

# Pancasila Ideology as A Field of Interpretation

**Althien J. Pesurnay**

Universitas Universal, Batam

e-mail: althienjohn@gmail.com

## Abstract

As a national ideology, Pancasila has formal quality, but it is also part of the material aspects that shapes perspectives that drives national policies through the process of consensus. The open and ambiguous character of Pancasila allows a wide space for social and political interpretation, and therefore is open to critique and reformation through reinterpretations of its meaning. An examination of the ethics of the socio-political application of Pancasila is crucial in the current national climate, and these ethical valuations are formed through public discussions and debates on the meaning of Pancasila. Using data drawn from mass media. In this paper, I will examine the Government Regulation on Law (*Perppu*) No. 2/2017 as an example of how these political ethics develop through the discussion of the meaning of Pancasila. Second, I'll highlight how the space for interpretation of the meaning of Pancasila determines how the public, government and oppositional coalitions evaluate the pro and contra approaches to translating the ideology into practice. Third, in examining the process of socio-political consensus as a necessity in the democratic life of Indonesia, this paper will position the discursive deployments of Pancasila in the ethical and political considerations that stem from the practical application of these discourses of Pancasila.

## Keywords

Pancasila, ideology, interpretation, perppu, ormas

## 1 Introduction

The discourse surrounding the Government Policy to Replace a Law (*Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang Undang*, henceforth *Perppu*) on mass organizations sparked controversy in the current political climate in Indonesia. Published on 10 July 2017, the *Perppu Ormas* was aimed at facilitating the disbandment of transnational Islamic organization Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, on the basis that their activities and ideologies are in contradiction with the national ideology of Pancasila. Politicians in support of the policy tended to be affiliated with the government coalition, with those opposed to the law associated with the opposition party. Academics, religious leaders and activists also joined in the public discussion and their positions reflected the larger discourse and positioning towards the meaning of Pancasila for different sectors of society. One clear impact of the policy is that it has the potential to be a powerful legal tool for cracking down on activities and groups considered to be in contradiction with the Pancasila.

**Citation:** Pesurnay, A. J., (2018). Pancasila Ideology as A Field of Interpretation. In M. Amini, M. Yusuf, & V. I. Yulianto. (Eds.), UGM Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities: Vol. 1. Proceeding of the 2nd International Conference on South East Asia Studies (pp. 161–170).

**Published:** October, 2018

Pancasila as the ideology and foundation for national life in Indonesia has an open quality, in that ideologies are spaces for the production of meaning that are essentially dynamic and must be constantly reassessed. The meaning of Pancasila is the result of a process of public discourse in an ideal sense, however, the meaning of national ideologies is often set by the government or regime in power. The regime in power usually serves as the main source and centre of discourse production in the process of shaping the meaning of the national ideology at a given historical period. Regimes have a number of tools that allow them to shape and dominate the production of public discourse, and yet they also must dynamically respond to the changing aspirations of the public and emerging socio-political realities. As regimes change, the discourse shifts and the meaning assigned to ideological orientations towards nationalism changes. The meaning ascribed to Pancasila changes along with regimes, it appears that the national ideology in Indonesia is tool of power rather than a compact for the aspirations of the public.

The new government policy on Mass Organizations is considered by some to be a repressive one that cripples the freedom for public assembly and association protected by the constitution. The impact on the right to freedom of assembly was one argument against the enactment of this policy. Yet the dangers of civil society organization's abilities to assemble and voice their aspirations in the public sphere were also interpreted, on the other hand, as the source of counter ideologies that represent a threat to Pancasila as the basis of the nation.

The debate over the value of the policy on Mass Organizations is the starting point for what will be discussed in this paper. First, is the policy appropriate an appropriate response by the government to current social issues in Indonesia? Second, is the public sphere in Indonesia healthy enough to produce discourse based on an ethical awareness and the meaning of Pancasila for socio-cultural policy? Another important issue is how the social-political process in Indonesian democratic life produces discourse about Pancasila in relation to economic interests. From a perspective of political ethics, this paper will use the case of the *Perppu ormas* to theorize about democratic practice in the Pancasila state.

## 2 Discussion

### 2.1 Philosophical Ideas of Pancasila

Pancasila underwent a transformation in its function at its very formulation. First formally codified in the nation's founding principles, it was transformed in the compromise between two groups; one that wanted to see Islam play a principle role in the state, and the Nine Committee (Team 9) who championed a nationalist state as a compromise towards those hoping to found a religious state. The formulation proposed by the Nine Committee was agreed on at the plenary session of the BPUPKI. Pancasila was both a mode of compromise as well as the foundation for establishing the Indonesian government (Suwarno, 1993, p. 76). The principles of Pancasila were intended to be the lived values of humanity in the archipelago, which was transformed and integrated into the life of the pre-Independence community.

These integrated values were identified as living values that became part of the collective consciousness of the people of the archipelago. Significant national figures realized these values and used them to create an affective awareness to escape from the oppression and injustice of colonial rule. This awareness was central to the nationalist movement, encouraging the development of a group of intellectuals and public figures who sought to formulate a scientific study of the values encapsulated in the principles of Pancasila. The principles formally became the founding moral and legal basis of the nation. The characteristics of Pancasila can be traced back to the ancient kingdoms of Nusantara through the XV century, enriched by the contact with the religious values of monotheistic religions as well as the values of the modern West. Indonesian thinkers were successful in fostering religious, cultural, socio-political and economic values with a philosophical character. These values served as both imperative and operative categories (Suwarno, 1993, p. 79).

Professor Notonegoro, an Indonesian scholar who has interpreted Pancasila, proposes that in a philosophical sense, Pancasila must be understood through causal theory. The material realization of Pancasila can be seen in the habits, culture and religion of Indonesia. Habit in the wider sense refers to the political dimensions of statehood, and the social and economic realms that are stored in the common memory of Indonesian society and also within the group. According to Notonegoro, the formulation of Pancasila really began in a speech by Soekarno on June 1, 1945 and the opening of the constitution in 1945 (Notonegoro, 1971, p. 34) Pancasila and the Indonesian state were born through the will of the nation itself.

Differing from Notonegoro, Nicolaus Driyarkara understood Pancasila through a phenomenological approach. The precepts of Pancasila are the result of human culture translated into the physical world, in which humankind enters the physical world and humanizes it. This activity can be said to be culture and produce culture. The result of this process of culturalization is embedded in the technical, economic and civilizational elements of society (Driyarkara, 1980, p. 34). The existence of the individual relates to others according to the structure it entails. In other words, people come out of themselves and enter others, that the human consciousness according to the self confronts another. According to him, the existence of man is based on the existence of others, originating from love which becomes humanity. The love of others in the fulfilment of life will give birth to social justice. In the social-political dimension it will give birth to democracy, and in terms of group identity, will become nationality. However, the existence of humans is dependent on the *causa prima* that humans come from God (Driyarkara, 1980, pp. 33-46).

As the founding father of the nation, it is significant that Soekarno chose a theory of nationalism that greatly emphasized the desire for unity. Although different in race, culture and socio-economic outlook, the desire to be free from colonial domination was strong enough to spur the emergence of leaders from different regions. The idea of democracy mentioned in the fourth precept represents Soekarno's efforts to accommodate the views of leaders who represented the political and religious diversity of the people.

According to George Kahin (2003) in his work *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Soekarno was a leader who synthesized Western democracy, modern Islam, Marxism, and democratic as well as communalistic ideals into a general basis of social thinking for the political elites of the time. In his estimation Soekarno used these concepts to elevate the values present in the lives of the archipelago's diverse peoples. His eclecticism in formulating Pancasila was a solution to the basic problems of the state and the formation of an independent Indonesia (Suwarno, 1993, p. 99). In conceiving of Pancasila, Soekarno used the theories of the modern nation to elevate the democratic realities of rural life towards a more abstract level that would become the modern democratic nation of Indonesia. All the figures involved in the formulation of Pancasila in the early independence period undertook a similar effort to philosophically reflect, from various approaches and dimensions, on the values that evolved from Indonesian society.

From the views on Pancasila discussed earlier, there are various interpretations of Pancasila as form of ideology. Pancasila has transformed its meaning and the interpretations about it have changed from the time of its formation. It has become a kind of open space for interpretation. As an open ideology in practical life, it is determined by the discourses that flourish in society as well as the discourses emerging from the ruling regime. Whether the discourse that emerges contains a solid moral justification should be examined more deeply. Political ethics is formulated with the aim of achieving public welfare and peaceful living based on freedom and justice. The main concern is the implementation of policies in public management. The democratic state requires a government committed to maintaining the state responsibly. In state affairs, government policies must be clearly defined in term of philosophical priorities, programs, methods, and fundamentals (Haryatmoko, 2003, p. 25). An understanding of Pancasila therefore must develop through public discourse. In the case of the debate over the Perppu on Mass Organizations, the pro-Perppu group assumes that Pancasila is the final ideology, and those groups who do not align themselves with the ideology are a threat and must be dissolved. For the contra Perppu groups, Pancasila is not a final ideology as its meaning can and must keep changing in order to accurately reflect the will of the people in a given historical period. In their eyes, it can even be replaced. Transnational organizations like HTI who have a vision of establishing a caliphate refer to the first principle of Pancasila, Belief in One and Only God, as a justification for their existence and their right to freedom of association in Indonesia.

The open nature of Pancasila means that debates over its meaning can be used in the discourse within political arenas. This open nature also means the process of community life and national development undergoes relatively quick shifts. Pancasila as a lived practice is central to the continued development of the nation (Hadi, 1994, p. 46). This means that both the praxis and the instrumental value of the Pancasila must be open to change. The instrumental dimension of Pancasila is adapted into the basic values of society and is also determined by the context of social and political life. The basic values of Pancasila are universal values that are adapted and translated according to the dynamics of community aspirations (Kaelan, 2013). The dynamics of society are what determines the creation of a socially just and economically progressive national life.

## 2.2 Pancasila as an Open Ideology

Viewed sociologically, Pancasila is seen an open ideology that accommodates the aspirations of society. Although stemming from the Marxist tradition, the concept of ideology is more commonly understood today as related to discourse and the impact of discourse on society and power. Ideology is no longer

understood as ideas and beliefs but has shifted to more distinct focus on the function of language (Giddens, 2017, pp. 282-286). Scholars from the Frankfurt School understand ideology from a critical perspective, in that ideology is a way of connecting ideas with cultural products along with power and power relations. In this sense ideology means how ideas are used to promote and legitimize the interests of the dominant group. As long as there are class differences within society, the study of ideology of a category of inquiry must be continued. Ideology is an important aspect for understanding cultural reproduction.

In Zizek's estimation, ideology means the empty space of discourse. In Psychoanalysis, the empty space is called the real. This empty space of meaning must be filled continuously. The impasse that prevents social progress is caused by this meaningless space that must be filled when the old ideology doesn't work effectively. It requires action from revolutionary subjects to break the cycle of domination and the frozen state of ideology. The subject's belief in the political ideology does not mean that the ideology is objectively true. That subjects are not capable of realizing the full reality of politics does mean that they are not loyal to the ideology. Political ideology only provides a manner of seeing the world (worldview). Ideology mediates the inability of an understanding of reality of *an sich* such as: a great nation, god, freedom, and other concepts removed from the profane things experienced in ordinary life.

According to Zizek, no regime can achieve a consensus on a prolonged basis according to state ideology, unless the ideology encourages the subjects to operate individually or remain free from the meaning of the values contained in the ideology. For Zizek, ideology gives us its own reality that allows us to escape from the traumatic essence of the real (Zizek, 2008, p. 48). Ideology is not false consciousness in Zizek's estimation since it does not distort. For him the fundamental reality cannot be reproduced without ideological mystification. Ideology offers a symbolic construction of reality as a way to escape the real traumatic effects of life (p. 28).

Pancasila's open nature stems from its foundation, where leaders engaged in deliberation (*musyawarah*) regarding the principles formation and meaning. All members of the PPKI session approved of this method of seeking consensus about the founding principles of the nation. As Pancasila in the Soekarno era was interpreted as a dialectic between Islamic thought, nationalism and Marxism, it was also a foundation for the nation based in the idea of a nation for all. In the New Order Period, Pancasila was refashioned into a single ideology that had to be followed by all political parties, as well as being applied to social-political life in public. The New Order approach to Pancasila under Soeharto was characterized by three elements. First, the national ideology was explicitly enforced along with a stabilization of political life and economic growth. Secondly, the socialization of Pancasila and the Pancasila contract was established as the sole ideology for all parties (Ismail, 1996: 78). Through the guidelines of the Instillation and Practice of Pancasila (P4) the New Order government made the state ideology a source of dogma and tool for maintaining power.

The Reformasi era heralded a change in the socio-political situation in Indonesia. Various discourses returned from political coordinates. Writings on leftist ideology started to reappear, as well liberal ideology. Extreme right groups began to show signs of life. HTI is one example of a mass organization based in religion that has an ideology that can be interpreted to be different than Pancasila. Other religion-based organizations such as FPI have utilized violence against other citizens due to their ethical and religious views, although it's important to note that they characterize their actions as pro-national through their interpretation of the government's responsibility to "protect" religion.

According to Alfian (1982, pp. 104-33), a political scientist who focuses on Pancasila, an ideal ideology has three dimensions. In his work *Politics, Culture and Humanity in Indonesia*, he discusses these three dimensions; the dimension of reality, the dimension of idealism, and the dimension of flexibility. The dimension of reality is where the concrete institutions of the state emerge within a society. Pancasila plays an important role in this dimension as it was introduced as the basis for law and the institutions of the state that would encompass a diverse, plural society. In accommodating this plurality, it has the capacity to survive and can adapt and be developed in the framework of common goals in the life of the nation. Pancasila for the values and ideas that existed in pre-independence society. In the idealism dimension, Pancasila contains strong aspirations to include all citizens in a united effort to build a better state. In the New Order interpretation, the meaning of the precepts was divided in two, with some focusing on the humanitarian and democratic aspects of the ideology, while others focused on the divine, religious aspects. This divided interpretation diminished Pancasila and its meaning, because Pancasila is a formula for interconnected values.

The flexible dimension of Pancasila refers to the necessity for it to be able to adapt to the social processes of Indonesian society. Not only does Pancasila direct social change according to the hopes and aspirations of citizens, but according to Alfian, this adaptation requires the continued involvement of the wider society in the evaluating and interpreting the ideology's meaning according to the needs of the current historical period. It is in this sense that Pancasila can be considered an "open" ideology, one whose underlying spirit

doesn't change but can be developed creatively and dynamically to remain relevant in the face of social transformations in the life processes of Indonesian society (Oesman, 1991, p. 350)

An open ideology means the organization of community life based in certain values and ideals. These kinds of ideals facilitate the embodiment of values in society. Underlying all this is the ideal for society to be free to define itself, with values originating from society through a process in which people decide which values must be uplifted and defended. Pancasila needs to be reaffirmed through its application in various areas of life. Ideology as a state philosophy can be said to be open in its orientation, while its translation into social political goals and norms can always be questioned and adapted and challenged by emerging moral frameworks in society. An open ideology, by definition, must be inclusive, not totalitarian and cannot be used to legitimize the power of one group of people (Suseno, 1991, p. 234). It is not something that comes from outside of society, but from within. Values and expectations formulated explicitly in the constitution is a guide for mobilizing the motivation and ethos of the national community. An open ideology should not set operational targets and strategies but instead should become a critical reference to the setting of goals, strategies and development (Suseno, 1991, p. 241). As a useful ideology, Pancasila should mobilize the potential motivation in society, and eliminate those trends that are not in line with the ideals of the Indonesian nation about universal humanity.

### 2.3 Pros and Cons of the Policy on Mass Organization

Since the official implementation of the Government Policy Amending the Law (Perppu) RI No. 2 2017 (replacing UU No. 17 2013 on civil organizations), various groups have spoken out in support or against the policy change. Members of parliament, civil organization leaders, religious leaders, academics have all weighed in, indicating that this policy is connected to issues of concern to the Indonesian public. The dominant view from those who oppose the legal change is that the policy demonstrates the authoritarian nature of President Jokowi's government, and can endanger the people's autonomy and the future of the nation. Additionally, the policy threatens the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly guaranteed by the constitution, and it is contradictory to the spirit of democracy that animates the national ideology. Finally, detractors see the policy as having a large potential for misuse by the current ruling regime and those in the future.

Those in favor of the policy, however, see the legal shift as an effort to reinvigorate the spirit to repair the problems of diversity among the people. They interpret the policy as a move to promote tolerance and the civil rights of those threatened by intolerant and radical groups in society. This group tends to underline that democracy must have limits in order to function properly. If all groups can operate freely, it may possibly undermine and threaten the spirit of democracy itself. Several religious groups released statements on the publication of the Policy on Mass Organizations. These reactions were cautiously optimistic. The Organization of Protestant Churches in Indonesian (PGI) representing churches from across the country, circulated information about the change in law, with a statement that government should not use it as a tool of power for silencing dissent (Ishanuddin, 2017). They noted that Indonesia is a democratic country must provide a space for freedom of expression, and that the law must not be used arbitrarily by the government to reduce the space for the expression of different group's aspirations. A similar opinion was expressed by the chairman of the Muslim Ulama Council (MUI), Ma'ruf Amin. He stated that the law should not be used as a tool for targeting any groups either to the right or left sides of the political spectrum, and that the law must not be used a tool for control. He also said that he hoped that HTI was the last group dissolved under the policy, as other groups that are seen as a threat can be disabled through counseling, which the MUI is willing to provide (Rahadian, 2017). The Vice Chairman of MUI, Zainut Tauhid Saadi stated the Perppu must act against all organizations that have orientations contrary to national ideology that endanger NKRI. Saadi proposed that the government should not only prioritize the legal and security approaches to handling anti-Pancasila organizations. However, MUI considered the Perppu reasonable. They see the president as possessing a subjective right to determine the meaning of the compelling crisis in the Indonesian public. Under the amended law, mass organizations cannot abuse, blaspheme, desecrate or violate religion. They are also prohibited from participating in any activities that threaten the sovereignty of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia or embracing and disseminating any ideas that contradict Pancasila (Idhom, 2017).

The response from leaders of several Islamic organizations is notable, in that these groups often reject democracy as an imported Western concept that is associated with infidels and secular liberalism. However, these same groups opposed the law as threat to human rights and democracy, concepts that they have previously found incompatible with their religious beliefs. In the case of the Perppu, the accused the government of being undemocratic and violating the spirit of the constitution. However, the government

felt that the dissolution of HTI through the law which resulted in the revocation of the group's legal status by Ministry of Law and Human Rights, was reasonable given that the HTI was guilty of attacking the foundations of the nation, as well as the values of religion, brotherhood, and national pluralism. Government officials stated that they had heard and considered the concerns coming from a number of sectors of society, including religious leaders who called for the protection of tolerance, nationalism and diversity (Alqurtuby, 2017).

Furthermore, according to Sumanto Al Qurtuby from the Scientific Research in Social Sciences at King Fahd University, Democracy must have limits. Democracy in Indonesian is not the secular-liberal democracy found in the West, but instead a system based on the values of local wisdom, the foundations of Indonesian nationalism and the values that emerge from Pancasila. Pancasila democracy is not a value-free, 'unhindered' system that tolerates elements that can potentially create conflict and division. Indonesia is not a secular-liberal system, nor is it an Islamic state. It is a Pancasila state. Civil organizations must submit to the ideology of the state. This policy does have the potential to be misused, just as the constitution and holy books can be misused. The intention of the policy, however, is to identify groups that promote acts of rebellion, intolerance and radicalism. In Al Qurtuby's view (2017), the Perppu is a positive move to prevent the kinds of disturbances seen in regions like the Middle East and Central Asia where many groups non-humanistic radical religious groups have emerged.

The group that has most vociferously protested the change to the law on civil/mass organizations is HTI itself, as they were first target of the policy's application. In statement from their representative Ismail Yusanto, HTI accused the government of creating the Perppu as manoeuvre specifically designed to allow for the dissolution of civil organizations. The policy enabled the government to dissolve HTI. The group claimed that the policy is form of tyranny, and arbitrarily targets groups that politically unpopular (Shantika, 2017). House of Representatives member from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) Jazuli Juwaini took a similar stance in his statement, saying that the government needed to explain the reason for the creation and legalization of the policy. Furthermore, he noted that PKS was concerned about the legal change, because it was based on a number of ambiguous legal articles and that it also bypasses normal legal processes. PKS members were of the opinion that the policy raises concern over the government's commitment to following the due processes of justice and the rule of law. They also noted that HTI was never invited to speak or engage in dialogue with government officials in the process of the policy's creation, and therefore represents a form of repression towards Islam by the state. Deputy Chairman of the House of Representatives Fahri Hamzah stated that the policy and the circulation of documents containing the names of members and sympathizers of HTI was not only unethical but also illegal, since the document could trigger discrimination or persecution. Fadli Zon, vice Chairman of the House of Representatives, expressed similar concerns that the policy indicates the decline of democracy and the new mode of dictatorship, since the government can now dissolve organizations without due process of law (Videlia, 2017).

Several foreign media outlets like the Washington Post (Tempo.co, 2017) wrote that human rights activists perceived that this policy decision by President Joko Widodo violates the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly (Akbar, 2017). Although this change to law No. 17 2013 was ushered in by the president and considered to be violation of rights by some, it was supported by moderate Islamic groups such as Nahdlatul Ulama. The Star Tribune quoted Andreas Harsono from Human Rights Watch as saying that the Indonesian government has the authority to crack down on groups that violate the law. However, to dissolve such groups is cruel action. "Banning organizations based on their ideology is cruel action that undermines the right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. This is despite the fact that Indonesians have struggled to develop these rights since the Suharto dictatorship" he said.

The government's official statement, made through the Minister of Political, Legal and Security Affairs, provided three reasons for the dissolution of HTI under the amended law. First, as a legal entity, HTI has not played positive role in furthering the development of the nation. Second, the activities undertaken by the group are in conflict with the objectives, principles and guiding characteristics of Pancasila and the constitution as stipulated in Law No. 17 2013 on civil organizations. Third, HTI activities are considered to have engendered conflicts in the community that can threaten public order and the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Movanita, 2017).

Wiranto underlined that the government had sufficient reason to amend the law through the 2017 policy. He noted that currently Indonesia faces an ideological threat from organizations that seek to replace Pancasila. He also pointed to the existence of organizations that implement anti-nationalist and anti-democratic campaigns in the public sphere. Furthermore, the original law from 2013 did not provide a strong enough legal basis for the government to act against these types of organizations (Erdianto, 2017).

An editorial column published by Media Indonesia (2017) seemed to be in support of the policy, noting that its application was in line with a decision by the constitutional court that says the president has the right to create policy on a basis of need in critical situations or to address legal concerns quickly. Secondly, the country's legal rules are not yet fully developed, and the option of presidential policy helps to address the gaps in the legal system. Third, the president may create policy in the case that gaps in the legal system cannot be adequately addressed with the creation of new law. Given these considerations, the author of the editorial finds that the president's amendment of the 2013 is neither arbitrary nor according to the president's personal whims. Therefore, the Perppu is based on the rule of law, and addresses a real threat to the stability of the nation.

As the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama's support for the Perppu is influential. Head of the Harian Tanfidziyah PBNU, Robikin Emas of the organization expressed his support for the policy, as a method of overcoming the polemic surrounding groups that NU sees as radical, such as HTI. He argued that the policy would "speed up the legal process addressing radical groups without suppressing constitutional rights." According to NU, HTI is a radical, anti-Pancasila organization, and their existence endangers the existence of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, threatening the nation's unity. "Since it's clear that HTI denies the plurality of the Indonesian public that has existed for hundreds of years, and they have been proven to be anti-Pancasila given their promotion of the concept of a caliphate that is no longer even used in Islamic nations." He added that HTI has even been rejected by many Islamic states worldwide (Friana, 2017).

Pancasila Ideology as a space of interpretation in the debate over this policy in the current political climate in Indonesia, an understanding of Pancasila as an ideology needs to be rekindled. In contemporary social scientific and philosophical thought, ideologies are not understood as beliefs or systems of thought but rather as a type of discourse. The function of ideology is to connect ideas with cultural products and life practices. Pancasila as an ideology in cultural life must influence the life of Indonesian culture. It implies the need for cultural politics or cultural strategies based on Pancasila (Sastrapratedja, 2013, p. 179).

Debates over the development and application of the presidential policy amending the law on mass organizations can be interpreted as a struggle for political and cultural power. Groups in support of the policy are in line with government in upholding the state's interest in controlling those organizations that are suspected of wanting to replace Pancasila with an alternative ideology. This policy was created with the goal of controlling organizations that are openly in conflict with Pancasila and who promote anti-democratic and anti-national ideas by the government's estimation. Those groups who rejected the policy are aligned with a coalition of government opposition groups. Utilizing the political moment when the discourse about the policy was enlivening the public space, both anti-government groups and radical organizations sought to disrupt political stability through assuring their discourse was dominant. However, these groups had different reasons and interpretations of Pancasila despite the appearance of being on the same side of the debate. This demonstrates the lack of a solid understanding and a process of actualization of Pancasila values that has characterized the reformation-era public engagement with the ideology. This lack of an engaged, inclusive public discourse about Pancasila has left a vacuum that is being filled from different quarters which can be seen in the emergence of pockets of leftist, liberal and Islamist ideologies in post 1998 Indonesia (Said Ali, 2012:143). These ideologies attempt to fill the gap where the actualization of Pancasila has failed. The dynamic and fast-moving character of socio-political life in Indonesia requires a return to the instrumental and practical domains of the ideology. Pancasila's value as a guiding principle for the nation has been obscured and abandoned. Furthermore, the lack of serious academic and philosophic attention to the ideology as a form of praxis has led people away from the principles it represents.

Pancasila was born out of the culture of Indonesia and is an essential part of the nation's identity. Pancasila's ideological function as a container for diversity and the aspirations of all the citizens of Indonesia must be maintained. Organizations with an agenda that contradicts Pancasila are a threat to the continued application of the ideology as the basis for the nation, as well as the unity of the people. The ideological claims of radical mass organizations should not be allowed to replace this foundation that is based in the everyday diversity of Indonesia religious, ethnic, and regional. Coming from this diversity, Pancasila importantly accommodates pluralism, which is necessary to maintaining the rights of all in a diverse population. Social transformation must be rooted in everyday life, and collective values developed creatively and dynamically in the dialectic relationship between Pancasila as the abstraction of public life that is realized through the public's interpretation of it. This is where Pancasila's open nature is most essential and must remain a space for interpretation. In that space, the discourse on values, both practical and instrumental, can be adapted to the developing context of society. This is a space where the aspirations of the people shape political will and influence the ruling institutions of the state. The government policy

on Mass Organizations is implicitly aimed at maintaining the basic orientation of the nation. This is a kind of corrective which shapes political life.

Pancasila constructively challenges the people of Indonesia to live according to the values of culture, tolerance, religion and justice. This is the intention of the ideology. In that sense Pancasila is an abstraction of that represents the idea of the contents of the state itself. Although Ramage claims that contestation about the meaning of Pancasila predominately comes from within the state itself (Ramage, 1995, p. 123). the debate over the Perppu shows that public discourse is also factor in defining and redefining the meaning of Pancasila, a polysemous concept that may have a number of competing definitions at any given historical point. Ramage may be right in pointing out that most of the dominant discourse about Pancasila is produced by the state, but that does not mean the state can the emergence of contending definitions in the public sphere. As the ideology is open enough embraces various views from different political sectors, it has a unifying function. However, the government also tends to use it to limit and regulate political behavior. Often, this is done through moral appeals by the state, which can be taken up in different ways by the public. In this case, all sides claim that theirs is a moral imperative in their position. For those who are pro-Perppu, the moral imperative is in protecting the nation from a perceived threat to Pancasila as an essential guarantor of national coherence. For those against the law, it violates the freedoms of people to maintain their own moral orientations within the framework of the state.

The underlying issue in this debate is how Pancasila should function in determining the limits of democracy. Political freedom and the space for free expression is guaranteed by the constitution, and yet it is the discourse produced in these spaces which the state feels it must regulate as function of control. It is here that speech and persuasion play a central role in determining how far the government can use appeals to safety and the protection of Pancasila to enforce their interpretation of the ideology. In representing plurality in the Arendtian sense as the distinctive and absolute feature of the whole condition of political life (Arendt, 1958, pp. 41-42), Pancasila becomes a unifying symbol through political action can unfold. If politics is concerned with all aspects of the human condition plurality cannot be avoided. Political action presupposes plurality or census, which means there will also be rejection, approval, conflict and cooperation in determining what is right in society.

In the discourse about Pancasila in the course of the public debates over the Perppu, the identities of different groups are realized and recast or reaffirmed through speech. This action of defining the meaning of Pancasila is how the ideology is applied in public policy and made material. The space of discourse provided by Pancasila becomes a space of freedom for the expression of the aspirations of a number of different groups as it is kept free of threats and intimidation that negate plurality. Speech in public debates ceases to be political when words are reduced to weapons in propaganda wars (Arendt, 1958, p. 180) or when intimidation limits the expression of plurality. This is what the government struggles within the defense of Pancasila: how to limit ideologies that threaten plurality and diversity without quashing the ability for different and often contradictory interpretations to enter into the process of public discourse.

The definition of Pancasila and how is concretized must be reached through a process of consensus. However, consensus means preserving the space and flexibility for the emergence of contradictory and competing claims into public discourse for wider consideration. The public then evaluates the sincerity and validity of the claims of different groups. Pancasila represents an ideal of a common basic belief about how we live humanly in the nation and state of Indonesia. Plurality is accepted as a distinctive feature of the Indonesian nation, with the goal of preventing any group from imposing their beliefs on all or claiming that their perspective represents the universal voice. The meaning of Pancasila means requiring the acceptance of a political consensus that underlies the nationality of the Indonesian nation (Suseno, 1986, p. 113). And this will always be accompanied by conflict as groups compete to have their voice gain traction and power in the process of consensus. As actors compete to see their vision of what is the natural and moral way to define difference instantiated and accepted as part of the nation (Mouffe, 2013, pp. 30-31), they engage in the process creating not only new common sense frames for recognition, but for also for defining the parameters of inclusion that Pancasila protects.

The meaning and actualization of Pancasila must change according to the context of generation and era in the development of the nation's history. The cognitive aspect of Pancasila ideology requires openness to criticism, rational argumentation, and dialogue between science and Pancasila, and these debates over who represents Pancasila (and who doesn't) are part of these processes of cognition. The emotive aspect of Pancasila involves the process of appreciating the ideological meaning of life (Sastrapradja, 2013, pp. 326-7).

In the midst of the composition of Indonesian society consisting of many different tribes, religions, cultures, and classes, Pancasila as consensus requires a concerted effort to develop, interpret, and interpret the continuing values and basic life-views contained therein



### 3 Conclusions

Pancasila is an open space for the constructive interpretation of its meaning for life of the state and the nation. The need for a healthy public space that facilitates discourse is a condition for the continued ability of Pancasila to reflect the aspirations of the public in their understanding and interpretation of it. However, Pancasila as an ideology has the potential to be misused if it is applied as tool for suppression or intimidation by the ruling regime. This potential for ideological misuse can be anticipated by open attitudes to rational ideals, critical analysis, and an academic dialogue about the values enshrined within Pancasila's principles. Pancasila must be grounded in a process by which it is realized in social practice, and that process requires the involvement of all parties in a joint effort to foster public reasoning to facilitate a healthy public discourse.

Political ethics describes a worldview in which ethical-rational considerations become central to the life of the nation. The main objective of the government is to regulate the life of the nation, public good, national development, and social justice for all Indonesian people. Public discussion as for space contestation meaning, and the practice of national life finds expression in Pancasila as moral orientation for the nation. Plural public discourse can be tested through the debates over the social ethics of Pancasila. If citizens can be actively involved in overseeing public policy through public opinion, and management can be carried out fairly by the authorities, then debates over Pancasila are part of the agonistic tendencies of a plural democracy that can rightfully be seen as political. Communities' constitution as a hot issue in public discourse becomes a marker of a disseminated political reality.

The existence of groups promoting ideologies to replace Pancasila becomes a marker of can be potential threat to the public space if they are intended to silence debate through intimidate or violence, because a healthy public sphere requires the government to maintain a safe space for discourse to flourish. The policy on mass organizations was intended by the government to protect Pancasila, but it implicitly seeks to protect public space from groups who seek to control discourse through repression and intimidation in their devaluation of the national ideology that remains intentionally open and can be claimed and interpreted by all citizens equally. The appraisal of the appropriateness of the issuance of the Perppu should be seen a priori, in the sense of whether the impacts and consequences of such policies contribute to a healthy public sphere in Indonesia, or if it is used as a tool to further political aspirations of the ruling regime.

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