

## Connecting Terrorist Networks

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*This article highlights initial findings from the authors' Global Transnational Terrorism (GTT) Project, which began in August 2006. The case study draws on the database work for Southeast Asia and charts the rise of a militant minority within Jemaah Islamiyah, which was directly responsible for a series of attacks from 2000–2005. The important but restricted role of radical madrassahs and the importance of kinship emerge clearly from the study. On a more theoretical plane, the article shows how leadership “niches” opened up by unplanned events create contingent opportunities that lead to new developments.*

### Overview

Terrorism is a defining phenomenon of these times. Unfortunately, pundits and policymakers often discuss terrorism as if it were a monolithic entity. In reality, it is a varied class of

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violence, with multiple ideological motivations, numerous tactics, and manifold levels of lethality. To clarify the discussion, this article focuses on a specific type of terrorism, global transnational terrorism (GTT). This class of violence has two parts. The “global” aspect refers to groups that target the “far enemy.” There are numerous terrorist groups such as the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, ETA in the Basque Country, Hamas in the Occupied Territories, and Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon that are restricted to local conflicts. These groups’ tactics are targeted at governments that thwart their parochial goals. Groups that target the “far enemy” see beyond the local and regional governments and concerns and hone in on the main enemy that “controls” the near enemies. Bin Laden encapsulates this argument when he noted in his 8 August 1996 declaration of “War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places”:

People of Islam should join forces and support each other to get rid of the main Kufr who is controlling the countries of the Islamic world, even to bear the lesser damage to get rid of the major one, that is the great Kufr.<sup>1</sup>

GTT refers to groups of non-state actors that operate in multiple countries. GTT groups such as Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) often have more extensive network capabilities and are subsequently more difficult to eliminate. This results from the fact that tracking such groups requires coordinated police and intelligence actions that only amplify whatever bureaucratic impediments exist within and across national agencies. The growth and development of GTT is largely a decentralized and evolutionary process, based on contingent adaptations to unpredictable events and improbable opportunities, more the result of blind tinkering (of fragmentary connections between semi-autonomous parts) than intelligent design (hierarchical command and control). As in any natural evolutionary process, individual variation and environmental context are the creative and critical determinants of future directions and paths. To ignore or abstract away from variation and context is to entirely miss the character of GTT along with better chances for intervention and prevention from the bottom up rather than the top down.

This article highlights some initial findings from the authors’ Global Transnational Terrorism (GTT) Project, which began in August 2006 under the auspices of the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. The case study draws on the database work for Southeast Asia and charts the rise of a militant minority within JI, which was directly responsible for a series of attacks from 2000–2005 in Southeast Asia. The important but restricted role of radical madrassahs and the importance of kinship emerge clearly from the study. On a more theoretical plane, the article shows how leadership “niches” opened up by unplanned events create contingent opportunities that lead to new developments.

## **Database Development**

A major problem facing the study of terrorism today is a lack of strong, quantitative data that is freely available for scientific research in the academic, policy, and government communities. This dearth of data unfortunately results in theoretical modeling that is often divorced from important policy questions that the U.S. government faces in the ongoing effort to fight global terrorism. Consequently, there are a vast number of modelers with “hammers” that are searching desperately for “nails,” but that have no conception of the empirical reality that should guide their search. In order to fruitfully marry theoretical modeling to government policy it is necessary to create a comprehensive, freely available

database that the research community can utilize to guide and test theoretical models. This is what the GTT Project aims to do.

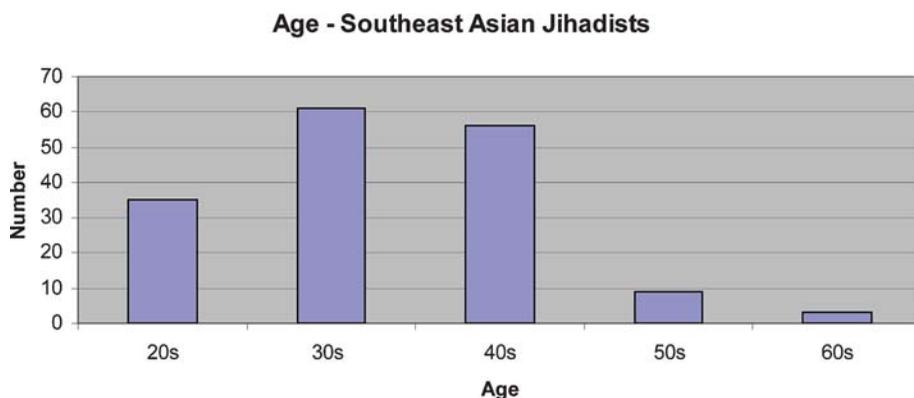
### *Database Structure*

The GTT Database rests on two foundations. The first is a detailed categorization of basic biographical and socioeconomic data that includes:

- Name
- Alias
- Nationality
- Ethnicity
- Date of birth
- Organizational affiliation
- Previous militant affiliation
- Previous non-militant affiliation
- Arrest date
- Death date
- Place of birth
- Education detail
- Education level
- Education type
- Occupation
- Operation summary
- Release date
- Militant Training
- Source information

This foundation is vital for testing the importance of basic, non-variant factors in individuals' decisions to pursue terrorist violence. For example, the authors found there was no evidence of specific individual characteristics associated with a predisposition toward participation in terrorism. Similarly, they found that there were no general "root causes" that lead to terrorism in Southeast Asia. For example, in Indonesia, hundreds of millions of people live in the same conditions, but only a very small percentage have responded with violence.<sup>2</sup> There is also no evidence that JI terrorists are drawn disproportionately from young males who are indoctrinated at a young age. Figure 1 below shows that there are a number of JI terrorists that are in their 20s; however, a significantly larger proportion are in their 30s and 40s, a fact missed by analysts that focus on radicals preying on teenage males in madrassahs and radical mosques.

The second database foundation addresses the vast network of connections that form the glue that holds the diverse array of jihadists together. This work includes a



**Figure 1.** Age of Southeast Asian jihadists in the GTT database.

comprehensive examination of acquaintance, friendship, family, madrassah, and terrorist training (Afghanistan, southern Philippines, etc.) ties. Documentation includes:

- Name
- Operation role
- Tie ID
- Tie name
- Relationship detail
- Tie reliability
- Tie year
- Tie extinguish date
- Strength of tie per period  
(10–21 periods depending on case)

In future analyses, the authors hope to address how time-series connection data allows one to evaluate the resiliency of terror networks and how counterterrorist activities affect terrorist network structures.

All ties in the database are meticulously sourced with a focus on primary documents. These ties are also rigorously documented based on a methodology created to discern differences in the strength of ties over time and in the reliability of the ties based on the available open-source information. Tie strength is outlined in what follows and increases with number.

#### **Strength of Tie 1**

- In-Laws
- Acquaintances

#### **Strength of Tie 2**

- Friends/non-nuclear family
- Operational leadership
- Operational ties

#### **Strength of Tie 3**

- Nuclear family

To address the reliability of ties, the authors created a methodology to discern differences in the reliability of the information culled from open sources. Tie reliability increases with number.

#### **Tie Reliability of 1**

- Media accounts that are not based on direct sources

#### **Tie Reliability of 2**

- Media accounts that stem from direct sources

#### **Tie Reliability of 3**

- Letters
- Photos
- Direct government-released or government-seized documents
- Other direct documents
- Court testimony
- Telephone conversations
- First hand testimony/interviews

The database for the case study currently details approximately 300 jihadists, with over 1,600 lines of network relations. Hopefully, this database will serve as a foundation for future academic and policy research that is grounded in empirical realities rather than theoretical fantasies. Additionally, the database should provide a complement to most other databases that are incident based (MIPT, Rand/START, ICT, GTD, etc.). This will allow researchers to address theoretical questions from two levels of analysis—incident-level and

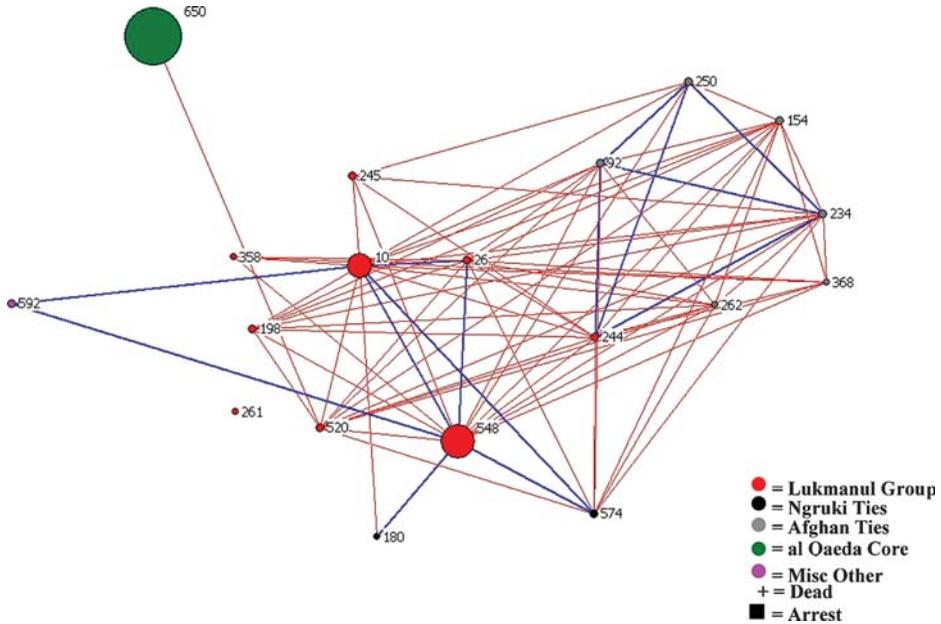
individual/network level (GTT Database). The database will be accessible on the Internet in 2009.

### **Militant Minority Findings**

One common misconception is to view terrorist groups as highly disciplined, hierarchical organizations. In reality, terrorist groups are more complicated, with JI being a perfect example. JI was hijacked by a militant minority in 1999–2000 that sidelined the moderate majority of the organization and subsequently blazed a trail of terror across Southeast Asia in the 2000s.<sup>3</sup> JI was formed in 1993 by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir after the two leaders split with the leadership of Darul Islam, a jihadist movement in Indonesia. Sungkar was the central figure and the source of vision, inspiration, and direction for JI until he died in 1999. Ba'asyir served as his second in command; however, Sungkar ruled JI with an iron hand and did not allow any other centers of power to arise within the organization.

Sungkar's death in 1999 was a cataclysmic event for JI, and it left a leadership void that would never truly be filled. Sungkar's long-time confidant, Ba'asyir, was expected to successfully lead the organization after his death. However, Ba'asyir provided "oracular" rather than "operational" leadership, leaving an operational void for the organization. Unlike the centralized Sungkar era, the organization split into two fractious groups under the leadership of Ba'asyir. The "moderate majority"<sup>4</sup> wing came under the control of Abu Fatih, the head of Mantiqi II (JI's regional sub-organization for Indonesia), Mustopa and Nasir Abas, the successive heads of Mantiqi III (Philippines), and Abdul Rahim Ayub, the head of Mantiqi IV (Australia). The radical minority wing was led by Hambali, the head of Mantiqi I (Malaysia, Singapore), and Zulkarnaen, the chief of military affairs for JI's Central Command council. Ba'asyir, who was unwilling to provide the operational vision for the organization, initially sided with Hambali. This support allowed Hambali to radicalize the organization through his pursuit of violent, terrorist activities and his funding connections with Al Qaeda.<sup>5</sup> Hambali's "militant minority" was responsible for all of JI's terrorist attacks from 2000–2003. In 2000 alone, Hambali was responsible for seven sets of attacks—the Medan Church Bombings, the Jalan Kenanga/Sitorus Bombing, the Philippines Ambassador Residence (PAR) Bombing, the Jalan Sudirman Bombing, the Indonesian Communion of Churches Bombing, the Rizal Day Bombing, and the Christmas Eve Bombings.<sup>6</sup> All but the PAR and Rizal Day attacks were church bombings, which were part of Hambali's strategy to foment violence between Christians and Muslims in an attempt to expedite radicals' ascension to power and to expedite the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia. The PAR bombing (which entailed the use of a car bomb to attack the Philippines Ambassador when he entered his residence compound) and the Rizal Day bombings (a joint venture between JI and the MILF that involved five simultaneous explosions in Manila on 30 December 2000) were directed by Hambali as revenge for the Philippines government's decision to overrun the JI/MILF training camps—Camp Abu Bakar and Camp Hudaibiyah.

Consider the network representation of the JI leadership social relations in the mid-1990s (Figure 2). Node size represents overall reputation in the organization. Reputation is based on a rational decay algorithm that addresses a combination of organizational role and attack history with 15% annual decay rate and 85% annual retention rate. Three important individuals in the graph are Abdullah Sungkar (548), Abu Bakar Ba'asyir (10), and Hambali (520). It is clear from the diagram that Sungkar is the undisputed leader,



**Figure 2.** Jemaah Islamiyah leadership network—1993–1995.

with no one approaching his level of authority (650 represents the Al Qaeda core and is separate from the overall JI organization). Outside of Sungkar and Ba'asyir, other leaders are generally equal in stature, a situation that changes dramatically with Sungkar's death.

Figure 3 illustrates the JI leadership structure as of late 2000. Ba'asyir is again represented by the 10 node and Hambali by the 520 node. In this graph, there are multiple centers of power. By 2000, Ba'asyir was the uncontested amir; however as a result of his oracular leadership style, he served largely as a source of inspiration and an arbiter when conflicts arose in the organization. In contrast to expectations, Hambali served as the CEO of JI, directing operations and training and allocating funding via the Al Qaeda money spigot. Fellow Mantiqi I leaders, Mukhlas (26), the director of the 2002 Bali bombings, and Faiz Bafana (368), treasurer of Al Qaeda, are clearly also important in the organization—both were leaders within Hambali's militant minority. Moderate members of the organization (or example, 92, 234, 574, 592) were minimized under Hambali's leadership. Whereas Hambali, Faiz Bafana, and Mukhlas grew in stature in the organization, moderate leaders were isolated from decision making. Instead of relying on these leaders for key administrative, planning, and staff support, Hambali relied almost entirely on his Mantiqi I underlings.

2000 was only the beginning for Hambali's militant group. Buoyed by his success in 2000, Hambali set about directing the 2001 Singapore bombing plots (foiled by the Singapore government in 2001), as well as several church bombings. The Singapore bombing plots were the first and only direct collaboration with Al Qaeda in which Al Qaeda supplied a potential suicide bomber, Ahmed Sahagi, and planner, Mohammed Mansour Jabara, in addition to its normal contribution of funding.<sup>7</sup> During this time, Hambali ignored the majority of other JI members and called on a small core of field commanders for his bombings, including Imam Samudra and Yazid Sufaat (field commanders for the 2000

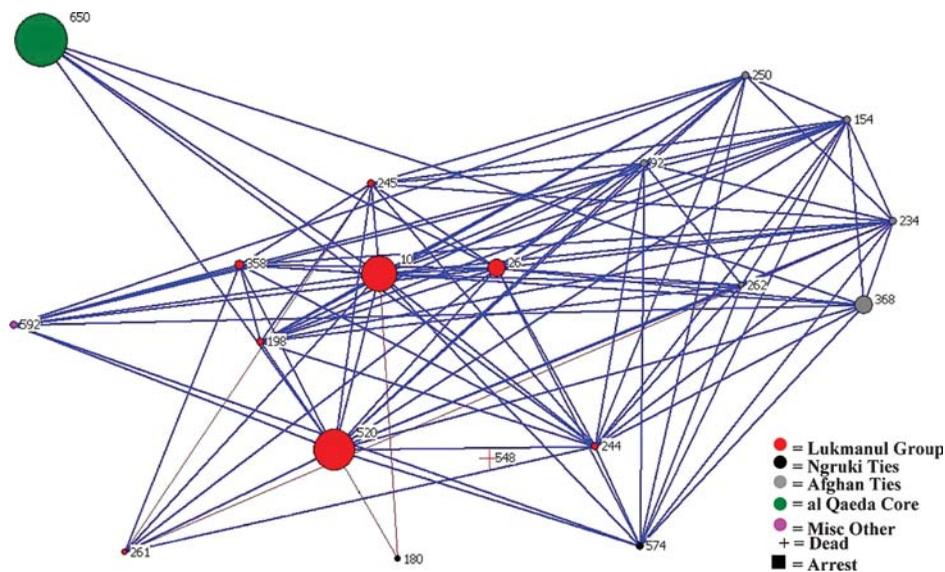


Figure 3. Jemaah Islamiyah leadership network—2000.

Christmas Eve bombing and many of the other church bombings), Mukhlas (Christmas Eve bombing, Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing, Singapore Bombing plots), Faiz Bafana (Christmas Eve bombing, Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing, Rizal Day bombings, church bombings, Singapore bombing plots), Fathur al-Ghozi (Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing, Rizal Day bombing, Singapore bombing plots), and Edi Setyono (Christmas Eve bombings, Philippines Ambassador Residence bombing, church bombings). Hambali also mobilized a small core of Mantiqi I jihadists including Amrozi, Ali Imron, Mubarak, DulMatin, Abdul Ghoni, Azhari Husin, Umar Patek, and Idris, all of which would later form the core group of the 2002 Bali bombing. This small group of bombers represented a minute percentage of the overall JI organization (most probably less than 10% of the entire organization), but was responsible for all of its violent actions.

Hambali's ambition is an interesting study itself. Prior to the 2002 Bali bombing, Hambali did not hesitate to steal jihadists from other JI leaders, often without telling them. In 2000 Hambali "borrowed" al-Ghozi, a Mantiqi III member under the leadership of Mustopa, for the Philippines Ambassador and Rizal Day bombings. Hambali also engaged in turf wars with the other leaders. Hambali was officially in charge of Malaysia and Singapore. However, he planned and implemented the Christmas Eve bombings and the other church bombings in Indonesia, which was the geographic domain of Abu Fatih, the head of Mantiqi II. Hambali also set up Jack Roche's meeting in February 2000 in Afghanistan with Al Qaeda's Khalid Sheikh Mohamed and Mohamed Atef to prepare for an attack on the Australian embassy in Canberra and the Israeli consulate in Sydney. The Ayub brothers, who headed Mantiqi IV and considered Roche their operative, balked at Hambali's encroachment onto their territory. According to the Australian police investigator who interrogated Roche, the Ayub brothers asked Ba'asyir to mediate the dispute. Roche said that Ba'asyir at first consented to the operation but then called Roche back a few days later to cancel it.<sup>8</sup> Nasir bin Abas, who later headed Mantiqi III, recalled similar attempts at interference by Hambali in Mustopa's Mantiqi III domain.<sup>9</sup> Hambali's brash disregard

for other moderate leaders in the organization rubbed off on his followers, with individuals like Ali Imron and Amrozi often attacking more moderate leaders at organizational meetings.<sup>10</sup>

The militant minority led by Hambali reached its apex of power in 2002 around the time of the Bali I bombing, the most lethal and the most famous JI attack. Bali I is the culmination of a series of events starting with the death of the JI founder, Abdullah Sungkar, the oracular leadership of his alleged successor, Ba'asyir, and the rise of the militant minority within the ranks of JI. The Bali I bombing planning process started when Hambali convened a meeting of his radical Mantiqi I advisors, Mukhlas, Wan Min bin Wan Mat, Azhari Husin, Noordin Top, and Zulkifli Marzuki in Thailand in early 2002 to discuss future bombings. At the meeting, Hambali changed the focus to soft targets such as bars and nightclubs and handed out assignments. Top and Azhari would “apply” for funding through Al Qaeda, Mat would arrange the transfer of funds, and Mukhlas would handle the bombing. Because the Mantiqi I leadership was scattered and in hiding from Malaysian and Indonesian authorities, Mukhlas decided to work through the Mantiqi II administrative structure in Indonesia. But, in keeping with the precedent of Hambali, he chose to avoid the moderate Mantiqi I leader, Abu Fatih. Instead he chose to work through the radical Zulkarnaen, the Head of Military Affairs for JI and a fellow Central Command member.<sup>11</sup>

Mukhlas then chose Imam Samudra, perhaps the most radical and violent member in the entire JI organization, to head up the bombing.<sup>12</sup> Samudra recruited the usual suspects of radical JI members, most of which had already taken part in previous bombings—Ali Imron, Amrozi, Mubarak, Sarjiyo, Abdul Ghoni, Idris, DulMatin, Umar Patek, and so on. In mid-August, Zulkarnaen, Mukhlas, and Imam Samudra convened a meeting at Hernianto's house that was attended by the majority of the bombing participants, in which the plans for a bombing were announced and roles were handed out. From here, the mission planning was put into overdrive. Ali Imron, Umar Patek, Sarjiyo, Umar Patek, Abdul Ghoni, and DulMatin mixed and built the bomb with the guidance of Azhari Husin. Idris handled all logistical issues and Imam Samudra directed the ongoing operation.<sup>13</sup>

On 12 October, the two suicide bombers, Feri and Iqbal, detonated the bombs at Paddy's Bar and Sari Club, killing 202 people and injuring another 209. What is perhaps most surprising about the Bali bombing is that it was implemented by a small militant minority of JI, with no input from the majority of the organization, including high-level leadership. For example, at the October Markaziyah (Central Command) meeting shortly after the bombing, there was no discussion of the bombing. Nasir Abas, head of Mantiqi III, asked the JI Chief of Military Affairs, Zulkarnaen, if he knew who had carried it out. Zulkarnaen reportedly shot back that it was “none of his business.”<sup>14</sup> With this bombing, JI went from being an organization with almost no name recognition outside of a small circle of intelligence officers to being one of the most notorious terrorist organizations in the world. This shift occurred against the will of the majority of JI leaders and organizational members. The social network for the Bali I bombing is highlighted in Figure 4.

Figure 4 demonstrates several important things. First, a significant number of participants were part of the radical Lukmanul Hakiem circle of JI (nodes in red). Although a minority of the overall JI membership, this group was certainly overrepresented in the Bali bombing. Second, although Ba'asyir's (10) detailed role is unknown for the Bali bombing, it is clear that he is *not* the driving force behind the attack. Rather, as noted before, the “militant minority”—the recycled bunch of Lukmanul Hakiem associates and Afghan trainees—were the driving force behind the bombing. In particular, Hambali (520) and his lieutenants such as Mukhlas (26) and Imam Samudra (1) directed the bombing and were centrally connected to all actors (see “Thailand Planning” and “Leadership Working

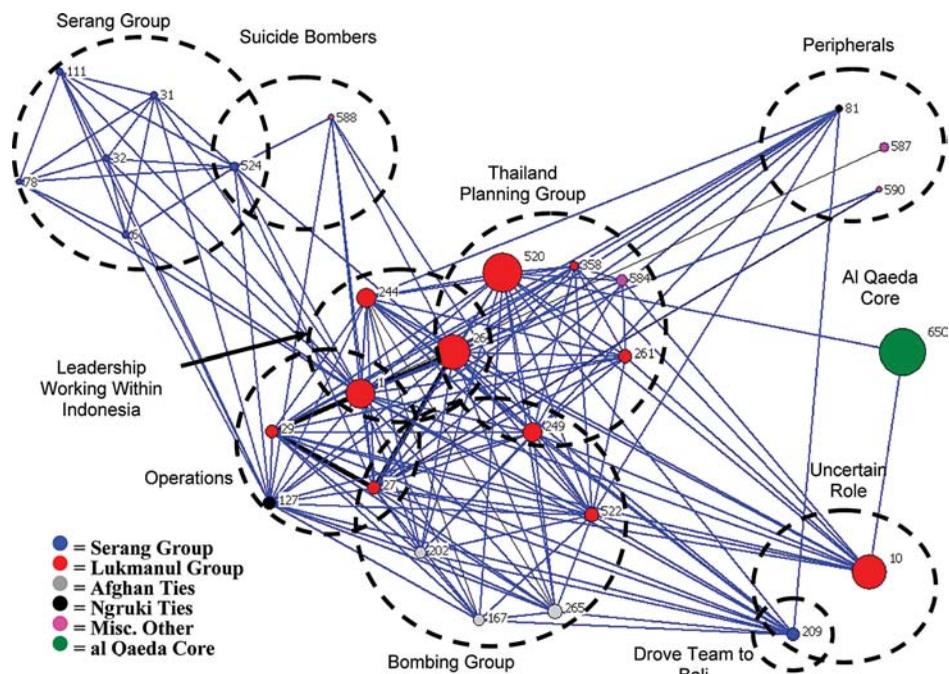


Figure 4. 2002 Bali bombing network.

In Indonesia” groups in Figure 4). Perhaps more importantly, the Bali bombing group is the fruition of all of Hambali’s social networking within JI, as well as the fruition of his cultivation of Al Qaeda ties, from the mid-1990s to 2002.

With the series of arrests after the 2002 Bali bombing, the militant minority became an even smaller “club of individuals.” With Hambali in hiding in Thailand in 2003 (and later under arrest in August 2003), and his lieutenants, Mukhlas and Faiz Bafana under arrest, Noordin Top, the former head of Lukmanul Hakiem (one of the two most radical JI madrassahs), took over the informal role of attack leader for the radical fringe of the organization. Over the next three years, Top and his partner Azhari Husin, planned and implemented three bombings—the 2003 Marriott bombing, the 2004 Australian Embassy bombing, and the 2005 Bali II bombings. Top proceeded to take the “militant minority” network concept to its logical extreme, utilizing only a handful of JI members for each attack and pulling from other jihadist organizations in Indonesia. The Australian Embassy bombing network is highlighted in Figure 5.<sup>15</sup>

It is quite obvious from Figure 5 that Top is operating outside the general JI leadership network. His only known leadership links for the AE attack were Qotada (250), a Central Command member, and 180, the replacement Mantiqi I leader. The importance of other groups is also clear in Figure 5. KOMPAK, a local charity, and Ring Banten, a radical group affiliated with Darul Islam, were utilized for recruitment, terrorist training, and explosives acquisition, roles traditionally filled by JI leadership and JI members. The overall JI leadership network in 2005 is also highlighted in Figure 6.

From Figure 6, it is apparent that with most leaders either arrested or no longer with the organization, Top’s (261) only known links to the formal JI leadership structure were through the two Central Command members, Abu Dujanah (245) and Qotadah (250),

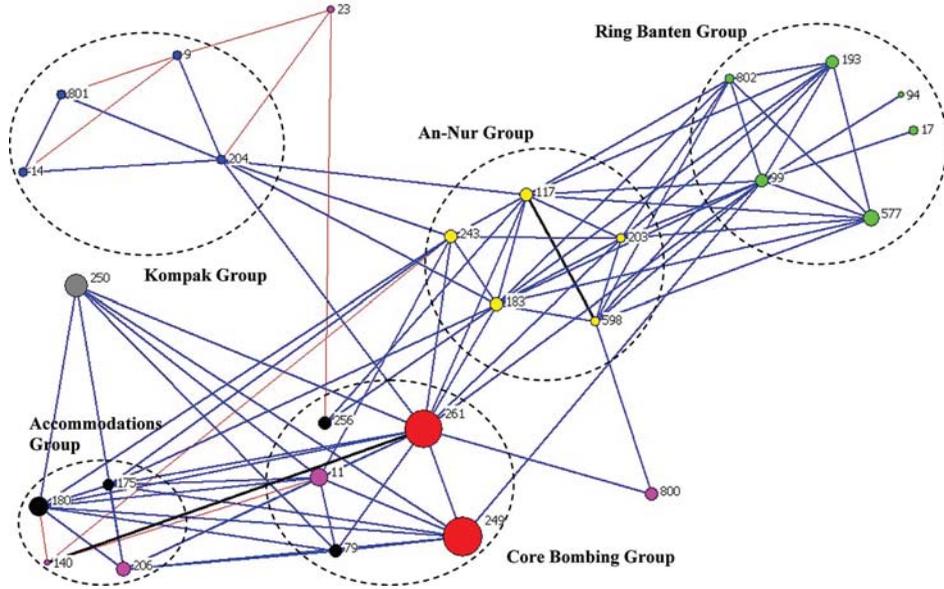


Figure 5. Australian Embassy attack network—2004.

who is rumored to now be dead), both former Afghanistan training veterans, and through Zulkarnaen (244).

What can one learn from this study of JI? First, JI developed into a fractured organization with militants leading the attacks and moderates sidelined to the shadows of the organization. Counterterrorism officials in Indonesia and Malaysia may be able to take advantage of this organizational split by appealing to moderate members of JI to “take

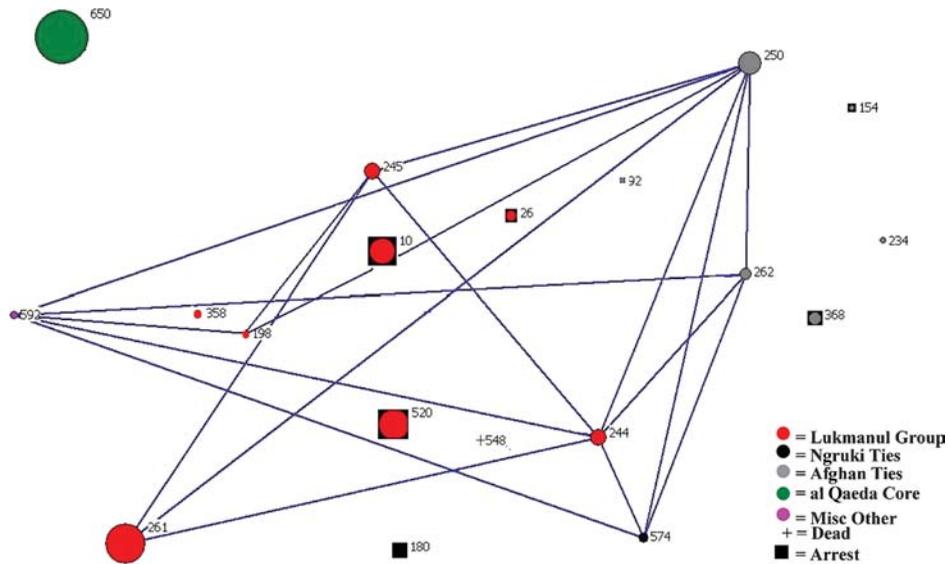


Figure 6. Jemaah Islamiyah leadership network—2005.

back” the organization and turn over heretical radicals such as Noordin Top in exchange for amnesty. Second, and more broadly, it underscores the fact that all jihadists are not the same and may be successfully handled in different ways. The majority of JI members were significantly less radical than Hambali, Noordin Top, and their entourage. It might be possible to engage such jihadists politically in the future to see what solutions are attainable via other means rather than mass arrests.

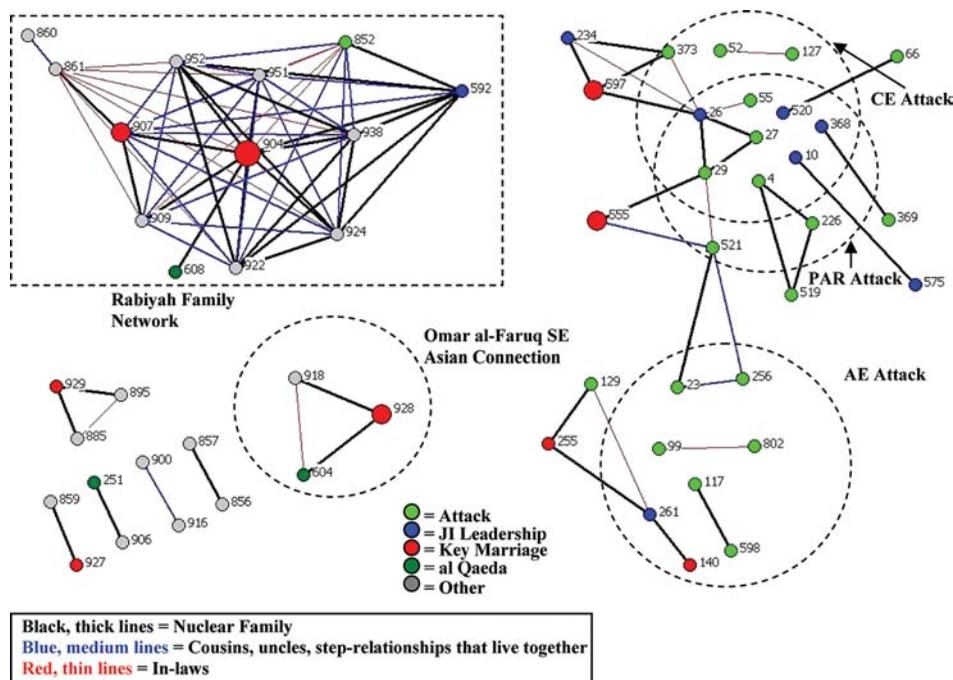
Regardless, it demonstrates that the media focus on Ba’asyir, who was recently released from prison, is misplaced. Ba’asyir was (and remains) an oracular leader. He has had a vitally important role as a social and ideological connector, even during his stint in prison. For instance, he married Urwah (one of the Noordin Top—associated jihadists arrested before the AE bombing) while they were both in prison and presided over a public marriage ceremony on 29 April 2007. However, he has never focused the majority of his leadership efforts on operational attacks<sup>16</sup> and most probably does not have any operational control over the most radical fringe of the organization. In fact, Ba’asyir has spoken out against further attacks, leading the radical members of JI to search for fatwas supporting violent jihad in the face of his opposition.<sup>17</sup> Any focus on Ba’asyir should be on his important role as oracle and social connector.

### Radical Madrassah Findings

After 9/11, madrassahs were excoriated in public policy and media circles for breeding terror. This was an overstatement, particularly given that the media focus was on Al Qaeda and madrassahs have had little importance in Al Qaeda’s recruitment strategy. Peter Bergen and Swati Pandey responded to this in the *New York Times* and *Foreign Affairs* by arguing that madrassahs were largely irrelevant from a public policy perspective, as they did not teach the tools necessary to create effective terrorists. The problem with this entire debate was that it was largely based on anecdotal case studies.<sup>18</sup>

To rectify this, the authors utilized a combination of aggregate level data and data collected for the GTT Project to examine the issue. Aggregate level data on Indonesian education rates demonstrates that JI-linked radical madrassah attendance was clearly associated with participation in JI terrorist attacks. An ordered logit statistical analysis on jihadists involved in the Bali I, Marriott, and Australian Embassy bombings ( $n = 75$ ) shows that in general madrassahs were not associated with an individual’s role on a terrorist attack. Nonetheless, radical, JI-linked madrassah attendance and association (i.e., teaching, serving as a board member, or simply attending lectures at a radical madrassah) in Indonesia and Malaysia were significantly associated with an increased role on JI terrorist operations.<sup>19</sup>

The focus on attendance *and* association is important because all of the work on madrassahs in the past had focused on top-down ideological indoctrination as the most important service that these schools served. But the authors found that association with one madrassah in particular, Lukmanul Hakiem, was strongly associated with a more important role in terrorist attacks. This explanation received the strongest support from the data, with the coefficient for Lukmanul Hakiem surpassing all other variables in explanatory power. It appears that radical madrassahs serve *two* roles, as key ideological indoctrination/recruitment centers and as focal points<sup>20</sup> within jihadist networks to connect like-minded radicals. The latter finding is a novel explanation for radical madrassah importance and actually lends support to the argument that terrorist networks are often



**Figure 7.** Southeast Asia kinship ties.

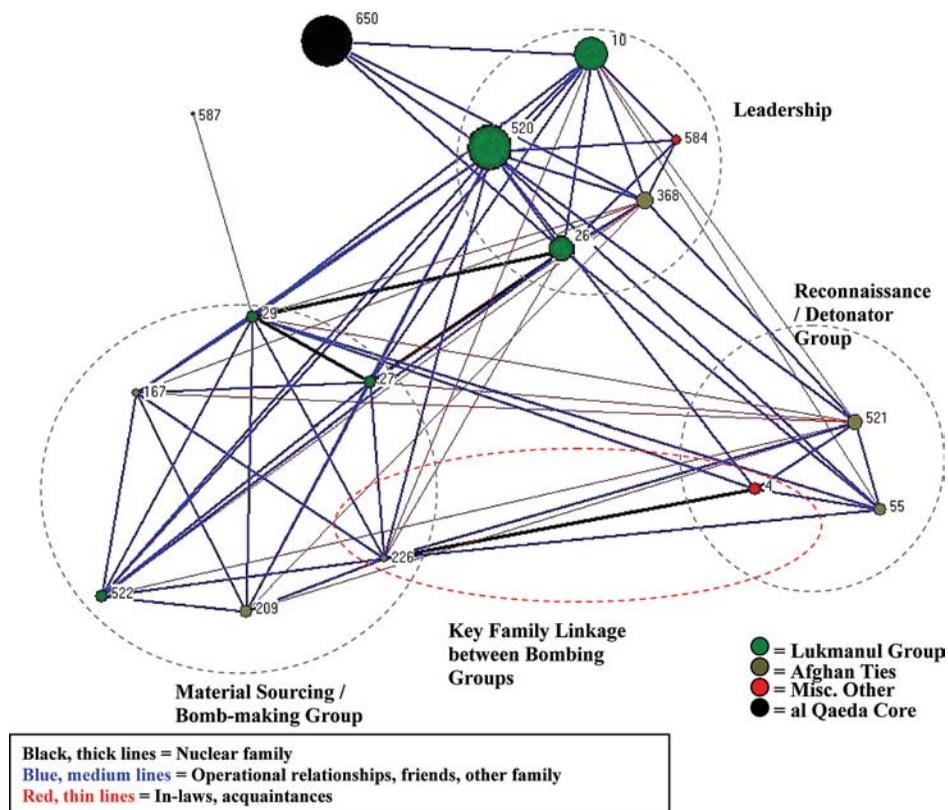
more important than top-down ideological indoctrination and recruitment, the typical mechanisms cited for madrassah influence.

The policy ramification is that analysts need to be careful about making strong proclamations about madrassahs. There is no evidence that madrassahs *in general* produce terrorists, as Bergen and Pandey have noted. Nonetheless, there is evidence that JI-linked radical madrassahs, a small selection of the madrassah population, are associated with both participation in terrorist attacks and role on JI terrorist attacks in Indonesia and Malaysia. Radical madrassahs are an important policy issue that should not be discarded.

## Kinship

Kinship networks are the glue that holds radical networks together in Southeast Asia. Our preliminary research shows a vast spectrum of overlapping kin relationships that cut across different groups *within* organizations and even *across* organizations. A social network diagram (Figure 7) provides a brief illustration. In the upper-left-hand side, Rabiyah Hutchinson's (904) family relationships connect various jihadist groups in Australia. She married Abdul Rahim Ayub (592), the head of Mantiqi IV for JI in the 1980s (divorced in 1996) and had four children with him. She married off one of her daughters (907) to 861, a jihadist who was arrested as part of the Pendennis Operation in Australia. After her divorce from Ayub, she married Mustafa Hamid (608), a member of the Al Qaeda Shura, creating a link with the Al Qaeda core.

The middle, left-hand side of the graph shows that Omar al-Faruq (604) cemented ties with a local Darul Islam (DI) radical (918) by marrying his daughter (928), which formed an initial network bond between Al Qaeda and DI. The upper-right-hand side of the graph



**Figure 8.** PAR bombing—Farihin (226) and Abdul Jabar (519) linkage.

illustrates Mukhlas's extensive relationships. Mukhlas (26), was the director of the Bali I bombing. His marriage to Nasir Abas's sister (597) cemented ties with Nasir (234), the head of Mantiqi III, and brother Hashim (373). Hashim would later take part in the Christmas Eve (CE) bombings with Mukhlas. Mukhlas (26) and Edi Setiono (55) are in-laws and both worked on the CE and Philippines Ambassador Residence Bombing (PAR) operations together. Mukhlas (26), Ali Imron (27), and Amrozi (29) are brothers and worked on the CE, PAR, and Bali bombings together.

Abdul Jabar (4), Farihin (226), and 519 are brothers. Figure 8 shows that Abdul Jabar and Farihin form the key linkage between different groups on the Philippines Ambassador Residence Bombing. The figure also illustrates the relationships between the brothers, Mukhlas (26), Ali Imron (27), and Amrozi (29).

Moving directly down from Mukhlas (26) on the *Southeast Asia Kinship Ties* graph (Figure 7), one can see that Al Ghazi's (521) family relationships bridge several different attacks. Al Ghazi (521) was a master bombmaker for JI and worked on the PAR bombing, as well as the CE and Rizal Day bombings, and the Singapore plots. Al Ghazi (521) and Amrozi (29) are in-laws and both worked on the PAR bombing together. Al Ghazi (521) and 23 are brothers and 256 is a cousin. 23 and 256 worked together on the Australian Embassy operation. Moving on to the Australian Embassy (AE) bombing relationships, 117 and 598 are brothers that worked together, and 99 and 802 are in-laws that both trained jihadists for the AE operation. Noordin Top (261) cemented relationship with 129 through

marriage to 255 and then worked on the Marriott bombing operation together. Top (261) then married 140 during the AE operation planning. 140 would later hide Top and Azhari (not pictured) before the bombing.

Faiz Bafana (368) and 369 are brothers that worked on the foiled Singapore plots together in 2001. Hambali (520) and 66 are brothers that worked on the Marriott operation together. Finally, 52 and 127 are in-laws that worked on the CE bombing operation together. This is only a brief examination of kin relationships in Southeast Asia. There are probably hundreds of additional relationships that have not come to researchers' attention. Nonetheless, the networks illustrated here demonstrate the importance of kin relationships among terrorist groups, which tend to be increasingly endogamous over time (as friends begin to marry one another's siblings) and so increasingly bound by a trust that is harder for counterterrorism efforts to penetrate or break.

## Conclusion and Future Directions

In 2006, the Global Transnational Terrorism project focused on the militant minority of JI, as well as the importance of JI's radical madrassahs and kinship networks in Indonesia and Malaysia. The militant minority study is important because it demonstrates empirically that terrorist organizations are not always unified, hierarchical organizations that remain static over time. Rather, JI started off hierarchical (in the true military sense) and then mutated into a fractured organization with militants leading the attacks and moderates sidelined to the shadows of the organization. Today, JI is decentralized to the extent that analysts are often unsure whether the Central Command of the organization is still running the organization. Individuals like Noordin Top, DulMatin, and Umar Patek have allegedly split off from the organization and are operating on their own in Indonesia and the Philippines. This has important policy ramifications. When addressing present and future groups, analysts must take note of empirical realities rather than relying on standard assumptions about terrorist group organization. In the case of JI, by focusing on empirical realities, they have a better chance for intervention and prevention "from the bottom up" rather than "from the top down." Similarly, the madrassah analysis demonstrates that the "madrassah issue" is more complicated than previously thought. Analysts need to be careful about making strong proclamations about madrassahs, as there is no evidence that madrassahs *in general* produce terrorists. Nonetheless, there is evidence that JI-linked radical madrassahs, a small selection of the madrassah population in Indonesia and Malaysia, are associated with both participation in JI terrorist attacks and role on JI terrorist attacks. Finally, the brief focus on kinship demonstrates that key parts of JI's networks are increasingly family-oriented. These overlapping kin relationships cut across different groups *within* organizations and even *across* organizations. As organizations like JI continue to decentralize and splinter, kin relationships provide the glue that holds these groups together. This will make continuing efforts to penetrate or break apart these networks more difficult in the future.

The Global Transnational Terrorism project is scheduled to continue through 2008, with an upcoming focus on European jihadist networks. The analytic focus will turn to network resiliency, network decentralization, leaderless resistance, and radical madrassah indoctrination. The long-term goal of the GTT project is to provide a public, open-source database to understand how transnational terrorist networks evolve in order to answer questions such as: How do terrorists become radicalized? What motivates them? Who supports them? Who among them is the most liable to defect? Many lives could depend on it.

## Notes

1. Taken from Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
2. Scott Atran and Marc Sageman, "Connecting the Dots." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 62(04)(2006).
3. Sally Neighbour, *In the Shadow of Swords: On the Trail of Terrorism from Afghanistan to Australia* (Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004), 297–300.
4. The term moderate is used relative to the reference point of Hambali and his Al Qaeda funders. The moderate majority members generally objected to killing innocent civilians through terrorist attacks. This objection stemmed from various reasons such as (1) moral opposition, (2) religious disagreement as to the justification of attacking civilians (i.e., not legitimate targets of jihad), and (3) organizational reasons (they opposed Hambali's decision to carry out bombings outside of his territorial domain). However, most moderate majority members were completely supportive of using violence against Christians in "jihad" areas such as Poso or Ambon. Hence, "moderate" should not be mistaken for "peaceful." Thanks to Sidney Jones for pointing this out.
5. See Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Zachary Abuza, "The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia," in Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, eds., *Strategic Asia 2003–2004: Fragility and Crisis* (Seattle, WA: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2003), 321–361; Ken Conboy, *The Second Front* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2006) for overviews of Jemaah Islamiyah and terrorism in Southeast Asia.
6. See Conboy, *The Second Front*, for an excellent and comprehensive overview of JI bombings.
7. See Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs, "The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism" (Ministry of Home Affairs: Singapore, 2003).
8. See "'Jack of all Trades—Master of None', Jemaah Islamiyah, Mantiqi IV, Perth, Australia," presented by Chris Dawson, Deputy Commissioner of Western Australia Police to the Critical Incident Analysis Group, Charlottesville VA, 2 April 2007. Also, personal communication between Chris Dawson and Scott Atran at CIAG.
9. See Scott Atran, "Jihad and Back." *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2005), pp. 78–80. Personal communication between Nasir bin Abas and Scott Atran, Jakarta, Indonesia, August 2005.
10. See International Crisis Group, 2003, "Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia" for more detail.
11. See Neighbour, *In the Shadow of Swords*, for a more detailed historical study.
12. See *ibid.*, p. 313.
13. There are various sources for this including the testimony of Ali Imron at the Bali I trial proceedings.
14. Ken Ward, personal communication, August 2006. Based on interview with Nasir Abas.
15. See International Crisis Group, "Terrorism in Indonesia: Noordin's Networks," Asia Report No. 114 (2006) for a comprehensive examination of Top's network for the Marriott, Australian Embassy, and Bali II bombings.
16. Ba'asyir did have operational input on JI bombings; however, it was not his main leadership focus. For instance, he approved the Christmas Eve bombings, as well as the Philippines Ambassador Residence (PAR) bombing. He also initially approved the Israeli Embassy bombing plans of Jack Roche (and then later called the plan off). See Dawson, "'Jack of all Trades—Master of None,'" for the Jack Roche plot and Conboy, *The Second Front*, for the PAR and Christmas Eve bombings.
17. Ubeid, one of Noordin Top's assistants, was initially given the task of finding fatwas supporting violent jihad. With his arrest, this task has passed to others, who now also sponsor Indonesian jihadi websites such as (<http://www.alqoidun.net/>), where a typical headline (accessed 23 April 2007) reads: "Mulla Umar Mendorong Mujahidin Memperbanyak Lagi Serangan Istisyhadiyah" ("Mullah Omar encourages mujahedin to undertake more martyrdom operations").
18. A good start for the madrassah debate is the work of Peter Bergen and Swati Pandey. See Peter Bergen and Swati Pandey, "The Madrassa Myth." *The New York Times*, 14 June 2005 and Peter Bergen and Swati Pandey, "The Madrassa Scapegoat." *The Washington Quarterly* 29(2) (2006),

pp. 117–125. See also Alexander Evans, “Understanding Madrasahs: How Threatening Are They?” *Foreign Affairs* 85(1) (2006), pp. 9–16. Finally, see International Crisis Group, “Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the ‘Ngruki Network’ in Indonesia,” *Indonesia Briefing* (August 2002), pp. 1–24, for an examination of the Ngruki school.

19. See Justin Magouirk, Dissertation: *Manufacturing Hate: Three Perspectives on Terrorist Motivations and Strategies* (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest, 2006), chapter 4 for the actual statistical work.

20. It is very possible that other organizations may serve as focal points for radicals in addition to madrassahs. Nonetheless, Lukmanul Hakiem was particularly important because it was the “Command Center” for JI during the mid to late 1990s.

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