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THE RELIGIOUS MARKET IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE EDEN-SALAMULLAH GROUP

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Iim Halimatusa'diyah

The Religious Market in Contemporary Indonesia: A Case Study of the Eden-Salamullah Group*

Abstrak: Munculnya fenomena gerakan keberagamaan dan kepercayaan baru, yang lahir sebagai konsekuensi langsung dari perubahan-perubahan kultural (cultural transformations), seringkali dipandang sebagai bentuk penyimpangan dari kelompok mainstream. Pandangan ini menekankan perubahan sosial, ekonomi, politik dan sistem nilai dalam masyarakat menjadi faktor utama dari kemunculan kelompok-kelompok agama baru yang dalam kajian sosiologi agama dikenal sebagai teori deprivasi (deprivation theory). Akan tetapi di kalangan sosiolog agama yang lain, muncul pandangan bahwa aturanaturan keagamaan yang dimiliki suatu negaralah yang mempunyai kontribusi untama bagi kemunculan fenomena ini. Dalam istilah sosiologi agama, dua pendapat yang berbeda ini dikenal dengan pendekatan dari sisi permintaan dan penawaran (demand-side and supply-side approaches).

Artikel ini berusaha melihat kemunculan kelompok-kelompok agama baru di Indonesia terutama yang berkaitan dengan Islam dari persepektif ekonomi atau supply side-approach dimana setiap aktifitas keberagamaan dipandang serupa dengan aktifitas ekonomi yang terjadi dalam sebuah "pasar agama" (religious market) yang memiliki berbagai kelompok agama (religious firms) yang sama-sama berusaha untuk menarik dan memperoleh penganut masing-masing. Perspektif ini memang masih baru dan bahkan mungkin asing untuk konteks Indonesia, karena pendekatan ini pada awalnya memang muncul di Amerika Serikat yang nota bene secara sosial dan kultural berbeda dengan Indonesia. Oleh karena itu, artikel ini akan mencoba mengaplikasikan pendekatan ini dengan beberapa penyesuaian dalam konteks Indonesia. Untuk lebih spesifik, studi ini menekankan pada kasus Eden-Salamullah dibawah pimpinan Lia Eden sebagai pemain baru dalam pasar agama di Indonsia yang telah didominasi oleh mainstream Islam. Artikel ini juga akan melihat bagaimana struktur dan dinamika pasar agama di Indonesia.

Menurut Roger Finke dan Rodney Stark, pelopor pendekatan ekonomi dalam kajian agama, struktur pasar agama akan selalui dipengaruhi oleh aturan agama yang diberlakukan oleh negara. Ketika pasar agama tidak diregulasi di mana negara tidak membatasi atau mungkin melarang partisipasi dari setiap kelompok agama sebagai religious firm dan setiap warga negara sebagai konsumen agama, maka yang terjadi adalah pasar agama bebas (free religious market). Struktur pasar semacam ini bisa ditemukan di Amerika Serikat ketika negara tidak mengatur urusan agama dikenal dengan istilah "the Great Awakenings." Memodifikasi dan lebih lanjut mengembangkan pendekatan ini, Fenggang Yang yang meneliti fenomena yang sama dalam konteks China melihat bahwa ketika negara tetap memberlakukan aturan yang sangat ketat berkaitan dengan agama, namun masih memberi sedikit peluang bagi kelompok agama lain untuk berpartisispasi, maka struktur dari pasar agama akan terfagmentasi menjadi tiga yaitu, pasar terbuka (red/open market) untuk kelompok agama yang diperbolehkan oleh negara, pasar gelap (black market) untuk mereka yang dilarang oleh negara dan pasar abu-abu (gray market) untuk mereka yang memiliki status hukum yang masih ambigu.

Berkaca dari dua pasar agama di Amerika dan China, pasar agama dalam Konteks Indonesia bukanlah jenis pasar bebas karena negara masih mengatur urusan agama, tetapi juga tidak dimonopili karena masih mengijinkan kelompok agama lain untuk ikut berpartisipasi dimana negara mengakui secara resmi 6 agama di Indonesia. Sekilas struktur pasar agama di Indonesia hampir mirip dengan yang ada di China. Namun yang membedakan adalah China memiliki aturan yang jelas dan mengikat partisipasi kelompok agama yang ada, sehingga pembedaan antara mereka yang berada dalam pasar terbuka, gelap dan abuabu juga terlihat dengan jelas. Sementara dalam kasus Indonesia, pembedaan antara tiga kelompok ini masih sangat buram karena ketidak jelasan aturan yang Indonesia miliki. Disatu sisi negara sepertinya memberikan kebebasan beragama bagi seluruh warga negaranya (pasal 29 UUD 1945), di sisi yang lain negara membatasi keterlibatan kelompok agama diluar 6 agama resmi di Indonesia dengan memberlakukan aturan hukum bagi kelompok agama yang dianggap menyimpang (pasal 156 a KUHP). Kondisi inilah yang kemudian membuat kelompok agama yang berada dalam ranah abu-abu akan selalu dalam bahaya karena sewaktu-waktu bisa dianggap sebagai kelompok yang dilarang negara (black market).

Dengan secara spesifik melihat Kelompok eden-Salamullah sebagai studi kasus, artikel ini bermaksud menganalisa secara detail aturan-aturan agama yang Indonesia miliki sekaligus institusi-institusi yang dianggap berwenang untuk membatasi aktivitas keberagamaan di pasar agama Indonesia dan bagaimana kerangka aturan yang ambigu ini membentuk struktur dan dinamika pasar agama di Indonesia.

Iim Halimatusa'diyah

The Religious Market in Contemporary Indonesia: A Case Study of the Eden-Salamullah Group*

الخلاصة: تعتبر في كثير من الأحيان ظاهرة حركة التدينية والاعتقادية الجديدة التي جاءت بسبب مباشر للتحويلات الثقافية، صورة منحرف من جماعة الإتجاه العام. يؤكد هذا الرأى أن التحويلات الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والسياسية والقيم في الجحتمع من العوامل الأساسية لظهور الجماعات لدين جديد الذي يطلق عليه في علم الاجتماع بـ " نظرية حرمان". لكن بعض العلماء الاجتماعيين الدينيين يرون أن اللوائح الدينية التابعة للحكومية هي التي تسبب بشكل رئيسي ظهور هذه الظاهرة. يعرف الرايان المختلفان في علم الاجتماع الديني بـ "نظرة جانب مطلب و جانب تجهيز " (demand-side and supply-side approaches).

يحاول هذا البحث على النظر من ناحية اقتصادية أو " نظرة تجهيز الجانبية" في ظهور الجماعات لدين جديد في إندونيسيا، خاصة بما يتعلقُ بالإسلام ، حيث تنظر كل انشطة التدينية مثل النظر في أنشطة اقتصادية تحدث في " السوق الدينية" التي لها شركات دينية مختلفة تبذل سويا على كسب أعضاء لكل منها. من المعروف أن هذه النظرية ما تزال جديدة، بل غريبة بنسبة لحالة إندونيسيا، لأن ظهورها لأول مرة كان في الولايات المتحدة التي تختلف اجتماعيا وثقافيا عما في إندونيسيا. على ذلك، تحاول هذه المقالة تطبيقها على حالة إندونيسيا بعد تعديلها. بالتحديد أن الدراسة تركز على قاضية الجماعة "ايدين سلاموالله" Eden-Salamullah الذي ترأسها السيدة "ليا إيدين" Lia Eden التي تعتبر لاعبا جديدا في السوق الدينية في إندونيسيا التي يسيطر عليها الدين الإسلامي. يلقى هذا البحث الضوء على حالة هيئة السوق الدينية وديناميكيتها في إندونيسيا.

يرى Rodney Stark و Roger Finke ، رائدان في الدراسة الدينية بنظرة اقتصادية، أن هيئة السوق الدينية تتأثر دائما بلائحة دينية تطبقها الدولة. عند ما لم توجد لائحة للسوق الدينية حيث لم تقم الدولة بحد جماعات أو

منعها من مشاركتها في شركة دينية أو بحد المواطن ومنعهم كذبائن لدين معين، فالذى سيحدث هو سوق دينية حرة. هذا النوع من السوق بحدها في الولايات المتحدة التي لم تنظم الشئون الدينية التي تعرف بـــ" اليقظة العظيمة". بعد تعديل هذه النظرية، يرى Fenggang Yang الذى يجرى البحث على حالة مماثلة في الصين، أنه برغم من تشدد الدولة على تنظيم الدين فيها، إلا أنها لا تزال تعطى فرصة ضئيلة لدين آخر في مشاركة. هذا الأمر يؤدى إلى تقسيم السوق الدينية إلى ثلاثة أقسام، منها السوق المفتوحة للأديان التي حصلت على تصريح من الدولة، ومنها السوق السوق السوداء للممنوعين، ومنها السوق الموازية للناس الذين ليس لهم موقف قانوني واضح.

نظرا للنوعين من السوق الدينية في الولايات المتحدة والصين، فإن السوق الدينية في حالة إندونيسيا لم تكن من أنواع السوق المفتوحة، لأن الدولة تقوم بتنظيم الشؤون الدينية، لكن بغير تحديد دين معين، لأنما ما تزال تسمح للأديان الأخرى بالمشاركة حيث اعترفت الدولة بستة الأديان الرسمية في إندونيسيا. من هنا أن السوق الدينية في إندونيسيا لأول وهلة مثل ما نجد في الصين. لكن الفرق بينهما يتمثل في أن للصين قانونا محددا يسرى على الأديان الموجودة بالفعل التي تؤدى إلى تقسيم أتباعها بصورة واضحة إلى السوق المفتوحة والسوداء والموازية. أما في إندونيسيا أن تقسيمها يظل غير واضح، لأن إندونيسيا ليس لها قانون صريح في هذا الأمر. تبدو من ناحية أن الدولة تضمن على حرية التدين لمواطينها طبقا لبند ٢٩ من الدستور ٥٤٩، من ناحية أخرى ألها تقوم بتحديد مشاركة الأديان الأخرى غير المعترفة كها وتطبيق القانون على الأديان التي تعتبر منحرفة طبقا لبند ٢٥، أ لقانون العقوبات. هذا الأمر الذي يعرض أتباع الأديان الموازة لخطر دائم، لألهم في يوم من الأيام قد يقعون في أديان السوق السوداء المحظورة من قبل الدولة.

قدف هذه المقالة التى تتخذ جماعة "أيدين سلام الله " موضوعا للدراسة إلى تحليل مفصل للقوانين الإندونيسية المتعلقة بالأديان عما فيها الهيئات التى لها سلطة لتحديد الأنشطة الدينية في السوق الدينية بإندونيسيا وما هو دور لهذه القوانين غير الواضحة في تكوين هيئة السوق الدينية وديناميكيتها في إندونيسيا.

In sociology—or more correctly sociology of religion - there exists a theory which views religion as an economic commodity. That is to say, religion is a commodity which is produced and marketed in a religious market. This theory is known as the supply-side approach. The idea of applying an economic concept to religion has been promoted by many sociologists particularly the likes of Bainbridge, Finke, Iannaccone, and Stark.¹

Another important characteristic of the supply-side approach is that significant alteration in religion originates from changing supply.² The change in supply is mainly brought about by religious regulation³ which impacts on the freedom people have to choose and practice the religion of their liking. Regulations further influence the dynamics and structure of the religious market. In short, it is argued that whenever the religious market is deregulated, religious pluralism will emerge.

The supply-side approach has been of considerable benefit to sociologists examining religious participation in a number of countries, particularly the United States, from where this approach originated. This does not mean, however, that the theory is without its detractors. One of the most critical unanswered questions with regards to this theory is whether or not this theory can be applied to all societies regardless of culture or time period. This is an important question that needs to be answered since every society has very distinct social and cultural values.

There are also a number of issues within the application of this theory itself. Firstly, once a religious market is deregulated, it tends to be pluralistic. However, as with other markets, consumers are not homogenous in that everyone has different religious inclinations and preferences. Even people following the same religion have very different interpretations of that religion. It is therefore quite difficult for a single interpretation of a single religion to satisfy every individual. The possibility of one stream of a religion monopolizing the market so to speak is very unlikely.

Secondly, another matter that needs to be noted is that state regulation pertaining to religion can either help or hurt religion. At the end of the day, there is no completely unregulated market. What this means is that the meaning of 'deregulated' should not be perceived as literally as it appears, but with consideration for this fact. Therefore, a completely free and liberal religious market does not exist.

Fenggang Yang in his article also remarks that the rational choice theory of religion has a tendency to ignore the existence of non-institutionalized religions since most of the studies on religious economy solely concern religious participation in formal religious organizations.⁵ He believes that every society has non-institutionalized religious beliefs and practices such as "popular religion," "folk religion," "occults," "implicit religion," "pseudo-religion," or "quasi-religion." He contends that these non-institutionalized religious beliefs and practices are particularly rife in non-western societies. In expanding this argument, he notes that the application of the rational choice theory to the issue of religious economy can also be applied in other societies besides the United States but with some significant modifications.⁶

Thus, he argues that, in the case of Eastern countries like China in particular, where religious regulation is heavily enforced by the state and there is the availability of informal religious beliefs and practices instead of formal religions, pluralism and the availability of choices in the religious market can also happen and the triple market model will be the consequence. On this point, Stark and Finke point out that the assertion that whenever a religious market is deregulated, pluralism will flourish, fails to provide a formal explanation for the abovementioned situations.

Fenggang believes that a triple-market model is a beneficial framework to explain the market forces ignored in the existing rational choice theory.⁷ He divides the religious market into three categories. A red market is one that consists of all legal or officially accepted religious organizations, believers, and religious activities. Alternatively, it can be called an open market since the activities in this market are run openly. The black market comprises all illegal or officially banned religious organizations, believers, and religious activities in which the activities are conducted underground.⁸ A grey market comprises all religious and spiritual organizations, practitioners and activities with ambiguous legal status. Furthermore, a grey market is considered as the most difficult to distinguish on account of its vague nature.9 Generally speaking the grey market can be grouped into two forms of practices, namely illegal religious activities of legally existing religious groups and religious or spiritual practices that are manifest in culture or the science of religion.¹⁰

In short, rational choice theory of religion only states that when a religious market is deregulated, many new religious producers will emerge to take part in religious market activities. In fact, in a country where the religious market is regulated and its religions are very

pluralistic, the possibility of other religious producers taking part is still quite high. Although a free religious market has never existed, other forms of a religious market can be achieved as a result of existing religious regulation.

This paper examines the application of the supply-side approach, with particular focus on its application in the Indonesian context (with reference to Islam). We will further consider the possibility of the eventuation of a triple market in Indonesia, drawing on a case study of the Eden-Salamullah group.

Religious Dynamics in the Indonesian Context

Indonesian Islam is known for its diversity, and it is often distinguished from Middle Eastern Islam because of a number of characteristics unique to Indonesian Islam.¹³ In the case of Islam in Java, Geertz has pointed out in his classic *Religion of Java* (1960) that Javanese Islam has been mixed with ancient pre-Islamic beliefs and socio-cultural traditions. Therefore, some mystical and non-Islamic beliefs can be found in certain Islamic rituals in Java. And the mix of Islam and the local culture is not a phenomenon found in Java only but all over Indonesia.

Yet, due to this diversity, conflict among religious followers and within the followers of certain religion somehow becomes inevitable. This is in part related to the religious market in Indonesia, which consists of five official religious producers, 11 and each of which has a religious institution to control their religious market, 12 including the "cleansing" of the religion from any heritical movement labelling them as deviant (*sesat*).

In recent times there have been a number of controversial "heretical" movements that have popped up throughout the nation. In some cases, the presence of these groups has sparked outrage, with violence occasionally breaking out. Such cases include: the Salamullah Movement (or also well-known as Lia Eden group) under the leadership of Lia Aminuddin; Mahdi in Salena West Palu, which led to clashes between this movement and the police, resulting in the deaths of a number of security officers; the Ahmadiyah in Parung; the doomsday sect (Sekte Hari Kiamat) in Serang Banten; and a group of people under the leadership of Zikrullah in central Sulawesi, among others. Interestingly, some "heretical movements" can even be found in pesantrens. They are Pondok Pesantren Ar-Rahman in Lingsar West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Majelis At-Tazkir Al-Musyarofah in Beka-

si West Java, Pondok Pesantren Ma'dinul Asror in Tulung Agung, Pondok Jama'ah I'tikaf Ngaji Lelaku in Malang, Pondok Pesantren Baitul Taubah in Probolinggo, and Pondok Pesantren Al Mardiyah in Surabaya.¹⁴

The aforementioned religious groups and others that have not been mentioned generally take Islam as the source of their basic religious values. However, they tend to adopt interpretations that tend to be in the form of unusual ideas, doctrines and practices which deviate from the mainstream. Salamullah, for example, is signified as a heretical movement since its leader, Lia Aminuddin claimed herself as Imam Mahdi. Pondok Jama'ah I'tikaf Ngaji Lelaku in Malang is also considered heretical since it engages in the unusual practice of performing prayers bilingually, in Indonesia and Arabic or in Javanese and Arabic. In short, all of the groups that are viewed as heretical tend to engage in practices and adopt beliefs that deviate from mainstream Islamic ones.

Most of the aforementioned cases of deviant religious groups have been brought to trial. Most of the accusations are made based on the controversial article 1 of UU No.1/PNPS/1965, and Article 156 A of the KUHP (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata, or the Indonesian Penal Code) on the violation of the accepted religions in Indonesia. These articles are to some extent incompatible with the 1945 Indonesian Constitution article 29 verse 2, article 28 E verses 1, 2, and 3, all of which guarantee freedom of religion for Indonesian citizens.

What the cases of the above mentioned heretical groups shows is that the Islamic mainstream groups have monopolized the religious market in Indonesia. This will, for the foreseeable future, mean that new religious groups will always be challenged by the more powerful ones.

The Religious Market in the Indonesian Islam Context

Religious regulation in Indonesia can be traced back to the Dutch colonial era. It was then that there existed the so-called colonial police. One of the roles of the colonial police was to control religion. The controls focused mainly on stemming the formation or growth of Muslim rebellions against colonial rule. The biggest perceived threat to colonial rule was the Islamic mystical groups (i.e. *tarekat*). This assumption was based on a report by Snouck Hurgronje, the ethnologist and Advisor on Islam and Indigenous People Affairs for the Dutch

Governor-General. ¹⁶ Snouck Hurgronje interpreted Islam monolithically and only in terms of the dichotomies of fanatic versus nonfanatic, believer versus non-believer. He also literally identified relations between the *guru* and the *murid* (teacher and student) as an organization to attack the government. He then concluded that fanaticism emerged from the relationship between *guru* and *murid* whereby rebellion was promoted and taught. ¹⁷

As regards to his conclusion, Snouck Hurgronje proposed that the Dutch governor control the indigenous people (pribumi), particularly Muslims. He also introduced the idea of police for religious control, particularly Islam, to prevent Muslims from becoming fanatics and joining the tarekat groups which were seen as the biggest threat to Dutch power.¹⁸ After the Banten rebellion in 1888, the Islamic religious teachers became the focus of the central control. 19 Lots of guru and santri were detained because they were perceived to be a threat to the Government.²⁰ For the sake of the supposed security of the colonial power, all Islamic religious teachers had to register themselves and receive legal permission to teach from the government.²¹ This regulation was based on Staatsblad No.550 year 1905 which was known as the Guru Ordonnantie. It came into effect on November 2nd 1905.²² It consisted of many restrictions and rules that were supposed to be fulfilled by Islamic religious teachers regarding their teaching activities. It also stipulated punishments and fines for those who did not obey this regulation.23

After Independence, the Indonesian Government took the place of the colonial police office. In the Law of the Attorney Office (*UU Pokok Kejaksaan*) No.15 year 1961,²⁴ one article states that the duty of the Attorney Office (*kejaksaan*) is to control and monitor those religious groups which are considered to potentially endanger community and state.²⁵

Prior to this, the Indonesian Prime Minister, Ali Sastroamidjojo (1953-1955), set up an interdepartmental committee for supervising and controlling the religious groups in society. This committee was called Panitia Peninjauan Kepercayaan-kepercayaan dalam Masyarakat (Committee for Monitoring Mystical Beliefs in Society), better known by its abbreviation Interdep Pakem. This committee was in charge of investigating the form, characteristic and purpose of religious groups. Additionally, it also functioned as the consultative institution for the government to limit religious groups' activities when they were considered to a threat to community safety and well-being.²⁶

Due to a dramatic rise in the number of religious groups whose leaders claimed to be prophets and to have a holy scripture, the Attorney General founded it necessary to establish a division for supervising and controlling religious movements and groups. In 1960, this division became Biro Pakem (*Pengawas Aliran Kepercayaan*) which played the main role in controlling and supervising religious movements in society in coordination with other related official institutions.²⁷ Later, PAKEM became a national institution with an office established in every province and regency.²⁸

In 1965, President Soekarno issued Presidential Decree No. 1—which later became law—on the Prevention of Misuse and/or Violation of Religion. The law sought to protect the official religions of the state from any deviant teachings, ideas, practices or beliefs.²⁹ It was also employed by the New Order regime, although the Attorney General's Office extended the scope of the law to cover cases related to religious violation (*delik penyelewengan agama*) and anti-religion (*delik antiagama*).³⁰

The impact of PAKEM's role in policing the religion market is evident. Soeparman, S.H., the chief of the division of public relations of the Attorney General's Office, stated that from 1949 until 1992, in total of 517 religious groups were eliminated all over Indonesia. More comprehensive data shows that by 1998, 685 deviant religious groups had been banned by PAKEM, while 2136 continued to be monitored. For the groups which have been banned by PAKEM, their cases are generally brought before the courts, and their leaders are charged with violating Article 156 (a) of the KUHP on organized religion, a crime that carries a maximum penalty of five years in jail. The solution of the strength of the

The groups which are being monitored are given religious education and guidance by the Ministry of Religious Affairs with the hope that they will return to the fold of mainstream Islam and adopt "the correct Islamic teachings". Take, for instance, the recent case of the Mataram West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Provincial Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs assigned, which deployed 1214 religious counsellors (*penyuluh agama*) throughout the nine regencies of NTB to promote mainstream Islamic teachings. Such measures were viewed to be necessary by the MUI representatives in NTB because of the commonness of heretical practices in the community.

Furthermore, throughout its modern history, religious regulations in Indonesia have changed considerably in line with the ruling regime. When the state tends to be more authoritarian as was the case with the New Order regime, banned religious groups naturally tend

to operate secretly. In the Reformation Era, however, the ideas of democracy and human rights engendered a spirit of freedom amongst Indonesians, and the number of new religious movements has risen dramatically as a result.

In this regards, the Government faces a considerable dilemma in that it must performs contrary roles; on the one hand it enforces the above-mentioned religious regulations, while on the other it strives to uphold the democratic and human rights principles, which include freedom of expression and religion. One of the consequences of this is that the role of PAKEM has also changed. It has no full authority anymore to prohibit any groups as such. It now only functions more as a coordinative institution to manage meetings with other state institutions. The state institutions include MUI, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Department of Home Affairs, and the National Police. The meetings generally focus on identifying religious groups that are considered to be heretical. Recommendations are then made to the government, particularly the president, to ban the identified groups. The President cannot, however, always act on these recommendations for he faces considerable pressure from lobby groups, citizens, foreign governments, and so on.

MUI and its Role as a Market Regulator

MUI, as a representative of mainstream Islam in Indonesia, has played an important role in controlling the participation of religious producers in the religious market in Indonesia. It has considerable authority to determine whether the teachings and practices of a particular group are in accordance with Islamic teachings, and has the authority to issue some edicts (fatwa), including the status of religious groups.

This institution was established in May 1975 by the government.³⁷ MUI's function is advisory in nature. It provides *fatwas* and advice to both the government and to the Muslim public at large, on issues related to religion in particular, and to all problems facing the nation in general.³⁸ All MUI *fatwas* have equal status. Every branch of MUI in every local area has the same authority to issue *fatwas* and the national office.³⁹ MUI is also expected to promote unity among Muslims, to play a mediating role between the government and Muslim citizens in matters concerning religion (Islam).⁴⁰

As part of its function to provide religious guidance for both Muslims in general and the government, MUI issues many *fatwas* to

prohibit the emergence and existence of new religious movements that endorse unaccepted religious practices and teachings. ⁴¹ Furthermore, as a consultative institution for the government, MUI is also involved in coordinative meetings arranged by PAKEM. Therefore, PAKEM tends to rely on the *fatwas* issued by MUI for its guidance. ⁴²

What is important to note here, however, is that MUI *fatwas* are not legally binding. From the Indonesian Government's perspective, a *fatwa* is different from law; while a *fatwa* may have the backing of the religious elite and is binding in Islamic law, at the end of the day it is the secular laws which are enforced by the authorities. Therefore, it is not uncommon that *fatwas* issued by MUI are ignored by the Government. The case of Ahmadiyah in Parung, Bogor, is a case in point. Even though MUI has issued a *fatwa* banning the existence of Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudoyono, is yet to take a firm stance on whether or not this group should be banned.

Although MUI enjoys support from the Indonesian Muslim community in general, there have been some calls for the institution to be disbanded. This is because some religious experts argue that although the *fatwas* issued by MUI do not contain a clause allowing the use of violence to enforce the edict, they stir the emotions of dedicated Muslims and inspire some to turn to violence to enforce MUI *fatwas*.⁴⁴

Case Study: Eden-Salamullah, a New Player in the Religion Market

Salamullah is a religious group which first emerged in 1996. It was originally an informal religious discussion group (*pengajian*) that commenced in November 1996. At that time the discussion group was attended by several students of the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Jakarta. When it in turn transformed into a group under the charismatic leadership of Lia Aminuddin, who claims to have been receiving revelations from an angel since October 28th 1995, most of the group's founding members left the group. Some even went as far as labelling the group heretical, in line with the official MUI stance regarding this group.

Prior to receiving revelations from Habib al-Huda, believed to be the angel Gabriel (*Jibril*), Lia Aminuddin was a simple florist. Although her family had quite a strong religious background, she did not have any specific religious education, to the point that she could not even recite the Qur'an very well. Moreover, Aminuddin has not studied beyond senior high school.

After its founding, Salamullah soon changed its name to Eden. ⁴⁵ The name change was a result of orders from the angel Gabriel that the group should not to affiliate with any particular religion. In this article, we refer to the group as Eden-Salamullah. ⁴⁶

Initially, the group had a reasonably strong following. But over the years the number of followers has fluctuated considerably, and it appears that there are very few permanent members. Most recently, the group totalled less that 50 members. Most of the members are young people from well-educated and middle class backgrounds.

With regards to religious practices, Eden-Salamullah holds group congregations such as the *Majelis Hari Sabtu* (Saturday Sermon) and *Halaqah Suci* (Holy Circle).⁴⁷ Besides these collective congregations, members are required to make financial contributions for the development of the group.

Another interesting practice of the members of this group is the dress code. Members wear a seven metre-long white cloth without stitching (*kain kafan*). *Kain kafan* symbolizes releasing themselves from physical and material dependency; the white colour is a symbol of purity while unstitched clothing is a symbolic statement that members' spirituality is not limited by the boundaries of religions. Members also wear a white bracelet with the inscription "God's Kingdom, Eden the holy thorn of God's Kingdom" (*GOD'S KINGDOM*, *Tahta Suci Kerajaan Tuhan Eden*). ⁴⁸ This dress code is only enforced on members who have succeeded in undergoing some purification rituals in Eden, which make them official members.

The purification rituals begin with the sin confession procession in which every member including Lia-Eden as the leader confesses their sins in front of the other members. Other rituals include reciting an oath of repentance and a fire procession in which prospective members shave their heads and burn all parts of their body as a symbol of repentance and purification from sins.⁴⁹

Perhaps one of the most peculiar aspects of the Eden-Salamullah group is that some members maintain their pre-Eden-Salamullah practices. In the early days following this group's emergence, most of the members came from a Muslim background since the group was originally an informal prayer gathering (pengajian) of Jakarta Muslims. Sometime later, however, it started accepting people from any religion, the idea being that Eden-Salamullah embraced the universal

values of all religions. In this phase, it still tolerated their members practicing their previous religion's rituals and traditions and it still allowed them to identify themselves based on their previous religious affiliation. Besides practicing and believing in the Eden-Salamullah teachings, those who were Muslims, for instance, were allowed to practice Islamic teachings, including praying and fasting. As a consequence of this strange doctrine, there were two different labels to identify members: Salamullah was used to identify all members who are Muslims or have a Muslim background, while Eden identified members who followed the teachings of both their original religion (i.e. Christianity or Islam) together with those of Lia Aminuddin.

More recently (February 26th 2005), however, Lia Aminuddin—on behalf of Gabriel—asked members to fully turn to Eden-Salamullah teachings and thus give up their previous religions, particularly Islam. Aminuddin explained that the purpose of this change was to be more neutral and avoid the inclination to affiliate with a certain religion since the inhabitants of heaven would consist of those who had neutral beliefs. Since this change has been enforced, it is only the Eden group that remains.

For Muslims, the social costs of becoming a fully-fledged member of this group are evident. Further to dealing with ridicule and threats from mainstream Muslims who view Eden to be a heretical following, members whose spouses and other family members are not members of Eden face expulsion from their families and communities.⁵⁰

Eden-Salamullah in the 'Triple Market' Context of Indonesian Islam

Eden-Salamullah's entry into the religious market has been restricted by some religious regulations. Furthermore, the more established religious producer also challenges their participation.

Not surprisingly, MUI has long held the opinion that Eden-Salamullah is a heretical movement. This was made clear in late November 1997 with a *fatwa* (Kep-768/MUI/XII/1997) in which MUI stated that Eden-Salamullah has violated Islamic doctrine. For example, in 1997, Lia declared that she received revelations from the Angel Gabriel, and in August 1998, she claimed that the Angel Gabriel had chosen her as Imam Mahdi and her son as Prophet Jesus. Even these claims have changed subsequently: she has recently claimed that she is the *Ruhul Qudus* (the Holy Spirit).⁵¹

Although Eden-Salamullah has announced that it is no longer affiliated with any specific religion, it still cannot distance itself completely from certain Islamic values in its doctrines and teachings. As a result, members still refer to many Qur'anic verses in order to understand and legitimize the group's teachings. For example, when Lia Aminuddin proclaimed that she received revelations from Gabriel, she referred to some verses from the Qur'an to justify her claims. These included al-Qasas: 7, al-Zalzalah: 5, an-Nahl: 2, Maryam: 16-17, ash-Shaffaatt: 150, and an-Najm: 6. One should keep in mind in this regard that Muslims in general believe that the last prophet is Muhammad—as Muhammad is referred to as the Seal of the Prophets⁵²—and therefore such claims the Angel Gabriel has no such duties of delivering revelations.

Eden-Salamullah's other heretical beliefs include ideas regarding reincarnation. Lia has claimed that she is the reincarnation of Maryam (*Bunda Maria*) while her deputy Muhammad Abdul Rahman is the reincarnation of Prophet Muhammad. She re-interprets Surat al-Waqi'ah verse 61-62 to justify her claims.

Another strange doctrine espoused by the group is the belief that Eden-Salamullah's centre in Jalan Mahoni 30 Central Jakarta has become God's Kingdom on Earth; for this claim, she has used the Qur'anic verses al-Insan: 20 and al-Mu'min: 15-16. Even stranger, Lia has claimed that God permitted her to eat pork, forbidden in Islam.

Additionally, the Eden-Salamullah group integrates the teachings of some other religions into their practices and teachings, particularly such Christian notions as sin confession. The other holy books utilized to justify Eden teachings are the Bible (the Book of Revelations: 10, verses 1-11; the Book of Revelations: 19, verses 10-16), Rgveda II. 39.2-7, and Dhammapada (verses 1 and 2).⁵³

From a religious market perspective, what MUI did by issuing the *fatwa* against Eden-Salamullah can be understood as a measure taken by a producer [of religion] to protect their product from being imitated by another producer. Like other markets, in this religious market producers or sellers will offer their products with varied trademarks. The products can be in the form of religious teachings, terms, symbols, and rituals which are displayed with different brands. Like other producers, religious producers also have copyrights or intellectual property rights for their products.

It is inevitable then that the religious community will continually produce new commodities. No one can stop the production of goods

as long as those goods have a demand. However, the production of religious goods (i.e. a new religion) becomes a problem when one of the following takes place:

- a. New producers use the brand name of other producers for their own goods or use other religious producer's goods for their own brand.
- b. New producers change the contents or ingredients, for example, of a well-established product.

Lia Aminuddin, for example, has done precisely the above by producing the same religious symbols as other religious groups. She offers terms such as Jibril and Roh Kudus (*Ruhul Qudus*), and resorts to some Qur'anic verses to legitimize her teachings.

Therefore, as in any other market, when the well-established producers find out their products and their brands are being illegally imitated and used by new producers, they will take several measures to protect and stop the dissemination of those imitation products. Of course, the producers of Islam (ulama, kiyai, or religious leaders) will put in every effort to protect their products as well as their targeted-consumers and MUI as the representative of Muslims in Indonesia plays this role. However, since the edict issued by the MUI in 1997 is not legally binding, it has been unable to prevent Eden-Salamullah from carrying out its activities. In 1998, the Attorney General's Office only went as far as calling for an investigation of Lia and her followers but failed to take the matter further. Ultimately, the only effect of this edict is that it has been interpreted by some Muslims as an endorsement to act aggressively towards this group, which resulted in attacks on Eden-Salamullah centres in Megamendung Bogor and Jatipadang South Jakarta in April-May 2001. When the group moved to Pondok Gede, Bekasi that same year, they faced considerable opposition from local residents and were forced again to move to Central Jakarta.

In December 28th 2005 police evacuated this group from this centre for security reasons. On December 29th 2005, however, Lia Aminuddin and Abdul Rahman were named as official suspects in a criminal investigation concerning violation of religion. Accordingly, the two were placed in police detention. The case was brought to trial under Article 156 (a) of the KUHP for violating and disgracing religion, and on June 29th 2006 the judge of the State Administrative Court of Jakarta sentenced Lia Aminuddin to two years imprisonment.

The court case against Lia followed by her subsequent imprisonment illustrates the state's efforts to protect the purity of the accepted religions in Indonesia. Lia is perceived—not just by the Government but by and large by the entire Islamic community in Indonesia—as having introduced deviated teachings and associated these teachings (e.g. by referring to the Qur'an to justify her claims) in some way with Islam. She is also considered, understandably, to be a threat to religious harmony in Indonesia. One of her *fatwa*s in Eden-Salamullah for example states that God will eliminate Islam from this Earth.⁵⁴

By considering the case of the Eden-Salamullah group and others like it we can see the role that the state performs as a kind of regulatory authority for religion and religious groups. Further to curtailing the existence of deviant religious groups Eden-Salamullah, the state also 'backs' certain groups and by doing so 'inflates' the 'cost' of joining a new religion like Eden-Salamullah. This is because people who join religious groups deemed deviant by the likes of MUI or the government itself will face considerable social costs, such as persecution and isolation. In short, the state's role of suppressing and supporting certain religious groups function ultimately to control the religious market in Indonesia.

In recent times, however, the application of state regulations on religion has faced some changes. They are no longer effectively applied and there is no clear distinction between what groups are and aren't suppressed by the state. These changes are largely a consequence of the political changes that have taken place in Indonesia over the last decade. As long as this vagueness in the government's stance on deviant religious groups persists, the existence and participation of new religious producers in the religious market in Indonesia will always be in a limbo. Such circumstances obviously contribute to social instability.

In the case of Eden-Salamullah, it is viewed as a religion that participates in the grey market since it does not have any legal status as an accepted religion. Howell argues that Eden-Salamullah can be categorized as a variation of other loosely-defined Sufi institutions. She and van Bruinessen believe that Sufi mysticism that has a traditional base in the Islamic religious orders (*tarekat*) has attracted many urban cosmopolitan followers in Indonesia since the mid-1980s. Those who are not interested in *tarekat* turn their attention to other loosely-associated Sufi institutions like the Eden-Salamullah group. ⁵⁷

Ultimately, although the religious market in Indonesia can be deemed a triple market, a number of factors regarding its structure and dynamics should be noted. Firstly, as mentioned above, the religious regulations in Indonesia continue to be unclear. Although religious regulations should serve to ensure that deviant groups are restricted, banned and even criminalized, the government's failure to take a clear stance regarding some groups results in considerable ambiguity over the status of these groups. Hence while regulations—as well as other factors such as social attitudes—ensure that there is a triple market in Indonesia, the status of groups like Eden-Salamullah, which should logically be classified as illegal (i.e. black market) are still grey.

Secondly, another issue concerns the lack of clarity of Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution. Although this article guarantees freedom to practice one's chosen religion, in reality Indonesian's must follow one of five religions, that is, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, or Buddhism. Further confusing the issue is that the Indonesian government has never made it clear what the accepted forms of each religion are. What is clear, however, is that local religions, mystical groups and spirituality are commonly under scrutiny because of the view that they are deviant in some way or another.

In short, by considering the existence of the religious regulations as well as the role of religion-controlling institutions such as PAKEM and MUI, it is evident that the structure of the religious market in Indonesia has become considerably more complex. It is not a free market; it constitutes a triple market as a direct consequence of the religious regulations put in place by the government. However, since the implementation of religious regulations and the role of religious surveillance institutions remain unclear, the categorization of those groups is also difficult.

The structure of the religious market in Indonesia is distinct from the religious markets of both the United States, which is very free, and China, which is very restricted. Considering the two religious markets in the United States and China, it might be said that the religious market in Indonesia is regulated; it is not free since the state still implements some regulations.

Although the market structure of Indonesia most resembles that of China, the later has clearer religious regulations that restrict and repress the participation of certain religious firms. Therefore, the status of those groups that engage in the open market, the black market

and the grey market are clearer compared to similar groups in Indonesia.

The greatest danger for groups—or more specifically the members of the groups—that fall into the grey market is that at any time they can be prosecuted because of a change in the government's position. That is to say that members of a particular group previously considered to be grey market might suddenly find they are part of an illegal group because of the government's decision to ban it. The arrest and sentencing of Lia Aminuddin and Muhammad Abdul Rahman are proof of this danger. Members of other grey market groups are also vulnerable until the government pulls its act together and clearly states which groups are and are not banned.

Conclusion

Looking at the religious market in Indonesia, it is evident that religious regulations play an important role in changing the structure and dynamics of the religious market in Indonesia. In the case of Indonesia the increase in the number of new religious groups is not because the state has deregulated the religious market. It is still quite regulated. The fact of the matter is that regulations concerning religion face some ambiguity and the consequences have been that they are not implemented as they should be.

The obvious implication of this ambiguity is that some religious groups that should be categorized as 'black' market (or illegal) continue to be considered part of the 'grey' market. Another more serious implication of the ambiguity of the regulations is that it has given rise to social and political instability. The numerous attacks against Ahmadiyah centres and demonstrations over the government's failure to take a firm stance on the Ahmadiyah issue are proof of this. The dilemma the government faces is that although it may wish to implement relevant regulations that would result in the banning of certain religious groups, the recent push for democratic reforms and the adoption of human rights principles requires the government to guarantee all citizens' basic freedoms, which include freedom of religion and expression.

Endnotes

- This article is part of my thesis at Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies Postgraduate Program State Islamic University Jakarta. I would like to express my thanks to Jajat Burhanudin and Ceyne Scott who read the draft of the article.
- 1. See for example Laurence R. Iannaccone, Roger Finke, and Rodney Stark, "Deregulating Religion: The Economics of Church and State," Economic Inquiry (1997): 350-364; Laurence R. Iannaccone, "Voodoo Economics? Reviewing Choice Approach to Religion," Journal for Scientific Study of Religion Vol. 34 No. 1 (Mar. 1995): 76-88; and William Sims Bainbridge, The Sociology of Religious Movement (New York: Routledge, 1997).
- 2. Roger Frinke, "The Consequence of Religious Competition: Supply-Side Explanation for Religious Change," Rational Choice Theory and Religion; Summery and Assessment, ed. Lawrence A. Young (New York: Routledge, 1997) 47.
- 3. Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, "the Dynamic of Religious Economies," Handbook of the Sociology of Religion, ed. Michele Dillon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 100.
- 4. See Steve Bruce, "The Supply-Side Model of Religion: The Nordic and Baltic States," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 39(1) (2000): 32-49. See also Lori G. Beaman, "The Myth of Pluralism, Diversity and Vigor: The Constitutional Privilege of Protestantism in the United States and Canada." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 42(3) (2003): 311–25.
- 5. Almost all studies which apply the economic approach focus on one type of participation in formal religious organizations as measured by membership and attendance. In part, this is because of attempts to fit mathematical models with quantified data. Researchers should not forget that some factors might be more difficult to quantify, but nonetheless play critical roles. See Fenggang Yang, "the Red, Black, and Gray Markets of Religion in China," The Sociological Quarterly, 47 (Midwest Sociological Society: 2006): 94.
- 6. See Finke and Stark, "the Dynamic of Religious Economies," 96 109; and Yang, "the Red, Black, and Gray Markets of Religion in China," 94-96.
- 7. Yang, 96.
- 8. Ibid., 97.
- 9. Ibid.
- 10. Ibid.
- 11. The official religions of Indonesia are five, that is: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. This is stated in Article 1 of UU No.1/PNPS/1965. The consequence of this article is that religions other than the official ones are not well supported by the state. What is inevitable, also, is that in every religion there will always be various groups which are different from the religious mainstream.
- 12. The institutions are: KWI (the Episcopal Conference of Indonesia/Konggres Wali Gereja Indonesia) which is the authoritative institution for the Catholics, PGI (the Communion of Churches in Indonesia/Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja Indonesia) for the Protestants, WALUBI (Council of Buddhist Communities) for Buddhists, Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia for Hindus and MUI (the Indonesian Council of the Ulama/Majelis Ulama Indonesia) for Muslims.

- 13. This data has been collected gained from several online media sources such as Liputan6.com, Media Indonesia Online, www.sabili.co.id, Tempo Interaktif, LKBN Antara, Media Indonesia, and Suara Merdeka.
- 14. Ibid.
- 15. Muslims believe that the Mahdi (the Guided One) is the prophesied redeemer of Islam who prior to the Day of Judgment (*Yaum al-Qiyamah*) will restore justice and change the world into a perfect Islamic society alongside the Prophet Jesus.
- 16. Ahmad Baso, "Islam Pasca Kolonial: Perselingkuhan Agama, Kolonialisma dan Liberalisme," (Bandung: Mizan, 2005), p. 191.
- 17. Ibid., 197.
- 18. Ibid., 195.
- 19. Ibid., 229.
- 20. Ibid.
- 21. Ibid., 230-231.
- 22. Ibid.
- 23. Ibid., 231.
- 24. Ibid., 239.
- 25. Ibid.
- 26. Ibid., 240.
- 27. Ibid.
- 28. Ibid., 241.
- 29. Ibid., 243.
- 30. It is noted in the letter of General Attorney of Republic of Indonesia No. B-1177/D.I/101982/ dated October 30th 1982. See Baso, 245.
- 31. Baso, 238. Soeparman's statement was cited from an article in Kompas, the daily newspaper in Indonesia, on August 5th, 1993.
- 32. The data was taken directly from documents provided by the PAKEM office in the Department of Justice. The latest data (2005) has not completely been collected yet as some regional offices of PAKEM have not sent their reports to the central PAKEM, namely to the attorney general's office.
- 33. Interview with a PAKEM officer, July 2006.
- 34. Samuel Agustinus Patty, "Aliran Kepercayaan: A Socio-Religious Movement in Indonesia," Ph.D. Dissertation (Washington State University: December, 1986) 96-96. See Margaret Louise Lyon, Bases "Conflict in Rural Java" Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies (Barkeley: University of California, 1997).
- 35. 111 religious counsellors perform their duty in the NTB Provincial Office of Department of Religious Affairs, 115 in charge in Mataram, 150 in West Lombok, 170 in Central Lombok, 156 in East Lombok, 172 in West Sumbawa, 114 in Dompu and 226 in Bima. These numbers do not include the 80 people who work as functional staff. These religious counsellors are in charge of giving Islamic guidance and "correct Islamic values". Each of them should have at least four religious sermon groups (pengajian) with at least 20 members each. This data is gained from Tempo Interaktif, (Jakarta: 10-05-2005), in http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/nusa/nusatenggara/2005/04/14/brk,20050414-24,id.html.
- 36. Ibid.

- 37. Nadirsyah Hosen, "Behind the Scenes: Fatwa of Majlis Ulama Indonesia (1975-1998)," Journal of Islamic Studies, 15:2 (2004): 149. For more information, see Ali Mufrodi, "Peranan Ulama dalam Masa Orde Baru: Studi tentang Perkembangan Majelis Ulama Indonesia," (Ph.D. Thesis, IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 1994).
- 38. Hosen, "Behind the Scenes: Fatwa of Majlis Ulama Indonesia (1975-1998)" 152.
- 39. Ibid., 166-67.
- 40. Ibid., 152.
- 41. Ibid., 152. See also M. Atho Mudzhar, "Fatwas of the Council of Indonesian Ulama: A Study of Islamic Legal Thought in Indonesia 1975-1988" (Jakarta: INIS, 1993) 112. This is based on his Ph.D. thesis at University of California, Los Angeles, 1990.
- 42. Hosen, 151.
- 43. Book Review of Sherman A. Jackson, "Islamic Law and the state: the Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihab al-Din al-Qarafi", Journal of Islamic Studies 9:2 (1998): 299-332.
- 44. Suratno, "Eden Community and the Freedom of Religion," The Jakarta Post, January 09, 2006. Available online: http://www.thejakartapost.com/ detaileditorial.asp?fileid=20051219.E02&irec=1
- 45. Accordingly, Lia Aminuddin also changed her name to Lia Eden.
- 46. This evolution began on November 15th 2005. "Gabriel" still uses Salamullah to call the members who are from Islam and Eden is used for all members. In line with commands from Gabriel for the group to disassociate itself from all religions, on February 26th 2005 this group performed spiritual rituals to discharge them from all religions they previously embraced. Thus, Eden institutionally is none of the official religions in Indonesia and does not affiliate with other religions at all. One of the consequences of this evolution has been a mass resignation of sorts, particularly of Muslim members.
- 47. While the Saturday Sermon (Majelis Hari Sabtu) is especially held for members, Halagah Suci is open for those who are not members but they are interested in joining in Eden Activities. Majelis Hari Sabtu is further a kind of forum for Lia Aminuddin (on behalf of the Angel Gabriel) to speak to members. Halaqah Suci was originally designed to allow for questions about Eden-Salamullah Teachings, but this was later eliminated as it was perceived to be counter-productive to efforts to attract members. This was probably because questioners were also given the opportunity to criticize the group's teachings.
- 48. "Atribut Pakaian (Dress Code)," http://www.liaeden.info/mahoni30/ fag/atribut pakaian.html
- 49. For more detail regarding the purification rituals, see Marzani Anwar, "Dimensi Perenial Kelompok Keagamaan Salamullah," Masters Thesis (Jakarta Islamic University: 2004) 201-223.
- 50. Some of the members who did not follow the purification processions and could not fully practice the other teachings, finally dropped out of the group, or were banned by Lia from attending.
- 51. See note 49.
- 52. Our'an, Surah al-Ahzab:40

- 53. See http://www.liaeden.info/indonesia/rahasia.html
- 54. http://www.liaeden.info/indonesia/dokumen/fatwa/2006/fk_060814_rk_release.html
- 55. Frinke, "the Consequence of Religious Competition: Supply-Side Explanation for Religious Change," 50.
- 56. Julia D. Howell, "Muslim the New Age and Marginal Religions in Indonesia: Changing Meanings of Religious Pluralism," *Social Compass*, 52 (4), (2005): 480.
- 57. Howell, 480.

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