After jihad: A biographical approach to passionate politics in Indonesia
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CHAPTER 5

From Jihad to Prison:
The Narratives of Jama’ah Islamiyah

“The most wonderful experience during the battle was when shooting the enemy”

(Fauzan, interview, Jakarta, 30/1/2008)

“Conducting jihad like the Bali bombing must be stopped and must be prevented from happening again.”

(Ali Imron, 2007: 177)

“We considered it [schoolgirl beheading] legitimate in so far as it did not surpass what they had done [to us]. So, based on the principle of retaliation, it was justifiable as long as it was equivalent to their past actions. Next, we aimed to stop them from repeating their massacre of children as had happened in the Walisongo pesantren…”

(Hendro, interview, Jakarta, 2/2/2008)

“[Prison] is a humiliating place for a man of faith (mu’min). It is very hard for a man of faith to be jailed by unbelievers (kafr). We felt so stupid because we were under their control. We hated them but we were so powerless.”

(Fauzan, interview, Jakarta, 15/2/2008)

“This is not a prison; this is a sort of apartment with meals, even better than home…”

(Hendro, interview, Jakarta, 18/12/09)
Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the narratives of jihadi activists who joined jihad through the jihadi group Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI). While JI is only one of the jihadi groups in Indonesia, it became the most notorious group in the aftermath of its action, the first Bali bombing on 12 October 2002 that resulted in the death of 202 people, mostly foreigners, and several hundred injured. The horror was followed by a sequence of terrorist actions including the first Hotel Marriot bombing (2003), the Australian Embassy bombing (2004), and the second Bali bombing (2005). Soon after the Bali bombing, on 25 October 2002, JI was added to the United Nations 1267 Committee’s list of terrorist organizations linked to al-Qaeda/the Taliban under UN Security Council Resolution 1267.1)

In this chapter I will present and discuss the life story narratives of jihadi activists. One characteristic feature of jihadi activism, according to ICG (2005b: i), is its focus on armed struggle (al-jihad) and the fighter (al-mujahid) as its characteristic actor. It follows a particular jihad or jihadi ideology (jihadism) with the following basic views: (1) perception of non-Muslim hostility toward Islam; (2) perception of a perpetual war between Muslims and unbelievers; (3) justification of the use of violence to achieve the political goal, of (4) the establishment of an Islamic state (Hassan 2009). Although like the pious activists they rejected democratic principles and political engagement, (unlike the general stance of the political activists) the jihadi engaged in bitter debate with the pious activists over religious justification of the use of violence and terrorism in their actions.2)


2) The ICG (2005b) outlines interesting features of debates and rivalries between the three variants of Islamism, namely jihadi, missionary, and political, mainly in the case of Middle East countries. A bitter debate between the jihadi and salafi movements in Indonesia took place following the publishing of the book Imam Samudra, the leader of the first Bali Bombing, entitled Aku Melawan Teroris (I Fight against Terrorists) in 2004. In his semi-autobiographical book, Samudra reveals his personal story of joining the jihadi movement and provides several reasons why terrorist actions, such as the Bali Bombing, are justifiable in the fight against the global hegemony of Christians and Jews. In a reply to Samudra’s book, Luqman bin Muhammad Ba’abduh published a book entitled Mereka Adalah Teroris: Sebuah Tinjuan Syariat (They Are Terrorists: An Islamic Law Perspec-
Another characteristic of *jihadi* activism is its type of group affiliation. Following Della Porta and Diani (1999: 119-20) I have distinguished membership affiliation in social movements between *multiple affiliation* and *exclusive affiliation*. Unlike political activists who commonly have multiple affiliations, *jihadi* (and *pious*) activists usually affiliate only to their own group or some other exclusive affiliation.³ In a few cases, some of their activists have links and affiliation with a particular group which had developed before their affiliation to the *jihadi* group. Though sharing a pattern of *exclusive affiliation* membership, *jihadi* activists apply a different form of attachment to the group through the rite of passage of taking a *bai’ah* or spiritual oath.

In *Understanding Islamism* ICG (2005b: 13) separates *jihadi* *Islamism* into three main variants, namely, *internal*, those who combat against nominally Muslim regimes considered impious and thus lawful targets for subversion; *irredentist*, those who fight to redeem land considered to be part of the Dar al-Islam from non-Muslim rule or occupation, such as the case of Afghanistan, Chechnya, Kashmir, Mindanao and Palestine; and *global*, those who combat against the West, or more specifically against the United States and its allies.⁴ Such a distinction, however, I would argue, does not mean necessarily imply a different category of actors, but rather a different focus of actions at different periods of time by similar actors.

As I will show and discuss later in this chapter, many JI activists began their jihadi activism by taking part in the ‘military acad-

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³) This distinction between the two type of group affiliation was suggested by Della Porta and Diani (1999: 119-20)
emy’ of overseas mujahidin, either in Afghanistan or in Mindanao of the Southern Philippines. By doing so they also engaged in fighting to redeem Muslim lands from non-Muslims forces or becoming irredentist jihadists. Following their participation in irredentist jihadi activism, either in Afghanistan or in Mindanao, they returned to their home country and engaged in internal jihadi activism, either in Maluku or in Poso, and some eventually took part in global jihadi activism by carrying out terrorism actions targeting venues symbolic of the West, such as bars/restaurants frequented by foreigners in Bali, a foreign embassy, international hotels and churches. Thus, based on my research findings, I have modified the definition of internal jihadism to extend beyond “combating nominally Muslim regimes considered impious,” to include “combating non-Muslims living in a Muslim country particularly, but not necessarily, in the conflict situation.” Fighting against non-Muslims in a conflict situation occurred in the religious conflict that took place in Maluku and Poso, whereas one example of the second case of fighting against non-Muslims in a non-conflict setting was the series of Christmas bombings of churches in 2000.5)

This chapter will present the narratives of the trio of JI jihadists: Ali Imron, Fauzan, and Hendro.6) These three JI jihadists first joined jihad abroad (Ali and Fauzan in Afghanistan and Hendro in Mindanao, the Southern Philippines), then took part in the communal conflict in Maluku and/or in Poso, and eventually received prison sentences in Indonesia. However, their journey to prison, their terms and experiences as prisoners, and their interpretation of their time in prison as well as their recent life trajectories are dissimilar.

Ali Imron was arrested for his involvement in the first Bali bombing of 2002, three years after his short period of jihad participation in Maluku in 1999. After his arrest, Imron publically apologized for his role in the bombing and became ‘cooperative’ with

5) This was part of a JI’s operation led by Hambali to respond to religious communal conflict in Ambon by carrying out bombing in several cities and towns in Indonesia. For a further discussion, see ICG (2002) and Imron (2007).
6) Ali Imron is a real name while the other two are pseudonyms.
From Jihad to Prison

the police which resulted in him receiving the ‘lenient’ sentence of life imprisonment—while the other perpetrators received the death penalty.7) In jail, Ali cooperates with the police in implementing ‘deradicalization’ programs. Fauzan was jailed for his role in communal conflict in Poso. Fauzan was arrested and jailed twice for two conflict-related cases in Poso and later, after spending three and a half years in prison over two different periods, was released in late 2004. He claimed to be still associated with the JI, though he has a complicated relationship with other JI activists and has expressed his confusion and ambiguity toward the JI leadership. The third jihadi activist Hendro was captured and sentenced to twenty years for his role in ‘terrorist’ actions, including bombings and killings, in the post-conflict situation in Poso in 2006. Although he has sought forgiveness from the victims and their families, he seems to remain ideologically ‘radical’ and refuses to ‘cooperate’ with police.

Through the life story narratives of the three post-jihadists, I present my arguments to answer the three main questions of this research—expressed in Chapter 1, namely, first, “how did they become jihad actors?”; second, “what did jihad experience mean to the actors?”; and finally, “how did jihad experience influence the life trajectory of the actors in the post-jihad period?” I will structure the discussion in four sections as I did in the previous chapter: first, the brief profiles of the jihadists and my encounter with them; second, the narratives of how they become jihadists; third, the narratives of their jihad experience; and finally, the narratives of the “post jihad” experience of the three (ex) prisoners. I use term “post jihad” in quotation marks because there is no clear fixed border to the post jihad period for those committed to jihadism. I will discuss the three jihadi narratives as cases of demobilization and disengagement from a social movement theory perspective. Before commencing I present a brief introduction of the JI as an organization with an emphasis on its transnational and underground movement features.

7) The other perpetrators of the first Bali Bombing who were sentenced to death and executed were Imam Saudra and Imron’s two brothers, namely, Mukhlas alias Ali Ghufron and Amrozi.
Photo 5: Live from custody: Ali Imron on TV, 2011
Photo: taken by author

Photo 6: “Casual businessman” jihadist: Fauzan
Photo: taken by author
Photo 7: Under isolation: Hendro in cell, Jakarta 2008
Photo: taken by author
As described briefly in Chapter 1, the Jama’ah Islamiyah is historically rooted in the Darul Islam (DI) movement, a radical Islamist movement which aimed from 1949 to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. JI’s transnational character was influenced by the exile of two (ex) DI activists who co-founded the JI, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, in Malaysia from 1985 to 1999. Building a new base for the Islamist movement in Malaysia, they began to recruit local people to join the movement, including Nasir Abbas who later become one of JI’s leading figures. They also began to engage with transnational Islamist activists, particularly in Afghanistan through the participation of several groups of DI activists in the military academy of Afghanistan Mujahidin. Those factors critically shifted their view of the territorial boundary of Islamic struggle: from Indonesia (national-oriented) to Southeast Asia (transnational-oriented). This paradigm shift of the Islamic struggle was then reflected in the general organizational guidelines of the JI, the Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah (PUPJI, the General Guidelines for the Struggle of Jemaah Islamiyah) (ICG 2002c, 2005a, 2007a, Ridwan 2007, Abuza 2003, 2007, Gunaratna 2002).

The transnational nature of JI is reflected in its leadership structure which is divided into three geographical areas: Mantiqi I which covers the western part of Malaysia and Singapore; Mantiqi II which covers the western and central part of Indonesia, including Sumatra, Java, Bali, west and east of Nusa Tenggara; and Mantiqi III which covers Sabah-Malaysia, eastern Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi and Mindanao, Southern Philippines, including the Hudaibiya military camp (Abbas 2005: 120). It aims to establish the Islamic caliphate (khilafah) on earth (the 4th principle), through iman (faith), hijrah (migration), and jihad (the 5th principle), by gradually implementing the system of the jama’ah (community) followed by the daulah (nation-state) and then the khilafah (transnational-state, the 10th principle) (Abbas 2005: 104-5, Abuza 2007: see Chapter 3, footnote 23, 43). It also applies the strategic principle of tandzim sirri (literally meaning secret movement), an underground movement characterized by secrecy and covertsness (Abbas 2005: 107). The secretive tandzim
sirri nature of the JI is reflected in the narratives of those who remain committed to the JI movement. I discuss this issue in the next section.

Brief profiles and encounters

• Ali Imron: the youngest son jihadist

Ali Imron8) was born on 2 January 1970 in Tenggulung village, Solokuro sub-district, Lamongan district, East Java.9) His parents come from a middle class santri family in the rural area of Lamongan where his father occupied the respected position of village secretary for 22 years (Noor Milla 2009: 129). The family’s santri background was reflected in his education trajectory: he went to Islamic schools from primary to senior high school. The small village of Tenggulung then gained prominence throughout the globe for the three Bali bomber brothers: Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas, Amrozi, dan Ali Imron, who all came from that same family in Lamongan.10)

As the youngest son of eight, Ale—his nickname—was attracted to follow the religious trajectory of his older brothers, especially Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas, who studied at the well-known

8) I conducted a series of interviews with Ali Imron in the police detention room, both in my first fieldwork in 2008 and in the second one in December 2009.


10) Mukhlas was the fifth, Amrozi the sixth, and Ali Imron the youngest of eight children. Each of the three published his own book. Mukhlas’ book was entitled Mimpi “Suci” Dari Balik Jeruji Besi ; Hikmah Mimpi yang Baik dan Benar (The ‘sacred’ dream from behind the bars: Learning from good and right dream) and Amrozi’s book was entitled Senyum Terakhir Sang Mujahid ; Catatan Kehidupan Seorang Amrozi (The last smile of the mujaheed: The life notes of Amrozi) both published by Arrahmah Media in 2009. The two books were published in tandem with another book by Imam Samudra entitled Sekuntum Rosella Pelipur Lara ; Catatan & Renungan Dari Penjara (A hibiscus flower to sooth the hurt : Notes and reflections from the prison) by the same publisher. The three books were published after their execution in November 2008. Ali Imron’s book was published earlier in 2007.
Pondok Ngruki pesantren in Solo, and, later, joined jihad in Afghanistan. Unlike his older brother, Ale, however, only spent one month in Ngruki in 1988 before returning to his village. He confessed he did not feel at home there (Imron 2007: 3). He then continued his study at the Muhammadiyah high school located in Pondok Karang Asem Paciran and graduated in 1991. Yet, Ale did not board in Pondok as did many other students but instead made the daily trip from home to school. He narrated that made his education process less intensive as he wrote in his book: “I spent more time having fun than studying…” (2007: 4)

After completing studies at the Islamic high school in Lamon-gan in 1991, Ale went to Malaysia joining a group of migrant workers. Through his older brother Mukhlas, Ale then joined jihad in Afghanistan later that year. Before departing to Afghanistan in September 1991, Ale swore a bai’ah (religious oath) to Abdullah Sungkar, which he discovered later in Afghanistan, was a sign of his commitment to join the Darul Islam (DI) movement (2004: 6). Ale returned to Indonesia in 1996 and then worked as a teacher in the Al Islam pesantren founded by his older brother M. Chozin and friends in Tenggulung. After marrying in 1998, Ale was sent by the JI to Ambon in 1999 for a few weeks.

On 12 October 2002, he played a key role in the first Bali bombing which resulted in him receiving a life prison sentence. Prior to this he had participated in the bombing of the Philippines Ambassador Jakarta residence in August 2000 and the Christmas church bombings of 2000. After being arrested for the Bali bombing, Ale had a change of heart and made a public apology for his role in the bombing. Ale was sentenced to life in jail, and was spared the death penalty given to the other bombers, namely Imam Samudra, Mukhlas and Amrozi, who were executed on 9 November 2008 (Jawapos, 9/11/2008).

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11) The Ngruki pesantren is well-known for its role as the hub of Islamist jihadi in Indonesia. See the ICG report entitled Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the “Ngruki” Network in Indonesia published in August 2002. Another older brother of Ale, Amin Jabir, also went to study in Ngruki but he passed away in an incident in the Lawu mountain expedition in 1987 (Imron 2007: 3).
I met Ale in jail for a series of interviews from 2008 to 2009.\textsuperscript{12} I was able to meet him and conduct the interviews with the help of Brigadier Suryadarma, Commander of the anti-terrorist police squad Densus 88, and Nasir Abbas, ex JI leader who had become an ally of the police, as described in Chapter 3. He was held in a maximum security detention center for drugs and narcotics offenders at the Jakarta Police headquarters. One part of the building was the ‘terrorists block’, occupied by prisoners who had been classified as agents in ‘terrorist actions’ in the archipelago.\textsuperscript{13}

When I first met him on the morning of 31 January 2008 in his cell he was wearing a white T-shirt and sarong and was smiling. After we shook hands and I had introduced myself as a lecturer doing doctoral research, we sat on the vinyl carpet of his cell floor and began to talk. The room measured about 4 x 5 meters and was divided into three: a 2 x 3 meter bedroom partitioned by a small curtain; a small bathroom/toilet and a living space. His room held had a number of items that included books, a fan, a Fujitsu laptop and printer, and a boxed Nokia E90, the latest model mobile phone. His appearance, with a thin moustache and pretty trim beard, was quite different to the beardedless terrorist on the cover of his recently published book \textit{Ali Imron, Sang Pengebom} (Ali Imron, The Bomber, November 2007). His complexion also looked brighter and his body a little stockier.

Ale is a special prisoner in that special cell block. He is one of the most senior JI members and is serving the longest sentence, life-time imprisonment, in tandem with Mubarok alias Utomo Pamungkas,\textsuperscript{14} another Bali bomber. His cooperative attitude and assistance to the police on counter-terrorism issues allows him to re-

\textsuperscript{12} The interviews took place on 31 January 2008, 15 June 2008 and 29 December 2009.

\textsuperscript{13} When I visited there were about twenty prisoners jailed in the block, who had been involved in various terrorist actions, such as Bali bombing I and II, the Marriot hotel bombing, the hiding of Noordin M. Top, as well as the conflict related terrorism in Maluku and Poso.

\textsuperscript{14} Like Imron, Mubarok also confessed his role in the bombing and became ‘cooperative’ with the police. Noor Huda Ismail, a Ngruki graduate who works as a freelance journalist and researcher, has written the book, \textit{Temanku Teroris?} (My Friend a Terrorist?), Hikmah publisher (PT Mizan Publika) 2010 which relates the story of his friendship with Mubarok in the Pondok Ngruki in Solo.
ceive certain privileges. A report entitled “Deradicalization” and Indonesian Prisons, ICG (2007d: 12-3) mentions Ali Imron and Nasir Abbas as the ‘two stars’ of the deradicalization program run by the police endeavoring to change the ideological attitudes of jihadi activists, especially those affiliated with the JI. ICG (2007d) praises the success of this program in convincing about two dozen members of the JI and a few members of other jihadi groups (perhaps, including Fauzan) to collaborate with the police. One of the program’s most important strategies is to employ a personal and humanistic approach to the prisoners, often linked to the economic needs of their families.

The above average facilities provided in the ‘terrorists block’ compared to ordinary cellblocks is perhaps part of the program’s approach. Here follows a brief description of the common room, situated in the corner of the block, where many prisoners spent their time together, either eating or watching TV. The common room was basically a large cell that had been equipped with electric stoves, eating utensils, and a 29 inch flat screen TV. In addition a treadmill machine was located outside the common room. Prisoners were also allowed to play table tennis in the afternoon around 4-6 pm in a facility located in front of the block’s entrance gate.

Although the block was located in a maximum security detention building, encircled by three meter high steel fences, I was easily able to enter the block for my fieldwork using the simple password—supplied to me by Imron on my first visit: “I am a visitor of Ali Imron.” With this password I never had a security check before entering the block so that I could bring in all my equipment in my backpack, including digital recorder and camera. All I had to do was surrender my identity card to security at the reception desk.

• Fauzan: the oldest son jihadist

Fauzan,\(^{15}\) the first of five male children, was born in Jakarta in 1966 to an Islamist activist family. His father came from West

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\(^{15}\) I did a series of interviews with Farih in during my first and second fieldwork, in 2008 and 2009 respectively, mostly in Jakarta but also in Palu in March 2008.
Nusa Tenggara, while his mother was from West Java. Like Ale, Fauzan was raised in a santri family. Furthermore, his father was a hard-core activist of the DI movement whose involvement in the rebellion movement in West Java led to his arrest by the military in August 1957.

His family roots in jihadi activism were planted even deeper; his uncle, who was also a DI activist, took part in an assassination attempt on President Soekarno on 10 November 1957 in Jakarta. Born in a jihadi family, Fauzan grew up in the very heart of Islamist movements at 58 Menteng Raya Street, Central Jakarta, where his parents lived. Since 1960 the place had been the headquarters of two radical Islamist youth organizations associated with Masyumi, namely, Gerakan Pemuda Islam (GPI, Youth Islamic Movement) and Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PII, Indonesian Muslim Student Association).

Fauzan and his brothers were engaged in Islamic activism from the very beginning and, later, following the life trajectory of his father becoming a jihadi activist. Fauzan and three of his three brothers, joined jihadi movements and served time in jail for their involvement. Fauzan spent his early childhood in Tasikmalaya, West Java, his mother’s town, before moving to Jakarta in 1979 where he finished his primary school. He continued junior high school in Jakarta before moving back to Tasikmalaya for senior high school. This was because in 1982 he had become involved in political riots during the election campaign ran by Golkar (Golongan Karya, Functional Group), a state-backed political party. His parents sent him to an Islamic high school managed by a network of DI activists in Tasikmalaya (Interview, Jakarta, 21/1/08).

After finishing high school, Fauzan joined jihad in Afghanistan in late 1987 through the DI network. Returning to Indonesia in

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16) One of them participated in several bombing attacks in 2000-2001 and was sentenced to 20 years; the third became involved in jihad in Poso in Central Sulawesi and was sentenced to several months; while the fourth brother who took part in the bombing of the Atrium shopping mall, Jakarta, in August 2001 and later became involved in Noordin M. Top’s network was sentenced to seven years (Interview, Jakarta, 21/1/08; Ismail 2007: 4; ICG 2007: 19).
1992, he married a girl from a DI activist family in Cirebon, West Java. Following an internal conflict within the DI, he joined the JI. He also became involved with the GPI and was elected commander of its paramilitary group in Jakarta in 1999. He later joined jihad in Ambon in late 1999 and continued the jihad in Poso from 2000 to 2002 through KOMPAK. His roles in the Poso conflict resulted in two separate jail sentences for him. He was arrested following his leading role in an attack on the Christian area of Sepe-Silanca in December 2000 and was sentenced to one year imprisonment. In September 2002 he was arrested in Palu for his role in smuggling weapons and bullets and was sentenced to two and a half years jail. He was released from prison in 2004.

When I met him first in January 2008 in a meeting arranged by a researcher colleague in Jakarta, I was impressed by his appearance: a rather big and tall man with a thick but short beard. His graying hair was cut short. His trousers were a bit above the ankle, in the typical Salafi fashion. Though he appeared friendly, he seemed somewhat reserved. But our conversation quickly turned smooth after he mentioned that he lived at 58 Menteng Raya Street, Central Jakarta. I had frequently visited the PII headquarters there. We also knew some people in common, including my older brother, a former leading PII activist who had spent some time in the compound in the mid-1990s. We soon became friends. After the meeting, we went to the 58 Menteng Raya compound, where he had spent most of his life. Coincidently as we entered some former PII activists in the compound recognized me as a former PII activist, which also confirmed my identity.

Thus, the following meetings and interviews ran smoothly there, mostly inside the complex mosque, and occasionally interspersed with a drink or meals in a modest café next to the mosque. I also met him once in Solo, Central Java, and another time in Palu, Central Sulawesi.\(^\text{17}\)

The 58 Menteng Raya compound is a fascinating place with a unique history. It is situated in the heart of Jakarta with the United of States Embassy about five hundred meters away and the National Monument Square, situated in front of the Presidential Palace, located less than a kilometer away. Although it is a strategic location, the compound is somewhat of a slum area—in contrast to the surrounding buildings. The compound historically belonged to Masyumi but it was granted to the GPI following the disbandment of Masyumi by President Soekarno in 1960.\textsuperscript{18} The compound is about 5,000 meters square, with an old building at the front currently used as the National Headquarters of the GPI. When I visited there in June 2008, there was a big GPI banner out front with three calls for action: cancel the fuel price hike; disband Ahmadiyah; GPI-affirms its undying defense of the FPI.\textsuperscript{19}

Entering further into the compound through a small gate behind the old building, we could see quite a big modern mosque of about 30 x 50 meters positioned to the back. On the two sides of the compound there were many modest, small houses side by side right to the rear. Some looked quite strong and well-built; some were even two storey, while others were only constructed of simple, aged timber. Fauzan told me there were about forty houses in the area, many of them inhabited for decades, like the one occupied by Fauzan and his family, most of the occupants former GPI or PII activists. During my fieldwork, the place where Fauzan’s parents used to live was shared by Fauzan’s younger brothers and their families. Fauzan himself usually slept inside the mosque on the thin portable bed I frequently saw him use during my interviews.

\textsuperscript{18} According to P. Adiyes Putra (2008), the place originally belonged to the Masyumi Islamic party. Following the disbandment of Masyumi by Soekarno in 1960, the place was granted to the GPI. The GPI used the place as its headquarters. Later the PII also jointly occupied the place until recently. The issue was discussed further in Putra’s personal blog at: \texttt{http://adiyes.blogspot.com/2008/04/menteng-raya-58.html} (6 August 2010).

\textsuperscript{19} The banner was made in response to the violent incident in the National Square Jakarta when FPI members attacked a mass demonstration promoting pluralism and defending the rights of Ahmadiyah on 1 June 2008, the anniversary of Pancasila, the state ideology. Following the incident many pluralist groups pressured the government to disband the FPI, a paramilitary group prominent for its roles in carrying out ‘sweeping operations’ against places of vice.
It was a place of great significance because so many important activists had been there. Fauzan told me that some prominent global jihadi activists had visited the compound, including Imam Samudra, Ali Ghufron, and Hambali, and they had even—with his help—obtained resident identity cards there. Fauzan also claimed that Syeikh Khalid Muhammad, the alleged mastermind of the September 11 bombing, had once been a visitor. He also said that some terrorist actions, such as the bombing of the BCA bank branches in Jakarta in the mid 1980s, were also discussed, planned, and prepared in the complex. However, on the other hand, many liberal and pluralist Islamic figures had also visited. For example, the kindergarten and the children’s Qu’ranic recitation school located in the compound were managed by an Islamic foundation YAKPI (Yayasan Kesejahteraan Pemuda Islam, Youth Muslims Welfare Foundation) led by Sofyan Djalil, an ex PII activist, the then Minister of State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN). Utomo Danandjaya, the former Chairman of the Executive Board of the Paramadina Foundation, a leading institute and university promoting Islamic liberalism and pluralism, was also a former Chairman of the National Board of the PII in 1960s.

• **Hendra: the ex abangan jihadist**

   Hendro\(^{20}\) was born in Wonogiri in December 1976 into a rural peasant family. Unlike Ale and Fauzan, he came from a lower class abangan (non-devout Muslim) family. As the second of four children from a poor family, even as a child he worked, cleaning cars and selling books. Fortunately, due to his excellent academic results, he received a scholarship from primary school to senior high school. While the primary school scholarship was provided by the Super Semar Foundation, a quasi-state education foundation under the Soeharto regime, his scholarship for junior and senior high school

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\(^{20}\) I conducted a series of interviews with Hendro in two different places: they took place in the West Jakarta Police detention room during my first fieldwork in February 2008 and in Jakarta Police Headquarters in October 2009 during my second fieldwork.
was provided by a local Islamic charity foundation, Al Barokah, led by a local community leader, *Mbah* Samsu (pseudonym).

After finishing primary school, Hendro was raised as a foster child by *Mbah* Samsu and sent to study in Islamic schools under his charity foundation. This was the first critical episode in his personal history—Hendro, the son of an *abangan* family, fostered by a leading santri figure in town and sent to Islamic school. So influenced by his new milieu, Hendro began to change his personal and collective identity from *abangan* (non-devout) Muslim to *santri* (devout) Muslim. This appeared to be a profound shift, for later, after graduating from junior high school as the second best ranked student in his town, the teenager Hendro aspired to continue study at the radical Islamist pesantren Pondok Ngruki in Solo. However, *Mbah* Samsu rejected his idea and insisted that he continue studying in a high school under his charity foundation (Interview, Jakarta, 1/2/08).

Being refused permission to study in Pondok Ngruki did not weaken his desire to become a militant Muslim activist. After he graduated from high school in 1994, still amongst the top of the class, Hendro entered study at the State College for Islamic Studies in Salatiga, a middle-sized town in Central Java. Again, due to his excellent academic achievements, *Mbah* Samsu and the head of the local subdistrict provided him financial support to pursue his studies. They entertained great hopes that the bright young man Hendro would return as a college graduate to make a great contribution to the area.

Unfortunately, Hendro never finished his studies. As I will describe in the next section, he became involved in a radical Islamist movement and eventually left college. Leaving Salatiga in 1995 he went to Solo, the heart of Islamist activism. His former wish to study in Solo was eventually realized, although not in Pondok Ngruki. In Solo he ran a small business selling books and Islamic clothing. Through his involvement with the JI network, he joined jihad in Mindanao, the Southern Philippines, in 1998. After spending years in the Mujahidin military academy in Mindanao, he was assigned to Poso, Central Sulawesi, to lead a local JI group. In Poso, Hendro became involved in terrorist actions, including killings and bomb-
ings, which eventually brought him to jail in 2006 with a twenty year sentence.

It was during his period in jail in police custody in Jakarta I met him for a series of interviews in 2008-2009. During my early interviews with him in 2008, he was ‘under isolation’ for ‘misbehavior’. I will discuss this issue later in his ‘after jihad’ narratives. What I want to describe here is how I tried to gain his trust and confidence during the interviews.

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 3, I was able to meet Hendro through the kind help of Brigadier General Suryadarma, the Commander of Densus 88. Furthermore, Brig. Gen. Suryadarma even assigned his aide, Sergeant Tatang, a younger man of about 30 years old dressed casually in blue jeans, to escort me to meet Hendro in his ‘isolation’ cell in the West Jakarta district police headquarters. It was Friday at about 4 pm when Sergeant Tatang and I entered Hendro’s cell, number 25, located next to the security gate. “Assalamualikum, ustadz!” Sergeant Tatang greeted Hendro and we each shook hands. The sergeant then briefly introduced me to Hendro, briefly informing him that I had permission to interview him and that General Suryadarma himself had ordered him to escort me there. After forwarding greetings from “Pak Haji”21) to Hendro and giving permission for further interviews the next day, if needed, he left me alone in the cell with Hendro. So, it was quite clear that it was through General Suryadarma’s influence and authority that I was in Hendro’s cell!

Hendro himself was reserved. Wearing a cheap blue T-shirt and sarong, he looked a little overweight for his rather short body. Dark marks on his forehead, signaled many hours spent prostrate in prayer. I introduced myself as a UGM lecturer and explained my fieldwork research, including my interviews with Islamist leader Abu

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21) Later, following my conversation, I learnt from Hendro that “Pak Haji” was the pseudonym of a santri officer of Densus 88 with whom he had a good relationship. He claimed to have been given a mobile phone number by him although it was ‘officially’ forbidden to use mobile phones inside the jail. The fact was, however, that most of the detainees used mobile phone inside the jail. He told me he thought there was a kind of rivalry between Muslims and non-Muslims officers in Densus 88.
Bakar Ba’asyir and the leading Muslim lawyer Mahenderadatta, but he kept silent, his eyes lowered, only occasionally giving short answers to my questions. I thought there was a thick wall between us. I could understand his reserve by putting myself in his shoes. At the moment he had a ‘troubled’ relationship with Suryadarma following his ‘misbehavior’. Yet I had been escorted to his ‘isolated’ cell by Suryadarma’s aide at his special wish, which placed him in an awkward situation. So I could imagine that he was trying to scan and assess me: “Who in the hell is this man and how far can I trust him?”

Fortunately, I was gradually able to develop his trust and confidence in me, by amongst others, asking his permission to perform the *ashr* prayer in his room after I had handed him a three-page interview guidelines to read. By the end of the interview after we had performed the *maghrib* prayer together with him as the *imam* he embraced me, kissing my cheek to wish me farewell. This was a sign of closeness and friendship familiar to Islamist activists. His suggestion that I should meet and conduct interviews with Imam Samudra and other *jihadi* fellows who were jailed in the special prison of Nusakambangan was another sign of his trust. He even joined in talking to Achmad Michdan, the leader of Muslim Lawyer Team, on my mobile phone, asking him to give me the opportunity to visit Imam Samudra and fellows. Unfortunately the visit failed to eventuate as there was insufficient time to meet all the conditions required to permit such a visit.

Later, when I met him again during my second fieldwork in October and December 2009, he had been transferred back to the ‘terrorist block’ of the Jakarta Police headquarters after his stay of about a year in West Jakarta police detention. Comparing the two places, he said each had ‘plusses’ and ‘minuses’. On the ‘plus’ side of staying in the ‘terrorist block’, he claimed, there were many good inmates who would remind him if he were careless or less disciplined in conducting *ibada* and other religious teachings. He claimed that he felt it was like being in a *pesantren* due to the intensive Islamic study programs in prison. During my fieldwork there, I had the opportunity to take part in an Islamic study program held after *isya*
The Narratives

prayer given respectively by Zarkasi and Abu Dujana, two senior JI leaders who had recently been arrested and detained in the block. However, he said that there were also drawbacks to being there: the good service and comfortable facilities provided by the police. For Hendro, the good services and comfortable facilities from police were a threat to purity of faith and jihad conviction. He argued that the more comfortable life they had [in prison], the more likely their spiritual life would deteriorate. He commented of the ‘terrorists block’: “this is not a prison; this is a sort of apartment with meals even better than at home…” (Conversation, Jakarta, 18/12/09).

On becoming a jihadist

As I have elaborated in Chapter 4, I will concentrate on ‘radical reasoning’ in explaining how the informants in this chapter became jihadists. I begin by discussing the identity crisis experienced by the informants in different stages of their life by referring to Erikson’s (1968: 16-7) notion of identity crisis as “a necessary turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshaling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation,” which usually apply to the age of adolescence and young adulthood. Erikson has argued that personal growth and societal change, as well as the identity crisis in individual biography and present-day crises in historical transformation cannot be separated because the two help to delineate each other and may happen at different stages of the life cycle.

Unlike the life story narratives of the Salafi jihadists in Chapter 4 who shared an experience of identity crisis in the period of political crisis in the early 1990s, the stories varied in this chapter. While Hendro had such an identity crisis in 1994 and Ale in 1990, it happened earlier in mid 1984 for Fauzan, following his move from Jakarta to Tasikmalaya. Interestingly, although it happened in the period before the so-called ‘political crisis’ from the early 1990s, for Fauzan it was still triggered by his intensive involvement with the
dynamics of political affairs in the mid-1980’s. In his case it seemed that ‘place’ was really important as he lived in the center of radical Islamic movement in Jakarta during this time.

Yet I would start by arguing that all the informants in this chapter had experienced crisis identity in their adolescence, the transition from childhood to adulthood, the “passage to a new identity involving responsibility, knowledge, ritual and symbolic roles, and acceptance to adult culture” (McGuire 2002: 62). It occurred during high school for Fauzan and Imron but in early university for Hendro. While personal identity crisis was clearly narrated by Hendro and Ale, it was however less prominent for Fauzan. In Fauzan’s narratives, political crises were more dominant in shaping his life during adolescence.

A striking case of personal identity crisis was narrated by Hendro from his early university days in the State College for Islamic Studies in Salatiga after leaving his hometown Wonogiri. He began a new phase as a university student by passionately joining the Islamic Student Association (HMI), especially active in its special unit of da’wa, LDMI (Lembaga Dakwah Mahasiswa Islam, the Da’wa Institute of Islamic Student). He had big dreams of becoming both an Islamic scholar and Islamic activist following his earlier shift from abangan to santri. But his expectations and idealistic imaginations of an Islamic campus and Islamic activism seemed too high—or too puritan. He became quickly disappointed with the religious atmosphere of both the campus and the HMI which he said was, “Full of Islamic symbols but empty of meaning.” He became concerned with simple issues, such as, the way many female students were dressing and having a date with male students in public, and also the common habit of HMI activists of postponing one of the five daily prayers by prioritizing their meetings or discussion sessions. These were not trivial, but major, issues for him: “How could the so-called Islamic intellectuals behave in a way incompatible with Islamic teachings? They claim to struggle for Islam but are actually damaging it” (Interview, Jakarta, 1/2/08).
It seemed likely that during this period he had experienced ‘cognitive opening’ through an encounter with the radical Islamist movement before he turned twenty. He told me that he had a group of four friends who shared similar concerns and dissatisfaction at un-Islamic atmosphere both on campus and in HMI. Unfortunately, I did not succeed in tapping a detailed story of this period. In short, after being a university student for only one year, he decided to leave. This was a critical decision since it severed his relationship with Mbah Samsu, his foster father who had funded his studies and held high ambitions for him. By leaving university Hendro opened a new chapter in his life: the new step of becoming a jihadi activist.

In 1995 he left Salatiga and moved to Solo, the heart of Islamist activism in Central Java. He managed a small business selling books and Islamic clothing in Solo while making trips back and forth to Wonogiri. During the period he continued to study Islamic teachings more intensively which eventually led him to meet a person named Abdullah, a petty book trader like him. They quickly developed a close friendship for both shared similar views on Islamic teachings. Hendro told me during the interview that it was Abdullah who gave him information and an offer to study Islamic teachings overseas—although he was aware that the destination was the Southern Philippines. He said that he took up the offer because he wanted to study Islamic teachings overseas for free (Interview, Jakarta, 1/2/08).

However, Hendro was silent on the matter of Abdullah’s identity and the movement network, claiming to have no information on the issue. It is also surprising that he had never asked questions before taking the important decision to go overseas. He also said that Abdullah asked him to be ready to face any possible risks that might happen during the period of study. He told me that he had replied, “I am ready for what-so-ever risk happens, including death. The main thing for me is that I am able to go and study without cost, bismillah.”

His police dossier testimony reveals another version of the story:
I was assigned by *wakalah* Solo under Ihsan to go to Philippines in 1998 in a group with Abdurrahman, Zaid, Usman, Ibn Sirrin, to study Islamic tenets in Moro... In September 2002, I returned to Indonesia and stayed temporarily in BTN Palupi (the *wakalah* Palu office). In October 2002 Nasir Abbas escorted me to Poso to Alfi from Java who lived in Tanah Runtuh, Gebang Rejo village, and after that he assigned me as leader of *wakalah* Poso. (2006: 8.b5)

Although it is not easy to trust the police record of interview because of the common use of torture and violence during interrogation, I argue that the second version is in fact closer to the facts. I base my argument on the supposition that Hendro’s refusal to reveal his true story is due to his sustained commitment to JI as an underground movement. As I will show later in this chapter, Hendro’s denial of the existence of JI as an organization is part of his ongoing commitment to JI, although some other ex-JI activists, such as Nasir Abbas, Ali Imron, and Fauzan, have disclosed information on the role of JI.

Following Hendro’s narrative, I argue that his ‘radical reasoning’ began in 1994 in response to his identity crisis in his early period of study at university. During the crisis, he experienced ‘cognitive opening’ through involvement with the radical Islamist movement, which eventually led him to leave his studies and move to Solo. It is not clear if he became involved with JI from Salatiga or later in Solo. Although if one considers Solo’s position as the ‘capital’ of the radical Islamist movement in Indonesia, it seems likely he became engaged with JI in his period of activism in Solo. What is obvious from his narrative of becoming a jihadist is that he experienced a sort of *conversion*, namely “a radical transformation of self and meaning system” (McGuire 2002: 74) from being the son of an *abangan* family to becoming a *jihadi* activist. His decision to join the jihad movement in Mindanao can be seen as *act of identity*, a way of resolving the deep crisis between his autobiographical self and identity by undergoing a radical transformation of his meaning system by joining the *jihad* and embracing *jihadism*. 
Hendro’s narrative of becoming a jihadist differs from Ali Imron and Fauzan who come from jihadi families. Thus, for Imron and Fauzan their decision to join the jihad movement and become a jihadi activist might be called “a reaffirmation of elements of previous identity,” a less extreme type of conversion as argued by McGuire (2002: 74). This type of conversion, McGuire suggests, often does not involve change in one’s religious affiliation but produces real changes in the individual’s personal religious behavior and sense of identity.

In the case of Ali Imron, his ‘radical reasoning’ to join jihad began with an identity crisis following his failure to study in Pondok Ngruki in 1988. Unlike his older brother, Mukhlas, who graduated and eventually became a teacher in Ngruki, Ale spent only one month there before returning home. Continuing his study in a high school and Pondok Pesantren affiliated with Muhammadiyah in Karang Asem, Lamongan, he also admitted to not having a strong commitment to study. “I spent more time having fun than studying,” as he narrated in his book (2007: 4).

Following this identity crisis, Imron then took part in an Islamic study circle held by his fellows in the Pondok Karang Asem in 1990. During the study circle sessions some teachers taught jihad lessons, describing the misery of fellow Muslims persecuted by non-Muslims in other corners of the globe, such as Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to Islamic teachings on jihad which resulted in ‘cognitive opening’ for Ale, there was also a video screening of the jihad struggle carried out by Muslim movements, in places such as Palestine and Afghanistan. For Ale these sessions ignited ‘moral shocks’, “when an unexpected event or piece of information raises such a sense of outrage in a person that she becomes inclined toward political action,” as argued by Jasper. “Since then I was moved to change my old bad habits… I also wished to take part in a struggle to defend my religion and my fellow Muslims from the atrocities done by their enemies as happened in Palestine and Afghanistan,” as he narrated in his book (2007: 4).

His next step was to contact his older brother Mukhlas who had joined jihadi activism and lived in Malaysia during the period.
After coming to Malaysia, Ale became involved with DI and eventually joined the jihad movement in Afghanistan. Ale’s step in following the life trajectory of his older brother to join jihad can be seen as an *act of identity*, namely resolving a deep crisis between his autobiographical self and identity by making a *reaffirmation* of his previous identity as a part of a jihadi network and family.

Unlike Hendro and Ale, for Fauzan political crisis has a more critical influence than the narrative of personal identity crisis. Raised in the heart of the radical Islamist movement at 58 Menteng Raya, Fauzan was involved in the movement from his adolescence. In 1982, as a 16 year old junior high school student, he said he took part in a riot during a political campaign in Jakarta. He also claimed to have distributed newsletters published by Islamist radical groups such as *al-Ikhwan* and *ar-Risalah*. These were published by a group of young activists in Yogyakarta affiliated with Abdullah Sungkar (see Chapter 1). He also recalled he had participated in circulating a fatwa made by the *Dewan Imamah* signed by Mursalin Dahlan and Ahsanuddin Hayat supporting the murder of President Soeharto, upholding *syari’a* and establishing the presidium [of national leadership]. Due to political tensions during the period, including Muslim resentment over the unpopular “Asas Tunggal” issue, the 58 Menteng Raya compound was temporary closed down by the military.

Fauzan recalled just before he took part in the Tanjung Priok incident in September 1984, he moved to Tasikmalaya to attend a Muhammadiyah high school while joining a *pesantren* managed by a network of DI activists. He said it was his own maternal grandfather who arranged for him to join the *pesantren*. His deeper involvement with the radical movement took place in this period, including his participation in the “*Pesantren Kilat*”, an intensive Islamic study program run by the *Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Pesantren Kilat* (LP3K, Institute for the Study and Development of *Pesantren Kilat*) led by Mursalin Dahlan.22) He recalled one of Dah-

22) When I was a high school student in Pekalongan, I took part in the *pesantren kilat* held by LP3K. So I had the experience of taking part in a training program held by a *jihadi* group and encountered some people mentioned by Fauzan.
lan’s statements: “the Soeharto regime is thaghut, anti-Islamic, so it must be overthrown!” (Interview, Jakarta, 21/1/08). According to Fauzan, the LP3K was a group founded by a DI faction under Aceng Kurnia. He claimed he had followed the training course named Fi’ah Qalilah (FQ) held by LP3K up to level two. As also happened to Ali Imron, a series of intensive sessions were organized to persuade the pupils to join in the jihadi movement by inducing both ‘cognitive opening’ and ‘moral shocks’ in a single training package. As the son of a DI family, it seemed to Fauzan like a sort of rite of passage for becoming a jihadi group member.

After finishing senior high school, Fauzan was already prepared for the further challenge of joining jihad in Afghanistan. He told me he had been recruited to join jihad by Broto, a DI faction under Ajengan Masduki, with whom he took the bai’ah. Why did he join the jihad in Afghanistan? “I was moved by the news that Muslims in Afghanistan had been attacked and invaded by [communist] Russia. The Indonesian media had also given great exposure to the cases. That’s why we wanted to help them with our blood,” said Fauzan. His father, the (ex) hard core DI member, endorsed the decision made by his oldest son to join jihad as act of identity: reaffirmation of his jihadi family background and movement identity.

The narratives of jihad experiences

The jihad narratives of the jihadi trio in this chapter took place in two rounds: first, their participation in jihad overseas in the form of irredentist jihad, and second, their participation in jihad in their own country in the form of either national or global jihad. The

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23) A comprehensive overview of the various factions of the DI movement from its birth in 1948 until its recent development was discussed in the ICG report Recycling Militants in Indonesia: Darul Islam and the Australian Embassy Bombing, Asia Report No. 92, 22 February 2005. A man named Aceng Kurnia was recently shot dead by police in Aceh following a military training session held by a group named Tandzim Al Qaeda Indonesia of Aceh (Vivanews, Menguak Jaringan Teror di Aceh, 13 March 2010, 18: 35).
first jihad participation overseas could also be considered as *i’dad* or preparation for jihad, since they spent most of their time during that period as cadets of the Mujahidin military academy, either in Afghanistan or in Mindanao. However, the distinction between the cadets and the mujahidin was blurred since the two shared life in the war zones and some cadets occasionally took part in battle.

The first round of jihad for Ale and Fauzan took place in Afghanistan: from late 1987 to 1992 for Fauzan and from late 1991 to 1996 for Ale; while the first round of jihad for Hendro took place in Mindanao of the Southern Philippines from 1998 to 2002. The second round of jihad for Ale came about in different periods with different forms: firstly, he took part in *internal jihad* in Maluku twice for a short term at different periods in 1999; secondly, he took part in *internal jihad* by carrying out the Christmas bombing in December 2000; thirdly, he took part in *global jihad* by carrying out the bombing of the Philippines Embassy residence in August 2000 and later the first Bali bombing in October 2002. The second round of jihad for Fauzan also came about at different periods with different forms: firstly, he took part in *internal jihad* in Maluku in 1999 for a short period of time; secondly, he took part in *global jihad* by participating in the Philippines Embassy bombing in 2000; thirdly, he took part in *internal jihad* in Poso from December 2000 to 2002 which resulted in two prison sentences for him until his release in 2005. The second jihad round for Hendro lasted from 2002 to 2006 when he was assigned to lead a local JI structure in Poso and took part in *internal jihad* which resulted in his imprisonment until recently.

What did the jihad experience mean to the actors? I argue that their first jihad participation, which took place overseas over quite a long period in a local violent conflict situation, was perceived as a ‘pivotal event’ by the actors producing “a pivotal meaning structure that organizes the other activities in a person’s life” (Denzin 1989: 64–7). I also argue that jihad participation was a ‘pivotal event’ for the actors because of two key elements: *first*, the nature of ‘high-risk’ activism, involving high levels of ‘costs’ and ‘risks’, produces powerful meanings in the actors through the investment of a high
level of emotions; and second, the use of religious symbols and meanings during the events, as reflected in the use of term jihad, produces powerful effects which impact on the actors. The combination of the two elements lead to the production of “a pivotal meaning structure” as reflected in the use of marker or a signifier referring to the participant of the movement: as a jihadist or a jihad actor/activist or mujahid (Arabic: plural, mujahidin). It also increased the commitment of the actors to the movement, in this case to the DI/JI. It is through commitment to the movement that the activist “increasingly identifies with the group, its meaning system, and its goal” (McGuire 2002: 84). As a consequence of their identification and commitment to JI as their social and ideological network, the informants continued to take part in their second round of jihad.

In the next section I will present the narratives of jihad experience of the jihadi trio and how they interpret their jihad experience as reflected in the way they narrated their life stories.

• Fauzan: the ‘smuggler’ jihadist

Fauzan joined jihad in Afghanistan from late 1987 to 1992 as the fifth DI contingent in a 25 member cohort along with Nasir Abbas (Abbas 2005: 56-7). Before leaving for Afghanistan, he and other jihadi fellows spent about two months in Malaysia occupied with various preparations including applying for a Pakistani visa and studying religious teachings. For Fauzan alone, it was also a case of family reunion because his uncle, Nasir “kecil” or little Nasir, who had been involved in the “Tanjung Priok case” had migrated to Malaysia and joined Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in exile.

Before going to jihad in Afghanistan the young Fauzan had imagined taking part on the frontier of real battles against the communist Soviet Union troops—perhaps, like the Hollywood and jihadi movies he had previously watched. However, he and other fellows were sent to the Afghanistan Mujahidin military academy located in the Kheldan Sadaa valley, Pakistan, on the Afghanistan
border, namely the Northern Khowst (Abbas 2005: 49). Although he admitted he was not initially prepared for study, he claimed that he eventually learnt various aspects of jihad, including the need to be prepared, in terms of knowledge and skills, both mentally and physically.24)

When I asked Fauzan about his most meaningful experience during jihad, he replied: “I sensed the beauty of Islam by living together with the mujahidin. There was also a strong bond of fellowship among the mujahidin cadets in the academy” (Interview, Jakarta, 30/1/08). So, there were reciprocal emotions shared by the mujahidin cadets. He then also mentioned the very meaningful experiences of joining in the battle. As cadets, as also explained by Abbas (2005: 58), they had the opportunity to take part in battle as an exercise for one month each year during vacation.25) For Fauzan, the special experience of taking part in battle at the frontline with the Afghanistan Mujahidin infantry happened during the vacation of his second year at the academy. There were about eight mujahidin fellows from DI who got this rare opportunity to take part in battle for about a month with their instructors, Syawal and Muhammad Qital, in Samarrkhil Jallalabad in the province of Nangrahar (Interview in Jakarta, 30/1/2008, Abbas 2005). Their involvement at the front line was, uniquely, without approval from the Commander Rasul Sayyaf. Fauzan said of his experience taking part in battle: “The most meaningful experience during the battle was when shooting the enemy.”

What did you feel at that time?
It was such a satisfaction inside my soul. Because what we had [in the academy] was just theory, so when I was shooting it was such a relief, because the theory had been put into practice.

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24) Nasir Abbas (2005: 109) explains that there were three steps of jihad as a holy war, namely, *i’dad* or preparation, *ribath* or standby securing the border zones, and *qital* or joining in the battle.

25) The Commander of Tandzim Ittihad Islamy Rassul Sayyaf said Indonesian mujahidin could only take supporting roles in the rear position with the artillery division, not at the front with the infantry. Sayyaf said that Indonesian mujahidin should join the struggle in their country. However, an exception sometimes happened—as claimed by Fauzan and confirmed by Abbas (2005).
Did you successfully shoot the enemy?
Wallahu a’lam, because it was at night, [when the enemy was] close by. During the day, it’s quite far [the distance from the enemy]. The commander sometimes asked us not to shoot during the day. Sometimes, having witnessed other mujahidin shoot the enemy and reach their target, though, I felt such satisfaction…

Did you have any fear of death?
Of course, it’s human. Especially at the time of departure [to the battle].

Which battle?
All [battles]. We usually had such strong fears at the time of departure, but the Al Qurán says that if we pray when we are in fear then Allah will fulfill our prayers. But when the shooting began, the fear had gone.

(Interview, Jakarta, 30/1/08)

Fauzan claimed he had taken part in real battles in Afghanistan about six times. With such experience and expertise, Fauzan had been trained as one of the key DI members on his return to Indonesia in 1992. Furthermore, during his time in Afghanistan he also claimed to have had the opportunity to meet one of the legendary Afghanistan mujahidin, Abdullah Azzam, beside the commander of the Tandzim Ittihad Islami, Abdul Robbi Rassul Sayyaf.

After returning to Indonesia in 1992, Fauzan was among the elite DI activists with a special credential: an “Afghan alumnus” jihadijist. He maintained and consolidated his DI network by holding weekly meetings to share information, listen to sermons, as well as do physical exercises. The exercises, he explained, were part of efforts to “maintain our military performance, both our expertise as well as our physical condition, while waiting for the next duty to be carried out” (Interview, Jakarta, 30/1/08). When JI was founded in 1993 following internal DI friction, Fauzan joined JI under the leadership of Abdullah Sungkar. His next duty as a jihadi activist came when the religious communal violence erupted in Ambon in 1999. As a consequence of the slow JI response to the conflict in Ambon, Fauzan decided to join jihad through KOMPAK “because it was ready to facilitate the jihad” (Interview Jakarta, 30/10/2008).
He spent three months in Maluku from December 1999 to March 2000. His main role during the period was delivering logistics, such as food and medicine, and joining local militias in safeguarding the border area in security posts. He also took part in conducting field observation for opening a paramilitary ground in Ceram Island. So, his role in Ambon was not significant. Returning to Jakarta in March 2000, he became involved in the preparation for the Philippines Ambassador residence bombing which was carried out later in August 2002. He did not play a key role in the action, merely helping to bring the explosive materials from Lamongan to Jakarta. The bombing was not a response to the conflict in Maluku, but rather a retaliation for the bombardment of the JI camp in Mindanao done by the Philippines and the U.S. troops (Interview, Jakarta, 30/10/08).

He played a more critical role later that year in Poso, Central Sulawesi. He went there in September 2000 and remained under the banner and network of KOMPAK. Soon after his arrival, he opened a paramilitary training ground in Sausu, a village in the coastal area of Donggala district on the way to Poso. But his more prominent role was later on 27 December 2000 when he led a group of mixed local militias to attack the villages of Sepe and Silanca, a Christian area about 10 miles from the city of Poso. They killed two Christians and burnt some houses but two of the militia were arrested, including Fauzan, its commander. He was sentenced to one year in prison.

After being released from prison in December 2001, he returned to his family who had moved to live in Solo, nearby the Pondok Ngruki. After that he made several trips back and forth to Poso smuggling weapons and ammunition. He claimed to have smuggled more than 10,000 bullets and 10 military standard weapons to Poso, beside hundreds of detonators for making bomb during the period. But in September 2002 bad luck caught up with him. He claimed that he had been entrapped by the intelligence in efforts to link him with global jihad network of Al Qaeda. How did he come to such a conclusion?

Here follows his brief story from the interview in Jakarta (30/10/2008). After being asked by Poso local jihadists to buy am-
munition, he contacted some of his contacts to search for supplies. Unlike previous ‘search operations’ which were usually long and complicated, he felt that this one ran very smoothly with no fuss. Furthermore, his ship ticket to forward the goods to Palu was also paid by a fellow Muslim activist. Everything seemed to run well until the ship docked in the port of Palu in the evening of 27 September. To his dismay a police squad was waiting for him at the docks, with a group of snipers. Unbeknownst to him three intelligence officers from Jakarta had followed him and even stayed in the same Class I-B cabin as him. He was soon arrested, handcuffed and brought to the Palu police headquarters. This was revealed to him later when he was brought to the National Police Headquarters in Jakarta and spoke with a police officer, who asked him: “Did you realize that you had been followed from Jakarta?” Fauzan replied no. “Didn’t you realize they were your cabin mates?”

His arrest took place in the aftermath of the 11th September terrorist attack in New York which probably explains the severe treatment he received during interrogation by the security apparatus. Fauzan was sentenced to a two and a half year jail sentence by the court. Compared to his previous sentence, this later period in prison involved torture. About one year after his arrest, the first Bali bombing occurred in October 2002 (having in fact initially been planned for execution on the first anniversary of September 11).

I will narrate next the story of Ali Imron, the Bali bomber.

**Ali Imron: the ‘follower’ jihadist**

Following the trajectory of his older brother Mukhlas, Imron joined jihad in Afghanistan from late 1991 to 1996. Ale—his nickname—was sent to study at the Afghanistan Mujahidin Military Academy in the ninth contingent consisting of 33 people from Southeast Asia, 18 of them from Indonesia including Qudamah alias Imam Samudra dan Abu Syaikh alias Umar Patek, another two per-
petrators from the first Bali bombing. Ale was also given the new alias, Zaid by his senior DI member, Dzulqarnain (Imron 2007: 8). I present his narratives of jihad in Afghanistan and in Maluku as well as his role in the first Bali bombing in 2002 next.

After having transited in Malaysia for a month to apply for a Pakistani visa and other physical and mental preparations, he left for Karachi, the capital of Pakistan in September 1991. After staying overnight at a mosque of Karachi he and a group of 18 jihadis from Indonesia made the two-day journey to Peshawar and then continued to Pabbi and on to Sadda Parachinar, to the Afghanistan Mujahidin military academy on the border with Afghanistan. The academy was under the leadership of Tandzim Ittihad Islami Afghanistan led by Syaikh Abdur Robbi Rasul Sayyaf. The academy had a special class for mujahidin cadets from Southeast Asia with mostly Indonesian instructors, except for the Malaysian Nasir Abbas (Imron 2007: 5-9, interview, Jakarta/31/1/2008).

There were two main subjects taught at the academy, namely, religion and military studies. Interestingly, most of the description of his academy schooling in his book was about the military. While his religious studies are described in one short list of subjects “Aqidah, Fiqh Jihad, et cetera”, his military studies were described in detail over four pages under the five subjects of (1) “physical exercise and discipline”, (2) “[military] tactics”; (3) “map reading”; (4) “weapon training”; and (5) “field engineering” (Imron 2007: 12-5). Such an imbalance seems to reflect his interest in military matters rather than religious issues. However, I contend that the most profound effect of joining such a military education program led by mujahidin is not mainly increased military expertise and techniques but rather increased involvement in ‘high-risk’ jihad activism with a high level of emotions and strong religious symbolism.

The way Ale narrated his daily life in the military academy reflected his hard experiences during the jihad. Here is an excerpt from

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26) The list of those who travelled to Afghanistan in the same group with Ale based on different paramilitary division was provided on pages 9-12 in his book. The description of the details of subjects learnt in Afghanistan was presented on page 12-15.
his book: “I followed all the programs of the academy day by day as far as I could. I always had such feelings of tiredness, exhaustion, fatigue, being upset and irritated but I kept trying to be tough and forbearing.” (2007: 15) Ale attempted to cope with all of his troubles and difficult days by taking a religious approach, to make sense of his trajectory as a jihadist: “On the other hand, I felt really grateful for being able to be in such a [troubled] place to fulfill my religious duty for i’dad (preparation for holy war). Thus [by thinking that way] my participation in the academy gave me such a unique feeling of joy and happiness.” (2007: 15-6)

Unlike Fauzan and Hendro, Ale did not take part in real battles in Afghanistan. He spoke of his unfulfilled wish to take part in a battle. Ale said that it was a sort of tradition for the cadets to be sent to battle during the long vacation. Thus, during the December 1991 vacation, he and other mujahidin cadets were ready to be selected to for battle. Some fellows had even left the academy in preparation for battle. But good news came from the battle front—‘bad’ news for Ale and his fellows: the communist regime under Najibullah had been defeated—meaning the opponent was not longer available. “We were all feeling regret and sorrow because there would be no more opportunity to take part in real battle,” he described the collective emotions at the time (2007: 16).

Jihad participation in Afghanistan was an opportunity to build a broader network of jihadists. Ale also met with Abdul Matin alias Dul Matin,27 who was later involved in the first Bali bombing and other series of bombing, when he took part in a military short course in Afghanistan (2007: 17). Of course, jihad participation in Afghanistan had also expanded the global network of jihadi groups as for example in the link between Hambali and Al Qaeda. Ale himself had the personal opportunity to meet the leader of Tandzim Ittihad Islami Afghanistan Syaikh Abdur Robbi Rasul Sayyaf in the headquarters in Towrkham when he escorted Abu Dujana to clarify the rumor that the Taliban were going to attack the Tandzim headquarters (2007: 23).

27) Dul Matin was just shot dead in Pamulang, Jakarta, on 9 March 2010 (Kompas, 10/3/2010).
After returning from Afghanistan in 1996 with the strong credentials of an “Afghan alumni” jihadist, Ale was selected to be part of the special team (khos) of JI under Ustadz Zulkarnain in 1998. One of his jobs was to source weapons and other combat equipment (2007: 32). In 1999 he was sent to Ambon to “help Muslims who were fighting against Christians” (2007: 32) as ordered by Zulkarnain, the JI military commander. His roles during the Maluku conflict were relatively minor, namely taking part in preparations to open a military training ground on Buru Island and forwarding logistics into the area in close relation with KOMPAK (Komite Aksi Penanggulangan Akibat Crisis, Action Committee for Crisis Response), a humanitarian group founded by the DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, Indonesian Council for Islam Propagation). Ale also claimed he had persuaded the chairman of the KOMPAK Solo branch, Shobih alias Aris Munandar, from his contingent in Afghanistan, to build the paramilitary group later known as the Mujahidin KOMPAK. Although his role in Ambon was less significant, it is important to notice the way he viewed the conflict. While admitting that the outbreak of the conflict had nothing to do with the JI, he argued that the conflict “promised a new hope for JI” by “giving a way to find the field of jihad and spark the spirit of jihad” (2007: 56).

Ale took a more critical role later in the first Bali bombing in October 2002. As a field commander he commanded the bombing operations on the D-day while Imam Samudra was the project leader. In Chapter 3 of his book Ale describes in detail every single step of the plan and preparation up to the execution of the bombing which was initially planned to be held on the anniversary of the September 11 attack (Imron 2007: 75-103). Yet Ale actually only half-heartedly took part in the bombing. He had raised doubts and questions regarding the previous terrorist actions, such as the Christmas bombing in 2000, which was carried out by him and other JI activists, but questioned by other JI members. He had also queried whether the bombing projects were ‘officially’ JI programs because they had not been led by Dzulkarnain, the JI special troops commander. Dissent among JI members had begun in the aftermath of the foundation of
the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesian Mujahidin Assembly) to which Abu Bakar Ba’asyir was elected as leader (*amr*). Ale claimed most of JI members refused to join the MMI while only a few approved. Such friction inside JI confused him and made him pessimistic about the organization’s development (2007: 33-4).

Thus, his participation in the Bali bombing 2002 was mostly due to his trust in some JI seniors, especially his older brother Mukhlas. As an ordinary member, although part of the special troops, he admitted that he had never learned about the structure, the guidelines, and the membership of JI until being later informed by the police when he was in prison (2007: 35). Ale’s narrative sounds different to that of Hendro, the leader of JI in Poso. I turn now to his narrative.

### Hendro: the ‘leader’ jihadist

Hendro went to Mindanao in the Southern Philippines by ship from the Tanjung Perak port of Surabaya in 1998. He told me that he had visited his parents in Wonogiri seeking their permission and blessings for his overseas trip without mentioning his destination. According to the police file, he went to Mindanao in a group of four, namely with Abdurahman, Zaid, Usman and Ibnu Sirin, while during my interview he mentioned only one fellow named Said (Interview Jakarta, 1/2/2008, 2006: 8.b5). He spent four years in Mindanao from 1998 to 2002. In the first two years he studied at the military academy and then joined the battle frontline for another two years. During the interview Hendro mentioned that the military academy was located in the Hudaybiya Camp, which was initially co-founded by Nasir Abbas with Qotadah on behalf of JI in 1994-5. According to Abbas (2005: 156), at the gate of the Hudaybiya Camp there was a banner “the Military Academy of Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiyah”

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28) In Chapter 5 of his book Abbas (2005: 139-68) describes how he and Qotadah alias Baasyir began to open the military academy in late 1994 which was firstly used to train the ‘elite forces’ of the Moro Liberation Front. He claimed that it was him and Qotadah who named the place The Hudaybiya Camp, which was later used to train the JI members.
What was the most meaningful experience for him in Mindanao? “I had discovered all new things there; from the discipline of life, profound religious studies as well as military training,” Hendro said (Interview, Jakarta, 1/2/2008). Another impressive aspect of his life in the academy was that the military training applied Islamic ethics and codes of conduct, such as the absence of harassment, dirty words and flag raising. “We just held the flag parallel to the chest both in training and the battle.” His taking part in the frontline of the battle was, of course, another meaningful experience. During the interviews, he narrated many stories of karamah (miracles). Here is one of his narratives in the battle fronts in Mindanao:

It was clear that the weapons of the enemy in the frontline were far more complete [than us], including the heavy weapons. But, subhanallah, many of their mortars did not exploded when they fell down around the mujahidin. The mortars just went deep into the ground…. Later, I took part in a group to intercept the enemy patrol group. Some of the mujahidin put a bomb on the road that the ten member patrol group would pass. And then bang, the bomb exploded so that the heads and the legs of the troops flew high in the sky. Subhanallah, it was really beyond the calculations of demolition science... The next lesson was that to be a martyr means to be one of Allah’s chosen ones; it’s not random. Here is the evidence: hundreds of bullets were shot in the frontline ruining the corn plants around the mujahidin. But why were none of the mujahidin shot although many of them wished to become martyrs? Rationally thinking, at least one among a hundred bullets would reach the target. But, even when the bullets were very close by they did not reach us. That means that to be a martyr is to be the chosen one....

(Interview, Jakarta, 1/2/08).

The narratives have interestingly shown how his experiences of taking part in violent situation were interpreted as ‘religious expe-

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29) Abbas’ (2005:156-7) book list of participants of the JI military academy in 1998 consists of 17 persons. Interestingly there is no Hendro listed nor his alias. Perhaps, he used another pseudonym.
riences’ with profound religious meanings. Such ‘radical’ experiences became ‘pivotal events’ which produced a new pivotal meaning structure in his life and formed his *movement identity* as a *jihadist*. As to be a martyr is to be the chosen one, it seemed likely that he also thought that a life trajectory as a *jihadist* is also to be the chosen one.

During his term in Mindanao Hendro met Nasir Abbas, well-known as Sir Sulaiman in the area, who he sincerely describes as one the most respected and impressive instructors in the academy. Abbas was one of the founders and the first leader of the Camp Hudaybiya who established and trained the elite troops of the Moro military forces since 1995, which is probably why he was highly respected in Mindanao. It was also Nasir Abbas, as the chairman of Mantiqi III, the regional division of JI leadership which covers the Southern Philippines, Sabah and Sulawesi, who assigned Hendro to move to Central Sulawesi to lead a local JI structure in Poso, known as *Wakalah Khaibar*, in September 2002.  

In order to support his job, JI even arranged his marriage with the daughter of a local leading Muslim figure, Haji Ahmad (pseudonym) (ICG 2007c: 5).

Under his leadership JI quite successfully consolidated the local militia forces and expanded its role in Poso and the surroundings. Several terrorist actions took place in Poso, Palu and the surroundings, include the bombing of Poso’s central market, killing six, in November 2004; the Poso armed robbery of some $50,000 in local government salaries in April 2005; the bombing of the Tentena central market, killing 22, in May 2005; the killing of Budianto and Sugito, two alleged informers, in August 2005; the killing of policeman Agus Sulaeman in October 2005; the beheadings of three Christian schoolgirls in October 2005 and the bombing of a pork market in Palu killing seven, in December 2005 (ICG 2007c: 2).

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30) ICG (2007a: 5) suggests that a week after the Bali bombings in October 2002, a JI executive meeting decided to establish a new wakalah in Poso. The reason for the establishment of the new JI structure in Poso was because JI had many members there but there was no strong leadership. JI leaders also considered Poso had good economic potential to become a major source of income through its agricultural wealth and the cacao boom, replacing Singapore and Malaysia.
Following the second Bali bombing on 1 October 2005 and the schoolgirl beheading in Poso a few weeks later the police intensified investigations and conducted a series of arrests. The police finally arrested Hendro on 9 May 2006 (ICG 2007c: 10). For his role in terrorist actions in Poso and surroundings he received a twenty year sentence. During the interviews he admitted his role in several terrorist actions, including the controversial action of beheading schoolgirls in Poso, and confidently presented some arguments and justification for the actions. As the leader of jihadi group at the local level he tried to take the responsibility for the actions conducted by some members of his group. I will discuss this issue in the next section.

The ‘after jihad’ narratives: the tale of three (ex) prisoners

In this section I will present and discuss the “after jihad” narratives of the JI jihadist trio by focusing on their experience in and after their imprisonment. While Fauzan was released from prison in 2004, Ali and Hendro are serving their term in jail: a life sentence for Ali and a twenty year sentence for Hendro. Through their narratives I will show how ‘prison experience’ has been crucial in shaping the life trajectory of the jihadist trio. I argue, however, that the meanings and consequences of their experiences in prison varied depending on two factors, namely, their roles, experiences and leadership position during the ‘second jihad’ and their relationship with their social networks.

As described in Chapter 2, I distinguish three different kinds of jihadi social networks, namely: core-networks, networks through which the jihadists join the jihad; tactical-networks, jihadist and other networks which occurred temporarily during their jihad period, either in Afghanistan/Mindanao or in Maluku/Poso; extended-networks, extended networks which developed in the aftermath of jihad, both among jihadists and beyond. Beside the three social net-
works, in the case of informants in this chapter, family also plays an important role as a supporting network in the post-jihad period. I use two interpretations of the concept of social network: first, social network as the link between concrete actors through specific ties as articulated by a ‘realist’ view; and second, social networks as “phenomenological realities” and “networks of meaning” as suggested by White (Diani 2003: 6; Passy 2003: 27).

I argue that the different roles, experiences, and leadership position during the ‘second jihad’, namely jihad participation in Indonesia, produced a different ‘ideological attitude’ and ‘moral choice’ in the ‘after jihad’ period, either in prison or afterwards. In the case of Ali Imron, I contend that his ‘operational role’ (rather than his ‘ideological’ one), his position as follower, and his experiences of doubt and uncertainty in the process prior to the first Bali bombing led him to shift his ‘ideological attitude’ and ‘moral choice’ after his arrest. In the case of Fauzan, I contend that his ‘operational role’ (rather than the ‘ideological’ one), his follower position, and his experience of being tortured by the security apparatus and accused by his jihadi fellows while he was in prison, led him to behave in a complex ambivalent manner after his prison period. While in the case of Hendro, I contend that his leadership position and ‘ideological role’ eventually led him to retain his ‘ideological attitude’ and ‘moral choice’ intact.

I also argue that the relationships between informants with different social networks significantly affect the construction of meaning of the prison experiences as well as its consequences. I suggest that the core-network, the network through which jihadist join jihad, is the most important ‘ideological network’ of all the networks. This is because of the fact that the Islamist jihadi is a type of group with exclusive affiliation, meaning that those who joined the group usually only belong to their own group. It contrasts with the multiple affiliations which commonly apply to political Islamist. I follow the distinction between exclusive affiliation and multiple affiliation proposed by Della Porta and Diani (1999: 119-20).
The core-network of the jihadi trio was similar, namely the DI-JI movements. When Fauzan and Ale joined jihad in late 1980s and early 1990s, the JI was not yet founded so they became involved with the DI. Later when Hendro joined the jihad in 1998, JI had been established in 1993 so that he became involved with the JI. As discussed in the previous section, the JI was a splinter group of the DI following internal leadership friction. For Fauzan and Ale the circle of Afghan alumni was part of the core-network and for Hendro it was the circle of Mindanao alumni. Another part of the core-network was the cohort of alumni, meaning those who had joined jihad at the same time. For example, Nasir Abbas was an Afghan alumni cohort of Fauzan.

With regard to the tactical network, they had different stories. Fauzan joined jihad through KOMPAK. Some JI activists also joined jihad through KOMPAK, including Ali Imron in his second trip to Maluku forwarding humanitarian goods belonging to KOMPAK. Aris Munandar alias Syabih, an Afghan alumnus in the same cohort as Ali, was the chairman of KOMPAK in the Solo branch. 31) Hendro’s story was very different since he was assigned directly by the leadership of JI Mantiqi III under Nasir Abas. His tactical network was the many local jihadi groups in Poso, such as Laskar Jundullah, Laskar Wahdah Islamiyah, Laskar Jihad and Mujahidin KOMPAK Kayamanya. As his marriage was arranged for the purpose of jihadi activism, so it was also part of both the tactical and extended-network. It is interesting, however, to note that the JI structure, which was based in the Ulil Albab pesantren in Tanahruntu, sometimes competed with the Mujahidin KOMPAK some of whose leaders were JI activists, including Fauzan.

A more interesting picture was the extended-network which developed in the aftermath of jihad. During the trial process, Hendro

31) The establishment of the Solo branch of KOMPAK led by Aris Munandar was a reaction toward the slow response of Mantiqi II, which covered Maluku area, toward the communal violence in Ambon. KOMPAK was established by the DDII to to assist Muslims affected by natural disasters, conflict, and poverty. JI relations with DDII were due to the involvement of Abdullah Sungkar, JI’s founder, in DDII in late 1970s and early 1980s. For further discussion of the relationship between JI, KOMPAK and DII see ICG (2004b).
was defended by the *Tim Pembela Muslim* (TPM, Muslim Defense Team), an independent lawyer team, while Ali was represented by a lawyer team provided by the police headquarters. Thus, during his period in prison, the police constituted an important extended-network for Ali Imron. They provided him with not just a lawyer team but also good facilities in jail as well as access to media. Unlike other prisoners, Ali was quite often quoted in media. Ali has also been appointed as the ‘unofficial’ chaplain for drugs prisoners by regularly giving Islamic sermons for them in prison (Interview, Jakarta, December 2009). Fauzan’s extended-network has become much broader since he his release from prison. I distinguish at least four kinds of extended networks for Fauzan, namely, first, security apparatus; second, Muslim activists; third, business sector; and finally academic-journalist groups. The security apparatus has been an important extended network for him since many police and intelligence officers have been in touch with him and got to know him. His extended network among Muslim activists, especially in Poso and the surrounding area, developed further as the repercussion of his jihad participation. His jihad activism in Poso also developed his economic network through selling food, clothes, and timber. Finally, Fauzan also has an extended-network of academics-researchers and journalists, including foreigners, since they have quite often interviewed him. The four kinds of extended-network are actually not exclusive to each other, but instead often overlap.

As mentioned above, in the case of the JI informants in this chapter, family and family relationships play an important role as a supporting network especially in the post-jihad period. For Ale, for example, family support is very important in taking care of his wife and children as well as giving moral support to his decision to make a public apology for his role in the bombing, in contrast with his two other brothers, Mukhlas and Amrozi. While for Fauzan and Hendro, family support comes from their parents in-law who helped them by taking care of their wives and children when they were in jail or after.
• **Ali Imron: the ‘Starbucks’ (post-) jihadist**

Prison time was a key turning point in the life of Ali Imron. It began after his arrest on 13 January 2003, when he was in hiding in a very remote village of East Kalimantan with Mubarok and Imam Sussanto. His capture was part of a series of successful operations conducted by the police in hunting the Bali bombers. It began with the arrest of Amrozi on 5 November 2002, followed by Imam Samudra, the leader of the bombing, on 21 November 2002, and then Mukhlas on 4 December 2002 (Imron 2007: 124-56).

His arrest and the following events, including a series of police interrogations and a court trial, eventually led to a major turning point in his life: Ale made a public apology and confession expressing his regret for his role in the bombing! He also asked for pardon from the victims, the families of the victims, and any people caught up in the bombing. His dramatic shift of ideological thinking and ‘moral choice’ toward his jihad action was extremely interesting especially for its contrast with his two older brother, namely Amrozi and Muchlas, also the Bali bombers. Their ideological convictions on jihad remained intact and they refused to make an apology. Together with Imam Samudra, the Bali bomber leader, they received a death penalty and were eventually executed on 8 November 2008.

How did such major shift of ideological thinking and ‘moral choice’ on jihad action happen to Ale? When he was in police custody, Ale began to write his testimony on his involvement in the bombing, his reflections in jail, until he made the major decision to express his apology. The book was then published in November 2007 entitled *Ali Imron, Sang Pengebom* (Ali Imron, The Bomber) by Pustaka Republika. It is a kind of autobiography that begins with his personal stories as a local village boy who became a transnational jihadi activist by participating in the jihad movement and military training in Afghanistan (Chapter 1). In addition to quite a detailed story of his role during the Bali bombing 2002 and his hiding as a fugitive in various areas until his arrest (Chapter 3), he wrote a special chapter explaining how he changed his attitude to become coopera-
tive with the police (Chapter 4). He also wrote a section describing his involvement in jihad actions before the Bali bombing of 2002 (Chapter 2) and a final section on his reflections regarding “Jihad versus Terrorism” (Chapter 5).

Based on the book and my series of interviews with him, I will describe his reasons and a series of processes that preceded his decision to change his relations with the dynamics of JI as his core-network. I will also discuss his relationship with the police as an extended-network as the consequence of his shift to becoming ‘co-operative’ and its repercussions on his term in jail.

In his book, Ale discusses his major shift in Chapter 4 entitled “Mengapa Saya Kooperatif” (Why did I become cooperative) with two sub-topics, namely “Sikap Setelah Ditangkap” (My Attitude After Being Arrested) and “Perasaan Setelah Ditangkap” (My Feelings After Being Arrested) (Imron 2007: 171-8). It is interesting to note that he makes a distinction between ‘attitude’ and ‘feeling’ in the process of his ideological shift. Although not neatly and clearly displayed in the book, he emphasizes cognitive and intellectual processes in the first section and affective and emotional processes in the latter.

In the first part, Ale describes how the testimonies given by his JI fellow perpetrators who were arrested before him had influenced him to choose to tell the truth of the whole story of the Bali bombing. Ale admitted being somewhat surprised to know that Imam Samudra and Ali Ghufron then followed Amrozi’s testimony admitting their role as perpetrators of the bombing. He said that he thought they testified to tell the world about the paths of struggle for the sake of Islam, including the Bali bombing. It was the reason he decided to endorse and confirm their testimony that the first Bali bombing was “part of jihad in the path of Allah to revenge and to fight against the despotic power of the U.S. and its allies.” (2007: 172) Yet later, after reflecting deeply over the bombing, he concluded that he had made a mistake and asked forgiveness for his involvement. How did he come to such a conclusion? Here is his reasoning (Imron 2007: 174):
Conducting jihad by a bombing as in Bali is disputable among Muslims. Some say it is correct while some say it is wrong. Whereas I previously had followed the opinions of those who justified the bombing, I then changed my mind to follow those who refuted the justification of the bombing. This is justifiable; there is nothing to forbid it.32)

In the second part, Ale describes his heavy emotional burden (beban berat) following the capture of his brothers and especially some innocent fellows who were allegedly involved with the bombing. Unfortunately the description of his emotional tensions was thin. The strongest illustration was, peculiarly, his anguish in looking at his two older brothers, Amrozi and Mukhlas, in police custody in Bali. He describes his feelings of humiliation when looking at his two brothers being handcuffed and escorted by two police every time they left their cells. He narrated that it was so unbearable a feeling that he was forced not to look at them if he encountered them because “I could not help and could not bear my feeling seeing them under such conditions.” (2007: 176) It seemed likely that such anguish was caused, or at least heightened, by his moral choice to confess and apologize for his involvement in the Bali bombing—in contrast to the moral choice of his two brothers. As a consequence they were treated quite differently: the police treated Ali kindly in a relaxed fashion while his brothers were subject to a high level of security measures. He continued to express his disagreement with them regarding the moral wrong of terrorist actions and says: “conducting jihad like the Bali bombing must be stopped and prevented from happening again.” (2007: 177)

His ideological shift and ‘moral choice’ brought him closer to the police, who asked him to help them carry out the so-called ‘deradicalization’ programs mentioned previously. Unlike other

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32) The original quote is: “jihad dengan cara melakukan pemboman seperti di Bali masih diperdebatkan oleh kaum Muslimin. Artinya bahwa dari kalangan kaum Muslimin ada yang membolehkan dan ada yang tidak membolehkan. Maka jika saya sebelum kejadian Bom Bali saya mengikuti pendapat yang membolehkan, kemudian setelahnya saya berubah mengikuti pendapat yang tidak membolehkan, hal itu sah-sah saja dan tidak ada larangan.”
prisoners, Ali is quite often quoted in the media. He has also been appointed as the ‘unofficial’ chaplain for drugs prisoners, preaching regularly to them in prison (Interview, Jakarta, 28/12/2009). Ale’s special relationship with the police attracted world-wide attention in September 2004 when the press discovered him having coffee in the Starbucks café, Plaza X, Jakarta with Brig. Gen. Gories Mere, the National Police Headquarters’ Director of Drugs, Investigation and Crimes. (Tempointeraktif, 3 September 2004; BBC News 24, 2 September 2004).

Although Ale explained his reasons and, a few of the emotional processes which led to his dramatic shift in ideological conviction and moral choice, there were still some questions such as: how did he make such a ‘radical decision’ to blame his core-network of JI in the bombing? How did he make a ‘moral choice’ different from, even in contrast to, his older brother Mukhlas who had been his ‘role model’ to join jihad?

I argue that there are some crucial factors that influenced Ale to make such a ‘radical decision’. First, Ale had actually been uncertain with and somewhat confused by the internal fragmentation of his JI core-network prior to the bombing. It was reflected in his response to at least two issues: first, the internal dispute regarding the establishment of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesian Mujahidin Council) led by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in August 2000, and second, the internal dispute regarding the series of bombings, including the 2000 Christmas Eve bombings. On the first issue, Ale suggests that most of the JI members disagreed with any JI member joining MMI while only a few agreed. On the second more crucial problem, he was confused by the fact that if the bombings were JI programs “why did many of our colleagues, supposedly JI members, disagree, unhappy with the actions?” (Imron 2007: 33).

Second, Ale was not the decision maker of the first Bali bombing project; his role was minor from the outset. At the first meeting to prepare for the bombing, held in mid August 2002 in Solo, Ale was merely a follower who was picked up by Amrozi (ibid, 75-8). I share Milla’s (2009: 20) argument that Ale was merely a ‘com-
plementary follower’; his involvement in the bombing was to carry out particular jobs in the field.\(^{33}\) Thus, as a ‘complementary follower’ Ale did not need a rationale for the action. Third, Ale had been uncertain regarding the legitimacy and the effectiveness of the bombing. Milla (2009: 224) explains how Ale had refused the idea of carrying out a bombing in Bali presented to him one year earlier. Instead of bombing a public area, likely to cause many innocent civilian casualties, Ale suggested launching a terrorist action against a U.S. ship which was anchored in an Indonesian port (Interview Jakarta, 15/6/2008, Milla 2009: 224). Finally, his participation in the bombing was merely an expression of loyalty to his JI core-network as well as respect towards the senior members of JI, especially his older brother, Mukhlas. Although admitting knowing only a little about the organizational side of JI, Ale (2007: 34) claims that as a member of JI he must follow its approved program.

In such a confusing situation and his fragile association with both the core-network and the plan of action, Ale was in a weak position to respond to the two wave of effects: first, the dramatic and difficult consequences of the actions toward victims, his brothers and fellows, especially allegedly innocent suspects, and, of course, himself; and second, strong pressure from outside against the JI as the core-network and himself, both from the general public and, particularly, from the security apparatus.

The bomb explosion in Bali created devastation in the beach suburb of Kuta, Bali. Milla (2009) describes how Ale felt deeply saddened hearing the sound of ambulances crowding the streets of Kuta. In his book, Ale made a long list of innocent people who had become involved in the event and were arrested by the police. He also described how sad and humiliated he felt following the arrest of his two brothers, Amrozi and Mukhlas. He was also terrified by his arrest and detention. Furthermore, there was also very strong pressure from the public and the state toward JI as the core-network for its jihadi activism and his involvement in it. On the other hand, the

\(^{33}\) Milla (2009) uses the pseudonym Zado to refer to Ali Imron.
police also applied a ‘humane approach’ to JI prisoners in order to ‘deradicalize’ them and, furthermore, to weaken the network of JI activists.

I contend that his ‘radical shift’ was a consequence of several factors, including his troubled relationship with the weak JI leadership as the core-network, the massive unexpected ‘collateral damage’ caused by the bombing, and the incentive of the ‘humane approach’ applied by the police as the extended-network.

During my interview in June 2008, several months before the execution of Ali’s brothers, I asked him a question about his moral feelings over his ideological shift and its consequences: “What do you think and feel about your shift and different attitude regarding jihad and the Bali bombing compared to your two other brothers, Amrozi and Muchlas? Do you feel guilty towards them?”

Of course it is difficult to have such different opinion about this issue, but I believe that I have done the right things. I think this is the true meaning of jihad according to the al-Qur’an and al-hadith… not their interpretation on jihad… although we never know which is the right according to Allah until He Himself tells us…

*How has your family, especially your mother, responded to this issue?*

Hmm, it is a very difficult situation… I know my mother sometimes feels sad about this issue… that her children quarrel with each other, but I am confident that people will finally know that what I have done basically is for the sake of religion and for the sake of the family as well…

(Interview, Jakarta, 15/6/2008)

It was interesting to me that Ale confronted the issue of ‘guilty feelings’ by using religious justification and simultaneously ‘family considerations’ for his moral choice. On the one hand, he claimed his moral choice was based on his convictions and his interpretation of the concept of jihad according to its major sources like Al Qur’an and Al Hadith, and on the other hand, he claimed his choice was based on family interests. As he said: “I believe people will finally
know that what I have done is basically for the sake of religion as well as for the sake of the family…”

While Ale made a major shift by offering a public apology and becoming cooperative with the police, Hendro’s narrative in his prison period is quite a contrast. I move to his narrative in the next section.

• **Hendro: the ‘isolated’ (post-) jihadist**

Hendro’s story began with his absence. When I visited the ‘terrorists block’ of the Jakarta police detention center I did not find Hendro, the leader of the Poso JI *wakalah* amongst the Poso perpetrators detained there. Where was he? Why was he not jailed there? During my interview with Ali Imron I asked him. He replied that Hendro’s behavior had upset other Poso men, so he had been transferred to prevent undesired consequences. Sergeant Tatang, Brigadier General Suryadarma’s aide, who drove and escorted me to meet Hendro in West Jakarta police custody, confirmed this story. Maybe it was true—maybe it was not, I did not know for sure what had actually happened. What I observed during my fieldwork was that indeed the cell where Hendro was held was in contrast to the ‘terrorists block’ cells where the other jihadi were detained.

Here follows a description of the contrast between Ale’s and Hendro’s cells based on my field notes on 1 February 2008.

Ale stays in a block of about 15 cells where people freely move from one to another, Hendro stays in his own cell which is locked the whole day. Though both cells are a comparable size (Ale’s room was perhaps slightly bigger), Hendro’s room is just a square, about 3 x 6 meters with a toilet partitioned only by a low wall about one meter or less to the rear. There is a dirty dark greenish carpet with a thin portable bed plus a rice cooker, an electric water heater, some books, instant noodles, a bottle of honey, and a largish cardboard box with probably clothing and food inside. There were some *gamis*, Arabic style long male robes, on hangers next to a big poster with the text: *Ten Tips to Memorize Qur’an; Those who memorize Qur’an are Islamic Banner Bear-*
Like Ale’s cell there is no Fujitsu laptop or newest E90 Nokia mobile phone, nor a treadmill exercise machine located in the corner outside nor a widescreen TV next door.

Why had Hendro been ‘isolated’ that way? What was his misbehavior? In the interview, he told me that General Suryadarma was upset by his attempt to defend himself against the charge of “schoolgirl beheading” in Poso. Hendro had made some phone calls to people outside the jail, and even successfully arranged for a signed letter testifying that Hendro had not initiate the action. He said he merely gave his permission. Perhaps this is true, but it is also possible that he was trying to avoid his responsibility as the leader of the Poso militia at the time.

Assigned by Nasir Abbas, then the leader of Mantiqi III, Hendro came to Poso in September 2002 appointed as leader of the Poso JI structure. Hendro succeeded in consolidating the local militia forces and expanded its role in Poso and the surroundings. It was during his leadership that several ‘terrorist’ actions were carried out in Poso, Palu and the surroundings.34) Unlike Ale who changed his ideological conviction toward jihad and become ‘friendly’ to the police, Hendro’s jihadi ideology remained intact, as did his loyalty to his JI core-network. His sustained commitment to JI was reflected in his denial of the existence of JI as an organization and his involvement within it. During interviews, he consistently refused to admit his involvement with JI and claimed that he only heard about the JI in the aftermath of the first Bali bombing from the police.

His refusal to acknowledge the existence of the JI was in contrast to the public testimony of some of (ex) JI members who had openly exposed their experiences with the JI, such as Nasir Abas, Ali Imron, and (though less publicly) Fauzan. Hendro behaved ambiguously regarding his connection with the JI. On the one hand, he admitted being the leader of the Poso Wakalah but, on the other

34) The list of terrorist actions which took place in Poso during his leadership is presented in ICG (2005c). For further discussion on this issue see ICG (2007a) Report Jihadism in Indonesia: Poso on the Edge. Asia Report No. 127.
hand, he denied that the *wakalah* was part of the JI structure. I suggest that this attitude was in response to two striking developments resulting from his ambiguity: first, the forceful pressure applied by external forces, especially the security apparatus, toward the JI, and second, the confused leadership of the JI after the exposure of terrorist actions by the JI activists and JI associated activists. In such a stressful situation he returned to the basic principle of JI as a secret organization (*tandzim sirri*). This was not unusual. Other JI activists and leaders had followed JI’s alleged spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in denying any links with the JI (*Koran Tempo*, 1 December 2004). Similarly Imam Samudra refused to testify as a witness in any JI-related cases. (Milla 2009: 231).

How to explain Hendro’s decision? I will discuss his decision compared to those of Fauzan and Ali Imron in the next section. Before moving to that section I will explain his rationale for some of the Poso terrorist actions. One of the major terrorist actions conducted by his followers was the 28 May 2005 bombing of Tentena market, the center of the Christian community, that resulted in 22 dead and 53 injured. What was the idea behind the action?

It had been part of the simulated demolition training, one which targeted many casualties. First, by causing many civilian casualties it would be a shock therapy to those who used to massacre Muslims. It was a shock therapy…. The main point was that we were persecuted (*dizalimi*) and the victims (*terzalimi*) so that we were allowed to defend ourselves by giving shock therapy to stop them from repeating such actions. Here is the logic *Pak*: If we were slapped on the right cheek and silent, they would slap us again later. *Dienul Islam* does not teach us to be a coward. Do not go looking for the enemy, but do not retreat if you face them…

(Interview, Jakarta, 2/2/2008)

Another awful event was the ‘schoolgirl beheading’ in which three Christian female high school students were murdered on 29 October 2005. How could such a horrible action against innocent female civilians be justified?
The Narratives

We considered it was legitimate in so far as it did not surpass *(melampui)* what they had done [to us]. So, based on the principle of retaliation, it was justifiable as long as it was equivalent to their past actions. Next, we aimed to stop them from repeating their massacre of children as happened in the Walisongo pesantren … (Interview, Jakarta, 2/2/2008)

After having conducted two days of in-depth interviews from afternoon to dusk in February 2008, interrupted by the Ashar and Maghrib prayers, I could grasp the shadowy answer: Hendro might be seen as a ‘dangerous virus’ by the police since he still remained convinced of the jihadi need for such violence. Though he had apologized and asked forgiveness from the families of the ‘schoolgirl beheading’ victims, he nevertheless still partially endorsed the Bali bombing of Imam Samudra and his group. He had suggested I visit and interview the Bali bomber trio, Imam Samudra, Mukhlas and Amrozi, in the Nusa Kambangan maximum security prison. “Because they remain consistent with jihad,” he argued.

About one year later, after some Poso local recruits were returned to local custody in Sulawesi, Hendro was returned to the ‘terrorist block’ in the Jakarta Police headquarters. His wish to be transferred to local custody in Palu, where his wife and children were living with his father in-law, still had not been approved by police at my last meeting in December 2009. Although his father in-law had attempted to conduct ‘high level’ lobbying in Jakarta—as Hendro told me during my first interview in 2008—it had not yet succeeded. When I met his father in-law in Palu he said that the police, especially Densus 88, are still concerned over the likelihood of the unfolding of new turbulence should Hendro be sent back to Palu (Interview, Palu, December 2009).

Thus: in contrast to Ali Imron who was seen by police as a partner in ‘deradicalization’ programs, Hendro was seen as the source of a possible new security threat in Poso if he were transferred there—at least at the time of my fieldwork. The following narrative of Fauzan lies between of the two: he was neither seen as a source of danger nor as a friend of the police like Ale. His narratives
were also more complicated because he was released from prison in 2004 so that he was able to develop his extended-networks quite extensively as reflected in his narratives in the next section.

• *Fauzan: the ‘casual businessman’ (post-) jihadist*

  Fauzan joined jihad in the two areas of conflict: Ambon and Poso. While his jihad trip to Ambon in December 1999 was only for three months, his involvement in Poso from September 2000 had a long impact on his life. He was arrested and jailed twice in Poso/Palu: first in December 2000 for his role in leading attacks on Christian villages when he was imprisoned for one year, and second in September 2002 for his role in smuggling ammunition to Poso when he was imprisoned for two and half years. While his core-network was JI, Fauzan joined jihad through KOMPAK, a humanitarian group founded by the DDII (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*) as its tactical-network. Fauzan claimed about ten JI activists joined jihad through KOMPAK (Interview, Jakarta, 29/1/08). What was interesting in the case of Poso was that: when the ‘official’ JI began to become involved more intensively in Poso, the KOMPAK Mujahidin had already been a quite important player with strong roots at the local level. As a result: the two forces, JI and Mujahidin KOMPAK, sometimes competed with each other and created tension between them.

  As a consequence of his important role in providing paramilitary training to local militia in late 2000, Fauzan had quickly developed quite a wide tactical-network in Palu, Poso and the surrounding area. When I conducted fieldwork in Poso in March 2008, some former local militia leaders still remembered him with great respect. His remarkable role in Poso and Palu during the conflict period was also reflected in his marriage with a local girl when he was jailed for the second term. A local girl expressed her pride and admiration for his impressively bold roles during the conflict and was willing to be his second wife while he was in prison (Interview, Jakarta, 29/1/08). His period of imprisonment in Palu had also brought about two unintended consequences: first, his relationship with the core-network
of JI was damaged because of accusations that he had betrayed the movement by leaking information about the JI network and its activists; second, as a repercussion of a long tough process of interrogation, some police and intelligence officers became close to him and, now, stay closely in touch him, monitoring during the post-prison period. So, to a certain extent, he has become part of security service network and they have become his extended-network.

In one of my series of interviews with him, Fauzan told me that his term in prison was one of the hardest parts of his trajectory of experience during jihad. Following his second term in prison, some of his JI core-network began to distrust and suspect him as being no longer a ‘clean’ person. Thus, in the aftermath of his release from prison in late 2004, Fauzan does not feel the same Fauzan as before. While his participation in the jihad movement in Afghanistan granted him the credential of jihadi, his period in prison in Palu has badged him with a new status: a traitor of jihadi activism!

What had actually happened when he was in jail? What kinds of experience did he have when he was a prisoner? Here follow his narrative of the troubled part of his experience in jail:

[Prison] is a humiliating place for a man of faith (mu’min). It was very hard for a man of faith to be jailed by unbelievers (kafr). We felt so stupid because we were under their control. We hate them but we were so powerless.

(Interview, Jakarta, 15/2/2008)

Intimidation, torture, and terror were also part of his life in custody, especially during police interrogation. “Repressive measures by the officials were common, particularly in the beginning, both in the police office and in the prison,” Fauzan recalled his early period in prison.

Just in the beginning?
It was during the time of interrogation.

35) Such suspicion of JI members who have been arrested and spent of time in jail is common amongst the JI. See ICG Report (2004b).
From Jihad to Prison

How harsh?
It was harsh, actually, but it was common. But it got worse in the second term when I was tortured by electric shock. There were some marathon interrogations that used electric shocks. As for the beatings, from the head to toe, it was just like a regular menu.

Did you feel it hard?
I felt it was hard when I felt down. [But] then I realized that it was the consequence [of jihad] I had to face.

Did the effects last long?
I was not affected the first term [in prison] because my spirit remained high. But in the second term, it was rather... the shock therapy made me a bit down, it was so fearful to face...

(Interview, Jakarta, 15/2/2008)

It is interesting to note that his second term in jail had more devastating effects on him. His more severe treatment seemed likely because his second arrest in September 2002 was a year after the horrific September 11 Al Qaeda terrorist attack in New York, when a terrorist act had initially been scheduled to take place by some JI members led by Imam Samudra. The Bali bombing eventually took place few weeks later on 12 October 2002. It was during such an atmosphere of insecurity that the security apparatus carried out harsh actions in order to extort important information regarding JI personnel and its network from Fauzan. He did not tell me what he told the police, but it was in the aftermath of his second term of being a prisoner that he felt he had been stigmatized by accusations of treachery. 36)

What had happened to him and his life after the prison?

36) Among the rumors was that Fauzan had leaked information about Muslim forces to Reverend Rinaldy Damanik, the ex Chairman of the Crisis Center of the Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah (GKST- Central Sulawesi Protestant Churches) who was jailed for allegedly possessing illegal weapons. During the peak of the conflict, Damanik was at the top of the wanted list for Muslim militias, including Fauzan’s. Fauzan met Damanik when Fauzan was in detention at the National Police headquarters in Jakarta. Damanik published a book on the Poso conflict in 2003, in which he told of his encounter with Fauzan in prison, with a photograph of the two standing in front of the gate hugging each other. Damanik (2003: 73-6) also mentioned some information from Fauzan regarding some conflict incidents and the role played by some local leaders.
... you would never be able to feel what I had. It was normal actually if people worried a lot that I had disclosed something [during the interrogation]. Although, according to Islamic law, it [the disclosure] was forgivable [in such hard situation]. One factor which let me down further was the lack of trust from my [jihadi] fellows…

So what’s been happening?
[Some] avoided talking to me, shutting down contact and communication (silaturahim). When I asked what’s up? They have no ideas, are confused, or act as if they were sick.

Thus, for Fauzan, his second term in prison has damaged his credibility and his movement identity as a jihadi activist and furthermore has broken down his relationship with the JI core-network.

Luckily Fauzan was not alone; there were other JI activists who had similar experiences of their relationship with the JI core-network breaking down following their period of incarceration, including Nasir Abas and Ali Imron. Abas, the former Chairman of Mantiqi III, one of the top positions of JI, moved even further; he officially declared his resignation from the JI (Abas 2005: 303-17). Furthermore, he even became closely involved with the police in assisting ‘counter-terrorist’ operations. Ale, though not officially declaring his resignation from the JI, moved in the same direction as Abas by being ‘cooperative’ with the police. The two have become the main ‘counterparts’ of the police in conducting ‘deradicalization’ and ‘counter-terrorism’ operations (ICG 2007d). Thus, Fauzan joined the extended-network of those who were alienated or even resigned from the JI.

Being released from custody was, of course, a blessing. But life did not instantly become convenient in the post-prison period: he had to face the challenges of daily life in taking care of his two wives and two families while he did not have a fixed job. His first wife lives in Solo with three children who were studying in the pesantren Ngruki. His father in-law, who was also a JI activist, sent them to Solo, following his second term in prison. His second wife lives in Gorontalo, with her parents, taking care of a small child who
was born not long after his release from prison. In order to meet the needs of his two separated families, he had to work hard by working various casual jobs. Sometimes, he worked in a logging business (sometimes perhaps illegal felling of timber) in Central Sulawesi, sending the timber to Java. From Java, he bought foods, clothes, and other goods and forwarded them to Sulawesi. During my last visit to Jakarta in December 2009 he told me that took part in a small business recycling plastics with a group of jihadi in Ciledug, on the outskirts of Jakarta. But he claimed to only have a small share and was attempting to increase his share by accumulating capital.

Another interesting extended-network was his relationship with the security apparatus after his period in prison. In some ways, his credential as a member of the jihadi group, alumnus of Afghan jihadi, and a former leader of militia in Poso, became his ‘cultural capital’ which was sometimes convertible to money. He told me the story of how a few weeks after his release from prison in Palu, the Australian Embassy in Jakarta was bombed in September 2004. He had just returned to Jakarta and had begun to start a normal life. His mobile phone rang and a middle-rank police officer asked where he was, requesting him to visit the Densus 88 headquarters soon. Later he was ordered to attend a police briefing for high level business community in a five star hotel in Jakarta. During the meeting he was introduced to the audience as one of the leading jihadi figures just released from the prison in Palu and a friend of the police. At the end of the meeting, some wealthy businessmen put thick envelopes (with millions of rupiah) in his small pocket!

Another interesting part of his extended-network was his close relationship with Noor Huda Ismail, a graduate of the notorious pesantren Ngruki who used to work as a journalist for the Wash-

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37) Noor Huda Ismail is the Vice President of Sekurindo Global Consulting, a security consulting division of PT Sekurindo Gada Patria, based in Jakarta, Indonesia. Previously he worked as a special correspondent for the Washington Post’s Jakarta bureau from 2003-2004. He was also a research analyst at the Institute of Defense and Security Studies Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, in 2005. He recently founded Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian to work on deradicalization programs. Further information on him is available at his blog: http://noorhudaismail.blogspot.com.
Ismail wrote an interesting article entitled *Schooled for Jihad* published in the Washington Post on 26 June 2005, describing his own life story of being schooled in the notorious Ngruki School but not caught up in a radical pathway—unlike some of his school mates. As a consequence of his place of work and the nature of his journalistic work in exposing the network of jihadi activists, some jihadi activists viewed him as an agent of the U.S. infidels. Recently, Ismail and his friends set up a risk consulting company named *Sekurindo Global Consulting* with Ismail as Vice President.

When I was in Poso in March 2008, Ismail called me telling that he and his Christian colleagues were conducting a risk assessment in West Sulawesi for a prospective foreign investor, assisted by Fauzan. I met Fauzan some days later in Palu. He confirmed that he was working on the risk assessment project assisting Ismail and his friends. It sounds rather a peculiar collaboration: a graduate of Ngruki working with an Afghan alumnus conducting a risk assessment for a prospective foreign investor! Huda told me that it was part of his efforts to ‘deradicalize’ some former jihadi activists, including Fauzan. He claimed that one of the success stories was Fauzan greeting his Christian fellows at Christmas! (Interview, Yogyakarta, 26/9/2009).

In one of my interviews, amidst such complicated and confusing social networks, I asked Fauzan if he still saw himself as part of the JI movement. Interestingly, he replied, “yes” in a somewhat less confident tone. “I think I still feel I belong to JI. I think its ideological framework is still compatible with me, although there have been acute crises and a lot confusing matters regarding its leadership…” he said while looking into space inside the mosque of 58 Menteng Raya Jakarta, the compound where he was raised by his hardcore DI activist parents. It seemed to me that his identity crisis as a consequence of his breakdown with his JI core-network began to happen since his second term of imprisonment in Palu, has not yet been resolved—and has perhaps, even got worse.

In sum, Fauzan’s attitude toward jihadi activism, from the perspective of social movement theory can be seen as *neglect*, whereas
Ale did exit and Hendro sustained his commitment to jihadi activism. I will discuss further different attitudes toward jihadi activism by the jihadi trio from a social movement theory perspective in the last section.

After jihad: identity pressure and disengagement

As shown in previous section, the JI jihadi trio took different pathways during their imprisonment or its aftermath. During their imprisonment, each lost their basic human freedom of physical mobility under the exercise of power and authority by the state. Being imprisoned for their involvement in jihadi activism, the trio of JI activists was confronted by the use of forces and pressure, at different levels, by the state apparatus. I argue that during their imprisonment the jihadi trio experienced ‘identity and ideological pressure’, a situation where their attachment and commitment to jihadi ideology and identity was under pressure. Identity pressure brings about three possible effects to jihadi actors: first, identity enhancement, meaning attachment and commitment of actors to jihadi ideology become increased; second, identity shift, meaning attachment and commitment of actors to jihadi ideology become altered; and third, identity confusion, meaning attachment and commitment of actors to jihadi ideology become confused. I suggest that their three variant outcomes of identity pressure ran parallel to the three variants of post-movement trajectory in social movement theory, namely, exit (parallel to identity shift); neglect (parallel to identity confusion); and sustain (parallel to identity enhancement).

Following a period in prison, and as a consequence of experiencing identity pressure, Ale altered his ideological conviction by conducting a public confession, correcting his jihad ideology, and eventually helping police in ‘deradicalization’ programs. It is a sort of identity shift. In contrast, Hendro remained committed to jihadism and the principle of JI as a tandzim sirri (underground movement) as reflected in his denial to admit the existence of JI as an organization.
Hendro also refused to become ‘cooperative’ with the police. It is a sort of *identity enhancement*. On the other hand, Fauzan has become deeply ambivalent over his attachment to JI and his relationship with the police during and after imprisonment. Although some JI activists and its network have accused him of becoming a ‘traitor’, Fauzan remained associated with the JI while simultaneously maintaining a casual relationship with the police. It is sort of *identity confusion*.

From a social network viewpoint, Ale and Fauzan, for different reasons, had a breakdown in their relationship with JI as the *core-network* of jihadi activism following their period in prison. They then joined a group of (ex) JI activists who had similar troubles in their relationship with JI, who shifted to become ‘less radical’ jihadists, and simultaneously began to develop a new kind of relationship with the police as part of their *extended network*. However, the process and the level of breakdown of relationship between the two activists and the JI *core-network* was not identical. Fauzan had a low level of breakdown which occurred tacitly following the accusation of some JI activists of his betrayal while Ale had a higher level of breakdown which occurred overtly following his public confession and his ‘cooperation’ with the police in the aftermath of the Bali bombing of 2002.

On the other hand, Hendro maintained his relationship with the *core-network* as reflected in his denial of the existence of the JI movement. While the structural leadership of JI has been significantly weakened in the recent period, Hendro sustained his commitment to the JI more as an ‘ideological network’ rather than as a network of particular social actors. His sustaining commitment to the JI as the ‘network of meaning and ideology’ was manifested in his commitment and loyalty to the principle of JI as *tandzik sirri* (underground movement). He also limited his relationship with the police to formal procedural functionality between detainee/prisoner and the holder of authority and refused to build a ‘cooperative’ relationship with the police, unlike the stance taken by Fauzan and, especially, by Ale.
How then to discuss the different life trajectories taken by the jihadi activist trio? I will start by quoting Poletta and Jasper’s (2001) remark: “If identities play a critical role in mobilizing and sustaining participation, they also help explain people’s exodus from a movement.” By approaching the issue from a social movement theory perspective, I refer to the distinction between the two kinds of disengagement from activism as suggested by Klandermans (1997), namely, passive defection or neglect, and active defection or exit. Following Klanderman’s framework, I argue that Ale did exit, Fauzan did neglect, while Hendro did indeed sustain his commitment to JI and/or jihadi activism. As I have suggested, exit is a consequence of identity shift; neglect is a consequence of identity confusion; and sustain is a consequence of identity enhancement.

Ale exited from the JI for two kinds of reasons: cognitive-rational and affective-emotional. He exited because he altered his interpretation of the doctrine of jihad and was critical of terrorist and bombing actions he perceived as wrong committed by his JI colleagues.38) In addition to his intellectual shift and reconstruction of his jihadi views, Ale also claimed to have the strong emotional experience of guilty feelings especially following the arrest of some innocent people accused of being associated with terrorist actions. In his book, Ale described his strong feelings of humiliation seeing his two older brothers, Amrozi and Muchlas, in jail under tight surveillance and being handcuffed when leaving their cells. Because of these feelings of shame and humiliation, Ale said that he always looked down avoiding their gaze when he encountered his two brothers (2007: 175-6). Intriguingly, he wrote nothing about feelings of guilt toward the victims of the bombing and their families. In another section of the book entitled Akibat Perbuatan Saya (the Effects of my Actions) he asks for forgiveness and lists 24 people who

38) Imron formulated ten points of criticism in his book as follows: (1) the absence of Islamic leadership/state as the condition for jihad; (2) erroneous motives and objectives; (3) violation of the ethics of jihad; (4) misplaced retaliation; (5) creating enemies and causing troubles for the self; (6) violating justice and truth; (7) simplifying the use of suicide terrorism; (8) lack of carefulness in choosing targets of action (9) self-imposed jihad; (10) lack of support from the Muslim community (Ali Imron 2007: 212-32).
were arrested by the police, directly or indirectly due to their role in helping him flee from the police.

Following Klandermans’ (1997: 102-3) categorization of active defection, I contend that Ale’s choice could be seen as resigning one’s union membership instead of resigning as a union activist meaning that although he did exit from the JI and criticized its views and strategies on jihad, he remained committed as a jihadi Islamist. Or, following Jasper (1997), Ale has shifted his movement identity from organizational identity as a JI activist to activist identity as a jihadi activist.

Fauzan, on the other hand, did neglect the movement for various reasons. Following Klandermans, neglect means a kind of erosion of support, in which “the non-participant individuals who, though once prepared to participate, have changed their minds and lost their readiness to take action” (Oegema and Klandermans 1994 as quoted by Klandermans 1997: 100). He furthermore explains erosion of support as happening due to two sorts of causes and contexts: micro-individual and macro-social. I borrow Klandermans’s framework to explain Fauzan’s neglect by making some adjustment of his rational choice logic to a ‘cultural approach’. I argue that Fauzan’s disengagement was a consequence of a set of micro-individual causes, namely, the increasing distrust of JI fellows towards him had produced a crisis of self-identification with the JI which eventually led to a decline of sympathy for the movement. At the same time the acute JI leadership crisis eventually brought about disorientation and confusion. The macro-social contexts were also favorable to his neglect, namely the decline of the jihadi movement and generally negative public opinion of JI.

On the other hand, Hendro had a different story and trajectory. While serving his sentence in custody, Hendro continued his sustained commitment to the JI as the ‘network of meaning and ideology’. Unlike Fauzan and Ale, senior JI members who did either exit or neglect, Hendro sustained his commitment as an obligation to remain in his organization, maintaining what Klandermans (1997:
calls *normative commitment*. Klandermans suggests the critical role of ideology in maintaining *normative commitment*.

It is a big puzzle why Hendro maintained his normative commitment to the movement, while Fauzan and Ale did not. It is also intriguing to examine what factors led him to have such an unbreakable commitment to the movement and ideology, despite being sentenced to twenty years in jail. I suggest that the discussion of three issues may help explain the different pathway taken by each, namely, first, different generations and cohorts of jihadi activist; second, different positions in the jihadi movements, and finally, family support and power relations.

The jihadi trio come from different generations and cohorts of *jihadi* activists: Fauzan is the most senior who joined jihad in Afghanistan from 1988 to 1992; Ale is the second senior who spent time in Afghanistan from 1991 to 1996; and Hendro is the youngest who joined jihad in Mindanao from 1998 to 2002. Their different generations and cohorts affected their ‘waiting period’ for participation in the next jihad actions. Fauzan waited about seven years before taking part in the ‘second jihad’ in Ambon in 1999 while Ale spent three years before joining jihad in Ambon in the same period. Unlike his two seniors, Hendro did not have a ‘waiting period’ before he took part in his ‘second jihad’ in Poso in 2002. Hendro was a ‘fresh graduate’ from the Moro mujahidin academy when he was assigned to Poso to become the leader of JI Wakalah Poso. I suggest that the ‘freshness’ of his jihad spirit was a crucial factor influencing his later life trajectory. By being overseas in the crucial period of leadership crisis of JI in 1999 following the death of Abdullah Sungkar, Hendro was also relatively free of a troubled relationship with the JI as his *core-network*.

The jihadi trio each had different positions in the JI movement: Fauzan was an ordinary JI member; Ale was a member of the JI ‘special forces’ under Zulkarnain; Hendro was the leader of the JI Wakalah Poso. Their different positions in the JI movement eventually led them to different positions in action which then brought them to jail: Fauzan led a group of militia to attack a Christian village
(the first case) and took a personal role in smuggling weapons and ammunition to Poso (the second case); Ale played the role of field-coordinator in the Bali Bombing 2002; Hendro played his role as the leader of a series of terrorism actions in Poso. Different positions and responsibilities in the movement and actions, which involved different processes of reasoning, commonly led to different levels of endurance under difficult situations. I share Milla’s (2009: 297) contention in making a distinction between the mode of reasoning between leader and follower. While a leader usually applies comprehensive and adequate reasoning process, followers usually apply heuristic reasoning which mainly relies upon judgment made by the leader. Thus the follower’s stance is commonly more vulnerable to change under strong pressure compared to the leader. Thus, I argue that Hendro’s strong commitment to his ideological conviction was due to his leadership position in movement and action. He, therefore, had followed a certain process of reasoning before committing the actions and had been relatively ready with a set of reasons and explanations. The same processes seemed likely not to have happened in the cases of Fauzan and Ale.

The next crucial factors are family support and power relationships. I argue that family support plays a crucial role in endorsing decisions made by individual jihadists in the post-jihad period. Take for example Ale’s decision to shift his ideological conviction and later work closely with police on ‘deradicalization’. It was such a difficult and radical decision to make, because he had to take a contrasting position compared to his two older brothers, Mukhlas and Amrozi. But family endorsement helped him to feel relief. On the other hand his shift put him closer to power, particularly the police, which during the global war on terrorism has become a very resourceful agency. Thus, while serving his sentence in jail, Ale was able to marshaling the supports of his family pesantren through his extended-network with the state, especially the police.

Hendro also enjoyed strong family support from his family, especially his father-in-law, Haji Ahmad. Ahmad was a prominent local figure who led Muslim groups both during the conflict and in
the peace process, and he had strong and wide networks both at local and national level. In an interview with me at his home, Ahmad Poso rejected any accusations of being the source of protection of his son-in-law as the leader of the local militia in carrying out terrorism actions (Interview, Poso, 17/3/2008). However, Hendro is the husband of his daughter and the father of two of his grandchildren. It was for the sake of his daughter and his grandchildren that he conducted many efforts and high-level lobbying in an attempt to have Hendro transferred from Jakarta to a local jail in Palu. During my last conversation, Hendro claimed that his father-in-law had never blamed him for his actions—which did not necessarily mean he supported him. He also claimed that his father-in-law had assured him he would take care of his children. I suggest it was such family support and endorsement which made him more confident to choose the difficult pathway of jihad, even in prison.

For Fauzan, family relationships have been both facilitating and hindering factors in his making big decisions in the aftermath of his imprisonment. Although being accused of being a traitor by some of his jihadi colleagues, it was difficult for Fauzan to exit because of the strong family bonds and network of jihadi activism around him. He is the oldest son of a jihadi family who is expected to be an exemplary figure for his younger brothers. His two father-in-laws were militant Islamist activists, one of them also being a jihadi activist, who most likely supported his sustained commitment to jihadi activism. Both parents-in-law also provided support for his two wives and their children living in two different areas, namely in Solo, Central Java, and in Gorontalo, South Sulawesi. Without receiving support from his fathers-in-law, it would be very difficult for him to support his two families. Being in such difficult situation, being absent as a strong power holder in his family network, Fauzan had to develop a soft approach to maintaining his extended-network with a cohort of ‘deradicalized’ jihadists, including the police.
Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the life story narratives of the JI jihadi trio in three different stages: before, during, and after the jihad period. Through their narratives, I have expressed my arguments on the three main research questions as introduced in Chapter 1. I end this chapter by highlighting some important findings from these research questions as reflected in the life story narratives of the JI jihadi trio.

How did they become jihadists? Through the life story narratives of the JI jihadi trio, I have argued that they became jihadists after experiencing a process of ‘radical reasoning’. The radical reasoning took place in different ways for the different actors but at the same life stage: a period of transition toward adulthood, namely in the late high school period for Fauzan and Ali Imron, and in the early university period for Hendro. It happened in the context of, or in response to, identity crisis as particularly narrated by Ali and Hendro. For Hendro, it occurred following his deep disappointment at what he called the ‘un-Islamic atmosphere’ both in HMI and his Islamic campus. For Ali, it was rooted in his failure to undertake high school study at the notorious Pondok Ngruki, Solo. For Fauzan, rather than personal identity crisis, his narratives were colored by political crisis and his engagement with it since his early youth.

The route towards becoming a jihadist for the JI jihadi trio was also varied: it was a sort of reaffirmation of family history and identity by following the life trajectory taken by the father (for Fauzan) and an older brother (for Ali Imron). For Hendro, who comes from an abangan family, his radical reasoning for becoming a jihadist can be seen as conversion, meaning “a radical transformation of self and meaning system” from being the son of an abangan family to converting as a jihadi activist! So jihad as act of identity holds different meanings for them: for Hendro it was a way of resolving identity crisis by making radical transformation and meaning system through joining jihad whereas for Fauzan and Ale it was a way of reaffirming family history and identity.
The process of radical reasoning, which involves ‘cognitive opening’ and ‘moral shocks’, took place in a ‘single package’ for Fauzan and Ale, when they took part in a sort of ‘recruitment training’ held by a radical Islamist network in their schools, respectively the DI network for Fauzan and the network of Ikhwanul Muslimin for Ale. There was no clear, detailed story from Hendro on how he experienced ‘radical reasoning’ that led him to become a jihadist. The closed nature of his narration of the process of his engagement with jihadi activism is probably linked to his ongoing commitment to the JI as tandzim sirri, an underground movement.

What did the jihad experience mean to the actors? I argue that jihad experience means a ‘radical experience’ that brings about ‘a pivotal meaning structure’ to the actors that organizes the other activities in a person’s life. As shown through their life story narratives, a new pivotal meaning structure was constructed following their participation in the ‘first’ jihad overseas: in Afghanistan for Fauzan and Ali Imron, and in Mindanao for Hendro. I argued that the ‘radical experience’ of being involved in a transnational jihadi movement in the context of a ‘holy war’ in a foreign country brings about ‘identity consolidation’ to the actors which takes place in two ways: first, through the enhancement of collective identity as Islamist activists; and second, through the construction of a new movement identity as jihadi activists. Their participation in jihadi activities abroad also become the rites of passage of their involvement with a jihadi movement, namely Darul Islam (DI) which later transformed into Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI).

How did jihad experience influence their lives? I argued that jihad participation as ‘radical experience’ informed the later life trajectory of the actors in a combination of two main factors, namely their biographical traits and their social networks. Through an analytical framework of three different kinds of social networks, namely, core-network, tactical-network and extended-network, I have shown that the dynamic engagement of informants with their different social networks has influenced their choice of life-trajectory in the post-jihad period. In the case of the three informants in this
chapter, their *core-network* was similar, namely the DI/JI movement. I also argued that jihad participation informed the life trajectory of the actors in two different steps, namely, first, through the *experiences*, and, second, through the *consequences* of jihad participation. As shown in the narratives of the JI jihadi trio, their involvement in *jihadi* activism eventually brought them to prison for their participation in different *jihadi* actions and for different lengths of imprisonment. Fauzan was sentenced twice (2000-1 and 2002-4) for his roles in conflict related cases in Poso; Ale was sentenced to life-time imprisonment for his role in the first Bali bombing in 2002; Hendro was sentenced to twenty years for his role in a series of terrorist actions in Poso from 2003 to 2006.

The life trajectory of spending a period in prison for involvement in terrorism or terrorist related-actions is a particular feature of the *jihadi* activists involved with the JI. It differs from the life trajectory of the *pious* jihadists who lived in ‘holy kampong’ in the post-jihad period as explained in the previous chapter. It also diverges from the life trajectory of the *political Islamist* activists who are actively involved in the dynamics of local politics in the post-jihad period as discussed in the next chapter.***