

From Kashmir to East Pakistan: How Hegemony Absence Redefined South Asian Warfare

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ABSTRACT: Post-World War II saw a bipolar global structure emerge, altering warfare dynamics to include not only traditional wars but also civil conflicts, skirmishes, guerrilla tactics, and terrorism. Superpowers like the USA and USSR, often involved in regional disputes in South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, have been criticized for escalating tensions. However, their absence sometimes led to greater instability and uncertainty, potentially sparking new conflicts. Aiming to investigate how and why hegemony absence has shaped the evolution of warfare in the region, this article examines the three significant conventional wars between India and Pakistan that transpired in South Asia—a region deeply entrenched in distinct historical and political significance. It reveals that the 1947 Kashmir War, occurring during a period of superpower preoccupation, failed to resolve tensions and laid the groundwork for future conflicts. The increased superpower involvement in the 1965 war significantly altered the conflict's scale and outcomes. In contrast, the 1971 war, with focused attention and support from the USA and the USSR, led to East Pakistan's independence, reshaping South Asia's geopolitical structure. Using process tracing and comparative analysis, this study highlights the critical impact of hegemonic absence on regional conflicts, marked by increased decision-making autonomy, diminished resource aid, and limited mediation efforts. This South Asian case study enriches our understanding of hegemony's role in international relations theory.

KEYWORDS: warfare, hegemony absence, geopolitics, South Asia

Introduction

Warfare, a pivotal and ever-evolving aspect of human history, transcends the realms of mere strategic or political discourse. It has been extensively analyzed by scholars across various disciplines, including political science, history, and international relations, reflecting its multifaceted impact and significance. The global devastation wrought by World War I and World War II, resulting in hundreds of millions of casualties and incalculable economic losses, underscores the prohibitively high cost of engaging in total war, of which the ambition is the annihilation of the enemy army and nation in the industrial era (Roy 2022, 140). Moreover, the emergence of massively destructive nuclear weapons contributed to the establishment of a relatively stable bipolar global structure, subsequently reducing the likelihood of large-scale wars. The evolution of warfare dynamics was marked by the emergence of various forms, including civil conflicts, skirmishes, guerrilla tactics, and terrorism (Jung 2005, 425). The Cold War's overarching pattern was typified by numerous small-scale conflicts and wars, which frequently occurred despite the period's overall peace.

Due to the roles played by the USA and the Soviet Union, the two superpowers, during the Cold War period, the concept of hegemony gained widespread prominence in international relations discourse. The realism scholars define the hegemony as the dominance or leadership of one nation over others, established and sustained through power and control (Mark 2009, 244). Such hegemonic states are often pivotal in setting international rules, standards, and norms, wielding the capability to ensure adherence by other nations. Constructivists, on the other hand, emphasize the influence of ideas, norms, and beliefs in

international relations, underscoring the importance of ideational and soft power (Hopf 2013, 321). However, these theories do not fully explain how hegemony shapes world order; in this context, the hegemonic stability theory, as proposed by neoliberalism, offers a novel perspective. Gilpin pointed out that ‘When a single nation-state is the dominant world power or hegemon, the international system is more likely to remain stable’ (Gilpin 2016, 86). These theoretical conceptualizations of hegemony help us to better understand its roles during Cold War. These studies underscore the academic community's extensive documentation of hegemonic involvement in wars. However, there is a notable paucity of research on wars in the absence of hegemonic influence. This gap leads to the central research question of this paper: What is the nature of wars when hegemony is absent? In other words, what's the different forms between wars with and without hegemony's involvement? To address this question and gain a deeper understanding of the role of hegemony in wars, this research examines the three conflicts between India and Pakistan from 1948 to 1971. The first part of the essay will discuss the varying degrees of hegemonic involvement. Subsequently, it will analyze the processes and outcomes of these three wars, along with the roles played by hegemonic powers. Finally, employing process tracing and comparative analysis, the study will explore multiple explanations for how the absence of hegemony leads to changes in the form of warfare.

Hegemony's Differential Involvement in Wars

Although scholars from different schools have given diverse definitions of hegemony, there is a consensus that the USA and the Soviet Union were the two most important hegemons during the Cold War. China, with its relatively strong national power and active involvement in regional affairs, can also be considered one of the hegemones. Overshadowed by the Western liberal camp and the Eastern communist bloc, many of the wars during the Cold War saw some level of participation by hegemonic powers. In this section, we will examine the involvement of these superpowers at various scales, encompassing both direct and indirect forms.

The most direct and highest level of participation of a hegemon in war is becoming one of the parties in the conflict. This means that the hegemonic nation deploys its military forces to another country and engages in direct conflict with one or more armed forces. In many cases such as the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (Bracke 2003) and the 1983 USA invasion of Grenada (Karas & Goodman 1984), a hegemonic country can achieve its political objectives with a small-scale military operation, without escalating it to a large-scale war. While the powerful military strength may facilitate the achievement of its strategic objectives, this approach often incurs significant costs, including damage to the hegemon's international image and substantial suffering in the targeted country. The high level of involvement of a hegemon in war reflects its nature of using material power to control other countries.

Compared to direct confrontation, it was more common for hegemonic nations during the Cold War to choose indirect forms of involvement in wars. Hegemonic nations often exert control over the progress and outcome of regional wars to a certain extent through various means. These include supporting specific powers, providing military and economic aid, engaging in arms trading, and imposing sanctions (Morris 1981). Through limited involvement in wars, hegemonic nations often gain greater flexibility while avoiding responsibility for the war. These groups rapidly developed capabilities to counter the opposing hegemon. In other cases, the conflicting parties in regional wars received support from opposing hegemonic powers, thereby giving these conflicts the characteristics of proxy wars (Mumford 2013). The third Indo-Pakistani War, which this study will discuss, is a typical proxy war, as both India and Pakistan received substantial support from the two camps, and the outcome of the war involved the interests of all stakeholders.

Another important role of hegemony in conflicts and wars is establishing an international system that provides norms for the mediation and termination of conflicts. As

hegemonic powers rise, they introduce norms of order at the global level, which, to some extent, maintain the peace and stability of the world (Kupchan 2014, 251). The UN, established by the hegemonic powers after World War II, stands as one of the most crucial global institutions in maintaining world order. On one hand, it possesses the capability to resolve conflicts and prevent wars; on the other hand, it provides essential mechanisms for mediating and bringing conflicts to an end. However, the theory of hegemonic stability points out that when a hegemon begins to decline, its ability to provide international public goods and ideology is weakened, which leads to the world situation falling back into instability and increases the likelihood of conflicts erupting (Lake 2022).

While the diverse roles of hegemonic powers were evident in most conflicts during the Cold War, there were instances where their presence was notably absent in regional conflicts. One plausible explanation for this absence is that most of the hegemonic resources and focus were allocated to other regions or issues of greater strategic value. The first Kashmir War serves as a prime example of a conflict that unfolded without significant involvement from the hegemonic powers, as both superpowers were primarily preoccupied with escalating tensions in Europe at the time. The next part of this paper will discuss in detail the three Indo-Pakistani Wars and the extent of hegemonic involvement, by which a comparison could be made to answer the major question of this research.

Evolution of India-Pakistan Wars

War and conflict have become the main theme of relations between India and Pakistan since their independence. The rapid partition of the British Raj in 1947 set the stage for a prolonged period of hostility between the two nations, creating geopolitical disputes and conflicts that even ended up in wars. Shortly after achieving independence, India and Pakistan were engaged in their first war, centered on the disputed ownership of the Kashmir region. This conflict had significant repercussions for both newly established post-colonial governments, profoundly influencing their political and diplomatic tendency. Later in the mid-20th century, two more large-scale conventional wars took place between the two countries again, culminating in the humiliating defeat for Pakistan with the independence of Bangladesh. A significant shift of hegemony's involvement in these interstate wars was witnessed, which resulted in the differentiated forms of wars. During the first Kashmir War, both the USA and the USSR refrained from engagement in the crisis, thereby maintaining their absence from the conflict. Later, in the 1965 conflict, the USA and USSR provided limited support to the opposing sides. By 1971, the war had escalated into a typical proxy war, with these superpowers more actively involved.

1947 Kashmir War

Pakistan, expecting Kashmir to join it due to its Muslim-majority, launched a guerrilla attack to influence Maharaja Hari Singh's decision. Singh, under pressure, fled and sought India's assistance, agreeing to accede to India for support. The Pakistani guerrillas initially succeeded but were eventually defeated by the Indian army due to their indiscipline and India's military intervention, leading to significant battles in the region (Stein 2010, 358). In 1948, the war entered a new phase, marked by India's successful recapture of towns like Jhanger through a counter-offensive. The subsequent spring offensive not only withstood a counterattack from the regular Pakistani army but also led to the capture of Kargil. By August 1948, the military commitments of both India and Pakistan had reached their limits, leading to a gradual subsidence in fighting (Iqbal 2022). As both countries were incapable of further warfare, India and Pakistan agreed to a ceasefire plan passed by the UN in August 1948. The plan required Pakistan to withdraw all its regular and irregular troops. India was allowed to retain a small number of troops to maintain order, while a plebiscite was to decide the future of Kashmir (UN 1948). However, the planned plebiscite was not implemented, and the final

ceasefire line became the actual line of control between India and Pakistan, each gaining one-third and two-thirds of the Kashmir territory, respectively. Throughout the war, the Indian forces suffered around 5,000 casualties, while the figures for Pakistan were several times higher (Singh 2000, 18).

Throughout the course of the war, the involvement of the two major hegemonic powers, the U.S.A. and the USSR, was notably minimal, exemplifying this conflict as a typical case where hegemony was absent. An analysis of the USA diplomatic documents from 1947 to 1949 reveals that the USA did not invest much effort and attention in the war during this period, merely limiting its role to aiding in ceasefire negotiations between the two countries. The *Foreign Relations of USA Series* is the official documentary historical record of major USA foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity. Apart from a general lack of interest in supporting either side, the US also imposed significant restrictions on material support during the conflict. The policy was designed to prevent any increase in the military potential of either country, leading to the rejection of both countries' request for weapon procurement. In notable contrast, during the same period, The USA air-dropped over two million tons of supplies to West Berlin in response to the Soviet blockade (Head 2021, 27). This operation, involving thousands of transport planes and massive financial investment, clearly indicated where the USA policy priorities lay at the time.

The situation on the USSR side was not much different. In 1948, one telegram from the Chargé in India (Donovan) to the Secretary of State mentioned that 'Russia has manifested no interest either at Delhi or Moscow in Kashmir'. One CIA report also indicated that 'Up to the mid-1950s, relations between India and the USSR were generally correct-limited to trade, cultural, and unexceptional diplomatic exchanges'(CIA 1972, 3). Another reason for Soviet Union's absence was Stalin's attitude of indifference and hostility towards both India and Pakistan, considering them still 'a colony of the Anglo-American capital, a British dominion ruled by the Indian national bourgeoisie'(Naik 1968, 50). At this time, the USSR was primarily focused on the front lines of the Iron Curtain, consolidating its influence in Eastern Europe. It confronted the US's Marshall Plan by promoting its own initiatives, such as the Molotov Plan and the establishment of the Comecon. In summary, the 1947 Kashmir War was characterized by the absence of the two major hegemonic powers, both in terms of material support and political involvement.

1965 Indo-Pakistani War

As both India and Pakistan were not satisfied with the outcome of the 1947 war, the ceasefire didn't symbolize the end of dispute. The decade of relative peace provided both countries an opportunity to focus on strengthening and modernizing their military capabilities, which involved consolidating state power and actively seeking support and aid from external powers. An agreement was signed in June with the effort of UK prime minister which awarded Pakistan 780 square kilometers (Wilson 1965). In August, approximately 30,000 Pakistani soldiers, disguised as local militants, infiltrated across the LoC, followed closely by the entry of Indian troops. By the end of the months, both sides had gained some advantage and progress after several battles in areas such as Tithwal, Uri and Poonch. On 20th September, as the war reached a stalemate, the UN proposed a ceasefire and demanded both nations agree to an unconditional cessation of hostilities within 48 hours (ibid, 350-352). Under the joint pressure of the USA and the Soviet Union, the two countries signed the Tashkent Declaration in the USSR, agreeing to cease hostilities. India and Pakistan respectively lost 540 and 1840 square kilometers of territory in this war, with no clear victor emerging (ibid, 348-350). Although the war only lasted for seventeen weeks, it resulted in nearly ten thousand casualties on both sides, significantly intensifying compared to the first Indo-Pakistani War (Leonard 2013, 806).

Compared with the first one, this larger-scale war was characterized by a notably increased engagement from hegemonic powers, both politically and materially. Both India

and Pakistan experienced a significant shift in their foreign policies, moving from a non-aligned position to seeking stronger connections with the superpowers in the late 1950s. Washington welcomed this development, as Pakistan could serve as a crucial force in preventing the communisation of the entire South Asian subcontinent by India, thereby strengthening the position of the Soviet Union. Several goodwill actions were then taken, symbolizing Pakistan's intention to confront India with the support of the USA. In 1960, President Khan granted permission for the USAF to conduct its first spy missions to the Soviet Union from the Peshawar Air Base, a decision that represented a significant level of defense cooperation between the two countries (Hussain 2015, 53). The USA also demonstrated its emphasis on Pakistan through high-level receptions for the visiting Pakistani President, highlighting the importance they placed on their relationship with Pakistan in 1961. This political connection with the USA yielded substantial material benefits for Pakistan, most notably in the form of military support. Signed in 1954, the USA-Pakistan Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement enabled Pakistan to acquire heavy equipment, including hundreds of M47 and M48 tanks, giving its armored forces a technological advantage over India in warfare (Khan & Emmerson 1954, 340).

India, on the other hand, also benefited from its strong relation with the USSR. Self-declared a socialist nation, India naturally became a target for the Soviet Union's diplomatic overtures. Nehru and Khrushchev exchanged friendly visits in 1955, and subsequently, the Soviet Union politically supported India on issues such as Kashmir and Goa (Mastny 2010, 54-59). After being humiliatingly defeated by China at the border in 1962, India, realizing its military inferiority, quickly requested advanced equipment from the Soviet Union. To counter hostile China, and US-supported Pakistan, the Soviet Union provided India with a batch of weapons. This included the delivery of their most advanced MiG-21 fighter jets, demonstrating the Soviet Union's importance placed on India (Donaldson 1972, 477). In summary, the military capabilities of India and Pakistan significantly improved with the support of superpowers, leading to more intense and brutal warfare.

1971 Indo-Pakistani War

As the 1965 ceasefire did not ease the hostility between the two countries, India and Pakistan found themselves once again in a state of war just six years later. Unlike the previous two wars, Kashmir was no longer the primary battlefield between the two countries, but rather the war was conducted on a larger spatial and political scale. The direct cause of this war was the Bangladesh Liberation War between the traditionally dominant West Pakistanis and the majority East Pakistanis, which, like Kashmir, was another political problem left over from the partition. The Pakistani military conducted harsh military crackdown, which evolved into a humanitarian crisis known as the Bangladesh genocide (Ranjan 2016, 135). The genocide resulted in millions of refugees pouring into India, further exacerbating tensions between India and Pakistan. The armies of both countries began mobilization for war, with border frictions becoming frequent and numerous cross-border attacks being carried out by both sides. On the western front, Pakistani military forces, comprising both army and navy units, initiated offensives against India; however, these efforts yielded minimal impact. Conversely, on the eastern front, Indian forces mounted a substantial offensive against East Pakistan. Despite its brief duration of only two weeks, this war was unparalleled in the region in terms of its intensity and consequences. The two sides deployed over a million personnel in total from their armies, navies, and air forces, equipped with advanced weaponry, epitomizing a modernized conflict. The staggering loss of over a hundred thousand troops signified a significant escalation in the scale of warfare (Gill 2003, 10-15). The war ended with the independence of Bangladesh, marking a comprehensive victory for India.

In contrast to previous conflicts where the involvement of hegemony was relatively limited, this war witnessed their significantly more prominent role. Firstly, both India and

Pakistan established more robust alliance relationships with their respective superpower backers, providing them with ample support before and during the war. In the year the war broke out, India signed the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR, in response to Pakistan's deepening ties with the USA and China, and the unstable regional situation. This marked the beginning of a comprehensive strategic cooperation between India and the USSR (Subrahmanyam 2021, 1-9). For Pakistan's relationship with USA cooled after the previous war, primarily due to the USA arms embargo. However, Pakistan found a new potential ally in China. China not only had border conflicts with India but also strained relations with the USSR, giving China and Pakistan shared interests. Moreover, Pakistan played an active role in the thawing of Sino-American relations, which led to joint support from China and the USA during the war. The involvement of China introduced a significant strategic threat to India from its northern border, consequently tying up substantial Indian resources. This situation afforded Pakistan a distinct strategic advantage.

In the course and conclusion of the war, superpowers played a significant role. Firstly, there were confrontations in the UN Security Council, where the USA and the Soviet Union each submitted draft resolutions supporting Pakistan and India, respectively, and used their power to veto the other's proposals. Before the war broke out, The USA President Nixon pressured India to prevent its intervention in the Pakistani civil war, but this was rejected by Prime Minister Gandhi. The Soviet Union also expressed concern over the actions of the Pakistani military. After the outbreak of the war, the USA sent its most advanced Seventh Fleet, led by the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, to the Indian Ocean at this sensitive moment, demonstrating the possibility of direct military intervention in the conflict. In response, the Soviet Union deployed its fleet to the Indian Ocean as well. The Chinese troops on the China-India border also made movements and provided certain military support to Pakistan. From this perspective, the Indo-Pakistani war had escalated into a confrontation between blocs, with both sides projecting their power directly into the region. The pressure from hegemony was undoubtedly a significant reason for the rapid end of this conflict.

Hegemonic Absence's Influence on War

After a thorough analysis of the three Indo-Pak wars and the role of hegemonic states in them, it becomes evident that both the nature and outcomes of these wars vary significantly. Due to the complexity of international relations, particularly in matters of war and conflict, which are composed of a multitude of intricate factors, it is challenging to conclusively determine whether these differences arose due to the presence or absence of hegemonic powers. However, it is undeniable that hegemony plays a crucial role in the evolution of the nature of warfare. In this section, our analysis will be framed from the perspective of hegemonic absence, aiming to examine its interrelation with diverse forms of warfare and the potential impact of this absence on these conflict dynamics. Our hypothesis is that the hegemonic absence results in conflicts that are more localized, protracted, and have a limited impact on a global scale.

Limited Scale of War

As observed in the cases above, wars tend to be of a smaller scale in the absence of hegemonic powers. Here, the term "scale" encompasses not only the military involvement and casualties on both sides but also the geographical and spatial extent of the conflict. In the first war, the total forces deployed by both sides were less than a hundred thousand, including a significant number of militia and local armed groups, which is starkly different from the nearly one million troops involved in the third war. Additionally, the first conflict was characterized by outdated weaponry and rudimentary tactics, largely devoid of direct engagements between regular armies, making it difficult to classify as a modernized war. Geographically and spatially, the first war was confined to the narrow region of Kashmir,

whereas by the third war, it had expanded into a full-scale conflict covering most of the border between the two countries, with two major fronts in the east and west. So, how does the absence of hegemony lead to this phenomenon?

A crucial factor is the inability of the warring nations to obtain substantial support from a hegemonic power. This includes forms of assistance such as military aid, arms trade, economic aid, or loans. War, often described as a relentless drain on resources, can significantly weaken even the most robust empires, as evidenced by the decline of the British Empire following sustained military engagements. For India and Pakistan, as newly independent states emerging from colonial rule, the economic and financial challenges were particularly acute (Ruiz Estrada et al. 2019, 4). They found it extremely difficult to sustain the expenses of large-scale warfare. Additionally, the political and military structures they inherited from their colonial past were in considerable disarray, posing significant obstacles to rapidly developing effective defense capabilities. In this situation, any potential escalation of the war's scale was constrained by the fragile economies of both India and Pakistan, which could not withstand the financial drain of large-scale conflict. Hegemonic powers, either due to their own preoccupations or reluctance, were largely unable or unwilling to offer substantial support to either India or Pakistan. This absence of external assistance significantly limited the scale of the war, as both countries lacked the resources to sustain a more extensive conflict. In contrast, around the time of the second and third wars, both countries not only received substantial financial support from hegemonic powers and their maintained economic systems but also modernized their military forces through weapons imports and military assistance. This led to a significant escalation in the scale of both conflicts.

Long Duration and Intractability

A second notable characteristic of the wars is their varying degrees of duration and intractability. Contrary to the escalating scale of these conflicts, their durations exhibited a decreasing trend. While the first war extended beyond a year, the third war was remarkably brief, concluding in just two weeks, demonstrating a trend inversely related to the scale of the wars. This phenomenon presents an intriguing contrast: the first war of a smaller scale endured the longest. A key factor contributing to this extended duration is the intractability and complexity involved in ceasing hostilities. Wars that are not easily resolved tend to prolong, and the first war exemplifies this, especially in the absence of direct hegemonic intervention. This absence resulted in greater uncertainty, leading to sustained instability and turmoil in the region. In contrast, the third war, characterized by a decisive outcome with the independence of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), significantly reshaped the political landscape of South Asia. Despite the persistence of regional conflicts, the geopolitical situation posts this conflict has remained relatively stable.

The absence of hegemony has, to a certain extent, shaped this situation, primarily reflected in the lack of mediation. Firstly, the minimal involvement of a hegemonic power in the matters of war allowed the warring parties to dictate the start and conclusion of the war. In the absence of external interference, both India and Pakistan sought to resolve their disputes in their own ways, rather than immediately seeking international intervention. Consequently, even though the UN initiated an investigation and proposed a ceasefire early in the outbreak of the war, the conflict continued for nearly a year. It was only when Pakistan realized that it could not make any progress that the ceasefire came into effect. In the subsequent two wars, direct intervention by hegemonic powers played a significant role, with both countries facing considerable pressure regarding ceasefire decisions. Even though India achieved a decisive military advantage, it still opted to accept the ceasefire agreement due to political and even military threats from powers like the US and China.

The limited mediation is also witnessed in the lack of enforcement mechanisms and the failure to address fundamental issues, leading to greater uncertainty and intractability in the outcomes of the war. Even though the UN called for a ceasefire between the parties and proposed a plebiscite to decide the fate of Kashmir, the absence of major powers in its execution process led to India and Pakistan not adhering to the agreement due to a lack of binding force. As a result, Kashmir became a contentious issue that sparked larger-scale wars and conflicts. This demonstrates that limited mediation is a significant factor contributing to the long duration and intractability of the war.

Limited Political Influence

Another key distinction among the three wars lies in their political impact, especially regarding their influence on the international stage. The 1947 war did not attract significant global attention, and its impact on both the world and the regional political landscape was quite limited. On one hand, the conflict was confined to the Kashmir region and did not intersect with the interests of other countries. On the other hand, the outcome of the war did little to change the regional status quo. In contrast, the results of the third war profoundly affected the geopolitics of South Asia and the broader Cold War context. The independence of East Pakistan led to the creation of Bangladesh, a nation with a population of over a hundred million; Pakistan's defeat exacerbated its domestic political instability and strategic disadvantage against India; and the support of the US and the USSR for different sides in the war influenced the course of the Cold War to some extent.

Firstly, regional conflicts in which hegemonic powers are not involved are less likely to directly affect the balance of global power structures. Therefore, such conflicts typically pose a smaller threat to global political stability. However, when hegemonic powers are directly involved, even if the conflict remains confined to a small area, there is still a significant likelihood that it will impact the balance of global power structures. Secondly, when hegemonic powers are absent, the parties involved in the conflict have greater autonomy in addressing their own disputes. This can lead to solutions that are more in line with the actual regional circumstances rather than the interests of global hegemonies, thereby reducing the impact of the conflict on global politics. In the first Indo-Pak War, due to the absence of hegemonic powers, the parties involved considered only their own interests. However, by the third war, when the interests of the hegemonic powers conflicted with those of the warring nations, the former took precedence. This shifted the nature of the conflict from being an isolated event between two countries to one that was embedded within the global political context, subsequently influencing the course of the war.

Conclusion and Reflection

War stands as a critical component of human political activity, offering indispensable insights into international relations, with hegemonic nations playing a major role. The three wars between India and Pakistan that occurred during the Cold War, due to their variability and geopolitical uniqueness, provide an excellent case study for research in this area. This paper attempts to explore the role of hegemonic powers from an innovative perspective by examining how the nature of war differs in their absence, through a thorough analysis of the processes and evolution of these conflicts.

The study highlights three characteristics of wars in the absence of hegemonic powers. Firstly, there is a smaller scale of conflict, as the warring parties struggle to obtain the necessary military and economic support from major powers to escalate the war. Secondly, the wars exhibit long duration and intractability, resulting from the absence of hegemonic powers that otherwise might provide timely mediation and lack strong mechanisms to ensure the implementation of such mediation. Finally, there is limited political impact, stemming

from the increased national autonomy due to the absence of hegemonic powers, leading to war outcomes that align more with national interests rather than the interests of hegemonies.

In the current complex international political landscape, the power of hegemonic states, particularly the USA, is dispersed across multiple regions. Whether supporting invaded Ukraine or the turmoil in Israel, the USA is required to project substantial resources and attention into these areas. This scenario can lead to a situation where, should conflicts or wars arise in other regions, hegemonic powers might be stretched too thin, resulting in their absence. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the potential forms of war under these conditions and comprehend the underlying political logic in order to better promote peace worldwide.

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