

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020, 32(5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1419193>

Organizational Dynamics, Public Condemnation and the Impetus to Disengage from Violence¹

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ABSTRACT:

This article examines under what conditions armed Islamist groups intentionally demilitarize and de-legitimize violence, and under what conditions they deprioritize violence temporarily. The central argument is that the decision to de-escalate is driven by the interaction between political context, organizational dynamics and public attitudes. When violence becomes costly and non-violent alternatives are available, groups have incentives to pause armed action, but they do not necessarily feel the pressure to change their ideological tenets or permanently renounce military capabilities. However, when organizational weakness reaches a point of crisis, and when the public explicitly condemns a groups, leaders are faced with a sink or swim scenario that forces them to reconsider the role of armed action and the very mission of the group. The ability of leaders to impose any changes in the behavior, ideology or organizational structure depends on the cohesion of the organization. Internal fragmentation can lead to behavioral escalation, but it can also eliminate the most hardline elements from a group, which facilitates organizational transformations from the top. The empirical discussion traces the complete demilitarization and renouncement of violence within the Egyptian Gama'a Islamiyah, and the more hesitant deprioritization of violence within the Indonesian Jama'a Islamiyah.

¹ I would like to thank Miriam Elman, Colin Elman, Mehrzad Boroujerdi, Mark Woodward, Matt Cleary, Peter Krause, Marina Henke, Isak Svensson, Desirée Nilsson, Mimmi Söderberg Kovacs, Julie Chernov Hwang, Véronique Dudouet and the participants in the Division II lunch series at Wesleyan University for valuable comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this work. I am also grateful to Amira Suntana and Sabrina Khattab for their assistance with research, and to the anonymous reviewers for helpful feedback. All shortcomings or errors are my own. This article is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. SES-1160391. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

In 1997 the leaders of al-Gama'a al-Islamiyah, the Egyptian group responsible for President Sadat's assassination and for the killing of scores of tourists, declared a non-violent initiative. Over the subsequent years the organization dismantled its armed wing, renounced violence, and published multiple volumes of ideological revisions that explained why their armed struggle was misguided. What prompts an armed group to undertake such a drastic transformation?

This article grapples with this question and examines the dynamics of disengagement from violence within armed Islamist groups more broadly.¹ More specifically, I ask under what conditions groups that have engaged in violence intentionally demilitarize and abandon armed action, and when do they simply deprioritize it temporarily. The article offers a theory of de-escalation that emphasizes the role of organizational crisis and public condemnation. The central argument is that the decision to de-escalate is driven by the interaction between political context, organizational dynamics, group leadership and public attitudes. When violence becomes costly and non-violent alternatives are available, groups can disengage from violence behaviorally. This does not mean that they denounce armed action or give up all military capabilities. The move towards a complete renouncement of violence is marked by the logic of disillusionment. Such a radical transformation is not driven by exit options, but rather by an organizational crisis and high public condemnation.

The empirical discussion draws on a variety of primary and secondary sources, including interviews conducted by the author, to process-trace the complete demilitarization and renouncement of violence within the Egyptian Gama'a Islamiyah, and the more hesitant deprioritization of violence within the Indonesian Jama'a Islamiyah. The study challenges prevalent assumptions about the role of grievances and public support, and sheds new light on the multifaceted impact of repression and the provision of nonviolent alternatives.

Why Armed Groups Renounce Violence

Armed resistance declines for a variety of reasons that are unrelated to the initial drive to violence.² In light of this, research on political violence has paid increasing attention to disengagement. However, there continues to be some conceptual ambiguity that makes it difficult to integrate insights from different strands of literature. Additionally, scholars have come to contradictory conclusions about the impact of repression and organizational dynamics.

On the issue of conceptual clarity, there is disagreement around what moderation and de-radicalization mean. Just as “radical” risks lumping together groups resorting to terrorist tactics and nonviolent groups with a hard-line rhetoric, defining a group as “de-radicalized” risks mistaking deterred, incapacitated or fragmented organizations as being permanently committed to nonviolent tactics.

Another challenge is that the renouncement of violence is sometimes forced and sometimes intentional. Terrorist campaigns wane when groups lose either their military or their political capability. This can be prompted by a variety of factors, such as preemption, repression, backlash from the population, internal burnout within the organization, the capturing or killing of the leader or the failure to transition to the next generation.³ But terrorism as a phenomenon can end *both* when armed groups fail and when they succeed.⁴ Between a complete defeat and an absolute victory lie many other instances of intentional disengagement from violence. What drives such changes?

Drawing on social movement theory, Della Porta integrates the individual, organizational and societal levels to argue that the mechanisms that lead to the escalation of political violence can also be reversed. Thus, violence can end through de-escalated policing and the provision of exit options, when repertoires of protest moderate, when militant networks deactivate and

organizations fall apart, and when individuals defect.⁵ The implication is that violence as an outcome declines when violent actors decline, and violent actors can decline when they lose public support, find less costly alternatives or face internal problems. While Della Porta identifies important mechanisms of escalation and de-escalation and offers one of the first studies of both phenomena, it remains unclear when and why some groups temporarily stop violence, and others permanently give up armed action.

Some armed groups transition from armed struggle to political participation or nonviolent resistance. Insights from conflict resolution suggest that this occurs when there is a commitment to change within the organization. This can emerge from shifts in the identity and attributes of leaders, generational shifts, changes in organizational goals and means,⁶ or an institutional pressure to expand and a strain in the availability of mobilization resources.⁷ Externally, there needs to be an opening in the political opportunity structures for groups to create a political wing.⁸ However, political participation and armed resistance are not always mutually exclusive. Organizations may alternate between armed resistance and political participation depending on the strategic advantage of each tactic.⁹ Groups may switch exclusively to party politics if there is a resolution of a protracted conflict, and if there is a shift in the outlook of the paramilitary organization. This shift can be caused by the prospect of winning, by backlash from the population, and the extent to which the government confers legitimacy upon the group.¹⁰

Groups hesitate to abandon armed struggle if their status and legitimacy are not recognized, if their grievances are not addressed, or if they fear backlash.¹¹ Internal organizational dynamics are also critical, though scholars disagree on whether internal competition between the military and the political wing is what forces groups to “choose

between bullets and ballots,”¹² or whether internal cohesion is what enables the adoption of nonviolent tactics and demobilization.¹³

The work on collective de-radicalization has mainly emphasized the impact of external factors. A harsh response from the state can increase the cost of violence and reduce its benefits by provoking organizational disintegration.¹⁴ This can lead groups to reconsider the usefulness of violence and the tenets of their ideology.¹⁵ Ashour argues that there are three endogenous processes that drive the de-radicalization of Islamist groups: strategic calculations, political learning based on interactions with non-jihadists, and the modification of worldview.¹⁶ These processes occur as a result of a combination of charismatic leadership, repression, interaction with others and selective inducements.

Repression by the state, however, can have a dual effect. It can lead to radicalization and violence because it generates grievances, denies activists the opportunity to expand material and organizational resources, delegitimizes the ruling regime, and disempowers and discredits moderate voices.¹⁷ Cross-national research on the impact of repression finds that forms of repression that close off nonviolent avenues for dissent and escalate grievances increase the overall amount of domestic terrorism in a country.¹⁸ Repression can also reinforce radicalization by leading to strong feelings of solidarity and a growing commitment to action from group members.¹⁹

Repression can lead to both organizational disintegration and the abandonment of violence, and to increased cohesion under pressure and growing hostility.²⁰ What remains to be clarified is under what conditions repression leads to escalation, and under what conditions it reinforces de-radicalization. This question is at the heart of the present study.

Scholars also disagree on the impact of organizational strength on de-radicalization. Some argue that de-radicalization occurs when the group is weak and there are disagreements over the use of violence, ideology or leadership.²¹ Research on the Egyptian cases, for example, argues that some of the reasons behind the de-radicalization of the Gama'a and Al Jihad have been the stagnant leadership and the inability of these groups to attract young recruits.²² Others, however, suggest that strong charismatic leaders have been essential for ideological revisions and for starting and carrying out the processes of de-radicalization.²³ Rashwan argues that a strong organization structure has been beneficial for the de-radicalization of the Egyptian group, because it has enabled leaders to have authority over members.²⁴ This paper sheds light on this issue by differentiating between organizational strength and organizational cohesion, and evaluating the ways in which these two issues impact the propensity for de-escalation. The next section presents the theoretical framework offered to explain limited and comprehensive de-escalation.

Adaptation and Transformation: Understanding Limited versus Comprehensive De-escalation

Before detailing the theoretical argument, a few definitional clarifications are in order. Ashour points out that disengagement from violence can occur on three dimensions: ideology, behavior and organizational capacity.²⁵ Has a group delegitimized violence? Has it halted all armed action? Has it dismantled its military capabilities? Whereas Ashour distinguishes among comprehensive de-radicalization (ideational, behavioral and organizational), substantive de-radicalization (ideational and behavioral) and pragmatic de-radicalization (organizational and behavioral), it is important to recognize that there are other possible combinations, and that groups can simultaneously “radicalize” on some dimensions and “de-radicalize” on others.

Because of these issues, this article adopts the concept of de-escalation, and calls for greater specificity on whether the process involves behavioral, organizational or ideational disengagement. Escalation is the move from nonviolence towards violence on any of the three dimensions, and de-escalation is a shift away from violence on any of the dimensions. The focus of this study is to understand what determines limited de-escalation in the form of behavioral disengagement, and what drives disengagement on all three dimensions.

I argue that both limited and comprehensive de-escalation are driven by the interaction of four main factors: organizational dynamics, leadership, public attitudes and political context. The strength of the group and public views regarding violence impact the way that group leaders evaluate the cost of armed action. However, leaders evaluate the cost of violence in a particular political context, and such calculations are influenced by the political opportunity structure, and the ability of the group to pursue its goals through alternative means. If violence becomes too costly at a particular point in time, because of either public revulsion or the state crackdown that it would cause, a group may disengage behaviorally and prioritize less costly alternatives. If the group is fragmented, however, it is unclear whether behavioral disengagement will occur. On one hand, such limited de-escalation can still occur if all factions continue to see violence as too costly at a particular point in time. On the other hand, disagreements over violence and competition over authority can also lead to behavioral escalation by the fringe elements. Figure 1 captures this process.

--- Insert Figure 1 here ---

When does a group undergo comprehensive de-escalation that includes behavioral, ideational and organizational disengagement? I argue that such a process is driven by the logic of disillusionment,²⁶ and occurs in response to two specific developments: the organizational

weakness reaches a point of crisis, and public opposition to violence leads to an explicit public condemnation of the group. In such a context, non-violent alternatives may indeed offer a group exit options, but they are not driving the story (in other words, they are neither necessary nor sufficient for a shift in tactics). With or without such exit options, leaders are faced with the stark reality that their group will either disappear, or it has to reinvent itself. In this swim or sink scenario, if the leaders have the initiative to offer new ideological interpretations, and if the organizational is coherent enough for them to control their ranks and impose drastic changes, the group can disengage from violence on all three dimensions. If the organization is fragmented, a new spin-off group might emerge that continues armed action, whereas the core constituents continue with the comprehensive de-escalation. Figure 2 captures this process of comprehensive de-escalation.

--- Insert Figure 2 here ---

These theoretical propositions accept Ashour's conclusion that repression plays a role in demobilization,²⁷ but it tells a different story of when and why violence is abandoned.

Repression has an impact to the extent that it can lead to an organizational crisis; but even when faced with this external pressure, groups only renounce and de-legitimize violence if they are also faced with strong public condemnation. In this account, it is organizational crisis and public attitudes that are doing the heavy lifting, rather than repression. This has important policy implications, as organizational crisis can be caused by multiple factors, and many governments operate from the assumption that pressure always works.

Before I show how these theoretical propositions play out in the cases under investigation, the next section outlines the case selection rationale and methodology.

Methodology and Case Selection

The empirical analysis includes two case studies, each of which employs process-tracing to draw causal inferences, and relies on a variety of primary and secondary sources, including archival material, newspaper accounts and interviews conducted by the author in Egypt and Indonesia. This type of analysis cannot make any claims about the necessity or sufficiency conditions of these variables at the level of the population. The extent to which the processes revealed in these case studies can explain all other Islamist groups would have to be tested.

The two cases were chosen because they are important groups to understand on their own right, and also make for an excellent comparison to each other. Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyah (GI) offers one of the clearest instances of intentional behavioral, ideational and organizational de-escalation among Islamist groups. The organization not only stopped its attacks and explicitly renounced violence, but it revised its ideology and completely re-invented itself, transforming into a political party after the fall of Mubarak. In that sense, GI is substantively and theoretically important for understanding the process of comprehensive de-escalation.

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyah (JI) gained international attention when it was associated with the October 2002 attacks in the most popular nightspots in Bali. Some voices within the JI have publicly condemned the violence, and most members have disagreed with the attacks. Yet the organization has not undergone the same sort of transformation that the GI has experienced in Egypt. Tracing the tactical changes in JI allows us to better understand when and why groups disengage behaviorally and deprioritize violence, without undertaking more drastic ideological transformations.

GI makes for an excellent comparison to the JI. The two organizations have a similar founding ideology, a similar history of repression, and a significant track record of violent

escalation. Yet their tactical changes over time reveal different paths of disengagement and challenge existing theoretical explanations, which enables us to tease out the dynamics of limited and comprehensive de-escalation.

Theoretical perspectives that focus primarily on the strategic logic of violence cannot explain why the GI would undergo such a comprehensive transformation, when it could have simply temporarily halted violence in the way that the JI has done. Internal disagreements over the use of violence also cannot explain why the GI, which faced significantly less internal debates over the use of violence than the JI, has transformed so drastically, whereas the JI has not.

If Islamist groups are seen as principled actors following the logic of appropriateness, GI's ideological shift must reflect the adoption of new norms. But why did the GI adopt new norms, and not JI, who had more avenues and arguably more models of nonviolent Islamic mobilization than the Egyptian group? And what prompted the GI leaders to undergo such learning process in 1997, and not during any previous attempts by religious leaders to reform their views?

The next two sections provide an overview of the de-escalation process in both organizations, which shows why a more nuanced understanding of organizational dynamics, public attitudes and exit options can shed light on the divergent paths of the two groups.

The Comprehensive De-Escalation of al-Gama'a al-Islamiyah

The GI developed out of the Islamist student movement that emerged in the 1970s on university campuses across Egypt. After the Iranian revolution, the students who formed the GI were inspired by the idea of an Islamic revolution, and believed that a violent take-down of the regime was necessary. In 1981 the GI staged its first attack, assassinating President Sadat.

Immediately after the attack, the group split into two separate organizations: the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and the GI. In the beginning of the 1980s, the GI focused on building up its support base. By 1987 the group officially established an armed wing, and by 1989 it attempted to assassinate the Interior Minister. In the 1990s, GI's violence expanded both in number and in the scope of attacks, starting to target general political figures, then public figures they perceived as apostates, and ultimately tourists. By the mid-1990s, the GI was the most active terrorist group in Egypt.

In July 1997 the imprisoned historical leaders of the GI issued a nonviolent declaration. The announcement did not have an immediate effect, and was followed by an attack against German tourists outside of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in September, and an assault on a police station in Tama (Sohag governorate) in the beginning of November.²⁸ On November 17, 1997, the most devastating attack on tourists occurred in Luxor, but GI leaders claimed that the organization was not responsible for the attack.²⁹ Some suggest that this was the response of hard-line GI leader Rifa'i Taha to the nonviolence initiative.³⁰

Over the next couple of years the organization underwent internal debates over its tactics. Taha was one of the most outspoken critics of the nonviolent initiative, but rather than causing deep fractures within the group, he broke away and joined Al Qaeda.³¹ With the most radical members breaking away and joining Taha, the core of GI was able to remain cohesive and implement the strategic shift that the leaders were pushing. The historical leaders both inside and outside Egypt reached a consensus on the need for the strategic shift.³² By April 1999 the group called for an end to all attacks against the government.³³ After 2001, the leaders that initiated the non-violent proclamation, working with Al-Azhar sheikhs, produced an extensive set of ideological revisions. They were allowed to tour the prisons and explain the revisions to their

members, which helped all ranks accept the new strategic outlook. The GI dismantled its armed wing, and it has not been involved in violent tactics since.

At the heart of the ideological revisions was a new understanding of utility of violence, rather than a pacifist vision. The new statements focused on utility versus injury, arguing that the focus should be on avoiding injury over ensuring the general welfare.³⁴ The organization concluded that its actions did not achieve the benefit that they desired, but rather increased the harm both to the organization and to individual Muslims, society and the state.³⁵ Karam Zohdi and Ossama Hafez clarified that *jihad* is only acceptable if it can prevent external violence and repel external aggression, but is strictly prohibited if it leads to infighting among Muslims. Saftwat Abdel Ghani suggested that “the fighting which occurred split of the *umma* (the Islamic nation) and harmed the interests of society and did not realize the benefit for the people. Consequently it became an action without meaning and legally forbidden since it lead to greater detriment.”³⁶

What accounts for such an ideological transformation? At a basic level, “learning” is a mechanisms proposed by scholars, and the explanation suggested by the group leaders themselves. But learning is also a somewhat vague concept that is easily amenable to post-hoc justifications. While self-reflection and the acquisition of new knowledge during the prison years were certainly important, without examining the political, social and organizational context in which the revisions occurred we cannot explain the timing of the nonviolence declaration and why learning did not occur earlier. Al-Azhar sheikhs (and at times Muslim Brothers) had issued denouncement of violence and challenged the GI ideology since the early 1980s, which means that GI leaders and members had access to alternative interpretations long before 1997.

The government had also been attempting to negotiate with the GI an end to violence since the mid-1980s, but none of the attempts were successful. Between 1983 and 1987 attempts at negotiation with the police resulted in relative calm, but not in a definitive organizational decision to end violence.³⁷ Between 1988 and 1994 Al-Azhar sheikhs became involved and undertook several attempts to convince GI leaders that violence against state and society is not sanctioned by Islam.³⁸ In 1993, three prominent Islamic scholars from Al Azhar tried to mediate between Gama'a and the government.³⁹ While the government brought in theological expertise, it refused to release GI members that had not been involved in violence, or to allow the group to engage in preaching, so the negotiations failed.⁴⁰ Under these conditions, learning did not occur.

GI leaders only started considering alternative views when the organizational weakness reached a point of crisis, and when the GI was faced with widespread public condemnation. The nonviolent initiative came at a time when, according to GI leaders, the group had 20,000 members in prison.⁴¹ The organization was at a breaking point. The driving logic of de-escalation was disillusionment.

Some consider that intense and sustained repression was the catalyst that made the GI leadership rethink the cost and legitimacy of violence.⁴² However, the GI had faced previous waves of repression before, and they only led to escalation.⁴³ In 1997, the main reason why repression prompted a transformation rather than a desire for revenge was because of the changes in public attitudes. In 1995 the regime began employing indiscriminate repression, using the threat of the GI to crack down on the Muslim Brotherhood. This meant that the GI violence had a very high audience cost, severely affecting not just its immediate constituency but the population at large, and especially non-violent Islamists. This led to a growing public condemnation of the

GI.⁴⁴ Even in Upper Egypt, the historical stronghold of the group, the public became increasingly outspoken against the state of violence.

In 1995, Islamist scholars that had been sympathetic to the GI “became unequivocal in their condemnation of violent attacks and turned away in disgust.”⁴⁵ That same year, even Hassan Nasrallah called on GI to stop attacking its own government and people, and focus instead on Israel.⁴⁶ When ten Coptic youths were killed in February 1997, the attacks were condemned by Muslim and Christian community leaders, as well as the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood. After the Luxor attack of 1997, public condemnation of violence reached a peak and came from all sectors of society.⁴⁷ The statements of shock, disbelief and outrage that were reported in the media from all parts of the country⁴⁸ revealed how disconnected and alienated the GI was from the Muslim community that it was claiming to represent.

At the same time that violence was condemned, the non-violent approach of the Brotherhood was becoming increasingly effective at Islamizing society. By 1997 the Brotherhood became a major political and social force in Egypt, making impressive inroads in society and dominating professional associations. Along with the *ulama*, the Muslim Brotherhood “played a key role in defining what was permitted and prohibited in cultural discourse.”⁴⁹

It is this combination of factors that drove the logic of disillusionment within the GI. After the leaders decided to change the tactics, ideology and structure of the group, the government also offered some measures that facilitated the appeal and implementation of the non-violent initiative at the group level. After 1998, the violence against GI members stopped, prison meals were improved, between 1999 and 2000 the GI members were gradually allowed prison visits, and by December 2001 the regime even began coordinating with GI leaders.⁵⁰

Officials began releasing detainees held without charge and they vowed to reconsider their policy that was centered on police repression.⁵¹ These were important incentives that eased the implementation of changes, but they were not the driving force behind the decision to de-escalate.

The historical leaders were allowed to tour the prisons and talk about the revisions, and after 2001 the regime strongly encouraged the cooperation with Al-Azhar sheikhs and the publication of the revisions. Allowing the organization to maintain its organizational structure in the prison gave the leadership broad authority over the members and enabled the implementation and acceptance of the changes.⁵² However, some suggest that seeing some members released but not others, and some leaders privileged by the regime, also sowed a great deal of suspicion and disillusionment with the cause among some cadres.⁵³

The GI leaders were also able to implement the changes because the most hard-line figure broke off from the organization and joined Al Qaeda. This limited fragmentation did not break up the GI, but rather it enabled the main constituency to consolidate around the top-down directives. Whereas this fragmentation led to behavioral escalation from these fringe elements (as exemplified by the Luxor attack), this splintering is also what allowed the GI to undergo such a fundamental transformation.

After the GI underwent the comprehensive de-escalation at all three levels (behavioral, ideational and organizational), the group did not immediately turn to any new forms of resistance, but was merely trying to survive as an organization. Over the years, the government started releasing GI prisoners, but the leaders were prohibited from political activities, preaching and any travel abroad.⁵⁴ After the 2011 political opening, the GI had the space to reinvent itself. The GI resurfaced and actively started expanding its activities, forming a political party,

establishing NGOs throughout Egypt and striving to drastically expand its social base once again. The group has remained focused on non-violent activities even after the Muslim Brotherhood has been ousted from power, and it has explicitly condemned the rising violence in Egypt over the last years.

The Limited De-Escalation of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyah

JI was established by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakr Ba'asyir in 1993, as a breakaway faction of the Indonesian Darul Islam (DI) movement.⁵⁵ The vision of the JI was to promote an Islamic society and establish an Islamic state in Indonesia.⁵⁶ To achieve this, the group emphasized *da'wa* (proselytizing) and *tarbiyah* (education), but also underlined the need for *jihad*.⁵⁷ This ideological justification for armed resistance was matched by an organizational structure that integrated these multifaceted aspects of JI's vision. The operations council (*markaziyah*) included officers in charge of proselytizing, education, military training, communications and sending recruits to conflict areas.⁵⁸ The group was divided into regional commands known as *mantiqis*, and *mantiqi* III (centered on Eastern Indonesia and the Philippines) was primarily focused on military training.⁵⁹

At the behavioral level, JI members have been associated with different acts of violence, some of them sanctioned by the central leadership, others denounced. Over the years, JI has largely disengaged from violence in Indonesia, focusing instead on *da'wa*. Nonetheless, this is a deprioritization of *jihad*, and not the same intentional comprehensive de-escalation that the Egyptian GI underwent. Some of JI's de-escalation was imposed, rather than the result of an intentional process of demilitarization. Furthermore, while JI leaders are currently opposed to the use of violence in Indonesia, this is primarily a debate around the conditions and timing of armed struggle, rather than a renouncement of *jihad* as a tactic. This is an important nuance, because it

holds the possibility of future escalation. In fact, a recent report reveals that the JI has considered rebuilding a military wing in order to build the capacity for an eventual confrontation, even though it continues to prioritize preaching over *jihad*.⁶⁰

Violent tactics have been contested within JI from the beginning, and any discussion of disengagement has to also consider the dynamics of escalation. JI's involvement in violence within Indonesia can be broken down into different stages and theatres, which will be discussed separately: 1) Participation in the communal conflicts in Ambon and Poso, 2) the violence between August 2000 and October 2002 outside of Ambon and Poso, 3) the violence between August 2003 and July 2009 in Java and Bali, and 4) JI's activity since 2009.

JI's Involvement in Communal Conflicts

Inside Indonesia, JI's first engagement in violence came after the conflicts in Poso and Ambon broke out in 1998 and 1999. In Ambon, JI members helped set up a military training camp for Mujahidin Kompak in October 1999.⁶¹ While there was some hesitation inside the organization regarding involvement in the conflict,⁶² JI decided to send members to Ambon "in order to aid and defend the fate of the Islamic community," which was seen as "being oppressed and killed without rights by the Christians there."⁶³ JI brought important military skills and weapons to the conflict, but it never had a large presence. By the middle of 2000, the focus shifted to Poso, where JI would have a significant impact until 2007.

In Poso, JI started recruiting foreign fighters and organizing military training after the Walisongo massacred in May 2000, when a hundred villagers were killed in an Islamic boarding school.⁶⁴ Within weeks of this massacre, both JI and Mujahidin Kompak started sending military trainers and fighters.⁶⁵ JI's participation shifted the communal conflict to a "terror period," characterized by bombings, shootings and assassinations.⁶⁶

Aside from armed action, JI's Project Uhud envisioned establishing Muslim enclaves governed by *shari'a* law in Christian areas,⁶⁷ and the group sought to develop Islamic education and allocate Islamic preachers among the Muslim community in Poso.⁶⁸ As Australia, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines were clamping down on JI activity, severely weakening its branches outside of Indonesia,⁶⁹ Poso was to become a secure base, where JI could not only implement Islamic law, but also rebuild its economic strength.⁷⁰

JI continued its activity in Poso until the 2007 government raid on Tanah Runtuh disrupted its project.⁷¹ JI's discontinued its military training and violent actions because it was forced to, and not because of an intentional decision to de-escalate.⁷² The leaders did not question the usefulness of violence or military training in Poso. This was at least in part because when the conflicts in Ambon and Poso erupted, public opinion was on JI's side. In 2000, for instance, there were rallies in Jakarta calling for *jihad* in order to defend the Muslim communities,⁷³ and six muftis from Saudi Arabia issued fatwas that declared holy war in the Moluccas obligatory.⁷⁴ In this context, JI continued its presence in Poso until it was forced to disengage.

The Debate over Violence Outside of Ambon and Poso: 2000 - 2002

By the summer of 2000, JI members started undertaking terrorist attacks outside of the communal conflicts. This included a failed assassination attempt on Philippine's Ambassador in Jakarta in August, and simultaneous church bombings on Christmas Day 2000. These attacks were masterminded by Hambali, the commander of *mantiqi I*, who planned them with the support of other JI leaders, and explicitly sought the approval of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir.⁷⁵ The 2002 Bali bombings, however, were masterminded by Imam Samudra, under the leadership of Mukhlas. Mukhlas replaced Hambali as commander of *mantiqi I*, and he purposefully did not

inform the Indonesian leaders about his plans, expecting opposition.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, after the attacks, JI members were ordered to give sanctuary to any JI fugitives, and the JI leadership pledged to financially support the families of Bali fugitives.⁷⁷

During this period, we do not see any successful behavioral, organizational or ideological de-escalation. Ba'asyir sent mixed signals about the importance of *jihad*,⁷⁸ but in September 2002 he argued that armed struggle should be put on hold, because it would have negative repercussions for the movement.⁷⁹ Why did this statement not result into a tactical shift at the level of the organization? The answer is two-fold: the group was internally fragmented and divided over the question of violence; and terrorist tactics had not yet imposed a high cost on the organization.

After Sungkar's death in November 1999, JI did not have a strong leader with a clear vision, who could exert control and impose top-down organizational changes. Aside from avoiding a clear stance on violence, Ba'asyir's leadership was contested, and other important and charismatic leaders, such as Hambali, were supportive of violent tactics. In this organizational context, violence escalated rather than subsided.

At the same time, JI did not face strong pressure to change, either from the public or from the government. Before Bali I, the government did not crack down on JI's activity, and many people questioned whether JI even existed. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who became security minister in 2001 and would later become President, questioned the existence of JI and its links to violence as late as 2004.⁸⁰ Many Indonesians perceived Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as a pious religious scholar, unconnected to violence.⁸¹ Whereas the public was generally opposed to violence (and especially critical of the Christmas Eve bombings), a significant segment of the population was also sympathetic to armed action.

A 1999 U.S. State Department poll found that 40 percent of Indonesians said that bombing civilian targets were often or sometimes justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies.⁸² According to Pew, in 2002, 27 percent of Indonesians also considered suicide bombing and attacks against civilians to be often or sometimes justified, and only 54 percent of the respondents considered them to never be justified.⁸³ These attitudes changed drastically over the subsequent years, raising the cost of violence after 2003.

Deepening Divisions and the Dynamics of De-Escalation: 2003 - 2009

In the summer of 2003, JI member Noordin Top started planning attacks without the approval of the JI leadership. These included attacks on the Marriot hotel in Jakarta in 2003, on the Australian embassy in 2004, on Bali cafes in 2005, and on the Marriott and Ritz-Carlton in Jakarta in 2009. Whereas Top informed some of the leadership about the plans for the August 2003 attack, he did not get their endorsement. What followed was a formal break between his faction and the main JI leadership.

During this period, JI only engaged in violence in Poso. After the group was forced to end its activities there in 2007, we see the most explicit behavioral and organizational disengagement from violence. The leadership emphasized the separation of operational cells from *da'wa* cells, and focused JI activities on preaching and proselytizing.⁸⁴ There was a decisive split between the pro and anti-bombing factions of JI, and the leadership announced that it was even permissible for JI members to inform on Noordin Top.⁸⁵ After the second Bali attack, there was a special order from JI leaders not to follow splinters and engage in such attacks, but there was no strong leadership and no hierarchy or structure to implement this order.⁸⁶

This intentional de-escalation was driven by an increasing government crackdown on the JI, which weakened the group, and growing public opposition to terrorist attacks, which raised

the cost of violence. At the same time, nonviolent alternatives made exit options from violence possible. After being forced out of Poso, JI leaders converged on the perception of violence as too costly in the present context in Indonesia.

After the Bali attacks, numerous arrests that included JI's top leadership significantly weakened the group. Outside of Indonesia, JI's branches were severely weakened, and the group's direct links to Al Qaeda were severed.⁸⁷ After the second Bali attack, public opinion also started shifting decisively against the use of violent tactics against civilians (see Table 1). In this context, violence became a costly tactic, especially given the possibility of nonviolent alternatives through education, proselytizing, or joining groups that call for the implementation of *shari'a* law, such as the Mujahidin Council of Indonesia (MMI), which was established by Ba'asyir in 2000. JI also established a significant publishing industry, through which it could propagate its vision.⁸⁸

--- Insert Table 1 here ---

Before 2003, such exit options were not enough to reinforce disengagement from violence, because JI felt no pressure to change tactics. After 2003, the possibility of such nonviolent engagement accentuated the increasing cost of violence in light of government crackdown and shifting public opinion. Yet, even during this period, JI never officially denounced *jihad*. This is because group weakness never reached a point of crisis, and public disapproval of violence or even of JI's mission, did not reach a point of explicit condemnation of the group.

In this regard, exit options from violence, on one hand reinforced behavioral de-escalation, but on the other hand also allowed the organization to persist, and to continue

building its base. The fact that JI was not *only* a group associated with violence, but rather an organization mainly focused on *da'wa*, allowed it to continue occupying an ambiguous space.

This is not an issue of public support for either JI or for violent tactics, but a question of avoiding a public outcry that explicitly targets the group. This distinction is significant, because Pew data shows that Indonesians during this period became increasingly opposed to violent tactics, and were in fact more critical of them than the Egyptian public (see Table 1). Lembaga Survei Indonesia (LSI) polls also consistently show low support for JI among those familiar with it – 11 percent in 2005 and 2006, and 8 percent in 2007.⁸⁹ However, these polls also reveal that the majority during this period was unaware of JI. In 2005, only 35 percent of respondents were aware of JI, whereas in 2007 this number increased to 41 percent. Additionally, in 2007, 19 percent of respondents were sympathetic to apostates being killed,⁹⁰ and in a separate poll only 85 percent of respondents considered terrorism to be very big or moderately big problem, compared to 97 percent considering corrupt political leaders to be a very big or moderately big problem.⁹¹

In this context, some political leaders feared that speaking out too strongly against groups like JI would be perceived as being anti-Islamic. Some suggest that there has been a “public race for displaying Islamic symbols,” and “a myth among bureaucrats and law enforcement officers” that opposing Islamist groups could be perceived as being anti-Islamic.⁹² At the same time, many saw the “hunt for terrorists” as a distraction from corruption scandals,⁹³ and nobody challenged the portrayal of Densus 88 victims as martyrs.⁹⁴ Some of these dynamics have persisted after 2009, which explains why in spite of continuing public opposition to violence, JI has remained focused on nonviolent activities, but has not renounced *jihad*.

JI after 2009

Noordin Top's killing during an antiterrorism raid in 2009 effectively put an end to all major attacks in Indonesia associated with a JI splinters. In light of the continued high public opposition to terrorist attacks and the military defeat of violent splinters, JI has continued to prioritize *da'wa* over *jihad*, but it has not revised its ideological tenets. JI's main spiritual leader Abu Rusydan, for example, is highly critical of Indonesia's deradicalization programs because they delegitimize the concept of *jihad* and of *mujahid*.⁹⁵ According to him, there are clear criteria for when and how to conduct jihad, and it has to be conducted at the right time and in the right place. When the conflict in Syria erupted, Abu Rusydan considered that context to be both the right time and the right place for conducting *jihad*,⁹⁶ and JI used its humanitarian delegations to Syria to open channels for Indonesian *mujahidin* to join the fighting.⁹⁷

To the extent that among JI members there is still some interest in violence or military training, these manifest themselves primarily in individual initiatives and small scale attacks or targeted assassinations.⁹⁸ However, some reports suggest that by 2010 JI decided to revive its military wing, and by 2012 the group once again started acquiring weapons, even though a 2014 mass arrest disrupted these plans.⁹⁹ JI continues to be focused on spreading its message nonviolently and consolidating its social base, yet it also holds the potential for future escalation.¹⁰⁰ JI has avoided comprehensive de-escalation because its above ground activities allow it to avoid a complete organizational destruction, while its emphasis on preaching enable it to exploit persisting ambiguities in public attitudes.

A 2016 LSI and Wahid Foundation survey reveals that whereas 72 percent of Indonesians are opposed to radical actions, 7.7 percent are willing to act radically, and 19.9 percent hold no opinion.¹⁰¹ A 2017 Alvara survey of students across Indonesia shows that slightly over 23

percent support *jihad* for the establishment of an Islamic state or caliphate, even though over 80 percent are supportive of Pancasila.¹⁰² A 2016 PPIM survey of religion teachers across the country found that 77 percent of them supported groups that wanted to enforce *shari'a*, and they were largely “positive about the use of violence to settle differences.”¹⁰³ A 2017 ISEAS survey revealed that 63 percent of Indonesians support more severe punishment for blasphemy against Islam.¹⁰⁴ What these surveys suggest is that as far as public attitudes go, armed action remains a costly tactic, but the broader fight for an Islamic state continues to have pockets of sympathizers within society.

Conclusion and Implications

Examining the evolution of GI and JI reveals that organizational dynamics and public attitudes are particularly influential in determining the nature and path of de-escalation, whereas political openings are neither necessary nor sufficient for disengagement from violence. The GI underlines the fact that in response to organizational crisis and military defeat organizations do not necessarily die off, but they can also attempt to reinvent themselves if the leaders have the initiative to rethink the ideological tenets. This case also offers a new take on the role of repression in driving de-escalation, emphasizing its impact on organizational crisis. It was organizational crisis, combined with the high public condemnation of the group that pushed the leaders to reconsider their tactics, and not repression per se, which had previously only led to more violence.

When it comes to grievances, it is not only the state who can alienate citizens. Groups can also alienate publics if their violence has high audience costs. This insight cautions us against assuming that publics necessarily sympathize with violent tactics when a regime is repressive, and challenges the argument that indiscriminate repression creates public outrage that benefits

violent groups. The discussion has shown that publics can be simultaneously outraged at *both* the regime and at armed groups, and that in repressive environments we can have some groups disengage from violence, and other groups or factions escalate their tactics.

The analysis of the JI shows that exit options from violence and public opposition to terrorism are very powerful determinants of behavioral de-escalation. But in and of themselves, these are not sufficient for ideational de-escalation, especially if the group itself is not faced with high levels of public condemnation. Exit options have two impacts: they provide incentives for behavioral de-escalation, but also enable a group to evade public censure.

On the issue of ideational de-escalation, in both Egypt and Indonesia there were plenty of powerful counter-narratives offered by religious scholars and other Islamic groups that condemned violence. However, such alternative views are not always salient. It is not just an issue of messenger and message, but perhaps most importantly it is an issue about when these alternatives are presented (timing). In Egypt, attempts to change GI's views by the regime, al Azhar sheikhs and Muslim Brotherhood members were completely ignored until it became clear to the leaders that the revolution they envisioned would never occur, and that their armed struggle achieved more harm than good. What the leaders themselves argue was a process of learning and maturing did not occur until the organization was militarily defeated, the public turned against the group, and the nonviolent alternative of the Brotherhood was clearly much more effective at building the foundation of an Islamic society. In this context it became clear that the vision of a top-down revolution was a pipe dream. Taking down Sadat brought an even harsher President Mubarak that clashed with Islamists much more, and the Muslim community regarded GI as terrorists. The revisions were not just a strategic attempt for the group to survive, they were also an attempt by the leaders to come to terms with their own disillusionment.

In the case of the JI, the founders of the group had already learned from the original DI movement that a top-down imposition of an Islamic state would be difficult, so they emphasized the bottom-up establishment of an Islamic society as the foundation of a future Islamic state and caliphate. Within this frame of reference, religious clashes in which the Muslim community is seen under attack were and will most likely always remain an immediate trigger for behavioral and organizational escalation. In the absence of immediate threats to the Muslim community, focusing on *da'wa* is a natural shift within JI's vision of working towards a long-term Islamic community. Within this long-term bottom-up vision, leaders and cadres are not presented with the same pressing disillusionment that would force them to revise their ideological tenets. In this context, the counter-narratives presented by groups such as NU and Muhammadiyah are more effective in preventing recruitment to JI, than they are in converting JI members.

Religious aspirations can be more nuanced, complex and adaptable than is often assumed. Groups with a gradual view on change and an emphasis on the establishment of an Islamic society are more open to exit options and more adaptable to nonviolent tactics. But public attitudes also play a powerful role, and when a group is faced with internal crisis, public condemnation can drive leaders to revise their tactics, and ultimately their goals and aspirations.

Notes

¹ I define Islamist groups as sociopolitical organizations that use their interpretation of Islamic principles as their reference point, and seek to apply these principles to the social, economic and political realm.

² Martha Crenshaw, "Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced: A Case Study of Oppositional Terrorism," in Thomas Gregor (ed.), *A Natural History of Peace* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996), 259.

³ Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How Al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 7 - 48; Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); J.I. Ross and Ted R. Gurr, "Why Terrorism

Subsides: A Comparative Study of Canada and the United States,” *Comparative Politics* 21, no. 4 (1989): 405–426.

⁴ Cronin, “How Al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups” (see note 3 above); Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends* (see note 3 above); Dipak Gupta, *Understanding Terrorism and Political Violence* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Crenshaw, “Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced” (see note 2 above); Clark McCauley, “Group Desistance from Terrorism: A Dynamic Perspective,” *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 1, no. 3 (November 1, 2008): 269–93.

⁵ Donatella Della Porta, *Clandestine Political Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁶ Véronique Dudouet, “Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance,” *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (May 1, 2013): 401–13; Alberto Martin Alvarez, “From Revolutionary War to Democratic Revolution,” *Berghof Conflict Research*, 2010.

⁷ Benedetta Berti, *Armed Political Organizations: From Conflict to Integration* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Leonard Weinberg, Ami Pedahzur, and Arie Perliger, *Political Parties and Terrorist Groups* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Véronique Dudouet, “Intra-Party Dynamics and the Political Transformation of Non-State Armed Groups,” *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 6, no. 1 (2012): 96–108.

¹² Berti (see note 7 above), 26.

¹³ Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Dudouet, “Intra-Party Dynamics and the Political Transformation of Non-State Armed Groups” (see note 11 above).

¹⁴ Crenshaw, “Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced” (see note 2 above)

¹⁵ Diaa Rashwan, “The Renunciation of Violence by Egyptian Jihadi Organizations,” in Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Amr Hamzawy and Sarah Grebowski, “From Violence to Moderation: Al-Jama’a Al Islamiya and Al-Jihad,” Carnegie Paper (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 2010).

¹⁶ Omar Ashour, “De-Radicalization of Jihad? The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 2, no. 5 (2008); Omar Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Omar Ashour, “De-Radicalization of Jihad? The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 2, no. 5 (2010); Omar Ashour, “Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Transformations of Armed Islamist Movements,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23, no. 3 (2011): 377–97.

¹⁷ Ted Gurr, *Minorities at Risk* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993); Mohammed M. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca and Luis De la Calle, “Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 31–49.

¹⁸ James A. Piazza, “Repression and Terrorism: A Cross-National Empirical Analysis of Types of Repression and Domestic Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 102–18.

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- ¹⁹ Donatella Della Porta, “Leaving Underground Organizations: A Sociological Analysis of The Italian Case,” in Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, “Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3 (2008): 415–33.
- ²⁰ Crenshaw, “Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced” (see note 2 above).
- ²¹ Tore Bjorgo, “Processes of Disengagement from Violent Groups of the Extreme Right,” in Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Della Porta, “Leaving Underground Organizations” (see note 19 above).
- ²² Hamzawy and Grebowski (see note 15 above).
- ²³ Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists* (see note 16 above); Ashour, “De-Radicalization of Jihad?” (see note 16 above); Ashour, “Post-Jihadism” (see note 16 above).
- ²⁴ Rashwan (see note 15 above).
- ²⁵ Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists* (see note 16 above).
- ²⁶ This argument is about the sense of disillusionment at the group level, but there is significant research that shows disillusionment is also a key mechanism for individual disengagement from violence. See John Horgan, “Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Analysis,” in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, ed. Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan (New York: Routledge, 2009); John Horgan, *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements* (Taylor & Francis, 2009); Bjorgo, “Processes of Disengagement from Violent Groups of the Extreme Right” (see note 21 above); Julie Chernov Hwang, “The Disengagement of Indonesian Jihadists: Understanding the Pathways,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 2 (2017).
- ²⁷ Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists* (see note 16 above).
- ²⁸ Roel Meijer, “Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong as a Principle of Social Action: The Case of the Egyptian Al-Jama’a Al-Islamiyya,” in *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement* (London and New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 209.
- ²⁹ Galal Nassar, “The Hamza Connection,” *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, January 13, 2005, Issue No. 725 edition, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/725/eg5.htm>.
- ³⁰ Khaled Dawoud, “Divided on Violence,” *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, January 4, 2001, Issue No. 515 edition, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/515/eg6.htm>.
- ³¹ Taha started working with Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri, eventually becoming a leader in Al Qaeda’s “Khorasan Shura,” a body within Al Qaeda that sits above regional branches and is responsible for overseeing various aspects of the group’s global operations. See Thomas Joscelyn, “US strikes al Qaeda’s ‘Khorasan Group’ in Syria,” *Long War Journal* (April 8, 2016).
- ³² Anonymous interview conducted by the author with GI leader, July 4, 2012, Cairo, Egypt.
- ³³ Dawoud (see note 30 above).
- ³⁴ Rashwan (see note 15 above), 126–27.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Lisa Blaydes and Lawrence Rubin, “Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism: Confronting Militant Islam in Egypt,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 4 (2008): 473.
- ³⁷ Mustapha Kamel Al-Sayyid, “The Other Face of the Islamist Movement,” Democracy and Rule of Law Project (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 14.

³⁸ Omar Ashour, "Continuity and Change in Islamist Political Thought and Behavior: The Transformation of Armed Islamist Movements in Egypt and Algeri," in Bahgat Korany (ed.), *The Changing Middle East: A New Look at Regional Dynamics* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 144.

³⁹ Al-Sayyid (see note 37 above), 15.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Anonymous interview (see note 32 above).

⁴² Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists* (see note 16 above), Rashwan (see note 15 above). Ashour argues that the key to deradicalization is the combination of high state repression and high selective inducements. However, in the case of GI the selective inducements only started being offered after the initial decision by the leaders to announce the non-violent initiative.

⁴³ Anonymous interview (see note 32 above).

⁴⁴ Hafez (see note 17 above) argues that political exclusion and reactive and indiscriminate repression are both necessary and sufficient to explain the timing and scale of Islamist rebellion. For him, when predatory state repression threatens the organizational resources and lives of Islamists the result is radicalization. In contrast, I bring in the dimension of public alienation, and argue that such a moment of crisis can actually drive the renouncement of violence.

⁴⁵ Stefan Malthaner, *Mobilizing the Faithful: Militant Islamist Groups and Their Constituencies* (Campus Verlag, 2011), 168.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 168-169.

⁴⁷ Salwa Ismail, "The Popular Movement Dimensions of Contemporary Militant Islamism: Socio-Spatial Determinants in the Cairo Urban Setting," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 2 (2000): 392.

⁴⁸ Malthaner (see note 45 above), p.168.

⁴⁹ Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *Middle East Contemporary Survey 1997* (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center, 1999), 303.

⁵⁰ Ashour, "Continuity and Change in Islamist Political Thought and Behavior" (see note 38 above), 156.

⁵¹ Geneive Abdo, *No God But God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 194.

⁵² Rashwan (see note 15 above), 129.

⁵³ Anonymous interview, February 23rd, 2013 (skype interview).

⁵⁴ Anonymous interview (see note 32 above).

⁵⁵ The break between Sungkar and DI leader Masduki started in 1992, and Sungkar began paving the way towards a new organization in Malaysia. However, JI was officially established as a distinct organization in January 1993. When this occurred, the fighters in the Torkham training camp in Afghanistan were asked to either join Sungkar and remain in Afghanistan as members of JI, or stay loyal to Masduki and leave. For details see Nasir Abas, *Inside Jamaah Islamiyah: A Former Member's True Story* (Jakarta: Grafindo Khazanah Ilmu, 2011), pages 93-95; Solahudin, *The Roots of Terrorism in Indonesia: From Darul Islam to Jem'ah Islamiyah* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), pages 145-156; International Crisis Group, *Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous* (Jakarta, August 26, 2003); International Crisis Group, *Recycling Militants in Indonesia: Darul Islam and the Australian Embassy Bombing* (Jakarta, February 22, 2005).

⁵⁶ There is some disagreement among scholars on whether JI was ever interested in establishing a regional caliphate, or whether the focus was solely on establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia.

Some suggest that after the Afghan experience, JI's view of the Islamic struggle and of territorial boundaries shifted, as exemplified by the group's declared principle to re-establish the Khilafah. See Muhammad Najib Azca, *After Jihad: A Biographical Approach to Passionate Politics in Indonesia* (Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2011), p. 222; Ken Ward, "Indonesian Terrorism: From Jihad to Dakwah?" in Greg Fealy and Sally White (eds.), *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2008), 211. Others, however, argue that the regional dimension was simply operational, and that the real focus of the group was always on building an Islamic state in Indonesia. See Julie Chernov Hwang, "Terrorism in Perspective: An Assessment of 'Jihad Project' Trends in Indonesia," *Asia Pacific Issues* (East-West Center, September 2012); Andree Feillard and Remy Madinier, *The End of Innocence: Indonesian Islam and the Temptations of Radicalism* (Singapore: National University of Singapore), p. 137.

⁵⁷ Nasir Abas, *Inside Jamaah Islamiyah* (see note 55 above), 112.

⁵⁸ Justin Hastings, *No Man's Land, Globalization, Territory, and Clandestine Groups in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2010), 53.

⁵⁹ Abas (see note 55 above), 140).

⁶⁰ Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, "The Re-emergence of Jemaah Islamiyah" (Jakarta, April 27, 2017).

⁶¹ Solahudin (see note 55 above), 175; International Crisis Group, *Terrorism in Indonesia: Noordin's Networks* (Jakarta, May 5, 2006).

⁶² Azca (see note 56 above), 37.

⁶³ Abas (see note 55 above), 143.

⁶⁴ There were two main groups of mujahidins that participated in the conflicts in Ambon and Poso: Laskar Jihad (formed in January 2000), and Laskar Mujahidin, an umbrella organization that included fighters from several groups, including JI, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) and Mujahidin Kompak. Mujahidin Kompak was established with the help of JI leaders, and at times included JI members. Azca (see note 56 above); Feillard and Madinier (see note 56 above); Julie Chernov Hwang, Rizal Panggabean and Ihsan Ali Fauzi, "The Disengagement of Jihadis in Poso, Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 53, no. 4 (August 1, 2013); Kirsten E. Schulze, "Laskar Jihad and the Conflict in Ambon," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* IX, Issue 1 (2002); Dave McRae, *A Few Poorly Organized Men: Interreligious Violence in Poso, Indonesia* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2008).

⁶⁵ Chernov Hwang et al. (see note 64 above), 760.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 763.

⁶⁷ Gillian S. Oak, "Jemaah Islamiyah's Fifth Phase: The Many Faces of a Terrorist Group," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33, no. 11 (2010): 995.

⁶⁸ Abas (see note 55 above), 143.

⁶⁹ Hastings (see note 58 above), 71-73.

⁷⁰ Chernov Hwang et al. (see note 64 above), 761.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² At the individual level, some Tanah Runtuh members started disengaging from violence before the 2007 raid. See Ibid., 764.

⁷³ Schulze (see note 64 above), 65-67.

⁷⁴ Azca (see note 56 above), 30.

⁷⁵ Hastings (see note 58 above), 88-89; International Crisis Group, *Indonesia Background: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates* (Jakarta, December 11, 2002), 5.

⁷⁶ Solahudin (see note 55 above), 186 -187.

⁷⁷ Hastings (see note 58 above, 81).

⁷⁸ Ba'asyir's autobiography, which came out in 2002, explicitly underlines the importance of *jihad*, and proposes suicide attacks as a way to reach martyrdom. Feillard and Madinier (see note 56 above), p. 132, note 79. In a 2005 interview with Scott Atran, he also emphasized that while he may disagree with the calculations of the Bali & Marriott bombers, they were nonetheless *mujahid*, who had good intentions and right objective and targets. Similarly, while he disagreed with bin Laden's total war approach, he considered attacks on American soil justified, and the fight against America "compulsory." See Scott Atran, "The Emir," *Spotlight on Terrorism*, 3: 9 (2005), available at: https://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/ijn_00000631.

⁷⁹ International Crisis Group (see note 75 above, 4).

⁸⁰ See "Yudhoyono not convinced JI exists," ABC News, October 26, 2004, available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2004-10-26/yudhoyono-not-convinced-ji-exists/574076>.

⁸¹ Anonymous interview, October 31, 2012, Jakarta.

⁸² Terror Free Tomorrow, "The Terrorist Support Base in Indonesia," accessed April 6, 2014, <http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/article.php?id=42>.

⁸³ The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, "Support for Terror Wanes Among Muslim Publics," The Pew Global Attitudes Project (Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, July 14, 2005).

⁸⁴ Hastings (see note 58 above), 82.

⁸⁵ Chernov Hwang (see note 56 above), 3.

⁸⁶ Interview conducted by the author with Noorhuda Ismail, Executive Director of the Institute for International Peace Building, October 18, 2012, Jakarta.

⁸⁷ Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (see note 60 above), p.2.

⁸⁸ International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Publishing Industry* (Jakarta, February 28, 2008).

⁸⁹ "Trend Orientasi Nilai-Nilai Politik Islamis vs Nilai-Nilai Politik Sekuler Dan Kekuatan Islam Politik", Lembaga Survei Indonesia, October 2007.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Pew Global Attitudes Project 2007.

⁹² Interview conducted by the author with Ulil Abshar Abdalla, June 12, 2013, Jakarta.

⁹³ Anonymous interview, October 31, 2012, Jakarta.

⁹⁴ Interview conducted by the author with Muhammad Wildan, June 10, 2013, Jakarta.

⁹⁵ "Adu Pendapat Soal Terorisme Antara Abu Rusydan Dan Nasir Abas ('A Debate of Terrorism between Abu Rusydan and Nasir Abas')," *MuslimDaily.Net*, December 9, 2012, <http://www.muslimdaily.net/berita/nasional/adu-pendapat-soal-terorisme-antara-abu-rusydan-dan-nasir-abas.html>.

⁹⁶ "Ustadz Abu Rusydan: 4 Hal Yang Harus Diperhatikan Bagi Peminat Pergolakan Syam ('Ustadz Abu Rusydan: 4 THings That Have to Be Paid Attention to for Enthusiasts of the Unrest in Sham')," *Voice of Al Islam*, September 21, 2014, <http://www.voa-islam.com/read/world-analysis/2014/09/21/32993/ustadz-abu-rusydan-4-hal-yang-harus-diperhatikan-bagi-peminat-pergolakan-syam/#sthash.qaMjTdyl.dPJV3EwY.dpbs>.

⁹⁷ Sidney Jones and Solahudin, "Terrorism in Indonesia: A Fading Threat?," *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2014, no. 1 (2014): 139-47.

⁹⁸ Chernov Hwang (see note 56 above).

⁹⁹ Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (see note 60 above), p. 7, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Even former JI member Nasir Abas argues that if conflict were to break out again in Poso and Ambon, it would constitute symmetric warfare and armed struggle would be justified. Interview conducted by author with Nasir Abas, June 26, 2013, Jakarta.

¹⁰¹ Wahid Foundation, “A Measure of the Extent of Socio-Religious Intolerance and Radicalism Within Muslim Society in Indonesia” (Jakarta: The Wahid Foundation, 2016).

¹⁰² Alvara, “Potensi Radikalisme Di Kalangan Pelajar dan Mahasiswa” (Jakarta, October 2017).

¹⁰³ Dirga Maulana, “The Exclusivism of Religion Teachers: Intolerance and Radicalism in Indonesian Public Schools,” *Studia Islamika* 24, no. 2 (2017): 398 -399.

¹⁰⁴ Diego Fossati, Hui Yew-Foongq, and Siwage Dharma Negara, “The Indonesia National Survey Project: Economy, Society and Politics,” Trends in Southeast Asia (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), 2017).