



## Repressive State Apparatus in *Minkuhk'wah Zajfilləjo Maf's'o*: An Ethiopian Political Novel

Tsegaberhan Wodaj

Arba Minch University

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### Abstract

*This study explores the social media habits of university students, focusing on how youths engage with various platforms. It applies Social Network Theory and the Use and Acceptance of Technology Theory to examine the participants' uses and gratifications of social media. Data was collected from students at three public universities through surveys and in-depth interviews. The analysis employed descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The findings reveal that Ethiopian youths are actively engaging with various social media platforms, including Telegram, Facebook, YouTube, Messenger, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Viber. These platforms are primarily used for viewing others' posts, chatting with friends, discussing political issues freely, developing talents, and staying updated on current events. The study indicates that social media use among Ethiopian youths has reached a point of no return. A striking 98% of participants reported using more than one social media platform, with nearly 72% of them managing accounts on more than three platforms. Social media also offers numerous opportunities for youth, such as fostering friendships, connecting across national borders, developing personal talents, and generating stable incomes. However, challenges such as misbehaviors and misuse of platforms also persist. Based on these findings, the study suggests several recommendations: Users should better manage their time and social media interactions, group and page administrators should be more responsible for content management, and the government should intervene to curb misuse and abusive behaviors. Given that a lack of media literacy and analytical skills was identified as a challenge, the Ministry of Education should integrate media literacy into the education curriculum at various levels. In the meantime, Ethiopian universities should offer media literacy training to students.*

**Keywords:** Ethiopia, Social Media, University Students, Youths, Youths' Engagement

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this study, Tesfay Yohalashet's Tigrigna political novel (*Minkuhk<sup>wah</sup> Zajfillajo Maſs'o*, 1984) (translated as "an ever-banged door") is extensively examined for its portrayal and reflection of authoritarian ideologies. The novel, which addressed the pervasive political corruption of the administrations during that time, was published in Ethiopia amidst a period of intense and deadly political turmoil. It also delves into the sociopolitical issues, characterized by class conflict and civil war, that persisted both before and after the 1974 revolution. The main focus of the story is on the events leading up to the popular uprising in 1974 against the Ethiopian monarchy's semi-feudal and semi-capitalist system, as well as the subsequent rule of the military junta post-revolution. With its abundance of well-documented historical facts, which can be found in other non-fiction works, the novel serves as a historical document with a touch of fiction.

The political novel, *Minkuhk<sup>wah</sup> Zajfillajo Maſs'o*, examines issues of oppression, power, and resistance in a repressive state. It offers a critical perspective on authoritarian administration and its suppression methods by drawing on Althusser's idea of the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA), which refers to organizations such as the military, police, and court that uphold state rule by violence. The work is a fictional yet thoughtful critique on power dynamics in the actual world, set against the backdrop of Ethiopia's complicated sociopolitical past.

The novel explores the traits of dictatorship, corruption, indifference, and inflexible political beliefs within leadership. It tells the story of a struggling family while highlighting how a revolution is inevitable. The regime's attempts to suppress opposition serve as a clear example of its heartless and inhumane nature. Ethiopian students are portrayed as heavily involved in the anti-government revolution and as advocates for the underprivileged. Literary works, whether overtly or covertly, depict ideology in alignment with societal experiences and historical reality. (Eagleton, 1976, p.19) offered a compelling explanation of ideology to support this assertion.

*Ideology in any society has a certain structural coherence. Because it possesses such relative coherence, it can be the object of scientific analysis, and since literary texts belong to ideology; they too can be the object of analysis.*

The main focus of this essay is on the concept of ideology, which refers to a set of beliefs that influence an individual's goals, values, and behaviors. This indicates that ideology, encompassing a wide range of ideas, shapes society's overall perspective. According to (Tarekegn, 1982, p.10), understanding ideology is essential for grasping political and economic processes, behaviors, and institutions. Additionally, (Ngara, 1985, p.21) offers a definition of ideology within a literary context.

*Literature enables us to see the nature of ideology of an epoch because it is socially conditioned. In other words, literary works are basically reflections of particular social and political conditions and relationships.*

Without a commitment, message, or protest, it is difficult to write anything in Africa (Achebe, 1965). This suggests that every literary work discusses a specific social worldview. (Tarekegn, 1982), who examines the nature of ideology and challenges which ideological concepts and arguments belong in a novel, supports this point. This article evaluates the target novel's ideological reflections and the important functions they play.

The repressive state apparatus (RSA) is used to stifle opposition and uphold hegemony in the society portrayed in the novel. But nothing is known about the precise repression tactics used in the text, their ideological underpinnings, and how they affected resistance movements. This study poses the following questions: What does the novel's depiction of the RSA operations and outcomes teach us about resistance in authoritarian environments?

Thus, the purpose of this study is to familiarize future scholars with the concept of repressive state ideology and how it is portrayed socio-politically in novels. This allows scholars to explore how repressive state ideology functions as a powerful backdrop in literature. Additionally, it seeks to provide readers and scholars with a deeper understanding of the socio-political ideologies present in Ethiopian literature in general, and in Tigrigna novels in particular, as well as how these works portray such ideologies. The primary goal of this study is to evaluate the nature of oppressive state machinery by examining the ideological ideas presented in the chosen novel in light of its sociopolitical allusions. The specific goals of this paper are to identify the dominant and

contradictory repressive state apparatus within the novel, and to highlight the significance of current ideologies in relation to the socio-political realities portrayed in it.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized both qualitative descriptive approaches and textual analysis. Althusser's theoretical framework was employed to examine the subject, beginning with the collection of relevant theoretical literature. To organize information for the literature review, a critical reading and analysis of sources gathered from online and various libraries were conducted. The review of pertinent literature helped consolidate the descriptive and critical surveys of the chosen work. The primary data for this study came from the book under examination, while secondary data was collected from related literature and critical works on ideology. Critical reading techniques were applied to analyze texts relevant to the study. Through close reading, the text was scrutinized to gain insights into its main ideas and to identify the ideological elements present in the specific text. Additionally, this approach aims to reduce subjectivity and validate objectivity in the research.

## **3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

To evaluate their progress and draw comparisons between historical and contemporary literary elements, literary academics in civilized nations have made an effort to record and analyze their creative works. Unfortunately, many intriguing Tigrigna literary works have not received enough attention or investigation in the literary study of Tigrigna. Most of the research has not been conducted because, until recently, there was no institutional department dedicated to the study of Tigrigna language and literature.

However, with growing interest in Tigrigna, several scholars are now eager to explore its literary compositions. Students are especially encouraged to study Ethiopian languages at Addis Ababa University's Institute of Language Studies. Some students at Addis Ababa University's Foreign Language Department have focused their M.A. theses and PhD dissertations on various aspects of Tigrigna literary works. For example, (Fikadu, 2010) prepared his M.A. thesis on a historical novel in relation to oral literature to investigate the function of integrated oral literature in Tigrigna historical novels.

In addition, (Gebreyesus, 2008) examined seven Tigrigna novels for his doctoral dissertation. The aim of the study was to reveal the central structure of ideas and values by analyzing, interpreting, and describing the selected novels within the framework of feminist analysis of the historical context in which they were written. However, in terms of M.A. or PhD theses at Addis Ababa University, students have not yet explored the socio-political ideology of Tigrigna.

By focusing on direct coercion, the theory of RSAs (Althusser, 1969) sets them apart from Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). This is extended to postcolonial contexts by scholars such as (Fanon, 1961; Mbembe, 2001), who emphasize militaristic repression. Ethiopian literature criticizes governmental violence in works like *The Thirteenth Sun* (Dagnachew Werku), but *Minkuḥkʷaḥ Zəjjilləjo Maʿs'o* presents a distinctive fusion of local historicity and metaphor. There are gaps in our knowledge of this novel's critique of authoritarianism since so few researchers have used Althusserian frameworks to analyze it. This study fills that gap by tying political theory and literary analysis together.

### **Ideology, Art and Community**

According to (Sutton et al., 1956), ideology is defined as "a patterned reaction to the patterned strains of a social value." This perspective offers a therapeutic explanation of how ideologies function, suggesting that they provide symbolic outlets for emotional or other disturbances caused by social or political unrest. (Richard and Thomas, 1977, p.181) mention that "there is no necessary reason why ideological catharsis should not be compatible with the reinvigorating of the canons of a traditional aesthetic, though Clifford Geertz focuses on moving away from tradition," and thus producing literature that caters to the perceived needs or tastes of a specific audience. (Ogung, 1974, p.44–5) quotes Chinua Achebe's perspective in her essay "Politics and the African Writer."

*Here, I think my aims and the deepest aspirations of my society meet. For no thinking African can escape the pain of the wound in our soul.... The writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. In fact, he should march right in front.*

On the other hand, the word "ideology" can refer to a broad range of phenomena. This implies that it can only generate minor writing that is marked by emotional language, simplicity, bias, and adaptability to intentional prejudice.

### **Ideology in African Literature**

Ideology and literature have a deep and dynamic relationship that transcends historical boundaries. These two concepts are closely intertwined and interconnected. Literature not only promotes ideology but also engages with the internal ideological conflicts that reshape and redefine society during times of reform. It serves as a medium for expressing ideology and is sometimes subtly used to advance it. Conversely, ideology influences literature and leaves a lasting impact on its underlying themes and nuances. African literary works explore a variety of subjects and reflect different ideological perspectives at various moments in history. According to (Ngara,1986, p.34), writing is a reflection of the collective political consciousness of Africans at any given time, rather than merely an individual endeavor.

*The writing of committed novelists, political ideologists and talented academics were an expression, in ideological terms, of a new social psychology, a new level of political and ideological awareness after an era of acceptance of and submission to colonial domination, cultural imperialism and capitalist exploitation.*

Similar to this, several African politicians and writers have joined forces to combat inequality and hegemony. This aligns with the principles of socio-political struggles and the broader trend. Despite varying opinions among Africans on national issues, they typically unite to overcome a common enemy. In other words, democratic forces, regardless of differing class interests, often come together during times of social unrest to confront a mutual adversary in the national democratic revolution.

(Ngara,1986, p.34) observes that "when the common enemy is defeated, the differences between groups and classes will resurface, giving the struggle a new direction" to emphasize how African writers express their ideology. African authors shift their focus to domestic issues, particularly those related to the sociopolitical life of the people, and illustrate their plans to overthrow oppressive rulers. Some scholars discuss how the third world, especially Africa, has been affected

by Western and capitalist nations. (Calder,1981, p. 4) assesses this ideological significance in the following manner.

*Economics as an ideology is not a science and development (as aid giving countries) for an integral part of an ideology of exploitation and alienation. This ideology, unchecked, will destroy the world much like it has already destroyed the comfort of most of its habitants. The artist, if he merely wishes to survive, physically into middle age cannot exempt himself from political action. He must commit himself to the destruction of a system which destroys humanity.*

Calder emphasizes the idea that a literary work can convey an ideology that should be viewed with suspicion. As long as the artist is committed to what he believes is important, he can use an ideology to protest or advocate. (Soyinka,1976, p.75) illustrated a variety of concerns and anxieties that relate to our fears. All of this is evident from the essay's opening sentences.

*Asked recently whether or not I accepted the necessity of a literary ideology, I found myself predictably examining the problem from the inside, that is, from within the consciousness of the artist in the process of creating. It was a familiar question, one which always appears in multiple guises. My response was a social, vision, yes, but not a literary ideology.*

Repressive ideological apparatuses" differ from "ideological state apparatuses," which, according to (Althusser, 1990, p.55), "function by ideology." (Althusser, 1975) characterizes ideologies as collections of doctrines that claim to provide belief systems comprehensive enough for the entire populace to exist solely on them. The traditional definition of ideology, which contrasts the true economic and class relations with "false consciousness" and "the system of ideas and representations dominating the mind of individuals or social groups," has been redefined by Althusser. Since ideology reflects social thought, understanding the relationship between socio-cultural and ideological concepts is crucial for the analytical approach of this study. I will now delve into the workings of ideologies in modern societies.

(Therborn, 1980, p.77) argues that "Ideologies function neither as elaborate texts presenting the thoughts of great minds, which other minds then examine, memorize, accept, or reject like visitors passing exhibits in a museum, nor as bodies of thought that we possess and invest in our actions."

This implies that understanding ideologies as social processes rather than physical objects is essential to grasp how they operate in a specific society. (Barth and Bendix 1976, p.162) asserts that "To deny the autonomy of mind and the existence of universal truths is the principle of ideological interpretations, cultural, and intellectual life." Barth's statement resonates with the reader, suggesting that "universal truths" and "autonomy of mind" are predominant perspectives today. (Goodheart1997, p.1) further complicates the ideas of autonomy and universality by adding "reason, transcendence, and aesthetic value" to the mix.

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

(Althusser,1998) states in his article that the institutions and organizations within a society that primarily use repressive and physical tactics to regulate the relations of production are known as the repressive state apparatus (RSAs). He adds that these institutions are necessary to preserve the reproduction of the relations of production in conjunction with the Ideological State Apparatus. Essentially, this means that the labor force is kept working for the state and the bourgeois society. When force is not an option, the authoritarian ideological apparatus uses ideas to achieve its goals. In this context, the police, the courts, the prison, and the administrator are highlighted as the four main points in the novel under investigation.

#### 5. POLICE

In order to enforce its oppressive ideology, the Dergue administration manipulates organizations such as the police, security, and civil service. All members of society are subject to the total authority of these institutions. Reda-e's girlfriend, Tiebe, explains what happened in Addis Ababa as follows:

ዘተፈላለዩ አካላት ተቋቋመን ናይ ምእሳር፣ ምምርጫን ምቕታልን መሰል ተውሃበን፡፡(p.124) አብ እስርቤት ዘተፈላለዩ መግረፍትን በትርን ይቕበለካ (P:129)

*The Junta established several organizations with the authority to arrest, investigate, and execute individuals suspected of involvement in anti-government activities (P,124). Those who were detained were subjected to torture and beatings. (P,129).*



The creation of the Kebele's Urban Dwellers Association was seen as an effective ideological tool for the military junta to control every member of households living in the nation's cities when necessary. The main goal behind establishing these associations was to identify and capture anyone considered a threat to the dictatorship. Security forces gather information from transient residents who are hired temporarily to help with their immediate financial needs. Lacking political awareness and education, these individuals are easily manipulated and dutifully carry out government assignments. Tesfay seeks to illustrate their significant role in the dictatorship through the following methods:

ነቲ ናይ ደርጊ ዕላማታት ዘፈፀመ ካብ ቀበሌ ማሕበራት ጀሚሮም ክሳብ ፖሊሳትን ሌባታትን ዕዋሉን እዮም ነይሮም (P,116):: እቶም ገረፍቲ ዕላምኦም ነቲ ናይ ደርጊ ፖሊሲ ደንፎም ዘይኮኑስ ገንዘብ ክረኽቡ እዮም (P, 130) :: ፀሃየ ፖለቲካዊ ብስለት ዘይብሉ መሳረሒ ድርጊ እዩ ነይሩ:: (P. 149)

*Both the police and the kebele organization were corrupt; their institution had a history of instability. They joined the military police solely to satisfy their own desires (P,116). The ruthless torturers did not believe in the Dergue's program; instead, they were motivated by financial gain (P, 130). Tsehaye's obedience to the ruling authority left him ignorant and immature in his thinking. (P,149)*

The excerpt illustrates how Louis Althusser's theory of RSA operates, in which state institutions such as the police use coercion rather than ideological persuasion to enforce domination. These institutions' corruption and instability show how they use violence and terror to keep power instead of a respectable authority. The torturers' financial incentives and lack of ideological support for the Dergue highlight how repression is frequently used for selfish ends rather than ideological devotion. Furthermore, the degrading result of such repression is reflected in Tsehaye's mindless obedience, which reinforces the state's dominance by making people politically immature and incapable of critical thought. The passage, therefore, illustrates how RSAs maintain authoritarian control by using economic incentives, brute force, and the repression of free thought.

Tsehaye was a low-ranking official of that times ruling party who also came from a corrupted governmental system where propaganda and continuous monitoring were norms of the regime.

The security service's relentless and brutally cruel tactics were intentionally exposed to the public to instill fear and horror in the hearts and minds of the people. The 'Red Terror' symbolized the political disaster of a generation of Ethiopians who worked tirelessly, starting as students, to build a prosperous and modern Ethiopia. In his story, Tesfay demonstrates how investigators and torturers had the power and authority to kill or imprison anyone they deemed deserving of punishment. Despite Tsehay being certain that Tiblets was not involved in any anti-revolutionary activities, he punished her out of a pure lust for power, even though she had committed no wrongdoing. Let's delve into Tesfay's account of this incident:

ፀሃዖ ድሕረ ንረዳኢ ሞቕታሉ ተመሊሱ ንትብላፅ ሊዝዋ ኸደ (P,167):: ብዘይ ድሌታ ይጋሰሳ (P,169)

*After killing her brother, Reda-e, Tsehay, the infamous cadre, returned to Silas's home and took custody of her daughter, Tiebe (P, 167). He then violently raped her (P, 169).*

A major character in the novel, Silas, is the mother of a political victim who was subjected to severe treatment without tangible evidence of a political allegation by Tsehay and other security personnel. The 'Red Terror' in Ethiopia claimed the lives of hundreds of intelligent people. Atrocities against various segments of society were carried out during the Red Terror campaign. Suspects were detained, executed, tortured, and buried in unmarked graves. What happened to Reda-e in this book serves as an example of the brutal tactics of the military and the totalitarian regime Reda-e, suspected of supporting or being affiliated with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), suffered unimaginably. As he witnessed the horrific crimes of the dictatorship, particularly those committed by Tsehay, Reda-e realized he was in grave danger. Tsehay then killed Reda-e and left his body on the pavement to terrorize pedestrians after subjecting him to extreme torture. Silas, Reda-e's mother, had always worried that he would die and leave her without anyone to support or care for her basic needs. Following her son's death, she began to contemplate her bleak future, finding no solace in her circumstances.

Tsehay, a vicious cadre, represents the police, who act as agents of ideological repression, using terror rather than justice to uphold the state's authority. His acts of rape, kidnapping, and murder are not only individual transgressions but also systemic instruments of control that show how

RSAs function without moral or legal restraints to engender fear and obedience. Sexual assault serves as an example of how ideological organizations such as the Dergue dictatorship degrade both victims and enforcers, turning policing from a public service to a violent force. His position as a state actor emphasizes how unchecked violence, rather than consent, is used to preserve ideological hegemony, strengthening the regime's hold on power by stifling opposition and decency. In this situation, the police serve as tools of terror rather than defenders, using extreme violence to enforce conformity.

## The Court

*Minkuhk'ah Zajfilləjo Maſs'o* (an ever-banged door) portrays the court as little more than a surface-level establishment. It is not an independent body of justice with the authority to make decisions. Thus, the institution serves as a vehicle for the ideology of the ruling class to sustain its power and political dominance. The author characterizes his notion in this issue as being in the narrator's voice. In a short amount of time, many of Ethiopia's irreplaceably gifted youngsters were slain without following the proper legal procedures during the "Free Revolutionary Measure" and "Red Terror." Tiebe informs Reda-e, during their current political conversation, of what was going on in Addis Ababa:

ስሩዕ ፍርዲ ዝበሃል ነገር ኣይነበረን። ሓደ ነገር እንተጋጥሞም እንተሎ ኣብ ቀረባ  
ንዝረኽቡዎም እሱራት ኣውጃኦም ይርሸንዎም ወይ ካብቲ መስሪዕ ስቕ ኢሎም  
ብኣጋጣሚ መመሪያም ይርሸኑ። ጉቦ ዝሃበ ኣውጃኦም ይፈትሖ (P, 137):

*Formal due process of law did not exist. In emergencies, prisoners were chosen randomly from their ranks or some of the closest inmates were executed. A prisoner would only be released once he paid a bribe. (P,137)*

These actions illustrate that the authoritarian Dergue dictatorship operates without the rule of law. This illustrates how the state apparatus monopolizes power in all areas to achieve its political objectives. The so-called institutional courts act as instruments of oppression against the oppressed, serving the interests of the ruling class. Silas could not keep her dispersed family safe from the acts of violence that were being carried out. This dominance structure is likewise

maintained by other establishments. For example, thousands of prisoners now endure torture in the prison. Tsehaye is pressuring inmates and captives like Read-e to reveal the political secrets of the opposition by threatening them with dire consequences.

In order to impose authority through brutality, corruption, and arbitrariness, judicial and law enforcement agencies act outside the bounds of the law. The state's dependence on terror rather than legitimacy is demonstrated by the lack of due process, as inmates are subjected to extortion or random executions, which furthers the atmosphere of fear. Investigators serve as state power enforcers rather than unbiased arbiters of justice, use bribes to selectively punish and reward, thus undermining any idea of justice. This institutionalized misuse demonstrates how RSAs maintain authoritarian governance, not by influencing people with their beliefs, but by using force, uncertainty, and the weakening of legal protections to guarantee complete obedience from the people.

### **The Prison and Administration**

The jail is a facility where the state exerts its power over the population and society. Opponents of the ruling class are cruelly imprisoned and subjected to torture in order to extract information from them. For example, the narrator describes Read-e as being severely tortured while detained in a prison camp for months for refusing to talk. Tsehaye and his allies torture their victims with inhumanity. After a few days of being detained, Reda-e is implicated by Atakility, who exposes Reda-e's membership in anti-government movements and betrays the TPLF membership. As a result, Reda-e is brutally killed and put on display in the streets as a warning to others about the consequences of engaging in anti-government activity. People who are perceived as revolutionaries or potential threats to the state are still being held captive by the regime. Countless individuals, including young people, the elderly, and women, are apprehended and detained.

For individuals classified as anti-government operatives, life is made even more difficult by the overcrowding in prison cells. Parents are seen regretting their decision to have children during such a terrible period, especially Silas. The final category is bureaucracy, which describes how the ideology of the ruling class is used to maintain power and oppression, as well as the inner workings of governmental administration. The state's machinery, the bureaucracy, hinders regular operations

in various departments and sectors. Throughout his book, Tesfay delves into the complexities of bureaucracy in several sections.

The administration serves as a reflection of a certain oppressive reality. Higher officials assume culpability and are distrustful of everyone. People with cases going to the office are violating their right to personal freedom. This suggests that government employees are angry because they are aware that they are not upholding the law or the truth. Gebremariam, the record officer of the Embaserawat administration, is regarded as an exceptional illustration of this kind of instrumental of the regime.

ንባሻይ በዓል ነገር ማለት ፀገም ረኺቡ ብቼልጡፍ ክፍተሓሉ ዘለዎ ሰብ ማለት ኮይኑ  
ኣይረድኦምን። ስልጣን ዝሓዘ ዘበለ ክንዲ ዝኾኣለ ክግህፃ ዘለዎ ቀረመት እዮም ዝወለድዎ  
(P:6):: ኩሎም እቶም ብልዕሊኦም ዘለው ስበስልጣን እውን ክምናይ ባሻይ እዩ  
ኣረኣእዮኦም (P,7)::

*Gebremariam is an incompetent autocrat who fails to comprehend the personal issues of the society members who come to his office seeking public services. He abuses his governmental power and exploits community members who are unable to defend themselves (P,6). Every political appointee of the regime treats society just as unfairly as Gebremariam does. (P,7)*

The example mentioned above illustrates how the monarchy's government abuses its authority for personal gain. Similarly, officials exploited the administrative structure during the Dergue administration that followed the revolution to further their own interests. Tsehay's actions in his office, where he pressures Tiblets to come in for self-criticism, are particularly egregious. He misused his position of authority to satisfy his sexual desires by using the bed in his office to enact his fantasies. Furthermore, in exchange for her daughter's release, Tsehay ordered one of his mother's acquaintances to offer her body for his sexual pleasure.

Numerous viewpoints from the younger generation, who have complaints against the state, are present in both the ideological and repressive state apparatuses under investigation. Tekie, Tiebe, and Reda-e all have strong political opinions. Reda-e and his brother feel that armed conflict is the

only way to get even with the government for the cruelty they have endured. Despite being a victim of the government, Tiblets has an unbiased opinion regarding the underground movement. Due to shared experiences, the author identifies with these individuals and takes up their points of view. This data demonstrates the cause-and-effect link between the state and its opponents by pointing to a fundamental conflict between modern ideologies and the dominant ideology.

According to the novel, authority is depicted as a sacred and unchangeable force that brooks no dissent from its citizens. The Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) and Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) work together to maintain political subordination and uphold authoritative dominance. The author criticizes the administrators' tactics in running political institutions, highlighting how bribery, intimidation, and violence are employed by government officials to gain compliance. Throughout the narrative, the general intolerance towards political opponents serves as a demonstration of the erosion of democratic norms.

## 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Finally, various oppressive ideological categories have been explored in relation to the sociopolitical issues present in the novel *minkuhk'ah zäjfilläjo ma's'o*. Three main branches of prevailing ideological formations have been utilized to analyze the book, helping to identify the dominant ideology and socio-political themes of the 1974 pre-revolution and the Dergue Regime. It is evident that the ruling class and its agents wield significant power over their constituents to maintain their authority. The military Junta's agents seek to garner support through intimidation, violence, and bribery in order to widen the gap between the ruling class and the governed. In an effort to seek revenge and demonstrate his political power, Tsehayé turns to violent actions.

To further its political objectives, the state resorts to the Repressive State Apparatus when the Ideological State Apparatus fails to deliver the desired results. This is evident throughout the book, as the police assist the Dergue Regime in maintaining its power. The fact that the police are a group of untrained, unstable social beings suggests that the state manipulates them as tools to advance its agenda.

Similarly, the dictatorship's court exists solely to serve the state's goals. Fair trials are denied to political prisoners because the judicial system is manipulated to align with the regime's objectives.

By carrying out their duties obediently, the security service and judiciary demonstrate their devotion and allegiance to the regime.

This study demonstrates how the Dergue dictatorship was able to hold onto power through a repressive state apparatus (RSA), in which organizations such as the military police, kebele, and police used arbitrary control, violence, and corruption in place of legal or ideological legitimacy. The regime's use of terror to quell opposition is evident in the lack of due process and the arbitrary killing of inmates. Torture, extortion, and sexual abuse were committed by law enforcement officials motivated more by personal greed than by political belief. Tsehaye's vicious rape of Tiebe serves as an example of how state power was used as a tool to degrade both victims and offenders.

Gebremariam and other inept and violent authorities also draw attention to the systematic exploitation of weaker citizens, which feeds the oppressive cycle. The institutions of the government operated as tools of terror rather than as public services, guaranteeing rule by violence rather than by administration. In the end, the excerpt reveals how authoritarian governments maintain their hold on power by undermining the rule of law, encouraging corruption, and reducing government operations to outright repression.

Generally speaking, the book under investigation in this research combines historical and political topics. It is an illustration of a novel that is influenced by socio-political beliefs on multiple levels. The author's bias in favor of resistance against the governments of that era is evident throughout the entire book. Tesfay focuses on the negative aspects of Mengistu's and Haileselassie's administrations, rather than any positive aspects, in his assessment. This paper has shown that the novel can also be explored in terms of socioeconomic reality and its relationships to capitalist and socialist ideals. The investigator also suggests that other academics could examine the target novel from feminist and stylistic perspectives.

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