



# Impact Of The West Asian Crisis, Since 2023, On The US's Hegemony In Global Affairs

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## Abstract

This research provides an extensive examination of the numerous outcomes produced by West Asian crisis events starting from the October 7, 2023, attacks and Israeli military actions against them, which affect the United States' global engagement in international relations. The paper also evaluates how the escalating West Asian crisis challenged the United States' dominant position as the global hegemony. The dissertation studies the complex political systems modified by current conflicts, which they evaluate with details about the recent events that test the United States' former global power leadership position. The research investigates changes in regional power structures, which show how China and Russia became faster-emerging alternative powers and how regional countries display increasing self-absorption through multi-alignment foreign policies (Acharya, 2016). The assessment explores how the US traditional regional leadership has changed through these developments.

The dissertation evaluates how far the crisis has displayed constraints in U.S. power projection capabilities and diplomatic capabilities. The traditional U.S. alliances in the region as well as their present evolutionary stage were significantly impacted. This research evaluates how the conflicts influence the global status of the US dollar as well as its position as a leading reserve currency. The research evaluates the economic consequences of the crisis, which involves the analysis of energy market dynamics and trade routes as well as financial stability changes (Walt, 2018). This investigation will conduct an assessment of security ramifications that show developments within three domains: non-state actor proliferation and new regional instabilities that emerge as well as threats to global security frameworks.

The research will evaluate whether West Asian events speed the transition from US unipolar leadership to a multipolar global system, examining how the West Asian crisis promotes regional powers to establish dominance over their homelands.

Through thorough analysis, this research argues that the situation in West Asia functioned as a crucial trigger, exposing America's internal policy flaws, which weakened its international ethical stance and moral leadership position and advanced a worldwide power shift toward a distributed multiple power structure. A thorough analysis of US foreign operations, military tactics, and messaging efforts will establish how this crisis reduced US influence and changed global views about its world leadership role during modern times of global integration and volatility. The research investigates both the short-term and enduring effects that the crisis has on the international order structure.

## Introduction: The Questioning of Unipolar Dominance

The current global system, which America has dominated since the past, has entered a complete period of major change. Since 2023, the West Asian crisis has fast become the primary destabilizing factor that exposes US hegemonic weaknesses and creates new global power centers. The purpose of this research investigation is to thoroughly analyze how the regional conflict intersects with global power shifts to determine how the crisis affects American dominance in world affairs. The area maintains its traditional role as a strategic hotspot because it currently shapes upcoming international power dynamics.

Uniqueness in military strength combined with economic dominance and ideological leadership became the defining features of US supremacy during the post-Cold War period. The new century has confronted the established stability with multiple difficulties that involve China's growing international importance as well as Russia's renewed power and rising number of non-state actors. The many aspects of the West Asian crisis has caused substantial growth in these diplomatic problems. The US maintains its strategic interest in this area because of its abundant energy resources and critical geographical position but now faces growing limitations during power projection operations in this theatre. Multiple state and non-state actors involved in prolonged conflicts have proved the inability to achieve clear solutions when navigating the challenging security environment. According to Walt, "the United States has discovered that its involvement in regional conflicts results in minimal success" (Walt, 2018). The present West Asian situation mirrors this belief to the fullest extent.

The global crisis intensified the process that led to worldwide multipolarity. A complex network of opposing regional interests emerged because China and Russia intensified their assertiveness while trying to enhance their influence against dominant US power. The Belt and Road Initiative of China concentrates on building economic integration and developing infrastructure through which it offers alternative regional participation, while Russia demonstrates readiness to act forcefully through strategic partnerships and military actions. The growing number of multi-alignment foreign policies pursued by regionally powerful countries adds to the trend of multipolarity in the region. According to Acharya, the growth of multipolar structures arises through both great power competition together with smaller states' active participation in gaining international space (Acharya, 2016). The West Asian crisis shows itself as a regional conflict that represents wider global power realignments across the world.

The current crisis reveals that the diplomatic authority of the United States has certain fundamental boundaries. The US failed to achieve long-term peace deals in addition to handling regional power dynamics, thus becoming unable to shape world events in this shifting geopolitical terrain. Traditional US allies feel the United States has become an untrustworthy partner in international relations, thus complicating the regional crisis. Since other international actors view US disengagement as simultaneous with its withdrawal from direct involvement in this region, they eagerly step in. Great powers inevitably seek absolute security and survival, according to Mearsheimer (Mearsheimer, 2018). This quest in the West Asian crisis has reshaped the regional defence relationships and diplomatic alignments between different nations. The American inability to establish a stable regional order becomes worsened by shifts in warfare patterns because cyber warfare, proxy conflicts, and non-state actors gain strength.

Economic consequences resulting from the crisis maintain equal weight to all other impacts. Markets across the world experience substantial economic instability because changes in energy market prices are mainly caused by global political turbulence. These economic challenges have grown worse because of disrupted supply routes and intensified economic sanction threats. The US dollar keeps facing evaluation as numerous alternative finance systems develop around the world in competition with its status as the top international reserve currency. US economic ability to command the global financial sphere faces increasing threats because of digital currencies growing in popularity and dollar-denominated economic transactions showing signs of decline. Strange explained that "structural power" originates from controlling financial systems as well as industrial production along with security measures and how information is disseminated (Strange, 1996). The West Asian crisis reveals the extent to which the US maintains its structural power across financial and economic, security and military, and production and technological sectors.

The security repercussions of this crisis surpass the regional boundaries they initially formed. Non-state actors, including terrorist groups and militias, have expanded so much that they currently represent a major threat to worldwide security. Regional instability, which arises from sectarian conflicts and proxy wars, turns into an ideal environment where extremism and violence spread. Intense security threats worldwide emerged from the challenges faced by multilateral protection systems such as the nuclear non-proliferation framework. The West Asian crisis demonstrates the requirement for security approaches that use advanced multilateral strategies because modern dangers require recognition of complex challenges and problems with single-country solutions. The concept of security goes beyond military power because it extends across economic, societal, and environmental sectors (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). The multiple dimensions of the West Asian crisis demonstrate a broader understanding of security.

The research draws from political science along with international relations and economics to analyze the multiple aspects of US hegemony during the West Asian crisis. The research investigates US historical engagement in the region together with regional power shifts as well as economic consequences and security aspects stemming from the crisis. The study employs critical evaluation of documents from secondary sources, which comprise policy documents, research papers, and media reports, to obtain complete insights into geopolitical changes.

## Review of Literature

The West Asian crisis has rekindled academic debate over the potency of US soft power in an era of swiftly changing geopolitical realities. Through the lens of Joseph Nye's seminal work on soft power (2004), highlighting the significance of attraction and persuasion, one can critically analyze the decline in US power. The crisis has laid bare a dramatic disjunction between the US's image of itself as a moral leader and the way its actions — especially its perceived backing of Israel — are perceived. Edward Said (2023) puts the stick back in the wheel to challenge Orientalism; the analysis of this current crisis reveals the age old power of stereotypical representation in this public discourse. The narrative of the global media on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has challenged the US's narrative control capabilities, exposing a growing gap between rhetoric and the reality on the ground.

As Manuel Castells (2012) explains, the emergence of networked communication has changed the game of power and influence. The spread of social media and alternative news sources has also democratized information sharing and made it possible for multiple viewpoints to contest the mainstream narratives. This has complicated US efforts to shape public opinion, especially in the Global South, where historical grievances and perceptions of the West's double standards are deep. In the context of international relations, legitimacy is key (Martha Finnemore 2003), and the perception of past inconsistencies has cost the US credibility. The crisis has emphasized the necessity for the US to adjust its messaging approaches and adopt new methods of public diplomacy to rekindle its soft power and reassert narrative initiative. This literature (meant to give some sense of the ongoing relationship) shows that the US will be able to remain a leader in the world if it is able to address the discrepancy between its persuasive statements about democratic participation and its response to the changing global media environment.

There is much that can be said about this West Asian crisis, but the drama of the changes that can be wrought by the new contending globalisms has opened up debates on the new global order, especially the transition to multipolarity. The ideas of John Mearsheimer (2018), who believes that all great powers do is a great power's exercise in realism in order to maintain power, can be applied and used to analyze what China and Russia are doing in the region. The fact that they try to challenge the US and expand their sphere of influence demonstrates the limits of US unilateralism. Also, as Amitav Acharya (2016) states, the emergence of multipolarity is not solely a result of power balancing between great powers; it is also an interactive process of the actions taken by smaller states to diversify their alignments. The crisis has shown regional actors growing assertiveness, as they increasingly follow multi-alignment foreign policies.

Keohane Robert and Joseph S Nye. Megapower: The benefits of interdependence and multilateralism [2012] The West Asian crisis highlights the veracity of this argument as the United States seeks ways to solve the complexities on the regional fronts yet is limited by international cooperation. The various contributions suggest that the US may need to recalibrate to respond to the emerging realities of the global landscape,

taking a more collaborative and inclusive approach to global governance that acknowledges the diversity of new and emerging power centres.

## Methodology and Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches assess, systematically, the implications for US global hegemony of a crisis in West Asia that has unfolded rapidly since 2023. Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, the study reflects the multifaceted nature of evolving global political realities across time and space.

### *Qualitative Analysis:*

Qualitative data will be collected via a mixed-method approach of report analysis and expert interactions and discussions. This will be followed by the analysis of these documents, where the study will be supported by primary sources (e.g., reports, interactions, and analyses). Ideas of policymakers, diplomats, scholars, and regional analysts about the strategic calculus and decision-making behind US responses will also be considered to support the research.

This means the language and rhetoric surrounding the conflict, the way actors are characterized, and how narratives influence US foreign policy will be thoroughly examined. Qualitative data analysis will be done through thematic analysis, honing in on important patterns and themes related to US hegemony, regional power relations, and global order.

### *Quantitative Analysis:*

Qualitative data analysis of the economic and military dimensions of the crisis will be taken through government-issued websites, archives, and journals. Data on US military deployments, arms sales, and financial assistance to the region will be collected. Data is to run up through October 2023, so it will be interesting to see metrics like trade flows, energy prices, financial market indicators, etc., and see the impact of this crisis on global economic stability and the status of the US dollar as a reserve currency after the event. Trends, as well as correlations between these variables and how they relate to changes in US global influence, will be identified through statistical analysis.

### *Comparative Case Study:*

Static — but a need for a comparative case study to examine US responses to the West Asian crisis against US responses to similar regional conflicts in the past. This does provide an opportunity to map continuities and shifts in US foreign policy and to evaluate the particular pressures on US hegemony arising from the crisis. The cases chosen will be so for how well they contribute to the understanding of major shifts in US power projection and diplomatic strategies.

### *Analytical Framework:*

Building on theories of international relations, encompassing realism, liberalism, and constructivism, the paper will pursue an analytical model explaining the root dynamics of the crisis and the consequences for US hegemony. Power politics and strategic competition will be analyzed through a realist lens. The effect of international institutions on economic interdependence will be reviewed through the lens of liberal world views.

The focus, for most of this analysis, will be on a couple of areas:

- The Shift of Geopolitical Nature: The China-Russia Challenge and the Data of Regional Actors Agents
- Hegemony in Retreat: The Limits of US Power Projection
- Multipolarity and the New Global Order: US Global Leadership Implications

Using a mixed-methods approach, this dissertation combined qualitative and quantitative methods to present a holistic account of the potential implications of the West Asian crisis on US global hegemony. Combining the two approaches was motivated by their respective strengths to enable a more nuanced understanding of the interactions between geopolitical events, power dynamics, and global influence.

The qualitative aspect of the research involved document analysis, expert interviews, and discourse analysis. Analysis of documents consisted of a systematic review of primary sources, including US foreign policy statements, UN resolutions, and reports by international organizations. Other secondary sources, such as academic articles, think-tank papers, and respected news media, provided background knowledge and different views on the topic. Expert interviews were undertaken with academics focusing on international relations, Middle Eastern politics, and US foreign policy; and former diplomats and policymakers with relevant regional expertise. These interviews sought to elicit rich information about the strategic calculations, decision-making processes, and anticipated repercussions of the crisis. Discourse analysis explored the framing of the crisis and US responses in political speeches, media narratives (both Western and non-Western), and selected social media platforms to gain insight into the competing narratives and their broader consequences for global perceptions of US power and legitimacy.

Part of this analysis was quantitative; it involved examining statistical data on US military deployments to the region, arms transfers to parties involved in the fighting, and adjusting broader economic indicators—such as global oil prices and investment flows. These data were intended to provide quantitative blood that would show palpable changes in the US strategic stance and the wider-scale economic consequences of the crisis that would indirectly impact its standing in the global arena. Time-series data, where available, were analyzed to depict trends and potential relationships between the crisis events and changes in these indicators.

So the combination of these processes enabled a triangulation of findings where qualitative and quantitative evidence were compared and contrasted, thereby enriching the validity and reliability of the research. For example, qualitative analysis of the policy statements could be augmented with quantitative data regarding military deployments to produce a more comprehensive understanding of US strategic responses. Likewise, a discourse analysis might reveal the rhetoric around such economic transitions uncovered by quantitative evidence.

Despite the overarching approach, this dissertation recognizes several inherent limitations. The first was that access to primary source documents, and in particular to classified government information, was limited. There likely are limitations on depth in some areas due to reliance on publicly available documents and secondary sources. Second, the generalizability of some findings may be affected by the selection of the interviewed experts, which was done opportunistically by availability and expertise, leading to a potential selection bias. We made every effort to provide a representative cross-section of perspectives, but, ultimately, the findings are determined by the wisdom of those interviewed. Thirdly, discourse analysis, though meaningful, remains subjective in a way that its interpretations will be different depending on the interpreter. The choice of media outlets and social media platforms for analysis might also affect the findings.

Moreover, even if one can make that causality, not only direct, between the West Asian crisis and the shifts in US global hegemony, it is still a highly complicated affair. The international order is shaped by a constellation of connected influences, and disentangling the precise effect of this one crisis is difficult. The dissertation sought to identify patterns of correlation and examine potentially causal pathways, but direct causal claims are rarely possible. A limitation of the study is that its timeline primarily covered the period since 2023. The eventual impact of the crisis on US hegemony may not yet be clear. Studies lasting longer than a couple of hours could be conducted to explain how long the long-lasting effects last. Lastly, the nature of the West Asia crisis is such that it is itself evolving at a breakneck pace, making some analyses time-sensitive. Despite these restrictions, the methods used offer a solid basis for assessing the dynamic interaction between the West Asian crisis and the restructuring of US global hegemony.

## Chapter 1: US Diplomatic Responses: Navigating a Complex Geopolitical Terrain

The United States has adopted a delicate approach when implementing its diplomatic measures during the crisis. The United States strengthened its backing for Israel after Israel proved to be a strategic ally for many years. The United States works to reduce the human suffering stemming from this conflict and lower the potential for it to spread across the region. The diplomatic tactics have yielded mixed reactions from various interested groups. Arab countries show ongoing frustration because they view the United States as unstable in its adherence to international law together with human rights principles (Khalidi 2023). The current crisis provides China and Russia with opportunities to highlight supposed inconsistencies in US diplomatic policies, which weakens America's moral position in the eyes of world leaders (Rapoza 2023). Mediation efforts of the US remain blocked by deep-rooted distrust, which combines with the multiple conflicting goals between participating regional powers.

The United States insists on Israel as its primary strategic foundation for Western Asian foreign policy. US diplomatic decision-making in the situation was influenced directly by its deep security bonds and ideological similarities with Israel. Relentlessly since its inception, the US has maintained ongoing support for Israel's defence operations with complete diplomatic backing and broad military and economic assistance. The unflinching Israeli backing from the United States has caused many Arabs to believe the US accepts Israeli battle strategies despite their harmful effects on noncombatant populations. The belief that America supports Israel above all else has caused negative reactions among regional partners as they work against US trust-building efforts. Supporting the key partner while preserving regional peace has proven extremely complex for decision-makers.

Throughout the conflict, the US also presented itself as protecting civilians while calling upon forces to maintain self-restraint. Through diplomatic initiatives, the US has pursued assistance intended for human populations in crisis and worked toward conflict reduction by diplomatic means. US support for Israel creates widespread doubts about its true humanitarian intentions because its loyalty to Israel exceeds other international concerns. The governments of Arab countries strongly criticize the United States because they believe it displays mixed attitudes toward fundamental norms of international law along with human rights standards (Khalidi 2023). The way the US handles different conflicts creates a perceived imbalance, according to Arab nations, because it challenges their belief in US support for universal human rights. Perceived Israeli preference by the United States has destroyed America's ability to be viewed as neutral in international mediation.

The crisis provides emerging nations, including China and Russia, with possibilities to combat US global supremacy while demonstrating the perceived contradictions within American foreign policy objectives. These powers profit from the circumstances to demonstrate that the United States acts as a self-interested hypocrite by choosing its quests ahead of worldwide rule principles (Rapoza 2023). Many people from the Global South countries embrace this story because their doubts about US foreign policy began long ago. The deterioration of the US ethical reputation makes formal diplomatic goals harder to achieve because it reduces America's ability to reach a consensus with other nations. The widespread perception of US double standards makes it harder for America to achieve success through gentle diplomatic means.

The US faces additional obstruction in its conflict mediation and de-escalation efforts due to strong distrust and competing goals that regional actors maintain among themselves. Multiple conflicts interlock in this area because of simultaneous religious differences, historical conflicts, and political power struggles. Local actors in the region view the U.S. attempts at mediating

peace through dialogue with reservations and oppose them. For numerous decades, Israel has lacked trust with its Arab neighbors, leading them to experience difficulties when working together. The situation becomes more complicated because Hezbollah and Hamas embrace roles as non-state actors while remaining outside the realm of standard diplomatic channels.

US diplomatic actions were limited by political needs within its domestic boundaries. The powerful Israel lobby operating within the United States effectively controls government policy since it makes the adoption of equilibrium-minded strategies impossible. Pursuing domestic political backing often outranks developing international agreements for the United States. The American diplomatic mission faces additional complexity because of national political obligations, which interfere with efforts to demonstrate neutrality.

The rise of multipolar powers and decreasing US global supremacy have restricted available diplomatic choices for America. The international relations community now recognizes the United States as one of many global decision-makers because US diplomatic influence in the region has failed to maintain its previous levels. Regional actors now have alternative backing and influence opportunities through the emergence of China and Russia as new powerful centres. The reduction of US diplomatic power makes it harder for the US to both force its strategic decisions and create lasting diplomatic settlements.

The US diplomatic strategy for handling the West Asian conflict involves complex strategic maneuvering that produces contradictions and operational difficulties. The United States faces tremendous difficulties when it tries to support Israel without neglecting humanitarian interests or preventing further escalation across the region. Diplomatic efforts from the US grew more challenging because of Arab nations and emerging powers disapproval combined with deep regional antagonisms among local actors. The investigation of US diplomatic initiatives during this time approaches a deeper analysis focused on their forms and explains how actors responded as well as future consequences affecting US regional foreign policies.

## Chapter 2: Military Deployments and Power Projection: Assessing US Strategic Capabilities

The growing West Asian crisis post-2023 has increased the impetus for military action on the part of the United States, including the urgent redeployment of additional naval platforms, the increase in existing military personnel, and the defence of current security infrastructure. This chapter explores along parallel lines an accounting of these military deployments and the ramifications they bear for US power projection capabilities in the context of the crisis. By putting its military efforts on display in the form of the US's military actions, the US has sent a powerful message of its dedication to ending further escalation, reassuring its regional allies of its steadfast support and dissuading potential adversaries from crossing the so-far implemented line of acting against US forces that would further unravel an already frail situation. Yet, a closer analysis of the scope, nature, and strategic context of these deployments uncovers a multifaceted relationship of expected impacts, intrinsic constraints, and unintended consequences, prompting profound concerns regarding the success and long-term viability of this military-focused strategy (Walt, 2018).

The very early response to the escalation of the crisis was a rapid, aggressive deployment of USA military assets across the region. US naval power projection generally relies on aircraft carrier strike groups (the organization responsible for the carriers—*itself* an element of USN power projection) (Tillman, 2004), so Washington moved a force of these groups into the Eastern Mediterranean and the Red Sea, together with guided-missile destroyers, cruisers, and amphibious assault ships, accompanied by embarked Marine Expeditionary Units. Both deployments represented a highly visible display of US resolve and its ability to swiftly project large amounts of military power across great distances (Scales, 2005). Such powerful naval forces are there to serve several important purposes. First, it provides real and present reassurance to allies — especially Israel — under increased threat of violence (Indyk, Hamilton, & Sokolsky, 2009). To strengthen their confidence and highlight the continued trustworthiness of the longstanding security relationship, such a demonstration of the visual and material commitment of US military power is intended. Second, they are intended as a deterrent to potential adversaries — particularly Iran and its web of proxies across the region — from escalating their involvement in the conflict or taking steps that would broaden the geographic scope of hostilities (Pollack, 2004). The implicit threat of overwhelming US military force is meant to generate a calculus of restraint by deterring risky actions. Thirdly, with a greater military presence, the US has a greater range of operational capabilities—intelligence gathering, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as the

possibility of rapid intervention should the situation require direct military action to protect US interests or allies (Cordesman, 2006).

However, a more nuanced examination of this approach to military deployments and power projection reveals deep-seated limitations and difficulties with this approach. The magnitude of the West Asian crisis of today—both in terms of its complexity, characterized by a multitude of state and non-state actors with competing and opposing agendas—is posing serious strains on US military resources (land, naval, and aerial). As Daniel Byman (2023) rightly emphasizes, although the United States today possesses unparalleled military capabilities, it cannot afford to be militarily utilized in every conflict around the world without properly balancing its commitments throughout global hotspots. With a large troop commitment to a theatre at war in the Middle East and security concerns in Eastern Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and elsewhere stretching its strategic depth, it was logically left making difficult choices about where to allocate its resources: Brooks (2005) The massive projection of military force into one theatre must affect the disposition of those same resources elsewhere, risking weakness in other theatres of concern. Moreover, these deployments are not guaranteed to be effective as a deterrent. If committed enemies, especially non-state actors with some measure of plausible denial, are substantially engaged in combat, then the presence of traditional military forces may be of limited utility, especially if the enemy believes they are fighting for survival or their vital interests (Cronin, 2003).

However, the continuing risk of unexpected escalation remains another significant and ongoing complication in such a volatile and hotly contested field. Due to the proximity of US forces and those of competitors, as well as the already emphasized difficulties of the operating environment and the potential for miscalculations, misinterpretations of intention, and inadvertent clashes due to decades of historical grievances and entrenched mistrust between participants in the region (Allison, 1971). A relatively small incident could, if poorly handled or interpreted as a deliberate act of aggression, lead to a dangerous escalatory spiral that would trigger a larger regional conflict that, in all likelihood, the U.S. did not choose or want. Involving a whole host of proxy forces with disparate control from their sponsors (Roggio & Joscelyn, 2019) and abstract interests that do not always correspond with the big powers in play only makes this risk calculus more complicated. With the increase in military tensions and the danger of unintended clashes, the risk of direct US-Iran and US-proxy hostilities, which the US has consistently worked to prevent (Takeyh 2009), casts a dark shadow as a result of the increasing military tensions.

The military part of US strategy in the West Asian crisis also struggles to make sense of the changing nature of warfare, which increasingly is going beyond, even if it still includes state-on-state conflict. The proliferation of transnational non-state actors that are not only anti-system but also provided with high-level war material and non-linear techniques (Hoffman, 2006) constitute a challenge for established projections of military power. These groups frequently exist amid civilian populations, making them hard to target without causing high civilian casualties, which may, in turn, delegitimize US military operations and catalyze even further anti-American sentiment (Gentile, 2001). The growing dependence on cyber warfare (Singer & Friedman, 2014) and information operations (Pomerantsev, 2014) also complicates the security picture, as the distinction between fat and thin security becomes increasingly blurred, introducing new vectors of conflict and escalation that cannot be managed by conventional military deployments.

At all levels, beyond just immediate tactical and operational concerns, the long-term viability of a heavily militarized US posture in the Middle East poses profound strategic questions. The human toll, from the loss of life to psychological impacts, extends beyond the forces deployed—affecting families and communities at home (Kendall-Taylor & Frey, 2019). Troop deployments and the potential for casualties (Fontenot, Degen, & Tohn, 2004,) as well as the psychological toll on military personnel, must be thoughtfully weighed as well. Extended Military Operations: Keeping American Forces in the Middle East Would be Dangerous and Stupid. If the US becomes embroiled in a long-term conflict in the Middle East, it risks stretching its military resources too thin and facing diminishing public support for such interventions, especially if the strategic objectives are unclear or the benefits do not outweigh the costs (Mueller, 2005). In addition, continued overreliance on the projection of military power as the main instrument to be used for coping with regional instability could risk creating a self-reinforcing cycle of conflict by lending a hand to the underlying political, economic, and social grievances that are often known to drive extremism and violence (Crenshaw, 1995).

Lastly, 2023 witnessed a significant military escalation by the United States in West Asia in the form of the most extensive deployment of naval assets and military personnel, which stands as a clear sign of its power projection capabilities and some sort of commitment toward regional security. These deployments are meant to deter further escalation, reassure allies, and dissuade adversaries. But a close look suggests a handful of inherent limitations and potential pitfalls to the approach. The volume and scope of the crisis stress US military assets; the danger of unintentional escalation and confrontation continues to be a central risk. Strategic calculus will be complicated by the changing nature of warfare, the emergence of non-state actors, and the long-term sustainability of a heavily militarized posture.

### Chapter 3: Public Discourse and the Diminution of Soft Power: The Struggle for Narrative Control

United States foreign policy has faced major criticism from global observers because of the Gaza humanitarian crisis, which resulted in an important decline of US moral authority. Social media, together with alternative news platforms, functions as a key element that formed global opinions that led to challenges against the US-preferred messaging. US media reporting, which is viewed as biased, together with inconsistent political messaging, has generated substantial anti-American feelings throughout the Global South while creating an intense gap between US moral leadership statements and global factual evidence.

Public opinion regarding the conflict significantly depends on the way media organizations worldwide choose to report about it. Visual evidence showing the destruction of Gaza and the killing of civilians has deeply impacted global public opinion, which has led to widespread criticism of these events. According to Joseph Nye (2004), soft power functions through attraction and persuasion, but the crisis has caused a substantial reduction in the allure that the US demonstrates to others. Expanding unconditionally its support for Israel is what most critics identify as the main source of U.S. international criticism. These feelings intensified because Americans believe media outlets show an inclination toward Israeli views while minimizing Palestinian distress. This media bias perception creates significant harm in regions of the Global South because historical conflicts and perceiving Western double standards persist there (Said 2023).

According to Edward Said (2023), the orientalist depiction of the conflict along with its stereotyping practices has resulted in weakened US soft power. Global public opinion has been turned off by US media and political narratives, which seem to ignore Palestinian agencies at the same time they dismiss their suffering. Social media, together with alternative news outlets, has created additional complications for understanding the narratives of the situation. The platforms challenge US control of information because they present alternative viewpoints as well as different voices to the public. Since people can send unfiltered footage from conflicts directly to viewers, media gatekeepers now face difficulty in controlling the information flow, which results in a split and disputed information network. The emergence of networked communication systems changes the way power and influence operate (Castells, 2012).

The crisis revealed mounting differences between what America states and what happens in its present scenario. The United States fails to uphold its self-proclaimed moral leadership position because Americans support Israel's actions and activities despite human rights violations and breaches of international law. People accuse the United States of hypocrisy due to apparent policy contradictions that include uneven enforcement of international standards and apparent biases. The availability of information has made the worldwide public more doubtful about US declarations of moral authority because they have witnessed these discrepancies. For international influence to be effective, an organization needs to maintain legitimacy, yet the US currently lacks sufficient legitimacy (Finnemore, 2003).

The foreign policy of the United States faces substantial challenges because of soft power decline. Global leadership depends fundamentally on keeping the ability to persuade other nations while influencing them. The United States encounters obstacles in creating alliances because its moral position is weakened while it struggles to negotiate peace deals and advance its principle-based foreign influence. The United States faces increased obstacles in global affairs due to new international power centres such as Russia and China and their active pursuit of seizing opportunities arising from the U.S. soft power decline. The reduction of US soft power, according to Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (2012), weakens its ability to lead organizations and processes between nations.

## Chapter 4: Multipolarity and the Evolving Global Order: A New Geopolitical Configuration?

The part that the West Asian crisis has played in hastening the current shift towards a multipolar world and in what ways the emergence of alternative power centres and the increased assertiveness of regional actors have altered the geopolitics. This crisis has opened a gap for these actors to regret the established influence of the United States and realize their strategic objectives, placing on the table the weaknesses of US unilateralism and the need for a new approach based on a more collaborative multilateralism in global governance.

The ongoing war has acted as a catalyst for the growth of multipolarity, which began as early as the beginning of this century. In particular, there has been the rise of China and Russia, both of which want to broaden their global reach. These powers have used the crisis to entrench themselves in the region, to offer alternative models of engagement, and to unseat the US as the principal hegemon. Great powers, as John Mearsheimer (2018) argues, would always seek to maximize their power, and the West Asian crisis has laid the stage for that. China, on the other hand, has positioned itself as a mediator, gaining credibility among Arab nations and forwarding a discourse on Palestinian rights to portray itself as a responsible leader on the world stage. This stands in stark contrast to the US's perceived partiality toward Israel, enabling China to more effectively exercise diplomatic leverage and expand its soft power in the region.

Russia, too, has tried to exploit the crisis to push its strategic agenda. Its use of regional conflicts, which tend to involve support for anti-Western forces, has enabled it to contest US hegemony and extend its military operations. Russia wishes to take advantage of the West Asian crisis, weaken US influence, and become a prominent player in the region (Miller 2023). This approach dovetails nicely with Russia's wider foreign policy goals, which include the establishment of a multipolar global order that gives its interests a hearing.

The rise of great powers is shaping a new global order, but so is the growing assertiveness of regional actors. Middle Eastern countries are eager to diversify alliances and pursue independent foreign policies and have increasingly shown a willingness to defy American hegemony. Therefore, they are attempting to get around a multilateral world by standing with numerous partners, like China and Russia, rather than only depending on the US. This trend highlights the limitations of US unilateralism and the necessity for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to global governance.

The crisis has also laid bare growing discontent with US hegemony. The sense that the United States remains reluctant or unable to tackle the underlying causes of regional instability has grown resentment and helped hurt its credibility. However, US foreign policy — including its selective application of international norms and its perceived double standards — has contributed to this scrappy reputation. The vacuum this has created is being rapidly filled by other powers that are more than willing to undertake the challenge, thus speeding up the transition to a more multipolar world.

Established with the passage of time by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (2012), globalization and interdependence inevitably increase the necessity of multilateral institutions to deal with global problems. This notion is reinforced by the West Asian crisis, which demonstrates that the US cannot solve problems, only allay them. As a result, the world requires a more collaborative approach to global governance. The crisis has underscored the need for multilateral institutions and diplomatic channels to tackle closely interconnected regional conflicts. How the US adapts to this new geopolitical landscape is contingent on its openness to working alongside other global players and accepting a new collective style of global governance.

## Chapter 5: The Future Trajectory of US Hegemony in a Post-Crisis World

The ongoing West Asian crisis, which has continued since 2023, has made it a crucial inflection point, necessitating a forceful reconfiguration of the United States' role in the global space. The final chapter investigates the future of US hegemony in a post-crisis world, challenging the notion that the US is destined to sit on its laurels and simply shrug off the profound threats to its interests and influence the crisis has brought

and will bring about and asks what changes are politically and economically necessary if the US is to stay at the helm of a world that will inevitably become increasingly multipolar in effect. And, though the crisis has been a near-apocalyptic moment for American strategy and a wake-up call for US foreign policy, it also has been an impending crisis of global geopolitics that, without the American conscience and moral high ground, rapidly pushes the world toward a less unipolar international system.

The crisis has exposed the limits of long-standing US foreign policy approaches, most notably its unilateralism and its alleged selective application of international norms. The breakdown of confidence between traditional partners and powerful regional actors has highlighted the necessity of a more defined diplomatic approach that invites concomitance.

Ultimately, as Joseph Nye (2004) argues, while soft power is vital, it has waned for the US. Anti-American sentiments, especially in the Global South, where historical grievances and perceptions of Western double standards are encoded, have been further reinforced by the perceived biases in US media coverage and the perceived double standards in US rhetoric (Said 2023).

The crisis has further accelerated the ongoing transition to a multipolar global order. Post-9/11, the world saw the rise of China and Russia and the emergence of regional actors into increasingly contestable geographies. These powers have seized the moment to position themselves as challengers to US influence, providing alternative models for engagement and building relationships with countries looking to expand their alliances. Referring to the agency enjoyed by smaller states in a multipolar world, Amitav Acharya (2016) emphasizes its growing importance.

In addition, the crisis has highlighted the limitations of US military power. The scale of the confrontation and the participation of so many players have been a test of American resources and a reminder of the limits of military planning in an ugly, chaotic world. However, the necessity of balancing competing priorities and the potential for unintended escalation have fueled debate about the long-term repercussions of continued US military engagement.

How the U.S. responds to these shifting realities will determine its hegemony. The US needs to rethink its strategic priorities, practice more effective diplomacy, and promote a more sensible and cooperative model of global governance. This includes strengthening alliances, engaging with rising powers, and addressing the underlying drivers of regional insecurity. Interdependence requires multilateral institutions and cooperation (Keohane and Nye 2012).

Even as the US has continued to be a global actor, its ability to influence world events is always diminishing. Unconventional power center rises and more centralised international connections demand a more flexible and nuanced foreign policy. Until then, the US should try to adjust toward a more manageable and just international order, one that is conscious of the wide variety of interests and views that exist in the international environment.

Overall, the West Asian crisis upended the prevailing power dynamics in the region, where US hegemonic leverage was steadily diminishing and multipolarity was expanding. It will be in the US influence's eyes to see how it navigates through these challenges, more so with the new governance model and the style of foreign policy that the Trump administration 2.0 is bringing.

## Suggestions:

The West Asian crisis of 2023, which has been the intensifying crisis of global power until now, posed what appears to be an existential threat to US hegemony, exposing systemic vulnerabilities in its foreign policy, undermining and deepening the loss of its ethical authority, and hastening the transition to a more multipolar order. This dissertation has shown that the crisis is not simply a regional conflict but a decisive inflection point in the development of global power dynamics. Focusing such analysis on pre-2016 US redundancy and then juxtaposing the current realist solutions -- the latter having advanced so much attention on this trend -- has discovered that such an enforced uncreativity is as creatively lame as it appears. We are in an increasingly assertive world, with the rise of China and Russia, the assertiveness of regional powers, and

the proliferation of information warfare. The US already struggles to remain the world's preeminent power, but its global dominance was already under threat before it was further undermined by the pandemic, as we see here with Professor David Rothkopf. Its ability to keep the world safe from the aggression of others will be determined by its ability to adapt to these realities.

Though the US continues to play a major role on the world stage, its ability to control world events is gradually circumscribed. US hegemony can only be recalibrated through a willingness to rethink strategic priorities for more effective diplomacy and a sustainable and equitable world order. That includes cultivating closer ties with allies, building relationships with the rising powers, and championing action through multilateral institutions against global challenges. The crisis in West Asia has highlighted the importance for the US to evolve from a conventional approach of projecting power and deferring the kind of leadership that is needed in the world. It requires not just armed and economic strength but also the capacity to cultivate trust, encourage collaboration, and tackle the underlying factors of regional instability.

There are several directions for future research and recommendations based on the analysis of the previous chapters of this dissertation. We need to achieve a more sophisticated understanding of multipolarity and conduct finer-grained investigations on at least two fronts in the region: the different avenues through which China and Russia exercise statecraft and the willingness and capability of both powers to be politically active for the long term. Moreover, there is a need to analyze how the relationships with regional powers are changing and how far they are broadening their alliances away from the US. Determining the efficacy of alternative diplomatic strategies, such as multilateral mediation and regional dialogue, in the resolution of the conflict can also help assess US diplomatic strategies. Also useful will be an examination of the impact of US domestic political considerations on its foreign policy decisions and potential reforms to increase the space for diplomatic flexibility.

Therefore, the researcher is also responsible for doing in-depth research on how information warfare has been done in the digital region (social media) and how alternative news sources have an impact on public and political discourse by exploring all these different avenues. They should discuss how, in the context of international conflicts, combating disinformation and promoting media literacy are essential, too. It is time to recalibrate the US military posture, assess the sustainability of US military deployments in the region in the long run, and consider alternative security arrangements. Additionally, it is essential to understand the impact that evolving technology, from cyber warfare to autonomous weapons systems, has on US military capabilities, as well as regional stability; further advocacy for strengthening international institutions and the creation of inclusive global governance structures would be another milestone towards establishing multilateralism and global governance. It is important to promote the US and other large powers to play a greater role in the global response to issues like climate change, epidemic eruptions, etc. Lastly, it is recommended to further study the economic impact of the West Asian crisis on the petrodollar system and how the latter system is being challenged on the one hand and the impacts of the crisis on trade routes and how they are being affected on the other.

In conclusion, the future of US hegemony will derive from its success in responding to the challenges that transcend the 20th century well into the 21st. The crisis in West Asia is an essential test, and its lessons will continue to govern the direction of US foreign policy for years to come.

## Conclusion

The West Asian crisis, which has broken out and escalated with considerable force since 2023, has thrown out a clear and indubitable crucible of the existing world hegemony of the United States. Prior to this turbulent era, the idea of American supremacy in global relations was based, to a large degree, on several elements converging. Top among these was its unmatched military might, a power projection that supported its security guarantees and its ability to intervene around the world. What it also had was its considerable — though increasingly challenged — economic preeminence, anchored in the primacy of the US dollar and its central position in global financial institutions. Its status was reinforced by another vast and complex network of alliances cultivated over decades of wars, providing both strategic depth and collective security frameworks. Lastly, the US took an integral position in the design of international organizations, positioning itself as a standard-setting leader in each such and many multilateral institutions. Although scholarly

discussion had long recognized the gradual rise of peer competitors — like China — and the aggressive comeback of Russia, the United States retained, in the popular and academic imagination, its status as the world's paramount power, the keystone of the global order.

Yet the long and complex realities of the West Asian crisis, which this dissertation's analysis brings to light, have depicted a much more mottled and contested picture of the contemporary global scene. The crisis has served as a powerful accelerant to multipolarity in progress. Both of these countries have seized upon this opportunity to actively grow their influence within the region, providing competing frameworks of economic and security cooperation and directly challenging the hegemony of the United States that has long defined the Near East. Concurrently, regional actors, historically conditioned to operate in a US-dominated security framework, have become progressively prominent, pursuing multi-alignment foreign policies intended to broaden their partnership vector and optimize their strategic agency. The shortcomings of the historical US approach to power projection have become starkly visible. The multifaceted nature of the wars and the number of both state and non-state actors with major vested interests — often at odds with one another—have outstripped US military capabilities and revealed the limitations of unilateralism in attaining decisive results. Moreover, distrust in the region has long hampered the effectiveness of US diplomatic leverage, with grievance politics and widespread perception of US bias towards specific actors further complicating US mediation efforts. The nature and scale of the crisis have generated widespread coverage in the global media of its catastrophic humanitarian impacts — especially civilian suffering — and have contributed to a perception of inconsistency and double standards in US rhetoric and policy that has significantly undermined US soft power, especially within the countries of the Global South, where historical experiences lend themselves to skeptical views of Western interventions. The explosion of social media and other news sources has splintered information even more, making it difficult for the US to manage narratives and shape international public opinion. Economically, the crisis has created extreme instability in global energy markets and has posed direct threats to traditional international trade routes — indirectly shaking the basis of U.S. economic power. Additionally, the extensive and enduring power of the US dollar as the international reserve currency, although significant, has come under rising scrutiny alongside the pursuit of alternative financial avenues.

Despite the important lessons that this investigation has yielded, several key issues related to the long-term implications of the West Asian crisis for the trajectory of US hegemonic power are still clouded in uncertainties. Time will tell if these reconfigured coalitions will continue in a lasting manner or if the multi-alignment policies pursued by diverse states will translate into stable geopolitical transformations or merely represent short-term tactical readjustments. The lingering economic effects of the crisis, particularly with respect to its long-term implications for global energy markets, the resilience of global trade networks, and the future viability of the US dollar's global dominance, remain to be fully realized. It remains to be seen how the post-crisis geopolitical arrangement—whether the definitive multipolar order, a return to one version of bipolar rivalry, or the birth of some entirely new power structure — will play out. Ultimately, the deep, lasting effects of this extended period of instability on US domestic public discourse and the prospects for a revived bipartisan consensus on foreign policy remain to be seen.

Some limitations that prevent definitive conclusions at the current time are inextricably part of these unresolved unknowns. The crisis in the West Asia region is, itself, ongoing and highly dynamic, with real potential for shock changes and sudden escalations, and therefore any long-term predictions should be seen as inherently provisional. Access to classified government information remains limited, which, coupled with the unknown intentions of various state and non-state actors involved in the conflict — who may or may not have plans to continue waging a proxy war against Russia — has made comprehensive analysis a challenge. Tugging on any one thread of power dynamics that is neatly interwoven with other threads makes finding a singular causal thread/output much more difficult. While the immediate timeframe of this study, concentrating on the period directly following 2023 and the events that have since taken place, offers a useful snapshot of current events, it cannot capture the longer-term and potentially more significant fallout. And last, it has to be said that any discussion of global narratives and changing geopolitical landscapes has a degree of interpretative subjectivity to it, with the future likely to reveal different directions and results than now predicted.

This dissertation boldly addresses the West Asian crisis, which has posed a serious, direct, albeit multi-layered, challenge to the previously consolidated global hegemony of the United States since it directly affects

the interests of 2023. The United States, since 2023, has starkly exposed vulnerabilities already present in US foreign policy, and it has significantly undermined its perceived moral authority on the international stage. It has powerfully accelerated the move already underway to a more complex and distributed multipolar world order. The epoch where the United States could act with near-uncontested levels of unilateral influence seems to be gradually fading. Any path forward for the US to play a useful and positive role in world affairs will require a fundamental and system-wide reconsideration of US first principles and dominant modes of statecraft. This should include a real commitment and common action for multilateralism, a renewed effort to put diplomatic solutions ahead of military power — even in the exercise of organized military power — and a sincere and systemic approach to restoring lost soft power by strictly adhering to international norms and a more empathetic understanding of worldly perspectives. At the end of the day, in the 21st century, US power will be measured by its ability to adjust to a more complex and contested world order and by its ability to construct a more sustainable, equitable, and collaborative world order through joint endeavours and realistic acknowledgement of the changing distribution of power within the world.

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