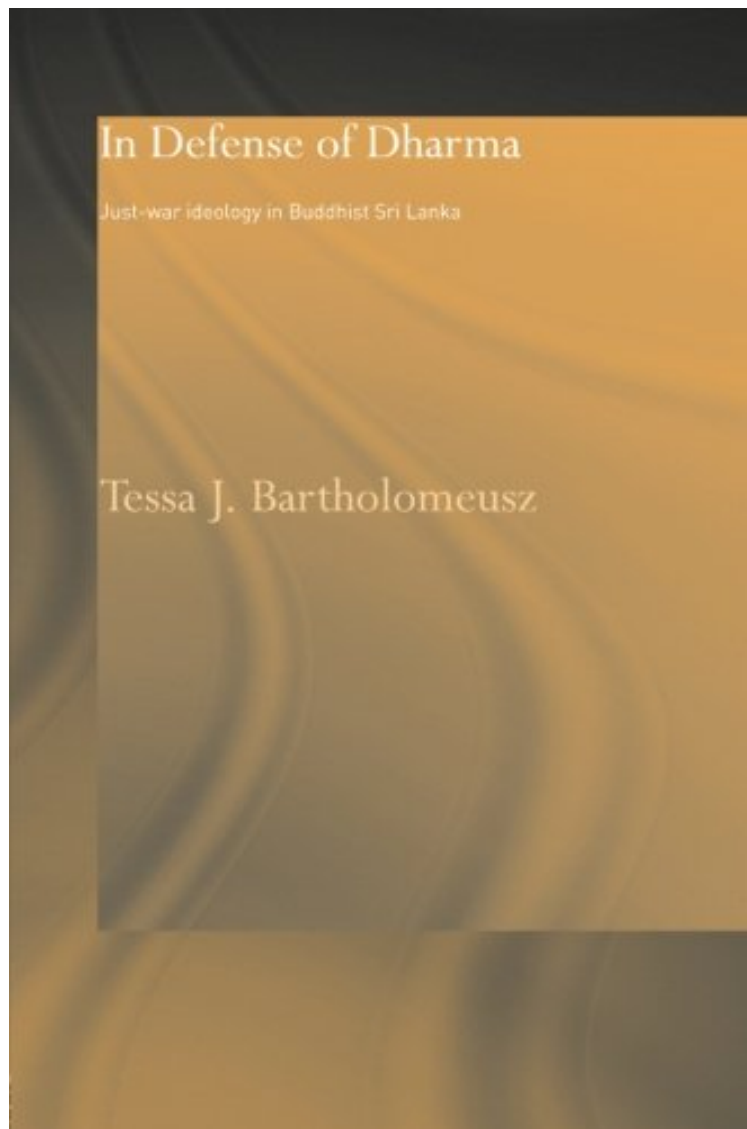


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In Defense of Dharma: Just-War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka (Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism)

Tessa J. Bartholomeusz

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

'Bartholomeusz's provocative book explores the arguments for and against the justice of war in the Buddhist tradition of Sri Lanka. This interdisciplinary work analyzes Buddhist ideas in relation to western just war and ethical theory.' - Journal of Military Ethics 2003
About the Author
Tessa J. Bartholomeusz was Professor of Religion at the Florida State University, Tallahassee. Her work concentrated on gender, religious identity and most recently, on Buddhism in America.