CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

Constructivism chose to view the world we know today as something that was constructed by the society.[1] Constructivists saw an opportunity to develop their theory after the Cold War; growing from the critical international theory and becoming more of a meta-theory, when theories such as Realism and Liberalism failed to explain the reason the Cold War did not end in a violent war where the actors compete for power. While the critical theory rejected the rationalist view that humans are egoists and society as a playing field, constructivists chose to utilize the ontological phenomenon to address the anomaly of world politics that exist within neo-realism and neo-liberalism.[2]

The idea of instilling fear by creating an irrevocable image is a phenomenon that can be explained through Constructivism. One of the most prominent organizations in the world whose modus operandi is the instillation of fear, is the Islamic State or IS whose propaganda and campaign include brutal killings, beheadings, suicide bombings, and other terrorist acts. The Islamic State's brutality and inhumane acts were not only upsetting to watch, but also cause uncertainty and fear due to the unpredictability of when the next assault might happen and who will be targeted or become collateral victims. What Constructivism is able to explain is

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[1] Scott Burchill, *Theories of International Relations*, vol. 3 (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

[2] Ibid.

how instead of fearing the organization, many Indonesians feel a sense of belonging and accepts the invitation to join the Islamic State's cause and propaganda in creating a caliphate and ridding the world of those who do not adopt their religion and ideology.

The establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or will henceforth be abbreviated as ISIS, can be traced back to the formation of al Qaeda formed by Osama bin Laden in 1988.[3] An armed Islamic group, al Qaeda was responsible for many terrorist attacks around the world including the United States embassy attacks in 1998, September 11 attacks in the United States in 2001, and the 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia.[4] Their reign of terror persisted until 2003 when a combined force, known as the Coalition of the Willing led by the United States with over 30 countries in support, invaded Iraq.[5] According to President George W. Bush himself, the coalition's aim was to "disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and free the Iraqi people."[6]

During this invasion, an extension of Osama bin Laden's network formed an organization called al Qaeda in Iraq or AQI, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.[7] Their aim was to cleanse Iraq of Western occupation and instill a Sunni Islamist regime in the area. Zarqawi was killed in a strike led by the United States two years later,

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[3] Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know: an Oral History of Al Qaeda's Leader* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2006).

[4] Reuters, "Timeline - Major Attacks By Al Qaeda," *Reuters*, May 2, 2011, https://www.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-56711920110502.

[5] George W. Bush, "Bush: Join 'Coalition of Willing'," in *CNN Interntional*, 2002, https://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/europe/11/20/prague.bush.nato/.

[6] "Operation Iraqi Freedom," *President's Radio Address* (Washington, DC, March 22, 2003).

[7] Cameron Glenn et al., "Timeline: the Rise, Spread, and Fall of the Islamic State," Wilson Center (U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2019), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/timeline-the-rise-spread-and-fall-the-islamic-state.

and his position was then filled by Abu Ayyub al Masri who would then renamed the organization to the Islamic State in Iraq, or ISI, which would be spearheaded by Abu Omar al Baghdadi.[8] In 2010, during an operation between the United States and Iraq, Abu Omar al Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al Masri were murdered and Abu Bakr al Baghdadi stepped up to fill the vacuum of power.[9] When the civil war in Syria began, ISI sent their operatives to Syria to fight against Syrian forces and expanded their forces into the region, officially renaming as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS in 2013.[10] By 2014, after the organization had declared a caliphate over territories in Iraq and Syria, they changed its name into simply Islamic State (IS) to eliminate the confines of borders because their aim is to establish their authority beyond Iraq and Syria and into the world's estimated 1.5 billion Muslims.[11]

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, and the majority of Muslims in Indonesia are Sunnis.[12] Indonesia is no longer a stranger to radical Muslim propaganda and terrorist acts. In 2002, a coordinated bombing killed 202 Indonesians citizens and Australian and British tourists, while the following suicide

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[8] Cameron Glenn et al., "Timeline: the Rise, Spread, and Fall of the Islamic State," Wilson Center (U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2019), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/timeline-the-rise-spread-and-fall-the-islamic-state.

[9] Waleed Ibrahim, "Al Qaeda's Two Top Iraq Leaders Killed in Raid," *Reuters*, April 19, 2010, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-violence-alqaeda/al-qaedas-two-top-iraq-leaders-killed-in-raid-idUSTRE63I3CL20100419.

[10] Cameron Glenn et al., "Timeline: the Rise, Spread, and Fall of the Islamic State," Wilson Center (U.S. Institute of Peace, October 28, 2019), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/timeline-the-rise-spread-and-fall-the-islamic-state.

[11] CNN Editorial Research, "ISIS Fast Facts," *CNN Interntional*, August 8, 2014, https://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts/index.html.

[12] Imam Reza, "Shia Muslims Around the World," Shia Muslims Around the World || Imam Reza (A.S.) Network, 1998, https://www.imamreza.net/old/eng/imamreza.php?id=3591.

bomb in Bali three years later killed 20 people.[13] More recent attacks happened in May of 2018 with three suicide bombs simultaneously detonated in three different churches in Surabaya, injuring over 40 people and killing 18 citizens along with the perpetrators.[14] The bombing in Surabaya was said to be inspired by a suicide bomb that detonated in Thamrin, Jakarta in 2016.[15] In 2019, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister of Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, Wiranto, was stabbed by a man while exiting his car in Pandeglang, Banten; Chief of Police of Menes and Police Commissioner, Dariyanto, was also stabbed by the perpetrator's wife.[16] In the following month, another suicide bomb was detonated at the Medan Police headquarters in Medan, injuring six people among whom are four police officers and two civilians.[17]

The attacks in Surabaya, Medan, and Wiranto's assault were done by members of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), an Indonesian Islamic terrorist organization that was an extension of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), a terrorist group that was previously linked to Al-Qaeda. Head of Community Information Bureau, Brigjen. Pol. Dr. Dedi Prasetyo, claimed that members who do not agree with Jemaah Islamiyah's

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[13] BBC News, "The 12 October 2002 Bali Bombing Plot," *BBC News*, October 11, 2012, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19881138.

[14] BBC News, "Surabaya Attacks: Family of Five Bomb Indonesia Police Headquarters," *BBC News*, May 14, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-44105279.

[15] Kristen E. Schulze, "The Surabaya Bombings and the Evolution of the Jihadi Threat in Indonesia," *CTC Sentinel* 11, no. 6 (2018), https://ctc.usma.edu/surabaya-bombings-evolution-jihadi-threat-indonesia/.

[16] BBC News, "Wiranto: Indonesia Security Minister Stabbed by 'IS Radical'," *BBC News*, October 10, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49997210.

[17] Apriadi Gunawan, "24-Year-Old Man Behind Suicide Bombing At Medan Police HQ, Police Confirm," *The Jakarta Post*, November 13, 2019, https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/11/13/24-year-old-man-behind-suicide-bombing-at-medan-police-hq-police-confirm.html.

ideologies would cross over to JAD which was linked to the ISIS that was led by al Baghdadi.[18]

JI and JAD are not the only two terrorist organizations that exist in Indonesia. Darul Islam (DI) is an organization that has already existed since the early years of Indonesia's independence in 1949.[19] Darul Islam's past actions were usually inspired by the shortcomings in the government, such as backing out on their deal regarding Aceh's special status.[20] Another radical Muslim organization in Indonesia is Mujahidin Indonesia Timur headquartered in Poso, Central Sulawesi, whose infamous leader was named Santoso, or also known as Abu Wardah.[21] The group's connections to ISIS became public knowledge after a video of them declaring their loyalty to ISIS was published.[22]

Indonesian Islamic State supporters do not only exist within Indonesia's borders. In a 2018 interview with the President's Chief of Staff, it is revealed that citizens who travel to Iraq and Syria to join the Islamic State (labelled as foreign terrorist fighters or FTF) have almost reached 700 people in total.[23] As of 2020, Indonesia has officially refused the return of nearly 700 ex-Islamic State militants

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[18] Adi Briantika, "Polri Sebut Perbedaan Jamaah Islamiyah Dan Jamaah Ansharut Daulah," *Tirto*, July 1, 2019, https://tirto.id/polri-sebut-perbedaan-jamaah- islamiyah-dan-jamaah-ansharut-daulah-edok.

[19] International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, "The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia: From Jemaah Islamiyah to 'Islamic State,'" *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 10, no. 6 (June 2018): pp. 1-2, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26435159.

[20] Sidney Jones, "Relevansi Darul Islam Untuk Masa Kini," Crisis Group, November 16, 2016, https://www.crisisgroup.org/id/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/darul-islam-s-ongoing-appeal.

[21] Angga Indrawan, "Mengapa Santoso Mendukung Gerakan ISIS?," *Republika*, May 26, 2016, https://www.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/umum/16/05/26/o7ram3365-mengapa-santoso-mendukung-gerakan-isis.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ahda Bayhaqi, "Moeldoko Ungkap Jumlah WNI Jadi Militan ISIS Di Suriah & Filipina," *Merdeka.com*, May 22, 2018, https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/moeldoko-ungkap-jumlah-wni-jadi-militan-isis-di-suriah-filipina.html.

to Indonesia in fear of jeopardizing the security of 267 million Indonesian citizens currently living inside the archipelago.[24]

With their constant terrorist attacks and publication of violent videos, it is understandable that fear would become the first instinct to the people of Indonesia when it comes to responding towards the Islamic State and its networks in Indonesia. However, we cannot disregard the fact that many Indonesian citizens are also drawn to the cause and chose to travel far away and risk their lives and the lives of their families in order to join the Islamic State.

How the Islamic State's propaganda managed to recruit Indonesian citizens and encourage them to uproot their lives for a radical ideology continue to raise questions. The purpose of this research is to understand how the idea of the Islamic State's propaganda managed to draw Indonesian citizens to join the Islamic State instead of instilling fear which is a more common response.

1.2   Research Question

Based on the aforementioned findings and information, I suggest the following questions:

1. How does the Islamic State recruit foreign terrorist fighters from Indonesia?

2. How did the Islamic State's recruitment methods manage to persuade Indonesian citizens to join the Islamic State?

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[24] Berita Satu, "Indonesia Refuses to Repatriate Former Islamic State Fighters," *Jakarta Globe*, February 12, 2020, https://jakartaglobe.id/news/indonesia-refuses-to-repatriate-former-islamic-state-fighters.

1.3   Research Objective

This research aims to identify the methods used by the Islamic State to recruit foreign terrorist fighters from all over the world, including Indonesia. In addition to that, this research hopes to uncover the reasons why the methods used by the Islamic State to recruit foreign fighters were successful in convincing Indonesian citizens to uproot their lives and risk their wellbeing in order to join the Islamic State's cause. This research aims to identify how the Islamic State has managed to successfully take advantage of the power of ideas and the social process of Indonesian citizens as suggested by Constructivism theory.

1.4   Research Contribution

The outcome of this research would hopefully provide a better understanding towards the Islamic State's methods of recruitment and why it is successful in recruiting Indonesian terrorist fighters, especially when explained and analyzed through Constructivism. It would shine a light to the Islamic State's ability in manipulating and taking advantage of the power of ideas to create enticing promises and appeal for them to effectively recruit foreign terrorist fighters and hopefully encourage Indonesian citizens and other foreign terrorist fighters to be more careful and aware of any propaganda and exposure to persuasion.

The use of Constructivism theory in this research will thoroughly show how powerful ideas can be in shaping and changing a person's perspective and identity, which will impact their decision-making process and affect their actions. In so doing, this research will adhere to the need of understanding how ideas can be

utilized or exploited as a means to create powerful entities and alter the course of many lives.

1.5   Structure of Thesis

The first chapter of this research provides a general overview of the topic that will be discussed further. It includes the background, research topic, objectives, and the contribution that this research will hopefully provide.

The second chapter is the theoretical framework which this entire research's analyses will referred from. The second chapter will provide a summary of peer-reviewed researches that are related to the Islamic State, its terrorist fighters, and its dwellings and influence in Indonesia along with the general public. It will also contain the theories and concepts that will be referred to in the thesis such as the theory of Constructivism and the concepts of terrorism, identity, symbolic interactionism, and persuasion.

The third chapter contains the methodology of the research where the methods of research and analysis will be laid out which would include the research approach, research method, data collection technique, and data analysis technique for this research.

The fourth chapter contains the analysis of the thesis, presenting all the data gathered in the research process and analyzing it according to the theories and concepts mentioned in the second chapter. This chapter identifies the tools that is used by the Islamic State for propaganda such as magazine publications, social media, videos, anonymous sharing platforms, and instant messaging applications.

It will also present ways in which the Islamic State managed to persuade prospective recruits into joining the Islamic State through the creation of ideas. This chapter will also address both research questions stated in the first chapter.

The fifth chapter, which is the conclusion and recommendation, provides the summary of the analysis in the fourth chapter and also point out the recommendation that can be taken by future researchers into consideration when exploring the topic. It also contains a recommendation for action that can be taken in order to contribute to the prevention of Indonesian citizens travelling to Iraq and Syria to join the organization.