Survival Under Difficult Conditions In Chernobyl Prayer By Alexievich

Chernobyl Prayer is a book that the victims of Chernobyl witnessed and the struggle for survival under difficult conditions. Alexievich asked them to tell them what they saw and lived. Depression, exclusion, being seen by others as a different identity, depletion of trust in the state, despair and loss of love before the eyes of the people of Chernobyl are among the subjects covered in the book. While the Chernobyl want for help, the state's indifference and inadequacy to these cries is also important for people to be disappointed with the state they fully support. Spouses, mothers and fathers who cannot leave their loved ones are one of the sufferings of Chernobyl, and love of the country can also be observed in the book. In other words, while Svetlana Alexievich tries to make us feel the pain and love of people, she also tries to instill awareness. In this book I will combine some similarities with Agamben's theories and ideas. As the book sheds light on many events and emotions, Agamben's thoughts give us new perspectives. It shapes our thinking in different directions. In this book I found a few similarities about Agamben. These similarities can be combined with state of exception, Homo sacer theories and beyond of the human rights.

After the explosion, the state resorted to various ways in order not to panic the people. The state tried to convince people that radiation was not at first and that people were unnecessarily anxious. The Soviet and Russian governments tried to hide the Chernobyl tragedy. No information was given about the explosion. The government lied about it for a very long time after the exploding trying to minimize the peoples' fear and discontent with the government. ''Every day they brought the papers, I'd just read the headlines: 'Chernobyl – A Place of Achievement,' 'The Reactor Has Been Defeated!' 'Life Goes On.'' (Alexievich) The villages were evacuated but the fields continued to be planted. In the villages, people are fed with vegetables grown in their own gardens and no measurements are made in these gardens. How to live was not explained. Masks have not been dispensed so people won't panic. People who are willing to do anything for their homeland understand that everything is a lie. After the explosion, all of the books about Hiroshima, Nagasaki and radiation are destroyed. The disappearance of Gorbachev for days, wrong information given to foreign journalists, representatives, seizure of all the photographs taken, and the fact that asphalt was poured everywhere for a party official while working in the dust land in the region, shows that the state did not fulfill its responsibilities in such an extraordinary situation. Agamben's theory of the extraordinary circumstance and state of exception is an example. The exception is the suspension of the order. Agamben is to reveal the barest state of political power. He thinks that political power is an arbitrariness that can leave us to die at any moment rather than to guarantee our rights and freedom. Although political power seems to be a legal force with the task of protecting rights, for Agamben, power is nothing more than domination, which deprives people of all kinds of rights. With the inclusion of the deprived people in the legal system, the problems are solved. According to Agamben, becoming a part of the legal system will not solve any problems. It will cause the subject to a controlled lawlessness. This is because whatever happens, it occurs at the threshold between the external and the internal. States will owe the reasons for existence to the fight against exception and spend everything they can to eliminate the exception. However, according to Agamben, practices become permanent rather than temporary. The state suspends the law. An example is that people are forced to leave their

homes and camp in the woods and then the state does nothing despite the looting of their homes. State also lies about the radiation measurements. These lies were made and they manipulated the weather in order to save urban Russia. Government didn't tell Belarus's people anything about it. People lived Belarus for many years in really high levels of radioactivity. They were lack of funds and international support. So, moving out was so slow. They need support but because of the government's policy they suffered from the radioactivity without knew. Also, other countries were didn't know because government were hiding out the event to not worry people. This place became an exclusion zone by the government.

Alienation is another condition they are exposed to. For example, a conversation in the book: ''the person standing before you is no longer your husband, not the man you love. Now you have a radioactive object emitting a high concentration of poison.'' (Alexievich) People exposed to radiation have been altered by others. As Chernobylite they had gained a new subject. When people heard the word Chernobyl, they turned their heads. Chernobylites are different from other people. Everyone who lived there, whether or not they left the region, became a completely different people. They have a new identity. This identity is Chernobylite. I mean, they're not like every human being. Those who were moved to other cities and were not admitted to their relatives and friends, who were ill and left alone in hospitals, children who were not made friends in schools, people who were tried to be touched, and Chernobylites who could not marry were exposed. "The world has been split in two: there's us, the Chernobylites, and then there are you, the others. Have you noticed? No one here points out that they're Russian or Belarussian or Ukrainian. We all call ourselves Chernobylites. 'We were from Chernobyl.' 'I'm a Chernobylite.' '' (Alexievich) The book also mentions that Chernobyl apples were distributed as gifts. People begin to use things taken from Chernobyl as magic. This situation looks like Agamben's homo sacer theory. Homo sacer is a kind of metaphor for excluded people from official legal protection and from reduced to a state of bare life. These people excluded from the realm of law. The person is put in to bare life that is excluded in or included out. These victims of Chernobyl are also in a bare life situation that is a mechanism of social security which is independent from the state and also complements it. Homo sacer is a forbidden person who can kill anyone but cannot be sacrificed in religious rituals. This person's citizenship rights have been taken away from him, he is neither a citizen nor a rights holder. Homo sacer is the outsider of society as the perpetrator of a major crime. Being different from the people of Chernobyl from other people is enough to throw them out of society. Their most natural right, the right to give birth and the right to life, has been taken away by radiation. People who exclude Chernobyls see them as inadequate or fear them. Because, according to them, they are not in the definition of normal people. They will never have a normal life. Their radiation and their Chernobyl identity were the conditions that made them separate from society. This makes them an exception figure. Agamben shows life in two words: bios and zoe. Bios is seen through the function of different actions and qualities. It is death that does not have action and qualities. Zoe, on the other hand, refers to the life shared with other inhabitants. Homo sacer is one who is isolated from the customs and qualities of a certain life in the eyes of the society that expels him. Bios properties are insufficient. In addition, once it is isolated from society, a life begins alone. This is also linked to zoe. According to Agamben, the camps are places where the political status of a group of people, that is, their citizenship rights, are reduced to bios bare life, that is to say, only physical existence, zoe exception, and this exception becomes the rule. When the bios is reduced to zoe, those in the camp have no political meaning. And therefore, it is not a crime to implement various biopolitical practices on this non-citizen or even unreal human community. The people of Chernobyl who are excluded from society are forced to return to their abandoned homes. They have been left to die. They

were devastated by radiation that they could not hold by hand and penetrate into their bodies against their will or consciousness. Therefore, there has been a disappointment against the order in which they are. The narrators considered themselves worthless.

The people of Chernobyl refuse to be refugees by not leaving their places. But the area they are in is now a derelict region. They are those who cannot leave their loved ones, but also cannot leave their homes. They continue to live there even though they know they will die. Many refugees have preferred to be stateless in order not to return to their home countries. This is the case with them, for example, if they return to their home country, risking the possibility of survival. These Chernobyl people were risking their lives. These noncitizens have nationalities but they don't prefer to benefit from their own states' protection. So they find themselves in a condition of de facto statelessness. Chernobyl people prefer to stay so state cannot protect them. They chose to risk their lives in order to be refugees. In the book they are such as a wife that cannot leave her husband or a person that cannot leave his home. In the first chapter, there is a wife whose husband is a deceased firefighter. Her husband was in hospital in because of the radiation he got. Although she was pregnant, she preferred to stay with her husband in the area with radiation. She did not care the radiation because she couldn't imagine herself without her husband. So she also putted her child in danger. But she was desperate. She just wanted to know if he was good and not want to leave him alone. Also there were people that couldn't leave their home. They witnessed how easily the values of society were destroyed. They have gained the desire to reclaim the past and, from this point of view, the construction of a whole new subject that goes beyond the cultural-social boundaries. Agamben identifies them as stateless for those who refuse to be refugees, while these people receive the Chernobyl stamp. These people have stayed between go and stand. They will be deprived of their rights as refugees at the destination and will not be able to enjoy some of their rights at the same place of residence. The food they eat, the water they drink, their goods, almost everything is an obstacle to them. People would recognize them as radiation victims. Like an interesting new species, they would always be regarded as unusual among humans. Agamben enlightened on the first article of the Declaration of 1789. In the first article, people are born and live equally and free. However, according to Agamben, the natural life itself, which was placed on the basis of order as the beginning of modernity bio politic, was also vanished by being handed over to the figure of citizen in which the rights were protected. So people benefit from citizen rights as soon as they are born. The rights belong to the nation. The problem of the refugees reveals the hidden assumption of the political sphere, namely the bare life, by revealing the difference between birth and nation. Agamben, therefore, wants to destroy the separation of nation with this birth. He talks about a system in which refugees become direct carriers of bare life. Their drifting out of society has put them in a state of bare life. These victims of Chernobyl's lives removed of the protection of the law. They abandoned through insufficient policies and they are put outside the responsibility of the state. To have like this extraordinary life means living outside of the protection of the law.

All in all, when I compare the stories in Svetlana Alexievich's book with Agamben, I have combined the state of exception with the trust they have in their governments. In addition, being a new identity, being a new species, conforms to Agamben's theory of bare of life. Another example is that the Chernobyl victims risk death and prefer to stay in an abandoned place for their loved ones. They're in some kind of purgatory. I combined this with Agamben's article on beyond of human rights. As the book says: '' Chernobyl is like the war of all wars. There's nowhere to hide. Not underground, not underwater, not in the air. '' (Alexievich) In the Second World War, it was at least visible to the enemy that they knew who they were fighting. Now they

didn't even know what they were fighting. People's fears have become something they cannot see.