

特別寄稿

Pancasila as an Ambiguous Instrument for Interreligious Harmony and Development in Indonesia, 1945-2015

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Abstract: In the debate about the form of the 1945 Constitution for independent Indonesia, the ideology *Pancasila*, was coined as a compromise between an Islamic and a secular state. *Pancasila* has been an important instrument for positioning religion in Indonesian society, however, in various stages of its social and political development, it has been interpreted in different ways. It has been used to tame and oppress Muslims (until 1965) and to propagate and expand Islamic activities during Suharto's New Order. It has also been used to restrict the number of official religions. This limitation has led to serious weakening of *Pancasila* in promoting inter-religious harmony and true freedom of religion.

Towards the end of the Pacific War, the Japanese administration started to allow discussion on directions for independent Indonesia. On 1 March 1945 they instituted a *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Body for the Study of Activities leading towards Indonesian Independence), with middle-aged Javanese as members.¹ There were several Protestant Christians, but no Catholics in this 62 (later 68) member organization.² There were fifteen members of Muslim organizations present and they asked for independent

¹ Benda 184 & 284.

² During the second Dutch military intervention in December 1948, Republican government buildings in Yogyakarta were set afire and all reports of these meetings were lost. Reconstruction of these developments were made through interviews and later information.

Indonesia to take the form of an Islamic State. On the last day of this first session, 1 June 1945, Sukarno gave a moving speech in which he proposed that the new Indonesia should hold a position between a secular state and a state founded upon one religion alone. He formulated a doctrine of Five Pillars, *Pancasila*, including not merely belief in the One Supreme Deity, but also nationalism, humanitarianism, democracy, and social justice.³ Sukarno's speech later was published as *Lahirnya Pancasila* or 'The Birth of *Pancasila*'. He stressed that he did not construct or invent the doctrine himself, but found it by looking into the soul of the Indonesian people. In this he stated that *Pancasila* was some kind of mythic age-old treasure of Indonesian society. On the theme of belief in the One Supreme Deity religious diversity of Indonesia was stressed:

Not only should the people of Indonesia have belief in God, but every Indonesian should believe in *his own* particular God. The Christian should worship God according to the teachings of Jesus Christ; Muslims according to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad; Buddhists should discharge their religious rites according to their own books. But let us all have believe in God. The Indonesian state shall be a state where every person can worship God in freedom ... without 'religious egoism'. And the State of Indonesia should be a State incorporating the belief in God. Let us observe, let us practice religion, whether Islam or Christianity, in a civilised way ... the way of mutual respect.⁴

A committee of nine members was selected to formulate a further solution for the basis of the Indonesian state. In their meeting of 22 June 1945 they formulated a compromise, the so-called *Piagam Jakarta* or Jakarta Charter, to be used as a preamble to the future constitution (later the Arabic word *Muqaddimah* was also used). It repeated the five pillars of *Pancasila*, but now

³ See, among many others, references to this 'Birth of the *Pancasila*', Boland 1971: 21-22; Kahin 1952: 122-7.

⁴ Kahin 1952: 125.

with the belief in the One Supreme Deity in the first place. Most controversial was its addition of the seven words after Belief in the Supreme Deity: 'with the obligation for adherents of Islam to practice Islamic law' (*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*). It was a minimum result for some Muslims who asked for designation as an Islamic State or at least a Muslim President.⁵

On 6 August 1945 a new body was instituted, *Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Preparatory Committee for the Independence of Indonesia). This body had 25 members and held its first (and only) meeting on 18-22 August 1945. Muhammad Hatta relates that on the 17th of August (after the declaration of independence) he received a telephone call from the Japanese navy (in control of East Indonesia where most Christians lived) saying that an officer wanted to see him immediately. This officer warned Hatta;

That the Protestants and Catholics in the regions that were under control of the Japanese navy had serious objections to the formula with respect to 'the obligation for adherents of Islam to practice Islamic law'. They recognised that this formula was not binding for them, but only for Muslims. But to include such a formula in a basic text as part of the Constitution would seriously discriminate them as a minority group. If this 'discrimination' would be prolonged, they would prefer to stay outside the Indonesian Republic.⁶

Hatta replied that on 22 June, the only Christian in the small committee of nine, Maramis, had no problem with this formula. Nevertheless, on 18 August Hatta called the four most outspoken Muslim members for a private meeting that lasted only 15 minutes in which they agreed to the removal of these seven words. This was later confirmed by the plenary session. Hatta adds here that this legal difference was mostly relevant for family law, because in other fields

⁵ Boland 1971: 23-6; Aritonang 2004: 241-3.

⁶ Hatta 1982: 58.

there were no specific rules to be applied.⁷

*Pancasila as a Kind of Indonesian Shintoism?
Against the Idea of an Islamic State, 1945-1965*

We have presented the birth of *Pancasila* and the debate about introduction of *shari'a* with some detail in order to suggest the background of *Pancasila* as a solution for a political aspirations to give religion a place in Indonesian society. In the 1970s, the idea of 'civil religion' was developed by American social scientists and was not only seen as an American reality, but also applied to Japanese Shinto, as well as to the *Pancasila* ideology.⁸ A civil religion is not just a set of doctrines (Belief in One God or more deities, values like democracy, solidarity, tolerance), but also a set of rituals (flag hoisting, national anthem, a series of holidays to celebrate the independence and development of a nation) and the creation of a national myth through commemoration of heroes and tragedies. In the period up to 1965 *Pancasila* remained one of the most powerful obstacles to the development of Muslim domination, or an Islamic State that was the greatest threat to the new Republic of Indonesia.

The establishment of a Ministry of Religious Affairs on 3 January 1946 narrowed this vague religious basis of the new state towards a formal religion, because initially it concentrated on Islam, while in a process of two decades other religions also gained access to the ministry. One may debate about the translation of the *Departemen Agama*, plural or not?⁹ However, various regional Muslim groups in Aceh, West Java, Kalimantan and Sulawesi were not content with *Pancasila* and a Ministry of Religious Affairs but continued armed revolts against the *Pancasila* State; only on 3 February 1965 could the Darul Islam leader Kahar Muzakkar be killed in his hiding place in Sulawesi.¹⁰

⁷ Hatta 1982: 60-1.

⁸ Robbert Bellah 1980; Purdy 1984, Intan 2006; see further Steenbrink 1990.

⁹ The programme INIS, Indonesian Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies, used the abbreviation MORA, Ministry of Religious Affairs. Feillard and Madinier 2011 is consistent in the use of the plural 'religions', but the translation Ministry of Religion is also used and can be defended as well.

¹⁰ Van Dijk 1981: 217.

There is an interesting comparison of American and Japanese civil religion by Robert Bellah which is also useful for defining Indonesian civil religion. Robert Bellah begins his discussion with the statement that 'in no society can religion and politics ignore each other'. However, he sees two extremes: American and Japanese society. He defines the United States as modern with a high degree of differentiation between religion and politics, also separation of social issues and individual liberty. For Bellah, Japan is still archaic: divinity, society and the individual are still one.¹¹ Like American civil religion, *Pancasila* is a mythical and ritual instrument to bind a diverse nation together. But *Pancasila* is also quite different from American civil religion. It is very strictly formulated, in the 1970s courses and school books were created, there is a national holiday in memory of the seven generals who were killed in 1965 as 'Day of Confirmation of *Pancasila*', and on the 17th of every month there is a special ceremony to celebrate the ideology. In the Suharto period, there was even a National Committee for the Formulation of *Pancasila*.¹² A 1985 law stipulated that *Pancasila* must be mentioned as the 'sole basis for this society' in the charter of all political, social and cultural institutions. This was done after the national congress in 1983 had declared that *Pancasila* was 'not a religion'; apparently it looked very much like a formalized religion. *Pancasila* is different from Japanese civil religion or *Shinto*, because it is a modern creation, did not develop over centuries, and it originated in a clear pluriformity of religious convictions within the country and was placed besides the existing religions.

In 1945-1965, outspoken Muslims protested against *Pancasila*, while the Indonesian Communists just accepted its formula, even the 'belief in the One Supreme Deity'. This is in contrast to the following period, 1965-1998 of Suharto's New Order, when *Pancasila* was used as the magic formula against Communism, and all religions embraced *Pancasila* as an effective instrument to eliminate Communism.

¹¹ Bellah 1980: 28.

¹² BP7, *Badan Penasihat Presiden tentang Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*.

In line with the character of the two institutions where I was invited to deliver a lecture, I will pay some extra attention to Catholic leaders. The first is the Divine Word Missionary (SVD), Dr. Jan Raats. Like many people in East Indonesia where the largest number of Christians are found, Dr. Raats was in favour of the new nation as a loose federation of nearly-independent states. A specialist in canon law, Raats drafted the constitution for the new *Negara Indonesia Timur* or State of East Indonesia (NIT) together with the Balinese chairman of the provisional NIT parliament, Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung.

Among the representatives who attended the constitutional meeting for the new state in November-December 1946 in Den Pasar, Bali, three Catholics represented Flores: besides Dr. Raats, there was an indigenous SVD Priest named Adrianus Conterius. The third representative of Flores was Louis E. Monteiro, alumnus of the Catholic teacher training school. Timor was represented by two Protestants (a teacher and a minister) and by the first Catholic priest from the island ordained in 1942, Gabriel Manek SVD, from 1951 bishop of Larantuka and after 1961 archbishop of Ende.¹³ In the preamble and the 148 articles of the Constitution for the State of East of Indonesia, *Pancasila* never was mentioned as the basis of the state. However, the preamble is clear that God and religion are important aspects of this state: 'The State recognizes and honours the fact that in the State of East Indonesia the concept of God and religion are very special pillars for society and for the individual lives of the citizens.'¹⁴

There was quite a pragmatic anti-Javanese feeling, mixed with support for the partial autonomy of an Eastern Indonesian State. This did not diminish the sympathy of the people of Flores towards Sukarno who stayed in exile in Ende between 1935 and 1938 and had developed a good relationship with the

¹³ For these representations, see Gde Agung 1985: 801.

¹⁴ Different from the Indonesian national constitution which was formulated in Malay/Indonesian, the State of East Indonesia used Dutch as its language of debates. 'De Staat erkent en eerbiedigt het feit, dat in den Staat Oost-Indonesië Godsbegrip en godsdienst bij uitstek de grondslagen zijn van de samenleving en van het leven van iederen burger afzonderlijk.' *Staatsregeling* 1949: Preamble.

Catholic missionaries and the community. However, when the State of East Indonesia dissolved itself and became a full member of the new Indonesian Republic in early 1950, as someone who too strongly had promoted the division of Indonesia, Father Raats had to leave the country. Since that time he worked in the Philippines and was never able to return to Indonesia.¹⁵

The most impressive formulation of Catholic thinking about *Pancasila* was without doubt the speech given in 1959 by Jesuit priest and philosopher Nicolaus Drijarkara (1913-1967). Drijarkara, born in a nominal Muslim family, was a first generation convert to Catholicism, because he had attended a Catholic secondary school. Drijarkara later studied at the major seminary of Yogyakarta and at the Jesuit Gregoriana University in Rome, where he obtained a doctoral degree in philosophy with a dissertation on the French priest-philosopher Nicolas Malebranche. He concentrated more on philosophy of culture, also labelled contextual theology.¹⁶

In February 1959, the Society for the Promotion of *Pancasila* held a five-day seminar in Yogyakarta, where also President Sukarno was present. Drijarkara delivered a major speech, that later was published in English translation by the Ministry of Information. Its beginning sounds more or less like a confession of faith about the basis of the Indonesian Republic, or rather something like *fides quaerens intellectum*, a firm belief that seeks rational arguments:

Here in this seminar, we are meditating in common about *Pancasila*. To ponder over *Pancasila* does not mean at all that we hold doubts about the position of *Pancasila* in the way of life of the Indonesian Nation. We are convinced that in *Pancasila* we have the best possible basis for our State. But if we are already convinced that these Principles of ours are correct, why do we hold a seminar about them? Does this not jeopardise them? To this objection we reply firmly that it is precisely this deep conviction of ours which causes us to think more deeply about those

¹⁵ John Prior in Aritonang & Steenbrink (eds.) 2008: 251-2.

¹⁶ Prior 2003: 173-5 and Prior in Aritonang & Steenbrink (eds.) 2008: 786-9.

Principles, as we are doing now.¹⁷

Drijarkara started the discussion of *Pancasila* with a quite philosophical question, formulated in German: *Was ist der Mensch and was ist seine Stellung im Sein?* [What is man and what is his/her position in Being?] Here, Drijarkara develops a description of human beings as socially active and part of society with an ultimate goal of (again in German) *das liebende Mit-sein* [togetherness in love].¹⁸ In this way Drijarkara praises Sukarno while summarizing the *Pancasila* doctrine as *gotong-royong* or mutual help in a traditional society. He puts the theoretical problem about ‘someone with the *Pancasila* attitude but living outside Religion: is this not in conflict?’ Drijarkara here answers that this is never a reality because we never live in a social vacuum. And all Indonesians live in a religious society or group. Religion, however, should develop without control of the state and enjoy full freedom in its own field.¹⁹

A third person to be mentioned here is Ignacius Kasimo, born in 1900 and the first Catholic convert from his nominal Muslim family. He became a veterinarian, also leader of the small Catholic political party and so member of the national parliament in 1945, minister of economic affairs in 1947. His party garnered 2% of the votes in the first general elections of 1955 (where the Protestants had 2.6% and the large Muslim parties 39.3%). In 1957 he left the Sukarno government because he felt Sukarno was too close to the Communists. In this way he shows that in the Sukarno period of 1945-1965, *Pancasila* was instrumental in keeping nationalists and Communists together. Not only were some Muslim hardliners, but also some Catholic leaders like Kasimo, not happy with the way this solution worked.

¹⁷ Drijarkara 1960: 7. This is the official translation as published by the Ministry of Information. The original Indonesian text was published in the Catholic journal *Basis* and reprinted in Drijarkara 2006: 831-65.

¹⁸ Drijarkara 1960: 9 & 19.

¹⁹ Drijarkara 1960: 33-4.

1965-1998 Pancasila Against Communism:

The Promotion of Adherence to a Global Religion

After the bloody change of government in 1965-1966, the New Order administration of Suharto kept religion out of direct politics, but gave it a very important role in society. In the decade 1966-1976 not only did many people become more active mosque-going Muslims, quite a few Indonesians also embraced Christianity. Formal adherence became much more widespread as a guarantee against accusations of being Communist. It became more and more difficult for small, local spiritual movements to engage in activities, seek adherents or even simply to survive. In the national legal system, the role of the five actually recognised religions (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Protestant and Catholic Christianity) was strengthened by the marriage law of 1974 which required that all marriages should be administered according to the rules of the couple's religion. This law provided a great job opportunity for Muslim officials within the Department of Religion and for functionaries of other religions. It also led to a quite effective ban on inter-religious marriages.²⁰ Besides the social obligation to opt for one religion in 1967-1970, the marriage law of 1974 marks a turn in the importance of religion in society. There was also a sharp increase on the hours spent in religious courses in schools in the 1970s.

In 1988, a new law on education stipulated that pupils must participate in religious education according to their own religion (and that of their parents). At that time, exceptions were still made for pupils who attended private schools (in most cases, Muslim pupils at Christian schools). In 2003 another Law on National Education would formulate in much stricter terms that all children should receive religious education according to their own private religion, and here the implementation was formulated in an unquestionable way. In 1989 a law on (Muslim) religious courts was accepted, followed in 1991 by a presidential decree that a Compilation of Islamic Law in Indonesia, formulated

²⁰ Pompe 1988 and 1991; Aritonang 2004: 405-412 and 423-430.

by experts of the Ministry of Religion should be used at all these courts.²¹

This movement of Islamic fervour also gave rise to a number of radical and militant Muslim groups who attacked night clubs, restaurants serving alcoholic drinks or simply still open in the month of Ramadan. Critics claim that their methods looked like gangsterism: when restaurants paid enough money they would be 'spared' if they would not show their activities too clearly to the outside world. Thus, even in this case there was a mixture of religious enthusiasm and common crime and greed.²² In addition to the (partial) implementation of *shari'a* in various regions, several laws affected the role of religion in society during this period. Besides the Law on National Education, already mentioned above, several proposals for a bill of inter-religious harmony were circulated from 2003, but no final draft was accepted by parliament. However, in 2006 the Minister of Religion and the Minister of the Interior issued two joint decrees (no 8 and 9, 2006), *On the role of the heads of local government in the protection of interreligious harmony and the building of houses of worship*. This ruling confirmed two decrees of 1978 about the ban on propagation of one's faith to people who already embraced a recognised religion. The decrees further order that in all 33 provinces and in all 405 districts a FKUB, *Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama* or Forum for Harmony of the Faithful must be established.

Disagreement and Conflict

Above we have indicated the major steps towards a general strengthening in the position of all five major religions in Indonesia from 1966 until the first decade of the 21st century. This process, however, was not without debate and conflict. The Department of Religions, granting positions primarily but not exclusively to Muslims, generally was in favour of a strong policy of harmony

²¹ See Aritonang 2004: 448-453 and Mujiburrahman 2006: 192-3 for the many earlier steps in this field. Nurlaelawati 2007 describes the whole procedure.

²² For the rise of radical Muslim groups, see Jamhari 2003, and Jamhari and Jajang 2004. For Laskar Jihad, see Noorhaidi 2005.

and peace between religions. In the late 1940s, sections for Catholics and Protestants were created in the Ministry, in addition to the initial and largest one for Muslims. In 1958, a special section for Hinduism was created and in 1980 a Buddhist section was created as well.

The Ministry did not solely represent the Muslims and therefore in 1975 it stimulated, financially and by providing facilities, the foundation of a Indonesian Council of Muslim Clerics *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* or MUI. This new body was to be a national body for all Muslims, independent of the government, like the Catholic bishops or the Protestant Council of Churches. Representatives of the two largest Muslim organizations, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, but also representatives of many other organizations, joined this initiative. In 1981 this new body came in conflict with the Minister of Religion, Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara. MUI President Hamka had issued a *fatwa* declaring it prohibited or *haram* that Muslims should participate in Christian celebrations of Christmas. It was stated that MUI had received many complaints about Muslim pupils in Christian schools who were urged to act as Joseph, Mary or an angel in Christmas plays or sing in the choir at Christmas celebrations. To people who complained about these practices, Christians had answered that the harmony of religions would be endangered if they should refuse participation. Many pupils dared not complain, for fear of repercussions during their examinations.

This prohibition by MUI was strongly attacked by the Minister of Religions and was withdrawn from publication soon after it had become publicly known. However, Hamka resigned as President of MUI and reproached the Minister of Religions, a prominent Muslim in his own right, of intimidating Muslim leaders. Minister Alamsjah accused MUI President Hamka of acting against *Pancasila* that should promote inter-religious harmony, while Hamka accused the government of interference with religion and of attempts to introduce *Pancasila* as a new state religion.²³

In the early and middle 1980s, with its strong support for *Pancasila* as a

²³ Steenbrink 1993: 236-237 for a more detailed discussion on this and other debates.

method for interreligious harmony, it was Muhammad Natsir who strongly protested what he called government-promoted syncretism. One of the booklets for *Pancasila* Ethics, an obligatory subject for kindergarten until the first year of university studies, contained a statement 'that all religions profess the belief in *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the One Supreme Deity.' Natsir, a former prime minister who was jailed in the early 1960s for his anti-Communist position, protested against this and similar formulas. One of these was a question about a case of a burial. 'If you see that people bring a dead person to a cemetery, be it a faithful of your own or of another religion, you should always pray for his/her soul to God Almighty.' As a follower of modernist Islam which had resisted since the 1930s the idea that human prayers and offerings could change the fate of people who had already died. That was superstition for him, because all human beings carry their own burden in the scrutiny of their deeds before God.²⁴

Not all debates about *Pancasila* and the definition of Islam were so quiet. On 28 March 1981 a group that called itself *Komando Jihad* hijacked a Garuda plane on an inland flight from Palembang to Medan. They took the plane to Bangkok, where they asked for the release of some 80 *Komando Jihad* members from Indonesian prisons. A group of Indonesian army Special Forces attacked them. One survived the attack and was brought to court where he attacked the ideology of *Pancasila* and its formula of the One Supreme Deity. According to him the Indonesian word *Ketuhanan* is a collective word just like Deity, which also can refer to more divine entities, and is comparable to *gunungan* which may refer to a chain of mountains, a collective word signifying a plural reality.

The aforementioned Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara, Minister of Religion in 1978-1983, designed a program of three dialogues related to religion and politics: one internal within the various religious communities, one between the major religions, the last between the religions and the government. The first indicates that religions are not homogeneous and that there is never any

²⁴ More examples of these case and references in Steenbrink 1990: 134-5.

individual person or collective body that can speak for all Muslims, Christians, Buddhists or Hindus. Also in Indonesia the history of these religions has been characterized by a long series of debates, dissensions and conflicts. The Indonesian government tried to promote harmony and cooperation in a program of national economic and social development and even to take the lead in this field. The early 1990s creation of ICMI, an organization of Muslim Intellectuals, served this purpose through an effort to counteract the higher level of education among Christians and Buddhists in Indonesia. However, already in the 1990s there was a strong increase in hard-line Muslim groups like FPI (*Front Pembela Islam* or the Islamic Defence League), claiming that true Islam was in danger in Indonesia. The rise of violent militias like *Lasykar Jihad* in 1999-2002, the Bali bombings of 2002, and local groups struggling for the (partial) introduction of *shari'a* law in some districts and provinces led two French scholars to publish a book entitled *The End of Innocence? Indonesian Islam and the Temptation of Radicalism*, (Feillard and Madinier 2011). The French version of this book had the subtitle: *From 1967 until our days*, indicating that this was a process that had started in the early years of the Suharto government.

In 2009 two leaders of the largest Muslim organizations of the country, Achmed Syafii Maarif of Muhammadiyah (founded in 1912) and Abdurrahman Wahid of Nahdlatul Ulama (founded in 1926) jointly published an angry book with the title: *The Illusion of an Islamic State*, warning many compatriots that they should remain faithful to the ideal of a pluralist country where no religion should dominate politics. They warn against 'infiltrations of Middle East Salafi and other hard-line activists' in mosques and religious schools. Must we talk about the failure of *Pancasila* harmony? What could be the reason for this failure?

The Initial Mistake: A Compromise with an Intrinsic Flaw

In the Indonesian Constitution we find two basic formulas related to religion. In the preamble the five pillars of *Pancasila* are formulated with as first the (belief

in) One Supreme Deity. This is repeated in article 29, where it is added that ‘The state will guarantee the freedom of worship, each according to his/her own religion or belief.’ The committee for preparation of the constitution added here that religion (*agama*) must be understood as a monotheistic religion, while belief (*kepercayaan*) must be seen as based upon this religion.²⁵ In later discourse, however, *kepercayaan* was seen as a new or local tradition, a tribal religion or new sect, that somehow should be formally seen as part of one the five major global religions. The revival of traditional Batak religion was in this way formulated as a special brand of Hinduism and called Parmalim or Karo Hinduism, while the Dayak tribal religion in its modern style is called Kaharingan Hinduism. Also in other regions of Indonesia (South Sulawesi, Tengger) such constructions have been made.²⁶

In a social and legal practice that reduced ‘religion’ to a small number of global religions with specific characteristics (monotheism, Holy Scripture, a prophet, global character and recognition), only after much debate Confucianism was added. In 2002, a national holiday of Imlek (Chinese New Year) for Confucians was formally adopted, and in 2006 it was recognized as the sixth religion within the formal structure of the Ministry of Religions.

Religion was not only reduced to the five or six big players, these diverse and dynamic institutions were also reduced to homogeneous, uniform entities. This happened through efforts to create bodies that should represent the communities in their relations to the government. Above we have seen already the problems and conflicts that MUI created in its 1981 *fatwa* about Muslim participation at Christian celebrations of Christmas. It was not the only clash of MUI with other Muslims and with the government. In a session of 26-29 July 2005, MUI issued 11 quite controversial *fatwa*. One was a ban on religious pluralism and religious liberalism, apparently an attack on the Indonesian Liberal Muslim Network, *Jaringan Islam Liberal*, JIL. Another was a ban on women as leader of prayers (a reaction on the American Muslim Amina Wadud who led a mixed male/female Muslim congregation in Friday prayers on 18

²⁵ Basic text here is Yamin 1960, vol. III: 801-2.

²⁶ Ramstedt (ed), 2004.

March 2005 in a building of Virginia Commonwealth University). A third *fatwa* was against the claim of Ahmadiyyah community that they are Muslims. This was at a time when Muslim hardliners openly attacked the Indonesian Ahmadiyyah community, established mostly in West-Java since the 1930s. Mosques were burnt down, houses set on fire, with a number of people killed. The Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took no action against this kind of violence. Instead he signed a decree involving a prohibition on teachings or public displays of the Ahmadiyah religion in June 2008. International organizations have blamed him for this refusal to protect freedom of religion for them and to curb the illegal violence against this smaller sect.

Non-Muslim organizations are also not free from government interference in their actions. Quite interesting is the case of the national Buddhist organization (comparable to the Muslim MUI), the WALUBI, Representation of the Buddhist Community in Indonesia (or *Perwakilan Umat Buddha Indonesia*), which was founded in 1979 by Oka Diputhera, the highest official for Buddhism in the Department of Religion from 1959 until 1991. WALUBI is a compromise between lay and monk leadership in Buddhist affairs. Because of the fact that there are few monks in Indonesia (quite a few are from Thailand) and because of the prominent position of Chinese lay business people in WALUBI, during his presidency (1999-2001) President Abdurrahman Wahid tried to put the monks in a position of unambiguous leadership. Two years after his abdication he wrote:

The values of the Muslim community are defined by the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, of the Catholics by the Conference of Catholic Bishops, of the Protestants by the National Council of Churches, of the Confucians by the High Council of the *Konghucu* Religion of Indonesia. In this way the Buddhist community should, according to this author, follow the religious values as formulated by the High Council of Monks in Indonesia, *Konferensi Agung Sangha Indonesia*. They should not follow some party or organization of lay people. These lay people have to obey the religious specialists. This we have to realise as government or as members of

society. As long as this matter is not settled, our life as a nation is still in danger.²⁷

This is quite a remarkable statement about internal debates of the Buddhist community by a very distinguished Muslim.

Similar circumstances faced Hinduism in Indonesia as well. In 1959 in Bali a Hindu Society, *Parisada Hindu Dharma* was established. It functioned as the supervising body for the academic education of Hindu specialists, training teachers of Hindu religion in Balinese and some other schools. Its activities were subsidized by the Indonesian government, so this Hindu organization under leadership of the Ministry of Religion followed the rules of modern Indonesia: no attention being given to caste, equal opportunities to women and a strong emphasis on monotheism. If we look at the books used in primary and secondary education, it is not the traditional rituals, not the sacred mantras, not the classical texts as used in the Hindu-Balinese temples by the priests or *pedanda* of Brahmanic offspring, that dominates the content of these Hindu school books, but pious meditations and prayers to the One Supreme Deity, ethical rules that also can originate from any ethical philosophy. With some kind of exaggeration one could label this development in modern Hinduism in Bali as a kind of adaptation to Muslim doctrine and practices. Quite understandable for a small religious community in such an overwhelming Muslim country.

We should not exaggerate the danger of the government involvement in religious affairs. In 2006 an Indonesian student defended a thesis in the Netherlands (Tilburg University) under the title: *Official Reform of Islam. State Islam and the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Contemporary Indonesia, 1966-2004*.²⁸ The number of mosques, of visitors to mosques, of faithful who went to the hajj pilgrimage, of copies of the Qur'an, of pupils in schools who received more religious education, all this has increased in an impressive way during the Suharto period. But much of this has been orchestrated top-down and in a

²⁷ Wahid 2006: 136-137. More on this matter in Steenbrink 2013: 16-27.

²⁸ Ichwan 2006.

uniform, nearly monopolistic way in these three decades. The role, not of official Islam, but also of the Christian churches, Buddhist and Hindu communities, has grown considerably. But there were costs too, intolerance for deviations and innovations, uncontrolled terrorism of Muslim hardliners and also of aggressive Christian fundamentalist preachers.

Mangunwijaya and Ayu Utami: Too Much Religion and Too Organised Piety

Yusuf Biljarta Mangunwijaya (1929-1999) was a Catholic priest, architect, famous novelist, and well-known social activist. He was invited to give the keynote speech at the annual meeting of the Catholic bishops in November 1996 entitled *Gereja Diaspora, Gereja Berkualitas* [(Only) A Diaspora Church can be a Quality Church]. In his opinion, there is too much religion in Indonesia in general and especially within the Roman Catholic Church: too many committees, organizations such as the charismatic movement, Legio Mariae, choirs, recollections, picnics and hiking, organized by parishes and many other activities. In his opinion, the Indonesian church is overactive, organizes so much that this church is in danger of becoming a sect, concentrating religious life on the parish and its organizations. He extolled the Jewish sabbath-ceremonies in the family and noted that the busy activities in the parish threatened not only the family as the nucleus for religious education and practice, but also the spread of personal faith in the everyday life of society. But this qualification of 'too much religion' or an overheated religious role in society is for him also clear among other religious denominations. *Pancasila* counts five pillars: belief in the One Supreme Deity is only one, democracy and social justice deserve more attention and even a first place. Mangunwijaya also developed a special inter-religious system of education, where religious education never should start with the particular denominational characteristics and formulas, but with the focus on the intensification and analysis of natural religious emotions of all children.²⁹

²⁹ For more about this idea, see Steenbrink 1998.

An even more critical attack on the monopoly of the institutional religions has been initiated by the novelist Ayu Utami (b. 1968). Her first two novels (*Saman* 1998, *Larung* 2001) were partly about an activist Catholic priest who sided with the poor, fighting the destruction of natural forest by the combination of agro-business and the corrupt military. As a consequence, the priest had to leave his formal position in the Catholic Church. In her great novel of 2008, *Bilangan Fu* she attacks the three dangers of our time: Modernism, Monotheism and Militarism. Modernism has destroyed our naïve and innocent view of our world, annihilated our ability to see miracles, to experience the divine. Monotheism has reduced the rich variety of spiritual ways to six, the officially recognised international religions of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Catholicism and Protestantism. These great global religions are especially damaging the rise and development of true spiritual life when they express themselves in a fundamentalist way. (Anti)Militarism is presented in a somewhat nuanced way: not all military are bad people. They are very powerful and so it may be wise to seek the cooperation of good officers and try to do good things with them. This will not always work. In *Bilangan Fu* and her subsequent three novels, Ayu Utami glorifies the revival of old Javanese spirituality, although this results in opposition from the bureaucracy and Muslim hardliners. She complains about the dominating role of the military in modern Indonesia, in politics, economy and social life and culture and joins the call: 'Send the military back [from economy, government administration] to their barracks!' This is followed immediately by a similar call the '*ulama* must return to the barracks. Send the religious people back to their different places, because they also are filled with lust for power. No different from the military, political leaders and all other people. No single person should claim absolute truth.'³⁰

These two Catholic voices are not representative of their community. They are rather a critical minority, but their analysis is a quite strong

³⁰ Utami 2008: 482. Notwithstanding her overt sympathy for traditional Javanese religiosity, Ayu Utami is much respected in official Catholic circles. In 2012, Catholic institutions launched a great movie on the first Indonesian bishop, Albertus Soegijapranata. Utami was asked to write the more or less 'official' biography of this Catholic bishop. See Utami 2012.

illustration of what liberal Catholics think about the public role of religion in general. They are joined by many more liberal Muslims as well.³¹

Conclusion with a Personal Anecdote

From March 1981 until mid-1988, I was a lecturer at IAIN, the State Academy of Islamic Studies in Jakarta and Yogyakarta (now UIN, *Universitas Islam Negeri*). My major duty was to teach courses on 'orientalism', understood as introduction to Western traditions of religious research on Islam in general, the Qur'an and the history of Indonesian Islam. I gave also a course on Christianity yearly for some 60-100 students, all Muslims. I regularly uttered criticism of Christian practices or doctrines, of the Pope and some fundamentalist Protestants. I also sometimes showed admiration for Muslim traditions. Therefore, once a student asked me in class: 'Sir, why do you not become a Muslim?' My answer was that I had some friends and colleagues who indeed embraced Islam. I saw how they were pampered in their new community: one even received a free ticket for the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca from the Indonesian Ministry of Religions. But they were recent converts, *mu'allaf* and could not be critical in their new religion. They had to remain silent and just accept the full 100% of their new religion. So, I preferred to remain a critical Catholic, rather than a tame or meek recent convert. Anyway, it is still quite uncommon to be an atheist in contemporary Indonesia. A religious label is a quite important indicator of one's identity. This has only grown in the last 50 years, during the Suharto period and also in the period since then.

Different from the situation in Western Europe (and maybe also Japan), religion has gained more and more prestige, influence and importance. Some causes and consequences have been sketched out in this presentation. From the beginning of independent Indonesia the ambiguous concept of *Pancasila* has been used to stimulate, also to control various manifestations of religions and to prevent

³¹ Maarif and Wahid 2009; also Azyumardi Azra in the newspaper *Republika*, 21 August 2014: 'Waspada Transnasionalisme'.

conflicts. According to the various situations its use was also different. This contribution has given an image of the major manifestations of this flexible concept.³²

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³² This article is based on the paper used for Guest Lectures at Nanzan University, Nagoya (23 October 2014) and Sophia University, Tokyo (24 October 2014). I thank Professor Kobayashi Yasuko and Professor Kawashima Midori for this invitation.

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