

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ISLAMIC STATE BY ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA (ISIS) IN 2014

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Abstract

The Study of the establishment of the Islamic State by ISIS in 2014, a militant group that formed by Zarqawi in 1999 and increasingly developed and conquered territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria, After seizing territories in Iraq and Syria, they proclaimed itself as the Islamic State, recently claiming Al-Baghdadi as their caliph leader. This study aims to find out the reason why ISIS establishes an Islamic State. The writer used the constructivism theory to help analyse the problem, and used the qualitative-descriptive method. The materials of the study are obtained through internet by collecting some data from articles, journal, papers, and books to answering the research question. The data needed for the undergraduate thesis were collected through some facts that can support the data of the research.

Keywords: Al-Baghdadi, Constructivism, Islamic State, Islamic State of Iraq & Syria, Zarqawi.

Background

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria commonly know as ISIS is a resistance group that operated in the region of Iraq and Syria, moreover the group has now conquered the

territory in Western Iraq and Eastern of Syria region, the region that approximately six and a half million people lived there. Although created as one of al-Qaeda manifesto, but different from al-Qaeda, ISIS became an organization that evolves quickly, evolve using a variety of

strategies in addition to terror and insurgent tactics, into an organization that is more organized. After seizing some territories in Iraq and Syria, in mid-2014. ISIS calls upon the international public by setting up an Islamic State, they claim authority over political and theological exclusively over the Muslim world. (Laub & Masters, 2014, p. 1).

According to Lister (2014, p. 6) As he has been paying attention to the activities of ISIS:

“Over the years, ISIS fighters have frequently been heard proclaiming “*baqiya wa tatamadad*” (lasting and expanding). This simple statement represents ISIS fundamental modus operandi as an organization. ISIS has deep roots dating back to at least 1999, when its notorious father figure, Ahmad Fadl al-Nazal al-Khalayleh (Abu Musab al-Zarqawi) was released from prison in Jordan.”

In the process, ISIS in a long period of time has evolved. Answering the challenge from various parties, especially military challenge under

United States military leader, then led the invasion and occupation in the Middle East especially in Afghanistan and Iraq. On the other hand, it turns out that this answers the desires of the organization, namely, the realization of their desire to be "lasting and expanding".

The occurrence of civil war in Syria, became the trigger for the establishment of a branch of al-Qaeda in Syria in August 2011, led by the leader of the ISI, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which appointed Mohammad Suriah Abu al-Golani as a command centre. In an effort to topple the Assad regime and set up an Islamic State, the Golani and his colleagues across the border of Iraq into Syria to help liberate a number of Islamist groups which was captured from Syria's military prison. This process lasts from May to June 2011, active resistance against Syrian security forces (Blake & Benotman, 2013).

The Islamic State or well-known as ISIS, the name have been stealing the attention of the jihadists. They have occupied some areas of Iraq and Syria, and declared the caliphate

system to control the region. It attracted the attention of the militant from another region, ranging from Libya to Afghanistan. The Islamic State insists to the other groups to join them, if not, then regarded as the enemy, this tactic has alienated many areas under their control. Public execution conducted by ISIS, including beheading Western hostages, prompting the U.S. military to form a coalition to do the bombing, invasion.

Sunni disenfranchisement of citizens in Iraq and Syria led to the existence of a vacuum, exploited by the Islamic State. The Sunni minority in Iraq, had been ruled out in their national politics after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime by the United States in 2003. In 2011, in Syria occurred a civil war between a Government dominated by Shiite parties Alawi, and the opposition, the majority Sunnis., spawning sectarian violence.

The rebellion that occurred in Syria in 2011 to further ease the expansion carried out by the Islamic State. Analysts argued that actually have

occurred a non-aggression pact between the militant of the Islamic State shrouded with the regime of Bashar al-Assad, and each of them choose to focus for anti-Government forces fight to retain power in its region. Extremist groups have come to dominate the northern and eastern Syria, and moderate forces invaded. Assad claimed by validated the opinion that his Government can defend against them.

Analysis

In taking the decision the actors will find a lot of possible options and there is no exact pattern applied in all actors' preference because of their difference identity will create different outcomes. Constructivism believes that understanding the reasons behind the interest creation is crucial to understand the international phenomena. It tends to analyse the identity of the actors to generate the reason behind their creation of the interest.

The development of ISIS were also can't be denied for the role of

their actors behind their presence and were able to make ISIS become an international issue. The writer believed that there are two figures that are influenced in the development of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and these figures are the actors behind that, started from establishing a small resistance group in Iraq expanded into a jihadist organization with all their controversies, in the mid-2014 they have reached to declare into the Islamic State. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is the founding father of ISIS, and his successor Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi continues his idea and mastermind ISIS declaring to establish the Islamic State.

Constructivism believes that the non-material structure mentioned before is important to form the identities of the actors, and the identity is the crucial factor that determined the interest of actors both individual and state actors, in consequence interest will produce the actions.

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was a Jordanian-born who started to radicalize as a young man while in prison for drug possession and sexual assault. He travelled to Afghanistan in the late 1980s with the intention of joining the fight against Soviet occupation (Teslik, 2006). During the 1990s, Zarqawi adopted a Salafist ideology. While in prison, he gained a following by smuggling statements out of prison to be published on Salafist websites.

These statements caught the attention of Osama bin Laden after Zarqawi was released from prison in 1999 (Kirdar, 2011). The two allegedly met after Zarqawi's release, although conflicting reports claim that they had little contact. Bin Laden was reportedly suspicious of Zarqawi and disagreed about several targeting and tactical issues. The key ideological difference between the two was that Zarqawi preferred to target his "near enemies," such as Israel and the Jordanian government, whereas AQ leadership often focused on the "far enemy," the United States (Bergen, 2008). Zarqawi also had a

strong hatred for Shiites that bin Laden did not agree with. Nonetheless, bin Laden allegedly asked Zarqawi to join AQ. Zarqawi refused, but bin Laden instead reportedly provided him with money to set up a training camp in Herat, where Zarqawi would train between 2,000 and 3,000 Salafist terrorists by October 2001. Zarqawi and his men moved through Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Kurdish areas of Iraq after the 2001 American strikes in Afghanistan (Kirdar, 2011).

Ideologically, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi handed down to his heirs a radical Islamic, uncompromising legacy whose traces is evident in ISIS's actions to this day. Noteworthy is its hostility toward Shi'ites in general and Iraqi Shi'ites in particular, whom he referred to in strong terms ("human scum", "poisonous snakes", "deadly poison"). He regarded the Shi'ites as a fifth column who, along with pro-American Sunnis, was trying to institute a new Shi'ite regime in Iraq, anti-Sunni and pro-American. That anti-Shi'ite legacy, based on Arabic

Islamic sources from the middle Ages, gave al-Zarqawi what he considered "Islamic legitimacy" to carry out mass-killing attacks on Shi'ites and the Shi'ite-affiliated central government. His objective was to instigate a Shi'ite-Sunni civil war that would destabilize public order, prevent the establishment of a Shi'ite regime and support Al-Qaeda's takeover of Iraq. ISIS has continued its brutality towards the Shi'ite population in Iraq and Syria, implementing the legacy of al-Zarqawi, who, after his death, became a revered figure and role model (Keneally, 2015). On June 7, 2006, Zarqawi was killed by an American airstrike.

Zarqawi's leadership was a chief factor in shaping the group's emergence as well as directing its course throughout its evolution. His leadership style was tied to the time he had spent in prison, where he "found" Islam and became a fully hardened criminal and gang leader. His embrace of Salafist Islam likely stemmed from his pre-prison exposure to radical Salafist preachers

in Zarqaa's lawless Palestinian refugee camp where his foray into criminal life began. In prison, his captivating personality and nascent brutality earned him the loyalty of a criminal gang, foreshadowing the cult-like following he would eventually engender as a terrorist leader (Kirdar, 2011).

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Islamic State's leader who now styles himself "Caliph Ibrahim," He was born in 1971 with original name Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim al-Badri. Like Bin Laden and Zawahiri, Baghdadi is well educated. In fact, he has more serious religious credentials than Al Qaeda's leaders, having received his PhD from the Islamic University in Baghdad.

Baghdadi joined the jihadist resistance to US forces in Iraq in 2004, if not earlier. US forces detained him for most of that year, but he was ultimately deemed not to be a particularly dangerous threat, indeed, according to some accounts,

he got along well with camp officials and was released. In 2006, his group joined the umbrella organization for Iraqi jihadists, known as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). (I and others often use ISI interchangeably with Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), which dominated the organization, though technically it was not the only group.) Baghdadi became a member of the group's senior leadership council. For several years, Baghdadi controlled forces in the western Iraqi town of Qaim, where the Pentagon claims "*he was connected to the intimidation, torture and murder of local civilians*" (Freeman, 2014).

Baghdadi became the leader of the ISI in 2010, just before the group began moving into Syria. As the leader, Baghdadi oversaw ISI action against Iraqi security forces, various Shi'ite groups, the Iraqi government, and the Sunni leaders who worked with it. He helped ISI rebuild after the devastation it suffered during the US-led "surge" that began in 2006. Baghdadi appointed a number of former military and intelligence officers who had served under

Saddam in senior positions in ISI. Under Baghdadi, ISI also launched the “Breaking the Walls” campaign, which freed hundreds of ISI members from Iraqi prisons and sent Baghdadi’s prestige soaring within the organization. He cleverly exploited the Syrian civil war to further rebuild his organization, using the fighting there to develop a haven and attract new recruits and support (Byman D. , 2015, p. 165).

On July 1, 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi posted an audiotape in Arabic on YouTube entitled “*Message to jihad fighters and the Islamic nation during Ramadan.*” Al-Baghdadi took advantage of the Islamic religious month of Ramadan and the declaration of the Islamic Caliphate to encourage Muslim operatives around the world to support the Caliphate, join the ranks of the jihad fighters in Syria and Iraq and wage a jihad that would lead to an Islamic takeover of the world (according to MEMRI, translations of the audiotape were distributed in English, German, Russian, Albanian and French through the Al-Hayat

Center, the ISIS propaganda unit) (Crethiplethi, 2014).

The main points made by al-Baghdadi:

1. Call for jihad:

Al-Baghdadi called on Muslims to help the Islamic nation through jihad for the sake of Allah. He promised the jihad fighters that bliss awaited them in paradise and said, “*Allah’s religion is the victorious one.*” Al-Baghdadi added that the Muslim masses around the world lived in suffering, noting al-Sham (Greater Syria), Egypt, Iraq, Palestine ‘which is part of Greater Syria’, the Arabian Peninsula, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, China, India, Somalia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Ahvaz (Khuzestan Province in Iran, with its Arab character). He said that the Muslims in those places were waiting for the Islamic State and the jihad fighters come and help them. He described the world as split into two camps: one included Muslims and jihad fighters; opposite it stood the camp

of the Jews, the “Crusaders” (i.e., Christians) and their allies in all the “infidel countries,” led by the US and Russia.

2. Praise for the Islamic Caliphate:

Al-Baghdadi called on Muslims to support the Islamic State to save themselves from enslavement to foreigners. He noted that the Nation of Islam failed after the abolition of the Caliphate (1924) and was taken over by infidels. The infidels stole their resources, denied their rights, conquered their land and appointed collaborators to rule over them by force. The collaborators waved false slogans of peace, democracy, pan-Arab nationalism, nation states and Ba’athism. In contrast, the Caliphate whose creation was declared “*united the Caucasian, Indian, Chinese, American, Arab, French, German and Australian, who became brothers, defending each other in the same trench under one flag, the flag of faith.*” He said that the Muslims would erode the power of the nation-state model, destroy the model of

democracy and expose the “satanic nature” of those models.

3. Defending ISIS’s methods:

According to al-Baghdadi, what the Arab regimes call “terrorism” is actually resistance to their false slogans and implementation of Islamic religious law (sharia). He added “*Is it not terrorism when Muslims are killed and their homes burned in Burma, when they are murdered and their limbs cut off in the Philippines, Kashmir, Indonesia, when they are deported in the Caucasus and buried in mass graves in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Is it not terrorism when the homes of Muslims in Palestine are destroyed, their land is stolen and their rights are violated? Is it not terrorism when mosques are burned in Egypt, the homes of Muslims are destroyed, their women are raped and the jihad fighters in Sinai and elsewhere are oppressed? Is it what’s happening in Turkestan not terrorism? Is it not terrorism when women are prevented from wearing the hijab in France?*” All this is not terrorism, but freedom

and democracy, he added sarcastically.

4. Call for Muslims to join the Islamic State:

Al-Baghdadi rejected the concept of the modern nation states and called on Muslims to join the Islamic State he founded. He said, *“There is no (need for slogans such as) Syria for the Syrians or Iraq for the Iraqis, since the earth is Allah’s. The country belongs to the Muslims; Therefore, Muslims, wherever they are, immigrated to the countries of Islam, since the immigration to the area (or region) of the Islamic State (Dar al-Islam) is obligatory.”* He called on Muslims who were able to do so to perform Hijrah (i.e., migration, an important symbolic act in the history of Islam which, in his perspective, is related to the establishment of the Caliphate). He called on Muslim clerics, led by sharia judges, people with military, administrative and academic capabilities, as well as Muslim doctors and engineers in all fields, to join his self-declared Islamic State, arguing that it was a necessity due to

the sorry state of Muslims worldwide.

5. The vision of ‘Islamic takeover of the entire world’:

Al-Baghdadi concluded by saying that if Muslims adhered to Islam, they would rule the entire world: *“If you cling to it (faith in Allah and the principles of Islam), you will even conquer Rome (the symbol of Christianity), and the Earth will be owned by you, with the help of Allah”*.

The Ideology of The Islamic State

Since declaring itself to be the Islamic State by mid-2014, and includes large parts of Northwestern Iraq and Eastern Syria. The experts are still debating about the origin of the ideology espoused by the Islamic State (Hassan, 2016). It's important to understand the ideology embraced by Islamic State, as a crucial step to defeat them. Even the Commander-in-Chief of the military of the United States stressed how important it is to know the steps or solutions to fight

it. As Major General Michael Nagata, a former commander of the U.S. special operations forces in the Middle East, has noted, "*We do not understand the movement, and until we do, we are not going to defeat it*" (Schmitt, 2014). This is also expressed by one of the field commanders who say that in their efforts against the movement of the Islamic State in Syria, they hampered related to the ideology, it is difficult for his troops to mobilize. One of these occurs, when they get a rejection and hard to recruit the fighters in the area, because most of them refused to fight against the Islamic State. Even they don't want to join the Islamic State. This is especially the case for efforts backed by Western powers. Ideology can therefore have practical implications in the fight against the Islamic State.

The Islamic State declares that they are one of the representatives of a group that applies the values of Islam as a whole, as exemplified by the early generations of Muslims. This refers to the presumption that what IS stated by is referring to the

Group of Salafism. People who apply Salafism, called Salafist. At the time of the postcolonial and modern, there are many groups that declare themselves as Salafist. Salafist stated that the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad is the best and ideal where Islam flourished. The things they make reference and vision to establish an Islamic State, as done by modern Salafist, where it began in Egypt, which aims to restore Islam into early form, back to the heyday of Islam where Islam reached its peak. The Islamic State is known as the Group of adherents of Islamic Jihad Salafist doctrine, one of the branches of a Sunni Islamic extremist factions, which aims to revive Islam through jihad, and the fight against internal and external enemies (Brown, 2011, pp. 6-8).

According to Haykel notes, committed to expanding Dar al-Islam (Islamic State), the land of Islam, even, perhaps, with the implementation of monstrous practices such as slavery and amputation but at some future point. Their first priority is personal

purification and religious observance, and they believe anything that thwarts those goals such as causing war or unrest that would disrupt lives and prayer and scholarship is forbidden (Wood, 2015).

The Return of the Golden Age of Islam

The return to the Golden Age of Islam, according to the Islamic State, takes place through the reestablishment of an Islamic Caliphate, based on the Salafist-jihadi interpretation of Islamic religious law (the sharia). The Caliphate State, whose establishment was declared by The Islamic State, currently includes large parts of Iraq and Syria, from the outskirts of Baghdad to the outskirts of Aleppo. However, Islamic State seeks to expand its self-declared Caliphate State to the rest of Iraq and Syria, topple the regimes in Baghdad and Damascus, and subsequently spread from there to the rest of the region, most of it included in Greater Syria (Bilad al-Sham) according to ISIS:

Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Jordan, and even Kuwait (Crethiplethi, 2014).

On June 29, 2014, the ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani declared the establishment of the Islamic State, headed by Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The announcement was made by a spokesman on an audiotape posted to YouTube and elsewhere. On the occasion of the establishment of the Islamic State, Caliph al-Baghdadi announced an amnesty for detainees held by the Islamic State (SITE Intelligence Group, 2014).

The Islamic State is aimed to restore the “Khilafa” (Caliphate), a transnational Islamic state that would prevail over the European carved borders established within the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement of World War I, also called Asia Minor Agreement, (May 1916), secret convention made during World War I between Great Britain and France, with the assent of imperial Russia, for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. The agreement led to the division of Turkish-held Syria,

Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine into various French- and British-administered areas. Negotiations were begun in November 1915, and the final agreement took its name from its negotiators, Sir Mark Sykes of Britain and François Georges-Picot of France (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2016).

Islamic State's ambitions extend beyond the areas of Greater Syria. According to its vision, the Caliphate in Greater Syria will be the core of an extensive Islamic Caliphate. It will include the countries of the Middle East; North Africa; parts of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan (Khorasan); European countries that were conquered from the Muslims in the past (Spain, the Balkans); and other Muslim countries (Turkey, the Caucasus).

Holy War Against Internal & External Enemies

When it declared its territories as a caliphate one year ago, Islamic State stated its ultimate aim as the establishment of a single, global state

under its interpretation of Islamic rule. Conquering the whole world is clearly a target for the extreme long term, particularly for a group which appears to be struggling to advance much beyond its swathe of northern Syria and Iraq. (Withnall & Romero, 2015) According to the panel of leading experts that tried to figure out what actually Islamic State want and their militants goal that claim they can practically achieve.

On a practical level, the movement is determined to occupy territory wherever it can. The logical ancillary to this is to project the group as an ever-growing power and a popular slogan "*baqiyya wa tatamaddad*" (remaining and expanding) (Al-Tamimi, 2014). By calling the group The Islamic State, and making a point of bulldozing the berm that separates Syria and Iraq and destroying border posts, Abu Bakr has underlined his rejection of the colonial boundaries established by the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. This is calculated to appeal to three separate constituencies: the local tribes who span the border, the

Arab nationalists who resent the continued colonial legacy of divide and rule, and those members of the Muslim Umma who believe that they should form one nation based on their shared faith (Black, 2014).

From a religious point of view, The Islamic State should have as an early objective the conquest of the Hejaz as the location of the two holy places, Mecca and Medina, but it has not given this as its aim. The challenge to the religious authority of the king of Saudi Arabia is clear enough, but in purely political terms, Abu Bakr's group still reflects its origins as an Iraqi movement with Iraqi objectives though now with an increasing stake in Syria.

The change of name to The Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria was an attempt to capitalize on the energy created by the civil war in Syria and use it in support of the insurgency in Iraq, making a common cause of Sunni disaffection with the Shia regimes on both sides of the border - albeit that in Syria the Sunni comprise some 70% of the population whereas in Iraq they

make up only about 30%. By changing its name to The Islamic State, Abu Bakr broadened the appeal of the movement beyond Syria and Iraq without necessarily changing its short-term objectives. The removal of the geographic limitations in the name reinforced his challenge to al Qaeda as the leader of global 'jihad' and gave further reason to foreign fighters to join him.

Although The Islamic State has threatened countries outside Iraq and Syria since its earliest days, al Adnani's call for attacks against the coalition does not signify a change in its immediate strategic objectives. The military ambition of the State remains the capture and control of further territory in Iraq and Syria, and the consolidation of what it already has. In due course it may try to move into Jordan and Lebanon, where it already has supporters, and then into Saudi Arabia, but it does not seem to be making plans to do more. Unlike al Qaeda, therefore, it does not appear to have set up camps within its territory to attract and train

foreign recruits to commit terrorist
acts elsewhere (Barret, 2014).

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