

Power Domination and Resistance in Nawal El Saadawi's *Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan*: Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony

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Doi: [10.24252/jad.v25i2a8](https://doi.org/10.24252/jad.v25i2a8)

(Submitted: 29/07/2025, Accepted: 09/11/2025, Available Online: 10/11/2025)

Abstract

This research explores the dynamics of hegemony and resistance in Nawal El Saadawi's novel *Mawtu Ma'ali al-Waziri Sabiqan* through the lens of Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony. The research takes Gramsci's concepts of ideological domination and counter-hegemonic struggle as its formal object, while the novel serves as the material object. Using a qualitative descriptive approach and a critical reading method grounded in ideological literary theory, this research positions itself within contemporary Arabic literary research that intersects with cultural-political analysis. The findings indicate that power in the novel operates not only through coercive mechanisms but also through ideological consent embedded within social institutions and dominant narratives that regulate behavior, identity, and voice. Resistance emerges as both symbolic and material acts of defiance that challenge the prevailing ideological structures. This research highlights literature as a site of negotiation between power and ideology, offering valuable insight for literary and cultural studies in understanding how texts mediate sociopolitical relations and contestations.

Keywords: Gramsci; Hegemony; Resistance; Ideology; Physical

ملخص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة ديناميكيات الهيمنة والمقاومة في رواية نوال السعداوي "موت معالي الوزيري سابقان" من خلال منظور نظرية أنطونيو غرامشي في الهيمنة الثقافية. تتخذ هذه الدراسة مفهوم غرامشي للهيمنة الأيديولوجية والصراعات المضادة للهيمنة موضوعًا شكليًا لها، بينما تمثل الرواية موضوعها المادي. باستخدام منهج وصفي نوعي وأساليب قراءة



نقدية تركز على النظرية الأدبية الأيديولوجية، تضع هذه الدراسة نفسها ضمن البحث الأدبي العربي المعاصر المتقاطع مع التحليل الثقافي السياسي، تشير النتائج إلى أن القوة في الرواية لا تعمل فقط من خلال آليات الإكراه بل أيضاً من خلال الموافقة الأيديولوجية المضمنة في المؤسسات الاجتماعية والسرديات السائدة التي تنظم السلوك والهوية والصوت. تبرز المقاومة كأفعال تحدّ، رمزية ومادية، تتحدى البنى الأيديولوجية السائدة تُسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على الأدب كساحة للتفاوض بين القوة والأيديولوجيا، مقدمة رؤية قيّمة للدراسات الأدبية والثقافية في فهم كيفية توسط النصوص في العلاقات الاجتماعية والسياسية والصراعات

الكلمات المفتاحية: غرامشي، الهيمنة، المقاومة، الأيديولوجيا، المادية

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dinamika hegemoni dan perlawanan dalam novel Mawtu Ma'ali al-Waziri Sabiqan karya Nawal El Saadawi melalui lensa teori hegemoni budaya Antonio Gramsci. Penelitian ini mengambil konsep dominasi ideologis dan perjuangan kontra-hegemoni Gramsci sebagai objek formalnya, sementara novel berfungsi sebagai objek materialnya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dan metode pembacaan kritis yang berlandaskan teori sastra ideologis, penelitian ini memposisikan dirinya dalam penelitian sastra Arab kontemporer yang bersinggungan dengan analisis budaya-politik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kekuasaan dalam novel beroperasi tidak hanya melalui mekanisme koersif, tetapi juga melalui persetujuan ideologis yang tertanam dalam institusi sosial dan narasi dominan yang mengatur perilaku, identitas, dan suara. Perlawanan muncul sebagai tindakan pembangkangan, baik simbolis maupun material, yang menantang struktur ideologis yang berlaku. Penelitian ini menyoroti sastra sebagai arena negosiasi antara kekuasaan dan ideologi, menawarkan wawasan berharga bagi studi sastra dan budaya dalam memahami bagaimana teks memediasi hubungan dan kontestasi sosiopolitik.

Kata Kunci: Gramsci; Hegemoni; Perlawanan; Ideologi; Fisik

How to Cite This Article: Hidayat, Ridho, Rohanda Rohanda, and Dendi Yuda S. "Power Domination and Resistance in Nawal El Saadawi's Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan: Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony". *Jurnal Adabiyah* 25, no. 2 (November 9, 2025): 376–400. Accessed November 9, 2025. <https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/adabiyah/article/view/60286>.

A. Introduction

Literature, as a reflection of social reality, has long been a platform for writers to explore various aspects of human life. "Literature is a form or creative work whose object or theme is human life using language as a medium. This statement clearly shows that literature is a product of its time, reflecting the values, norms, and views prevailing at that time."¹ In *Nawal El Saadawi's Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan*, the story is told through the eyes of a mother. The story centers on a former high-ranking state official who unexpectedly meets a woman from the lower ranks, a lowly employee who refuses to submit or turn her back on reality. The seemingly trivial encounter shakes the former minister's beliefs about the limits of behavior that had been considered normal. The incident becomes a turning point that shatters his life, leading to a career downfall, dismissal from office, and ultimately leading to his death.² This research examines constructs the collapse of hegemonic power through narrative strategies that reveal the intersection between ideology, social consciousness, and moral disillusionment. Unlike previous Gramscian readings of Arabic literature that primarily emphasize class struggle or political domination, this research explores how hegemony operates through the interiorization of values and self-perception within an authoritarian culture. The analysis focuses on how the novel exposes the limits of ideological persuasion when confronted with lived experience and moral awakening.

The ideology is then considered reasonable and legitimate, even though it is actually a tool to maintain power.³ In this context, the hegemony of power works through consensual and coercive domination. Through this approach, the research positions *Mawtu Ma'ali al-Waziri Sabiqan* as a critical site for rethinking Gramsci's concept of hegemony in the context of Arabic literature shifting attention from external structures of control to the inner collapse of belief systems that sustain them. This perspective not only illuminates the novel's political dimension but also contributes to broader debates on ideology, power, and the crisis of moral authority in modern Arab societies. For example, in Nawal El Saadawi's *Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan*.

هذا الجانب اللاإرادي في علاقتي بك يثير تمردي؛ ؛ فأنا أعبد حريتي، وهذا هو السبب في أنني أثور عليك، وأحياناً أقول لك لن أراك بعد هذه المرة، أو أحاول أن أجمع لك الأخطاء وأستقطب زلات اللسان. وقد أتهمك بما أتهم به الرجال الآخرين، لكنها ثورة

¹ Rohanda Rohanda, "Metode Penelitian Sastra: Teori, Metode, Pendekatan, Dan Praktik" (LP2M UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2016).

² Analisis Karakter Tokoh et al., "Nilna Indriana, Dkk ANALISIS KARAKTER TOKOH UTAMA DALAM NOVEL MATINYA SEORANG MANTAN MENTERI KARYA NAWAL EL SAADAWI MENURUT TEORI GORDON ALLPORT" 6, no. 2 (2022).

³ Antonio Gramsci, "Selections from the Prison Notebooks," in *The Applied Theatre Reader* (Routledge, 2020), 141–42.

فاشلة دائماً، تشبه ثورتي على نفسي أحياناً، ورغبتني في إلقاء جسدي أحياناً من النافذة والتخلص منه إلى الأبد. والنتيجة دائماً واحدة أن جسدي يظل ملتصقاً. وهي فوق المقعد، وأنت تظل بي في مكانك أمام عيني، وبالقرب مني تكاد تلمسني لكنك لا تلمسني لماذا لم تلمسني أبداً؟ هل أنت مجرد طيف؟ أم لك وجود حقيقي؟⁴

The quote represents a form of consensual hegemony that works subtly in the realm of personal relationships. Although the character is aware of the inequality, domination has worked through the internalization of values, guilt, and existential helplessness. This is a mirror of hegemony that does not rely on coercive power, but succeeds in creating compliance through ideological acceptance and affection. The character's rebellion, though it occurs, always returns to himself-as a form of crisis of consciousness in a hegemonic society.

Research conducted by Isma Fauziyah and Budi Sujati. "Resistance to the Hegemony of Egyptian Rulers in the Novel Mudzakarati Fii Sijni Al Nisa (Gramsci's Hegemony Study)" discusses how the hegemonic power exercised by the Egyptian government during the Anwar Sadat era is represented in literary works. In addition, this study also examines the forms of resistance to this domination that are depicted through the characters in the novel. Through Antonio Gramsci's hegemony theory approach and descriptive-analytic method, this research is able to identify various instruments of hegemonic power, both structural and cultural, which are used to maintain power.

This research also highlights the process of ideological negotiation between characters in the story, especially the main character named Nawal, who shows resistance to the oppressive system through collective consciousness and solidarity in the prison environment.⁵

In his research entitled "Gramsci's Hegemony in Ahmad Tohari's Novel Kubah", he examines how Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony is represented through the ideological dynamics in the novel. The main focus of this research is the process of ideological domination carried out by the Communist Party against the character Karman, a Muslim youth, and the ideological impact caused by the process.⁶ In his

⁴ Nawāl al-Sa'dāwī, p28 "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً".

⁵ Isma Fauziyah and Budi Sujati, "Resistensi Hegemoni Penguasa Mesir Dalam Novel Mudzakarati Fii Sijni Al Nisa (Kajian Hegemoni Gramsci)," *Diwan: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 5, no. 1 (2019): 36–52.

⁶ Fais Rokmawar Dani and Suseno Suseno, "Hegemoni Gramsci Dalam Novel Kubah Karya Ahmad Tohari," *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia* 12, no. 2 (July 23, 2023): 127–37, <https://doi.org/10.15294/jsi.v12i2.70403>.

research entitled “Nyai Kartareja's Moral Hegemony over Srintil in the Novel Jantera Bianglala by Ahmad Tohari” examines how ideological domination is exercised through the figure of Nyai Kartareja over the character Srintil. The main focus of this study is the form of moral hegemony and the factors that cause this domination in the socio-cultural context of the Dukuh Paruk community. Using the sociology of literature approach and Gramsci's hegemony theory, this study shows that social control over Srintil is not done through physical violence, but through the manipulation of moral values and local traditions. Srintil, who initially has no power, is forced to accept a social role as a *ronggeng* due to the pressure of custom and cultural legitimacy attached by the dominant figures around her, especially Nyai Kartareja.⁷ This study contributes to Gramscian literary criticism by broadening its analytical scope beyond class-oriented interpretations to include the moral and psychological dimensions of power. It argues that Arabic literature provides a valuable framework for understanding hegemony not only as a political formation, but also as an experiential process shaped by belief, consent, and disillusionment within specific cultural contexts.

B. Literature Review

1. Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony

In modern societies, power rarely operates solely through overt violence or direct repression. Antonio Gramsci's theoretical framework provides a critical lens for understanding how domination is maintained through consent as much as coercion.⁸ Hegemony refers to a form of power that is created not through direct conquest or oppression between social classes, but through a process of achieving domination based on the consent and acceptance of the people voluntarily.⁹

Gramsci explained that domination does not only take place at the political level through the state apparatus, but also at the ideological level through civil society. Through moral and intellectual leadership, the dominant class not only controls economic and political aspects, but also controls the worldview of society. This process works through institutions such as education, religion, media and culture that propagate

⁷ Mahadi Dwi, Hatmoko □ Sumartini, and Dan Mulyono, “Jurnal Sastra Indonesia HEGEMONI MORAL NYAI KARTAREJA TERHADAP SRINTIL DALAM NOVEL JANTERA BIANGLALA KARYA AHMAD TOHARI: KAJIAN HEGEMONI GRAMSCI,” *JSI*, vol. 3, 2014, <http://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jsi>.

⁸ Paola Merli, “Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks,” in *Cultural Policy Review of Books* (Routledge, 2014), 61–63.

⁹ Fajrul Falah and Hegemoni Ideologi dalam Novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih Karya Habiburrahman el Shirazy, “Hegemoni Ideologi Dalam Novel Ketika Cinta Bertasbih Karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy (Kajian Hegemoni Gramsci),” *NUSA*, vol. 13, 2018.

the dominant ideology.¹⁰ Power is stronger precisely because it is not always visible in everyday consciousness and habits.¹¹ Gramsci also divided state power into two realms: political society, which includes repressive institutions such as the military and the law; and civil society, where ideology is consolidated through social institutions.¹² This statement emphasizes that hegemony does not replace coercive power, but rather complements it. The state still needs power to maintain stability, but its success depends on bringing together ideological leadership and coercive power in a seemingly natural structure.¹³ In this strategy, oppressed groups do not physically attack power, but seize ideological spaces ranging from education, culture, to language to create counter values.¹⁴

This, Gramsci's concept of hegemony becomes very relevant in understanding how power is not only built from the top down, but also produced and reproduced from the bottom up through consensus, habits, and ways of thinking.¹⁵ Some scholars emphasize the *primacy of ideology*, arguing that hegemony relies on persuasion rather than repression. Others, however, caution that Gramsci never abandoned the role of coercion; instead, he viewed it as a necessary complement to consent, suggesting that ideological dominance is sustainable only when supported by the potential for force. This dualism raises further questions about how the balance between coercion and consent manifests within specific cultural contexts, particularly in postcolonial or non-Western societies where political and moral authority are often intertwined.¹⁶

¹⁰ Rika Febriani and Irwan Hamdi, "Soft Power & Hegemony: Gramsci, Nye, and Cox's Perspectives," *Jurnal Filsafat* 34, no. 1 (2024): 86, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.87478>.

¹¹ Francesco Colucci, "Gramsci in Action : Cultural Hegemony and Schooling in the Arab Israeli Conflict Gramsci in Action : Cultural Hegemony and Schooling in the Arab Israeli Conflict" 5, no. 3 (2024): 54–77.

¹² Merli, "Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks."

¹³ Jaya Scott, "The Liberal International Order as a Gramscian Hegemony : A Critical and Exploratory Thought Piece," *Liberated Arts: A Journal for Undergraduate Research* 8, no. 1 (2021): 0–10.

¹⁴ Patricia Robin, Andi Mirza Ronda, and Frengki Napitupulu, "Hegemony of Independent Campus Learning (Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony Study in the Indonesia Education System)," *Academy of Education Journal* 15, no. 1 (2024): 1072–81, <https://doi.org/10.47200/aoej.v15i1.2341>.

¹⁵ Muhammad Fathan Zamani, Abi Ihsanullah, and Badri Badri, "Karakter Anti-Hero Sebagai Counter-Hegemoni Superhero Dalam Film Deadpool: Analisis Counter-Hegemoni Antonio Gramsci," *Jurnal CULTURE (Culture, Language, and Literature Review)* 8, no. 2 (2021): 112–31, <https://doi.org/10.53873/culture.v8i2.264>.

¹⁶ Dani Filc, "Is Resistance Always Counter-Hegemonic?," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 26, no. 1 (2021): 23–38.

a. Consensual Dominance

Consensual domination is a form of power that works through ideologically constructed consent by dominant groups towards subordinate groups in society. Gramsci emphasized that hegemonic power becomes effective precisely when it is not recognized as power, but as a “social normality” that governs everyday life without being questioned. This consensual mechanism takes place within the realm of civil society through institutions such as the family, schools, media, religion, and culture, which are the main channels for spreading the values and ways of thinking of the dominant class.¹⁷

“The ‘spontaneous’ consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is ‘historically’ caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.”¹⁸ This quote shows that seemingly “spontaneous” consent is actually the result of a long-standing social construct, shaped by the dominant role of a group in the structure of production and ideological representation.¹⁹ In capitalist societies, for example, values such as hard work, meritocracy and competition are often accepted as natural, even though they reflect the ideological interests of capitalism itself. Because consensual domination is subtle and invisible as oppression, it is difficult for resistance to emerge explicitly.²⁰ When the gap between lived reality and imposed ideology becomes glaring, there is room for ideological resistance.²¹ This is why Gramsci emphasized that true class struggle does not only occur in the formal economic or political field, but in the realm of culture and consciousness itself.²²

b. Coercive Domination

If consensual domination operates through voluntary consent and internalization of ideological values by the people, then coercive domination is the other side of the

¹⁷ Fatmawati Fatmawati, Kalsum Minangsih, and Siti Mahmudah Noorhayati, “JIHAD PENISTA AGAMA JIHAD NKRI; Analisa Teori Hegemoni Antonio Gramsci Terhadap Fenomena Dakwah Radikal Di Media Online,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 17, no. 2 (2019): 214–40.

¹⁸ Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks Volume 2*.

¹⁹ Made Pramono, “Melacak Basis Epistimologi Antonio Gramsci,” *Listiyono Santoso, Dkk, Epistimologi Kiri*, Jogjakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media Group, Cet. K3-7, 2009.

²⁰ DNSI Devi, “Analisis Interseksionalitas Dalam Aktivisme Di Abad Ke-21 Menurut Perspektif Neomarxisme,” *ResearchGate*, July, 2022.

²¹ Chantal Mouffe, “Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci,” in *Gramsci and Marxist Theory (RLE: Gramsci)* (Routledge, 2014), 168–204.

²² Muhammad Aminullah, “Analisis PP. No 55 Tahun 2007 Tentang Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan Perspektif Antonio Gramsci,” *Fikroh: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2016): 176–98.

hegemony mechanism that works by enforcing compliance when consensus fails to be maintained.²³

Gramsci distinguished two main spaces of power: civil society as the arena of consensual domination, and political society (the state) as the terrain of coercive domination.²⁴ When the dominant ideology is no longer able to bind society in one consensus for example, due to social, economic, or political crises then the state will activate coercive tools to enforce order. In Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Gramsci wrote:

“The State is the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules”.²⁵ This coercive domination is not always physical or overtly violent. In modern societies, coercive forms can be very subtle, such as the use of legal tools against political opposition, the stifling of civic space, and the manipulation of public opinion by state apparatus.²⁶

In addition, Gramsci highlights that coercive domination is usually used not to create a new consensus, but to maintain a hegemonic order that is under threat. In this context, coercive power arises when the state fails to convince society that the existing social order is the only possible and just one.²⁷ Coercive is the rough face of power, which emerges when the soft face of consensus is no longer able to convince.²⁸

2. Antonio Gramsci's Resistance

In Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, resistance is understood not simply as a rejection or resistance to the domination of power, but as a complex and historical process, involving consciousness, organization, and strategy. Therefore, resistance to

²³ Peter Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci* (Pluto Press London, 2004).

²⁴ Lastry Monika, “Dominasi Kelas Penguasa Terhadap Subaltern Dalam Novel Gadis Pantai Karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer,” *Jurnal Ilmiah FONEMA* 8, no. Spesial (2025): 375–86.

²⁵ Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks Volume 2*.

²⁶ Muhammad Fadel Rachman, Juanda Juanda, and Aslan Abidin, “Unsur Pencapaian Hegemoni Kekuasaan Dalam Novel Perang Karya Rama Wirawan: Tinjauan Hegemoni Antonio Gramsci,” *Indonesian Journal of Social and Educational Studies* 3, no. 2 (2022): 166–73.

²⁷ Fredy Nugroho Setiawan, “Hegemoni Dan Dominasi Perusahaan Semen Terhadap Penduduk Di Wilayah Pembangunan Pabrik Semen Dalam Samin Vs Semen,” *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesusastraan, Dan Budaya* 6, no. 1 (2016): 39–53.

²⁸ Anas Ahmadi, “Representasi Hegemoni Gramsci Dalam Novel Teruslah Bodoh Jangan Pintar Karya Tere Liye,” *EUNOIA (Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia)* 5, no. 1 (2025).

hegemony must emerge as a conscious act that rejects an order that is framed as natural and natural.²⁹

"The crisis of authority is precisely the crisis of hegemony, or the general crisis of the State. This crisis occurs when previously accepted ideologies are no longer believed in and the masses become detached from traditional parties."³⁰ This statement shows that resistance arises when there is a crisis of confidence in the hegemonic order previously accepted by society. At this point, hegemonic power loses its ability to direct social life consensually.³¹ Resistance emerges as a form of detachment from the ideological conformity previously embedded in social consciousness.

These debates raise questions about whether resistance within hegemonic systems can ever be fully emancipatory, or whether it inevitably reproduces fragments of the very ideology it contests.³²

a. Ideological Resistance

Within the framework of Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, ideological forms of resistance have a central position as the main strategy in challenging the dominance of the ruling class.

It targets the deepest roots of domination: the ways of thinking, feeling, and believing that have been taken for granted as "natural" by society at large.³³ Gramsci believes that hegemonic domination will not survive if it is not supported by "common sense", which is a general view that has taken root in people's daily lives. This common sense does not emerge neutrally, but is shaped by the interests of the dominant group through institutions such as education, media, religion, and popular culture.³⁴ As Gramsci stated:

²⁹ Adrian Ford and Peter Newell, "Regime Resistance and Accommodation: Toward a Neo-Gramscian Perspective on Energy Transitions," *Energy Research & Social Science* 79 (2021): 102163.

³⁰ Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks Volume 2*.

³¹ Pablo Ciochini and Stéfanie Khoury, "Thinking in a Gramscian Way: Reflections on Gramsci and Law," in *Research Handbook on Law and Marxism* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021), 139–55.

³² Azadeh F Osanloo, "Antonio Francesco Gramsci: The Origins and Originator of the Concept of Hegemony," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Educational Thinkers* (Springer, 2024), 855–65.

³³ Lutfiana Ilma Annisa, Redyanto Noor, and Suryadi Suryadi, "Negosiasi Ideologi Pengarang Pada Novel of Mice and Men Karya John Steinbeck Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Dalam Perspektif Antonio Gramsci," *Anuva: Jurnal Kajian Budaya, Perpustakaan, Dan Informasi* 5, no. 3 (2021): 431–46.

³⁴ Dwi Safitri, Siti Fatimah, and R Yusuf Sidiq Budiawan, "HEGEMONI DALAM NOVEL MARYAM KARYA OKKY MADASARI: KAJIAN HEGEMONI GRAMSCI," *Lingua Franca: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya* 8, no. 2 (2024): 14–32.

“The challenge to hegemony begins when subaltern classes move from a state of economic-corporate consciousness to a political and ideological one”.³⁵ Resistance only becomes possible when a narrow economic consciousness develops into a collective political and ideological consciousness, which sees social conditions as the result of historical processes and specific power structures, rather than fate or natural laws. Organic intellectuals are not just academics or thinkers, but those who are actively involved in the socio-political life of the people, and are able to connect concrete experiences with social change strategies. This ideological resistance also involves the production of alternative cultures, such as community media, critical literature, popular education, and art that sides with marginalized voices.³⁶ On the other hand, this process is also an uneasy field of contestation. The dominance of ruling ideologies is not only repressive, but also persuasive, and often masquerades as universal truths.³⁷

Therefore, efforts to form an alternative ideology require intellectual discipline, strong social organization, and the moral courage to oppose the mainstream.³⁸

b. Physical Resistance

Although Antonio Gramsci's thought emphasizes the importance of ideological struggle in maintaining or overthrowing hegemony, he also does not rule out the possibility of resistance in the form of direct physical action, especially at the moment when the hegemonic power structure begins to lose stability.³⁹ It is in this context that Gramsci introduced the concept of “war of movement”, which is an open, fast, and offensive form of political struggle, which usually emerges after the previous ideological stage has succeeded in creating a strong enough mass consciousness.⁴⁰

Gramsci implies that in modern capitalist societies (especially in the West), state domination cannot be overtaken by a frontal attack or sudden revolution (war of movement), because the strong and complex structure of civil society will block radical

³⁵ Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks Volume 2*.

³⁶ Muharrina Harahap, Heny Anggreini, and Jakaria Jakaria, “NEGOSIASI IDEOLOGI DALAM ANTOLOGI PUISI ‘LEPAS MUASAL’ KARYA SEISKA HANDAYANI: KAJIAN HEGEMONI GRAMSCI TERHADAP WACANA PEREMPUAN,” *IdeBahasa* 6, no. 2 (2024): 314–21.

³⁷ Ely Rusliawatia et al., “Hegemoni Dan Perlawanan: Interpretasi Gramscian Terhadap Novel Di Kaki Bukit Cibalak” (Mantra, 2023).

³⁸ Fadlil Munawwar Manshur, “Teori Sastra Marxis Dan Aplikasinya Pada Penelitian Karya Sastra Arab Modern,” *Bahasa Dan Seni: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Pengajarannya* 40, no. 1 (2012).

³⁹ Catherine Diaz Aprillia and Hespi Septiana, “Hegemony and Resistance in the Novel 3726 MDPL Aku Kamu Dan Rinjani Based on Antonio Gramsci’s Theory,” *International Journal of Integrative Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2025): 1483–94.

⁴⁰ Riki Ardiansah, “Dominasi Kaum Penguasa Terhadap Kelas Pekerja Dalam Novel Anak Rantau Karya Ahmad Fuadi (Kajian Hegemoni Antonio Gramsci),” *Jurnal Sapala* 5, no. 1 (2018).

change. Therefore, he suggests an alternative strategy, which is a more gradual and profound struggle for ideological position (war of position). However, when the hegemonic order begins to experience a crisis of authority, that is, when social consensus weakens and people lose confidence in the moral and intellectual leadership of the authorities, there is room for more open resistance movements.⁴¹

In this situation, resistance is no longer limited to the production of alternative ideas, but evolves into direct collective action, such as massive demonstrations, strikes, and political revolutions.⁴² Therefore, Gramsci views the war of movement not as the beginning, but as the culmination of the accumulation of intellectual and cultural struggles that have been built before.⁴³

Physical resistance according to Gramsci is not an independent form of resistance, but the result of a long and organized ideological struggle.⁴⁴ The key to its success lies in the strength of counter-discourse, social solidarity, and the readiness of political organizations to articulate the demands of the masses into a transformative movement.⁴⁵

C. Research Methods

In general, the research methodology contains four points, namely research approaches and methods, types and sources of data, and data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques.⁴⁶ This research uses a qualitative method that is descriptive in nature to produce a detailed description that is also accurate.⁴⁷

Descriptive itself is the nature of data from qualitative research.⁴⁸ The source of data is the novel itself, while materials such as books and journal articles are used to

⁴¹ Fatimah Cahyaningtyas, Joko Purwanto, and Nurul Setyorini, "Representasi Karakter Pemimpin Novel Tanah Para Bandit Melalui Teori Hegemoni Gramsci," *Metafora: Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra* 12, no. 1 (2025): 33–43.

⁴² Adamson, "Gramsci and the Politics of Civil Society."

⁴³ Nurul Kholifah, Hasan Busri, and Sri Wahyuni, "The Phenomenon of Silencing Activists in the Novel Laut Bercerita and Digital Silencing in Indonesia: An Analysis of Gramsci's Hegemony," *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya* 11, no. 1 (2025).

⁴⁴ Siti Nabila Amira Wangsi et al., "Exploring of Hegemony in the Novel the Kite Runner, A Thousand Splendid Suns, Girl of Kosova, and The Thief of Baghdad," *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Multidisipliner Research* 2, no. 4 (2024): 200–212.

⁴⁵ Mohammad Afrohul Lubab and Suhartono Suhartono, "HEGEMONI AKADEMIS: ANALISIS SOSIOLOGI SASTRA DALAM NOVEL PENAKLUK BADAI KARYA AGUK IRAWAN MN," *BAPALA* 11, no. 03 (2024).

⁴⁶ U I N Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, "Pedoman Penulisan Skripsi" (Tesis, dan Disertasi. UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2020).

⁴⁷ Rohanda, "Metode Penelitian Sastra: Teori, Metode, Pendekatan, Dan Praktik."

⁴⁸ Hanif Hasan et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Yayasan Tri Edukasi Ilmiah, 2025).

support theoretical understanding and contextual interpretation. Each selected passage is recorded with chapter and page references to ensure transparency and traceability. In the research, there is one type of data source, the data source used in this research comes from the Novel *Mawtu Ma'ali al-Waziri Sabiqan* by Nawal El Saadawi.⁴⁹ This research approach refers to Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony Theory, which focuses on hegemony and resistance. According to Gramsci, hegemony is a form of domination built through consent, where power is exercised through political leadership and ideological influence.⁵⁰ While many literary works depict dominant power relations, few highlight the forms of resistance that emerge in response to that power.⁵¹ While many literary works depict dominant power relations, few highlight the forms of resistance that emerge in response to that power.⁵² If hegemony creates domination through ideological agreement, then ideological resistance is built through the struggle to create an alternative consciousness that contradicts the dominant values.⁵³

The process of data collection is conducted through close reading and systematic note-taking. The researcher reads the text multiple times to identify recurring patterns, contradictions, and thematic expressions related to Gramsci's concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony.

Data analysis proceeds in several stages. The first stage involves open coding, in which words or sentences containing indications of domination or resistance are marked and labeled. In the next stage, the initial codes are grouped into broader analytical categories such as *consensual domination*, *coercive domination*, *ideological resistance*, and *symbolic authority*. Then power functions solely as a tool to maintain the stability of domination built on the basis of ideology, moral values, and culture adopted by the ruling group.⁵⁴ The categorized data are then interpreted in relation to Gramsci's theoretical framework, emphasizing how power is reproduced through social and ideological consent, and how resistance arises through acts of moral and intellectual challenge.

⁴⁹ Nawal El Saadawi.Pdf," 2015. موت معالي الوزير سابقاً،

⁵⁰ Hartley, "Hegemony and Cultural Politics: The Praxis of Gramsci's Prison Notebooks."

⁵¹ Palendika Alandira and Wildan Taufiq, "Power Relations and Resistance i n Naguib Mahfouz ' s Layali Alf Laylah : Michel Foucault ' s Hegemony صخللما تلليل فلا يلايل "تياور يف قمواقلمو قطللسلا ققلاع وكونفل قتميهلا قيرطن مادختساب طوفحم بيجنل" 25 (2025), no. 1, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jad.v25i1a5>.

⁵² Giuseppe Cospito, *The Rhythm of Thought in Gramsci: A Diachronic Interpretation of Prison Notebooks*, vol. 130 (Brill, 2016).

⁵³ Fabio Frosini, "Subalterns, Religion, and the Philosophy of Praxis in Gramsci's Prison Notebooks," in *Marx, Marxism and the Spiritual* (Routledge, 2020), 222–38.

⁵⁴ Marcus Schulzke, "Power and Resistance: Linking Gramsci and Foucault," in *Gramsci and Foucault: A Reassessment* (Routledge, 2016), 57–74.

Because the original text is in Arabic, translation becomes an essential part of the research process. All Arabic quotations are translated into English and, where relevant, into Indonesian using a semantic translation strategy that prioritizes meaning and tone rather than literal equivalence. Key passages are subjected to back-translation to maintain accuracy and minimize bias. The edition of the novel used is clearly cited, and all quotations respect fair use guidelines. While the data is in the form of phrases or sentences related to the domination of power and forms of resistance. The data were collected using reading and note-taking techniques.⁵⁵ The researcher sees and records sentences related to the practices of power domination and forms of resistance.

D. Result and Discussion

1. Domination in the Novel *Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan* by Nawal El Saadawi

a. Consensual Dominance

In this excerpt, the main character, a former high-ranking state official, utters a sentence containing Consensual Hegemony Based on Class Ideology and Status Symbols.

وكنت أدرك - يا أمي - أنّ الله لم يتوفّني بعد بدليل أنني لم أقرأ نعي في صفحة الوفيات، ولا يمكن لرجل في مثل مناصبي أن يموت هكذا دون أن يُنشر نعيه كبيراً بارزاً في الصحف، وأن تُنظّم له جنازة كبيرة يمشي فيها كبار رجال الدولة يتوسطهم رئيس الدولة. مشهد كان يهزني - يا أمي - إلى حد أنني كنت أتمنى، وأنا أمشي في مثل هذه الجنازات المهيبة⁵⁶

The character's longing for a grand funeral symbolizes the internalization of hegemonic values that equate human worth with social recognition and institutional power. This reflects what Gramsci terms "spontaneous consent," where individuals accept dominant norms as natural truth. Power here operates not through coercion, but through moral and ideological consent embedded in everyday consciousness. Within Gramsci's framework, this episode highlights a key theoretical tension: domination endures because subordinates internalize elite values, making resistance a struggle of awareness rather than force. The novel thus engages Gramscian debates on the fragility of consent and the possibility of ideological awakening as the first step toward counter-hegemony, especially in moralized and hierarchical Arab social contexts.

⁵⁵ Nawal El Saadawi, *Matinya Seorang Mantan Menteri* (Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1994).

⁵⁶ al-Sa' dāwī, p13-14 "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً".

In this excerpt, Consensual Hegemony Based on Bureaucracy and Discipline of Power.

يا أمي حين أرى جسدي وهو يتحرك وحده هكذا بغير عقلي أدهش، بل أخاف خاصة إذا كنت أجلس في اجتماع هام يقتضي مني التركيز والانتباه وكان الاجتماع الهام الوحيد هو الاجتماع الذي أصبح فيه مرءوساً⁵⁷

He character's uncontrollable bodily movements in a formal meeting signify more than mere nervousness they reveal how domination operates through internalized social discipline. Her anxious restraint reflects the embodied effects of hierarchical power, where subordination produces self-surveillance and conformity. The character's body becomes a mirror of the structures of domination that have long shaped her consciousness: that being at the bottom means always having to conform. This narrative shows that power is not always explicitly present, but can work subtly through habits, norms, and inner anxieties. The characters are not directly pressured by their superiors, but the pressure remains in the form of fear of making mistakes. Thus, the character's nervousness is a silent manifestation of a system of power that has reached into the body and mind.

In this excerpt Patriarchy-based Consensual Hegemony, family tradition, father/male moral authority.

فكيف الحال إذا كان هذا الشخص هو الأب، رب الأسرة وعمادها، الذي يعمل، والذي ينفق، ومن حقه على أفراد أسرته جميعاً الاحترام والطاعة، كباراً كانوا أم صغاراً وعلى الأخص الصغار؟ ماذا تقولين يا أمي؟ نعم يا حبيبتي في حياتي كلها منذ كنت موظفاً صغيراً إلى أن أصبحت وزيراً، لم يصادفني موظف واحد قال بشيء آخر غير ما كنت أقول، وهذا هو السبب - يا أمي - في أنني لم أحتمل هذه الوظيفة، ولم أحتمل أن أظل جالساً في مقعدي كعادتي، وقوراً كأبي وزير حين يكون جالساً بين موظفي وزارته، لم أحتمل. يا أمي - إلا أن أنتفض واقفاً صارخاً بغضب على غير عادتي، خارجاً عن وقاري فاقداً لصوابي. لم تكن تقول شيئاً ذا بال⁵⁸

⁵⁷ al-Sa'dāwī, p14 "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"

⁵⁸ al-Sa'dāwī, p16 "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"

The character's belief that a father must be respected as the family's provider reflects the internalization of patriarchal values that sustain consensual hegemony. These norms rooted in ideas of duty, authority, and respect operate through everyday language and social relations rather than coercion. In Gramscian terms, such beliefs exemplify how ideological leadership secures consent by making hierarchy appear natural and moral. Yet, this raises a central debate within Gramscian scholarship: whether consent in patriarchal contexts arises from genuine moral agreement or from the long-term normalization of unequal power relations. The passage thus exposes how hegemony persists not through visible domination, but through inherited moral values reproduced within the family and accepted as common sense.

b. Coercive Dominance

In this quote, it contains patriarchal symbolic violence.

وشعرت بالخلج الذي ذكرني في لحظة سريعة خاطفة بعيني ابنتي الصغيرة، وتحول الخجل في لحظة خاطفة إلى رغبة في أن أخلجها كما أخلجتني، ووجدت نفسي أصرخ في وجهها بصوت عال على غير عادتي: «كيف تجرؤين؟! مَنْ أَنْتِ؟ ألا تعلمين أنكِ مهما كنتِ فلست إلا موظفة صغيرة وأنا الوزير، ومهما ارتفعت فأنت في النهاية امرأة، مكانها في الفراش تحت الرجل؟»⁵⁹

The scene reveals two intersecting forms of domination: bureaucratic authority and patriarchal power. When the female subordinate challenges this order, the male character's authority previously sustained through consensual hegemony shifts toward coercion. In Gramscian terms, this shift marks the moment when ideological consent collapses and domination must be maintained by force. His verbal aggression exposes the fragility of hegemony: it depends on the subordinate's acceptance of hierarchy. This tension reflects a broader debate in Gramscian and feminist theory whether patriarchal power should be read as a form of cultural hegemony that secures consent, or as a coercive system that constantly risks exposure and resistance. The scene thus dramatizes the instability of hegemony when moral and ideological legitimacy begin to erode..

This excerpt contains symbolic and social hegemony.

وهي لا تسمع هذا الكلام في حجرة خالية مغلقة، ولكن حجرة مكتبي كانت مليئة بالرجال، وكلهم من كبار الموظفين؟ نعم يا أمي، أية امرأة في مكانها كان لا بد أن يقتلها

⁵⁹al-Sa'dāwī, p18 "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً".

الخل، وكنت أود أن أقتلها بأي شيء وإن كان هو الخجل، لكن الغريب - يا أمي - أن هذه المرأة لم يكن يقتلها شيء ولم يَبْدُ عليها أي خجل، بل إنها لم تُطرق بعينها إلى الأرض ولم يرمش لها جفن⁶⁰

In this scene, the male character deploys coercive power to enforce subordination through public humiliation a strategy aimed at restoring ideological control. Yet his effort fails when the female subordinate resists not through confrontation, but through silence. Her refusal to react destabilizes the expected dynamics of domination, transforming passivity into a form of counter-hegemonic agency. From a Gramscian perspective, this moment exposes the limits of coercion when consent is withdrawn. The scene also engages a key debate within Gramscian and feminist scholarship: whether resistance must be overt and organized, or whether it can emerge subtly through gestures of refusal that disrupt the symbolic order of power.

This excerpt contains crisis.

لم أعرف كيف وصلت إلى هذه الحال؟ وكيف يمكن لموظفة صغيرة في الدرجة الخامسة أو السادسة أن تهدد وجود رجل كبير مثلي في منصب الوزير؟ لكني كنت غاضبًا، وغضبي كان أشد غضب عرفته في حياتي، ولم يكن ذلك الغضب لأنني عاجز عن القضاء عليها بأية قوة أملكها أو لا أملكها، وليس لأنها فعلت شيئًا لم يفعله أحد⁶¹

In this scene, the minister's crisis arises not from political loss but from the collapse of ideological consent. The female subordinate's quiet defiance exposes the fragility of a power system built on assumed obedience. Her refusal to reproduce fear undermines the minister's symbolic authority, revealing that hegemonic power depends on voluntary recognition rather than force. As Gramsci suggests, when consent erodes, domination shifts from ideological to coercive forms. This moment illustrates a central debate in Gramscian criticism—whether hegemony can sustain itself without the active complicity of the governed, and how gendered hierarchies expose the instability of consent-based authority.

2. Resistance in the Novel *Mawtu Ma'ali Al-Waziri Sabiqan* by Nawal El Saadawi

a. Ideological Resistance

In this excerpt ideological counter-hegemony.

⁶⁰ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، al-Sa' dāwī, p17

⁶¹ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، al-Sa' dāwī. p18-19

لا تنظري هكذا كأنما أنا المجرم الوحيد على الأرض، الجريمة في حياتنا نحن الرجال ضرورة، إنها الوسيلة الممكنة الوحيدة ليثبت الرجل منا أنه رجل. ولأن الجريمة تحتاج إلى جرأة أو سلطة فأنا عاجز دائماً عن أن أكون مجرماً، وليس أمامي إلا أحلام اليقظة، وتخيل نفسي بطلاً مغواراً أفصل الرؤوس عن الأجساد بخبطة سريعة من سيفي. نحن الرجال تعجب بالقتلة إعجاباً شديداً، والرجل منا لا يمكن أن يعجب برجل آخر دون أن يكرهه، وهذا هو سبب الانقباض النفسي الذي أشعر به وأنا بين الرجال المهمين من ذوي السلطة؛⁶²

The character's realization exposes the irony of patriarchal hegemony: as a man, he is both its beneficiary and its victim. His awareness that masculinity is socially constructed around dominance and violence marks the beginning of ideological resistance. In Gramscian terms, this reflects a form of counter-hegemony resistance achieved through critical consciousness rather than direct confrontation. His statement that "we men admire murderers very much" reveals how patriarchal ideology naturalizes violence as a marker of male identity. The central debate here concerns whether such personal awareness can genuinely challenge hegemonic norms or merely represent an individual crisis within an intact system of patriarchal consent..

In this excerpt ideological critical feminism.

ماذا تقولين يا عزيزتي ؟ رفضت أن تتزوجي لهذا السبب أنتِ امرأة ذكية، لا أظن أن الذكاء وحده هو الذي يجذبني إلى فراشك من دون نساء الأرض، لماذا أنت بالذات أعترف لك كما يعترف العبد أمام الإله؟ لماذا أتسلل من فراش زوجتي كل ليلة لآتي إليك؟ لا أكذب عليك، ليس هو الحب فأنا – كما ذكرت لك - قد وقعت في حب نفسي منذ البداية وانتهى الأمر⁶³

The male character's view of love reflects patriarchal hegemony, where affection functions as symbolic domination rather than mutual recognition. The woman's refusal of marriage thus becomes an ideological act of resistance rejecting not merely a personal bond but a social institution that reproduces female subordination. In Gramscian terms, her stance represents counter-hegemony achieved through

⁶² "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، al-Sa'dāwī, p48

⁶³ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، al-Sa'dāwī, p49

withdrawal and critical awareness rather than direct confrontation. Her silence and refusal to participate in the patriarchal order undermine the moral consent that sustains it. The key debate lies in whether such individual defiance can transform broader hegemonic structures, or whether it remains a personal escape within an enduring system of domination.

In this excerpt ideological identity and power.

وأني في كل حياتي لم أستطع مرة واحدة أن أرفع عيني في عيني أي رئيس من رؤسائي وإن كان موظفًا صغيرًا، ولا يملك عليّ إلا سلطة صغيرة. وكان غضبي – يا أمي يشتد كلما حاولت أن أعرف كيف عجزت عن ذلك وهي لم تعجز؛ مع أنني رجل وهي – امرأة، مثل أي امرأة أخرى؟⁶⁴

The male character's inability to look at those above him reflects internalized submission within a hierarchical and patriarchal order. What unsettles him most is a woman's simple yet subversive act returning his gaze. In Gramscian terms, this moment exposes the fragility of hegemonic power, which depends on moral consent and habitual deference. The woman's gesture becomes an act of counter-hegemony: she challenges domination not through open rebellion but through reclaiming agency within the symbolic order. The scene also reveals that patriarchy subjugates both women and men through imposed submission, men through the pressure to embody control and authority. The debate that emerges is whether such individual acts of defiance can disrupt entrenched hegemonic norms, or whether they remain symbolic gestures within an enduring system of consent-based domination.

b. Physical Resistance

In this excerpt Physical and Symbolic Resistance

وقفز فوق كالنمر المفترس ، لكن أمي كانت أسرع منه، وفي غمضة عين أصبحت أمي بجسدها الكبير بيني وبينه. لم أكن أرى وجهها لأنني كنت أقف خلفها، لكنني أدركت من انقباض عضلات ظهرها وتكورها أنها أصبحت كالنمرة التي تتأهب للانقضاض. ولم أعرف تمامًا ماذا حدث؛ فقد كفت الأصوات عن أن تكون آدمية، وكل شيء تغير في لحظة في ثانية والثانية أيضًا لم تكن هي الثانية؛ فالزمن تغير ولم يعد هو الزمن⁶⁵

⁶⁴ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، p19 al-Sa' dāwī.

⁶⁵ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً"، p32 al-Sa' dāwī.

The mother's physical intervention against domestic violence represents a direct challenge to patriarchal hegemony within the private sphere. By using her body as a shield, she resists both the coercive and consensual dimensions of power that legitimize male authority in the family. Her silence is not passivity but a counter-hegemonic gesture an assertion of agency through embodied action rather than discourse. In Gramscian terms, this act illustrates how resistance can emerge from everyday life, transforming the body into a site of ideological struggle. The key debate here lies in whether such individual, bodily resistance can produce broader social change or remains symbolic within the continuing structure of patriarchal consent..

In this excerpt the resistance is humanistic and physical.

ولم يكن غضبي عليها؛ لأنها نطقت بشيء آخر غير رأيي، أو لأنها موظفة صغيرة تختلف في رأيها مع الوزير أو لأنها امرأة تعتد برأيها أمام رجل، أو لأنها قالت لي وهي تخاطبني «حضرتك»، في حين أن الموظفين جميعًا يقولون حين يخاطبوني: يا معالي الوزير⁶⁶

The woman's calm defiance represents a form of counter-hegemony enacted through language rather than violence. By addressing the minister informally and asserting her opinion, she destabilizes the consensual hierarchy that relies on ritualized respect and obedience. In Gramscian terms, her act disrupts the ideological mechanisms of consent that sustain patriarchal and bureaucratic power. This scene raises a key debate in Gramscian feminist criticism whether subtle, discursive gestures of dissent can meaningfully challenge hegemonic structures or remain contained within them as tolerated expressions of difference.

In this excerpt the resistance is active and the verb.

للمرة الأولى أمامي، بدا وجه والدي طبيعياً أمامي. لم أعد خائفة كما في السابق لا أعرف كيف استعدت شجاعتي، لكنني قلت له في البداية بصوت هامس: "أنا لا أحب أبي". وعندما صمت أمامي للحظة، استجمعت المزيد من الشجاعة وقلت له بصوت أقوى: "أنا لا أحب أبي". وعندما استطعت أن أسمع صوتي بوضوح في أذني وعندما تأكدت أنه صوتي، استجمعت المزيد من الشجاعة وقلت له مرة أخرى: "أنا لا أحب أبي! استمررت في فعل هذا حتى وجدت نفسي أصرخ في صراخ متواصل: "أنا لا أحب أبي

⁶⁶ "موت معالي الوزير سابقاً" al-Sa' dāwī.p16

The character's emotional rejection of his father signifies a subtle but profound form of counter-hegemony. His refusal to reproduce his father's patriarchal values represents resistance not through rebellion, but through the denial of inherited consent. In Gramscian terms, this moment illustrates how hegemony operates within affective and familial relations, where love and obedience become tools of ideological control. By withdrawing emotional allegiance, the character challenges the moral foundation of patriarchal authority itself. The key debate lies in whether such personal and psychological resistance can transcend the private sphere to unsettle broader hegemonic structures, or whether it remains confined within individual consciousness.

E. Conclusion

This research concludes that *Mawtu Ma'ali al-Waziri Sabiqan* by Nawal El Saadawi presents a complex portrayal of power relations shaped by Gramscian hegemony. Power in the text operates not only through repression but also through ideological consent rooted in social and institutional norms. The novel reveals two forms of resistance ideological, through rejection of patriarchal values, and material, through direct defiance of domination. These resistances show how the work transcends personal struggle, reflecting broader social tensions between control and emancipation. Literature thus emerges as an ideological space where power is negotiated and challenged. While limited to a single text and framework, this research opens space for further comparative and interdisciplinary research to explore how literature mediates and contests power in diverse cultural contexts.

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