion reports investigated the three most widespread Abrahamic religions (Part I covers Christianity, Islam, and Judaism), and four Indic-origin religions (Part II covers Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism). Each set of scriptures was introduced and the extracts were summarized before they were provided in categories. The scriptural extracts were presented in a different font (Garamond) than the commentary (Times New Roman) and some key words were bolded or underlined for ease of scanning and reference. The present report identifies the more pacific and the more militant passages of each religion based on the extracts provided in the previous two parts.

In this report, all seven religions are compared and contrasted. Chapter 2 uncovers passages that come closest to answering basic questions about the use of force. Chapter 3 concludes the trilogy with a proposed model that positions religious texts from the seven world religions along a spectrum of force. These reports should serve as a research and educational tool through the compilation of scriptural extracts relevant to war and peace, and thus they should promote the understanding of religious scriptures worldwide and in the Canadian Forces (CF).

This report should serve as a useful reference work for religious passages on war and peace, as well as an analytical work which compares and contrasts different scriptures. A similar scriptural comparison of the justifications for war and peace does not seem to be available in the literature. This work straddles the field of religious studies, one of the humanities, and the wider peace and security field, which is partly a social science. While the authors are sensitive to the drawbacks of taking scriptural passages out of their historical context, they nevertheless present the scriptures in as simple and straightforward a manner possible. Such passages can give an indication of how parties interested in justifying the use of force, be they thinkers, politicians, combatants or religious practitioners, might use scriptures passages. It should be noted that the frequency of violence-justifying passages in a religion’s scriptures does not imply that members of religious groups will behave in a more militant fashion. The links between scripture and practice would need to be analysed to make any such link. Such an analysis would be particularly difficult since there are so many interpretations and applications of scriptures.

This scriptural analysis is designed to contribute towards a broader consideration of religious rules and policies associated with war and armed force. As a result, this work can serve as the basis for a wider effort to compare and contrast different religious scriptures; and, in future studies, religious sects, thinkers and religio-cultural practices.

Sommaire

The Justifications for War and Peace in World Religions Part III: Comparison of the Scriptures of Seven World Religions

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Tel que rappelé dans le Résumé de la Partie I (Les religions abrahamiques) du rapport, les textes sacrés ont souvent été utilisés pour justifier une ligne de conduite, fut-elle violente ou pacifique. L'objectif immédiat du projet est de relever et de résumer les extraits pertinents des textes sacrés de sept religions du monde. Les textes sacrés sont des documents consultés et évoqués par bon nombre d'adeptes. La majorité des textes sacrés utilisés pour les besoins de la présente étude ont été composés et transmis oralement au cours des siècles et ont par conséquent fait l'objet de multiples recensions. Dans la mesure du possible, les auteurs de ces recensions ont utilisé des éditions critiques revues et corrigées par des érudits, sans jamais perdre de vue que le concept de « saintes écritures » ou de « textes sacrés » dans les religions abrahamiques n'est pas toujours applicable au contexte hindou. Mais leurs travaux permettent tout au moins de dégager les grandes tendances du discours moral de ces religions.

Les trois rapports complémentaires se penchent sur les trois religions abrahamiques les plus répandues (la Partie I traite du christianisme, de l'islam et du judaïsme) et sur quatre religions d'origine hindoue (la Partie II traite du bouddhisme, de l'hindouisme, du jainisme et du sikhisme). Les différents ensembles de textes sacrés y sont présentés et les extraits y sont résumés avant d'être classés par catégories. Deux polices de caractères différentes sont utilisées : Garamond pour les passages cités et Times New Roman pour les commentaires; de plus, certains mots clés sont imprimés en caractères gras ou sont soulignés pour en faciliter la lecture et la référence. Le présent rapport cerne les passages les plus pacifiques et les plus militants des textes sacrés de chaque religion examinés dans les deux rapports antérieurs.

Dans ce rapport-ci, les sept religions sont comparées et mises en contraste. Le chapitre 2 dégage les passages qui se rapprochent le plus d'une réponse aux questions fondamentales concernant le recours à la force. Le chapitre 3 conclut la trilogie en proposant un modèle qui situe les textes religieux dans un éventail de recours à la force. Ces rapports devraient servir d'instrument de recherche et d'éducation, puisqu'on y trouve une compilation d'extraits de textes sacrés au sujet de la guerre et de la paix, et peut être utilisée pour promouvoir la compréhension des écrits religieux partout dans le monde et au sein des Forces canadiennes.

Le présent rapport devrait constituer un ouvrage de référence utile pour les passages religieux sur la guerre et sur la paix, de même qu'un document analytique qui compare et met en contraste différents textes sacrés. Une telle comparaison des justifications de la guerre et de la paix dans les textes sacrés ne semble pas disponible dans la littérature existante. Cette recherche touche à la fois le domaine des sciences religieuses, qui appartient au secteur des lettres et sciences humaines, et le domaine plus vaste de la paix et de la sécurité, qui fait partie des sciences sociales. Les auteurs sont conscients des contre-indications qu'il peut y avoir à sortir de leur contexte des passages de textes sacrés, mais les présentent néanmoins le plus simplement et le plus honnêtement possible. Ces passages peuvent être révélateurs des méthodes qu'emploient les parties intéressées, qu'il s'agisse de penseurs, de politiciens, de combattants ou de fidèles d'une Église, pour justifier le recours à la force. Il convient de rappeler que la fréquence des passages justifiant la violence dans les textes sacrés d'une religion

ne signifie pas nécessairement que les membres des groupes confessionnels vont devenir plus militants. Pour établir un tel lien, il faudrait analyser les rapports entre les textes sacrés et la pratique religieuse. Compte tenu de l'abondance des interprétations et des mises en application des textes sacrés, ce genre d'analyse serait particulièrement exigeant.

La présente analyse des textes sacrés se veut une contribution à un examen plus approfondi des règles et politiques religieuses associées à la guerre et à la force armée. Elle peut donc servir de point de départ à un projet plus vaste de comparaison et de mise en contraste des écrits sacrés de différentes religions ainsi qu'à d'autres études portant sur les sectes religieuses, les penseurs religieux et les pratiques culturelles d'origine religieuse.

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1 Introduction

Religious scriptures have often been used to either justify or oppose the use of armed force. Throughout history, one can find many instances of scriptural passages being cited to encourage participation in warfare and increase animosity (adversarial intent) or to foster peace and understanding. Some examples from the Abrahamic faiths were described in the Introduction of Part I of this three-part series of reports.

Knowledge of scriptural sources is useful to those who wish to better understand peoples or societies in which religion plays an important role, particularly in motivating and justifying war and peace. Scriptural knowledge is also useful to those who seek to influence religiously-inspired people, combatants and supporters. Knowing the reasons for recourse to war or violence and the alleged scriptural support can contribute to the peace process by providing insight into the personal justifications of the leaders and combatants. Furthermore, mediators and negotiators may choose to challenge extremists' scriptural interpretations favouring war by presenting alternative passages or interpretations that offer a more peaceful perspective.

Comparative religion studies also help foster deeper understandings among religions and to provide greater insight into the human condition worldwide. The goal of this report is to facilitate the reader's awareness of the scriptural justifications for war and peace, and an ability to analyze and compare these justifications. Through this compilation of scriptural excerpts and accompanying summaries, the work aims to create a research and educational tool which will promote further investigation and understanding of religious scriptures worldwide and within Canada's defence and security community.

1.1 Source selection and definition of scripture

Academically and religiously there is a wide diversity of opinion about the definition of "scripture." Scripture is defined here pragmatically as the common document or documents to which a large number (the majority preferably) of adherents to a particular religion refer. Determining this can sometimes be difficult, particularly in Indic religions that are strongly dependent on an oral rather than written tradition.

All texts were examined in English translation, relying upon scholarly renditions. In accessing the works in translation, connotations and flavours proper to the original text may be lost, but the general meanings mostly remain intact.

In cases where a reliable scholarly translation of a scripture was not available electronically (as was the case for the Rāmāyaṇa), an authoritative print version was located and visually scanned for key terms and concepts.

Short background introductions for each scripture precede a summary of the scriptural extracts. The quoted passages are then presented in a different font (Garamond) than the introduction and summary. Certain words in the excerpts have also been bolded for emphasis and ease of reference and browsing.

The scriptures originated in drastically different times and places. Despite the contextual diversity among these texts, they share a universal concern about the loss of human life. The authors of this report are cognizant of the rich cultural nuances and historical references offered in these texts. However, exploring the historio-cultural context is beyond the scope of this scriptural exegesis. One aim of this work is to ascertain the extent to which these ancient traditions offer similar approaches. A particularly apt comparison relies on the main themes of the just war tradition.¹ The tradition evaluates the justifiability of using armed force based on factors including the cause, intent, means and expected outcome, as well as type of authority launching the war, and way the war is conducted. In so doing, this report offers a preliminary contribution to comparative-religious and cross-cultural discourse on war and peace.

Basic questions about the use of force are asked for each set of religious scriptures. Because of the close overlap with the themes of the just war tradition, some of the questions are framed in language drawn from that tradition. This is deemed acceptable as an interpretive framework because the just war tradition results from the most sustained intellectual query into the ethics of force cross-culturally, and because of its influence on modern laws of armed conflict, including the Charter of the United Nations.²

1.2 Methodology and methodological limitations

The authors of this report used a linguistic basis, in the form of keywords, to begin their compilation of relevant scriptural passages. Keyword searches directed the authors towards excerpts in the scriptures. The keywords are listed in the introduction of each chapter. The keywords were chosen to be appropriate for each scripture so as to obtain as many relevant hits as possible. The verses surrounding these keywords were likewise reviewed for relevant content.

Passages from different religions were grouped together in Chapter 2 according to a common classification system. This system interrogates how each passage answers the basic interrogative questions about war: Why? Who? When? Where? What? How? The just war tradition informed the refinement of these themes.

The overall intention of this methodological approach is to offer a primary source exposition that is as thematically comprehensive as possible given the length and scope of these scriptures. One of this method's strengths is that it allows a broad overview of the wide range of scriptural passages along with a basic classification of passages that aids a comparative analysis. The work seeks to increase the accessibility of these passages, which have gained increased salience in current conflicts, as well as in the evolving literature on war and peace. This exposition should

¹ Although there is no single definitive source for a statement of the just war tradition, the principal elements are described in: Reichberg, Greg, Henrik Syse & Endre Begby (eds.), *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Blackwell Publishing: Oxford, 2006) and Walzer, Michael, *Just and Unjust Wars* (Basic Books: New York, 1997).

² See: Reichberg et al, *ibid.* and International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre), <http://www.iciss.ca>.

therefore be of interest to scholars, the general public and practitioners, including members of the Canadian defence and security community.

The limitations of this approach should also be acknowledged. First, scripture is only one component of a set of religious beliefs. It is often considered the heart of many religions and provides a source of inspiration and guidance to generations of adherents across wide geographical areas and diverse communities, but the writings, speeches and examples of spiritual teachers are also important. Second, there are many, varied versions of the scripture, as discussed above. Third, there are often divergent interpretations of the same version of scripture. Various religious schools interpret scriptures differently, often with the guidance of secondary texts unique to those particular schools. An analysis of the great many commentaries on religious scripture is beyond the purview of this work, or any work, due both to the lack of key primary source materials (speeches, sermons and writings in a plethora of languages, ancient and modern) and the plethora of diverse opinion regarding their salience.

This study provides a modest exegetic summary and interpretation of the justifications of war and violence in each scripture using the words as close as possible to what is presented in the scripture. All effort was taken to let the scriptural excerpts speak for themselves. The authors caution, however, against simple “proof-texting,” the superficial use of a quotation taken out of context, especially when made to sound like an authoritative and definitive reference. When a text is used without an understanding of the context of the writings and the writers, the original meaning can be lost and the value for dialogue diminished. Nevertheless, by collecting together all relevant passages, much can be revealed about a religion’s basic approach to the subject of war and peace. When quotes are grouped and introduced, the broader thrust of each religion’s approach can be appreciated.

Furthermore, collecting and categorizing passages can help in their interpretation. The similarity to ‘just war’ themes, such as just cause and legitimate authority,³ help make comparisons easier. But being a religious studies (humanities) exercise and not a social science analysis, these categorizations were not subjected to the tests of scientific scrutiny—namely, determining the level of inter-rater reliability when several persons act as evaluators (“raters”) using approaches such as independent review and quantitative analysis of reliability such as correlation, percent correct, or some other measures of agreement. Future research from a social science perspective could develop the present exercise in that direction by examining inter-rater reliability and developing a more standard set of coding guidelines and search terms.

1.3 Overview

This is thought to be the first compilation and comparison of scriptural passages from Indic religions dealing with armed force, and, when read alongside Parts I and II, it almost certainly is the only report which extends its scriptural compilation to seven world religions. Together, the reports cover the world’s largest religions. These religions are listed by the estimated percentage of world population in Figure 1.1.

³ A fuller range of criteria used by various just war thinkers would include: Just Cause, Right Intent, Legitimate Authority, Last Resort, Proportionality of Means, Net benefit, Right Conduct.

This figure shows the religions covered in this work, which include religions having over five million adherents. Jainism, the smallest, with approximately five million followers, is important for this study because it is based on non-violence, forming an important pole on the force spectrum. It also has a marked influence on other religions, especially Buddhism and Hinduism, including through the works of the modern leader Mahatma Gandhi. A review of other, smaller, religions was omitted due to time and space constraints.

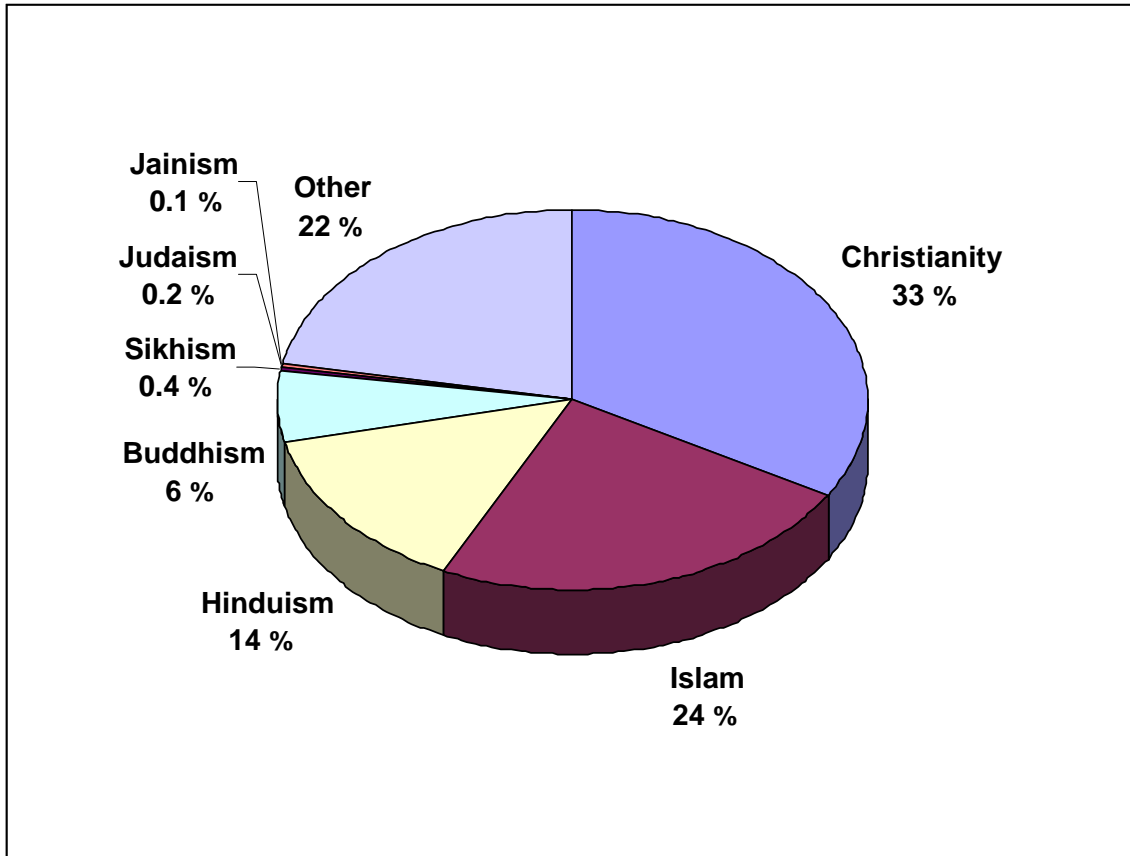


Figure 1.1: Seven world religions by percentage adherents of global population⁴

Lastly, the methods used in these reports—extracting, summarizing and preliminary analysis—are the first steps in a wider examination of religious approaches to the use of force. Upon this foundation, the variety of interpretations, schools of thought, religious sects, leaders and religio-

⁴ Data from the Adherents.Com website, where the sources for the various estimates are also provided (Available: www.adherents.com/Religions_By_Adherents.html, accessed 20 June 2009). Included in the “Other” category here are the following groups with over a billion adherents in total: Secular/Nonreligious/Agnostic/Atheist; Chinese traditional; primal-indigenous; African Traditional & Diasporic; Juche (North Korea); Spiritism; Baha’i; Shinto; Cao Dai; Zoroastrianism; Tenrikyo and Neo-Paganism. The percentages shown in Figure 1.1 are quite close to those presented in the World Christian Database, available at www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd.

cultural practices can be added. These reports can serve as a reference source of scriptural passages, thereby contributing to the field of comparative religion. Through this modest work, the authors aim to stimulate practical uses and further analysis on the overlap between religion and the themes of war and peace.

2 Scriptural comparisons of seven world religions

Having extracted and reviewed the passages from the religious scriptures of seven world religions in Parts I and II of this work, comparisons can now be made among these scriptures and, by careful extension, among these religions. First, however, some basis or framework for comparison is needed. One of the most basic ways of comparing is to examine how the scriptures answer basic questions exemplified by the list of ‘six Ws’ (or more precisely, ‘five Ws and one H’): Why? Who? When? Where? What? and HoW? In relation to war and armed force, the following six questions can be posed:

1. **Why fight war?** Includes the declared and undeclared causes, the motivations and intentions, and a possible expression of a net benefit;
2. **Who authorizes war?** Lists the authorities that can decide on war and the persons that are expected to fight;
3. **When to fight?** Describes the particular time or point, if any, at which war can be fought;
4. **What amount of force?** Describes the level of force that should be used.
5. **Where to fight?** Describes the fighting places and any places that out of bounds;
6. **How to fight?** Describes the code of conduct in warfare.

As it turns out, these themes are described in the just war tradition, which also provides some specific answers to the questions.⁵ Although the just war tradition arose from early Christian theologians, its main themes have become incorporated into international law and they are commonly used in contemporary debate on military ethics.⁶ In order not to analyse the various religions from the perspective of any one religious tradition, an independent approach is taken to determine how each religion answers the above basic questions. The most relevant scriptural passages for each religion are tabulated for each question, drawing from the excerpts listed in Parts I and II. The religions are presented in the tables in alphabetical order

Before exploring the circumstances in which force can be applied, it is important to discover if all religions have a basic presumption against the use of lethal force (i.e., killing). In other words, is there a general rule not to apply deadly force? If so, organized killing would then be justified only in exceptional cases, requiring specific conditions and circumstances. A review of scripture shows this to be true: there is a presumption or basic rule against killing in all world religions,

⁵ For further reading on the development and application of the just war tradition, see: *Just War Theory*. Ed. Jean Bethke Elshtain. (Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1992); Johnson, James Turner, *Ideology, reason, and the limitation of war: religious and secular concepts, 1200-1740* (Princeton University Press, 1975); Walzer, Michael, *Just and unjust wars: a moral argument with historical illustrations*. (New York: Basic Books, 1977) and *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Gregory M. Reichberg, Henrik Syse and Endre Begby (Eds.) (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006).

⁶ See: James Turner Johnson, “From Moral Norm to Criminal Code: The Law of Armed Conflict and the Restraint of Contemporary War” in Anthony F Lang, Jr., Albert C. Pierce, and Joel H. Rosenthal, eds., *Ethics and the Future of Conflict: Lessons from the 1990s* (Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall Publishers, 2004): 68-90. See also: Richard Falk, 2004, “Legality to Legitimacy: The Revival of the Just War Framework,” *Harvard International Review* 26 (Spring 2004), pp.40-44.

though the strength of the rule and the exceptions vary. To demonstrate this, a set of some relevant and important quotations are provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: The presumption against killing as expressed in the scriptures of the world religions

Buddhism	All tremble at violence; life is dear to all. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill. (<i>Dhammapada</i> 10.130)
Christianity	Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill ; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment ... (<i>Bible</i> , Matt. 5:21-22)
Hinduism	The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Fearlessness ... self-control ... nonviolence [ahimsa] ... freedom from anger ... tranquility ... compassion for all living entities ... these transcendental qualities, O son of Bharata, belong to godly men endowed with divine nature. (<i>Bhāgavad Gītā</i> 16.1-3; 10.129-130) Nobody anywhere, even among the most despicable, attacks those who are conciliatory . (<i>Rāmāyana</i> IV.58.17)
Islam	Nor take life – which Allah has made sacred – except for just cause (<i>Qur’ān</i> 17:33 see also 25:68)
Jainism	Having thus correctly understood what is meant by violence, its consequence, its victim, and its perpetrator, persons who embrace (the doctrine) should always avoid violence , to the best of their capacity. (<i>Purushyartha Siddhyapaya</i> 60) Desisting from injury , falsehood, stealing, unchastity and attachment is the fivefold vow. (<i>Tattvartha Sutra</i> 7.1)
Judaism	You shall not murder . (<i>Tanakh</i> , Exodus 20:13) Whoever sheds the blood of man , by man shall his blood be shed; for in His image did God make man . (<i>Tanakh</i> , Genesis 9:6)
Sikhism	One who contemplates the essence of reality remains awake and aware. He kills his self-conceit, and does not kill anyone else... Those who meditate on You, Lord, those who meditate on You – those humble beings dwell in peace in this world.... (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i> 1128)

Thus, all religions have a basic prohibition against taking human life. This could be communicated in the form of a commandment, as in the Abrahamic religions, as a moral standard or virtue, as in Buddhism, or as part of the general advocacy for peace and non-violence, as in Sikhism. Notably, Jainism does not admit any exceptions but extends the prohibition to cover violence of all types against all living beings.

(1) If force can be used in some cases, the first and most natural question is: **why** use deadly force? All the religions, except Jainism, maintain exceptions to the rule of non-killing. They present conditions and circumstances when the use of force is justified; firstly, when the cause is just and the intent or motive is right. Illustrative passages for this are provided in Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

Table 2.2: Causes that can justify armed force

Buddhism	Although all kings, ministers, rich lay men and upasakas may possess the sword and staff for protecting Dharma , I call this upholding the precepts. (<i>Mahaparinirvana Sutra</i> , Ch.5)
Christianity	For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. ... For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil . (<i>Bible</i> , Rom. 13:3-4)
Hinduism	<p>If, however, you do not perform your religious duty of fighting, then you will certainly incur sins for neglecting your duties and thus lose your reputation as a fighter. (<i>Bhāgavad Gītā</i> II.33-34)</p> <p>If his life is threatened, even a Brāhmana may use arms. (<i>Bhāgavad Gītā</i> VII.25)</p> <p>A Brāhmana and a Vaisya may take up arms in self-defence, and in (order to prevent) a confusion of the castes. 25. But that (trade of arms) is the constant (duty) of a Kshatriya, because he is appointed to protect (the people). (<i>Dharma Śāstra</i> V.3.24)</p> <p>Bhīṣma said...War should be waged for the sake of conquest. (<i>Mahābhārata</i> XII.96.1-11)</p> <p>Twice-born [higher caste] men may take up arms when (they are) hindered (in the fulfilment of their duties), when destruction (threatens) the twice-born castes (varna) in (evil) times, (8:349) In their own defence, in a strife for the fees of officiating priests, and in order to protect women and Brahmanas; (8:350) ... he who kills in the cause of right, commits no sin. One may slay without hesitation an assassin who approaches (with murderous intent), whether (he be one's) teacher, a child or an aged man, or a Brahmana deeply versed in the Vedas. By killing an assassin the slayer incurs no guilt, whether (he does it) publicly or secretly; in that case fury recoils upon fury. (<i>Manu Smṛti</i> 8.348-350)</p> <p>Neither he who inflicts punishment on one who deserves punishment nor he who is punished when he deserves punishment perishes: Each serves the due process of justice. (<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> IV.18.53-56)</p>
Islam	Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you , but do not transgress limits; for

	<p>Allah loveth not transgressors. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 2:190)</p> <p>And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, Let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 2:193)</p> <p>Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith Fight in the cause of Evil: So fight ye against the friends of Satan ... (<i>Qur'ān</i> 4:76)</p> <p>Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya [tribute] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 9:29)</p> <p>And those who, when an oppressive wrong is inflicted on them, (are not cowed but) help and defend themselves. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 42:39)</p>
Jainism	<p><i>No passages indicating a justified cause were found.</i></p> <p>Beings which kill others should not be killed in the belief that the destruction of one of them leads to the protection of many others. (<i>Purushyartha Siddhyapaya</i> 83)</p>
Judaism	<p>Moses said to them, '... if you go to battle as shock-troops at the instance of the LORD, [crossing the Jordan river] ... and the land has been subdued ... this land shall be your holding under the LORD.' (<i>Tanakh</i>, Numbers 32:20-22)</p> <p>[T]he penalty shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth ... (<i>Tanakh</i>, Exodus 21:23)</p>
Sikhism	<p>The death of brave heroes is blessed, if it is approved by God. They alone are proclaimed as brave warriors in the world hereafter, who receive true honor in the Court of the Lord. (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i> 579-80)</p> <p>The Lord asked me [Guru Gobind Singh] to spread Dharma, and vanquish the tyrants and evil-minded persons. I have taken birth of this purpose, the saints should comprehend this in their minds. (I have been born) to spread Dharma, and protect saints, and root out tyrants and evil-minded persons. All the earlier incarnations caused only their names to be remembered. They did not strike the tyrants and did not make them follow the path of Dharma. (<i>Dasam Granth, Bacitra Nāṭak</i> 138, L10-14)</p> <p>All the saints were pleased because the tyrants have been destroyed. (<i>Dasam Granth</i> 285, L7)</p>

The justifications for fighting provided in the above passages are many. They include: the protection of religion and righteousness (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism), the protection of innocents (Hinduism, Islam), the end of oppression (Islam, Sikhism), the punishment of evil doers (Christianity, Islam), self-defence (Hinduism, Islam), simple conquest (Hinduism) and the acquisition of God-promised land (Judaism).

As noted, Jainism entirely rejects the notion that killing is ever justified, even for the protection of self and others. Surprisingly, in all the religious scriptures, self-defence is not mentioned more widely as a legitimate cause, perhaps because it is an obvious reason or perhaps because some religious scriptures may even reject it (New Testament).

Another aspect of the right reason to fight, and closely related to the cause, is the intent behind the use of armed force? Even when the cause is just, many religions assert that armed action should be decided upon and carried out with right intention and attitude. Table 2.3 provides scriptural passages dealing with intent.

Table 2.3: The intent behind the use of force

<p>Buddhism</p>	<p>In just the same way, the Bodhisattva-mahasattva acts likewise for reasons of protecting Wonderful Dharma. Should beings slander Mahayana, he applies kindly lashings, in order to cure them. Or he may take life in order that what [was]obtained in the past could be mended, thus seeing to it that the law [Dharma] could be accorded with. The Bodhisattva always thinks: ‘How might I best make beings aspire to faith? I shall always act as is best fitted to the occasion.’ (<i>Mahaparinirvana Sutra</i>)</p> <p>Two people have a fight with a sword and staff, cause bodily injury and draw blood, and death results. But if they had no thought [intention] of killing, the karmic consequence will be light, not heavy. (<i>Mahaparinirvana Sutra</i>)</p>
<p>Christianity</p>	<p>Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (<i>Bible, Matt. 5:43-44; see also Luke 6:27</i>)</p>
<p>Hinduism</p>	<p>He even who slays unintentionally, reaps nevertheless the result of his sin. (His guilt is) greater, (if he slays) intentionally. ... In a Purâna (it has been declared), that he who slays an assailant does not sin, for (in that case) wrath meets wrath. (<i>Dharma Sūtra of Āpastamba 1.10.29.2-3 and 7</i>)</p> <p>Considering your specific duty as a kshatriya, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles. (<i>Bhāgavad Gītā 2.31</i>)</p>
<p>Islam</p>	<p>If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein ... (<i>Qur’ān 4:93</i>)</p>

	<p>But he that obeys Allah and his Messenger, (Allah) will admit him to Gardens beneath which rivers flow; and he who turns back, (Allah) will punish him with a grievous Penalty. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 48:17)</p> <p>Go ye forth, (whether equipped) lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle, with your goods and your persons, in the cause of Allah. That is best for you, if ye (but) knew. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 9:41)</p>
Jainism	<p>There never is Himsa [violence] when vitalities are injured, if a person is not moved by any kind of passions and is carefully following Right Conduct. (e 45)</p> <p>One should never think of hunting, victory, defeat, battle, ... because they only lead to sin. (<i>Purushartha Siddhyapaya</i> 141)</p>
Judaism	<p>Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. (<i>Tanakh</i>, Joshua 24:14)</p>
Sikhism	<p>All the saints were pleased because the tyrants have been destroyed. (<i>Dasam Granth</i>, 285, L7 <i>Caṇḍī Caritr</i>)</p> <p>They have slanting whiskers on their faces and fight without caring for their life. (<i>Dasam Granth</i>, 122, L7 <i>Bacitra Nāṭak</i>)</p> <p>All the fighters engaged in war against their enemies, ultimately fell as martyrs. (<i>Dasam Granth</i>, 125, L6 <i>Bacitra Nāṭak</i>)</p>

In Buddhism and Christianity, the scriptures clearly state that adherents should act with compassion and love, even towards enemies and those being punished. In Hinduism, proper intent is to perform one's duty, especially for the warrior, keeping in mind that killing with the wrong intention or unjustly can bring negative results (karma) on oneself. Islam tells of dire punishment for those acting with wrong intent, including Hell for those who kill a believer intentionally. In Islam, as well as most other religions (especially Judaism) the intention should be to fulfill the will of God. Sikhism encourages warriors to fight without thought to their own lives and those who die in self-sacrifice through battle are considered martyrs. In Jainism, there is always sin in killing no matter what the circumstances and intention. Even thoughts about killing are considered sinful.

In determining why to fight, one must see that the benefits outweigh the costs. According to just war theory, not only should the means be proportional, but so also should the ends. Armed action should only be taken if the benefits gained by the action exceed the suffering caused. Surprisingly, this net benefit criterion is stated explicitly in only a few of the scriptures of the world religions.

Table 2.4: The net benefit criteria for the use of force

<p>Buddhism</p>	<p>“To kill these merchants would create formidable evil karma for that person. ... There is no means to prevent this man from slaying the merchants and going to the great hells but to kill him.... Yet I [the future Buddha] can bear to experience [the] pain of the great hells, that this person [will] not slay these five hundred merchants and develop so much evil karma. I will kill this person myself.” (<i>Upayakausalya Sutra</i>)</p> <p>Indeed, Beloved-of-the-Gods [Buddha] is deeply pained by the killing, dying and deportation that take place when an unconquered country is conquered. But Beloved-of-the-Gods is pained even more by this -- that Brahmans, ascetics, and householders of different religions who live in those countries, and who are respectful to superiors, to mother and father, to elders, and who behave properly and have strong loyalty towards friends, acquaintances, companions, relatives, servants and employees -- that they are injured, killed or separated from their loved ones. Even those who are not affected (by all this) suffer when they see friends, acquaintances, companions and relatives affected. These misfortunes befall all (as a result of war), and this pains Beloved-of-the-Gods. (<i>Ashoka’s Fourteen Rock Edicts XIII</i>)</p>
<p>Christianity</p>	<p><i>No applicable passages were found.</i></p>
<p>Hinduism</p>	<p>When the advantages derivable from peace and war are of equal character, one should prefer peace; for disadvantages, such as the loss of power and wealth, sojourning, and sin, are ever-attending upon war. (<i>Arthaśāstra VII.II</i>)</p> <p>The whole world is kept in order by punishment, for a guiltless man is hard to find; through fear of punishment the whole world yields the enjoyments (which it owes). (<i>Manusmṛti 7.22.II</i>)</p> <p>When (the king) knows (that) at some future time his superiority (is) certain, and (that) at the time present (he will suffer) little injury, then let him have recourse to peaceful measures. (7:170) But when he thinks all his subjects to be exceedingly contented, and (that he) himself (is) most exalted (in power), then let him make war. (<i>Manusmṛti 7:169-170</i>)</p> <p>“In our desire for the welfare of the worlds, we shall set a task for you, Viṣṇu. Lord, King Daśratha, lord of Āyodhyā, is righteous, generous, and equal in power to the great seers. Viṣṇu, you must divide yourself into four parts and be born as the sons of his three wives, who are like Modesty, Majesty, and Fame. And when you have become a man, Viṣṇu, you must kill Rāvaṇa in battle, that mighty thorn in the side of the world, for he is invulnerable to the gods...for he is...a terror to ascetics and a source of lamentation to the world.” (<i>Rāmāyaṇa I.14.17-22</i>)</p>

	“Nor, best of men, should you be softhearted about killing a woman . A king’s son must act for the welfare of the four great social orders .” (<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> I.24.14-24)
Islam	Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know. Whatever ye shall spend in the cause of Allah, shall be repaid unto you, and ye shall not be treated unjustly . (<i>Qur’ān</i> 8:60)
Jainism	Beings which kill others should not be killed in the belief that the destruction of one of them leads to the protection of many others. (<i>Purusharta Siddhapaya</i> 83)
Judaism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>
Sikhism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>

As seen above, the concept of net benefit is pronounced in Hinduism, which places emphasis on the overall welfare of society, even in warfare. Buddhist texts, which propound an exacting law of karma (cause and effect), have advanced various “net benefit” criteria. The Buddha, in one past-life story, kills one to save many. He was willing to undergo the karmic suffering for the greater benefit of the many, including the would-be killer, who is thus prevented from killing others. More generally, the misfortunes of war are the subject of much compassion from the Buddha and in Buddhism. Within Christianity’s New Testament, a passage could not be found that considers the net benefit of armed action. On the contrary, Jesus orders his disciple to sheath his sword even as the disciple seeks to protect Jesus from arrest. Jesus states that “those who live by the sword, die by the sword” (Matt. 26:52). Even more pronounced, Jainism sees karmic retribution for any and all violence and can envision no benefit for fighting, so a net benefit provision is not relevant. It even rejects explicitly the argument that killing one can save many. Surprisingly, while Sikhism values the sword, in the two Sikh scriptures examined no passages were found describing the net benefit principle; the same was found for Judaism. On this criterion, there does not seem to be broad reference in the principle religious scriptures. Perhaps this is because religions are not based on practical calculations but rather rely on moral and spiritual factors, using principles of right and wrong irrespective of the net result.

(2) **Who** is able to authorize the use of force? This is not often discussed in religious scriptures, as it tends to be an institutional and societal matter, but some relevant indications can be found in the sacred texts.

Table 2.5: The authority that can authorize or utilize armed force

Buddhism	Even the forest people, who live in Beloved-of-the-Gods' domain, are entreated and reasoned with to act properly. They are told that despite his remorse Beloved-of-the-Gods has the power to punish them if necessary, so that they should be ashamed of their wrong and not be killed. Truly, Beloved-of-the-Gods desires non-injury, restraint and impartiality to all beings, even where wrong has
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	<p>been done. (<i>Ashoka's Fourteen Rock Edicts XIII</i>)</p> <p>'But what, sire, is the duty of an Ariyan wheel-turning monarch?' 'It is this, my son: Yourself depending on the Dhamma, honoring it, revering, cherishing it, doing homage to it and venerating it, having the Dhamma as your badge and banner, acknowledging the Dhamma as your master, you should establish guard, ward and protection according to Dhamma for your own household, your troops, your nobles and vassals, for Brahmins and householders, town and country folk, ascetics and Brahmins, for beasts and birds. (<i>Cakkavatti Sihananda Sutta</i>)</p> <p>Four robbers were then brought before the king to be judged. Temiya witnessed his father sentence one robber to a thousand strokes from thorn-baited whips, another to imprisonment in chains, a third to death by the spear, and a fourth to death by impaling. The infant Bodhisatta was terrified at his father's apparent cruelty and thought to himself, 'A king acts as judge, and so he must perform cruel actions every day. By condemning men to death or torture, he will however himself be condemned to hell.' (<i>Temiya Jataka</i>)</p>
Christianity	<p>For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. ... For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. (<i>Bible, Rom. 13:3-4</i>)</p>
Hinduism	<p>... kings took upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining the safety and security of their subjects (<i>yogakshemavahāb</i>), and of being answerable for the sins of their subjects when the principle of levying just punishments and taxes has been violated. (<i>Arthaśāstra I.XIII.5</i>)</p> <p>Considering your specific duty as a kshatriya, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles. (<i>Bhāgavad Gītā II.31</i>)</p>
Islam	<p>To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah,— whether he is slain or gets victory — soon shall We give him a reward of great (value). (<i>Qur'ān 4:74</i>)</p>
Jainism	<p><i>No passages indicating a legitimate authority for using armed force were found.</i></p>
Judaism	<p>Before you join battle, the priest shall come forward and address the troops. (<i>Tanakh, Deuteronomy 20:2</i>)</p> <p>For God said, 'If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.' So God led the people ... (<i>Tanakh, Exodus 13:17-18</i>)</p> <p>So they obeyed the word of the LORD and went home again, as the LORD had</p>

	ordered. (<i>Tanakh</i> , 1 Kings 21:24)
Sikhism	<p>The True Lord is Himself the Creator. He Himself kills, and gives life; there is no other at all. (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i> 1069)</p> <p>...The death of brave heroes is blessed, if it is approved by God. (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i> 579-80)</p> <p>With the use of weapons and arms, the winsome armours were being cut; And the warriors performed their religious duties in a nice manner. (<i>Dasam Granth</i> 273 L12-13)</p> <p>He does not defile his hands by accepting bribes. Rather he raises them to put to dust the foes of the king. ... If there has been such a dauntless person, who remains prepared for war remaining domesticated, and his operations are approved by people, He is revered as the saviour king.⁷ (<i>Dasam Granth</i>, 18-19 L30, L37-39, L45-50)</p>

Buddhism renders certain powers, including the power to punish, to the king. But even in executing this duty, a ruler gains negative karma. For this reason, the Buddha even sought to evade kingship in one past-life story.⁷ The above quoted Christian passage affirms the right of the ruler to “bear the sword” and even suggests that it is a God-ordained right. Hinduism places great emphasis on the power of kings and the duties of the warrior class (kshatriyas). In fact, it is considered an honour for a kshatriya, especially a ruler, to fight in a righteous battle. Jewish scriptures accord prophets such as Moses as well as kings like Saul and David the right to wage war, though it should be a war permitted, if not commanded, by God.⁸ While the Qur’ān places primacy on fighting in the cause of Allah (*jihad*), it does not provide explicit authority to certain figures to wage war. More generally in Islam, powers are given to the Imam and other leaders, including the power to make war. Sikhism also centres on God-ordinance and provides the ruler (“saviour king”) the right to wage war against oppressors, though this is not explicitly cited in the main scripture but in a secondary, more controversial one.⁹ In Jainism, there is no proper authority since fighting itself is never proper.

(3) **When** can force be applied? The answer provided by just war tradition is: only after all peaceful measures have been exhausted. This seems to hold, more or less, in other religions as well, as shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Force in relation to peaceful measures (last resort)

Buddhism	Though one may conquer a thousand times a thousand men in battle, yet he indeed is the noblest victor who conquers himself . Self-conquest is far better
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⁷ See the section on Buddhism in Part II, section 2.9, “The Temiya Jataka (Mute Prince)”

⁸ Deuteronomy 20 states that priests are to address the troops before battle. Certain types of people are exempt from engaging in battle.

⁹ See section 5.3. Many early Sikh leaders became martyrs.

	<p>then the conquest of others. (<i>Dhammapada</i> 8.103-104)</p> <p>Thus are pious men wont to appease an enmity, though heaped up from many causes, even if it be great; what wise man, pondering this, shall not be of peace-loving mind toward others? (<i>Mahāvamsa</i> XXIV)</p>
Christianity	<p>Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” (<i>Bible, Matt. 18:21-22</i>)</p>
Hinduism	<p>When he is thus engaged in conquest, let him subdue all the opponents whom he may find, by the (four) expedients¹⁰, conciliation and the rest. If they cannot be stopped by the three first expedients, then let him, overcoming them by force alone, gradually bring them to subjection. Among the four expedients, conciliation and the rest, the learned always recommend conciliation and (the employment of) force for the prosperity of kingdoms. (<i>Manu Smṛti</i> 7:107-109)</p> <p>When we study the texts we can think of many courses of action, but the ancient sages tell us that war is the worst course of all. (<i>Mahābhārata</i> IV.47.44.1-4)</p> <p>...[one] should never resort to clash if there is any possibility at all of not doing so, War is said to be the last resort, after conciliation, dividing the enemy, and offering payments.... (<i>Mahābhārata</i> XII.103.20-40)</p> <p>Kṛṣṇa: First I used a conciliatory approach, hoping for a sense of brotherliness to prevail, to prevent a breach in the dynasty of Kuru...when conciliatoriness failed, I tried alienation and recited your feats, human and divine. When Suyodhana ignored my conciliatory speech, I convened all the kings and attempted to sow discord. I displayed dreadful and terrifying miracles and superhuman exploits, Lord Bhārata. I threatened the kings, denigrated Suyodhana, and intimidated Rādheya and Saubala time and again. Again and again I pointed to the meanness of Dhārtarāṣṭras and heaped blame on them, trying to alienate those kings over and over again with words and advice. Once more conciliatory, I mentioned gifts, in order to prevent a breach in the dynasty of Kuru and accomplish my mission...Yet at such words the evil man did not change his mind. Now I see no other course open but the fourth – punishment. (<i>Mahābhārata</i> V.56.8-16)</p> <p>Rama: If you cannot recover Sita by peaceful means, by conciliation, tact, or diplomacy, lord of men, then unleash the flood of your fold-feathered arrows, as devastating as Indra’s thunderbolts. (<i>Rāmāyaṇā</i> III.61.15-17)</p>
Islam	<p>Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (Guarantees of) peace, then Allah Hath opened no way for you (to war against</p>

¹⁰ The four expedients (known in Sanskrit as *upakramas* or *upāyas*) are conciliation (*sāma*), bribery (*dāna*), dissention (*beda*), and physical force (*daṇḍa*).

	them). (<i>Qur'ān</i> 4:90; similarly in 2:193)
Jainism	<i>No relevant quotes found. Force is not allowed.</i>
Judaism	When you approach a town to attack it, you shall offer it terms of peace. (<i>Tanakh</i> , Deut. 20:10) [The LORD said:] 'I give into your power Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin the occupation: engage him in battle. This day I begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven, so that they shall tremble and quake because of you whenever they hear you mentioned.' Then I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to King Sihon of Heshbon with an offer of peace , as follows, 'Let me pass through your country. ...' But King Sihon of Heshbon refused to let us pass through ... Begin the occupation ; take possession of his land. (<i>Tanakh</i> , Deut. 2:24-31)
Sikhism	When all other methods fail , it is proper to hold the sword in hand. (<i>Dasam Granth</i> , <i>Zafarnāma</i> 1471.L8)

Buddhism strongly recommends peaceful responses to all of life's circumstances and it values self-conquest over all other forms of conquest, so force should not be considered as an early option, if at all. Similarly in Christianity forgiveness is to be extended many times to those who have done wrong. Hinduism advocates an ancient system of "Caturōpayas" or "four means," where praise (*sāma*), gifts (*dāna*) and threats (*bheda*) should be tried before force or punishment (*daṇḍa*) is applied. The extensive peace efforts of the divine incarnation Kṛṣṇa before the battle of Kurukshetra provides a powerful example of "last resort," a term which is explicitly used in the Mahābhārata. Islam states that if an enemy sues for peace, then this must be pursued. The Jewish Tanakh offers the dramatic example of God placing fear in the hearts of an enemy to make them more susceptible to peace offers, which were sometimes made before wars were declared. Finally, Sikhism offers that "all other methods" should be shown to fail before force is used. Naturally, Jainism does not suggest violence as a last resort since even that is prohibited, though it does advocate tolerance for accidental violence.

(4) If force is finally an available option, **what** level of force should be used? The just war theory suggests that it should be applied in proportion to the threat or challenge. Excessive force should be avoided. This provision also seems to be held in other religions, as shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: The degree of force to be used (proportionality of means)

Buddhism	I [Emperor Ashoka] have had this Dhamma edict written so that my sons and great-grandsons may not consider making new conquests, or that if military conquests are made, that they be done with forbearance and light punishment , or better still, that they consider making conquest by Dhamma only, for that bears fruit in this world and the next.
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	<p>In just the same way, the Bodhisattva-mahasattva acts likewise for reasons of protecting Wonderful Dharma. Should beings slander Mahayana, he applies kindly lashings, in order to cure them. Or he may take life in order that what [was] obtained in the past could be mended, thus seeing to it that the law [Dharma] could be accorded with. The Bodhisattva always thinks: ‘How might I best make beings aspire to faith? I shall always act as is best fitted to the occasion.’ (<i>Mahaparinirvana Sutra</i>)</p>
Christianity	<p>Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. (<i>Bible</i>, Matt. 5:38-39)</p>
Hinduism	<p>For whoever imposes severe punishment becomes repulsive to the people; while he who awards mild punishment becomes contemptible. But whoever imposes punishment as deserved becomes respectable. (<i>Arthaśāstra</i> I.IV.5)</p> <p>One should not attack chariots with cavalry: chariot warriors should attack chariots. One should not assail someone in distress, neither to scare him nor defeat him. There should be no arrows smeared with poison, nor any barbed arrows – these are weapons of evil people. (<i>Mahābhārata</i>, Chapter 841, “Law, Force, and War”, 96.1-11, p.411)</p> <p>War should be waged for the sake of conquest; one should not be enraged toward an enemy who is not trying to kill him. (<i>Mahābhārata</i>, Chapter 841, “Law, Force, and War”, 96.1-11, p.411)</p> <p>If, upon an outbreak of hostilities among strictly righteous people, a righteous man gets into trouble on a battlefield, then one who is wounded should not be attacked in [any] way, nor one who has no son, one whose sword is broken, one whose horse has been destroyed, one whose bowstring has been cut, nor one whose vehicle has been destroyed. (<i>Mahābhārata</i>, Chapter 841, “Law, Force, and War” (96.1-11, p.411), words of Bhishma]</p>
Islam	<p>If thou fearest treachery from any group, throw back (their covenant) to them, (so as to be) on equal terms: for Allah loveth not the treacherous. (<i>Qur’ān</i> 8:58)</p> <p>But when the forbidden months are past, then, seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practise regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (<i>Qur’ān</i> 9:5)</p> <p>And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out. But if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient. (<i>Qur’ān</i>, 16:126) ... For Allah is with those who restrain themselves, and those who do good. (<i>Qur’ān</i> 16:128)</p>
Jainism	<p>Those, who, even after listening to the doctrine of Ahimsa, are not able to</p>

	renounce the Himsa of immobile beings, should at least give up the Himsa of mobile beings . (<i>Purushartha Siddhyapaya</i> , verse 75)
Judaism	[T]he penalty shall be life for life , eye for eye, tooth for tooth ... (<i>Tanakh</i> , Exodus 21:23)
Sikhism	All the saints were pleased because the tyrants have been destroyed. (<i>Dasam Granth</i> , 285, L7, <i>Caṇḍī Caritr</i>)

Buddhism places emphasis on the soft approach, even suggesting “kindly lashings” and “light punishment.” Christianity’s New Testament seems to reject the proportionality argument, advocating forgiveness instead. By contrast, Hinduism’s Arthaśāstra, a text rich in *realpolitik*, deprecates softness. More generally in Hindu scriptures, force is admired, even glorified, but strict limits are placed on the types and levels of force. One type of proportionality is clearly pronounced: only warriors of an equal type should fight each other. Uneven matches are discouraged and wounded warriors are not to be targeted. Furthermore, many weapons (such as those employing fire or poison) are deemed barbarous and unfair. Islam indirectly advances a type of proportional response. The Qur’ān says that those seeking peace should receive such terms while those practicing treachery should be “thrown back.”

Some Qur’ānic passages advocate restraint whilst others suggest drastic means of fighting the unbelievers (see Table 2.8 below). Judaism advances the concept of exact retribution, or more colloquially, “an eye for an eye” (sometimes referred to as *Lex Talionis* in legal works), but the extent to which this applies to war is not stated. There are many instances in the Tanakh where drastic actions are taken by Israelite leaders against enemy forces and local populations, seemingly out of proportion. But most religious scriptures contain passages advocating leniency. Furthermore, the New Testament seemingly rejects *Lex Talionis* and advocates forgiveness. In the two sacred texts of Sikhism examined here, no passages advocating proportionality were found, except possibly the passage stating that tyrants should be destroyed. Jainism does not advocate the destruction or harming of any living creature. Its only demonstration of proportionality is its tenet that to kill living organisms possessing a greater number of senses is a greater sin.

(5) **Where** to fight? This question of the proper and improper locations for fighting is hardly dealt with in scriptures as shown in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8: Where to fight

Buddhism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>
Christianity	<i>No applicable passages were found in the New Testament. The final battle between good and evil is prophesied to take place at a location called Armageddon (Rev. 16:16) but this is envisioned as a divine battle not a human one.</i>
Hinduism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>

Islam	fight them not at the Sacred Mosque , unless they (first) fight you there (<i>Qur'ān</i> 2:191)
Jainism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>
Judaism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>
Sikhism	<i>No applicable passages were found.</i>

It appears that only Islam deals with the location of fighting in its prohibition of fighting in Mosques, unless attacked there. While Hindu scriptures codifies, more than any other religion, the specific rules for fighting, there does not seem to be a rule for the locations of proper battlefields or, conversely, areas where fighting is prohibited. Battlefields are the usual location for fighting in the Hindu epics (e.g., the battlefield Kurukṣetra in the Mahābhārata).

(6) **How** should force be used? Most religions provide specific guidance on how to apply force. Some of these “rules of engagement” are spelled out in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Right conduct in warfare

Buddhism	<p>He who inflicts violence on those who are unarmed, and offends those who are inoffensive, will soon come upon one of these ten states: Sharp pain, or disaster, ... upon dissolution of the body that ignorant man is born in hell. (<i>Dhammapada</i> 10.137-140)</p> <p>I have had this Dhamma edict written so that my sons and great-grandsons may not consider making new conquests, or that if military conquests are made, that they be done with forbearance and light punishment, or better still, that they consider making conquest by Dhamma only, for that bears fruit in this world and the next. (<i>Ashoka's Fourteen Rock Edicts, XIII</i>)</p>
Christianity	<i>No applicable passages were found in the New Testament. See the Judaism section for passages from the Old Testament (aka the Hebrew Bible or Tanakh).</i>
Hinduism	<p>17. No sin (is committed) by injuring or slaying (foes) in battle, (18) Excepting those who have lost their horses, charioteers, or arms, those who join their hands (in supplication), those who flee with flying hair, those who sit down with averted faces, those who have climbed (in flight) on eminences or trees, messengers, and those who declare themselves to be cows or Brāhmanas. ... (<i>Dharmaśāstras</i> 17.18)</p> <p>Let [the warrior] act according to his instructions. 9. Let him not turn back in battle. 10. Let him not strike with barbed or poisoned (weapons). 11. Let him not fight with those who are in fear, intoxicated, insane or out of their minds, (nor with those) who have lost their armour, (nor with) women, infants, aged men, and Brāhmanas, 12. Excepting assassins (âtatâyin). (<i>Dharmaśāstras</i> 1.10.18.8)</p>

	<p>Bhīṣma said: One should not fight in battle a kṣatriya who is not equipped for war, one who is without armour. A single warrior should be addressed by a single warrior... If one should make war with him deceitfully, then he should attack that one with deceit. And if he makes war righteously, then one should oppose him righteously. One should not attack chariots with cavalry: chariot warriors should attack chariots. One should not assail someone in distress, neither to scare him nor defeat him. There should be no arrows smeared with poison, nor any barbed arrows – these are weapons of evil people. War should be waged for the sake of conquest; one should not be enraged toward an enemy who is not trying to kill him. If, upon an outbreak of hostilities among strictly righteous people, a righteous man gets into trouble on a battlefield, then one who is wounded should not be attacked in way, nor one who has no son, one whose sword is broken, one whose horse has been destroyed, one whose bowstring has been cut, nor one whose vehicle has been destroyed.... If he has captured a man who has discarded his sword, whose armour is broken to pieces, who pleads with his hands folded in supplication, saying, I am yours, then he should not harm that man. A king should not wage war against anyone who has already been defeated by force... A king should fight against a king, ... no other man who is not a king should ever assail a king in any way... The king's enemy should not be abused, nor tortured in any way... (p 96) (<i>Mahābhārata</i> 96.1-11)</p> <p>the virtuous do not advocate killing an emissary...let your rod of punishment fall instead upon those who have sent him.... a messenger never deserves death. (<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> V.50.5-10)</p> <p>A person who knows the principles of religion does not kill an enemy who is careless, intoxicated, insane, asleep, afraid or devoid of his chariot. Nor does he kill a boy, a woman, a foolish creature or a surrendered soul. (<i>Śrīmad Bhagavatam</i> 1.7.36)</p>
Islam	<p>Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 2:190)</p> <p>If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (Forever). (<i>Qur'ān</i> 4:92 and 4:93)</p> <p>[I]f any one slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 5:32)</p> <p>It is not fitting for a prophet that he should have prisoners of war until he hath thoroughly subdued the land. (<i>Qur'ān</i> 8:67)</p> <p>Remember thy Lord inspired the angels (with the message): 'I am with you: give firmness to the Believers: I will instil terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them.' (<i>Qur'ān</i> 8:20)</p>

	And know that out of all the booty that ye may acquire (in war), a fifth share is assigned to Allah ... (<i>Qur'ān</i> 8:41)
Jainism	<i>No applicable passages since fighting is never endorsed.</i>
Judaism	<p>When you approach a town to attack it, you shall offer it terms of peace. If it responds peaceably and lets you in, all the people present there shall serve you as forced labor. If it does not surrender to you, but would join battle with you, you shall lay siege to it; and when the LORD your God delivers it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword. You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, the livestock, and everything in the town—all its spoil—and enjoy the use of the spoil of your enemy, which the LORD your God gives you. (<i>Tanakh, Deuteronomy 20:10-15</i>)</p> <p>“When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax [<i>sic</i>] against them. ... Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege-works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.” (<i>Tanakh, Deuteronomy 20:19-20</i>)</p> <p>“The LORD anointed you king over Israel, and the LORD sent you on a mission, saying, ‘Go and proscribe the sinful Amalekites; make war on them until you have exterminated them’” (<i>Tanakh, 1 Samuel 15:17-18</i>)</p>
Sikhism	<p>The warrior who fights on the battle-field should keep up and press on. He should not yield, and he should not retreat. Blessed is the coming of one who conquers the one and renounces the many.¹¹ (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib, 341</i>) [note spiritual allusion to “conquers the one,” i.e., attains to God]</p> <p>The battle-drum beats in the sky of the mind; aim is taken, and the wound is inflicted. The spiritual warriors enter the field of battle; now is the time to fight! He alone is known as a spiritual hero, who fights in defense of religion. He may be cut apart, piece by piece, but he never leaves the field of battle.¹² (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib 1105</i>)</p> <p>The resonance of trumpets was precipitating the youthful warriors. Those brave men were jumping and engaged in chivalrous acts. In great rage, the warriors showed signs of anger on their faces. They were striking their swords. (<i>Dasam Granth, Caṇḍī Caritr, 275, L9-12</i>)</p>

¹¹ Commentary: the authors interpret this passage to mean an inner battle: the “battlefield” is often used in reference in Sikhism to inner struggle and the mind. The “one” probably refers to God, the “many” all other distractions. This is in line with surrounding verses discussing contemplation on the Lord.

¹² Commentary: like the passage above, this seems to suggest that the battle is a mental one. The fight for religion seems to be a fight within the mind. This would be consistent with Kabear's earlier position on force being a form tyranny.

The killing of innocent civilians is explicitly proscribed in the religious scriptures of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Jainism. This also applies in Christianity's New Testament, where killing in general is condemned (except killing by divine hand in the Book of Revelation). The Qur'ānic injunction not to "transgress limits" (*Qur'ān* 2:190) is often deemed by Muslims to cover civilian immunity from attack. The Islamic sacred text warns against killing "believers" and innocents. In contrast, it gives explicit instruction to smite unbelievers "above the necks." It also suggests that prisoners of war should not be taken at least in certain circumstances; consequently, the alternatives would be either to release the captured or kill them.

The rules in Judaism's Tanakh support the application of strong force, the rules found in the Deuteronomy section titled "How to fight."¹³ It states that in a town which surrenders, all the people shall serve as forced labour. If it does not surrender, all the males are to be killed and the women, children and livestock are to be taken as booty.¹⁴ By contrast, both Judaism and Islam have prohibitions on the cutting down of trees during war. The Sikh scriptures provide remarkably little guidance on the ways force is to be applied but courage in battle is lauded.

In summary, the approaches of the seven world religions to war and the use of force reflect not only the rich diversity of human thought but also demonstrate a substantial degree of commonality. Each religion posits that life is sacred and holds the presumption against taking human life except under certain circumstances, with the exception of Jainism where the taking of life is unconditionally forbidden. Each religion puts limits on when and how fighting can occur. All seek to limit the destructive potential of war. But the extent to which a religion is ready to resort to force varies. Within a religion, different scriptures exert varying degrees of advocacy, especially in Christianity where the Old Testament and New Testament take radically different approaches. The comparative tendencies are explored in the next and concluding chapter.

¹³ "How to fight" is the title for Deuteronomy 20 used in the 1985 New Jewish Publication Society (NJPS) translation. The New International Version (NIV) version titles the section "Going to war."

¹⁴ This provision on killing males may have been to prevent any possibility of militant retaliation from enemy groups in that era of tribal and ethnic warfare.

3 Commentary and conclusion: the force spectrum

Decisions to go to war or to apply armed force usually require strong justification. The taking of life can only be warranted under certain circumstances, and only for significant causes. To begin to understand the justifications provided in religions for permitted force, the most important scriptures of seven world religions were examined. The relevant passages were extracted, categorized, summarized and compared. From these results, an overview has been formed for the Abrahamic and Indic-origin religions examined in the two parts. It is now possible to contrast all these religions on the basis of the *extent* to which force is permitted in the scriptures and the level of justification needed to use force. This conclusion will attempt to situate different scriptures along a spectrum of force based on the indications and stipulations provided in the passages and tables of the previous chapter and the previous two parts. A review of religious approaches from pacifist to militant helps present the case for such a schematic representation.

Jainism represents a clear pole in the spectrum of force. All seven world religions maintain a presumption against killing but Jainism considers it an absolute, unconditional prohibition. Jain scriptures extend non-killing to non-violence (*ahimsa*) more generally and cover not only humans but also animals and all sentient beings. In absolute pacifism, as found in Jainism's Tattvartha Sutra, the prohibition on the deliberate use of force extends to thought and word as well as deed. The distinction is made, however, between harming organisms with advanced senses such as five-sensed human beings and harming creatures with fewer senses like flies or microscopic organisms, which are lesser sins, incurring less "negative" karma.

Buddhism is only slightly less pacifist: it advocates compassion (*karuna*), loving kindness (*metta*) and reduction of the suffering of all sentient beings. The Buddhist scriptures urge people to fight against the forces of anger and violence within themselves in order to achieve conquest over one's own self, not others. Most Buddhist scriptures either ignore the use of outer (armed) force or take an unequivocal stance against it. There are, however, certain notable exceptions in this religion's scriptures, which complicates the question of violence both theoretically and in practice. Some of the texts examined in this study seem to justify waging physical war to protect the faith, as is the case with the Sri Lankan nationalist text, the *Mahavamsa*. In other texts, the Buddha recounts instances in his past lives where he killed or allowed a battle to proceed. Thus, Buddhist scriptures advocate pacifism with some exceptions. But the degree to which these exceptions are prescriptive and normative within the overall tradition is debatable.

Jesus and the early Christian martyrs/fathers could be considered pacifists in both their teachings and practice. In the fourth century, however, Augustine of Hippo, commonly considered the father of just war theory, believed that force was justified to protect innocent people, though not to protect oneself. Since Christian scripture, as represented in the New Testament, makes some allowance for rulers (the temporal power) to exert their authority and use force, the potential breadth of force application can still be quite large, almost open ended. Furthermore, the Old Testament, which some Christians weigh equally with the New Testament, provides many passages that not only justify but strongly advocate armed force, and describes many God-commanded wars. Some of these Old Testament passages were later used to justify armed action, for instance, in the Crusades from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries.

Hinduism, like Christianity, comprises a wide range of scriptural approaches to force. The main epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, which includes the Bhāgavad Gītā, strongly advocate the use of force when the cause is righteous (such as *dharmayuddha* or righteous war), but usually only as a last resort. Other principles also apply. In fact, these two Hindu texts are found to contain all the principles of the just war tradition—a remarkable conclusion, given that they significantly predate Christianity. Nevertheless, some modern Hindus consider the texts as primarily metaphorical. Mahatma Gandhi considered Krishna’s call to fight in the Bhāgavad-Gītā as describing the need to fight an individual inner battle, though he did recognize the conventional explanation.¹⁵ For most of Hinduism’s long history, a hereditary caste of warriors, *kshatriyas*, existed to protect the innocent and to uphold order. Their code of conduct is clearly outlined and illustrated in the epic scriptures, including their strong sense of self-sacrifice in battle. On the extreme militant end of Hindu scriptures, however, certain *shastras* (texts providing principles and guidelines) advocate use of force for narrow self-interest, making the strategist Kautilya, author of the Arthaśāstra and the Nītiśāstra, appear as an Indian Machiavelli.

Sikhism is based on the Gurū Granth Sāhib, which disparages the use of force in favour of the force of love. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and primary author of the religion’s most sacred text, rarely considered the use of armed force. As later Sikhs fought against Mughal attacks, their Gurus provided ample justifications for the use of outer force. The tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, strongly promoted armed force in defence of religion and even took up arms on the battlefield before being “martyred” together with all four of his children. His more militant writings can be found in his Dasam Granth, though the place of this sacred text is disputed as a legitimate part of Sikh canonical scripture.

Judaism also possesses a range of scriptures from the more pacific, including the mystical Kabbalah, to the more force-reliant and militant, such as the Tanakh. The Torah, the first five books of the Tanakh and the most authoritative scripture in Judaism, gives explicit instructions on how to wage war, as illustrated in Deuteronomy 20. The Tanakh is also filled with God-commanded wars and stories of massacres committed by all parties. Still, the vision of a world at peace is emphasized in specific epistles, including in the Book of Isaiah.

Islam’s holiest book, the Qur’ān, is considered by most Muslims to be an infallible text when read in Arabic. Many read it to allow killing for just cause, which includes the protection of religion and the fight against oppression. Like other religions, it has provisions on how to wage war, as well as when to wage war. Other sacred texts, like the various Hadiths and the Sunnah, interpret and describe Mohammed’s words and deeds in a more pacific or a more militant direction. For instance, the instruction to wage *jihad akbar* (the greater jihad) is about fighting against the forces of aggression within oneself. Other passages declare the glory of Mohammed’s fighting skills. As in other religions, Islam provides guidance in its scriptures through the examples of its great religious figures as well as by explicit rules.

¹⁵ In the introduction of his Gujarati translation of the *Gita*, Gandhi wrote, “Let it be granted that according to the *Gita* it is possible that warfare is consistent with renunciation of fruit [of action].” And also: “If he [the warrior Arjuna] left the battle, the Pandava army would be simply annihilated. What, then, would be the plight of their wives and children?...Arjuna, therefore, had no choice but to fight.” Gandhi, Mohandas K., *The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi*, John Strohmeier (ed.), Berkeley Hills Books, Berkeley 2000, p.34.

To further determine the approach to force, the scriptures were reviewed to find passages that were deemed to be the most pacific and most militant in each. These are identified in Table 3.1. This “bracketing” of the approaches within each scripture helps give a sense of the span within the scripture and the relation to other scriptures.

Table 3.1: Pacific and militant quotes from a principal scripture of each world religion¹⁶

Religion	Pacific Quotation	Militant Quotation
Buddhism (<i>Dhammapada</i>)	Not insulting, not harming , restraint according to the Fundamental Moral Code ... this is the Teaching of the Buddhas. (2.14.185)	Though one should conquer a thousand times a thousand men in battle, he who conquers his own self, is the greatest of all conquerors. Self-conquest is, indeed, far greater than the conquest of all other folks . (2.8.103-4)
Christianity (<i>New Testament</i>) ¹⁷	I [Jesus] tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek , turn to him the other also. (Matt. 5:39) “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword .” (Matt. 26:52)	he that hath no sword , let him sell his garment, and buy one. ... And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords . And he [Jesus] said unto them, it is enough. (Luke 22:36, 38) [The ruler] beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. (Rom. 13:3-4)
Hinduism (<i>Bhāgavad-Gītā</i>)	self-control ... non-violence ... freedom from anger; compassion for all living entities ... these transcendental qualities, O son of Bharata, belong to godly men endowed with divine nature. (16:1-3)	Considering your specific duty as a <i>kshatriya</i> [warrior] you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles (2:31) ... dishonor is worse than death. (2:34) ... By your nature , you will have to be engaged in warfare. (18:59) ... courage in battle and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the kshatriyas. (18:43) ... you should not grieve for the body (2:25) ... the soldiers are already put to death by My arrangement. (11:34)
Islam (<i>Qur’ān</i>)	But if the enemy incline towards peace , do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah ... (8:61, Yusufali)	Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the

¹⁶ These are deemed to be among the most pacific and most militant in the scripture

¹⁷ For *Old Testament* quotes, see under Judaism (*Tanakh*).

		People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya [tribute] with willing submission , and feel themselves subdued. (9:29)
Jainism (<i>Tattvartha Sutra</i>)	Benevolence towards all living beings ... compassion and sympathy for the afflicted, and tolerance towards the insolent and ill-behaved are the right sentiments. (Ch. 7)	Excessive infliction of injury or pain (domestic works) and excessive attachment cause the influx of karma which leads to life in the infernal regions. (Ch 6)
Judaism (<i>Tanakh</i>)	They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks: Nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war. (Isaiah 2:4) Shun evil and do good, Seek amity and pursue it. (Psalms 34:15)	In the towns of the latter peoples, however, which the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage, you shall not let a soul remain alive. (Deuteronomy 20:16) Fair Babylon, you predator, a blessing on him who repays you in kind what you have inflicted on us; a blessing on him who seizes your babies and dashes them against the rocks! (Psalm 137:8-9)
Sikhism (<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i>)	One whose mind is pleased and appeased has no egotistical pride. Violence and greed are forgotten. (1198) Kabeer, it is tyranny to use force ; the Lord shall call you to account. (1378) Fareed, do not turn around and strike those who strike you with their fists. Kiss their feet, and return to your own home. (1375) [The Lord] is not won over ... by fighting and dying as a warrior in battle.(1237)	The death of brave heroes is blessed, if it is approved by God. (579) He alone is known as a spiritual hero, who fights in defence of religion. He may be cut apart, piece by piece, but he never leaves the field of battle. (1105) [Note: likely metaphorical meaning]

These passages give a sense of the various approaches in the scriptures. Along with the tables and passages analysed previously, it is possible to envisage the placement of the scriptures along a line of force. The proposed force spectrum, drawn schematically in Figure 3.1, ranges from absolute pacifism to extreme militancy. This study cannot presume that any one extreme or approach is correct or better than another, or that a particular place in the spectrum is more or less moral or justified. But the approach does allow for a subjective mapping and comparison of religious scriptures.

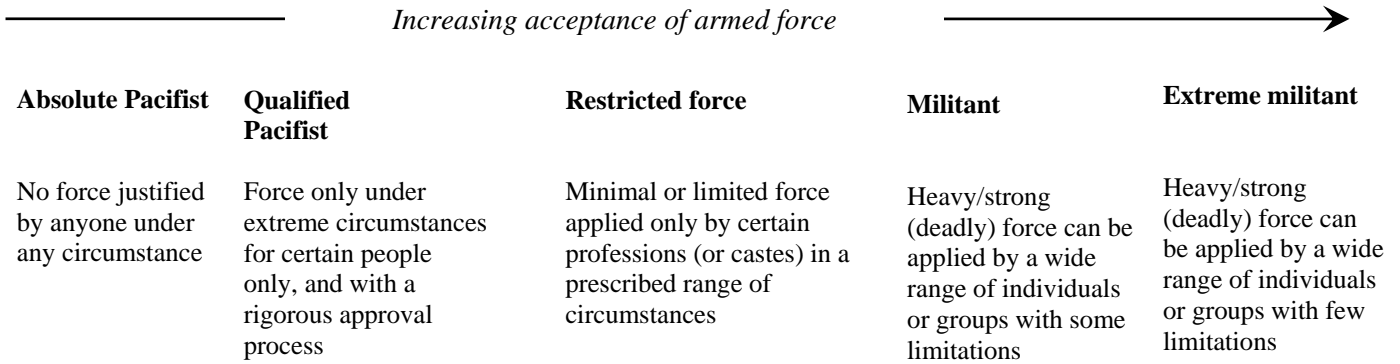


Figure 3.1: Possible positions along the force spectrum

In Figure 3.2, I have attempted to locate religious scriptures along the force spectrum presented in Figure 3.1. Figure 3.2 is my subjective assessment of the degree to which a religious scripture accepts or advocates the utility of armed force overall. The scriptures are drawn from the seven religions examined in the earlier reports. The more a particular scripture justifies the resort to force, the further to the right I have placed it on the spectrum. As in Figure 3.1, on the extreme left is absolute pacifism, in which no force can ever be justified, and on the extreme right is uninhibited aggression, where no religious or other constraints apply. No scripture justifies this extreme right position. Most religions reject both extremes and reside in between. Within each religion there is usually a range of scriptural approaches, as indicated by the length of the line representing each religion.

In the paragraphs that follow the figure, I endeavor to explain why I have located the various scriptures where I have, though it is important to note at the outset that this mapping exercise is based on the author's best judgment after having read and studied the various scriptures as well as the pertinent literature on the just war traditions. The mappings shown in Figure 3.2, however, are not based on a set of social scientific methods that could necessarily be replicated by other teams of researchers, although such methods could conceivably (and perhaps profitably) be developed in future work.

The subjective assessment is based on:

- the framework provided in Figure 3.1 for the spectrum of force;
- the passages analysed in the previous parts and the previous section, especially the results of a search for the most pacific and militant quotes, listed in Table 3.1;
- how each religious scripture justifies the use of force, and the conditions it places on force through the answers to the basic questions (six Ws) shown in the previous chapter;
- the relative positions of the scriptures within each religion and between religions.

Jainism

- Tattvartha sutra

Buddhism

- Dhammapada
 - Cakkavattisihanada Sutta
 - Edicts of Ashoka
 - Mahaparinirvana Sutra
 - Mahavamsa

Christianity

- New Testament (not incl. Book of Revelation)
- Old Testament

Hinduism

- Bhāgavad Gītā (metaphorical only interpretation)
 - Rāmāyaṇa
 - Bhāgavad Gītā (literal interpretation)
 - Mahābhārata
 - Arthaśāstra

Sikhism

- Guru Granth Sahib
- Dasam Granth

Judaism

- Kabalah
- Talmud
- Tanakh (Hebrew Bible)

Islam

- Selected Hadiths/Sunnah
- Qur'ān
- Selected Hadiths/Sunnah

Figure 3.2: The utility of armed force: a spectral interpretation of scriptures from seven world religions

The positioning of Jain scriptures on the far left of the spectrum in Figure 3.2 is hardly debatable, given the religion's unequivocal stance of absolute pacifism, which is extended to all sentient beings. Buddhism has a longer bar starting slightly further to the right, given that it goes from pacifism in human interactions to endorsing moderate use of force in extreme circumstances, e.g., the protection of the religion in the Mahavamsa. Christianity has a large span (perhaps the

largest), given the diametrically contrasting approaches taken in the Old and New Testaments on the issue of armed force. Hinduism also has a large span. Many of its epic scriptures, including the Rāmāyaṇā and the Mahābhārata, describe battles and warriors in glorious terms. Furthermore, scriptures advocating pure pacifism hardly exist in Hinduism, except if one reads certain scriptures metaphorically, as Mahatma Gandhi did the Bhagavad Gītā. The Arthaśāstra, one of the Hinduism’s relevant texts, would be considered a staunch *realpolitik* text in modern terms. It goes so far as to advocate assassination and invasion as a means to increase political power.

Sikhism has a polarized spectrum. The Gurū Granth Sāhib, Sikhism’s main scripture does not deal significantly with armed force. It advocates winning the inner battle within oneself, not fighting an outer one against an external enemy. But it cannot be said to be a pacifist text because it does not make explicit the necessity of non-violence. It gravitates towards peace, outer as well as inner. By contrast, Sikhism’s disputed Dasam Granth exhibits a clear advocacy for the use of armed force (“the sword”) for a number of causes.

Judaism’s Tanakh is located on the same position of the spectrum as Christianity’s Old Testament because it is virtually the same text, having served as the basis for the first (and larger) part of the Christian Bible. The Talmudic interpretation of the Tanakh tends to be more pacific than the Tanakh itself, in large part because the conditions to make war did not exist in the same way during the period of Talmudic writers. The mystical Kabala is hard to locate in a spectrum because of its extensive use of symbolism but it is not militant in any fashion.

The Qur’ān, which adopts a similar approach as the Tanakh, is similarly positioned. The Qur’an explicitly states the justified causes for fighting, including action against oppression, in defence of the weak and in self-defence. Various Islamic Sunnah and Hadiths can be positioned to the left and right of the Qur’ān. Sufism is a more pacific branch of Islam, but it still adopts the Qur’ān as its central holy text with no other text that rivals the Qur’ān for authority. Those who promote militancy will refer to the more violence-supporting passages in the Qur’ān, the Sunnah and the Hadiths.¹⁸

Religious scriptures only give one indication, albeit an important one, of the degree to which violence is endorsed in a religion. Given a potentially wide range of interpretations, even a specific scripture can be viewed at different points along the spectrum. For instance, the Bhāgavad-Gītā is ostensibly about removing a warrior’s doubts about fighting a battle. But it has been interpreted as an inspiration for purely passive resistance by Mahatma Gandhi. Furthermore, some individuals and schools of thought will selectively use certain passages dealing with the use of force to further their specific objectives. For instance, Pope Urban II’s call to crusade against the infidels in the holy lands or Osama bin Laden’s call¹⁹ for *jihad* against the West both included passages from their respective scriptures to justify their cause. An analysis of individual interpretations and the range of thought within each religion is beyond the scope of the present work. It is important to note that the nature and frequency of passages in religious scripts does not imply a corresponding degree of violence among the said religion’s adherents. Rather this work highlights the scriptural passages that can be used as tools by individuals who seek to justify their actions, be they peaceful or belligerent.

¹⁸ For a case of scriptural passages being used to support extreme militancy, see part I of this series (Abrahamic Religions) in which the passages used by Osama bin Laden are listed (section 5.2).

¹⁹ See Part I, Section 5.1 for specific scriptural passages used.

The previous chapter has compared the scriptural approaches using fundamental questions (6 Ws) about the use of force: Why (the cause, intent and net benefit)? Who (the authority)? When (last resort)? What (proportionality)? Where (locations)? and hoW (conduct)? It confirmed that the issues raised in just war tradition can be found in most of the other religions. The analysis of passages, both pacific and militant, allowed a comparison among religions and helped in the positioning of the religions on the spectrum of force. Significant commonalities clearly exist among world religions that need to be highlighted such as the holding of life as sacred, the presumption against killing and the quest for peace. Nevertheless significant differences are also noted and contrasted. Both the similarities and the differences should be understood. This is particularly true when analyzing modern conflicts within societies where religious and moral justifications play such an important role. An undertaking of the war/peace approaches in religious scriptures is a first step.

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(U) One of the most important decisions of any nation or armed group is when, if ever, to wage war or apply armed force. Such life-and-death judgements are informed by and sometimes determined by ethical principles and religious beliefs. World religions all provide guidelines on when armed force is justified. Are the permissions and prohibitions similar among religions? The present work seeks to map out the range of religious approaches to armed force, as expressed in the scriptures of the world's largest religions. Though the interpretations of religious scriptures vary considerably, the texts themselves provide a sense of each religion's approach to the important issue. Covering values from absolute pacifism, where armed force is not permissible under any circumstances, to strong militancy, where armed force is readily adopted, this research compiles, compares and contrasts important scriptural passages. Along with the associated DRDC reports, it presents a tour d'horizon, surveying scriptures from seven world religions. The previous reports analysed the three Abrahamic religions (Part I: Christianity, Islam and Judaism) and religions of Indic origin (Part II: Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism). The important scriptures from each religion were briefly introduced and the relevant verses were extracted, categorized and summarized. This makes possible, in each religion, the juxtaposition of passages justifying the use of force with passages suggesting the opposite. More broadly, a comparison is presented here, in Part III, in both a descriptive and a schematic fashion to illustrate the differences between the scriptures within each religion and the differences between the religions. The religious approaches are compared by examining how they answer basic questions about war: Why? Who? When? Where? What? How? This variance is illustrated in this report by locating religious scriptures along a spectrum of force.

(U) L'une des plus importantes décisions qu'un pays ou un groupe peut être appelé à prendre, même si ce n'est que rarement, est celle de partir au combat ou de prendre les armes. De telles décisions de vie ou de mort reposent parfois sur des principes éthiques et des croyances religieuses. Toutes les religions du monde définissent des balises pour justifier l'utilisation de la force armée. Les autorisations et les interdictions à cet égard sont-elles les mêmes dans les différentes religions? Le présent document tente de décrire, en se reportant à leurs textes sacrés, comment les plus grandes religions abordent la question de la force armée. Les interprétations des textes sacrés sont très variables, mais les textes à proprement parler contiennent des indications quant à la position de chaque religion par rapport à cet important enjeu. En compilant, comparant et mettant en contraste des passages fondamentaux des textes sacrés, la présente étude a permis de faire ressortir des valeurs fort diversifiées allant du pacifisme absolu qui interdit tout recours à la force armée en toutes circonstances, au militarisme radical qui prône d'emblée l'utilisation de la force armée. À l'instar de rapports connexes de Recherche et développement pour la défense Canada (RDDC), le présent rapport présente un tour d'horizon des textes sacrés de sept religions du monde. Les rapports antérieurs contenaient des analyses des trois religions abrahamiques (Partie I : le christianisme, l'islam et le judaïsme) et de religions d'origine hindoue (Partie II : le bouddhisme, l'hindouisme, le jaïnisme et le sikhisme). Ces deux premières parties présentaient brièvement les textes sacrés de chaque religion ainsi que les versets pertinents qui en avaient été

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extraits, classés par catégorie et résumés. D'où la possibilité de juxtaposer, pour chaque religion, les passages justifiant l'emploi de la force et les passages suggérant le contraire. De façon plus générale, la comparaison présentée ici, dans la Partie III, est descriptive et schématique, ce qui permet de mettre en lumière les différences entre les textes sacrés de chaque religion ainsi que les différences entre les religions. Les approches religieuses sont comparées en examinant leurs réponses aux questions fondamentales au sujet de la guerre : Pourquoi? Qui? Quand? Où? Quoi? Comment? Dans le présent rapport, ces divergences sont expliquées en situant les textes sacrés de chaque religion dans l'éventail des recours à la force.

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