



The Critic of Sovereign State within *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* Novel by Ahmad Tohari

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ABSTRACT: *This research of Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air aimed to investigated the position of state regarding Kafilah Darul Islam/Indonesian Islamic State (DI/TII) a group that had been reducing towards sovereign power. Darul Islam appearance in that era was officially not avowed by the government, so they were losing their civil rights. Critic of Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air Novel revealed that problem using Agamben political ideology in the relation between society and state. The research found that sovereign politic which used the state of exception to produce bare life under DI/TII group. Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air gave a respond to the characters of the story. From the state of exception, they keep their effort with fellows to be able to defend and raise their ideal life. The role of state should give the whole-secure and fair upon the DI/TII member, but with their sovereign; DI/TII troop was homo sacred by the government becomes their official part.*

Keywords: Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power, Bare Life, State of Exception

1. Introduction

Regarding to the State of Sovereignty which is reproduced by the state as an absolute thing that obeyed by the civil. The society have to comply towards sovereignty and power, and it is final for controlling inhabitant. Besides, the power constantly not recognize where it come up but there is it. Meanwhile, the abstract of power have controlled inhabitant through discourses and rules and the inhabitant do not recognize those practical Carl Schmitt on (Agamben, 1998a)

In addition, the power is also his decision of state of exception that commonly understand as a doctrine, concept or law within the power. In doing so, it is becoming the border for inhabitant in their life, action and fade it away. Thus, sovereignty has a goal from the state to undertake or defend their power involved by apparatus and spread discourse of knowledge, law and institution. They have to be ready anytime to resist and obey the inhabitant (Agamben, 2009). Even when the regime has changed many times, the existing of sovereign power keep it constantly. By then, this research envisage the Agamben' philosophical politic operate while the state runs.

In this case, the researcher took *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* by Ahmad Tohari as a representative of the relationship between state and citizen. *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* tried to dismantle how the citizen keep their effort to preserve their faith of their state



under the name Hizbullah Flag. Starting from Amid and Kiram who got exclamation from Kiai Ngumar as their martial art master to fulfil the demand of Hadratus Syech, where it also clash in Surabaya, East Java. Kiai Ngumar charge both of them for leaving immediately, they set out in Purwokerto and intercepted by Netherland troop coming out from Tegal.

In 1949, Netherland officially recognized the Republic Sovereign dan Hizbullah, and nothing beat after. But there was a problem even their clash was over, where Hizbullah troop was forced to disband or united apart as a Republic troop. Amir was glad to hear that news, by means the power of Netherland has gone. The palimpsest at least has one requirement to unite as Republic, and the provision was council school certificate but Jun and Kiram not, otherwise Kang Suyud did not impressed as the reward and he also too old.

Amir, Kiram, Jun and Others except Kang Suyud have had accepted to unite as one with Republic troop and the way back to Purworejo. In this way, there was fisticuffs and shooting between Hizbullah force and PKI that was camouflage under Republic Flag. It caused tension, then they cancelled to join with Republic troops and turned on DI/TII called by AOI (Angkatan Oemat Islam). Kiai Ngumar and Kang Suyud made a sentimental argument, they questioned that there was a State within the State—Negara Islam Indonesia. Kiai Ngumar stand out to take sides became the part of Indonesian Republic officially.

Besides, Kartosuwiryo revolted against the Republic troops in 1949 as the leader of Darul Islam—the Islam revolution that is formed for peace and unity (Dijk, 1981, p 14). In the era of 1962, the other warrior that where located in Slamet mountain reported that Sekarmaji Maeijan Kartosuwiryo as the supreme of Darul Islam/Indonesian Islamic Soldier has been arrested by Republic troops and it has to dissolve sooner, then they could get national amnesty. Indeed, they went out from the hiding place and admit to surrender. Whilst, there were hesitant from the religious figures even the Darul Islam got untrue.

It was not happened only in Java Island, but the Guerrilla renamed them as Indonesian Islamic Soldier which expand until South Sulawesi. The Guerrilla troops were on firing along Luwu area, they made chaos, broke the Mandar bridge, cut off telecommunication network, burned schools, church and houses within May until June 1952. The soldier at that time did not know that the tumult was commanded by Kahar. Previously, Kahar made a big plan to combat a half of opponent area, but he did not take over Luwu area, where that place was his homeland and the whole of regencies was under his control (Harvey, 1975). In 1953, Kahar Muzzakar claimed and proclaimed, South Sulawesi became the Indonesian Islamic State lead by Kartosuwiryo (Bakar, 2018).

While Republic troops combated invisible movement revealed to the Communist, the soldier needed a hand toward Hizbullah, they looked for hiding place in Cigobang forest. Afterwards, in the battle field Amir was passed, but Jun and Kiram still alive. By this short story, it asserted a sign of power that corelated or linked with life, if so biopolitics as a tool of the state and keep stand out.



In this sense, Agamben also gave an insight especially his political field, political philosophy. From Agamben, it can be highlighted regarding the relationship of politic and bare life as an original form—the bare life of inhabitant or society without attributes and it can hit by the rule and law as well. This is a form where the life and political power give biopolitical power space. Thus biopolitics as a media to everlasting the state of sovereignty. This concept coined by Michel Foucault from his book *The History of Sexuality*. Moreover, the process of biopolitics naturally happen through mechanism and calculation from power state smoothly. In dong so, Agamben elaborated these thing based on human life even when it found purely life, then these life keep it away freely and being a principle such as zoe and embodied in bios.

Furthermore, Michel Foucault highlighted that modernity took a place of individual on questioning where their existent is. It also termed by Aristotle which human is an animal who can live with their capability and capacity to tackle political exist. Indeed, for modern human seems like animal and keep going to quest of their life even when human being itself. One thing from Foucault revealed about human exist, human tend to make a defend for political strategy. This animal nature of human is reached by the political technique. In contrast, social sciences has already saved the life but there were another fact that many of massacre, genocide in the era of Holocaust (Agamben, 1998a). This cleaning ethnic have been condemn by their offspring and the world need to look it back to anticipating the same thing.

The Foucault's perspective by reading Agamben stated that modern social sciences envisage the proper life is the fully controlled life (docile bodies). By the tame bodies, Foucault also argued that (docile body) is not a power related the belonging or thing but a strategical politic possess. Besides, power action involved some strategies included the space: controlling and be managed. The strategical representative form is not only repressive action but also emphasize trough regulation and normalization (Bartens, 2006).

Understanding Agamben' philosophical politic also criticized the biopower from Foucault and turn the term as biopolitics by Agamben and the concept of government whole-authority which is to regulate (totalitarian). A statement by Arendt as follows, "Totalitarianism is used today to denote lust for power, the will to dominate, terror and a so-called monolithic state structure" (Arendt, 2011, p. 312). Arendt elaborated a worthy life based on homo laborans, it asserted to fulfilling the politic modernity. If so, totalitarian means an intervention from state and power used by partly group with their concerns.

In the totalitarianism, Arendt break it down into three steps: pre-power, means that consolidation and practical power stated with fully domination. Then, Arendt investigated a totalitarian as a complete discipline movement to other organization, it enabled gaining another such as government institutions which depends on the step pre-power or a total power (Tsao, 2002, p. 591-592). By then, a modern totalitarian phenomenon accepted liberal tradition, so the people faced the fact to overcome or struggling in reaching freedom and desired to state the norms (Morgenthau, 1977).



Foucault has also gave the viewpoint of Agamben' biopower: he asserted that power regulated in constructive space such hospital and jail. Further, biopower has a meaning as power analysis, which is not only focus on sovereign as primary sources but also mechanism of discipline and normalization that transformed into human life (Frost, 2010). This condition of bodies if it break the rules will hit the punish. Therefore, there is a mode to operate biopower, coined by Agamben. It is a value system that keep on growth and live on.

Agamben traced back on Foucault thought towards power flaw on juridical institutional mode. In this way, Agamben tend to reveal precisely the gap between juridical institutional and the strength of biopower mode. It simply that, those mode can be interpreted as apart, so the emergence of bare life in politic determined manifestation of power. Indeed, production of biopolitics bodies is a real activity ((Agamben, 2020, p. 15-16). Regardless life that can not be sum up into zoe and bios is an natural zoe life that implicated within bios (political life), it is termed by Agamben with bare life. A political bare life used to strength sovereign and existent.

Continuing state of exception as well as power have already revealed by Carl Schmitt entitled *Politische Theologie* (1992). By understanding the sovereign concept from Carl Schmitt, it emphasized that power from the authority has an access of juridical power, if so, they grasp the state of exception. In another word, the state of exception has also took by power caretaker whether inside or outside of law, to simplify those are illegal and being the vice legal system (Murray & Whyte, 2011, p. 186). Schmitt highlighted, the situation to use state of exception when it comes emergency position (*necessitas legem no habet*) necessity has no law. This condition of state of exception is unbalanced position between public law and politic fact, as an example battle or war, rebellion and resistance. In short, the state of exception unlike special law form, however a suspension juridical order itself, a reflection of law threshold and restricted concept (Agamben, 2005, p. 4)

Subsequently, Agamben viewed on power by monopoly to finally concluded, the partly of decision making refer to authority threshold.

The sovereign creates and guarantees the situation in its totally. He has the monopoly over the final decision. Therein consist the essence of State Sovereign, which must be a juridical properly defined not as the monopoly to sanction or to rule but as the monopoly to decide, where the word monopoly is used in general sense that is still to be developed. The decision reveals the essence of State authority most clearly (Agamben, 1998b, p 16)

This situation reviewed the form of elimination, neglect that is truly happen strategically.

"...our age is nothing but the implacable and methodical attempt to overcome the people, to eliminate radically the people that is excluded".

Political field of Agamben investigated on radically alienation. The location came from natural/pure life—bare life will be forced by the political power called a species.

Political power has authority to save themselves, having the right to pose citizen as citizenship. As morphological and purpose, in the term of zoe expressed a common life to a whole entity (animal, human and god) and bios has a sign of way of individual life otherwise group (Agamben, 2000, p. 3). The concentration both zoe within bios and bios life always questioned from zoe. Zoe constitute naturally life in political activity enabled homo sacer situation. Similarly, Agamben asserted on human right discourses which already accepted in this modern era in liberal democracy as humane thing.

“Yet it is time to stop regarding declaration of right as proclamations of eternal, meta juridical values binding the legislator (in fact, without much success) to respect eternal ethical principles, and to begin to consider the according to their real historical function in the modern state” (Agamben, 1998b)

The other thing of powerless has shaped on life production, which means bare life so do the biopolitics life filtered systematically and its can not denied. Frankly, the main role of western modern philosophy from Agamben is Homo Sacer. Returning the way to Homo Sacer journey that is mentioned by Pompeius Festus in his piece *On the Significance of Words*, Festus referred on *sacer mons* and he adding the quote below:

“The sacred man is the one whom the people have judged on account of crime. It is not permitted to sacrifice this man, yet he who kills him will not be condemned for homicide; in the first tributian law, in fact it is note that “if someone kills the one who is sacred according to the plebiscite, it will not be considered homicide. “This is why it is customary for a bad or impure man to be called” (Agamben, 1998, p. 71)

There is an elimination and neglect way point out to bare life condition where a natural life or real life has no attributes at all. In this sense, the condition of bare life classification count on human life. A political identity is another way, it cannot be applied for those who not participate on law or people has own law inherently.

In consequence, Agamben’s thought can be looked or usually found in citizen life, exceedingly, a critic towards ruler against alienated people and it caused by political power. For instance, an organization keep on their ideology and dignity, then it contrast with state principle. Once more, if there are refugees who not get involved in political rule, they are very risky to be subordinated by means of sovereignty.

2. Method

In this research method, researcher divided into two step. First, collecting the data and then analysis the data. According to (Faruk, 2012), methodology is a way to obtain a certain of object knowledge, this means have to relate with the object as it mentioned by the theory. This research used descriptive analysis method by approaching the research object be in the form of literature texts.

There are two main data in this research: primary data and secondary data. For the primary data, the researcher used a novel by Ahmad Tohari entitled *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* (2019). Afterwards, the secondary data or theoretical framework to undertake the research used sovereign power and bare life by Agamben. In so doing, the

main data that obtained in the novel, the researcher analysed t thru took the none and intensive reading. The result of the data were analysed and interpreted to look up emergency situation and bare life condition. To conduct interpreting the data, researcher took a note and cited the relevant text that is match with the theory. After all, the researcher concluded all the finding and discussion.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 JURIDICAL ORDER: Power Reduction of Hizbullah Flag

Paradoxical of power happened on facts that at the same time its operate power that could be outside or inside of law order. If so, the power either right nor wrong as part of their authority could also grant a state of exception. Hence, it depends on law validity, and the power stand outside on law order. Negatively, the first power that already belong to, it can be rejected as well. Below, the narrative and citation of the novel where power on the patriotic process came up:

“Hizbullah is a movement of society voluntary. Basically, their intend following on lillahi taala, they aimed to follow a compulsory, fight against the unbeliever that made a harm in this country as it proclaimed by Hadratus Syeikh. Besides, it does not look as official soldier, Hizbullah unrelated with the government. The were born because of ulama’s greed. With the intention of lillahi ta’lala, Hizbullah troops free of wage dan they have to disperse after, when the condition is safe. That is it, so made me quest, why do not all of you united to become official soldier? (Tohari, 2015, p. 47)

This narration that cited on, revealed how the power came up even from law order named Hizbullah soldier. Thought, Hizbullah soldier aimed in a positive way and same goal to combating Netherland soldier which already settled in Central Java. But this condition, the state unrecognized them as an official soldier under the government, the sovereign power denied Hizbullah troops. It can describe that Hizbullah troop stand outside of juridical order, they voluntarily took on space an apparatus to take over state integrity. Officially, based on that narration the state presents only overlooked Republic troops as a legal part of state apparatus.

“Kiai Ngumar looks strain. It fell like Kiai Ngumar definitely do not want a debatable topic. The lips on ups and downs. Suddenly, a voiceless turn lower”
“Suyud, as I said before that Bung Karno and Bung Hatta are Muslim as well. They lead this country over the consensus among leader, included the Islamic leaders. That is why, your question has nothing to answer. We do not need to set against Islam and Republic”
“Answer it rightly, Kiai” said Kang Suyud so harsh. I already anxiety. “Kiai chooses Islam or Republic?”
“Right, Nah, guys please witness my answer here: for implementing the Islamic values, I am strand for Republic. I am the follower of Hadratus Syeikh”. (Tohari, 2015, p. 76)

Ahmad Tohari on this narration described when it found a tension from Kiai Ngumar and Kang Suyud witnessed by Amid and friends. Kiai debated with Kang Suyud over constellation between Hizbullah troops and Republic. The reality has shown and be debated by Kang Suyud who kept on his argumentative about the important thing on shaping Republic and Islam soldier. In that moment, Kiai answered firmly that he took sides on Republic part, the official apparatus. Following the previous statement asserted by by Hadratus Syeikh. In this sense, the state used state of exception, where it be over the law, as the state would not be judged and has own authority to put off the law. The existence of state of exception from public place based on this case refer to the citizen. Thus, the sovereign power located in constitution power zone, and it effected to the sovereignty interwind with repression by tackle down a law, the sovereign connected to the defence of violence (Primera, 2019). Through the single power discourse, it is slowly unrealized to rule the citizen. In addition, the state of exception form be an exclusive, an exception towards public rule on the individual case happened below:

*“At that time, you were mad because I finish off Mantri Karsun directly is not it?
Said Kiram*

“Yes, it because our main mission to hand over to Republic troops. You have already did more”

“Ah, you already know it. Instead of get out, its better I finish off him. Moreover, at the moment who was cared about the people handed me a mission. Principally, Mantri Karsun have had to be arrested. Indeed, it seems we do not hand off Mantri Karsun alive. In fact, the commander has paid off when he knew what I have brought, a head of Mantri. Is it? (Tohari, 2015)

In the Novel of Ahmad Tohari above, Mantri Karsun figure is a fiscal market and a spy for Netherland behalf. Amid and Kiram who carried out the mission to arrest Mantri Karsun without first sign from Republic soldier. Luckily, Mantri Karsun been executed by Kiram and the captive head of Mantri handed down to Republic soldier. In so doing, Republic soldier felt so satisfied in what Kiram already did before. This citation proved where an evidence, shortly, they do not need a law to be beaten, a power exception based for judging in conditional emergency. This position sum up the state of exception, Republic has a privilege power to finalized. The case of rebellion and committing treason by Mantri Karsun, have to be eliminated by killing him. Kiram being an executioner from this case which lend on the state of exception of this country, the law order be suspended *necessitas no habe* (necessity has no law). An unbalanced condition of the public law that is face by political fact.

*“The sovereign exception (as zone of indistinction between nature and right) is the presupposition of the juridical reference in the form of its suspension”
(Agamben, 1998a)*

“Wait a moment, they are here. Further, Jalal get in to our group, we officially declared as a Darul Islam force. We already had own country, Indonesian Islamic State”

Indonesian Islamic State? I remembered about Kiai Ngumar. I remind when we witnessed that in a strong faith, Kiai Ngumar realized for choosing an official



country named Indonesian Republic. It is same page as you to call back the memories of him which is an official state, in that body of country is not required have more than one official state. I fully trusted Kiai Ngumar's thought: certainly, there is only one official or recognized state, there is Republic state. But, I do not have anything to say, if Republic soldier clearly recognised me as a betrayal? (Tohari, 2015, p. 95)

Another uprising narration, cited when communist partly penetrate in Republic soldier. Here Kang Suyud as Darul Islam partly wanted to declare the existent of Darul Islam to reform Indonesian Islamic State. I effected on losing their faith of Republic soldier over Darul Islam, and the main cause is Communist group. It is clear that the relationship between power and life called bare life condition, intervened by systemically biopolitics have stand forward of sovereign power. In the modern government politic, whatever the citizen faith as always found a bare life condition (Calarco & DeCaroli, 2007, p. 201). The alienation of Darul Islam have to beat on the problem, to stay on unity within a country. In another fact, they have to accept it as citizenship absolutely. They also need to obey and comply, this called the form of biopolitical mechanism unconsciously. Once more time, a natural life in human coined by Agamben as a way off zoe neglected principle that implicated in political bios life.

"I stared besides, Kiram face looked so harsh and angry. He asked me and Jun to shoot them back, anyone who disappeared and hide in carriage ahead. Actually, Kiram does need to ask me to do because the war already happened. Hizbullah fellows, except the slain troops got fired in the first carriage, then they against back together. At that time, I noticed by myself who Kiram it is. He is a superhero. He crept along the way to the trench to reach on carriage while the battle started. I looked forward to Kiram who bited off grenade and threw it away by Kiram. I am sure all of the people inside that carriage would be died after, while the fume whiff up higher" (Tohari, 2015,p. 79)

3.2 EMERGENCY STATE: The State of Exception and Human Right

The power situation has an ambivalence, referring to the political system somehow showed their bestiality to each the political existent. In a positive way, it also carried out the whole life. Those slaughter case is a manifestation of political power. A massacre inside the train carriage during the day where Hizbullah journeyed to Kebumen with the mission to unite as an official soldier. Communist movement blocked their way with a long-fired that made Hizbullah fellow died. The other narration, as the form of state of exception coming from the country, DI/TII fellow were struggling on defend and saved the sovereignty for the sake of human life.

"In the end of June 1962, a comrade who settled on Slamet mountain area, went meet us. I thought it was Toyib, a colleague been on the way for so dangerous journey to give us an important message. Sekarmaji Marijan Kartosuwiryo, the supreme leader of Darul Islam, the commander of Indonesian Islamic State, arrested by Republic soldier. Exceedingly, Toyib took a piece sign by the Khafilah, it conveyed to all the DI/TII member to put down the weapon and surrender in



front of the agency, so, they would get national amnesty by the Government of Indonesian Republic (Tohari, 2015, p. 144)

This citation indicated that the state has an exception and made a homo sacer for DI/TII member, they could be free of punishment as national amnesty gave by the government of Indonesian Republic. Following the supreme leader Sekarmaji Kartosuwiryo from Darul Islam who detained by Republic soldier, it is continued by falling down over unofficial force who fought the same effort to uphold the sovereign. This effected also by a traitor from communist as if they fooled around. Finally the went back to the society, they asked from the government if all the weapon handed over, they could be safe and the government grand it. To get the humanity right, regardless the social punish would hit them, humanity from the power authority would be requested.

4. Conclusion

The existent of Hizbullah, since an establishment of DI/TII in 1946-1950 has been reduced by sovereign power. The state looked Hizbullah left behind, and it recognized them as a threat while the process of the government runed. On the contrary, they accused this member as a part of homo sacer. In that situation, the Hizbullah member turned back as Darul Islam where this member unapproved as a citizenship and they missed their human right. Humanity right wanted by Amid and fellows is a safety guaranteed from Indonesian Republic.

When there was a tension of Darul Islam wished, which they wanted to uphold Indonesian Islamic State, the country purged them by an excuse state of exception to reduce those members became a unity state. The country took over the authority so that member would be homo sacer after. It required them for wearing off the attributes included weapon, if so, they could be free from law bond or they pretend to firm would also be eliminated soon, where the subject be assassinated.

The state failed to fulfil of citizen right, they must give a safety and justice for citizen but it unsuccessful. Consequently, the sovereign power that could be perpetuate a regime power through apparatus, failed in contributing a justice towards their citizen who have voluntary made a goal of freedom.

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