CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A.   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 the Council on Foreign Relations (2015, p. 23) that, its state-building project, however, has been characterized more by extreme violence, justified by references to the Prophet Mohammed's early followers, than institution building. Successful self-publishing, and attracts international attention, particularly in the recruitment of thousands of foreign members, who want to join them. This became the concern of Western intelligence.

In the history of its development, they have gradually growing processes. Starting from the bottom, where at the beginning of their existence was unknown by the public, even international public, even so it is hard to trace the beginning of their existence. However, there is some information that is slowly sticking above the surface of the information about what is ISIS, and where they came from. Because ISIS with surprisingly announced the formation of the Islamic State, their dominance in most areas of Iraq and Syria, under the leadership of Al-Baghdadi. (Schweitzer, Einav, & Editors, 2016).

The roots of ISIS can be followed back to 1999s, with the establishment of Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (JTWJ). When Zarqawi fled to Iraq, where he remained under the radar for a period of time, planning his terrorist ideals and plotting to establish the terror organization to be known as the JTWJ. The goal of the JTWJ itself is to drive the US out of Iraq, overthrow the Iraqi government, and then purge the land of all Shia Muslims and establish a pure Islamic state (Byman D. , 2015).

In the mid-2000 the group merged with Al-Qaeda in Iraq and other local organizations and formed the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). The group rebranded as Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in October 2004. AQI was a focused and coordinated organization, carrying out complex suicide attacks and abducting multiple people whom they tortured and beheaded on video. In 2006 they merged with other small local organizations and formed the Mujahadeen Shura Council (Lister, 2014, p. 6).

The formation of the Mujahadeen Shura Council was a calculated move by Zarqawi to distance himself from Al-Qaeda, but Zarqawi was killed in June 2006 shortly after the Council was formed. His death allowed for the group to change the direction again, with the support of the other organizations involved in the Mujahadeen Shura Council (Schweitzer, Einav, & Editors, 2016). In October 2006, the group announced that the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) had been established. The ISI brought the Southern Baghdad neighbourhood of Dora under their control from 2006-2007.

When the United States began its withdrawal from Iraq in 2009, they leave the governance and security to the Iraqi military and police forces. ISI used this time as a chance to regroup and rethink the strategy, ISI is regaining their strength and engaging in fundraising activities, also began a campaign targeted at toppling/overthrown the Iraqi government. It was reported in April 2010, ISI announced that they had been completely cut off from communication with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.

During the Syrian civil war, which began in Spring 2011, ISI played an integral role in the conflict as a large opposition force to the Syrian army of the Assad regime. On August 2011, the members of ISI were sent into Syria with the mission to spread out and recruit fighters for their terror cells. After recruiting, in January 2012 the members of ISI in Syria announced their names as Jabhat al-Nusral'Ahl al-Sham, more commonly known as the al-Nusra Front. They quickly spread and became a formidable fighting force against the Free Syrian Army (FSA). After months of involvement in the conflict, ISI leader Abu Bakr al-

Baghdadi released a statement that the al-Nusra Front and ISI groups were about to merge, forming the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham or known also as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In April 2013 were the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) made considerable territorial gains in Northern Syria, they quickly became the strongest group in the region (Crethiplethi, 2014).

ISIS is known as one of a Salafist-jihadi Islamic organization, a part of the Sunni Islamic extremist faction which seeks to restore the early Islam's days of glory through jihad, a holy war directed against internal and external enemies. The Salafist movement perceives the time of the Prophet Muhammad as ideal and the first Caliphs who succeeded him as role models (the Arabic word *Salaf* means ancestor or first generation) (Crethiplethi, 2014). The modern Salafist movement itself began in Egypt, as a result of the desire to purify Islam of its flaws and return to what was perceived as the Golden Age of Islam

According to the ISIS concept, Islam's golden era will be restored through the establishment of a supranational Islamic Caliphate modelled after the first Caliphs regime after the death of Muhammad. It will be ruled by Islamic religious law (the sharia), according to its most extreme interpretation. The Caliphate will arise on the ruins of the nation states established in the Middle East after the First World War. Some of them, including Syria and Iraq, ruled by ISIS, are in the process of disintegrating in the wake of the upheaval in the Middle East creating favourable conditions for the vision of an Islamic Caliphate (The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, 2014, p. 3).

That was reflected in the tape distributed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi shortly after the declaration of the Caliphate. On June 29, 2014, Baghdadi tried to take ISIS to a new level when coincidently on the first night of Ramadan in 2014 after significant territorial gains in Iraq and Syria, the group again changed its name, and declared them as the "Islamic State" (IS) a name for the Caliphate and named its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the Caliph in Islamic State. Urge called upon all Muslims to declare allegiance to the new Caliphate. He proclaimed the return of the caliphate, with himself as leader. As caliph, he would be the commander of the faithful, as written in the Quran, Muslims everywhere would owe him obedience (Pizzi, 2014).

B.   Research Question

As described in the background of the study, the question of this undergraduate thesis is "Why did ISIS decided Iraq and Syria as the early step to establish the Islamic State?"

C.   Theoretical Framework

In the study of International Relations, the theory will help the undergraduate thesis to analyse critically, logically, and coherently by managing the analysis into certain categories. Theoretical framework also becomes the tools in order to identify the connection, pattern of behaviour and guide the writer in his undergraduate thesis to avoid misunderstanding. The use of theoretical framework has highly obligated and important. As a result, the writer considers that using the theory of Constructivism in his undergraduate thesis entitled "The Establishment

of Islamic State by ISIS in 2014" will determine the reason why the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria establish the Islamic State.

Constructivism Theory

The most appropriate international relations theory used to generate the answer over the question of this undergraduate thesis is the theory of Constructivism. The constructivism theory was established after the cold war era which mainly focused on the importance of normative and material structures in shaping the political behaviour (Reus-Smit, 2005, p. 201).

There are three main ontological prepositions established by the constructivism; First, constructivism believes that structure is able to shape the behaviour of social and political actors both individual or state actors. In building the structure, it is believed that normative and ideational aspects are as important as material aspects. Normative and ideational factors here mean that metaphysical aspects such as ideas, belief, value, culture, and norms which embodied inside the actors. Constructivism believes that the normative and ideational factors also have a structural characteristic in which they are able to influence the political and social actions. It believes that the material sources of actors only have meaning because the actors have the structure of knowledge or normative, and ideational structures embodied inside the actors (Reus-Smit, 2005, p. 202). Therefore, one kind of material source will have different meaning based on the actors who acquire them since every single actor has his/her own unique normative and ideational structures.

Second, constructivism believes that the non-material structure as mentioned earlier is important to form the identities of the actors, and the identity is the crucial factor that determines the interest of actors both individual and state actors, as consequence interest will produce the actions. 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 different identities 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 last ontological proposition is that constructivism believes that the normative and ideational structures will be able to form the identities of the actors, but it will not exist without the use or practices of those structures in a knowledgeable manner. Reus-Smit (2005, p. 205) states that identities shape the behaviour of the actors through three mechanisms: imagination, communication, and constraint. Identity will form the actor's preference in deciding behaviour related to the phenomena that they face. Thus, it is used by the actor to legitimate their action toward certain case.

Those three main ontological prepositions will match the best to understand why the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) establish the Islamic State. This undergraduate thesis will try to verify that the establishment of the Islamic State is constructed on ISIS's identity reasons.

D.   Hypothesis

From the research question and the theoretical framework, the writer assumes two influencing factors that lead to the reason why ISIS decided Iraq and Syria as the early step to establish the Islamic State.

The first is, based on their historical background, ISIS is linked to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi as the most influential figures with the realization of the Islamic State.

The second is, ISIS adopted the Salafist, moreover, they claim as a Salafist-jihadi islamic organization, believes that as a representative of Islam, aimed to restore the early Islam's days of glory through jihad, by conducting a holy war directed against internal and external enemies.

E.   Purpose of Writing

This undergraduate thesis will assist the writer to attain a graduation, bachelor degree in International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, in Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

F.   Method of Writing

To complete the research, the writer used the qualitative-descriptive method. The materials of the study are obtained through internet by collecting some data from articles, journal, papers, books and other thesis that can be used for answering the research question and the data needed for the undergraduate thesis were collected through some facts that can support the data of the research.

G.   Scope of Research

In writing this undergraduate thesis, the writer limits the discussion about the proclamation of the Islamic State, from the beginning of Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (JTWJ), Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) from 1999 until the establishment of the Islamic State (IS) in 2014, accurately in 29 June 2014.

H.   Organization of Writing

The undergraduate thesis will have five chapters. Each of them will be described, explained and elaborated:

Chapter I   : The chapter contains the Background, Research Question, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Research Methodology, and Organization of Writing.

Chapter II   : The chapter will describe the historical development that consists of the chronology of ISIS divided into three parts, that happen in Iraq and Syria, and showed the development of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) status.

Chapter III   : The chapter will discuss the two influential figures in ISIS namely Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi and Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi.

Chapter IV   : The Chapter will discuss about ISIS toward the Salafist-jihadi Islamic organization, the restoration of the early

Islam's days of glory, a holy war directed against internal and external enemies.

Chapter V   : Conclusion.