



Rebranding Islam: Piety, Prosperity, and a Self-Help Guru (Studies of the Walter H. Shorenstein Asi)

James Hoesterey

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Kyai Haji Abdullah Gymnastiar, known affectionately by Indonesians as "Aa Gym" (elder brother Gym), rose to fame via nationally televised sermons, best-selling books, and corporate training seminars. In *Rebranding Islam* James B. Hoesterey draws on two years' study of this charismatic leader and his message of Sufi ideas blended with Western pop psychology and management theory to examine new trends in the religious and economic desires of an aspiring middle class, the political predicaments bridging self and state, and the broader themes of religious authority, economic globalization, and the end(s) of political Islam.

At Gymnastiar's Islamic school, television studios, and MQ Training complex, Hoesterey observed this charismatic preacher developing a training regimen called *Manajemen Qolbu* into Indonesia's leading self-help program via nationally televised sermons, best-selling books, and corporate training seminars. Hoesterey's analysis explains how Gymnastiar articulated and mobilized Islamic idioms of ethics and affect as a way to offer self-help solutions for Indonesia's moral, economic, and political problems. Hoesterey then shows how, after Aa Gym's fall, the former celebrity guru was eclipsed by other television preachers in what is the ever-changing mosaic of Islam in Indonesia. Although *Rebranding Islam* tells the story of one man, it is also an anthropology of Islamic psychology.

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