From Rebellion to Conformity: Study in Punishment and De-Ideologization of Ex-Terrorist in Indonesia

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A. Background

In Indonesia there are currently 289 terrorist inmates in 113 correctional institutions throughout Indonesia. Until 2017, more than 60s of former terrorist prisoners repeated their actions. There are around 25 ex-criminal criminal inmates who are then involved in terrorism. Apparently while in prison they were exposed to the ideology of extremism taught by their inmates. Fortunately, despite the quantity, the number of terrorist attacks is relatively high, but the quality of attacks is low to victims. It is arguable that the level of repetition of crimes committed by terrorist inmates is not only large enough, they are also able to develop cells and network from within the prison. Currently there are around 600 former prisoners of terrorism cases in the community. They are spread in 17 provinces, only 184 people were detected.

This phenomenon raises a big question: to what extent can de-ideologization be possible and how far has the engagement of terrorists with the group occurred?

B. Punishment and de-ideologization as Adaptation Process

In general, the term deradicalisation is used to explain the process (as well as the purpose of) aimed to the detainees or prisoners suspected or convicted of terrorist crimes. While prevention refers to the programs aimed at individuals or groups, that is considered vulnerable to terrorist recruitment. Counter-radicalization refers to both efforts, as well as to broader public diplomacy that aim to reduce the appeal of terrorist ideologies. Thus deradicalization refers to the need to change/reduce the level of involvement and calling of a terrorist suspect from the ideology that he adheres to. Unfortunately, until now there has never been a measure that can be used as a reference to determine the level of depth of a terrorist's radicalism.

Here, the adaptation theory proposed by Robert K Merton is very interesting and can be used to see the shift in the views of former terrorists to their world so that we can employ to determine the extent to which former terrorists have escaped their ideology or not. Merton theory has been widely used to investigate criminological phenomena, but so far it has never been used to understand adaptation in terrorism as social process.

Merton in Social Theory and Social Structure, presents four concepts of social adaptation: Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatisme and Rebellion. Conformity, is a mode of adaptation where people accept both cultural goals and institutionalized means of the society. Innovation, on the other hand, involves acceptance of the cultural goal but rejection of legitimate, institutionalized means. The ritualist rejects the cultural goals of the society and receives its institutionalized means. Retreatism, the rejection of both cultural goals and institutionalized
means. Retreatism involves complete escape from the pressures and demands of organized society. The final typology of adaptation in Merton is rebellion, the rebel not only rejects the goals and means of the established society but actively attempts to substitute new goals and means in their place.

C. First Transformation : From Goodman into Terrorist

There are three basic elements that make up a person from 'ordinary citizens' to become terrorists: the first is global solidarity towards the fate of fellow Muslims who suffer in various parts of the world. The second is the existence of a recitation organization that fosters and transforms global solidarity into an ideological political position and preparations for acts of violence. These two elements will be stronger in forming terrorists if accompanied by a third element, namely the experience of conflicts and violence involving religion. The conflict between religious groups in Ambon and Poso, for example, played an important role in providing references to struggle, combat experience and proof of the ideological commitment of jihadists.

In 1999, after the Ambon Poso incident, there was a friend from Ambon ask me to joint a meeting at the HMI (Muslim Student Association) office where we were showed a video of the Ambon conflict. We saw that the Ambonese Moslem people asked for help. We were involved in Ambon conflict by helping in providing food, health, logistics, carry riot victims, caring orphaned children. I take 11 children to boarding schools from Ambon. Initially we did it all for humanity. Furthermore, the Ambonese people also asked to be defended, so we open volunteers, we meet with others, including Imam Samudra who were a member of KOMPAK DDI. ¹

Similar backgrounds are also found in SA’s statement:

I am a victim of doctrine. Before I became a policeman I had seen Palestine, Bosnia, the American invasion, which made me angry. I like heroism. In short, after I became a police officer I met with Jamaah Islamiyah cell. In 2005 I began visiting Bali bomb detainees. In 2006 I read Aman Abdurahman's books about Syirik Demokrasi, in 2009 I joined Dul Matin.

A statement explaining similar reasons was also raised by YR and Sfy who were jailed in the Beji bombing case:

I used to be in Medan with a brutal life: thugs. I want to improve my life in Jakarta. In 2002 I met with Sofyan, it was him who invited me to join the Mujahideen Council. I joined because I am amazed by Ustad Abu, i met many friends ... when

¹ ZA, interview with authors, ...
the explosion occurred in Beji I ran to Medan. I just agreed at that time to repay anyone who hurt Muslims, or the police who harmed the ulama.

This initial motive gives a strong impression that the transformation of individuals into terrorists is basically a cosmopolitan transformation. That is the transformation of an individual mediated by more complex global relations. They are motivated initially by their humanitarian commitment to Bosnia, Palestine and Iraq, they moved beyond the limits of their nationality. Here, terrorists find new meaning in their lives. This transformation is also dialectically reinforced by the fact that the response to the terrorist action also comes from various elites in major leader of the big countries. The international construction on terrorism as a global war increasingly thickens this cosmopolitan transformation: just as they are declared to be enemies of western counties, their individuality has since dissolved as well as rising to an unstoppable stage. Of those who are now an enemy of powerful powers. This transformation underlies the growing spirit and heroism as mentioned by Sofyan Sauri, Ali Fauzi and Ahmad Sofyan. Their integration into global jihad gives them new meanings as individuals.

Why do I want to be a terrorist? Because of empathy, I read the Ambon case, I see why the country is more in favor of Christians. If Muslims are killed, the state is silent, but if the Christians who are killed, the world are shocked. As soon as I joined the recitation with Anwar, I got the argument. Once recitation, after mastering the argument, we were divided according to preference: weapons to weapons, bombs to bombs.²

It is recitation that teaches the arguments of violence and organizes violence. In the recitation they also met with ideological mentors who provided jihadi literature and guided and directed them to jihadist interpretations.


After being arrested, all of the convicted terrorists were not immediately taken to the police station or detained in police custody, they were taken first to a place they did not know. Agus said that once he was arrested he was taken to a cheap hotel, where he was held for a week and experienced interrogation and torture. He gave up on his interrogator because he heard the voice of his sister being tortured in the next room. His brother was not involved in any terrorist activities, was arrested only because for receiving SMS from him. Baim experienced the same thing, when he was arrested he was held captive for a week "destroyed" first he said. Zaki, Abu Toto and Sofyan also experienced the same thing.

After a week in captivity in hidden places, they were then taken to POLDA (Regional Police Head Quarter) and detained there while waiting for the filing process from the police. Here they are usually formally interrogated once more and treated more humanely. After the filing is complete, the file is sent to the Prosecutor's Office.

² SS, interview with authors,....
When they begin to enter the trial stage, they become prisoners of the prosecutor's office. Usually from here they are then deposited in the Mako BRIMOB correctional facility as entrusted prisoners. Prison Mako Brimob is basically a temporary detainee, it is not intended to be a means of correcting for general prisoners especially detainees with a high level of security risk such as terrorist prisoners. Mako Brimob Prison is intended to be a place of detention for police members involved in criminal offenses. But the government changes its function and was used for prisoners and prisoners of terrorist prisoners. During those time the responsibility for the administration of detainees in the detention center was carried out by the Police Criminal Investigation Unit, but the responsibility of the location was managed by the Police Mobile Brigade (BRIMOB). Prior to the major riots on 8 May 2018, the Mako Brimob experienced severe damaged and criticism. As acknowledged by the Chief of Police Tito, this facility should only accommodate 64 prisoners / prisoners with a maximum limit of 90 inmates. But until May 2018 this facility has more than 155 prisoners.

Agus explained in detail what had happened while being held in the Brimob Mako Prison. He was detained in this detention center for about 1 year 2 months.

1. Monday: 24 hours cell room.
2. Tuesday: get 1 hour, 10-11 hours Then go to the cell.
3. Wednesday: 24 hours in cell.
4. Thursday: get 1 hour. The rest goes back to the cell.
5. Friday: Exercise 1 hour. Return to Cell.
6. Saturday: 24 hours
7. Sunday 24 hours.

In 2013 in November Agus was transferred from the Mako Brimob to the Pasir Putih, Nusa Kambangan, an isolated island in the south of Java with super maximum security. In Nusa Kambangan, the schedule of life is much more loose. They have their own activities, want to pay, life schedules are not rigily \ programmed, they have morning sports, or planting fish, they buy seedlings from the officers. They can also read books, doing fitness, badminton.

In Nusa Kambangan there is a regular recitation organized by the Ministry of Religion office. The terrorist though that all Ulema from sent by the ministry, have a lower standard in understanding Islam. However, they usually just follow this recitation because it is a compulsory. Presentation in government recitation is a one of conditions for parole.

Similar timetable was experienced by all detainees held at the Brimob Mako. In addition, they also have a simple daily life schedule, namely: breakfast at 7 breakfast, lunch at 12, dinner at 5 o'clock. During their detention at the Brimob Mako, they are detained and do not get any correctional programs at all. From this, Agus then tells that due to the intensity of being in prison for so long they instead met with "ikhwan" like "harder" terrorist prisoners. He said what happened was, fellow brothers exchanged knowledge.

Many detained terrorist prisoners complained about the enactment of Government Regulation (PP) No. 99 of 2012 concerning the Requirements and Procedures for the Implementation of Prisoners' Rights, which replaced Government Regulation No. 32 of 1999. This PP complicates the
conditions of release. Terrorism prisoners interviewed stated that PP 99 "made prisoners stressed". PP 28 is better than PP 99. In their view PP 99 has removed a chances for parole. As a result, "it makes us feel no use to be good, because there is no reward". PP 99 also caused many prisoners to resent the officers. PP 99 creates more hardliner people. PP 99 makes people hate officers, hates law.

For many observers, PP 99 is indeed regarded as one of the culprits of the 'over capacity' of prisons, especially for drug and terrorism cases. This PP is intended to tighten the conditions of release for perpetrators in 3 categories, namely: corruption, narcotics and terrorism. However, unintended consequences that arise from the implementation, is not taken into account by the government. As a result, in prison for drug cases and terrorism over capacity is accumulated. In response to over capacity, a number of experts and observers have asked that this PP to be revised on a limited basis only for narcotics and terrorism.

According to A, Compared to Nusa Kambangan, although both have the maximum security status, BNPT detainees are more stringent because there are more indoor characters. But food is very guaranteed and 1 person occupies only one cell. In BNPT the convicted terrorist have more room and freedom : Monday-Sunday: 6 am - 5 pm may be out of the cell. Opening hours are 2 times a week, each is given 1 hour on Tuesday and Thursday. IN BNPT terrorist inmates get an education with a schedule: Monday 9-10 education education nationality. Tuesday holidays. Wednesday there is an entrepreneurial education where they are taught nyablon, calligraphy, online trading which lasts for 1 hour. Thursday there is a psychology lesson filled by lecturers from UI, with discussions. Friday: religious lessons taught by lecturers from Jakareta National Islamic University for 1 hour. Saturday: holiday. Sunday off. Saturday Sunday watching TV.

E. Terrorist Detention Placement

Before the occurrence of major riots and violence in the Mako Bimob in May 2018, in general, suspects or defendants of terrorist were detained in the Brimob Mako. After a court decision, a coordination meeting was held which was attended by 4 institutions, namely BNPT, Attorney General's Office, Detachment 88 of the National Police and Director General of Corrections. These four institutions determine where the next terrorist prisoner will be placed. These four agencies carry out categories and classifications to place terrorist prisoners. This categorization and placement is based on three recommendations from three institutions: regional recommendations (from Detachment 88), recommendations because they are still needed at the trial (from the Attorney General) and recommendations for the prison to be placed (from DG PAS). In determining the placement of terrorist prisoners from the Maki Brimob o to the correctional institution through the profiling process by taking into account several considerations, namely:

1) The area of the network of prisoners concerned.
2) There are members of the same network in the prison.
3) The number of prisoners of terrorism in the prison.
4) Is still required as a witness in the trial.
5) Further case development.
6) The area of origin of the inmate / domicile.
7) Factors for prison conditions such as: buildings, facilities and infrastructure.
8) Category of terrorist inmates (ideologists, militants and sympathizers).

However, regardless of the legal rules, the error is already inherited from the very beginning. Riots that occurred in the Rutan Mako Brimob, in which 155 terrorist prisoners not only managed to seize automatic weapons from the police and even executed 5 police officers, have opened up errors in the terrorist imprisonment system. The terrorist prisoners took control of the Maki Brimob Prison for two days from May 8 to May 10 2018. A number of former prisoners who were detained in the detention center explained that despite the hard-liner ideology of ISIS prisoners, the management of the prison in the Brimob Detention Center was indeed a mess. There are a number of reasons they have raised about why detainees in the detention center tend to rebel: first, on the one hand the control system makes prisoners stressed because the prisoner's time to enjoy the open air is very little, while the cells they occupy are also crowded. Second, the control of the guards was also low, often even the guards mingled with the prisoners in cells. Third, the position of the armory room is very close to the cells of the prisoners. So that once the bulkhead can be broken down, prisoners can freely control the weapon. Third, during detention, officers often frighten them that they will definitely be punished very severely: sentenced to death or for life. As a result, hope is often very low among terrorist terrorists. Fourth, in an all-over-capacity and overcrowded environment, hardline prisoners are detained by mixing with novice terrorist prisoners. As a result, many beginner terrorists actually learn ideology and become harder when arrested.

One of the factors that caused this detention house to continue to be used as a substitute detention center despite over capacity was corruption. The number of prisoners means bigger amount of the budget. This condition is maintained continuously until the big riot took 6 lives in May happened. After the May riots, all terrorist prisoners at the Brimob Mobile Brigade were transferred to Nusa Kambangan.

F. Third Transformation: Family, Internal Conflict and World Experiences

Family is a salient factor in influencing terrorists to stop being terrorists (or continue to be terrorist). Baim for example, when he was arrested he was visiting home to meet with his daughter. When detained his wife who had just given birth died of cancer. He continues to imagine how his children will be in the future. The thought of his family's fate changed and encouraged him to stop his 'struggle'. The same thing happened to Agus Abdillah. He said that when arrested by the Detachment, his younger brother who was not involved in any kind of terrorism was also taken by the Densus and suffered torture. When he was held in a small hotel, he heard the voice of his sister being tortured in a nearby room held captive. Agus feels guilty. In addition, at the same time he also thought of his elderly mother. The role of the mother in changing the basic positions of terrorists also occurred in Zaki. During his imprisonment, his wife died as a result of an accident. His two children were divided, each of them was taken care of by his in-laws in Surabaya, and his parents were in Serang. His mother often called him during his imprisonment and hoped he would start taking care of his child, taking care of parents who were getting older. The obligation to take care of his mother made him call to stop his actions.

From another perspective, Siti Hafsah, the wife of Yusuf Rizal said that she is the one who asked her husband to stop. At first, both of them are couples who meet in a struggle for Islam. Siti Hahsaf is a da’wah activist of the Prosperous Justice Party who lives in the Harmoni area of Central Jakarta.
He who told her husband after being arrested "Abi (daddy) just stop, I was also so tired of taking care of the child. We don't need to do any more”. "Children bring changes to this type of terrorist establishment. Siti Hafsah explained that children bring new life to them. This made them finally leave organized ideological activity. They think more about their children's dreams. The same thing happened to Sofyan, who said that their greatest aspirations today were for the lives of children. Sofyan said, this is what distinguishes them from ISIS which includes children and wives to die in self-bombings. We have wife's children not to be killed.

Uniquely from all interviewees, none of them said that they abandoned terrorism as a result of education or coaching during the prison organized by official institutions of the state such as BNPT.

From many sources, only Ali Fauzy mentioned the role of the police, but more as a person. Ali Fauzy acknowledged that one of the things that pushed him to renounce terrorism was his meeting with a Catholic police officer. Periwira who helped him during his detention and gave him confidence. Goodness and trust change their views about the enemy and the world. He said, in the past, when he saw the building, he determined the size of a building like that, how many bombs were needed to destroy it. Now fantasies like that don't appear again in his head. He acknowledged that there are goodness in many people.

Another factor that drives terrorists to change is conflict with other terrorist groups. This conflict occurred in a moment where new terrorists were imprisoned into new prisoners inhabited by old terrorists. Zaki, Baim, Abu Toto and Sofyan, for example, started leaving terrorism when they went to prison. Baim said when he was transferred to Nusa Kambangan, he met with other terrorist prisoners, Aman Abdurahman’s men, at that time he was suddenly asked to choose between his group of pages or did he start following Aman Abdurrahman who was the leader of ISIS in Indonesia. Baim was slightly hit by the fact that this jihadist group was split from within. Not only that, Agus said, Sofyan also confirmed that the terrorist groups they met, who were affiliated with the Aman Abdurahman group, behaved very dominantly.

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G. Conclusions

The ideological change from ordinary people to people committed to acts of terrorist violence is constructed in three unique social fields: the first is cosmopolitanism, namely the integration of individuals into broader, and sometimes universal, values of solidarity. This process is a normal social process and occurs in most Indonesian people, as a result of the globalization of information that includes various exposures, news stories of the suffering of Muslims in various parts of the world. The second important process is the transformation from cosmopolitan solidarity into narrow solidarity into the ideology of violent jihadists through ideologization in recitation groups. In the process of human concern and solidarity changed and shifted into the doctrine of hostility and violence. The third process is the experience of conflict and violence. The third process transforms the jihadist doctrine of violence into violence. This third process confirms the change from a conformist citizen to a person who completely rejects all objectives and methods provided by the community without compromise, as well as the intention to reverse the order of society and all cultures in accordance with their doctrine.

Punishment in imprisonment has no relevance in changing a terrorist to return to being an ordinary citizen by removing his rebellion adaptation model. In prison, a terrorist accused is punished but not socialized to know well the basic goals in his community and the ways to achieve that goal.

The change from rebellion towards conformity occurs as a result of internal drive in ex-terrorist life. It is a result of some of the social processes new experiences in contact with the 'profane world' such as malls, cinemas, people from other religions. The second factor which is also quite important in changing the radical structure of terrorist mentality is a fragmentation in terms of views, teachings and doctrines of terrorism as well as new groupings formed due to factionalization in their core groups. This opens up opportunities to take a distance from the doctrine of violence.
and is slightly, open up the possibility to adopt other teachings outside the doctrine of violence. The third factor that turns them into more conformists is family.

Finally, from this study it is known that in reality de-ideologization is a non-mechanical process, there is no one who can truly escape, sterile from his ideological ideas and doctrines. They can change, shift and abandon its old doctrine, but this dating process or disengagement process is a social process that leaves residue, history and memory. What determines the extent to which the disengagement is fully successful in pushing people towards conformity is the deideologization that occurs in the practice of wider social interaction, not punishment in prison nor the recitation programs there. What happens after the inmates are outside the prison will determine the extent to which they will return or not. In other words, individual deradicalization is irrelevant because of pseudo and partial individuals. How individuals behave according to the goals of society depends on whether the community functions well in meeting their needs or not.