

By examining the origins of these technocratic ideals, and the political conditions that kept them alive, this work meticulously reconstructs a world of science shaped by administrative practices that at once expanded and limited its possibilities.

Claire Edington

*History and Sociomedical Sciences, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University*

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## ***Spiritual Economies: Islam, Globalization, and the Afterlife of Development***

DAROMIR RUDNYCKYJ

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Daromir Rudnyckyj's book casts spiritual reform as a specific intervention designed to address economic crisis in the late 1990s brought about by what some perceived as a blind faith in development. In line with a policy of developmental nationalism that permeated Indonesian history, an enthusiastic dose of religious fervor was subsequently injected into economic development. Spiritual reform, based on an ethic of individual accountability to God, was emphasized thereafter to mitigate economic decline. Through this process, religious piety was linked to economic productivity that stressed long-term survival over immediate personal gain. The secular workplace is therefore reconfigured as a site of religious piety through public slogans and emotionally-charged training sessions. Based on anthropological research conducted in Krakatau Steel, a state-owned steel enterprise in Banten in west Java, Indonesia, Rudnyckyj's rich study provides a window into these training sessions and the methods known as "Emotional and Spiritual Quotient" (ESQ), which were developed by spiritual reformers Ary Ginanjar and Rinaldi Agusnyana. Rather than divorcing economic development from religious precepts, as former Indonesian President Suharto had done, motivational speakers such as Ginanjar and Rinaldi ardently fused economic progress with spiritual reform. Ginanjar emphasized that the economic development and spiritual cleansing are in fact mutually reinforcing since the latter actually provides an ethical basis and

natural behavioral code for economic success.

Both argued that a separation between the economic and spiritual domains had only led to chronic corruption. Previously, hollowed out of proper correct motivation, i.e., religious values, workers were prone to stray from moral conduct. Rudnyckyj's thick description effectively describes how Ginanjar's training sessions channeled spiritual energies towards economic progress in life. Values such as hard work and honesty in the workplace would naturally spur workers to increase productivity and eventually, their personal wealth and happiness. By using the term "spiritual economy" to explain how economic reform was conceived of and enacted as a matter of religious piety and spiritual virtue, Rudnyckyj points to the effects of global religious resurgence during the last two decades of the twentieth century on the parallel phenomenon of economic globalization. He demonstrates how religious practices are designed to transform individuals into specific types of economies. In this particular case, spiritual economies absorbed capitalist tendencies to bring about rationalization of practice (p. 134). Capitalism thus acts through the individual subject by effecting practices and ethical dispositions. Muslims enmeshed in a spiritual economy look to religion as means to attain greater productivity, efficiency and transparency.

One of the strengths of Rudnyckyj's book lies in his nuanced take on the history of democratization in Indonesia with regards to pluralism, as discussed in the penultimate chapter. Rudnyckyj creatively demonstrates, through an episode involving the spiritual possession of an employee who was part-Chinese, how non-Muslim members of the Krakatau Steel Community have been affected by the explicit Islamic overtones in these training sessions, which threatened Indonesia's legacy of *pancasila* pluralism that forms the basis for nationalist developmentalism. The plight of non-Muslims, especially Christians, became evident when employees felt that their religious freedom was somewhat curtailed. The *pancasila* training that accommodated plural identities during the authoritarian Suharto regime was replaced by seminars which only resonated with Muslim employees. By contrast, plural identities had been carefully managed during Indonesia's period of authoritarian pluralism as the state cemented over religious and ethnic differences and emphasized unity in facilitating development. Previously constituted as Indonesians by the regime, they were now forced to confront, choose and subsequently assert their own religious and ethnic identities, aside from their national identity. Democratization, Rudnyckyj argues, enables new exclusions from the political community because one is compelled to choose, and highlight, other facets that underscore ethnic and religious differentiation in society which were formerly not that apparent. This is particularly manifest in the spiritual training sessions where introspection and constant self expression was aggressively encouraged. Hence, these sessions could potentially sideline minority ethnic and religious communities at the workplace.

In examining ESQ, Rudnyckyj spends more time analyzing the discourse adopted by Ginanjar and other similar reformers rather than the corporate institutional workings of Krakatau Steel. Relying on Foucault and Weber, he convincingly shows how Ginanjar's language supports the view

that economic success and spiritual development are mutually beneficial. It is clear that employers are manipulating employees' spiritual beliefs to achieve great productivity. However, the reader is left wondering how corporate structures within this huge industrial firm were conducive to Ginanjar's teachings based on Rudnyckyj's empirical research, what makes Krakatau Steel inherently suitable for ESQ strategy to achieve corporate success? Rudnyckyj's study is eager to address broad general questions regarding the repercussions of the spiritual guidance offered by ESQ, but remains silent on the specific impact on Krakatau Steel as a corporation.

Rudnyckyj also did not address the question of why ESQ trumped Sufism as the conduit for spirituality for Indonesian Muslims. What drew the Muslim employees to ESQ in the first place? Rudnyckyj's sensitivity to Ginanjar's discourse does not extend to his observations of the employees. In tracing religious trends within the community at Krakatau Steel, Rudnyckyj considers the entire plant as one entity with hardly any differentiation of its organizational parts (p. 56). Although Rudnyckyj singles out non-Muslims in his analysis, the nuances, unfortunately, stop here. The absence of a bar serving alcohol and the close proximity to a mosque are simplistically interpreted as signaling an increase in religiosity. Eager to locate signs of piety, Rudnyckyj rather hastily points to cultural aspects in Javanese life, such as sitting on the floor barefoot, as markers of Muslim religiosity. Moreover, there are other key absences in the book. Photographs found throughout the book only feature male workers in the company. Women are starkly absent in Rudnyckyj's narrative. What were the gender dynamics at these sessions? How did women view the messages propounded by spiritual reformers? What about less pious Muslims in Krakatau Steel? Did all Muslim employees inevitably fall in line with the teachings of spiritual reformers? If they did not, should they be cast as marginalized individuals? Surely, a narrative that privileges the viewpoint of ardent, attentive Muslims need not imply that non-practising Muslims are not part of the mainstream in Indonesian society.

The problem with Rudnyckyj's work is that individual human agency is minimized. By examining corporate strategies, he understandably highlights the fact that the measure of each individual was largely determined in terms of their productivity in the workplace, where even the human heart has been transformed into an object of management. Emotions were skillfully managed to increase productivity through affective transformation. But the reader is left wondering: how did the participants of spiritual development seminars themselves actually decide what strategies to adopt in the workplace? Such gaps in his narrative notwithstanding, Rudnyckyj has certainly provided us with a compelling and informed analysis of how religious faith has entered the secular site of the workplace. His work has done much to provoke discussions about the place of religion in Indonesia today.

Nurfadzilah Yahaya  
*History Department, Princeton University*