

US hegemony

What is the American hegemony ?

hegemony : a state that possesses vastly superior military and economic capabilities that includes size of population and territory, economic capacity, and military strength.

The US considers itself as the chosen people endowed with the mission of showing the way, of **spreading its interests and ideas** (or ideology) abroad (especially DEMOCRACY)

War in Ukraine: it started over Ukraine's NATO membership. The West against Russia: is it a matter of hegemony?

Arguments in favour of this hegemony

- Military and economic strength.
 - The American **dollar** is the universal currency = heavyweight in global economy
 - English is the *lingua franca*, it is the most commonly used language in the world, especially for business, it helps spread US ideas and culture around the world.
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Facts and events :between unilateralism and multilateralism^{[L][SEP]}

- US power in South America, the CIA pushed dictators to resign to install non- communist leaders
 - Barack Obama was granted the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009. He relied more on multilateralism.
 - Embargo on Cuba after the **missile crisis** (cold war)
 - The US troops withdrawal from Afghanistan 2021: the end of interventionism
 - The wall with Mexico (isolationism, xenophobia)
 - Movie Snowden : about a true story from a former FBI agent, who was illegally watched by the government. (no more privacy for US agents)
 - Contradiction** in Trump's foreign policy: isolationist = Mexican wall, BUT interventionist = struggle with North Korea
 - The US wants the monopoly of the cure against coronavirus, they want to defeat China (always a war against China because of competition in world market or Chinese communism) see also the trade war with China with taxes on imported goods (tariffs) such as steel. Ban on Huawei on US soil => the US fears losing their hegemony.^{[L][SEP]} Hard relation with the **the Middle East** for oil
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Benefits of US hegemony

American hegemony is beneficial to both the United States and the world:

- Reduces security competition and continues to confer significant economic benefits to the United States

-The United States is better able to pursue a **liberal grand strategy** democracy promotion, **free trade**, **interdependence**, and **multilateral institutionalism** – when it has unrivalled capabilities

-According to the **hegemonic stability theory** : US power is not used to dominate others : they did not use its preponderant power after World War Two to dominate the world and create an empire but instead, American hegemonic leadership was wisely used to establish the foundations of a liberal international order.

Criticism of US hegemony

-The part played by the US on the world stage comes under criticism both at home and abroad; the US has oscillated between unilateralism and multilateralism. 9/11 turned the tables and prompted Republicans (who were prone to limit intervention) to invade Afghanistan and to wage a global war on terror to fight against the “axis of evil” constituted by rogue states : Iran, Irak, North Korea, Afghanistan; targetted by US president since November 11th 2001.

-The movie Vice about Vice President **Dick Cheney** (G.W Bush’s VP), who invaded Iraq with a fake reason (saddam hussein = chemical arms)

Decline of the US hegemony

-With the growth of right-wing populism, the turn to authoritarianism, and the election of Donald Trump, the durability of the liberal international order is being called into question - Rise of peer-competitors such as China: competition in world market and against Chinese communism

-The **Subprime crisis** (2008 financial crisis) revealed the dependence of other countries on US economy

Questions

-Is being interventionist the way to thrive ?

-Is the US still the world’s leader ? Is this the end of American primacy? Does the US still run the world market ?

-Is Biden’s foreign policy the best way to trade with the world ?

-Does the maintenance of hegemony continue to serve American interests ?

-Is American hegemony in decline?

Vocabulary

a state-run economy inflation

a share = une action

plunge = dégringoler

thrive = prospérer

protectionism

state intervention

an embargo

a crash = un krach boursier

customs duties = les droits de douane a currency = une devise

the troops = les troupes

the arms race = la course à l'armement

troop withdrawal = le retrait des troupes