

ISLAMIC RADICALISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ALLEGED TERRORIST ORGANISATION, JAMA'AH ISLAMIYAH

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ملخص

لقد أدت حادثة ١١ سبتمبر ٢٠٠١ إلى اتهام الإسلام كإرهابي، وفي هذا الصدد حركة تنظيم القاعدة . وأشارت حادثة انفجار القنبلة في بالي إلى اتهام تواجد شبكة تنظيم القاعدة في جنوب شرقي آسيا التي سميت فيما بعد بالجماعة الإسلامية. هناك كثير من النظريات عن الراديكالية الإسلامية التي قدمها الملاحظون في أنحاء العالم ومنها النظرية القائلة بأن الراديكالية الدينية التي حدثت في أنحاء العالم عبارة عن المقاومة الدينية ضد تقدم التحديث العالمي. ويبدو أن ظهور الراديكالية الإسلامية في جنوب شرقي آسيا إنما هو نتيجة مواقف الحكومات المحلية من الأمة الإسلامية، بيد أن الجماعة الإسلامية - مهما يكن من أمر - ظلت لغزا من الألغاز : لا يعرف وجودها ولكن ظواهرها موجودة في كل مكان. وفي نهاية الأمر ربط كثير من الملاحظين تواجد الجماعة الإسلامية مع المعاهد الإسلامية المتطرفة في إندونيسيا. تحاول هذه المقالة دراسة احتمال العلاقة بين منظمة الجماعة الإسلامية وبين المجموعات الإرهابية التي تسيء سمعة الإسلام.

Abstract

Pemboman WTC 11 September 2001 telah melahirkan sebuah stigma terhadap Islam, yaitu teroris dan al-Qaeda sebagai tertuduh. Di Asia Tenggara, kasus Bom Bali juga mengidentifikasi adanya jaringan al-Qaeda yg kemudian dikenal dengan nama Jama'ah Islamiyah. Banyak teori yang dikemukakan oleh ilmuwan-ilmuwan di berbagai belahan dunia tentang fenomena radikalisme Islam ini. Di antara teori tersebut mengatakan

bahwa radikalisme agama yang terjadi di berbagai belahan dunia merupakan resistensi agama terhadap laju modernisasi dunia. Di Asia Tenggara, munculnya radikalisme Islam lebih dipicu oleh sikap-sikap pemerintah terhadap umat Islam. Walaupun demikian, Jama'ah Islamiyah tetap merupakan misteri; eksistensinya tidak bisa dibuktikan, namun fenomenanya ada di mana-mana. Banyak pihak akhirnya mengaitkan keberadaan Jama'ah Islamiyah dengan keberadaan berbagai pesantren garis keras di Indonesia. Artikel ini berusaha untuk mengidentifikasi hubungan antara keberadaan organisasi Jama'ah Islamiyah dengan kelompok-kelompok teroris yang akhir-akhir ini telah memperburuk citra Islam.

Keywords: Islamic Radicalism, al-Qaeda, Jama'ah Islamiyah, Terrorist Groups, Structural Connection.

A. Introduction

In the wake of the September 11 incident, Islamic radicalism has become a prominent issue across the world. Al-Qaeda, a Muslim-based group, has been alleged to have been responsible for the deadly attacks on the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon military compound in the United States of America (USA). The issue of Islamic radicalism has intensified in the aftermath of the bomb blast in Bali Sari Club and Jakarta Marriot Hotel, Indonesia. These so-called October 12 (2002) and August 5 (2003) incidents respectively have also been associated with Islamic radicalism, in particular with Jama'ah Islamiyah¹ (JI), a Muslim-based organisation alleged to be part of the al-Qaeda terrorist network in Southeast Asia and the group responsible for these two bomb attacks.

Islamic radicalism has drawn the attention of the world. Within the Southeast Asia region itself, the media gave wide coverage to the issue of Islamic radicalism. A large percentage of the Muslim population of the world lives in this region, and thus it is an issue of immense

¹ The term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" is spelt out differently. The word "Jama'ah" (with letter "a" after "j") is given another spelling, that is "Jema'ah" (with letter "e" after "j" instead of "a"), just as "Islamiyah" (with letter "y" between "i" and "a") is given another spelling with dropping "y", that is, "Islamiah". In addressing this organisation throughout the discussion, this paper prefers the way of spelling "Jama'ah Islamiyah" to "Jema'ah Islamiah" or "Jema'ah Islamiyah".

significance in the region. Certainly, al-Qaeda, which is regarded as the number-one Islamic terrorist group in the world, is not based in the region. However, it has been suggested particularly by some overseas governments, such as Singapore, Australia, and the USA, that al-Qaeda has links with other radical groups in the region - groups said to be responsible for the bomb attacks in the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Thus, JI has come to be perceived as connected with al-Qaeda. It has been associated with two prominent Indonesian figures, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar, who are said to be its spiritual leaders.

This paper examines Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia in terms of its roots and the possibility of there being a structural connection between radical Islamic and terrorist groups. The essay will focus in particular on JI in Indonesia, but possible links with Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore will also be examined. The paper argues that the emergence of Islamic radicalism is mainly triggered by the ruling regime's political measures of marginalisation over Muslim groups as well as by the global awareness of Muslims. Also, it is argued that there seems to be no structural connection among the Islamic radical groups across the region even though they might have the same vision and view of their struggles.

To begin with, the paper explores the roots of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. In what follows, it discusses the allegation of the existence of JI in Indonesia under the leadership of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and the late Abdullah Sungkar. The discussion on JI in Indonesia is followed with a comparison of the same case in some other Southeast Asian countries. At the end, the paper challenges the existing view arguing for the possibility of there being structural connection between Islamic radical and terrorist groups across the region as the JI networks.

B. The Roots of Islamic Radicalism

Islamic radicalism has strongly colored the picture of Islam in contemporary Indonesia. The face of Indonesian Islam is identified with some radical Muslim-based groups, such as FPI (*Front Pembela Islam*/Islamic Defenders Front), MMI (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*/Indonesian Mujahidin Council), LJ (*Laskar Jihad*/Jihad Paramilitary

Troops), and JAMI (*Jama'ah Ikhwan al-Muslimun Indonesia*/Indonesian Ikhwan al-Muslimun Community).² Even though Islamic radical groups do not have significant numbers in comparison with moderate ones, such as Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) and Muhammadiyah, they can draw the popular attention. Azyumardi Azra explains these groups are prominent in the contemporary Indonesian Islam for their literal religious understanding and radical actions;³ or in the words of Noorhaidi Hasan, they spread a "privatised militancy".⁴

Numerous examples demonstrate the radical actions of such groups. FPI, as described by Azra,⁵ has been involved in a number of raids and destruction of several cafés, discotheques, night clubs, gambling dens, and other socially "bad places", just as LJ has had an intimate connection to the *jihadist* actions in Maluku, Ambon and Poso of Central Sulawesi. In particular reference to LJ, in these conflicting areas, it has sent its militias to fight against Christians. Meanwhile, the *Amir Majlis* (the head of the advisory board) of MMI, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, is believed by groups such as Washington-based magazine, *Time*, in its edition "Confession of an al-Qaeda Terrorist",⁶ Lee Kuan Yew in his address at the Conference on Asia Security by the International Institute for Strategic Studies,⁷ and above all by the US Bush administration, to be leading JI, a Muslim group believed to have networks throughout Southeast Asia, in

² See Azyumardi Azra, "Agama dan Otentisitas Islam [Religion and the Authenticity of Islam]," *Republika*, 25 October 2002: http://www.republika.co.id/kolom_detail.asp?id=101025&kat_id=16 (Accessed 22 October 2002); Noorhaidi Hasan, "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia," *Indonesia*, no. 73 (April 2002), pp. 145-146.

³ Azra, "Agama dan Otentisitas Islam."

⁴ Hasan, "Faith and Politics," p. 145.

⁵ Azra, "Agama dan Otentisitas Islam."

⁶ See *Time's* report "Confession of an al-Qaeda Terrorist," *Time Magazine* (23 September 2002); "Bentuk Triumvirat Bersama Hambali-Jibril: Laporan Akhir Serial 'Ba'asyir dan Jaringan Ngruki (4-Habis)' [Setting Up Triumvirate along with Hambali-Jibril: Final report of a serial 'Ba'asyir and Jaringan Ngruki]," *Surya*, 04 November 2002 (Accessed 05 November, 2002); "Bocoran wawancara Omar al-Faruq [Confession of Omar al-Faruq]," *Jawa Pos*, 25 October 2002 (Accessed 25 October 2002).

⁷ For details of this matter see Sidney Jones, *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the "Ngruki Network" in Indonesia* (Jakarta/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002), p. 2.

particular Singapore and Malaysia, and to be allegedly linked to Al-Qaeda.⁸

Much attention has been given to such Islamic radical groups, particularly to MMI and LJ. While MMI with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as its leader, as described by Reyko Huang,⁹ is allegedly responsible for the unsolved bombings in several places of Indonesia and the Philippines, LJ is believed to have played a significant role in the worsening of religious conflicts in several areas of Indonesia. In particular context of MMI, Indonesian security forces pay much attention to the figure of Ba'asyir. Having arrested him for the indictment of breaching immigration rules, the police direct its further investigation of him into his possible involvement in JI as the *Amir Majelis* of this alleged terrorist organisation.¹⁰

To discern the involvement of LJ in such conflicts, in the meantime, some commentators have different views. As an example, Greg Fealy notes that the sending of the Laskar militias to the areas of conflict, particularly in Maluku, resulted from the low capacity of the state to end the conflict and from the finding suggesting that Muslims were to be driven out from the areas as Protestant churches had plans to build Christian state consisting of Maluku, West Papua and North Sulawesi.¹¹ Unlike Fealy, Paul Marshall regards LJ as the responsible for the aggravation of the conflicts. According to Marshall,¹² LJ is the cause of the deterioration of the conflicts as the coming of LJ militias

⁸ Al-Qaeda itself emerges having a close relation to the state of World politics as well as modernism. See John Gray, *Al-Qaeda and What It Means to be Modern* (New York: New Press, 2003).

⁹ Reyko Huang, "Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: Evidence and Response," *Terrorism Project*, 8 February 2002: <http://www.cdi.org/terrorism/sea.cfm> (Accessed 14 November 2002).

¹⁰ See "Polisi Arahkan Ba'asyir sebagai Amir JI," *Republika*, 29 April 2004: http://www.republika.co.id/ASP/koran_detail.asp?id=159548&kat_id=3 (Accessed 29 April 2004).

¹¹ Greg Fealy, "Inside the Laskar Jihad: An Interview with the Leader of a New, Radical and Militant Sect," *Inside Indonesia*, January-March 2001: <http://www.insideindonesia.org/edit65/fealy.htm> (Accessed 15 April 2002).

¹² Paul Marshall, "Terror's not New to Indonesia," *Center for Religious Freedom (Freedom House)*, 15 October 2002: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/country/indonesia/Terror's%20Not%20New%20to%20Indonesia.htm> (Accessed 14 November 2002).

in Maluku and Sulawesi hindered the attempts of reconciliation between the conflicting groups. Marshall also points out that LJ had plans to drive out all Christians and to establish an extreme version of Islamic law, particularly in Sulawesi.¹³

Irrespective of the particular polemic of LJ involvement in the conflicts, such reported cases of Islamic radicalism might send a significant message that religious radicalism is frequently followed by violent actions. As Khamami Zada suggests,¹⁴ there is a parallel connection between religious radicalism and violence as the radicalism appears in the form of social resistance in accordance to its own religious understanding. Zada goes further to say that radicalism has three general tendencies. First, radicalism is perceived as a response towards the existing conditions, including assumptions, ideas, values, and institutions regarded as deviant. Second, radicalism is not restricted to the form of such resistance, but also accompanied by an attempt to change the existing order with another one supposed to be better. Third, radicalism is equipped with a strong belief in a certain ideology and program, which can result in emotional reaction and violence.¹⁵

Even though Islamic radicalism becomes a picture of contemporary Indonesian Islam, some commentators, while tending to come to the agreement that such Islamic radicalism is a new phenomenon for Indonesia, relate the phenomenon to the crisis suffered by the country. According to Noorhaidi Hasan,¹⁶ Islamic radicalism, as a new phenomenon in Indonesia, is inseparable from the so-called multi-dimensional crisis befalling the country since it started emerging in

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Khamami Zada, "Terorisme dan Radikalisme Agama [Terrorism and Religious Radicalism]," *Media Indonesia*, 18 October 2002: <http://www.mediaindo.co.id/cetak/berita.asp?id=2002101802153562> (Accessed 22 October 2002). In the case of al-Qaeda, for instance, this organisation has occupied itself with a strong ideology of violence, and has set up programs using violence as its political means. For more details, see Maha Azzam, *Al-Qaeda: The Misunderstood Wahhabi Connection and the Ideology of Violence* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Briefing Paper no. 1, February 2003).

¹⁵ Zada, "Terorisme dan Radikalisme Agama."

¹⁶ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Islamic Radicalism and the Crisis of the Nation-State," *ISIM Newsletter*, no. 7: <http://www.isim.nl/newsletter/7/regional/1.html> (Accessed 14 November 2002).

1997 when Soeharto's regime was beginning to collapse. It seems to Hasan that Islamic radicalism had its moments when the country fell in the overwhelming crisis.¹⁷ In addition, Zada maintains that the fall of Soeharto provides Islamic radicalism with invaluable moments to accelerate its movement.¹⁸ The change of political leadership in Indonesia is likely to bring about the emergence of the alternative ideology in place of the previous one, and the ideology which seems to be more accurate to cover the movement of some contemporary Indonesian Muslims, according to Greg Barton,¹⁹ is Islamism. The ideology, as indicated by Barton,²⁰ which believes Islam can and should form the basis of political ideology can be, to some extent, the beginning of the Islamic radicalism.

Certainly, the post-Soeharto era with its unsolved crises became a worthy moment for the emergence of the Islamic radicalism. Azra admits that the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism became more visible in the post-Soeharto era as the wide coverage of media towards their actions made their movements more influential.²¹ Meanwhile, Martin van Bruinessen, while depicting Islamic radicalism as one of the most conspicuous new phenomena in contemporary Indonesian Islam, suggests that such Islamic radical groups had much power against the state authority at the time of the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid.²² Bruinessen gives an example that they often gained control of the streets given the unwillingness of the army and police to restrain them.²³

Such analyses on the emergence of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia play an important role in looking at the wider phenomena of Islamic

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ See Khamami Zada, *Islam Radikal: Pergulatan Ormas-ormas Islam Garis Keras di Indonesia* [Radical Islam: The Struggle of Muslim Radical Organisations in Indonesia]. (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002), p. 88.

¹⁹ Greg Barton, "Islamism and Indonesia: Islam and the Contest for Power after Soeharto," *The Review*, September 2002: <http://www.ajiac.org.au/review/2002/279/islam-indon.html> (Accessed 14 November 2002).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Azra, "Agama dan Otentisitas Islam."

²² Martin van Bruinessen, "Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in post-Soeharto Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 10:2 (2002), p. 118.

²³ *Ibid.*

radicalism across Southeast Asia as a whole, especially when it has been already found that some Islamic radicalism in the region have been interconnected. Indonesia which has been noted for long time as being occupied by moderate Muslims, and has the world's largest Muslim population, is now repeatedly claimed by several foreign governments, such as the US, Singapore and Malaysia, as a country with serious problems of Muslim terrorist and radical groups, particularly in the aftermath of the bomb blast in Kuta Bali and Marriot Jakarta. As Fealy points out,²⁴ these governments of foreign countries claim to have evidence of Indonesians leading offshore terrorist groups or evidence of terrorists being based in Indonesia, and moreover, Singaporean senior minister Lee Kwan Yew, as indicated by *Tempo*²⁵ and Fealy²⁶, claimed that Indonesia was a 'hotbed of terrorism'. This intensifies the significance of analysis of why people become radicalised in the middle of the changing socio-political and economic situations within the course of the nation.

A major reason put forward by critics to deal with the problem of why people become radical individuals is to do with the nexus of political repression and crucial socio-economic deprivation. According to a general view of terrorism, as suggested by Ramakrishna,²⁷ people become radicalised by this reason. Under this general view, people are perceived to become radicalised if the government conducts repressive measures towards the protests and aspirations of the people while it fails to provide them with economic growth, proper jobs, and affordable education. From this view, an understanding can be drawn that radicalism results from two key points: political suppression by the government and socio-economic downturn.

Such a general view does not seem to be precisely the case in some Southeast Asian countries, however. Even though political repres-

²⁴ See Greg Fealy, "Is Indonesia a Terrorist Base?," *Inside Indonesia*, July-September 2002: <http://www.insideindonesia.org/edit71/fealy1.htm> (Accessed 19 November 2002).

²⁵ See "Diakah Sang Imam? [Is He Its Spiritual Leader?]," *Tempo* (3 November 2002), p. 25.

²⁶ Fealy, "Is Indonesia a Terrorist Base?."

²⁷ Kumar Ramakrishna, "Jemaah Islamiah: Aims, Motivations and Possible Counter-Strategies," *Perspective*, October 2002: http://www.ntu.edu.sg/idss/Perspective/research_050221.htm (Accessed 14 November 2002).

sion and socio-economic decline have been the *raison d'être* for Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia, there are other factors in the prevalence of radicalism: globalisation and Arabia. As suggested by Ramakrishna,²⁸ Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia emerges, while in response to “political repression” and “poor governance”, as a result of the global awareness of Muslims in the region of the developments in the Islamic world, which creates anti-American sentiment. From the perspective of Ramakrishna,²⁹ globalisation is depicted as having poured more fuel on Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia since Muslims of the region become aware that the problems facing the wider Islamic world result from a biased US foreign policy, while their national governments have not done so much to help change “Washington’s policy mind-set”.

Staying with Ramakrishna’s idea on the effect of globalisation on radicalism, Pitsuwan, a Thai Muslim intellectual, adds Arabia as another factor of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia. According to Pitsuwan,³⁰ the spread of Islamic radicalism in the region is not only simply a result of the natural impetus of globalisation, but also an outcome of the prosperous charities and individuals from Arabia. These Arabian wealthy charities and individuals are believed to make the seeds of Islamic fundamentalism grow up in the region. While the wealthy charities from Saudi Arabia and Gulf States have been given for more than three decades to fund puritanical schools, mosques and foundations, as suggested by Pitsuwan,³¹ the Arab religious activists have traveled to Southeast Asia, preaching and teaching Wahhabi school of thought, which is an austere version of Islam.

In short, Islamic radicalism in Indonesia is given rise by four major factors: political repression, poor governance, global awareness, and Arabia. It is frequently argued, as reported by the International

²⁸ See Kumar Ramakrishna, “Beware of Pouring Fuel on Radical Embers,” *Perspective*, September 2002: http://www.ntu.edu.sg/idss/Perspective/research_050216.htm (Accessed 14 November 2002).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ See “Islam: Look East for the Answer,” *The Bulletin*, 30 October 2002: <http://bulletin.ninemsn.com.au/bulletin/EdDesk.nsf/6df5c28ed2c6c605ca256a1500059f03/ecb398f48c30073cca256c6000801601?OpenDocument> (Accessed 4 November 2002).

³¹ *Ibid.*

Crisis Group (ICG) in its “Indonesia Briefing” section,³² that the New Order regime’s high suppression of political Islam contributed to the radicalisation of Muslim dissent. Meanwhile, Komaruddin Hidayat holds that religious radicalism is used by the people in response politically to the poor governance,³³ just as Azra maintains that the increase in Islamic radicalism is basically an outcome of the government failure to enforce the law and to solve the socio-religious conflicts, and a result of the abrupt decline of central government authority.³⁴ Besides political struggle as well as poor governance as the roots, Bruinessen adds that the present Islamic radicalism in Indonesia results also from global awareness, which paves the way for the establishment of transnational Islamic networks.³⁵ In addition, Azra suggests that Islamic radicalism in Indonesia is closely related to the role of some Arab descendent figures in the groups of FPI, MMI, and LJ since they tend to take rigid and rigorous ways instead of persuasive and peaceful ones to come to their goals.³⁶ Also, Hefner admits that Islamic radicalism in Indonesia has come to its prominence with the significant contribution of financial assistance from the Saudi Arabian authorities.³⁷

Meanwhile, ideological factor plays more significant role in the rise of Islamic radicalism in Singapore and Malaysia. This is not to say that political and socio-economic reasons are not the factors of Islamic radicalism in both countries, but rather to say that this radicalism in

³² International Crisis Group (ICG), “Indonesia: Violence and Radical Muslims,” *Indonesia Briefing*, 10 October 2001: http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/asia/indonesia/reports/A400455_10102001.pdf (Accessed 18 November 2002).

³³ See interview with Komaruddin Hidayat, “Pemerintah Tidak Adil, Kelompok Radikal Muncul” [Government Does Injustice, Radical Groups Emerge], *Media Indonesia*, 3 November 2002: <http://www.mediaindo.co.id/cetak/berita.asp?id=2002110300272506> (Accessed 22 November 2002).

³⁴ See Azra’s statement on this matter in “Islam in Modern Indonesia,” (Unpublished Conference Proceeding Sponsored by the United States-Indonesia Society (USINDO) and The Asia Foundation, Washington D.C., 7 February 2002), p. 3.

³⁵ Bruinessen, “Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism,” p. 118.

³⁶ Azra, “Agama dan Otentisitas Islam.”

³⁷ See Robert W. Hefner, “Globalisation, Governance, and the Crisis of Indonesian Islam,” (Unpublished paper presented in the Conference on Globalisation, State Capacity, and Muslim Self Determination, Center for Global, International, and Regional Studies, University of California-Santa Cruz, 7-9 March 2002), pp. 23-24.

the two places is more ideological. Ramakrishna maintains that the most important factor and very basic cause of Islamic radicalism, as represented by the JI extremism, in Singapore and Malaysia are ideological, not socio-economic or political.³⁸ All the 31 JI detainees in Singapore, according to Ramakrishna,³⁹ are not “the children of poverty and despair”, but they are “gainfully employed” and own their homes encompassing deluxe five-room or executive flats. In the matter of non-socio-economic and political factors of the Islamic radicalism in Malaysia, the roots can be traced to the background of its activists. Ramakrishna indicates that several leading activists of Islamic radical groups are the principals of schools, graduates and lecturers of universities.⁴⁰ These kinds of job positions suggest a gainful employment, and show that the members of Islamic radicalism, who hold these job positions, occupy an upper level in the community in terms of the socio-economic status.

From the phenomenon of the Islamic radicalism in Indonesia, there is one significant feature that Islamic radicalism does not appear from zero point or without any affiliation to the others. Bruinessen maintains that Islamic radical groups in Indonesia can be traced to two roots: national and transnational networks.⁴¹ According to him, while national network refers to two relatively “indigenous” previous Muslim political movements, the Darul Islam (DI) movement and the Masyumi Party,⁴² transnational network refers to a number of such more recent transnational Islamic links as the sponsor groups, which are identified with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Pakistan.⁴³

From such a perspective, the DI movement and the Masyumi Party have inspired the activists of current Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia, and thus have occupied a certain place in their hearts. Having been ordered to dissolve itself in early 1960s, according to Bruinessen⁴⁴

³⁸ Ramakrishna, “Jemaah Islamiah: Aims.”

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Bruinessen, “Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism,” p. 118.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

and ICG⁴⁵, Masyumi transformed its political struggle then into, one of the things, the missionary efforts among Indonesian Muslims under the name of the *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (DDII/the Indonesian *Dakwah* Council) in 1967. The two prominent figures, which are claimed to be leading JI, Ba'asyir and Sungkar, are indicated by Bruinessen⁴⁶ to be well connected to DDII circles. Meanwhile, Bruinessen also indicates that one of the most active Islamic radical groups, MMI, in which Ba'asyir occupies the leadership position, encompasses the sections of the DI movement of the foregoing decades.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, Hefner points out that among those in MMI organisation's rank are individuals associated with the DI group.⁴⁸ The connection of the alleged terrorist organisation, JI, to the DI movement, according to Jones,⁴⁹ has gained justification from the intimate relationship between Ba'asyir and Sungkar and Kadungga, a son-in-law of Kahar Muzakkar, the leader of the DI movement in South Sulawesi.

In sum, globalisation has met with localisation ("glocalisation") to become two contributing factors for Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia. Globalisation has raised the awareness of Muslims of the global situation facing Islamic world. This awareness has generated Muslims' reaction to the existing situations they face, using lots of their possible religious and financial resources. This condition has been devastated by the reduced capacity of the state in which Muslims stay, coupled with socio-economic downturn, to deal with radicalism and violation within the country.

C. The Issue of Jama'ah Islamiyah in Indonesia

Jama'ah Islamiyah is claimed to be an organisation with an ultimate goal of establishing a great Islamic state in Southeast Asia, or in the words

⁴⁵ International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Violence and Radical."

⁴⁶ Bruinessen, "Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism," p. 129.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴⁸ Hefner, "Globalisation, Governance, and the Crisis," p. 21.

⁴⁹ See interview with Sidney Jones, "Hambali Adalah Petinggi Al-Qaidah [Hambali is the Top Figure of al-Qaidah]," *Tempo* 3 November 2002), p. 53; "Jejak Ba'asyir di Sungai Manggis [Ba'asyir's Footsteps in River Manggis]," *Tempo* (3 November 2002), p. 28.

of *Gatra*, “Negara Islam Nusantara [Nusantara Islamic state]”.⁵⁰ While it is found to exist for the first time in Malaysia, several Indonesian Muslim figures are suspected of leading and evolving it. In terms of its first establishment, according to Umar Al-Faruq, a Kuwait national detained by CIA for the allegation of being al-Qaeda leader in Southeast Asia,⁵¹ JI was established in Malaysia in the beginning of 1980s as a network of the al-Qaeda organisation. In the case of its accused leaders, however, along with Al-Faruq,⁵² some other commentators, such as Jeremy Zakis⁵³ and Singaporean Senior Minister Lee Kwan Yew⁵⁴, claim that Abu Bakar Ba’asyir as well as Riduan Isamuddin (Hambali) are the key actors of JI, and many other Indonesian Muslims are the advocates of it. Moreover, Yew, as described by Al-Anshari,⁵⁵ states that as long as Ba’asyir is not captured, Southeast Asia is not a secure place.

As a result of the alleged Indonesian Muslim figures behind JI, the issue of this alleged terrorist organisation in Indonesia has become the subject of wide debate. The Indonesian prominent figures are suspected of having leading roles in the organisation, and thus JI is presumably thought to be existing in Indonesia. Commentaries on the issue can be classified into having two approaches. The first approach sees that JI really exists in Indonesia, just as the second approach views that JI in Indonesia is only a fictitious organisation blown up by the political campaign of other countries. Both approaches have their own rationale, and thus they give rise to different consequences in terms of analysis of the alleged terrorist group, JI.

⁵⁰ See “Jemaah Islamiyah versi Dokumen Sukoharjo [Jemaah Islamiyah a la Sukoharjo Document],” *Gatra* (9 November 2002), p. 29.

⁵¹ See “Mengejar Siluman [Chasing a Ghost],” *Tempo* (3 November 2002), p. 36.

⁵² See the agreement of al-Faruq with these commentators on this claim in “Mengejar Siluman,” p. 36.

⁵³ Jeremy Zakis, “Investigation Begins as Death Toll Reaches 187 in Bali Terrorist Attack,” *Indonesia - Special Report*, 14 October 2002: http://www.emergency.com/2002/bali_bomb1002.htm (Accessed 18 November 2002); idem., “ERRI Warns of Jemaah Islamiyah Involvement in Bali Terrorist Bombings,” *Bali - Special Report*, 13 October 2002: http://www.emergency.com/2002/bali_bomb1002.htm (Accessed 18 November 2002).

⁵⁴ On Lee Kwan Yew claiming this matter see “Diakah Sang Imam? [Is He Its Spiritual Leader?],” *Tempo* (3 November 2002), p. 25.

⁵⁵ Fauzan Al-Anshari, *Saya Teroris? (Sebuah “Pledoi”)* [Am I a Terrorist? (A Defence)]. (Jakarta: Republika, 2002), pp. 14-15.

The first approach relates the emergence of this organisation to the auspices of the Indonesian military. One of the proponents of this approach, Sidney Jones, as reported by *Detik.com*,⁵⁶ says that this organisation in Indonesia, which is allegedly responsible for several terrorist acts in Southeast Asia, was established by the Indonesian military in the beginning of the 1970s. The establishment of this organisation, according to Sidney Jones,⁵⁷ was mainly to accommodate the political interests of Muslims in the era of Soeharto, and at the same time to manipulate it as a 'rubberstamp' for labeling Islamic movements fundamentalists. With this labeling, the government had a reason then, as indicated by Sidney Jones,⁵⁸ to eradicate and combat the movements that allegedly bring a danger to the country.

The evidence exploited by such an approach to convince the existence of JI in Indonesia is taken from the District court documents, from which the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" was found in Indonesia for the first time. As Sidney Jones⁵⁹ and Asep Chaerudin⁶⁰ explicitly suggest, the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" did not appear to be found in the court documents until the 1980s, one of the things is the Sleman District document under the title "Berkas Perkara Tersangka Abdullah Sungkar [Case Document of the Alleged Abdullah Sungkar]".⁶¹ However, according to *Tempo*,⁶² there is another court document found earlier than the document of Sungkar's trial to support the claim of the presence of JI in Indonesia. This document is the Medan District Court document of 1978 on charges of Gaos Taufik,

⁵⁶ See "Jemaah Islamiyah Dibentuk oleh Militer Indonesia? [Is Jemaah Islamiyah Established by Indonesian Military?]," *Detik.com*, 13 August 2002: <http://www.detik.com/peristiwa/2002/08/13/20020813-055812.shtml> (Accessed 06 November 2002).

⁵⁷ See *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ See Sidney Jones, *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the "Ngruki Network" in Indonesia* (Jakarta/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002), p. 6.

⁶⁰ Asep Chaerudin, "Countering Transnational Terrorism in Southeast Asia with Respect to Terrorism in Indonesia and the Philippines," (MA Thesis, Naval Postgraduate Scholl, Monterey, California, December 2003), p. 33.

⁶¹ In this document, it is told the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" was delivered by Abdullah Sungkar to call his organisation. Sungkar informed the court that as he got information from newspaper that the members of *Jama'ah Islamiyah* have been detained in Medan, he was certain to go to Pondok Ngruki for security reason. See Jones, *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia*, p. 6.

⁶² See "Diakah Sang Imam?," p. 25.

the leader of *Komando Jihad* (Jihad Command), which states, as reported by *Tempo*,⁶³ that Taufik had taken Abdullah Umar's oath of loyalty to JI in establishing a state based on Islamic law. From this evidence, it is clearly shown that the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" is recognised for the first time through the documents of the court, which contain charges on the alleged figures of Islamic radicalism.

The first approach which sees JI located in Indonesia has been criticised, however, as being "ethnocentric". The evidence to show the existence of JI solely through the court document without any sufficient investigation towards political atmosphere of the time is believed to be misleading. Supriyono, a senior journalist of the Indonesian daily newspaper, *Republika*, criticises such an approach, saying that the allegation of JI to exist in Indonesia based only upon the finding of the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah" from the court document of the trial process of the late Abdullah Sungkar needs to be further investigated. This is because, as suggested by Supriyono, the emergence of the term resulted only from the indictments of the prosecutor in the late 1970s and the early 1980s.⁶⁴ Any reference to the political cases of Muslims at this period, according to Supriyono,⁶⁵ must be carefully conducted with an analytically close and careful observation of the political relations of Islam and the state in which the New Order regime conducted very strong political repression on Muslims. Under this political repression, the indictment of the prosecutor, as apparent in other cases, is likely to be with collusion of the state intelligence body. The trial of the late Abdullah Sungkar at this period went under this situation with the result that the term "Jama'ah Islamiyah", as indicated by Supriyono,⁶⁶ might appear in Sungkar's confession under the direction of the state intelligence body.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ See Supriyono's critique in "Liputan Media Tentang Bali: Mana Jurnalisme Mana Propaganda? [Media Report on Bali: Between Journalism and Propaganda]," (Seminar Proceeding by ISAI [Institut Studi Arus Informasi/The Institute of Information Currents studies] and *Majalah Pantau* [Pantau Magazine], Jakarta, 7-8 November 2002), posted on the mailing list of Indonesian Muslim Student Association in Australia, Minaret: Minaret@anu.edu.au (Accessed 20 November 2002).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

In contrast, the second approach argues that the political campaign of other countries and the familiarity of its name are responsible for the view of JI in Indonesia as a fictitious organisation. Some Indonesian commentators tend to follow this approach, maintaining that as a Muslim organisation, JI is not well recognised by Indonesians. Most of Indonesians have no prior knowledge of the existence of this organisation. Alfitra Salamm, a researcher from *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia* (LIPI/ Indonesian Institute of Science), for example, states that JI is not a real, but only a fictitious organisation set up by Malaysia and Singaporean governments to silence the criticism of Islamic radical groups in their respective countries.⁶⁷

Some other Indonesian prominent commentators are in sympathy with this approach. As reported by *Republika*⁶⁸ and *Gatra*⁶⁹, figures such as Nurcholish Madjid, a leading Indonesian Muslim intellectual, Deliar Noor, a political scientist, Dien Syamsudin, the Secretary General of MUI (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*/Indonesian Muslim Scholar Council), Ibrahim Ambong, a member of Indonesian Parliament, and Riza Sihbudi, a researcher of LIPI, are convinced that JI is not recognised throughout the history of Indonesian Islam. The report of *Republika* elaborates further that while Sihbudi views that Indonesia has a Muslim organisation with the name “Islam Jama’ah” rather than “Jama’ah Islamiyah”, Ambong holds that JI is based and operates in Malaysia and Singapore, not in Indonesia, even though its alleged leading figures might be from Indonesia.⁷⁰ The Indonesian government also tends to dismiss the issue of the JI presence in the country as indicated by its Defense Minister, Matori Abdul Djali: “Jama’ah Islamiyah only exists in Singapore and Malaysia.”⁷¹ The Indonesian police

⁶⁷ See interview with Alfitra Salamm, “Peneliti LIPI: JI Organisasi Maya Buatan Malaysia dan Singapura [LIPI’s Researcher: JI Fictitious Organisation by Malaysia and Singapore],” *Detikcom*, 30 October 2002: <http://www.detik.com/peristiwa/2002/10/30/20021030-065421.shtml> (Accessed 06 November 2002); “Jama’ah Islamiyah yang Cuma Bualan [Jamaah Islamiyah, only the Frame-up],” *Forum Keadilan*, no. 3 (10 November 2002), p. 16.

⁶⁸ “Berikutnya: Partai-partai Islam [Next: Islamic Parties],” *Republika*, 28 October 2002: http://www.republika.co.id/cetak_detail.asp?id=101455&kat_id=3 (Accessed 6 November 2002).

⁶⁹ “Jemaah Islamiyah versi Dokumen Sukoharjo,” p. 30.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ See “Mengejar Siluman,” p. 37.

also admit the difficulty in proving the existence of JI in Indonesia, as stated by a top-level policeman at the time of investigating this organisation: “We acts like chasing a *siluman* (ghost)”.⁷²

Several Indonesian figures are the subjects of such allegations based on the dubious argument. This is certainly if the parameter used to relate the organisation of JI in Southeast Asia to Indonesian figures is only based on the governmental claims and the confession of detainees, In Malaysia, for example, JI, as reported by *The Malay Mail*,⁷³ was claimed to be established by two Indonesian clerics, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and Riduan a.k.a. Isamuddin Hambali, at the time of their status of exile in Malaysia. JI is allegedly to exist through the *Kumpulan Militan Malaysia* (KMM), an organisation regarded, according to *The Malay Mail*,⁷⁴ as the offshoot or the local branch of JI, which had plans to establish a pan-Islamic state including Indonesia, Singapore, southern Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei.

The allegation of there being links between KMM and JI has also been made by the Singaporean government. According to Fealy,⁷⁵ like in Malaysia, officials in Singapore claimed there were links between the two organisations. This allegation was followed by the arrest of several figures in the period of mid 2001 to early 2002. All the detainees, according to Internal Security Department (ISD) of Singapore,⁷⁶ confessed that four Indonesian Muslim figures, such as Ba’asyir, Hambali, Abu Jibril or Mohammad Iqbal bin Abdul Rahman, and Faiz bin Abu Bakar Bafana, are their JI leaders.

The association of JI and Indonesian figures is also very much traceable to the background of the JI detainees in Malaysia and the Philippines. While among the JI detainees in Malaysia is Mohammad

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ See “Bali Bombings: Mastermind with Local Links,” *The Malay Mail*, 19 November 2002: http://www.mmail.com.my/Current_News/MM/Monday/Frontpage/20021118094632 (Accessed 19 November 2002).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Fealy, “Is Indonesia a Terrorist Base?”

⁷⁶ See “Stempel JI dari Singapura [Label of JI from Singapore],” *Tempo* (10 November 2002), 37; “Jejak Ba’asyir di Sungai Manggis [Ba’asyir’s Footsteps in River Manggis],” *Tempo* (3 November 2002), p. 30.

Iqbal, an Indonesian figure who was captured in late 2001,⁷⁷ some of the JI detainees in the Philippines are also Indonesian figures. Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi, a former student at Ba'asyir's boarding school, who was detained in January 2002 on charges of importing explosives and involvement in several bomb attacks throughout the region, as reported by ERRI,⁷⁸ for example, is an Indonesian Muslim as well. In mid-March 2002, three other Indonesian Muslims —Tamsil Linrung, Abdul Jamal Balfas and Agus Dwikarna— were also arrested, as described by Fealy,⁷⁹ on charges of smuggling C4 explosive in their luggage, even though the latter two figures were finally discharged in mid-April for lack of evidence.

The problem with such a way of association of JI with Indonesian figures, however, centers around the question “is the confession of detainees reliable enough to be the evidence while they give so under the interrogation by the investigating officers?”. This problem has gained confirmed justification from the experience of the two alleged Islamic radical groups, KMM in Malaysia and the *Komando Jihad* in Indonesia, that they were set up and then framed by the regimes to suppress the resurgence of Islamic groups in the respective countries. KMM proved, as indicated by Salamm,⁸⁰ to be fictitious, which was set up by the Malaysian Mahathir administration. Likewise, the *Komando Jihad* was invented and engineered, as indicated by Jones⁸¹ and Bruinessen⁸², by Ali Murtopo, the head of the state Intelligence body in the era of Soeharto.

D. The Structural Connection of Islamic Radical and Terrorist Groups in Southeast Asia

The problem of associating JI with Indonesian figures is also closely intertwined with the problem of the possible structural

⁷⁷ Fealy, “Is Indonesia a Terrorist Base?”

⁷⁸ ERRI (Emergency Response and Research Institute), “Multiple Bombings in the Philippines; 14 Dead and More than 50 Wounded,” *Current Philippine Islands Advisories and Analysis*, 21 April 2002: <http://www.emergency.com/philwarn.htm> (Accessed 18 November 2002).

⁷⁹ Fealy, “Is Indonesia a Terrorist Base?”

⁸⁰ See “Jamaah Islamiyah yang Cuma Bualan,” p. 16.

⁸¹ “Jamaah Islamiyah versi Dokumen Sukoharjo,” p. 30.

⁸² Bruinessen, “Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism,” pp. 128-129.

connection among the Islamic radical groups across Southeast Asia, particularly inside Indonesia. Indonesianists, as suggested by Barton,⁸³ are divided into two main groups of opinions in assessing the threat of Islamic radicalism in the country by the form of structural connections. First, some observers, according to Barton,⁸⁴ argue that as a result of the dysfunctional nature of much of the state apparatus, the making of structural connections of Islamic radical groups across the country and the wider world cannot be avoided. JI, as suggested by Huang,⁸⁵ is the subject of this opinion; it having been suspected of being a terrorist network, that is regional in focus but global in association. Second, some other observers, as described by Barton,⁸⁶ argue that there is little hard evidence to support the charges of structural connections of Islamic radical and terrorist groups in local affairs.

To come to the firm understanding on the possibility of there being structural connections, especially across Indonesia, the issue of how to have a reliable perception in understanding the term “Jama’ah Islamiyah” needs to be considered carefully. This is because differing perceptions have occurred. Some observers discern the term as the name of the alleged terrorist organisation while others depict it as only the concept of the entity of Islamic values or community. From the reported data in media, it seems that those from outside Indonesia tend to give a meaning to the term as a name of organisation, which is claimed to have created several cases of terrorism across Southeast Asia. The governments of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, the USA, Australia,⁸⁷ and even the United Nations with its Security Council Resolution 1267 and 1333⁸⁸ have claimed JI as a name of terrorist organisation. Above all, it is clear from the declaration of Singaporean Senior Minister Lee Kwan Yew, as reported by *Tempo*,⁸⁹ that JI is claimed

⁸³ Barton, “Islamism and Indonesia.”

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Huang, “Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia.”

⁸⁶ Barton, “Islamism and Indonesia.”

⁸⁷ See “Jemaah Islamiyah versi Dokumen Sukoharjo,” p. 29.

⁸⁸ “Menyelusuri Jejak Jamaah Islamiyah [Tracing the Footsteps of Jamaah Islamiyah],” *Tempo* (4-10 November 2002), p. 25.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

to be the name of the alleged terrorist organisation in Southeast Asia. However, there seems to be only one political leader, namely Abdul Hadi bin Haji Awang, the president of the PAS opposition party of Malaysia, who admittedly did not hear, as reported by *Tempo*,⁹⁰ the name “JI” so far as an organisation in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, those from inside Indonesia tend to understand the term as the Arabic-origin term for the concept of “Islamic Community” or “Islamic values”, which denotes the community of believers of Islam as a whole. According to the director of Ba’asyir’s Pesantren Ngruki, Wahyuddin,⁹¹ JI is a concept, not a name of organisation. *Tempo*⁹² also reports that the term “JI” provides the meaning of “Islamic community” which implies that Indonesian Muslims who reach the majority number of the country population are included in its scope of meaning. If the term “JI” is meant as the name of the alleged terrorist organisation, Indonesian Muslim community has to be within it, and thus it is too loose. Certainly, for this perspective, understanding JI as a name of organisation as such is dubious for the absence of clear-cut definition of the meaning of “JI”. It is required, as indicated by *Tempo*,⁹³ therefore, that those who claim JI as an International terrorist organisation give a clear-cut and detailed definition of the organisation. Otherwise, it can create a loose definition and arbitrarily apply to all Muslim communities across Southeast Asia. In line with the perception on JI as a concept of Islamic community, Jones maintains that in the period of end 1970s to early 1980s, the term “JI” had different meanings.⁹⁴ As an example, for Ba’asyir, the term, according to Jones,⁹⁵ had a specific meaning, that is, the entity of Muslims to revive Islamic values in Indonesia. Even though it implied a political aspect of meaning, the intended interpretation of the term did not indicate any kind of organisation,

⁹⁰ “Balada Sang Pendakwah di Negeri Sembilan [The Ballad of the Preacher in Negeri Sembilan],” *Tempo* (10 November 2002), p. 30.

⁹¹ “Dari Ngruki, Dia Bermimpi [From Ngruki, He Dreams],” *Tempo* (10 November 2002), p. 32.

⁹² “Menyelusuri Jejak Jamaah Islamiyah,” p. 25.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ See interview with Jones, “Hambali Adalah Petinggi,” p. 53.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

and moreover, there was at that time, according to Jones,⁹⁶ the absence of nicely structured organisation with a great influence on others.

From such an explanation, it seems that there is no firm definition of the term "JI". Those who claim JI as a terrorist organisation only disclose, as suggested by *Tempo*,⁹⁷ a loose organisation which is claimed to include several groups of Muslims with the spirit to establish Islamic caliphate in Southeast Asia. This claim is so slack and arbitrary that all Islamic radical groups, which are suspected of establishing Islamic caliphate, can be included in the connection of this organisation. The crucial problem arising from this loose and arbitrary claim is do the Islamic radical groups across the region, regardless of the name and the vision, have structural connection to each other? If the connection is meant for the making of communication among the activists of Islamic radical groups, it might be right that the connection is there. A *Tempo* investigation provides evidence that much communication and contact has occurred between Ba'asyir and some other figures who eventually proved to be involved in a number of incidents of radicalism and violence.⁹⁸ *Tempo* reports further that while Ba'asyir has made contacts with some suspected figures responsible for several bomb attacks on a church in 1984 and on Borobudur temple in 1985 as well as for the failed bomb attack on Kuta beach 1985, he also has kept in touch with such alleged International terrorist figures as Hambali, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, and Fikiruddin Muqti.⁹⁹

However, if such intended connection is to be dealt with things in terms of structure, more and careful investigation needs to be undertaken. There are different opinions on the possibility of there being structural connections of Islamic radical and terrorist groups. The opinion which argues for there being structural connection among them tends to be presented by, among them, Sidney Jones¹⁰⁰ and Asep Chaerudin¹⁰¹ maintaining that there might be a structural connection

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ "Menyelusuri Jejak Jamaah Islamiyah," p. 25.

⁹⁸ See "Diakah Sang Imam?," p. 25.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Jones, "Hambali Adalah Petinggi," p. 54.

¹⁰¹ Chaerudin, "Countering Transnational Terrorism," pp. 36-39.

between Islamic radical group and JI on the one hand, and between JI and al-Qaeda on the other, through Hambali, who is suspected to be the operator of al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia. To support her conviction, Jones uses the confession of some detainees in Malaysia as well as the intelligence document and some journalist investigations as the evidence.¹⁰² Due to the presented evidence, some people are still doubtful about such structural connections, however. Tejo, for example, puts in doubt the possibility of there being structural connections, since Jones' paper on the "Ngruki" connection does not give any clue of why the issue of JI suddenly appears in Southeast Asia.¹⁰³ The only description given by Jones,¹⁰⁴ according to Tejo, is that "...while the Darul Islam members certainly talked in terms of establishing Islamic communities in a generic sense, the government prosecutors offered little hard evidence that the *Jemaah Islamiyah* was in fact an organisation with an identifiable leadership."¹⁰⁵

From such arguments, it seems that the existing hard evidence does not fully support there being structural connection of Islamic radical group and terrorist groups in Southeast Asia. Therefore, such an opinion that puts in doubt the possibility of there being structural connection is relatively more acceptable so far than that arguing for. Having made a lot of contacts and communications as well as having kept in touch with other Islamic leaders does not mean that the figure has made a structural connection with them in his struggle. As suggested by Salamm,¹⁰⁶ JI as an organisation is really a frame-up as the structural connection which implies a form of organisation does not seem to be there.

Finally, the thought of JI as only a fictitious organisation has stronger indications so far — this is not to say that Islamic radical and

¹⁰² Interview with Jones, "Hambali Adalah Petinggi," p. 54.

¹⁰³ See Bimo Ario Tejo, "JI Organisasi Fiktif? [JI, Fictitious Organisation?]," Posted on to the mailing list of Indonesian Muslim Student Association in Canberra - Australia [Minaret], 02 November 2002: Minaret@anu.edu.au (Accessed 04 November 2002).

¹⁰⁴ Jones, *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ Tejo, "JI Organisasi Fiktif?."

¹⁰⁶ See "Jamaah Islamiyah yang Cuma Bualan," p. 16.

Islamic terrorist groups do not have any presence — than the idea of JI as a real name of organisation of some Islamic radical groups in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia. First, JI appeared for the first time in Malaysia, as reported by the local media, while Malaysian media were themselves, as indicated by Salamm,¹⁰⁷ hegemonised and under control of the regime. As a result, any report or allegation of radical social groups, such as KMM, according to Salamm,¹⁰⁸ is only the invention of the regime. Second, in Indonesia the term “JI” appeared, as described above, from the indictments of the trial processes in some district courts in late 1970s and early 1980s. In this period, the New Order regime was in its highest power with the result that it could gain control of any resurgence of Islamic groups. One of the examples was the *Komando Jihad* which was, according to Jones¹⁰⁹ and Bruinessen¹¹⁰, engineered and invented by the state intelligence body under the leadership of Ali Murtopo.

E. Conclusion

The phenomenon of Islamic radicalism has been quite prominent in the regional development of Southeast Asia. It has been frequently associated with some Indonesian Muslim figures. As a result, Indonesia turns to be the subject of the allegation of the hotbed of radicalism and terrorism. While Islamic radicalism in general is brought about by the combination of political repression and crucial socio-economic deprivation, in Southeast Asia other contributing factors include globalisation and “Arabia” support. These four factors have also contributed to the rise of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. Also, in this country Islamic radicalism appears in connection to two main roots: the national bonds tracing back to the previous Islamic movement and party in the early history of Indonesia, and the transnational networks referring to a number of recent transnational Islamic links as the sponsor groups.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ See “Jemaah Islamiyah versi Dokumen Sukoharjo,” p. 30.

¹¹⁰ Bruinessen, “Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism,” pp. 128-129.

However, there is still doubt about the possibility of there being structural connections between Islamic radical and terrorist groups. Even though some Islamic radical groups might share the common vision and view of their struggles, the existing hard evidence does not fully support there being structural connections of Islamic radical group and terrorist groups in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the idea that puts in doubt the possibility of there being structural connections is relatively more reliable so far than that arguing for. This is because having made much contact is not automatically the same as having made a structural connection. Without any pretension to saying that Islamic radical and terrorist groups do not have any presence in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia, the thought of JI as only a fictitious organisation has stronger hints so far than the idea of JI as a real name of organisation of some Islamic radical groups.

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