

# The Future of Pancasila as a Philosophy, a Life Vision, and an Ideology of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia

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**Abstract—** Pancasila is believed to have an important history in establishing Indonesia as a nation. It is also believed to have united ethnics, languages, and religions in Indonesia successfully. Although there are different ways of implementing Pancasila from Soekarno era to Joko Widodo era, they agree that Pancasila is a philosophy, a life vision, and an ideology of Indonesia. Along the way, Pancasila has also been faced with communist ideology and Islamic political groups who want to replace Pancasila as the state ideology. The question proposed in this paper is whether Pancasila has a future in the midst of the surveys of more than 50 percent Indonesians agree on the Islamic *Shariah* (Islamic law). To illustrate, this study uses Signifier and Signified concept of a linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. The Signifier is a conception of an object in which Pancasila as a symbol. Meanwhile, Signified is a conception of the function of the object or the function of Pancasila that is understood by people. Pancasila is interpreted as a guide for the life of the entire nation of Indonesia which later interpreted by other political Islam as a un-Islamic thing that is not based on Al-Quran and Hadith. The other views show that Pancasila is compatible with Islamic teachings. Although double meanings are unavoidable in an object, the meaning of Pancasila as a philosophy, a view of life, and an ideology of the nation becomes a challenge to the existence of other meanings.

**Keywords-** Pancasila, Ideology, Islamic *Shariah*, Signify and Signified, and Indonesia

## I. Introduction

Until now, Pancasila is still believed as a unifying tool among various ethnics and religions in Indonesia. It is always used as a mediator in the middle of reinforcement of sectarian political movements that want to replace Indonesia with certain ideology and group. Muslim as the majority still aspire Indonesia to implement Islamic *Shari'ah* under the law. The Pew Research Center report in 2013 showed that as many as 72 percents of Indonesian Muslims, including women, agree with the application of Islamic *Shariah* (Islamic law) [1].

Previously, the Center for Islamic Studies and Society or in Indonesia called as *Pusat Pengembangan Islam dan Masyarakat* (PPIM), State Islamic University (*Universitas Islam Negeri-UIN*) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta also conducted researches in 2001, 2002 and 2003. It resulted in more than 50 percent of Indonesian people agree on the

implementation of Islamic *Shari'a*. The number of this supporters continues to increase every year. Afterwards, in 2016, 72 percent of Islamic religious education teachers (*Pendidikan Agama Islam*, PAI) agreed on the same thing [2]. At the same time, there are also some groups of pro-Islamic *Sharia* voiced their support for the Islamic *Shariah*, wherein the Soeharto era, it was strictly prohibited.

## II. Pancasila as Social Contract

Pancasila is a result of an agreement for various backgrounds of groups and religions to form the state of Indonesia. It is a social contract that agrees Indonesia stands not as a religious or a secular state but the country is a unitary state with five principles listed in it. Those principles are (1) Belief in the one and only God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The concept of this social contract also mentions similar points with the Madina charter that the Prophet Muhammad made [3].

The word of 'Pancasila' was first introduced by Soekarno in a speech before the session of the Preparatory Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia-BPUPKI*) on June 1, 1945. Although not all tribal components were involved in formulating the content of the Pancasila, at least Pancasila succeeded in becoming a strong foundation to unite the Indonesian nation of many ethnicities. Until today, Pancasila is still regarded as the basis, philosophy, and ideology that unite Indonesia.

However, in the process of forming Pancasila, which is still becoming a debatable topic, there was a moment of making the first principle into "Belief in the one and only God with the obligation to enforce Islamic *Shari'a* for its adherents." This principle was agreed and signed in a charter called the Jakarta Charter on June 22, 1945. Furthermore, on August 18, 1945, Muhammad Hatta proposed a change and it was accepted by omitting the words 'obligation to implement the Islamic *Shari'ah* for its adherents'. Hatta did it because of a news stated that if those words were still used, some other Indonesian regions with the Christian majority, such as those

who lived in the Eastern part of Indonesia, would break away [4].

Pancasila also has experienced up and down. For example, in the era of Soekarno (1945-1966), a Presidential Decree of Pancasila was issued on 5 July 1959. Meanwhile, in the Soeharto era (1966-1998), it was said that Pancasila should not be disputed. Pancasila was declared as the sole principle for every organization based on the Law No. 3 1985. Therefore, Pancasila should also be considered as the basis, ideology, and philosophy of Indonesian state. Although this policy received support from the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sadjali, at the same time, it also gained denial from several Islamic groups.

Besides the debates, in its interpretation, Pancasila also depends on the political will of people in power. For instance, in the era of the Old Order, the meaning of Pancasila tended the ideology of Marxism, Communism, and Socialism. That was likely because Soekarno was an admirer of Marx's thought. Meanwhile, in the New Order era, Pancasila accommodated "kejawen" (Javanese religious tradition) values more, where Pancasila was associated with the beliefs of the ancestors of Indonesian nation, especially the ancient Javanese community. Currently in the era of reform, when Indonesia gets euphoria of democracy (freedom of opinion and politics), the interpretation of Pancasila walks toward the flow of liberal and pluralist thought with the human right as a reference [5].

Rizieq Syihab, the leader of Islam Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam-FPI), in his dissertation entitled *The Effect of Pancasila on Islamic Shariah Implementation in Indonesia* says that the interpretation of Pancasila depends on the ruling regime. If Pancasila wants to work together with Islam, the leader must be led by people who have well-Islamic knowledge [6].

### III. Pancasila and Islam

Another debate regarding Pancasila is the relationship between Pancasila and Islam [7]. In one side, it is said that Pancasila is compatible with Islam, but the other side says it is not. Pancasila became a big debate when the New Order forced political parties, organizations, and any groups to use Pancasila as their ideology. The strongest rejection was mainly from the Islamic groups. Soeharto assertively applied this policy by imprisoning those who rejected the single principle.

The most monumental rejection in the history of Pancasila was done by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir [8]. Both were detained and prosecuted for the rejection of Pancasila. Both managed to escape to Malaysia and made an organization called Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) [9]. This organization is a splinter of the Darul Islam (DI) group [10]. Firmly, this group rejected Pancasila, and some of them were more extreme by joining Islamic State led by Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi in Syria. According to this group, Indonesia is a *thagut* (infidel) state because the law does not use Islamic law. This group also allows killing the apparatus.

Then another group said that Pancasila was not against Islam. Based on the National Conference of Alim Ulama Nahdlatul Ulama (Munas NU) in 1983 in Situbondo, Pancasila may be used as the organization's principle. One year later, at

NU's 27th Congress in 1984 in Situbondo, Central Java, it was decided that NU accepted the sole principle of Pancasila. NU also argues that Pancasila and Islam are not contradictory. Pancasila and Islam could walk together [11].

The five principles listed in Pancasila as they were mentioned in the Munas NU in 1983 are in harmony with Islam. As an example, the principle of "*Belief in the one and only God*," is a reflection of monotheism in Islam about belief in one God. Then in the declaration, it was also mentioned that according to NU as an organization, the acceptance and practice of Pancasila is a manifestation of the efforts of Indonesian Muslims to run the Shari'a of religion. Therefore, as a consequence of NU's acceptance of Pancasila, NU is obliged to secure a right understanding of Pancasila and its pure and consistent practice by all parties [12].

### IV. Pancasila as Symbol and Concept

Pancasila in linguistics studies is merely a symbol of an eagle. According to Ferdinand de Saussure's terms, it is called a signifier. In a sense, it is only a form or object like a table, chair or building. Therefore, Pancasila is an object if it is seen as a picture of an eagle, which is often interpreted as a symbol of strength [13].

However, in a further meaning, it is also known as a signified in Saussure's term, in which Pancasila has a special meaning as it is viewed in each of the principles. Signified itself means a meaning contained in an object. The first one, "Belief in the one and only God," is likely to be interpreted that this country believes in one religion and does not recognize any group that has no God (atheism). In Soeharto era, this principle once had issues with Buddhism and Hinduism where they were already accustomed to the recognition of God who is not one.

The second principle's meaning, "A just and civilized humanity," cannot yet be owned by Indonesia especially if it is related to the issue of law enforcement. The third principle is about the Unity of Indonesia where this principle is still quite effective nowadays. Suharto used Pancasila as a sole principle as an excuse to avoid clashes between ideologies after responding to a confrontation between the United Development Party (PPP) which had the direction of Islamic ideology against Golkar with Pancasila [14]. Besides that, when there was a religious issue used in Jakarta gubernatorial election, fighting the issue of religion by using the jargon of diversity is also derived from the principle of Indonesian unity, which becomes very effective to use [15].

The fourth principle is "Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives." However, it faces a direct democratic system where the local leaders of both legislative and executive leaders are elected directly by the people. It is no longer in the form of representation as applicable in the New Order era. Finally, the fifth principle is "Social justice for all Indonesians," yet, in fact, the meaning is still far from reality.

In short, the signified can then make other meanings of Pancasila. Although the content of Pancasila is not getting a problem, the term of Pancasila comes from Hinduism; therefore, it becomes one of the reasons of some Islamic

groups to reject Pancasila easily. These Islamic groups compare Pancasila with Al-Quran where Al-Quran comes from God, but Pancasila comes from humans. Therefore, there is likely a connection between Pancasila that is far from reality with the increasing number of Indonesian Muslims who want to establish Islamic Sharia in Indonesia. The importance of the meaning of signified that depends on Pancasila will automatically shift to other definitions which are preached by anti-Pancasila groups.

## V. Conclusion

Finally, the future of Pancasila can be very dependent on the meaning of Pancasila itself whether it can be perceived by the people of Indonesia directly or not. The principal actors heavily depend on the stakeholders themselves who rule the government. If implementations of Pancasila are still far from the hope, the meaning also will go away, and it opens a possibility to find an alternative meaning. However, one thing that always becomes hope in Pancasila is on the principle of Indonesian unity. It is important to note that survey research also includes the question of whether Pancasila is still believed to be a unifying tool of the nation's components in Indonesia.

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