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Introduction:
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This volume of essays explores the roles and significance of political networks in a variety of Asian—and particularly Southeast Asian—settings. The essays collectively have four modest aims. First, they set out to show that a "networks" approach can capture the dynamism and resilience of political interactions where actors are operating in different contexts. Second, the emphasis placed on networks of politics in this volume complements the wider attention that analysts based in anthropology, sociology, and economic development have paid to social networks within Asian studies. Third, the volume is intended to demonstrate that certain basic conditions of networks apply to different locales, times, and conditions. For example, communications and technologies, albeit very different in their development or sophistication over decades, remain crucial factors in networks. Finally, the essays collectively emphasize the roles of individuals and personalities in the formation of political networks. In quantitatively oriented network theory, the nodes and links of networks are taken to be interchangeable or display the same character. That does not hold in the realm of politics, where human agency may be uniquely important. Where he or she forms a node, each politician, activist, or comrade has a personal character, different from that of other nodes, such that their human interactions frequently shape the strength, influence, or effectiveness of the links among them. Thus, while two articles in this issue show some direct engagement with ideas developed by Albert-Laszlo Barabasi (2003), the investigation and analysis of actual political networks must go beyond abstract principles of network theories to a critical understanding of the personal peculiarities, ideological tendencies, and even career constraints of the actors involved.

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I Big Pictures and Large Categories

It is not difficult to see why other categories and units of analysis may have been preferred over networks as academic analyses of Asian politics engaged with the social, economic, and political fortunes and misfortunes of states in the region. Once past the 1970s, when struggles for independence, "wars of national liberation," and Cold War conflicts had mostly entered the annals of history, studies of Asian politics were dominated by thematic issues linked to the occurrence of the "East Asian Miracle" (World Bank 1993)[1] in its different subregional and national variations. The foci of research appeared, accordingly, to be redirected toward the political economy of late (export-oriented) industrialization (Amsden 1989; Haggard 1990; Doner and Hawes 1995; Jomo *et al.* 1997), the growing integration of national economies with global markets, regional initiatives in economic cooperation and integration, and so on. With the 1997 financial crises, however, it was evident that even East Asian pathways of hopeful structural transformation could end in painful structural adjustments (Jomo 1998; Robison *et al.* 2000), with both being paved as much with latent contradictions and disruptive conflicts as with the technocratic imple-mentation of rationally formulated policies and plans.

In late twentieth century East Asia, moreover, no less than in other regions at other times, deep and extensive economic transformation produced winners and losers at the same time that it generated growth and development. Besides, winning and losing social classes and groups were liable between them to produce tumultuous surges of anti-authoritarian opposition (Boudreau 2002; Heryanto and Mandal 2004), organized pres-sures for democratization (Anek 1997; Uhlin 1997; Case 2002), mobilization around populist appeals (Mizuno and Pasuk 2009), and pushes toward many permutations of power realignment and redistribution. Occasionally launched to preempt those political trends but more often conducted in response to them were repressive strikes or mili-tary coups in Burma, China, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand; exercises in oligarchic reconstitution (Anderson 1998, Chapters 8 and 9; Pasuk and Baker 2004; Robison and Hadiz 2004); and the assertion of different statist or hegemonic discourses of national identity, ethnicity, and religion (Brown 1997; Callahan 2005; Khoo 2005). Many ideological countercurrents and policy directions shaped the course of these polit-ical struggles (Chen 2001); they expressed or imposed, now in tandem, now in contention, ideologies of economic nationalism, "Asian values" (Khoo 1999), decentralization (Hadiz 2010), neoliberalism (Rodan and Hewison 2006), Islamism (Esposito 1987; Hefner and

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1) For the limited purpose of referring to basic themes of research in this section, the citations given, beginning with this one, are only indicative and not meant to be adequate, let alone comprehensive.

Horvatich 1997; Saravanamuttu 2009), and even prescriptions of good governance, transparency, and accountability (Rodan and Hughes 2014).

To understand such developments of socioeconomic change and politics, the most frequently used units of analysis were understandably states, markets, models of capitalism, regimes, policy frameworks, institutions, social movements and civil society, and the intraregional or international flows of capital, goods, services, and people. Thus, much research and debate were devoted to explaining and distinguishing between the character and capacities of different kinds of states—interventionist, *dirigiste*, developmental, and others (Johnson 1982; Woo-Cumings 1999; Chang 2002). At the same time, the merits and flaws of different types of markets—from loosely regulated to "governed" markets (Wade 2003)—were widely evaluated. The relationships and power balances between states and markets were, moreover, discussed via a strong interest in (Asian) varieties of capitalism that sustained arguments over the sustainability or replicability of an East Asian model of capitalism. In parallel, there was considerable investigation of the peculiarities of (Southeast) Asian hybrid regimes (Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007). The analysis of politics was not far either from research on the contributions of social policy regimes to overall development directions and attainments (Chang 2002; Ramesh 2004; Bangura 2010; Khoo 2012) or the roles played by institutional evolution or degradation in determining paths of success or failure in development (Doner 1992). More broadly, a global research agenda on democratization likewise stimulated diverse research projects on the interjections of social movements and civil society into participatory and contentious politics (Shigetomi and Makino 2009). And, under the growing influence of notions of globalization and its acceleration via advancements in information and communication technology, there was a concomitant concern with intraregional or international flows of capital, goods, services, ideas, and people (Nelson *et al.* 2008; Hau and Kasian 2011) that could sometimes be cast in the mold of "non-traditional security issues" (Caballero-Anthony and Cook 2013).

All this was understandable as academic work strove to keep up with fast-paced developments taking place in what was typically depicted as the most economically dynamic region of the world. This is a roughly hewn outline, not a comprehensive survey, of the milieu of academic studies of Asian politics. Suffice it to indicate that networks might have received less attention than deserved in political analysis, notwithstanding references to lingering patrimonial, patronage, and clientelist practices, and business-politics connections (Searle 1999; Sidel 1999; Gomez 2002). Overshadowed by major themes, big pictures, and macro-level concerns, networks found sporadic incorporation for the micro-level significance that network formation and operations seemed to have in politics. Where it was deployed, networks as an analytical category appeared to be on

its own, placed outside the major paradigms of critical political economy, rational choice, public choice, and neo-institutionalism. To give a notable example, the *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics* (Robison 2012), thorough in its treatment of competing (and even discarded) paradigms, makes no mention of networks applied to Southeast Asian politics.

II Networks of Politics

There were two notable exceptions to this overall picture (of Asian studies rather than specifically studies of Asian politics). The idea of networks was crucial to studies of age-old but also contemporary patterns of overseas and transnational Chinese associational activities conducted throughout their fluid relationships with China (Liu 1998; McKeown 1999; Tan 2007). Studies explored kinship, clan, locality, dialect, and other such ties that bonded ethnic Chinese networks in far-flung diaspora. Networks featured prominently also in studies of business practices, organizational models, and entrepreneurial culture widely hypothesized to be bound to networks of East Asian (or Chinese, Japanese, or Korean) "relationship capitalism," which were typically contrasted with Western free-market, rules-based business practices. Claims and counterclaims were advanced: Did interpersonal links suffused with distinctly East Asian, even neo-Confucianist, values and notions of trust and goodwill supply a cultural edge to networks of trade and investment while keeping those impenetrable to (non-East Asian) outsiders? In a way, one might speculate, networks appeared to confer a degree of structure to bridge the seeming opacity of cultural factors and the hard materiality of business operations, such that "the success of Asian network capitalism was not about its ability to bypass the state, but about the indirect forms of cultural, material and strategic support provided by the state" (Meagher 2012, 270).

Political networks can be created and maintained by elites as well as counter-elites, in stable contexts or under unsettled conditions. Over broad terrain, under varying circumstances, and subject to special constraints, as a summary literature review suggests, there is scope for networks in the analysis of the personalities, relationships, and maneuvers bound up with networks that tried to consolidate their positions, increase their influence, vie for power, or, indeed, survive in unfavorable situations. For that matter, networks may become particularly useful as conditions change from one kind to another. One type of condition was likely to arise when elite positions and interests were threatened or unsettled by changing or overturned socio-political parameters. To put it differently, "networks take a prominent role when events are changing rapidly, while

social categories and other more recognizable groups are more salient when people have relatively unchanging social positions" (Buck 2007, 646). For example, radical post-Soviet economic and political restructuring cast the 1990s Russian elites' unity, status, and class positions into "a state of flux." Then, the previously established system of elite affiliation was superseded by a complex of networks that supplied the "crucial resources and markers for selection into the post-Soviet Russian elite" (*ibid.*, 645). In post-authoritarian South Korea, to offset the uncertainty of political careers caused by increased electoral competition, an interplay between politicians, bureaucrats, and businesses maintained elite networks of "parachute appointments" of mostly ex- or unsuccessful politicians and ex-bureaucrats in public and private companies (Lee and Rhyu 2008). Thailand's "fractious multi-party system" (McCargo 2005, 507) was fraught with instability, though, as coups d'etat produced alternating military and civilian governments. From the 1980s, "placing the right people (mainly the right men) in the right jobs" (*ibid.*, 501) became a mode of governance manipulated by Thailand's "network monarchy" as it marginalized institutions and rules.

In the higher strata of society and the political system, the very wealthy, powerful, and influential—for example, tycoons, oligarchs, senior bureaucrats, high uniformed personnel, and community leaders—commonly maintain closely guarded networks that facilitate discreet consultations, confidential negotiations, and private deals to further their interests. For that matter, such elite networks could be the locus for hatching plots against foes, as was the case with the political turmoil that beset Thailand from 2005 onward. Indeed, if "Thai politics are best understood in terms of political networks" rather than "bureaucratic polity, constitutional monarchy, transitional democracy and political reform," then a compelling reason for the 2006 military coup could well have been that the ousted prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, had "sought to displace network monarchy with new networks of his own devising" (*ibid.*, 499). In subsequent political developments, it might be suggested that networks of networks—the latter being royalist, military, and judicial—colluded to suppress the threat posed by Thaksin and roll back his populist mobilization (Thongchai 2008).

Networks, however, were clearly not the exclusive realm of elites and their concerns. On the contrary, risk and repression have long compelled diverse counter-elite groups and grassroots activists to organize via networks of varying degrees of transience, adaptability, or stealth. During the interwar years of the twentieth century, for example, a good part of "European Chinese politics" was conducted by nationalists, communists, unionists, seafarers, and students as "the Chinese were connected by networks across borders and even oceans" (Benton 2007, 130). Almost a century later, on the eve of the Arab Spring, political networking was "essential for sustaining protest activities, by pro-

viding activists with opportunities for exchanging ideas and moving from one umbrella and initiative to the other . . . also for allowing activists to escape heavy-handed state control" (Abdelrahman 2011, 415). At counter-elite levels, networks could be formed by different groups, in the country or the city or internationally, depending on the principal sites of political contestation and the types of immediate antagonists involved. It has been observed of Egypt that, faced with intense repression and a lack of political party mobilization,

> the networks for change that emerged in Egypt's countryside from the 1990s onwards have been overall more fluid in nature than urban struggles for political and economic transformation. Opposition to agricultural policy by smallholders, landless and urban allies has taken many different forms and is still in formation. Overall these networks of resistance tend to be loose knit, subject to change and reinvention, but persistent and often effective in challenges to land dispossession. (Bush 2011, 401)

In Burma, urban community networks emerged in the uprising of 1988 and then vanished underground to continue covert and everyday resistance (Malseed 2009, 373), even as rural community networks of "non-compliance" allowed Karen villagers to "evade the state of mitigate the effects of abuse" (*ibid.*, 379) as part of their survival strategies while living "under nominal state 'control' or in a condition of strategic displacement" (*ibid.*, 380). Against the sectarianism of a fragmented Lebanese ruling class "lacking a coherent conception of itself and both unable and unwilling to construct a strong state with strong national institutions" (Joseph 1983, 11), women in a Beirut working-class neighborhood built "networks crossing kin, ethnic, sect, class, and national boundaries" (*ibid.*, 3). Being "neither inherently conservative nor revolutionary" (*ibid.*, 4), these networks

> created a social universe for socializing the young; for integrating new residents and stabilizing older residents; for airing disputes, rendering customary justice, and resolving local conflict; for sustaining a sense of order in an atmosphere of political instability; and for linking the working class to other social classes and the political elite. (*ibid.*, 13–14)

On a different social level and bearing an international dimension, "developmental networks [were] vehicles for collectives of intellectuals to construct and contest the hegemony of global capital" (Henry *et al.* 2004, 846).

Networks have been widely favored as a mode of association because their formation, organization, and operation tend to have attributes such as flexibility, adaptability, informality, fluidity, and trust, all useful qualities for collaboration and reinvention (*ibid.*, 843; Bush 2011, 401), and, where necessary, stealth. A theorist of networks was not wrong to draw attention to some of these attributes, but he surely exaggerated when he

made the following claim: "Today the world's most dangerous aggressors, ranging from al Qaeda to the Colombian drug cartels, are not military organizations with divisions but self-organized networks of terror [that] exploit all the natural advantages of self-organized networks, including flexibility and tolerance to internal failures" (Barabasi 2003, 223). From an organizer's perspective, networks could seem diffuse and yet be coordinated. For underground parties in different countries ("scattered islands, unyielding fortresses, or foundation stones in the mansion of communism"), a Chinese communist organizer recounted, the "progressive seafarers who plied the world's ports" were like "the human nervous system [that] punctually relayed commands" and "the system of veins and arteries [that] transmitted vital forces and nutrients to the cells and organs."[2]

A more sober if terse comment on networks pointed out that "in an era of globalization, the characteristics attributed to networks, such as flexibility and dynamism, facilitate the dissemination of information, particularly digital information."[3] Before the 2011 uprising in Egypt, "Nationally based activist groups [were] involved in an ongoing process of exchanging, borrowing and disseminating ideas and experiences with other groups through the internet and other new information and communication technologies" (Abdelrahman 2011, 413).

Such qualities enabled networks to be variously sized. Flexibility could mean self-restraint, as when Indonesian NGOs, students, and other activists mobilizing against Suharto in 1998 "declined to build large networks" and cautiously remained "small-scale and loosely organized" given the regime's record of ruthless repression of dissent (Boudreau 2002, 37). Networks, however, could be integrated into larger structures, such as social movements that were "neither fixed nor narrowly bounded in space, time, or membership" but were "made up of shifting clusters of organizations, networks, communities, and activist individuals" (Whittier 2002, 289). Those "shifting clusters" served as "nodes, hubs and links" that could maintain networks over long periods and distances. Noting that Japanese businesses were linked to "powerful Southeast Asian politicians and their mainly Chinese business allies to ensure the security of their investments, to avoid bureaucratic red tape, and even to retain access to these markets," Takashi Shiraishi (1997, 182) saw them as "complex transnational politico-business alliances . . . often built on networks forged in the 1950s and 1960s." Indeed, that kind of inter-elite networking could prop up a "soft regionalism" inasmuch as institutionalization was weak in Asia. Japan, "a nation of networks," it has been suggested, "create[d] regional integration through networks" as if the "[p]olitical and economic network structures that vitiate[d]

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2) Z. Tie, *Liao Chengzhi zhuan* [Biography of Liao Chengzhi] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1998), pp. 97–98, cited in Benton (2007, 136).
3) Manuel Castells, cited in Henry *et al.* (2004, 844).

the distribution between public and private spheres inside Japan [were] replicated in and externalized to Asia" (Katzenstein 1997, 31).

Finally, networks need not be tightly closed. It is not uncommon that "the official capacities and class positions of elites are often cross-cut by social networks linking different parts of government and class fractions" (Buck 2007, 645). Counter-elite networks could have a similar feature. For instance, "loose domestic networking" in the uprising against Hosni Mubarak in Egypt went together with "interchangeable membership" as dissidents were "active in one of more civil society or political groups, either through their professional careers as members of advocacy NGOs or individual membership in political groups outside of the scope of official politics" (Abdelrahman 2011, 414). Nor need a network be "based on shared values," as was pointed out by Leroi Henry, Giles Mohan, and Helen Yanacopulos (2004, 845). Illustrating this point, a study of the links between prominent Asianists from China, Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines, and their individual "daydreams and fantasies" from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth, showed that a network "does not imply any uniformity of ideas or consistency, let alone equal intensity, in the level of political (or even personal) commitment" (Hau and Shiraishi 2009, 336). Able to create links with "*minimum* motive[s]—not necessarily ideational, but personal, professional, and even financial" (*ibid.*), networks bear enormous potential for forging "connections between people across territorial and ideological boundaries who have very different ideas" (*ibid.*, 337).

III   Structure of the Volume

On the whole, the subjects of this volume range from the ranks of powerful elites to the cells of underground militants whose politics was conducted within networks that struggled for influence, superiority, or sheer survival under varying conditions. The two essays by Pasuk Phongpaichit, Nualnoi Treerat, and Chris Baker, and Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem track the careers, not to say careerist paths, of individuals who aspired or rose to elite status by accessing the privileges of networking or competing for influence by being the hub of a high-level network. Another two essays, by Khoo Boo Teik and Naruemon Thabchumpon, examine networks that, linked to broad-based movements, participated in open electoral politics, albeit under the strictures of the domestic political systems. The final two essays, by Takeshi Onimaru and Ken Miichi, focus on networks with international connections that operated in stealth.

The creation of elite networks can be explicit and deliberate, especially as a strategy to sustain an oligarchic political system, as Pasuk Phongpaichit, Nualnoi Treerat, and

Chris Baker show in their article. In Thailand, because of rapid economic and social change, there are none of the established, seemingly natural frameworks for networking found in more settled societies. Those hopeful of joining the power elite come from widely differing backgrounds. Paths through education are very fragmented. There are no clubs and associations that can serve as meeting places. Alumni associations have been brought into existence as one major way to meet the demand for a framework for power networking. This particular associational form is familiar and comfortable because it draws on aspects of collegiate life that most of the participants have experienced. The military pioneered this strategy in the 1960s. When the military's power and prestige waned in the 1990s, several other institutions emerged to fill the gap. One of the most successful was the Stock Exchange of Thailand, which created the Capital Market Academy in 2006. The latter offers academic courses, but its main purpose is to create an alumni association that serves as a network linking the main centers of power—bureaucracy, military, judiciary, big business, politicians, and select civil society. Although created in an earlier era, such networks can be effective, for example, in rent-seeking activity, which is one feature of oligarchic politics even during later politically unsettled conditions.

Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem traces the emergence and eventual collapse of the technocratic network of Cesar E. A. Virata, prime minister of the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos. The influence of Virata's network rose during the martial law period (1972–86), when technocracy was pushed to the forefront of economic policy making. Applying concepts of networks, the paper attributes the rise and eventual collapse of Virata's network to a three-dimensional interplay of relationships—between Virata and Marcos, Virata and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, and Marcos and the United States. Initially, Virata's close links to social, academic, US, and business community networks thrust him into government, where he shared Marcos's goal of attracting foreign investments to build an export-oriented economy. Charged with obtaining IMF and World Bank loans, Virata's network was closely joined to Marcos as the principal political hub. The former, however, had to contend with the networks of Marcos's wife, Imelda, and his chief cronies. While the IMF and World Bank support offered Virata some leverage, the latter's network could not control Imelda Marcos's profligacy or the cronies' sugar and coconut monopolies. In Virata's own assessment, his network was weakened when Marcos's health failed during an economic crisis in 1981 and after Benigno Aquino's assassination in 1983. In those crises, Imelda Marcos's network and Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Fabian Ver's faction of the military network took power amidst the rise of an anti-dictatorship movement. Tadem concludes that the United States' switch of support from Marcos to Corazon Aquino sealed the

demise of Virata's network.

In Malaysia's 12th general election of March 2008, three opposition parties collectively cracked the hegemony of the ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN, or National Front). They denied BN its customary two-thirds majority in Parliament, won 10 of 11 parliamentary seats in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, and took control of 5 of 11 states in Peninsular Malaysia. As the opposition parties formed a coalition called Pakatan Rakyat (PR, or People's Alliance), a two-coalition system appeared to have taken shape even though PR had not yet won national power. As Khoo Boo Teik shows in his article, one way of analyzing how PR reached that watershed electoral outcome is to examine how the coalition moved from imagining to realizing dissent over a 10-year period. Khoo does not cast imagining and realizing dissent as disparate acts. He treats them as two tasks that were borne by qualitatively different but connected networks that helped PR to overcome its structural, organizational, and resource disadvantages in battling BN. The first networks considered in this article are the cyber-networks that used information and communication technology-sited or -enabled links to construct an alternative media. As PR's cyber-networks wove a web of counter-hegemonic discourses, the alliance's organizers, allies, and supporters could imagine themselves as a community of dissent. PR's second type of network consisted of physical coalitions, that is, groups and organizations of varying degrees of cohesion that linked the PR parties with their allies in civil society and their supporters at large. These coalitions were ground-level networks of people, formed for political actions that included issuing informal appeals for support, joining ad hoc activities, participating in structured events, and making highly organized interventions. Their common objective was to mobilize and realize dissent through electoral contestation. Even after 2008, however, PR lacked a third type of network that would maintain stable links between party structures and social bodies, including trade unions, community organizations, and civic associations. Those "missing links," Khoo argues, rendered PR vulnerable to regime harassments and blandishments that could undermine its parties and networks. By analyzing PR's experiences through the lenses of its networks, Khoo offers a fresh understanding of the travails of constructing a two-coalition system.

Naruemon Thabchumpon investigates the two bitter antagonists in the turbulent politics of contemporary Thailand—the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), with its members labeled the Yellow Shirts, and the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), or the Red Shirts. Each of the two foes, typically regarded only as a movement, actually has a vast network connecting supporters from many quarters. The Yellow Shirt network was associated with the "network monarchy," military, judiciary, and bureaucracy. The Red Shirt network, organizationally manifest in a series of

electorally triumphant parties, was linked to exiled ex-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, his proxies, and also groups and individuals who opposed the military coup that ousted Thaksin in 2006. The significance of the two antagonistic networks can be gauged from their different influences on democratic processes over several years. Naruemon uses concepts of political networks to examine PAD and UDD within the socio-political context in which they arose. The article focuses on several aspects of each of the two networks: their political conception and perspectives, organizational structures (for decision making and networking), and the strategies and activities of their members. By critically analyzing key and affiliated characters within PAD and UDD, as well as the functional mechanisms of the networks, Naruemon provides an evaluation of the respective positions of the two networks in contemporary Thai politics.

Small, clandestine political networks trying to survive are often the most difficult of networks to trace, as two articles dealing with networks operating one century apart demonstrate. Such networks critically depend on how individuals in them can build and maintain close links in underground existence against the obstacles of constant state surveillance and police suppression. Takeshi Onimaru reviews the activities of the regional headquarters of the Third International (Comintern) in Shanghai to chart the construction and collapse of the Comintern network, which linked international and regional communist movements in East and Southeast Asia from the late 1920s to the early 1930s. The Comintern had established its Far Eastern Bureau in Shanghai in 1926 and Pan Pacific Trade Union Secretariat in 1927 to supervise national communist movements in East and Southeast Asia, allocate funds, dispatch couriers and agents, and receive local communists who were headed for Moscow. For this work, a liaison network was necessary. Its construction and maintenance were carried out by agents and couriers who had contacts with the Comintern's Shanghai staff and with liaison officers in local communist movements. Within this complex East and Southeast Asian network of international and regional communist movements, critical links were developed between agents, couriers, Shanghai regional headquarters staff, and local liaison officers who acted as the network's nodes. Intriguingly for the operation of this vast network, important roles were played by regional facilitators who spoke European and local languages, were familiar with regional situations, and knew their contacts. By charting the structure of the network, tracing its links—forged or snapped—and identifying its nodes—which emerged or vanished—Onimaru provides an original account of the construction and collapse of the Comintern network over a decade.

Finally, Ken Miichi uses network theories to explore the characteristics of militant Islamist groups in Indonesia that committed or ideologically legitimized violent attacks on those they regarded to be enemies of Islam in times of peace. The basic militant

Islamist network was constituted by the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and its associated groups in Indonesia. Believed to have been responsible for dozens of violent incidents in Indonesia after 2000, including the Bali bombings of 2002 and 2005, JI sympathized with al-Qaeda's ideology, openly supported al-Qaeda and other militant ideologues by translating and publishing their work in Indonesia, and sent hundreds of fighters (*mujahidin*) to Afghanistan for training. Even so, the Indonesian militant Islamist groups were not controlled by foreign entities. Nor did they merely emulate their Middle Eastern counterparts. Miichi shows that JI had its own characteristics, although it shared some features with a broader militant Islamist network. The paper takes as its point of departure Barabasi's characterization of al-Qaeda as a matrix of self-organized networks, not a military organization with structured divisions. In Barabasi's theorization of networks, al-Qaeda appears as a "scale-free network" in which a limited number of persons over years accumulated many nodes in a scattered and self-sustaining web (Barabasi 2003). Hence, JI could be regarded as an organization with a loosely organized yet hierarchical structure divided into small cells that were held together by personal loyalties. Its members were typically recruited through family, school, and other friendly connections. Indeed, when faced with intensifying police arrests and assaults, militant Islamists modified their methods and increasingly fell back on their networks. Using published reports and his own interviews with relevant individuals, Miichi reviews JI's organizational structure and explores militant Islamist networks in Indonesia and its neighboring countries. By focusing on the links and nodes in these networks, the article compares significant aspects of militant Islamist groups with corresponding features of other political and Islamic movements.

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