

# English Essay.

Are modern wars not holy wars?

## Outline:

1) Introduction.

2) Modern wars are not holy wars:

1) Religion ~~today~~ is only being used as a tool to further national interests today.

2) Modern wars are all about technological competition.

3) Unlike holy wars, states only seek power today.

4) Modern wars are the wars of ~~the~~ acquiring resources.

5) In contemporary era, holy wars have become obsolete.

6) Economic interests to dominate in modern wars and not religion.

- 7) Modern wars tend to shape narratives ~~to~~ around the globe to gain power.
- 8) Unlike modern wars, holy wars did not use information warfare.
- 9) Under the umbrella of religion, states support proxy.
- 10) In their quest for power, states use deception to wage wars in the modern <sup>world</sup> era.
- 11) To satisfy the public, states use religion as a cause of waging war.

### 3) Conclusion.

Thucydides said, "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." Modern wars are fought for acquisition of power and wealth, thereby ~~they~~ <sup>states</sup> do not undermine these luxuries for a religious cause. In the past, holy wars used to be very brutal which led to bloody massacres. Contrarily, states are considered rational actors and they wage war for different purposes. Today, states use religion as a tool to achieve their national interests. Moreover, modern wars are becoming

more ~~involved~~ technologically fierce. Furthermore, states ~~tools~~ are power-hungry which is the leading major foundation of modern wars. Additionally, states get involved in wars to get the maximum amount of resources. Holy wars have become obsolete in the current world order. Not only this, but states also keep their economic interest ~~at~~ <sup>center</sup> the ~~core~~ of national interest as their top priority while waging a war in modern times. In addition, war of narratives is central to attaining victory in contemporary wars. Unlike modern wars, holy wars did not use information warfare as a tool to win against an adversary. Most importantly, states use proxies under the umbrella of religious slogans today. Therefore, one cannot deny the fact that modern wars are not fought for religious causes.

Religion is a mere tool to fulfil national interests. National interests are a source set of goals which states prioritize to ensure ~~a~~ <sup>their</sup> country's wellbeing. In modern wars, states use religion as a tool to justify their violent actions. Moreover, it also helps a state to boost the morale of people. According to a research

Paper, Iran has always taken a religious stance in Middle Eastern politics, while it ~~has~~ even supported Sunni proxies in the region against Israel and Saudi Arabia. Therefore, in modern times, religion is only ~~at~~ the mean through which states fulfill their national interests.

Modern wars are also fought for technological superiority. Technological superiority means modernizing technological assets of a state to compete in international markets. Modern wars are all about attaining technological supremacy against the adversaries. Furthermore, in ancient times ~~religious~~<sup>holy</sup> wars were limited to the spread of religion and its practices. Council of Foreign Relations has stated that US imposed ~~sanctio~~ tariffs on Chinese technology to hamper its rise. Resultantly, this led to a fierce trade war between US and China. Henceforth, technological supremacy is a crucial factor shaping modern wars.

Modern wars are fought for seeking power. Power helps states to influence smaller ~~powers~~<sup>states</sup>. In the international system, there are different types of powers to which aim to alter the status quo by waging a war. Additionally, modern wars create hegemony, instead of spreading

religious messages via wars. According to Power Transition Theory, huge wars ~~are~~ become inevitable when a rising power tries to change the status quo. Therefore, modern wars revolve around the element of power.

Today, states seek resources in the aftermath of war. Resources aid in creating economic stability in a state. In modern wars, states fight over resources even if they have to go beyond the religious and moral principles. In addition, for the sake of resources, states can also breach their adversary's sovereignty. Western scholars have justified Russia's invasion of Ukraine by stating that Moscow wanted the access to ~~Red~~ Black Sea which is rich in resources and has a strategic geostrategic location. Thus, states aim to acquire resources in modern times.

In modern times, religious wars do not exist anymore. It was a ~~pr~~ practice of ancient empires and civilizations. Today, states do not ~~pr~~ prioritize religion, instead they practice secularism to protect their national interests in war. Furthermore, states do not undermine their relations with other states for religion during war; it can turn friends into foes.

Israel's unprecedented reign of terror in Gaza has showed that religion has no space in modern wars. Henceforth, holy wars are no more a part of the contemporary world.

Economic interests shape wars in the twenty-first century. Economic interests are those interests which <sup>ensure</sup> ~~secure~~ a state's power and influence in the international community. In modern days, even if a country's economic interests get hampered, it feels compelled to go for war. Additionally, global hegemons are moving closer towards a war due to their fierce economic competition.

A theory of International Relations, known as Realism states that countries maximize power by building a strong military and securing economic interests simultaneously in modern <sup>times</sup> ~~cases~~. Thereby, economic interests rule the modern wars.

Modern wars are all about narrative-building. Narrative building means shaping a country's image in the eyes of foreign and domestic public. National leaders compete with other country's narratives <sup>by</sup> through adopting a strong rhetoric. Resultantly, these wars of narratives help states

in winning the hearts and minds of the people. An old documentary pasted by Voice of America demonized the Soviet Union during Cold war era which helped the US in winning the war of narratives. Hence, modern wars tend to shape narratives as well.

Holy wars did not use information warfare like modern wars. Information warfare refers to the war conducted by states through the use of information, mostly in the digital realm. In ancient times, empires did not have modern technology to spread negative information quickly. Furthermore, holy wars were limited to religious causes, like following the message of popes during war. In modern world, Rebecca Hersman has regarded information warfare as a tool of escalation between states. Thus, holy wars unlike modern wars did not use information warfare.

Religion can be used by states to support their proxies in modern times. Proxy war is a type of war which is indirectly fought between states by using non-state actors. States use proxies only to achieve their national interests. However, states in modern times do motivate their

proxies by giving religious justifications to non-state actors. During Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistani authority stated that it has been supporting Afghan Mujahideen and the US became both the countries believe in One God. However, US and Pakistan only wanted to eradicate the Soviet threat. Therefore, modern wars use proxies in the name of religion sometimes.

For the sake of power, states tend to deceive other countries. Deception means to cheat another state or manipulate it in the international community. States use psychological techniques of war to manipulate another state. In addition, these techniques can use religious sentiment means to ignite the sentiments of people, but the war itself is not religious.

Mr. Zia Ul Haq, Shamsi has stated that through psychological warfare, India has maligne Pakistan and ignited the sentiments of different sects present in Pakistan. Hence, states use art of deception in modern wars.

States can use religion to satisfy their public. Even today, religion has been a sensitive debate for a country's public. In holy wars, there was no need of satisfying the public because people considered religion to be a justified cause.



of war. In addition, leaders are accountable to their people in modern times, so they need a reason to justify their war objectives, regardless of the fact that the objectives are completely materialistic.

According to a lecturer at National Defence University, Iran justified its support for Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by stating that it supports the innocent and the oppressed, by drawing an analogy with the Battle of Karbala. Henceforth, states justify their war objectives by using religion.

Therefore, modern wars are not holy wars. They are power-centric and they aim to achieve their interests. States use religion for supporting their proxies. Furthermore, states use deception in wars to acquire power in modern times. In addition, states often use religion to justify their wars. Not only this, but states also use religion to fulfil their national interests in modern times. Moreover, unlike holy wars, modern wars aim to attain technological supremacy. Additionally, states want to become powerful which is contrary to what <sup>used to</sup> happened in holy wars. In modern times, holy wars have become obsolete. Also, economic interests are the prioritized in modern wars. Most importantly, modern wars are fought for building narratives globally. Lastly, holy wars did not prioritize information warfare like modern wars. Thereby, holy wars have become obsolete as the current world order compels the states to prioritize their security. Religion is only used as a tool by states to gain public support. Modern wars are fought for power and prestige which have become a custom in the international system.