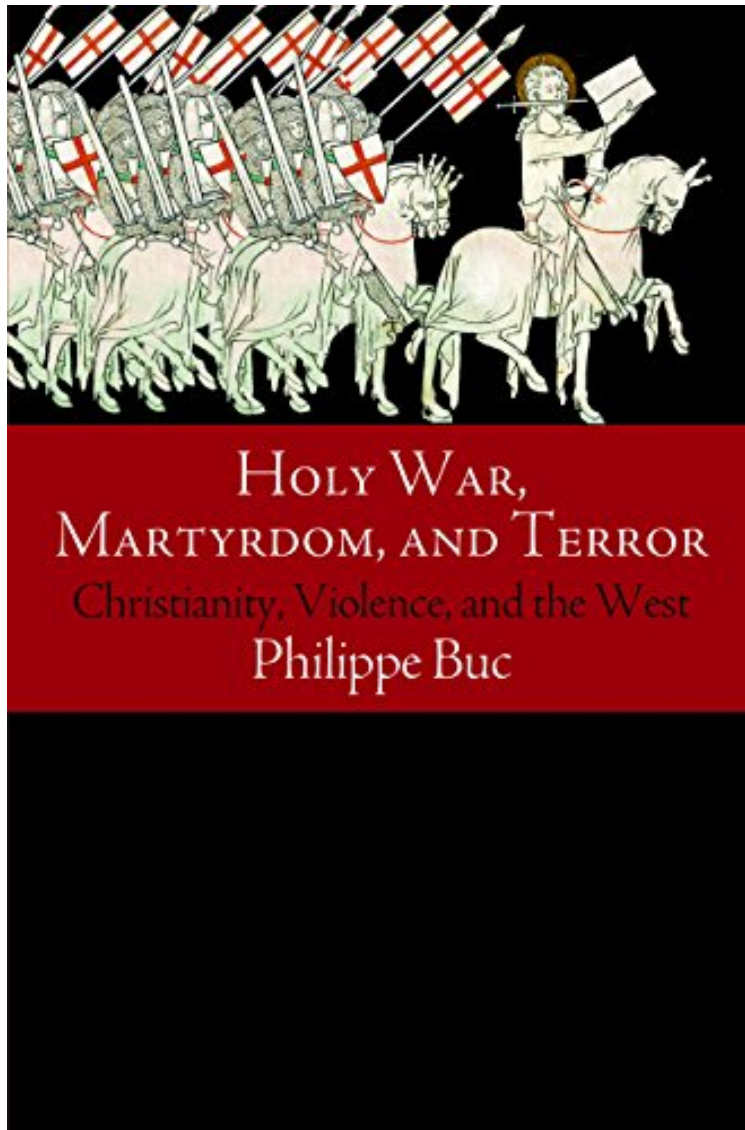


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## Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror: Christianity, Violence, and the West (Haney Foundation Series)

*Philippe Buc*

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**Philippe Buc : Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror: Christianity, Violence, and the West (Haney Foundation Series)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror: Christianity, Violence, and the West (Haney Foundation Series):

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Incomplete review: Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror. By Charles B. Jones This is a much more academic book than I was expecting and I am having to do some background reading to get up to speed before really getting into it. That said, I am eager to see what Professor Buc has to say on these very contemporary and germane topics.

Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror examines the ways that Christian theology has shaped centuries of conflict from the Jewish-Roman War of late antiquity through the First Crusade, the French Revolution, and up to the Iraq War. By isolating one factor among the many forces that converge in war the essential tenets of Christian theology Philippe Buc locates continuities in major episodes of violence perpetrated over the course of two millennia. Even in secularized or explicitly non-Christian societies, such as the Soviet Union of the Stalinist purges, social and political projects are tied to religious violence, and religious conceptual structures have influenced the ways violence is imagined, inhibited, perceived, and perpetrated. The patterns that emerge from this sweeping history upend commonplace assumptions about historical violence, while contextualizing and explaining some of its peculiarities. Buc addresses the culturally sanctioned logic that might lead a sane person to kill or die on principle, traces the circuitous reasoning that permits contradictory political actions, such as coercing freedom or pardoning war atrocities, and locates religious faith at the backbone of nationalist conflict. He reflects on the contemporary American ideology of war one that wages violence in the name of abstract notions such as liberty and world peace and that he reveals to be deeply rooted in biblical notions. A work of extraordinary breadth, Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror connects the ancient past to the troubled present, showing how religious ideals of sacrifice and purification made violence meaningful throughout history.

"In this challenging study, Philippe Buc deploys his vast knowledge of the history and complex influence of scripture and its exegesis to explore the themes of holy war, martyrdom, and terror in the culture of the Christian and post-Christian West. He has little patience with conventional, polarized constraints of religion/secularization, historical periodization, and the anachronistic dismissal of the power of religious thought and language. Buc's is a quick, learned, and contentious mind, and his identification of a distinctly western kind of identity determination and the related contours of public violence in the West is a major contribution to a fundamental historical debate." Edward Peters, University of Pennsylvania "This is a remarkable book. Buc takes us through two millennia of western Christian and what he calls "post-Christian" (i.e., post-Enlightenment) attitudes towards violence, in order to explore how Christianity has left its imprint on western violence in the modern period. . . . He argues that violence is woven into early and medieval Christianity's conceptual frameworks and language. He then points out direct continuities between Christian violence in the past and both Christian and 'godless' violence (in the literal sense of the word, not the judgmental) in various modern presents." Medieval "The medievalist Philippe Buc discerns Christian tropes of holy war and martyrdom in seemingly secular movements with terroristic potential. A brilliant and disturbing interpretation of the religious origins of redemptive violence in the West, this is a book for our times." Dirk Moses, European University Institute "This is an enormously ambitious book, one that seeks to say something fundamental about the deep-rooted set of ideas and priorities that have fueled violent action over two millennia. . . . It is deeply imagined, enormously learned, and brings into conversation, with elegance and coherence, a series of analytical threads about the ideology of violence in the Western trajectory." s in History About the Author Philippe Buc taught at Stanford University for two decades and is now Professor of Medieval History at the University of Vienna. He is author of several books, including The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory.