
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Requisites of Deradicalisation: Study on the De-Ideologisation of Indonesian Ex-Terrorists

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ABSTRACT

Studies on terrorism in Indonesia heavily emphasize a security-first approach, which has had profound implications for counter-terrorism strategies, policies, and terrorist imprisonment. This approach, however, fails to properly grasp the internal “deep experience” of terrorists. There are currently 289 terrorist convicts serving their prison sentences in 113 Correctional Institutions throughout Indonesia. Until 2017, over 60 convicted terrorists have been documented for recidivist behaviour and repeating their crimes. This phenomenon raises the question of the possibility of de-ideologization of terrorists in incarceration and if Indonesia’s criminal justice system is truly effective in deradicalizing terrorists. Our study explores this question by interviewing three different groups: ex-terrorists who have served their prison sentence, terrorists who were still incarcerated in prison, and former sympathizers of ISIS who had been deported back from Syria to Indonesia. We explored the social elements and actors that constituted their radical view, their experiences in prison, and the factors that had led them to abandon terrorist activities or disavow their support for ISIS. We conclude that social-legal policies aiming to effectively reduce the ideological reproduction of terrorism cannot be carried out using a heavy-handed security approach, but sociological insights are required to grasp the allure and kernel of truth behind terrorist acts.

KEYWORDS

De-ideologisation, deradicalisation, Adaptation, Conformity, Rebellion.

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1. Introduction

In 2022, 1,031 people were detained in Indonesia for terrorism crimes; this number encompasses those awaiting trial as well as those who had been convicted. From 2020 to 2022 alone, Indonesia’s counter-terrorism task force, *Densus 88*, arrested 658 individuals suspected of terrorism. The National Agency for Terrorism Prevention (BNPT) reports that 116 out of 1,036 ex-convicts of terrorism crimes have demonstrated recidivist behavior, including 19 individuals currently still detained in various correctional facilities.ⁱ According to BNPT, such recidivism stems from the proliferation of extreme ideologies in prison amongst convicts of terrorism crimes. This claim suggests that prisons have inadvertently functioned as an incubation space for extreme ideologies—allowing terrorists to devise future plans, find new recruits, and further radicalize one another.

The ease for terrorist cells and networks to agglomerate themselves partially explains the frequent number of terrorist attacks in Indonesia; however, these attacks tend to be low in intensity, often resulting in very few casualties.ⁱⁱ Nonetheless, these accounts raise serious questions on the *possibility* and *extent* of terrorist de-ideologisation in Indonesia. How far do deradicalisation efforts help convicted terrorists to disengage from their groups?

Deradicalisation programs are widely defined by their aim to diminish and/or transform the predisposition and investment of individuals to the ideologies that prompt them to commit acts of terrorism. While deradicalisation is most closely associated with efforts to rehabilitate terrorists in detainment, it can also be preventive in nature, such as being aimed at “individuals or groups

considered vulnerable to recruitment".ⁱⁱⁱ Another closely-related term, namely *Counter-Radicalisation*, aims to "broader public diplomacy efforts to reduce the appeal of terrorist ideologies."^{iv} Deradicalisation programs in Indonesia are no different in how they pursue similar aims to the definitions above. However, as Solahudin and Ihsan Ali Fauzi argued in their seminal research, these programs have not been properly informed by a coherent body of knowledge and research. They put little interest in identifying the specific processes of how terrorists become radicalized and largely ignore how extreme ideologies are constituted through the dynamics of social transformation rather than the result of individual predilections.^v

Studies on terrorist deradicalisation tend to focus on two subject areas. The micro-approach often employed by social psychology aims to elucidate social factors that condition individuals or groups to engage in acts of terrorism. These streams of research largely employ a symbolic interactionism approach and, as such, focus on symbols, situations, and socialisation processes that encourage someone to invest in role-taking and self-identifying themselves within acts of terrorism.^{vi} Micro-level studies have also paid significant attention to how individuals become entangled with terrorist groups, extending their analysis to the specific steps of terrorist recruitment.^{vii}

The macro approach, on the other hand, posits terrorism as a symptom or byproduct of wider social phenomena. Historical analysis, for example, traces the logic of terrorism in the emergence of nationalism and secular politics of the 1789 French Revolution, in which the dissolution of Monarchy power necessitates the utilization of terror as a tool to control the behaviour of modern civil subjects.^{viii} Other hallmark studies of a more modest scale have identified the correlation between acts of terrorism and periods of economic downturn,^{ix} as well as the prevalence of "copycat acts" from different terrorist groups following the execution of a successful terrorist attack.^x These studies inform deradicalisation efforts on a broad level and, as such, focus on the social prevention of terrorist ideologies rather than the rehabilitation of individuals.

Based on Merton's theory of Adaptation, the problem with deradicalizing individuals, however, lies in the absence of a universally agreed-upon measurement tool to gauge the *degree of radicalism* in terrorists. One facet of this methodological problem lies in defining "terrorist ideology" as an operational concept in which the individual behaviour of terrorists can be explained by their specific ideological makeup. From a psychological lens, ideological beliefs are both dynamic and long-standing: while they are inadvertently subject to transformation, individuals tend to adhere to one for a prolonged period of time. As such, one way to determine if terrorists still cling to their ideologies—or have disengaged with them—is by recognizing how individuals have successfully *adapted* in relating to their world and environment in a way that demonstrates a decisive break with their previously-held beliefs. This framework implies that the influence of ideology is *unconscious*: their effects cannot be determined by explicit disavowal, even if the individuals *actually* believe they have managed to be successful in their disengagement.

The discipline of sociology offers one possible solution to the conceptual deadlock of understanding terrorist adaptation. For example, Robert K. Merton categorizes the different outcomes of social adaptation in relation to two social aspects: *Cultural Goals* (the specific values, practices, and modes of being considered to be ideal or acceptable in a given society) and *Institutionalized Means* (methods that are collectively deemed as legitimate avenues for social mobility and transformation). Within this framework, individuals and social groups do not necessarily view the social world as a totality: they might approve the Cultural Goals of a society and disavow its Institutionalized Means, and vice versa. Merton categorizes these specific positions within the acceptance/rejection matrix into five distinct positions: *Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism, and Rebellion*.^{xi}

The first three positions are straightforward. *Conformity* is a mode of adaptation where people accept both Cultural Goals and Institutionalized Means of society. *Innovation*, on the other hand, involves an acceptance of Cultural Goals but disapproval of Institutionalized Means. Meanwhile, the *Ritualist* rejects the Cultural Goals of society but recognizes Institutionalized Means as legitimate. The fourth and final position, namely *Retreatism* and *Rebellion*, are similar in their disavowal of Cultural Goals and Institutionalized Means. Yet, while retreatists aim to completely *escape* the pressures and demands of organized society, those adopting the position of rebels actively attempt to *substitute* new goals and means in their place.

Merton's framework—which has often been employed in criminology—enables us to identify the process of social adaptation amongst convicts of terrorism crimes in a more robust manner. As an ideological act, terrorism combines specific ways of seeing the world *along with* the apparatus and means deemed to be appropriate for transforming it, including using violence^{xii}. As such, the outcome of terrorist de-ideologisation might not be a wholesale rejection of the values that informed their acts, but rather the divorce between their religious and/or cultural aspirations and the utilization of violence to attain them: in Merton's typology, this would signify Innovation. On the other hand, terrorists who deem their personal beliefs to be completely incompatible with the dominant values of their society might adopt a position of Retreatism—choosing to cling to their "inner worlds" while refusing any sort of engagement with the "external" social structure.

2. Methodology

In this qualitative study, we conducted in-depth interviews^{xiii} with ten different informants who had been convicted of terrorism crimes. Our primary interlocutors can be categorized into two major groups: the first being ex-terrorists who had completed their period of penal conviction, and the second group comprising convicts who are still incarcerated in Nusa Kambangan Correctional Facility located in Cilacap, Central Java. To interview detained terrorists, we were required to attain a special permit issued by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. Even after acquiring this permit, our informants were initially reluctant to grant us an audience. This temporary setback is understandable as those convicted of terrorism crimes are well-known to be especially introverted and have limited interaction with other people throughout their prison sentences. We eventually managed to acquire their consent to be interviewed after arriving with our group of students from Universitas Negeri Jakarta, which convinced them of our formal status as lecturers.

Interviews were conducted in a flexible but structured manner. For the first group, our questions sought to narrate their journey in-and-out of terrorism: from their early involvement in communal Quran reading groups, which marked their entry into the radical network, their experiences of being caught and convicted, as well as how they spend their days in Nusa Kambangan; and eventually, their release from prison and their current daily lives. For the second group consisting of still-incarcerated convicts, our questions focused instead on their personal background, including the socio-economic factors that prompted their involvement in terrorist cells, as well as their personal ideological beliefs. We also noted down the structure of their daily activities in prison, discerning the specific treatments they faced as inmates convicted of terrorism crimes.

To supplement our interviews, we also collected several forms of secondary data, including documents from their court proceedings, news articles on their acts of terrorism well as further interviews with various secondary informants, including wardens and officers in Nusa Kambangan Facility, experts on terrorism in Indonesia, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, and the police force.

The N-Vivo Software was utilized for qualitative data analysis, particularly to generate both Open and Axial Coding for interview transcripts and secondary data sources. In doing this, we follow the typology of coding by Strauss, which comprises open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.^{xiv} Our final step was to conduct a Narrative Analysis by establishing connections between different elements of the code that form a Plot. This enables us to identify the important elements of our informants' life experiences—which were broken down into different Episodes—by omitting insignificant periods and settings.^{xv}

3. Discussion

3.1 Entering Rebellion: From Cosmopolitan Solidarity to Violent Ideology

The process in which "ordinary citizens" are recruited into terrorist cells tends to involve three quintessential elements. First, a general sense of global solidarity with "fellow Muslims" who have been marginalized and endured oppression around the world. Second, being recruited into an organization—usually in the form of *pengajian* or Quran reading groups—enhances and transforms such feelings of solidarity into a stable ideological position that justifies the utilization of violence. While the combination of these two elements might be sufficient to persuade someone into committing acts of terrorism, they would be greatly amplified by a third factor, namely "personal" experiences that seemed to confirm the oppression of Muslims as a universal phenomenon. These might include witnessing first-hand religious conflicts in their neighbourhood or listening to stories of inter-religion violence in various Indonesian regions such as Ambon and Poso. In particular, the stories of Muslim combatants in these two cities have played an important discursive role for terrorist networks—helping them to frame religious struggle as acts of heroism, providing a trove of practical knowledge pertaining to combat and strategy, as well as a general yardstick that can be replicated by other *jihadis* to demonstrate their ideological commitment.

Almost all ex-convicts we interviewed would narrate their transformation into terrorists as beginning with a deep sense of empathy for the plight of Muslims across the globe. On the one hand, resistance against the atrocities committed against the Muslim populace in Palestine, Bosnia, and Iraq has galvanized universalist solidarity for Human Rights; on the other hand, our interlocutors professed not to see these conflicts as humanitarian crises but rather as an orchestrated oppression against Muslims by Imperialist Western Powers. One of our informants, AF, explained to us the drivers that encouraged him to join a terrorist cell:

There were three main factors. The first was a sense of camaraderie and friendship. The second was a strong desire, from my end, to stand up against the oppression of fellow Muslims. The third was that I wanted to become part of the group promised by the Prophet [Muhammad] as *Thoifah Manshuroh* (those who were helped). (Interview with AF, 2017)

This narrative provides us with crucial insights into terrorist ideologisation. By professing his aspiration to be part of the privileged *Thoifah Manshuroh*, AF asserts the fundamental role of organization and solidarity amongst terrorists. It can be argued that no

terrorists would fit perfectly into the profile of a “lone wolf”, as even acts of terrorism that were planned and executed by one person nonetheless belie a larger collective struggle taken up by a brotherhood of believers. Another informant, ST, tells us how feelings of injustice informed his process of radicalisation:

“I was a victim of doctrine. Even before I became a cop, I was already enraged by [what happened in] Palestine, Bosnia, the American invasion. And I was drawn to heroism. Long story short, after being appointed to the police force, I met with the *Jamaah Islamiyah* cell. In 2005, I began to pay visits to the Bali Bombing convicts. In 2006 I read Aman Abdurrahman’s books on *Syirik Demokrasi*.^{xvi} And in 2009, I joined Dulmatin (Interview with ST, 2018).”

The recurring motive of standing up against injustice also emerged during our interview with YR, who was imprisoned for conducting a bombing in Beji, West Java, as well as AS, another convict:

My previous life in Medan was brutal. You can even say I was a thug. So I moved to Jakarta for a better life a better wage. It was 2002 when I met Sofyan, who was the person who introduced me to *Majelis Mujahidin* [the council of *Mujahideen*, or people who engage in *jihād*]. Back then, I really looked up to Ustadz Abu and made a lot of friends. After the explosion in Beji, I ran away to Medan. Back then, I saw what I did as a righteous vengeance against those that had hurt Muslims, against the police who had hurt the ulemas (Interview with YR, 2018).

“I came from a broken home family. I wasn’t raised by my father and mother but my grandparents. I entered the [radical] groups because of the injustice against Muslims. The events in Ambon, in Poso. Our frontal (direct) response was due to the nature of the injustice (Interview with AS, 2018).”

In their formative period of radicalisation, would-be terrorists are transformed into a “cosmopolitan” subject. By asserting their commitment towards the plight of Muslims in Bosnia, Palestine, or Iraq, radicalized individuals internalize a new sense of self-identity that transcends national boundaries. This transformation is dialectically reinforced by the responses of political elites in the United States and developed European countries—particularly in their denouncement of terrorism as a global war. The making of a terrorist involves shedding any traces of one’s previous individuality while *simultaneously* inflating their sense of self-grandiosity to unprecedented levels: once they were ordinary people, but now they have become the sworn enemies of global superpowers.

However, it takes a concerted effort to turn phantasies of heroism and to rise up against Western oppressors of Muslims around the world into *actual* acts of terrorism. This is the function of *jihadi* Quran reading groups, which lures its members by appealing to their general sense of solidarity towards fellow-Muslims, and then transform these aspirations into a political ideology of violence. In *jihadi* circles, the events in Bosnia, Palestine, Ambon and Poso are ideologically reconstructed as irrefutable proof of oppression against Muslims. Our informants recounted the use of propaganda materials in these meetings: they would be shown videos of slaughtered Palestinians in Israel, displaced victims of war in Bosnia and other Arab states, as well as audiovisual materials produced by Al-Qaeda. New recruits would also be assigned to ideological mentors, who provide them with literature written by *jihadi* figures such as Mohamad bin Abdul Wahhab, Abdullah Azzam, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir dan Aman Abdurrahman^{xvii} and help them to interpret religious texts. This mentoring is crucial in laying down the ideological foundations, which would be followed by hands-on tactical training.

“Why did I want to become a terrorist? Because of empathy. I read the Ambon events and asked: why did the state side with the Christians? When a Muslim is murdered, the state is silent, but when a Christian is killed, the entire world goes into panic. After joining Anwar’s Quran reading group and understanding the *dalil* [religious dogma], we were divided into groups based on our specific preferences: first-hand arms combat or explosives (Interview with AA, 2018).”

The end goal of this entire radicalisation process, as AA explains to us, is practical: terrorist cells require individuals who are able to supply and handle automatic weapons and craft explosives to be deployed to places of conflict such as Ambon and Poso. This praxis ensures that recruits understand the grand goal of their political struggle, namely the establishment of a government with Islamic principles (*Khilafah*), and justifies the necessity of employing violence.

3.2 The Prison Life of Convicted Terrorists

Convicts of terrorism crimes are likely to experience several phases of incarceration. All of our informants (aside from Dhanian and her family, whose experience in joining ISIS we will cover later) were initially detained in various places before being transferred to

a formal holding cell. Most convicts, like ST, were arrested in a crackdown on their safehouses. B was apprehended by Densus 88 when he was visiting his child after a period of hiding, while AA was caught in a mosque. After being arrested, they were not immediately brought to police detainment. Ag, for example, claimed to be taken to a cheap hotel, where he was subjected to interrogation and torture for a week. He claimed to finally give up after listening to his brother's screams in a room next door: AG' brother was not involved in any terrorist activity but was arrested after receiving a text message from him. B, Z, AT and ST all professed to experience similar treatment—or, as B puts it, they have to be covertly “brutalized” firsthand before moving on to formal legal procedures.^{xviii}

After a week of violent interrogation, the terrorists would be transferred to a holding cell in the local police (Polda) complex and wait to be formally registered in the police records. During this period, they would face another round of interrogation—albeit this time conducted in a more formal and humane manner. In this phase, the police would have to wait for the Indonesian General Attorney Office to approve holding a trial. Once a trial is set, suspects are formally recognized as detainees of the Attorney Office—and not the police—where they would be transferred to the Correctional Facility of the Mobile Brigade Head Office (Mako Brimob) until given a formal verdict.

The Mako Brimob Correctional Facility is a temporary detainment site. The complex was originally designated as a place to detain police officers involved in criminal activities and is far from suited to contain detainees for a prolonged period of time—let alone suspects of terrorism crimes that are deemed to pose a high-security risk. On 8 May 2018, a violent riot erupted in the Mako Brimob facility. Detainees took over the prison for two days—seizing automatic weapons en-site, engaging in a standoff with police forces, and executing five police officers. One inmate was killed in the process. The Head of the Indonesian Police Force, Tito Karnavian, admitted that the complex had been facing overcapacity for some time. Ideally, Mako Brimob can only house 64 detainees with a maximum limit of 90. By May 2018, however, there were 155 inmates in the location.

Ag spent 14 months in Mako Brimob detainment. He and other inmates would spend 24 hours in his cell for four days a week—every Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. Their only “free time” was a one-hour period of receiving visitors every Tuesday and Thursday, as well as one hour for sports and physical activities on Friday. Their daily activities were also designed to be as simple as possible: breakfast at 7 in the morning, lunch at 12 noon, and supper at 5 in the evening. Throughout their time in Mako Brimob, inmates did not experience any correctional or social programs as they were merely waiting for a verdict. As such, they experienced an intense, prolonged state of being “left alone” by the justice system and the world at large.

It is in this isolated setting that terrorists in Mako Brimob would often engage with a more hardened “*ikhwan*” (brother), leading them to form strong bonds, exchange skills, and further radicalize one another. AA, for example, shared the same cell bloc with the high-profile terrorist Umar Patek, a member of *Jamaah Islamiyah* and alleged vice field-coordinator of the 2002 Bali Bombing; in his heyday, Patek would have a USD 1 Million bounty for his arrest.

Our interviews with AA and B revealed several factors which might have contributed to the Mako Brimob riot. *First*, the lack of free time outside their cells has led inmates to feel agitated, which is compounded by the lack of room within their confinement due to prison overcrowding. *Second*, within these already-suffocating settings, the control of prison guards is paradoxically lax: at times, officers would even hang out in cells with inmates while carrying their weapons. *Third*, the prison armoury is located dangerously close to the cell blocks: in the event that the barrier separating both areas is overcome, it is possible for inmates to gain access to weapons. *Fourth*, prison officers would often terrorize inmates—usually by claiming that they are likely to be imprisoned for life or given the death sentence. Consequently, terrorists waiting for their legal sentence in Mako Brimob would feel despair and lose any incentive to change their behaviour. These factors, combined with the mingling of “senior” and rookie terrorists due to prison overcapacity, ultimately raise the possibility of radicalisation within Mako Brimob walls.

After the May 2018 riots, all terrorists detained in Mako Brimob were transferred to the Nusa Kambangan Correctional Facility in Cilacap, Central Java. Moving forward, a new protocol to determine the placement of convicts committing terrorism crimes is established. While the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) remains responsible for classifying the risk level of individual terrorists, they would receive inputs from Densus 88 on the risk level of a region that would house the convicts; legal expertise from the Attorney Office pertaining to the legal status and progress of each terrorist case; as well as recommendations from the Directorate General of Correction for the capacity and security of prisons.^{xix}

AA was transferred from Mako Brimob to Nusa Kambangan in November 2013—four and a half years before the Mako Brimob incidents took place. Located on an island off the southern coast of Java, Nusa Kambangan is regarded to be a proper maximum-security prison, and its inmates are allowed to roam more freely within the complex: they can do fitness, play badminton, read books, conduct prayer, and even organize pisciculture (farming fish). Most inmates who just moved to the facility would still endure bullying and abuse by prison officers—“*digulung*”, as AA puts it—under the pretext of making them docile throughout their prison

sentence. However, terrorists have been largely spared from this treatment, as guards believe they would respond negatively when subjected to violence. Terrorists in Nusa Kambangan—especially individuals deemed to have extreme or radical views—are also required to attend religious lessons delivered by preachers certified by the Department of Religion. These lessons are a prerequisite for their conditional release, and some convicts claim to attend them nonchalantly “just to fill out the attendance form”.

On 22 January 2016, AA was transferred once more—this time to a correctional facility in Sentul, West Java, as a detainee under the purview of BNPT. Similar to Nusa Kambangan, the BNPT complex in Sentul is similarly designated as a maximum-security prison but with far tighter security measures due to its mostly indoor environment. Nonetheless, AA claimed that the facility did not suffer from overcrowding: there was enough food for everyone, and every inmate received their own cell.

Aside from its more-enclosed living space, the BNPT Correctional Facility still allowed its inmates—all of which are convicted of terrorism crimes—to pursue activities within the complex. Every day, cell doors are opened from 6 AM to 5 PM. Throughout the week, convicts are required to attend various classes: on Monday, a civics knowledge class from 9 to 10 AM; a one-hour entrepreneurship class on Wednesday, where convicts are taught various skills such as calligraphy, screen-printing, or opening an online shop; on Thursday, a psychology class and discussions delivered by a lecturer from Universitas Indonesia; and on Friday, a one-hour religious education class by a lecturer from Jakarta State Islamic University (UIN Jakarta). There are no classes on Tuesday, and inmates are allowed to watch television during the weekends. Similar to Mako Brimob, there is a one-hour visiting session on Tuesday and Thursday.

While our informants perceive these correctional programs with different degrees of hostility or enthusiasm, they are unanimously hostile towards one particular aspect of their incarceration. In 2012, a newly-ratified Government Regulation has put pressure on Correctional Facilities to implement stricter criteria’s for releasing inmates convicted of three different types of crime: corruption, terrorism, or narcotics.^{xx} For terrorists, the provision of Government Regulation Number 99—or GR 99—has “made them distressed” as it severely hinders their possibility of receiving parole:

“We feel that it [our efforts navigating prison life] was all for nothing because there is no reward. Back then, it was different. Take Edi Jablay. He got [was sentenced for] 7 years but got out after 4 years and six months. But for Pak (Mr.) Agus, he got a verdict of 5 years and had to stay for 5 years because of GR 99 (Interview with AA and B, 2018).”

Government Regulation Number 99/2012 has generated two sets of problems against efforts of terrorist deradicalisation. On the immediate level, it provokes terrorists to view their incarceration in a far more negative light, hence potentially exacerbating feelings of injustice and oppression that formed the basis of their hateful ideology. Some convicts see prison wardens and officers as being the real beneficiaries of this provision: as the number of convicts determines the allocation of the state budget towards penitentiaries, the amount of funds that could be swindled would also increase.

“Many inmates feel hatred towards the prison officers, towards the law, because of GR 99. Don’t be surprised if this regulation makes inmates more hardened and hostile instead. (Interview with AA and B, 2018).”

On a larger scale, the provision itself has been singled out by experts to be a significant cause of the overcapacity crisis in Indonesian prisons.^{xxi} Overcapacity, simply put, would lead to a far more dismal quality of life in prisons, leaving inmates feeling agitated. Such a general atmosphere of agitation is not only uncondusive for deradicalisation efforts but could foster radicalisation and impetus for rebellion within prison walls. The decision to put convicts of terrorism crimes in Mako Brimob before the 2018 riots, too, in spite of its obvious risks, was due to other facilities already exceeding their capacities. As such, the overcapacity of prisons also presents a *structural* problem that has derailed efforts of terrorist deradicalisation.

3.3 Radical Ideology, Without The Hatred: The Case of Isis Returnees

As respondents such as B, AA, Al and ST have conveyed to us, one path of terrorist ideologisation involves the transformation of cosmopolitan solidarity into violent ideologies. In recent years, however, a different path of radicalisation has opened up through the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The establishment of ISIS provided the legitimacy for a new expression of radical Islamic beliefs that does not necessarily entail acts of terrorism in one’s own country but participates in establishing a Caliphate in Syria, a distant land:

“In the end times, Syria is a blessed place. It is in Syria, too, that *al malhamah Qubra* [the final battle] will take place. Furthermore, in the end, times there will be a Caliphate of *minhaj alal nubuwwah* [following the precepts of prophethood] after the era of *Mulkan Jabariyah* [the kingdom of hubris]. ISIS claims themselves to be *khilafah minhaj alal nubuwwah*. For a long time, jihadis have believed that now is the end times. They tend to fuse this

belief with Takfirism [the gesture of denouncing another Muslim as apostates] and believe that in the end times, the world will be divided into two camps: those of *al haq*, or followers of *Imam Mahdi* [the final leader in Islamic eschatology], and *al batil*, the followers of *Dajjal* [the false prophet].^{xxii}

Some experts, Solahudin included, have posited the theological component of the ISIS project as the main driver behind the exodus of Indonesians—and thousands of other people around the world—to Syria. However, the experiences of DH, who was just 16 years old when she joined ISIS in 2015, necessitate us to see this theological explanation in a different light.

The daughter of a high-ranking administrator in Batam, Riau Archipelago, DH was in high school when she went to Syria along with 26 other members of her extended family—including her grandmother and cousins who were still children. She first learned about ISIS and their call for Muslims around the world to come to Syria from her uncle, who went by the name of Abu Umar. To fund their travels, her father sold their house. The family departed for Istanbul in August 2015; upon arrival, they were helped to cross the border between Turkey and Syria by ISIS sympathizers. To prevent raising suspicion, the family had to be divided into several groups. Of 26 people, only 19 managed to arrive in Syria; the other seven, including Abu Umar and his two wives, were arrested by Turkish officials before crossing the border.

What makes DH's story of radicalisation stand out compared to the terrorist convicts comprising our other group of interlocutors was that she, who was still a child, was the *one* most enthused about coming to Syria amongst her family members. At one point, DH even threatened her parents to leave Indonesia for Syria on her own if they kept on delaying their departure. According to DH and her mother, R, her uncle Abu Umar was indeed influential in influencing the extended family to commit *hijrah*.^{xxiii} At the time, Abu Umar, a formerly-successful entrepreneur, was crippling in debt and believed that leaving for Syria to join ISIS would open up new opportunities: a job paid in Dollars, which is valued more than the Indonesian Rupiah, a far better standard of living for his family; and to achieve while staying true to the theological call of establishing a caliphate. Nonetheless, DH's personal conviction stemmed from a different source.

"I learned about ISIS from Tumblr, reading from users such as *Diary of Muhajirah* and *Paladine of Jihad*. They provided the step-by-step on how to go to Syria, including what to do once you've arrived in Turkey. I especially liked *Diary of Muhajirah*. They published poetry, statements, and dialogues that were meant for young women. It is from the internet that I came to know that many teenagers around the world went to Syria. I also came to know that the people who go there are not dim-witted. They are intelligent souls. A lot of the testimonies I read on Twitter came from people from the United Kingdom. I also contacted Ummu Layth, who came from Scotland^{xxiv} (Interview with DH, 2018)."

DH professes that she was not a particularly devout girl in middle school. She only became more pious after entering high school, in which:

"...I paid attention to my friends on Facebook and how their clothes looked really good [which makes me envious]. In Junior High, I was still a naughty (*bandel*) adolescent. I only started reading the Islamic books that have always been stored in my house in High School. And then, I read articles on ISIS on Facebook (Interview with DH, 2018)."

For adolescents such as DH, internet propaganda was a powerful driver in her enthusiasm for *hijrah*. She professed to begin imagining Syria as a profoundly tranquil place on earth—one that she can visit and leave in her thoughts anytime she wanted to.^{xxv} Furthermore, this alluring visual imagery is supported by the well-known theological dictum along the lines of, "once the caliphate has arrived, it is your duty to go there". To this, DH's mother added that she had read that "the caliphate is a land between the flaps of two angel wings".

"The *hadith*^{xxvi} I followed was the *hadith* to Syam (Syam is the name of Syria at the time of the Prophet Muhammad). This made me elated with feelings of gratitude when I entered Syria. [It was said to be] a blessed land! I thought that Europe was very un-Islamic, but in Syria, I met a lot of Europeans. But they would flee once more after finding that ISIS, too, was very un-Islamic (Interview with DH, 2018)."

DH's mother, R, further adds that their positive reception of ISIS propaganda was influenced by a sense of longing to live in the golden age of an Islamic caliphate:

"We read and believed that by *hijrah*, we would live like it was the times of Prophet Muhammad. Food was provided, and so was work. Schools would be free of charge. We don't have to pay for hospitals. And we thought,

there's no way they lied, they cited the Quran! They also said that the funds we expended for *hijrah* [to reach Syria] will be gradually reimbursed. We also watched their videos, and they all looked very nice (Interview with R, 2017).

ISIS propaganda relies on convincing its viewers how prosperous and vibrant their economic life could be under the ISIS Caliphate. A quintessential document containing the utmostly-refined form of this marketed phantasy is the 2015 *"A Brief Guide to The Islamic State"* written by Abu Rumaysah al-Britani, who was born from Hindu parents in London under the name of Siddhartha Dhar.^{xxvii} His writings contained a thorough—and completely fabricated—account of day-to-day life in the ISIS caliphate: the advanced technology, sophisticated education, as well as the devout, brilliant people that form the community. Here is a mouth-watering passage he wrote on the delights one would find upon arrival.

"If you thought you would be living on stale bread and septic water, then erase that culinary fib from your mind. Below are some of the most popular dishes served on the streets of the Caliphate, and some familiar snacks. Shawarma. Shish kebab. Falafel sandwich. Jubun bread. Fruity cocktail. Tea and coffee. Ice cream. Chocolate..."

After a brief exposition of the tantalizing culinary offered by the caliphate, Rumasyah follows this passage by describing how delightful life would be under the sunny skies of Syria:

"This really depends on where you are, but as it stands, the caliphate offers an exquisite Mediterranean climate that has all the makings of a plush holiday resort."

The allure of ISIS propaganda does not simply lie in the self-actualization through *hijrah*, let alone the heroism of armed struggle against all-powerful impious forces which had captivated individuals into terrorist cells in the early 2000s. Above all, what they offer is the good life that one can enjoy—and all the while being fully-justified to enjoy it under the banner of religious piety. Life in the ISIS Caliphate is supposed to be *without contradiction*—pure and fully-ensured of its sanctity. A widely-circulated video entitled *"Eid Greetings from the Land of the Khilafah"*, posted by an English *jihadi* in ISIS, neatly encapsulates this sentiment:

"I don't think there's anything better than living in the land of *khilafah*. You're not living under oppression. You're not living under *kuffar* [the rule of *kafirun*—those who are thankless to God]. We don't need any democracy. All we need is *sharia*.^{xxviii}

Paradoxically, these phantasies—while claiming to be available for "all believers"—are certainly only attainable by a privileged few: those who have the financial capabilities to deal with travel agents, purchase a ticket overseas, are savvy in using social media, and are proficient in at least the English and/or Arabic language. DH's own family had to spend thousands of US Dollars just to fund their travels and much, much more for their living expenses in Syria and pay off the smugglers carrying them across the Turkish-Syrian border. While DH's family can be considered to be well-off by Indonesian standards, the level of affluence required to join ISIS is far easier to attain for people living in developed countries.

Asking the question of why 4,000 women and girls opted to join ISIS from western countries, an article in *The Atlantic* cited the 1981 work of sociologist Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims*, which sought to explain why citizens of liberal-capitalist societies would emigrate to communist countries such as Cuba and "rise up" against imperial western rule. For Hollander, these aspiring rebels all shared a similar feeling of alienation from their respective societies. A similar disenchantment of the modern world, it is argued, might have fuelled those going to ISIS—especially young sympathizers:

ISIS's caliphate project, because it offers a bracing utopian alternative to Western secular society, speaks directly to those who feel their lives are worthless, spiritually corrupted, empty, boring, or devoid of purpose and significance and who see no value in their own societies. It promises, in short, salvation and ultimate meaning through total commitment to a sacred cause.^{xxix}

A significant number of young women who joined ISIS came from a similar background to Ummu Layth: they are daughters of Muslim immigrants in Europe. Many cited their reasons for fleeing to Syria as a general feeling of alienation, of failing to adapt to the norms and cultures in western society. While DH's story does not espouse a similar motive of escapism, she nonetheless shares a similar cosmopolitan savviness with the young ISIS sympathizers in Europe. Indonesians who sought to *hijrah* were usually required to pass tests and selections conducted by ISIS representatives in Indonesia. DH, on the other hand, was able to bypass all these procedures by receiving a direct recommendation on the internet from "Paladine of Jihad", an ISIS officer from Africa. As such, her channels for radicalisation are far different from the covert recruitment process of terrorist cells in the early 2000s.

3.4 After Rebellion: Factors of Disengagement and Social Adaptation

DH only had to arrive in Syria to become completely disenchanted with ISIS propaganda. The promises of receiving a free, high-quality education in medicine, universal healthcare, and the guarantee of a well-paying job all turned out to be lies. ISIS men, DH told us, were only preoccupied with marrying women for sex. Furthermore, all men are apparently required for mandatory conscription in the ISIS militia—something that was *specifically* promised to them earlier not to happen. While DH and her family managed to subsequently free themselves from ISIS, both her father and uncle had to face legal charges after returning to Indonesia. These traumatizing events have completely shattered DH's belief in the ISIS cause, which has always been founded in wishful thinking—something completely different to the hateful ideology of terrorists.^{xxx}

For our ex-terrorist interlocutors, however, the decision to abandon their cause might stem from more immediate factors: their family. B, for example, was arrested when he visited his house to meet his daughter. Shortly afterwards, his wife, who just gave birth to their child, passed away from cancer. He told us that he could not stop thinking about his children and their futures and decided to “put an end to his struggle”. AA, too, could not erase the guilt of implicating his little brother—who has never engaged in terrorist activity—and inadvertently have him subjected to the brutal interrogation of counter-terrorism officers. In those bleak times, AA would also keep thinking of his aging mother.

The story of Z, another informant, echoes parts of B's decision to leave his life as a terrorist behind. Z's wife died in an accident when he was incarcerated, which forces his two children to be separated: one is in the custody of his in-laws in Surabaya, while another is with his parents in Serang. Throughout his time in prison, Z's mother would often call him and urge him to return: his parents were already senile, and someone had to take care of his child. For Z, the feeling of being responsible towards his family was a crucial part of his transformation.^{xxxi}

SH, the wife of terrorist convict YR, emphasizes to us the importance of family persuasion. The couple met one another when they were young cadres of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and were gradually radicalized together. When YR was arrested, SH pleaded with him that they should cease their activities.^{xxxii} Afterwards, the pair decided to focus on their children—who had provided them with a new focus in life—and abandoned radical Quran reading circles. A similar sentiment would also be echoed by ST, who claims that his children are now the most important thing in his life. The manner in which convicted terrorists cherish their family, argues ST, is what differentiates them from ISIS sympathizers, who have been documented to commit suicide bombings along with their wives and children.^{xxxiii}

Another prominent motive for terrorist deradicalisation is conflict with other terrorist groups in prison. B recounted his encounter with a disciple of Aman Abdurrahman, the leader of ISIS in Indonesia, after being transferred to Nusa Kambangan. At the time, B was presented with the option to forsake his old group and join ISIS, which disenchanted his ideal preconceptions of a united Muslim Brotherhood.^{xxxiv} This unsavory realization of an internal conflict amongst believers would pressure B and other convicted terrorists to diversify their readings and explore new doctrines of struggle, if not to simply bolster their own stance against Aman Abdurrahman's group. These new insights have empowered them to stand up and denounce Abdurrahman-related groups as false (*sesat*). They not only oppose the Takfirism of ISIS in denouncing *all* other Muslim groups but also point out that some ISIS practices are profoundly un-Islamic, such as using women and children for suicide bombings.

Significantly, *none* of our informants cite the deradicalisation programs they went through in prison as a reason for abandoning terrorism. The only informant who mentioned the police as a positive influence was AF, and even this was due to an isolated personal experience. AF recounted how a particular officer had helped him throughout detainment and put much faith in him—and this officer, above all, was a Catholic. Encountering such kindness and trust from a non-believer led AF to reconsider his views of the world and his supposed enemies. In the past, he would see tall buildings and automatically gauge how many bombs would be needed to raze them to the ground. Such fantasies, he claims, do not occupy his mind anymore.^{xxxv}

There is a legitimate concern that rehabilitated former terrorists could return to their former radical ideologies. While none of our interlocutors have admitted to “having relapsed”, we also found that some ex-terrorists might benefit from meaningfully engaging with the world without disavowing their history and identity *as* former terrorists. AF, for example, has adapted to post-prison life by providing insights into the deradicalisation programs of NGOs, universities, BNPT—sharing his life story with different organizations across Indonesia. B and ST, too, did not shy away from their history of someone who was radicalized and has given talks in forums and television.

Other informants preferred to keep a low profile after completing their criminal sentence. Their process of social adaptation, unfortunately, has not been without its hurdles. Ex-terrorists often find that they are unable to properly reintegrate themselves into society without social aid, and many have found themselves waiting for the state relief package that has been often promised by high-ranking police officials and BNPT bureaucrats. Some informants conveyed that the socio-economic hardships they face

might just push them back to terrorist activities. Finally, they also warned against policies that allow the military to involve themselves in counter-terrorism, arguing that these gestures will likely lead to increased militancy amongst terrorist groups.^{xxxvi}

4. Conclusion

To ensure its reproduction and grow its ranks, terrorist groups need to ensure the ideological commitment of potential recruits through a process of radicalisation. Our study identifies three distinct social fields which comprise such radical ideologies. *First*, the integration of individuals into a cosmopolitan field, in which one's personal and social identity is defined by events that occur at the global level rather than national identity and boundaries. While the production of cosmopolitan subjectivity should be considered an ordinary occurrence due to the globalisation of information, the cosmopolitanism of terrorist recruits would typically involve a strong sense of solidarity towards the plight of Muslim communities around the world. *Second*, this knowledge and a general sense of empathy for the suffering of fellow Muslims is then transformed into a violent ideology of jihadist extremism, usually by way of joining radical Quran reading groups. These *pengajian* are the main channels through which an ordinary, concerned Muslim is recruited into terrorist cells, providing the context to radicalize individuals by way of simply "informing them of the state of the world". *Third*, recruits are led to believe that the only way to stand up against the injustice suffered by Muslims—indeed, the *only* thing one should do as a Muslim—is through acts of violence and terrorism. By this point, the process of radicalisation is nearly complete as recruits adopt a position of Rebellion, completely rejecting the cultural values of their society while simultaneously distrusting the possible avenues for social transformation.

This study suggests that experiencing incarceration and penal punishment has no *intrinsic* relevance for terrorist convicts in changing their Rebellion position. Being imprisoned does not convince terrorists to accept social values beyond their own or see the state of society as something justifiable. If anything, fatal cases of mismanagement, such as the lumping-together of various terrorist convicts within a designated facility like Mako Brimob, have contributed to cases of recidivism and further radicalisation within prison walls. Ongoing "deradicalisation programs"—such as the skill classes taught in BNPT's Facility—put great emphasis on ensuring that convicts will be able to fend off their own post-imprisonment. Nonetheless, many ex-terrorists have found themselves socio-economically struggling after release, and the state, which had punished them for years, is now largely absent.

As such, terrorists tend to see their prison life as mere punishment, *not* rehabilitation. For our rehabilitated informants, incarceration did not convince them to abandon their terrorist activities. Instead, their transformation from the Rebellion position to that of Conformity, Innovation, or Retreatism is a by-product of various social processes. Some former-terrorists found themselves transformed after meeting new people beyond their social bubble—including those of another religion—or by allowing themselves to be exposed to the modern world, experiencing a culture that they used to deem as profane. For others, the decision to abandon terrorism begins by realizing the absurdity of the terrorist way of life: how the preoccupation over doctrines, teachings, and group loyalty have betrayed the professed goals of liberating oppressed Muslims. Yet most ex-terrorists regard their closest people—their family—as one of the most prominent motivations to cease their radical activities. Some informants recounted feeling shocked after learning the recent modus operandi of ISIS sympathizers, who would commit suicide bombings along with their wives and children and realized the importance of cherishing their families.

In this regard, one pattern of recruitment amongst ISIS sympathizers, namely the radicalisation of entire nuclear and extended families, poses a grave new problem. Those radicalized by ISIS propaganda are unlikely to find their family as a motive to abandon radical activities; on the contrary, families now function as a bubble that makes an exit from radicalism far more unlikely.

This study illuminates how de-ideologisation is profoundly a non-mechanistic process. Just as the process of prescribing to one ideology does not necessarily entail abandoning all others, the most conscious disavowal of a previously-held doctrine nonetheless leaves its residues, history, and memory. When we accept that individuals are always "decentered" and fleeting, the mainstream notion of "deradicalizing individuals" cannot but come across as absurd. Ideologies are not formed and activated in an isolated vacuum but are continuously reinforced or delegitimized by one's social environment. One cannot be simply coerced into conformity; one requires justifying positive reinforcement. This is why ensuring the welfare and well-being of former-terrorists *beyond* their period of incarceration is crucial: when impoverished, people would certainly struggle to see things in a positive light.

Finally, our study supports the claim that terrorism is a challenge unique to democratic polity.^{xxxvii} In Indonesia, terrorism only became prominent *after* the nationwide period of political reform and democratization in 1998; in the New Order, most acts of terrorism were done by regional separatist groups with no cosmopolitan aspirations. On the other hand, we also echo the analysis of Katerina Dalacoura that the kernel of Islamist terrorism has very little to do with the authoritarianism in the Middle East: its truth lies in how its framework intermediates various social, political, and strategic relationships on different scales.^{xxxviii}

Acknowledgement

Declaration of Interest

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Endnotes

- [1] See: Kurniawan Eka Mulyana, "Sepanjang 2020 hingga Maret 2022, Densus 88 Tangkap 658 Anggota Jaringan Terorisme" (22 March 2022). <https://www.kompas.tv/article/272745/sepanjang-2020-hingga-maret-2022-densus-88-tangkap-658-anggota-jaringan-terorisme>.
- [2] See Solahudin's 2016 paper, "Ancaman ISIS di Indonesia", presented at the Centre for Terrorism and Social Conflict Studies in Depok, Indonesia.
- [3] Stern, J. (2010). *Deradicalisation or Disengagement of Terrorists: Is It Possible?* Stanford University: Hoover Institute.
- [4] Ibid.
- [5] Solahuddin and Ihsan Ali Fauzi, *Deradikalisasi di Indonesia* in Ihsan Ali Fauzi (ed), *Toleransi dan Terorisme: Riset dan Kebijakan Agama di Indonesia*, 2017, (Jakarta: PUSAD), p. 233-262.
- [6] Arena, M.P. Arrigo, B.A. (2005), Social Psychology, Terrorism, and Identity: A Preliminary Re-examination of Theory, Culture, Self, and Society, *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* 23: 485-506 (2005), DOI: 10.1002/bsl.653
- [7] Clauset, A., & Gleditsch, K. S. (2012). The developmental dynamics of terrorist organizations. *PLoS One*, 7(11), doi:<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0048633>
- [8] Crenshaw, Martha. (1981). Comparative Politics, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Jul., 1981), pp. 379-399. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/421717>
- [9] Enders, Walter; Sandler, Todd (2005). "Transnational Terrorism 1968-2000: Thresholds, Persistence, and Forecasts," *Southern Economic Journal*, John Wiley & Sons, vol. 71(3), pages 467-482, January. DOI: 10.1002/j.2325-8012.2005.tb00652.x
- [10] Clarke R, Newman G (2006) *Outsmarting the terrorists*. Praeger, Westport
- [11] Merton, Robert K (1968). *Social Theory and Social Structure*, (New York: Free Press), p. 193-213.
- [12] Ibid
- [13] Hasell, J., Mathieu, E., Beltekian, D., Macdonald, B., Giattino, C., Ortiz-Ospina, E., Roser, M., &
- [14] In Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 7th Edition, Pearson Education Limited: England
- [15] Aside from Neuman, see also Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA Sage.
- [16] Democracy as *Syirik*, namely the impious act of tokenizing something to assume the position/being equal to God.
- [17] Aman Abdurrahman was the leader of the Indonesian faction of ISIS. A notorious recidivist, he was first apprehended for orchestrating the Cimanggis Bomb Case in 2004, and would later be implicated in a terrorism case in Aceh Province in 2010. Before being a renowned *jihadi* figure amongst terrorist circles, he was an activist for the Islamic-Conservative Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and later an ultra-conservative public *Salafi* figure. Abdurrahman opposed the Indonesian government for refusing to implement Sharia Law, which he contends as robbing Allah of Divine Rights (*Hak Tasyri*).
- [18] In B's words, "*diancurin*", or being obliterated—subjected to violent interrogation, which is deemed necessary according to police standards and code of conduct.
- [19] A detailed consideration for the placement of terrorists can be seen in Firdaus, I., *Penempatan Narapidana Teroris di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan, Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure*, 24-11-2017, p. 438. These include: 1. The region of operations for each terrorist convict; 2. How many members of the same terrorist cell are in the prison where a terrorist will be transferred; 3. How many convicts of terrorism crimes are in the prison; 4. The likeliness of a convict to be summoned to court, such as as a witness; 5. Further possibilities or breakthrough in a case; 6. A convict's region of origin; 7. The state of a correctional facility, such as building conditions and other amenities; 8. The risk level of each terrorist: either an active ideologue, a militant, or a sympathizer.
- [20] Formally issued as *Peraturan Pemerintah (PP) No. 99 tahun 2012 tentang Syarat dan Tata cara Pelaksanaan Hak Warga Binaan Lembaga Pemasyarakatan*, or Government Regulation Number 99 on the Requirements and Procedures for the Implementation of the Rights of Citizens under Penitentiary Supervision.
- [21] The Coordinating Minister of Law and Human Rights have since entertained the idea to provide parole for convicts of terrorism and low-level drug cases. See Andi Saputra, "Mahfud MD dan Saldi Setuju Revisi PP 99, tapi Tidak untuk Remisi Koruptor" (24 September 2016). <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3305628/mahfud-md-dan-saldi-setuju-revisi-pp-99-tapi-tidak-untuk-remisi-koruptor>

- [22] Excerpt from Solahudin's 2016 paper, "*Ancaman ISIS di Indonesia*".
- [23] In Islam, the term refers to the journey the Prophet Muhammad and his followers took from Mecca to Medina. Nonetheless, the term is also colloquially understood as the decision to fully commit oneself to the Islamic faith (in Arabic, it also means "to sever ties") and renounce other ways of life, especially ones brought by the modern world.
- [24] Ummu Layth is the "*hijrah*" name of Aqsa Mahmood, who was a 20-year old medicine school student and daughter of Pakistani immigrants in Glasgow. Previously, she was an ordinary girl who listened to *Coldplay*, read *Harry Potter*, and enjoyed films such as *Mockingbird* from the *Hunger Games* franchise—until she left her family and married an ISIS fighter. Afterwards, she played the role of encouraging young women to join ISIS. See: Colin Randall, "From Coldplay to Jihad: the Scottish Girl who Joined ISIL" (10 July 2023). <https://www.thenational.ae/world/from-coldplay-to-jihad-the-scottish-girl-who-joins-isil-1.236431>
- [25] One of our interlocutors, B, offered us his hypothesis that young women and/or girls were lured to join ISIS by the show of masculinity of ISIS soldiers in propaganda: strong, muscular, attractive men who gallantly call for *jihad* (interview with B, 2018).
- [26] In Islam: the statements and actions of the prophet Muhammad, as recorded by his disciples.
- [27] Al-Britani/Dhar did not formally publish the manuscript, but it remains available online in various links. The one we accessed was on http://valasz.hu/data/cikk/11/2761/cikk_112761/A_Brief_Guide_to_Islamic_State_2015.pdf
- [28] Given the ISIS propaganda content within this video, it has since been widely deleted from the internet by digital platforms.
- [29] Simon Cottee, "Pilgrims to Islamic State" (24 July 2015). <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/07/isis-foreign-fighters-political-pilgrims/399209/>
- [30] The Hungarian sociologist Karl Mannheim distinguishes between *wishful* and *utopian thinking*. For him, the former is a common part of Human Affairs, and occurs when someone finds little-to-no satisfaction in existing reality, hence seeking refuge in wishfully-constructed places and periods: "Myths, fairy tales, other-worldly promises, religion, humanist fantasies, travel, and romance—all are continuously-changing expressions of that which are lacking in actual life". Wishful thinking is akin to "complementary colors in the picture of reality, existing at the time", whereas utopias work in opposition to the status quo and disintegrates it. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, (London: Routledge), p. 184.
- [31] Interview with Z, 2018.
- [32] I told him: "that is it, *Abi*. I'm also tired of taking care of our kids. Let's just not create problems from now on." (Interview with SH, 2018).
- [33] (Interview with ST, 2018).
- [34] AA and ST also claimed that amongst the terrorist groups they have encountered, those affiliated with Aman Abdurrahman were especially domineering and often try to impose themselves upon other groups.
- [35] Interview with AF, 2018.
- [36] Interview with AA, May 2018.
- [37] Terrorism occurs in societies with five features: a free and open political system; organizational pressures that stem from the cost of competing within this open system; the lack of monitoring and surveillance, especially when compared to authoritarian regimes; political deadlocks as a result of multiparty democracy; as well as the heightened efficacy of terrorism acts against the notion of progress and modernity within democratic society. See:
- [38] Chenoweth, E. (2013), Terrorism and Democracy, *The Annual Review of Politics*, Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 2013. 16:355–78. doi: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-032211-221825
- [39] Dalacoura K. (2011). *Islamist Terrorism and Democracy in the Middle East*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press