



THE OPERATION OF HEGEMONY IN VICTORIA AVEYARD'S *RED QUEEN*

Ulul Azmi Rachmawati*, Irana Astutiningsih, Eko Suwargono
Universitas Jember

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ABSTRACT

Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard is a dystopian, young adult fantasy novel set up in the Kingdom of Norta where the construction of a class in society is determined by blood color; Silver and Red. In this novel, there is a depiction of how power and ruling position could be achieved by utilizing a process of negotiating beliefs and values rather than conducting full coercive domination. The Silvers as the dominant class indoctrinating ideology using hegemonic apparatuses before finally gaining consensus and achieving a ruling position from the Reds as a subordinate class. This study uses a qualitative research method. As the theoretical framework to analyze the data in the novel, this study utilizes the theory of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci. The purpose of this study is to discover how hegemony operation is constructed by the ruling class to the subordinate class and to find out the ideological construction in *Red Queen*. The result of this study elaborates that hegemony operation works through several stages. This study also discover that the hegemony operation depicted in the novel is correlatively related to the issue of racial discrimination and white supremacy in the United States. The ideological construction that is built in the *Red Queen* novel is to resist the totalitarian government with Silvers' ideology that put the Reds powerless and inferior. From this result, it can be concluded that *Red Queen* as a cultural product acts as one of the hegemonic apparatuses to spread certain ideology of the author to the reader

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: ululazmicrh@gmail.com (Ulul Azmi Rachmawati)

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INTRODUCTION

Victoria Aveyard's *Red Queen* is a dystopian, young adult fantasy novel published in February 2015. *Red Queen* tells the story of a fictional world called the Kingdom of Norta, where the construction of a class in society is determined by blood color; Silver and Red. Silver is for people with superhuman abilities who were born with silver blood. Meanwhile, Red is for those born with red blood without any special abilities. The story in this novel is narrated from the point of view of Mare Barrow the main character who faces many difficulties, struggles, and oppression living under the control and superiority of the Silver. In this novel, the Silver is considered the incarnation of Gods because of their superhuman abilities. This set of beliefs has brought the Red into the subjected condition of having their lives be led and controlled by the Silver. This situation is strengthened since only the Silver, who has superhuman abilities, places them as the dominant class and holds a strong position in society. From the depiction, it could be theorized that the leading role achieved by the Silver in *Red Queen* is not only gained by the act of coercion but also through a long process of negotiating a set of beliefs and values of the dominant class.

Through the explanation above, I assume that this novel depicts the hegemony operation of the Silver as the ruling class toward the Red as the subordinate class. This novel depicts a situation in which the Red have been indoctrinated with the ruling class's ideology and believe the Silver existence is considered an incarnation of Gods with their unbeatable superhuman abilities. This ideology places the Silver as a ruling class with a strong position over the Red in society and puts them under their control and domination. The contextual background of the novel is linked with the social and historical events in the United States, which is the alternate setting of place in the novel during the 21st century when the novel exists. Using the theory of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci, I would like to find out the construction of hegemony operation in the novel. I am also interested in analyzing this novel's contextual background and ideological construction, whether accepting or rejecting the hegemony.

METHOD

This research utilizes a qualitative method to analyze the data in the novel. Qualitative research is applied because the research object is a novel related to verbal and textual descriptions. This research presents verbal descriptions such as quotes and sentences in the form of narratives directly related to the object of this research. In this

research, the data collected are divided into primary and secondary data. The primary data in this research are taken from narrations or dialogues presented in Victoria Aveyard's *Red Queen* related to the hegemony operation as the topic of discussion. Meanwhile, secondary data come from other sources such as books, articles, essays, journals, and internet sources to support the analysis related to the theoretical frameworks, the novel's contextual background, and ideological construction. In this research, data processing begins by choosing and classifying the data, both primary and secondary data, according to the topic of discussion. The next step is eliminating unnecessary data to make an accurate analysis. The next step is the process of analyzing data that have been classified based on the topic of the discussion. For answering the first research question, I analyze the classified data from the *Red Queen* novel with the concept of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci to discover how the hegemony operation is constructed in the novel. To answer the second research question, I find out the novel's contextual background by discovering the author's background and analyzing the social and historical events related to the hegemony surrounding the United States, which is the alternate setting of place in the novel. Lastly, for answering the third research question, I correlate the answer to the two research questions to provide an ideological construction beyond the hegemony operation in the novel and its correlation with the hegemony of the United States of America in the 21st century.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Structure Group of Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci (1971) stated in the concept of hegemony, there are two structure groups of hegemony; there are the dominant group and the subordinate group. *Red Queen's* novel presents an imaginative country called The Kingdom of Norta with a social class construction based on blood color; Silvers and Reds. The Kingdom of Norta is not a blood-equal country. Class classifications in society are organized and separated along the blood divide, separating Silvers from Reds. Silvers who have superhuman abilities are considered the incarnation of God. The following quotation presents how the orientation of the two classes.

As is customary, the officers are Silvers and Silvers have nothing to fear from us Reds. Everyone knows that. We are not their equals, though you wouldn't know it from looking at us. The only thing that serves to distinguish us, outwardly at least, is that Silvers stand

tall. Our backs are bent by work and unanswered hope and the inevitable disappointment with our lot in life. (Aveyard, 2015:11)

The Reds are few and fast, running errands and selling their wares, all marked by their red bands. Though the Silvers wear no band, they're easy to spot. They drip with gems and precious metals, a fortune on every one of them. All are tall and beautiful and cold, moving with a slow grace no Red can claim. We simply don't have the time to move that way. (Aveyard, 2015:32)

The Silvers are oriented to have an extremely beautiful appearance. They have a high posture with a pale undertone to their skin. Meanwhile, Reds are oriented to have a hunched posture due to overwork. They have skin with a warm undertone and hair that is black at the roots but pale at the ends. Victoria Aveyard the author, in her blog, describes Mare as brown, of Latinx/Hispanic, and Caucasian descent. The color of the blood shows the difference between those born with power and privilege and those who are powerless and poor. The construction of classes based on the blood color system separates the Silvers and Reds and creates a very significant gap between the two classes. The Silvers were regarded as superior with all the privileges they had. They hold the highest power in a society where they have the authority to govern and make policy over their people. Meanwhile, the Reds are regarded as inferior and must face many difficulties, struggles, and oppression living under the control and superiority of the Silvers.

Through this depiction of the social class division based on blood color, I assume that Aveyard wants to portray the existence of race in the United States as one of the main themes of *The Red Queen*. In this novel, the Silvers represent the white people, while the Reds represent the non-white or black people. Through the explanation above, the author wants to mention the issue of racial discrimination in the United States through the characters in this novel. The United States of America is a race-conscious society where those who are colored (as opposed to white) have generally been put in inferior positions and treated accordingly. Racial discrimination is prevalent throughout the United States. However, they can be felt most strongly in conservative regions of the country like the south and midwest, as well as in small towns and rural areas.

Concerning social conditions in the United States, Victoria Aveyard describes how the discrimination experienced by Red people over the control and dominance of the Silver class as people of color in the United States are treated. They consider minority groups in the United States are often subjected to discrimination, ranging from racist comments to

violent hate crimes. Racism has long been a part of American society, with the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and discriminatory practices shaping the experiences of people of color for centuries. In the 21st century, this legacy access to education and employment opportunities to the disproportionate targeting and police of people of color, to ongoing economic disparities.

The Operation of Hegemony in Victoria Aveyard's *Red Queen*

Indoctrinating Ideology

According to Gramsci (1971), the first stage of hegemony operation is the indoctrination of ideology or belief. This is the first stage of gaining power and ruling societal positions. This stage is important to give the dominant class a 'starting place' to run their hegemony. Gramsci stated that indoctrinating ideology or belief could influence people's ways of thinking and behaving in society. This is depicted in *Red Queen*, where the Silvers convince the people that they are living Gods due to their unbeatable superhuman abilities. This is illustrated in the novel when the Reds acknowledge the Silvers' position in society.

"But we are different." One day in this world taught me that. "We're not equal."

"For hundreds of years the Silvers have walked the earth as living gods and the Reds have been insects at their feet." (Aveyard, 2015: 109)

From the quotation above, it is assumed that the Silvers, as the dominant class, have successfully indoctrinated their ideology into the people in the society. Reds consider the Silvers' existence in the world to be the incarnation of God with all the unbeatable superhuman abilities they have. They have also convinced people that the Reds are nothing more than insects living under Silvers's feet. This led the Reds to believe that their presence would never be equal when compared to the Silvers. Another quote elaborates on how the Silvers injected the doctrine into the Reds.

Long ago he called us ants, Red ants burning in the light of a Silver sun. Destroyed by the greatness of others, losing the battle for our right to exist because we are not special. We did not evolve like them, with powers and strengths beyond our limited imaginations. We stayed the same, stagnant in our bodies. The world changed around us and we stayed the same. (Aveyard, 2015:46)

The quotation demonstrates how the Reds consent to the doctrine that the Silvers have been indoctrinating for a long time. The Silvers' indoctrination process involves not only

physical violence but also instilling a new mindset toward the Reds. This will affect how the Reds act and view the world. In addition to showing their superiority, the Silvers also try to show the Reds' position in society. This approach will indirectly make the Reds aware that they are not born as special and powerful as the Silvers, proving their inferior position in society. Through this indoctrination process, the Reds, as the subordinate class, believe in the doctrine that the Silvers have spread consensually and without coercion.

Moreover, it is also depicted in another quotation that clarifies the division between the Silvers and the Reds which strengthens their position in society. The elaboration of this condition is delivered directly by Mare Barrow, the novel's main character, who represents the Reds class.

This is the true division between Silvers and Reds: the color of our blood. This simple difference somehow makes them stronger, smarter, and better than us. (Aveyard, 2015: 14)

The quote above illustrates how Silvers' ideology has succeeded in indoctrinating a mindset and value in the main character, who belongs to the Reds class. The Reds believe that they are born different. Although it is only limited to the color of blood, it has created the belief that those born with silver blood are stronger, smarter, and better than those born with red blood. The blood color difference between the two classes has established a new mindset that Silvers will always be superior to Reds. They also believe that as long as they are born with red blood, they will never be able to equal the Silvers.

In the *Red Queen* novel, the Silvers use superhuman abilities and all their privileges to create a doctrine of their superiority. The urge to lead the people to follow this ideology has brought the Silver class in the novel into operating hegemony as its way to control and dominate its people. Through indoctrinating ideology, it succeeds in forming the position of the two classes in society, where the Silvers class becomes the superior class, while the Reds class is the inferior class. The condition described through the quotes presented above has led the majority of people in The Kingdom of North to inevitably accept this fact without having any other choice. This means that they have agreed and subconsciously acknowledged that the position of the Silvers class is superior to that of the Reds.

This indoctrination process is an important stage in determining the 'starting place' for the dominant class in operating its hegemony over the subordinate class. In this case, the Silvers, as the dominant class, have succeeded in indoctrinating the belief that their existence in the world with their supernatural abilities puts them in a superior position

while the position of the Reds is inferior. The indoctrinated ideology here has deeply rooted in Reds people's unconscious minds and influences how they live in society. Once this indoctrination process has been successful, the dominant class is ready to proceed to the next stage in their hegemony operation.

In the United States, a similar conception to this ideology is discovered to exist known as White Supremacy. Frederickson (1981) said that white supremacy refers to the ideology of attitudes and policies relating to the emergence of striking forms of the white population or American dominance over the non-white population. This belief is rooted in centuries of systemic racism and discrimination, and it continues to be perpetuated by individuals and institutions in The United States today. The notion of white supremacy represents the hegemonic practices of white people over other races in the United States of America, and it has become a consensus among scholars (2004:953-954). In short, it is understood and concluded that white ideology is exercised over other races in American society.

The explanation above shows that the process of indoctrinating certain ideologies is important before the dominant class succeeds in gaining power and consensus from its people. White supremacy provides the foundation for racial hegemony, creating a power dynamic that allows white people to maintain control over society. The beliefs and attitudes perpetuated by white supremacy contribute to the institutionalization of racism, creating systemic barriers for non-white people and preventing them from accessing equal opportunities and resources, the dominance of white people in society.

Setting Apparatus

In the process of indoctrinating ideology or belief, the ruling class uses a medium or tool to spread their doctrines toward the subordinate class. Antonio Gramsci has pointed out several ways as he refers to the use of apparatus. He further explains that the realization of hegemonic apparatus can create a new ideological mindset which also determines a reform of consciousness and method of knowledge in the society (Gramsci, 1916-1935: 192). In the *Red Queen* novel, there are few apparatuses to spread Silvers' ideology to people in society.

The first apparatus is manifested in the form of a school. School, as formal education, plays an important role in the process of indoctrinating ideology into the minds of subordinate people. Gramsci has stated the utilization of knowledge to be an essential asset of hegemony operation (Davidson, 1977: 64) as it shapes and forms the dominant ideology

through a more academic and formal institution.

In school, we learned about the world before ours, about the angels and gods that lived in the sky, ruling the earth with kind and loving hands. Some say those are just stories, but I don't believe that. The gods rule us still. They have come down from the stars. (Aveyard, 2015: 15-16)

The quote above describes how people in the Kingdom of Norta were taught about the manifestations of angels and gods who lived in the sky. Angels and Gods are figured to be the ones who rule the world with kindness and loving hands. People believe this creates a societal belief that it is not just a story but a fact. What is different is that gods no longer dwell in the sky but have descended to earth in human form, nothing but the embodiment of the Silvers. In the novel, the Silvers are portrayed as an incarnation of Gods ruling the world with all the unbeatable abilities that no other people possess. The quote above also demonstrates how the Silvers' ideology has been successfully indoctrinated into the Reds' people. The Reds believe that the description of Gods ruling the world has been proven in a real way, as has the existence of Silvers in this world.

The second apparatus in spreading Silvers' ideology is the form of tradition. Several traditions are depicted in this story as being constructed by the Silvers as the dominant class to spread ideology or belief among the Red people. The first tradition is "The First Friday." This tradition is held every first Friday of each month. The first Friday is a tradition in which two Silvers battle each other to demonstrate their abilities in front of the Reds. This tradition is more than just a battle; it carries a message, as interpreted by Mare Barrow in the quote below.

Kilorn and I don't see eye to eye on the Feats of First Friday. He doesn't understand what the Feats are about. This isn't mindless entertainment, meant to give Reds some respite from grueling work. This is calculated, cold, a message. Only Silvers can fight in the arenas because only a Silver can survive the arena. They fight to show us their strength and power. You are no match for us. We are your betters. We are gods. It's written in every superhuman blow the champions land. (Aveyard, 2015:12)

The quote shows the role of the First Friday tradition as one of the mediums used by the Silvers to demonstrate their abilities to the Reds. This tradition usually takes place in a large arena attended by dozens or hundreds of Silvers and Red people. Two fighters from the Silvers class will fight against each other to test who is the strongest. In this novel, it is revealed that the Silvers created this tradition as a kind of entertainment for the Red

people due to the density of their work. But behind that, the Silvers hid a message and set of values they wanted to deliver to the Reds. The Silvers intended to visualize their superior strengths and power over the Reds through this show. Displaying their strengths directly in front of the entire audience can give the Reds a perspective on how great and powerful the Silvers are with their unbeatable abilities. The quote also shows how the Reds people, represented by the character Mare Barrow have been successfully indoctrinated by the Silvers' ideology and consider the Silvers to be the image of God. Mare's statement proves that she has subconsciously accepted the doctrine and applied it to the way she thinks and behaves.

The second tradition that the Silvers used to spread their ideology is the "Queenstrial" tradition. This tradition is not much different from the previous First Friday tradition. What distinguishes it is that this tradition takes the form of a contest intended for eligible silver daughters from the high houses.

Now is the rite of Queenstrial, to bring forth the most talented daughter to wed the noblest son. In this we find strength, to bind the High Houses, and power, to ensure Silver rule until the end of days, to defeat our enemies, on the borders, and within them. (Aveyard 2015:56).

So this is a pageant. A violent one, meant to showcase a girl's beauty, splendor—and strength. The most talented daughter. This is a display of power, to pair the prince with the most powerful girl so that their children might be the strongest of all. And this has been going on for hundreds of years. (Aveyard, 2015: 59)

The Queenstrial tradition is a contest for the eligible Silver daughter of the high house. This tradition is held by Silvers, who aim to find the strongest princess among the strongest, the best among the best. Unlike other contests in general, where a princess will be dressed beautifully to show their beauty and intelligence, the Queenstrial is a place to show strength and power. They will show off the abilities they have from each high house. The contest winner will later marry The Prince to become the future king and queen of Norta. This contest aims to select the most powerful potential kings and queens so they can later produce the best children. This contest, like the previous First Friday tradition, is intended to demonstrate the Silvers' strength and power in front of the Reds. This tradition is one of the Silvers' strategies for displaying their identity and position in society. The Silver elite wants to show the public how powerful their dominance is.

The Silvers use those apparatuses described above as the medium for spreading their

ideology and beliefs to the Reds as the subordinate class. By utilizing those apparatuses, the dominant class can easily indoctrinate their ideology or belief into the subordinate class to gain consensus. Those hegemonic apparatuses are considered effective as an approach to the subordinate class before finally operating in the next stage of hegemony.

Concerning white supremacy ideology in the United States, it also takes the apparatus as a medium to spread the belief and influence people's ways of thinking, such as the existence of white supremacist groups and social media. One of the most well-known white supremacist groups in the United States was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). This secret society was formed in the aftermath of the Civil War to resist the advancement of African Americans. The KKK terrorized black communities, lynching and killing African Americans and their allies and spreading fear and intimidation. Although the organization was officially disbanded several times, it has persisted in various forms and continues to exist today.

Through social media apparatus, white supremacy has been perpetuated through the media and popular culture, which often promotes harmful and stereotypical images of people of color. Online platforms, such as social media, have become a breeding ground for white supremacists who use these platforms to spread their hateful ideologies and recruit new members. News media has consistently portrayed people of color in a negative light, often depicting them as criminals and dangerous. These images help to reinforce the idea that people of color are inferior, and they contribute to the systemic racial biases that exist in society.

Gaining Consensus and Maintaining Power

The next hegemony operation stage is gaining consensus and maintaining power. In this stage, it is important to know how the subordinate class responds to the ideology or belief that has been indoctrinated in them. If the subordinate class accepts and operates the doctrine unconsciously, then what Gramsci stated by consensus has been achieved. The act of gaining consensus is traced by analyzing the dominant class power of domination that starts growing stronger and influencing several aspects of society. Then, to keep the achieved consensus, the ruling class must maintain its power over the subordinate class.

In the process of gaining consensus and maintaining power, the dominant class needs to articulate the interest of the subordinate class and maintain the society's stabilization. In this novel, the silver government helps create a safe and comfortable environment for

its citizens by reducing the crime rate in the red village.

Once, the Feats were not matched at all, but executions. Prisoners and enemies of the state would be transported to Archeon, the capital, and killed in front of a Silver crowd. Then they became the Feats, and spread out to other cities, to different arenas, and different audiences. Eventually, the Reds were granted admission, confined to the cheap seats. It wasn't long until the Silvers built arenas everywhere, even villages like the Stilts, and attendance that was once a gift became a mandatory curse. My brother Shade says it's because arena cities enjoyed a marked reduction in Red crime, dissent, and even a few acts of rebellion. Now Silvers don't have to use execution or the legions or even Security to keep the peace; two champions can scare us just as easily. (Aveyard, 2015:12)

Silvers, as the dominant class, invented the First Friday feat and established it as a tradition not only as a means of spreading doctrine but also as a tool to reduce crime rates and maintain stability in the Reds' village. It is intended to make society safe and comfortable for citizens to live in. As evidenced by this quote above, showing a duel between two Silvers fighters can easily reduce red crime, dissent, and even the act of rebellion. This explanation means that Reds, as the subordinate class, are led to believe that the Silvers government has successfully solved the crime problem of the Reds' village and made society a safe place for them to live. In this case, the dominant class has obtained the consent of the subordinate class. The subordinate class believes that society will achieve stability under the leadership of the Silvers as the dominant class.

In addition, the dominant class needs to fulfill the needs of its people. The following passage illustrates the process of gaining consensus and maintaining power by providing jobs. This showed by Cal when he gives Mare Barrow a job so she can be free from conscription.

Working. A job. I almost fall over at the thought.

Cal. He said he had a good job—and now he's pulled some strings to do the same for me. I might even be working with him. My heart leaps at the prospect, knowing what this means. I'm not going to die, I'm not even going to fight. I'm going to work and I'm going to live. (Aveyard, 2015:51)

The quote describes how Cal, the first prince of Silvers, hires Mare Barrow, a Reds girl who is unemployed and about to be sent to war. Knowing this, Cal does not hesitate to hire Mare Barrow as a royal servant. Cal's action gives Mare Barrow new hope. Getting a job means she is free from the obligation to fight, which also means that she does not have to

fight and, in her worst case, does not face the risk of dying in war. In this case, Cal, as a Silvers, has managed to fulfill the need of Mare's character by solving the crisis she is going through. This shows the role of Silvers as the ideal leader who can provide a way out for the submissive class.

The explanation above shows the dominant class strategy for gaining consensus and maintaining power within the hegemony operation. By fulfilling the needs of the subordinate class, Silvers can create an ideal place for its citizens to live, maintain the stabilization of society, and obtain consensus from them. After fulfilling its people's needs and getting public consensus, Silvers, as the ruling class, will continue the operation of hegemony by maintaining its power and position in society.

Concerning social conditions in the United States, the superiority of the Whites has influenced the lives of people of color from time to time. Also, the hegemony has become a consensus culture to maintain within African American society. It could exist and happen in society unconsciously. The worse is even the hegemony could be the status quo in their daily way of thinking. As a result, they live in a society with the strong belief that white people are superior to them; hence, racial discrimination could emerge, and it oppresses African Americans roughly (Tyson, 2006:362).

The Emergence of Crisis and The Way to Overcome It

In the hegemonic operation, there will always be a crisis and the possibility of an act of resistance. In this novel, it is depicted several actions that trigger the emergence of crises in the silvers hegemony operation. The Silver government conducts several ways of limiting the people's actions, such as surveillance actions or the imposition of penalties and sanctions on people who violate established rules or policies. The Silver government also uses coercive institutions such as security officers, police, and the army.

Security officers are everywhere, their black-and-silver uniforms standing out in the crowd. This is First Friday, and they can't wait to watch the proceedings. They carry long rifles or pistols, though they don't need them. As is customary, the officers are Silvers and Silvers have nothing to fear from us Reds. (Aveyard, 2015:11)

In The Kingdom of Norta, security officers are responsible for monitoring citizen movement, particularly in Red areas. This coercive institution was formed to maintain societal stability and avoid resistance from its people. The presence of security officers also stimulates 'fear' in Reds as the subordinate class, causing them to refrain from violating

the rules. Security officers will discipline the people to obey government policies and follow all mandatory events they have held. This is done to keep the Reds over the consensual that has been achieved and maintain the ruling position of the Silvers. Using the role of security officers, the Silver government also conducts surveillance using video cameras placed at strategic locations to reach out to the citizens on a broader scale.

What concern me most are the black video cameras hidden in the canopy or alleyways. There are only a few at home, at the Security outpost, or in the arena, but they're all over the market. I can just hear them humming in firm reminder: someone else is watching her. (Aveyard, 2015: 34-35)

Another form of surveillance carried out by the Silver government is hidden cameras, whose function is also to monitor the movement of people within more extensive areas. The Silver government can fully monitor the activity of its people by utilizing this technology, even in places where security officers are unable to reach them. This is a strategy of the Silver government to show its authority in keeping its people and country under its control. This surveillance system was also created to reduce criminal activity, especially in Red Villages. The oversight system that the government has created will support them in maintaining the power and ruling position they have achieved. It is also helpful for detecting suspected actions of resistance and rebellion from Red citizens.

The explanation above shows that Silvers, as the dominant class, has used coercive institutions, surveillance, and limitations to control people's movements and make them submissive to them. Using these coercive institutions will increase the possibility of a crisis in the Silvers hegemony operation. According to Gramsci (1971), hegemony is in crisis when the ruling class has lost consensus over the subordinate class. It could be caused that the ruling ideology is no longer acceptable. The continuation of hegemony in society depends on how the ruling class deals with crises. They can maintain their dominance if they deal with any challenge or resistance. However, hegemony will come to an end if they can not maintain their position and allow the subordinate class to ruin their hegemony construction.

The crisis began with the emergence of a red rebellion group that carried out bombings on several government buildings in West Archeon. Furthermore, they use broadcast media to spread this news to the public.

"Thirteen minutes ago there was a terrorist attack in the capital. This was an organized bombing of government buildings in West Archeon." (Aveyard, 2015:35).

The bombings, allegedly carried out by terrorists, destroyed several important buildings where the silver elite ran their government. This attack sparked tension and societal chaos in The Kingdom of Norta. The bombing of the capital was initiated by the Red Rebellion group and successfully attracted the attention of the silvers. This action was the initial movement of the insurgency they conceived. Furthermore, they boldly revealed their identities in front of the public, as conveyed directly by Farley, their leader.

The newscaster returns, paler than ever. Someone whispers to her offscreen and she shuffles through her notes, her hands shaking. "It seems that an organization has taken responsibility for the Archeon bombing," she says, stumbling a bit. The shouting men quiet quickly, eager to hear the words on-screen. "A terrorist group calling themselves the Scarlet Guard released this video moments ago."

"We are the Scarlet Guard and we stand for the freedom and equality of all men—," the woman says. I recognize her voice.

Farley. "—starting with the Reds." (Aveyard, 2015: 36)

Farley confirmed their identity as The Scarlet Guard throughout the broadcast. This movement claims they stand for freedom and equality for all human beings, especially the Red people in The Kingdom of Norta. This act of rebellion represents the first step of resistance to any unfair treatment by Silvers. This action indicates the stage where Reds, as the subordinate class, no longer accept the Silvers' ideology as the dominant class. They began to take resistance actions to demand the fulfillment of their right to freedom and equality for all human beings. They then expressed their views as well as the intention of the emergence of this rebellion group.

"You believe you are the masters of the world but your reign as kings and gods is at an end. Until you recognize us as human, as equals, the fight will be at your door. Not on a battlefield, but in your cities. In your streets. In your homes. You don't see us, and so we are everywhere." Her voice hums with authority and poise. "And we will rise, Red as the dawn." (Aveyard, 2015: 37)

The Scarlet Guard began their rebellion by expressing their aspirations to the Silvers. They protested Silvers' superiority to the point of demanding justice for the Red people as equal human beings. This public appearance of the Scarlet Guard marked the beginning of the hegemony operation crisis that the Silvers had built. The Reds, who had been subjected to unequal treatment for thousands of years, finally dared to start a rebellion to get their rights as human beings.

As the dominant class, Silvers will try to overcome the crisis threatening the hegemony construction they have built. In response to the uprising by The Scarlet Guard, the Silvers made a new provision addressed to Red citizens, as described in the following quote.

“In his wisdom, King Tiberias has drafted the Measures, to root out this sickness of rebellion, and to protect the good citizens of our nation. They are as follows: As of today, a sunset curfew is in effect for all Reds. Security will be doubled in every Red village and town. New outposts will be built on the roads, and manned to full capacity. All Red crimes, including breaking the curfew, will be punished by execution. And”—at this, my voice falters for the first time—“conscription age has been lowered, to the age of fifteen.” (Aveyard 2015:236)

The quote above has clearly explained the additional provisions addressed to Red citizens as consequences of the rebellion action that occurred. As punishment, the Silver government will tighten security in the society and lower the conscription age for Red citizens. King Tiberias drafted this provision to create a sense of deterrent to the people, warning them not to dare to go against the policies of the Silver government, or they have to bear the consequences. The new provisions are aimed at those involved in the rebellion and the Red people as a whole. This will traumatize Red citizens, preventing them from repeating the same actions. These actions are done to keep society under control, and the subordinate class will continue to be submissive under the dominant class’s authority. Therefore, through these strategies, the dominant class can overcome the crisis and maintain their power and ruling position in The Kingdom of Norta.

Through the narrative in *The Red Queen*, Aveyard explores the emergence of the crisis as a sign that hegemonic operations are beginning to regress if the dominant class no longer gets consensus from the subordinate class. This conception also applies to the racial hegemony that occurs today. When the subordinate party, in this case, black people, already feels that the ideology embedded in the mindset of people in society begins to be incompatible with their values. So began to emerge movements as protest actions aimed at voicing their aspirations and gaining equal rights among human beings.

The most widely known massive protest was the existence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. This massive protest was caused by the 2012 shooting of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African American boy, by a half-white police officer named George Zimmerman. BLM’s main cause is to protest incidents of police brutality and racially motivated discrimination and violence against black people and other minorities. In 2020,

the protests in support of the BLM movement quickly spread across the whole American nation in various states. This was caused by the murder of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, at the hands of a white police officer Derek Chauvin. When he was arrested over a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill, Floyd's neck was knelt on by Chauvin for over nine minutes long while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down in the street, resulting in his death caused by cardiopulmonary arrest due to neck compression. Since then, BLM has grown into a global movement attracting the attention of millions of people who are concerned about the ongoing struggle for racial justice.

The Ideological Construction Beyond The Hegemony Operation in *Red Queen*

After analyzing how hegemony operation is constructed in *Red Queen*, this research is then aimed to discover the ideological construction of Victoria Aveyard as the author of *Red Queen*. Victoria Aveyard is an American writer of young adult fiction and screenplays. She was born on July 27, 1990, in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts. She achieved her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Writing for Film and Television from the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. *Red Queen* was the first series she wrote after graduation in 2012 and published in 2015. In her interview with EpicReads, Aveyard shared her inspiration for writing *Red Queen*. She explained that the setting of The Kingdom of Norta in this novel is based on the location of the Northeastern United States, with various name modifications following the needs of the story.

Victoria Aveyard's work is often centered around themes of power, oppression, and the fight for equality. One of the central themes of *Red Queen* is the fight for equality and the power dynamics between those in power and those powerless. The story of *Red Queen* also touches upon themes of rebellion and resistance as Mare joins forces with the revolutionary Scarlet Guard to fight the oppressive Silver ruling class. Through the narrative in *Red Queen's* novel, Victoria Aveyard explores the issue of racial discrimination for certain groups to gain power or authority in a country. Through the portrayal of the division between the Silvers and Reds, Aveyard highlights how systems of power and privilege can be used to maintain the status quo and oppress the marginalized and disadvantaged. This practice is commonly found in several countries, including the United States. As someone who grew up and has been studied in the US, Aveyard puts her attention to cases surrounding her environment. She delivers her ideas of how the depiction of the blood color class in the novel turns out to carry the discourse of race, which

leads to racial discrimination in the United States.

Victoria Aveyard also created a red rebellion group called the Scarlet Guard. This movement claims they stand for freedom and equality for all human beings, especially the Red people. The ideological construction of the novel is that depicted to be against the discrimination over one superior group that oppresses the inferior one. Through the narrative of *Red Queen*, Aveyard shows her rejection of how the Silvers, as the dominant class, use their superiority to control and position the Reds under their dominance. Furthermore, Aveyard also shows her rejection by creating a red rebellion group as a sign of a crisis in the hegemonic operations that the Silvers class has constructed.

Additionally, *Red Queen's* novel, as an American novel that brings issues about racial discrimination and white supremacy ideology of the United States, could also be assumed to have spread the ideology about white people's dominant position in the United States. The reason could be traced from how the author describes how construction class in the novel reflects class disparities based on superiority and inferiority. Throughout the storyline, it is also discovered that the novel creates a situation in which the Silver domination of its people in the society is strong and triggers the resistance movement, such as the emergence of a rebellious movement by the Reds called The Scarlet Guard. This is proven as the novel positions the Silvers as the ruling class until the end of the story. Understanding this conception, it is then important to notice that *Red Queen*, as a cultural product, has indoctrinated the Silvers' ideology to gain its leading position and keep it firm from resistance. The novel has also made its readers aware of the issue of racial discrimination and white supremacy ideology of the United States as the contextual background of the story. This could be elaborated that the novel makes it possible to inform that white dominance remains persists until now. It also leads the superior class to perpetuate domination in society. The *Red Queen* novel, as cultural apparatus, makes it possible to continue to spread these issues in society.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on my analysis using Gramsci's theory of hegemony, I discovered that Victoria Aveyard's *Red Queen* picturizes the construction of hegemony operation because the Silver class, as the ruling class, has dominated the people, especially the Red class in the Kingdom of Norta as the subordinate class. As the dominant class in Norta, Silvers indoctrinated the subordinate class by instilling Silvers' beliefs and values, which are used

to legitimize Silver superiority. In conducting the indoctrination process, the Silvers create apparatuses in the form of schools, traditions, and mass media. Through the process of negotiating ideology with the help of these apparatuses, the dominant class could gain consent from the subordinate class. However, the dominant class needs to maintain its position as the ruling class by making several attempts, such as articulating the interest of the subordinate class and fulfilling the need of people. Although several attempts have been made to maintain its power, a crisis still may arise. As what occurs in the Kingdom of Norta, several crises appear, such as The Scarlet Guard organization and the existence of New Blood acquired by Mare, the main character. In dealing with these problems, the dominant class has made several regulations, including interrogation and execution of the persons involved. They also tightened security and regulations and enforced the death penalty for those who violated it.

The hegemony operation depicted in the novel is correlatively related to the issue of racial discrimination and white supremacy in the United States. Racism in the United States is widely acknowledged to be mostly the result of white supremacy. White supremacy is one of the triggers of racial inequality that leads to racial hegemony. The United States has gone through a long history of racial discrimination experienced by people of color. As a result of this long process, in 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement emerged as a black people's protest against the supremacy and dominance of white people. The BLM movement signifies an act of resistance to white supremacy ideology and an attempt to get justice for people of color, especially black people in The United States. The ideological construction that is built in the *Red Queen* novel is to resist the totalitarian government with Silvers' ideology that puts the Reds powerless and inferior. Through all these analyses and findings, it is then discovered that the *Red Queen* novel is included and recognized as one of the United States' cultural apparatuses through its role in constructing and spreading the issue of racial hierarchy and white supremacy ideology.

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