

# Breeding terrorism: an anomie's anatomy of the terrorism in Indonesia

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## **Abstract**

This article investigates the emergence of terrorism in Indonesia through the anomie sociological perspective. The data for this analysis was gathered from various sources, including documents of terrorist attacks in Indonesia from the internet, personal diaries, and interviews with terrorist prisoners. The anomie theory provides a means of analysis to illuminate the understanding of terrorism, its roots, and causes. From the anomie perspective, terrorism is not viewed as a savage group that allows the killing of innocent people nor a political party that wants to destroy and seize the secular government or Western countries. In the Indonesian context, terrorism is just seen as deviant groups or individuals resulted from global capitalism that destroys the equilibrium of the Muslim world. The anomie consists of two distinct forms: the terrorist attacks and the anomic interpretation of the Islamic holy text (Quran and Sunnah). Both conditions result in a threat to the government that they consider as infidel and aligned with the West. The anomie theory provides more promising remedies to abolish terrorism more permanently and to reduce the tensions between the government and the terrorists by proposing social integration and restoring equilibrium in the Muslim world, especially in Indonesia, as a focus for implementing these remedies.

Artikel ini mengupas munculnya terorisme di Indonesia melalui perspektif sosiologis khususnya teori anomie. Data diperoleh dari berbagai sumber, termasuk dokumen tentang serangan teroris di Indonesia yang terdapat di internet, catatan pribadi, serta wawancara dengan narapidana teroris. Teori anomie dalam analisis ini dapat meningkatkan pemahaman mengenai terorisme, utamanya akar dan penyebabnya. Dalam teori ini, teroris bukan dipandang sebagai kelompok yang kejam dan membenarkan pembunuhan terhadap orang tak bersalah, atau sebagai partai politik yang ingin menghancurkan serta mengambil alih pemerintahan sekuler atau negara-negara Barat. Dalam konteks Indonesia, terorisme hanya dipandang sebagai kelompok atau individu yang menyimpang, sebagai akibat dari kapitalisme global yang menghancurkan keseimbangan dunia Muslim. Anomie memiliki dua bentuk berbeda: *Pertama*, serangan teroris dan interpretasi anomik terhadap teks suci Islam (Al-Quran dan Sunnah); *kedua*, ancaman terhadap pemerintah yang dianggap kafir dan pro-Barat. Teori anomie menawarkan solusi yang lebih menjanjikan untuk memberantas terorisme dalam jangka yang lebih panjang, serta dapat mengurangi ketegangan antara pemerintah dan para teroris melalui integrasi sosial dan pemulihan keseimbangan dunia Muslim, khususnya di Indonesia sebagai fokus implementasi solusi.

**Keywords:** *Terrorism, Anomie, Sociological perspective, Indonesia*

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#### **Introduction**

US officials might claim that the prisoner abuses at Abu Ghraib were committed by what the government called “a few bad apples.” On the other hand, the Indonesian government might also claim that some terrorist attacks, which occurred from 1998 to 2023, were committed by a few bad Muslims.

The blamed soldiers are among the best of American soldiers. They did not have any criminal records before the trial of Abu Ghraib. Similarly, in the case of terrorist attacks in Indonesia, most perpetrators of the terrorist attacks were known as humble, helpful, and pious persons. They are regarded as social

people and hard workers even in their society. In the days before and after the day of the three Bali bombers' execution, many Islamic-based organizations openly showed their support to these people. Then, how should we look at these "a few bad apples?"

At the end of 2004, I visited my old friend in the terrorist prison in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. He was caught by the international intelligence in Pakistan for his alleged involvement in Al-Qaeda networks. After being screened by the police, I was allowed to enter the prison. I passed some cells for the common criminals (drug, stealing, etc); those prisoners did not behave properly, and they talked very loudly. However, when I entered the "terrorist cell," the situation was completely different. The cell had about four or five rooms and was very clean. My friend welcomed me warmly. I said to him "Is this prison? This is better than our former boarding schools." Other terrorist prisoners, one by one, showed up, shook my hand, and said "assalamu'laikum"; there were about ten. Everyone behaved properly and politely. Their appearance and behavior did not imply wickedness and crime. During my conversation with my friend, one of the prisoners, who later I knew as one of the bombers of the Marriot Hotel, offered me something to drink and a menu for lunch. I had my lunch and conversation with him. I asked myself: "Are they criminals?" I could not even imagine if they could kill an ant. But some of them killed and hurt many people, and destroyed public places. Then in the beginning of 2023, I visited the terrorist prisoners in Nusakambangan jails. I talked with some terrorist prisoners in two super maximum-security prisons. They behaved politely and seemed to show themselves as good and religious, citing the Al Quran in their arguments and their care to Islam (personal field notes, 2004 and 2023).

Why did those "good, religious" people commit big crimes? The interesting fact is that most perpetrators of terrorist attacks did not consider their actions as "criminal" but "holy, sacred missions" to show their total obedience to God. This paper, therefore, attempts to apply a genuinely sociological theory of anomie to terrorism in Indonesia. Hence, it questions how the theory of anomie explains the terrorism in Indonesia committed by Muslim groups or Muslims who call themselves pious Muslims.

### **The needs of anomie: modernism for postmodernism**

With the help of Nietzsche's idea, Baudrillard has proposed an alternative thought in decentering and deconstructing everything. For example, while many scholars and politicians contend that terrorist attacks by Muslim groups and the war in the Gulf are a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam, Baudrillard argues that terrorism is the impact of Western political expansion; the Gulf war and conflict are only a hyper-reality. However, he failed to escape from his ruthless and unreal world of power. The impact of the war and conflict has existed and caused more people to suffer and die (Kerr, 2008).

The anomie theory that originates from Durkheim is one of the potential theories that can illuminate the unreal world of postmodernism. If the idea of postmodernism of hyperreality or simulacra, especially in the era of Society 5.0, is correct, then the theory of anomie can help to make sense of why those problems happen, and what remedies the anomie theory may offer.

Anomie is often used to analyze unexpected situations, just like the case of terrorism. However, many studies of anomie mostly ignore macro-level analysis. Instead, it focuses on the individual and tends to be reduced to simple psychological assertions. For example, crimes result when people cannot achieve monetary success through legitimate channels. In short, the macro-side theory of anomie has been largely ignored (Agnew, 1997).

Anomie theory can be applied to individuals in all social strata as well as to organizational actors (Vaughan, 1997). Durkheim and Merton emphasize the regulation of individual conduct. Concerning strain and anomie, Durkheim argues that little restraint at the macro level leads to strain at the individual level. In contrast, Merton argues that the cultural imbalance between goals and norms at the macro level contributes to strain at the individual level. In turn, strain at the individual level contributes to the low emphasis on institutional norms at the cultural level (Passas, 1997). This means that the theory of anomie could be

brought into a broader context to examine group or individual levels of anomie, such as the global strains to analyze the emergence of terrorism (anomie).

The studies by Vaughan, Cohen, and Mestrovic (2007) are among the few that comprehensively applied the theory of anomie at macro-level analysis. Vaughan (1997) elaborates on Cohen's theory of collectivities. Organizations threatened with defeat may turn to deviance, a prospect enhanced by the ambiguous societal standards guiding the conduct of organizations. Organizational deviance then is most likely when there is pressure to deviate in a context of limited social regulation. In this process, the organizations developed a subculture that came to justify their deviance to normalize the deviance in which they engaged.

Mestrovic's Abu Ghraib (2007) rejects the "rotten apple" theory (the micro side theory of anomie) at the abuse of Abu Ghraib. Instead, he examines the abuse into broader political and social aspects of the US army (macro-level theory of anomie). For Mestrovic, looking at micro-level analysis theory is not enough to explain the military justice of the Trial of Abu Ghraib. He elaborates on multifaceted approaches to understanding the anomie in Abu Ghraib, such as the issues of military command, shortage of facilities and supplies in the prison, lack of military training, and three preexisting reports in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo prisoners.

Mestrovic seems to employ Durkheim's anomie rather than Parson's or Merton's to analyze the abuse in Abu Ghraib. He distinguishes the theory of anomie proposed by Durkheim and Parsons. Durkheim defines anomie as a situation of derangement, which literary means a rule that is lack of rule, a state of corruption, evil, agitation, torment, impiety, and intemperance, which leads to general suffering and torment. Thus, anomie is a deranged state of disorganization, lack of coordination, and other variations of social chaos (p. 9). On the contrary, Parsons defines anomie as normlessness or lawlessness. He also defines it as a war of all against all. Mestrovic argues that Durkheim's

understanding of anomie seems more applicable in examining the Abuse at Abu Ghraib, than the version of Parsons.

Similarly, Vaughan employs the theory of anomie in the case of NASA and the space shuttle Challenger disaster. Unlike Mestrovic who emphasizes Durkheim's anomie, Vaughan focuses on Merton's anomie. However, she seems in line with Mestrovic. Vaughan also does not blame what Mestrovic calls the "two bad apples" (Marshal and Thiokol) or two engineers responsible for the Challenger launch with the damaged O-rings. Instead, she looks broadly at the anomic situations in NASA (competition, resource scarcity, and limited norms). In so doing, she examines how the anomic situation creates deviant workers and how the workers tried to normalize the deviance in which they engaged so that the public would accept that the Challenger disaster is normal and part of routine events (p. 118).

Vaughan opposes the criticism, arguing that Merton's anomie fails to address the deviant and criminal behavior of the middle and upper class of offenders. She re-conceptualizes Merton's "means" and "ends" as "scarce resources" and argues that his paradigm can be applied to people across the class spectrum and organizations (p. 97).

The previously mentioned studies, especially the last two, help the present study to discuss the theory of anomie and the case of terrorism in Indonesia. In doing so, the following will discuss terrorism in Indonesia: its emergence, actors, and other political and socio-religious contexts, while applying the anomie theory.

### **Terrorism in Indonesia**

Over the past two decades, Indonesia has faced a dynamic counter-terrorism challenge. The number of terrorist attacks and attempts has consistently risen, from the Bali Suicide Bombing in 2002 to the Bandung Suicide attack in 2022. Responding to this phenomenon of terrorism in Indonesia, the government has

produced many regulations and policies to handle terrorism. Some of the major regulations are:

1. Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1 of 2002, concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism;
2. Law Number 15 of 2003, concerning Criminal Acts of Terrorism;
3. Law Number 5 of 2018, concerning Amendments to Law Number 15 of 2003, concerning Criminal Acts of Terrorism;
4. Government Regulation Number 77 of 2019, concerning Prevention of Criminal Acts of Terrorism and Protection of Investigators, Public Prosecutors, Judges and Correctional Officers; and
5. Presidential Regulation No. 7 of 2021 of National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism leading to terrorism 2020 - 2024.

These regulations show how the Indonesian government (across regimes) has paid severe efforts to counter-terrorism. It is because the threats of terrorism in Indonesia are latent but recurrent at times with different levels of destruction. Among the twenty-seven major terrorist attacks in the world, four of them occurred in Indonesia. They are the First Bali Bombings, Marriot Hotel Bombing, Jakarta Australian Embassy Bombing, and the Second Bali Bombing. These terrorist attacks are often linked to local and international networks, such as, Jamaah Ansarut Tauhid (JAT), Jamaah Ansarud Daulah (JAD), Jemaah Islamiyyah (JI), Al-Qaeda of Southeast Asia, Islamic State of Iraq and Syam (ISIS). Though these groups have been damaged gradually since the capture of Amrozi in 2002 to the death of Dr. Azhari in 2005, in 2008, the Indonesian police still captured nine terrorist suspects who have close ties to JI and ISIS. The following are some of the major terrorist attacks in Indonesia.

The First Bali bombings occurred on 12 October 2002. It killed 202 people (88 Australians, 38 Indonesians, 22 British, and 7 Americans) and injured more than 209 people. The big bombs exploded in nightclubs in Kuta and the smaller bomb exploded near the US consulate in Denpasar. This attack

is often linked to the Jama'ah Islamiyah (JI). Among Muslims who are often cited to be involved in the attacks are Abu Bakar Ba'asyir (later, he is not proven in the terrorist attacks), Amrozi, Mukhlas, Ali Imron, Imam Samudra, and Dr. Azhari.

The Marriot Hotel bombing occurred on 5 August 2003, in the capital city of Jakarta. The bomb exploded outside the lobby of the JW Marriot Hotel and killed 12 people; all of them were Indonesian. It is often assumed that the hotel became the target of the terrorists because various events of the US embassy were held in this hotel. Some of the names that are involved in this attack are Hambali, Dr. Azhari, Nurdin M. Top, Sardono, and Ari Setiawan. Like the first Bali bombings, the Marriot bombing is believed, to have a connection with Al-Qaeda.

The Jakarta Australian Embassy bombing occurred on 9 September 2004 in Jakarta. The bomb exploded on the street in front of the gate of the Australian Embassy. It killed nine people, including the suicide bomber and injured more than 150 people. This is believed to be part of Jama'ah Islamiyah operation.

The second Bali bombings occurred on 1 October 2005, in two tourist areas of South Bali, Jimbaran and Kuta. The two bombs killed 20 people, including the three suicide bombers, and more than 129 people were injured. The Indonesian government still argues that the perpetrators of the second Bali bombings are still the old players. The institutions of Jama'ah Islamiyah and Al-Qaeda are still the main focus of these terrorist attacks. Interestingly, this focus is still in line with the US and its allies' expansion in Afghanistan and Iraq, namely destroying Al-Qaeda.

Terrorist offender riots occurred on 8 to 10 May 2018, at Mako Brimob (Police) prison in Depok, West Java. The 156 terrorist convicts hold hostage of several Police members (Brimob and Densus 88) for 36 hours. Five police



officers and one terrorist were killed and four police officers were seriously injured.

Finally, in the last case to be noted, a group of terrorist families launched a series of suicide attacks in Surabaya on 13 and 14 May 2018. At least fifteen people died, and many people were injured. In the evening, a bomb exploded in an apartment in Wonocolo, Sidoarjo, East Java. The next day, a bomb exploded at the Surabaya Police Headquarters, East Java, on 14 May 2018, at 08.50 IST. All the perpetrators who carried out the series of terror bombs in Surabaya and Sidoarjo were members of the Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD) network, which is affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Similar to the case of abuse in Abu Ghraib explained by Mestrovic, six terrorist attacks indicate the high level of social disorder in Indonesia as well as in the Muslim world. During the history of Indonesia, it has never had any direct conflict with the West, especially the US, Great Britain, and Australia. However, the targets of the attacks were, in the beginning, the West (especially the US and Australia) or something associated with Western culture, then the Indonesian government, especially security authorities, which they identify as kafir, agents of the West, and the enemy of God. These facts indicate that analyzing terrorism using a psychological approach or micro level of anomie will not suffice to get a comprehensive understanding of terrorism in Indonesia. It also needs a macro-level analysis to explain this anomie. In doing so, the following will discuss the micro and macro level approaches to investigate what Durkheim called derangement, or what Merton called a gap between means and goals.

### **Ummah and the logic of anger**

The state of derangement or anomie in the Muslim World should be traced to the concept of social unity in the Muslim community, which is often called the concept of ummah. Ummah literally means community; it is close to the term

umm which means mother. Similar to the concept of Veblen's matriarchal society, the concept of ummah urges that Muslims should care, help, and avoid competing with each other as explained below.

The concept Ummah is used to maintain the integrity of Muslims under the highest level of institution, namely "only one single Islam." Its concept contains at least three principles. First, the Muslim community consists of various backgrounds in terms of their nationality, ethnicity, skin color, gender, school of law, and so forth. Second, this diversity is God's will to make people (Muslims) understand and know each other. All Muslims are equal and all brothers and sisters, which is often called the *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Muslim brotherhood). What makes Muslims different is their level of obedience to God. Third, God has predestinated that the Muslim community is the best community that God has created. This principle gives the ultimate motivational frame to maintain the concept of the ummah. The ummah, then becomes the highest goal that all Muslims should achieve. The basis of the reasoning is rooted in the verses of the Quran and Muhammad's Hadith. Some of them are:

1. Mankind! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know one another, the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (the Quran, 49: 13).
2. God says: Ye are the best of people, evolved for mankind (Al Quran, 3:10).
3. Muhammad says: None of you will have faith till he likes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself (Hadith, Narrated by Bukhari: 61).

Most of the Islamic systems support the concept of ummah. For example, in the five-time prayers, Muslims are demanded to conduct the praying collectively. In Islamic countries, many Muslims meet together five times a day on average, and every Friday they meet together in a big meeting. Durkheim's theory suggests that routine encounters and frequent rituals will promote more and more social integration. Hence, the concept of ummah has

become one of the central parts of Muslim life. In addition to that, in Muslim countries, the concept of the ummah has been strongly emphasized since early education. For example, most of the Muslim children are taught that there is only one single Islam. Even in Islamic schools, children have to memorize some verses of the Quran that entail Muslim brotherhood or ummah teachings.

In general, Muslims are born to be dependent and less individual, they have strong ties to their community and will feel guilty if they cannot help other Muslims. Even though Muslims live in different parts of the world, Islam is constructed as a *gemeinschaft* rather than a *gesellschaft*. Therefore, the current Western political expansions in Islamic countries, like the Gulf War, the Afghan War, and the Iraq War, have created a state of confusion and strain among Muslims in Indonesia, and then led to the state of anomie (though still many Muslims do not turn into anomie). Therefore, to understand the state of derangement in the Indonesian Muslim community, one should understand the structural concept of the Muslim community, namely the concept of ummah.

The state of anomie (produced by the US and its allies) then turns some Muslims into different levels of animosity. First, it increases the number of what Oliver Roy called neo-fundamentalism, in terms that they hate the West but they still believe that the Quran does not allow using violence (including suicide bombing) to counter the Western hegemony. But, they also do not condemn the perpetrators of terrorist attacks. Among the Muslim groups that are often considered to embrace this idea are Hizb-ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI). For example, on one hand, they disagree with the terrorist attack of 9/11 but at the same time, they also argue that the US deserved what they did. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir blames Hambali, Abu Dujana, and their cliques for committing the Bali Bombings, and argues that they misunderstood in reading the Quran. But, Ba'asyir considers suicide bombers in the four terrorist attacks as martyrs.

Secondly, the state of strain and confusion has led to the creation of terrorism among Muslims. Some Muslims do not agree with the “means” that have been embraced by Muslims in Indonesia to achieve their goal, “the perfect ummah”. They allow the use of violence to seize power; and even, they allow killing themselves to restore the glory of Islam. At the same time, this strain also leads to the anomic interpretation of the holy text of Islam, namely the Quran and Sunnah, which makes terrorism become hidden anomie, in which the person who commits anomic action believes that he or she performs a holy mission.

In short, both neo-fundamentalism and terrorist groups share the common idea that the West, which is now led by the US, is responsible for the holocaust happening in Muslim countries, especially Iraq and Afghanistan. These views and their anomie can be traced from the confession of Muslim terrorists (including some fundamentalists) that are discussed as follows.

### **Terrorist’s confession**

It is not too difficult to find information on why Muslim terrorists commit evil actions and why they hate the West so much. They were willing to be questioned by police officers, judges, lawyers, and journalists. Even some terrorists published a book telling the reasoning behind their terrorist actions. One of them is Imam Samudra.

Samudra is one of the masterminds behind the first Bali bombings. He was caught by the police on 26 November 2008. During his life in prison, he wrote about his confession and justification for the Bali bombing operation. With the help of Bambang Sukirno, the owner of a small publication, he published his writing entitled *Aku Melawan Teroris* (I am Fighting against Terrorist). Sukirno helped to edit and launch to the market. Interestingly, the book had been difficult to find only two weeks after its publication. It swept the

market and became one of Indonesia's best-selling books in 2004. Does it indicate a silent agreement for terrorism?

Samudra argues that the main targets for his mission are the US and its allies. He opposes other Muslim argument saying that according to the Quran and Sunnah Bali bombings is illegitimate because Bali is part of Indonesia, a Muslim country. For Samudra, those with this idea are narrow-minded, naïve, and do not understand the current global world. Globalization has changed the nature of the conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims. Now, the conflict between them is not limited by geographical boundaries. The West attacks Islam on a global scale, so Islam should fight against the West without limiting the area of war to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Chechnya (Samudra, 2004).

Samudra understood that killing women, children, and innocent civilians is forbidden by Islam. He, however, argues that this rule applies in normal conditions. When the situation is not normal, in terms that the enemy also violates the rule of war, Muslims are also allowed to kill unavoidable victims, like women and children.

He argues that before his terrorist attack, the US had already transgressed the rule. In 1991, the US embargo on Iraq caused 60,000 children to die; From 1994 to 2001, thousands of civilians in Afghanistan died as a result of the US embargo; the US always supported politically and financially the Israelite attack on Palestinians; Post 9/11 attacks, the US brutally seized many Muslims; and In Afghan war, more than 200,000 innocent civilians have been killed by the US (Samudra, 2004).

A similar statement was also made by Abu Dujana, one of the senior members of Jama'ah Islamiyyah (JI). In his special interview with CNN, he argues that he, along with the JI, does hate the US because the US did attack and seize Muslim lands, in Afghanistan and Palestine. All Americans and the West can be legitimate targets for terrorist attacks because it has been clear that they attack Muslim countries (CNN, June 25 2007).

When he was asked why he did not report to the police after he met with Nurdin M. Top, the perpetrator of the Marriott bombing, he answered that M. Top is his brother in Islam; he will never surrender his brother to the enemy or the police who are influenced by the US. He clarifies that the bombs that are often attributed to Jama'ah Islamiyah are false. As a senior member of JI, he had no prior knowledge of the Mariot bombing attack. So it means that the bombings were not planned by JI, even though the actors are the members of JI. He also rejects the connection of the attacks with the JI and Al-Qaeda. However, he agrees that the struggle and ideology of JI is parallel to those of Al-Qaeda (CNN, June 25 2007).

What he wants is just to get back the lands of Islam and give the Muslims a chance to power, and then Muslims can apply the Syariah rule (based on the Quran and Sunnah) so that justice can be served. The interviewer was struck by the paradoxical behavior that he encountered during his conversation with one of the most dangerous terrorist suspects. When the noon prayer came, he asked permission first to pray. Dujana also looked very friendly person. He always smiled, even when he talked about a terrorist attack like 9/11, which killed 3,000 innocent people. He was so happy to hear about 9/11 because America harvested its arrogance. It seems as the CNN interviewer felt weird about Dujana, that the terrorist is very mysterious. On one he professes to be a devoted Muslim, on the other hand, he is full of hatred, which is hidden in their smile.

Similar stories are still the same in 2023. The writer visited terrorist prisons in Nusakambangan island. In a super maximum-security prison, he met a terrorist prisoner who received a life sentence. He said that he had given his life to the religion. What he did that put him in prison is kind of his obedience to God. When the writer asked why he does not subjugate and acknowledge the government or state of Indonesia so that he will get remission and discount of his life sentence. He said that he never complies with the government, which he

considers as a toghut, the enemy of God. All people will die, in or outside the prison. The most important is how people die. A similar response also writer got from another terrorist prisoner who had just divorced his wife, who is also a terrorist prisoner. He asked why he declared that he automatically divorced his wife. The terrorist prisoner answered that his wife has declared to be loyal to the government of Indonesia, so he considered her as part of the government, and she became automatically an infidel or kafir, and therefore, she was automatically divorced (interview with terrorist prisoners in Pasir Putih and Karanganyar prisons, August 2023).

### **The anomic reading of the Quran**

Like the case of the anomie of NASA where the workers created some ethical engineering to make the anomic situation be seen as normal and acceptable, the terrorists in Indonesia also created their reasoning so that their action became legitimate, at least in the eyes of Muslims. In this case, the reasoning aspect for the anomie goes further than the anomie of NASA workers. They not only seek recognition from society that their deeds are normal and acceptable, but they also provoke Muslim people to join their actions, challenging Western hegemony and finally becoming true Muslims (Munajat, 2022).

If the reasoning of the terrorist action is true, it bears some technical problems in the analysis of anomie. Is this a form of adaptation, normalization, or legitimation? Answering this question, it needs information on how the terrorist gives the reasoning for their actions. Terrorists refer their missions to the concept of jihad. Jihad generally means striving in God's way and for the Muslim ummah's betterment. However, in Islamic law, jihad refers to warfare. Jihad is one of the most righteous actions in Islamic teaching. Muslims believe that God has granted heaven to whoever does jihad in the way of God. However, Muslims have different interpretations in applying the concept of jihad in the present time (Munajat, 2022a).

Most Muslim terrorists like the JI or Al-Qaeda group, define Jihad as warfare, or military fighting against the Muslim enemy. As the US and its allies, which they called unbelievers, have run their project of Muslim cleansing in Iraq, Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Palestine, All Muslim individuals are obliged to do the jihad or wage war against the Muslim enemy. Mostly, they based this idea on the following verses of the Quran:

Permission [to fight] is given to those against whom war is being wrongfully waged—and, verily, God has indeed the power to succor them—those who have been driven from their homelands against all right for no other reason than their saying, “Our Sustainer is God!” (22:39–40)

. . . slay those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God whenever you may come upon them . . . (9:5)

[And] fight against those who—despite having been vouchsafed revelation [aforetime]—do not [truly] believe either in God and His Apostle have forbidden, and do not follow the religion of truth [which God has enjoined upon them], till they [agree to] pay the jizyah (exemption tax) with a willing hand, after having been humbled [in war]. (9:9)

And fight against those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God, all together—just as they fight against you, [O believers,] all together—and know that God is with those who are conscious of Him. (9:36)

In short, Muslim terrorists try to contextualize the meaning of the Quran, simply by replacing the objects of those verses with the West. Hence, as if God has ordered Muslims to struggle and fight against the US till the end of their deed.

They consider a suicide bombing as a martyrdom operation. Imam Samudra, for example, argues that this kind of action occurred in the time of Muhammad. Sunnah’s narrations told that during Muhammad’s time, Muhammad’s companions fought the enemy without paying attention to their safety. This narration is used by the terrorist to legitimize their offensive jihad. It is not part of the paper to assess whether terrorist arguments about their action are valid or not. There are a bunch of Quranic verses and Sunnah saying



not to kill even a small ant. But, the obvious thing is that killing innocent people and suicide are both anomies, thus it is fair to say that reading the holy text that leads to the anomie, is part of anomic action.

My concern is that the terrorist use of the Quran and Sunnah is part of the “language game” in the postmodern time. During the early history of Islam, there was no evidence that suicide was allowed by Islam. Suicide bombing is a current phenomenon. So, how suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks are rationalized by the terrorists? The answer will be who plays this language game first.

In short, the legitimating of terrorist attacks from the holy text is another impact of global capitalism and Western political expansion. Poor people give their poverty as a reason why he or she steal. NASA workers use their sophisticated knowledge to say that the Challenger disaster is just a common occurrence, airplane crashes happen everywhere. And finally, devoted Muslims also seek the religious reasoning from their anomie that God has ordered Muslims to fight against the West.

In addition, the anomic reading of the holy text also indicates that anomie does not mean normlessness or lawlessness, as Parson explained. On the contrary, Muslim terrorists still embrace Islamic norms “with their interpretations.” In the case of the present study and the study of anomie in NASA, it seems that the anomie has nothing to do with the state of normlessness.

Besides, the anomie does not contain the meaning of Parsons’ “the war of all against all.” The battle of the terrorists is the battle between the West and Islamic terrorist groups. Many Muslims silently support terrorist actions, even though they do not agree with the terrorist ideology.

### **Counterproductive remedy**

The above anomie analysis suggests that terrorism (their ideology and actions) should be considered as a symptom of a sick society. To remedy the situation, the doctor should not only give the pill to reduce the symptom, but most importantly, the appropriate medication to kill the virus that produces the symptom.

Anomie looks at terrorism as neither a savage group that allows killing innocent people nor a political party that wants to destroy the Indonesian government and the Western countries. Terrorism is just seen as deviant groups or individuals resulted from global capitalism that destroys the equilibrium of the Muslim world.

According to Mestrovic, Durkhiem's anomie suggests that the remedy for anomie is collective therapy that includes "establishing fixed normative referents, promoting social integration, and ensuring that existing norms are coordinated, incorporated into policies, and function properly" (Mestrovic, 2007). Thus, to restore the social disorder, especially in the Muslim countries, the efforts towards creating equilibrium and social integration between Muslim worlds and the West, should be prioritized.

Nowadays, however, this sociological perspective has been neglected. The efforts towards the remedy for terrorism are still far from the concept of anomie. This can be seen in the concepts of the War on Terrorism, Counter-terrorism, and Anti Terrorism, which are mostly applied in many countries worldwide. Counter-terrorism is defined as offensive strategies intended to prevent and deter terrorism. It involves using any kind of strategies that often violate human rights. Anti-terrorism is defined as defensive strategies to reduce the possibility of terrorist attacks. It also often produces some violations, but in less scale.

Many countries have passed anti-terrorism legislation to respond the terrorist threats and attacks. The US, the UK, Australia, and Indonesia have

passed several acts of anti-terrorism. In Indonesia, for example, since the enactment of acts on terrorism in 2002 and Bush's campaign on the War on Terrorism, the military government often scrutinized Islamic boarding schools (madrash and pesantren) and any fundamentalist group. However, it resulted in the stigmatization of Muslim groups and tension between Muslims and the government; many moderate Muslim leaders even warned the government to not blindly scrutinize the Muslim schools and groups.

However, the Indonesian government received much appreciation and recognition from many countries, like the US and Australia, for its successful program in the war on terrorism. In the 6th ASEAN Summit last year, Indonesia's successful story in reducing terrorism and arresting more than three hundred terrorist suspects has become an exemplary case in the program of War on Terrorism. But, the more appreciation and reorganization, the Indonesian government received, the more followers of Islamic militant groups increased. Therefore, currently, Indonesia has used several strategies to deal with terrorists by categorizing terrorists based on their ideology and potential threats and campaigning a more soft approach to deal with these types of terrorists and terrorism (Munajat, 2022b).

Finally, based on the theory of anomie, it seems that current therapy for alleviating terrorism in the world is counterproductive to the nature of terrorism. The regulations produced to stop terrorism and the policy of the War on Terrorism tend to breed terrorism rather than stop terrorism. Thus, it is a good time to apply the remedy offered by anomie theory for the plan of permanent eradication of terrorism from the world; otherwise, a new variant of terrorism will be born with another holocaust. Therefore integrating terrorist individuals and their families into the lives of society and nations is an important factor to alleviate terrorism.

### **Reflection and conclusion**

In the era of postmodernism, people encounter more simulacra and hyperreality. Everything seems to be paradoxical. The US is democratic and wants to be consistence in promoting democracy across the world. However, Muslims look at the democracy of the US and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan. On the other hand, Islam aims to bring salam (peace) to the world. The Quran and Sunnah are the basis foundation of the Islamic teaching to spread peace. However, Western people look at Islam at 9/11, the London bombings, the Surabaya series of terrorist bombings, and other terrorist attacks. The West and Islam seem to have contradictory double faces. Both only look at the shadow of their opponents.

Similarly, when the abuse of Abu Ghraib came to trial, many argued that those suspected soldiers were a few bad apples of American soldiers. In fact, those soldiers were among the best of the American young generation. On the other hand, many argue that the terrorist perpetrators are also a few bad apples among good Muslims. The suspects of terrorist attacks are known as devoted Muslims, and known as social and hardworking people.

Baudrillard might be true; everything is simulacra and hyperreality. Everything should be deconstructed and decentered. We can no longer sustain the theory that the perpetrator of any criminal is the one who should be blamed since it does not describe any reality. Anomie theory is a potential means of analysis to illuminate the understanding of postmodernism problems, like terrorism, Islam, and the West. Anomie looks at terrorism as neither a savage group that allows killing innocent people nor a political party that wants to destroy the United State. Borrowing the Indonesian case, terrorism is just seen as deviant groups or individuals resulted from global capitalism that destroys the equilibrium of the Muslim world.

Thus, to restore the social order, especially in the Muslim countries, the efforts towards creating equilibrium and social integration between the Muslim

world and the West, should be prioritized. The integration is not only to include the individual of terrorists but also their families (spouses and children) and their supporting groups and individuals.

The concepts of War on Terrorism, Counter-terrorism (CT), and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), which are mostly applied in many countries worldwide, seem counterproductive to the nature of terrorism. The policy and the practices of the War on terrorism often create new chaos in the Muslim World. Thus, the War on Terrorism becomes an invitation for terrorism or breeding a new generation of terrorism. Therefore, one of the potential alternatives to be developed in the counter-terrorism policy is by expanding the present Indonesian concept of a soft approach involving social programs to remedy terrorism comprehensively.

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