

The Culture of Pancasila. An Indonesian concept that fuses the impossible

Abstract

This paper offers a brief insight into the history and culture of Pancasila. Called the Indonesian National Philosophy, in force since 1945, it aims to embrace all aspects of life, to provide tolerance and justice in Indonesia to all. Since independence, however, Indonesia has been struggling with intractable problems of religious intolerance and minority communities, despite a functioning democracy today. Pancasila stems from compromises and alliances between the different major religious communities, both Muslim and non-Muslim, but which cause social exclusion of some groups at the same time. For years, during the presidency of Soekarno and Suharto, it served as a political tool to ensure relative peace and control in the state, and today seems to be only a set of phrases repeated in Indonesia without further reflection on their content.

Keywords: Indonesia, Muslim majority democracy, Pancasila, Soekarno, Suharto.

Towards the Indonesian nation-state

Indonesia is one of the most complex postcolonial countries in the world, which before its declaration of independence had only a short pre-colonial history as a united entity. Since it came to being in 1945, Indonesia's leaders faced all kinds of internal divisions and found *Pancasila* a useful strategy to weaken the sense of local and religious identity and emphasize Indonesia as a whole. This state has a long tradition of peaceful coexistence of various groups, supported by *Pancasila*, which largely enforces harmony and tolerance, but its history is also characterised by countless social, political and religious conflicts. The Pancasila philosophy, shared at the national level, seems to be a solution in which religion plays an important role, relying essentially on the interreligious dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims. At the time of proclaiming independence by Soekarno, the future first president of Indonesia,² the country was divided and dividing lines ran across various social, ethnic and religious groups. The idea of integration did not find much understanding among the various ethnic groups scattered throughout the archipelago and speaking in various languages. The tendency of violent reactions by competing

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2 Soekarno, together with Hatta, was the proclamer of Indonesia's independence and first President of the Republic of Indonesia. See: Steedly 2013.

of political elites became visible. Power meant not only state control but also the possibility of shaping the nation. Soekarno's overarching goal was to maintain Indonesia's integrity because the "dream of many generations" had just come true and the fight against colonialism and occupation could not be wasted.³

The Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies in 1942–1945, although short-lived, put an end to Dutch colonialism.⁴ The Netherlands did not intend to respect Indonesian sovereignty and a growing national identity and offered Indonesia entry to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. For Soekarno, Hatta and Syahrir⁵ this could not be acceptable in any way.⁶ For four consecutive years, starting from 1945, there were bloody fights between Dutch and Republican troops, regional guerrillas, Muslim and communist militias, opposing the former colonisers, the Japanese, and the republican authorities themselves. The unification of such diverse social groups was by no means simple and obvious. This period, known as the Indonesian National Revolution (*Perang Kemerdekaan* Indonesia or *Revolusi*) and also *bersiap* ("get ready" or "be prepared"), plays a significant role in the Indonesians collective memory as a violent, chaotic time.⁷ The treaty acknowledging Indonesian independence from the Netherlands was not signed until 2 November 1949.⁸

Indonesia won freedom, but its socio-economic situation was more like that of a defeated country. The Japanese occupation, fighting with the Netherlands and its British ally, destroyed the colonial economy and exhausted the society. Freedom alone was not enough to reward after such murderous guerrilla warfare. The first decades of independence were very unstable. The *Revolusi* myth was supposed to symbolise not only the fight against colonialism but the fight for new social justice. However, instead of a harmonious society, the clashes within the newly formed state between rival groups, previously suppressed by the coloniser, intensified. It should be clearly emphasised that the independent state existed only in the minds of a narrow political elite. Most of the population from areas distant from Java initially did not even know about their belonging to a new state or did not recognise it for a long time.⁹

3 Emmerson 2005: 48.

4 See: Bharadwaj 1997.

5 Soekarno, Hatta, Sutan Syahrir are considered the founders of the Republic of Indonesia. See: Steedly 2013.

6 Indonesian historiography ignores Tan Malaka, a legendary communist-national figure, an advocate of violent national liberation struggle and leader of anti-negotiation forces opposing any negotiations with the Netherlands, and at the same time Soekarno's greatest opponent, captured and executed by the president's supporters in 1949. See: Bouchier 2015.

7 Frederick 2002.

8 Friend 2003.

9 See the Republic of South Maluku case. Feith & Lev 1963.

Therefore, an idea was needed to unite diverse social groups into a new state, even if it were a very complicated and seemingly illogical setup.

The Indonesian language, adopted from Malay, fulfils an identity-forming function of constructing and consolidating the scattered society on thousands of islands.¹⁰ Mandatory usage of Indonesian was applied to shape a common culture, building for the first time a supra-local community, rising above local solidarity. A common language, usually even today not the first language of a child in Indonesia, not only allows people from different parts of the archipelago to communicate, but also creates a common bond between Indonesians from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

The formulation of the national motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which can be translated as “unity in diversity”¹¹, expresses the fundamental unity despite the huge ethnic, regional, social or religious differences, and perfectly describes this most extensive archipelago in the world and probably the most heterogeneous in ethnic and cultural terms.¹² The motto perfectly reflects the Indonesians’ flexibility and their natural ability to syncretise and embrace various religious beliefs, traditions and dimensions of cultures, matching them to local conditions, which for the Western world can be quite astonishing.

Adopting *Pancasila* as the foundation for creating social relations in the state, a neutral Indonesian language to unite all ethnolinguistic groups, as well as rejecting the Islamic religion as a constitutive element, are the three foundations for building the Indonesian nation. This process can be successfully called “Indonesianisation”. The building of Indonesian identity is, therefore, from the beginning the result of a politically and top-down project. From the beginning of the 20th century, Indonesia was a political rather than an ethnic project.¹³ In a country with such a diverse heritage and so many local cultures, this process often required limiting local traditions in favour of one “Indonesian national heritage”, which in practice took on a rather top-down and intentional character.¹⁴ From the beginning, it was not just about celebrating nationalism, but also about proclaiming the unity of the nation and legitimising political power.

10 The Institute for the Indonesian Language (Institut Bahasa Indonesia) in Indonesia reported in 1972 that there are more than 400 local languages (not dialects). Nababan 1991: 116.

11 Choy 1999: 3–4.

12 Based on the 2010 census by Badan Pusat Statistik, the ISAS in Singapore developed a new ethnic classification, distinguishing 119 large ethnic groups, but over 600 ethnic groups in general, see: Ananta et al. 2014.

13 Cribb 2001: 219–39.

14 Cribb 2001: 229.

Pancasila as a binder of state and nation

In considering the process of Pancasila's formation, we should emphasise the ideological tensions that accompanied its creation as derivatives of tensions around the shape of the emerging state. The nation's founders tried to answer this challenge by developing a conception of the "brotherhood state" (*negara kekeluargaan*), based on *gotong-royong*,¹⁵ as opposed to "the individual state" (*negara perseorangan*), as in liberalism, or "the class-based state" as in communism.¹⁶ The mythical, sublime, almost divine process of Pancasila creating is often emphasised, coming basically from one politician, Soekarno, who played a central role.¹⁷

Indeed, Soekarno was confronted with reconciling the various elites' interests and their ideological options, faced with ongoing military operations. Although Soekarno radically referred many economic and social issues, and socialist aspirations show through his writings¹⁸ and speeches,¹⁹ he put that socialism aside: Indonesia must first become free from feudalism and imperialism, and the class struggle has been replaced by a national fight.

A tension between Muslim groups and secular state proponents was visible. Soekarno proposed a kind of balance as the solution: Indonesia would not be a secular state with religion banished from public life by legal regulations, or a religious state based on one specific religion.²⁰ In Soekarno's mind, an independent republic would provide conditions for the coexistence of many varieties of Muslims and factions and multilingual forms of Islam, so an Islamic politicisation should be rejected. But this did not end the Islamic groups' efforts to base the state on Islam. Non-Muslims defended *Pancasila* too, well knowing that they would quickly become second-class citizens.²¹

The name *Pancasila*, proposed by Soekarno, derives from two Sanskrit words: *pañca* (five) and *śīla* (principles), and was certainly intended to evoke former splendour of Hindu and Buddhist empires. Soekarno and Hatta understood the importance of gathering leaders support of all political orientations to create unity. Above all, they wanted to get support from Muslim groups, organisations outside Java, as well as left and right groups in their

15 Gotong-royong expresses mutual aid usually practiced in local communities throughout Indonesia, traditionally understood as a collective spirit among neighbours to strengthen economic and social resilience. See: Suwignyo 2019.

16 Latif 2018: 209.

17 Latif 2018: 210.

18 See for example: Soekarno 1964.

19 See: *Monash Collections Online. Sukarno Speeches 1965-1966*.

20 Intan 2006: 18.

21 Intan 2006: 18.

socio-economic orientation. They wanted to present a broad consensus before independence and the adoption of the Indonesian Constitution. According to Soekarno's reflections, *Pancasila* has always existed in Indonesian communities and had only to be rediscovered.²²

Because, indisputably, Soekarno had the greatest influence on the content of the five principles, we find in *Pancasila* certain aspects of various values and influences of ideologies, such as nationalism, democracy, socialism, as well as religiosity and broadly understood humanism. The rules reflect the impact of so-called universal values were to be common determinants and basis for the upbringing, education and social life of Indonesians. He presented *Pancasila* on 1 June 1945,²³ during the meeting of the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence (Badan Penyelidik Usaha-Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan).²⁴

The first principle, *Kebangsaan Indonesia*, means belonging to one Indonesian "nation", i.e. nationalism, with belonging of various peoples inhabiting the territory of the country to one great unified nation. Rule two, *Internasionalisme atau peri kemanusiaan*, means simply humanity, neither humanism nor humanitarianism but a nationalism embedded in internationalism. It is a recognition that all humankind bears common attributes, the awareness of belonging to a large family of free ethnic groups, all of which have the right to peaceful coexistence with other nations (which seems, however, somewhat grotesque in the subsequent context attempts to subjugate the neighbouring areas of Indonesia by Soekarno).

Mufakat atau demokrasi, the third rule, is deliberation or democracy. The state cannot express the will of only a specific social, religious, etc. group, but its task is to enable unanimous participation of all citizens. It does not base itself on majority votes, but on a deep-rooted Indonesian custom of councils to reach consensus. *Keadilan (kesejahteraan) sosial*, meant as social justice or social welfare, is the fourth principle, and is a necessity for the state to ensure social well-being by constantly raising the living standards of its citizens. It arose from the view that democracy will not fulfil its role if it does not ensure a fair share of prosperity and does not guarantee every Indonesian a decent living standard.²⁵

22 Friend 2003.

23 The June 1st each year *Hari Pancasila* (Pancasila Day) is celebrated, which along with *Hari Merdeka* (Independence Day), celebrated on August 17, is one of the most important patriotic holidays. From 1965 to 1998, Pancasila Day was celebrated on October 1st.

24 Ricklefs 2001: 258.

25 Gouda & Zaalberg 2005: 127.

“Belief in One and Only God”, or *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, is the last principle, establishing religious tolerance, emphasising the community of monotheistic religions and identifying the value of faith in one God regardless of religion. Importantly, it includes a commitment to monotheistic religion but not to Islam specifically and was a compromise between fundamentalist aspirations and the principle of state secularism. J. Menchik calls it “Godly Nationalism”. It allows the government to provide financial and institutional support to religious organisations, but without enforcing Islamic law or giving the state a formal Islamic identity.²⁶

While the first four principles are “secular”, the fifth principle has a purely “religious” dimension. According to Soekarno, these five principles could be condensed into three (*tri sila*): Socio-nationalism, Socio-democracy and Faith in One God. Then these three rules can be referred to one (*eka sila*), denoted to the value of *gotong-royong*, calling Indonesia *Negara Gotong Royong*, the Country of Cooperation. In all these endeavours, Soekarno was not about numbering, but interpreting principles, in which the ideals of democracy, nationalism and morality are realised in social justice as a critique of inequalities in society. Pancasila was supposed to be a critical ideology always updating the social structure towards a fair society. Socio-nationalism should be read as nationalism based on the awareness of oppression and isolation of society; socio-democracy as an idea that realises political and economic rights, freeing citizens from imperialism and capitalism. Belief in One God is imperative to moral respect for people of all religions.²⁷

This last one was not well received by Muslim leaders, who wanted a more explicit reference to Islam. Three weeks after historic Soekarno’s speech, changes were made and “faith in God” became the first pillar along with the duty for Muslims to follow Islamic rules. This version is known as *Piagam Jakarta* (the Jakarta Charter), which, however, never came into force. Pancasila remained the socio-political master glue of state and nation.²⁸ Belief in one God²⁹ is now most often mentioned as the first and basic pillar of *Pancasila*. It must be noted that what was supposed to be a compromise, in practice turned out to be discriminatory against non-believers or animists. This principle, as well as Indonesian law requiring the religion to be entered personal ID cards, is discriminatory against them. Also, the followers of non-theistic Buddhism or the polytheistic Hinduism had to look for references in their religious scriptures

26 Menchik 2016.

27 See: Soekarno 1985; Soekarno 2001.

28 Ricklefs 2001.

29 About defining “religion” in Indonesia see: Cholil 2014.

to justify their views as being not in contradiction with the “belief in one God”. This example denotes a crack in *Pancasila* as uniting the people.³⁰

Indonesia’s current religious map shows an overwhelming, over 80 per cent, Muslim majority.³¹ However, it is important to realise that under the “Muslim surface”, Indonesians’ beliefs are deeply shaped by the religious and cultural heritage of powerful Hindu and Buddhist empires, presented on the archipelago for over a thousand years.³² We can put forward a similar thesis concerning the still present animism, creating a colourful cultural mosaic. Animist beliefs are spread and incorporated into all layers of Indonesian syncretic culture, including contemporary secular beliefs.³³

Pancasila became the basis of the constitution adopted on 18 August 1945, the day after Soekarno and Hatta proclaimed Indonesian independence. Thus, the utopian dream of uniting the multicultural archipelago consisting of thousands of islands came true.³⁴

An interesting *Pancasila* interpretation can be presented in the context of specific Indonesian values.³⁵ One of these values is traditional communalism, understood as putting local interests above state interest. The cultural and social patterns of the community in Indonesia are diverse, and laws, customs and political structure show significant differences. Traditional communalism is the ongoing close relationship with ancient and all-encompassing patterns of local functioning focused on the rural community, covering most Indonesians. What is striking here is the close interdependence of all spheres of human behaviour: political, social and economic. Action taken in one of these areas has a direct impact on others. A person is not in itself a separate entity, and his needs are subordinated and conditioned by general cultural patterns in force in his social group. The faith in God implies a constant and undivided concern for the whole supernatural expression as religious, social, economic and political life are not separate aspects of the individual’s existence as a group member in Indonesia. They are indivisible and the “secular” sphere of human activity does not exist. The third feature of Indonesian communalism is its strong territorial

30 Jonathan 2018.

31 Because of a number of inhabitants Indonesia has the biggest Islamic majority in the world. According to the 2010 census, 87.2 percent identified as Muslim, 7 percent as Protestant, 2.9 percent as Catholic, and the remaining 3 percent as Hindu, Buddhist, or adherents of Confucianism. Lussier 2019.

32 Jones 2005: 24.

33 Kahane 1993: 12.

34 The date of the Proclamation and the five basic principles gained their image in the emblem of Indonesia, Garuda Pancasila. See: Choy 1999: 120.

35 Van der Kroef 1954: 225–251.

affiliation and lasting relationship. Community members have a close sense of belonging to a community, which is expressed not only by far-reaching and complex patterns of mutual assistance but also by joint ventures.³⁶

Soekarno maintained his vision of a united Indonesia until the end of his rule in 1967. However, 20 years after independence, Indonesia still did not resemble a united state. As a result of internal policy, Soekarno's so-called "guided democracy"; a clash of two powerful forces took place: the right-wing army and the communists (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI). Besides, neither of these forces was a monolith, on the contrary, various sections clashed inside them. Next to them, there was a huge number of Muslim organisations, admittedly without a chance for a decisive vote, but more and more numerous and stronger. As A. Heryanto writes, we can read the history of Indonesia in the last century as a story of fierce competition between different major global ideologies with various local contents. He points out that in the interests of national unity, Soekarno tried to reconcile various ideologies, and the Cold War of the 1960s led him to the socialist bloc. According to the author, after the fall of Soekarno, the role of Pancasila ceased to be to maintain the balance between these ideologies to peacefully coexist, and that remains until today.³⁷

Pancasila democracy

In Suharto's regime,³⁸ a priority goal from the outset was economic development by limiting democracy and suppressing diversity, including religious diversity. *Pancasila* day was celebrated, called *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila*, i.e., "Supernatural Power of Pancasila Day" and was regarded as the "holiest" day on the national calendar.³⁹ He used Pancasila, among other things, to build a positive image of his rule inside and outside the country, and his government focused on creating and maintaining its legitimacy. Heryanto emphasises that for this purpose he based his politics on five sources: nationalism, *Pancasila*, the 1945 Constitution and its formal implementation, development programmes and propaganda on stability and order.⁴⁰ In 1978, the "P4 Programme" was developed: *Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pelaksanaan Pancasila* (Guide to Realization and Implementation *Pancasila*).⁴¹ Indoctrination was intended not only to strengthen Suharto's dictatorship

36 Van der Kroef 1954: 227.

37 See: Heryanto 2020.

38 The second president of the RI, took over power bloodily suppressing the coup of 30 September 1965; after 32 years of authoritarian oppressive rules, in 1998 was forced to leave as a result of national protests. See: Budiawan 2000.

39 Lloyd & Smith 2001.

40 Heryanto 1990.

41 II/MPR/1978, see: Darmaputera 1988: 181.

symbolically but also to give an ideological tool in the fight against political opponents who allegedly misused *Pancasila*.⁴² The orders and prohibitions system, assembled in *Eka Prasety Pancakarsa*, formed 45 “bases” created to develop *Pancasila* from 1945. The programme included, among other things, the requirement to attend a mandatory ideological course called “P4”.⁴³

State identity, culture, tradition and art became the most important elements of Suharto’s politics, as well as cultural coexistence. This, however, remained only in the sphere of declarations and did not connect with all culture’s equality. A great example are Papuans living in the western part of New Guinea (Irian Jaya), not matching the Indonesian multicultural state image for the Suharto regime. To this day, the Javanese and their culture dominate in Indonesia, and Java is an island making up the geographical, political and cultural centre of the country.

The situation for Indonesian Chinese was difficult since Soeharto’s government banned all expressions of their culture and traditions. To avoid political problems (accusations of being atheists and communists), Indonesian Chinese were then required to adopt one of the official religions (Buddhists, Muslims, Catholics or Christians). After the New Order, followers of traditional Chinese beliefs regained recognition of their identity after the presidency of the KH. Abdurrahman Wahid⁴⁴ authorised Confucianism as an official religion.

The implementation of the “P4” tools was in the most important social sectors, including the education system, media and all cultural and religious institutions. Hence, *Orde Baru*⁴⁵ is sometimes written in literature “*Pancasila State*”, as the five principles were more important than the 1945 Constitution. Intellectuals criticised and ridiculed P4, but undoubtedly programme had a significant impact on many people convinced that *Pancasila* was a unique Indonesian ideology that could lead the state and its citizens, protecting them from threats from both the left and the right.⁴⁶ But the idea was to maintain the state’s central position. It was, therefore, necessary for the regime to prevent political shifts left or right using broad means. Both should be within the limits of the floating apolitical mass.⁴⁷

42 See: Ward 2010: 31.

43 McGregor 2007: 87.

44 An outstanding Muslim scholar, politician and reformer, leader of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Muslim party, the president of the Republic of Indonesia 1999–2001, adored by both Muslims and believers of other religions, an advocate of interreligious dialogue. See: Barton 2002.

45 *Orde Baru* is translated as a New Order, referred to Suharto’s regime 1966–1998.

46 Ricklefs 2001: 373.

47 Farid 2005: 14.

Suharto's politics, using *Pancasila* as a weapon against opponents, led to a kind of "overdose" of this ideology. Everything that did not fit into the regime's policy was described as "against *Pancasila*" and forcefully attacked by state forces. As a result, for a long time, this concept evoked unpleasant associations with mind control from the past, when in 1965 the PKI was accused of acting against this ideology and operating to the state's detriment, which was one of the arguments for the abolition of the PKI.⁴⁸

As Heryanto points out, to be accused of being anti-nation, anti-*Pancasila*, or anti-1945 Constitution was much more serious than to be accused of being anti-development or disrupting stability and order.⁴⁹ Suharto firmly indicated that the state's current basis was final and *Pancasila* was the only legitimate ideology. He maintained that the question of an Islamic form of state had been settled and would not be reopened. Adherence to *Pancasila* became compulsory for all social and political organisations in the mid-1980s but, already in the 1970s, Suharto had ensured that it was learned and followed.⁵⁰

Both communist and liberal ideologies were considered dangerous. The regime recognised that communism did not subside after the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed. The globalisation era and free communication influenced Indonesia's development. The borders between national and international systems were quickly blurred, which introduced a new spectrum of risks in every sphere of national life. In politics, globalisation favoured capitalist penetration, liberal thought and other foreign ideologies, all of which were contrary to *Pancasila*. The free market idea threatened *Pancasila* based on *kemitraan* (partnership), while in religious life globalisation has facilitated the influx of foreign values disturbing religious groups. The military stated that these dangers would harm social harmony and national resilience (*Ketahanan Nasional*). Globalisation, according to the government, exposed an alleged internal menace with the "new style communism" (*komunisme gaya baru, KGE*). *Kewaspadaan*⁵¹ supposed to ward off these perceived threats, but allowed to infiltrate all social groups and control political ideas in society. The regime used Pemuda Pancasila (Pancasila Youth)⁵², a nationwide extremely right-wing paramilitary organisation with underworld connections, to terrorise and to discredit any rivals.⁵³

48 In particular, the atheism of communists was emphasized.

49 Heryanto 1990: 291.

50 Bertrand 2004: 38.

51 National Vigilance Refresher Course (Penataran Kewaspadaan Nasional – Tarpadnas, for the indoctrination of both officers and civilians, who were taught about the widespread "potential" political threats to national stability (Honna 2018: 56).

52 See: Anderson 2001.

53 Ryter 2018.

The Five Principles today

Over several decades, from 1945 to 1998, *Pancasila* was transformed from a leftist revolutionary utopian dream into a tool for making citizens passive, obedient, floating masses.⁵⁴ Two different regimes applied the same *Pancasila* in completely different ways, causing the political frontier to shift and enabling the social exclusion of specific social groups. Suharto used this philosophy to divide and rule the nation, and an instrument against his political adversaries, while Soekarno saw it primarily as a cementing force for keeping the nation together. It was to be expected that with the *Reformasi*,⁵⁵ the principles of the democratic state would become a real “common denominator”, “common ground”, and “common orientation” for diverse Indonesia.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, *Pancasila* remains unchanged to this day and, as in the Orde Baru, is read rather as a series of sentences deprived of values, and not as a synthesis of ideas intended by the nation’s founders.

The democratic restoration lifted restrictions on Islamist political aspirations. While most major Islamic organisations came to terms with the *Pancasila* compromise in Suharto’s time, the division between pluralists and supporters of Islam’s greater role survived.⁵⁷ The consequence of the society’s liberalisation and pluralisation after Suharto’s fall was the need to redefine the slogan “unity in diversity” and rethink *Pancasila* role in Indonesian social and political life.

Each of the incumbent presidents after 1998 has had their own way of developing the *Pancasila* heritage. Abdurrahman Wahid was an important proponent of this philosophy, opting for Indonesia’s mild secularism: while religion has an important role as a social and moral force, the political arena should be the realm of political parties, which allows Islam to function as a force for morality and the control of authority, and to avoid being entrapped in the ambiguity of power struggles.⁵⁸ For Joko Widodo (president since 2014, known as Jokowi), *Pancasila* is a tool to fight radicalism, extremism and terrorism, phenomena from which Indonesia, in his opinion, is free thanks to *Pancasila*. In the name of *Pancasila*, both past regimes (Soekarno and Suharto) violated human rights, and nowadays under Jokowi’s rules, in its name, no human rights activities are undertaken, including the settlement of the troubled past,

54 See Baudrillard’s discussion of the uncontrolled silent and deaf mass, Baudrillard 1983. About the floating masses and the free-floating signifier concepts in Orde Baru, see: Heryanto 1999.

55 *Reformasi* was a time of rapid reform after the Suharto’s fall in 1998.

56 Latif 2018: 210.

57 Aspinall & Mietzner 2019.

58 Wahid 2001: 28.

such as the mass murders in 1965-66, brutal violations against the opposition, crimes against society and the environment in West Papua, the genocide in East Timor, the pacification of Aceh or the Petrus murders.⁵⁹

Human rights activists have condemned the failure of successive presidents to resolve these issues⁶⁰ and a lack of concern by Jokowi's administration for civil and political rights.⁶¹ Indonesia is facing the dilemma of human rights protection in the form of a gap between policy and practice. For this reason, Jokowi's *Pancasila* is a central nervous system or a bastion against the negative phenomena that an increasing number of countries in the world are facing sound unbelievable.⁶² In his solemn speech to Indonesians on 1 June 2016, in which the echoes of Soekarno's famous speech 71 years earlier, Jokowi clearly emphasized Indonesia with *Pancasila* as a reference point for other countries⁶³ and as a system of values that must be practiced and strengthened continuously, a panacea for all social problems. However, we can find many examples of how it contributes to the diminution of democracy in Indonesia.⁶⁴

Today, too, all attempts to change *Pancasila* are met with immediate protests (or even hysteria) from various communities as a threat to national unity. An expression of this is Jokowi's words: "*Pancasila* is our home, we live in it together as compatriots! We will not tolerate anyone who discredits *Pancasila*, anyone who dares to question its values!"⁶⁵ The efforts to mitigate Islamic radicalism and the rhetoric of five rules defence contain an echo of the anti-*Pancasila* discourse of the Soeharto regime, aimed at curbing political opposition and regulating political expression.⁶⁶

Despite its mixed history, *Pancasila* remains visible today in a transitioning, democratic Indonesia, although it is clear that its principles do not work universally. It is difficult to say that it fulfils its role since the 1965 mass murders and the other regime crimes have not yet been clarified, their perpetrators have

59 See for example: Roosa 2006; Tanter, van Klinken & Ball 2006; Heidbüchel 2007; Sangaji 2007; Mietzner 2009; Lee 2020.

60 ICTJ, KontraS 2011.

61 McGregor & Setiawan 2019.

62 Belarminus 2017.

63 *Jokowi: Pancasila benteng melawan radikalisme dan ekstremisme*. BBC News Indonesia. 01.06.2016.

64 For example: Law No. 17 of 2013 on Societal Organizations (Organisasi Kemasyarakatan, "Ormas Law"); Law No. 5 of 2018 on Civil Society Organizations ("Perppu Ormas"). These legal acts are a response to the aggressive behaviour of radical Muslim groups, but contradict the assumption of the state democratization and the assumptions of civil society. See: Wanto & Sebastian 2020.

65 Yasmin 2019.

66 Nuraniyah 2020.

not been punished, and the victims are still intimidated. This is enough to show the double face of human rights discourse in post-Suharto Indonesia, offering rights by neglecting it for those who need it the most. However, already in kindergarten, classes on the basics of *Pancasila* philosophy are conducted, focusing primarily on the first principle, faith in one God. As T. Friend says, the compromises between centralists and federalists, Muslims and followers of other religions and laity were imperfect – because how could it be otherwise?⁶⁷ Indonesian political discourse has been disturbed for over half a century and will continue to be.

Conclusion

From the very beginning, Pancasila aroused great emotions and was subjected to various interpretations. The path towards its understanding its role as the foundation stone of the state has changed many times since 1945, and it has been redefined, used commonly for political purposes, and its significance questioned. But one thing is beyond doubt, that Pancasila has shaped Indonesian history and culture. Just as every country is convinced that it is unique for various reasons, so Indonesians are widely convinced of the uniqueness of their national philosophy, and this is evident in the form of their unwavering devotion to *Pancasila*. P. Iskandar called it the *Pancasila* delusion.⁶⁸ There are also voices that it is time to abandon the unfavourable view of some varieties of ideology, such as atheism, and demonstrate the ability to solve contemporary problems, although this may give alternative views on *Pancasila* to adapt to modern Indonesian society. Amid global convergence of the entrenchment of universal human rights in national constitutions, constitutional development in Indonesia is moving toward parochialism in its promotion and protection of human rights⁶⁹. The high level of intolerance towards ideologies and philosophies other than Pancasila may restrict the current political parties and social organizations in addressing the real challenges that face modern Indonesian society. This is a risky approach in a country where the possibility of a conflict breaking out is commonplace. Pancasila seems to be still the only viable alternative if Indonesia is to preserve its unity and diversity, even if this unity is a superimposed vision, and religious diversity is limited to religions strictly defined by the state.

67 Friend 2003.

68 Iskandar 2016: 723.

69 Iskandar 2016: 723.

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