

# Reading assignemn

Religion



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Mahmud claims that some of the reasons why he is involved in acts of violence against US targets include the fact that he wanted to reach the government with the message that they are not tolerating the way the government is dealing with their citizens. He cited the example of the US which according to him terrorizes nations to obliterate their power and tells them that they are nothing and that they must follow the US. Mahmud thus felt being a Muslim he had a duty and a mission to go wherever there is injustice and fight it. Mahmud is also against about how Jewish influence controlled America's news media, financial institutions, and government. Mahmud thus is against America's pretence of being secular and impartial toward religion but it's in fact so much involved in religious and politics already. Mahmud regards America's involvement in religious politics, its support of Israel and for "enemies of Islam" such as Egypt, is not the result of Christianity. Rather it was due to America's ideology of secularism which Mahmud regards as hostility toward religion, especially Islam. Religion is deeply involved and in fact it is firmly entrenched in this whole issue.

2. Rantisi claims that Hamas is in a state of war simply because of Israel's stance toward Palestine-especially toward Hamas concept of an Islamic Palestine. Thus Israel wants to destroy Islamic nationalism. Rantisi explains that the bombings are a moral lesson and the actions of self-martyrs are understandable and simply responses to the oppression brought about by the Israelis. Unlike other movements, Hamas was purely founded on religious principles. Muslims can legitimately use violence while responding to attacks and other forms of violence from the Israeli side, acts that frequently affect innocent civilians. In this sense they are defensive since they are victims in this struggle and not the cause of it.

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3. Some of the modern Islamic justifications for the use of violence claim that in case of aggression, or usurping of a Muslim land, they must call for hitting the attacker and the aggressor to end the aggression. Killing of an enemy of Islam is also justified. Use of force is also consistent with Islamic principles and Khomeini of Iran claims that he knows of no command more binding to the Muslim than the command to sacrifice life and property to defend and bolster Islam. There are some Islamic tenets that condone struggle and the use of force. There are therefore some Muslim principles that justify killing as in the defense of faith and maintenance of the purity of religious existence, a thought said to be that of jihad which is often translated to mean “ holy war”

4. According to Rantisi a suicide bomber is a deranged individual who carries out an impulsive act. A self chosen martyr on the other hand is one who deliberately chooses an action as part of his religious obligation. This difference is significant to Rantisi since it conveys significance. A self chosen martyr can be compared to a freedom fighter whereas a suicide bomber can be compared to a terrorist.

5. Politics and religion are almost intertwined. Present day religious activists look for more traditional Islamic justifications for the use of violence and in this case both Yassin and Rantisi justifies the use of violence by Hamas. They have also expanded the notion to include the defense of one’s dignity and pride as well as one’s physical well-being. Thus Islamic struggle can be taken to be a moral struggle as well as a political one, stemming from religious commitment. It was also part of a tradition of Islamic protest against injustice, which is an interesting idea and that the approval of force for the defense of Islam can be expanded to include struggles against political and

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social injustice. Yes, the religious justifications for acts of violence are similar, since they are all based on the same principle of liberation from oppression and injustices.

Work cited

Mark, Juergensmeyer. *Terror in the Mind of God*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003.