

Motivations of war

[Science](#), [Anthropology](#)



Motivations for War: Write a paper on either a current or historical war. The focus of the paper must be the primary motivating factors for that specific war. Apply one of the theories presented in “ The Origins of War: Biological and Anthropological Theories” to the war. Investigate the general experiences and factors that shape(d) human experiences during the time of the war and recovery from the perspective of at least one culture involved in that war.

There were numerous stated motivations for the ongoing War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan. But ever since intentions of war were mooted in the wake of September 11, 2001, many official statements of motivation have been discredited and disproved. The inefficient manner in which search operations for Osama-bin-laden was carried out showed that the American government’s interest lay elsewhere – namely the oil rich Iraq. The supposed presence of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the hands of the authoritarian Iraqi leaders Saddam Hussein is also proven to be a fabrication. Hence, the real motivation for the ongoing War on Terror operations seem to be to secure strategic material interests of the United States. In this process, the consequences for Iraq/Afghanistan civil society and its local economy is given scant regard.

We could analyze the War on Terror operations within the framework of ‘ Just War’ theory presented in the book “ The Origins of War: Biological and Anthropological Theories”. Admittedly, the 9/11 terror strikes were heinous acts that cannot be justified under humanitarian principles. The 9/11 attacks were not an attack on the United States alone, but on all of human civilization. Continuing in this vein, one could argue that the threat posed by

networks such as Al Qaeda is potentially as big as that of totalitarian rulers of the past, including Hitler and Stalin. Hence, it won't be illogical to equate the ongoing military engagements of the United States to its major confrontations against Nazism and Stalinism. (Dowd, 2009) But those state apologists who make these claims do not make a serious effort to justify the War on Terror with the conditions laid down by the Just War theory, most likely because the case is a weak one. The invasion and occupation of Iraq is a breach of several of the Just War conditions, the most blatant of which is the numerous civilian fatalities that the war has caused.

We also realize that the doctrine of Pre-emptive war, which was the cornerstone of the eight year term of George W. Bush, has several flaws in it. The doctrine is based on weak premises and it fails to meet the standards set by the Just War theory. The action of the United States against Iraq fails the crucial test for a Just War, namely that " it undercuts a key pre-emptory norm in international law that underpins all others—the use of force cannot be justified merely on account of an adversary's capabilities, but solely in defense against its aggressive actions" (Kegley & Raymond, 2005) The subsequent revelation that Iraq under Saddam Hussein did not even possess weapons of mass destruction underlines the flaws inherent in the pre-emptive war doctrine. Moreover, the pre-emptive war doctrine has the potential to start a cascade effect, whereby there is worldwide increase in acts of aggression, all in the name of pre-emption.

And finally, the justifications and motivations given for War on Terror were all done from the perspective of the United States. None of the officials or political commentators paused to study the pros and cons from the

perspective of Iraqis and Afghans. As a result the 4000 year old Iraqi civilization with its rich historical and cultural heritage has been destroyed beyond repair.

Works Cited:

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