

Market Islam in Indonesia

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MARKET ISLAM IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This article argues that in contemporary Indonesia development is increasingly being posed as an ethical, rather than a political and economic, problem. I describe one of several moderate Islamic ‘spiritual reform’ movements that are active in state-owned enterprises, government offices, and private companies. These initiatives combine business management ideas and techniques from popular life-coaching seminars with Muslim practice. I term this assemblage ‘market Islam’ and contrast it with what has been labelled ‘civil Islam’. I argue that market Islam seeks less to create commensurability between Islam and democracy and is instead designed to merge Muslim religious practice and capitalist ethics. Market Islam is thus less concerned with state power and the articulation of politics and religion, and more focused on eliciting the ethical dispositions conducive to neoliberalism. It is thus designed to create a form of effective self-management by making ‘people better from the inside’ and ‘break boundaries’ that are seen to plague Indonesian development, such as those between Indonesia and other countries, between religion and work, and between individuals and the corporations for which they work. I conclude that market Islam is neither fundamentalist nor conservative, but rather involves breaking a series of boundaries that were constitutive of Indonesian modernity.

Introduction

At about ten minutes before noon one Friday in May 2004, employees from Krakatau Steel's slab steel plant ambled toward the Baiturrahman mosque adjacent to the mammoth mill. Small clumps of dingy bamboo with greyish-yellow leaves were planted around the building's perimeter just beyond a small gutter aligned with the roof edge above. The acrid odour of smelting steel pervaded the dusty, heavy air as the sun beat down on a mercilessly hot midday. The mosque's high, Javanese style roof provided some relief from the otherwise sweltering heat. A smattering of workers had already assembled to perform optional *sunnah* prayers prior to the main collective prayers, while others hurriedly finished their obligatory ablutions at a row of metal spigots adjacent to the mosque. Shortly, against a background of heavy machinery and massive equipment that roared in semi-muted cacophony, Asmianto,¹ the plant employee who would serve as the *khatib*, the prayer leader who delivers a religious lecture, launched into an ominous sermon.

His sermon concerned Indonesia's ongoing economic problems, the country's upcoming presidential elections, and the political and ethical responsibilities of plant employees. Asmianto began by explaining that the assembled were 'here to enact our duty (*melaksanakan kewajiban*) of Friday prayers'. He then linked Indonesia's political and economic problems to what he termed a 'moral crisis' intoning, 'Events in our country cause us to take notice. Since 1997 there has been an economic crisis that has been getting worse (*makin parah*). There is also a political and social crisis, but what is most threatening is the prospect of a moral crisis that is now gripping the country...Given these conditions we face the future pessimistically'.

He then launched into a long Qur'anic citation in Arabic and suggested the crisis was a challenge presented by Allah that employees of the company could address through pious action guided by Islamic principles. Referring to Indonesia's upcoming election for president of the republic, he said that pious acts included electing 'a better leader, one who is comfortable with the people (*senang kepada rakyat*), and with whom the people are content....If we return to the true road the people will receive the grace (*nikmat*) of Allah....Thus, we must implement the orders of Allah' (*perintah Allah*). He urged workers to fulfil religious duties as a means of resolving the crises that plagued the country. He said that they should develop proper moral behaviour in their everyday activities. Finally, he enjoined the workers to 'remember that work is worship (*kerja adalah ibadah*)...our work is part of our service to Allah!'

Later that afternoon I sat with Tata, a foreman in the slab steel plant who had attended the prayers, drinking small cups of the instant coffee that is popular among plant workers. I asked him about the sermon and the relationship between the crisis, the future of the company, and matters of work and religious worship. He explained that recently he had noticed an increasing focus on relating Islamic practice to daily work at official company functions. Referring to Asmianto's discussion of time during the oration, Tata said that after each *rakaat* (the basic unit of Muslim prayer, consisting of a set of bows and prostrations) the *khatib* had quoted two Qur'anic passages. After the first *rakaat* he quoted from the Sura at-Takathur.² This was intended to remind Muslims 'that people may not be greedy (*rakus*)...they shouldn't be oriented toward worldly (*duniawi*) things like money, things, or women'. Tata interpreted this as an injunction against corruption, like taking tools from the factory or deliberately misreporting one's hours on a time card.

Tata then explained that the Qur'anic citation after the second *rakaat* specifically addressed questions of time management at work. This one was from Sura al-Asr³ and ‘reminded us not to waste time...that we cannot be relaxed at work’ (*membuang-buang waktu diingatkan...santai tidak boleh*). Tata explained:

We made a promise with a representative of God (*janji di wakil Tuhan*)—the company—not to waste time’. This is not a regulation made by humans, but by Allah (*bukan aturan manusia, tapi Allah*). We made a promise (*janji*) with the company, if we violate it, it is a betrayal (*khianat*)....The company may not know, but God knows. God notes all the violations (*Tuhan mencatat pelanggaran*). Not God specifically, but one of his angels. Later there will be a verdict after death (*nanti hukum sesudah mati*).

With this portentous injunction, Tata finished his cup of coffee and returned to work. His comments and the day’s earlier sermon reflected an emerging emphasis on cultivating religious practice to instil labour discipline and enhance corporate competitiveness. It was a message I would hear repeatedly during the period of my ethnographic research in Indonesia.

The notion that intensified attention to Islamic practice would redress Indonesia’s political and economic crisis resonated widely at Krakatau Steel and beyond. Not only was it a common topic of sermons at factory mosques as demonstrated by workers like Tata and Asmianto, but managers also sought to make it part of the company’s regular human resources training sessions. They had contracted a Jakarta-based company, the ESQ Leadership Center, to hold intermittent ‘spiritual training’ programmes for employees. These sessions, called Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) training, fused business management, life-coaching, and self-help principles with Islamic history and examples from the life of the prophet Muhammad,

creating what I term 'market Islam'. Market Islam, a combination of religious practice and business management knowledge, was seen as conducive to success in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Conceived by the charismatic businessman-turned-spiritual reformer Ary Ginanjar, ESQ was embraced by managers at Krakatau Steel and scores of other state-owned enterprises, private companies, and government offices in Indonesia. During the period of my field research, Ary Ginanjar and his brother, Rinaldi Agusyana, delivered monthly (or sometimes bi-monthly) training sessions at Krakatau Steel in a distinctive style that blended zealous religious oratory and fervent motivational speaking. These sessions consisted of emotionally evocative programmes that were designed to configure a new type of Muslim practice, which helped to reconcile the ethical, economic, and moral predicaments of middle and upper-middle class Indonesians.

I argue that this articulation represents the emergence of what I term market Islam. Market Islam refers to the way in which Islamic practices are mobilized to facilitate the transition from an authoritarian regime of state-fostered development to a market-based approach to labour and commercial activity. Although there are points of overlap with what has been called 'civil Islam', I argue that market Islam seeks less to create commensurability between Islam and democracy and is instead designed to merge Muslim religious practice and capitalist ethics.

Islam and modernity

Partially in response to the widely circulating arguments of Samuel Huntington and others, Robert Hefner identified civil Islam in contemporary Indonesia as the reconciliation

between Islamic religious authority and democratic political institutions. Civil Islam does not stand in conflict with the west, but rather sees precedents for ideas central to democratic polities in Islamic history and certain Qur'anic injunctions. It accepts both democratic norms such as free speech, participation, and toleration and a division between state and society in which society is the proper domain of religious practice. Furthermore, in contrast to Huntington's emphasis on uniformity and homogeneity across 'civilizations', Hefner instead argues that Indonesia, in part due to deep pluralist traditions that predate colonial intervention and in part due to the role of civic associations in its recent democratic transformation, is a paradigmatic example of an 'emergent tradition' of civil Islam. According to Hefner, civil Islam is characterized by 'denying the wisdom of a monolithic "Islamic" state and instead affirming democracy, voluntarism, and a balance of countervailing powers in a state and society...this democratic Islam insists that formal democracy cannot prevail unless government power is checked by strong civic associations' (Hefner 2000: 12-13).

The vigorous debates in the Muslim world and the pluralism of political forms within a discursive tradition of Islam (Asad 1986) identified by Hefner, is confirmed by others as well. Anthropologists have chronicled how, far from being characterized by tyrannical forms of authoritative knowledge, the Muslim world is rife with debates over religious practice and proper ethical choices, although these debates do not always conform to the norms of a public sphere rooted in a European historical tradition (Hirschkind 2001; Ong 1990; Othman 2003; Peletz 2002).

Hefner's attention to the commensurability of contemporary Islam and civil democratic traditions begs a related question: How do Muslims perceive the relationship between Islamic practice and the norms of contemporary capitalism? While there has been considerable work on

political Islam, the articulation between Islam and economic globalization has received much less attention.⁴ This article sheds light on this articulation by analyzing the mobilization of Islamic ethics to meet the challenges of globalization. I argue that market Islam has come into being alongside, but distinctly from, civil Islam in contemporary Indonesia.

My attention to market Islam also builds on earlier approaches to Islam and capitalist transformation in Southeast Asia. Scholars of the region have long focused on ‘modernist’ Muslim movements that have sought to reconcile Islamic practice with the norms and forms of modernity (Geertz 1960; Noer 1973; Peacock 1978). However, my analysis differs on important methodological grounds from these earlier accounts. In the ethnographic material presented below, it is not the analyst who posits the relationship between Islam and capitalism, but the participants in my research project themselves who sought to forge this assemblage (Ong & Collier 2005).

Rather than imposing a certain theoretical model on empirical reality, I focus on the way in which contemporary Indonesians posed questions about their contemporary lives that might enable anthropologists to see the theory that we use in a different light (Boyer 2001).⁵ The concept of market Islam emerges, then, out of my efforts to break down the boundary between anthropological theory and the theories used by those studied anthropologically (Ferguson 1999; Maurer 2002; Miyazaki 2004; Riles 2000). In short, I dissolve the distinction between anthropological theory and empirical reality by uncovering the models that are practiced by those who are the focus of ethnographic investigation and suggesting how they might further anthropological knowledge. Market Islam refers to efforts of self-styled spiritual reformers and corporate managers to enhance Islamic practice to better compete in an increasingly transnational economy. Although Indonesians themselves did not refer to ‘market Islam’, I use it to refer to

the practical models they deployed to address the challenges presented by ‘the free market’ and the way in which Islamic practice was mobilized to address those changes.

This approach differs from previous analyses of Islam and capitalism in Southeast Asia (Alatas 1963; Geertz 1963; Peacock 1978) in so far as the Indonesian Muslims involved in the project of spiritual reform explicitly connect Islamic practice to economic development. That is to say they are developing a model of how to live *in practice* as Muslims in an economy no longer defined in national terms. This project consists of a set of discursive practices intended to make Indonesian Muslims amenable to what they term the ‘free market’. Underlying this approach is the presumption that proper Islamic practice necessarily entails greater productivity, less corruption, and more diligent work habits. Furthermore, this is an avowedly self-reflexive process. Participants in spiritual reform directly connected their own previous moral failings to the political and economic problems in Indonesia at large. Perhaps due to past acts of corruption or, at lower levels of the company hierarchy, labour shirking they see the problem of resolving this moral crisis as an impetus to work on themselves in order to improve both themselves and the larger community.

Market Islam differs from other new forms of popular religious practice and new religious movements in Southeast Asia. Peter Jackson and Katharine Wiegele have recently discussed the widespread popularity of prosperity theology in Thailand and the Philippines. While Jackson focuses on the Buddhist veneration of amulets and the worship of saints and monks and Wiegele on the enormously popular El Shaddai Catholic movement, both scholars define these recent phenomena as ‘prosperity religions’ (Jackson 1999; Wiegele 2005). Followers of prosperity movements believe that enhanced religious devotion will net them economic success through divine intervention (Coleman 2000). Herein lies the main difference

between prosperity movements and market Islam. Adherents of a prosperity movement are encouraged, following Wiegele, to ‘invest in miracles’ by making donations to religious groups as a means of ‘eliciting miracles from God’ (Wiegele 2005: 21). Market Islam, in contrast, is designed to inculcate the kind of ethical dispositions deemed conducive to greater competitiveness in a global economy. Rather than expecting miracles as the result of previous economic exchanges, market Islam emphasizes an ethics of hard work, responsibility and accountability as the means to economic well-being. Thus, spiritual reformers in Indonesia see initiatives like ESQ training as a means of both enhancing Islamic piety and developing Indonesia’s human resources to further the project of national development.

Market Islam offers a different analytical stance from that entailed in what political scientist Patrick Haenni has recently called ‘Islam de marché’.⁶ Whereas Islam de marché is represented as ‘conservative’ and ‘fundamentalist’, market Islam is neither. This is due to the fact that a scale like liberal-conservative appears very different from the perspective of people in Indonesia than it does from Europe or North America. Indonesians did not see Ary Ginanjar as conservative because he was not trying to conserve a tradition perceived to be under threat. Rather, they saw ESQ as progressive (or even radical) because it represented a completely new way of practicing Islam to make it commensurate with modern life and labour.

‘Breaking the boundary’: spectres of the free market

Employees of Krakatau Steel would often invoke the ‘free market’ (*pasar bebas*) as the greatest threat to the future of the company. The free market served as an all-purpose phrase that referred to a number of different, yet interrelated phenomena. These included the end of Krakatau Steel’s monopoly on marketing steel, global integration of the steel market, the

elimination of both tariffs on imported steel and state subsidies to support modernization of aging plant facilities, and the end of an exclusive national zone of economic activity.

Krakatau Steel had long enjoyed a monopoly position on the sale of steel in Indonesia. However, between 2003 and 2005 when my fieldwork took place, the central government under pressure from downstream consumers fully eliminated tariffs on imported steel. Employees of the company felt further threatened by plans to form the ‘AFTA plus three’ free trade area which would include Southeast Asian countries and China, Japan, and South Korea. These plans, announced at an October 2003 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) summit in Indonesia and widely reported in the Indonesian press, were a recurring topic of my conversations with Krakatau Steel workers. The inclusion of China, Japan, and South Korea in a free trade zone with Indonesia was particularly alarming, as employees were well aware that these countries had achieved economies of scale in steel production that far exceeded Indonesia’s meagre output.⁷ The prospect of a free market in which Indonesia would have to compete with these three steel titans did not portend well for the company’s long-term viability.

The free market had far-reaching ramifications for employees of Krakatau Steel. Longstanding, routine practices deemed inefficient and not conducive to global competitiveness were under re-evaluation. Thus, the company sought to introduce various reforms, including basing promotions on merit rather than personal ties; eliminating corruption; restructuring the employee salary scale; and eliminating guaranteed lifetime employment. According to managers, these changes meant that employees had to become more industrious, honest, independent, and responsible. This involved a wide-ranging overhaul of existing norms. Thus, the abstract notion of the ‘free market’ presented a very practical problem: how to elicit labour practices that would ensure the company’s long term viability given increasing transnational

competition? Krakatau Steel would no longer occupy the dominant position in the domestic steel market, but would become one company competing with others in a global economy. They chose to address these challenges through particularly high-profile means, by enhancing the Islamic practice of company employees.

Krakatau Steel employees repeatedly invoked the free market as the foremost threat to the company's future. Suryawardi, an employee in production planning and control, showed how this problem was articulated. In a conversation he explained that 'globalization is the world market. If the world market becomes free (*pasar dunia sudah bebas*), it is a foregone conclusion. If we don't do things correctly, then we'll lose to the others. Other companies will come to Indonesia and send their products to Indonesia. We won't be anything because they are brave enough to sell [their products] inexpensively'. He then invoked the spectre of the growth of the Chinese steel industry, which had the potential to flood the Indonesian market with cheaper steel, rendering Krakatau Steel non-competitive and moribund.

The spectre of a free market and increasing transnational competition marked a drastic change in the way business had been conducted during Krakatau Steel's short history. Most notably, while there were other steel companies in the country, the company had long held a monopoly on marketing steel domestically within Indonesia. Fajri, a 14-year veteran of the company who worked in human resources planning, said that the government had sought to promote the development of Krakatau Steel by giving it a domestic monopoly on steel sales. Thus, while other companies could produce steel, they were obliged to use Krakatau Steel's marketing department to access the domestic market. Fajri explained that although Krakatau Steel became 'the sultan of steel' (*raja baja*), this had led to poor customer service. He continued, 'since there was no competition, there was no pressure to provide good service to

Krakatau Steel customers, it was a culture of being served, not serving others,' explaining that if customers required a special order, needed expedited delivery, or had some other extraordinary request, then they often had to pay a bribe the employee in the marketing department who handled the account. The monopoly position also had led to instances in which company employees used their quasi-official positions for personal benefit.⁸ This poor record continued even after Krakatau Steel's marketing monopoly was ended in the mid-1990s. Fajri said that this problem had become increasingly acute with the prospect of a free market, 'now with globalization (*globalisasi*), now with the free market (*pasar bebas*), we must be competitive, the steel business must be competitive. We must serve the customer. If not we will be destroyed!'

Fajri's concern over Krakatau Steel's lack of competitiveness and poor customer service was reiterated by Effendi. He had long worked in the cold rolling mill, which produced the thin sheets of steel that were among the company's most marketable commodities due to their numerous industrial applications. He said the company was facing considerable competition from new smaller mills in Indonesia. Echoing Fajri's point that the company's past monopoly had led to lax customer service in the marketing department, he bluntly stated 'It isn't clear how to make an order from Krakatau Steel. The marketing department doesn't understand their jobs'. Effendi explained that he had a friend who owned a small business in Bandung that made exhaust pipes for motorcycles. The man had sought to place a standing order of 20 tons of cold rolled steel per month from Krakatau Steel, but the marketing department showed little interest in fulfilling the order. Ultimately, he found another supplier more accommodating who could fulfil his needs.

Anxieties over the free market were not only expressed in private conversations and interviews. In June 2004 I attended a large meeting in honour of the five-year anniversary of the

founding of Krakatau Steel's newly formed labour union, in which senior company managers met with 100 union representatives. Fazwar Bujang, the vice-president of corporate finance, presented the union with the five major challenges that he claimed threatened the company's viability. Firstly, he argued, the fluctuation of the price of raw materials and steel. He explained that due to the increasing global integration of the steel market, Krakatau Steel had much less power to set prices domestically. Secondly, the elimination of tariffs on imported steel. These reductions could allow foreign companies to flood the Indonesian market with 'below standard' steel. After listing other challenges including both ageing machinery and employees, Bujang admonished the workers in decidedly neoliberal terms, claiming that 'the responsibility for the future is not just the onus of the company, but of the employees themselves' (see Rose 1999). He explained that the workers must be disciplined and productive to ensure the long term survival of the company. Shortly thereafter I met with another senior manager, Fauzi who, even more bluntly, argued that the greatest problem facing Krakatau Steel was 'breaking the boundary between the inside and the outside...we must be ready to compete in the global era'. In short, employees at all levels of the company hierarchy identified the free market as the biggest challenge facing the company.

Marketing Islam or Islamizing the market?

The course of action Krakatau Steel undertook in order to address the problems presented by the free market was unprecedented in company history. Managers contracted a Jakarta-based company, the ESQ Leadership Center, to implement a programme of moderate Islamic spiritual and leadership training for employees and thus to make the company more competitive in a globalizing steel market. The creator of ESQ, Ary Ginanjar, developed an elaborate model, the

‘ESQ model,’ which is based on the claim that the five pillars of Islam and the six pillars of the faith (*iman*) contain ethics conducive to business success. Through the spiritual training sessions that his company offers, Ginanjar stresses that Islamic piety should not be simply restricted to religious worship, such as during one’s daily prayers. Rather, drawing on the principle of *tauhid*, or the unity *of* and faith *in* God, Islam should animate all of one’s worldly activity, from interactions with one’s family to everyday work in the world.

During these sessions, Ary Ginanjar argues that principles conducive to modern business and management can be found in Islamic practice and Qur’anic doctrine. For example, participants in these training programmes are instructed that the third pillar of Islam, the duty to give alms (*zakat*) is divine sanction for ‘synergy’, ‘strategic collaboration’, and exercising a ‘win-win’ approach in both business transactions and relations with co-workers. Further, Ary Ginanjar asserts that the fourth pillar of Islam, the duty to fast during *Ramadan*, is a model for self-control and self-management. ESQ draws on this principle to inculcate the obligation to constrain this-worldly desires in order to ensure other-worldly salvation. Corruption, which is represented as a result of the longing for material possessions, is depicted as contrary to this divine injunction of individual accountability.

At Krakatau Steel ESQ training sessions were held once or twice per month except during Ramadan and the *hajj* pilgrimage season.⁹ ESQ sessions were most often held in the large multi-purpose room of the factory’s education and training centre, which could accommodate over 300 participants. The sessions ran for three consecutive days, usually from Friday through Sunday, but occasionally mid-week. The first two days started at 7:00 a.m. and lasted until just before the *maghrib*¹⁰ prayers, which usually begin around 6:00 p.m. The third day of the training involved a dramatic self-confession session in which participants simulated

the experience of being interrogated by the angels of death, Munkar and Nakir, to judge their fitness for salvation. The final event was the programme's dénouement, which consisted of a simulation of three of the events that take place during the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca: *tawaf*, the circumambulation of the *kaaba*, the *sa'i*, the ritual of running seven times back and forth between the hills of Safa and Marwah in Mecca,¹¹ and the stoning of *jamrat al-aqabah*, in which pilgrims hurl rocks at three representations of the devil.¹² This final day ran from 7:00 a.m. until almost midnight.

Like many other forms of management knowledge the training was structured through what is becoming a ubiquitous global form for conveying information, a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation. This consisted of the usual slides with graphs, charts, tables, and a litany of bullet points, but also with spliced film clips, colourful photographs, and popular music. The training was delivered primarily as an interactive lecture in which the main trainer would alternate between engaging with the audience in the familiar style of a television talk show host and delivering fiery and deeply emotive lectures asking for collective atonement from Allah for past indiscretions.

In addition to lectures, assistant trainers would often perform skits to illustrate the main points of the training. Interactive games, participatory role-playing activities, and callisthenics were deployed to break up the monotony of sitting and listening. In order to elicit certain affective states, the physical environment during the training was carefully calibrated. The sound in the hall was sometimes elevated to ear-splitting volume and the lights in the room were manipulated to maximize the dramatic effects of the points made. Further, the air conditioning was turned to its lowest setting creating a disconcerting chill in an otherwise steamy tropical climate. The careful manipulation of the environment and the sheer mental and physical

exhaustion of so many hours of training no doubt contributed to the profound outpouring of affect exhibited by participants in the programme.

Ary Ginanjar's idiosyncratic combination of discourses and practices drew on North American and Japanese management theories and practices,¹³ Islamic history and Qur'anic recitation, popular science, Javanese culture, popular psychology, Hollywood blockbusters, and more. This assemblage was neither wholly Indonesian nor American, but global in the sense that it found inspiration in a wide multiplicity of sources. Nevertheless, Ginanjar's originality lies in the combination of elements that made up ESQ, not in the specific elements themselves. ESQ is evocative of what Tom Boellstorff, in another Indonesian context, has referred to as 'dubbing culture' (Boellstorff 2003) in so far as it involves a subtle negotiation of what is Indonesian and what is foreign.

While most foreign firms in Indonesia were oblivious to the programme, ESQ was well received by educated Muslim. In 2001, after Ginanjar finished the ESQ book that serves as the basis for the training he began visiting various Qur'anic study groups (*pengajian*) affiliated with middle- and upper-middle class mosques in Jakarta. After his ideas were well received he offered the first ESQ leadership training sessions in 2002. At the end of the year he counted 43 'alumni,' but the programme quickly grew so that by the end of 2007 over 465,000 people had completed his spiritual training. This included senior managers in state-owned enterprises, officials in national, regional, and local government, and small and medium sized business owners. In 2005 weekly ESQ pages began to appear in *Republika*, the most prominent national Islamic daily paper. Ginanjar was also named to the board of experts of ICMI [*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*, the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals], a New Order body founded by Suharto as a means of cultivating support among the growing legions of

educated, middle-class Indonesian Muslims. The organization has maintained an important role in Islamic affairs in the post-Suharto period. Marwah Daud Ibrahim, the head of ICMI and a candidate for vice-president of Indonesia in the 2004 elections, cited Ginanjar's efforts to 'develop human resources' as the reason for his selection (Republika 2006) and expressed the hope that his methods for strengthening human resources through the intensification of Islamic practice would benefit national development.

Although Krakatau Steel was one of the first companies to embrace ESQ, the programme subsequently spread widely across Indonesia. In 2002, as he was in the early stages of developing ESQ, Ary Ginanjar identified a niche market in state-owned enterprises and government departments. In addition to Krakatau Steel, training programmes were initiated at the Directorate General of Taxation, Pertamina (the national oil company), Telkom (the country's largest telecommunications company), and Garuda (the nation's flag air carrier). A number of (current and former) Indonesian armed forces generals were also avid supporters of and participants in ESQ. Several training sessions specifically for military leaders were offered at the Army's officer candidate training school in Bandung.

State ministers, both past and present, were enthusiastic proponents of ESQ. In late 2004 Sugiharto, then the newly appointed Minister for State-Owned Enterprises, issued a letter 'recommending' that employees of all state-owned enterprises in Indonesia complete the ESQ training programme. This is a vast pool of over 100 companies, all of which have established budgets for employees' training. During a news conference when journalists asked the Minister how he intended to combat rampant corruption, he invoked ESQ as the primary means his new administration planned to use toward this end.

In just five years the growth of ESQ was nothing short of spectacular. The company does also a brisk business in so called ‘public’ trainings, where people pay up to US\$350 out of their own pockets to participate. Ary Ginanjar said that these events, which attract as many as 1000 people at a time, are his biggest growth market. Recently ESQ has met its goal of becoming a national movement by establishing branch offices in 30 out of 33 Indonesian provinces.¹⁴ In late 2005 the ESQ Leadership Center initiated construction of a new headquarters - a 25-story office tower and convention centre in south Jakarta – which was partly funded through investment shares sold to past participants. By May 2008 the convention centre had been completed and work continued on the office tower in spite of Indonesia’s economic crisis. The company planned to lease much of the office space to multi-national corporations with offices in Jakarta.

Ary Ginanjar’s ESQ training programme and associated books, DVDs, tours, and other branded commodities are a manifestation of a wider trend in Indonesia in which Islamic values are mobilized to meet the challenges of globalization. Watson (2005) and Hoesterey (2008) have described the charismatic engineer-turned-television preacher Abdullah Gymnastiar who, until his decision in 2006 to take a second wife, was one of the most recognizable public figures in Indonesia. Gymnastiar, better known under the abbreviated moniker Aa Gym, is the founder of the Islamic media and direct marketing conglomerate called the Manajemen Qolbu Corporation. He used first an English-derived term (*manajemen*) and then an Arabic word (*qolbu*) to yield a corporation and form of spiritual practice that Indonesians understand as ‘Management of the Heart’. In addition to his successful televangelism, Gymnastiar also designed human resources training sessions that combined the principles of business organization and the teachings of Islam, which he called ‘Management by Conscience’ (*Manajemen Suara Hati*). Over 40 state-owned and some private companies have sent staff to

his Bandung headquarters for training. Market Islam refers to these efforts to design a form of Islamic practice conducive to the 'free market' by transforming the way in which corporate employees viewed their own labour.

In addition to ESQ and Management by Conscience training there are a growing number of similar initiatives that combine Islamic practice and management and life-coaching techniques in Indonesia, including 'Syariah Management' and 'Celestial Management'. These groups are moderate in so far as they do not advocate the seizure of state power as a means of enforcing Islamic strictures. Rather, proponents of and participants in these movements considered Indonesia's political and economic 'crisis' a result of the separation of religious ethics from economic practice. They argue that this disjunction resulted in rampant corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of discipline in the workplace. This phenomenon is not limited only to Indonesia, but is increasingly found elsewhere in the Islamic world as well (Haenni 2005; Osella & Osella this issue; Wise 2003).

At Krakatau Steel, Ary Ginanjar and his brother Rinaldi Agusyana delivered the standard ESQ training session that had been replicated at hundreds of sites across Indonesia. However, they tailored portions of the programme specifically to address issues troubling the company's workforce. For example, in one session in May 2004, Ary Ginanjar presented economic globalization and the free market as divine challenges that demanded enhanced attention to Islamic practice by company employees. Effectively merging globalization and monotheism, he declared that a recent decision by Indonesia's central government to eliminate import tariffs on steel was in fact a blessing from Allah. He said 'ladies and gentlemen...our faith in Allah is the key to all the problems that we face in this global era! This era has brought the elimination of import tariffs on steel. For humans it is darkness, but for Allah it is light. Because the

elimination of tariffs is a blessing from Allah! The reduction of import tariffs to zero percent is a blessing from Allah!’ He continued with this line of reasoning, proclaiming that global competition was the effect of divine intervention that sought greater corporate efficiency and productivity:

Achieving our potential is not only dependent on the government. In fact, we are ready to compete with the outside world! The way things are going in Indonesia and with international competition—this is what Allah has confronted us with...Allah wants to prove to every level of the company that we have entered the global era (*kita masuk era global*) and that we are able to compete.

The free market was represented not as a matter of global economic restructuring, but rather as a divine challenge, whereby problems were posed in explicitly religious terms and enhanced Islamic practice was invoked as the means to their resolution.

This message resonated profoundly with Krakatau Steel employees. Hadi, an operator in the hot strip mill, supported ESQ because it offered tools to address the challenge presented by the free market. He said, ‘ESQ can raise the human resources. It shows how bad waste and cheating are. The employees will become aware (*jadi sadar*) that Allah doesn't like waste and loss. We must work honestly (*tulus*). With ESQ the employees will become aware (*sadar*) and work motivation will be increased’.

Furthermore, Ary Ginanjar’s message that individual fate was part of a divine plan, led some employees to see ESQ as a means to resolve obstacles to the privatization of Krakatau Steel. Eliani, who worked in the human resources department and was one of the company’s few female employees, conveyed this point. She was an active participant in ESQ training programmes. In one session I observed she conducted what the trainers referred as ‘sharing’.

This was a kind of personal audit in which a participant tearfully repented for past misdeeds or impious actions in order to elicit similar existential introspection from other employees. In her words, it was a chance to ‘describe one's religious experience in a collective setting...It is a form of self-evaluation and introspection’. She said that many employees were scared of privatization because they thought it would mean massive job losses, but ESQ offered a means to confront these fears. Plans were afoot to divest state ownership of the company, either through a strategic sale to a foreign investor or via a public offering through the stock market. Eliani said that, in light of this impending privatization, ‘the mentality must be different. People must be prepared to be fired! This means changing the mindset...in state-owned companies, employees think that they can depend on the company for a long time. It is safe, people can wait around for their pension...ESQ prepares people to face changes, so they will not be afraid (*tidak takut*)’. Thus, employees in the human resources department hoped that Islamic spiritual reform would encourage employees to accept the transition from the stability of state guarantees to the uncertainty of the market.

Proponents of spiritual reform saw religion and spirituality as internal to those who took part in spiritual reform. The market, on the other hand, was conceived of as something external to both participants and the boundaries of the nation. Market Islam breaks these boundaries by representing individual religious practice as directly tied to corporate success in the free market. This point was made by Aris, who worked in the hot strip mill. He stressed that ESQ was successful because it encouraged people to improve themselves, rather than forcing them to act in certain ways. He told me that the training was intended to ‘make people better from the inside...to give us a sense of where we are from and where we are going’. He then stressed that ESQ was not about setting up a set of rules to obey, but rather created a system that elicited

certain forms of behaviour from participants, a point that was also reiterated by Rinaldi Agusyana (see below). Aris said ‘there is no regulation and no force’ involved in the training, thus emphasizing the way in which employees see the training, largely because it is represented as religious, as something that they are doing for themselves, rather than something that others are doing to them. After all, commitment to Islam is taken as a personal decision requiring individual piety. The relationship is between God and an individual, with no intermediaries. Participants in spiritual reform found this compelling because they saw it as a manifestation of the outside world conforming to Islam rather than the religion succumbing to outside forces.

Fauzi, the senior manager quoted earlier, spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of ESQ. Unprompted, he told me that ‘ESQ is one of the best methods that Krakatau Steel had for improving the quality of its human resources’ because it enhanced ‘loyalty, honesty, discipline, and productivity’ and reduced corruption. He said that it was effective because it reminds employees that ‘they will die and they need to prepare for the afterlife’. I asked him why ESQ was necessary to insure honesty and prevent corruption, given that Krakatau Steel had an internal audit department responsible for ensuring company business was conducted transparently. He said that ESQ was superior to company audits as a means of reducing corruption because it trained employees to monitor themselves, rather than relying on company employees to scrutinize the actions of other employees. Thus, spiritual reformers and managers had recast the problem of development as a matter of cultivating the individual ethics inherent in a familiar tradition. It was no longer solely a question of acquiring external knowledge and technology.

From civil to market Islam

Market Islam emerges in response to a specific set of moral, political, and economic challenges. In contrast to the active role in democratic reform that has been played by Islamic groups like those described by Hefner, proponents of ESQ present themselves as explicitly non-political. Ary Ginanjar and his brother Rinaldi eschewed any connection to party politics and Islamic social organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah that increasingly served as the bases for political organization in the post-New Order period. Unlike the leaders of NU and Muhammadiyah who used their vast networks as springboards to enter elite politics, Ary Ginanjar viewed participation in political activity as a possible threat to his religious credentials and thought that it would only make ESQ look opportunistic. He and Rinaldi adamantly insisted that ESQ was ‘non-political’, perhaps also fearing that engaging in party politics would present a threat to their lucrative franchise.

Their hesitation at being involved in political activity reflected the widely held sentiment in Indonesia that religion and politics should be kept separate. This orientation was often expressed by employees of Krakatau Steel, who were deeply suspicious of religious scholars (*kiyai*¹⁵) who got involved in politics. One operator in the direct reduction plant said that he supported ‘religion in politics, but not politics in religion’. Thus, although he approved of *syariah* law, he did not believe that religious figures should enter politics. He explained that the activities of a politician were incongruous with those of a religious figure who, he thought should ‘calm the *umma*, motivate worship, and promote a peaceful environment’ (*menentramkan umat, motivasi ibadah, dan menyampaikan lingkungan damai*). Political leaders, in contrast, might inflame the passions of the ‘masses’ (*massa*) with inflammatory pronouncements and fiery rhetoric.

ESQ, and other movements for spiritual reform in contemporary Indonesia, have emerged alongside of, but separately from, those groups that Hefner views as characteristic of civil Islam. Hefner described this form of Islam as ‘a public culture’ that ‘depends on mediating institutions in which citizens develop habits of free speech, participation, and toleration. In all this, they say, there is nothing undemocratic about Muslim voluntary associations (as well as those of other religions) playing a role in the *public* life of civil society as well as in personal ethics’ (Hefner 2000: 13). While the groups described by Hefner fall into this category, movements for spiritual reform active in state-owned enterprises, private corporations, and government bureaucracies in contemporary Indonesia represent a different phenomenon. Democratization has enabled freer rein for groups like ESQ, but these groups are not necessarily interested in achieving broad social transformation through party politics or direct advocacy. They are not concerned with question of human rights, social justice, or political liberalism: those who represent Islam as holding the key to economic success are, in general, not outspoken advocates for democracy¹⁶. Thus, their representations of reform do not necessarily align with those groups involved in developing civil society. Rather, their primary objective is in enhancing Islamic practice as a means of improving Indonesia’s economic performance and competitiveness. The medium through which they do so is the market, by offering Islam-inflected training programmes and selling a wide-range of books, videos, and manuals that offer advice on how to live as a Muslim in an increasingly global, free market.

However, market Islam does not only refer to the fact that the market enables new forms of Islamic practice. It also refers to the ways in which enhanced Islamic practice is designed to address the challenges presented by the free market. Market Islam instils religious practices seen as conducive to market-oriented reforms. The elimination of generous state subsidies and a

domestic steel market protected by tariffs led Krakatau Steel to implement Islamic spiritual reform as a means of producing steel producers fit for international competition. Further, market Islam involves designing a form of Muslim practice commensurate with the goals of eliminating corruption, promoting privatization, and enhancing productivity in an increasingly global market. In looking for analogues between Islamic spiritual reform movements and the classic texts of Western social science, the point of reference is not so much Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (Tocqueville 1990 [1835]) (as it is for notions of civil Islam), but rather Weber's *Protestant Ethic* (Weber 1990 [1905]). ESQ advanced the notion of work as a calling rather than forming a civic association that could further democratic reform. At other ESQ trainings that I observed away from Krakatau Steel many participants sought to develop their own business networks and investment opportunities, in addition to enhancing their faith. Spiritual reform is surely producing new collectivities. However, these are not the kind of collectivities that necessarily constitute a democratic public culture.

Even in domains where market and civil Islam appear to converge, there are important differences. Proponents of civil Islam reject Islamic law based on maintaining a division between state and society in which religion is restricted from the former and consigned to the latter. Like politically liberal Muslims, those enmeshed in market Islam steadfastly reject efforts to implement uniform Islamic *syariah* law in Indonesia. However, the terms which those who are creating market Islam criticize *syariah* are different from the terms that Hefner's civil Muslims use. They do so on ethical rather than political grounds. Market Islam does not reject *syariah* law out of a fear of protecting religion from the state, but rather on the grounds that religious practice is a matter of individual initiative. Thus, adherents of ESQ resolutely affirmed the notion that individuals must choose Islam, not have it imposed on them.

To advocates of market Islam Indonesia's recent history reveals the inevitable failure of the use of force to implement Islamic principles. The authoritarian, hierarchical Suharto regime governed through violence (or the threat of violence) and its collapse was invoked as evidence of the failure of such approaches. In contrast to other groups in contemporary Indonesia like Hizbut Tahrir that advocate state enforcement of *syariah* law, the proponents of spiritual reform saw such efforts as doomed to failure.

Rinaldi specifically contrasted the ESQ spiritual training programme with initiatives dedicated toward the implementation of *syariah* law. He told me that participants in ESQ were not being indoctrinated in a system of 'more rules'. He said 'we already have enough rules...but if you touch them here, in the heart, they don't need rules. They won't accept commission even without more rules'. Thus, forming a subject conducive to the norms of the free market was not something that Rinaldi thought could be approached through external regulation. Rinaldi here suggests ideas that I referred to above, such as Aris's idea that ESQ makes people 'better from the inside'. Spiritual reform seeks to elicit a new ethical subject who governs him- or herself in accordance with religious norms that are conceived of as internal to the subject, not because of external compulsion.

The failure of external compulsion to elicit desired ethical dispositions was reiterated during ESQ, which advocated self-surveillance. On the morning of the first day of training Rinaldi asked the audience rhetorically, 'is there a method to make someone honest?' He answered the question himself, suggesting that 'rules, regulations, standard operating procedures, and more supervisors' (*pengawas*) would not ensure integrity. Rinaldi spoke about the futility of merely multiplying forms of surveillance. He said:

Supervision keeps a close eye. For every unit, surely there is a supervisory committee, but how about the supervisor? They must be supervised, of course! So a supervisory board for the supervisory board—even administrators must be supervised, of course! So you have a supervisory committee for the supervisory committee of the supervisory committee, and it goes on. Until when?

Thus, the problem of non-sovereign forms of power in which there is no position external to the operations of power is the central problem of ESQ training. Corruption, inefficiency, and indolence are the objects of intervention, but spiritual reformers recognize the inability of regulations and coercion to eliminate such behaviour.

Market Islam has emerged alongside civil Islam in contemporary Indonesia. The project of producing workers for the ‘free market’ presents a different solution to the perceived oppositions between Islam and modernity. Proponents of spiritual reform accept a distinction between religious and political spheres. At the same time, however, they argue that an historical separation between religious and economic spheres is directly responsible for Indonesia’s crisis in wake of the collapse of the Suharto regime. Whereas civil Islam demonstrates affinities between Islam and democracy, market Islam illuminates efforts to resolve the tension between Islam and capitalism. Market Islam captures efforts to design a self-regulating subject who ‘worships through work’. The extent to which this is commensurable with the subject of civil Islam is an open question, but the possibility of their overlap suggests the ongoing problem of the entanglement of democracy and capitalism in the contemporary world.

Conclusion

Islam has long been linked to the expansion of trade in Southeast Asia, however, market Islam captures a different phenomenon. According to prevailing historical accounts, traders from the Indian subcontinent and the Arabian peninsula spread Islam through the region as early as the 13th century (Azra 2004, Reid 1993). In these accounts the extension of Islamic ethics was facilitated through market relations. In contrast, market Islam captures the dissemination of a market ethic through Islam. Market Islam refers to the way in which spiritual reformers work to mobilize Muslim ethics to meet the challenges of the 'free market' yielding Islamic practices conducive to neoliberal transformation. In this articulation, the free market was represented as a divine test. Enhanced Islamic practice was the means to address it. Further, the prospect of the elimination of guaranteed employment was given religious justification. By introducing a programme of spiritual training grounded in moderate Islam, managers and self-styled spiritual reformers sought to create a set of practices that resembled those that Nikolas Rose and others have identified as characteristic of neoliberalism (Barry et al. 1996; Rose 1999). They sought to create a responsible, accountable, self-managing subject who acted according to the norms of the free market.

During my fieldwork there was a pervasive sense that the political and economic crisis afflicting Indonesia was the result of a deeper moral crisis. However, representations of these problems in the media—the decline of the country's currency, political instability, corruption, and an volatile economy—were abstract in so far as there was not much that individuals could do to resolve them. They appeared distant from the everyday lives of many Indonesians. Connecting these abstract problems to individual practices made them more comprehensible to contemporary Indonesians. An intensification of individual religious practice was a way through which individuals could address problems that otherwise appeared removed.

Those who presented political and economic problems as a moral and religious crisis argued that the challenges that the country faced were not the result of abstract forces affecting Indonesia from the outside, but rather effects of the individual ethical practices of the nation's citizens. Thus, Indonesian Muslims, by enhancing their religious practice could solve these problems. These efforts were referred to as spiritual reform and sought to introduce Islamic ethics such as honesty, self-discipline, accountability, and considering work a form of worship, into everyday practices in the interest of producing a workforce capable of competing globally. Market Islam simultaneously draws on immersion in an Islamic discursive tradition, calculating economic rationality, and instilling principles and practices of self-management. While market Islam is commensurable with both capitalism and Islam, it is reducible to neither.

The methodological approach used in this paper builds on recent approaches to dissolve the boundary between anthropological theory and the empirical material that anthropologists encounter during fieldwork. This choice of approach enabled me to avoid making an artificial split between anthropological theory and method (and observation and participation). Thus, this paper works reflexively between anthropological knowledge and the perspectives of the Indonesian participants that I endeavour to accurately reproduce. My questions are not so much dedicated to uncovering what kind of definitive statements social science can make about their social world. Rather, I show what the implications of the models encountered in the field are for anthropological thought regarding religion and political economy today. I use the models and theories developed by spiritual reformers to reflect back on the concepts, like civil Islam and Islam de marché. Thus, I focus on the practical models that prominent Indonesians have developed to address what they perceive as some of the greatest challenges that they face. Market Islam dissolves the distinction between theory and the empirical world by showing how

spiritual reformers in contemporary Indonesia are developing sophisticated models and theories to address the challenges presented by the free market.

Just as I have sought to dissolve the boundaries of anthropological theory and the empirical material I encountered during fieldwork, the project of producing workers for the ‘free market’ creates an assemblage that breaks the boundaries that were constitutive of Indonesian modernity. The corporate managers and spiritual reformers who seek to mobilize Islam to enhance the ability of Indonesian firms to compete in an increasingly global economy want to ‘break the boundary between the inside and the outside’. ESQ introduced examples from the life of the prophet Muhammad and represented forms of Islamic practice to show how Islam was compatible with modern life and labour in a vast corporation. Breaking the boundary does not involve seeking to conserve tradition in the face of modernity, but reinvent it in order to meet new challenges. The boundaries ruptured in this reinvention are numerous. One is the boundary between religion and economic development, once seen as a cornerstone of secular modernization. Another is the boundary between Indonesia and the outside world, which was assumed under the programme of nationalist development. A third is the boundary between the individual and the corporation, as spiritual reformers assert that individual interest in personal salvation is merged with corporate success. By breaking these boundaries spiritual reformers seek to form a new subject capable of the kind of self-government conducive to development in new conditions of economic crisis and transformation.

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NOTES

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¹ With the exception of public figures, I have followed anthropological practice and used pseudonyms to conceal the identities of all individuals referred to directly in this article.

² This is chapter 102 of the Qur'an.

³ This is chapter 103 of the Qur'an.

⁴ Although, recently anthropologists have begun to address this articulation (Maurer 2005; Maurer 2006; Otayek & Soares 2007; Sloane 1999).

⁵ I have used this approach to explain other phenomena in contemporary Indonesia (Rudnyckyj 2004).

⁶ I began to formulate the notion of market Islam while writing my dissertation (2006) and only became aware of Haenni's work in Egypt while composing this paper. While Islam de marche could be translated into English as market Islam, the respective analytical stances toward similar research objects differs significantly. Commensurate with the methodological stance put forward in this paper, I contend that the language in which one articulates a concept affects its meaning.

⁷ In 2004 China, Japan, and Korea were ranked first, second, and fifth in steel production with a combined output of almost 450 million tons per year. Krakatau Steel produced about 2.5 million tons per year.

⁸ These practices resembled the earlier pattern of hulu-hilir trade in Southeast Asia in which sultans profited from trade by virtue of their position, not by producing or adding value to commodities (Bronson 1977). This provided the economic underpinnings for early Southeast Asian states. Prior to and after European contact sultans in Sumatra and on the Malay peninsula controlled the points where river systems met the sea and taxed both upstream and downstream trade. Joseph Conrad supplements Bronson's functionalist account with a vivid account of the conflicts precipitated by this system of this political organization in *Lord Jim* (Conrad 1900).

⁹ For more details on these training sessions see Rudnyckyj 2008; Rudnyckyj 2009.

¹⁰ *Maghrib* is the first evening prayer for Muslims and occurs at sundown. It is a particularly important prayer for employees of Krakatau Steel because it represents the end of the workday for non-shift employees. Departing work for home before *Maghrib* sometimes served as a justification for leaving work early 'in time for prayers'.

¹¹ This is a re-enactment of Hagar's search for water, before Allah revealed the well of Zamzam to her.

¹² The stoning of *jamrat al-aqabah* takes place in Mina just outside of Mecca and physically enacts rebuking the devil. The ritual involves hurling the pebbles at three pillars, which represent the devil. The pillars are three different representations of the devil: the first and largest is where he tempted Abraham against sacrificing Ishmael, the second is where he tempted Abraham's wife Hagar to induce her to stop him, and the third is where he tempted Ishmael to avoid being sacrificed. He was rebuked each time, and the throwing of the stones symbolizes those rejections.

¹³ Among other sources, he borrowed ideas and practices from business management and life coaching sessions such as *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, that have greatly expanded in North America, Europe, and Asia in recent decades (Thrift 1998; Thrift 1999).

¹⁴ As of early 2008 the three Indonesian provinces with no ESQ presence were Gorontalo, Maluku Utara, and Nusa Tenggara Timur. These are among the poorest and least developed provinces in Indonesia.

¹⁵ A *kiyai* is a learned scholar of Islam who is the leader of an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*).

¹⁶ This is not to say that they are critical of Indonesia's fledgling democratisation. Rather, it shows there are multiple ways in which Islam intersects with the institutions characteristic of modernity in Indonesia.

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