

## Abstract

### Just War and *Jihad*:

#### Two Traditions on the Use of Force

The cultures of the West and of Islam have produced two distinct moral traditions on the right use of force, that of just war and that of *jihad* of the sword. This paper, which is a chapter in a book of mine currently under publisher's review, undertakes a comparative overview of major features in these traditions, identifying where they run along similar lines and where they differ. It sketches their origin and development in their respective cultural contexts, notes the different relation of each to the spheres of religion and political life, and briefly examines them on three elements central to both traditions: the authority required for the justified use of armed force, the justification necessary for the use of such force, and right conduct in the use of such force. In examining these themes I note how contemporary versions of each tradition have interpreted the tradition on these matters. I give special attention to a common feature in both traditions: that the justified use of armed force is conceived in both as a public enterprise to be undertaken by the supreme public authority according to established rules in response to wrongdoing. By contrast, I note a particular problem in contemporary radical Islamist conceptions of the *jihad* of the sword: the tension between the idea of such *jihad* as an activity of the Islamic community as a public body and as an activity to be undertaken by individuals and private groups in conditions of emergency—a problem bearing directly on the use of *jihad* language to justify terrorist activity.