

Are modern wars not holy wars?

Outline

1- Introduction

- Wars were historically fought with ulterior holy motives
- The structures and intentions behind wars have shifted
- Modern wars are no longer holy wars, instead they are based on geo political and economic interests.

2- What are holy wars?

3- Modern wars are not holy wars

3.1 US vs China - the most prevalent global conflict has no religious roots

3.2 Ukraine Russia war: A classic example of a geo strategic war with national interests

↳ Russian ideology 'Ruski Mir' is a hyper nationalist perspective with no holy foundation.

3.3 Ethnicity: A more heightened faultline for war in recent times as compared to

religion

↳ Baloch Separatist Movement in Pakistan

3.4 The nation state system wipes out the phenomenon of religious empires.

↳ Empires like Ottoman have no place in the modern world.

3.5 USA ; the global leader projects liberal values across the globe with minimal religious intervention

↳ Keeping politics and religion separate lies at the core of liberal ideology

3.6 Worlds' lens are shifted towards economic prosperity due to prevalent capitalist system, war front is now economic security.

↳ Bretton Woods system is spread over the entire globe.

4 - Refuting the claim that modern wars are holy wars

4.1 Proponents claim that contemporary wars such as Israel-Palestine are fueled by holy ideas.

Rebuttal: Israel's attack is merely a disgusting attempt at land grabbing for

geo political needs.

↳ Israel would not have joined hands with Jordan or made ties with KSA if the idea was just being anti Muslim

4.2 It is believed that war on terror was repackaged crusades

Rebuttal: War on terror is not a contemporary conflict, it was not targetted towards any religion, but terrorist factions, who are looked down upon by muslims also.

5 - Conclusion

- Contemporary wars have contemporary objectives, they are not holy wars.

In the past few hundred decades, prevalent modern religions were revealed and spread. Preaching was not the only tool used, instead, there were wars, conquests and large scale military expeditions. It was a norm for religion to be a motivating factor behind war. However, with the evolution of society this concept is becoming obsolete. There have been mass advancements in the global system which have resulted in new focus areas behind conflicts. Intentions behind war are now an amalgamation of geo political and economic interests. The biggest conflict of contemporary times is the Sino American tension which is based of similar interests. Other wars across the globe follow similar objectives as can be seen in Russia Ukraine war. It is also essential to notice that these orientational shifts did not come over night, the evolution of system plays the biggest part. Nation state system is now an integral component of the world and hence forming religion based empires is now next to impossible. To further strengthen this concept, the globally applied American system also keeps politics and religion separate. The worlds lens

are now shifted towards the supremacy of economic prosperity and using conflict as a means to achieve that. If any social characteristic drives war now a days, it is ethnicity where by groups are together beyond borders. Some people do argue that modern wars are indeed holy wars such as the devastating Israel - Palestine situation, however it must be noted that the conflict is a manifestation of geo political gains. War on terror was also believed to be a holy war despite it being collective action against terrorist factions, not muslims. Hence, it can be said that holy wars were a reality of the past, but now there are other motives that lead to war.

Holy wars, as the name suggests are wars fought with a holy purpose. Figuratively it means wars fought for religious purposes or as a religious duty. The spread of Islamic empires, the establishment of the Ottoman and Abbasid caliphates are examples of the motivation. Europe's longest reigning series of wars, the crusades, were also holy wars based on the purpose of defending a

particular religious school of thought.

The evolution of society and social systems, however changed intentions of war. Wars now do not have an ulterior religious motive. The next section of the ^{essay will} explain how modern wars are not holy wars.

The most pertinent conflict today is the rising America China rivalry, not based on any religious divide. Academicians and scholars predict the rise of China, naturally pitching it against the USA. China is exponentially increasing its' military and economic power to come at par with its opponent. Both parties are rigorously engaged in countering the others' advancements, there is also a subconscious formation of blocs. All of this is done without any sort of holy motivation present. None of the entities have a religious duty to fulfill, nor is there any faith based animosity between them. The conflict is entirely backed by hegemonic needs. Hence the Sino American cold war is an overwhelming example of wars not being holy in the modern

times.

The Ukraine Russia war is also geo strategic in nature with no religious inclination. Russia does have its 'hyper nationalist philosophy' which is the main reason behind its drive to control the former Soviet states. The entire focus is more of a national pride game and Putin's emotional attachment to the phenomenon of Ruski mir - a forward looking approach towards the greater Soviet Russia. Upon deep diving, this to seems like a geo political ideology. Russia aims to reunite all those who were a part of the Soviet Union with the belief that these areas were taken away wrongfully. The Ukraine war is a clear attempt to regain national glory having no correlation to religion.

Ethnicity is now a more important cause of war instead of religion. Previously religion was a common cause of uniting people under one banner for war. Infact it did not just unite people, but also ensured that they were emotionally involved. Now ethnicity often plays

that role. People get together on the basis of their ethnicity to fight against their marginalized status. Ethnicity has collected people across borders and within states. Modern wars have modern reasons, when a certain group of people feel cornered, they unite to fight against it. Pakistan faces the Baloch separatist movement, a country formed due to religion has ethnic groups within, hence proving conflicts are no longer holy. Ethnicity beats religion is today's uprisings, wars do not have religion as the uniting factor.

The evolution of the nation state system largely ~~wiped out of religious empires~~ wiped out the power of religious empires. In the old times, wars were fought and regions were added to empires. The Ottoman empire ^{stretched} from south eastern Europe to Central Asia, Arabia and North Africa. It was all possible because national borders were not as well defined and formal as they are today. International law was also not focused on sanctity of national boundaries, however with the increased focus on concept of sovereignty and borders the war arena

changes. No army could conquer land in the name of religion and make it theirs under the current international law. Dynamics have changed and the global adoption of the nation state system does not allow religion based expansion and forming empires.

USA the global leader practices the liberal values which propagate keeping religion away from politics. The entire global system de facto works on liberal values as they are endorsed by international institutions as well. As a consequence the system of interaction between states and non state actors has become devoid of religion. The new war fronts as opened by liberal philosophy are economic stability and integration. Countries are more interested in securing their future with in accordance with the prevalent global systems. With religion completely being out of the global political discourse it is unlikely that there will be unity based on religion even though other things matter more. Hence it is true that with the widespread adoption of ~~religion~~ liberalism, religion goes out of equation.

in the strategic spheres.

The shifting of world lens also involves a strong focus on economic front which is now controlled by a centralized Bretton Woods system, it is highly unlikely that a country unifies under a religious banner. Bloc politics might still be present subtly in some ways but the economic system currently makes every body so interdependent and interconnected with each other, it becomes hard to disassociate and form religious allies. It is unfathomable to imagine that Saudi Arabia would get up today, collect every Islamic country to stand up against something and launch a war. Makes it more difficult when there ^{is} economic interdependency. Since there is a great focus on economic interconnectivity now, there is a slim chance of an armed conflict on the basis of religion.

Despite the change in global perceptions and practices, few people still believe that modern wars are holy wars. This idea may be present due to historical bias or the difference in religion

present in some contemporary conflicts. However upon analyzing the situation from an unbiased perspective, ^{it is} ~~they also~~ proved that modern wars are not holy wars. The next section of the essay will elaborate on a few such arguments.

Proponents claim that the ongoing Israel Palestine war is a holy war. The only point of conflict here is religion ~~that~~ the motivation behind the war is also religion. However, this is a very surface level stance, it is naive to assume that Israel just has some holy mission that they are trying to achieve. In reality, it is a gruesome attempt of ~~satisfying~~ their geopolitical needs. Israel's attack is not limited to securing Al-Aqsa, instead it is a strategic endeavour to annex as much land as possible. It is important to analyze that if their entire motivation would be anti Muslim, why would they welcome Jordans support with open arms. Moreover, Israel's keenness to form diplomatic ties with the Kingdom of Saudia Arabia further explains the absence of any holy motives. Hence, it can be said that the Israel Palestine conflict is not a holy war.

It is also believed that war on terror was a holy war, that pitched the world against muslims. It was a war of muslims against the world. However, such was not the case. It was not an attempt towards the muslim and the religion Islam, instead it was a war against terrorism and extremist factions. Pakistan being a muslim state was also involved in it because it wasnt marginalizing muslims. The entire idea behind the war on terror was eradicating groups that practice extremist behaviours in the name of religion. Muslims themselves were aligned with the western perspective ensuring that Islamic school of thought does not fall in line with terrorism. Thus, it is wrong to label war on terror, a holy war, when it factually isnt.

To conclude, it can be completely said that modern wars are certainly not holy wars. The world has evolutionized in a way that religion is no longer a major cause of war. Even those that have seemingly holy intentions, are actually fuelled by other geo strategic or economic factors. Modern wars still might share a number of traits with previous wars but being holy is not one of them.