
The Free Individual in a Tale of Democracy: Hegemony and Dystopia in Visual Narratives

KOME – An International Journal of Pure
Communication Inquiry
Volume 10 Issue 2, p. 25-36.
© The Author(s) 2022
Reprints and Permission:
kome@komejournal.com
Published by the Hungarian
Communication Studies Association
DOI: [10.17646/KOME.75672.90](https://doi.org/10.17646/KOME.75672.90)

Hasan Gürkan^{1,2} and İlkim Ergene³

¹ Girona University, Faculty of Tourism, Philology & Communication, SPAIN

² Istinye University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Radio, Television and Cinema, TURKEY

³ Independent Researcher, TURKEY

Abstract: This study examines the power relations of the characters in dystopian-themed visual culture narratives. The study is based on the reasons that lead to the construction of the concept of hegemony, how a hegemonic system is processed in the dystopian narrative, and the effect of this system on the social norms among the characters. This study examines both how social norms enable the functioning of the hegemonic system and how the characters are separated among themselves according to age, gender, power, and race differences. The study examines the young-adolescent TV series *The Society* (2019) in connection with the concept of hegemony. The main goal of this essay is to theoretically contextualize and systematically analyze a contemporary TV series through a combination of political science, speculative fiction, and film studies to explore the concept of hegemony. The hegemony in the narrative is based on the existence of the sovereign power and is built through all the oppression and ideological devices held by this power.

Keywords: dystopia; hegemony; science fiction; *The Society*; visual media

Introduction

Many concepts that have been put forward in the tradition of Marxist thought are at the base of many disciplines and studies, although they have undergone changes from the past to the present. The transformation and effects of the concept of hegemony, which is the subject of different disciplines, in the Marxist tradition of thought in the historical process constitute the focus of the study. In this study, it is argued that, with the concept of hegemony becoming more visible, especially with Gramsci, the idea is positioned on the plane of culture, daily life, and social relations, which is isolated from its political context, as claimed by the Marxist tradition of thought.

Acknowledgement: This article has received funding from the Maria Zambrano Grant for the attraction of international talent in Spain.

Address for Correspondence: Hasan Gürkan, email: gur.hasan[at]gmail.com

Article received on the 8th August, 2021. Article accepted on the 4th August, 2022.

Conflict of Interest: The author declare no conflicts of interest.

In macro and micro studies on the social field, the question of precisely the mechanism that prevents the society and social actors from mobilizing against the dominant order and how this mechanism is reproduced is discussed. The hegemony debate, one of the answers to these questions, appears in different ways of reading the factors that alleviate the social actor. In this sense, the hegemony literature, which offers us a wide range of reading, appears as due diligence of this state of passivity. It leads us to discuss how the concept of hegemony, based on the consent element built in the society, provides and reproduces this consent.

This study presents how the concept of hegemony has survived in the social sphere, from the classical Marxist tradition to the present day, from great discourses to our daily life practices and media products. The hegemonic practices that are coded in the social relations network continue to exist in our routine procedures, which are too ordinary to be thought about, in a constant reproduction dynamic. In this sense, the paper will contribute to the literature in terms of presenting a trace of the concept of hegemony from the past to the present and the transformation in the concept-oriented social field.

The main argument of this essay is the attempt made to theoretically contextualize and systematically analyze a contemporary TV series through a combination of political science, speculative fiction, and film studies to explore the concept of hegemony. During this process, many crucial political ideas are addressed, and the analysis of whether adolescent individuals with no official ties to the state need sovereign power or not is useful and contemporarily relevant. Visual culture is seen as a source of entertainment that relieves people of the inevitable stress of working in a complex society. Since the authors of this essay see this cultural consumption as something belonging to the private domain of social actors, in this study, the product of visual culture is placed at the center of the study. In this study, we argue that visual culture, whether in everyday life or material culture, is fundamental for understanding society and the mentality of society. Visual media has become the dominant ideological device today, replacing literate culture. At this point, *The Society* shows exactly how a power that watches and punishes works, but this is a power that also seduces. Therefore, in this study, by placing a visual culture product at the center, the libidinal power of globalization, not the disciplinary power of modernity, is emphasized and emphasized that (visual) media reproduces and strengthens and strengthens systems. We should also express our wish that this article does not purport to be in TV series or film analysis but as a text analysis in media and cultural studies. Therefore, we aim to make a discourse analysis of the sample product with the help of cultural and political theory.

Dystopias driven by symbolic or physical coercion

Dystopia can be defined as a way of life of a possible future or an alternative present that can be evaluated negatively for humanity. This alternative way of life is the subject of a wide range, from written narratives to visual narratives. As an audio-visual media medium, TV series can be a suitable space for dystopian narratives from time to time. *The Society* series, which was screened on the Netflix platform in 2019, and the dystopian world (society) and hegemony relationship built in this series are essential in conceptualizing a part of such artistic expression or narrative background.

Dystopian-themed visual narratives depict a dark future or an uncertain time. In most visual dystopian narratives, we encounter an unusual state and hegemony. Placing these issues at the center of these narratives is important in showing how societies can be affected by the concept of sovereign power itself and the situations that may occur in the absence of this concept. The dominant power somehow builds its hegemony in different systems and societies. This

dominant power achieves this construction of hegemony by promising to ensure the continuity of the values and traditions of the society they will rule. Balasopoulos (2006) lists ten different types of utopia/dystopia: (i) Satirical anti-Utopias; (ii) Dogmatic fictional anti-Utopias; (iii) Dogmatic non-fictional anti-Utopias; (iv) Pre-emptive anti-Utopias; (v) Critical anti-utopias; (vi) Dystopias of tragic failure; (vii) Dystopias of authoritarian repression; (viii) Dystopias of catastrophic contingency; (ix) Nihilistic dystopias; (x) Critical dystopias.

This classification depends on the interpretation of the texts to which they apply. This typology of Balasopoulos aptly illustrates how vital the question of definition is in any discussion of the subject. For example, Balasopoulos defends the deconstruction of Mannheim's distinction between ideology as a distortion "in the interests of preserving a certain order" and as a utopia that tends to "disrupt the order of things that prevailed" (Balasopoulos, 2019; Panagopoulos, 2020).

It is possible to define dystopia, which is often referred to as science fiction, as follows: In dystopian societies, individuals have generally accepted the social norms and system, and most societies do not even notice the system's disorder (Westfahl, 2005). Beyond these, two other important factors affecting the transformation of paradise into a hell on earth are bureaucracy and technology. While bureaucracy is used to keep individuals under control and pressure, technology provides this control and pressure with the necessary method and technique. In dystopias, society functions like a two-sided mechanism consisting of bureaucracy and technology. In this mechanism, while the social organization becomes mechanized, the individual becomes objectified and isolated (Bezel, 2001: 8-10).

Hegemony & The Society Series as a Dystopian Narrative

Hegemony plays an essential role in examining the power relations of societies (Weaver et al., 2016; Hall, 1987; Metcalfe et al., 2010; Donoghue, 2018). The dominant power establishes its hegemony over other individuals in society. As a result of this power, it is ensured that society is placed in a specific order. The sudden disappearance of a particular state order has been the subject of many science fiction series and movies (Sobchack, 2001; Kuhn, 2003; Seed, 2011; Telotte, 1995; Cornea, 2007). Going out of the ordinary, in cases where the existing state order is destroyed, and social norms are no longer valid, the sovereign power is reconstructed by considering different elements. As a result, a new system is built. Individuals find it appropriate to live in order, and the presence of a leader makes them feel secure. Therefore, even societies that have not yet established state systems have a ruler. Even if the people have given the power to rule them to a person or a group, if these people build their hegemony without forming a solid base and gaining the trust of the rest of the society, in any revolt of the people, this hegemony can be damaged and easily destroyed.

While investigating the concept of hegemony, Gramsci discusses how and in what way a minority dominant group agrees to dominate the remainder of the numerical majority society (Marx & Engels, 1976; Gramsci, 1971; Thomas, 2013). On the one hand, hegemony refers to the concept of culture as a social process carried out with integrity, in which people shape their entire lives; on the other hand, it includes the concept of ideology, which is a reflection of meanings, values, and social class interests (Williams, 2018; Marx & Engels, 1976; Gramsci, 1971).

The task and function of ideology in hegemonic systems are to act as cement by combining different views and value systems to secure the hegemony of the dominant power and class. While any ruling class articulates its class interests to protect its relations with other classes and groups with which it is allied, it accomplishes this task by developing a new ideology that will take on a unifying task. The main factor in the reproduction of hegemony is that the

dominant ideology, which is the unifying force, is ultimately shaped by the power balances within the ruling force. For this reason, hegemony is not a question of class and social alliance established around the dominant class. Instead, hegemony is the holistic fusion of the socioeconomic, cultural, and value judgments of the dominant powers and other classes and forces in relation to them (Gramsci, 1971).

In Gramsci's views, the class that seeks to dominate under modern conditions must take moral and intellectual leadership and act above its interests in cooperation with different alliances. When harmony occurs within the social order, dominant classes reproduce their unique hegemony using class institutions, social relations, and thoughts. The construction of hegemony takes place in civil society and forms the basis of society. The state stands at the middle point between all these concepts.

As one of the developing creative industries, visual culture offers an essential field in revealing and evaluating social and cultural issues. Inevitably, ideology stands out as one of these issues. However, it is possible to say that diversity and freedoms are depicted instead of stereotypical moral representation patterns in conventional narratives. In this context, by examining *The Society*, we would like to discuss the new possibilities this series offers in terms of visual narrative as one of the rare examples in visual culture. Furthermore, we would like to state that *The Society* series examines the connections between the characters, the progression of events in a cause-effect relationship, real life, and the hegemony of sovereign power in the traditional sense and that this power relationship is not different from real life. At this point, it can be concluded that *The Society* series falls under Dystopias of authoritarian repression according to Balasopoulos's (2006) classification. Therefore, we aim to make discourse analysis of the sample series with the help of ideological film theory.

This essay explains how hegemony is built-in society through a visual text. This study frames how hegemony is shaped in a dystopian world through a popular series and points to limitations and recommendations for future research using the recent and relevant literature. From this perspective, the transfer of power balances in real life, management, and hegemony-building processes through *The Society* series can be examined under the following headings. First, however, it is noteworthy that these titles are closely related to the natural process in real life in the construction of hegemony.

(i) Sovereign Power and Chaos

Societies that spontaneously accept to come under the hegemony of the dominant power get this because they think that they cannot continue their life activities on their own, and they want to keep themselves under the protection of an official (Lears, 1985; Young, 2004; Macedo, 1998). The main reason for the choice of leadership, which also took place in the series, is that the students want to find a solution to the situation and to have a 'power' presence that will ensure their safety in the current conditions. According to the plot of the series, the students who adopt a system of hegemony spontaneously have already been persuaded in their normal lives, not through tyranny but the manufacture of consent, to the rulership of the sovereign power, and this consent has continued to exist even when the state and the sovereign power have disappeared.

The state and the absence of law enforcement, which constitutes the state's repressive power, push the townspeople into chaos, and they do not hesitate to commit crimes. As Garland (1996) states, it is the dominant forces themselves that take control of the crimes of societies. Because in societies where the concept of sovereign power does not exist, there is no oppressive power and punishment system, and societies are therefore inclined to commit crimes. The dominant power takes control and manipulates the society so that in the absence of the dominant power, the society cannot distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, and will only act

according to their impulses. The dominant powers, which have established their hegemony systems on societies, largely control the culture by imposing their right and wrong on the society (Guha, 1997; Wolf, 1999). As seen in the series, young people perform behaviors that they would not display in their everyday lives and that they would call 'bad behavior' after the disappearance of their dominant power source. The biggest reason for this is that they have taught them that these behaviors are bad and good through pressure in the hegemony of the dominant power.

In the series, the first concept of sovereign power is realized in character 'Cassandra'. Cassandra is the dominant power because she is an opinion leader. One of the biggest reasons underlying the need for societies to be governed is the instinctive and psychological consciousness behaviors left over from past hegemony systems (Giroux, 1984). Because they are accustomed to being governed so much that they feel safe by taking refuge in a hegemony of a sovereign power, as they do not believe that they will establish an order in a completely equal form of administration. Although Cassandra applies the principle of 'equality' in the distribution of work, the fact that one of the high school students in the same situation - or a few students of a board - directs all the other students, decides what to do, and holds the right to intervene in every issue, doesn't mean that she has not established a hegemonic system. According to their job load sharing, everyone continues their daily routines by working equally and doing things alternately. While continuing this routine, they aim to use their resources carefully. Cassandra and her team instilled this goal and idea into them. They are taking power and property into their hands, just like a state hegemony, by indicating that no one has the right to own property in their situation and that everyone will benefit equally from everything.

(ii) Rebellion and New Leader

Although Cassandra is seen as the person who establishes and advances the hegemony system in the first three episodes of the series, at the end of the third episode, Cassandra is killed by an unknown person at the church party exit. Cassandra is the leader in the series because she was the head of the school before and had managerial qualifications. But after Cassandra's death, although she is only her sister and has no authority and no leadership history, those who are by Cassandra's side and support her want Allie to take over as leader after her death.

As a result of the persuasion processes of those around her, Allie decides to take over the management. When she takes over the leadership, she emphasizes the "safety of life" since her sister was also murdered and there is still a murderer who has not been caught in the town. While Allie is describing her new rules, no one objects to these rules and her self-proclaimed leadership. Because after Cassandra is killed, the townspeople are worried both in terms of their safety and in terms of running out of food in their limited stock. For this reason, they still need the presence of a ruler, that is, a sovereign power, which gives them confidence. With the same leadership attitude, Allie first instills trust in the townspeople, then imposes her business plan and shares the workload to ensure their safety. The first two rules Allie sets after declaring her leadership is re-posting job-sharing lists and confiscating all guns in town. Allie seizes weapons to show she's protecting the townspeople. But the most crucial reason for confiscating weapons is to understand from which gun the bullet that killed her sister came. In addition to the idea that the dominant powers establish a superiority not always by tyranny but primarily by consent to adapt to their hegemony and not to rebel, they sometimes exhibit movements that serve their interests, as seen in this incident, by expressing that they look after the interests of the society (Kann, 1998). The only person who opposes Allie's confiscation of weapons is Luke's girlfriend Helena, who stands out with her religious personality and is one of the guards. Helena displays a more fatalistic approach than other members of society. She refuses to have all the ammo in town under Allie's control. Helena is the character that allows religious motifs to be included

in the series. For this reason, she is someone who is listened to and respected by the townspeople, and Allie does not want to confront her. The message here is that religion and state acting together show that both sides can more easily protect their interests against society.

(iii) Coercive Power of the 'State'

The guards in the series represent the state's oppressive force, the police, and the army. Allie, who assumes the role of the sovereign power, the state, in the series, both makes the townspeople do what they want with the guards, that is, the repressive forces, and while doing this, she prevents the society from resisting them by saying that the guards protect them. Although the guards take their place as innocent school football team students who protect and support Allie at first, as the series progresses, they realize the power in their hands and begin to use this power on society and bully them. Dominant forces need the pressure to protect the hegemony system they have established, ensure their security, manipulate society more quickly, and impose what they want on the society (Ikenberry et al. 1990). These oppressive forces not only strengthen the dominant power but also establish the bridge between them and society. Because, as represented in the series, the forces of repression undertake all the bad events. Thus, the sovereign power does not become cruel in the eyes of society. The guards are too understanding and attentive to Allie in the face of the powers given to them. Allie, the sovereign power, makes them the power of oppression. Although Dewey's sudden arrest had an astonishing effect on the rest of the society, the oppressive power under the dominant power, other individuals in the society, cannot speak up. Society becomes afraid of this oppressive power. Society, which trusts the police in their old order and is scared of them and the power of oppression and violence they hold, has the same thoughts and feelings for the guard team in their new order. For this reason, they both feel safe and secure in the existence of a pressure force, and a penal system gradually reduces their tendency to commit crimes.

(iv) New Judgment in the Absence of Judgment

Following Greg Dewey's capture and arrest, Allie requests a court to be established to ensure justice. The parties and officials in the court that will take place are determined as follows:

- Jury: A group of students chosen among those who have done well
- Judge: Allie
- Dewey's lawyer: Helena
- Prosecutor: Gordie
- Witness: Harry

Allie, who is in the position of sovereign power, still takes place as a judge even though she is someone from the court. This is an indication that the sovereign power holds the judicial system. Meanwhile, Allie forces Helena to become Dewey's lawyer. The reason why she wants Helena to undertake this task is Helena's religious identity in society. Helena, who is respected for her religious identity, does not wish the new townspeople to accept the idea that the court is conducted impartially. In other words, the sovereign power creates its judgment by taking advantage of religious weaknesses.

The fact that the jury members were chosen from among the students who had good grades during their high school education is also a move that the sovereign power performs for its benefit. The jury is the unit that decides whether the accused is guilty or not, and choosing the jury members from among the students with good grades prevents the turmoil in the rest of the townspeople, even if the accused is found guilty. Students with good grades are the ones who

can make decisions with "justice" in the eyes of the townspeople. On the other hand, the sovereign power uses this opinion of the townspeople to its benefit.

It is clearly seen that all these assignments and events hold the judicial system of a single sovereign power. While Allie is a party to the case, she is also the judge who decides the sentence and directs the case. Other officials in the court are those elected from their close circle. The sovereign power imposes its hegemony on the society in the judicial system. The next day in court, Dewey is found guilty of murder by the jurors. The person who has to decide the sentence is Allie, who is the judge. But Allie needs time to think before deciding what the punishment will be. In the meantime, the guards try to convince Allie that Dewey should be sentenced to death. Although Allie initially objects to the death penalty, when she announces her decision a few days later, she says that Dewey has been sentenced to death. Dewey appeals to the conclusion and says it is not a real court. Even though the show is given the image that the trial and the decision process are carried out as fair and impartial, the fact that the townspeople, who do not have the legal knowledge, currently lead a different life and are only high school students, apply their own rules by establishing a court in this way among themselves shows how effective it is.

There is such an angle in the scene where Allie takes the stand before she announces the verdict when she first comes to the court that it is often used in filming the lives of leaders in history. Everyone's eyes are on Allie, and Allie is positioned to appear slightly higher and more significant than everyone else. This camera angle is used to reinforce the existence of the sovereign power and to reflect this to the audience with this image. At this point, it is seen how important it is for the hegemony and the continuity of its rules that the sovereign power can manipulate the psychology of that society to put pressure on society and make it seem like its own wishes as their wishes (Guha, 1997; Debord, 1998). While Allie uses the guards' dominance as a power of repression on the rest of society, she uses psychology as a power of suppression over the guards.

The characters Clark, Luke, and Grizz from the guards' team shoot at Dewey, sitting with his back turned and tied, with weapons; they do not know which one is loaded with live ammunition, but Dewey does not die. As they were about to fire their second shot, Grizz lays down his gun, saying he can't do it again. Allie resolutely goes, grabs the gun, and stands next to Clark and Luke to shoot. The dominant power can also take on tasks that others cannot perform. The biggest reason behind this behavior is to protect their power.

(v) Dictatorship

In the 7th episode of the series, the audience encounters a town 6 months after Dewey's execution and living by Allie's rules. Chapter 7 begins with the narration of a voice-over:

'We were kids 6 months ago. We are in this state right now. We eat, live, and sweat collectively. Everything is following Cassandra's rules. Now, these are Allie's rules too. Night curfews, mandatory weekly town meetings, and social doctrines. Those who don't work can't eat. We have struck a balance between doing what is expected of us and being happy with what we can do. In love, sex or play. We oscillate between following the rules and breaking them. We are constantly worried that this rickety structure might topple and break if we chew too much. Because we know that one foolish act can cause our ruin'.

As it can be understood from the introductory speech, Allie continues the rules of her older sister Cassandra while adding new ones to these rules and creating a hegemony over the townspeople. Division of labor becomes a routine of the town, and sanctions are imposed on individuals who disrupt their work. The fact that sanctions are imposed for not doing the job

shows that sovereign power imposes its will and power on everyone. Allie no longer deals with most problems herself, and the guards take care of them on her behalf. This shows that it exercises its hegemony very well and that everything works comfortably in its order.

As the hierarchical order in the town begins to settle, new guards join the team of guards, whose number was initially small. The guards are not only responsible for protecting Allie but also for maintaining order in the town. In addition, the guards are responsible for taking action against those who cannot go to work, which shows that the foundations of a police state understanding have been laid. As the guards' powers expand, so does their pressure on the townspeople.

For some jobs to be carried out more easily, committees are established according to the townspeople's interests. These committees can be compared to the ministries of today. Allie provides the establishment of these committees to make her job easier and make the operation turn like a wheel while dominating the town with her managerial qualifications. Although they seem to have a social state understanding – because everyone eats equally and has equal opportunities – they are still managed in a sense far from the social state.

(vi) Election Decision and Coup Plan

As Allie converses with her best friend, Will, she explains that people simply accept her management but are not happy and worried about it. She wonders if Will thinks she has taken power unfairly, he suggests an election, saying that she can ask them for the power through elections. But Allie strongly opposes Will's proposal because she fears splitting up and losing her power. For the town that looks like a welfare state but has become a dictatorship, it would be expected for Allie to fear losing her power and reject the election. She has her power and worries as she feels she will lose that power. In episode 7, Allie accepts an election and gathers the townspeople to explain that there will be an election and there will be rules for the election.

The main reason for Allie's election decision is not to create a democratic society. Still, to prevent the power and authority she holds from being questioned by the public in the future. Because if she becomes an 'elected' president, the people will not be able to ask where she got this power and the existence of her power. Allie ends her speech by saying that she is also a presidential candidate after announcing that there will be a presidential election. She says that the people who will run for the presidency can write their names on the paper at the church door. Confident that he will not be elected, Campbell writes Harry's name on the list without his permission as a presidential candidate. In addition, Clark from the guards team also writes Luke's name on paper, without Luke's knowledge, for the presidency and the guards' team for the councilor. Since the guards are the police of this new town, they will not be in the position of both the punisher and the executioner. Allie makes this statement to them and says they will not be able to participate in the election. The guards object to this but cannot object for long and accept the decision because Allie is the sovereign power.

In democratic states, units that enforce the rules, such as the military and the police, cannot also be in the position of making the rules, because this contradicts the understanding of democracy and social state (Wantchekon, 2004; Merkel, 2004). Allie explains to the guards: "You can't be the one to make the rules and enforce them simultaneously". But Allie does this not with an understanding of advanced democracy but because she is aware of her power. Because if the dominant powers lose their power of suppression, they are afraid of losing all the power in their hands, so Allie is aware of the power of repression of the guards and does not want to confront this power and forbids the guards from entering the elections. During his election speech, Harry manipulates people by saying that if he becomes the dominant power, they can regain what they had in their past lives. In contrast, Allie manipulates by saying that she will maintain this order, that what she has done so far is for their good, and that she adopts

and applies the 'good of the majority' approach in the decision-making process. While these are happening in the election speech between Harry and Allie, Lexie, who comes to the church, takes a stand as a public member and gives a speech by succumbing to her anger towards Allie.

In societies with hierarchical differences between the rulers and the ruled, a representative called 'rebel' (Arjona, 2015) from among the people – who did not give this representation, Lexie has made herself a representative – opposes the order by voicing the mistakes of the rulers. Although the reason for doing this is considered Lexie's problems with Allie, from a state perspective, Lexie is entirely public. For this reason, as seen in every society, individuals who oppose the ruler and the form of government, that is, undertake the task of representing the power of the people against the sovereign power, are described as "rebels" or "traitors" by the sovereign power. The situation is not different in Lexie, and Allie's supporters consider her a traitor who opposes the state and state apparatuses created in the town.

By giving too much authority to the guards with the oppressive power in her hands, she kept herself in the background, caused a distance between the people and the sovereign power, and caused the sovereign power to move away from the base of the people, thus alienating the people from him. When the people see a candidate close to themselves and one of themselves, they identify themselves with the leader they are alienated from and tend to reject the existence of the sovereign power. This indicates that no matter what the conditions in the societies living in, a sovereign power wants to establish hegemony over the people but moves away from the people. This construction cannot be done correctly. Campbell convinces Harry and the guards' team to stage a coup to further his hatred toward Allie. Although Luke opposes the idea of a coup, the guards threaten him so that he is on their side. Campbell convinces Harry in a purely personal way and the guards by manipulation. Angry that they cannot participate in the election, the guards tend to believe this manipulation of Campbell. When considered as a state understanding, it is possible to make a classification as follows:

- Allie: sovereign power,
- Guards: army/police (force of repression)
- Harry: opposition,
- Lexie: people's ruler, rebel
- Campbell: provocateur.

The guards convince Allie to become their leader, saying they will always protect her. They are carrying out a coup against the person they say they will always protect. As described in the series, the pressure force, i.e. the police/army, is of great importance in smaller-scale hegemony systems. Because the townspeople do not have official institutions, they easily believe in the guards, the only unit where they can feel safe. Campbell's plans are fully implemented, and a coup d'état against Allie destroys the hegemony built by Allie. However, this demolition process with a coup indeed allows the building of a new hegemony instead of revealing a social state understanding. After these statements in the church, the public is angry with Allie and attempts to lynch Allie and Will when they are brought before the public.

(vii) The Relationship Between Religion and Politics in *The Society Series*

Various findings involved in hegemony in the series have been described and conveyed in the previous section. One of the elements that is not included in the plot of the series but appears in the hegemony systems and serves as a supportive function against the people is the phenomenon of 'religious identity in the hegemony system. While examining the events in the series within the context of religion and politics, it should be mentioned that the church is where important decisions are made, and meetings are held. At this point, the effects of religious

identities and motifs on society and political systems are utilized. As Althusser (1971) states, emphasizing the importance of religion, especially for states, the state's ideological apparatuses are divided into sub-components such as religion, education, family, law, politics, union, and mass media. Religious apparatuses make up the system of churches. Churches are ideological devices that carry out cultural and doctrinal functions together. The church is an ideological device that tries to harmonize individuals with the existing order and serve the interests of the ruling classes. The religious motif used to support the hegemony system created in *The Society* series is conveyed through a character. This character is Helena. Although Helena is shown as an impartial and honest character in the series, as a result of all the things she experiences in the last part, she realizes that this religious identity can affect people. When we look at the character development of Helena in the narrative, it is seen that while she was neutral at the beginning of the narrative, she got closer to Allie over time. This is because of the influence of political and economic power on religious power. Because the party holding the political power exalts the religious power and attracts the religious power, which should be neutral.

Conclusion

This study examines how society is affected in cases where sovereign power exists and does not exist. While reviewing this domain, it is tried to be explained whether young-adolescent individuals who do not have official ties to the state need sovereign power or not through *The Society* TV series. Hegemony permeates the whole of social life without individuals noticing it. While people live in a society with an intertwined understanding of good and bad, they accept the existence of a ruler for all their other individual needs such as punishment, judiciary, the justice system, and fulfillment of basic requirements by the sovereign power. In the series *The Society*, the main reason why the community, which determines the need for a leader (sovereign power) as a priority, is wondering who will rule themselves instead of thinking about how their basic needs will be met, in the event that all sovereign powers disappear because they do not know exactly what to do. The dominant power in the series produces its hegemony, and society allows this wheel to turn as long as it feels safe. After a point, the hegemony of the sovereign power is subject to fractures within itself and is on the way to extinction. The society that develops thanks to the dominant power realizes its power over time. In this process, other sovereign powers that have developed themselves better in the society also emerge, and they may aim to establish their hegemony by destroying the existing hegemony. At this point, the segment of the society that is open to manipulation is more likely to choose the one that does not already exist among the different hegemonies put forward by these other dominant powers. The main reason for this predisposition is that their curiosity about the unknown makes the weaknesses of the known more obvious. In the series *The Society*, in which the dystopia theme is handled, the society is frightened by the chaotic environment that occurs in the absence of sovereign power. In this framework, the hegemony in the dystopian narrative in the series is shaped by the existence of sovereign power. It is built by all the oppression and ideological devices held by this power. Society adopts this construction in its subconscious and allows its reproduction.

References

- Alford, R. R., and Friendland, R. (1985). *Powers of Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation).” In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp. 142–7, 166–76. Translated by Ben Brewster. New York and London: Monthly Review Press.
- Arjona, A., Kasfir, N., Mampilly, Z. (2015). *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University.
- Balasopoulos, A. (2006). “Anti-Utopia and Dystopia: Rethinking the Generic Field,” *Utopia Project Archive, 2006-2010*. Athens: School of Fine Arts Publications, pp. 59-67.
- Balasopoulos, A. (2019). “Conrad, Ideology, and Utopia,” *Strange Vistas: Perspectives on the Utopian*. Justyna Gallant and Marta Komsta, eds. Frankfurt A.M.: Peter Lang, pp. 59-77.
- Bezel, N. (2001). *Yeryüzü Cennetlerinin Sonu*. Ankara: Güldiken Yayınları.
- Cohen, M. R. (1927). *Property and Sovereignty*, Rev. 8
- Cornea, C. (2007). *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality*. Rutgers University Press.
- Debord, G. (1998). *Society of the Spectacle*. Bread and Circuses Publishing.
- Donoghue, M. (2018). Beyond Hegemony: Elaborating on the Use of Gramscian Concepts in Critical Discourse Analysis for Political Studies. *Political Studies*. 66 (1). [CrossRef](#)
- Garland, D. (1996). Limits of the Sovereign State. *British Journal of Criminology*. 36: 445-471. [CrossRef](#)
- Giroux, H. A. (1984). *Ideology, culture, and the process of schooling*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, New York, International Publishers.
- Guha, R. (1997). *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hall, S. (1987). Oral Presentation, Minneapolis, Minn., April 3. Notes in Lipsitz’ possession.
- Ikenberry, G. J. and Kupchan, C. H. (1990). Socialization and Hegemonic Power. *International Organization*. 44 (3): 283-315. [CrossRef](#)
- Kann, M. E. (1998). *A Republic of Men*. New York: New York University Press.
- Kuhn, A. (2003). *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*. New York: Verso Publishing.
- Lears, T. J. J. (1985). The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities. *The American Historical Review*. 90 (3): 567-593. [CrossRef](#)
- Macedo, S. (1998). Transformative Constitutionalism and the Case of Religion: Defending the Moderate Hegemony of Liberalism. *Political Theory*. 26 (1): 56-80.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F. (1976). *Alman İdeolojisi*. Sol Yayınları.
- Merkel, W. (2004) Embedded and defective democracies, *Democratization*, 11:5, 33-58. [CrossRef](#)
- Metcalf, B. D., C. J. Rees. (2010). Gender, globalization and organization: exploring power, relations and intersections. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*. 29 (1): 5-22. [CrossRef](#)
- Panagopoulos, N. (2020). Utopian/Dystopian Visions: Plato, Huxley, Orwell. *International Journal of Comperative Literature and Translation Studies*. 8 (2): 22-30. [CrossRef](#)
- Seed, D. (2011). *Science Fiction: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Telotte, J. P. (1995). *Replications: A Robotic History of Science Fiction Film*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Sobchack, V. (2001). *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film*. New Jersey: Turgers University Press.

- Thomas, P. D. (2013). Birleşik Cephenin Çatışkaları. (in) Gramsci Çağı: *Felsefe Hegemonya Maksizm* (İ. Akçay, & E. Ekici, trans., p. 123). Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları.
- Wantchekon, L. and Jensen, N. (2004). Resource Wealth and Political Regimes in Africa. *Comparative Political Studies*, 37 (7), 816-841. [CrossRef](#)
- Weaver, S., R. A. Mora, & K. Morgan. (2016). Gender and humour: examining discourses of hegemony and resistance. *Social Semiotics*. 26 (3): 227-233. [CrossRef](#)
- Westfahl, G. (2005). *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy*. Westport: Greenwood press.
- Williams, R. (2018). Pasajlar: Hegemonya Nedir. Retrieved from: <https://www.e-skop.com/skopbulten/pasajlar-hegemonya-nedir/3874>, Accessed Date: 15.05.2021
- Wolf, E.R. (1999). *Envisioning power. Ideologies of dominance and crisis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Young, I. M. (2004). Modest Reflection on Hegemony and Global Democracy. *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*. 51(103), 1-14. [CrossRef](#)