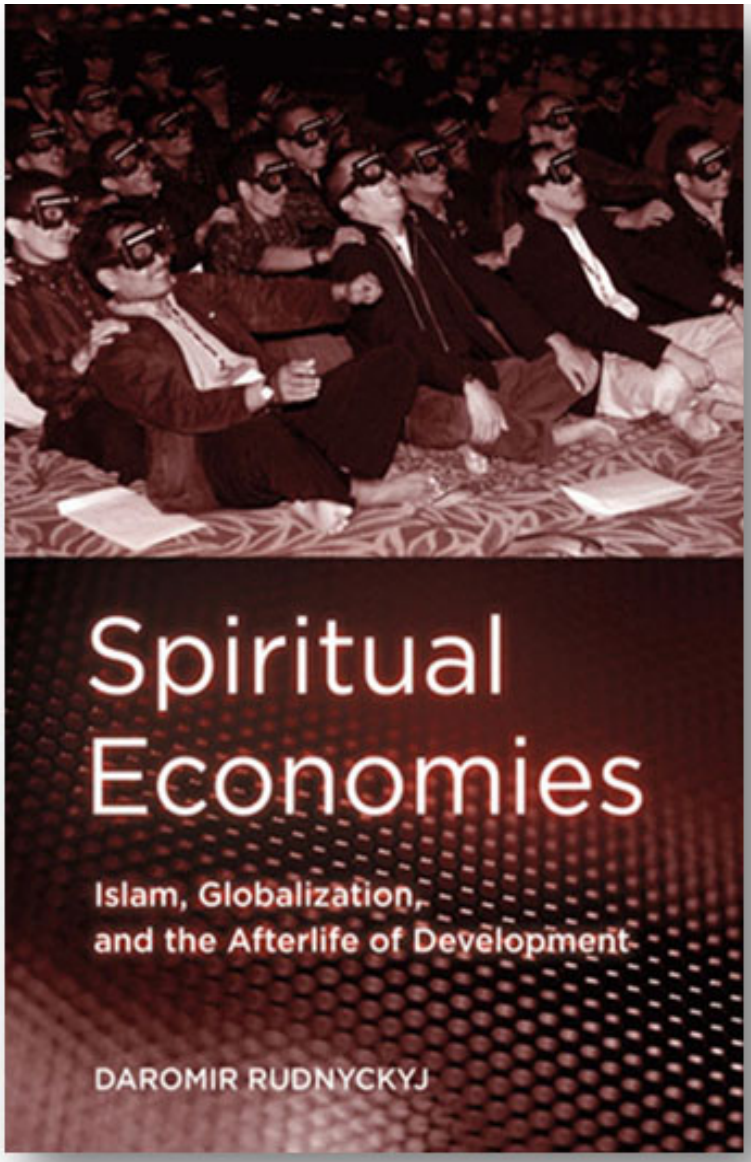
Daromir Rudnyckyj, "*Spiritual Economies: Islam, Globalization and the Afterlife of Development* ." 2010 Cornell University Press.

Prize Committee: Ken Guest (chair), Samuel Martinez, and Patty Kelly.



From the Prize Committee: Daromir Rudnyckyj's Spiritual Economies: Islam, Globalization and the Afterlife of Development sheds new light on the canonical anthropological theme of religious revival in times of social upheaval. Against the background of political and economic regime collapse and restructuring of Indonesia in the 2000s, Rudnyckyj describes how de-legitimation of the prior Suharto regime's development policies and ideology brought state corporate investment into a globalizing discourse of Islamic revival. Rudnyckyj gives particular attention to one unexpected media that brought new life to Islamic precepts and devotional reforms, a series of flashy workplace motivational seminars, labeled Emotional and Spiritual Quotient Training by the seminars' creators. Their central theme: the devout Muslim is a good worker. While banal, this message is delivered through the emotional rollercoaster of a three-day audiovisual presentation, climaxing in a virtual 3-D simulation of the participant's own death and burial, leading many participants to speak later of experiencing an "opening" of their "hardened hearts." As Rudnyckyj ethnographically tracks the repercussions of these Islamist motivational seminars on worker-management dialogues, he finds collectively organized workers to be surprisingly capable of turning concepts of the good Muslim worker in their own favor in negotiations with management. Spiritual Economies unites the descriptive and theoretical possibilities of ethnography and confirms the potential of single-sited ethnographies to both tell new kinds of stories and illuminate the human capacity to navigate increasing local complexity at the intersection of religious revival, neoliberal economic activity, and global media forms.