

## The Church in the Midst of Religious Pluralism: Christianity with the Ideology of Pancasila

Sri Ayu Dyah Utami<sup>1</sup>, Setio Dharma Kusuma<sup>2</sup>, Sofia Margareta<sup>3</sup>, Edi Sugianto<sup>4</sup>, Sion Saputra<sup>5</sup>

[ayu.dyah@sttia.ac.id](mailto:ayu.dyah@sttia.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [setio.dharma@sttia.ac.id](mailto:setio.dharma@sttia.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [sofia.margareta@sttia.ac.id](mailto:sofia.margareta@sttia.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>,  
[edi.sugianto@sttia.ac.id](mailto:edi.sugianto@sttia.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>, [sion.saputra@sttia.ac.id](mailto:sion.saputra@sttia.ac.id)<sup>5</sup>

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Tabernakel Indonesia Surabaya, Indonesia,<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

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### Abstract

The foundation of Indonesia is Pancasila that allows 6 religions in our country to live together in society. Therefore, it is a country with a high religious pluralism level, yet the churches nowadays are being exclusive in the society. Christians as a minority tend to be distant with the society members around them. While the principles in Christianity are actually encouraging Christians to be able to be inclusive in society. This research has the purpose to show the importance of the churches being inclusive. The method used is a qualitative method with a literature study approach. The focus of the research is on the application of the principles of Christianity that are not against the Christian faith and Pancasila to be applied practically in the midst of religious pluralist society. The result of the research shows that Christianity could be exclusive in the matter of faith and inclusive in life application. The teaching of Christian faith definitely is not against the basic values of the Indonesian ideology, that is Pancasila.

**Keywords:** Church, Religious Pluralism, Religion, Christianity, Ideology of Pancasila

### I. INTRODUCTION

The independence of Indonesia on August 17, 1945 cannot be separated from the unity values that had been edified by the predecessors and the founder of this nation and also had been mentioned in the Sumpah Pemuda (the Oath of the Youth) on October 28, 1928. Khaeruman and Ghazali confirmed that these values of unity had become the embryo of the Nationality Insight of the people of Indonesia. "One island, one nation and one language, that is Indonesia." It had been an agreement of the nation of Indonesia that the nationality insight of Indonesia consisting of 4 (four) pillars or the milestones, they are: (1) Pancasila, (2) the basic law of 1945, (3) the united country of the Republic of Indonesia and (4) the unity in diversity. furthermore Soeprapto manifested his expectation of the four pillars not to

be as a slogan only or even a mere political jargon but to become a real and concrete foundation in facing global competition.

Pancasila that becomes one of the pillars has a literal meaning of five principles. The word *panca* means five and the word *sila* means principle. Yamin said the term Pancasila had been used by Empu Prapanca (Negara Kertagama) and Empu Tantular (Sutasoma) whom they were the author and thinker of the Hayam Wuruk's government in Majapahit Hindu Kingdom (Yamin, 437). Being scrutinized by Darmodiharjo that in that era, the function of Pancasila was as the five principles of ethical guides for the people and the ruler not to commit any theft, violent actions, deceit, vengeance and alcoholism (Darmodiharjo, 23). There are two fundamental foundations found in Pancasila according to Ismail. Pancasila is as the political and ethical foundations. Nationalism becomes the political base for Pancasila, while the principle of Divinity is the ethical base (Ismail, 29). Khaeruman and Ghazali both restated that Pancasila has the strong foundation. It is reflected in each of the principles. It was begun with the first principle, belief in the one and only God, that has the basic concept that all religions and beliefs owned by the people of Indonesia is the common denominator of all religions that can finally be received by each one of it. As it was arranged in the constitution of PNPS in 1965 chapter 1 about religion misuse and or desecration prevention that the religions owned by the people of Indonesia are Islam, Christian, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The basic values of Pancasila in National Insight for the first principle, belief in one and only God are (1) To belief and to be godly toward the one and only God according to their respective religion according to the just and civilized foundation of humanity. This shows us the exclusive basic value. Yet, it does not end there, the basic value (2) To honor and cooperate between religious and believing people that harmony will be established. This shows us the inclusive basic value (Pusat, 51–53).

Christians are the part of Indonesia who are obligated to defend the country and nation in many life aspects. Minority is not the reason to make a separation in edifying spirituality and the harmony between communities. Practically the Christianity in Indonesia still cannot apply such an attitude entirely. This matter can be seen in Christianity in an urban context that was becoming a disorder in giving the meaning of Christianity.

As said by Artanto, who was quoted by Setinawati who said that urban Christianity was provoked to be exclusive and lived selfishly with many busy activities in the church for their own members' interests. The church was seen as the center of all activities that all things outside the church walls were seen and regarded as a priori (Setinawati et al, 255–56). Mamahit wrote in his article about the attitude of the church that was divided into two, being opened and closed. For those who tend to be closed, they were being very exclusive, tend to be defensive toward other religions in relation to Misiology. The exclusive attitude of Christianity took a skeptical attitude for inter-faith dialogue for they refused equality to other religions. In the same article, quoting the opinion of Azumah that this matter would also impact the anxiety of syncretism and the fact of the encounter of Christian and other religions (Mamahit, 80–81 and 83–87).

Christians should be able to have an open mind in their daily life to accept diversity. Kawangung concluded that furthermore in the religious life in Indonesia, Christians are part of Indonesian people and should be able to have the dialogue with the public figures, having active roles, able to cooperate and taking concrete actions (Kawangung and Lele, 158). The togetherness in diversity has the usage to edify the nation. The unity of Indonesia is not an effort to uniform differences but to honor

differences. The strength that has to be managed in gaining the desires to have a life of state is inclusivity (Nggili et al, 77).

This research has the purpose to show how Christian values teach Christians to have an exclusive faith but to have an inclusive attitude and behavior on the daily basis in the life of the society. This research also shows that the basic values of Pancasila are in accordance with Christian teaching.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

This paper was prepared by conducting library research methods in descriptive, qualitative research types. It used secondary data based on the results of the study and included in the discussion for clarity on the objectives of the research to strengthen the result. The purpose of this research is to reach religious harmony through the impactful attitude of Christians to be exclusive in faith while inclusive in society. Research steps are carried out firstly by describing the Christian values in the life of nation and state, secondly by viewing the values of Pancasila through Christian perspective, and then analyzing the exclusive and inclusive attitude and behavior of Christians in the midst of the society.

## **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Biblical Foundation of Christianity in the Life of Nation and State**

God loves all tribes, nations and languages in the world, in this case Indonesia also included (Tanhidy et al. 127). It can be seen when God made Abraham and his descendants as a blessing for all nations (Genesis 12:1-3). God also taught the Israelites through the prophet Jeremiah to seek the welfare of the city. At that time Israel was in exile, furthermore God commanded them to pray for the city even though the citizens did not believe in God (Jeremiah 29:7).

In the New Testament Jesus gives command to live side by side with 'other people' (Matthew 5:13; 22:29). Not only giving command, Jesus also gave an example in loving others (Butar-Butar et al, 93–95), as He loved the Samaritan woman who was hated and exiled by others (John 4:1-30), visited and healed the 10 lepers in Samaria who was being exiled by other people (Luke 17:11-19) and even loved and restored Zacheus who was considered sinful (Luke 19:1-10). After His resurrection, the last commandment of the Lord Jesus, known as the Great Commandment, it was really obvious that Jesus wanted the believers to be blessings for others. Paul also exhorted Timothy to pray for others, and also for the leaders (although they were unbelievers) so that the situation and condition surrounding us could be conducive, and even for all people to be saved.

Christianity was taught to take the example of Christ who brought peace to earth (Matthew 28:20; John 13:15). The believers who confessed themselves to love God should love others. The biblical foundations above must be the compass of paradigm for Christians as the descendants of Abraham (believers) so their lives would be blessings in the life of nation and state.

### **3.2 Christianity in the Ideology of Pancasila**

Christianity are taught to obey and submit themselves toward the leaders of the nation and participate in the prosperity and the peace of the nation.

In the writing of Apostle Paul in Romans 13 verse 1, it can be seen that Paul encourages believers to be submissive to the government as the priority and the obligation with the awareness that it is a part of God's sovereignty (Angkow and Supriyadi, 157).

The delegation Paul did to Timothy and Titus also showed his request related to the obedience toward the government. Paul longed that the congregation members shall be reminded to act actively to be submissive, obedient and ready to do good, also to pray for the welfare of the country (Angkow and Supriyadi, 157–58).

This shows that a spiritual leader also needs to have the concern for the obedience of believers to the government to have involvement within the society and nation. This matter is in accordance with the writing of Rambitan in his book that Christians need to have an edifying attitude, positive and creative, although being demanded to take the critical attitude to adapt with the situation and condition going on at the moment (Rambitan, 43).

Not only Paul, but even Jesus Himself also stated explicitly in Matthew 22:21 so that people will obey the rule to pay the tax according to what is determined by the government (Angkow and Supriyadi, 157).

Apostle Paul also take us realize that the sovereignty of God can be applied in every aspect of human life including in the society and nation before the government placed by God for the respective people.

Jesus was not abusing His power even though He has the divine power, but He still teach obedience to the government in practical things, specifically in paying taxes.

### **3.3 Pancasila as the ideology of Indonesia**

The entire citizen of Indonesia needs to understand the history of the nation especially related to the history of the compiling the Pancasila. This is a very important matter for there were many dynamics and challenges in the journey process of the nation. In the book entitled *Pendidikan Pancasila* (the Education of Pancasila) for the University was written that the President of Indonesia namely Soekarno once said, “Never ever leave history.” History expounded the fact and stories that can be used as experience or learning for a better life in the future.

Gunche Lugo stated that the orientation of political parties is to snatch power or to place people in the government to arrange the society or the country (polis). while the orientation of Jesus is the politeuma that focused on the spiritual power, where God commanded His people. The theocratic leadership in the world is leading the leaders to focus on God and to increase humanity (Lugho, 42–43).

The leaders in the past had gone through various incidents that marked the existence of the national movement. The struggle must not be done individually, but collectively with the people. Hard times, agony, and death were the price to pay and can even involve the family. But there was no personal ambition to overpower this country but to bring advancement in many things.

### **3.4 The Application of Pancasila in Christian/church life**

The Christians who en live the teachings of Christianity comprehensively means already enlivening the basic values of Pancasila in accordance with the teachings of Christianity.

#### **3.4.1 The first foundation: Belief in the one and only God**

The first foundation states monotheism teaching God is one, perfect, unchanging, Creator of the universe, and obliges worship of One Supreme entity (Arijal, 105–06). This is in line with the beliefs in Christian faith, that is believing in one God as taught in the Bible (Deuteronomy 6:4; Mal. 2:15; Mark. 12:29; 1 Cor 8:4; 1Tim. 1:17; 2:5). Christianity believes in the doctrine of Trinity which admits that there is only

one true God. In this unity, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are the same eternal in essence but different in personal (Ryrie, 78).

Christians keep this doctrine as an exclusive faith, but in the nation and state life, Christians show an inclusive attitude which is giving respect to the beliefs of the others.

#### **3.4.2 The second foundation: Just and civilized humanity**

Septian stated that humanity refers to a just and civilized human being, upholding and acknowledging the values of justice and human dignity as the most glorious creatures of God who respects each other, tolerant, having high moral values, and develop an attitude of tolerance, empathy to others and act for the common good (Septian, 161).

It is in line with what the Bible teaches that humans are created according to the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26-27). God does not want humans to harm others because God created man according to his image (Gen. 9:6). On the other hand, God teaches His people to love one another and pursue justice ((Isaiah 56:1; Mik. 6:8; Mark. 12:31, 1 Tim. 6:11). Jesus emphasized that loving your neighbor as yourself is the second important law after Loving the Lord God (Matt 22:37-40; Mark 22:29-31; Luke 10:27). The church is able to show a good social life to others and the environment by the love that has been received from Christ. Therefore, Christianity is often called the religion of love. Every Christian who puts the Word of God into practice at the same time practices the values of the second foundation of Pancasila.

#### **3.4.3 The third foundation: The Unity of Indonesia**

Christianity delivers the teaching about the unity and peace of the religious people through biblical verses that the believers need to care for others, and also love others as themselves (Matthew 22:36-40) (Kamaluddin, 10).

The application of the third foundation of Pancasila can be based on the writing of Paul in Romans 14 verse 19 that said about Christians who always tried to bring peaceful condition in this life. We are encouraged not to have schism between us but to be able to unite with others (Widjaja, 148).

Paul wrote in chapter 12 of Romans to encourage the believers to take a role in a peacemaker with anyone without any discrimination (Romans 12:18). It means Christians here are not to know about the theory only, or only to understand various rules from the government, but also must be able to put it into practice daily.

#### **3.4.4. The fourth foundation: Democracy lead by wisdom in deliberation or representation**

The Indonesian is large and well-known geographically and its culture and tribes (Najmina, 53). When a community has more and more members, problems and different opinions come up. The history of Indonesian's journey cannot deny it, so the fourth foundation about leadership has become a good foundation in the solidity of Unitary Republic of Indonesia. This also happened in the early church. However when there is a different point of view or opinion, it does not immediately separated the community. There are activities like meeting, deliberations led by some community leaders. It can be concluded that the Bible teaches the principles of decision making for the public businesses which is through the leadership of wise leaders (Kis.15:6-22).

Christianity teaches how to give respects and pray for leaders. In a state, the leader of a country is the government. The Bible teaches people not to fight the



government. There is no government that does not come from God, the government that exists is ordained by God (Romans 13:1-4). This shows that the values of the fourth foundation are in line with Christian teachings.

#### **3.4.5 The fifth foundation: Social justice for all the people of Indonesia**

Widjaja wrote in a journal that there should be a defending feeling for the believers to apply the fifth foundation of Pancasila. In the psalm of Asaph, it was described that God asked for the believers to pay attention to the weak, helpless, those in misery and lacking that the purpose of the fifth foundation to reach justice can socially be attained (Widjaja, 148).

Pancasila as the ideology of the nation, had been established by the constitution, but it does not mean that it is already over. The fact is that Pancasila is an unfinished project that continuously needed to be responded actively (Nggili et al, 128).

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The life of Christians in the life of nation and state in Indonesia is attached to the application of the values in Christianity and Pancasila. There are 3 points of the conclusion based on the findings and discussion:

1. The basic values of the ideology of Pancasila are in accordance with the teachings of Christianity.
2. Christians who en live the teachings of Christianity comprehensively means equally enlivening the basic values of Pancasila.
3. Christianity teaches the life of faith exclusively and inclusively in the life of nation and state.

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