

## **SOFT POWER AND HEGEMONY: GRAMSCI, NYE, AND COX'S PERSPECTIVES**

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### **Abstrak**

*Artikel ini menyoroti pentingnya soft power dan hegemoni dalam ranah teori hubungan internasional dan filsafat politik. Soft power berfungsi sebagai strategi politik yang digunakan oleh negara-negara untuk menarik dan membentuk ide-ide di negara lain melalui pengaruh dan persuasi. Demikian pula, konsep hegemoni Antonio Gramsci menekankan pada pengaruh gagasan masyarakat dengan menggunakan kepemimpinan moral dan intelektual melalui konsensus. Untuk memperkaya analisis ini, artikel ini menggabungkan perspektif dari Robert Cox, yang memperdalam pemahaman tentang bagaimana hegemoni terjalin dengan struktur kekuasaan global, kekuatan sosial, dan konstruksi tatanan dunia. Artikel ini memberikan tinjauan teoritis terhadap konsep soft power Joseph S. Nye dan gagasan hegemoni Antonio Gramsci, dengan membandingkan keduanya di tingkat epistemologi ilmu politik, yang mencakup konsep, praksis, dan nilai. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada Soft Power (2004) dari Nye dan Selections from the Prison Notebooks (2007) dari Gramsci melalui tinjauan literatur. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa kedua konsep tersebut memiliki kesamaan, seperti memanfaatkan kepemimpinan intelektual, mempromosikan kesadaran di dalam kelas intelektual, dan menargetkan masyarakat sipil sebagai pemberi pengaruh yang krusial.*

**Kata kunci:** Soft Power, Hegemoni, Konsensus, Nye, Gramsci, Cox

**Abstract**

This article highlights the significance of soft power and hegemony in international relations theories and political philosophy. Soft power serves as a political strategy utilized by nations to attract and shape ideas in other countries through influence and persuasion. Similarly, Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony emphasizes the influence of societal ideas by employing moral and intellectual leadership through consensus. In enriching this analysis, it incorporates perspectives from Robert Cox, who deepens the understanding of how hegemony intertwines with global power structures, social forces, and the construction of world order. This article provides a theoretical review of Joseph S. Nye's soft power concept and Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony, comparing both at the epistemological level of political science, encompassing concepts, praxis, and values. This study is based on Nye's *Soft Power* (2004) and Gramsci's *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (2007) through a literature review. This article concludes that these concepts share similarities, such as utilizing intellectual leadership, promoting awareness within the intellectual class, and targeting civil society as a crucial influencer.

**Keywords:** *Soft Power, Hegemony, Consensus, Nye, Gramsci, Cox*

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**INTRODUCTION**

The impetus for humans to act is the power that exists between individuals and, more broadly, in the nation or other modern organizations. The nation exercises power through two types: internal and external. It is internal when it is bound by law, and there are officials who enforce it, such as the police and coercive rules. It is external in its ability to carry out war with military power. With these two forms of power, the power of the nation is limited to the anticipation of rebellion and externally to the fear of losing the war (Russell, 1997).

Hard State power implies destruction, slavery, and the values that support the existence of the country. Power, in general, is the

ability to influence and control other people to achieve the expected goals. This method can use coercion, or vice versa, by inviting the other party to cooperate. Power is also closely related to freedom (Laclau, 2003). If someone is exercising his power, then on the other side, there will be parties whose freedom is restricted. Based on this principle, power can be a condition that allows for unactualized repression. At the same time, repression practices power and freedom. Even in the most democratic society, this kind of power relationship is practiced.

Meanwhile, in the politics of international relations, power is something that is measurable, concrete, and predictable, more than an action definition (Nye, 2004). This measure can be in the form of resources, territory, economic size, military strength, and political stability. After World War II, relations between countries in the world were not in a state of peace or war (Seton-Watson, 2022). In situations like this, various kinds of thoughts emerge that explain forms of power, where the aim is only one: control of a country. Among the practices of power and the ideology that accompanies it are totalitarianism, imperialism, racism, with various pros and cons of this form of power.

The enforcement of power using military force causes many losses, especially in the material and physical fields. England, for example, which had controlled a quarter of the world, experienced failure because of the high cost of implementing the rules of direct colonialism against its colonies (Pemberton, 2001). Direct control by a country or the commonwealth of its colonies will be effective in the 19th and 20th centuries, but not in the 21st century.

Political philosophy in international relations emphasizes the problem of morality in diplomacy, war, and the concept of justice. In addition, institutions focus on economic well-being, the global environment, human rights, and the relationship between the principles of loyalty by a state and global commitment to morality (Craig, 2013). Several studies have shown that China uses its soft power in countries and regions. For example, China's soft power strategy in the Middle East, which applies the "value" of loyalty,

resistance to radicalism and terrorism, and resistance to US domination (Yulianti, 2018). Other case studies, such as the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), which is a promotion of infrastructure investment at Hambantota Port, Sri Lanka, is seen as China's soft power diplomacy at the global level (Wibisono, 2019).

The problem is when these values are then used as a tool to expand power, which at a certain stage can be done through war. Can this be considered as power? Is there power that is mutually beneficial? Can we be separated from the forms of power that use these universal values? The debate on hegemony in international relations lies in how the capitalistic world order is created and the social power relations between countries in the world. The question is how can the power relations between the State and civil society be transformed into relations between States? How can norms, institutions, and practices be implemented? What power has the emancipatory potential to change and transform the existing order?

This is a theoretical study of the interplay between control and freedom that unfolds, shaping political philosophies, international relations, and societal norms. The narrative of power extends beyond measurable resources and military strength, encompassing softer dimensions of influence and diplomacy. China's strategic use of soft power exemplifies this yet raises critical questions regarding the potential exploitation of universal values for geopolitical gain. The discourse surrounding hegemony prompts contemplation on the creation of global orders and transformative potential within power relations. In navigating these complexities, the imperative lies in understanding how power relations between States and civil society can evolve, and how norms, institutions, and practices can be harnessed to foster a more just and equitable world. The quest for emancipatory potential becomes paramount in envisioning a future in which power serves not only dominance, but also the collective well-being of humanity.

This article aims to demonstrate the parallelism between the concept of soft power in international relations and Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony. Employing a qualitative

methodology, the study involves a comprehensive comparison of these two concepts. The author utilizes various references from books as the primary source for data collection and analysis. The article is structured around key themes such as power in international relations, Joseph Nye's perspective on soft power, Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Gramscian analysis in international relations, production of social relations, hegemony, and world order, and comparative analysis of the concept of soft power with hegemony. Through this organized framework, this article delves into a nuanced discussion and analysis, shedding light on the interconnectedness of these two influential concepts.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Power in International Relations and Gramsci's Hegemony

Power in international relations is also known as soft power. This notion of soft power is promoted by Anglo-Americans in terms of the legitimacy of power and the policies it issues. This type of thinking is also used to explain the motives for the work of non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International, the International Red Cross, Greenpeace, Doctors without Borders, the UN Human Rights Commission, and other international organizations. Soft power is the ability to get what you want through the influence of interest and not by coercion or payment. This concept emerged from the culture, political ideals of a country, and its policies (Nye, 2004).

The concept of soft power can be traced from the neo-Marxist political philosophy of Gramsci with his concept of hegemony. In a socialist view, they see that the state is an instrument of class management that can also determine the political structure. According to Marx and Engels, the state is a tool for repression. The definition of the state as an institution that explains class rules is used in terms of the individual's relationship with the state, or more precisely: class with the state.

The state is no longer seen as a regulatory instrument between classes, but rather as an instrument for regulating relations between

a country and other countries, where one of them is subordinate to the other. This could explain the existence of a capitalist state. Class theory cannot explain domination, power struggles, wars, and other indications of violent power, but it can explain why oppression occurs between countries.

Relations between countries according to Marxists cannot be used if the two countries have equal strength. Because the theory of conflict between classes can only be explained if one class dominates. Then, the comparison between the theory of soft power and the struggle between these classes can be used because there is a difference in position between those who influence and those who are influenced.

The term hegemony by Gramsci (2007) is used to describe the ruling class that uses dominant ideology to hide its control over the masses. According to Gramsci, social transformation can only be achieved if society is facing this hegemony. Meanwhile, capitalism, according to Gramsci (2007), controls not only the political and economic fields but also culture, where bourgeois values enter and are then accepted and become values that are considered reasonable. This is where the role of intellectuals is, namely translating the interests and values of a social group into general values. The cultural consensus resulted in the working class identifying goods and needs with the bourgeoisie and the working class maintaining the status quo rather than rebelling.

According to Gramsci (2007), every class that wants to dominate modern conditions must transform their thinking from economic interests to leadership that uses intellectual and moral interests. This amalgamation of various social forces is known as the historical bloc. Historical blocs form the basis of social arrangements that continually reproduce the hegemony of the dominant class through the intersection of institutions, social relations, and ideas.

## **2. The concept of soft power according to Nye**

The term soft power was popularized by Nye, a lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, in providing input to the

United States government. Nye distinguishes between hard power and soft power to further strengthen the reasons for using soft power. Military power and economic power are examples of hard power. Power in this way is used to force others to change their positions. Meanwhile, soft power depends on the ability of a country to set the political agenda in a way that can be a preference for other countries. The ability to make these preferences can be linked to more subtle powers, such as culture, ideology, and institutions. Things like this can inspire other countries and indirectly.

Soft power does not depend on hard power because its presence in a country cannot always go hand in hand. For example, the soft power possessed by the Soviet Union was decreasing along with the increase in its economic and military resources which were growing. Hard power and soft power are related because both are aspects of the ability to achieve a goal through the influence of the actions of others.

When a culture appeals to other people, a developing country can form international rules that are consistent with the values of that culture. The effectiveness of this culture depends on the context in which it was implemented. For example, an American film that makes American culture attractive in Latin America or China can have the opposite effect if it is shown in Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, and this results in a weakening of soft power.

Culture cannot be simplified into popular culture and mass consumption, but rather culture, which has a set of values and practices that create meaning in society (Nye, 2004). Political values that are already held by a country can be a factor in the influences of soft power. A policy that seems hypocritical and based on a narrow nationalist approach can also weaken soft power. For instance, America's decision to attack Iraq in 2003. Most Americans reject President Bush's decision but are not against America as a whole. The public can differentiate American society and culture through policies implemented by the government.

Foreign policy which is seen as a legitimacy and has moral authority also influences soft power. This foreign policy, for example, is to promote peace and human rights. It can be used as a preference for other countries. The factors that can weaken soft power in this case are when the policies issued are not in accordance with the practices carried out by the citizens of the country. For example, consider a Hollywood film featuring a fundamental Christian group that views Islam as an evil religion. This is outside the government's control in a liberal society, but this has weakened soft power and changed relations with the Islamic states (Nye, 2004).

Soft power is not the same as the influence. Influence can depend on hard power through threats of military and economic action. Soft power is more than just persuasion or the ability to move people through an argument. Soft power refers to the ability to attract ideas.

The United States has long practiced soft power. Quoting President Dwight Eisenhower's speech (1954) when the United States assisted France in the war against the Vietnamese Communists: "as the most powerful of the anti-colonial powers .... [This] moral position of the United States was more to be guarded than the Tonkin Delta, indeed than all of Indochina."

In this 21st century, the proposals offered by Nye to the United States in exercising its power, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, have increased rapidly. The United States seemed to concentrate on hard power until the terrorist attacks on September 11. Nye and James Woolsey proposed soft power as a top priority in US security strategy, but due to the natural circumstances of the US public, soft power discourse was neglected. Even after the events of September 11, the United States is still demonstrating its tough power, namely through propaganda as a war against terrorism. According to the government at that time, both hard power and soft power were very important in the war against terrorism.

America is still trying to maintain its superpower after the September 11 attacks. And the development of American

information and technology on the other hand has created traumatic effects for other countries. America can be said to have been successful in hard power, but it is considered less successful in upholding soft power. This can be seen from the many other countries that refuse to form an alliance with it.

The success of the United States, according to Nye, depends on a deep understanding of the importance of soft power and a good combination of hard power and soft power. In this case, it is impossible to carry out soft power without hard power. Hard power is used as a "deterrence effect" against other countries.

The United States has achieved its heyday in the military field, but hard power is not the main factor for the United States to become powerful, but rather a policy that is global in nature and can force other countries to be able to agree with America's values. Such things have not been developed by the United States in the 21st century.

### **3. Gramsci's Hegemony**

The notion of hegemony is widespread in *The Prison Notebooks*. When Gramsci kept records in prison, he did not have proper tools. Therefore, his ideas were not regularly written in a logical order. Only the publishers—who only selected about a fifth of all the notes—organized the texts according to main themes (Suseno, 2016).

There are three main interpretations of Gramsci's thought. First, orthodox thought, or the Leninist school, which sees Gramsci as a follower of Lenin, translates the Bolshevik experience in Russia to the conditions that occurred in Italy. The consequence of this interpretation is that they see hegemony as a concept of Lenin's dictatorship of the class proletariat. Second, seeing that Gramsci's theory of hegemony is a type of totalitarian Marxist thought, interpreters belonging to this group are basically anti-Marxist writers. Third, being in a middle position between the two interpreters above, namely seeing Gramsci in the context of the

importance of the moment of approval and moral and intellectual leadership (Fontana, 2002).

The term *hegemony* was first used by Plekhanov and other Russian Marxists in the 1880s to denote the need for the working class to form alliances with the peasantry to overthrow the tsarist movement. The working class must develop national strength, struggle to liberate all oppressed classes or groups. Concepts like this were later developed by Lenin. According to Lenin, the Russian working class made an alliance with the peasants to act as the main (hegemonic) force in the bourgeois-democratic revolution to overthrow the rule of the Tsarist nation. In this way, the working class, which at that time was still a minority group, was able to gain support from the majority of the population.

To understand Gramsci's thought, it is also necessary to emphasize the importance of distinguishing between the base and superstructure. Gramsci criticizes the framework of Marxism as deterministic and mechanistic. The basis, according to orthodox Marxism, is economics. Meanwhile, the superstructure includes awareness, ideology, and culture. Orthodox Marxism sees that the contradictions that occur at the bottom will influence the superstructure.

Meanwhile, what Gramsci wanted was a unity between philosophy and praxis that could be used to carry out a social revolution. According to Gramsci, these changes must originate from the superstructure. What is referred to as the superstructure contains the dimensions of the awareness of the social classes about their position in history and the possibilities that are open to them, even though the lower classes struggle based on that awareness. What in Marxism is considered "upper building" is a key factor in social change.

The role of ideology contained in the superstructure is very important to be able to explain the social revolution at the bottom. Gramsci sees ideology as the science of ideas which must be analyzed historically and from a practical philosophy. Ideology must be able to organize human thought, so that it can be used as a

basis for a mass movement that can accept awareness of its position and struggle. Ideology according to Gramsci should be able to create movement.

Gramsci used the concept of hegemony for the first time in his work entitled *Notes on the Southern Question*. Hegemony, according to Gramsci (1926), is the creation of a system of alliances that allows for the movement of the majority group of workers against capitalism and the bourgeois state. This resistance is carried out to create a social revolution and ensure that workers are more powerful than the classes that become their allies. In addition, Gramsci emphasized the need to build a concept of power based on consensus.

To explain why a mature concept of how capitalism in its mature development must be overthrown, Gramsci (1926) refers to the differences between European and Russian concepts of socialism. In Russia, the revolution can be forced if the state apparatus is captured, then socialism can be realized from above. However, this cannot be done in the West where there is a strong civil society, which is not only controlled by the bourgeoisie, but on the contrary supports and guarantees its position. Thus, any idea of forcing the abolition of capitalism to create revolution through revolutionary action is simply doomed to failure.

The structure (base) and superstructure then form the historical block, in which the contradictions between the constituent sets of the superstructure reflect the social relations of production. Based on this, only a totalitarian ideological system can provide a rational reflection on the contradictions of the structure and represent an objective existence for the praxis of revolution. In this case, totalitarianism is considered a unitary and comprehensive absorption of ideology (Gramsci, 1926).

Meanwhile, the historical bloc is used to support class hegemony, in this case, the bourgeois class. The elements that form the historical bloc are economic, political, and military and are seen as a dialectical process. The bourgeoisie holds onto the hegemony of its historical bloc not because they are in power in the economic

field and are supported by threatening powers by the state, but because the whole society considers this situation of power to be natural.

According to Gramsci, the role of the state is dictatorial, as well as political and civil society. Dictators and political society in this case refer to power, while hegemony and civil society refer to agreement. When a social group can create its socio-political rules and instill moral and cultural beliefs in people's consciousness, then there will be a guarantee of stable and permanent hegemony. Social groups must exercise their moral and intellectual leadership to exert influence over those who still have a particular moral conscience of the world. As feedback, the state then receives an ethical agreement that transforms its repression so that the class can accept it as something that has moral values and is universal.

The state does not completely depend on coercive power but is mediated by moments of legitimacy from agreement and persuasion. Hegemony that has legitimacy in the beginning must be achieved; without this kind of hegemony, revolutions are more like coups that will again produce political and social patterns from existing power relations.

According to Gramsci, power is born from the monopoly of knowledge by the ruling class, so there needs to be a fundamental change in the relationship between humans and knowledge in the transition to socialism. Gramsci made observations of their role in society and their relationship with the labor movement and revolutionary parties.

Gramsci (2007) rejects the traditional view of intellectuals consisting of literary experts, philosophers, and artists. Intellectuals are not characterized by intrinsic thinking activities that are shared by all people but by the functions they carry out. Therefore, everyone is intellectual because they have a function in society.

With this understanding, Gramsci broadens the definition of intellectuals, namely, all people who have a role as organizers in all levels of society, both in production as well as in politics and culture. Intellectuals are not only thinkers, writers, and artists but also

organizers such as civil servants and political leaders, and they are useful not only in civil society and the state but also in the means of production as engineers, managers, and technicians.

Furthermore, Gramsci distinguishes between organic and traditional intellectuals. Each class creates one or more intellectual strata that give it equality and awareness of its own function not only in the economic field but also in the social and political spheres. Intellectuals do not form a class, but each class has its own intellectuals.

Traditional intellectuals are people who become organic intellectuals in a feudal model of production, such as the petty bourgeois production model (*petite bourgeoisie*) in the interior of Italy (Gramsci, 2007). Traditional intellectuals position themselves as dominant social groups that are autonomous and independent. Besides, they are people whose position in society has a certain inter-class circle.

Meanwhile, organic intellectuals are political organizers who at the same time are company leaders, wealthy farmers, housing managers, industrial commercial rulers, and so on. They are aware of the identity of the represented and the representing, and are the real and organic vanguard of the top economic strata to which they belong.

The function of the organic intellectuals of the capitalist class is as class agents in organizing hegemony in civil society and the state apparatus. The role of organic intellectuals is to support class hegemonic positions through intellectual-philosophical reflections. Organic intellectuals are in the working class and fight for the interests of workers. Workers must be able to produce their own intellectuals to defeat the bourgeoisie.

Gramsci (2007) sees that philosophy is not just an abstract consciousness but a concrete social activity, to which everyone is bound. Ideology was originally common sense as the acceptance of understanding through the unconscious. This common sense is a complementary aspect of ideological struggle.

Organic intellectuals can express objective societal tendencies. Simultaneously, it takes sides and is driven by the same passion and emotions as the working class. They can express what is experienced by the people, both in the language of philosophy and language that is understood by ordinary people. This is what distinguishes it from traditional intellectuals, which are only found in ruling groups who tend to isolate themselves from society and form a separate layer floating above society.

The stability of the power of a class is a dialectic between coercion and consensus. Through hegemony, unity between theory and praxis will be increasingly achieved. To build the consciousness of the working class, a revolutionary party is needed. The task of the revolutionary party is to seize civil hegemony. Through passive revolution or positional war, the party seeks to change people's awareness and make other social classes willing to accept the moral and cultural values of the working class. If the working class has established its intellectual and moral leadership, it means that they are already in power because they are supported by other social classes. Thus, in building socialism, the working class no longer needs to rely solely on coercion, as did the communists in Russia.

The concept of passive revolution is tentatively related to war of position as a form of political struggle in relatively stable periods between fundamental classes. Gramsci's concept of passive revolution derives from a political principle: that no social formation is lost if the productive forces within it are still looking for space for further movement, and that society is not responsible for solutions to conditions that are not ready for revolution.

Political struggle is not as easy as the realist view which sees that when military war has succeeded in carrying out its strategic objectives then peace will be created. But it is more complex where when an area has been controlled then the possibility of its people to rebel still exists. The struggle continues in the political realm. For that, we need a war of position. Gramsci gave an example of the boycott and struggle carried out by Gandhi in India as a form of war of position. But the war of position carried out by Gandhi according

to Gramsci was very naive, because it involved religious interests in it.

The concept of war of position is more important than war of movement to ensure ideological hegemony in society. The role of intellectuals is very important here because hegemony is obtained and strengthened through education. Intellectuals must not lose touch with the masses. Their ideas must be tested on the common sense of the people. Because hegemony is becoming increasingly consensual, the relationship between the leading and led must be democratic.

#### **4. Gramscian Analysis in International Relations**

Robert Cox (1983) looks at the debate between hegemony, world order, historical change, globalization, and structural change. The Gramscian view of international relations theory places more emphasis on the area of hegemony that appears in agreements and is manifested in the acceptance of ideas. This acceptance is then supported by material forces and institutions established by social power. These activities are led by a country and then projected onto a wider world scale. Through hegemony, the world order is expected to create conformity between the configuration of material power, the collective picture of the world order (including norms), and a set of institutions that contain universality (Cox, 1981).

Hegemony in this sense is a form of domination, but rather a consensual state. Hegemony is more specifically defined as how a world order is created based on values and understanding that permeate the natural state of that order. It must also be considered how intersubjective understanding can be shared in social relations and then shape reality. The notion of reality here is not only the physical state of human action, but also includes the institutional, moral, and intellectual context that shapes thought and action. Hegemony can enter through the structure of society, culture, gender, ethnicity, class, and ideology.

Hegemony in the social structure is formed in three parts: (1) Social relations of production. It includes the totality of material

social relations incorporated into institutional relations. (2) The form of the state as a particular form of power includes a complex historical state-civil society contingency. (3) A world order that not only represents a phase of stability and conflict but also a scope that allows alternative thinking to the world order.

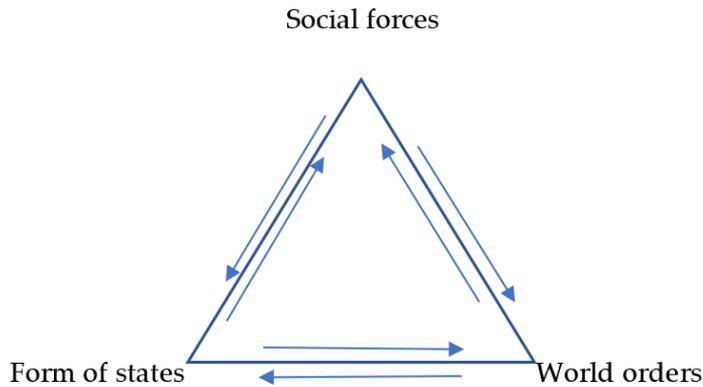


Fig 1. Hegemonic Social Structure

With these three areas, the social relations of production, the form of the state and the world order will be reciprocated in combination to create historical structures. Idea is understood as an inter-subjective understanding that is in line with the collective picture of the world order. Meanwhile, material capabilities refer to resources that are accumulative in nature. The institution joining the two previous elements is the stabilization of the order.

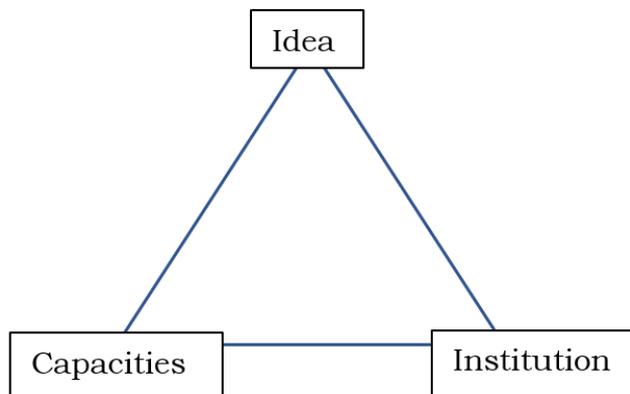


Fig 2. Dialectical Moments of Hegemony

### ***Production Social Relations***

Cox (1987) looks at the pattern of production relations departing from an analysis of operations and mechanisms of hegemony. Production relations do not have to relate to things that are economical in nature, because production is not only understood as an effort to produce goods and consume them, but in a broader sense than that. Production includes the reproduction of knowledge and social relations, morals, and institutions, which are prerequisites for producing physical goods.

This pattern refers to the model of social relations of production, which are collected in a configuration of social forces that are bound up in the production process. By looking at the different models of social relations it is possible to consider how changes in the relations of production may arise within social relations. This becomes the basis of power in the State and then forms the world order. The reciprocal relationship between production and power is very important.

To examine this relationship, the focus is on how power in social relations of production can appear in certain social relations, then how this social power becomes the basis of state power and how this can then shape the world order. This framework works within the social ontology of historical structures.

In the contemporary era, the focus on exploitation and resistance can guarantee that social relations are not necessarily simplified to material aspects, but also include other forms of identity: ethnicity, nationalism, religion, and gender. In other words, issues like peace, ecology, ideology, and political values are not ruled out but become the basis of awareness in social reality, which is formed through the process of production (Cox, 1987).

### ***Form of state***

Changes in social relations give rise to a new configuration of social power. The state cannot be simplified into a given institutional category, but rather a historical and social construction

of political struggle. This will be seen in the creation of historical blocs and by extending the theory of the state as civil society.

Historical bloc, according to Gramsci (1971), is a social force that leads under a national context that creates relationships among other social forces. Not only seen as a political alliance but rather represent a class or faction within a class. This indicates the various class interests that enter society, not only the integration in economic and political ends, but also the moral and intellectual integration in a universal design.

It is the natural state of the historical bloc that makes hegemony possible. Hegemony is created in the relationship between intellectuals and society, and between those who are led and leaders in organic relations. Only in this way can the relationship share a common value within the historical block.

### *Hegemony and world order*

In the contemporary era, the hegemony of the ruling class can manifest itself in international phenomena in so far as it represents a particular form of social relations of production. Once hegemony can be consolidated domestically, it can expand beyond a particular social order and move onto a world scale and then into the world order. By doing this, hegemony can be realized.

World hegemony begins with the expansion of national or internal hegemony created within social classes (Cox, 1983). Outward expansion is done to create a world order facilitated by international organizations. According to Gramsci (2007), organizations such as The Rotary Club and the Roman Catholic Church have an international character but on the other hand are rooted in the State.

In addition, the expansion of Ford through the Fordist assembly plant production by the United States grew into world hegemony and the reign of "Americanism and Fordism" in the 1920s and 1930s which was characterized by mass consumption and mass production was a form of hegemony (Gramsci, 2007).

It becomes evident that the hegemony of the ruling class has contemporary manifestations on the global stage, representing a specific configuration of social relations of production. Once established domestically, hegemony can transcend national boundaries, evolving into a world-scale influence and shaping the broader world order. This process of global hegemony initiation involves the outward expansion of national or internal hegemony forged within social classes, as highlighted by Cox (1983). Such expansion is often facilitated through the establishment and operation of international organizations, as noted by Gramsci (2007). Examples such as The Rotary Club and the Roman Catholic Church, having an international character while rooted in the State, underscore the multifaceted nature of global hegemony. Furthermore, Gramsci's examination of Fordism and the global expansion of the Fordist assembly plant production by the United States in the 1920s and 1930s exemplifies how economic and industrial dominance can translate into a form of hegemony. This period, characterized by mass consumption and production, illustrates how hegemony can manifest and influence the global socio-economic landscape.

##### **5. Comparative Analysis of the Concept of Soft Power with Hegemony**

Soft Power is defined as the ability of international political actors (States and NGOs) to attract other countries to form views that are in accordance with the ideas they want to develop through culture, political ideas, and foreign policy. These values are values that are widely accepted, or commonly known as global norms. These norms include liberalism, pluralism, and autonomy.

In addition, domestic and foreign policies of a country can also affect the strength and weakness of soft power. If the policy is consistent with the values of democracy and human rights and reflects openness to the opinions of others, it will indirectly affect the good image of soft power by the country and vice versa.

The use of soft power becomes important in the 21st century because the information revolution has created virtual communities and networks that eliminate national boundaries. Transnational corporations and non-governmental actors play an important role. The success of the information revolution has made communication less expensive and made recruiting by organizations not just limited locally but more global.

Overall, the soft power political discourse proposal is used to face challenges from the dark side of globalization and the privatization of war. The dark side of globalization can be interpreted as terrorism and fundamentalist Islamic movements. The United States is fully aware that the war against terrorism is a war between two schools of thought within Islam itself, between moderates and radicals.

The comparison between soft power and hegemony is seen in three epistemological frameworks in political science: concepts, praxis and values.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Soft Power and Hegemony

No	Comparison	Soft Power	Hegemony
1	Concept	The ability to get what the State or NGO wants through emphasizing the attractiveness of a country, not on coercion (military force) or providing assistance (economic power).	The ability to create a system of alliances that allows for the movement of the majority group (working class) against bourgeois state capitalism. This ability is based more on leadership morally and intellectually, not based on domination and coercion.
2	Praxis	Formation of environmental preferences that support domestic and foreign policies of a country or an NGO. Components that play a	Creation of awareness together for conscious action in achieving social goals. Intellectuals play an important role.

No	Comparison	Soft Power	Hegemony
		role: multinational companies, universities, foundations, etc.	
3	Value	Culture, political values, and foreign policy	Ideology and interests. Ideology acts as the adhesive force that binds the different classes and strata.

The notion of power relations in soft power has the same pattern as that of hegemony. Hegemony bases its power relations on moral and intellectual leadership, where the unifying factor is agreement and persuasion. As a result, the great powers then achieve their long-term goal of establishing a global world order. Investments that appear (tangible) in short-term effects will reap the results that are not visible (intangible) in long-term effects.

The success of hegemony is when certain groups or social classes can form a value system and transform it into things that are universal. This concept can be interpreted as penetration of complex ideological mechanisms because it consists of various class elements with different interests.

Soft power has the same pattern of work, namely, through the installation of cultural, political, and foreign policy values in civil society. The inclusion of these ideological values prevents the development of groups with conflicting interests within a country.

The hegemonic phase is obtained after previously going through the corporate phase. In the corporate phase, Gramsci describes the history of the birth of the capitalist class consisting of traders and entrepreneurs. The first phase is the formation of trade unions to protect the economic interests of various groups. The second phase of hegemony includes the role of the capitalist class and its members, both in seizing state power and in maintaining the power that has been obtained. The hegemonic class is a class that

gains approval from other social forces and classes by creating and maintaining a system of alliances through political and ideological struggles.

This is in line with the history of the emergence of soft power. Soft power originating from the idealist tradition can be analogous to the corporate phase. The idealist tradition, which is firmly rooted in legalistic morality, yearns for world order and the achievement of global security, has the same goal as forming trade unions for the sake of the economy. The idealist tradition uses the establishment of formal institutions between nations to avoid wars such as the United Nations.

To maintain the power that has been obtained, the hegemonic class creates an alliance system. This alliance system refers to a reciprocal system using persuasion. Leadership is carried out in alliances, which means that there are groups that agree to be led by a group. Likewise with countries that have soft power, they will try to embrace countries with different interests so that they can be given a common understanding in a systemic way.

In this system, the relationship between the leading State and the secondary State is democratic. In accordance with the concept of hegemony that the more the relationship is consensual, the more democratic the relationship between the leading and the led will be.

To strengthen the hegemonic system, organic intellectuals need to function as supporters of class hegemonic positions through intellectual-philosophical reflection. The role of intellectuals is as an agent in a hegemonic system. The creation of such a hegemonic system depends on the realization of an organic and dialectical relationship between the intellectuals and the masses, a relationship which will be thoroughly created in a socialist society.

In the concept of soft power, the role of intellectuals can be analogous to the role of state actors, NGOs, and people who are agents in soft power. It is institutions and people like these that will raise the awareness of the public. This is achieved through ideology and values as a cohesive force in civil society. These institutions operate outside the geographical boundaries of the state and apart

from the coercive power of the state. These values and ideologies will enter the public and indirectly form a new knowledge system for the community. The aim is to maintain power relations through the penetration of knowledge and anticipating unwanted upheavals against opposing ideologies.

## CONCLUSION

The concept of soft power developed by Nye has the same pattern as Gramsci's concept of hegemony through the points of intersection: (1) The use of leadership that is moral and intellectual in its power relations. (2) Generation of class awareness through organic intellectuals, which in soft power is termed global awareness and the actors who play a role are the State and NGOs that penetrate in the formation of new knowledge in society. (3) The use of civil society as an object of power, and not vice versa, using state power. (4) Consolidation of power (the term used by Gramscian: war of position) through education, culture, political values, and foreign policy. Providing financial assistance by international institutions, introducing and developing of a foreign culture as a form of long-term intellectual and cultural investment.

The concept of soft power can explain that investments that are visible in the present have a long-term effect on the sustainability of the world order in the future. We can find the same power relations in the concept of hegemony put forward by Antonio Gramsci. The power relation between soft power and hegemony both work at a subtle level of power. The praxis of soft power is nothing but a form of hegemony of power. Regardless of the right and wrong ideology that is developed, the way it is spread, the reaction of the community, and other political and social psychological problems.

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