

# 17 Hegemony Examples

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**HEGEMONY**

Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group over all others. A hegemon holds unrivaled power and can use their power to exert influence over others.

**EXPLANATION**

Hegemony can refer to a dominant nation or culture, but also the dominance of a particular ideology or way of thinking.

For example, in the early 1990s, the United States exerted hegemony over the world by promoting neoliberalism as the only acceptable way to think about economics.

**HEGEMONS**

- 1 British Empire (19th Century)
- 2 USA (20th Century)
- 3 Neoliberal Ideology (1990s)
- 4 Judaism in Israel
- 5 Sunni Islam in Saudi Arabia
- 6 Capitalism in the West

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**Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group over all others. A hegemon holds unrivaled power and can use their power to exert influence over others.**

The word hegemony comes from the Greek word hegemon, meaning “leader.” The English word hegemony was first used in the early 1800s to describe the dominant position of the British Empire.

Hegemony can refer to a dominant nation or culture, but also the dominance of a particular [ideology](#) or way of thinking. For example, in the early 1990s, the United States exerted hegemony over the world by promoting neoliberalism as the only acceptable way to think about economics.

## Hegemony Examples

### 1. The British Empire

**Time Period:** 18th-19th centuries

**Location:** Global

The British Empire was the global hegemon of the 18th and 19th centuries. It was the largest empire in world history and at its peak controlled a quarter of the world's land area and a fifth of its population. The British Empire was fueled by its industrial revolution and used its military and economic power to expand its territory, dominate other nations, and subjugate indigenous peoples. Today, 14 [constitutional monarchies](#) technically remain part of the British crown and maintain the British monarch as their sovereign.

## 2. American Culture

**Time Period:** 20th century

**Location:** Global

The United States became the global hegemon after WW2 thanks to its economic and military power. The United States promoted neoliberalism as the only acceptable way to think about economics, and its cultural exports (such as Hollywood movies and rock music) became dominant around the world thanks to [cultural globalization](#). American culture has been criticized for its focus on individualism and materialism, and for promoting a “white man’s worldview.”

The strength of American and British hegemony in the 19th and 20th Centuries led to the [hegemonic stability theory](#) that holds a single global hegemon can lead to increased prosperity and decreased war.

## 3. Neoliberalism

**Time Period:** 20th century

**Location:** Western World

Neoliberalism is an economic ideology that became dominant in the world in the 1970s and 80s, pushed by figures like Ronald Regan and Margaret Thatcher. It is based on the idea that free markets and privatization are the best way to create economic growth. An [example of neoliberalism](#) is the privatization of public assets like electrical lines to shrink the role of government in the economy. Neoliberalism has been criticized for its focus on profit over social welfare, and for increasing inequality around the world. However, it also led to rapid economic growth.

## 4. Communism in the Soviet Union

**Time Period:** 1922 – 1991

**Location:** Eastern Europe and Russia

Communism was the hegemonic ideology throughout the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence. No other political mode, such as capitalism or democracy, was conceivable. The Soviet Union used its military and economic power to spread communism throughout Eastern Europe, and it was only with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 that other ideologies began to gain ground. Unfortunately, it was replaced by the crony authoritarianism of Vladimir Putin in Russia.

## 5. Sunni Islam in Saudi Arabia

**Time Period:** 610 CE – Present

**Location:** Middle East

Islam is the official religion of Saudi Arabia and the hegemonic religion in the Arab world. In fact, Sunni Islam, one of the two major branches of Islam, is the hegemon. Any other form of Islam, such as Sufism or Ijtihad, is

not tolerated in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi regime has also used its oil wealth to promote Sunni Islam throughout the Muslim world where it enjoys a wide sphere of influence.

## 6. Judaism in Israel

**Time Period:** 1948 CE – Present

**Location:** Palestine and Israel

Judaism is the dominant religion in Israel, where it is the official state religion. Israel is also the only country in the world where Judaism enjoys a constitutional status. This gives the Jewish religious authorities a great deal of power in Israeli society. Israel has been criticized for its treatment of the Palestinian minority, which is mostly Muslim.

## 7. Capitalism in the West

**Time Period:** 18th century – Present

**Location:** Global

Capitalism is the dominant economic system in the world. It began to emerge in the 18th century in the West and has since become the dominant mode of economic production around the world. Capitalism is based on free markets and private ownership, and it has been criticized for its focus on profit over social welfare. However, it also led to rapid economic growth. Even communist nations like China have been forced to embrace aspects of capitalism and concede that it is the most efficient economic ideology for wealth generation.

## 8. Democracy in the West

**Time Period:** 17th century – Present

**Location:** Europe, North America

Democracy is the dominant political system in the western world. It began to emerge in the 17th century in the West. Democracy is based on the idea of [popular sovereignty](#), or the idea that the people are the source of all political power. It led to the development of civil society, human rights, and individual liberty. While there are still many [dictatorships around the world](#), democracies were the dominant global powers for the decades following World War 2, causing some scholars to call this democratic era “the end of history”, indicating that nothing will ever be this good again.

## 9. Christianity in Medieval Europe

**Time Period:** 4th century CE – 15th century

**Location:** Europe

Christianity was the dominant religion in Medieval Europe. It began to spread through the Roman Empire in the 4th century CE and eventually became the official religion of the Roman Empire. It was also the dominant religion in Europe during the Middle Ages. Christianity is based on the belief in one God who created the world and all of humanity who sent his son Jesus to earth to save the world.

## 10. The Kim Dynasty in North Korea

**Time Period:** 1948 CE – Present

**Location:** North Korea

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The Kim dynasty is the ruling family in North Korea. It has been in power since 1948, when the country was founded. The Kim dynasty is a communist dynasty, and the Kims have been absolute rulers of North Korea since its inception. The Kim dynasty has been criticized for its human rights abuses and its totalitarian dictatorship. However, the dynasty has also been very successful in maintaining control over North Korea.

## 11. The Communist Party of China

**Time Period:** 1949 CE – Present

**Location:** China

The Communist Party of China is the ruling party in China. It was founded in 1921 and has been in power since 1949 when it won a civil war against the nationalists. The Communist Party of China has been responsible for the transformation of China into a communist state, although the state also has strong elements of capitalism to aid in its growing prosperity. The Communist Party of China has been criticized for its human rights abuses and its totalitarian dictatorship.

## 12. Patriarchy Throughout History

**Time Period:** –

**Location:** Global

[Patriarchy](#) is a social system and gender ideology in which men are the primary authority figures and women are subordinate to them. It has been present throughout history in most societies and religious doctrines throughout history.

Patriarchy is based on the idea that men are superior to women and that they should have authority over them. Modern liberal democracies have attempted to dislodge the ideology with some successes, but more progress is required.

*See also:* [Gender stereotypes](#)

## 13. White Hegemony in Europe and America

**Time Period:** –

**Location:** Western World

White hegemony is a term used to describe the domination of white people in American society. It refers to the idea that white people have had and continue to have a disproportionate amount of power and privilege in America. White hegemony is based on the notion of [white privilege](#) where white people are able to move through life with privileges that people of color cannot, giving them an advantage in most social situations.

*See also:* [Discrimination examples](#)

## 14. Communism in Cuba

**Time Period:** 1959 CE – Present

**Location:** Cuba

Communism is a political system in which the state owns all property and the means of production and all citizens are equal. It is a totalitarian ideology based on the idea of socialism. It has the belief that society should

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be organized in a way that benefits the majority of people, but lacks the individual incentive mechanisms of capitalism that facilitate economic growth. Communism began to spread through Latin America in the 1950s and eventually reached Cuba in 1959.

Communism is hegemonic in Cuba because no other rival political system is allowed.

## 15. Sparta in Ancient Greece

**Time Period:** c. 900 BCE – 371 BCE

**Location:** Greece

Sparta was a city-state in ancient Greece that was famous for its militaristic society. It became the undisputed superpower state within Greece. Sparta invaded and conquered many other city-states, and its powerful military made it a feared adversary. Sparta was also known for its austere society in which all citizens were required to perform military service and live in a barracks-style compound.

Sparta was a hegemonic state because it was able to exert its power over surrounding city-states and get its way in political machinations. Sparta fell when it was invaded and defeated by the Thebes in 371 BCE.

## 16. Canadian power over Indigenous People

**Time Period:** 1610 CE – Present

**Location:** Canada

The colonial Canadian government has exerted power over Indigenous people since its colonial settlement in 1610. This has taken many forms, including military conquest, economic exploitation, [forced assimilation](#), and cultural suppression. Canada has been successful in suppressing Indigenous culture and diminishing its political power. However, Indigenous people continue to resist and assert their rights. Due to the asymmetrical power balance between the settlers and indigenous people, the colonizers are seen as the hegemonic power.

## 17. Rome during the Roman Empire

**Time Period:** 27 BCE – 476 CE

**Location:** Mediterranean

The Roman Empire was one of the most powerful empires in history. It controlled a vast area of the Mediterranean and was home to over 50 million people. The Roman Empire was based on the principles of hierarchy, order, and discipline. It had a strong central government that controlled all aspects of society. The Roman Empire was a hegemonic power because it was able to dominate and control societies throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. It fell when it was invaded by the Visigoths in 476 CE.

## Conclusion

Hegemonic power is the ability of a country or group to exert influence over others. This can be done through economic, political, cultural, or military means. Whereas once hegemony was exerted through military campaigns, recent years have seen the USA exert its hegemony through [cultural globalization](#). It has spread its values through global media. Hegemony can also be ideological, such as the power and control of the patriarchy and capitalism in society. Communist nations have also been known to use force inside their own country to sustain the hegemony of the communist ideology.