



WHAT DO TERRORISTS THINK? ANALYZING THE BALI BOMBERS' MEMOIRS

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Abstract:

This article tries to examine what terrorists think about their actions. Why did they do the violent action? What are inside their mind? How did they justify their violence? This article tries to answer the question by focusing on three main perpetrators of the Bali bombers 2002, *i.e.* Imam Samudra, Ali Ghufron and Ali Imron. Except Imron who was sentenced to life imprisonment, Samudra and Ghufron has been sentenced to death by Indonesian authority. The authors analyze their mind by reading the texts written by these three bombers and trying to understand and explain its context. This research reveals that the bombers had different understanding of the religious teachings. Samudra and Ghufron believe that their action is based on the true understanding and true depiction of implementation of jihad in Islam. Ali Imron, who previously had the similar believe, was repentant and believed that their action was based on unjustified interpretations of jihad teaching in Islam.

Key words: Terrorism, radicalism, Bali bombers, mind, memoirs, jihad.

Titulo en Castellano: *¿Qué piensan los terroristas? Analizando las memorias de los terroristas de Bali*

Resumen:

Este artículo trata de examinar qué piensan los terroristas sobre sus acciones. ¿Por qué realizaron la acción violenta? ¿Qué hay en su mente? ¿Cómo justifican su violencia? Este artículo trata de responder a estas preguntas centrándose en los tres principales autores de los atentados de Bali de 2002, es decir, Imam Samudra, Ali Ghufron y Ali Imron. Excepto Imron, que fue condenado a cadena perpetua, Samudra y Ghufron han sido condenados a muerte por las autoridades indonesias. Los autores analizan su mente mediante la lectura de los textos escritos por estos tres terroristas y tratan de comprender y explicar su contexto. Esta investigación revela que los autores de los atentados tenían una comprensión diferente de las enseñanzas religiosas. Samudra y Ghufron creen que su acción se basa en la verdadera comprensión y la verdadera representación de la aplicación de la yihad en el islam. Ali Imron, que anteriormente tenía una creencia similar, se arrepintió y creyó que su acción se basaba en interpretaciones injustificadas de las enseñanzas de la yihad en el islam

Palabras Clave: Terrorismo, radicalismo, terroristas de Bali, mentalidad, memorias, jihad

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1. Introduction

Bali Bombing in 2002 was the most horrendous terrorist attacks in Indonesia. The Australian Prime Minister described the terrorist action as barbaric and a mass murder.³ The horrific bombs exploded at October 12, 2002 in two nightlife spots close to Kuta Beach in Bali that completely devastated the areas and killed around 202 people and injured about 209 people. It has been argued that the perpetrators were linked to Al-Qaeda and its regional network especially *Al Jamaah Al Islamiyah* (AJAI). Many people attempted to question, why did these bombers commit such horrendous act, what the actual meaning of Jihad is and what inside their mind was.⁴ Although there were many arguments such as terrorism has no religion, however, the public discourse arrived at the opinion that the bombers had the extreme religious ideology. Under the violent jihad doctrine, these radicals were found to be willingly preach and create a new network in the Southeast Asian region including Indonesia.⁵

Given the fact that all Bali bombers are Muslim, the discourse on *Jihad* is inevitable. Therefore, tracing violent and militant *Jihad* as the fundamental ideology of the bombers is common. On the contrary, the novelty of the paper can be judged from the factor that this article attempts to offer alternative understanding on *Jihad* through the perpetrators' mind that has been articulated in different books. This is an inimitable since the bombers had the sense of academic thinking to defense and to counter the common narratives surrounding the concept of *Jihad*. Additionally, they would convince that their violence actions were blessed by the God.

In particular, this article attempts to analyze what terrorist think about their violent actions and what is inside their mind? In addition, why did they do the violent action and how did they justify their violence? This article has focused its analysis on three main perpetrators of Bali bombers 2002, i.e. Imam Samudra, Ali Gufron and Ali Imron. Except Imron who is in life imprisonment, Samudra and Gufron have been sentenced to death. This article analyzes their mind by reading the books written by those three bombers. Specifically, this article has examined three seminal books written by these three bombers namely, 1). *Aku Melawan Teroris!* (I Fight Terrorists!) by Imam Samudra, 2). *Risalah Iman di Balik Terali* (Story of Faith behind the Prison) by Ali Ghufuron, and 3). *Ali Imron: Sang Pengebom* (the bomber) by Ali Imron.

Using critical text analysis, this article argues that the bombers have very different understanding of the religious teaching. This article layouts theoretical framework, methods, result and discussion which will elaborate the what the terrorist think throughout the three books written by the three bombers, and wrapped up with the concluding section.

2. Theoretical Framework

Understanding the mind of terrorist and the reasons why individuals engage in extremist behaviors has been argued as the key to successful counterterrorism and violence prevention.⁶ Therefore, research on radicalization—the psychological, emotional, and behavioral processes by which an individual adopts an ideology that promotes the use of violence—has proliferated in recent years. Along the way, scholars have identified the diverse set of structural, group-based, and individual-level mechanisms as potential drivers of political extremism.⁷ Hwang &

³ Ressa, Maria; Chinoy, Mike: "Tourists flee Bali after bombings", *CNN.com*, 12 October 2002, at <http://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/southeast/10/14/bali.bombings/index.html>

⁴ Cimino, Richard: "No God in Common: American Evangelical Discourse on Islam after 9/11", *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (2005), pp. 162–174, at <https://doi.org/10.2307/3512048>

⁵ Oak, Gillian S.: "Jemaah Islamiyah's Fifth Phase: The Many Faces of a Terrorist Group", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2010), pp. 989–1018, at <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2010.514697>

⁶ Post, Jerold M. *The mind of the terrorist: the psychology of terrorism from the IRA to al-Qaeda*, New York, Palgrave, Macmillan. 2007

⁷ Hwang, Julie Chernov; Schulze, Kristen E: "Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesian Jihadist Organizations",

Schulze, for instance, explored four pathways to entry into Indonesian militant groups: study sessions, local conflict, kinship, and schools. They argued that within all four of these pathways, social bonds and relationships are the common thread in encouraging entry as well as in fostering commitment. Specifically, these relationships contribute to the formation and eventual consolidation of one's identity as a member of the jihadi group through regular participation in activities, attending meetings, narrowing the circle of friends to those within the group, and participating in increasingly risky and possibly violent activities together.⁸

Crenshaw has also examined the contributions of psychological approach (rather than the rational actor model) to the study of terrorist motives. Includes a large section on the necessity of would-be terrorists to undergo de-humanization training in order to be able to kill (again supports Bandura). Crenshaw argued about three primary points: (1) the group performing the terrorist act is more significant than the individual (group consciousness); (2) it is important for terrorists to be able to justify what they do; (3) the stated goal of terrorism may not be what the perpetrators really want (e.g. they may just want to engage in violence, or seek a group collectivity, etc) implying that even if the group is conceded the gains they are seeking, the violence may not end.⁹

In the context of the Bali Bombing, Kumar Ramakrishna and See Seng Tan show that idea that radical Islamist ideology is the center of gravity of the terrorist threat in Southeast Asia. This ideology is dynamic, robust, and draws its sustenance from exploitation by radicals of objective political and socio-economic grievances of Muslim communities within the region and in the wider world.¹⁰ Hassan has particularly investigated the motive of one of Bali bombers, Imam Samudra, by analyzing the content of Samudra's book. Hassan found out that Samudra's book contains his confession and justification for committing the Bali bombing. Hassan shows that the Samudra's book informs the public of the basis of his violent action that he had neither committed the act blindly nor has he contradicted the teaching of Islam as claimed by the state authorities and his critics. Hassan also mapped out the ideas that guided Imam Samudra and attempt to offer criticism and an alternative viewpoint on *jihad*.¹¹

Keeping in view the frames above, this article investigates what inside the terrorists' mind when they committed violence by analyzing books written by terrorists. Beside Samudra's, this article has also included two other main perpetrators of the Bali Bombing, i.e. Ali Ghufuron and Ali Imron. By doing so, we could get comprehensive as well as critical understanding about what was really inside their terror mind.

3. Methodology

This article uses qualitative methodology. Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. This article uses secondary data by collecting existing data in the form of texts written by the bombers. By using critical text analysis, as discussed earlier, this article examines three seminal books written by three bombers namely 1). *Aku Melawan Teroris* (I Fight Terrorists) by Imam Samudra,¹² 2). *Risalah Iman di Balik Terali* (Story of Faith behind the

Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 30, n° 6 (2018), pp. 911-932, at <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1481309>

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹ Crenshaw, Martha: "How terrorist think: what psychological can contribute to understanding terrorism", in Howard, L (Ed.) (1992): *Terrorism: Roots, Impact, Responses*, London, Praeger, pp. 71-80.

¹⁰ Ramakrishna, Kumar; Tan, See Seng (2003): *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, Singapore, IDSS.

¹¹ Hassan, M. H. Bin.: "Imam Samudra's justification for Bali Bombing", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 30, n° 12, (2007), pp. 1033-1056, at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100701670896>

¹² Samudra, Imam. *Aku Melawan Teroris!* [I Fights Terrorist!], Solo, Jazeera. 2004.



Prison) by Ali Ghufon,¹³ 3). Ali Imron: *Sang Pengebom* (Ali Imron: The Bomber) by Ali Imron¹⁴.

Critical text analysis was employed to scrutinize the ideology throughout the text. The three books written by the bombers would be examined so that the readers understand what inside their mind about *Jihad*, worldviews as well as stories behind their actions.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Bali Bombing

Since 2000, Indonesia suffered with series of consecutive terror attacks committed by radical religious group. The biggest terror attack among them was surely the Bali Bombing 2002. It was a series of three bombings that took place on the night of 12 October 2002. The first two explosions occurred at Paddy's Pub and Sari Club (SC) on Jalan Legian, Kuta, Bali. Meanwhile, the last explosion occurred near the United States Consulate Office, although the distance is quite far.

The police immediately moved quickly after the horrendous attacks. The Joint Police and foreign police investigation team that was formed to handle this case concluded that the bomb used was a 1 kg TNT type and in front of the Sari Club was an RDX bomb weighing between 50-150 kg. The perpetrators were speedily arrested and sentenced.¹⁵

The chronology of the attack was uncovered in the court. It was Ali Ghufon alias Mukhlis who recruited the executors. He together with his older brother, Amrozi, traveled to Solo, Central Java, to organize a technical division of tasks. The meeting decided that Bali is the location for the bomb detonation. Entering the original plan, there are three types of bombs to be detonated. First, assembled car bombs weighing up to one ton; Then the motorcycle bomb which weighs 50 kilograms and lastly the vest bomb.¹⁶

Imam Samudra was appointed as field leader. On September 8, 2002, Ali Ghufon and the others left for Denpasar. Ali Ghufon became a search for the location of the explosion. Hurry to survey the Kuta area, where the discotheque has the most foreign tourists. Ali Ghufon also set up a nightclub on Jalan Legian called Sari Club. Imam Samudra agreed with his choice. From 8 to 16 September 2002, they had just started sending explosives from Java to Denpasar, Bali. Collected more than 1 ton, began bomb compounding on September 17-20, 2002. The car from Lamongan which Ali Ghufon had bought from his colleague was also taken to Bali and the bomb was assembled.

Entering the execution date, which finally stretches to October 12, a problem arose. The executor, who was thought to be ready to lose his life, was even surprised to operate an active bomb ready to go. Plans are changed according to the final plan. The motorcycle bomb, which was intended to hit the American consulate office, was turned into a carry-on bomb weighing 6 kg of TNT. While the car bomb has not changed. Ali escorted the executor who was not good at driving a car, along with the vest bomb user to the location of the explosion.

One of the perpetrators, Ali Imron, prepared a box bomb weighing about 6 kilograms, which had been installed by a mobile remote system at a rented house. The bomb was detonated remotely using a cellphone. The bomb was brought by Ali Imron on a motorcycle and placed on the sidewalk to the right of the United States Consulate. Next, he went to the Sari Club and

¹³ Ghufon, Ali (2009): *Risalah Imam dari Balik Terali* [Story of Faith behind the Prison], Surabaya, Kafilah Shuhada.

¹⁴ Imron, Ali. *Ali Imron Sang Pengebom* [Ali Imron: The Bomber], Jakarta, Republika. 2007

¹⁵ Cianflone, Matt et al. *Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack: An in-depth Investigation into the 2002 Bali, Indonesia, Bombing*, The Matthew B. Ridgway Center for International Security Studies. University of Pittsburgh. 2017.

¹⁶ Cianflone et al, *Ibid*.



Paddy's Pub to monitor the situation as well as the surrounding traffic. Ali Imron then returned to the rented house.¹⁷

At around 22.30 WITA, Ali Imron and two suicide bombers—Jimi and Iqbal—went to Legian [Kuta] using a Mitsubishi L 300 car. Idris, another perpetrator, followed them on a Yamaha motorbike. Arriving at Legian, Ali Imron instructed Jimi to join the cables from the detonator to the L 300 car bomb switch box. Jimi was going to launch a suicide bomb using the L 300 car at the Sari Club. At the same time, Ali Imron ordered Iqbal to wear a vest bomb. Iqbal will also act as a 'bride' (as suicide bombers are called) at Paddy's Pub.¹⁸

After the preparations were complete, Iqbal got out of the car and entered Paddy's Pub. The bomb exploded from the hangout restaurant. An even bigger explosion occurred in front of the Sari Club. The vibrations of the bomb explosion were felt for up to 12 kilometers.

On November 5, 2002, one of the key suspects was arrested. Amrozi bin Nurhasyim was speedily arrested at his home in Tenggulun Village, Lamongan, East Java. And, 10 people suspected of being linked were also arrested in a number of places on Java Island. On November 10, 2002, Amrozi finally exposed the five people who were the core team of the detonation. Ali Imron, Ali Fauzi, Qomaruddin are executors at Sari Club and Paddy's. Meanwhile M. Gufron and Mubarak were the ones who helped to prepare the detonation.

The police also quickly arrested Ali Gufron (Amrozi's brother), Ali Imron (Amrozi's younger brother), Ali Fauzi (another brother of Amrozi's biological mother) and Amrozi's half-brother, Tafsir. Tafsir was considered to know the ins and outs of the Mitsubishi L-300 and lent his house to be used by Amrozi as the repair shop. On November 26, 2002, another Bali bombing suspect, Imam Samudra, was arrested on a Kurnia bus aboard the Merak Harbor ship. Apparently, he was about to flee to Sumatra. On December 3, 2002, it was Ali Gufron alias Muklas (Amrozi's brother) to be arrested in Klaten, Central Java. On December 18, 2002, the Australian Police-Police Joint Investigation Team opened and exposed the Solo Document, a document in the possession of Ali Gufron.

On 7 July 2003, Amrozi was sentenced to death. Then, on September 10, 2003, Imam Samudra was also sentenced to death. And, on October 2, 2003, Ali Gufron was also sentenced to death. The three perpetrators who were sentenced to death were then transferred to the Nusakambangan prison on October 11, 2005. On the early hours of Sunday, November 9 2008, Amrozi and his brother Mukhlas alias Ali Ghufon and the leader of the Imam Samudra group alias Abdul Azis were executed by shooting. However, Ali Imron was sentenced to the life imprisonment.

4.2. The Journeys of Ali Ghufon, Imam Samudra, and Ali Imron

4.2.1 Ali Ghufon a.k.a Mukhlas

Ali Ghufon alias Huda bin Abdul Haq alias Muklas who was born on February 1960 was convicted and executed for his role in coordinating the 2002 Bali bombings. He was a senior and influential Al Jamaah Al Islamiyah (AJAI) leader who had ties with Osama bin Laden. He attended *Pondok Pesantren* Al-Mukmin with his brothers Amrozi bin Nurhasyim and Ali Imron.¹⁹ Pondok pesantren (Islamic boarding school)²⁰ which located in Sukoharjo Central Java was founded by Abu Bakar Bashir in 1972.

¹⁷ *Bali planner sentenced to death*, at <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/southeast/10/02/bali.verdict>

¹⁸ Cianflone et al, *op.cit.*

¹⁹ See *Bali planner sentenced to death*, *op.cit.*

²⁰ Pesantren or Pondok Pesantren is a common Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. The Islamic boarding school is defined similarly although the names are diverse such as in Malaysia and Thailand called as "Pondok," while in



The curriculum of the pondok pesantren is no different with other modern Pesantrens in Indonesia. It has abided by the standards set by the Department of Religious Affairs since 1980s. In term of teaching standard and practice, the teaching is modeled on other well-known modern *pesantrens* in Indonesia, such as Pesantren Gontor in Ponorogo, East Java. Some of the textbooks used at Ngruki are also similar to those used at the more traditional pesantrens of Indonesia, while others are also used in the more modern *pesantrens* such as the Pesantren Modern Darussalam. However, many books are drawn from *salafi* sources. The courses that are on offer range from traditional religious subject to subject that are part of the modern curriculum of the secular high school and colleges of the Indonesian government.²¹ However, a number of people linked to the school have been implicated in a series of terrorist attacks.²²

The life experiences after the education in the Pesantren could have built Ali Ghuftron's radicalism. Ali Ghuftron went to Afghanistan and sought to continue *Jihad* at various training camps. He fought in the Soviet–Afghan War between 1980 and 1989 as a member of Osama bin Laden's "International Brigade." Ali Ghuftron admitted that "he met with Osama bin Laden in 1987 and admitted that he and other top personnel of Al Jamaah Al Islamiyah (AJAI) were careful to nurture ties to bin Laden and al-Qaeda in the years that followed."²³ After the eventual defeat of the Soviet Union and installation of the Taliban as Afghanistan's rulers, Ali Ghuftron returned to South East Asia to lead operations for the AJAI. He was named head of AJAI's *Mantiqi*—a regional AJAI command covering Sumatra, Singapore, Malaysia and southern Thailand.

Ali Ghuftron then co-founded an Islamic school in Malaysia that was to be used as a local training ground for AJAI operatives. In 1991, Ali Ghuftron, at the behest of Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Bashir founded Lukmanul Hakiem, an Islamic boarding school based on his old school at Ngruki, Solo, Central Java. Lukmanul Hakiem employed Noordin M. Top, a Malaysian national, as school principal and Noordin used this role to recruit Muhammad Rais and others for the 2003 Marriott Hotel bombing in Jakarta. The AJAI bomb maker—Dr. Azahari Husin—served on the board of directors. Noordin Top was promoted to director, when Malaysian law was adjusted, however Muklas continued to operate as leader by proxy.

Ali Ghuftron admitted to being present and in command at the planning meetings for the Bali bombings and recruited two of his brothers to help assemble and transport the bombs used in the terror attacks. Approximately US\$35,000 was contributed to the Bali bombings by Wan

Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and other central Asian countries, called as Madrasa. In boarding school, the students called "santri" have to reside at the dormitory and are obliged to follow all rules made by the master of the school called "Kyayi." They not just merely study Qur'an, hadiths, and of course, classical Islamic texts. Additionally, they will study co-curriculum even martial arts. In Indonesia, the typology of Pesantren is vary ranging from classical, modern mode to movement Pesantren which teaching such narrow, puritan, even radical Islamic understanding. Fortunately, a Pesantren Al-Hidayah in Medan, North Sumatra, founded by a former terrorist namely Khairul Ghazali adopt a deradicalization throughout its curriculum to counter terrorism threats. For further reading please see Fauzi, Muhammad L.: "Traditional Islam in Javanese Society: The Roles of Kyai and Pesantren in Preserving Islamic Tradition and Negotiating Modernity," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 6, n° 1 (2012), pp. 125-144; Park, Jaddon & Niyozov, Sarfaroz.: "Madrasa education in South Asia and Southeast Asia: current issues and debates," *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, Vol.28, n°.4 (2008), pp. 323-351, at <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188790802475372>; Gayatri, E. & Kosasis, K.: Break the chain of terrorism through deradicalization of (former) terrorists' children: Narration from Al-Hidayah Pesantren Medan," *Analisa Journal of Social Science and Religion*, Vol. 4, n° 1 (2019), pp. 79-96.

²¹ Noor, Farish A. "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren Al Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta." Working Paper RSIS n° 139, 1 October 2017. pp 11-12

²² Jones, Sydney. "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Ngruki Network in Indonesia." *ICG Asia Briefing* 20, at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/al-qaeda-southeast-asia-case-ngruki-network-indonesia>

²³ Lumpkin, John. "Huda bin Abdul Haq". Homeland Security. GlobalSecurity.org 16 November 2006

Min Wan Mat, a leader of the AJAI network in Malaysia. This money was transferred through Hambali, AJAI's head of operations. The money was provided in cash and according to claims by Muklas, the money was not just used for the bombings in Bali, but also in other terror attacks in Indonesia.

After acquiring al-Qaeda funds, Ali Ghufron recruited two of his brothers to handle the logistics of the bomb plot. His younger brother Amrozi, was convicted who is also situated on "death row" for his conviction in the attack, personally selected the Mitsubishi van that was to be used outside the Sari Club. Amrozi also assembled the car bomb, and backpack bomb used at Paddy's Pub, in an empty warehouse in Denpasar.

After arrested on 4 December 2002, he confessed to police that he was the head of one of the AJAI's four cells and had ordered the Bali bombings. He admitted to being present and in command at the planning meetings for the Bali bombings. He also admitted that he recruited two of his brothers to help assemble and transport the bombs used in the attacks.

He also confessed that another AJAI leader, Riduan Isamuddin, had provided the funds for the terror attacks. His trial began on 16 June 2003. Before a panel of five Indonesian judges, on 2 October Ali Ghufron was found guilty of coordinating an act of terrorism and sentenced to death.²⁴ Muklas showed no remorse during the trials. In the prison, he wrote a book entitled *Risalah Iman di Balik Terali/RIDT* (Story of Faith behind the prison).

4.2.2. Imam Samudra a.k.a Abdul Aziz

Imam Samudra was born as Abdul Aziz on January 14, 1970 in Serang, Banten Province. He was then raised by a single mother as one of 12 children. He studied in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN), Serang Banten.²⁵ Among his village friends, he was known as a smart kid. In his school, he was always ranked first. The curriculum in the school is no different with other curriculum in other schools. Imam Samudra himself was very fond of studying religion. From the books he read, there is a book *Ayatur Rahman fi Jihadi Afghanistan* (Signs of God's Power in the Afghan Jihad) written by Abdullah Azzam. Imam Semudra himself admitted that the book touched his heart, so that he wanted and aspired to join the jihad in Afghanistan.²⁶

The next episode of Samudra's life have strengthened his radicalism. He then went to Malaysia to transit to Pakistan with the final destination of Afghanistan. He then joined *Jihad* at various training camps in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Aziz lived for around 2.5 years and he returned to Malaysia and lived for 6.5 years in Johor. After he return to Indonesia, Samudera was involved in the Bali Bombing.²⁷

²⁴ *Daftar Teroris yang Divonis Mati oleh Negara* [List of terrorists who are sentenced to death by the government], at <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20180622121053-12-308041/daftar-teroris-yang-divonis-mati-oleh-negara>

²⁵ Surprisingly, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN), where Imam Samudra attended, is a government-run secular institution that emphasizes Islamic courses while also teaching broad subjects such as physics and social sciences. The Madrasah schools in Indonesia were founded by the government and privates from elementary, junior, and senior high schools. Furthermore, because of the low tuition fees, poor families are more inclined to send their children to Madrasah. For further readings please see Syarif, F.: "The History and Development of Madrasa in Indonesia," *Tsaqofah dan Tarikh: Jurnal Kebudayaan dan Sejarah Islam*, Vol.5, No.1 (2020), pp. 23-40 doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/tjksi.v5i1.2856>; Asadullah, M.N.: "Poor Indonesian families are more likely to send their daughters to cheap Islamic schools", *The Conversation*, 6 March 2020, at <https://theconversation.com/poor-indonesian-families-are-more-likely-to-send-their-daughters-to-cheap-islamic-schools-131310> (accessed 15 Aug 2021).

²⁶ Pp.39

²⁷ *Imam Samudera: Sampai Maut Menjemput Aku tak Menyesali* [Imam Samudera: Until death, I will not repentant], at <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2008/07/26/16425571/Imam.Samudera.Sampai.Maut.Menjemput.Aku.tak.Menyesali>.

Samudra went on trial on 2 June 2003 and testified on 16 July 2003. On 10 September 2003, he was found guilty for his role in the Bali bombing and sentenced to the death penalty to be executed by firing squad. Originally incarcerated in Denpasar's Kerobokan Prison, he was moved to the high-security prison island of Nusakambangan. Samudra, along with Amrozi and Ali Ghufron, were executed by firing squad at 00:15 local time on 9 November 2008.²⁸ Inside the prison, he wrote two books, *Aku Melawan/AMT (I Fight Terrorists)* and *Bila Masih ada yang Mempertanyakan Jihadku* (If there are still those Who Question my Jihad)

4.2.3 Ali Imron a.k.a Alik

Other main perpetrator of the 2002 Bali Bombing terror was Ali Imron. Before his involvement in the 2002 attack, he worked as a teacher at the Al Islam boarding school in Tenggulun. The Curriculum of the Pesantren al-Islam builds on Tawhid—monotheism as a standard of value. Tawhid is placed as a reference for human thoughts, attitudes and actions. Whatever the thoughts and attitudes or actions of Muslim humans make monotheism as the main reference to assess whether the action is in accordance with the principle or out of principle. The implementation of *Kaffah's* [total] Islamic education goes through three stages. The three stages are *tarbiyah*, *hijrah* and *jihad*. In the *tarbiyah* stage, students (*santri*) are educated to know and realize human existence on earth. The *hijrah* stage, namely the education of students who have lived the values of the caliphate and servitude to Allah with movement activities from non-Islamic life to a fully Islamic life (*Islam kaffah*). The last stage of Islamic education where human activities in society in order to uphold the teachings of Islam.²⁹

However, the founder of Pesantren al-Islam Mohammad Chozin admitted that his boarding school founded in 1992 had a radical orientation. "... teaching [in the boarding school] was directed towards this kind of [radical] movement".³⁰ In fact, the boarding school reject to pay salute the Indonesian flag, reject ceremony on Indonesian's Independence Day, and any other activities related to the Republic of Indonesia.³¹ It means that the school rejected Indonesia as a legitimate nation-state.

The next episode of Imron's life experiences has strengthened his radical mind. He traveled with his brother Ali Ghufon to Malaysia and then to join *jihad* in Afghanistan in the 1990s where he received firearms and explosives training. He returned back to Indonesia and worked as an ustadz (teacher) at Al-Islam Islamic Boarding School Lamongan in 1996. Ali Imron went to Ambon to fight in sectarian conflict for several weeks in 1999. He also involved in the series of bombing such as in the Philippine Embassy in Jakarta and the several churches on the night of Christmas eve in 2000.

Imron later reported that the terrorist group had decided on Bali as the target by August 2002 and had chosen the target because it was "frequented by Americans and their associates." He also claimed that the attack was originally intended to be carried out on the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks but was postponed to the following month because the bombs were not ready in time. Imron played a significant role in the preparation of the attacks. He later confessed that he trained the suicide bombers and helped construct the bombs. Imron and two

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Taufik Nugroho. "Ideologi Pendidikan Pondok Pesantren Al - Islam Tenggulun Solokuro Lamongan" [The ideology of Education in Al Islam Boarding School; Tenggulun Solokuro Lamongan]. *Jurnal Ulumuddin: Jurnal Ilmu - Ilmu Keislaman*. https://jurnal.uci.ac.id/index.php/agama_islam Vol. 9 n° 2 des 2019. pp. 109.

³⁰ Perjuangan Menepis Sejarah Kelam Desa Tenggulun, at <https://www.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/ardiansyah-fajar/perjuangan-menepis-sejarah-kelam-desa-tenggulun/5>

³¹ *Ibid*

accomplices also purchased a brand-new Yamaha motorbike from a dealership that they would use for transportation in the attack.³²

Ali Imron was arrested and convicted for his involvement in the attacks and sentenced to a life in prison.³³ He was reportedly spared the death penalty because he expressed remorse and cooperated with authorities after his arrest. In the prison, he also wrote a book entitled *Ali Imron: Sang Pengebom/AISP* (Ali Imron: The Bomber).

4.3. What Inside Their Mind?

In this section, the authors have explored the three books orderly from Ali Gufron, Imam Samudra, and Ali Imron. This section, in particular, has focused on the fundamental argument of the three bombers in the books based in the perpetrators' perspective. The bombers also quoted the Quran and Hadith, yet they interpreted by themselves. The details are as subsequence paragraphs.

Bali Bombing: Ali Ghufron

In his book, Ali Ghufron did not mention specifically about the Bali Bombing. However, in his book, he wrote messages to Muslims "Wasiat dan Nasihat untuk Kaum Muslimin." In the seventh message, he clearly mentions about his understanding of *Jihad* and try to justify his action.

He wrote:

*"Kembalilah kepada jihad karena ia adalah perintah Alloh yang wajib dilaksanakan, bahkan menurut sebagian ahlul ilmi, setelah kedaulatan dan kekalifahan Islam sirna dari muka bumi dan negara-negara kaum muslimin dikuasai orang-orang kafir, maka jihad menjadi fardhu ain atas seluruh kaum Muslimin]"*³⁴

[Return to *jihad* because it is an order of God that must be carried out, even according to some scholars, after the sovereignty and Islamic caliphate vanished from the earth and the countries of the Muslims were controlled by infidels, then jihad became *fardhu 'ain* [compulsory] over all the Muslimin]

He also quoted Al Quran of Surah Al-Baqoroh [216]:

*"Diwajibkan atas kamu berperang, padahal; berperang itu adalah sesuatu yang kamu benci, boleh jadi kamu membenci sesuatu, padahal ia amat baik bagimu, dan boleh jadi (pula) kamu menyukai sesuatu padahal ia amat buruk bagimu. Alloh mengetahui sedang kamu tidak mengetahui"*³⁵

[Obliged upon you to fight, maybe, war is something you hate, maybe you hate something, even though it's very good for you, and maybe you like something even though it's very bad for you. God knows that you don't know]

He also selectively quoted al Hadits riwayat Abu Hiraira R.A.:

*"Barang siapa yang mati dan belum pernah berperang dan tidak terdetik dalam hatinya dengannya (untuk berperang) maka ia mati di atas cabang kemunafikan"*³⁶

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Ghufron, *op.cit.*, p. 157.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Ghufron quote Quran al Baqarah: 216

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 161.



["Whoever dies and has never fought and is not caught in his mind with it (to fight) then he/she will die on the branch of hypocrisy]

And he wrote,

*Jika kalian mati syahid, berbagai fadhilah dan keutamaan dan kemuliaan, kehormatan, pahala, ganjaran kenikmatan-kenikmatan yang akan raih di sisi Allah SWT*³⁷.

[If you die of martyrdom, various *fadhilah* and virtues and glory, honor, rewards for enjoyment which will be achieved in front of the God.]

He also quoted a Hadist Turmidzi, Ibn Majah, and Ahmad when the Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

*"Sesungguhnya bagi orang-orang yang mati syahid di sisi Allah memiliki enam perkara: diampuni dosanya sejak pertama kucuran darahnya, ia melihat tempat duduknya di surga, dihindarkan dari siksa kubur, ia aman dari dasyatnya huru-hara di hari kiamat, diletakkan mahkota kebesaran di atas kepalanya, yang mana satu butir yakut darinya lebih baik dari pada dunia dan apa yang ada didalamnya, ia dijodohkan dengan tujuh puluh bidadari surga dan diberi hak memberi syafaat pada tujuh puluh orang kerabatnya."*³⁸

[Actually for those who have died martyrdom at God's side have six good things: their sins are forgiven from the first shedding of blood, they see their seat in heaven, are protected from the torment of the grave, they are safe from the chaos of riots on the Day of Resurrection, placed a great crown on top of his head, of which one *yakut* grain is better than the world and what is inside the world, he will be mated with seventy heavenly angels and was given the right to intercede with seventy of his relatives.]

Bali Bombing: Imam Samudra

To know what Imam Samudra think, we need to read what he wrote in his two books written in the prison before his execution: *Aku Melawan Teroris!* (I Fight Terrorist) and *Bila Masih Ada yang Mempertanyakan Jihadku* (If there are still questions about my jihad). In the first book, Samudra has tried to justify his violent action. The second book is merely confirmation what he has elaborated in his first book.

According to Samudra's mind, Bali bombing is a form of *Jihad fi sabilillah*. He elaborates his reasons,

*"Berdasarkan niat atau rencana target, jelas bom bali merupakan jihad fi sabilillah, karena yang menjadi sasaran utama adalah bangsa-bangsa penjajah seperti Amerika dan Sekutunya. Ini semakin jelas dengan adanya pembantaian massal terhadap umat islam di Afghanistan pada bulan Ramadhan tahun 2001 yang disaksikan oleh hampir seluruh umat manusia di segala penjuru bumi. Bangsa-bangsa penjajah pembantai kaum lemah dan bayi-bayi tak berdosa itulah yang disebut kaum musyrikin (orang kafir) yang berhak diperangi"*³⁹

["Based on the intention or the target plan, it is clear that the Bali bombing was a form of *jihad fi sabilillah* because the main targets were imperialist nations such as the United States and its allies. This is very clear with their mass slaughter of Muslims in Afghanistan in the month of Ramadan 2001 which almost all human beings in the world could witnessed it [the mass slaughter]. The imperialist nations that slaughter the weak and innocent babies are called the *musyrikin* (disbelievers) who deserved to be fought."

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 168. Risalah Iman dari balik Terali, Ghufroon quote Quran Al Baqoroh 154.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

³⁹ Samudera, *op.cit.*, p. 109

He selectively quoted Al-Quran

*" Dan perangilah kaum musyrikin itu semuanya sebagaimana mreka memerangi kamu semuanya dan ketaghuilah bahwa Alloh beserta orang-orang yang bertaqwa."*⁴⁰

["And fight the polytheists as they are fighting all of you and know that God is with people who are pious].

Bali Bombing: Ali Imron

Ali Imron initially believes that his action was a form of *jihad*. In chapter II of his book AISP, he shows his argument why he believes that the bombing as form of *jihad*. He states that his reasons were his dissatisfaction with the current (secular) government and the various social ills. Therefore, his violent action was a form of *jihad fii sabilillah* to revenge and fight against the infidels [AISP, 5274].⁴¹ However, different from another perpetrators, he was then openly repentant. He realizes that what he did was totally wrong, as he wrote,

*"Saya akan melakukan koreksi terhadap aksi bom bali dan memaparkan kekurangan-kekurangan dan kesalahan supaya bisa dijadikan sebagai pelajaran oleh semua oranag khususnya kawan-kawan kami agar mereka tidak lagi melakukan kesalahan yang pernah kami lakukan"*⁴²

[I will criticize the Bali bombing and clarify the shortcomings and mistakes [of the violent action] so all people, especially our (radical) friends, can learn that they would not commit mistakes again that we have already done].

He argues that Bali Bombing was totally wrong by arguing that 1]. It violated the right manners of *jihad*. They did not deliver *da'wah* and warning first before the action; It went beyond the limits; Killing women who are not involved in fighting against the Muslims; Killing the innocent people. 2. Bali Bombing was not yet clear about the status of the people who became targeted. 3. Bali Bombing was emotionally driven since it was based on only hatred against the USA and its allies. 4. They did not have the authority to do. 5. It generated enmity against themselves. 6. The bombing failed to fulfill the objectives of *jihad*. 7. There was no support from the Muslims community. 8. It was executed by suicide bomber which is prohibited in Islamic teaching. 9. It was a form of haste [*Isti'jal*]. 10. It created conflict among themselves. 11. It overuse of funds. 12. It was excessive in disguise.⁴³

5. Conclusion

This article offers a different perspective on how to understand the terrorist ideology. Most of the researchers focused on how Jihad ideology shaped terrorist thought. Traditionally, the ideology's roots are discovered in the Islamic manuscripts and mainstream literature such as Quran and Hadith. In addition, the historical perspectives also occasionally used to understand how the life of terrorist from 'moderate' to become 'radical' and 'extremist.'

However, this article found an interesting source of ideology not only from traditional Islamic references. Instead, the ideas came genuinely from the inside of terrorist through their own thinking and understanding of selective Islamic teachings which translated into printed books. It is also interesting to note that all of the bombers have personal experiences of violence when they joined the war against enemy in Afghanistan. The Bali Bombing happened several years after all the perpetrators returned back from their involvement in Afghanistan war. The bombing occurred one year after the terror attack on September 11. It seems that their radical

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.109. Samudera quote Quran at-Taubah: 360.

⁴¹ Imron, *op.cit.*, pp. 41-52.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 238.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 238-349



minds are not the only causes of their violent action. Their life experiences and the opportunity, especially their connection with the global terror network (Al Qaeda) played major role in their terror attack.

Finally, this article reveals, using critical text analysis, that bombers have differing ideas of religious teaching. Imam Samudra and Ali Ghufon agree that the real interpretation and practice of Jihad in Islam is the foundation of their actions. On the contrary, Ali Imron who had originally the same mind, then showed repentance and insisted that the actions were based on mistaken interpretations of the teaching of jihad in Islam. This research is expected to enrich the body of literature especially on terrorism in particular and security studies in general.

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