
Who Rules the World?

Hegemony Theories,
the Decline of the
U.S. and Rise of the
EU

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Introduction: What is The Debate?

In 1991 the Cold War ended and the collapse of the Soviet Union brought about different questions regarding the future of the international system. The United States appeared to have emerged as the leading world power and was categorized by many as the hegemon of the international system enjoying global hegemony in a new uni-polar system. Though the power of the United States in the world system had been unquestioned since the end of the Second World War, the debate surrounding what type of power the United States possesses rages on. The discussion on hegemony is not new to the power possessed by the United States and theories in today's system regarding hegemonic power date back to ancient Greece. Three major theories of hegemony have emerged, realism, liberalism, and constructivism, and have made the debates surrounding U.S. hegemony even more heated.

The beginning of this paper will focus on the three different notions of hegemony theory with particular emphasis on the notion of power within the theories. The realist theory will be examined first, followed by the liberal conceptions, and finally the constructivist argument will be presented. The three theories will then be analyzed against each other to determine which theoretical concept best captures the argument surrounding hegemony. The theories of hegemony will then be examined through the framework of U.S. hegemony to determine the theory that best describes the current status of the U.S. within the international system.

The second part of this paper will focus on the notion of a hegemonic challenger to U.S. supremacy. The hegemony theories have not only been crafted to analyze the current status of U.S. hegemony, but rather to discuss the possibility of states within the international system rising up to challenge the hegemony of the United States. Much of the literature has been presented surrounding the rise of China and India as possible challengers, but a few within the

scholarly literature have discussed the growing power of Europe. This paper will examine Europe as a possible hegemonic challenger to the United States. The growing power and structural changes of the EU will be outlined within the framework of the three theories of hegemony. The hope of this paper is to review hegemony theory at the root level and to discuss the current and future status of hegemony.

Realist, Liberal, or Constructivist: Who Says What?

Hegemony has varying definitions that can be traced through different theoretical schools from realism to liberalism to constructivism. Each of the theories places emphasis on their own definition of hegemony. The theories of hegemony have their roots in the concepts of power. The power theories easily differentiate the views of hegemony and help ground the theories within the international system.

The realist argument of hegemony focuses primarily on conceptions of power that are based on military and defense. While the types of realism are vast and vary with ideas, the realism presented here will be based mostly on the classic realist model. The realist conceptions of hegemony also review how changes in the international system occur due to wars and the military victories of one state over another. For realists, true state power is not a focus of economics or the cultural ideals that are associated with other forms of hegemony, discussed later, but rather only on if the state can win wars and maintain the power superiority.

Robert Gilpin addresses the argument of realist hegemony by discussing the arguments of Thucydides. Through that argument Gilpin presents that changes to the hierarchy of the international system occur through great interstate wars and that the outbreaks of such wars are due to the attempt to balance the power of the hegemon (Gilpin 1988). The components of power are also discussed in terms of a hegemon having, as Wolforth notes, “decisive

preponderance in all the underlying components of power: economic, military, technological, and geopolitical” (Wolforth 1999, 7). The concepts of power for Wolforth are also often described in terms of military expenditures and capabilities.

Realist arguments also focus on the importance of military power to secure hegemonic power. The realist argument is such that the control over the international system allows for increased cooperation and discussion on issues such as world trade that would not be possible if the hegemon did not have the military power to secure those interests (Posen 2003). Perhaps one of the greatest components of realist hegemonic theory, proposed by Mearsheimer, is the idea that hegemony is the goal of states that have best maximized their power capabilities (Mearsheimer 2001, 35). Hegemony in realism is achieving high levels of power and dominating both globally and regionally, but not controlling the entire international system.

An alternative to the realist theories on hegemony are the liberal theories of hegemony. The liberal theories are considered the largest alternative to realism and differ in perceptions of the international order with less focus on military. The liberal theories have differences between them with focuses mainly between hegemony related to either the international economic order or increased institutionalism, which are sources of power.

Robert Koehane’s view of liberalism and hegemony is perhaps one of the most well-known. Koehane’s liberal perspective centers on the importance of a hegemon to create and maintain the world order. Within that world order, the main facets of the hegemon’s stability are the ability to show economic power by being able to control the access to markets, provide better credit than other states, and encompass a large enough level of market power that the presence of the hegemon can open and close the markets (Koehane 1983). Another component of liberal hegemony is the importance of the hegemon to help control the market. The global hegemon

does not need to have dominance over the economic markets, but does need to provide leadership for how the economic order should run (Kindleberger 1981).

Liberal hegemony also takes the form of the institutionalist argument. For liberal theory, the hegemonic power will help to construct institutions, which will govern and establish global norms for how the international system will be run (Hurrell 2006). John Ikenberry presents both arguments together as “liberal characteristics.” For Ikenberry, the liberal hegemon builds institutions and helps to govern the economic strategies as part of the overall concept of hegemony (Ikenberry 2003).

The power of the hegemon lies not in military capabilities alone, but in how the hegemon governs the state. Liberal theory represents the hegemon as guiding the international system not with absolute power, but more in system construction. By creating and maintaining the structures of institutions and economics, the liberal hegemon has power and governs the international system.

Still hegemony has been explained through another theoretical framework. Scholars have recognized the importance of constructivism in the hegemony discussion. For many constructivists, hegemony has an identity aspect and cannot be viewed the same from hegemon to hegemon. Constructivist vision of hegemony has been discussed in the terms of the role of identity in shaping both domestic and international politics of the hegemon. That is, the hegemon is powerful because of the type of identity constructed (Ciuta 2006, 180). Other constructivists also see power as not a given concept. These constructivist scholars view power through historical relationships and as a social construction, which makes hegemony less about power and more about how the power was created (Bieler and Morton 2007, 91).

Another key component of constructivist hegemony is the importance of a social purpose. Hegemony, for Ruggie, is not merely driven by military or economic power, but more importantly, "...represents a fusion of power with legitimate social purpose" (Ruggie 1982, 382). Hopf ties the elements of social purpose and identity together by stating, "In this way, social practices not only reproduce actors through identity, but also reproduce an inter-subjective social structure through social practice" (Hopf 1998, 178). Here Hopf presents the argument of states using their own identity as a guideline for the social system, thus making power relative to the specific state. For the constructivists, hegemons change the system not because of power, but because of how the system of power is constructed by the state identity and the then greater international system.

Realist, Liberal, or Constructivist: What is hegemony?

The theories of hegemony, as outlined above, are all important to explaining how hegemony is viewed throughout the international system. However, while each theory offers a distinct explanation of hegemony, the constructivist theory can be seen as more inclusive of the different ways to achieve and maintain hegemony. This section of the paper will analyze compare and contrast the three different theories of hegemony to determine which best describes the current status of hegemony as well as best analyzes changes to the hegemonic order.

Realism and liberalism have been seen as the two competing theories of hegemony throughout the 20th century. The two theories have both extreme differences, yet in particular facets, the theories have begun to merge. The realist focus on power and hegemony is primarily related to absolute power. For realists, the amount of power a state has determines the strength of that state. Realists are not generally interested in cooperation and facilitating a more institutional world order, rather the realist hegemon would like to maintain the favorable balance

of power to remain in control of the international system. The realism described by Mearsheimer best describes the differences between the realist and liberal viewpoints. While liberalism, and constructivism to be detailed later, has a focus on the hegemon being the leader of the international system, realists ascertain that the hegemon should dominate the international system (Mearsheimer 2001,22). The realists do not maintain the status of the system as a whole, but rather the individual placement of the hegemon within the system. Generally speaking, realism does not believe that the hegemonic power is constructing a new international system or that the hegemon maintains power by establishing a greater purpose. Realism gains and maintains power militarily by keeping the balance of power in their favor and being militarily strong enough to continue being the hegemonic power.

The gain and maintenance of power for the liberal theorists is quite different. For liberals, power is gained by having the control over the world's economic resources. By being able to control the market and establish an international economic order, the hegemonic power is able to rise (Koehane 1983, 33). The liberal theory does merge with the realist theory on the concept of maintaining hegemony. Liberal theory focuses on a powerful military to maintain the liberal order that the hegemon has established. Without the military presence of the hegemon, the international economic order established is more vulnerable (Koehane 1982, 39). Thus the liberal theory has components of realism within the discussion of hegemony. At the same time, the most important concept of power within liberal hegemony is still within the economic order established, with the military being used only as maintenance of that power.

Constructivist theory places a large departure from the liberal and realist theories of hegemony. For constructivists, the power of the hegemon is not based primarily in one area of military or economic superiority; rather the power of the hegemon is placed in the construction

of the term power. The power concept for hegemony in constructivism is how those powers view themselves in the system (Bieler and Morton 2007, 90). The construction of power is created by the individual state who believes that power is represented in any number of situations. These states view their power from their identity, which is shaped from interactions and historical perspectives of the state within the international system. Constructivist theories of hegemonic power believe that hegemons gain importance and power by how the identity of other states views them within the system (Ciuta 2006, 180). The constructivist theory of hegemony does not rule out military and economic power as making that state the hegemonic power. However, the constructivist hegemon would be powerful in the military and economic realms only if the rest of the state system viewed that identity as powerful and remain powerful as long as the hegemon holds that identity.

Another important distinction between the theories of hegemony is the determination between the purposes of the hegemon. The three theories each have vastly different conceptions of how the hegemon should be acting within the world system created. The realist theory believes that the hegemon has no role in “governing” the global system. The liberal theory notes the importance of the hegemon in crafting the international system and providing leadership in both economics and institutions. The constructivist theory provides the argument that the power of the hegemon has a social purpose. These differing conceptions of the use of hegemony are important to review as part of the theoretical discussion.

Realist hegemons achieved their power through having the greatest military power in the international system. The realist theory of hegemony sees the power as constructing the international system only to maintain continued power (Gilpin 1988, 592). By having the highest military power in the system, the realist hegemon is able to create a system that will

enable the power to continue its hegemony and prevent a balance of power from occurring. The classical realist perception does not see the role of the hegemon as placing a world view or social purpose on the rest of the states in the system.

The liberal theories of hegemony see the hegemonic power as being a leader of the international system. For liberals, the hegemon plays two roles within the system. The first role is to help create the world order, particularly in economics, and the second is to be the leadership within the international system. Hegemons in liberalism not only attempt to maintain their own power, but to also make the entire system function in the hegemons order (Ikenberry 2003). The liberal hegemon also works to create institutions that help establish norms for the international system. By helping create norms, the hegemon is able to be powerful within the system, but provide greater cooperation between states (Hurrell 2006). The liberal hegemony theories are thus different from realist theory in the role that the hegemon plays within the system. The liberal theory believes that hegemonic power comes with responsibility to make the international system function successfully.

The constructivist theory is similar to the liberal position of hegemony in that the hegemon has a responsibility to the international system that has been constructed. The hegemons in constructivist theory have gained power through repeated interactions and the identity of the hegemon through other states (Bieler and Morton 2007, 91). Constructivism sees the hegemon as promoting their identities abroad and using that identity to spread power on a more cultural level instead of just military and economic power. The social purpose of the hegemon is also the source of power for constructivism (Ruggie 1982, 382). Hegemons, for constructivists, project internal identity to create the external system and are in the process giving the entire system a social purpose.

Another important distinction between types of hegemony comes from the use of hegemonic power. While hegemons gain and maintain power in different ways, the way in which each theory proposes that hegemonic power is utilized also varies. The realist approach is based on forcing states via military powers. The liberal approach, however, is to influence states economically to follow the hegemon. The constructivist approach is to use relationships and the importance of the social purpose so that power is utilized via dialogue rather than influence.

Realist theory sees the hegemon as the great power within the international system. The other states within the system do not go against the realist decisions out of a fear that the hegemon will utilize military strength against those states (Wolforth 1998, 8). Hegemony for realists operates out of the threat that military intervention is always possible and uses that power to pressure states into agreeing with the position of the hegemon. States work with the hegemon primarily out of fear of repercussions in the military sector especially.

The liberal theories of hegemonic power see the hegemon as expressing power via economic control. Hegemons in a liberal framework will influence the international system by threatening to cut off economic gains from states (Koehane 1983, 40). The liberal theory sees economic power as how to convince states to follow the hegemon or face the economic power the hegemon possesses. The liberal theory again uses types of persuasive measures to control the international system by threatening or even using its power over the system against other states that chose not to work with the hegemon.

Constructivists once again present a differing view on how the hegemon works with states in the international system. For the constructivist hegemony theory, the hegemon does not need to use forceful measures to achieve what they want from the system; instead the constructivist works with other states to form a collective want (Hopf 1998, 173). The

constructivist power here is represented by the collective identity and relationships that states will follow the hegemon because they believe in the goals of the hegemon. Unlike the liberal and realist uses of power in hegemony theory that rely to exerting power against states, the constructivist hegemon works with states because of a common belief in the international system.

Another final important distinction between theories of hegemony is how hegemonic powers rise up and decline from hegemony. The realist perception of how powers become hegemons is based upon the assumption of great power wars. The liberal view is that once a state loses control over market forces and the ability to lead those forces, they will no longer be the hegemon. For the constructivists, the transfer of power for hegemons comes from the social purpose and political authority derived from that purpose.

The realist theoretical explanation about how states gain and lose hegemony is based on the product of great power wars. According to realism, states will become a hegemon when they have demonstrated the power over all other powers within the system (Gilpin 1988, 593). The winner of these wars between great powers will then be able to construct a new international system that would keep the new hegemon in power. The hegemon generally remains the leader of the international system until new powers rise up and militarily challenge the hegemon.

The liberal theory of hegemony provides a different argument for how hegemons gain and lose control over the international system. The liberal theory bases the idea of once a state can no longer control the economic stability and leadership of the international order, they are declining in hegemonic status (Koehane 1983, 32). Additionally, in the liberal view if states cannot be the leader in institutional transformation and the establishments of rules and norms, the

state no longer has hegemonic power (Ikenberry 2003). A new hegemon will then emerge in the international system who has gained control over the economic and institutional orders.

The constructivist viewpoint presents the rise and fall of hegemons in a less “zero-sum” approach of the theory. Constructivists believe that system change can occur through changes in political authority. Since constructivist theory of hegemony notes that hegemons gain power through interactions between states, the hegemon will lose its status when interactions no longer legitimate its power. Additionally, unlike the liberal and realist theories that see a fundamental change within the system, the constructivist theory notes that, according to Ruggie, “analytical components of international regimes, rules and procedures (instruments) would change, but principles and norms (normative frameworks) would not” (Ruggie 1982, 384). Thus for constructivism, the regimes are more fluid and do not constitute a complete change within the system.

The theories of hegemony represent differing viewpoints on subjects from the type and use of power to the transitions between one hegemon to another. The realist and liberal theories are similar because in both theories the hegemon has greater power capabilities than the other states in the international system. The realist theory only recognizes the importance of military power for the hegemon to create the international system and liberalism similarly recognizes specific sources of power from economic control to institutionalism of norms. The power associated with constructivism however is all encompassing. Hegemony theory in constructivism can be centered on a combination of military, economic power, and institutions. The constructivist theory allows hegemony to look differently depending upon the power in question because each hegemon defines power differently. The perceptions and interactions that form identity give the state the identity of a hegemon. By using different identities to gain power

in the international system, constructivism best represents hegemonic theory because constructivism can explain all different forms of hegemony and not rule out any form of power in creating the hegemonic system.

The United States: What is the Hegemonic History?

The foundations of U.S. hegemony stem from the beginning of the 20th century. The power gained by the United States during that period and as a result of WW II allowed the United States to have superiority in military, economic, and social power. The United States was able to continue the power superiority even during the Cold War period in competition with the Soviet Union. The power formation of the United States occurred at a very specific time period that allowed the U.S. to gain power in all areas of the international system and maintain the power throughout the 20th century. This section will address the formations of U.S. hegemony in the pre-WWII and post-1945 periods. The foundations of U.S. hegemony will be analyzed to provide a background for the following sections regarding the current status of U.S. hegemony and the links to theoretical literature.

The beginnings of U.S. hegemony can be discussed as early as the late 19th century when the United States began intervening in Latin American affairs. By using U.S. military power to influence the decisions of Latin American states as well as the territorial disputes as a part of the Spanish-American War, the U.S. gained a reputation of regional power. The U.S. power continued to grow during WW I because the U.S. was able to stay out of the war until the last stages and be more active in promoting the peaceful resolution than increased military presence (Dunne 2000, 31). The power of the United States was still present in the period directly after WWI because the failure of the United States to participate in the League of Nations contributed to the failure of the organization (Dunne 2000, 33).

The origins of hegemony for the United States are also rooted in the importance of U.S. leadership during and after WW II. The industries of Europe had been decimated by the war and the United States, who had already been an economic leader, began to work within the European states to ensure economic production. The European states were not in a place after WW II to rebuild themselves in both security and economics alone. Thus, Europe relied on the United States to provide security and economic aid in the years after 1945 (Ikenberry 1989, 376). The United States was able to gain power over the European states because the U.S. had the resources available to help Europe rebuild after the destruction of war.

The military superiority of the United States both during and after WW II helped to create origins of U.S. hegemony. The United States showed military superiority in the war and was an important component in the war victory for the Allies. The United States did not leave the war being economically and militarily damaged after WW II, rather the U.S. was strengthened militarily by having a larger standing army and continuing research and development for their military system. The United States continued to use military power to ensure the rebuilding of Europe and kept Europe under the umbrella of U.S. nuclear power (Strange 1987, 561). The continuation of U.S. military power, which was in full force during the Cold War, helped the U.S. become the hegemon of the international system. For realist hegemony theory especially, the military power level of the United States both created and maintained U.S. hegemony for the 20th century.

Perhaps more importantly, the U.S. power stemmed from the willingness of the U.S. to become a leader within the international system. The leadership of the United States was possible because of the levels of power achieved after WW II. The United States before WW II was an isolationist power who did not intervene in the international system. In the years

following U.S. intervention in WW II, the U.S. became a leader in the international system by helping to rebuild Europe, challenging the Soviet influence during the cold war, and building international institutions that would help govern the post-1945 international system. The power of the United States in establishing a new system was not as important as how that power was utilized. In 1945, the United States was the foremost power in creating the United Nations to promote peace and cooperation throughout the international system (Puchala 2005, 573).

Additional organizations such as the World Trade Organization followed to help institutionalize and spread the U.S. power even more. By becoming an influence and crafting the international system based on the ideals of the United States, the hegemonic power of the U.S. continued to grow.

The United States: Losing Hegemonic Power?

The United States has been considered a hegemon for over 50 years. Even during the bipolar period during the Cold War, the United States was always considered the preeminent Western power. The power of the United States, rooted in each different theoretical perception of hegemonic power, has been seen as declining in recent years. The decline from hegemony for the United States is directly rooted to the types of power the U.S. has within the international system. This section will explore the United States in the three theories of hegemony and review in what cases, if any, the U.S. is experiencing a decline in power.

The United States has been at the forefront of military and security within the international system since even before 1945. For many scholars, the importance of U.S. hegemony is within the realist framework. As noted above, the importance of hegemony in realism is the power achieved from security and military capacity of a state. The United States has been able to achieve the military power associated with the realist conceptions of hegemony.

Barry Posen notes, “Command of the commons is the key military enabler of the U.S. global power position. It allows the United States to exploit more fully other sources of power, including its own economic and military might as well as the economic and military might of its allies” (Posen 2003, 8). The power of the United States has been rooted in the military power and has made the U.S. a hegemon in the international system.

The military strength of the United States is the one area in which many challengers to U.S. hegemony have yet to reach the level of the U.S. The United States spends more money on defense capabilities each year than any other state within the international system. Although the current status of U.S. military affairs appears to be weaker than before, due to the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. military is still the strongest in the world. While the problems in Iraq and Afghanistan show a challenge to U.S. superiority, each situation can be explained through variable such as location, willingness to suffer casualties, and other inequalities not directly correlated to military power (Posen 2003, 23).

Thus the key to U.S. hegemony is very much dependent on the realist notion. For realist hegemony theory, the United States is and will continue to be the hegemon of the international system. The control of military power and willingness to use such power is the source of U.S. hegemony in the realist theory.

While the United States may have the superiority in the realist theory, the liberal theories of hegemony place a different spin on the current status of U.S. hegemony. While the United States continues to play a large role in international economics and institutions, the power of the United States is not as absolute in the liberal theories of hegemony and unlike realism; hegemonic challengers are emerging for the liberal definitions of hegemony.

The roots in liberal hegemony for the United States are grounded in the international institutions following WW II. The United Nations is a large reminder of the power the United States maintains over international norms. The United Nations, as noted above, was crafted out of the U.S. notions of international society. The importance of the UN for the United States was to have the ability to export U.S. notions of the international community through an institution. The U.S. power in the UN can be seen, as Donald Puchala notes, “with regard to international public policies emanating from the United Nations, its associated specialized agencies, and the managing institutions of the global economy” (Puchala 2005, 575). The U.S. has used the UN to institutionalize the U.S. norms and values as well as spread those values across the system. The liberal theories of hegemony can explain the U.S. control over the UN. By being able to influence the UN agenda, the U.S. power can be explained through liberal hegemony theory.

The U.S. has used the UN as an expression of power and U.S. interests. In that way, the U.S. is a liberal theory definition of a hegemon. The power of the U.S. continues to be important for the UN as the U.S. is still a key for the organization. The U.S. provides most of the UN budget and the UN reform plans cannot go through without approval by the U.S. (Puchala 2005, 576). Thus, while the UN currently encompasses 190 member states, the United States is still the most inherently powerful state within the institution.

The other facet of liberal hegemony theory is the control over the international economic order. The United States is still the largest market in the international system and as such have control over trade. The United States is able to act unilaterally to govern the market and even the market regulating institutions like the WTO (Griffin 2003, 797). As the leader in the international economy with the ability to continue to regulate the market, with help of institutions, the U.S. is showing continued hegemony in the liberal theory argument. However,

the institutions used by the United States to regulate the international economic system are not as solidly part of the U.S. control as the UN. Rich states, such as the member states of the EU, have the ability to influence the WTO and the international economic institutions as a whole (Griffin 2003, 803). Although the rich states are able to influence the international economic institutions and are showing a rise to power in the international economic order, the influence of these states generally comes with a U.S. coalition and power force, thus making the U.S. still a viable hegemon in the liberal theory.

The constructivist hegemony of the United States is perhaps one of the most controversial components of U.S. hegemony. The perception of the United States abroad and the relationships between the United States and other countries are the most changing sources of U.S. power throughout the international system. The United States ranges from being perceived as the stabilizer of the international system to being the fundamental problem for many states within the system. Due to the way power is constituted in constructivism, the United States is a most risk of declining in hegemony in the constructivist theories because other states within the system are not as receptive to U.S. power.

The United States is seen by states in different ways. Francois Heisbourg presents four different ways the U.S. is perceived in the international system. The U.S. has been viewed as the benign hegemon who focuses solely on internal affairs and is not bothered by external affairs. The U.S. can also be viewed as a “rogue state” type of hegemon who believes the hegemon has the power to intervene in the international system however it wants. A third perception of U.S. hegemony is the hegemon who uses force willingly against other states who are not compliant to the type of system the U.S. wants to achieve. Finally, the U.S. has been perceived as the keeper of the world order whereas the U.S. is working to better the international system and maintain

norms or values (Heisbourg 2000, 8-16). The different perceptions of the U.S. in the world order show how the power of the U.S. is either continuing or declining. Since the U.S. can be viewed as presenting a social purpose of system maintenance, the U.S. can still be considered a hegemon in constructivist theory. However, the perceptions of the U.S. looking internally and not caring about the relationships with other states makes the U.S. less powerful in the constructivist meanings of hegemony. Thus, the U.S. power decline is best viewed in terms of constructivist hegemony because of the focus on declining power relationships.

The United States has been successful at maintaining power in the international system since the end of the Cold War. The military strength of the U.S. as well as the control over international institutions like the UN has shown that the U.S. is able to maintain power in the uni-polar security environment. The hegemony theories of liberalism and realist have shown that the U.S. is still a global hegemon without many challengers, but the constructivist argument shows a different position for U.S. hegemonic power. The differences in relationships and viewpoints of the United States around the world have made the U.S. less powerful than in the past. Without the strength in the relationships that create power in constructivist theories of hegemony, the U.S. is showing decline in hegemony and allowing hegemonic challengers to occur.

EU Historical Foundations: Why Can The Discussion Happen?

The hegemony of the United States, has, by some scholars, been seen as declining in power over the recent decades. The arguments for U.S. hegemonic decline have been met with theories about rising powers to challenge the U.S. hegemony. The European Union is one such possible challenger to U.S. hegemony. However, in order to understand the potential for the EU has a hegemonic challenger, the history and current status of the EU must be examined. This

section will discuss the historical importance of the European Union. Particular interests of this section will be to review the current legal status of the European Union as a background to the relationship with hegemony theory.

In the winter of 2007, the European Union enlarged again moving from 25 member states to 27. Since 2004, the European Union has grown from 15 member states to include 12 new countries within the institution. The European Union began conceptually after the end of World War II as a way to encourage the growth of the European states, but to prevent the occurrence of another large bid for supremacy on the continent and the possible declaration of another war in Europe. For the initial members, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the cooperation among European states provided just a beginning for 50 years of working together.

The initial organization of the EU, the European Coal and Steel Community was both economically and security related. By tying the European states together, primarily France and Germany, through the two largest industries of war coal and steel, Europe was able to encourage the economic growth of Germany, but control military capabilities (Dinan 2005, 2). The success of the Coal and Steel Community made the possibilities for future cooperation possible and in 1957 the Treaty of Rome was passed. The Treaty of Rome is considered to be the most important founding document to what is now the European Union. In the Treaty of Rome, the European Economic Community (ECC) and Erratum are created (EU "Treaties and Law" 2008). The ECC was established to form the beginnings of a common market. The first step in that process, the creation of a customs union, helped states to cede some levels of sovereignty to the ECC, external tariffs, and establish a greater level of cohesion among member states.

Throughout the next few decades, more states joined the European Union from the original six and by 1995; the European Community was comprised of 15 member states. Perhaps one of the most important years for the European Union was 1992 because during that year the EC formally becomes known as the European Union. The importance of the Maastricht Treaty for European integration is vast. The issues discussed in the Maastricht Treaty range from the beginnings of the monetary union to the creation of social policies, to granting the concept of European “citizenship” (Dinan 2005, 5). The idea of European citizenship is an important concept for the growth of a common European identity and the acceptance of greater European collective power or ideas. By granting individuals within any member state the right to move freely in pursuit of work and the allowance of voting in EU elections no matter where the EU citizen lives, the European Union truly began to embrace the concept of a collective Europe.

Another important concept of the Maastricht treaty was that for the first time in EU negotiations, the ideas of foreign affairs, security, and immigration policies were discussed. By introducing matters that ventured away from economics into the policy discussion of the European Union, Europe was able to see the potential for growth in other areas (Dinan 2005, 5). Although the Maastricht Treaty simply provided a framework of possibilities for cooperation in the sensitive policy areas such as national security, immigration, and asylum laws, by opening the conversation European policy growth was able to happen in subsequent years.

Following the Maastricht Treaty, the European Union adopted the Schengen Agreement, as part of the Amsterdam Treaty, which allowed for the free movement of people across national borders within certain EU member states. Although in 1995 when the Schengen was established, only seven countries fit into the framework, the Schengen area continues to expand so that full

use can be made of the common market and of the conceptions of European citizenship (“Schengen Area” 2007). Additionally, European growth continued after Maastricht because of the ideas regarding EU member state growth, mainly from Eastern European countries. The European Union worked from the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 until the accession took place in 2004 to make 10 new states economically and politically ready for European integration. Another two states joined the EU in 2007, making the total number of member states 27.

Other than the political integration of member states and the 2004 increases in membership, the European Union grew in the new millennium in economic ways. The euro was introduced in 1999 as the new currency of Europe. By 2002, 11 member states had replaced national currencies for the common European currency. Although Britain and Denmark had negotiated opt-outs to the currency in previous negotiations, the euro will be the standard for all other member states once they reach the economic requirements associated with the euro (“The Euro” 2008). The importance of the euro was to completely integrate the monetary policies of most member states. By making one standard currency, the European market was able to lose another barrier to trade and become increasingly competitive in the world market.

The European Union’s history represents a primarily economic nature to the institution. Member states have ceded most sovereignty to the levels of economics creating the common market of free movements of goods, services, people, and labor. Additionally the economic interdependencies of the EU grew due to the growth of the institutions themselves. The European Union is currently comprised of three bodies: the Commission, the Council, and the European Parliament (EP). Each body represents a specific function with the powers being divided differently based on the topic area at hand. The topic areas under EU competency are also divided into three parts. The three “pillars” or issue areas of the European Union are Pillar I

European Economic Communities, Pillar II Foreign and Security Policy, and Pillar III Justice and Home Affairs.

The Commission is the most powerful body in Pillar I of the European Union. In Pillar I, the European Commission can initiate legislation and with input from the Council and European Parliament, then pass different directives and regulations. The Pillar I directives and regulations directly become laws into the European member states. The individual member state laws thus become secondary to the EU legislation in Pillar I areas and if the two would have contradictory statements, the EU law would take supremacy (Nugent 2006, 488). Pillar I shows the true strength of the European Union. For most economic issues in Pillar I, the European Union is able to run the discussion with minimal problems from member state governments. On this level, the EU is truly a supranational body with the member states ceding competency to the institution.

Pillars II and III are fundamentally different in this process however. For both foreign and security policies (FSP) as well as justice and home affairs (JHA) the European Union has very little autonomy regarding the issues. The European Council comprised of state ministers and officials hold the power in Pillar II and III negotiations. For both pillars, the ideas of cooperation and common positions are central to discussion rather than binding decisions made by the EU institution (Nugent 2006, 488). The decisions made by the European Council in both FSP and JHA must be done by consensus to represent any grievances by member states.

While the each of the pillars in the European Union shows the strength and weaknesses of EU integration, the simple fact that discussion is happening should provide hope for greater growth. The Pillar I discussions began in the early 1950s and not until after the new millennium has the European Union really begun to embrace the institutional competencies over

economic/community related issues. Although common foreign and security policies were discussed in the 1950s, no real attempt was made to include those issues into discussion until the Maastricht Treaty. Thus, while Europe is more economically unified than politically, the growth is continuing in all areas.

Future Discussions: What Could the EU Look Like?

The European Union is an organization based on foundations in the 1950s. The EU is continuing to grow in the 21st century to be more inclusive of policies relating not just to the economic foundations of the EU. This section of the paper will focus on the future of the EU with particular emphasis on the increased security and political integration. The importance of the EU future is linked to the possible perceptions of the EU as a hegemonic challenger to the U.S.

The European Union attempted to create a constitution in 2004 just before the arrival of new member states. The constitution, which would have increased the EU's power over Pillar II issues, even created a High Representative for the Foreign and Security Policy. However, the constitutional treaty was rejected by two member states, France and the Netherlands, thus the reforms to increase EU competencies were not ratified (Gwertzman 2005). However, in 2007 during the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council, the idea of a constitutional treaty was rejuvenated.

The importance of what is being known as the Reform Treaty or Lisbon Treaty is expansion of European Union involvement on foreign and security issues. The Pillar II involvement of the European Union will, as the reform treaty states, "...in matters of common foreign and security policy shall cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union's security, including the progressive framing of a common defense policy that might lead

to a common defense” (European Council 2008, 41). By including such language in the reform treaty documents, the European Council has begun to recognize the importance of institutionalizing the common position framework for foreign policy and security issues.

The Reform Treaty has also brought to light the concerns with having a united voice regarding foreign and security issues. Although the European Council will continue to be the controlling factor of security and defense policies, the European Union has decided to include a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The High Representative will be an integral part of the Council for foreign and security matters. The functions of the High Representative will be to help bring foreign and security matters to the agenda in the European Council. Additionally, once issues are on the debate table, the High Representative will try to ensure unity among Council members and perhaps most importantly, “He shall conduct political dialogue with third parties on the Union's behalf and shall express the Union's position in international organizations and at international conferences” (European Council 2008, 42). The position of the High Representative is perhaps the most important show of unity across the European Union in the new Reform Treaty. By creating a position that would allow one person to represent the EU in external contexts on foreign and security policies, the foreign and security sector of the EU is becoming more like the economic sector. Although the High Representative does not have any authority without the consent of the Council, even creating the position is helping to make the European Union a more cohesive body.

The defense sector is another area of increased cooperation for the European Union that has been making progress in recent years. In 1999, the European Union started to review EU defense procedures within member states. The EU, after the Amsterdam Treaty, began the Nice Treaty, which included some provisions on defense and security (“Treaty of Nice” 2008). Once

the EU began negotiations for EU-led operations, agreements with NATO took shape in 2003. As part of a series of agreements, termed Berlin Plus, the EU and NATO negotiated plans of action regarding the sharing of planning capabilities and resources. As part of the Berlin Plus framework, EU-lead operations, even those outside of the auspices of NATO, could be planned using the NATO operational planning capabilities (EU-NATO 2003).

The foreign and security policy, according to the texts of the Reform Treaty is also a step in the process of the “...progressive framing of a common defense policy, which might lead to a common defense in accordance with the provisions of Article 42, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world...” (EU-NATO 2003). While the European Union has not begun to establish an EU-wide defense policy, the provisions by the reform treaty begin to codify the cooperation for defense policies.

The defense policy has begun to change in recent years for the EU member states. Although most EU members are also members of NATO, the EU has begun to increase EU operations separate from NATO Operations. While the EU still maintains NATO to be the foundations of collective defense in Europe, the EU is beginning to create a European Defense Agency (EDA). The purpose of the EDA would be to establish a system for further defense cooperation between member states. The program would promote the harmonization of operational needs of member states, propose multilateral projects between states, and even support greater cohesion in research and development for defense purposes (European Council 2008, 54). However, the EDA has not yet been implemented by the Council and even upon implementation the process for greater defense cohesion would be far from complete. The provisions for the EDA would give member states the option to participate or to stay out of the

agreement. Although the EDA is not close to creating full disclosure of defense information between member states, including the process of defense into the Reform Treaty shows that the EU is showing a greater focus on defense and security.

The further integration of the European Union in the realms of security and defense is helping to create the common identity of the EU. However, identity formation of the EU also needs to take place on the individual level. As such, the European Union is taking steps in the Reform Treaty to improve the 'democratic deficit' that would give the citizens of the EU more control over the institution as a whole (Hix 2008). The EU currently has one elected body, the European Parliament, which has limited powers within the institution. The recent negotiations are attempting to make the European Parliament a more relevant body for the European Union and give a larger voice to European citizens. Although the increased powers of the European Parliament would not give the EP control over sensitive issues like security or defense, increased participation by EU citizens would give the institution more legitimacy across Europe and attempt to make European citizenship an important concept. Having citizens of member states identify with a 'European identity' would strengthen the overall power of the EU and encourage member states to become more involved politically and militarily in EU operations (Mozgan 2008).

The European Union is currently working on a framework built upon economic supremacy. Citizens of the EU are supportive of the institution primarily because of the relative peace on the continent and major economic gains that have occurred since the 1950s. While the EU member states have not given control over the most sensitive issues, those of foreign policy and defense, to the EU level, the member states are cooperating more on the European level. The EU member states are now willing to discuss and formulate common positions on subjects

in the foreign policy spectrum and are actually having dialogue in new areas. The increased focus on EU citizenship is also making the EU a stronger organization and changing focus. By reviewing the 'democratic deficit' and attempting to give the EU the blessing of citizens, the EU is becoming more and more a supranational governing body throughout the member states.

Where does the EU Fit into the hegemony debate?

By outlining the current status of the European Union, the power of the European Union has been seen in both real and future terms. The European Union is growing in importance throughout the international system by engaging as a collective unit in aspects of trade and even defense missions. The European Union can be analyzed using the different variations of hegemony discussed earlier and compared to the hegemonic powers represented by the United States. The goal of this section is to analyze if the European Union has or is working to achieve hegemonic status in any of the three theoretical conceptions of hegemony. The realist argument and focus on security will be examined, followed by liberalism (both economic and institutional), and finally the constructivist framework will be discussed.

The realist discussion of the European Union is generally focused on the lack of an integrated EU military command. While the United States works under one large military framework, the 27 member states of the European Union have different military systems and resources. The non-integrated European militaries are also still members of NATO whereas they continue to work with the United States on many issues of defense and security. For the realists, the lack of a completely integrated structure of EU military automatically rules the EU out of the hegemony discussion. The realist camp, as described by Wofforth, would ideally see EU cohesion when the military powers are merged. The ideas of nuclear weapons being controlled by all states are when the realists see EU challenging hegemony (Wofforth 1999, 31). Again, the

realist viewpoint of military power is narrow and limited noting that hegemonic challengers can only come about when militarily ready and with cohesion. The realist view is very limited in the conceptions of power and may be as relevant in the current structure of the international political climate with changes in power being not as absolute as military superiority and victories.

The EU is working to correct this assumption of realist power. The increase in discussion about security and defense issues shows that Europe has begun to value the collective defense framework. The general perception is that the EU continues to look inward at building the European Union (Hix 2008). However an argument against the internal focus of the EU is the increased focus on the common foreign and security policy as well as the European defense policies. The increase in political and security collaboration shows how Europe has begun to look outward as a group. However, since Europe is not yet militarily as large as the United States, the realist critique of hegemony would continue to leave Europe out of the debate on hegemony. Without concrete collective military action and greater military spending, Europe will never be considered a global hegemon or even a viable challenger to the United States.

The liberal arguments for hegemony are perhaps some of the most important for the European hegemony discussion. The liberal focus on hegemony with focus on institutions and economic growth are important characteristics for the EU. Economic integration is the foundation of the EU and Europe is moving on to new levels of economic growth daily. The institutional level of liberalism, which discusses created collective norms, has also been shown through the EU.

The European Union works as a collective power in the economic areas of Pillar I. The EU, as noted above, has complete control over the economic interests of the member states. One example of the external power of the EU in economic relations is the representation of the EU

(or EC for economic purposes) in the WTO. The EC represents the interests of the institution collectively making trade negotiations with other states on behalf of Europe collectively. The strength of the EC in this area has been apparent and even challenged the U.S. While many WTO suits have been brought against the United States, the U.S. and Europe are routinely filing cases against each other for trade problems. One case that has been especially important to that debate is the Boeing vs. Airbus suit (Irwin 2004, 23). The case has been so large that the WTO has increased staff working on the project. The idea that the EU could compete with the U.S. on trade levels and be doing well just makes the liberal argument of EU hegemony even stronger.

Another facet of the liberal hegemony theory is being able to lead the international system through economics and control over resources. The United States has control over many economic resources, as noted above, but the EU has access to similar markets. The U.S. may still be the leading world economy, but Europe has only been growing while the U.S. has been in a state of decline recently. In fact, the euro has been surpassing the dollar since 2000 and is now worth over \$1.50. The EU is slowly gaining ground against the United States economically (Collins 2006, 28). By no longer needing the resources of the U.S. to be economically successful, Europe is beginning to challenge the hegemony of the United States in the liberal theory perspective.

The liberal theory perspective on the creation of norms and practices through institutions is also a way in which Europe is challenging the United States. The European Union has grown to now encompass 27 member states. In order to become a part of the European Union, these states must agree to certain norms and institutional practices associated with the EU. The spread of EU norms is also moving to states that want membership like Turkey and the Balkans. The participation in these norms for the EU can be represented by the “inclusion” factor of wanting to

join to get the benefits from the institutions, in this case the EU (Hurrell, 2006). By spreading institutions and norms throughout Europe, the EU is showing liberal power.

While the EU has many facets of liberalism in its favor, some liberal theorists still discount the EU as a hegemonic challenger. One problem with the conception of EU hegemony, presented by Koehane, is that the other states within the international system are at an advantage to grow faster than the hegemon (Koehane 1982). Other scholars agree that hegemonic challengers can grow faster because they are not keeping the order together, but rather only need to look domestically to growth and prosperity (Wolforth 1999, 24). The EU has been looking internally since the 1950s and has been building the institutional framework to be successful, which in some ways make the arguments of Koehane true. However, the EU has begun to change its focus, which could again explain the possible increase in the hegemony debate. Simon Hix noted in a presentation on the future of the EU that the EU is going through a shift moving from creating the framework to having it function and using it in daily lives (Hix 2008). The change here means that Europe has created an institution that can function, especially in the Pillar I sector, as a government, which can export norms and economic practices to the international system.

The EU represents facets of liberalism in the international system so that hegemony of the EU could be explained by the liberal theory of increase in economic power and the growth of norms in the EU institution. While the liberal arguments for participation in the EU can explain why the EU is a hegemonic challenge, the constructivist theory also represents why the EU could be considered a challenger to U.S. hegemony. The constructivist theory's discussion of power is the key factor in the argument for the growth of the European Union. The conceptions of power,

relationships within the international system, and self-identity are important to the increasing importance of Europe.

The European Union is exerting power in the international system simply by moving in its own self-identified direction. The European Union has adopted platforms and interests that are unique to the EU and are not necessarily of importance to the United States. The United States has goals for Europe that the EU has not followed. The United States would like Europe to be another source for U.S. power. By asking Europe to increase their military size, the U.S. is trying to exert power against Europe. Although the U.S. encouraging the increased military power seems counterintuitive to maintaining hegemony, if Europe expanded militarily the way the United States wanted, then the EU would be following U.S. leadership in the system (Ciuta 2006, 182). By not increasing military power to please the United States, the EU is showing leadership by itself. Europe is not being lead by the hegemon, but instead formulating its own identity and agenda (Crook 2007, 22).

Part of the European agenda is working with the United States on concerns within the international system. The United States has begun to look to the EU for help in solving problems and concerns. The U.S. and EU partnership has taken place in the Middle East, Kosovo and other situations. In these international areas of concern the U.S. and EU have even adopted different strategies for approaching the situations that have made each successful (Mozgan 2008). The EU is representing a hegemonic challenger in the case of partnership with the United States because of the changing roles of the U.S. and Europe. As other states within the system begin to see the EU identify as a partner of the U.S. and not just another follower of the U.S. system, the power of Europe grows.

The goals of the European Union are another factor that contributes to their possible hegemony. The European Union has become a driving force of policy across the international system and represented leadership in areas where the United States has been increasingly quiet. The European cooperation on these areas has become a source for power as the world is looking for Europe to be a leader when the U.S. is not. One example of this leadership is in the area of the environment. By formulating the world's expectations and helping to draft international agreements, the EU is showing power to influence the world's opinion on the topic, which is the role of the hegemon (Falkner 2005, 590). Although the European Union does not have a common foreign policy, the EU has still worked together on international issues. Jeremy Shapiro of the Brookings Institution noted that the EU cooperates on foreign policy issues around 80% of the time and is able to form cohesive policies that are then transferred to the international system as a whole (Shapiro 2008). Additionally, the EU understands that the collective action of the member states do have a place in the international system. According to Miriam Mozgan of the Slovenian Embassy¹, "Europe sees itself as a leader on issues certain international issues such as climate change" (Mozgan 2008). Having member state governments see the EU institution as a leader in the international arena, the EU is growing in importance. The leadership role, seen both inside and outside of the EU, shows again the growing hegemonic challenge.

By choosing to work on different priorities than the United States, the EU is showing a type of power. Since the constructivist theory of hegemony views power as relational, the EU leadership on international issues such as climate change makes Europe a more powerful state. Additionally, the relationships between the U.S. and Europe have changed on both the governmental and institutional levels. One example of this is the war in Iraq, which although

¹ Slovenia currently holds the Presidency of the European Council and is therefore able to set the agenda for the Council meetings on topics such as foreign policy and security.

split the positions of the EU governments, caused a greater rift between the United States and Europe. The citizens of member states were overwhelmingly together on the issue and represented an EU-wide public opinion (Puchala 2005, 582). The internal and external beliefs that the EU is becoming a leader on international issues and moving farther from the United States on security issues, makes Europe more powerful and places the EU in the hegemony discussion.

The European leadership is also representing the constructivist hegemony theory by how the EU is gaining power. The EU is becoming more powerful because of the constructivist argument of the social purpose. States follow the EU because of what they can gain from the EU and not because of some external power force. New member states like the Balkan regions and Turkey want to become a part of Europe because of what Europe can offer. The EU has maintained peace between member states due largely to the common identity of the member states and having common goals on issues such as economic policy and the environment. Collective European identity is growing with roots in the economic sector. The EU member states already have similar systems of capitalism and economic policies, which allow them to be, integrated economically (Anderson 2008). The social and political identities are continuing to grow and are working towards integration like the economic sector, in which states have different systems based on their internal situations but also have a collective identity, as well.

The problems with the EU in the hegemony debate are still present. One problem with classifying the EU as a hegemon is the lack of complete cohesion on handling sensitive international security concerns. While, as Shapiro stated, the EU is 80% together, the 20% disagreement comes on issues such as Iraq, Iran, and high importance issues (Shapiro 2008). Additionally, the priorities of member states may differ across issues making certain situations

important to some member states, but not all (Princen 2007, 28). The lack of consensus is a problem for the EU hegemony debate because if the member states cannot agree on the sensitive issues, then the power for those issues is weakened. Without the common identity and relational viewpoint, the EU has no power, according to constructivist hegemony theory.

The social purpose aspect of constructivist theory can also be called into question regarding the EU. Since the EU collective identity is not possible in all areas of foreign and security policy, the social purpose of each member state is different for those issues. For constructivists, the hegemon in the international system has a social purpose that is a form of the power. Without the social purpose, the EU is not as powerful since member states have established different relationships and power structures with sensitive issues. Additionally, the social purpose is not always present because the policy agendas in each member state are different. The EU is only strong and can represent a hegemonic challenge on issues that all member states agree upon. Thus, the EU cannot, according to constructivist hegemonic theory, be a true challenger to U.S. hegemony without more cohesion on foreign and security issues.

The concerns regarding the possibility of the EU as a hegemonic challenger are sound arguments. However, the overall perception of the EU continues to grow in favor of continued EU power. With the EU becoming more cohesive in security and defense areas, the possibilities for more collective action in those areas seems likely. Additionally, the EU is continuing to be a leader in economic and environmental policies, which make the EU stronger and more powerful to states across the international system. The leadership role taken by the EU in certain issue areas combined with the partnership with the U.S. in other areas makes the EU powerful. The power possessed by the EU in collective identity and social purpose also make the EU a possible challenger for hegemony.

Conclusions: What has really been learned?

The concept of hegemony within the international system is a hotly debated topic. However, hegemony is not an easily defined topic and has different definitions depending on the theoretical explanations used to discuss the concept. The realist theory of hegemony is perhaps one of the most cited hegemony theories. The idea of military power and supremacy making a state the global hegemon is important for some theorists. Other theories however, note the importance of economics and institutions in forming hegemonic status. The liberal theories, which focus on economic power and norm-framing institutions, are also plausible explanations of hegemony within the international system. The final theoretical viewpoint has just begun to gain importance in the discussion of hegemony. The constructivist framework, which emphasizes power construction and hegemonic social purpose, is a new way of looking at hegemony that is not a concrete of a concept of power.

Although each theoretical explanation is important to the system, the concept of constructivism in the hegemony literature proves to be most inclusive and best analyzes the rise and fall of hegemonic powers. Since the structure of power in the constructivist theory is not simply focused on military or economic power, the constructivist theory of hegemony allows for different states to compete for hegemonic status. The constructivist framework includes the conceptions of power included by the liberal and realist arguments, but by making power as an identity, proves to be more representative of the system of hegemony.

The hegemonic status of the United States appears to be unquestionable in the realist definition. The U.S. maintains the military superiority over all states within the international system. In the liberal theory, the U.S. is also still the global hegemon by maintaining power over international institutions and governing the norms of the international system. However, the

hegemonic decline of the United States can be seen through the constructivist framework. By looking at how different states perceive the U.S., the power of the U.S. is waning. Not all states continue to view the U.S. as a leader in the international system and see the U.S. looking more internally than externally. By not leading the system or being perceived as such, the U.S. is losing hegemonic power in the constructivist standpoint.

The European Union is representing the opposite trends to the United States. The EU is not representing a hegemonic challenge to the U.S. in military terms as the EU is not completely militarily integrated, though working towards more collaboration. The EU is rising to meet the liberal expectations of a hegemon by increasing economic growth and representing leadership in the system for economics. However, the area most covered by the European Union is the constructivist standpoint of a hegemon. The constructivist hegemonic theory best represents the power of the EU because of the EU's relationships and power. The EU has begun to be recognized as a leader in international issues and is developing relationships that are legitimating the power of the EU as a hegemonic challenger.

United States and Europe define themselves differently in hegemony. The differences in theory regarding how theory explains the system and how states use the theories to construct the system are particularly strong with hegemony. The United States seems to have taken on the realist standpoint of hegemony by spending more resources than all other states to secure power. The European Union has shown the constructivist theory of power creation by following its own agenda and paths. The EU seems to be more focused on relationships as sources of power than military expenditures. The view of the U.S. and EU on hegemony do impact what types of hegemony theory these states best resemble, however, since the states have taken on

characteristics of each of the theories, the U.S. and EU have not completely determined which type of hegemony theory is most representative.

The theories of hegemony may differ, but the constructivist theory of hegemony has proven to be the most inclusive and fluid about power conceptions for hegemons. While the United States is still representative of the global hegemon, the power of the U.S. is weakening and hegemonic challengers are emerging. The EU, particularly in the constructivist viewpoint, is rising in power and although the EU is not as strong as the U.S. presently, the EU is continuing to grow in power and importance, thus representing a hegemonic challenge to the U.S. in the upcoming years.

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