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Subalternity and Counter-Revolution: The Social Drivers of the Egyptian State Transformation

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PhD

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where it states otherwise by reference or acknowledgement, the work presented is entirely my own.

Maria D'Aria

Abstract

Many scholarly works address extensively the causes of revolution, but surprisingly little work has been done to develop a theory on counter-revolution. Generally, counter-revolution has been understood simply as the failure of revolution; counter-revolution is rarely considered as a process in its own right. This thesis argues that counter-revolution is an important form of the transformation of state–societal relations that should be investigated in its own right, and not merely regarded as ‘failed revolution’ or as the restoration of the pre-revolutionary order.

Between 2011 and 2013, Egypt experienced two uprisings. In 2011, the mass uprising led to the resignation of Mubarak and put his 30-year rule to an end, while in 2013 a second mass uprising allowed the military to take full control of the country. Therefore, Egypt provides an excellent example, and the opportunity for a better understanding, of counter-revolution. Revolutionary studies have failed to explain why the Egyptian revolution was so fragile. What was a promising start to the democratisation process, with free parliamentary and presidential elections, came to an abrupt end and remained misunderstood as counter-revolution.

To address an important question regarding the study of the Egyptian counter-revolution, this thesis builds on the work of Antonio Gramsci, by reinterpreting its concept of subalternity – social groups who lack political power. This new interpretation of the concept of subalternity allows this thesis to argue that the Egyptian counter-revolution was not the result of a top-down restoration process due to the exclusion of civil society; rather, *that* it was the result of the shifting alliance between civil society groups and the military.

This work aims to make a threefold contribution: (1) to establish a model that explains counter-revolution as the outcome of the open-ended revolutionary process depending on the interaction of the *state transformation* and the *autonomy of civil society*. I argue that the counter-revolution was the result of the power dynamics between the military, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the revolutionary movements. (2) To apply the concept of subalternity to the case of counter-revolutionary Egypt. This thesis identifies the main weaknesses that characterise the fragility of the revolutionary process. By comparing the strategies used by different social groups during the 2011 uprising, I seek to show that the strategy of cooperation used by the Muslim Brotherhood, while initially successful, failed to conquer political power

because it excluded the confrontational strategy of revolutionary movements. (3) To reconsider state–society relations in Egypt. The post-coup state is not based on form of corporatism as was the case pre-2011; rather, Sisi’s regime attempts to allow a meaningful participation of social forces in the formation of the counter-revolution state.

By looking at the social drivers of the counter-revolution in Egypt through the lens of subalternity, this thesis offers a better understanding of the relationship between structure and agency during counter-revolutions that could be applied beyond the case of Egypt.

Lay summary

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For Giulio Regeni, his family and
for all Egyptians like them
who deserve truth and justice

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List of abbreviations

AGEG	Anti-Globalisation Egyptian Group
AOI	Arab Organization for Industrialization
CSF	General Security and Central Security Forces
EBDA	Egyptian Business Development Association
EEDC	Egyptian Economic Development Conference
EPCSPI Intifada	Egyptian Popular Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada
FJP	Freedom and Justice Party
GIS	General Intelligence Service
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NDC	National Defence Council
NDP	National Democratic Party
NSC	National Security Council
NSF	National Salvation Front
NSPO	National Service Products Organisation
SCAF	Supreme Council of the Armed Forces
SSI	Security Service Investigation
TRU	Television and Radio Union

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This thesis reconsiders the role of social forces during the counter-revolution. There is much scholarly interest in revolution but surprisingly little in developing a theory on counter-revolution. Revolutionary theory focuses on the causes that trigger the revolutionary episode, while there is little investigation of the reasons behind forms of counter-revolution which are generally understood as the failure of revolutions. In contrast, this thesis argues that counter-revolution is still a form of transformation of state–societal relations, and it needs to be investigated not merely as ‘failed revolution’ or the restoration of the pre-revolutionary context, but as one of several outcomes underpinning the open-ended revolutionary process. In order to provide a better understanding of the revolution as relational and procedural, this thesis takes the Egyptian counter-revolution as the starting point to address important questions regarding the study of revolution.

This thesis aims to fill the theoretical gap in the understanding of revolution addressed by the Arab Uprisings of 2011. In fact, the Arab Uprisings marked not only the need for a revision of the understanding of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) politics in terms of relations between regime and society but also the necessity to advance revolutionary theory which failed to address why the Arab Uprising generated a wave of *fragile revolutions* prone to turn counter-revolutionary (Abrams, 2019, p. 2; Allinson, 2019a, p. 148, 2019b, p. 321). By revising the study that Gramsci conducted on subalterns and their quest for political power, the theory presented in this thesis addresses how the concept of subalternity helps to explain the relational feature of revolution – intended as a hegemonic crisis – and its open-ended resolution.

Therefore, this thesis aims to make a threefold contribution by bringing together three different pieces of literature, ranging from the broader study of revolution to the narrow understanding of state–society relations in MENA. Its first contribution to the study of revolution is the development of a model to understand the counter-revolution as one potential outcome – of many – of the open-ended revolutionary process. The model proposed in this thesis sheds light on how the interaction between state transformation and autonomy of civil society can shape the outcome of the revolutionary process.

The second contribution is a re-engagement with the concept of subalternity in Gramsci. Subalternity is not equated to a ‘state of victimhood’ or marginalisation, nor is it the equivalent of proletariat due to censorship (Green, 2002; Smith, 2010, p. 45). Rather, subalterns are social groups which suffer under the hegemonic power of a ruling elite (Louai, 2012, p. 5). The interaction of various social forces – which use different strategies in their quest to conquer political power – is key to understanding where the fragility of the revolutionary process lies. By applying the concept of subalternity to the empirical case of revolutionary Egypt, this thesis stresses how the 2011 uprising generated a three-player power dynamic – between the military, the Muslim Brotherhood and the revolutionary movements. To take control of the state, two of these actors had to become allies; the shifting alliances among these three actors determined the counter-revolution.

Finally, the third contribution is narrowed down to the understanding of state–society relations in Egypt. The Egyptian Uprising revealed that the Egyptian state was not *resilient* due to its corporative nature, and similarly the Muslim Brotherhood as the major opposition force – considered a state in waiting – was unable to take control of the state. The pre-2011 context was reshaped primarily by the neoliberal policies introduced in the 1970s. This affected both relationships within the elite and the relationship between state and society. Such transformation ultimately made fertile ground for the 2011 uprising. Considering the post-2013 situation as the restoration of the relations existing before 2011 limits the understanding of counter-revolution as a form

of state transformation. In fact the relations within the elite and the state–society relations are the direct results of the transformation that occurred during the transition period, which could not have otherwise been understood.

In conclusion, this thesis focuses on how, despite the promising start, the Egyptian Uprising turned into a counter-revolution. This serves the broader scope by proposing a categorisation of how the interaction between the state and the actors can shape the outcome of a revolution. By looking at the social drivers of the counter-revolution in Egypt through the lens of subalternity, this thesis offers a better understanding of the relationship between structure and agency during counter-revolutions that could be applied beyond the case of Egypt.

1.1 Research puzzle and research question(s)

Between 2011 and 2013, Egypt experienced two uprisings. In 2011, the mass uprising led to the resignation of Mubarak and drew his 30-year rule to an end. This seemed to be the start of the democratisation process, skipped during the third wave of democratisation (Sarihan, 2012; Arafat, 2018). After Mubarak’s resignation, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) suspended the constitution of 1971. To facilitate the transition of power, the SCAF amended only nine articles of the 1971 constitution. This was considered as a provisional draft, in force only to facilitate the transition of power and organise both presidential and parliamentary elections. It imposed upon the newly elected parliament the requirement to form a new Constituent Assembly able to write a new permanent constitution. The first Constituent Assembly was dissolved because it was deemed to be ‘unrepresentative’, due to the majority of Islamist members. Thus, a second Constituent Assembly was formed. Although it was more representative, it was boycotted by members of the opposition who accused the Islamists of not respecting the agreements that formed the foundation of the second Constituent Assembly. In December 2012, the constitutional draft opened up new waves of protests. A new social

movement – Tamarrod (Rebel) – capitalised on this. The movement managed to organise what it claimed to be the largest protest in Egyptian history (BBC, 2013). Tamarrod was founded in April 2013. It collected 22,000 signatures to demand Morsi's resignation; it also organised the protest that led to the 2013 uprising. On that occasion, the military removed Mohamed Morsi, who was the first freely elected president, and took control of the country. Soon after the military coup, Tamarrod supported General el-Sisi.

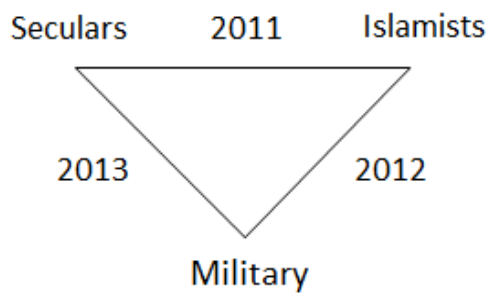
The popular supported military coup poses questions about the understanding of agency and structure in the region. Firstly, until 2011 secular and Islamist groups put aside their incompatible ideologies to fight against the common enemy: the authoritarian regime. Often seculars declared clearly, 'With the Islamists? Sometimes. With the state? Never!' (Abdelrahman, 2009). However, in 2013 the secular bloc split on their position regarding military intervention. Some openly supported the military, while others simply wanted Morsi to resign. This outcome reinforced the assumption that the counter-revolution was a default outcome because the revolutionary movements were not revolutionary enough to establish a new order (Bayat, 2013, 2017). In addition, the unfolding of the counter-revolution exposes the inability of the fourth generation of revolutionary study to understand why the Egyptian revolution was so fragile.

Secondly, the inability of the Muslim Brotherhood – the main opposition group – to remain in power despite significant parliamentary and presidential victories shows two main flaws in the understanding of the Egyptian state and its opposition; in fact, the Muslim Brotherhood was revealed to be not the *state in waiting*, ready to capitalise on its counter-hegemonic leverage to control the Egyptian state (Bayat, 2007; Perry and Blair, 2012; Al-Anani, 2015, p. 533; Ranko, 2015; Kennedy, 2017). On the other hand, the counter-revolution showed that the corporative system was not adaptable enough to prevent the uprising (Ayubi, 1995; Stacher, 2012a). Both these considerations highlight how the counter-revolution is the result of the interactions between agency and

structure, and not necessarily based on specific characteristics of the agent (Lauer, 1972; Abou-El-Fadl, 2015; Bennani-Chraïbi, 2017; Volpi, 2017).

What was a promising start to the democratisation process, with free parliamentary and presidential elections, came to an abrupt end and remained misunderstood. Therefore, to explain the Egyptian counter-revolution, I identify the following dynamic of power (Figure 1): to rule, two actors must join against a third one. The three main actors in this dynamic of power shifted their alliances in each uprising. Until the first uprising in 2011, seculars and Islamist groups cooperated against the regime. In 2012 Islamists won the elections and allied with the SCAF while excluding the seculars from any institutional positions. Finally in 2013, during the second uprising, secular forces challenged the Islamists' regime, supporting instead the military intervention and the restoration of the military regime.

Figure 1: Dynamic of power in Egypt between 2011 and 2013 uprisings



This dynamic stresses how the interaction among actors is key to understanding the counter-revolution; therefore the counter-revolution was not merely the failure of revolution, rather an active process in its own right. To recap, this thesis aims to answer the following question: *what explains the Egyptian counter-revolution?* In order to address this question, this thesis analyses it from four different angles, with specific sub-questions. (1) 'How did the Egyptian state transform?' looks at the transformation of the Egyptian state and the relations between the elite and society that ultimately led to the 2011 uprising. (2) 'How did the alliance between the military and the Muslim Brotherhood shape the Egyptian state in 2011–2012?' investigates the

immediate aftermath of the 2011 protests and reflects on the basis that brought the military and the Muslim Brotherhood to exclude the secular forces, and how this dynamic affected the state. (3) 'How did the Muslim Brotherhood fail in controlling the state?'; by asking this, this thesis addresses the paradox of how the major opposition group which was waiting to take control of the state failed in its task. (4) 'How did Sisi's counter-revolutionary regime consolidate after the coup?'; to answer this question, this thesis explores the basis of the counter-revolutionary post-coup state, the results of the state and society transformation started in 2011.

These questions have been addressed by the existing literature at different levels of analysis: regime and societal level. The Arab Uprisings challenged established paradigms in the literature such as the resilience of authoritarianism, which is the ability of the authoritarian regime to neutralise any challenge to its stability with methods like co-optation and repression (Albrecht and Schlumberger, 2004; Bellin, 2004; Albrecht, 2005; Heydemann, 2007). In 2013, the second mass uprising led to the military coup which put an end to the so-called 'democratic transition' (Brown, 2013a), reviving the assumption that authoritarian regimes persist because they learn from each other how to adapt to new challenges (Heydemann and Leenders, 2011; Stacher, 2012a). The Arab Uprisings revived the debate between contrasting paradigms like 'democratic spotting' and 'authoritarian resilience' (Cavatorta, 2015; Rivetti, 2015).

The literature on social movements as protagonists of the uprising soon identified such movements as cross-ideological, spontaneous and episodic in destabilising the regime, but leaderless and unorganised, thus prone to failure (Bayat, 2011; Cole, 2012; Bayat, 2013; Beinín and Vairel, 2013; Abdelrahman, 2015; Durac, 2015). Due to the lack of organisation and leadership of social movements, the elite was able to control the transition (Springborg, 2011b, 2014; Brown, 2013a; De Smet, 2014b). Again the literature reproduces the dichotomy between the elite and society rather than aiming to address more organic relations. Among all the countries that experienced the uprisings, only

Egypt had the trajectory of a counter-revolution, whereas Tunisia managed to transit to a new democratic regime, Syria and Libya plummeted into civil war, and Yemen's transition turned into civil war and escalated to major regional conflict and humanitarian crisis. This reopened the debate around competing paradigms and framed the return of an authoritarian regime as the failure of the democratisation process. This project aims to go beyond the deterministic approach of both paradigms and will provide a new understanding of the social drivers of the counter-revolution. In this regard, Gramsci's theory of revolution allows the understanding of the transformation as due to the revolutionary process, without a predetermined outcome.

Therefore, a way to move beyond this dichotomy is to address these two uprisings as the manifestation of a revolution and its counter-revolution. This is not an easy task, either, because the theory of revolution falls short in (1) conceptualising the uprising as a form of revolution due to its deemed failure;¹ and (2) explaining state–society relations in Egypt. I will address the latter point first, and from the particular case of Egypt, I show the limitation of the existing theory of revolution. First of all, the Egyptian case highlights how the understating of the strength of the agency and state was not accurate. This can be analysed from two different angles. At the state level, Ayubi has argued how the lack of hegemony in the Arab countries has created a corporative system that could be easily disrupted by the activism of civil society:

The 'radical' (*thawri*) systems [...] could mobilise the populace (via education, the media and social welfare programmes), but they could not as effectively *integrate* the newly mobilised social forces (partly because their economic and industrial plans had not yielded the required accelerated development). They suffer from a 'hegemony crisis': a mildly prolonged fiscal crisis (often resulting from the very contradictory nature of their economic policies) is sufficient to tear away the thin veneer of their populist ideology and to reveal that it is more of an eclectic blueprint than it is of a genuine self-sustaining 'world-view'. Once their powers of (coercive) expropriation are exhausted, it becomes clear that their powers of

¹ Cf. the debate between Beinin and De Smet mostly on Jadaliyya (Beinin, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b; De Smet, 2014b, 2014c, 2014a).

(politico-economic) extraction, via direct taxation, are seriously impaired. (Ayubi, 1995, p. 448, emphasis in original).

This interpretation helps to explain how the wave of protests in 2011 put an end to Mubarak's regime; however, it falls short in accounting for the formation of the counter-revolutionary regime in 2013. In addition, the assumption that opposition groups like the Muslim Brotherhood were able to capitalise on the state and transform the regime was revealed to be a second shortfall in light of the 2013 coup. In other words, this thesis investigates how the counter-revolution occurred by looking at the intersection between the state structure and civil society forces that were ready to take control of the state. The understanding of how the Muslim Brotherhood failed to take control of the state sets a foundation for explaining where the counter-revolution stands.

1.2 Contributions

The innovative approach that this thesis offers makes three contributions, since it brings together three different but interconnected fields of knowledge. Firstly, the primary contribution is to the study of revolution and counter-revolution, because this thesis develops a theoretical framework that encompasses a multitude of actions depending on two main criteria: (1) the integration of civil society within the state, and (2) the autonomy and leadership of specific segments of civil society. The combination of these two criteria shapes the revolutionary process.

Secondly, within the study of Gramsci's political thought, this thesis contributes to redefine and to operationalise the concept of subalternity. The concept of subalternity has been interpreted differently by different schools of thought – like the British Marxist Historians and the Subaltern Studies Group – due to the objective challenge of studying incomplete manuscripts written in captivity, such as prison notebooks, and the subjective research aim of these schools of thought. Within the scope of readdressing the concept of subalternity to explain the counter-revolution, this thesis redefines the role of

'intermediary forces' – which are groups that connect civil society with the elite – as pivotal in explaining the counter-revolution. Thirdly, by narrowing down the scope of this research based on the Egyptian case study, this thesis revisits the transformation of the state, and civil society transformations and interactions in the MENA. In the field, there has been a tendency to study either the persistence of authoritarianism or the lack of democracy in the region. As discussed earlier, the Arab Uprising shook the understanding of both; nevertheless, despite the return of authoritarianism in the region after the uprising, we can still learn how the interaction between the state and civil society has changed.

In sum, this thesis moves the debate towards a fifth generation of revolutionary study. Therefore, it seeks a better understanding of the Egyptian Uprising because this event marked an impasse for revolutionary studies, which was not able to explain fragile revolutions prone to failure. It offers a new theoretical framework which enables a pinpointing of the relations between structure and agency that allows a better understanding of the open-ended revolutionary process. This new theorisation can be extended to other cases – beyond the case analysed in this thesis – and such applications will help to refine the theory. Thus, this thesis contributes to the fifth generation of revolutionary study by stressing the interaction between agency and structure that marked the fragility of these new waves of revolutions. In this way, this thesis reassesses the concept of revolution by stressing its open-ended outcome. By looking at the various possible ways in which the revolution can develop it should be possible to pinpoint where the main weaknesses of the revolutionary process are in order to identify the source of the fragility of revolution and the turning point of counter-revolution.

The core argument of this thesis rests on the variation of the integration of civil society within the state. In fact, in the case under analysis, the Egyptian state is semi-integral; this means that civil society forces are not fully integrated into the state system, leaving more autonomy to civil society actors to shape their counter-hegemony. Within the context of a semi-integral state – where

the elite does not have full control of civil society – the intermediary force acted as a connecting element between civil and political society. I argue that the Egyptian Uprising turned counter-revolutionary due to the oscillating behaviour of the intermediary forces; in fact, because the intermediary forces attempted to support the dominant force and at the same time counteract it by attempting to lead the subaltern bloc. Next I clarify these terms and introduce the necessary concepts that need to be unpacked to understand the dynamic of counter-revolution – addressed in Chapter Three. In other words, how does the concept of subalternity explain the Egyptian counter-revolution? Next, this thesis discusses how the concept of subalternity explains the open-ended outcome of the revolution, and specifically the counter-revolution. In fact, it addresses how the counter-revolution was the result of the interaction between political and civil society, instead of a top-down process.

Subalternity puts in relationship the agency and the structure, in the way that the counter-revolution does not interpret the Egyptian Uprising as the start and the failure of a democratisation process based on the assumption that there is only one direction that a regime change should take – from non-democratic to democratic regime. In other words, by using subalternity, we can move beyond the impasse that this dichotomy presents. Thus, this thesis shows how the Egyptian regime has changed thanks to the counter-revolution; nevertheless, this change is not democratic, not the complete restoration of the pre-2011 order. The concept of subalternity formulated by Gramsci is here interpreted as a lens that can explain the counter-revolution by looking at the agency of different actors in a specific context. In other words, in order to understand the dynamics of the counter-revolution, we should reconsider the state to address how different actors attempt to control it and how those dynamics have shaped the counter-revolution. The interaction between the state and subalternity offers a new understanding of how social drivers lead to the counter-revolution.

Therefore the analysis of subalternity in order to understand the counter-revolution relates to a different conceptualisation of the revolution as an open-

ended process, and the rethinking of the relations between state and subalternity during revolutionary situations. In this regard, Gramsci's theory offers a comprehensive tool of analysis to reconceptualise the revolution as a crisis and the different outcomes as different resolutions. This project offers a model of revolutionary process and outcomes based on the transformation of the state, and the ability of civil society to exploit pockets of autonomy – due to the state transformation – to develop political strategy to conquer the state.

1.2.1 Rethinking revolution in terms of hegemonic crisis

It is impossible to study the phenomenon of counter-revolution without taking into account the concept of revolution. However, before doing so it is necessary to clarify the differences between passive revolution and counter-revolution. In Gramsci, passive revolution has two distinct meanings. On the one hand, passive revolution is a form of state formation; on the other hand it is a form of crisis resolution. In both cases, passive revolution is driven by dominant forces with the exclusion of the remaining subaltern forces. Contrary to the case of passive revolution – which is a form of state formation that does not need a revolution as a prerequisite – counter-revolution is unthinkable without the reference of a revolution preceding it.

This thesis goes beyond the understanding of revolution as a process or outcome. Revolutions – as a form of crisis of hegemony defined by Gramsci (see section 3.3) – allow investigation of the process of a revolutionary situation without assuming a predetermined outcome like the consolidation of a democratic regime, or that the fact that the control of the process by the old elite will necessarily determine counter-revolution.

Depending on the actors involved, a revolution can be top-down – the elite control the revolutionary process, excluding the social forces – or bottom-up – social mobilisation leads the revolution. In terms of change, revolutions can be either political or social, or both, depending on the type of transformations that

occur. These categorisations attempt to crystallise the complex phenomenon of revolution, reducing it to a set of attributes that develop accordingly fixed patterns (Lawson, 2019, pp. 48–61). This strict classification allowed some scholars to place revolution and counter-revolution as opposite poles, where revolution is led by popular forces and counter-revolution is led by elite forces (De Smet, 2016, pp. 69–71). Therefore, this thesis argues that the phenomenon of revolution could be better understood using the concept of hegemonic crisis developed by Gramsci, since hegemony determines the relations between structure and agency. This allows the crisis to be resolved in different ways: either as revolution, passive revolution or forms of morbid symptom. Morbid symptoms are when a previous social order has been disrupted by a hegemonic crisis, but the outcome of the crisis – either as revolution or passive revolution – does not resolve the root cause of the hegemonic crisis. In other words, both revolution and passive revolution generate a new order that resolves the cause that triggered the hegemonic crisis, whereas morbid symptoms establish a system that is the direct result of the combination of a new and old system that does not resolve the causes of the hegemonic crisis.

Therefore, this thesis argues that revolution and counter-revolution are not two determinist accounts. Rather they become the extreme of a spectrum that offers nuanced concepts that have the potential to explain a larger variety of cases, depending on the interaction between the subaltern bloc and the state. Looking at it from this perspective, the concept of subalternity developed by Gramsci helps to understand how the relations between structure and agency and within social forces can explain the counter-revolution. By doing so, this thesis expands the panorama of theories on the revolution, advancing the relational approach overlooked by the fourth generation.

In fact, this thesis argues that revolutionary episodes should be better understood as a form of hegemonic crisis. In this way, the stability of the system is not due to specific attributes or conditions that need to be met as is assumed by the fourth generation. On the contrary, this thesis reverses the

logic of the study of hegemonic control. In order to understand how hegemonic crisis emerges in a context that does not share similar attributes or conditions, we should look at how hegemony is exercised within civil society. Instead, the balance between the integration of the state and the autonomy of civil society allows us to study the entire revolutionary process and stress the open-ended nature of the revolution. In this way, actors who control the hegemonic functions are pivotal in understanding the development of the revolution.

1.2.2 Rethinking subalternity and state

At first glance, the attempt to explain a counter-revolution by using the concept of subalternity might sound odd because schools of thought like the British Marxist Historians and the Subaltern Studies Group had investigated the social forces to unpack their relations with the colonial power and rewrite a 'history from below'. Although these studies on subalternity helped to popularise the concept – and also the overall theory of Gramsci – the analysis of subalternity has slowly been disassociated with relations with the system. Subalternity during counter-revolution remains under-studied because counter-revolution is often equated to a passive revolution which implies the exclusion of civil society from the revolutionary process. On the contrary, this thesis offers an account of how the internal division within the subaltern bloc – and its attempt to control the state – offers a better explanation of the role of social drivers in the counter-revolution.

Via the lens of subalternity, this thesis argues that the counter-revolution is not solely a top-down process – as is the case in passive revolution. Counter-revolution can be better understood by looking at the internal dynamics within civil society and the attempt of social groups to conquer the state power. For this reason, the concept of intermediary force between political and civil society allows us to move forward the dichotomous predetermined outcome of a successful revolution led by civil society forces, vs counter-revolution led by the elite. The majority of studies on the Egyptian counter-revolution either look

at how the military attempted to maintain the neoliberal structure (Abul-Magd, 2016), or how Islamist and secular forces failed in gathering the support of the masses (Bayat, 2013; Brown, 2013a) or at the weaknesses of the working movements (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014; Allinson, 2015). The existing literature looks at the state transformation in economic terms to explain the uprising in 2011 (Joya, 2011; Roccu, 2013), but it does not account for the implications of the state transformation in explaining the counter-revolution.

Subalternity – along with hegemony – is the concept that puts political and civil society in relationship. Gramsci is well known to be the theorist of hegemony and civil society. Hegemony represents both ideological and coercive control of civil society. For Gramsci ideology is not only a political system of ideas, it is a much broader *understanding of the world*. For this reason, ideology is close to other concepts like religion, folklore and common sense (Liguori, 2004a, pp. 140–142) .

The missing piece between the hegemony of the dominant force and its implementation within civil society is the concept of intermediary forces, a peculiar form of subalternity. Understanding the dynamic within the subaltern bloc explains how hegemony is implemented within civil society. In this regard, the intermediary forces are the key driver that exercises the hegemonic function within civil society. A function is an activity that a subject has. I distinguish direct and indirect uses of such a function. The direct use is related to the dominant force, which directly exercises the hegemonic function to keep its power. Indirect use of the hegemonic function is when the subject performs an activity not for its own interest, but for the interest of a third party. For example, hegemony is exercised in political and civil society, and as Chapter Three discusses in detail, hegemony as domination is directly performed within political society, while hegemony within civil society is mediated by the ‘private organisation’. For example, the intermediary teacher who works within an educational institution exercises the hegemonic function of dominant force within the civil society; in other words, the teacher exercises the hegemonic function not for their own interest but for the interest of the dominant force.

The control over civil society and cooperation of the intermediary forces is a criterion to define the state. Therefore the integral state of Gramsci is not simply the unity between political and civil society. It implies a specific regulation of civil society, which deprives civil society of any form of self-regulation and autonomy. As the revolutionary outcome is not a dichotomy of two opposite poles, neither is the concept of state either integral or gendarme – a gendarme state is a state that does not attempt to regulate social and economic relations within civil society, as its priority is to maintain a police state (Ayubi, 1995, p. 7). The state should be placed on a continuum, and that should overlap with the definition of revolution (see section 1.2.4). This thesis argues that during the moment of hegemonic crisis, the intermediary forces are the key factor that can shape the outcome of the crisis resolution. Such an outcome is dependent on the type of state because this establishes the permeability of the state structure to subaltern counter-revolutionary forces. Finally, by applying the idea of intermediary forces as a special case within the variety of subalternities in the case of the Egyptian counter-revolution, this thesis advances the understanding of how hegemony is organised within society via the support of specific social actors within civil society.

1.2.3 Rethinking the role of intermediary forces as social drivers of counter-revolution

The Egyptian Uprising was the manifestation of a crisis of hegemony. The crisis manifested because on the one hand the dominant bloc weakened due to internal power struggles which translated into reduction of hegemonic control over civil society, and on the other hand the subaltern forces unified and strengthened their counter-hegemonic strategies like the war of position and war of manoeuvre. Gramsci's conceptualisation of society can be summarised in two distinct blocs. A dominant bloc controls the economic structure's political and coercive institutions, while a subaltern bloc is a social alliance among different social groups. This difference might resemble the

dichotomy between elite and civil society; however, the interactions between the dominant and subaltern forces are mediated by the intermediary force, which is a special case of subalternity. Intermediary forces are the ones that exercise the hegemonic function within civil society, to control the different social forces. This thesis reinterprets the concept of subalternity by establishing clear relations between subalternity, state and hegemonic crisis; conceptualising the subaltern intermediary force, which within the case of a semi-integral state can shape the outcome of the revolution; and introducing this new concept of subalternity within the field of Middle Eastern studies, which has mostly used the concept based on the work of the British Marxist Historians and the Subaltern Studies Group. Finally, Egypt offers an empirical case to explain such new conceptualisation, especially since the empirical application of the revised concept of subalternity had remained limited to the empirical case of India (Zene, 2011; Nilsen and Roy, 2015).

In this way, the revised concept of subalternity as social alliance developed by Gramsci helps us to understand the dynamics within a specific bloc. Subalternity has been studied so far by reducing the concept to already existing conceptual categories. Subalternity should be rethought as a form of social groups' alliance, rather than the identification of a single category (Green, 2002, p. 21). In other words, the dynamics among the various components of this social alliance determine the revolutionary outcome. In order to understand how the social interactions of groups within the subaltern bloc can explain the counter-revolution, we need to go back to the relations that the structure has with the agency. From this point of view, Gramsci once again offers a comprehensive interpretation of the relations between structure and agency. As a result, this thesis expands the understanding of fragile revolution by looking at the agency of intermediary forces within the context of a semi-integral state.

1.2.4 Gramsci's theory in a nutshell – a model of revolutionary process

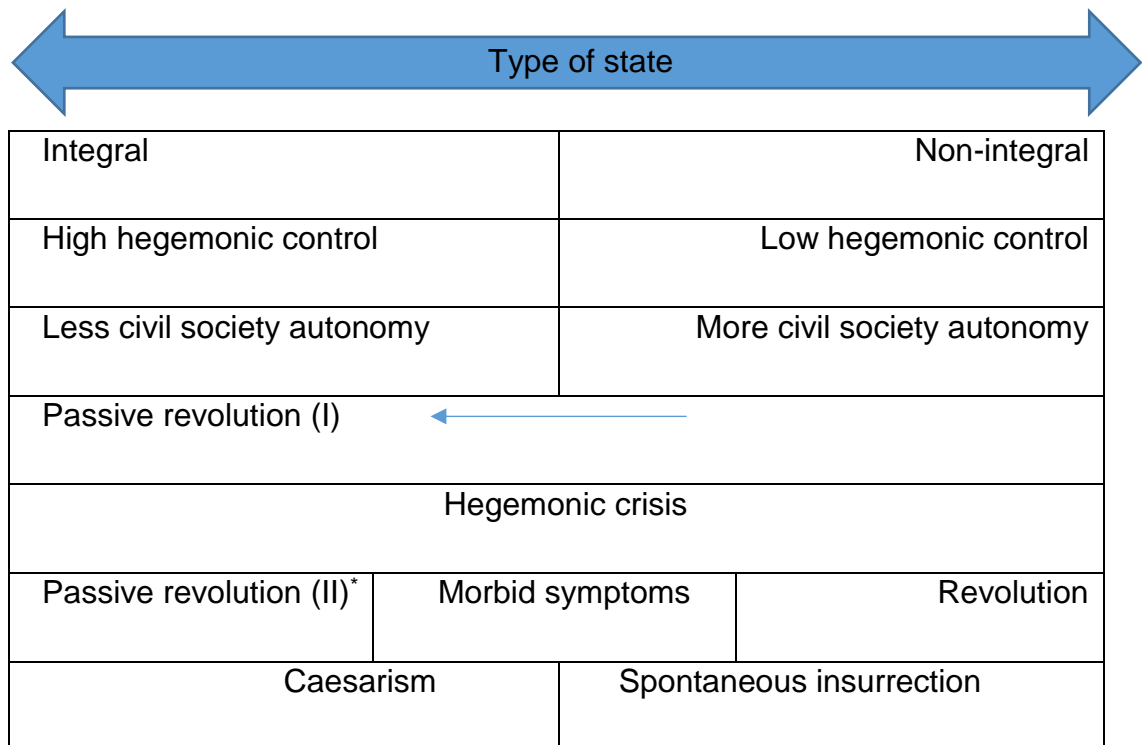
An efficient way to understand and interpret the concept of state and subalternity is to put the conceptualisation of the state along a continuum. At one extreme, there is the integral state (regardless whether it is democratic or not); this integral state encompasses strong relations with civil society – in a way, civil society is indeed integrated within the state. Such integration occurs at structural (economic) and superstructural (political and cultural) levels. The difference between democratic and authoritarian regimes does not lie in integration, since the primary form of integration is economic. An integral state is not democratic or authoritarian; this can be explained with Fordism as the democratic state, as well as the planned economy of the Soviet Union as a non-democratic regime. The difference between the types of regime is superstructural: the democratic hegemony is skewed towards persuasion; on the other hand, the authoritarian hegemony is shifted towards coercion. In this context, the autonomy of subaltern groups within civil society is limited. And in the rare case of a crisis of hegemony, the dominant force can actuate a passive revolution to maintain its supremacy over society.

At the opposite extreme, there is the non-integral state. By non-integral state, I refer to what Gramsci defines as 'the state as a confederation of classes' (Frosini, 2016, pp. 136–137). In this context, civil society is the space where the classes interact with less imposition from a dominant class that places itself within the state structure. Such state formation is theorised by Gramsci (see Figure 2) as passive revolution (I), where a dominant force emerges and forms the integral state, restricting civil society autonomy via its hegemonic function. For example, the Free Officers' revolution in 1952 was a form of state formation, when Egypt's state and society changed radically via the ability of the Nasserite state to integrate different social forces within the state (Achcar, 2016, p. 66; Salem, 2019, pp. 270–271).

The crisis of a democratic or authoritarian system should be addressed as a crisis of hegemony regardless of the form of governance. This leads to the definition of crisis in Gramsci as the situation where the 'old is dying and the new cannot be born' (Gramsci, 1975, p. 311 [Q3§34]). Such a crisis of authority is ever-present; it emerges when the hegemony of the dominant force weakens and the autonomy of the civil society allows the subaltern forces to organise their form of alternative hegemony. At this point, the crisis of hegemony can be resolved with a variety of potential outcomes, within the spectrum of the opposite poles of revolution and passive revolution. The revolution occurs when a social force within the subaltern bloc develops a counter-hegemony to take the lead in controlling the state. In contrast, passive revolution (II) consists of the exclusion of the subaltern forces and the use of hegemony by the dominant force to reinstate the integrity of the state. The core difference between revolution and passive revolution is not only the main actor that leads the resolution of the crisis, but in fact the type of state is also a prerequisite to determining a specific outcome. In order for the dominant force to exclude the subaltern forces, they need to exercise their hegemony within the framework of the integral state, whereas subalterns can only achieve their complete autonomy within the context of a non-integral state.

The semi-integral state exists with mixed characteristics in between these two extreme ideal types of state. If a hegemonic crisis occurs in the context of a semi-integral state, the crisis is more likely to be resolved as a form of morbid symptoms. In fact, the role of the intermediary forces – between civil and political society – can make a difference in resolving the crisis towards the end of revolution or passive revolution. From the specific case of the Egyptian counter-revolution this theoretical framework can be generalised to be applied in other cases.

Figure 2: Type of state–civil society relation and implication for the hegemonic crisis



* In this case, passive revolution is a form of transformation of the state to pre-empt or resolve a crisis of authority.

1.3 Research design

The research objective of this thesis is to develop the study of subalternity and counter-revolution, specifically the role that intermediate forces have in shaping the counter-revolution. This thesis is based on the epistemological assumption that the social world is formed by stratified structures that are reproduced by the agency via complex inter-relations (Joseph, 1998, pp. 83–84). In this view, hegemony is key to reproducing the structure within social relations, and the stratification of reality reflects the dialectic relations between politics and economics (Joseph, 1998, pp. 99–100).

The central question of this thesis is: what explains the Egyptian counter-revolution? This question is further analysed from four different angles that together concur to provide a comprehensive answer: (1) How did the Egyptian

state transform? (2) How did the alliance between the military and the Muslim Brotherhood shape the Egyptian state in 2011–2012? (3) How did the Muslim Brotherhood fail in controlling the state? (4) How did Sisi's counter-revolutionary regime consolidate after the coup? These four sub-questions address four different aspects of the counter-revolution. Let's turn to how this thesis develops models to understand the relations between agency and structure.

As already stated earlier in the chapter, the counter-revolution is the by-product of the hegemonic crisis. Therefore in order to explain what leads to the counter-revolution, it is essential to investigate the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis during the 2011 uprising. In order to answer this first sub-question, this thesis elaborates a model of state integration. The second sub-question – which investigates the transformation of the Egyptian state during 2011–2012, as a result of the interaction between the new dominant force and the most advanced subaltern force – and the third sub-question – which shifts the analysis onto the ambivalent agency of the Muslim Brotherhood as an intermediary force which alternates support and challenge to the dominant forces – both set the scene for understanding how, during the hegemonic crisis, the relations between key actors can shape the structure of the state. Finally, the last sub-question aims to square the circle. In other words, it addresses how the post-coup regime is the result of the counter-revolution due to the crisis started in 2011.

To answer the research question I use the retroductive research strategy. The retroductive strategy is composed of two stages: *empirical study* and *theoretical study*. During the empirical study, researchers observe the phenomena and identify patterns. They identify potential models of explanation. In the theoretical study, the researchers elaborate the details of the models. Finally, the researchers have to establish if the proposed models fit the reality. Because the research strategy chosen is retroductive, theory is generated 'by establishing which one of a number of possible known structures or mechanisms is responsible, and the condition under which it operates'

(Blaikie, 2009, p. 155; see also Ragin, 1994, pp. 55–59; Hartig, 2011, pp. 161–163).

The Egyptian case offers the opportunity to clarify concepts and categories used in dominant theories. It identifies which type of models can better explain the causal mechanism hidden behind the uprising and coup, and these models can still be tested in other contexts (George and Bennett, 2005, pp. 111–112).

1.3.1 Approach and case selection

This study is qualitative. The qualitative method offers the possibility of a detailed description of an entire process and allows the development of concepts and theory while collecting data (Blaikie, 2000, pp. 252–253). Therefore the qualitative data is analysed to ensure the establishment of models and relations. Egypt as a fragile revolution can shed light on the interaction between structure and agency that led to the counter-revolution. The finding derived by the Egyptian case can be generalised and tested in other cases which have experienced the same fragility. The Egyptian Uprising is an extended retrospective case study. It is extended because the events under analysis span over an extended period, and the actors are involved in different interlinked events. This allows us to identify patterns and models (Blaikie, 2000, p. 219). In this way, the Egyptian hegemonic crisis between 2011 and 2013 outlines an explanatory model of how the interactions between the state structure and the agency can affect the outcome of the counter-revolution. The different models of crisis resolution are based on Gramsci's theory, and Egypt is the explicative case that addresses the failure of the revolution as a form of counter-revolution rather than passive revolution.

It is retrospective because the phenomenon under analysis occurred in the past and the data collection was undertaken when the final outcome was already known. Therefore even if the researcher cannot observe or actively participate in the development of the phenomenon under study, she can

access documents or witnesses (Street and Ward, 2010, p. 825). A case study is beneficial to answer a 'how' question – that addresses the development of a specific event – when the event under analysis is not in the researcher's control. The case study is able to address contemporary phenomena in a real-life context when context and event is inextricable (Yin, 1994, p. 13). The obvious choice of selecting Egypt during 2011–2013 to explain the counter-revolution is dictated by the research question and contribution already discussed in this chapter. Egypt challenges empirically the assumption that 2011–2013 is a form of passive revolution, especially if we compare it with the 1952 Free Officers' coup. This is the case of the Egyptian Uprising when the context of the semi-integral state is taken into account to explain the agency of actors and the outcome of the uprising. Egypt has been chosen because, among the countries that experienced the so-called *Arab Spring*, only Tunisia and Egypt had a relatively peaceful transition. However, while Tunisia has been more successful in its transition process, the Egyptian transition was stopped by a military coup. For this reason, Egypt is also an instrumental case study; in fact, it provides specific insights and understanding of the phenomenon under consideration. It is therefore beneficial to develop a new theory – as this thesis does in taking into account subalternity to explain counter-revolution as well as testing the existing theory – the interpretation that the failed revolution is a form of passive revolution (Grandy, 2010, pp. 474–475). In this regard, the Egyptian Uprising is an instrumental case study because it allows the explanation and clarification of Gramsci's theory of hegemony, and related concepts like hegemonic crisis and subalternity within the specific context of the semi-integral state.

In terms of time frame, the thesis takes into account the development of the state from Nasser to the eve of the uprising, in order to investigate how the shrinking of the integral state allowed more autonomy for the subalterns' agency. Between 2011 and 2013 I focus my attention on the agency by looking at the interaction between dominant and subaltern forces in the context of the semi-integral state. Finally, after the military coup, I return to analyse the potential for the integration of the subaltern within the state.

1.3.2 Data collection

Before addressing in detail the data collection via the use of secondary data, I address the conditions of production of this research and how the changing situation in the field required an abrupt steer in the direction of this project. Factors like the internal organisation of social movements involved in the uprising and counter-revolution, the impact of ideology in decision making, and pragmatism in perusing political opportunities are all variables that capture the limits of actors' actions and how these affect the interactions between agency and structure.

These factors are best captured via tailored interviews of actors involved in the phenomenon under analysis. Therefore I planned fieldwork in Cairo starting from April 2016. However, I never went to Cairo to conduct my fieldwork and collect primary data via interviews. My fieldwork was cancelled because of the tragic death of Giulio Regeni, a fellow PhD student. Giulio was in Cairo to conduct fieldwork on pedlars and independent trade unions in Egypt. He went missing on 25th January 2016 – not surprisingly the fifth anniversary of the start of the uprising – and his body was subsequently found in a ditch on the side road of the Cairo–Alexandria highway (Kirchgaessner and Michaelson, 2016). Giulio's murder brought significant changes not just in the country but also the way scholars can study it. The death of Giulio showed the necessity for the academic community to rethink how to conduct the research of sensitive topics highly scrutinised by authoritarian regimes, not just in the Middle East but elsewhere (Clark and Cavatorta, 2018, p. 3).

First of all, Giulio's murder highlighted the escalation of harassment experienced by other academics like Michelle Dune, who was denied access to the country, and 'Fanny' Othier, who was arrested in Damietta for meeting with April 6 activists (Kirkpatrick, 2014; Al Karama, 2015). Holding a foreign passport was no longer sufficient to protect researchers in Egypt. Secondly, it unveiled the paranoid climate that pervaded society where the rhetoric of honourable citizens deepened divisions within society and xenophobia fed the

spread of conspiracy theory, increasing the hostile environment for researchers. Beside concerns for my personal safety I was not willing to put any of my participants at risk, especially knowing that many activists were already jailed or missing. In addition, I lived in Egypt between April 2012 and October 2014, getting to know many people, and with some of them I developed a deep friendship. Regardless of the lack of political activism of my friends in Egypt, I did not want them to be put at any risk because of their relations with me and the sensitivity of my research.

In sum, the ethical burden of risk for my participants and friends did not allow me to return to Egypt for my fieldwork. This left me with other data collection methods to explore and evaluate to conduct my research. Obviously I was not the sole researcher interested in the Egyptian counter-revolution to face such a hostile environment. Said reflects on a series of creative methods for collecting data from various participants without accessing the field (Said, 2018, pp. 90–92).

The first method is cooperation with local researchers. Such an interesting form of academic cooperation is not exempted from the ethical burden for the safety of local researchers who live and work in Egypt along with their families (Clark and Cavatorta, 2018, p. 3; Said, 2018, pp. 91–92). Beside the ethical, obviously, this method is not an option for a sole-authored work like a PhD thesis; nevertheless, it could be considered for further research.

The second method proposed by Said is interviews through emails. This method consists of emailing out a series of questions to participants and awaiting their answers. The advantage of this method is that it avoids the risk of participants encountering the security apparatus. At the same time, written answers ensure more accuracy and avoid time-consuming transcriptions. Nevertheless, Said himself admitted that this method is beneficial when asking short questions but that the follow-up round of questions was not successful (Said, 2018, p. 92). The difficulty that I envisaged with this method was related to a lack of access to participants from abroad.

Finally, the third method involves conducting interviews with Egyptian activists in exile. This method ensures a relatively easier access to participants and the opportunity of snowballing for other participants. However, the primary limitation of this method involves the risk of relying only on a limited number of activists and the potential of skewing the finding over a limited group. This is problematic when we look at two overlapping issues: on the one hand, the variety of destinations chosen by exiled activists like the MB who left the country for destinations like Qatar, Turkey, Sudan, North America, Asia and Europe, mostly depending on socioeconomic and ideological factors, whereas the destination country of young secular activists were European capitals and North America (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2019, pp. 3–4); on the other hand, travelling to multiple locations in order to ensure the validity of the data was not financially affordable as a self-funded student. Nevertheless, the lack of fieldwork did not prevent me from investigating actors' agency to assess the effect of their political actions, beyond the impact of ideology in their decision making.

In terms of data collection, I rely on a range of documents. Documents under consideration are all sorts of written, audio and visual artefacts that testify to human activities. The variety of documents is very comprehensive, from public records or open documentation – like the media, books, reports, government policy, laws, court documents etc. (Olson, 2010, pp. 319–320; Raptis, 2010, pp. 321–322). Documents provide a wide variety of contextual materials that are alternative – or complementary – to direct observation and interviews (Raptis, 2010, p. 323). The documents analysed in this thesis are secondary sources, like newspaper articles and reports and data from peer-reviewed academic research, broadcast media, and recorded interviews; as well as official documents like constitutions and laws. By analysing the economic and security policies that have been put in place by the SCAF and the Muslim Brotherhood it is possible to establish in what forms the Muslim Brotherhood challenged the military's dominance, and how the military attempted to appeal to other sectors of society. The assessment of authenticity and credibility of the document being examined is crucial for accurate analysis (Raptis, 2010, p.

323). For this reason, this thesis relies on established news providers and academic peer-reviewed research to ensure the credibility of the data analysed.

The qualitative secondary analysis revisits the data of existing research projects to develop theories (Curtis and Curtis, 2011, pp. 216–218, 224). It offers a valid alternative to fieldwork for conducting research on sensitive topics, unsafe countries and elusive populations (Long-Sutehall, Sque and Addington-Hall, 2011, p. 335). The qualitative secondary analysis consists of the use of existing data to answer a different research question than the original questions driving the primary data collection (Hinds, Vogel and Clarke-Steffen, 1997, p. 408). In this research existing qualitative secondary data is used to reinterpret and re-analyse existing data on the Egyptian Uprising through the conceptual lens of subalternity, and its relations with other Gramscian concepts like hegemonic crisis and its resolution and the integral state. Nevertheless, the collection of secondary data displays minor gaps due to the lack of primary research. However, the Egyptian Uprising was one of the most documented events in recent years, and the overwhelming data existing on the topic is sufficient to minimise the gaps caused by the lack of fieldwork. Therefore, the intention of the project is to evaluate the existing data on the Egyptian Uprising in line with the concept of subalternity in general, and intermediary forces in particular. The secondary data used has similar research questions to those in this study; however, this research aims to link the existing data on the Egyptian Uprising with the explanatory concept of subalternity and intermediary forces, as the scope of the primary research needs to be taken into account during the re-analysis of secondary data (Hinds, Vogel and Clarke-Steffen, 1997, p. 412; Long-Sutehall, Sque and Addington-Hall, 2011, p. 337).

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two starts by addressing the broader literature the theory is built on. The chapter addresses the gaps in existing Middle Eastern studies which view 2011 or 2013 as examples of forms of democratisation or authoritarian resilience respectively. Studies on revolution have attempted to move beyond the deadlock of viewing these two phenomena separately. However, theories on revolution sufficiently address the causes of revolution but fall short in addressing the roots of counter-revolution. Finally, the chapter analyses the interpretation of the concepts of subalternity by the British Marxist Historians and the Subaltern Studies Group, who were credited with popularising the concept of Gramsci's subalternity but failed to link it to the counter-revolutionary process. Chapter Three then turns to discussing the concept of subalternity in Gramsci and its relations with hegemonic crisis, crisis resolution and types of state. It highlights why the Egyptian counter-revolution is a form of morbid symptom, and in order to do this the chapter discusses the active role of the intermediary force in shaping the counter-revolution. Chapter Four analyses the hegemonic crisis in Gramsci's terms, highlighting not only the economic roots of the uprising but also defining how autonomy is a prerequisite of subalternity organisation. This chapter addresses the transformation of the Egyptian state and the manifestation of hegemonic crisis at the political and civil society level, since the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis cannot be fully understood without taking into account the Egyptian state. Chapter Five explains the first phase of the power dynamic between the three main actors, within the time frame from 25th January 2011 to the presidential victory of the Brotherhood candidate Mohamed Morsi in June 2012. In Chapter Six, the thesis looks at the failed attempt of the Muslim Brotherhood as the intermediary forces that allied with the military to control political society. It investigates how the intermediary forces oscillated between attempting to lead civil society and maintaining the dominance of the military. Chapter Seven looks at the post-coup scenario to analyse how the military has learned from the experience of the Muslim Brotherhood as intermediary force and unstable ally. This chapter

stresses the transformation of the post-coup Egyptian state as the result of the counter-revolution. The chapter argues that the new basis of the hegemony of the new regime is linked with the attempt of the military to create an integral state, where the political society can penetrate the socioeconomic relations of the civil society. Whether or not Sisi's regime will manage to turn Egypt into an integral state via a passive revolution to neuter the subaltern forces remains beyond the scope of this thesis. Finally, the concluding chapter self-reflects on the theoretical framework and argument offered in this thesis and expands on other contexts where this theory can be valuable.

Chapter 2 Beyond the *paradogma*: revolution, Gramsci and subalternity

Chapter One has set the rationale of counter-revolution study in its own right. In fact, the empirical puzzle that Egypt poses – not only to scholars interested in Middle Eastern politics, but also scholars interested in the phenomenon of revolution – has offered the opportunity to bridge different fields that otherwise might not have been in put into relationship: Middle Eastern politics, revolution studies and subaltern studies. Hence, the threefold contribution discussed in Chapter One reflects these three different areas of literature, and thanks to the Egyptian counter-revolution helps to build a theory of counter-revolution.

To investigate the counter-revolution, we need first to address how revolutions occur. The so-called Arab Spring questions the two paradigms – democratisation and authoritarian resilience – in existing MENA studies. Both of these contrasting paradigms need to be revised to explain the reasons behind the uprisings. Additionally, the literature on Arab civil society deserves attention, because under-studied actors like seculars and workers' movements had a key role in the 2011 and 2013 uprisings. Finally, the literature on revolution and counter-revolution in Egypt has failed to relate the agency of social forces during the counter-revolution, and exposes a misunderstanding of Gramsci's theory.

2.1 Democratisation and authoritarian resilience – two separate levels of analysis

2.1.1 On democratisation and authoritarian resilience – regime level

Before the Arab Uprisings, the academic debate on MENA politics was characterised by two dominant paradigms: democratisation (transitology paradigm) and post-democratisation (authoritarian resilience). The use of the democratisation paradigm was inspired by the third wave of democratisation in the 1990s, which included regime reforms like repetitive elections, the introduction of a multi-party system, economic liberalisation, and social activism which signalled the emergence of a vibrant civil society (Huntington, 1991; Salamé, 1994; Yom, 2005; Pratt, 2007). These changes, however, did not allow democracy to flourish. Instead, it seemed that the Arab world skipped the third wave of democratisation, and the debate moved around the exceptionalism of the region. Lisa Anderson (2006) highlights that searching for democratisation in MENA states is misleading because we are searching for something that is not there. Scholars would have to adjust democratisation theory in a context that was not democratising. Consequently, rather than studying ‘the failure of democratization, one should seek a better understanding of the success of authoritarianism’ (Valbjørn, 2015, p. 221).

The democratisation paradigm was replaced with the authoritarian resilience paradigm for the MENA region (Carothers, 2002). Regime reforms and social activism were interpreted as forms of regime upgrading in line with Tomasi di Lampedusa’s doctrine² (Valbjørn and Bank, 2010; Valbjørn, 2015). Albrecht and Schlumberger (2004) argue that democracy in the Arab world is like Beckett’s *Godot* because we are waiting for something that might not arrive; the regime reforms did not make democracy any closer for MENA states. The authoritarian resilience paradigm focused its attention on regime structure and the ruling elite, and less on civil society. Arab regimes undertook

² In his novel *The Leopard*, Sicilian nobility is caught by popular revolution, and in order to maintain its privileges, the nobility understands it has to adjust and manipulate the changing events.

changes only to grant them stability and longevity, which resulted in a kind of hybrid regime, not fully autocratic or progressing towards democratic forms (Brumberg, 2002; Zakaria, 2003; Volpi, 2004; Cavatorta, 2010). However, the post-democratisation paradigm became a *paradogma* – stressing the fact that certain paradigms in academia become like dogma because their core assumptions are unchallenged (Valbjørn, 2015).

Both paradigms failed in different ways. Authoritarian resilience did not take into account the unintended consequences of liberalism and cosmetic reforms, while democratisation did not look at other actors like social movements that challenged the regime (Pace and Cavatorta, 2012). Nevertheless, regimes still operate successfully in their upgrading, demonstrating the validity of the upgrading and resilience capacity of regime adaptation (Pace and Cavatorta, 2012). Other scholars looked at factors like oil renters and hereditary regimes to explain the causes of the uprisings and regime change. Brownlee *et al.* (2013) argued that non-hereditary regimes without oil experienced elite defection that determined regime change, whereas hereditary regimes with rich oil-maintained elite cohesion guaranteed regime continuity. In the case of Egypt, Brown (2013a) identifies ‘bad behavior’ and ‘bad choices’ as the causes of the failed transition. Bad behaviour is constituted by shallow democratic practice, mistrust of ballots, corruption and authoritarian procedure. The Muslim Brotherhood excluded the rest of the opposition while in power, while the opposition sought to overthrow the electoral results by street protests rather than seeking negotiation and mediations. In terms of bad choices, the political forces lacked consensus and oppositions split (Brown, 2013a). To the eyes of the vast majority of the population, Mubarak, his son Gamal, and the National Democratic Party (NDP) were responsible for Egypt’s declining conditions, whereas the positive image of the military was reinforced. Looking only at regime level, Cook points out that ‘Arab leaders have little reason to undertake reforms’ (Cook, 2006, p. 66). The robustness of the security apparatus and the co-opted opposition enjoyed benefits of the corporate system and had few intentions of pushing towards an overthrow (Albrecht and Schlumberger, 2004; Bellin, 2004, 2012; Albrecht, 2005).

None of these explanations takes into account the importance of popular support during regime change. The focus of the majority of existing literature conducts its analysis at the regime level (elite and institutionalised opposition) while considering social movements and masses as secondary actors. Both paradigms underestimated the role that civil society had in the region. In the case of Egypt, civil society challenged the regime in 2011 and supported the upgrading of authoritarians in 2013. On the contrary, the theory of counter-revolution – proposed in Chapter Three – addresses how the return of the authoritarian regime does not recreate a pre-2011 order; the post-2013 order is the result of the interactions between civil society and the elite.

2.1.2 On democratisation and authoritarian resilience – society level

Many scholars, like Augustus Richard Norton (1995), Saad Eddin Ibrahim (1997) and Ghassan Salamé (1994), have investigated the role of civil society in the Arab world. The existing literature regarding civil society in MENA offers several perspectives on how civil society can affect democratisation in the region. Despite different interpretations, these approaches stand on the same definition of civil society as the sphere of voluntary associations autonomous from the state and the market.

In the liberal approach, civil society was understood as a necessary force able to undermine a non-democratic regime. This approach is derived from the successful democratisation in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe, as well as from its liberal heritage. This approach argues that the involvement of citizens in civil life occurs when the state (no matter what form of government) retreats from both social and economic life, leaving society enough space to regulate itself. This empty space is considered free and autonomous, and therefore individuals *freely* and *voluntarily* decide to organise themselves to fulfil the common aim that brought them together (Kubba, 2000; Hawthorne, 2004; Yom, 2005; Pratt, 2007). From this perspective, it is understandable why there was great enthusiasm regarding civil society in

MENA among scholars, who hoped for the development of this new actor as the key element in triggering democratisation in the region (Kubba, 2000). However, the limitations of this approach came from the fact that civil society in MENA does exist but is not considered a pro-democratic actor. Those who were not convinced by the idea of a weak civil society in MENA preferred to explain the lack of democratisation by looking at the Islamist groups. For them 'uncivil society' was the answer (Abdelrahman, 2002; Berman, 2003; Hawthorne, 2004).

The formation of an Islamic state with characteristics that did not seem to reflect a democratic state made these scholars assume that Islamists are illiberal and anti-democratic forces by definition (Berman, 2003). This is the reason why Arab countries are trapped in the dilemma of the 'Weimar' syndrome of how to implement the democratic procedure without having spread democratic values, as well as reflecting on how democracy could exclude certain groups from the political competition (Brumberg, 2002; Zakaria, 2003). This approach is limited since it considers Islamist groups undemocratic by *definition*; they are seen as a monolithic bloc that is incapable of having different views, thus highlighting the fact that *civil* and 'uncivil' society are unable to cooperate.

There is a third approach that aims to be 'value-free', distancing itself from this debate around civil vs uncivil society (Cavatorta and Durac, 2011). Cavatorta and Durac claim that assuming that civil society can have a positive or a negative character leads to the predetermination of what we could expect from it in terms of goals and behaviours. They point out that Islamist and non-Islamist groups can cooperate together because they are both actors operating within the same system. They remark that civil society behaves differently in a democracy vs a non-democracy. Thus, to understand a civil society we need to take into account the environment within which it works (Abdelrahman, 2002, pp. 33–34; Shehata, 2010, p. 83; Cavatorta and Durac, 2011, pp. 18–19).

Both levels of analysis – elite and societal – reproduce the same deterministic outcome of democratisation. The Islamist bloc can be considered either civil or uncivil; likewise, it is possible to make the same assumption regarding the non-Islamist bloc, since not all non-Islamist groups aim to undermine the regime in order to trigger a democratisation process. Although this perspective offers a better understanding of the variety of Islamist forces, it still bases its analysis on the expectation that the transformation of the regime and the actions of actors are guided by democratic goals. On the contrary, this thesis applies Gramsci's concept of civil society. Instead of considering civil society 'good' or 'bad' in itself, Gramsci describes civil society as an expression of dialectic between hegemony and counter-hegemony. Civil society is divided into different (subaltern) groups. What limits the previous approaches is the imposition of labels to specific groups (like Islamists, seculars, pro-democratic etc.) which brings more focus onto the characteristics of the groups themselves rather than their interactions. The fact that Arab society does not have pro-democratic actors as defined according to the dominant Western concept does not mean that different civil society forces do not interact with each other to reshape the existing order. Gramsci's approach overcomes these limits because it highlights the moment of interaction of different groups within civil society, and between civil and political society; such interaction determines the revolutionary outcome.

Gramsci offers a better understanding of the interaction between political and civil society. Gramsci's approach overcomes the analysis of a single level, either of elite interactions or of the dynamics within civil society. These separated analyses of elite and civil society have two main limitations: first, the separation between the agency of the elite and the agency of civil society remains confined in two separate levels of analysis that compromise the understanding of social drivers of counter-revolution. This division does not offer an accurate account of the power dynamics during the Egyptian counter-revolution. Second, the analysis of elite and civil society overstates the agency of these actors and limits the analysis of how the structure limits actors'

agency. Therefore the agency of social forces during the counter-revolution needs to be analysed by taking into account the limits that the state imposes.

2.2 Revolution

A way to overcome the determinist dichotomy reproduced by the democratisation vs authoritarian persistence is to analyse the uprising through the lenses of revolution. Revolution is by definition a form of transition. Initially, this helps to move beyond the expected democratic outcome embedded in the democratisation theory. Nevertheless, the literature on revolutions tackles this complex phenomenon from different angles. Revolutionary theories have developed in generations, which allows a building upon reflections of previous theories and is driven by a heuristic scope (Lawson, 2016, pp. 106–107). The first generation – ‘the natural history of revolution’ theories – was led by historians who used a descriptive approach to explain revolutions as a deviation from the norm. This implies the exceptionalism of the revolutionary phenomenon derived from normative assumptions, because the explanations for revolution were often various and ad hoc. For these reasons the main weakness of the first generation of study of revolution was the lack of a robust theoretical framework (Goldstone, 1980, pp. 428–429; Foran, 1993, pp. 1–2; Lawson, 2019, pp. 48–49).

Second generation – *general theory* – developed from three distinct approaches – psychology, sociology and political science (Goldstone, 1980, p. 425; Foran, 1993, p. 1). The psychological approach looks at cognitive psychology and the frustration-aggression theory. Inspired by modernisation and urbanisation theory, this approach considers revolutions as the result of ‘relative deprivation’. In other words, masses rebel because they become ‘frustrated’ by the discrepancy between the expectation generated by rapid economic growth and the unrealised expectation that has caused through an economic downturn. Ultimately the divergence between the reality and the unfulfilled expectations turns frustration into violence. In this perspective, the

aim of this school of thought was to identify the factors that affect these cognitive attitudes (Gurr, 1970; Goldstone, 1980, pp. 427–428; Tiruneh, 2014, p. 2; Lawson, 2019, p. 50). Although this approach explains the people's motivation to revolt, it does not explain the modality of revolution. These interpretations overstate the ability of the agency in triggering a revolution, depending on the interpretation of deprivation by the subject. They also fail to explain cases that have widespread relative deprivation but where revolution did not happen (Lawson, 2019, p. 50).

The sociological approach refers to structural-functionalist theory which considers revolution as the result of 'disequilibrium' among the various subsystems (polity, economy, culture, status, values) that make society – the social system. The aim of the analysis is to identify the causes that disrupt the equilibrium of the system (Goldstone, 1980, p. 428). The political science approach reflects on the pluralist theory of interest-group competition. The political science pluralist theory addresses the revolution as the results of the conflict between competing interest groups. In this regard, revolution is the escalation of conflicts among these groups that could not be solved via negotiations, and therefore revolution was the violent bursting of the political system (Goldstone, 1980, pp. 428–429). These theoretical approaches also share common weaknesses, for example their variables – frustration, disequilibrium and conflict – remain difficult to observe and measure. These theories also focus on the causes of revolution, giving a little attention to what accounts for revolutions that produce a democratic or an authoritarian regime (Goldstone, 1980, pp. 433–434; Foran, 1993, pp. 1–2).

The third generation – *structural model* – steered the investigation of revolution towards the structure, reconsidering the state structure, domestic and international constraints that led to revolution. The debate was no longer why people rebel but under what circumstances revolutions happen (Foran, 1993, p. 1; Lawson, 2019, p. 51). The third generation started to pay attention to the different kind of state – based on governance institutions and coercion – and its goals. In fact, revolution is the result of the mismatch of the goals of the

state and the political and economic structure (Trimberger, 1977, Eisenstadt, 1978, Skocpol, 1979 cit. in Goldstone, 1980, p. 435). The third generation of revolution study also takes into account international political and economic interferences as well as accounting for armed forces coherence, agrarian structure and elite concessions (Skocpol, 1979; Goldstone, 1980, pp. 436–437). Nevertheless, the third generation overemphasised the structure, disregarding other factors like agency and culture, and it failed to recognise the role of urban forces and social coalition generally (Foran, 1993, p. 4). Overstating the structural features of revolution resulted in the impossibility of explaining cases that structurally met the criteria for revolution but where the revolution did not occur, and vice versa; it was unable to explain why revolution occurred in unfavourable circumstances (Lawson, 2019, p. 51).

Finally, the fourth generation attempted to balance the relationship between structure and agency, by looking at culture, ideas, values and ideology that can motivate actors. The fourth generation foregrounded the variety of factors that allowed the revolution to burst forth (Foran, 1993, pp. 6–7; Goldstone, 2001; Lawson, 2019, pp. 51–52). In this regard, the actors behind the revolution were not a single category – like peasants for the third generation. Instead the fourth generation addresses the involvement of a broad social coalition not characterised solely by social class dimension; rather, it emphasises other social cleavages like gender, ethnicity and religion (Foran, 1993, p. 8). Despite the improvements in the fourth generation of study of revolution, it has not remained immune from criticism. Firstly, the research of multiple factors and the renewed attention on agency highlight how the contingency aspect makes the phenomenon of revolution difficult to study and impossible to predict. This is because the revolution breaks down everyday life and ultimately creates a state of confusion where people are not aware of their own actions and likewise they might not understand the actions of others around them. Therefore attempting to explain the pre-existing conditions of revolution remains impossible (Kurzman, 2004a, p. 347, 2004b, pp. 166–167, 2008, pp. 22–23; Clarke, 2014, pp. 381–382). Secondly, despite the aim of the fourth generation to overcome the limitations of the third generation by looking

at multiple factors, it remained anchored to ‘substantialist commitments’ like ‘context-less attributes, abstract regularities, ahistorical variables, and timeless properties’ (Lawson, 2016, p. 122).

The Arab Uprisings flagged the need for a new theoretical tool make sense of such phenomena. This shaped the debate within Middle Eastern studies to understand, in the first instance, if the Arab Uprisings were a revolution or not. The debate is shaped around two relevant definitions of revolutions – from the third and fourth generation – that were used to conceptualise the Arab Uprisings.

The first definition is perhaps the most well-known definition of revolution. Skocpol (1979, p. 4) looks at social revolutions as ‘rapid, basic transformations of a society’s state and class structure; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below’. This definition takes into account (1) the causes (class-based revolts) and (2) the outcome (transformation of state and class structure) of the revolution, and (3) the modality (rapid and basic transformation). The Egyptian case hardly fits this definition of revolution, because the causes were not only class-based revolts – for example, police brutality – and the outcome did not materialise into a transformation of a class structure, because the neoliberal economic system that generated the grievances at the core of the uprising remained in place after the counter-revolution. Starting from the same economic approach, Beinín stresses how an essential element of revolution is its ‘long-term process’ which will form a new social order, and in the case of Egypt the spontaneous popular movement that managed to bring down Mubarak did not build a new political order (Beinín, 2013b). In this regard, rather than attempt to theorise counter-revolution the focus should be on addressing ‘the distinction between a successful revolution and a defeated social movement with revolutionary aspirations’ (Beinín, 2014b). In this way, looking at the revolution only through its success reduces the analysis of revolution only to successful cases and makes the study of failed revolutions impossible (De Smet, 2016, pp. 72–74; Allinson, 2019b, p. 324).

This opens the debate on how to conceptualise a revolution that fails, often considered a successful counter-revolution (Goldstone, 2001, p. 143; De Smet, 2014c; Slater and Smith, 2016, pp. 1473–1474; Allinson, 2019a, pp. 143–144). In the critiques of Skocpol's definition of revolution, Goldstone takes away the 'success' of a revolution as a necessary outcome to define the concept and defines revolutions as:

(a) efforts to change the political regime that draw on a competitive vision (or visions) of a just order, (b) a notable degree of informal or formal mass mobilization, and (c) efforts to force change through noninstitutionalized actions such as mass demonstrations, protests, strikes, or violence. (Goldstone, 2001, p. 142).

This definition includes the Egyptian case; in this way the focus of investigations moves from the outcome to the process. This definition allowed a shift of analysis from a class-based analysis to an ideological component (*the vision of just order*). However, it poses methodological issues regarding the measurement of 'efforts' or 'notable degree'. Goldstone attempts to operationalise these variables using social movement theory, and therefore including elements like organisations and networks and the relevance of identity to account for the agency (Goldstone, 2001, pp. 152–154). To apply this definition to the case of Egypt, the revolution materialised due to the presence of various social movements; however, arguably the failure of the Egyptian revolution was due to the lack of ideology and leadership. Such interpretation is primarily agency-driven and does not take into account the constraints that the system imposes on the range of actions of the agents. In addition, conceptualising the failed revolution as a process that *lacks* specific attributes ultimately reduces 'counter-revolution [to] an inevitably secondary, reactive phenomenon' (Allinson, 2019b, p. 323). As non-democratic regimes are not merely the residual category of what does not constitute a democracy, within the pool of non-democratic regimes there is growing investigation into how to understand and conceptualise these regimes on their own merits (Brooker, 2014, pp. 1–4). The same logic is applied here to understand 'failed

revolution', which is not a residual category of what does not constitute a revolution. In this regard, the Arab Uprising stressed the need to revise the theory of revolution. Firstly it highlights the need to understand what makes these revolutions so fragile (Abrams, 2019, p. 2; Allinson, 2019a, p. 148, 2019b, p. 321), therefore we should no longer seek 'to understand failed revolutions but rather successful counter-revolutions' (Allinson, 2019a, p. 144, emphasis in original); and secondly it stresses how the complexity of studying revolutions and counter-revolutions derives from the fact that revolutions often occur along with other social phenomena like civil war, rebellions, coups d'état, and transitions (Lawson, 2019, p. 3).

A way to move forward our understanding of revolution and counter-revolution refers to the conceptualisation of revolution as a process based on 'context-specific interactions' (Lawson, 2016, p. 114). The use of the interactionist approach moves beyond the dichotomy between agency and structure, by balancing 'law-like historical processes and thick narratives of particular events without trying to subsume the one into the other' (Bennani-Chraïbi and Fillieule, 2012 cit. in Volpi, 2017, pp. 3–4). In fact, based on the interactionist approach, social conflicts are underpinned by an economic structure that nevertheless leaves the agency room to manoeuvre to generate unpredictable development (Clarke, 2017, p. 573). From this perspective, class interests are context-driven and not fixed, and this allows the formation of coalitions beyond class interests (Yashar, 1997, Wood, 2000, Bellin, 2002 cit in. Clarke, 2017, p. 574).

2.3 Reconsidering the application of Gramsci in Egypt

2.3.1 Gramsci before the uprising

In order to move beyond the impasse of the fourth generation, this thesis will use Gramsci's theory of revolution and the concept of subalternity in the

revolutionary process. However, Gramsci was not only the theorist of revolution; the application of his theory has been prolific and varied because Gramsci offered a multi-level analysis of elements like the state, civil society, and revolution. All these concepts have been applied in Egypt with great merit; nonetheless the Egyptian uprising highlights some limitations. The first analysis on the Arab state based on Gramsci offers an alternative understanding of the state in liberal terms (either strong or weak). In fact, Ayubi argues that most Arab states are 'hard state', some are 'fierce', while very few are 'strong state'. Arab states are 'hard' states in the sense that they have a large bureaucracy; 'fierce' states as they have sharp and efficient repressive apparatus; but not 'strong' states because they fail to penetrate into society in terms of taxation and law enforcement (Ayubi, 1995, p. xi). More importantly, the states lack ideological hegemony. Therefore, social relations were shaped by individual ties developed across limited groups; this cooperation ultimately developed into form of corporatism (Ayubi, 1995, pp. 3, 33–35, 196–221). This understanding of Gramscian states and their relations with civil society does explain the stability of the authoritarian regime in the region. However, it falls short of explaining how these relations change. In fact, the stability of the corporatist system did not prevent the uprising in 2011.

The other side of the analysis of the state is based on its relations with civil society. Pratt (2007, pp. 6–9) observes that despite the fact that welfare is declining it does not seem that the authoritarian regime is becoming more fragile. She explains the failure of democratisation or the persistence of authoritarianism through 'bringing culture back in', while acknowledging the contributions of other theories based on economic variables, such as the rentier state theory, economic development of state formation, and lack of independent civil society (Pratt, 2005, pp. 69–70). In this regard, she uses Gramsci's theorisation of the role of culture in structuring politics, explaining how the dominant forces use both coercion and consent – a variety of non-coercive means – because the regime cannot apply coercion alone to maintain hegemony; therefore, culture plays a fundamental role in maintaining hegemony (Pratt, 2005, 2007, p. 11).

Pratt argues that 'civil society under authoritarianism continues to exist but does not necessarily behave or resemble civil society in liberal democratic systems' (Pratt, 2007, p. 12). In this regard, Pratt considers democratic forces – in liberal terms – as counter-hegemonic (Pratt, 2007, pp. 13–15). Civil society is not only the arena of authoritarian consent but also the terrain of counter-hegemony developed through what Gramsci defines as a war of position, an attack on the ideological structure of the state. Pratt claims that civil society actors that embrace political freedoms and civil rights represent the wars of position against the regime (Pratt, 2007, pp. 13–14). National unity is constructed as threatened by the introduction of human rights, perceived as Western cultural imperialism. Pratt continues that these pro-democratic forces are portrayed as an internal enemy to national unity; therefore they are often repressed for the salvation of the nation (Pratt, 2005, p. 70, 2007, pp. 13–19).

In the aftermath of the Egyptian Uprising, we should reflect on to what extent those pro-democratic counter-hegemonic forces described by Pratt (2005, 2007) played a role in triggering the uprising and the counter-revolution. The analysis of counter-hegemonic forces is not confined to one specific group; in fact, if Pratt looks at pro-democratic forces as the manifestation of counter-hegemony, others see in the Islamist movement of the Muslim Brotherhood an example of counter-hegemony (Simms, 2002; Bayat, 2007; Kandil, 2011; Ranko, 2015; Kennedy, 2017). Other scholars consider the cultural mobilisation of the Muslim Brotherhood as an example of a counter-hegemonic strategy. Simms analyses the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood as a reaction to British occupation, referring primarily to the counter-hegemony as 'control of the culture' rather than coercion; 'using the Koran' to politicise 'the common folk with a religiously focused anti-western message' (Simms, 2002, pp. 564–570). The Muslim Brotherhood mobilised the population by framing Islamic doctrine as anti-Western, thus creating a completely new system of beliefs. In this regard, the basis of the society and the state are endorsed in the Quran and to establish such a new system it is necessary to educate the society according to Islamic precepts (Simms, 2002, pp. 573–578).

Others acknowledge that employees, students, professionals and the intelligentsia were the active political layer of Middle Eastern society which was able to mobilise the 'street' in the 1950s and 1960s via different ideologies like socialism, nationalism, Ba'athism and Islamism (Bayat, 2007, p. 8). Bayat argues that Egypt undertook an *Islamist passive revolution* since the authoritarian regime was threatened by the rising expansion of Islamist movements (Bayat, 2007, p. 12). Bayat argues that the Islamist movement launched a war of position which failed to penetrate the state, which is defined as 'weak' or non-hegemonic. He continues by defining the Egyptian Islamic 'passive revolution' as 'socioreligious change initiated from below by the Islamist movement and subsequently appropriated by the target of that change, the state which from then on attempted to contain and control its trajectory' (Bayat, 2007, p. 138). Bayat (2007, p. 143) referred to the increasing control of the Muslim Brotherhood within civil society and its attempt to penetrate political institutions. However, this is not further discussed in relation to the war of position. It is puzzling how a non-hegemonic state can survive the attack of such a significant war of position; if the Egyptian state was non-hegemonic as claimed, the war of position of the Islamist movement would have easily overthrown the state – something that did not happen even when the Muslim Brotherhood had become part of political society after winning parliamentary and presidential elections in 2011–2012.

Other scholars investigate the MB war of position. For example, the analysis by Ranko of the development of the Muslim Brotherhood under Mubarak conceptualises well the notion of a war of position as ideational and material. Ideational in the sense of winning the consent of other subaltern forces, and material as seeking the conquest of the state institutions that hold political power (Ranko, 2015, p. 33). Yet, despite winning political contests like parliamentary and presidential elections, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) lost control of the state and civil society over two years, revealing the overstated strength of this component of civil society at the expense of its balance with the state. The mounting weaknesses of the MB are well captured by Kennedy who traced parallels between Italian and Egyptian state formation

characterised by similar state–society, state–religion and centre–periphery relations (Kennedy, 2017, p. 17). Kennedy – similarly to De Smet (2016) (see next section) – considers passive revolution as a dummy outcome based on the success of revolution (Kennedy, 2017, p. 3), arguing that ‘Egypt is trapped in the cycle of a “passive revolution” because a coercive state has persisted and there is an absence of lasting consent’ (Kennedy, 2017, p. 5). She argues that the Egyptian passive revolution started in the late 1980s with the attempt of the MB to form political alliances, which progressively deteriorated to reach the peak in 2012 when the MB lost the consent of their own members who defected and formed other movements (Kennedy, 2017, pp. 164–176).

Finally, Kandil (2011, p. 37) underlines how structural shifts are determinant in triggering a revolution; cultural mobilisation is an important catalyst to make it happen but it needs to be analysed within the context of structural shifts. According to Kandil (2011, p. 38), Gramsci’s theory of hegemony and counter-hegemony offers the link between particular structural change and cultural transformation. Indeed, Gramsci stresses that the ruling classes maintain their dominance through ‘cultural hegemony’; that is possible because the power of the dominant force ultimately rests on brute force (Kandil, 2011, pp. 38, 58). In order to overthrow the ruling elite, the subaltern forces must counter this hegemony. Kandil (2011, p. 58) stresses that counter-hegemony was not merely cultural but worked in combination with violent confrontation. The Muslim Brothers are a counter-hegemonic force because they aim to create a Muslim civil society able to counterbalance the state and because they avoided a direct confrontation with the state – and so they attempted to infiltrate it through parties, the media, unions, the courts, the military and the police – applying Gramsci’s war of positions, so to speak (Kandil, 2011, pp. 47–49). Kandil argues that the counter-hegemonic struggle based on ‘cultural hegemony’ is not sufficient to overthrow the regime; in fact, state repression prevents Islamists from capitalising on cultural hegemony. In this regard, he stresses that ‘control over the organs of repression remains the final arbiter of political power’ (Kandil, 2011, p. 40). This conclusion falls short when we consider the ideological role that Tamarrod had in preparing the ground for the

military coup. Although the post-2013 regime is based on unprecedented brutal repression, Sisi's uses ultra-nationalistic rhetoric to gain consent.

To sum up, the literature that utilised Gramscian theory in explaining Egyptian state and society offers a better understanding of the Egyptian state–society relation than the previous theory which looked at the lack of democratisation or persistence of authoritarianism at one single level of analysis. Nevertheless, the Egyptian Uprisings provided new evidence that stresses how the application of Gramscian theory has overstated the ability of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood to be able to control the state by attempting to transform society. Yet the new evidence that challenged the previous application of Gramsci offered the chance to reinterpret Gramsci's theory. The Egyptian counter-revolution shows how a war of position and a war of manoeuvre go hand in hand in order to control and reform state structure. On the other hand, the assumption that the Egyptian state was based on a fragile corporative system that can easily fall apart under a crisis of hegemony does not stand against the counter-revolutionary outcome of the hegemonic crisis.

2.3.2 Gramsci after the uprising

As remarked several times already in our reflections, the Arab Uprisings re-engaged the debate around structure and agency in MENA. In this regard, scholars revisited Gramscian theory on hegemony to explain the origin of the uprisings. In more detail, Chalcraft (2016, p. 8) analyses the uprisings through the combination of 'objectivist historical sociology and subjectivist social constructionism'. In order to do so, Chalcraft reinterprets the concept of hegemony. Thus, he argues that mobilisation is the result of how identity shapes perceptions of actors, and how ideas and principles become 'rightful guides for action', together with strategies and social relations created within movements (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 32). He proposes his revised version of hegemony as hegemonic incorporation vs hegemonic contraction. Hegemony

combines domination and intellectual, moral and political leadership (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 33). Hegemony expansion refers to the 'structure and function of the state power', not only in terms of the use of force to guarantee security, law enforcement and protection of liberties, but also in terms of participation – beyond the institutionalised channels (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 34). In this way, Chalcraft links hegemonic expansion with the use of intermediaries – *wasta* – that ultimately characterised such relations (Chalcraft, 2016, pp. 35–36). According to Chalcraft, when the elite starts to undermine forms of consent based on such relations with the subordinate intermediaries, then the latter utilise resources and capacities for a new purpose.

This process is conceptualised by Chalcraft as a hegemonic contraction that puts in place reasons for mobilisation. Finally, he posits that hegemonic contraction leads to a 'crisis of authority' because 'groups previously incorporated within the state can be pushed out or neglected' (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 36). His analysis of hegemonic contraction is primarily focused on the role of the elite in managing the limits of hegemony in terms of expansion and contraction, reducing hegemony to forms of concessions through the formation of authorised dissent (Chalcraft, 2016, pp. 36–37). This approach offers a compelling account of how the uprisings emerged as from hegemonic crisis; nevertheless, it offers less to help our understanding of the counter-revolution. This thesis builds on the idea of the degree of hegemony and links it with the concept of subalternity to explain the counter-revolution. Chalcraft acutely observes that 'the leading powers of decisions are in the hands not just of an economic class, but a complex dominant bloc consisting of polity members' (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 38). Chalcraft points out that 'the dominant bloc is not by any means cohesive or monolithic. Indeed, fragmented among different sources of power, the dominant bloc faces basic problems of cohesion, which can cause it to undermine the forms of hegemony on which it relies' (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 38). Based on a similar assumption, this thesis argues that the subaltern bloc should not be understood as a monolithic and homogeneous entity, either. Therefore – as Chapter Three will argue – in order to understand

the counter-revolution (as conceptually distinct from the passive revolution) we should look at the dynamics of actors within the subaltern bloc.

Similarly to Chalcraft (2016) and Pratt (2007), De Smet (2014, pp. 11–12), too, prioritises the role of the agent over the structure. According to De Smet, the revolution occurs because the subaltern classes ‘reconfigure the existing “historical bloc” to their advantage’ (De Smet, 2014b, p. 12). At the same time, he argues that the counter-revolution also is the result of the agent’s actions – through practice, strategies and discourses – to maintain the status quo. Contrary to other scholars who have applied the Gramscian concept of passive revolution from the 1919 revolt to the 2011 uprising (El Shakry 2012), De Smet acknowledges the value of such interpretation only partially, arguing that although passive revolution captures the essence of the authoritarian character of Nasserism, it ignores the ‘populist’ and ‘socialistic’ aspects which according to De Smet are conceptualised by Caesarism (De Smet, 2014b, p. 20). However, De Smet does not detail how the populism and Arab socialism of Nasserism emerge from the definition of Caesarism he puts forward. Caesarism is a form of power deadlock between progressive and conservative forces. The deadlock is due to the fact that the continuation of conflict between these forces will lead to mutual destruction. These forces can weaken each other and this allows a third force to intervene and dominate both forces (Gramsci, 1975, p. 1619 [Q13 §27]). On the one hand, the concept of Caesarism can describe the military intervention in 1952, because the military was considered a ‘semi-independent, “external” social force, which was able to “solve” the protracted and undecided power struggle between the national-popular forces and the semi-colonial ruling bloc of landlords, the Palace, and British capital’ (De Smet, 2014b, p. 22). However, it is unclear why the regime of Sadat and Mubarak – and later Sisi – should constitute examples of Caesarism in this regard. Finally, De Smet attempts to stretch the concept of Caesarism to the Muslim Brotherhood’s interaction with the military, arguing that ‘both Morsi and Shafiq displayed Caesarist tendencies, as they claimed to be the only revolutionary force able to contain the danger of military or fundamentalist counter-revolution’ (De Smet, 2014b, p. 33). In his more

extended analysis, De Smet (2016) continues to stretch the concept of Caesarism in three distinct 'Caesarist episodes', with the SCAF in 2011, Morsi in 2012, and Sisi in 2013, resulting in 'a new "Caesar" at every moment' (Alexander and Naguib, 2018, p. 91). Likewise, De Smet gives little attention to subaltern forces, often referring to them with the single category of workers that failed to lead the subaltern bloc (Roccu, 2018, p. 107).

This thesis builds on the gaps in this literature, redirecting the focus of the counter-revolution as the result of interactions between agency and structure. It builds on Chalcraft's work because it applies the concept of subalternity to understand how hegemony is exercised within society; however, it does not assign hegemonic control only to the hand of the elite. For this reason, this thesis shifts the analysis to how the forces within the subaltern bloc shaped the counter-revolution by interacting with the structure. At the same time, this thesis builds on De Smet's limitations, re-engaging with the concept of hegemonic crisis but offering an alternative outcome beyond Caesarism. The contribution of this thesis is a perspective on how the intermediary groups were able to shape the counter-revolution in Egypt. Contrary to De Smet's (2014) assumption that the Egyptian counter-revolution is a form of passive revolution determined by Caesarism, because dominant and subaltern forces are two equal and opposite forces, this thesis argues that the Egyptian counter-revolution was characterised by three forces – dominant, intermediary and revolutionary – and the continuous alliance shift determined the condition of counter-revolution. This thesis addresses the uprising of 2011 as a hegemonic crisis and it provides an interpretation of how subaltern forces concurred with the counter-revolution. The connection between the dominant and subaltern forces remains central to understanding the counter-revolution despite the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis. Chapter Three will propose an alternative understanding of the Egyptian counter-revolution, building on the limits of these theories. In doing so, this thesis offers a relational model that can explain the open-ended process of revolution; this will advance the study of revolutions by shedding light on the fragility of revolutions in MENA and elsewhere.

2.4 Reconsidering subalternity

The concept of subalternity has been studied by two schools of thought: the British Marxist Historians and the Subaltern Studies Group. Both have the merit of popularising Gramsci's theory and the concept of subalternity; however, neither investigated the agency of subalternity during the counter-revolution.

The British Marxist Historians posed the basis for the '*history from below*' historical perspective, which aimed to provide an alternative view from the conventional history written by the ruling elite which assumes the passivity of the masses. Thus this approach stressed the involvement of the 'lower classes' in the *making* rather than the *writing* of their history (Kaye, 1984, pp. 4–6). British Marxist Historians focus their attention on forms of resistance and rebellion while acknowledging the limitations that such struggles have had (Kaye, 1984, p. 230). Historians of the Middle East followed the 'history from below' and subaltern studies approach in the attempt to write the history of non-elite groups, focusing on 'the oppressed and the marginal' (Cronin, 2008, p. 1), reducing the action of the subalterns to being defensive (Beinin, 2008, p. 230).

Historians of Egypt analysed workers and peasants through the lens of subalternity; this led to a variety of interpretations of the concept of subalternity and the agency of these groups. First of all, Egyptian workers were not a passive mass, nor were they revolutionary forces. They aimed instead at engaging with the state in order to gain political and social rights (Chalcraft, 2008, pp. 69–70). From this perspective, subalterns are part of the state-building process, thus in contraposition to the assumption of passive revolution based on the exclusion and passivity of subaltern forces. Secondly, other interpretations argue that capitalism becomes hegemonic, affecting the transformation of the working class (Beinin, 2001, p. 20). The Tanzimat³ era

³ Tanzimat, which literally means 'reorganisation', was a period between 1839 and 1876 that marked the modernisation policies of the Ottoman Empire. The effect of the Tanzimat reforms reached Egypt as well. Mohamed Ali, the Ottoman governor of Egypt at the start of the Tanzimat era, triggered the first modernisation reforms only within the military sectors,

had a profound impact on the economy of the regions, and the subaltern could barely resist or evade such pressure (Beinin, 2001, p. 42). This interpretation of the Tanzimat is very close to the concept of passive revolution as a form of state formation. Finally, the third application of subalternity is used to interpret the role of foreign workers within the integration of the Egyptian economy into the international capitalist system. This interpretation considers foreign workers as subaltern because they were not able to benefit from the penetrative capitalist system. In fact, the foreign workers were able to defend workers' rights (regardless of whether they were foreigners or Egyptians) against the authoritarian capitalist state based on a multi-ethnic ethos beyond national and religious identities (Gorman, 2008, p. 237). From this perspective, the subalternity in Egypt is an expression of class resistance within international discourses (Gorman, 2008, pp. 254–255). Taken individually, these interpretations provide three different interpretations of subalternity: involved in the process of state building; remains excluded and unable to react to the emergence of capitalism; and a form of resistance to protect workers' rights. Ultimately, because subalternity is used to understand state formation, its application in other radical phenomena like revolution and counter-revolution has remained limited.

The second school of thought that investigates subalternity is the Subaltern Studies Group. This was founded by a group of Indian and British scholars (Partha Chatterjee, Shahid Amin, David Arnold, Gyan Pandey, Dipesh Chakrabarty and David Hardiman) led by Ranajit Guha whose intellectual objective was to investigate 'the most oppressed people' due to 250 years of British domination. Their main investigation was primarily historical; indeed they aimed to trace the presence of oppressed people within the traditional historical narrative (Chakrabarty, 2015, p. 10; Ganguly, 2015, p. 5). Others like Gayatri Spivak, Gyan Prakash and Susie Tharu joined the group until it was officially disbanded in 2008 (Chakrabarty, 2015, p. 11). The fact that the

whereas his successors promoted reforms to other sectors, like education, administration, economy, infrastructure, etc. (Cleveland and Bunton, 2013, pp. 75–94).

Subaltern Studies Group vanished as a formal collective of scholars did not mean the end of subaltern studies as a field of investigation.

The historians of the Subaltern Studies Group were dissatisfied with the traditional interpretation of 'free movement' which stressed the prominent role of the elite in the Indian national-state formation, and the exclusion of the 'politics of the people' (Chaturvedi, 2000, p. viii). The distortion of the concept of subalternity resulted also from the criticism that the Subaltern Studies Group made of the British Marxist Historians with whom the Subaltern Studies Group shared the 'history from below' approach. They criticised the Marxist determinist view of history. As well as the major division within historians into two main schools of thought, the cultural and political-economic approaches were considered incompatible (Chatterjee, 1985, pp. 53–54, 2015, p. 633; Ludden, 2002, p. 5). As a result, until 1985 subalternity was a fluid concept with broad defining features; however, after 1985 subalternity was deeply connected with cultural studies and discourses on power (Ludden, 2002, p. 11). Subaltern studies moved from the analysis of tribes', workers', and peasants' struggles to the discourse on colonial construction of cultural power (Ludden, 2002, p. 12). The postmodernist critique of Marxism resulted in a division of the project. On the one hand, some scholars continued to address the subaltern within the 'history from below' approach; on the other hand, other scholars embraced post-Marxist stances, which later became postcolonial theory (Chaturvedi, 2000, pp. xi–xii).

The first trend of the Subaltern Studies Group followed Guha's interests in the relations between subalternity and hegemony. Guha equated the term 'elite' with dominant groups. He distinguishes two main dominant groups: the first is the dominant foreigners, primarily the British officials as well as foreign business people (merchants, financiers and industrialists), landlords and planters, and missionaries. The second dominant group is composed of dominant Indians that operate at two levels: at national level as the most influential bourgeoisie, and at the local level the dominant group are actually in hierarchically inferior social strata which act in the interests of the

bourgeoisie and not their own social condition (Guha, 1982, p. 8). The assumption that subalternity is synonymous with the people spilt over into Middle Eastern politics. In fact, other scholars looked at subalternity as synonymous with social movements and 'the people' (Ismail, 2013, pp. 866–867; Radsch, 2016, pp. 20–21, 27). Despite the heterogeneity of the subalterns being recognised, the understanding of subalternity as merely popular groups does not allow the investigation of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood – which mutated from a social movement to a political party by accessing political society. Nevertheless, the Muslim Brotherhood's access to political society did not necessarily mean it had control of the state.

The second trend of the Subaltern Studies Group turned their attention to postcolonial studies, replacing the capitalist and class analysis with an investigation on culture and ideology. Based on postcolonial studies, subalternist scholars reinserted culture as an essential element for agency analysis, and such culture has a specific connotation in 'the East' (Chibber, 2013, pp. 1–8). Therefore, the trend of subaltern studies had developed their distinct interpretation far from Gramscian Marxism and closer to postmodernism and post-Marxism including Foucault, Deleuze, Badiou and Agamben (Chaturvedi, 2000, p. vii; Ludden, 2002, p. 7; Chakrabarty, 2015, p. 11). The drift to postmodernism shifted the essence and the nature of the investigation of subaltern groups. In fact, for Foucault, the individuals who are subjectified by the dominant power cannot escape such a system of power, whereas Gramsci is interested in subalternity precisely to study their struggle to escape their subaltern condition (Currie, 1995, pp. 221–222). The postmodern turn of subaltern studies – which at the same time reflected the approach of cultural studies – focuses its attention on the form of resistance, as well as the manifestation of counter-hegemony, but it overshadows why hegemony persists (Buttigieg, 2008, p. 227).

This thesis will offer an alternative interpretation of the concept of subalternity; in fact subalternity here is understood as a cross-group alliance that explains how hegemony is exercised within society and how social drivers

can transform the balance of power. Subalternity understood as a subaltern bloc captures the differences and complexity within society. For this reason, the concept of subalternity is relational and differentiated at various degrees. By unpacking the concept of subalternity in relational terms we can understand where the fragility of revolution lies within the revolutionary process. More specifically, such fragility highlights the shrinking of state integration and the increasing of the autonomy of subaltern forces within civil society. Indeed, the delicate balance between these two variables can determine the trajectory of the revolution.

The theory of counter-revolution presented here builds on Gramsci's original conceptualisation of subalternity. In fact, Gramsci developed the concept of subalternity in three main themes: (1) understanding the social-political power relation that determined the marginalisation of certain social groups; (2) analysing how ideology is used to cover and reframe power relations and the social activity of the social groups; (3) defining a theory of social transformation to empower counter-hegemonic social forces to escape their condition and establish a new social order (Green, 2006, pp. 12–13). The widespread concept of subalternity, which has spilt over to other fields and regions, derived predominantly from the Subaltern Studies Group's interpretation. In this respect, the concept of subalternity has been related to the passive acceptance of hegemony or forms of counter-hegemony to promote revolution, whereas a thorough analysis of the role of social forces – analysed through the lens of subalternity – during counter-revolution remains unaddressed. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to investigate how the subaltern forces reacted during a moment of hegemonic crisis that allowed the potential for a revolution, and it analyses the counter-revolution, an alternative to the mainstream concept of passive revolution. Understanding the relations between the hegemonic crisis and the political activity of social forces through the lens of subalternity gives a new interpretation to the agency of the subaltern forces during the Egyptian Uprisings. I argue that the failure of the Egyptian revolution is due to the agency of the subaltern forces, specifically the tension within the subaltern bloc, and the solitary attempt of the Muslim Brotherhood to control

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the Egyptian state, since the Muslim Brotherhood, as the most advanced subaltern force, was not able to challenge the judiciary nor the military despite its access to parliament and presidency. Although the Muslim Brotherhood had the organisation, its leadership disconnected with the subaltern bloc because the Muslim Brotherhood attempted to subordinate revolutionary forces rather than leading them.

Chapter 3 Theoretical framework

This chapter addresses an alternative approach to understanding counter-revolutions. The chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the thesis through the revision of the concept of subalternity. By using the case of Egypt between 2011 and 2013, this thesis stresses how the relations between agency and structure define the counter-revolution and how intermediate forces have a key role in it. Chapter Two discussed, firstly, how the debate on democratisation and authoritarian resilience reached a dead end in explaining the counter-revolution in Egypt, simply reproducing an old dichotomy based on normative expectations. Secondly, the literature on revolution shapes the debate on the understanding of revolution either as a process or an outcome. This again limits the understanding of the Egyptian Uprising and the military coup which were framed in different ways: a passive revolution of a coup backed by popular support, or revolution backed by the military. Thirdly, the concept of subalternity has been theorised differently according to various approaches – like those of the British Marxist Historians, Subaltern Studies Group, etc. The various interpretations of the concept of subalternity allowed the investigation of the role of subaltern forces in the context of counter-revolution to remain under-studied. As discussed in the previous chapter, overstating the corporative system as flexible but precarious can help to only partially explain the uprising in 2011, whereas the assumption that opposition groups like the Muslim Brotherhood were able to take over the state falls short in explaining the popular support of the military coup.

Therefore, this chapter argues that in order to understand the role of subalternity within a revolutionary and counter-revolutionary process it is necessary to establish clear relations between the subalternity, state, and hegemonic crisis. Therefore I argue that more integrated the subaltern are

within the state, the less likely the hegemonic crisis is to happen; nevertheless, in the unlikely case that a hegemonic crisis manifests, the integral state is able to resolve the crisis through passive revolution, whereas when subalterns are not integrated within the state, the hegemonic crisis is more likely to be resolved through revolution. Finally, in the case that subaltern forces are only partially integrated within the state, the hegemonic crisis turns into forms of counter-revolution. Thus, subalternity becomes a lens to understand power relations within civil society; these power relations are essential to understand the reaction that different social forces will have during a moment of hegemonic crisis and, finally, determine whether or not the crisis can be resolved in a revolution or counter-revolution. This chapter presents the theoretical framework necessary to explain the social dynamics that will be discussed in the chapters that follow. This chapter turns now on the rationale that the interpretation offered here of the concept of subalternity will provide an account for the relations between the concepts of subalternity, integral state and hegemonic crisis. Finally, it will briefly apply this model to the case of Egypt between 2011 and 2013 to account for the counter-revolution, which will be further unpacked in Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven.

3.1 Rethinking subalternity

The next section looks at how Gramscian studies on subalternity in conjunction with the state can explain counter-revolution. Gramsci investigates subalternity because he aims to understand how a social group can trigger uprisings but fails to establish a new social order. Indeed, this is the defining feature of the fragile revolution which remains unexplained by the fourth generation of revolution studies. As Chapter Two explored, the analysis of counter-revolution focuses the analysis on passive revolution only as a transformation from above with the exclusion and passivity of subaltern forces. In contrast, this thesis builds on the same starting point as Gramsci's analysis. Gramsci's aim is to understand how uprisings do not turn into successful revolutions, which are different from forms of passive revolution which imply

the exclusion or passivity of subaltern forces. He investigates subalternity to understand the role of certain social forces during a revolutionary process. Therefore, subalternity offers a better understanding of the social drivers of counter-revolution by analysing the dynamics within the subaltern bloc and the relations between civil and political society. For this reason, the investigation of subalternity in Egypt during the 2011–2013 period provides a better understanding of the Egyptian counter-revolution.

The theoretical framework of this thesis builds on the work of Marcus Green (2002, 2006, 2011) and Guido Liguori (2016), who readdressed the concept of subalternity as conceptualised by Gramsci, since the aim of these scholars is to understand Gramsci's political thoughts rather than their application. The criteria of interpretation are suggested by, not operationalised and applied to, any empirical case. This thesis provides a way to operationalise subalternity in a way that can be applied to empirical cases. Gramsci analyses subalternity from three different angles: (1) in the pre-prison writings, he analyses the 'intermediate forces' between the dominant and the masses which is a specific concept within the subaltern bloc; (2) in the first version of prison notebook 1, Gramsci reflects on connections between subalternity and hegemony; and (3) in prison notebooks 3 and 25, Gramsci closely investigates the agency of the subalterns within their own system (Liguori, 2016, p. 90). The next section discusses the concept of subalternity and the peculiarity of the intermediate forces. The rest of the chapter then addresses the relations between subalternity and state and subalternity and counter-revolution. The focus of this thesis is to investigate the agency of the intermediary forces during the hegemonic crisis and their relations with the dominant and other subaltern forces. This thesis argues that during a specific structural condition, the intermediary forces had a significant role in shaping the outcome of the hegemonic crisis. This analysis explains how the oscillating position of the Muslim Brotherhood, from being the allied force of the dominant force to attempting to be the leader of the subaltern bloc, led to the counter-revolution.

3.1.1 Subaltern bloc

Gramsci's reconceptualisation of subalternity and intermediary forces between political and civil society helps us to understand the development of counter-revolution. Subalternity is the condition that links the various subaltern forces vis-à-vis the dominant force. However, subalternity should be understood as a form of social forces alliance which has a variety of manifestations. The dominant force is the one that controls the mode of production, coercion and political power. In fact, different categories can control the means of production but do not classify them as dominant; for example, big business, small companies, family businesses, and single shopkeepers all control the means of production to various degrees but not all can influence the mode of production.

Subaltern is not the same as oppressed; neither is it synonymous with revolutionary. The concept of subaltern forces in Gramsci is not the equivalent of workers or labour; rather, it distinguishes specific hierarchical relations which put these actors in the condition of subordination (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 299–300 [Q3, §14]; Modonesi, 2014, pp. 13–14). Subalternity should not be understood solely as 'the subordination of the majority by a minority' (Buttigieg, 2018, p. 11). Gramsci did not aim to provide a precise definition of subalterns. In fact, Buttigieg observes that:

It is futile to search for or attempt to formulate a precise definition of 'subaltern' or 'subaltern social group (class)' as conceived by Gramsci, since in his view they do not constitute a single, much less a homogeneous, entity – which is precisely why he always refers to them in the plural. (Buttigieg, 2018, p. 9)

This thesis will follow Gramsci's starting point. He is not interested in analysing a specific group; he is interested in understanding how different social groups can escape their subaltern condition. Therefore, this thesis argues that subalternity is better understood as a *social bloc* formed by different social groups that share the same condition of subordination. Within the subaltern bloc, subalterns are a plurality of different social forces; their relations are primarily but not exclusively economic since their economic

relations overlap with factors like gender, age, religion, kin, region, etc. For this reason, subalternity is not a static concept; it is rather *intersectional* and *relational* (Green, 2011, p. 393).

Subalternity is a form of intersectionality; in fact 'Gramsci recognized that subalternity was not merely defined by class relations but rather an intersection of class, race, culture and religion that functioned in different modalities in specific historical context' (Green, 2011, p. 395; see also Nilsen and Roy, 2015, pp. 13–14; Liguori, 2016, p. 99). Subalternity is not only characterised by economic relations but it is shaped by other relations such as ethnicity, gender and regionality (Thomas, 2018b, p. 873). Therefore, subalternity depends on the power relations of different social groups, beyond their structural economic nature. This explains why the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood did not manage to remain in power despite being democratically elected and being in the business sector, because even if they entered political institutions the effects of their decisions were limited by military control. In order to study revolution, Gramsci focuses his attention on how the various subaltern groups have organised and infiltrated institutions to represent their political will, and how the subaltern forces have used pockets of civil society autonomy to create counter-hegemony (Green, 2011, p. 394; Nilsen and Roy, 2015, pp. 13–15).

The relational features of subalternity emerge from the type of social groups investigated within the state. In fact, Gramsci analyses subalternity in three distinct historical contexts: ancient Rome, medieval communes and Italian *Risorgimento*. The aim of Gramsci is to understand the power relations between dominant and subaltern forces and how subaltern forces organised themselves politically despite the different forms of state and hegemony (Green, 2011, pp. 393–394). In fact, the political structure allowed different room for political actions; Gramsci carefully analyses how despite slaves in ancient Rome and medieval Ciompi⁴ both being in the same subaltern

⁴ Ciompi were salaried wool artisans who did not have any corporate representation within the Florentine oligarchy guilds system at the end of the 14th century (Scaramella, 1931).

condition their relations with the state were different (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 2284–2287 [Q25, §4]). Although both were in a system characterised by low centralised power, the slaves in Rome managed to reach an alliance with the plebs, exploiting the expertise of the slaves who were war prisoners. On the contrary, the wool artisans in the medieval commune were not able to develop any form of leadership and direction to engage artisans of other guilds, and remained trapped in the economic-corporate interests system (Green, 2011, pp. 394–395).

Gramsci reflects on the political and economic context in which these two subaltern groups triggered their revolts. The fact that Gramsci's starting point is the groups that trigger revolts does not mean that those groups are the only subaltern forces. In fact, as the case of ancient Rome shows, slaves who triggered the protests were supported by the plebs – subaltern forces as well – because they still had limited access to political power. Although Gramsci specifically analyses slaves and Ciompi to conceptualise subalternity, he investigates subalternity with the additional cases of the bourgeoisie during the *Risorgimento* and workers during the *Biennio Rosso*⁵ to understand how the outcome of these uprisings was different. The analysis of the bourgeoisie as a subaltern force reinforces the idea that subalternity is relational since controlling the means of production by the bourgeoisie does not necessarily imply its dominant roles within a specific context. Gramsci underlines the role of the bourgeoisie political party in leading other subaltern forces and remarks

⁵ In Italy, the crisis of the liberal state after World War I allowed the class struggle to reach its peak in 1919–1920; this was the *Biennio Rosso* – Two Red Years. During these two years, Italy was on the verge of a socialist revolution since the confrontation between the revolutionary forces like anarcho-syndicalists and revolutionary syndicalists and reactionary forces like fascist Blackshirts escalated. The leaders of the workers' unions and Italian Socialist Party were not able to capitalise and take the lead of the growing workers' movements, which started with political demonstrations and strikes and led to more extreme forms of political participation like the occupation of factories in order to take over production. The Italian Socialist Party, in particular, was caught in internal strategic and ideological divisions; the three currents – reformist, communist and maximalist – were unable to reconcile, leading to the spin-off of the communists which created the Italian Communist Party (Gramsci was among its founders), while the reformists were pushed out the party and later formed the Unitarian Socialist Party, leaving the maximalist faction in control of the Socialist Party. These contrasts ultimately created a fertile ground for fascism to rise (Bertrand, 1982, pp. 383–384; Natoli, 2012, pp. 205–206; McNally, 2017, pp. 314–315).

that the interactions among the subaltern forces and the bourgeoisie – as the most advanced subaltern force – is central to understanding the outcome of a revolutionary process (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 372–373 [Q3, §90]). The focus of Gramsci's analysis is to understand how certain groups triggered the revolts and why these revolts did not succeed.

Gramsci developed his analysis by taking into account two variables: (1) the type of state and context in which these groups operated, and (2) the relations within the subaltern bloc. In the same way, this thesis will analyse the Egyptian counter-revolution by addressing the relations within the subaltern bloc and the type of state. This will ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the revolutionary process and the counter-revolutionary results more broadly. Equally importantly, understanding counter-revolution through the lens of subalternity explains how the counter-revolution was not exclusively a process led by the elite, but rather an organic process that set the basis for the formation of the counter-revolutionary regime. As already addressed, subalternity and dominance can be better understood as a composition of similar but not identical forces. The dominant bloc encompasses the control of the economic structure, the control of the political institutions and the control of coercion. Since dominance is not a zero-sum game, different forces within the dominant bloc can have a different degree of control over the economy, state institutions and coercion. On the other hand, the subaltern bloc is not a monolithic entity either, and subaltern forces have a different degree of development according to their structural conditions and their ability to develop organisation and leadership by exploiting pockets of autonomy within civil society (see sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3).

Green addresses how the 'system of class alliances' is crucial to trigger the revolution (Green, 2002, p. 18). Indeed, Green argues that for Gramsci a broad alliance of subaltern social forces is essential to achieve a new state based on egalitarian social relations. Since subaltern forces have varying degrees of political organisation, the most advanced groups have to become leaders of the subaltern alliance because they are able to present the alternative values,

social relations and the conceptualisation of a new state (Green, 2002, p. 21; Nilsen and Roy, 2015, pp. 13–15). Using this perspective, in order to challenge the dominant force the most advanced subaltern force has to become a counter-hegemonic force, and it needs to win the consent of the other subaltern groups within civil society. In order to control civil society, the most advanced subaltern force needs to develop the ‘war of position’ which implies the promotion of counter-hegemonic values and the unification of the subaltern bloc (Green, 2002, p. 21). This reinterpretation of subalternity takes into account relations with the state structure and dynamics within the subaltern bloc, and this thesis presents a new analysis to understand how the Egyptian Uprising turned into a counter-revolution due to the agency of the most advanced force that alternated its position from ally of the dominant force to leader of the civil society.

3.1.2 Intermediary forces

This thesis turns now to the discussion of the role of a specific force within the subaltern bloc. As explained in the previous section, it is necessary to understand the relations of certain subaltern groups with the dominant bloc. For this reason, the intermediary forces are essential to understanding (1) how hegemony is exercised within civil society; and (2) how these actors can influence the hegemonic crisis’s resolution.

I reconstruct the concept of intermediary force which emerges only marginally and in a fragmented way in Gramsci, and has been underdeveloped. The relations between the dominant and intermediary forces emerge also from the notebook Q1§44 entitled *political direction of the class before and after governing*. Gramsci addresses the dominant force as both dominant and leading (*dirigente*). The term *dirigente* (leading) establishes its relations with the allied intermediary force, while the expression *dominant* establishes its relations with the opposite forces. He stresses that even before reaching power, the class can (and should) be *dirigente*. However, Gramsci

clearly points out that before becoming dominant the force remains in the terrain of subalternity. Within the subaltern bloc, on top of their hierarchical structure, there are the intermediate forces which have the goal of connecting political and civil society. The intermediate forces are subaltern forces because they do not have autonomous decision making; rather, they implement the hegemonic functions within civil society to serve the interests of the dominant forces. The intermediate forces operate within a wide range of civil society organisations and economic structures. The intermediate forces become allied with the dominant forces because they either help by spreading consent or controlling coercion, since hegemony is not only ideological consent but also dominance via the use of force. Thus, the concept of intermediary force is placed in between the dominant and the subaltern bloc, where the intermediary force has a key role in keeping the balance of power in favour of the dominant force.

Since subalternity is relational and shaped by structure and superstructure, Gramsci addresses how *allied* intermediary forces are not a single category but are contingent on the social-political structure and economic superstructure. For this reason, depending on the system, the allied intermediary forces are different groups. For example, in the agrarian context of the Po Valley, in Q1§44, Gramsci clarifies how the landlords controlled the peasantry by alternating *metayage*⁶ with direct control of the economy. Due to this alternation, the landlords were able to select privileged metayers as allied intermediary forces, especially within agrarian councils. In this way, the landlords were able to control the agrarian councils via the participation of the allied metayers. Generally, in the context of the modern capitalist state, allied intermediary forces can be highly skilled waged labour, like bureaucrats, public sector employees, professionals like doctors, journalists, lawyers, engineers etc. Depending on their field they are able to shape hegemony within civil society to serve the interests of the dominant forces. Indeed, in a democratic

⁶ Metayage was a form of agrarian contract between the landowner and the metayer. The landowner allows the metayer to use the land and in return the metayer receives half of the land production.

capitalist system, the allied intermediary forces are intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie, because intellectuals shape the ideological component of hegemony while petty bourgeoisie second the capitalist system.

The distinction between 'subordination and resistance' is central to understanding the degree of subalternity and its actions. Indeed, the acceptance of leadership and active support for the dominant force is a peculiar feature of the allied intermediary force. Subalternity remains within a continuum of acceptance vs resistance of domination, which will end only when the leader⁷ of the subaltern forces establishes its hegemony to become dominant and leading through revolution (Modonesi, 2014, pp. 21–22). This implies the existence of an allied intermediary force that is essential in balancing the relations between political and civil society because the allied intermediary forces organise the hegemonic function within civil society. Gramsci identifies direct and indirect hegemonic functions within the superstructure: as the direct domination of the political society, and as the indirect control of the private organisations within the civil society (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 1517–1519 [Q12, §1]). In other words, hegemony is not only ideological but also administrative, and organisation of consent is via institutions of the civil society; in fact, when more and more subaltern forces are integrated within the state, the state needs to develop its ideological apparatuses to keep the consent. The inclusion of the subaltern within the state requires tight control of all the aspects of their lives (Frosini, 2016, pp. 133–135).

Gramsci addresses peculiar characteristics of the intermediary force. Due to its contradictory features – since *allied* intermediary forces are subalterns that actively serve the hegemony of the dominant force – during a period of hegemonic crisis the intermediary force oscillates between 'the old and the new'. In fact, Gramsci argues that within the subaltern forces hegemony should be granted to the progressive forces rather than the privileged, otherwise this

⁷ Cf. section 3.1.3 for a full discussion on leading and advanced forces.

oscillating pattern will occur (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 1138–1140 [Q9, §68]⁸). This was the case with the Muslim Brotherhood at the dawn of the uprising; in fact, in early 2011, the Muslim Brotherhood had little intention of leading the uprising because it feared the repressive consequences of its failure. This provoked the oscillation of the Muslim Brotherhood between supporting the military and attempting to challenge it and become the leading force of the subaltern bloc.

Gramsci uses the military metaphor to explain the relations and the role of intermediate forces and the link between political and civil society. The social relations between political and civil society should be interpreted as hierarchical, as in the military where the middle-rank officers are the ones in the position to trigger a coup because they are strategically positioned in between the head of the military organisation and the foot soldiers who control the tanks and artillery. In this metaphor, the middle-rank officers are the allied intermediary forces that can make a difference during the hegemonic crisis. On the one hand, they can support rather than crush foot soldiers' mutinies, thus refuse to obey superiors' orders – and take the lead in the mutiny. On the other hand, as Gramsci described in the development of subalternity, the middle-rank officers are the most advanced force, and precisely because they can control the subaltern they are in the position to trigger the coup.

3.1.3 Development of counter-hegemonic subaltern forces

Gramsci outlines the development of the subaltern forces from dominance to resistance, which is guided by four criteria: (1) the formation of the subaltern forces in relation to the economic situation, (2) organisation, (3) leadership, (4) autonomy (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 372–373 [Q3, §90]). Gramsci also stresses that the phases of development of subalterns' consciousness are actually a crescendo of autonomy of the subaltern forces; in fact, they move from passivity to the formulation of their own demands. Thus we can assume that

⁸ I prefer to address note Q9, §68 which is a text A instead of the text C of Q13, §36, because in the text A the oscillation between old and new is more articulated than in the text C.

autonomy is an active function to form an alternative hegemony. The first phase stressed the relations with the structure; for this reason, multiple categories belong to the subaltern bloc depending on their relations and integration with the structure. Once one or more subaltern forces become aware of their subaltern position due to their existing structure they attempt to counter the existing hegemony. The conscious subaltern forces build organisation and leadership in order to gather other subaltern forces to form a counter-hegemony and to conquer political power (Modonesi, 2014, pp. 18–19).

In Q3§43, Gramsci addresses the variety within the subaltern bloc which contains forces that have developed consciousness (via organisation and leadership), while other forces which do not develop the same level of consciousness as the leading force remain – based on Gramsci’s terminology – spontaneous. This differentiation of forces within the subaltern bloc as conscious and spontaneous serves the purpose of understanding different strategies of actions. In fact, the spontaneity of some subaltern forces needs to be controlled by conscious direction. This reinforces the idea of degrees of subalternity within political leadership. Gramsci continues in this note by addressing how only the unification between spontaneity and conscious direction (*direzione consapevole*) can lead to the struggle for hegemony (Liguori, 2016, pp. 100–101). Such conscious direction is echoed by what Gramsci writes in Q8§205 when he argues that the turning point of the spontaneity is when the subalterns become leaders and accountable, *dirigenti e responsabili* (Liguori, 2016, p. 109). Understanding this degree of development of social forces contributes to a better understanding of the original concept of Gramsci, and the understanding of these forces during the revolutionary process. Gramsci addresses how the subaltern moves from passivity to activity, in his own words from ‘resistant’ to ‘active agent’ (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 1388 [Q11, §12]). This passage is particularly important because it sets out two main characteristics of subalternity. First of all, Gramsci here clearly describes various degrees of subalternity and that subalterns, despite moving from resistance to activity, still remain within the realm of civil society

and therefore subalternity. Thus subalternity can escape only by becoming dominant, not merely active. Secondly, it clarifies the scale of subalternity and the variety within the subaltern bloc, which is not a monolithic entity; rather it is in perpetual transformation due to economic and social relations.

As the concept of allied intermediary forces was exemplified by Gramsci with the case of agrarian society in the Po Valley, so the relations between spontaneity and leadership are also explained within the prison notebook with concrete cases under analysis. In fact, Gramsci addresses how the *Biennio Rosso* has failed because of the spontaneity of specific groups within the subaltern bloc – in the case of *Biennio Rosso* these groups were factory workers. In fact, when the workers turned active – they attempted to occupy and take control of the factories – they met the incapacity of the party in managing their spontaneous rebellion and leading them. Gramsci addresses the relations within the subaltern bloc that determined the failure of workers' revolts and factory occupations (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 320 [Q3, §42]). In contrast, Gramsci analyses how spontaneity and leadership worked together in the case of the Sicilian Vespers, where the popular uprising against the French rulers was later successful thanks to the secret organisation put in place by Giovanni da Procida who organised the Sicilian nobility against French domination. Based on the example of the Sicilian Vespers, Gramsci highlights the hierarchical organisation of the subaltern, both economically and strategically. In fact, the spontaneity of the mass movements allowed the most advanced subaltern forces to advance due to the weaknesses of the state. Finally, Gramsci states that the outcome of the revolution is due to the progressive character of the most advanced subaltern force. Interestingly, he remarks that the reality is rich with unusual combination; this means that outside the logic of revolution and passive revolution there are other combinations of actions and power relations (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 332 [Q3, §48]). Spontaneity and leadership are also related to the strategies of the war of manoeuvre and war of position, where to succeed the leading subaltern force has to conquer the institutions of civil society via the war of position and to mobilise of all of the subaltern strata via the war of manoeuvre.

Leading and advanced forces are closely related but they are not synonyms. The leading forces prompt political leadership and mobilisation. I identify three criteria to assess whether a force is leading or not. First of all, it has to *lead* from the front, to be confrontational. Secondly, it has to inspire *togetherness*, to gather different sectors of society. Thirdly it has to *achieve*, to reach the main goal that brings followers together. The definition of advanced force is based on the development of subaltern forces addressed by Gramsci. I consider three main criteria to define the development of the various subaltern forces: 1) organisation, 2) leadership and 3) autonomy. Organisation encompasses forms of: resilience, for example for how long the social forces have been organised in a formal or informal organisation; impact of civil society, for example fulfilling state functions for the community; control of civil society institutions, like professional syndicates, unions etc. Leadership is assessed by looking at: the formation of counter-hegemonic values; the establishment of political party and organisations that can access political society; and the scale of electoral victory when given the chance. Finally, autonomy is assessed on: the resistance of this movement to the confrontation of the state; and the ability to exercise alternative control of coercion.

Nevertheless, it is important to understand that leadership as a criterion to assess the development of subaltern forces is different from the role of a leading force. In fact, the leading force shows two distinct attitudes: it is confrontational with the dominant force and it develops specific political goals. For this reason, Kefaya and April 6, despite the fact they were not the most advanced forces in Egypt pre-2011 (because in terms of organisation, leadership and autonomy they had a limited impact compared to other groups like the MB), attempted to lead the subaltern bloc because they were confronting the regime, challenging it on specifics. However, because they were not advanced, they were not able to keep up their leading role when the Muslim Brotherhood, as the most advanced force, utilised its capability to reach political society. In contrast, the Muslim Brotherhood was the most advanced force in 2011 until the 2013 coup, because it enjoyed a solid organisation which had adapted to different challenges since its establishment

in 1928. At the same time, it filled the gap left by the shrinking of state functions in terms of welfare, and managed to access and control civil society institutions that interacted with the state, like professional syndicates and unions. In terms of leadership, the Muslim Brotherhood is notorious for promoting Islamist society as an alternative form of societal organisation based on religious values. In the 2000s the Muslim Brotherhood managed to secure seats in parliament, running as independent, and post-2011 it capitalised on electoral consent via the formation of its own party. Finally, despite its moderation and abandon of violent confrontation, the Muslim Brotherhood remained the most advanced social force in Egypt on the eve of the 2011 uprising until it was ousted by the 2013 coup.

3.1.4 Subaltern political activities – understanding the war of position and war of manoeuvre

Gramsci utilised military welfare language to explain political activism. In fact, he distinguishes three different types of political actions: war of position, the war of manoeuvre and underground war. The war of position aims to conquer the key posts within political and civil society that held the hegemonic function. In other words, the counter-hegemonic leading force aims to replace the allied forces which exercise the hegemonic function via strategic positions within civil society. Instead, the war of manoeuvre is the actions on the ground that threaten the state, like protests, strikes, occupations, civil disobedience etc.; unless the state is non-integral, the war of manoeuvre supports the war of position, but it cannot alone be crucial to conquer the state. Finally, the underground war consists of a more organised violent form of political action like guerrilla warfare and armed resistance (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 122–123 [Q1, §134]).

The war of manoeuvre is often associated with violent conflict while the war of position is associated with cultural and social transformation (Dodge, 2006, p. 456; Thomas, 2009, p. 150). These characterisations of the war of position and the war of manoeuvre derived from the Marxist tradition; in fact, in the

1960s the Marxist tradition considered the war of position conceptualised by Gramsci as an alternative to a 'militarized Leninist strategy of insurrection' (Egan, 2014, pp. 521–522; 2015, p. 103). The distinction that Gramsci introduced in terms of the war of manoeuvre and the war of position reflects the type of state (Egan, 2015, p. 102; 2016, pp. 438–439, 2019, pp. 55–56). In fact, in the context of a non-integral state, a war of manoeuvre as a form of armed insurrection is sufficient to allow a successful revolution. Conversely, within the boundaries of the integral state the war of position replaces the war of manoeuvre since revolution can be won only by controlling civil society institutions. In fact, within an integral state, the war of position needs to undermine the existing hegemony (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 972–973 [Q8, §52]).

This thesis departs from this conceptualisation of the war of manoeuvre exclusively as a form of armed and violent insurrection to reflect on the components of the war of manoeuvre as a *direct assault to the state*. Therefore, this thesis offers a different interpretation of the war of manoeuvre, taking into account the economic and coercive aspects that have characterised the neoliberal Egyptian state. Indeed, the war of manoeuvre is not necessarily synonymous with armed insurgency. I, rather, focus on the expression of frontal attack the state. To put in simpler terms, I take out the 'armed' characterisation of the insurgency – also because I use the expression 'underground war' to address an armed insurrection similar to a guerrilla warfare. In this way the uprising can be peaceful and likewise powerful in attacking core aspects of the state. In this way, we are able to disentangle various forms of political activities that fall under the umbrella category of war of manoeuvre without reducing the war of manoeuvre exclusively to a form of violent insurgency. In this regard, forms of non-violent collective actions that target the state should be considered as forms of a war of manoeuvre because they attack the state hegemony. By analysing the political actions that target the state directly within a continuum with violent vs non-violent means at the extreme, we can place violent insurgency at one extreme and civil disobedience at the other. In between these two extremes, there are a series of political actions – like protests, demonstrations, sit-ins, occupations, strikes,

etc. – that are able to target the core of the state without embracing violent actions.

In fact, reducing the concept of the war of manoeuvre only to a violent insurrection would overshadow forms of peaceful political actions like strikes, protests, demonstrations, civil disobedience and all sorts of forms of political actions that had a significant impact in shifting the balance of power during the uprising. In the context of Egypt, strikes, protests and demonstrations converged to break ‘the barrier of fear’ (Allinson, 2015, p. 305). More important, these forms of political participation, directed to undermine various forms of hegemonic power, can create the conditions for activists to exchange ideas which might set the ground for a long-term war of position. For example the wave of demonstrations in the early 2000s allowed activists from different ideologies to come together to initiate their political demands in terms of constitutional reforms. Workers’ strikes had the ability to challenge both the economic and coercive components of the state – in other words, the state was weakened by these forms of political actions despite their being peaceful. In fact, on the one hand they showed the ability to undermine the authorities responsible for both abusive working conditions and the brutal repression of state apparatus. On the other hand, strikes and protests had a significant impact on the economy: strikes mean loss of productivity with factories and more broad social unrest creating insecurity for foreign investors, generating a domino effect in other sectors that impact other important sectors – for example like tourism which contributes around 11.3% of Egyptian GDP (Smith, 2014).

In order to turn the crisis of hegemony to its own advantage and resolve it into a revolution, the leading force of the subaltern bloc coordinates the war of position and war of manoeuvre. For this reason, the counter-hegemonic leading force needs to reach the positions that exercise the hegemonic functions within political and civil society. The war of manoeuvre is carried out by other subaltern forces that have been mobilised by the leading subaltern forces or led by ‘spontaneity’ (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 801–802 [Q6, §138]).

Gramsci stresses how the war of position is undertaken by the leading force of the subaltern bloc while the war of manoeuvre is left to the rest of the subaltern forces (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 810–811 [Q6, §155]). Therefore, the war of manoeuvre can lead to the manifestation of the crisis of hegemony, often in conjunction with an economic crisis which poses a challenge to the integration of the subaltern within the state. However, it is not sufficient to obtain a significant victory, because the war of position is linked to the social and economic organisation of civil society (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 1615–1616 [Q13, §24]). For this reason, the war of position and the war of manoeuvre should be considered complementary rather than opposed strategies.

The war of position is the strategy of the leading subaltern forces to reconquer their institutions within civil society; at the same time, when the institutions of civil society are controlled by allied intermediary forces, the dominant force exercises its control over civil society and integrates the subaltern forces within the state. In the case of Egypt, the subaltern bloc failed the revolution because the war of position and war of manoeuvre were uncoordinated between the most advanced forces like the Muslim Brotherhood, which controlled civil society institutions like the professional syndicates and offered welfare services, and the revolutionary groups which undertook a war of manoeuvre. The direct confrontation with the security apparatus destabilised the weak balance within the dominant bloc. In other words, *the counter-revolution was the result of the clashes between the war of position of the Muslim Brotherhood and the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary social groups*. To sum up, in Q3§48 Gramsci stresses how the subaltern forces were numerous and hierarchical. This passage remarks how the spontaneity of various strata of subaltern forces allowed the most advanced subaltern forces to gain control of the state (Liguori, 2016, pp. 101–102).

In Q3§18, Gramsci highlights the close relations between the political autonomy of the subaltern and the type of state they operate within. Gramsci stresses the importance of the autonomy of subaltern forces which allowed

them to develop their own institutions; in this way the pre-modern state was a confederation of classes (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 302–303 [Q3, §18]; Frosini, 2016, pp. 136–137). Since subalternity is relational, when subaltern forces gain autonomy and therefore shrink the borders of the integral state, they remain in a subaltern position because they still interact with the dominant force as inferior, while they have not yet conquered the political society and control of hegemony. For this reason, although the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood was composed of business people, they cannot be considered part of the dominant force because their access to political society was restricted by the military's dominance. Subalternity is not a class in an economic sense but includes various relations; in fact, they are actively and differently incorporated in degrees, including: (1) incoherence rebellion, (2) co-optation, (3) partial autonomy, (4) complete autonomy (Thomas, 2018b, p. 873). Without a degree of subalternity and growing autonomy, a revolution (as a process, and its various outcomes) would be unthinkable.

Civil society represents the relations among subaltern forces, which are constantly fragmented by the regulation of civil society by the political society. In fact, the integral state is the penetration of political society into civil society, what Gramsci defines as '*società regolata*' (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 763–764 [Q6, §88]). The more integrated the subalterns are within the state, the less autonomy they have. Such integration and lack of autonomy are essential for the dominant force to develop its passive revolution (Thomas, 2015, p. 90). Subalternity occurs in various degrees, and such degrees are characterised by the specification of the groups, their organisation and activity within civil society and their relation with political society (Thomas, 2015, p. 90; 2018b, p. 873). A better understanding of degrees of subalternity allows a better understanding of where the hegemony power of the dominant force lies within society (Thomas, 2015, p. 90). Within the integral state, subaltern forces are fully integrated into the political power of the state (Thomas, 2015, p. 92). In note Q3§90, Gramsci traces the relations between the dominant force, the subaltern and the state. Gramsci stresses how the dominant force leads the

subaltern and how this determines the 'unity between state and civil society' (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 372–373 [Q3, §90]; Thomas, 2018b, pp. 867–868).

Based on this definition, it is easier to understand how, pre-2011, big business affiliated with the NDP was the predominant force over the military and police. Since political power is not a zero-sum game, the military with control of the Egyptian economy and coercion was still part of the dominant bloc but marginalised because business and the police outbalanced the economic and coercive control of the military. For the same reason, post-2011, when business and the police lost the consent of the subaltern bloc, the military became the dominant force. That is why the intermediate forces like the Muslim Brotherhood and the contractors were not dominant: because they did not control the state institutions. As already discussed, the dominant bloc is not monolithic and is rather formed by different components. In this case, the Egyptian dominant bloc pre-2011 was formed by business affiliated with the NDP as the actor with more leverage of power control, with the protection of the police. On the other hand, the military, which was still part of the dominant bloc, was pushed to its periphery because its control of the economy and coercion was limited. To recap, the conceptualisation of subalternity in relational terms is able to identify how hegemony is exercised within a society, which is crucial to understanding how forms of counter-hegemony can develop. Since subalternity encompasses different social groups, there is the potential that the subaltern bloc contains different forms of counter-hegemony and different power relations among these groups.

3.2 State

This thesis puts in relation the state and the resolution of the hegemonic crisis. In social science, the state is a variable that reflects 'the varying political reality' (Nettl, 1968, p. 562). As discussed in Chapters One and Two in the analysis of the Egyptian counter-revolution, the Egyptian states have been overshadowed by the analysis of elites and neoliberalism. According to Nettl,

a strong state that does not allow forms of dissent within civil society is more likely to form polarised anti-systemic groups that violently seek to overthrow it, whereas a weak state that has a strong civil society that can organise its dissent is unlikely to experience an overthrow because there is 'no state as such to overthrow' (Nettl, 1968, pp. 571–572). The form of dissent is 'indirect evidence for the variableness of the development of stateness in different societies' (Nettl, 1968, p. 571). This thesis shares the assumption that the state is a variable to take into account to explain revolution; however, it uses Gramsci's conceptualisation of integral state to reverse Nettl's argument. The next section will address first the limits of the conceptualisation of the state's strength in understanding the Egyptian Uprising, and it will later move on to address the integral state.

3.2.1 Limits of the strength of statehood

As discussed in the previous chapter, the different generations of revolutionary study have also influenced the relations between state and revolution. The first generation considered the revolution as the pathological manifestation of a weak system. Therefore a weak state was the prerequisite that favoured revolution. This relation between state and revolution was dropped by the second generation of revolutionary study, which stressed popular discontent; in other words the 'frustration-aggression' explanation foregrounded in the psychological approach was the trigger of revolution. The third generation attempted to combine the previous two approaches, where revolution was the result of state weakening and popular mobilisation (Davidheiser, 1992, pp. 463–464). Finally, as addressed earlier, the fourth generation expanded the investigation of the structure, including not only the state but also international relations.

However, addressing the relations between state strength and revolution is problematic in terms of operationalisation. In fact, the operationalisation of strength is contingent on the idea of the modern state and its control over the population. Thus, the strength of the state was operationalised via political and

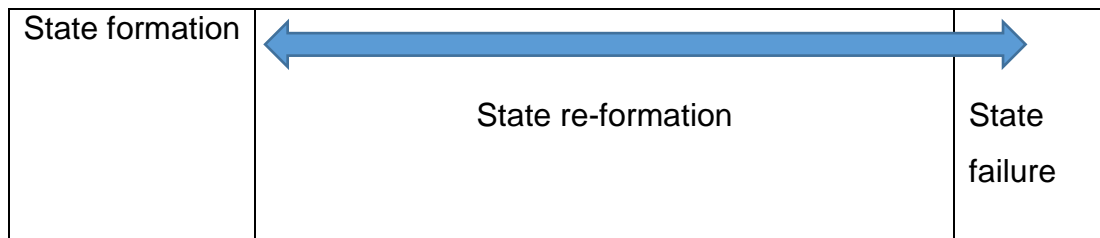
military coercion to control civil society, and this led the first and third generations to assume that the weaker the state, the more likely revolution was to happen (Davidheiser, 1992, p. 464).

Finally, the fourth generation shifted the attention from the strength to state stability. Indeed, Goldstone argues that ‘happy’ states do not have revolutions (Goldstone, 2001, p. 173), the starting assumption that attempted to move beyond the debates on strong vs weak states. Stable regimes can avoid falling into revolution by adapting to new situations and challenges. This assumption recalls the debates on the authoritarian resilience of the Arab state discussed in Chapter Two, and similarly, if it can explain the fall of a regime, it fails to explain the progression of the revolutionary process.

The main scope here is to move beyond this idea of state strength or regime stability, because the state strength is rather problematic to measure as closely aligned with the idea of the Weberian state. The next section will highlight the limitations of the application of the idea of a strong state in Egypt, then it will move on to address how the concept of integral state is more explanatory for addressing the development of revolution and counter-revolution. Some scholars have argued that this lack of democratic electoral representation and welfare legitimacy led to the 2011 uprising, especially in cases like Tunisia and Egypt which were considered closer to the ‘strong state’ end of the spectrum as shown in Table 1 (Schwarz and De Corral, 2011, pp. 212–213).

Table 1: Degrees of statehood

	Degree of statehood				
Functions	Strong state	Reformed state	Rentier state	Weak/fragile state	Failed state
Security	X	X	X	X	-
Welfare	X	-	X	-	-
Representation	X	X	-	-	-



Source: Schwarz and De Corral, 2011, p. 213

According to this framework, Egypt is categorised as a reformed state in the sense that it provides security and representation but not welfare: in other words, Egypt is able to ‘keep the country stable’, due to its security function and the significant military aid derived from the peace treaty with Israel. At the same time, parliamentary and governmental representation derives from taxation – since Egypt does not have a natural resource that it can exploit to provide services without demanding taxation. In addition, welfare services are left to private initiatives, and it led the Muslim Brotherhood and charity organisations to gain support by filling the void left by the state in numerous services like provision of food and water, health and educational facilities. According to this approach, the Egyptian Uprising was the result of the ‘unbalanced taxation-representation social contract’ and the lack of welfare state (Schwarz and De Corral, 2011, p. 214).

We now point out the limits of this interoperation. First of all, being a ‘strong state’ regarding security remains questionable, in the sense that citizens do not necessarily enjoy protection from crimes; they rather face repression and coercion where the use of force is not necessarily legitimate. In fact, military spending does not automatically reflect a high protection of Egyptian citizens from external threats, whereas the support of the military is essential to the survival of the regime since the military is one of the founding institutions of the modern Egyptian state. Furthermore, high spending on the police budget guaranteed the repression of dissent via the increase of torture and police brutality, which was one of the triggers of the uprising – indeed, it started on National Police Day. Finally, such a massive security apparatus does not represent a strength of the state; it rather shows how Egypt has failed in protecting its citizens from various security threats.

Second, taxation does not take into account the sector of the informal economy which remains disjointed from the claimed taxation-representation relationship, where one of the weaknesses of the state is exactly the lack of ability to collect taxes consistently and transparently (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 214). In fact, in terms of representation the limited electoral game and the non-competitive multi-party system were designed not for a balanced and fair representation of interests but rather for co-optation. In addition, the interpretation of strong vs weak state fails to acknowledge the existence of a corporative system and clientelist forms of representation of collective and individual interests, which do not determine legitimacy in Weberian terms, or forms of consent in Gramscian terms.

Finally, the private provision of the welfare state is not the result of an inefficiency of the state; it is rather the integration of Egypt within a global economy which pushes for neoliberal policy – reduction of public spending, austerity, and promotion of a less regulated free market. More generally such an approach does not acknowledge the more complex relations within a society, considering it only as a single relation between an abstract state – as service or function provider – and a united single category of society, affecting social relations. The wave of neoliberalism increased the marginalisation of informal areas, having a double effect. On the one hand, the emergence of informal labour remained confined within the informal district. On the other hand, liberalisation resulted in widening the gap between rich and poor; rich areas developed while poor areas suffered from the lack of basic services such as education and healthcare (Ismail, 2006, pp. xix–xx). This thesis now turns to discussing the relations between the integral state and the revolution.

3.2.2 Gramsci's integral state

Gramsci's idea of the state was introduced in MENA by Ayubi's masterful work. Based on the Gramscian concept of integral state, Ayubi argues that the Arab state is 'hard' because it can impose coercion and repression with impressive state institutions but is not 'strong' because it does not have

consent (Ayubi, 1995, p. 3). For this reason, the Arab state is not integral; rather it is a gendarme/corporative state (Ayubi, 1995, p. 7). The core assumption of Ayubi is that the state is hard because it can control economic development and penetrate society via bureaucracy, but it is not strong enough to impose itself on civil society (Ayubi, 1995, pp. 448–450). Ayubi concludes his analysis by arguing that the Arab state will not survive the ‘hegemonic crisis’ (Ayubi, 1995, p. 448). 2011 was the manifestation of this hegemonic crisis; however, if the state was weak and civil society was strong, then the uprising should have transformed the Arab state and the uprising would have turned into a successful revolution. However, the hegemonic crisis manifested and was resolved in a popular supported military coup. This thesis will build on Ayubi’s starting point that the Arab state is not integral; however, it offers a different classification of the state that reflects the relations between the state and hegemonic crisis.

In this way, this section analyses in detail how although the Egyptian state is not integral the revolution was not successful. From Ayubi’s perspective the state is either integral or gendarme, in the sense that if hegemony exists the state is integral, while if it does not exist the state is gendarme and bases on its reliance on coercion (Ayubi, 1995, pp. 7–10). In contrast, I argue that the state and hegemony should be conceptualised in a continuum where the extremes are integral and non-integral states, and in between there are a variety of degrees of integration and hegemonic control. Contrary to Ayubi’s interpretation that Egypt is not an integral state because of the corporative system (Ayubi, 1995, pp. 25–26, 33–35), I argue that this system is a way to integrate some social forces and exclude others. Therefore, Egypt is a form of semi-integral state, where corporative forms coexist with forms of the informal economy.

In Gramsci the concept of state and civil society are bound by a relation of unity and distinction (Liguori, 2004b, p. 208). In other words, in Gramsci two concepts of state coexist: on the one hand, the minimal definition of state, which is identified with the government and governance of the state, in

Gramscian's terms the political society; on the other, the integral state – *stato integrale* – which includes relations with civil society (Liguori, 2004b, pp. 214–215). The enlargement⁹ of the concept of state occurred in two directions: on the one hand, the state reflects new relations between politics and economics; and on the other, it reflects new relations between political society and civil society. In the first case, Gramsci stressed that the state is the expression of the economic situation, and not vice versa (Gramsci [Q7§43:890] cit. in Liguori, 2004b, p. 210). For Gramsci, state intervention in the economy is a way to protect the interests of specific groups and affects the class composition of society (Liguori, 2004b). Gramsci highlighted how a new function of the state is emerging – the hegemonic function (see section 3.3) – and comprehensive understanding of the state includes the understanding of the dominant bloc and its relations with the subaltern bloc (Gramsci [Q3§46, p. 326; Q3§90, p. 372] cit. in Liguori, 2004b, p. 216).

Therefore, the formation of the integral state implies a sophistication of social relations within the state structure (Thomas, 2009, p. 140). The integral state is characterised by the lack of autonomy of civil society vis-à-vis political society (Frosini, 2016, p. 143). The integral state reflects mutually constitutive relations between civil and political society; their relations of integration have various degrees of intensity and extension (from the more structured and directive political society to the various organisations within civil society). Civil society is not opposed to political society (as in the liberal tradition); civil society is 'a politically overdetermined system for the regulation of needs, associations and conflicts' (Thomas, 2018b, pp. 869–870). The dominant force that controls political society continuously intervenes within civil society to limit the autonomy of the subaltern forces (Frosini, 2016, p. 129). Therefore civil society becomes the battlefield for competing social forces for the control of hegemony (Thomas, 2009, p. 137). Thus, political society is an expression of governmental-coercive apparatus, whereas civil society reflects the

⁹ The expression 'enlargement' to define a specific type of state does not come directly from Gramsci who used the expression 'integral state'; it was first used by Buci-Glucksmann (1980). For a full discussion see Thomas (2009, pp. 137–141).

'hegemonic apparatus' (Gramsci, 1975, p. 800 [Q6 §136]; Liguori, 2004b, p. 221). Indeed, the hegemonic process is not a 'battle of ideas', rather a proper apparatus that creates consent (Liguori, 2004c). In note Q11 §70 (pp. 1508–1509), Gramsci stresses that a subaltern group becomes *truly (realmente)* autonomous and hegemonic when it can form a new type of state.

In the case of Egypt between 2011 and 2013, the Muslim Brotherhood was not able to turn its autonomy into meaningful political power, since despite accessing political society it was still unable to control political power. This does not mean that hegemony does not exist, since both systems can be considered as an integral state. The state becomes integral because the dominant force is able to use its hegemonic function to integrate subalterns within civil society and reduce their autonomy; whether this occurs with the prevalence of persuasion or coercion is a secondary issue. In this way, it is important to clarify how the integration works. As the state reflects structure and superstructure, the integration works at both levels. In terms of integration at the economic level, Gramsci presents the notorious case of Fordism, where the transformation of workers into customers due to instalment payments was at the basis of the development of the economy of mass production (Gramsci, 1975, Q22§13).

Similarly, the case of the planned economy of the Soviet Union is a form of economic integration, because such structured industrial and agrarian production was imposed from above, and the subaltern forces were integrated due to the promise that they could have kept the surplus produced beyond the required quota (Davies, 1998, pp. 23–24). Another form of economic integration is social safety net policies which allowed citizens to remain integrated within society. Other forms of integration are also political, in fact: forms like representation in political decision forums, like democratic representation or Soviet democracy. Finally, the last superstructural element that determines integration is coercion, more precisely the unity of security forces which do not allow the non-state actors to exercise any form of coercion or supply parallel security providers.

To recap, the type of state determines whether or not hegemony is spread across all aspects of civil society, forming an integral state. In contrast, the pockets of autonomy within civil society allow the development of subaltern forces that can aspire to challenge the dominant force and conquer the state. Such a process reaches the peak of its potential during moments of the crisis of hegemony. The resolution of the crisis of hegemony forecasts three possible crisis outcomes: revolution, passive revolution and morbid symptoms as forms of counter-revolution. The role of subalternity and the relations within the subaltern bloc determine the outcome of the crisis resolution. This thesis contributes to the understanding of the role of the allied forces during the moment of crisis, since it is the core factor that has most leverage in the crisis resolution.

3.3 Hegemonic crisis and its resolutions

As discussed in the previous section, the type of state is the benchmark to follow to understand the links between the agency of subalternity and the crisis's resolution. Before discussing the hegemonic crisis I will clarify the concept of hegemony. In Gramsci's writings, the concept of the (integral) state is the sum of political and civil society (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 763–764 [Q6, §88]); therefore, the concept of hegemony is not equated exclusively with cultural consent reproduced within civil society, rather it is a concept that embraces consent and coercion exercised by both political and civil society. Gramsci underlines that hegemony is the result of leadership (via ideology) and dominance (via coercion) (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 41 [Q1, §44]). At Q4§49, Gramsci also provides a useful explanation of the relations between state, civil society and hegemony:

These distinctions having been made, it is possible to conclude, for now, that: the relationship between the intellectuals and the production is not direct, as in the case of the fundamental social groups, but mediated, and it is mediated by two types of social organisation: (a) by civil society, that is, by the ensemble of private organisations in society; (b) by the state. The intellectuals have a function in the 'hegemony' that is exercised throughout society by

the dominant group and in the 'domination' over society that is embodied by the state, and this function is precisely 'organisational' or connective. (Gramsci, 1996, p. 200)

This passage remarks how hegemony is a function directly exercised within political society, while within civil society it is mediated by a variety of structures and institutions – in this specific case, the intellectuals are the intermediates between the dominant force and the subaltern forces. Hegemony is characterised by the balance between force and consent; in fact, when the hegemonic apparatus crumbles, it is more difficult to maintain hegemony by relying only on coercion (Gramsci, 1975, p. 59 [Q1 §48]). Hegemony is a function exercised over the superstructure, and the two elements of the superstructure are political and civil society. The relations between these two elements offer different interpretations of the conceptualisation of the state.

A function is an activity that a subject performs. I distinguish direct and indirect uses of such a function. The direct use is related to the dominant force, which directly exercises the hegemonic function to keep its power. Indirect use of the hegemonic function is when the subject performs an activity not for its own interest, but for the interest of a third party. For example, hegemony is exercised in political and civil society, and as discussed earlier, hegemony as domination is directly performed within political society, while hegemony within civil society is mediated by the 'private organisation' (Liguori, 2004b, p. 213). As anticipated in section 1.2.2, regarding the example of a school, the subaltern teacher who works within the educational institution exercises the hegemonic function of dominant force within the civil society; in other words, the teacher exercises the hegemonic function not for its own interest but for the interest of the dominant force. The hegemonic function can be fully understood by analysing the power relations between dominant and subaltern forces. At Q19§24, Gramsci stresses that the 'supremacy' of a social group is manifested in two ways, as 'dominance' and as 'moral and intellectual leadership' (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 2010–2011 [Q19, §24]). In the passage, Gramsci describes a dominant group as able to subordinate the opposite forces via coercion and lead the allied intermediary forces. In this context,

Gramsci stresses how a group has to become a leader even before reaching governmental power. This is the main condition to conquer power, and once in power the group becomes dominant; however, it has to continue to be the leader. This passage highlights how dominance is a component of hegemony.¹⁰ Understanding how a social force becomes the leader and dominant and how it loses this function is essential to understanding the historical development of social relations. The different options proposed by Gramsci to resolve the crisis of hegemony rest on the conditions posed by the integral state vis-à-vis autonomy of civil society.

I will now analyse closely Gramsci's note 3§34, which discusses the concept of the crisis. Note 3§34 needs careful consideration because it describes two important relations between the crisis and its consequences. First of all, it remarks on the relations between the two components of hegemony; in fact, the crisis of hegemony is the reduction of consent and coercion. Because consent is limited there is the chance for the subaltern to expand their alternative hegemonic function. If subaltern forces are able to take advantage of their autonomy and master their hegemonic function they can escape their subaltern condition by becoming a state (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 311–312 [Q3, §34]). This is also linked to Q6§98, in which Gramsci discusses the relations between custom and law, observing that the custom has to precede the law. The expansion of the rule of law and judiciary system is the instrument of the dominant force to impose a specific behaviour within society. However, since the custom precedes the law, Gramsci argues that before becoming dominant the subaltern forces need a long period to control civil society via the change of custom. Such expansion within the civil society never stops until the subaltern forces have absorbed the entire society. However, Gramsci observes that the expansion of subaltern forces within society is not the same for all the subaltern forces; in fact, there are forces that constantly expand and are able to control the entire society, while others experience mixed phases of expansion and regression (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 773–774 [Q6, §98]).

¹⁰ Not opposed, as interpreted by Anderson (1976) and Guha (1997).

The second element that emerges from note 3§34 is that the resolution of the crisis does not necessarily lead to restoration, and at the same time a revolution is not ensured. According to Gramsci, the old order can survive or adapt to the crisis because the crisis opens a variety of possibilities rather than the deterministic formation of a new predefined order. These are the morbid symptoms that Gramsci addresses as the results of the crisis that go beyond the dichotomy between revolution and passive revolution (Gramsci, 1975, pp. 311-312 [Q3, §34]). In fact, I argue that morbid symptoms are not necessarily the case in passive revolution which has specific features; rather, all are various options that cannot be classified within the categories of revolution and passive revolution. As discussed earlier, passive revolution has two definitions. On the one hand, it is a form of state formation; on the other, it is the resolution of the hegemonic crisis by the dominant force with the exclusion of subaltern forces.

Therefore, I will highlight in the discussion on Egypt, as an illustrative case of a crisis resolved, how the Egyptian case was neither a revolution nor a passive revolution, whereas it displays the formation of morbid symptoms. In the specific case of Egypt, I argue that the internal struggle of the subaltern bloc, as well as the oscillation of the intermediary forces, was the manifestation of morbid symptoms. Gramsci remarks that 'the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be Born' (Gramsci, 1975, Q3§34, cit. in Filippini 2017, p. 89); in other words, the crisis is 'an opportunity for political struggle, rather than a given point at which existing contradictions erupt' (Filippini, 2016). However, this opportunity needs to be exploited by the autonomy of the subalterns. The link between the crisis and the imbalance of forces is a core element in Gramsci. The intensification of existing phenomena that do not have counterbalancing elements will define the crisis. Thus, Gramsci argues that the crisis is ever-present but latent due to the balancing of opposing forces. However, the crisis becomes manifested when some elements strengthen while others become unable to oppose (Filippini, 2016). The revolution and the passive revolution have been categorised as a

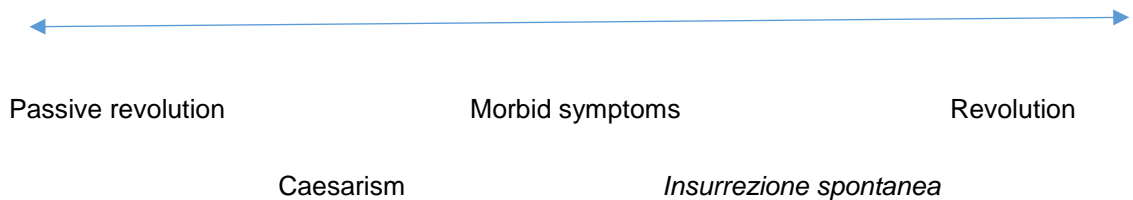
dichotomy depending on which group becomes successful in resolving the crisis.

According to this interpretation, the revolution is due to the victory of the subaltern forces, whereas the passive revolution is due to the victory of the dominant force (De Smet, 2016, pp. 69–71). Although this definition puts dominant and subaltern forces in relationship with the process of crisis resolution, such resolution is not necessarily a sharp black-and-white division. In the context of passive revolution, Thomas points out the importance of following the evolution of Gramsci's concepts to understand how scholars have differently understood passive revolution. For example, passive revolution is often understood as bourgeois 'revolution from above'. In other words, passive revolution is the process by which the existing political elite manages popular unrest and prevents the revolution (De Smet, 2016). This interpretation does take into account the passivity of subaltern forces, as an essential feature to define passive revolution. Others consider passive revolution as a form of state formation and modernisation (Allinson and Anievas, 2010, pp. 480, 485), based on the interpretation of the Italian case of passive revolution as a form of *trasformismo* – a political strategy and technique of statecraft. Finally, there are other interpretations of passive revolution as the transformation of capitalist order into a more aggressive form of accumulation like neoliberalism, where the dominant force can exploit the passivity of the subaltern to reconstruct economic relations (Roccu, 2017, p. 551). The combination of these interpretations frames the passive revolution as a continuum of different interpretations (Thomas, 2018a, pp. 3–4).

Therefore passive revolution is a 'distinct process of (political) modernization that lacked the meaningful participation of popular classes in undertaking and consolidating social transformation' (Thomas, 2013, p. 23), where the passive revolution is a stage of hegemonic function, not its culmination. Therefore passive revolution is a 'strategic intervention' due to the failure of hegemony (Thomas, 2013, pp. 24–25). There are three possible ways to resolve the crisis of hegemony and those solutions depend on (1) the

type of the state, which reflects (2) the relations between the dominant and subaltern blocs. Rather than considering the resolution of the crisis as a dichotomous outcome, either failure or success of revolution, I rather conceptualise the resolution of the crisis within a spectrum containing a variety of options. However, in order to operationalise it, I state three main referencing concepts: revolution and passive revolution at the extremes of the spectrum, and morbid symptoms in between (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Hegemonic crisis's resolution scale



As anticipated in Chapter One and in the first part of this chapter, revolution is the outcome where the leader of the subaltern forces exploits the gap of autonomy within civil society and manages to establish a new order via the control of hegemonic functions thanks to the mobilisation strategies of the war of position and the war of manoeuvre. Gramsci identified two phases of action for the organised forces: the first phase is 'objective' linked to the structure. The elements of the economic crisis cannot be changed, for example the number of employed or unemployed, and the development of cities vs rural areas. The second phase allows the agency a range of actions and is characterised by political and military engagement. In fact, the political phase is characterised by 'the degree of homogeneity, self-awareness, and organisation attained by the various social classes' and their relations with military forces (Gramsci [Q13§17] cit. in Filippini 2017, p. 102). The core of a successful revolution is precisely the balance and organisation of political and military forces. However, Gramsci highlighted that when 'spontaneous movements' do not develop, 'conscious leadership' causes the formation of reactionary forces, and ultimately the manifestation of moments of imbalanced forces favour military forces (Filippini 2017, p. 102). Gramsci considers the

passive revolution as a mechanism for rebalancing the disrupted equilibrium through the action of the dominant forces. The more widely used core concept of passive revolution describes it as 'absence of popular initiative' (Thomas, 2018a, pp. 15–16).

To sum up, passive revolution can be conceptualised in two main directions depending on the state type. On the one hand, the concept of passive revolution as a process of state formation results in the formation of an integral state, where the hegemonic function of the dominant force allows the integration of the subaltern within the state. On the other hand, passive revolution as a political strategy to resolve a hegemonic crisis assumes the a priori existence of the integral state, in the sense that in the passive revolution the integral state is essential to allow the political society to disaggregate the civil society. Now, assuming that both directions can exist, once the integral state is formed via the passive revolution, during the crisis of hegemony the dominant force within the political society can resolve the crisis with a new passive revolution. However, what remains under-studied and under-conceptualised is the possibility of a failure of a passive revolution. In the case of Egypt, both interpretations are puzzling. If we assume that the passive revolution was a case of state formation, then the uprising in 2011 should be considered as the interruption of such state formation; however, since the revolution was not successful some argue that even the counter-revolution was a form of passive revolution (De Smet, 2016). The 2013 coup that toppled Morsi was not a form of passive revolution like the Free Officers' coups in 1952, because the Free Officers' coup led to the transformation of the Egyptian state from above, without being preceded by a revolution, whereas the 2013 coup was a form of counter-revolution because the subsequent consolidation of the post-2013 regime is the direct result of the development of the uprising in 2011 (Gervasio, 2013, pp. 72–73; Achcar, 2016, pp. 65–66).

The scale of variation within the extreme outcomes of revolution and passive revolution is not fully discussed by Gramsci; nonetheless, the morbid symptoms can be reconstructed in different ways. Such reconstruction is

particularly sensitive to the scale of subalternity; in other words, since there is not a clear separation between the possible interactions between the dominant and subaltern forces since none of these blocs is uniform and monolithic, the various interactions should be analysed case by case. For the purpose of this thesis, Egypt is considered neither a case of revolution nor of passive revolution, rather the double failure of the intermediary force, on the one hand, in leading the subaltern and controlling the hegemonic function, and on the other, the failure of the intermediary forces in cooperation with the dominant force. For the sake of the explanation of the morbid symptom, I will discuss two cases in the notebook *Cesarismo e insurrezione spontanea* – ‘Caesarism and Spontaneous Insurrection’. These two examples are deeply linked with the balance of forces between and within the dominant and subaltern blocs. I want to stress that because the subaltern forces are involved in the process of crisis resolution, neither of these cases can be classified as a form of passive revolution because, as discussed above, passive revolution implies the exclusion of the subaltern forces. The fact that the paralysis of Caesarism can be resolved with and without the exclusion of the subaltern forces introduces further nuances into the crisis’s resolution within the two extreme cases of successful revolution and passive revolution. Therefore Caesarism should not be equated necessarily with a specific form of passive revolution; rather it should be understood as a form of what Gramsci called ‘morbid symptoms’.

Gramsci classifies the episode of the Sicilian Vespers as *insurrezione spontanea* – spontaneous insurrection – the twin concept of Caesarism that characterised the concept of morbid symptoms. Thus spontaneous insurrection is closer to the extreme of the revolution, whereas Caesarism is closer to the concept of passive revolution. That the Sicilian Vespers – as with the Egyptian Uprising – is closer to the revolution does not make it an example of revolution. Gramsci investigates the case of Sicilian Vespers to understand the ‘spontaneity’ of the subaltern movements and their relations with the other subaltern forces. However, Gramsci takes the example of the Sicilian Vespers to understand the spontaneous insurrection. Indeed he stresses how the Sicilian Vespers is a combination of ‘spontaneous movements’ and ‘conscious

leadership'. The Sicilian Vespers started in Palermo in 1282 due to the spontaneous rebellion against a French soldier who represented the Angevin domination. Similar rebellions spread quickly to the rest of the island. Later the Sicilian nobility took the lead of the rebellion to expel the Angevins and organise the resistance of the island calling for the support of Peter III of Aragon – claimed to be the legitimate king – against Charles I of Anjou. Gramsci did not investigate the Sicilian Vespers as a form of morbid symptoms because his scope was to investigate the relations among the various groups of subalterns. Even so, I argue that the spontaneous insurrection Vespers can be considered a form of morbid symptom closer to the revolution extreme point because the unity of the subaltern forces managed to oppose French domination. However, given the limited resources that the united subaltern bloc had vis-à-vis the French, the Sicilians had to call for the Aragoneses. In this way, Sicily did not become independent; rather, it passed from the domination of the Angevins to the control of the Aragoneses. Gramsci stresses that the spontaneity of the marginalised subaltern groups – which became active – allowed the most advanced subaltern forces – the nobility – to take the lead and organise the rebellion.

I argue that, viewed from this frame, the Egyptian Uprising falls as a spontaneous insurrection morbid symptom rather than a clear case of passive revolution. Indeed, during the initial phase of the uprising, the dominant and subaltern forces do not reflect a catastrophic balance, nor did an external force intervene to take control of the transition (both core features of Caesarism). In fact, the military was a marginalised force of the dominant bloc rather than an external force. Similar to the Sicilian Vespers, the spontaneity of the civilian movements allowed the Muslim Brotherhood – as the most advanced force – to access political society without considerable political weight, rather than the leading force of the subaltern. However, the difference between the Egyptian Uprising and the Sicilian Vespers is that in Egypt the unity of the subaltern forces was precarious, and the Muslim Brotherhood turned out to be the actor that compromised such unity.

3.4 Subalternity and the Egyptian counter-revolution

Egypt offers a very interesting case to explain the concept of subalternity and relations with the state and different forms of crisis resolution. By analysing the 25th January uprising with the 3rd July military coup as interlinked phenomena, this thesis unpacks the development of revolution as an open-ended process that offers a better explanation of fragile revolutions, in line with the aim of the fifth generation of revolutionary study. Therefore, this thesis argues that the fragility of the revolutionary process is due to the existence of the semi-integral state, while the under-studied category of intermediary forces is able to influence the revolutionary outcome. In this regard, Gramsci's concept of hegemonic crisis is able to unpack the causes of the uprising and at the same time address the potential of a different outcome. The crisis of hegemony develops from the failure of the dominant bloc: in delivering the plan they imposed the hegemony over masses, and at the same time the oppressed social forces turned active and attempted to change the existing order (Antonini, 2016, pp. 168–169). In Egypt, the economic performances of the country improved thanks to the neoliberal policies implemented since 2004; however, such economic improvement went hand in hand with economic difficulties faced by the lower as well as the middle class, especially the youth. As Chapter Four addresses, the elite forces were unbalanced, where the NDP dominated by crony capitalists sought the closer support of the police rather than the military. Revolutionary forces were strengthened due to the galvanising event of the Tunisian uprising, while the weaknesses of the ruling elite, due to the marginalisation of the military, affected the ability of the ruling elite to react cohesively towards the revolutionary forces. The counter-revolution and the formation of the post-2013 regime is the stabilisation of a hegemonic crisis that in Egypt manifested as the beginning of the 25th January uprising.

According to Gramsci, the old order can survive the crisis because the crisis opens a variety of possibilities rather than the deterministic formation of a new predefined order; these possibilities depend on the adaptability of dominant forces and activism of subaltern forces, and their ability to control the state

(Gramsci, 1975, pp. 1603–1605 [Q13, §23]). The uprising expressed a partial unity among subaltern forces, like middle-class revolutionary youth, workers and Islamists; however, it affected the neoliberal structure marginally: the military and a very limited number of corny capitalists remained in power post-2013, but with different power relations compared to pre-2011. The emergence of various social movements in the 2000s, distinct from the predominant Islamist groups, stressed how 2011 was the result of a political struggle started earlier. Gramsci highlighted that when ‘spontaneous movements’ do not develop ‘conscious leadership’ it causes the formation of reactionary forces, and the manifestation of moments of imbalanced forces ultimately favour military forces (Filippini, 2016). Gramsci made an example of the young generation in Italy who briefly supported the working class but later supported the fascist regime (Filippini, 2016). This reflects the case of Tamarrod, a movement derived from other ‘leaderless movements’ – like the proto-democratic Kefaya – that ultimately turned to support the military coup, as well as workers’ leaders like Kamel Abu Eita. Finally, the post-2013 order re-establishes the neoliberal structure, but with different dominant forces. Sisi’s regime is the result of the counter-revolution. In other words, post-2013 is a counter-revolutionary regime, different from the pre-2011 liberalised authoritarian one;¹¹ it is not a replica of Mubarak’s regime (Gervasio, 2013, p. 75). The period between 2011 and 2013 was characterised ‘by a retreat of the regime and the achievement, in practise of revolutionary demands’ (Allinson, 2019b, p. 325). For this reason the period between 2011 and 2013 should be investigated in its own right regardless of the successful outcome of the revolution, otherwise the transformation of the post-2013 state into a counter-revolutionary regime could not be understood.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the literature on subalternity does not investigate the relation between subaltern and counter-revolution. In addition, the uprising was quickly deemed a form of passive revolution without reflection on the relations between the state type and passive revolution. This section

¹¹ Cf. the literature on liberalised autocracy (Brumberg, 2002; Volpi, 2004; Heydemann, 2007).

will explain how Egypt is not an integral state and therefore that the interpretation of passive revolution as a resolution of the crisis of hegemony is hard to sustain given the interaction of the social drivers in the counter-revolution. It will also map out the scale of subalternity within civil society, to show how the interaction between various subaltern groups can determine the resolution of the crisis.

The literature that analyses Egypt as a form of passive revolution considers the dominant and subaltern forces as two homogeneous blocs who are opposed and compete over hegemony. This interpretation is not per se inaccurate; rather, it is too simplistic because it ignores the variety that exists within the subaltern forces, and thus it reduces the dichotomy dominant-subaltern to the economic relations existing between bourgeois and proletariat. Specifically, some scholars consider the Muslim Brotherhood as part of the dominant elite that attempted to crush the mobilisation of the working class which failed to emancipate and win the revolution (De Smet, 2014c, 2016). Contrary to this interpretation that considers neoliberalism a form of passive revolution both before and after the uprising, I argue that the case of the Egyptian counter-revolution cannot be categorised as a form of passive revolution because the subaltern forces were not excluded from the process of crisis resolution; rather, the agency of the intermediary forces – the Muslim Brotherhood – as well as subaltern groups – youth and workers' movements – determined the reverting of the initial revolution into a counter-revolution which still is different from a passive revolution. The Muslim Brotherhood acted as an oscillating force which was able to steer the direction of the revolution from supporting the subaltern to seconding the military. In contrast to the literature that considers the uprising as a form of passive revolution and Egypt an integral state because it embraced neoliberal policies (Roccu, 2012; De Smet, 2016), I argue that the uprising is rather the result of failure of the formation of the integral state, for two main reasons: first of all, the neoliberal policies have alienated rather than integrated the subaltern forces within the state; this emerges from the steady expansion of the informal economy. The informal economy flags the existence of an autonomous space within civil society. Such

a space allowed the consolidation of the civil society organisations which provided welfare services unfulfilled by the state to local communities (Ismail, 2006).

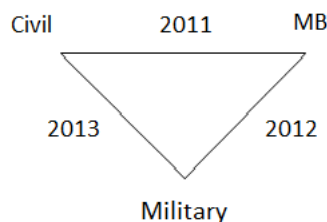
Secondly, the Egyptian state does not control civil society enough to impose significant changes. Examples relate to the fact that the state is not able to reinforce systems like taxation or control of the security of the whole territory; in fact, areas like Sinai are not fully controlled by the state coercive power (Burgrova, 2014). The phenomenon of *baltagiya* illustrates the undermining control of the territory by the state, a further limitation to the existence of the integral state. In fact, *baltagiya* act as a buffer zone between the police and the local population, in two different ways. First, *baltagiya* seek inclusion within the state; indeed, *baltagiya* often inform the police in an exchange of protection or licences. The failure of the police should not be interpreted as neglect of duty; instead, it is a strategy to control the territory via a network of informants (Ismail, 2012, pp. 451–452). Nevertheless, at the same time, the *baltagiya* fill the void left by the inefficiency of the police, serving the population, and so have gained wider control of the territory; this might eventually threaten the police. On the other hand, Egypt cannot be classified as an extreme case of the non-integral state where political society is disjoined from civil society. In fact, the repressive system showed the strength of political society (Ismail, 2011, p. 846).

Therefore I argue that Egypt is in between the two extremes of integral and non-integral state, making it a semi-integral state. Precisely because Egypt is a semi-integral state, the crisis of authority emerged easily due to the imbalance provoked by both the increasing autonomy of subalterns and the lack of control of dominant forces within civil society. Therefore the resolution of the Egyptian crisis of authority is made more challenging due to the narrow difference in power between dominant and subaltern forces.

How are intermediary forces able to shift the hegemonic balance during a moment of crisis? This was made possible because these forces were operating in the context of the semi-integral state where the actors in both

blocs had room for manoeuvre. Pre-2011, the dominant bloc was composed by the NDP and the crony capitalists who had become predominant in 2000 and marginalised the military, which was at the periphery of the dominant bloc with limited control of hegemony. Pre-2011 the crisis of hegemony could emerge because the two blocs (dominant and subaltern) were undertaking significant transformation (see Chapter Four); the dominant force was slowly alienating part of its component, while at the same time the subaltern forces increased their activity in enlarging the gaps of autonomy within civil society. Crucially, the lack of intermediary forces in the pre-2011 period determined the lack of balance between the dominant and the subaltern bloc. This allowed the crisis to emerge. The marginalisation of the military allowed it to be considered by part of the subaltern forces (the protesters who cheered and fraternised with the military after the resignation of Mubarak) as an external force not part of the dominant force. Further investigation is required to understand the transformation within the subaltern bloc; in fact, if the dominant and subaltern forces were in a catastrophic balance, as argued by De Smet (2016), the uprising could not result in a power struggle among the three actors: the military as a dominant force, the Muslim Brotherhood as the intermediary force, and civil movements as the leading force of the subaltern bloc – as visualised in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Power dynamics between dominant and subaltern forces during the uprising



The dynamic that developed between 2011 and 2012 shows the shifting positions within the subaltern bloc, that the dominance of the military remained precarious, and that the Muslim Brotherhood, as the most advanced force within the subaltern bloc, failed to take the lead in the uprising, even if the

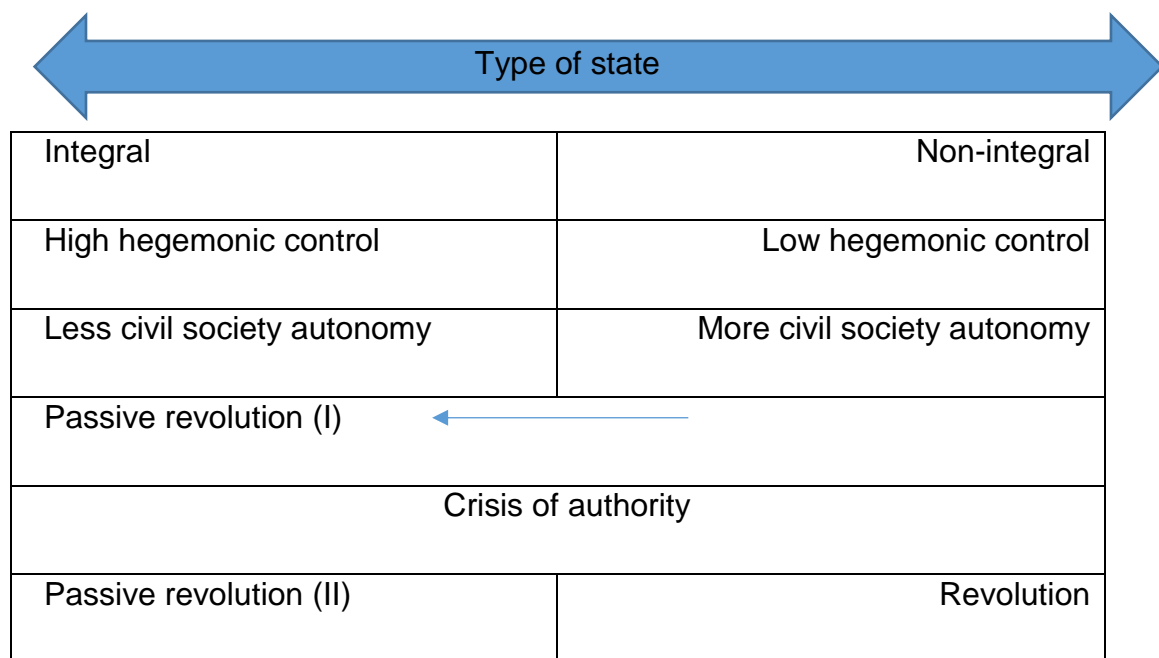
Kefaya movement led the pre-2011 mobilisation because it started the direct confrontation with the regime by demanding constitutional reforms. Nevertheless, Kefaya and April 6 failed to become a leading force post-2011, because it remained distant from the rest of the revolutionary youth organised on the ground. In this scenario, the Muslim Brotherhood started to oscillate between two different positions within the spectrum of subalternity. On the one hand, it aspired to become the leading force of the subaltern bloc, as exemplified in its cooperation with the youth against the military imposition of the Selmi document. On the other hand, the Muslim Brotherhood acted as an allied force of the dominant military, thus shifting the balance of power in favour of the military, as with the early approval of the constitutional referendum. The Muslim Brotherhood kept oscillating between these two positions, especially during Morsi's presidency. In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood attempted to consolidate its position within political society; this is crucial because it addresses how a subaltern force like the Muslim Brotherhood, with a partial control of the economy, minimal control of coercion and reliance on Islamist ideology, can infiltrate political society but still lack hegemony. This empirical case disproves the equation of the subaltern as the masses vs the dominant as the elite, proving also that part of what can be considered elite remains in a subaltern position.

At the same time, Tamarrod needs to be analysed within the same logic; in fact, Tamarrod can be considered as an attempt of the leading force of the subaltern bloc. The tension between Tamarrod as the new emerging leading force and the Muslim Brotherhood as oscillating between leading and allied prepared the ground for the military coup. In fact, the military coup should not be interpreted as the re-appropriation of the military's control; rather it was the manifestation of the removing of a challenging allied force and its replacement with another that was more reliable. The target of the protests in 2013 was not the dominant force, as happened in 2011, but the allied intermediary force – which is by definition a component of the subaltern forces. Such an attack provoked the reaction of the Muslim Brotherhood which attempted to challenge the hegemony of the military without any concrete support from the subaltern

bloc. Finally, the popular support for the military coup, considered as a form of corrective revolution, was the result of the transformation of Tamarrod from the embryonic leader of the subaltern bloc to the new allied force in the immediate aftermath of the coup. The Egyptian state after 2013 undertook a series of transformations. The most relevant was the lack of a clear party able to support the military. I argue that the lack of a regime party was nothing more than the military's fear of the presence of an allied force that could shift the balance of power towards the subaltern force within civil society. In fact, the aim of Sisi's regime is to form an integral state which integrates the subaltern to reduce their autonomy. As long as the dominant does not create an integral state, the dominant force has to further fragment the allied forces to avoid the same oscillating behaviour as the Muslim Brotherhood, supporting and at the same time challenging the military.

To conclude, this thesis analyses the Egyptian Uprising using the lens of subalternity. Starting from a new philological interpretation of Gramsci's concept of subalternity, this project builds on this interpretation of subalternity and relates the concepts to Gramsci's theory of revolution. This reconceptualisation and empirical application enhances our understanding of the nature of revolution as an open-ended relational process. Figure 5 represents the link between state, society and revolutionary process, along with the application to the Egyptian case. This thesis argues that the Egyptian Uprising of 2011 was the U-turn of the state *dis-integration* – the reverse process of integration; while the military coup of 2013 shows the dominant force's effort to reintegrate the subaltern within the state.

Figure 5: Type of state–civil society relation and implication for revolution

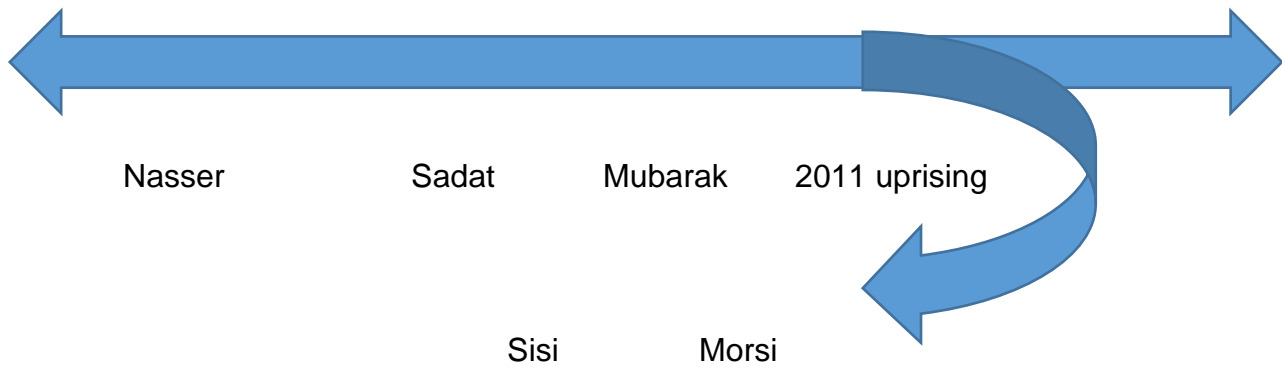


Egypt

Integral

Semi-integral

Non-integral



The Free Officers' coup in 1952 was a form of passive revolution because it achieved a transformation of the Egyptian state, and integrated the civil society. Nasser's successors reversed his policies to maintain the stability of the regime, challenged by military defeat in 1967, the revamping of Islamist movements and the poor economic performances which had a negative effect on other sectors like education, administration, housing, and foreign trades. However, these policies resulted in the dis-integration of the subaltern forces until the 2000s. The activism of civil society began to reach its peak in 2011, a year which marked the conjunction of two parallel opposite changes, the integration of the subaltern forces and the capitalisation of their autonomy. Therefore, contrary to the interpretation of passive revolution, Egypt is a case of spontaneous insurrection because of the contradictory behaviour of the intermediary force. In fact, the period between the uprising and the coup was characterised by the oscillation of the intermediary force, because the Muslim Brotherhood acted sometimes as the leader of the subaltern bloc by challenging the military's dominance, while at other times it acted in support of the military. By doing this, the Muslim Brotherhood attempt to stabilise the state via the reintegration of civil society. Furthermore, the failed attack of the Muslim Brotherhood to the military's dominance allowed further integration of the subaltern bloc after the military coup. Finally, the post-coup regime has progressively attempted to reintegrate the subaltern forces within the state.

This explicative model of the Egyptian counter-revolution (Figure 5) will be discussed further in the following chapters. Nevertheless, the organic relations addressed in this model can be generalised and applied to other cases. In this way, this model advances the dynamic that characterised revolutions as a relational organic process between the state integration and the subaltern forces' ability to control their autonomy.

Chapter 4 The dis-integration of the Egyptian state and the war of position and manoeuvre of subaltern forces

This chapter analyses the relationship between the dis-integration of the state and the manifestation of the crisis of hegemony. It stresses how the transformation of the state – from integral to non-integral – allows pockets of autonomy within civil society that can be exploited by a variety of subaltern forces to overthrow the state. The chapter argues that progressive state dis-integration underlines the growing need for the dominant force to seek to ally with an intermediary force in order to connect with civil society. In fact, in the case of state integration there is little need for the dominant force to have an allied force, because various subaltern social groups are integrated within the state via the economic structure or ideological superstructure or both. On the contrary, in the case of a non-integral state the allied intermediary force that connects political and civil society is necessary to prevent a hegemonic crisis. In this regard, Egypt provides an excellent example of state dis-integration which progressively developed a hegemonic crisis.

The events of 25th January 2011 were the manifestation of a latent crisis of hegemony. The crisis was ever-present; however, in the 2000s the various subaltern social groups strengthened while the dominant bloc weakened and the crisis became manifested in 2011. The manifestation of the hegemonic crisis cannot be fully understood without taking into account the Egyptian state. Contrary to other interpretations that consider neoliberalism as a form of passive revolution, I argue that the Egyptian state moved from a more integrated form under Nasser – due to its Nasserist ideology and the planned state-controlled economy – to a progressive dis-integration of the state started

by Sadat and exacerbated by the last decade of Mubarak's rule. The state dis-integration also affected relations within the dominant bloc, since the upgrading of crony capitalist figures from economic allies to political dominant force compromised the stability of the dominant bloc due to the marginalisation of the military. On the contrary, the upgrading of the cronies from allied to dominant was not followed by the formation of a new intermediary force that could connect political and civil society.

Within civil society, various subaltern forces started to take advantage of the state dis-integration. This chapter traces the development of the Muslim Brotherhood who in 2011 became the most advanced force within Egyptian political society. This was thanks to the use of the war of position – which served to access key posts within civil society that held hegemonic functions. Although the Muslim Brotherhood was the most advanced subaltern group within civil society, it was not the only one that attempted to contrast the state. In fact, other movements like the workers, Kefaya and April 6 used the war of manoeuvre to confront the state directly. The success of these two strategies allowed social movements to target the state on political and economic issues.

4.1 The dominant bloc and the dis-integration of the Egyptian state

4.1.1 Nasser and the integration of the state

As discussed in the previous chapter, according to Gramsci passive revolution has two interlinked meanings: (1) as a type of state formation (of the integral state) and (2) as a type of state transformation to overcome hegemonic crisis. In both cases, the initiative of social forces is excluded and such processes are firmly controlled by the dominant bloc. Passive revolution also has another key feature that encompasses the integration of subaltern forces within the state. Indeed, passive revolution as a form of state formation aims to integrate the various social forces to form an integral state, in which political and civil society are in alignment; this is similar to passive revolution as a form of hegemonic crisis resolution, intent on transforming the state through the integration of social forces within the state. In this respect, the Egyptian state

underwent a series of transformations after 1952; however, not all the top-down transformation that occurred in Egypt before and after the 2011 uprising can be considered as a form of passive revolution. In fact, this chapter argues that only the period from 1952 until 1967 can be considered in this way.

The 1952 revolution was the result of the dissatisfaction and anti-imperialist feeling which also targeted the ruling elite considered close to the British; the malaise was understood by the emerging middle class, and new social changes like urbanisation and workers' migration from rural areas to the cities exacerbated the feeling of instability (Podeh and Winckler, 2004). The Free Officers' coup was a pivotal moment for Egyptian state transformation, because the coup marked the creation of a new constitutional order (Osman, 2013, pp. 53–54).

Nasser was able to understand the needs of the masses and so deliver the right message. He was able to integrate various social forces within the state at structural level via social reforms and as superstructural-level populist ideology and state repression. Nasser often used symbolism praising a simple and humble life; portraying himself as one of the people, opposed to the wealthy classes, Nasser used the bureaucratic system to ensure employment, thus the enlargement of the public sector allowed the population to feel engaged in the participation of building a new Egypt. Indeed, forms of socialism were used to spread nationalism (Podeh and Winckler, 2004).

The integration of different social forces within the Nasserite state took place within the context of the creation of social equality and social justice. The economic development of the country was tightly linked to the expansion of the public sector; this led the nationalisation of banks, corporations, and insurance companies. This manoeuvre allowed the state to penetrate civil society via state-led economic development (Lenczowski, 1965). Prior to the land reform in September 1952, Egypt was characterised by a profound social inequality, where 0.5% of Egyptians controlled one-third of the fertile land while 95% of farmers shared the remaining land (Osman, 2013, p. 54). Such reforms ended absentee ownership, strengthening farmers' legal rights, limiting families' holdings. The surplus land was redistributed to peasants who paid for

it by instalments, whereas the expropriated landowners were compensated with bonds (Vatikiotis, 1991, p. 395; Osman, 2013, pp. 54–55).

The second major social economic reforms embraced the industrial sector. Different types of business, like factories, enterprises and companies, were nationalised, transferring the ownership from a limited number of business people to workers and employees. This allowed the rapid industrial development of the country (Osman, 2013, pp. 55–56). With these two major reforms the Nasserite state managed to integrate different social forces. By redistributing the land to farmers and allowing them to pay for it by instalments, the state ensured that even the poorest farmers could access the benefit of the redistribution of wealth. At the same time, the compensation of the expropriated landowners with bonds tied the economic conditions of these forces to the strength of conditions of the economy in general.

Similarly to the integration of farmers within the state, the nationalisation of business and the state led to capitalism-integrated workers within the state. The integration of workers within the state was necessary to develop the Nasserite economy based on state-led development. Indeed – similar to the Soviet model of workers' integration – the workers were motivated to increase their production to meet specific goals, and similar to the *metayage* system addressed by Gramsci, political representation of workers was controlled via the regime's representative bodies (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, p. 43). Nevertheless, the integration occurred at the price of brutal repression, since at the very beginning the new military regime crushed workers' protests despite the fact that the demonstrators were sympathetic to the military (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, p. 42; Chalcraft, 2016, pp. 320–321). Workers were also integrated within the Nasserite state through the application of labour law that guaranteed them job security, longer holidays, free medical care, and free transportation to the workplace (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 322). The integration of various marginalised groups in society occurred with the subsidisation of primary goods and commodities to prevent inflation (Chalcraft, 2016, p. 324).

The nationalisation of the Suez Canal inaugurated the expansion of the public sector in Egypt (Abdel-Malek, 1964). The economic development materialised with the implementation of spectacular projects like the construction of Aswan Dam, the widening of the Suez Canal, the establishment of the steel plant in Helwan, and the development of the state-owned petroleum industry (Lenczowski, 1965). This set the basis for economic planning, and finally the regime established the Arab Socialist Union as a central organ to control all the productive forces from the national capitalists to the working classes. Such significant economic reforms necessitated the development of the state machinery. The growing of the state bureaucracy allowed the integration of social forces like the middle class. The socialisation of the economy allowed the regime to control the economic resources of the country and encourage consumption through welfare state policy (Abdel-Malek, 1964). In addition, in companies with a foreign majority, the shareholding was 'Egyptianised' (Abdel-Malek, 1967).

The expansion of the public sector, the increasing services to the population and the reform of the educational system increased the integration of various subaltern groups; however, at the same time, the educational reform was a way for the regime to spread its propaganda. In fact, Nasser claimed that one of the aims of the revolution was to eliminate the cultural anarchy existing in the Egyptian system, where foreign schools were reduced in order to 'Egyptianise' education (Mansfield, 1973). The impact that Nasser had in promoting Egyptian nationalism is rooted in the process of 'Egyptianisation' [*tamsir*] of the country's economy and cultural life by eliminating any foreign domination (Mansfield, 1973). The Nasserite state in these terms integrated different social forces which were kept together by state-led development and populist ideology.

In fact, Nasser's state transformation went hand in hand with his ability to gather civil society consent by creating the image of a national 'hero', and culturally transforming the country. In particular, the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956 and the successful resolution of the Suez Crisis allowed Nasser to consolidate his image (Osman, 2013, pp. 56–57). The Egyptian victory

against the tripartite attack – the UK, France, and Israel – not only raised Egypt as a key actor in international relations, but helped Nasser reach the peak of his support within the population (Osman, 2013, pp. 58–59).

Some scholars argue that Nasser did not leave a state behind because state institutions revolved around his figure (Osman, 2013, p. 78). Often Nasser's state is considered weak because of its unstable institutions; for example government and parliament lifespans were 13 months and two years respectively, while the constitution was promulgated six times (Vatikiotis, 1991, p. 424).

This conclusion highlights the liberal idea of the state as either strong or weak, reducing the negative consequences of economic and social reforms to the failure of the state. As discussed in Chapter Three, this interpretation overshadows the complex relations and balance of power between political and civil society. In contrast, by looking at the transformation of the state through the lens of subaltern integration, we can grasp a more comprehensive development of the Egyptian state since 1952. In fact, from 1954 to 1967 the Egyptian state progressively integrated various social forces in order to maintain their consent. In this regard, the Nasserite project until 1967 was a form of passive revolution, not just because it implemented top-down policies but precisely because more sections of the subaltern bloc were integrated within the state. The fact that the negative consequences of the Nasserite project emerged post-1967 does not mean that 'Nasser did not leave behind a state' (Osman, 2013, p. 78); it rather means that the subaltern bloc was no longer fully integrated within the state. The dis-integration of the state progressed further under Sadat and Mubarak until groups of the dis-integrated social forces exploited pockets of autonomy to counterbalance the dominant bloc. For example, Sadat's institutional crafting, like the 1972 constitution – which survived until the uprising – and the formation of a non-competitive multi-party system – which further 'liberalised' under Mubarak – did not necessary guarantee the stability of the state.

Indeed, Nasserism was not a social contract based on the trade-off of liberties for welfare. On the contrary, the ruling elite imposed authoritarianism

by offering 'them [workers and peasants] more meaningful participation' (Brown, 2004, p. 134). This inclusive process related to the promotion of equality where under Nasser class differences were less marked contrary to the pre-revolutionary era when lower classes were ghettoised (Brown, 2004). Indeed, the Nasserite regime transformed the Egyptian state via '*political* suppression' and '*social* incorporation' (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, p. 38, emphasis in original).

4.1.2 The progressive dis-integration of the Egyptian state

Although the concept of crisis refers to hegemony and is not reduced to an episodic economic crisis, the origin of this crisis developed from an economic contradiction at the structural level. In particular, the origin of the Egyptian hegemonic crisis goes back to the *infitah* – a series of neoliberal policies started by President Anwar Sadat in the 1970s – which marked the shift from a state-planned economic strategy to a development led by the private sector. The *infitah* sowed the seeds of the crisis of hegemony because neoliberal policy transformed the Egyptian integral state into a semi-integral state with the dis-integration of various subaltern forces – like workers, farmers and the middle class – who became impoverished while the gap between rich and poor increased (Kandil, 2012b). The dis-integration of workers, farmers and the middle class required the regime to seek the support of intermediary forces to link the state and the social forces that had been dis-integrated. In fact, as others have pointed out, Nasser's corporatism and Sadat's corporatism were different. Nasser used his charisma to establish 'populist-corporatism'; in this way subaltern forces were directly integrated within the state, structurally via the economic transformation that allowed the workers and farmers to participate actively in the formation of the post-1952 state due to the state-led economic development, and ideologically through the direct relations between Nasser and the Egyptians. Sadat's corporatism, on the other hand, became 'bureaucratic' because the exclusion of the workers, farmers and middle class to favour the emerging business forces in the country started the dis-integration of the state (Bianchi, 1989; Ayubi, 1995; Ranko, 2015, pp. 47–50).

Starting from this assumption, the argument proposed here highlights how the dis-integration of the state determines the increasing necessity for the dominant force to seek an ally in order to connect with civil society. In fact, as in the integrated Nasserite state, there was no need of a specific allied intermediary force because economic structure and political superstructure were able to integrate the subaltern forces directly. Sadat's regime needed the business people to be the allied intermediary force to connect with the working and middle classes. In this regard, business people were not yet dominant – as they would be under Mubarak – and indeed 'they continue[d] to be rather "junior" partners in the current informal coalition' (Ayubi, 1995, p. 352). Finally, further dis-integration of the Egyptian state occurred under Mubarak; on the one hand, subaltern forces like the working and middle classes further suffered from the negative effect of the *infitah*. On the other hand, the crony business people who were an allied intermediary force under Sadat became a dominant force under Mubarak. The 'upgrading' of the business people – from an intermediary force to a dominant force – exacerbated the dis-integration of the state because the internal division within the dominant bloc prevented the old elite from surviving the hegemonic crisis.

4.1.3 Sadat's corrective revolution

After Nasser died, opposition including the left – which was in disagreement with Nasser – started to use 'Nasserism' and its reinterpretation to attack the Sadat regime. To resist those attacks, Sadat put in place a 'de-Nasserisation' programme by releasing materials such as books, articles and movies to discredit his predecessor (Binder, 2004). The image of Nasser as a charismatic figure turned out to be the image of an autocrat, where his charisma was useful to oppress rather than modernise the country (Binder, 2004). The formation of an alternative narrative about Nasser functioned to support a new political agenda. Sadat reversed Nasser's socialism, reducing the public sector in favour of aggressive forms of capitalism (Osman, 2013, p. 79). In fact, the de-Nasserisation was defined by Sadat as 'corrective revolution' (*thawra al-tashyah*), to justify all the opposing policies that he put in

place: the economic openness to foreign intervention, economic privatisation, reinforcing the role of Islam and signing the peace treaty with Israel (Ansari, 1986, pp. 167–173; Hatina, 2004). The justification for such dramatic change was based on the idea that the free market would have allocated resources according to the needs of the market itself, opposing the *wasta* dynamics that flagellated the country with endemic corruption (Joya, 2017, p. 343).

The rhetoric used to support the neoliberal reforms addresses privatisation as a way to empower Egyptian citizens (Osman, 2013, p. 130). *Infitah* was not only an economic reform but it deeply changed the political environment in Egypt (Osman, 2013, p. 129). The new business people became the allied intermediary forces of the dis-integrating Egyptian state; because they were not accessing the government they remained in an allied but subaltern position – ‘junior partners’, in Ayubi’s words (Ayubi, 1995, p. 352). Nevertheless, they still functioned to connect the subaltern forces with the state. In fact, the transformation of Sinai after the withdrawal of Israeli occupation allowed the flourishing of the real estate industry in the peninsula. The new economy was now led by the private sector’s estate (Osman, 2013, p. 139). The bulk of the working and middle classes, which were – under Nasser – integrated into the public sector, were now employed within the private sector (Osman, 2013, pp. 132–133). This transformation stressed how the business people were the link between the regime and the tourist workers needed to operate the tourist sector machine. In this way, social forces like workers were inserted into a specific economic relationship with the cronies as intermediary forces rather than directly with the state. Nevertheless, the signal that the lower classes started to dis-integrate from the state emerged in 1977 with the bread riot, a spontaneous protest to reject Sadat’s initiative to remove basic subsidies in response to pressure by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Vatikiotis, 1991, p. 422; Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, p. 47).

The corrective revolution initiated by Sadat not only addressed neoliberal policies, it also attempted to reshape the limits of civil society by alternating tolerance and repression. This strategy ultimately created the opportunity for subaltern groups like the Muslim Brotherhood to exploit pockets of autonomy

to initiate their war of position against the state (Ranko, 2015). In the long run, this allowed the MB to become the intermediary between the civil and political society post-2011. Paradoxically, corrective revolution also had effects within the dominant bloc, because it started the progressive marginalisation of the military that further dis-integrated the state through the military's parallel economy.

The introduction of the *infitah* was not as worrying for the dominant role of the military as was the peace treaty with Israel, which directly affected the primary function of the military. Such a shift had destabilising effects for the military's hegemonic relations. Following the peace treaty with Israel, the military suffered a reduction of its dominant role within the ruling elite, already damaged after the defeat of the 1967 war and partially restored in 1973's Yom Kippur or October war. Therefore, to avoid dissatisfaction and dissent in the military, Sadat allowed the military to enjoy the new neoliberal policies.

Established in 1979 by presidential decree n. 32, the National Service Products Organisation (NSPO) had the scope to re-engage the military with Egyptian politics and society. Hence, the military started to step into the economy of the country, in line with the *infitah* policy (Abul-Magd, 2015). This manoeuvre pushed the military to the border of the dominant bloc, but without turning it into a subaltern force because the military was still in control of coercion and a significant part of the Egyptian economy. This is not a minor detail since being marginalised within the dominant bloc allowed the military to control the transition post-uprising, contrary to the Muslim Brotherhood which reached political society as intermediary force but remained unable to enforce its decisions over the military's opposition.

The military economy went through different phases. Nasser pushed for industrialisation of the country via the lead of the public sector, and military factories focused on steel and aluminium industrial products. Following the neoliberal policies and privatisation, the military expanded on component assembly projects like electronic and vehicle industries as well as food and drink industries, like the subsidies of bread and meat, 'Sinai' olive oil, and 'Queen' pasta as well as the supply of fuel by the Wataneyya chain of gas

stations (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 22). However, the military accepted this marginalised position within the dominant elite due to the initial economic profit, which did not reflect the hardship that the lower classes experienced. The Minister of Defence, Field Marshal and National Democratic Party (NDP) leader Abdel Al Halim Abu Ghazala, turned the NSPO into a proper business which provided services and products for civilian consumption (Abul-Magd, 2015, p. 56). The new role of the military as the economic provider of civilian goods allowed it to gain consensus from the lower classes and unskilled labour who were unfit to undertake a military career (Abul-Magd, 2015, p. 56). This strategy allowed the state to keep the consensus of the lower classes who attempted to access the military for the state's safety net, as a retired colonel commented:

The private sector could not absorb the large numbers of retiring officers. Instead, the military prepared them, offered them training and the means to manage various businesses that benefit the military as an institution and the country as a whole. As an army major in my late 30s at the time, I could not afford an apartment, except in shantytowns and under-developed areas. When Field Marshal Abu Ghazala [defence minister, 1982–1989] surveyed the officers about their residence needs, almost all of them responded that they could not afford decent housing. This is how the military began its residential construction activities. The military imported the best building materials and sold the officers apartments at reduced rates. It was the only way for us to lead a dignified life, both while in service and after, and be able to find a place in which to get married and start a family. (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 21)

However, while the military made an effort to keep the consent of the lower classes, it was losing consent from the upper middle class. As Minister of Defence, Abu Ghazala stressed how the tenure of officers was lowering compared to the living standards of the upper middle class. The increasing social inequality was reflected in the failure of the military to recruit officers from the upper middle class (Kandil, 2012a, p. 182). The dissatisfaction and economic hardship of the military also emerged from a reduction of the military spending that was not in line with progressive inflation. In fact, the military budget dropped from 19.5% GDP in 1989 to 2.2% GDP in 2010 (Kandil, 2012a, p. 183).

4.1.4 Mubarak's 'upgrading' of crony capitalists and the 'downgrading' of the military

After Sadat's assassination his vice president – Hosni Mubarak – took power. Mubarak's initial plan was to continue the economic reform and regain a strong coercive grip on the country (Osman, 2013, p. 140; Ibrahim, 2015, p. 75). In this regard the transformation within the dominant bloc involved the 'upgrading' of the crony capitalists to political power due to the transformation of the economy; and the 'downgrading' of the military, not only because of the economic transformation but also due to the increasing competition with other forces within the security apparatus.

Between 1975 and 1985 the dis-integration of workers and the well-educated middle class from the state was mitigated by the massive migration of Egyptian workers to the oil-rich countries (Amin, 2009, p. 7), mostly in the Gulf (Joya, 2011, p. 370). In fact, the following two decades (1985–2004) were characterised by the decline of Egyptian migration due to the decline of oil prices and the reduction of earnings from the Suez Canal as well as remittance from Egyptian migrants (Amin, 2009, p. 7; Joya, 2011, p. 370; Hanieh, 2014, p. 41). The bureaucratic apparatus which used to be the pivotal state apparatus to integrate the educated middle class and unskilled workers turned into an ineffective institution which prevented economic development due to pervasive bribery (Ibrahim, 2015, p. 75).

Mubarak revised the neoliberal reforms in two main areas: agrarian reform and reductions of the public sector. Law 96 of 1992 granted landowners the power to evict farmers, who were forced to migrate abroad or to move to urbanised areas and rely on the informal economy, whereas the reduction of the public sector reversed the integration undertaken under Nasser – where well-educated youth could seek secure employment within state institutions or state-owned enterprises. Law 203 of 1991 authorised the privatisation of state-owned companies. By 1999, 137 out of 314 state companies were sold, and by 2004 the privatisation had a further push under Ahmed Nazif's government to 200 out of 314 (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, pp. 48–51; Hanieh, 2014, p. 41).

In the 1990s, in return for its support in the First Gulf War, Egypt benefited from debt relief from the Western powers, arranged by the IMF with the imposition of neoliberal reforms such as support for the private sector and privatisation of state-owned companies. The privatisation transformed the managed and related profits of public resources, placing them in the hands of a small circle of crony capitalists allied with the NDP. This alliance allowed crony capitalists to play a role in policy making, and at the same time the state promoted the interests of a few at the expense of the entire community (Joya, 2011, p. 370).

In the 2000s, the more aggressive neoliberal policies of Ahmed Nazif's government and the grooming of Gamal Mubarak to the presidency transformed the crony capitalists from an allied force to a dominant force which entered into collision with the military. In fact, the rise of Gamal Mubarak posed challenges to military interests. First of all, Gamal was not perceived as 'one of them', not only because he was not an officer but also because he did not even serve in the military. Instead, he was sent to London to work at the Bank of America and then helped found and managed a private company. In 1995, at the young age of 22, he was recalled to Egypt and in 2000 joined the NDP which gave him the leadership of the Policies Secretariat of the party – a board of liberal economists and business people – which was known sarcastically as 'Gamal's Cabinet' (Frisch, 2013, p. 187). Those were alarming signals for the military which had already seen Bashar Al Assad inherit the Syrian presidency after the death of his father Hafez (Bou Nassif, 2012, pp. 18, 21).

In order to pre-empt the hostile reaction of the military towards the grooming of Gamal, Mubarak gave a generous economic concession to the military. In fact, the project of developing infrastructure – like telecommunications and construction – allowed the military to be involved in projects like the Ain Sokhna highways in 2004. In addition, Egyptian land which is not owned by industries, investors or government is by default owned by the military (International Crisis Group, 2012, pp. 21–22). The military acquired Semaf, a state-owned railway factory, via the Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI); and in 2005 a steel factory in Qaliubiyya was bought by the Ministry of Military Production

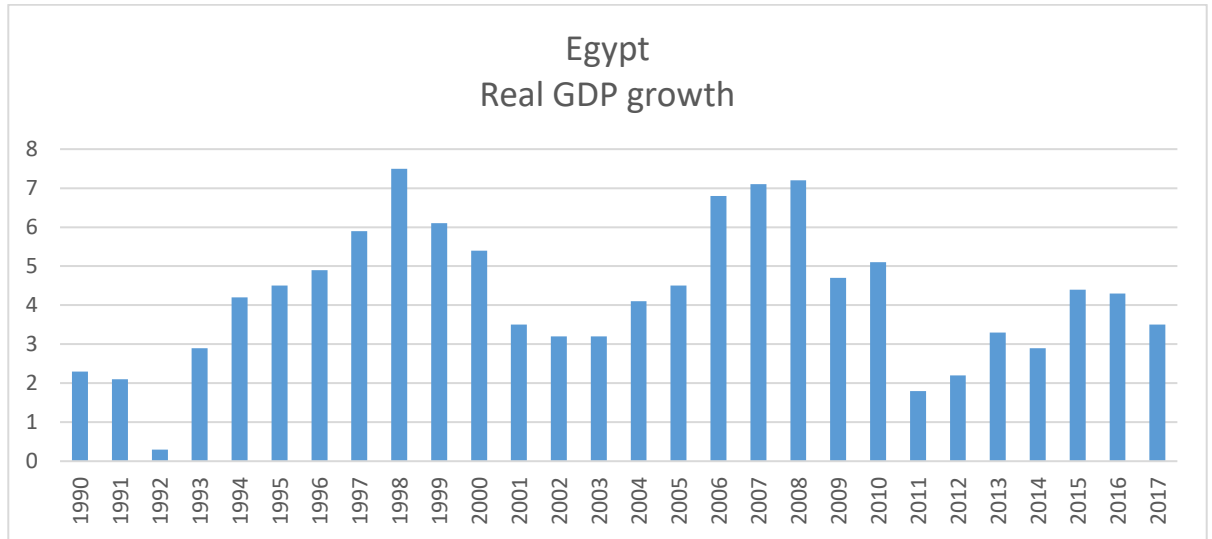
(MoMP) (Abul-Magd, 2012, 2015). In 2009, the civil production of the military was worth 1.8 billion LE, while the military production was lower at 10 million LE (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 22).

Despite the coup-proof strategy attempted by Mubarak, who appointed retired officers in all branches of bureaucracy (Abul-Magd, 2015), the period 2004–2010 was characterised by aggressive neoliberal reforms which consolidated the crony business people as the dominant force. Indeed, the number of MPs who were business people increased from 8 to 150 in a decade (in three electoral turnouts 1995, 2000 and 2005). Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif (2004–2011) became a symbol of this bond between the ruling NDP and the crony capitalists. In fact, during his premiership, Nazif's government was nicknamed 'the business cabinet'; this government was composed of business people who controlled vast parts of the Egyptian economy: Rashid Mohamed Rashid – as Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry – is owner of FineFoods, the main food company in Egypt, and senior executive of the Unilever group in Egypt; Ahmed Al-Maghraby became Minister of Housing as owner of a real estate company and the Mansour and Maghraby Group investment company; Mohamed Mansour from the Mansour group, division of General Motors and Chevrolet in Egypt, became Minister of Transportation; and Yousef Boutros Ghali, senior economist of the IMF, became Minister of Finance.

In addition, a new Ministry of Investment was established and was led by Mohamed Mohieldin with the goal of privatising; as result the ministry privatised 59 public companies in 2005–2006 with the total value of \$2.6 billion, and last but not least Ahmed Ezz – steel tycoon – became Head of the Economic Committee of the Parliament (Joya, 2011, p. 370; Abdelrahman, 2015, pp. 7–8). The effects of the transformation of economic relations did not emerge as an economic crisis per se, since the performance of the Egyptian economy was actually improving; however, the redistribution of the increasing wealth was denied, exacerbating existing issues of inequality. In mid-2004, the reforms launched by Ahmed Nazif's government allowed the expansion of finance, reducing investment regulation, lowering tariffs and privatising state-

owned enterprises (Khan and Miller, 2016, p. 2). The result of such reforms determined growth from 4.5% in 2005 to 7.2% in 2008 (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Egypt's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth



Source: http://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP_RPCH@WEO/EGY

Egypt continued to grow despite the recession caused by the global financial crisis in September 2008. Despite the constant growth between 2005 and 2010, such benefits remained in the hands of few people and the structural economic and political issues affecting the country – like youth unemployment, crony capitalism, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient bureaucracy, and a widening wealth gap between rich and poor – remained untouched (Khan and Miller, 2016, p. 2). This inevitably led to the dis-integration of workers, farmers and the middle class from the state.

The devaluation of 2002 and the increased revenues from gas allowed the Egyptian economy to grow fast and steadily after 2003. The global financial crisis of 2008 reduced revenue in all key sectors (remittance, tourism, Suez Canal revenue, gas export and Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)) (Springborg, 2011a, pp. 91–92). Before the uprising, Egyptian GDP grew steadily by 6% after 2005, making Egypt the 26th largest economy in the world by 2010. Nevertheless, such growth was not equally distributed and half of the population was still below the poverty line. At the same time, the unemployment rate of 15% in 2010 did not account for underemployment and

exploitation. The situation was exacerbated by inflation, especially for basic goods (MacQueen, 2012, pp. 17–18).

The expansion of the military economy highlights how military control shifted from the direct control of political society to the indirect control of civil society. This process went in the opposite direction to the participation of the business people within political society who nevertheless failed to integrate the subaltern forces within the state. However, the military were not marginalised only in the economic terrain; further marginalisation derived from the competition over coercion with other security. On the other hand, the new emerging dominant crony capitalists force ensured that the means of coercion were dispersed among different apparatuses; in fact, on the eve of the uprising the Ministry of Interior – rather than the Ministry of Defence – was in charge of protecting the business elite (Abdelrahman, 2017, pp. 186–187).

Table 2: Security apparatus

President (above all branches and coordinator)		
Ministry of Defence		Ministry of Interior
Military – SCAF		General investigation police
Military intelligence	General Intelligence Service (GIS)	State Security Investigations Service (SSI) Transformed into National Security Agency Transformed into Homeland Security (police intelligence)
Military police		Central security forces (police riot)
Paratroopers – mazalat		
Commando forces – saaqa		
	Grey zone	
Private security companies	Vigilantism	Baltagiya

Adapted from: Amnesty International, 2012b, pp. 6–7, 2012a, pp. 1–4

Table 2 shows the division among the coercive forces in Egypt. Despite the institutionalised armed forces' accountability to the president there is an ongoing tension between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence, which protect different interests. Finally, the presence of a grey zone in which non-state actors can develop their own coercion highlights the lack of integral state.

The powers of the State Security Investigations Service (SSI) were reinforced by the emergency law issued in 1981 in response to Sadat's assassination, although it was meant to be in place only during 'exceptional circumstances threatening the stability of security and order in the country' (Tadros, 2011, p. 83). The emergency law as well as the SSI remained in place until the uprising (Tadros, 2011, p. 83; Amnesty International, 2012a, p. 12). The emergency law allowed the SSI to justify arrest to protect national security. Until the uprising the Mukhabarat, the external intelligence agency, and the SSI, for internal security, were the two most relevant state coercive apparatuses, in competition with each other and held accountable to the president (Tadros, 2011, p. 83). At the same time, the other security apparatuses had economic appetites, like the General Intelligence Service (GIS) whom the military had to compete with. In fact, Omar Suleiman, Head of the GIS, negotiated the price of the natural gas to export to Israel instead of officials like the Prime Minister or the Minister of Petroleum (Abdelrahman, 2015, p. 22).

Finally, Mubarak moved a further distance from Nasser than did Sadat. He allowed a multi-party system, a tolerable opposition and more freedom of speech, picturing a more concrete road to democracy (Hatina, 2004). In addition, Mubarak's economic reforms reversed Nasserist policies; he started privatisation and incentives to attract foreign investments, and launched a new agrarian reform (Hatina, 2004). Mubarak's supporters perceived his regime as the third stage of the 1952 revolution, where finally systemic reforms like the reinforcement of the judiciary and legislative powers, free press and new parties gave the feeling that Egypt was on the road to democracy (Hatina, 2004). The poorest sectors of society, like workers and peasants, were the most affected by privatisation of the public sector. From this perspective Hatina's words seem prophetic, because he observed that 'the ethos of social justice nurtured by Nasserism cast a threatening shadow over Mubarak's regime' (Hatina, 2004, p. 116). The tension between the crony capitalists and the military remained latent until the 2011 uprising when it emerged because various groups of the subaltern forces turned from passivity to activity.

4.2 The subaltern forces: From passivity to activity

As Gramsci explained, no matter how fragile the unity of dominant forces, unless subaltern forces turn from passivity to activity the hegemony of the dominant bloc remains in place and the crisis continues to exist but remains latent. In the Egyptian cases, the transformation from passivity to activity by the subaltern forces happened at different moments for different subaltern groups which used the war of position and war of manoeuvre in their counter-hegemonic effort. These strategies were not always coordinated; in fact, the success of the 2011 uprising was due to the coordination of strategies by the Muslim Brotherhood's war of position and the revolutionary movements' war of manoeuvre.

Once the Muslim Brotherhood and the revolutionary movements failed to integrate each other's strategies, the revolutionary process turned towards the counter-revolution. Indeed, the unity of the subaltern forces was often episodic, manifesting the intrinsic lack of counter-hegemonic character and therefore their failure to escape the subaltern position. Without the autonomy created by the dis-integration of subaltern forces from the state, the activism of the subalterns would have not been possible. Precisely because of the dis-integration of the state and the increased autonomy within the civil society, the subaltern had room to develop appropriate organisation, leadership and autonomy as addressed by Gramsci. As discussed in Chapter Three, organisation, leadership and autonomy are three criteria that allow us to understand how advanced a subaltern force is.

4.2.1 The Muslim Brotherhood's war of position

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) was founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna; the organisation's aim was to restore the moral and social renewal of the country based on Islamic values. The MB considered Western influence in the country to be the reason for its moral degradation (Wickham, 2013, pp. 22, 26). For this reason, the MB welcomed the Free Officers' coup in 1952; however,

entering a power struggle with the military resulted in the MB becoming the target of Nasserite state repression via torture and exile. The state repression marked the internal division of the MB between conservatives, who advocated the ideological reform of society through the implementation of Islamic values in every aspect of life, and radicals, who called for violence (Kennedy, 2017, p. 41). On the one hand, the radicalisation of the movement via Qutb's ideological work was in fact considered a response to state repression (Wickham, 2013, pp. 27–28; Kennedy, 2017, pp. 35–36); on the other hand, the brutal repression under Nasser forced the conservative MB to abandon its violent confrontational strategies (Wickham, 2013, p. 30). This split highlights how the MB started to separate the underground war – which remains a prerogative of radical Islamist groups – and the war of position, which started once the dis-integration of the state allowed the MB to conquer autonomy within civil society.

Indeed, the MB's war of position started with the opportunities generated by Sadat's 'de-Nasserisation' via the corrective revolution. In fact, to counterbalance the Nasserists and socialists, Sadat released the MB from prison and allowed the return of its exiles – especially from the Gulf. His strategy was based on a self-portrait of believer-presidents appealing to religious feelings. To counterbalance the left, the MB was allowed to publish its magazine to explain its ideological stand to its followers and to the broader audience (Wickham, 2013, pp. 29–30). Nevertheless, the Brotherhood was excluded from political participation because religious parties were banned. In this way the MB was allowed to keep publishing and lobbying but was not allowed formal access to politics (Wickham, 2013, pp. 30–31).

In 1976, the MB managed to win six seats in parliament as independent, and it attempted to influence the application of sharia law. Despite the fact that Sadat allowed the MB to be part of the parliamentary committee to discuss Islam, its actions remained ineffective because Sadat imposed his own decision over the MB's proposals (Hamzawy and Brown, 2010, pp. 5–6; Wickham, 2013, pp. 31–32). This highlights how the MB's access to parliament did not turn it into a dominant force; nevertheless, it allowed the group to exploit

its organisation to increase consent within civil society. By the late 1970s the contrast between the MB and Sadat started to emerge. The MB was dissatisfied with the *infitah* policy and the peace treaty with Israel because the former increased social inequality while the latter clashed ideologically with solidarity towards the Palestinian cause. The open opposition of the MB to the peace treaty was met with repression by Sadat (Wickham, 2013, pp. 32–33). The fact that even the non-violent confrontation of the MB was met with repression forced the MB to focus its war of position towards civil society institutions more broadly.

The low profile that the MB had during the initial few years of Mubarak's presidency allowed it to take control of civil society institutions; in fact, the MB was filling the void left by the state in providing social services to the population, like mosques, cultural organisations, healthcare facilities, Islamic banking, manufacturing activities, and publishers (Wickham, 2002, p. 97; Al-Anani, 2015, p. 530; Ranko, 2015, p. 86). Building on its war of position allowed the MB to attempt again to infiltrate political society. Although the election of 1984 was less corrupt, the 8% electoral threshold and the prohibition of establishing religious parties posed considerable restrictions on the MB in accessing parliament. For this reason, the MB reached an agreement with the Wafd party to access parliamentary politics (Ranko, 2015, pp. 77, 82). The Wafd would provide the institutional channel – as a recognised party – while the MB would provide a popular base (El-Ghobashy, 2005). This allowed the Wafd to gain 58 seats in parliament, eight of which were given to the MB – still a very small number considering that the Wafd had limited support (Wickham, 2013, p. 47).

The MB's war of position, started with service provision to the lower classes, expanded to reach the consent of the middle class. In fact, the MB infiltrated the professional syndicates in 1983, starting with doctors, engineers, lawyers and scientists; by 1987 it took control of the engineering syndicate, improving the services it provided for its members, and established the MB's presence in university campuses by becoming active in the student unions as well (Ranko, 2015, pp. 84–85). The activism within professional syndicates allowed the MB

to get the consent of another portion of civil society, and the growing consent that the MB gathered emerged in its more significant electoral victory in 1987. In fact, the MB's coalition with Labour and the Liberal party (the Islamic Alliance) in 1987 stressed the larger majority the MB was able to capitalise on due to the consent it was building. In comparison with the 1984 election when the Wafd won 58 seats in coalition with the MB, in 1987 the Islamic Alliance won 56 seats, 17% – the MB took 38 seats out of the 56 – while the Wafd won only 35 seats, 10.9%. This highlighted the considerable weight that the MB had in the previous election in coalition with the Wafd. In 1987, the MB became the first opposition force in parliament (Wickham, 2013, p. 47; Ranko, 2015, pp. 115–116).

Threatened by the strength of the MB's war of position, In the 1990s the state cracked down on the MB's social activities; the MB responded by boycotting the elections to discredit the regime (Al-Anani, 2015, p. 530). The state started to limit civil society space for the MB by restricting participation in syndicate and student union elections. Media censorship increased after 1995, and in 1999 NGOs' activities were further restricted (Ranko, 2015, pp. 119–120, p. 142). This was accompanied by coercive state repression; in fact, between 1992 and 1997 around 1,000 civilians were tried in military court (Kennedy, 2017, p. 137). As a result, the MB boycotted elections in the 1990s, stressing its strength within civil society: indeed, the MB had managed to gain control of important syndicates like medicine, engineering and law (Ranko, 2015, p. 116).

In this way, the war of position of the MB allowed it to mutually exploit its access to parliament and to civil society institutions. In fact, in the 1980s the increasing charity work with the lower classes allowed it to gather consensus to gain a political platform which was further amplified when the group achieved control of the professional syndicates. Ultimately this marked the stronger electoral victory of the MB that helped to discredit the façade of opening elections up to competition (El-Ghobashy, 2005, p. 376; Wickham, 2013, p. 57).

As many scholars have addressed, the war of position of the MB allowed it to gain a significant electoral victory in 2011 parliamentary and 2012 presidential elections (Al-Awadi, 2013; Wickham, 2013; Al-Anani, 2015; Ranko, 2015). However, the success of the 2011 uprising was not the result of the MB's war of position alone. The MB's war of position was combined with the war of manoeuvre of the growing revolutionary movement in the 2000s. The next section discusses how the war of manoeuvre and the position of different subaltern forces were able to manifest the hegemonic crisis of an expanding and conflicting dominant bloc that no longer had an allied force with which to connect with civil society.

4.2.2 War of manoeuvre: Kefaya, April 6 and workers

As discussed in Chapter Three, the war of manoeuvre is the direct confrontation of the state via protests, strikes, civil disobedience, demonstrations, occupation, marches etc., whereas the war of position aims to reach significant positions in political and civil society to counter the hegemony of the dominant force. As explained in the previous section, the MB exploited pockets of autonomy within civil society which were created by the dis-integration of the state. In this way, via the war of position within civil society institutions and activities, the MB gained consent that allowed it to access political society. However, this strategy had limited results in opposing the Mubarak regime without the war of manoeuvre started in the 2000s by various activists.

The war of manoeuvre generated by the long-lasting activism of various subaltern forces was characterised by four main characteristics (Shehata, 2012). The first phase that triggered the war of manoeuvre was the development of activism targeting external issues, like the Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000 and the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The second phase of the war of manoeuvre laid the foundations to link with the war of position because it confronted the political superstructure; in fact, in this phase the mobilisation around Kefaya targeted the state directly with measures like constitutional reforms and elections. The third phase of the war of manoeuvre shifted its aim

to the economic structure, thanks to the mobilisation of workers' movements towards their economic struggles. Finally, the last phase of the war of manoeuvre attempted to join political and economic struggles with the formation of the April 6 Movement (Shehata, 2012).

The start of the war of manoeuvre: External issues bring internal episodic unity

The hegemonic crisis of 25th January 2011 manifested when revolutionary forces, strengthened by social mobilisation that started in the 2000s, joined with the Egyptian Popular Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada (EPCSPI), which gathered a broad range of activists from seculars and leftists to Islamists and representatives of syndicates and unions (Shehata, 2010, p. 68; Abdelrahman, 2015, pp. 31–33). The first phase of the war of manoeuvre was characterised by the existence of an external enemy that brought episodic unity among various fragmented groups. The EPCSPI developed between 2000 and 2003; this gathered different episodic movements like the Anti-Globalisation Egyptian Group (AGEG), the 20th of March Movement for Change, and the Defence Committee for Labour Rights. The demonstrations in solidarity with the Second Palestinian Intifada were generated from the mobilisation of students in different university campuses across the country. These activities did not spread because security apparatus contained them within the university premises (Shehata, 2010, p. 69; Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, pp. 103–104).

The leaders of these movements later formed Kefaya: Kamal Khalil, Aida Seif Al-Dawla and Hamdeen Sabbahi, for example. The Second Palestinian Intifada provided a cultural framing to revive the resistance and linked the struggle to the local level (El-Mahdi, 2009, pp. 1024–1025). 20th–21st March 2003 marked another episodic founding moment of the war of manoeuvre: when Egyptian activists called for a demonstration against the US invasion in Iraq. This triggered a new wave of protests which did not remain confined to university spaces. In fact the protests moved to important urban spaces in Cairo, including Tahrir Square (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, p. 104). This

event was claimed to have the participation of 40,000 people, the biggest protest since the bread riots in 1977 (El-Mahdi, 2009; Shehata, 2012). Even at the early state of this episode of unity, the MB youth organised protests with Nasserist and socialist youth movements against the Iraqi invasion (Wickham, 2013, p. 156). Arguably the impressive number of protesters reflected the anti-American sentiment rather than being the expression of an emerging counter-hegemonic formation, precisely because during the protests and later in April 2003 the activists were brutally suppressed by the coercive apparatus, and demonstrations were stopped by police violence, legal prosecution, and imprisonment (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1026). The conclusion of this first episodic moment of unity had the merit of bringing close together different elements of the subaltern forces; at this stage they failed to develop any sort of subaltern unity beyond the episodic unity against an external enemy. This initial phase – similarly to the second phase – stresses the *reactive* rather than *proactive* character of the subaltern forces. Nevertheless, in Gramscian terms, this was necessary to gather awareness of their presence against the system. This awareness was further developed. In the second phase, Kefaya developed the war of manoeuvre to another level: first it shifted the issues from international affairs to domestic issues, and second it shifted from a mere act of solidarity and condemnation of foreign interference to proper concrete demands against the state.

Kefaya: the war of manoeuvre against the political structure

A further and more sophisticated sign of transformation of the subaltern bloc from passivity to activity was the formation of the Egyptian Movement for Change, also known as Kefaya, which targeted specifically the emerging of the crony capitalists in control of the NDP, manifested by Gamal Mubarak's rise to power (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1012). Contrary to the very basic episodic pro-Palestinian and anti-US formation in the early 2000s, Kefaya became a uniting force of the subaltern bloc due to the composition of its founders; in fact, this new force embraced all sorts of ideological views including those of liberals, nationalists, leftists and Islamists, with a cross-generational base with

both veterans and inexperienced activists (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1013). What kept the factions of Kefaya together was the least-common-denominator goal; indeed, the aim of the group was to reform rather than control the state. In contrast to the MB, Kefaya adopted a confrontational strategy, and it became the first cross-ideological movement since 1984 (Clarke, 2011).

In this regard, Kefaya's manifesto consciously avoided clear political statements; instead, it was focused on the improvement of civil and human rights (Clarke, 2011, pp. 406–407). The core of Kefaya's committee was composed of political forces not officially recognised by the state except the liberal Al-Ghad party, which was a spin-off from the Wafd party; other forces were the Marxist Revolutionary Socialists, the Nasserist Karama Party, and Islamist forces like the spin-off Wasat and Labour Party (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1019; Clarke, 2011). Although members of other opposition parties were part of Kefaya on an individual basis, other official parties like Al-Tagammu, Al-Wafd and the Nasserist party did not join Kefaya and kept their distance from the movement (Shorbagy, 2007; Clarke, 2011). In this regard, the MB youth asked the Guidance Bureau for permission to participate under the name of the Brotherhood Youth, but the leadership declined, allowing the youth to participate on an individual basis only while the organisation remained neutral (Wickham, 2013, p. 160).

In this way, the MB youth were crucial to connect the Brotherhood with other revolutionary movements on the ground (Wickham, 2013, p. 162). This connection turned out to be useful when the US pressured Mubarak to liberalise elections in 2005. It allowed the MB to build on the first phase of the war of manoeuvre that the MB youth had undertaken with the other revolutionary movements. As a result, in 2005 the MB reached 88 (20%) seats in parliament, which is an impressive result considering that the MB contested only for one-third of the parliamentary seats (Shehata, 2010, p. 52; Al-Anani, 2015, p. 530; Ranko, 2015, pp. 157–160). This promising result of the joint strategies of the war of manoeuvre and the war of position provoked the reaction of the state which manifested in a major crackdown on the MB and

Kefaya, with new waves of arrests in 2006, 2007, and 2010 (Al-Anani, 2015, p. 530; Ranko, 2015, pp. 163–165).

The efforts of Kefaya's mobilisation were focused on direct confrontation with the superstructural political institutions; in fact, Kefaya engaged in political demands like 'no re-election, no to a new mandate, and no inheritance of the presidency' (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008, p. 8; Abdelrahman, 2015, pp. 36–37). Kefaya focused on three main institutional changes within political society: a constitutional referendum in May 2005; the presidential election in September 2005; and parliamentary elections in November 2005 (Clarke, 2011). The strength of Kefaya emerged in targeting the regime in the person of Mubarak, which created a specific goal for the movement – as a Kefaya activist stated, 'We were not working against the police or for economic reasons. We were aiming just to remove Hosni Mubarak.' (Medhat Fayed quote in Kennedy, 2017, p. 31) However, its weakness was its inability to trigger a war of position within civil society. In fact, it was not able 'to rebuild democratic institutions in villages and cities, trade unions, labour unions, and local assemblies' (Mohamed Sayed Said quote in Oweidat *et al.*, 2008, p. 39).

Kefaya succeeded in increasing awareness across different sectors of society, from well-educated unemployed youth to farmers, from professionals such as engineers, doctors and journalists to judges (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008). This success came from the use of a specific strategy to mobilise people. Primarily it documented corruption and brutality through recording and monitoring abuse, using blogs to share evidence and appealing to prominent media (such as Al Jazeera, BBC and CNN) to reach the international community (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008).

Kefaya's short life was determined by several factors. First of all, it was unable to react to state repression, as it did not attempt to produce an alternative discourse to the state propaganda. Indeed, the regime repressed the movement by arresting, beating and torturing activists, as well as conducting street aggression. The immediate result of these repressive strategies was the decrease of numbers attending Kefaya protests (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008). In addition, the government amended the constitution to ensure

it could continue to violate human rights like personal freedoms without the need to call a state of emergency (Human Rights Watch, 2008; Oweidat *et al.*, 2008, p. 30). In conjunction with this repressive state strategy, the state-controlled media used propaganda against the movement. Anti-democratic discourses were spread by a pro-regime elite that portrayed democracy as a threat to stability and unity (Oweidat *et al.* 2008, p. 37). The different ideological components of Kefaya had to agree on the terms of their cooperation, but the cooperation did not mean these forces were willing to reconcile or reconsider their own goals. In fact, secular and Islamist activists contrasted over the role of religion (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008; Abdelrahman, 2015, p. 92). Last, but not least, Kefaya faced financial challenges. It was supported by individual donations that ultimately were insufficient (Oweidat *et al.*, 2008).

Although Kefaya dissolved due to internal and external factors, the fact that its actions strengthened the cohesion of various social forces by attempting to formalise their demands should not be underestimated. Indeed 'Kefays's boldness and activism' inspired the formation of other movements to pressure for reforms (Shehata, 2010, p. 69). In this regard, Kefaya met the three components needed to be classified as a leading force - confrontational *lead*, *togetherness*, and *achievement*. In fact it was confrontational and set a specific goal – the 'no re-election' and 'no inheritance of the presidency' which resulted in the removal of Mubarak. To some extent it could be argued that Kefaya was also able to gather a wide range of political positions; this was the base for further mobilisations that were set by April 6.

April 6 and the war of manoeuvre against economic structure

Kefaya dissolved at the peak of the workers' mobilisation. This was a missed opportunity to join political and economic struggles. The strike of 24,000 workers in at Misr Spinning and Weaving Company in Mahalla Al-Kubra in December 2006 boosted the war of manoeuvre because it introduced new forms of collective action. In fact, the Mahalla strike was the only strike that ended with negotiation instead of brutal repression (Alexander and

Bassiouny, 2014, pp. 102–103). This increased the frequency of protests and the number of participants. By the end of 2009, the war of manoeuvre of the workers' movement was marked by 1.7 million workers becoming involved in strike action (El-Mahdi, 2011, pp. 387–388). This phenomenon was not limited to specific geographical areas, but covered multiple sites, as well as spilling over into other sectors (Alexander and Bassiouny, 2014, pp. 106–107). The spillover of the activism, not only within the textile sector but also to other sectors like public transport, cement, and tax collecting, reflected the growth of class consciousness (El-Mahdi, 2011, p. 393). The workers' movement in Mahalla not only pushed for economic demands but turned them into political actions like resignation from the state-controlled textile workers' union in March 2007 and demanding the resignation of corrupt leaders of the union (El-Mahdi, 2011, p. 392).

A similar pattern, but still distant from the workers' movement, was the development of professional associations like democratic engineers who unionised with the aim of establishing an engineering syndicate independent from state control, similar to the March 9th Group for Academic Freedom which aimed to ensure academic freedom from regime control over students' union elections, appointing academics and approval of guest lectures (Abdelrahman, 2012, p. 616). The war of manoeuvre of the workers was also supported by young MB members with the approval of the leadership, which remained distant (Wickham, 2013, p. 157; Ranko, 2015, pp. 170–171).

The disappearance of Kefaya left a void filled by the newest generation of activists, the very same ones who engaged in politics for the first time in the early 2000s, and who with Kefaya had had their first organised political experience. The April 6 Movement aimed to bridge the war of manoeuvre over structural political demands started by Kefaya and the war of manoeuvre of workers over economic struggles. The movement was founded by a group of young activists to express solidarity with the workers' strike of Mahalla Al-Kurba on 6th April 2008. These activists were affiliated to Al-Ghad and Labour parties, including Esraa Abdel Fattah, member of Al-Ghad, and Ahmed Maher, former head of Al-Ghad's youth committee (Shehata, 2012; Hafez, 2013;

Durac, 2015, pp. 246–247). Maher became the first general coordinator of the movement, which adopted a structure similar to Kefaya's organisation, with the election of the general coordinator, sub-coordinators, and a number of committees (Shehata, 2012). The main focus of the group was mostly economic demands such as addressing unemployment and slowing down the rising price of primary goods, as well as increasing the minimum wage (Shehata, 2012, pp. 111–112).

Similarly to Kefaya, April 6 had direct confrontation with the regime; however, April 6 developed new tactics to allow the war of manoeuvre to still be confrontational, but protected from state repression. In fact, with the use of social media April 6 avoided street repression in favour of cyberspace's protection, and this allowed the movement to spread alternative discourses challenging the dominant propaganda (Shehata, 2012). For the first time, April 6 started an embryonic war of position. The movement grew mainly on the virtual network of Facebook, seemingly developing spontaneously around webpages, and it framed its actions by using non-violent activities like civil disobedience and by networking with other transnational social movements. April 6 turned its economic demands into a more formalised systemic demand, along with other movements supporting the candidacy and campaign of El-Baradei for the presidential election scheduled for late 2011, as an alternative to Hosni and Gamal Mubarak (Shehata, 2012). This stresses how an understanding of the war of manoeuvre as a variety of non-violent political action is complementary to the war of position and can facilitate its start.

However, the repression of regime surveillance ultimately limited the activists of the movement; given the limited space of manoeuvre that the regime left to any opposition movement, April 6 called for a protest on the same day as the public holiday of the armed forces (Frontline PBS, 2011). Finally, April 6, like Kefaya, was based on the loose common goal (Shehata, 2012). Nevertheless, it achieved reaching out to different elements of the subaltern forces – across social classes and ideologies, towards groups like workers, unemployed middle class, leftists and Islamists – to disrupt the balance with the dominant forces. This imbalance ultimately became manifested in January

2011. The chapter that follows addresses how the subaltern forces – the MB and the revolutionary movements – failed to unite the war of position and war of manoeuvre. This created the basis for the hegemonic crisis to turn away from a revolutionary outcome, and develop as a counter-revolution.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the transformation of the Egyptian state along with the agency of dominant allied and subaltern forces. Since Nasser, the Egyptian state progressively dis-integrated the subaltern social forces at a different level; contrary to other interpretations (Roccu, 2012; De Smet, 2016; Kennedy, 2017), Egypt did not undergo a passive revolution which implied structural transformations that culminated in the formation of an integral state. Rather, the constant dis-integration of the subaltern forces from the state determined the failure of this transformation and determined the manifestation of the crisis of hegemony. Kefaya as April 6 developed following the pattern discussed by Gramsci – organisation, leadership, and autonomy (see 3.1.3). In fact, Kefaya progressed from the formation of its own political demands within the old framework to the formation of a movement with the potential to become a proper political party, whereas April 6 progressed the development of subaltern autonomy. Nevertheless, the revolution failed because the phase of autonomy did not follow the pattern of ‘political formations that assert complete autonomy’ (Gramsci, 1996, p. 91) to the subaltern forces.

The latent crisis of hegemony was generated by the neoliberal system implemented by Sadat in the 1970s because it shifted the balance between dominant and subaltern forces, as well as within each bloc. The transformation from passivity to the activity of the subaltern forces was the result of structural changes due to the implementation of neoliberal policy which divided the subaltern forces since some groups like the MB gained from the liberalisation, while other like workers paid the price of austerity. Further complexity was added by a generational conflict between the 1970s generation and the youth that, similar to the workers, were affected by unemployment without being absorbed by the bureaucratic apparatus. The transformation from passivity to

activity went through four main phases that had different social actors as main protagonists and therefore became unable to establish any counter-hegemonic bloc. Neoliberalism was not a form of passive revolution because it dis-integrated the subaltern forces from the state allowing them to become active and capitalised on their autonomy to challenge the hegemony of the dominant force. Otherwise, if neoliberalism was a form of passive revolution, the presence of the crisis of hegemony would mark the failure of the passive revolution.

At the dominant level, relations of the dominant forces shifted due to controls over the mode both of production and coercion. In fact, if the military expanded within the civilian economy, that came at the cost of being relegated to the margin of power, especially when the military had to face limitations on the economy vis-à-vis the new emerging business elite, and of coercion, with the reinforcing of the police and intelligence as competing security apparatuses. 25th January was the manifestation of the crisis of hegemony generated by the dis-integration of the subaltern forces from the state and by the marginalisation of the dominant force who initially integrated the subaltern. The subaltern forces that demanded the fall of Mubarak targeted primarily the state; in such demands the military saw the opportunity to regain its dominant position by exploiting the grievances of the protesters but not fully meeting their demands. The next chapter will address the first phase post-2011, addressing the dominance of the SCAF and the fragmentation of subaltern forces, with the emerging of the MB as an allied force of the new dominant force. The dis-integration of the subaltern allowed them to exploit pockets of autonomy within the civil society. Outside the hegemony of the state the subaltern forces developed their autonomy and the fragile complementary leadership of Kefaya and 6 April allowed the crisis of hegemony to manifest. However, since the leading force of the subaltern was not the most advanced force of the subaltern, the crisis turned into morbid symptoms.

Chapter 5 Reshaping and shifting alliances

The previous chapter highlighted how the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis in Egypt was the result of the state dis-integration that started in the 1970s and allowed different social groups – the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), workers and youth movements – to exploit uncontrolled spaces within civil society to advance the war of position and the war of manoeuvre. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate how the interaction between the military, the MB, and the revolutionary forces determined the transformation of the Egyptian state and the crisis resolution. As discussed in Chapter Three, the hegemonic crisis can be resolved in various ways depending on the integration of the state and the development and control of subaltern forces of autonomy within civil society. The more the subaltern social groups are integrated within the state, the more likely it is that the dominant force will undertake passive revolution as a form of crisis resolution. At the opposite extreme, in the case of a non-integral state, the autonomy of subaltern forces within civil society would allow social groups to take down the non-integral state via a war of position, a war of manoeuvre and underground war. This would allow the hegemonic crisis to be resolved into a revolution. State integration and dis-integration should not be considered as a dummy variable. Instead, they are the extremes of a continuum that contains several potential outcomes. In other words, in the case of a semi-integral state the hegemonic crisis turns into what Gramsci called *morbid symptoms* – a middle-ground situation between two extremes of revolution and passive revolution. Gramsci defines morbid symptoms as a condition when the old system – a semi-integral state in crisis due to the lack of an allied force to connect with civil society – is dying, and the new order – because of a temporary unity that cannot be translated into concrete structural and superstructural transformation – cannot be born. In

other words, the state transforms due to the persistence of an old system that intertwines with some features of the new order.

This was the case in the aftermath of the Egyptian Uprising which ultimately shaped the counter-revolution. The promising revolutionary beginnings of the Egyptian Uprising – marked by the successful resignation of Mubarak and the possibility of political changes – soon drifted into forms of morbid symptoms, because the two main strategies – war of manoeuvre and war of position – that allowed the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis separated, and the two main actors – the MB and the revolutionary movements – that mastered these strategies continued their war of position and manoeuvre, but did not always coordinate. The unity of these strategies is crucial for the subaltern bloc to oppose the dominant force; in fact, only when the war of manoeuvre and the war of position were united did the MB and the revolutionary forces manage to push back the attempt of the military to further restrict the access of the political structure to revolutionary forces. In this regard, the military attempted to regain full control of the state by controlling the political and economic structure. In order to transform the semi-integral state, the dominant forces have to reconnect with civil society via an allied force. In this regard the military's priority in the immediate aftermath of Mubarak's resignation was to connect with civil society via the support of a suitable allied force.

This chapter investigates the relations between the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the MB and revolutionary movements that were involved in the transformation of the state, from the uprising triggered in 25th January 2011 to the presidential victory of the Islamist candidate Mohamed Morsi in June 2012. Drawing from the findings of the previous chapter, this chapter argues that the military exploited the manifestation of the crisis to force Mubarak to resign due to growing popular pressure, and this gave the opportunity to the military to turn from a marginalised position of the vanishing dominant bloc to a new emerging dominant (*classe dominante* in Gramsci's terms). In this regard, the semi-integral Egyptian state undertook transformation to reflect the dominance of the new force. In other words, in order to maintain its renewed dominance, the military needed to develop

hegemony over the state political superstructure and economic structure. The partial control of the Egyptian economy, as well as the existence of the informal economy, forced the dominant force to seek the support of intermediary forces. During this phase the military allied with the MB, since the Brotherhood controlled portions of society but was not in the position to become a counter-hegemonic force to challenge the dominance of the military; because the MB was the most advanced force, it was not the leading force (*dirigente* in Gramsci's terms) of the uprising. In fact, the MB focused on its own war of position to reach state institutions and kept its distance from the war of manoeuvre of street protests that targeted the SCAF and demanded the end of military rule.

5.1 The Egyptian military emerges as a dominant force

The hegemonic crisis in a semi-integral state allowed the confrontation of the dominant and subaltern blocs over the control of economic structure and political superstructure. Hegemony is exercised by consent and coercion. The war of manoeuvre and the underground war are strategies to oppose the coercive power of the dominant force, while the war of position serves as a strategy to build counter-hegemony consent.

The dominant forces attempted to use the existing structure of political consent via control of institutions and coercive apparatus to maintain their dominance. The clashes between a persisting dominant force and intermediary forces that operate in autonomous civil society determined the dynamics of the morbid symptoms. The contrasts between the old and new orders derive from the competition of the dominant and intermediary force over political institutions, control of coercion, and economic structure. The fact that the subaltern bloc separated its strategies enabled the military to control the political superstructure to contrast with the MB war of position, while the military contrasted with the war of manoeuvre of protesters and revolutionary movements on the terrain of coercion. Finally, the control of the economic structure represented the battlefield between the military's economic empire –

which needed to safeguard its privileges and at the same time be used to generate consent of the lower strata of society – and the MB – which attempted to develop the economic initiative of the private sectors to gather consent for economic development led by the MB within the private sector. Therefore the military as the new dominant force needed to secure hegemony in each of these areas.

5.1.1 Failed attempt of passive revolution

Many scholars quickly deemed that the transition period that followed the resignation of Mubarak withered as a form of counter-revolution or passive revolution. In fact, on the one hand, the assumption that the transition period after Mubarak was a '*conservative coup* aimed at preserving the old regime with the support of the Muslim Brotherhood' (Achcar, 2016, p. 105, emphasis in original) addresses the MB as 'Islamic fundamentalist', opposing the development of democracy. Addressing the MB as such, firstly, undermines the distance that the MB drew between the more radical violent movement and its renewed aim of democratic political reforms, such as electoral reforms and addressing corruption and police brutality instead of preaching the Islamisation of society (Kennedy, 2017, p. 33); secondly, it does not reflect on the fact that although constitutional reforms favoured the MB over poorly organised revolutionary movements, the victory of the MB in presidential and parliamentary elections was under free and fair elections. Thus Egyptian citizens for the first time experienced democratic elections. On the other hand, the argument that the transition period was a form of passive revolution due to the exclusion of subaltern forces which allowed the military and the MB to stage a 'counter-revolution in democratic form' (De Smet, 2016, p. 209) reduces the Muslim Brotherhood to a bourgeoisie force.

Although the MB is ideologically conservative, addressing it as a counter-revolutionary force because among the leadership there are business people that advocated the independence of the private sector disregards the relevance of work that the MB did within civil society in terms of welfare and

improving services for the members of professional syndicates that they controlled. In contrast, this section argues that if ever a passive revolution happened in Egypt it was short lived and undermined because of the very same reason that led the military to force Mubarak's resignation: the lead of the dominant bloc. The SCAF aimed to verify if it had the support of other forces. The SCAF was cautious in dealing with cronies. Before acting against them the SCAF needed to enlarge the support and reinforce the unity of the military, to buy the support of the other generals by ensuring that the transitional government appointed retired officers in the public sectors; at the same time, decree law 45 of 2011 granted immunity from prosecution in civil courts to officers accused of corruption (Abul-Magd, 2015, pp. 60–61, 2016, p. 32). Another attempt to keep the dominant bloc unified emerged from the fact that the SCAF had a relaxed and still-contained attitude towards Mubarak who was initially guaranteed freedom in Sharm el Sheikh, until the clashes of late June 2011 (Selim, 2015). On the same note, the SCAF, which previously allowed the NDP to keep dominant local councils, after these events dissolved all local councils through the State Council's Administrative Court order (Selim, 2015).

In order to confront the subaltern bloc, the military attempted to strengthen the perishing dominant force and retake the lead from it. Initially the SCAF attempted to gain the support of cronies, as the case of Rashid Mohamed Rashid, Minister of Trade and Industry, and Yousef Boutros Ghali, Minister of Finance. Rashid was a prominent businessman with links to multinational corporations. He was SCAF's first choice as prime minister after Mubarak's resignation. However, following Rashid's refusal of the premiership offer, he was immediately accused and convicted *in absentia*. Yousef Boutros Ghali, and many other businessmen linked to the NDP, shared a similar destiny; they were convicted in June 2011 (Springborg, 2011a, p. 97). This strategy was directly to galvanise the masses and boost the military's popularity, and at the same time intimidate crony capitalists close to Mubarak (Springborg, 2011a, p. 98). A similar strategy involved the arrest of businessmen like Ahmed Ezz and Ibrahim Sulayman; the SCAF ensured the protection of their interests to

reduce the control of the crony capitalists over the economic structure. At the same time a direct attack on the crony capitalists – who were the main target of the protests' anger – was the attempt from the military to gather protesters' consent. In fact, other business people close to the military were allowed to carry on with their business (Marshall and Stacher, 2012). Arguably, the SCAF initially attempted to create an alliance with the cronies, no longer now as the leader of the dominant bloc. Since the military's attempt to unite the dominant bloc failed, in order to pre-empt further convergence between the war of manoeuvre of revolutionary movements and the war of position of the MB, the military had to seek a way to control a different part of civil society. In this way the cooperation between the military as a dominant force and the MB as an allied force served this purpose and it shaped the transformation of the state because it allowed the MB to access political society.

The next section addresses the military's need to recruit an intermediary force. Since the tentative passive revolution of the military failed, they needed to neuter the war of position and the war of manoeuvre of the subaltern force.

5.1.2 Contrasting war of manoeuvre

The manifestation of the hegemonic crisis also requires specific analysis of the use of coercion and its symbolic representation. The military had to face the impetus of the unorganised youth movement's war of manoeuvre, an ambiguous war of position of the MB which moderated over time but never completely abandoned its aim of reaching power (Stein, 2012; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, pp. 105–106). The call for protests on the day of the 25th January was chosen for its symbolic meaning. In fact, 25th January was declared National Police Day in 2009, to commemorate the effort of the police against the British occupation in 1952 in Ismailia (Ismail, 2012, p. 435). Anger towards police brutality built up for years due to the abuses that police perpetrated under the emergency law, involving arbitrary arrests, disappearances, torture and death in custody. Emblematic remains the case of Khaled Said, a young activist of Alexandria, who was beaten to death for

uploading a video on YouTube testifying to police brutality in June 2010. His death became the symbol of police brutality and the webpage 'We are all Khaled Said' reflected the dissatisfaction of Egyptian youth (Abdelrahman, 2015, pp. 46–47). The second call for protest was on Friday 28th January 2011 – the 'Friday of anger' – which symbolised the police as the target of the protesters' anger (Ketchley, 2017a, pp. 27–28).

As discussed in Chapter Four, the military was slowly sidelined in favour of crony capitalists within the NDP and other competitive security apparatuses. For this reason, the military saw in the 25th January uprising the chance to regain the dominance of the country. When the uprising seemed to gain momentum, the military saw the opportunity to regain power against the crony capitalists and police (Kandil, 2012a, pp. 228–229). To disassociate from the cronies and police and to gain the support of protesters the military portrayed themselves as supporters of the 'people'; allegedly the military Minister of Defence ordered troops to not fire (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 1). Arguably to avoid the defection of ranks who potentially had access to weapons, the military declared it would not have used force against protesters. In addition to the threats on the borders with Gaza, Sudan and Libya, the withdrawal of the police from the street forced the military to deal with domestic security, performing daily policing duties like dealing with in sit-ins and strikes including those at military factories that paralysed the economy as well (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 20).

The coercion of the military was further challenged by the patchy presence of the *baltagiya* which reinforced the sense of insecurity and danger within the country. This ongoing feeling of insecurity did not only affect Egyptian everyday life, but it also jeopardised the state economic structure, making difficult the recovery of economic activities such as tourism, production and export (Springborg, 2011a, p. 97). In this way, the military had to contrast with the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movement in order to move on with the transformation of the economic structure. In this regard, the military reaction to the war of manoeuvre was demeaning to the dignity of protesters and was accompanied by divisive rhetoric.

The initial phase of the Egyptian Uprising, namely the 18 days between the start of the protests on 25th of January – the police day – and the resignation of Mubarak on 11th February, was considered relatively peaceful compared to countries like Libya, Syria and Yemen, where there were violent conflicts. Nevertheless, 840 people were killed and over 6,000 were injured by thugs and security forces, and other activists were detained and tortured or subjected to disappearance – human rights activists, journalists, bloggers and doctors were the first targets of this repression (Amnesty International, 2012c, pp. 9–12). This reflects the increasing control of direct repression by the military which ensured the same coercive pressure over society by keeping emergency law, and kept charging civilians before military courts (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 2).

The military opposed the war of manoeuvre of the protesters easily since the protesters did not undertake any form of underground war to escalate and properly contrast the coercion of the military. The protesters failed to challenge the military and, paradoxically, fraternised with the military; on the one hand to avoid repression, on the other to attempt to divide the security apparatuses (Ketchley, 2017a, pp. 46–77). In order to keep its dominant position in a semi-integral state the military had to use its hegemony – as consent and coercion – to reintegrate different social forces within the state. This means that the military had to contrast both the war of position and war of manoeuvre as well as recreating the economic condition to reintegrate the subalterns within the state.

In March 2011 the military police captured protesters in Tahrir Square and subsequently tortured them at the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities by beating and whipping them and giving them electric shocks. Protesters were interrogated by military prosecution in prison and summarily sentenced to up to seven days in prison; however, they were detained for two months (Amnesty International, 2011, pp. 25–26). In the same circumstances, 18 women were detained, beaten, given electric shocks and called prostitutes. They were forced to undress and were subjected to a ‘virginity test’. Threatened with a charge of prostitution if they were found not to be virgins, the women arrested

were charged with destroying private and public property, disorderly conduct, obstructing traffic and possession of weapons (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 26). Such a violation of human dignity and abuse was justified by a military general as protecting the reputation of the military; he argued '[w]e didn't want them to say we had sexually assaulted or raped them, so we wanted to prove that they weren't virgins in the first place' (Amin, 2011; Amnesty International, 2011, p. 27). He addressed these women as not honourable, arguing that they 'were not like your daughter or mine. These were girls who had camped out in tents with male protesters' (Amin, 2011; Amnesty International, 2011, p. 27).

The attack against protesters was not limited to violent clashes during protests but escalated to trials to contain the war of manoeuvre. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), the number of civilians sentenced in military trials in the aftermath of the uprising was higher than the total sentenced during Mubarak's rule (Selim, 2015). In fact, by August 2011 the military judiciary declared that 12,000 civilians had been tried before military courts since 28th January 2011. The charges were for 'thuggery', damaging of public and private property, rape and possession of weapons, insulting the military and violating the curfew. Sentences went from imprisonment to death (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 29).

Finally, to ensure that the war of manoeuvre did not reinforce the war of position which takes root within civil society institutions, the military systematically targeted NGOs involved in protecting human rights and the freedom of expression of newspapers and the TV, and it arrested prominent activists. In fact, the SCAF attacked forms of war of manoeuvre like informal political participation such as protests, sit-ins and strikes, but also broke that link with civil society organisations that attempted to spread counter-hegemonic ideas like the protection of human rights. Semi-institutionalised organisations and groups – like the April 6 Movement, Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), the El Nadeem Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights and the Hisham Mubarak Law Center – were declared illegal based on the allegation of receiving unauthorised foreign funds. In contrast, funds derived from Arab Gulf

donors to Islamist movements remained free of surveillance by the SCAF and it allowed the Islamists to have a wider range of financial support (Selim, 2015). Intimidation based on a restriction of freedom of expression increased towards newspaper and TV broadcasters. Dina Abdel Rahman – presenter of Dream TV – was fired because she criticised the armed forces while arguing with a former air force officer during a live show (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 11). Newspaper *Sawt Al-Omma* and magazine *Rose El Youssef* were both prevented from printing articles critical of the intelligence services (Amnesty International, 2011, pp. 11–12).

In order to reinforce their hegemony and prevent the threat of the war of manoeuvre sowing the seed of the formation of a war of position of the revolutionary forces, the SCAF needed also to control the state political institutions dedicated to the control of coercion, by shaping the reforms of police and judiciary. First of all, the Minister of Interior, Mansour el-Essawy, was considered as an independent since he had not served in the government under Mubarak; however, he served as a top-ranking officer within the ministry. The Minister of Justice, Abdel Aziz al-Gindi, was closely linked with Mamdouh Marei (August 2006–March 2011), chosen by Mubarak after the 2005 election to purge the judges who acted independently to monitor the fairness of the elections (Springborg, 2011a, p. 96).

In a more institutionalised way, in March 2011 participating in any activity that would ‘disrupt the work of public institutions or public authorities, or harm national unity and public security and order’ was criminalised by military decree n. 34 (later Law n. 34 of 2011) (HRW, 2012, pp. 16–23; Selim, 2015, p. 184). The penal code was amended by the SCAF: law 7 of 2011 added two articles that criminalised ‘hooliganism, terrorism and thuggery’. If any of these actions occurred with a crime of murder, the offender was sentenced to death. In April 2011 the SCAF also extended the death penalty to rape in cases where the victim was underage; this applied also to offenders who were underage (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 34).

The SCAF prosecuted activists and journalists for spreading ‘false news’. Many activists and journalists like Bothaina Kamel, founder of Shayfeencom,

were interrogated by military prosecutors for criticising the military; Hossam Al-Hamalawy and Nabil Sharaf Al-Din were interrogated following their criticism of the military and the suggestion of a military deal with the MB (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 10). April 6 activists were targeted as well; Asmaa Mahfouz was detained for insulting the military and inciting violence, while Sherif Al-Rouby was detained and interrogated regarding the funding of the movement (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 10). Other activists like Alaa Abdel Fattah and Bahaa Saber faced military trials and were charged with inciting violence against the armed forces during the Maspero massacre. In addition, Alaa Abdel Fattah was also charged with stealing weapons and detained for 15 days. This was a clear attack on the most prominent critic of the SCAF (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 11). Nevertheless, all of this did not stop the embryonic war of position of the revolutionary forces, which continued to demand clearly and loudly the transfer of power to civilian authority.

5.1.3 The military contrasting war of position

The war of position of the subaltern forces serves to secure key posts of power within civil society. In order to reach political power the subaltern forces need to expand the war of position to political institutions as well. In this regard, during the stage of morbid symptoms the dominant force attempts to control political power by preventing the success of the war of position of the subaltern forces in reaching political institutions.

The emergence of the military as a dominant force derived from its ability to shape the transition period, and from its control of the state political superstructure to prevent the success of the war of position of intermediary forces like the MB which, as addressed in the previous chapter, had mastered the war of position to capitalise on portions of civil society. In February 2011, after Mubarak's resignation, the SCAF led by the Minister of Defence – Mohamed Tantawi – and composed of 20 other senior military officers, took the lead in the transition process. After Mubarak's resignation, the SCAF soon assumed both executive and legislative power, dissolving the parliament and

suspending the constitution of 1971 (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 105).

The MB was not the only force to use the war of position; other revolutionary forces like April 6 attempted to initiate a war of position against the military, which remained ineffective given the lack of experience of the group. In this regard, the military easily refused to meet the demands of the protesters who called for an interim government of national salvation. The April 6 Movement posed a clear demand to reform state political institutions; the Revolutionary Youth Council – an umbrella organisation that gathered various social forces that took active action in the 2011 war of manoeuvre, such as the April 6 Movement, the MB youth and the Campaign for Supporting El-Baradei, along with others (El Amrani, 2012; Abdalla, 2016, p. 47) – demanded the destruction of Mubarak's power structure, from the removal of political figures close to Mubarak, like Ahmed Shafiq, his last prime minister, to dismantling the secret police. In fact, in February 2011 they demanded Mubarak should step down. Calls also came to dissolve the national assembly and the senate and, most relevant, to establish a national salvation group to form a coalition government and be responsible for drafting a new constitution (Jadaliyya, 2011).

The SCAF only met the demands that fitted its interests; it made sure that power did not pass into the hands of Ahmad Fathi Sorour, an NDP leader and speaker of the People's Assembly – as prescribed by article 84 of the 1971 constitution (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 105; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 81). The intention of the military to stay above civil scrutiny and to maintain its privileges was made clear by General Mamdouh Shahin, an SCAF member, while confronting the political party that the 'special position' of the military should be ensured regardless of the 'whims of the president who might be a civilian' (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 23). Contrary to the transfer pre-2011 of the leading role of the subaltern bloc from Kefaya to April 6, post-2011 was, rather, characterised by the inability of the leading force to materialise a war of position to establish any structural change beyond its immediate demands.

In contrast to the revolutionary youth movements, the continuation of the war of position by the MB was more successful, since it was able to use its influence. In fact, a delegation of the MB – the future President Morsi was part of this delegation – was invited by Vice President Omar Suleiman on 6th February 2011 to participate in a ‘national dialogue’ to solve the protest (Stacher, 2012b, p. 10; Wickham, 2013, p. 169). On 14th February 2011, constitutional amendments to seven articles of the 1971 constitution were introduced by an eight-member committee formed by the SCAF and led by Islamist judge Tariq al-Bishri, including members of the MB, like Subhi Saleh, and excluding other revolutionary forces (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 13; Selim, 2015).

These amendments resulted in prioritising elections over the constitution, regulating candidacy rules for presidential elections and limiting presidential powers. In this regard, the MB saw in the early election the possibility of capitalising on its war of position to access political institutions, since it managed to secure electoral victories under Mubarak (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 107). Nevertheless, the military introduced new structural barriers to discourage the war of position of the revolutionary forces in general and the MB in particular. In fact, the SCAF retained both legislative and executive powers until both parliament and president were elected. In March 2011, despite the approved referendum on constitutional amendment, the SCAF unilaterally issued a ‘constitutional declaration’. This document kept the seven articles amended with the cooperation of the MB, plus another 54 new articles added after the referendum, one of which – article 56 – granted the SCAF both legislative and executive power (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 110; Selim, 2015; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 81).

The SCAF acknowledged that the MB was the most advanced force within the subaltern bloc, and that if it decided to become confrontational with achievable demands that gathered the broad support of other social forces this would create the potential for the MB to become the leader of the subaltern bloc. At this early stage of the transition, the dominant force put in place strategies to prevent the war of position and the war of manoeuvre of the

subaltern forces. In fact, the constitutional referendum was very divisive for the subaltern bloc and the revolutionary forces, as the youth and seculars boycotted it (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 3). On the one hand, the MB enjoyed its grassroots organisation that was able to ensure considerable popular support. On the other hand, revolutionary forces complained that the new constitution could have resulted in the dictatorship of a temporary majority rather than having been the result of a confrontational and consensual process (Selim, 2015).

The division of the subaltern forces does not mean that they were not organised or lacked agency to counterbalance the dominance of the military. Therefore it is difficult to sustain the thesis that the Egyptian Uprising was a form of passive revolution, since the subaltern were not passive during the transition period; rather, they acted in contradiction. One group protected the interests of the dominant force, while the other remained faithful to its values at the expense of pragmatic strategies. In this contest, Gramsci's concept of subalternity fills the conceptual gaps that emerge by looking at the post-uprising as an alternation of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary waves based on the ideological division of secular vs Islamist, where the access to political institutions is considered as the hijacking of the revolution by the MB; waves of social unrest like strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations are instead the manifestation of revolution (Achcar, 2016, pp. 105–106). This account overlooks how the parliamentary victory of the MB was a significant change in the Egyptian state, especially since in the parliamentary election in 2010 the MB's seats dropped from 88 (in 2005) to 15 (Meital, 2006, p. 275; Dunne and Hamzawy, 2010).

Instead, through the lens of subalternity – as the most advanced subaltern force – the MB managed to capitalise on the benefit of its war of position to reach political institutions, especially with the coordination of the war of manoeuvre. In fact, although the MB won 42% of seats during the parliamentary election, the performance at the presidential election was less significant. The first round of the election was on 23rd and 24th May 2012, when 13 candidates ran. The results saw Morsi gaining the majority with 25%

while Shafiq at 24% was a close second; Hamdeen Sabahi got a surprising 21%, while Abdel Moneim Abul Foutoh received 17% of the vote thanks to the support of the Nour Party and the Wasat Party; finally, Amr Moussa got 11% of the votes (Ahram Online, 2012a; The Carter Center, 2012, p. 63; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, pp. 118–119). At this point, on 16th and 17th June 2012, in the second round of the presidential election, Egyptians had to choose between the MB candidate Morsi or Shafiq – Mubarak’s minister of civil aviation from 2002 until he served as prime minister for the last two weeks of Mubarak’s presidency (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 118).

Before the second round of the presidential election, the secular opposition, including Wael Ghoneim, creator of the Facebook page ‘We are all Khaled Said’; Ahmed Maher, founding member of April 6 Youth Movement; and writer and former member of Kefaya, Alaa Al Aswany, met at the Fairmont hotel in Heliopolis – a suburb of Cairo – to discuss their support for the MB candidate Morsi. When the SCAF on 18th June 2012 assumed both executive and legislative powers, the seculars asked Morsi to withdraw from the election; however, Morsi refused that possibility and the seculars decided to support Morsi against Shafiq. On that occasion, Ahmed Maher declared, ‘we were left no choice ... Shafiq’s success would have symbolised the end of the revolution’, although not all pro-revolution groups agreed to support Morsi (Shukrallah, 2013). Morsi agreed with the secular opposition on forming a ‘national salvation’ government, guaranteed that the prime minister would not be from the MB, and held regular meetings with the members of the Fairmont group – later renamed the National Front for the Salvation of the Revolution (Khorshid, 2013). Morsi appointed members of the Fairmont group like Sekina Fouad and Hamid Qandil in the presidential advisory team; however, he did not take into account their position nor keep regular meetings with the group as agreed, nor nominate a non-MB candidate as prime minister (Khorshid, 2013; Shukrallah, 2013). With the electoral victory of the most advanced forces, the MB became the intermediary force able to connect political and civil society.

From this perspective, morbid symptoms emerge when a war of manoeuvre and a war of position are no longer coordinated, and, as the next chapter will discuss, the conflict between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre created fertile ground for the counter-revolution in terms of a military coup.

5.2 Unity of war of position and war of manoeuvre

During a hegemonic crisis within a semi-integral state, the convergence between a war of position and a war of manoeuvre is essential to counter the dominant force that resists holding on to the hegemonic power. Since the case of the Egyptian Uprising generated a power dynamic between three actors, as discussed in Chapter Three, the transformation of the Egyptian state and therefore the resolution of the hegemonic crisis depended on the interactions of these actors. The dominant force acts to oppose the two main strategies at the subalterns' disposal – the war of position and the war of manoeuvre – to reach hegemonic power. However, as addressed in the previous chapter, the manifestation of the uprising was the result of the successful war of manoeuvre of revolutionary social movements and the war of position of the MB. The convergence of these strategies allowed the subaltern bloc to oppose the military, while, as the next chapter will discuss, the divergence and conflict of these strategies sowed the seed for the military coup. The increasing repression was the direct response of the military to the episodic unity of the subaltern forces, as in the cases of Maspero and Mohamed Mahmoud Street.

Following the demolition of a church on 3rd October 2011 in Upper Egypt which was declared illegal by the local authority (Egypt Independent, 2011), a week later, on 9th October, the Copt community in Cairo organised a march from Shubra – the Coptic major district – to Tahrir Square. Once the protest reached the Maspero building – the building hosting state TV – allegedly, thugs started to attack protesters, and violence escalated when the security forces – military, riot police and a number of military police – joined the clashes, using military vehicles against protesters in addition to batons and bullets. The clashes resulted in 26 Copts, one Muslim and one military policemen dead (Amnesty International, 2012b, p. 11). Despite the Copt majority on the march,

youth movements joined the protesters, holding signs like 'Muslims and Christians are one hand, Down With Military Rule, and Down with [Supreme Council of the Armed Forces Chairman Mohamed Hussein] Tantawy' (Abdellatif, 2011).

The Maspero protest was the biggest demonstration since the events of 25th January, representing the strength and significance of the war of manoeuvre. Similarly to the incident of 'the virginity test', the military continued to discredit the image of the protesters to avoid a situation where the war of manoeuvre could escalate and attract more and more protesters to join. In fact, state media framed the clashes with sectarian discourses, as well as emphasising the killing of security forces while failing to acknowledge the killing of protesters by the security forces, picturing the protesters as violent towards the institutions and calling 'all honourable citizens' to protect the military from the attack of an 'unknown force' (Chammah, 2012; Khalifa, 2014), whereas independent TV broadcasters like Alhurra and 25 January TV were raided by military police during the live coverage of the events (Amnesty International, 2012b, p. 14). The military crackdown continued after the events; in fact, 30 civilians – including Alaa Abdel Fattah – were detained and accused of inciting violence against the armed forces, assaulting security forces, stealing weapons and engaging in disorderly behaviour. No security personnel were investigated for the violence in Maspero (Amnesty International, 2011, 2012b).

Even more emblematic is the episode of Mohamed Mahmoud Street that occurred on 19th November 2011, which reflected the fear of the dominant forces towards the episodic unity of the subaltern forces. In November 2011, Ali Al Selmi – senior member of the Wafd party – in his role as deputy prime minister issued the 'declaration of the fundamental principles of the new Egyptian state', also known as the Selmi document. This 22-article document apparently inspired clashes with Islamist forces on the 'secular' character of the state (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 112). Most important, article 9 of the Selmi document guaranteed the military complete independence from civilian control (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p.

113). In fact, the document attempts to grant no restriction on military decisions on either strategic or financial matters, as well as elevating the SCAF to the rank of 'protector of the constitutional legitimacy', allowing the SCAF to freely intervene in the constitutional formation process (Selim, 2015).

The MB, who so far had focused on pursuing its war of position to reach political institutions and rarely confronted the military, openly opposed the controversial Selmi document and threatened the SCAF with 'unbearable consequences if they persisted in articulating these demands' (Selim, 2015, p. 186). The Islamists called for a demonstration against the Selmi document; the 'The Friday of One Demand' saw the convergence of the war of position and the war of manoeuvre since the MB, Salafi, April 6, and Revolutionary Socialists stood against the military's imposition of the Selmi document (Ahram Online, 2011). As a response, the security forces evicted the sit-in at Tahrir Square, which consequently triggered further protests against SCAF rule, pushing Tantawi to declare 30th June 2012 as the final date for the transition of power to civilian authority. Arguably, the withdrawal of the Selmi document represents the military fear of the episodic unity of the subaltern bloc.

The protesters continued and echoed the demand of the Maspero protests, calling for the end of military rule and for an immediate transition of power to civilians, especially since the first round of elections was in three days. The MB, confident of its electoral victory, professed to abstain from the protest, distancing itself from the requests of the secular (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 6). Once the Selmi document was withdrawn, the senior MB withdrew from the clashes of Mohamed Mahmoud Street, letting the revolutionary youth as well as the young Brothers face the violence of the military and security forces – this generational split would be later exploited by the military post-2013 as they attempted to gather the consent of youth via the Nation's Future Party (see Chapter Seven) (Ryzova, 2011; Amnesty International, 2012a, pp. 7–14; Selim, 2015). The General Security and Central Security Forces (CSF) attempted to crush protesters by using tear gas, batons, rubber bullets, shotgun pellets, and live ammunition targeting the eyes of protesters (Amnesty International, 2012a, pp. 7–8). Those arrested by the CSF were continually

beaten, sexually assaulted and spat on and insulted; while only one CSF officer was kept in preventive detention, 379 protesters were facing trial and charged with possession of weapons, damaging private and public property and assaulting public officials (Amnesty International, 2012a, p. 14). There were 51 deaths (Amnesty International, 2012a, p. 7).

The Mohamed Mahmoud clashes addressed how the convergence of the war of position and the war of manoeuvre was successful in demanding a definitive date for the presidential elections, which the military had attempted to postpone indefinitely. When the MB used the war of manoeuvre with the support of the revolutionary social movements, the subaltern bloc succeeded in securing the transition via presidential elections. This was the only time the MB acted as a leading force of the subaltern: it was confrontational to the military in calling for protests; it had an achievable goal – the withdrawal of the Selmi document; and it brought together different social forces. However, when the MB achieved its goal, it abandoned the war of manoeuvre – regardless of its continuation by youth movements, including the MB's own base. The withdrawal of the MB from the street marked its inability to retain any coercive competition vis-à-vis the military, thus keeping the MB unable to challenge the military alone. Another example of oscillation of the MB was during the presidential elections. Before the second round, the seculars met Morsi at the Fairmont Hotel and Morsi agreed to form a 'national salvation' government with them. However, once elected, Morsi disregarded the agreement (Khorshid, 2013; Shukrallah, 2013). By disowning the Fairmont agreement, the MB could infiltrate the institutions but it was slowly losing consent of the subaltern forces. Its lack of leadership would later be exploited by the military.

To recap, during the early stage of the transition, the military failed to unite the dominant bloc, and the examples of convergence between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre weakened the hegemony of the military. To ensure its dominance it needed to divide the subaltern forces, not just to weaken the opposite bloc but also to ensure the support of an intermediary

force, to serve its dominance in order to expand its hegemony within civil society.

5.3 Shaping the political structure – the MB as allied force

As discussed earlier, the inability of the military to take the lead and reform the dominant bloc failed; this put the military in need an intermediary force to ally with it in order to reconnect with civil society, and in this regard the MB as the most advanced force was the top choice. However in order to do this, the military had to carefully lessen its strategy to restrict the war of position of the MB – giving it just enough space to access political society but not to become a significant threat – while at the same time it still prevented the revolutionary forces triggering a war of position alongside their successful war of manoeuvre. For this reason, since the MB did not have a war of manoeuvre of its own, the best strategy for the military was to separate the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary forces and the war of position of the MB. In order to do so, the SCAF reshaped the state political superstructure in three main ways – the constitutional amendments (as discussed earlier), the new party formation and the new electoral law. In this way the restriction to the war of position of the revolutionary movements and the MB had different effects, as the development of the MB was given the most advantage as discussed in the previous chapter. In fact, the amendment of the political party's law n. 40 of 1977 – approved by the interim government on 28th March 2011 – favoured the MB against other revolutionary movements. Small and unorganised parties faced structural barriers to be legalised; the increment of the number of founding members grew from 1,000 to 5,000 across ten different governorates. Moreover, each member's signature needed to be witnessed by a notary. Eventually this notification process resulted in delaying the registrations of new parties (Auf, 2014; Selim, 2015).

Further restriction came in terms of finance and privacy. The average expenses for advertisement and publicity were estimated to be around \$250,000: prohibitive for newly formed parties with limited access to electoral

competition (Wickham, 2013, p. 172). The law imposed on new parties to circulate the names of the 5,000 founding members to newspapers had financial costs that poorly financed youth movements could not afford, especially after the withdrawal of state funds; these did not affect established and well-funded movements like the MB (Selim, 2015). The SCAF amended the political party law and it allowed the formation of the Freedom and Justice Party by the MB in April 2011; the party was declared independent from the organisation (Wickham, 2013, p. 175). In the parliamentary elections the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) won 216 seats out of 508, and Saad El-Katatni, Secretary General of the Party, became Speaker of the People's Assembly (Al-Awadi, 2013, p. 554). The fact that the major opposition force of the country had managed to get the majority in parliament marked a significant bottom-up transformation of the Egyptian state determined by the strength of the war of position of the MB, rather than a top-down transformation as a form of passive revolution, because for the first time Egyptian citizens had the opportunity to cast their vote in free and fair elections (Hill, 2011; Ozen, 2018, p. 454).

The amendments of the law of party formation went hand in hand with the amendment of electoral law. Two-thirds of the parliamentary seats would be elected through a closed party list system, while the remaining third would be dedicated to the election of individual candidates as independent. On the one hand, the seats allocated to independent candidates could have allowed representation of revolutionary figures unaffiliated with a party – perhaps those unable to form a party. On the other, it failed to guarantee representation of revolutionary forces, because at the same time party-affiliated candidates were allowed to compete for independents' seats (Selim, 2015). In this way the military attempted to prevent other revolutionary movements developing their war of position along their existing war of manoeuvre.

Although the military needed to reach the MB to connect with social forces which supported the MB thanks to its charity work and improvement of the professional syndicate, it did not want the MB to become a significant challenge to military dominance. In this way, the military proposed the

nomination rather than the election of the members of the assembly: 20 members according to political party weight, while the remaining 80 members would come from governing bodies of designated professional bodies (Selim, 2015). This was a pool of remnants of Mubarak's regime, 15 selected from the high council of universities; 15 from professional syndicates, among whom were five workers, five farmers, and one from institutions like the police, military, churches, student and sport unions, business unions and other corporate institutions (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 112). The SCAF refused to ban ex-NDP members – as demanded by the revolutionary movements. In fact, landowning military and police generals in retirement could run as peasants, while factory-owning businesses could run as labourers. In this way, the parliamentary quotas were meant to use the former members of the NDP as a strategic tactic to limit the war of position of the MB in reaching parliamentary elections (Hope, 2011; International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 4).

However, the intent of the SCAF to maintain a 50% quota for farmers and workers filled by ex-NDP candidates failed because the ex-NDP candidates managed to win only 5% of the seats; the SCAF then had to turn to the MB to maintain its privileges (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 17), particularly as the parliamentary elections resulted in 87% of the assembly being composed of forces like the FJP, Nour Party, Wafd and the Egyptian Bloc (Marshall and Stacher, 2012). This result was surprising also for the MB, which hoped to get a third of seats in parliament and did not expect to get over 50% (Wickham, 2013, pp. 170, 175). However, after securing a parliamentary majority the Brotherhood attempted to exploit the success of its war of position to make direct demands on the military. In fact, when the MB demanded the SCAF replace Ganzouri – the interim prime minister close to Mubarak – with a government that could reflect the parliamentary majority, the SCAF refused (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 116). The victory of the MB in parliamentary elections, thanks to the meticulous war of position that the organisation had undertaken since the 1980s, allowed it to become the sole negotiator with the military in order to craft the amendments of Sadat's

constitution of 1971. Nevertheless, the years of moderation that made the MB over-rely on the war of position undermined the ability of the MB to undertake a war of manoeuvre and an underground war – which put it in a vulnerable position when the military restricted the MB's demands. In fact, the MB soon learned that accessing political institutions was not necessarily accessing political power, making them the intermediary force between political and civil society.

5.4 Expanding the state economic structure

Since Egypt is a semi-integral state the sole control of the political superstructure is not sufficient to guarantee the hegemony of the dominant force over civil society. Therefore the military had to expand its economic domain in order to be able to reintegrate the subaltern forces – like workers, urban poor and unemployed well-educated youth – within the state. At the same time, the expansion of the military's control over the economic structure reduced the threat of the MB who under Mubarak used neoliberalism to develop the private sector to gain the popular consent of both profit and not-for-profit business. Once the SCAF had managed to control the state political superstructure it started to reach the MB as a potential allied force within political institutions. The tension between the dis-integrating effect of neoliberalist reforms and the need of the dominant force to integrate the subaltern within the state is a distinctive feature that characterised the Egyptian Uprising as a form of morbid symptoms. The military was rather cautious to evaluate the potential of old and new allies. In fact, the SCAF expressed several times the intention of protecting its economic interests. For example, General Mahmoud Nasr – Assistant to the Minister of Defence for Financial Affairs – declared: 'this money is not the state's ... but the result of our sweat from 30 years of labour ... the armed forces would fight ... in order not to allow any party whatever it might be to come near our projects' (Abdelhadi, 2012; International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 23).

In fact, soon the military started to keep a firm grip on both military and civilian economic production. The initiative of the military to maintain a

significant portion of the Egyptian economy served different aims. Firstly, the increase of the military economy served to increase the means of internal repression, institutional benefits and keep the consent of soldiers. Under the SCAF the Egyptian military expanded the production of weapons. In February 2011, the navy managed to renegotiate with the US a contract for \$13 million; the final contract was for \$20 million. In this way, Egypt gained, in addition to the four vessels previously agreed, institutional benefits for the military, like technology transfer, new facilities, long-term contracts for repairs and spare parts and new personnel training (Marshall, 2015, pp. 6–7). In terms of the civilian economy, the SCAF invested in an industrial chemical complex in South Cairo, a cement factory in North Sinai and made a profit out of the construction of the new highway in Upper Egypt (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 32). The expansion of the military economy was the attempt to control the economy to be able to integrate multiple subaltern forces – like workers, the middle class and lower classes – as the state development economic plan under Nasser did.

The tension between the integration and dis-integration of various subaltern forces emerged when the military attempted to develop contradictory economic reforms. On the one hand, the intention of the military to control the civilian economy was not only for economic interests: civilian production was functional to build the consent of a section of the subaltern forces. In fact, the cheap primary goods provided by the military were mostly directed to the lower classes. In a context where the neoliberal policies and privatisation combined to increase the price of primary goods, the military production of civilian goods managed to provide cheap goods by cutting the cost of labour – in fact, often conscripts were employed in military factories. Despite the lower quality of the products, they fulfilled the need of the lower classes, which ensured this group's consent to the military (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 22). On the other hand, the SCAF continued to deny public demands for food security, shelter and living wages to be national policies (Joya, 2017, p. 347). For this reason, the SCAF replaced Financial Minister Samir Radwan – an NDP in

favour of increasing spending on wages of social expenditure and budget – with the more neoliberal-friendly Hazim Beblawi (Marshall and Stacher, 2012).

Furthermore, the SCAF used the same strategy that Mubarak promised to regain consent to remain in power. These economic manoeuvres were directed to ensure consent of the bureaucracy, such as an increase by 15% of salaries in the public sector, a boost for pensions and a conversion of 450,000 public sector contracts from temporary to permanent employment, as well as the price rise by 75% of food and fuel subsidies (Springborg, 2011a, p. 94; El Dahshan, 2015, pp. 213–214). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) offered Egypt a loan of \$3 billion, at a low interest rate of 1.5%; however, the SCAF rejected this offer, believing it would have damaged its nationalist image (Springborg, 2011a, p. 93). The SCAF proved to not have sufficient experience and skills to be able to handle such important economic policies (Springborg, 2011a, p. 94). In fact, during the first year of SCAF rule, the economy grew below 2% while unemployment increased more than 10%. The populist economic reforms were not the economic reforms needed; rather, they contributed to increased inflation (Khan and Miller, 2016, p. 3). On the other hand, Islamists also profited from the *infatih* neoliberal policy. In the 1980s, eight of the top 18 business families – leaders in the private sector – were affiliated with the MB, whereas in the 1990s a new guard of business-minded and entrepreneurial Brothers started to replace the old theological guard (Dalacoura, 2016, p. 68). Arguably, the SCAF sought an ally with better organisational skills and economic knowledge, as the MB seemed to be serving this purpose as well.

5.5 Conclusion

As remarked in Chapter Three, the Egyptian Uprising cannot be defined as a form of passive revolution due to the exclusion of the subaltern forces. This would deny the participation of Egyptian citizens in casting their votes for the constitutional referendum and parliamentary and presidential elections in free and fair elections (Bassiouni, 2017, p. 80). Addressing the first year of transition as a revolution, counter-revolution and passive revolution (Tugal,

2012) depends on the actors affecting the transition and creates further theoretical limitations because it assumes that actors act based on the perceived characteristics without taking into account the changing context. In fact, according to Tugal, the revolution failed because the revolutionary forces remained far from the 'institution-building processes' due to their lack of expertise and organisation. On the other hand, the MB was considered as a force of the passive revolution because it seemed to represent a threat to the social justice demands of revolutionary forces, because of its attempt to embrace neoliberalism. This interpretation based on the distance of the revolutionary forces from the institutions can be substantiated by the perpetration of the war of manoeuvre that these social forces undertook – as the chapter has addressed.

However, considering the MB as a force that is not compatible with the revolution is to reduce it only to the perpetration of neoliberalism which is equally problematic. This interpretation does not take into account – as the next chapter will – the possibility that a private-led development of the country could be considered a way for the MB to take control of the political structure of the state. In fact, as discussed in Chapter Four, the failure of the neoliberal policy under Mubarak was not related to poor economic performance in multiple sectors of the economy; it was due to the lack of redistribution of wealth and an increased gap between rich and poor. In the case of the Egyptian Uprising the old practice of the subaltern forces – the war of position and the war of manoeuvre – contrasted with each other while the new dominant force – the military – attempted to reshape the political and economic structure of the state.

Chapter 6 The allied force challenges the dominant

As discussed previously in Chapters Three and Four, Gramsci addresses the development of the various subaltern forces to understand how they conquer political power. This means that within the subaltern bloc a social force needs to become the leader of the other forces before accessing political society; that is, unless a subaltern social force within civil society takes the lead of the subaltern bloc and undertakes a war of position, a war of manoeuvre and an underground war to form a counter-hegemony. This classification needs to reflect the development of the subaltern forces. In fact, the origin of the Egyptian counter-revolution lies in the paradox that the most advanced force might not necessarily be the leading force of the subaltern bloc. This diversion allowed the progression of forms of counter-revolution – not necessarily due to the exclusion of the subaltern bloc, as it is during passive revolution. Therefore the development of the counter-revolution in Egypt can be explained via two interlinked dynamics. Firstly, the oscillating behaviour of the MB, which acted sometimes as an allied force – supporting the military – and at other times acted as the leading force of the subaltern bloc, which it was able to do because it had become an intermediary force immediately post-2011. Secondly, although the MB was the most advanced force within the subaltern bloc, it openly challenged the military without becoming the leading force of the subaltern bloc, opposing the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary social movements, while at the same time the revolutionary movements targeted the MB in its capacity of intermediary force instead of the military as dominant force.

The previous chapter highlighted how the military opposed the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary social movements and the war of position of

the MB in order to keep its dominance. The diversion between the war of manoeuvre and the war of position facilitated military dominance, especially when the MB continued the war of position to reach political institutions at the expense of the revolutionary movements' war of manoeuvre. This resulted in the oscillating behaviour of the MB in supporting and opposing the military at different points in time. Nevertheless, the fact that the continuation of the MB's war of position facilitated a sense of the dominance of the military does not necessarily mean that the first year of the Egyptian transition can be considered a form of passive revolution or counter-revolution. Thus the war of position was the strategy at the disposal of the subaltern forces to control key posts within civil society with the aim of developing counter-hegemony, especially as since the 1980s the MB had been engaging with a war of position to control part of the economy via profit and non-profit businesses, infiltrate professional syndicates and gain seats in parliament (Ranko, 2015; Kennedy, 2017).

This chapter turns the focus on how the clashes between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre sowed the seeds for the counter-revolution; in this way it puts the attention on the agency of the MB as the intermediary force, arguing that the MB's behaviour continued to oscillate between protecting the military interests and attempting to challenge them by controlling political society. In fact, the MB attempted to control political society via the control of the state political institutions – like the presidency, parliament and government – while at the same time, due to its control within civil society, it aimed to change state economic relations.

The weakness of its war of manoeuvre prevented the MB from directly confronting the military. Therefore, the MB attempted to expand its war of position, and the increasing control of economic structure, its attempt to challenge the dominant force by shaping economic relations with businessmen and by controlling the judiciary system, failed due to the lack of leadership of the MB among the subaltern forces. Although the MB was the most advanced subaltern force within Egyptian civil society, it was not the leading force behind the uprising. The cat-and-mouse game between the MB and the military is the

manifestation of the reactive act of defence that triggered strategic negative consequences for the subaltern forces. Finally, the chapter argues how the failure of the uprising was not due only to the successful dominance established by the military, but also to the competition among the subaltern forces to reach the allied position in the post-2011 balance of power. In fact, in contrast to 2011, in 2013 the subaltern protests targeted the MB as an intermediary force, not the military as a dominant force as had happened in 2011 when Mubarak and the crony capitalists were the object of the protests.

These assumption is further supported by the fact that the removal of Morsi via a military coup was quick, relatively peaceful and overwhelmingly supported by different groups of subalterns like Tamarrod and the National Salvation Front, as well as cheered by the protesters in the street. This chapter will keep the focus on the oscillation of the MB as an intermediary force. In fact, it will analyse in detail the relations that the MB had with the dominant force and the subaltern forces. The first part addresses how despite accessing political society the MB did not become dominant but only the intermediary force of the military. As discussed in the previous chapter, the MB moderated and shifted its strategy towards the war of position and abandoned other strategies like the war of manoeuvre and the underground war. This forced the MB to over-rely on the war of position to the point that the control of institutions was no longer reflecting consent within civil society, especially since the MB did not respect the Fairmont agreement made with the revolutionary forces during the second round of presidential elections. The second part of the chapter explains how the attempt of the MB to reshape the economic structure and the exacerbation of the war of position stimulated the response of the revolutionary forces. Finally, the third part analyses how the clashes between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre set the terrain for the counter-revolution.

6.1 The backfiring of the MB's war of position

As the war of position was the main strategy at the MB's disposal, the Brotherhood used it to the extreme to increase its power within political society.

In order to do so, the MB utilised two main strategies: one was the so-called *Brotherhoodisation* of the state – the Brotherhood attempted to place Islamist supporters within state institutions (Brown, 2013b, p. 5) – and the second was the effort to reshape the economic structure to reintegrate the lower strata of society. Nevertheless, these strategies failed, firstly because the MB's extreme war of position alienated the revolutionary movements, especially since the attempt of the MB to control coercion was reflected in the progressive reduction of the revolutionary movements' war of manoeuvre.

The revolutionary movements did not remain passive at the uncontrolled expansion of the war of position of the MB. Mirroring the MB, the war of manoeuvre was the most effective strategy available for the revolutionary movements to oppose the Brotherhood. Secondly, the MB's attempt to reach out to the business people – instead of the revolutionary movements – in order to openly challenge the military, over a possibility of a private-led state development. The combination of these two trajectories ultimately resulted in the clash between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre within the subaltern bloc that allowed the military to depose Morsi and take full control of the state.

6.1.1 The Brotherhoodisation of the state

The war of position allowed the MB to access political society by accessing parliament and the presidency. However, the distance it had from the protesters' war of manoeuvre and the lack of underground war did not make the MB a dominant force because its presence within political society was tolerated by the military only as long as the MB was cooperative. At the same time, the military wanted to constantly reaffirm its dominant position, fearing that the unity of the subaltern bloc could escalate and compromise its dominance, as happened in 2011 when the protesters in Tahrir Square destabilised the relations between the military and Mubarak; in late 2011 when the unity of the revolutionary movements and MB forced the military to withdraw the Selmi document; and in the second run of the presidential

elections when the Fairmont agreement seemed to establish the unity of the movements on the ground and the MB within institutions.

Since 2011 the MB oscillated between allowing the military to consolidate its dominance and attempting to take the lead of the subaltern bloc to challenge the military's predominant position. The election of Morsi as president changed the weight of the MB in political society; however, the access of the MB within core political institutions did not necessarily allow it to have full control of the state. In fact, fearing Morsi's electoral victory, the Supreme Constitutional Court dissolved the Islamist-dominated parliament on 14th June 2012 (two days earlier than the second round of the presidential elections). In this way, even if Morsi had won the presidential election he would not have been able to rely on an Islamist majority parliament. The Supreme Constitutional Court declared the parliament unconstitutional because it allowed party members to run as independents for seats intended for non-partisans, like peasants and workers.

To express their coercive control, the generals deployed troops to prevent MPs from entering the parliament (Amnesty International, 2012b, p. 5; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 120). Finally, the military expanded its control of the state political institutions; in fact, in line with the judiciary's actions, during the final day of presidential election the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) assumed legislative power through the constitutional declaration, replacing the dissolved parliament; in this way the SCAF gained the power to veto presidential decisions as well as reassuming the control of the Constituent Assembly (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 120). In fact, the SCAF wanted to send to the MB a clear message, that although it was formally in charge of the legislative and executive power, it was still subject to the conditions that the SCAF set for it. In fact, the formal handover of power from the SCAF to Morsi occurred at the Huckstep military base – the very same base that witnessed the military trial and imprisonment of many Muslim Brothers and other opposition figures during Mubarak's regime (Stacher, 2012b, p. 10; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 111).

Morsi's accommodating behaviour with the military was indeed the reflection of the moderation of the MB dating from the 1980s (Stacher, 2012b, p. 10); in fact as soon as he became president, Morsi thanked the military for its support, declaring 'only God knows how much love I have in my heart [for it]' (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 32). He maintained the privileges of the military by hiring top administrators, governors and ministers from the military's officers. In addition, Morsi stressed his intention to maintain the peace treaty with Israel, justifying such a position through religious obligations, maintaining the economic and security arrangement that Mubarak had with Israel and the US (Selim, 2015, p. 190). This was a strategic attempt to ensure the stability of political institutions in order to expand the war of position within political society.

In fact, the president has the power to call the parliament to its normal session (Al Jazeera, 2012b). Restoring the parliament meant reclaiming the legislative power that the military took away from the elected Islamist majority. Morsi attempted to restore the dissolved parliament but his decision was rejected by the Supreme Constitutional Court (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 121; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 114). The fact that the Supreme Constitutional Court could take action in a situation that does not have clear jurisdiction flagged the subaltern position of the MB in political society, despite its electoral victory. The MB was reduced to an allied force that was allowed to share political power only if its actions favoured the dominant force. The MB's limited institutional power emerged from the minor changes in the government.

Although Morsi formed a new government replacing Prime Minister Ganzouri with Hisham Qandil, a civil servant and Minister of Irrigation from 2011 to 2012, the bulk of the government did not undergo major changes. In fact, the majority of new ministers were technocrats and bureaucrats. The need for technocrats highlighted, on the one hand, the lack of competence that the MB had in engaging with political society; on the other hand, it showed the MB's inability to impose its members within the government. In fact, Qandil reconfirmed seven key ministers already serving in Ganzouri government that belonged to the old regime and were close to the military: Defence (Tantawi), Foreign Affairs (Mohamed Kamel Amr), Insurance and Social Affairs (Nagwa

Khalil), Scientific Research (Nadia Zakhary), Finance (Momtaz El-Saeed), Military Production (Ali Sabri) and Culture (Mohamed Saber Arab) (Aboulenein, 2012; Ahram Online, 2012c; Essam El-Din, 2012; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 121; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 115; Arafat, 2018, pp. 35–36).

On the other hand, the MB attempted to control political society via key ministries that could have a role in controlling civil society in those areas in which the MB had already a stake. Only five members of the Freedom and Justice Party filled posts, as Ministers of Housing (Tareq Wafiq), Communication (Salah Abdel Maqsoud), Manpower (Khaled Al-Azhary), Youth (Osama Yassin) and Higher Education (Mostafa Mossad) (Aboulenein, 2012; El-Hennawy, 2012; Arafat, 2018, p. 36); nevertheless, a few of these names were part of a strategy to maintain control over civil society. For example, Salah Abdel Maqsoud, a Brotherhood member of the journalists' syndicate's board, replaced Ahmed Anis, a retired military general. This move aimed to have a more symbolic than pragmatic meaning; in fact, for the first time, the Television and Radio Union (TRU) – directly controlled by the government – was under the control of Islamists. The fact that this move was empty in substance emerged in the fact that Mohamed Badie – the Supreme Guide of the MB – accused the employees of the TRU of fabricating false news to discredit the MB (Essam El-Din, 2012).

The expansion of the war of position of the MB was extended to other Islamist forces and beyond parliament and government. In fact, moderate Islamist Mohamed Mahsoud Abdel-Meguib from the Al Wasat Party became Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, and Salafist Hatem Saleh from the Al Nahda Party was appointed Minister of Industry and Trade (Aboulenein, 2012; Essam El-Din, 2012; Turner, 2014, p. 424). In addition, the MB attempted also to conquer political society by reaching other Islamist forces as potential supporters, for example within the religious institutions. Talaat Afifi, a Salafi close to the MB, was appointed Minister of Religious Endowment. Once in office, Afifi replaced ten civil servants of the ministry (two of whom were officers) with other Islamists (Haenni, 2016, pp. 29–30). Other figures close to

the MB and Salafis – like Sheikh Salama Abdel Qawi and Sheikh Mohamed Hussain Nawfal, Assyut mosque’s Imam elected through the Nour Party, who were appointed to be the ministry’s spokesperson and the Director-General of the Administration of Religious Endowment respectively – gained positions, whereas figures critical of the MB and Salafis – like Sheikh Ahmed Abdel Moneim, Sheikh Sabri Ibada and Sheikh Salim Abdel Jalil – either lost their posts or faced administrative sanctions (Haenni, 2016, p. 30).

6.1.2 The limits of the war of position

Because of the lack of a war of manoeuvre and underground war, Morsi did not have the ability to challenge the coercive apparatus directly; therefore the MB used the war of position to infiltrate the police forces via a bottom-up and top-down approach. Firstly, as a bottom-up strategy, policemen demanded to grow their beards, and this was considered as the growing presence of Islamists within the police (Saleh and Taylor, 2013; Arafat, 2018, p. 39). Secondly, as a top-down strategy, the MB appointed as Minister of Interior Ahmed Gamal al Din, a general close to Habib Al Adly, the last Minister of Interior of Mubarak. This was an attempt to oppose the dominance of the military in terms of coercion, especially since the security apparatus remained largely intact. In fact, the new Commander of the Republican Guard was General Mohamed Zaki, the former head of the paratroopers, who was responsible for crushing protesters in December 2011 during protests outside the government (Haenni, 2016, p. 30). Finally, Khaled Gharaba, Chief of Police in Alexandria in January 2011, at the time that Salafi activist Sayyid Biala was tortured to death, was appointed Deputy Minister of Interior (Haenni, 2016, p. 30). Gharaba was deemed the ‘engineer of torture’, due to his responsibility for the torture in prison of the Mahalla workers arrested on 6th and 7th April 2008 for striking to demand the national minimum wage (Assaf, 2008; Al Satuhy, 2012).

Finally, after a terrorist attack that killed 16 police officers in Sinai on 12th August 2012, Morsi forced military Chief of State Sami Annan and Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Hussain Tantawi to

resign (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 121; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 115). Morsi also dismissed other generals like Nagiub Mohamed Abdel Salam, the Head of the Republican Guard; Murad Muwafi, Head of General Intelligence; and Hamdy Badin, Head of the Military Police (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 1). With Tantawi another 200 officers, among them five members of the SCAF, were forced to retire. It is plausible that it was a move from junior officers to get rid of the older officers based on the fact that the SCAF should not have directly ruled the country, thus avoiding public scrutiny and accountability (Fahim, 2012; Stacher, 2012b, p. 11; Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 1; Sayed, 2013). The Chief of Military Intelligence, Sisi, was nominated Minister of Defence allegedly because he was considered a 'pious Muslim' and close to the MB (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 1; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 122; Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 32).

Despite the fact that Morsi removed Tantawi and Annan after the incident in Sinai, he appointed both of them as presidential advisors; allegedly this action was considered a prearranged decision taken in collaboration (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 122). The Sinai incident was the pretext for the junior officers to reach higher positions within the military hierarchy rather than an exercise of power by the MB. In fact, the argument that the removal of Tantawi and Annan was also an attempt to remove the unpopular officers that were responsible for the crackdown on protests in order to gather protesters' consent falls short, since Sisi defended the infamous 'virginity test' performed on female protesters in March 2011 (Hussein, 2012b; Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 2).

On several occasions, the political actions of Morsi were directed to gather the consent of revolutionary forces, nevertheless with limited concrete impact. For example, Morsi attempted to challenge military authority by attempting to investigate violence against protesters. In fact there was the formation of two committees – one with the mandate to identify who was responsible for killing and wounding protesters between 25th January 2011 and 30th June 2012, as well as investigating 'crimes against protesters not previously investigated', like torture and ill-treatment (Amnesty International, 2012b, p. 8). The other

committee was in charge of reviewing the cases of civilians in trials before military courts in addition to the cases of 'revolutionaries' imprisoned. As result of the committee's investigation, 572 detainees were released after receiving amnesty by the president (Amnesty International, 2012b, p. 8), although Morsi granted a general amnesty for 'crimes committed to support the revolution' which excluded civilians to be tried by military courts.

The military continued to randomly arrest and try civilians, like the case of Al-Qursay Island where the military police arrested 25 civilians (Al-Jaberi, 2012). In 2010 civilians were granted the right to live and work on the island. Despite the lack of any military properties on the island, the inhabitants were tried for assaulting military properties according to art. 198 of the 2012 constitution, which allowed the military to try civilians for crimes involving 'harming armed forces' (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 3). On the other hand, the military remained away from civilian scrutiny for their responsibilities; in fact, the code of military justice remained in force. Despite the desire for the fair trial of officers involved in crimes against protesters, the code established that the military prosecutor had the exclusive authority to investigate military personnel (Chams El-Dine, 2013, pp. 4–5). This explains how the MB remained a subaltern force regardless of its access to the political society. In fact the MB was incapable of imposing its decisions on the military because its lack of war of manoeuvre did not allow the MB to oppose the coercion of the military.

6.1.3 Pushing the war of position to its limits

The perpetration of the war of position against coercive apparatuses without the support of the war of manoeuvre met the opposition of the judiciary system. The MB attempted to expand its control of political society outside the government and its affiliated institutions. In fact, Qandil appointed Ahmed Makki as Minister of Justice, someone who was extremely critical of the dissolution of the parliament that was ruled by the Supreme Constitutional Court, accusing the court of being politicised by loyalists of Mubarak's regimes. This reaction was not unexpected since Makki was critical of Mubarak's regime. Indeed during Mubarak's rule, Makki demanded the independence of

the judiciary, becoming the leading voice of the judges' protests against Mubarak (Essam El-Din, 2012). Nevertheless, Ahmed Makki was in favour of the emergency law and the empowering repressive power of the police (Haenni, 2016, pp. 30–31). Similarly, Morsi chose as his vice president Mahmoud Makki. Like his younger brother Ahmed Makki, Minister of Justice, Mahmoud was known for his activism in reforming the judiciary system. Makki, along with presidential candidate Hisham Al Bastawisi, denounced the involvement of the judiciary in committing electoral fraud and for that was tried for 'defaming the judiciary' in 2005. He also supported political protesters organised by Kefaya and the young guard of the MB (Afify, 2012; Pioppi, 2013, p. 2; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 122).

The Brotherhood did not target the judiciary blindly; although the judiciary was considered the bastion of the authoritarian regime it contained seeds of dissent. In the aftermath of the uprising, the judiciary was not a unified bloc; in fact, on the one hand the judiciary was the executive of authoritarian rule and state corruption. On the other, there was an attempt from within the judiciary to criticise the regime and to act independently. This latter faction demanded the resignation of judges involved in supporting the previous regime, and the reinstatement of the judges' arbitrary removal due to their critical political views. In the end, the Supreme Constitutional Court remained a cosy nest for the supporters of the previous regime, while the Judges' Club – a social club that acts as an unofficial judges' syndicate – shared a reformist position, posing the two institutions in contrast (Pioppi, 2013, p. 3).

In October 2012, Morsi nominated Abdel El Magd Mahmoud as Vatican ambassador, with the intention of gaining the consent of the revolutionary movements who denounced Mahmoud's inefficiency in persecuting the leaders of the old regime, responsible for violence against protesters (Pioppi, 2013, p. 3; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 122). The Prosecutor General refused Morsi's offer, claiming to protect the independence of the institution from presidential impositions (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 123). The strenuous war of position of the MB against the judiciary eventually backfired because Morsi exacerbated the situation by increasing

control of the state institutions with the aim of controlling the judiciary, to limit the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements and to ensure the autonomy and economic privilege of the military. As a result, firstly the presidential decree also alienated the reformist Brotherhood judges; and secondly the decree and subsequently the new constitution triggered a new wave of protests, placing the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements in direct conflict with the war of position of the MB.

In November 2012, Morsi attempted to limit the power of the judges by issuing a new constitutional declaration in which he empowered himself with both executive and legislative powers (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 123; Bassiouni, 2017, p. 118). The decree attempted to also appeal to the revolutionary youth by attacking the old regime. In fact, it prescribed the retrial of Mubarak and all the security force members and officials responsible for the killing of protesters during the uprising (Beaumont, 2012). In this way, Morsi succeeded in replacing Mahmoud as Prosecutor General while becoming unaccountable and the self-proclaimed guardian of the Egyptian revolution (Selim, 2015, p. 190) (cf. next section for a detailed analysis on the revolutionary movements' reaction). This constitutional decree prescribed that all decrees, laws, and constitutional declarations issued by the president since his official appointment were binding until the election of a new parliament and the approval of the new constitutions (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 123; Selim, 2015, p. 190). Finally, the constitutional decree allowed the military to make arrests until the end of the constitutional referendum (Hussein, 2012a; Haenni, 2016, p. 31).

The decree created tensions over the independence of the judiciary which was still a priority even for the reformist judges close to the Brotherhood. In fact, Islamist judge Tariq al Bashri – who was called by the SCAF to amend the 1971 constitution in 2011 – rejected the constitutional declaration of 21st November 2012 (Haenni, 2016, pp. 33–34). Tensions between the MB and the judiciary were exacerbated when the majority of judges refused to oversee the legality of the constitutional referendum of December 2012 (Haenni, 2016, p. 33). In the meantime, despite the protests, the Constituent Assembly approved

the new constitutional draft, which protected military interests (BBC, 2012b; Hussein, 2012c). Ultimately, the new constitution was approved by 64% of votes in the referendums held on 15th and 22nd December 2012 with a 33% turnout (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 124; Selim, 2015, p. 192).

The war of position of the MB and the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements entered into collision due to the major restrictions that the new constitution imposed. Political and civil rights were not guaranteed by the new constitution which empowered the parliament and limited the term of the presidency; however, the president was still above the checks and balances. In fact, art. 202 prescribed that the independent body that monitored and charged the presidency was appointed by the president himself; art. 104 gave the president the power to veto parliamentary legislations; art. 176 granted the president the power to appoint the Chief of Justice and judges of the Supreme Constitutional Court (Selim, 2015, p. 192). Art. 219 allowed corporal punishment for cruel, degrading and inhuman crimes; more importantly, art. 198 still allowed the military courts to prosecute civilians involved in the broad scale of offences 'that harm the armed forces' (Selim, 2015, p. 192). Art. 215 restricted freedom of association for journalists (Selim, 2015, p. 192).

The MB protected the military interests by ensuring through art. 197 that the military budget remained secret; art. 195 obliged the parliament to consult the National Defence Council (NDC) (a body formed by internally nominated military officers) before issuing any law related to military affairs (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 33). The NDC was instituted by Sadat via art. 182 of 1971 constitution. However, it had already been set up by Nasser. It remained inactive until Tantawi as head of the SCAF called a meeting on 14th June 2012, just before Morsi's inauguration as president (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 6; Sayigh, 2013). Originally, the Council was formed by 11 out of 16 military officers and headed by the president. Tantawi's composition of the NDC allowed more civilians, six out of 14. According to art 197¹² of the 2012 constitution the NDC is the only

¹² Article 197, which granted the military independence, was similar to article 53 of the Selmi Document: 'Article 53: The incumbent SCAF members are responsible for deciding on all issues related to the armed forces including appointing its leaders and extending the terms in office of the aforesaid leaders. The current head of the SCAF is to act as commander-in-chief

institution able to discuss the military budget; in this way the parliament was excluded from scrutiny. In addition, the budget did not show a breakdown of the overall spending (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 6). Law 86 of 1986 granted the NDC the authority to define national defence policy in terms of troop number mobilisation and equipment during both war and peace (Chams El-Dine, 2013, pp. 6–7). Through the NDC, the new constitution formalised the role of the military in Egyptian politics; in fact, the NDC was responsible for the safety and security of the country and had to be consulted before parliament and president declared war (Sayigh, 2013). Finally, the new constitution guaranteed that the Minister of Defence had to be an officer since civilians cannot fill the post (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 33). Specifically, art. 146 of the 2012 constitution compelled the president to consult the NDC before declaring war or sending troops outside national territory; art. 197 also obliged the parliament to consult the NDC regarding drafting law related to the military.

In addition, during discussions in the Constituent Assembly, Mamdouh Shahin, the representative of the SCAF in the Constituent Assembly, pushed for the formation of a new military institution, the National Security Council (NSC); art. 193 prescribed that the president headed 12 members of the NSC with a similar prerogative to the NDC but on civilian defence (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 7). With the 2012 constitution, the MB aimed to secure for the military the domain of national security, hoping to lessen the military's grip on the economic structure of the state. The election of Morsi as president and the majority in parliament for the Freedom and Justice Party marked the first major transformation of the Egyptian state. For the first time since 1952, Egypt allowed free and fair elections and Morsi became the first Islamist president. This was the result of the long-standing war of position of the MB. However, the lack of war of manoeuvre affected the MB's consolidation of power. In fact, in the context of the semi-integral state, the limited ability that the MB had in influencing political institutions stressed how the war of position is necessary but not sufficient for a subaltern force to reach political power and control the

of the armed forces and Minister of Defense until a new constitution is drafted' (Ahram Online, 2012b).

state. The lack of other strategies like a war of manoeuvre and underground war – as well as its distance from other subaltern forces that had developed a war of manoeuvre – reduced the chances of the MB to resist the imposition of the military. In this regard, the MB was found to be allied force.

In fact, because of its allied position the MB attempted to gain control over the police as the alternative coercive force of the country. Indeed, the police supported the NDP in controlling the subaltern. Morsi thanked the security forces for their contribution, promising to restore security, better working conditions for the police (Amnesty International, 2012a, p. 5), and the trust between the people and the police. In August, Ahmed Makki – Minister of Justice – announced a draft of a new emergency law to restore security. Later Prime Minister Qandil announced that the draft was revoked to prove the government would not act above the law; nevertheless, the Minister of Interior then proposed a new draft to deal with crime which had similar features to the emergency law (Amnesty International, 2012a, p. 5). Police remained on strike for almost two years from Mubarak's resignation, with the Minister of Interior against Morsi; at the same time the lack of police in the street contributed to the privatisation of security (Sayigh, 2013).

In addition, the MB continued to target workers' movements; in response to the request of labour movements to meet their basic rights the MB responded with coercive confrontation – as well as the perpetration of torture and torture to death for prisoners (Selim, 2015, p. 193). The strategy of controlling the subaltern via coercion rather than leading them further alienated the subaltern forces and planted the seeds for its division which allowed the military to capitalise on such division to oust Morsi. This does not necessarily mean that the MB had the power to force the military or the police to torture prisoners to death; rather it highlights its lack of power to stop them, because it had not infiltrated the coercive apparatuses. On 6th May 2012, art. 6 of the code of military justice was abolished by the assembly of people. This article allowed the president to refer civilians to military court. Even though the president no longer had the power to send civilians to military courts, the military still kept the authority to judge civilians in military courts (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 4).

This was a failure of the intermediary force in taking the lead and integrating the subaltern groups within the state by guaranteeing them the protection from coercion by the dominant force. The intermediary force was unable to confront the military and impose its authority. In this way the MB's war of position partially succeeded in accessing political institutions but it failed in securing control of the coercive apparatuses.

6.2 Reshaping the economic structure?

The control of the MB within civil society was not limited to social mobilisation, control of civil society institutions and service provision to encourage ideological persuasion. Along with the attempt to control both political and civil society, the MB needed to control economic relations that were essential for the formation of the integral state. The engagement of the MB with the economic structure of the Egyptian semi-integral state reproduced the dilemma of the intermediary force. The MB had to face two major economic challenges during its year in power: on the one hand, it needed to be sure to solve the economic problems that triggered the popular uprising in 2011, reflecting the need of the allied force in reintegrating the subaltern within the state; and on the other hand, it needed to balance the economic interests of the military since the allied force did not have the capacity to challenge the dominant force, at least unless it became the leading force of the subaltern bloc.

Contrary to the assumption that the MB and the military allied due to their mutual economic interests, the allied force needed to reach a balance with the dominant force to protect its dominance. In fact, the MB – as the military – profited by neoliberal policies, from Sadat *infitah*; therefore once in power they made sure to continue such policies. When the MB was released from jail it attempted to benefit from the *infitah* policies; however, such profits were marginal due to the limits to investment that the regime imposed. In fact, its business remained limited to supermarket franchises and selling imported goods (Abul-Magd, 2012). In 2007 a group of businessmen from 72 companies, members of the MB, were brought to a military court. The

companies were construction firms, clothing shops, Turkish luxury furniture shops and a fast food chain (Abul-Magd, 2012). This stresses how the MB was not able to challenge the economic empire of the military, since its economic expansion under Mubarak was crushed.

On the other hand, the military's economic empire specialised in high and heavy industries, chemicals and civil goods (Abul-Magd, 2012); this might have given a chance to the MB to find a balance with the military, since it was not competing within the same industries. Different economic sectors will integrate different social forces. In fact, confident of the financial support of Qatar and Turkey's president, Morsi during his electoral campaign promised to launch the Nahada programme, a plan for national economic 'renaissance' based on heavy industrialisation (Abul-Magd, 2012). The MB attempted again to reintegrate different social forces within the state, since the programme aimed to attract the middle class who were advocating state intervention in the economy – like progressive income tax and distribution of national revenue – to fund education, healthcare and unemployment benefits especially for the youth, improving conditions for workers and farmers (Adly, 2016a, p. 68).

Due to its ambivalent attitude towards integrating and dis-integrating the subaltern, the MB attempted a selective integration. In fact, on the one hand, in July 2012, before starting the negotiation with the IMF, to ensure the support of public sector employees Morsi raised state pensions by 15% and public sector employees' salaries as well (Dalacoura, 2016, p. 71). In autumn 2012, the Egyptian pound fell, and to reassure the IMF the government proposed a 10-year development plan; the deal with the IMF would have included the reduction of energy subsidies and tax increases (Dalacoura, 2016, p. 72). On the other hand, the MB aimed to lighten the state budget; in order to do this it advocated privatisation, especially regarding essential infrastructure, rather than increasing taxation (Adly, 2016a, pp. 62–63). Following the neoliberal policies that had characterised the Egyptian economy since the 1970s, the MB was reluctant to accept the IMF loan, not on an ideological basis but rather a strategic one, because economic austerity would have undermined the popular base of the MB. The cut in food and fuel subsidises that the IMF demanded

formed a quarter of the whole country's budget (Dalacoura, 2016, p. 71); this would have alienated the lower- and middle-class supporters, therefore preventing the integration of these groups within the state (Adly, 2016a, p. 62; Dalacoura, 2016, p. 74).

Similarly, although the tax increase meant to only target goods like alcohol, tobacco and luxury products, it eventually also hit essential goods like food, transportation, medical care and housing (Joya, 2017, p. 349). The fact the taxation was not voted on in parliament but was rather a presidential decree increased the unpopularity of the president since the population affected by the reform considered it the result of an authoritarian act. The dis-integration of the state was not merely due to the austerity measures to meet the IMF conditions. It resulted also from the inability to address structural problems like the creation of progressive taxation and policies against illicit financial flow, which generated \$3 billion a year (Joya, 2017, p. 349).

6.2.1 EBDA and the economic challenge for the military's economic interests

The MB tried to appeal to investors and businessmen close to Mubarak, undertaking individual and collective negotiation. In fact, over 2012-2013 Hassan Malek – founder of the Egyptian Business Development Association (EBDA) – had a series of meetings with various businessmen; in one of these meetings, on 25th February 2013, Malek managed to reach out to 60 businessmen (both Brotherhood and NDP) with the intention of promoting local business in Alexandria (Awad, 2012; Marroushi, 2012a; 2012b; Fouad, 2013; Haenni, 2016, p. 26;38). EBDA was founded with the intention of being:

The pioneer business association in Egypt, to boost the economy for a better standard of living ... [to] enable businessmen to contribute effectively in boosting the Egyptian economy, affecting positively the lives of the broad base of people ... [by] attracting and encouraging investments, human development, providing projects and developmental solutions. (Adly, 2016a, pp. 73–74)

The association claimed that the massive corruption existing under Mubarak was the main reason for Egypt's economic hardship, disregarding the toxic effect of neoliberal policies. Neoliberalism for the MB was a way to take control of strategic economic sectors as the starting point to take control of the state. Therefore it portrayed itself as made up of responsible businessmen able to affect 'positively the lives of the broad base of people' (Adly, 2016a, p. 74). In addition, EBDA encouraged support for small and medium-sized factories to foster growth, hoping to create new job opportunities (Adly, 2016a, p. 74). The membership of EBDA was varied, including Islamist businessmen (like Osama Farid), businessmen closely linked with the organisation (like Abdel Moneim Al Saudi and Samir al Nagger), and also respected businessmen involved with the previous regime (like Mohamed Farid Khamis, Safwat Thabet, and Mansour Amer, who were in charge of attracting other businessmen linked to Mubarak). There were other businessmen from important sectors like steel, as well as those in collaboration with Rashid Mohamed Rashid, former Minister of Trade and Industries under Mubarak. Finally, EBDA also accepted among its members companies from Turkey and Kuwait (Abul-Magd, 2012; Adly, 2016a, p. 62; Haenni, 2016, pp. 26–27). In September 2012, when Morsi went to China, Hassan Malek, founder of EBDA, accompanied him and invited many tycoons close to Mubarak to join the trip and share the potential benefit (Abul-Magd, 2012). Such plans might have been seen as threatening to the economic interests of the SCAF, as well as to their dominance. In fact, improving the economic conditions of the subaltern via the involvement of the businessmen meant for the MB the possibility of integrating the subaltern and reducing the crony capitalists of the NDP to an allied force.

Through EBDA, the MB reached agreements with the Sawiris family, Yassin Mansour, Hamid al Shiti, and Hussein Salem. These businessmen were allowed to return from exile in return for repaying sums from their tax evasion over a period of five years (Haenni, 2016, p. 27). Naguib Sawiris was treated as a hero and the president's office's intention was 'to send out a positive message that Egypt would welcome all honourable men ready to serve the nation, promptly rectify their situation with the state and open new investment

horizons for the rebirth of the national economy' (Haenni, 2016, p. 38). Morsi continued negotiations with other businessmen, like Mounir Ghabbaour, Mohammed Mansour, Ahmed Al Maghrabi and Ahmed Ezz (Haenni, 2016, p. 27). These negotiations did not reach any agreement due to the military coup that ousted Morsi in July 2013. Arguably this signals the growing relationship between the MB and the businessmen in order to challenge military dominance. Seeking an alliance with the previous dominant force led the MB to fail in becoming the leading force of the subaltern; in fact, this strategy further alienated the revolutionary social movement who were successful in using the war of manoeuvre to counteract Mubarak's regime.

To guarantee good relations with the military, in March 2013 the Shura Council,¹³ with an overwhelming Islamist majority, ensured the input to expand military business. In fact, the parliament transferred the property rights of state-owned car factories from the Committee of Human Development to the Ministry of Military Production. The minister who visited the factory with the Islamist head of the committee expressed the intention to engage foreign partners and donors to relaunch the business (Abul-Magd, 2013, 2016, p. 33). In addition, the Ministry of Military Production was requested to assemble and sell tablets to government bodies like the Ministry of Religious Endowment and the Ministry of Education, without holding a fair and competitive public tender (Abul-Magd, 2013). The Military Engineers Authority was also granted contracts for public construction projects once again without winning a competitive public tender, similarly with the military's right to turn the existing Cairo–Alexandria desert road into a toll highway and gain from the deriving profit (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 33). Equally, the MB – through the Minister of Supply – granted to the Freedom and Justice Party the monopoly of distribution of subsidised goods like bread and butane gas cylinders (Abul-Magd, 2013). As in the past, the distributing of goods was covered by the donation of wealthy Brotherhood businessmen now the same strategies to gather consent were

¹³ The Egyptian parliament was formed by the People's Assembly, the lower house; and the Shura Council, the upper house. The constitution of 2014 abolished the bicameralism and established the unicameral parliament known as the House of Representatives (Völkel, 2017, p. 605).

financially covered by state resources (Abul-Magd, 2013). This was arguably another attempt by the MB to integrate the subaltern after the failure of the previous strategies.

In fact, on the one hand, the MB failed to integrate the subaltern forces – middle and lower classes – within the state, a similar situation to the failure of the crony capitalists in the 2000s. Indeed – as argued in Chapter Four – the alienation of these social forces and their dis-integration from the state led to the manifestation of the crisis of authority. On the other hand, as discussed in the previous section, the MB aimed to protect the economic interests of the dominant force, erroneously believing that protecting the economic privileges of the military would allow the MB to change economic relations with different parts of the business community. In fact, the formation of the EBDA by the MB was an attempt to unite the business community to change the economic structure in order to create development programmes led by the private sector, posing considerable challenges to the military's economic empire not only in terms of profits but also in terms of consent generated by different social forces that could be integrated in the state via the economic success of the EBDA.

6.2.2 Sinai – where the war of position, the war of manoeuvre and economic structure met

The war of position and the war of manoeuvre are two strategies at the disposal of subaltern forces to counter the hegemony of the dominant force. However, the control of the superstructure is linked with the control of the economic structure. As discussed earlier, the MB attempted to take control of the economic structure in order to launch an economic development led by the private sector via EBDA to compete with the military's economic empire. However, when the MB attempted to engage with more significant projects in relation to state infrastructure – which implied more concrete political action – the contrast between the MB and the military manifested over Sinai. In fact, Sinai represents the fact that the conversion of the wars of position and manoeuvre and the economic structure are interlinked and the control of these three elements is necessary to reshape the state. Major clashes between the

MB and the military emerged over the control of the economic project and security issues in Sinai. On the one hand the MB attempted to take control of development projects, exploiting its position within state institutions. On the other hand, the military opposed the intention of the MB, reminding it of its allied position – in other words, if the MB wanted to remain within state institutions it needed to abandon its own economic initiative.

Despite the concession that the MB granted to the military in terms of expanding civilian industry, favouring it with a non-competitive tender and excluding its activities from judiciary scrutiny, the precarious alliance between the MB and the military failed over the control of Sinai and related projects (Marshall, 2015, p. 11). In late 2012, the MB announced the Suez Canal Corridor development project: an ambitious project to turn the Suez Canal into a heavy manufacturing hub, based on a solar, wind and geothermal power station. The military would have been involved in the project by providing equipment and construction through the Ministry of Military Production and the Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI) (Marshall, 2015, pp. 11–12).

A contrast between the military and the MB emerged when the MB nominated the deputy prime minister as the single chairman overseeing the project, relegating the military to a minor role. The Sinai project was a test for the MB to understand to what extent it was able to challenge the military while shifting the attention from the expansion of the civilian market to development projects. However, the military soon reminded the MB that despite being an allied force it remained subaltern. In fact, when Morsi announced the involvement of India in the expansion of the project, Sisi, in his capacity of Minister of Defence, promptly remarked that no title would have been given to land near the canal and any further plan needed the approval of the military to protect the area from foreign insolvency. The military reminded the MB that firms and supervisors involved in the project should not be decided by any particular party. The MB responded to this provocative statement by stressing that the canal expansion was under presidential authority (Marshall, 2015, p. 13). After initial opposition from the Minister of Housing, Tarek Wafiq, who declared that the government would show the plan to the military but the

military would not have any voice in amending the project, three months later the ministry declared that the military was the only authority to able to grant licences to firms involved in the project (Marshall, 2015, p. 13).

The tensions between the military and the MB did not remain confined to the economic realm; rather, they spilled over due to a dispute of coercion. In fact, the interest of the military in Sinai was not merely economic; it was also a matter of control of national security. In other words, the military did not want to risk losing its coercive leverage in Sinai. In this case, the increasing instability in Sinai constituted a threat. Apart from the underdeveloped social economic conditions, jihadist groups started to penetrate the peninsula (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 5). On 5th August 2012, 16 Egyptian soldiers were killed in an ambush in North Sinai, and two armed cars were stolen and used to cross the border into Israel, where seven jihadists were killed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) (Al Jazeera, 2012c). The military accused Hamas of being affiliated with the MB and responsible for the attacks (Haenni, 2016, p. 32),¹⁴ since the Egyptian military is not allowed in Zone C,¹⁵ along the Israeli border, and only police are allowed (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 5). To solve the issue, in November 2012 Morsi attempted a dialogue with jihadist groups; the negotiations eventually failed, due to the refusal from Sinai jihadists to engage with the MB since they were considered heretics due to their alliance with the military (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 5)

At the same time, while Morsi asked the military to suspend the operation to allow negotiation, the military continued the operation, asserting that no dialogue was possible with the jihadists. Eventually Sisi, in his capacity of Minister of Defence, attempted a dialogue with local tribes regarding land ownership. The division grew between the MB and the military over capitalising support of local subaltern forces to gain coercion of Sinai. Finally, Law 14 of 2012 allowed the Minister of Defence to set the rules of land rights in Sinai, and in December Sisi banned private ownership and rent in areas strategically important for the military (Chams El-Dine, 2013, p. 6). Tensions between the

¹⁴ This incident cost the resignation of Tantawi and Annan, cf. section 6.1.2.

¹⁵ Zone C was established by the peace treaty with Israel.

MB and the military on security issues emerged on several fronts: the military questioned the legality of the 'Suez Canal Corridor' plan that Morsi presented as an industrial plan for technology development in Suez, Ismailia and Port Said, advocating a partnership between the public sector and foreign private investors. Tension was raised also by the intention of Morsi to negotiate with Sudan the contested cities of Halayeb and Shalatin (Haenni, 2016, p. 32).

6.3 War of position vs war of manoeuvre – the seeds of the counter-revolution

The fear of the 'Brotherhoodisation' of state institutions played a key role in alienating the revolutionary movement, especially since the MB did not respect the Fairmont agreement which facilitated the electoral victory of Morsi. Instead of building consent with the revolutionary forces, the peak of the war of position of the MB allowed it to use a form of coercion to oppose the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements. From this perspective, the reaction of the revolutionary movement was the escalation of their prominent strategy. The clashes between the war of position of the MB and the reaction of the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements created the condition for a stalled situation that was eventually resolved by the military intervention. The military coup put an end to the contrast between the war of position and the war of manoeuvre and set the basis for the transformation of the Egyptian state in a counter-revolutionary regime.

The MB demonstrated its inability to be the leading force of the subaltern bloc – a force that is able to confront the dominant force, set achievable goals and gather the support of different social groups. In these terms, the MB attempted to confront the military without setting a specific goal, since often the MB, contrastingly, served the military's interests. Finally, instead of developing the consent of social groups – like workers and revolutionary movements – that had been crucial during the uprising the MB attempted to unite the business community to steer the economic structure of the country. This emerged from the relations between the leadership of the MB and its youth component. Indeed, the MB failed to keep the leadership even of its one base. The results of such poor leadership led to the exclusion of the younger

generation and to the defection of the so-called *wasat* generation. These internal clashes weakened the stability of the organisation and allowed hardliners to take control of it. The youth section of the MB was largely based on a student division operating within the local universities, coordinated by graduates in their late 20s and early 30s. This network had relations with other youth movements with a different ideology; nonetheless, all of them shared the anti-regime sentiment that had pervaded Egypt since 2005. The MB youth observed the non-violent resistance and civil disobedience that characterised secular movements (Al-Awadi, 2013, pp. 541–542).

The MB continued to alienate the revolutionary youth with the attempt to grab coercive control from the military, via institutional reforms and the exercise of power over the police. Both strategies failed to control civil society, and they produced the disengagement of the subaltern forces, creating mistrust that was easily filled by Tamarrod and subsequently steered by the military. In terms of institutional reforms, art. 6 of the constitutional declaration allowed that in case of danger for the safety and unity of the nation, the president had the freedom to take all necessary measures to stop this danger (Haenni, 2016, pp. 24–25). This article recalled the intentionally vague wording of law 162 (the emergency law) that was applied by Mubarak for 30 years (Haenni, 2016, p. 25). In addition to the constitutional declaration of 22nd November 2012, Morsi issued law 96 of 2012 – the so-called ‘law on the Protection of the Revolution’.

Contrary to the SCAF security policy against protesters – that mostly involved a crackdown on the protests – after November 2012 the MB attempted to reduce the room for action by criminalising protests and controlling the trade unions (Haenni, 2016, p. 24). The intention of the law was to protect protesters from becoming the target of violence and police brutality, by criminalising a special court to try crimes against protesters. However, the law also allowed the protesters to be charged for ‘insulting and resisting the authorities’ which in itself contradicted the purpose of the law (Haenni, 2016, p. 24). In addition, the new constitution continued to limit the formation of new

independent unions, considering that between 2011 and 2012 the number of strikes and worker protests was over 4,000 while the new independent trade unions were more than 1,000. Although art. 52 of the constitution granted union independence, in reality such a right of association was exclusively granted to the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) which continued to maintain its monopoly over the trade unions (Haenni, 2016, p. 25).

In May 2013, the MB expanded its repressive policies to other organisations; in fact, it proposed a draft law to restrict civil society organisations by monitoring their activities by security and administrative bodies, which had broad power in investigating foreign funding and restricting the collection of donors (Selim, 2015, p. 193). The repression against revolutionary movements and protesters did not stop; in fact, according to the Egyptian Centre for Social and Economic Rights, during Morsi's year in power Egypt had 558 demonstrations, 514 strikes and 500 sit-ins (Al-Awadi, 2013, p. 545; Achcar, 2016, pp. 80–81). In June 2013, the El Nadim Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence announced that in the first year the MB was in power the torture documented was 359 cases, plus 217 cases of death due to torture (Selim, 2015, p. 193). In this climate the polarisation between MB supporters and the revolutionary movements emerged sharply. On the one hand, revolutionary movements protested at the presidential palace and stormed the MB offices; on the other hand, Islamist supporters besieged the Supreme Constitutional Court (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 124; Achcar, 2016, p. 76). In fact, in December 2012, Islamist supporters of Morsi surrounded the Supreme Constitutional Court with the aim of preventing it from taking legal action against the Shura Council and the Constituent Assembly, portraying it as an enclave of Mubarak loyalists (Selim, 2015, p. 191).

At the same time, the MB leaders invited their supporters to use violence against the opposition, especially the National Salvation Front (NSF), claiming that they were simply a minority of insurgents (Selim, 2015, p. 191). A few days later, a sit-in at the presidential palace was attacked by MB supporters, causing seven deaths and hundreds of injuries. When the military declared that it would

not have tolerated any sort of violence, Morsi withdrew the constitutional decree but not the referendum (Selim, 2015, p. 191). Finally, the Minister of Defence, Abdel Fattah al Sisi, attempted to mediate between seculars and Islamists primarily to protect the interests that the military had gained during Morsi's leadership (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 124). Sisi, without consulting the government or the president, invited Morsi, the government and the opposition to confront each other in a 'social dialogue', remarking on the ability of the military to interfere in politics (Sayigh, 2013).

During a joint news conference on 23rd November 2012, Amr Moussa and Mohamed El-Baradei supported the declaration made by Sameh Ashour – head of the lawyers' syndicate – who defined Morsi's presidential decree as 'a coup against legitimacy ... We are calling on all Egyptians to protest in all of Egypt's squares on Friday' (Al Jazeera, 2012a; BBC, 2012a). In this way, the revolutionary forces focused their war of manoeuvre against the MB as the allied force rather than oppose the military's dominance. In fact, the revolutionary forces attempted – as they did after the resignation of Mubarak – to develop a war of position next to their war of manoeuvre. As a result, the reaction of revolutionary forces – from social movements to political parties – united a varied and an anti-Morsi front to form the National Salvation Front (NSF), with three main opposition leaders: liberal Mohamed El-Baradei, Nasserist Hamdeen Sabahi and diplomat and Mubarak's foreign minister – popular for his anti-Israeli positions – Amr Moussa (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 124; Selim, 2015, p. 191). The aim of the NSF was the cancellation of the constitutional declaration, the postponement of the constitutional referendum and the appointment of a new Constituent Assembly, asking for a new government of national unity by recalling the spirit of cooperation stipulated in the Fairmont agreement (BBC, 2012c; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2013, p. 124; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013).

The formation of the NSF as a tentative move by the political parties to take the lead of the revolutionary base – as Gramsci analysed in the case of the

Biennio Rosso – remained ineffective until a new social movement appeared on the political scene to pit the war of manoeuvre against the MB further. Dissatisfaction with the governance of the MB led a group of citizens in three governorates in March 2013 to call for military intervention (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 125). This call was echoed by Tamarrod, a new social movement. Tamarrod (Rebel) was founded in February 2013 by a group of young activists who started their political activity within Kefaya (Barbary and Adib Doss, 2014, pp. 156–157). Tamarrod was inspired by Nasserism, referencing the figure of Nasser, reviving the feeling of nostalgia in the Egyptian collective memory. The leaders criticised Kefaya's other components – such as April 6 and the Revolutionary Socialists – because they did not maintain the unity within Kefaya. The leaders attempted to be part of these other movements but due to their apparently incompatible ideology they decided to come together and revive Nasserism under Tamarrod (Barbary and Adib Doss, 2014, pp. 157–158).

The aim of Tamarrod was rather simple and effective: it had the intention of asking for the resignation of Morsi by showing him it was able to gather 12 million signatures (the same number of votes Morsi received during the presidential election) (Barbary and Adib Doss, 2014, p. 163). The main accusation aimed at Morsi was that the MB had hijacked the revolution, by monopolising power, *ikhawanising* the state and suppressing the opposition (Selim, 2015, p. 194; Volpi and Stein, 2015, pp. 286–287). Tamarrod was affirmed as a movement for the Egyptian people claiming to regain power for the Egyptian people (Barbary and Adib Doss, 2014, p. 164). It justified the idea of the petition against Morsi by using Sa'd Zaghloul,¹⁶ a nostalgic figure, and

¹⁶ Sa'd Zaghlul (1857–1927) was the founder and leader of the Wafd Party, and considered the 'Father of the Egyptians'. Raised in a rural environment and educated in a European-style system, Zaghlul was the classic example that social mobility was possible due to the Tanzimat reforms in Egypt. The Wafd party started as a delegation of landlords and commercial bourgeoisie demanding Egyptian representation at the Paris Peace Conference – a peace conference organised by the allies to redefine geopolitical relations with the defeated countries of World War I. To overcome the denial of Egyptian representation, the Wafd sought popular support for their demand for independence, claiming to represent the will of the Egyptian people rather than the Egyptian rulers backed by the British. Using a similar rhetoric, the

reconnecting with the more recent El-Baradei campaign, the National Campaign for Change of late 2010 (Barbary and Adib Doss, 2014, pp. 164–165).

The novelty of Tamarrod compared with the other movements and campaigns was to achieve the shift from cyberspace to the street (Iskandar, 2013), and to reach also those who remained passive, as Emad Mubarak, a member of Tamarrod, explained: '[Egyptians] are generally split between those who go down to the streets and those who do not. And it is important for us to know how much support we have from those who remain in their homes' (Emad Mubarak quote in Antoun, 2013). The movement interpreted unity as a core value and any form of dissent was a threat to unity, and as Mahmoud Badr – founding member of Tamarrod – indeed affirmed, 'unity is the most important thing' (Mahmoud Badr quote in Antoun, 2013). This highlights how it was the scattered action of various components of the subaltern bloc that prepared the terrain for the military coup, rather than their passive acceptance of the alliance between the military and the MB. Indeed, the growing division within the subaltern bloc was simply an advantage for the military, which did very little to co-opt Tamarrod. It rather allowed the clashes among the allied and the subaltern forces to escalate to the right moment when the military could lead the subaltern against the allied force via the military coup, portrayed populistically as the fulfilment of the will of the people.

By mid-May 2013 Tamarrod claimed to have 2 million signatures, while in June they claimed 15 million (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 125).

Tamarrod movement sought to represent the will of the people to force President Morsi to resign.

As a charismatic and eloquent leader, Zaghlul channelled popular discontent with the Egyptian quest of independence; the British attempted to dismiss the Wafd demands by arresting and exiling Wafd leaders including Zaghlul. Such actions backfired causing a popular uprising in support of the Wafd, with protesters chanting 'Egypt to the Egyptians'; this uprising became known as the revolution of 1919. To put an end to the social unrest, Zaghlul was allowed to return to Egypt and the Wafd went to Paris hoping to make a case for Egyptian independence, in line with the self-determination right which remained unfulfilled (Vatikiotis, 1991, pp. 257–260; Goldschmidt, 2002, pp. 243–245; Cleveland and Bunton, 2013, pp. 180–182). For a detailed discussion of Zaghlul's involvement in Anglo-Egyptian relations between 1919 and 1922 leading to the British unilateral withdrawal from Egypt and meaningless independence, cf. Vatikiotis, 1991, pp. 262–272.

On 23rd June the military was already preparing to act, especially when Sisi declared that the military would intervene to protect the will of the people and to avoid civil war (Kingsley, 2013; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 125). However, the success of Tamarrod was due to the economic and strategic support that the movement received from the military and the Minister of Interior. On the one hand Tamarrod's leaders had access to a bank account administrated by the military; on the other hand, the Minister of Interior allowed protests against Morsi and violence against MB offices (Ketchley, 2017b).

The fact that the Minister of Interior and the military decided to financially and logistically support Tamarrod addresses that, firstly, the initiative was nevertheless coming from a subaltern group, not from the dominant force. Secondly, it highlighted the need for the dominant force to seek a more reliable allied force that would not challenge the military as the MB did. Protesters started to fill Tahrir Square after 26th June 2013 while Morsi placed the responsibility of the political situation on the heritage of the Mubarak era with a manipulative media and an uncooperative judiciary and opposition (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 125). Millions of people took to the streets and squares in Egypt to protest against Morsi; on the other hand, Morsi's supporters mobilised as well to defend the president's policies. They gathered around Rabaa al Adawya mosque in Nasser City, and elsewhere in the country. On 1st July, the military issued a 48-hour ultimatum to Morsi to meet protesters' demands, threatening Morsi with imposing an alternative road map if he did not fulfil them. The following day, Morsi denounced the danger of the return of the old regime and rejected the ultimatum, claiming he was legitimately elected (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 126; Selim, 2015, p. 195). In response, Badr called for the military to intervene, addressing Minister of Defence Sisi: 'I tell you, sir, you may be the general commander of the Egyptian military but the Egyptian people are your supreme commander, and they are immediately ordering you to side with their will and call an early presidential election' (Saleh and Taylor, 2013).

Finally, on 3rd July 2013, Sisi appeared on national TV, surrounded by new aspiring allied forces, stating that the military had had no intention of stepping into the political sphere but that they felt that the people were calling them to save the nation and to help them in their revolution. Sisi announced that Morsi 'failed to meet and conform to the demands of the people'; he was subsequently removed from office and arrested, and then 'the army met all political powers, the youth movements and sections of the society to draw a roadmap' (Al Arabiya, 2013; Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 126). The 2012 constitution was suspended; Adly Mansour – the president of the Supreme Constitutional Court – was nominated president ad interim to lead the country to a new presidential election; and a new Constituent Assembly of 50 members (with only two Islamists) was appointed to draft a new constitution (Brownlee, Masoud and Reynolds, 2015, p. 126). Finally, the NSF issued an official statement declaring that:

the NSF salutes the police and military forces, and bows its head in tribute and respect for the great people, imposing their will of complete victory and continuing to strive for a constitution befitting a civilized Egypt, rising to a bright future ... Glory to the people, to the great army and to the courageous police. (Abdelrahman, 2015, p. 115)

The military coup of 3rd July 2013 marked another important shift in Egyptian politics; the precarious alliance between the MB and the military failed due to the attempt of the MB to challenge the military's fragile hegemony. The MB attempted to control political society and meanwhile lost control of civil society, mistaking the legitimacy derived from electoral support to mean hegemony over the state and civil society. The MB failed primarily to build any alternative alliance to oppose the power of the military. The military acted against the MB to protect its control over the political structure that it had recently regained in 2011. The persistence of a dominant force like the military, in a semi-integral state like Egypt, will be investigated in the next chapter.

6.4 Conclusion

As discussed in Chapter Three, the hegemonic crisis can be resolved with a variety of outcomes depending on the type of state and the autonomy of the subaltern forces. As a reminder, a successful revolution is the resolution of the hegemonic crisis developed in a dis-integrated state with the use of a war of manoeuvre, whereas, at the other end of the spectrum, the passive revolution is the resolution of a hegemonic crisis characterised by the top-down approach of the dominant force and by the exclusion of the subaltern forces. In between these two extremes there are morbid symptoms that generate forms of counter-revolution, either as Caesarism or as spontaneous insurrection. When the most advanced force does not take the lead of the spontaneous insurrection the potential that it could turn into a successful revolution gets reduced.

The case of the transformation of the Egyptian state and the inability of the MB to take the lead of the revolutionary forces prepared the ground for the counter-revolution. As discussed in Chapter Four, at the time of the 25th January revolution the MB was the most advanced force within the subaltern bloc. It progressively abandoned a confrontational strategy against Mubarak's regime and maximised the war of position by infiltrating civil society institutions. The infiltration of civil society institutions was necessary to expand the consent of different social groups. The MB's consent was built primarily over service provision which compensated for the dis-integration of the state. In this way – as Chapter Five explained – the uprising opened the opportunity for the MB to expand its war of position to political institutions. The perpetration of its war of position was, however, characterised by its oscillation between two extremes. In fact, since the MB became an intermediary force able to link the social forces within civil society with the dominant force in political society, it acted as both allied force of the dominant force and as a leading force of the subaltern bloc.

Due to this oscillation the Egyptian case cannot be considered as a form of passive revolution – as De Smet argues, the revolution did not succeed because subaltern classes did not reach political power to transform economic

relations (De Smet, 2016, p. 202), and the attempt of the MB to reach political power after 25th January 2011 was considered a 'counter-revolution in democratic form' (De Smet, 2016, p. 214). First of all, De Smet considers as subaltern classes only the workers and peasants; this overlooks the fact that although the new generation of the MB were businessmen, this did not make them dominant because they did not build sufficient counter-hegemonic consent and coercion to oppose the military.

Secondly, the assumption that Morsi was a civil Caesar, able to shape the 'counter-revolution in democratic form', stresses the narrow view that the control of the economic structure was, for the benefit of the MB businessmen, in order to reproduce a class conflict between bourgeoisie forces and the proletariat. In this regard the clashes between the MB and the revolutionary forces relied on the authoritarian action that Morsi had to impose constitutional reforms (De Smet, 2016, p. 215). This interpretation overlooks the attempt of the MB to control the economic structure to promote the development of the country via its economic organisation (EBDA) which would have posed significant challenges to the dominance of the military as the sole actor in control of the development of Egypt.

Thirdly, the mobilisation of revolutionary forces via the war of manoeuvre contradicts the interpretation of the Egyptian Uprising as a form of passive revolution because the revolutionary youth, workers and peasants did not reach political society as the MB did thanks to its prolonged war of position. The failure of the MB was due to the fact that it was in between the military and the revolutionary forces, and it was unable to develop a coherent strategy that could have turned it into a reliable allied force of the military, or the leading force of the revolutionary forces. The MB exacerbated its war of position without developing any war of manoeuvre, and in turn opposed the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary forces, hoping to control the economy of the country via EBDA. On the other hand, the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements allowed the targeting of the MB as an intermediary force, regardless of the dominance of the military. The escalation of these

conflicts prepared the ground for the military coup, which removed the first Islamist freely elected president of Egypt.

Chapter 7 The post-coup and the transformation of the state

Events post-coup unfolded a further twist in the relation between the dominant force and subaltern forces. The military had to prevent the possibility that a new subaltern force could develop and take the lead of the subaltern bloc. In order to avoid such a scenario, the dominant force had two options: 1) to seek another and more reliable allied force within the context of semi-integral state; or 2) attempt to start a passive revolution to transform the Egyptian state into an integral state. Contrary to the interpretation that the military coup was not the end of a passive revolution that started in 2011, it is actually post-2013 – the consolidation of the post-coup regime – that can be analysed through the lens of passive revolution.

As addressed in Chapters Two and Three, passive revolution and counter-revolution are often used interchangeably to address the unfolding of the Egyptian Uprising. In this view, the starting point of the counter-revolution was right after the resignation of Mubarak and the transition period controlled by the military and the MB (De Smet, 2016, p. 209). As discussed in Chapters Five and Six, this interpretation undermines the role the social forces like the MB and the revolutionary movements had in preparing the ground for the counter-revolution. In fact, Chapter Five highlighted how the separation between the war of manoeuvre and the war of position advanced the dominance of the military; and Chapter Six analysed how the counter-revolution was the result of the clash between the war of position of the MB and the war of manoeuvre of the revolutionary movements, while the military stood in the background waiting for the right moment to start a new transformation of the Egyptian state. In other words, Chapter Six addressed how the counter-revolution was not a form of passive revolution with a Caesarist tendency. This chapter now reflects on the transformation of the

Egyptian state after the coup. In this regard, I argue that the post-2013 situation was not the restoration of the status quo, as in 2011; in fact, contrary to pre-2011, the military was attempting to recreate an integral state to prevent the formation and potential challenge from social forces that could exploit pockets of autonomy within civil society to take the lead of the subaltern bloc.

In this last empirical chapter, I investigate the attempt of the military to transform the semi-integral state with the aim of integrating the subaltern forces. Nevertheless, the dominant force still needs the support of an allied force, due to the partial integration of the subaltern with the state. In other words, the dominant force can only hegemonise the entire society without the need of any allied force within an integral state. Unless the military manages to fully integrate the subaltern, the dominant force will always need the support of an allied force to keep its hegemony. In the previous chapter, I argued that the dominant group – the military – survived the challenge of its allied group – the Muslim Brotherhood – exploiting the consent of the faction of subaltern forces that attacked the allied force. In this chapter, however, I will address why, instead of building an alliance with the subaltern forces like the secular opposition, and technocrats, the new military regime preferred to rely on coercion to establish its hegemony while establishing ad hoc alliances with various groups; these weak alliances were challenged by the foreign support that the military regime received. In fact, the aftermath of the military coup witnessed not only the reshaping of new alliances but also the increase of coercion in the country. Indeed, despite an initial phase of cooperation with leftists and Nasserists that the regime used strategically to appeal to workers, considered the most threatening social group, as well as to appeal to the ultra-nationalist rhetoric.

In fact, the new regime has not yet formed a suitable alliance with other intermediary forces able to ensure its hegemony; the lack of such consent emerged from the urgency of the military in controlling the means of production by expanding its economic empire, and to protect its dominant position it relies heavily on increasing coercion. The expansion of the military economy marginalises and divides the business community, and the regime is spreading

its consensus in fragmented sectors of the subaltern forces. Contrary to the Mubarak era, when the interests of the cronies were channelled into the political arena via the NDP, in the post-coup era the relations between the economic and political elites have been reshaped directly by Sisi's personality. The secular opposition which supported the coup suffered from marginalisation as well, and parties like the Salafi Nour Party were marginalised during the parliamentary election of 2015, although they had taken part in writing the new constitution of 2014; with the initial co-opting of the Nour Party, Sisi's regime tried to appeal to Islamist supporters since other Islamist parties like Wasat and Watan opposed the coup (Messieh and Mohamed, 2015).

The secular opposition acted similarly to the Nour Party. Tamarrod first suffered from internal division and then was transformed in a short-lived political party supporting Sisi's candidacy. The National Salvation Front collapsed after the coup, due to its inability to become a unifying force that could lead the subaltern bloc. Nevertheless, Amr Moussa headed the Constituent Assembly and attempted to form a coalition list for the parliamentary elections, while Hamedeen Sabahi participated both in the presidential elections in 2014 and the parliamentary elections in 2015. The Dostour Party suffered from internal divisions which affected its popular support, after its cooperation with the dominant force further alienated the subaltern forces who protested against Morsi but did not wish to see the consolidation of the military as a dominant force. On the other hand, the business community was fragmented and not supported by any other opposition parties (especially after the co-optation of the Free Egyptians Party); this allowed the military to relegate business to a subordinate position, allowing just a few companies to be involved in projects only as subcontractors, while the rest of the non-aligned companies remained excluded.

The aftermath of the coup illustrated how the military did not strategically use the support of the opposition which played a role in undermining the MB's authority and supporting the military intervention to form a new alliance; rather it preferred to rely on coercion, divide and rule strategies for both political and

economic opponents, and to reinforce alienating forms of consent derived from the network of patronage. Whether or not the developing hegemony of the dominant group has the ability to rely primarily on coercion and fragmented consent to prove durable goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

7.1 The military's transformation of the political superstructure

The priority of the dominant force was to reintegrate various subaltern forces – youth, and middle and lower classes – within the state. In order to do so, the military had to firstly seek a new allied force since it was still operating within a semi-integral state; in this context the pool of forces that targeted Morsi were the first option to be considered as potential allies. In this way, the military transformed the state political institutions to ensure the inclusion of an allied force that could connect with various social forces within civil society – as the MB was the intermediary force between political and civil society in the aftermath of the 25th January uprising.

The road map set up by the military consisted of the drafting of the new constitution and the consolidation of a pro-regime coalition within parliament (Alsharif and Saleh, 2013). These two developments were essential for the formation of the new allied groups that would eventually support the new regime. During the first year of the transitional government, the new regime tested Morsi's opposition, while the parliamentary elections represented the formation of weak and variegated allied groups.

7.1.1 Interim government – the start of the counter-revolution

The formation of the interim government highlights two main features of the new state that the military intended to benefit from: first, the military, like the MB, did not have much experience in running state business; therefore, it needed to rely on technocrats. Second, the military needed an allied force that could connect and represent subaltern forces – especially youth, workers and leftists – who concurred with the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis in 2011.

In the first phase, the newly formed regime failed to maintain the consent of leftist co-opted forces like the Social Democrats, Karama and Dostour. This government represented the inability of Morsi's opposition, most notably the National Salvation Front, to negotiate and to take part in the transition. However, once the interim government served the purpose of securing the military's privileges by drafting the new constitution, and by increasing the use of coercion, the new regime shifted alliance and sought the support of the business community. But the businessmen split over opposing or accepting their new subordinate role. Despite such division among the subaltern, the post-coup was led by co-opted opposition and technocrats.

In fact, the technocrats in Beblawi's government had worked with the MB; for example, Ahmed Galal – Beblawi's new Minister of Finance – took part in 'societal dialogues' that Qandil launched to address economic issues. Similarly, the Minister of Investment, Osama Saleh, served in the same post from August 2012 to May 2013 (Ahram Online, 2013b). This highlights how both the Muslim Brotherhood and the military were in need of skilled technocrats in order to face the country's economic difficulties. In fact, many of the ministers in the new government had connections with Mubarak's regime: Dorreya Sharaf El Din, Minister of Information, was a member of the NDP and relevant figure of the state-run Egyptian Radio and Television Union; Ibrahim Mahleb, Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Development, under Mubarak was appointed head of the public Arab contractors' company (Ahram Online, 2013b). The presence of figures close to Mubarak showed the need for the new regime to seek cooperation beyond the allied forces to avoid giving concessions to the social forces which were the protagonists during the post-uprising.

At the same time, the military needed to test the support of the co-opted forces – both the secular opposition and the remnants of Mubarak's regime. The co-optation of these technocrats was not only due to their expertise but also the fact that they represented different forces that were crucial to target the MB in 2013. In this regard, in addition to Beblawi – founder of the Social Democratic Party in 2011 – as Prime Minister, the Nasserist and unionist

leader and member of the Karama Party, Kamal Abu Eita, was appointed Minister of Labour; and Ahmed Burai – supporter of the independent labour union – became Minister of Social Solidarity; Hossam Eissa, co-founder of the Dostour Party and former member of the Nasserist Party, was nominated Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Higher Education (Ahram Online, 2013b; Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 35).

However, this placebo co-optation of labour's leaders was not followed by concrete action to placate the strikes. It actually provoked the opposite results, in fact: the co-optation of the leadership of such groups compromised their credibility and alienated the base. The intention to integrate the workers resulting in the split between the base and the leadership is a similar pattern to the one Gramsci analysed in the *Biennio Rosso* – as discussed in Chapter Three. Workers occupied the factories, a manifestation of their war of manoeuvre, while the leadership of the socialist party did not take the lead of the movement to transform the war of manoeuvre into a more significant threat to the state.

As a result, the split nurtured the opportunity of the leadership of the revolutionary forces in 2011 to become a leading force of the subaltern bloc and to pose challenges to the dominant force. Indeed, the temporarily allied forces in the Beblawi government did not hesitate to target revolutionary forces; for example, the Minister of Higher Education, Hossam Eissa – co-founder of the Dostour Party – suppressed students' demonstrations and involved private security providers in controlling students' and universities' activities (Ahram Online, 2013a). Finally, Abu Eita remained silent when the military was cracking down on the workers' strike of the Suez Steel Company (Beinin, 2013a; Charbel, 2016). From this perspective, the political leader of the subaltern forces concurred with the formation of the counter-revolution and the transformation of the post-coup state. In fact, the military attempted to reach out for the consent of the revolutionary movements by co-opting political leaders active against Mubarak like El-Baradei and Abu Eita.

Finally, the major achievement of the interim government was to ensure temporary political stability and allow the consolidation of the military as a

dominant force. The constitutional committee – formed via the constitutional declaration on 7th July 2013, but starting its work on 8th September – appointed to draft the new constitution was composed of remnants of Mubarak's regime, as well as representatives of professional syndicates; official representatives of Al-Azhar University and the Coptic Church; with the representation of youth by Tamarrod, Youth Coalition and Student Union. The allocation according to political ideology did not reflect the popular support of the parties; in fact, Islamists were represented by Bassem Al Zaka from the Nour Party, and Kamal Al Halabawy, former MB; liberals were represented by Sayed al Badawy from the New Wafd, and Amr Moussa; and leftists were Mohamed Abul Ghar from the Social Democratic Party, and Mohamed Samy from the Karama Party (Auf, 2013; Mansour, 2013).

However, the abrupt resignation of the Beblawi government also marked the failure of the anti-Morsi coalition. The failure in calming the waves of strikes due to the lack of guarantee of minimum wages and the inability to solve the storage of cooking gas and the insecurity due to clashes with the MB's supporters led to the resignation of Beblawi (Ahram Online, 2014a; BBC, 2014; Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 35). In his speech, Beblawi gave conflicting reasons for the resignation, claiming that his government 'restored basic security and helped bring forth a new constitution' (Sabry, 2014). If, on the one hand, Beblawi's resignation opened officially the door for Sisi's candidacy, on the other it seems that the post-revolution forces, who aimed to be pro-revolution and at the same time non-Islamist and anti-Morsi, failed to reach an agreement with the new regime (Sabry, 2014).

The dominant force continued to transform the state political superstructure via constitutional reforms and parliamentary elections. The military was moving away from its previous strategy of relying on only one main allied force. In fact, the opposition protagonists of the coup, like Karama, the Social Democratic Party and the Dostour Party, soon became excluded from the power sharing and were no longer able to be considered allied forces of the military. A significant example is the Social Democratic Party which supported the coup, many of whose members were part of the interim government led by Beblawi;

despite helping draft the new constitution of 2014, contrasting bids for the leadership compromised the credibility and stability of the party and in fact their winning only four seats in parliament reflects the distance of the Social Democrats from the regime (Ahram Online, 2013b; Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, pp. 10, 23).

7.1.2 Establishing the new rules of the game – the new constitution

In January 2014 the new constitution was approved in a referendum which attained 94% of popular consent; this new constitution maintained the same military privileges as the MB constitution of 2012 despite the concession of a few rights (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 35). In fact, art. 203 (similarly to art. 197 of the MB constitution) ratified the secrecy of the military budget, granting to the National Defence Council the authority to discuss it (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 35). Art. 201 specifies that the Minister of Defence must be an officer; art. 204 prescribes that civilians should face military courts for attacks on military businesses (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 1; Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 35). Art. 204 extended military trials to civilians; according to art. 234 the Minister of Defence must be approved by the SCAF for two presidential terms (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 2). In addition, the new institutional set-up was created to weaken the parliament and strengthen the personal relations that individual MPs had with the president rather than channel their grievances through a political party. In fact, the constitution approved in January 2014 abolished bicameralism in Egypt, creating only one chamber for a total of 568 MPs directly elected (Sanyal, 2016, pp. 446–447). A single chamber limited the access to political society.

In addition, electoral law – law 46 of 2014 – established that only 120 seats out of 568 should be elected through a closed list; the rest are elected on individual representation, plus 27 MPs are appointed by the president, therefore not elected. As a result, the new electoral law increased the fragmentation of the opposition, and offered an advantage to the individual who could rely on their network of patronage by exploiting the mixed system

of 420 seats for independent candidates, and 120 seats for closed-list coalitions (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 5). According to art. 5 of law 46 of 2014, each list must present a number of candidates equal to the seats available (Sanyal, 2016, p. 447). Therefore, voters have different numbers of votes to cast according to the district; for example if the district prescribes three seats, the voters have three votes to cast, one for each seat (Gur, 2016, p. 461). Despite the fact that votes have unequal weight according to the geographic area, this system allows the increase of the patronage network in which voters are interconnected with more than one candidate, and voters can spread their votes among all lists, regardless of the party affiliation or ideology. Therefore, for the individual seats, this system endorses the existing network of patronage, where only well-connected and well-funded individuals can run for elections. At the same time, this increases instability within the already fragmented opposition because many small parties have to negotiate an alliance often too fragile to survive, only for the sake of securing the majority (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 5).

7.1.3 Parliamentary elections – testing the allied forces

The failure of the interim government as a coherent coalition restrained the chances of the military to connect with social forces like workers, youth and leftists. In this regard the military implemented different strategies to connect with the social forces that triggered the uprising. The parliamentary election offers a good understanding of the effort to transform the Egyptian state and the ability of the dominant force in steering the semi-integral state towards forms of integration. In fact, only seven electoral lists ran for political election in 2015. In summer 2014, Sisi won the presidential election against Nasserist candidate Hamdeen Sabahi, with the wide consent of different social classes from the business community to workers, public employees and middle-class urbanites (Abul-Magd, 2015, 2016).

The parliamentary elections of 2015 witnessed seven electoral lists: the main parties in the For the Love of Egypt coalition were the Free Egyptians

Party (65 seats) and Nation's Future (53 seats); New Wafd got 36 seats (Sanyal, 2016, p. 447; Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, p. 6). For the Love of Egypt was a list in support of Sisi, although it was never officially affiliated, and it was the only list able to run in all four constituencies (Afify and Magid, 2015; Magid, 2015), which meant it was the only one which won all 120 seats. Other parties boycotted the elections, including Egypt Freedom, Strong Egypt, Bread and Freedom and the Dostour Party (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, pp. 6–8). In conjunction with the political crackdown, this meant that the number of political parties participating in the 2015 parliamentary elections was only 44 (Sanyal, 2016, p. 449). Only 13 parties formed electoral coalitions for closed lists while the rest of the 31 parties let their candidates run as independents (Sanyal, 2016, p. 449).

As already discussed with regard to electoral law – such a system that encouraged independent candidates reflects the increase of the patronage network and the direct linkage that single candidates had with the new regime, to promote alienation, ineffective opposition and greater control over groups that do not play according to the rules. On the other hand, the longevity of such a precarious system depends on the consent that the regime can gain around the figure of the president. The parliamentary elections of 2015 provide details of Sisi's support especially where the lack of a ruling party supporting the president is so noticeable. In a way, similar to the Nasserite state, Sisi attempted to consolidate power around his persona rather than creating institutions as a way to mediate interests as Sadat did.

First of all, the parliamentary elections were constantly postponed due to the lack of consensus over several lists. In fact, the reasons behind the declaration of unconstitutionality of the electoral law – the unfair weight of voters across the constituencies – was only superficially addressed, since the closed-list system remained untouched (El-Fekki, 2015a; Farid, 2015). The formation of a pro-Sisi coalition was preceded by two failed attempts, the first by Amr Moussa and the second by Kamal Ganzouri. In July 2014, Amr Moussa attempted to create a list with members of Shafiq's party, Egyptian National

Movement, with the aim of creating an allied force ‘that would not oppose the government, but at the same time would not act on its orders’ (Bahgat, 2016). Amr Moussa was head of the 50-member committee which drafted the 2014 constitution. In June 2014, he called for the ‘civil and patriotic’ element of political society to build a coalition which only excluded candidates sentenced to corruption, giving an opportunity to former NDP members to join the list (AbdAllah, 2014a). Moussa negotiated with other parties to form a coalition; this negotiation never led to an agreement over a list, due to parties’ self-interest and unwillingness to cooperate with members of the NDP (Chams EI-Dine, 2014, p. 5).

The second attempt to create a pro-state list with the aim to win all 120 seats in parliament came from Ganzouri who became presidential advisor in July 2013. This attempt also failed, due to the interference of Ganzouri (as representative of the executive power) in the formation of the parliament. The failed attempt to create a strong pro-state list left the opposition deeply divided to the point that general intelligence had to intervene to create a pro-state list (Bahgat, 2016).

These two attempts highlight, on the one hand, how leaders of subaltern forces that supported the military coup – like Karama, Doustour and the Social Democrats – realised that such actions had alienated the base who still opposed the military. Therefore these parties were no longer keen to be reduced to an intermediary force for the advantage of the military. On the other hand they highlight how the military had to use its internal resources, like military intelligence, to attract allied forces. Eventually, the For the Love of Egypt list was formed and its first meeting was in the general intelligence headquarters, and the composition of the group of founding members brought together the intelligence and co-opted part of the opposition. The coordinator of the list was Sameh Said al Yazal, a former intelligence officer; the founding members included Mahmoud Badr – founder of Tamarrod; Tarek al Kholy, former leader of April 6; Gabaly al Meraghy, chair of the Egyptian Trade Union Federation; Sayed Mahmoud al Sheriff, the head of the descendants of the

Prophet's syndicate, who eventually became the Deputy Speaker of the parliament; and Emad Gad, former leader of the Egyptian Socialist Democrat Party who later passed to the co-opted Free Egyptians Party. All these personalities were included in the list and all secured their seats (Bahgat, 2016). The composition of the founding members of this list reflects how the dominant force was penetrating civil society. In fact, Tamarrod and the April 6 leaders were the direct connection with the youth that triggered the uprising, along with the control of media, workers and business.

The aim of the list was to target specific social forces that were the main forces during the uprising and its aftermath, like youth and business. Pro-regime parties were formed after the coup, like Nation's Future and My Homeland Egypt Party (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, pp. 7, 22). Firstly, while the Free Egyptians Party initially attempted to run independently, refusing to participate in other coalitions, it meant to join the alliance to support Egypt coalition led by Ahmed Shafiq (AbdAllah, 2014b; Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 5). Eventually the Free Egyptians Party ended up supporting the new regime and Sisi's candidacy (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, p. 23). Naguib Sawiris – founder and financial supporter of the Free Egyptians Party – admitted that the party reluctantly agreed to join the list to avoid the accusation of dividing the country and not helping at such a difficult time (Bahgat, 2016).

Founded and financed in 2011 by Christian businessman Naguib Sawaris, the Free Egyptians Party channelled the Christian identity of its leader to attract the Christian community as well as to gather the interest of the businessmen that had clashed with the MB (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, p. 10). In the 2011 parliamentary election, the party won 17 seats thanks to the financial support of Sawaris and the use of its television, ONTV. In 2015 Free Egyptians became the first party in the country with 65 seats in parliament; however, corruption scandals and leadership conflicts affected the strength of the party. Sawiris was forced to sell ONTV and was later expelled from the party, as well as expelling other members and losing support (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, pp. 7, 11).

Secondly, the Nation's Future Party claimed to present Egyptian youth, while its candidates were former NDP members who also supported the party financially; more important is the fact that although those parties used their network of patronage to reach the presidency, they were still limited in enlarging the base of the network of patronage that the NDP used to have (Dunne and Hamzawy, 2017, pp. 22–23).

A big component of social unrest was unemployed youth, and for the survival of the new regime this faction of society needed to be selectively integrated within the state, especially when the youth seemed to be divided. In 2011 the MB youth joined the April 6 Movement and workers' protests while in 2013 Tamarrod claimed to represent the youth but eventually divided the secular from the MB forces. In December 2015 the Nation's Future campaign was founded by 1,500 young people to 'support the nation at this historical juncture', chaired by Mohamed Badran, president of the Egyptian Student Union, already appointed in July 2013 as a member of the Constituent Assembly (as a representative of university students) (Mansour, 2013; Bahgat, 2016).

This campaign was necessary to attract the consent of youth movements that were protagonists in the 2011 uprising; since the division within Tamarrod, especially, the campaign acted in support of the regime by mobilising voters in favour of the constitution during the referendum in January 2014, receiving financial and legislative support from officers from military intelligence to incentivise youth activism with the pro-state campaign. The campaigners were also promised exemption from compulsory military service (Bahgat, 2016). The necessity of the Nation's Future campaign and party materialised when the new regime perceived Tamarrod as not as reliable as expected. In fact, Tamarrod started to suffer from internal divisions; the leadership split over the presidential election campaign: Badr expressed unconditional support for Sisi, while Abdel Aziz was member of the Popular Current led by Sabbahi (Ahram Online, 2014b; El-Fekki, 2015b; Hussein, 2015). During the Rabaa Al-Adawiya Mosque and Nahda Square sit-ins in support of the deposed Morsi, Tamarrod

demanded to be armed and to have arrest powers against the protesters. Badr on that occasion said, 'we cannot accept having weapons in the squares. Not only does this harm the nation, but harms the very concept of a peaceful protest' (Mada Masr, 2013b).

The demands of Tamarrod of gaining coercive power were refused by the military which would not allow an unpredictable force like Tamarrod to have access to resources which could be used for an underground war – as a strategy to destabilise the state. Nevertheless, populist rhetoric remained convenient for the military, to use ultra-nationalist rhetoric to reintegrate the population as Nasser did. Contrary to all other social movements, Tamarrod entered political society formally by becoming a political party – the Arab Popular Movement Political Party – 'to avoid the "corruption" of the elections in 2012, in which the Muslim Brotherhood's political party won the most seats', and to support a 'new parliament to represent the revolution', highlighting its support for only 'patriotic' forces (Mada Masr, 2013c).

Badr remarked that the participation of Tamarrod in the coming parliamentary elections was in order to 'block the forces of darkness from entering the parliament' (Ashraf, 2013b). Tamarrod continued to build up its populist rhetoric during the controversial Protest Law, asserting that it 'won't allow for terrorist forces to continue their campaign against the Egyptian people and their consistent acts of violence and sabotage against the Egyptian state' (Mada Masr, 2013a). Tamarrod – like Kefaya – did not survive after the achievement of its goal. In fact, before Sisi announced his presidential candidacy, Tamarrod issued conflicting statements. First, it expressed concerns over the potential candidacy of a member of the military, stating that:

Lieutenant General Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi should not run for presidency, to preserve his image as a national hero who did his duty for this nation. The movement affirms that Egypt, after the revolution, must be ruled by a civilian president who is elected through a democratic process (in Ashraf, 2013a).

A few days later a new statement expressed not only support for the military, but also the populist sentiment and the aspiration of unity that seems to characterise the movement; in fact, it read that ‘the Tamarod movement cannot disagree with the people’s aspirations; therefore, it announces that if Al-Sisi runs for presidency, the movement will support him’ (in Ashraf, 2013c).

Despite the ideological achievement of spreading ultra-nationalistic rhetoric to recall Nasserist nostalgia, the demand for coercive control and internal division showed that Tamarrod was not a reliable allied force able to reintegrate the youth. And in fact, due to such internal divisions and the rejection by the Supreme Electoral Commission of the establishment of Tamarrod’s party, Mahmoud Badr abandoned the idea to turn Tamarrod into a political party; Tamarrod members would run as independent (Nader, 2014; Aswat Masriya, 2015; Messieh and Mohamed, 2015). The rhetoric of Tamarrod highlights how the group was willing to become an allied force similar to the MB, and this can be interpreted in the mobilisation of Tamarrod as the intention of replacing the allied force rather than the dominant.

To fill the void left by Tamarrod, in July 2014 Mohamed Badran – already a member of the Constituent Assembly in 2013 as the university students’ representative – filed the official request to transform the National Future campaign into a political party with the aim of representing the youth (Bahgat, 2016). The party remained in the shadows until August 2015 when Badran took his place in the inauguration of the new Suez Canal next to Sisi. Due to such proximity to the president, the party started to receive financial support from businessmen like Ahmed Abu Hashima, Masnour Amer, Kamel Abu Ali and Hani Abu Reda, as well as big families like Al Ghoneimi, Al Maghrabi, Al Qurashi and Al Ashraf (Bahgat, 2016). The network of patronage and financial support were essential to help the party win 53 seats (becoming the second party of the country) at its first election. Beside the financial support of businessmen and the logistics support of military intelligence, the party exploited the existing network of patronage, selecting candidates with specific advantages in their constituency like leaders linked with the NDP or those able to finance their own campaign (Bahgat, 2016). Finally, the For the Love of

Egypt list included wealthy business people like Farag Amer; Akmal Kurtam, also leader of the Conservative Party; Mohamed Moustafa Salleb; and Sahar Talaat Moustafa, daughter of Talaat Moustafa¹⁷ (El-Sayed, 2015; Bahgat, 2016; Essam El-Din, 2016). The formation of the electoral coalition and the result of the parliamentary elections show the weak alliance that the new regime managed to achieve with only fragmented parts of society.

The new forces represented in parliament reflected the result of the state transformation derived from the 2011 uprising. In fact, the attempt to reintegrate the youth was a necessity dictated by the fact that the youth movements were a strong component behind the 2011 uprising – and along with other revolutionary movements they were in control of the war of manoeuvre. In addition, the fact that some business people and former NDP members returned in parliament does not necessarily mean that the status quo before the uprising had been restored. In fact, co-opted business people and NDP members were no longer leading the dominant bloc as before in 2011; rather, they were now following the lead of the military. The regime attempted to attract and neuter the youth since they were the primary force behind the 2011 uprising. The regime co-opted business people and former NDP members willing to maintain an inferior role. This precarious balance revolves around the figure of the president, and his ability to directly mediate conflicts and interests within the allied groups. The effort to reshape the political superstructure to guarantee the support of the youth and to secure its hegemonic power is a necessary but not sufficient condition to ensure the transformation of the state into an integral form. The dominant force also needs to transform the economic structure.

¹⁷ Talaat Moustafa – patriarch of the powerful Talaat Moustafa family – founded his construction business with his children in the 1970s. In the 1980s, thanks to the government-sponsored development programme, the Talaat Moustafa Group started an unstoppable expansion. Talaat Moustafa, along with his two sons, Tarek and Hisham, was a constructor and MP, and member of the NDP party. Tarek presided over the housing committee in parliament; and Hisham, close to Gamal Mubarak, was stripped of his parliamentary immunity before the trial for the murder of Lebanese singer Suzanne Tamim (Sturcke, 2009; El Gundy, 2011; Eibl, 2016; Essam El-Din, 2016; Talaat Moustafa Group, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c).

7.2 Egypt integral state? The integration of economic structure

The military – as the dominant force with no significant challenges – attempted to reinforce the integrated part of the state like the expansion of the military economy and the bureaucracy, and to integrate the subaltern via the implementation of infrastructure. The development of infrastructure allowed the dominant force to exercise the presence of the state within the various local communities, implementing a top-down strategy of integration targeting the small subcontractors and construction workers rather than big business. After the coup, the military economic empire expanded in all sorts of sectors, with the major support of foreign donors and companies, which partially met the resistance of the local business community. In fact, the new regime relied on the military economy to bolster growth through the military-owned companies. Firstly, military involvement in the economy would ensure the support of the military for the new regime; secondly, the military intervention in infrastructure, transportation, energy and housing projects aimed to maintain the consent of the population (Adly, 2016b, p. 14).

7.2.1 Military-led economic development

Sisi faced the dilemma of how to reconcile the nationalistic rhetoric of a socialist state à la Nasser, controlled by the military – essential to frame its discourses to appeal to the population – with how to create the condition for a liberal market to attract local and foreign investors – vital to provide the necessary resources to relaunch the economy (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 34). The solution to this decline would reveal how to integrate different social forces within the counter-revolutionary state to guarantee the formation of the integral state. This was an attempt to revive the economy by using a state-led model, primarily with the involvement of the military in the economy attempting to benefit public employees (Adly, 2016b, pp. 9–10).

In order to do so, the ad interim president Adly Mansour appointed 15 new governors of province who were military officers in retirement, as well as retired officers to be in charge of ports and government authorities for industrial and

agricultural development, and heads of state-owned companies in chemical, transportation and land reclamation. Sisi continued appointing retired generals to positions like heads of the maritime navigation safety authority and the tunnel and subway authority (Abul-Magd, 2015, 2016). He constantly ensured the support of the military, by increasing military pensions by 25% in addition to the 15% increase in 2011 by the SCAF and 15% in 2012 by Morsi (Abul-Magd, 2015). The military budget increased from 31 billion to 39 billion EGP in 2014–2015 and to 43 billion in 2015–2016 (Abul-Magd, 2015, 2016).

Despite the precarious economic situation, the regime strategically attempted to guarantee the support not just of military officers but also of other public sector groups like public sector employees, including the police and judges, as well as granting benefits for investments by companies linked with the Minister of Interior, and the possibility of blending coercion and business by establishing for-profit private security companies (Tarek, 2014; Adly, 2016b, p. 9). In addition, the regime aimed to gain consensus from public sector employees in local government public authorities and state-owned companies because they were skilled labour forces with legal contracts, which allowed them to have a better position in bargaining with the regime (Adly, 2016b, pp. 9–10). The marginal minimum wages guaranteed were only for public sector employees, not for the rest of the workers and employees of private and state-run companies (Abul-Magd, 2015). However, such spending on public salaries was unsustainable due to the low revenue of the state (Adly, 2016b, p. 10).

In order to get the resources to maintain the high satisfaction of the military, Sisi implemented austerity policies – especially the reduction of food and gas subsidies and the increase of electricity bills regardless of the continuous power cuts – to attract foreign and domestic investors (Abul-Magd, 2015, pp. 64–65, 2016, pp. 23, 37). Sisi relied on austerity policies which were characterised by the introduction of new taxes as well as the increasing of the existing cuts in public spending, and investment reforms as well as a new programme of privatisation (Joya, 2017, p. 351).

The introduction of new taxation like VAT affected mostly low salaried and unemployed people, whereas corporations and high salaries did not face

taxation on wealth. Companies paid a fixed tax regardless of discretionary factors like size, profit, capital and workforce, and profit on the financial market remained untaxed. All of the different taxation resulted in increasing the already existing gap between poor and rich (Joya, 2017, p. 352). This social inequality was exacerbated by the rise of goods prices, especially for primary goods like food and energy that had already become affected by cuts to subsidies. Farmers and peasants would be particularly affected by such cuts, due to the increase of high costs of agriculture production that did not reflect income, in addition to cuts in healthcare, education and housing (Joya, 2017, p. 353). The increase in fuel prices had an effect not only on the lower classes but also energy-intense industries like cement, fertilisers, iron and steel which competed with the military in these sectors (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 3). The introduction of the VAT affected the lower classes as well the public sector who were more likely to increase consumption. At the same time, taxes on real estate and progressive taxation to ensure social equality had not been implemented; neither was the suspension of the capital gains tax (Adly, 2016b, pp. 11–12).

The cut in subsidies had a limited popular discontent due to the programme of the World Bank to supply food subsidies for the poorest families; at the same time the Central Bank offered loans to small and medium enterprises. However, those programmes would not necessarily help the category they aimed to help because of the lack of formal assessment of wealth due to the informal economy (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 214).

The development of the military economy was not only a measure to ensure the consent of retired officers, but it also it aimed to compensate the austerity measures with the provision of welfare and infrastructure to secure the consent of the population, via service provision and employment opportunities (Roll, 2014, p. 2). The full control of the military over the economy had already started under the Adly Mansour presidency which amended the legislation on public tender. Decree 48 of 2014 allows the government to direct the allotting of construction projects of less than 10 million EGP; this allowed the government to directly hire military companies for all sorts of projects like hospitals, bridges,

roads, tunnels and social housing, as well as the Suez Canal area development project, without undertaking transparent and competitive public tenders in case of emergency (Chams El-Dine, 2014; Abul-Magd, 2015, 2016; El Dahshan, 2015). Subsequently, military companies signed contracts for construction projects for \$1 billion despite the lack of any emergency status for such intervention (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 212). Since 2012, the armed forces engineering corps was also involved in 1,350 development projects, in several sectors, especially in the enlargement of the Suez Canal and land reclamation (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 213).

Between September and November 2013, the military companies were granted contracts for 7 billion EGP; in August 2014, the head of the military engineers' authority declared that it was involved in 850 projects on construction in different sectors like land reclamation, housing, health, education, transportation etc., also acquiring 10,000 acres of land in the Western Desert and 40,000 in Upper Egypt (Roll, 2014; Abul-Magd, 2015, 2016). The military started to select the companies that seemed more reliable, although not competitive; for example, in January 2014, the National Bank of Egypt approved a loan of \$20 million to a subsidiary, Tharwa Petroleum, which had links with the military, since the National Authority of Military Production owned 5% of the shares (Tharwa, 2017), despite the fact the company had lacked business with the state between 2011 and 2013. In addition, the state-owned shares of Vodafone Egyptian were transferred to the military (Marshall, 2015, p. 14).

Also, the military expanded by governing 10,000 acres from land reclamation and commercial farming in the Western Desert, and 40,000 square metres for the construction of four gas stations in Upper Egypt (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 36). This allowed the government to hire military contractors to build all sorts of infrastructures like hospitals, social houses, roads, tunnels and bridges, as well as the Cairo–Alexandria toll highway (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 36). The Ministry of Defence was involved in the construction of new roads in 2015–2016, including major connections between cities in the Nile Delta, the Cairo–Ain Sokhan road and the amelioration of the Cairo–Ismailia road

(Adly, 2017, p. 20). The engineering agency of the armed forces was involved in the construction of the social housing projects, cooperating with the Ministry of Housing to deliver 145,000 units in May 2016, and the contract was renewed for another 145,000 units to be delivered in 2017 (Adly, 2017, p. 20). In this case, the dominant force was seeking the support of external forces to avoid seeking an alliance with the Egyptian intermediary forces.

7.2.2 The international help for the formation of the counter-revolutionary state

The military-led development of the state – intended to reintegrate social forces like workers and youth which were at the front of the uprising – needed considerable financial support. In order to attract foreign capital, the government protected investors from nationalisation, guaranteeing tax breaks for the creation of jobs, and created a new system of dispute resolution between the investors and the state, avoiding judiciary scrutiny and protecting the executive bodies of companies from criminal charges (Joya, 2017, p. 352). Sisi attempted to revive the Egyptian economy by stimulating the private sector as well as launching development projects for the Suez Canal with the intention of using the revenue for infrastructural projects, transportation, health, agriculture and energy (Joya, 2017, p. 352).

In this regard, during the Egyptian Economic Development Conference (EEDC) held in Sharm el Sheikh in March 2015, the government remarked on its position in leading the development of the country, expressing openness to private business in helping the state's economy. It was also an occasion for funding ambitious projects, and in fact Egypt received \$12.5 billion from Gulf countries, plus secure deals with Gulf companies worth \$38.2 billion, and memoranda of understanding for future deals of \$92 billion. The government also signed a deal with Siemens for \$9 billion (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 211). During the conference, the government also revealed its five-year programme: 2014/15–2018/19. This plan involved tax and spending reforms mostly through cuts of energy subsidies, adjustment of wages and managing of public finance, plus reduction of the public debt from 95.5% to 80–85% GDP; reducing

inflation from 11.5% to 6–8%; and promoting export (El Dahshan, 2015, pp. 211–212). In addition to an increase in fuel prices, this policy was already suspended in 2015–2016, gaining from the lower global oil price and so reducing the discounting of such an unpopular measure (Adly, 2016b, p. 12).

The financial support of international actors is not simply to guarantee the military the development of megaprojects, but also to limit the opportunities for local business to take a stake in the Egyptian economy. In fact, the involvement of the military in such projects would not have been possible without the financial contribution of foreign companies and countries. To the initial \$12 billion offered to Egypt by the Gulf states in July 2013, in May 2014 the offer became \$20 billion; the conditions for this loan were relaxed, especially since both Saudi Arabia and UAE hoped to reinforce the military regime to firmly crack down on the MB opposition. The investment in Egypt from the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) was \$50 billion by 2013; it was more than the investments of Western states which reached \$46 billion (Roll, 2014, p. 2). Thanks to the generous help from the Gulf state of \$12 billion, Sisi could suspend the negotiation with the IMF; in July 2013, Ashraf Al Araby, the Minister of Planning, declared that in such an unstable political situation it was inappropriate to continue with the negotiation (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 208).

Other considerable support came from Russia, China and the US. In fact, Russia kept its word given to Morsi on financing Nasco, and also included support for the development of the Helwan District of iron and steel factories, and Egyptalum, the largest state producer of aluminium and aid to the electricity generator plants of the Aswan Dam; China also financed projects like the Suez Canal, power stations and high-speed rails (Marshall, 2015, p. 17). The US maintained military production at a high level; in fact, despite the massacre of Rabaa al Adawya the US Department of Defence signed a contract to deliver and manufacture military equipment for \$300 million. In June 2014, the US released \$575 million of military aid and another \$1.3 billion in December 2014. France and UAE helped the growth of the coercion apparatus; France agreed on \$7 billion for fighter jets and battleships; while

UAE proved training and intelligence during military operations against ISIS in Libya between March and October 2014 (Marshall, 2015, p. 17).

In October 2013, UAE signed agreements with Egypt. These ensured the armed forces engineering authority had the exclusive role of implementing these projects. In addition, two companies based in UAE – Emaar Properties and Arabtec Holding – became involved in retail development and low-income housing projects (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 2). The UAE financed \$4.9 billion for infrastructural projects contracted to military companies and their partners, and long-term concessions for the management of highways. In return the military partner Arabtec, based in Dubai, managed a \$40 billion project for affordable housing (Marshall, 2015, pp. 16–17). The contract of Arabtec was decided without any public tender, justified by the urgency of the project (Marshall, 2015, p. 17). In March 2015, during the EEDC, Arabtec was going to receive land for the construction of one million affordable houses. In his capacity as Minister of Defence, Sisi signed an agreement with Arabtec for the construction of one million houses on 160 million square metres of land; the land would be provided by the military free of charge (Roll, 2014, p. 2; El Dahshan, 2015, p. 213).

The fact that the military allowed foreign companies to set the development of important projects like social housing reflects its strategy to prevent Egyptian business from controlling projects that are strategic to capitalise on the consent of lower classes. In this way, the military attempted to integrate the lower classes by utilising foreign support to avoid giving concession to the local business community.

The military focused the majority of the financial support on three megaprojects: Toshka, the Suez Canal and the new capital. The Toshka project was particularly valuable for the military, since the military had several companies contracted with the project. The project saw Al Waleed Bin Talaal, a Saudi prince, as the major investor in the project; this raised issues related to the use of land, taxation, agricultural exports and labour requirements by foreign companies since 2010, and the MB openly opposed the project; however, in September 2013, soon after the removal of Morsi, the interim

movement welcomed financial support from UAE and Saudi Arabia (Marshall, 2015, pp. 15–16).

The military as dominant force had the interest in avoiding an alliance with threatening forces like the MB – which was able to control civil society via consent and had attempted to change the economic structure of the state. In fact, by relying on foreign actors the military had less need to seek the alliance of local businesses that could be a threat. This allowed Sisi to expand the Toshka plan to \$140 billion including 48 new cities, eight airports and highways. This project had been financed by businessmen like Talaal and Sawiris – as well as a call for citizens to donate to Sisi's Long Live Egypt fund (Marshall, 2015, p. 16).

During the EEDC, the economic plan revealed by Sisi proposed vague investment policies for the development of 26 cities and tourist sites, and especially the Suez Canal development project. This project claimed to increase the revenue from canal transit from \$5.4 billion in 2014 to \$13.5 billion in 2023, as well as developing an industrial hub in the area near the canal which was expected to contribute up to 30–35% of the national economy (El Dahshan, 2015, pp. 208–209). The existing Suez Canal Corridor development project saw the expansion of six ports plus the construction of an industrial zone, tunnels and a parallel canal to increase the traffic in both directions. The enlargement of the canal involved the partnership of Dar al Handash, a Gulf-based construction and consultancy company (Marshall, 2015, p. 14). The construction of the new waterway took only one year and the new Suez Canal was inaugurated with majestic celebration all over the country on 6th August 2015 (El Dahshan, 2015, p. 209; MadaMasr, 2015). The control of such revenues seems problematic since the canal project saw the cooperation of the Egyptian military with Saudi Arabia and UAE and the establishment of a separated jurisdiction that was not subject to Egyptian authorities and legislations (Joya, 2017, p. 352).

Finally, the new capital project was launched in 2016. The military, especially the Armed Forces Land Project Organization, received 8,000 hectares to create the new administrative capital as announced by Sisi in

March 2015 during the EEDC in Sharm el Sheikh (Adly, 2016b, p. 15). With the launch of the new administrative capital, competition over land intensified; in addition, in 2016 Sisi allocated 15,400 acres for the capital project to the Armed Forces Land Project Organization, allowing also the formation of for-profit companies in partnership with the military (Adly, 2017, p. 20). However, when the military companies were not skilled enough to implement specialised work, the regime allowed big companies, like Orascom Construction, to be involved in the project, with two contracts, one for the construction of the building of the Ministry of Interior in the new capital, and a second contract for the construction of six tunnels under the Suez Canal (Adly, 2017, pp. 20–21).

The fact that the military had to rely on a few big companies to implement these projects stressed their inability to form an integral state where social forces were integrated and unable to be a threat to the dominant force. Finally the value of these megaprojects is also ideological. In fact, the dominant force utilised ultra-nationalist rhetoric to frame these projects as a tool to fill the ideological gap left by the crackdown on the Islamists. Despite the stability claimed by the regime after the coup, the economic situation improved marginally: domestic and foreign investments have not recovered since 2010. The low growth contributed to the reduction of tax revenue; another lack of revenue was determined by the stagnation of the maritime traffic in the Suez Canal, due to the slowdown of the Chinese economy which affected the trade between Europe and China, as well as the tourism revenue decline since 2011, even more marked after incidents involving a Russian airline in Sinai in 2015 and Egyptair in May 2016 (Adly, 2016b, pp. 6–7).

7.2.3 Subcontractors as allied forces

The post-Morsi era has been characterised by the formation of the various new allied groups that support the reshaping of the state; the military focused its effort on the expansion of controlling the economic structure, portraying such expansion as the model of economic development of the country. However, rather than relying on business to support the economy, the military regime relies on the considerable financial aid of foreign countries, primarily

from the Gulf. This results, on the one hand, in the unstable and precarious support of only a part of the business community – and in fact business only cooperates with the military at a subordinate level: some business people are excluded from the market due to the unfair competition set by the military, while other companies aim to work in partnership with the military to avoid being subjected to civilian administration (Adly, 2016b, p. 15). On the other hand, the military has to rely on growing coercion to maintain power, given the limited consensus received from business and the political opposition.

As discussed earlier, similarly to the SCAF and the MB Sisi also encouraged investment to generate jobs in 2015. The government tried to incentivise domestic and foreign companies with a reduction of taxes and exemptions and, most importantly, the protection of private companies involved in public projects from administrative scrutiny (Adly, 2017, pp. 18–19). The expansion of the military economic empire marginalised and divided the business community. Some business actors, especially the ones owning media, seemed to engage with the new regime, while others remained distant (Abul-Magd, 2015, p. 67, 2016, p. 36). In April 2015, the Federation of Egyptian Industries denounced the illicit allocation of contracts that the military had for construction projects (Abul-Magd, 2016, p. 36).

Sisi does not have connection with business, contrary to Mubarak who had close enough connections with businessmen to allow them to be part of the NDP and gain seats in parliament, as well as be part of the cabinet. Sisi has more distant relations with business, commenting, for example, that businessmen did not contribute to the Long Live Egypt (Tahiya Misr) fund he created to seek economic help for infrastructure projects (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 3; Adly, 2016b, p. 13). In mid-July 2014, Sisi attempted to reconcile with businessmen, inviting them for a Ramadan iftar at the Ittadeya Palace, asking them to invest in the development of the country in return for a revision of investment law (Abul-Magd, 2015, p. 67). From the 50 businessmen invited by Sisi, he managed to gather 5 billion EGP. This was donated by a limited number of businessmen while others preferred to abstain (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 3).

To the meeting Sisi invited all sorts of businessmen regardless of their ideological affiliation, including Naguib Sawiris; Mohamed Farid Khamis, former member of the NDP; and Safwan Thabet, former member of EBDA; though figures like Ahmed Ezz, considered too close to Mubarak cronyism, were excluded (Chams El-Dine, 2014, p. 3). However, such friendly promises to business clashed with a 10% tax on capital gains in the stock market with the intention to get state reserves, which at the same time discouraged investors. This tax was eventually cancelled due to the pressure from business (Abul-Magd, 2015, p. 67, 2016, p. 36). The relations with businessmen remained distant, to the point that during the inauguration of the Suez Canal, Sisi intimated to them that they were 'going to pay' for the Long Live Egypt fund (Rabie, 2014).

In addition, Sawiris, who was previously welcomed as a hero when Morsi allowed businessmen in exile to repay their tax evasion over five years, was now forced to pay 7 billion EGP. Salah Diab, owner of *Al-Masry Al-Youm* newspaper, was released after three years in jail for corruption, and arrested in November 2015 for owning unlicensed weapons, together with his son. His lawyer declared that the arrest was due to the fact that his newspaper became critical of the regime, and both were acquitted in 2017 (Ahram Online, 2017; Dawoud, 2017).

Although the regime co-opted Sawiris's Free Egyptians Party, after his expulsion Sawiris attempted to buy and merge two banks while the Central Bank of Egypt vetoed the deal, arguing Sawiris's companies did not meet the required criteria (Adly, 2016b, p. 14). Ahmed Ezz, tycoon of steel industry in Egypt and the closest businessman to Gamal Mubarak, was acquitted of most corruption charges and allowed to resume his economic activities, but he was forbidden twice to run for the 2015 parliamentary election (Adly, 2016b, pp. 13–14, 2017, p. 17).

The lack of a ruling party similar to the NDP made it harder for businessmen formerly affiliated with the NDP to revive their old patronage relations in the new regime, especially since the attempt to run for election by the Shafiq party failed (Adly, 2017, p. 17). The network of patronage was established but the

lack of a ruling party and the increase of individual candidates helped Sisi to pick and choose the businessmen he needed. Sawiris attempted to remain in an oppositional party representing the interests of business, but after the co-optation of the party Sawiris and its supporters were expelled, according to the new party leadership because Sawiris refused to reconcile with the authorities (Adly, 2017, p. 18).

The main interest of the new regime was to reduce business to an allied force, unable to operate without the agreement of the military. The military aimed to use the economic activity of the business community to contribute to the state integration, creating jobs to ensure popular consent. Mostly redirecting the business money for state projects, Sisi expected businessmen to contribute 100 billion EGP to the Long Live Egypt fund; however, at the end of 2016 the fund had reached only 6 billion EGP. This is a signal that the business community was divided and part of it resisted being to the allied force of the military (Adly, 2017, p. 18). Despite the generous financial help that the new military regime received from foreign powers, the economic situation in the country needs the implementation of structural reforms. So far, Sisi has had to keep big business at a distance while ensuring the support of small subcontractors.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the post-coup scenario to analyse how the military has learned from the experience of the oscillations of the MB between ally of the dominant force and the advanced subalterns at different points in time. In this chapter I highlighted how the military avoided having a single organised force that could be an allied force, creating a hyper-fragmented and transversal composition of allied forces, like subcontractors in the economy rather than big business dependent, and co-opting specific elements from, for example, the youth, Salafi and worker movements.

The transformation of the Egyptian state in this sense is the result of the failure of the new interim government which sought the co-opting of unionist leaders like Kamal Abu Eita and Ahmed Burai, an initial attempt to integrate

the workers within the state. This strategy backfired since it alienated the base of the subaltern forces from their leaders. The main strategy of the military was to limit the subalterns' autonomy via coercion and attempting to fragment them and integrate them within the state. I argue that, contrary to the previous two phases of the uprising which were characterised by a lack of ideology from the dominant force, in this third phase the military started to develop a more defined ideology, firstly addressing any dissent as *terrorist* as it targeted unarmed Brotherhood supporters (as discussed in Chapter Six), and secondly reconstructing ideas of unity and integration via ultra-nationalist rhetoric, concretising it with the construction of megaprojects.

I argue that the post-2013 state transformation, contrary to the 2011–2013 transition, could be considered as a new passive revolution, where the military as the dominant force attempts to fragment the subaltern groups and integrate it within the state. However, contrary to the previous regime which undertook a strategy of divide and rule along lines of ideological difference within the opposition, the new dominant force divided the subaltern forces at the individual level, as proven by the split of Tamarrod and April 6. This highlights the weak alliance that the new dominant force managed to achieve with only fragmented parts of society.

However, to fully integrate the subaltern groups within the state, the military has to implement structural reforms; this requires the cooperation of business which is reluctant to subordinate to the military. Because the contradiction that led to the 2011 uprising remains unsolved, in order to survive Sisi's regime needs to include the subaltern groups in economic, social and political relations, reducing the autonomy of the subaltern groups within civil society.

To do so, the new regime needs, on the one hand, to restrict the informal sector, on the other to provide welfare services to avoid the competition of subaltern groups. The main goal of the military is to reduce business to an allied force – where they do not have any access to the political society – with limited control of the economy, contributing to regime stability by creating jobs to ensure popular consent. By attempting to control business, the military aims to create an integral state where political society can penetrate the social–

economic relations of civil society. Whether or not Sisi's regime will manage to turn Egypt into an integral state via a passive revolution to neuter the subaltern forces remains beyond the scope of this thesis.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

This project has aimed to provide a new theoretical tool to navigate the development of a revolutionary situation and to understand counter-revolution not as the default outcome of a failed revolution, but in its own right. The study of revolution often tends to focus only on successful revolutions while the unsuccessful are deemed merely as the residual category of what revolution is not. In this regard the Arab Uprising in general and the Egyptian counter-revolution in particular highlighted how existing theories of revolution were unable to identify factors that made revolution fragile or the dynamic that underpins the development of counter-revolution. In order to fill this theoretical gap, the project revisits Gramsci's theory of hegemonic crisis and subalternity.

This thesis is based on assumptions similar to Gramsci's: the understanding of how social forces develop and how to counter the hegemony of the dominant force. In this way, the thesis has proposed a theoretical model to address how the interaction between structure and agency determined the formation of counter-revolution. In addition, the model aims to go beyond the dichotomy between the study of the elite and the study of society as two separate levels of analysis. Indeed, as the example of the MB highlights, some social forces develop from civil society to political society and the linkage between these two realms is key to understanding state–society relations. In other words, the understanding of the oscillation of the intermediary forces and the conflicting strategies used by the social forces allowed us to explain the formation of the counter-revolution not as a top-down approach imposed by the will of the dominant force – as argued by scholars who consider the Egyptian Uprising a case of passive revolution – but rather as bottom-up dynamics that unfold with

the clashes within the subaltern bloc and the use of the strategies at their disposal to conquer the state.

As a final remark, this thesis made three important contributions and linked three different fields of investigation. First of all, the thesis, by providing a model to understand the revolutionary situation as an open-ended process, contributed to the study of revolutions by accounting for the relations between structure and agency which was an unfulfilled aim of the fourth generation of revolution study. Secondly, but following the new insight offered by scholars on the study of Gramsci and subalternity, this thesis operationalised and empirically applied the concept of subalternity in terms of development and leadership that so far have been only theorised, based on the study of Gramsci's prison notebook and pre-prison writing, but not yet applied. It also highlights how the intermediary force can be investigated in order to understand how in the context of a semi-integral state the hegemonic function of the dominant force is exercised within civil society through the intermediary forces that ally with the dominant. Thirdly, the thesis offered a reinterpretation of the conceptualisation of the state based on the empirical questions posed about the transformation of the Egyptian state due to the Uprising. The conceptualisation offered in this thesis should not be restricted to its application in authoritarian or developing countries. As addressed in Chapter Four, the integration and dis-integration of the state are complex mechanisms that underpin the simultaneous transformation of structural and superstructural relations.

This final chapter underlines the main insights offered by the model that describes the Egyptian case throughout the thesis, and it remarks how it fills the gaps of the existing literature in understanding counter-revolution. Finally, the chapter reflects on the limitations of the thesis and proposes a future research agenda to fill these gaps.

8.1 Summary of thesis

The introductory chapter (Chapter One) presented the research puzzle that underlined the theoretical gap. This thesis aimed to develop a new model to theorise revolution, passive revolution and grey areas of phenomena contained between these two extremes – like counter-revolution. By re-engaging with the concept of subalternity and the integral state, this thesis explained how the Egyptian counter-revolution was the result of the oscillation of the intermediary force – the MB. In fact, the MB acted alternately as the allied and leading force. On the one hand, the MB accommodated the military in order to keep its place within the institutions. On the other hand, the MB took the lead of the subaltern bloc by setting specific achievable goals that could unify the subaltern forces in order to oppose the dominance of the military.

In this regard, this thesis highlighted the relevance of the intermediary force in affecting the outcome of the Egyptian Uprising. The analysis, based on the intermediary force, reflects the necessity of investigating the dis-integration of the Egyptian state. In fact, the lack of an integral state allowed the emergence of a triangle of power during the revolutionary situation that started in 2011, because the dominant force does not control civil society in order to resolve the hegemonic crisis via a passive revolution. Instead of looking at a bipolar dynamic between dominant and subaltern blocs, this project investigated a ‘tri-polar’ dynamic. Pre-2011 the military was pushed to the margin of the dominant bloc; when massive protests pushed for the removal of the crony capitalists, it allowed the military to emerge as the new dominant force after the uprising. This ‘democratic’ transition led to the election of the first Islamist president of Egypt.

As discussed extensively in Chapter Two, this poses the basis for the scholarly debate on how to conceptualise the uprising. On the one hand, scholars who remained anchored to the old debate between authoritarianism and democratisation recognised the limits of both approaches but only addressed the uprising as a failed revolution, looking at the contingency of the empirical cases. On the other hand, scholars who attempted to move beyond

these old approaches interpreted the uprising as a form of revolution. However, the attempt to explain the revolution was soon replaced with the effort to explain the counter-revolution without adequate theoretical tools. In order to fill this gap of the fourth generation of revolutionary theory, this thesis revisited the concept of subalternity and the integral state to provide a theoretical framework to explain the Egyptian counter-revolution.

Chapter Two looks at the existing literature on subalternity and the application of Gramsci's theory in the pre- and post-Egyptian Uprising contexts. The literature on the Egyptian Uprising does not problematise the relations between the subaltern and the state in a counter-revolutionary context. This thesis contributed to the work of these scholars like Green (2002; 2011); Liguori (2016); Modonesi (2014); Thomas (2015; 2018); and Galastri (2018) who highlight how subalternity is relational and intersectional, and can be identified at different levels of the organisation and penetration of civil society and political society, specifically in the context of the integral state.

The pre-uprising literature applies Gramsci's theory to explain the Egyptian state formation (Ayubi, 1995), the lack of democracy (Pratt, 2007), or the trajectory to the MB under Mubarak (Ranko, 2015), and the neoliberal economic reforms (Roccu, 2012), whereas the post-uprising literature focuses on hegemonic contraction as an enabling condition of the uprising (Chalcraft, 2016), or a passive revolution driven by Caesarism (De Smet, 2016). While the uprising offers a new context to revise the application of Gramsci in Egypt, some of the scholars who applied Gramsci in the context of the uprising overlook the active role of subalterns in the counter-revolution, and their relations with the state. For example, De Smet (2016) stressed the exclusion of revolutionary forces in the revolutionary process, due to their failure to emancipate. De Smet assumed that because the working class failed to lead the revolution, then automatically the process is a passive revolution because it was led by neoliberal forces.

This theory has two main limitations. On the one hand it overstretches the concept of passive revolution and Caesarism since both concepts are

continuously applied in every single phase of the Egyptian regime transformation. This argument minimises the disruptive effect of the uprising, reducing the relation between subaltern and dominant to only controlling the means of production, overlooking the complex relations among subaltern, intermediary and dominant forces.

On the other hand, De Smet's application of Caesarism to the relations between the military and the MB is also problematic. This theory does not fully explain, for example, why the MB challenged the hegemony of the military, especially since they are both considered dominant while sharing economic interests. More specifically, De Smet's application of Caesarism is in contradiction with the argument which considers Morsi as both a civil Caesar – which by definition has hegemony – and a counter-hegemonic force – characterised by a lack of hegemony – that attempted to challenge the military. I do agree with the argument that the MB aimed to challenge the military; however, as discussed in Chapter Six, in order to conceptualise this power dynamic I argue that the concept of subalternity is more explanatory, and, additionally, the concept of intermediary force is a peculiar case of subalternity that can steer the transition in one direction rather than another.

Chapter Three discusses the concept of the state in Gramsci and its relations with hegemony crisis, subalternity and state. The passive revolution – which implies the exclusion of the subaltern forces in the resolution of hegemonic crisis – is linked with the concept of integral state. In fact, only when the political and civil society are *integrated* with each other can they form the integral state. Thus, the changes in political society can shape the civil society and win the consent of subalterns, as fully integrated within the state, and they passively accept the change. The integration of subalterns within the state is necessary to restrict the autonomy of the subaltern because autonomy is a key condition for developing counter-hegemony. The chapter conceptualises the crisis of hegemony as the starting point of a revolutionary change; however, it states that the resolution of the hegemonic crisis is not predefined as revolution and passive revolution, rather it encompasses all sorts of 'morbid symptoms'.

The chapter outlines how the concept of subalternity develops within Gramsci's work. In the pre-prison writing Gramsci analysed non-hegemonic groups as the main connection between the dominant and oppressed masses, addressing it as the bureaucracy and the petty bourgeoisie. Then in the initial prison notebook, Gramsci analysed other non-hegemonic groups as both marginalised groups and fundamental social groups in different historical contexts, like slaves in ancient Rome, medieval Ciompi, and the industrial proletariat. In this way, the enlargement of the term should not be interpreted as a contradiction within Gramsci's intellectual work, in fact the dominant/subaltern relation encompasses a broader category than bourgeoisie/proletariat, engaging with the cultural and ideological aspect of hegemony (Liguori, 2016, pp. 123–124). Thus the chapter connects Middle Eastern studies, revolution studies and Gramscian studies to elaborate an explanatory model that interlinks the autonomy of subalterns, state integration and the resolution of hegemonic crisis.

Chapter Four analyses the hegemonic crisis in Gramsci's terms, addressing specifically how the dis-integration of the state allowed different social forces to exploit pockets of autonomy within civil society. It highlights not only the economic roots of the uprising but also defines how autonomy is a prerequisite of subalternity organisation. The pre-uprising has been analysed by other scholars like Alexander and Bassiouny (2014), Abdelrahman (2015) and De Smet (2016); however, none of them conceptualised the crisis of hegemony as the failure of the integral state, they rather focus their attention on neoliberal contradictions. The manifestation of the hegemonic crisis cannot be fully understood without taking into account the Egyptian state. Chapter Four argues that the attempt at passive revolution by the crony capitalists failed because it did not develop any ideology to win the consent of the subaltern forces, nor for integrating the subaltern groups within the state. The relations between the dominant – the NDP and business – and marginalised force within the dominant bloc – the military – progressively deteriorated since the 1980s, as the Minister of Defence Abu Ghazala stressed how the tenure of officers

was lowering compared to the living standards of the upper middle class (Kandil, 2012a, p. 182).

This tension remained latent due to the military economic interests in society, since the military relied on the manufacture of products for the civilian market, and the export of military products (Abdelrahman, 2015, pp. 21–22). The military enjoyed the benefit of state bureaucracy, since after their retirement generals accessed top positions in local governments (Bou Nassif, 2012). In addition, the marginalisation of the military within the dominant bloc emerged in their competition with the police. The military had their resentment against Mubarak, because they had been put aside in favour of the police. The role of the military reduced after the peace treaty with Israel, which determined a parallel increase of the police and Mukhabarat (Frisch, 2013, p. 138). The number of MPs who were business people increased under Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif (2004–2011), becoming the symbol of the bond between the NDP and the crony capitalists. This penetration of political society by business has led scholars like De Smet (2016) and Roccu (2012) to suggest the formation of a passive revolution. However, I argue the passive revolution failed due to the lack of integration of subaltern forces. In fact, the exclusion of the subaltern groups from the redistribution of wealth confirmed the limited integration of the subaltern forces within state economic relations, as well as the lack of ideology behind business figures' persuasion of civil society to accept their neoliberal economic relations.

At the subaltern level, I argue that the subaltern forces exploited the autonomy offered by cyberspace, which allowed them to form a loose network that enabled them to develop contentious politics, witnessing the cooperation of various movements like workers, youth, Islamists, etc. In this context, the MB exploited pockets of autonomy to launch its war of position against the state; however, the war of position was necessary to weaken the state but not sufficient to allow the MB to become dominant. The convergence of the war of position by the most advanced force and the war of manoeuvre by the leading force – Kefaya and April 6 – allowed the strengthening of the subaltern bloc

which contributed to the manifestation of the hegemonic crisis. The most advanced groups, like the MB, had more sophisticated networks, organisation, resources and alternative ideologies. Nevertheless, I argue, the MB failed to take the lead of the post-uprising, being paralysed in its position of intermediary force, situating itself between the subaltern and the military. Finally, the military could become dominant because it was at the margins of the dominant bloc rather than an external force intervening due to the contrast between bourgeoisie and proletariat (De Smet, 2016).

Chapter Five explains the first phase of the power dynamic between the three main actors starting from 25th January 2011. On the one hand, the gap formed by the resignation of Mubarak and his cronies was immediately filled by the military who became the dominant force with limited links with social forces except for their state within the civilian production and provision of primary goods for low-income groups. On the other hand, the transition opened the possibility for the MB to benefit from its war of position. However, because the war of position and manoeuvre were developed by different groups this resulted in a three-polar dynamic that characterised the transformation of the Egyptian state. In fact, as the dominant force of a semi-integral state, the military needed to secure more consent within civil society. In this regard the MB, as the most advanced force within civil society, was the preferred actor to become the connector between political and civil society.

Contrary to the interpretation that the alliance between the military and the MB was a form of counter-revolution because it opposed the demand of the revolutionary movements (Achcar, 2016, p. 105), Chapter Five highlights the relations between the role of intermediary force as the connector between civil and political society and the semi-integral state. Due to its intermediary position the MB oscillated between becoming the potential allied force of the military and attempting to lead the subaltern forces. The necessity for the MB to consider the alliance with the military was due to the alienation between the base and the leadership of the MB which undermined the ability of the MB to

perform as the leading subaltern force, despite being the most advanced force within civil society.

This marked the diversion of strategies of the base (war of manoeuvre) and the leadership (war of position), since the leadership maintained its moderate strategy, preferring cooperation over confrontation, and aiming to infiltrate political society; the base continued to engage actively with other social movements on the ground. This argument differs from the interpretation that the MB became a dominant force in Egypt because it won parliamentary elections and was bourgeoisie (De Smet, 2016, pp. 210–211). In fact, the moments of unity among the subalterns' forces, such as the cooperation between the various social movements and the MB, highlight an oscillation on the part of the MB that stressed the inability of the military to control civil society without the support of the intermediary force, as the unity of the subaltern forces against the Selmi document, which forced the military to withdraw it, emphasised. However, once the Selmi document was withdrawn the MB abandoned the lead of the subaltern forces. The inability of the MB to perform a war of manoeuvre ultimately resulted in its ability to challenge the military.

In Chapter Six, I look at the failed attempt of the MB as the allied force to control political society. I argue that the MB's perpetration of its war of position was an attempt to challenge the military and control political society. The MB attempted to undertake the same strategy that allowed business figures to gain power under Mubarak – controlling civil society and then reaching political society. However, contrary to the crony capitalists, the MB had ideological leverage. In other words, since the MB was supporting different social forces via profit and non-profit activities, it had the potential to create a development model led by the private sectors. The MB did not have any control over coercion, due to its moderation since the 1980s, and it did not infiltrate the coercive apparatus; this resulted in its inability to challenge the military directly. Therefore, I argue that the MB attempted to expand its control of economic relations within civil society and, secondly, that the MB attempted to infiltrate the judiciary as an alternative coercive apparatus which resisted confrontation

with the MB. Finally, in the attempt to pre-empt the military reaction, before expanding its economic control over civil society, the MB had to protect the economic interest of the military. However, similar to the mistake made by crony capitalists under Mubarak, the MB did not integrate the subaltern forces within the state.

The oscillation of the MB from being the allied force of the military to attempting to become the leading force of the subaltern bloc reduced the consent from the civil movements. In this context, Tamarrod emerged as a leading force to channel the discontent which resulted from the exacerbation of the MB's war of position and the economic dis-integration. In this way, Tamarrod was able to lead the subaltern forces – similarly to the way Kefaya and April 6 did – by using a confrontational strategy to reach a specific aim – Morsi's resignation – that could gather a broad base.

However, due to the lack of organisation and therefore the lack of leadership, the military was able to capitalise on the wave of protests generated by the Tamarrod movement, and win the consent of the subaltern groups in deposing Morsi. To conclude, I argue that the easy removal of Morsi by the military was due to the fact that, in contrast to 2011, in 2013 the subaltern forces targeted the intermediary force which acted as an allied force of the dominant force, rather than targeting their alliance. This reinforced the dominant position of the military, which at that point had to recruit another allied force or expand its hegemony to form an integral state.

Finally, Chapter Seven interrogates whether or not the transformation of the Egyptian state after the military coup can be addressed as a form of passive revolution. Most of the studies on the Egyptian Uprising – especially authoritarian resilience approaches – interpret the military coup as the complete restoration of the status quo that existed during Mubarak, denying the participation that popular forces had in shaping the Egyptian transformation. In this regard, some scholars put revolution and counter-revolution as the two opposite outcomes of the same revolutionary situation (De Smet, 2016; Allinson, 2019a, 2019b). This approach stresses the

importance of addressing revolution not as an outcome but as a process, because it captures the dynamism of a change that occurs over an extended period of time and involves a plurality of actors at different levels. However, this dichotomic approach does not allow the study of what might fall in between revolution and counter-revolution.

Others have conceptualised the Egyptian Uprising as form of morbid symptoms as the alternation of waves of revolution and counter-revolution. For example, the first wave or revolution is considered to be between the occupation of Tahrir Square and the resignation of Mubarak; the *conservative coup* follows as the first moment of counter-revolution based on the cooperation of the military and the MB as conservative forces to stop the revolution; the second wave of revolution was considered the strike and protest during the presidency of Morsi, to be followed again by the final counter-revolutionary way of the post-military coup (Achcar, 2016, pp. 105–106). Although this interpretation aims to be rooted within Gramsci's theory, it is close to Huntington's theory of waves of democratisation (Arafat, 2018) – where the end goal of protest is to establish a revolution which will be achievable only via the support of the troops – similar to the case of 1952 (Achcar, 2016, p. 146).

This interpretation does not acknowledge the achievement that the unity of subaltern forces displayed against the military. In fact every time that Islamist and secular forces united they managed to push back the military's demands. Furthermore, despite the need of the military to form an integral state, there were not suitable forces able to connect the political society with the civil society. As a matter of necessity to maintain its dominance, the military had to develop a way to integrate different forms of social forces. This intensified the use of consent and coercion with the use of ultra-nationalist rhetoric and brutal repression respectively. In order to reintegrate the social forces within the state, consent and coercion have to be accompanied by structural transformation.

In this case, in order to avoid the possibility that an allied force could challenge its dominance, the military over-relied on foreign aid to sustain and trigger the development of the country. Whether or not the military will succeed in the reintegration of the state is too early to assess; however, protests triggered in September 2019 by Mohamed Ali – a former contractor of the military – and the formation of an anti-Sisi protest highlighted two main points (Al Jazeera, 2019; Michaelson, 2019a, 2019b). Firstly, Sisi's state reintegration based on the lack of intermediary forces able to connect with different social forces might be a short-term strategy if the military-led development does not ensure the integration of subaltern forces. Secondly, these protests stress the relevance of the intermediary forces as a pivotal force that can tip the balance between political and civil society within the context of a semi-integral state.

8.2 Limitations and further research agenda

The thesis has discussed the reinterpretation of Gramsci's concept of subalternity and his theory of revolution to propose a model to explain counter-revolution and the fragility of the revolutionary process that the Egyptian case exposed. It is also important to reflect on the limitations of the thesis project and bear these in mind in order to prepare for further research. Thus, the main limitation of this project has been the inability to conduct fieldwork and primary data collection via interviews. In fact, although secondary data has been useful to highlight the development of the war of position and war of manoeuvre of the social forces involved in the uprising and its transition, the lack of interviews with those in the revolutionary movements, youth – both seculars and Islamists – workers, the MB, limited an analysis of the relations within the subaltern forces – not in terms of strategies used, since the thesis has investigated the wars of position and manoeuvre – but in relation to their internal organisation and ideology. Firstly, an accurate investigation of the organisation and mobilisation of these different groups will allow a better understanding of how the social forces developed between 2011 and 2013, and a mapping out of how their impact changed over time.

Secondly, the investigation of ideology – defined by Gramsci as a world view – is intertwined with other forms of consent and integration, like the provision of welfare and the development of economy. In this regard, we can better understand the limits of the war of position and the war of manoeuvre by investigating the relations in the ideological division between Islamists and seculars within the subaltern bloc. However, the investigation of ideology can illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of each movement, and its development. As explained in Chapter Three and discussed throughout the thesis, with the case of the MB the development of a social force is crucial to understand how the most advanced force can take the lead of the subaltern bloc and keep it united to turn the revolutionary situation into a consolidated revolution. Overall, access to interviews would have helped ‘why’ questions, like why movements like April 6 over-relied on the war of manoeuvre, or why some secular groups supported the military coup while others did not.

To overcome these limitations the thesis focused on the ‘how’ questions which were essential to develop the model proposed to explain the counter-revolution as the result of an open-ended process. Furthermore, the data collected from previous research is linked with the research objective of the primary researcher. I have always been aware of this and in fact in order to overcome this limitation this research triangulated data by seeking multiple sources reporting the same events in a similar manner. Similar to the previous limitations, in this case interviews are a way to further attest the validity of the sources used.

These limitations can be met by conducting interviews, and as discussed earlier, can provide insight on the ideology of the subaltern forces. However, ideology is not exclusively a world view of the subaltern forces only. In fact, in order to maintain its dominance the military had also to develop ideology, and it did it through the use of ultra-nationalistic discourse to recall Nasser’s state. As discussed earlier, the new Egyptian state under Sisi is attempting to integrate the subaltern forces who triggered the uprising. In this regard an investigation of how Sisi’s regime deployed ideological discourses will help to

build on the current understanding of the basis of Sisi's regime offered in this thesis – for example, military-led development and pretentious representations of the revolutionary forces like youth and workers. However, as stated in Chapter One and re-affirmed in Chapter Seven, whether or not the Sisi regime is successful in the integration of the subaltern forces remains beyond the scope of this project. Thus, this seems the first and foremost aim for further research.

More broadly, since the aim of this research has been to develop a model of understanding of counter-revolution, it would be valuable to apply the model to similar cases that have experienced the wave of uprising as well but experienced very different outcomes, like Yemen, Syria and Libya, to assess the explanatory power of the model. This would also be valuable to understand the part of the model that has been conceptualised based on Gramsci but is not applicable in Egypt, like the use of the underground war. In fact, on this basis it is useful to reflect and investigate how underground war has played a role in the transformation of these cases and if there might be a correlation between underground war and civil war. Other components of the model can be investigated, for example the concept of Caesarism in the case of Yemen. In fact, Yemen in particular is a striking case for the application of the model in order to test the application of its Caesarism aspect because before turning into a civil war, the contrast within the military allowed the Houthi to gain control of the territory in the north and west of the country.

The model can be applied in ongoing cases like Sudan and Algeria. This does not mean to suggest that Sudan and Algeria will turn into a counter-revolution, rather it stresses that this model can be useful in two ways. Firstly, it can capture the difference within revolutionary situations. Secondly, it offers a theoretical tool to investigate state–society relations in a changing region that is still experiencing the effects of the Arab Uprisings.

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