

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I.1 Background

Social media has been an important part of human life since the turn of the millennium. Pew Research Center, an independent online research center, data output regarding social media adoption of United States (U.S.) adults shows that in 2005, only 5% U.S. adults login to social media sites, the number raises to around 50% in 2011, and today 69% of U.S. adults use at least one platform of social media daily.¹ Nowadays, every modern human being from any age and social ladder interact through an online platform of social media. Through social media, anyone can post anything, from reporting the ongongings of our daily lives to starting campaigns of social movements that has real implications in real life.

The “social” aspect of social media refers to its distinction from ‘traditional media’.² The prominent feature of social media is that it enables human being from faraway distances to be able to intermingle or interact by sharing and receiving information to and from each other within seconds. Throughout history, humans have always wanted to communicate with each other across long distances. Most of the earliest long distance communications took place within one’s empire to serve the government’s interest in controlling and

¹ “Social Media Fact Sheet,” Fact Sheet, accessed August 4, 2017, <http://www.pewInternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/>.

² Dhiraj Murthy, “Twitter: Microphone for the masses?,” *Media, Culture & Society*, vol 33 iss 5 (2009).

coordinating their territory. The development of long distance communication method is discussed in the following.

The original postal systems were established exclusively for government officials to provide essential support for the empire. King Charles I, who ruled over England and Ireland, made the Royal Mail postal service available for public use for the first time in 1625.³ Gradually, the European postal services expanded and developed on a large scale during Enlightenment era (1685-1815)⁴ as more and more governments set up postal services for public use.

Alexander Graham Bell invented the wired phone or telephone through his research that began in 1874. In 1877-1878 the first successful telephone call was made and the first telephone line that reached all over the U.S. was manufactured. His invention had been aimed for commercial use, but by the beginning of 1980, around 49,000 home telephones were in use. Public interest for telephone grew rapidly, 2.2 million telephones were in use two decades later as transcontinental telephone line began operating.⁵

Wireless phone or mobile phone has only been mass produced and sold to public in 1973 by Motorola. It weighed more than one kilogram and almost a foot (22,8 centimeters) long. It can only last for 20 minutes after up to ten hours of charging.⁶ Constantly reinvented by engineers, present mobile phones have taken

³ William Lewins, *Her Majesty's Mail: a history of the Post Office* (London, 1865).

⁴ "Enlightenment," History.com, accessed May 31, 2017, <http://www.history.com/topics/enlightenment>.

⁵ "The Development of the Telephone," *Imagining the Internet*, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/predictions/150/1870.xhtml>.

⁶ Richard Goodwin, "The History of Mobile Phones From 1973 To 2008: The Handsets That Made It ALL Happen," *Know Your Mobile*, March 6, 2017, accessed May 27, 2017, <http://www.knowyourmobile.com/nokia/nokia-3310/19848/history-mobile-phones-1973-2008-handsets-made-it-all-happen>.

the name *smart phones* with barely two hours of charging and, depending on the battery capacity, can last more than five hours after each full charge cycle. Whilst it used to facilitate one-on-one voice based communication, nowadays it can connect to the internet, hence text-based social media such as Facebook or Twitter or one-on-one chat applications such as WhatsApp or Telegram are utilized to replace voice based communication media.⁷ Evidently, humans are so eager on interacting and socializing that technological innovations in terms of communication are always renewed and modernized. Nowadays mobile phone is a necessity in a person's daily life, especially the youth, taking up much of their time to co-exist in offline world as they do in the real world. In the U.S. alone, 86% of young adults age 18-29 use at least one platform of social media daily.⁸

The "media" aspect of social media refers to the platform of communication, in this case it's the internet. People used to utilize traditional mass media, such as television, radio, or newspapers to broadcast news or advertisements for communication. The internet features social networking that includes mass media information sharing, a feature of social media where individuals, public figures, media corporations, or governments post stories, news, and/or opinions to the public and let the internet community (netizens)⁹ share it to each other and give comments and their thoughts on them. Its remarks is getting people updated about any latest occasion and enable them to interact directly to the post makers. The post varies from information of what an individual had for

⁷ Daniel Miller, *How the world changed social media* (London: UCL Press, 2016).

⁸ Pew Research Center, "Social Media Fact Sheet."

⁹ "Definition of NETIZEN," Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed July 28, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/netizen/>.

breakfast or feel about their day to breaking news, all according to the interest of the post maker. Therefore, through the internet as a media, mass communication is no longer a one-way communication but an interactive activity between multiple channels consisting of individuals, public figures, media corporations, governments, and so on.

Through this interactivity, many politicians and activists use the internet to sort of introduce themselves publicly by sharing their thoughts and opinions on a subject to gain feedback and support. Richard Spencer, founder of the internet-based far-right group the “alt-right” or Alternative Right in 2008, utilized social media to gain support for the cultural movement whose core belief is to uphold “white identity”.¹⁰ Hillary Clinton, during her presidential campaign, condemned Donald Trump for his racism rethoric and claims that it made hate-groups, such as the alt-right, become popular. “This is not Republicanism as we have known it. These are racist ideas. These are race-baiting ideas. Anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, anti-women ideas – all key tenets making up an emerging racist ideology known as the 'alt-right.’” Clinton said in a speech in Reno, 25th of August, 2016.¹¹

Richard Spencer is hated by the netizen for his white supremacist or neo-Nazi remarks while Hillary Clinton successfully promoted herself as an all-embracing America’s future leader. In a protest during the Inauguration Day of Donald Trump, Richard Spencer was punched twice in the face by anti-fascists for

¹⁰ Southern Poverty Law Center, “Alternative Right,” Extremist Files, accessed May 28, 2017, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/alternative-right>.

¹¹ Amita Kelly. “Clinton: Trump Is ‘Taking Hate Groups Mainstream,’” *National Public Radio*, August 25, 2016, accessed May 28, 2017, <http://www.npr.org/2016/08/25/491358661/clinton-trump-is-taking-hate-groups-mainstream>.

promoting white supremacy and the rise of neo-Nazi¹² while Hillary supporters went on a protest spree in universities all over California chanting “not our president!” on the streets of San Fransisco and Los Angeles.¹³ This incident shows that social media-based movement has real implications in real life, in either negative or positive way. Therefore, social media plays a dominant part in politics as it can set across ideas and opinions that can determine an actor’s stance on a subject while simultaneously receive feedback from supporters and opposition through interactive social networking on the internet platform.

Social media does not only attract politicians, however, it is also popular among those with other agendas, such as terrorist groups. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS is a terrorist group whose name gone viral from between the mess in Middle East region. It shocked everyone in the 21st century by its active campaign and propaganda through social media, such as YouTube and Twitter. In 2014, ISIS released a video on YouTube of the beheading of American journalist, James Foley. In the video, ISIS threatened to kill more captured Americans if President Barack Obama does not halt U.S. intervention in Iraq.¹⁴ Labeled one of the most dangerous terrorist groups on the planet,¹⁵ the name of

¹² Nadeska Alexis, “Neo-Nazi Richard Spencer Got Punched Twice on Inauguration Day,” *Complex News*, January 26, 2017, accessed May 28, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ql7BaOrTvYA>.

¹³ Cyrus Engineer, “Riots on the streets of USA as Hillary Clinton supporters protest and chant '*** Trump',” *Express News*, November 9, 2016, accessed May 28, 2017, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/730363/protests-Donald-Trump-violence-US-election-Hillary-Clinton>.

¹⁴ Chelsea J. Carter, “Video shows ISIS beheading U.S. journalist James Foley,” *CNN News*, August 19, 2014, accessed February 19, 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/19/world/meast/isis-james-foley/>.

¹⁵ Jenna Martin, “A closer look at 5 of the most dangerous terrorist groups on the planet,” *SBS News*, June 20, 2017, accessed on August 10, 2017,

ISIS started to skyrocket among politicians and academia around the globe as it dared to challenge the Superpower State to take immediate actions through such vicious way. However, it appeared that ISIS has been equipped with experience of online murder video posting because it has been done before by ISIS' predecessor, al-Qaeda.

On June 30, 2006, a video featuring Osama Bin Laden uploaded in Islamic militant website.¹⁶ The 19-minute video shows Bin Laden expressing his admiration towards the deceased Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who died earlier that month due to an U.S. airstrike on Hibhib, Iraq.¹⁷ Both Osama Bin Laden and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi are vital actors in the creation of ISIS. Osama Bin Laden was the leader and founding father of al-Qaeda, a multinational jihadist group aimed to battle foreign intervention in Islamic lands, especially against U.S.¹⁸

Al-Qaeda's ideology is Salafi-Jihadism, which is an ultra-conservative movement aims to convert Sunni Muslims to return to the traditions of fundamental Sunni Islam.¹⁹ This explains the group's hatred towards foreign presence and intervention in Muslim countries. Al-Qaeda is notorious for its attack on two World Trade Center buildings in New York, September 11, 2001. Bin Laden was killed on May 1, 2011 when CIA alongside U.S. army raided his

<http://www.sbs.com.au/guide/article/2017/06/13/closer-look-5-most-dangerous-terrorist-groups-planet/>.

¹⁶ Staff at CBC News, "New message purportedly from bin Laden," *CBC News*, June 29, 2006, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/new-message-purportedly-from-bin-laden-1.609939>.

¹⁷ Staff at CBC News, "New message purportedly from bin Laden."

¹⁸ Public Broadcasting Service, "Background: Al Qaeda," *Inside Terror Network*, accessed February 20, 2017,

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/network/alqaeda/indictment.html>.

¹⁹ Global Security, "Salafi Islam," *Military*, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-salafi.htm>.

compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan.²⁰ Since his death, the leadership of al-Qaeda shifted to Ayman al-Zawahiri, whom the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) offers \$25 million reward for his head.²¹

On the other hand, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was the al-Qaeda leader in Iraq. He named his own al-Qaeda branch AQI, which stands for al-Qaeda in Iraq. He pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2004 after series of attacks brought to U.S. forces and United Nations (UN) officials, mainly in Baghdad, since U.S.' invasion to Iraq in March, 2003. His biggest orchestrated attacks including the acclaimed "worst attack ever by al-Qaeda towards Shia Muslim" at Imam Ali Shrine in Najaf, killing 125 people, including Iraq Shia community leader, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim. He also detonated car bombs and sent suicide bombers to numerous attacks and against International Red Cross offices, foreign embassy buildings, to U.S. troops.²² After his death, he was succeeded by Abu Ayyub al-Masri.²³

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi left AQI to be branded as terrorist by fellow Iraqi Muslims, therefore AQI started to lose supports from both Shia and Sunni Iraqis. In an attempt to save the group, Abu Ayyub al-Masri rebranded the group as ISI or Islamic State in Iraq in October, 2006. In 2010, Abu Ayyub al-Masri detonated

²⁰ Staff at CBC News, "Bin Laden death ends 10-year manhunt," *CBC News*, May 1, 2011, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2011/05/01/us-obama.html>.

²¹ "Ayman al-Zawahiri: most wanted: terrorist," FBI's Most Wanted Terrorist, accessed February 20, 2017, https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/wanted_terrorists/ayman-al-zawahiri.

²² Robert Windrem, "Terror strikes blamed on al-Zarqawi in Iraq," *NBC News*, April 5, 2005, accessed February 20, 2017, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/5437742/ns/world_news-hunt_for_al_qaida/t/terror-strikes-blamed-al-zarqawi-iraq.

²³ Tara John, "ISIS: Timeline of the Rise of the Islamic State," *Time.com*, October 9, 2015, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://time.com/4030714/isis-timeline-islamic-state/>.

himself after the U.S.-Iraqi troops surrounded him, and Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi was chosen to be the next leader.²⁴

On May, 2013, ISI attempted to expand its influence by merging with al-Qaeda branch in Syria, the Jabhat al-Nusra, and changed the name to Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS. In 2014, ISIS started taking control of cities in Iraq and Syria. First it took control of Mosul and Fallujah, Iraq, then the city of Raqqa, Syria.²⁵ Both cities become the headquarters of ISIS. However, the leader of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, rejected the whole expanding and merging attempt with the Syrian al-Qaeda franchise, insisting the al-Nusra as independent entity.²⁶ This sparked a conflict between ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra.

In an attempt to stop the conflict, Al-Zawahiri released a statement video expressing his views and concerns towards the aggressiveness of ISIS. Al-Zawahiri also expressed his disagreement of ISIS' extreme ways, such as taking control over cities and executing civilians in public. ISIS' main object seems to have shifted from al-Qaeda. In Syria, al-Qaeda's main objective is to topple Bashar al-Assad and maintain peaceful relations with other rebels, whilst ISIS kidnapped other rebels, openly killing other rebel's leaders, and focusing more on seeking the control over Syrian territories.²⁷ In the end, al-Zawahiri announced his

²⁴ Tara John, "ISIS: Timeline of the Rise of the Islamic State."

²⁵ Tara John, "ISIS: Timeline of the Rise of the Islamic State."

²⁶ Staff at BBC News, "Al-Qaeda disavows ISIS militants in Syria," *BBC News*, February 3, 2014, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26016318>.

²⁷ Ruth Sherlock, "Al-Qaeda cuts links with Syrian group too extreme even for them," *The Telegraph*, February 3, 2014, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10614037/Al-Qaeda-cuts-links-with-Syrian-group-too-extreme-even-for-them.html>.

separation with ISIS. "Al-Qaeda is not responsible for ISIS's actions," he said in an audio statement released to a jihadist web forum in early 2014.²⁸

Since then, ISIS became independent. They advanced on to take control of Mosul and Tikrit in Iraq. On June, 2014, ISIS declared itself a caliphate, or Islamic state, with Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi as Caliph, claiming himself the successor of Prophet Muhammad and the leader of all Muslims.²⁹ In November 2014, Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi released a propaganda video urging ISIS sympathizers to attack anyone that hinders the establishment of caliphate, including Christians, police, and other government institutions. "Oh soldiers of the Islamic State, erupt volcanoes of jihad everywhere. Light the earth with fire against all dictators," he had declared in the video.³⁰

On January 2016, three suicide bombers detonated themselves in a Central Jakarta designated tourist area. Two other attackers dragged two foreigners and shot them. They threw grenades and shot the police trying to clear the area. The police moved fast and cleared the area immediately. Tito Karnavian, the Head of Police, with the information from the police intelligence, announced that Bahrin Naim is behind these attacks. Naim is an Indonesian who was jailed for 2,5 years for illegal possession of weapons in 2010. He is now believed to be living in

²⁸ Karen DeYoung, "Al-Qaeda leader Zawahiri seeks to end infighting among Syrian militants," *Washington Post*, January 23, 2014, accessed February 20, 2017, <https://tinyurl.com/yafhzz3u>.

²⁹ Staff at BBC News, "Isis rebels declare 'Islamic state' in Iraq and Syria," *BBC News*, June 30, 2014, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28082962>.

³⁰ Francis Chan, "Indonesia sees more lone-wolf terror attacks," *The Strait Times*, October 27, 2016, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/indonesia-sees-more-lone-wolf-terror-attacks>.

Raqqa, Syria, as a high ranker ISIS fighter. He orchestrated the attack from afar to his ISIS link in Indonesia.³¹

On June 2016, an ISIS propaganda video was released on Youtube featuring three men each from Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia. The officials identified one of them as Abu Aun al-Malysi or Rafi Udin, from Malaysia. Rafi Udin is a member of *Kumpulan Mujahiddin Malaysia* (KMM) who left his homeland to fight alongside ISIS in Syria in 2014. The message in the video is focusing on those who wished to join ISIS, if they could not travel to Syria, they can go to join Moro people in Mindanao, Southern Philippines.³² In the video, Rafi and two others convince ISIS sympathizers to take actions against non-believers. “Kill them wherever you meet them... If you have a car, hit them... Use your weapons and knives to stab them in the chest,” he said.³³ Since then, police in Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia began to encounter ISIS attacks.

Around the world, many researchers or government officials have contends that ISIS use social media strategy to recruit, communicate, and teach religious propaganda. They are present in every social media platform that is commonly used, such as, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. They recruit people who reach out to them, helping those people to coop to their difficulties on leaving their families and give them tutorials on how to get to Syria and Iraq.

³¹ Greg Botelho, Kathy Quiano and Ivan Watson, “ISIS militant ordered Jakarta attack from abroad.” *CNN News*, January 15, 2016, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/14/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>.

³² Akil Yunus, “IS releases video declaring Philippines a caliphate,” *The Star Online*, June 23, 2016, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/06/23/is-releases-video-declaring-philippines-a-caliphate/>.

³³ Staff at Malaysia Stylo News, “ISIS fighter warns of 'slaughter,’” *Malaysia Stylo News*, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.malaysiastylonews.com/152740/malaysians-isis-fighter-warns-slaughter/>.

Once fighting or working alongside ISIS, these people become Foreign Terrorist Fighter (FTF). If those people cannot leave their families, they may as well pledge allegiance to the terrorist organization by initiating violence against the Islamic State's enemy; the Americans, non-Muslim, and government officials. Despite this, ISIS also uses social media to communicate with pre-existing Islamic terrorist whom have pledged allegiance with ISIS. They communicate with ISIS-pledged groups around the world to mount attacks, like the Thamrin attack in Jakarta that was orchestrated by Bahrun Naim in Syria.

I.2 Research Question(s)

Indonesia is one of Southeast Asian countries that possess notorious homegrown Islamic extremist terrorism since its independence in August 1945. The recent formation of ISIS in 2014 posed threat to Indonesia's national security as ISIS extend their reach to influence Southeast Asia,³⁴ especially Indonesia as the largest Muslim populated country, that many Islamic extremist terrorist groups accept their propaganda positively and even express their support by pledging their allegiance to ISIS. Through this extensive reach, they can also radicalize individuals in faraway places and persuade them to take terrorist actions in the name of ISIS.

This extensive reach can be done in many ways, but the prominent way ISIS is utilizing is through the media of internet, particularly social media. Islamic State's social media activity is an urgency because it ignites 'lone wolf terrorism',

³⁴ INTERPOL Indonesia, interview on May 26, 2017.

and through social media they convince and accommodate FTFs to leave their homeland, and it gives reason for the pre-existing Islamic extremist terrorist groups in Indonesia to act again, now with broader connections and given momentum.

Based on the problems explained above, the research questions for this topic are:

1. In what way does ISIS use social media to further its propaganda?
2. Why are Indonesians prone to ISIS' radicalization?
3. How do ISIS' social media activities threaten Indonesia's national security?

I.3 Research Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a detailed and highly accurate description of the on-going phenomenon of ISIS' social media activities. There are many ways and channels of the distribution of ISIS ideology in Indonesia, however the researcher is going to focus on the social media channel of distribution. This thesis put into words how ISIS' social media activity is a national security threat for Indonesia and how the diffusion of ideas through increasing technology contribute to the spread of transnational terrorism, hence its backlash to the spread of ISIS in Indonesia.

There are types of ISIS threats in Indonesia that has direct connection with ISIS' social media activity. The researcher aims to categorizes or classify these types to give clearer image of ISIS in Indonesia for the public and academia to

consume and research more. This thesis is also aimed to document a causal process. In this case, it is social media and the spread of terrorism. Social media platform is utilized to be able to interact with each other with the absence of being straight face-to-face. Social media is used by everyone regardless of gender and age. Therefore, this thesis is also to spread awareness of the grim side of social media.

I.4 Research Objective

This thesis is written to fulfill the terms and conditions to graduate from Universitas Pelita Harapan and get a diploma for the researcher's undergraduate studies of International Relations. From this thesis, the researcher expects to gain more knowledge and experience in writing, analyzing, and data finding. The researcher expects to be able to meet new people that are experts in this scope of knowledge and have the experience of protecting Indonesia's national security from ISIS social media activity.

It also for the general public to consume so they may be informed of the presence of terrorism in social media platform. Also, for the general public to be aware of ISIS social media tactics and forms of threat so they may understand the growing threat of ISIS. Moreover, it is so the general public can filter and be careful of the information they grasp from the internet so they will not swallow it raw but ignores the information that does not have clear source and does not in line with their beliefs.

I.5 Structure of Writing

Chapter I: Introduction

The introduction consists of five sub-chapter: the background, research question(s), research purpose, research objective, and structure of writing. The background provides the context of the overall topic. The research questions gives clarity of the urgency of the problem and the questions that can navigate the topic analysis as the focus of research. The research purpose is to state the usage of the thesis and research objective is to state the goal expected from the thesis. The structure of writing is to explain the content of the structure of the thesis, including the chapters and sub-chapters.

Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework consists of two sub-chapters. Literature review includes review of books and journals that are used for the thesis, theory and concepts sub-chapter explains the International Relations theory to apply on the answers to the research questions and general concepts according to the thesis topic and researcher's understanding.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

Methodology consists of three sub-chapters. Overall it explains the method on which the researcher uses for the thesis and the technical ways the researcher is going to undergo for data gathering and analysis. The researcher used various

ways advised for data finding and analysis according to the research method she conducts in this thesis.

Chapter IV: Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of three sub-chapters, each sub-chapter answers each research question. First sub-chapter will lay out ISIS' social media propaganda tactic. It includes what social media platforms they are using and their activities on social media. Second sub-chapter explains ISIS' agenda to Southeast Asia region and an analysis of the reasons Indonesian Muslim are prone to be ISIS symphatizers by examining ISIS' ideologies. Third sub-chapter consists of two variables; lone wolf and FTF.

Chapter V: Conclusion

The conclusion has two sub-chapters, the conclusion and the recommendations. They wrap up the entirety of the thesis in a clear manner along with the recomendations towards the government, law enforcer, and the readers.