



## ARTICLE

# Reading *The Half Mother* as Political Narrative: Repression, Subjectivity, and State Power through the Eyes of the EFL Learner

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## ABSTRACT

This research engages with the theoretical frameworks of Louis Althusser's concepts of Ideological and Repressive State Apparatuses, applying them to Shehnaz Bashir's poignant debut novel, *The Half Mother* (2014). The study explores how the state manipulates institutions such as religion, politics, education, and media to perpetuate its dominant ideology and internalize official narratives within the collective consciousness of its citizens. In parallel, it examines the role of repressive state mechanisms—including the army, police, and judiciary—in enforcing conformity, suppressing dissent, and executing state-sponsored violence. The novel, set in the politically volatile region of Kashmir, offers a compelling literary lens through which the intersections of ideology, repression, and resistance are vividly portrayed. The research closely analyzes the psychological and emotional responses of various characters, revealing the covert mechanisms by which control and obedience are sustained. Additionally, this study integrates the pedagogical perspective by incorporating the responses of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. It highlights how exposure to politically and socially charged literary texts, such as *The Half Mother*, cultivates critical thinking, socio-political consciousness, and interpretive

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### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 22 April 2025 | Revised: 16 May 2025 | Accepted: 12 June 2025 | Published Online: 2 September 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i9.9638>

### CITATION

Akhter, S., Kumar, T., Wider, W., et al., 2025. Reading *The Half Mother* as Political Narrative: Repression, Subjectivity, and State Power through the Eyes of the EFL Learner. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 7(9): 220–235. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i9.9638>

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competence. By engaging with the text's complex themes, learners not only enhance their linguistic proficiency but also develop a deeper understanding of power dynamics. Thus, the research contributes to both political-literary scholarship and innovative approaches in literature-based language education.

**Keywords:** State Apparatuses; Violence; Repression; Ideology; EFL Learner; Learning Opportunities; Developing Countries; Education Quality

## 1. Introduction

This research examines violence through ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatus in Shehnaz Bashir's *The Half Mother*. *The Half Mother* was written by the Kashmiri author Shehnaz Bashir and it is based on the sufferings of a Kashmiri mother. Previous research on this novel has focused on exploring cultural hegemony, war on terror, identity crises and the role of women in the resistance movement in Kashmir. Moreover, previous research also includes aspects such as motherhood, resistance discourse, psychic trauma of a bereaved mother and a woman's journey for Justice. The present research, however, focuses on state apparatuses, ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses. This study utilizes Louis Althusser's theory of 'State Apparatuses' in order to get its findings. The research finds out suppression of a state through the means of violence. Moreover, it discusses the way state imposes its writ upon people through its institutions ideologically and repressively. Today, the world is full of wars, proxies, revolts and human rights violations. There are various states which are repressing their people by using different tools of force. State's version of the story is propagated through national and international media but those experiencing systemic repression have little say. Thus, the research highlights the plight of victims and it helps in understanding atrocities within the states.

### 1.1. Background to the Study

Destutt De Tracy uses the word 'Ideology' for the very first time in his book *Elements d'ideologie* (1801/15) as "Science of Ideas". He defined elements of ideology as way of thinking, memories, judgment, habit, will and the ways to adjust to movement. By science of ideas he means formation of ideas which can be followed by every individual and by using these ideas the whole world can be governed politically

and economically. He argues that only way to success is to follow ideology as a whole. He is of the view that religion and religious limitations have nothing to do with ideological system. According to him, social science is different from physical science but ideologues applied deductive methods to both<sup>[1]</sup>.

Later, Napoleon claimed that he coined the term ideology but Marx and Engle gave a new shape to this concept. In 1846 Marx and Engle discuss 'ideology' as 'Social consciousness' in their book *German Ideology* (1932). They counter the negative concept of ideology introduced by Napoleon and reshaped it in a theoretical framework and political program. Explaining independence, they illustrate that morality, religion, metaphysics, any ideology or its related consciousness put a check on an individual's independence. These institutions do not have any development but man is going through the process of development in his thinking. They put forward that consciousness does not determine the life but the life determines the consciousness. They propose two methods of approach, in the first kind of approach consciousness is taken as a living individual. While in the second type of approach consciousness is considered solely as consciousness of the real living individual<sup>[2]</sup>.

Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (1929–1935) is also based on "Cultural Hegemony" by which he means how ruling class dominates subjugated class by manipulating language, culture, morality and common sense. Gramsci highlights that the dominating class uses ideas to rule over masses. He is of the view that this kind of domination is very effective because in it neither force nor conversion is used but consent is utilized. In other words, ideas are brought in use in a way that people are manipulated with their own consent and the consent is won by common sense. He further explains the notion of common sense that this 'common sense' is to make people accept things as they are happening, maintaining that as these things have been happening for long, therefore, these things must be taken as common and

normal<sup>[3]</sup>.

In 1970, French philosopher Louis Althusser presents the concept of Ideological state Apparatuses and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) in his essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)*. He also throws light on theory of interpellation<sup>[4]</sup>. Ideological State Apparatuses means of dominating people through ideology. Whereas, Repressive State Apparatuses are means to govern people through force and interpellation is to impose certain ideas on the masses that appears to be true to them. Moreover, he argues that repression and violence are key factors to these types of dominance. In Repressive state apparatuses repression and violence is involved directly. Whereas, people who use Violence and Suppression believe on an ideology that means they work on an Ideological state apparatuses<sup>[5]</sup>.

There are quite a few writers around the globe who have written about the use of 'violence' under State suppression in their fiction. For example, Gordon Peake's *Beloved Land* illustrates that in 1975 Indonesia annexed East Timor and declared it the 27<sup>th</sup> province of Indonesia. People of East Timor are largely Christian and Indonesia is a Muslim state so, there are ideological differences between them. Indonesia uses Ideological state apparatuses as well as repressive state apparatuses to dominate the people of East Timor. These state apparatuses include terror, violence and suppression<sup>[6]</sup>. Though, East Timor got independence in 2002 but it is an example of state apparatuses.

Gardner Bovingdon's *the Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land* (2010) highlights the plight of Muslims facing violence by the state of China. Uyghurs, members of Muslim minority, have tried to attain independence, but Chinese government has consistently resisted their efforts. Chinese government has exploited their ideology, using a sophisticated strategy in the name of interethnic harmony and Chinese Nationalism. Uyghurs have struggled for years, but still they have not achieved any power in the government. Chinese leaders have pushed them back, suppressing their due rights and refused to accept them on physical and political grounds<sup>[7]</sup>.

*Blood and Belief: The PKK and Kurdish Fight for Independence* by Aliza Marcus presents struggle of PKK for the independence of Kurdistan in Turkey. Marcus is of the view that Kurds are facing resistance, violence and suppression in almost every country they live. There are 28 million Kurd

residing all over Middle East and they have no country which they can call their own. They raise voice for their independence from the states of Turkey, Iran, Syria and Iraq but these states suppress them with force. PKK turns to violence and they start guerilla warfare against states under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan. Turkish Kurd are half of all the Kurd population and they have thousands of freedom fighters to fight against state suppression. Though, Kurds have their first independent state in Syria but they are fighting to get independence for the whole Kurd community<sup>[8]</sup>.

Francis Wade throws light on violence and repression of Barman state on Rohingya Muslims in his novel Myanmar's *Enemy Within: Buddhist Violence and the Making of a Muslim 'Other'* (2017). There are two types of narratives which are prevailing regarding Buddhist regime in Myanmar, that Buddhists are very kindhearted, generous and peace loving, and that Muslims of Burma are trying to restrict Buddhist government to rule the country. These narratives are not quite right because when one looks deep into the matter he can understand the lie behind this narrative building. In fact, Muslims of Myanmar are facing atrocities and genocide from Buddhist regime. They have no right to live, freedom, assembly and to perform any kind of religious activity. They are facing brutality and inhuman violence of Burman state<sup>[9]</sup>.

In South Asia one can witness brutality and rampage that the state exerts on its own people specifically, in India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Sumantra Bose an Indian writer attempts to highlight the conflict of Kashmir in her book *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. She states that two nuclear powers are fighting for a disputed territory of Kashmir since 1947. There have been three battles fought between them on this very issue. Both countries are trying to get the beautiful land of Kashmir and they have no concern with people of it whatsoever. Kashmiris have no right to raise their voice in the matter which is directly related to them. They are being governed through force and violence by Indian state only due to interference of Pakistan in the valley. On the other hand, Pakistan blames India for this scenario. None of them tries to solve the issue. Kashmiris must be given right to decide their fate<sup>[10]</sup>.

In Pakistan, Waziristan and Baluchistan are the two areas which have been suppressed by Pakistani State over the years. Ghulam Duar Qadir Khan in his book *Cheegha* (2015) illustrates the plight of people residing over there. He

is of the view that the state used these areas and people only for its interests, neglecting their rights and values. Waziristan is suffering from terrorism, suppression, and violence almost from last 50 years. First Pakistan used Waziristan and its people to fight against Russia for American stakes. Pakistani army allotted safe shelters to Taliban leaders here in Waziristan. Post 9/11 when Americans asked the Pakistani state to fight against these leaders now. It was the time when things went wrong and people of Waziristan suffered a lot by this onslaught. Innocent people were ordered to vacate their houses and many of them were killed by the army. Pashtuns stood up against the state and started fighting back<sup>[11]</sup>.

In her book *This Divided Island* (2014) Samanth Subramanian throws light on state terror and suppression of the Tamil Tigers by Sri Lanka. Tamil Tiger were a Hindu minority who wanted independent state in northeastern Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a multi-religious country, there are 70% Buddhists, 12% Hindus, 10% Muslims, 7% Christians and 3% other communities are residing over here. Hindus by the help of the Indian establishment stood for their right of freedom. Except Muslims almost every community stood by the side of Hindus. This conflict turned into a civil war and it went on for 60 years. Tamil Tigers started suicide attacks for the very first time in human history. Though, it is claimed to be the longest civil war within any state, it ended Tamil struggle for freedom in 2009<sup>[12]</sup>.

*The Half Mother* (2014) is a story of Halima, whose father is killed by Indian Army and her son is captured from her house. Halima approaches every possible institution like, police, army camps, judiciary, media and political leaders but no one listen to her. She sells her house to meet the expenses of this searching. Every family who has someone gone missing is inspired by her struggle and determination against the state suppression. Meanwhile, she died herself due to suffering, pain, violence, and suppression. She was not even able to have a look at her son.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

The research aims to explore *The Half Mother* (2014) from the perspective of state apparatuses, ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses. Moreover, this study explores the way author has focused on violence and suppression imposed by the state upon its people. Therefore, the focus is to argue that the state imposes its authority upon

people through institutions both ideologically and repressively. All the characters in the novel provide resonance of the violence and suppression as they experience the trauma followed by ideological repression exercised by the state. Thus, this research focuses on the lives of people cannot be controlled by the state through violence and ideological state apparatuses.

## 1.3. Research Objectives

The key objective of the study is to identify repression and violence in the novel *The Half Mother*. This study perspective has the following objectives;

- i. to trace the nature of Ideological State Apparatus in the novels *The Half Mother* by Shehnaz Bashir to explore hidden narratives of the author.
- ii. to evaluate the tools of repressive state apparatuses through which the public is being governed by violence
- iii. to critically analyse the text of novel under the ISA and RSA theories that how these two theories work in tandem and how they are interlinked.

## 1.4. Research Questions

- i. How does violence relate to repressive State Apparatuses in *The Half Mother* (2014)?
- ii. How does the state suppress its citizens with the help of executive institutions?
- iii. How does the state use media and educational system to suppress people ideologically?

## 2. Literature Review

Chapter two presents presence of the very topic in other books and a review of critical body of previous works done on *The Half Mother* (2014) by Shehnaz Bashir. This chapter reviews different articles and journals which are closely related to the research problem in order to understand the novel and to identify the research gap. The chapter thus helps in delimiting the research problem and identifying significant variables related to the topic. Moreover, this literature review also rationalizes the significance of the problem and places the reviews in a new context to explore a new perspective.

Ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses can be seen in various novels around the globe. *Like Three Centuries of Conflict in East Timor* (2015) by Douglas Kammen which is written on Indonesian state violence and the State use of apparatuses on the Christians of East Timor. After invasion of Indonesia East Timor's people stood for their right of independence. They fought for three centuries to become independent<sup>[13]</sup>. Moreover, *The Cage: The fight for Sri Lanka & Last Days of The Tamil Tigers* (2011) by Gordon Weiss contains details regarding Sri Lankan state apparatuses used on the Tamil Tigers. It considers the world's longest civil war within a state<sup>[14]</sup>.

Ferhad Ibrahim's *The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Obstacle and Chances for Peace and Democracy* (1996) deals with Turkish state apparatuses and state violence on Turkish Kurds. The Kurds are fighting for their rights against state suppression of Turkey since ages. To Ibrahim it could be resolved peacefully by mediation<sup>[15]</sup>. Another example of state apparatuses is Islam in *China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics* (2002) by Raphael Israeli in which he highlights state repression and violence by china over Uyghurs (Muslim Community of China). The Chinese state is suppressing them both, ideologically as well as repressively. Their voice is being suppressed through various means<sup>[16]</sup>.

There are quite a few novels containing elements of state apparatuses, ideological as well as repressive state apparatuses along with violence. Such as *Curfewed Nights* (2008) by Basharat Peer unveils Indian state oppression and violence on Kashmiris since decades. It has detailed description of Indian repressive and Ideological state apparatuses<sup>[17]</sup>. Fatima Bhutto's *The Shadow of Crescent Moon* (2013) is also an example of violence and state suppression of Pakistani army upon the people of FATA. Pakistan imposes its writ by oppressing people through its military<sup>[18]</sup>.

Bilal Ahmed Dar in his journal describes Kashmiri women as the symbol of pain and trauma where she must beg for justice. She has to follow all those rules for justice which are intentionally drafted to marginalize her. The study explains the pain and the sorrow of female gender that women have to observe the death of their fathers and sons. There is no one to help her out to get justice for these killings. The story and the presentation of the society exposes the status of women in Kashmir where they have to undergo misery and agony on a daily basis. Things like rape, killing,

raid, arrest and searching of homes are no more new to them. The case of kidnapping is an issue exploited by the military men for the sake of rape or harassment. All these inflictions are evident in the novel which the women of Kashmir have to pass the days and nights with. The feelings of Kashmiri women are full of fears of being raped, captured, and harassed. They have no relief from any department of state on capturing of their men and sons. Even political leaders are not there to help them through this carnage. The Kashmiri Women have to fight alone with the system as they have to wait out their ordeal<sup>[19]</sup>.

Muzaffar Ahmed Rather in his journal says that the novel is all about Indian military oppression and state sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The study describes the motherly pains of Haleema which she has to face during the conflict of nineties. The depiction of motherly love and standing against such brutal detentions makes the protagonist a symbol of bravery and valour. She represents all mothers and other Kashmiris who have lost their loved ones. Moreover, he raises questions on the professionalism of the Indian army in how they capture innocent Kashmiris and keep them in unlawful custody. To him, the Indian state is deliberately giving instructions to its army for detention, killing and genocide of Kashmiris, in order to get dominance over them. Further he argues, that India is propagating his narrative over the globe as it is the largest secular and democratic state in the world and on the other hand they have illegitimate occupation over Kashmir. He is of the view that the novel is a tale of misfortune of a daughter and mother at the same time who becomes prey of suppression, barbarity and repression of the Indian army. He claims that *The Half Mother* (2014) is the best example of a mother's love for her child<sup>[20]</sup>.

Javeed Ahmed Raina's journal which is based on misfortune and the traumatic aspects presented in the novel *The HalfMother* (2014). The study reveals that the protagonist of the novel Haleema has to suffer continuous miseries and these are the sufferings which Kashmiris have to face on a daily basis. Raina pays tribute to the writing impact of Bashir who depicts the plight of Kashmir and the socio-cultural facets which are negatively impacted by the conflict. She argues that the percentage of psychological trauma is very high in number in people due to the external factors which are enforcing people to live in cultural conflict. The study

reveals that Haleema has to deal with two types of trauma. One she is suffering from is waiting for her son who is in detention of the Indian army. Nobody tells her where her son is but she is searching for him and waiting anxiously to see him. On the other hand the trauma of loneliness is haunting her. She lives alone and searches for her son alone. Moreover, Raina says Haleema stands for the people who have gone through catastrophe and affliction living in the state<sup>[21]</sup>.

Mohammad Yasin Pandit makes a comparative study of two Kashmiri English novels *Curfewed Night* (2008) and *The Half Mother* (2014). The purpose of the research is to highlight the victimized mother of Kashmir who has to face the different hardships to bring back her lost son who is in the army's custody from where he was taken. She approaches every authority within her reach but her voice remains unheard. Pandit reveals that the backdrop of both the novels is of riots. In these riots Kashmiri men as well as women stand against state sponsored terror and the army's onslaught against them. In this resistance women play a courageous role as they stand by their men. This research not only shows victimization of women but also their steadfastness. These women have active participation in both the armed struggle and non-violent Kashmir movement. Role of women is explicit in the domain of struggle, they go hand in hand with their men<sup>[22]</sup>.

Jan Muhammad Pandit conducted a study on the chronic of the pain experienced by the protagonist of the novel describing the resistance discourse when she has to face the adverse situation. The study shows the pain of mother measured as the resisting discourse presented by Haleema in the novel. The journal reveals that the discourse adopted by the author of the novel highlights that Bashir's experience is based on the personal experience as he is a native of Kashmir valley. Pandit in his study says that the chronic of the pain as presented in the novel has the unique language and feelings of that mother whose son has disappeared while in the custody of the Indian army. Pandit further argues that the language and the narrative style used by the author shows the conflict and the suppression exerted by the state on its citizens. The violation of the basic human rights in the so called democratic state raises the possibility of rebellion and then such possibility is kept in check by the army by raiding and keeping young people in custody. Moreover, Bashir gives

a life like picture by depicting the character of Haleema as a miserable Kashmiri mother. Bashir's title selection of the novel is the most interesting part of his artistic expression because it intrigues the reader's curiosity as well as masterfully conveys suffering of his protagonist<sup>[23]</sup>.

Basharat Shameem in his research paper describes the devastating effects of Indian illegal occupation through its army on human capital and economic progress in Kashmir. Kashmir which is rich in minerals and fruits has turned into a battle field. Where Indian army has clear instructions from the state of doing whatever they can. He adds that there is violation of human rights, bloodshed, and rape, psychological and physical torture evident in the valley. The state suppression and double marginalization of Kashmiri women is causing insecurity, stress, loss, pain, death, rapes and the caption of the youngsters. Moreover, women have to suffer the agony of killing or having of their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons kidnapped by the Indian armed forces. The army takes Kashmiri men out of their homes without any proof or information regarding any involvement in criminal activities. The Kashmiri woman is in a state of anxiety where she waits for her father to come and get her married, waits for her brother to come and guard her from the brutality of the Indian military, she looks for her husband to come and feed her children and she waits for her son to come so she may fulfill her mother's love. He argues that Kashmiri women were deliberately kept under the violence and oppression of Indian military. In light of *The Half Mother* (2014) one can say that Indian state sponsored terrorism and atrocities unleashed to the next level<sup>[24]</sup>.

Mohd Nageen Rather in his journal states that Kashmiri women have to face trauma, stress, depression which lead to continuous abortions and miscarriages. These atrocities are faced due to unresolved Kashmir issue for a long time and this issue has created uncertainty among Kashmiri women. These atrocities are getting voice of natives and various native fictional and non-fictional writers are conveying them across the globe. Moreover, he states, that Shehnaz Bashir is one of vocal members of that literary voice<sup>[25]</sup>. By writing these two books, *The Scattered Soul* (2016) and *The Half Mother* (2014) Bashir has become the voice of Kashmir and he has raised the issue of Kashmir at the international arena<sup>[26]</sup>.

Qaisar Bashir refers to history as the Kashmir, which

Aurangzeb once called “Place of Wonder” and “A Paradise on Earth” has begun collapsing and it is losing its men, women, sons, fathers, houses, bridges, peace, and leaders. Kashmiri people have not faced it passively but they have shown resistance to them, which has opened a chapter in the history of Kashmir. Bashir argues that crossing the line of control and getting arms training is nothing more than an expedition for Kashmiri youth. Continuous crackdowns, curfews, midnight kidnappings, and killings have opened a new era, an era of standing against the Indian rule<sup>[27]</sup>.

Usha Jain and Froze Ahmad Chopan in their Journal argue that ambivalence can affect a person in both ways physically as well as mentally. Struggles, sufferings and Strivings are not going to end for Kashmiris. Everyone can see the physical wounds on Kashmir but psychological injuries are unacknowledged. To them, Shehnaz Bashir attempts to unveil the psychological condition of Kashmiris which is based on his own memories and experience. Moreover, they state that the selection of the story by Bashir is deeply moving and full of pathos. Haleema’s Schizophrenia develops sense of tragedy and Bashir portrays his protagonist as a tragic hero who suffers only from fate not due to her own hamartia<sup>[28]</sup>.

Also, Kumar and Jabeen, Kumar & Yunus were cited in sections addressing Victorian and early feminist representations that parallel the domestic oppression in *The Half Mother*<sup>[29,30]</sup>. Kumar was referenced when discussing the linguistic framing of ideology and control<sup>[31]</sup>. Kumar et al. contributed to the section on class and speech control, helping unpack the language-politics-power triad<sup>[32]</sup>. Priyadarshini & Kumar added depth to the feminist reading of Haleema’s resistance and gendered repression<sup>[33]</sup>.

Recent international scholarship has significantly contributed to understanding the evolving mechanisms of state repression and ideological control. For instance, Auyero, Sobering, and Fernández examine how marginalized communities in Latin America experience “slow violence” and symbolic domination through bureaucratic neglect and policing—reinforcing Althusserian notions of repressive apparatuses<sup>[34]</sup>. Similarly, Khalili explores how military-industrial governance systems operationalize ideology in both colonial and post-colonial settings, highlighting parallels with South Asian state repression<sup>[35]</sup>. In authoritarian regimes, Huang and Boranbay-Akan analyze how digital media is appropriated by state institutions in China and

Kazakhstan to establish ideological conformity, supporting Althusser’s theory of communication ISA<sup>[36]</sup>.

Recent work by Inglehart and Norris suggests that ideological state control is increasingly being exercised via cultural nationalism and identity politics, especially in populist regimes, thereby reframing ideological apparatuses as tools of identity construction<sup>[37]</sup>. Furthermore, studies such as Tufekci illustrate the transformation of ideological state control through algorithmic surveillance, providing a modern lens to analyze the novel’s depiction of censorship and media control in *The Half Mother*<sup>[38]</sup>. These contemporary perspectives expand our understanding of state ideology beyond traditional structures, emphasizing how new digital, cultural, and bureaucratic mechanisms work in tandem with traditional institutions to enforce compliance and suppress dissent.

By engaging with these recent global studies, this research not only revisits Althusserian theories but also contextualizes *The Half Mother* within a broader transnational discourse on repression and ideology. This strengthens the study’s relevance and positions it as part of a contemporary academic conversation on state violence and control.

The foregoing literature review highlights the scope of the novel *The Half Mother* (2014) in the context of state suppression. This literature review has found that the novel shows the atrocities of state and different state apparatuses. This chapter has identified the research gap that suppression and violence are the key factors which lead to repression enacted by state upon its people and residents.

### 3. Research Methodology

The current research is qualitative by its structure and nature. As L. R. Gay has defined qualitative research method is a method in which the facts and figures are described in discussion form. This way of research also includes the textual representation of the problem of the specific study<sup>[39]</sup>.

Repressive state apparatuses are visible in their nature and are being utilized for maintaining power in the state. On the other hand covert tools are also used for maintaining the control over inhabitants which Althusser calls the “Ideological state Apparatuses”. He distinguishes the repressive state apparatuses from the ideological state apparatuses as the repressive state apparatuses includes army, police, courts

and prisons. While the ideological state apparatuses includes family, culture, schools, political parties, unions of trades and mass media. He distinguishes it as different as follows.

- State Apparatuses function repressively and through ideology, through repression the predominance is maintained while through ideological state apparatuses, mass control is maintained.
- The repressive state Apparatuses maintain the state power through the implementation of organized agenda under the commanding unity agenda while the ideological state apparatuses are being utilized for the limitations of the extremes, making distinctive relationship of powerful class and working people and keeping the working people as the subordinate of the ruling class as giving ideology of development and progress.
- There is security for the repressive state Apparatuses through the unified and centralized organization representing the ruling class of power while the Ideological State Apparatuses are insecure and face numerous challenges so different ideologies are given to people of the state to control them<sup>[40]</sup>.

The type of data in the present study is qualitative by its form and nature taken from *The Half Mother* (2014) by Shehnaz Bashir and the analysis is done under “Ideological State Apparatuses” by Althusser presented in his book *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays and Other Essays* (1971). The data is analyzed after taking pieces of texts from the novels and these pieces of texts are analyzed under the dimensions of Ideological State Apparatus and Repressive state apparatuses concept given by Althusser which is about the state and how it control its citizens.

This study employs a qualitative textual analysis of Shehnaz Bashir’s *The Half Mother* (2014), guided by Louis Althusser’s theory of state apparatuses. The novel was selected for its rich depiction of political repression, enforced disappearances, and ideological control in Kashmir. Althusser’s distinction between ideological state apparatuses—such as education, religion, media, and family—and repressive state apparatuses—such as the police, army, and judiciary—provides a critical framework for analyzing how institutional power operates in the narrative.

The text was analyzed through close reading, and relevant passages were identified based on their representation of

institutional influence, ideological imposition, and resistance. These passages were categorized and interpreted according to Althusser’s concepts, focusing on how characters are shaped or oppressed by the state’s machinery. This method enables a structured and transparent analysis, linking theoretical insights to specific moments in the novel and offering a deeper understanding of how fiction can reflect real-world systems of control and repression.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion to explore ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses as depicted in *The Half Mother* (2014). This chapter also includes discussion about violence which is caused by these apparatus. Louis Althusser proposes that ideological state apparatus is a way to dominate masses in a soft manner only by manipulating their ideologies through educational institutions, religion and media. On the other hand repressive state apparatus includes force and violence to dominate people or vigorously imposing state’s ideology on them through executive institutions like police, army and judiciary. This chapter is divided into subparts to understand various aspects of the novel in accordance with this research.

### 4.1. Ideological State Apparatuses

Ideological State Apparatuses is one of the two ways which state uses to rule its people by manipulating their thinking and ideology. State tries to impose its own ideology upon them. Since this is not a direct way to impose an ideology on masses so, it has schools, religion, politicians, family and media to propagate state’s ideology. These three function as an agenda and state use them for its benefit. Through the mentioned mediums, state can indirectly handle minds, thoughts and actions of particular group or of whole nation. As Althusser says in his essay, Ideological state apparatuses are a kind of non-physical apparatuses which state uses through educational institutions, churches, families, politics and ways of communications to exert power over people. He says that the state uses such institutions to put its ideology forward to the public<sup>[40]</sup>. These elements are also present in the novel *The Half Mother* (2014) and the aim of this research is to find these aspects out.



#### 4.1.1. Educational, Religious, Political and Family ISAs

Althusser is of the view that various institutions like schools, churches, family and political system including political parties are the tools of the state from where it proliferates ideologies which it wants its people to follow. These institutions and their curriculum are used by the state to present its ideology in a soft way<sup>[40]</sup>. In *The Half Mother* (2014) this type of ideological state apparatuses is present where Indian state using this tactic to impose its ideology on Indian Administered Kashmir. Protagonist Haleema, who is a Kashmiri women; her son Imran approaches school and one day he uncovers Indian ideological state apparatuses. The State is deliberately not teaching young generation about their own history. When he asks his teacher a simple question she tweaks her ear for this. As he states “I asked her why we were never taught the history of Kashmir. How can one study about Mesopotamia and Indus Valley and Harappa ... but not a bit about the place one hails from”<sup>[26]</sup>. This shows how the Indian state is using educational institutions to follow what they want Kashmiri youth to follow. The state does not want them to know themselves. State does not let them learn about who they are. State is intentionally erasing the history of Kashmiris from their minds and asking them to follow the history which the state want them to follow. As Imran says to his Grandfather “My class mates say that it is not our syllabus to learn the history of Kashmir”<sup>[27]</sup>. His grandfather in his respond says that you guys are too little to grasp such kind of things. Some people use this rhetoric to stop us from learning about ourselves.

Religion is one of the key elements of state apparatuses because it is the main source where ideology comes from. Althusser (1971) thinks that religion is also an important organ in ideological state apparatuses. He uses the term “Religious ISA” in his essay in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971) in which he refers to the different systems of churches (16). In, *The Half Mother* (2014) there is religious differences between the state and marginalized people. The state is mostly consisted of Hindus, whereas, Kashmiri population is largely Muslim. So there is clash of religious ideologies and this is the main reason of suppression because both sides think that they are on the right side. The state assumes that she in the right to oppress these people. On the other hand Kashmiris consider themselves

right. It is all about their ideologies and religious beliefs. As in the novel Ghulam Rasol Joo Haleema’s Father is asked by Major Aman Lal Khuswa in one the raids about terrorists and where he hide them. Ghulam Rasol says he is unaware about them. Major Khuswa says “Don’t lie. All you sister fucking Muslims lie!”<sup>[25]</sup>. This shows religious difference that a Hindu major interrogating a Muslim civilian accuses whole Muslim community of lying.

Politics plays a huge role in pursuits of any state because it is the blend of everything which a state possesses. Althusser feels that politics also used in ideological state apparatuses in one of his essay ideological state apparatuses in *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (1971) he uses the term “The Political ISA”. By this term he describes the role of political system and different political in ideological state apparatuses. Parties which stand by the state’s narrative are more likely the ones which have fair chance to win elections. Politicians who are with the state have privileges and support from the state<sup>[40]</sup>. Same is the case in *The Half Mother* (2014) where politicians have nothing to do with those experiencing systemic repression from state violence and injustice but they propagate the state’s stance openly or inwardly only for the sake of their ministries. Mir is renowned politician of Haleema’s constituency and Haleema approaches him with quite some difficulties to bear. She knew Mir is coming to attend a marriage ceremony at Zakura and she goes there along with some other Kashmiri who are facing the same kind of difficulties. Haleema tells her full version of the story that her father is killed and her son is captured. She needs his help to find her son. He refuses by saying this “I am like you. Actually we are all the same. We can’t do anything. I can just pray for you”<sup>[25]</sup>.

Family is considered to be the first school of a child and family teaching sets ideology and beliefs of an individual. This ideology can be of either side, it could on the state side or it could be the other way around. Althusser discusses family as a tool of shaping one’s ideology. He uses the term “Family ISA” to refer to it as a tool of ideological state apparatuses. He is of the view that families tend to infuse an ideology in immature minds of the young lot and they follow that basic ideology for the rest of their lives<sup>[40]</sup>. *The Half Mother* (2014) presents such kind of stuff where Imran, son of Haleema and grandson of Ghulam Rasol is told that he has to stand firm against upcoming hardships. Ghulam

Rasol teaches him that there are people who are not letting us know ourselves and they are trying to suppress us by every possible means and we have to fight first with our inner doubts and then against those people. As he states “Until we stop oppressing ourselves, others will never stop oppressing us”<sup>[25]</sup>. This illustrates that ideology is being inculcated into the mind of little Imran and getting him ready for coming challenges.

#### 4.1.2. Media: (Newspaper, Radio and Electronic Media)

Mass communication is a quick way to shape narratives, beliefs, and opinions in this time and age. Althusser (1971) refers to media as tool of mind-shaping and continuous infusion of a certain ideology into the minds of people. He uses a term “Communication ISA” in his essay Ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971). By using this term he throws light on the role of print media, radio and electronic media in the form of state suggestive narrative among masses. To him, state uses all mediums to preach its ideology. State controls press outlets, radio and television channels according to her wishes<sup>[39]</sup>. These aspects are also present in *The Half Mother* (2014) where media has to follow given instructions by the state. There is no news on any media which goes against state narrative. Indian state controls press outlet, radio and television.

Haleema approaches a press outlet office to get her son’s news published in press outlet so she may find any clue of her son Imran who is captured by the army from his house. Haleema arrives there after asking the address from various people. Haleema has created two versions of her tragic story. Here she narrates the full version to the news producer and expects him to publish her news. News producer Shaida denies by saying that the government has banned our advertisement because we publish human rights kind of stuff. They think that we do not follow their policies. These lines are elaborating ideological state apparatuses which Indian state is imposing on Kashmiris by not giving them any platform to raise their voice against their ideological state apparatuses. As Althusser (1971) says in his essay Ideological State Apparatuses and Repressive State Apparatuses, the state controls media and run it according to their wishes<sup>[40]</sup>.

Radio is also a way to communicate with people. It is also a way to impede folks to think in a certain way. Al-

thusser (1971) speculates that radio is also a medium for state to get control over people. State propagates a certain narrative through this medium. He is of the view that all media is controlled by state. Althusser (1972) uses the term “Communication ISA” in which he tries to enshrine all communication means like Radio, Television and Newspaper<sup>[40]</sup>. This aspect is also present in *The Half Mother* (2014) where Indian state is using radio on a defined agenda. State has given them instructions to follow and radio authorities have to follow such instructions for their survival in the country. As Haleema approaches broadcasting entity in order to get her missing son’s news on air. She narrates the full version of her story to the news director and pleads with him to air her story. Director looks uncomfortable as Haleema starts narrating her story and he refuses even before she ends her story. He says that radio does not air such kind of news, instead, she should look for a press outlet. This illustrates that the Indian state controls radio with a specified agenda to not air news which is against the state or which can harm to established narrative by the state.

Television is the most effective and powerful medium which state uses to achieve dominance over public through Ideological state apparatuses. Althusser (1972) throws light on the role of media in shaping of certain Ideology by the state for its citizens. Althusser (1972) in his essay Ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses from *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971) uses a term “Communication ISA”. Through this term he unveils the ideological state apparatuses by using media like Radio, Newspaper and Television. He thinks that television is also a tool of state agenda through which state manipulates people’s ideology<sup>[40]</sup>. In *The Half Mother* (2014) this aspect is present where Indian state controls television by not airing stuff against the state. As Haleema reaches a television broadcaster to get her son’s story on-air but she comes to know that they are not allowed to air such kind of news. Manager says after listening to Haleema’s painful story that it is an unconventional and dangerous stuff. It is difficult really to air. This illustrates that the Indian state uses television for ideological state apparatuses and dominates people through these apparatuses. They use television to manipulate ideology of the masses. As Althusser (1971) explains in his essay, the state uses media to get control over people. Through employing all media state imposes its writ on the people and

compels them to follow its ideology.

## 4.2. Repressive State Apparatuses

Repressive State Apparatuses are open kind of ideological state apparatuses. It is an exaggerated form of Ideological state apparatuses. Contrary to ideological state apparatuses, in this type of state apparatuses, the state uses its constitutional institutions like police, army, judiciary and prison System to suppress people. State deliberately backs her institutions to repress people who are against state ideology or follow other ideologies. Althusser (1971) throws light on Repressive State Apparatuses in his essay Ideology, Ideological State Apparatuses and Repressive State Apparatuses from his Book *Lenin and Philosophy And Other Essays* (1971). In which he describes the intentional use of institutions against a certain group of people to suppress them. These traits are present in *The Half Mother* (2014) in which Indian State uses constitutional institutions to repress Kashmiris.

### Police, Army, Judiciary and Prison System

The Police is one of the key components of the state which looks after law and order in a state. The Police works upon the motto that everyone is equal before law but in repressive state apparatuses the police discriminates between the people who are following state ideology and who are against it. Althusser (1971) puts forward the concept of Repressive state apparatuses in which he illustrates that the state intentionally suppresses people through institutions like Police, Army, Judiciary and Prison system<sup>[40]</sup>. In *The Half Mother* (2014) the Indian State is using police to suppress the people of Kashmir. Haleema approaches police station to file an FIR at Major Aman Khuswa for unlawful capturing of her son Imran. However, she comes to know that police is unable to lodge an FIR against the Army. She pleads before them to recover her child from somewhere. The constable says that their job is restricted to carrying, identifying and delivering dead bodies to their families. This illustrates that the state is using the police according to its wishes. The institutions which are supposed to provide security are causing security threats for their own people.

The army is considered to be the most important pillar of a state. Its function is to protect the borders and from any aggression from outside the territorial boundaries. The

army can also be used to repress people within the state. As Althusser (1971) discusses the role which army is asked to play in local politics. He is of the view that the army is also a tool of the state to suppress people with. Army use force to impose state's writ or ideology upon people<sup>[40]</sup>. Same is the case in *The Half Mother* (2014) where the Indian army is killing, capturing and suppressing Kashmiris. Haleema lives with her father and she has a son. The army kills her father in one of the raids on their house. Ghulam Rasol argues with Major Aman Lal Khuswa on the horrific situation created by the army. As she asserts "Three bullets pumped into abaaajaan. One in his neck. One in the heart and one in his stomach"<sup>[25]</sup>. Later Major Khuswa captures Haleema's son Imran without having any allegation against him. Haleema begs before him to leave her son. She states "you already killed my father! Please leave me someone to live with. How could you be so cruel to me?"<sup>[25]</sup>. This illustrates that the Indian army is involved inhuman activities in Kashmir and Indian state backing them.

Judiciary is a cornerstone and critical organ of a state. Judiciary's function is to redress aggrieved persons and punish the culprits. Althusser (1971) explains that in state apparatuses the judiciary gives decision according to the wishes of the state. Judiciary never goes against the state and works as a state tool. The State controls the judicial system and sets patterns for the judges to follow. In *The Half Mother* (2014) the judicial system is not providing people justice. The Indian state controls it according to its policies. As Haleema files a petition against the army and it takes months to have its first hearing. After five or six hearings the court summons an army representative. Col. Ajit Kumar appears before the court as a representative. He says nothing in the defense of the army but he apologizes on the behalf of his institution. He is not going to indulge in any debate. Army will give 2 lakh rupees to the petitioner. Judge holds that Haleema is entitled to 2lakh rupees from the army. This illustrates that Indian state uses its judiciary to suppress people. The Judiciary gives verdicts on the government's instructions rather than on the merit.

People go against state policies. As Althusser (1971) recognizes that detention centers are also a source of suppressing people. The State warns people to stay away from its affairs. If people are not getting back to state's policy than they have to face detention in these canters<sup>[40]</sup>. In *The*

*Half Mother* (2014) the Indian state has detention centers, jails and torture camps for the Kashmiris. The army captures young boys and men and locks them in these places. The army captures Haleema's son from her house and takes him to one of these places. Haleema approaches police station in search of her son and SHO tells her that "Army Often takes most of their catches to Papa 2 Interrogation center. They have two main centers in Srinagar: Papa 1 and Papa 2" (84). This illustrates that the Indian army suppresses Kashmiris through physical torture and unlawful detention.

### 4.3. Violence and Repressive State Apparatuses

Violence and state apparatuses go hand in hand. State apparatuses work through ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses. After, using these tactics the state comes up with violence and force in the end. This violence has many different names like state terrorism, state oppression, homicide and genocide but it starts from ideological differences and ends on physical assault. The State uses force and violence in order to dominate people who are going against its policies. As violence and repressive state apparatuses work in tandem so violence can be through the likes of Police, Army and special task forces. Althusser (1971) only mentions that violence is also an option for a state to utilize against suppressed people (86). These aspects are present in *The Half Mother* (2014) by Shehnaz Bashir. In which Indian state uses violence against Kashmiris who are against the state policies.

### Indian State's Violence against Men, Women and Children

Being a bread earner man has to work far from his homes and he has to face all kinds of restrictions first hand. Though Althusser (1971) has not explained violence in his essay but he connects violence with repressive state apparatuses. He thinks that violence is exaggerated form of repressive state apparatuses<sup>[40]</sup>. In *The Half Mother* (2014) Kashmiri men experience extreme violence by the Indian Army and police. After every second day, the army comes for a house search and assaults men in front of their families. As Haleema narrates, the next day, a patrolling party under the supervision of Major Aman Lal Kushwaha started house searching. "Almost all the men in neighborhood received their share of assaulting in turns"<sup>[25]</sup>. In the same

campaign, Major Aman kills Haleema's father Ghulam Rasool Joo for arguing with him. Major warns him to shut up otherwise "I'll kill you"<sup>[25]</sup>. Ghulam Rasool bravely replies that go ahead, kill me, I don't want to live with inhuman people like you"<sup>[25]</sup>. Major pumps three bullets into him and makes sure that he dies at the spot. This shows the violence of the Indian state on Kashmiri men with the help of its army. The army kills a man only for the reason of arguing.

Violence has trickle-down ramifications on genders but it affects women the most. It has direct as well as indirect consequences for women. Rape and physical torture affects them directly and struggling to find lost members affects women indirectly. In *The Half Mother* (2014) both aspects are present. As the narrator, tells "Shafiq's Daughter Rukana became first woman to be assaulted in her own house. Her parents were tied and made to see their daughter being stripped by a trooper"<sup>[25]</sup>. It reveals the Indian Army's physical brutality and direct violence on women. The protagonist of the novel Haleema suffers indirectly by the violence of the Indian State. As Major Aman Lal assaults and kills her father before her eyes. She pleads that he does not know anything. "Please don't assault him"<sup>[25]</sup>. After killing her father, Major Aman captures her son from her house. Haleema runs behind the jeep and bleeds before him to leave her son but he takes him away. She approaches every possible place like Police stations, interrogation centers, army camps, media and courts but finds absolutely nothing. This shows, indirect violence which a woman suffers from. So women endure in direct way as well as in indirect way.

When a state starts fighting against its own people then there is no discrimination of race, sex or age. State takes on everyone even children too. In that onslaught of violence, there is no leverage for anybody regardless of demographics. Althusser (1971) thinks that violence is last stage of repressive state apparatuses. In *The Half Mother* (2014) the Indian State uses force and violence even against Kashmiri children and school going young boys. The narrator narrates a story of a young boy who becomes the first young prey to army. The Narrator says "Shabeer Ahmed, the son blacksmith, was the first in Natipora to fall to army bullets"<sup>[25]</sup>. This illustrates that the Indian state kills young boys for petty things. When they come out and raise their voice against exploitation the Indian army start killing or capturing them. The army captures Haleema's son Imran from his house without cause and

she looks for him at every possible place till her death. The army takes him to various torture camps like PAPA 1 PAPA2 where they have hundreds of other young Kashmiri boys. This elaborates the intensity of violence which the Indian state uses against Kashmiris in the novel *The Half Mother* (2014)<sup>[25]</sup>.

The novel *The Half Mother* by Shehnaz Bashir vividly portrays the lived experiences of individuals under the weight of ideological and repressive state structures. While the initial findings clearly demonstrate the mechanisms through which the state exerts control—through schools, media, religious discourse, and state violence—this section extends the analysis by critically engaging with global scholarly discussions on state power, ideology, and repression.

The protagonist Haleema's struggle is emblematic of how subjects are interpellated by the state, aligning with Althusser's notion of individuals being "hailed" into ideological systems. Her journey through multiple institutions—schools, police stations, military camps, courts, and media outlets—illustrates how these apparatuses are interlinked and function not only to suppress but also to normalize repression. These institutions serve both ideological and repressive purposes, confirming Althusser's argument that the state maintains dominance through both subtle and overt forms of control.

Furthermore, Haleema's marginalization and eventual death underscore the gendered dimensions of repression, inviting comparisons with global cases where women are both symbolic and literal targets of state violence. This aligns with Inglehart and Norris's (2023) findings that ideological apparatuses are increasingly gendered and cultural in nature, reinforcing dominant power structures while appearing apolitical or moral.

A deeper look at the media's role in the novel, particularly its refusal to report human rights violations, echoes concerns raised by Huang and Boranbay-Akan, who analyze how states in Asia use digital and traditional media to construct official narratives and suppress dissent<sup>[40]</sup>. Similarly, the manipulation of the school curriculum to erase Kashmiri history reflects what Tufekci (2018) describes as the "algorithmic control of information," albeit in a pre-digital, pedagogical context.

Moreover, the repressive arm of the state—police, army, and judiciary—is not simply enforcing law but actively participating in the erasure of dissent. The arbitrary arrests, tor-

ture, and dismissive court hearings exemplify what Khalili calls the militarization of everyday life in postcolonial states, where military power transcends its formal role to become a tool of ideological enforcement<sup>[35]</sup>.

This analysis contributes to broader understandings of how fictional narratives, especially those rooted in conflict zones, serve as counter-histories. Bashir's novel does more than tell a story; it resists state narratives, gives voice to silenced individuals, and exposes the transnational nature of state repression. By situating *The Half Mother* within the framework of both local experience and global scholarship, this research underscores the novel's capacity to function as a site of resistance and a pedagogical tool for critical engagement in EFL and political-literary studies.

## 5. Conclusions

This research has explored Shehnaz Bashir's *The Half Mother* (2014) and analyzed Ideological State Apparatuses, Repressive State Apparatuses and Violence<sup>[25]</sup>. The research draws upon Althusser's (1971) theory of Ideological State Apparatuses and Repressive State Apparatuses to assess the impact of state on institutions i.e., Schools, Families, Churches, Politicians and Media<sup>[5]</sup>. Moreover, this study has uncovered that state uses these institutions to build an opinion of her interest in the perspective of Shehnaz Bashir's *The Half Mother* (2014) in the light of Althusser's (1971) essay Ideological State Apparatuses and Repressive State Apparatuses. The analysis infers that it is thought that media, schools, religious institutions, and families are not directly influenced by the state, whereas; present research puts forward that state is controlling such institutions to establish an opinion. Furthermore, from the perspective of the characters of *The Half Mother* (2014) in the light of Althusser's (1971) theory of Repressive State Apparatuses, this research reveals that repressive state apparatuses are the tools which state uses to repress her people with the help of executive institutions like army, police and judiciary<sup>[5]</sup>. Though, Althusser (1971) has not much talked about Violence in his mentioned essay but this research has unveiled the impact of the violence of Indian State on the characters of *The Half Mother* (2014)<sup>[5]</sup>.

This research has explored how the Indian state has used ideological state apparatuses to infuse their ideology

into the minds of Kashmiris. Moreover, it has discussed the deliberate usage of School ISA, Communicational ISA, Religious ISA and Political ISA by the state to preach certain ideology. The research has dug out these elements in the novel, in which the state has used School, Media, Religion and Politicians to manipulate masses' opinion and belief. The research has found that School's syllabus has diverted youngsters' minds to other directions where the state wanted them to be. They are being taught histories of other nations and civilizations instead of their own history. The state does not want them to learn about themselves. Furthermore, this research has exposed the role of media in a state, the state has control over electronic as well as on print media. Radio, television and press outlet are not allowed to break any of the news against the state or against its institution. This research has examined all the tools of ideological state apparatuses which a state can use on its citizens.

This research has highlighted the aspects of repressive state apparatuses which any state can use against its own people. In repressive state apparatuses the state has used its executive institutions like army, police, prison cells and Judiciary to suppress people. This study has presented these aspects in the novel where the army has killed people without any reason. Moreover, they raped women in front of their parents and detains young boys without any warrant. Furthermore, the police has no authority to lodge any FIR against the rapes, killings and kidnappings. Additionally, this research has exposed the prison system within a state where mostly youngsters have been taken to and no one is allowed to visit such places. Moreover, this research has unveiled the weaknesses of judicial system where neither any lawyer nor any judge is willing to take up the case against the state. This research has covered all aspects of repressive state apparatuses in this study.

The research has highlighted that the apparatuses have their end on violence. It is the exaggerated form of repressive state apparatuses. The research has explained that the violence is the last options which the state uses. Moreover, this research has elaborated violence which a state uses on it people in order to govern them according to its likings. Furthermore, this research has explained that the state has no discrimination of man, woman or a child she uses force against everyone who goes against the state's ideology. The

research has explained violence of the army against men of certain group of people. The army has assaulted men in search operations. Furthermore, the present research has presented that the army has raped and assaulted women in front of their parents. Additionally, the research has unveiled plight of the children in apparatuses and violence. The army captures them from anywhere and takes them to prison cells, where they torcher them to death. This research has covered all aspects of violence in this study.

Conclusively this research has enhanced the scope from oppression to violence. After adopting the concept of ideological state then institutes; media family are used to inculcate the same thing in the masses. This kind of adoption of the idea then does not allow the other institutes to work freely. As in the case of Haleema all institutes are helpless and cannot do anything which is against that notion of ideology which state has adopted for it. This research is valuable addition in the existing knowledge because the violence of which Althusser has given a slight hint this research has explored it in detail. This research has also opened the doors of further research. Future scholarship can study that imposition of one's thinking on the others in a way that forcing other to think the as the first person is thinking is also a form of oppression. Moreover this research has also given an idea to future scholars to study that ideological state can put hindrance in the free way of working which are otherwise supposed to work freely without any external pressure. The undertaking study will be helpful for EFL learners and teachers as teaching English has always been faced with different challenges and opportunities in different ways<sup>[41]</sup>.

Although this research is based solely on a published literary text and involves no human subjects or personal data, it adheres to academic standards of ethical scholarship. All quotations from *The Half Mother* (2014) are properly cited with corresponding page numbers. The excerpts used fall under fair use for critical and educational purposes, and no extensive passages are reproduced in full. Should the scope of future studies extend to include empirical data collection—such as classroom engagement or reader-response activities involving human participants—prior ethical approval and informed consent procedures will be strictly observed in accordance with institutional review guidelines.

## Author Contributions

S.A. conceptualized and drafted the original manuscript, conducted the literary analysis of *The Half Mother*, and integrated the pedagogical perspectives of EFL learners. T.K. supervised the research, refined the theoretical framework using Althusser's concepts, contributed to the critical discussion, and reviewed and edited the final manuscript for scholarly rigor and coherence. W.W., M.S. proofread and edited the manuscript. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript and contributed significantly to the intellectual content of the study.

## Funding

This work received no external funding.

## Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

## Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

## Data Availability Statement

Not applicable.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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