



## An Ideological Critique Towards the Representation of Power in The Novel Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar by Tere Liye

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### **Abstract**

In some cases, literary works can be a means to depict social and political life that is unjust and undemocratic. Ideological criticism in literature is an analytical approach that focuses on how ideologies, or dominant systems of thought and values, are represented and critiqued in literary works, particularly to explain a specific representation of power that can be used as a learning tool. This study aims to analyze the representation of power in novels using a qualitative descriptive method and the theory of hegemonic power. Data was collected through a reading and note-taking technique, as well as by comparing data from the novel with data from references. The analysis reveals that the representation of power in novels consists of three forms: authority, legitimacy, and the nature of power. Authority is used to depict how power influences the lives of society, legitimacy is used to depict how power influences the lives of society in a legitimate manner, and the nature of power is used to depict how power influences the lives of society in an illegitimate manner. The representation of power in novels shows that power can take the form of authority, legitimacy, or the nature of power, which influences the lives of society.

**Keywords:** *Ideological Criticism; Representation of Power; Hegemony Theory; Novel*

### **Introduction**

Indonesia is a state of law with all the consequences within it. The government that runs properly if we look deeper turns out to hold various kinds of secrets and depravity. As a developing country that has felt the bitterness of being colonized for hundreds of years, it should make the Indonesian people understand all the actions of the colonized form. But it turns out to be the opposite. This nation has not yet understood how to defend its pride and is now even shackled by the new era of colonization. Colonized by its same nation.

Literature as a form of representation of the real world has an important role in understanding and communicating human experience. In literary works, authors use various techniques and strategies to describe the social, cultural and political life of society. Thus, literature can be a means of understanding and communicating human experience, as well as a tool to criticize and change the social and political structures that affect people's lives.

In some cases, literary works can be a means to depict social and political life that is unjust and undemocratic. For example, a novel by N. Riantiarno shows a strong criticism of ancient customs and the shackles of tradition. Thus, literary works can be a means to change the order of social and cultural values in a society that does not give freedom to the people. Therefore, literature has an important role in understanding and communicating human experience, as well as being a tool to criticize and change the social and political structures that affect people's lives.

Ideology is a concept associated with ideas and notions. The term comes from the French "idéologie" created by Antoine Destutt de Tracy in 1796. Ideology can be understood as a form of thought and action that contains an explanation of reality, ideals, values to be achieved, and how to achieve these ideals that guide a community to act. Ideology functions as a system of ideas that influence the decisions and actions of individuals and society. In novels, ideology can be used as a tool to describe the social and political life of society. For example, in the novel by N. Riantiarno, which shows a strong criticism of ancient customs and the shackles of tradition. Thus, ideology can be a means to change the order of social and cultural values in society that does not give freedom to the people.

In novels, ideology can be applied by illustrating how ideology affects people's lives. For example, Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novels show how the ideology of nationalism affected the lives of Indonesians during the colonial era. Thus, novels can be a means to understand and communicate human experience, as well as a tool to criticize and change the social and political structures that affect people's lives[1][2].

Ideological criticism in literature is an analytical approach that focuses on how ideologies, or dominant systems of thought and values, are represented and critiqued in literary works. Ideology in this context refers to a worldview disseminated by dominant groups to maintain their power and influence. Ideological analysis reveals how literary works can reinforce or challenge existing power structures by portraying underlying values and beliefs. For example, Louis Althusser in his theory of the state ideological apparatus explains how ideology functions through social institutions such as schools, churches, and the media to interpellate individuals into subjects who support the existing system.

Ideological critique can also be used to understand how ideologies and social structures influence political and policy decisions. In this case, the analysis is carried out by understanding how ideologies and social structures influence political and policy decisions, as well as how individuals can participate in changing political and policy decisions that affect them. According to Michel Foucault, "Ideologies contain not only ideas or values, but also social and political structures that influence how people think and behave" (Foucault, 1972).

An ideological approach can also be applied to understand works that depict class conflict. In this context, Marxist criticism highlights how economic and social structures are represented in novels, as well as how class relations and class struggle are expressed through characters and plot. Terry Eagleton, a Marxist literary critic, explains that literature not only reflects social conditions but also participates in ideological struggles by promoting or opposing a particular worldview. For example, in the analysis of the novel "Violence, the Contract, and Heroes" by Festus Iyayi, ideological criticism reveals how the novel depicts social and economic injustice and working-class resistance to exploitation by the ruling class.

In novels, ideological critique is often done by analyzing characters, plot, and setting to identify the ideological messages conveyed by the author. For example, literary works from the Harlem Renaissance, as analyzed by Amritjit Singh, show how black writers used their narratives to critique oppressive racial and social systems. Singh identifies themes such as self-definition, class, caste, and skin color in the works of writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, who ideologically challenged the hegemony of the dominant white culture at the time.

The representation of power in literature refers to the way power and authority are portrayed in literary works, including how power is exercised, maintained and challenged. Literature often reflects existing power structures in society, both through the characters who hold power and those who are

affected by it. Michel Foucault, in his study of power, emphasized that power is not only repressive but also productive; it produces knowledge, discourses, and norms that shape the behavior of individuals and groups.

Literary criticism often uses power theory to analyze how these power structures are not only represented but also critiqued in literary narratives. For example, in the analysis of African novels by authors such as Chinua Achebe, critics highlight how colonialism and colonial power are represented and how the characters in the novel struggle against colonial domination (ERIC, Atlantis Press). This kind of analysis helps to reveal complex power dynamics and resistance to them, which often mirror and challenge existing power structures in the real world.

Ideological criticism of the representation of power in literature aims to uncover and analyze how power and ideology are intertwined and represented in texts. This approach explores how characters, plots, and settings reflect or oppose existing systems of power. According to Louis Althusser's theory of ideology, ideology functions to reproduce the material conditions necessary for the survival of the capitalist system through state ideological apparatuses such as the media, schools, and other cultural institutions (OpenEdition Journals) (ERIC). In literary works, these representations can show how individuals and groups are affected by and interact with existing power structures.

George Orwell's novel "1984" is a powerful example of an ideological critique of representations of power. Orwell depicts totalitarian rule through Big Brother and the Party who use information control, language manipulation, and constant surveillance to maintain power and oppress individuals. Through the character of Winston Smith, Orwell highlights the dehumanizing effects and loss of individual freedom under totalitarian regimes, critiquing how totalitarian ideologies can control thought and behavior (Penn State University Press). The novel shows that power is not only physical but also psychological and ideological, creating a highly controlled and engineered reality.

In addition, in the novel "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe, ideological criticism of colonial power is evident. Achebe describes the life of the Igbo people before and after the arrival of the British colonizers, showing how colonial power destroyed the existing social, cultural and economic structures. Through the character of Okonkwo, Achebe expresses resistance to colonial domination and a critique of imperialist ideology that considers indigenous cultures inferior. The novel highlights the tension between local traditions and colonial power, as well as the destructive impact of colonialism on cultural identity and sovereignty (ERIC) (Atlantis Press). Achebe uses his narrative to challenge the dominant colonial narrative and offer an alternative perspective that showcases the diversity and richness of African culture.

## **Method**

This research uses descriptive qualitative research. The data is in the form of descriptions of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs related to power. This research uses the theory of hegemony of power and produces descriptions of forms of power, forms of indigenous resistance to colonizers and dominant fictional elements that represent power. The technique used in this research is reading and note-taking technique. This technique is done by reading repeatedly and then recording things related to the problem under study. In addition, marking is done on suspected readings of indications of power representation in the novel "Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar by Tere Liye".

The data is analyzed by comparing the data in the novel with the data in the reference, after which the data is identified and classified into tables. Next, interpretation is carried out, namely interpreting the discourse context that is indicated as a representation of power in the novel "Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar" using the theory of hegemony of power. The last step is inference, which is making conclusions on aspects that contain the problem under study based on the description of the data using the theory of hegemony of power.

## Discussion

The characters in the novel "Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar" play a crucial role in the story, particularly in critiquing ideology and representing power. The characters are not just mere puppets, but rather they are the driving force behind the plot, shaping the narrative and influencing the reader's perception of the story. Through their actions, dialogue, and motivations, the characters reveal the underlying themes and messages of the novel, including the critique of ideology and the representation of power.

They are not just passive recipients of power, but rather they are actively engaged in resisting and challenging the dominant ideologies and power structures. They are the ones who are fighting for their rights, challenging the status quo, and seeking to create change. Through their struggles, the novel highlights the importance of individual agency and the need for collective action in order to bring about social and political change.

The study found that there are dialogues that represent the abuse of power in the novel "Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar". The dialogues were analyzed to identify the forms of power that are represented, including coercive power and reward power. The study found that the characters in the novel used various forms of power to manipulate and control each other, with the most dominant form being coercive power.

The study also found that the dialogues in the novel were used to critique the abuse of power and to highlight the negative consequences of such abuse. The characters in the novel were shown to be struggling against the oppressive forces that were exerting control over them, and the dialogues were used to convey their feelings of frustration, anger, and despair. The study concluded that the novel

provides a powerful critique of the abuse of power and highlights the importance of individual agency and collective action in resisting such abuse. The form of power representation used by the characters can be observed from the following dialogues.

Table 1. Forms of Power Operating in Novel Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar

No.	Forms of Power	Findings
1.	Coercive Power	The government utilizes the state apparatus and the power of weapons to create fear and obedience in the people through authoritarian leadership.
2.	Reward Power	The figure of Tuan Liem, the President-elect, General Bacok, and Lawyer Hotma Cornelius who are ready to do anything to perpetuate their power, including giving money and positions to committee members who have legalized mining concessions that are detrimental to the people.

The next result of the study is a form of subordinate class resistance to the ruler that occurs between groups and between individuals.

Table 2. Forms of Subordinate Class Resistance to the Ruler

No.	Forms of Power	Findings
1.	Intergroup	The government utilizes the state apparatus and the power of weapons to create fear and obedience in the people through authoritarian leadership.
2.	Interpersonal	The figure of Tuan Liem, the President-elect, General Bacok, and Lawyer Hotma Cornelius who are ready to do anything to perpetuate their power, including giving money and positions to committee members who have legalized mining concessions that are detrimental to the people.

## The Forms of Power Operating in the Novel *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar*

The forms of power operating in the novel *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar* are coercive power and reward power. Coercive power is predominantly exercised through violence and coercion. This type of power involves the intervention of state apparatuses in executing leadership. In this novel, The oligarchy utilizes state apparatuses and the power of weaponry to instill fear and obedience among its people. This is evident in the following quote.

(1)

*"Jangan dibuat rumit, Pak Kadus. Atau nanti semua urusan penduduk ikut rumit." Komandan tentara menatap dingin. Di dadanya tertulis nama, 'Bacok', menilik pangkatnya, dia seorang Mayor. "Halangi wartawan yang hendak meliput di gerbang kampung!" Komandan tentara itu memberi perintah, "Jika mereka memaksa, ambil kamera dan alat liputannya." (TBJP, 2024: 27)*

(1)

*"Don't make it complicated, Major Kadus," the commander said, his eyes cold. "Or else everything will get complicated." He looked at the name on his chest, "Bacok", and thought about his rank, he was a Major. "Stop the journalist who is trying to report at the village gate!" the commander ordered. "If they force it, take their camera and equipment." (TBJP, 2024: 27)*

Luthans (2011:431) states that the source of coercive power depends on fear. This power originates from the fear of punishment that leaders impose on those who do not comply with their wishes.

(2)

*"Kau pura-pura bego atau bego betulan, heh? Kau bicara dengan wartawan?" Mayor Bacok mendelik, "Baca ini! Wartawan ini menulis kesaksian penduduk tentang kejadian dua tahun lalu. Tidak cukup uang yang diberikan pemilik tambang kepadamu, heh? Dibayar berapa kau oleh wartawan itu? (TBJP, 2024: 33)*

(2)

*"Are you pretending or are you really like that? You're talking to a journalist?" Major Bacok scowled, "Read this The journalist wrote a testimony from the villagers about the incident two years ago. Not enough money was given by the mine owner to you, right? How much did the journalist pay you?" (TBJP, 2024: 33)*

From the quote above, the issuance of threats to subordinates by those in power aims to create fear and compliance to ensure they follow the leader's wishes. The next form of power is reward power, which stems from a leader's ability to provide rewards, something meaningful and necessary to those in need (Yukl, 2010:178).

(3)

*"Iya. Jelas dia berbohong. Entah apa pun alasannya. Pihak lawan telah membeli kesaksian temanmu itu. Tiga puluh tahun berlalu, bahkan dengan kebebasan pers yang berkembang pesat, bahkan setelah berganti berkali-kali rezim kekuasaan, tetap saja ada yang tidak pernah berubah. Di permukaannya saja yang terlihat berubah, di dalamnya, bergumpal pekat, tetap hitam. Cara-cara lama. Trik-trik kekuasaan lama." (TBJP, 2024: 60)*

(3)

*"Yes. It's clear he's lying. Whatever his reason. The opposing side has bought his testimony. Thirty years have passed, even with the rapid development of press freedom, even after changing regimes, there are still those who never change. Only the appearance changes, but inside, it's still dark. Old ways. Old tricks of power." (TBJP, 2024: 60)*

From the quote above, it is shown that the form of reward power relates to a leader's ability to influence subordinates by providing rewards for their positive behavior or behavior that aligns with the leader's desires (Yukl, 2010:178).

(4)

*"Tidak. Ini jalan milik tambang. Kawasan tambang. Semua yang lewat harus diperiksa. Mulai hari ini. Perintah atasan."*

*"Hei! Jalan ini sudah ada sejak seratus tahun lalu. Dulu jalan setapak, dibuat kakek nenekku. Perusahaan tambang itu datang, mendadak mengaspalnya, lantas bilang jalan mereka? Aku mau ke kebunku, apa urusannya dengan kalian?" Dua tentara lain mendekat, senjata mereka teracung. Penduduk yang hendak ke kebunnya menatap jerih. (TBJP, 2024: 113)*

(4)

*"No. This is the mine's path. The mine area. Everyone who passes must be checked. Starting from today. The boss's order." "Hey This path has been here for a hundred years. Our ancestors made it a footpath. The mine company came, suddenly asphalted it, and then said it was their path? I want to go to my garden, what's it got to do with you?" Two other soldiers approached, their weapons drawn. The villager who was heading to his garden looked worried. (TBJP, 2024: 113)*

From the quote above, it is shown that the form of reward power relates to a leader's ability to influence subordinates by providing rewards for their positive behavior or behavior that aligns with the leader's desires (Yukl, 2010:178).

(5)

*"Kami tidak bisa memuat tulisan ini, Dik. Pemerintahan bisa memberedel koran kami." Demikian penjelasan redaksi koran lokal, saat menerima tulisannya tentang pemilu tahun-tahun itu. Anak itu mengangguk, tidak masalah. (TBJP, 2024: 145)*

(5)

*We can't publish this article, Dik. The government can shut down our newspaper." This is the explanation from the local newspaper's editorial team when they received their article about the election years ago. The child nodded, no problem. (TBJP, 2024: 145)*

From the quote above, the issuance of threats to subordinates by those in power aims to create fear and compliance to ensure they follow the leader's wishes. The next form of power is reward power, which stems from a leader's ability to provide rewards, something meaningful and necessary to those in need (Yukl, 2010:178).

(6)

*Yang Mulia, ratusan tahun bangsa ini melawan penjajah, yang mengangangi tanah, air, dan hasil bumi. Ratusan tahun susah payah bangsa ini mengusirnya, agar bisa hidup merdeka, makmur di negeri sendiri. Kehidupan yang baik dan mulia. Tapi sayangnya, setelah penjajah itu berhasil diusir pergi. justru yang datang adalah saudara sendiri, yang lebih bengis, lebih rakus, untuk kemakmuran kelompoknya sambil membual demi kepentingan bangsa dan negara. Penjajah era kini. (TBJP, 2024: 246)*

(6)

*"Your Majesty, for centuries our nation has fought against the colonizers, who have exploited our land, water, and natural resources. For centuries, our nation has struggled to expel them, so that we can live freely and prosper in our own land. A good and noble life. But unfortunately, after the colonizers were successfully driven away, it was our own kin who came, even more brutal and greedy, to enrich their own group while deceiving the nation and the state for their own interests. The colonizers of today." (TBJP, 2024: 246)*

From the quote above, it is shown that the form of reward power relates to a leader's ability to influence subordinates by providing rewards for their positive behavior or behavior that aligns with the leader's desires (Yukl, 2010:178).

### **Forms of Subordinate Class Resistance Against Rulers**

In the novel *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar*, forms of resistance occur both intergroup and interpersonal. Hegemony here refers to the process of building alliances among subordinate classes as an effort to revolutionize the dominant or ruling class in the government (Simon, 2004:21). Intergroup resistance is based on several factors, such as competition among European nations (Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch) for power, longstanding conflicts between two local kingdoms, non-compliance with rulers, attacks by the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch to occupy a territory, and rebellions by groups against rulers.

Admiral Van Neck of the Netherlands launched an offensive against the Portuguese stationed in Tidore to recapture the ship "de Trouw." Another form of resistance comes from The villagers, which allied with the Dutch, while Tidore allied with the Portuguese to maintain their respective kingdoms' power and positions. The Dowingo-Jo inhabitants showed their disobedience by rebelling against the Sultan of The villagers's order to build five warships. Additionally, the Portuguese and Spanish united to launch an attack in an effort to regain control over the The villagers kingdom. A rebellion also occurred between the Banda Neira inhabitants and the VOC, opposing trade monopoly policies. Resistance in the novel also occurs on an individual level, driven by Kiema-Dudu's desire for covert revenge against his subordinate who had humiliated his position. Additionally, Dirk Joncker Callenbacker engaged in resistance through negotiation with the VOC leader, JP Coen, to conduct joint discussions.

### **Dominant Fictional Elements Representing Power**

The theme of nationalism in the novel *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar* depicts the spirit of nationalism among the people of The villagers and the colonial powers of an unnamed country. Characters in the novel represent various forms of power dynamics. Figures wielding power include Tuan Liem, Jendral Bacok, Hotma Cornelius, Anggota Komite, Presiden terpilih. They exercise dominance through methods of violence and coercion over the people. Hegemony refers to the relationship between classes and other social forces. A hegemonic class gains consent and power from other social classes by creating and maintaining alliances through political and ideological struggles (Simon, 2004:22). Characters opposing The villagers and the Dutch include Bu Sri, Environmental Activists, Dandy, and the villagersare.

Bu Sri, Environmental Activists, Dandy, and the villagersare characters deeply affected by the hegemony of power. According to Nurgiyantoro (2007:217), the setting provides a concrete and clear foundation for the story. The setting used in the novel is during the period of an unnamed country. Locations such as Dowingo-Jo village, the palace of The villagers, Tuan Kalengbakar's house, the ship de Draak, and the Banda Neira islands are used to illustrate the practices of power. The novel also portrays the chaotic political and economic conditions of the Halmahera community during colonial times. The storyline begins with the massacre in Dowingo-Jo village, which sparks prolonged conflicts between The villagers and Tidore, exacerbated by the interventions of foreign nations manipulating both kingdoms, leading to resistance from the people to expel the colonizers.

The perspective essentially reflects the author's vision, meaning it represents the viewpoint the author adopts to observe events in the story (Sayuti, 2000:158). The narrative perspective used in this novel is third-person omniscient, where the author uses pronouns like "he" or "they" and demonstrates their bias towards the oppressed people depicted in the novel. This research shares similarities with previous studies, such as the analysis of hegemonic power in the novel *Pabrik* by Putu Wijaya, conducted by Wijakangka, an Indonesian Literature student at Universitas Negeri Malang in 2008. Both *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar* and *Pabrik* explore coercive power and reward power, which function to instill fear and obedience.

Additionally, the novel incorporates ideologies of humanism and nationalism disseminated through characters like Bu Sri, Environmental Activists, Dandy, and team. Similar ideological themes are found in the research conducted by Chandra, an Indonesian Literature student at Universitas Gadjah Mada in 2015, focusing on *Burung-Burung Manyar*. This research also bears resemblance to a thesis written by Ariyanti titled "Social Conflict with Historical Background in the Novel *Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar* by Tere Liye". What sets this research apart is its detailed exploration of dominant fictional elements to understand the representation of power in the novel.

### **Conclusion**

The form of power operating in the novel "*Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar*" is coercive power and reward power. The most dominant form of power is coercive power, which involves the state apparatus through violent and coercive means. On the other hand, reward power is exercised by the authorities by providing rewards and positive promises to those under their control.

The resistance of subordinate classes against the authorities occurs between groups and individuals. Group resistance is carried out by village residents and residents living in strategic areas to be made into mining land. Meanwhile, individual resistance is carried out by environmental activists, committee heads, coffee shop owners, the writer, Bu Sri, and Dandy. The resistance they carry out is a form of national spirit and a strong desire to achieve independence from oligarchy, mine owners, and corrupt government officials.

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