Questioning power and identity: Race and class in *Tambora 1815* by Paox Iben Mudhaffar

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Article History	Abstract
	This study examines the discourse of identity politics, focusing on race and class, in local literary texts, specifically in the novel *Tambora 1815* by Paox Iben Mudhaffar. Through a cultural studies perspective, the research explores how racial and class identities are represented, constructed, and sustained in the local literature and their impact on political and social discourse in Indonesia, particularly in Bima. A qualitative approach was employed using literature review and textual interpretation techniques, including repeated reading, data classification, and symbol analysis, with triangulation for validation. The findings reveal that identity politics in local literary texts can serve as a tool of resistance against marginalization and a potential source of essentialism and further oppression. The novel reflects and challenges power hierarchies related to race and class, showcasing social inequality and the influence of dominant powers over marginalized groups. This research contributes by providing new insights into the dynamics of power and identity in Indonesian society, offering a critical analysis that encourages further exploration of identity politics in other local literary works.

Kata Kunci:	Abstrak
	Penelitian ini mengkaji wacana politik identitas, dengan fokus pada ras dan kelas, dalam teks sastra lokal, khususnya novel Tambora 1815 karya Paox Iben Mudhaffar. Melalui perspektif kajian budaya, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana identitas ras dan kelas direpresentasikan, dikonstruksi, dan dipertahankan dalam sastra lokal, serta dampaknya terhadap wacana politik dan sosial di Indonesia, khususnya di wilayah Bima. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik telaah pustaka dan interpretasi teks, termasuk pembacaan berulang, klasifikasi data, dan analisis simbol, yang divalidasi melalui triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa politik identitas dalam teks sastra lokal dapat berfungsi sebagai alat perlawanan terhadap marginalisasi sekaligus memiliki potensi untuk menjadi sumber esensialisme dan penindasan lebih lanjut. Novel ini merefleksikan sekaligus menantang hierarki kekuasaan yang berkaitan dengan ras dan kelas, memperlihatkan ketidaksetaraan sosial serta pengaruh kekuasaan dominan terhadap kelompok-kelompok yang termarjinalkan. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dengan menawarkan wawasan baru tentang dinamika kekuasaan dan identitas dalam masyarakat Indonesia, sekaligus mendorong analisis kritis lebih lanjut terhadap politik identitas dalam karya-karya sastra lokal lainnya

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1   Introduction

In the view of Plato and Aristotle, literary works are copies of reality, often referred to as mimesis (Baktır, 2003). In other words, literary works result from the author's contemplation of the socio-cultural conditions in which the literary work was created. Literature, as a reflection of social reality (Coles, 2010), is inseparable from identity politics regarding race, class, and education. Local literary texts offer a variety of critical lenses to understand how local identities can be constructed and interpreted (Beach et al., 2020). Local literary texts, such as novels, short stories, folktales, and poems, present diverse representations of race, class, and education (Ramazani, 2019). These representations may reinforce stereotypes and prejudices or challenge and dismantle them. Analyzing literary texts with a cultural studies approach allows us to examine how the authors and characters construct and interpret these identities. Identity politics refers to mobilizing social identities, such as race, class, and education, for political purposes (Das, 2020). Identity categories are often socially and politically constructed to legitimize systems of power and injustice (Trochmann, 2021). In the context of local literary texts, this can dismantle such identity constructions and reveal how they are nurtured through dominant discourses and practices. In this paper, the author uses a cultural studies perspective. The cultural studies paradigm examines how cultural texts are produced, interpreted, and distributed in a particular social and political context (Grossberg, 2019). Cultural studies encourage critical analysis of the power structures underlying identity and political discourse construction.

The emergence of the discourse of identity politics, race, class, and education in Indonesian literary works may also be due to Indonesia's diverse languages, ethnicities, religions, and cultures. (Supratikno, 2022). For most people, talking about identity politics is considered forbidden and even disgusting. This assumption arose during the DKI Jakarta elections in 2017. The Jakarta elections 2017 told a bitter story; the Moslem's division was severe. The case continued in the 2019 presidential election. Polarisation and even labeling were so intense that the terms *cebong* (tadpole, a term used to address Jokowi's voters by their political opponent in Indonesian presidential general election contestant) and *kampret* (small bat, a term used to address Prabowo's voters by their political opponent in Indonesian presidential general election contestant) was massively used. They are used to attempt to categorize differences in political choices between one group and another. If not appropriately managed, then identity politics becomes a calamity for the multicultural Indonesian State (Iksan, 2020). For this reason, it is necessary to find a formula so that identity politics does not become a disaster for the Indonesian State. Based on this proposition, conducting an in-depth study of the discourse of identity politics, race, class, and education in local literary works is necessary so that people do not "taboo" and consider it "forbidden" to talk about identity politics. This reason motivates the author to research because the discourse of identity politics is unavoidable, especially in Bima district, especially in Indonesia. In this paper, the author uses the cultural studies paradigm because the author sees the discourse of identity politics, race, class, and education that appears in literary works written by local writers, especially those with a setting in the Bima district.

The cultural studies paradigm is a theory and method that seeks to provide or uncover the hidden meaning behind the text. In the cultural studies paradigm, text is not only interpreted as writing but can also be interpreted in other forms that have meaning. Barker said that the concept of text refers not only to the written word, although this is one of its senses, but all practices have meaning (Diha, 2023). In literary works, these symbols are full of meaning; these cultural symbols must be translated. Cultural studies analyze how culture is produced, disseminated, and consumed in social and political contexts. In the context of identity politics, cultural studies focuses on how culture is used to build and strengthen group identity. Cultural studies show that identity is not something static but something that is constantly changing and negotiated. In addition, identity is also influenced by factors such as race, class, and education.

Meanwhile, the author uses theories of literary sociology, identity politics, and cultural studies. Structural theory is a discipline that sees literary works as a structure that stands on several elements that are interrelated with one another. The more closed text can be considered a coherent and complete articulation of the "world vision" of a social class, and it becomes more important because of its vitality as a work of art (Eagleton, 2011). Literary texts are the most powerful medium for expressing ideologies, including identity politics. For this reason, literary texts must be suspected. In line with that, Diha (2017) said that texts and symbols must be suspected of carrying the ideology of the social groups where the literary work is produced and that texts and symbols will become "parasites" on literary works.

Identity politics is the politics of difference (Gupta & Basu, 2010). This means that differentiating political choices between one group and another. In line with that, Agnes Heller said that identity politics is a political strategy focusing on differences and using primordial ties as its main category (Diha et al., 2024). Identity is an essence interpreted through comfort signs, beliefs, attitudes, and lifestyles; identity is considered personal and social and marks that we are the same or different from others. (Diha, 2023). Referring to this opinion, identity is a characteristic of a region or individual that distinguishes one region from another or an individual from another. Cultural studies is a theory and a method that exposes the meaning behind the text. (Hall, 1991). Cultural studies can be a discursive formation, a group of ideas, images, and practices that provide ways of talking about and conduct associated with a particular topic, social activity, or institutional site. (Barker & Jane, 2016).

The study of identity politics, particularly race and class, has been widely explored in previous research. Helford (2001) Examines the intersections of race, ethnicity, and class privilege in literature, revealing how these elements shape political communities. King (2002) delves into racial identity and middle-class aspirations, questioning the constructed boundaries of racial belonging. Meanwhile, Wajiran and Apriyani (2025) investigate race, gender, and identity in Toni Morrison's novels, highlighting their relevance to contemporary struggles faced by Black women in America. However, while these studies provide valuable insights, there remains a significant gap in exploring identity politics within local Indonesian literature, particularly in the context of *Bima* district.

This research seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how the novel *Tambora 1815* by Paox Iben Mudhaffar portrays the interplay of race and class within the socio-cultural landscape of Bima. Unlike previous studies focusing on Western literary traditions, this study offers a localized perspective, emphasizing the nuances of identity construction in an Indonesian setting. Using a cultural studies approach, this research aims to uncover the mechanisms through which power structures shape identity narratives in local literature.

The novelty of this study lies in its application of cultural studies to a regional literary text, shedding light on how race and class dynamics manifest in Indonesian literature. By examining identity politics in *Tambora 1815*, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how literature serves as a medium for negotiating power and identity. Furthermore, it provides a critical lens to re-evaluate the role of local literary works in shaping socio-political discourse in Indonesia. This study is significant for literary scholars and those interested in the intersection of literature, identity, and social change in diverse cultural contexts.

2 Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a cultural studies paradigm because this research analyses and reveals the discourse of identity politics (race and class) in local literary texts. The cultural studies paradigm approach in this research is an analytical method that focuses on how culture, particularly local literary texts, is produced, constructed, and interpreted within specific social and political contexts (Gray, 2002). This research uses the cultural studies paradigm to analyze and reveal

the discourse of identity politics, specifically race and class, in local literary texts. This approach goes beyond examining the structural or aesthetic aspects of the text; it also explores how it reflects, challenges, or reinforces social and political dynamics in the society where it emerges. Cultural studies enable researchers to understand how racial identity and social class are constructed within literary texts and how these texts contribute to broader identity discourses in society. In addition, this research also tries to provide and explain the meaning of the discourse of identity politics in local literary texts. Diha (2017) says that the cultural studies research paradigm is an analysis that gives meaning or uncovers the ideology hidden behind the text. The type of data used in this paper is qualitative data, namely in the form of narratives, descriptions, and texts that appear in local literary works. In this paper, the researchers used a literature study to collect data. They searched, read repeatedly, understood, and analyzed the literary work *Tambora 1815*. Paox Iben Mudhaffar's work.

The data analysis technique in this research is to find meaning and interpret the text in the novel *Tambora 1815* Paox Iben Mudhaffar's work. The researchers interpreted, found meaning, and analyzed the texts by applying the cultural studies paradigm. The steps in the data analyses are: (1) reading the literary text repeatedly, (2) clarifying the data needed, (3) analyzing and interpreting the data, and (4) concluding. To validate the data, the author used data triangulation to understand the data through various sources, research subjects, methods (theories, methods, and techniques), and time. Triangulation in this research involves verifying data credibility by using multiple perspectives. Source triangulation ensures data validity by comparing information from different texts, authors, or historical records. Research subject triangulation involves gathering insights from various individuals, such as literary critics, historians, or local cultural figures, to cross-check interpretations. Method triangulation strengthens findings by applying different analytical approaches, such as structural analysis, discourse analysis, or historical contextualization. By integrating these triangulation techniques, the research ensures a comprehensive and reliable interpretation of identity politics in local literary texts.

3   Findings

The novel *Tambora 1815* serves as a rich literary text that unpacks the complexities of identity politics, particularly focusing on race and class. Within its narrative, identity is not merely a static attribute but an active discourse shaped by historical, cultural, and socio-political forces. This analysis examines how the text articulates the power, domination, and marginalization dynamics that emerge from racial and class identities.

Table 1: The Discourse of Identity Politics (Race) in the Literary Text *Tambora 1815*

No	Literary Text (Tambora 1815)	Discourse of Identity Politics (Race)
1	"A rainbow of colors often emanates from the direction of the waterfall. No one dares to go there... Ncuhi forbade anyone to go there."	This discourse illustrates the authorities' power in restricting access to certain places, which can be interpreted as a metaphor for control over racial identities. Here, race is understood as a social construct tied to power.
2	"If Sriwijaya, Majapahit, Gowa, can become a great kingdom, why can't Papekat? I will build the biggest empire and have a dynasty from my descendants. I am the emperor of the world!"	This discourse shows the identity project of the King of Papekat, shaping his self-image as a strong ruler with ambitions to conquer the world. It exemplifies how racial identity and power are constructed to assert domination.
3	"He had promised himself, if his kingdom was strong later, the first kingdom he would invade was the sultanate of Bima."	This discourse reflects an identity project with a narrative of power, positioning other groups (the Bima kingdom) as targets of domination reinforcing power hierarchies based on racial and group identity.

No	Literary Text (Tambora 1815)	Discourse of Identity Politics (Race)
4	"... but he lost his temper when his friends mocked his black skin and curly hair. He hit one of his friends with a wooden block so that his head bled."	This discourse raises the issue of marginalization based on racial identity (black skin and curly hair). It shows how racial prejudice shapes social relations and how the character reacts to that marginalization.
5	"After La Banga lived in Papekat, the area was much more developed and powerful compared to the kingdom of Sanggar whose government center only contained about 2000 people... mostly fishermen and farmers..."	This discourse portrays the marginalization of the Sanggar people, positioning them as a weak and insignificant group. Racial and group identity is used to differentiate between the "strong" and the "weak."

Table 1 demonstrates how identity politics in *Tambora 1815* reflects the power, domination, and marginalization dynamics within society.

Table 2: The Discourse of Identity Politics (Class) in the Literary Text *Tambora 1815*

No	Literary Text (Tambora 1815)	Discourse of Identity Politics (Class)
1.	"... the slaves were orders that he had already bought, but they did not go to Java because of a change in power that caused the slave trade to slow down. He was not too worried about that. For he had other plans ..."	The word "slaves" represents class division, highlighting the social strata between the economically strong and weak. It shows the exploitation of the lower class (slaves) by the elite, emphasizing class-based power dynamics.
2.	"according to rumors, there are huge reserves of gold and gems in the region. That's why in the past, the Majapahit kingdom under the command of Laksamana Nala invaded Dompu... Majapahit wanted to control the hidden treasures."	This text highlights the greed and control of the upper class (Majapahit kingdom) over the resources of weaker regions (Dompu), showing how the ruling class exploits the wealth of others for their gain, reinforcing class struggles.
3.	"He was fascinated when he saw VOC ships anchored on a beach not far from the harbor where he was a poor *gelandangan* (homeless). Instantly, his strong desire to become a sailor arose."	The contrast between the protagonist's poverty ("poor *gelandangan*") and the VOC ships, a symbol of wealth and power, highlights the class disparity. It shows the aspiration of the lower class to rise, juxtaposed with the elite's power and influence.
4.	"La Banga crowned himself king or sultan of Papekat... Witnessed by the heads of the robbers and pirates... La Banga... promised to protect the robbers and pirates and to increase their fleet and weaponry."	This text reflects class identity through La Banga's leadership over robbers and pirates, representing a lower-class rebellion against the elite. It shows how class dynamics are formed within social groups seeking power and survival in a stratified society.

Table 2 demonstrates how the *Tambora 1815* novel portrays class identity politics, illustrating the dynamics between the upper and lower classes, power, exploitation, and the struggles within a socially stratified society.

4 Discussion

The discourse of identity politics, race and class in literary texts is a double-edged knife. On the one hand, it can be a tool to fight oppression, marginalization, discrimination, and the like. On the other hand, it also has the potential to be trapped in essentialism and marginalization. In this article, the author describes the discourse of identity politics (race and class) in local literary texts, especially those written by Mbojo writers. Identity politics is hotly discussed, both academically (seminars, workshops, and the like) and non-academically, because identity politics is a tool of resistance to show the identity of a group (ethnicity, tribe, culture, religion, and the like). Literature, as a reflection

of social reality, cannot be avoided from the influence and content of identity politics. A lot of local literature talks about how understanding identity (race and class) can be constructed and interpreted in political discourse. This paper shows how literature acts as an arena where these identities are constructed, negotiated, and fought for.

4.1 The discourse of identity politics (race) in the local literary text *"Tambora 1815"*

Representations of race in literary texts often reflect the prejudices and stereotypes prevalent in society. Literature can reinforce or challenge social constructs that sustain racial hierarchies through these depictions. Some literary works perpetuate racial inequality by supporting harmful stereotypes or glorifying dominant groups while marginalizing minorities. As the text notes, "Literary works can reinforce racial hierarchies, marginalize minority groups, or challenge the status quo and promote racial equality" (Barker & Jane, 2016). This statement demonstrates how literature mirrors existing social power dynamics. In cultural studies, race is understood as a biological factor and a product of social interaction, history, and power. "Race is not only about physical/biological human beings but also about social interaction, history, and power" (Barker & Jane, 2016), emphasizing that racial identities are constructed through these factors, with literary texts serving as reflections or critiques of these societal structures.

Postcolonial theory offers a framework for analyzing racial dynamics in literature, especially focusing on domination, subordination, hybridity, and creolization. As the text highlights, "Postcolonial theory explores postcolonial discourses and their subject positions on the themes of race, nation, subjectivity, power, subalterns, hybridity, and creolization" (Barker & Jane, 2016). This theoretical approach examines how colonized societies grapple with issues of race, identity, and power. These themes are visible in literary works like Tambora 1815 as the novel occasionally promotes racial equality, challenging established racial hierarchies. The statement, "Tambora 1815" promoting racial equality sometimes appears" (Mudhaffar, 2015) underscores the novel's role in questioning racial power structures. This proposition highlights how literature can reflect societal power relations while offering a critique that encourages dismantling oppressive racial dynamics.

> *"A rainbow of colors often emanates from the direction of the waterfall. No one dares to go there. That's because it's part of the forbidden forest. Ncuhi forbade anyone to go there. Besides, to get there you have to pass through a very dense forest. It is said that the forest is very haunted because it is guarded by the demons waiting for the mountain," Tambora 1815 pp. 5 (Mudhaffar, 2015)*

The passage from *Tambora 1815* describes a mystical and forbidden forest, symbolizing how power and authority control access to certain spaces and impose social restrictions. The mention of the Ncuhi's prohibition on entering the forest reveals how fear and authority are intertwined to maintain control over the populace. This scene illustrates the larger theme of identity politics, where power is exercised by the ruling class or authority figures to shape the behavior and choices of individuals within the society. The fear of the "haunted" forest guarded by demons suggests that the authorities use myth and superstition to instill obedience and compliance, preventing individuals from challenging the status quo. In this context, the forest and its dangers are metaphors for barriers imposed by those in power to maintain social order.

From a cultural studies perspective, the text delves into the dynamics of race and power, where race is not merely a biological concept. However, it is intricately tied to social construction, history, and identity. The discourse of identity politics, especially concerning race, is represented through the power structures that control access and restrict freedom. In this case, race is depicted as a complex interplay of authority and societal norms, where the rulers (Ncuhi) exert control over the marginalized or powerless. As Barker (2004) notes, identity politics involves the creation and preservation of cultural rights within a social framework, and in this text, the racial and social hierarchies are

reinforced through the symbolic control of space and access. Through this portrayal, the novel reflects how identity and power are constructed and maintained within societal and cultural systems.

In addition to the text above, other texts discuss racial identity politics. According to Soenjoto (2019) says that identity politics is a political tool of a group such as ethnicity, tribe, culture, religion, or others for certain purposes, for example, as a form of resistance or as a tool to show the identity of a group which makes it easier for teenagers to communicate and digest symbols that understand based on the mindset and opinion of the community by the understanding. In the text below, a king wants to show his identity that the king of Papekat will one day rule the world. Stuart Hall sees identity in two ways: defining it as a unity, a collection of one's truth, which hides or accentuates something about oneself where historical elements unite in the present (Hadi, 2022). The second way is to see similarities and differences that form a person's self-image and differences that form "his real self-image" rather than "what he has become." The novel *Tambora 1815* depicts the social conditions of society in a way that, according to Stuart Hall, forms a self-image. King Papekat wanted to shape his self-image as a strong man and have an empire that was feared by the world. For more details, see the text below.

> *"If Sriwijaya, Majapahit, Gowa, can become a great kingdom, why can't Papekat? I have all the conditions needed to become great. I will build the biggest empire and have a dynasty from my descendants. I am the emperor of the world!" Tambora 1815 p. 34. (Mudhaffar, 2015)*

For Giddens, the discourse that appears in the series of sentences above is an identity project. According to Giddens, an identity project is an identity that is recreated or rebuilt to form a new identity. The series of discourses above is a reconstituted discourse because the king of Papekat wants to show his power to the world. Identity politics is a discourse that is never finished; it will be finished after something dies (Diha, 2023). For example, "the Papekat area, which was originally a poor and weak area, can be transformed into a developed and strong area". Giddens refers to this as an identity project. An identity project is an identity that is recreated or rebuilt to create a new identity. Identity will never be completed. Stuart Hall said that identity is also not a "finished" process; it is never complete or perfect and will never end. Identity is always in the process of formation. Identity means the identification process where the structure itself is always constructed through ambivalence. Like between "us" and "other", or "us" and "them", "real" and "unreal" (Azis, 2022).

In addition to the sentence above, other excerpts show that the king of Papekat wants to show his power.

> *"... and he had promised himself, if his kingdom was strong later, the first kingdom he would invade was the sultanate of Bima, he always remembered the torture, sometimes for days thinking about it," Tambora 1815 p 35.(Mudhaffar, 2015)*

> *"La Banga is very determined with his plan; to build a new kingdom. He will name his kingdom Tambora with Papekat as its capital. He will control the entire area around Mount Tambora. Then slowly he will continue to expand his power to the west and east until the entire island of Sumbawa can be controlled. He thought carefully about the plan" Tambora 1815 p. 45(Mudhaffar, 2015)*

In addition to the discourse of showing identity, in the novel Tambora 1815, there is also a discourse of marginalizing other groups. The discourse of marginalizing other groups has always been a concern. This is because this discourse creates divisions between one group and another. According to Soenjoto (2019: 190), identity politics is feared to be present as a narrative of resistance of marginalized groups due to the failure of the mainstream narrative to accommodate minority interests that have an impact on the millennial generation positively; identity politics presents a mediation vehicle for voicing aspirations for the oppressed. The marginalized discourse that appears in the text of the novel *Tambora 1815* can be seen below;

"... but he lost his temper when his friends mocked his black skin and curly hair. He hit one of his friends with a wooden block so that his head bled." Tambora 1815 p. 36. (Mudhaffar, 2015)

In addition to the text above, another text can also be seen below;

"What's more, what's the point of having a relationship with the sanggar, because it doesn't give him any benefits either. He felt that he was not a subordinate of the Sanggar and did not have to obey the king of the Sanggar. He had no major allies in Sanggar since the old king died and was succeeded by his brother Ismail Lamujang. The new king seemed to lack co-operation. He planned to burn the kingdom of Sanggar to the ground if it did not support his efforts to invade Bima." Tambora 1815 p. 45. (Mudhaffar, 2015)

"After La Banga lived in Papekat, the area was much more developed and powerful compared to the kingdom of Sanggar whose government center only contained about 2000 people. Even then, most of them were only fishermen and farmers who were fond of learning witchcraft. ..." Tambora 1815 p. 45. (Mudhaffar, 2015)

Identity politics in *Tambora 1815* is represented through the power dynamics between social groups, particularly in how dominant groups seek to control or oppress others. The quote, "He also plans to burn down the Sanggar Kingdom if it does not want to support his efforts to invade Bima," illustrates this struggle. Here, the leader or dominant social group, represented by the king, is willing to use violence and coercion to achieve its goals, highlighting the aggressive assertion of power over a weaker group. This reflects the broader discourse of identity politics, where powerful groups attempt to maintain dominance by subjugating or marginalizing others. In this case, the kingdom's refusal to support the invasion is a point of contention that threatens the king's political and social standing.

Ma'arif (2010) describes identity politics as closely linked to the interests of social groups who feel marginalized or excluded by mainstream society. In the novel, the king's desire to conquer Bima and subjugate the Sanggar Kingdom aligns with this understanding of identity politics, as his actions are driven by the need to assert dominance and expand his influence. The struggle between these groups highlights the tension between justice and power, where the ruling class seeks to impose its will, often at the expense of weaker groups. The novel uses this conflict to explore the broader implications of power dynamics in society, where identity politics justifies the oppression or marginalization of others. The discourse thus reflects the ongoing battle for justice and equality in the face of domination and exclusion.

4.2   Discourse Identity Politics (class) in local literary texts

The discourse of class identity politics in literary texts often reveals the complex interplay between power, social structure, and class distinctions. Class is not merely a matter of economic standing but is deeply intertwined with how power is distributed and maintained within society. It is reflected in how characters, events, and social hierarchies are portrayed in literary works. According to Barker and Jane (2016), post-Marxist thought views class as a discourse shaped by how we talk about and understand class distinctions. In other words, class is not just an objective economic category but is influenced by the language, narratives, and power structures within society. This discourse shapes class consciousness, the collective awareness of one's social position, interests, and values about other social groups. However, this consciousness is neither fixed nor unified, as it is influenced by other factors such as gender, race, and age.

In *Tambora 1815*, class identity politics is illustrated through events highlighting power imbalances between social groups. For example, the mention of "slaves" and the shifting of power

dynamics around the slave trade reflect the stark contrasts between the ruling elite and the oppressed lower classes. These class differences are not just economic but also reflect broader social hierarchies reinforced by power structures. In this context, class identity is constructed and maintained through the interactions between those in power and the marginalized, reflecting the complex ways class is depicted in literature. By exploring these power dynamics, *Tambora 1815* offers insight into how class struggles and inequalities are represented, making the text a rich site for analyzing the discourse of class identity politics. In literary texts, the political event of class identity can be seen in the novel *Tambora 1815* below;

> *"... the slaves were orders that he had already bought, but they did not go to Java because of a change in power that caused the slave trade to slow down. He was not too worried about that. For he had other plans ..." Tambora 1815 p 33. (Mudhaffar, 2015)*

The discourse of identity politics (class) in local literary texts, in this case, "Tambora 1815," appears with various variants, including the word "slaves". The word slave in the "Tambora 1815" novel text shows class differences or differences in social strata. In this case, class analysis and identity politics refer to the collective awareness of a particular social group of positions, interests, and values that distinguish them from other social groups based on social strata or economic class. The word "slaves" indicates the social strata between the economically "weak" and the economically "strong" or the "proletariat" and the "elite". In political literature, identity (class) refers to the form of narrative representation and themes that reflect the life experiences, struggles, and aspirations of certain social groups. In addition to the word slave, "there was a change in power that caused the slave trade to become sluggish" also appears. This sentence clearly shows the difference between the weak (who have no power) and the strong. The novel Tambora 1815 describes the life of social classes that occur in society, for example, the life of the upper class and the lower class, the weak class and the strong class, and the competition in achieving profit. Literary sociology is an approach close to class analysis in the context of literature. Diha (2017)says that literary sociology is imposed on the writings of critics and literary historians who are mainly aimed at how an author is influenced by his class situation, the ideology of society, the economic conditions related to his work, and the type of reader he intends to reach. Karl Marx in Suseno (1999) said that the main actors in society are social classes.

In addition to the text above, other texts show class identity politics in the novel Tambora 1815. According to Marx, in Apriliastutik and Rahmayati (2022), the State is an opponent of the weak class because it always supports the ruling class's interests. Indirectly, the State represents the classes that exploit the labor of the lower classes.

> *" According to rumors, there are huge reserves of gold and gems in the region.*
>
> *That's why in the past, the Majapahit kingdom under the command of Laksamana Nala invaded Dompu. The invasion was said to have been carried out because Majapahit wanted to control the hidden treasures owned by the Dompu Kingdom. The prosperous and wealthy kingdom was located on the southern side of Mount Tambora." Tambora 1815 p. 33. (Mudhaffar, 2015)*

In *Tambora 1815*, the reference to the Majapahit kingdom's invasion of Dompu due to the rumored existence of vast reserves of gold and gems illustrates the intersection of class, power, and economic interests. The narrative suggests that the Majapahit kingdom, driven by a desire to control valuable resources, invaded Dompu, a prosperous and wealthy kingdom near Mount Tambora. This account highlights how the ruling class, motivated by the promise of economic gain, exerted power to subjugate and exploit weaker states. The pursuit of wealth and resources often catalyzes conflict, underscoring the role of economic incentives in shaping historical and social dynamics. This

depiction emphasizes how the ruling elite's greed and quest for dominance over the weaker classes drive political and military actions.

The mention of "VOC ships" further emphasizes the economic motivations behind such power dynamics. As cited by Turner (2005), McCabe criticizes the overemphasis on class in analyses produced by the CCCS, which sometimes leads to an essentialized and nostalgic view of working-class characteristics. In *Tambora 1815*, the presence of VOC ships symbolizes the external influence and exploitation exerted by colonial powers, reinforcing the disparity between the ruling and the oppressed classes. This portrayal aligns with McCabe's criticism, showing how the novel reflects broader themes of economic exploitation and power imbalances. The text demonstrates how the ruling class manipulates and dominates weaker groups, illustrating the impact of class and economic interests on historical and social relations.

> *"He was fascinated when he saw VOC ships anchored on a beach not far from the harbor where he was a poor gelandagan (homeless). Instantly his strong desire to become a sailor arose."....Tambora 1815 p. 36. (Mudhaffar, 2015)*

> *"Once he was sure of his mind, he gathered his allied raiders for a consultation. At the end of 1811, when the west wind season was in full swing, and the pirates were idle, la Banga crowned himself king or sultan of Papekat. Witnessed by the heads of the robbers and pirates and their half-drunk sons, La Banga, who called himself Sultan Abdul Ghafur, promised to protect the robbers and pirates and to increase their fleet and weaponry. Whether or not he understood the meaning of Ghafur, he was always ruthless to those who challenged him" (Mudhaffar, 2015).*

5   Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of Tambora 1815 uncovers a multifaceted discourse on identity politics, emphasizing various critical themes such as the promotion of racial equality, the exertion of power by dominant groups over the marginalized, the assertion and visibility of identity within social hierarchies, and the systematic exclusion and marginalization of other groups. Additionally, the text reflects deep-seated social stratification, highlighting class disparities and the ongoing oppression of vulnerable populations. These findings underscore the nuanced and layered portrayal of power dynamics within the narrative. The author advocates for more extensive research on identity politics in local literary works, particularly in the context of race and class, to bridge the divide between marginalized and dominant groups. Such studies could enrich the understanding of these dynamics from a cultural studies perspective, offering new insights into how local literature negotiates issues of identity, power, and social structures.

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