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Hegemony Revisited

A Conceptual Analysis of the Gramscian Concept of
Hegemony in International Relations Theory.

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Abstract

The concept of hegemony is indispensable for the study of global politics. Yet, the application of the concept is widely contested and requires clarification. A new framework of hegemony is necessary to account for contemporary global politics. This thesis takes its point of departure in the multitude of definitions of the concept of hegemony. The concept of hegemony is analytically approached through the work of the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. His concept of hegemony is investigated through an in-depth analysis of two critical receptions of his work by Robert Cox, and Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau. Within a combined conceptual analysis of the interpretations, the Gramscian concept of hegemony is deconstructed. A deconstruction of the concept into its constitutive elements provides characteristics to construct a new and comprehensive framework of hegemony in IR. The distinguishing elements of the two interpretations are illustrated by an application to the phenomenon of Arab nationalism. The insights presented through the analysis provide the groundwork to develop a new conceptual framework of hegemony in International Relations.

Key words: Hegemony, Global Order, Gramsci, Critical Theory, Arab Nationalism

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem

Hegemony is a central concept in international relations. The concept of hegemony approaches questions of world politics and global order in the field International Relations (IR). Applying the concept of hegemony serves to understand how dominance is created, maintained and challenged. In contemporary debates, hegemony is primarily defined in realist terms as leadership of one state over others (Ashcroft et al. 2007:106). However, hegemony remains a contested concept with a variety of definitions.

This research project takes its point of departure in the multitude of definitions of the concept of hegemony and aims at illuminating a particular strand of conceptualising hegemony more closely. The concept of hegemony is approached through the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. His concept of hegemony is then deconstructed through an in-depth analysis of two receptions of the concept. Analysing the construction of the concept of hegemony in depth from a variety of perspectives serves to avoid practising conceptual favouritism and instead to argue for the necessity to develop a conceptual framework which encourages consideration of the multiple contributing factors of hegemony. A narrow conception of hegemony fails to incorporate the various dimensions and factors which play a role in establishing and maintaining a position of power in international politics. One main overlooked factor is that hegemony is generally portrayed as created and held by a state as actor, but as can be seen in more contemporary discussions of IR, states are not the only actors in the international arena.

The focus of the thesis is a theoretical analysis of Antonio Gramsci's work in the 'Prison Notebooks' and the relevance of his writings for contemporary IR. This thesis seeks to contribute to the constituting a better-informed conceptual framework of hegemony. It is strongly believed that Gramsci's work contributes to advancing IR theory to make it more applicable to contemporary global challenges and enable a deeper understanding of global relations. Gramsci's writing has

contributed to the understanding of hegemony. His work has inspired a range of scholars, often classified as 'neo-Gramscian' to reconceptualise hegemony and its scope of applicability from a critical theory perspective. These particular critical perspectives are the object of study of the research project at hand. The conceptual analysis is undertaken on Robert Cox's conception of hegemony as well as Chantal Mouffe's and Ernesto Laclau's approach to hegemony. The two diverging perspectives are compared and contrasted with Gramsci's work. These two strands of Critical Theory are chosen as interesting competing approaches stemming from two influential perspectives of neo-Gramscian thought. Robert Cox represents the neo-Marxist strand of the neo-Gramscian school and is well known within the sphere of IR; whereas Mouffe and Laclau represent the post-structural take on neo-Gramscianism, situated in the field of Cultural Studies and not primarily applied to IR issues.

To present the analytical insights, one issue serves as illustrating example to highlight the particular characteristics and diverging applicability of the different conceptualisations of hegemony. The exemplary issue is 'Arab nationalism' as one configuration of pan-nationalism and a particular form of order in the global system. Arab nationalism illustrates one phenomena of global transformation. Throughout the analysis, the different perspectives are applied to explain Arab nationalism through the conception of hegemony. Although, the example of Arab nationalism only serves as a way of highlighting and illustrating the theoretical claims and conceptual arguments. The aim here is not to explain Arab nationalism in its full extent, nor is it seen as the basis of causal arguments. The motivation behind the choice of Arab nationalism as illustrating example lies in the unique configuration of a range of complex elements within the issue.

Hegemony in International Relations

The research takes place at the intersection of the tensions between classic IR and critical IR theories. The main issue Critical Theory accuses classic IR of is the narrow focus on state and inter-state relations in regard to world order and transformations in the global system. The international system constantly

undergoes changes, such as the development of a territorial nation-state system, the increasing role international institutions play in exerting power and general shifts from unipolar to multipolar distribution of power.

The world is facing a global power shift which will restructure the system and influence the dynamics of world politics, due to more interconnected politics, economies, cultures and knowledge networks (Bisley 2010:66-67; Mansbach 2010:108). However, in which way the system is changing is unclear and there are a range of predictions as to how the international distribution of power might look like in an increasingly globalised world. Mainstream IR theories are incapable of accounting for transformations in a globally interconnected world due to the limited scope of factors allocated to the constitution of world order. A conception is necessary which can account for a variety of actors that operate on a multitude of levels. As Gramsci pointed out, understanding “[...] the moment of hegemony is essential to developing a conception of social relations that goes beyond a ‘theory of the state-as-force’“(Gramsci 1995 in Morton 2007:77).

The concept of hegemony is relevant for the study of international relations because it explains the construction and dynamic characteristic of global power. Especially a critical theory of the practice of hegemony is relevant for understanding the changing structure of power in a globalised world (Morton 2007:112). A theory of hegemony centres on the emergence of power and resistance and is therefore a conception that rather than approaching global order as static instead accounts for dynamic distributions of power (Worth 2009:29). Therefore, hegemony is an essential concept to understand contemporary global relations.

1.2 Research Question

Placing the focus on receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony by critical thinkers inherently disrupts mainstream theories and challenges the way we have been talking about hegemony. Challenging mainstream IR approaches implies a reflection of the questions about the construction of the international system in times of globalisation and how to study it. Throughout the historical period of the last two centuries, the concept of hegemony has shifted in meaning. This shift of

meaning of hegemony generates interesting insights about the world. Hence, analysing varying approaches to the concept provides insights relevant for the adaptation of the concept of hegemony to contemporary politics. The process of the thesis is guided by the following research question:

What are the insights gained from different receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony toward understanding transformation in the global order?

The research question builds upon the argument that the notion of hegemony is indispensable for the study of global politics, though the concept itself is widely contested, hence one should strive for a clarification of the concept. Clarification is reached through deconstructing the concept into its constituting factors to then be able to configure a new framework for hegemony in IR. Insights which can be drawn from the perspectives relate to the question of the characteristics of the constituting factors of hegemony.

The research question is developed in accordance with a number of arguments serving as guiding thoughts throughout the analysis. The first argument, presented above, emphasises the relevance of the concept of hegemony to account for contemporary and dynamic global politics. This argument is based on the underlying aim to contribute to the creation of a new framework of hegemony in IR to explain complex issues in a globalised world. To establish a new framework, clear distinguishing features of the conceptualisations of the Gramscian concept of hegemony must be produced to lay the groundwork.

A second argument determines the value of the contribution Gramsci's work provides to contemporary IR scholarship. Gramsci has contributed greatly to the development of Marxist theory by incorporating culture and ideas which can grasp power relations beyond the state and the economy, and emphasises the role of civil society (Schwarzmantel 2009:3). Gramsci's ideas offer a perspective, fruitful to illuminate the problem areas of the contemporary political and social world. Gramsci's work inspired the so called neo-Gramscian scholars which are primarily

concerned with a new structure of international power and world order. “Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, extended to the international sphere, has thus proved to be an indispensable tool for describing and analysing world politics“ (Schwarzmantel 2009:7). One of Gramsci’s main contributions is the importance of ideology in maintaining class rule and in bringing about social change (Steans et al. 2010:112-113). Furthermore, Germain and Kenny (1998:5) argue that Gramsci’s work “[...] provides an ontological and epistemological foundation upon which to construct a non-deterministic yet structurally grounded explanation of change.” The Gramscian notion of hegemony additionally extends the classical IR understanding of hegemony with a historically specific category beyond a state-centric approach (Femia 2005:341).

A third argument proposes the necessity of aspiring toward conceptual pluralism to produce a new framework of hegemony. Conceptual pluralism counteracts conceptual favouritism which is a central dilemma in IR theory. In other words, the aim of this thesis is not to create a new framework of hegemony but rather contribute to establishing the groundwork by fleshing out the essential characteristics of hegemony by emphasising the nuances of each reception of Gramsci’s approach. A combined conceptual analysis of the characteristics, of each reception of the concept, combines the arguments stated above, by emphasising Gramsci’s contribution to IR scholarship and at the same time aspiring toward conceptual pluralism in the process of producing a new framework of hegemony.

1.3 Research Design

To begin with, the state of research, consisting of previous research on hegemony and on Gramsci’s work is presented. This chapter serves the purpose to introduce Gramsci’s work and formulate an introduction to his concepts developed out of my own reading of his work and secondary literature. After that, the overall relevance of hegemony for IR is outlined. The next chapter is dedicated to exploring Arab nationalism. This chapter briefly defines and explains the development of Arab nationalism. It is relevant to lay out the background of this global issue to provide the reader with the knowledge of what dimensions of Arab nationalism will be used

to highlight the conceptual insights drawn from the analysis. After that, the methodological implications are discussed. The main methodological approach is conceptual analysis and the material will be approached through intertextuality as analytical tool. In addition to the method, in this chapter the limitations and ethical considerations regarding the research process are addressed.

Building on this and bearing these considerations in mind, the Gramscian concept of hegemony is introduced. Through close reading, an in-depth understanding of the various factors included in Gramsci's development of the concept of hegemony is established. Gramsci's conceptualisation is followed by the examination of the receptions of Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Applying conceptual analysis combined with comparative analysis in this chapter emphasises the nuanced differences between the various understandings and applications of the concept of hegemony. A comparison of these nuanced differences offers the possibility to formulate specific characteristics of each theoretical perspective. The specific insights will be illustrated within the process of analysis by applying the varying approaches to the global issue of Arab nationalism.

2 STATE OF RESEARCH

This section provides an overview of the scholarly work on the concept of hegemony, beginning with a historical background, a variety of understandings and ending with its use within IR theory. The understanding of hegemony differs between different schools of thought. Some common features are observed, such as the exercise of a certain degree of power, but not in terms of direct control. Though, the exercise of power is defined in different terms in each theory, broadly speaking, realism focuses on coercion, neo-liberalism centres on consent, whereas Gramscian scholarship incorporates both coercion and consent. The approaches within IR are presented below in a simplified manner, attempting to incorporate a diverse body of scholarship. This literature review is not exhaustive but exemplifies the range of work in IR that has engaged with the conception of hegemony.

2.1 Realism

In realist theories, emphasis is placed on power, anarchy and the assumption that power in the world is held in balance between multiple powers (Morgenthau 1960; Waltz 1979 and Mearsheimer 2001). Realism is concerned with the pursuit of power and national interests struggling for security. Since, in realist understanding, conflict is inevitable, every state has to be its strongest self to avoid war (Steans et al. 2010:54). The main point, in which neo-realists differ from classical realism is their strong emphasis on the “[...] anarchic structure of the international system and the impact that the structure has on the behaviour of states” (Steans et al. 2010:55). The condition of anarchy refers to the lack of a central authority at the global level to regulate relations between actors. Albeit, realism places great emphasis on the role of power to understand international behaviour, power is defined narrowly as hard power, military or physical power (Steans et al. 2010:57).

The realist perspective explains the distribution of power in the international system through the concept of ‘balance of power’, “a mechanism which operates to prevent the dominance of any one state in the international system” (Steans et al. 2010:61). “Neo-realists employed the concept of ‘hegemony’ to describe a situation in which one state is dominant in the international system” (Steans et al. 2010:67). “Neo-realists frequently cite two major phases of hegemonic domination (pax-Britannica and pax-Americana) which describe the periods of British dominance over the global economy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and US domination in the post-Second World War period” (ibid). In a realist understanding, the concept of hegemony is employed to show how order in a system of anarchy can be achieved. Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) emerged from a need to explain this order, in the context of a growing liberal international economy in the international state system. HST holds “that there is always a proclivity towards instability in the international system, but this can be avoided if the dominant state assumes a leadership or hegemonic role” creating and maintaining a system of rules providing international order (Steans et al. 2010:67).

Realist theories inhabit the belief in unchanging laws that regulate individual and state behaviour (Steans et al. 2010:53). Hence, the narrow scope of realism does not allow for the possibility of substantive change in regard to their overall assumption of the world, which is especially problematic in the context of globalisation and a continuously changing world.

2.2 Liberalism

In Neo-liberal theories, the focus lies not on the subject but rather on the mechanisms and conditions of hegemony, placing emphasis on how to maintain a hegemonic position, by cooperation and rejecting power politics. The liberal idea reaches back to Immanuel Kant's belief in peace and a just international order established through the regulation of states' behaviour by international law (Steans et al. 2010:28). In the post-war period, the institutionalisation of the principles of liberalism in, for example, the Bretton Woods System shows how intertwined the economic order is with the overall political order in the international system. Scholars of International Political Economy emphasise the relevance of analysing economy and world order as co-constituting factors (Steans et al. 2010).

Liberals understand state and power in international relations similarly to realist thinkers. Here the emphasis lies on pluralism as diffusion of power and state autonomy towards its own citizens and toward other states. Liberals differentiate between the state and civil society, a distinction which is lacking in realist conceptions of international order. One of the main features of neo-liberalism is the possibility and emphasis of cooperation in a system of anarchic states and the complex interdependence of institutions (Steans et al. 2010:39).

Neo-liberal institutionalists contest the neo-realist assumption of the necessity of a dominant hegemonic state for international order and instead argue "that successful cooperation was not solely dependent upon the existence of a hegemon [...]" (Steans et al. 2010:42). As advocate of neo-liberal institutionalism, Robert Keohane (1984) explains hegemony as economic dominance, achieved through superiority of material resources. Although, the focus lies on economic factors, Keohane (1989) defines hegemonic power as one actor holding enough power to create a

particular international rule and to maintain this rule by ensuring others follow the hegemon.¹

Similar to the realist approach, many critics have voiced concern about the sufficient applicability of liberal and neo-liberal principles to explain contemporary world order. A broader claim against liberalism has been made on the grounds that liberal principles demand to be considered universal, but they are only characteristic for a particular group of people at a particular period in history (Steans et al. 2010:49). Marxists argue, that a pluralist view misses the fundamental issue of inequality between groups at the international level (Steans et al. 2010:50).

2.3 Structuralism

In comparison with realism, structuralism shares the emphasis of conflict being structural; and with liberalism, the interconnectedness of international economic relations and the role of non-state actors (Steans et al. 2010:75). The structural approach is mainly concerned with relations of domination and dependence and global economy as conflictual system (ibid). The central influence in structuralist thought is Karl Marx. One advocate of structuralism is Louis Althusser, who argued that all parts of a system, economic, political, social and legal are intimately connected and can only be understood in relation to their function in the system as a whole (Steans et al. 2010:79). “Structuralists argue that global economic relations are structured so as to benefit certain social classes, and that the resulting ‘world-system’ is fundamentally unjust” (Steans et al. 2010:75). Lenin expanded Marx’s ideas toward analysing international capitalist expansion and inter-state conflict (ibid. 80). Power to structuralists is “[...] embedded in social relations; that is, it is part of the structure” (Steans et al. 2010:90). This understanding of power includes the notion of persuasion or influence, exerting power not solely through coercion but also by ideology.

¹ Hegemon: The term ‘hegemon’ describes a subject position, a hegemonic actor. Though, this term is as contested as hegemony itself and the definition differs across the different theoretical perspectives.

What this theory lacks is an approach as to how one can account for change in the system of international economic and political order. However, structuralists introduced the approach of interdependent economic and political spheres that shape the global system. Structuralists attempt to incorporate some form of identity, nevertheless the primacy of social class and class struggle remain the main driving forces for the world system (Steans et al. 2010:98).

2.4 Critical Theory

Introducing Critical Theory presents the transition to the relevance of this work to advance IR theory on world order. There is not one critical methodology or epistemology, rather the debate offers a variety of insights built around elements such as reflexivity, emancipation and the purpose of knowledge. Critical Theory ties in at the economic biases and shortcomings of structuralist Marxism. Critical Theorists argue that knowledge is always ideological and hence connected with social practice and interests (Steans et al. 2010:105-6). Critical Theory provides alternatives and solutions for a better social and political life, in terms of creating “[...] possibilities of human emancipation from oppressive forms of social relationships” (ibid. 106). This perspective advocates the possibility of change of the structure and how the forces of the social and political system change over time. To grasp forms of domination, Critical Theory scholars emphasise the role of culture and ideology for shaping social order in a global context (ibid. 107). Critical Theory in IR is where Antonio Gramsci can be placed, next to the early Karl Marx, Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas.

The thesis takes its point of departure at the encounter between IR theory and Critical Theory. Defining the methodological implications that are derived from the critical theoretical perspective, the discussion moves broadly towards the purpose of political theory. A critical engagement with political theory “introduces power where it was presumed not to exist before [...]” (Brown 2002:570). Wendy Brown (2002:574) argues, that theory’s purpose is to produce new representations of the world, creating meaning and coherence. Critical theory adheres to explaining the shape in which power relations materialise and what effects these have on the

construction of representations of the world. Thus, a critical study “suggest[s] that we cannot uncritically accept as our starting point the default languages and practices of politics and their rival traditions of interpretation and problem solving inherited from the first Enlightenment, as if they were unquestionably comprehensive, universal, and legitimate, requiring only internal clarification, analysis, theory building, and reform” (Tully 2002:537). The aim must be to reevaluate the meaning of theories and concepts, or as Tully (2002:533) put it “rather, it is the kind of open-ended dialogue that brings insight through the activity of reciprocal elucidation itself.”

The neo-Gramscian scholar Robert Cox, based within International Political Economy, argues that Critical Theory, especially rooted in the ideas of Gramsci and Habermas, serves to further the theoretical understanding of IR and maps out a critical conception of world-order (Steans et al. 2010:115). Cox defines knowledge as always being “for someone and for something” (Cox 1981 cited in Farrands/Worth 2005:54), denying the possibility of objective knowledge. Cox has taken inspiration from Marxist as well as Frankfurt School thought, which emphasise reflexivity and emancipation as essential for critical engagement. Besides Cox, Andrew Linklater and Mark Hoffman are two figures relevant in Critical Theory in IR, taking inspiration from Habermas’s concepts that emphasise dialogue and intersubjective communication (Steans et al. 2010:115). Critical approaches vary greatly from realist understandings; the state here is only seen as one form of political organisation, existing in particular historic circumstances. Critical Theory makes major contributions to IR in approaching world order and institutions through a critical perspective of the state, not just as an actor in the international system but in terms of its’ actions as regulator of capitalism. Critical Theorists are concerned with the nature of change in the structure of the international system. A criticism against the Gramscian strand of Critical Theory is its strong focus on the significance of social class and class relationships, disadvantaging other forms of inequalities, such as gender, sexuality, race or ethnicity.

2.5 Gramsci and International Relations

The thesis focuses on an approach to International Relations via the perspectives of the neo-Gramscian school. This perspective shifts analysis from a state-centric toward a social constructivist approach. Critical Theorists discuss dominant social forces and ideas in IR through the concept of hegemony (Stearns et al. 2010:67). In realist approaches, world order is taken as given, whereas in Gramscian scholarship the contemporary global order is questioned, and it is central to analyse how it has been created. Bieler and Morton (2004) point out that hegemony filters through structures of society, economy, culture, gender, ethnicity, class and ideology and is therefore not simply limited to military as claimed by Realists. Providing a concept of hegemony which looks beyond military power, the Gramscian concept of hegemony stems from a broader focus on the relations and cooperation of political society, civil society and superstructure with structure. Hegemony is based on a combined understanding of coercion and consent and the role of intellectual leadership through material resources and institutions (Bieler/Morton 2004). An alternative approach such as the Gramscian understanding of hegemony and the neo-Gramscian perspectives improve mainstream IR because they centre attention on relations of social interests instead of concentrating on state dominance (Bieler/Morton 2004).

The IR scholar Andreas Antoniadis (2008) argues that traditional IR framing of hegemony, as presented in realism, neo-realism and the neo-liberal tradition is not sufficient to study hegemony in world politics. Elaborating this belief, Antoniadis offers a framework of how to go about approaching hegemony outside the 'IR cage'. He presents hegemony as movement of power and categorises the type of movement. This approach emphasises that it is essential to understand how hegemony operates, how it is produced and maintained (Antoniadis 2008:13). He claims that his categorisation enables an analysis of hegemony that incorporates a range of areas of the different IR theories and their perspectives and concepts to understanding world politics (ibid.). A great variety of scholars have engaged with the Gramscian notion of hegemony. For this paper, two perspectives have been

singled out and will be analysed in more detail, while recognising that there are more approaches and that this review and the analysis are not exhaustive of the scholarly work present in IR today.

An engagement with Gramsci's work contributes to the body of IR scholarship on world order and transformations in the global system through his conception of hegemony. An in-depth analysis of the concept of hegemony in IR draws on the work of Gramsci and scholars basing their approach on Gramsci's contribution to better understand power relations.

3 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The overall aim is to develop a framework of hegemony which can be applied to a greater variety of global issues. To take a step into that direction, the concept of hegemony is analysed. The main methodological approach is conceptual analysis with a comparative tendency. The analysis is conducted with an intertextual approach. The foundation of the analysis is a deconstruction of Gramsci's writing on hegemony, fleshing out the original understanding and historical applicability. This serves as background to analytically compare and contrast two critical receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony. Deconstructing the concept and the perceptions of it is the groundwork to gain analytical insights about the constituting characteristics of hegemony. The characteristics of the concept found in the analysis and their explanatory value are illustrated through the application to Arab nationalism. The example is illustrative in the way that each perspective goes about explaining this particular issue with a different starting point, focus, and logic. The illustration enables the reader to imagine the somewhat meta-theoretical particularities which derive out of the concept analysis between the perspectives in a more realistic and empirically relevant fashion.

The research design is inspired by the model of the IR scholars Barnett and Duvall (2005) and their work in 'Power in International politics'. From their work, I have taken up some of the rhetorical tools, shaping my research method. They formulate three methodological steps which are translated to the project at hand. Through the

analysis of a range of interpretations of the concept of hegemony, the unique and constituting characteristics of each perspective are identified. This multiplicity of the concept of hegemony is illustrated through the analysis of Arab nationalism. The multiplicity of characteristics of hegemony are contrasted to conclude whether one should follow Barnett and Duvall's (2005) argument of finding inherent connections, or if the goal must be to choose the most valuable characteristics and create a new framework of how hegemony functions in global politics.

3.1 Concept Analysis

The purpose of a conceptual analysis is to flesh out the various particularities of the reception of the concepts in the different perspectives. Comparison serves the purpose, as David Collier puts it, of "bringing into focus suggestive similarities and contrasts" (Collier 1993:105).

This thesis emphasises the importance of close reading of texts and the systematic evaluation of a concept. One way of doing this is to highlight the differences within interpretations of the same concept. Concepts play a central role in academia in constructing reality. Hence, analysing the structure of the concept of hegemony, following its historical track of development with regard to changing social and political conditions, to assess its value and contribute to the possibility of developing new conceptual alternative is a necessary objective in this thesis.

An approach based on comparing different works on the same concept benefits the objective by highlighting which parts of the central discourse in the older texts are reproduced and represented similarly and which aspects are silenced (Hansen 2006:58). The attention placed on the work of Critical Theorists in the analysis derives out of the purpose to single out characteristics of the concept of hegemony without the bias and ontological constraints which are in place in the classical IR perspectives. Deconstructing the concept itself, through fleshing out the constituting characteristics serves the purpose of aspiring toward a meta-theoretical level framework that accounts for change in global order. The objective is to create a framework that is neither static, nor confined to particular historic and social circumstances. Applying conceptual analysis and using intertextuality as a tool

offers the possibility to read texts without complying with a general pitfall of political theoretical works of reading “through the dominant categories of a contemporary debate, rather than the ones that might have been prevalent at the time of writing” (Hansen 2006:58).

3.2 Intertextuality

The basis of the analysis and the argumentative claims all lie upon texts. However, the type of text varies between notes and essays to historical texts, contemporary studies, books, and articles. Intertextuality is used as analytical tool to approach the material.

The Bulgarian-French literary and philosophy scholar Julia Kristeva framed the term intertextuality in academia first and foremost in her work on Mikhail Bakhtin (Allen 2000). In Kristeva’s famous article “Word, Dialogue and Novel” she claims that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva 1986:66) which is the basis for intersubjectivity and intertextuality as method. The process of analysing texts with the concept of intertextuality is theoretically and methodologically relevant for conceptual analysis of the Gramscian concept of hegemony. It highlights that texts and interpretations are not only situated within specific historical and social conditions, but also within and against other texts. In this thesis intertextuality is “employed through conceptual intertextuality, where the articulation of concepts [...] rely upon implicit references to a larger body of earlier texts on the same subject” (Hansen 2006:57, sic).

As proposed by Kristeva, this thesis applies a definition of text and intertextuality in the broad sense of the word, referring to more than literary pieces of work and also including conversations and unfinished and often incoherent writings as texts (Moi 1986). In Kristeva’s sense, the concept of intertextuality can be interpreted as referring to an interaction between different texts, implying that a text never stands alone but rather is influenced by and influences other texts, and these other texts are visible within one text (ibid.). I approach intertextuality as a method basing my understanding on Kristeva’s definition. Applying a broad definition of

intertextuality allows the researcher to approach texts and their complex interrelations on many levels. One of these levels is the interwoven function of texts and history (ibid. 39).

Intertextuality as a method expresses how different texts are interrelated with one another and how the knowledge produced through a text is never fully independent but both explicitly and implicitly produced in relation to, and as response to, previous knowledge about the same subject, manifested in texts. Applying intertextuality as analytical tool in this thesis requires some transferring from the popular but highly contested application of the concept in linguistics (Allen 2000; Lesic-Thomas 2008; Kristeva 1986).

Making use of intertextuality as an analytical tool is inspired by the international relations scholar Lene Hansen's methodological use of intertextuality in her work 'Security as Practice' (2006). Hansen takes her inspiration from Kristeva and sees intertextuality as a tool which "[...] highlights that texts are situated within and against other texts, that they draw upon them in constructing their identities and policies, that they appropriate as well as revise the past, and that they build authority by reading and citing that of others" (Hansen 2006:55). The way in which interrelations appear, differs. Hansen (2006) differentiates between explicit references through quotations and direct referencing of other texts; and implicit conceptual intertextuality which describes a connection on the same subject but no direct link. Hansen (2006) argues that political intertextuality constructs legitimacy through referencing older texts, "but it also simultaneously reconstructs and reproduces the classical status of the older ones" (Hansen 2006:57). One must bear in mind though, that a rendition of an older text never fully transmits the original meaning. This is where intertextuality as a method comes in; to be aware of the various levels of reproduction of meaning and interpretation of knowledge in particular contexts. With that said, approaching the concept of hegemony and the differing interpretations of the concept itself through a variety of texts must incorporate the principles and methodological implications of intertextuality as described here. Taking intertextuality as analytical tool enables the analysis to take

into consideration explicit and implicit connections of references. Texts are appropriated and made sense of through intertextual relations and their interaction with other texts, but at the same time in the case at hand, the same subject is reproduced in a variety of ways presenting the reader with the challenge to decide about the initial meaning of the subject. In more detail, the Gramscian concept of hegemony is reproduced in both theoretical perspectives, but as will be shown, these perspectives differ greatly in their understanding and conceptualisation of hegemony.

3.3 Limitations

The choice of theoretical material is limited through the focus on the perception of scholars on the Gramscian concept of hegemony applied in IR theory. Furthermore, another limitation is the sole consideration of Critical Theory approaches.

One limitation relates to the ontological implications. Seeing the world as at least partly socially and discursively constructed, means that “social phenomena exist independently of our interpretation of them, our interpretation affects outcomes” (Marsh/Furlong 2002:31). This implies that the specific interpretation of social phenomena, such as the understanding of hegemony in world order, affects empirical outcomes. Hence, identifying discourses and traditions to establish the particular meanings attached to social phenomena is central to understanding international relations. However, this view also implies that “objective analysis is impossible, knowledge is theoretically or discursively laden” (Marsh/Furlong 2002:26). These ontological claims limit the kind of arguments which can be made, however, acknowledging these biases contributes to a more informed analysis. It has to be acknowledged, that even though the focus of the thesis is to point out the differences between the receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony, these are compared with a biased understanding of Gramsci's work. These limitations are addressed throughout the thesis, formulating claims within a very limited scope regarding the possibility to transfer historic knowledge to contemporary phenomenon, as well as by placing emphasis on particular social and political

conditions, shaping the context of the various writings on the concept of hegemony in different periods.

The choice of theoretical material is limited due to a variety of factors. For once, the focus lies on the perception of scholars of the Gramscian concept of hegemony applied in IR theory, positioned within the field of Critical Theory. Gramsci's theory of hegemony is formulated within the prison notebooks which are written under conditions of censorship, illness and highly limited access to books and source material (Schwarzmantel 2009:2). These limitations have resulted in chaotic and often unfinished essays on a range of issues combined and translated into the prison notebooks. The original writing of Gramsci is in Italian and the process of publishing and translating required some form of interpretation. One example for censorship gives this sentence in which Marxism, Marx, and Lenin are added by the translator: "The problem which seems to me to need further elaboration is the following: how, according to the philosophy of praxis (as it manifests itself politically) [Marxism] – whether as formulated by its founder [Marx] or particularly as restated by its most recent great theoretician [Lenin] – the international situation should be considered in its national aspect" (Gramsci 2010² :240).

Such biases I will try to minimize, but never fully avoid, by placing trust not into one but rather in a great variety of sources on his life and work. Even if I will not claim that my reading of Gramsci is the truthful one, I defend my understanding as useful for my endeavour to read Gramsci in order to apply it to and find relevance for the field of IR. The choice of theoretical material is limited through the focus on the perception of scholars on the Gramscian concept of hegemony applied in IR theory. Furthermore, another limitation is the sole consideration of Critical Theory approaches in the analysis leaving out the theoretical insights of other schools of thought.

² Gramsci 2010 refers to the edition of the Selections of the Prison Notebooks published in 2010. The first edition was published in 1971. All references noted with (Gramsci 2010) refer to Gramsci's work combined in the 'Selections of the Prison Notebooks,' translated and edited by Quintin Hoare & Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (2010, ©1971).

4 ARAB NATIONALISM

4.1 Historical Development of the Arab Region

Some scholars depict the development of the Arab nation back to the period of the Caliphate. “The main arc of the story of nationalism is often seen as running from the French Revolution to the end of the Second World War (1789-1945)” (Hearn 2006:15). However, this accounts for Europe, whereas the time frame in which nationalism became popular in other regions of the world is a different one. Nationalism became popular in the Middle East after the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (1400-1923) (Mandaville 2009:175; Choueiri 2000:83).

The ‘Great Arab Revolt’ is seen as the root of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire bringing about transformations in the region, e.g. “[...] Ataturk’s abolition of the caliphate, the European mandate system and the foundation of new Arab territorial-states“ (Valbjorn 2009:151). Others see the root of Arab nationalism in the cultural revival through Arab movements between 1908 and 1916, where Arab intellectuals formulated specific demands of the Arab nation as a political entity (Choueiri 2000:54). Another crucial period are the years after the Second World War in which the region was dominated by waves of nationalist struggle for independence, and a range of independent nation-states emerged, as reaction to the European colonial domination in the Middle East besides other regions (1945-1977) (Hearn 2006:17-18; Choueiri 2000:175). Arabism gained strong political character between 1900-1945, mostly due to the emergence of independence movements against European colonialism in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia and Morocco. This triggered a call for solidarity among Arabs in the region, creating the idea of a pan-Arab movement in order to overthrow European powers (Choueiri 2000:83). Anti-colonial nationalisms created a range of ethnically diverse states, described as artificial constructions without historical legacy, whose borders are defined by colonial geopolitics and do not regard actual distributions of ethnic communities (Hearn 2006:18; Valbjorn 2009:151). In the Middle East, nations are distinguished from states, meaning, that political and ethnic borders seldom coincide. “Some

nations are stateless, for example the Kurds and Palestinians, whereas some states are multinational” (Mansbach 2010:111). Valbjorn (2009:151) argues that the division into states in line with decolonisation encourages an awareness of being Arab and belonging to an Arab nation. This functions as signifier for identity rather than belonging to a particular state. This awareness was manifested in 1945 in ‘The League of Arab States’ founded as a response to a large public opinion calling for unity and solidarity amongst Arabs (Choueiri 2000:107). As consequence to a division of the Arab world into Arab nationalist or pro-Western regimes during the Cold War, Arab nationalism emerged as socialist movement focusing on economic, social, political and cultural change (ibid. 178, 197).

4.2 Definition of Arab Nationalism

Arab nationalism as ideology is a specific configuration of nationalism. Definitions of nation and nationalism are diverse (Hearn 2006:3). One established idea is, that ‘nationalism’ is what ‘nations’ do (ibid.). Benedict Anderson (2006) defines ‘nationalism’ following Hobsbawm (1983) as “a historically embedded phenomenon that [...] is linked to social and economic modernity” (Mansbach 2010:110). The rise of nationalism is often linked to the development of states as political organisations (Steans et al. 2010:144). Immanuel Wallerstein defines “nationalism [as] a device which is used to strengthen and consolidate the power of the state” (ibid. 97).

Arab nationalism is rooted in the context of the emergence of the modern state system in the Middle East. Arab nationalism is based on shared experiences, “[...] historical and cultural affinity of all Arabic-speaking peoples” (Mandaville 2009:176). Generally speaking, Arab nationalism as ideology is based on a unification attempt of people with a common history, religion, and language, producing Arab national identity (Choueiri 2000:169). Nevertheless, religion does not necessarily qualify as primary determining factor for nationalism (Choueiri 2000:135). Instead, religion plays a secondary role behind language, economic ties, and geographical location. The modern state system, in which Arab nationalism is embedded, works counterintuitive to the aim of this ideology, states as political

superstructures strive to repress the divisions (class, clans, ethnicity, religion, ideology) amongst their people to create one community in a specific territory (Cerny 2010:25).

4.3 Particularities of Arab Nationalism

Arab nationalism contains a range of peculiarities, such as the influencing role of the elite for the strengthening of the ideology with political weight; the emphasis of soft power; the role of religion; and its relation to postcolonial movements. In the process of promoting Arab nationalism in the region an elite, titled ‘intelligentsia’, took on the task to formulate claims and arguments for Arab emancipation. Examples of the elite are the Arab Renaissance Society and the Junior Circle of Damascus (Choueiri 2000:85). The intelligentsia played a central role for the development of nationalist movements and are depicted as “a key structural component in a larger social dynamic” (Hearn 2006:130), achieving support across a range of classes and communities.

In accordance with the relevance of the intelligentsia, another distinct feature of Arab politics is ‘soft power’ creating legitimacy through ideological appeal instead of military ‘hard power’ (Valbjorn 2009:146).

Religion contributes to creating a geographically and ideologically unified community. Religious ideology strives toward an Umma³, it sees the region transformed into one single Arab state (Choueiri 2000:34). “Yet, historically and today, Islam has proven insufficient and in some ways averse to the development of a regional society, in the Middle East or other regions“ (Hashmi 2009:199).

The ideology of an Arab nation served as rhetoric for unification during the anti-colonial struggle of the region. Arab nationalism presented an ideological structure replacing the notions of social order and stability, previously provided by the colonizing powers. Arab nationalism provides an effective discourse for unification for colonial resistance (Mandaville 2009:175).

³ Umma: Islamic Community, distinct from the concept of a nation and instead described as supra-national community with a common history (Mandaville 2009).

4.4 Connection to the Theory of Hegemony

The question remains, how the Middle East is still segregated into separate nation-states and why unity has not been achieved, even though plenty of evidence for the ambition of Arab unity can be found (Choueiri 2000:170). A second question which arises is why the particular form of authority (nation-state system) succeeded in claiming people's allegiances and shaping the region instead of Arab nationalism.

In the analysis, Arab nationalism functions as illustrative phenomenon. Understanding how this particular regionalism or pan-nationalism came into existence is one way of approaching transformations in the structure of the system of states and can bring about examples for change in world order and global relations. The illustration of an analysis of Arab Nationalism shows that the different conceptions of hegemony considered below, recast Arab Nationalism in a different way. However, the aim of this research project is not to illuminate the factors contributing to the complexity of order and inter-state relations in the Middle East, instead the utility of Arab nationalism lies in its opportunity to provide a range of different factors that scholars of world order and IR place their emphasis on. Therefore, the case of Arab nationalism is used as an illustrating example, highlighting the diversity of interpretations of the Gramscian concept of hegemony.

5 THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introducing Gramsci

This chapter introduces the scholar Antonio Gramsci and his contribution to political thought. To begin with, milestones of his life are outlined, however, this is just a basic overview and detailed experiences of his influential life are not presented here. The aim is to outline the historical and intellectual context in which Gramsci developed his ideas. This is expanded by a selection of his conceptual work. The selection of these concepts is based on their connection to the understanding of hegemony and to outline the contribution he makes to contemporary scholarship.

5.1.1 Historical Background

Antonio Francesco Gramsci (1891-1937) was an Italian philosopher and politician (Schwarzmantel 2009:1). Defining moments in his life were “[...] the First World War, the Russian Revolutions of 1917 [...] the growth and coming to power of Fascism in Italy and later in Germany, the formation of Communist parties throughout Europe as part of the Communist International, seen as an agent of world revolution, and the failure of revolution, inspired by the Bolshevik model, to spread beyond the borders of what became the Soviet Union” (ibid.). Gramsci himself was part of the Third International Marxism; he was founding member and for a period of time leader of the Communist Party of Italy (1921-1926); and he was imprisoned by Benito Mussolini's Fascist regime (Morton 2007:81; 88). Major historical themes that he was concerned with in his writing are the Italian Risorgimento⁴; the role of the Renaissance in shaping the Italian state and European state formation; as well as the problem of the ‘southern question’ producing uneven development in Italy and beyond (Morton 2007:76).

During his time in prison, he produced the now famous prison notebooks (Morton 2007:88). His work gained attention for the first time in Italy between 1947 and 1951 when his prison writings were published in six volumes (Buttigieg in Morton 2007). This stirred a body of scholarship on the concept of hegemony, the state and civil society and Gramsci's views on Italian history of unification and his revised version of Marxism and work against Benedetto Croce's philosophy besides other aspects of thought (Buttigieg in Morton 2007). The second wave of interest in Gramsci's work occurred in the late 1960s and 1970s, in the context of Eurocommunism and ‘western Marxism’ (Buttigieg in Morton 2007). A publication in English of the prison notebooks in 1971 started another wave of interest and enabled serious study and analysis of Gramsci's work in the Anglophone world. In the 1980s, Gramsci's work became popular in cultural studies and continued to feed material to scholars interested in questions of power (Buttigieg in Morton 2007).

⁴ Risorgimento: The 19th century movement for Italian political unity where unity was achieved through the notion of ‘trasformismo’: Attempt to “remove substantive differences and establish convergence between contending social-class forces [...]” (Morton 2007:98).

Today, Gramsci is considered one of the most influential Marxist thinkers. His particular contribution to Marxism is embedded in his aim to develop traditional Marxism beyond economic determinism (Morton 2007:1).

When Gramsci's Prison Notebooks were published in English in 1971, politically the world was concerned with the Cold War which opened up space to challenge the status quo on both sides, challenging a dichotomy of the existing order of a capitalist system in the West and a communist system in the Soviet Union (Schwarzmantel 2009:2). This questioning of the status quo materialised in a range of riots and international protests challenging the existing order (ibid.). The breakdown of the dichotomy during Cold War politics lead scholars to call for a revision of Marxism and Marxist theory which presents the context where Gramsci's ideas gained prominence (ibid. 3).

5.1.2 Inspirations

Gramsci's main work was partly inspired by the conditions of uneven development in creating the Italian state with regard to the constitutive force of 'the international' for shaping the dynamics of state formation (Morton 2007:56). He was concerned with the rise of fascism in Italy. He saw a "causal sequencing of Italian state development within the wider history of the European states-system" (Morton 2007:59). According to Schwarzmantel (2009:2) in the process of writing, Gramsci was concerned with "the importance of culture and of intellectuals in civil society; the creative role of the working-class movement and its potential emergence from a subaltern or dominated position to one of leadership of all of society; and reflection on the distinctive characteristics of Western Europe compared with the society in which the Bolshevik revolution had taken place." One central theme in his work are why revolutions failed. However, Gramsci's analysis of a dominant set of ideas, the function of hegemony, was not just motivated by the social and political conditions of inequality in Italy and the world. Instead, he was inspired to formulate an alternative which could challenge existing hegemonic order (Schwarzmantel 2009:9). Gramsci based his analysis of ideas on Niccolo Machiavelli's notion of power, on Marx's work, and also took inspiration in Lenin.

Some of his inspirations can be grounded in his experiences with US led hegemony, where Gramsci regards Fordism as an example for an outward expansion of national hegemony beyond the United States, creating a world hegemony of ‘Americanism and Fordism’ in the 1920s and 1930s (Morton 2007:122).

5.1.3 Contributions

Gramsci contributed substantially to Marxist theory, and also to IR scholarship. Gramsci proposed the method of absolute historicism which implies “an approach to the history of ideas useful to the present by locating ideas both in and beyond their context” (Morton 2007:17). This approach offers the possibility to create approaches which are able to transcend their particular social and political historical conditions shaping their context. Schwarzmantel (2009) depicts one of Gramsci’s main contributions for contemporary scholarship in the deconstruction of history which uncovered the ways in which revolution can take place. These contributions are combined in the claim that Marxism has to be applied in relation to actual society and be open to transformations in order to grasp reality and not impose a static model onto contemporary reality (Schwarzmantel 2009:13).

Gramsci developed a range of concepts which are all interrelated and serve as foundation for his conception of hegemony. Here, I present one approach of understanding his way of thinking, however, this is only one interpretation out of many. The aim is to convey a comprehensive picture of Gramsci’s approach to politics and international relations.

5.2 Gramsci’s Concepts

Gramsci’s concepts developed in bits and pieces throughout the prison notebooks. One can identify relevant themes, even though they were not written in linear fashion, such as the integral state, civil society, power, historic bloc, passive revolution, the function of intellectuals and the international.

5.2.1 Integral State

Gramsci was concerned with the particularities of state formation. His writing emphasises class struggle in the process of constituting the Italian state within the

emergence of the international system of states (Morton 2007:40). Throughout his analysis of uneven development, Gramsci points out the influence the international sphere has for state formation (Morton 2007:56). The specific emergence of the Italian state was distinguished from state formation throughout Europe. Gramsci presented it in contrast to the development of France, “[...] where ‘the protective shell of monarchy’ permitted the struggle within and between feudal classes, whereas in Italy the interests of mercantile capital were ‘incapable of going beyond a narrow-minded corporatism or of creating their own integral state civilisation’” (Gramsci 1985 in Morton 2007:58). In Italy the state formation was characterised by “[...] transformism – in other words by the formation of an ever more extensive ruling class, within the framework established by the Moderates after 1848 and the collapse of the neo-Guelph and federalist utopia” (Gramsci 2010:58).

Even though Gramsci was highly concerned with the ‘state’, he did not formulate a complete conception of the state but instead he provides a variety of ideas and questions. As Morton (2007:88-89) argues, Gramsci formulates “[...] an alternative conception of the state that was identified with the struggle over hegemony in civil society.” The alternative conception defines the state a balance between political and civil society (Gramsci 2010:208). The state is the “[...] entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules [...]” (Gramsci 2010:244). Incorporating political and civil aspects creates an extended notion of state which Gramsci termed ‘integral state’ (Morton 2007:89). An integral state in that sense means a combination of dictatorship and hegemony, heavily relying on the notion of civil society, “[...] in the sense that one might say that State = political society + civil society, in other words hegemony protected by the armour of coercion” (Gramsci 2010:239, 263). Dictatorship relates to the realm of political society which aims at enforcing ideas through coercion, utilising the mode of production; whereas hegemony relates to civil society’s aim to obtain consent (Morton 2007:89). The integral state serves as a broad structure and “[...] represents hegemony as never simply the independent operations of political power” (Howson/Smith 2008:3). This conceptualisation of state allows a

broader view of the workings of power within a territory which is not bound by governmental domination but also shows power exercised through civil society.

5.2.2 Civil Society

To make sense of Gramsci's extended notion of the integral state, the concept of civil society has to be clarified. Civil Society is presented as "[...] ethical content of the State" (Gramsci 2010:208). At times Gramsci adopts Marx's usage of the term which includes economic relations: "The State is the instrument for conforming civil society to the economic structure [...]" (Gramsci 2010:208). Defining civil society as one clear concept is not the main aim, Gramsci rather emphasises the relationship between state and civil society. The relationship between the state and civil society is described by an example of Russia and the West: "In Russia the State was everything, civil society was primordial and gelatinous; in the West, there was a proper relation between State and civil society, and when the State trembled a sturdy structure of civil society was at once revealed" (Gramsci 2010:238). Civil society is part of the state, but it is not essentially within or dependent on the state itself, nor is the state only made up out of the civil society.

Civil society provides the "primary sphere of existence and operation for subaltern groups" (Gramsci 2010:52). Subalternity is defined as "the ability to use politics to promote one's own interest" and also as a signifier for a lack of political autonomy of the state (Gramsci 2010:52). A lack of political autonomy appears through a lack of conformism which is essential to maintain shared common sense of a group. If the belonging of members of one group diverges, in regard to traditional practices and beliefs, fragmented subaltern groups develop within civil society creating a variety of common sense ascribed to each group (Gramsci 2010:324; Howson/Smith 2008:4).

5.2.3 Power

An often quoted understanding of power depicts Gramsci to have adopted Machiavelli's conception. Machiavelli describes the nature of power as "[...] a centaur part man, part beast, a combination of force and consent" (Cox 1981:153). Besides the metaphor of the centaur, Gramsci reformulates the subject of the prince,

central in Machiavelli's work into the portrayal of 'the modern prince'. The modern prince, presented as a myth instead of a real individual portrays one element of society. It is that "complex element of society in which a collective will, which has already been recognised and has to some extent asserted itself in action, begins to take concrete form" (Gramsci 2010:129). Through the modern prince, Gramsci emphasises the importance of intellectuals and moral reform, as well as questions of religion and world view incorporated into the notion of power (Gramsci 2010:132).

Albeit, Gramsci's understanding of power exceeds this simple metaphor into a more complex notion. Power, as understood in hegemony, relates to the aspects of resistance, subalternity, common sense and cannot be operationalised alone (Howson/Smith 2008:5). Interpreting Gramsci, some scholars conceptualize power as "an asymmetrical politico-economic operation that leads ineluctably to domination" (Howson/Smith 2008:5).

5.2.4 Historic Bloc

A historic bloc⁵ is an alliance between social class forces. An alliance of social class forces, or a historical bloc at the national level consists of a social group which holds hegemony over subordinate groups (Morton 2007:78). The formation of hegemony is a prerequisite for the development of a historical bloc (Morton 2007:78). However, the relationship between hegemony and historical bloc "is constantly constructed and contested and is never a static reflection of an alliance of social class forces" (Morton 2007:97). Gramsci defines the notion of historical bloc as "dialectical relationship between economic 'structure' and ideological 'superstructures'" (Morton 2007:95). Dialectic in this sense means a reciprocal and interrelated development of structure and superstructure. The existence of a historical bloc gives rise to the possibility of resisting this particular set of social forces and empowers counter-hegemony which in turn calls for strategies of attaining and maintaining hegemony. Creating a new historical bloc is the foundation for 'counter-hegemony' to challenge the existing world order, however,

⁵ Historic bloc is used interchangeably with historical bloc and does not imply different meanings.

the historical bloc is bound to the realm of the 'national' context (Morton 2007:132).

5.2.5 Passive Revolution

A restriction of Gramsci's concepts to the national context is highly contested. The explanation of the concept of passive revolution shows an interrelation of the national and the international (Budd 2007). Passive revolution presents Gramsci's take on an influential counter-hegemony of resistance against the existing world order, describing a period of revolution (Gramsci 2010:118). Passive revolution describes a particular process of change in which political and institutional structures are transformed without strong social processes. Gramsci depicts passive revolution as the only way to enable revolution in a capitalist society. The concept of passive revolution describes transformation through the institutions of civil society through a variety of tactics. The strategies work in tandem and create organic change, establishing new cultural hegemony in society (Morton 2007:71). Gramsci developed the concept in regard to the rise of fascism in Italy. The ruling class in Italy developed productive forces by allying with the urban and rural bourgeoisie on the basis of fascism (Gramsci 1971 in Morton 2007:71). "One may apply to the concept of passive revolution (documenting it from the Italian Risorgimento) the interpretative criterion of molecular changes which in fact progressively modify the pre-existing composition of forces, and hence become the matrix of new changes" (Gramsci 2010:109).

Passive revolution responds to the political field and influences the economic field through 'war of position' (Gramsci 2010:120). An example for "[...] a war of position whose representative - both practical (for Italy) and ideological (for Europe) - is fascism" (Gramsci 2010:120). Gramsci used the term 'war of position' for different forms of political struggle (Gramsci 2010:206). The conflicting forms are combined in the notion that "[...] in the West civil society resists, i.e. must be conquered, before the frontal assault on the State" which relates to his principal condition of effective power, which in turn means, "a social group can, and indeed

must, already exercise ‘leadership’ before winning governmental power [...]” (Gramsci 2010:207).

5.2.6 Social Function of Intellectuals

The process of passive revolution illuminates Gramsci’s understanding of transformation of society. In the process of convergence of contending social-class forces, intellectuals are essential. Intellectuals perform a mediating function between class forces in political struggle over hegemony, either as instruments of maintaining hegemony or as supporters of subaltern classes promoting social change (Gramsci 2010:3; Morton 2007:60). Intellectuals fulfil their function by organising the social hegemony of a group to exert domination over the state (Gramsci 2010:12-14). Gramsci acknowledged the importance of political parties for transformation movements, established as a ‘collective intellectual’ which he called the ‘modern prince’ inspired by the function Machiavelli predicted for ‘the prince’ (Schwarzmantel 2009:10). Intellectuals possess a social function. A social function means to “[...] direct the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong” (Gramsci 2010:3).

The task of the intellectuals is to provide intellectual justification for an ideology, in the case of Italy and in regard to Croce, that ideology was fascism (Morton 2007:91). Croce contributed to reinforcing fascism by equipping it with an intellectual justification (Gramsci 2010:119). Even though intellectuals often claim independence of class forces, Gramsci argues that they are not autonomous to social-class forces and that “the notion of ‘the intellectuals’ as a distinct social category independent of class is a myth” (Gramsci 2010:3). However, Gramsci distinguished between different types of intellectuals. “All men are intellectuals, one could therefore say: but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals” (Gramsci 2010:9). A distinction is made between ‘organic’ and ‘traditional’ intellectuals (Gramsci 2010:6). Organic intellectuals are the key mediators who produce progressive self-knowledge through education and are informed by, and informing of, the mass (Gramsci 2010:12-14; 238–239). Whereas traditional

intellectuals pursue an ideological function, trying to disarticulate the mass from power (Howson/Smith 2008:5).

5.2.7 Presence of the International

The presence, or lack of the international is a central point of critique brought up against applications of Gramsci's concepts in IR. Joseph Femia argues that Gramsci's concepts of civil society and hegemony are inherently international (Femia 2005:342). Others argue that Gramsci's work has its particular significance within the constraints of the nation state and the historical conditions in Italy. However, Schwarzmantel (2009) responds that Gramsci was aware of the international dimension of politics and that the concept of hegemony is fully matured only in an international understanding of the world.

Gramsci's work emphasises the complexity of affects to the state formation process. In this regard, Gramsci was concerned with the interrelation of capitalism and the emergence of the sovereign state system and how this reproduced the uneven development he traced in the Italian system (Morton 2007:75). He depicts a reciprocal relation between 'the national' and 'the international' by describing developments as "taking a 'national' point of departure that was intertwined with the mediations and active (as well as passive) reactions of 'the international' dimension" (Morton 2007:75; Gramsci 2010:240). Hegemony is embedded in a dialectical relation of national and international elements (Morton 2007:78). Gramsci declares capitalism as an interdependent and world historical phenomenon which requires political movements to take place on an international scale with international character (McNally 2009:59-60).

5.3 The Gramscian Concept of Hegemony

The above explored concepts are a relevant prerequisite for presenting the concept of hegemony. This section fleshes out the original understanding of the concept of hegemony as presented in Gramsci's writings. Gramsci applied the idea of hegemony lined with ideology to analyse how social classes come to dominate society without coercion. Gramsci claims that we need to look beyond the state and the economy by incorporating social order and non-state actors into analysis

(Gramsci 2010). The insight is based on a close examination of historical moments. Gramsci organizes politics and ideology in the concept of hegemony (Barrett 1994:238). Gramsci singles out American hegemony to illustrate the characteristics of changing hegemony from the British system to the American system (Gramsci 2010:279). Through his analysis of different historical moments of hegemony Gramsci highlights the relevance of not just the existence but the specific type of hegemony. Furthermore, the concept of hegemony aims at explaining why revolutions fail even though persistent existence of class struggle and counter hegemonic initiative in society can be traced (Morton 2007:78).

Hegemony as a form of authority combines power and legitimacy, in turn authority that only consists of domination is never legitimate (Howson/Smith 2008:6). This relationship of power and legitimacy is the basis for the theory of hegemony which implies that legitimate authority can only be established and maintained through a combination of coercion and consent. The combination of coercion and consent responds to the two spheres of the state, as determined by Gramsci (2010) as political and civil. The two spheres are levels of superstructures, the private or civil society and the political society, the state (Gramsci 2010:12). The cooperation of political action and civil society is a prerequisite for hegemony and is embedded in the notion of the integral state (Morton 2007:89). The hegemonic project relies on functions on various levels. In the sphere of civil society, consent with the pending social class that seeks domination has to be created. The transformation of particular social class ideas into common sense happens through the diffusion of ideology by organic intellectuals. A subaltern ideology, which can be considered counter-hegemonic, or aspirational hegemony, serves as basis to challenge the existing order. A subaltern ideology strengthens a social class's interests through a reconfiguration of power through multiple processes unified in a war of position leading to passive revolution (Howson/Smith 2008:5). Once a social class has gained legitimate authority in the sphere of civil society and a new order has been established, political action and military force is merely applied to further strengthen the hegemonic position. Gramsci argues that predominance is obtained

by consent, and cultural hegemony describes that power is exercised as much through cultural texts as through physical force.

The process of exerting domination through consent to promote the ruling class's interest in society implies convincing other classes of the universality of their interests, called 'hegemonic process' (Steans et al. 2010:117). The ruling class exerts power over the economy and a variety of state apparatuses, including education and the media (Ashcroft et al. 2007:106). The sphere of civil society has to be conquered by forming a new ideology understood as common sense through "shaping intersubjective forms of consciousness in civil society" (Morton 2007:93) as requirement to challenge the existing hegemon. If a new historic bloc has been established which considers the subaltern ideology as common sense, the existing hegemon can only rely on its coercive element of the state, the political action and military force to reinforce its own power. Gramsci claims, this is not sufficient to maintain domination, be it in a national or international context. On the contrary, if a hegemon loses its political power, this does not necessarily mean an end to that particular hegemonic period (Gramsci 2010:238).

Hegemony is produced in a national context which functions as the starting point to establish a historical bloc. Hegemony, operates within a form of state to establish social cohesion and unity in the form of a historical bloc, but also expands that particular mode of production in the international realm to further shape world order (Morton 2007:122). World hegemony is consolidated within a national setting, Gramsci (2010:24) pointed out that "a class that is international in character has [...] to 'nationalise' itself in a certain sense." Gramsci bases his analysis of hegemony in his essays mainly on a national context, but he occasionally applies it to the international system. One example presented in the prison notebooks is France's attempt to establish supremacy in 19th century Europe (Budd 2007).

The work of neo-Gramscian scholars is in great measure based on applications of hegemony to the international system and the international political economy. They take Gramsci as intellectual and practical inspiration by using the Gramscian method of thinking to develop their own theoretical accounts of hegemony in IR

and IPE. However, one can see that the focus differs across the various perspectives due to the multiplicity of possible understandings of ‘the Gramscian way’.

5.4 Robert Cox’s Reception of Hegemony

5.4.1 Background of the Concept

Robert Cox represents the neo-Gramscian school of thought. He is a scholar of International Political Economy and International Relations. Cox’s work on hegemony is an extension to classic IR theory and ties in where he sees a lack of explanatory strength of classical IR thought. Classic IR faces a “major difficulty in the neorealist version signalled by Keohane and others, namely, how to explain the failure of the United States to establish a stable world order in the interwar period despite its preponderance of power” (Cox 1981:103). Classic IR also lacks the ability to account for instability of the international order. “If the dominance of a single state coincides with a stable order on some occasions but not on others, then there may be some merit in looking more closely at what is meant by stability [...]” (Cox 1981:103).

Cox focuses on stability and changes within the realm of world order. He provides insights into IR from a critical perspective. He applies the concept of hegemony to understand historical changes in the international order. Approaching hegemony from a critical perspective breaks with the static application of hegemony developed by Waltz (1979) and Keohane (1984/1989) (Morton 2007:111). A break with the theories of classical IR thought allows for explanations of processes of structural change. Cox is concerned with explaining the change from the post-Second World War order to an order shaped by globalisation (Morton 2007:123). In addition, he observes a radical change in the way production is organised across the globe in the twentieth century, where production, the economy, and economic classes are organised globally. As a reaction to this development and the prominence of Waltz’s non-historical realist thinking, he formulated a theory of ‘states, social forces and world order’ (Sinclair 2016:511).

In his theory Cox asks himself how the prevailing world order came into being. He places emphasis on the workings of social forces between a variety of actors. Cox is inspired by Gramsci's work and adopts his notion of hegemony and applies it to explain world order. Cox is particularly interested in the supremacy of the United States at the time of his writing. US supremacy in the global system developed through an outward expansion of the American historical bloc which spread its ideology of neoliberalism in order to legitimate the US's claim to power (Konrad 2012). Cox adopts Gramsci's argument, that a social class emerges as hegemonic by establishing consent among subordinate classes and not through coercion (Konrad 2012). Cox (1983:125) emphasises Gramsci's particular focus on historical circumstances, which give meaning to concepts. Besides historical circumstances, Cox (1983:132) believes in the intertwined relationship between politics and economics, such as material relations and world order. He utilises the Gramscian theory of hegemony to analyse how social forces, the state and ideologies constitute and sustain some world orders and end others.

Cox's critical approach inherently challenges the existing world order and asks how the prevailing order of the world has come into being in regard to institutions, social power relations and the power of class forces (Morton 2007:111). Cox analyses world order by not only taking parameters that are present in the world to look for sources of trouble, rather focusing on relationships between structure (Sinclair 2016:512). Historical materialism determines structure as economic relations and superstructure. World order as particular historical structure consists of a variety of state-society complexes which produce a range of organizational forms. Hence, the notion of 'the international' has to be perceived beyond political or military interactions of states. States are the product of and in turn shape evolving societies all shaped by and in turn shaping world order (Moolakkattu 2009:440).

Robert Cox's theoretical contribution to the field of IR is a tool to analytically unpack a structure into its components (Sinclair 2016:518). Focusing heavily on structure, beyond a state centric framework, he highlights the relations between material conditions, ideas and institutions and how these constitute world order.

Cox applies historical materialism which, “[...] is sensitive to the dialectical possibilities of change in the sphere of production which could affect the other spheres, such as those of the state and world order” (Cox and Sinclair 1996:96–97). Furthermore, Cox presents an interesting way of applying Gramsci’s conceptualization of hegemony on an international level. In more detail, he emphasises the important role of institutions to ensure legitimate authority and hence create hegemony.

5.4.2 Cox’s Concept of Hegemony

In this section, Cox’s understanding of the concept of hegemony is reproduced and it is analytically underlined in which way he borrows from Gramsci’s. Hegemony at the international level is an “[...] order within a world economy with a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production” connecting social classes across countries through complex social relationships (Cox/Sinclair 1996:137). Cox refers to hegemony in terms of consensual order, and to dominance as the preponderance of material power (Cox/Sinclair 1996:120). Power is understood in the same sense as Gramsci defined it, namely through the image of power as a centaur, half man, and half beast, taken from Machiavelli. This translates into a combination of consent and coercion. Power is the central aspect of hegemony, which prevails as long as consent is the main aspect of power and coercion, although latent, is only applied as exception (Cox/Sinclair 1996:127).

One extension of Gramsci’s concept represents the focus on world orders. Cox states that Gramsci adjusted Machiavelli’s ideas in order to be applicable to the world he knew, hence “it is an appropriate continuation of his method to perceive the applicability of the concept to world order structures” (Cox 1981:153). Cox (1981:139) formulates a concept of hegemony, based on a coherent arrangement of “[...] material power, the prevalent collective image of world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions which administer the order with a certain semblance of universality [...].” The primary concern is how a state can become hegemonic. This requires an analysis of the changes between hegemonic and non-

hegemonic historical periods. For that purpose, Cox (1981:135) refers to historical periods through which he determines when a period of hegemony begins and when it ends. This includes the change from a hegemonic period with British supremacy to an era of rival imperialism as a non-hegemonic period in the 19th century (Cox 1983:135). In 1945-1965 the US created a new hegemonic world order, grounded in more complex institutions and doctrines through world economy (Cox 1983:136). The emergence of the third period is decisive to understand the characteristics which shape world order. However, Cox depicts a structural transformation of world order since the US faced challenges in the 1970s (Cox 1983:136). Cox concludes from the historical observations that “to become hegemonic, a state would have to found and protect a world order which was universal in conception, i.e., not an order in which one state directly exploits others but an order which most other states (or at least those within reach of the hegemony) could find compatible with their interests” (Cox 1983:136). Here, we can clearly see his adoption of the Gramscian emphasis of consent for hegemony applied to the sphere of international and inter-state relations.

Besides the emphasis of consent taken from Gramsci, Robert Cox sees structure and institutions as two central and interrelated factors of hegemonic world order. A structure is made up of three interacting categories of forces: material capabilities, ideas and institutions (Cox 1981:136). These forces, how people organize themselves in terms of production, determine the form of state and world order. Cox denies the base-superstructure thesis implicit in Marxism and argues that change can commence in any of the spheres (Sinclair 2016:514). Instead, the structure only imposes pressures and constraints but does not determine action (Sinclair 2016:514). Furthermore, Cox regards a structure through the lens of historicism as one moment within an ongoing process of structural change (Cox 1981:135). Exploring this particular moment offers an understanding of the origin of a structure and the causes for transformation (Moolakkattu 2008:447). A structure can be hegemonic or non-hegemonic.

Structures are moments of the historical process of change and institutions are the central element for change. Cox adopts Gramsci's understanding of hegemony in regard to power exercised as authority with legitimacy. This notion is based on the role of institutions, which provide ways of dealing with internal conflict and ensure dominance without the use of force. A particular form of prevailing power relations is seen as hegemonic if the strong "[...] are willing to make concessions that will secure the weak's acquiescence in their leadership and if they can express this leadership in terms of universal and general interests, rather than just as serving their own particular interests" (Cox 1981:137). One can see the direct adoption of Gramsci's definition of legitimate rule and how this domination can be maintained without the application of force. However, Cox particularly emphasises this as the task of institutions, whereas in Gramsci this role is mainly attributed to intellectuals. Institutions play an essential role to cover up changes in material capabilities and emerging ideological challenges (Cox 1981:137). Despite their essential role, institutions cannot be the sole focus in the constitution of hegemony. The institutions' task is to represent diverse interests and to universalise specific policies, in this way they are the root of a hegemonic strategy (Cox 1981:137).

To properly understand Cox's reception of the concept of hegemony, we have to explore his contribution to critical IR theory. His work is based on the theory of the method of historical structures (MHS). "The historical structure does not represent the whole world but rather a particular sphere of human activity in its historically located totality" (Cox 1981:137). This theoretical approach is based on Marx and the belief that change in the sphere of production affects the spheres of the state and world order (Cox 1981:135). The spheres apparent in Cox's theory are social forces, forms of state and world order. Each of these levels serve as possible commencement for dominant structures or emergent rival structures. The levels are interrelated and changes in one of the levels influence the configuration of the other levels (Cox 1981:138).

The idea of interrelated levels of historical structures implies that change can be introduced in each of the levels and transforms the system through the assumed

connection. Gramsci claims that transformation depends on the creation of a new historical bloc which will in turn influence the distribution of power and create a new hegemonic order. Cox (1981:153) translates the notion of a historical bloc into a historical structure. The method of historical structures determines transformation to be constituted through a rupture in either of the assumed levels. This means that different historical structures emphasise the levels differently and hence shape diverging world orders. The complexity of forms of state and world order can be analysed by looking at the particular configuration of material capabilities, ideas and institutions within each element (Sinclair 2016:513).

World order is constituted out of the particular setting of these forces, how the lines of force run between the reciprocal categories in a structure (Cox 1981:136). The constitution of the categories of forces is historically dependant which means it differs throughout history and has to be considered situated in its specific configuration. This is the key aspect of Cox's framework to analyse global power relations without reproducing a particular world system. This framework is concerned with the global realm. World hegemony is created through outward expansion of national hegemony by connecting social class forces across countries and through international institutions (Cox 1981:153).

The notions of passive revolution and an alternative historical bloc found in Gramsci is taken up in Cox's conception of hegemony. The creation of alternative institutions, using intellectual resources within the existing society leads to "actively building a counter-hegemony within an established hegemony [...]" (Cox 1983:129). World orders are grounded in social relations, hence structural change in world order leads back to change in social relations and in the national political order which correspond to national structures of social relations (Cox 1983:140). Building up a socio-political base for change through creation of a historic bloc is necessary for a war of position which ultimately brings about structural change. However, even in regard to global hegemony, a historic bloc is founded within the national context. Cox explains logically that an emerging hegemony cannot happen on inter-state terms only, since that would create a clash of opposing state interests,

implying that forces of civil society on the world scale are essential (Cox 1983:136). This adopts Gramsci's notion of the necessity to ground a historical bloc into civil society before confronting the state. The approval of an ideology by civil society exerts more power than coercive force can ever yield. Cox argues that force is not necessary to ensure dominance if "the weak accept the prevailing power relations as legitimate" (Cox 1981:137).

Besides structures and institutions as dialectical elements of the method of historical structures, Cox bases his conception of hegemony on a unique notion of state. He sees the state as basic entity of international relations, though explains it as a "[...] plurality of forms of state, expressing different configurations of state/society complexes" (Sinclair 2016:511). Cox demonstrates Gramsci's opinion about the state as the place where social conflict takes place, where hegemonies of social classes can be built (Cox 1983:134). This supports Cox's belief that changes in the power relations of world order can be traced to changes in social relations within the realm of the state.

To sum up, Cox adopts many of Gramsci's elements of a theory of hegemony but extends these to the international sphere. Cox's theory of world order and his specific reception of the concept of hegemony make the concept applicable to the sphere of a globalised arena of contemporary issues embedded in the world system, rather than Gramsci's detailed configurations of the distribution of power within the nation-state and specific class configurations.

5.4.3 Application to Arab Nationalism

Robert Cox developed a framework of social forces and world order on the basis of his reception of the Gramscian concept of hegemony. Applying the concept of hegemony to analyse Arab nationalism in relation to world order offers interesting insights. The critical approach generates the necessity to question the prevalent order in which Arab nationalism is embedded and asks how that particular order came about (Cox 1981:129). One of the central characteristics of Cox's approach to hegemony is the emphasis of structures. In this regard, Arab nationalism represents a particular historical structure. The understanding of Arab nationalism

as historical structure introduces two analytical insights. Arab nationalism is an organisational form consisting of state-society complexes. To illuminate the emergence of the particular configuration of this order, the focus has to be beyond political or military interactions of states and instead emphasise the interrelations between society and world order. Hence, Arab nationalism cannot be considered as an autonomous issue but rather as one element within a complex structure. Cox's understanding of structure as being constantly constituted, non-static, influenced by a variety of forces and open to transformation implies the possibility to view Arab nationalism as a particular configuration of structures. If one understands the decisive characteristics how the particular order has been established and why Arab unification failed, it enables a view of Arab nationalism as rival structure and gives possibility for transformation. According to Cox, Arab nationalism as structure needs to consist of ideas, institutions and material capabilities in order to produce a counter hegemonic movement. Currently Arab nationalism lacks material capabilities, hence it lacks a productive force. However, ideas and institutions are fairly advanced and enjoy great influence in the region.

One main feature highlighted by Cox's perspective is the importance of consent by the civil society about the overarching system. In relation to Arab nationalism, or the broader situation in the Middle East, this allows for an interesting insight in causes of ongoing conflict, both intra- and inter-state. The prevalence of conflicts in the Middle East proves the necessity of the constant referral of coercive force by the governments to maintain authority over their societies within a state context. If one applies Cox's notion of hegemony, it seems obvious that the particular historical structure, manifested as state system found in the Middle East has been constructed without broader consent in the civil society. It follows that the established order cannot be maintained without coercion because it lacks legitimacy. This points at the relevance of analysing Arab nationalism in more detail to uncover the contradictory features of the ideology of Arab nationalism, supported by the civil society and understood as greatly universal phenomenon and the contemporary order apparent in the Middle East.

Taking Cox's perspective on hegemony as point of departure, the state system in the Middle East is not a hegemonic system since it requires the use of force to maintain domination. However, Cox's concept of hegemony also includes the notion of a rival structure, inspired by Gramsci's idea of passive revolution and historical bloc. One can approach Arab nationalism as an emerging rival structure which aims at overthrowing the contemporary order of a system of nation-states. Arab nationalism as historical bloc creates disturbances where the representatives of the existing order can no longer express their leadership in terms of universal interests and hence refer to coercive methods of domination such as political and military power. To approach Arab nationalism as counter hegemonic movement emphasises the relevance to consider the power relations between different existing ideas of how the area should be structured. Considering Arab nationalism not as failed attempt to gain domination but rather as emerging rival structure promotes a different outcome of politics in the region.

Cox highlights that structures are always historically contextual. In order to fully understand the composition of the system of states in dialogue with Arab nationalism, one has to analyse the role the international system played and still plays in exerting power through colonial or imperially established institutions, ideas, and material capabilities. We can observe tensions between the influence of a world system and the locally represented understanding of order. The observation of the tensions between global power relations sheds light on the role colonialism, imperialism and anti-colonial resistance movements played for the development of the current system. In other words, the particular historical development of the state system in the Middle East also illuminates why an Arab Empire has not become a hegemonic structure. Cox emphasises the power exerted by the international system which influences developments of structures in national contexts, he warns to "beware of underrating state power but in addition give proper attention to social forces and processes and see how they relate to the development of states and world orders" (Cox 1981:128). As argued before, Arab nationalism cannot be approached as isolated issue but rather as integrated into a broader system. We can trace direct influences of the hegemonic structure of nation-state systems on the development

of states in the region of the Middle East through colonial relations and anti-colonial independence movements, economic ties and the power of the US led world order during the period of state emergence.

In regard to global challenges, the understanding of what constitutes a historical bloc, hence the concrete conception of class has to be adapted to the changes yielded through globalization. Cox advocates for a broader conception of class, including ethnicity, religion, gender and geography (Moolakkattu 2009:451). A broader notion of class enables a more inclusive analysis. In regard to the case of Arab nationalism, this notion of class incorporates a variety of dimensions into the analysis of the development of the social class interest, promoted by elites which serves as historical bloc. Allowing these divisions to play a role we can better understand the difficulty to form a united social class interest and hence explain some variation of the failure of constituting one common Arab consciousness. A variety of identity constituting dimensions clash and prevent a reality of a united Arab State to become the universal interest. For example, the differing claims of territory and form of government between the different religions, even within Islam (Sunni/Shia) fragment the interests of what constitutes a social class. Ethnic variety within one territory also complicates the unification of interests.

Another characteristic of Cox's concept of hegemony is the emphasis of world order rather than international relations. This conceptualization offers the possibility to engage with the notion of Arab nationalism on a variety of levels. A complex issue cannot be understood by looking at the state level. Instead, Arab nationalism relates to the different configurations of society complexes on local, regional and global levels. The notion of 'Arabness' as constitutive factor for ideology is manifested across national borders, which requires to pay attention to the co-constitutive function of the domestic and the international sphere. Cox's perspective steers the attention toward Arab nationalism as a form of pan-nationalism which is constructed beyond the simple notion of a state system consisting of separate autonomous nation states in a given territory. Cox's perspective emphasises the interrelated function of the levels and how world order,

forms of state and social forces determine each other. This shapes the analysis in a way that one has to consider the prevailing 'world order' in the period of the development of nation-states in the Middle East and Arab unification. This is relevant to understand how the overall world order influences the configuration of a nation-state system in the area, and in turn influences the particular form of state.

Furthermore, Cox's method of historical structure allows the analysis to go beyond a state-centric view by emphasising the level of social forces in the process of Arab nationalism. As presented in the outline of Arab nationalism, the elite, made up out of scholars and religious intellectuals played a central role in shaping and diffusing interests to be regarded as universal. By highlighting the level of social forces in relation to the level of world order, the development of the particular structure becomes easier to understand. Without this approach to consider the interplay between those levels, the question remains how Arab nationalism developed as overarching identity in an area which comprises of such a great variety of identities and interests, diverging ethnicities and religions within nation-state territories. Being able to approach Arab nationalism from the perspective of the method of historical structures enables the application of hegemony beyond a state-centric view and uncovers the complex factors which play a role in the construction of the nation-state system in the Middle East and the contradictory existence of the ideology of Arab nationalism.

Cox's reception of the Gramscian concept of hegemony offers an analytical perspective of Arab nationalism which provides insights into the complex power relations and social forces at play. However, even Cox's extended conceptualisation of hegemony lacks some explanatory value in regard to the emergence of Arab nationalism itself. Global hegemony can be achieved by domestic consolidation of configurations of social forces which is then expanded beyond a particular social order to transform itself into world order (Cox 1983:171). Even global hegemony is created within the realm of a state since intrastate ideologies would be confronted with diverging state interests. This notion of the emergence of a new hegemonic order presented by Cox lacks the ability to account for the particular configuration

of the ideology of Arab nationalism as ordering principle across state boundaries. One can argue that the ideology has been grounded within each nation state before reaching a global accountability, however, it seems unlikely that the same process of coalition building to inform a historical bloc happened simultaneously within the region's countries. This calls for alternative explanations of the emergence of Arab nationalism as hegemonic ideology and the politics which resulted from it. A second reception of the Gramscian concept of hegemony is analysed with the aim at contributing to the already presented framework for transformations in global order.

5.5 Chantal Mouffe's and Ernesto Laclau's Reception of Hegemony

Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau represent the second strand of the neo-Gramscian field. They provide a post-Marxist interpretation of Gramsci's conception of hegemony. Mouffe and Laclau combine poststructuralist discourse theory with their reading of Gramsci and Althusser to tackle class reductionism and economic determinism in Marxist theory (Howarth 2010:311). Their position within post-Marxist theory of discourse motivates them to extend Gramsci's concept of hegemony toward socialist strategy with an emphasis on intellectual and moral leadership (Sunnercrantz 2017:21). The two scholars create a distinctive framework for the analysis of politics and ideology by integrating discourse and hegemony (Howarth 2015:195).

In the construction of hegemony they draw upon the works of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Louis Althusser and others (Sunnercrantz 2017:20). Laclau and Mouffe (1985:93) base their theoretical construction of the concept of hegemony in a thorough analysis of the discursive location of the concept. Already in their earlier and separate works, the scholars were concerned with “[...] the emergence and character of ideologies like fascism, populism, authoritarianism and nationalism in Marxist theory, as well as institutions like the capitalist state“ (Howarth 2015:202).

Hegemony, subjectivity and power are central elements in Mouffe's and Laclau's reception of Gramsci's work. The extension of the Gramscian concept of hegemony

is the main function of their combined political theory (Howarth 2015:201). In their political theory, Mouffe and Laclau highlight the construction and deconstruction of political coalitions (Howarth 2010).

5.5.1 Background of the Concept

Laclau and Mouffe observe a problematic that definitions of hegemony in the Gramscian sense often only stress either the formation of the collective will, or the exercise of political leadership. This narrow conception limits hegemony to a political, or moral and intellectual direction (Mouffe 1979:184). Due to this narrow understanding, Mouffe aims at establishing a comprehensive definition of the Gramscian concept of hegemony which incorporates both aspects. Political leadership and the formation of the collective will can be combined through the concept of ideology (Mouffe 1979:185). She bases her motivation on Gramsci's realisation that the role of politics and ideology is central for understanding change in politics (Mouffe 1979:177). She claims that Gramsci was the first to formulate a "[...] complete and radical critique of economism" contributing vastly to Marxist analysis and Marxist theory of ideology (Mouffe 1979:169-170). However, due to a lack of available tools for critical theory formulation, Gramsci's approach lacks a range of elements anticipated by poststructuralists. Mouffe and Laclau transfer Gramsci's thoughts on hegemony into the context of recent critical theory achievements. A poststructuralist take on hegemony contributes to understanding the emergence of social formations and in which way ideology shapes and reproduces power (Laclau/Mouffe 1985).

5.5.2 Mouffe's and Laclau's Concept of Hegemony

In the book 'Hegemony and Socialist Strategy' Mouffe and Laclau develop a non-reductionist and anti-economist approach to hegemony. Mouffe sees economism and the inherent more complex series of problems as obstacles to the development of Marxism, and hence undermining the significance of ideology in theory formulation (Mouffe 1979:168). Furthermore, considering all ideological elements with a class-belonging creates an inherent problematic. Discourse belonging to the bourgeoisie had to be rejected by the working class, so that proletarian values can

be created without external pressures (Mouffe 1979:173). Applying a non-reductionist approach looks at ideologies not necessarily as inherently class-affiliated. These two aspects serve as theoretical basis for the concept of hegemony.

Mouffe and Laclau argue that hegemony can be seen as two diverging kinds. Some define hegemony as “[...] a kind of political practice that captures the making and breaking of political projects and discourse coalitions,” whereas others define it as “[...] a form of rule or governance that speaks to the maintenance of the policies, practices and regimes that are formed by such forces“ (Howarth 2010:310). A combination of these two dimensions enables a better analysis of the relations of power within a system of social relations. Laclau and Mouffe adopt an approach to hegemony as articulatory practice. This conception of hegemony goes beyond political leadership of a class striving for state power and rather emphasise the construction and operation of intellectual and moral leadership (Howarth 2015:198). Finally, hegemony is defined as “[...] indissoluble union of political leadership and intellectual and moral leadership, which clearly goes beyond the idea of simple class alliances” (Mouffe 1979:179). This definition is termed expansive hegemony which combines hegemony as practice and hegemony as governance.

One central requirement for their concept of hegemony is that the social must be open and incomplete, it is characterised by negativity and antagonism which assure “[...] the existence of articulatory and hegemonic practices” (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:144-145). Another requirement is the fact that hegemony is not only, but also economic. Hence, a hegemonic class must be a “fundamental class” (Mouffe 1979:183). A hegemonic class cannot renounce its own class interest regarding a determinate mode of production as this will lead to a clash of basic interests between the own and the popular class interests (Mouffe 1979:183). Mouffe sees in the element of economic activity a limitation of, on the one side the number of possible hegemonic classes and on the other side the forms of hegemony (Mouffe 1979:183). Limitations of forms of hegemony relate to the necessity for a class to maintain their primary class interest during the process of articulation. It follows naturally that because the bourgeoisie is fundamentally based on exploitation its class

interests will clash with the interests of the popular classes (Mouffe 1979:183). The clash of class interests requires the usage of force which then leads to a downward spiral of increasing exertion of coercion. This leads her to conclude that “only the working class, whose interests coincide with the limitation of all exploitation, can be capable of successfully bringing about an expansive hegemony” (Mouffe 1979:183).

Laclau and Mouffe trace the concept of hegemony in genealogical fashion based on Foucault, from the Russian Social Democracy, via Leninism to Gramsci. In Gramsci’s work they see the concept developed to “a new type of centrality that transcends its tactical or strategic uses: ‘hegemony’ becomes the key concept in understanding the very unity existing in a concrete social formation” (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:7). As argued above, within expansive hegemony only a working class can bring about a successful hegemony. However, Gramsci argues “[...] that social classes must transcend their narrow economic interests and elaborate a new ideology” (Howarth 2015:198). This assumes a non-reductionist approach, in which ideology is not inherently a class interest and serves as basis for forging hegemonic links. For a successful hegemonic project the different classes and other groups have to unify over a common set of beliefs as basis for united political objectives through the creation of a new ‘collective will’ (Howarth 2015:198). A collective will is formed in civil society, beyond class alliances through a movement from the political to the intellectual and moral. Mouffe argues that the element which makes Gramsci’s conception of hegemony unique and not limited to political leadership and class alliances is “the aspect of intellectual and moral leadership and the way in which this is achieved” (Mouffe 1979:183, sic).

5.5.3 Moral and Intellectual Leadership

Moral and intellectual leadership is one of the central categories to bring about structural and societal change. Moral and intellectual leadership consist of shared ideas and values across a range of sectors (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:67). Gramsci claims intellectual and moral leadership forges the collective will which in turn through ideology serves as unifying element for a historical bloc (Laclau/Mouffe

1985:67). Forging a historical bloc is considered a process of ideological transformation or “intellectual and moral reform” in which existing ideological elements are rearticulated (Mouffe 1979:191-192). Rearticulating the existing ideological terrain means to create a new world-view. The process of articulation is one of the main characteristics of Mouffe’s and Laclau’s understanding of the concept of hegemony and will be discussed in more detail. In order to understand the role of articulation, the particular function of ideology has to be elaborated first.

5.5.4 Ideology

Mouffe and Laclau allocate ideology a material nature relying on the basis of Gramsci’s argument that “ideology constitutes practice by producing subjects within the apparatuses (Mouffe 1979:188). Mouffe assumes, in Gramsci’s sense, that ideology possesses agents which fulfil the function of the intellectuals to realise moral and intellectual reform (Mouffe 1979:187). Besides the agents’ importance, Gramsci stresses the relevance of the material and institutional structure for the spreading of ideology. The material and institutional structure consist of a range of hegemonic apparatuses, such as schools, the church and the media. The hegemonic apparatuses together form the ideological structure of a dominant class. The process of production and diffusion of ideology takes place on the level of the superstructure which is called civil society (Mouffe 1979:187). In addition to that, ideological elements have to acquire class character in the struggle for hegemony since it is not intrinsic to them (Mouffe 1979:193).

On the basis of this understanding, ideology is defined as terrain and as practice. Ideology as terrain serves the purpose to unite economic relations with political relations and intellectual objectives (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:67). Whereas ideology as practice relates to discourse and ideological formation shapes consciousness. Ideology consists of discursive and non-discursive elements. Ideology materialises in practices, and is called a world-view of a social bloc which Gramsci considered organic ideologies or common sense (Mouffe 1979:186). Organic ideologies create consciousness, and thus ideology determines subjects and their actions (Mouffe 1979:186-7).

5.5.5 Articulation

The concept of hegemony requires the category of articulation as starting point (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:93). The method of hegemony relies on the ability to articulate the interest of other classes. One way of achieving that is to neutralise the specific interest by articulation to prevent particular demands to be developed, whereas another way suggests to formulate one's own interest in the sense that it promotes the full development of the other interests (Mouffe 1979:96). In general, articulation describes "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of articulatory practice" (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:105). The articulatory practice constitutes and organizes social relations in the form of a discursive structure (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:96). Gramsci conceptualises social practices as hegemonic and articulatory (Laclau/Mouffe 1987:98-99). In this regard, Laclau further develops the understanding of hegemony with a focus on the concept of articulation. Through this extension, the concept of hegemony is able to grasp the complex relations between hegemonic identities and resistance against such within global society. Articulatory practices serve as the medium to reach consent in order to establish shared meanings or world views between the groups aspiring to a hegemonic alliance (Worth 2009:27).

5.5.6 Discourse

The central category of analysis in Laclau's and Mouffe's work is discourse. A discourse in this context is "the structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice" (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:105). The exercise of power along with forms of exclusion is the basic category of discursive formation (Howarth 2010:313). A discourse is constructed through articulation of hegemonic struggles. Through articulation, identities and discursive elements are linked together and can be transformed. "This construction takes place in and through hegemonic struggles that aim to establish a political and moral-intellectual leadership" (Sunnercrantz 2017:20).

Embedded in the notion of discourse are a complex form of ideologies. Ideologies have a material character "[...] inasmuch as these are not simple systems of ideas

but are embodied in institutions, rituals and so forth” (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:109). Gramsci applied the materiality of ideologies as unifying role of a class, however, Mouffe and Laclau develop the notion of articulation into a discursive practice (ibid.). This means that a discursive practice is not confined to linguistic representation of social reality, rather a constitutive conception of discourse is applied. Discourse includes material objects, human subjects, language and social practices, which create discourse through articulatory practice which constitutes the particular formation of social relations, constructing their meaning (Howarth 2015:201). If a discourse is hegemonic it can be brought out of control by events which cannot be explained or controlled by this particular discourse, producing the moment of a crisis. Through a crisis, a hegemonic discourse is dislocated and has to be reconstituted by reformatting the elements inherent to the discourse (Sunnercrantz 2017:20).

5.5.7 Antagonisms and Power

In the theory of hegemonic formation, the existence of antagonisms is a central requirement. This is based on Foucault’s conception of power and resistance. Laclau and Mouffe borrow from Foucault the claim that issues of resistance are directly connected to forms of domination which in turn means that “[...] in the relations of power, there is necessarily the possibility of resistance, for if there were no possibility of resistance – of violent resistance, of escape, of ruse, of strategies that reverse the situation – there would be no relations of power” (Foucault 1991b:12 in Howarth 2010:316). This conception of power implies a degree of freedom for social agents, they can either maintain systems of domination, or dedicate themselves to systems of resistance (Howarth 2010:316). Furthermore, Mouffe concludes that Gramsci’s contribution enlightens that power is not localised in the repressive state apparatuses but rather is exercised at all levels of society (Mouffe 1979:201).

Besides the emphasis of the possibility of resistance, the concept of antagonism fulfils another function. Through the construction of antagonisms, the limits of an identity and hence an ‘other’ are constituted which establishes boundaries and

creates political frontiers. The presence of political frontiers is an essential requirement for the possible constitution of blocs and regimes (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:126-127). The particular significance of political frontiers is fully implemented in the concept of war of position (ibid. 136).

5.5.8 Extension of Gramscian Elements

In Mouffe's and Laclau's theory of hegemony, they emphasise the notion of historical bloc and war of position. Historical blocs correspond to the constitution of social relations through articulation of antagonistic relations between actors along established political frontiers (Howarth 2010:313). Mouffe and Laclau extend the notion of historical bloc and contribute to deconstructing Marxism. They apply the notion of a relational historical bloc which instead of focusing primarily on a particular mode of production as constituting element for historical blocs, is defined as never closed, nor fully constituted (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:142).

In Gramsci's theory of hegemony a class can become hegemonic. Mouffe singles out two methods for this process, transformism and war of position. She denotes the first as inefficient since it only produces passive consensus through absorption of allied and antagonistic elements. In her perception this kind of passive revolution produces merely a dominant but not a hegemonic class because vast sectors of popular classes are excluded from the hegemonic system (Mouffe 1979:183). In contrast, what Gramsci terms 'war of position' is seen as the successful method to establish a new hegemonic class. A war of position is constituted by disarticulation and rearticulation of the existing ideological blocs (ibid. 197). The war of position translates the concept of ideology and politics into concrete political strategy. Gramsci argues, in order for hegemonic formation to be successful, articulatory practice is based on one unifying principle to combine diverse identities within a fundamental class (Laclau/Mouffe 1985:69). This is one of the two aspects in which Mouffe and Laclau divert from Gramsci's thought. They do not agree that hegemonic subjects are necessarily constituted by a fundamental class (ibid. 137-138).

5.5.9 Application to Arab Nationalism

Applying Mouffe's and Laclau's conception of hegemony to Arab nationalism allows to approach ideological elements without class determinism. Hence, the development of the ideology of Arab nationalism can be approached as not one particular class interest but rather as ideological elements which transcend through classes and are not necessarily based in one fundamental class. This offers a particular insight in the widespread diffusion of the ideology in the region. This, on the one hand, explains the popularity of Arab nationalism but, on the other hand, hints at the lack of a centralised fundamental class to unify the interests. A wide range of competing interests which are contradictory in itself, such as religion, ethnicity, or social standing produce diverging world views and complicate the constitution of a 'collective will'.

Laclau's particular advancements of the concept of hegemony enable a broader view of the complexities involved in the issue of Arab nationalism. Laclau advocates that ideological change happens "[...] through class struggle, which is carried out through the production of subjects and the articulation and disarticulation of discourses." Applying this notion of hegemony offers an analytical approach to Arab nationalism from a different perspective. The central question highlighted by this notion of hegemony is not how Arab nationalism as ideology is diffused in order to create a historical bloc and transform the prevailing order via counter hegemonic struggles. Instead, understanding Arab nationalism is approached by asking in which way Arab nationalism as ideology has been utilised by nationalist intellectuals in the anti-colonial movements to form a collective will. This analysis offers a valid point, since Arab nationalism serves as effective basis for the creation of a collective will because it is not class deterministic and functions as strong identity giver unifying subjects. Laclau and Mouffe's approach to hegemony enable an understanding of how moral and intellectual leadership effectively creates discourses which unify the ideologies of 'Arabness' and nationalism. In their words, ideology as practice creates subjects which means that the particular ideology of Arab nationalism serves as central element for formation of consciousness and identity. In line with this argument, the concept of hegemony

implies the insight that not all interests are class interests and not all contradictions are class contradictions. A pluralization of contradictions in a social formation allows for a range of elements to be available for political articulation. Political articulation of elements creates historical blocs that unite subjects across class identities and forge a collective will beyond class struggle.

The main contribution which the reception of Laclau and Mouffe present here is a change in perspective. They offer an approach to transformation in world order which, on the one hand, goes beyond a state centric view and, on the other hand, focuses on the actual construction of new forms of order and not only how these obtain power. Emphasising ideology as a subject producing practice enables a more complex understanding of actors in global relations as well as of the forces between actors and the role of underlying discourses which create social reality. This approach sees global order not as existing reality but rather as dynamic processes of discursive articulation of ideology. Employing an understanding of how articulating practices construct social reality, at the same time, enables us to define significant moments of change deeply embedded in complex relations. A post-Marxist approach to hegemony as offered by Laclau and Mouffe contributes vastly to the understanding of power and transformation in world order. Their application of hegemonic formation is not confined to one actor obtaining legitimate authority over other actors in a national or international context, rather it allows to question prevailing forms of order at the roots of their development. In other words, this approach allows to critically analyse the construction of the nation-state system because it does not assume nationalism to be the prevalent form of order in which hegemony can be achieved. To transform global order one has to be able to analyse order by emphasising its underlying constituting elements to discover possibilities of change.

5.6 Combined Conceptual Analysis of Hegemony

From the conceptual analysis of the two receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony derives a set of constituting elements characteristic for either approach. Remarkable about this is that the scholars all base their conceptions on the same

material, on Gramsci's prison notebooks, but conclude very diverging interpretations. This is a result of their particular point of departure as well as proposed aim of their theory. Cox, as scholar of world order and International Political Economy aims at utilising Gramsci's concept of hegemony to explain the change and constitution of particular world orders. Mouffe and Laclau set out to extend the Gramscian notion of hegemony in order to account for the emergence of ideologies such as populism and nationalism and at the same time aim at advancing Marxist analysis by integrating discourse and hegemony. Despite the distinct aims, the scholars are situated within neo-Gramscian scholarship and Critical Theory. However, they illuminate varying aspects within these schools of thought. Cox adopts a neo-Marxist approach, whereas Mouffe and Laclau situate themselves in the field of post-Marxist discourse theory.

The two strands differ greatly in their application of the concept of hegemony. They apply different causalities in regard to how hegemony is constituted and maintained even though both perspectives adopt the Gramscian notion of hegemony in terms of coercion and consent. The differing perceptions lead to different politics that evolve out of their world view which has severely varying consequences in regard to the future of global order. Through the application of the two perspectives to Arab nationalism their fundamental differences are illustrated.

The analysis underlines the argument made above that both theoretical perspectives emphasise diverging aspects within Gramsci's work and hence shift the focus within their concept of hegemony to different realms. The main characteristics of a Gramscian concept of hegemony cannot easily be determined as result of the diverging interpretations which already two perspectives bring into the discussion. It has to be taken into account that these two perspectives are merely a small amount of the scholarly work which has set out to recast Gramsci's theories. Despite this, what can be singled out are the constituting factors of these two receptions and which elements within Gramsci's writing they primarily ground their thoughts on.

In Cox's conception of hegemony the essential elements taken from Gramsci's theory are the idea of power as a combination of coercion and consent, the

understanding of hegemony as legitimate authority; the notion of historical bloc, and war of position which bring about historical change and the constitution of the integral state as the sphere of politics and civil society. Cox depicts passive revolution as significant element to initiate counter-hegemonic movements, whereas Mouffe depicts a hegemony developed out of passive revolution as being not as successful, and instead advocates for expansive hegemony which can in turn be created through active and direct consensus. The conceptual analysis shows in which way Cox adopts and modifies these elements. In his extended version of the concept, hegemony is constituted and maintained through the interplay of historical structures and institutions which are the central element for change. One essential characteristic of the conceptualisation is the emphasis on world order, forms of state, and social forces as levels on which change can occur through the configuration of material capabilities, ideas and institutions. One last significant characteristic is the adoption of placing the constitution of hegemony, as well as counter-hegemony, within the realm of the nation-state as point of departure.

The characteristics of the concept of hegemony vary greatly within Mouffe's and Laclau's approach. Although they adopt similar elements from Gramsci's work, the outcome of their modifications and extensions of those elements are difficult to compare. Their approach primarily emphasises Gramsci's notion of passive revolution, historical bloc and war of position. Yet, the main element composing their unique conception of hegemony is the relevance of moral and intellectual leadership. This element does not receive much attention in Cox's conception, who only transfers the function of the intellectuals on to his notion of institutions. On the contrary, Mouffe and Laclau develop their conception of hegemony around the notion of moral and intellectual leadership by incorporating ideology as central characteristic. This is extended through the notion of articulation creating a collective will embedded in the logic of discourse. Another characteristic of their approach is the requirement of antagonisms and frontiers based on the understanding of power and domination which inherently possesses a degree of freedom enabling a moment of crisis and hence resistance.

In conclusion, Mouffe and Laclau transform Gramsci's concept with critical discourse theory and a post-structural perspective to extend Gramsci's thought through a more informed notion to understand the emergence of ideologies and to account for transformations in global order through the study of ideology. Their approach is not directly designed for the application to world order, as is Cox's which creates difficulties in the actual application to understand the shift of a hegemonic order to a non-hegemonic order in the international system. As a result of the varying realms of application and different emphasised elements within the two perspectives both concepts require modifications. The deconstruction of these receptions through conceptual analysis serves as a first step for the development of a new framework of hegemony which can better account for the complex transformations of world order. Arab nationalism serves as an example to illustrate the different attributes the scholars focus on when constructing hegemony. An analytical application of these attributes highlights how their explanations differ. Already the application of two differing conceptualisations of hegemony broadens the explanatory scope for the emergence of Arab nationalism. As a result it can be said that each concept only illuminates a small number of factors, whereas conceptual multiplicity can advance a framework to account for more variance. A new framework will be better equipped by incorporating a combination of the characteristics highlighted in both perspectives. It seems like a necessary step forward for a more informed analysis of the complex issues in a globalised system to create a conception of hegemony which includes Cox's focus on the interrelation of social forces on different levels and at the same time incorporate the role of ideology as constituting factor for specific social forces. A concept of hegemony combining a multitude of characteristics presented through this analysis will not only serve to better understand the construction of hegemony and how a power position is maintained, but also account for the particular configuration of such a hegemony. The insights drawn from this analysis support the relevance of conceptual pluralism. Conceptual pluralism is a necessary step toward the development of a concept of hegemony which can grasp the complexity of transformations in global order and also investigate potential alternative

developments. In order to grasp the complexities, the concept of hegemony has to be developed according to modern politics and not merely reproduced. This implies an updating of Gramsci's approach, as the critical scholars have attempted in their work, but the task continues to adapt the concept of hegemony to the changing and complex circumstances of contemporary politics.

6 CONCLUSION

The construction of global order and the distribution of power in the international system are major concerns in the field of IR. IR scholarship requires tools to understand the complex transformations in global politics. Thus, the focus of the thesis has been to analyse two receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony in an international relations context. The overarching purpose has been to produce the constituting characteristics of the Gramscian notion of hegemony, to provide the basis for constructing a new conception of hegemony. For that purpose the aim has been to see what insights are gained from different receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony toward understanding transformation in the global order?

Antonio Gramsci's work provides a valuable contribution to the study of global politics, power relations, and world order. The Gramscian concept of hegemony is analysed through Robert Cox's, and Chantal Mouffe's and Ernesto Laclau's reception of the concept. The analysis provides a set of relevant insights in the form of conceptual characteristics. These characteristics must serve as starting point to construct a new framework of hegemony. The central characteristics provided by Cox are: the idea of power characterised by coercion and consent; the understanding of hegemony as legitimate authority; the role of a historical bloc, and a war of position to bring about change; the notion of historical structures; and the constitution of the integral state as the sphere of politics and civil society. Laclau and Mouffe emphasise: an understanding of expansive hegemony; the relevance of moral and intellectual leadership; the function of ideology; and the notion of articulation, collective will, and discourse.

The combined conceptual analysis and illustrative application of the perspectives to Arab nationalism support the argument of conceptual pluralism. In order to constitute a better framework of hegemony, conceptual pluralism is necessary. A multiplicity of interpretations of the Gramscian concept of hegemony is observed in this thesis. This derives out of a variation in the emphasised elements of the concept. This results in a set of characteristics constituting the concept of hegemony. The analysis has shown how the combination of multiple characteristics provides a more accurate explanation of complex phenomena in global politics. In conclusion, an extended concept of hegemony, inspired by Gramsci, and informed by critical theory, can better account for transformations in world order.

The analysis of the receptions of the Gramscian concept of hegemony only emphasised two different approaches. Within the neo-Gramscian school, a number of scholars have attempted to extend the Gramscian concepts to the international sphere. In order to succeed in constructing a comprehensive framework of hegemony, an exhaustive study of the other approaches has to be conducted. Another future remark regards the study of Arab nationalism. Throughout the thesis, the applicability of the Gramscian concepts to understand the complexity of the phenomenon of Arab nationalism becomes apparent. For further research, the phenomenon of Arab nationalism can serve as case study to explore the complex relations and forces that shape the order in the Middle East and possibly contribute to understanding the causes of conflict within the region.

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