

## REFLECTIONS OF MADURESE LOCAL POLITICS IN THE SHORT STORY MATA CELURIT BY MUNA MASYARI: A GRAMSCIAN HEGEMONY ANALYSIS

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### Abstrak

*Kajian hegemoni Gramsci menawarkan perspektif inovatif dalam sastra, yang tidak sekadar merefleksikan struktur kelas, tetapi juga memiliki dimensi sosial, politik, dan budaya yang otonom. Cerpen Mata Celurit merepresentasikan realitas politik lokal Madura, khususnya dalam pemilihan kepala desa yang sarat perebutan kuasa dan intrik licik. Penelitian ini berpijak pada metode kualitatif deskriptif, dengan objek utama cerpen Mata Celurit yang dipublikasikan di website Kompas. Unit analisis yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini merujuk pada teori hegemoni Gramsci, yang dikaitkan dengan fenomena politik masyarakat Madura dalam perhelatan demokrasi lokal, yakni pemilihan kalebun (kepala desa). Sumber primer penelitian ini adalah cerpen Mata Celurit, yang diperkuat dengan sumber sekunder berupa buku induk, artikel jurnal, dan penelitian relevan. Peneliti berperan sebagai instrumen kunci dalam proses penganalisisan cerpen. Adapun teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik baca catat, kajian pustaka, dan tabulasi data. Selanjutnya, data yang telah ditabulasi dianalisis secara mendalam menggunakan metode analisis wacana. Untuk memastikan keabsahan data, peneliti menerapkan teknik triangulasi data. Berdasarkan hasil dan pembahasan, ditemukan bahwa dominasi ideologi yang dilakukan oleh masyarakat politik untuk menghegemoni masyarakat sipil mencakup kekuasaan tirani, materi sebagai instrumen politik, tindakan ancaman terselubung, legitimasi religius, serta manipulasi dan intimidasi politik. Sementara itu, dominasi ideologi dari masyarakat sipil meliputi menentang dinasti politik dan kepatuhan terhadap otoritas penguasa. Melalui wacana yang dihasilkan, Mata Celurit menyajikan fenomena tanah percaton sebagai isu yang memengaruhi hegemoni. Analisis hegemoni Gramsci merefleksikan bahwa penulis tidak hanya menyajikan pribadi (masyarakat), tetapi juga berfungsi untuk mengungkapkan hegemoni yang dilakukan dalam kontestasi politik di desa pada masyarakat Madura. Penelitian ini dapat menjadi inspirasi bagi masyarakat, akademisi, dan penulis untuk lebih peka terhadap praktik hegemoni yang terjadi di lingkungan sekitar, khususnya dalam konteks politik desa di Madura. Cerpen Mata Celurit dapat dijadikan media literasi kritis untuk meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat tentang pentingnya memahami dan mengkritisi dominasi kekuasaan.*

**Kata Kunci:** cerpen mata celurit, hegemoni gramsci, muna masyari, politik lokal

### Abstract

Gramsci's hegemony study offers an innovative perspective on literature, which does not merely reflect class structures, but also has autonomous social, political and cultural dimensions. The short story Mata Celurit represents the local political reality of Madura, especially in the village head election, which is full of power struggles and cunning intrigues. This research is based on descriptive qualitative method, with the main object of Mata Celurit short story published on Kompas website. The unit of analysis used in this research refers to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which is associated with the political phenomenon of Madurese society in the local democratic event, namely the election of kalebun (village head). The primary source of this research is the short story Mata Celurit, which is strengthened by secondary sources in the form of master books, journal articles, and relevant research. The researcher acts as a key instrument in the process of analysing the short story. The data collection technique is done through reading and note-taking, literature review, and data tabulation. Furthermore, the tabulated data was analysed in depth using the discourse analysis method. To ensure the validity of the data, researchers applied data triangulation techniques. Based on the results and discussion, it was found that ideological domination exercised by the political

community to hegemonise civil society includes tyrannical power, material as a political instrument, covert threat actions, religious legitimacy, and political manipulation and intimidation. Meanwhile, the ideological domination of civil society includes opposing political dynasties and obedience to the ruling authority. Through the resulting discourse, Mata Celurit presents the phenomenon of percaton land as an issue that influences hegemony. Gramsci's analysis of hegemony reflects that the author not only presents a person (society), but also serves to reveal the hegemony exercised in political contestation in the village in Madurese society. This research can be an inspiration for the community, academics, and writers to be more sensitive to hegemonic practices that occur in the surrounding environment, especially in the context of village politics in Madura. Mata Celurit short story can be used as a critical literacy media to increase public awareness about the importance of understanding and criticising the domination of power.

**Keywords:** *short story mata celurit, gramsci's hegemony, muna masyari, local politics*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a reflection of a writer's imagination based on their life experiences. Thus, literary works can be understood as representations of facts that are reconstructed in writing (Tabarok et al., 2025). Literary works are manifestations of human creativity rooted in real-life experiences and observations, then expressed and immortalised in the form of works (Soleh et al., 2024). In line with this, according to (Damayanti, 2023) literary works represent human intelligence and freedom of expression. In addition, as a form of expression from an author, literary works also function as a medium for educating social facts that occur in society. Literary works often reflect social issues that exist in the author's environment (Sahrum et al., 2021).

Many depictions of social reality are illustrated in literary works, showing that literature is not only entertainment but also functions as social control. It is no wonder then that individuals find social criticism contained in literature, whether done directly or indirectly (Arif & Wahyudin, 2024). During the independence struggle and the New Order period, many writers were born who used their work as a medium of expression against the social reality that occurred, such as Chairil Anwar, Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Leila S. Chudori, and others. Nowadays, there are also many great writers who

come from various regions in Indonesia. One of them comes from the Madura region.

One of the contemporary writers who gave birth to literary works by raising the social reality of Madura is Muna Masyari. He is known as a writer who consistently raises the theme of Madurese locality in each of his works (Cindi et al., 2023). Through his writing, Muna Masyari indirectly introduces the culture in Madura. Readers will be immersed in the strains of Muna Masyari's story and gain local Madurese knowledge through his literary works. Muna Masyari also raises the socio-political conflicts of Madurese society in his works, one of which is through short stories.

Muna Masyari's short stories have been published in the short story selection of Kompas, one of the short stories published in October 2024 is a short story entitled Mata Celurit. Mata Celurit short story by Muna Masyari takes the background of the local political dynamics of the Madurese community. With a touch of culture and its distinctive characteristics, Muna Masyari tries to describe the complex dynamics of Madurese local politics. The short story Mata Celurit will be an interesting reflection to understand the reality of Madurese local politics from the lowest level, namely the village head election or coloured by the cunning power struggle that often occurs during the election.

This research tries to analyse the political dynamics that occur in short stories through the perspective of Gramsci's hegemony theory. The

theory of hegemony originally emerged in the Marxist tradition of thought, particularly from the Russian Marxists' response to Monarchist domination. Much of the discourse on hegemony developed within the framework of Marxism. However, over time, hegemony has come to be understood more neutrally and applied to the analysis of power relations in areas such as politics, literature, economics, social and culture (Daniel, 2004). Talking about the concept of hegemony will eventually lead to one name, namely Antonio Gramsci.

Gramsci's theoretical view of hegemony provides a framework for understanding how the dominant class maintains its power through control over ideology, culture, and social systems (Sinaga et al., 2025). Gramsci's hegemony is not just an abstract theory, but the result of deep appreciation, observation, and interpretation of political realities during his lifetime (Siswati, 2018). Gramsci's theory of hegemony offers an innovative perspective in literary studies. Literature is not just a structural reflection of class society, but an independent entity with social, political and cultural power (Pangestu et al., 2023; Latifah & Putra, 2020). Through the lens of Gramsci's hegemony theory, this research will analyse how the short story *Mata Celurit* reflects or illustrates how the hegemony mechanism carried out by the dominant group in the short story, so that it can reflect the local politics of Madura through the short story.

Several studies on Muna Masyari's short stories have been conducted by previous researchers, such as Cindi, Dermawan & Zahro (2023), Poetri & Dewi (2024), Efendi (2022), and conducted by Zebual & Chasanah (2022). The study examines Muna Masyari's short stories from various perspectives, namely from the recessive that occurs in short stories, the voices of women in the patriarchal culture in Madura that are depicted, the study of feminism or gender injustice, and local wisdom in short stories. These studies mostly explore the culture contained in

short stories. Furthermore, as far as the researcher's search goes, there has been no research on Muna Masyari's short story using Gramsci's hegemony theory so that it becomes a research gap to analyse Gramsci's hegemony theory that occurs in Madurese society.

It is different from the previous research. The novelty in this research lies in the application of Gramsci's hegemony theory to examine the short story *Mata Celurit* by Muna Masyari as a reflection of Madurese local politics. This research is expected to offer a new perspective in understanding the complexity of Madurese local politics through the lens of literature and critical theory. This article will examine how the dominant group, in this case Ayah Dahlan's family, maintains its power through manipulation, ideological control, and cunning political strategies. The analysis will focus on how Ayah Dahlan's family utilises civil society to reinforce their hegemony. In addition, this article will also explore the resistance and counter-hegemony that emerges from the Ta'lab group that supports Samsul in his political resistance in the short story.

By examining the short story *Mata Celurit* through Gramsci's hegemony theory, this article is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of local politics in Madura, as well as implications for the community in dealing with manipulation and building a fair and integrity political system. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of Indonesian literary studies.

## 2. METHOD

Descriptive qualitative method is the method used in this research. Qualitative research means collecting non-numerical data to understand social and cultural phenomena that exist in society (Sugiyono, 2015). Furthermore, according to Nurdin & Hartati, (2019), qualitative research departs from field data and uses existing theories as support, then the results will bring up

theories from these data. The object of research comes from the short story *Mata Celurit* by Muna Masyari published on the Kompas website on 27 October 2024. The unit of analysis used in this research uses Gramsci's theory of hegemony, related to the political phenomenon of Madurese society in the local democracy period, namely the election of *kalebun* (village head). The short story *Mata Celurit* is used as a reference for primary data sources. In addition, researchers also use secondary data obtained from master books, journal articles, and relevant research according to the focus and scope of Gramsci's theory. The instrument of this research is the researcher himself as a participant in analysing the content of short stories according to Gramsci's hegemonic view.

Data collection techniques used reading and writing techniques, literature review, and data tabulation based on the categories of ideology and hegemonic practices found in the short story *Mata Celurit*. For the coding, the researcher classifies into two steps, namely those that refer to elite groups that have power with the category of political society (MP), which consists of tyrannical power (MP1), material as a political instrument (MP2), veiled threats (MP3), religious legitimacy (MP4), and manipulation and intimidation (MP5), while those that refer to ordinary people, villagers or groups that do not have power with the category of civil society (MS), which consists of opposition to political dynasties (MS1) and obedience to ruling authority (MS2). Furthermore, the tabulated data will be analysed in depth using the discourse analysis method. This method was chosen because it is able to reveal how the language structure, narrative, and symbols in the short stories represent ideological meanings and power relations, which are in line with the concept of hegemony according to Antonio Gramsci. Through discourse analysis, researchers can interpret the representation of local politics in literary texts as a form of hegemonic social and

cultural practices. To ensure the validity of the data, researchers used data triangulation techniques. This stage includes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1992). Thus, the results of the analysis are not only interpretative, but also methodologically validated.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reflection of Madura local politics is an image of local political events at the village level that commonly occurs in Madura, how political dynamics occur at the lowest level, namely the struggle for the position of village head in Madurese society. The hegemony of the bourgeois class that occurs in a village dominates the lowest class. The power possessed by the ruler becomes a stepping stone to oppress the working community through various dirty means, such as violence (verbal and physical) and agreements with the aim of maintaining the power possessed so that the relay of power can be controlled.

#### **Ideological Dominance of Political Society**

##### **Tyrannical Power**

The portrait of tyrannical power in *Mata Celurit* short story by Muna Masyari represents inhuman authoritarian actions to maintain power by curbing people's freedom. In its implementation, tyrannical power operates not only through physical violence, but also builds a cultural consensus that reinforces an unjust social structure. This concept occurs because the ruler uses persuasion and violence against the lower class. Therefore, the hegemonic relationship between the community and the village apparatus becomes very complex (Rusliawati & Sari, 2023). This tyrannical power is reflected in the actions of the characters, as described in the following conversational narrative.

'They must vacate the land immediately!' exclaimed Dahlan's father last night, among his triumphant men.



That's right! How dare you fight us!" greeted Mat Tanjar, his accomplice, as he slammed down the cigarette packet after releasing one of its contents.

'They've been allowed to live on the land of the kalebun percaton, but now it's soaring!' continued Dahlan's father, furious.

'Patompes sakale!' exclaimed another. (MP1)

The portrait of tyrannical power in the short story Mata Celurit is illustrated through the dominance of local ruling figures who use verbal violence and threats to maintain the status quo (current situation). The rulers see the common people not as subjects with rights, but as a threat to their power. Ayah Dahlan and his accomplice, Mat Tanjar, display authoritarian behaviour by forcing the small community to vacate the land without going through a fair legal process. Sentences such as 'They must vacate the land immediately!' and 'How dare they fight us!' reflect the repressive and inhumane behaviour of the authorities. Land is seen as absolute property, without considering the rights and human values of the people who have long lived there. Power in this narrative shows the practice of domination through the disregard for property rights, social justice, and freedom of expression, which sociologically reflects the unequal structure of feudal society and unequal power relations.

### **Material as a Political Instrument**

Material as a political instrument is used to gain victory in the regional head election contestation. This also happens in the short story Mata Celurit, which represents bribery in the village head election in Madura. Rewards in the form of money become a central tool in driving the power system carried out by the rulers (Pangestu et al., 2023). By using the material power that is distributed, the ruler has a big share in controlling public awareness through symbolic and economic power. The material of money

politics is represented through narratives such as the following.

*The 13-vote advantage for Dahlan's victory was actually too slim to be proud of. Moreover, his father's sowing of money to gain victory was like lowering a barn in front of a horde of hungry chickens. (MP2)*

The narrative describes the village head election contest that Dahlan won through his father's intervention. The victory was not achieved through academic capacity, competence, and spirituality, but through the practice of bribery in the form of sowing money to the community. The 13-vote advantage shows how fragile the legitimacy of power is built on political transactions. The explicit comparison 'like lowering a barn in front of a horde of hungry chickens' is a form of social criticism of the practice of money politics, which utilises the economic conditions of the community to gain power. In this context, money is positioned as the bait, while the people are portrayed as the ones who are easily tempted due to their deprived condition. As a result, victory has been designed from the start, not the result of a healthy democratic process. This shows that democracy has experienced a deviation, where people's votes are bought, rather than based on objectivity and political awareness.

Dahlan's victory reflected manipulation rather than sovereign choice, and ultimately tarnished the democratic system inherited from our ancestors. The practice of money politics in local elections is often used to attract public sympathy. In fact, this practice takes place without coercion, because the community is ideologically hegemonic and voluntarily involved (Urbaningrum & Putra, 2020). Furthermore, this practice shows how economic power can reduce people's political awareness. Citizens no longer vote based on a candidate's track record or vision-mission, but rather based on who is able to 'give more'. This is certainly a big challenge for political education at the lower level. Without

critical efforts to improve people's political and economic literacy, practices like this will continue to be repeated and passed on to the next generation.

In addition, Dahlan's father committed malpractice by using the material instrument of food aid as their ultimate weapon. This is illustrated in the following short story excerpt.

*Dahlan's father did not hesitate to spend hundreds of millions to garner votes. Food aid was poured out in order to attract public sympathy and paralyse opponents. (MP2)*

The discourse shows how Dahlan's father managed to control public opinion and gain cultural hegemony by using food aid, money, and propaganda strategies to win the village head election. He tried to control public opinion and seize hegemony in the village.

The food aid became a tool to build a positive image, create dependency and shift people's critical consciousness. In this dirty way, Ayah Dahlan not only bought the people's votes, but also engineered social acceptance so that power appeared legitimate and was accepted voluntarily. This perspective is in line with Gramsci's thinking, that the domination of power that appears legitimate in the eyes of the people is often a form of disguised destruction, which is not realised because it has obscured aspects of their critical mindset awareness. Furthermore, Gramsci stated that colonialism today is not carried out invisibly through physical coercion and weapons, but through the colonisation of thought (Hariansyah, 2012).

### **Covert Threat Measures**

The characteristics of a political society are closely related to using its power by threatening civil society with various covert actions. From the actions carried out, it makes the community submissive, obedient, respectful, and always under the full control of the ruler, with all the threats given resulting in the entire community being in oppression (Suhar et al., 2019). The

veiled threat can be through various means both explicit and implicit. This is done to maintain dominance over society. In the short story Mata Celurit, the threat is carried out by Dahlan's father, who has a big hand in the victory process. This happened because Dahlan as his son was elected as the village head according to the following quote.

*This time, Dahlan's father put the residence of Ke Ta'lab on the line. (MP3)*

A veiled threat was made by Dahlan's father, a figure who had full control over Ke Ta'lab's residence. The house was rumoured to stand on percaton land, which is village-owned land that is traditionally controlled by the local authorities. With his power, Ayah Dahlan felt entitled to declare that Ke Ta'lab's house should be returned to the village government. In Madura, percaton land is a symbol of local power. The winning party in a land struggle automatically gains legitimacy to control it. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the run-up to the kalebun (village head) election, Ke Ta'lab's residence was used as a bargaining chip and even a place to bet on power. This narrative is heard directly by the character 'I', Dahlan's neighbour, who smells the conflict through rumours circulating in the community as follows.

*'They say that if Dahlan is elected, the Langgar and Ke Ta'lab's house will be demolished. Is that true?' you ask your father one evening, less than 48 hours after you set foot back in your hometown. The kalebun election is just a matter of counting fingers and the rumours have been heard in coffee shops and at roadside stands where mothers stop vegetable vendors.*

*'He said so,' your father replies flatly. Without a ripple of concern. You see the cow's mouth savouring the fresh grass in front of her. Saliva*

*drips from between the animal's brownish-red lips.*  
(MP3)

The quote represents how the conflict of power not only affects Ke Ta'lab personally, but also becomes public consumption that illustrates the dynamics of village politics. The tension between tradition and Dahlan's father's personal interests transforms into a tool of hegemony that silences one's right to housing. By allowing rumours of the house demolition to spread in public spaces such as coffee shops and community gardens, Ayah Dahlan is actually carrying out ideological strategies of domination, such as creating fear, asserting authority, and normalising control over other people's space as something natural or legitimate. People who do not resist or even passively accept the rumours show the success of hegemony. When the dominated accept the ruler's narrative without open resistance, this is a sign that the village's social structure has been successfully controlled through cultural and symbolic control mechanisms, not just formal rules.

### Religious Legitimacy

Campaigns under the guise of religion are often used in politics in Madura, one of which is by making kiai figures the main instrument to influence people's mindsets. According to Syahidah (2022) Kiai are able to take advantage of political opportunities through more active involvement by relying on their religious authority to influence the community, including in the context of elections. Handaka et al., (2016) explain that the political dynamics in Madura have their own uniqueness, where the level of voter dependence on religious leaders, community leaders, and government officials is high. This is inseparable from the obedience paradigm that developed in Madurese culture, known as Bhapa', Bhabu', Ghuruh, Ratoh which means parents, teachers (kiai), and government leaders. In this obedience structure, the position of kiai is second only to parents, signalling how great the influence

and authority of a kiai is for Madurese people. According to Syarif & Thabrani (in Tabarok 2025), the teacher, in this case the kiai for Madurese, is not only seen as someone who merely transfers knowledge, but also as a figure who educates morally and spiritually.

The charisma and politeness inherent in kiai make them a trusted figure, so their views and direction are highly considered by the Madurese community in making political choices. The more famous a kiai's lineage, the greater his charisma and socio-political influence. The kiai's status as a holy figure, close to God and with a deep understanding of religious teachings, makes him the object of absolute obedience from the community. By carrying the name of religion, any actions taken by certain parties seem indisputable (Hannan, 2018). However, behind this sacredness, power often manipulates religious symbols for political purposes, so that people are unconsciously hegemonic by the rulers. This is illustrated in the Dahlan family's strategy of using Ke Ta'lab as a propaganda tool. Ke Ta'lab was scapegoated in order to perpetuate power through religious legitimacy. As illustrated in the following narrative:

*Since long ago, it turns out that Ke Ta'lab's family has been used as an aperture to cut down opponents, because people trust their votes to the support of kiai. (MP4)*

Religious legitimacy is often used by certain figures or groups so that their actions are considered legitimate and accepted by the community, especially in religious environments that still uphold spiritual values. In this context, the figure of Ke Ta'lab, known as an influential kiai in the village, became a symbol of moral and religious power that was respected by the community. Ke Ta'lab's residence and langgar (small mosque), which were built on percaton land given by the kalebun towa (previous village head), were then used by Ayah Dahlan as tools of hegemony to influence the village community. By utilising Ke Ta'lab's reputation as a kiai,

Dahlan's father attempted to keep village power in the hands of his family. Ke Ta'lab was implicitly used as a propaganda instrument to perpetuate this power.

### Political Manipulation and Intimidation

Rulers who have a big share in winning the election contestation use all means to gain victory. In the world of Madurese politics, a group of rulers hired bajing (Madurese heroes) for hidden reasons, this is stated in the following quote.

*Apart from the bettors celebrating their victory, you're sure that some of the strangers under the tents are pirates hired to monitor the village elections. Or, perhaps, the perpetrators of fraud. (MP5)*

Several people with common interests work together to exercise hegemony of power. The relationship is established between Dahlan's father and bajing (a local Madurese hero). Dahlan's father in the quote reflects a typical local ruler who plays a dual role, as a public figure as well as a covert power actor. In the context of Madurese politics, as explained by Hannan (2018), the power structure is not only formed by formal actors such as village heads and government officials, but also involves non-formal actors such as blaters, bajing, and other local patrons who have significant social and cultural influence. Dahlan's father is represented as collaborating with bajing groups, individuals who are hired to carry out hidden agendas, including surveillance, intimidation, vote manipulation and other political fraud. This strategy reflects the common practice of political patronage in Madura, where power relations are built through loyalty, protection and exchange of services between patrons (powerful figures) and clients (supporters or field actors). Thus, the community will submit to the course of democracy due to the influence of the hegemony that has been formed by the ruler.

### The Ideological Dominance of Civil Society Against Political Dynasties

Resistance is a form of protest against various things that are considered deviant. According to Wulandari & Subandiyah (2012), a figure who initiates resistance is called an intellectual. Gramsci believed that every social class will naturally give birth to one or more groups of intellectuals who are aware of their role, not only in the economic field, but also in the political and social realms. Therefore, if the working class wants to become a hegemonic group, then they need to form their own intellectuals. In Gramsci's view, intellectuals are representatives of the dominant group who perform social functions and become agents in spreading hegemonic ideology (Hanafi, 2023). The resistance carried out by the intellectuals is reflected in the character of the short story Mata Celurit, namely Ke Ta'lab as a kiai. His actions in resisting are not merely because he feels threatened, but are driven by a determination to break the chain of political power that has been continuously inherited in the Dahlan family. The position of village head, which has been held by the family for generations, is seen by Ke Ta'lab as a form of inequality, especially because there is no transparency and clarity in the use of village funds that should be used for development. Concern over these conditions became the basis of Ke Ta'lab's resistance, as illustrated in the short story data.

*The cleric openly supported Samsul to be Dahlan's strong opponent in the election, in order to break the dynastic chain of power and stop the obscuring of village funds that were never clearly allocated. (MS1)*

Ke Ta'lab's form of resistance can be seen through his support for Samsul as Dahlan's challenger in the upcoming village head election. As a religious figure, Ke Ta'lab uses his spiritual influence and the sympathy of marginalised community groups to fight Dahlan's father's



political domination. In this context, Ke Ta'lab represents the voice of resistance from the marginalised lower class. He tries to build an alternative force that can challenge the authority of Dahlan's father by emphasising moral and religious values. The short story Mata Celurit shows how the role of a religious figure like Ke Ta'lab is crucial in opposing unequal power and forming a moral force in the midst of injustice. In line with the opinion of Topan & Tianah (2024), the involvement of a kiai in the political arena can function as a mechanism of checks and balances, namely as a counterweight between the interests of the people and religion with the social and economic needs of the wider community.

In this context, Ke Ta'lab as a representation of the figure of the kiai became an important element that strengthened Samsul's position in his candidacy as village head. Support from Ke Ta'lab is expected to attract the sympathy of the wider community, considering that in Madura, the role and decisions of a kiai have great influence in the political sphere. As stated by Zamroni (2007), kiai have religious authority that allows them to play a strategic role in the social life of the community. This is in line with the findings of Syahidah (2022), which states that Madurese people's loyalty to religious figures makes kiai a significant social capital in their involvement in the local political arena.

### **Compliance with Ruling Authorities**

One indicator of the success of hegemony in a society is seen in the emergence of an attitude of submission and acceptance without resistance to the leader or the ruling party (Pangestu et al., 2023). This attitude of submission is reflected in the behaviour of Dahlan's friends and the village community who always show loyalty to Dahlan's family, who have held the position of village head for generations. This is illustrated in the following quote:

*Since then, you've come to admire the Dahlan family as great people with great merit! Moreover,*

*whenever there was an event, Dahlan's mother and father were always invited and occupied the front row seats. Whether it's a wedding, a recitation, or a Bhujū' celebration held at the beginning of Muharram. (MS2)*

From the narrative, it appears that Dahlan's family has succeeded in establishing an image as the most meritorious protagonist of the village, earning special respect from the community. They are always given an honoured position in various events, equal to other important guests. This shows that the Dahlan family's domination is not merely exercised through formal power, but has been embedded in the collective consciousness of the community as something that is natural and acceptable. In Gramsci's theoretical framework, this can be understood as a form of cultural hegemony, which is domination that is built through the active consent of the led group, rather than simply through coercion. This is in accordance with Mansyur's opinion (in Aziz, 2021) that a social group with an ambition for power must first establish dominance over opposition groups in order to create hegemony. This power becomes the foundation for control over the government, and once achieved, it needs to be maintained through continuous efforts to maintain it in the structure of society.

Gramsci emphasised that hegemony is created when the dominant class is able to form social and cultural consensus, so that its values and interests are accepted as natural by the wider community. In the context of the short story Mata Celurit, the Dahlan family succeeds in reproducing power through symbolic and cultural influence, not just through administrative power. Thus, the community's respect for the Dahlan family shows the success of their hegemony, where domination takes place subtly through established social and cultural structures, as described by Gramsci as power that is voluntarily accepted by the ruled.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the short story *Mata Celurit* by Muna Masyari represents the dynamics of local politics in Madura, especially related to the process of selecting *kalebun* (village head) which is hereditary and the ambition of the ruler in controlling the *percaton* land occupied by a *kiai*. This reality is in line with Gramsci's theory that highlights the practice of power domination through ideological and cultural control. The reflection is divided into two main forms of domination. First, ideological domination by the political community, which includes the practice of tyrannical power, the use of material as a political instrument, acts of veiled threats, religious-based legitimacy, and manipulation and intimidation in the electoral process. Second, political domination of civil society, which is seen through forms of resistance to the practice of political dynasties as well as compliance with the authority of the ruler despite its hegemonic nature.

This research has several weaknesses, such as limited data that only focuses on one short story that has not been able to represent the dynamics of Madurese local politics inclusively. In addition, the qualitative approach that tends to be interpretative allows for researcher subjectivity in interpreting the symbolic meaning and discourse contained in the text. Nevertheless, this research makes a crucial contribution to the field of literary studies and socio-political science, especially by presenting Antonio Gramsci's perspective in understanding the practice of local hegemony through the medium of literature. The findings are also expected to add new perspectives and open space for further research that is broader with different objects and contexts to strengthen the understanding of ideology, power, and community resistance in the construction of local culture in various regions.

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