



## **Cold-Blooded Killer in Tom Rob Smith's Novel *Child 44* (2008)**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this analysis is to expose the issue of cold-blooded killer in Tom Rob Smith's novel *Child 44*. The issue of cold-blooded killer refers to Russian governments who colonize their own country by treating their citizen violently and devastate them. The problem of this study is to find how far this novel reveals the issue of cold-blooded killer that referred to Russian government. This analysis aims to find out Russian governments' crime while ruling the state. Implied author is used in this study to reveal the evidence related the issue. This analysis is based on Frantz Fanon's concept of decolonization. This study is analyzed through text and context-based interpretation. The result of this study is crimes that commit by Russia government in order maintain their authority. The crimes are done in two ways; setting up situation and applying authority.

**Key words:** Cold-blooded killer, decolonization, governments.

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Humans are considered as highly intelligence living being. They have the ability to learn and comprehend things in order to adapt with surrounding. At the same time, they are also equipped with desire that motivates every activity they do. It can lead them to do good things or the evil one. It depends on their purpose of life. Humans who commit bad and morally corrupted things can be considered as killer. As it is defined in Merriam Webster (2015), killer is forceful and violent person that causing death and devastation.

Every individual has possibility to be killer and commit crime. There would be no limitation for human being to do harmful thing. It can be done toward any existence in their livelihood, such as animals or plant, and toward other human being. To reduce the crime rate, humans form a government system. In the collins

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dictionary, government is defined as both person and system which has the authority to govern the state and has the duty to control the state. In line with it, according to Hobbes in *Britanica Encyclopedia* (2018), government is the result of agreement among man to keep peace. Government is tasked with securing society. This government is also tasked with regulating each individual who has personal goals so as not to harm others. Thus, the existence of the government can neutralize conflicts or gaps that occur in society. Therefore, government functions as an intermediary. As mentioned by Dahl (1971) that quoted in *Encyclopedia of Government and Politics* (1992), that government acts as an impartial umpire or neutral arbiter.

Each country might have different governmental system. However, generally governments exist to serve their countries. Evert Lindquist writes in his article, *Putting Citizens First: Engagement in Policy and Service Delivery for 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, governments work in citizen-oriented way. This means that every task of government is carried out in the interests of the people. One of the tasks of governments is to form regulations. In this case the government is expected to make decisions as wisely as possible so that the community is not disadvantaged.

However, in some cases, there are some governments who act arbitrarily. Russia was oppressed by its own people. In his journal, Alvin w. Gouldner (1978) writes that, during the era of Stalin, Russian government forced citizens to collectivize their crop and farmland to be state's property. On the other hand, the collectivized objects were used and consumed by authority holders: state's leaders, government, and civil force. As the result of this action, the citizens as common people without authority were oppressed by their own government. This phenomenon contradicted with governments' purpose in the first place. Thus, it can be said that the governments act as oppressor and oppressed their own citizen. On the other word, governments become cold-blooded killers of their own people by manipulating and neglecting them. The term cold-blooded killer here refers to governments who treat their citizen violently and devastate them with their crimes.

By referring it to governments, the issue of cold-blooded killer is interesting to be discussed. As the one who are trusted to prosper the state and citizens, some governments in reality take advantage of their authority. They betray their citizens and make them suffer. There are many literary works that reflect this topic. One of them is a novel by Tom Rob Smith, *Child 44* (2008). This novel shows Russian governments who colonize their own country by treating their citizen violently and devastate them.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

The study of Tom Rob Smith's novel, *Child 44* (2008), is analyzed through text and context-based interpretation. Implied author is applied to dive in and discover the issue of cold-blooded killer. Implied author, which supported by other fictional devices displays the evidence of this issue. This study used Frantz Fanon's concept of decolonization.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the issue of cold-blooded killer reflected in Tom Rob Smith's novel, *Child 44* (2008). Cold-blooded killer in this analysis refers to Russian governments who indirectly colonize their own country by treating their citizen violently and devastate them with indirect crimes. Implied author is applied in revealing the evidence of this issue. At the same time, the other fictional devices such as characters, plot, and setting are also used as supporting tools. Moreover, Frantz fanon's concept of decolonization is used in order to analyze the novel. Governments' crimes toward their country can be identified from two points. The first one is setting up situation, while the other one is applying authority.

### 1. Setting up society

Result and Setting up situation is the first point to prove the issue of Russia government as cold-blooded killer in Tom Rob Smith's novel *Child 44* (2008). Setting up situation is an act to arrange things according to particular goal of particular person. It is a trick that is done with dishonesty. As Collins dictionary (2008) defines it, the phrase of setting up refers to an act of doing or organizing something without the knowledge of someone. Thus, it can be understood that setting up situation is a corrupted act to arrange the situation. In this study, setting up situation refers to governments' tricks to arrange the society according to their wishes.

Setting up situation is one of governments' dishonest tricks to arrange society for their advantage. Since it is a tick, government applied it in undercover. In this case, propaganda is used to trick the citizens. Thus, the citizens would trust them. By holding citizens' trust, the government can maintain their position as the holder of authority in the country. They spread this propaganda to every group of people, but the main target is young people. They make used the innocence of youth to create their good image. School and education are used as the media to spread the propaganda. This trick can be seen in quotation below;

“Raisa was relieved to be nearing the end of the day. She'd spent the past eight hours teaching exactly the same lesson to all her year groups. Normally she taught compulsory political studies but this morning she'd received instructions posted to

the school from the ministry of education ordering her to follow the enclosed lesson plan. It seemed these instructions had been sent to every school in Moscow and were to be implemented with immediate effect, ordinary lessons could resume tomorrow. The instructions stipulated that she spend the day discussing with each class how much Stalin loved his country's children. Love itself was a political lesson. There was no more important love than the leader's love, and consequently, one's love for the leader. As part of that love, Stalin wanted all of his children, no matter how old they were, to be reminded of certain basic precautions which they should make part of their daily life. They were not to cross roads without looking twice, they were to be careful when travelling on the metro and finally, and this was to be emphasized particularly, they were not to play on the railway tracks. Over the past year there had been several tragic accidents on the railways. The safety of the state's children was paramount. They were the future." (p.76)

In this quotation, it can be seen that the education system of the country is strictly created by government. The education that was formed, force the students to accept the governments' political understanding. Through education, the governments inject the doctrine to young people. They are told that they are protected by state's leaders. At the same time, young people are pressured to be loyal to the state's leader. This is evidenced by the quotation which states that young people must love the state's leader; "*there was no more important love than the leader's love, and consequently, one's love for the leader.*". Through the implied author, it can be understood that love for a state's leader is not the same as love for the motherland. Love for the state's leader illustrates his desire to be glorified by his citizens. It is also indicated that he wants his citizen to obey without any objection.

On the other hand, on page 77, there is a quotation, which proves that state protection toward youth is only government propaganda. "*youth provided no protection. The age at which a child could be shot for their crimes, or their father's crimes, was twelve. That was a lesson Raise wasn't allowed to teach.*" From the quotation, it can be seen that there is no regulation that protect youths as promised by the government. This shows that the government only uses youths as a tool to maintain their power. Moreover, this statement is emphasized on the last sentence of the quotation above; "*that was a lesson raise was not allowed to teach.*" it appears that youth is at a very disadvantageous position. They are forced to behave as regulated by the government, but do not know what these regulations are. This condition is clearly contradicted with governments' promise in the first quotation. These contradiction is a crime that Russia government commits toward their citizens, the youth especially. At this point, the government has violated their rights as children and human being by not giving them the protection they should

have received. Moreover, they are also tricked into victimizing mistakes they did not make.

Furthermore, from the quotation above, it is shown that the government has set up the mindset of youths. The government regulates them by only providing subject if it is beneficial to the government and their position. Okechukwu eme (2015) in his article *role of the youth in nation building*, states that the national youths policy recognizes that the youths are a key resource that can be tapped for the benefits of the whole country. From this definition it can be seen that by setting up the mindset of the youths the government can use them for the benefit of government. With the existence of strict regulations governing the education system, the government can lead the mindset of youths to always side with them. Thus, they can minimize the possibility of youths to speak up for their rights being violated.

Apart from education, the governments also set up the regulations that apply in the country. In *Child 44 (2008)*, russia has no specific laws. However, the country has strict penalties for everyone that is considered guilty by the governments. This can be seen in the quotation below.

Leo understood that the lubyanka held a special place in the people's psyche, representing the place where those guilty of anti-soviet agitation, counter-revolutionary activity and espionage were processed. Why did that category of prisoner strike particular dread into everyone's heart? While it was easy to comfort yourself that you would never steal or rape or murder, no one could ever be sure they weren't guilty of anti-soviet agitation, counter-revolutionary activity and espionage since no one, including Leo, could ever be sure exactly what these crimes were. In the one hundred and forty articles of the criminal code Leo had just one article to guide him, a subsection defining the political prisoner as a person engaged in activity intended to:

*Overthrow, subvert, or weaken the soviet power. (p. 52)*

Russia in this period is very aware of the existence of traitors to the state. Lubyanka is one of the special prisons to punish traitors of the state. Every prisoner in this prison will receive a sentence of torture to death. Therefore, treason against the state is labeled as an act of serious crime. However, on the other hand, there is no regulation or further explanation issued by the government regarding this crime. In the quotation, it is stated that political prisoners / state traitors are people who intend to overthrow, subvert, or weaken the soviet power. Moreover, these three words have the same meaning. In collins dictionary (2008), these words refer to an act of conquering something. Through implied author, it can be seen that, in the absence of clarity of the rules that govern serious criminal acts, governments can appoint anyone as a criminal. With governments as the

holder of absolute power in the state, have the right and opportunity to punish anyone they consider traitor.

To set up the situation in a wider society, the government uses media. Through media, governments are able to control public's perception. They manipulate fact that will be shown to the public. They filter the facts according to their will. They cease the facts that have the potential to threaten their power. On the other hand, the government would publish the statement that will strengthen their position. Therefore, the media have become an appropriate tool for the government to control the situation. Through media, governments can lead public opinion according to their will. This can be seen on the quotation of page 123 ; *“factory production figures filled pravda’s front page, the middle pages and the back pages too. Good news was the only news worth printing–high birth rates, mountain-top train lines and new canals.”*

Governments only allow the public to know the information that can build a good reputation for the government. This is because they need the people's trust in order to continue to be governments. As happened with news about high birth-rates. By reporting this, the government intends to show that their citizens live in prosperity so that they can have offspring and live in big good family. However, through implied authors it was found that the news was only the result of the governments' arrangement. The quotation below shows the low level of welfare of the russian population.

The main hall of the orphanage had once been the factory floor. All the machinery had been cleared and it had been converted into a dining room, not by the addition of tables and chairs, for there were none, but by the fact that the entire floor was covered with children sitting cross-legged, pressed up against each other and trying to eat. Every child clutched a wooden bowl filled with what appeared to be a watery cabbage soup. However, it seemed only the eldest children had spoons. The rest either sat waiting for a spoon or drank straight from the bowl. Once a child had finished, they licked the spoon from top to bottom before passing it onto the next child. (p. 166)

The condition of the orphanage reflects the true level of welfare of the russian people. From the quotation, it can be seen that many children in russia do not get a proper life. They do not have adequate housing and sufficient food. The number of children who exceed the capacity of the orphanage is the impact of high-birth-rates. However, this is not published publicly because it can reduce the government's reputation.

These quotations show that russian people are devastated by governments. The government used propaganda to setting up the situation. They do not work as their promise. People are violated by this action. In this case, governments ignore the existence of humanity, because their priority is their personal intention. In order to do this, the governments make use of education, media, and regulation.

These three elements are the tools for government to set up situation according their intention. Furthermore, the governments mainly use propaganda to trick the citizens. They spread lies to gain citizens' trust. They also manipulate fact to give them advantage. These acts are proved that the Russian government acts like a cold-blooded killer for its people.

## 2. Applying Authority

Result Applying authority is the second point to prove the issue of russia government as cold-blooded killer in Tom Rob Smith's novel *Child 44* (2008). Applying authority is an act of government to make something use the power they have. This action was taken to maintain their position as rulers in the state. This act is based on government's selfishness. Therefore, applying authority is generally used by the government to fulfill personal desires. This act resulted in losses for people who did not have power.

In order to maintain their power, governments use the power of their authority. Governments use violence to eliminate people or things that are against them. This also applies to matters that can threaten the position of government as the holder of absolute power in the country. The first evidence can be seen in the quotation below.

“Some years ago she had organized the village resistance after it was announces that men were on their way to collect the church bell. They wanted to melt it down. She and four other women had locked themselves in the bell tower, ringing it continuously, refusing to let them take it away. Oksana had shouted out that the bell belonged to god. She might get shot that day but the man in the charge of collection decided to spare the women. After breaking the door he'd said that his only orders were to collect the bell, explaining that metal was necessary for the state revolution.” (p.10)

Men in this quotation refer to militaries. From this quote, it appears that the government uses military force to force citizens to obey the orders of the state. Through implied author it appears that governments compel citizens to look away from god and their religion. God and the religion of the russian people are represented by the church bell. It can be said that church bell is the representative of identity of the Russian people as Christians. According to McDowell in his article *the history and significance of chruch bell (2014)*, chruch bell is a tool of communication for christians This bell is rung to call or remind the christians to worship. Therefore, by taking the church bell forcibly, the government has taken away the identity of their citizens as christians. Moreover, this act also shows governments' arrogance. They take other people's religion and sacrifice it for their personal advantages. It seems like they claim themselves more important than people's religion and people's god. The government is not violated people's right to have faith in a religion and do the worship, but also humiliated the religion and God.

Another quotation in page 10 also proves that the Russian people are oppressed by the government that applying their authority; “*when the state began taking the villagers' food, arguing that it belonged to the country and not them, Oksana had learned her lesson. Instead of strength she feigned obedience, her resistance remaining in silence.*”. The government takes advantage of the people by using their authority. They force the citizen to collectivize their belongings. In the quotation is mentioned that citizens' foods are forcefully taken by the government. This shows the cruelty of the government because they took away one of the primary needs of the people. On the other side, citizens are not allowed to defend themselves and. They are forced to obey even though they are disadvantaged by the government. This shows the imbalance of power between governments and citizens.

On the other hand, governments, who have authority get privileges to live luxurious life. Governments have the authority to consume collectivized object. With their authority, governments are able to get things that common people could not get. “*The driver was transporting bananas, luxury exotic goods intended for the spetzorgi. Shops for high ranking party figures* (p. 264)”. Through the quotation it can be understood that the ruling government gets the best services from the citizens. On the other hand, poor citizens are required to serve the government. Bananas in the quotation is a representation of the work of the farmers. This indicates that in addition to being confiscated from their property, citizens must also work to meet government needs.

The existence of special privilege of being government is also supported in quotation below.

He'd improved their access to food—no longer did they have to queue for several hours for basics such as bread and buckwheat; instead they were given access to the spetzorgi, the special shops not intended for the general public. In these restricted shops there were exotic delights such as fresh fish, saffron and even slabs of real dark chocolate, instead of the synthetic kind which substituted cocoa with a blend of rye, barley, wheat and peas. (...) In the kitchen a head of cabbage was bubbling in a copper pot of water. His parents were in the middle of preparing golubsty and Leo told them to carry on, they could talk in the kitchen. He stood back and watched as his father mixed together mince (fresh meat, not dried, possible only because of Leo's job), fresh grated carrots (once again possible only because of him) and cooked rice. (P.84-85)

This quotation shows the different condition between government's life and common citizen's. The governments can live in nice condition. They get enough food easily. The variety of foods that can only be consumed by the government indicates that they are getting a prosperous life. Moreover, this kind of live is only limited to governments. At the same time, they could have nice private housing.



Furthermore, citizens experience poverty and lack of foodstuffs. It can be seen in the quotation below.

“She comforted herself with the knowledge that surprise was on its side. In a community where grown men chewed clods of earth in the hope of finding ants or insect eggs, where children picked through horse shit in the hope of finding undigested husks of grain and women fought over the ownership of bones(...).” (p. 8)

Through this quotation, it can be shown that the Russian citizens who do not have authority have to live in misery. They could not get proper food. This could be the effect of the collectivization. Moreover, in the quotation it can be seen that citizen's life is worse than the livestock. It states that some people pick the undigested grain from horse's feces, it means that the animal is feed-well. In this condition, the common people is impossible to have raise livestock, it is government who have chance to do this. Thus, from this point it is revealed that human being is less important than animal for Russian governments.

Apart from taking people's rights away, government also commits other crimes by applying their authority. One of them is sexual harassment. With the authority they have, government tends to consider other people low. They consider that their desire is more important than other people's self esteem. It can be seen in the quotation below.

“An idea had taken hold of Zarubin: it had taken shape in the kitchen when Raisa had blushed and crystallized into a plan the moment he'd smelt soap on her hands. If he reported that Leo wasn't sick, that he was faking his leave of absence, then he would almost certainly be arrested and interrogated. With all the other doubts surrounding his behaviour there would be a heavy weight of suspicion. He'd most probably be imprisoned. His wife, his beautiful wife, would end up alone and vulnerable. She'd be in need of an ally. Zarubin's status within the state security forces matched or even surpassed Leo's and he felt sure he could offer an acceptable, comfortable alternative. Zarubin was married but he could take her as a mistress. He was convinced that Raisa's survival instinct was highly tuned.” (p.68)

Zarubin in this novel is a high ranked member of party who is also a senior doctor. His job as a doctor is to confirm the truth of the military member's sick reports. From the quotation above, it can be revealed that zarubin used his powers to seduce his patient's wife. He uses his authority to threaten other people to grant his wish. He underestimates other people because he is more powerful. From this point, it can be understood that authority is more powerful than truth.

The quotations above show that Russian people are devastated by governments. The government used their absolute authority to control the citizen. Citizens' rights are violated by governments. They force people to stay away from their God and religions. They forcefully snatch citizens' property and do

collectivization. By using their authority, the governments also humiliate the citizens. The governments ignore the existence of humanity, because their priority is their personal intention. These are the proof that the Russian government acts like a cold-blooded killer for its people. They use the authority they have to get what they want.

#### **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

There are many negative impacts received by the people because of the government absolute and arbitrary action. The rights of the people as human being are often violated. They also cannot live in peace because of the terror from the government. On the other side, the government can enjoy a peaceful and self-sufficient life. These are the evident that show Russian government in Tom Rob Smith's novel *Child 44 (2020)*. These evident can be found by applying implied author while analyzing the novel.

The problem of government acting arbitrarily is nothing new. Many countries are experiencing this problem. Many governments abuse their authority. This abuse of authority can be done openly or secretly. In general, this abuse of power is based on the desire to fulfill personal satisfaction. At the same time it is supported by opportunity and authority. The impact of this abuse of power is felt by the people. People who don't have the authority of government often give up on the treatment provided by the government. Resistance can not guarantee their welfare, because the government with their power is stronger. So that the government, which is supposed to work to ensure the welfare of the people and the state, has become a source of misery for the people. From here the term cold-blooded killer can be given to the government. This term refers to governments who colonize their own country by treating their citizen violently and devastate them.

Governments use dishonest tricks to set up situation according their intention. Education, media, and regulation are the tools for government to maintain their power. Through these three things, they spread propaganda. Furthermore, the governments mainly use propaganda to trick the citizens. They spread lies to gain citizens' trust. They also manipulate fact to give them advantage.

At the same time, governments also make use of their authority. By applying their authority, the government force people to obey them. They force people to stay away from their God and religions. They forcefully snatch citizens' property and do collectivization. By using their authority, the governments also humiliate the citizens. The governments ignore the existence of humanity, because their priority is their personal intention.

By using dishonest and cruel tricks while ruling the state, the government already became criminal. It is getting more serious, when the tricks are used to fulfill their personal intention. This action lead them to be cold-blooded killers, the person who make other people suffer without any consideration. This

condition is contradicted with the purpose of government in first place. Basically, governments exist to guide and lead the citizens to get harmonious life. They are trusted because the citizens believe they have the ability to govern the state wisely. However, this expectation cannot be found in reality because the government put their personal intention as their first priority.

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