

No. 117

**“From Counter-Society to Counter-State:
Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI”**

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**Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
Singapore**

14 November 2006

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ABSTRACT

The General Guide for the Struggle of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah (Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah) – commonly known under its acronym PUPJI – is an essential document for understanding Southeast Asia's most deadly terror network. Issued by Jemaah Islamiyah's Central Executive Council (Qiyadah Markaziyah), it outlines the group's administrative structure and guiding religious principles, in addition to providing insights into its organizational development, membership recruitment, and operational strategy. From the time Jemaah Islamiyah was established on January 1, 1993 – as the result of an internal split within the Darul Islam (DI) movement – until the time it first engaged in terrorist activities – with the Medan church bombings on May 28, 2000 – the group was structured and managed in accordance with this handbook. To understand Jemaah Islamiyah, therefore, we must understand PUPJI.

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Introduction

The General Guide for the Struggle of Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiyah (*Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiyah*) – commonly known under its acronym PUPJI¹ – is an essential document for understanding Southeast Asia’s most deadly terror network. Issued by Jemaah Islamiyah’s Central Executive Council (*Qiyadah Markaziyah*), it outlines the group’s administrative structure and guiding religious principles, in addition to providing insights into its organizational development, membership recruitment, and operational strategy. From the time Jemaah Islamiyah was established on January 1, 1993 – as the result of an internal split within the Darul Islam (DI) movement – until the time it first engaged in terrorist activities – with the Medan church bombings on May 28, 2000² – the outfit was structured and managed in accordance with this handbook. To understand Jemaah Islamiyah, therefore, we must understand PUPJI.

PUPJI is important for a number of reasons. For one, it is the most significant document produced by JI as an organization.³ It functions as the *de facto* manifesto of

¹ A copy of the original PUPJI document was obtained and translated by the International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. The current author first reviewed and analyzed the document while working as Manager for Research at ICPVTR. The results of this study can be found in Rohan Gunaratna, Elena Pavlova, and Muhammad Hassan Haniff, “A Preliminary Analysis of the General Guide For the Struggle of Jemaah Islamiyah,” ICPVTR, IDSS, February 2004

² Even though most reports associate the August 2000 car bombing of the Philippine embassy in Jakarta or the December 2000 Christmas Eve bombings of various churches in Indonesia as Jemaah Islamiyah’s first forays into terrorism, Ken Conboy has convincingly proven that the May 2000 Medan church bombings – one successful and the other one foiled – are more deserving of this title. See, Conboy Ken The Second Front: Inside Asia’s Most Dangerous Terrorist Network (Equinox: 2004), p.109-11

³ There has been an ongoing debate in Indonesia as to whether Jemaah Islamiyah exists as a tangible organization or not. For many, it is an abstract concept due to the ambiguous moniker it has chosen for itself. In Arabic, the term ‘Jemaah Islamiyah’ stands for ‘a society of Muslims’ in a narrow sense and ‘a worldwide community of Muslims’ in a broader sense. Indonesian political figures and security experts, community leaders and ordinary citizens have all voiced concerns that proscribing JI as an organization would nominally ban the entire Islamic community in the country. The Indonesian government, therefore, has had to treat this issue with extreme caution. On the one hand, they have clumped down heavily on JI members and supporters, while, on the other hand, they have refused to proscribe Jemaah Islamiyah as an organization on the pretext that it does not have a known headquarters or distribute name cards to members. See, “No Indications As Yet That Indonesia Will

the group, throwing light on its fundamental principles and practices. It lays out the normative precepts and the operational practices of the group, in addition to mapping out its rules of engagement, procedural norms, and targeted outcomes. As such, PUPJI is the normative template from which the institutional entity of Jemaah Islamiyah emerges and subsequently develops.

From a strategic point of view, PUPJI is also important because it outlines the group's religious vision and core mission. As an outfit that views itself primarily as a mobilizing agent for collective action, JI and its handbook provide key directions as to how exactly this is to be achieved. From the organizational stages that Jemaah Islamiyah has to undergo in order to reach its full institutional potential to the operational learning curve that its members have to accomplish in order to adapt to their environment, PUPJI is essential to all these endeavors. It provides strategic, tactical, and operational guidelines on how Jemaah Islamiyah should conduct itself as a strategic actor.

In terms of the religious underpinnings of the group, PUPJI is even more central to JI's endeavors because it portrays the organization as belonging to the spectrum of *Salafi-Jihadist* extremist outfits. Rather than a random collection of militants who perpetrate haphazard acts of violence, the manual designates the group and its members as key stakeholders in a broad socio-political undertaking. Their principal rationale for action is that of creating the nucleus of an Islamic society that can subsequently form the core of the Islamic state of their imagination. While terrorist attacks and armed combat are important components of their overall plan, it would be a disfavor to JI to strip their operational calculus to the bare minimum of random violence.

In fact, the much-publicized split among the ranks of JI can be somewhat attributed to PUPJI-outlined norms and procedures. This split first took place when one of JI's armed factions – the faction led successively by Hambali, Azahari, and

Ban Jemaah Islamiah," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)*, September 20, 2004; "Megawati's Tightrope," *Business Week Online*, March 10, 2003; and, "President Mulls Banning Jemaah Islamiyah," *Laksamana*, October 26, 2004

Noordin Top – made a unilateral decision to engage in terrorism. The leaders of this group believed that the time had come for Jemaah Islamiyah to wage armed *jihad* and to take on the international system.⁴ Other members of JI, on the other hand, were either nonchalant or directly opposed to such initiative. While they were not averse to waging local *jihad* in conflict zones like Maluku or Poso, they were much more lukewarm to the imperatives of global *jihad* as espoused by Hambali, Azahari, and Noordin Top.⁵

For one, these JI members believed that a premature descent into violence would jeopardize the goals of the organization as posited in PUPJI. Such activities would effectively thwart the group's efforts to build a broad constituency of like-minded individuals and to establish a 'secure base' as their operational headquarters. In their view, only after these primary objectives had been achieved, JI would be ready to engage in armed combat. It is in this context that we should interpret JI's Executive Council member Achmad Roihan's statement that the decision to stage the 2002 Bali blasts was not taken by Jemaah Islamiyah as an organization. Rather, it was the product of the 'initiatives' of a few 'individuals.'⁶

A second explanation is that in the aftermath of President Suharto's fall from power and the ensuing democratic transition in Indonesia, a portion of JI's members had become convinced that a change of plans was also at hand. Whereas Jemaah Islamiyah had been formed during a regime of active persecution against Islamist activists,⁷ the new political system allowed such activists to champion their cause openly and through public debate. The formation of the *Majlis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI) and the ascendance of Abu Bakar Bashir to the top position in MMI were

⁴ Their decision followed in the footsteps of Bin Laden's 1996 Declaration of War against the Zionist-Crusader Enemy and his 1998 Fatwa calling for the killing of American and Western civilians. See Conboy (2004), p.136-8

⁵ Noor Huda Ismail, Understanding How Jihadists in Indonesia Rejuvenate Themselves, Source: <https://alumni.state.gov/bin/alumni/Brusssel%20talk.pdf>

⁶ "Achmad Roihan: This is Not the Decision of the Organization," *Tempo* 6 (4), October 14-20, 2003. Similarly, Ali Imron, one of the key perpetrators of the 2002 Bali attacks, has also stated before prosecutors that, "As to whether it was a mission of the JI, I do not know. According to me it was not a mission of the JI because the majority of the JI do not like violence. (. . .) According to me, it could only be the work of Hambali and Mukhlas," "Bali Attack 'Planned for 11 September,'" *BBC*, 21 August, 2003

⁷ Interview with Sheikh Abdullah Sungkar, "Suharto's Detect, Defect, and Destroy Policy Towards the Islamic Movement," *Nida'ul Al-Islam*, 1997 [author's collection]

perceived as evidence of the alternative routes available to the group. Why fight when one can proselytize and lobby?

Many of these internal debates quietly surfaced at the time of Bashir's resignation as JI's *emir* in 2000. He was quickly replaced by Abu Rusdan and, subsequently, by Abu Dujana.⁸ Both of these top leaders had very different plans in mind for JI. Whereas Bashir was willing to shift methods to match the new climate of political openness, Abu Rusdan and Abu Dujana continued with the previous confrontational stance of JI. In fact, according to some reports, there were even plans in 1999-2000 to assassinate top Indonesian politicians, including then presidential candidate Megawati Sukarnoputri, on account that a woman was not suited to lead a Muslim country.⁹ Similar plans were also formulated against four members of Megawati's PDI-P ruling party in 2003.¹⁰

Another point of contention among JI's ranks was the increasing number of Muslim civilians killed. As the terrorist campaign of the Hambali-Azahari-Noordin Top splinter outfit unfolded, more and more JI members became uncomfortable with this faction's chosen methods and their deadly consequences. From key JI operatives who had helped out with various terrorist attacks¹¹ to unaffiliated with violence JI members,¹² the organizational sentiment inside JI was starting to change. What could previously be written off as relatively unimportant internal debates over organizational and operational matters became important faultlines, according to which the group was divided into a pro-violence and a non-violence faction. As much as Abu Bakar Bashir was publicly seen as their religious model and source of

⁸ Zachary Abuza, "Abu Dujana: Jemaah Islamiyah's New Al-Qaeda Linked Leader," *Jamestown Foundation*, Terrorism Focus, 3 (13), 4 April, 2006

⁹ "Confessions of an Al-Qaeda Terrorist," *Time Magazine*, September 15, 2002

¹⁰ "Members of Indonesian President's Party on JI Hit List," *Associated France Press*, 22 July, 2003; "Soft Targets for JI?," *Tempo* 46 (3), July 22-28, 2003

¹¹ For example, Ali Imron, one of the key participants in the 2002 Bali bombings expressed severe remorse at his actions, stating before prosecutors that "this incident has destroyed me" and that it "smeared" Islam. See, "Bali Attack 'Planned for 11 September,'" *BBC*, 21 August, 2003. For remorse on the part of the Marriott hotel bombing perpetrators, see "Marriott Suspects Regret Bombing," *CNN*, November 3, 2003

¹² The two most prominent examples are Achmad Roihan and Nasir Abbas, the former leader of Mantiqi III, who following his detention and subsequent release has been cooperating actively with the Indonesian authorities and throwing light on the workings of JI

inspiration for the militants, even he felt compelled, upon his release in June 2006, to condemn Mohamed Noordin Top's splinter group as 'misguided fighters.'¹³

In summary, PUPJI is an important resource through which we can trace the gradual evolution of Jemaah Islamiyah as an organization. From the day-to-day activities of the group to its key strategic premises and decision-making processes, PUPJI provides us with an insider's perspective into the motivations, structures, and capabilities of JI. As such, studying it and uncovering its key themes and objectives will bring us closer to understanding Jemaah Islamiyah itself.

PUPJI's Composition

PUPJI comprises a booklet of approximately forty-four pages. Its content consists of a broad range of topics, divided into various sections and sub-sections. Written in a combination of Bahasa Indonesia and Arabic, the text is steeped in religious terminology and afloat with doctrinal precepts. The Qu'ran and the Hadith are frequently quoted, either to illustrate the meaning of certain passages or to situate the workings of the group from a religious perspective. In this respect, JI resembles other radical Islamist militant groups. To them, the religious underpinnings of their endeavors are just as important as their ultimate strategic goals. Religious injunctions are usually incorporated into their charters to ensure that all actions are in strict accordance with Islamic principles.

It is important to note that PUPJI was intended as a reference manual for senior JI cadres.¹⁴ Rather than a booklet with specific instructions to all rank-and-file members, its content is geared towards providing religious, strategic, and tactical directions to the top leaders. The handbook's primary objective is to map out the organizational structure and the operational trajectory of the group, while also ensuring that these components are synchronized with JI's religious values and core mission. As such, PUPJI functions on three distinct levels: it is simultaneously an

¹³ *MediaCorps News*, "Indonesia's Abu Bakar Bashir Says Extremists Misguided Fighters," June 15, 2006

¹⁴ Abbas, Nasir (2005), *Membongkar Jamaah Islamiyah*, Jakarta: Garfindo, chapter on PUPJI.

organizational charter; an operational handbook, and a religious-strategic programme. As the main guide for the group's activities, it embodies both the spiritual essence and the day-to-day practicalities of JI.

According to most experts, PUPJI was drafted by a committee of religious scholars, rather than a single individual.¹⁵ This is obvious from the text's irregular cadence, the differences in writing style among the various sections, and the insertion of extraneous material at the end of the pamphlet.¹⁶ The document allegedly underwent a number of editions, with new information being included periodically. For the most part, however, JI's guidebook is organized around four main themes. These are:

- the Principles for the Methodology to Establish the Religion (*Ushulul Manhaj Al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien*);
- the Methodology to Establish the Religion (*Manhaj Al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien*);
- the Methodology for Operations (*Manhaj Al-Amaliy*);
- JI's Constitution (*Nidhomul Asasiy*).

PUPJI starts by listing the ten religious principles that comprise Jemaah Islamiyah's Islamist worldview (*Ushulul Manhaj Al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien*). These principles are subsequently expanded into a religious vision and an ideological programme on how to achieve them (*Manhaj Al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien*). An operational methodology follows, delineating the group's operational apparatus and core activities (*Manhaj Al-Amaliy*). A constitutional charter is also included, with the

¹⁵ 'The Emir: An Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir,' *Jamestown Foundation*, Terrorism Focus, 3 (9), 15 September 2005, footnote 6.

¹⁶ For example, right after the explanations that accompany the forty-three articles of JI's Constitution, the PUPJI text concludes with brief closing remarks, extolling the virtues of the pamphlet and expressing hopes for the successful achievement of JI's aims and objectives. Immediately after that, a considerable portion of material is inserted, starting out with the establishment of *Al-Qiyadah ar-Rosyidah* and continuing for another twenty-eight pages. This segment was neither mentioned nor suggested by the schematic outline of PUPJI's content at the beginning of the pamphlet. [ICPVTR Translation] *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyyah (PUPJI): The General Guide of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyyah*, p.25-53

goal of clarifying the group's norms and procedures, chains of command, and decision-making processes (*An Nidhomul Asasiy*). In its entirety, PUPJI thus offers a comprehensive strategic outline and coherent organizational framework with regard to JI. It is the conceptual template from which the institutional entity of Jemaah Islamiyah emerges and subsequently develops.

To understand JI, therefore, we must understand PUPJI. Three things stand out in this perspective. First, JI's founding document was drafted in a conscious effort to differentiate Jemaah Islamiyah from Darul Islam (DI). Due to the internal split between the two – which was over ideology as well as methodology – JI's leaders needed a new paradigm for collective action through which to refashion the group.

Second, PUPJI resembles closely the founding charters and operational handbooks of other radical Islamist militant groups. Due to the cross-fertilization of ideas and practices that resulted from JI's participation in the Soviet-Afghan war – especially the joint training with members of other terrorist outfits in the camps of Afghan commander Abdurrah Rasul Sayyaf – JI acquired knowledge and expertise previously unavailable to other Southeast Asian militant groups.

Finally, PUPJI envisions Jemaah Islamiyah to emerge and to develop as a *counter-society* instead of a *counter-state* movement. Inherent to this process is the emphasis on amassing resources, consolidating them over time, and transforming them into organizational and operational strengths. Only after these strengths have reached their territorial and institutional embodiment, would JI be ready to engage in violence. It will become a *counter-state* outfit only after it has achieved full status as a *counter-society*.¹⁷

¹⁷ I use the sociological concepts of '*counter-society*' and '*counter-state*' to differentiate between two different kinds of religious-political movements, or alternatively, the same movement but at different stages of its historical evolution. The classification is undertaken on the basis of the stated goals and objectives of these movements, as evident from their written statements and daily activities. The term '*counter-state*' typically refers to movements that violently challenge or seek to overthrow the existing structures of power, i.e. the state and its governing apparatus. Most terrorist and guerrilla organizations belong to this category since they oppose national governments and aim to overpower or overrule them. By contrast, the term '*counter-society*' connotes movements that conceptualize themselves primarily as alternative forms of social collectivity and organization. Rather than confront the state directly – or, perhaps, they envision themselves as confronting the state, but at a later date – such movements opt for withdrawing their members from most forms of social interactions, exchanges, and contracts. Instead, they opt for re-creating the structures, powers, and mandates of the broader society under a new guise, one which is more in accordance with their own worldview and religious, cultural, political, and/ or

In this regard, JI's descent into terrorism – in the aftermath of Bin Laden's 1998 Fatwa to kill American and Western civilians – is an aberration of PUPJI norms and procedures. How Jemaah Islamiyah traveled the road from an emerging *counter-society* – as envisioned in PUPJI – to an untimely *counter-state* movement – in direct contradiction to PUPJI's norms and procedures – is the subject matter of this paper.

Background Information on PUPJI

PUPJI was first discovered two months after the 2002 Bali bombing. A police raid in Solo, Central Java on the house of Achmad Roihan – a member of JI's Central Executive Council [*Qiyadah Markaziyah*] – rendered the pamphlet in the hands of the police.¹⁸ After a preliminary analysis of its content, the authorities were quick to recognize its value for throwing light on the workings of the group. Additional copies were subsequently recovered at the homes of other high-ranking JI leaders throughout Indonesia.

Files extracted from Imam Samudra's computer – a top JI field-commander responsible for orchestrating the first Bali bombing – also contain information on PUPJI.¹⁹ In his book on Jemaah Islamiyah, Nasir Abbas – yet another key JI operative and the former head of the organization's territorial sub-division *Mantiqi III* – describes in detail both the pamphlet and its significance for the group.²⁰ Documents retrieved during a July 2003 counter-terrorism dragnet against the terrorist network of JI commander and *Laskar Khos* [Special Operations Group] leader Mustopa in Semarang, Central Java also corroborate and supplement the content of JI's guidebook.²¹

social disposition. In this way, they implement alternative lifestyles and establish parallel social collectivities, which are often referred to by the term '*counter-societies*.' Most religious sectarian, anarchist, communist, and even feminist movements perceive themselves as deserving of the title of '*counter-societies*.'

¹⁸ 'Jamaah Islamiyah and the Soya Milk Factory,' *Tempo*, **15** (3), 17-23 December 2002 and 'The Bombings In Bali, Makassar And Marriott Are Linked,' *Tempo*, **6** (4), 14-20 October 2003.

¹⁹ 'Police Enlist Muslim Scholars to Study JI Documents,' *Jakarta Post*, 19 September 2003.

²⁰ Abbas, Nasir (2005), *Membongkar Jamaah Islamiyah*, Jakarta: Garfindo.

²¹ 'Bombs in a Shoe Shop,' *Tempo*, **6** (4), 14-20 October 2003.

In court, PUPJI was applied as evidence in the trials of the Lampung group – the key suspects behind the first Bali bombing – and, even more prominently, that of Abu Bakar Bashir – the alleged *emir* and spiritual leader of JI.²² However, due to the uncertain nature of the legal process during terrorism trials in Indonesia and the repeated withdrawal of promised testimonies by key JI suspects, PUPJI seems to have had little impact on the overall proceedings. One possible explanation is that although some JI members profess to have seen and read the handbook, others claim to have never even heard of its existence.²³ Even more troubling is the persistent denial by top JI commanders – such as Imam Samudra, Ali Ghufron and Abu Rusdan – that the document is authentic.²⁴

Part of the mystery is explained by the fact that PUPJI was meant as a reference manual for senior JI cadres.²⁵ Not every member recruited into the organization was presented with a copy or expected to know PUPJI's content. In terms of key JI operatives who negate the existence of the handbook, their reluctance to acknowledge it stems from their insistence that even the organization that issued it – namely, Jemaah Islamiyah – is not for real. As they have widely proclaimed in the media, both PUPJI and JI are a convenient fabrication of the Indonesian authorities, part of a murky conspiracy to undermine Islam and Muslims at the behest of the United States. Even Abu Bakar Bashir – who prosecutors claim formed part of the religious committee that originally authored the booklet – has repeatedly stated that PUPJI was planted as evidence by the Indonesian police to prove that an organization by the name of Jemaah Islamiyah exists.²⁶

²² 'God's Enemy: Bashir,' *Herald Sun* (Australia), 29 October 2004.

²³ 'Secret Guide Details JI Plan for Conquest,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 September 2003.

²⁴ 'Alleged Terror Group Leader Goes On Trial In Indonesia,' *AFP*, 29 October 2003.

²⁵ See, for example, the statement of Nasir Abbas that he only became acquainted with the PUPJI when he was appointed *Wakalah* leader for Sabah, Malaysia in 1997. He had previously been an ordinary member for the period 1993-1997, but he had never seen the document as such, 'X Files Jemaah Islamiyah: Misteri Tandzim Sirri,' [The Mystery of the Secret Organization], *Nasional, GATRA*, 28 May 2004, Source: http://swaramuslim.net/more.php?id=A1014_0_1_0_M. Similarly, in an interview with Tempo Magazine, Ali Imron – a low level JI operative who had participated in the 2002 Bali bombings – claimed that he had never seen the PUPJI, but had heard of its existence from his brother Amrozi who was higher-up in the hierarchy of JI. 'Ali Imron: I Never Thought I'd Be A Star,' *Tempo*, **24** (3) 18-24 February 2003.

²⁶ 'Ba'asyir Contacted By Bin Laden,' *CNN*, 2 December 2004; 'The Emir: An Interview With Abu Bakar Ba'asyir', *Jamestown Foundation*, **3** (9), 15 September 2005, footnote 6.

Notwithstanding such contradictions, investigation proceedings, court documents, witness statements, and journalist reports all support the authenticity of JI's guidebook. For one, the procedural norms outlined in PUPJI have been followed throughout the organization's existence. From the rise of JI cadres through the ranks²⁷ and the nomination of regional and sub-regional chiefs²⁸ to the oath-taking ceremony marking the inclusion of new members into the group²⁹ and the regular meetings scheduled at the *Markaziyah*, *Mantiqi* and *Wakalah* levels,³⁰ PUPJI's institutional influence and formative impact are evident in a number of ways.

Even with regard to violence, most terrorist attacks conducted by the group bear the hallmarks of JI's manual. The two Bali bombings, the Marriott hotel bombing, and the Christmas Eve bombing all share in the commonality of their being operations in which the PUPJI-stipulated *modus operandi* of division of labor and cell compartmentalization, pre-ops team surveillance and post-ops team review have all been dutifully implemented.³¹ Under these circumstances, any attempt to discredit JI's guidebook needs to provide an alternative rationale for the high-levels of standardization and operationalization of norms and procedures that are clearly manifested in the day-to-day workings of the group.

Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI

PUPJI portrays JI as a highly centralized and well-structured organization with a top-down chain of command and meticulously defined objectives and activities. It also

²⁷ PUPJI regulations on this issue are contained in Chapter V, Article 11 of JI's Constitution, [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.14. For a good account of how these regulations worked out in practice, see Nasir Abbas' experience as described in his book, *Membongkar Jamaah Islamiyah*, p.87-137 and Ken Conboy's description of Hambali's rise to power, in Conboy, Ken *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network* (2004), p.46-9; 53-6;59-63; 156-7.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ PUPJI regulations on this issue are contained in Chapter X of JI's Constitution, [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.18. For a good account of the oath-taking ceremony, see Abbas, Nasir (2005), and 'Underground Video,' *Tempo* **12** (4), 22-28 November 2005.

³⁰ PUPJI regulations on this issue are contained in Chapter IX, Article 25-28, [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.17; For a good account of how these regulations worked out in practice on *Markaziyah* level, see 'Zulkarnaen: The Commander From Sragen,' *Tempo*, **5** (6), 4 – 10 October 2005; Abbas, Nasir (2005), and various ICG reports on JI.

³¹ Details on operational planning and attack execution are contained in the *Al Manhaj Al-Amaliy Li Iqomatid Dien* section, [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.6-9. See also, Conboy, Ken (2004), p.165-84 and 229-35.

outlines a broad framework of organizational and operational procedures, based on *Salafi-Jihadist* religious principles and a rigorous methodology of self-discipline, inter-body consultation, and internal control mechanisms. Furthermore, JI's constitution in PUPJI unequivocally sanctions acceptable and non-acceptable behavior for members. Three things stand out in this perspective:

- The emphasis on *Daulah Islamiyah* [Islamic state] as a stepping stone towards the restoration of the global Islamic Caliphate [global Islamic governance];³²
- The process of preparing for the *Daulah Islamiyah* [Islamic state] through a persistent and patient “molding” of the individual, the family, and the *Jama'ah* [group] as Islamic entities;³³
- The prominence of military training and *jihad musallah* [armed struggle] as the final outcome and the ultimate test of success for JI's long preparations.³⁴

It is imperative to consider all three principles in tandem in order to understand JI. While other Islamist movements might share some of JI's objectives, PUPJI's pre-eminent focus on armed struggle as its preferred *modus operandi* for establishing *Daulah Islamiyah* and restoring the global Islamic Caliphate places JI into a completely different category of groups. The organization's efforts to cultivate the individual, the family, and the environment can only be understood in the context of JI's unwavering resolution to become a military outfit. It is this difference that accounts for JI's descent into violence and its subsequent transformation into a clandestine terrorist network.

Within PUPJI, Al-Qaeda's influence on JI is evident both in terms of JI's ideology and JI's *modus operandi*. The ways in which the parameters of the struggle

³² [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, Chapter II, Article 4, Clause 2 of JI's Constitution, p.13.

³³ PUPJI, p.3 and p.37-42.

³⁴ PUPJI, p.3, p.42-4, and p.52.

are conceptualized, the organizational phases through which JI is expected to pass, and the clear distinction between JI's administrative apparatus and its operational branch all point to an organization whose reason for being and approach to the world are solidly rooted in seeking out opportunities for violence. As PUPJI phrases it:

“The effort to develop strength is a long process that includes building potential until [the organization] reaches the stage where this potential has become real, effective, and ready to be used in a show of strength and combat operations.”³⁵

The Organizational Patterns of JI According to PUPJI

JI as a Jama'ah [Group]

According to PUPJI, the main objective of JI as a *jama'ah* [group] is to develop the resources and the capabilities of its members and the organization as a whole. In a 1997 interview, the founding father and first *emir* [leader] of JI, Abdullah Sungkar, observed that such outcome is to be achieved in three consecutive phases:

- *Quwwatul Aqidah* [Faith's strength];
- *Quwwatul Ukhuwwah* [Brotherhood's strength];
- *Quwwatul Musallaha* [Military strength];³⁶

According to this interview, the need to establish JI as a separate *jama'ah* [group] is brought forth by the fact that other organizations have forsaken their religion and have become ineffective at dealing with oppressive governments. The strategic and tactical differences between JI and the rest of the Islamic community require a separate organizational model, a distinct developmental trajectory, and a different institutional entity to embody and sustain JI's unique vision and mission.

³⁵ PUPJI, p. 9.

³⁶ *Nida'ul Al-Islam*, Interview with Sheikh Abdullah Sungkar (1997)

Similarly, PUPJI outlines two paths through which JI's strengths are to be nurtured:

- *Al-Manhaj al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien* [the Methodology to Establish the Religion];
- *Al-Manhaj Al-Amaliy Li Iqomatid Dien* [the Methodology of Work/Operational Guide];

These two paths are to be implemented by training and developing enlisted JI members, and by cultivating and expanding the organization geographically.³⁷ The structural model of a *jama'ah* [group] is particularly well suited for such endeavors. As a functionally distinct entity that differentiates between members and non-members, it allows for the group to recruit, indoctrinate, and train its followers into obedience. The institutional vehicle of the *jama'ah* thus lies at the foundation of JI's efforts to carve a separate public space for its particular type of collective action.

On the one hand, JI's goal is "to establish the religion collectively through the *jama'ah*."³⁸ On the other hand, JI hopes to develop a particular type of community – with a strong sense of religious, political, and social identity – which can be used as a launching pad for its mission of armed *jihad*.³⁹ The two paths are thereby inherently linked. Only by possessing the correct perspective, emotional conditioning, and material preparation, JI members will be successful in achieving *Daulah Islamiyah* [Islamic State] and the Global Islamic Caliphate through *jihad musallah* [armed struggle].

Viewed from this perspective, Jemaah Islamiyah as a *jama'ah* is only the first step on the long road to the group's transformation into an armed *jihad* movement.

³⁷ [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p. 9-12.

³⁸ PUPJI, p. 22.

³⁹ PUPJI, Chapter II, Article 5 of the JI Constitution, p. 13.

JI as a Qiy'adah Rosyidah [Core Group of Those Who Follow the Righteous Path]

According to PUPJI, before JI transforms itself into a full-blown *jihad* movement, some core mechanisms and principles need to be instituted within its structures to ensure that the organization will not deviate from the “right” path or forget its “true” mission. The essential component, in this regard, is the cultivation of a “righteous” leadership endowed with a “wholesome” strategic vision.

To accomplish this, Jemaah Islamiyah conceptualizes itself as starting out with a *Qiy'adah Rosyidah*. *Qiy'adah Rosyidah* refers to a ‘core group’ of leaders who possess the “true” faith, knowledge, and leadership skills. Their role is to guide the organization and its members along the “righteous” path and to adapt their skills and strategies to suit the exigencies of an ever-changing environment.⁴⁰ They are expected both to set the agenda and to pave the way for other members to follow it.

Under these circumstances, the processes of leadership selection, training, and evaluation become critical to the success of the movement in the long term. Jemaah Islamiyah can achieve its vision of *Daulah Islamiyah* [Islamic state] and restore the Global Islamic Caliphate through its strategy of *jihad musallah* [armed *jihad*] only if it manages to sustain and to preserve *Qiy'adah Rosyidah* as its guiding element. In the course of the group’s existence, the molding influence and institutional impact of *Qiy'adah Rosyidah* will prove essential to retaining the group’s identity and core values, while also adapting its structures and membership for the opportunities and challenges that the future holds.

JI as a Qoi'dah Sholabah [Solid Base]

Once the core leadership is developed and its long-term strategy outlined, JI can proceed to the next stage of its evolution. During this phase, the knowledge, characteristics, and experiences of the ‘core group’ of leaders will be passed on to

⁴⁰ PUPJI, p. 25-7.

other members of the *jama'ah* [group]. The goal is to build *Qoi'dah Sholabah*, or a 'solid base' of followers, who are steadfast in their obedience and dedicated to the group and its objectives.

According to PUPJI, JI as *Qoi'dah Sholabah* will be characterized by material strength and emotional solidarity. Its members will act as the vanguard and the "core executor, propagator, and guardian of the *jama'ah*'s mission."⁴¹ They will assist one another and keep the fire of the struggle alive. A collectivity of like-minded individuals will only strengthen the movement and exert a unifying impact on its daily activities.

It is important to compare this phase of JI's development with Al-Qaeda's rationale as a 'Solid Base' [*Al-Qa'idah Al-Sulbah*]. As conceptualized by Abdullah Azzam and put into practice by Osama Bin Laden and Ayman Al-Zawahiri, the 'Solid Base' is a conglomerate of training camps, which provide military instruction and religious indoctrination to their recruits. Concurrently, they also embody the symbolic effects and the practical manifestations of armed *jihad* as a way of life:

"Therefore, I came with the idea of an essential base [*Al-Qa'idah Al-Sulbah*] for the construction of the Islamic society, which is as follows . . . The Islamic society cannot be established without an Islamic movement that goes through the fire of tests. Its members need to mature in the fires of trials. This movement will represent the spark that ignites the potential of the nation. It will carry out a long *jihad*, in which [the movement] will provide the leadership and the spiritual guidance. The long *jihad* will bring people's qualities to the fore and highlight their potentials. It will define their positions and have their leaders assume their roles to direct the march and to channel it. After all the tribulations, *Allah* will install them in the land and make them the outer manifestation of his might and the means to the victory of his religion."⁴²

⁴¹ PUPJI, p. 28.

⁴² Paz, Reuven, *Tangled Web: International Networking of the Islamist Struggle* (Unpublished Manuscript), Appendix 1 [R. Paz translation of Arabic text originally published by Dr. Abdullah Azzam in *Al-Jihad* magazine (Pakistan), No. 41, April 1988, p.46].

According to PUPJI, JI as a *Qoi'dah Sholabah* [Solid Base] will have a similar impact. It will not only pave the way for other Muslims in Southeast Asia to acquire deadly *jihad* skills, but it will also exert a gravitational pull on them. In this regard, *Qoi'dah Sholabah* is a much broader and deeper concept than *Qiy'adah Rosyidah* [Core Group of Those Who Follow the Righteous Path]. It encompasses both the 'core group' – as leaders – and other members of the *jama'ah* [group] – as followers.

JI as a Tandzim Sirri [Secret Organization]

The imperative to develop JI as a *Tandzim Sirri* [Secret Organization] is generated by the unwavering resolution of the group to become a military outfit. Similar overtones of concealment can be recognized in training manuals authored by Al-Qaeda and other extremist militant groups. The need for secrecy is usually prompted by the practical consideration to insulate the open organization – with its mass membership and public interactions – from the illegal activities of a small contingent of its cadres – usually deliberately and covertly trained for the purpose of violence.

Tandzim Sirri was first introduced by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in 1942-1943, in response to the increasing hostility of the Egyptian government and its British allies towards the movement.⁴³ The secret apparatus fulfilled two key purposes, it maintained the security of the organization vis-à-vis its external enemies, and upheld the internal law-and-order within the group. Its existence as a separate entity from the Brotherhood's administrative apparatus was instituted due to its explicitly military role. Apart from the security benefits that mandatory secrecy imparted, the cycles of independent decision-making, covert operational planning, and clandestine execution were deemed essential to the success of any form of paramilitary activity.⁴⁴ The Muslim Brotherhood could thus continue unimpeded with its social programs of grass-roots education, community development, and political mobilization, while also protecting and advancing its interests by force, if and when the need arose.

⁴³ Mitchell, Richard (1993), *The Society of Muslim Brothers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.30-2.

⁴⁴ PUPJI, p.148-50

Within PUPJI, these same aspects are emphasized because JI is developing military capabilities in direct opposition to the state's monopoly on power. Concealment is considered paramount so as not to avert the 'enemy' – equated here with the state – to the gradual advancement of the organization in military terms.⁴⁵ The subdivision of JI into an open organization and a 'secret apparatus' is believed to facilitate the group's dissimulation and to contribute to its long-term survival.

Secondly, the purpose of JI as a *Tandzim Sirri* – according to PUPJI – is to provide periodic military instruction and operational reminders to the group's members. Even if the organization has not yet reached the phase of a full-blown *jihad* movement, it is important for it to cultivate its members as fighters. Small-scale training sessions are recommended, in which paramilitary instruction is imparted in a gradual and measured fashion.⁴⁶ The ultimate goal of the 'secret organization' is to lay the groundwork for JI's eventual transformation into an effective *counter-state* outfit.

As such, JI as *Tandzim Sirri* [Secret Organization] has a dual role. It both contributes to the internal security and external survival of the organization, while also preparing JI's cadres to adopt 'armed struggle' as their *modus operandi* in the long run.

JI as a Qoi'dah Aminah [Secure Base]

The final stage of JI's evolution – as outlined in PUPJI – is the group's transformation into a 'secure base' and a full-blown militant outfit. For this to occur, JI must exert complete and effective control over its territory, authority, and membership. In the process, it will acquire critical capabilities and resources, and develop them into organizational and operational strengths. In a nutshell, JI will reach its full institutional embodiment as a '*counter-society*.' Only when this takes place, Jemaah

⁴⁵ [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.29

⁴⁶ PUPJI, p.30

Islamiyah will be able to transform itself into a ‘*counter-state*’ outfit and launch a campaign of armed *jihad* according to PUPJI.

In PUPJI, *Qoi’dah Aminah* refers to a ‘secure base.’ JI as *Qoi’dah Aminah* is the geographical, demographical, and institutional embodiment of this concept. What this means in practice is that the group has secured control over a certain territory, where both preachers and *mujahideen* [fighters] have been deployed; the population has accepted JI’s teachings and methods and is ready to sacrifice; and the community/collectivity is secure from the advances of the enemy because it has developed certain defence mechanisms, in both political and military terms.⁴⁷

As defined by JI’s guidebook, the central leadership of the territory in question is under the control of the Islamic movement and there are enough resources and capabilities to neutralize “the pressures of the enemy’s politics.”⁴⁸ In terms of geography, the location of such territory is advantageous for both defensive and offensive actions. On the demographic front, the ‘secure base’ represents a community which is intrinsically averse to being subjugated and placed under the control of the central authorities. In the realm of politics, such area renders itself conveniently to outside recognition and can be legitimized through international cooperation and diplomatic efforts.⁴⁹

All of these requirements contribute to the gradual advancement of the movement through their long-term conditioning impact. Jemaah Islamiyah as a ‘secure base’ is the territorial, political, and military embodiment of the organization as a *counter-society*. It is the tangible manifestation that JI has achieved its institutional purpose as a mobilizing agent for collective action. Concurrently, the outfit has also reached the stage when it can traverse the threshold into a *counter-state* outfit and adopt armed struggle as its main goal and strategic focus. JI as *Qoi’dah Aminah* – according to PUPJI – is the ideal platform from which *jihad musallah* [armed *jihad*] can be launched.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ PUPJI, p.45

⁴⁸ PUPJI

⁴⁹ PUPJI

⁵⁰ PUPJI

Not surprisingly, the emphasis within this stage of JI's evolution is on military training and combat preparations. Since the group considers *jihad musallah* [armed *jihad*] as a showpiece of organizational and operational strength, it is imperative for JI "to develop military-type personnel, who possess combat energy, tactical thinking and/or strategic thinking, and/or leadership qualities."⁵¹ All other endeavors of the outfit – from funding and collaboration with other *jama'ah* to security and intelligence gathering – are expected to revolve around its military efforts.⁵² During this phase, militancy and martyrdom are elevated to central virtues in the group's ethos. The goal is to inculcate destructive *jihad* skills and self-sacrificial ideals in JI's members and to prepare them to fight till death in the name of the group's religious vision and strategic mission.

As such, JI as a 'secure base' is the climax of Jemaah Islamiyah as an organization. It embodies both the spiritual essence and the institutional manifestations of the *Daulah Islamiyah* [Islamic state] and the Islamic Caliphate [global Islamic governance] of the future. Rather than focus solely on self-development and self-improvement, the group will attempt to shift the prevailing balance of power. Such efforts will be directed either against a particular nation-state (such as, Indonesia) or the international system as a whole. The logical steps on this path of JI's development are *I'dad* [preparation], *Ribath* [standby], and *Qital* [fight].⁵³

The Operational Dimensions of JI According to PUPJI

Details about the administration of the group and its daily proceedings are outlined in the sections of PUPJI that deal with the Methodology for Operations (*Manhaj Al-Amaliy*) and JI's Constitution (*Nidhomul Asasiy*). These are the two most extensive and elaborate segments of the entire manual. Their importance is underscored by the fact that they deal concurrently with the group's religious nature, its strategic culture, and its operational routines.

⁵¹ PUPJI, p.46

⁵² PUPJI, p. 47-50

⁵³ Section on *Jihad Musallah* (Armed Jihad), Ibid, p.53. See also endnote 7 and 21. It states that: "VI. Steps [for Armed Jihad]: *I'dad* (Preparation); *Ribath* (Standby); *Qital* (Fight)"

Al-Manhaj Al-Amaliy stands for ‘general operational guide.’ It provides information on the group’s operational dynamics and composite structural layers. According to the manual, JI’s command apparatus is divided into an administrative branch and operational branch.⁵⁴ While the administrative subdivision is responsible for managing the organization as a whole, the operational subdivision exhibits much more specialized functions. It is the equivalent of a field apparatus placed directly in charge of JI’s paramilitary activities. As PUPJI defines it, its areas of expertise include:

“a) To observe, analyze, and assess all aspects of the enemy and the environment; b) To carefully and objectively monitor all potential and real strengths that we possess; c) To determine targets on the enemy and the environment to serve our purposes; d) To devise a general and an operational plan.”⁵⁵

Even though the language of this section is deliberately vague and can be applied to a range of other activities as well, there is no doubt that JI’s operational branch is the ultimate stake-holder with regard to JI’s military evolution. For one, the elements of strength that the group considers necessary for its advancement as an effective organization are articulated using explicitly military terminology. They include qualitative developments, such as “mobility, firepower, and endurance,” as well as quantitative developments – both physical and non-physical – such as, “mobility, arms weaponry, physical endurance” and “confidence, mental endurance, knowledge, management.”⁵⁶ Furthermore, the sequence of proceedings – for what the manual terms ‘activities’ and ‘events’ – follows the spectrum of “planning, execution, report, and evaluation of team efforts.”⁵⁷ As such, they are very much in concurrence with standard military procedures and any national army’s concept of operations.

⁵⁴ PUPJI, p.6

⁵⁵ PUPJI, p.7

⁵⁶ PUPJI

⁵⁷ PUPJI, p.8

Secondly, with regard to the stages of preparation for each operation and their classification according to PUPJI, these revolve around “intelligence, strength development, use of strength, and combat operations.”⁵⁸ The intrinsic components that must be put into place before an attack is launched are (i) the command and control function; (ii) the coordination/ communication function; (iii) the objective assessment of resources and capabilities; and, (iv) the selection of the most opportune time/ moment for attack.⁵⁹ What this tells us about the operational cycle of Jemaah Islamiyah is that it envisions itself as a continuum of preparatory ‘activities,’ punctuated on both sides by paramilitary ‘events.’ In this way, each operation becomes a stepping stone for the next one. To achieve its full military potential, JI must amass resources, capabilities, and expertise, and subsequently feed them back into the planning and execution cycles for each new ‘event.’ From this perspective, Jemaah Islamiyah’s operational routine also follows standard military rules and combat preparation procedures.

Finally, with regard to the organizational aspects of each operation, PUPJI specifies three types of working relationships for JI’s operational teams. These include “one core of the network (centralization); many cores of the network (organized decentralization); and even more cores of the network (unorganized decentralization).”⁶⁰ As basic and rudimentary as this delineation sounds, it is important to remember the heavy compartmentalization of team efforts during terrorist attacks conducted by JI, such as the first Bali bombing or the Marriott hotel attack. Even though the launching team for each operation was initially insulated and tightly coordinated (centralization), there were at least two levels of peripheral accomplices, who either provided attack logistics – such as transportation and funding (organized decentralization) – or post-attack team support – mainly in the form of safe-houses and general protection from the authorities (unorganized decentralization).⁶¹ In this regard, JI’s Operational Guide exhibits clear military overtones at the level of planning and launching terrorist attacks as well.

⁵⁸ PUPJI, p.9

⁵⁹ PUPJI, p.8

⁶⁰ PUPJI p.9

⁶¹ Conboy, Ken (2004), p.165-84 and 229-35.

In summary, despite the deliberate obfuscation throughout JI's guidebook on the issue of the group's military ambitions, it is obvious that the activities of JI's operational branch belong firmly in the military domain. This is the entity which is *de facto* in charge of conceptualizing, defining, and laying the groundwork for JI's engagement in violence. Although the group's administrative apparatus still holds ultimate decision-making authority over its operational branch, the goal is to provide broad and general directions, rather than to stymie personal initiative.⁶² JI's operational subdivision thus retains high levels of organizational autonomy and operational flexibility, as long as it manages to calibrate its activities to match the overall capabilities and resources of JI. In PUPJI, this is reflected in the emphasis on maintaining a "close mutual and reciprocal relationship" between the two units.⁶³ Rather than in competition with one another, they are expected to work in tandem and to synchronize their activities.

What this indicates is that Jemaah Islamiyah is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional organization. Its functional differentiation into an administrative branch and an operational branch ensures that the burden of the task at hand is equally subdivided. Such division is especially important when it comes to military strategy and tactics. In the realm of combat preparations, the existence of an autonomous technical apparatus, placed directly in charge of the organization's military endeavors, is crucial for the overall transformation of JI into an effective fighting force. Since military operations are defined as "all efforts, activities, and measures that use the elements of strength based on a guided plan and in relation to certain criteria of space and time," persistent and constructive efforts are needed to achieve them.⁶⁴ This can only be accomplished if JI's operational subdivision takes the time and effort to develop its military resources and manpower capabilities independently from the rest of JI.

According to PUPJI, there are three areas of capacity-building initiatives that deserve special attention. They include a Military Training and Development program; a Personnel Development program; and a Territorial Development

⁶² [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.9

⁶³ PUPJI, p.6

⁶⁴ PUPJI, p.7

program.⁶⁵ The Military Training and Development program is responsible for the process of selecting, recruiting, training, and creating a “competent, loyal, effective, and efficient personnel.”⁶⁶ What this means in practice – to use real-life examples – is that this program is in charge of planning the curriculum and monitoring the activities of JI’s training camps in the Philippines and Sulawesi.⁶⁷ It is responsible for establishing and maintaining JI’s training facilities; recruiting and training promising JI cadres; and transforming them into battle-hardened JI veterans.

The Personnel Development program, on the other hand, tackles the issue of the on-going development and cultivation of JI members, especially once these recruits have graduated from the group’s training facilities.⁶⁸ To achieve this purpose, the internal assessment of their capabilities and their suitable post-graduation placement within JI’s ranks become paramount. Whether such recruits will remain as trainers in the group’s military camps or be directed to take over critical positions in JI’s administration will be determined on the basis of their skills and demonstrated potential. One example of successful placement is Nasir Abbas, who was consecutively ordered to assume the responsibilities of a military instructor at Camp Hudaybiyah; a *Wakalah* leader in Sabah, Malaysia; and, ultimately, the head of JI’s *Mantiqi* III.⁶⁹

Finally, the Territorial Development program is responsible for preparing the terrain and laying the groundwork for the group’s combat activities. Among its most important tasks are the inspection of border, field, and soil conditions; the study of weather and road conditions; and the critical assessment of the local population, its customs and habits, and material and human resources. In its entirety, this program thus oversees the overall “preparation of the [selected] area so as to support the show of force and combat operations.”⁷⁰ A real-life example of it is JI’s *Uhud* project

⁶⁵ PUPJI, p.9-12

⁶⁶ PUPJI, p.10

⁶⁷ Conboy, Ken (2004), Chapter 6, pp.66-70; ‘An Underground Video,’ *Tempo*, **12** (6) 22-28 November 2005; ‘The Emir: An Interview With Abu Bakar Ba’asyir,’ *Jamestown Foundation*, **3** (9), 15 September 2005, footnote 7.

⁶⁸ [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.11

⁶⁹ Abbas, Nasir (2005), p.87-137 and ‘The General of Suicide Bombers,’ *Tempo*, (6) 4 14-20 October 2003.

⁷⁰ [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.11

undertaken in 2000 and headed by Mustopa, the former head of JI's *Mantiqi* III. This initiative consisted of a territorial building program in Poso, Sulawesi, where JI members were expected to be sent for training, residence, and combat.⁷¹

In summary, the purpose of the three programs is to create the infrastructure, the personnel, and the expertise necessary to transform JI into an effective fighting force. By building assets and developing capabilities in these areas, the group envisions itself as becoming a full-blown military outfit, capable of withstanding the enemy's advances and of launching its own offensive initiatives. To quote PUPJI once again:

“The effort to develop strength is a long process that includes building potential until [the organization] reaches the stage where this potential has become real, effective, and ready to be used in a show of strength and combat operations.”⁷²

In conclusion, the Methodology for Operations (*Manhaj Al-Amaliy*) lays out the military procedures and the combat rules for the group. It is an essential component of JI's operational evolution since it focuses on the real and effective cultivation of JI's military strength. As stipulated in the pamphlet, JI's operational branch is responsible for managing the group's military camps and training programs, its field preparations and field testing efforts, its territorial development and personnel development programs, etc. Given JI's paramilitary aspirations and its subsequent involvement in terrorism, it is not far fetched to presume that JI's operational branch is also the *de facto* entity in charge of the group's terrorist activities as well. Within PUPJI, this is reflected in the *Manhaj Al-Amaliy* incorporating provisions that allow JI's operational teams to work both in a centralized and a de-centralized fashion, and its emphasis on operational cycles and combat routines that consist of long preparatory 'activities,' punctuated by a few and in-between *destructive* 'events.'

⁷¹ Abbas, Nasir (2005), p.90-5

⁷² [ICPVTR Translation] PUPJI, p.9

By contrast, JI's Constitution [*Nidhomul Asasiy*] deals exclusively with administrative matters and organizational norms and procedures. Comprising fifteen chapters and a total of forty-three articles, *Nidhomul Asasiy* establishes the ground rules and the membership criteria for JI. It also maps out the hierarchical structures, the command and control mechanisms, and the decision-making processes of the group. Its primary goal is to ensure the smooth functioning of the organization by stipulating the ways in which Jemaah Islamiyah should be run.

The need to regulate the way in which JI is governed stems from the religious nature of the group. Since the key reason behind its members' coming together and forming a community of like-minded individuals is so that they can practice their religion collectively and through the institutional vehicle of a *jamaah*,⁷³ it is imperative for the organization to be managed in accordance with Islamic laws and principles. As PUPJI phrases it:

“The objective is to ensure that the administration of *Jama'ah Islamiyah* is organized in order to establish the Caliphate in accordance with the way of the Prophet, which guarantees the implementation of the *Syariah* [Islamic law] in a comprehensive way.”⁷⁴

This is also reflected by the inclusion in *Nidhomul Asasiy* of a section with general explanations and quotations from the *Qu'ran* and *Sunnah* [Prophetic tradition].⁷⁵ The purpose of these additions is to contextualize the constitutional provisions featured in PUPJI and to interpret them from the perspective of the traditional sources of Islam. Only when JI members are assured that the directives of their organization are in harmony with Islamic values and principles, they can also be confident that they are truly following the path of God and their rightly guided predecessors, in preparation for the Islamic state and the Islamic Caliphate of the future.

With regard to JI's administrative apparatus, the Constitution stipulates both a technical and a territorial component. The technical component is represented by the

⁷³ PUPJI, p.22

⁷⁴ PUPJI, p.12

⁷⁵ PUPJI, p.22-24

Qiyadah [Executive] Council; the *Syuro* [Consultative] Council; the *Fatwa* [Religious] Council; and the *Hisbah* [Internal Discipline] Council.⁷⁶ As entities with specialized competencies, these councils are expected to preside over the policy planning and the policy implementation functions of JI. Their role is to articulate, disseminate, and implement the organization's directives throughout its ranks in a uniform and equal manner. From key organizational decisions and general issues of management to more specific matters of religion and disciplinary action, the purpose of the technical councils is to manage and to align the organization horizontally.

The territorial component, on the other hand, is manifested in the heavily layered and highly hierarchical relationships enacted among the three area commands of JI. The latter comprise the *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council; the *Qiyadah Manthiqiyah* [Regional Executive] Council; and the *Qiyadah Wakalah* [Local Representative] Council.⁷⁷ The driving principle behind them is to facilitate the structural alignment and the vertical coordination of the organization, given JI's geographically rather spread-out administrative apparatus. By initiating and monitoring the activities of the group at the local and regional levels, and by making sure that these are also in agreement with the requirements of the Central Executive Council, the territorial councils thus ensure the smooth and synchronized functioning of JI and its field units on the ground.

The conclusion to be drawn from the parallel existence of a technical and a territorial component in JI's administrative apparatus is that Jemaah Islamiyah possesses multiple loci of authority and hierarchies of command. Differences in functional roles and operational procedures are calibrated through structural layerings in the existing configurations of power. As an outfit with versatile ambitions, capacities, and strategies, Jemaah Islamiyah can only succeed by leveraging on its manifold and sometimes overlapping channels of communication, coordination, and command and control. To this end, JI has created both an overarching *superstructure* – reflected in the horizontal activities of its four technical councils – and an underlying *infrastructure* – rendered in the vertical relationship among its three area

⁷⁶ PUPJI, p.13

⁷⁷ PUPJI

commands. Any ensuing tensions are thus dissipated through the interconnected links and networked dynamics of an organization in *intentional* structural flux. Core and periphery relationships, top-down and bottom-up approaches, and horizontal and vertical alignments are all utilized to serve the group's multifaceted needs and purposes.

At the heart of this structural fluctuation is the religious, social, and strategic stratification of the group into (i) a *jama'ah* [a group of Muslims]; (ii) a *Tanzim* [organizational structure]; and (iii) an *Imarah* [Leadership].⁷⁸ Even though such differentiation may seem inconsequential at first glance, the reality is that it captures effectively the diverse purposes and manifestations of JI. Differences in institutional needs and functions are mediated through differences in structural and operational contexts and configurations.

For instance, Jemaah Islamiyah as a *jama'ah* designates a collectivity which acts as the building matrix for an Islamic order as a way of life. According to this interpretation, Muslim society is the product of Muslim individuals living under Muslim authority and struggling on behalf of Muslim ideas and interests.⁷⁹ The degree to which the group's followers accept Islam and live in accordance with Islamic laws and principles is also the degree to which the *jama'ah* will be successful. Empowerment, in this institutional context, is measured by ideological purity and conformity of practice. Exclusivity of membership is also important so as not to create opportunities for dissent or distraction among the *jama'ah*'s members.

At the same time, however, if JI is to grow and to develop as an organization, it must acquire new members and new objectives. Such changes precipitate new structural requirements as well. In order to attract fresh cadres or to retain the cadres it has already assembled, Jemaah Islamiyah must develop outreach programs and membership control mechanisms. Within the Constitution, this role is fulfilled by the *Tanzim* [organizational structure]. Its existence is justified by the need to integrate all of the group's members into one hegemonic organization. Only by consolidating their

⁷⁸ PUPJI, p.12-14

⁷⁹ See Chapter II, Article 4 & 5 in Ibid, p.13

resources and capabilities and by streamlining their efforts and initiatives will JI be able to ensure that its ultimate objectives be achieved. The mechanical solidarity of voluntary association is thus replaced with the compulsory centralization of membership, structure, and purpose. Viewed from this perspective, Jemaah Islamiyah truly becomes an organization in the Weberian sense of the term. It is capable of exerting authority and imposing its values both on the inside and on the outside of the group's perimeter, thereby retaining old cadres while also attracting fresh recruits.

The more JI expands though, the more difficult it becomes for the group to preserve its original identity and purpose. Especially in the context of the group's drive to acquire mass-membership, Jemaah Islamiyah will eventually find itself rather hard-pressed to sustain its elitist, conformist, and purist status as a *jama'ah*. To mediate between these differences of institutional purpose and function, JI's Constitution in PUPJI insists on introducing the structural configuration of an *Imarah* [Leadership]. Its role is to guide and to shape the organization and its activities in a way that allows Jemaah Islamiyah not to deviate from its original principles and objectives.

According to PUPJI, the *Imarah* can take various forms and institutional manifestations. It can be personified in the figure of the *Emir* [JI's Supreme Leader] and his supervisory role for the group.⁸⁰ It can also designate the knowledge and expertise of a few key individuals, selected to head the *Fatwa* [Religious] or *Hisbah* [Internal Discipline] Councils.⁸¹ In tandem, it can also connote the hierarchical ordering of structures and competencies, such as the *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council being in charge of appointing and supervising the members of the *Qiyadah Manthiqiyah* [Regional Executive] Council, which in turn is responsible for appointing and supervising the members of the *Qiyadah Wakalah* [Local Representative] Council, etc.⁸² Finally, the *Imarah* can also encompass the group's standardization of norms and procedures and of everyday customs and practices – as manifested in the ritual of *mubayaah* [oath of allegiance],⁸³ the criteria for group

⁸⁰ PUPJI

⁸¹ PUPJI, p.16

⁸² PUPJI, p.14

⁸³ PUPJI, p.13

membership and its ensuing obligations,⁸⁴ and the required quorum for majority voting during JI internal meetings.⁸⁵ As such, the structural configuration of an *Imarah* completes the operational gaps and institutional voids left behind in the space between Jemaah Islamiyah's functioning as a *jama'ah* and Jemaah Islamiyah functioning as a *Tanzim*.

In PUPJI, JI's Constitution also specifies the operational role of each council and its overall position within the organization. For example, the task of the *Qiyadah* [Executive] Council is to assist the *Emir* [JI's Supreme Leader] in conducting his administrative duties. Under its jurisdiction fall the articulation and the implementation of all directives pertaining to the group's general management.⁸⁶ The *Syuro* [Consultative] Council, on the other hand, conducts comprehensive evaluations and appraisals of the group's administrative procedures. On their basis, this council proposes necessary amendments to the Constitution.⁸⁷ The *Fatwa* [Religious] Council consults the *Emir* on matters of religion and answers any procedural queries he might have.⁸⁸ The *Hisbah* [Internal Discipline] Council monitors and regulates the actions and powers of the *Emir* and his assistants. Concurrently, it is also takes charge of bringing punitive actions against any JI members, who might have transgressed disciplinary procedures or neglected their stipulated chores.⁸⁹ As such, these councils oversee and embody the daily proceedings and processes that comprise JI as an organization.

In terms of the territorially spread-out apparatus of the group, the manual mentions that the *Qiyadah* [Executive] Council acts as an overarching framework uniting the *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council, the *Qiyadah Manthiqiyah* [Regional Executive] Council, and the *Qiyadah Wakalah* [Local Representative] Council.⁹⁰ It does not possess any legislative or executive authority as such, but merely performs the function of an umbrella structure for the activities of

⁸⁴ PUPJI, p.18-19

⁸⁵ PUPJI, p.17-18

⁸⁶ PUPJI, p.14

⁸⁷ PUPJI, p.15

⁸⁸ PUPJI, p.16

⁸⁹ PUPJI, p.16-17

⁹⁰ PUPJI, p.13

the other three area commands. In fact, it is they that wield true power and real authority, and, in particular, the *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council.⁹¹

The *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council is the effective go-between of the entire organization, binding together its territorial infrastructure and its technical superstructure into an organic whole. It thereby performs a dual role, having executive authority over both branches of the group. As such, it is the ultimate power-broker within JI, working in tandem with the *Emir* [Supreme Leader] to oversee and manage the group. It also plays a key role within the *Qiyadah* [Executive] Council, presiding over and directing the activities of the *Qiyadah Manthiqiyah* [Regional Executive] and the *Qiyadah Wakalah* [Local Representative] Councils.⁹²

The system of internal checks and balances within JI functions on a number of different levels as well. Apart from the *Hisbah* [Internal Discipline] Council and its role for maintaining internal control and harmony within the group, the *Emir* [Supreme Leader] and the *Qiyadah Markaziyah* [Central Executive] Council also act as important power-brokers. Whether supervising and directing the activities of the group as a whole, or whether appointing, rewarding, or terminating deserving individual members, these are the two functional units that bear supreme authority over JI. It is with them that ultimate decision-making power rests and from them that it emanates towards the rest of the organization.⁹³

To summarize, JI's Constitution in PUPJI covers the range of administrative, executive, and legal procedures for the group. It provides both a broad, general overview and an in-depth, closer look at how the organization is structured, directed, and managed. From stipulating the procedures for appointment, tenure, and termination of JI leaders⁹⁴ and specifying the criteria, obligations, and rights of JI members⁹⁵ to discussing the regularity, quorum specifications, and majority rule during JI's internal meetings and identifying the sources, assets, and allocations of the

⁹¹ See Article XII, Clause 2, Ibid, p.14

⁹² PUPJI, p.14

⁹³ PUPJI, p.13-14

⁹⁴ PUPJI, p.13-17

⁹⁵ PUPJI, p.18-19

organization's finances and economy,⁹⁶ JI's Constitution thus paints a rich and complex picture of the day-to-day workings of the group. What started out as a collectivity of like-minded individuals became a community of like-practicing followers, and, ultimately, took the shape of a powerful centralized organization, in command of its membership, in control of its activities, and in charge of its destiny.

Conclusion: the JI and DI Dichotomy

This essay has attempted to take a closer look at JI's most authoritative text. Its driving motivation has been to illustrate the multiple ways in which the pamphlet has brought to life and given flesh to the group. A key misconception that it has hoped to dismiss is that Jemaah Islamiyah does not exhibit enough organizational functions or operational manifestations to be designated as a tangible organization.

In contrast, the essay has argued that PUPJI-stipulated norms and procedures have been prominent at every stage of the group's existence. From the organizational patterns of JI in its various phases of development to the operational dimensions and functional aspects of its administrative and operational branches, JI has behaved as an organization with a clear-cut strategy, a compelling trajectory, and a forceful command and control. It has carved out an institutional space for itself and has pursued with emphasis and dedication its stated goals and objectives. Moreover, the group has also been flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances and to include provisions for internal control, inter-body consultation, and crisis decision making.

To completely abandon the notion that JI does not constitute a tangible organization, it is important to do away with one last misapprehension. Since PUPJI envisioned Jemaah Islamiyah to emerge and to develop as a *counter-society* before becoming a *counter-state* movement, and since JI never reached its full institutional embodiment as a 'secure base' from which to launch its campaign of armed *jihad*,

⁹⁶ PUPJI, p.19-20

how do we explain the group's violent activities and terrorism involvement in the period 2000-2005? A record of destructive mayhem and bloodshed – such as the one JI exhibits – is definitely in need of a well-reasoned and well-substantiated explanation.

There are two possible justifications for JI's descent into terrorism before the arrival of the 'opportune' moment specified by its guidebook. One is of a historical nature, while the other bears more closely to the norms and provisions featured in PUPJI. As Ken Conboy has skillfully argued in his book *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, JI's agenda was effectively hijacked by a small contingent of its cadres led by Riduan Isamuddin, also known as Hambali.⁹⁷ In the context of the 1998 Bin Laden Fatwa to kill American and Western civilians, and given the close relationship between the two militant outfits, Hambali decided to take matters into his own hands. With the help of a few like-minded followers, he planned and executed the very first JI attacks.⁹⁸ Among them ranked the Medan Church bombings, the bombing of the Philippine ambassador's residence in Jakarta, and the Christmas Eve bombings. These acts of terror, however, still fit the specificities of 'local jihad' and were directed primarily in response to the group's involvement in the Maluku and Poso communal conflicts and the raiding of MILF's Abu Bakar Complex by the Philippine Army in 2000.

The campaign of the group reached a global crescendo with the Bali attack in October 2002. This was the first terrorist operation by JI, in which suicide bombers were successfully used. Its target range also included primarily Western civilians. The list of all subsequent attacks – from the Marriott hotel bombing and the Australian embassy bombing to the latest triple-suicide blasts in Bali in October 2005 – have all been perpetrated by the same roster of terrorist operatives, initially assembled, inspired, and given the 'green' light by Hambali.⁹⁹ Following his arrest in 2004, the command initiative fell upon the shoulders of Azahari bin Husin (killed in November 2005) and the current leader, Mohammed Noordin Top. As a terrorist commando team, they were acting on the presumption that they could join their campaign of

⁹⁷ Conboy, Ken (2004), Chapters 9 and 10, p.108-33.

⁹⁸ The first attack was the Medan church bombings of May 28, 2000. See Conboy, Ken (2004), p.110.

⁹⁹ Conboy, Ken (2004), Chapters 10 and 11, p.120-46.

jihād musallah [armed *jihād*] to the global campaign of Al-Qaeda against the United States and the West.¹⁰⁰ Viewed from this perspective, JI's descent into terrorism is both intrinsically and historically linked to the imperative for emergency violence around the world, as declared by Bin Laden and Ayman Al-Zawahiri.

The second explanation belongs to the realm of PUPJI-stipulated norms and procedures. Having read the manual, one comes out with a confused sense about the highly centralized nature of JI as an organization – as outlined in the guidebook – and JI's ad-hoc violence – as witnessed by the group's historical trajectory in the period 2000-2005. Yet, this apparent contradiction and paradoxical behavior have their origins in and can be glimpsed from within PUPJI itself. For one, a clear distinction exists between JI's administrative apparatus and its operational branch according to the manual. Secondly, Jemaah Islamiyah as an organization is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional entity, with multiple chains of command and sources of authority. As such, given the organizational autonomy and operational flexibility of the group's operational branch, it is not unthinkable that at some point of JI's existence this unit would have taken matters into its own hands and hijacked JI's trajectory anyway. The fact that it happened so late in the group's evolution – since the outfit was originally formed in 1993 – has more to do with the role and authority of Abdullah Sungkar as *Emir* of JI, than anything else.

It is worthwhile to remember that when Jemaah Islamiyah was first established, the group of followers surrounding Sungkar comprised mostly members and supporters of Darul Islam (DI).¹⁰¹ This steadfast rebellion against the Indonesian state at the time of its declared independence from Dutch colonial power exerted immense influence and impact on the country's subsequent history. As argued by Van Dijk in his magna opus *Rebellion Under The Banner Of Islam: The Darul Islam In Indonesia*, it provided a tangible taste and a real-life manifestation of the possibilities of an Islamic state as an alternative to the Indonesian republic.¹⁰² With this said,

¹⁰⁰ See Imam Samudra's justification for the Bali bombing of 2002, posted originally on www.istimata.com (now defunct)

¹⁰¹ 'Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The case of the Ngruki Network in Indonesia' (Corrected on 10 January 2003), *ICG Report*, 8 August 2002, p.3.

¹⁰² Van Dijk, Cees (1981), *Rebellion Under The Banner Of Islam: The Darul Islam In Indonesia*, Leiden University: Ph.D. Thesis, chapter 1 and conclusion.

however, it should also be noted that not all DI members were driven by religious fervor or Islamist ideals. For many rank-and-file soldiers, the rebellion was also a manifestation of their deeply held social, political, and economic grievances, especially in the realm of expanding federal control by Java over the rest of Indonesia's provinces. Yet another possible reason, according to Van Dijk, was the irregular proceedings surrounding the demobilization of the anti-Dutch revolutionary army after the war.¹⁰³

Such differences in motivation and ideology became especially pronounced following the sojourn of Southeast Asian volunteers in military training camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan war. From Abdullah Sungkar to Imam Samudra, various JI leaders and members have acknowledged the profound transformative impact this experience had on them. They returned to their homes as followers of *Salafi-Jihadist* religious principles and embraced a more puritanical and rigid interpretation of Islam. In this regard, their association with post-rebellion Darul Islam leaders and members – with their ad-hoc mysticism and intra-organizational bickering – became unsustainable. The rupture between Abdullah Sungkar and DI's leader Ajengan Masduki merely brought to the fore tensions that had been lurking under the surface for quite awhile. This rift also marked the official emergence of Jemaah Islamiyah as a distinct organization from Darul Islam.¹⁰⁴

Following these developments, JI's leaders needed a new organizational model, a distinct developmental trajectory, and a different institutional template to embody and sustain the group's unique vision and mission. Therefore, they crafted JI's religious manifesto, strategic programme, and operational manual, also known as PUPJI. To DI's extensive social networks, PUPJI counterpoised exclusivity of membership and selective recruitment. To DI's multiplicity of cell rings and small networks, PUPJI responded with a centralized, yet flexible structural apparatus. To DI's elasticity in religious matters, PUPJI contrasted its emphasis on religious purity and ideological discipline. In fact, the core notion of JI's guidebook – portraying Jemaah Islamiyah as a *counter-society* amassing resources, consolidating them over

¹⁰³PUPJI, Chapter 2

¹⁰⁴ 'Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous', *Asia Report No. 63*, 26 August 2003, p.38

time, and transforming them into organizational and operational strengths before it transforms itself into a *counter-state* outfit – originated from the deeply felt desire of JI’s leaders not to see their own rebellion and campaign of armed *jihad* peter out for lack of preparation, capabilities, and assets.

In this context, PUPJI was rather instrumental in refashioning Jemaah Islamiyah as an alternative community of believers. Apart from endowing it with a distinctive organizational framework and a new programme of action, the manual also provided the group with a new trajectory of development. It laid out the rules of engagement, determined the targeted outcomes, and mapped out concrete projects in which JI’s members could invest their time and effort. As such, PUPJI became the normative template from which the institutional entity of Jemaah Islamiyah emerged and subsequently developed.

From the standpoint of PUPJI, the existence of a separate subdivision in charge of the paramilitary activities of the group matched JI’s role as a hybrid organization. It both captured and reflected the outfit’s parallel emphasis on a gradual, bottom-up, evolutionary approach and a rapid, top-down paradigm for revolutionary change. It thus marked the organization both as a social movement and a terrorist entity, while also simultaneously transforming PUPJI from a religious manifesto into a terrorist manual.

Although PUPJI created the context for JI’s violent activities, it did not foresee the organization’s members launching them prematurely. When viewed in hindsight – especially from the perspective of the group’s sustained terror campaign in the period 2000-2005 – it becomes clear that the administrative branch of the group gradually became subservient to the operational branch. A few ambitious members within JI hijacked the entire agenda of the outfit. Unfortunately, PUPJI did not provide for such contingency. On the road from a *counter-society* to a *counter-state* movement, Jemaah Islamiyah sidetracked and abandoned the manual. Al-Qaeda’s influence and the September 11 attacks only reinforced such tendencies. Nasir Abbas was therefore quite correct in observing that “JI didn’t carry out the Bali bombing as

an organization. But JI members [did].”¹⁰⁵ It was the one and only contingency – from within all of PUPJI’s extensive norms and principles – that the handbook did not foresee and prepare for. The disruptive effects that this violence will have on the organization as a whole will only become evident in the years to come.

¹⁰⁵ ‘Heaven’s Just a Step Away,’ *Tempo* 6 (4) 14-20 October 2003.

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